

New capitalism and smart cities



It is not only a financial meltdown. And not even just a recession that is likely to be the longest and deepest since the big depression. It looks like it is a crisis of an entire model of production and consumption. A somehow structural, definitive crisis of an industrial model, or an entire approach to draft and sell "business propositions" and probably of a certain version of capitalism and democracy. And the crisis seems to be not any more about markets producing inequalities but about markets mechanisms not able any more to allocate resources to the most efficient ends. (...)

Invitation-The Future of the Universities

April 20. Rome, Italy



In the global market for innovation the future of Italian and European universities is closely linked to their ability to adjust to internationalization. Vision addresses this topic during the annual conference of universities, organized in conjunction with Nova, Air and Urania, with the help of recent data provided, among others, by OECD and the Lisbon Council. Universities are the object of continuous assessments measuring their prestige and results. The conference to be held in Rome on 20 April will explore these topics. [Agenda](#).

Call for Ideas Security and Immigration in Italy



Italians, or average, believe that the situation in Italy overall is much worse than in their immediate surroundings. Not only the perceptions, but also the data put forward by public institutions are confusing and contradictory. In the next few months Vision will reflect upon the still critical state of affairs, and will feature new thinking and rational reform proposals in September 2009 during a project conference in Milan, organized with the cooperation of Bocconi University.

Vision in Facebook



Now you can join the Vision Group on Facebook and be constantly updated in real time on all projects and initiatives underway. Please join the group "Vision - The Italian Think Tank".

If you want to join Vision projects or be author of Vision web magazine write to info@vision-forum.org.

The Kyoto of the Cities Smart Cities in the Post-Crisis Era



Vision is launching "Smart Cities in the Post-Crisis Era" ([Agenda](#)), a programme with the objective to explore the possibility of engaging major cities in an international agreement on environment-related goals and explore innovations for CO2 emissions in housing, waste management, urban transportation, energy. Vision calls for a direct leadership of world cities in the tackling of climate change issues, via the adoption of cross-border quasi contracts and mutually agreed policy targets. Vision is acting as a broker engaging a broad group of experts from top-ranking universities, think tanks and management consulting firms in Europe and worldwide. Like McKinsey & Co, MIT, RAND Corp, Politecnico di Torino, Bocconi University and Demos - a leading UK think-tank, LSE ([Paper](#))

The project's first results will be delivered at a conference taking place in Naples, 26-28 of March 2009. Anyone interested in joining the team or the upcoming conference can obtain further information by writing to kyotoofthecities@vision-forum.org

Trafficless Cities



The consulting practice of Vision has just concluded the first measurement of traffic in terms of the evolution of its main parameters - hours spent in cars, emissions of CO2, consumption of energy, average speed - in the ten largest Italian cities. The research that is based on data collected through GPS devices, will be soon extended at international level. The final objective is to propose the flexible congestion charge as an evolution of the toll paid in cities like Singapore, Milan and London and as a first, pragmatic step towards the solution of a problem that has been for decades one of the most distinctive features of industrial societies. (...)

The "e-Agora" challenge

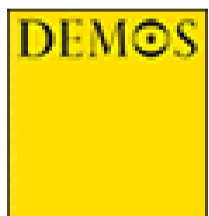
Patrizia Lombardi
Politecnico di Torino, Italy



The Lisbon European Council (CEC, 2000) sought to make Europe "the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion". This objective was reinforced by the Commission in the i2010 initiative which sets the strategic framework for ICT policies in the Union and underlines that: "Information and Communication technologies provide the backbone for the knowledge economy" (CEC, 2005). The Knowledge Society is seen as a key factor for growth and employment, contributing to economic and social development in Europe. (...)

Everyday democracy

Silvia Guglielmi, Demos



It is extremely difficult to translate huge global concerns into concrete individual, community and family responsibilities. Embedding the climate change agenda into everyday civic action is a case in point. Far-reaching changes in lifestyle and energy use are required to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. National government policy alone cannot enforce these changes; local initiatives, individuals and families must play an active role in creative future cities with a green conscience. (...)

The Role of University Education in Fostering Sustainable and Responsible Development

Ludovico Ciferri and Patrizia Lombardi
Politecnico di Torino, Italy



As affirmed by United Nations, education is a human right and the primary agent of transformation towards sustainable development, increasing people's capacities to transform their visions for society into reality. Education teaches people to be better individuals, family members, community members and citizens. Quality education is holistic and a prerequisite for education for sustainable and responsible development. It upholds and conveys the ideals of a sustainable world. It takes into consideration the social, economic and environmental context. Quality education is locally relevant and culturally appropriate. It is informed by the past and relevant to the present, and prepares individuals for the future. (...)

Traffic Congestion in Indian Cities: Challenges of a Rising Power

Azeem Uddin, Lead Analysis Engineer, General Motors, India



Growth of Indian Economy: Until as recently as 1990, India was essentially insulated from the world markets. With foreign trade and foreign investment amounting to a tiny proportion of the GDP, ups and downs in the world economy mattered little. Movements in the Indian economy were even less consequential for the world economy — India accounted for negligible proportions of world trade and investment. (...)

City Making as Climate Policy

Philipp Rode, LSE



In 1986, the German news magazine 'Der Spiegel' chose for one of its weekly editions a cover with a severe warning. It pictured Cologne's famous gothic cathedral half under water with not a single other structure emerging from an endless sea. It was titled 'the climate catastrophe' and linked the global environmental crisis not only to the great aspirations of mankind — in 1880, the Cologne cathedral was the tallest structure in the world — but also to the disappearance of a city, exposing its vulnerability when confronted with the force of nature. (...)

The Next big thing: energy internet and the bottom up generation models

Stefano Casertano, Potsdam University



A sense of energy for communities. Every week the kids and the women from the African village walk to the big city carrying dozens of empty tanks on their shoulders, and come back bearing the same tanks full of litre of gasoline. Gasoline is needed to cook, to light kerosene candles, and not least to make power generators run and make TV sets work. Gasoline is the blood of the community. The African village had lived centuries with a strict rule: energy independence was the limit to the development of the community. The force of the sun was their light, and the wood they could chop and burn at night was their source for illumination and cooking. Draught Oxen could be fed on the neighbouring availability of fodder. (...)

Everyday Democracy

Adrian Hornsby, Director of Kilometer Zero



Bright out of Communism, the global tilt of the past two decades has been toward greater self-dependency. From "light-touch" governments, to banks which "self-regulate", to "participatory development" in the global South, to local community police in London, to the freshly-connected and brilliantly unique internet user — and then interactive internet user-blogger — there is a continuous thread of empowering people to manage themselves, and through that, to manage the whole. It is a curious mixture of the bottom-up and the private interest; a combination of ideals of market-democracy and parochial engagement. (...)