INTRODUCTION

European society is more and more an urban one. Urbanity is an essential dimension of Europe. The twelve Member States consist of 229 cities with more than 300,000 inhabitants and 122 of them have a core population exceeding 200,000 (3). 89% of Europe's population is expected to be living in urban areas over the next thirty years. The Urban Euroscape is the space where most socio-economic disparities and environmental problems accumulate, but also where most progress takes place.

According to the Commission's Green Paper on the Urban Environment, as we move towards the 21st century, cities will continue to be the main centres of economic activity, innovation and culture (8). Cities emerge at the European scene stronger (6), they compete more and they collaborate more (15). Each one is unique and individual but they share the concern for a better environment and they want to exchange policy innovations. They fight for sustainability with its environmental, economic and social dimensions (26). They all want to be more environment friendly, socially integrated and economically efficient.

On the other hand there is the feeling that the environment crisis, together with societal shock waves that cities can no longer absorb, can be mortgages for the future of many cities. And also, many cities see their position deteriorating in the geopolitical equilibria of 1993. Everybody seems aware that the abolition of national frontiers is not automatically resulting in an integrated Europe. The complex urban cultural system of assets, values and social relations, with its European historic specificity and proper logic of organisation and of infrastructure, is in danger (11, 18).

This paper is concerned with the current metamorphoses which take place or are likely to take place in the European Cities and with the European policies, aiming at revitalising and regenerating cities. It constitutes an effort to synthesise the changes, trends and policies reported at the European level, at the most recent conferences and European Institutions, mainly the European Commission and the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions.

A. ENVIRONMENTAL METAMORPHOSES TOWARDS THE SUSTAINABLE CITY

The global environment is being increasingly disrupted by cities, with increased dangers for the cities themselves. Cities are a threat to air, water, soil and ecosystems. They cause irreparable damage by contributing massively to the phenomena of the greenhouse effect, the depletion of the ozone layer and the irreversible reduction of biological diversity, while the world climate system is particularly influenced by the intense level
of energy consumption and the consequent emission of carbon dioxide. The climatic changes will have serious impact on urban living and working conditions and public health (18).

The contribution of the cities to the global environment problems depends on each city's growth cycle, but also on the city's environmental performance and behaviour. Cities attract people and goods, extract resources from the natural environment, export products and services and also waste. A considerable flow of traffic and transport is required for the functioning of cities. The extraction of resources, the export of waste and the flow of traffic are threats to the urban and global environment.

The conventional policy to solve threats to the urban environment by removal of pollutants and wastes can be extremely harmful to the regional and global environment. Reactive policies, coming always after a failure at the urban level, will fail in solving the problem at the global one. There is need for proactive policies acting on situations which reduce opportunities conducive to uneven developments, both at the local and global level.

There is increasing awareness that prevention policies, concentrated on the sources of pollution, lead certainly to the conception of new systems of transport, production and consumption in cities. This is not only a matter of technology or planning, but also of cultural change and environmental education. They are policies that focus on the improvement of the urban systems, with selection in the type and reduction in the level of consumption of energy and resources and the reduction of wastes through recycling, reuse and recuperation (29). Many European cities start, in fact, to be aware of the exhaustibility of the physical resources and to consider wastes as valuable resources. Cities like Aarhus and Sheffield invest in the management of the flows of supplies and waste. Self-efficiency seems more and more important for European cities and many innovative actions are being taken for the prevention of industrial waste and the avoidance, reuse and recycling of domestic ones (18).

Environmental problems in metropolitan areas do not mainly come from production; they come from consumption and mainly from traffic. Urban transport is a major contributor to acid rain and the greenhouse effect. The modern motorised transport system is a source of socio-economic advantages and environmental problems. There are many experiences in favouring public transport and the bicycle over the private car and giving priority to the pedestrian and various tariff and tax policies and constraints on the use of private cars. The development of environment friendly vehicles and environmentally compatible transport structures is always an aim, closely linked to the user's change in transportation behaviour.
The public transport system in Zurich is a clear example of the political will (not of the politicians, of the citizens who ask for public transport), of the compatibility between economy and ecology and of the possibilities of the urban traffic management. The system has a record in trips/person/year (470) and its surface component is as rapid and reliable as underground systems, which are ten times more expensive. The management system was based on the reorganisation of the existing ways and achieved waiting time 0 in junctions for trams and buses.

Tram is often highlighted as the transportation means of the future. In Grenoble, it has been a credible alternative to the use of cars and since 1987, when the first tram route was established, public transport was increased by 40%.

The ecological networks of the biosphere are highly influenced by the urban metabolism, expressed through production and consumption processes (23). Industrial Production and Consumption systems, as well as energy production and consumption systems are under various metamorphosis. The creation of Industrial and Technology Parks is being considered as increasing productivity and environmental quality. This quality is, in fact, more and more, considered as a main factor for the economic viability of the cities and their power to attract people and capital (29).

The above considerations are in interaction with Cultural Environmental Change. The awareness of environmental quality is being regarded as a civic value and different actions are undertaken for the change of environmental behaviour patterns. Market imperfections are also causes of environmental degradation and economic measures are considered for changing environmental attitudes. In a recent conference organised by the Foundation, the relevant working group was unanimous in suggesting the changing of the "Polluter pays pollution" principle, into the "Potential Polluter pays the Prevention of the Pollution" (18).

In the last IULA's world congress the prevailing slogan was "Think globally, act locally" and the importance of the awareness of the planetary dimensions of the problem was well highlighted (22). Local authorities across the world are by definition close to local problems. But these local problems cannot be seen in isolation from the global trends and challenges of our time and the local authorities must see their role in a wider global perspective. There is only one earth and one sky; during the 1990s, decisive moves must be taken from common perception to common action. Local authorities have an independent role to play in initiating measures necessary for human health and for ecological systems, measures necessary to win the overall battle to save the global environment.

Close to this perception are the French municipal plans of environment. They constitute a kind of partnership between the State and the Local Authorities. In the first experimental phase
(started in 1990, after a rise of the greens during the municipal elections of 1989) 30 cities and towns prepared a plan starting with the exhaustive diagnostic of the present situation and concluding with suggestions for environmental improvements. The elaboration of the plans joins the efforts to give an identity to the anonymous and interpenetrable periphery of the cities and the environmental valorisation of abandoned derelict land (28).

B. SOCIAL METAMORPHOSES TOWARDS THE SUSTAINABLE URBAN EUROSPACE

There is often been stressed the role of cities as a stimulating and exciting maelstrom of cultural conflict and change, "a giant scene where many discourses are co-presented, where otherwise is often unassimilated" (21). Beyond environmental considerations Social Justice as a main criterion to challenge the overall qualities of the city as a social system. However, there are as many competing theories of social justice as competing groups and it is important to look at the ways a particular urban society produces such variations in concepts. Egalitarian views may also be wrong, as "there is nothing more unequal as the equal treatment of unequals".

Does urban social justice have environmental dimensions? Even in the most prosperous European cities, there are urban islands where environmental degradation and social exclusion go hand in hand. They are more or less extended zones in run-down city centres or chaotic peripheral zones. They are places of functional impoverishment, with poor housing and insufficient equipment and facilities. Is it a coincidence that the social features of these areas are: poverty, delinquency and crime, high unemployment, low mobility, little access to information, education and training? (19, 24, 31, 35).

Partnership and solidarity seem the first European answers in fighting exclusion and promoting integration, in a better environment. The programme of Revitalisation of Urban Areas in crisis created, during its first phase, a multilateral network between 10 cities from 5 countries: each city, undertaking a revitalisation programme, observed and has been observed by the others through an exchange scheme (23). Most of the EC Poverty projects (160 in total after 1978) are urban ones, as the familial and social solidarity is stronger in the country than in the city (1, 27).

Social integration concerns start now to be taken into consideration in all urban policies. Transport policies where, till now efficiency considerations dominated those of equity, can play an important role, as they offer various access and mobility opportunities (32). There is a clear recognition of the need for an integrated urban systems approach to transport planning and for careful social transport policy design (8, 22). Changing transport behaviour away from dependence on the private car and
towards public transport, cycling and walking is promoting both environmental improvement and social integration.

The improvement of the built environment is an important factor for Fighting Delinquency and Crime. But there is moreover the need to create new forms of employment, real, valued and environmentally sound forms of employment; to resource deprived areas recreationally and culturally; to promote interagency partnership/intersectoral strategies, especially involving the police education systems, social work agencies and the family (13, 24, 38).

Partnership and solidarity are essential for improving social housing and living conditions (2). Mass housing often created social tensions on the urban fringe. It has often been paternalistic, large, remote, uniform, collective, reactive, anonymous, devoid of management and it failed. It starts now to be self-regulated, local, personal, individualised, proactive, corporate/neighbourhood space, with responsive local management. It has to make proof of vitality of work and enterprise and to allow personal identification. Vibrant local communities are replacing void neighbourhoods. The demographic cycle, emerging in Western Europe, created new housing needs. Families are now smaller, but the housing surface per capita is growing. The present energetic and environmental requirements create new needs for landscaping and energy efficiency. There is need for intelligent buildings and home environments. But, there is also a persisting tendency to provide temporary solutions in order to respond to emergency situations. These solutions are the most costly, if you consider the long term effects.

There is a periodic housing crisis, going in hand with the business cycle. The baby boom of the mid 60s is partly a cause for the over-demand in housing in the 90s. In the centre of the European Community, the famous, "banana" region, there are no problems of obsolete housing, but there are rent problems. The most unexpected mass housing crisis is the one due to the large migration waves. The German case is a good one in highlighting problems. It is worth noticing that 15% of Eastern Germans work already in the former FRA (gaining 60% of the Western salary), even if they had to face huge housing problems there. On the other hand, in Eastern countries, there is a tendency in liberalizing the mass housing market, even if this sector, in the West, has always been under control (40). In all cases, well planned housing proved to be an important factor of social integration (35, 36).

The good results of the Partnership approach for urban economic regeneration and housing improvement are evident in the case of Glasgow, the city which refused to die. 60% of the housing stock of the city is social housing and there are many rehabilitation projects, undertaken by housing associations.
The creation of new economic, environment friendly, urban activities is considered can be a major factor of social integration. Offering disadvantaged groups access to project and income is giving them new opportunities for creativity and self-esteem (24). In all European cities new environmental jobs (recycling business, water cleansing, etc.) totally unknown years before, are being created. Orientating into these, the persons most affected from an unhealthy environment, can have considerable results in the dual fight of exclusion and environmental deterioration.

All European urban social policies and actions seem to have a strong, common denominator. The citizens' involvement and participation. Environmental and other non-governmental organisations, citizen and community groups are more and more invited to act as partners rather than protesters. Bottom up developments expand continuously (6). The hidden human resource of each neighbourhood are being discovered (19). Citizens, workers, consumers play a more and more active role in the urban decision making concern. They form pressure groups with high environmental claims. They try to inform the less-informed, to mobilise the excluded, to make them aware of the possibilities of improving their urban conditions.

The approximation between citizens and administration is already an irreversible trend in European cities. No more major decisions concerning the future of cities are taken without well defined civil consensus. In Barcelona more than 160 citizen associations participate in the implementation of the Economy and Social strategic plan, basic instruments for urban change (15).

C. PLANNING METAMORPHOSES TOWARDS THE SUSTAINABLE URBAN EUROSPACE

All these metamorphoses are well reflected in Land Use plans interact with changes in Planning actions and practices. Land has always been seen as the basic raw material for human settlements and basic environmental resource. Land use developments are witnesses of the urban development stage and the land policies. Conflicts often arise between the physical planning of land use and the environmental quality, with a high environmental cost for inadequate land use developments.

Land use management is highly linked to the economic efficiency and viability of a city, its social values system and its environmental aspirations. Land use is an investment-attractor factor and urban added-value-generator, but also an indicator of social equity and environmental quality. The land markets are influenced by historical and cultural factors and have an impact on the social environmental landscape of the cities.

National, regional and municipal competence regarding urban land use are being reviewed, as well as the role of plan, as a instrument and reference system with integrated global and sectorial considerations. The need for a Dialectic relationships
between the global and the sectorial appeared with the birth of planning, defined as a public function to control the development (primarily the industrial development). Of course there was always a utopic component, as if nothing could escape the total public control and if the achievement of an absolute rationalisation was possible. Other problems also emerged, related to scientific-intellectual approaches offering global - and often non-applicable models or related to cooperative interests and the professional control of land problems. Whatever the development phase is, in the European cities (urbanisation, desurbanisation, reurbanisation) and whatever the degree of integration, social and environmental considerations are always taken into account.

There has been, these last few years a tremendous production of verbal and written statements concerning "integrated" or "cross-sectoral" or "transversal" or holistic and comprehensive approach in land use management. We just indicate here an exemplary integration and cross-sectoral approach: the one adopted by the Swedish Government Commission on Metropolitan problems with as main task the proposals of action improving the living environment in the Göteborg, Malmö and Stockholm and enabling these three metropolitan areas to play a dynamic role in national economic development (31).

Every urban sector appears, more and more often, as just one atom in the complex molecule that is the European city and all actions on that must take into account the impact of all urban data and policies having always in mind the necessity of insertion at the whole. The big challenge is the complexity of the reality. The urban reality suffered a lot from rigid zoning of the urban functions and monofunctionality. There is a European tendency in defining mixture and co-existence of functions as key features of urbanity (14) and many support that the city would cease to exist if the diversity and mixture disappeared. But if there is unanimous agreement concerning diversity, the main question remains "What the optimal articulation of urban functions should be".

The harmonious articulation of urban functions is therefore a goal to achieve, linked to the reintegration of land uses and the integral environmental quality. Transportation and allocation of activities are always powerful tools for featuring the city and a new articulation and mix of compatible activities can dramatically reduce transport flows and environmental deterioration and increase employment, access and mobility opportunities for disadvantaged social groups. Recreating the city's identity through the mix of land uses and functions seems to be one of the important debates of the nineties and after the Green Paper European Community dialogues (19,20). For the reintegration of uses and functions, partnership is again an important pillar.

The types of communication and collaboration between the state, the citizens and the market for the efficient and equitable functioning of urban land use are very important for the
sustainability of the urban Euroscape. The consensus for environmental considerations in land use management and the common fight against land use speculation and environmental degradation will be decisive for the future of the European cities and regions (7).

Partnerships are being institutionalised, as in the proposed Committee of the Regions (Maastricht Treaty Article 198A) and the Community is encouraging local authorities to rise to the challenge of managing Europe's cities and towns in partnership with its citizens. Public participation, visibly discontinuing with respect to the participatory tradition embodied in social movements and the '60s, is leading to the creation of a new urban value system.

If it is sure that this urban value system is more green, it also sure it incorporates more technological development. Cities become more intelligent (4), their infrastructure of communication networks more technologically advanced (12) as they assume more and more their role as nodes of communication networks. The creation of technopoles (33) is closely linked to urban reconversion strategies and the search of clean environments.

Europe tends to be a tissue of urban regions or cities-regions which articulate the economic and socio-cultural system, at the example of the Dutch randstand. It will be a European territory in competition (5). This new territory can't be isotrope. Disparities are increasing (9) and a combination of policies - dynamic in some regions and refraining in other one - seems quite difficult. There are many obstacles to overcome emerging from the traditionally different teleologies. For a more harmonious development, a new culture of plan has to be created and adapted, as strong, transparent and legitimate reference and direction, well beyond any imposition of administrative obligation.

If, with the fall of the Berlin wall, Europe is being reconciled with its geography (6), this geography seems more dynamic and variable geometry. The map of the towns of Europe is changing (10). The network of capital cities which predominated in geopolitics of Europe seems less strong. More "second cities" emerge (15). Major new cross-routes and axes may redistribute activities and have a high impact on jobs generation and self-generations and reinvested wealth.

According to the European Council of Town Planners (16), town planning is among the challenging and difficult tasks in a Europe, poised for a dramatic new wave of spatial, economic and social change. The reconstruction of Europe is of special interest for the 30,000 European planners and implies serious responsibility. The challenge is to build the bridge between the promotion of development and the interest of common good and influence the political agenda and the formulation of planning policies.
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