ABSTRACT

The productive basis of the city of Barcelona and its surroundings has suffered a deep transformation during last years, evolving from a basically industrial economy to an economy based on activities characterized by the intensive usage of the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), and by its knowledge-dense character. These activities represent the fastest growing and most potentially wealth-generating sector in the more advanced world economies.

With the aim of a full integration in the new technological revolution, Barcelona has chosen to promote the installation and development of the new activities in the Poblenou district by means of the 22@barcelona project, which creates the necessary environmental and urban structure conditions through town planning. Among the chief requests one can mention the need for advanced telecommunication, energy and transportation infrastructures.

Beyond its near down-town location, the Poblenou district gathers several elements which make it suitable for supporting this transformation, namely: its role in the industrial history of the city, the good accessibility, the already-existing industrial fabric, and the urban grid-like structure.

The renewal process also involves the adoption of adequate economic policies and the introduction of a new global philosophy promoting innovation (with the creation of specialized zones in research, formation and enterprise incubation), incorporating environmental quality, life quality and sustainability as key production factors.

On the other hand, the renewal of the Poblenou industrial district obeys a second strategy: the restructuring of an industrial area located in a central area of the city which, despite having addressed some of the basic questions during the investment process generated by the 1992 Olympic Games, still presented a deficient infrastructure system.

The tool that has made possible the renewal of the Poblenou area is the Modificació del Pla General Metropolità per a la renovació dels sòls industrials del Poblenou (“Modification of the General Metropolitan Plan for the renewal of the industrial lands in the Poblenou district”), planning the resources and execution feasibility of the new infrastructures as one of the key elements, by means of the Pla Especial d’Infraestructures (“Infrastructures Special Plan”).

This plan designs an advanced infrastructure system based on the main needs of the transformation process, among which one can mention the greater technological efficiency of the networks and services which will support the establishment of the new @ activities, a better adequacy of the urban structure to the sustainability criteria, allowing an effective deployment, in many services under the liberalization criteria, and the achievement of a high environmental, townscape and mobility quality.