

Italy	301'338Km2	* Inhabitants	60'325'805
Urban Region	280Km2	* Inhabitants	365'700

Florence: a squandered heritage

Data 2008
Population of the municipality of Florence 365.659, surface 102,41 km2, density 3.571 inhabitants/km2, pop. growth rate 2002-2008: 3,5%
Population of the "urban region" as defined on the map approx. 750.000
Population of the extended area of influence of the urban region approx. 1.000.000
Population growth rate 2002-2008: 5%
Percentage of social dwellings in the "urban region" 3%

The urban area, as defined on the map (part of the biggest area of "Central Tuscany" that gathers along the Arno valley about half of the population of the whole Tuscany), is dominated by two big cities (Florence on the est side and Prato on the west, with a strong industrial district in crisis), with a pre-eminence of Florence in terms of cultural role, services and facilities. In the past the population was strongly concentrated in Florence city centre. Recently all the region around grew up, mainly because of movement of population inside the area where many people left the main centre to re-locate in the surroundings, looking for cheaper housing or more comfortable lifestyle (parking facilities, less urban congestion, greenery etc.). From the point of view of demography we are in a relatively small town on the European context and also local economy is not significant on the global scale. What makes Florence part of the global MM is therefore its

image of cultural centre and masterpiece in the history of art, that gives to the city a position in the global market of high level cultural tourism because of its heritage and because of a policy of preservation of the historic city centre (UNESCO world heritage site). The network of museums and historic archives supports the attractiveness of the city for cultural tourism and the image of historic treasure is easily marketable for both luxury and cheap "mass tourism" residences, hotels, shops, restaurants with related consequences on the city everyday life. This image is also relevant for:

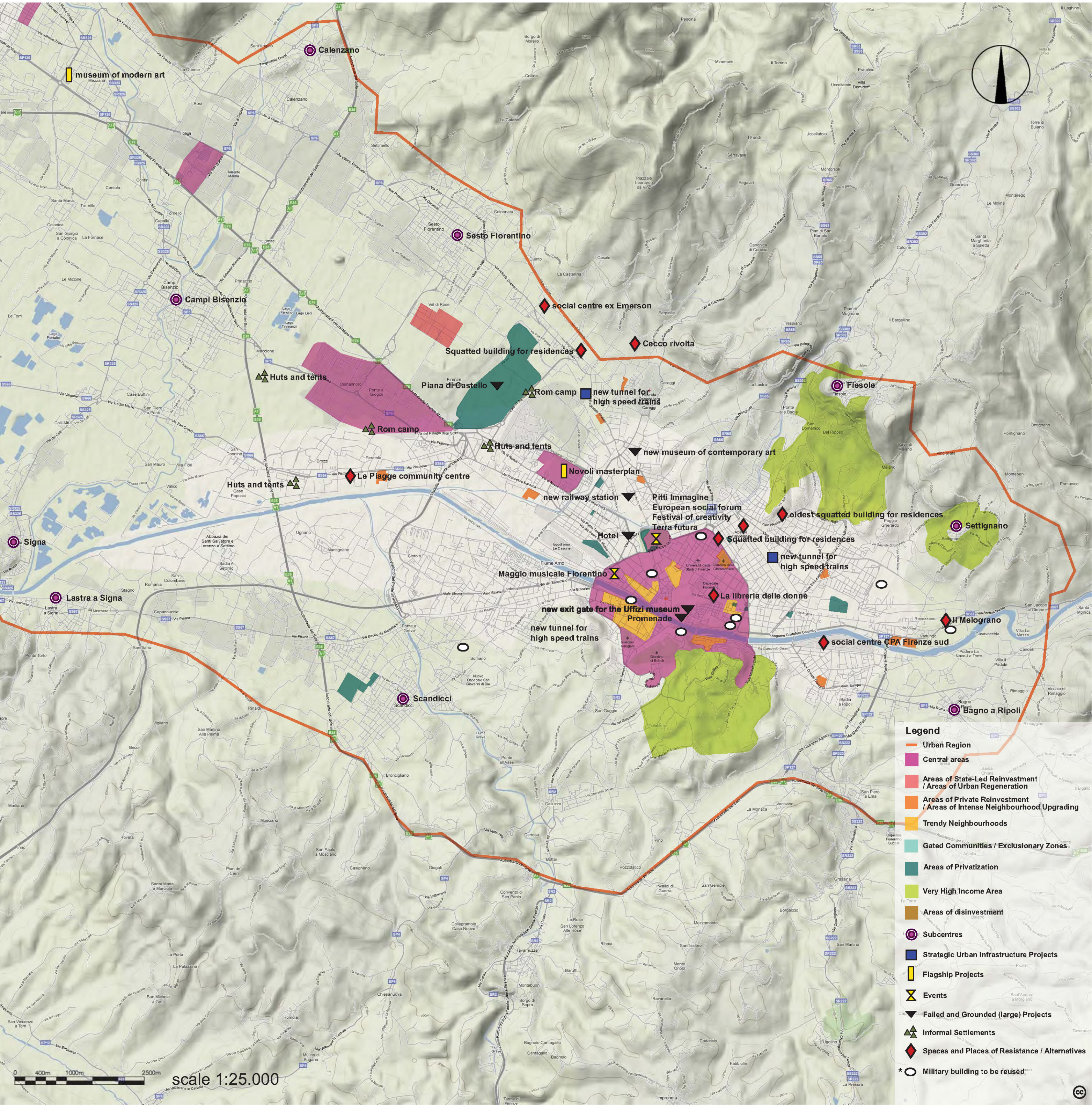
- international institutions of the academic system that locate here research centres mainly connected with history of art and restoration (Harvard University Centre for Italian Renaissance Studies, Opificio delle Pietre Dure, Kunsthistorisches Institut, etc.);
- branch of foreign universities (Syracuse, Stanford, New York, etc.);
- the European University Institute, one of the most relevant EU research institution.

Florence MM is, as a matter of fact, based on the past and not efficiently supported by recent public policies. This explains the relevance of commerce and real estate income in the area.

The city seems to live from the consumption of existing cultural values, being unable to innovate and produce new culture:

- a big university but without high standard faculties or departments;
- an important classical music theatre but always under serious difficulties;
- some book publishers, but not any more of national scale;
- etc.

Alternative movements tried, in the recent past, to innovate the cultural landscape (music, figurative art, theatre) and to have an impact on the social situation (housing fight movements, squatted social centres, alternative economy initiatives) with the supposed secondary effect of influencing the cultural, economic and political scene. The process failed because of a lack of local policy vision to support cultural and social bottom up innovation and because of a local entrepreneurship more accustomed to exploit land rent than to develop innovation. The described situation of Florence as tourist attraction increases the cost of dwellings, and an almost not existing social housing system increases the housing shortage for low and medium income people.



Flagship Project: The Fiat-Novoli area

Purpose: redevelopment of the area of a former car factory in the north-west part of the city.

Dimension: 32 ha (12ha dedicate to the park), 3.000 future inhabitants, almost other 10.000 daily users; the area is located in a neighbourhood with 44.600 residents at a distance of 500 mt; 70.200 residents in a 10 minutes distance by car.

Architects: first landscape project by Lawrence Halprin and development plan by a team coordinated by Bruno Zevi, then masterplan by Leon Krier (1990) and detailed plan by Gabetti e Isola (2000), design of single building by different architects (Gabetti, Isola, Natalini etc).

Investors: development, management and commercialization by "Immobiliare Novoli S.p.A." shareholders are national and international investors: Fiat holds 40 %, 30% by Tuscan banks (Monte dei Paschi, Cassa di Risparmio e Banca Toscana), 30 % by the multinational Dutch corporation "Novoli Investors".



Description / Reasons for the choice / Background context

Fiat built a car factory in the outskirts of the city in the early twentieth century and a new plant in 1936 in the Novoli area. The location had been offered by the Council of Florence to the company in order to provide incentives for industrial development. In the course of time the city has grown around the factory. Therefore, Fiat's area has reached a very high value, as a result of town's development. After relocation of industrial activities in the half of the 80's Fiat undertook an usual operation of private exploitation of the income incorporated in the soil: a long period of negotiation between the private company and the civil authority for the area's transformation begun. In the middle of the Eighties a first modernist project was developed through a workshop coordinated by the landscape architect Lawrence Halprin and then by urban planner Bruno Zevi. The project was stopped by decision of the central direction of the communist party, to whom the major belonged, caused by rising social opposition. The project was only temporarily abandoned, at the beginning of the 90's the Council of Florence entrusted the emerging star of new (anti-modern) urbanism Lèon Krier with the drawing of a new master plan. The central idea of Krier is to re-establish in the area an urban centre which reminds the old Florence: an organic settlement, buildings of a relatively limited height, a network of typical urban streets. Service and residential purposes were expected to locate here, as well as a new University campus, while a park goes through the area from side to side in the middle of the new district.

Impacts

The University buildings have been built instead of the plant of 1936, despite the fact that the University Town Planning Department proposed to reuse some buildings, interesting pieces of industrial archaeology. The advantages for the community were few: the buildings were sold to the University at a very high price (at that time rose a crisis of the University finances which lasts still today), there is a lack of services for students in the area (a building for the canteen was bought hastily by the regional administration to provide meals for thousand of students), there's only a bus Line with high frequency, a tramway will be built in almost 5 years. The biggest part of the area is intended as houses And shops for the private market, Krier's Original plan got Worse during the project's realization, the density of the built area is too high, the street narrow and the public space very poor, without enough parking spaces, thus making in the end that area congested. At one corner is in progress the building of a multiplex, not expected in the original master plan. A public prosecutor have stopped the construction because of land use law violation and a negotiation is open in order to define the future of the project. On the edge of the area is under construction a courthouse, a project firstly designed in the 70s by a famous Florentine architect Leonardo Ricci. It's about a giant-size building, designed according to the 60's fashion, born already old (construction started in 2000), consumer of energy and financial resources. The building site has lasted for decades, with increasing costs, and still after many years is not finished. Its height competes with the one of the Brunelleschi's Dome, altering the city's skyline.



Event Pitti Immagine

Purpose to celebrate and promote the fashion system involving enterprises, institutions, associations.

Dimension thousands of people are involved in the event mainly in three periods on the year: autumn, spring and summer.

Projects cost the cost of the project ranges from 20 to 35 million Euros per year (approximately).

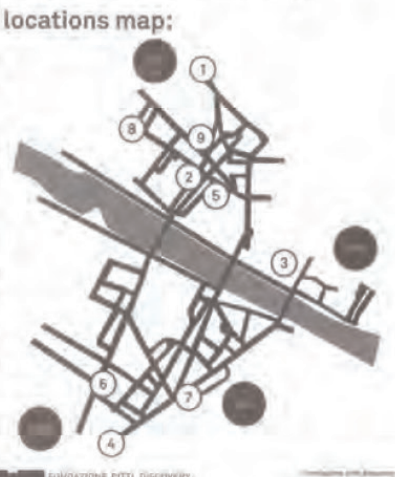
Investor the investors are merged in a group named CFMI (Centro di Firenze per la Moda Italiana)-which is a non-profit association of public and private participation.

Architect the event management involves a lot of architects (both as creative leader and guest stars).

Description / Reason for this choice / Background context

Pitti Immagine is a public and cultural happening that marks the city in different ways: international quality clothing and textile fairs, communication deeds; cultural and research initiatives for the fashion system. It is an interesting event for four main aspects:

1. the event involves a very large range of actors: inhabitants, tourists, famous architects, young artists, creative sector representatives, investors and other stakeholders;
2. the event intercepts the fashion global market and its interests at many levels;
3. the event faces a suffering local economy, a weak political leadership with no vision for the future;
4. the event lasted for more than half a century; it involves the entire city all year: public spaces, city centre, historical buildings and monuments, villas, historical gardens, "pieces" of industrial architecture that was recently opened to the public, landscape resources and so on.



Significance for a new metropolitan Mainstream

Pitti Immagine can be pointed out by the following "mainstream indicators":

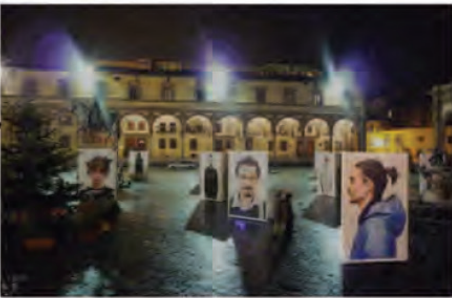
1. the interaction between intellectual/relational capital and human capital;
2. the high level of internationality in terms of economical interest, cultural contamination, entrepreneurial promotion;
3. Public and private partnership (PPP) in management and financial support of fashion fair activities and related events;

Stakeholders and their interests

The stakeholders network includes three main companies:

1. "Pitti Immagine S.r.l." which is the main company of the group engaged in the management of textile and clothing for fashion events and fairs.
2. "Fondazione Pitti Discovery" which promotes cultural Events, exhibition and editorial projects. Fashion culture Activities and its Contamination with other expressions: design, architecture, visual arts and so on.
3. "Stazione Leopolda S.r.l." which develops the "Pitti Immagine" fair and exhibition models in creative and commercial terms.

The public sector is involved in the event in many ways: as a promoter, as an investor, as an organizer in terms of cultural, economic and urban planning.



It deals with

The governance model that emerged from the event management style is based on three main political and cultural assumptions:

- short-time investments based on a global urban image connected with brands, fashion, the global market;
- selection of actors' concerns and hierarchical networks built on actual or potential contribution to global brands;
- fashion oriented fairs, events and projects have been seen as a production of aesthetic/cultural consumption patterns.

The choices of the event deal with the balance between public benefits/costs and private interests. The public cost of the event is a very high one whether valued in terms of common goods consumption, public space alienation or privatization, blindness in front of neighborhood economy, social and cultural local resources.

Impacts

The impact evaluation is really difficult. Something that makes sense is to identify urban policies dilemmas dealing with a principal question: to whom belongs the city?

It would be important to get a long-period assessment on:

- the balance between local enrichment and the "power of place";
- the right direction of local urban policies called to answer to the global claim;
- finding out a socially shared project of public space (indoor and outside).

Alternative: Piagge Community

Purpose: To build into a deprived neighbourhood a sense of community and a self sustainable development process based on "solidal economy" and social justice.

Dimension: The community involves in an active way few hundreds of people, in the neighbourhood live 8.000 inhabitants.

Project costs: mostly self-financed activities, 3 working cooperatives give an income to unemployed people, some projects are carried on with public money from social services (social inclusion) and educational programmes (alphabetization centres etc.).

Architects: No archistars involved, some collaborations with volunteer architects, self-building practices of the place.



Significance for NMM

The Piagge's base community was founded 15 years ago in the outskirts of Florence by a catholic priest, Alessandro Santoro, close to the theology of freedom and to the long history of "disobedience" in the Florentine church represented by don Lorenzo Milani, don Enzo Mazzi and others. The Community concentrates its activities into a self-built shack called "Centro Sociale il Pozzo" in the core of the neighbourhood, surrounded by fields, a community garden and some small working activities (nursery, recycling, repair laboratories, a fair trade shop etc), and linked with an organic farm in the countryside called Casale di Villore. The community defines itself as "nor a religious neither a political group" but something in between. The community works especially to enlarge the access to rights and primary goods for the excluded, to activate processes of liberation from psychiatry, prisons and other total institutions, giving back dignity to people. The pillars of this dignity are the possibility to express themselves and to work, from here the centrality of education and job insertion. The reason why we choose the Piagge's community as an alternative to MM is that all the activities are promoted bottom up and since the beginning the community has believed in empowerment of individuals in the frame of self sustainable development processes rooted in the "third sector" or in the fields of locally based "green" and "solidal" economies. This makes Piagge neighbourhood a place of concrete experimentation of "another possible world".

Impacts

In 15 years started up from Piagge's community:

Associazione il Muretto (a volunteer association): adults school and after school for teenagers; children activities selfmanaged by mothers and young women; summer play activities, hospitality in an organic farm, children in foster care, job training; legal advice for migrants, homeless etc. Il Muretto also publishes L'altracittà, "newspaper of the suburbs";

Cooperativa sociale Il Pozzo (a working cooperative in the educational and social field): the members of the cooperative work not only "for", but primarily "with" the people of the neighbourhood who live in difficult conditions, involving the inhabitants in the problem setting and in the starting of empowerment processes, community care and community design, locally based social activities (learning and training courses, language school, baby services, social inclusion especially for gipsy and Chinese people that live in the surroundings, socio therapeutic insertion, contrast to dropping out for young people and so on).

Cooperativa sociale Il Cerro: job placement and creation of solidal and ecological microeconomies locally based (gardening, organic and self sufficient farming, recycling, repair and reuse of books, clothes, metals, appliances, bicycles etc).

The Piagge's community has also activated the Fondo etico e sociale (Ethical and social fund), one of the first and most important experiences of microcredit in Italy and a cooperative of women called "Equazione".

criticalconsumption, buying groups of organic products, fair catering and a solidal economy shop.



The inhabitants of the neighbourhood are involved in many different ways but always there is a practice of individual and collective responsibility and decision making processes through assembly. The Piagge's community is able to promote "bottom up public policies" and self-managed social services in a worm and friendly way that neither the market nor the state can provide and has strong relationships with a wide network of political, social, and cultural organizations in the local, national and international contest.

transformations in this area, so many new projects (see Novoli master plan) are not inserted in a frame sufficiently wide and strategic, then they don't reach the expected goals in term of urban performances;

• there is a contradiction in the relationship between the global economic system (tourism, fashion, culture, arts, etc.) and local everyday life (see Pitti event), that produce a private use of public spaces and built heritage. This imply an imbalance between costs and benefits;

• the crisis hits hard also here, with losses of jobs and families that are not able to pay the mortgage, or the rent and are evicted from their home: their number is growing noticeably. Between Dec. 2008 and Dec. 2009 in the Province of Florence there was an increase of 104,02% of the total evictions; in the period Jan.-Feb. 2009 the total eviction were 2.895; a big part, i.e. 1.148, for default and other 1.174 for other reason, neither of the two were for the lease end (Figures from the Ministry of Interior);

Failed Projects: Unbuilt Flagship Projects

Arno Masterplan 1983- 1984; **Client:** City of Florence; **Architect** Richard Rogers Partnership; **Purpose:** an 8 kilometre pedestrian promenade on one river bank and a green park on the other; **Status:** unbuilt.

Novoli Masterplan 1987-1988; **Client:** Fiat; **Architect:** Richard Rogers Partnership; **Purpose:** a new mixed use quarter in a decayed area; **Status:** unbuilt. Built with another architect.

Piana di Castello, 1995- 1995; **Client:** City of Florence; **Architect:** Richard Rogers Partnership; **Purpose:** a new mixed use quarter in an agricultural area; **Status:** unbuilt.

Florence High Speed Train Station, 2003; **Client:** Italian Railway Network; **Architect:** Norman Foster **Purpose:** new station below ground with two levels of shops; **Status:** unbuilt.

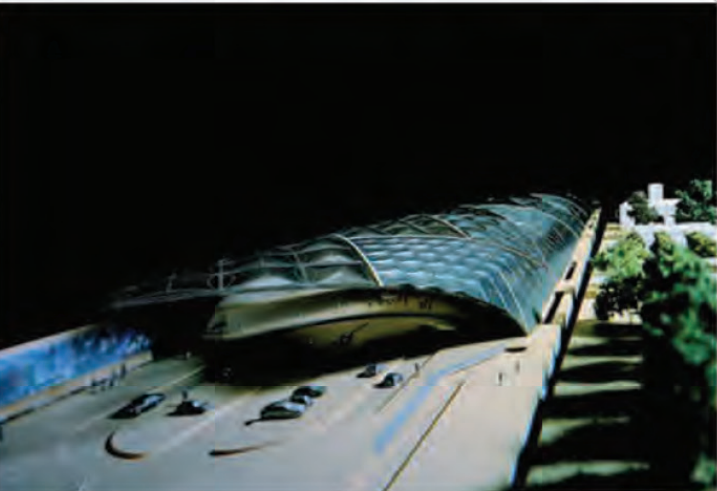
Belfiore Hotel; 2002 - 2007; **client:** Baldassini Tognozzi spa; **Architect** Jean Nouvel; **Purpose:** four star hotel; stopped by legal argument between client and architect; **Status** unbuilt.

CAC Centro d'Arte Contemporanea (contemporary art centre); 1981- 2009; **Client:** City of Florence; **Architect:** 1990 Battisti, Dezzi Bardeschi e Mattei (in 1981 also Vittorio Gregotti); **Purpose:** renewal of an old factory as an art centre; stopped by a legal argument on the tender; in 2009 the mayor drop the plan; **Status:** unbuilt.

Exit of the Uffizi Museum, 1998 - 2010; **Client:** Ministry of Cultural Heritage and City of Florence; **Architect** Arata Isozaki; **Purpose:** design the front rear of the Uffizi and the square in front of it; **Status** unbuilt and under criminal investigation.

Calatrava Bridge 2000 - 2003; **Client:** City of Florence; **Architect** Santiago Calatrava; **Purpose:** modernize the existing bridge alla Vittoria; **Status:** Unbuilt.

Music and Culture park. New Auditorium 2007 - 2010. **Client:** Presidency of the Council of Ministers; **Architect:** ABDR Architetti Associati s.r.l.; **Purpose:** a complex with auditoriums and gardens; **Status:** unbuilt and under criminal investigation - 2010 (cooked competition).



Significance for NMM

The projects listed above intended to renew the image of Florence. But they failed: why?

For some of them at the end the promoter choose a more camouflage architecture. Why change the old image when is still so well marketed?

For others the conflicting matter was the proposed function and the name-brand architects was used to push a controversial projects (the station of Foster). The Exit of Uffizi by Isozaki was actually the only one delayed by criticism on architecture. The lack of political will to really innovate the town is the reason for the cancellation of the Centre for Contemporary Art strongly asked by local people.

Should be noted that almost all the tenders fall under investigation. Being mainly promoted by public bodies, some of them were financed as large events and "emergencies", without any control and at discretion, and now are charged for bribery. Is it a deviation or part of the tendency towards undemocratic policies?

Deals

The "jelly system" is a bribery in which high level ministerial public officers use their power of awarding public and rich contracts, to get gifts and kickbacks from real estate and building enterprises. This system is fully documented by the investigations and it is very widespread.

The spending for the community is immense and the contractor often present fake discounts which subsequently are systematically inflated. To put under a commissioner the Work for The Great Uffizi by the Minister Of Cultural Heritage mean award the restoration to a person without qualification for 29,5 million euro.

Discretion and lack of transparency and control are becoming the rule. Without any control, the power become absolute.

Is it Italian folklore or there is a trend link between PPPs and bribery?



Impact

Lack of funds for social and cultural needs.

Synthesis over all four projects and outlook

The Florence MM is characterized by:

inability of the political economic, social, cultural system to manage complex plans and to promote or take advantage from innovation;

• public administration relies on public-private partnership to provide public and social services able to generate profits and to realise extremely gainful public works. Currently this attitude gives rise to many case of bribery and highlights that the public bodies are unable to manage the partnership with private enterprises and project financing in a way that safeguard any definition of the common good;

• public administration shares the same approach with the private sector in housing, public utilities, cultural activities, etc. This implies that many public properties are sold and this is particularly visible in the public and social housing;

• public housing sustains only a small range of very low income people: the others are left alone by public policies becoming the main victims of the social housing system inefficiency. The social housing for medium income, is mainly built by private enterprises heavily subsidised by public bodies, with money, with land at low cost or almost for free, with the right to built an higher amount of housing for the market, this means that we have a pre-eminence of the commercial and real estate economy;

• the housing shortage is exploding, involving not only low income but medium income people as well. In this situation a social or cultural centre "outside the market" hardly find a place;

• the economic system is used to exploit rent and so to earn from accumulation by dispossession of common goods;

• territorial planning is unable to effectively control urban