



Youth and exclusion
in disadvantaged urban areas:
policy approaches in six European cities



Youth and exclusion in disadvantaged urban areas: policy approaches in six European cities

*Paul Soto Hardiman
Frédéric Lapeyre*

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FOREWORD

This volume in the Trends in social cohesion series follows on from Volume 8,¹ which dealt with some aspects of “integration” of young people in urban areas, in particular the implications of the concept and the responsibilities of the various parties (the state, the administrative authorities, politicians, the voluntary sector, mediators, families and young people themselves) in matters of policy. It also considered the limitations of reparation-orientated approaches that treat the question in isolation, being targeted at this specific section of the urban population. The present volume provides two additional studies.

The first part, by Paul Soto, offers a reading of the causes of youth violence, based on comparative analysis of neighbourhood integration policies in six European cities: the four west European cities are Naples (the Spanish quarter), Barcelona (el Raval), Amsterdam (Slotervaart) and Derby (Derwent); the two cities in transition countries are Sofia (Fakulteta) and Moscow (the Southern Administrative District).

In the second part Frédéric Lapeyre looks at the particular case of Naples’ Spanish quarter. His investigation brings home the complexity of any genuine policy in the matter, which, to restore humanity and dignity to young people’s daily lives, requires that all the players revise their perceptions and action.

In a summary of the six case studies, Paul Soto shows that so-called “youth violence”, whether in west or east Europe, displays certain constant features: poverty, disappointed aspirations, lack of prospects, of self-confidence and of confidence in the local environment, official uncertainty, ignorance of the problems, indifference and spatial segregation. The violence manifests itself in the home and in family life, in the street, towards “outsiders”, towards symbols of authority, towards young people’s own community and towards communal facilities and installations. The study examines in detail the forms that violence can take. In the neighbourhoods considered, violence is one response to lack

1. Trends in social cohesion *No. 8, Youth and exclusion in disadvantaged urban areas: addressing the causes of violence.*

of control over changes that worsen the situation and the social climate: in addition to containing concentrations of poverty, some of it extreme, these are also reception areas for imported poverty in the form of immigrants.

A series of questions arises. What kind of policy will enable young people to change their lives in neighbourhoods suffering from identity loss and in which identity building is conflict-based (“us”, the minority in the neighbourhood, and “them”, the majority who live on the far side of the mental and social boundaries that surround young people’s life setting)? What kind of constructive spaces can we provide for analysing and discussing the older generation’s anger and resentment? In what kind of environment are the political decisions being taken? How do politicians respond to the pressure they are under to make tackling local and street violence the priority rather than developing proper long-term education, training and employment policy?

Paul Soto’s overview identifies four types of official response, ranging from decentralisation – allocating responsibilities and resources to the level at which the problem is located – to seeking areas in which young people themselves, and the rest of society, could be given greater responsibility. He reflects on how the political sphere addresses this and highlights the strengths and weaknesses of the different approaches. He shows that no project can be fully successful unless it rebuilds young people’s sense of belonging and sense of identity by reconciling them with their immediate life context (family, school, friends and so on).

This part ends with a series of recommendations as regards both methods and indicators for evaluating the situation and setting up mechanisms for intervention and spaces conducive to it.

In the second part Frédéric Lapeyre describes the everyday lives of young people in the Spanish quarter of Naples. He offers an interpretation of the interplay between various “life spaces” (physical/public, family/private and relational/public), all of which are characterised by a culture of disorganisation and violence, but also by great vitality and by tolerance of incomers who themselves have been marked by their experience of poverty and despair. The Spanish quarter features a huge concentration of deprivation and the community there has a large proportion of jobless citizens and people on minimum guaranteed income. From an early age the young have to harden themselves against disadvantage and take on

an adult role. Their desperate need of protection draws them to the sort of figure who rules by fear, and the dearth of self-fulfilment models is compounded by the instability of relationships. The rejection of social norms is reflected in vandalism, educational failure, membership of criminal gangs and so forth. How is any sort of ambition for something better to be fostered in neighbourhoods like that, and how are people to be enabled to form any kind of life project in an environment where people are constantly afraid both individually and collectively?

A few years ago Marcello d'Orta, who taught at a school near Naples, edited an anthology of sixty pieces of writing by his young pupils. It was published as *Lo speriamo che me la cavo* (Let's hope I make it),² a book that publicised the mixture of bewilderment, disenchantment and humanity of children growing up amidst social marginalisation and violence. *Lo speriamo che me la cavo* is a hymn to life, a call to hope boldly for better things in the face of great adversity.

Having the courage to want a better life and never abandon hope is also the message of Chance, the project that Lapeyre examines. The project is based on neighbourhood plans and involves creating local-level co-operation between teachers, families, researchers and whatever other partner is required in order to influence the processes which cause young people to drop out of school: educational provision is geared to the neighbourhood context. The Chance Project is primarily a network – a safety net created by collective commitment to a community venture.

The two studies on youth in disadvantaged urban areas reflect the Council of Europe's approach, which is to consider the question of everyday violence while bearing in mind its commitment as an organisation to human rights, social cohesion and democracy. In some contexts the crackdown on violence by the use of violence seems to be a favoured method. The two studies warn against this and advocate building new bridges between officialdom and the community in order to generate more inclusive and innovative forms of co-operation.

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2. Marcello D'Orta, *Lo speriamo che me la cavo*, Mondadori Editori, 1993.

Government, in particular the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sports and its representative on the Council of Europe's European Committee for Social Cohesion (CDCS), Mr Gerard Van Rienen.

Gilda Farrell

**Head of the Social Cohesion Development Division
Council of Europe**

I. Strengths and weaknesses of current policy approaches: analysis and guidelines

Paul Soto Hardiman, Grupo Alba SLL, Italy

1. Executive summary

1.1. Background

This is the final report of six case studies of neighbourhoods in Amsterdam (Netherlands), Barcelona (Spain), Derby (UK), Moscow (Russian Federation), Naples (Italy) and Sofia (Bulgaria) carried out on behalf of the Council of Europe's Social Cohesion Development Division and the Integrated Project on "Responses to violence in everyday life in democratic society³".

The overall aim is to design a set of concrete recommendations for policy and practice aimed at building social cohesion among young people in disadvantaged urban areas. The study focuses on the links between policies for social cohesion and the multidimensional aspects of youth violence. The method used has been to carry out a series of interviews with key stakeholders and to contrast this with the results of desk research.

This report on the social inclusion of young people in deprived urban areas takes place at a crucial time when major pressure to find short-term improvements in physical security could threaten long-term human and social rights. In every corner of Europe, young people of all origins find themselves in the eye of this storm. They are held responsible for much of the violence and are also said to be among the most frequent victims.

3. Case study of the Spanish quarter, Naples: Frédéric Lapeyre. Case study of Raval, Barcelona: Paul Soto and Lali Biosca. Case study of Derwent Community Team, Derby: Steve McAdam. Case study of Slotervaart/Overtoomseveld, Amsterdam: Wim Klei, Marieke Megens, Mike Heuves and Rogier den Uyl. Case study of the Southern Administrative District, Moscow: Svetlana Stephenson. Case study of Fakulteta, Sofia: Paul Soto, Maria Jeliaskova and Elena Atanassova. Council of Europe, 2003.

The six neighbourhoods covered in this study were chosen because they experience relatively high levels of deprivation and youth violence in extremely different European contexts (north-south, east-west, city centre, peripheral housing estate, high immigration, low immigration). The four western European cities chosen are Naples (the Spanish quarter), Barcelona (el Raval), Amsterdam (Slotvaard/Overtoomseveld) and Derby (Derwent) while the two cities from transition countries are Sofia (Fakulteta) and Moscow (the Southern Administrative District).

Five of the areas have between 10 000 and 45 000 inhabitants. In the two ex-communist countries, it is difficult to speak of neighbourhood policies as such. In fact, the Southern Administrative District of Moscow was the smallest spatial level at which it made sense to examine policies (1.6 million inhabitants).

Among the western European countries, historic city centre neighbourhoods such as el Raval in Barcelona or the Spanish quarter in Naples tend to have more economic potential and social capital than the out-of-centre housing estates such as Derwent or Slotervaart/Overtoomseveld.

The areas were chosen explicitly because they are considered to have had an important experience of integrated neighbourhood policies to increase social cohesion (within each national context). The central questions posed refer to how young people have been involved and affected by these policies. For this we carried out a stakeholder analysis to look at how young people, residents and policy makers perceived both the problems and the solutions.

We argue that the main tools of integrated neighbourhood policies (decentralisation of budgets and decision making, policy integration, partnership, community involvement) are central elements of what has been called the transition from a welfare state to a welfare society. However, each tool can be used for both repressive and preventative purposes.

Our aim has been to tease out what progress has been made in terms of using these tools specifically to build a more socially cohesive environment in deprived urban areas for young people. We want to take one step beyond the good practice that has been identified in many projects to look at the steps that have been taken to integrate the lessons from these pilot projects into mainstream policies.

We hope that this will enrich the recommendations that have already been developed by the Parliamentary Assembly, the Congress of Regional and Local Authorities of the Council of Europe and the European Committee for Social Cohesion for building social cohesion among young people in disadvantaged urban neighbourhoods.

1.2. Main findings

All the neighbourhoods suffer from higher than city-average levels of poverty and educational failure. But most also act as magnets for immigration. The two eastern European neighbourhoods stand out not only for having far higher absolute levels of poverty (10-30% do not have enough money for food) but also for being relatively richer than other parts of their respective countries. Therefore, both neighbourhoods attract migrants from other parts of the same country. The western European neighbourhoods are poorer than the rest of their respective countries but several also act as reception areas for immigrants from developing countries.

All the neighbourhoods are experiencing cycles of rapid economic change driven increasingly by global rather than local events. Changes are driven primarily by the response of the labour and housing markets to widespread economic restructuring. Many of the new service jobs that replace traditional jobs in manufacturing and craft activities are low paid and insecure. The availability of public or private accommodation for low-paid groups outstrips the availability of jobs. The education system also loses its capacity to provide access to better-paid jobs. Wealthier residents escape the area leading to a decline in local services, amenities and physical decay.

These economic developments produce a whirlwind of social and cultural change leading to a loss of personal and collective identity, family breakdown, dependency on state benefits, and inevitably, the social exclusion of certain groups and people. All the case studies stressed the difference between being poor, which could be remedied by more resources, and being excluded, which created a severe rift between the person affected and the main institutions and customs of society. Young people everywhere often find themselves on the wrong side of the divide. Bridging these rifts requires rebuilding the social and cultural foundations for mutual trust as well as viable economic alternatives, considerable time and resources.

Young people in these areas find themselves in the centre of many types of violence which go far beyond the anti-social behaviour that dominates the headlines and much policy. Violent activities connected with survival are far more important in the case of the Roma neighbourhood of Fakulteta and the street children of both Barcelona and Moscow. Domestic violence and ethnic violence also stand out, with the latter being especially virulent in the east European countries. Finally, there is aggressive behaviour, harassment and violence by the authorities towards young people. Violence in schools or at sports events tended to be seen as derivatives or venues for other kinds of violence rather than something special in their own right even if they can require particular types of action.

Young people themselves tend to highlight the violence that they are subjected to in the home and aggressive behaviour by adults and the authorities. They complain of being ignored, insulted and tarnished with the same brush as a minority of troublemakers. They describe the adult violence that surrounds them – domestic violence, drunkenness, the risk of drugs pushed by adults and the prostitution of teenage immigrants.

One of their first demands is for respect, to be listened to, for the right to be different. But they also describe a longing for economic independence in a context where this seems like an unrealistic fantasy. For many the prospects are of a lifetime of insecurity, humiliation and drudgery. In contrast, there is the immediate gratification and kudos they can get from their peers on the street or the informal economy. So the key questions are both how to build an environment of mutual respect and how to offer real, tangible ways out of their problems.

Many of the older, long-standing residents clearly feel threatened by young people. In most cases, the main source of resentment is precisely low-level, anti-social behaviour – vandalism, noise, graffiti, abuse and so on carried out by young people. For example, despite the concern of the authorities, the residents of Moscow do not tend to see homeless street children as their problem, referring instead to unruly behaviour by local youth. Some neighbourhoods with a longer tradition of street life, like Naples and Barcelona, seem to be more tolerant, while residents in the UK would seem to go as far as to support a blanket curfew on young people in the streets.

Large migratory influxes (whatever the race, colour or creed) are often accompanied by a growth in racial tension. The most extreme and dangerous forms of this can be seen in the neighbourhoods of Moscow and Fakulteta. Our experts from Amsterdam also indicated that everyone, even the ethnic population, is convinced there is a link between ethnic origin and crime.

Public officials and policy makers often face greater pressure and have more ability to find solutions for visible social problems than for fundamental individual problems. In most neighbourhoods, it is easier to mobilise repressive measures against certain high-risk target groups and areas in order to clean up the street than it is to build a pathway into a long-term job.

1.3. Comparing responses

Decentralisation

If one is going to encourage young people to participate in certain programmes and projects, the question is do these have the power to deliver significant changes to their lives? The report notes that:

- the main public services which shape social cohesion, such as social security, education and health, still tend to be under the control of separate national ministries;
- local authorities have more experience and scope for intervention in housing and physical redevelopment. However, here the investments required to affect social segregation are expensive and long term;
- at a local level, there is greater experience of the provision of personal social services. However, the approach here is often reactive. There are few examples of forward-looking strategic approaches.

In this context, each of the case studies considered the degree to which budgets and decision making had been decentralised in the programmes and projects analysed. The overall impression is that decentralisation of decision making to a local level is still quite limited. This considerably reduces the margin for manoeuvre of local actors who want to provide real solutions for young people. Nevertheless, the more advanced cases, such as the New Deal for Communities (NDC) Initiative in Derwent

provide many insights into how to make progress towards far greater local control.

Integrated policy making and implementation

Given the fact that the main levers of social cohesion are often outside local control and that the level of decentralisation to local programmes and projects is generally quite limited, the question is how far have the neighbourhoods got in bringing together other local and national actors to provide integrated solutions for social exclusion among young people? The case studies show that the point of entry into integrated area-based strategies differs but youth is nearly always a residual. The Spanish quarter in Naples provides an imaginative local strategy for the social inclusion of young people and provides many lessons but even here this is a relatively small part of the overall strategy for neighbourhood renewal (only one of eight themes).

There is still insufficient integration of urban renewal and social policy. Nevertheless, el Raval in Barcelona provides some lessons about how an ambitious programme of physical redevelopment can be used to achieve certain social goals. However, there is a risk that these social objectives will get lost in other areas.

It seems to be easier to improve integration in repressive policies rather than in preventative policies targeted at young people. In Slotervaart/Overtoomsveld our case study finds "the set of repressive tools is effective for that matter due to the close co-operation between different judiciary partners as a result of which a relatively coherent chain has been formed". However, in terms of prevention there is no coherent demand-orientated offer at all for at-risk youths. Within the prevention chain there is hardly any co-operation, network consultation or mutual harmonisation.

There tends to be an abundance of small pilot projects for young people but little change in mainstream services. Right across Europe, pilot projects run by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) on short-term funding are often used to make up for deficits in mainstream services. They become pseudo-structural projects, which substitute for bending or fundamentally changing core public services. The case studies of the Children of the Street Project in Moscow, the sectoral co-ordinating committees in el Raval, Barcelona, and Derwent NDC partnership all show

how positive steps can be taken to improve the interface between pilot and mainstream services. However, this is still an outstanding priority to be developed in all areas.

In this context, leadership and top-down support (vertical integration) is often required to increase horizontal collaboration between agencies at a local level. But this is often complicated by rivalries between different levels of government. The case studies show that good local co-ordination and networking is necessary but not sufficient for providing young people with practical, coherent pathways out of social exclusion. Local agencies often compete for resources and clients, and unless they also have legitimacy and a clear commitment from the top, it is difficult to move beyond the experimental stage.

Partnerships

Partnerships are increasingly being seen as both a method for achieving the horizontal and vertical integration described above and for gaining the energy and ownership of local people. However, the partnerships covered in our case studies were limited for several reasons. They are primarily a method for achieving local inter-agency co-operation in specific fields, for example, physical renovation in Barcelona and Amsterdam, social intervention in Naples or the situation of the Roma community in Sofia.

Although consultation and participation is always mentioned, the community only seems to be formally represented in a minority of cases. In Derwent, residents form a majority of the partnership and in the Sofia Ethnic Public Council there is a strong presence of Roma community groups. However, in both cases the representatives are co-opted rather than elected. In Sofia, the Roma community is also totally unorganised at neighbourhood level. The private sector appears even less frequently and when it does this is generally connected to projects with a strong economic component such as major urban redevelopment.

None of the partnerships have formal youth representatives. This is clearly a major gap that will require important changes in the operation of many partnerships. As a first step, there is a need to form longer-term and more transparent partnerships between the public sector and the NGOs and community groups working with young people.

The knowledge and experience of community organisations working on the ground with young people must be built into the planning, design and evaluation phases. These organisations cannot simply be seen as a cheaper way of subcontracting certain stopgap services. This means more transparent procedures to consolidate a two-way legitimacy – both with the public sector and directly with young people themselves.

Youth empowerment

The case studies look at some of the steps that need to be taken to put young people in the driving seat and develop genuinely youth-centred strategies for social cohesion. However, the lessons here are from individual projects; the challenge is to extend them into mainstream services. The key points are examined below.

The empowerment and engagement of local people, in general, and young people in particular, has to be seen as the first and central building block for local strategies for social cohesion. Several of the case studies point to the dangers of leaving this to a later stage. It is important for strategies to analyse the starting levels of social capital among young people in the area. This heavily influences future developments. For example, an extremely progressive programme such as the Derwent NDC is limited in how fast it can go because of relatively low levels of youth and community organisation compared to, say, Barcelona. This is also one of the main barriers in the Roma community of Fakulteta.

The problem has to be examined from young people's point of view. This is not necessarily the same as that of residents, policy makers or society as a whole. Given the lack of grassroots youth organisations to articulate young people's problems, needs and aspirations, one of the first steps has to be a serious commitment from all levels to build channels for dialogue (not just communication).

Comprehensive pathways are seen as one of the most powerful ways of helping young people to take a coherent sequence of small tangible steps which provide individual solutions to some of the main problems as seen by them. The case studies make it possible to identify the main success factors from comprehensive pathways developed in extremely different contexts.

Certain key areas of youth culture (IT, music, media, sport) can be used far more imaginatively as spaces for self-expression and dialogue. The case studies provide examples of how this can be done. The activities must be “sensual, professional and practical”. This is the complete opposite of diversionary activities designed simply to take youth off the street.

The streets and other physical spaces also need to be reclaimed as dynamic venues for interaction among and between generations and cultures. The case studies show how street educators can be used to connect with young people who would not, on their own, come in to other programmes. Public spaces can be turned into stages for intercultural and intergenerational exchange but this requires creating unthreatening environments where differences can be brought out and explored.

More needs to be done in certain areas such as social entrepreneurship and supporting young people to build a stronger collective presence as active citizens within society.

Evaluation of changes and results

With the exception of, perhaps, Barcelona, the cases are all too recent and/or too small to expect a major impact on the area. Despite worrying long-term trends, all areas except Fakulteta in Sofia seem to have experienced absolute improvements in indicators such as unemployment and violence in the last few years. Most of this is undoubtedly due to improvements in global or macro-economic conditions. In Sofia, the same forces have made the situation considerably worse. All areas except Sofia have also recently experienced relative improvements in crime statistics, and all except Fakulteta and Slotervaart/Overtoomsveld have experienced relative improvements in socioeconomic conditions. However, both are still considered to be unacceptably worse than other areas.

More worryingly, there is still a major deficit not only in transparent evaluations but also in the design of strategy, the selection of projects and the monitoring of results. There is a major need for applying methodologies such as the Council of Europe’s “Methodological guide to the development of social cohesion indicators”,⁴ to all stages of the programme and project cycle.

4. Currently under preparation by DG III – Social Cohesion.

Guidelines for a youth-centred strategy

The report concludes with a series of recommendations for progressing from individual cases of good practice towards a genuinely youth-centred strategy for social cohesion. These recommendations cover the main areas dealt with above and can be consulted in the last chapter. The key guidelines cover youth empowerment, decentralisation, joined-up and integrated government, partnership and evaluation.

2. Introduction

This chapter looks at the patterns of deprivation, violence and crime among young people. It examines the similarities and differences in extremely diverse contexts, using both published data and interview material. It also looks at the problem of youth violence from the point of view of different stakeholders – young people themselves, residents and policy makers – based upon material from interviews and focus groups.

2.1. Background

Both violence and crime and the public's fear of them have become driving forces in shaping the political choices being adopted in Europe today. According to *Eurobarometer*, west European citizens consider that crime is the second most important problem (29%) facing their countries after unemployment (41%)⁵.

The concern for physical security has been given a new, extremely dangerous international dimension by the climate created following the tragic events of 11 September and the war on Iraq. Nearly half of all Europeans (48%) now put either crime or terrorism at the top of their concerns. Although this is still less than their concerns for economic and social security (65% cite unemployment or the economic situation), it has been enough to make it a dominant issue in the latest elections in the Netherlands, UK, Spain and Italy, to name just four of the west European countries covered by the case studies in this report.

5. *Standard Eurobarometer*, No. 59. Fieldwork, March - April 2003.

For these reasons, during 2002, the Social Cohesion Development Division of the Council of Europe drafted two reports to analyse the links between policies and projects to improve social cohesion among young people in disadvantaged urban areas and those directed at crime reduction. The reports were presented at an expert meeting in Strasbourg on 16 and 17 December 2002 as part of the Council of Europe's and Integrated Project "Responses to violence in everyday life in a democratic society". By carrying out a review of secondary sources, the studies were able to highlight many cases of good practice and the lessons that emerged from many years of experience of integrated approaches to these problems.

However, it was found that although some of the approaches have been around for a considerable amount of time, in many cases they have not progressed beyond pilot project phase. The amount of fresh, additional resources dedicated to them is generally quite limited. Only very recently, and in a very few cases, have they been taken up as part of coherent national strategies. Given the long time spans required to produce results (one is talking about generational change) it is still too early to assess the impact of the latter.

In general, there is a considerable deficit in the monitoring and evaluation of these policies and projects. There are also major differences in the way that different approaches, processes, concepts and tools are interpreted by stakeholders. Quite often social cohesion and the prevention of violence among young people are treated as side issues of policies directed primarily at other objectives such as urban regeneration or employment creation. Little is known about the views of young people themselves or how these relate to the views of other local residents and urban policy makers.

This situation is compounded in central and east Europe where most countries are only just beginning to experience the patterns of spatial segregation within cities that is so common in the west. There is very little tradition of integrated approaches to increase the social cohesion among young people at neighbourhood level.

In this context, there is a major danger that the political pressure to come up with short-term visible solutions shifts the attention towards policies based upon the detection and punishment of crime and away from long-term policies based upon building social cohesion among young people.

The Council of Europe has always recognised that physical safety and security is a prerequisite for other human and social rights. It has also accepted that preventative and repressive approaches must work in parallel. The crucial question is the balance between these approaches and the extent to which repressive measures to protect the right to physical security diminish the right to liberty and other fundamental social rights. Another central issue is the long-term sustainability of different approaches. It is in this arena that one of the fundamental debates about a new distribution of rights and responsibilities is being negotiated in the shift from the welfare state towards a new paradigm of a welfare society.

2.2. Aims of the current study

The aim of the current study is to explore and build on the rights-based and preventative traditions supported by the Council of Europe. In order to do this, the Social Cohesion Development Division, in partnership with the Integrated Project, “Responses to violence in everyday life in a democratic society”, decided to carry out a detailed analysis of the achievements, limits and lessons of integrated projects to increase social cohesion among young people in the neighbourhoods of six European cities characterised by high levels of violence.

It should be noted that the study does not pretend to carry out an academic analysis of the processes and problems which lead to youth violence. This would require a longitudinal study of dimensions which far exceed the scope of this study. Similarly, it does not try to prove that social cohesion policies are more or less effective in reducing violence than repressive measures. This would be to fall into the trap of not comparing like with like. Under certain conditions effective repression may well have faster effects on crime and violence – the problem as we have said is the cost in terms of civil liberty and the social and economic sustainability of the policies in the long term. Nor is the study an analysis of best practice of youth involvement in local strategies for social cohesion or for crime prevention. Such an overview of the situation in this respect has been published in *Youth and exclusion in disadvantaged urban areas: addressing the causes of violence*.

The central questions we pose refer to how young people have been involved and affected by these neighbourhood policies. Our aim is to try to tease out what seems to be working, what the constraints are and

what the conditions are for making local strategies for social cohesion more relevant for youth. In doing this we consider the ways in which certain key features of the welfare society such as integrated government, partnership and empowerment have specifically affected young people.

The method used has been to carry out a stakeholder analysis of the initiatives including interviews with young people themselves, frontline community workers and policy makers and implementers at different spatial and sectoral levels. In addition, focus groups were organised with young local people in a safe environment where they could express themselves freely. The meetings usually involved between five and ten young people for a period of two to three hours around a common core of questions which were adapted to each area. The stakeholders' perceptions of both the problems and responses has been compared to those of young people. This subjective information has been contrasted with desk research on each area.

2.3. Repressive approaches – Reinforcing individual responsibilities

At the time of writing, extreme right-wing and/or populist parties have connections with government in Austria, Italy, Denmark, Portugal and Switzerland. They are a considerable electoral force in the Netherlands, France, Norway and Poland among other countries. The common feature of all these parties, and of the populist press, is that they target easy scapegoats. This invariably involves restrictions on the rights of immigrants, ethnic minorities and (certain kinds of) young people.

These views find resonance among disturbingly large numbers of people in many European countries. For example, a recent survey in *Le Monde*⁶ found that nearly one in four French people (22%) agreed with the programme of the National Front party and 59% agreed that there were "too many immigrants". Similarly, one survey in the UK found that 75% of adults would support a legally enforceable evening curfew on teenagers.⁷ Much of the support comes from the poorest families and neighbourhoods which directly suffer the highest levels of crime, violence and anti-social behaviour.

6. Reported in *El Pais* 11 December 2003.

7. www.mri.com/polls/1997nfm02/shtml

In this context, repressive strategies such as the policy of “zero tolerance” promoted by Mayor Giuliani in New York have had a major impact on European thinking. Between 1993 and 1997 violent crime in New York fell by 39% in central Harlem and 45% in the South Bronx. Over the same period, it fell by an average 5% in US cities with more than a quarter of a million inhabitants (from levels which are considerably higher than in Europe). Despite the social costs of these policies (for example, a massive increase of the prison population) and evidence that certain contextual factors such as falling unemployment, rising real incomes and demographic changes have heavily affected the outcomes, this experience has had a major impact on European thinking.

The policy formula that US politicians have accredited with this success has involved the following developments: increases in police numbers, equipment and powers; speeding-up the judicial system with faster and automatically heavier sentences; better data targeted on trouble spots and hardcore individuals; clamping down heavily on relatively minor anti-social behaviour such as dropping litter and graffiti, and finally, a shift towards more community policing. The latter not only involves getting police out of offices and cars and onto the streets but also uses a series of methods or tools, which are also used in preventative strategies to increase social cohesion. These include better inter-agency co-ordination or joined-up government along the entire delivery chain of detection and punishment. It also entails working in partnership with social and community services and the participation of the community in the analysis, planning and detection of crime.

These approaches have probably made rapid headway in the UK. The UK's Crime and Disorder Act, 1998 required local authorities and the police to set up community safety partnerships to secure closer co-operation between the police and other agencies, such as housing, in tackling anti-social behaviour. The Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act, 1999 speeded up court processes and introduced a range of schemes to deal with juvenile offenders. Mandatory sentences have been introduced for persistent domestic burglars.

One of the most distinctive UK measures has been the development of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders and Good Behaviour Contracts between problem families and individuals, the police and other public bodies such as public housing agencies. Infringement can lead to a loss of rights and imprisonment. A series of trailblazer areas have recently been designated

to receive support in community-based campaigns against certain kinds of anti-social behaviour. One of them is begging which will become a recordable offence. Offenders could face obligatory drug or alcohol treatment.

In a recent book,⁸ Frank Field, former Minister for Welfare Reform in the UK, makes the relationship between rights and responsibilities even more explicit by the controversial proposal to base general welfare payments on contracts that link eligibility to acceptable behaviour.

Although the UK has probably gone further and faster down this road, it is now difficult to find any centre-left or centre-right party in Europe which has not espoused the most important elements of this approach. For example, during the last local elections in Spain, the Minister of the Interior argued that in the past “the crime had been punished but there had been sympathy for the delinquent”.⁹ He argued that previous governments had only proposed social measures against crime because “they believe that society is also responsible for delinquency”. We, however, “believe in the liberty and responsibility of the individual and that there are people who freely choose to live from delinquency and that, in this context, one has to take social measures but also repressive measures and punishment”. Local joint action plans are to be drawn up with this aim by local inter-agency committees (Juntas Locales de Seguridad).

The same view is echoed in France where there are considered to be 1 100 *banlieues sensibles* (sink estates) where crime and violence is part of everyday life. The former Minister of the Interior (Nicolas Sarkozy) has spearheaded an unprecedented zero-tolerance crime crackdown involving the familiar recipe of more police, more police powers to stop and search, new stiffer sentences, a reduction of the age at which youth can be sent to detention centres to 13 years and new offences such as that for youth congregating in stairwells. Decree No. 2002-999¹⁰ recommends that “local councils for security and the prevention of delinquency produce global plans for repressive and preventative actions based on a shared analysis of local problems”.

8. Frank Field, *Neighbours from hell*, Politicos, London, 2003.

9. Angel Acebes, “Se castiga el delito y se compadece al delincuente”, *El Pais*, 8 May 2003.

10. Decree No. 2002-999, 17 July 2002, published in the *Official Journal* of 18 July 2002.

At the same time, most people recognise that there are clearly limits on repressive policies. Experience shows that there is no linear relationship between increased expenditure on repressive polices and reductions in crime and violence. In fact, despite certain exceptions and fluctuations, most European countries have experienced the opposite – important long-term increases in the number of police, the prison population and violent crime since the second world war.

Once again the UK is a case in point; over the last ten years the prison population has increased by 60% to 74 000 people but the overall levels of serious crime have doubled. The cost of keeping such a large prison population is estimated at around 4.5 billion euros per year but more than a million crimes, nearly a fifth of all offences, are committed by released prisoners at a cost of at least 16.5 billion euros per year. This is considered to be a fraction of the real cost because detection rates are so low. As long ago as 1990 a government White Paper pointed out “prison is an expensive way of making bad people worse” .¹¹

As a result of the obvious limitations of repressive policies, most governments claim to follow a double-barrelled approach of being “tough on crime and tough on the causes of crime”.¹² Prevention has to work alongside punishment. The question is the relative weight that should be given to each, the extent to which tightening-up the delivery chain of punishment impinges on basic human and social rights and the long-term sustainability of the measures.

2.4. Preventative strategies and social cohesion

As the main reference point for pan-European human and social rights, the Council of Europe plays a major role in this debate. In Recommendation 1532 (2001),¹³ the Parliamentary Assembly argues that “there is a growing recognition that juvenile justice or criminal justice agencies will not of themselves resolve the problems posed or experienced by children who offend (...) the Parliamentary Assembly believes that the response to youth violence needs to be based on prevention rather than on repression or punishment, addressing at the earliest possible stage the situation of children facing disadvantage and risk” .

11. *Economist*, October 18 2003.

12. Tony Blair, election promise 1997.

13. Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe Recommendation 1532 (2001) on a dynamic social policy for children and adolescents in towns and cities.

The Parliamentary Assembly goes on to propose the development of a dynamic social policy for children and adolescents in towns and cities based on the following elements (among others): public-private community partnerships; integrated approaches to cover the whole range of risks faced by children and adolescents; the participation of children and adolescents in decision making and policy development; measures to support families and parents in their parenting role; the promotion of formal and non-formal education; assistance in the transition from school to employment; leisure pursuits; taking account of gender-based issues; and measures to improve the situation of street children.

As a contribution to the Council of Europe's Integrated project "Responses to violence in everyday life in a democratic society," the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe has also passed a series of resolutions and produced a guide for local authorities on urban crime prevention¹⁴ with many recommendations for implementing the points made above at a local level. In the section on young people and crime the guide recommends: bringing together all institutions to remedy the situation; recognising the pivotal role of young people and actively promoting their involvement; ensuring that those at risk have a meaningful role to play within the regeneration of their neighbourhood; improving education; establishing a genuine dialogue; providing financial support for youth initiatives; encouraging social and vocational skills in New Deal-type programmes; and involving parents, police, the education authority and local residents' representatives in support for young people.

Looking at the situation from the point of view of social rights, rather than violence, the European Committee for Social Cohesion adopted a publication written by Mary Daly laying down a set of principles for assuring access to social rights in Europe.¹⁵ While this deals with the broader issues related to guaranteeing the social rights side of the equation in the transition to a welfare society, many of the key principles are the same, namely: integration of services and benefits; partnership; empowerment; transparency and monitoring; and review of implementation. Other principles of good practice such as user-orientated service delivery, quality and equality are closely related.

14. *Urban crime prevention. A guide for local authorities*, Integrated Project. "Responses to violence in everyday life in a democratic society," Council of Europe Publishing, Strasbourg, 2002.

15. Mary Daly, *Access to social rights in Europe*, Council of Europe Publishing, Strasbourg, 2002. Adopted by the European Committee for Social Cohesion at its 8th meeting 28-30 May, 2002.

In fact, we can see that both strategies for increasing social cohesion and repressive approaches to crime and violence advocate more integrated government, the use of partnerships and more community involvement or ownership. Clearly these key terms are not neutral and depend fundamentally on who is using them and why.

In preventative and rights-based approaches, the causes of violence and crime are seen to be a complex result of physical, psychological, social and economic factors. There are no linear relationships – but violence and crime thrive in environments of multiple deprivation. As a result the response also has to be multisectoral, integrated and holistic (more joined-up government).

Partnerships between different state agencies and between community and private sectors, are not only seen as an ideal mechanism of co-ordination, but also as a way of mobilising tacit knowledge, commitment and the ownership of different stakeholders in producing social cohesion. Citizens can no longer be seen as passive consumers of welfare benefits. They must be empowered to take responsibility, individually and collectively, for shaping their own futures. They, and not just state suppliers, must shape social policies.

Recognising that these key features of a welfare society can be interpreted and used in different ways, the key question is how far have they been taken and what are the conditions for ensuring that they increase social cohesion among young people.

3. Scope of the problems

3.1. Setting the boundaries

Table 1 shows that five of the neighbourhoods studied have populations of between 10 000 and 45 000 people. The major exception is the Southern Administrative District of Moscow, which has a population of 1.6 million people and cannot be considered as a neighbourhood at all. Data was collected at this level in Moscow because this was considered to be the smallest spatial level at which one could obtain information about an urban area and the policies being implemented within it.

Table 1. – Urban neighbourhoods in the case studies

Neighbourhood	Population	Type of area
Spanish quarter, Naples	15 000	Old inner-city area. Long history. Strong popular identity. Tourist/leisure potential.
el Raval, Barcelona	37 500	Old inner-city area. Long history. Strong popular identity. Tourist/leisure potential.
Derwent, Derby	9 355	Inter and post-war residential neighbourhood. Inner ring but physically cut off from centre.
Slotervaart/Overtoomseveld, Amsterdam	44 034	Medium and high-rise housing estate in west Amsterdam.
Fakulteta, Sofia	12 500-30 000	Roma neighbourhood. Uncontrolled family housing ranging from shacks to chalets. Many without sewage or electricity.
Southern District, Moscow	1.6 million	Not a neighbourhood. Old industrial area with blocks of flats built in 1980s. Major environmental problems.

Source: Case studies

The case studies show that the definition of territorial boundaries has a crucial affect on the perception of the problem and the policy response to them. The starting point for any local urban strategy is the definition of the area and its position within the city (and the city's role within national and international developments).

Among the six case studies there are three main approaches to the definition of boundaries. Firstly, there are areas which correspond to certain administrative boundaries. In the case of Slotervaart/Overtoomseveld in Amsterdam and the Southern District in Moscow the areas correspond to full local authority boundaries. The other four cases under review are defined administrative units within sub-city local authorities.

Secondly, there are areas which have a clear identity both in the eyes of residents and outsiders. These are usually older areas with a history that have evolved organically over time (although this may include dramatic transformations). Of the six case studies, the Spanish quarter in Naples, el Raval in Barcelona and, to a certain extent, Fakulteta in Sofia fit into this category.

Thirdly, it is vital to consider the position or function of the neighbourhood within the city and the way that this is changing over time. Later on in the report, when analysing the policy responses, it will be seen that a clear vision and leadership on the role that the neighbourhood can play in the future of the city is one of the most important elements of success. Different types of neighbourhood clearly have different margins for manoeuvre within the global changes which are reshaping cities across Europe.

The four case studies from west Europe include two of each of the main categories of disadvantaged urban area identified by the OECD,¹⁶ namely deprived city centre neighbourhoods and peripheral public housing estates. The Spanish quarter of Naples and el Raval in Barcelona are both popular inner-city neighbourhoods of old, often substandard private housing. They are lively, bustling areas with a strong local identity, which have traditionally served as reception areas for migrants, first from the interior of the country and, more recently, from abroad. Their closeness to the city centre and a certain picturesqueness means that they have potential for tourism, leisure, cultural and other residential uses. They are also better connected to the cities' growing service sectors.

On the other hand, Derwent in Derby and Slotervaart/Overtoomseveld in Amsterdam are out-of-centre, post-war public housing estates, which were built precisely to provide accommodation for industrial workers in better conditions than the poor inner-city housing of that period. Neither are actually that far from the centre, but as time has progressed the more upwardly mobile residents have moved further out to better housing, leaving increasing concentrations of people facing multiple forms of deprivation. These areas do not have the same potential for tourist or leisure activities or the same connectivity to the most dynamic parts of the cities' economies.

16. *Integrating distressed urban areas*, OECD, 1998.

When it comes to the two ex-communist countries, the same OECD report also correctly argued that the state-controlled housing and labour markets of the previous regime had prevented the kinds of spatial differentiation and segregation that is found in the cities of west Europe. Partially as a result, there is little tradition of public or community intervention at a neighbourhood level. This is now changing with rapidly rising real estate prices in the most attractive parts of both cities. Given relatively low levels of urban segregation and little tradition of policies for comprehensive neighbourhood renewal, the experts from these two countries concentrated on the urban areas and problems that were seen as being most relevant within their respective national context.

In the case of Bulgaria, this resulted in the clear choice of a Roma neighbourhood. Fakulteta in Sofia is an example of the most dramatic form of territorial differentiation that occurs within Bulgarian cities. It is a completely unplanned neighbourhood of family accommodation which varies from large numbers of very poor shacks to a few ostentatious villas. Many buildings have no sewage or electricity.

The Roma community is soon to be the largest ethnic minority in the European Union, with nearly 10 million people, many of whom live in conditions characterised by shocking levels of deprivation, crime and violence. As a result, there is also a more (but not very) developed tradition of integrated policies to solve the problems of Roma neighbourhoods.

Finally, in Moscow, it was not possible to find an example of a specific deprived neighbourhood with a history of integrated intervention that was comparable with the other studies. However, the manifestation of youth exclusion and violence that has most affected political and public opinion is undoubtedly the appearance of thousands of homeless street children in certain parts of Moscow. It was, therefore, decided to study this problem and the projects that have sprung up to deal with it in one specific part of Moscow – the Southern District. This old industrial area is the poorest part of Moscow. It is a mixed industrial-residential area with over 250 major factories and blocks of flats built in the 1980s. There are also major environmental problems.

3.2. Patterns of deprivation

All six areas studied suffer from higher levels of poverty and educational failure than the cities they are situated in. However, given the diversity of the countries and of the areas it is not surprising that there are also major differences between them. Three such differences are outlined below.

Firstly, the levels of poverty in the eastern neighbourhoods are of a completely different order to those in the west. The general problem in both neighbourhoods is not so much unemployment as low income. Both Sofia and Moscow are growth poles for their national economies and have tighter labour markets than all four west European countries (4.5% unemployment in Sofia and 0.6% unemployment in Moscow). In Moscow, average city wages are below the city subsistence level. In the Southern District, 34.5% of inhabitants have just enough income to pay for food and nearly 10% go hungry.

This situation reaches catastrophic levels in the Roma neighbourhoods of Sofia and other parts of Bulgaria. Here over one third of the population says they go hungry while around 20% of the Roma population are considered to be anomic: " They live by begging, collecting the remains from trash by petty theft and doing occasional jobs. Their standard of life is of the lowest, amounting to utter misery. Their connection with all social institutions (excepting those offering social assistance) has been severed." ¹⁷

Secondly, the eastern European urban neighbourhoods are richer than the rest of their respective countries and act as magnets for internal migration. In the totally Roma neighbourhood of Fakulteta, the numbers of inhabitants have swelled from the official figures of 12 500 to 2 to 3 times this amount by people trying to escape poverty in the rural areas and by those who simply do not have enough money to pay for an official apartment in other parts of Sofia.

In Moscow, incomes are 1.6 times more than the Russian average and migrants are flocking in from the far poorer ex-Soviet republics of Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Takistan.

17. Case study of Fakulteta, Sofia: Paul Soto, Maria Jeliaskova and Elena Atanassova.

Table 2. – Indicators of deprivation

Neighbourhood	Unemployment Rate	Poverty	Education
Spanish quarter, Naples	50% – more than twice city average.	13.5% on income support – 43% more than city average.	Truancy 36.6% – more than city average.
el Raval, Barcelona	25% – 50% higher than city average.	Family purchasing power 60% less than city average.	25% more than city average with only primary education.
Derwent, Derby	13% – more than twice city average.	Twice city average on housing benefit.	36% with no qualification.
Slotervaart/Overtoomseveld, Amsterdam	9.1% (15-24 yrs) compared to 8.7% for the city.		40% school drop out rate.
Fakulteta, Sofia	50% compared to 4.5% in Sofia.	60% below poverty line. A third go hungry.	Two thirds leave school before 15. 19% illiterate.
Southern District, Moscow	0.6% – same as rest of Moscow.	34.5% only have income for food. 9.8% not even this.	

Source: Case studies

Table 3. – The role of migration

Neighbourhood	Ethnic minorities
Fakulteta, Sofia	100%
Southern District, Moscow	Estimated 1 million unregistered migrants in Moscow.
el Raval, Barcelona	47%
Slotervaart/Overtoomseveld, Amsterdam	41%
Spanish quarter, Naples	17%
Derwent, Derby	3%

Source: Case studies

Thirdly, although the western neighbourhoods are relatively poorer than their respective countries they also act as magnets for migrants – this time from developing countries. In el Raval, Barcelona, nearly half the population comes from an ethnic minority with the main groups being Pakistanis, Filipinos, Moroccans and Ecuadorians. The numbers are not much lower in the Amsterdam neighbourhood of Slotervaart/Overtoomseveld but this time the composition is mainly Turks and Moroccans.

In the Spanish quarter of Naples new migrants, mainly from Sri Lanka, are occupying the tenement *bassi* (basements) that were previously the preserve of the poorest Neapolitans and migrants from the country. The only neighbourhood which is not drawing in large numbers of newcomers is Derwent in Derby.

There is also a contrast between the tighter labour markets of the northern economies of UK and the Netherlands and the high unemployment regimes of the southern economies of Spain and southern Italy. It should be remembered that the informal economy plays a far more important role in southern European countries and that it flourishes in neighbourhoods like the Spanish quarter of Naples and el Raval in Barcelona.

3.3. Spirals of social exclusion

While the absolute levels of their socioeconomic problems may differ, the underlying processes they are experiencing are quite similar. All six cities are experiencing cycles of rapid socioeconomic change – driven increasingly by global rather than city events. Although the sequence of cause and effect is extremely complex, the cycle is presented schematically below.

Economic change

In the neighbourhoods under review there is rapid economic change involving the massive expulsion of certain workers and, in some cases, the absorption of others. For example, in the Derby area, the number of coal mining jobs was reduced by four fifths and in engineering they fell by similar absolute numbers. In the last ten years, Bulgaria as a whole has lost one third of its jobs (1 200 000) including most of the unskilled jobs previously done by the Roma community. Many of the craft firms which previously provided work in the formal economy for the residents of the Spanish quarter in Naples have disappeared. In the Southern District of Moscow the largest companies have gone through several waves of

redundancies. The important textile sector that existed in Barcelona has disappeared.

However, as already mentioned, the growth of the service sector and certain other sectors in five of the cities (all but Derby) still mean that they function as magnets, constantly drawing in migrants from other areas. In a sense the local labour market is like a bath that gets constantly topped up when any water is let out.

Labour market problems

Labour market problems include unemployment, low income, reliance on the informal economy and/or dependence on benefits. All the areas and all the people interviewed refer to the centrality of the labour market. The new jobs being created are mostly in the service and leisure sectors and are often precarious, low paid and require different skills and qualities to the jobs that have been destroyed. As noted above, the result is either high levels of long-term structural unemployment, low pay, a shift to the informal economy, a reliance on benefits or a combination of all of them.

A mismatch between housing and jobs

The public housing estates built in Amsterdam and Derby had the noble aims of taking people out of poor accommodation and providing them with modern flats with gardens close to industrial jobs. But now these jobs have moved elsewhere and/or the areas find themselves poorly connected.

Similarly, some of the previous waves of migrants to Barcelona and Naples find themselves stranded and forced into the informal economy or dependency on welfare following the disappearance of craft sectors. The residents of Fakulteta also relied upon certain state enterprises which have now been decimated. As a result, those residents who can do so move out to other areas. However, in most cases public and private housing continues to offer low-income people a better opportunity for survival than elsewhere.

A mismatch between the education system and the needs of the labour market

Local people start to feel that education is no longer a passport to a job or social mobility. Table 2 shows that high levels of truancy, school drop-

out rates and poor educational attainment pervade all areas. Young people regard school as useless work with no reward – while the authorities use it as a way of keeping young people off the street. An extreme case is that of Moscow, where 200 schools have just moved to a full day system, effectively locking pupils in until as late as 9 p.m. However, even progressive educational projects in Barcelona recommend not focusing too heavily on labour market outcomes because “there are not enough jobs for everyone”.

Physical degradation

The processes described above result in a familiar pattern for all the west European cities. The more upwardly mobile who can escape do so. Their places are filled by successive waves of poorer people. The same process can be observed in the inner-city neighbourhoods of Barcelona and Naples and in the out-of-centre public housing estates of Amsterdam and Derby. In the first case, new migrants are attracted by the willingness of landlords to let and sublet for multi-occupation and the existence of solidarity networks. In the second example, public housing criteria play a role. But in both, the presence of large numbers of low-income groups puts pressure on local amenities and the public and private built environment.

Nevertheless, the more organic development of the inner-city neighbourhoods does have certain advantages. Witness the descriptions of Derwent and the Spanish quarter of Naples: of Derwent, the author writes “As a place it had a tired air. A number of abandoned and vandalised shops in the three small clusters that make up the commercial centres mirror boarded-up houses in the streets around, testifying to the difficulties generated by a high turnover of tenants that leads in some cases to a complete breakdown in social structures and networks.” Of the Spanish quarter, the description is: “The passer-by is struck by its vitality and the impression of chaos provoked by the chaotic traffic of cars and motorbikes, as well as the narrow streets packed with local people and mobile vendors.”

Physical deterioration is present in both cases but it is lived in different ways. Both the Spanish quarter and el Raval have strong historical, popular identities which are a far more fertile ground upon which to build strategies for social cohesion.

Loss of personal and collective identity

Nevertheless, all areas are experiencing a whirlwind of cultural, social and economic change in which the young people from all nationalities have to find their path. The most recent migrants suffer the loss of families, friends and traditions. However, this is often relegated to a second place during the first years by the desperate struggle of survival and the dream of returning home under better conditions.

For example, one of the employment projects visited in Barcelona reported that they often achieved faster progress with the street children from northern Africa than with disaffected Spanish youth or second generation migrants. A 12 year old who has left his family and hung on to the bottom of a lorry for over a thousand kilometres will often seize any opportunity to escape the risks and hunger of the streets. On the other hand, the men who have lost their jobs in the factories and their national or second generation migrant children can easily lose faith in the future. Faced with a life of unemployment or low-paid, insecure and often demeaning jobs, the street can often offer young people more immediate gratification both economically and in terms of peer status.

When large numbers of people facing similar problems are concentrated into one area the whole neighbourhood can become stigmatised. Thus el Raval was known in Barcelona as *el Barrio Chino* the den of prostitutes and pick-pockets. Similarly, in Derwent, Derby, a senior public official reported: "There is discrimination against job seekers from the Derwent area. The stigma attached to the place is immediately evoked by the post-code of applicants resulting in rejection, sight unseen."¹⁸

Family breakdown

Economic insecurity, coupled with rapid social change and clashes in both intercultural and intergenerational values, places massive pressure on families. Thus one of the central institutions of social cohesion (together with the labour market and the education system) begins to crumble.

For example, Derwent has twice the level of single-parent families (14%) as the UK average (7%). In Naples, one of the social workers interviewed

18. Case study of Derwent Community Team, Derby: Steve McAdam.

pointed out that “95% of the cases of difficult young people had their roots in (broken) family histories going back one, two or three generations”. The situation reaches far more dramatic proportions in the two ex-communist countries. Thus in the Southern District of Moscow nearly every third child is brought up by a single parent. In the Roma neighbourhoods of Bulgaria, such as Fakulteta, the family is the linchpin of both social and economic existence. However, for the poorest 20% of the community classified as anomic, even their basic social ties – between family and relatives – have been eroded. In these conditions the use of children and young people in begging, prostitution and human trafficking flourishes.

Greater dependence on social services

Faced with a breakdown in the traditional social institutions for self-help, such as the family, social services are called to intervene more heavily with both remedial and preventative measures. Dependency on benefits is high in all the areas studied. For example, the proportion of families receiving an income supplement in the centre of Naples is 43% higher than the city average. In Derwent, Derby, 32% of families require housing benefit to cover the cost of their rent. In Moscow, a third of families with children need social support and financial assistance.

Social safety nets are absolutely essential to prevent extreme hardship and a total loss of social rights but when the education system and the labour market does not seem to offer a solution, they can also generate a culture of dependency. In addition, people and families that ask for help can easily be classified as a problem or dysfunctional. Through the various kinds of joined-up government that are being proposed (see the next chapter) this information can be passed on and affect opportunities in other realms of life. It may even be used by the police.

In addition, there is a major distinction between the generous benefit regime of say the Netherlands, the lower levels experienced in Italy and Spain and the totally inadequate cover in the ex-communist countries. For example, in Fakulteta, Bulgaria, a very high proportion of the Roma community do not qualify for benefits due to poor employment records, etc. Even so, half quote benefits as their main source of income. However, the minimum guaranteed income is less than one euro a day, which is lower than the amount required to pay for basic foodstuffs and energy.

Social exclusion and high-risk groups

All the studies stress that the changes occurring above are affecting large swathes of the population in the study areas. However, certain groups of the population face a far higher risk of suffering a combination of them at the same time. In general, the young people in the neighbourhoods studied are a high-risk group and as soon as they start to accumulate disadvantages like family breakdown, educational failure and unemployment the situation can become overwhelming.

Difficulties in accessing social rights in a range of areas can lead to a feeling of being marginalised from the rest of society, of not being recognised as a normal citizen, of “us and them”. The despair and anger that is felt in this situation makes it extremely difficult to recover ground in any particular sphere such as education or employment.

In Naples, the author of the case study describes local “adolescents who are both depressive and aggressive and who, at under 16 years of age, already have a past which bears down too heavily on their young shoulders. They come from (Neapolitan) families who have lost all hope, marked by unemployment, misery, psychological problems and social degradation (...) families where nobody gets up in the morning because there is nothing to do and who think that school is pointless. These adolescents are the tip of a much larger iceberg of socioeconomic insecurity (...) which is massive in this area – even if all young people do not face such dramatic situations”.

In Barcelona, an NGO representative pointed out: “There is a difference between someone who is poor and someone who is socially excluded (marginalized). In the first case, the person can improve their situation through better access to economic resources. But the person who has been marginalized has lost all reference points. It is necessary to take action through transversal educational and cultural programmes and to create spaces where they can interrelate with the rest of society on more favourable terms.”

Similarly a survey of the Roma community in Bulgaria reported that the poorest anomic 20% “have lost all hope of changing their way of life – and do not even try to change it”. This is the context in which we turn to look at violence among young people.

3.4. Country analysis of patterns of violence and crime among young people

Obviously, neither crime nor anti-social behaviour need necessarily be violent. There is also a violence of expression and body language, as described among the young people of the Spanish quarter in Naples, which does not necessarily involve physical harm but can be extremely intimidating. However, even at national level, it is difficult to find internationally comparable statistics about these differences, and at local level, it is almost impossible.

As a result the approach adopted in this study has been to allow the stakeholders of each country to define the problem as they see it and to substantiate this with whatever indicators are available. This allows us to see that the perception of the problem and its causes is not only different between countries (this chapter) but also between different stakeholders (next chapter). This is extremely important because it allows us to see that while issues relating to anti-social behaviour may dominate the political agenda in certain countries it is by no means the most important aspect of violence involving young people. In these other forms of violence young people are often simply the victims of older people. This provides us with some fertile material for chapter four which shows that the policy responses are invariably compromises which tend to reflect the priorities of the dominant stakeholders.

Turning first to the patterns across countries, violence and crime are woven into the social fabric of all the neighbourhoods in a complex pattern of cause and effect. The levels of violence and crime are considerably higher than the city averages in all six areas studied. Young people take part in, and suffer from, a high proportion of this in all cases. However, the violence and crime involving young people takes certain common forms.

Anti-social behaviour

This is referred to in all the study areas and covers a wide range of activities. Some of this involves violence such as street and gang fighting but most simply involves making a nuisance in terms of meaningless vandalism, noise, rubbish and generally threatening behaviour and/or language. The behaviour may not be criminal in any way (young people congregating in certain public places), but its group nature makes it threatening to outsiders.

The main people who suffer are local residents – unless the activity transfers to city-wide public spaces and/or public transport. In Derwent, Naples and Moscow, the problem is put down to indigenous youth. Derwent, for example, has three times the UK average level of anti-social behaviour. One interviewee said “there’s a lot of violence in the streets, on street corners, near shops. It’s where the young people hang out and usually get drunk. Sometimes they hang around my house and just destroy things. They tore down a fence that had just been put up. They set fire to the rubbish bin outside. They shout at me. I just have to ignore it. If I respond or say anything it will get worse” .

Similarly, in the Southern District of Moscow, the residents did not see homeless children as a community problem. It was local kids and “low-level public disorder (graffiti, damage to elevators and petty hooliganism) that presented the biggest threat” .

In fact, simply being in the street is increasingly being connected with anti-social behaviour in many countries. As was mentioned earlier, a survey carried out in the UK reported that 75% of respondents would support a legally enforceable evening curfew on young people.

In contrast, there appears to be considerably more tolerance in Naples and Barcelona, where a vibrant street life is seen to enhance the quality of life. For example, in Barcelona it was found that only 10% of youth were involved in street life and only 3% were involved in any kind of criminal or violent activity. Community groups asked whether it was intrinsically more anti-social to be in the street with other young people or to be on one’s own watching violent video games. One of the young people in the focus group in Barcelona summed up by saying: “We like our neighbourhood. We feel good about it and are proud to live here because it is a neighbourhood based upon street life. People ‘live’ in the street. Neighbours know each other. You are not alone. You have more relationships, more friends. We like the fact that there are people from all over the place.”

Nevertheless even in Barcelona, autochthonous residents complained about groups of immigrants congregating in certain public spaces and there are growing conflicts between residential activities and noisy leisure and tourist activities. In fact, in both Barcelona and Amsterdam anti-social behaviour is connected in people’s minds with immigrants as opposed to local youth. The issue of anti-social behaviour among young

people has become a major issue in all cities and it is urgent to find solutions which do not threaten basic human and social rights.

Crime and violence with a strong economic motive

Burglary, petty theft, shoplifting and pick-pocketing are important in all cities but seem to be mentioned more often in the southern European cities of Barcelona and Naples and also in Sofia. For example, the pick-pocketing and shoplifting carried out by the *meinas* (street children) in Barcelona is clearly about survival. Similarly, for certain young people in the Spanish quarter of Naples pick-pocketing and theft forms part of a broader way of life which includes a wide range of informal, semi-legal and illegal activities.

In the Roma community of Fakulteta a representative expressed the widely held view that "12-16 year-old boys steal domestic animals, fruit from the gardens, modern equipment, mobile phones, hi-fi and so on. They do that because they have nothing to live on".

Historically, much of this activity has taken place between one community or neighbourhood and another (for example, young people from el Raval in Barcelona and the Spanish quarter of Naples to tourists and people outside the community, or people from Roma neighbourhoods to Bulgarian houses). Strong local conflicts can occur when unwritten codes of conduct are broken, as in the case of street children pick-pocketing the residents of el Raval or stealing from local shopkeepers.

Domestic violence

Here both women and young people are the victims, usually of adult males. Domestic violence is appallingly high in all the study areas and young people constantly referred to this aspect of their lives. It is clearly a symptom of family breakdown and plays a major role in creating vicious cycles of violence involving young people outside the family. For example, it is three times the UK average in Derwent and it is rife in the Spanish quarter of Naples and el Raval in Barcelona. In Moscow, 80% of street children experienced physical violence in the home and one third had wounds from beatings. In contrast only 20% experienced violence on the street. Conclusion – the street is a safer place to be than the home. Despite these figures, the political implications of domestic violence are far easier to ignore, and in general, it is not associated so closely by the authorities with the problem of youth.

Table 4. – Patterns of crime and violence

Area	Crime and violence
Spanish quarter, Naples	<p>Around 200 families are part of the Camorra – family conflicts and murders. Violence pervades relations and language.</p> <p>Young people convicted of crimes against people or property is 61% higher than city average.</p> <p>Predominantly young Italians from destructured families dropped out from school – child labour – speak only dialect. Not immigrants.</p> <p>Vandalism of shops and alien institutions (can be schools).</p> <p>Domestic violence is rife. Girls marry and have children at 14-15.</p>
el Raval, Barcelona	<p>Crime and violence in general five to ten times higher than the city average (pick-pocketing, theft, robbery with violence, grievous bodily harm, murder).</p> <p>About 10% of youth take part in street life (850). Culture of hardness, risk living on one's feet. Some 75% are men.</p> <p>Different immigrant groups hang around certain squares and public places at night.</p> <p>About 3% of street youth are involved in illicit or violent activities.</p> <p>The main manifestation is petty theft and pick-pocketing. Large increase due to street children – <i>meinas</i> from Morocco.</p> <p>The increase in tourism and this kind of immigration has meant that violence changes form and more takes place in the area.</p> <p>Young people experience violence at home, prostitution (young immigrant women), drugs.</p>
Derwent, Derby	<p>Violent crime 71.4% above the city average. 55.9% of residents afraid to walk in the dark (twice national average).</p> <p>Criminal act carried out once every two days by 10-17 year olds in the neighbourhood (twice the average). Anti-social behaviour nearly three times the city average.</p> <p>Violence in streets, street corners, near shops where young people hang out, get drunk. Vandalism, insults, etc.</p> <p>Domestic violence three times city average. Teenage pregnancy twice national average.</p>
Slotervaart/ Overtoomseveld, Amsterdam	<p>1 500 hard-core youths. 35% of these live in west Amsterdam (around 525).</p> <p>70% are aged between 18 and 25. Persistent offenders with very poor education, no job, broken families.</p> <p>45% of the violent young people said to be third generation Moroccan, 30% other immigrant groups and 25% Dutch.</p> <p>Main violence: vandalism, pick-pocketing, theft and other forms of anti-social behaviour centred around stations and certain public spaces.</p>

	<p>Serious riots in 1998 and serious tension between these youths and other residents.</p> <p>Violence against immigrant youth is considered to be minimal.</p>
<p>Fakulteta, Sofia</p>	<p>Young Roma people represent 45% of condemned juveniles while they are less than 8% of the population.</p> <p>Mainly pick-pocketing, small burglaries.</p> <p>High levels of violence within the community and the family: rape, domestic violence, child prostitution, child labour.</p> <p>Violence against the Roma community: skinheads, general racist abuse and violence on public transport and in the streets, violence by police.</p>
<p>Southern District, Moscow</p>	<p>Crime in Moscow is increasing rapidly: 23.8% more in first eight months of 2003. 40% in public spaces and 60% caused by teenagers.</p> <p>Racist pogrom Southern District in 2001. Several migrants killed. 33 000 street children. 80% experienced physical violence in the home and about one third had wounds from beatings.</p> <p>73% reported being afraid on the street. 20% report actual violence.</p> <p>Majority involved in stealing and/or begging. Very high consumption of alcohol, glue, drugs and smoking. High risk of being drawn into organised crime and prostitution.</p>

Source: Case studies

Domestic violence is part of wider gender-based violence, which includes: rape, prostitution and sexual harassment. Young women are once again the victims while a high proportion of the culprits are older men. There are very few statistics on these problems at a neighbourhood level. Rape is known to be endemic in the Roma communities like Fakulteta and despite the improvements in the area prostitution is still renowned in el Raval, Barcelona. However, it increasingly involves younger women from developing countries.

Racial violence

Large inflows of migrants to any society, whatever their race or colour, inevitably generate inter-ethnic tensions between the newcomers and existing residents. If the integration of the immigrants is not managed and negotiated with great care there is always a risk of violence, which often involves young people.

The interviews suggest that the problems are more intense in the ex-communist countries that have gone through far more dramatic changes in the last ten years and have far fewer resources for managing the situation. Thus in the Southern District of Moscow there was a racist pogrom by Russian youths in the summer of 2001 in which several non-ethnic Russians were killed. The interviews revealed that racist attitudes were dangerously close to the surface among both local residents and public sector workers. One resident went so far as saying that "all the people from the Caucasus and Asia who come to Moscow should be shot and hung".

In Fakulteta, a Roma community leader reported: "In the centre, if you go on the trams, Bulgarian men and boys shout at you: 'You are Gypsies, vandals! Show your tickets!' Why do they behave so? Bulgarians behave roughly with us, they make us leave public transport and they beat us."

In Slotervaart in Amsterdam the case study also starts with a description of the riots which took place in 1998 between Moroccans and the police because residents disagreed with the arrest of three Moroccan boys for ignoring a bye-law.

The proportion of ethnic minorities is very low in Derby but nevertheless the study reported that "in some areas there's a lot of racial tension and a perverse pecking order: The Brits take it out on the Turks, and the Turks take it out on the Pakistanis".

In Barcelona there are also tensions between successive waves of migrants – the autochthonous Spanish, the Roms, the Moroccans and Algerians, the Pakistanis and the Ecuadorians. However, in general, these conflicts seem more contained in both Barcelona and Naples and in areas of relatively low migration like Derby.

Institutional violence

Young people also suffer from violence by the authorities, by adults and by certain sections of society. It must be remembered that repressive measures can never be targeted with total accuracy. All young people expressed the view that adult and mainstream society was also aggressive towards them. This varies from ignoring them, general rudeness, senseless police controls and harassment to racist pogroms. Attitudes like

this can generate macho battle mentalities among some groups on both sides and repetitive cycles of violence and repression.

The next section deals more fully with the perceptions that young people themselves have of this situation.

3.5. Stakeholder analysis of patterns of violence and crime among young people

In order to understand and even start to evaluate the policy responses described in the next chapter it must be clear who they are targeted at and who is driving them. This means considering the problems from at least three angles: from the young person's point of view, from the point of view of local residents (and workers) and from a broader political or policy point of view.

The voices of young people

Failure to listen to young people's views and to find spaces for dialogue and negotiation between the other stakeholders such as older residents and local businesses and services leads to a series of simplistic explanations which put the blame on certain categories of people: immigrants, ethnic minorities, certain kinds of young people or even young people as a whole. All the case studies carried out a series of direct interviews with young people and held one or more focus groups with them. The following passages provide a flavour of their views.

The Spanish quarter – Naples

The case study describes the lives of young high-risk Neapolitans in the following terms: " They live a life without any reference points – particularly in terms of parents or of any kind of security. They do not anticipate the future but only think in the present. They never make plans because they know full well that nothing will happen as they wish. They can't project themselves into the future because if they did they would be overcome by the anguish and rage of being trapped into a life of exclusion from which they have little chance of escaping (...). Sometimes they will vandalise the school, steal and break equipment because for them school is an example of those institutions that do nothing for them – that wash their hands and pass them back to society (...). On other occasions they will vandalise the shops on the main commercial streets, which just

a few metres from their run down neighbourhood are a show case of the abundance of consumer society (...). Or they may channel their anger through the football stadium at the supporters of certain teams of the north of the country – which they see as the centre of the system of which they are victims (...). To push others away seems to be the main objective of these young people and this is one of the main obstacles to any social intervention on their behalf. The others are strangers, who represent a threat. They provoke fear, which must be banished. ‘Who do you think you are? Do you think you’re a person? Why have you come to screw me up? You’re nothing but rubbish.’ By rejecting other people they try to show that they are impenetrable, that they should be left in peace. They try to avoid the risk of being vulnerable, to create a distance between anyone who may raise questions or doubts. Their violent behaviour covers a desperate need for protection.”

el Raval – Barcelona

In Barcelona interviews carried out on sixty young people and organisations show how different groups of young people build mental mind-maps and use a range of strategies to mark out the social and geographical boundaries between “us” (the minority) and “them” (the majority or rest of society).

These boundaries mark the limits of the security, trust and respect obtained within the group and the insecurity, distrust and lack of validation experienced outside. Exclusion from the labour market, the impression that educational achievement is unrelated to higher standard of living, and family breakdown, all reinforce the need to find other strategies for building self-respect and trust outside mainstream institutions.

The street is the place *par excellence* where many young people find that they can win this kind of validation, excitement and meaning to their lives. Although the street demands certain qualities of toughness and the ability to think on one’s feet, this by no means entails actual violence or crime.

In the mind-map of young people, issues like drugs (sold to them by adults) and domestic violence between and from their parents figured more largely than street violence. In our focus group they also said: “The neighbours think that all young people are violent, they accuse them all of breaking and dirtying things even when they have not done anything.

Adults complain about everything. If they see a group of young people having a good time in a square they immediately think that they are delinquents. In summer young people spend time in the street at night and the neighbours complain because they make a noise. But when they make a noise nothing happens. Not all the fights are caused by young people. Adults also fight and are even more violent."

Derwent – Derby

In Derwent, the young people in the focus group expressed a strong desire for the status brought by employment. But they also expressed fear of violence on the streets: "In three months there has been a murder, a stabbing, beatings-up, muggings, a whatsit – self-immolation, etc., etc. We all avoid groups of young people hanging around. We're all worried by what we've heard and seen – it is scary (...). Its frightening after dark. Its not just out on the streets but even when we're in our homes. I had people rummaging around in my back garden one night. I was worried they'd nick my moped so I called the police. They said they couldn't get anyone round for about four hours – that's hopeless."

Domestic violence and family breakdown was also very high on the agenda: "You can't vote until you're 18, but you can be left on your own in a house to bring up a child at 15." A recent survey of young people reveals the perspective of the young people who said that "adults are aggressive and horrible to us", or that "adults think children are the scum of the earth", or "we are always being complained about". "A lot of adults round here set a bad example. They get drunk in their front gardens or the street and don't care that people see them. The young ones look up to them and think 'I want to do that'. There's no thought about university. They'll tell you that 'my Grandfather didn't do it, my father didn't do it and I'm not going to do it'" (18-year-old Lithuanian refugee).

Slotervaart/Overtoomseveld – Amsterdam

During the focus group all the boys stated that they enjoyed living in the west part of Amsterdam in spite of all the negative publicity there always was about this part of town. The atmosphere was good and the many cultures live respectfully next to each other. They felt safe in their own neighbourhood because they knew all the people you have to know on the street and they never got bothered. According to them, the criminal-

ity problem in this part of town was caused only by a small group, which gave the area a bad name in the media. "The police in this part of town tend to act severely, and without respect, to all youngsters with another cultural background. Without any reason you get accused of committing crimes, arrested, or even shot." According to the boys, "the police cause most of the problems in the area. If the police acted in more relaxed way, everyone would be relaxed. More police brought more tension and probably more problems. If everyone had respect for each other, for each other's culture, and age, the area would automatically become safer".

Nowadays youth groups require acknowledgment of their individual position (including cultural aspects, such as living in-between cultures), a new balance between authority and respect (from parents, school, government authorities) and access to core institutions (housing, labour market, etc.).

Fakulteta – Sofia

The following quotes provide examples of young people's feelings: "I didn't finish school. I couldn't. If you go to other schools they don't accept you. In school 92 the children insult you, tear up your notebooks and attack you – they write 'here is not for Gypsies'. I have studied in different schools – 79, 97 and 75. In a Bulgarian school, if children attack you, teachers don't do anything they just say 'go and tell the director' (...). The cops – they get at us. When they meet you they immediately say 'give me your identity card!' They never do that with Bulgarians. If you don't have it with you they say that you must pay or go with them to the regional department or buy them something. I'm speaking of policemen in the centre, here they don't do that."

When asked whether they would play football with Bulgarians, the Roma focus group said: "No. After the game there is always a fight. They shout at you. You are a dirty and nasty Gypsy! They kick us out, they swear at us. I have played football once, not now. It was free, without money. Now you have to pay. And our trainer left the country. They invite you only if you have money."

The representative of a Roma NGO summed up: "They do not accept us as people. If there was a way, they would push us out to another country. They prefer us not to exist. Bulgarians have computer clubs, for

Bulgarians there are street lights. Here at night it is absolutely dark; people are afraid to go out.”

Southern District – Moscow

A survey of 400 young people in a project Youth Studies Youth conducted in Moscow in 1998-2003¹⁹ showed that young people tend to see themselves as excluded from society, forced onto the streets and unable to change their lives. They blame the older generation for being negative to young people, for provoking conflicts and for lacking understanding. The teachers are viewed as being overly authoritarian in dealing with young people. Young people interviewed in the focus groups felt that society offers them nothing. Parents can be violent or have no time for them. There are very few free sports and leisure facilities. The school does not want to know what happens beyond its walls: “ Teachers do not care if kids have problems, they do not want to know if their parents beat them.”

They saw the causes of youth violence not as a result of having nothing to do, but stemming from young people’s need for recognition in peer groups: “ Kids go fighting because they want to earn a certain reputation – glory. The glory is often sought in fights with non-Russians coming to Moscow from the Caucasus and Asia. This violence is seen as normal – they [non-Russians] should not come here.”

Other research shows that Russian youth is becoming increasingly chauvinistic. In an all-Russian representative survey on attitudes and values of youth, 52% of young people from 16 to 24 strongly agreed that the Russia Federation should only be for ethnic Russians.

The views of older residents

Older, long-standing residents suffer the full impact of the major changes occurring in the deprived urban areas chosen for this study. They are the ones most likely to feel threatened by newcomers whether they be new generations of young people or new arrivals from other parts. There may be real or perceived risks that they will lose out in the competition for jobs, housing and social services. In any case, it is a common human

19. The survey was conducted by the Moscow State Pedagogical University.

reaction to blame others for ones problems and to seize on the most obvious cultural differences as the cause of what is going wrong.

The next chapter highlights that the changes and the conflicts that this engenders have to be managed to avoid serious threats to social cohesion. This section presents the main patterns in the study neighbourhoods. Some of the most dangerous tensions seem to be occurring in the neighbourhoods of the two ex-communist countries. In Bulgaria, for example, the problem is perceived almost entirely in racial terms. The older residents of both Bulgarian and Roma neighbourhoods do not tend to separate out the problems of youth from the general problems associated with the growing size and poverty of the Roma neighbourhoods. The violence suffered and perpetrated by young Roma people is seen as a symptom of a deeper malaise. The local authority responsible for Fakulteta in Sofia reported that “in the last year tension among Bulgarians has grown and there are many collective appeals from whole blocks – as many Roma people break into apartments and take everything that they find inside (...). Everybody, especially on the lower floors, has put metal bars on the windows, doors and terraces. They are forced to make their homes like prisons but the number of crimes does not decrease”. On the other hand, it has been shown that the Roma community also feels extremely threatened. According to the local police: “They are united by insecurity outside the community and security inside. A tribal feeling is prevailing.”

In the Southern District of Moscow, residents did not see the problem of runaway and homeless children as the community's problem: “These children tend to stay around train stations, we do not see many of them.” Rather, local kids who hang about on the streets seemed to present a problem. Low-level public disorder (graffiti, damage to elevators and petty hooliganism) was seen as the biggest problem coming from street youth. The reasons for the disorder were mainly seen as resulting from a lack of parental attention: “Mothers have no time to look after their kids, they have to earn money.” Everybody blamed television for juvenile aggression: “When they show pornography and violence all the time, no wonder the kids are like that.” At the same time all the adults interviewed expressed their (verbal) aggression towards migrants.

The level of intolerance among residents is also high in the north European residential areas of Derwent in Derby and Slotervaart/Overtoomseveld, Amsterdam. For example, 50% of the local residents of

Derwent think that “teenagers hanging around on the streets represents a problem” – nearly twice the national average.

In Slotervaard/Overtoomseveld the research indicated that “everyone, even the ethnic population, is convinced there is a link between ethnic origin and crime”. The problem is put down to 1 500 hard-core youth, a high proportion of whom live in west Amsterdam. The interviews suggested that 45% of the youngsters were third generation Moroccan and 25% came from other countries with the remainder being Dutch. These youths are seen as terrorising the users of certain public spaces: “Since 1999 regular passengers have regularly been shunning the station (NS Lelylaan) and 60% of the station staff have been confronted with verbal and or physical violence.”²⁰

The same tensions can be found but in a more muted form among the residents of the southern European inner-city neighbourhoods of el Raval, Barcelona, and the Spanish quarter of Naples. For example, two local Spanish women interviewed were vitriolic in their attacks on the Moroccan community who they blamed for a general deterioration of the area and a major rise in street crime (despite the fact that neither they nor their daughters had experienced any).

However, their anger was even more strongly directed at the City Council who they saw as favouring ethnic minorities and the culprits of violence rather than the victims. This attitude was shared by certain front-line public service workers, who felt inundated by demands from certain groups. There are also more general conflicts over the use of space between residential, tourist and leisure uses. Some local people complained that the entire centre was being converted into a leisure centre (used disproportionately by the young) rather than a living-working city.

In the Spanish quarter of Naples youth violence has deep historical roots in local Camorra culture. It is not related, in the minds of local residents, with the arrival of large numbers of immigrants, who on the contrary are seen as people who want to keep their heads down in order to work as much as possible. Both here and in Barcelona a generally vibrant street life makes people far more tolerant of a certain amount of noise and chaos that might be seen as an affront in the northern cities.

20. Case study of Slotervaart/Overtoomseveld, Amsterdam: Wim Klei, Marieke Megens, Mike Heuves and Rogier den Uyl.

In providing these examples we by no means want to suggest that all or even a majority of local residents are resentful of young people or of migrants. But the germs of these feelings are present to a greater or lesser extent in all cities. Moreover, as will be seen in the next section, most of the successful projects deal with the situation by trying to build safe spaces where the anger and resentment can be brought out into the open and the needs of different groups can be contrasted and understood.

This is easier said than done and requires extremely sensitive and experienced management. However, the alternative of shutting the door on these feelings and hoping that they will go away is extremely dangerous. In these cases the embers of resentment can slowly build up heat and explode with surprising violence when the door is opened.

The position of public officials and policy makers

The next section analyses the differences in the main public sector responses in more detail. However, it is important to highlight one central issue that emerges in all the case studies, namely that public officials and policy makers often face greater pressure, and have more ability, to find solutions for visible social symptoms than for underlying individual problems. In other words, in most neighbourhoods it is easier to mobilise repressive measures against certain high-risk groups and areas in order to clean up the street than it is to build a pathway into a long-term job.

The distinction between the individual problems as perceived by stakeholders such as young people and the social problems confronted by the public sector emerges very strongly in the case study of Slotervaart/Overtoomsveld in Amsterdam. The second are seen to drive public policy but this does not necessarily provide adequate solutions to the individual problems. It may even make them worse. For example, in Slotervaart/Overtoomsveld, the report argued that priority is given to combating “visible symptoms such as diminishing (semi-criminal behaviour and the regulation of social life (for example, street life)”. The approach taken is “a preponderantly repressive one”. It goes on to say that the “set of repressive tools is effective for that matter due to the close co-operation between the different judiciary partners as a result of which a relatively coherent chain has been formed”. On the other hand, in terms of pre-

vention there is no coherent demand orientated offer at all for at-risk youths.

Questions related to the economic performance and the image of a country or city also tend to drive decisions in other cities. For example, the deplorable conditions of the Roma community in ghettos like Fakulteta in Sofia is one of the outstanding issues to be resolved in order to achieve Bulgaria's entry into the European Union. At a city level this produces considerable pressure to clear up the symptoms of the problem. For example the Mayor of Sofia argues that "we have to remove them (the Roma community) from the territory. Houses should be destroyed in order to build proper infrastructure. We have to clear the area. Around 30% will be involved in building up their own houses. The poorest who don't have housing will be settled in municipal apartments and will have to pay social rent, energy and heating".

In the Southern District, Moscow, residents do not perceive the situation of street children as their problem but the alarming growth of the numbers of children sleeping on the streets seriously tarnishes Moscow's international image: "Runaway and homeless children are a matter of high concern for the federal and city authorities but existing provisions are centred around their registration and institutionalisation." Despite a series of innovatory projects the dominant discourse on youth dislocation views institutional control and the organisation of leisure as key solutions. As a result resources are directed towards containing children within educational and leisure establishments. According to a Russian NGO the police still tend to interpret prevention as the "purging of the city's territory".

In this sense, the redevelopment of el Raval in Barcelona provides some interesting insights. The programme was clearly driven by a concern to reclaim a strategic part of Barcelona's historic centre and thus further enhance the city's national and international image. However, it was carried out in a way which simultaneously met a series of social objectives with very positive repercussions for young people. All the case studies, in fact, provide examples of how to progress beyond the short-term pressures. However, when analysing the public responses in the following chapter, it is important to bear in mind that young people, in general, and immigrant youth in particular, are still primarily seen as a problem to be controlled rather than a resource that can make a valuable contribution to their neighbourhood and the city as a whole.

4. Responses to youth, violence and crime

This chapter starts by analysing the margin for manoeuvre that the neighbourhoods have for meeting the social needs of young people and other stakeholders given the different institutional context in each country. If young people are to be encouraged to participate in certain programmes and projects the key questions are: Do these programmes have the power to deliver significant changes to their lives? How do they use the tools at their disposal to increase social cohesion among young people?

The main concepts and tools of area-based initiatives for social inclusion include:

- the decentralisation of decision making (and budgets) to levels closer to the citizen or final user;
- joined-up or seamless government (integrated policy making and implementation);
- partnership between public, private and civil society;
- the empowerment of civil society in general and young people in particular.

This chapter analyses how young people have been involved and affected by these tools in the different neighbourhoods studied. Our aim is to try to tease out what progress has been made, what has been working, what are the constraints and what the conditions are for making local strategies for social cohesion more relevant for youth.

4.1. Decentralisation and recentralisation

All the countries studied recognise that unacceptable numbers of young people face multiple forms of deprivation and social exclusion which correspondingly require multifaceted solutions. However, the scale of the problem, its specific form and the degree of spatial segregation differs considerably between countries. There are also important differences in the institutional context and the role of the public sector. This in turn leads to variations in the extent to which solutions are sought by decentralising budgets and powers to area-based initiatives.

Each country and case study is, of course, unique, but it is helpful to divide them into three major blocks: the Mediterranean inner-city areas

(the centres of Naples and Barcelona), the northern European housing estates and the eastern European neighbourhoods.

The Mediterranean inner-city areas

Despite higher levels of provision in certain areas, the welfare state developed later and more slowly in the two Mediterranean countries (Spain and Italy) than in the north of Europe. However, there is a higher level of regional devolution in both countries (especially in Catalonia, Spain). Informal activities and forms of survival also play a greater role. Finally, there appear to be more highly developed local networks of civil and non-profit organisations in the two neighbourhoods chosen.

In Italy there have been various initiatives in favour of more proactive territorial strategies for social cohesion. For example, in response to a UN initiative, the Italian Government passed a law in 1997 (Law No. 285/97), which for the first time portrayed children and young people as having a series of rights rather than just being the source of problems. One of the key aspects of this law was to provide decentralised funding to the ten largest Italian cities, including Naples, on the basis that the non-profit sector would formally play an increasingly important role in implementation within networks of local agencies.

At the regional level this approach was consolidated through a further law (Law No. 328/2000), which established the principle of developing integrated local plans for social intervention involving partnerships or networks of public and private agencies. In the context of our case studies, this approach is interesting because it is the only one that explicitly places a strategy for social intervention at the heart of the programme rather than physical renewal, economic regeneration or the reduction of crime.

The local (zone) strategies are based around eight thematic areas which focus on social target groups (young people, the aged, immigrants, people with disabilities, drug addicts, women, mental health and the general fight against poverty). So there are explicit local strategies for young people even though they form only one of the eight priority themes. This is the only such case in the six neighbourhoods of this study.

Urban security is treated as a transversal issue centering on building a sense of community ownership of key public spaces, community responsibility (for example, civic grandparents) as well as a series of preventative programmes with high-risk groups (both victims and potential offenders).

The local (zone) plans are drawn up through a participative process which involves the different public and civil actors in the network. These are represented on local territorial committees which are responsible for implementation (see the section on partnership for the make-up, powers and functioning of these committees). The process has considerably improved the integration and synergy between and within different service supply chains. In 2002 the local zone plans in the Region of Campania had a total budget of 231 million euros. The plans have a time-scale of four years.

In Spain there is no parallel national initiative in favour of integrated local approaches to combat social exclusion in deprived urban areas. The redevelopment of the neighbourhood of el Raval does not form part of a regional government law or programme. In this case the main initiative was taken by the City Council, which had a clear vision of the transformation of the historical centre of Barcelona and could build on more favourable local economic and social conditions than in some of the other case studies. Nevertheless, the Spanish case study complements the others in a number of ways. Firstly, it is the project with the longest track record (fifteen years) and the largest budget (around 36 million euros per annum in physical investment alone). It gives an idea of the time-scales and levels of investment that are required to have an impact on an area facing such severe problems.

Secondly, in contrast to Naples, the point of entry of the programme is clearly physical rather than social redevelopment. The driving aim was to transform the function of the neighbourhood within the city by creating a major tourist and cultural axis. Nevertheless, this programme has been carried out with a clear and transparent set of guarantees to existing residents and with a wide and imaginative range of parallel initiatives for young people and others on the social front.

In the case of the physical redevelopment of the area, the City Council had a clear strategy and set up a formal partnership of stakeholders to implement the programme. On the social side, the intervention has been more piecemeal. Many actors complained of the lack of an explicit strategy for the social development of the area. No formal partnership structures exist in the social field and decision making is also more fragmented between different levels and departments of regional and city government. Nevertheless, this is compensated for by the existence of a rich and varied network of civil and non-profit organisations which have organised themselves into sectoral and general co-ordinating committees.

Table 5. – Budgets and time-scales

Neighbourhood	Programme	Budget	Time-scale
Spanish quarter, Naples	National. Law No. 285/97, Decentralised funding to ten cities. Law No. 328/2000. Integrated zone plans for social intervention. Implementation by social networks. Urban Community Initiative.	€231 million in 2002 for region.	4 years.
el Raval, Barcelona	City Council. Mainstream regional funding. Long-term plan for physical renewal of central district. No explicit strategy for social cohesion but strong city-local NGO networks and collaboration.	€36 million p.a. for physical renewal. Social Investment not available but mainly better co-ordination of existing expenditure.	15 years ongoing.
Derwent, Derby	National. New Deal for Communities. Integrated neighbourhood plan (jobs, crime, education, health, infrastructure). Decision taken by NDC partnership.	€9.4 million p.a. decentralised to NDC partnership + major bending of mainstream spending.	10 years.
Slotervaart/ Overtoomseveld, Amsterdam	National. Major Cities Policy (<i>Grote Steden Beleid</i>). Integrated Safety Plan, employment and education + quality of life (housing desegregation). City-level strategy. Implementation by partnerships of district councils and other agencies + NGOs.	€2 million p.a. to GSB areas. Mostly better co-ordination of existing budgets. Physical Investment = 5-10 x social investment.	Integrated safety plan = 4 years.
Fakulteta, Sofia	National. Framework Programme for Roma Integration. National Strategy for the Prevention and Counteraction of Anti-Social Behaviour. Implementation by state committees, local authorities and NGOs.	NA.	NA.

Southern District, Moscow	National frameworks, city-wide programmes and structures. Comprehensive City Programme to fight against Crime, Programme for the Development of Tolerance and the Prevention of Extremism in Russian Society, Emergency Measures against Child Neglect and Homelessness in Moscow. Implementation by state agencies and NGOs.	NA.	NA.
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Source: Case studies.

NA.: not applicable.

Northern European, out-of-centre, housing estates

Both the UK and the Netherlands can be considered pioneers in the development of the welfare state after the second world war. However, to a large extent, the solutions adopted to guarantee a high and uniform level of social rights in key areas such as employment, education, health and crime prevention required the centralisation of powers into national sectoral ministries and departments. At this stage many powers were progressively taken away from local authorities and voluntary organisations.

Nevertheless, after the first flush of enthusiasm for the welfare state, both countries rediscovered the existence of considerable pockets of poverty in certain areas and groups of the population. The problems in these and other areas worsened after the industrial restructuring brought on by the first oil crises of the early 1970s. Consequently, since the late 1960s most northern European countries have experimented with various cycles of integrated area-based policies for combating social exclusion. These progressed from an almost complete domination of programmes based on physical regeneration in the 1970s to giving a greater priority to social programmes in the 1980s and finally to the economic causes of urban deprivation in the 1990s.

Despite this shift from physical to social and then economic goals, there is no doubt that traditional land use and physical investment still dominate the picture in all areas. In Slotervaart/Overtoomseveld, Amsterdam, physical investment is estimated to be five to ten times higher than social investment. The same is true in all other areas. Similarly, it must be stressed that the area-based programmes to combat social exclusion in both north and south Europe are still extremely small compared to main-

stream sectoral programmes. A study carried out by Michael Parkinson entitled *Combatting social exclusion. Lessons from area-based programmes in Europe*²¹ covering Ireland, Denmark, the Netherlands and France found that most initiatives were “essentially an effort to encourage additional expenditure from other agencies, to re-orientate existing resources or to achieve greater impact from existing resources through increased synergy”. The initiatives in the Netherlands, France and Denmark typically received about 2 million euros new money from national government per year whereas in Ireland the area-based partnerships only received around 250 000 euros. The case studies confirm this picture.

The Netherlands has retained far more of its centralised, high benefit, high taxation model of the welfare state with a strong planning system and a large public housing sector. The level of provision of housing, education, police and public transport remains relatively high and as a result the level of social segregation in urban neighbourhoods is far smaller than in the UK. Nevertheless by the 1980s a combination of industrial restructuring and public support for out-of-centre growth cores resulted in a 25% loss of population in the largest cities and a process of physical and social decay in many urban neighbourhoods.

This was tackled first by a major housing renewal programme and then by a national programme for the social renewal of 500 Dutch urban neighbourhoods through contracts to provide integrated packages of services in the fields of employment, education, culture and social welfare. The impact of this programme varied considerably and it was criticised for becoming primarily a “welfare, community-based approach to recapture community space”. It is interesting to compare this to the current approach in Italy. In the mid – 1990s this led to a further national initiative called the Major Cities Policy (*Grote Steden Beleid*) designed to increase the margin of manoeuvre of Dutch cities in tackling the economic, social and physical problems of certain neighbourhoods. The Amsterdam neighbourhood of Slotervaart/Overtoomsveld covered by our case study forms part of this programme.

Each Dutch city taking part is awarded a budget on the basis of an integrated plan to provide a specified set of outputs (reduction of unem-

21. Michael Parkinson, *Combatting social exclusion. Lessons from area-based programmes in Europe*, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, UK, 1998.

ployment, crime rates, perception of public safety, etc.). The programme contract covers three major policy themes: employment and education, safety, and the quality of life. In Amsterdam, the fifteen elected district councils form variable partnerships in order to implement the programme. These can involve other districts and other public, private and civil organisations depending on the issue. Our case study focuses on the Integral Safety Plan of Slotervaart/Overtoomsveld.

In summary, it can be seen that the Integrated Safety Plan is part of a national programme. The goals and strategy for achieving them are set at city level, whereas implementation takes place at a local level. The contracts are fixed for four-year cycles, closer to the electoral time frame than to the ten-year time frame of the New Deal for Communities and fifteen-year period required to produce substantial results in el Raval. Our case study also remarked that “there is no budget in the Integrated Safety Plan. It is more a co-ordination and integration strategy than a new activities/new money approach”.

The UK is approaching the problem from a different position. While being one of the pioneers of the welfare state, it was also one of the first to considerably weaken its foundations through successive waves of public expenditure cuts and privatisations in the 1980s and early 1990s. As a result much of the physical infrastructure and the levels of public service are in a considerably worse condition than in many parts of Europe. This has contributed to a major increase in inequality and the growth of multiple deprivation among certain social groups and areas. To provide just a few examples, in 1998 in the 10% most deprived wards in the UK over 60% of the children lived in households depending on means-tested benefits. Shockingly, alongside Greece and Portugal, the UK has the lowest numbers of 18 year olds in education in the EU. The UK also has more 14-15 year-old drug users than any other EU country.

Although the UK is now putting considerably more resources into public services at national level, it has explicitly rejected returning to the old model of a high tax, high expenditure welfare state. It has, therefore, embarked on a spate of programmes to make public services more efficient and responsive to users. Most of these programmes involve the key concepts analysed in this chapter – namely more synergy and joined-up government, greater private and civil society responsibilities within partnerships and various methods for empowering users and providing more consumer choice.

The decentralisation of services to levels closer to users in local or area-based initiatives have formed part of the strategy against poverty and social exclusion. There are now twenty-six Health Action Zones, fifteen Employment Zones and twenty-five Education Action Zones. However, the most ambitious and holistic initiative is the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal approved in 2001. This channels funds to Local Strategic Partnerships in the eighty-eight most deprived local authorities. The flagship of this approach is the New Deal for Communities whose local partnerships are piloting many of the principles of the national strategy in thirty-nine selected neighbourhoods. Our case study covers Derwent, in Derby, which was selected in 1999.

The key features of this national programme are: firstly, that there is a long-term (ten year) commitment to change. The time-scale in Derwent covers the period from 2000-03. Secondly, block funding is provided on the basis of a neighbourhood plan which tackles five key themes: poor job prospects, high levels of crime, educational underachievement, poor health, and problems with health and the physical environment. Thirdly, the plan has to demonstrate joined-up thinking and solutions with action based upon evidence about what works and what does not.

The additional funding is around 9 million euros per annum – larger than in most other case studies. The funds pass through Derby City Council but all decisions are taken by the local partnership formed by ten public sector council and agency representatives and twelve co-opted local residents. The partnership must demonstrate that there has been widespread community involvement and ownership both in the original plan and in the design and funding of individual projects.

The eastern European neighbourhoods

The situation could not be more different in the ex-communist eastern European urban neighbourhoods studied in this report. In both Bulgaria and the Russian Federation, centralised state control of employment, education, housing, health and law and order prevented the emergence of marked social differences between the neighbourhoods of the same city, as occurred in the west. There is also no tradition of neighbourhood or area-based programmes to combat the social exclusion of young people or any other group. Finally, there is an important legacy of suspicion towards terms such as community participation and partnership.

In Bulgaria, the most dramatic concentration of multiple deprivation undoubtedly occurs in the Roma neighbourhoods of Sofia and other parts of the country. Moreover, the Roma community as a whole has been particularly devastated by privatisation and the massive reduction of employment in both industry and agriculture. As a result these problems have worsened considerably in the last ten years.

The main public responses that are particularly relevant for young people and issues of violence in these particular areas have taken the form of two national strategic framework plans. The Framework Programme for the Equal Integration of the Roma Community into Bulgarian Society and the National Strategy for the Prevention and Counteraction of Anti-Social Behaviour. Both are co-ordinated by high-ranking interdepartmental ministerial committees and are trying to attract funds from external donors. However, implementation depends upon a series of local committees, which involve central and local government representatives together with representatives from the main Roma NGOs.

Sofia City Council has created a partnership structure to develop and implement a strategy for all five main Roma neighbourhoods within the city. However, there is no neighbourhood plan or partnership as such. Moreover, the action plans have still not been agreed for the framework programmes so it is not possible to know the budget, time-scales and concrete activities. As a result it is only possible to compare the broad national strategies with the implementation of certain individual projects on the ground.

In the Russian Federation, the same factors mean that it does not even make sense to choose a neighbourhood in the traditional sense. The area studied is the Southern Administrative District of Moscow which has a population of 1.6 million people – more than many of the cities in this study. It was considered that this was the smallest spatial level at which it made sense to analyse a series of policy responses to the problems of violence and social exclusion among young people. The general strategy is basically designed at city and national level. The most important initiatives are the Emergency Measures against Child Neglect and Homelessness in Moscow, the Federal Programme for the Development of Tolerance and the Prevention of Extremism in Russian Society (and its Moscow counterpart the Comprehensive City Programme to Fight against Crime). There is also a draft law on State Support for Youth Policy.

Certain new city-wide administrative bodies have been established to implement youth policies such as the City Committee on Public Relations and the Social Pedagogy Department of the Committee on Family and Youth. There is also a Moscow Council for Youth created in 1999 and headed by the vice mayor which includes leaders of youth organisations as well as state agencies. The Southern Administrative District has a Territorial Committee on Youth with six members of staff. Local implementation generally depends upon a series of state agencies such as the Divisions of the State Procuratura, local administrations (Upravas), Local Commissions on Minors and the Protection of their Rights and state-funded youth clubs and/or the twenty-five registered NGOs that operate in the area.

Table 6. – Decentralisation: a neighbourhood roundup

Neighbourhood	Programme
Derwent, Derby	Formally this is the most ambitious example of a truly neighbourhood approach to social cohesion; it is part of the national New Deal for Communities Programme. There is decentralised ten-year block funding for an integrated plan drawn up locally and implemented by a partnership made up of a majority of local residents. However, the involvement of young people has been hindered by a very low level of community and NGO organisation.
el Raval, Barcelona	Another very ambitious and long-term programme can be seen in the widespread physical renewal of el Raval. However, the driving force of strategy clearly takes place at city level and focuses on the physical side. The implementation was carried out by a local partnership. There is no equivalent territorial strategy for social intervention but, in contrast to Derwent, this is to some extent mitigated by a fairly highly developed social network of NGOs and community organisations.
Spanish quarter, Naples	The Spanish quarter of Naples benefits from a local zone plan for social intervention which relies heavily on networks of NGOs and state agencies for implementation. Budgets and time-scales are smaller, however, and there is not the same level of co-ordination with strategies for physical renewal.
Slotervaart/Overtoomseveld, Amsterdam	In Slotervaart/Overtoomseveld, it is possible to see that the national Major Cities has won the City Council a greater margin of manoeuvre. However, the local plans are mainly concerned with implementation – either carried out by variable partnerships of district councils and or a wide range of NGOs.
Fakulteta, Sofia Southern District, Moscow	In both Fakulteta, Sofia, and the Southern District of Moscow one is talking entirely about the local implementation by state agencies and NGOs of strategies developed at a national (Bulgaria) or city (Moscow) level.

All these more ambitious and innovative projects should be seen within the context of the mosaic of public city-wide strategies and implementation. Chapter two showed that local labour markets are heavily affected by global trends. This section has pointed out that the main public services which shape social cohesion such as social security, education and health still tend to be under the control of separate national ministries in all countries. In countries where these services have (or had) been given a strongly egalitarian role, such as the ex-communist countries and the Netherlands, this has significantly reduced spatial segregation and the concentration of multiple deprivation in certain neighbourhoods. It seems that neighbourhood strategies can complement and strengthen these national policies but they certainly cannot substitute for them.

Overall, the level of decentralisation to a local level is still quite small. This considerably limits the margin for manoeuvre of local actors who want to provide real solutions for young people.

4.2. Integration – Seamless government or endless meetings?

In order to overcome the lack of explicit powers and budgets at a local level, local authorities and local actors not only have to mobilise and coordinate all their internal resources (horizontal integration) but also achieve maximum leverage with mainstream central government departments (vertical integration). We will now look at how far these joined-up approaches have got in improving the social cohesion of young people.

All the case studies suggest that the point of entry to integrated area-based strategies differs but youth is nearly always a residual. It can be seen from Table 7 that the driving focus of the policy response in each area broadly mirrors the perception of the problem as expressed by policy makers and outlined in chapter two. At a local level, social policy is often a residual or compensatory measure to mop-up the effects of economic decisions taken elsewhere or even of physical redevelopment. Youth policy is usually a small part of social policy.

Social cohesion takes first place in the Spanish quarter of Naples; physical renewal drives the changes in el Raval; community safety is a very strong priority in Slotervaart/Overtoomseveld; the integration of the Roma community is central in Fakulteta; and street children are of major concern in Moscow.

Table 7. – Focus of policy responses

Area	Sectoral focus or entry point	Complementary policies	Explicit neighbourhood strategy for youth
Spanish quarter, Naples	Integrated social policy.	Physical renewal of housing. Urban Community Initiative.	Yes. Wide range of local projects.
el Raval, Barcelona	Physical renewal with a strong social content.	Wide range of social programmes but no local strategy or long-term vision as with the physical renewal.	No. City strategy for youth pays little attention to high-risk youth or particular neighbourhoods. Wide range of local projects.
Derwent, Derby	Integrated neighbourhood development.	Jobs; education; health; crime; housing and the physical environment.	No. Wide range of local projects.
Slotervaart/ Overtoomseveld, Amsterdam	Strong focus on community safety and within this on repressive measures.	Quality of life – reducing the degree of social segregation by a major increase in housing for higher income brackets. Employment and education	No.
Fakulteta, Sofia	Integration of Roma community and their neighbourhoods.	Struggle against anti-social behaviour among juveniles. National youth policy.	No. Isolated local projects.
Southern District, Moscow	Street children.	City policy for rehabilitating housing courtyards. Isolated sectoral policies.	No. City strategies. Isolated local projects.

Source: Case studies

As already mentioned, the Spanish quarter in Naples is the only example in our case studies where there is an explicit strategy for youth as part of an integrated local social policy. But even here youth are seen as just one of eight target groups. The strategy is based upon two central principles – the reinforcement of children’s rights and the strengthening of the role

and responsibilities of the family. Public officials work together with a wide range of NGOs on projects which are divided into four priority themes. Firstly, there are a series of projects designed to strengthen all the existing resources, networks and informal mechanisms within the community in the fight against exclusion. This includes a series of projects based around the street and public spaces which bring together young people and other residents in a series of activities designed to provoke dialogue on questions related to the local environment, the social situation and community involvement.

Secondly, there is a group of pilot projects designed to provide additional support to high-risk families and youth outside the official state system. One of the most interesting, called "Chance" is described in more detail at a later stage. Thirdly, there is a range of centres and support structures for children who have either been abandoned by their families or where the family is simply not able to cope. Finally, there are a series of projects for promoting youth culture, identity and providing spaces for self-expression. There is, for example, a youth-run Internet platform similar to one that is described later in el Raval, Barcelona. Our case study reported that this explicit local youth strategy had made considerable progress towards what it considered to be its main challenge of integrating young people themselves in the design, implementation and evaluation of policies against exclusion.

The most ambitious and long-standing initiative to change social conditions in any of our study areas is undoubtedly that of el Raval in Barcelona. This is not only because of the size and duration of the project but also because the City Council had a clear vision of what it wanted to do in the neighbourhood and led with a far-reaching physical redevelopment plan where it had both the power and (unlike other areas) the resources to implement the strategy. The driving goal was not to increase social cohesion but to exploit the full potential of the centre of Barcelona by creating a new cultural and tourist axis. Consequently, by far the lion's share of investment went in this direction. However, the City Council make a clear social commitment to local residents which has had a far-reaching effect on the conditions faced by young people in the area.

It opted for rehabilitation of existing buildings rather than wholesale redevelopment. Emblematic buildings were given new outward and inward-looking uses and new attractive public spaces were carved out of the maze of narrow streets. Secondly, all existing residents were given a

clear commitment that they would be rehoused in better conditions in the neighbourhood if they so wished. However, this does not extend to future generations of young people who are now finding it difficult to afford the prices. Furthermore, although the amounts were smaller, there was considerable investment in social infrastructure primarily for local residents. Finally, there has been much smaller, but none the less very forward-looking, social policy in its own right. So although the redevelopment, of el Raval was certainly not led by social concerns for young people, this study has been able to confirm that the physical redevelopment was universally approved and had a major impact on the sense of pride and identity that young people had in their neighbourhood.

This is a total contrast to the situation in other areas such as that of the Roma neighbourhood of Fakulteta in Sofia where the City Council is proposing to remove the local Roma residents from the territory.

It can be easier to improve integration in repressive policies than in preventative policies. The Integrated Safety Plan of Slotervaart/Overtoomsveld involves around 200 individual projects carried out by local authorities, state agencies, NGOs or a combination of them. The policies and projects can be divided roughly into those that focus primarily on repressive measures and those that emphasise prevention. Given the political and public concern over what is seen as a relatively small, hard-core of mainly ethnic minority youth who terrorise certain public places this has led to what our case study reports as “too much emphasis on repression”.

These repressive measures also rely heavily on better integration and co-ordination: common databases on hard-core youth and trouble spots; more surveillance equipment and rapid communication of trouble between agencies at any point; more resources and better co-ordination of the actors in the chain of justice thereby increasing the speed and probability of punishment; community involvement in neighbourhood surveillance and the monitoring of problem youth leading to the persecution of young people and/or their parents. In Slotervaart/Overtoomsveld our case study finds that “the set of repressive tools is effective due to the close co-operation between different judiciary partners as a result of which a relatively coherent chain has been formed”. Growing political and public concern coupled with the relative coherence of some of the main actors in the chain of justice seems to be making co-operation easier. On the other hand, preventative projects include those that provide space and sports activities for youth, projects to reduce violence in schools and a

range of projects to provide integrated approaches to guidance, remedial schoolwork and youth training. Here both the agencies and public pressure is more diffuse. The report continues “in terms of prevention there is no coherent demand-orientated offer at all for at-risk youths. Within the prevention chain there is hardly any co-operation, network consultation or mutual harmonisation” .

The report on Slotervaart/Overtoomsveld argues that there is “an abundance of small projects but a diffusion of responsibility” with little change in mainstream services. Pilot projects for young people run by NGOs on short-term funding are often used to make up for deficits in mainstream services. They become pseudo-structural projects which substitute for bending or fundamentally changing core public services. As they are too small and short-lived to have a lasting impact on the quality of life their credibility with residents and young people can soon be lost.

This observation is true of all the case studies, but particularly true in the eastern European countries where a wide range of NGOs compete to attract funds from external donors in the face of chronic financial problems in mainstream public services. For example, in Bulgaria, the Framework Programme for the Roma community is a good example of a well-integrated national strategy covering eight key areas. The problem, however, does not lie with the strategy, the overall objectives or even the structures. The key issue is the lack of integration and implementation on the ground. Speaking about Roma neighbourhoods like Fakulteta in Sofia, a representative of central government said “there are many NGO projects. However, they are not sustainable – they die when the money finishes. These are small, unco-ordinated projects and they have little effect” .

Some of the initial attempts to desegregate Roma schools in Fakulteta show that the problems of co-ordination on the ground can completely sabotage a well-meaning strategy. The case study reports that “at the beginning of 2002 an NGO committed itself to bussing a certain number of Roma children from the school in Fakulteta to other schools in nearby areas. However, there appears to have been little co-ordination or back-up preparation of the teachers in the receiving schools or of Roma and Bulgarian parents. The result has been a combination of lukewarm commitment, high drop-out rates from the Roma children, anger from many teachers at what they see as an intrusion into their professional respon-

sibilities and outright racist aggression on the part of some parents, children and teachers” .

Similarly in the Southern District of Moscow our case study reported that “when it comes to a particular child or young person in need of multi-agency assistance or intervention, there is not much evidence of an effective system of co-ordination being in place” . Agencies are widely thought to work a “system of revolving doors, processing the same teenagers and their parents over and over again without being able to influence their circumstances and behaviour” .

In this sense the work of the Children of the Streets Centres has involved a major breakthrough in the traditional divisions between agencies. Similarly, the work carried out by the Centre for Judicial and Legal Reform and the organisation No to Drug Abuse (NAN) on remedial justice is starting to confront the fact that schools, social services and the police do not work together to prevent child neglect and develop social work with offenders. Nevertheless, these are isolated cases and the general assessment is that “NGOs compete with each other over funding and seem to see little value in co-ordination” .

Despite the absence of an explicit local strategy for social cohesion or a single partnership structure, el Raval does seem to have made some progress in the horizontal co-ordination of policies for the social integration of young people. One example is the fluidity between schools, families and NGOs providing support to young people through comprehensive pathways to education or the job market. Another is the social networks surrounding street educators and NGOs working to involve young people and other members of the community in debates around the use of public space (both are described in a little more detail below). The main reason seems to be that committed and progressive public officials from different agencies and levels of local government have been able to count on a fairly dense fabric of local NGOs that have tried to retain their founding principals while organising themselves on the ground.

Vertical integration is complicated by rivalries between different levels of government. If local authorities want to tackle youth problems by combining traditional physical redevelopment with social and economic policies they invariably have to negotiate with other agencies at different levels of government. Assembling this jigsaw into coherent supply services which respond effectively to users on the ground was seen as the biggest

obstacle in all the neighbourhoods covered in our case studies. Whether this is done by the local authority directly, by another agency or by a local partnership, the entity that carries out the role of broker must be recognised as having legitimacy by the other actors. This is precisely where the problems start in all the study areas. For example, in Barcelona a senior city council official argues “urban renewal is entirely the responsibility of the City Council. However, the responsibility for social policy is far more complex: education falls under the regional government; primary health care under local government, specialised health care under the regional government (...) this complexity makes the work very difficult. There are often differences in the criteria used, often based upon political differences” .

It should be noted that city, regional and national governments are controlled by different political parties in many of our case studies – something which very frequently hinders integrated local strategies for social cohesion.

Leadership and top-down support (vertical integration) is often required to improve horizontal integration between agencies at a local level. It is extremely difficult for a local authority or local partnership to forge a consensus with the local representatives of national public and private agencies unless there is a very clear incentive for them to enter into an agreement. In most cases, it is necessary to have a degree of top-down, vertical support or leadership to ensure that the other players and agencies bend in the same direction. Table 8 illustrates that a number of steps can be taken in this direction.

All the neighbourhood approaches studied were backed by a national/regional law or programme. The one exception is Barcelona where the City had the vision and the resources to lead the programme itself.

Interdepartmental or ministerial committees have proved an important tool for providing a framework of co-operation between national agencies at a local level. These exist at national level in the UK, Netherlands and Bulgaria. The key question is the seniority of the lead minister – a junior Minister of the Interior in the Netherlands or the Deputy Prime Minister in the UK.

A further key factor is whether the local programme as a whole is provided with a separate budget. Even if this budget is not enough to solve

a particular problem itself it does provide a basis with which to negotiate with other actors and agencies. There is a separate budget in the case of Naples, Derwent and Barcelona (for urban redevelopment). In Sofia and Moscow there are individual projects and in Slotervaart/Overtoomsveld there is mainly the co-ordination of existing funds.

Table 8. – Vertical integration

Area	Strategy
Spanish quarter, Naples	National and regional law. Strategy at city level, implementation at local level. Separate budget.
el Raval, Barcelona	Strong city vision and leadership on physical renewal. Social commitment. Additional budget for redevelopment.
Derwent, Derby	National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal. National Neighbourhood Renewal Unit in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. Special Neighbourhood Renewal Fund. Local budgets. Area-based statistics. Proofing the impact of core public services. Quantifiable targets. Evidence.
Slotervaart/Overtoomsveld, Amsterdam	National programme: Major Cities Policy. Junior Minister of the Interior co-ordinates interdepartmental working group of civil servants. Links with mayors. Strategy at city level. Little fresh money.
Fakulteta, Sofia	National framework programmes. Ministerial Council for Ethnic Minorities and Central Commission for the Struggle Against Anti-Social Behaviour in the Council of Ministers. Certain elements of strategy at city level. Resources highly dependent on foreign donors.
Southern District, Moscow	National and city laws affecting street children. Strategy at city level. Resources.

Source: Case studies

Another key issue is the extent to which local agencies and actors are involved in the development of strategy rather than just being an arm of implementation. Basically, cities seem to maintain a virtual monopoly on strategy in every case except the NDC partnership in Derwent. As already mentioned, the NDC programme in Derwent differs from the other case studies in that there is an explicit neighbourhood strategy backed up by a decentralised budget that is the responsibility of a local partnership made up of all the key local agencies and a majority of local residents. Recognising the problems of integration with core public services described previously, the NDC initiative explicitly considers one of its motors to be improving local services – attempts to rethink service delivery including inter-agency action.

Indeed, a series of tools should be part of the armoury of all area-based strategies for social cohesion. These include:

- the production of objective small-area statistics to trace the spatial dimension of multiple deprivation. This exists in Naples, Barcelona and Amsterdam but not in Moscow or Bulgaria;
- the proofing of the impact of mainstream public services and policies on these areas, and as a result of this, the setting of time-bound quantitative targets to redress the balance. To our knowledge, these last two points only exist in the UK;
- monitoring the outputs of projects and transparent and participative evaluation of the impact.

The challenge is to apply all these tools systematically to increase the social cohesion of young people. So far, it would seem that this process is still in its infancy.

4.3. Partnerships – On whose terms?

Partnerships generally have two main functions. Firstly, they are increasingly used as one of the main operational mechanisms for achieving better co-ordination and joined-up government as described in the last chapter. Secondly, partnerships serve as a channel for the involvement and ownership of actors who do not usually take part in the design and implementation of policy – namely the private sector and the community itself. The question here is the extent to which young people themselves are involved.

All but one of the neighbourhoods in our case studies use partnerships of one form or another. Some of these have a long history of involvement in local development. However, in the introduction we argued that partnerships are by no means neutral. It is important to understand their aims, how they have evolved, who is involved and the rights and responsibilities of the participants. This would take a far more detailed analysis than we have been able to carry out here. Instead we simply draw certain key conclusions from the six case studies with particular relevance for young people.

Table 9. – Partnerships

Area	Partnerships
Spanish ter, Naples	Zone Co-ordinating Committee: local authority representative quarter (president) and the co-ordinators of social services, health services and education services, representatives from NGOs and civil society (balance). Covers whole of central Naples.
el Raval, Barcelona	Procivesa: local development company in charge of physical redevelopment. City owns majority of shares but local associations (mainly business) also participate. Thematic co-ordinating committees of NGOs and neighbourhood platform. Covers the whole of central Barcelona.
Derwent, Derby	NDC Partnership. Ten key state agencies and twelve co-opted residents. Exclusively for the neighbourhood.
Slotervaart/ Overtoomseveld, Amsterdam	Bureau Parkstadt. Central city, districts and largest social housing corporation. Works to implement the policies of local authority in four districts mainly on physical but also social fields.
Fakulteta, Sofia	Sofia Ethnic Public Council. Central and local government and representatives of Roma NGOs
Southern District Moscow	No mixed city-wide or local partnerships.

Source: Case studies

From Table 9 it can be seen that two of the partnerships (Procivesa in Barcelona and Bureau Parkstad in Amsterdam) are concerned primarily (but not exclusively) with physical renovation. Slotervaart/Overtoomsveld also points to the efficiency of its operational partnerships along the supply chain of justice led by the police. The Zone Co-ordinating Committee covering the Spanish quarter of Naples is primarily concerned with ensuring co-ordination between the different local networks and agencies involved in social policies. The Sofia Ethnic Public Council is exclusively concerned with improving the situation of Roma communities within the city. The Derwent NDC partnership stands out as having a far more holistic brief involving both physical and economic redevelopment, social cohesion and community safety in its five theme areas. There are no city or local partnerships as such operating in the Southern District of Moscow.

The only clear example of private sector involvement is in Procivesa in Barcelona, where associations of retailers and other firms clearly have a direct economic interest in the programme. Once again, Derwent stands out by having a majority of community residents on the board. However, as has already been pointed out, these are appointed rather than elected (other NDC partnerships do have elected community representatives).

It can be seen that the partnerships are overwhelmingly being used as a method of co-ordinating different aspects of public sector provision. Half of the partnerships are primarily concerned with social intervention (Naples, Sofia, Derwent) but none specifically with youth. In this context, it is not surprising that representatives from different departments of the city and local (district) councils dominate the partnerships in every case except Derwent. There is often minority private and community involvement, or at least an interface, between the partnership and these non-public actors but this in no way goes as far as ownership. There is no formal youth representation on any of the partnerships in the case studies. In the next section it will be seen that this lack of formal youth representation seriously limits the ability of the partnerships to engage and empower young people.

One of the biggest gaps is the need to form longer term and more transparent partnerships between the public sector and the NGOs and community groups working with young people. In terms of stakeholder involvement, the strongest trend that can be discerned in all areas is a growing use by the public sector of a network of NGOs to provide cer-

tain services. It must always be remembered that this second tier of associations, co-operatives, charities and other non-profit entities, often lumped together as the social economy or third sector, in no way is, or represents, the community, even if the most active and creative members of society are often involved. Nevertheless, in most of the study areas, NGOs are at the forefront of the developments for increasing social cohesion among young people (Chance in Naples, TEB Youth Association, Casal d'Infants and Can Xatarra in Barcelona, the No to Drug Abuse project and Children of the Street in the Russia Federation). The lessons emerging from some of these projects are described in more detail in the next section.

One of the main questions raised in all the case studies was how to deal with the increasingly complex links between public sector actors and NGOs in order to provide coherent needs-led social alternatives for high-risk youths. Youth projects need to build their legitimacy with the public sector. Many of the NGOs interviewed reported that, in this context, they faced a double problem of legitimacy – with the public sector and with their own community. In the first case they had to demonstrate to their public sector paymasters that they were in fact covering an unmet need for young people in at least as cost-effective a way as the public sector. This often led to pressure to reduce wages, cut costs and avoid entering into controversial areas.

In this context, NGOs universally complained that the public sector tended to see them as a second-rate arm of the state. This is particularly true in the eastern European countries. For example, in the Southern Administrative District of Moscow, the case study stated that “the key orientation to civil society organisations can be seen as co-optive, with non-governmental actors perceived as part of official structures or as residual service providers and implementing agencies with a limited participative/democratic agenda of their own (...). Most of the local organisations have very close links to the city and territory administration with activists often seeing their NGO work as a step towards a career in the civil service”.

In Barcelona, NGOs also voiced a common criticism: “For local public administration, subsidiarity stops with them. NGOs do not take part in the design of programmes only in providing ideas and in solving the immediate problems that arise (...). The administration argues in favour of passing problems over to NGOs but without providing the necessary

resources. So conditions which are no longer tolerated for public sector workers (low wages and job insecurity) are passed on to local organisations.”

On the other hand, both public and external observers argue that, in some cases, there is a dangerous lack of transparency and quality control. In Sofia an academic reported: “We have many organisations connected with different power structures (political structures, parties, central government) that divide up enormous sums of money between them (...). They establish so-called distributional coalitions that do not care about the social costs of their enterprise. Because pretending to improve the situation can be a very profitable business (...). There are lots of problems with the programmes of foreign donors, both in the way they define the main aims of the programmes and in the way that they distribute the different projects among different organisations. There is no system of monitoring.”

The ultimate loser, if this complex web of relationships and interests gets out of control, is the population and the young people of areas like Fakulteta. Promises are made, money is spent, it appears as if the lion's share is going to the Roma community. However, neither the Bulgarian nor the Roma neighbourhoods see much change on the ground. The report on Fakulteta concludes that “the only way to change this situation is to increase the base level of information and establish more open transparent procedures at every stage: in strategy design, in the fixing of budgets, the selection of projects, monitoring results and evaluating impact”. This will be taken up in the last section of this chapter.

Youth projects also need to consolidate their legitimacy among young people and the community. NGOs also have to retain legitimacy among their membership and local communities who often demand a far more militant stance. In order to achieve this, many insisted on the need to retain a certain level of independence by keeping office and other overhead costs to a minimum and by ensuring a certain level of grassroots voluntary involvement: “In our NGO there are around 50 staff and around 150 volunteers. These volunteers belong to different social movements and they are the ones who really evaluate you. They only participate voluntarily if they are convinced of what you are doing. There are

also around 1 000 members who pay a membership fee. They demand to be kept informed. These kinds of relationship help us to move forward" (NGO Barcelona).

The Derwent case study raises some important issues about building legitimacy among young people as a whole. Firstly, there is the question of time-scales; youth is a relatively short period in anyone's life and young people need to see results before they get old. Secondly, there is the fact that youth involvement can be cyclical; generations and fashions change and there a constant need to be inventive and maintain interest. Furthermore, building up community and youth involvement is extremely time intensive for both youth workers and young people. Both monetary and non-monetary forms of recognising and validating this effort need to be developed.

4.4. Youth empowerment

This section analyses some of the lessons from the case studies about how to engage and empower young people. The case studies show that there are certain conditions and methods for increasing the level of youth empowerment. However, this tends to be the weakest link in the entire chain for dealing with the social cohesion of young people. At state, regional and city levels there are examples of broad objectives and commitments but these are not generally backed up with budgets or instruments for implementation. Most of the lessons for empowering young people have to be drawn at project level.

Existing social capital – The first building blocks

The empowerment of local people in general, and young people in particular, has to be seen as the first and central building block for area-based strategies for social cohesion. It cannot be left until a later stage or relegated to a secondary position. The dangers of doing so are clearly illustrated in Derwent, Derby. At a strategic level the New Deal for Community Initiative probably puts more emphasis on community empowerment than any previous area-based initiative in the UK, but in practice this is far harder to achieve. The Derwent NDC Partnership has set up a community empowerment theme group. However, there are still no young people represented on this or on the main partnership board. In general there seems to be a lack of youth involvement in defining projects.

As reported earlier, this resulted in many of the young people interviewed in our focus groups reporting either ignorance of many of the projects or a detached and indifferent attitude. In order to counteract this situation, Derwent NDC Partnership has put in place an impressive community communications strategy involving a newsletter and a community FM radio station. They have also increased their visibility through a number of community festivals. However, this still does not seem enough to dispel the sensation among many young people that the programme is being done *to* them rather than done *by* them. This situation creates pressure on the programme to achieve a number of visible quick wins to engage young people's interest. In this context, the longer time schedule of ten years falls outside most young people's horizons.

Slotervaart/Overtoomsveld in Amsterdam also reported that many of the migrant youth groups did not "always consider the projects as the right answer to their problems. Consequently, they do not take part in the project's programmes and stay out of reach".

It is easy to say that these problems could be considerably reduced by involving young people from the beginning in the definition and running of projects. However, this is no straightforward task. The scope for doing so depends considerably on the level of self-organisation and social capital among these groups at the outset. For example, both el Raval in Barcelona and the Spanish quarter in Naples seem to have evolved stronger forms of community organisation and self-regulation than the northern European housing estates covered in our case studies. Most of this is based upon traditional short circuits of solidarity within extended families, particular blocks or streets and among certain ethnic groups. Some also have violent and/or illegal connotations such as the control still exercised by the Camorra families in Naples and the informal economies of both areas. In general, it is inward rather than outward looking.

However, it also manifests itself in a more developed second tier of community organisation which provides a forum for resolving internal conflicts and negotiating with the outside world. In el Raval there are 106 NGOs and community groups who have organised themselves into a series of thematic co-ordinating groups to increase synergy and try to develop joint strategies and common positions in relation to public authorities. They have also created a joint neighbourhood community

platform. In the Spanish quarter there is also a network of community associations and co-operatives and an umbrella association.

The existence of these networks does not automatically provide the key to grassroots community empowerment. In some cases it can even act as a filter, which reduces direct access and perpetuates historical (and often personalised) conflicts. However, it is usually a far more fertile starting point than areas like Derwent, which have “virtually no voluntary and community sector infrastructure on which to build”.

This situation is compounded many times over in the urban areas studied in eastern Europe. Despite immensely strong family ties, there is no formal local organisation in the neighbourhood of Fakulteta. The level of trust between the Roma community, the rest of Bulgarian society and the state in particular is abysmally low. This leaves a series of second-tier national NGOs to intervene as intermediaries between the community and the public sector.

In the Southern District of Moscow there is no area-based tradition of community organisation. As in all the ex-communist countries, the previous regime has left a major residue of distrust towards public sector exercises in engagement, empowerment and partnership building. With a total population over forty times greater than that of el Raval, the Southern Administrative District has one quarter of the NGOs and most of these are offshoots of national or city-wide initiatives.

However, although the situation varies considerably between the study areas in terms of general levels of local community organisation, it is uniformly bad in terms of local youth organisation and empowerment. Many of the second-tier NGOs in all the neighbourhoods focus on the problems of youth. The most interesting cases work in a way that specifically builds youth empowerment. Some of the most important lessons from these initiatives are presented below. However, we have not been able to find a single one which can itself be considered to be a grassroots organisation of and by local young people. Changing this situation will require time, resources, considerable skill and sincere commitment.

Seeing the problem from young people's point of view

Given the lack of grassroots organisations to articulate young people's problems, needs and aspirations, the first step has to be a serious com-

mitment from all levels to build channels for dialogue. One of the first conditions for such a dialogue to take place is a minimum level of respect. From the point of view of the authorities this requires a fundamental shift in attitude from seeing young people simply as a social problem to viewing them as a potential resource. Chapter two showed that this was one of the first demands of the young people interviewed in nearly all our focus groups. Surprisingly, despite the massive levels of physical deprivation in many communities, the demand for respect often takes precedence over material demands for jobs and other benefits.

Given the high levels of distrust that exist between young people, the rest of society and public authorities in all the neighbourhoods studied, it is quite clear that this respect will not just emerge spontaneously on any side. It has to be won. Moreover, the case study of the extremely tense situation in Fakulteta shows that grandiose strategic promises of social change can actually be dangerously counterproductive. The experience of all areas suggest that it is better to design a strategy made up of small but tangible and practical steps (quick wins) which are then reinforced by longer term and larger scale changes, for example in emblematic public spaces and buildings.

The question is who starts the ball rolling and how does one know in which direction to go? Some of the approaches taken and lessons learnt from the case studies are presented below.

Comprehensive pathways out of individual youth problems

The first type of response has been to design individual pathways or itineraries that provide relevant solutions at an individual rather than purely social level. Variations of this approach can be seen in the projects run by NGOs such as Chance in Naples, New Perspectives in Amsterdam and Can Xatarra in Barcelona.

Contact between the NGO and the young person usually takes place as the result of a referral by the school, social workers, the local authority or the police. The itinerary can involve a short intensive period of individual mentoring as with New Perspectives or a one to two year period of training in a classroom coupled with individual advice as in the case of Can Xatarra in Barcelona and Chance in Naples.

Table 10. – Comprehensive pathways addressing youth problems

Project and status	Key facts	Main features of method
<p>Chance, Spanish quarter, Naples</p> <p>NGO funded under the Zone Strategy for Social Intervention.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Low additional cost due to secondment of staff and buildings. – 3 centres of 30 students. Youth from broken families. – 2-year programme to school certificate or professional training. – 2 modules of 15 students. – 1:5 teacher pupil ratio and individual tutoring by social workers. Psychological back-up. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Initial selection. – Agreement of contract specifying a personal itinerary involving the family. – 5 euros per week payment. – Regular meetings with parents – Ceremonies to celebrate achievements. – Learning is linked to the reality of young people's lives. – Establishment of trust, flexible but firm rules, safe spaces for dialogue.
<p>New Perspectives Slotervaart/ Overtoomseveld, Amsterdam</p> <p>NGO – one of 200 projects funded under the Integrated Safety Plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 700 offenders 12-18. – 8-10 weeks intensive individual guidance. – 1:1 sessions. – Job trajectory. – Pathway back to school or job trajectory. – 24 hours availability. – 1 mentor to 4 young people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Initial contact and motivation. – Joint analysis of the situation of the young person. – Identification of VIPs. – Negotiation of a plan of action involving family, school and work. – Mentors from similar backgrounds. – Aftercare. Help with convictions and remand.
<p>Exit and Success Can Xatarra, el Raval, Barcelona</p> <p>NGO funded by City Council.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 36 students. – Ordinary school in the morning and agreed special training in the afternoon. – Pathway to educational qualification or professional training. – Multidisciplinary team of tutors. – Individual advice and assistance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Clear agreement. – Boundaries – rights and responsibilities. We will help you if you help yourself. – Learning through doing. – Activities based on realities of young people. – Breakdown of subject boundaries and categories of people. – Team and collective work.

There are a number of common principles which should be borne in mind for all the work with young people. Firstly, there tends to be an initial period of contact, motivation and dialogue, followed by a joint analysis of the young person's situation. This involves a preliminary identification of both internal and external strengths (for example, reinforcing tacit

abilities and skills, social networks that can be drawn on, etc.) and problem areas. Following this, an individual plan of action is drawn up. The plan often takes the form of a contract between the support worker or support network and the young person, specifying that each has certain rights and responsibilities. In certain cases such as in Chance and Can Xatarra the plan revolves around a syllabus of class or group work.

The next stage is implementation. The projects agree on certain central elements of the methodology. It is based upon dialogue, mutual respect and trust. Mentors and trainers have to listen as well as explain. This involves a more flexible, convivial atmosphere than conventional education but none the less have certain clear boundaries and discipline. The attitude is "I will help you as long as you are prepared to co-operate and help yourself." Activities are usually designed around young people's experiences and try to involve a series of small tangible milestones or results. A major effort is made to celebrate and value these achievements not only with the individual but also with families and the wider social network.

The mentors and teachers work with other social institutions such as schools, social workers and the judicial system. They are able to recommend and achieve changes along the social supply chain that materially affect people's lives. They also try to reinforce the external social networks (social capital) of the young people. Chance in Naples holds monthly meetings with the families. One of the main aims is to demonstrate to families that have often given up hope under immense material and psychological pressure that their child is able to achieve something. New Perspectives in Amsterdam identifies and tries to involve the VIPs among the young person's peers and relations.

The work is extremely labour intensive and skilled. Ratios of young people to mentors or teachers seem to be around one to three. Teams are multidisciplinary and require back-up from specialists such as psychologists both for themselves and for the young people. Mentors are important figures and as far as possible should come from, or have experience of, the backgrounds of the young people. Chance has managed to reduce the additional cost of their project through the secondment of staff and the loaning of buildings but the real cost is there.

Finally, most of the pathways are directed at providing people with a second chance or new perspectives in the education system or the labour

market. However, it is recognised that for some, access to the labour market is a very long way off. Some NGOs said explicitly that it was wrong to build up too many false expectations because there “were not enough jobs for all”. The fundamental aim is to reinforce self-esteem, a sense of cultural identity and the capacity to determine one’s own future as an antidote to attitudes which are both self-destructive and damaging to the rest of society. This means that the success rates of these projects cannot be measured simply in terms of the number of people who enter full-time employment. It is necessary to take into account the social cost of not taking action – wasted lives dependent upon social benefits or the cost of isolating certain sections of society from the rest through prison and other repressive measures.

A variation of this approach is being taken in the programme of juvenile restorative justice being carried out by two Moscow – based NGOs – No to Drug Abuse and the Centre for Judicial and Legal Reform. There is a similar process of joint analysis and an action plan which brings together relatives, friends, teachers and sports trainers. However, in this case the victim is brought into the circle and the programme includes a series of activities designed to develop active responsibility.

Spaces for dialogue and self-expression

Most of the approaches based upon comprehensive pathways stress the reinforcement of young people’s sense of identity and belonging in their immediate surroundings (family, school, peers, etc.) The priority is to build up bonding social capital. Most of the young people are referred or selected for these initiatives. However, there is another set of activities which depend upon young people voluntarily choosing to take part because it interests them. All the case studies mentioned three key areas in this field: sport, music and information technology (often linked to the media in the form of local radio and television).

These activities and the drop-in centres and associations that have grown around them are also being used to build up bridging social capital – the ability to work collectively in a team or group and to enter into a non-violent relationship with other groups. In this sense a fundamental distinction must be made between the way in which some of these activities have been programmed in the past and the approach taken by the NGOs in the case studies. For example, there is a strong tradition of organised sport and mass events in both the ex-communist countries of Bulgaria and the Russian

Federation. In the past the primary aim was to divert young people's energy into health and patriotic activities on the understanding that this would make them too busy or tired to get into mischief. Since the collapse of communism the funds for many of these diversionary activities have dried up, leaving a real void. The same attitudes were expressed by residents and some public sector stakeholders in the western European countries – their aim was to occupy young people and get them off the streets.

Many of the NGOs in our case studies argued that this focus on the social problem (youth hanging around on the streets) rather than on youth needs led to a series of dowdy youth centres and amateur activities which in no way was able to compete with the glamour they are offered (but usually cannot afford) by the mass media.

In el Raval, Barcelona, youth workers argue that youth activities must be “sensual”, in the sense of being in tune with the latest trends in youth fashion and culture, professional and useful (in a wider cultural sense and not necessarily in terms of advancing towards a job). The NGO TEB in Barcelona provides a very interesting example of this approach. TEB is a drop-in IT centre, which was set up by some young teachers living in el Raval. It is run as an association of young people of both Spanish and immigrant origins. The programme of annual activities is decided by the young members themselves and these go far beyond basic computer classes.

The young people of the centre have designed and developed an IT network called Ravalnet aimed at strengthening co-operation between local organisations and associations. The content of the site is created by the young people themselves in two-way communication with all the groups carrying out local projects. It is now accepted officially as the IT resource base for the neighbourhood (and proved very useful for the research carried out in the case study). Ravalnet includes a forum in which young people and other groups in the neighbourhood debate social conditions and controversies, discuss plans and co-ordinate activities. They have also created an Internet radio station in which people from the many cultures in the area can make their own programmes. The site has been so successful that the local authority and the associations of other neighbourhoods have commissioned the young people in TEB to help them set up their own sites.

Reclaiming the streets

There is another approach for bringing networks of social provides closer to young people and this culture. This recognises explicitly that many young people do not get referred to, or refuse to take part in, comprehensive pathways and voluntary activities centred around sport, IT or music. It also tries to come to terms with the fact that for certain young people the prospect of many years of what they see as irrelevant, boring and sometimes humiliating study with no guarantee of a decent job at the end does not seem as attractive as the toughness, capacity to think on one's feet and immediacy of street life.

The case studies show that attitudes to street life vary enormously between countries. Both young and older residents tend to set a far higher value on it in the Mediterranean cities of Naples and Barcelona whereas in the north, as in Derwent, the debate centres around legal night-time curfews of young people. The case study in Barcelona also shows that only a minority of young people are regularly involved in street life and that an even smaller minority of these is involved in any kind of illegal or violent activity.

Nevertheless, it is clear that the status attached to a certain kind of toughness together with the symbols and labels of a consumer society does put these young people at risk from both violent and illegal activity. Similarly, it is clear that residents from all over the world feel threatened and angry about certain kinds of anti-social behaviour carried out by young people in public places.

In certain places like el Raval, Barcelona, this has led to a return of a profession that had started to die out with the bureaucratisation of many social services: the street educator or animator. They are also usually young people with experience or a background of street life whose first objective is to engage with and win the trust of young people who would not otherwise get involved in the previous two approaches. This is by no means an easy task and once again the case studies provide a series of lessons.

Firstly, as shown in the Spanish quarter of Naples, it involves being street wise and understanding the informal community mechanisms for surviving, establishing status and maintaining a certain social order. These can vary from positive, spontaneous forms of self-organisation, the informal

economy, to criminal and violent activities. To become accepted the street educator has to tread a tightrope between tolerance and collusion. But the starting point has to be a recognition of the existence of these informal ways of life, of different forms of cultural identity and the desire to build people's capacity to find their own solutions, rather than incorporate them into set moulds as a condition of support.

Secondly, the street educator is basically involved in group, rather than individual work. This requires experience and intuitive sensitivity of group dynamics, peer pressure and the role of youth leaders. Thirdly, to have any credibility the street educator also has to be able to bring in additional resources and to be able to achieve changes elsewhere in the chain of social provision (good links with schools, social services, the judicial system, etc.). This often results in referrals to the other two types of initiative mentioned earlier. In this context it is important to mention the pioneering work being carried out in extremely difficult circumstances by the Children of the Street Project in Moscow. Their work rotates around a series of physical centres (seven in Moscow) where children who have been found on the street or are at serious risk of neglect can carry out a programme of after-school activities, often with their parents. However, they rely both on a network of young, trained street workers and on their ability to pull in the support of a range of institutions which did not previously work very closely together.

Finally, some of the most ambitious street projects have worked to create a safe environment for bringing out the controversies that exist over the use of public space between older residents and young people from different ethnic groups. This is the case of the NGO, Casal d'Infants that is being funded by Barcelona City Council to carry out a pilot scheme called the learning neighbourhood. Street monitors work with different groups to bring out their views about what the neighbourhood used to be like, how it is changing and their vision for the future.

In Derwent, these kinds of discussions are being used to ensure that public spaces and emblematic public buildings are also designed with a certain social sensitivity and flexibility. The universally positive attitude to the physical redevelopment of el Raval in Barcelona shows that success in this area can have a major impact on young people's pride, optimism and energy.

Young people as citizens and entrepreneurs

The scoping study recently published by the Council of Europe in *Youth and exclusion in disadvantaged urban areas: addressing the causes of violence*, showed that other areas of Europe have taken these approaches further by involving young people directly in physical rehabilitation (implementation and to a lesser extent design) and in local democracy through setting up youth councils which debate and make recommendations about the future of the neighbourhood.

Another trend has been to involve youth in a broader definition of entrepreneurship, which includes traditional for-profit small businesses but also includes a more social entrepreneurial attitude towards designing, setting up and running projects of general interest to the community. Alternative finance and marketing play an important role in the viability of these initiatives. It is absolutely vital to develop youth-orientated policies towards the demand side of the labour market as well as the supply. Integrated pathways on their own cannot change the situation if there are no jobs and if young people are at the bottom of the queue. However, neither of these approaches was represented in the case studies.

4.5. The evaluation of changes and results

With the exception of, perhaps, Barcelona, the cases are all too recent and/or too small to expect a major impact on the area. The Zone Plan covering the Spanish quarter of Naples and the NDC Partnership in Derwent did not start until 2000. The Integrated Safety Plan started in 1999 with little new money so it is difficult to isolate the effects of the new policy. In both Moscow and Bulgaria this study covers the implementation of isolated projects. General strategies (for example, for street children) have only recently been approved in Moscow and have not yet started to be implemented in Sofia.

All areas except Fakulteta in Sofia seem to have experienced absolute improvements in indicators of social cohesion and violence in the last few years. Most of this is undoubtedly due to improvements in global or macro-economic conditions. In Sofia, the same forces have made the situation considerably worse. All areas except Sofia have also experienced relative improvements in crime statistics and all except Fakulteta and Slotervaart/Overtoomsveld have experienced relative improvements in

Table 11. – Evaluation methods

Area	Time frame and changes	Existence of evaluation
Spanish quarter, Naples	Zone Plan 2000. Chance 1998.	Individual project level by University. Chance: majority get school certificate. Significant percentage go on to professional training. Some get job. Significant reduction in anti-social behaviour.
el Raval, Barcelona	Redevelopment started in 1988. Relative improvement in socioeconomic situation but still worse than elsewhere. Relative improvement in indicators of violence and crime.	Individual project level. Self-appraisal.
Derwent, Derby	NDC started in 2000. Buildings only just coming on line. Individual projects successful. Crime and fear of crime better but still too high.	External evaluation by Sheffield University. Focus on monitoring and quantitative outputs.
Slotervaart/ Overtoomseveld, Amsterdam	New Perspectives started in 1992. Safety Plan started in 1999. Improvement in socioeconomic situation but less than elsewhere. Reduction in crime and violence, but levels still considered unacceptable	Individual project level. 70% of New Perspectives clients stop criminal activity.
Fakulteta, Sofia	Roma framework programme 1999. Not implemented yet. Worse on all fronts.	None. Existing projects are too small and recent to have an impact.
Southern District, Moscow	Strategy 2003. Interventions since 1996. Improvement in the macro-economic situation. Improvement in crime statistics.	None. The projects are too small to have an overall impact. Success of NAN to stop one in five children reoffending.

socioeconomic conditions. However, both are still considered to be unacceptably worse than other areas.

There have also been important physical improvements in Barcelona, which has had a big impact on the pride and identity of the area. All the reports, except Derwent, point to a deficit not only in transparent evaluations but also in the design of strategy, the selection of projects and the monitoring of results. Derwent is following the general trend in the UK towards evidence-based policy but this has focused rather obsessively on quantitative measures of outputs rather than qualitative measures of impact. There is a high management cost.

There is clearly a need for systems of monitoring and evaluating changes in the social cohesion of urban neighbourhoods. In this sense the “Methodological guide to the development of social cohesion indicators” under preparation by the Council of Europe could fill a major gap.

At project level, more detailed evaluations have been carried out. These show that major progress can be made to increase social cohesion among young people. However, these achievements are intensive in time, labour and money. This has to be set against the huge financial cost of keeping young people in prison and the enormous social cost of a life that is spent trying to harm society rather than help it.

5. Conclusions and guidelines for a youth-centred strategy

5.1. Youth empowerment

- This has to be the first and central building block for neighbourhood strategies. It cannot be left until a later stage or relegated to a secondary position.
- The problem has to be understood from young people’s point of view as well as from the point of view of other stakeholders (local and non local).
- There needs to be a shift from seeing young people and immigrants as the problem to seeing them as a unique resource. All energy needs to focus on the mobilisation of the internal and external resources of young people themselves.
- There must be a change of priority from integration to recognition of identity, culture and capacity to determine one’s own future within a cohesive society.

- The role of informal mechanisms of economic and social survival and protection must be taken into account when designing activities.
- There needs to be adaptability on the part of social networks but within clear boundaries. Help on the condition that one helps oneself. Actions need to be negotiated (and possibly formalised into a contract) between youth and networks with rights and clear responsibilities.
- This means building safe spaces and channels for listening and dialogue between stakeholders and between the networks involved in social intervention.
- The spaces can be physical or cultural. Music, sport and IT should not just be seen as methods for taking young people off the streets but as exciting channels for communicating individual and collective identities. Public buildings and spaces have a major impact on self-esteem and must also respond to social and cultural needs.
- At the same time there is a need to broaden social and physical landscapes with exchanges, visits, etc.
- Street educators and mentors can play a vital role.
- Schools can become vital intermediaries if they broaden their scope.
- Individually negotiated itineraries are a central methodology and much can be learnt from cases of good practice.
- Youth activities must have clear relevance. They must be both “sensual” (exciting and professional) and be seen to be useful. There is a need for quick tangible wins. Ceremony and celebration of progress is important.
- Access to the labour market will always be a central goal but there should be no false expectations. Itineraries must build self-confidence, autonomy and both individual and collective capacity to take action, independently of whether this leads to a job.

5.2. Decentralisation

- Changes require a ten to twenty year planning, implementation and evaluation cycle. Funding mechanisms must match this.
- Pilot projects cannot indefinitely patch the holes left by mainstream services. Expecting pilot projects to play a pseudo-structural role eventually leads to burnout and rejection.
- The transmission mechanism between pilot and mainstream must be made clear within specified time-limits.

- There is considerable margin for far greater local involvement in the design, implementation and evaluation of services within nationally (or regionally) agreed boundaries. But these boundaries must also be explicit and clear to avoid creating false expectations.
- More importance must be given to developing a coherent social and economic vision and strategy for each area. Urban design also must also take into account the evolving socioeconomic functions.
- Any long-term strategy for cohesion requires the ability to deliver benefits in core areas largely outside local control like employment, education and health. So the mechanisms for vertical co-ordination must be clear.

5.3. Joined-up and integrated government

- More attention needs to be given to clarifying vertical lines of support and co-ordination as opposed to simply focusing on horizontal co-ordination.
- Strategic or framework plans and interdepartmental structures on their own do not mean anything. It is essential to clarify their legitimacy and level of support (budget, powers) within the hierarchy.
- Leadership from the top is a necessary complement to empowerment from below. It is essential to provide a vision, clear aims and boundaries.
- It is important to have transparent territorial indicators of social cohesion and violence among youth in order to target the intervention.
- Mainstream government services and spending must be proofed for their impact on the areas and groups in question.
- Clear targets and budgets need to be set for mainstream services in relation to these areas and groups.
- It is necessary to arrive at long-term cross-party understandings to avoid excessive competition and duplication between levels of government under different forms of political control.
- The main aims and terms of horizontal co-operation need to be made transparent. Is the main aim repressive with information flows primarily in the direction of the police and the courts or does information flow in the opposite direction with the police referring social problems for preventative action led by schools, social services and NGOs?

5.4. Partnerships

Following on from the points above, the aims, terms of reference and distribution rights and responsibilities within the partnerships need to be made clear.

- Young people themselves must be centrally involved as partners and workers. This requires rules about confidentiality and changes in style.
- The method for selecting all partners needs to be transparent and find a balance between legitimacy at a local level and legitimacy with mainstream institutions (validation by local organisations or in local meetings, etc.).
- In addition to their rights, partners must fulfill a clear set of responsibilities both to the partnership itself and to their constituency (regular information, democratic debate, etc.). These must be conditions for continuation.
- In general, NGOs and the private sector need to be given a greater role in setting objectives, designing strategies, selecting projects and evaluating results. They cannot simply be seen as a cheaper form of implementation. But in return, NGOs need to fulfill a series of conditions regarding transparency and co-ordination with other NGOs.
- Maintaining partnership structures and local management teams requires time and adequate financial and human resources. This cannot simply be regarded as a transaction cost of implementing a project. A partnership which functions well can be a major tool for increasing social cohesion. However, this function cannot be taken for granted and needs to be effectively supported and monitored.
- In order to avoid burnout, community partners need to feel that participation is a positive experience providing a mix of: personal achievement, information, involvement in key debates and decisions, status, the opportunity to visit and learn from other experiences, fun and on certain occasions, explicit financial rewards for time spent.

5.5. Evaluation

- There is a major deficit in the evaluation of place-based strategies for increasing social cohesion among young people and the analysis of the effects this has on levels of violence.

- This deficit, which applies to most local economic and social development strategies, is one of the main barriers to extending and mainstreaming the results. It is possible to point to a series of good practices and promising results but it is not possible to know whether these results justify the means used or under which conditions it would be possible to transfer them.
- Some progress is being made in certain countries, but the focus has mainly been on quantitative output indicators rather than qualitative measures of impact on social cohesion.
- In addition, there is a major shortage of tools for allowing both community and private stakeholders to participate in the evaluation. This creates a climate of suspicion and makes the sense of ownership required for progress towards a stakeholder or welfare society much harder.

II. Case study of the *Quartieri Spagnoli* (Spanish quarter) of Naples, Italy: analyses and recommendations based on the experience of the Chance Project

Professeur Frédéric Lapeyre, Institut d'études du développement de l'Université catholique de Louvain

1. Introduction

The *Quartieri Spagnoli* (Spanish quarter) is located in the historic centre of Naples. For the visitor this neighbourhood encapsulates the essence of everyday folklore in Naples, with its theatrical, chaotic, vivacious and predominantly working-class lifestyle. However, it is above all an area hit by high unemployment rates and enormous socioeconomic problems, which have a devastating effect on both individuals and whole families. The fact that so many local inhabitants have no access to decent employment results in intensive informal activities, which are in fact survival strategies in a context of material deprivation. Another consequence of this situation is the presence of organised crime, especially involving the Camorra culture, which marks the behaviour and attitudes of many local people. However, the violence is not necessarily criminal: it is rather an everyday violence in terms of body language, words, modes of expression and interpersonal relations, particularly influencing gender relations.

In the Spanish quarter underprivileged families are born, grow up and live in fear of tomorrow because of the ambient insecurity, both physical and socioeconomic and this profoundly affects their mode of existence. Young people cannot talk about their future because they live on a day-to-day basis, preferring to avoid future projections: they already know that their future is bleak. These young people never make plans because they know that nothing ever turns out as planned.

These problem youngsters are school dropouts who hang about in the streets all day; they are the "hard nuts" whom the schools and social services have failed to crack and who have already had problems with the police. They are "losers", depressive and aggressive youngsters who, even though they are not yet 16 years old, have already had too troubled a life for their age. They come from families which have given up all

hope, scarred by unemployment, destitution, psychological problems and social degradation. They have been pushed into a ghetto which is not only physical but also cultural and linguistic, because many of them only speak dialect. These teenagers are the tip of the iceberg of a much vaster problem of social-economic insecurity which dominates these deprived areas, even if not all the young people are in equally dire straits.

The ensuing report will look into the question of social action for the benefit of marginalised youngsters in the Spanish quarter. We shall use a territorial approach to take stock of the local socio-economic situation, study the inhabitants' needs and priorities, analyse the existing social action network, pinpoint the stakeholders involved in the latter and their methods of co-ordination and consultation, and examine the meaning of social action in such an environment as the Spanish quarter. In this connection we shall stress the importance of the institutional and political context in order to clarify the social action dynamics by emphasising:

- the impetus imparted by Law No. 285 of 1997 tabled by Mr Turco, government minister, which was to provide a new action framework for the most innovatory schemes in Naples in the field of assistance for children and young people;
- the new Outline Law No. 328 of 2000 introducing an integrated system of social action and social services;
- the social dynamics launched in the second half of the 1990s by the Mayor of Naples, Antonio Bassolino (who went on to become President of the Region), continued by his successor Rosa Russo Iervolino.

We shall be concentrating on the analysis of the Chance Project, which is primarily a projected network aimed at rescuing teenagers in difficult relational, educational and social situations, from the angle of human development in extremely deprived urban areas. The Chance Project goes far beyond the explicit aim of helping the youngsters to obtain qualifications by implementing an original approach, or of ensuring that they stay at school until the legal school-leaving age. The essential objective of Chance is to promote social construction by adopting a territorial approach aimed at enhancing and mobilising the resources available on the ground and strengthening social cohesion in the target area.

Where methodology is concerned, during our week's visit to the Spanish quarter organised by the local Chance Project unit, we carried out a

whole series of interviews with the various stakeholders involved at different levels in the project. We met up with the project leaders, teachers, social workers, government authorities, the social services, psychologists and also the young people involved in the project, their parents, local inhabitants, members of local associations and trade unions, etc. Our aim was not to presume to assess this project but rather to attempt to improve understanding of the work conducted under the Chance Project in the field of combating the exclusion of young people, identifying their problems, the kinds of response the project is providing to these problems and the innovatory nature of the responses.

It must be acknowledged that this analytical work was greatly helped not only by the quality and helpfulness of the individuals involved in the project but also because the project was designed right from the outset as a research tool:

- it adopted an original approach creating an innovatory type of know-how and practice;
- it intensively capitalised on this knowledge and know-how by ensuring that all the stakeholders involved engaged in systematic restitution and exchange practices;
- it established a collective learning process with genuine teamwork, thus ensuring acquisition of the new skills not only by each individual but by the whole team.

Moving on beyond the Chance Project, we will also briefly analyse a number of other social initiatives in the Spanish quarter affecting young people's living environment.

Lastly, the final section will identify guidelines for the integration of young people in disadvantaged urban areas. We shall stress three basic elements: the need to provide a solid basis for joint regulation, so that the institutions and the youngsters can carry out joint action; the importance of recognising that a valuable resource possessed by the teenagers involved is their own specific mode of participation, their self-reliance, and that it is vital to have a forum where the young people can express themselves, to listen to them and to try to understand their explicit and implicit demands; and the need to open up a horizon for self-projection for the young people, letting them realise the diversity of the world and the whole range of possibilities on offer, in order to direct them towards a novel universe of action and reaction.

This report draws on all the encounters we made during our visit to the Spanish quarter and the written material I received as part of this assignment. I should like to thank the co-ordinator of the Chance Unit in the Spanish quarter, Marco Rossi-Doria, for his kind welcome to the area and for having initiated me in the realities of the Spanish quarter and the social action on behalf of the youngsters in this deprived area of Naples. I would also express my gratitude to all the individuals I encountered for their helpfulness and the valuable information they gave me, including Maria-Rosaria, Rosa, Wanda, Evelina, Carla, Caroline, Salvatore and Lino. Warm thanks also to Francesca Ricciardi for transcribing the interviews. Obviously, I take sole and full responsibility for my account and my analysis.

2. Description of the living environment

2.1. Physical environment

The Spanish quarter is part of the historic centre of Naples and is located in an area bounded by the Via Toledo (also called Via Roma) and the Augusteo-Pontano, Corso Vittorio Emmanuele, S. Pasquale and Concezione main thoroughfares at Montecalvario. This neighbourhood has a very marked identity deriving from the popular culture and practices that have ensured its fame for several centuries now. The Spanish quarter was built between 1550 and 1750, and was so called because the Spanish Viceroy Don Pedro da Toledo ordered the building work as an expansion of the city in order to house the Spanish military garrisons. Right from the outset the quarter was a densely built-up and overcrowded working-class area in which such activities as prostitution and smuggling were encouraged by the concentration of soldiers in the area. However, the prostitution which used to be fairly widespread in the lower reaches of the Spanish quarter has now moved to other districts and is virtually non-existent locally.

The area has a parallel network of steep, narrow streets (on the slopes of the San Martino hill), the lower section of which opens out on to the Via Toledo, the main shopping avenue in Naples. Even though the neighbourhood is mainly residential, it is also very busy in economic and production terms (arts and crafts, small shops for the local population and also various informal activities), with stores and workshops opening out

on to the street, thus making it a lively, colourful district, the very antithesis of any urban "dormitory".

Passers-by discovering this neighbourhood are struck by its vitality, the chaotic impression created by the mass of cars and mopeds rushing by and the narrow streets full of local residents, craft workers and hawkers. From this angle the Spanish quarter is fairly typical of a certain type of Mediterranean town or city, with its chaotic working-class atmosphere. The area is not a bazaar or a medina, but it does have something in common with such southern Mediterranean markets because of the historic Arab and Spanish influence.

This profusion of activity pervading the local streets also causes certain dysfunctions and disorder (noise pollution, traffic, problems with emergency service access to the centre of the Spanish quarter), which makes local living conditions difficult. As Giovanni Laino, a town planning lecturer and one of the leaders of the Spanish Quarter Community Association, told us: "There is a widespread deterioration in both the physical environment and the organisation of local life because many people misuse or damage public property, park their cars illegally or dump rubbish or bulk waste in the street; also the communal parts of the buildings are mismanaged and there is frequent misbehaviour in public areas, etc. That is what sets the Spanish quarter apart from the quiet, elegant middle-class areas in the city centre."

The Spanish quarter comprises 170 blocks with a total of 600 buildings inhabited by 3 000 families, accounting for approximately 15 000 individuals. There are also 900 *bassi* accommodating at least 3 000 persons. To this we must add 259 workshops, 360 small businesses operating virtually exclusively for the local population, 196 warehouses and 223 garages. The housing stock is made up of small and medium-sized flats which are owned by small landlords and are often in a poor state of repair. However, the stereotype of life in the Spanish quarter stems from the *bassi*, which are ground-floor areas formerly used for non-residential purposes (stores, shops, stables or passageways to inner courtyards). The vast majority of these dwellings were until recently dark, damp one-room slums with only one inlet for air and light (the front door) and summary sanitation.

In the 1980s, thanks to the renovation grants made available after the earthquake, many of the *bassi* were repaired and redeveloped. One of the main aims of this work was to split up the living area into a kitchen, bed-

room and living room. Nevertheless, the primary problems associated with this type of housing remain (particularly the lack of ventilation and light). The *bassi* are synonymous with overcrowding and lack of privacy for the large families shut up in two small rooms. However, a further problem is incursions from the street, which becomes a playground for the children and an extension of the dwelling where family members settle when it gets too hot inside. As a resident of the Spanish quarter told us: "If you have no room in the house, the street becomes your living room, and when there is a football match on television you take the TV set and chairs outside for the whole family to watch, as if the outside was part of your home."

The great majority of *bassi* are rented by Neapolitan families who have been in the area for a long time. The other large, and growing, group of *bassi* residents are immigrants, primarily Sri Lankans, who accept housing conditions that leave much to be desired in terms of both quality (slum conditions and overcrowding) and cost (exorbitant rents demanded by unscrupulous landlords exploiting the immigrants' illegal situation) in return for integration in a "porous" area which grants them some degree of security and opportunities for developing community networks and activities.

On the architectural front, apart from a dozen or so town houses, the main types of dwellings were based on small two or three-storey buildings intended for working-class populations (craft workers, small shopkeepers and manual workers). One of the most remarkable facts about the area is that although the housing stock has frequently been restored and converted in order to cope with high population pressure (particularly by raising the height of buildings and dividing up houses), it has never undergone any really radical transformations. This explains the great pressure on the housing stock and the major difficulties in finding a flat in this neighbourhood, which has virtually no vacant dwellings.

2.2. Social environment

The Spanish quarter differs in social composition from many other deprived areas in major European cities. The situation here is one of coexistence by a variety of social strata, which are differentiated in both cultural and material terms. This social mix constitutes the originality of the Spanish quarter, which lacks any very clear borderline between the areas inhabited by the marginalised groups and the better-off. As we heard from a local resident: "In this neighbourhood, destitution and prosperity have always lived

together in the same block. The poor man, the sub-proletarian, lives on the ground floor, but as you climb up the stairs the economic situation of the occupants changes and it is not uncommon to find a lawyer or a representative of another profession on the upper floors. They have always lived side-by-side, even if they do not really interact.”

Giovanni Laino feels that one of the main factors in differentiating among the social strata is neither income nor housing quality, but rather the origin of the income (from legal, informal or illegal activities), the family's standard of education, the extent of their integration in the labour market and, lastly, the valuation of working culture within the family environment as against dependence on social welfare. We might broadly single out five major social groups in the social stratification of the Spanish quarter:

- a group made up of middle and lower-class workers, most of whom are employed in the public sector and live in the neighbourhood more as residents than inhabitants. None of this group ever live in the *bassi*. They have difficulty putting up with the lifestyles and misconduct of the other groups. Young people from this group tend to leave the area as soon as possible, emigrating to nicer neighbourhoods as a sign of social advancement. They have a guaranteed income thanks to their job security and some actually own their flats;
- a group which might be referred to as “proletariat”, with widespread unemployment problems and a low standard of education, but also a strong work ethic; most have few qualifications and since they are not employed in the public sector they are usually involved in casual labour. These working-class families are vulnerable but generally healthy. They are only sporadically prone to deviant behaviour. They are long-established in the Spanish quarter and are an integral part of the folk culture and the life of the neighbourhood. Most of them rent their flats;
- a large urban sub-proletariat group; they show acute signs of economic and social vulnerability: educational failure and school dropout, early motherhood, experience of imprisonment, family overcrowding, etc. They face structural unemployment and their household income usually comes from informal or indeed criminal activities, topped up by various social welfare allowances paid by the state. This group runs informal networks, many of them illegal. Many of the families concerned are marginalised. The hundreds of

households with members involved in Camorrist activities also belong to this group, which has shrunk in recent years because some of its members have been killed in revenge shootings or sent to prison. Street life is often in the hands of this urban sub-proletariat, who base their reproductive logic on illegal networks and political vote-catching. Young people from the last two groups hardly ever emigrate from the Spanish quarter, or if they do they move to other deprived neighbourhoods on the outskirts of Naples;

- one more recent group is made up of new homeowners who can afford to purchase and renovate apartments because of the attractive prices resulting from the many problems in the Spanish quarter: such residents are the result of the nascent process of gentrification along the edges of the Spanish quarter stemming from the major drive by the municipality to rehabilitate the area. They put up with the drawbacks of the neighbourhood in exchange for a central location in the city and an original lifestyle. This group comprises a large number of teachers and academics. However, they are not actively involved in local life, merely residing in the quarter;
- lastly, the immigrant group. There has been mass immigration over the last ten years, resulting in ever-increasing numbers of migrant inhabitants. The number of legal and illegal immigrants is constantly growing in Naples, where an estimated 16 000 currently live. But the fact is that the Spanish quarter, being located in the historic centre of Naples, has a higher concentration of immigrants than the other urban areas. This is explicable, on the one hand, by the fact that clandestine immigrants find it easier to find housing here, renting slum accommodation at exorbitant rates, and on the other, by the area's proximity to income-producing areas (particularly the main shopping avenues for hawkers working in the informal sector and the upper middle-class neighbourhoods for domestic work). The percentage of temporarily resident immigrants (an administrative category used by the social and health services, giving some idea of the number of illegal immigrants present) in the historic centre, which embraces the Spanish quarter, is 17%, namely 70% higher than the average figure for the whole Municipality of Naples. A great many immigrants work in the domestic service sector (home care for elderly or sick persons, housework, etc.). Sri Lankans are the largest immigrant community in the Spanish quarter, where most of them live in buildings previously used for prostitution or as storage

areas. Some immigrants also manage to rent small, slightly more salubrious flats after a few years in the area. Communally organised, the immigrants maintain strong social cohesion, contributing to local life with their small corner shops and ethnic restaurants.

The relations between the long-established populations in the Spanish quarter and these newly-arrived immigrants is a good illustration of the concept of a “porous” city which is often applied to Naples with reference to its capacity, probably greater than in any other town or city in Europe, to accommodate a host of informal activities and individuals operating outside the law, be they illegal immigrant workers or individuals involved in criminal organisations. To quote a young Sri Lankan immigrant living in the Spanish quarter: “No one here asks to see our papers. We behave ourselves, bother no one and everyone leaves us alone.”

While racist and discriminatory expressions are commonly used in street talk, there is actually no particular antagonism between the Neapolitan population in the neighbourhood and the immigrants who have moved in, and in fact, there is even a certain amount of understanding for the latter. This is partly due to the fact that crime, violence and incivility in the neighbourhood mainly involves the Camorrist organisations and local youngsters rather than the immigrants, most of whom work hard in the informal sector. As one local woman told us: “As long as they behave themselves we have good relations and we quite like them (...). Poor things, they have to sell bags in the street to feed the families they left behind and they have to live in terrible conditions day in, day out, with the risk of the police checking on them and confiscating their goods.”

3. Overview of problems and needs

3.1. Basic data

The latest publication by the National Commission on Social Exclusion estimated that 2.6 million families in Italy were affected by poverty, namely almost 7 500 000 individuals with under half the average consumption rate for Italy. This phenomenon is particularly marked in southern Italy, where almost 66% of all the poor families in Italy live.

It is difficult to secure any accurate overview of poverty in Naples because statistics on poverty (living conditions and levels of consumption) are

hardly ever broken down to individual city, never mind neighbourhood, level. Nevertheless, for a few years now we have been able to form a clearer idea of the situation thanks to the efforts of the Municipality of Naples to improve information on realities in its territory by means of zone plans, which we shall be looking at in greater detail in chapter three below. The municipality has collected administrative statistics for this purpose using a territorial approach that consists in defining a series of basic territorial units (UTBs). UTBs Nos. 48 to 52 are the districts with the highest concentration of social problems. UTB 51 is the historic centre of Naples, embracing the Spanish quarter. Below we shall be analysing the main features of this UTB, which is one of the most underprivileged in Naples. It should be noted that the territory of this UTB exceeds that of the Spanish quarter, where the situation is generally even more difficult than the impression given for UTB 51 overall.

The first interesting indicator for economic insecurity in this territory is the number of recipients of the “minimum integration income” (RMI), which was experimentally introduced in 1998. Table 12 shows the distribution of recipients based on their UTB of residence.

Table 12. – Distribution of recipients by UTB

District	UTB	Frequency	Percentage
Not stated	Not stated	200	4.9%
Chiaia, San Ferdinando Posillipo	UTB 44	141	3.5%
Bagnoli Fuorigrotta	UTB 45	133	3.3%
Pianura Soccavo	UTB 46	529	13.0%
Arenella Vomero	UTB 47	61	1.5%
Piscinola Chiaiano Scampia	UTB 48	341	8.4%
Stella S. Carlo all’Arena	UTB 49	421	10.3%
Miano Secondigliano S. Pietro	UTB 50	416	10.2%
Avv. Mont. Mercato Pendino	UTB 51	554	13.6%
S. Giovanni Barra Ponticelli	UTB 52	888	21.8%
Poggioreale S. Lorenzo, Vicaria	UTB 53	385	9.5%
Total		4 069	100%

Source: Comune di Napoli, Piano sociale di zona 2003, le aree di priorità: contrasto alla povertà, 2003.

The areas with the highest concentrations of RMI recipients are therefore the S. Giovanni, Barra and Ponticelli neighbourhoods (UTB 52), followed by the historic centre area (UTB 51) and Soccava Pianura (UTB 46). As we shall see later, these are also the three areas in which the Chance Project for teenagers at risk of exclusion is being implemented. The historic centre has almost 43% more RMI recipients than the average for the whole city of Naples. The extremely precarious socio-economic situation of these recipients is mainly a result of family size (large families) and the lack of work. There is in particular a strong link between poverty and child poverty, because more than one in every two families (56%) applying for the RMI has three or more children or young members. The problem of teenage vulnerability is particularly severe in an area where the percentage of young people under 20 years of age is 23%, while that for children under 13 years is only 12%. The large number of teenagers in the neighbourhood means that specific activities are needed to promote the rights of children and teenagers and to combat the economic and social insecurity which primarily affects young people.

Where under-age persons in general are concerned, it is in UTB 51, which includes the Spanish quarter, that the rate of primary school absenteeism is highest in Naples, namely 1.23%, while the corresponding rate for lower secondary school is also one of the highest, namely 2.5%. The average rates for Naples as a whole are 0.66% and 2.13% respectively; and if we exclude all cases of readmission and transfer, these rates drop to 0.12% and 1.17% (Osservatorio sulla dispersione scolastica del Comune di Napoli). It should also be noted that the average rates for the whole of Italy are 0.08% and 0.33% respectively. Table 13 shows the full extent of the problem:

Table 13. – Number of reported instances of school absenteeism by young people

	Number	Naples average	% deviation from average
Absentees	164	120.1	36.6

Source: Comune di Napoli, *Piano sociale di zona 2003, le aree di priorità: contrasto alla povertà*, 2003.

The problem of absenteeism and school drop-out is usually associated with illegal work and micro-crime. This is why a further indicator of youth problems is the rate of under-age involvement in offences against property and persons. This rate is particularly high in UTB 51, with 515 young offenders, that is almost 61% higher than average. On the other hand, it should be noted that the drug addiction problem is less severe than in other deprived areas, with a small number of drug users being registered, especially among minors, as shown in Table 14.

Table 14. – Rate of drug users per age-group

Age-group	Rate	Average rate for Naples
14-24 years	1.6	5.6
25-39 years	10	12.8

Note: User rate = users per age group/UTB population of same age-group

Source: Comune di Napoli, *Piano sociale di zona 2003, le aree di priorità: contrasto alla povertà*, 2003.

However, UTB 51 comprises a large number of inhabitants suffering from mental disorders. It is important to see that very many of these mental disorders are due to the extremely precarious socioeconomic situation faced by many families and the extent and diversity of the problems affecting these marginalised families. Three quarters of all mental disorders recorded here are linked to phobic, affective, delirious or schizophrenic syndromes rooted in the past experiences and lives of the inhabitants of these depressed areas, which are exposed to the high pressure of day-to-day survival.

Lastly, the main problem behind the extremely precarious socioeconomic situation of many families is unemployment, which hits record levels in the most deprived areas of Naples, in both national and European terms. In the words of a UIL (Unione Italiana Lavoratori) trade union leader in Naples: "Unemployment rates here are sky high, with a 19-20% average for Naples and the Neapolitan region, that is more than 10% above the national average. However, this level is much higher still in specific areas of Naples, where it nears 50%."

Economic and social destitution and the structural problem of child labour are linked to a basic fact which is essential to any understand-

ing of social dynamics in Naples, namely the existence of mass structural unemployment and an immense informal sphere which is essential to the families' survival. To an enormous number of families in the Spanish quarter – as in other districts right across Naples – access to employment is the main problem and is also the main social demand. Being excluded from the formal labour market, the most disadvantaged social groups have major difficulties in planning for the future and live one day at a time for lack of economic security. This insecurity is primarily due to an overall transformation in the productive structure which discourages job creation (and cuts back on manual and crafts work, which used to be an important sector for these neighbourhoods), but is also caused by the lack of skills and mobility on the part of the populations of the poorer areas, making them less employable. More often than not, such people are excluded from formal work and decent employment. They are condemned to work in the informal sector or else pushed into the criminal underworld, which mainly involves selling contraband cigarettes, a common source of household income.

This basic characteristic of the labour market poses a huge problem in terms of social action for the more destitute groups. For instance, youth workers in these areas are faced with the dilemma of either leaving the youngsters to fend for themselves in the streets or supporting their efforts to enter the world of work, which usually means becoming involved in the informal sector. As one youth worker pointed out: "Between the unlawfulness of undeclared work and ending up in a criminal career there is an enormous difference which must be taken into account, even if at the same time we must use all locally available resources (including training and employment centres) to allow the youngsters to obtain decent employment or else stay on at school."

One woman living in the Spanish quarter blamed the state for failing to understand the socioeconomic realities of such neighbourhoods, particularly the issue of child labour. She told us: "In my day we went to work at a very early age and the state did not interfere, but nowadays children are forced to go to school even if they don't want to, with the result that they hang about in the streets, whereas it would be better if they could work and earn an honest wage, which would stop them falling into bad company."

3.2. Violence and youth in the Spanish quarter

One of the peculiar features of Naples is the omnipresence of organised crime (Camorra) and the all-pervading associated culture. Camorrist gang warfare in the 1980s led to an impressive number of murders and imprisonments in the Spanish quarter, which had many of the hallmarks of a war zone, with unavoidable psychological effects on the local populations. It is not uncommon for families in this neighbourhood to have one of their members in prison, or to have lost someone in a shoot-out between rival Camorrist gangs. On 18 February 1998, for instance, a 14-year-old school dropout who was working illegally as a supermarket "car-park attendant" was shot dead by two men on a moped in a murder aimed at taking revenge on his brother, who had been a killer for a Camorrist family but had decided to co-operate with the police.

The Spanish quarter presents a number of "war zone" symptoms linked to the warfare between the various Camorrist families. Even though the situation is less murderous than in the 1980s, when shoot-outs were commonplace, the Spanish quarter is still painfully security orientated, with Camorrist families fortifying their houses and staking out their territories, and with people (including children) who are directly or indirectly associated with their families living in varying degrees of fear and preferring to remain in their own territories where they feel protected. As one youth worker points out: "Virtually every street has its own clan and this is a feature of the fragmented, divided type of organised crime in Naples. Young people live in the midst of this Camorrist culture, which is very much present throughout the area and many of them are closely or distantly related to families involved in criminal activities. This means that even if they are not directly involved in Camorrist activities, they experience it first-hand on a day-to-day basis."

So this is an urban area where violence reigns supreme, hand in hand with the Camorra, especially Camorrist culture, which impregnates everyone's behaviour. The local streets are the preserve of these teenagers, who are already "hard men" hanging around in gangs in the neighbourhood, speeding through the alleyways on mopeds bought with the proceeds of dodgy transactions, playing football, yelling in the streets, boxing the ears of passers-by, etc. For example, even small children frequently shout "you're gonna die" at school, in the streets and in the football stadiums, and they do not mean it figuratively, because people close to them (family, friends, neighbours, etc.) are regularly shot dead in

the streets near their homes. It is a real challenge to be a peace-loving individual in such an environment.

Nevertheless, this story of violence and insecurity in the Spanish quarter must be qualified to the extent that these problems are no worse than in some other deprived areas of Naples. A number of local people deplore the fact that the Spanish quarter has a bad reputation outside the area and that as soon as there is any incident in the neighbourhood the information is passed on by the media, even though the same type of thing goes on elsewhere. Furthermore, even though gangs of youngsters also engage in widespread vandalism in the area, the neighbourhood has various modes of internal organisation that guarantee relative security for local inhabitants. Broadly speaking, apart from Camorrist killings, local inhabitants can rest reasonably easy and there are no physical attacks or car thefts in the neighbourhood. There is a kind of local "surveillance system" implemented not so much by the public institutions as by the local Camorra boss, who ensures that some kind of "law and order" prevails on his patch. To quote one youth worker: "In the Spanish quarter there are areas where there is no aggression at all, especially not against the neighbours. When attacks do occur they involve stray tourists or they happen on the shopping avenues along the boundaries of the Spanish quarter, never inside the neighbourhood."

However, the violence in the area is not necessarily criminal. It is above all an everyday violence in terms of body language, words, modes of expression, interpersonal relations, and in particular, gender relations. It also embraces widespread domestic violence and problems of sexual abuse. The loudness and violent gestures of these young people primarily reflects great fear and a feeling of abandonment. In the Spanish quarter people are born, grow up and live in fear of tomorrow because of the ambient insecurity, both physical and socioeconomic and this profoundly affects their mode of existence. So the violence lies first and foremost in their mode of speech and bodily expression. It is reflected not only in the fact of speaking very loudly but also in the choice of words, their sentences are littered with swear words and expletives. These youngsters use fervid words and expressions in an attempt to prompt agitation and provoke reactions. Above all, this type of aggressive communication withholds interlocutor status from others. The dominant use of speech as an attack is reflected in the fact that they expect a similar reaction, that is an aggressive one. These youngsters' preferred mode of defence is to identify with the attacker and consider the other as a hotchpotch of bad, vio-

lent things. One of the features of these marginalised youngsters' speech is the attempt to be as racist, discriminatory and intolerant as possible. They have a highly developed vocabulary in terms of words aimed at stigmatising, excluding and hurting others.

These problem youngsters are school dropouts who hang about in the streets all day; they are the "hard nuts" whom the schools and social services have failed to crack and who have already had problems with the police. They are "losers", depressive and aggressive youngsters who, even though they are not yet 16 years old, have already had too troubled a life for their age. They come from families which have given up all hope, scarred by unemployment, destitution, psychological problems and social degradation, families where no one gets up in the morning because there is nothing to do and who see no point in going to school. These families have been pushed into a ghetto which is not only physical but also cultural and linguistic, as they only speak dialect.

Parental figures are a very complicated issue for these youngsters. There is a fundamental difference between, on the one hand, the biological mother and, on the other, the person who actually takes on the parental responsibility. Many of the young people have several "mamas". There is the biological mother, and in most cases, also the older sister, who takes practical responsibility for raising the children and who is also referred to as "mamma" or some derivative of this term. This plural "motherhood" can cause confusion and anxiety in the child. The confusion is exacerbated by early motherhood and the prevalence of "broken" families, which creates a general confusion of roles whereby sisters are not sisters but "child-mamas" who are already functioning as mothers for their younger brothers and sisters, and 14 or 15-year-old mothers who are mothers biologically but still children psychologically.

This is why the social workers whom we interviewed stressed that the problem of these difficult teenagers was not dropping out of school as such, as this was merely a symptom, but the family and the lack of parental authority, which results in children being left to their own devices without any positive adult reference figures to use for shaping their own identities. One social worker remarked that: "The reason why these young people do whatever they want, skip school and sometimes engage in deviant behaviour is to be found in the family history. In 95% of cases the individual histories of problem teenagers are rooted in one, two or three generations of family history."

Teenagers in these deprived urban areas have little in common with other teenagers in terms of their evolution: their membership of families facing a wide range of serious problems creates imbalance, stress and violence, while their relations with other groups of young people are virtually non-existent because they have not been socialised and integrated into the school's social fabric owing to their chronic absenteeism. Moreover, they have to tackle chores and responsibilities which are normally reserved for adults. In psychological terms, rather than just being teenagers, these youngsters would appear to be a complex combination of expectations, fears, childish needs and pseudo-adult behaviour.

One feature common to all these teenagers is an obsession with protection. Their forms of representation of reality are highly "fictionalised". They tend to develop scenarios and symbolic modes of speech to help them manage the difficult situations they have to face. Their need for physical protection is bound up with their difficulty in constructing a reassuring representation of their environment, reflected in their aggressive verbal and body language. This obsession with, and excessive need for, protection is one of the characteristic manifestations of an under-privileged childhood and it begins very early on.

In a violent universe in which conflicts are settled with blows and screams rather than words, youngsters start at a very tender age seeking the protection of someone bigger and stronger than themselves. This is a manifestation of a self-defence mechanism on the part of a child attempting to secure protection in a situation which he or she perceives as being completely hostile. This conduct transforms the child, with the gradual insinuation that teachers, relations with others and speech are all pointless and that the only useful thing is intervention by a bigger person to terrify the others and thus protect him or her. So we see that what might at first sight be taken for precocious Camorrist behaviour is in fact merely the child's response to his or her security obsession. Accordingly, it is not a purely negative mode of behaviour but also a vital form of conduct. As Cesare Moreno (1997) points out, the children from these areas are not precocious Camorrist, but rather the Camorrist are in fact children, because many modes of criminal behaviour are but infantile responses to problems which could actually be dealt with differently.

Many local teenagers assimilate life in the Spanish quarter to living in extreme conditions. This is the reason for the emergence of modes of behaviour which are somewhat analogous to those in other extreme

environments such as gulags and concentration camps, albeit, obviously, on a different scale. The youngsters' main idea is that it is pointless to plan their lives any more than one day ahead. This solution of living one day at a time is one of the major factors driving these youngsters towards educational underachievement and social disaffection. This approach was not the result of a mental process on the youngsters' part but rather, as Varlam Shalamov put it, a kind of animal instinct peculiar to prisoners, a muscle instinct²². Some of the mothers interviewed deplored the violence committed by gangs of youths, complaining that they were afraid of it, but at the same time they implicitly recognised the structural nature of the violence, one of them for instance stating the following: "There are some special cases, delinquent cases, but you can't put them all in the same bag, and at the end of the day, the main problem for young people is poverty and unemployment."

These children and teenagers at risk live one day at a time because to them every day is different from the previous one. They do not always sleep in the same house and do not always see the same parental figure, who is sometimes the mother, sometimes the grandmother and at other times the older sister. There is no continuity either from the psychological or the physical point of view, because the young persons will sleep one night at home, the next at their uncles' and aunts', and after that somewhere else again. Every day they must start from scratch and face different situations, lacking any stable socio-spatial environment in which to shape their identities. The youngsters' lives have no reference points, particularly the parental reference, or security frameworks. This prevents them from developing any kind of anticipatory approach, instead forcing them to concentrate exclusively on the present. They never plan anything because they know only too well that nothing ever turns out as planned. They cannot make future projections because that would fill them with anxiety and a raging despair at being trapped in a life on the fringes from which they have very little chance of escaping. The future corresponds to a project, but to these problem youngsters, imagining the future is something extremely difficult, frightening and infuriating. And these emotions may find expression in a wide variety of ways, as social workers in the neighbourhood explained: "Sometimes they vandalise the school, and steal and smash up school equipment, because school to them represents the institutions who do nothing for them, the outcasts of society

22. Varlam Shalamov, *Kolyma tales*, Penguin Twentieth Century Classics, 1994.

(...) at other times they vandalise the shops in the shopping avenues because they are showcases for the abundance of the consumer society just a few dozen yards away from their deprived neighbourhood. Or else they channel their fury into football matches, insulting and attacking supporters of teams from the North, which they see as the country's political and economic centre and therefore the people responsible for the social injustice they suffer."

Driving others away seems to be these youngsters' primary aim in life, which is a major obstacle to social action on their behalf. The other is a foreigner, a threat, someone who prompts fear, hence the need to drive him or her away: "Who are you? You are nobody! What are you doing here annoying people? You're a real bastard!." This rejection of the other is aimed at showing that they are unassailable and that people should leave them alone. They will do anything to avert the risk of discovering their own vulnerability and so must distance themselves from the other as someone liable to force them to see themselves differently. Their violent attitude in fact conceals a desperate need to protect themselves. "Shut your gob" is probably the sentence, or rather injunction, most frequently used by these youngsters in response to any attempt by teachers to communicate with them. Because of the myriad serious problems they have had to face since early childhood, these young people protect themselves by closing all means of access to their bodies and minds. The first problem encountered by people involved in assisting them is this wall which blocks out any relationship with an adult. However, these teenagers try to protect themselves not only with their words but also with their looks and gestures. This is why they tear up any pictures they may have drawn and any words they may have written: they destroy what they have just created in order to avoid looks which, like words, may entail criticism.

In concluding this section on youth and violence, we should stress the specific problem of the symbolic, but also physical, violence endured by girls. The scope of self-actualisation for girls is severely restricted by the social position of women in the neighbourhood. The female role is confined to that of housewife and mother and to deviate from this model would be to risk severe stigmatisation. In this connection, teenage girls' lives change radically once they are engaged, because engagement considerably curtails their autonomy. In the Spanish quarter the male-female relationship is still strongly marked by the tradition of male domination, which is reflected in numerous cases of conjugal violence, which are only

the transposition to the couple of the everyday violence in their social environment.

At around the age of 14 or 15 girls get engaged to young men who, in 75% of cases, are actually their future husbands. There is a high rate of early motherhood at this age in the Spanish quarter, where the attitude to such pregnancies is very permissive. In these cases, the young women leave school and stay at home to raise their children. In the words of a local social worker: "One of the problems confronting women is a cultural one to the effect that women are expected to stay at home and have children. This means that a young woman has no future other than being a housewife, doing housework and putting up with her husband's beatings without protest, because in cultural terms these blows are supposed to be a sign of affection."

In this socially, economically and culturally difficult context, young women are robbed of any chance of fulfilling their potential. In fact, none of them ever say they would like to be doctors or lawyers, but rather go in for training as hairdressers or beauticians, which are virtually the only jobs they think they can do, at best, and are activities they can carry out at home, without leaving the neighbourhood.

3.3. The institutions and autonomous regulation

The fact must be faced that the Spanish quarter is very largely "self-governing", resulting in widespread informal and criminal practices. An analysis of the Spanish quarter reveals the existence of two rival types of regulation which co-exist rather than clash: supervisory regulation as conducted by the institutions and autonomous regulation resulting from practices instigated by the local populace and the Camorristas. These two types of "governance" survive side by side by attempting to ignore each other. The spatio-temporal continuum in local community life is invariably under the influence of rituals and modes of behaviour that are typical of such autonomous regulation. This area, with its high level of socio-economic insecurity, has a variety of specific codes hermetically sealed off from the outside world. In such an environment the school may be seen as a pointless institution, or even as antagonistic to the local culture and to the mindsets of operators who induce young people to engage in informal or even unlawful paid activities at a very early age and to drop out of school.

Broadly speaking, Neapolitans maintain a complex, problematic relationship with the law. The legal and statutory frameworks are there, but little is done to enforce them – the most recent example being the controversy surrounding compulsory helmets for moped riders. No one is urged to comply with the laws, resulting in a chaotic way of life marked by a culture of transgression, but also of “you scratch my back and I’ll scratch yours”, whereby everyone exploits all his or her social resources in order to gain favours from the institutions or to evade punishment. Most people are convinced that social mobility can only be obtained through personal connections rather than via open public procedures. A youth worker made the following point: “What we refer to as the Camorrist culture is in fact a culture of favours. There is no real perception of rights and duties but instead the rather medieval idea of an authority which grants favours and privileges. I consider this favour and privilege mentality as a strong feature of Neapolitan society and it is particularly to the fore in such areas as the Spanish quarter.”

This mentality has a profound effect on relations between citizens and institutions. The relationship is particularly complex in that the coexistence of formal, informal and illegal activities largely stems from a form of social control that tacitly delimits a kind of legal “no go” area facilitating, against a background of mass unemployment, the reproduction of the most vulnerable populations via access to income opportunities (contraband, work in the informal sector, street hawking, etc.). These survival strategies on the part of the local population are a result of the fact that, as Givoanni Laino puts it, the welfare state has been deficient in southern Italian towns and cities and has taken little practical action over the past ten years to prevent the socioeconomic marginalisation of these vulnerable populations.

Seen from this angle, the discrepancies which the visitor notes between the legal framework – supervisory regulation – and these “little arrangements” in local life should not be interpreted solely as a means of cheating with the law, but also as a response to shortcomings in the institutions and their inability to tackle the structural problems in this neighbourhood. These arrangements give deprived populations some degree of access to essential goods, which means that they are no mere affective self-defence mechanisms, but actually correspond to a strategic rationale which gives rise to the creation of genuine collective organisations of the actual persons involved. In what are often extreme socioeconomic conditions, the worst-off inhabitants of such

neighbourhoods show impressive survival skills, for instance when a destitute mother becomes involved in selling contraband cigarettes from a makeshift stand on the pavement in order to feed her family.

Paradoxically, the interviews revealed that a great many inhabitants of the Spanish quarter feel that they have been abandoned by the institutions. However, as the local social workers point out, the origins of this feeling of abandonment are subjective rather than objective. For some years now the locality has had an extensive social network acting on behalf of these populations, but the problem is that the extent and nature of the difficulties facing these families preclude any satisfactory response to their social demands. Failing to see any institutional response to their demands for decent employment and housing, they conclude that the institutions are doing nothing for them and develop a negative view of these bodies. A social worker from the Spanish quarter admitted that: "In practice, we are not managing to solve their most urgent problems because the difficulties in the neighbourhood are, for instance, the lack of available housing and the fact that if young people plan to get married this is a problem because they refuse to move out of the neighbourhood, given that their means of subsistence – undeclared work, informal and sometimes criminal activities – are rooted in their belonging to their local area. This is their way of life, and we in the social services are in no position to provide them with work or housing, even though we do try to cope with their urgent social problems and improve their living conditions. So they feel that their problems are being disregarded by the institutions, which they see as belonging to an alternative culture with different objectives from their own."

While in the past the welfare state did indeed take insufficient action given the extent and complexity of the social problems facing these deprived areas, we must nevertheless acknowledge, as pointed out by several of our interviewees, that the ethics of private responsibility and initiative is also rather deficient in the Spanish quarter, where some social groups seem to think they can "live on government handouts", waiting passively for the institutions to do something for them.

Moreover, one major criticism levelled by several inhabitants of the Spanish quarter was the low level of police patrols and police action in the neighbourhood. One 50-years old woman born in the Spanish quarter claimed: "The institutions should be more conspicuous, the state should show a higher profile, because the neighbourhood is left to its

own devices. What are the police doing? Why are they not more present on the ground? It's always good to see a police patrol in the streets, but there are too few of them, and in any case, all the policemen do is to tell any youngsters hanging around at two in the morning to go home (...). And how are we supposed to trust the institutions? Sometimes you do better to contact the Camorra than the police if you want to set your mind at ease."

However, efforts have also been made in recent years to increase the local presence of the institutions, for example by investing in urban renewal (stimulated by the tourist potential of the geographical location of the Spanish quarter right in the historic centre of Naples), but also opening a new police station and *carabinieri* barracks in the heart of the Spanish quarter. These changes are of great symbolic value in terms of the presence of the state in a "difficult" neighbourhood affected by Camorrist and other criminal activities.

Marco Rossi-Doria stresses that this increased public action in the Spanish quarter (freshly resurfaced streets, public lighting, improved electric cabling, renovated buildings, support for crafts workers and small businesses, etc.) since the 1990s is helping gradually to change the image which the inhabitants have of their neighbourhood and of the institutions.

3.4. Social resources and citizens' initiatives

The Spanish quarter embraces a closely-woven relational fabric, a certain shared communal attitude and a bustling community life, but we must avoid idealising the situation because, as Giovanni Laino points out, Naples is no longer the pre-capitalist city it used to be. The existing solidarity networks are mainly based on family links in the broad sense, taking the enlarged view of the family. The available social resources are based on these close but extremely strong social bonds, which have resisted the modernisation process more successfully than elsewhere in Europe. So community life is lived primarily at family level, but also in terms of one's block, street or area, although it remains highly restricted and closed off from the outside world because that is where the potential threats lie. The result is intense suspicion of anyone extraneous to these primary networks. While street life is redolent of theatrical sentiment and enormous human warmth, there are limited relations of confidence and solidarity outside the enlarged family circle. In the words of

one youth worker interviewed: "There is superficial solidarity, but the really strong bonds are within the family, with relatives, links of belonging which are especially strong in the *bassi* because of the physical proximity, indeed lack of privacy."

These primary social bonds help underprivileged families to meet their vital needs and to struggle on despite their extremely precarious situation; they amount to a defence system not only in terms of reproductive rationale but also from the angle of individual physical safety. One youth worker notes that the territory is protected from outside threats by means of an informal observation system which monitors persons entering the neighbourhood, assessing whether they pose a threat to the community or not.

The Spanish quarter therefore possesses a wide variety of social resources, although not the type of "connectionist" resources needed for solid social construction within the community. This defensive type of "social capital" is closed in on itself and therefore cannot serve to instigate local civic initiatives. The local culture caters for little or no consultation, dialogue or participation. Giovanni Laino deplores this shortfall in political culture and citizen involvement. What mobilisation there is usually occurs in lobbying networks, as in the case of the committee set up to pressure the municipality on the RMI, rather than in proper political projects, as happens in the Charleroi neighbourhood committees or the Brazilian grassroots committees. In the 1970s, the Spanish quarter saw some degree of political mobilisation, with citizens organising to unilaterally reduce their electricity bills, but this kind of direct participation culture is generally underdeveloped. Nevertheless, shopkeepers have campaigned to improve the municipal refuse collecting arrangements and there is the Nido de Mamma Project run by mothers from the Spanish quarter to set up a day-care centre for small children, as we shall see below. A social worker from the Spanish quarter also mentioned the example of families self-organising in order to improve their children's educational situation by sending them to a family with a larger house to revise their lessons in the evening and collecting money to pay a student to help the children with their homework. However, one youth worker admitted that Naples was not in the vanguard of the active citizenship movement.

Nevertheless, this situation is offset by the involvement of such intermediate operators as voluntary associations and co-operatives which are

present on the ground, engaged in the participatory process launched by the municipality and region under the zone plans and the urban planning process. This means that the area does benefit from pressure exerted by voluntary sector democracy through a variety of small organisations that are attempting to represent the population's interests and to speak for them, even if local citizens are generally rather apathetic about the voluntary sector. The Spanish Quarter Association is the largest organisation promoting the local area and people. Over the years it has stepped up operations to become the foremost voluntary body providing assistance to the local population. For instance, it has opened a social office open 24 hours a day aimed at solving problems arising from the extremely difficult living conditions in the area. One of the officer-bearers of the Spanish Quarter Community Association acknowledged that the body acted as a local interlocutor for the municipality, aimed at promoting local-level action to improve people's living conditions. The association has acted as a vehicle for innovation and consciousness-raising using the integrated approach. It was through this association that the one and only Italian post of "street teacher" was created and, after three years of difficult negotiations with the municipality, the new Spanish quarter social centre was opened under the community's URBA initiative.

4. Policies and initiatives on the ground

4.1. Importance of the political and institutional context

Over the last ten years, the state social welfare system in Italy has undergone radical change, moving gradually from a redistributive, assistance-based welfare state model to a social welfare model based on sharing responsibilities and creating opportunities by means of job stimulation policies. This change has been accompanied by a new enlarged system of local governance involving both the public authorities and civil society. The local territory is of cardinal importance here because in this context it becomes the environment in which the stakeholders interact in order to encourage social integration of socioeconomically disadvantaged persons.

There was a broad consensus among the interviewees that the innovative dynamic established in recent years in the field of childhood and youth policy is the result of a political and institutional sea-change. This change stems, on the one hand, from the arrival in Naples in the second

half of the 1990s of a new left-wing administration led by Antonio Bassolino. This new administration set itself the task of changing the modes of social action, which had traditionally been passive, hamstrung by "cronyism". On the other hand, there is also a centre-left coalition in power in Italy which is much more alive to social issues and anxious to innovate in this field.

Law No. 285 of 1997 tabled by minister Turco provided the new social action framework for the most innovative new initiatives in Naples in the child welfare field. This law was the Italian response to the United Nations' recommendations, particularly the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which stresses the importance of access to education as a vital precondition for active citizenship and also the best means of reinforcing the individual's capacity for combating poverty and exclusion. This framework secures children's and young people's rights to growth, education, health and protection from violence, ill-treatment and sexual and economic exploitation.

Law No. 285 of 1997 was original in that it addressed children and teenagers as individuals and dealt with promoting all their rights, while laying the stress on situations of suffering and social exclusion. There had previously been instruments geared to tackling such problems, but they had never addressed actual individuals as holders of rights. Most of them had been small-scale Ministry of the Interior instruments aimed at preventing situations of actual or potential crime, but the national budget had never comprised any major financial instrument aimed at intervening on behalf of young people at risk of social exclusion. The other major innovation was a highly flexible system of resource transfers to the municipalities of the ten largest Italian cities, including Naples, that is to say to the public institutions closest to the citizens. This gave the municipality responsibility for funding projects on the basis of opinions from a top-level committee of experts with long experience in the field and sound knowledge of the difficulties of implementing this law. One final originality of this law was that it militated for establishing a network to promote an integrated social action policy legitimating and reinforcing the role of the voluntary sector. The activities conducted under Law No. 285/97 have facilitated an integration process both at inter-institutional level (involving schools, ASLs (local health agencies) and municipalities) and in terms of relations with the social sector and voluntary organisations. One social worker from the Spanish quarter stressed that the municipal administration had drawn on existing social action schemes

rather than having to start from scratch. It had endeavoured to enhance their experience, consolidate it and incorporate it into an integrated social action network.

The aim was to enhance partnership practices by promoting opportunities for encounters (or indeed confrontations), discussions and brainstorming sessions aimed at improving the local population's living conditions by constructing a wide-ranging social action network. Law No. 285/97 laid down various procedures under which management of certain public services could be assigned to the voluntary sector. The aim of reforming the social welfare system and promoting the social economy over the last few years derives from this determination to improve service quality and efficiency, to make service supply more flexible and to provide more dynamic services that correspond more closely to the needs of individuals in vulnerable situations.

The process initiated by Law No. 285/97 was consolidated by the Campania Region (which embraces Naples) under the new Outline Law No. 328 of 2000 establishing an integrated system of social services and modes of social action. This law has reinforced co-operation among the main local operators in implementing municipal policies for improving local living conditions. This makes the municipalities the main protagonists in programming and implementing these new social policies. They take on the vital role of co-ordinating and directing the enlarged system of local governance by ensuring institutional consultation with all those involved in the social and voluntary sectors in order to formulate the urban socio-health strategy. Law No. 328/2000 accordingly provides an opportunity for promoting and reinforcing the development of the procedures for integrating collective communication and social resources between the social services and the private social sector. This law stipulates that the integrated system must act in accordance with the objectives set out in Law No. 285/97 (Rights and opportunities for children and teenagers).

Article 19 (3) of Law No. 328/2000 identifies the stakeholders who may take part in the planning agreement for the adoption of the zone plan: the municipalities affected, the USLs, socially useful non-profit-making organisations, co-operatives and other mutual organisations, social advancement associations and bodies, sponsorship agencies and bodies, voluntary organisations and agencies approved by the various religious denominations. This law is aimed at developing a rationale of collective

responsibility and establishing new systems of local governance facilitating optimum use of existing resources and potential synergies, while also providing an improved response to the needs of populations exposed to poverty and exclusion. The outline law assigns a central role to the municipalities, which must supervise social policy in the area as the bodies responsible for the administrative aspects of social action and must also contribute to regional planning.

In accordance with the principles set out in Law No. 328/2000, the Municipality of Naples has begun formulating zone plans (PZs) in order to improve the quality of urban life, encourage social cohesion and promote social integration processes. The main innovation has been to include consultation in the zone plan at both central and peripheral levels. The themes of citizen participation in planning and evaluation of public services have been at the heart of the approach proposed for the PZs, as we shall see in the next chapter.

4.2. Zone plans

Social action planning through zoning highlights the territory as a risk factor but also as a source of existing or potential resources for combating poverty and exclusion. Local community stakeholders are invited to use the PZs to design their action on the basis of the territory, promoting social cohesion and mobilising local resources in order to provide innovative, sustainable responses to the problems of the local population, particularly the young, and to remedy the shortcomings and dysfunctions in the local social action system. Social PZs must pursue two main aims:

- improving knowledge of local needs. In order to achieve this, analysis of administrative statistics must be accompanied by collection of qualitative information by mobilising local stakeholders operating within the territorial social action network who are alive to the needs and problems of the local community;
- reinforcing local partnerships. The success of the PZ depends on the ability of the different partners in the network together to build up co-operation mechanisms capable of improving the social action system and make optimum use of all available synergies.

The urban PZ breaks down according to the ten basic territorial units (UTBs) under the responsibility of ten territorial co-ordinating bodies made up of the district president, the social service co-ordinator, the

health district director, schools and bodies representing the social organisations and voluntary associations. The UTB PZs are aimed at:

- analysing the territory on the basis of specific guidelines;
- analysing the characteristics of users by sector and territory, from the social/health angle;
- targeting priority strategic social action objectives on the basis of the analyses conducted;
- defining modalities for organising services and available financial, material and human resources;
- defining modalities for guaranteeing the integration of services and service provision;
- defining modalities for result assessment and verification;
- defining modalities for co-ordinating with peripheral state administrative bodies.

In 2002, PZs in the Campania Region earmarked a total of some 231 million euros for social policy, 42% of which came from the municipalities' own resources, 16% from the ASLs and 30% from transfers from the National Social Policy Funds (Regione Campania, 2003, p. 8). The PZ comprises eight thematic fields: combating poverty, minors, the elderly, immigrants, people with disabilities, drug addiction, women and mental health.

The most significant innovations in the PZ lie at four different levels:

- the methodological and participative planning level: the process of formulating the PZ reinforced the practices of territorial consultation, with the introduction of such new integrated planning bodies as the Integrated Territorial Committee (incorporating the socio-health planning function); the introduction of territorial consultation of the voluntary sector, with the function of territorial consultation and representation on the Citizens' Committee to combat social exclusion; the process of drawing up a profile of the community (recognition of needs, actors and resources); and assigning responsibility for the functions of need analysis and quality assessment to the territorial level (district and UTB);
- at the content and executive planning level, extending the priority sectors to the fields of women and mental health; promoting a high-quality voluntary sector by establishing a contractual system with the Banca Etica and the social co-operation fund reserve; and providing active, mobile services in response to new poverty and

increased financial contributions, to services intended for children and young people;

- at the level of departmental and service restructuring, with the merger of certain strategic central offices, significant investment in terms of infrastructure, amenities and training in territorial social services, introducing a general training course for executives and workers in the social sector and reinforcing services in priority sectors; and lastly increasing human resources by re-skilling employees in line with local people's needs;
- at cognitive level: knowledge of the territory and its population – with its special features, problems and needs – is an essential precondition for planning, monitoring and assessing social action at territorial and central level. The community profile is established by comparing and combining quantitative indicators from existing databanks, that is to say information that is available at no extra cost. These indicators have been selected by an inter-institutional working group involving the ASL Socio-Health Department and the Social Department of the Municipality of Naples. The data are re-organised according to UTB in order to secure specific information on the various districts selected for special action and to compare the specificities of and changes in the various UTBs. Such information is available not only to the institutional players and voluntary organisations but also to the ordinary citizens, in order to stimulate debate and promote active citizenship. While the centre – the municipality – does provide the basic indicators for the community's profile, the process of getting to know the urban area in question is not a one-way street from the centre to the local area, because within the UTBs themselves the social operators will be comparing the data presented in this document with their specific field knowledge, qualitatively deepening a number of points and complementing it. Integrated territorial co-ordination plays an important role in this context. Centre-neighbourhood communication lies at the very heart of the PZ concerns because it facilitates a process of integrating knowledge of the area in question.

Before presenting details of the PZs for young people, we should note that the option of enlarged and shared responsibility necessitates redefining the roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders in the social action network within which the voluntary organisations and the local community are having an ever greater say. The fact is that voluntary sector management of social action and the social services is not without its

problems owing to the lack of a culture of participation, to political interference standing in the way of the technical level, to the identity crisis affecting the social workers who are having to confront these radical changes in social action, to the need to acquire new skills, to the lack of organisation and clarity in role distribution, to the inaction of various persons belonging to the bodies constituting the Planning Office, to the lack of articulation between the co-ordinator and the other component parts of the Planning Office, etc.

Youth PZs

The complexity of the social issues arising out of the whole sphere of childhood and youth require us to take account of new needs and problems (social integration, multi-ethnic issues, ill-treatment and abuse, etc.), which necessitate original analytical and operational frameworks for social action. The challenge is to involve the youngsters completely in the definition, implementation and assessment of policies to combat insecurity and exclusion by endeavouring to pay more attention to their demands and aspirations, their rights and their desire to communicate. This means prioritising preventive work involving the family, the public institutions and voluntary organisations with a view to preventing violence and ill-treatment by means of socio-educational work aimed at developing the identity, socialisation and citizenship of young people in these deprived areas. This work cannot replace police work aimed at enforcing the law and punishing abuses, but it can complement it and increase its potential impact by reinforcing the local population's public spirit.

In the youth field the PZs have taken over the objectives of Law No. 285/97 by attempting to improve the planning and management of actions on behalf of children and teenagers. The two main lines of regional planning have been support for and enhancement of family responsibility and reinforcement of children's and young people's rights. The guidelines for the new planning system, based on past experience, are as follows:

- adopting an area-based approach to implementation and management of activities based on a process of networking and integrating the various services and operators. The aim is to enhance the overall community as a resource for combating exclusion. This necessitates not only bringing citizens into contact with the existing

formal assistance network so that they can activate the services, but also supporting informal solidarity networks (family, friends or community) which spontaneously emerge in individual communities;

- developing support for the family unit of origin and reinforcing services responsible for placing minors in non-administrative family-type structures;
- providing assistance to families by means of: a) information and guidance for families, aimed at facilitating their access to services; b) assistance for minors at risk and their families of origin by mobilising the home assistance network, embracing family mediation and aid in managing family conflicts and preventing risks of psychosocial crises; c) tutoring and assisting children and teenagers at risk from multi-problem families;
- developing and reinforcing services and initiatives for and with teenagers in order to increase their self-reliance, responsibility and participation in civic life through activities involving them in proactive socialisation, communication and expression, on the one hand, and vocational training courses and programmes preparing them for the world of work on the other.

In order to attain these objectives, the Municipality of Naples has supported a whole series of activities based on networking public and voluntary bodies in the following four fields:

- tutoring, social advancement and prevention of social handicaps. The idea is to provide youngsters at risk with new opportunities by means of prevention, education and training. Some examples of the schemes being implemented are the open-air recreational project Il parco di Gigi e Paolo, which endeavours to promote a culture of respect for the social and natural environment, the SollecitAzioni Project aimed at publicising the culture of respect for the law and citizenship, and the Laboratori di Educativa Territoriale Project, which involves qualified social workers in the field in running cultural and social street activities with the young people at risk, thus encouraging communication between the youngsters and adults and youngsters and the institutions;
- assistance for the family unit and support for young people at risk. The aim here is to enhance the family unit and support its educational functions by means of a wide-ranging action and synergising system, including integrating young people into a variety of activities. The latter comprise the Baby Care Project, which pro-

vides home support for families and looking after children; Chance, which is aimed at “a second chance at school” for youngsters who have dropped out of school (this project will be described in detail in the following chapter); the Sportelli Lavoro Project running two employment centres (in the Spanish quarter and the Sanità district), aimed at ensuring the social integration of young people aged from 15 to 30 by means of information, guidance and training activities, work experience and support for self-employment; and finally the Fratello Maggiore venture offering a training programme (on the themes of self-knowledge, mediation and conflict management) for the eldest brothers in families at risk. The older brother then goes on to act as a “tutor” for his younger brothers;

- taking youngsters in difficulty out of their family units and supporting them: taking young people who have dropped out of school or in respect of whom a youth court has issued a placement order into accommodation centres, socio-educational institutes or reception communities;
- promoting the role of young people and their culture. The aim is to enhance the youngsters’ identities and roles, increase their opportunities for taking part in civic life and provide them with forums for self-expression. This is the role played, for instance, by the youth centres and the Rete Cittadina Informagiovani project, which provides youngsters with information, guidance and advice on a variety of themes ranging from school and culture to holidays and sport.

The strategic guidelines for the PZ in the youth field link up with the main lines in other priority fields to constitute the mainstays of the integrated social action strategy established by the Municipality of Naples. From this perspective it might be useful to skim through the other local initiatives with a youth impact:

- PZ in the field of combating poverty: gradually extending and standardising types of income support for the poorest families; preventing early school-leaving; guaranteeing health assistance; promoting social integration projects and support measures for beneficiaries of such projects; introducing a “social emergency network” to meet the priority needs of such marginalised population groups by providing for early social “first aid” action to provide an effective response to emergency situations and also by networking available

resources in order to improve co-ordination and increase the capacity for action (this network includes an integrated inter-institutional co-ordinating team, a call centre for social emergency situations, a mobile social “first aid” action unit, reception centres and specific inclusion programmes);

- mental health PZ: adopting an aid programme for families affected by mental illness; opening an advice centre for teenagers; promoting psychological consultation and support activities; and promoting psychological assistance at home;
- urban security: urban security is a priority for the region, as well as being a fundamental human right. This transversal theme calls on quite a few of the dimensions of social action. The general approach involves:

- improving local living conditions by enhancing public areas (by means of activity organisation and action on infrastructures in order to reduce incivility and general crime), reinforcing the feeling of belonging to the community and citizen participation in the life of their city, early social action initiatives calling upon the territorial network and social and occupational reintegration initiatives;

- promoting assistance for victims and risk reduction by preventing crime and anti-social behaviour in groups at risk, victim assistance teams and initiatives to protect women from domestic violence;

- introducing action to promote a solidarity-based community by means of the “civic grandparents” project, territorial groups for security and solidarity, street social workers and mobile first-aid units.

4.3. The Chance Project, “A second chance at school”

4.3.1. Context

The murder of a 14-year-old school dropout in a Camorrist revenge killing prompted a widespread realisation in Naples that something had to be done for these young people in the deprived areas who were the primary victims of local violence. This new public awareness, which was extensively covered by the local and national press, was in line with the

work being carried out on the ground by the one and only “street teacher” in Naples. At the request of the Naples Department of Education, this teacher had already been co-operating, in the framework of the Spanish Quarter Association, with other colleagues and the Spanish quarter network in endeavouring to make more widespread use of his practical experience.

The Chance Project stemmed more specifically from an initiative launched by two teachers working in Naples, Marco-Rossi Doria and Angela Villani, who had had years of experience with teenagers at risk. Marco Rossi-Doria, in particular, had in previous years secured Ministry of Education authorisation to work as a “street teacher” in the Spanish quarter. These two were joined by another teacher, Cesare Moreno, armed with similar experience.

The idea was to initiate a project aimed at rehabilitating young school dropouts from extremely deprived backgrounds in three different neighbourhoods with high concentrations of socioeconomic problems and with drop-out rates four times higher than the average rate for the city, which is already much higher than the national average. The plan was to combine all the resources from the different institutions involved in social action and to bring in all the various actors from the areas chosen in order to provide young school dropouts from extremely deprived neighbourhoods with a second chance.

The time was ripe for launching a project of this kind because, as we have seen above, Naples had a left-wing mayor at the time who had committed himself to combating the socioeconomic degradation affecting the City, and above all, the Italian Government was in the process of adopting Law No. 285/1997, which was to earmark a large budget for projects on behalf of children and young people. In the words of Marco Rossi-Doria: “We contacted minister Livia Turco’s team two or three months before the adoption of the law and proposed the Chance Project as a means of operationalising the new text. They found that the project fitted in perfectly with this piece of legislation, which dealt with the rights of all children and teenagers and therefore endeavoured to promote this type of scheme by decentralising resources to municipal level. So Law No. 285/97 was extremely important to us and we are proud to have been among the first to receive funding under this legislation. We were also among the few projects to be monitored at national level thanks to the agency for children’s and young people’s rights at the

Innocenti Institute in Florence. Lastly, this agency assessed the project after three years of operations, whereupon the Ministry of Social Affairs incorporated it into its action plan against poverty and notified it to the European Commission as an example of good national practice.”

In the programme agreement concluded with the Department of Education and the Municipality of Naples on the basis of Law No. 285/97, three pilot areas were selected for launching the Chance Project. These areas are all badly hit by exclusion and violence, with high drop-out rates, although they are not the only ones in Naples. However, they were chosen because there were already a number of educational experiments under way at local level, and an operational local network provided a reserve of professional and human energies that could be exploited for the purposes of the project.

4.3.2. Organisation

The Chance Project has two main organisational features. Firstly, it is designed on the basis of three territorial modules operating in three extremely deprived areas – one in the historic centre and two in the outskirts of Naples – with exceptionally high school absenteeism and drop-out rates and where many families are in very difficult socioeconomic situations. These areas are the Spanish quarter, the San Giovanni-Barra area and the Soccavo neighbourhood. Furthermore, this is a project based on partnership among the teachers concerned, the Naples Department of Education, the municipality, the Psychology Faculty of the Federico II University, youth workers, local craft workers and the families in question. All these parties co-operate in coping with the huge and complex problems affecting the teenagers involved in the Chance Project, working alongside the youngsters for the success of the educational project.

The requisite resources for the project are supplied by:

- the Naples Department of Education, which seconds seven teachers to each module and pays their salaries;
- the host schools, which provide the premises and administrative and maintenance services;
- the municipality, which provides the amenities available locally and the services of the social welfare departments and funds the activities which are not institutionally financed or provided for by the Department of Education;

- the university, which supplies the psychologists required for the assistance, research and development activities.

The Chance modules comprise:

- six teachers and one co-ordinator (who is also a teacher), the latter selecting the teachers on his or her team on the basis of their skills, experience and, above all, motivation. The thirty teenagers in each module are split up into two groups of fifteen, to each of which three teachers are assigned;
- between six and eight social workers from the private social sector, responsible for tutoring, support, activity leadership and back-up for the youngsters and their families;
- between two and four local craft workers responsible for organising apprenticeship activities;
- one psychologist specialising in leading discussion groups.

The budget for the project is fairly low because the teachers continue to receive their normal salary (without any bonus for the extra personal investment required for work with problem youngsters) and the premises are made available in existing school structures. The municipality funds the other activities (laboratory work, excursions, organised visits, etc.) and the youth workers from the money made available under Law No. 285/97. It also pays an hourly fee to the craft workers responsible for teaching the youngsters. Lastly, the Federico II University of Naples has seconded psychologists and experts to the project responsible for monitoring it and organising meetings with the teachers and other parties involved in the project.

Each of these three modules takes in thirty youngsters, up to a maximum of ninety students per year, who are looked after by a team of teachers with a view to ensuring that they obtain the *licenza media* (junior school-leaving certificate) and comply with the compulsory schooling requirement up to the age of 16. One specificity of the educational teams is that they are made up of teachers who have taught at a variety of levels, namely the primary, junior and secondary school levels. This combination of competences covers any gaps the young people may have in their basic general knowledge and it has also proved very important from the psychological angle. The Chance Project is based on a numerically more favourable proportion of teachers to students, namely one to five, in

addition to the special funds disbursed by the municipality to recruit special out-of-school teachers and experts for the laboratory work.

It should also be noted that the Chance Project is split into Chance 1 and Chance 2. Chance 1 embraces a two-year personalised training course leading to the *licenza media*, the first year concentrating on restoring the educational bond for these teenagers who are at odds with the conventional school system, and the second continuing with the socialisation work and also preparing the students for the *licenza media* examination. Once Chance 1 is completed with the award of the *licenza media*, Chance 2 begins. This strand of the project caters for the legal obligation on training up to the age of 18 and involves orienting the young people towards vocational training courses or apprenticeships and providing them with individual support to help them acquire occupational skills likely to improve their lives and livelihoods. It is particularly important to help them adapt to regular working hours, observe the rules and occupational discipline, carry out repetitive tasks, speak Italian rather than the dialect and, lastly, to control their speech and behaviour.

4.3.3. Objectives

The Chance Project goes far beyond the explicit aim of helping these youngsters to obtain a certificate by means of an innovative course or merely keeping them in education until the legal school-leaving age. The primary objective of Chance is to influence the root causes of these teenagers' alienation from school and to reinforce the school's capacity for keeping them by ensuring that the educational action itself is anchored in the local environment. Chance is first and foremost an endeavour to network a wide variety of forces in order to rescue young people in relational, educational and social difficulties, from the angle of human development within the target territory. This approach stresses activation and mobilisation of all the teenager's inner and outer resources and his or her realisation of the existence of these resources. This empowerment strategy is aimed at reinforcing the youngsters' capacities to have a different future from the one they are "fated" to have because of the intergenerational reproduction of factors for social exclusion in families living in extremely difficult socioeconomic conditions. The idea of "a second chance at school" is a strong, explicit educational demand. The Chance Project pursues the aim of resocialising these young people by promoting sociality, social cohesion and respect for others, where these are, precisely, absent or deficient.

In this context the Chance Project strives first of all to restore an educational bond to the reference adult world by means of an appropriate methodology based on receptiveness, conviviality, existential exploration and pooling of efforts, geared to reaffiliating the youngsters to society and also to enabling them to obtain the *licenza media* before the legal school-leaving age of 16. So it is a case of constructing an educational itinerary taking account of these marginalised, extremely vulnerable young people's specific problems and requirements. The initial constraint was to strike a balance between the regulations and procedures and the realities on the ground. The fact of large numbers of young people failing at school and liable to drop out of the traditional education system prompted the project to propose a non-exclusive environment combining strict rules (restricting the use of physical or verbal violence, regulations on smoking, class attendance requirements, etc.) with some degree of flexibility, with the provision of a leisure area and a system for joint conflict settlement in order to reduce violence.

4.3.4. Characteristics of the young people involved in the project

Each teenager must be considered individually, because together they represent thirty widely differing cases without any real common denominator apart from the denial and rejection element. Most of the young people arriving at the Chance school have been left to their own devices in a violent universe devoid of hope. They have been abandoned by their parents, who no longer wake them in the morning to go to school or make them come home in the evening when they are hanging around in the streets until after midnight. However, they have also been abandoned to some extent by their schools and teachers, who are unable to control their aggression, by their football coaches because they refuse to play by the rules and by local craft workers who had given them a chance in apprenticeships but had lost patience with them and thrown them out after a few days.

They are hard, violent youngsters and many of them have been expelled from school for violent, aggressive behaviour, breaking the school rules. They carry around with them a burden of accumulated pain and misfortune, resentments and unresolved troubles. They are extremely unstable and capable of the most astonishing acts at the most unexpected times, because their inability to manage their own emotions means that they burst out when they can no longer contain them, because their lives have

never allowed them to develop the appropriate structures. They belong to multi-problem families with members frequently facing problems of alcoholism, drug abuse, mental disorders, imprisonment and close or looser modes of involvement in Camorrist activities. If chronic absenteeism is a widespread problem in the Spanish quarter, affecting almost half of all schoolchildren, it peaks every Monday, which is visiting day at the Poggioreale prison.

These youngsters are not only school dropouts but also social outcasts, the section of the population worst hit by social fragmentation and segregation mechanisms. They combine all the most serious forms of social ostracism, family break-ups (divorces, adultery, a jailed father, etc.), deficits in parental responsibility for their upbringing, sexual abuse and occasional involvement in crime, either as perpetrator or victim, directly or indirectly (for example, the death of a relative in a Camorrist revenge killing).

At the crucial transitional age of 13-15 they are confronted with a twofold problem: first of all, the normal crisis of adolescence and, secondly, the affective and social crisis arising from the conditions under which the family unit has to function, which causes deep psychological, social and economic distress. While adolescence is always a period of uncertainty and worry creating not only a need for reassurance but also various emotional impulses and anxious thoughts, in their case these phenomena double in intensity. This makes them uncontrollable, constantly angry and ready to explode, talking loudly and unable to cope with their violent emotions. They have a very poor image of themselves and of their environment and are extremely suspicious about the adult world. In other words, they are the tip of the iceberg of a much bigger problem of growing socioeconomic insecurity. This problem takes on enormous proportions in these deprived neighbourhoods, even though not all local teenagers are in such dire straits as those involved in the Chance Project.

These young people have been reported by the social services and their parents have been ordered by the youth court to comply with the obligation to attend school until the legal leaving age. The youngsters are subsequently directed to the Chance Project, because experience has shown that forcing these problem teenagers back to school seldom does any good, because it is regarded basically as a punitive measure which only serves to widen the gulf between the family and the school. At the

same time, such measures provide no solution to the problems which induced the young people to drop out of school in the first place. The starting point for Chance was therefore to meet the urgent need for a solution to the relatively high number of youngsters between the ages of 13 and 16 who had dropped out of school and whose needs were so complex and specific that conventional schools were unable to provide responses to their extreme individual cases. Right from the outset the focus was on extreme cases rather than teenagers with problems at school. So the youngsters all share the following features:

- traditional rehabilitation measures used by conventional schools have proved powerless to make them return to normal schooling, which means that they no longer attend school;
- their families have all been directly contacted by the municipality social services on the matter of their absenteeism, without any positive results;
- they are all known to the local voluntary associations, in whose activities they sometimes take part, although it is difficult to establish lasting contact with all the potential reference adults for the youngsters;
- they have expressed their determination not to go back to school even though it is compulsory;
- they come from families facing a wide variety of serious problems, which are unable to shoulder their child-rearing responsibilities;
- they are often involved in income-producing activities as casual workers in the informal sector;
- they spend a great deal of time in street gangs, which constitute their only reference point.

Consequently, most of the teenagers coming into Chance have already been specifically labelled. This label comes firstly from their names, many of which point to membership of one or other of the local Camorrist families, but also from their specific family history as recorded by the social services or the police and judicial bodies, or else their educational past, with repeated absenteeism, acts of aggression and expulsions. So when they come to their first Chance Project interview and are asked to introduce themselves, they are surprised and ask "What, you don't know me?" They lay full claim to this negative identity because they have internalised it and because it protects them from the terrible risk of having to answer certain questions that are potential sources of anxiety and destabilisation in their socio-spatial environment. For instance, one

psychologist associated with the Chance Project tells the story of one of the few teenagers whose father had an honest trade but who presented him to others as being in prison in order to conform to his peer group.

4.3.5. Methodology

The project methodology starts from the recognition that these teenagers have left the school system for structural reasons linked to their socio-cultural environment and their families' socioeconomic difficulties. This situation manifests itself in suspicion and deterioration of the teenager's relationship with the adult world in general and with schools in particular. The Chance Project has two highly original features: first of all it takes account of the living realities faced by the youngsters and, secondly, the socio-educational action is rooted in the target locality in order to overcome the structural obstacles to their rehabilitation.

In this context, Chance was designed with a view to developing a relationship and interaction between the miniature community formed by the project and the social environment in the youngsters' area of origin. The challenge was to gain the esteem and support of the local population for the educational project of providing the teenagers with a second chance. The Chance methodology attempts to gradually build up a positive relationship by using informal channels and other more formalised ones, enhancing both the young person's experience of life and the curricular subjects. Such an approach to collective learning requires the teachers to show extreme flexibility so that they can interact with the teenager's experience and pinpoint crossover points for getting the knowledge across.

The central question in the Chance methodology is "what is the relationship between these teenagers' lives and feelings and the learning process?" The starting point has to be the place where the teenager is located in emotional and mental terms, otherwise there is no possibility of communication flows between the student and teacher. Unless the educational approach involves the young person's living experience and provides a number of reference points with their own current realities in their living environment, the youngsters will reject all the teachers' efforts. Encounters must be secured between, on the one hand, the culture borne by the teacher, the universal culture which he or she is attempting to transmit and, on the other, the teenagers' culture and

experience. This makes it an empowerment model geared to enhancing all the resources not only of the students but also of the teachers, helping to develop each individual's potential.

The great strength of the project is that it enters into the youngsters' own specific logic, carrying out an ongoing process of cognition, interpretation and comprehension. The objective of Chance is to win their confidence, to show them that in fact people are reaching out to them, listening to them and looking after them with a view to changing their lives for the better. The school here plays a role not so much of cultural transmission as of cultural mediation, that is the use of culture to facilitate communication between people with different experience and feelings. This approach can help the teachers to capture the teenagers' attention and win the right to speak. This will stop the youngsters heckling them, shouting "who are you?" with the implied continuation "to try and teach me any lessons?" It entitles the teacher to speak. This human relationship with the teenager, taken as a unique individual, is at the heart of the Chance educational methodology. From the teaching angle this results in lessons, which, on a daily basis, take account of the student's mood and disposition rather than the constraints of the school book. Success in establishing constructive dialogue with the young persons depends on this ability to incorporate into the educational approach their anxieties in having to face extreme living conditions not only in their neighbourhoods but also in their actual family units.

These teenagers require a kindly approach acknowledging their hidden potential and their fragmented skills, on the basis of which a start can be made on the reconstruction process. Chance provides an educational path facilitating the youngster's development, and in this context, the teacher's role is to extract from each activity those factors that will aid their personal development and socialisation. The times and places for learning are many and varied, transcending the class, laboratory or gym environment to embrace all the spaces of day-to-day life, including buses, streets, cafes, etc. The project therefore amounts to an atypical school in which self-expression through movement and language activities play a more important role than in traditional schools; in which sustained attention is paid to a welcoming, convivial attitude; and in which the students are always in active mode, with everything being negotiated, many activities taking place outside the classroom and many opportunities for expressing community life.

The Chance Project provides an educational environment that is different from and more flexible than the conventional school, which has proved rather unsuitable for managing this type of youngster. In the Chance school teachers and pupils are on first-name terms (they use the "tu" form in Italian) and are allowed to have physical contact in order to express emotions, greeting each other with kisses and hugs, back-slapping, etc. Moreover, students are allowed to smoke cigarettes and use certain swear words as long as they respect the pre-established rules limiting their use and intensity. The teachers have learnt to tolerate certain limits of verbal violence in the recurrent insults and physical manifestations of hot tempers which in an ordinary school would result in the immediate application of disciplinary measures.

So Chance is first and foremost a non-traditional teaching model requiring a capacity for teamwork on the part of the teachers and also for some degree of "soul searching", questioning their teaching methods and adapting to and tailoring lesson content quickly to the young people's specific situation, which can change from one day to the next depending on the problems facing them or on events in the collective life of their neighbourhood. The project attempts to offer an integrated educational and teaching approach based on communication, dialogue, guidance and socialisation geared to work, respect for others, the ability to manage emotions and to feel good in oneself and with others. One of the major difficulties the teachers encounter in their work is in persuading these teenagers to attend school and remain seated in order to take part in the activities proposed. They must accordingly tackle the relationship with the youngsters on an individual basis using more affective, open and personal relations than is possible in traditional schools. This change of tack is aimed at establishing a special kind of relationship between teacher and student while retaining clear role distinctions.

Unprejudiced, non-judgmental acceptance is therefore one of the basic components of the interpersonal educational relationship that the Chance Project strives to establish. This means that the selection and reception phase for new candidates is absolutely decisive. The Chance course therefore begins with the involvement of the social services, sending Chance the background files on 13 to 15 year olds who have partly or totally dropped out of the school system. The Chance Project uses these files from the social services as the basis for selecting teenagers eligible for "a second chance at school". The introductory phase is one of the project's most innovatory contributions as compared with the con-

ventional school. It is based on a chain linking up the school, police, social workers and the families, which provides the young school drop-outs with a network prompting them to freely subscribe to an original type of educational contract with a school specially tailored to this task.

First of all, the social services invite candidates to an interview by means of a letter forwarded to the teenager's home address, clearly marked with the title of the Chance Project and the names of the institutional operators supporting it (Municipality of Naples, Ministry of Education, Directorate General of Campania and University Federico II). Subsequently, the teenager will attend two very different types of interview. The first involves four of the players involved, namely the social workers, the family, teachers and tutors, and lastly, the teenagers themselves. This interview is aimed at introducing the teenagers and their families to the network that will be actively endeavouring to offer them a second chance. The second interview involves only two operators, namely the teenager and the teachers. At this meeting the youngster is informed that he or she is a full partner in the procedure and will be invited personally to sign the contract committing him or her to the Chance Project after the selection procedure.

The aim of these meetings is to exchange information describing the reality of the Chance Project and the terms of the mutually binding contract. In addition to the age criterion, two further conditions must be respected: first of all, two successive failures to respond to invitations to interviews or an explicit refusal to sign the contract signify that the teenager does not wish to become involved in the Chance process and, secondly, regard must be had to the subjective limits of the group or its members, who may not feel capable of providing for specified youngsters.

On completion of the selection and reception procedure, the results are transmitted to the social services and the training contract is drawn up, emphasising the mutual responsibilities of the contracting parties. This is the starting point for the partnership between the social workers, the families and the Chance workers in helping the teenagers along their long, difficult road to emancipation. The teenager has met his or her future teachers, visited the premises, received the information on the programme on offer, read the conditions which he or she is invited to respect and can now freely decide whether or not to sign the contract.

This gesture will give him or her a second chance, to be accepted or rejected.

One of the reasons for the success of Chance in securing the youngsters' loyalty is precisely that it forges these essential links between student and teacher (and also the youth workers). This explains the low numerical teacher-student ratio, namely five to one, which enables the youngsters to maintain a relationship with a more accessible, open and stable reference adult. The teacher's responsibility in his or her relationship with the students is not only to maintain order in the classroom but also to hold their attention, to create direct human contact and to realise the needs and demands of these young people in order to recognise and enhance each individual's potential and help the students to keep "their bottoms on their chairs" despite all the serious problems of concentration. One peculiarity of the Chance school is the small symbolic allowance the students receive, depending not only on class attendance but on their behaviour and the extent of their involvement in the activities proposed. Each lesson ends with a short time set aside for individual student self-assessment vis-à-vis the activities over the preceding hour. The degree of student participation in the lesson is also assessed under three different categories: "present" when they have been active subjects, "absent" if they failed to attend the class or if they left in the middle of the lesson and "present-absent" where they have attended physically in a passive manner, without taking part in, or contributing to the work of the class. The students themselves write in the results of this daily evaluation on a table, to be taken into account for calculating their small allowance. This payment is calculated at a basic rate of 5 euros per week, with bonuses and deductions depending on the teenager's commitment to the training course. Every three months a small ceremony is held in the presence of the families, teachers and social workers in order to present the money earned by the teenager and sign the receipt. This allowance is primarily symbolic, according to Marco Rossi-Doria, because these youngsters would earn more by working in the informal sector, but it does help to empower them and gives rise to a "social highlight" in the life of the Chance Project when the parents arrive at the school to receive this money as a kind of "return on investment" in their child's progress.

The methodology used in the Chance Project involves one teacher standing in front of the class guiding the lesson, while all the others are simultaneously present, strategically distributed around the classroom in among the students, providing support when they encounter difficulties,

motivating them and boosting their confidence when they show signs of giving up, and also managing, as a team, any situations of conflict emerging in the classroom. This proximity between students and teachers helps install a climate of trust which reassures the youngsters and reduces the emotional tension. It helps students to relax, not to be afraid of making mistakes and to use their mistakes and the underlying causes as instruments for understanding. Furthermore, the educational process proposed by Chance is based not on a sequential, linear programming approach but on a concept involving gradual disclosure, enabling the youngsters to discover the progress they have made in practical terms, the lessons they have learnt, the distance covered. In a socio-cultural environment marked by day-to-day survival strategies and major problems with future projections, the Chance teaching methodology is based on feedback rather than anticipation. This takes three forms:

- feedback from the teenagers on their past and present living experience;
- feedback on the progress and achievements of the young people to their parents;
- feedback on the teachers' activities.

These educational and teaching options do cause problems for the teachers, who are permanently faced with violent negative attitudes, attempts to hurt them with verbal insults and abrupt challenges to the fragile relationship growing up between teachers and students. The teacher must accept that such reactions are in fact merely messages to be interpreted, like a foreign language that must be deciphered, but it is exhausting work. Teachers are subjected to constant stress resulting from their difficult, complex role vis-à-vis unpredictable teenagers alternating between moments of affection and destructive crises. These intensive efforts to help a teenager facing serious problems very often prove insufficient, because the walls shutting them out are also internal walls shutting them in from relations with teachers and school. In such cases the staff have to summon huge reserves of patience and perseverance in order gradually to break through the fear and suspicion making up these walls. The Chance Project shows the difficulty of working with such youngsters, given that the working hours tend to extend *ad infinitum* (because of its enormous emotional content, the work tends to invade the teacher's private sphere), boundaries between different subjects tend to disappear and the teacher's epistemological and methodological certainties go by the boards, together with his or her identity. This is com-

pounded by the fact that there are objective limits to their capacity for changing the lives of teenagers who face a wide variety of extremely difficult problems. All these factors are highly destabilising and explain the group conflicts and the turnover phenomenon within the project.

All these elements mean that it is vital for those involved in the Chance Project to have time off to unwind, discuss and exchange ideas. The main hallmark of the Chance Project is teamwork, enabling the team to put in place a whole series of mechanisms to manage and deal with the conflicts, frustrations, moments of depression and soul searching that can affect its members. "Soul handling" is an essential element of this project, implemented through training and research activities facilitating the expression of feelings and emotions.

4.3.6. *The other players in the project*

The bidelle (lady caretakers)

The Chance Project empowers all its operators, that is to say not only the teachers and youth workers but also the *bidelle*, who have a very special role to play in the Spanish quarter project. The *bidelle* were initially seconded by the host school and were not systematically present because of the rota system they followed, which meant that they could not be involved in the project. This situation led to a number of problems of clashes with the teenagers, regular noisy disputes, exchanges of expletives, or else various forms of connivance and rule-dodging.

After three years, this situation was settled by the recruitment of a *bidella* specially assigned to the Chance Project. The Chance team also reassessed the importance of specifically planning and defining the potential role of the *bidella* as a full and active member of the project team. In 2002, moreover, the project secured a second specific concierge for the project.

The *bidelle* have a very important role to play because they are locals from the Spanish quarter, are well acquainted with the realities facing these youngsters and can communicate easily with them. The project is aimed at developing their natural capacity for containing these teenagers by reinforcing the natural tutoring abilities. The *bidelle* have the specificity of having chosen to work for Chance, they have excellent "mothering" skills, possess inside knowledge of the local area, have time for

the youngsters, enormous communicative and relational capacities, are highly observant, are able to speak the local dialect, can cook, and are ready to learn and become involved in a formal training process. For instance, one of them told us the following anecdote: "Last year there was a youngster who came to school with a knife, so I had a word with him and warned him that if he kept on like that I was liable to lose my job and that if I did I would 'smash his face in'. He didn't expect me to react like that and the next day he came up to me and handed over his knife, apologising and calling me 'mum'. The only way to rescue these kids is to give them attention and trust."

So the *bidelle* are far from playing a subordinate role, because they co-operate with the educational team in:

- the physical preparation of the classroom in accordance with the teachers' needs;
- spatio-temporal management outside the classroom: they take care of the teenagers coming out of classrooms, the reception area (noting youngsters going in and out of the school, talking and listening to them and reading newspapers with them), the smoking room (requiring the youngsters to comply with project regulation smoking times) and the canteen area, and lastly they look after visiting parents;
- work on language use (controlling the voice, vulgarity, encouragement to use Italian);
- body talk (posture, sartorial matters, hygiene, violence);
- respect for the premises (preventing graffiti, litter, etc.).

They reinforce their capacities by observing how the teachers and youth workers behave with the teenagers and their parents, drawing up summary teenager observation reports which they submit to the teachers, getting involved in the reading and writing room and the computer laboratory, and taking part in some of the team meetings and planning sessions.

It should be pointed out that this important mediation and trust-building role has also been taken on in another Chance Project module (in Barra/San Giovanni) by a number of mothers who spontaneously came forward to help the teachers in the school. They are responsible for a special part of the building called the "leisure area", where the teenagers come to unwind and where the mothers are able to build up a relation-

ship based on trust with the teenagers and help them at times of crisis and anxiety.

Social workers/social tutors

The Chance Project stressed the tutorial role right from the outset. Each teacher acts as a tutor for five teenagers in order to cover all the students in the module (five students to each of the six teachers, giving a total of thirty students in receipt of tutoring). Furthermore, each teacher can call on the assistance of a community activity organiser from a local association, acting as a youth worker. So each youngster has a tutorial duo made up of one teacher and one youth worker. The teacher/tutor is responsible not only for teaching one or more subjects but also for monitoring the teenagers' progress, building up a positive relationship with them and utilising all available resources in the Chance Project to help them in their educational venture. The social tutor/youth worker is present during meal times, leisure time and school trips and visits, and also develops relations with the families and the local environment.

The tutorial relationship is vital for the young people's progress. The tutors are responsible for picking the youngsters up at home to go to school, as they would otherwise not bother getting up because of general family disaffection. Very often the tutors have to wake the youngsters and have a coffee with the parents while they get ready. This provides an opportunity for persuading the families to help ensure the success of their youngsters' education by stressing the importance of the second chance that they are being given. In many cases, this ensures family involvement in the project and many of the youngsters begin after a while to get up and get ready for school on their own. In the Chance Project, the tutor becomes the tutor for the whole family, not just the young person. So he or she has an enormous responsibility, in view of the extent of the problems and expectations and their multidimensionality. Educational support is a central issue for these youngsters.

The tutor is also the person with whom the youngsters can speak in confidence during the short walk from home to school. He or she plays a central role of social mediation and trust-building for the youngster thanks to these recurrent exchanges. He or she offers both support and protection in the various phases of the youngster's progress. Young people who remain at school are very resourceful and they have taken the most difficult step, although they still need support. One local social

worker stressed that “one extremely useful part of the project was the tutoring aspect, because it enabled us to provide effective support for the teenagers, but also brought us closer to their families. Normally we [social workers] would not have had the time or resources to maintain such contact” .

The psychology department of Federico II University

From the outset, because of the importance given to human resources, the Chance Project laid emphasis on the need for a psychological component and it was for this reason that the clinical psychology and applied psychoanalysis unit of Federico II University of Naples was asked to join the project as a co-founding institution. The aim of this partnership was to deal with the “handling” of human resources and the provision of appropriate spaces for training and supporting the project participants.

Tutoring indeed requires a huge input in terms of time, but also a considerable emotional input owing to the very great energy directed towards these problem children. Tutors are in a difficult psychological situation owing to the lack of clarity as to the limits that should be set on their work in order to avoid feelings of guilt or failure – phenomena which are likely to trigger internal crises or a sense of fatigue within the team. It was important, therefore, to establish boundaries, even flexible ones, but also to put in place psychological monitoring for the members of Chance. The psychology department’s role is to carry out this monitoring and to organise regular group discussions in which the members will be able to articulate their doubts and problems, ask questions and exchange experiences.

The primary function of the project’s psychological component was to keep open the channels of communication between the various players and institutions involved in the project, build mutual capacity for understanding and managing the dynamics set in motion through the work with adolescents. Both the intensity of the emotions and the anxiety experienced by the teachers and the provocation, confusion and adolescent excitement with which they are faced every day tends to affect group work unless they are dealt with appropriately. Working/discussion seminars provide a forum for these more primitive levels of communicating emotions. Institutional innovations have been introduced for this purpose. They include:

- working/discussion seminars: three hours a week in the school, led by a psychotherapist;
- a support group: this group, composed of representatives of all the institutions involved in the project, provides a means of containing the tensions which may emerge between them during the project (for example, the problem of the incompatibility of administrative and financial procedures with the need for urgent responses to a youngster's specific needs, or the expulsive tendency of the host schools in relation to the module hosted owing to the problems caused by these difficult youngsters). Thanks to this support group, conflicts are taken on board and considered as an important aspect of the project. In this respect, it is an innovatory way of managing institutional relations that are often highly personalised and bureaucratised;
- scientific seminars: held four times a year for three days, these seminars are crucial times for the project because they represent a space for sharing and conceptualising ongoing experiences. Such a space is essential because it offers teachers theoretical reference points and establishes a stable relationship with the group which should make them better able to withstand the violent attacks from these youngsters on their competence and abilities;
- an enlarged discussion group: each scientific seminar ends with a session devoted to an enlarged discussion group led by a psychoanalyst who is an expert in groups. Everyone involved in the project (teachers, youth workers, social workers, *bidelle*, etc.) thus have the opportunity to meet and engage in conversation in a space from which institutions and youngsters are excluded;
- a psychology team supervision group: this group, which was not included in the original plans for the project, was set up in response to the requirement expressed by the psychologists to have a meeting space of their own.

The families

Communication with the families is a key component of the Chance Project. While each youngster is considered as an individual, the family is never seen as being external to the project. The relationship with the family is a specific area of work on which attention is focused with the aim of improving the environment in which youngsters must find the motivation and the courage to learn and attend the Chance school on a regular basis. One teacher told us: "One of the reasons for the good results of the Chance Project is the co-operation with the families and the

harnessing of potential synergies. We are trying to restore the role of the parents in families where the notion of parental responsibility no longer exists.”

Chance aims to enhance as much as possible the role played by the family in each youngster's progress within the project. The obstacles are quite considerable because the families are socially dislocated and no longer perform their parental functions. Of course, these families in great difficulty usually do not give their support to the project and above all express rejection and distancing with regard to a destabilising process of re-appraisal. Working on the families also means working on the youngsters themselves because their highly negative self-image derives from their family environment. The project attaches great importance to enhancing the status of the parents, and in particular the mother, primarily as individuals who are often helpless in the face of responsibilities they are unable to assume, having often been confronted with parental responsibilities from the age of 16. One of the ways of enlisting their support is to have them co-sign their child's educational contract. In so doing, they commit themselves to a number of small things designed to restore their parental responsibility. A *bidella* who lives locally explains how: “ Families are given a sense of responsibility by the tutors who establish special relations with them. After a few months they get up earlier to wake up their child and make coffee for the tutor while waiting for their child to get ready. And when their child doesn't want to go to school, they support the tutor so that their child ends up going to school.”

Through their involvement in the Chance Project, which takes the form of a dozen meetings a year, parents have the opportunity to discover unknown facets of their children (photo exhibitions, drawings, short films about the different activities, attendance reward ceremony) and to enjoy festive and relaxing moments together with their children. On these occasions, they have the opportunity to see their child change for the better, enjoying the recognition of the Chance team, something they had never seen before. One of the project's objectives is precisely to give these families a better image of their children through a range of activities designed to enhance their resources and creativity. To this end, the project leaders pay great attention to carefully recording the youngsters' progress and recognising their efforts. Social occasions, attended by youngsters, parents, teachers and social workers, and conviviality, form an integral part of the community-type educational process, in which the families are actively involved.

Interviews with the mothers of children participating in the Chance Project highlight the strong support for the project from the families. They feel that something is being done to help them in a tangible way. They are pleased that their child had been able to participate in the project and has been given a second chance. They also say that they have seen their child change for the better. Marco Rossi-Doria tells us that “the parents gradually realise that their children are making progress, that institutions are rallying round to help them, that another future is possible for them and that they have opportunities for training”. A relationship of trust thus grows up between the families and the teachers because the families see that the end result of the process is not just a paper qualification, but a possibility of giving their child a better future.

However, working with the youngsters and their families does not mean colluding with them and it is essential to ensure compliance with the terms of the contract. For example, where parents suddenly decided not to allow their child to sit the examination for obscure reasons related to envy and frustration, the project co-ordinators, after first trying to talk to them, had no hesitation in threatening to send in the *carabinieri* to take the youngster to sit the exam on the day.

4.3.7. Results

The public first came into contact with the Chance Project as a result of an administrative and legal initiative related to the obligation for children to attend school until the age of 16. The aim was to solve the urgent problem of their children dropping out of school and not getting their *licenza media*. It was not, therefore, a proactive approach on the part of the families. In addition, the aims of the project were not clearly understood. The idea was going around that the Chance school was not only a place for those who, at worst, were expelled from traditional schools, but also a special school where the certificate was given to you when you left, where you studied less, where there was no homework and no books to take to school and where you were even paid to attend classes.

Gradually, however, both the families and the youngsters themselves realised that Chance was not that at all. There was the contract to begin with, the canteen, school and out-of-school activities, teachers who had more time to give and who came to the home, regular meetings, and much more attention paid to the pupil and his or her family, and if a youngster had problems that went beyond the confines of the school,

these were taken care of. On the one hand, the families were able to see in practice the results of the path followed by their children in the Chance Project and realised that there was a genuine institutional interest in securing a better future for their children. Although the process of developing a sense of responsibility among the families is problematical and demands great attention, there are signs of a growing interest on their part in the aims of a project which they trust. On the other hand, the youngsters participating in the project have also realised that there are adults who are prepared to “waste time on them”, positive reference figures on whom they can rely, who are ready to listen to them and to try and help them to solve their problems. As a result of this dual realisation, favourable reports on the project have spread by word of mouth in the Spanish quarter. Families publicise it. At the beginning, nobody in the area knew about the project, but now there are families who come looking for the teachers to find out whether they can enrol their child, or pupils who ask if their cousin can join.

Generally speaking, a review of the first few years of the Chance Project shows an acceptable school attendance rate and a significant reduction in both the frequency and the seriousness of acts of violence. As soon as a youngster stops coming to school, the alert is given and a teacher goes to see him or her at home and engages in mediation with the family in order to renew and strengthen the initial contract. This close attention paid to attendance means that Chance has a much higher average annual attendance rate than the local schools. The gradual increase in attendance on the part of these youngsters, who, before, were frequently absent from traditional school, reflects growing support for the project on the part of these youngsters and their families. What is more, the very great majority of them obtain their *licenza media* upon leaving the project, a significant number of them continue afterwards in some form of vocational-type training and some have found jobs after their period of training. What is not at all extraordinary for the majority of Italians, namely attending school, obtaining the *licenza media* or finding a job as a hairdresser, is, on each occasion, something quite extraordinary in the world of these youngsters who are often the first in their family to obtain a certificate and for whom becoming a hairdresser or beautician often seems like an impossible dream.

Another of the project's successes is that it changes the youngsters' self-image and the image that their parents have of them. During their time at the Chance school, the youngsters undergo a veritable transformation.

They gradually realise that they are capable of doing things they thought they were incapable of doing and they learn to behave more appropriately in company. They learn, for example, to lower their voice, to listen to others and to greet others as a sign of recognition. During a talk with a group of pupils from the Chance school, one of them, referring to what they learn at this school, admitted in hushed tones that “we learn to respect rules and people”. The Chance Project attaches great importance to these objectives, which are essential for creating stronger social bonds. What is more difficult is to help them to make progress in controlling their emotions, because these youngsters are used to expressing their feelings through violence. This is normal behaviour in their social environment. A teacher pointed out that a boy will never say to a girl “I love you”, “you are charming” or “I’m going to write you a poem” because, in their culture, men are violent and women often accept this violence as a sign of affection. The project focuses great attention on this process of controlling emotions and expressing feelings.

In this connection, art teachers express the difficulty they have in breaking down these youngsters’ inner walls so that they allow themselves to have feelings and especially to express them. For example, these youngsters experience great difficulty when faced with a blank page on which they are expected to draw, or quite simply in closing their eyes and remaining silent because both are likely to open the floodgates to their emotions and create cracks in the compartmentalised world which protects them. Such activities are essential, but they also trigger depression and violent responses on the part of these young people, who thus find themselves destabilised and prey to anxiety.

Talking about the evaluation criteria for a project such as Chance, Marco Rossi-Doria stresses the following points: “There are some objective criteria which we give the Ministry of Education when it asks us what has been achieved with these thirty youngsters for whom they allocated increased resources. We have a large number who, on arrival, had completely dropped out of the school system but who got their *licenza media*. Some of them stayed on at school and others went on a training course, which some completed. These are tangible results. But there are also results which are more difficult to assess which are related to life skills such as behaving properly, controlling one’s voice, using Italian rather than dialect, being able to talk about oneself, allowing oneself to express feelings, refusing to commit wrongful acts, etc. All these things are difficult to assess because you would need to write each youngster’s

biography. We often have ambivalent results with some youngsters who we know are making progress in these areas, but we also receive information about others who continue to get into trouble with the police, or else they have kept quiet for some time and have then fallen in love with someone very destructive who gets them back into trouble, or they suddenly get involved in a street fight. We know we are limiting the damage, but we have no concrete evidence. What we can do is write these biographies and continue them so that we find out what has become of these youngsters. For this, we need to retain even loose links with them, even when they have left the project, by meeting them in the street or calling them occasionally on the phone. Another indicator is the parents' perception of their child after he or she has been through the Chance Project. Did that lead them to feel proud of their child or enhance their child's image in their eyes, or did it create conflicts because these youngsters later turned their backs on the kind of life their parents had lived? All these things are difficult to understand."

Lastly, the aim of rooting the project in the local area and developing synergies between its different resources also seems to have been successfully achieved. The project is rooted in the social fabric in two ways:

- firstly, via its participation in an inter-institutional social action network to respond more effectively to the complexity of the social problems which arise. But that is not always easy and the various parties involved in social action have stressed the constant effort that needs to be made to operate the network, increase co-ordination and co-operation and defuse open or latent conflicts. One example of this is the fact that the Chance premises were housed within a traditional school structure, which was bound to create conflict because parents were by no means pleased to see these youngsters come into contact with their children, with the risks of violence that this entailed. But through dialogue and mediation the situation has returned to normal and a more dispassionate climate has been created now that local families have realised that the Chance Project is doing useful work to rescue these difficult youngsters;
- secondly, through its active presence in the living environment of the youngsters participating in the Chance Project, as we have already seen. The choice of this area-based approach is crucial because it means recognition of the potential for development in the local area and acceptance of the specific identity, culture and rituals of the inhabitants of the Spanish quarter. It means giving up the idea of

integration as a more or less authoritarian process of change of identity in favour of the idea of social construction within a community in order to give it greater control over its own destiny.

This rooting of the project in the local area is bolstered by a whole range of activities, for example when the youngsters were asked to mount an exhibition on their neighbourhood which led them to take a fresh look at it, talk to fellow inhabitants and meet with district officials in their offices. At the end of this exercise they presented their work to local people. This work gave them the opportunity to reassess their living environment and forge closer links between school and the local area. This area-based process of socialisation is also reflected in the numerous community gatherings which are organised by the Chance school (to mark the beginning and end of the school year, carnival, etc.) or in which it participates in one way or another (pupils' first communion, birthdays, etc.). The tutoring of youngsters and their families also plays a very important part in this process of immersion in the life of the neighbourhood because of the mediating role to which this gives rise within the family or between the family and institutions to resolve existing conflicts and problems. The Chance teachers have noticed the gradual development of a community fabric in the course of the project: to begin with, only the parents attended festivities, but then brothers and sisters, cousins and second-year Chance pupils came too.

In the day-to-day work undertaken in difficult neighbourhoods, the Chance Project has shown the need to build at one and the same time the school as an institution and the social cohesion of the community whose support the school requires. But this long-term groundwork is not easy and is often frustrating because of the inability to remedy the structural causes of the economic and social hardship which forces these youngsters into the spiral of social exclusion and violence.

Despite these successes, the project co-ordinators draw attention to the fact that this type of pilot experiment is dependent upon many contextual factors and, in particular, the institutional and financial support of the local, regional and national authorities. The project is affected by the policy of reducing staffing levels in state education, the reduced funding available for social action and political changes. One example among others is the change in the procedure used by the Municipality of Naples for transferring money to voluntary associations. Up to 2002, the municipality transferred 75% of the money in advance, which enabled the Chance

Project, for example, to manage the funds more flexibly according to the youngsters' needs and any emergencies that might arise. The system changed in 2003 and the municipality now only pays 40% of the allocated amount, which drastically changes the way the project is run and affects the work done with the youngsters.

Lastly, one can identify four main conditions which will allow the reproduction of the Chance Project:

- the existence in the local area of a range of social players who can be mobilised within a broad network of social action. The project was built from the experience and legitimacy gained by these players in the area;
- the handling of human resources. A project of this kind calls for teachers who are motivated, experienced and strong enough to withstand the difficulties with which they will be faced every day in working with these youngsters. But even so, it is essential to preserve them in order to spare them undue stress or weariness. That is precisely the purpose of this human resources handling, to offer these teachers places and times for relaxation and recovery. This is also intended to preserve the cohesion of the group, which is essential;
- group work. A project like Chance was conceived as a group project. That is a prerequisite for its success. The group's cohesion is what gives the project strength. It also helps individuals to stand up to pressure because they know they have the support of the group. But that also means that there have to be places where the group members can address their differences, forcefully if need be, in order to make the group stronger. Group work means trying to find out what lies behind the aggressiveness of these youngsters. This process of constant research should make it possible to preserve the project's receptive dimension because if we do not understand the reasons for these actions, we will not succeed in breaking down the barrier of hostility erected by these youngsters. Group work thus makes it possible to create a shared perception of the individual who learns, is listened to and is present in the minds of everyone and the group. Receptiveness therefore goes hand in hand with feedback. To make pupils active and help them to harness their own resources, it is essential to be able to feed back to them what the teachers have learnt about them and through them. The teachers seek to feed back to the youngsters a better image of themselves, to make them

aware of what they can do and be. It is also important that self-image should be connected socially to the parental unit and the family because that is where the processes of identity development and social behaviour have their origins;

- the role of training. The Chance Project is an original example of assisted self-learning via the work of the group and with the help of the psychology department of Federico II University of Naples. The training is permanent and takes the form of discussion and analysis of the group's experiences. The group learns from its mistakes by reflecting upon their causes and trying not to reproduce them. What gives the Chance Project its strength is the constant effort made by the teachers to improve themselves and their operating methods, which gives them increased confidence in their ability to overcome difficulties and face up to mistakes. The endurance and strength of the Chance teachers in their work with these difficult youngsters is the strength of people who, when faced with difficulties, instead of losing their temper, yelling, getting depressed, running away or resorting to violence, pause to think as a group, try to find the best solution and grow.

4.4. Further initiatives in the Spanish quarter

4.4.1. *Minimum income schemes*

Law No. 285/97 provided the opportunity for a first attempt to introduce a minimum income in Naples, in the form of a subsistence minimum paid to families in need having at least one child under the age of 12. The social workers point out that this was the first anti-exclusion programme not to be based exclusively on economic considerations, because provision was made in this context for a contract with the family and close co-operation between the family and the social services in deciding what to do with the money. In particular, the families undertook to send the children to school, to exercise their parental responsibility and to become more actively involved in the community in order to address local needs and problems.

It was in this context that the Nido di Mamma Project came into being. In 2000, forty women from the Spanish quarter who were in receipt of this subsistence minimum paid by the Municipality of Naples asked to participate in an activity of benefit to their neighbourhood. In response to this request, the municipal authorities, in co-operation with the relational science department of Federico II University and local associations,

suggested a child welfare service, in view of the major shortcomings in this area in the Spanish quarter. The project, launched in January 2000, consisted in the setting up of a local care service for babies aged 18-36 months, based on a close-knit network of parents, and in the provision of training opportunities for local inhabitants involved in the project. In addition to this, parents and children were offered psychological support under the Nido di Mamma scheme. At present, in the Spanish quarter, there are four centres mobilising a total of thirty six helpers (thirty four mothers and two fathers), four counsellors and eight cultural mediators and youth workers. The Nidi di Mamma has a maximum capacity of twenty children. This project has proved such a success that it is going to be extended to other parts of Naples.

As regards a minimum income, however, it should be remembered that until the “minimum integration income” (RMI) experiment was launched at national level (in thirty-nine municipalities), the existing system in Italy failed to meet the requirements of the 1992 European recommendation on the need to guarantee all citizens a minimum level of income and benefits to enable them to lead a life consistent with human dignity. The RMI experiment was launched in 1998 after Law No. 237/98 had been passed. In Naples, the experiment covered 4 069 nuclear families, or a total of around 18 000 people. Most of the families eligible for the RMI lived in the areas where the Chance project was established and hence especially the Spanish quarter. For social workers this is a very important development because it eases the burden on the neediest families and gives them a stable income which enables them to make plans for the future. Otherwise, these families are caught up in day-to-day survival strategies. The original feature of the RMI scheme is the integration aspect in keeping with the new style social policies designed to encourage active involvement and a sense of responsibility. The beneficiaries are entitled to a minimum income, but they must become involved in the activities which are offered to them in order to increase their chances of re-entering the labour market and becoming reintegrated into society.

4.4.2. Vocational training programmes

As a means of combating the consequences of dropping out of school, which is a major contributory factor in poverty and social exclusion, Article 68 of Law No. 144/99 made it compulsory for young school-leavers to attend training activities up to the age of 18 in order to offer all young people a real opportunity to undergo training leading to a certificate or vocational qualification.

Law No. 144/99 eases the previously highly problematical transition between leaving the school system and commencing a training course. The purpose of compulsory training is to prevent young people from leaving school with a high risk of persistent exclusion from the official labour market, owing to their lack of qualifications. The training is provided in three different settings:

1. at school, through the establishment of integrated training programmes in co-operation with the vocational training centres or the introduction of more flexible arrangements for young people wishing to return to school;
2. the regional vocational training centres, which offer programmes lasting a minimum of two years and taking into account not only young people's wishes but also the demands of the labour market;
3. apprenticeship, offering direct experience of the local productive sector.

This training requirement has led, on the one hand, to the creation of a network mobilising the different public and private players in the youth training field and, on the other, to the introduction into the system of a new professional figure in the person of the tutor, who is responsible for supporting young people throughout their training and mobilising the different players – families and social services – in order to ensure successful integration.

The tutor works with young people on an individualised basis, inviting them to the employment centre for an interview at which they are provided with information and guidance, then, at a later stage, supporting them during their training and monitoring their progress. The tutor's role is based on a preliminary analysis of the characteristics of the local area, of the players able to contribute to the success of this compulsory training – school, vocational training institutes, the two sides of industry, the voluntary sector, etc. – and of the operating methods of the players participating in management of the training system, in order to make it more effective. This area-based approach should enable the tutor to identify the key players and resources at local level. The tutor therefore stands out as a central player in constant dialogue with young people, families, school teachers, trainers and tutors, schools themselves, the social services, businesses and lastly, voluntary organisations.

Generally, the results are good for Naples as a whole, as the drop-out rate over the two years of training is 20%. Out of nearly 2 000 youngsters, only 400 discontinued their training, which is not very many considering that most of the young people attending these courses had dropped out of school and wanted nothing more to do with it. The Chance Project's contribution to this process should be noted: youth workers continue to closely monitor the youngsters leaving the Chance Project and entering these training programmes in order to facilitate their integration and help them throughout their training. But a trade unionist responsible for this training scheme points to a problem of mismatch between the kinds of training these young people want, especially those from the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods, and the needs of the labour market. For example, most girls want to be trained as hairdressers or beauticians, for the reasons we have already seen, but there is no place for them on the labour market.

To conclude on this point, mention can be made of the OFF/ON Rete Project, under which activities are carried out – in the city and province of Naples – to disseminate information and facilitate access to the guidance and training services offered by the employment centres in order to promote implementation of the compulsory training scheme. From a methodological point of view, this project asserts the centrality of the individual and the need to highlight the opportunities offered by the scheme through activities to give young people fresh motivation and a fresh sense of direction and through their participation in the design of personalised training programmes. The project's area-based approach provides for activation of a broad network comprising not only the social services present in the area but also the voluntary sector and families and, at the centre of the network, the employment centres.

Lastly, the project is based on the setting up of a network of social workers performing youth information and awareness-raising functions focused on those undergoing compulsory training.

The activities of the project are divided into three phases:

- identification of the youngsters required to undergo training and gathering of information on their successive paths and directions and experiences of tutoring. This preliminary work gives rise to a great deal of correspondence;

- interviews with the youngsters concerned, at which they are provided with information on local training opportunities. These individualised interviews help to clarify needs and motives and thus to outline a training project for each youngster;
- motivation and guidance. This phase is highly important because the guidance interview makes it possible to analyse each youngster's expectations, motives and career interests, to identify skills (knowledge, ability, psycho-social resources) and to design a personalised training programme in line with the training opportunities available locally.

4.4.3. *Urban planning*

The Urban Project, jointly funded by the European Social Fund and the Municipality of Naples, was launched in 1996 to support the municipal policy of restoring the quality of urban life. The idea of the then Mayor of Naples, Antonio Bassolini, in launching the Urban Project for the Spanish quarter, was to combine urban management actions with actions to combat social hardship and to promote small and medium-sized businesses. The project served as a catalyst in stimulating public and private sector interest in the development of this area. A total of 22 million euros has been made available for the two Urban Projects in Naples (Spanish quarter and Sanita). The funds have been used to restore squares and turn them into pedestrian precincts, to repair streets, restore buildings and provide street lighting for around a hundred streets. In the Spanish quarter the funds have made it possible to convert a large building, used for two centuries as a military hospital, into a public garden. The Urban funds have also served to finance employment and training centres as a means of combating exclusion from the labour market.

The establishment of an urban multipurpose centre in the Spanish quarter was an important stage in bringing institutions and the local population closer together. Located in a building restored specially for this purpose, the centre will house social, cultural and prevention-orientated activities, a youth club and employment services. The project also includes the opening of a police station in the building to bring police and local youth closer together and maintain law and order more effectively. The centre meets the need for innovative forms of public service based on a user-centred approach. It is a kind of citizen's advice bureau where users find people who are ready to listen to them and try to respond to their social requests.

Lastly, the Sirena Project for the renovation of buildings is a perfect example of citizen participation. This programme offers the opportunity for private operators to carry out renovation work on buildings in the historic centre with 30% coverage of the costs by Sirena. In 2003 the region paid 10 million euros to Sirena for the second phase of its programme. In addition to this, the municipality plans to allocate 3 million euros per year to the Spanish quarter over the next three years for improvements to the infrastructure.

More recently, the municipality and the region made 15 million euros available in 2003 to restore the Spanish quarter and eliminate the *bassi* as a residential area by bringing back commercial and craft activities. Of these 15 million euros, 10 million are to be funded by the region and 5 million by the EU. It is a project in stages which will start with a few alleyway areas and should in due course cover the entire Spanish quarter. Work will focus on a part of the Spanish quarter comprising 568 *bassi*. The funds will be used to encourage people who live in rented *bassi* to move. Owners of *bassi* will be offered a choice between selling them to a company formed by the region and the municipality or converting them to an economic activity. A major information campaign has been launched locally to inform residents of the advantages on offer.

Antonio Bassolino, President of the Region, and Rosa Russo Iervolino, Mayor of Naples, have stressed that there will be no evictions and that "only those who want to will leave". Bassolino also hopes that those who leave the *bassi* will find somewhere to live in the neighbourhood. The political authorities are anxious to avoid merely shifting social problems from one area to another, to the detriment of the inhabitants of the historic quarters, whose reproductive practices are deeply rooted in a feeling of geographical belonging: "We don't want to recreate the situation in Venice or Florence which resulted in the historic centres losing their historic inhabitants" (*La Repubblica*, 10 April 2003).

This project has triggered scepticism and criticism. Firstly, a significant proportion of those living in the *bassi* are immigrants, for the most part illegal, who pay as much as €600 a month in rent for a one-room dwelling in which several of them sleep crammed together on the floor to reduce costs. The Spanish quarter offers these immigrants, firstly, a certain degree of security as illegal immigrants, since no one checks their papers in the quarter, secondly, a central location close to their income-generating activities and, thirdly, a favourable social environment due to

the phenomenon of community concentration which guarantees, on the one hand, networks of solidarity and, on the other, the presence in the quarter of unlicensed ethnic shops and restaurants and places from which cheap international phone calls can be made. Many of these immigrants would not need a monetary incentive to move, but they prefer to remain in *bassi* in the Spanish quarter which guarantees them a certain degree of security. In this context, it is unlikely that the proposals made to landlords by the region and the municipality will meet with any great interest because it is much more profitable to rent substandard housing to illegal immigrants at exorbitant prices.

Secondly, one of the heads of the Spanish quarter community association stresses the very problematical nature of this measure: people are offered a material incentive to move and be rehoused in the neighbourhood, but as no housing is available, this measure in fact boils down to giving money and moving people to an outlying district. Where the quarter's historic inhabitants are concerned, it is the local area that ensures the conditions are met for their reproduction in a very difficult and uncertain socioeconomic environment. Consequently, cutting oneself off from the area and its resources by moving would mean jeopardising this very delicate reproductive balance. It is for this reason that there is very strong social opposition to this project and many inhabitants of the *bassi* prefer to stay where they are rather than move into a more modern apartment in another, more recent disadvantaged area such as Barra or Pianura. Furthermore, even if this only applies to a minority of cases, it should be borne in mind that major work has been carried out in the *bassi* – particularly with the public funds made available after the earthquake in 1990 – and that a number of them offer a certain quality of housing.

What happened in Soccavo (where one of the Chance modules is located) is highly enlightening with regard to the risks involved in moving people. The Traiano estate, where so many problems of socio-economic hardship and crime are concentrated, was built after the war when the Municipality of Naples decided to bulldoze the slums situated around the station and in the historic centre and to move their lower-working class inhabitants mainly to this new outlying district, which was still predominantly rural. The effect of this was to shift the problems without improving the living conditions of people who, in the vast majority of cases, remained excluded from the official labour market. As the President of the Soccavo district told us, the estate has been socially devastated, especially as this shifting of population has tended to damage

the very strong social cohesion found previously in the old quarters of Naples, which were rich in history. The inhabitants of the Spanish quarter are aware of this danger and that is why they refuse to move and take a very dim view of this municipal initiative. One woman told us: "It's stupid because there's no sense in closing the *bassi* without controlling crime. And what's the point of having attractive buildings if it's still the same people with the same problems living inside them." In a documentary on young people in the deprived districts of Naples (*Intervista a mia madre* by A. Ferrante and G. Piperno), a youngster from the Spanish quarter can be heard regretting that the municipality repairs pavements in the area but does nothing to give its inhabitants a better future.

Also, the plan to rehabilitate the Spanish quarter by improving infrastructure is a factor which may lead to rent increases and a process of gentrification, that is social change resulting in the eviction of the poorest inhabitants and in the arrival of new social categories of a higher social standing. This can already be seen on the fringes of the Spanish quarter and in the renovated area around the avant-garde theatre, where a growing number of families (and single people) are coming to live, lured by attractive houses at relatively low prices, and are becoming, as we saw in chapter one, residents of the neighbourhood rather than inhabitants because they do not participate in local community life. This process has gathered momentum thanks to Bassolino, who has launched renovation work to provide the area with two new hotels and to promote cultural activity through the reopening of an avant-garde theatre attracting young people who gather in the evening in the pedestrian precincts. In addition to this we should mention the opening of an exit from the metro in Largo Montecalvario and the building of a new *carabinieri* barracks and a new police station.

5. Guidelines for the integration of young people in deprived neighbourhoods – The lessons of the Chance Project

5.1. Constraint and consent: towards joint regulation

The analysis of the Spanish quarter has shown the existence of two rival forms of regulation which coexist more than they than clash: control by institutions and self-regulation by a large part of the population. They survive together by endeavouring to ignore one another. Against this background, the Chance Project is seeking to establish joint regulation

with youngsters who, by dropping out of school, have shown their independence from this controlling form of regulation which was unsuited to the pattern of everyday life in their area. Experience shows the need to avoid confrontation between two kinds of violence and aim for joint regulation. Responding to youth violence with violence would mean accepting their rules of the game, opposing them on their own playing field and entering a world which is familiar to them, that of their everyday life. On the contrary, it is essential to turn this world upside down, a step which is far more destabilising for them. That requires the youngsters to accept an area where rules have to be complied with, but it also requires on the part of the social workers a reappraisal of their certainties, skills and working methods.

The aim is to establish a reciprocal relationship which is a relationship of exchange and hence negotiation. This relationship is of course unevenly balanced and it is the teachers who determine the framework, but the exercise of their power presupposes that the rules laid down are legitimate and that the youngsters agree to play the game. In the relationship between teachers and adolescents there is always a combination of constraint and consent. Accordingly, a rule will only be complied with if it is intelligible and if it makes sense to the youngsters. For this to happen, the process must bring out explicitly the important issues to be addressed and face up to them by trying to find solutions. The result of the negotiations and confrontations which punctuate the life of the Chance project is an agreement which is always provisional and subject to the players' dynamics, but within the limits of a very clear definition of everyone's roles and responsibilities.

The dynamics of the Chance Project is similar in many respects to that of an internal combustion engine because of the clash of competing and very often conflicting regulation systems between the youngsters and the teachers. The project's strength is to have built a kind of housing which, via a constant process of negotiation and conflict management, is able both to withstand pressure in order to avoid breakdown and to channel the energy produced and convert it into a source of positive creativity. It is therefore in this confrontation that the project finds its meaning, its strength and its source of knowledge and practices of a new and perpetually evolving kind. Rejecting negotiation and the always difficult challenge of joint regulation would mean depriving the project of its substance and condemning it irrevocably.

But shared regulation is by no means easy and can only be achieved after a slow process of negotiation and decision making. Any successful initiative in the area of social action starts a movement and upsets the order of things and people. To be crowned with success and transform the local social situation, it needs to persuade the individuals concerned to participate in it and overcome their hostility, their fears or their indifference (Lapeyre 2002). Resistance and unresponsiveness to the proposed change, together with conflict-management problems, are some of the main obstacles to the success of the initiative. To overcome these obstacles, an effort needs to be made to arrive at a negotiated compromise on the aims and modalities of the initiative. Participatory processes and arrangements for listening to youngsters' needs and anxieties ensure that their concerns regarding the upheavals resulting from the change are not only given a hearing but also taken into consideration. In this way the change is made acceptable and the resistance to it loses its intensity. In other words, by co-operating, the youngsters are gambling on the success of a project in which they have placed their trust (Reynaud 1997, p. 141).

Here lies the most problematical aspect of area-based social action: why bother to change the way these youngsters operate and their system of values and beliefs, which is attuned to their environment, if nothing is done to change that environment? The self-regulation which predominates in the Spanish quarter is the building, with the constraints and learning this entails, of a set of social standards. Hence the scale of the Chance teachers' task in achieving shared regulation, but also the difficulty they face, because this self-regulation is rational in that the protagonists are thereby pursuing, more or less coherently, aims that are consistent with their reproductive logic. To quote Jean-Daniel Reynaud (1999, p. 167): 'Real' regulation is an (often unstable) compromise between autonomy and control. But the variety of these compromises is very great, as great as that of the procedures whereby they are achieved."

However, joint regulation is not an automatic outcome and the coming together of two regulation systems may give rise to total conflict which precludes any possibility of joint action. There is no sense in making rules and enforcing them unless they are somehow shared. The work of social construction undertaken by the Chance Project with these difficult youngsters is based on this process of social exchange which implies initiative on their part. Fostering the emergence of shared regulation means

building a capacity for joint action on which the youngster's learning process will be based. In this context, the power relationship the teacher must establish with these pupils is no longer reflected solely in the giving of orders but also in a process of persuasion, information provision and training with the aim of getting this group of players to share the assessment of a situation and guiding them towards a new world of action and reaction.

It must be stressed – as the experience of the Chance Project shows – that the fact of receiving these youngsters into the project without condemning or prejudging them in any way has its counterpart in the laying down and enforcement of rules, even if the Chance Project's rules are different from those of traditional schools. They are the result of the recreation of a space of regulation within a specific educational field – that of the second-chance school – in a particular area – the Spanish quarter. Working with these youngsters is a constant search for mediation. Accepting and gaining acceptance for mediation and negotiation continues to be an alternative, non-violent method of conflict resolution. That poses the problem of rules, of the coexistence of those which institutions regard as universal and those which the community builds for itself at local level.

The Chance teachers find themselves in a difficult position, having to avoid, on the one hand, the problematical use of disciplinary punishment and, on the other, running the risk that their failure to punish improper behaviour and verbal and physical violence might be seen as a form of masochistic submission or connivance. The way out of this dilemma is pragmatism, being able to identify the different signifiers of this violence. That calls for a degree of flexibility in punishing violations of the rules. Violent behaviour takes on different forms which are not all punished in the same way, for example. Each carries its own significance which the teachers attempt to identify. Each violation is considered in context and with reference to the individual and may vary in meaning in relation to the rules. Not attending classes may mean a challenging of the rules, a fear of staying in the classroom with the others, a wish to avoid being put to the test, that something has happened in the neighbourhood, or a combination of these things. It is important, for example, to punish a verbal assault when it was committed on purpose to damage a good relationship established with the teacher. The project's limits and internal rules are not, therefore, fixed once and for all. On the contrary, they are the result of an organic process which is sensitive to its environment and

to the interrelations between its various components. Rules are therefore combined with a process of mediation and negotiation which encourages creative management of rule-related disputes by the teachers.

Chance is therefore also a set of rules and limits because the planning of activities calls for a fixed timetable. This is important for both the teachers and the pupils because a timetable reduces uncertainty and hence the anxieties and impulsive behaviour of youngsters when faced with the unpredictable. It is for this reason that the project has a set of rules to be complied with relating to late arrival in class, presence and absence, smoking, ongoing mediation and procedures to encourage peaceful coexistence and unacceptable behaviour. It is essential to arrive at school on time. Defeating the tendency towards unpunctuality is very important in a project such as Chance whose pupils have a history of school absenteeism, because it reflects a choice between coming to school or staying outside.

Faced with repeated destructive and unacceptable behaviour, the different modules have had to try out different ways of overcoming this tendency towards a repetition of behaviour that is harmful to those guilty of it as well as to others, averting serious crises, preventing an accumulation of distress and easing tensions and halting negative dynamics. In this context, a large number of absences leads to a youngster being excluded from sitting the examination, late arrival leads to him being excluded from the first hour of classes. A youngster who offends someone must apologise to the person concerned and a youngster who strikes someone or engages in destructive behaviour is taken home, with the emphasis, during the walk home, on listening to the youngster and seeing how he can make amends; if this behaviour recurs, the youngster may be excluded from school for a few days; if he is aggressive one day, he may have access to a cooling-down area where he will be supervised by a teacher who will talk with him, listen to him, try to understand the reasons for the aggressive behaviour and comfort him; anything which is broken must be paid for or repaired; anyone who is convicted by a court must realise that he has breached the Chance contract, and to bring this home to him, a rehabilitation process is set in motion with the agreement of the court and the social services (the rule in such cases is that he is not allowed to sit the examination). These rules are essential in a world without redress, which knows nothing but destructive vengeance. Moreover, once the rules have been explained, discussed and, in some cases, negotiated, the youngsters expect to be punished for any transgression. The

first reaction will be to rebel, but then they will accept the punishment and it would be meaningless not to give the punishment. As a school headmistress explained to us: "These youngsters are looking for authority and when they do something which should be punished and isn't, they are disappointed and feel that no one's taking an interest in them, and sometimes they go to the teacher and say 'why didn't you punish me?'"

In this connection, Marco Rossi Doria makes the following assessment: "There are clearly a number of things which we know do not work: complicity with the youngsters – 'you're right, you're poor, I'm on your side, here's some money' – doesn't work, it doesn't work to have no limits or rules, it doesn't work to be too friendly with the youngsters or their family, it doesn't work to disparage your institution in the name of the common struggle against injustice – none of that works. Another thing that doesn't work is inflexibility in interpreting the rules, a paranoid and exclusive interpretation of the rules (...). A larger and stronger police presence in the neighbourhood facilitates the work of a project like Chance, but we must maintain a positive approach to working with teenagers and not adopt a repressive approach, because setting repressive limits by way of a response doesn't work either."

Chance is not a place of social inclusion but a place of social construction. In this respect it is an experimental project for the promotion of citizenship. By offering scope for negotiation of rules the Chance Project helps to produce active individuals capable of asking questions and questioning the effectiveness or usefulness of rules. The project is about refusing to turn youngsters into mere executants complying mechanically with the rules, and embarking on a process of building citizenship. This cognitive approach based on understanding of the rules by youngsters enables them to make the rules their own and even reinvent them. The success of the Chance Project is largely due to recognition by its promoters that the pupils possess a rare resource, namely their own participation and, hence, their autonomy.

5.2. The importance of speaking and listening: towards an anthropological encounter

To hope to develop shared regulation, it is essential to communicate. Not being given the chance to speak and not being listened to means above all not having any discussion partners and not being recognised as a dis-

cussion partner. Being listened to does not mean being obeyed, or that requests necessarily receive a response, but quite simply being recognised as a discussion partner. These youngsters are scared of speaking – it is an instrument to make them look ridiculous. The first thing they say to teachers who try to communicate with them is “Shut your gob!” They deny them the right to speak. The value therefore lies in the fact of being listened to, in the social bond that is formed through listening. The encounter cannot take place unless both parties have laid down their arms, as in the case of the Chance Project youngsters, who have laid down their arms, to some extent at least, and have accepted the challenge of co-operation despite their uncertainties and anxieties, while the teachers take the step of paying great attention to them. This work makes it possible once again to speak and to listen. Speaking opportunities can be consolidated and extended. In this context, the first essential meeting of voices and the first ritual is the greeting. For Chance, the greeting is a sacred everyday ritual. It is an important indicator, because giving a proper greeting means recognising others and respecting them.

Trying to rescue a few youngsters in a class is not at all the same thing as facing up to a group consisting solely of youngsters with a whole range of serious problems. In the latter case, it is for the teacher in the first instance to try to gain acceptance and establish communication. Hence the idea of an anthropological encounter, on which the work of the Chance teachers is based. An approach of this kind means rejecting the stereotype of inclusion, because ultimately the metaphor of inclusion is just another attempt at civilisation or modernisation, the reverse of an exclusive community, refusing to point to the structural processes which lead to the exclusion of these young people and refusing to see the resources they carry in them and the ways in which the local identity and culture can help to improve living conditions.

A characteristic feature of disadvantaged neighbourhoods is the predominance of an oral over a written culture. The Chance Project shows the importance of creating opportunities for young people to speak, but also the need to decode their speech, which more often than not is loaded with unspoken implications and coded messages and is expressed in their own language (Neapolitan dialect in this case study). The work with these youngsters has shown that there is a big difference between what they actually say and what they have really expressed. They do not use language in the same way as others and impart information implicitly, in coded form, build roles and hierarchies and social identities. In a

cultural context dominated by oral expression, it is crucial to be able to give priority to unwritten speech, physical contact, the individual. The lesson of Chance and of street work on communication in a world of orality is that there must be direct contact and personalisation between the provider and the recipient of information.

For those involved in the Chance Project, frequenting the area has meant accepting its rituals, forging links with the inhabitants and their territory, accompanying youngsters to their first communion, drinking coffee with the parents in the morning while the youngster gets ready for school, observing rituals, talking to the youngsters in the street, meeting them when they play football late at night in the underground galleries, going to see them when they are doing undeclared work, speaking to them in dialect and in Italian, agreeing to buy them a coffee, and taking the time to talk with them and listen to them to gain their trust. We need to promote a culture of listening by setting up local “antennae” that can receive the social requests, whether explicit or not, made by the youngsters or their families.

The approach is an open one, meaning that we must accept that the youngsters do undeclared work to earn some money or that 16-year-old girls are already pregnant for the second time. We must learn to see something productive in this work and this pregnancy, put up with the pressure of the parents’ and youngsters’ expectations, and have no hesitation in coming even sharply into conflict with them, against their destructive existential crises.

Another lesson of the Chance Project is related to the use of symbols and rituals. The latter have always been important in primitive societies to mark the transition from one state to another in the development process of the child and adolescent. They played a crucial role in the young person’s social construction. Yet these youngsters who live from day to day in insecurity lack bearings and need rituals that are stable points in their lives. The designers of the project have reintroduced these rites of passage and included them in the teaching procedures. It is for this reason that Chance places heavy emphasis on the ceremonial and ritual aspect in its work with teenagers. The first ritual is the signing of the teaching contract. Then there are the parties to mark the beginning and end of the school year, at which the youngsters get together to eat and play and social bonds are formed. There is also the handing over of the baton when two of the contracting parties (the family and the social serv-

ices) entrust the youngster to the Chance teachers. The end-of-year party provides the opportunity to highlight the results achieved through the award of certificates and an exhibition of photos and drawings reflecting the road travelled together within the Chance Project and offering the parents an image of their children which differs from the one they had. Regularly, throughout the year, there are ceremonies to present the attendance reward, attended by all four contracting parties. Other rituals include breakfast, with reading of newspapers and morning chats, lunch and school outings. By participating in these rituals the youngsters also show that they are stakeholders, that they are committed and are becoming active participants.

5.3. Advocating mobility and multiple possibilities: towards the creation of escape routes

The example of the Spanish quarter is a perfect illustration of the idea put forward by Boltanski and Chiapello (1999), according to which the concept of exclusion is mainly relevant with reference to a particular form of exploitation which is developing in a connectionist world. In such a world, the immobility of disadvantaged populations is the source of their exploitation. To quote Boltanski and Chiapello (p. 445): "In a connectionist world, mobility, the ability to move autonomously, not only in geographical space but also between individuals or in mental spaces, between ideas, is an essential quality of the haves, so that the have-nots are characterised primarily by their immobility (rigidity)." Those who stay cannot develop their ability to be mobile and establish new links. They lie abandoned, outside the networked world. This local entrenchment, this loyalty and stability vis-à-vis their local area, are at one and the same time means of survival leading to self-protective behaviour rooted in their living environment, and paradoxically, factors for insecurity, and they are experienced as such by the youngsters, who have a very negative view of their socio-spatial environment.

One social worker, talking about youngsters from disadvantaged neighbourhoods, uses the metaphor of quicksand to convey the idea that, in their environment, the more they move, the more they sink in. It is for this reason that the youngsters live from day to day and refuse to project themselves into the future, which, for them, is uncertain and a source of anxiety. This state of mind in which the youngsters find themselves is reflected, as the Chance Project has shown, in their inability to concentrate, in their fear and rejection of silence and in the blank page,

which are as many cracks in their protective system against a hostile reality. The compartmentalisation of their mental world is a means of protection.

Their closed world gives them a sense of security and this need for protection is reflected, for example, in the fact that they very rarely leave their neighbourhood or want to keep their jackets on in class, or when they are feeling down, they withdraw to a small, narrow room where they feel safe and where the *bidelle* will come to comfort them. Invariably they express a need to be contained within something, and this behaviour in fact reflects their confined living environment – in terms of both the neighbourhood and their own homes.

The disadvantaged families of the Spanish quarter are familiar only with the reality of their own neighbourhood. They very rarely go outside it and, consequently, have no experience of diversity, because diversity frightens them. Because they are unable to project themselves either mentally or physically into anything other than the everyday life of their neighbourhood, their range of possibles is extremely limited; hence this tendency to run themselves down and to answer any prompting from the teachers with “I can’t do it”. This situation serves to confirm the fatalistic notion that there are no other possible futures and leads youngsters to reproduce their family’s way of life. As one inhabitant told us: “I know of many young people who, even if they don’t want to go astray, are unfortunately forced to do so by the life they lead and get involved in things they can’t control and can’t get out of.”

Here, we are in the sphere of what Amartya Sen (1992) calls freedom of action. What is important is not only the amount of money an individual has but what he is capable of doing in his life. His range of possibilities may be limited by the lack of opportunities for social and physical mobility or because of discrimination and stigmatisation. Hence, guaranteeing the socially excluded a minimum income may solve the problem of poverty, but not that of social exclusion. A strategy for combating social exclusion is not to provide compensation for the socially excluded but to lay the foundations for a more cohesive society and make people self-reliant so that they take control of their future. In other words, what is important is not only people’s situation but also what they can or cannot do and what they might have done without these structural obstacles which reduce their scope for action.

By exposing youngsters to new situations, teaching them things they did not know, helping them to control their emotions and introducing them to new forms of expression they had never explored, the Chance Project seeks to guide them towards a new world of action and reaction. Change of scenery is one of the features of the project's psychological, educational and pedagogical strategy with youngsters. It is reflected in the organisation of outings and school trips enabling the youngsters to discover different realities. It is a metaphor expressing the search for cognitive and emotional conflicts that can open up gaps for learning. The idea is, for example, to train their voices not through orders and constraint but through dialogue and changes of scenery, to take them to different places where the use of voice is different so that they can become aware of the existence of other modes of expression.

The impact of these processes of empowering young people and increasing their capacity for mental and physical mobility is difficult to assess. If, in the future, a boy who was destined to enter a Camorrist clan does not do so, if a girl has waited for the right time to have a baby, if she has been a more caring mother than her own mother was to her, then one can say that the project has had an effect, but that would require a youngster to come along of his own accord and say "I was going to become a drug dealer, but thanks to you I've become a mechanic". But this kind of information is often difficult to obtain. Besides, we have to accept that results can be ambivalent and that the road these youngsters have travelled in the Chance Project is experience which they may or may not put to use in leading their lives.

But work of this kind on and with young people is desirable only if, at the same time, a whole network of social action is mobilised to increase their freedom of action and their control of their destiny in order to give them the opportunity to realise, at least in part, an alternative life plan. The challenge is to get across to young people the idea that another world is possible, that they can succeed at school, have a decent job and lead a normal life. Only then can they change the image they have of themselves. But if, at the same time, nothing is done to facilitate their access to employment and a decent income, a project of this kind becomes more destructive than creative, by increasing their frustration and feeling of exclusion.

There are no forms of escape, and hence of "deterritorialisation" – perceived primarily in terms of mental space – that are not socially and cul-

turally destructive without the possibility of “reterritorialisation”. Those involved in the Chance Project are well aware that their work with youngsters needs to be combined with genuine alternative solutions, but these are issues that far exceed their power. This is nevertheless a decisive test for the legitimacy of the project. For this reason, a major effort is being made with the authorities and the two sides of industry to develop employment integration and apprenticeship schemes in order to help these youngsters gain access to the labour market in Naples and the surrounding region.

However that may be, this process of awareness of the existence of multiple possibilities for the young people of these disadvantaged neighbourhoods is an essential contribution to the emergence of active individuals who are ready to commit themselves to the improvement of living conditions in their local area. In realising that their future is not mapped out in advance, learning to move away from unthinking compliance and becoming aware of their own resources, these young people can become the driving force behind a process of civic mobilisation in the area.

5.4. In conclusion: twenty-two recommendations

- overhaul the social action system by networking all local resources to combat exclusion;
- establish at local level mechanisms and practices of consultation and co-ordination between the different parties in order to make the most of existing synergies and gain a better knowledge of local needs and resources;
- develop a close interactive relationship between the social action network and the social environment from which these young people originate, in other words strengthen social bonds with and within the community whose support the project requires;
- seek to reconcile the culture and value system of those involved in the social action network, which they are attempting to pass on, and the culture and experience of these youngsters. Here, school plays not so much a role of cultural transmission as one of cultural mediation;
- opt for an area-based approach implying that social action recognises the area's development potential and accepts the specific identity, culture and rituals of the area's inhabitants. This means abandoning the idea of integration as a more or less authoritarian

process of change of identity in favour of the idea of social construction within a community to give it greater control over its own destiny;

- promote voluntary organisations as social watchdogs and ensure better communication between the central and local levels;
- recognise the long-term nature of social action and ensure its long-term stability through appropriate funding mechanisms. Undue optimism as to the short-term effects of the project on the most disadvantaged families in disadvantaged neighbourhoods should be avoided. This is a slow recovery process which calls for a flexible, open-ended approach based on a constant search for institutional and methodological innovation;
- change the criteria for evaluating the project by putting the emphasis on the qualitative as well as the quantitative aspects and favouring a dynamic approach based on the youngsters' path in life;
- accept that the issue of the integration of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods should be a complex, cross-sectoral issue calling for a questioning of the theories because there are no ready-made solutions or miracle practices. We must embark on a process of trial and error in which practice must fuel theory, which in turn must help to improve practice;
- recognise that these youngsters are in conflict with the main social institutions for structural reasons related to their socio-cultural environment and their family's socioeconomic difficulties;
- put the emphasis on the activation and mobilisation of all the youngster's internal and external resources and his or her awareness of his or her resources;
- recognise that the youngsters possess a rare resource which is their own participation and hence their autonomy. We must refuse to turn them into mere executants complying mechanically with the rules and embark on a process of building citizenship;
- consolidate and develop speaking opportunities by setting up social "antennae" capable of listening to the youngsters' problems and decoding their requests and anxieties and be ready to try to respond to them;
- expose the youngsters to new situations, teaching them things they do not already know, helping them to control their emotions and introducing them to forms of expression and places they had never explored, in order to guide them towards a new world of action and reaction;

- strengthen the role of the family and emphasise the development of parental responsibility. The relationship with the family should be a separate area of work which should serve to improve the environment in which the youngster has to find the motivation and courage to learn and change his behaviour;
- promote a system of tutoring. The tutorial relationship is an essential part of the youngsters' learning process. It bears a huge responsibility, bearing in mind the scale of the problems and expectations and their multidimensional nature. The question of educational back-up is crucial for these youngsters;
- attach great importance to the handling of human resources within the social action network and encourage the provision of suitable areas for training, conflict management and psychological support for the various parties involved;
- guarantee a minimum income in order to reduce the intensity of the problems facing the families of these difficult youngsters and give them some breathing space and stability so that they can make plans;
- promote vocational training and access to decent jobs for young people;
- take care to ensure that urban renewal projects are combined with schemes to empower and involve the local population in order to avert any pernicious effects and ensure that the projects meet their needs and actually contribute in the long term towards improving their living conditions;
- recognise the limits of a repressive and strictly disciplinarian approach in order to avoid a clash between two forms of violence and seek to achieve joint regulation as a basis for developing a capacity for joint action in the local community;
- accept and gain acceptance for ongoing negotiation as an alternative method to violence for managing conflicts.

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LIST OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED

- Chance project co-ordinators, Spanish quarter and Soccavo modules
- Teachers working in the Spanish quarter and Soccavo modules
- Social workers and *bidelle* in the Spanish quarter module
- Heads of the “movement and artistic expression” workshops of the Spanish quarter module
- Social workers of the Barra/San Giovanni and Soccavo areas and the Spanish quarter
- Members of the psychology department of Federico II University, Naples, working with the Chance Project
- Head of the Spanish Quarter Community Association
- Inhabitants of the Spanish quarter
- Families of the youngsters participating in the Spanish quarter module
- Youngsters participating in the Spanish quarter module
- UIL trade union leader responsible for vocational training for young people
- Headmistress of the school housing the Chance module in Soccavo
- President of the Soccavo district