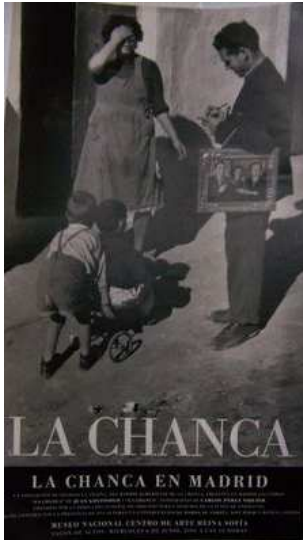


## La Chanca



The district of **La Chanca**, which was founded in the 10th century was in a state of abandonment and oblivion, since the close of the 19th century. The neighborhood endured a situation of « *unsustainable misery* », as denounced by the writer Juan Goytisolo at the beginning of the sixties in his book « La Chanca », forced to be spread secretly and incompletely and eventually published in Spain almost twenty years later.

The **Special Plan for Interior Improvement** of La Chanca (PERI) drawn up to meet the demand of social movement in the district of La Chanca and passed in its definitive version in 1990, tries to go beyond a mere intervention and improvement of the physical conditions of the neighborhood and it establishes a proposal with a capacity to intervene in problems of the community of people and in external problems that may cause situations of vulnerability:

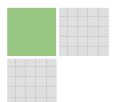
The Plan was conceived as an *integrated urban program*, which not only operates on the habitat – the physical structure – but also on the inhabitants – the people who live there – from a perspective of sustainable development.

From the beginning, the Plan was set to include participation, as it was inspired by the resident association “La Traiña”, which also cooperated actively in its drafting.

The PERI plan, deals with general action in infrastructure, housing, equipment and free space, while it maintains the resident population within its own community. Coordinated with urban-development intervention, it applies *Social Programs* which attempts to *eradicate poverty* from the neighborhood at risk of being socially excluded.



Arrival in the neighborhood of La Chanca



Likewise, initiatives are set forth which pay attention to social and cultural variety and which promote ethnic equality, dedicated to the gypsy community and Maghrebi immigrants. At the same time, intervention programs are developed for women, health prevention, education and vocational training as social rights are priority objectives of the Plan.



*The history of the neighborhood is a bet on future generations*

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## What was the situation before the initiative began ?

The district of La Chanca, with a population of 10 000 inhabitants, was having serious urban and social problems : the existence of substandard housing and cave dwellings, deficit in infrastructure, high rates of illiteracy, primary-school dropout, unemployment, a high birthrate and groups at risk of social exclusion with a 25% gypsy population.

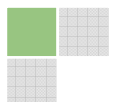
### Establishing Priorities :

Priorities were selected through public debates, organized by the resident association and the team of specialist who drew up the Plan. The regional government of the Junta de Andalucia – COPT and the Almeria City Council participated and promised to provide the necessary means and funds to make action possible. Solving the problem of access to decent housing for groups of outcast was considered as the main priority, as well as implementing programs to eradicate poverty and to promote ethnic equality, conserving social and cultural diversity.

### Stating objectives and strategies:

#### **Objectives :**

- 1/ To complete and improve infrastructures,
- 2/ To act in a balanced way with regards to the environment,



3/ To install equipment and free spaces,

4/ To intervene in the housing problem through restoration and building new homes,

5/ To apply social programs in order to eradicate poverty, to promote ethnic equality and respect for social and cultural diversity,

6/ To join the factors of social, economic, environmental and cultural sustainability;



*The “self renovation” of houses is part of the social project to increase pride and feeling of belonging.*

### **Strategies :**

1/ To tackle the physical recovery integrated with social action,

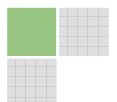
2/ To establish a “Management Unit” in charge of coordinating all actions and a “Monitoring committee” to assess them,

3/ To manage the plan in subsequent stages, intervening in “Implementation Units” according to the order of priorities,

4/ To stimulate neighbor participation and the coordination of administrations as clues of the strategy.



*Each daily task is an opportunity to participate to educational action and to involve young people.*



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## Making resources available:

Financial, technical and human resources are made available through agreements between the Central, Regional and Local administrations.

The Junta of Andalucía has declared the **district of La Chanca a priority action** by the means of a decree (20<sup>th</sup> July 1993). The contents of such a declaration demonstrate the need of taking integrated action in order to improve social, educational and public health conditions as well as employment and urban development.

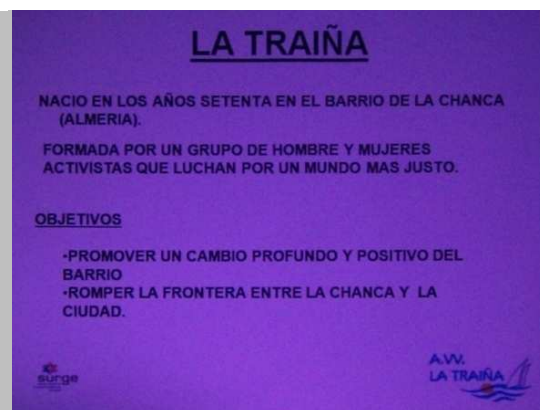
Within the context, the agreements set forth are the following:

- Agreement between the Junta of Andalucía and the Almeria City council to implement the **neighborhoods of preferential action**,
- Agreement Program between the Junta of Andalucía and the Almeria City council **regarding housing, soil and urban development**,
- Agreement between the Almeria City council and E.P.S.A. to develop the PERI-Plan in La Chanca and **to obtain, prepare and urbanize soil** with a budget of 1.200.000 pesetas;
- Agreement of execution and management between the Junta of Andalucía and the Almeria City council for **setting up a Renovation Office**,
- Agreement between the Ministry of Public Works; Transports and Environment and the Junta of Andalucía applying Royal Decree of 14<sup>TH</sup> of May 1993 for the action of **Integrated Renovation** with a total budget of 4.259.240 000 pesetas.

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## The Process :

By the end of the 70<sup>ties</sup>, resident association **La Traiña** represented the voice of the district, demanding the indispensable social and urban transformation of La Chanca.



**Association of neighborhood La Traiña**  
*Created in the 70<sup>th</sup> in the district of La Chanca,  
Composed by men and women who act for a more equitable world.*

**Objectives :**

- To promote a deep and positive change of the district
- To erase the barrier between La Chanca and the city

At the start of the 80<sup>ties</sup>, the Direction General de Arquitectura y vivienda of the Junta of Andalucia and the Almeria City council reached an agreement to draw up the **Special Plan for Interior Improvement (PERI)**.

The neighbors, assisted by a team of specialists, participated actively to the drafting of the Plan and they provided permanent discussion to establish objectives, strategies and priorities by means of organizing cultural weeks, which also joined leisure and cultural activities. These gatherings, still held, always count on participation of *Juan Goytisolo* and *José Angel Valente*, essential authors of Spanish and European Culture and honorary members of the resident association, and guests such as *Edmond Amram El Maleh*, a Moroccan author, which favors meeting the Maghrebi immigrants living in Almeria.

Once the Plan had been passed in 1990 and La Chanca has been declared to be a Neighborhood of Preferential Action, the financial, technical and human resources were made available through a series of agreements between the different public administrations (see above)

In 1996, the **Office for Urban Remodeling of La Chanca (ORUCHA)** was set up, which, reporting to the Public Company of Andalusian Soil (EPSA) is entrusted with the management by the Almeria City council and the Junta of Andalucía. This office works as a management unit in charge of developing the Plan in subsequent stages, coordination between administrations; soil management, urban development, and the implementation of housing policies and social programs.

Most important problems are the high economic cost of intervention, the fact that social changes, eradication of poverty and the fight against social exclusion need time and systematic work, and the long-term implementation to develop the entire Special Plan. However, the neighbors have adopted the Special Plan as their own and have been standing united with the team of specialists for more than twenty years. The strength and perseverance of their demands, channeled through the Association are the clue to overcome weaknesses and threats.



*Members of La Traina are present at each event of the neighborhood – Here waiting for the children spectacle given for the next carnival.*



*The preparation of the carnival is one of the highlights of life in the neighborhood where the moms are much involved. The district will then give to see the rest of the city  
Singing, music (flamenco of course) and oral tradition are recognized and valorized as areas of excellence by the Plan. These are vectors of pride.*

## The obtained results :

The obligations adopted by the public administration regarding the task of managing the strategic implementation Units have been fulfilled in this first stage.

The monitoring and the quantitative assessment of the interventions are carried out by the Monitoring Committee formed by the public administrations in which the resident association is represented.

### *Quantitatively :*

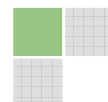
- Management of soil and temporary rehousing : rehoused people : **426**
- Improvement of urban environment : infrastructures, free spaces and equipment : **1 132** millions of pesetas
- Renovation of homes and cave dwellings : **1 011** renovations
- New homes : **245**
- Guidance services: management of 423 job offers, jobs for **187** people
- Job placement with companies: management of placement for **125** people
- Race and social integration: **4** specific programs carried out,
- Eradication of poverty: **6** specific programs carried out
- Strengthening of the community : **4** specific programs carried out



*The « code of colors » is a legacy history port of Almería. Each fisherman use to paint his house with the paintings of his boat to see it from the sea. The visual link between the boat and the house remained permanent.*

### *Qualitatively :*

The improvements in coordination and integration between the various actors and institutions as well as the changes in the use and assignment of human, technical and financial resources are demonstrated by the intense activity of the Management Office (ORUCHA). The office has been turned into a referent of a new all-round policy and of transfer of the experience, at a social, economic and environmental level to other interventions of local, regional, national and international scope.



Carrying out renovation programs and the building of new houses facilitate access to a decent home for the less-favored groups in society. In this way, improvements in people's living standards have been obtained. Likewise, the interventions carried out in the urban environment have been conceived out of environmental sensitivity.

The coordinated implementation of social programs, in order to eradicate poverty and promote ethnic equality, is succeeding in generating wages and income and in creating jobs. This is made possible by the "Guidance Service", which was set up to plan individual careers, and by "Maromeros S.L." a company of social job-placement, establish to give groups at risk of social exclusion access to jobs in the construction works that are being carried out in the neighborhood; in this way turning public investments into job creating resources.



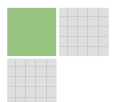
*Children also are involved in the project of housing requalification. All members of the family participate to the works within a project of self-renovation*

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## Sustainability :

It is an objective of the Special Plan **to integrate social, economic environmental and cultural elements**. It is based on the support and development of the following factors:

- The Special Plan results of **citizen participation** maintained over more than twenty years. In this way, it has accomplished the civic commitment and the necessary cultural vitality to improve the social preparedness of the participants and the complete shared management of the Plan.
- **Making people participate in planning and management** supports the idea of a neighborhood or city as a real community. It makes it possible to define culturally acceptable objectives and strategies of intervention that can get over possible difficulties in execution.
- The possibility of a local governance based on transparent and **responsible administration and public management**, backed by civil organizations has reinforced the foundation of cooperation, by way of turning the citizens into participants from the and not into mere beneficiaries.



- Opening up the neighborhood to the city and the national and international contacts maintained over the years have brought about that La Chanca has become a meeting place of intercultural expression and a place where social and strategic policies have been put to use, **with the possibility to apply them in other situations.**
- Making funds available, which requires a strong public investment, helps to maintain the commitment of **economic cooperation from the neighbors** regarding their contributions to the home-renovation Program. Likewise, a management system for the maintenance of new-state-funded homes for rent has been facilitated, which includes collecting the rent and applying social programs for monitoring.
- Setting up a permanent “Guidance Service” and stimulating private “companies for job-placement” permit controlled access to jobs for groups of people at risk of social exclusion. The introduction of social clauses in the contracts of specific public works culminates the organization of these new processes and turns investments into job-creating resources.
- Architectural and urban design observe proposals that agree with environmental sensitivity. This concept basically considers three aspects: its place, its history and its culture. By way of the architectural and urban designs themselves and taking the proper location, climate, orientation, sunshine ...into account, the conditions of habitat and energy consumption and pollution are diminished. With respect to this, acts of restoration have been brought about cave-dwellings and experiences such as the “renovation of the Cuevas de Pecho” have been transferred to other interventions carried out by the Junta de Andalucía.



*Traditional materials and internal organization (such as patios) has been “given to the style of the day” by the architect Ramon de Torres. Inspired by the works of Vitruvius (First century BC), he highlighted the qualities of some thermal hydraulic lime*





*The Park de La Oya, next to the neighborhood of La Chanca, is currently the subject of a regeneration project dedicated, in particular, to the reintroduction of endangered species.*

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## Some Lessons that have been learned:

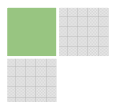
The development and execution of the PERI-plan of La Chanca teach a series of lessons, which have been learned and are being put into practice by the Junta of Andalucía in order to establish new policies, intervention plans and strategies from the perspective of sustainable development.

**Citizen participation** is a key piece in planning, where objectives, strategies and principles of development have to be shared. In La Chanca, the resident association has been the driving force of changes that have inspired innovative action and have stimulated changes in public policies.

The agreements and cooperation systems between the different public administrations are indispensable to make the necessary funds available. The same holds for **inter administrative coordination**, which favors the integrated management of social, economic, environmental and cultural elements. In La Chanca, the agreement between Local, Regional Autonomous and Central administrations have been decisive, as well as the development of several programs supported by the E.U.

Only if the public sector provides society with the necessary means and resources to act, supporting the basis of **encouraging civilian society**, it can strengthen, the single way to get the scenes of urban vulnerability of the neighborhood in crisis. In La Chanca, the integration of the neighbors in the management Office (ORUCHA) has been decisive.

The **compulsory inclusion of social clauses** in public works put out to tender makes it possible for public administration to generate additional social benefits, in order to favor social cohesion and access to jobs to those groups of people that are at risk of dropping out. It can comply with the contents of the **white paper of the European Union**, creating new mechanisms of solidarity to face the challenges of the future.



The SURGE Project, an integrated initiative of the European Social Fund, made it possible to set up the “Guidance Service” and the private “Companies for job-placement” in La Chanca, once the lessons of a public company called “Adigsa” of the Autonomous Government of Catalonia had been learned.



Overview from “La Alcazaba”

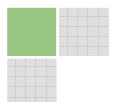
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## The possibilities of transfer:

The initiative of the PERI-Plan of La Chanca is **transferring its experiences**, not only with the Autonomous Region of Andalusia, but also **nationwide and abroad**:

- The Junta de Andalucía is promoting interventions, which correspond to an integrated policy and transfer of experience, such as *Almanjayar* in Granada, the renovation of the old centre of Cadiz, or the revitalizing of the *El Puche* district in Almeria,
- Nationwide there have been exchanges of experience with the “PERI de las 1000 viviendas in Alicante”, with the “*Plan Integral de desarrollo local del barrio de La Coma*” in Valencia, and with the “*Instituto de Realoja e Integración Social*” in the Autonomous Region of Madrid.

The following transfers to the other countries have taken place :



- The **Integra II project**, within the framework of the **European Integra Network**, where several countries belong to after signing a collaboration protocol.
- The **SURGE Project** : an enterprise of the **European Social Fund** to develop initiatives aimed at social and labor integration of least-favored groups in society.
- The international Cooperation Program of the **Junta de Andalucía**: which develops renovations in the **Tetuan Medina of Morocco**, promoting initiatives of exchange with **La Chanca for Magrebi immigrants**.

... And of course within the **LINKS** partnership all around Europe thanks to the **URBACT** program.



*La chanca is the oldest district of Almeria. Build below the fortress of “la Acazaba”, it use to be the fishermen district since the Califa of Cordoba.*



*A vestige of the walls of 12th century*

**Texts from the City of Almeria**  
**Photos from Nathalie Aguesse – City of Bayonne Feb 2011**

