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What plan for what town planning?

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**Problems, policies, and research**

Ecological network and planning  
 The project of ecological network in Ptcp of Mantova  
 The system of the provincial green. The ecological network of the Province of Novara  
 Strategies of riqualfication: planning ecological network. The case of Province of Bologna  
 Ecological network in the urban design

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**Projects and implementation**

Beyond the Company town. Plans and projects for San Donato Milanese  
 A plan for Mattei's city  
 Shared neighbourhood planning. The structure of the 'Laboratorio Quartieri' and its activities  
 Planning with the inhabitants: open issues of a shared experience  
 Starting from the neighbourhood to reach the neighbourhood  
 Form and contents of the 'Strategy and framework document'  
 San Donato. Four images of change  
 Closing the gap and maintaining tension  
 The Services plan project  
 The Area management plan for San Donato Milanese: legislative architecture  
 Plans for deciding: speed, goals and forms  
 Work on the plan. Interview with Achille Taverniti  
 Coming closer to the town, experiencing life in the town. Interview with Mario Dompè  
 Politics and policies  
 San Donato Milanese a workshop on innovation  
 In search of a working dimension

*Harald Bodenschatz*

**Profiles and practices**

Town planning in the new Berlin

*Giovanna Bianchi*

Practices and instruments for the quality of the 'Space of day-to-day life'

*Davide Ponzini*

Public real estate appreciation as a local development opportunity

*Yodan Rofé*

The white city of Tel Aviv

*Giovanni Laino*

**Methods and tools**

The crisis in Campania waste. A short reconstruction of the story

*Gian Paolo Corda*

The real challenge for Expo 2015

## The real challenge for Expo 2015

Gian Paolo Corda

2015 will be a deciding year not only for the Expo but also for the opening of new train connections with Europe possible with the completion of the Alptransit project and the Gotthard and Sempione-Lötschberg's tunnels.

These two events require an important and rapid process of infrastructural investments: urban railways in Milan, railways and motorways.

With the theme of Expo: 'Feeding the Planet, Energy for life', it will be necessary to introduce Milan to the world as a renewed city with a regional urban system with high environmental quality and efficiency, appropriate for a European urban region with an important history.

The new alpine tunnels will change the system of relationships between Italy and Europe and even with the whole world, if we will be able to seize this extraordinary opportunity, not only because they will assure a more rational connection between the Rhinevalley and Italy but mostly because they will enable to intercept the big traffic flow across the Atlantic that unloads at Rotterdam and Hamburg and reaches the Mediterranean ports which could top between 2010 and 2015 for the first time in history of container market the north European ports. We need to be prepared to this event not only with an appropriate continuity of the railway network but also with a sufficient capacity of the motorway network, both destined to receive the growing quantity of merchandise, to prevent possible damage to the environment.

For Expo 2015 above 29 million of visitors are expected during the six months of the event, 7 of

them from north Italy, 12 from centre and south Italy and Europe, 1,7 from America, Asia, Africa and Australia.

An average flow of 160.000 persons a day and a peak flow of 250.000 persons represent a transportation challenge concerning the approximation to the urban system of the Lombardy by those who will arrive by train or by plane, and also with regard to the realizations under construction as to the new high speed train link and the opening of the new train station Rho-Fiera in 2008 which will be directly useful to the Expo space.

The motorway system represents greater problems, new investments are necessary to resolve the traffic congestion around Milan caused by the connection between the other cities of Lombardy that all have to use the motorway ring of Milan. The realizations of the eastern extern motorway link ('Tangenziale est esterna'), the northern freeway (Pedemontana), and the new motorway link Milan-Brescia have to be accelerated.

Around the area for Expo the interventions scheduled for the new trade exhibition centre have to be completed and a new and important road link between the Expo area and the major road 'Varesina' is necessary as a connection with the region in the north of Milan, Brianza.

Thanks to Expo the plans to extend the urban railway network of Milan will be accelerated with the construction of two new lines, M4 and M5, and the splitting of M1 line which will have a double capacity of passengers from the Expo and the Trade Exhibition area to the centre of Milan. The Expo will be a success if its accessibility is guaranteed by train and urban railway systems.

The private transportation by car mustn't exceed 16%

of the total arrivals, there are four remote car parks placed along the motorways, these will be connected with the Expo area by ecological busses in only 6-13 minutes.

To conclude, the Expo 2015 has to be an opportunity for Milan to both, urban renewal and efficient transportation systems. That's not enough.

This event must be the opportunity to hold Milan on the world networks, the city region has to acquire the necessary dimension that derives from being the essential part of a wide urban system Milan has to look not only at its own excellence but it must favor the the regional development of a system of cities which guarantees more efficiency, opposes to the urban sprawl (residents, activity, service) and maintains the quality of urban and rural landscapes in Lombardy.

The identification and the improvement of a strategic plan based on a polycentric vision that consists in a network of towns within a wide rural landscape means to introduce Milan to the world, thanks to Expo event, as a new urban model, appropriate for the third millennium, with ecological proposes for urban settlements that in the case of the Lombardy derive from the historical urban development.