



URBAN STRATEGIC PLANNING

ANALYSIS AND IDENTIFICATION OF BEST PRACTICES AND BENCHMARK

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Introduction

Why perform strategic planning?

The Strategic Plan is not merely, as the name would suggest, the definition of a plan of strategies for the development of the city, but is also, and more importantly, the building of a process in which everyone assumes responsibilities for the achievement of specific development goals for a territory. It is in effect a definition that has multiple and extremely complex meanings.

The Strategic Plan is therefore a document that maps out priority strategies and actions for achieving a certain concept of development, but first and foremost a process that succeeds in sharing that concept of development.

The process is in fact a highly diversified form of interaction between private and public stakeholders, of mobilisation and aggregation of the territorial interests, aimed at reaching consensus on a future vision of the city and the issues that are considered strategic. It is an incubator of territorial and decisional relations that stimulates mechanisms of consultation, co-operation and participation, and above all in which actors and networks of actors are set in contact with each other, both at different territorial levels (municipal, Provincial and so on up to European), and as the representatives of different interests (institutional, social, economic and civilian. All these stakeholders have planning visions, resources and solutions that are sometimes in harmony and sometimes in conflict.

A second element relates to policy integration, that is constantly ensuring that the strategies, actions and tangible projects for achieving specific development objectives do not overlap and are consistent with each other.

These process elements are common to all cases of strategic planning in Italy and all over Europe. They are all approaches that network the stakeholders, engage the persons involved in dialogue and exchange, promoting projects in the attempt to integrate the different policies and initiatives scheduled and in existence within a shared vision of development of the city.

Thus the link between strategic planning and governance is clear. The term *governance* is frequently used in apposition with *governing* to stress the procedural element of the action of government rather than the institutional element. More specifically, local governance refers to public policies constantly renegotiated at multi-organisational and multi-institutional level and to the set of mechanisms for the mobilisation and interaction of the various stakeholders, groups, networks and subsystems in the sphere of urban government.

The reasons for strategic planning

The practice of Strategic Planning was developed to respond to models of government undermined by political-institutional, economic and social factors.

Apropos the political-institutional motives, these are primarily due to the deadlock of political representation and representative democracy generated by the crisis of the traditional political parties, since the administrations no longer have the filter of the parties as spokesmen for the interests of the citizens in territorial choices.

The repercussions emerge in the municipal councils, as the consummate representative organs, also as a result of the diversification and multiplication of the interests and demands. This tendency at European level has engendered a thrust towards regionalism, considering that for the EU the territorial bodies of reference are the regions rather than

the municipalities, even in terms of building local policies. The administrations are not sufficiently prepared, and the resources, tools and procedures continue to be inadequate to address complex requirements and situations of crisis.

As regards the economic motives, the shortage of resources leads to the removal of State safety nets. Moreover, this is an issue that is affecting municipal administrations now more dramatically than ever before – with drastic cuts being made to local bodies in the spheres of social services, education, research, culture etc. – with the Maastricht agreements and the pressure to reduce public debt further aggravating the local situations.

The acceleration due to economic globalisation means that the cities have to be competitive in a situation where international competition is increasingly intense. We can take as example those enterprises that invest in foreign countries such as China or India, where production costs are lower. Consequently it is increasingly essential to astutely valorise local specificity and difference to reach specific segments of the tourist, cultural and leisure markets etc.

The third aspect relates to the reasons of a social nature. Society and the population are increasingly diversified and fragmented and express demands and needs that are more heterogeneous and complex; rather than universal responses they are demanding the capacity for such responses to be differentiated and individualised. The new actors in this scenario are the numerous social movements and civic committees, frequently hyper-local and addressing a single issue. In substance, the traditional ambits of cohabitation and socialisation (family, school, work) are languishing, bringing to the fore new inequalities, new forms of social exclusion and a fragmentation of the traditional identifications and articulations of class.

These factors have led to the need to change the mode of governance and above all to address the aforementioned prevailing aspects.

An authentic change in the role of the municipal administration is called for: from the management of services to the orientation of policies, where the local bodies are being increasingly requested, both from above (EU, central government) and from below (the citizens) to guide the demand, to find shared solutions, to select the priorities for action to sustain development, with the aim of identifying the goal and the route of and for the cities, with a new capacity for territorial and prospect analysis.

The government policies and actions must be increasingly interdependent. The various areas of intervention are increasingly enmeshed (town planning and mobility are the most obvious examples, but also the interlinking of these with education and productive activities). A balance needs to be found between economic competitiveness and emerging issues such as the quality of life (especially in relation to environmental problems) or social cohesion (connected predominantly with the immigration phenomenon, etc) and safety. All these questions demand a capacity for vision, responses and transversal policies.

Finally greater public-private and public-public co-operation is called for. Without the support of the public sector, the private can no longer invest in development strategies. But the public sector too has increasing need of the support of the private (not only in economic terms but also technocratic, specific know-how in certain sectors of the territory), with a view to a governance of the city that goes beyond the urban administrative confines. It is necessary to build public-public coalitions (such as town council-provincial authority-regional authority) which call for a great capacity for co-operation between the institutions, since the cities cannot be governed within the urban/municipal administrative boundaries.

Over the last 20 years in Europe, and the last 10 in Italy, the strategic plan has represented a possible response to these problems, a potential instrument for guiding and orienting the processes and transformations in progress within the territory. Where it has been interpreted and used to this end it has effectively succeeded in supporting the institutions and the actions of the government in building an itinerary for the development of the cities.

The elements of the Strategic Plan

From the very start of planning it is fundamental to understand what are the elements that make a plan into an innovative method of government of the territory, and that then also determine its efficacy in terms of achievement of the targets and actions. Summarised below are the key elements for a methodologically correct approach emerging from the good practices of strategic planning.

Grand design

The identification of a future vision of the city means grasping what concept of city we want to build; to do this we need to start from a very attentive analysis of the territorial scenarios. These normally become the basis for defining the vision of development and the strategies for achieving it. An entire initial phase of the process is devoted to this reconnaissance. This is an extremely important moment in which the city reflects upon itself and reviews where it is, where it's going and where it wants to go.

The shared and participatory vision

The vision is the result of a process of listening and participation, in an exchange between the territorial stakeholders on all the relevant issues and the networking of knowledge and choice options on the action solutions. The strategic planning is a process that can mobilise broad participation, social capital and planning intelligence so as to identify and select development priorities shared by all (institutional, economic and social stakeholders etc.).

Construction of networks and coalitions

The intelligence of the strategic plan resides above all in having grasped the fact that promoting projects of innovation, recognised as valid and necessary, means first and foremost constructing a coalition of actors who are capable of sustaining them, giving them legitimacy and feasibility in terms of the real possibilities of implementation.

This is a very important point, given that where the plans have managed to build strong coalitions, these have gone on to become authoritative sites of permanent reflection on the city's development needs and the opportunities open to its stakeholders. They have become sites for the legitimisation of the choices since it is here that they are "approved" by the city, and where – even though they are identified and implemented elsewhere – the actions are shared and provided with their propulsive drive. They also represent a specific location within a broader vision of development, and frequently an organisational, theoretical and methodological benchmark for the elaboration of the actions.

Integrated and coherent policies

The intersectorial approach of strategic planning is seen as priority, with constant attention to the fact that the strategies, actions and projects are interrelated (without either overlaps or contradictions), and are coherent with the vision of development.

Strategic planning places attention on the maintenance of consistency over time, in relation to much more dynamic entities and in relation to decisions that may be altered, even as a result of the economic, technical or political impossibility of carrying through a solution or an action.

Vast Area

The strategic planning relates to an urban space that is not that of the administrative confines of the city but rather that of the effective economic and social impacts of the decisions.

Medium-long term approach

Strategic planning – which maps out a path for reaching an extended idea of desired city – by definition develops in a medium-long term perspective of the strategies.

Process

Naturally, strategic planning has a process-oriented approach, in that the process of construction of a model of governance is more important than the results in terms of products; there is in fact a close link between strategic planning and governance, a term that indicates the procedural element of the action of government rather than the institutional element. More specifically, local governance refers to public policies constantly renegotiated at multi-organisational and multi-institutional level and to the set of mechanisms for the mobilisation and interaction of the various stakeholders in the sphere of urban government.

Institutional building

By networking the decisional interests of the territory and fostering consultation between the stakeholders, strategic planning in fact represents and promotes the governance of vast area, understood as a set of networks through which demands are reformulated and aggregated, a unified vision of development is identified, strategies are oriented and priority attributed to the actions. It is hence a tool that facilitates the decisional mechanisms, and that can thus bring forth a valid mode of modifying the institutional forms of government, which can no longer be the traditional forms generated by pre-established rules, administrative hierarchies and sector competencies, but emerge rather from the relations and interactions that take place within the territory.

It is significant that it is precisely the ambit of the strategic plans, first in Europe and now in Italy too, that has reopened the debate on metropolitan government and the institutional framework best suited to represent it and legitimise inter-municipal coalitions.

Experimental/educational approach

Finally, another important role that strategic planning now assumes in local government is learning. In effect it represents an important occasion of training for the administrators and for the territory in general, which has to address the delicate task of changing the style of government, the attitudes of both public and private in the face of the territorial choices, the procedures (of participation and co-operation, but also of communication and information), and also the creation of an important common language to share a method and style of governance.

The method

Another element that characterises strategic planning is the persistence of a method. Naturally, each case has its own specificity, but is nevertheless a process that envisages a breakdown into consequential phases that are all very important because each one is a condition for the success of the next.

The construction of the plan

The paths towards the construction of the plan, or better still the planning of these paths, is a very delicate phase since the building and evolution of these approaches is based on the specificity of the territory and its economic, political and cultural context.

In general, however, the numerous experiences developed have brought to the fore a breakdown into four significant phases within which the specific demands can be interpreted: diagnosis, planning, implementation and evaluation.

Diagnosis

This is a very important phase because it influences all the other phases of planning; it is here that the conditions for the success of the other phases are created.

The purpose is to identify “where the city is going”, that is to define the vision that illustrates the desired model of city and around which it is then possible to build consensus and define the real commitments of each institution in relation to the future of the city. At this stage the situation of the city at the outset is appraised, what its current situation is, what are the strong and the weak points, which trends can point up the vision of the city’s future and how it should be pursued. In other words, which elements are to be enhanced, which problems need to be addressed and resolved and which strategies and concrete actions are to be implemented to achieve this.

Also dealt with in this phase are questions related to even external trends, regarding the future of the labour market, economic development, and “governance” at local level (hence the competitive dynamics of the territory), which could in some manner influence the positioning of the city. Consequently, starting from the analysis of the principal vocations of the city and the general context of the territory, the pre-existing trends and the innovations to be introduced, a number of strategic issues are then identified, that is a number of decisive ideas for the development of the city, within a medium-long term timeframe (normally 10-15 years) and in a dimension of at least vast area.

Planning

This is the phase of construction of the projects, of concrete actions to achieve the objectives and the vision; each project has to find its placement within the strategic issues and must be integrated with the other projects so as to maintain the overall coherence of the strategic decisions.

This is a phase of open listening to the city; everyone is called on to participate (naturally, collective interests) and everyone who wants to is allowed to take part, bringing into play resources, special targets, interests, sector planning and design skills.

The documents are read and discussed, and there is debate and exchange on the know-how of the municipal administration and the other stakeholders in the city, the agendas drafted by each, the reform of the municipal administrative machinery, the policies already in existence and those scheduled.

This also materialises as an *in itinere* evaluation of the state of the art of all the projects and initiatives in existence and scheduled, and of the new proposals, tabling an *in itinere* appraisal of the efficacy and efficiency, the deviation from targets and the vision, the coherence between them, the degree of satisfaction on the part of the stakeholders involved in the plan, and the economic, technical and procedural feasibility.

In this phase strategic communication is particularly important to render the project visible to the largest possible number of people and to build a consensus as broad as possible on the design of the plan, both internally and externally, exploiting all the marketing strategies. Tools of strategic communication include, for example, “forums” and “meetings” which serve to enlarge involvement, as well as conferences, presentations of the projects newsletters etc.

Implementation

This is the phase that supports the implementation of the projects, launching the procedures and the tools to put the decisions taken into practice, feasibility studies, fund-raising, etc...

This is a very open and very flexible phase, which naturally has to progressively adapt to the changes in progress in the territory – from the changes in the political executives of local government through to planning and the new economic climate scenarios – and also to the positive evolutions generated by exceptional events that open up new opportunities, from celebrations to major occasions such as sporting and exhibition events of large-scale attraction.

Evaluation

This phase is concerned with measuring the extent to which the strategic planning, its projects and the dialogue set up – both inter-institutional and inter-organisational – affect the overall performance of the city, the institutional efficiency of the city, the creation of infrastructures for mobility and social cohesion, the creation of innovative new enterprises, the attraction of investments, the growth of the knowledge economy, the quality of urban life, the environment etc.

It is very difficult to trace this type of outcome to a single decisional moment, as it is difficult to assess the “crossover” and more long-term effects: the implementation of projects that would have been funded in any case (as in the case of the operations for the Olympics in Barcelona or Turin, or other urban initiatives such as Fairs, universities, transport networks etc.), how these intersect with the contents of the plan and how they relate to other projects, and finally how they might conflict with decisions implemented by the strategic plan.

Assessment of the strategic plans

In proposing an initial assessment of the results attained to date by strategic planning – in general, but in particular in Italy – several elements come to light:

- the fact that it has paved the way to a new style of governance and a different mode of governing that pivots on dialogue and exchange: the way of interacting with the stakeholders has changed, there is an increasing awareness of the need for continual exchange on strategic decisions and on a number of spheres of intervention simultaneously, and also on the issue of participation (the cities are experimenting models of participation starting from grassroots, and are constantly reviewing the potential enhancement of the participatory procedures);
- the fact that it has launched “monitoring of urban policy”. Policy appraisal is becoming standard practice, that is the evaluation of the coherence of the choices and priorities of government in relation to the vision identified, and the strategic planning enables the cities to review their situation at regular intervals (every 3-4 years), offering an extremely useful occasion for assessing outcomes and scenarios and repositioning themselves in terms of the transformations made or under way;
- the fact that it has enabled a number of major operations that would not have been possible without it (for example major infrastructural works such as the financial centre of Verona, the waterfront of La Spezia, operations of major technological innovation such as Torino Wireless in Turin, and even governance proposals such as the metropolitan union in Florence);
- the fact that it has underscored the need to create territorial connections in terms of the institutions and programming; these are now issues central to the debate on

urban and metropolitan governance, and we are asking ourselves what is the role of the strategic plan in the construction of governance, to what extent it should be recognised and whether this can trigger bonus tools for the cities (in terms of attribution of additional resources, functions and powers) upon which to set up consultation between the cities, the regions and the government.

Certainly, there are also several questions that are still open; the two principal issues relate respectively to the sphere of politics and the sphere of management.

On the one hand, an inadequate recognition of the strategic plans at local and central level in relation to the effective and potential role that they have, or the lack or inadequacy of legitimisation and authority, especially in certain moments of the political life of the cities.

On the other, the still insufficient capacity of the local bodies to orchestrate the decisional processes, the programming and implementation of the initiatives; where the local administrations have equipped themselves to manage the process of strategic planning through an ad hoc change in organisation and management (as, first and foremost in the case of La Spezia, but also in Bolzano) the strategic plan had plainer sailing. In general, however, this deficiency becomes a critical node, especially in the passage from the planning phase to that of the actual implementation of the plan.

Map of the strategic plans

The pioneer cases

Strategic planning first saw the light in the mid-1960s in the United States, conceived as a tool of corporate planning designed to enhance business efficiency. It consisted of actions aimed at defining the long-term objectives (in terms of products/markets/technologies) and control and optimisation of the processes to attain the scheduled goals.

In the early 80s strategic planning began to be applied to local government institutions to respond to the difficulties and limitations in the implementation of town planning entrusted solely to technical and bureaucratic functions.

The first case of the drafting of a strategic plan at the level of local government is that of the general Plan of San Francisco (1980), in the wake of which many other North American cities launched strategic planning initiatives. In these cases, the plan was used substantially to address complex problems that demanded long-term solutions, the confluence of different competencies and the involvement of the various stakeholders in the territory, while also establishing very specific objectives to respond to emerging problems. For example, in the case of the Los Angeles plan for the control of air quality (1989), the objective set was to eliminate atmospheric pollution by 2010, while at the same time the need emerged to co-ordinate the functions of mobility, energy and health policy.

At the end of the 80s the strategic plans spread through Europe: the Randstat in Holland (1988), Paris (1990) and then Lyon (1988), which together with that of Barcelona (1990) are among the most successful, still considered as excellent in terms of the innovative references they contain.

These first European plans differed from those of North America because they set all-round development objectives; they are plans that aim at spreading phenomena of internationalisation of the economy and of competition among the European cities, promoting major projects of modernisation of the territory and the construction of polycentric cities on metropolitan scale. They are plans that have served to accompany the construction of the metropolitan city (the RMB and the Grand Lyon immediately spring to mind), and are now fully-fledged plans of metropolitan status that guide and direct policies of this level on territorial scale.

On the strength of these pioneer cases, in the 90s similar experiences began to spread in random fashion through Spain, Portugal, France, Holland, Germany and Great Britain, and finally also in Italy (the first case being that of Turin in 2000). These plans did not, however, make any significant innovations on the previous plans, except for the widespread adherence to principles of sustainable development in the awareness that environmental problems cannot be separated from the issues of economic development, and at a later stage in the adherence to the principles of social cohesion.

A case that differs from the above is that of London (2004), since it is the only case in which strategic planning is prescribed by law (the Greater London Authority Act, which is also the law that ratifies the metropolitan government). In effect, London now represents the most extensive operational experience of metropolitan government: the Greater London Authority, a government body elected by universal suffrage (May 2000) with extremely vast areas of competence (transport, economic development, police and fire brigade etc.) comprising among its functions the drafting of a Spatial Development Strategy. In substance this is a strategic plan for Greater London that integrates the orientations of the policies for transport, land use, the environment and economic development, with the task of directing the planning of the individual boroughs and controlling that they are consistent with the more general strategies of vast area.

Moreover, in the construction of the plan significant weight is attributed to interaction, participation and exchange among the territorial stakeholders.

The Italian cases

In Italy strategic planning is by now a very widespread practice in continuous and rapid expansion. We have only to think that the first city to provide itself with a strategic plan was Turin in 2000, and that since then over forty cities have adopted or are launching strategic planning itineraries.

These are big cities (Turin, Naples, Palermo), small cities and even tiny cities (even aggregations of municipalities such as North Milan, or the association of municipalities in the area of Copparo), but above all they are the medium-sized cities (Florence, Trento, Verona, Venice, Catania, Terni, La Spezia, Ferrara, etc.).

Cities of the Centre-North and cities of Southern Italy, but with a distinction: the strategic planning was launched in the Centre-North (apart from a few exceptions such as Catania and Caserta), and it is only in recent years that the practice has spread to the south of the country, partly stimulated by a central government policy favouring its implementation. This temporal difference now introduces a further distinction in terms of the typology of the strategic plan, which can be broken down into plans of first, second and third generation.

The first generation comprises the historic plans of the late 80s and all those of the 90s, from the outstanding case of Barcelona to the plans of Birmingham, Stockholm and Munich, and even that of Turin, albeit more recent. These are all plans that have served to reposition the cities within the Country System and within Europe. In these plans the emphasis is placed substantially on the competitive dimension of the territory, so that they can be qualified first and foremost as tools of territorial marketing.

The second generation consists of the plans from the late 90s up to the present, including almost all of those of the Italian cities; the plans are used by the local governments to build an integrated programming of the vision and strategies of development that is shared by the territory; hence the emphasis is placed on the construction of consensus and co-operation around the desired concept of city.

Finally, the third generation comprises certain plans that at present in Italy are placing the issue and implementation of the territorial connection at the centre of their mission, not only in terms of actors and policies, but also in terms of institutions and planning. In order to do this, they are attempting to redefine themselves as tools for the elaboration of "strategic instrumentation", that is they are assuming a central role in the construction of the tools, methods and procedures aimed at: effective urban integration both horizontal (central municipality and municipalities of the metropolitan or bordering area) and vertical (municipality/province/region); efficacious co-ordination of the planning (town planning, plans for the sectors of trade, tourism, mobility etc., mandate programme, agenda 21, area contracts, programme agreements etc.). They are also focused on the construction of ad hoc structures and functions to manage the strategic plans (plan offices, departments, competencies etc.), and evolving tools for adapting the municipal organisation to the new requirements of planning and implementation of the policies, aiming above all at building transversal operational channels within the public body, at both political and technical level.

Moving in this direction is, first and foremost, the case of Florence, which has focused the review of the first strategic plan and the drafting of the second on the proposal of a form of institutional aggregation that is adequate to represent the metropolitan area. Then there is the case of La Spezia, which has passed from a first strategic plan for the city to a two-parent second plan fully promoted by both the City Council and the Provincial Authority with the support of a regional law. Finally Trento too has provided itself with a regulatory

restriction in the form of a regional law that schedules the strategic plan among the tools of territorial planning.

Hence if we wish to classify strategic planning in Italy in line with the typologies sketched out above, we could say that the Central and Northern cities are substantially comprised within the class of second-generation plans, while those of Southern Italy have substantially modelled their strategic planning on first generation plans, while nevertheless attempting to position the Plan as a tool of governance.

Instead, as regards the reasons for which the cities approach strategic planning, these can be primarily related to factors of a political-institutional, economic and social nature followed by the specific motivations of the strategic plans.

The first of the latter is the crisis of historic identity and the need to reinvent a vocation. In this light we can observe the case of Turin, morphed from the city of the FIAT to a city of culture; that of La Spezia, transformed from a port and seaboard city to a centre of logistics and Terni, from a city of labour (steelworking) to a city of naturalist and environmental tourism.

The second is a major change of scenario and the need to manage it by maintaining and enhancing the traditional vocation by taking the strong points and striving to innovate and modernise them (a crisis that is impacting all the art cities, Florence, Venice, Rome).

Finally, the third motivation is economic globalisation and the need to address international competition, which calls on the cities to be competitive (in the sphere of tourism, we can consider the entry into the market of cities such as Barcelona and Bilbao, and in Italy Turin and Genoa). The need to position themselves in special brackets of the tourist, cultural and leisure market can be detected in the case of many medium-sized cities, such as Trento, Bolzano and even Ferrara, cities that are historically rich and with a high quality of life.

The spread throughout the country of strategic plans as a model of inclusive and participatory governance oriented towards integrating socio-economic initiatives, clearly illustrates the fact that in Italy now there is an approach to territorial government that marks a turning-away from the traditional models. It is a need that is clearly felt and has been taken over by the local governments, an evident sign of the attempt on the part of the local bodies to find better potential paths along which to evolve the new role they are called upon to fill, especially as regards the landscape: from mere suppliers, producers and managers of services to protagonists in the programming and the implementation of public policies.

Florence

The document “Firenze 2010 – Strategic Plan for the Florence metropolitan area” brings together the results of the completion of the first Strategic Plan, the “planning” which had the aim of translating the strategic objectives into project ideas.

The Plan identifies four strategic axes, eight objectives, 32 project ideas and 55 concrete actions for the city which, duly integrated and co-ordinated, promote a vision of development of the city up to 2010 as a centre of postgraduate training and cultural and scientific production that can combine innovation with social and environmental quality. It is an organic project, a co-ordinated design for development that starts from an identification of the priorities and needs of Florence and its metropolitan area, and goes on to define a complex of operations and actions conceived to respond tangibly to the problems experienced by Florence.

Subsequently “Towards the second strategic plan” documents instead the itinerary for review of the Strategic Plan for the Florence metropolitan area. In recent years this itinerary has engaged the Firenze Futura association, the entities belonging to the same and the national experts on a number of fronts: project monitoring, evaluation of the

planning process and urban governance, updating of the metropolitan dimension and its development strategies, reflection on the role of the Strategic Plan as a tool of governance. In over ten Round Tables and various occasions of public debate, the eleven municipalities and the economic and social categories of the Florentine urban area and over one hundred sector workers and highly-qualified experts compared notes on projects and strategies for the future. The document provides a general overview of the Florentine urban area: the changes that have taken place in recent years in the social and demographic geography of the territory, the physical transformations and the new functions of the area: the shift from an area concentrated on the capital city to an area made up of numerous nodes – with specific and increasingly more decisive functions – within a single network. Advanced here is the proposal of the Union of the eleven municipalities of the Florentine urban area to aggregate the territorial functions. This is an initial operational step for addressing the linking of the territory, which means networking stakeholders and policies, institutions and territorial programmes. There is also a meditation on the identity, vocation and the elements that support the growth of the area, upon which the policies for contributing to the modernisation of the entire territory are to be focused so as to enhance the excellence: cultural production and postgraduate training, quality manufacture and tourism. Also addressed are central and transversal issues, such as the environment and social cohesion, moving towards a significant enhancement of urban quality in support of development.

It is a document of strategic planning that is aimed first and foremost at maintaining a high level of discussion on the issues relevant to the city so as to guide and accompany the territorial managers in performing the complex task of selecting priorities, identifying strategies and defining and stimulating the actions necessary to foster development.

Verona

Towards a Europeanist dimension

Over the course of the centuries Verona has built its fortunes on a strategic geographical positioning and a growth conducted in synergy with the cities of Trento, Mantua, Vicenza and Brescia.

The resulting economic and social development brought prosperity and progress to the city and all the people of Verona. This is a heritage that needs to be preserved and enhanced through the construction of a shared project of participatory democracy which ought to converge the energies and resources of all the stakeholders present in the Verona metropolitan area, thus achieving the objective of a growth advantageous for the economy, the culture, the territory and the environment: in a word, the whole of society.

This is the basic philosophy underlying the Strategic Plan of the city, a tool aimed at mapping out the Verona of 2020, projecting the entire city towards a more Europeanist dimension.

Governing the city together; “working together as a system” is a much-repeated slogan which everyone agrees on, at least in theory. The Strategic Plan constitutes the instrument for beginning to make this concept tangible, supplying tools and opportunities for co-operation between all stakeholders to construct the city of the future.

In proposing the Strategic Plan the idea is to offer the city a medium-long term horizon in which to fuse all the energies of the city upon clear and shared targets, addressing right from the start a number of problems and priority projects.

Participation is not solely a condition for the success of numerous projects for the city: it is a way of bringing policy closer to the citizens and of creating a climate of social cohesion that can at the same time improve the quality of life, boost trust and become itself a factor in development.

Turin

The Strategic Plan for the promotion of Turin was launched at the beginning of the nineties, during a period of profound economic, urban, cultural and social transformation. In response to the general objective of strengthening Turin's European image, the Plan was broken down into 6 strategic lines, with 20 goals and 84 actions.

On May 9, 2000 the Associazione Torino Internazionale (Turin International Association) was set up to co-ordinate, monitor, update and communicate the development of the Plan. Chaired by the Mayor of the City and the President of the Provincial Authority, it is divided into task forces which operate on the various lines.

The aims of the Association are to contribute to defining future scenarios of the Metropolitan Area, to actively participate in the change, updating the projects and ideas as they spring up and develop, to share opinions and points of view, to converge all the energies into one direction, to advertise its role as a motor for development, to give impetus to its own priorities in a collaborative and constructive manner, and to meet with the other participants on common ground.

These are the reasons that have convinced the 122 members, institutions, public and private organisations, trade unions and industries, to join this association and to foster the works in an ongoing manner. Three years on from its foundation, Torino Internazionale completed its report on the first Strategic Plan, leading to revision of the same by the year 2005.

La Spezia

Towards a new city

La Spezia needed to define a new mission in its competition with other cities. Particularly hard hit by de-industrialisation, it had been going through a profound transformation with significant effects on the economic and social framework.

Nevertheless it possessed great potential that was still unexpressed: its strategic position on the crossroads between Europe and the Mediterranean, its industrial traditions, natural environment, existing skills and expertise, and its strong network of solidarity.

Between 1999 and 2001, under the direction of the City Council, the city worked at the Strategic Plan in order to redefine the national and international role of the city.

A medium-long term vision emerged, based on goals shared by the institutions, the economic and social stakeholders and the citizens. The pivots of the new development model were identified: the economy of diversification, the valorisation of old and new vocational skills, the growth and strengthening of social cohesion, quality of life and the environment.

During these years several projects essential to this vision were set in action: the rehabilitation of the old city centre with new museums and cultural centres; the founding of the University; new municipal welfare services; a new urban plan; a new project for the coastline designed to allow tourism, the commercial port, and shipbuilding and nautical activities to flourish side by side. All this, plus the creation of operational tools engaging all the public and private entities.

The new city has already come into being. La Spezia has grown up. One thing worth mentioning: the unemployment rate has dropped to a threshold of 5.3% in just a few years. In 1997 it was 11.3%. This city will keep on growing.

Works for the Strategic Plan were resumed in 2003 within a vast area framework thanks to the Provincial Authority's active role in unfolding the potentialities of the territory.

The aim at present is to enrich the contents and projects of the Strategic Plan. The new town planning scheme and the availability of new areas opens up novel development

possibilities, while the growth of a stable network of relations between the city and a stronger system of infrastructures will make it possible to exploit all the opportunities offered by La Spezia's strategic position within the Euro-Mediterranean context. Tourism, culture, environment, welfare, education, labour, and a participatory government are some of the other fields in which the city is also being put to the test.

Two crucial points in which La Spezia is investing much of its hope are: the sea as a major economic, social, cultural and territorial resource – rehabilitation of the waterfront for urban use, the development of new production activities, the rationalisation and modernisation of the port activities, the integration of seaside, naturalistic and cultural tourism, and the future of the defence sector in the area of La Spezia. The city is an active agent in the reorganisation processes in this sector, defending and relaunching the existing situation and defining projects for the reutilisation of of no longer strategic areas for prestigious development initiatives.

The City Council and the Provincial Authority have asked the economic, social and participating authorities, as well as all citizens, for their contribution of ideas and proposals in order to define new shared projects for relaunching La Spezia and its territory.

Venice

Towards a near and foreseeable future

The strategic plan of Venice aims, in the near and foreseeable future, to promote a city that is characterised by both a guaranteed high quality of life for its inhabitants in its relational, working and cultural aspects, and a high quality in its physical and environmental structure.

The prevalently economic strategies identified in the plan are aimed at the creation of the conditions necessary to make the city a place where it is possible to produce and reproduce material and cultural resources, thus inverting a long cycle marked by the consumption of those accumulated over the years.

In this manner, Venice will become an attractive living space for a population that is characterised by mobility and social complexity and, by presenting itself as a city that is able to offer the international community considerable contributions, in particular politically and culturally, will have great possibilities of success on the scene of global competition.

Plurality, solidarity and sustainability are simultaneously the conditions for assessing the development policies and individual strategic lines that demand a detailed system of action for their implementation.

This tool is the result of team work within the City Council administration, which worked together not only with other city council structures and plan promoters – the Venice universities, industrial associations, the Chamber of Commerce and trade union organisations - but also with a vast number of public and private stakeholders. Due to its very nature, this is a document that must always be considered “open” and will be elaborated via consultation and debate that will be extended as broadly as possible to encompass all the components of the city.

The European cases

The strategic plan is now present all over Europe as an innovative and efficacious tool aimed at defining a vision of urban development and co-ordinating strategies, actions and initiatives shared by public and private bodies for the creation of the desired future.

Starting from the pioneering cases of Lyon (1988) and Barcelona (1990) the '90s witnessed the emergence of numerous other experiences of strategic planning, such as

those of Madrid, Valencia and Bilbao in Spain, Porto and Lisbon in Portugal, Marseilles in France, the Hague, Utrecht and the Randstad in Holland, Bremen, Frankfurt and Munich in Germany, Birmingham, Glasgow and Edinburgh in the United Kingdom, Stockholm in Sweden and the recent cases of the countries of Eastern Europe, Prague and Budapest. Despite the different conditions, needs and demands that the strategic plans are called upon to answer, and despite the different situations and contexts in which they operate, all over Europe and in Italy the strategic plans represent valid tools and models for the selection of choices and priorities of government, via continual consultation and exchange between stakeholders, interests, policies and objectives on metropolitan scale, for the mobilisation of potential economic investors, and for enhancing the vocations of the cities. But first and foremost they are a tool for enhancing the quality of life and for stimulating the cultural growth of the citizens.

Illustrated below are some of the cases mentioned above that are indicative of the profound processes of urban requalification, transformation and modernisation of the territory. Some of these plans have already been completed, others are in the process of realisation and others again have only just been launched.

The Hague

International city of Peace and Justice, and Dutch national city of Governance and Democracy.

The Hague is the seat of the national government and of a number of high-level global organisations. The Hague contains the largest civil service apparatus and the greatest number of national and international organisations of any city in the Netherlands. Well known are the International Criminal Court, the Hague Tribunal, Europol and Eurojust.

In addition to being the seat of the national government and of the Queen as Head of State, a large number of high-level global organisations, embassies and international headquarters (Shell, Siemens, Dutch Telephone) are based in the Hague.

A quarter of the labour force are civil servants and almost half are employed in the service sector, working from offices covering a total of some three million square metres.

The Hague's economic policy is geared towards providing an expanding network of high-quality business locations and an adequate logistics and digital infrastructure aimed in particular at administration and international organisations, commercial services worldwide, and communications and e-business.

A number of mutually reinforcing master plans describe the way in which the city administrators, in collaboration with central government, the business community and private individuals, plan to invest in the Hague and its inhabitants in the years ahead.

The city's competitive position needs to be strengthened and measures need to be taken to improve job opportunities and training for the city's inhabitants as described in the strategic master plan "the Strength of the Hague". This master plan gives directions for new developments for a new and modern city centre and a special area for the international institutions and related activities. In addition, there is a growing understanding to enhance the city network relations within the Randstad (Amsterdam, the Hague, Rotterdam and Utrecht) region.

This Master plan is focused on Economy, Tourism, Business and Housing. There is also a city-wide master plan for "social integration and people at work".

The Hague is also part of the Dutch Delta Metropolis, comprising the G4 cities Amsterdam, The Hague, Rotterdam and Utrecht. This wider Randstad network region is the fourth region for economic performance in the European Union and the fifth largest region in Europe based on the number of residents (approx. 7 million people).

Barcelona

A Metropolitan Strategic Plan

“Let’s all think together a common future”. The metropolitan area of Barcelona consists of what is known as the “real city”, an urban expanse concentrating almost 50% of the population of Catalonia.

The economic and social trends influencing global society at present have an equal effect on the 36 municipalities that make up this “real city”, working together because the future must be shared. The metropolitan strategic plan is an instrument for debate and consensus, capable of ensuring maximum cohesion between institutions and acquiring maximum potential to address the social and technological changes taking place in the metropolitan area.

The metropolitan strategic plan of Barcelona works towards: promoting the social and economic transformation of the metropolitan area of Barcelona; integrating the entire metropolitan area into the same project for the future; creating the best conditions within the new European framework.

Commitment to the future of the metropolitan area of Barcelona: the aim is to make the metropolitan area of Barcelona a European benchmark in terms of quality of life, where economic stimulation and the promotion of new technologies are combined with sustainable land use and improvements in human and cultural resources and social cohesion.

The five areas we are concerned with are: human capital; economic stimulation; metropolitan model, transport and housing; civic coexistence; leadership and globalisation.

Edinburgh

Brevity, clarity, precision and a vision for a sustainable development

The four Councils covering Edinburgh and the Lothians (East Lothian, the City of Edinburgh, Midlothian and West Lothian) are preparing a new Structure Plan for the period up to 2015.

Since the last structure plan was prepared in 1994 there have been major economic and social changes in Edinburgh and the Lothians. The main change has been the exceptionally high level of economic growth the area has experienced over the first five years from 2000. This has had the effect of increasing demand for housing and other forms of development. The challenge for this plan is to accommodate any new development in an environmentally acceptable and sustainable way.

The structure plan is the strategic plan for the development of land in Edinburgh and the Lothians. It provides key planning policy guidance on housing, economic development, transport, retail and the environment.

The structure plan sets the policy framework for local plans which contain more detailed and site-specific land use planning policies. Each of the Councils produces one or more local plans for its own area. Together the structure plan and the local plan form “the development plan” which is the main basis for making planning decisions.

A draft plan was published for public consultation, and was distributed to a wide range of public and private sector organisations.

This triggered a major consultation exercise on the draft plan, encouraging as many people as possible to make comments. These will then be used to shape the final document. This was the citizens’ opportunity to get involved in the future development of the Edinburgh and Lothians area.

The next stage was to carefully consider comments received from this consultation exercise and make any changes where necessary.

Then a finalised version of the plan was prepared which was submitted to the Scottish Government Ministers for approval.

The plan will be placed 'on deposit' and advertised to allow further opportunities for comment. When approved, it will replace the current Lothian Structure Plan 1994.

Prague

From Strategic Vision to Reality

Prague – the capital of the Czech Republic – has entered the third millennium with its first Strategic Plan. The Plan is based on the city's strengths, in particular its unique character, spiritual, intellectual and cultural tradition, extraordinary natural and urban qualities, as well as its economic and human potential, advantageous position in the very heart of Europe, good reputation and attractiveness both for tourists and investors. The Strategic Plan lays down Prague's intentions for the next 15 – 20 years, and formulates development priorities for the period 2000 to 2006. It is being progressively accomplished, and its implementation is evaluated on an annual basis in the form of monitoring reports.

Prague has paid much attention not only to the quality of life of the city's inhabitants and their living environment, but also to issues reducing its attractiveness for business and tourism. Prague's transport services have been improving, too – the capacity of the Prague International Airport at Ruzyně has been increased, new underground lines and tram tracks are being built, and efforts are being made to increase the speed of railway connections. Prague develops its telecommunications infrastructure and fosters the development of the information society, seeks to enhance the quality of the workforce through lifelong learning, and to ensure better use of the city's scientific and research potential.

When the Czech Republic becomes part of the European Union, in connection with the implementation of some of the objectives of the Strategic Plan Prague will be able to exploit the financial assistance of the EU Structural Funds. The support will be utilised under the Single Programming Documents for Objective 2 and Objective 3 of the City of Prague NUTS 2 level region, accepted by the European Commission. The two programming documents respect the principles of sustainable development.

The SPD for Objective 2 is aimed at support for the economic and social conversion of a selected part of Prague facing structural difficulty. Under the programme, in the 2004 – 2006 period Prague will be able to draw assistance from the EU Structural Funds for a value of 71.3 million Euro, which, given the mandatory co-financing from national resources, represents a total investment of 142.6 million Euro.

The SPD for Objective 3 is focused in particular on the development of an effective labour market based on a skilled workforce, competitiveness of employers, exploitation of R&D potential, integration of threatened groups of the population, and equal opportunities for women and men. Assistance from the EU Structural Funds may amount in the period 2004 – 2006 to 58.8 million Euro, while the overall value of projects can reach 117.6 million.

Prague on the market of European metropolises: the City of Prague is classified as one of the attractive European metropolises, based on an evaluation by Cushman & Wakefield Healey & Baker. Since the early 1990s, this reputable firm has evaluated, on an annual basis, the quality of the business environment in thirty of the most important European cities. By the year 2003, Prague had progressed upwards in the attractiveness for business rating by seven places, leaving a number of important Central European cities lagging behind it.

Stockholm

Building the City inwards

The City is growing. In 2003 the population of the city amounted to 900,000 inhabitants, and that of the Region 2,4 million. The Stockholm City Plan 1999 is the Comprehensive Plan for the City of Stockholm adopted by the City Council in October 1999.

The plan prepares for growth and change while highlighting the qualities of the existing city. Planning challenges to prepare for growth implies: solving the main traffic issues; extending the inner-city area; creating housing in the city centre; promoting outer-city areas; establishing a multi-core Region.

The Comprehensive Plan for the City of Stockholm is the planning strategy to promote sustainable development. It implies: reutilising previously developed land; respecting and enhancing the character of the city, the built-up environments and the green areas; transforming old semi-central industrial sites into mixed and varied urban environments; establishing attractive focal points in the outer city; concentrating new development in areas with good access to public transport; meeting local demands.

Stockholm in 2030: the comprehensive planning for the City continues, focusing on visualising Stockholm in the year 2030. Traffic infrastructures will be created in relation to the growth and the development areas, and the City Plan 1999 will be tested from a sustainable perspective, comprising all three aspects: environmental, social, economic.

Valencia

A city on the sea, one of the principal Mediterranean ports, and a logistic centre of southern Europe.

Thanks to the Strategic Plan, Valencia is experiencing a broad urban, economic and social regeneration that will transform it into one of the leading cities of the New Millennium. Added to its commercial, tourist and entrepreneurial appeal, Valencia is also a very “liveable” city, a modern capital with a high level of environmental quality, coupled with a good quality of life, and excellent facilities and infrastructures.

The city has undergone a steady modernisation over recent years. Its streets have been enhanced with fountains and gardens, and all its quarters have been equipped with cultural and sports infrastructures for educational and recreational purposes. The green areas have practically doubled and today, of the largest Spanish cities, Valencia is that with the highest percentage of green areas per inhabitant.

An important redevelopment project has been implemented in the old city centre, with the requalification of residential buildings, streets, squares, façades of historic buildings, and the restoration of numerous monuments (including the Serranos and Quart Towers).

As a result, Valencia is now undergoing a large-scale urban and residential boom. The requalification of its quarters is about to be completed and homes are being constructed within the framework of the Integrated Implementation Plans (PAIs), plans integrated with the higher-level urban planning schemes which govern the sustainable and well-balanced development of the city.

Valencia also has a surprisingly dynamic nature which has given rise to exciting urban, architectural and cultural projects, making it a leading city in the new century – projects that are unique in Europe and the world, such as those of the City of Arts and Science, Central Park, Cabecera Park and Balcony over the Sea.

Faced with all these opportunities, the mission of the City Council is to promote the development of the city, by coordinating and integrating the various social interests so that all Valencia’s citizens will be able to enjoy a city in constant growth.

Lyon

The designed planning tool is part of a town planning document, but the method pursued in its drafting and the goals and the outcomes achieved are more pertinent to a model of strategic planning than one of traditional territorial planning. Lyon 2010 is an agglomeration project for a European metropolis which already contains the preliminary studies for the review of the urban development master plan (SDAU). The final objective is of a global character, with a view to creating a city of European dimensions that is in a position to compete with other European non-capital cities for the localisation of high-level industrial and service activities.

To this end the document identifies five priority areas of action: boosting the engine of economic development; extending and enhancing the system of urban transport; fostering residential attractiveness; creating functions that contribute to enhance the city's image abroad; and finally promoting an active policy in the environmental sphere.

The most innovative element of the document is the shift from planning of a restrictive kind to that of a voluntaristic kind, in terms of prospects and scenarios, which urges the local actors to orchestrate behaviour and choices that are consistent with the prefigured scenario. This is a type of planning oriented towards identifying processes, mapping out scenarios and selecting areas of economic influence.

The second relevant point is the formation of a strong public-private partnership and liaison between the different levels of the public and institutional bodies. Already in the phase of elaboration and evaluation of the decisions there is major focus on the involvement of the various stakeholders by means of conferences, working groups and an intensive series of consultation and promotional initiatives.

Another qualifying element is the emphasis on an image policy, embodied in a series of "representations" and "projections" of the city: the advanced city, the innovative city, the liveable city, equipped with tangible and intangible resources, specially conceived to enhance its international attraction and position it in the ranking of the so-called "international cities".

Finally, the figure of the mayor (Raymond Barre) has become a central benchmark for the political co-ordination of the local stakeholders, while the organisational management of co-ordination is entrusted to a technocratic structure made up of local administrations and agencies equipped with top-level technical and managerial resources.

Project factsheets

Strategic planning makes a significant contribution, in particular to the government of the territory, and in many cases various successful actions could not have been implemented outside this type of shared project approach. Illustrated below are a number of recent Italian cases that are intimately bound up with this practice, which in their specificity can be considered as positive models in the construction of the strategic development of a territory.

Florence Knowledge: the network of knowledge and know-how

The Firenze Sapere project has been spawned by an acute observation of the world of culture, the institutions that characterise it and the craft and craftsmen that compose it.

This is a context in which skills and knowledge coexist and intersect, perpetuating a tradition of excellence that derives from Humanistic culture, making no distinction between types of knowledge, no fracture between speculation and tangible production, where wisdom is at once erudition and technical ability, Knowledge and Know-How: the two areas of investigation and action scheduled by the project from the start.

Both these ambits are marked by a long tradition that draws its cues and creative verve from the ancient expertise of the guilds and has managed to perpetuate itself, grow and adapt to new objectives and new standards. Thus the city has been furnished with a fabric of cultural institutions of the highest level and a very large number of small and medium-sized craft enterprises, on average of outstanding quality, with a level of competitiveness calibrated on global scale.

More specifically, we can safely say that the sectors of knowledge and know-how in their most varied contextual interpretations (universities, professional training, craft expertise, enterprises and workshops etc.) represent an enormously manifold underworld. This is a connective tissue that reflects the salient features of the city but that does not appear to have yet been given the necessary prominence, lacking on the one hand an effective co-ordination of the actions undertaken and on the other specific policies of enhancement.

Considering the state of the art, it is precisely the need to re-programme the new socio-economic development of Florence (innovation, quality, competitiveness on the world markets), to restore impetus to the local economies and to supply valid alternatives to the concentrations engendered by tourist phenomena, that has triggered the idea of an action aimed at valorising the training-production axis and the spillover effects generated by the same.

The first action is therefore aimed at creating a “network” between all these realities within the Florence area, conceived as a system with a natural projection towards the international ambit. A network that is both tool and target, with precise aims:

- the creation of a structured system of connection between the entities that fosters exchange of information and appropriate forms of shared production;
- the enhancement and strengthening of relations between training and private entrepreneurship;
- the formation of a cultural ambit capable of stimulating creativity;
- the creation of specific informative tools regarding the local territorial system via a dedicated website: www.firenzesapere.it;
- the organisation of special occasions of encounter;
- the stimulation of activities that embody an optimal combination of creativity and innovation, through the establishment of a special prize.

The basic need continues to be that of organising Firenze Sapere to exploit maximum flexibility in relation to its openness towards the territory and the sectors of knowledge and know-how, with modes of access differentiated to meet the demands of the individual stakeholders involved.

Underscoring the symmetrical character of the world of education and that of production as a generator of resources (human firstly and technological in the second place), we can summarily classify the types of entities scheduled in the project in two blocks:

Florence – The education system

- Universities and Academies – national and foreign
- Cultural institutes
- Professional training centres/Institutes

Florence – The know-how system

- Craft activities
- Services connected with craft-type production
- Services aimed at facilitating the practices of workshop apprenticeship, fostering the preservation of the craft trades most threatened with extinction
- Sectors dedicated to fashion and clothing
- Services and production linked to the historic-artistic heritage and the sector of performance, art, architecture and design.

These are just examples of how the comparison between heterogeneous elements can generate major potential for exchange and development.

Florence, virtual “city of restoration”

This project can be placed in Axis A, Objective A.1 of the Strategic Plan and, more specifically, emerges as a development of the work performed by the "Città del Restauro" Strategic Plan Project Group co-ordinated by Dr. Cristina Acidini, Superintendent of the Polo Museale Fiorentino and the Opificio delle Pietre Dure of Florence, ad interim.

The Project Group, after having broken down the “City of Restoration” into virtual city and physical city, agreed that the term restoration is to be understood in the broadest possible sense, referring to “a vast and diversified set of theoretical disciplines and manual skills which share the general aim of knowledge and conservation of the cultural assets.” The virtual “City of Restoration” project is aimed at defining and enhancing, within a systematic cognitive framework, the reality of the Florentine metropolitan area in the sphere of restoration of moveable assets and the fixed decorative apparatus of architectural structures.

As its territorial benchmark, the Project Group defined the metropolitan area of Florence, enabling entities operating in the sphere of restoration of moveable assets and the fixed decorative apparatus of architectural structures with their registered offices in the municipalities of Florence, Bagno a Ripoli, Campi Bisenzio, Fiesole, Impruneta, Pontassieve, Scandicci, Sesto Fiorentino and Signa to participate in the initiative .

The agreed methodology for the implementation of the project can be divided into successive phases, with reference to the guidelines defined by the Project Group:

- research, acquisition and organisation of data for reference masters;
- definition of the observation questionnaires, aimed at characterising the entities active in the sphere of restoration of moveable assets and the fixed decorative apparatus of architectural structures in the sectors of Operation, Training and Research;
- forwarding and collection of questionnaires;
- organisation, analysis and selection; entering of acquired data;

- definition and development of the www.firenzerestauro.it website for the creation of the virtual “City of Restoration”;
- dissemination of the project results: organisation of Conference and presentation Show.

The objective of the project was the realisation in virtual form of a “City of Restoration” in the Florentine metropolitan area that is not merely a set of appropriately organised data that can be consulted at international level, but also a tool for communication and updating for all those working in the sector. The idea of taking the first step in "virtual" mode made it possible to appraise the consistency of the heritage of knowledge underlying the project and to highlight the widespread need to enhance the degree of interaction of the functions with a view to optimising results.

The results achieved represent an important springboard from which to take off with greater force and conviction to develop the “physical” City of Restoration, as it was initially conceived.

The principal objective achieved by the project was also that of responding to the widespread requirement to set up links, not only between the three mega-sectors of operation, training and research into which the world of restoration is divided, but also between the public and private entities operating in this field. This is the fundamental issue to be addressed in order to tangibly tackle the goal of “working as a system”.

A decisive aspect is to succeed in implementing the exchange of knowledge between the various sectors, facilitating communication between those doing research and those who are working, expanding as far as possible the number of persons that have access to the results of this research, while also fostering a fertile exchange between the institutions and the private bodies who contribute to create this dense network of highly specialised skills that very few other areas can boast.

Then, in no way secondary, is the aspect linked to the possibility of enhancing the promotion of these skills at international level, particularly at a time when many countries are beginning to address the problem of the conservation of their cultural heritage.

Finally, the virtual “City of Restoration” represents a perfect venue for the exchange of ideas and contributions of the broadest provenance for the conceptual and design development of a possible “City of Restoration” as a physical site.

La Spezia – The reorganisation of the coastline and the urban waterfront

From a planning angle this project represents the most important transformation in the city, which is changing and renewing itself. From the very first stages of the strategic plan in 1999, the debate was focused on the rationalisation of the waterfront areas so as to arrive at an optimisation of the functional layout of the commercial port that would allow the city to approach the sea again, hampered to date by what is seen as the overly-invasive presence of the commercial activities of the Port. The changed demands of the commercial port, shifted increasingly in the direction of a Port-Territory connotation, have enabled a re-appropriation of the city and of important sections of the coastline, as a unique opportunity for the creation of new spaces and public functions, and new installations compatible with and complementary to the existing fabrics. Also linked to the decision to reutilise the coastline are the decisions to consolidate and relaunch certain sectors of the local economy, such as pleasure sailing, tourism and the opening up of new seafront passages in the old city districts. The coexistence between sea and city thus becomes a core issue for the base Plan deriving from the desire to construct a new model of development of a multi-functional nature, geared to integrating the consolidated specialisation of the Port for commercial traffic with the sector of cruises, pleasure sailing, shipbuilding and services. Following definition of the framework and the new development

scenarios of the territorial layout, in the second phase of the actions of the Strategic Plan the project materialised in a global meditation on the reorganisation of the waterfront. On the basis of the functions and indications of the city, an international competition was announced to garner ideas for the creation of the waterfront, with 16 projects being selected out of the 64 applications. In December 2006, the examining committee made a shortlist of 5 that were duly admitted to the second stage of the competition.

In addition to the public sector bodies (City Council, Provincial Authority) and the Harbour Authority, all the other potential stakeholders were also involved, including trade associations, urban transformation companies, individual citizens and the committees of the city districts.

Also directly engaged in the project were the big private investors responsible for important initiatives along the coastline (Molo Mirabello and Cantieri Ferretti).

The Liguria Regional Authority made 1 million Euro available to launch at least the planning phase of the coastline initiatives. Agreements and memoranda of understanding were drawn up with the entities directly involved in the project (harbour authorities and local bodies), and updated over time. The City Council and the Harbour Authorities made 600,000 Euro available for the competition.

The overall duration of this initiative is of at least 6/7 years.

It is, however, considered to be a fundamental enterprise for the city, which will have a significant impact on both the urban layout and the image of the city. The scope of the initiative and the complexity of the elements in play have called for the direct and ongoing involvement of the city, materialised in the phase of design and definition of the guidelines and contents of the competition notice. It was within the Strategic Plan that the major conflict and opposition existing between the city and the sea, the harbour and the city districts was addressed and a solution sought.

Moreover it was also as a result of the Strategic Plan that it was possible to bring together ideas, innovation, resources and design solutions as indispensable components in the mutual effort to build a new city. The published competition notice once again summoned the city to debate and decide upon the winning project.

In the works for the implementation of the Plan, launched in October 2006, the Strategic Plan still has a fundamental contribution to make to the identification of the best design solution.

Torino Wireless

The Fondazione Torino Wireless Foundation is at present the co-ordinating structure for the Piedmont district devoted to Information and Communication Technology (ICT). In the early years of activity, 182 firms used the assistance, technological, managerial and financial services activated by the Foundation, in collaboration with the public and private partners, to enhance their growth and assist in the consolidation of their market positions.

Torino Wireless worked on the development of enterprises with elevated potential, moving in a number of directions: direct collaboration with start-ups and SMEs, the launch of major projects for already established companies, the collection and management of public and private financial resources for the acceleration of business, support for R&D and for the creation of new patents. Within the framework of the SMEs, at the end of 2006 the Torino Wireless experts carried out an appraisal of 332 small enterprises, and agreed a line of collaboration with 182 firms (for a total of 514 actions), representing 3,198 employees and an overall turnover of 391 million Euro. Within the ambit of activities of consultancy and technological transfer the activities yielded: 12 prototypes and demonstrators, 15 innovative products ready to market, 5 advanced or concluded commercial negotiations and 6 patents, in addition to which various channels for collaboration between SMEs and big businesses were opened up.

Clustering processes were also launched (that is the aggregation of firms operating in the same chain and collaboration for the development of activities and products) in the sector of info-mobility (32 companies operating in the Cluster on Intelligent Transport Systems) as well as thematic calls for proposals to foster collaboration between SMEs and big business.

Recent actions have included the launch and consolidation of the Galileo chain in Piedmont, starting from professional research training through to the acquisition of the assignment for the supply of Precision Time. We can also mention the action of awareness-raising among the SMEs via the call for proposals, issued by the Foundation itself, for the development of applications and services linked to the Galileo system.

Using the regional SPD funds, funding was allocated for the development of three projects: one product for home help for the elderly, a multi-frequency receiver of the Galileo signal, and services that utilise the Galileo system for access control, emergency management and time certification in financial transactions.

Thanks to the first tranche of funding from the Ministry of Education (MIUR), three projects were launched in the area of info-mobility involving a total of 8 SMEs and 7 big businesses synergetically engaged in the projects. Torino Wireless consolidated its consultancy and management role even in the complex sector of intellectual property and patents.

The Torino Wireless project evolved from a consultation committee organised within the framework of work on the first Strategic Plan for Turin. To illustrate the situation of the metropolitan area and map out the stages to be followed for the creation of an efficient system of services and links that could benefit the enterprises and attract new investments, initially a seminar on hi-tech districts and two workshops with firms operating in the ICT and high-tech sector were organised. The potential of the area was then assessed, along with the readiness of the territory to launch a demanding programme of development in the sector of new ICT technologies focused on the Wireless sector. After this, on 11 December 2001, an agreement was signed that ratified the shared commitment to build a technological district oriented towards Wireless in Turin. In May 2003 the activities of the District were officially launched, with the signature of the Negotiated Planning Agreement that ratified in a binding manner the commitment of the partners to the definition of shared actions and programmes, while also granting the Fondazione Torino Wireless the necessary autonomy to perform the function of co-ordination of the activities.

Torino Atrium

In recent years the City of Turin has developed a programme of national and international communications and promotion that accompanies the preparation of the Olympics event, with a view to boosting knowledge of Turin and enhancing the image of the city. More specifically, the Central Communication System for the Olympics and Promotion of the City presided over information aimed at the citizens and the institutional communication towards the exterior. Numerous activities were carried out in this ambit, including: co-ordination of the city stakeholders significant in terms of the international communication of the city; a project of "corporate image" makeover for the city; a boosting of the Press Office in the direction of foreign media; advertising campaigns to enhance the image of Turin at home and abroad; a renewal of even the pictorial material used to present the city; an international newsletter; and a programme of public relations aimed at tour guides.

These activities reached their peak in the preparation in Autumn 2003 of the two pavilions of Atrium Torino, a site for communication and information on the programmes of transformation of the city connected with the Olympic event, but also for access to the cultural offer of the city aimed at both tourists and visitors. The role and the utilisation of the two Atrium structures went beyond expectations, proving to be a flexible structure

capable of responding to numerous communication needs and of intercepting a genuine demand for information.

The creation, design and initial layout of Atrium cost around 5.6 million Euro. The sponsorships garnered in the years 2003, 2004, 2005 and 2006 came to a total of 7,685,291 Euro. From 2004 up to the present the total number of visitors is approximately 1,400,000. Over 800 events and 200 Press conferences have been organised at Atrium.

The Atrium Torino project was originally launched by the Turin City Council, but it rapidly won the support of the Provincial Authority and the TOROC, the organising committee for the Turin Winter Olympics, both very interested in this project of communication and promotion. The Turin Provincial Authority sustained the initial project and the various events, both through financial contributions and through the organisation of a space for the Provincial “shopping basket”, designed to promote the food and wine specialities of the territory. The TOROC contributes to the Olympic contents of pavilion 2006 and subsidises the management of the same.

Over time Atrium has increasingly assumed the role of institutional medium, with the adherence of the Piedmont Regional Authority too, as well as other private partners.

The first Strategic Plan of Turin, signed in 2000, scheduled among its actions a civic coordination to enhance the external communication of the city. The Association set up to monitor and promote the Strategic Plan also naturally implicated the idea of communicating the transformations of Turin to the citizens, both at the level of identity and vocation, and at the level of transformation of space which largely derived from these. Torino Internazionale hence worked in close liaison with the City of Turin on these issues, contributing to make it even more incisive. The Fondazione Atrium, set up to manage the activities that for over two years were held daily in the pavilions, was co-funded by the Turin City Council and Torino Internazionale. This made it possible to have a management tool not encumbered by the rigidity of the public sector, while being closely controlled by it. Furthermore, it also enabled Atrium to draw upon the Association’s legacy of contacts and its experience in the sphere of involving both professionals and citizens on issues relating to the future of the city. It also permitted greater flexibility in the search for sponsorships and partnerships with private entities for the individual initiatives.

Verona – Financial Centre

The priority objective of the project is that of creating a space to be a focus of financial activities – decisions, development and mapping out of strategies, qualified employment, attraction of talents and capital – with a view to boosting the importance of the main financial institutions of the city. Verona is in fact thome to the headquarters of the Fondazione Cariverona, which is the leading shareholder of Unicredit, Unicredit Banca d’Impresa, the Banco Popolare di Verona e Novara and the Gruppo Cattolica Assicurazioni. Although they have their administrative offices in Verona, these institutions have concentrated a significant part of their qualified financial activities in Milan (research, corporate finance and asset management), which could thus be relocated to Verona. Moreover, the Financial Centre also aims to become a magnet for the installation of other economic and credit institutions.

Within the programme of urban and social redevelopment for the area of south Verona, the project for the Financial Centre is aimed at retrieving a part of the abandoned industrial premises of the former fruit and vegetable market to destine them to new financial services and activities, with a view to making Verona into an economically dynamic city with new opportunities for employment and training. The project for the Financial Centre, which was generated by the efforts of public and private bodies, will also be accompanied by the construction of the nearby Cultural centre, in the area of the former Magazzini Generali, aimed at promoting new spaces for culture and social aggregation.

In August 2005 the Verona City Council sold the area of the former fruit and vegetable market, where the Financial Centre was to be created, to the Fondazione Cariverona. In November 2005 the stakeholders, that is the Banco Popolare di Verona e Novara, the Fondazione Cariverona and the Società Cattolica di Assicurazione set up the Polo Finanziario S.p.A., which was to deal with the development of the Financial Centre: the first signs of the redevelopment of the area consisted of the demolition of the two large “sails” of the prefabricated structures located in proximity with Viale del Lavoro in October 2005 and September 2006.

At the end of 2006, the Polo Finanziario S.p.a. presented to the Verona City Council the Single Co-ordination Project (PUC) for the area where the centre is to be constructed. The PUC comprises the preliminary plan for the entire operation and the definitive design of the planning works (public car parks, connections with the public services etc.). The PUC was approved in two successive meetings of the Services Conference, a structure that brings together the representatives of all the municipal departments and the bodies interested in the project, ready to receive the final approval from the Regional Government and then proceed to the architectural design.

From a technical point of view, creating a Financial Centre implicates carrying out a series of activities to create the new services aimed to meet the financial demands of the businesses and the territory. It is an ambitious project, but not unrealistic, because the very entities involved provide the guarantee of its implementation.

There can be no doubt that the Strategic Plan played a fundamental role in the mobilisation of such important economic entities as Unicredit, Banco Popolare and Cattolica. From the very first meetings in the consultation phase, there was a clear demonstration of interest in pursuing the project for the Financial Centre, to the extent that one of the priorities that emerged from the Economy Committee was precisely that of “developing the knowledge economy and services with high added value”, to be achieved through the installation of excellent and innovative enterprises with a high knowledge content, and the promotion of innovation and research. A further stimulus for dialogue on the expediency of setting up the Financial Centre was undoubtedly provided by the working group on territorial marketing which was held in 2005.

Moreover, on the website devoted to the Strategic Plan major communication activities were devoted to the phases in the development of the Centre. In addition to updated news bulletins, a special blog was launched in 2005 which gathered the questions and the comments of the citizens regarding the future role of the Financial Centre in Verona, providing information and clarifying the phases of development.

Catania, city of hospitality

The guidelines that the city council intends to pursue with a view to promoting tourism are inspired by the principles of sustainable development and the compatible valorisation of the local resources. Consequently, primary focus is given to the resolution of some of the principal problems of the sector, such as the “deseasonalisation” of tourist flows and their diversification with a view to creating a pool of small and medium-sized enterprises and workers that are less influenced by seasonality and by economic crises. The implementation of these principles calls for ongoing collaboration with other institutions (other Municipalities, the Provincial Authority, the Fine Arts Commission, the Curia etc.), with sector professionals and those engaged in complementary activities, as well as with the workers’ representatives. This collaboration is based on the need to link the development of tourism with a variety of spheres of priority action: the retrieval and exploitation of the historic, monumental, artistic and cultural assets; the promotion of performance and conference events; the valorisation of agri-foodstuffs and craft; the

creation in the ambit of the metropolitan city and the territory of naturalistic and food & wine itineraries. In short, connected with the stimulation of a tourist district that embraces the entire Etna region, its natural and cultural assets and specialities, and that has excellence as its operational philosophy

The main projects destined to contribute to the new Catania tourism scenarios affect territorial ambits that are more or less defined, with their specific resources, but have been conceived in the perspective of the development of the entire metropolitan city. Among the principal ambits of reference, the coastal region occupies the most important place. This can be divided into the actual waterfront of Catania – that is to say the intensively built-up districts overlooking the sea – and the stretch to the south of the city that extends from the Plaja to the border with the province of Syracuse.

Similarly important are the projects involving the urban landscape, a “social product” that has come to be differentiated from the rural landscape following the transformations of the community, stratified over time, with their roots going back to the period of Spanish domination and the post-unification period, later followed by the building explosion in the wake of the Second World war.

The promotion of the environmental and cultural resources of Catania, with a view to boosting tourism, develops at two different levels. On the one hand the rediscovery of a collective local identity, not belonging solely to bodies or entities with particular interests, with a view to creating the necessary climate of trust to enable the new endogenous entrepreneurial initiatives to catch on, and to attract exogenous projects. On the other hand, to promote a new image of Catania: dynamic, operational, efficient and clean. An operation of territorial marketing, launched by the institutions in parallel with the definition of a stronger urban identity and the establishment of a relationship of greater collaboration with the local community, focusing attention on mutual interests.

The focusing of collective interests on a renewed urban identity, with input from the environmental and cultural policies implemented by the local government, has undoubtedly contributed to enhancing the tourist appeal of the city, bringing its cultural and recreational resources also to the attention of a vast national and international public.

The programme of urban requalification and sustainable development (PRUSST "The economies of tourism"), which involves 52 municipalities in the Province of Catania, also comprises other important projects affecting the tourism sector of the city. This programme, once again generated by consultation between the institutions and the social and business stakeholders, schedules private initiatives not only in the sectors of tourism and leisure, but also aimed at urban regeneration, which has by now become the means and the end of the tourist development of Catania. In this context, there also emerge numerous interconnections with the Integrated Territorial Project (PIT "Catania metropolitan city").