

## ***BARI***

The URBAN area coincides with the Città Vecchia (Old Town), with its typical medieval layout, nestling on the promontory between the old port and the new port.

For centuries this area represented the main urban nucleus, until (in 1813) the modern expansion took place, at the initiative of Murat.

The ancient Borgo has undergone a process of progressive marginalisation (at present 8,000 inhabitants, with a considerable emphasis on the elderly component) with levels of petty crime among the young age group.

The depopulation was matched by general impoverishment, as indicated by the unskilled type of activities and the high unemployment rates. Although possessing tourism potentials, the area is not provided with hotels and suchlike.

### ***The objectives***

The URBAN programme for Bari, operative since 1998, started from the need to assist the municipal administration in preparing an organic strategy of measures aimed at improving the quality of life in favour of urban districts having serious social, economic, environmental and urban planning problems.

The objectives to be reached could be summed up in three action categories:

- *Objective A, urban and environmental rehabilitation*, pursued through a series of measures to remake and modernise the networks and services of a number of squares and streets of particular historic worth, with special regard to connecting the abovementioned spaces with the remaining part of the city, and through a series of restoration measures on buildings of great historic value.

- *Objective B, economic and productive revitalisation* pursued through an action supporting the opening up of new productive activities, located in the Old Town (Città Vecchia), and the modernising of the existing ones.

- *Objective C, combating of social decline* by means of upgrading receptive structures for the carrying out of social activities and services, rehabilitating buildings in public ownership and promoting a series of measures on the territory aimed at improving the usability and the safety of a number of roads and squares in the Old Town by means of providing adequate public lighting.

Vocational training courses have also been organised, intended not only for territorial operators engaged in the field of the social services, but also directly for commercial and catering operators, new entrepreneurs and craftsmen, etc.

Although apparently the objectives fixed by URBAN seem separate from each other, all the measures are on the contrary closely connected together, and possess a common denominator: the environmental and social rehabilitation of the Città Vecchia .

Think for example of the incentives for economic and productive revitalisation, accompanied by a series of training courses for commercial and catering operators, or other formative measures for the creation of new enterprises, handicraft workshops and/or cooperatives.

With these coordinated joint actions, an unemployed young person, for example, intending to start up an activity on his own, has had the chance to attend training courses and, at the same time, to obtain non-repayable grants for the opening of the commercial firm or handicraft workshop.

The revitalisation of the Città Vecchia will assuredly obtain the hoped-for success because the URBAN project has foreseen numerous measures (Objective 1) aimed at making use of public spaces (buildings, squares, streets, etc.) to concentrate and intensify the moments of social aggregation and thus make the renaissance of economic life possible in a pleasant, safe context.

Also the functional integration of the Città Vecchia with the neighbouring Murattiano district is starting to become a reality: for instance, the “Passeggiata” to the Città Vecchia starts from Corso Cavour and from Corso Vittorio Emanuele, which are the two commercial thoroughfares par excellence.

It will therefore be possible to assess the results of the project only if the measures in progress are analysed transversally and if significant points of contact can be found between the various actions carried out.

### ***Communication***

To make the project known to all those possibly interested and to promote it, not only within the municipality, already in 1998 numerous meetings of various sorts were organised.

At the operative stage, an Internet site ( **Errore. L'origine riferimento non è stata trovata.** ) was promoted, as an innovative means of disseminating information and in support of the activities.

The success of the initiative is borne out by the numbers involved; in 1999 alone more than 60,000 contacts were recorded, and the provenance of the contacts was even more surprising, coming not only from citizens interested in making use of the facilities, but also from Italian and European public administrations, university departments, and so on.

The site will be subject to in-depth updating, both graphically and regarding its content.

The new configuration, apart from acting as a promotional “show-window” of the successes achieved by the administration, will be provided with a *Borgo Antico Virtuale* in which every initiative funded by URBAN can have a web page available.

The site, renewed in this way, will more effectively transmit the sense of dynamism and of renewal that the programme has generated in the Città Vecchia of Bari.

### ***Implementation***

At 30/6/2000, about 18 months before the definite conclusion of the project, the state of progress is in keeping with the timing foreseen.

Regarding the activities of urban and environmental rehabilitation, a large part of the works have been completed:

- The house where Niccolò Piccinni was born, measure completed and handed over;
- Fortino, Lots I – II, measure completed but not handed over;
- Largo Sant' Annunziata, measure completed but not handed over;
- Circuit no. 7 (section Fortino Sant' Antonio – S. Scolastica), measure completed and handed over;
- Circuits 1-2-3-4 disbursement, 1<sup>st</sup> SAL;
- Student accommodation, 1<sup>st</sup> SAL;
- Circuit no. 5, consignment of works;
- Access roads to Piazza Mercantile, consignment of works;
- Piazza Mercantile, measure nearing completion, consignment foreseen in December 2000.

By and large it can be said that during the performance of the works no particular technical-executive difficulties were encountered. Only in the cases where excavations had been foreseen, as for example for the underground passages for the sub-services (Piazza Mercantile - Largo Santa Chiara ) were foundations dating from past periods found, making it necessary to suspend operations pending the intervention of the Department of Archaeology of the Puglia Region, which then gave ad hoc indications thereon.

Building restructuring works and new building works, coming under Objective B (incentives for economic activities), are going ahead in accordance with the timing foreseen.

It is pointed out that the offices concerned in the issuing of the authorisations necessary (Technical Office / ASL / Sovrintendenza / etc.) were clearly informed as to the problem of respecting the times, thereby making a substantial contribution to the regular performance of the entire project.

Control and monitoring of the various measures is carried out by an "URBAN" office set up in the Department for Community Policies, supported by the activity carried out by IPRES (Puglia Institute of Economic and Social Research) which prepares quarterly reports on the progress of the "Physical and Financial" programme. Moreover, a consultant has been appointed to follow in particular the building initiatives for Objectives 1 and 2.