

# The case of Naples, Italy

by Matteo Scaramella

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## I. INTRODUCTION: THE CITY

### A. URBAN CONTEXT

The huge physical and demographic expansion of the major Italian cities started to slow down in the early '70s. Comparison of the 1971 and 1981 Census data show, at first in the North and later in the South, a “deglomerative” process, characterized by a drop in the number of residents in major cities and the growth of outlying districts.

Residents in the top 12 Italian cities (see **Table 1**), which made up 18.1% of the Italian population in 1981, dropped to 15.6% just 15 years later. This counter-urbanization process also affected immigration: of the 860,000 immigrants between 1981 and 1996 just 23% settled in the major cities.

As elsewhere in Europe, most of the Italian traditional “100 cities” can no longer be distinguished from the settlement basin in which they lie and which host all different kinds of activity, even those historically located in cities and still considered “central activities”, even if their centrality is functional and not spatial. ISTAT, based on the most recent census, aggregated the 8104 municipalities into 784 urban systems of this sort.

The Italian birth rate has dropped significantly: from a high fertility country, Italy has become the country with the lowest birth rate in Europe. Since 1993, growth has been negative, compensated by a positive migratory balance which has guaranteed a tiny overall population increase. Demographic predictions are of a stable population of about 58 million until 2020, with a rapidly aging population: the proportion of those over 65 to those under

14, already 1.09 in 1995, will reach 1.79 in 2020. Because of the differing demographic trends<sup>1</sup>, the three major geographic areas in Italy will remain more or less stable in terms of total population, but will show very different profiles in terms of age distribution: the Southern population will age more slowly, so that the aging index will reach 1.2 in 2020, compared to 2.4 in the Centre and 1.9 in the North. The dependency index should therefore be much lower in the South, where the working-age population will still account for 65% of the total.

Naples numbers third in Italy by population, with 9102 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup>. It has one of the densest population in Europe, despite the trends towards an emptying out of the central areas as residents move to outlying towns: the Neapolitan hinterland grew by 20% between '61 and '81 and by 11% in the following decade, while the population in the central districts fell by 12% in the '80s and by a further 6% between 1991 and 1999. Although only a quarter of the population lives in the centre, about half work there, in addition to the roughly 180,000 city users who commute from outlying towns.

Between 1981 and 1996 the birth rate was much higher in Naples than in Northern Italy cities and led to a positive growth rate, even if it fell from 6.2% to 3.1% between 1981 and 1996; net migration was negative, - 6.4% over the same period. In addition to the counter-urbanization underway, Naples is the least attractive of the major cities and, at least until 1988-89, was still feeling the negative effects of the terrible earthquake of the

23rd of November 1980. This earthquake killed 53 people and injured hundreds, and destroyed much housing stock. After 1988, population movement is no longer towards the nearby periphery but towards other towns in the province. The population in the area which the Campania Region calls the "Neapolitan Conurbation" grew by 24% over the 15 year period above, compared to 15% in other towns in the province. The higher birth rates seen in some Northern and Eastern peripheric quarters, Pianura and Soccavo, and some central quarters (Montecalvario, Stella, Mercato, Pendino), where the birth rate is double the city average, seem to be due to a higher fertility rate rather than to the demographic structure of the population.

Throughout the '70s, Naples was able to keep a strong industrial presence, thanks to the presence of numerous heavy industries, most of them public (Italsider, Aeritalia, Alfaromeo-Alfasud, etc.) and a large number of SME's from many sectors. Naples has been rapidly deindustrializing over the past 15 years, and the growth in the service sector has not been sufficient to compensate for job losses. SME's have also not developed much further, probably because of the lack of adequate infrastructure or services, the presence of an increasingly bold and aggressive organized crime - a problem which grew enormously following the public works contracts awarded after the earthquake - and because of competition of the informal sector.

Key to understanding the deindustrialization process is the fact that "the Neapolitan industrial system was particularly affected by European Union to reduce iron and steel production in Europe and its policies protecting fair competition and thus limiting State aid to industries"<sup>2</sup>.

Already the number of businesses fell by 11%

between 1971 and 1981, although employment rose by 14.7%. The next decade saw Naples lose 36% of its manufacturing industries and 27% of its industrial employment. The only growth sector was construction which, thanks to public works programmes, showed a 30% increase in registered employees; unregistered employees counted for many more. The service sector offered more jobs throughout the '70s and '80s and stabilized in the '90s, but the growth is "is concentrated in less advanced services, i.e. retail commerce and traditional professional occupations, and in the public administration, providing evidence of the difficulties that the city has experienced in making the transition toward a service economy".<sup>3</sup> One cannot but notice how unemployment rose sharply between 1993 and 1995, when the State decided to end its policy of special intervention, closing the legendary Cassa per il Mezzogiorno, once again demonstrating how the Southern economy developed overdependent on public funds.

Work opportunities are available above all in the informal sector, if not unregistered or even illegal, yet the breadth of the informal sector shouldn't be taken as proof that unemployment is overestimated: "informal work in Naples is not of the same kind as that found in the Northeast of Italy. It is unskilled, precarious and poorly paid. Informal manufacturing activities have transformed themselves from traditional crafts - what used to be an urban subsistence economy - to a sweatshop system of production, which is not direct towards medium-to-high or innovative sectors of the market, but to residual ones, such as the market for unauthorised imitations (knock-offs) or second quality goods. In this context, work in the informal economy does not provide a substitute for a formal job."<sup>4</sup>

**Table 1: Socio urbanistic indicators for Italian cities with more than 250,000 inhabitants (1991)**

	Residents	Density (inhab/km2)	Inhabitant/dwelling	m2 per inhabitant	Average family size	Dependency Index	School attendance rate*	Activity rate	Unemployment rate
Rome	2,775,250	1,825	2.7	32.3	2.7	36.6	97.6	43.7	8.9
Milan	1,369,231	7,541	2.4	34.0	2.3	38.2	98.6	44.7	9.5
Naples	1,067,365	9,102	3.4	24.0	3.4	41.8	95.9	39.3	42.7
Turin	962,507	7,394	2.4	32.0	2.3	37.6	98.4	44.7	14.1
Palermo	698,556	4,397	3.2	29.3	3.2	44.7	97.3	37.6	34.8
Genoa	678,771	2,823	2.5	32.6	2.4	44.0	98.	39.9	14.6
Bologna	404,378	2,873	2.4	35.0	2.3	44.9	99.5	45.4	6.5
Florence	403,291	3,938	2.5	35.1	2.4	45.0	98.3	45.5	10.1
Bari	342,309	2,946	3.2	27.8	3.1	38.9	97.9	39.	25.1
Catania	333,075	1,841	3.1	28.7	3.0	46.4	95.5	37.3	33.5
Venice	309,422	676	2.7	32.9	2.6	38.6	98.9	41.842.6	12.1
Verona	255,824	1,285	2.6	35.6	2.5	40.6	99.0	42.6	7.9

Source: Istat, Grandi Comuni, 1994. Our elaboration.

\* Compulsory schooling (age 6 - 13)

Living conditions are poor. The data from **Table 1** clearly show how Naples has the most inhabitants per dwelling, the least living space per inhabitant, and the largest number of family members. The unemployment rate is very high and is more than 10% higher than Catania, the second worst city in terms of unemployment. Unemployment is the highest in Italy: for those between 14 and 29 it reaches 57.3% for males and 78% for females, with an overall female unemployment rate of 50%. Informal work, widely performed despite the poor and unreliable income it provides, cannot reduce this rate by much. It's no surprise, then, that 1 in 4 Neapolitan families was living in poverty in 1996, compared to 1 in 8 nationally.

In the three decades leading up to 1993 Naples had 26 different City Councils. It has since reached a more stable government pattern: the same mayor governed from 1993 to 2000 and his successor, the first woman mayor, is from the same coalition. For the first time, many cases of unauthorized construction have been demolished, the city approved new zoning ordinances, trying to reverse a history of a city which was permissive, if not collusive, with construction that violated zoning rules.

During the post-earthquake construction boom, which involved Euro24 billion spent in the metropolitan area in the late '80s and early '90s, meant that the city was essentially governed by national politicians from different parties who shared a common Neapolitan origin. The Regional government is also very important,

kinds of subdivision, but most socio-urbanistic research is done on the basis of the districts, or on areas which do not fit into either classification (e.g., the Spanish Quarters and Sanità). This paper provides data on districts, since these better correspond to the slums identified. It should be noted that the Naples municipal registers differ sharply from the census findings; until 1981 these differences were not noteworthy, but in 1991 reached a difference of 138,647 residents who were not counted in the census. A chronological series of data should therefore be considered with some caution.

## II. SLUMS AND POVERTY

### B EXISTING TYPES OF SLUMS

Research on Naples has, until now, been characterised by limited communication between scholars of social issues and scholars of urbanistic aspects; only recently have the two strands started to make contact, thanks to a group of inspired and advanced researchers.

A recent analysis of Naples<sup>5</sup> that takes into account both the urbanistic dimension and the socio-economic condition of the residents has classified the decaying residential areas into *historic residential periphery*, *recent public city*, *unauthorised city*, *new periphery* and *decaying central pockets*.



since it now controls many areas which were once decided nationally, especially urban planning, transportation, health, and industrial policy. The City of Naples and the Region of Campania are currently governed by the centre-left; the fragile and heterogeneous coalition, however, does not promise much in the way of clear development policy.

Naples is divided into 21 districts (*circoscrizioni*) and into 30 quarters. The Census contains data on both

#### 1. Historic residential periphery

This area comprises quarters which developed in the early 1900's near the industrial areas which have now closed, in the East (Barra, S. Giovanni a Teduccio) and West (Bagnoli). Originally rural areas bordering on the industrial plants going up in those years, they hosted important public housing projects for the workers and managers of the nascent industry. Later, other private

and public housing projects were constructed, such as those which followed the 1980 earthquake.

Even though the older public housing is in very poor condition, Bagnoli is considered a desirable area because it is close to the sea and to a very good beach, and for its excellent transport links to the centre; since the Italsider steel plant, which once employed 12,000 people, has been dismantled, the quarter has been opened to new residential and tourism development. It is currently losing its traditional residents, retired workers whose offspring cannot find work locally, and is awaiting the start of a long-debated and slow to appear urban renewal programme. Its future, however, is one of growth, and property prices have been rising for some time.

Although the Eastern quarters can also be considered semi-central, they are nonetheless perceived and lived as if they were peripheral. Here, too, the older buildings are in poor condition, while the recent construction is of low quality. The development of Barra and S. Giovanni a Teduccio took place following the creation of industry in the area in 1906; this industrial zone, too close to the centre, is also now being dismantled, but some of the smaller businesses remain, amid many abandoned lots that have yet to be reused. These two quarters have public services of a level expected in the city, thanks to the post-earthquake public works projects.

Demographically, these areas differ little from the trend of the entire city, which sees the population aging and moving outwards.

ects aimed at transforming them from dormitory quarters into normal city neighbourhoods.

These quarters share a bad reputation, both among their residents and all Neapolitans. Socially, the decision to concentrate large numbers of residents with problems in a single area, depriving them of the social capital they possessed in their original neighbourhoods, turned out to be a serious problem. The "Sails", huge twenty-storey housing blocks, turned out to be uninhabitable and two have already been demolished; the shared spaces have turned out to be abandoned.

The two quarters, and especially Scampia, are poorly linked to the rest of the city, so that the main problem in finding work, above all for the women, is the distance from the centre, where part-time domestic work is sought. Organised crime, the Camorra, is deeply rooted in both quarters and opposes any kind of socio-economic development, since this would cause it to lose its grip on the population. The areas are nonetheless growing: Scampia grew from 38000 to 44000 inhabitants between '81 and '91, and Ponticelli from 45,000 to 51,700 in the same period.

### 3. The Unauthorised City

The best known case of wildcat construction is Pianura, a neighbourhood which sprung up in the '70s and '80s, when 5-7 storey buildings were built without authorisation from the city, in an area that the zoning plan had classified as agricultural. They can be called illegal homes only in the technical sense, since they had



## 2. Recent Public City

This is made up of two zones planned as part of a programme of public housing: Ponticelli in the East and Scampia in the North. Entirely made up of public housing, they developed along different lines despite both having been planned in the '60s and finished after the earthquake, with additional residential and service buildings, and both are currently subject to renewal proj-

no building permits and violated the zoning plan; the land was legally bought by private developers that respected building standards, and were placed on the market at prices only slightly (15-20%) below the cost of legal units. With the connivance of the authorities they were linked to the public water and electric system, and later to the sewer system. Growth at Pianura is still strong – from 38,500 residents in '81 it rose to 54,000 in '91, with young families, productive (although unde-

clared) businesses, and higher homeownership rates than the city average.

Illegal but not informal construction, which characterises all of the Pianura neighbourhood, is widespread outside the centre of Naples<sup>6</sup>, even if it is usually limited to the expansion or construction of single-family homes. There are quite a few areas in the city which appeared “spontaneously”, some of them representing large settlements, others single episodes, not always and not only on the edge of the city. An interesting example is Camaldoli, a once-wooded hill, where rapid development was fuelled by a transit road meant for a large park but which actually catalysed illegal construction.

The unauthorised city is marked on the one hand by a scarcity or lack of services, and on the other hand by a rich urban landscape which is “both very traditional and almost experimental (... where) bits of countryside, attempts at suburban sprawl and other successful or fashionable recent residential patterns from different epochs overlap and stand next to each other (...) and different building types, from the tall building to the suburban villa, are mixed.”<sup>7</sup>

#### 4. New periphery

The most recent metropolitan periphery developed in the dynamic areas in the Northwest part of the city, and along the Domitian way, which follows the coastline. These low-density areas, far outside the city centre, are criss-crossed by highways and covered by unauthorised housing. The first settlement of this type – developed around the so-called “American Road” in the ‘80s and followed by many other roadways – was sparked by the placement of a NATO and US Armed Forces base between Bagnoli and Pozzuoli. This first population, settled into gated residential enclaves, was followed by the creation of second homes and later primary residences for those seeking a less urban lifestyle.

Housing generally comprises small or even tiny single family homes with low-density land use. The population is mixed and includes farmers and ex-farm-

ers, US or NATO servicemen, the *petit bourgeois* in the towns and an upper middle class with American-style gated communities.

#### 5. Decaying central pockets

Some of the quarters in the historic centre provide excellent examples of the highly contradictory dimensions of Naples. On the one hand there is a very high level of decay in terms of housing and social indicators, while at the same time there is a solid urban fabric rich in artistic monuments. They lie at the crossroads of the movement patterns in the city, are well linked (both on foot and using public transportation), have a reasonable level of social aggregation and are rich in commercial and small scale artisan businesses, even if these often lie at or over the line between the declared and the submerged, the legal and the illegal.

These quarters are in crisis because of the ageing of the population and the high risk for exclusion due to poor performance along certain parameters, including educational level, truancy rates, job qualifications, safe housing and home ownership.

The inner peripheric pockets can be divided into the *historic centre quarters in serious decline*, such as Sanità and Mercato Pendino, and those which are recovering, such as the Spanish Quarters, which, during Bassolino’s first term as mayor (1993-1997), were subject to many renewal programmes, of which the EC financed Urban programme is one of the most important. The Mercato Pendino neighbourhood, on the other hand, is the central zone where conditions most continue to worsen. The Spanish Quarters, created during the 1500’s to house the Spanish troops, are currently a solidly structured quarter from an urbanistic point of view, although they lack basic facilities, and the buildings are in advanced states of decay, worsened further by the 1980 earthquake. In this area, just as in other parts of the city, a slow and gradual exodus has been taking place, accompanied by an ageing of the population, which contributed to the emargination of the zone.



The most vulnerable segments of the population (the very young and the elderly) now meet in a zone where the socio-economic fabric is deeply damaged, with a high density of inhabitants, underuse of the housing stock (high rates of vacancy), crumbling apartments and buildings. These quarters are further marked by low rates of home ownership, high truancy rates, low educational and professional qualifications, high unemployment and a high dependency ratio, undeclared and illegal work, and petty crime and juvenile delinquency. The high "risk of exclusion" is added to a certain presence of commercial and artisan activity which are often undeclared and discontinuous. On the other hand, the Sanità area - affected by the Urban programme together with the Spanish Quarters - which lies in the Stella-S. Carlo Arena district, is physically more marginal, and the society is more closed than in the Spanish Quarters. Built during the 1600's in the Vergini nucleus, it has always been on the edge of the historic centre, a collocation aggravated by the construction of the route to the Capodimonte palace, which passes over the neighbourhood on a bridge. For this zone as well, the main socio-economic variables, similar to those of the Spanish Quarters, indicate impoverishment and increasing marginalisation.

Both areas are characterized by physical and social decay and poor reputation, yet are quite different morphologically, for the role they have in the popular imagination and in their chances for development; the two have particularly low educational achievement levels, very high unemployment, low labour market activity with evident cases of discouragement of job-seekers; indicators of housing quality and environmental quality provide further evidence of the state of decay which dominates in these areas.

### **C. OFFICIAL DEFINITIONS OF SLUMS**

As in most European cities, the term "slum" can be used in Naples to describe a habitat where housing maintenance is poor, where secondary city services (health, education, social and cultural facilities) are lacking, where incomes are low and social indicators are clearly below the city average. Except for the six gypsy camps on the edge of the city, there are no cases of informal housing built with precarious materials, nor are there areas in which the number of homes without publicly provided services is significant.

Some factors, especially illegal building, which are elsewhere associated with slums, are actually associated with middle class neighbourhoods in Naples. Another typical characteristic of the Neapolitan case is the mix of social classes and incomes in those quarters which developed before the second world war.



Historic quarters of Naples

Historically, stratification was horizontal, with the nobility or wealthy at the first floor – the noble floor – and less wealthy tenants at the second and third floor, artisans, workers and servants on the upper floors, in the attics and on the ground floor, which opened onto the courtyard and the street. The latter is typical of the central quarters of Naples: the “basso” is a ground floor dwelling with a door onto the street which serves as the only source of air and light. Usually there is just one room, often divided to create a kitchen and bathroom, and sometimes a mezzanine creates a second room. Terribly unhealthy, the “bassi” have been defined as “spaces not to be used as dwellings” since the Master Plans of the early 1900’s; nonetheless, there are still many of them in the central area. It was precisely this social mix that led the English ambassador in the mid-1800’s to call Naples “the only Arab city without a European quarter.”

Early industrialisation and the consequent rise of zoning in modern urban planning led to a functional separation of the urban areas, including residential areas. Later, with the reconstruction that followed the war, with public building programmes, with the special fund for reconstruction after the 1980 earthquake, units in the new projects were assigned according to the neediness of the applicants, creating quarters largely inhabited by low-income people and those who were least integrated into society. The Rione Traiano zone is one of the clearest examples from the ‘60s; it has been followed by the glaring case of Scampia, where some buildings have already been demolished less than 20 years after they were built. In both quarters organised crime almost completely controls the neighbourhood, not because the poor are prone to crime, but because the lack of social cohesion makes it difficult to combat the infiltration of illegal activity (mostly drug and arms trafficking).

No official definition of slum can be found, nor of specific decaying areas, even if the debate over this question has been raging for the past century in Naples. In 1865, also following the Haussman’s experience in Paris, a Renewal operation (“*Risanamento*”) was launched, opening up the central areas following a cholera epidemic, and “urban reclamation” later became a recurrent phrase in city urban planning, but it affected all of the city centre and all of the social classes who lived there.

## D. UNOFFICIAL DEFINITIONS OF SLUMS

The popular perception of a slum or marginal area is quite different, and always refers to a collective and spatial dimension: Neapolitans see as a slum any urban area from which “gentlemen”, or the middle class on up, have disappeared, where there are no collective spaces animated by trade and services. Housing quality does not seem to be important in this perception, while a certain consideration is given to the time and means needed to get to the centre. This perception coincides perfectly with that of the middle class, which however also defines a slum in terms of housing quality (light and air, size), giving this latter consideration more weight.

There is not data on the income of slum inhabitants, while there are fairly reliable figures for the social, employment and crime situation. The sectoral nature of policies supporting the vulnerable social segments, largely implemented by national structures through various ministries, does not allow for data to be compared even for the same zone. The increase in the number of interventions conducted by NGO’s has led to greater knowledge of the situation but there has been no centralisation that might help to share data. The outlook



A barren street in the district of Scampia

Table 2: Relative and absolute poverty thresholds (2000), Euro/month

Family size	Threshold of relative poverty	Threshold of absolute poverty
1	486.1	363.5
2 (standard measure)	810.2	544.9
3	1,077.6	980.1
4	1,320.6	774.0
5	1,539.4	1,235.3
6	1,724.2	1,423.8
7	1,944.5	1,606.7

Source: Istat, 2001



Buildings in Ponticelli

seem better for the future, even the immediate future, thanks to the Local Social Plans and to other measures required by the framework law for the creation of an integrated system of intervention and social services (Act 328/200).

The need to choose certain cases of slums meant cross analysing data on housing stock and on employment with socio-economic data with the perception of Neapolitans, including those who live in such areas. The zones identified are Stella-San Carlo Arena, Scampia, Ponticelli and Barra. The first lies in the historic centre of the city (category 5 from Chapter B), Scampia is a recently built public housing neighbourhood (category 2 in Chapter B) like Ponticelli, which is older, while Barra is part of the historic residential periphery (category 1 in Chapter B). Detailed figures for these quarters are provided in Chapter H.

## **E. OFFICIAL DEFINITIONS OF POVERTY**

Support actions for the vulnerable segments of the Italian population, at least from the public standpoint, are launched at a national, regional and municipal level, through action by the ASL (health district), which is part of the National Health Service. There are different definitions of poverty, not always in agreement, at each level.

They are generally based on at least two dimensions:

1. the basic criteria according to which certain people is entitled to receive certain benefits, such as access to public housing, income support, priority access to public services, total or partial exemption from health service copayments, etc.
2. basic indicators for determining the social composition in certain urban areas, in order to conduct social research or to create special services or measures, such as opening family assistance services, job orientation services, or drug addiction treatment facilities, etc.

As far as the first category is concerned, the National Commission on Social Exclusion of the Prime Minister's Office defines as poor those who consume less than half the average Italian consumption rate: the absolute poverty line is a monetary line based on an index of goods and services which are necessary for a family of a certain size to live at a "socially acceptable" level. Poor families are those whose monthly purchases are at or below the value of the index. By this definition, 2.6 million Italian families are poor, for a total of 7.5 million people, or 13% of the population. Along with the concept of absolute poverty there is also standard relative poverty: for a two-person family, poverty is when monthly expenses are less than half the average expenses per person. In 2000, the average monthly expenditure per capita was € 810.21. The coefficient varies according to family size.

There are substantial local differences, with most of the poor families (66%) and most of the poor individuals living in the South. Poverty affects mostly single elderly people in the North and mostly large families in the South. Unfortunately, the risk of sliding into poverty is growing even for the families of employed workers, since monthly income is not enough to meet family needs, and for the more recent family structures, especially single parent families, and even more so when the head of household is a woman.

A broader definition of the concept of poverty is that of the "vulnerable segments" which takes non-economic variables into account. The National Health Plan for 1998-2000 defines vulnerable persons to be those "who do not have sufficient social skills and who often bear complex needs which require the health system to understand their problems and to act accordingly to address them. They are those who, when needy, face especially difficult situations and are forced into forms of chronic dependence on assistance," which is in line with the indications and objectives of the WHO and of the European Union.



The Welfare Ministry's social policy department, in defining its national anti-poverty policy, set the threshold for minimum income below which access to services and assistance such as minimum pension, welfare payments, maternity payments, large family contributions, RMI (minimum wage insertion), partial or total exemption from health copayments. These thresholds are corrected through the use of scales of equivalency considering the characteristics of the family. Children, single parent families, and disabled family members are considered as aggravants (some benefits are available only to families with three or more children).

The Report to the Commission of Research on Social Exclusion at the Ministry of Welfare, conducted by the University of Padua, underlines how, in general, there is no coherent and systematic approach to poverty, both in definition and in policy, which often ends up benefiting part of the population which is not actually impoverished.

According to this study, the Italian welfare system is highly selective, weak and secondary compared to that offered by the family and by the market, and employ-

the pension payments made by the applicant. Yet poverty is closely tied to employment exclusion and discontinuity, so that many of those who have economic problems are automatically excluded from benefiting from contributions."<sup>8</sup>

At least until RMI was introduced at the national level (even if only in 39 cities), anti-poverty measures varied enormously in terms of how they identified beneficiaries, the duration of support and the means of intervention, which meant that Italy has not been able to comply with the 1992 European recommendation (1992) concerning the need to guarantee all citizens a minimum level of resources and benefits sufficient to live with respect for their human dignity.<sup>9</sup>

The new context provided by the framework law for the creation of an integrated system of intervention and social services (Act 328/200) affirms the concept of "vertical subsidiarity" attributing greater responsibility to cities, which can then better match data and sectoral indicators to the areas from which they are taken.



Internal courtyard and to the right, view of dwellings in the historical quarters of Naples;

ment is the dominant requisite in determining the right to social protection measures. The result is to favour the elderly and the employed, or the ex-employed, rather than young people, the unemployed and women. "The absence of an organic system of national policies covering the many risks and types of poverty creates forms of internal inequality within the welfare system (...); our welfare system is still confused between insurance and assistance: most of what is being offered depends on

From the analysis of the benefits provided in national legislation we can identify the categories of beneficiaries corresponding to the different conditions of need: the elderly, families, the disabled, and, only as a final category, economic vulnerability. Within these categories, anti-poverty policies include means to select those who meet the official definition – still differing – of the vulnerable or poor. For almost all assistance benefits, there is a base-line income above which no poverty risk is considered.

## F. UNOFFICIAL DEFINITIONS OF POVERTY

Sociological research on poverty, just like local needs analysis in order to plan anti-poverty policy, are based on a battery of indicators which can be called “classic”, in terms of their consideration of immaterial components such as social networks, both at the family and at the community level.

The Socio-economic category of indicators includes income, the number of dependent children, labour force participation rate, unemployment rate, especially youth and female unemployment, literacy and school achievement, secondary school enrolment, drop out rate, rate of “distance from employment excellence” or the percentage in low-qualification jobs, drug use, crime rates.

Immaterial components in Naples include the important indicator of informal work, which is hard to measure but of great importance in the local context. In addition, other factors such as the rootedness in a solid social



network, which is centred on the family – which is often extended in the South – but can also be in a broader community context, and access to public and NGO or religious institute assistance and benefits.

## G. SOCIO-URBANISTIC INDICATORS OF CITY SLUM

The population decline in Naples between 1981 and 1991 was particularly sharp, especially in the historic centre areas (especially Pendino, Porto and Vicaria), and with the exception of the Scampia, S. Pietro, Pianura, Chiaiano and Ponticelli neighborhoods. Within the former central areas, the decay of the ancient housing stock has allowed low-income classes to stay in private homes, while those with the means to leave preferred to go elsewhere. In the latter case, the smaller drop in population can be explained by the low income of the residents of these quarters; in fact, the exodus from the city mostly involved young middle class white collar families and stably employed blue collar families, and was most evident in middle-class, central and hill-top residential neighborhoods.

As an analysis by the City of Naples<sup>10</sup> shows, in February 2001 there were 1.072.890 registered inhabitants, which can be compared with census data from 1991, although with some caveats<sup>11</sup>, indicating a stable

population with a growth rate of just 0.52%. Looking at the figures by district, the trends of the previous decade appear to have been reversed: in Scampia the population dropped sharply (-11.7%), and to a lesser degree in Barra and San Carlo all’Arena (-4.3 and -4%). In the municipal areas of the Northern periphery, especially Chiaiano, Piscinola and Scampia (district 48), and in the Western area, the aging of the population is less evident. The population over 65 is 15.5% in Naples (less than the 18% Italian average, although it has risen from 12% in 1991) and is just 10.8% of the population in the Scampia district.

If Naples is among the Italian cities with the youngest populations, quarters with more elderly than average can be found in the North and East (including Scampia, Barra, S. Giovanni, and Ponticelli). Overall, slum areas have a higher birth rate than the city average (12%), including

the historic centre, where the percentage of minors is 15.2% (**Table 3**). The gender breakdown of the slums mirrors that of the city, where females slightly predominate at 52% of the population. Overall, 24% of city residents live in the slum quarters. Nonetheless, even if the indicators for housing, for socio-economic conditions and poverty allow Scampia, Stella – San Carlo all’Arena, the Spanish Quarters, Barra and Ponticelli to be defined as slums, in a city such as Naples the concept of ghetto (a completely decayed and impover-

ished neighborhood with homogeneous social makeup (in terms of income and profession) is not an appropriate one to describe the identified slum areas<sup>12</sup>.

Each of the areas named contains different situations, the relationship between exclusion and poverty and relative wealth varies from one quarter to the next: the Spanish Quarters, for example, are being renewed and there are residents who are decidedly not low-income. In Scampia, on the other hand, although there are middle class families present, a great majority of families are on or below the poverty line: a research on Scampia shows how among families with more than 4 members the poverty rate is over 90%. Poverty, often deep poverty, can even be found in areas which are not included among the slums listed, although such cases are not the majority.

Housing is comprised entirely of permanent buildings, even in the most decaying parts of the city, with the single exception of the gypsy encampment at Secondigliano, where trailers and other barracks are used.

Access to primary services in the dwelling unit is widely guaranteed across the city, and is in itself an indicator of the quality of life in different zones. Such services as sanitation and safe collection are present for almost all housing (Table 4). The city is entirely covered by paved roadways, although they are often narrow.

Similarly, in all slums listed, the percentage of homes with running potable water ranges between 96.6% in Ponticelli and 99.5% in Scampia (compared to a city average of 99%). For hot running water the figures are 92.9% and 97.2% for those quarters compared to a city average of 94.7%. Heating systems are less frequent in Naples (59.4% of dwellings), and slums show similar low rates, with the noteworthy exception of Scampia where 84.6% of homes are heated because they are of recent construction. The lowest rate of heated units is in Barra (Table 5).

What sets the slums apart from the city average is the housing density: the number of residents per dwelling is

higher than average in all slums: the Naples average is 3.4 residents per dwelling, while all slums except for Stella San Carlo Arena have higher rates, from 4.5 in Scampia to 3.7 in Barra. Furthermore, in the selected slums the number of square meters per resident is lower than the 24 m<sup>2</sup> city average, ranging from 19.1 m<sup>2</sup> in Barra to 23.1 in Stella San Carlo Arena. The year of construction reflects the specific history of each single slum: Scampia is an example of a building policy that developed between the Sixties and the Seventies, and the vast majority of the buildings (88,6%) were built after 1961: specifically, 14,7% between 1961 and 1971, over two thirds (73,9%) after 1972, and 55,1% of those in the decade 1972-'81; here, only 2,5% date to before World War II. Stella San Carlo Arena is the opposite: just under half of dwellings were built between 1945 and the '70s, and almost 47% before 1945, with just 4.2% built in the past 20 years (Table 6). It should be noted that pre-war buildings in this neighbourhood date mostly from the 17th, 18th, and some 19th Century, with a few buildings from the early 1900's. This is even more true for the Spanish Quarters – for which no census data is available since it is not an administrative unit (quarter or district) – which were entirely built before the 1900's. Since then, the only construction has been repair or the addition of network services.

Although there are no recent data on ownership or rental, it should be noted that in 1991 Naples had more renters than home-owners (almost 60% of Neapolitans did not own the home in which they lived, while in other Italian metropolises this figure is no higher than 42%). This figure is even more dramatic in the slums: only 32.4% of residents own their own homes in Scampia, 37% in Barra and Ponticelli. Stella San Carlo Arena is closer to the national average at 45% (tab. 7).

The map of rental property largely coincides with the quarters in which public housing is dominant, in the North and East, and with the most decaying quarters in the centre. Scampia is a prime example of this, since it

**Table 3: Socio-economic indicators in selected slums (2001)**

	District			Naples
	Scampia, Chiaiano, Piscinola (48)	Stell, S. Carlo Arena (49)	Barra, Ponticelli, S. Giovanni (52)	
Children (0-13 years)	19.0	15.3	19.1	15.9
Persons over 65	10.8	16.4	12.5	15.5
Ageing index	56.7	106.7	65.4	97.4
Birth rate	15.2	12.0	13.1	12.0
Density	5.197	10.527	5.952	9.149

Source: Comune di Napoli, 2002, our elaboration

**Table 4: Access to sanitation and safe collection, by slum (1991)**

Slum	WC	of which external	of which connected to safe collection	Bathroom
Scampia	99.0	0.1	99.2	99.1
Stella-San Carlo Arena	99.2	0.3	98.5	92.5
Ponticelli	99.1	0.8	99.2	96.3
Barra	99.2	0.8	96.9	95.0
Naples	99.2	0.4	97.4	94.8

Source: Istat, I Grandi Comuni 1994. Our elaboration



Street in the old quarters of Naples

is made up mostly of public housing. Stella San Carlo Arena, on the other hand, is closer to the average, since it is a more integrated city district, in which an area such as the Sanità neighborhood, notoriously decayed, exists alongside other less poor ideas.

## II. OVERALL POVERTY INDICATORS

It is difficult to get an overall vision of poverty in Naples, since the data on poverty, life style and consumption are never broken down by subunits of the city. The most detailed studies on income and consumption have been done by retail associations for marketing

purposes. In addition to being by definition of little use, they are also dated, since the Italian law governing the privacy of personal data, passed in 1996, has made it difficult to collect data of this type.

The Local Social Plan developed by the City of Naples represents the main document from which to take data in order to understand the dimensions and distribution of poverty and malaise. It is based on the districts, or basic local units, which reflect subdivisions of the local Health Authority. The districts examined are number 48, which includes Scampia, Piscinola and Chiaiano, number 49, which covers Stella - San Carlo Arena, and 52, which covers Ponticelli and Barra along with San Giovanni a Teduccio.

The most direct indicators of poverty are those that

Table 5: Access to potable running water, heating system and hot running water, by slum (1991)

Slum	Potable tap water		Heating system		Hot water	
	v.a.	%	v.a.	%	v.a.	%
Scampia	9,676	99.5	8,230	84.6	9,453	97.2
Stella-San Carlo Arena	32,913	99.3	17,541	52.9	31,128	93.9
Ponticelli	12,950	96.6	9,169	68.4	12,445	92.9
Barra	10,812	97.4	5,075	45.7	10,492	94.5
Naples	308,751	99.0	185,199	59.4	295,281	94.7

Source: Istat, I Grandi Comuni 1994. Our elaboration

Table 6 Indicators on houses, by slum (1991)

Slum	Year of construction			Average size (m2)	Rooms / dwelling	inhabitants / dwelling	m2 / resident
	Before 1945	1946 / 1971	1972 / 1991				
Scampia	2.5	23.6	79.3	89.9	4.8	4.5	19.9
Stella-San Carlo Arena	46.8	49.0	4.2	76.5	3.8	3.3	23.1
Ponticelli	13.3	40.9	45.4	77.5	3.9	3.8	20.2
Barra	21.7	53.2	25.1	71.4	3.6	3.7	19.1
Naples	34.4	50.2	15.4	81.7	4.0	3.4	24.0

Source: Istat, Grandi Comuni, 1994. Our elaboration

**Table 7: Secure tenure, by slum (1991)**

Slum	Rental		Ownership		Other		Total %
	v.a.	%	v.a.	%	v.a.	%	
Scampia	6.193	63,7	3.152	32,4	378	3,9	100,0
Stella-San Carlo Arena	17.014	51,3	14.922	45,0	1.224	3,7	100,0
Ponticelli	7.428	55,4	4.971	37,1	1.004	7,5	100,0
Barra	6.151	55,4	4.151	37,4	795	7,2	100,0
Naples	159.236	51,1	138.330	44,4	14.165	4,5	100,0

Source: Istat, 1991. Our elaboration

can be found in the City of Naples records of requests for minimum wage support (RMI), divided into local subdistricts. This data cannot alone be considered sufficient to define the distribution of poverty in the metropolitan area, and must be crossed with indicators such as school attendance, employment and unemployment, mental illness and drug addiction, and especially family structure. It has been found, in fact, in both special surveys and from an analysis of applications for RMI, that poverty is essentially associated with large families, as well as unemployment, rather than other special conditions of neediness (presence of disabled, handicapped or ill persons). Among families applying for RMI, more than half (56.5%) include at least one child and 12.7% have 3 or more children.

RMI applications come most of all from Barra, Ponticelli and S. Giovanni (district 52), followed by Secondigliano, Miano and S. Pietro a Patierno (district 50), the historic centre (district 51) and Soccavo - Pianura (district 46).

The 1991 census showed Naples to be the Italian city with the highest average number of family members (3.4), with the highest rate of large families (23.7%, almost six times higher than in the Northern cities of Turin, Milan and Bologna). In 2001, in the slums identified, data on family size and structure clearly show that these are areas at risk, in terms of the above criteria: large families, in fact, are most prevalent in the Northern (Scampia, Piscinola, Chiaiano) and in the Eastern (Barra, Ponticelli, S. Giovanni, Miano, S. Pietro) quarters. In Naples, an average of 13% of families have 2-4 members, and 1.8% more than 6, compared to figures of 24.3% and 7.1% in Scampia (Table 8).

The Neapolitan Emergency Social Intervention Service recently counted about 1600 homeless people in Naples, who represent the most extreme stratum of poverty and exclusion. This population, by definition, cannot be assigned to any single area of the city, but it is well known that they are concentrated around the main stations, especially Piazza Garibaldi and Campi Flegrei (in the Northwest of the city). A survey of 150 homeless people found that they are mostly Italian

(53%), between 25 and 50 (66%), and men (85%). 40% are unemployed, 17% have lost their job and 40% have a very small income from occasional or undeclared jobs.

In terms of unemployment and exclusion from the labour market, Naples leads the country with 42.7% of the labour force inactive. This is particularly serious for young people; further, women make up 48.4% of the registered unemployed. Unemployment, however, varies according to the single neighbourhoods. Some, such as the North-East periphery, are hit badly; the dormitory quarters such as Scampia, Miano and Piscinola offer few work opportunities, while others such as S. Giovanni, Barra and Ponticelli suffer from a de-industrialization process that has not provided any alternative development. Other areas with high unemployment rates are the central quarters (Stella-S. Carlo, Mercato, Pendino), where the absence of jobs is related to the disappearance of artisan and manufacturing activity and to their migration to areas outside the city limits. Overall, as shown in Table 9, all the slums – with Scampia at one extreme and Stella at the other – have higher than average unemployment, both in general and for youth.

The social composition of the slums can be found in the professional profile of inhabitants. In Naples, 8.7% of the population are professionals or entrepreneurs, yet just 3.1% of residents in Scampia, where clerical workers make up 56% of the population compared to 36% city-wide (Table 10). It is widely held that unemployment figures should be adjusted to account for undeclared employment. Nonetheless, field work has not revealed much in the way of employment opportunities in addition to those declared, and, except for criminal activity, informal work is usually discontinuous and cannot be compared to regular employment, nor considered a stepping stone towards a normal job.

The school attendance rate and the educational level provide some idea of the gap between the slums identified and the rest of the city, except for Stella, which is closer to the average: in Naples, 27.1% of potential students attend secondary school, and only 13.8% in Scampia, and about 18% in Barra and Ponticelli.

**Table 8: Household size, by slum (2001)**

Slums	1 member		2/4 members		5/6 members		6 or more members	
	v.a.	%	v.a.	%	v.a.	%	v.a.	%
Scampia	1.270	12,3	5.842	56,4	2.514	24,3	732	7,1
Stella - S. Carlo Arena	10.581	26,9	23.892	60,7	4.414	11,2	492	1,2
Barra	2.403	19,4	7.506	60,4	2.208	17,8	301	2,4
Ponticelli	2.545	15,5	9.980	60,6	3.407	20,7	539	3,3
Naples	93.844	25,4	221.374	59,8	47.926	13,0	6.810	1,8

Source: Comune di Napoli 2002. Our elaboration

**Table 9: School attendance and participation in the labour market, by slum**

	School attendance			Labour force participation	Unemployment rate	
	Nursery	Compulsory education	Secondary School		Total	Youth
Scampia	51.0	97.2	13.8	41.4	61.7	54.9
Stella-San Carlo Arena	45.6	87.7	28.1	39.5	42.3	41.7
Ponticelli	51.4	96.3	18.8	38.5	53.3	47.8
Barra	49.7	96.7	18.4	36.6	53.7	46.9
Naples	48.9	95.9	27.1	39.3	42.7	41.7

Source: Istat, Grandi Comuni, 1994. Our elaboration

**Table 10: Professional working population according to profession, by slum (1991)**

Slums	Entrepreneurs & self-employed	Independent workers & partners	Executives	Managers, clerical	Other contract workers
Scampia	3.1	13.7	0.7	27.3	54.5
Stella-San Carlo Arena	7.7	14.9	2.4	37.9	36.5
Ponticelli	3.9	15.9	0.8	26.3	52.6
Barra	4.9	18.1	0.7	20.5	55.2
Naples	8.7	15.0	3.0	36.8	36.0

Source: Istat, Grandi Comuni, 1994. Our elaboration

**Table 11: Percentage of inhabitants aged over 6 by educational level in identified slums (census data, 1991)**

District	University Degree	Secondary Diploma	Middle School Certificate	Elementary School Certificate	No certificate, literate	Illiterate
Scampia	0.7	8.5	28.7	36.6	13.9	3.1
Stella-San Carlo Arena	4.6	18.9	28.1	29.9	10.1	2.4
Ponticelli	1.5	14.0	36.3	40.1	17.5	4.8
Barra	0.7	7.6	23.4	27.2	11.1	3.1
Naples	5.6	17.8	27.6	28.9	10.8	2.3

Source: Istat 1994, our elaboration

Similarly, the number of university and secondary school graduates in Scampia is 0.7% and 8.5%, compared to 5.6% and 17.8% city-wide (**Table 11**).

Concerning crime rates, Naples Police data for 1997 for the area including Scampia, Secondigliano and Chiaiano show a very high crime rate in Scampia. Organised crime in particular is much more widespread than in the rest of Naples: the ten *Camorra*-related homicides in Scampia were a full third of all such homicides in Naples.

### III. SLUM: THE PEOPLE

Due to high and concentrated poverty conditions, with a very high percentage of low income households, Scampia has been selected for a sample analysis of the conditions of slum dwellers. Little known outside Italy, it is one of the priority areas for policies countering poverty and urban decay.

The University of Naples recently surveyed the area during the European project URBEX<sup>13</sup>. In this study, interviews were realised with single mothers, long term unemployed men and immigrants, as these had been identified as the most vulnerable categories. The following are extracts from interviews with people from the first two categories.

A typical long term unemployed man is in his forties, married and with 3 or 4 children, living in an extended family household (with other relatives). His educational level is low (at best, a middle school certificate), and his family of origin, instead of being a source of support, is often in need of support itself and therefore a further burden. He generally lives in public housing, either paying rent or squatting, and maybe not even paying for utilities such as gas, electricity and water. Social services are rarely called upon, and the solution for economic problems is considered to lie in finding an odd job or asking for help from the family.

These are special categories, not unemployed in the traditional sense, since they are always working at least one job, but rather because all through life they have entered and left the labour market, doing only temporary jobs, often more than one at a time, with no reliability or guarantee, underpaid and without a contract. These odd jobs are often in factories or small enterprises. These people perched on the edge of the labour market have little chance of finding a steady and guaranteed job in the main economic sectors, and for a number of reasons: low education, lack of specific skills, urgent need to support the family which means that they cannot refuse bad offers while waiting for better pay and conditions, living in a peripheric area with few employment possibilities and poor links with the centre, as well as stigmatised by the rest of the city. This exclusion starts early and is reproduced over time. It starts by dropping out of school, often encouraged by parents so as to become a breadwinner. The first jobs are found directly or through friendship or family networks, in unqualified, unsteady and poorly paid work (busboy, peddler, bricklayer...). There is plenty of work, if defined as daily activity, but they can still be considered (and define themselves) as unemployed, and therefore as a disadvantaged category, because they know that the jobs they do will never allow them to improve their social conditions.

G., a long term unemployed man, 25 years old, works as a labourer in a furniture factory, earning no more than Euro 20 – 25 a day. It is not a steady job and they contact him when they need him. As an alternative, he manages to sell fruit and cigarettes and he works from 4.30 a.m. until 8 p.m. because "...the situation is critical, unfortunately you have to take what you can get. I try not to stay idle...". His family income totals Euro 250 – 300 / month, since he is the only breadwinner. His uncle is a drug addict who is often in jail, his grandmother earns Euro 75 / month running a small canteen out of her home. The extended family is too poor to provide any support.

Often drug addiction, prison and illness make a bad situation even worse, as in the case of F., 42 years old, under house arrest and undergoing a 5 year sentence for robbery. He turned to crime when he became an addict, after loss of his job. Usually people don't drop out of the labour market, and sometimes they try to start up small businesses, as P. did since adolescence when he performed all different kinds of jobs, always unsteady and often for just a short while. After he got married, he worked in a hotel, but had to quit because it was too far from home.

*"I bought a van that I use for transporting people and goods. Here in the district I have a lot of friends, so when they need something they come to me and tell me to go to a certain place and pick something up, and I do it. Sometimes I don't work for a few days but generally I do one job a day; the money depends on the trip and the goods. But I'm not starving to death..."*

In general, even if they live below the poverty line, most of the people in the sample manage to meet their basic needs, and limit their expenditures when they are making less money. Home electronics are limited to TVs and radios, no one has a bank account, a credit card or savings, and average consumption is already very low. Purchases are limited to food, and here, too, little is spent, since only the children eat meat and receive new clothes. Nothing is spent for culture, for leisure or social activities, since these people are often socially isolated, with few contacts outside their family. Isolation is worsened by the lack of playgrounds in the neighbourhood, or other meeting places, and by the deep seated fear that comes from the high crime rate.

Limited access to the different kinds of public assistance shows how little the families know about the programmes that might help them, in addition to revealing how ineffective the institutions are in having a real impact on neighbourhoods where serious deprivation exists. The unemployed themselves have a rather negative perception of the quality of welfare assistance available, which they consider both difficult to obtain and insufficient:

*"...I get a monthly cheque for Euro 413 for socially useful work. On the pay slip it says unemployment*

*benefit; that's the only time in the month I remember I'm on assistance – for the rest of the time I just feel that I'm an exploited worker because they don't pay contributions...".*

The typical single mother is a widow, 45 years old. Her family of origin is large, with economic difficulties, and her educational level is extremely low (probably she has not completed primary school), since the cultural patterns see girls as helpers for their mothers in family care and housework. The absence of qualification or professional skills profoundly affect her position on the job market, and she is typically employed in home-based work for small factories (footwear, socks, clothes, gloves).

Lack of sufficient income is aggravated in several cases by other problems (drug addiction, handicaps, imprisonment, alcoholism) which can accumulate to create precarious situations of serious social exclusion. The majority has been living in Scampia since the Eighties, when they moved into public housing after the earthquake, and they do not pay rent or utility for the apartment. Their condition of poverty is linked to the absence of their husband (due to either death or separation), which adds to a pre-existing condition of economic instability.

The family of origin plays an important role, but since it is very poor itself, it is unable to provide serious economic help. Local parishes play an even more important role, since they provide food parcels, clothes, etc. and act as intermediaries in the search for work, and for this they are regarded as a reference point. The attitude towards job seeking is passive, especially for widows, due to the awareness of being scarcely competitive on the labour market.

Help received from the State can consist of a widows' pension, child benefits for those who have more than two children under 18, the Minimum Subsistence Benefit (Euro 500 per month for those with three or more children), the Minimum Insertion Income (monthly cheques from Euro 250 upwards). The typical single mother is very pessimistic regarding the possibility of finding a regular job: *"I can't read or write and I can't leave the house because of the children – what else can I do besides cleaning?"*. Usually difficulties are not experienced as isolated or as an isolating event.

As shown by all the indicators analysed in H and I, Scampia is a very poor area. Couples without children represent only 12,2% (the city figure is 17,9%), 69,3% are couples with children, 5% are households consisting of a single father with children and 12,2% of single mother with children. Concerning the household size, in Scampia there is the highest concentration in all Naples of households with 5 or more members (31,4% of the families), and higher birth rates than in the rest of Naples (15,2 versus 12).

Most dwellings are rental units (ownership rates are as low as 32,4%, whereas the average for Naples is

44,4%), which is explained with the history of the district built in large part by public housing.

Literacy and occupancy ratios once again depict a very underprivileged neighbourhood: here we can find the highest concentration of unemployed (61,7%, as compared to a figure for Naples which is already very high, 42,7%). Truancy rates are within, if not below, the city average, but 3,1% of the population is illiterate (in Naples, 2,3%) and only 8,5% have finished secondary school, very low compared to the city average, 17,8%.

Data on permanence in the households are not available, but since most people live in public housing, it can be assumed that they tend to keep their houses for a long period, unless they change their economic and social condition, which is quite infrequent.

Data on Income are not available; the only indicator that can measure the economic situation to some extent is the one concerning the attribution of the Minimum Insertion income: in Scampia in 1999, 48 people received Minimum Insertion Income, which represents 12,5% of the city figure (384). As far as density in dwellings is concerned, the average size of units is not lower than in Naples, but more people live in them (4,5 persons per household instead of 3,4), and floor area per person is calculated to be 19,9 m<sup>2</sup> (24 m<sup>2</sup> for Naples).

Scampia's poor inhabitants suffer from double **discrimination**: from their neighbours belonging to higher social classes, and from the rest of the town. The former finds expression, for example, in the fact that lower-middle class and middle class inhabitants, who live in better quality housing built by private co-operatives, often tend to live apart from the rest of the district, as is clearly shown by the enclosure of some buildings (protected by iron railings, video cameras and other security systems), or by the distribution of children in schools: the higher classes tend to avoid to close relationship with low income families, which on their part find difficulty in accessing certain schools due to their children already being branded as deviants or potential criminals.

**"External"** discrimination, i.e. that made by the rest of the town, depends principally on the district's bad reputation: research conducted over the past decade<sup>14</sup> show how women from Scampia encountered greater difficulties in finding a job, because of prejudice against the district they lived in (employers were afraid that they could give information to criminals about family movements or contents of the house) and because of the greater difficulty in coming to work on time because of the distance and the poor public transit connections.

A third form of discrimination has to be added to the above two, a sort of "self-discrimination", deriving from the widespread practices of social differentiation towards the other inhabitants of the area, with the effect of increasing the degree of social exclusion:

*"...If they ask you where you live and you say Viale della Resistenza, then that's the end of it. I'd act the*



same if I were in their shoes. There are good people, but unfortunately most of them are negative...”.

Social *isolation* represents a characteristic of Scampia, due to the history of the neighbourhood: people were mostly relocated here, at first when the public housing area (called 167 after the no. of the bill that governed it) went up, and later after the 1980 earthquake, when many families whose homes had been destroyed were moved. The latter found themselves isolated from their previous social context (also because before settling in Scampia they had been living for several years in containers or hotels), and faced ever weaker contacts with relational and neighbourhood networks. In addition to isolation, a form of segregation can be seen in the architectural and urban structure of the district, with the result that the common spaces intended for social life have been progressively abandoned to the point of being a real social danger.

Padre Vittorio, parish priest, says:

*“it was intentional that people shouldn't have any chance of meeting; just think that in these buildings that house 570-600 families - that's 4-5000 people - there isn't one space where is possible to gather for any sort of community life. There have been no social centres, so living here is like a prison sentence... But they knew all this. It's all part of the politics that [...] saw the necessity of dismembering grassroots struggles and 'breaking up the breakouts'”.*

Crime rate in Scampia is very high (see **Table 12**), also due to the high presence of prisoners and ex-prisoners amongst the inhabitants, and makes the area a dangerous one, especially at night.

in spite of the high rate of poverty in the neighbourhood, Scampia does not represent a ghetto, and the



unstable proletariat classes live side by side with families of regularly employed workers. The presence of the latter type of inhabitants from one point of view represents an advantage for the whole area, since they are the most active in political and community life, taking part in and starting up initiatives for change in the district. But at the same time this social composition leads to a very huge distance amongst different social classes and to very few social contacts and thus of social networks, which might provide an opportunity for mutual help. In contrast to other areas of Naples, in Scampia it is the social co-operatives and the religious association and parishes that play a key role in providing assistance to needy families.

## IV. SLUMS AND POVERTY: THE POLICIES

### H. ACTIVE POLICIES FOR URBAN SLUM AREA

The main policies are national programmes supporting employment and entrepreneurship, the so-called *Patti territoriali* (Territorial Pacts for Employment), local contracts which are also widespread in the European Union, and the *contratti di area*, of a similar kind.

The late 90's saw the launch of the Urban Renewal and Local Sustainable Development Programmes, known by their Italian acronym PRUSST. The innovative aspect of these programmes were that they funded planning of projects which were ensured the support of local owners and private capital. The objective was to support a wide variety of applications for funding under the Regional Work Programme (POR) 2000-2006, in order to overcome a certain difficulty that the Regions, especially the Southern regions, have had in taking full advantage of the European Structural Funds.

**Table 12: Crimes committed in Scampia in 1997, by crime category**

	Scampia	City ranking
	401	1
	373	1
	26	1
	10	1
	23	1
	1252	4
	160	8

Source: Naples Police, 1997



In planning these funds, the Campania Region allocated Euro 1.5 bn for “promoting the recovery and improvement of urban aspects of the cities (...) promoting social services offered in city slum areas (...) through the creation of the services and infrastructure, recovery, renewal and taking advantage of the urban landscape and urbanistic and construction patterns”.<sup>15</sup>

It is still early to judge the outcome that this funding has yielded; one can only note that the POR got off to a late start. Some positive experiences – such as with the URBAN programme – may be generalised, and are listed in the following chapter.

### Anti-poverty policy in Italy

In Italy,<sup>16</sup> the main anti-poverty policies are indirect, and not all the individuals and categories that benefit are in economic difficulty. Although many policies have a significant impact on poverty, there are few real “anti-poverty” policies.

Italian welfare policy does not make a very good

distinction between pensions and assistance; the former consumes 81.5% of all expenditure. There are two approaches to fighting poverty. The first is a confused and stingy system of welfare payments, while the second is more generous and is based on the principle of insurance, so that only those who have paid into the pension system can collect. The weak welfare system, which reaches only those who have made pension payments, means that the very means to fight emargination are the weakest where they are most needed.

Current welfare measures with some impact on poverty are: the “social wage”, the “social pension”, the minimum pension, disability pension, subsidy for permanent medical assistance, special disability pension, family subsidy, national rental subsidy, tax break for renters, services for the disabled, maternity payments, family subsidies for those with more than 3 children, minimum wage integrators (RMI), subsidised health care co-payments.

Most of the welfare measures are insufficient. Even the recent rise of the minimum pension to Euro 516/month did not affect all those who were entitled to it, and the elderly without pension rights often live below the poverty threshold unless they are married and can live with relatives. And yet the elderly and the disabled are the best protected in the Italian welfare state, since current measures have little to offer for many other categories, such as the homeless, drug addicts and youth.

The RMI is meant for young people who are unemployed and capable of working, who are willing to take professional training courses and to work, as proved by their enrolment in the employment office. They are eligible for the RMI if they have no income or if they meet the requirements indicated in **Table 13**.

The wage integration multiplier rises by 0.35 for each additional family member, by 0.2 for single parents with

**Table 13 Income thresholds (Euro) to receive RMI according to family size (1998-2000)**

Family size	1998	1999	2000
1	1.00	258	263
2	1.57	405	413
3	2.04	526	537
4	2.46	635	647
5	2.85	735	750

Source: *Rapporto per la Commissione di Indagine sull'Esclusione Sociale*

**Table 14: Distribution of recipients according to region (1998)**

	North	Centre	South	Italy
Social pensions & subsidies	33.1	22.0	44.9	100
Minimum pension integration	42.0	20.3	37.7	100
INPS Disability pension	46.9	23.7	29.4	100
INPS Disability subsidy	31.7	22.3	45.9	100
Subsidies for services for disabled	37.6	19.4	43.0	100
Family welfare payments (pensioners only)	38.8	19.1	42.1	100
Resident population	44.5	19.2	36.3	100

Source: *Rapporto per la Commissione di Indagine sull'Esclusione Sociale*

children, and by 0.5 for each handicapped or severely disabled family member, and by 0.2 for families with children where both parents work.

Welfare payments and those for the handicapped are pitifully small (Euro 204 monthly in 1999), and are available to those who make less than Euro 282 a month. The impact of these payments depends on the beneficiary: if he or she is married or lives with family members, the sum can be a useful contribution; for the single disabled they are absolutely insufficient.

Many Italians benefit from the above measures, but it is difficult to know exactly how many, since a single individual can receive one or more benefits simultaneously, because family subsidies benefit an unknown number of family members, and because some are of very recent introduction. Among these benefits, 72.4% are for disability payments, which means that pensions and disability payments comprise a full 93% of all welfare payments.

Of all anti-poverty measures (Euro 52 bn), 91.3% of the funds are spent on just two categories: the elderly (45.5%) and the disabled (45.8%). These two categories also have access to many other benefits (housing subsidies, family subsidies), so that they actually receive an even higher proportion of the funding.

The pension and social benefits are disproportionately for women, who make up 71.9% of those who receive pensions, 82.8% of social welfare payments, and 74.3% of those who receive minimum wage integration. INPS pensions and disability payments, on the other hand, which are based on the number of years that contributions have been paid, are mostly for men (women are just 21.9% and 30.6% of beneficiaries, respectively).

**Table 14** shows the distribution of recipients of different welfare payments in 1998. It clearly shows how beneficiaries are concentrated in the South, except for minimum pension integration and INPS disability pensions, which are, not coincidentally, the most generous of all benefits. Further, the data show how welfare payments are less important in the North, where access to work opportunities are greater. Where unemployment is high, other sources of income become more important.

Only in recent years has there been some attempt to find an alternative to the Italian concentration on pensions and certain categories of beneficiaries. A new and more coherent anti-poverty approach is beginning to appear, which uses a few instruments which are directly aimed at supporting individuals and families in conditions of risk for poverty, such as rental subsidies, welfare payments for families with many children, and above all the RMI. The Economic Situation Index (ISE; calculation mechanism is the one used for attribution of RMI shown and commented in **Table 13**) has been introduced to provide a uniform criterion for measuring income in order to determine eligibility for assistance benefits, although this has only been applied to a few measures so far.

Assistance has been the responsibility of local government since 1977, although the actual devolution only took place in 2000, with the publication of the framework law on the integrated system of social intervention and services (Act 328/2000). Development in the sector had been extremely variable until recently, with huge regional and municipal differences, especially between North and South.

This framework law on is the foundation for integrating health and social services and focusing on local districts so as to plan for and manage action for a single catchment area.

At this local city level, with its new demands for social and individual protection and security, a new model of municipal mixed welfare is emerging, in which the State no longer presides over welfare policy but implements social policy based on the development of interchange and rationalisation of the resources of the state, the market and "third sector", the rich variety of volunteer, church and non-profit structures.

The full integration of such non-profit entities, which are still associated with reciprocity, altruism, charity and solidarity, is considered rather innovative compared to the usual characteristics of social and health services.

## Policy in Naples

Naples, in its City Social Plan, is trying to make the shift from government, which is the exclusive province of the State, and local governance. This means a

**Table 15: Social spending in the city of Naples by sector (Millions of Euro)**

	2000		2001	
	Number	%	Number	%
Elderly	26.3	29.68	24.0	28.90
Disabled	8.7	9.83	10.0	12.04
Anti-Poverty	32.1	36.13	27.4	32.98
Prevention, Promotion & Co-operation	0.7	0.82	0.9	1.04
Families	0.9	0.98	0.8	0.94
Immigration	0.7	0.82	0.7	0.85
Addiction	0.1	0.09	0.5	0.56
Youth Support	1.9	2.10	0.7	0.84
Education Support for Families	16.9	19.01	17.7	21.29
Family Services / Foster Care	0.5	0.56	0.5	0.56
	88.8	100.0	83.2	100.0

Source: *Piano Sociale di Zona*, Comune di Napoli, 2002

commitment to the idea that only locally can the social welfare system be effectively arrayed, giving rise to a different scenario of city welfare in which a universalist value system means attempting the social integration of the underprivileged.

The City Social Plan is a serious attempt to define a mixed system of local welfare, and has been made possible by the many legislative changes that took place during the centre-left's years in power,<sup>17</sup> during which the State took on a subsidiary role, granting local government broad powers, based on criteria of effectiveness, cost, communication and efficiency of the government action.

In terms of its contents, the Social Plan aims most notably to support families. In Italy and in Naples, in contrast to many other European countries, plays an important complementary or even substitute role in the welfare system. In addition to reducing the burden placed on these families, there is also a need to recognise the transformation of the traditional models of the family: the growing instability of marriages, the rise in single-parent families with children, the drop in birth rates, the changes in childbearing trends (fewer and later children), the ageing population, the increasing number of women in the labour market, and the doubts cast on the job stability of the segment which has historically had the least to worry about, the male breadwinner.

As shown in the following table, social service expenditures in the City of Naples over the past two years have included anti-poverty measures among their main objectives.

## **I. THE IMPACT OF POLICIES**

It is premature to evaluate the results of the Social Plan. Overall, the changes taking place in Naples show how deep social and urban decay remains. Considering that these conditions are the result of countless inter-playing factors, urban renewal can only take place in a comprehensive plan of urbanistic and environmental reorganisation matched with measures aimed at increasing and improving the services needed to attract economic activity and to integrate those segments of the population currently facing increasingly emargination into the social and economic fabric of the city.

Even so, some positive signs are already visible. One success story is that of the URBAN Programme in the Spanish Quarters between 1994 and 1999, followed by that in the Sanità quarter.

The URBAN programme aimed to serve as a catalyst for the small and uncoordinated efforts at urban and social renewal underway in the city, and to provide support in order to focus them in terms of timing, location and action.

This integrated social and urbanistic approach common elsewhere in Europe was an important innova-

tion for Naples. In a single part of the city, the urban problems were faced through promoting economic activity, improving the physical environment, and developing pilot actions for a lasting betterment of the quality of life.

In the context of the Urban project different interventions have been realised:

- structural interventions: refurbishment of squares and main streets, and of façades of private and public buildings;
- interventions on mobility: car parks for residents, electric buses, creation of pedestrian areas;
- intervention for socio-economic development: opening of a centre for social and psychological prevention for adolescents, opening of several information services to support the needy, support for existing artisan activities, with the specific objective to help them to legalise their activities and favouring their access to credit even without collateral.

## **J. THE COMMITMENT OF INSTITUTION TO REGULAR MONITORING, FEEDBACK & ADJUSTMENT**

### **POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES**

It goes without saying that the procedures used by the European Commission for awarding grants have helped to spread a culture of evaluation and, more generally, of project management in all its phases. Structural funds require the identification of performance indicators and SWOT (Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats) analyses. This has meant that hundreds of bureaucrats from Regions, Provinces and Cities have become familiar with these previously alien concepts.

At the same time, Italian government has been rocked by a major debate over the evaluation of almost all its activity, especially that involving social policy, from education to health. Even if, unfortunately, concepts of evaluation and indicators are often seen as synonymous with budget limitations and cost-cutting decisions, there is no doubt that many capable bureaucrats are mastering logical, if not technical, methods for analysing problems, defining strategies and designing projects.

The 2000-2006 structural funds impose much more stringent monitoring and evaluation requirements than in the past, and provide much greater resources for these tasks. Almost all Italian regions have published calls for tender for technical assistance for their services in the execution of these tasks.

All POR-funded urban renewal projects, including those limited to social themes, will therefore be monitored and evaluated by dedicated staff. It is possible to confidently assert that monitoring and evaluation practices are spreading deep and wide in the management of Italian public policy. What is yet to be built is a widespread and standard ability to do this. Even more diffi-

cult will be the promotion of the effective capacity of large organisations and public administration to translate their evaluations into changes in their future activity.

The Naples Social Plan is already structured on a conceptual basis, and defines the District as "the area in which it is possible to verify not only the effectiveness (in terms of capacity for implementation) and efficiency (in terms of resources used) of social inclusion policies, but also their relevance to the needs of the local population". This is based on the guidelines of the National Action Plan, which "privileges the adoption of flexible organisational models, oriented according to their aims and results so as to make monitoring, verifying and evaluating the actions more efficient".

<sup>14</sup> *Disoccupati e disoccupate a Napoli*, Cerase, Morlicchio, Spanò, 1991, and *Oltre le vele. Rapporto su Scampia*, Pugliese, 1999.

<sup>15</sup> Regione Campania, Programma Operativo Regionale 2000-2006, Complementi di Programmazione.

<sup>16</sup> The most recent and complete analysis of anti-poverty policy in Italy, from which these figures are taken, is the report from the Commissione di Indagine sull'Esclusione Sociale: *Le politiche nazionali contro la povertà in Italia*, David Benassi (ed.), Università di Padova.

<sup>17</sup> Local government, with the Bassanini law (Act 50/1999; Act 127/1997; Act 191/1998, Bill 112/1998) and with the law on the autonomy of local government (L. 142/1990 e L. 265/1999) and most recently the new framework law on the integration system of social intervention and services (L. 328/2000), has become one of the main local actors in implementing municipal policies of development and the promotion of the welfare of residents.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Official figures show that immigration is higher in Northern and Central Italy (50,6% and 31,2% respectively) and is very low in the South, while birth rate is constantly negative in North and Central Italy and is positive in South.

<sup>2</sup> Vicari Haddock, *Naples: Urban regeneration and exclusion in a Southern metropolis*.

<sup>3</sup> Cavola e D'Antonio, 1994, in Vicari, cit.

<sup>4</sup> Vicari Haddock, cit.

<sup>5</sup> Daniela Lepore, "Napoli" in CRESME, *Scenari e strategie di intervento per la riqualificazione delle periferie in Italia*, 2001, forthcoming publication.

<sup>6</sup> This phenomenon of construction in absence of permits and in violation of zoning is called "abusivismo" and was so widespread in Italy that, in 1982, the Socialist government approved a "building amnesty" law under which owners could legalise their buildings by paying a fine proportional to the size of the building. Other amnesty laws followed. This has meant that Italy has developed special know-how on building service networks in illegal neighbourhoods after they have been built.

<sup>7</sup> Lepore, cit.

<sup>8</sup> *Le politiche nazionali contro la povertà in Italia*, David Benassi (ed.), Università di Padova

<sup>9</sup> *Cfr. Le politiche nazionali contro la povertà in Italia*, David Benassi (ed.), Università di Padova.

<sup>10</sup> Piano Sociale di Zona, Comune di Napoli, Gruppo di piano (L. 328/00 - Del. G. R. 1826 del 4/5/01).

<sup>11</sup> As stated in the cited publication, it is not easy to compare the data, since the 1991 Census was immediately shown not to correspond to residence data. Nonetheless, in the absence of other data, the analysis of the Zone Social Plan compares these available data.

<sup>12</sup> As it has been pointed out by E. Morlicchio, professor at University of Naples, during an interview.

<sup>13</sup> *Spatial Dimensions of Urban Social Exclusion and Integration. The case of Naples*, Enrica Morlicchio ed., 2001. The stories and all interviews with inhabitants of Scampia and with key players and social operators are extracted from that survey.