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“A HEART IN THE STATION”: FIRST MULTIFUNCTION CENTRE FOR THE HOMELESS NOW OPEN AT ROME’S TERMINI STATION

- *Psychologists and social workers, healthcare support, careers and jobseeking advice, physiotherapy, learning and creativity workshops, fax, library, internet and a film club, all in a home-like environment*
- *“A Heart in the Station” is an outreach project run by the Enel Cuore Onlus non-profit organization and Italian State Railways (Ferrovie dello Stato) that offers shelter, assistance and rehabilitation to people of no fixed abode. Rome Termini is the first of fifteen such premises scheduled to open in the next two years. In 2010, reception centres will be opened at Genoa Cornigliano, Naples Centrale, Pescara and Catania*
- *January 2010: Ferrovie dello Stato and Enel Cuore Onlus to launch the “Restart your life” campaign during the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion*

Rome, December 18th 2009 – A multifunction centre for the homeless opens today at Rome Termini railway station. It is the first of fifteen such venues that are scheduled to open as part of the nationwide “A Heart in the Station” project, which has been conceived by the Enel Cuore non-profit organization and Ferrovie dello Stato.

The new integrated centre, which is being run by the “Binario 95” association, has been set up to offer relief to homeless people who live in and around railway stations.

Attending today’s inauguration ceremony was Enel CEO and Chairman of Enel Cuore Onlus **Fulvio Conti** and Ferrovie dello Stato CEO **Mauro Moretti**.

The “Un Cuore in Stazione” initiative has transformed the “Binario 95” Centre – which the Cooperativa Sociale Europe Consulting Onlus has been running on Via Marsala since 2006 – into an integrated multipurpose facility. The new 400 m² premises is a groundbreaking site where people experiencing social hardship can seek and receive help and assistance.

People who walk into the multifunction centre will find:

- a home-like environment
- psychologists and social workers
- healthcare support
- a physiotherapy area
- learning and creativity workshops
- careers advice and jobseeking assistance
- a library, internet access and film club

Much as in any home, the facility has all the amenities of everyday life: showers, a laundry, and emergency nighttime accommodation.

Enel Cuore has provided funding of 400 thousand euros to build the facility. Italian State Railways contributed an extra 300 m² of residential space.

The two-year project, which has received the patronage of European Commission Vice President **Antonio Tajani**, will see reception centres either opening or expanding at 15 railway stations. The centres are designed to help people experiencing hardship and foster their reorientation and re-insertion into society. Ferrovie dello Stato is contributing property that it owns in and around stations but no longer requires for railway-related activities; Enel Cuore Onlus is funding renovation work on these premises, and purchasing the equipment and materials needed to achieve the project's goals. Enel Cuore has earmarked around 3 million euros for the project. The facilities, which are being run by local voluntary groups, offer more than just accommodation; they provide a gateway to local social and health care structures, help people obtain the documents they need, and assist them in looking for employment.

Enel CEO and Chairman of Enel Cuore Onlus **Fulvio Conti** says: "The dramatic circumstances of people who live on the fringes of society prompted us to direct a significant portion of our social responsibility-related activities towards people of no fixed abode. Enel Cuore Onlus's "A Heart in the Station" project allows us to support local voluntary associations in their efforts to provide reception and outreach facilities that restore dignity to people living on the margins of society, and give them hope and an opportunity to restart their lives."

Ferrovie dello Stato CEO **Mauro Moretti** says: "This venture is an expression of our keenness to break through the indifference surrounding social outcasts, and offer the hope and opportunity to return to an active role in society. These goals are the twin strengths of the *Restart Your Life* campaign, which we will be running with Enel Cuore starting in January 2010, during the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion. This venture falls with the framework of our much broader station improvement programme: stations serve as 'gateways' to our cities, and are magnets for people experiencing hardship."

In 2010, "A Heart in the Station" is scheduled to arrive at the railway stations of Genoa Cornigliano, Naples Centrale, Pescara and Catania. A brand-new integrated multipurpose facility is opening in Pescara, which will be run by the "On The Road" non-profit association. The "La Tenda" help centre at Naples Centrale is being donated a mobile unit and a camper for first-resort assistance and outreach in the streets. The existing help centre at Genoa Cornigliano is being expanded by adding a new premises which will offer multiservice facilities; the centre will also be donated a van for food delivery. In Catania, renovation of the new premises and purchase of a vehicle will enhance the services on offer at the Caritas Diocesana-run daycare centre. The project will subsequently move on to Turin and Melfi (Potenza). Planning work is currently underway to bring the venture to other stations including Messina, Salerno, Grosseto and Parma.

Enel Cuore, Enel's non-profit social organization, was established in 2003 to supervise and manage funds earmarked by the company for charitable and social solidarity purposes in Italy and internationally. The organization's initiatives are run in partnership with other associations and voluntary organizations. Enel Cuore focuses on social and health-oriented welfare, and on assisting people in hardship, with the emphasis on



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children and the elderly. The organization also promotes education by building schools and training centres in developing nations. Enel Cuore pays particular attention to the disabled, supporting social inclusion projects, many of which are sports-based. Since 2003, Enel Cuore has invested around 29 million euros and undertaken 276 projects, of which 236 in Italy and 40 internationally.