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The agglomeration of Clichy-Montfermeil, a complex site of *politique de la Ville*

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Clichy-sous-Bois and Montfermeil are situated about fifteen kilometres east of Paris, in the Seine Saint-Denis area.

Their agglomeration represents the phenomenon of copropriété, including two of the ten copropriété recognised in October 2000 by the Comité interministériel à la ville as being sites 'suffering difficulties', namely: 'les Bosquets' in Montfermeil and 'la Forestière' in Clichy-sous-Bois.

Following a private sector initiative, these two sites were constructed between the end of the 1960s and early 1970s, in order to respond to a strong housing need. At present, they are under attack by a number of degrading factors. The average construction quality, the fabrication defects (waterproofing of the façades, humidity, etc.), management problems and, above all, failure to construct a linking highway, have brought to rapid dequalification. In fact, their original project foresaw the construction of a highway that was to link the sites to two important employment basins: Roissy with its airport and 'la ville nouvelle' of Marne-la-Vallée, where Euro Disney is situated. The weakness of connections with the rest of the Paris region resulted in isolation, with consequent difficulties in the marketing of houses. From here onwards begins a long story of marginalization and degradation.

A long path to requalification

In the abovementioned context, at the end of the 1980s the Government began a process of requalification of the site, through its Hvs program

(Habitat et vie sociale), and later through the Dsq (Developpement sociale des quartiers) in 1989-1993.

Initially limited to the neighbourhood of Bosquets in Montfermeil, the perimeter gradually extended to bring into force the Grand projet urbain (Gpu) stipulated in 1996 and the Grands projets de ville (Gpv) in 2001.

At the same time, two contracts de ville implemented the social aspects of the public intervention and in 1997 the Zone franche urbaine (Zfu) procedure was applied.

Further, in the 1990s the Urban I (1997-2000) and Urban II (2001-2006) programs were also put into practice, aimed at kickstarting economic and commercial activities in the neighbourhoods and providing employment for residents.

In 2002 another development occurred owing to projects provided by the Borloo law, which came into force in 2003. This represented a further chance to revisit the program entirely, to modify once again its operators and the means of cooperation amongst the various parties.

The new Projet de rénovation urbaine (Pru) represents a new territorial development project: it modifies the Gpv objectives and modifies the scale of intervention significantly. The Project is based on three fundamental principles:

- profound renewal of the neighbourhood: starting from the physical aspect and, differently from prior experiences, undertake composition of the economic and social texture;
- reinforcement of economic and social policy cohesion (economic development, employment, local development, security, etc);
- end the enclavement nature of the site.

The starting point of the

requalification is an extensive demolishing program, in order to respond to a two-fold need: resolve the problems of building degradation and at the same time represent, for its residents, the start of a deep change, via the redesigning of the urban form. In fact, in comparison to the previous projects (Gpu e Gpv), the demolitions no longer include only les Bosquets, but involve the grand ensemble in its entirety: 1.624 housings of which 650 in Bosquets and 500 in la Forestière; the remaining 474 are social housings owned by the Hlm Orly parc Company.

As concerns the reconstructions, 1.488 new housings are estimated, essentially buildings of smaller dimensions (3 to 4 floors). This new offer shall be completed in the second phase (2010-2015), with 450 new housings being constructed. Further, the project foresees reorganisation of the existing commercial offer, with demolition and re-localisation interventions, aimed at obtaining improved management.

The main objective of the Pru is to ensure the area is 'present on the real estate market and re-launch a residential mix'. This objective is obtained by improving the conditions of existing housing as well as introducing new housing in view of a social mixité. The mobilisation of the financial means is considerable: the cost of the first phase of the project, completion of which is expected before 2010, is estimated to be in the amount of 460 million Euro in 5 years, of which 333,5 million Euro were already financed in 2004.

A first evaluation

At time of writing the new Projet de Rénovation Urbain does not appear to be in line with the objectives declared by public action

renewal. In fact, this intervention is hardly different from prior procedures, which have privileged urban transformation over improvement in management and social standards.

Further, it appears that the demolition/reconstruction program is not inserted within any wide or integrated policy. This is shown by absence of provision for any linking infrastructure or the provision of high speed public transport to increase the value of the grands ensembles' barycentric position. The risk is that the desired social mixité will not be achieved, owing to the isolation of the neighbourhood, which will likewise characterize the new project.