

## **VENICE**

The programme concerns the town of Marghera and the S. Giuliano peninsula. The former (about 27,000 inhabitants: 9% of the urban population and more than 80% concentration of drug addicts), which shows clear signs of socio-economic and environmental crisis; since it was established in the '20s it has been strongly integrated with the industrial zone of Porto Marghera, following its economic cycle. It is an area of some 2,500 hectares, of which 2,000 are industrial plants belonging to traditional sectors (chemicals, petrochemicals, steelworks, etc.), with highly polluted derelict areas. The second area, adjacent to the town of Mestre and to the Porto Marghera industrial centre, forms a significant part of the lagoon area

### ***Singular features of the programme***

Sub-programme 2, Venice, is a singular case in the panorama of URBAN projects in Italy. In the first place, its concentration in just a few actions that start up measures that are at least at city scale, based on known territorial and social features; and - but again in relation to the concentration of measures - the relative detachment from a traditional approach to urban upgrading and renewal of a well-defined territorial unit (the district).

The structure of the sub-programme derives from the programme priorities established by the first Cacciari administration in 1994:

- resolving the crisis of the Porto Marghera industrial pole
- management of the municipality's social services in relation to the expression of social subjectivity.

### **The “material” measures**

The measures co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), which amounted to 95% of the total expenditure, were centred on two actions: the City of Music and the San Giuliano Park.

The City of Music project foresaw “the restructuring of an abandoned industrial site in order to promote forms of particularly youth aggregation, with music as the common denominator”. The idea stems from Marghera's vitality in musical activities, represented by groups, concerts recurrent year after year, specialised clubs and so on, and also enterprises in the sector.

In March 1997, the Rehabilitation Plan for the area of the Scientific and Technological Park and the corresponding convention were approved by the municipal council. This convention foresaw, as part of the costs of secondary urbanisation, the cession to the municipality of the Ashes Store and Canteen buildings of the former factory (compound fertilisers), earmarking them for a “Technological City of Music”. At the end of 1998 a feasibility study was drawn up on the transformation of the two buildings into a “City of Music”. The selection procedure for the private partner occupied and concerned the municipal administration throughout 1999, in an endeavour to reconcile the guaranteeing of public interest in the initiative and the remuneration of the considerable investments requested from the private partner (15 billion lire out of 23). The limited time left to conclude a complex and completely new procedure entailed a difficult and insufficient promotion of the initiative and search for the business partner able to stand surety for the operation, and, at the finish, led to the failure of the project. In fact the only participant in the selection, a temporary association between a local building contractor, operators in the music sector and a number of small commercial enterprises in the field, broke up at the moment of signing the convention, which had been proposed by the temporary association itself and had already been approved by the municipal council.

The conversion into a park of the Punta di S. Giuliano, a vast area of the lagoon behind the bridge linking Mestre and Venice, acting as a dumping ground for 1,240,000 cu.m of industrial and urban wastes, is the action with the heaviest commitment of resources of the sub-programme (35 billion). The establishment of the San Giuliano Park witnessed the involvement - right from the calling of the international design competition (1989), and precisely due to the strategic importance of its function in "binding together" the whole municipal territory (and not only in the morphological sense) -, of several sectors of the municipal administration, and in particular Public Works, Urban Planning, Environment and Public Property.

The first lot (B1) foresees making the dumping area safe, remodelling the area and all the network installations of the Park. On the publication of the call for tenders, it absorbed the whole of the resources made available by the URBAN project. The contract was however awarded for a considerably lower amount and it was therefore possible to design and contract out (1999) two more lots: the system of accesses from Mestre for cyclists and pedestrians, the car parks, and a number of external furniture works (A2) and the irrigation system (A1).

### **The "intangible" measures**

The "intangible" measures, co-financed by the ESF, have witnessed a progressive transfer of attention and of resources from the one to the other, from Measure 4 "Permanent maintenance, cleaning and safety" to Measure 2 "Training and Social Services".

The first one concerned the objective of resolving the endemic conflict between tenants and owner as to maintenance of ERP housing, and foresaw the training of municipal and ATER personnel, information and advisory services for Marghera tenants, and the vocational training necessary for the organisation of "block units" formed by tenants for the performance of simple maintenance or "first aid" measures. But the bureaucratic requirements for the organisation of the activities financed by the ESF together with the difficulties of mobilising for the project the resources of the House Sector of the municipality, in the first place, and of ATER's maintenance service, in the second place, led also to the abandonment of the attempted experimentation concentrated on a pilot ERP agglomeration.

Conversely, the Centre for Women Suffering Violence (Anti-Violence Centre) has in the course of time increased its dimension and impact on the city. Started shortly before the drawing up of the sub-programme as part of the Women's Service, an entirely public service but strongly linked with the city's women's associations, the Anti-Violence Centre is a place for strengthening all potentials of life and work for women who are going through moments of malaise and difficulty, and for mapping out actions against the culture of violence of which they have been victims, and a project to win back their personal autonomy.

Since its opening in October 1994 the Centre has welcomed almost two thousand women, at a constant rate in the last three years of about 400 a year.

The Centre's activity has three subdivisions: the work of the multidisciplinary team formed by psychologists, lawyers and reception operators; the network of the various public services involved in case of violence; and the two Reception Homes. The Centre's team is based, first and foremost, on the needs of the women who apply to it, so that it is the service that adjusts to the women attending it and their requests, rather than the contrary, as is the traditional bureaucratic arrangement of the services. The aim is to represent the Anti-Violence Centre as a normal place, hard to identify with a structure dealing with malaise. It is however necessary for the complete support to a woman who has suffered violence to seek to provide actions coherent and adequately synergetic with the other public services which come into play immediately after the occurrence of violence or following the intervention of the Centre. Coherence is

sought by way of specific meetings with the other operators in the focus of the service and with consultations case by case.

Lastly, the Reception Homes have so far taken in 19 women, almost all of them with children. The first Home, opened in 1997, is a protected dwelling managed by convention with the Marzoli Foundation, started to protect young unmarried mothers and recently involved in the project to counter violence, and the "Le Moire" Association, formed by young women psychologists who have been trained in the Anti-Violence Centre. The Home has been devised as a structure in which the women (and their children) who are in immediate need of being taken away from situations of violence and maltreatment, which could endanger their physical and mental integrity, can be temporarily accommodated. The Home is thus safe, protected place, and its address and telephone number are strictly secret. the second home, however, opened in 1999, is not secret, and indeed it serves for the building up of the autonomy of the women who have had an experience of violence, by means of seeking a job, a place to live, and a network of friendly and family relations.