

***Housing system and housing policy
overview: Italy***

Trieste, 2 April 2012

1 | Housing policy of the country in past 10 years

emerging of “a new housing” issue

from ‘extensive needs’ to ‘intensive demands’: from a massive construction of new dwellings to specific subsidies for targeted groups

a decentralisation of governmental action: from National to Regional level

Act n.3/2001 - Reform of Title V of Italian Constitution (exclusive competences in public housing policy for the Regions). Each Region approved its own regional regulation (criteria for the allocation and management of public housing units).

a general decline in public investments

new social housing units per year: 34,000 in 1984 / 1,900 in 2004

new actors for housing policy

not only National, Regional and Municipal Governments, or public agencies, but also NGOs, social cooperatives, private foundations

2 | Supply-side subsidies

Italian housing supply system is mainly characterised by

- > **rent oriented supply** (the public housing strictu sensu)
- > **property oriented supply** (both from construction firms and from cooperatives)

Three main types of supply

‘edilizia sovvenzionata’, for low income families, with costs fully covered by the public administration, and public ownership of the houses built

‘edilizia agevolata’ supports construction firms and cooperatives, via interest subsidies on loans, to build dwellings below the free market prices to be offered for property

‘edilizia convenzionata’ gives construction firms and cooperatives the possibility to build on areas owned by the Municipality through a concession for 99 years

In the recent years, ***housing policy has been mainly developed according to an ‘area-based approach’***, through instruments such as Neighbourhood Contracts, etc.

New actors are emerging: bank foundations, investment funds, ...

3 | Demand-side subsidies

Policies for housing ownership

elimination of the tax on property (just re-issued); reduction of taxes connected with the purchase of property; tax incentives to renovate property

Rent in private market

Incentives (tax reduction) for house owners if they rent their house at a price below the free market level ('canone concordato') and guarantees provided by the Municipalities

Fondo Sociale per l'affitto (Social Fund for Rental housing)

Law 431/1998, art. 11 > granting of additional contributions in favour of lower income groups, for the payment of rents. The funds are quantified annually by the Financial Act. Contributions are defined on the basis of a specific municipal ranking.

4 | Housing tenure structure and its change

Italian housing system is mainly property oriented

> in 2008, 75% of households lived in their own house. 18.9% lived in a rented house
Property is still seen as a source of economic stability, a sound form of investment, the achievement of a status

Italy records an extremely low percentage of social housing: 4%

> EU average amounted to 19%

A state of housing emergency, that concerns both the rental and property housing

> the cost of rents has affected more and more the families' income: from 1999 to 2009 rents has increased in urban areas up to 105%, compared with an increase in family income of 18%

> 13.4% of households is burned by a mortgage on housing, 37% of the 4.5 million households paying a mortgage declared difficulties to repay the instalment (2008)

5 | Housing construction levels

Mid '90s/early 2000 -> “construction boom” period
sustained growth rate of residential construction sector

Today -> the construction sector is experiencing a period of severe crisis

- > from 2008 to 2011 the production of new houses fell by 35.5%
- > from 2006 to 2009 the number of building permissions for new houses went down by 47.5%
- > the production of new residential buildings passed from 15.202 in 2010 to 13.634 in 2011.
- > investments in housing construction decreased 4,9% in real terms between 2009 and 2011

The forecasts for 2012 confirm the negative trend for new construction, while renovation will instead continue to benefit from tax relief

6 | Impact of financial (economic) crisis on country housing policy

→ **new forms of mortgage** -> families can stop the payment of instalments over a defined number of months

→ the Law Decree n. 70 (13th May 2011, the so-called Development Decree) contained a number of **measures to promote development and economic recovery**, including liberalization and simplification for private buildings restyling and construction

→ **House plan** that is based on the idea that buildings can act as a driving force for the economy with positive impacts on employment. The results, however, are not so satisfactory as expected

7 | Overview of special housing and care policies aimed particularly at the elderly and people with disabilities

Two kind of “measures”

- > domiciliary care services -> allow people to stay in their living environment
- > residential services -> to those persons with limited autonomy

I) Domiciliary care services

- > to maintain the current levels of autonomy of the persons, strengthening the eventual support that the same family can provide.
- > significant increase of the users of domiciliary care services in Italy between 2007 and 2009 (+15%)

II) Residential services

- > “Residenza sanitaria assistenziale” for non autonomous persons
- > Appartamento sociale and “Gruppo appartamento”: quasi-autonomous houses, self-managed by the same occupants, with common facilities
- > Condominio solidale e APA: little flats with shared domiciliary care services

best practices | 1 | Community building



<i>Project</i>	<p>Experimental actions aimed at consolidating the home care area and the participation of elderly population to the active life of the neighbourhood, by activating Meeting and Aggregation Centres in each neighbourhood. The project is based on the idea that elderly is not only a service user but a person with his experience, practical and theoretic skills, his history and wisdom, a crucial resource for the neighbourhood and the all community.</p> <p>The pursued method is to enhance self-management and forms of social participation of older people, encouraging elderly social integration and psychological well-being, avoiding states of marginalization and isolation.</p>
<i>Objectives</i>	Consolidating the home care area and promoting the participation of elderly population to the active life of the neighborhood.
<i>Beneficiaries</i>	Elderly people
<i>Leader</i>	Municipality of Verona
<i>Partners</i>	Public bodies (Educational Institutions, ULSS 20, AGECC, Elderly Care Institute, Hospital, Centre for Voluntary Service, etc..), private entities (associations and voluntary organizations, individuals able to deliver hot meals at the Centers, touring University of 3rd Age, etc..) and any other subject that provides useful services to the project objectives
<i>Funding</i>	Funds are defined year after year according to disposable resources identified in the Municipality's budget.

<i>Project</i>	<p>Easymob is a project based on the idea of applying automation technology to assist people in complexes places characterised by paths and obstacles that people with difficulties are not able to cope without any help. Project beneficiaries are people with problems of various kinds; so, for each group the projects identifies specific solutions.</p> <p>EasyMob develops a system based on infrared (IR) transmitters and receivers, able to lead people providing information on logistics, on the presence of any obstructions and on disposable services of the environment in which they are. Interactive displays and solutions for interfacing with mobile phones and mobile media allow the accessibility to information by all, in a personalized way.</p>
<i>Objectives</i>	<p>Helping disabled, elderly and people with limited mobility, to move more easily inside indoor environments such as hospitals, offices, public and private structures and to facilitate their access to services.</p>
<i>Beneficiaries</i>	<p>People with problems of various kinds: perceptive or mobility disabilities, problems with orientation and location in space; elderly.</p>
<i>Leader</i>	<p>SOLAR Udine SpA</p>
<i>Partners</i>	<p>Project partners are three firms (SOLAR Udine SpA, project leader; L.U.C.I. Srl; MoBe Srl); University of Udine; National Cancer Institute - Aviano IRCCS; Friuli Innovazione, Center for Research and Technology Transfer; Technological Centre of Pordenone.</p>
<i>Funding</i>	<p>EasyMob is an initiative funded by Friuli Venezia Giulia Region, through the OP FESR 2007-2013, Activity 1.1 b.</p> <p>The total value of the project is 2 million euros, which 1.6 million provided by regional contributions.</p>

***best practices* | 3 | Housing affordability**

- > only **ordinary measures** provided at national level
- > defined locally in **very different ways from region to region**
- > addressed not only to elderly people but to the more general category of **vulnerable people**

Some significant interventions which are also relevant for elderly people:

FSA (Social Fund for Rental housing)

_additional contributions for the payment of rents

Funds for architectural barriers removal

_tax deduction (currently 36%) to the costs incurred for the interventions

Voucher for domiciliary care

_economic contribution in support of free choice of citizens, through which it is possible to buy social services given by professional caregivers (see Regione Lombardia, d.c.r. 12902/2003)

Project	<p>‘Custodi sociali’ (Social caregivers) is a initiative of Milan Municipality. It has been activated in every neighbourhood with social housing. There are some professional caregivers that work in the neighbourhoods, and play the role of antennas to intercept the needs of the community. They operate in two ways: in a ‘front desk’, to receive requests of intervention by the citizens; organizing visits in the house in order to find out the non expressed needs. The initiative is not addressed only to elderly people, but the vast majority of the recipients are elderly.</p>
Objectives	To know the needs of the vulnerable communities and to transmit them to the Municipality, in order to be effectively treated.
Beneficiaries	The communities of the neighbourhoods with social housing
Leader	Milan Municipality
Partners	Social cooperatives
Funding	Municipal budget

best practices | 4 | Access to information/education



<i>Project</i>	<p>Specific websites directed to services for elderly.</p> <p>www.infoanziani.it accessible and faces a lot of useful issues for Friuli Venezia Giulia Region population, but for elderly people in general.</p> <p>www.anziani.it is about elderly needs and services, but it is directed to their families, to social-healthy caregivers and to all the people who are interested in. Very developed interactional character</p> <p>www.servizisocialinrete.it ["Piano di Zona" of Seregno district MB] Directed to all the citizens, selecting the category of belonging and the kind of need, it is possible to have a complete description of all the disposable services.</p>
<i>Objectives</i>	To provide for information about elderly services and promote digital interaction.
<i>Beneficiaries</i>	Elderly people and their families
<i>Leader</i>	Public bodies (Municipality, Regions, Municipality Districts)
<i>Partners</i>	Actors who usually work with elderly population.
<i>Funding</i>	Public body's funds