

# FROM AN IMPOSED CITY TO A SHARED ONE: THE NEW CULTURAL DIMENSION OF URBAN SUSTAINABILITY

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## 1. Introduction

The city prevails as an essential element of our period: a territorial synthesis of progress and, at the same time, an open field of contradictions typical of development and modernism – a unique example of territorial and symbolic identification and at the same time a place where changes have taken place and contributed to endanger the recognition and partly its own role.

The city is the result of a double course. On one side we have the industrial course fed by the internal economies and agglomeration ones, which is unfolded as a standardized and consumers society, in it is becoming, together with a serious environmental impact. On the other side we have the post-industrial course based on a services society, a less energetic society but at the same time, a real space-consuming one.

The latter has increased some worse effects that can be summed up in the following items:

- Cities *sprawled* on the territory and fed both by the communication revolution and by the micro-electronic technology. At a minor geographic meaning of the physical distance corresponds a more and more increasing demographic and productive mobility which aims to enlarge the built space (suburban belts, peri-urban areas) without respecting any urbanistic law and environmental principles;

- Sharp market segmentation which, if, on one hand, it revitalized some local territorial systems, thanks to a more and more qualified demand, on the other hand, it creates technological unemployment which, as a consequence, creates urban conflicts and the demand for social reforms;

- Economic productive wave of the migratory transition which delays to organise the urban space again according to social relationships and environmental quality;

- Division among cities and ideas, information and knowledge, "enjoyed" and shared city by its inhabitants.

## 2. Towards a cultural and institutional sustainability

The complexity of the 'urban matter' can be explained according to the principle of the *sustainable development*. Although this concept has to be considered inflated as regards both its ideological<sup>1</sup> and application context, it still remains, without any doubt, the only 'course' to follow in order to reach and maintain a dynamic equilibrium between heterogeneous and conflictual dimensions which are fundamental as well, just like the economic, environmental and social ones.

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<sup>1</sup> The notion of sustainable development is full of ambiguity and reports, on one hand about "sustainability" as "an idea of maintenance / preservation of the present conditions for a long time and at the same time to guarantee a support, by avoiding deterioration" and on the other hand about "development" as "changing transformation of the status quo... and so, of fluctuation, instability and struggled things" (Fusco Girard e Nijkamp. 1997. P.21). Of particular significance is the definition given by the Brundtland Report (1987) which became well-known on the political field: "sustainable development means a development related to the present needs without compromising the possibility for the further generation to satisfy their own needs" (World Conservation and Environment and Development, 1987, p.43). A complementary definition is given by the World Commission on Environment and Development (1987, p.43). A complementary definition is given by the World Commission on Environment and Development (1987, p.43). The International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (1994) definition is considered more pragmatic and local: "sustainable development refers to a development which may offer basic environmental, social and economic services to all the members of a community, without menacing the development of the natural, social and built systems as the services depend on them".

Instead of being engaged in philosophical dissertations about the sustainable development of the natural, economic, social and ethical elements, we would like, indeed, to think about some basic remarks that fed the debate.

The logic of *complexity* and the need of the systemic approach merge with clarity in the attempt of balancing the management of the demand (principle of caution), environmental and social efficiency principle of equity, by taking into consideration the interdependence among the economic, social and environmental systems, it would be necessary both to evaluate the plurality of those who claim different aims and to recognize the need of a joining approach which may reduce conflicts.

The *cultural dimension* stands out. It shows the need to save and maintain the cultural diversity as well as the biological diversity in order to drive back homologated behaviour, typical of the *laissez-faire* approach which reveal competition by the use of the resources and by the stressed disequilibria between demand and supply.

Parallel the same *cultural dimension* seems to question man about his deep individualism typical of a consumer behaviour completely lack of the sense and feeling of belonging to a community: And let, at the same time, merge strongly the principle of the *complex ecosystem* operatively which recognize both the mutual dependence among all the subjects of the system and the mutual dependence among those subjects and nature<sup>2</sup>.

Only through a *cultural revolution* it will be possible to promote the sustainable development: it consists of "considering" our ethical system from another point of views, for example, by considering them not only on competition, efficiency and expansion, but also on cooperation, responsibility, mutual help, and by sharing fundamental managing rules (Fusco Girard and Nijkamp 1997). During Istanbul Conference (United Nations, 1996) among the general principles of the final Declaration, they pointed out that "we need to create a new era: the era of cooperation and solidarity", whereas E. Ronchi, during the introduction of the 2002 ISSI<sup>3</sup> report, pointed out that the way towards the 'sustainable development' suggests a *turning of the consumption models as well as the life style*, of productive process and of goods, doubling the eco-efficacy, *removing consumerism and waste*, and, on the contrary, to promote a better quality of economic well-being, technological innovation, dematerialization and economy of services.

The *cultural dimension* of the sustainable development must innervate the organizing order of society, and consequently of the institutions which are asked to rule the interaction among the different subjects and systems as, on one side, they show the cultural expression of a community and, on the other side, they contribute to form its structure and the same to modify thoughts, values and ideas.

The *institutional dimensions* of the sustainability are grafted on all the above mention elements. The strategic aspect of the institutional dimension can be found in its own ability to organize forms of co-evolution in the natural, economic and social systems, by aiming towards a more and more decentralized asset which gives a more relevant role to local government<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> In the complicated eco-systems working "each element is related to the others in a circular and not linear process which is not only of a trade-exchange kind but also of mutual one; therefore each single part co-develop with the others through an exchange which is considered of mutual change" (Fusco Girard e Nijkamp, 1992, p.31).

<sup>3</sup> A report of the Italian Sustainable Development Institute on "A Sustainable Future for Italy".

<sup>4</sup> All of that does not necessary mean to refuse the global governance without have any sense or length. More than ten years after the World Summit in Rio the Development Watch of United Nations shows a greatly unbalanced world and, therefore, unsustainable. That is more than one milliard of people cannot satisfy their own needs; about three/fifth of the four milliard and a half inhabitants in the Southern World has no sewer system; about one/ third has no unpolluted water or water at all; one/fourth does not live in suitable houses; one/fifth has no national health service; one/fifth of the children does not attend school and cannot eat sufficiently: on the contrary, 20 % of the world population in the industrialized countries consumes 45 % of meat, 58 % power energy, 84 % paper, 74 % of them use telephone cable and about 90 % have got cars (UNDP). For those reasons the position of the neo-liberal international policy which sustains the 'invisible hands' of the market stated by Adam Smith asks for corrective, regulative and integrative measures without necessary to go out from the market economy. The globalisation of economies should be oriented towards equity and sustainability; international financial speculations should not be encouraged; the price system balanced with the real costs and real benefits; international

that has been appointed to experiment new forms of intermediate institutions as regards co-decision and representative agency. Furthermore the same institutional dimension concerns new managing approaches based on the 'analytic holism' of the systemic models by refusing the traditional good managing which has its fundamentals on the sectorial specialization of single people and of organizations<sup>5</sup>, on the qualifications of results<sup>6</sup> and on the use of the market rules<sup>7</sup>.

According to the European Commission in order to approach the urban sustainability a good organizational management is necessary, the basic principle of which are based on *integration, cooperation, homeostasis, subsidiary and synergy*.

*Integration* acts at different levels such as:

- a down and cross integration of organisms, policies, plannings and programs
- an external environment which integrates with the internal decisional processes
- a spatial dimension which integrates with the temporal one
- values which integrates with behaviours

personal needs which integrates with institutional abilities.

As regards *cooperation* we can say that it consists of:

- a mutual dependence among all subjects of the same system
- the same employment of energy and resources
- a favourable approach for a general "consensus"
- mobilization actions by appointing powerful functions
- connection

*Homeostasis* may be acted out as the management of the dynamic changing within a flexible, but at the same time, steady system. In other words it refers to:

- the development of a managing cultural which is flexible to changing
- the skill to realize that the character of the political processes is a sort of never-ending character
- feedback systems to regulate changing
- a matter of values, motivation and property

For what concerns the *subsidiary*, we can consider it as:

- decisions and concrete actions at the lowest level but coherent with the already fixed objectives.

That is to say:

- correspondence among rights, liability and powers to resources
- to accept different approaches
- creation of different organizing plans able to deal with complex dependence and to promote agreements

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trade rules issued according to environmental treaties; new international institutions (such as a World Organization for the Environment, and International Judicial Court) should be created to improve the global governance (Ronchi, 2000). The same Agenda 21, the main document about the execution ways of the sustainable development must be followed by national and local government in their aims and liability and refuses the thesis according to which "the market or any other no consciousness and no direct phenomenon may solve serious problems caused by the integration of environmental, economic and social aspects" (LGMB, 1993).

<sup>5</sup> The well-being or the prosperity of the whole city do not take benefits from a determinate sector; for example, better streets may worsen the moving to the cities (EC, 1996).

<sup>6</sup> The richness of a city not necessary is the sum of all its inhabitants' income. A greater economic prosperity may impoverish the way of life of the poor more than how it raises the well being of the rich. In general, the "widespread distribution" effect announced by the free-market supporters seems not have touched the poor in the cities (EC, 1996).

<sup>7</sup> In a market a certain number of 'rational' decisions does not necessary determine a general well-being (EC, 1996).

- to promote new relationship among different administrator levels, local authorities and community.

As to *synergy* we believe it has to create a greater set and qualitative different from the sum of the single parts because it implies a strategic direction for the development, a view of what is possible to create and a circular planning instead of a linear one (EC, 1996, pp. 53-54).

All the items above mentioned will be carried out at the local level as the plan for the sustainable development is promoted and asked directly by “the local” both at the functional and dimensional stages but also at the decisional one and, above all, according to the choices of ecologic equilibrium, economic development and social equality fixed at the beginning. From this point of view, the sustainable urban managing is considered as a political process, asks the local authority and the citizens, to develop a deep sense of liability towards both the territory and the future generation<sup>8</sup>, to be kept keep alive by accepting changes and approval capable to criticize traditional governor decisions and, to suggest, at the same time, new managing and institutional relationship. For the local administrations, the importance of a professional education is a basic step in all sectors and at all levels in order to carry out all the strategies for the sustainability, a complex evaluation of the problem, the coordination and the cooperation, are necessary according to the rules of the internal network. At the same extend, we can say that the carrying out of the sustainable development needs the active cooperation of several subjects and bodies by setting some partnerships. It is obvious, at this point, that the role of the local administration is more than relevant. As a matter of fact, in the last few years high level institutions (such as United Nations, EU and the national governments) promoted the development of local plans even if the latter are institutions submitted to periodical environmental tests<sup>9</sup> in order to be financed, such as the partnerships for the rural integrated development<sup>10</sup>, the urban regeneration<sup>11</sup> like “Contrast de ville” in France and the “Single Regeneration Budget” in the United Kingdom, or partnerships the aim of which is the building up of a network in order to share experience, information, communication, education and diffusion<sup>12</sup> in general. That is, the network has to favour the active participation of its members and use a strong coordination structure.

The most important challenge is the real involvement of people promoted by the local authorities: “it does not exist a scientific and objective solution to facilitate the human development. It depends only to the ideas, thoughts, aims and participation of those people directedly interested into the matter. Therefore, it is clear that the latter and the evaluation of citizens’ opinion are fundamental to understand the meaning of the sustainable development, both at local and global level” (EC, 1996). To promote a greater sense of belonging is necessary a common joining to the management of the matters which forces the local authorities to adopt a more flexible management and the fixing of those objectives shared for community that is more informed and disposable than in the past. The cultural dimension of the sustainability means to save some economic aims in favour of the above-mentioned development in the private sector. As for the public sector it means major distribution of the resources and a wider competences division. Even in this case, as we can see, how the ability of setting institutions in order to create the conditions for cooperation and participation depends on the several local communities.

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<sup>8</sup> That means a change as regards behaviour and way of life; moreover, according to Nelissen (1992) in order to reach that direction, it is necessary to formulate a certain environmental market policy, that is “one of the main tasks for the environmental policy and for the environmental market consists of the message according to which the sustainable way of life is normal and not deviant; that it reflects liability and care for our planet; that it reinforces a sense of community; that it stimulates harmony, pleasure, purity, richness and enthusiasm”.

<sup>9</sup> Like Vas, and Via, and anyway, through the fitting of environmental variables.

<sup>10</sup> Of fundamental importance for the LEADER program.

<sup>11</sup> The British Royal Institution of Charactered Surveyors defines the urban regeneration as the process, which reverses the economic, social and physical decay of the cities, when they are suffering from the incapability of the market strength.

<sup>12</sup> In Europe, among the most important networks as regards the urban sustainability, we remember: Eurocities, ICLEI (International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives), Car Free Cities, European sustainable cities & Towns Campaign).

Moreover, the sustainability has to be “territorialized” both because some environmental critical conditions must be defined at a local level (it’s sufficient to mention carrying capacity) and also because, although there are some complicated relationship which link environment to economy, to society, it is necessary to answer with communication, plans and tests. From this point of view, the local dimensions seem to be the only one capable to guarantee the maintenance and building of network, solidarity and participation. As a consequence, the endogen character of the sustainability is obvious, as it is easy to understand how the urban sustainable management cannot be imposed from higher level, on the contrary, it needs to be development at the local level through a political plan which links the principle of subsidiary to the wider concept of shared liability.

“We must realize, of course, that there are many local models of sustainability which are able to formulate again a sustainable development with the specific characteristic of the territory and local ecosystems” (Bresso, 1993, p. 33). Of course, this relates back to the self-managing ability of the partnership by centring on itself both the cultural and institutional dimension of sustainable development. The local systems capable of that self-managing are based on a autopoietica structure and on a no hierarchic asset of the net kind since the sustainability process needs changes, experimentation, more autonomy and geographical territorial liability. If we concentrate on the latter aspect, the local management of the sustainability imposes cooperation among local administrations and all the other local, national and international governments<sup>13</sup>. Of course, the perspective model will be the net with no hierarchical nature but a sympathetic one with the cities, within a wider and wider form of territorial shared democracy.

### **3. The role of the local Agenda 21**

The world best known instruments is the local Agenda 21, which actively involves the population and at the same time, reinforces the role of the local authority. It consists of a program about the sustainable development in the 21st century adopted by the representatives of 173 members’ states of the Committee of the United Nations in 1992. In other words, it consists of a detailed plan of intervention divided into 40 chapters which dealt with aims, intervention instruments to be used, role definition, responsibilities and means of the coming out of the plan.

In particular, chapter 28 takes into consideration the role of the local bodies in order to promote a version of the local Agenda 21, which translates the general aims into programs and concrete interventions specific for each single territory. “Since many problems and consequent solutions individuated by A21 originated on local bases, participation and cooperation of local authorities will be a determinant element necessary to reach the fixed aims. As a matter of fact, the local authority maintains and renews the economic, social and environmental infrastructures, they supervise the planning process, determine rules and policies for the environment. Moreover, the local authorities takes part to the carrying out of the regional and national environmental policy. As the local authorities represent the closest form of government to people, they play a vital role to educate their own people and by giving them a correct sustainable development “(Agenda 21).

Another main characteristic of the local A21 is the participation and involvement of different subjects on a given territory. Through the building-up process of the consensus, it is possible to acquire a better knowledge of the social demand and to mobilise human and financial resources. “Local authorities must start a consulting process in order to reach a consensus of the local A21. Each single authority must talk to its own citizens, local organizations and private enterprises and at last, to adopt a local A21. This consultation will give the authorities the opportunity to acquire precious information in order to formulate the best strategies. The reference process will clarify the concept of sustainable development to

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<sup>13</sup> Even if many environmental matters regard the necessity to find out evaluations and solutions for local needs, they cannot be bordered in “local” and administrative fields. For example, the management of the water cycle would be more effective if it was considered according to either hydrographical basin or, in some cases, the whole river system. Also the planning for the urban transports gains an advantage if it will be considered as a commuter’s basin. Moreover, as the environment is a closed system it does not worth to more pollution or resources to other territories (ICLEI, 1999).

the citizens. Program, policies and administrative decisions, which has already been established by the local authorities to satisfy the goals of the local A21, have to be evaluated and adopted while the time passes, by taking into consideration also all the local needs. All the strategies adapted may be realized thanks to local, regional, governmental and international financial support” (Local A21, chapter 28).

The traditional division between the State (hierarchical control) and the market (spontaneous balance) is less and less convenient than the most developed forms of government which reflect the changed relationships between the State and the society, in a better way, the theory of the Policy Network represents a good example of how to take part to the process of public policy<sup>14</sup>.

It would be better to remember, at this point, that the setting in motion of a local A21 process is always of voluntary kind, in spite of the countless promotions made after Rio

Summit: in particular the Campaign for the Sustainable European Cities<sup>15</sup> contributed, greatly, to promote a more and more growing network of cities involved together with 1,500 busy administrations.

In the last few years, Italy in particular, is considered one of the most dynamic countries at the European level with a certain number of subscribers, which goes, at least formally, from 35 in 1998 to 513 in May 2002 thanks both to a larger and more spread conscience of sustainability principle and participation, and to a certain method co-financed by the Ministry for Environment, in 2000, which supported the starting process of local A21 as one of the main reference to join the Aalborg Charta.

At this point it is interesting to test the regional reaction, in order to investigate, in particular, on the process of landing through the stages of the Agenda development, and to test, in a qualitative sense, the local governance and empowerment.

In 2000 one of the Cnel<sup>16</sup> researches about 191 administrations<sup>17</sup> reported a massive geographic-land concentration in the North and in the Centre with their 124 townships involved versus only 27 townships involved in the South. Cnel also reported that among 12 Italian metropolitan cities<sup>18</sup> 9 of them started the local A21 process such as the southern areas of Palermo and Catania. In the detailed territory, the township involved covered 5,3 % of the national surface and over 12,5 million of inhabitants, equal to the 21,8 % of the total population; as regards demography 20,5 % of the townships had a small concentration with about 3,000 inhabitants above all in Piemonte region. On the contrary the highest percentage (40 %) concerned the average-size cities (with between 20,000 and 100,000 inhabitants) and another 17% concerned townships with more than 100,000 inhabitants, as regards the execution of the local A21, 42,3% of the local bodies could be defined *beginners*, as at the beginning of the process, 30,8% were *intermediate* and only 26,9% were *pioneers* with reference to those who had established either programs of specific activity or a planning of the local action.

An update status of the carrying out process of the local A21 has been made by Focus Lab, a research centre and a partnership company of the Italian local A21 Coordinate centre<sup>19</sup> with a detective report based on more than 500 Italian bodies formally involved in local A21

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<sup>14</sup> About that both United Nations and EU considers the joining participation of the political choices an essential condition for their success.

<sup>15</sup> The Aalborg Charta started from the Campaign for the Sustainable European Cities promoted by the EU in order to encourage and support the local authorities during their way towards the environmental sustainability. The subscriber cities of the Charta undertake the duties to reach a general consensus of the Local Agenda 21, within their own communities.

<sup>16</sup> CNEL, pronunce, n.7, 2001.

<sup>17</sup> Among which 151 townships, 25 provinces, 5 regions, 3 mountain communities, 4 Park Bodies, 1 territorial agreement and 2 Arpa.

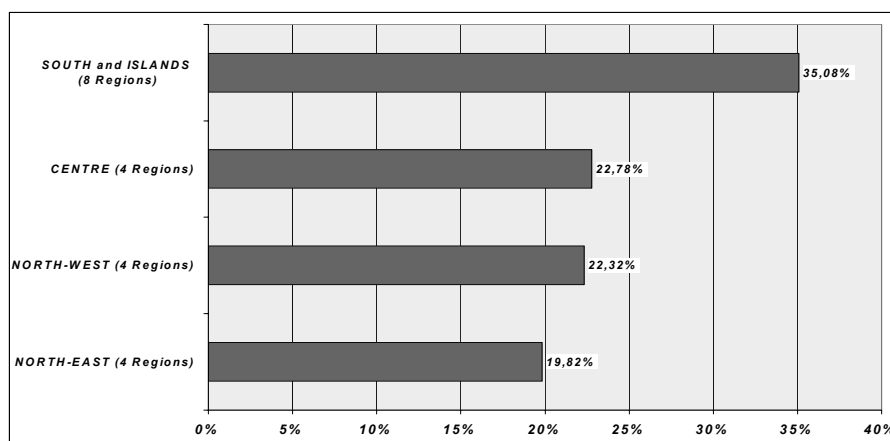
<sup>18</sup> According to the Law n°142 in 1990.

<sup>19</sup> The Local Agenda 21 in Italy in 2002. An investigation about the status of the execution Local Agenda 21 processes in Italy in June 2002.

program in 2002<sup>20</sup>. As regards the report about the aims and the methodology of the research, it would be necessary to point out some of the territorial results already reached and at the same time, to stress some negative aspects of the same process in order to contribute effectively to the development of policies and programs the aim of which consists of sustainability and shared process.

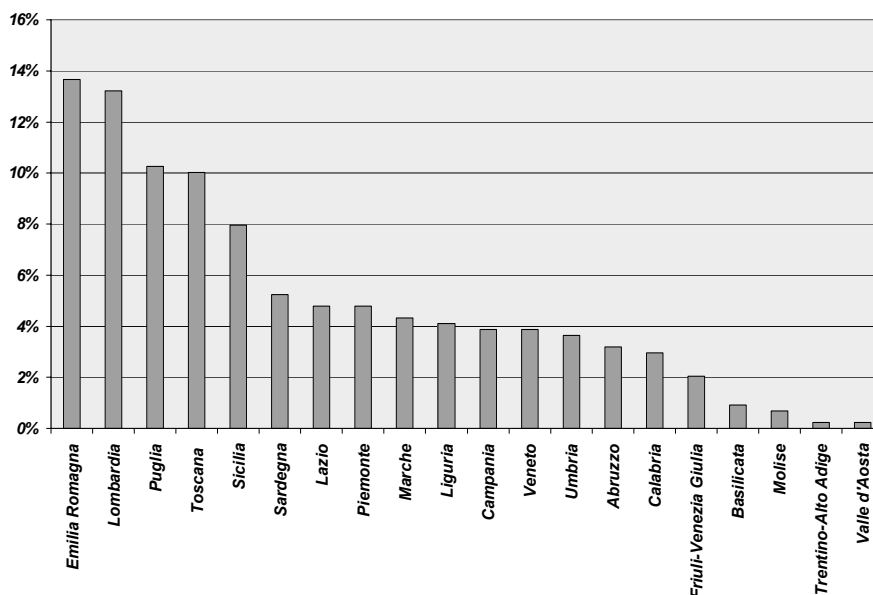
The geographical distribution strengthen an higher participation of the northern regions with their 42 % of interviewed bodies, even if there is also a good distribution of them in the central Italy (22,78% in 4 regions only); on the contrary in southern and insular Italy there are only 35 % bodies involved in the same kind of process (see figure 1). The most involved regions are: Emilia-Romagna (13,67%), Lombardia (13,21%), Puglia (10,25 %), Toscana (10,02%) and Sicilia (7,97%) (As you see in figure n. 2).

Fig. n. 1 - Territorial division of the interviewed bodies



Source: Focus Lab, 2002, p.12.

Fig. 2 - Number of the LA21 bodies interviewed per regions



Source: Focus Lab, 2002, p.12

<sup>20</sup> Out of 550 voluntary subscription to the Aalborg Charta and the National Coordination of the Local Agenda 21 by the Italian bodies, only 241 bodies declared to have really started up the Local Agenda 21 processes in 2002, it corresponded to 55 % of the whole interviewed bodies (439).

From a typological point of view we can say that townships prevail (72 %) and involve more than 11 million inhabitants, that is more than one fifth of the Italian population, provinces being the second with about 28 million inhabitants (11 %), mountain community (9 %), natural parks (5 %), townships associations (2 %) and at the end the regions (1 %).

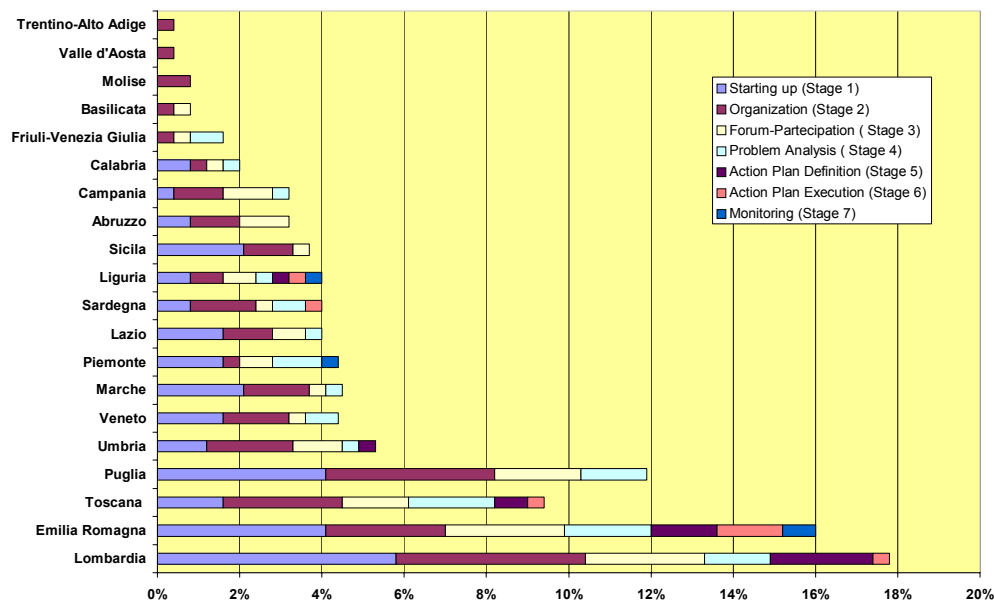
In a detailed analysis and by comparing the territorial data with the developing phases of local A21 process we can realize that

- a great polarization in Lombardia and Emilia-Romagna regions which represent one-third of the all active processes in Italy and at the same time, they are those who can guarantee the prosecution of the process;
- Puglia, by its high concentration of active bodies (about 11 %) and a relatively low stagnation of the process does not go over the analysis of the problems;
- and Toscana (9,4 %) where, on the contrary a low percentage of the processes has been quite completely executed according to the Action Plan (figure n. 3).

As a whole only Emilia-Romagna and Liguria are the two regions which gained the last stage of the monitoring of the local A21 process. Although Liguria started up few of them. On the contrary a too rigorous procedure is to be noticed in many regions, which, as a consequence, are classified as beginners<sup>21</sup>. Among them we can remember Lazio and Sicilia. 70% of the bodies in Lazio are still managing the application of the first two initial stages of the starting up and the organization and no “actor” has been able to go ahead the analysis of the problems (which is considered the fourth phase). In Sicilia 89% of the bodies are classified as beginners and only 11 % are intermediate.

In Southern Italy only Sardegna has a good level of development with 10 % of pioneers bodies. On the contrary some northern regions such as Valle d’Aosta, Trentino-Alto Adige and Friuli-Venezia Giulia have no experience of the Agenda in a pioneer stage, moreover, the first 2 regions mentioned are still considered 100 % beginners as they are involved in the first stage (figure n. 4).

Fig. n. 3 - Bodies started up the different stages of the LA21 process (241) divided per region

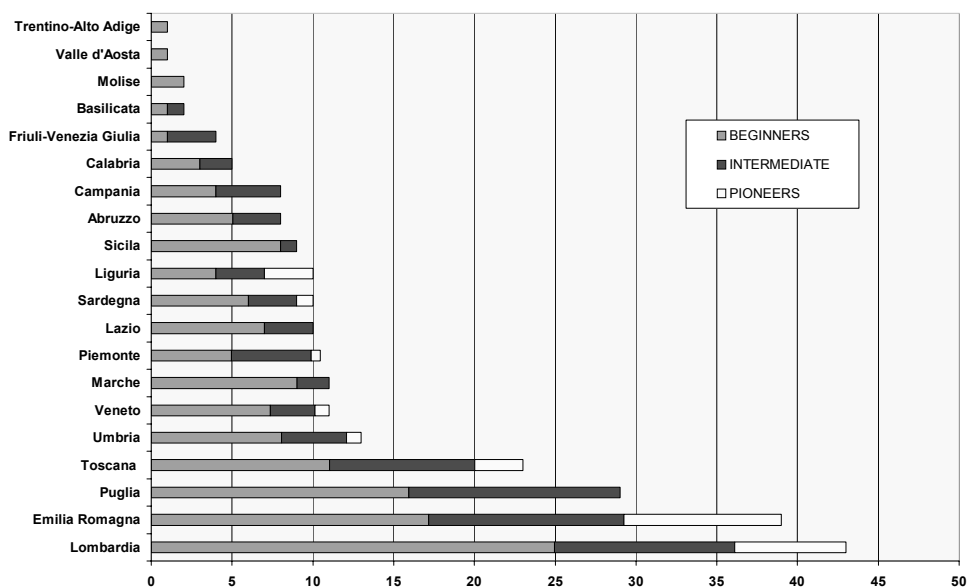


Source: Focus Lab, 2002, p.15.

<sup>21</sup> The subdivision of the developing status of the Local A21 is established by reducing the seven phases of the process into three main categories: “beginners”, including the first two moments of the starting up and organization; “intermediate” as to the two stages of Forum-Participation and of Problem Analysis; finally “pioneers” regards the three stages of Action Plan Definition, Action Plan Execution and Monitoring.



Fig. n. 4 - Developing stage: division of the bodies per region



Source: Focus Lab, 2002, p.16.

The economic resources problem together with those bodies, which did not carry the process out, are responsible for the slowing of the development of the local A21 process. On the other hand, less emphasis is registered for the active bodies the difficulties of which come from the direct carrying out of the process with particular reference to the scarce maturation and cooperation of the several councillorships<sup>22</sup>, to the difficulty of the local communities to be involved as far as the shortage of experience, resources and human competence. On a macro-regional scale (figure n. 5), the importance of the financial factor is rather relevant everywhere even if in the northern-east territories there are no sufficient political and administrative support because of scarce motivation and cooperation among all the councillorships.

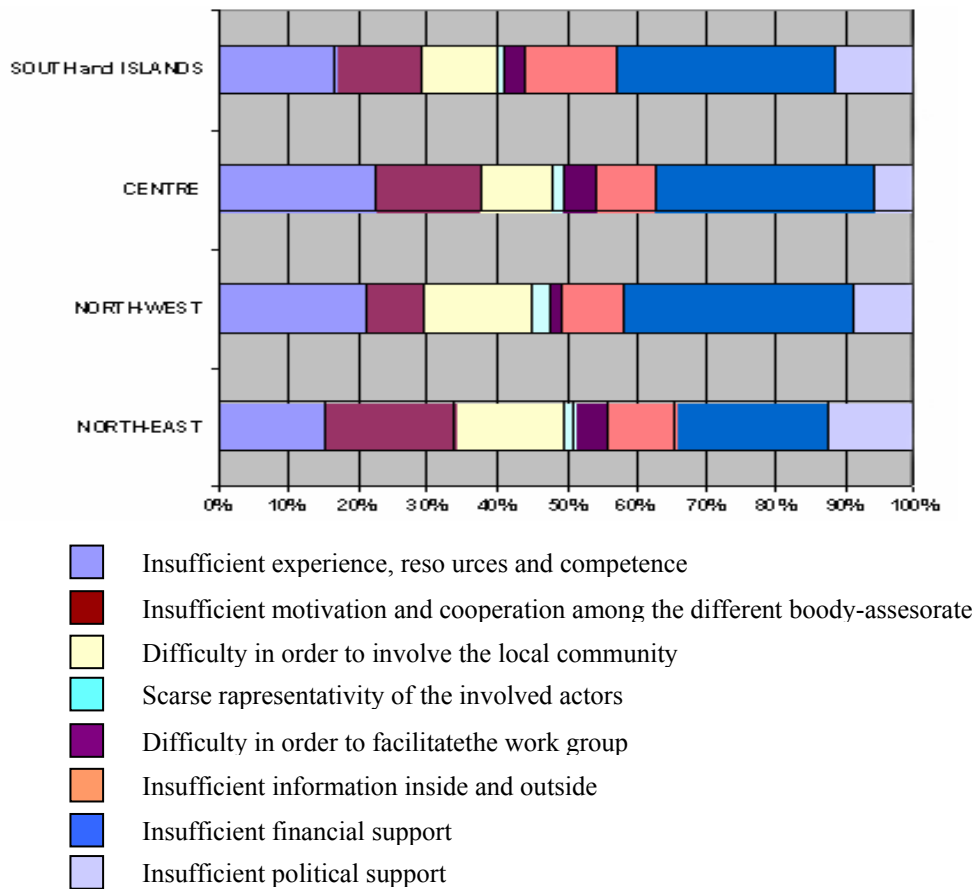
On the contrary, the distribution of the human resources, human competence, lack of experience in managing is quite homogeneous and together with the territorial relationship reduces, in some way, the inertial demand of the eternal scarcity of economic funds.

By summarizing we can say that the active bodies are very few (only 241), moreover the majority of them are only beginners and a very low number of them are complete and "mature" ones (about 4 % refers to the execution stage and only 2 % to the "monitoring" one). In other words, about 550 public bodies joined both the Aalborg Charta and the local A21 National Coordinator, but for more than a half of them neither evaluated the shared-political will possibility, nor a structure able to manage the process, but rather gained financing.

A part from the inborn complexity of the local A21 process-plan due to its trasversal theme and to its procedural characteristic, there are also further critical elements such as the average-long times for the execution (from 36 to 48 months) in comparison with the legislative-politic times and the public management one in general; moreover the whole worsened by a scarce cooperation with all the other territorial instruments for the territorial program because of political, technical, legislative and cultural motivations.

<sup>22</sup> It can be related to the *NIMO* syndrome (Not In My Office).

Fig. 5 - Main obstacles which slowen the development of the LA21 process per macroregions (439)\*



\* Total number of the interviewed bodies  
Source: Focus Lab, 2002, p.21

Nevertheless local A21 process suggests the way towards the sustainability than a book of dreams: economic, structural and educational need determine the right perception of the limited nature of the environment and the correct social responsibility. From a circular point of view foresee the building up of a local A21 national fund in order to support, above all, the charges for spread and information and the arrangement of a proper structure as the approval of law about the environmental accountancy. (Cnel, 2001, p.16). The territorial experience teaches that, apart from the necessity of the financing need, one of main bar to the carrying out of participation to the development is the lack of education. Therefore, in order to start the local A21 they need:

- a cultural revolution of the managing and organizational instruments by joining the transversal and shared models of the “matrix” kind which are usually based on the cooperative dialectics between “staff functions” and “line functions”;
- a revision and promotion of education and training themes based on self-references and are considered integral parts of the plan for the sustainable and shared intervention.

#### 4. Conclusion

Although the dynamic and no-linear character of the local A21 process does not give the chance to conclude in a general and sharp way we can propose some remarks:

- thanks to a quite balanced geographic distribution, the northern regions and in particular, some of them where it is more evident the “mature” process let us see the relationship between the territorial development and the skill to starting up/ execution of the Agenda considered an excellent example of land promotion and the international competitive scenery. Because of the

southern regions delay in the carrying out of the process they suffer from a procedural rigidity even if they take into great consideration the process as an endogen development based on preservation and the exploitation of natural and cultural resources;

- the complexity of the local A21 aims and their consequent execution probably explains the increased demand of the 'cities' (72 %) to confirm themselves as the actual land laboratory not only to test the sustainable runs but also to confirm themselves as lab based on choices and plan criteria determined by solidarity rather than on efficacy and economic productivity and as well as the long lab capable to organize themselves as an urban system. In this way the city prevails again as the cultural leadership of the territory thanks to its "human capital" and "institutional capital" and to its ability to be the incubator for knowledge, competence, identity and differences. Moreover, the city expresses the mass-critic necessary to think the inhabitant the other way round as the producer of both society and environment by feeding and reinforcing the being-citizen feeling that is the sharing feeling;

- anyway, because of the scarce results in the local A21 complete execution the city suffers from the lack of cooperative behaviour, ideas and values for the "community".

Only through the *cultural revolution*, the *Agenda-city* can impose itself as a new urban model of the following kind:

- competitive, as it is in favour of changing and, as a consequence, to attract and promote knowledge and innovation;

- strengthen, as it is able to rise human skills and, as a consequence, attractive;

- social liable, as it is able not to compromise the wealthness of some social status of the population and, as a consequence, the urban model sounds "safety";

- territorially balanced, as it is able to plan again the urban environment focusing its attention on city-network, urban-landscape and natural environment concepts.

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