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# The suburban neighbourhoods between integration and isolation: the case of Genoa

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## Abstract

Genoa knew, as well as other town in Italy, a fast development during the Italian economic boom (1958-1963), marked by a great urbanization of the city. This phenomenon took the construction of new suburban neighborhoods and changes in economic, political and territorial order.

The areas of Turin, Milan and Genoa, that formed the so-called "industrial triangle" brought the arrival of many unemployed coming from the south in Liguria, Piedmont and Lombardy, looking for a job in the factories and in the Port of Genoa. In fact, these regions saw almost redouble the population, in agreement with the overall rate of employment, in the end of 50s and early 60s.

In the periphery were built other settlements, for example "The Biscione" of Quezzi heights and "the Begato district", born with the purpose of connecting the agricultural area with the town, it is accessible in long hilly roads that become over time a sort of open dump and like other housing complexes does nothing more than defacing an already damaged natural environment.

From the first part of the 90s the Ligurian capital had a strong migration, mainly from Albania and Morocco and after from Eastern Europe in the 2000s. Later in the city came many foreigners coming from the south America and especially Ecuador, so much that today still constitute the most numerous and active community in the Genoese context.

Actually foreigners in Genoa are about a tenth of the entire population and they changed the traditional structures of the neighborhoods, their distribution in the urban areas, mainly in the suburban area. The suburban West Centre district, the area of Sanpierdarena, has the highest number of foreign residents followed by the East Centre district. Together the two districts hosted 40% of foreigners residents in Genoa. These data necessarily imply a greater interest of authority and politics about integration of an important reality in the Genoese urban context. The concentration of majority of foreigners in one single area of the city has inevitably led to a gradual isolation of communities from the rest of the Genoese territory, causing rivalry and other dynamics of conflicts with other groups of foreigners.

But the outskirts of Genoa are not just this: For example the West Centre district is also a great place of association for the citizens thanks to the presence of a large mall, called "Fiumara". Opened in 2002, there are two buildings where the Genoese can find bars,

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restaurants, shops of all kinds, from high technology to jewelleryes, as well as a large Cinema.

This paper, using the available data provided by historians, geographers, public and private organizations, wants to frame the evolution of Genoa and to underline that the periphery of the city is not only a place where most of foreigners live, but also an important site of connection and culture for the citizens of Genoa, for the presence of historical buildings and large industrial and commercial complexes making it one of the most visited places of Genoa.

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