

IL SOLE 24 ORE – ITALIAN DEVELOPERS IN BRAZIL FOUND THE “SMART SOCIAL CITY”: LOW COST HOMES AND INVITING DISTRICTS



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[Press release](#)

Quotidiano del Sole 24 Ore

Edilizia e Territorio

The engineering company Planet Idea and the Recs Architects studio presented at the Expo the Croatá Laguna Ecopark project

The concept was born in Italy, by engineering company Planet Idea, supported by a group of Turin investors, formed by experts with complementary skills and supported by the architecture studio ReCS Architects (based in Parma, Milan and Fortaleza). The project – which will bring within ten months the emergence of the first social smart city of the world – is developing in Brazil, 55 kilometers from Fortaleza, in the municipality of São Gonçalo do Amarante. Here, in May 2016, the ribbon cutting is planned for the first module of the Croatá Laguna Ecopark settlement.

To unveil the format were, yesterday, the same protagonists. For the first public release, they chose the spaces in the Brazil's Expo pavilion, where a seminar was held on the opportunities offered by the South American country's northeastern region, organized by the Italian-Brazilian Chambers of Commerce San Paolo and Fortaleza.

The first social smart city will be born under the 'Minha Casa, Minha Vida' program, launched by the Brazilian government. The housing, built with a private budget of around 20 million and thought of as a social housing project, will respect the standards and price parameters set by the South American state (they will be marketed in the coming weeks at an indicative and streamlined cost of 600 euros sq. ft. in front of a local private market with prices around one thousand euros). Unlike other operations, Planet Idea will, however, receive significant savings by investing in peripheral areas, where land purchase costs have less impact on overall investment, and by large numbers, with settlements studied for 4/5 thousand inhabitants, so as to guarantee the number of homes to be built for important economies of scale. The savings obtained will be invested in technologies and services for those who will live in the future neighborhoods.

“The real difference for the residents – says Gianni Savio, Planet's Ideal Operations Officer – will not be so much inside the house, in a modern apartment that will nevertheless respond to all the comforts of a smart home with low environmental impact . The jump in quality will be, rather, once you cross the door. When you find yourself immersed not in an anonymous suburban neighborhood, but in an integrated and social system that is able to respond in real time to all the small and big needs of the daily life. “

In fact, the social smart city answers six basic concepts: it is a city that combines architecture and urban planning, facilities, greenery, high technology, renewable energies and social programs. The operation will not stop at the first module: within a few years it will extend over an area of 330 hectares and will count about 21,000 inhabitants for a total

of 6,000 homes and nearly 6,800 total lots, including small-scale and industrial settlements.

“Those who will live in Croatia Laguna Ecopark will not only have modern infrastructures available to move around and reach Fortaleza,” Savio continues, but will have facilities to live daily life. For example, there will be an app that will put you in touch with all the other people to search for travel companions for carpooling, exchanging recipes, food supplies, and food sharing, to seek help in taking care of children, and to manage a community garden.”

The format of Planet Idea, which is well adapted to emerging contexts such as Brazil, is not said to be reimported in the old continent and in contexts such as Italy. “Maybe,” explains the organizers, “certain project aspects, like all the social management of the inhabitants, could easily be applied to small communities already in existence and with local communities that often need sharing services.”

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