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Neighbourhood Policies and Public Action: Practices and Challenges in Italian Cities

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Content

- ▶ **Target areas (public – historic)**
- ▶ **Reasons for neighbourhood policies**
- ▶ **Practices and examples: main focuses and tools**
 - Milano (urban safety)
 - Torino (urban regeneration)
 - Trieste (local welfare)
- ▶ **Learnings**

Warnings for a comparison between Italian cities and Wien in housing policies

- ▶ **For the last 20 years, absence of social housing policies:**
 - 75% of Italian households own the flats they live in
 - 15% are renting their flats
 - public housing is less than 5%
- ▶ **No regulation in the private rent market:**
 - a general law regulating duration of contracts (4 + 4)
 - cost of rents is fixed by the market
- ▶ **Dramatic lack of affordable dwellings on the rental market for the lower and lower middle income groups**
- ▶ **Housing policies are very often treated in terms of emergency**

Since the 90's a whole set of national and regional programs were "tailored" at the neighbourhood level



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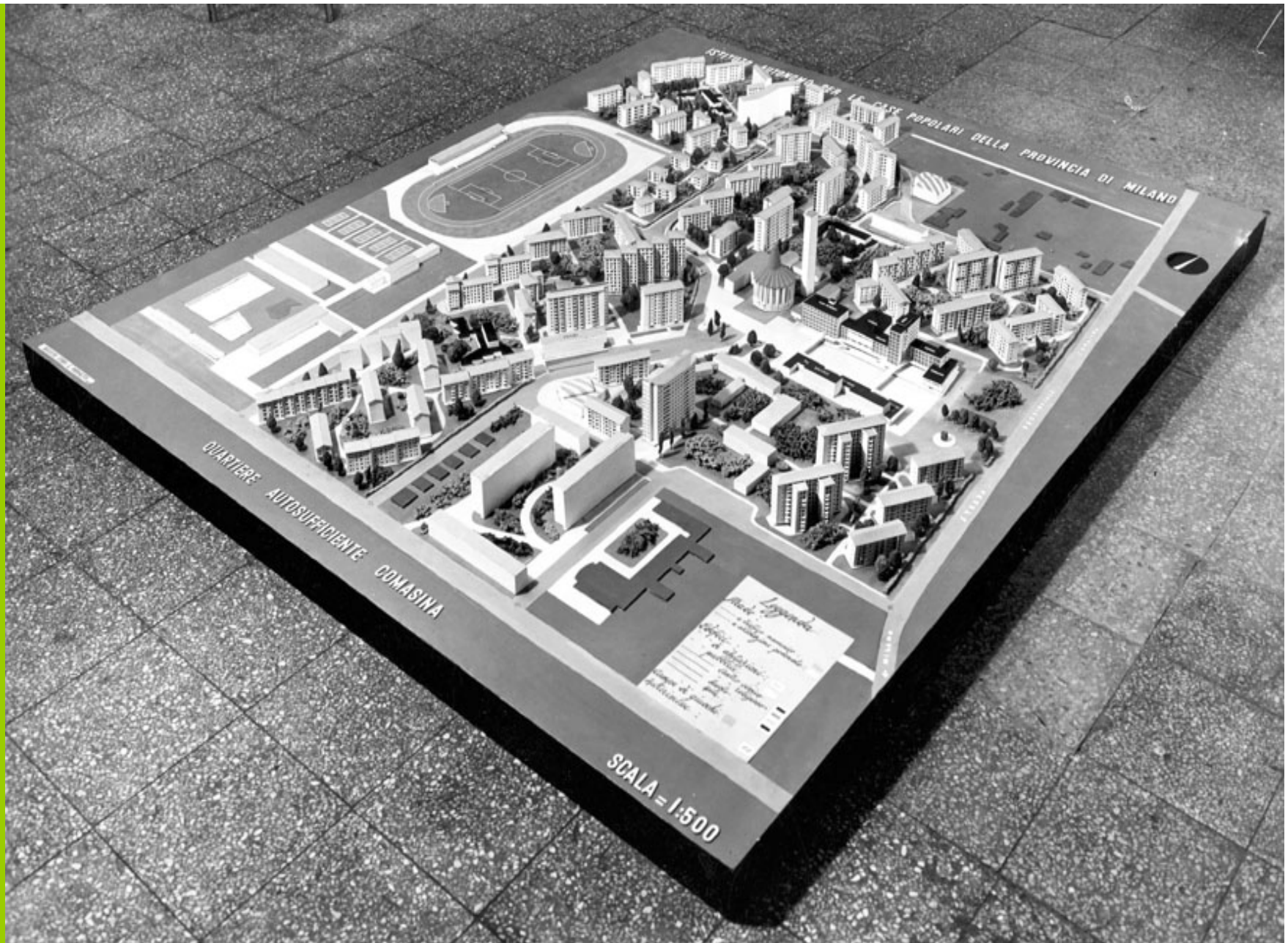
▶ **Which are the main target areas of neighbourhood policies in Italy?**

- Public housing estates
- Historic centres

A. Public Housing estates

- ▶ **Mainly built in major cities of the North, after WW1 and after WW2**
- ▶ **Solutions for enormous housing demand**
 - (cfr. labour migrants from southern Italy)
- ▶ **Worked as “platforms” for**
 - cultural integration
 - political socialisation
 - administrative decentralisation,
- ▶ **... movies from the so called neorealismo and others are giving a vivid image of processes and places. *Antonioni, De Sica, Rossellini, Pasolini.***

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B. Historic Centres

- ▶ **Some features of historic centres in Italy:**
 - entering point for newcomers
 - more mixed in terms of population and activities,
 - dense urban structure
 - strong image

- ▶ **Since the 70's there planning tools and interventions were focused at architectural conservation**

- ▶ **Bologna was a pioneer in developing “*Sanfte Stadterneuerung*” in Italy:**
 - under the pressure of citizens ‘ movements, residents where involved in a integrative regeneration of the building heritage taking care of existing inhabitants and economic activities

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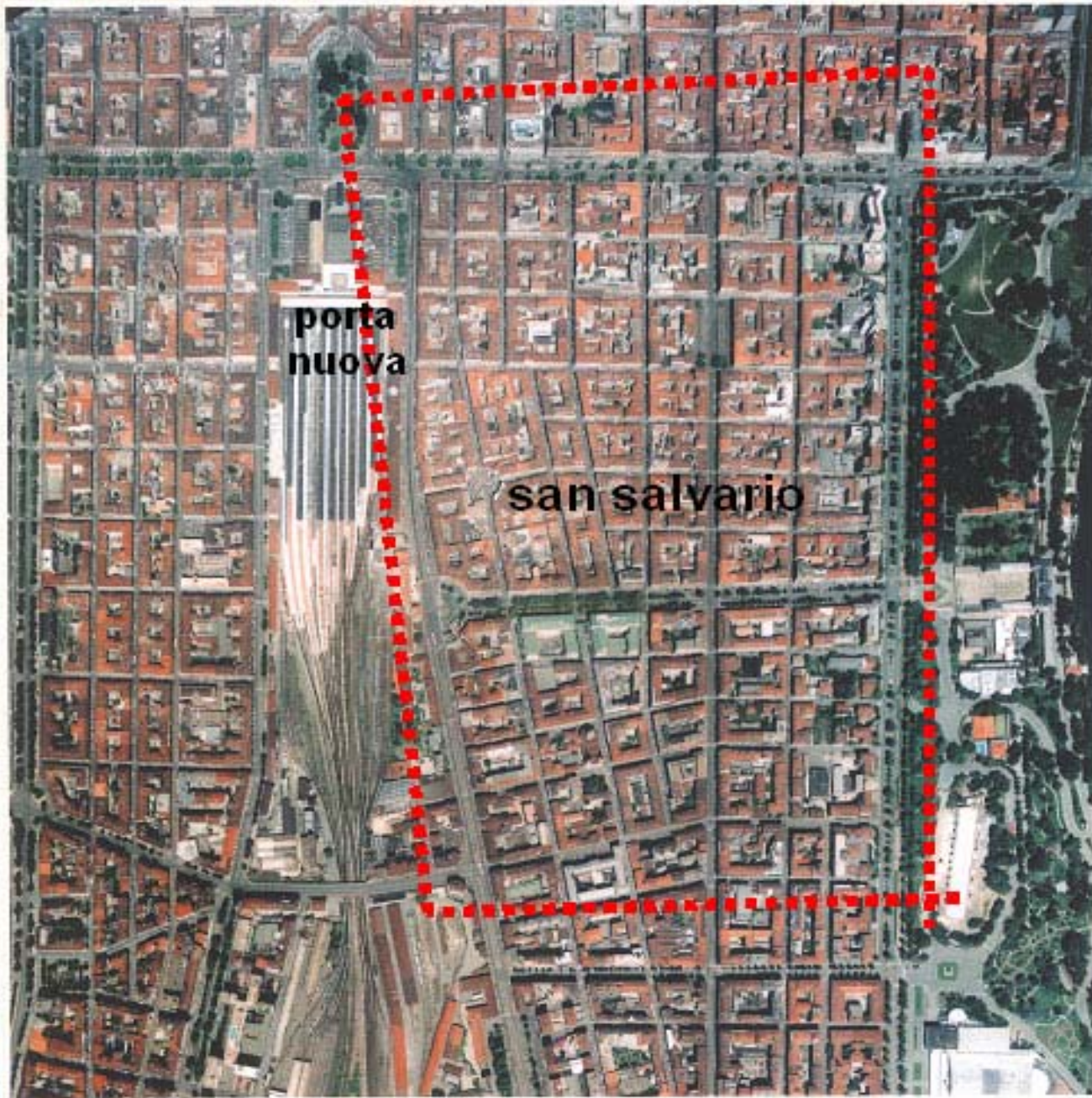
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Why public housing estates and historic centres became a target for specific policies?

PUBLIC HOUSING ESTATES:

- ▶ **increasing concentration of multidrived households**
 - Allocation of social housing “requires” multiple disadvantages
- ▶ **funds for public housing are lower and lower, physical decay got worse**
- ▶ **no innovation, ineffective policies and management of social housing**

HISTORIC CENTRES:

- ▶ **Low standards, decaying of housing stock**
- ▶ **moving out of middle income groups**
- ▶ **no investments on housing stock**
- ▶ **impoverishment**
- ▶ **since the mid 90’s, high proportions of foreign immigration**

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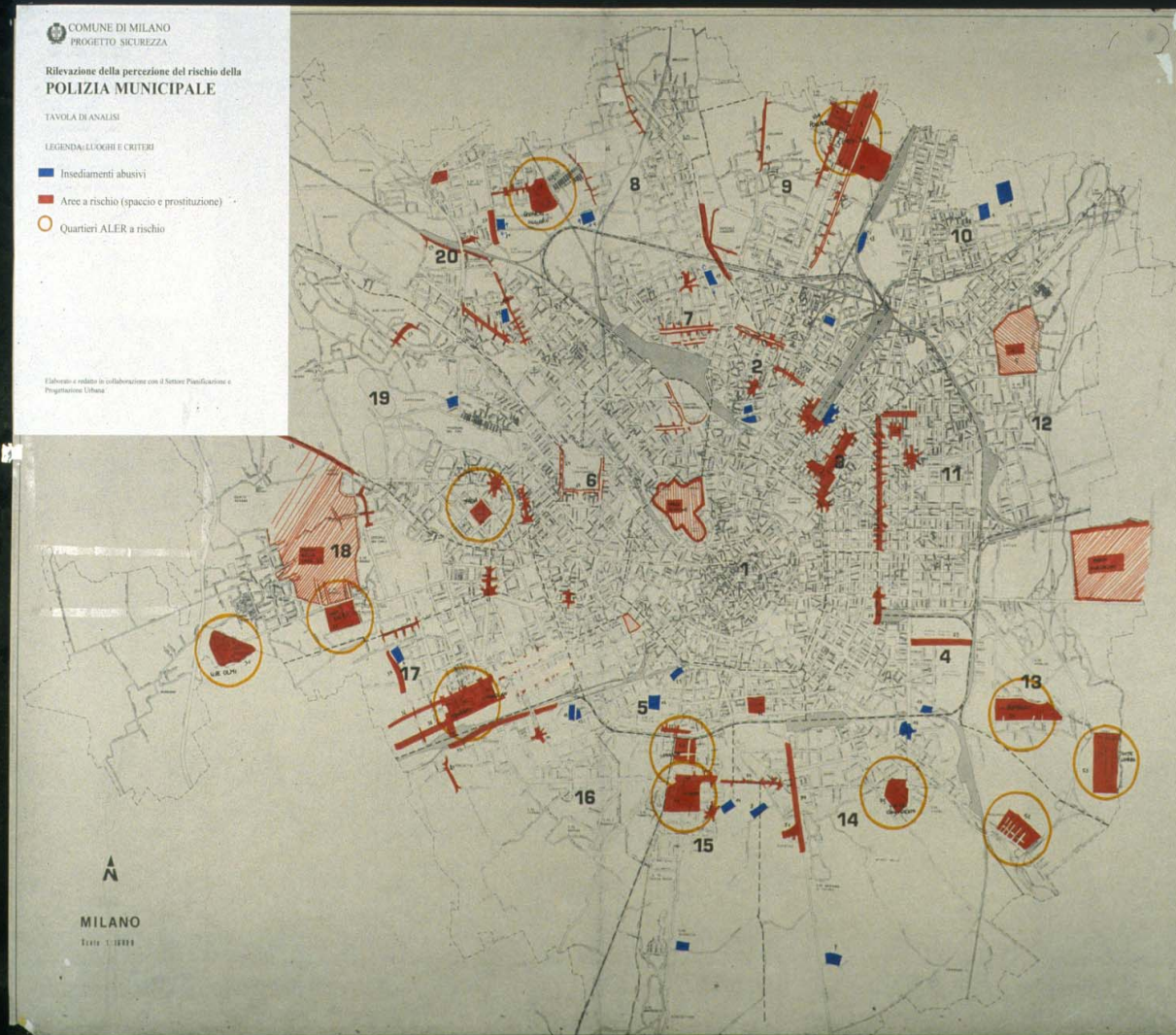
Which arguments supported the development of neighbourhood policies?

- ▶ **Combat social exclusion “on site”**: focusing policies and resources, where disadvantage is concentrated
- ▶ **Combat the ineffectiveness of sectoral policies** (building, social, economic)
- ▶ **Bring policies closer to the inhabitants and local actors**

Three examples from northern Italy...

1. Milano, Lombardia: the focus on urban safety policies

- ▶ **Laboratory for neo-liberal policy orientations**
- ▶ **Focus on Sicherheit**
- ▶ **Development of a neighbourhood program for the local police**
- ▶ **Only later, under the drive of national funding, development of neighbourhood programs (“Contratti di Quartiere”)**
- ▶ **Insurgent difficulties of short term and weak policies and**

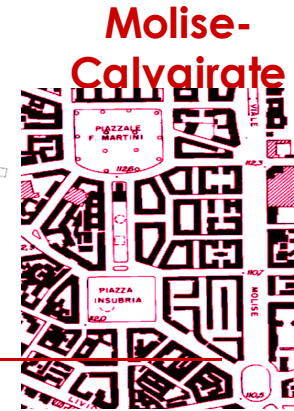


► Neighbourhood Local Police scheme, 2000

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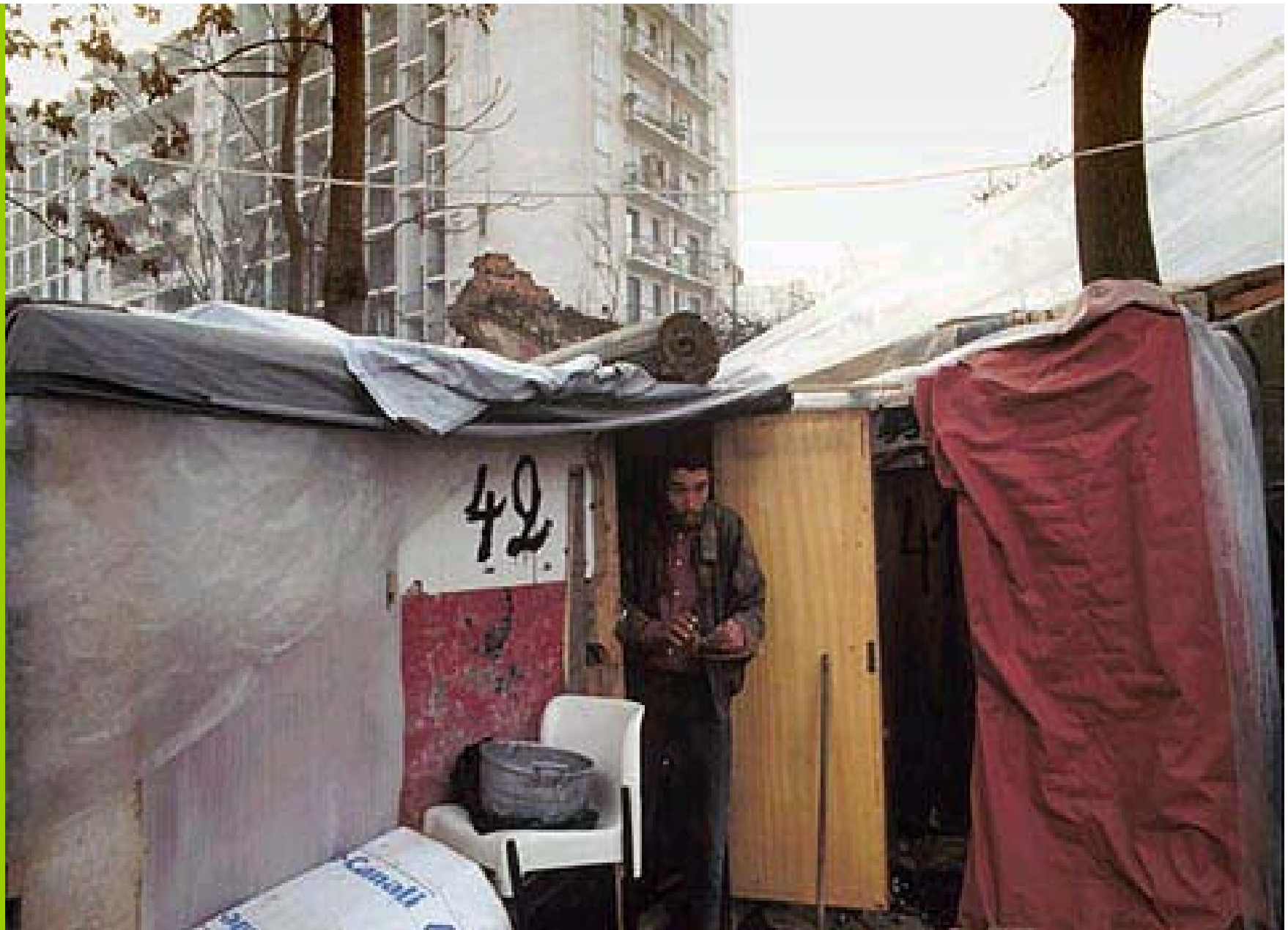


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► 5 Neighbourhood Contracts, 2004

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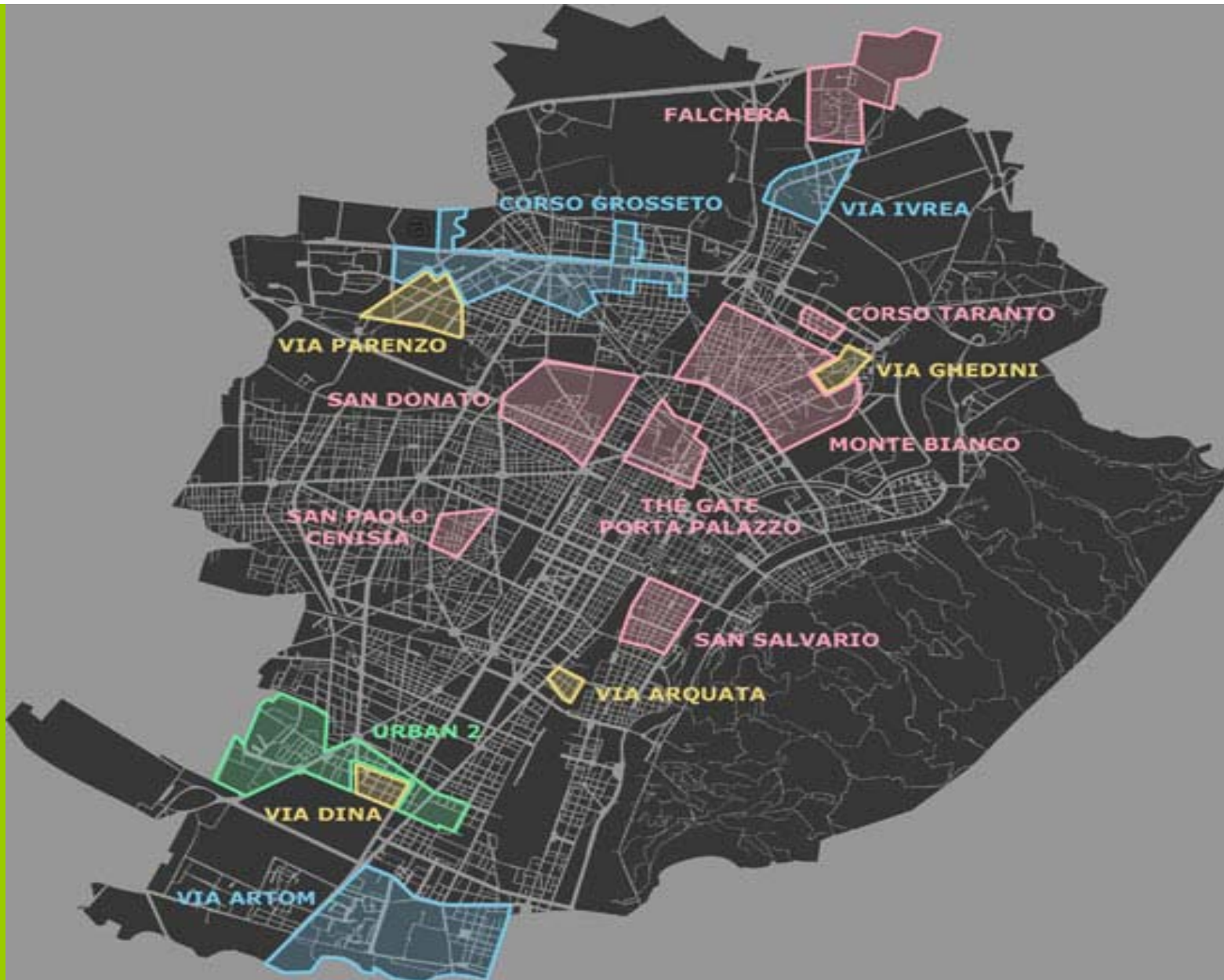
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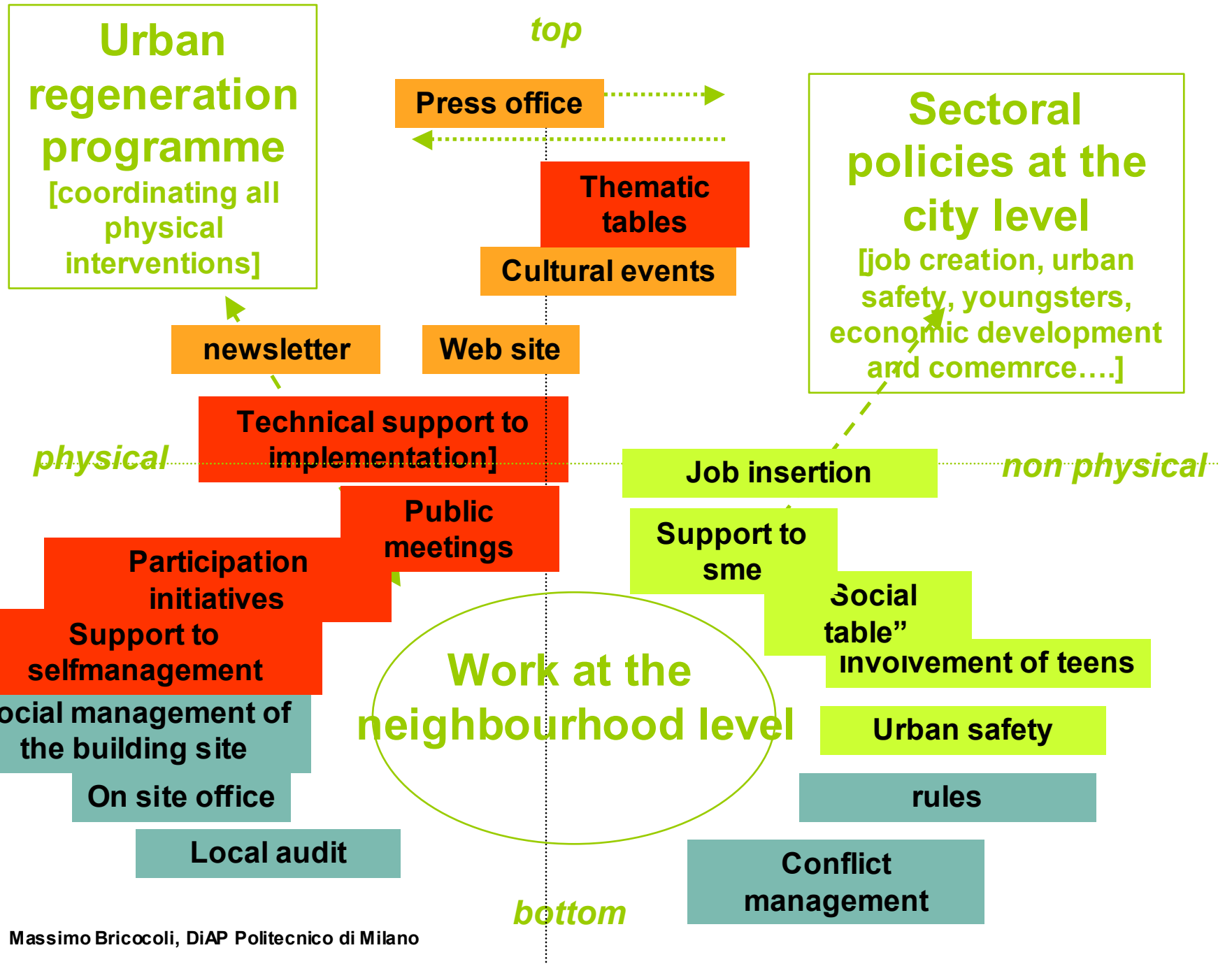
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2. Torino, Piemonte: the focus on urban regeneration

- ▶ Reinventing a future for a post-fordist city (FIAT Company Town)
- ▶ An overall scheme for the regeneration of critical areas in the city, definitin of a “Torino model”
- ▶ Focus on integrated and partecipated urban regeneration
- ▶ Different programs and sources of funding (EU, National, regional...)



► Torino: the “Progetto Speciale Periferie” target areas





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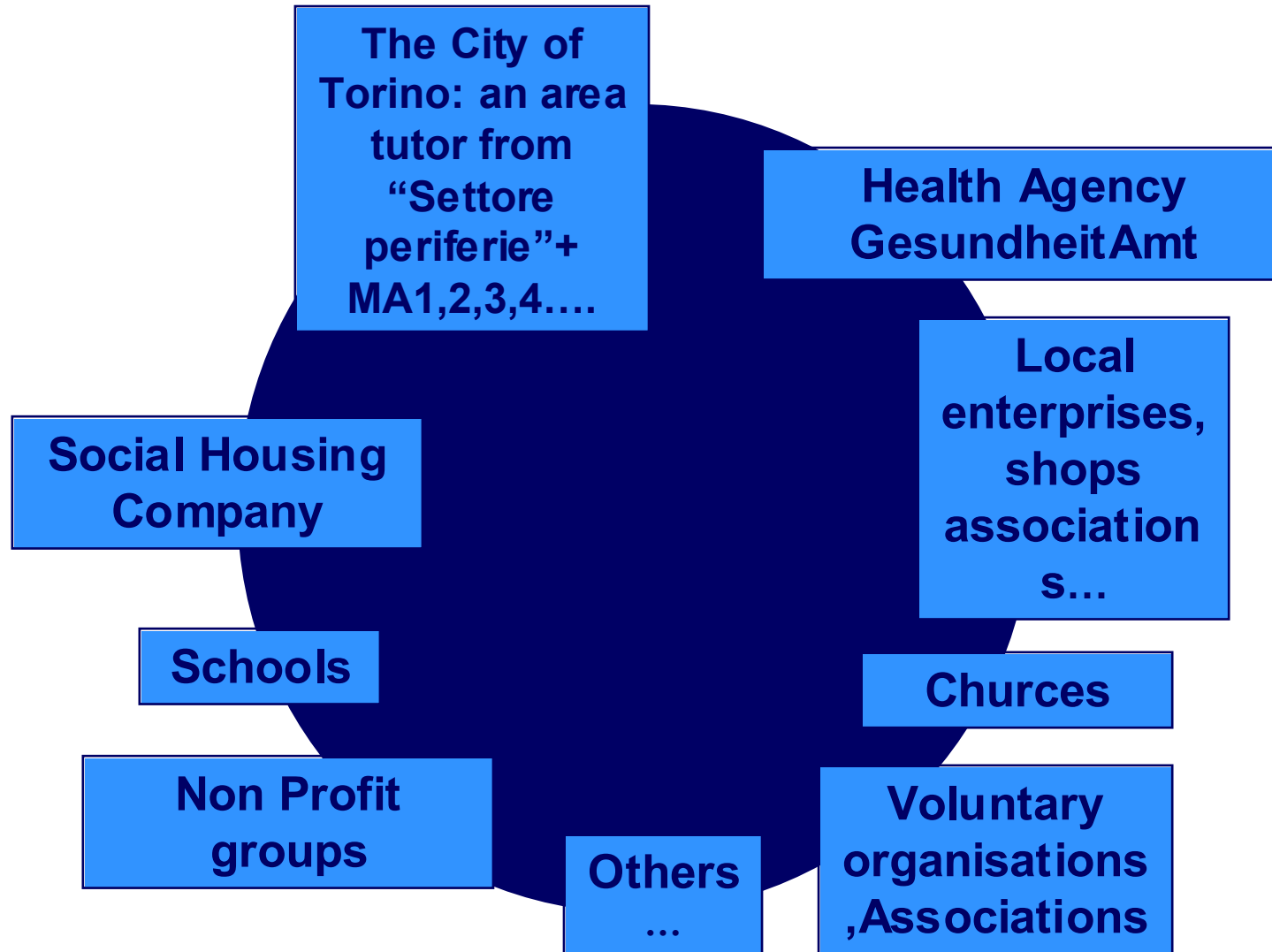


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▶ The structure of a "Local Table"

3. Trieste, Friuli Venezia Giulia, the focus on local welfare

- ▶ **Friuli Venezia Giulia and Trieste as laboratories for social-democracy**
- ▶ **Development of local welfare innovations based on inter-institutional cooperation and the active involvement of the local citizenry**
- ▶ **Focus on microareas of 1000/3000 inhabitants,**
- ▶ **Focus on effective, concrete integration among healthcare, social welfare, employment policies, social habitat and housing sectors**
- ▶ **Pragmatism: bridge the gap between international declarations of principle and the reality at the local level.**

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To resume, the philosophy of neighbourhood policies in Italy...

- ▶ **Was strongly influenced by previous experiences of other European cities (GB, D, F...)**
- ▶ **Has been adopting policy devices firstly introduced by EU programs.**
 - Es. competitive bids for the allocation of public funds: competition among local governments as a drive for innovation in public administration and policies
- ▶ **Was driven by new guidelines and keywords:**
 - integration among institutions and policy actors (vertical and horizontal), integration of different policies and measures (physical, economic, social), residents participation, subsidiarity, P&P partnerships

Which were the leverages that neighbourhood programs have been using to produce innovation?

- ▶ **Funding (money)**
 - allocating extra/specific resources for neighbourhood programs has been a key to activate local governments
- ▶ **Use of programs (focus on objectives and time schedules) instead of plans in the urban planning domain**
- ▶ **Obligation to define a director, in charge of each single program:**
 - project managers as new profiles within the bureaucracy of municipalities
- ▶ **Involvement of private and nonprofit groups in the support/management of neighbourhood program**

Some learnings...

- ▶ **Neighbourhood programs are effective in disvealing the hell of sectoral policies and the perversion of bureacracy**
- ▶ **The action/support of private or non profit organisation in the management of neighbourhoods is effective if there is a strong integration with the City public administration, otherwise the focus is more on communication rather than on local development**
- ▶ **Neighbourhood programs generate knowledge on critical factors of social and economic development.**
- ▶ **In the absence of integrated neighbourhood policies, a demand for sicherheit policies takes the lead**

Thank you for your attention!

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