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# **Characters in search of an author. Unfolding the territorial governance of Italian Metropolitan Cities.**

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# Summary

The governance of the metropolitan dimension constitutes one of the most relevant and complex challenges that countries and regions in the world are presently facing. Metropolitan areas have always represented new paradigms for interpreting the development processes of territorial policies. Their relevance is also supported by the fact that more and more people live in metropolitan areas, with the share of urban population that has overcome its rural counterpart in 2007 and is expected to reach almost 70% by 2050 (EUROSTAT, 2022). In this line, metropolitan areas are presently responsible to produce almost 70% of the total EU GDP (EUROSTAT, 2016). Acknowledging this growing concentration of people and economic activities, various European countries have since some decades started to experiment several institutional reforms that aims at delivering effective metropolitan development policies and to establish governance models that allow to manage metropolitan functional dynamics. At the same time, as many attempts have emerged in different European regions from the bottom up, in the form of more or less voluntary forms of supralocal visions and strategies as well as of other forms of intermunicipal cooperation that try to overcome the rigidity of the existing administrative structures.

In Italy, after various attempts of this kind that have been taking place during the 1990s and 2000s, a metropolitan level of government has been instituted in 2014, when the so-called Delrio reform (Law 56/2014) finally provided practical execution to the introduction of the *Città Metropolitane* in the Title V of the Italian Constitution (2001). Since their institution, however, the governance of the Italian Metropolitan Cities has encountered several of challenges. On the one hand, these challenges may derive from their relatively young institutional age and the need of additional time to get acquainted with the powers and responsibilities that were attributed to them by the reform. On the other hand, however, those challenges may be intrinsic to the reform itself, and the way the latter has instated the new entities from the top-down (Crivello & Staricco, 2017; Vinci, 2019).

Aiming at shedding light on the above, the present doctoral thesis focuses on the governance of metropolitan areas within the Italian context. It investigates the characteristics and dynamics of the multi-level territorial governance model that has been instituted through the Delrio reform, to reflect on its actual strength and limitation with reference to the promotion of effective metropolitan development strategies, policies and plans.

To achieve this overarching objective, the research will try to answer a number of research questions, concerning (i) the actual fit between the newly instituted administrative configurations and the functional dimension of the territorial dynamics that should govern and (ii) the nature of the powers and competences that the Delrio legal framework attribute to the Metropolitan cities and the way they are (or not) practiced. While doing this, particular attention will be dedicated to (iii) the peculiar role that the Metropolitan cities play – or should play – within the territorial development policies promoted by the European Union.

These questions will be answered through both a comprehensive overview of the territorial and institutional characteristics of the 14 Italian Metropolitan Cities, and a more in-depth analysis of the territorial development and governance dynamics that characterise three case studies pivoted on the Metropolitan Cities of Torino, Bologna, and Bari. Through these activities, the study aims to deliver sound and coherent knowledge concerning the results of the Delrio reform after some years of its implementation, upon which to develop evidence-based policy advice aiming at more effective metropolitan governance and policy. At the same time, it will provide a timely contribution to the ongoing academic debate concerning the governance of metropolitan regions in Europe, and their engagement with EU territorial development policies.

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## *Dedication*

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# List of Abbreviations

AIT: *Ambiti di Integrazione Territoriale*

ANCI: *Associazione Nazionale Comuni Italiani*

AP: Partnership Agreement

ARO: *Ambito di Raccolta Ottimale*

ASL: *Azienda Sanitaria Locale*

ATUSS: *Agende Trasformative Urbane per lo Sviluppo Sostenibile*

CUM: *Comunità Università Mediterranee*

CF: Cohesion Fund

CLLD: Community-Led Local Developments

COCOF: Coordination Committee of the Funds

COP: Complementary Operational Program

CP: Cohesion Policy

CPI: *Centri per l'impiego*

CS: Case Studies

DG REGIO: Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy of the EC

DRAG: *Documento Regionale di Assetto Generale*

DSU: *Documento Strategico Unitario*

DUC: *Distretto Urbano del Commercio*

EAFRD: European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development

EBRD: European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

EC: European Commission

EESC: European Economic and Social Committee

EGTC European Grouping on Territorial Cooperation

EIB: European Investment Bank

EIF: European Investment Fund

EMFF: European Maritime and Fisheries Fund

ERDF: European Regional Development Fund

ESDP: European Spatial Development Perspective

ESF: European Social Fund

ESIF: European Structural and Investment Funds

ESPON: European Spatial Planning Observation Network

ETC: European Territorial Cooperation

EU: European Union

FPM: *Fondo Perequativo Metropolitano*

FSC: *Fondo per lo Sviluppo e la Coesione*

FUA: Functional Urban Area

GDP: Gross Domestic Product

HZ: Homogeneous Zone

IB: Intermediate Body

ISTAT: *Istituto nazionale di statistica*

ITI: Integrated Territorial Investment

JRC: Joint Research Centre

LAGs: Local Action Groups

LAU: Local Administrative Unit

LUR: *Legge Urbanistica Regionale*

MA: Managing Authority

MASE: *Ministero dell’Ambiente e della Sicurezza Energetica*

MC: Metropolitan City

MCBa: Metropolitan City of Bari

MCBo: Metropolitan City of Bologna

MCs: Metropolitan Cities

MCTo: Metropolitan City of Turin

MDA: Metropolitan Development Area

MIBAC: *Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali*

MIMS: *Ministero delle Infrastrutture e della Mobilità Sostenibili*

MITE: *Ministero dell’ambiente e della sicurezza energetica*

MUA: Morphologic Urban Area

NEETs: Not in Education, Employment, or Training

NGEU: Next Generation EU

NOP: National Operational Programme

OECD: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

OIS: *Operazioni di Importanza Strategica*

OP: Operational Programme

ORME: *Officine di Rigenerazione Metropolitana*

OT: Thematic Objectives

PIC: *Piano Intercomunale del Comprensorio*

PINQuA: *Programma Innovativo Nazionale per la Qualità dell’Abitare*

PIS: *Piano Integrato Settoriale*

PIT: *Piano Integrato Territoriale*

POC: *Piano Operativo Comunale*

PPTR: *Piano Paesaggistico Territoriale Regionale*

PR: *Programma Regionale*

PRA: Administrative Reinforcement Plan

PRGC: *Piano Regolatore Generale Comunale*

PRT: *Programmi di Riordino Territoriale*

PSC: *Piano Strutturale Comunale*

PSM: *Piano Strategico Metropolitan*

PTC: *Piano Territoriale di Coordinamento*

PTCP: *Piano Territoriale di Coordinamento Provinciale*

PTGM: *Piano Territoriale Generale Metropolitan*

PTI: *Piano Territoriale Infraregionale*

PTM: *Piano Territoriale Metropolitan*

PTR: *Piano Territoriale Regionale*

PUI: *Piani Urbani Integrati*

PUMS: *Piano Urbano della Mobilità Sostenibile*

RDP: Rural Development Program

REACT-EU: Recovery Assistance for Cohesion and the Territories of Europe

ROP: Regional Operational Programme

RRF: Recovery and Resilience Facility

RUE: *Regolamento Urbanistico e Edilizio*

SDGs: Sustainable Development Goals

SDL: Local Development Strategies

SEA: Strategic Environmental Assessment

SFM: *Servizio Ferroviario Metropolitan*

SFs: EU Structural Funds SFs (ERDF and ESF)

SLL: *Sistema Locale del Lavoro*

SNAI: *Strategia Nazionale per le Aree Interne*

SNSvS: National Strategy for Sustainable Development

STAMI: *Strategie Territoriali per le Aree Montane e Interne*

SUA: *Strategie Urbane d'Area*

SUAP: *Sportello Unico per le Attività Produttive*

TUEL: *Testo Unico sull'ordinamento degli Enti Locali*

UA: Urban Authorities

UdP: *Ufficio di presidenza*

# **1. Introduction to the Research**

## **1.1. Introduction**

Metropolitan governance is a topic of growing interest in the context of public policies and spatial planning. In Italy, the challenges related to the management of metropolitan areas are particularly relevant due to the administrative complexity and socio-economic dynamics that characterise the territory. This introductory chapter aims to outline the general framework of the research, providing an overview of the context, motivations, objectives, and research questions that will guide the analysis. First, an attempt is made to frame the research in its context (1.2). The Italian context is characterised by profound urban transformations and a renewed interest in metropolitan governance policies. Italy, with its fragmented territorial structure and the presence of large urban agglomerations, offers fertile ground for the analysis of governance dynamics. This study aims to examine how metropolitan policies are implemented and what are the main challenges and opportunities that emerge in this process. The chapter describes the rationale behind this research, its positioning at the intersection between governance theory and administrative practice (1.3), with the aim of making a significant contribution to the understanding of metropolitan governance dynamics in Italy. The specific objectives and research questions are described (1.4), and the results are briefly outlined. This study aims to offer a significant contribution to the literature on metropolitan governance, providing empirical evidence and theoretical analysis that can guide future urban policies. The summary of the findings will be presented in a way that highlights the practical implications and potential applications of the research findings (1.5). To facilitate understanding and enjoyment of the work, a roadmap is provided to guide readers through the various chapters of the thesis (1.6).

## **1.2 Approaching the research context**

The topic of this research, as already anticipated in the summary, is the governance of metropolitan areas within the Italian context. Over the years, the metropolitan dimension has assumed an increasingly central role in territorial development policies. Metropolises cannot be considered only as a simple fusion

of densely inhabited, socially and functionally specialised centres, to which suburbs are generically attached. They are better interpreted as systems of networks, with variable geometry, articulated in nodes, some of which are characterised by a strong centrality dimension, defined according to their accessibility and degree of coordination. It is therefore central to give an initial reconstruction of the phenomenon, considering the extreme relativity of the concept, susceptible to continuous reinterpretation depending on the socio-economic and planning contexts encountered.

One of the distinctive signs of the metropolitan phenomenon lies in its functional character, aimed at transforming the concentration of economic, social and public functions into a process of interaction between the various legal and economic actors connected with strategic activities of local government (Urbani, 2000). In this context, the evolution of economic development multipliers tends to transform the metropolitan area into an urban form typical of advanced economy societies that identify itself more as an economic-functional system than as a demographic-building settlement unit. This means that both the territorial and demographic dimensions are much larger, and the physical boundaries appear more nuanced than those of cities and urban areas. There is a whole series of literature dealing with soft planning and fuzzy boundaries (Allmendinger, 2014, 2015). In particular, soft spaces are often accompanied by fuzzy borders, both help to manage those situations in certain sectors (transport, infrastructure, education, etc.) in which there is a mismatch between administrative and functional boundaries, and which operate at variable scales.

In this sense, even the delimitation of a metropolitan area becomes a non-trivial challenge. Delimiting something with variable geometry, functional and not strictly linked to morphological characteristics has led to the introduction of the Functional Urban Areas (FUA) (OECD, 2012, 2013) and other criteria for delimiting metropolitan areas, Morphologic Urban Area (MUA) and Metropolitan Development Area (MDA) (ESPON SPIMA, 2018). The best representation and interpretation of the metropolitan phenomenon must therefore be carried out by intersecting the various delimitations and interpreting the characteristics and relationships that the context encompasses. Here, too, the debate is constantly evolving. Numerous authors (Zimmerman, 2007, 2020, 2021; Galland, 2020a, 2020b, 2020c; Demaziere, 2020, 2021; Gualini, 2008; Tomàs, 2012, 2016, 2020, 2023; Fricke & Gualini, 2018; Fricke, 2017, 2020; Salet, 2003, 2005, 2015; Vinci, 2019) and projects (ESPON POLYCE, 2013; ESPON ACTAREA, 2017; ESPON SPIMA, 2018; ESPON COMPASS, 2018; ESPON MISTA, 2019; ESPON



METRO, 2021) have been through time dealing with the topic of metropolitan governance, exploring how the latter evolved and consolidated in recent decades and how the metropolitan level has become increasingly central for territorial development.

To properly address the issue of metropolitan governance within the Italian context, it is necessary to delve into the history of the Italian institutional structure and the various legislative phases that led to the institutionalisation of metropolitan cities. Basically, the Italian structure at the sub national level is organised on three different institutional levels: the Region, the Province and the Municipalities. According to Crivello and Staricco (2017) and Boggero (2016) and Mattarella (2010), this three-tiers system was based on the principles of homogeneity and uniformity, rooted in the Napoleonic model of public administration. Focusing on the Metropolitan authority, the institutionalization of the Metropolitan Cities took place with Constitutional Law no. 3 of 18 October 2001, although the real establishment of the metropolitan authority in Italy took place with the entry into force of Law no. 56 of 7 April 2014 (the so-called Delrio reform).

The reform of local authorities introduced by Law 56 of 2014 redefined the system of provinces and established metropolitan cities. Provinces have been defined (as well as metropolitan cities) as entities of '*area vasta*' and their organs - the president of the province and the provincial council - have become elective bodies of second degree; a similar system is followed for the council in metropolitan cities, with the difference that the metropolitan mayor coincides with the mayor of the capital municipality. The governance of *area vasta* bodies is completed by the assembly of mayors, for provinces, and the metropolitan conference, for metropolitan cities, which are composed of the mayors of the municipalities of the body. This reform was framed in line with the ten-year plan to reorganise local authorities and eliminate the provincial authorities, also in order to respond to the need to review public spending. However, many political and operational difficulties are being encountered in the process of empowering such metropolitan authorities, including a constitutional referendum held in December 2016 to confirm the provinces (a territorial level to be replaced by the metropolitan authorities in the largest urban areas). This event has resulted in a stalemate in terms of the implementation of the reform (Vinci, 2019).

The last topic interesting and strictly connected with the Metropolitan Cities is the relation between Metropolitan Cities and the European programming, with reference to the innovation process deriving from the implementation of a program

at the metropolitan level to address the EU's urban agenda. Indeed, in 2011, the publication of 'Metropolitan Areas and City Regions in Europe 2020' (EESC, 2011) highlighted the challenges of metropolitan government in Europe due to the fragmented nature of the different governance approaches adopted. According to Vinci (2019) with this document greater attention is paid to metropolitan development in the context of the structural funds and in the future European urban agenda (European Commission, 2016).

Acknowledging the above, this doctoral thesis aims to investigate the characteristics and dynamics of the multi-level territorial governance model that has been instituted through the Delrio reform, to reflect on its actual strengths and limitations with reference to the promotion of effective metropolitan development strategies, policies and plans, within and outside the EU cohesion policy framework.

### **1.3 Motivation, positioning and objective(s)**

The motivations for selecting this topic were multifaceted. Primarily, the topic's 'freshness' and the scarcity of substantial literature on it provided a compelling reason. During a period marked by the ongoing redefinition of paradigms related to metropolitan governance and planning, this subject promised to be both intellectually stimulating and invaluable to academic discourse. This quote well articulates the clear rationale behind the choice of topic.

*There is no better subject of debate that simultaneously captures the 'regional' and 'local', the 'urban' and 'rural', and the 'domestic' and 'transnational' dimensions of European policymaking than 'metropolitan governance' (Stahl, 2011, p. 3).*

A particularly intriguing aspect of this theme is the role of the metropolitan level. This intermediary entity presents numerous opportunities for reflection and research. Understanding how the metropolitan level is defined, how its governance structure operates, what its competencies are, and who the involved actors are, is critical. Notably, there is no universal methodology for defining a metropolitan area, which adds a layer of complexity and interest. The variability of the concept of a metropolitan area is among the most fascinating elements of this topic.

Furthermore, my academic training and professional experiences have involved extensive engagement with the metropolitan level within the Italian context. This background has fuelled my interest in the study of metropolitan governance and the

networks of institutional and non-institutional actors that operate within this sphere. A distinctive feature of the metropolitan level is its interaction with a network of public and private actors, leading to relationships that are not always formal and institutional. This motivates a deeper exploration and definition of these informal relations, the interaction of metropolitan authorities with their territories, and their ability to connect with peripheral and rural areas under their jurisdiction. Essentially, it is crucial to understand how these entities function operationally, beyond the constraints of legislation. Additionally, it is important to examine how strategic planning is interpreted and implemented by metropolitan cities. Investigating how spatial planning instruments are utilised by the metropolitan level for spatial governance and how these authorities interact with the European level will be particularly insightful.

As previously mentioned, the research aimed to deepen the understanding of the outcomes of the Delrio reform after several years of its implementation, with the goal of developing evidence-based policy advice to enhance metropolitan governance and policy effectiveness. It investigated the characteristics and dynamics of the multi-level territorial governance model established through the Delrio reform, evaluating its strengths and limitations in promoting effective metropolitan development strategies, policies, and plans. Additionally, it sought to contribute timely insights to the ongoing academic debate on the governance of metropolitan regions in Europe and their interaction with EU territorial development policies. To this end, the research provided an authoritative report on territorial governance and spatial planning systems at the metropolitan level within the Italian context.

More specifically, to achieve the overall objectives outlined above, several specific goals were pursued:

- **OB1.** To enhance and deepen the understanding of the metropolitan dimension and its governance implications.
- **OB2.** To deepen the understanding of metropolitan governance and spatial planning in the Italian context and to analyse and highlight the differences in metropolitan governance models within Italy, assessing how the Metropolitan Cities operate in practice as a consequence of the Delrio reform and its interpretation in different contexts.
- **OB3.** To investigate the impact of EU structural funds on the Italian metropolitan governance system and evaluate how metropolitan entities leverage opportunities arising from EU programming.

## 1.4 Research questions

Based on the aforementioned objectives, further detailed research questions guided the development of this thesis (Figure 1).

### RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

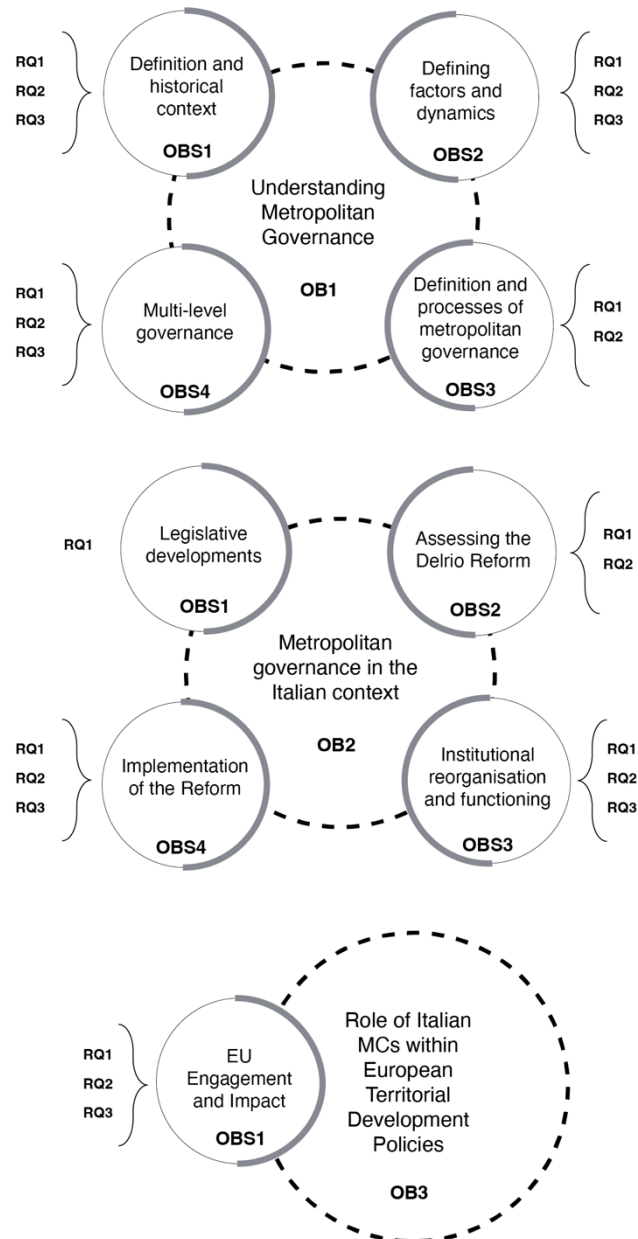


Figure 1 - Research Objectives and Research Question. Source: Author's elaboration.

## Regarding OB1: Understanding the metropolitan dimension and its governance

1. Definition and historical context:
  - How to define a metropolitan area?
  - What is the historical evolution of the concept of a metropolitan area?
  - How has the academic debate evolved on this topic?
2. Defining factors and dynamics:
  - What are the key factors and dynamics that define and shape a metropolitan area?
  - How have these defining factors of metropolitan areas evolved over time?
  - Is there a discrepancy between the functional characteristics of metropolitan areas and the institutional boundaries intended to govern them?
3. Definition and processes of metropolitan governance:
  - How can metropolitan governance be defined?
  - What processes are involved in metropolitan governance?
4. Multi-level governance:
  - Who are the actors involved in metropolitan governance?
  - How is governance institutionalised?
  - How are policies implemented at this level?

## Regarding OB2: Metropolitan governance in the Italian context

1. Legislative developments:
  - What legislative developments led to the birth of the metropolitan authority?
2. Assessing the Delrio reform:
  - What powers and competencies do the Delrio legal framework attribute to the Metropolitan Cities, and how are they practised?
  - How well do the new administrative configurations fit the functional dimensions they are meant to govern?
3. Institutional reorganisation and functioning:
  - How has the Delrio reform been implemented by the new Metropolitan Cities?
  - What are the strengths and limitations of the law in practice?

- How have the various institutional bodies reorganized and how are they currently operating?
4. Implementation of the Reform:
- How have the Metropolitan Cities in the case studies implemented the reform?
  - What planning instruments are utilized for spatial planning governance, and how has the strategic component been integrated?
  - What are the limitations of the reform in managing the metropolitan level, and are there any successful practices or examples in metropolitan governance? How have the case studies addressed EU programming?

Regarding OB3: Role of Italian Metropolitan Cities within European Territorial Development Policies

1. EU Engagement and Impact:
- How are Italian metropolitan cities engaged within the EU cohesion policy?
  - How is the European urban agenda implemented at the metropolitan level, and how does it impact planning and implementation of policies?
  - How does the EU cohesion policy contribute to consolidating and enhancing metropolitan governance and cooperation?

## **1.5 Contribution of the research and synthesis of results**

The primary contribution to the research concerns the development of a comprehensive body of knowledge aimed at enriching the understanding of the diverse territorial governance and spatial planning approaches adopted across various Italian metropolitan cities.

In-depth case studies of the Metropolitan cities of Turin, Bari, and Bologna play a pivotal role by offering invaluable insights into the intricacies of metropolitan governance dynamics in Italy. These case studies not only highlight the shared challenges faced by these urban areas but also underscore the innovative and distinct strategies each city employed to manage their complex and often fragmented urban landscapes. Despite operating under the same legal framework, each metropolitan city had developed governance models tuned to their specific territorial contexts. The dynamics of governance, particularly the vertical relations influenced by political factors, significantly shaped the allocation of funds and prioritization of urban development projects.

Inter-municipal cooperation, supported by advanced planning tools and robust participatory processes, has proven to be crucial for effective decision-making in metropolitan areas. These elements were identified as essential components for navigating the complexities of metropolitan governance and ensuring inclusive and sustainable development practices. At the same time, the case studies brought to light several well-documented limitations inherent to the implementation of the Delrio law, which regulates metropolitan areas in Italy.

Reflections stemming from field interviews conducted within metropolitan entities further elucidated key issues, such as the delineation of administrative boundaries and the evolving political roles within these entities. The reform efforts, while ostensibly aimed at fiscal austerity rather than structural reorganization, fell short in addressing these fundamental territorial dynamics. This oversight had profound implications for the efficacy of metropolitan governance structures and their ability to respond adequately to local needs and challenges.

Moreover, discussions on supra-local planning strategies revealed that updated spatial and strategic planning tools, coupled with strong collaboration between metropolitan authorities and municipal governments, facilitated more efficient fund allocation and cohesive development strategies across the metropolitan area. However, inherent weaknesses in smaller municipalities and metropolitan administrations became apparent during the subsequent phases of implementation, highlighting ongoing challenges in achieving seamless governance and sustainable urban development outcomes.

To sum up, the research not only contributes to a deeper academic understanding of metropolitan governance but also provides practical insights and recommendations for policymakers, urban planners, civil society stakeholders, and academics alike. By fostering a nuanced understanding of governance dynamics and highlighting best practices, the results of the research will support informed decision-making and foster collaborative efforts towards enhancing metropolitan governance frameworks in Italy and beyond.

## **1.6 Target subjects**

The research project is primarily aimed at policymakers and all stakeholders involved in metropolitan governance. Its main objective is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the intricacies of metropolitan governance, particularly within the Italian context. This includes policymakers, politicians,

technicians, urban planners, civil society actors, entrepreneurs, and academics who play crucial roles in shaping and influencing metropolitan policies and development strategies.

For policymakers and politicians, the research offers an opportunity to deeply analyse their own governance systems while gaining valuable insights from comparative studies of other metropolitan areas. This dual approach not only enhances their understanding of existing challenges and opportunities but also equips them with innovative tools and practices that can be adapted to improve their own metropolitan governance frameworks.

Similarly, urban planners and civil society actors stand to benefit significantly from the research findings. By examining successful practices and innovative instruments highlighted in the study, they can identify effective strategies for sustainable urban development, community engagement, and infrastructure planning within their specific metropolitan contexts. This knowledge exchange fosters a collaborative environment where stakeholders can leverage shared experiences to address common urban challenges and achieve collective goals.

Furthermore, the research serves as a catalyst for the business community by showcasing potential opportunities arising from public-private partnerships and collaborative initiatives in metropolitan governance. Entrepreneurs can explore new avenues for investment and partnership, aligning their business strategies with emerging urban development priorities and regulatory frameworks.

Academically, the project contributes valuable insights and empirical evidence to the field of metropolitan governance studies. It not only generates new knowledge but also stimulates further research and discourse on evolving governance models, policy innovations, and best practices. This academic engagement not only enriches theoretical understanding but also supports practical applications through technical collaborations with governmental and non-governmental bodies.

The research project plays a pivotal role in fostering informed decision-making, promoting stakeholder collaboration, and advancing effective metropolitan governance practices in Italy and beyond. By facilitating knowledge exchange and providing a platform for dialogue, it empowers stakeholders to collectively address complex urban challenges and achieve sustainable development goals in metropolitan regions.



## 1.7 Roadmap for the Readers

The volume is organised into ten main chapters, each of which explores different aspects of metropolitan governance research in Italy and Europe, with a clear focus on Italian Metropolitan Cities (MCs). A detailed description of the volume's structure is presented below.

Chapter 1 introduces the context of the research, outlining the motivation, position and objectives of the study. The formulation of the research questions, the expected results, the research contribution and the target subjects are also presented. This chapter provides an initial overview of the theoretical and practical framework within which the investigation is developed.

Chapter 2 offers an in-depth analysis of the metropolitan dimension from a functional and historical perspective. The evolution of the metropolitan phenomenon and metropolitan governance is explored, with examples of European metropolitan regions and the role of the European Union and international organisations in supporting metropolitan areas through cohesion policies.

Chapter 3 presents the methodological framework used in the research, including a literature review, a comparative analysis and the methodology used for the case studies. In particular, the part about interviews is subsequently detailed in Annex 1 where the protocol used is described. This chapter establishes the basis for the scientific approach and data collection techniques used in the study.

Chapter 4, then, contextualises the legislative evolution of Metropolitan Governance in Italy. In detail, the history of Italian spatial planning is outlined, from the '*area vasta*' to the most recent legislative evolutions. The main steps in the legislative evolution of metropolitan areas are analysed, with particular attention to Law 56 of 2014, known as the Delrio Law, and its impact on the structure and planning of Italian metropolitan cities.

Chapter 5 is dedicated to the comparison of Italian metropolitan cities. It offers a comparative analysis of Italian metropolitan cities, considering their statutes, demography, economy and metropolitan planning instruments. The chapter closes with a discussion of the rationale behind the choice of specific case studies.

Chapters 6, 7 and 8 are entirely devoted to case studies, respectively the metropolitan city of Bari – MCBa - (Chapter 6), Bologna – MCBo - (Chapter 7) and Turin - MCTo - (Chapter 8). The chapters on the case studies follow the same

structure. The first part is devoted to the physical and urban dimension, the territorial and demographic structure, and the economy of the metropolitan area. The second part focuses on the analysis of the institutional framework. The evolution of metropolitan governance in the three contexts is explored, and the different forms of inter-municipal cooperation present are highlighted. The third part is devoted to the description of metropolitan spatial and strategic planning instruments. The fourth part describes the role of cohesion policies at the regional and metropolitan levels. The role of the three metropolitan cities in cohesion policy and the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR) is highlighted, with special focus on the *Programma Innovativo Nazionale per la Qualità dell’Abitare* (PINQuA) and the *Piani Urbani Integrati* (PUI).

Chapter 9 is dedicated to the comparison of the three case studies (Bari, Bologna and Turin). Based on the structure used within the chapters of the case studies, the differences and similarities in the territorial contexts, institutional governance and planning instruments, and the role of the three metropolitan cities in European planning (ordinary and extraordinary) are highlighted.

Chapter 10 concludes the thesis, summarising the results obtained from the case studies and discussing the impact of the Delrio reform on Italian metropolitan cities. It also explicitly identifies the limits of the adopted research approach and proposes a number of future research avenues that deserve exploration.

This systematic organisation allows the reader to understand both the theoretical and practical context of metropolitan governance, with a particular focus on Italian metropolitan cities and their interactions with European policies.

# 2. Framing of the research topic

## 2.1. Introduction

The study of metropolitan areas is a multifaceted exploration into the evolution, structure, and governance of these dynamic regions. This chapter delves into the metropolitan dimension from a functional perspective (2.2), beginning with an analysis of the historical evolution of metropolitan phenomena. Over time, metropolitan areas have transformed significantly, driven by factors such as urbanization, economic shifts, and demographic changes. Understanding this evolution is crucial for comprehending the current characteristics and challenges of metropolitan regions. Next, the chapter discusses the conceptual frameworks used to define and frame metropolitan areas. This involves examining various criteria and methodologies that differentiate metropolitan regions from other urban and rural areas, highlighting the complexity and diversity inherent in these definitions. It further examines the governance structures that oversee these regions, focusing on the different models and mechanisms of metropolitan governance (2.3). This includes a look at various examples from European metropolitan regions, showcasing how different governance approaches can impact metropolitan development and functionality. Also has been stressed the role of municipalities within metropolitan regions and how relations of influence are managed. It explores how European discourses and documents influence metropolitan areas, emphasising the significance of Europeanization in the context of governance. The discussion extends to the involvement of international organizations, illustrating how global perspectives and policies intersect with local and regional governance. Furthermore, the chapter discusses the European Union's cohesion policy and its implications for metropolitan areas (2.4). The interplay between cohesion policy and metropolitan governance is explored, highlighting both the opportunities and challenges that arise from this relationship. Through this comprehensive overview, the chapter aims to provide a deeper understanding of the complexities and governance challenges inherent in metropolitan areas. It seeks to elucidate how historical evolution, conceptual frameworks, governance structures, and international influences collectively shape the development and management of metropolitan regions.

## **2.2 The Metropolitan Dimension. A functional perspective**

New types of urbanization have emerged in Europe and other countries throughout the past 40 years, mostly because of increasing socioeconomic, environmental, and territorial changes around large cities. Various changes have combined to generate what is known as ‘metropolitan Europe,’ defined by complex spatial connections between urban centres and their suburbs that have become more prominent within a growing web of interrelated social and economic places (Brenner, 2003). The intricate relationships that define metropolitan territories - which vary significantly among European nations and regions - between city centres, suburban areas, and vast peripheries make it challenging to address metropolitan issues and challenges (Salet et al., 2003; 2005; Herrschel, 2009). As such, there is still no consensus on a single definition of the metropolitan dimension, and disagreements on the conceptual and geographic boundaries of metropolitan Europe continue to be discussed, leading to several academic studies (da Cruz & Choumar, 2020; Moreno-Monroy et al., 2021).

### **2.2.1 Evolution of the metropolitan phenomenon**

First of all, the literature review has focused on the metropolitan phenomenon. In particular, the first step was to provide a brief historical overview of the roles of planning in metropolitan spatial development.

Starting from the understanding of the key drivers that influenced the evolution of metropolitan planning ranging from perspectives that interconnect land-use and strategic spatial planning with the treatment of scale, will be examined how metropolitan planning performed in different contexts. After that will be done an attempt to define and conceptualise metropolitan regions and metropolitan planning. To do that will be aware to do not try to provide a general abstract definition that does not match the reality in practice, or on the contrary, fall too much into the particularity of a specific case which makes it difficult to generalise and learn.

According to Galland and Tewdwr-Jones (2020b), the research will start asking *‘How has planning historically conceived metropolitan regions in a spatial sense and what styles has planning embraced and performed in processes of shaping metropolitan development?’*

According on what has been analysed by Galland and Harrison (2020b), Brenner's (2004a) periodisation of urban governance in Western Europe from early the 1960s to the 2000s describes a transition from a historical context where the state promoted economic development across the national territory, towards a situation where national governments privileged capacities and advanced infrastructure in the most competitive cities and territories.

In particular, Brenner's (2004a) periodisation focuses on four phases:

- Spatial Keynesianism (1960–1970)
- Fordism in Crisis (1970–1980)
- Glocalisation Strategies, I (1980-1990)
- Glocalisation Strategies, II (1990–2000)

In addition, a new phase starting in 2010 is based on the conception of metropolitan regions as competitive territories, where global firms (from the financial sector, real estate, new technologies, and collaborative economy) push for infrastructure alliances.

Starting from Brenner's periodisation has been developed by Galland, Harrison and Tewdwr-Jones (2020b) another kind of periodisation that is based on three different key periods which are related to the institutional change in the metropolitan development sphere. A first period (1950-1970), defined *Government*, in which a top-down model is rooted in state-territoriality where the key actors were state institutions (central government, local government, metropolitan government). This was the main approach in the spatial Keynesianism era. After that, there is a broad period, ranging from 1970 to 2000, identified as *Governance*. This period is in turn divided into two different moments, 1970-1980 as *New Localism* and 1990-2000 as *New Regionalism*. This has been the dominant approach in the era of neoliberalism. Is evident in this period an evolution from the governmental approach of spatial Keynesianism to include other actors, most notably business and private sector. Institutions became more entrepreneurial, symbolised by the rise of public-private partnerships. Finally, the third period, that according to previous authors ranging from 2010 to the present and take the name of '*Circumventing government and governance*'. Starting from the examples of major philanthropic organisations, consultancy firms and celebrated experts which work to complement and/or compete with existing institutional forms, making the metropolitan landscape increasingly complex, are identified other actors attempting to disrupt or circumvent traditional modes of government and governance

institutions and institutional frameworks to influence metropolitan policy and affect metropolitan change.

In this sense, the first notions of metropolitan space relate to the historical treatment of scale in spatial planning, which was entwined with the idea that national territories required ‘territorial synchrony’ to deliver functional unity and spatial coordination while alleviating the flaws and inconsistencies of public policies (Hajer, 2003).

The transformation of metropolitan institutions, from their consolidation to their eradication, and then again to their resurgence in new forms, is accompanied by the rescaling of planning power and thereby with the evolution of state spatial selectivity (Jessop, 1990; Jones, 1997; Brenner, 2004b).

In the last decades according to Galland (2020), metropolitan regions are fraught with multiple challenges and tensions wherein planning constantly seeks to (re)define its role in contexts of metropolitan governance accretion and at the same time are fraught with multiple conflicts between the pursuit of competitiveness and economic growth at the metropolitan level (OECD, 2015).

According to Tewdwr-Jones (2012), Knapp et al. (2015) and Galland and Elinbaum (2018) while globalisation stands as a main external driving force influencing metropolitan competition, the performance of metropolitan planning is similarly conditioned by path-dependent national planning systems, their institutional structures and inherited regional planning practices.

In this line, metropolitan urbanization needs to be recognised as a distinct phase in the development of the industrial capitalist city. Throughout the neoliberal phase of capitalist development, both from a localism perspective (with the emergence of coalitions of actors in a non-traditional urban context) and a globalised perspective (with the emergence of coalitions of multiscale stakeholder in uneven forms and geographies), regionalisation and globalisation, rather than metropolisation, have become more influential spatial imaginaries (Soja, 2011).

Furthermore, spatial planning systems directly influence metropolitan development insofar as they determine the relationship between levels of governance, which impact on the instrumental content as well as the planning processes associated with metropolitan spatial plans and strategies (Elinbaum & Galland, 2016).

The academic debate is stressing the need to go beyond not only a methodological *city-ism* but also beyond metropolitanism. Conceptualisation such as post-metropolis (Soja, 2011), planetary urbanisation (Brenner, 2014) and global sub-urbanisms (Keil, 2017) all stress the need to abandon, or at least to go beyond, the idea of metropolitan organisation of space as able to both conceptualise the urban and deal with related societal challenges.

Furthermore, the evolution of the metropolitan phenomenon has necessitated the development of strategic spatial planning and governance frameworks, particularly within Europe, to address the growing complexities of urbanization and regional development. Albrechts, Healey, and Kunzmann (2003) emphasize that strategic spatial planning has become increasingly crucial as metropolitan areas face challenges such as economic globalisation, environmental sustainability, and social inequality. This approach, which integrates spatial considerations with broader policy objectives, reflects the need for coordinated and long-term planning in metropolitan regions. Herrschel and Newman (2003) further elaborate on the governance aspects, highlighting the importance of multi-level governance structures capable of managing overlapping jurisdictions and diverse interests within city regions. They argue that effective metropolitan governance requires a balance between centralised strategic oversight and local autonomy, enabling adaptability to changing conditions. As globalization intensifies competition among city regions, Herrschel (2014) explores how this phenomenon has reshaped spatial and political relationships, necessitating governance models that are both strategic and flexible. Together, these works underscore the importance of strategic spatial planning and governance in the evolution of metropolitan regions, offering insights into managing the complex dynamics of urban growth in an increasingly interconnected world.

### **2.2.2 Framing metropolitan areas**

The identification and delimitation of ‘metropolitan areas’ are extremely complex issues. In recent years, several international research institutions have carried out studies aimed at delimiting metropolitan areas or similar territorial aggregations. Further evidence comes with the recognition that the metropolitan region concept is often used interchangeably with other spatial frameworks (e.g. city regions) or prefaced with adjectives such as morphological, polycentric or megapolitan. Over the years, there have been several attempts to define metropolitan territories. These attempts have conceptualised metropolitan territories as consisting of municipalities with highly integrated labour markets and

less densely populated municipalities that make up dense urban cores (OECD 2012, 2013; Fadic et al., 2019; Dijkstra et al., 2019).

### ***International Research Institutions***

The role of cities and metropolitan areas in promoting the polycentric reorganisation of the European territory has been highlighted in the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) and has been explored in several studies by the European Spatial Planning Observation Network (ESPON). Among the various projects that ESPON has carried out, there are some specifically devoted to metropolitan areas, urban policies and polycentrism. These projects are: ESPON ACTAREA - Thinking and Planning in Areas of Territorial Cooperation, SPIMA – Spatial Dynamics and Strategic Planning in Metropolitan Areas, URRUC - Urban-rural connections in non-metropolitan areas, MISTA – Metropolitan Industrial Strategies & Economic Sprawl, IMAGINE - Developing a metropolitan-regional imaginary in Milan-Bologna urban region, ESPON METRO - The role and future perspectives of Cohesion Policy in the planning of Metropolitan Areas and Cities, ESPON POLYCE - Metropolisation and Polycentric Development in Central Europe, ESPON TANGO - Territorial Approaches for New Governance, ESPON TOWN - Small and Medium Sized Towns and ESPON SUPER - Sustainable Urbanisation and Land-use Practices in European Regions.

### ***OECD Methodology***

First, the OECD defines a metropolitan area *as a social, economic, geographical and political space defined by shape, size and nature and by the interactions between individuals and organizations* (OECD, 2013).

Metropolitan areas can present a monocentric or, more often, a polycentric structure of an urban agglomeration, the latter being determined by the existence or formation of historically distinct and administratively and politically independent urban areas, located close and that has the potential to be connected through urban infrastructure. The OECD and the European Commission developed a framework that attempts to harmonize the definition of a greater city and its commuting zone based on population size and density. Based on this definition, a ‘greater metropolitan city’ is defined as a city with an urban centre of at least 50,000 inhabitants (Dijkstra & Poelman, 2012). However, the applicability of the methods for defining the commuting zones and suburban development and the actual borders of the metropolitan areas needs to be further assessed. In this regard, studies refer to the need to explore more comprehensively the relation between these spatial



elements, between the Local Administrative Units (LAUs) and the FUAs (ESPON SPIMA, 2018).

Three common approaches are currently used to identify metropolitan areas:

1) *The administrative approach* defines metropolitan areas based on legal boundaries and of additional criteria such as population size or population density. Metropolitan areas identified using this approach can be easily used by public administrations in terms of governance issues since metropolises are contained within administrative boundaries.

2) *The morphological approach* defines metropolitan areas based on the aggregation of continuous built-up areas that fit certain criteria of population density or the proportion of the municipalities covered by urban settlements. This approach provides a definition of metropolitan areas, which is better suited for environmental issues such as land-use change or greenhouse gas emission or housing development and transportation policies.

3) *The functional approach* defines metropolitan areas based on flows between a core area and its surrounding territories. Travel-to-work commuting flows represent the flow information generally used for this approach. Small administrative units, such as municipalities or census tracts, are the territories generally used to construct the core and the hinterland of metropolitan areas.

The use of different criteria or combinations thereof obviously results in equally differentiated territorial delimitations. In recent years, several international research institutions have carried out studies aimed at delimiting metropolitan areas or similar territorial aggregations.

The research promoted by ESPON identifies, for the European territory, Morphological Urban Areas - groupings of contiguous densely populated municipalities - and Functional Urban Areas composed of those municipalities in which a significant share of the resident population moves for work reasons within the territory of a given Morphological Urban Area.

The two units of analysis (MUAs and FUAs) are of equal importance for the classification of the urban and metropolitan phenomenon: while MUAs make it possible to highlight the presence of contiguous densely populated territories that transcend the boundaries of individual municipalities, FUAs make it possible to detect the scope of influence of MUAs in terms of the attraction of the population with working capacity. Concerning the concept of Functional Urban Area, it can be said that the FUA consists of a city plus its surrounding areas that are close to the extent of the city's labour market (*commuting zone*).

The OECD, in collaboration with the European Commission and Eurostat, has recently finalised a definition of Functional Urban Areas (Dijkstra et al., 2019). This EU-OECD methodology for defining FUAs entails several key steps (Dijkstra et al., 2019):

- *Cities (or urban centres)*: a population grid makes it possible to define ‘urban centres’ independently from administrative or statistical boundaries. An urban centre is a pure grid-based concept, a cluster of contiguous cells of high density and with more than 50,000 inhabitants. This means that an urban centre inside a large local unit and one spread out over multiple local units could be easily identified using the same approach, something which definitions relying only on local unit data struggled to do.
- *Commuting zones*: commuting flows are used to identify which of the surrounding, less densely populated local units were part of the city’s labour market (commuting zone). Commuting flows are based on travel to work i.e. the travel that employed residents in a local unit make to reach the place of work. However, commuting flows also capture some of the flows to access education, health, culture, sports or shops.

In this sense according with Dijkstra et al. (2019), FUAs are a powerful tool to compare socio-economic and spatial trends in cities and to design urban development policy.

This methodology has been applied to the boundaries of FUAs that characterize most European countries (Figure 2) and has been included in the updated European NUTS3 regulation (REGULATION(EU) 017/2391). This application demonstrates

how urbanization in Europe has progressively led to the formation of many metropolitan regions, thereby requiring specialised governance efforts.

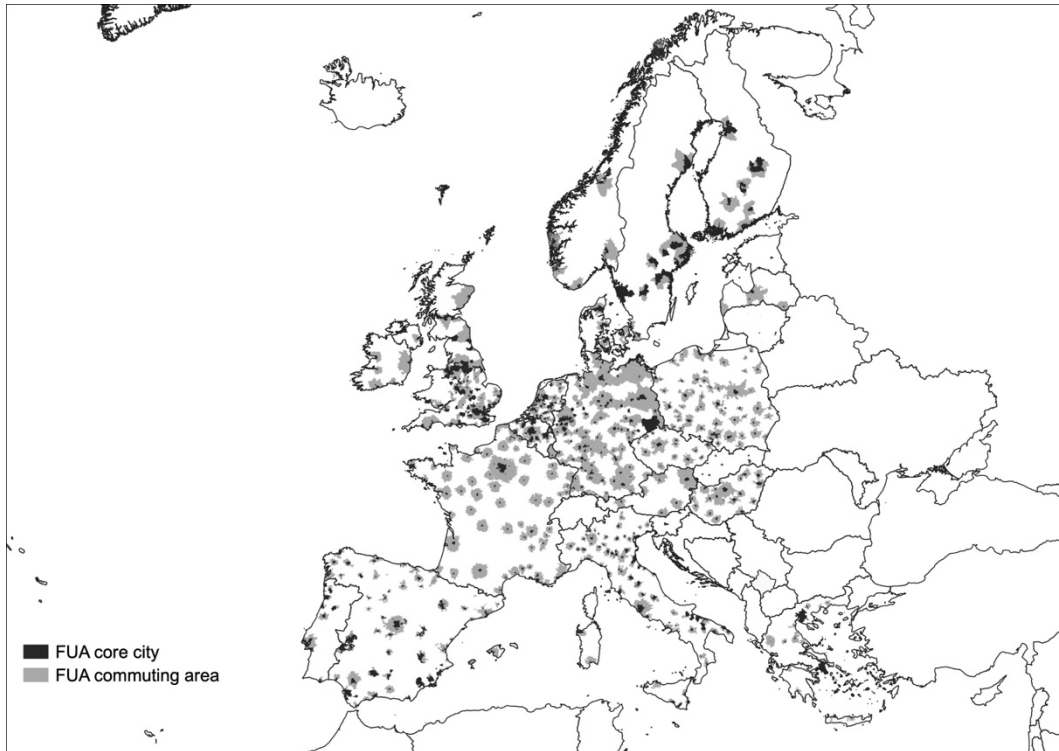


Figure 2 – FUAs in Europe. Source: Author’s elaboration on OECD data.

### ***ESPON SPIMA Methodology***

An alternative method for identifying the most appropriate configuration of the metropolitan area is developed within the SPIMA project of the ESPON Programme. In this project, a Metropolitan Development Area is referred to. The MDA does not represent a new spatial concept but defines areas based on area-specific concepts/scenarios. The MDA indicates the geographical extent of metropolitan areas as perceived by local or regional authorities and therefore can have fixed or ‘fluid’ boundaries. Some MDAs are based on the catchment areas of transport networks, while others are the result of specific institutional agreements between regions and municipalities. The MDA method is particularly useful for local planners as it allows them to assess the size of a metropolitan area based on key urban development factors such as transport, urbanisation, environment, and housing. Planners can see the overlap between MDA, FUA and MUA and understand the relationships between local government units within the urban area and outside the FUA boundaries. The method uses GIS tools based on local spatial

data and data from European and OECD databases, where they are represented at different scales (at the level of MDA, FUA and MUA) according to the aggregation of LAU2.

As there is no single definition of a metropolitan area that can represent urbanisation trends, administrative boundaries or actors' perceptions, the use of a customised MDA method can help define the most appropriate spatial scale. Assessing the 'geographical correspondence' between an MDA and key urban trends and the relationship between the MDA, FUA and MUA can be a useful decision-making tool in the planning and management of metropolitan areas (ESPON SPIMA, 2018).

### **2.3 Governing the metropolitan dimension**

As highlighted earlier, FUAs are essential for comparing socio-economic and spatial trends, as they more effectively capture agglomeration economies than traditional administrative regions. FUAs are also invaluable for guiding national and local governments in planning infrastructure, transportation, housing, education, and cultural spaces, thereby fostering positive changes in policy planning and implementation by addressing issues at the appropriate scale for both cities and their commuting zones. Over time, the inherent complexity of metropolitan areas has underscored the need for spatial policies and tools that address the integration of diverse urban functions and the coordination between core cities and surrounding municipalities (OECD, 2013). Consequently, for nearly three decades, metropolitan areas in Europe have been the focus of institutional experimentation. Public authorities across Europe have been developing strategic visions and plans to tackle metropolitan-scale challenges such as housing, mobility, urban planning, employment, economic development, and culture. These efforts aim to integrate spatial developments and engage both public and private actors at various levels, extending beyond the core city (Kübler & Heinelt, 2002; Healey, 2010; Albrechts et al., 2017; Malý, 2018). While metropolitan activities often involve informal inter-municipal cooperation that varies over time and depending on the issues, some governance structures have been established from the bottom-up to facilitate strategic planning and policy coordination among local governments. Additionally, in some countries, formal administrative bodies have been created top-down to manage and promote the development of metropolitan regions. Overall, various models of metropolitan governance have emerged, differing significantly in their level of institutionalization, distribution of powers,

competences, resources, internal structures, and involved actors (Tomàs, 2016; Zimmermann et al., 2020).

Before engaging with the topic of metropolitan governance, it is essential to first elucidate the concept of governance as it pertains to this thesis, particularly within the framework of spatial planning. Governance, in this context, refers to the complex and multi-layered processes, structures, and interactions through which collective decision-making and implementation occur, involving a diverse range of stakeholders, including public authorities, private sector actors, and civil society organizations. This conception of governance extends beyond the traditional notion of government (Kjaer, 2004), which is typically confined to formal institutions with legal authority to make binding decisions. In the realm of spatial planning, this distinction is critical, as metropolitan governance entails a more integrated and participatory approach to managing urban and regional spaces, where decision-making transcends the limits of conventional governmental frameworks and incorporates a broader array of interests and perspectives. Furthermore, the thesis addresses the dichotomy between governance and government, aiming to reduce the conceptual distinctions between these terms. Referring to Pierre and Peters (2000), the thesis conceptualises governance as the ability of government to formulate and implement policies, effectively guiding society.

### **2.3.1 The Metropolitan Governance**

According to Zimmerman (2007, 2020) the metropolitan governance refers to the governing of metropolitan regions. This can be achieved by a variety of processes, ranging from metropolitan ‘government’ to different forms of cooperation between different actors in a metropolitan area, referred to as ‘governance’.

Nowadays, metropolitan areas are the main level at which several key issues facing public authorities are concentrated, such as the phenomena of exclusion and socio-spatial segregation closely linked to the issue of security, but also issues related to environmental quality, access to and quality of the health and education system and many other issues. This level has become of fundamental importance in spatial government and spatial planning. It is the level at which all choices that are considered strategic for a given territory should be made.

However, according to Galland et al. (2020c), metropolitan regions are increasingly reliant on inadequate urban-economic infrastructures, as well as

fragmented governance and planning arrangements. These mismatches and coordination issues are intrinsically at the heart of the metropolitan question because they represent the starting point for cooperation in many contexts and yet they remain unsolved issues.

Related to this, building metropolitan governance aims to create cross-community tools, policies and practices on spatial governance, services and administrative functions. Acting on a metropolitan scale in terms of policies, practices, actions, institutions and agencies leads to numerous benefits for people and businesses: economies of scale; reduction of overlaps; increased investment; management efficiency in service activities and public functions; reduction of waste and improvement of services; enhancement of local capacities and adaptation to international standards.

According to Rebelo (2019) metropolitan governance assumes different forms, structures, and practices in different countries according to their political, social and economic features, and their historical institutional heritage. In this way, governance can be defined as a mix of formal and informal institutions. It extends beyond the city or municipal jurisdictional boundaries, surpassing pre-existing agreements and institutions, and demanding bigger geographical units and access to financial and human resources to deal with broader metropolitan issues (Sellers & Hoffmann-Martinot, 2009; Ye, 2014; Bird & Slack, 2007).

About the latter issue, numerous studies in Europe are underlining and deepening a process of change in the role of spatial planning currently underway. Numerous studies, to create hybrids of territorial and relational spaces, start to talk about the so-called *soft spaces*. Soft spaces constitute new spaces for development planning that can be relatively enduring or ephemeral, formal or informal, centrally sanctioned or locally driven (Allmendinger et al., 2014; 2015). The reflections on soft spaces focus mainly on spatial planning and governance, in which strategies go beyond the territorial level and are based on relationships and influences. Soft spaces are often accompanied by *fuzzy boundaries*, both help to manage those particular situations in certain sectors (transport, infrastructure, education, etc.) in which there is a mismatch between territorial and functional boundaries (resuming somehow the concepts underlying the constitution of FUAs) and which operate at variable scales.

Talking on the formal and informal institutions, a metropolitan institution with competencies and financial resources has different political and social implications

compared to a model of governance based on informal agreements. In this sense, Tomás (2020) states that if on the one hand, the capacity to implement metropolitan public policies (public transportation or sustainability) is higher when there are technical, human, and economic resources within an institution created with this purpose, on the other hand metropolitan governance is also shaped by the attitudes of local actors towards cooperation. In this line, could be very important for the metropolitan institutions if they can be really effective, try to have the capacity to ‘think metropolitan’, that is, to overcome local interests in the name of a metropolitan common interest, is also a key issue in metropolitan governance (Tomás, 2012).

Often this cooperation between formal and informal institutions is based on voluntary initiatives. These initiatives are based on networks and forms of institutional or voluntary cooperation, regulatory strategies, governance plans, capacities of local government bodies, interactions between public and private stakeholders (Lackowska & Zimmermann, 2010); and agreements between different governmental and organisational levels (Ye, 2014). Ye, in this sense, states that *voluntary cooperation is a governance-collaborative structure (without a permanent and independent institutional status) among adjacent cities involving the active collaboration of community-based organizations to decide and implement metropolitan policies (land use, planning and development, and provision of services).*

### **2.3.2 The role of municipalities in the metropolitan regions**

Municipalities play a crucial yet complex role within metropolitan governance structures. Effective place-based development requires tailoring policy actions to the unique needs and opportunities of specific territories, creating operational conditions that address local requirements and foster new functionalities (Barca, 2009). Small municipalities, often situated within the larger framework of metropolitan areas, contribute to and benefit from coordinated metropolitan policies aimed at more efficient service delivery, public goods management, and administrative functions (Wollmann, 2008). However, their integration into metropolitan governance presents significant challenges.

A key difficulty lies in establishing an appropriate geographical scope for metropolitan cooperation that aligns with the functional characteristics of the area. This includes navigating complex political alliances, power relations, and historical and cultural differences (Lefèvre, 1998; Brenner, 2009). The legitimacy and

effectiveness of metropolitan institutions often depend on these factors, potentially making them ill-equipped to address functional challenges if they are not aligned with the area's actual needs (Salet et al., 2015; ESPON, 2021). Municipalities often find themselves in a delicate position. Local political representatives from these municipalities play a decisive role in formalising metropolitan governance (Lefèvre & Weir, 2010). Despite recognising the challenges of addressing issues on a metropolitan scale, many European mayors are reluctant to consolidate metropolitan governments, preferring forums where decisions are made by consensus, preserving local autonomy (Hulst & Van Monfort, 2011; Dlablac et al., 2018).

The administrative role of small towns in metropolitan governance varies significantly depending on the degree of centralization within their national contexts. Comparative studies across different European countries reveal that formal metropolitan institutions, which are part of the administrative system, face distinct challenges related to their permanence and the necessity for cooperation among municipalities (Swianiewicz & Teles, 2019). The process of creating metropolitan governments often leads to tensions in the established power distribution, reflecting the political struggles among various levels of government (Lefèvre, 1998). In this sense, the role of small towns within metropolitan areas is multifaceted, involving their administrative evolution, spatial integration, and the development of cooperation instruments. Their effective engagement in metropolitan governance depends on navigating these challenges to enhance policy coordination and address city-region issues comprehensively (Cotella et al. 2024).

### **2.3.3 A quick glance at metropolitan governance models in Europe<sup>1</sup>**

Although the research focuses on the Italian context, it is useful to briefly examine the main metropolitan governance models present in Europe. These models vary significantly in terms of institutionalization, distribution of powers, scope of action, and the actors involved (Tomàs, 2016; Zimmermann et al., 2020; Cotella et al., 2024). These differences reflect the unique nature of cooperation in each metropolitan area, as well as the characteristics and evolutionary paths of various spatial governance and planning systems across Europe (ESPON SPIMA, 2018; Berisha et al., 2021; Nadin et al., 2024). Projects like ESPON SPIMA and

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<sup>1</sup> This paragraph was written based on an article currently in the final stages of publication: Casavola D., & Cotella G. (2024). "Metropolitan spatial planning for functional urban areas in Europe", in *Cuadernos de Ordenación del Territorio. Sexta época. Número extraordinario. Junio 2024*



ESPON METRO have analysed and evaluated the role of formalised metropolitan institutions in territorial governance and spatial planning, differentiating between strategic spatial planning, statutory planning activities, and collaborative planning. Examining these governance aspects provides insights into the dynamics of spatial planning processes at the metropolitan level (ESPON SPIMA, 2018; ESPON METRO, 2021). It is interesting to review how different European countries have adopted some form of metropolitan governance over time. An initial exploration of existing approaches can be drawn from the data compiled in the ESPON COMPASS project's national reports, revealing a rather diverse landscape (Figure 3):

- I. Countries characterised by rather limited urbanisation, that did not embark on metropolitan governance (Malta, Cyprus, Estonia, Lithuania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Liechtenstein, Iceland and Norway)
- II. Countries whose administrative system is suitable to manage metropolitan dynamics (i.e. large local administrative units in Bulgaria and Sweden and the relatively small provinces and cantons in the Netherlands and Switzerland)
- III. Monocentric countries dominated by the capital region, hence approaching metropolitan governance as an exceptional matter (Austria, Croatia, Denmark, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, Luxembourg).
- IV. Countries that, due to their federal or quasi-federal nature, have developed exceptional approaches (the cases of Brussels Capital Region in Belgium and Barcelona in Spain).
- V. Countries that have embraced policy-based metropolitan governance, often inspired by the New EU cohesion policy mechanisms (Czech Republic, Finland, Romania and Poland).
- VI. Countries that have introduced dedicated metropolitan governance institutions (France, Germany, Italy, Portugal and the United Kingdom).

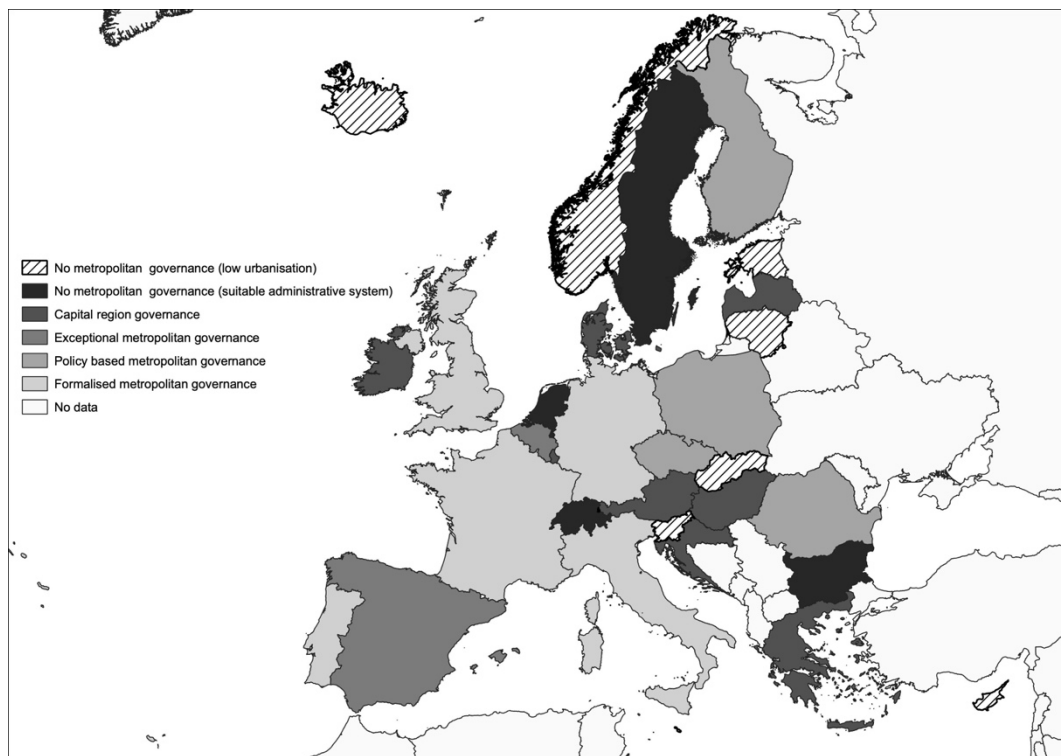


Figure 3 - Metropolitan governance approaches in Europe. Source: Casavola & Cotella, 2024

## 2.4 The European Union and metropolitan areas

Since multilevel governance has been defined to include the European Union, national states, regions and cities, it is commonly agreed that to effectively address the problem of metropolitan governance, it is necessary to position it within this framework. Therefore, it is important to consider both how European policies have affected cities and how much influence those cities have had over those policies when considering metropolitan governance in Europe.

In this sense, the relationship between the European Union and metropolitan areas is multifaceted, encompassing a wide range of discourses, governance frameworks, and policy initiatives that shape the development and functioning of these urban regions. One of the key areas of focus is the European narratives and official documents that outline the EU's vision and strategic priorities for metropolitan areas. These documents often set the stage for how metropolitan regions should evolve to meet economic, social, and environmental goals. In addition to these discourses, international organizations play a significant role in

shaping metropolitan policies and practices through guidelines, funding, and collaborative initiatives. The concept of Europeanization is also crucial, referring to the processes through which EU policies, norms, and governance models are adopted and adapted at the metropolitan level. This process influences how metropolitan areas are governed and how they align with broader European objectives. A critical component of this relationship is the EU's cohesion policy, designed to promote balanced development and reduce disparities across regions. The cohesion policy, along with the National Recovery and Resilience Plans provides substantial financial resources and strategic direction to metropolitan areas, aiming to enhance their economic resilience, social inclusivity, and environmental sustainability. These policies and plans are instrumental in driving the transformation of metropolitan regions, ensuring they contribute to and benefit from the overall progress within the European Union.

This section delves into these elements in detail, exploring the interplay between European discourses, international influences, governance practices, and policy frameworks that collectively shape the role and development of metropolitan areas within the EU.

### **2.4.1 European discourses and documents**

Until the beginning of the 1990s, the theme of urban policies was excluded from the European political agenda and the areas of competence of the Commission, as it was the responsibility of the nation-states.

It is only since 1994, with the launch of the URBAN<sup>2</sup> program as part of the European Regional Development Fund's programming, that this theme began to be dealt with independently and with a significant degree of depth, even if specifically dedicated to the theme of the regeneration of city suburbs.

Continuing the historical path, another important step was taken in 1999 with the presentation of the European Spatial Development Perspective, an orientation document, promoted by the ministers in charge of urban and land management, in which the theme of rebalancing European spatial planning was highlighted.

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<sup>2</sup> Community initiative concerning urban areas (URBAN), 1994-1999. The URBAN initiative is established to provide support to selected projects submitted by the Member States aimed at assisting socio-economically deprived urban areas.

A turning point came on 25 July 2001 when the European Commission published its *White Paper on European Governance*. The many keys to interpreting this text and the changes it brings with it are contained in the very concept of governance, which presupposes a new way of conceiving the decision-making process within the European Union and thus a new way of governing.

The big breakthrough consists in considering this process as an open process, both in terms of time and in terms of participation, with regard to the actors that this process involves. It is the European Union itself that has perceived this new reality and taken on the responsibility of launching a debate on the new governance, and it is therefore the European Union itself that has realised that the new concept of governance implies that decisions are increasingly formed with the participation of different actors within the Union, which no longer simply identify its institutions, but also include a series of subjects who have become interlocutors with respect to the European institutions, and not just recipients of their decisions.

According to what is written within the *White paper on European Governance*, the challenge for the Union is to renew the European political process. The questions raised by the White Paper and the answers it offers are linked to that renewal. Five principles underpin *good governance*, and the changes proposed in this White Paper: *openness, participation, accountability, effectiveness and coherence*. Each principle is important for establishing more democratic governance.

Furthermore, considering that the European Union is one of the most urbanised areas in the world and more than 70% of Europe's citizens lives in an Urban Areas, the development of Urban Areas will have a major impact on future sustainable development (economic, environmental, and social) of the European Union and its citizens. In this sense, has to be highlighted another important milestone in the European discourse on metropolitan areas, or urban areas, is the *Urban Agenda for the EU 'Pact of Amsterdam'*.

This Urban Agenda is a milestone of the European discourse on urban areas. It promotes a new approach based on a balanced, sustainable and integrated view of the urban challenges. It supports a joint approach between sectorial policies and different levels of government. It aims to develop the complementarity of policies affecting Urban Areas and to strengthen their urban dimension. *This can be achieved by involving all levels of government, by ensuring coordination and effective interaction between policy sectors, in full respect of the subsidiarity*

*principle and in line with the competences of each level. The Urban Agenda for the EU offers a new form of multilevel and multi-stakeholder cooperation with the aim of strengthening the urban dimension in EU policy* (European Commission, 2016).

## **2.4.2 International organizations**

In the early 2000s, associations of European cities and metropolitan areas such as Eurocities and METREX began to play an important role. Eurocities is a network of more than 140 European cities with the objective of ensuring that urban policies are central to Europe, of promoting transnational cooperation projects between network members, of facilitating access to EU funds, of promoting a methodology of networking between major European cities by seeking common working solutions between cities that have cultural, social, and economic differences.

Eurocities is one of the most influential urban networks in the EU, pioneering and a key example of how city diplomacy is seeking influence and relevance in the established world of international relations (Asdourian & Ingehoff, 2020). In Europe, this has been made particularly possible by the EU's focus on subsidiarity, which offers multiple opportunities to engage with and influence EU initiatives and policies, particularly on urban development and more recently the European Green Deal (Reichenbach, 2020). Eurocities is sometimes seen as an interest group more focused on re-establishing the power of the city over the nation-state than on connecting EU citizens across cities and borders.

METREX, on the other hand, is the 50-member network of European metropolitan regions and areas composed mainly of spatial planning experts. METREX contributes the metropolitan dimension to policies, programs, and projects on a European scale. The Network is a partner of European institutions, the research community, governmental organisations, and other networks. METREX contributes to EU programs and events organised by networks collaborating with, such as Eurocities, EMA and Metropolis.

EMA, in this line, is a forum for leading politicians from Europe's metropolitan cities and metropolitan areas to discuss the challenges of metropolitan governance. It is an initiative promoted by the Barcelona Metropolitan Area and creates spaces for political debate among European metropolitan authorities aimed at sharing experiences, fostering joint projects as well as positioning themselves and defending their interests in front of the European Union and states.

Furthermore, is very important the role of Metropolis. Metropolis serves as a global platform for city leaders and urban stakeholders to exchange ideas, share best practices, and collaborate on addressing common urban challenges. Metropolis organizes biennial congresses, regional meetings, and thematic forums where urban leaders and experts gather to discuss pressing issues and develop collaborative solutions. Metropolis stands as a pivotal organization in the global urban landscape, offering a vital platform for metropolitan areas to collaborate, innovate, and lead the way in sustainable urban development. By connecting cities and fostering partnerships, Metropolis continues to support the creation of more liveable, inclusive, and resilient metropolitan regions worldwide.

The role of those international organisation is crucial for the metropolitan regions around the Europe and world. They facilitate collaboration and knowledge sharing on metropolitan themes. By fostering a network of urban professionals and policymakers, they enable the exchange of innovative solutions and experiences related to metropolitan governance, urban planning, and sustainability. They aim at strengthening metropolitan governance supporting their members in improving governance structures and processes, enhancing transparency, accountability, and citizen participation.

EMA, Metropolis, and Eurocities each play vital roles in shaping urban development and governance. EMA focuses on the specific needs and challenges of metropolitan areas within Europe, Metropolis provides a global platform for major cities to collaborate and innovate, and Eurocities represents the collective interests of European cities in EU policymaking. Together, these organizations contribute to creating more sustainable, inclusive, and resilient urban environments, fostering cooperation and knowledge exchange among cities and metropolitan regions.

### **2.4.3 Europeanization and governance**

The Europeanization of planning has become in the last decades a topic very debated in planning literature. At this stage of this research will just briefly introduce the topic highlighting the main literature produced. In this sense, there is a broad literature (Böhme, 2002, 2008; Radaelli, 2003, 2004; Dühr et al., 2007, 2010; Barca, 2009; Cotella & Rivolin, 2010, 2011, 2015; Giannakourou, 2012; Faludi, 2014)

All of this author wrote about the Europeanisation of planning, distinguishes between the development at the EU level of new concepts, discourses, structures and instruments, and the mechanisms of policy transfer and learning and domestic changes brought about by the EU planning approach and European legislation (Faludi, 2014).

In this sense, this literature on Europeanization helps to conceptualise the European territorial governance. It will be defined *as set of simultaneous processes of (i) downloading of rules, policies and ideas from EU institutions to national systems; (ii) uploading of ideas and approaches from the systems to the EU level; and (iii) horizontal cross-influence of domestic systems through cooperation platforms set by the EU* (ESPON COMPASS, 2018)

According to the results by the ESPON COMPASS project, despite the absence of formal EU competence, Europeanisation takes place through various and simultaneous processes of influence: (1) the download of rules, approaches and ideas from the EU to national systems; (2) the upload of ideas and approaches from the national systems into the EU governance process; and (3) the mutual exchange of approaches between these systems through EU cooperation platforms.

National planning systems and policies in Europe are undergoing important transformations. While changes in domestic legal and administrative contexts, and planning discourses and contents of policies may be attributed to numerous internal and external factors, prominent among them seems to be the influence of the European Union.

In this light, Europeanization describes a variety of processes taking place at different levels of EU territorial governance Giannakourou (2012). These processes deal first with the emergence and development at the EU level of new concepts, discourses, structures, and instruments for European territorial cooperation and ultimately policy (Faludi & Waterhout, 2012; Kunzmann, 2006; Faludi, 2007). Furthermore, according to Giannakourou (2012) *Europeanization of planning has been approached as a governance process* (Rivolin & Faludi, 2005; Cotella & Rivolin, 2010), *as a process of institutional transformation* (Shaw & Sykes, 2003, 2005; Giannakourou, 2005), *and as a policy transfer, and lesson-drawing process* (Colomb, 2007; de Jong & Edelenbos, 2007; Dühr & Nadin, 2007; Hachmann, 2008) *and finally as a discursive process generating new meanings, material practices, and power-legitimacy relations* (Richardson & Jensen, 2000; Dabinett & Richardson, 2005) *and developing through the common participation and*

*interaction of national planning communities in the EU-based policy environment* (Böhme, 2003; Böhme & Waterhout, 2008; Servillo, 2011; Barbanente & Tedesco, 2012).

Coming back to the governance, from this perspective, the governance can be understood as a mode of government of the territory oriented to the pursuit of the European Union objectives of socio-economic-territorial cohesion, sustainable development and competitiveness. Therefore, governance policies arise from the desire to overcome the limits of a state that concentrates power on a single subject and delegates public power to several subjects.

At the metropolitan dimension, according to Fricke (2020), the emergence of metropolitan regions as European actors presents an exceptional case. Firstly, metropolitan regions present a particular case of subnational authorities emerging in the multi-scalar policy of Europe. ‘The metropolitan’ as a political label and research topic has witnessed an impressive upswing. The appraisal of metropolitan regions as hubs of economic flows, drivers of social transformation and territorial entities for inter-municipal cooperation – provocatively framed as the metropolitan revolution (Katz & Bradley, 2013) – contributed to metropolitan regions becoming a promising form of flexible governance arrangements in a new regional world – being subject of (complementary) territorial and relational governance approaches (Harrison & Growe, 2014).

International organizations claim that we are progressing towards a metropolitan century resulting from urbanization processes, understood as population growth in urban areas (OECD, 2015). This seeming triumph of the metropolitan region or, critically framed, the metropolitan fever (Leber & Kunzmann, 2006), is accompanied by the institutionalization and professionalization of metropolitan policies.

#### **2.4.4 Metropolitan area in the EU Cohesion Policy and Recovery and Resilience Facility**

Another theme that will be pointed out is territorial cohesion. In this sense, metropolitan areas have a vital role in strengthening territorial cohesion. According to what is emerging by ESPON METRO project, a number of European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) and tools have been progressively adapted to cater to their diverse needs. For instance, in the programming period 2014-2020, at least 5% of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) allocation is dedicated



to sustainable urban development strategies, through projects related to urban mobility, the regeneration of deprived communities, research and innovation capacity, tackling climate change, but also digitalisation and entrepreneurship.

This is evidence of how metropolitan areas and cities have progressively entered the EU cohesion policy discourse and started to receive attention by EU funding programs and tools.

In 2007, were adopted two different documents with a high impact on the territorial policies related to the European cities. These documents are the '*Territorial Agenda of the EU - Towards a More Competitive and Sustainable Europe of Diverse Regions*' and the *Leipzig Charter on sustainable European cities*. With the Lisbon Treaty, territorial cohesion was introduced as a basic goal for the EU alongside social and economic cohesion. To achieve this, EU cohesion policy is increasingly recognising the importance of integrated working throughout functional urban geographies. Certain elements of the new structural and investment funds aim to avoid the negative impact of previous instruments that unintentionally prevented cooperation across administrative boundaries and different types of territories.

Significantly, novel mechanisms have been introduced to enhance the adaptability of ESIF allocations to meet specific territorial requirements. Integrated Territorial Investments (ITI)<sup>3</sup> have been implemented to support the formulation and execution of comprehensive metropolitan development strategies, addressing the challenges of particular areas based on the key priorities of one or more ESIF programs. Concurrently, Community-Led Local Developments (CLLD) have been utilised to engage local communities and organizations in contributing to the attainment of the goals outlined in the Europe 2020 Strategy, emphasising smart, sustainable, and inclusive growth. This approach builds upon the previous LEADER Community Initiative, focusing on the active involvement of Local Action Groups (LAGs).

The EU's long-term budget for 2021-2027 and the Next Generation EU, approved on November 10, 2020, further reinforces the urban aspect of cohesion

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<sup>3</sup> The Integrated Territorial Investment (ITI) is an implementation tool that allows the aggregation of resources from several priority axes of one or more operational programs for the implementation of multi-dimensional and cross-sectoral interventions and is characterised by the provision of an integrated management and implementation regime. Source: Article 36 of Regulation (EU) 1303/2013 laying down Common Provisions on the EIS Funds; Commission Fact Sheet "Integrated Sustainable Urban Development - Cohesion Policy 2014-2020".

policy by allocating 8% of the ERDF budget to investments in sustainable urban development. Moreover, the restructuring into five policy objectives is expected to streamline ESIF management and facilitate their integrated utilization through ITI and CLLD. This enhanced integration aims to provide greater flexibility at all administrative levels and promote the formulation of comprehensive territorial development strategies tailored to specific local needs. Additionally, the newly established European Urban Initiative seeks to encourage cooperation, innovation, and capacity-building among cities across all thematic priorities of the EU Urban Agenda (Fioretti et al., 2020).

The rationale supporting an expanded role for metropolitan areas in territorial development has gained traction in recent months, particularly in light of the significant role that effective metropolitan governance models and mechanisms could play in the post-COVID-19 recovery phase (Metropolis, 2020; UN-Habitat, 2020; EWRC, 2020).

Within the Next generation EU initiative, the European Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) is the main instrument, and the metropolitan authorities should be key players in its planning and implementation. This is significantly argued by the *Position paper on the role of metropolitan areas in planning and implementing the European Recovery and Resilience Facility* published by EMA. This position paper aims to summarise how metropolitan areas should contribute to the planning and implementation of the RRF with a clear impact in citizens, companies, and other stakeholders.

In this position paper EMA states (EMA,2020):

*The metropolitan authorities on this territorial level are in the best position to set up integrated strategies and projects to implement the European Green Deal and the digital transition, while also ensuring that no one is left behind.*

They remark the importance of the role of metropolitan area and try to support the metropolitan level governance as the main level that will allow for a better sectorial and territorial coordination of policies (EMA, 2020).

In line with recent studies, the present research intends to accurately analyse how metropolitan governance is articulated in the different EU countries. Given the lack of comparative analysis of the phenomenon at the EU level, the research aims to fill the methodological and conceptual gap. In particular, the research intends to carry out accurate research, analysis, and comparison of metropolitan governance

within the EU countries. The final output will be to identify and share recommendations and best practices regarding metropolitan governance processes that will emerge during the research to be used as examples for other contexts.

# **3. Methodology**

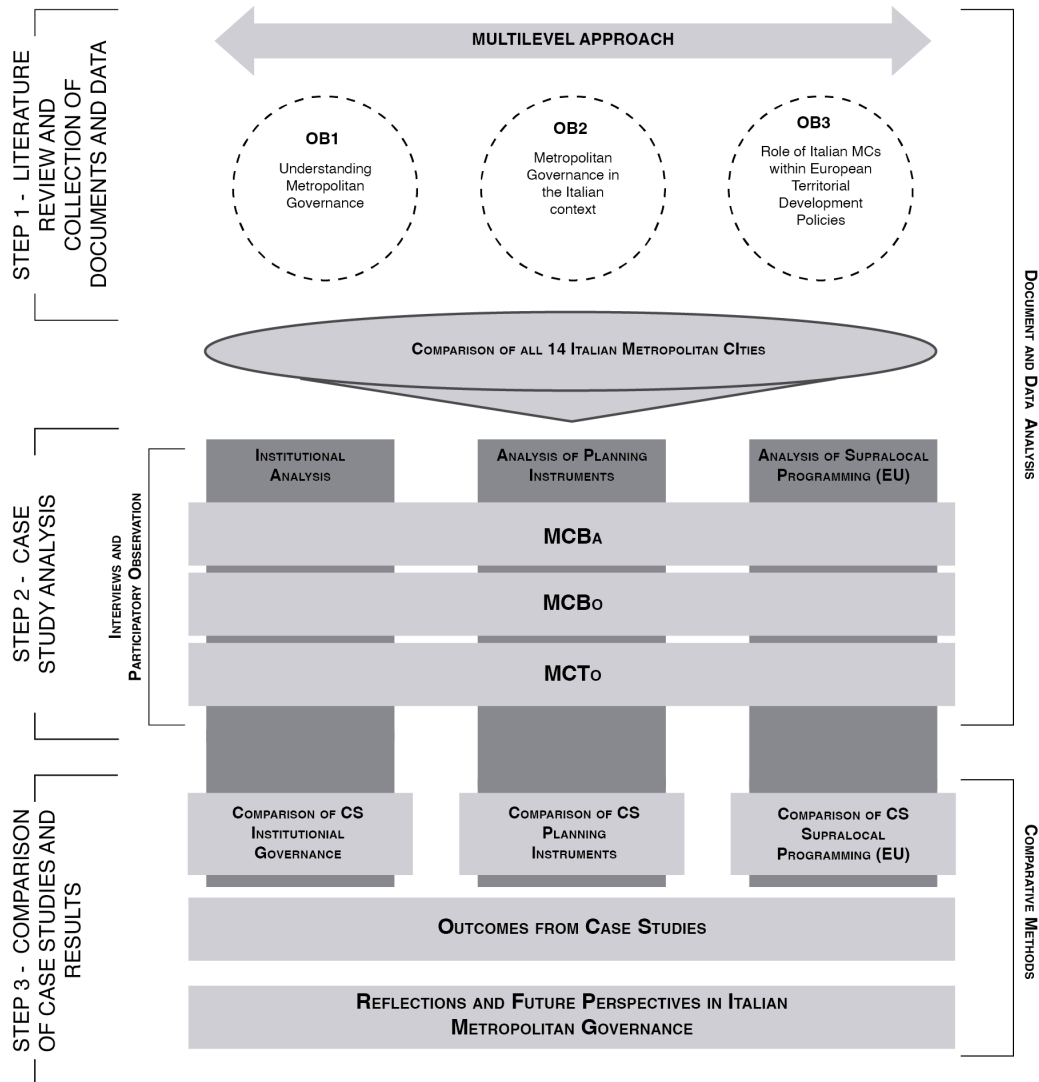
## **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter is provided a comprehensive overview of the research methodology and structure employed in this study. It begins with a detailed description of the structure of the research is elaborated upon (3.2), encompassing a thorough literature and documental review (3.2.1), the selection and examination of case studies (3.2.2), and the processes of comparison and results analysis (3.2.3). Furthermore, the chapter includes a section dedicated to the case studies' interview protocol (3.3), beginning with a foreword that contextualizes the importance and methodology of the interviews (3.3.1), and followed by a detailed explanation of the interview protocol itself (3.3.2). This structured approach ensures a rigorous and systematic exploration of the research questions, providing a solid foundation for the subsequent analysis and discussion.

## **3.2 The Structure of the Research**

The project's conceptual framework translates in three subsequent but strongly interrelated research steps, whose application throughout the project's lifetime allowed the research team to analyse, compare and assess the specific experiences and challenges that the stakeholders' metropolitan areas face in engaging with the EU cohesion policy and in employing the latter to achieve metropolitan goals (Figure 4).

## THE STRUCTURE OF THE RESEARCH



**Figure 4 - The Structure of the Research. Source: Author's elaboration.**

The research, from a methodological standpoint, was structured into three closely interconnected phases. The step 1 is the *literature review and collection of documents and data*. The activities related to the literature review included:

- Identifying and analysing academic studies, articles, books, and reports on metropolitan cities, metropolitan governance, planning tools, and supralocal programming. This allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the theoretical and practical context of the topic.

- Utilising academic databases such as Web of Science, Scopus, and Google Scholar to identify relevant sources. These databases were crucial in accessing a wide range of scholarly resources.
- Creating an annotated bibliography to summarize the main theories, methods, and relevant results, facilitating subsequent consultation and analysis.

The activities related to the collection of data and documents included:

- Collecting demographic, economic, and geographic data on Italian metropolitan cities. These data were essential for understanding the structural characteristics of the cities under examination.
- Acquiring official documents, strategic plans, regulations, and governance policies of the metropolitan cities. This enabled an analysis of the current administrative policies and practices.
- Consulting EU documents related to cohesion policy and national documents regarding the PNRR to understand the supralocal regulatory and programmatic framework impacting metropolitan cities.

The activities of the first step allowed for the building of a solid theoretical framework, framing the issue of metropolitan cities, and gathering pertinent and useful data and documents for subsequent analysis. Specifically, between Step 1 and Step 2 (case studies), there was an intermediate phase where a general comparison of all 14 Italian metropolitan cities was conducted from a demographic, economic, and specifically, a metropolitan governance and territorial planning tools perspective. This comparison was fundamental in defining the case studies.

The Step 2 is the *Case Study Analysis*. The main activities conducted to build the case studies included:

- Conducting semi-structured interviews with public officials, urban planning experts, and other key stakeholders. These interviews provided detailed qualitative information on the internal dynamics and administrative practices of metropolitan cities<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> The Interview protocol is presented in the paragraph 3.3.2

- Participant observation to collect firsthand data on governance and planning practices, allowing for a better understanding of the operational context and interactions among involved actors<sup>5</sup>.
- Analysing local documents, urban plans, and specific regulations of each metropolitan city to gain a detailed view of the policies and strategies adopted.

The three case studies were structured around three main themes. Specifically:

1. Institution Analysis:
  - Examining the structure of metropolitan governance and inter-municipal relations.
  - Analysing the collaboration and coordination among municipalities within metropolitan areas.
2. Analysis of Planning Instruments:
  - Evaluating the planning tools and techniques used.
  - Analysing the effectiveness and challenges of urban and strategic plans.
3. Analysis of Supralocal Programming (EU):
  - Examining the implementation and impact of EU cohesion policies.
  - Assessing the role of the PNRR in the development of metropolitan cities.

Finally, the Step 3 is *the Comparison of Case Studies and Results*. As previously mentioned, the comparison chapter is primarily based on the three defined main themes and was useful for identifying common patterns, significant differences, and best practices. In this phase, comparative methods were used to analyse the data collected in the case studies. Similarities and differences were identified in governance structures, planning tools, and the implementation of supralocal policies.

The main methodological tools used:

- Document Analysis: For the collection and analysis of secondary data.
- Qualitative Interviews: To gather primary data from stakeholders.
- Participatory Observation: To obtain a direct contextual analysis.

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<sup>5</sup> During the research period I actively contributed to the drafting of the PTGM and PSM of MCTo, and I have been involved in the drafting of the PSM of MCBa within the *'Tavolo dei Talenti e delle Giovani Generazioni'*

- **Comparative Methods:** To compare case studies and synthesize results.

The outlined methodological protocol allowed for a systematic and coherent structuring of the research, ensuring a solid theoretical foundation and a detailed collection of empirical data. The comparison of the case studies provided important insights for improving governance practices, planning tools, and supralocal programming in Italian metropolitan cities.

### **3.2.1 Literature and documental review**

The first phase of this research was devoted to a systematic review and critical analysis of the scientific literature dealing with the metropolitan dimension, with particular attention to policy and governance issues. A systematic review can be explained as a research method and process for identifying and critically appraising relevant research, as well as for collecting and analysing data from said research. In this sense, various search engines (Scopus, Web of Science, Google Scholar, ResearchGate) were queried with keywords that were the focus of the research program. The keywords used in the search were: Metropolitan Governance; Metropolitan Planning Tools; Inter-Municipal Relations; European Cohesion Policy; Metropolitan Development; Metropolitan Cities in Italy; PNRR; Territorial Cohesion; Metropolitan Area Planning; Metropolitan Policy; Regional Development; Spatial Planning; Governance Models in Metropolitan Areas; Delrio Reform. From these keywords, a first series of articles, books, chapters, and grey literature were selected, which were used first to complete chapter 2 of the research, and which were then used to analyse, deepen, and better explore the conceptual framework at the basis of the research.

Firstly, a review of the most important literature on making comparisons and of the evolution of the notions of territorial governance and spatial planning systems was carried out. Some of the key materials were Nadin & Stead (2013) and Reimer et al. (2014) on comparative planning research methods and trends; Nadin & Stead (2000) on planning and social models; Cotella & Rivolin (2011, 2015), Schmitt & van Well (2016), and Stead (2014) on territorial governance. After the first literature review, new bibliographic research was carried out, which was no longer general on the topics but entered the specific Italian context (chapters 4 and 5). In detail, extensive research of bibliography and useful data was carried out to obtain a complete and exhaustive declination of the metropolitan dimension in the Italian contexts. Laws, policy documents, national strategies, plans, and planning instruments were consulted.



An in-depth study of Italian legislation related to territorial planning was done. The study traced how the legislation evolved over time, starting from the fundamental urban planning law of 1956 up to the latest legislative updates. The legislative framework of the provincial level, which then became metropolitan with its institutionalization in 2014 with the Delrio Reform, was examined. The latter was the subject of an exhaustive study and was the reference law on which the research project was based. In particular, at first, the law was studied in depth and, secondly, the entire bibliography, both academic and non-academic, on the effects produced by the law was retrieved. Once the scale and scope of the project were defined, the next stage was data collection (qualitative and quantitative) for each metropolitan city. All the information and material relating to the metropolitan dimension were sought, starting from spatial planning and territorial governance; the organization of governance and the distribution of competencies; the typology of spatial planning and territorial governance instruments at regional, metropolitan, and local levels; the procedures for the allocation of development rights through plan and decision-making; the influence of EU legislation; and the influence of EU policy.

### **3.2.2 Case studies**

The analysis comprised two parallel phases of data collection and analysis: 1) the descriptive phase, involving document and data analysis; and 2) the interview phase, involving interviews with key actors. Regardless of which case studies were identified, the method of analysis for each case study, except for exceptional cases that might arise, was as follows.

The first phase of the case study analysis focused on the collection of quantitative and qualitative data from multiple sources, including scientific literature, policy documents, reports from previous studies, specific data from the case study areas, statistical data, and GIS data.

Key activities included:

- Collecting qualitative and quantitative data about the case study areas, such as key urban development trends and indicators, spatial structure, spatial dynamics, institutional frameworks, and planning systems.
- Conducting a socio-economic analysis of the area to gather all data useful for describing the metropolitan area under study.

- Consulting various European data databases (OECD, EUROSTAT), documents, and reports to obtain comprehensive information.
- Studying the system of governance and spatial planning in each specific metropolitan context.
- Reviewing spatial and strategic planning instruments to understand the planning approaches employed.
- Collecting GIS data to produce explanatory maps illustrating the spatial dynamics of the area.

This phase laid the groundwork for understanding the territorial context by providing a detailed and comprehensive description of each metropolitan area. The second phase involved conducting semi-structured interviews with key actors involved in metropolitan governance within the specific case studies. The design of the interviews and the analysis of the results were based on a scientific methodology for qualitative data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2013).

In this sense, the key activities included:

- Conducting an initial roster of interviews with actors identified during the first phase of the case study. These included institutional actors at various levels (not only at the metropolitan level), policymakers, planners, politicians, civil society representatives, and non-institutional actors such as local groups, private entrepreneurs, social partners, and academics.
- Building and using semi-structured questionnaires, which were then transcribed, analysed, and compared to gather insights from different perspectives.
- Interviewing key actors or re-interviewing them in an increasingly targeted way according to emerging doubts, reflections, criticalities, and curiosities during the research.
- Implementing a second round of interviews using the linear snowball sampling method. Initial subjects served as ‘seeds’, through which first-round subjects were recruited. These first-round subjects, in turn, recruited second-round subjects, expanding the sample progressively like a snowball growing as it rolls down a hill (Heckathorn, 2015).

By employing these two phases - document and data analysis followed by semi-structured interviews - the research aimed to provide a comprehensive and multifaceted understanding of metropolitan governance and planning practices. This approach allowed for the triangulation of data, ensuring a robust and nuanced

analysis of the metropolitan dimensions under study. The combination of quantitative data, qualitative insights, and spatial analysis facilitated the identification of key trends, challenges, and best practices across different metropolitan contexts, thereby contributing valuable knowledge to the field of urban and regional planning.

### ***The case study report structure***

As already mentioned in the previous paragraphs, the main aim of this case study report structure has been to allow the comparative assessment of the information collected. The structure of the case study report is presented in more detail in the table below (Table 1).

**Table 1 - The case study report structure<sup>6</sup>**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>TERRITORIAL ANALYSIS</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• THE PHYSICAL AND URBAN DIMENSION</li> <li>• TERRITORIAL STRUCTURE AND DEMOGRAPHY</li> <li>• THE ECONOMY OF THE TURIN METROPOLITAN AREA</li> </ul>  |
| <b>INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK ANALYSIS</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• THE REGIONAL PLANNING SYSTEM</li> <li>• THE EVOLUTION OF THE METROPOLITAN GOVERNANCE</li> <li>• GOVERNANCE SCHEME AND COMPETENCES</li> <li>• OTHER FORMS OF INTER-MUNICIPAL COOPERATION</li> </ul> |
| <b>SPATIAL AND STRATEGIC PLANNING INSTRUMENT AT METROPOLITAN SCALE</b>                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• THE METROPOLITAN GENERAL TERRITORIAL PLAN – PTGM</li> <li>• THE METROPOLITAN STRATEGIC PLAN – PSM</li> <li>• THE SUSTAINABLE URBAN MOBILITY PLAN - PUMS</li> </ul>                                 |
| <b>THE SUPRA-LOCAL PROGRAMMING – THE ROLE OF THE INSTITUTION BETWEEN COHESION POLICY AND PNRR</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• THE COHESION POLICY IN THE REGION</li> <li>• THE COHESION POLICY IN THE MC</li> <li>• THE NATIONAL RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE PLAN, PNRR</li> </ul>   |

**Source: Author's elaboration.**

<sup>6</sup> There may be some slight changes in the Case Studies (CS) structure, mainly related to some specific CS focuses.

### 3.2.3 Comparison and results

The information gathered for each case study, using the methodology detailed above and structured according to the case study report framework, was subsequently consolidated, compared, and evaluated. This comparative analysis aimed to assess the role that the three case studies play in multi-level governance within the Italian context and the broader framework of EU cohesion policy, also drawing insights from existing literature. Specifically, the findings from the comparative assessment were organised into the following categories:

- **Territorial Contexts:** Examining the geographical and socio-economic characteristics of each case study area.
- **Institutional Governance:** Analysing the structures and dynamics of governance institutions involved in each case study.
- **Planning Instruments:** Evaluating the planning tools and methodologies employed in the development and implementation processes.
- **Supra-Local Programming:** Assessing the influence and integration of broader, supra-local programs and initiatives on the case studies.

Starting from this comparison, chapter 10 has been designed to provide a comprehensive synthesis of the key findings derived from the case studies, incorporating critical analysis and future perspectives. The structure of this chapter is as follows:

- **Outcomes from the Case Studies (CS) (10.2).** This section presents and discusses the results obtained from the comparison of case studies. The objective was to highlight the main conclusions, similarities, and differences that emerged from the comparative analysis. The data collected have been synthesised to provide a clear and coherent overview.
- **The Delrio Reform and the Italian Metropolitan Cities (10.3).** This part of the chapter examines the impact of the Delrio Reform on Italian metropolitan cities. The analysis was conducted by considering the regulatory and institutional context, as well as the practical effects of the reform on local governance dynamics.
- **Research Limits (10.4).** This section discussed the limitations of the research, with particular attention to methodological constraints and potential sources of bias. The challenges encountered during the study and their possible influence on the results are highlighted.

- Future Perspective (10.5). The final part of the chapter focused on future perspectives and potential directions for further research. Areas for further exploration and improvement are suggested, based on the identified gaps and new questions that emerged from the case study comparisons.

This methodological structure allowed for a comprehensive and critical presentation of the findings, integrating the knowledge gained with reflections on future developments and practical implications for territorial governance and cohesion policies within the Italian and European contexts.

### **3.3 The Case studies' Interview protocol**

#### **3.3.1 Foreword**

Interviews and the information obtained from interviewees were key components of the case studies' strategy, providing primary data that, once processed, allowed me to address most of the research questions. For each case, I conducted between 8 and 15 stakeholder or expert interviews. It should be noted that this protocol served as a basic framework for the questions that needed to be addressed, with additional questions added to deepen the understanding of the case studies or adapted to fit their specificities.

Interviews typically lasted between 60 and 90 minutes. Therefore, it was important not to overwhelm interviewees with excessive questioning or to deviate too much from the focal issue. For instance, flexibility was crucial to avoid reiterating questions that interviewees may have already answered in previous sessions or open-ended discussions. At the same time, interviews were customised to each interviewee, prioritising questions and topics relevant to their role.

Unless opposition was expressed, interviews were recorded. Audio files were not a deliverable output of the research, but they helped in capturing details and facilitating the completion of the case study sections. Obtaining permission from interviewees to record was one of the preliminary tasks that required preparation before meeting with them.

#### **3.3.2 Interview protocol**

The aim of the interview protocol was to structure interviews for each case study as uniformly as possible. Ensuring uniformity across interviews in different case studies was crucial as it aimed to provide an empirical view and a solid

foundation for each case. Approximately 10 interviews per case study were conducted, targeting individuals in institutional roles within the sphere of influence of metropolitan governance relevant to each case study. For the interviewed see the table below (Table 2):

**Table 2 - Anonymised list of people interviewed**

|                      | <b>Institution</b>      | <b>Role</b>                | <b>Date of interview</b> |            |
|----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|------------|
| <b>MCBa</b>          | MCBa                    | Head of Department I       | 27/10/2022               |            |
|                      |                         | Head of Department II      | 15/01/2023               |            |
|                      |                         | PO – Department I          | 16/02/2023               |            |
|                      |                         | PO – Department II         | 13/10/2023               |            |
|                      |                         | Policy-makers              | 22/03/2023               |            |
|                      | Apulia region           | Head of Department I       | 11/10/2023               |            |
|                      |                         | Head of Department II      | 23/10/2023               |            |
|                      |                         | Regional councillor        | 24/07/2023               |            |
|                      |                         | PO – Department I          | 14/04/2023               |            |
|                      |                         | PO – Department I          | 10/05/2023               |            |
| Other municipalities | Mayor                   | 28/07/2023                 |                          |            |
| <b>MCBo</b>          | MCBo                    | Head of Department I       | 07/11/2022               |            |
|                      |                         | PO – Department II         | 20/01/2023               |            |
|                      |                         | PO – Department I          | 04/11/2022               |            |
|                      |                         | Policy-makers              | 14/05/2023               |            |
|                      | Emila-Romagna Region    | Head of Department I       | 27/03/2023               |            |
|                      |                         | Head of Department II      | 28/03/2023               |            |
|                      | Union of Municipalities | Managing director Union I  | 10/02/2023               |            |
|                      |                         | Managing director Union II | 13/02/2023               |            |
|                      | City of Bologna         | PO – Department I          | 14/05/2023               |            |
|                      | <b>MCTo</b>             | MCTo                       | Head of Department I     | 14/10/2022 |
| PO – Department I    |                         |                            | 18/10/2022               |            |
| PO – Department II   |                         |                            | 11/01/2023               |            |
| Policy-makers        |                         |                            | 22/02/2023               |            |
| Policy-makers        |                         |                            | 11/03/2023               |            |
| Piedmont Region      |                         | Head of Department I       | 11/04/2023               |            |
|                      |                         | Head of Department II      | 11/04/2023               |            |
|                      |                         | Homogeneous Zone I         | Spokesperson             | 08/05/2023 |
|                      |                         | Homogeneous Zone II        | Spokesperson             | 11/05/2023 |
|                      |                         | Union of Municipalities    | President                | 08/05/2023 |
| City of Turin        | PO – Department I       | 10/06/2023                 |                          |            |
|                      | PO – Department II      | 10/06/2023                 |                          |            |

**Source: Author's elaboration**

The objective of the interviews in this research project was to gain a deeper understanding of the functioning of the entire metropolitan governance structure following the Delrio reform, examining both its formal and informal aspects.

These interviews covered three thematic areas (the same macro-themes previously discussed in the paragraph):

- Governance
- Territorial and Spatial Planning
- EU policy

**0. Context and institutional setting (if missing or incomplete, 5 minutes maximum)**

0) Before starting with the interview proper, could you tell us a bit about XXXX (name of the institution/ group/ stakeholder)?

**1. Institutional Governance [25 minutes]**

The aim of this thematic box was to explore and deepen our understanding of the structure and functioning of metropolitan governance. Specifically, it focused on how metropolitan authorities have adapted to the 2014 Delrio reform. The study examined the role of these bodies from both technical and political perspectives, including their management of territorial areas, relationships with various institutional levels, and interactions with private stakeholders.

- How has the Delrio reform been transposed by the MCXX?
- Have there been any real changes post Delrio reform? If so, what were these changes?
- How has your institution reorganised itself from an institutional point of view? How, from an operational point of view?
- In relation to your institutional role, what have been the benefits of the reform?
- How does your institution relate to the supra and sub-ordinate levels in relation to metropolitan governance?
- What are the limits of the reform in the effective management of the metropolitan level?
- Are there good practices for metropolitan governance? Why are they successful in achieving territorial development objectives?
- Are the good practices identified transferable to other contexts? In which way?

**2. Territorial and Spatial Planning [20 minutes]**

The aim of this thematic box was to examine how spatial planning has changed with the new reform. Starting from the new strategic competence of the metropolitan authority, the aim was to examine the effects of the new metropolitan planning instruments on other institutional levels.

- How has the spatial planning of your institution changed in the framework of the Delrio reform?
- How have the new competences entrusted to the metropolitan authority affected your institution?
- Have there been any changes in the management of spatial planning post Delrio reform for your institution?
- How do the metropolitan spatial planning instruments affect your authority?
- Do you believe that the strategic component entrusted to the metropolitan area is the most appropriate scale for this type of planning? If yes, why? If not, which institutional body and its area of influence do you consider most appropriate?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of spatial planning instruments at the metropolitan level? What do you think could be improved?

### **3.EU Cohesion Policy and PNRR [20 minutes]**

The aim of this thematic box was to study and explore the role of EU Cohesion Policy in relation to metropolitan authorities. Specifically, it examined the metropolitan city's role within cohesion policy, the funds it accesses, how these funds are utilised, and their impact on the metropolitan territory.

- How do the metropolitan city of XXX is engaged within the EU cohesion policy?
- What funds and programs have an influence on the metropolitan authority?
- How does your institution relate to the metropolitan city with regard to EU cohesion policy funds?
- What is the role of the metropolitan authority within the management of EU cohesion policy funds?
- How is the European urban agenda implemented by the metropolitan level and how does it impact the planning and implementation of metropolitan policies?



- How does the EU cohesion policy contribute to consolidate and enhance metropolitan governance and cooperation?
- What could be improved in relation to EU cohesion policy and the role of the metropolitan authority?

### **Extra questions**

- What is your opinion about the reform?
- In our conversation we have already talked about many people, groups and institutions that affect or had affected by the metropolitan level. Can you think of any other that would be interesting to interview that would be very helpful for the aim of this research?

# 4. Metropolitan governance in Italy

## 4.1. Introduction

The governance of metropolitan areas in Italy has undergone significant evolution driven by legislative reforms and strategic planning initiatives. This chapter delves into the intricate framework of metropolitan governance in Italy, tracing its development through key legislative milestones and examining its integration into broader European cohesion policies. Starting with an exploration of the Italian spatial planning legislative framework (4.2), it analyses the concept of ‘*area vasta*’ planning and its legislative evolution (4.3). Central to our study are the pivotal legislative acts that have influenced metropolitan governance, including Law No. 142/1990 (4.4.1), the TUEL laws of the early 2000s and the reform of Title V (4.4.2), Law 135/2012 and Decree-Law 188/2012 (Section 4.4.3), and Law 56 of 2014, famously known as the ‘Delrio Law’ (4.4.4). The Delrio Law constitutes a pivotal juncture in the reform of metropolitan areas, establishing metropolitan cities and redefining governance structures within them (4.5). This section explores the hierarchical governance model and the strategic planning frameworks introduced under the Delrio reforms (4.5.1 and 4.5.2), while also considering the role and evolution of provinces within this new framework (4.5.3). Furthermore, this chapter delves into the integration of Italian metropolitan cities within the broader European cohesion framework, with emphasis on their participation in the ‘Metropolitan Cities 2014-2020’ National Operational Programme (4.6.1). Additionally, it explores the implications of the National Operational Programme ‘Governance and Institutional Capacity’ and the ‘*Metropoli Strategiche*’ project (4.6.2), as well as the evolving role of metropolitan cities in the 2021-2027 programming period and the initiative ‘*Città Medie del Sud*’ (4.6.3). The chapter concludes by examining the opportunities presented by the Recovery and Resilience Facility for Italian metropolitan cities, analysing their role within the PNRR (Section 4.7.1), the Innovative National Program for Quality of Housing (Section 4.7.2), and Integrated Urban Plans (4.7.3).

## 4.2 A brief overview of the Italian legislative system of spatial planning

The first law on territory dates from 1865, exactly four years after the constitution of the Italian State. In particular, on 26 June 1865, the first law of relevance to town planning was promulgated, Law n°2359 with the title '*Espropriazioni per causa di utilità pubblica*'. The law foresaw i) the expropriation at market prices for the realisation of public works (roads, railways, canals); ii) municipalities with a population of 10.000 inhabitants could draw up a master plan in which the alignments for building were drawn. This law can be considered the first fundamental law on expropriation for public works and at the same time introduces some of Italy's first urban planning instruments. Twenty years later, on 15 January 1885, Law 2892, known as the '*Legge di Napoli*', was adopted. It also made provision for the rehabilitation of the built-up area by declaring public utility for all the work required for this (unhealthy houses, wells, water, sewers). In 1903 the State introduced the first law on social housing, the so-called '*Legge Luttazzi*', which provided subsidised loans, particularly to cooperatives, for the construction of social housing. At the beginning of the 1930s, three important '*Testi Unici*' were approved: the first related to Municipal and Provincial Law, the second (also in 1934) to Health Law and the third, in 1938, to Social Housing.

In 1939, the introduction of two laws aimed at protecting the country's cultural and environmental heritage was particularly significant: i) the '*Legge Bottai*', law no. 1089 on the protection of heritage of historical interest; ii) law no. 1497 on the protection of natural heritage. The latter introduced for the first time a planning instrument expressly aimed at protecting landscape heritage and controlling the transformations affecting it, the Landscape Plan. Its scope, however, was limited to a logic of protection which, in accordance with the culture of the time, was concerned solely with the aesthetic value of objects and places, appropriately classified in special lists.

The current corpus of legislation on spatial planning and the articulation of planning instruments is based on Law no. 1150/1942, the '*Legge Urbanistica*'. This national law, approved by the Italian Parliament in the middle of the Second World War, opens a planning system. It provides for multi-level planning, with a strongly centralised and hierarchical approach, in which a clear distinction emerges between the supra-municipal scale and the municipal scale, which is given the central role in governing territorial transformations. This law provided the State with an

instrument, the Territorial Coordination Plan (*Piano Territoriale di Coordinamento, PTC*), while for municipalities it introduced the General Municipal Regulatory Plan (*Piano Regolatore Generale Comunale, PRGC*). This instrument was not compulsory and only municipalities included in a list drawn up annually by the Ministry of Public Works were obliged to draw up it. The municipalities drew up the PRGC, which was accompanied by a more lightweight instrument, annexed to the Building Regulations (*Regolamento Edilizio*), called the Building Programme (*Programma di Fabbricazione*), which assigned the building index to the entire municipal territory (high, low and medium buildability). The buildability index was lower in the suburbs than in the city centres. As regards the State level, the law assigned to the State an instrument for territorial planning: the *Piano Territoriale di Coordinamento*. This plan was not compulsory, and it was up to the State to decide whether, how and when to use the PTC. The PTC was intended as an instrument for coordinating municipal plans and unlike the PRGC it did not refer to private property, but aimed to guide, direct and coordinate spatial planning. However, over the years, no PTC was ever made.

Until 1970 there were two Italian authorities responsible for spatial planning: the State and the municipalities (since the 1942 law). The provincial level exists but is not competent in the field of spatial planning. Until then, the provinces are elective institutional subjects of the first degree, with sectoral and administrative competences. The provinces have jurisdiction over roads, high schools, some competence in the field of social welfare and some competence in agriculture. In 1970, the regions were established. Until that time, the state never applied its planning competence. As mentioned above, it could have used the PTC, but it has never used it. With the institution of the Regions, already foreseen in 1947 but established in 1970, the planning of supra-municipal territory passed from the State to the Regions. The State no longer has a planning instrument but provides itself with a document that is named the Fundamental Lines of National Territorial Planning (*Linee Fondamentali di Assetto del territorio nazionale*). It is a sort of programmatic document that identifies the strategic and structural scheme, which constitutes the structure and reference for spatial planning promoted by the regions and applied effectively by the municipalities. The dual (state-municipality) planning system changed in 1970 into a tripolar system: the State, the Regions and the Municipalities. Since 1970, therefore, the two fundamental planning activities (regional and municipal) are hinged on one territory: the territory of the Region and the territory of the Municipality.

Moreover, it is necessary to dwell on some very relevant sectorial legislative measures of the State: i) Law n. 167 of 1962 for social housing (a law that always drags along the theme of expropriation - a problem of Italian town planning); ii) Law n. 765 of 1967, the so-called '*Legge ponte*'. Going into the details of this law, the article 17 represents the reformist heart of the law itself. This article introduces the obligation for municipalities to have a general town planning instrument (*Piano Regolatore Generale or Programma di Fabbricazione*) with a strong limitation to building activities outside and inside the perimeter of the built-up area in case one of these instruments is not provided. In 1968 an important piece of legislation was issued, the Interministerial Decree 1444 of 1968, implementing the *Ponte* Law, and in particular the Article 17. This decree introduces into Italian law the obligation of a public city provision: the urban standards. This period of legislation by the State ended in 1977 with the '*Legge Bucalossi*' (law n.10 of 1977). The latter was supposed to constitute the final legislative process that began with the Law of 1942 and passed through Law 765/1967.

At the regional level, from the legislative point of view, the regions in the first legislature dealt with the development of their apparatus and statutes, while in the second legislature they began to adopt Regional Urban planning Laws, LUR. At the end of the 1970s, therefore, the regions were almost all endowed with their first LUR. In that historical moment the LURs tried to implement the best aspects of the *Ponte* law, which are: i) the standards (the obligation of the public city); ii) the obligation of the general urban planning (without which a building permit is given). In this phase, the Regions also started to experiment with multi-level governance. In fact, some Regions equipped themselves with a structure called *Comprensorio*. The *Comprensori* were bodies of the Region that set themselves the task of preparing an interrelated act of territorial planning and socio-economic planning. This experiment, however, did not last long, and in fact the experience of the *Comprensori*, which began in 1977, ended in 1990 when, with National Law n.142 of 1990 - *Ordinamento delle autonomie locali*. With this law, the experience of the *comprensorio* is definitively abandoned and planning competences are transferred to the provinces.

In 1985, 45 years after the *Legge Bottai* of 1939, the *Galasso* Decree legislated on the environment and the landscape, this time in systematic terms and with impositions on ministerial and regional inertia regarding Landscape Plans. The Regions are required to draw up Landscape Plans (*Piano paesaggistici*). Law n. 431 of 1985 will be followed by the Cultural Heritage Code n.42 of 2004 (*Codice dei beni culturali*), which covers, on the one hand, monumental, architectural and

artistic heritage and, on the other, the landscape heritage over which the State exercises protection.

Another milestone in the history of Italian territorial government is the reform of Title V of the Constitution in 2001. In particular, in those years there was a strong sense of regionalism spreading in the Italian context and the reform of Title V aimed precisely in this direction. In fact, the Regions were strengthened in the field of territorial government which became a matter shared between the State and the Regions. The State has been left with the exclusive competence for environmental protection. This relationship between the State and the Regions has evolved over the years. Regionalism started with great enthusiasm in the 1970s and had its almost federalist moment with the Constitutional reform of 2001. However, this process feared a counter revolution in a centralist key, a real weakening and downsizing of the Regions, with the attempt of the constitutional reform of the Renzi government (referendum not confirmed) in 2016. This attempt, on the contrary, has revived the 2001 Title V and has also given the Regions an extra push in making stronger claims regarding the application of Article 116 of the Constitution on differential autonomy. For this reason, three generations can be outlined: i) the generation of the initial enthusiasm, the first generation of LUR; ii) those straddling the reinforcement of the 2001 regions; iii) the generation of the renewal of regional autonomy and regional differentiation. Finally, in terms of time, the last significant reform about territorial government is the ‘Delrio reform’, Law n.56 of 7 April 2014 titled ‘*Disposizioni sulle città metropolitane, sulle province, sulle unioni e fusioni di comuni*’.

### **4.3 The ‘area vasta’ planning and the legislative evolution**

The origin of ‘area vasta’ planning arises from the need for effective solutions combining administrative efficiency and political applicability. It begins to be defined as the first kind of decentralisation that took place at the beginning of the twentieth century from the 1920s to the end of the 1930s, from the Wall Street crash to the outbreak of the Second World War, both in Great Britain and the United States and in Italy (Bottini, 2003).

Law n.1150/1942 can be considered the starting point following the introduction of two important planning instruments: the Inter-municipal Plan (*Piano intercomunale*), intended to regulate changes in the territory in areas of higher density, and the Territorial Coordination Plan (*Piano territoriale di coordinamento*), to regulate larger areas, which extended from the inter-municipal

to the vast area. It should all be considered that for more than fifty years large area planning was rarely applied for reasons that are part of Italian urban planning historiography (Longo & Cicirello, 2015). Only in the 1970s, considering the limits that had emerged in managing material, but above all immaterial relations transcending the administrative boundaries of the city municipality (Ciampi, 2013), an attempt was made to reintroduce into planning the vast area dimension favoured by the institution of the regions. The latter, as introduced in the previous paragraphs, were the depository of a regulatory framework for spatial planning, capable of integrating urban policies with the competent infrastructural ones of the State.

However, the limits of the 'area vasta' planning 'at regional scale' soon emerged due to the operational and procedural gaps between the decisions applicable by the region and those of the municipalities. As already mentioned, it was precisely because of this limitation that the need for intermediate planning arose, leading to the definition of '*comprensori*'. This experiment also ended negatively due to their nature as second-degree elected bodies with no political weight since they were decision-making bodies appointed by the municipality or the region. In this period, the unresolved issue of the contrast between central power and local autonomies emerged, which has always been characterised by conflicts, resistance and frictional dynamics (Galluccio, 2013) and, more generally, the dyscrasia between politics and territorial planning (Landini, 2013). For these reasons, in the 1970s the theory prevailed that for each level of planning there should be a government directly elected by the citizens (Salzano, 2003). In the following decades, the idea of assigning the planning of the intermediate level to the provinces began to emerge, which in the 1948 constitution became elected bodies of the republic, but with competences limited to a few sectors (hunting, fishing, high schools, intermediate roads, etc.).

Only in 1990, with Law 142, the provinces obtained the necessary powers for the 'area vasta' planning, as established by article 14, first comma, leaving to the regions the task of defining objectives, procedures, and planning resources belonging to the region. In this way the planning of provincial 'area vasta' came to hinge at an intermediate level between the two previous ones: the Municipality and the State (or the Region). The Provincial Coordination Territorial Plan, PTCP, was introduced, with the task of determining the general guidelines for territorial planning, reinforcing the centrality of this level of government, despite the introduction in the same law of Metropolitan Cities within which the provinces took on the name of Metropolitan Cities.

Ten years later, in the year 2000, the TUEL (*Testo Unico sull'ordinamento degli Enti Locali*) was released and subsequently approved with DL n.167. The TUEL reaffirmed the province's role as 'area vasta' with reference to those administrative functions of provincial interest in the sectors specified in the same article, which remain the same as those of Law 142/1990. Despite this dual profile, a body of local autonomy on the one hand and with decentralisation functions for the control of local power on the other, attempts have been made several times over the years to abolish them. The first reflections on a possible abolition of the authority began in 2011 with Law Decree n.38, Further Urgent Measures for Financial Stabilisation and Development (*Ulteriori misure urgenti per la stabilizzazione finanziaria e per lo sviluppo*), more commonly called 'Salva-Italia', converted into Law n. 148/2011. This law envisaged a gradual emptying out of provincial functions, the latter being reduced to coordinating and directing the actions of municipalities. Subsequently, in 2012, with Law Decree n.95 (the so-called *Spending Review*), converted into Law 135/2012, the functions of 'area vasta' were reallocated to the province, while maintaining its nature as a second-degree elective body, with reference to territorial planning, transport services and school buildings for second-degree schools (Marchetti, 2014).

Along with the process of abolishing the provinces, the process of establishing metropolitan cities is being pursued, which had already begun in 1990, continued with the TUEL and then concluded with the Delrio law (Law n.56/2014), which gives the metropolitan authority a very important role in 'area vasta' planning. In fact, according to the content of the law, metropolitan cities and provinces are defined as territorial entities of 'area vasta', whose functions apply to their respective areas of reference. From this fragmented regulatory framework emerges a transitional situation that, on the one hand, intends to move in the direction of a greater push to the territorial autonomies for the relaunch of the country's competitiveness, without prejudice to the principles of subsidiarity, differentiation and adequacy (ex art.1, comma 1, Law n. 56/2014), on the other hand, it generates frictions and doubts about the new architecture, which presents criticalities and weaknesses, starting from the uncertainties on the institutional changes deriving from the constitutional adjustments and with reference to the real operativeness of the Metropolitan Cities which, as of 1 January 2015, took over from the Provinces of the same name, succeeding them in all active and passive relations and exercising their functions (ex-art. 1, comma 16, Law no. 56/2014).



## 4.4 Main steps in the regulatory evolution of metropolitan areas

### 4.4.1 The Law no. 142/1990

Legislators only began to address the issue of metropolitan areas in 1990 with National Law no.142, although their role had already emerged in the 1970s as part of the discussions on local government reform. The Law n.142/1990 was therefore part of the decentralisation process, outlining the role and powers of provinces, municipalities and metropolitan areas. Despite a precise definition of metropolitan areas, the legislation emphasised the particularity and reason for its introduction into local government in the relations that arose between central and neighbouring municipalities. In detail, Art. 17 identifies *‘metropolitan areas such as the areas including the municipalities of Turin, Milan, Venice, Genoa, Bologna, Florence, Rome, Bari and Naples and other municipalities whose settlements are closely integrated with them in terms of economic activities, essential services, social life, cultural relations and territorial characteristics’*<sup>7</sup>. In this sense, the legislator seems, therefore, to have adopted a mixed criterion in defining the metropolitan areas: on the one hand, the cities to which the metropolitan areas belong are indicated, i.e. the metropolitan clusters, and, on the other hand, the municipalities destined to fall within the respective areas around the poles are not indicated as clearly, but only a generic reference is inserted (Recupero Bruno, 2001).

The legislator, therefore, rejects ‘an area model as an abstract and homogeneous category, a single scheme within which to rigidly summarise the various realities’ (Vandelli & Barusso, 2002), indicating the parameters, including the integration of production activities and the management of services, that determine the formation of a metropolitan area. The adoption of this normative system entails the choice between two paradigms: that of ‘delimited area’, which includes only the ‘conurbation’ (Armao & Matta, 1997), i.e. the whole of the provincial capital and the neighbouring centres where there is no interruption of the built-up parts; or that of ‘vast area’, which also includes portions of ‘rural areas’ (Spasari, 1995), which have the type of relationship with the urban conglomerate defined by the norms.

The law requires the regions to establish the territorial boundaries of each area, after consulting the municipalities and provinces involved. In cases where the

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<sup>7</sup> Article 17 of Law n. 142 of 8 June 1990 - *Ordinamento delle autonomie locali*

metropolitan area did not coincide with the provincial territory, new provincial boundaries or new Provinces would have to be defined, as provided for in Article 16, the metropolitan area being considered as the territory of a new Province. In this sense, it seems that the 1990 law considered it appropriate to research and study the optimal territorial dimension with respect to the characteristics of the metropolitan area, to be able to govern its dynamics and meet its needs as effectively as possible. The latter, within the metropolitan area, assumes the role of metropolitan authority, with specific statutory powers, taking the definition of ‘metropolitan city’. It is therefore configured as a new institution at an intermediate level between the Region and the Municipality, with the aim of managing a larger inter-municipal territory. As regards functions, Art. 19 would have assigned to the metropolitan city not only those of a provincial nature, but also those ordinarily attributed to the municipalities, in cases where they were of a supra-municipal nature or could be coordinated in the metropolitan area for reasons of economy and efficiency. In particular, the areas of municipal competence within which the metropolitan government could exercise its functions were: *a) spatial planning of the metropolitan area; b) mobility, traffic and transport; c) protection and enhancement of the cultural heritage and the environment; d) soil protection, hydrogeological protection, protection and enhancement of water resources, waste disposal; e) collection and distribution of water and energy sources; f) services for economic development and large-scale commercial distribution; g) wide-area services in the fields of health, education and vocational training and other urban services at metropolitan level*<sup>8</sup>.

#### **4.4.2 The laws of the early 2000s. The TUEL, and the reform of Title V**

Ten years after Law no.142/90, the legislature has once again focused on regulations concerning the metropolitan area. There were two regulatory changes at the turn of the millennium. The first one is the Law no.265 of 03.08.1999 - *Disposizioni in materia di autonomia e ordinamento degli enti locali, nonché modifiche alla legge 08.06.1990, n. 142*. The law aimed to extend the autonomy of local authorities to all decisions relating to local administration, such as spatial planning, functional organisation and the specific activities of the various bodies. It allowed for the possibility of different decisions according to the different interests involved locally, and no longer used operational paradigms valid for all cases. To

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<sup>8</sup> Article 19 of Law No 142 of 8 June 1990 - *Ordinamento delle autonomie locali*

ensure the application of the reform introduced by the aforementioned law, local authorities had to adapt their statutes in a short time to the new principles introduced concerning the implementation of the new governmental structure and the fair functioning of local powers. The second law, decidedly more relevant and bringing significant novelties regarding the form and procedure of establishing the metropolitan authority, was the so-called '*Testo Unico sull'ordinamento degli Enti Locali*', TUEL. The main innovation concerning the definition of the metropolitan area is contained in Article 22 of the TUEL, which states that to form a metropolitan area, there must be close territorial integration between the main municipality and the surrounding municipalities in terms of economic activities, essential services for social life, cultural relations and territorial characteristics<sup>9</sup>. In this sense, the theme of planning the vast area linked to the metropolitan area is further reinforced, which no longer includes only the main municipality and its surrounding areas, but also introduces the functional component. There is a reversal in the process of establishing the authority. In particular, the municipalities and provinces are not only consulted by the Region, as provided for in Law 142/90, but assume the role of subjects capable of proposing the establishment of metropolitan areas. The region, which is no longer responsible for implementation, is required to proceed based on a proposal from the local authorities concerned.

This is reiterated in the Article 23 of the TUEL, comma 1. In the metropolitan areas referred to in Article 22, the metropolitan municipality and the other municipalities linked to it by territorial contiguity and close integration in terms of economic activity, essential services, environmental characteristics, and social and cultural relations may form themselves into metropolitan cities with a differentiated system. Comma 2. To this end, on the initiative of the local authorities concerned, the mayor of the capital city and the president of the province shall convene an assembly of the representatives of the local authorities concerned. The assembly, on the assent of the municipal councils, shall adopt a proposal for the statute of the metropolitan city, which shall indicate its territory, organisation, internal organisation and functions<sup>10</sup>.

Regarding the functions of the metropolitan authority, the TUEL states that the metropolitan city assumes the functions of the province, and if the metropolitan city does not coincide with the territory of the province, the provincial territories are redefined or new provinces are established. As regards the functions coordinated

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<sup>9</sup> Extract from the art.22 of the TUEL

<sup>10</sup> Art.23 of the TUEL

with the Region, in Art. 24, ‘the region, after agreement with the local authorities concerned, may define supra-municipal areas for the coordinated exercise of the functions of local authorities, through forms of association and cooperation, in the following matters a) territorial planning; b) infrastructural networks and network services; c) inter-municipal traffic plans; d) protection and enhancement of the environment and detection of atmospheric pollution; e) soil and hydrogeological protection interventions; f) water collection, distribution and purification; g) waste disposal; h) large-scale commercial distribution; i) cultural activities; l) functions of mayors pursuant to Article 50, paragraph 7. The regional provisions issued pursuant to comma 1 shall apply until the establishment of the metropolitan city’<sup>11</sup>.

Following the legislation, there is no automatic transfer of functions to the metropolitan city, but the possibility of creating forms of cooperation is envisaged. Another consideration is related to the fact that the list of functions considered ‘metropolitan’ does not include some functions that were instead present in Article 19, such as the protection of environmental assets, and services in the vast area of health, education and professional training. The evolution of the metropolitan authority’s regulatory path is intertwined with the reform of Title V of the Constitution, defined by Law 3/2001. The reform radically changes the traditional hierarchy of the various levels of government on which Italy is founded. Indeed, the reform constitutionally legitimises the metropolitan cities. In fact, they are put on an equal footing with regions, provinces and municipalities. Article 114 states that ‘The Republic is constituted by Municipalities, Provinces, Metropolitan Cities, Regions and the State. Municipalities, Provinces, Metropolitan Cities and Regions are autonomous entities with their own statutes, powers and functions according to the principles established by the Constitution’<sup>12</sup>. The metropolitan city thus becomes a new form of territorial government recognised by law as a local authority. With this legislation, the legislator does not seem so much focused on ensuring, with specific rules, this level of government and its relations, as ‘a desire to confer equal dignity at all levels and without the need for special maieutic rules on municipalities, provinces and metropolitan cities’ (Palombelli, 2003).

To implement the changes included in the Constitution, Law no.131/2003 ‘Disposizioni per l’adeguamento dell’ordinamento della Repubblica alla legge costituzionale 18 ottobre 2001, n.3’, known as the ‘La Loggia’ law, was promulgated. This law entrusts the Government with the task of legislating, by

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<sup>11</sup> Art.24 of the TUEL

<sup>12</sup> Art.114 Title V – Italian Constitution

adopting specific legislative decrees, to establish the basic tasks for the functioning of metropolitan cities and their ability to govern the area they refer to.

#### **4.4.3 Law 135/2012 and Decree-Law 188/2012**

The debate on the reorganisation of local autonomies returned to the agenda with the establishment of the Monti government, which in 2012 adopted a law to revise public spending, Law 135/2012 - *Disposizioni urgenti per la revisione della spesa pubblica con invarianza dei servizi ai cittadini, nonché misure di rafforzamento patrimoniale delle imprese del settore bancario* - and the interventions detailed in Articles 17 and 18. This law deals with the so-called ‘spending review’<sup>13</sup> and addresses the reorganisation of the Italian governance system with a view to reducing public expenditure. This approach of the law, strongly focused on the containment of public spending, has probably caused a lack of attention with respect to the true scope of the law, since it has introduced important innovations on the issues of territorial government and local authorities. As anticipated, there are two relevant articles about territorial government, articles 17 and 18. The first, following the national policy of public expenditure containment, concerns the reduction of provinces based on minimum requirements linked to territorial size and resident population. While on the one hand it is hoped that the provinces will be reduced, on the other their role as bodies with wide-area functions is confirmed and strengthened with reference to territorial planning, public transport services and the building of secondary schools. The reorganisation plan does not include provinces with a regional capital within their territory or those bordering on other regions and those bordering on one of the suppressed provinces that have been transformed into metropolitan cities. Article 18 abrogates Articles 22 and 23 of the TUEL and establishes, with effect from 1 January 2014, the metropolitan cities of Rome, Turin, Milan, Venice, Genoa, Bologna, Florence, Bari, Naples and Reggio Calabria, whose territory coincides with that of the respective province that has been abolished at the same time, without prejudice to the power of the municipalities concerned to decide to join the metropolitan city or, alternatively, a neighbouring province. The fundamental functions of the province are transferred to the metropolitan cities.

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<sup>13</sup> Law No 135 of 2012 converts into law Decree-Law No 95 of 6 July 2012 ‘*Disposizioni urgenti in materia di revisione della spesa pubblica con invarianza dei servizi per i cittadini*’. This implements Articles 114 and 117 of the Constitution.

The fundamental functions of the province considered are: 1) general territorial planning and infrastructure networks; 2) the structuring of coordinated systems for the management of public services, as well as the organisation of public services of general interest in the metropolitan area; 3) mobility and viability; 4) the promotion and coordination of economic and social development. From the point of view of functions, there are no substantial differences with the provisions of Law 142/1990. On the contrary, the government bodies have changed substantially, as the Council and Councillors have disappeared and the Provincial Council and the President of the Province, who can be elected by a second-tier system, remain. The law therefore places general territorial planning alongside coordination planning, which is typical of the provinces, to be understood as configurative planning of the territory and strategic vision for policies and projects (Barbieri, 2012). On the contrary, it would be inappropriate for the new institutional level to define general territorial planning as regulating and conforming to property, a competence that should be left to metropolitan municipalities, which will have to draw up operational plans and regulatory tools that are consistent and integrated with the general territorial plans of metropolitan cities. In any case, it is necessary to specify that Law 135/2012 marks the start of a process that has the merit of having stimulated public and private actors to discuss and experiment with examples of territorial governance, renewing interest in issues of particular importance for the development of the territories.

This process is still suspended, interrupted by the Constitutional Court's sentence no. 220 of 3 July 2013, which declares articles 17 and 18 of Law 135/2012 unconstitutional, justifying the decision to use the instrument of the decree-law, which is valid in cases of necessity and urgency but not to proceed with an organic reform and system whose importance requires an ordinary legislative process. Following Law no. 135/2012, Decree Law no. 188 of 5 November 2012 - *Disposizioni urgenti in materia di province e città metropolitane* - was drafted. This, however, was not converted into law, causing a halt to the ongoing reform process, also caused by the 2013 Stability Law. Finally, the decree envisaged a deep reorganisation of the provinces, which would have led to a significant reduction in their number and included some provisions on metropolitan cities.

#### **4.4.4 Law 56 of 2014, the 'Delrio Law'**

The Constitutional Court's sentence marked the end of a brief phase of reform of the Italian local system and, from the reasons set out by the Constitutional Court, a new organic law was needed to define the structure of the Italian territorial

government. It was therefore necessary to accelerate the reform processes of the local system. The most evident criticalities within territorial governance derived from polycentrism, from the overload of representative levels and inefficiency of administrative apparatuses, from the overlapping of competences and dispersion of responsibilities. At the same time, on the one hand the European Union was pushing member countries to adopt an economic policy strategy aimed at exiting the crisis, and on the other hand it was pushing for a precise plan of structural reforms for all territorial levels of government, aimed at building effective multilevel governance based on greater involvement of the regions and local authorities in defining and implementing Community policies (De Donno, 2017). It was exactly with these premises that Law no. 56 of 7 April 2014 - *Disposizioni sulle Città metropolitane, sulle Province, sulle Unioni e fusioni di Comuni* - the so-called Delrio Law, came into force in the Italian legal system. The Delrio law, consisting of a single article divided into 151 commas, as explicitly stated in comma 5 and 51.

The Delrio law has two main objectives: i) the strengthening of the municipal level, especially using fusions and unions of municipalities; and ii) the overall reorganisation of the intermediate level, with the transformation of provinces into second-tier elective bodies (with indirect elections) and the establishment of metropolitan cities. However, to identify the true purpose of the legislature, it was necessary to read the Accompanying Report to the constitutional reform bill A.S. 1429-2014 containing the *'Disposizioni per il superamento del bicameralismo paritario, la riduzione del numero dei parlamentari, il contenimento dei costi di funzionamento delle istituzioni, la soppressione del CNEL e la revisione del Titolo V della parte seconda della Costituzione'*. In fact, the constitutional revision project - with respect to which Law no. 56/2014 declared itself to be a mere 'bridge law'<sup>14</sup> - aimed at the final creation of *'an orderly, efficient and non-competitive multilevel system of government, capable of balancing national, regional and local interests and ensuring territorial planning policies coordinated with the broader strategic choices adopted at national and European level'*.

The new territorial system, anticipated by the Delrio law and therefore to be completed through constitutional reform, should have coincided with a 'Republic of Autonomies' based on only two levels of government directly representing the respective communities (Regions and Municipalities). However, since the Province has disappeared from the Constitution, the intermediate level, summarised in the

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<sup>14</sup> Pending the reform of Title V of Part Two of the Constitution: see Article 1(5) and (51) of the Law.

new concept of vast area (art. 40, comma 4 of the draft law), should have been structured according to *'very flexible and articulated organisational forms'* which would have placed it *'in a functional vision more for a rational and coherent organisation of the activities of the municipalities insisting on the territory than for a real level of local democracy'*<sup>15</sup>.

The reform was conceived as a move towards the draft constitutional reform that envisaged the abolition of the provinces. Following the outcome of the referendum of 4 December 2016, and consequently the project of constitutional revision no longer exists, a debate was opened on the opportunity of a new legislative intervention. In this sense, Decree Law No. 91 of 2018 provided for the establishment of a technical-political round table, at the State-Cities and Local Autonomies Conference, for the drafting of guidelines aimed at launching a process of organic revision of the regulations on the organisation of provinces and metropolitan cities. The attempt to reform Title V Part II of the Constitution failed and the only provisions which remain today are those of the Delrio law. A law conceived as transitional, but which has become definitive and constitutes the starting point along the path of reform, which has been called for by the associations representing local authorities

## **4.5 Metropolitan areas with the Delrio reform**

The great protagonist of the Delrio reform is undoubtedly the metropolitan city, which was introduced into Italian law years later. The reform proposes a new model of autonomy, establishing the metropolitan city as a new territorial body. The law maintains the municipalities and regions as first-degree elective territorial entities representing the population, while making the provinces second-degree elective entities on a transitional basis (Barbieri, 2014). The new metropolitan cities will upset the balance that has been created and consolidated over time between the various levels of territorial government, from regional to municipal. The law identifies ten Metropolitan Cities in the ordinary statute regions (comma 5), Rome Capital, Turin, Milan, Venice, Genoa, Bologna, Florence, Bari, Naples and Reggio Calabria and, at the same time, four other Metropolitan Cities have been established by the special statute regions: Cagliari, Catania, Messina, Palermo.

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<sup>15</sup> Parliamentary act - XVIIth legislature, A.C. 1452, Accompanying report to the draft law on *Disposizioni sulle città metropolitane, sulle province, sulle unioni e fusioni di comuni*, p. 2.



The law lays down the provisions for metropolitan cities, which are defined as '*territorial bodies of area vasta*', elected at the second level and constituting an intermediate level of *governance* (and *government*) between the region and the municipalities. The model outlined by the law is therefore based on two levels of direct representation of the respective communities and first-degree electives (region and municipalities), together with the provincial and metropolitan city levels, which are second-degree electives and therefore better suited to represent municipalities and territories. As previously mentioned, the referendum of 4 December 2016, which among other issues should have proposed the amendment of Title V, had a negative outcome, resulting in the maintenance of the provinces. Despite this, it is worth noting that one of the merits of Law no. 56/2014 is that of having provided a discipline of metropolitan cities and of having identified their territorial extension (Art. 1 co. 16 of Law no. 56 of 2014.), thirteen years after the constitutional reform of 2001 that included them among the constitutive entities of the Republic. Regarding territorial extension, the choice made by the legislator is also to be read as a resolute attempt to put an end to the old dilemmas on metropolitan perimeters. However, in some cases, it clashes with the extension efforts of the metropolitan cities themselves towards their natural boundaries. The legislator itself was aware of this criticality, and recognised the possibility for external municipalities, including the capital municipalities of the neighbouring provinces, to join the metropolitan city through the procedure of modification of their provincial circumscription pursuant to Article 133 of the Constitution, thus entrusting the process of territorial adjustment to the concrete needs emerging in each area. However, while several metropolitan cities were willing to establish a dense network of relations with external municipalities, to extend their territory beyond their borders, currently the metropolitan areas still coincide perfectly with the former provincial perimeters (Figure 5).



Figure 5 - The Italian Metropolitan Cities. Source: Author's elaboration.

#### 4.5.1 The structure of metropolitan city governance

Law 56/2014 configures metropolitan cities as second-degree elective bodies suitable for representing and organising the activities of the municipalities and unions that are part of them. To carry out these functions the bodies of the metropolitan cities are established (comma 7): i. the *metropolitan mayor* (comma 8); ii. the *metropolitan council* (comma 8) and iii. the *metropolitan conference*

(comma 8-9). An institutional structure that combines the metropolitan mayor with two assembly bodies representing the population of the territory in the case of the metropolitan council and the municipal authorities of the metropolitan city in the case of the metropolitan conference.

The *metropolitan mayor* is by right the mayor of the capital city. He represents the authority, convenes and chairs the metropolitan council and the metropolitan conference; the office of metropolitan mayor is exercised free of charge.

The *metropolitan council*, a second-degree elective body, is composed of the metropolitan mayor and councillors that varies according to the resident population (from a minimum of 14 councillors to a maximum of 24). This body has the functions of policymaking and control and proposes the statute and its amendments to the conference; in addition to these functions, it has the power to approve regulations, plans, programs and any other act submitted to it by the mayor. The council lasts for five years but, in the event of the renewal of the council of the capital municipality, new elections to the assembly are held within 60 days of the proclamation of the mayor of the capital municipality (comma 21).

The *metropolitan conference* is composed of the metropolitan mayor and the mayors of the municipalities belonging to the metropolitan city (comma 42) and has the power to approve the statute as well as consultative power in the approval of the budget (comma 8-9).

In the system designed by the law in question, the metropolitan city has a functional characterisation that is articulated on four levels: i. the metropolitan city is responsible for the fundamental functions of the province, because of the takeover of the former to the latter following the constitution of the latter; ii. the functions attributed within the process of reorganisation of the functions of the provinces; iii. any further functions transferred by the State or the Regions based on paragraph 46; iv. they own and fundamental functions recognised to the body (by reference to art. 117, comma 2, letter p of the Constitution). According to Piperata (2019), the fundamental functions of the metropolitan city can be summarised in four different types:

*Steering functions.* The first of the tasks delegated to the metropolitan city by comma 44 is the strategic planning with the consequent adoption of the strategic plan. This is a planning and programming instrument to be adopted every three years, but to be updated annually, and concerning the entire metropolitan territory. Its value is that of an act of direction, since this function is carried out by the

metropolitan authority, but also with respect to the exercise of the functions of the municipalities and unions of municipalities in the territory.

*Planning functions.* Another important function is spatial planning. Intermediate bodies have always been called upon to perform an important public task in regulating and ordering the uses that can be made of the territory. Along the lines of the provincial coordination territorial plans, aimed at recomposing in a unitary way the whole system of territorial government, to which both municipal and sectoral urban plans contribute, a new territorial planning tool is introduced, the general metropolitan territorial plan.

*Coordination functions.* Strategic planning and spatial planning are intertwined with coordination functions. The metropolitan authority is identified as a central coordinating institutional level in the local government system. The relationship between planning and coordination functions reappears also with respect to a new task outlined by Law no. 56 of 2014 for the metropolitan city. This is the function of promoting and coordinating economic and social development, to be achieved also through the support and backing of innovative economic and research activities (comma 44, letter e).

*Support functions.* The metropolitan cities are assigned an important role in the organisation of public services and the coordination of their management systems. As part of the definition of this competence, a support function that the metropolitan city could perform with respect to the local authorities interested in requesting it is provided for: *'in agreement with the municipalities concerned, the metropolitan city may exercise the functions of preparing tender documents, of contracting station, of monitoring service contracts and of organising competitions and selective procedures'* (comma 44, letter c).

As mentioned above, one of the objectives of the reform is to strengthen the role of municipalities. The reform places the municipality at the centre, at least in its intentions, and presupposes, on the one hand, overcoming municipal fragmentation and, on the other, strengthening inter-municipal cooperation, mainly through unions of municipalities. Delrio is once again focusing its attention on municipal mergers. Between 2014 and 2021, 103 new municipalities were established, for a total of 272 municipalities that were suppressed, mainly in the country's inner regions. This is an important trend that has shown that there is a certain propensity of municipalities to merge, even if this trend is not able to

significantly affect the country's municipal fragmentation<sup>16</sup>. Law 56/2014, on the one hand, has considerably implemented Articles 15 and 16 of the TUEL, and, on the other, has continued along the path of financial and economic incentive policies in favour of new municipalities established through mergers. The innovation of Delrio lies in comma 116 and 134. For the first time, a wide-ranging regulation of the legal regime of the new municipality is provided to regulate the succession profiles between the original municipalities and the new municipal body. In particular, the provisions aimed at preserving and protecting the original local communities demonstrate a certain sensitivity on the part of the legislature to meet the resistance and fears of loss of identity of the populations concerned. However, the increase in the number of mergers in the last period has certainly been helped by the various incentives and economic support measures provided by both the state and the regions: from the constant increase in the extraordinary ten-year contribution for municipalities resulting from mergers (De Donno, 2019).

In line with the reforms of previous years, the Delrio law confirmed the mandatory nature of the associated management of fundamental functions for municipalities with less than 5.000 inhabitants (or 3.000 if they belong or have belonged to mountain communities). The instrument through which this obligation can be fulfilled is still the Union of Municipalities, excluding any other structured model (Consortium, Mountain Communities, etc.). The Union, as the institutional place of synthesis of the interests of the basic bodies, should also constitute, in the intentions of the legislator, the strategic and optimal solution to best achieve the interpenetration and integration between territorial levels targeted by Law 56.

#### **4.5.2 The planning of metropolitan cities in the Delrio Law**

The metropolitan cities within the Delrio law are defined, as already mentioned, as *'territorial bodies of area vasta'* with the purpose of *'managing the strategic development of the metropolitan territory; the promotion and integrated management of services, infrastructures and communication networks of interest to the metropolitan city; the management of institutional relations pertaining to its level, including those with European cities and metropolitan areas'*.<sup>17</sup> In this comma the aim with which the body is established is expressed, which thus assumes the task, different from that of the provinces, of promoting and directing the development of strategic territories. Metropolitan areas are recognised as having a

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<sup>16</sup> The number of Italian municipalities is currently 7.904. ISTAT, 2024

<sup>17</sup> Art. 1 co. 2 of the law 56/2014

key and decisive role for the future of the country, a strategic role. In line with this concept, metropolitan cities are assigned functions concerning strategic planning and territorial planning, as well as mobility and roads; the structuring and organisation of coordinated systems for the management of public services; and the promotion and coordination of economic and social development<sup>18</sup>. However, the regions are given wide freedom to attribute additional functions to metropolitan cities (always respecting the principles of subsidiarity, differentiation and adequacy), giving each region the possibility to choose the area of action of the new body. An innovative element of the Delrio law, introduced for the first time in Italian legislation, is the case of strategic planning. Strategic planning usually originates as a voluntary process, implemented to guide the long-term development of the territory and to identify certain objectives to be achieved, involving a plurality of both public and private actors. Precisely because of its voluntary aspect, *'it is difficult to outline a general and consolidated model'* of strategic planning (Donati, 2016). It is exactly for this reason that the Delrio law dispenses with defining the contents, and the adoption procedures, of the strategic plan, granting a certain freedom of action to the metropolitan cities, which will be able to intervene while respecting their own specificities. In this sense, the metropolitan statutes play a pivotal role in defining the strategic plan, and it will be up to the metropolitan cities to seize the opportunities offered by this type of planning and the legal vacuum left by Delrio. It is also necessary to point out that, by becoming an administrative act, the strategic plan is characterised by a more binding and compulsory profile (Barbieri & Giaimo, 2014).

Strategic planning is a peculiarity of metropolitan cities. They are the only institution to which this function is attributed by law, and this constitutes the main difference with the provinces, which are only responsible for territorial coordination planning. Metropolitan cities have the task of drawing up a three-year strategic plan. Several doubts have arisen concerning the three-year duration of the strategic plan, since the nature of this type of planning tends to be characterised by a medium/long-term perspective. According to Donati (2016), the metropolitan strategic plan constitutes an *'act of high administration ... linking the function of policy-making and operational management'*.

In this sense, the strategic plan would be bound to the objectives identified in advance by the policy. At the same time, it should enjoy technical and administrative discretion, since it relates to the basic choices of administrative

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<sup>18</sup> Art. 1 co. 44 of the law 56/2014

activity. Moreover, it should be the result of an administrative procedure and at the same time subject to the obligations of motivation and publication. The functions of metropolitan cities, in addition to the strategic planning introduced above, include general territorial planning and infrastructure networks. Also, in this case the national legislator fails to provide clear indications, thus leaving a certain freedom to the Regions. Within the spatial planning competencies attributed to the metropolitan cities there remains coordination planning (formerly the responsibility of the provinces), which goes together with general territorial planning. In this sense, the ability of the Regions to interpret the new opportunities is fundamental, thus avoiding the declination of general territorial planning as a *'metropolitan-intermunicipal regulatory urban planning, conforming to the property'* (Barbieri, 2017).

It is necessary to understand the differences between the Metropolitan General Territorial Plan (PTGM) and the Provincial Coordination Territorial Plan (PTCP) by trying to better interpret what is meant by *'general territorial planning'*. To understand the differences, it is useful to reason about the terms used for the two planning instruments. In fact, the term *'general'* appears in urban planning law 1150/1942 alongside municipal urban planning, article 7. The article 12 of the same law defines the General Inter-municipal Town Planning Scheme (*Piano Regolatore Generale Intercomunale*), an instrument designed to govern the development of neighbouring municipalities where it is recognised as necessary to coordinate future urban planning. The term *general planning* goes beyond the strictly coordinating role attributed to provincial planning and gives the PTGM a more strategic and at the same time prescriptive and binding character. Alongside the term *general* is the term *territorial*, which is used to indicate the coordination function on a vast scale, already the responsibility of the provinces. It expresses the need to leave planning at municipal level to the municipalities, allowing the metropolitan city to provide forecasts relating exclusively to the scale of *'area vasta'*. This leads us to consider that with the Delrio reform the competences of the metropolitan city are much stronger than those of the province.

### **4.5.3 Provinces in Law 56/2014**

While considering that the main theme of this doctoral thesis focuses on metropolitan cities, it is important to mention how the Delrio law has affected the provinces.

Between 2011 and 2013 there were a series of legislative initiatives, some of them of a constitutional nature, pushing for the merging of the provinces, their ‘regionalisation’ and their transformation into indirectly elected institutions that would end their institutional process of transformation with their abolition. In the light of these legislative initiatives, we should not forget the letter signed by Draghi-Trichet and addressed to Italy in 2011<sup>19</sup>, which expressly urged the then government to abolish the provinces. In 2014, the Delrio law intervened with a new organic discipline on the matter, aiming, in fifty paragraphs, at a profound transformation of the nature of these entities, with the aim of restructuring the intermediate level, which is certainly more wide-ranging.

First, the Delrio law has transformed the provincial institution, like the metropolitan one, into a second-degree elective body. The law, as anticipated, deals with carrying out a reorganisation of the provinces, while awaiting their suppression. The reorganisation of the provinces’ institutional governance system has been pursued through a twofold and contested order of interventions: the elimination of the executive collegiate body (the council) and, above all, the introduction of the indirect election of the president and the provincial council, with the electorate limited to mayors and municipal councillors. At the same time, the governance designed by the Delrio law for provinces is very similar to that defined for metropolitan cities.

The governance established by law in relation to the provincial body is based on three bodies: the *president of the province*; the *provincial council* and the *assembly of mayors*. However, the president of the province, differently from the metropolitan mayor, who is by right the mayor of the capital city, is elected by the mayors and councillors of the municipalities of the province from among the mayors of the municipalities that are part of it. The provincial council has similar functions to the corresponding body of the metropolitan city and is made up of mayors and municipal councillors; it carries out policy and control functions, proposes the statute and approves regulations, plans and programs. The assembly of mayors is formed by the mayors of the municipalities of the province and has proposing, consultative and controlling powers (as defined by the statute), as well as adopting or rejecting the statute proposed by the council and its amendments.

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<sup>19</sup> On 5 August 2011, at the peak of a dramatic European stock market crisis and a sharp widening of the spread between Italian and German bond rates, outgoing ECB Governor Jean Claude Trichet and in pectore Mario Draghi wrote a confidential letter to the Italian government, then headed by Silvio Berlusconi, outlining a series of measures to be implemented as soon as possible.



However, the functions assigned by law to provinces and metropolitan cities are different, and it is therefore useful to outline the differences between the two entities. The fundamental functions of the provinces include provincial territorial planning and coordination and transport services. With the Delrio law, the provinces have taken on the role of territorial bodies with the task of assisting local authorities and coordinating the municipalities of the province. For all the remaining functions - the so-called non-fundamental ones - Law 56 started, instead, a complex process of reorganisation and reallocation to other territorial levels, with preference for municipalities, their unions or other forms of cooperation between several local authorities, in accordance with the principles of subsidiarity, differentiation and adequacy (comma 89).

Obviously, the new role of the provincial authority presents some critical issues regarding the implementation and interpretation of national legislation by regional legislation. Indeed, the regions are allowed to attribute powers to the provinces that differ from those of Law no. 56/2014. Its renewed nature as an indirectly elected body leads the provinces to be suitable for playing a representative and coordinating role among municipalities. These considerations should in any case be placed in a broader framework drawn by the Delrio law, which provides a transitional framework for the entity pending the amendment of Title V of the Constitution that would sanction its definitive abolition, but as we have repeatedly stated, this constitutional reform project has failed.

## **4.6 The Italian metropolitan cities in European cohesion policy**

In introducing cohesion policy, according to Brocca (2017), it is important to emphasise that it complements and reinforces the EU's economic and social cohesion objectives. Cohesion policy has a function that applies to the whole territory and to all Community policies. Its concept condenses the aims of reducing '*existing disparities*' and preventing '*territorial imbalances*', increasing the coherence of '*sectoral policies with a territorial impact*' and '*regional policy*', improving '*territorial integration*' and '*promoting cooperation between regions*'.<sup>20</sup>

It is in this context and due to their European vocation that metropolitan cities come into their own (Vandelli, 2014). They are present in all European countries,

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<sup>20</sup> European Commission, A new partnership for cohesion. Third report on economic and social cohesion, 18.2.2004, COM (2004)107.

which means that they can relate to each other in a sort of supranational dialogue, and at the same time they can act as direct interlocutors of European institutions in the processes of formation and implementation of community policies. The success of this supranational debate depends very much on the way in which this organisational model is configured in the domestic legal system. In this sense, law no. 56/2014 is also of specific interest to verify whether and how the ‘European dimension’ of metropolitan cities has been supported (Brocca, 2017).

Metropolitan cities are at the centre of attention of the EU institutions, which look to them as a useful perspective for the design and implementation of EU policies. The promotion of cities, as key territories for the pursuit of EU objectives, is supported on the one hand, by regional policy and the related structural funds, on the other, by integrating this element into sectoral policies, as a cross-cutting objective in the name of what has been effectively called the ‘*local dimension*’ of EU policies<sup>21</sup>. In this sense, the cohesion policy reveals the European community’s interest in the level of local governance in the conviction that cities are factors of growth and territorial balance<sup>22</sup>.

This approach emerges in the programming of the 2014-2020 European Structural and Investment Funds which on the one hand aims at integrating and functionalising the funds with the strategic objectives of Europe 2020, and on the other aims at greater direct participation of local authorities (according to the so-called place-based approach).

For this reason, special attention is paid to metropolitan areas that reproduce on a local scale the dynamics and needs typical of European policies for socio-economic and territorial cohesion. The EU institutions look to metropolitan government bodies as privileged interlocutors, making them, among other things, recipients of specific funding. In this sense, in 2015 the European Commission approved the NOP *Città Metropolitane 2014-2020*, in support of ERDF and ESF funds. This program reflects European confidence in those ‘*institutional reform and reorganisation processes*’ that enhance the ‘*metropolitan dimension as a scale for planning and managing services that are crucial for development and territorial*

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<sup>21</sup> European Commission, Communication on The Urban Dimension of EU Policies - Founding Elements of an EU Urban Agenda, 18.7.2014, COM (2014) 490 final.

<sup>22</sup> Committee on Regional Development, Report on the role of territorial cohesion in regional development, 25.7.2005, 2004/2256(INI); European Parliament, Resolution on the role of territorial cohesion in regional development (2004/2256(INI), 28.9.2005.

*cohesion*<sup>23</sup>. At the national level, the model has been further developed, on the initiative of the Territorial Cohesion Agency, which has drawn up the ‘Complementary Operational Programme for Action and Cohesion’ for the NOP *Città Metropolitane* 2014-2020. The purpose of this complementary operational program is to integrate and strengthen, with a substantial financial endowment, the interventions provided for by the program of Community origin. Also, in line with the same objectives of the programs listed above, it is worth mentioning the Development Pacts (so-called *Patto per il Sud*). These are promoted by the Government and based on partnership programs with the metropolitan cities, which involve the pooling of State and European resources.

#### **4.6.1 The ‘*Città Metropolitane* 2014-2020’ National Operational Programme**

The National Operational Programme *Città Metropolitane* 2014-2020 (NOP METRO) is framed within the National Urban Agenda and the sustainable urban development strategies outlined in the Partnership Agreement for the 2014-2020 programming period. The Programme is organised in line with the objectives and strategies of the European Urban Agenda, which identifies urban areas as key territories for meeting the challenges of smart, inclusive and sustainable growth. The area affected by the NOP refers at most to the territory of the metropolitan cities, with more targeted interventions on portions of these territories and, in particular, on the territory of the capital city. More specifically, the territorial area of reference for the Programme is the Metropolitan City, limited to intangible actions linked to the Digital Agenda and to social inclusion actions of the European Social Fund (ESF). Interventions not linked to the Digital Agenda or to the ESF are instead concentrated exclusively in the territory of the Metropolitan City. In this sense, the identification of the territorial challenges that the Programme intends to address has been carried out through a partnership process that has seen the participation of Mayors, the National Association of Italian Municipalities (ANCI), the Regions concerned and the central Administrations and other competent subjects, as well as economic, social and environmental partners. The METRO NOP intervenes to support, with common intervention models, specific and determined priority actions that make up a unifying strategy at national level for the metropolitan cities, jointly and in a coordinated manner addressing some of the challenges that affect these territorial contexts. The Programme supports an

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<sup>23</sup> Territorial Cohesion Agency, National Operational Program Metropolitan Cities 2014-2020, Programming Document, 16.2.2015.

integrated strategy for each metropolitan city, foreseeing a greater number of interventions with an impact within the territory of the capital city.

The metropolitan cities involved are 14: Turin, Genoa, Milan, Bologna, Venice, Florence, Rome, Bari, Naples, Reggio Calabria, Cagliari, Catania, Messina and Palermo. The capital cities are identified as Urban Authorities (AU) and assume the role of Intermediate Body (IB).

The Programme has been subject to remodulation during 2020 because of the effects on the economic and social system caused by the health emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic, modifications aimed at mitigating and counteracting the negative effects of the crisis, particularly with reference to the territories of the metropolitan areas. However, the revisions made to the Programme do not modify either the overall strategy or the program structure and guarantee the regular continuation of the integrated urban development strategies.

In addition, in the year 2021, the Programme has been integrated as a result of the additional resources allocated to Italy by the Recovery Assistance for Cohesion and the Territories of Europe (REACT-EU) and the consequent inclusion of the objective '*Promote the overcoming of the effects of the crisis in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and its social consequences and prepare a green, digital and resilient recovery of the economy*'. Also in this context, the integration of the new thematic objective and related axes funded by the REACT-EU instrument do not alter the overall strategy of the Programme but strengthen its elements in support of an integrated and strengthened urban development in its components of green, digital and resilient strengthening of the economy and urban communities. To this end, in well-defined and exceptional cases to which the activation of the instrument itself relates, interventions not linked to the Digital Agenda or to the ESF may also be envisaged not exclusively in the territory of the capital municipality when the benefit of the intervention itself is effectively recognised, which, starting from the capital territory, may scale up to the metropolitan territorial level.

The program's overall budget is €892.9 million, of which €588.1 million comes from the ESIF. The program makes interventions in regions with varying financial intensity, prioritising the most severe deficit and the need for assistance in less developed areas.

**Table 3 - PNRR Financial allocation for Axis**

| <b>Financial allocation for Axis</b> |   |                |
|--------------------------------------|---|----------------|
|                                      | Description (OT)  | Allocation (€) |
| <b>AX 1</b>                          | Metropolitan Digital Agenda (OT 2)                          | 151.982.830    |
| <b>AX 2</b>                          | Sustainability of public services and urban mobility (OT 4) | 318.288.000    |
| <b>AX 3</b>                          | Services for Social Inclusion (OT 9 – ESF)                  | 217.193.592    |
| <b>AX 4</b>                          | Infrastructure for Social Inclusion (OT 9 – ERDF)           | 169.751.580    |
| <b>AX 5</b>                          | Technical assistance  | 35.717.332     |
| <b>Total</b>                         |   | 892.933.334    |

Source: Italia Domani, 2022

#### **4.6.2 The National Operational Programme ‘Governance and Institutional Capacity’ and the ‘*Metropoli Strategiche*’ project**

The NOP Governance and Institutional Capacity 2014-2020 is a further national operational program that has an influence on the metropolitan governance level. The Programme has a financial endowment of more than 805 million euro, which has been supplemented with a further 1.285 million euro (1.243 mln + 42 mln from the Complementary Operational Program - COP) through the adhesion to the REACT-EU initiative to contribute to overcoming the negative effects of the pandemic while maintaining its strategic aims focused on the strengthening of administrative and institutional capacity. Through the REACT-EU resources, the NOP Governance intervenes for the organisational strengthening of public health structures, the improvement of the population’s capacity to respond to the pandemic and the development of the administrative capacity of central and regional PAs, also in view of the transition to the 2021-2027 programming. To contribute effectively to strengthening public administration the NOP Governance invests in two of the Thematic Objectives (OT) of the 2014-2020 programming of Cohesion Policy:

- *OT 11 - Institutional capacity and efficient PA, co-financed by the European Social Fund and the European Regional Development Fund*
- *OT 2 - Information and communication technologies, co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund*

This is a complementary intervention strategy, in which PA reform measures need technological and infrastructural solutions to be fully effective. At the same time, these require interventions related to skills, personnel management,

organisational models and the way services are delivered in order to produce the expected innovation effect<sup>24</sup>.

In this framework, the priorities of the NOP can be traced back to two main areas of intervention. The first area - represented by Axis 1 and 2 - concerns the modernisation of the national administrative system and includes actions relating to all the aspects that define the concept of institutional capacity and that affect the quality of PA performance and the services offered to citizens and businesses. The second area - which coincides with Axis 3 - concerns the capacity of public administrations to be efficient and effective in implementing development policies and public investments through better coordination between all the levels of government involved and forms of institutional cooperation. The Axis 4 of the NOP is related to the actions of Technical Assistance to the Program.

The accession in 2021 of the NOP Governance to the REACT-EU initiative has led to the inclusion of three new Axes that contribute to the achievement of the new Thematic Objective 13 *"Promoting the overcoming of the effects of the crisis in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and its social consequences and preparing a green, digital and resilient recovery of the economy"*

The new Axes are aimed at financing interventions for the organisational strengthening of public health structures - Axis 5, strengthening the population's capacity to respond to the pandemic - Axis 6, developing the administrative capacity of central and regional administrations also with a view to the transition to the 2021-2027 programming - Axis 7 (Technical Assistance).

Within the framework of the NOP governance a project is financed with EU cohesion funds and dedicated to metropolitan areas, the *'Metropoli strategiche'* project. The *'Metropoli strategiche'* project stems from the need to accompany the regulatory reform process with a process of experimentation and sharing of organisational and technical solutions. The main objective of this project is to accompany the Metropolitan Cities in the process of institutional innovation, supporting them in organisational changes and in the development of the skills necessary for the full implementation of integrated policies on a metropolitan scale in three specific areas:

1. Administrative simplification for economic development

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<sup>24</sup> The intervention strategy of the NOP Governance and Institutional Capacity 2014-2020 is structured around 4 Axes + 3 new REACT-EU Axes.

2. Strategic metropolitan planning
3. Associated management of services and plans for institutional and organisational reorganisation

The project is based on the direct involvement of the political and administrative structures of the Metropolitan Cities and Municipalities within them and on the contribution of the Coordination of Metropolitan Mayors set up within ANCI. The resources allocated to this project amounted to €3.660.000 for the first phase, and €1.450.000 for the second phase.

The first phase of the project focused on research, training, experimentation, coaching and networking activities in three thematic areas: i) administrative simplification in the field of construction and urban planning; ii) metropolitan strategic plans; iii) associated management of services and institutional and organisational reorganisation plans. The second phase of the project aims at enhancing the transfer of experience results and at the same time aims at strengthening networking among Italian Metropolitan Cities, with Municipalities, with European Metropolitan Cities. The objective is therefore to enhance and recognise metropolitan identity.

To this end, an initial preparatory phase began with the production of 14 city dossiers in relation to the reform processes underway, with the respective analyses of territorial needs and the co-definition of customised support programs for the individual Metropolitan Cities. Further analysis notebooks were produced (Personnel and skills in the Metropolitan Cities; Administrative simplification for economic development; Strategic planning models; Productive identities; Sustainability in metropolitan areas; Metropolitan cities as relational entities: institutional and organisational structures) with a further focus on the state of progress of strategic planning, administrative simplification for administrative development, and associated management and organisational reorganisation.

About coordination and networking, four-monthly meetings of the national technical group and the coordination of metropolitan mayors were held, and at the same time 14 Collaboration Agreements were defined with the Metropolitan Cities. Around 10 meetings of the national thematic networks were held for the exchange and comparison between cities on solutions and experimentation paths, and over 55 meetings of the local networks. In addition, over 100 training days were held on the topics of service conferences, *Sportello Unico Attività Produttive* (SUAP) and associated management, territorial marketing, strategic planning and European

planning. A distance learning platform was set up for employees of the cities and municipalities in the metropolitan area, and exchange training visits were carried out between the Metropolitan City of Bologna and the Metropolitan City of Reggio Calabria on the topics of municipal associationism. At the same time, more than 30 experimental projects have been launched in the metropolitan area<sup>25</sup>.

#### **4.6.3 The role of metropolitan cities in 2021-2027 programming and *Città Medie del Sud*.**

In the new programming for 2021-2027, in continuity with the NOP Metro 2014-2020, the new NOP Metro Plus 21-27 is developed. This national operational program seems to follow, both in terms of themes (digital agenda, sustainability, social inclusion), and in terms of governance model (based on delegation to the 14 capital cities as Intermediate Bodies), what has already been done in the previous programming. What differs, or rather evolves the program, is the attention directed by the latter towards a new identified territorial target, the Southern Medium Cities.

The financial allocation destined for the 14 Metropolitan Cities is over 2.6 billion euros. The interventions financed by the PN Metro Plus mainly focus on digital and green transition. Additionally, within the framework of the PN Metro Plus, the Metropolitan Cities can carry out Operations of Strategic Importance (*Operazioni di Importanza Strategica*, OIS), which are projects that provide a significant contribution to achieving the objectives of a program and are subject to special surveillance and communication measures (Art.2.5 of Reg.2021/1060).

The *PN Metro Plus e Città Medie Sud 2021-2027* anticipate in the name a further element of absolute innovation. Specifically, the program includes actions aimed at new stakeholders represented by the medium cities of the South, which according to the program are involved in the role of ‘beneficiaries’ for projects aimed at regenerating fragile areas, characterised by socioeconomic and housing distress. This line of intervention aims to support intermediate-sized urban centers that represent a crucial dimension for the development of the territory, playing a role similar to that of large metropolitan cities. According to the data indicated by

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<sup>25</sup>Further information on the project:

<https://ot11ot2.it/dfp-organismo-intermedio/progetti/citta-metropolitane-nuove-prospettive>  
<https://metropolistrategiche.it/progetto/>



the program, the total available financial allocation is €326.968.000, directed towards the two intervention priorities.

According to the program's intentions, the Southern Medium Cities capitalize on the experience gained during the 2014-2020 programming by the Metropolitan Cities and participate in a support and co-design process promoted by the Managing Authority. In an outlook of correct and effective management of the various funds available, it is very important to emphasize how the government is committed to ensuring solid coordination between the NOP Metro Plus and PNRR, in order to guarantee coherence with the overall package of EU funds and minimize the risk of double financing, as indicated in the Program Agreement.

In these terms, coherence with national and regional strategies for sustainable development relevant to Metropolitan Cities and medium cities is ensured, whose specific references are contained in the description of individual priorities. Interventions in favor of the Medium Cities are fully implemented within the territorial Strategies ex art.29 of EU Reg. 2021/1060, defined at the local level in the form of ITI (Operational Plans). Interventions dedicated to medium cities are, instead, sectoral in nature and are aimed at promoting initiatives for social inclusion and innovation in degraded contexts.

## **4.7 The Recovery and Resilience Facility as a window of opportunity for the Italian Metropolitan Cities?**

Spreading 'topologically' (Bourdin & Levratto, 2023) over wide distances through multiscalar networks, the pandemic particularly affected metropolitan areas, while at the same time suggesting how they may play an important role in post-pandemic recovery. The connectivity of territories, as well as the readiness and adequacy of actions to prevent the spread of COVID-19 virus, appear to have been key factors in containing the spread of the pandemic (Hamidi et al., 2020). In this regard, Cremaschi et al. (2021) highlight a possible correlation between the spread of the virus and the presence of institutions that are inappropriate or inadequate to manage multiscalar and supra-local relationships. This suggests the need to reason about what scales are most appropriate for setting policies deputed to guide post-pandemic recovery, paying particular attention to the supra-local one (Cotella & Vitale Brovarone, 2021, 2024; Artelaris & Mavrommatis, 2022).

These reflections are particularly relevant with regard to the implementation, within different national contexts, of the Recovery and Resilience Facility,

introduced by the European Commission with the aim of mitigating the economic and social impact of COVID-19 and making Europe more sustainable and resilient. Although it constitutes an instrument of limited duration (2020-2026), the Facility envisages that each member state will develop its own PNRR, through which it will further articulate the priorities defined by the Commission, while specifying the multilevel governance system in charge of implementing the instrument. As will be discussed in more detail in the following paragraphs, this process seems to have opened a window of opportunity for the involvement of Italian Metropolitan Cities in the programming and management of European resources.

#### **4.7.1 The National Recovery and Resilience Plan and Italian Metropolitan Cities**

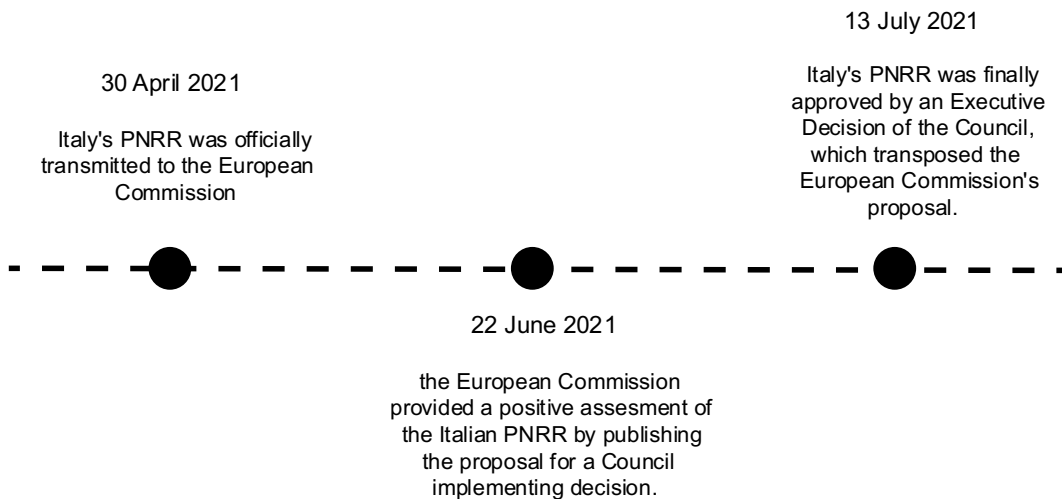
The pandemic, and the subsequent economic crisis, prompted the EU to formulate a structural response with the launch in July 2020 of the Next Generation EU (NGEU) program (Figure 6). The NGEU program includes two instruments to support Member States. The REACT-EU, designed with a shorter-term perspective (2021-2022) to help them in the initial phase of revitalising their economies, and the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF), which runs for six years, from 2021 to 2026. Its total size is 672.5 bn, of which 312.5 bn is grants and 360bn low-interest loans.

The NGEU aims to promote a strong recovery of the European economy through green transition, digitisation, competitiveness, training and social, territorial and gender inclusion. The RRF Regulation sets out the six main areas of intervention (pillars) on which the PNRR should focus:

- Green transition
- Digital transformation
- Smart, sustainable and inclusive growth
- Social and territorial cohesion
- Health and economic, social and institutional resilience
- Policies for new generations, children and youth

This is the context in which the PNRR is set, the document that outlines the objectives, reforms and investments that Italy intends to make using NGEU funds, to mitigate the economic and social impact of the pandemic and make Italy a fairer, greener and more inclusive country, with a more competitive, dynamic and innovative economy.

A set of actions and interventions designed to overcome the economic and social impact of the pandemic and build a new Italy, providing it with the necessary tools to face the environmental, technological and social challenges.



**Figure 6 - PNRR approval process. Source: Author's elaboration.**

The economic recovery of Italy outlined by the PNRR is developed around three strategic axes shared at the European level: i) digitalisation and innovation; ii) ecological transition; ii) social inclusion.

Digitisation and innovation of processes, products and services are a determining factor in the country's transformation and must characterise every reform policy in the Plan. Italy has accumulated a considerable delay in this field, and recovering this gap is essential to improve Italian and European competitiveness. The ecological transition, as indicated by the UN's 2030 Agenda and the new European targets for 2030, is the basis of the new Italian and European development model. Intervening to reduce polluting emissions, prevent and combat land degradation, and minimise the impact of production activities on the environment is necessary to improve the quality of life and environmental safety, as well as to leave a greener country and a more sustainable economy to future generations. The third strategic axis is social inclusion. Ensuring full social inclusion is key to improving territorial cohesion, helping the economy grow and overcoming deep inequalities often exacerbated by the pandemic. The three main priorities are gender equality, protecting and empowering young people and

overcoming territorial gaps. The empowerment of women and the fight against gender discrimination, the enhancement of young people’s skills, capacities and employment prospects, the territorial rebalancing and the development of the South are not uniquely entrusted to individual interventions but pursued as transversal objectives in all components of the PNRR.

The Plan is divided into sixteen Components, grouped into six Missions. The latter are articulated in line with the six Pillars mentioned in the RRF Regulation.

1. *Digitisation, innovation, competitiveness and culture*: the aim is the digital modernisation of the country’s communication infrastructure, in the public administration and in its production system.
2. *Green revolution and ecological transition*: the aim is to achieve the green and ecological transition of Italy’s society and economy in line with the European Green Deal.
3. *Infrastructure for sustainable mobility*: the aim is to strengthen and extend the national high-speed rail network and upgrade the regional rail network, with a special focus on the south of Italy
4. *Education and research*: focuses on young people and addresses one of the most important structural issues for boosting potential growth, productivity, social inclusion and adaptability to the technological and environmental challenges of the future.
5. *Inclusion and cohesion*: aims at a structural revision of active labour policies, a strengthening of employment centres and their integration with social services and the network of private operators.
6. *Health*: focuses on two objectives: i) strengthening the territorial network; ii) modernising the technological equipment of the National Health Service by strengthening the Electronic Health File and developing telemedicine.

As part of the PNRR, an extraordinary facility resulting from the pandemic crisis, there are several initiatives in which Italian MCs are involved as implementers or recipients of interventions, either alone or in association with other institutional levels (Table 4).

**Table 4 - Contact points between PNRR and Metropolitan Cities**

| <b>Missions PNRR</b> | <b>Interventions</b>               | <b>Implementing entity and/or recipient</b>              | <b>Funds allocated €</b> |
|----------------------|------------------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| <b>M2C2</b>          | 4.1 Strengthening cycling mobility | Regions, <b>Metropolitan Cities</b> , and Municipalities | 0.6 bn                   |

|             |   |  |           |
|-------------|---|--|-----------|
| <b>M2C2</b> | 4.2 Development of mass rapid transport                                       | Regions, <b>Metropolitan Cities</b> , and Municipalities           | 3.6 bn    |
| <b>M2C3</b> | 1.1 Plan for replacement of school buildings and energy upgrading             | <b>Città Metropolitane</b> , Province e Comuni                     | 0.8 bn    |
| <b>M2C4</b> | 3.1 Protection and enhancement of urban and suburban green                    | <b>Metropolitan Cities</b>   | 330 mln   |
| <b>M4C1</b> | 3.3 School building safety and requalification plan                           | <b>Metropolitan Cities</b> , Provinces and Municipalities          | 3.9 mln   |
| <b>M5C2</b> | 2.2 <i>Piani Urbani Integrati</i>   | <b>Metropolitan Cities</b>   | 2.494 mln |
| <b>M5C2</b> | 2.3 <i>Social Housing – PINQUA, Piano innovativo per la qualità abitativa</i> | Regions, <b>Metropolitan Cities</b> , Provinces and Municipalities | 2.8 mln   |
| <b>M5C3</b> | 1.2 Valorization of property confiscated from mafias                          | <b>Metropolitan Cities</b> , Provinces and Municipalities          | 0.3 mln   |

Source: Author's elaboration on Baldi et al (2023)

#### 4.7.2 PINQuA - *Programma Innovativo Nazionale per la Qualità dell'Abitare*

The National Innovative Program for Housing Quality represents an innovative and ambitious investment project, promoted by the Ministry of Sustainable Infrastructure and Mobility (*Ministero delle Infrastrutture e della Mobilità Sostenibili, MIMS*), aimed at implementing social housing and urban regeneration interventions throughout Italy. This program innovatively addresses the needs related to the 'housing issue' that has long plagued the country, with particular attention to specific critical areas. The PINQuA constitutes one of the lines of intervention of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan,

In order to respond to the growing difficulties related to housing disadvantage, the PINQuA, was launched with the Budget Law 2020 (*Legge di Bilancio*). A special multi-year fund was established to support investment in the sector. The Program aims to finance social housing and urban regeneration projects, with the goal of making attractive those areas that are currently on the margins of cities, both physically and socially. In addition, PINQuA aims to respond to widespread needs in the territories, enhancing the potential of urban peripheries.

The challenges addressed by PINQuA, and the tools put in place aim to respond to housing distress and changing housing needs in an organic and structured way. In addition, the program has the ambition to contribute directly to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations 2030 Agenda. In particular,

direct impacts can be identified with respect to SDG1 and SDG11, as the Program offers innovative solutions to address housing (and consequently economic) poverty and promotes models of inclusive, resilient and participatory cities.

The PINQuA is fully consistent with the founding pillars of the NGEU and has therefore been included in the PNRR within Mission 5 ‘Cohesion and Inclusion’ and its Component 2. Reforms and investments under this Mission specifically aim to strengthen the resilience and inclusion of the most vulnerable individuals and groups. Among the multiple objectives of the Mission, special attention is given to urban regeneration, social services, and disability services, with the aim of reducing situations of marginalisation and social degradation by upgrading public areas and promoting cultural and sports activities.

The PINQuA provides for the involvement of local authorities in a multi-level governance perspective. These entities were called upon to plan and submit proposals dedicated to responding concretely to the needs of the communities and territories of reference, in line with the overall strategies of the Program. Entities that submitted projects within the PINQuA include Regions, Metropolitan Cities, municipalities that are the heads of Metropolitan Cities, municipalities that are the heads of provinces, and municipalities with more than 60.000 inhabitants. To facilitate the success of the initiative, additional funding is planned, particularly through the involvement of the Third Sector and active communities operating in the targeted area.

The program has planned two types of projects: ordinary and high strategic impact pilot. In ordinary projects, proponents identify areas of intervention, focusing particularly on peripheral areas and areas that, while not peripheral, have situations of housing and socioeconomic hardship and lack adequate urban-local equipment. Pilot projects, on the other hand, must have a high strategic impact at the national level and aim to solve relevant and urgent social problems. Both types of projects are evaluated using the same indicators.

One of the main differences between the two types concerns the amount of funding: ordinary projects can receive up to 15 million euros, while pilot projects can get up to 100 million euros.

The program initially had resources of 853.81 million, with a guarantee to fund at least one proposal from each region of the proposing party and to allocate 34

percent of the total resources to interventions in southern areas. With the approval of the PNRR, additional funds were made available for the program, which resulted in changes to various project aspects, such as the amount of resources available, the timing of completion of interventions and the share reserved for the South, which rose to 40 percent (Table 5).

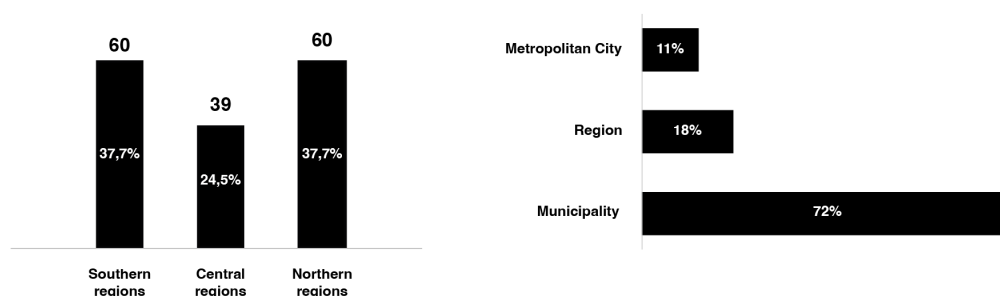
**Table 5 - Details of the PNRR foundations assigned to PINQuA**

| Mission | Typology       | Intervention             | Amount | Existing project | New Project | FSC resources |
|---------|----------------|--------------------------|--------|------------------|-------------|---------------|
| M5C2    | Investment     | 2.3 PINQuA               | 2.8 bn | 477mln           | 1.523 bn    | 800mln        |
| M5C2    | Sub-investment | PINQuA Pilot proposal    | 1.4 bn | 477mln           | 923mln      |               |
| M5C2    | Sub-investment | PINQuA Ordinary Proposal | 1.4 bn |                  | 600mln      | 800mln        |

Source: MIMS, 2022

Within the 159 funded projects, both the South and the North have 60 projects each (37.7 percent), while the remaining 39 are in the Central regions (24.5 percent). Given the nature of the program, the main beneficiaries among the proposing entities are municipalities (72 percent), while the remainder of the projects are managed by Regions (18 percent) and Metropolitan Cities (11 percent).

**INTERVENTIONS BY GEOGRAPHIC AREA AND PROPOSAL ENTITY**



**Figure 7 - PINQuA - Intervention distribution by Geographic Area and Proposal Entity. Source: Author's elaboration on MIMS, 2022.**

Of the 114 projects by municipalities, 98 are ordinary projects (including 15 in Apulia, 11 in Lazio and Lombardy) and six are pilot projects (two in Lombardy, one each in Apulia, Liguria, Marche and Calabria). The region with the largest number of funded projects is Puglia, which in addition to the 16 projects of

municipal entities (including one pilot), also has three ordinary projects from the Bari Metropolitan City and two from the Region, for a total of 21 projects.



Figure 8 - PINQuA - Geographical distribution of MCs' interventions. Source: Author's elaboration on MIMS, 2022.

#### 4.7.3 PUI - *Piani Urbani Integrati* <sup>26</sup>

In the framework of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan, by decree of 6 December 2021, the Ministry of the Interior launches the Integrated Urban Plans - M5C2 Urban Regeneration and Social Housing, Investment 2.2.

The Integrated Urban Plans intervention is dedicated to the suburbs of the Metropolitan Cities and provides for participatory urban planning, with the aim of transforming vulnerable territories into smart and sustainable cities, limiting the consumption of building land. In metropolitan areas, planning synergies can be

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<sup>26</sup> This paragraph was written based on an article currently in the final stages of publication. Palmisano, A., & Casavola, D. (2024). L'evoluzione delle città metropolitane italiane tra Politica di coesione europea e PNRR. *Territorio*: 106, 2024.



created between the ‘main’ municipality and smaller neighbouring municipalities with the aim of reconnecting the urban and suburban fabric, bridging infrastructure and mobility gaps. The investment involves the preparation of participatory urban regeneration programs, aimed at improving large degraded urban areas, regeneration, economic revitalisation, with particular attention to the creation of new personal services and the improvement of accessibility and intermodality of infrastructures, also with the aim of transforming vulnerable metropolitan territories into efficient, sustainable and productive ones, increasing their value where possible<sup>27</sup>.

The Metropolitan Cities will be able to identify the interventions that can be financed within the Integrated Urban Plans. The available resources are 2.7 billion euro (as per the subdivision of Law Decree 6 November 2021, no. 152, annex 1 to art. 23, comma 1). The interventions must have a value of no less than 50 million euro.

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<sup>27</sup> Italia Domani, il Piano Nazionale di Ripresa e Resilienza.  
<https://italiadomani.gov.it/it/home.html>



|                        |                 |                |                |              |                |                        |                 |
|------------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|----------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>MC</b>              | <b>Naples</b>   | <b>Rome</b>    | <b>Milan</b>   | <b>Turin</b> | <b>Palermo</b> | <b>Catania</b>         | <b>Bari</b>     |
| <b>Tot. Allocation</b> | 351.207.758     | 330.311.511    | 277.292.703    | 233.947.918  | 196.177.292    | 185.486.966            | 181.967.074     |
| <b>MC</b>              | <b>Florence</b> | <b>Bologna</b> | <b>Messina</b> | <b>Genoa</b> | <b>Venice</b>  | <b>Reggio Calabria</b> | <b>Cagliari</b> |
| <b>Tot. Allocation</b> | 157.235.707     | 157.338.045    | 132.152.814    | 141.210.434  | 139.637.277    | 118.596.100            | 101.228.402     |

**Figure 9 -Allocation of Integrated Urban Plans resources to metropolitan cities. Source: Source: Italia Domani, 2022. Authors' elaboration.**



already awarded with multilateral framework agreements, for a total maximum of more than 1.8 billion euros.

Wide discretion has been given in the management of the various funding. This has led to an absolutely heterogeneous picture of Integrated Urban Plans and related projects. Two factors have weighed heavily in this regard. The first, territorial heterogeneity and planning tools, and the second - probably more influential - the different tradition of inter-municipal cooperation between the capital municipality and municipalities in the metropolitan area. Spatial heterogeneity, as evidenced by Figure 3, has resulted in the number of PUIs ranging from 1 up to 6 Plans per MC. From the point of view of planning and issues, the planning within the same PUIs also varies greatly. In fact, we go from only 5 planning processes in the MC of Genoa (with only one PUI submitted) to the 181 planning processes implemented by the MC of Milan, contained in 4 PUIs.

**QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF PUIs AND PROJECTS**

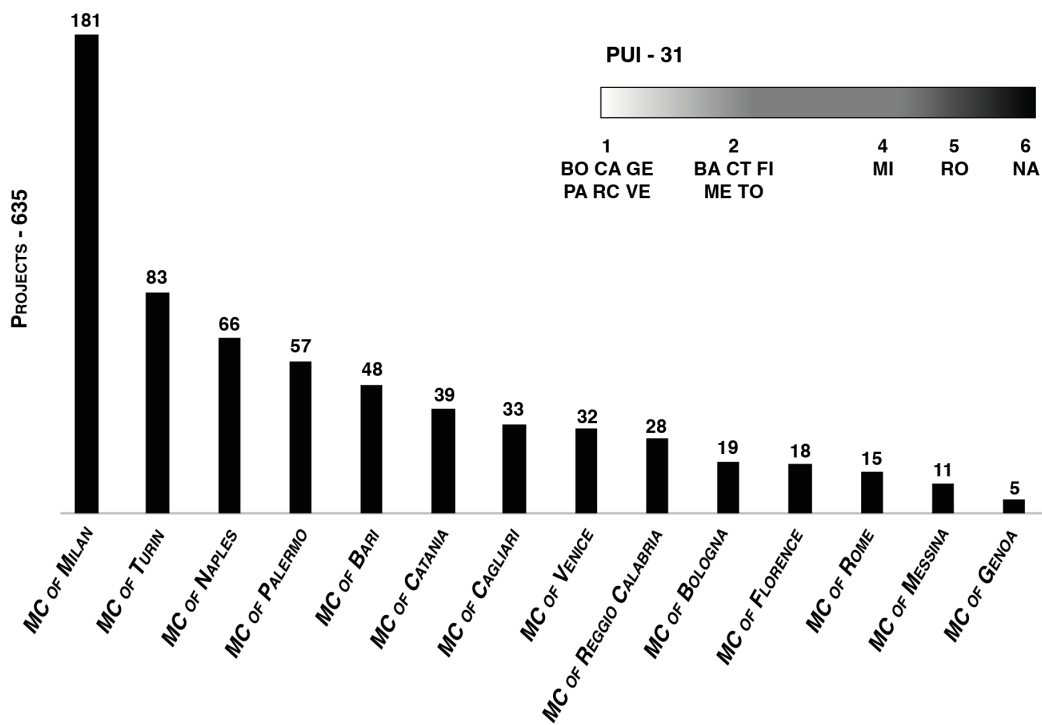


Figure 11 - Quantitative analysis of PUIs and projects by Metropolitan City. Source: Italia Domani, 2022. Authors' elaboration.

The lack of experience and tradition to inter-municipal (metropolitan) cooperation has brought to light the difficulties of Italian MCs in systematising actions and strategies of a metropolitan nature. In fact, analysing the PUIs with a

focus on the territorial target of the interventions revealed that there is not only an absolute heterogeneity but at the same time metropolitan in character projects, with metropolitan scale strategies, are only a very small part of the interventions. In fact, out of a total of 635 projects, there are only 46 projects with a metropolitan territorial focus, 138 projects that have their territorial focus on the capital municipality, as many as 451 projects that have the municipal level (or in some cases Unions of Municipalities) as their territorial focus, and finally 4 projects that have a neighborhood scale of intervention. These data further reiterate how much discretion has been left to MCs in relation to PUIs.

Operationally, following comments received from the European Commission, a decree of the Minister of the Interior in consultation with the Minister of Economy and Finance, dated April 28, 2023, partially corrected the Interministerial Decree of April 22, 2022, by not funding some projects. Specifically, the project envisaged within Integrated Urban Plan No. 7 *'Sport e Benessere – Next Re Generation Firenze 2026'* of the Metropolitan City of Florence and four projects envisaged within Integrated Urban Plan No. 31 *'Più Sprint - Piano integrato urbano per sport rigenerazione inclusione nel territorio metropolitano veneziano'* of the Metropolitan City of Venice.

The analysis on the state of implementation of the individual interventions included in the PUIs led the *Cabina di Regia* convened at the meeting of July 27, 2023, to propose, during the revision of the PNRR, the financial shift of these interventions from the PNRR to other sources such as national and EU resources of cohesion policies or national resources of the Complementary Plan.

The government's choice was dictated by the difficulty of many implementing entities in meeting the implementation timetable for the interventions, which jeopardizes the ultimate achievement of the European objective of having at least one integrated urban plan for each MC. Delays have been accumulated mostly in the design phase that have caused the estimated start of work to slip for most interventions in mid-2023. On this point, the government reassured the MCs on the continuity of financial coverage of individual interventions.

Following the European Commission's review of the Plan, funding for Integrated Urban Plans has been reduced from 2.5 billion to 900 million, and the final European target has been scaled back, now providing for the completion of at least 300 projects. Calls for proposals have been launched for nearly 45 percent of the funding originally planned in the PNRR for Integrated Urban Plans, amounting

to about 1.1 billion euros. This represents a significant achievement and does not seem to indicate structural delays in the implementation of this intervention. This downsizing, rather than on the program as a whole, seems to be more aimed at targeting critical situations that may not complete work by mid-2026. Indeed, it seems to be emerging how the European Commission is taking this approach, reducing but not eliminating the program's allocations and scaling back the targets to be achieved by the PNRR deadline.

# 5. Comparing Italian Metropolitan Cities

## 5.1 Introduction

The analysis of Italian metropolitan cities involves a detailed examination of their territorial, socioeconomic, and legislative aspects. Chapter 5 provides a comprehensive territorial analysis (5.2), highlighting the geographic and infrastructural characteristics of these urban areas. This is followed by an exploration of socioeconomic dynamics (5.3), which examines the economic activities, demographic trends, and social factors influencing these regions. The statutes governing metropolitan cities (5.4) are reviewed to understand the legal frameworks that shape their governance and operational structures. Additionally, the chapter addresses the metropolitan planning instruments (5.5), highlighting how all the Italian metropolitan cities are in very different situations with the update of their planning instruments to guide urban development and growth. Finally, the rationale behind selecting specific case studies (5.6) is explained, providing context and justification for the detailed examinations that follow.

## 5.2 Territorial Analysis

The organisation of local government and metropolitan cities has been radically transformed in recent years but is still in the making. Thirty years ago, Law 142/1990 introduced the concept of Metropolitan Cities into our legal system for the first time; the approval of Law 56/2014 definitively established ten Metropolitan Cities (Rome, Turin, Milan, Venice, Genoa, Bologna, Florence, Bari, Naples and Reggio Calabria) that replaced their respective provinces and formally came into operation on 1 January 2015. They are joined by the metropolitan cities established by laws of the special statute regions: Cagliari (which includes an area of 17

municipalities)<sup>29</sup>, Catania, Messina and Palermo (whose boundaries coincide with those of the provinces of the same name, which they replace).

The 14 metropolitan cities include almost 1.300 municipalities of different demographic size. Their total population is more than 22 million, or over 30% of the national population. The importance of metropolitan cities in demographic, economic and social terms has been repeatedly highlighted. However, it remains to be observed that differences and imbalances remain within and between metropolitan cities. In particular, the settlement pattern of metropolitan cities is differentiated, and in some cases governance structures remain insufficient with respect to the role that these cities assume. The main imbalances of a social nature concern income and access to services and show a gap between the different regions, which is accompanied by a further gap between the centre and the periphery in all metropolitan cities.

In this sense, the Italian metropolitan cities present themselves in a completely heterogeneous manner. There is heterogeneity in demographics, economics, in the number of municipalities, in territorial area (Figure 12).

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<sup>29</sup> The administrative geography of Sardinia has undergone a new reorganisation by Regional Law No. 7 of 12 April 2021, which establishes the metropolitan city of Sassari (in the process of being set up) and modifies the territorial circumscription of the metropolitan city of Cagliari, enlarging its territorial district. The new territorial structure substantially reproduces the one in force from 2005 until 2015, except for the different connotation of the two metropolitan cities. The above-mentioned Regional Law No. 7 of 2021 also provides for the possibility for provinces to associate in unions of provinces for the associated management of functions and services. The union consists of conterminous provinces, up to a maximum of three.



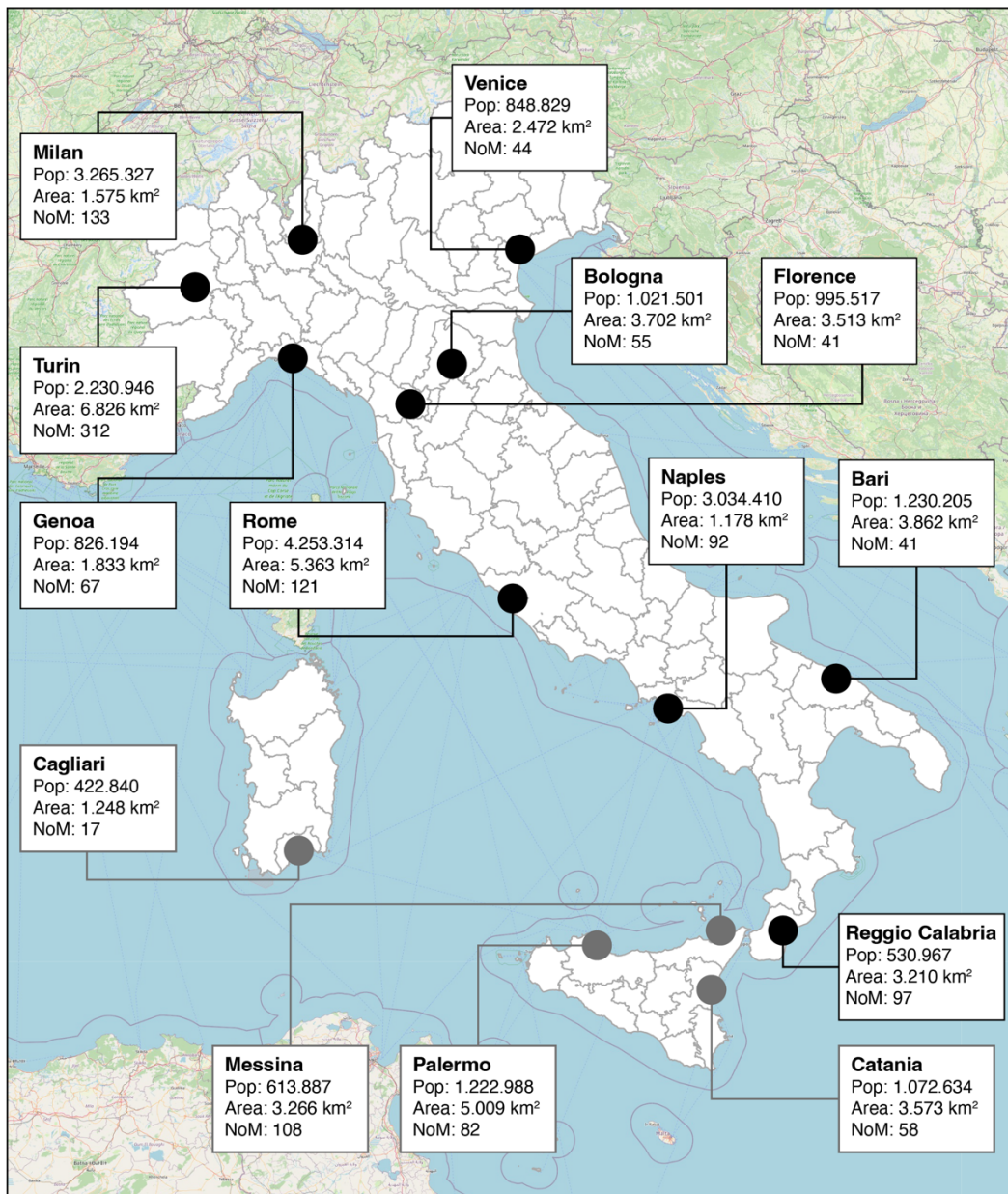


Figure 12 - The main dimensions of the 14 Metropolitan Cities in Italy. Source: ISTAT, 2022

From the point of view of territorial extension, the metropolitan city of Turin is the largest with 6.826 km<sup>2</sup>, while the metropolitan city of Naples is the smallest with 1.178 km<sup>2</sup>. The average surface area is 3330 km<sup>2</sup>. Around the average are the Metropolitan Cities of Messina (3.266 km<sup>2</sup>), Reggio Calabria (3.210 km<sup>2</sup>), Catania (3.573 km<sup>2</sup>), Bologna (3.702 km<sup>2</sup>), Bari (3.862 km<sup>2</sup>) and Florence (3.513 km<sup>2</sup>). The other metropolitan cities with a reduced territorial extension are the metropolitan city of Milan (1.575 km<sup>2</sup>), Naples (1.178 km<sup>2</sup>) and Genoa (1.833 km<sup>2</sup>). Among the

largest, on the other hand, are the metropolitan city of Rome (5.363 km<sup>2</sup>) and the metropolitan city of Palermo (5.009 km<sup>2</sup>) (Table 6).

**Table 6 - Brief characteristics of the territory**

|                        | Number of municipalities | Population | Average number of inhabitants per municipality | Surface area (sq. km) | Average surface area per municipality (sq. km) | Population density (inhabitants per sq. km) |
|------------------------|--------------------------|------------|--|-----------------------|--|---|
| <b>Bari</b>            | 41                       | 1.230.205  | 30.005   | 3.862,70              | 94,2   | 318,5                                       |
| <b>Bologna</b>         | 55                       | 1.021.501  | 18.573   | 3.702,20              | 67,3   | 275,9                                       |
| <b>Cagliari</b>        | 17                       | 422.840    | 24.873   | 1.248,70              | 73,5   | 338,6                                       |
| <b>Catania</b>         | 58                       | 1.072.634  | 18.494   | 3.573,50              | 61,6   | 300,2                                       |
| <b>Florence</b>        | 41                       | 995.517    | 24.281   | 3.513,70              | 85,7   | 283,3                                       |
| <b>Genoa</b>           | 67                       | 826.194    | 12.331   | 1.833,70              | 27,4   | 450,5                                       |
| <b>Messina</b>         | 108                      | 613.887    | 5.684  | 3.266,10              | 30,2   | 188   |
| <b>Milan</b>           | 133                      | 3.265.327  | 24.551   | 1.575,50              | 11,8   | 2.072,60                                    |
| <b>Naples</b>          | 92                       | 3.034.410  | 32.983   | 1.178,90              | 12,8   | 2.573,90                                    |
| <b>Palermo</b>         | 82                       | 1.222.988  | 14.914   | 5.009,20              | 61,1   | 244,1                                       |
| <b>Reggio Calabria</b> | 97                       | 530.967    | 5.474  | 3.210,30              | 33,1   | 165,4                                       |
| <b>Rome</b>            | 121                      | 4.253.314  | 35.151   | 5.363,20              | 44,3   | 793,1                                       |
| <b>Turin</b>           | 312                      | 2.230.946  | 7.150  | 6.826,90              | 21,9   | 326,8                                       |
| <b>Venice</b>          | 44                       | 848.829    | 19.292   | 2.472,90              | 56,2   | 343,3                                       |

Source: ISTAT, 2022. Author's elaboration.

As for the number of municipalities belonging to metropolitan cities, once again the situation is very heterogeneous. In particular, the metropolitan city of Turin, in addition to being the largest from a territorial point of view, is at the same time the metropolitan city with the largest number of municipalities (312). The number ranges from 133 for the Metropolitan City of Milan to 121 for Rome and 108 for Messina. Metropolitan cities with between 60 and 100 municipalities per metropolitan area are the metropolitan city of Reggio Calabria (97), the metropolitan city of Naples (92), the metropolitan city of Palermo (82) and the metropolitan city of Genoa (67). Metropolitan cities with between 40 and 60 municipalities are the metropolitan cities of Catania (58), Bologna (55), Venice (44) and the metropolitan cities of Bari and Florence with both 41 municipalities. Finally, the metropolitan city of Cagliari has the fewest, only 17 municipalities (Figure 13).

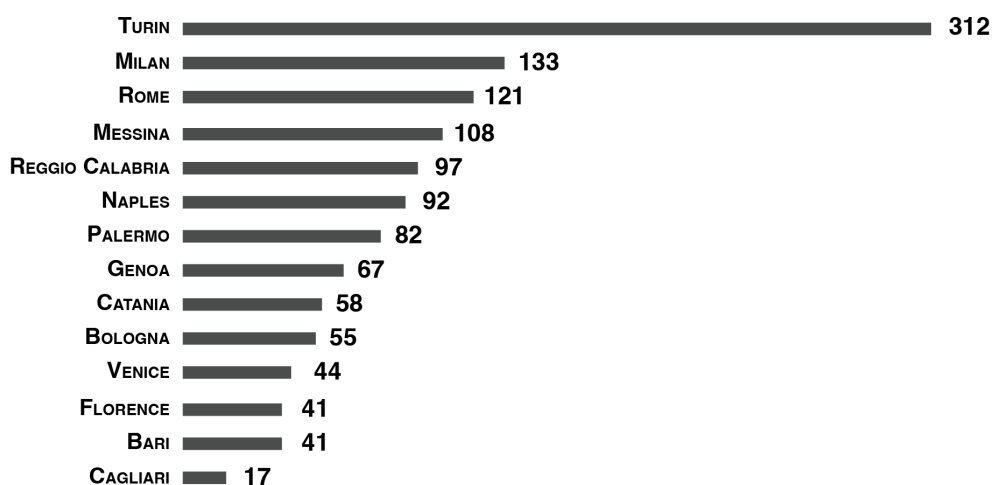


Figure 13 - Number of Municipalities. Source: ISTAT, 2022. Author's elaboration.

Comparing the values of the territorial surface area of metropolitan cities with those of the numbers of municipalities within them, it is interesting how the resulting values give a different and further interpretation of Italian metropolitan cities. In particular, in relation to the average surface area per municipality, the metropolitan city of Bari has the highest values (94.2 km<sup>2</sup>). Above the national average there are the metropolitan cities of Florence (85.7 km<sup>2</sup>), Cagliari (73.5 km<sup>2</sup>), Bologna (67.3 km<sup>2</sup>), Catania (61.6 km<sup>2</sup>), Palermo (61.1 km<sup>2</sup>) and Venice (56.2 km<sup>2</sup>). Below the average for Italian metropolitan cities there are Rome (44.3 km<sup>2</sup>), Reggio Calabria (33.1 km<sup>2</sup>), Messina (30.2 km<sup>2</sup>), Genoa (27.4 km<sup>2</sup>), Turin (21.9 km<sup>2</sup>) and Naples (12.8 km<sup>2</sup>). The metropolitan city with the lowest average surface area per municipality is the metropolitan city of Milan with 11.8 km<sup>2</sup>.

It is also interesting to analyse how municipalities are distributed within metropolitan areas in relation to their altitudinal zones (Table 7). In particular, there are some metropolitan cities such as Milan and Venice where all the municipalities are located in the plains, followed by other metropolitan cities where instead the municipalities are distributed between the plains and hills, the metropolitan cities of Naples, Bari and Cagliari. Two metropolitan cities (Genoa and Messina) have instead municipalities distributed between hills and mountains. The remaining have municipalities distributed between mountains, hills and plains. The most homogeneous in this sense are the metropolitan cities of Turin and Bologna, with municipalities that are distributed almost equally between the different altitude zones. The remaining metropolitan cities (Florence, Rome, Reggio Calabria,

Palermo and Catania) have predominantly hilly municipalities, followed by a good number of mountain municipalities and, finally, a small number of municipalities that are located on the plains.

**Table 7 - Number of municipalities for altitudinal zones**

|                        | <b>Mountain</b> |      | <b>Hill</b> |      | <b>Plain</b> |      |
|------------------------|-----------------|------|-------------|------|--------------|------|
|                        | Number          | %    | Number      | %    | Number       | %    |
| <b>Bari</b>            |                 |      | 24          | 58,5 | 17           | 41,5 |
| <b>Bologna</b>         | 12              | 21,8 | 18          | 32,7 | 25           | 45,5 |
| <b>Cagliari</b>        |                 |      | 6           | 35,3 | 11           | 64,7 |
| <b>Catania</b>         | 14              | 24,1 | 37          | 63,8 | 7            | 12,1 |
| <b>Florence</b>        | 7               | 17,1 | 31          | 75,6 | 3            | 7,3  |
| <b>Genoa</b>           | 44              | 65,7 | 23          | 34,3 |              |      |
| <b>Messina</b>         | 53              | 49,1 | 55          | 50,9 |              |      |
| <b>Milan</b>           |                 |      |             |      | 133          | 100  |
| <b>Naples</b>          |                 |      | 48          | 52,2 | 44           | 47,8 |
| <b>Palermo</b>         | 22              | 26,8 | 52          | 63,4 | 8            | 9,8  |
| <b>Reggio Calabria</b> | 35              | 36,1 | 54          | 55,7 | 8            | 8,2  |
| <b>Rome</b>            | 38              | 31,4 | 77          | 63,6 | 6            | 5    |
| <b>Turin</b>           | 105             | 33,7 | 124         | 39,7 | 83           | 26,6 |
| <b>Venice</b>          |                 |      |             |      | 44           | 100  |

Source: ISTAT, 2022. Author's elaboration.

### 5.3 Analysis of Socioeconomic Dynamics

After having analysed the Italian metropolitan cities from a territorial point of view, the second theme on which the metropolitan cities will now be compared is that of demography.

In terms of population (Figure 14), the metropolitan city with the largest population is Rome with 4.253.314 inhabitants, followed by the metropolitan cities of Milan (3.265.327), Naples (3.034.410) and Turin (2.230.946). Around one million inhabitants per metropolitan area are the metropolitan cities of Bari (1.230.205), Palermo (1.222.988), Catania (1.072.634), Bologna (1.021.501), Florence (995.517), Venice (848.829) and Genoa (826.194). Finally, the least populous metropolitan cities are Messina (613.887), Reggio Calabria (530.967) and the metropolitan city of Cagliari (422.840).

POPULATION IN THE ITALIAN MCs

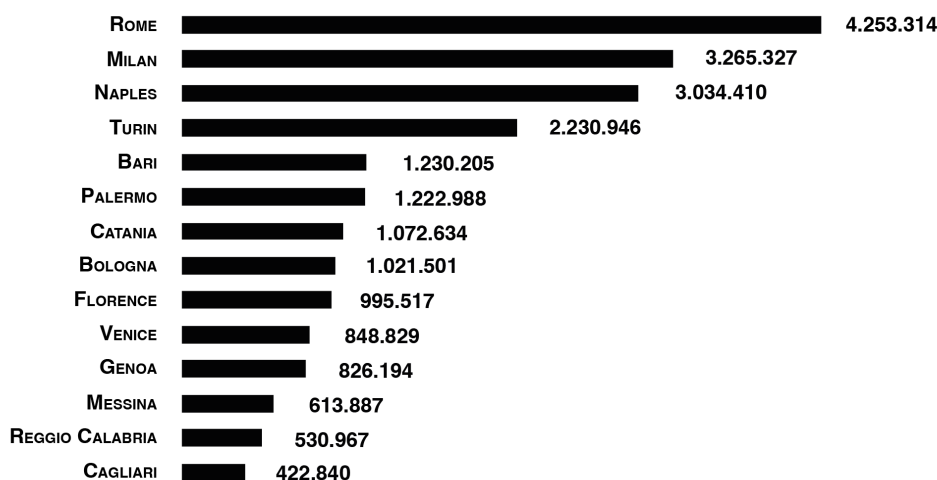


Figure 14 - Population in the metropolitan areas. Source: ISTAT, 2022. Author's elaboration.

A further step of detail is the distribution of population within metropolitan areas. The first level of detail we wish to analyse is the distribution of population between the Capital City and the other municipalities within the metropolitan area. This analysis allows us to assess the relative level of polarisation present in the different cases (Table 8).

Table 8 - Population in the Metropolitan capitals and the rest of the metropolitan territory

|                        | Metropolitan capitals |      | Other municipalities |      | Total     |
|------------------------|-----------------------|------|----------------------|------|-----------|
|                        | No.                   | %    | No.                  | %    |           |
| <b>Bari</b>            | 315.284               | 25,6 | 914.921              | 74,4 | 1.230.205 |
| <b>Bologna</b>         | 395.416               | 38,7 | 626.085              | 61,3 | 1.021.501 |
| <b>Cagliari</b>        | 151.005               | 35,7 | 271.835              | 64,3 | 422.840   |
| <b>Catania</b>         | 296.266               | 27,6 | 776.368              | 72,4 | 1.072.634 |
| <b>Florence</b>        | 366.927               | 36,9 | 628.590              | 63,1 | 995.517   |
| <b>Genoa</b>           | 565.752               | 68,5 | 260.442              | 31,5 | 826.194   |
| <b>Messina</b>         | 227.424               | 37   | 386.463              | 63   | 613.887   |
| <b>Milan</b>           | 1.406.242             | 43,1 | 1.859.085            | 56,9 | 3.265.327 |
| <b>Naples</b>          | 948.850               | 31,3 | 2.085.560            | 68,7 | 3.034.410 |
| <b>Palermo</b>         | 647.422               | 52,9 | 575.566              | 47,1 | 1.222.988 |
| <b>Reggio Calabria</b> | 174.885               | 32,9 | 356.082              | 67,1 | 530.967   |
| <b>Rome</b>            | 2.808.293             | 66   | 1.445.021            | 34   | 4.253.314 |

|               |         |      |           |      |           |
|---------------|---------|------|-----------|------|-----------|
| <b>Turin</b>  | 857.910 | 38,5 | 1.373.036 | 61,5 | 2.230.946 |
| <b>Venice</b> | 258.685 | 30,5 | 5.090.144 | 69,5 | 848.829   |

Source: ISTAT, 2022. Author's elaboration.

In detail, the metropolitan cities with the most centrality are the metropolitan city of Genoa (68.5%), Rome (66%) and Palermo (52.9%). These metropolitan cities are followed by the metropolitan cities of Milan (43.1%), Bologna (38.7%), Turin (38.5%), Messina (37%), Florence (36.9%), Cagliari (35.7%), Reggio Calabria (32.9%), Naples (31.3%) and Venice (30.5%). Finally, the most diffuse or polycentric metropolitan cities are the metropolitan city of Catania (27.6%) and the metropolitan city of Bari with 25.6% of the resident population within the capital city.

**Table 9 - Number of municipalities by population size**

|                        | 0 - 5.000 |      | 5 - 15.000 |      | 15 - 50.000 |      | 50 - 250.000 |      | 250.000 and over |     |
|------------------------|-----------|------|------------|------|-------------|------|--------------|------|------------------|-----|
|                        | No.       | %    | No.        | %    | No.         | %    | No.          | %    | No.              | %   |
| <b>Bari</b>            | 2         | 4,9  | 11         | 26,8 | 24          | 58,5 | 3            | 7,3  | 1                | 2,4 |
| <b>Bologna</b>         | 15        | 27,3 | 26         | 47,3 | 12          | 21,8 | 1            | 1,8  | 1                | 1,8 |
| <b>Cagliari</b>        | 1         | 5,9  | 8          | 47,1 | 6           | 35,3 | 2            | 11,8 |                  |     |
| <b>Catania</b>         | 15        | 25,9 | 24         | 41,4 | 17          | 29,3 | 1            | 1,7  | 1                | 1,7 |
| <b>Florence</b>        | 7         | 17,1 | 17         | 41,5 | 15          | 36,6 | 1            | 2,4  | 1                | 2,4 |
| <b>Genoa</b>           | 51        | 76,1 | 12         | 17,9 | 3           | 4,5  |              |      | 1                | 1,5 |
| <b>Messina</b>         | 88        | 81,5 | 17         | 15,7 | 2           | 1,9  | 2            | 0,9  |                  |     |
| <b>Milan</b>           | 32        | 24,1 | 58         | 43,6 | 38          | 28,6 | 4            | 3    | 1                | 0,8 |
| <b>Naples</b>          | 10        | 10,9 | 32         | 34,8 | 39          | 42,4 | 10           | 10,9 | 1                | 1,1 |
| <b>Palermo</b>         | 49        | 59,8 | 25         | 30,5 | 6           | 7,3  | 1            | 1,2  | 1                | 1,2 |
| <b>Reggio Calabria</b> | 75        | 77,3 | 17         | 17,5 | 4           | 4,1  | 1            | 1    |                  |     |
| <b>Rome</b>            | 61        | 50,4 | 28         | 23,1 | 24          | 19,8 | 7            | 5,8  | 1                | 0,8 |
| <b>Turin</b>           | 250       | 80,1 | 37         | 11,9 | 23          | 7,4  | 1            | 0,3  | 1                | 0,3 |
| <b>Venice</b>          | 8         | 18,2 | 22         | 50   | 13          | 29,5 |              |      | 1                | 2,3 |

Source: ISTAT, 2022. Author's elaboration.

The Table 9 gives us the opportunity to assess a further interesting aspect. It shows us the distribution of municipalities within metropolitan cities in relation to demographic size. It emerges, for example, that for the metropolitan city of Turin, over 80% of the municipalities (250) belong to municipalities with between 0 and 5.000 inhabitants. The metropolitan cities of Genoa, Reggio Calabria and Messina

also have 76%, 77% and 81.5% of small municipalities (0 – 5.000 inhabitants) respectively. The other metropolitan areas average between 5.000 and 50.000 inhabitants. Above 50.000 inhabitants, the percentages in all metropolitan cities are very low, with two small exceptions relating to the metropolitan cities of Naples and Cagliari with 10.9% and 11.8% of municipalities in the 50 – 250.000 inhabitants' band, respectively. Finally, all metropolitan cities have a municipality with a population above 250.000 with the exception of the metropolitan cities of Cagliari, Messina and Reggio Calabria (Table 10).

**Table 10 - Population by demographic size of municipalities.**

|                        | 0 - 5.000 ab |      | 5 - 15.000 ab |      | 15 - 50.000 ab |      | 50 - 250.000 ab |      | Capital City |      |
|------------------------|--------------|------|---------------|------|----------------|------|-----------------|------|--------------|------|
|                        | No.          | %    | No.           | %    | No.            | %    | No.             | %    | No.          | %    |
| <b>Bari</b>            | 3.532        | 0,3  | 117.702       | 9,6  | 612.997        | 49,8 | 180.690         | 14,7 | 315.284      | 25,6 |
| <b>Bologna</b>         | 49.349       | 4,8  | 235.143       | 23   | 271.005        | 26,5 | 70.588          | 6,9  | 395.416      | 38,7 |
| <b>Cagliari</b>        | 2.133        | 0,5  | 66.505        | 15,7 | 134.914        | 31,9 | 68.283          | 16,1 | 151.005      | 35,7 |
| <b>Catania</b>         | 48.824       | 4,6  | 220.351       | 20,5 | 456.017        | 42,5 | 51.176          | 4,8  | 296.266      | 27,6 |
| <b>Florence</b>        | 20.010       | 2    | 180.442       | 18,1 | 377.095        | 37,9 | 51.043          | 5,1  | 366.927      | 36,9 |
| <b>Genoa</b>           | 91.367       | 11,1 | 94.283        | 11,4 | 74.792         | 9,1  |                 |      | 565.752      | 68,5 |
| <b>Messina</b>         | 169.668      | 27,6 | 146.361       | 23,8 | 70.434         | 11,5 |                 |      | 227.424      | 37   |
| <b>Milan</b>           | 106.808      | 3,3  | 513.492       | 15,7 | 973.576        | 29,8 | 265.209         | 8,1  | 1.406.242    | 43,1 |
| <b>Naples</b>          | 31.832       | 1    | 294.553       | 9,7  | 1.053.716      | 34,7 | 705.459         | 23,2 | 948.850      | 31,3 |
| <b>Palermo</b>         | 117.645      | 9,6  | 224.299       | 18,3 | 180.213        | 14,7 | 53.409          | 4,4  | 647.422      | 52,9 |
| <b>Reggio Calabria</b> | 139.936      | 26,4 | 145.963       | 27,5 | 70.183         | 13,2 |                 |      | 174.885      | 32,9 |
| <b>Rome</b>            | 94.391       | 2,2  | 259.360       | 6,1  | 655.460        | 15,4 | 435.810         | 10,2 | 2.808.293    | 66   |
| <b>Turin</b>           | 389.334      | 17,5 | 303.625       | 13,6 | 623.340        | 27,9 | 56.737          | 2,5  | 857.910      | 38,5 |
| <b>Venice</b>          | 28.582       | 3,4  | 219.914       | 25,9 | 341.648        | 40,2 |                 |      | 258.685      | 30,5 |

Source: ISTAT, 2022. Author's elaboration.

The section on economic analysis of Italian metropolitan cities focuses mainly on the labour market (Table 11). Several key indicators were compared to assess employment conditions and labour dynamics in these areas. The indicators examined include the activity rate, employment rate, unemployment rate, youth unemployment rate and the percentage of NEETs (Not in Education, Employment, or Training).

**Table 11 - Labour Market data.**

|                        | <b>Activity rate</b> | <b>Employment rate (ER)</b> | <b>Unemployment rate (UR)</b> | <b>Youth UR</b> | <b>Neet</b> |
|------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|-------------|
| <b>Bari</b>            | 58,6                 | 52,5                        | 10,1                          | 32,6            | 25,4        |
| <b>Bologna</b>         | 74,9                 | 71,5                        | 4,4                           | 22,4            | 15          |
| <b>Cagliari</b>        | 66,4                 | 57,6                        | 13                            | 39,6            | 21,1        |
| <b>Catania</b>         | 47,1                 | 39,6                        | 15,6                          | 46,5            | 40,2        |
| <b>Florence</b>        | 73,1                 | 68,6                        | 6                             | 28,8            | 15,6        |
| <b>Genoa</b>           | 69,3                 | 63,5                        | 8,2                           | 27,1            | 17,3        |
| <b>Messina</b>         | 55,2                 | 41,7                        | 23,9                          | 52,6            | 40          |
| <b>Milan</b>           | 72,9                 | 68,7                        | 5,7                           | 22              | 18,1        |
| <b>Naples</b>          | 48,6                 | 37,9                        | 21,5                          | 52,8            | 38,2        |
| <b>Palermo</b>         | 46,8                 | 39,5                        | 15,3                          | 49,6            | 36,8        |
| <b>Reggio Calabria</b> | 46,7                 | 39,3                        | 15,3                          | 44,6            | 34,5        |
| <b>Rome</b>            | 68,5                 | 62,4                        | 8,7                           | 33              | 21,9        |
| <b>Turin</b>           | 69,3                 | 63,5                        | 8,2                           | 30,3            | 18,8        |
| <b>Venice</b>          | 70,8                 | 66,7                        | 5,6                           | 26,7            | 16,6        |

Source: ISTAT, 2022. Author's elaboration.

An analysis of labour data in Italy's metropolitan cities highlights strong spatial disparities that reflect deep economic and social differences between the country's regions. Northern Italian metropolitan areas, such as Bologna and Milan, show significantly better employment performance than many areas in the South. These areas boast a stronger economic fabric, a greater presence of advanced industries and a better ability to attract investment and talent. Activity and employment rates in these cities are significantly higher than their southern counterparts. In contrast, metropolitan areas in the South, such as Naples and Palermo, show serious shortcomings in terms of job opportunities, with very high rates of unemployment and youth unemployment. These regions suffer from structural problems, including the presence of a widespread informal economy, administrative inefficiencies and a less investment-friendly environment.

Youth unemployment and NEET rates are of particular concern in cities such as Messina and Naples. These data suggest a social and economic emergency that requires urgent and targeted interventions. The high number of young people who do not find jobs or participate in education or training represents a huge waste of human capital and a significant challenge to social cohesion. Vocational training



policies, apprenticeship programs, and incentives for firms to hire young people can be crucial to improving the situation.

Strong regional disparities require targeted policies tailored to the specifics of each metropolitan area. Uniform interventions are not sufficient to address different local realities. A tailored approach is needed that considers the economic, social and cultural peculiarities of each area. The National Recovery and Resilience Plan offers a unique opportunity to invest in infrastructure, education, and innovation, promoting more balanced and sustainable economic development. Improved transportation infrastructure is essential to facilitate labour mobility and access to the market. Investing in efficient and sustainable public transportation can reduce disparities and promote the economic integration of disadvantaged metropolitan areas.

To sum up, Italy's metropolitan areas represent a complex and diverse mosaic, with strong disparities between North and South. Addressing these differences with targeted policies and strategic investments is critical to promoting inclusive and sustainable economic growth, ensuring equal opportunities for development and well-being for all citizens.

## **5.4 The Statutes of Metropolitan Cities**

The approval of the Metropolitan Statute, proposed by a special statutory conference, constitutes the fundamental moment for the body to become operational. It establishes the fundamental rules of internal organisation, regulates the modalities and instruments for coordinating the overall action of the metropolitan territory's government, and:

- regulates the relations between the municipalities and their unions that are part of the metropolitan city and the metropolitan city regarding the modalities of organisation and exercise of metropolitan and municipal functions, also foreseeing forms of organisation in common, possibly differentiated by territorial areas.
- may provide, also upon proposal of the Region and in any case in agreement with it, for the establishment of homogeneous zones, for specific functions and considering territorial specificities, with coordinating bodies linked to the bodies of the metropolitan city.

- regulates the modalities according to which the Municipalities not included in the metropolitan territory can establish agreements with the metropolitan city.
- may provide for the direct election of the metropolitan mayor and metropolitan council.

**Table 12 - The main steps for the institution of the metropolitan authority.**

| <b>Metropolitan City</b> | <b>Constitution of the Institution</b> | <b>Replacement of the Province</b> | <b>First election of the Metropolitan Council</b> | <b>Approval of the Statute</b> |
|--------------------------|--|------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| <b>Bari</b>              | 08/04/14                               | 01/01/15                           | 12/10/14  | 18/12/14                       |
| <b>Bologna</b>           | 08/04/14                               | 01/01/15                           | 28/09/14  | 23/12/14                       |
| <b>Cagliari</b>          | 12/02/16                               | 01/01/17                           | 03/04/16  | 23/05/16                       |
| <b>Catania</b>           | 07/08/15                               | 07/08/15                           | Not yet done                                      | Not approved                   |
| <b>Florence</b>          | 08/04/14                               | 01/01/15                           | 28/09/14  | 16/12/14                       |
| <b>Genoa</b>             | 08/04/14                               | 01/01/15                           | 28/09/14  | 19/12/14                       |
| <b>Messina</b>           | 07/08/15                               | 07/08/15                           | Not yet done                                      | Not approved                   |
| <b>Milan</b>             | 08/04/14                               | 01/01/15                           | 28/09/14  | 22/12/14                       |
| <b>Naples</b>            | 08/04/14                               | 01/01/15                           | 12/10/14  | 11/06/15                       |
| <b>Palermo</b>           | 07/08/15                               | 07/08/15                           | 28/06/16  | 14/07/20                       |
| <b>Reggio Calabria</b>   | 11/06/16                               | 01/02/17                           | 07/08/16  | 29/12/16                       |
| <b>Rome</b>              | 08/04/14                               | 01/01/15                           | 05/10/14  | 22/12/14                       |
| <b>Turin</b>             | 08/04/14                               | 01/01/15                           | 12/10/14  | 14/04/15                       |
| <b>Venice</b>            | 08/04/14                               | 31/08/15                           | 09/08/15  | 20/01/16                       |

**Source: Author's elaboration.**

All metropolitan cities in ordinary regions currently have their own statutes (Table 12). For the special Regions, however, the situation is different. Two Sicilian metropolitan cities - Palermo and Messina - have their own Statute Scheme. The Metropolitan City of Catania and the Metropolitan City of Messina, on the other hand, don't have yet its own Statute Scheme. Therefore, the Statute of the pre-existing regional Provinces applies. The only Sardinian metropolitan city, that of Cagliari, has its own Statute.

The first elections of the metropolitan councils of Bari, Bologna, Florence, Genoa, Milan, Naples, Rome and Turin took place between 28 September and 12

October 2014. The election of the council of the metropolitan city of Venice took place on 9 August 2015 and that of Reggio Calabria on 7 August 2016.

The metropolitan council holds office for five years. However, the law states that in the event of a renewal of the council of the metropolitan municipality, new elections for the metropolitan council are held, which are called by the mayor within sixty days of its proclamation.

## **5.5 The Metropolitan Planning Instruments**

With the Delrio reform, as previously mentioned, Italy's metropolitan cities have been supplemented with a strategic component in the governance of their territory. Also, with the Delrio reform, the spatial planning instruments at the disposal of the metropolitan authority were identified, which are, the Metropolitan General Territorial Plan, replacing the old Provincial Coordination Territorial Plan, the Metropolitan Strategic Plan (three-year duration), and the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan. As with all previous comparisons made in relation to spatial planning and governance instruments, what emerges is a totally diversified picture among metropolitan cities. Since 2015, most metropolitan cities have tried to update their PTGM, and to introduce the PSM and PUMS. But although more than nine years passed since their establishment, to date the number of planning instruments drawn up by them remains limited and diverse (Staricco & Vitale, 2021) (Figure 15). In particular, in reference to the PSM, the three-year strategic plan of the metropolitan territory provided for by Law 56/2014, to date most metropolitan cities (10 out of 14) have implemented the strategic plan between 2018 and 2022, while the metropolitan cities of Palermo, Messina and Reggio Calabria have adopted the preliminary document of the PSM during 2022, and finally, the metropolitan city of Bari, in which the strategic plan is currently being drafted. As regards the PUMS, as of January 2023, there are five cities that have approved PUMS, eight that have adopted it, and one for which the PUMS is in drafting. Finally, in relation to the PTGM, the situation of metropolitan cities appears to be heterogeneous. The only metropolitan cities to have the new metropolitan spatial planning tool are the metropolitan cities of Bologna and Milan. The other metropolitan cities are in a very different situation, the metropolitan city of Turin has approved the draft technical proposal, others have updated the instrument on the basis of the contents of the previous PTCPs, others have approved the guidelines, and finally, there are also metropolitan cities where to date there is no spatial planning instrument at all.

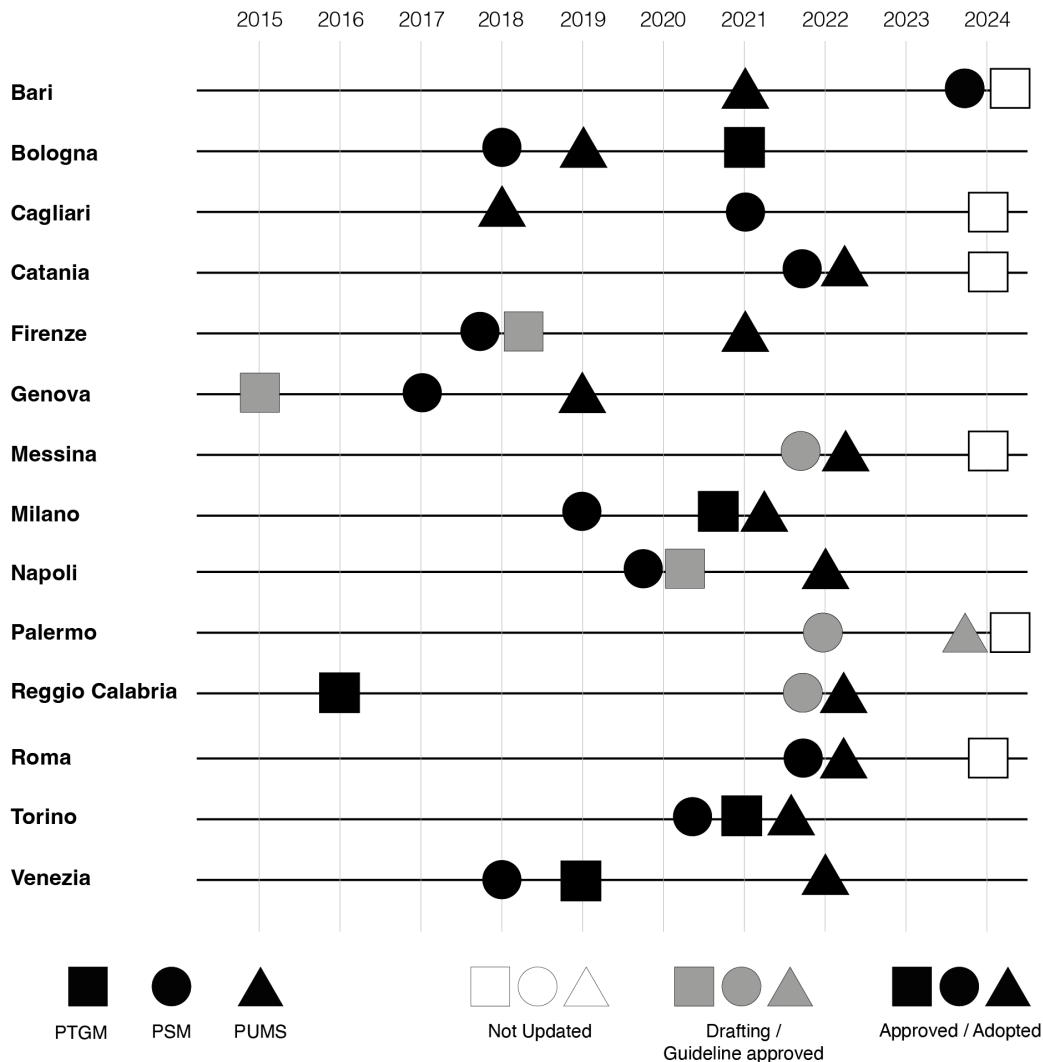


Figure 15 - The status of the planning instruments in the Italian Metropolitan Cities. Source: Author's elaboration.

## 5.6 Motivation on the choice of case studies

Comparing the 14 Italian metropolitan cities, the picture that emerges is one of absolute heterogeneity. Heterogeneity in demographic size, economically, socially, territorially and in terms of planning instruments. To adequately investigate three contexts that are different from each other but with elements that are useful to each other, the choice of case studies fell on the Metropolitan City of Turin, the Metropolitan City of Bari and the Metropolitan City of Bologna.

There are many reasons for the choice of case studies. Choosing to analyse the case of the metropolitan city of Turin was almost immediate. In particular, on the one hand for my experience within the metropolitan authority of Turin during my post-graduate internship and on the other hand in the academic context for studying the Turin metropolitan context during an ESPON METRO research project focused on cohesion policy and the role of metropolitan cities. On the other hand, the choice of the Turin context turns out to be very interesting from the point of view of a final comparison between the different case studies in the light of its characteristics, its territorial extension, its discrepancies between institution area and functional area, the very strong role of the City of Turin with respect to the other municipalities in the metropolitan area and finally its very recent planning tools (which I had the opportunity to follow directly in their drafting stages).

The choice of the case study on the metropolitan city of Bari had different motivations. In particular, its characteristics are very different from those of the metropolitan city of Turin. The Apulian metropolitan city, in fact, appears to be very polycentric, the demographic weight is distributed over the entire metropolitan area, the municipalities are definitely fewer but with a much greater demographic weight. The territorial context turns out to be different, the sub-ordinate governance also, there are no homogeneous zones, present instead in the Piedmont context. With regard to planning tools, I have been involved in the participatory process of the metropolitan strategic plan of the metropolitan city of Bari.

The last case study considered is that of the metropolitan city of Bologna. Here, too, there are different reasons for the choice. The case of the metropolitan city of Bologna also has different territorial, demographic and economic characteristics from the other case studies. The metropolitan area of Bologna was chosen mainly for its tradition in territorial cooperation. In particular, the metropolitan context, also considering the regional framework, is the one that is most attentive to horizontal and vertical cooperation between the various authorities. This is demonstrated by the presence of numerous unions of municipalities and the metropolitan city's focus on building relations with neighbouring municipalities, provinces and metropolitan cities. In this sense, the agreements between the metropolitan city of Bologna and the municipality of Prato, the provinces of Modena and Ferrara and lastly between the metropolitan city of Bologna and the metropolitan city of Florence, with a view to creating a metropolitan system, are interesting.

As pointed out, these three cases present different characteristics and at the same time elements that can link them. The basic idea behind the choice of these three case studies is that each of these three metropolitan cities can transfer best practices to the others and learn something at the same time.

# **6. Case study 1 – The Metropolitan City of Bari**

## **6.1 Introduction**

Within this chapter, the first case study, the Metropolitan City of Bari (MCBa), will be described. Specifically, the chapter is made up of four different sections. The first part is purely descriptive and relates to the territorial framework of the metropolitan city. Within this first part, in fact, all the territorial characteristics (physical and not) of the metropolitan city of Bari will be presented. The second part will focus on the institutional governance system of the metropolitan institution. This section will provide information about the metropolitan governance system of Bari. It will cover how the system was constructed, how the metropolitan level fits within regional legislation, and the specifics of the metropolitan statute. Additionally, the current metropolitan governance scheme and the different forms of inter-municipal cooperation will be highlighted. In this chapter, the third section provides a detailed explanation of the metropolitan authority's planning instruments. Specifically, it describes all the planning instruments that are currently in force at the metropolitan level, their construction process, and their role in relation to supra- and subordinate planning instruments. The final section of the case study focuses on the role of MCBa in the European cohesion policy. It will describe the different European funds that arrive in the metropolitan area. It will also detail the various European projects that MCBa participates in, as well as the role of the metropolitan city in relation to the PNRR and its associated projects.

## **6.2 Territorial Analysis of the Bari Metropolitan Area**

### **6.2.1 The physical and urban dimension**

The metropolitan area of Bari is made up of 41 municipalities, has more than one million inhabitants (1.230.158 residents as of 1/1/2021) and covers an area of 3.862 square kilometres, within which there are two distinct altitudinal zones: the

first is for coastal and lowland municipalities, the second, more inland, is for hillside municipalities. The MCBa faces the Adriatic Sea to the northeast, borders Basilicata to the west, the province of Barletta-Andria-Trani to the north and the provinces of Brindisi and Taranto to the south (Figure 16).

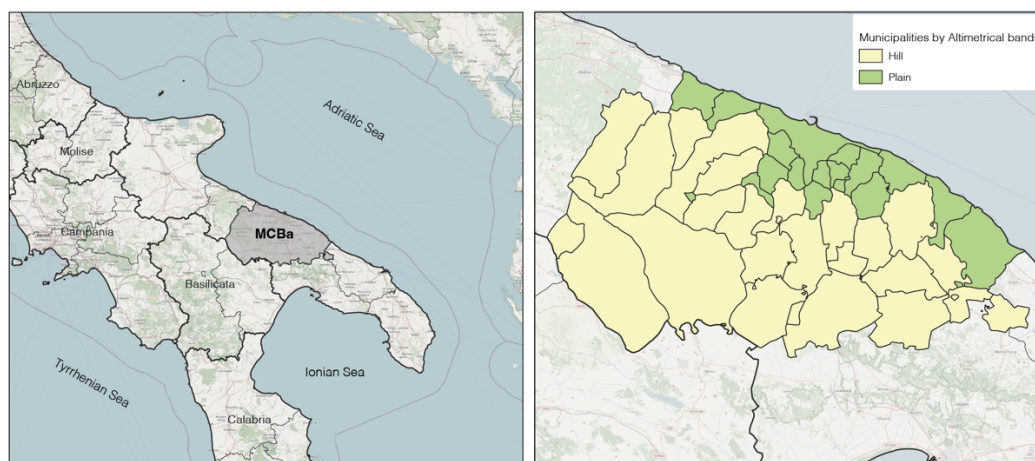


Figure 16 - MCBa and Municipalities by altitudinal zones. Source: Author's elaboration.

An interesting territorial distinction, made by the *Piano Paesaggistico Territoriale Regionale* (PPTR) of the Apulia Region, categorises the Apulian region and consequently the metropolitan area of Bari into landscape ambits and territorial and landscape figures (minimum landscape units). In particular, the interweaving of physical-morphological, socio-economic and cultural features of the territory has led to a coherent correlation between historical regions (not specified in their borders, but in their socio-economic and functional features), landscape areas and territorial figures (identified for the purposes of the plan in a geographically defined manner)<sup>30</sup>. The following is a breakdown of the 11 Landscape Ambits and their corresponding Territorial Figures (Table 13).

Table 13 - The 11 Landscape Ambits and Territorial Figures.

| Historical Geographic Region | Landscape Ambits | Territorial Figures |
|------------------------------|------------------|---------------------|
|------------------------------|------------------|---------------------|

<sup>30</sup> The 11 landscape ambits into which the region has been divided have been identified through the integrated assessment of a plurality of factors, such as - the historical conformation of the geographical regions; the characters of the hydro geomorphological structure; the environmental and ecosystem characters; the settlement types: cities, city networks, infrastructures, agrarian structures; the set of territorial figures constituting the morpho-typological characters of the landscapes; the articulation of the perceptive identities of the landscapes.

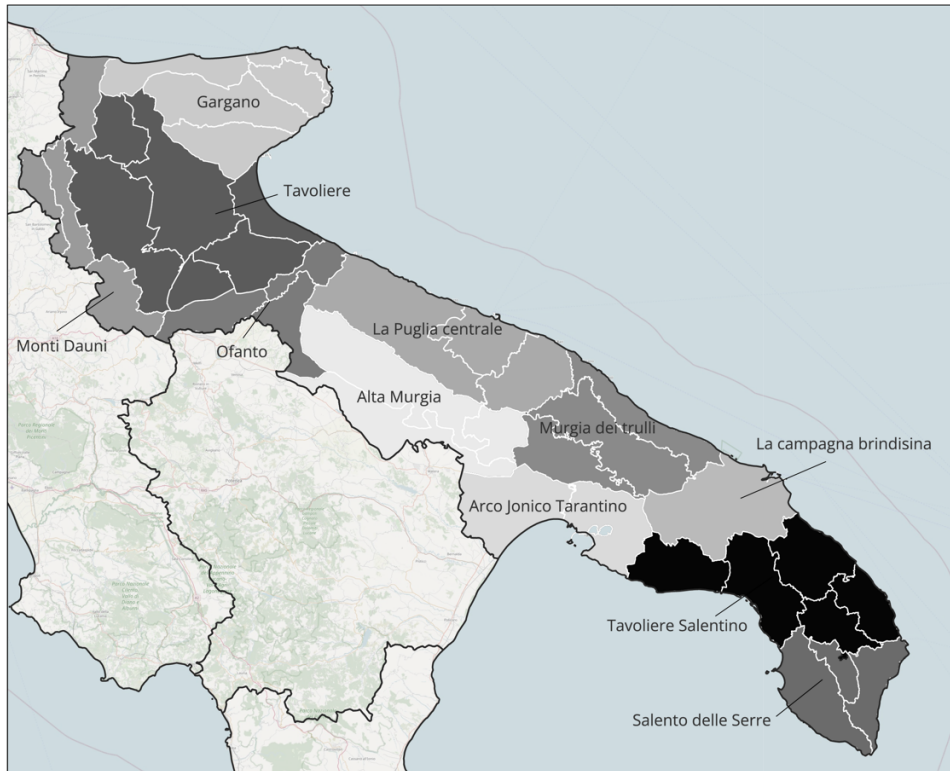


|  |                       |   |
|--|-----------------------|---|
| <b>Gargano (1° level)</b>  | Gargano               | Sistema ad anfiteatro dei laghi di Lesina e Varano<br>L'Altopiano carsico<br>La costa alta del Gargano<br>La Foresta umbra<br>L'Altopiano di Manfredonia  |
| <b>Subappennino (1° level)</b>                                       | Sub Appennino Dauno   | La bassa valle del Fortore e il sistema dunale<br>La Media valle del Fortore e la diga di Occhito<br>Il Subappennino settentrionale<br>Il Subappennino meridionale  |
| <b>Puglia grande (tavoliere 2° lev)</b>                              | Tavoliere             | La piana foggiana della riforma<br>Il mosaico di San Severo<br>Il mosaico di Cerignola<br>Le saline di Margherita di Savoia<br>Lucera e le serre del subappennino<br>Le Marane (Ascoli Satriano)  |
| <b>Puglia grande (ofanto 2° lev/ BaMiCa)</b>                         | Ofanto                | La bassa Valle dell'Ofanto<br>La media Valle dell'Ofanto<br>La valle del torrente Locone  |
| <b>Puglia grande (costa olivicola 2° lev – conca di Bari 2° lev)</b> | Puglia centrale       | La piana olivicola del nord barese<br>La conca di Bari ed il sistema radiale delle lame<br>Il sud-est barese ed il paesaggio del frutteto   |
| <b>Puglia grande (Murgia alta 2° lev)</b>                            | Alta Murgia           | L'Altopiano murgiano<br>La Fossa Bradanica<br>La sella di Gioia   |
| <b>Valle d'Itria (1° lev)</b>  | Murgia dei trulli     | La Valle d'Itria (Martina Franca, Locorotondo, Alberobello, Cisternino)<br>La piana degli uliveti secolari<br>I boschi di fragno della Murgia bassa   |
| <b>Puglia grande (arco Jonico 2° lev)</b>                            | Arco Jonico tarantino | L'anfiteatro e la piana tarantina<br>Il paesaggio delle gravine ionice  |
| <b>Puglia grande (La piana brindisina 2° lev)</b>                    | La piana brindisina   | La campagna irrigua della piana brindisina  |
| <b>Puglia grande Salento (piana di Lecce 2° lev)</b>                 | Tavoliere salentino   | La campagna leccese del ristretto e il sistema di ville suburbane<br>Il paesaggio del vigneto d'eccellenza<br>Il paesaggio costiero profondo da S. Cataldo agli Alimini<br>La campagna a mosaico del Salento centra le Nardò e le ville storiche delle Cenate<br>Il paesaggio dunale costiero ionico<br>La Murgia salentina<br>Nardò e le ville storiche delle cenate |

|                                    |                                |   |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| <i>Salento meridionale 1° lev)</i> | <i>Salento<br/>delle Serre</i> | <i>Le serre ioniche</i>   |
|                                    |                                | <i>La costa alta da Otranto a S.M. di Leuca</i>                           |
|                                    |                                | <i>La campagna olivetata delle "pietre" nel<br/>Salento sud-orientale</i> |
|                                    |                                | <i>Il Bosco del Belvedere</i>   |

Source: Regione Puglia, 2015.

Three different landscape ambits (*Puglia Centrale, Alta Murgia, Murgia dei Trulli*) fall within the metropolitan area of Bari. Although they cross the metropolitan boundaries, they manage to give an idea of the structural and identity context that exists at the metropolitan level. Each landscape ambit is articulated in territorial and landscape figures that represent the minimum units into which the region is broken down at an analytical and planning level for the purposes of the PPTR. The set of territorial figures defines the territorial and landscape identity of the area from the point of view of structural interpretation. By 'territorial figure' is meant a territorial entity recognisable by the specificity of morpho - typological characters that persist in the historical process of stratification of different cycles of territorialisation. The cartographic representation of these characters synthetically interprets its environmental, territorial and landscape identity (Figure 17).

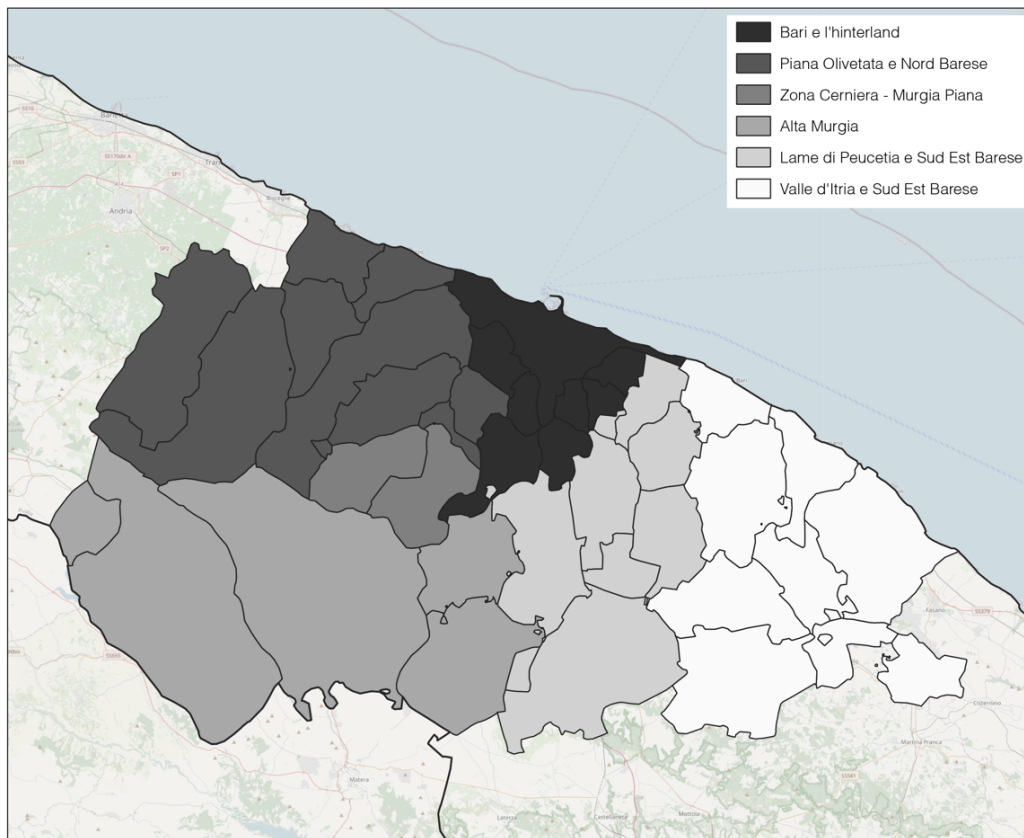


**Figure 17 - The 11 Territorial Ambits.** Source: Regione Puglia, 2015. Author's elaboration.

A further subdivision of the metropolitan territory, within the framework of the PUMS, made for the description and analysis of mobility phenomena at the metropolitan level, consists in dividing the metropolitan territory into homogeneous areas with similar infrastructural and transport characteristics. To this end, five homogeneous areas have been identified (Figure 18):

- *Bari and its hinterland*
- *Piana Olivetana and Nord Barese*
- *Alta Murgia*
- *Lame di Peucetia and Sud Est Barese*
- *Valle d'Itria and Sud Est Barese*

A sixth homogeneous area, known as the Cernera Zone, has also been identified and is made up of the municipalities of Toritto and Grumo Appula, and is sometimes similar to the *Nord Barese Area* and sometimes to the *Alta Murgia Area*.



**Figure 18 - The zoning of the MCBa according to the 6 homogeneous zones. Source: MCBa, 2021. Author's elaboration.**

## 6.2.2 Territorial structure and Demography of the Bari Metropolitan Area

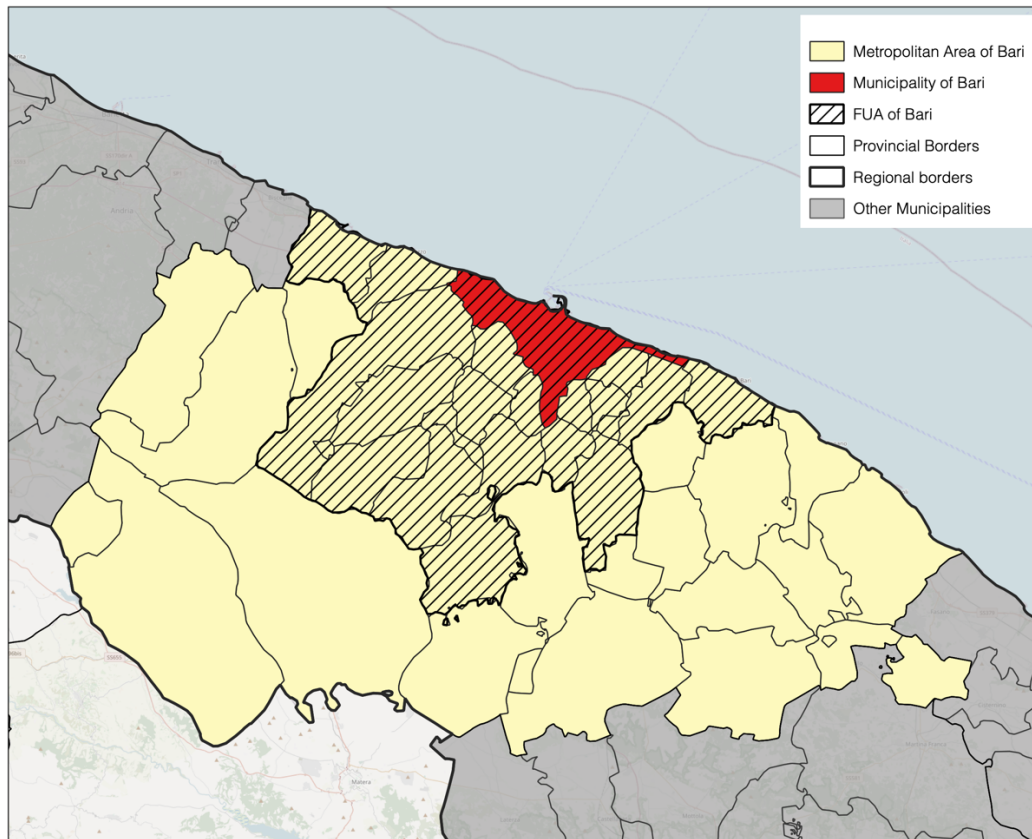


Figure 19 - The Metropolitan Area of Bari. Source: Author's elaboration.

As mentioned above, the metropolitan city of Bari has 41 municipalities (Figure 19) and maintains the same boundaries as the previous province. Demographically, about 25% of the population of the entire metropolitan area resides in the metropolitan municipality (315.284 residents as of 1/1/2022) (Figure 20).

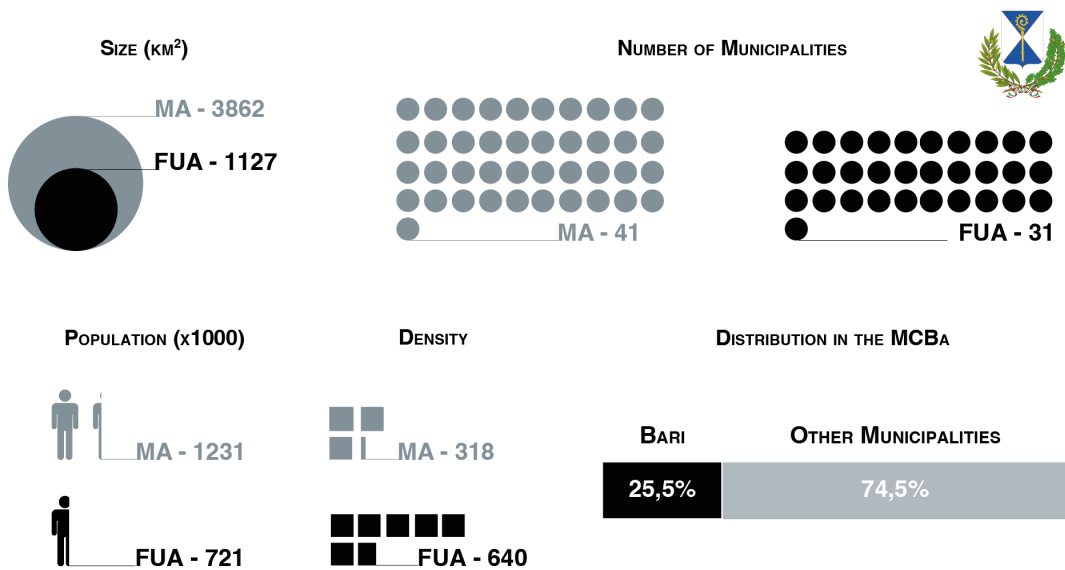
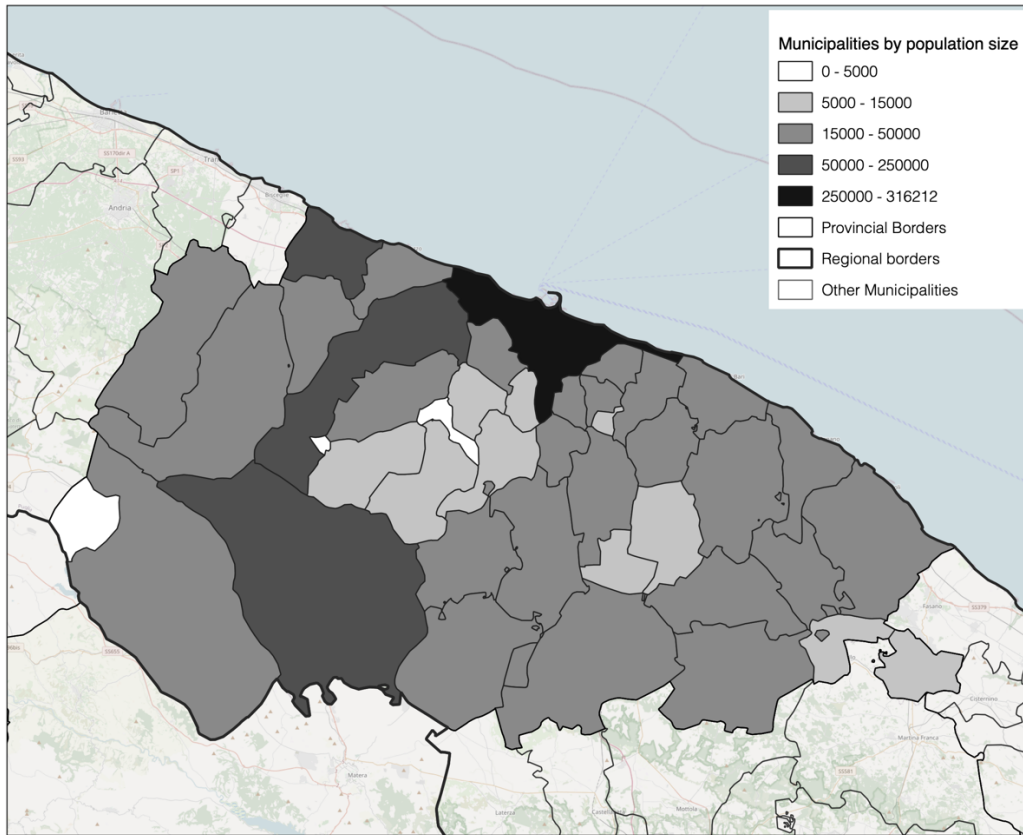


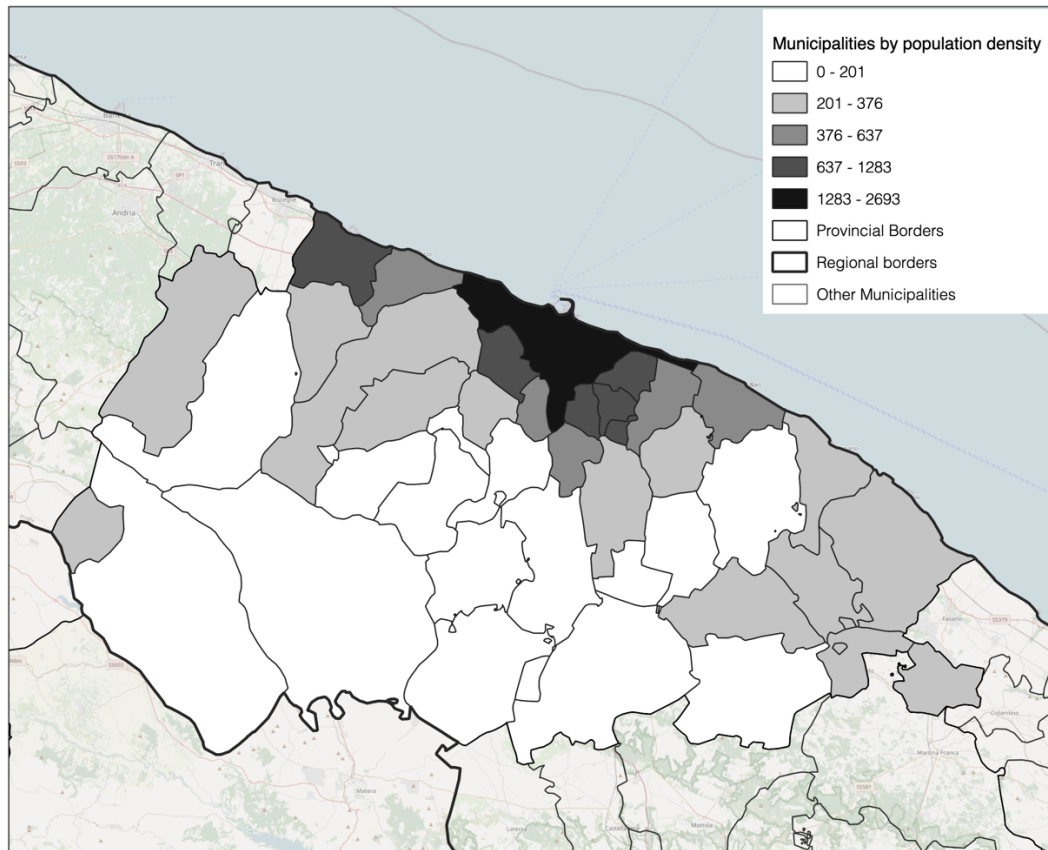
Figure 20 - Brief characteristics of the MCBa. Source: ISTAT, 2022. Author's elaboration.

The remaining population is unevenly distributed among the 40 municipalities that make up the metropolitan area. Classifying the municipalities according to population, the most populated municipalities, after Bari, are Altamura (69.911 residents), Molfetta (57.891 residents) and Bitonto (53.457 residents). Over 58% of the municipalities (24 municipalities) have a population between 15 and 50 thousand residents, followed by 26.8% (11 municipalities) with a population between 5 and 15 thousand. Only 2 municipalities are below 5 thousand inhabitants (Binetto and Poggiorsini). The Metropolitan City of Bari is among the seven Metropolitan Cities that has seen a contraction, albeit slight, in demographic data over the last decade. Specifically, the resident population recorded a reduction of 0.42%, from 1.254.461 inhabitants to 1.883.461 inhabitants (Figure 21). With a territorial surface area of 3.862.88 square kilometres (ranked 4th in terms of extension), the Metropolitan City of Bari ranks 8th in terms of population density at 323.40 inhabitants per square kilometre.



**Figure 21 - Municipalities by population size. Source: ISTAT, 2022. Author's elaboration**

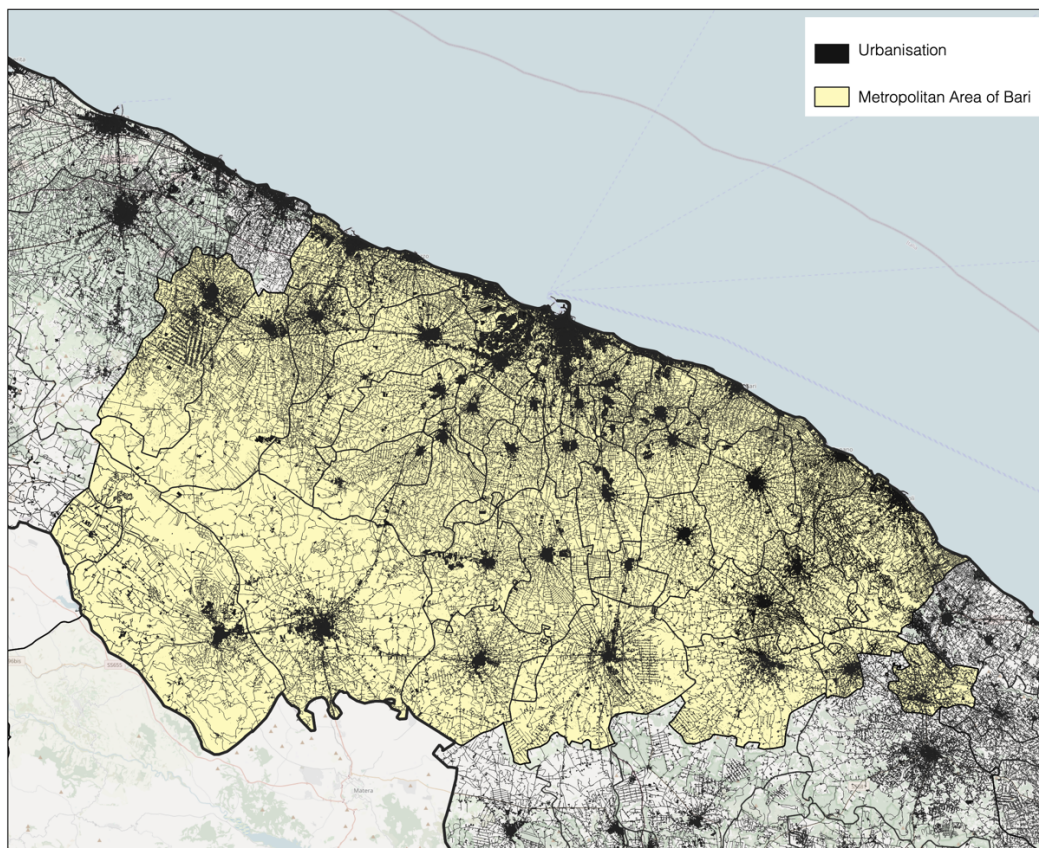
In relation to population density, it is certainly interesting to make some observations in this regard (Figure 22). The most densely populated areas can be identified in the municipality of Bari and in the inland municipalities of the first belt; these areas have a very high (more than 1.000 residents per square kilometre) or high (500 to 1.000 inhabitants per square kilometre) population density. In the rest of the territory, two realities stand out: on the one hand, coastal and lowland municipalities with high population density, and on the other hand, hilly municipalities with much lower population density. This highlights an evident territorial dualism for local decision-makers.



**Figure 22 - Municipalities by population density. Source: ISTAT, 2022. Author's elaboration.**

An overview of urbanisation (Figure 23) within the metropolitan area is interesting since it highlights how, starting from a compact built-up area in the municipality of Bari that goes beyond the administrative limits of the capital, it reaches out to the neighbouring municipalities, along the coastal line to the north (towards Giovinazzo and Molfetta) and to the south towards Triggiano and Mola di Bari. Towards the interior, the settlement continuum extends its offshoots towards Modugno and Valenzano. The settlement patterns of the other municipalities of the metropolitan city are mainly described as compact around the historical centres, apart from the southern area (Monopoli, Castellana Grotte, Alberobello and Locorotondo) where the settlements are less compact and more "sparsely fringed".



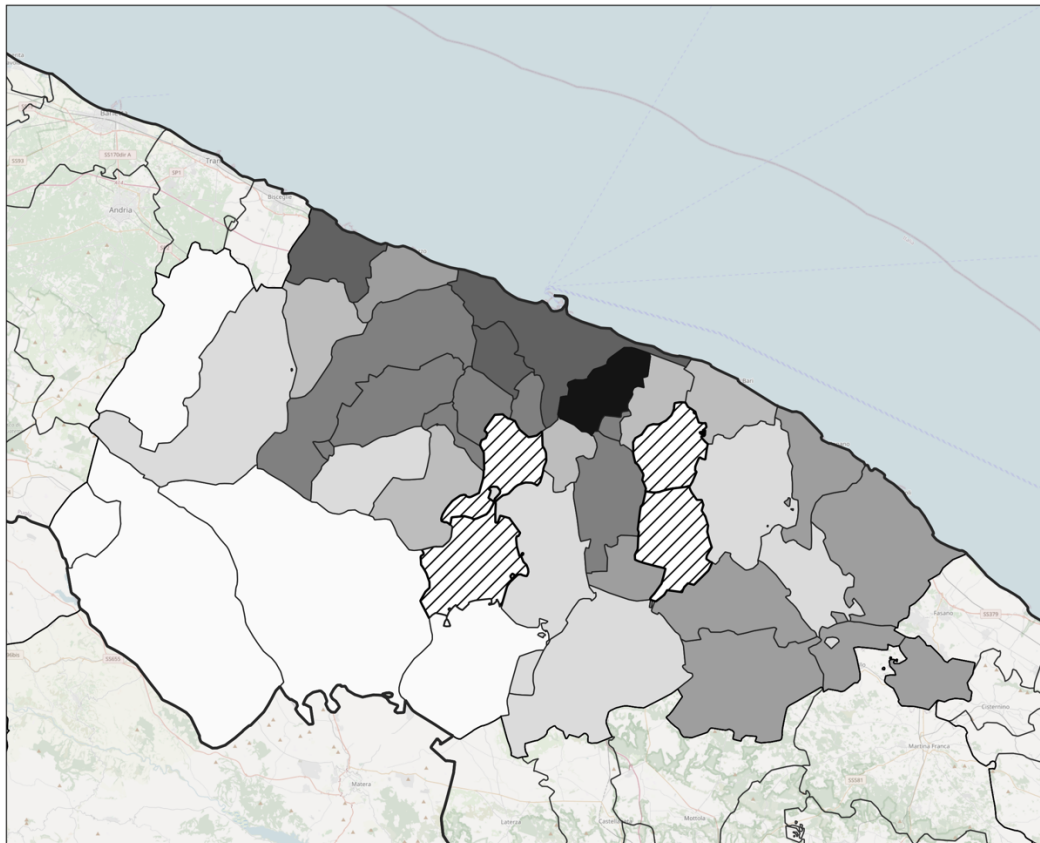


**Figure 23 - Urbanisation in the Metropolitan Area of Bari. Source: Author's elaboration on Regione Puglia data.**

In relation to the demographic trend of the resident population in the metropolitan city of Bari from 2001 to 2024. In 2009 the metropolitan city of Bari transferred 7 municipalities to another province. The data prior to that date have been reprocessed to make them homogeneous and comparable with the population residing in the current boundaries. From 2014 to 2024 there has been a constant demographic decrease. In the period between the last census and 2024, there was a generalised decrease in the resident population, with very significant values in the municipalities of Sammichele di Bari and Poggiorsini. The municipalities of Bitritto, Cellamare, Casamassima and Cassano delle Murge bucked the trend.

In relation to the analysis of the territorial context, it is interesting to highlight a territorial subdivision of the metropolitan area of Bari in relation to its functional territorial homogeneity characteristics. In this sense, it is interesting to view the complexity of the metropolitan territory according to a "lens" that aims to recognise the homogeneities of the individual territories, identifying groups (clusters) of

homogeneous municipalities with respect to the values of the variables analysed. The analysis that follows is aimed at identifying, by means of multivariate analysis statistical techniques<sup>31</sup>, the recurrent features in the municipalities (homogeneity of the municipalities), by including in the same cluster municipalities (not necessarily contiguous) that have similar characteristics. The indicators used for the functional classification were Altitude of centre, Land consumption, Density, Tourism index, Birth rate, Incidence of foreigners, old age index (Figure 24).



**Figure 24 - Functional constants and homogenous areas. Source: Author's elaboration on ANCI, 2023**

A reading of the cartography clearly shows the need to incorporate the element of 'territorial contiguity' as the glue of the different areas, an element that is coincidentally present in only three areas: that of the Altamura 'group', that of Alberobello and that of Binetto. If the latter area is united with the contiguous area of Bari, the three vast areas envisaged by the Apulia Region in the programming of

<sup>31</sup> The taxonomic method of the University of Wrocław on standardised variables was followed.

the ERDF Operational Programme for the 2007-2013 programming cycle are substantially traced: the '*Città Murgiana*', the '*Valle d'Itria*' and the '*Terra di Bari Metropol*', each with a different development trajectory, the first devoted to the rural and manufacturing dimension, the second to tourism and made in Italy, the third having several 'souls' within it, that of the tertiary sector, that of the food and manufacturing industry and that traditionally linked to agriculture.

### **6.2.3 The economy of the Bari Metropolitan Area**

Almost one third of the active enterprises in Apulia are located in the province of Bari; the Bari system is strongly linked to the industrial sector but is still little permeated by the spread of service activities, Nevertheless, this sector in the province of Bari has a higher value than the regional and *Mezzogiorno* averages, and the data on per capita added value support this assertion, since over 83 per cent of the added value created in the former province of Bari comes from services (compared to a national average of around 78 per cent), of which almost 28 per cent from services classified as 'Other services' (compared to a national average of less than 22 per cent).

The localisation of enterprises within the province shows a higher number of enterprises in the municipalities of Altamura, Monopoli, Corato and Molfetta, i.e. current or past seats of a local system. In particular, the municipality of Altamura - which, according to the 2001 ISTAT surveys, was the seat of a local system but is now part of the Bari Local systems - has as many as 7.450 enterprises in its territory.

The production systems in the territory of the metropolitan city of Bari are characterised by diversification and a widespread, mainly in the tertiary sector. This diversification includes high-quality agriculture in the Bitonto area and agro-industry in the hinterland. In addition, there are tertiary sectors gravitating around the capital and neighbouring municipalities, such as Casamassima, Molfetta, Bitritto and Triggiano. The textile sector is prominent along the Corato-Andria axis, while there are ICT services in Valenzano and a strong presence in tourism along the Molfetta-Polignano a Mare axis. The structure of the production system is described according to the employment rate in the various sectors: agriculture, forestry and fishing account for 5.7 per cent of employment, industry for 22.4 per cent and services for 71.9 per cent. The rate of creation of new enterprises in relation to the total number of active enterprises, known as the enterprise birth rate, is 0.6% in the Bari area, and 28.6% of active enterprises are run by women. Wealth,

measured through added value at current prices, is significantly per capita at €19.927,89.

The area's contribution of added value per inhabitant varies from the regional and national average, with an important impact on the regional economy, accounting for 35.9% of the total added value. The cultural and recreational sector contributes 4.8% of the total added value, slightly lower than the national average of 5.7%.

In 2021, a recovery in local tourism was observed, with an increase of 31.6% over the previous year, in line with the national average at 38.7%. The real estate market also recorded a positive change of 34.9% over the same period. In the renewable energy sector, the region contributed 0.5% to the gross annual production of electricity from renewable sources and the electricity consumed in the same year, in contrast to the national average at 40.9%. Regarding the production of photovoltaic plants, the territory's contribution is 0.6% at provincial level and 3.3% at regional level.

Another relevant aspect is innovation applied to ICT, energy efficiency and sustainable mobility, with the aim of making the metropolitan city of Bari a 'smart area'. There are important initiatives, such as the charging infrastructure for electric vehicles, a strong ICT sector and a significant number of innovative start-ups.

In addition, the area aims to consolidate itself as a pole of excellence in agribusiness, mechatronics and chemical pharmaceuticals, with a significant number of companies and research centres of excellence. However, there are challenges to face, such as unemployment, especially among young people, and gender inequalities. Accidents at work are higher than the regional average but lower than the national average.

## **6.3 Institutional framework Analysis**

### **6.3.1 The Apulia Regional Planning System in nutshell**

The current urban planning legislation is defined by Regional Law no. 20/2001, '*Norme generali di governo e uso del territori*', a second-generation law similar, even in name, to other regional laws of the period. This law follows, after twenty years, Regional Law no. 56/1980, '*Tutela ed uso del territorio*', and redefines the planning system only partially in line with the contemporary model of splitting the municipal plan. It consists of 25 articles establishing principles and procedures,

referring to further rules and regulatory acts for the implementation details and the content of the planned instruments. In fact, the contents of the DRAG - *Documento Regionale di Assetto Generale* (Regional General Planning Document) - and of the PTCP were defined by LR no. 24/2004, subsequently partially repealed by LR no. 22/2006. The regional planning system outlined in LR no. 20/2001 is fully developed in the DRAG and through various regional government actions that go beyond mere legislation. Two relevant topics further contribute to defining the regulatory and planning framework of the region. The first theme is urban regeneration, dealt with by LR no. 21/2008, '*Norme per la rigenerazione urbana*', an innovative law at national level that promotes interventions in peripheral urban contexts, in historical centres and in abandoned and degraded areas. This law introduces a double level of regeneration: a programmatic/strategic one and an operational/implementational one. The second theme concerns a new landscape planning model. The PPTR of the Apulia Region, the first region in Italy to have such a plan, is a reference not only for landscape aspects but also for regional planning at all levels. The DRAG and the PPTR profoundly influence the planning system, with the latter specifically guiding the land transformation actions envisaged in the various planning levels (Figure 25).

#### THE REGIONAL PLANNING SYSTEM - APULIA

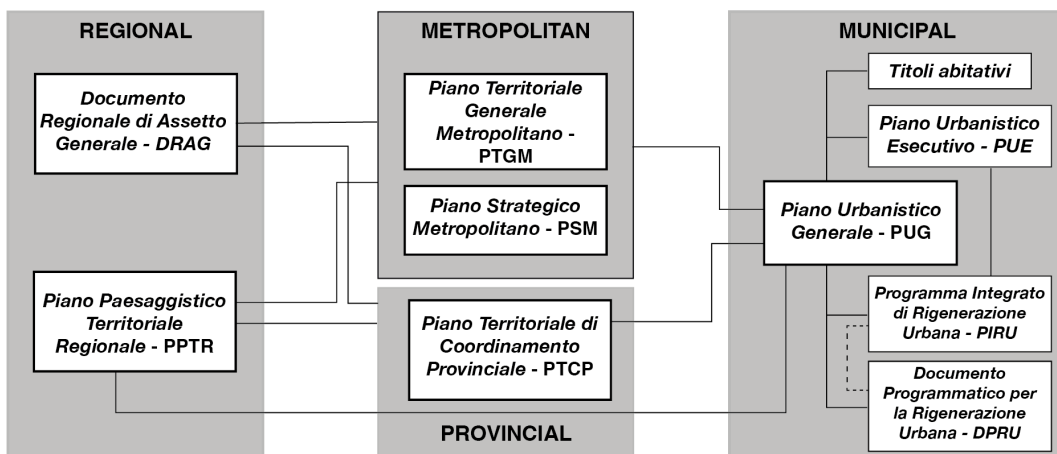


Figure 25 - The Regional Planning System of Apulia region. Source: Author's elaboration.

### 6.3.2 The evolution of the metropolitan governance

The former Province of Bari faithfully reproduced the classic scheme with which a public administration is usually described, as a rigidly bureaucratic and self-referential body, strongly anchored to its past as an administration set up to represent the State in the territory.

In 2005, the Province of Bari had a Macrostructure articulated in over 30 top structures in which a total of 981 staff units operated. In that year, a process of transformation and renewal began, which, even before the Delrio law, involved the Administration, following the approval of Law No. 148/2004, which established the Province of Barletta-Andria-Trani, which actually became operational in 2009.

The need to assign to the new body the indispensable endowment of human, instrumental and financial resources necessary to start its path of growth, entailed, among other things, the transfer of more than 200 employees, as well as the redefinition of the territory, which currently includes 41 municipalities.

A few years later, in 2011, the debate on the relevance of the so-called intermediate entities between the municipal and regional dimensions regained momentum at the height of the economic crisis and the ensuing European banking crisis. Thus, as is well known, after the Monti government's attempt to abolish the Provinces in Decree Law no. 201 of 6 December 2011 and the subsequent attempt to reorganise them by the same government in Decree Law no. 95 of 6 July 2012, we came to the approval of Law no. 56 of 7 April 2014, the Delrio law, by which, among other things, the Metropolitan Cities were made operational.

In the overall institutional design of the Italian State, the metropolitan cities represent an element of substantial innovation. In fact, far from being mere substitutes and/or evolutions of the provincial authorities they succeeded as of 1 January 2015, these bodies of *area vasta* are identified as a new type of local authority, destined to play a fundamental role in the process of strategic planning for the development of the reference territory.

Innovation has therefore permeated the entire design of the metropolitan cities, and this has been evident since the identification of the basic contents of the Statutes. In any territorial entity, in fact, the Statute contains the fundamental provisions for the functioning of the administration and interaction with the outside world. In the case of metropolitan cities and, therefore, also of this Administration, Law No. 56/2014 limits itself to identifying only a few essential attributions of the

metropolitan mayor and the two assembly bodies, leaving ample room for the statutory charter for everything else. The innovation program planned by the metropolitan city of Bari, in accordance with the general principles set forth in the Statute, was then declined in the operational modalities detailed in the Governance Model of the strategic planning process for the development of the metropolitan territory (MCBa, 2020).

The call for pluralism, equal opportunities, integration, participation, and respect for the diversity and peculiarities of the territories included in the metropolitan area, in fact, denote a clear propensity towards a development model that has clearly moved away from the classic and by now anachronistic scheme of the Administration that elaborates its own vision of territorial development in a self-referential manner, without any confrontation with the outside world, in view of the implementation of non-shared interventions.

The metropolitan city of Bari, therefore, has made sharing and participation its strong point and has consequently set up its political-administrative action with a view to maximum openness to the outside world. In this way, a substantial value has been conferred on the transparency of administrative action, since the Authority does not simply make its acts knowable *ex-post* but seeks and encourages the participation of citizens in the formation of decision-making processes, both as individuals and in the social aggregations in which they express their personality.

It is no coincidence that, from 2015 to date, the metropolitan city of Bari has signed a multitude of Memoranda of Understanding/Agreements/Conventions, first with the municipalities and then, with the universities and research bodies operating in the area, with professional associations, and with employers' and trade union organisations, with the aim of creating an environment particularly conducive to the exchange of ideas.

In this ideal ideas' incubator every contribution holds significance. Even a single individual's idea can be pivotal, as it might highlight previously unseen aspects that prove particularly valuable during the design of an intervention or the planning of a development initiative. This is probably the heart of the entire metropolitan strategic plan, as it particularly characterises the *modus operandi* of the metropolitan administration of Bari and, consequently, clearly conditions every single management act.

The setting up of an ambitious plan for the redefinition of the metropolitan territory's layout required, as a preliminary step, the introduction of particularly

innovative internal management models. In fact, the pursuit of the metropolitan vision, as described so far, could not have materialised without the capacity for adaptation and renewal to sustain the impact of the planned interventions. From this point of view, the most significant innovation consists in the introduction, in the Macrostructure of the Authority - which is currently divided into only 13 top management structures to which just over 300 employees are assigned - of the Project Units, work groups in which different professional skills of an administrative-accounting-technical nature converge, coming from different Services and operating in a functional and non-hierarchical logic, under the coordination of the Secretary General/Director General.

This is evidently a new vision of management activity, in which the indispensable articulation of the apparatus into lines of activity responding to sectorial competences is flanked by an alternative model based on the interaction of the specific competences of the components. All this, not according to a logic of contraposition but of integration and mutual enrichment. In fact, in this approach, the role of the service is undisputed, entrusted with the performance of specific institutional functions, at the apex of which is placed a manager who assumes the powers and responsibilities typical of the role and, with his own acts, binds the body by manifesting his will externally. This dimension, however, is flanked by another, which transcends the boundaries between offices and is characterised by greater elasticity and simplicity of interaction between different professionals and points of view.

In this way, we have come to define a management mode in which the joint analysis of certain problems and/or critical issues is flanked by a cross-departmental study activity that, through the identification of solutions and their implementation, identifies the opportunities for growth hidden behind the critical issues initially identified.

According with MCBa (2020), the Metropolitan City of Bari has systematically adopted this approach, which has resulted in numerous Units operating in different sectors, from the prevention of corruption and transparency to the transition to digital, from communication to the implementation of specific projects. For the purposes of the present work, the Unit of interest is the 'Strategic Planning' Unit, coordinated by the Secretary General of the Authority, in his capacity as main manager for the implementation of the Pact for the Development of the Metropolitan City of Bari. It is an internal structure of the metropolitan authority, established in 2015 in a minimal and experimental composition and then,



subsequently, innovated and expanded over time, consistently with the state of implementation of the strategic planning process, until it assumed its current articulation into three types of working groups.

- Typology A. Strategic planning staff: a working group whose main activity is directed to the implementation of interventions for the administrative strengthening of the Authority in the strategic planning sector; to the liaison, support and administrative co-ordination of the Metropolitan Municipalities in the implementation of the strategic planning process of the metropolitan city of Bari; to the support to the activity of the Secretary General as co-ordinator of all the working groups; to the technical/administrative/legal support to the activities of the other working groups
- Type B. Working groups aimed at the development and implementation of project initiatives related to the five strategic priorities identified by the Metropolitan Strategic Plan
- Type C. Working groups dedicated to the realisation of individual project initiatives, operating in synergy with the Municipalities participating in the same initiatives, as well as with the Services of the Body concerned as they are competent for the subject matter.

### **6.3.3 Governance Scheme and competences**

The new Macrostructure of the institution was approved by the Metropolitan Council in 2021. It represents a turning point for a body that has now completed the transition process and acquired full awareness of its new dimension and institutional role. In fact, a comparison between the previous Macrostructure and the one outlined by the aforementioned Council Resolution No. 149/2021 shows that the organisation of the Authority is still divided into 13 Services, but that the lines of activity have been allocated differently, making it possible to make room for a new reality, in full compliance with the institutional functions assigned to the Authority and with the overall vision of development of the metropolitan territory, as outlined by the Governance Model of the strategic planning process (Figure 26)

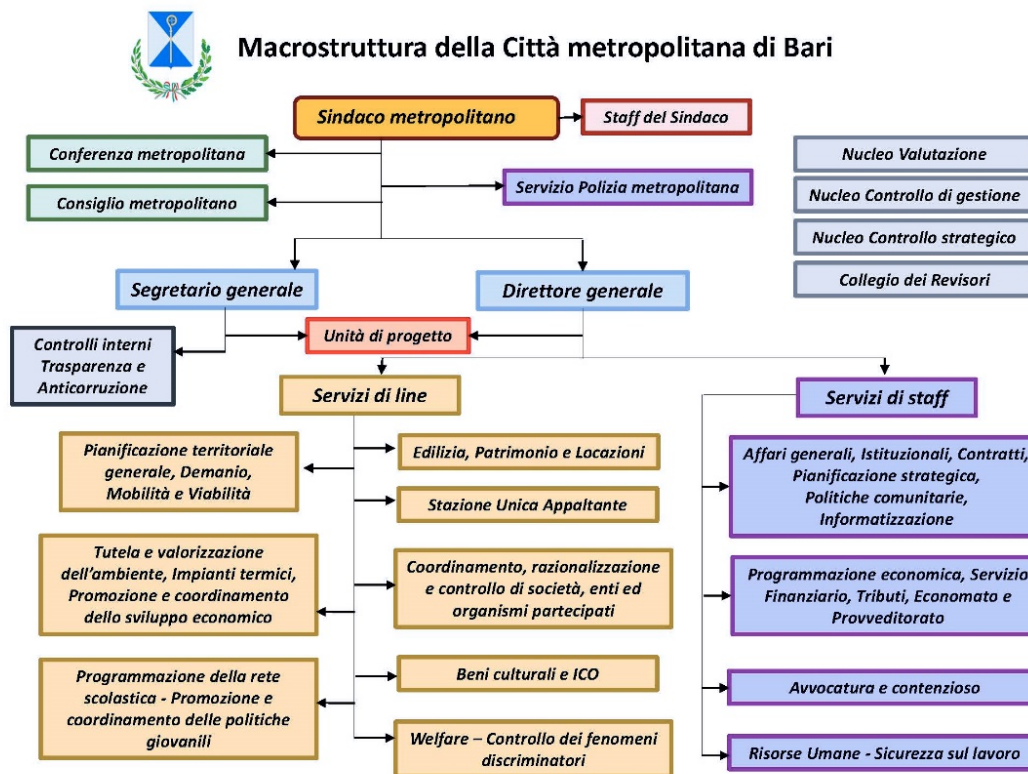


Figure 26 - Metropolitan Governance Scheme of Metropolitan City of Bari. Source: MCBa, 2024a

In the new set-up, the lines of activity relating to IT and Statistics, previously identified as a separate Service, have been merged into the General Affairs, Institutional Affairs, Contracts, Strategic Planning, Community Policies and IT Service. The new location is intended to emphasise their relevance at a time when the digitalisation of public administration is such a fundamental development factor that it has become the subject of the first mission of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan. In this way, the Metropolitan Council reaffirmed the interconnection between the institutional decisions of the Authority and those aimed at planning the development of the metropolitan territory. It has also reaffirmed the importance of the process of IT and digitalisation in the metropolitan area, as a fundamental enabling condition for the simplification of interaction with metropolitan citizens and municipalities, bringing back to the aforementioned Service also the lines of activity previously assigned to the Service for the Promotion and Coordination of IT and Digitalisation Systems.

At the same time, the new Macro-structure has emphasised, with the establishment of a special Service, the attention paid to the young segments of the

metropolitan population. The purpose of setting up the Service for the Planning of the Metropolitan School Network - Promotion and Coordination of Youth Policies, is to enhance the entire complex of activities dedicated to young metropolitan citizens, the absolute protagonists of the metropolitan city of the future.

Equally significant are the decisions taken by the Metropolitan Council in relation to certain sectors of activity that, in spite of their obvious differences and functionalities, can make a decisive contribution to the projection of the institution in the territory. In this sphere, we recall the decisive role that the Single Contracting Station Service is destined to play in the implementation of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan.

In any case, it is clear that the approach conferred by the Metropolitan Council on the Body's management apparatus is totally oriented towards the inclusion of the Body's institutional functions in the broad context of 'taking care of the development of the metropolitan territory', in line with the provisions of Law no. 56/2014, in view of the numerous fulfilments connected to the implementation of the PNRR, the PNC and, obviously, the entire strategic planning process of the aforementioned development (MCBa, 2024a).

The intervention of the Building, Property and Leasing Service, for example, will be decisive in the implementation of the Integrated Urban Plans and the Quality of Living Programme, just as the Service for the Protection and Enhancement of the Environment, Thermal Installations, and the Promotion and Coordination of Economic Development will be decisive in the implementation of the Urban Reforestation Plan.

At the same time, given the need to continue the implementation of the Pact for the Development of the Metropolitan City of Bari, currently included in the Development and Cohesion Plan of the Metropolitan City of Bari (PSC), the action of the Welfare-Control of Discriminatory Phenomena Service will continue, with regard to the *Porta Futuro* metropolitan initiative, as well as the Cultural Heritage-ICO Service, with regard to the *Terre di Bari-Guest Card* project, and the General Territorial Planning, State Property, Mobility and Roads Service for major works such as the *Camionale*, Biciplan metropolitan or TPL services.

This last point also recalls the role of the Coordination, Rationalisation and Control Service of Companies, Entities and Participated Bodies, realising the connection with the realities that, due to their specific competences and statutory

activities, operate in sectors closely related to the institutional functions of the Metropolitan City of Bari and that, for this reason, are participated by the same.

Such a comprehensive and wide-ranging commitment necessarily also involves the Staff Services, each within the scope of their respective competences (MCBa, 2024a): the Legal and Litigation Service for the indispensable legal support activity; the Economic Planning Service, Financial Service, Taxes, Bursar's Office and Proveditor's Office for everything concerning both the current activity inherent to the management of financial flows, and for the related activity of expenditure certification, required by the SIGECO of the Pact for Bari The Human Resources and Workplace Safety Service, for both the management of personnel currently in service, and for the preparation of the new recruitment plan, in order to provide the Authority with the additional human resources necessary for the implementation of the above; the Metropolitan Police Service, whose contribution in terms of territorial surveillance completes the organisation of the Authority.

The management structure is completed by the Project Units, for a description of which please refer to the section of this document on the Metropolitan Strategic Plan Methodology and Actors. The importance of the implementation of the actions included in the PNRR and PNC is also underlined by the Metropolitan Council's willingness to emphasise in the organisation of the Authority the existence of a structure dedicated to such projects.

In response to the need for a unitary and overall vision of the metropolitan city of Bari and of its role as a linking subject for the activities of the Municipalities, in view of the common and priority interest of the wellbeing of the reference population, the structure is not identified as a separate entity but, rather, as a representation of the modes of action of interaction of all the political and management structures represented above, for the purposes of the realisation of the contribution that the Authority intends to make to the realisation of the PNRR. The above-mentioned Structure, approved by the Metropolitan Council with Resolution No. 101 of 27.07.2022, is reproduced below (Figure 27):

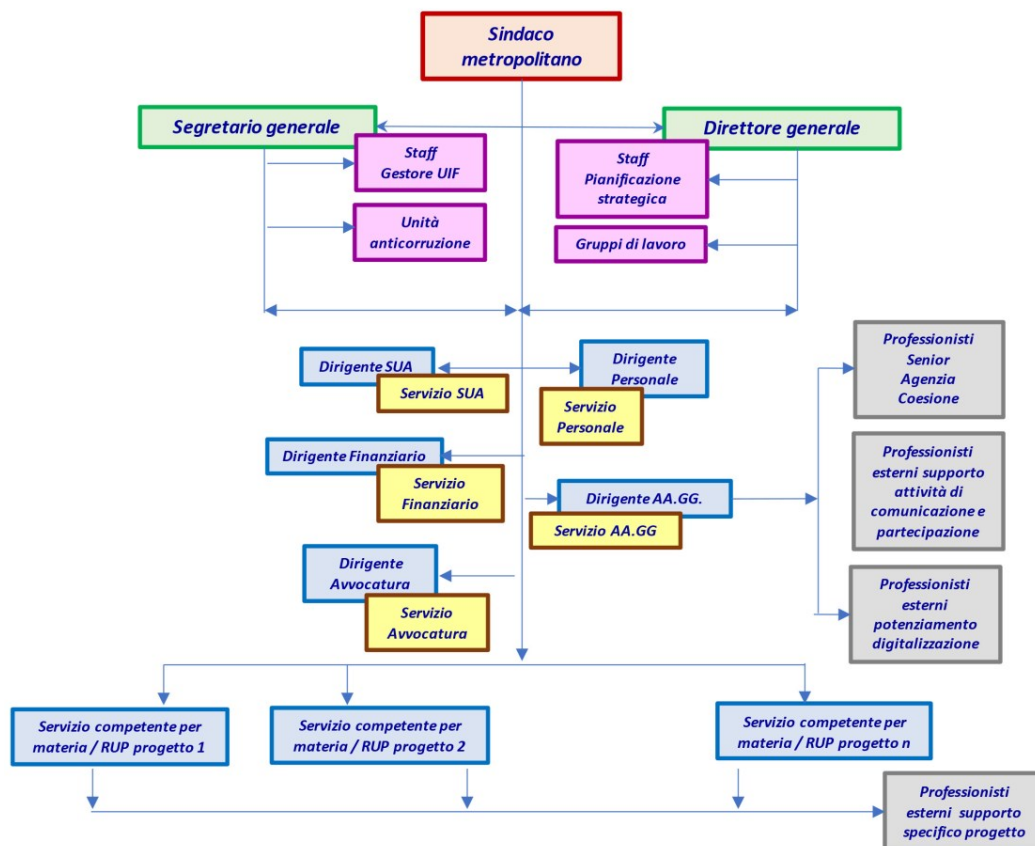


Figure 27 - PNRR Structure for Metropolitan City of Bari. Source: MCBa, 2024a

All the activity carried out to date is based on strict compliance with the following criteria (MCBa, 2024a):

- consistency of the contents of the Strategic Plan with the vision and strategic objectives set out in the policy document of the Authority's political mandate.
- articulation of the actions into two types: system actions concerning network actions involving several municipalities of the Metropolitan Area and strategic actions located in a single municipality but concerning functions of collective interest.
- assignment to the Metropolitan City of Bari of the role of coordinator of the selection and planning phase of these actions, as well as that of active subject managing, where necessary, also the implementation phase of the same actions through its own structures
- commitment of the Metropolitan City of Bari to raise funds from external financing sources, also on behalf of all the Municipal Administrations.

- Commitment of each Metropolitan Municipality to the implementation of actions that by their nature concern only the Municipality itself in line with the overall vision of the Metropolitan City of Bari.
- the implementation of the entire strategic planning process as a process of sharing and participation, to be carried out according to a multi-level governance model that supports the activation of the territory's social and economic forces to ensure its full implementation.

But, in terms of managerial innovation through the involvement of the Project Units, the Metropolitan City has taken a further step forward, going beyond the very borders of the Authority. As already mentioned, fundamental in the implementation of the process is the interaction with the Municipality of Bari and, therefore, in view of the need to work in close synergy, the two Administrations, after signing a special agreement, set up the Municipality Office, which is entrusted with the implementation of technical assistance activities for the implementation of the '*Patto per Bari*' and 'NOP METRO' programs, for which the Metropolitan City and the Municipality are respectively responsible.

The guiding principle of the structure thus defined, in which the existing professional skills of both bodies have been brought together, is the administrative strengthening of the metropolitan and municipal operational structures, with a view to the optimal achievement of the set objectives. It is, therefore, an evolution of the experimentation started in 2015 with the establishment of the aforementioned 'Strategic Planning' Project Unit, given that the latter, as already mentioned, was created with the intention of transcending the boundaries of the competences assigned to the individual metropolitan offices, creating a body that essentially meets functional organisation criteria. With the constitution of the Joint Office, therefore, this mechanism was projected outside the metropolitan city of Bari, in an experiment that involved different entities and whose operation necessarily required a careful coordination and linking action by the Steering Committee, in charge of overseeing the entire activity of the Office into which the top administrative figures of the two entities converged.

#### **6.3.4 Different forms of inter municipal cooperation**

The territory of the metropolitan city of Bari is characterised by various forms of inter-municipal aggregation, each one marked by criteria that make it possible to associate different territories on the basis of common needs, such as the provision of health services (Local Health Authorities - ASL), the management of solid urban

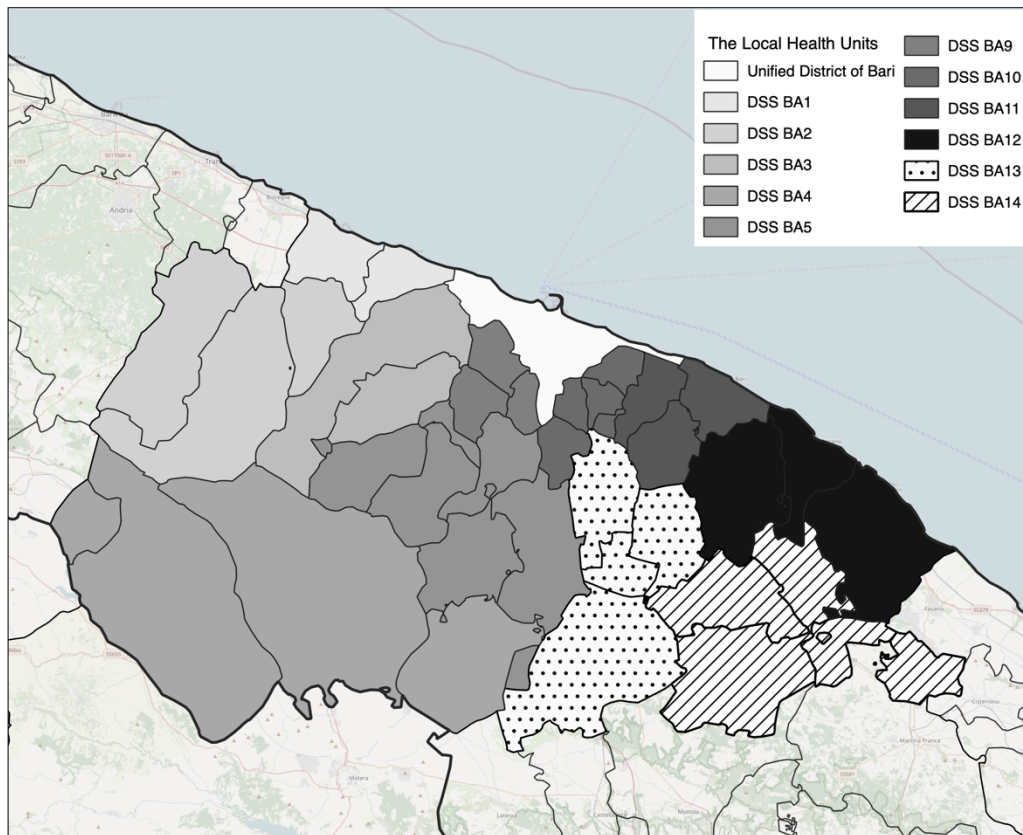
waste (Optimal Collection Areas - ARO), the definition of common strategies to foster local development (such as Local Action Groups - LAGs), areas that fall within the National Strategy of Inner Areas, inter-municipal aggregations related to trade (Urban Trade Districts, DUC). This paragraph briefly describes the main forms of inter-municipal cooperation present within the territory of the metropolitan city of Bari, with finally a historical excursus of past interested experiences of inter-municipal cooperation that over the years have come to an end or have been downsized.

### *ASLs - The Local Health Units*

In relation to issues of public health, the metropolitan territory of Bari is divided into 12 socio-sanitary districts<sup>32</sup> (Figure 28).

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<sup>32</sup> The 12 socio-sanitary districts: Unified District of Bari; DSS BA 1 Molfetta e Giovinazzo; DSS BA 2 Ruvo di Puglia, Terlizzi, Corato; DSS BA 3 Bitonto, Palo del Colle; DSS BA 4 Altamura, Gravina in Puglia, Santeramo in Colle e Poggiorsini; DSS BA 5 Grumo Appula, Acquaviva delle fonti, Toritto, Binetto, Cassano delle Murge, Sannicandro di Bari; DSS BA 9 Modugno, Bitetto, Bitritto; DSS BA 10 Triggiano, Adelfia, Capurso, Cellammare, Valenzano; DSS BA 11 Mola di Bari, Noicattaro, Rutigliano; DSS BA 12 Conversano, Monopoli, Polignano a mare; DSS BA 13 Gioia del colle, Casamassima, Sammichele di Bari, Turi; DSS BA 14 Putignano, Alberobello, Castellana Grotte, Noci, Locorotondo.



**Figure 28 - The 12 socio-sanitary districts in the Metropolitan Area of Bari. Source: Author's elaboration.**

They have the task of responding in a unified and comprehensive manner to the health needs of the population living in the municipalities included in their respective territorial areas and are responsible for ensuring, according to criteria of equity, accessibility and appropriateness, the availability of health and socio-health services with high health integration.

The Health District therefore plays a key role in analysing the demand for health, in governing the supply of services, in integrating the requests of the various stakeholders, both health and social, in carrying out health promotion activities, individual prevention of diseases and disabilities, in developing the culture and in achieving integration between territorial and hospital activities and between social and sociomedical services.

### ***ARO for Waste Management***

Another territorial aggregation was defined under Regional Law No. 24 of 20 August 2012, *'Rafforzamento delle pubbliche funzioni nell'organizzazione e nel*



*governo dei Servizi pubblici locali*’, by which the Apulia Region delegated to municipalities the definition of public service obligations for the collection of municipal solid waste to allow for differentiation but also to maximise efficiency within specific Optimal Territorial Ambits (ATOs) in which to define Optimal Collection Areas (AROs).

By Regional Law No 20/2016 “*Disposizioni in materia di gestione del ciclo dei rifiuti*”. (Amendments to Regional Law no. 24 of 20 August 2012), the Apulia Region established a single ‘Ambito Territoriale Ottimale (ATO)’ for the management of the waste cycle, coinciding with the entire regional territory, and at the same time suppressed the six provincial ATOs including ATO BA, which was made up of the 41 municipalities of the Province of Bari. All the functions of the ATOs in waste matters were transferred to the Territorial Agency of the Apulia Region for the waste management service, which is currently commissioned under the same LR n.20/2016. The provincial ATOs have been replaced by the AROs.

The sub-provincial territorial perimeters used in the definition of AROs guarantee the provision of sweeping, collection and transport services for municipal solid waste. The perimeters of the AROs are identified in compliance with the principles of differentiation, adequacy and efficiency, taking into account the characteristics of the sweeping, collection and transport services for all municipal and assimilated waste.

Article 8, paragraph 6 of Regional Law no. 24/2012, as amended by Regional Law no. 20/2016, establishes the perimeter of the Homogeneous Areas, established by the Regional Council with Regional Council Decree no. 2147 of 23 October 2012 on the "Perimeter of the Optimal Collection Areas" and subsequent amendments, after consulting ANCI and the competent Regional Council Commission.

To date, the Metropolitan City of Bari has 8 optimal collection areas (AROs)<sup>33</sup> (Figure 29):

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<sup>33</sup>The 8 Optimal Collection Areas (AROs): ARO 1, Corato, Ruvo di Puglia, Terlizzi, Bitonto e Molfetta; ARO 2, Giovinazzo, Palo del Colle, Binetto, Bitetto, Modugno, Bitritto e Sannicandro di Bari; ARO 3, Bari; ARO 4, Poggiorsini, Gravina in Puglia, Altamura, Santeramo in Colle, Toritto; Grumo Appula e Cassano delle Murge; ARO 5, Acquaviva delle Fonti, Gioia del Colle, Sammichele di Bari, Turi, Casamassima e Adelfia; ARO 6, Noci, Putignano, Castellana Grotte, Alberobello e Locorotondo; ARO 7, Rutigliano, Cellammare, Noicattaro, Triggiano, Capurso e Valenzano; ARO 8, Mola di Bari, Conversano, Polignano a mare e Monopoli.

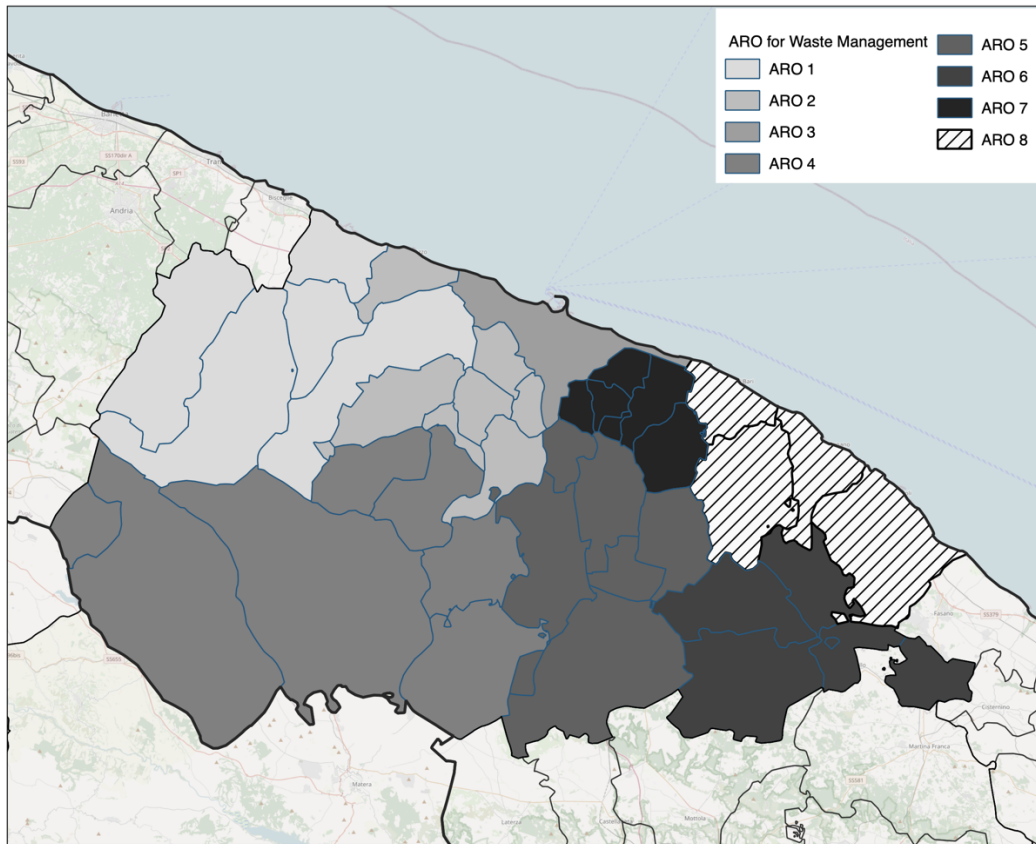


Figure 29 - ARO for Waste Management. Source: Author's elaboration.

### ***Local Action Groups***

Local Action Groups (LAGs) are set up as territorial aggregations to promote forms of local partnership made up of representatives of local socio-economic interests, both public and private, whose existence, tasks and purposes aim to foster the local development of rural areas. The various local public-private partnerships represented by LAGs choose a lead partner to be established as legally recognised structures.

The objectives of the spread of LAGs in the territory are to strengthen tourist attractions and tourist infrastructures, to increase the development of sustainable forms of tourism, to stimulate cooperation between local actors by strengthening the non-agricultural entrepreneurial fabric related to tourism, to improve rural roads, to upgrade cultural, landscape and natural assets and to stimulate the start-up of new agricultural entrepreneurial activities. There are 8 LAGs in the metropolitan area (Figure 30):

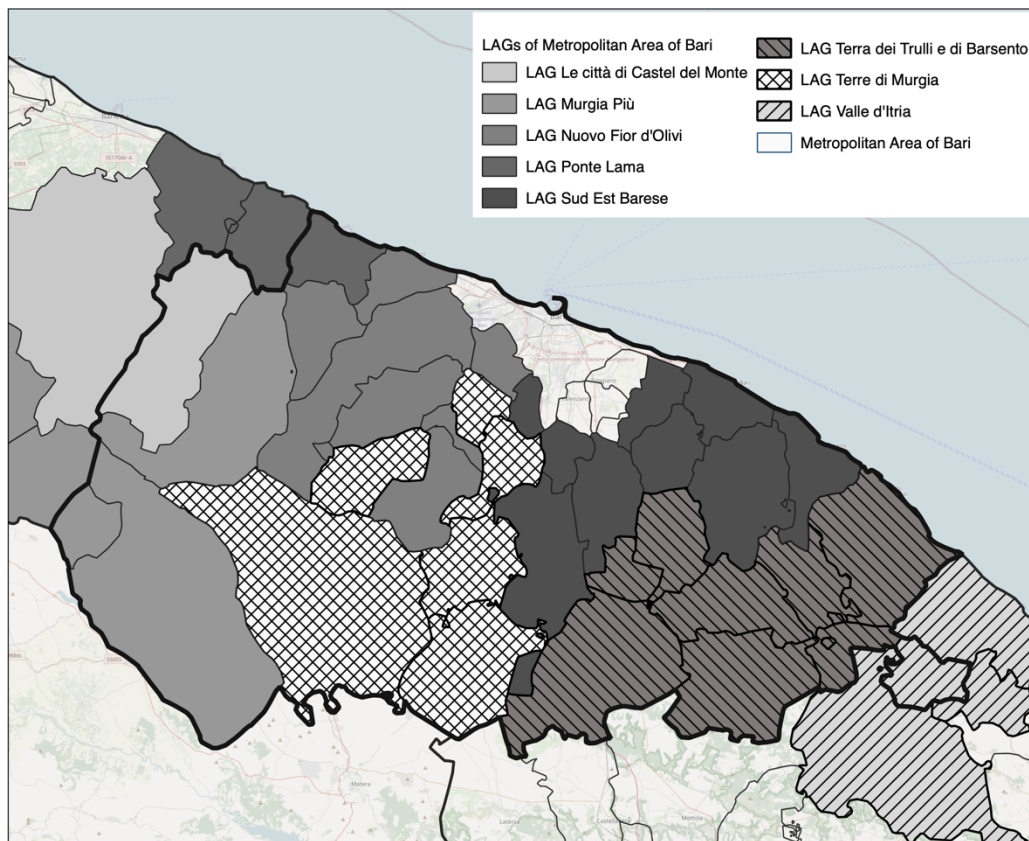


Figure 30 - LAGs of Metropolitan Area of Bari. Source: Author's elaboration.

- LAG *Murgia Più*, Canosa di Puglia (BAT), Gravina in Puglia (BA), Minervino Murge (BAT), Poggiorsini (BA), Ruvo di Puglia (BA) and Spinazzola (BAT);
- LAG *Le Città di Castel del Monte*, Andria and Corato;
- LAG *Ponte Lama*, Bisceglie (BAT), Molfetta (BA), Trani (BAT)
- LAG *Nuovo Fior d'Olivì*, Binetto, Bitonto, Giovinazzo, Grumo Appula, Modugno, Palo del Colle and Terlizzi;
- LAG *Terre di Murgia*, Altamura, Bitetto, Cassano delle Murge, Sannicandro di Bari, Santeramo in Colle and Toritto;
- LAG *Sud Est Barese*, Acquaviva delle Fonti, Adelfia, Bitritto, Casamassima, Noicattaro, Rutigliano, Conversano, Polignano a mare and Mola di Bari;
- LAG *Terra dei Trulli e di Barsento*, Alberobello, Castellana Grotte, Gioia del Colle, Monopoli, Noci, Putignano, Sammichele di Bari and Turi;
- LAG *Valle d'Itria*, Cisternino (BR), Fasano (BR), Locorotondo (BA) (the only municipality in MCBa) and Martina Franca (TA).

### ***SNAI<sup>34</sup>***

Within the Apulia Region, there are a total of 5 SNAI areas for the 2021-2027 cycle, 4 of which are the 2014 programming areas 2014-2020:

- *Area Interna Alta Murgia*
- *Area Interna Gargano*
- *Area Interna Sud Salento*
- *Area Interna Monti Dauni*
- *Area Alto Salento* (new inner area for programming 2021-2027)

The total resident population in the Inner Areas is 1.017.709; the number of municipalities in the Inner Areas is 138. In particular, within the metropolitan area of Bari, the inner area of the Alta Murgia is located. The project area is composed of the municipalities of Poggiorsini and Spinazzola, classified as peripheral areas, Minervino Murge classified as an intermediate area. The municipality of Poggiorsini falls within the metropolitan city of Bari, the municipalities of Minervino Murge and Spinazzola fall within the province of Barletta-Andria-Trani.

### ***DUC - Urban Trade Districts***

An interesting form of inter-municipal cooperation that allows individual municipalities to actively cooperate are the Urban Trade Districts, DUCs. DUCs are an area with homogeneous characteristics of the territory and a group of people, institutions and public and private companies that have as their objective the redevelopment of trade and services to citizens. In this regard, the Apulia Region published Regional Regulation No. 15 of 15 July 2011 concerning 'Urban Trade Districts'. Three different types of districts can be distinguished: diffuse, urban and metropolitan districts, depending on the size of the area that will become a DUC. DUCs in Apulia can be (Figure 31):

- Diffuse Districts: several municipalities with less than 25.000
- Urban districts: municipalities with more than 25.000 inhabitants
- Metropolitan Districts: municipalities with more than 70.000 inhabitants

Districts may be established by municipal administrations (individually or in association) or by associations of commercial operators. The Apulia Region finances the districts set up through special calls for proposals and applications may

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<sup>34</sup> In this paragraph, they will only be presented in terms of inter-municipal aggregations; any discussion in relation to programs and funds will be postponed to the related section.

be submitted by the municipality, the association of operators or the governance body that will manage the DUC.

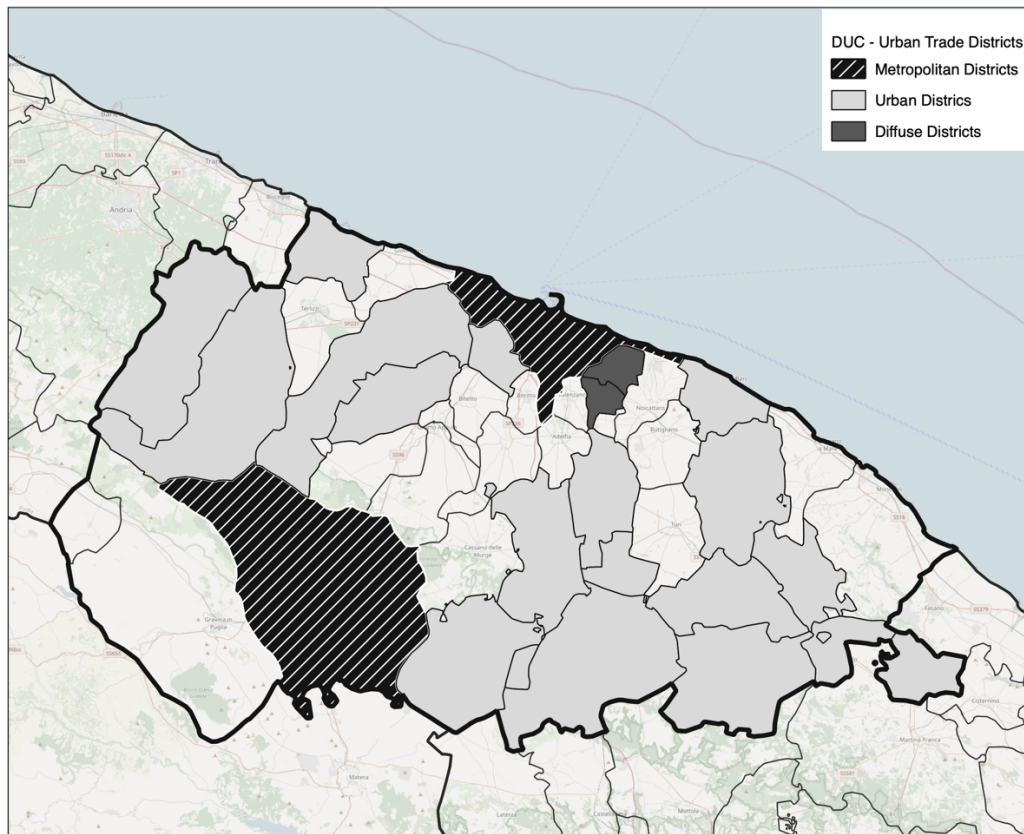


Figure 31 - DUC - Urban Trade Districts. Source: Author's elaboration.

### ***Previous Experiences of Institutional Cooperation***

This paragraph highlights various experiences of institutional cooperation that have occurred in the past or are still active in the metropolitan area of Bari. These forms of aggregation arose in response to the need to manage and implement actions, interventions, plans and programs for the development of the territory and of the socio-economic and productive system - which record the presence of local public entities. The aim is to make available further elements of knowledge of the Apulian territory and the development actions implemented through the use of management forms that see the active participation of Local Authorities and other representative bodies of the business and world. It is important to emphasise that the experiences of institutional and territorial aggregation realised through the forms of institutional cooperation were at the basis of regional programming (2007/2013) for which the 'Area Vasta' formula was favoured. Apulia is thus

ideally subdivided into ten Vast Areas (Bari, Brindisi, Foggia, Lecce, Taranto, Casarano, Gravina, Barletta, Mountain Community Monti Dauni Meridionali, Monopoli) that will play a leading role in the implementation of the ERDF Operational Programme 2007/2013.

The choice of the *Area Vasta*, in line with the provisions of the Regional Strategic Document of Apulia 2007/2013 and of the Operational Programme, tends to optimise the implementation phases of the interventions made possible by the availability of public resources, developing the experience of institutional cooperation matured in particular with the PITs (Integrated Territorial Programmes) and with the PISs (Integrated Sectoral Plans) and thus *"enhancing the proactive territorial aggregations and concretising, in the operational phase, the conferral of administrative functions and tasks to the system of Local Authorities, improving the effectiveness of the programming and management phase of the resources of the Structural Funds 2007/2013 and making the criteria for the allocation of financial resources transparent"*.

In relation to the Integrated territorial projects (PIT), they represented one of the most significant innovations of the Community Support Framework for Italian Objective 1 regions in the 2000-2006 period. The main objective, also pursued in the 2000-2006 ROP for Apulia, was to support territorial development with a new approach that would improve the effectiveness of public investment and increase the leverage effect on private investment. The PITs constituted an innovative way of using structural funds centred on a complex of intersectoral actions, closely coherent and interconnected, that converge towards a common objective of territorial development, justifying a unitary implementation approach.

The Sectorial Integrated Projects (SIPs) converge in the more general Integrated Projects, a complex of intersectorial actions, strongly coherent and interconnected, which aim at a common objective of territorial development. They focus on the development of tourist-cultural systems through a series of interventions aimed at the recovery, enhancement and management of historical-cultural assets and the strengthening of receptivity. The main features concern the concentration of interventions for the improvement of the socio-economic context and of local tourism systems, the integration of different incentive, infrastructure, training and service interventions and refer to precise territorial areas targeted by development actions that activate and strengthen the still unexpressed potential.

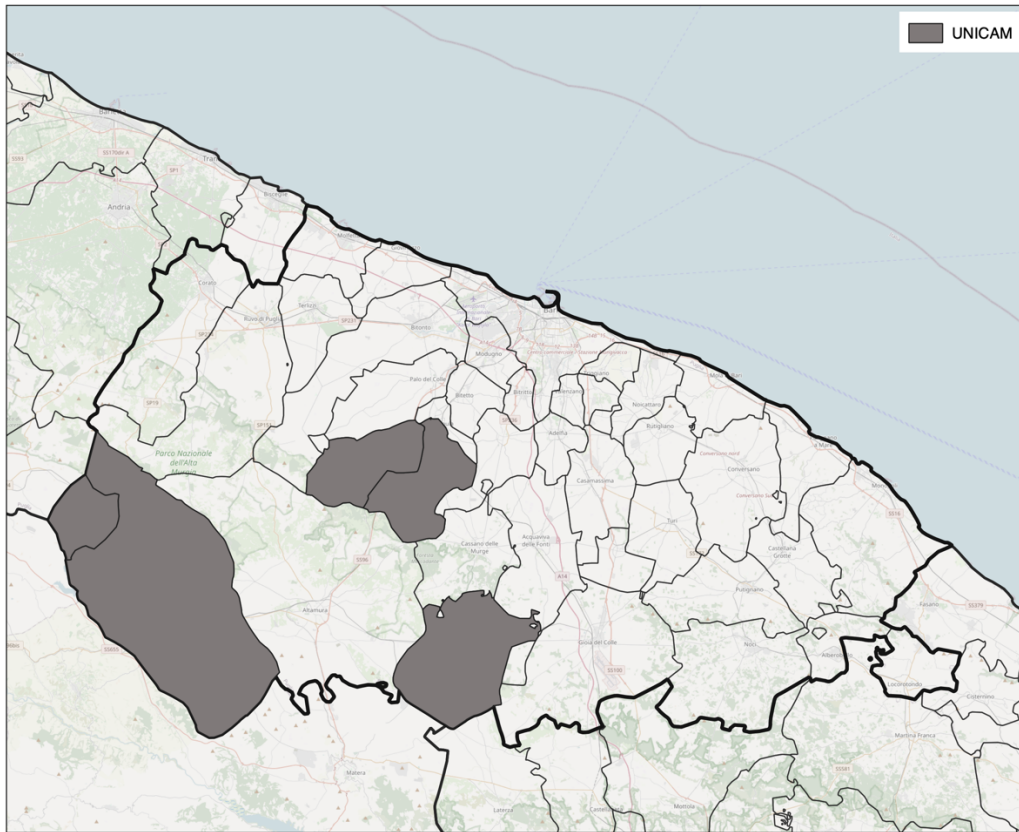
Other forms of inter-municipal cooperation, more properly related to negotiated planning, are territorial pacts. In the case study analysis, some 27 territorial pacts emerged within the region of Apulia. Many territorial pacts have been closed, others seem to be 'at rest', others are still active. Here in the table, the territorial pacts that fall within the territory of the MCBa.

Finally, the administrative geography that emerges from the Unions of Municipalities within the metropolitan city's territory should be considered. To date, and the picture is constantly evolving, there is only one Union of Municipalities, called the Union of Municipalities of the Alta Murgia (Figure 32)<sup>35</sup>, which includes five municipalities in southern Bari. These are the municipalities of Poggiorsini, Gravina in Puglia, Santeramo in Colle, Toritto and Grumo Appula. The geography that draws this union on the territory is peculiar; in fact, the non-participation of the municipality of Altamura determines a fracture and a non-territorial continuity of the territory of the union, which at the very least enters into contradiction with the initial concept of the Union of Municipalities, which, it should be recalled, was born as a free association of contiguous municipalities for the shared management of functions.

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<sup>35</sup> The status of this union of municipalities is still unclear. In the national list it is present ([https://dait.interno.gov.it/territorio-e-autonomie-locali/sut/elenco\\_unioni\\_comuni\\_comp.php](https://dait.interno.gov.it/territorio-e-autonomie-locali/sut/elenco_unioni_comuni_comp.php)), in the regional one it is not (<https://www.regione.puglia.it/web/istituzione-e-partecipazione/registro-regionale-unioni-di-comuni-pugliesi>). In the metropolitan city it is unknown and there has never been any institutional contact. From the website, however, it appears to be active (<https://www.unionecomunialtamurgia.it>).





**Figure 32 – UNICAM. Source: Author’s elaboration.**

The MCBa confirms a pattern observed in various metropolitan regions, wherein the preference for employing inter-municipal consolidation is more apparent in peripheral areas that lack strong connections to the core urban nucleus, rather than in situations where urban integration naturally occurs. This phenomenon is comprehensible but contrasts with the successful instances of metropolitan amalgamation seen in Europe, notably in Germany. In Germany, municipalities in the outermost metropolitan rings have often proactively merged, either voluntarily or due to legislative incentives, to foster cooperation in uniform peri-urban environments. This approach enhances their role within the new metropolitan framework and provides transparency regarding their functions’ decentralization. While not explicitly stipulated by Law 56/2014, it aligns with the law’s intentions and is indeed permissible. However, local decision-makers must shift their perspective and awareness in this direction, a change that has been conspicuously absent thus far, not only in the case of MCBa.



## 6.4 Spatial and strategic planning Instrument at metropolitan scale

The province of Bari has never had a Coordination Plan, and this has probably influenced the fact that there was no perceived need for a spatial-type instrument. In turn, it can be assumed that this was also due to the inherent characteristics of a system in which, compared to other metropolitan areas, a lack of hierarchy and the presence of many large municipalities, rich in history and with autonomous profiles, made it more complicated for the province to exercise its coordination function. Although it is inevitable that spatial content and directions will also find space in this path, so far, the territorial dimension in the strict sense is definitely not at the centre of the work and processes promoted by the Metropolitan City. The vice president of INU Puglia notes traits of continuity from the past due to ‘a lack of tradition in the field of spatial planning. The province of Bari has never had a Coordination Plan, and this probably influenced the fact that there was no perceived need to have a spatial-type instrument. In turn, it can be assumed that this is also due to the inherent characteristics of a system in which, compared to other metropolitan areas, a lack of hierarchy and the presence of many large municipalities, rich in history and with autonomous profiles, have made it more complicated for the province to exercise its coordinating functions.

On the contrary, strategic planning has a history of weight, explains Calace (2023): *‘It was already used in the 2007 - 2013 community programming, although it was set up in a rather institutional way, to direct resources. The idea that these could be allocated without a territorialised reference for policies was then reinforced over time. The tendency, if it was formed in the management of European funds, was further consolidated when the need to intercept and spend National Recovery and Resilience Plan funds in a rapid manner emerged. That said, one cannot but note that the Metropolitan City is very proactive; it is far from lacking in commitment and initiatives. It certainly has a very operational approach, geared toward intercepting resources and redistributing them among municipalities, including with their involvement, based on the goals assumed by the Strategic Plan in process. However, the absence of spatial planning should give pause for thought because what is lacking - strange to say - is a deep knowledge of the territory, an organic and integrated reading of its fragilities, and a system of planning choices based on an explicit and shared vision. The one channelled by the strategic plan is very broad, with rather broad objectives and keywords, which allow for a wide freedom of application; while this may seem an advantage today, it does not allow*

*for the pursuit of coherence, synergies and added value that spatial planning can guarantee. It should also be considered - and hoped for - that, today, the shared working method developed among municipalities could be the key to start a collaborative and effective spatial planning process'.*

#### **6.4.1 The Metropolitan General Territorial Plan – PTGM**

Regarding the territorial planning instrument, initially the province, and subsequently the metropolitan authority, has a rather troubled history. Starting in 2006, the province of Bari felt the need to begin the process of drafting the PTCP. It entrusts the task of drafting the instrument to the Community of Mediterranean Universities (*CUM - Comunità delle Università Mediterranee*). The analyses and studies went on for over two years. In 2008, however, the province of Bari was divided, losing some municipalities, in favour of the establishment of the new province of Barletta - Andria - Trani. This very long process went on for at least three years and at the same time put the drafting of the PTCP on standby. The previous analysis carried out by the CUM had been done on the old provincial territory (including the territory of BAT). Almost at the end of the drafting of the instrument, an update and resising of the contents of the PTCP was requested in light of the territorial changes.

In 2012, there had been a proposal for a resolution with the subject: 'Adoption of the Outline of the Provincial Territorial Coordination Plan' by the Provincial Council. The postponement of the discussion of this item to a date to be determined and the subsequent dissolution of the Council, following the start of the procedures for the establishment of the Metropolitan City, did not allow the continuation of the approval process of the planning instrument.

In 2014, at the time of the submission of the documents to establish the PTCP, the Delrio reform came into play, establishing the MCs, and introducing within the process of drafting the metropolitan planning instrument, now PTGM, a regional component that would give implementation guidelines for the MCs in order to adapt the PTCP or, in the case of the lack of the instrument, to shape the PTGM. These guidelines were never made, and the MC, aware of the uncertainty of the moment and the absence of such guidelines and seeing at the same time the beginning of the drafting process of the metropolitan strategic plan, decided to transform what was already done for the PTCP into preparatory studies for the implementation of the metropolitan strategic plan. Thus, the metropolitan strategic guidelines underlying the drafting of the PTCP were highlighted and transferred to the metropolitan

strategic plan. Currently, the Metropolitan City lacks the Metropolitan General Territorial Plan. Consequently, it is planned to establish, through the creation of a dedicated regulation, the necessary procedures for the municipalities located in the metropolitan area to participate in the formulation of the metropolitan plan proposal. This proposal will then be submitted to the Metropolitan Council for approval.

Currently, research and study activities are advancing, in accordance with an agreement previously stipulated with the CUM. These activities are aimed at preparing the ground for the future adaptation of the Provincial Coordination Territorial Plan to the Metropolitan General Territorial Plan. This adaptation also aims to coordinate the PTCP with the guiding principles of the PTGM and to take into account the current level of implementation in the authority's strategic planning.

The main objective is therefore to verify and coordinate the planning perspective of the PTCP with the quality objectives and strategic projects outlined in the PPTR.

#### **6.4.2 The Metropolitan Strategic Plan – PSM**

The strategic planning and consequently the metropolitan strategic plan is the planning instrument on which the metropolitan authority is focusing the most<sup>36</sup>.

The strategic planning activity of the metropolitan city of Bari started in 2015 in agreement with all the mayors of the metropolitan territory, through the analysis of the starting situation, of the needs of the territory, and of the growth hypotheses, has developed over time, laying the foundations of a long and fruitful path of collaboration destined to unravel along the entire mandate of the current administration (Figure 33).

The path of construction of the actual strategic planning tool began with the signing, in 2016, of the Pact for the Development of the Metropolitan City of Bari - Implementation of Priority Interventions and Identification of Strategic Areas of Intervention (*Patto per lo Sviluppo della Città Metropolitana di Bari – Attuazione degli Interventi Prioritari e Individuazione delle Aree di Intervento Strategiche*) with the Presidency of the Council of Ministers. The Pact immediately defined the

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<sup>36</sup> On 17 May 2024, the Metropolitan Council adopted the new Metropolitan Strategic Plan for the MCBa.

five priority intervention axes: 1) Infrastructure; 2) Environment and Territory; 3) Economic and productive development; 4) Tourism and culture; 5) Social requalification and metropolitan services. Subsequently, with the Single Programming Document 2018-2020, the Metropolitan City drew up a multi-level strategy, starting from the priority axes and arriving at the definition of 11 strategic axes (described below).

#### THE PARTICIPATORY PROCESS

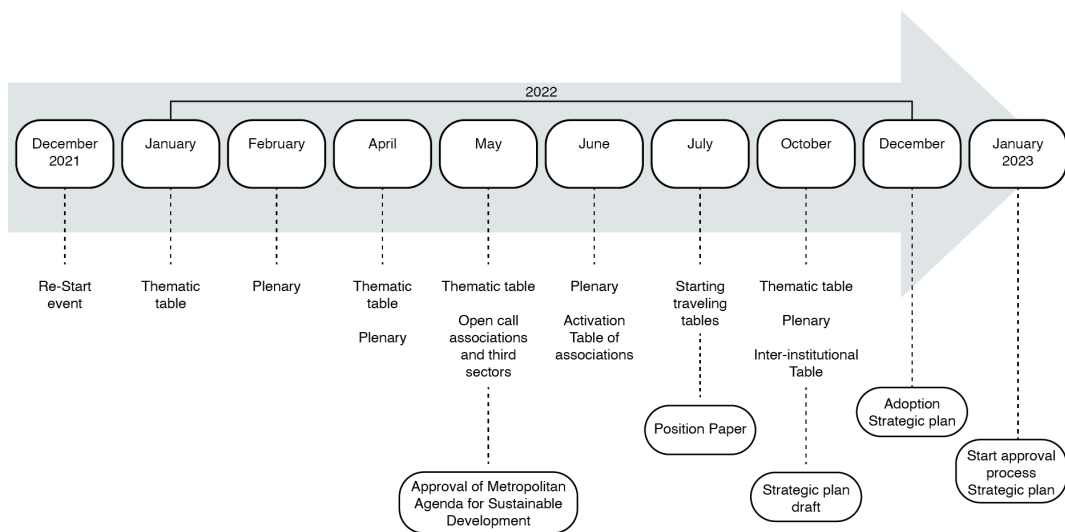


Figure 33 – Participatory process for the PSM of MCBA. Source: Author’s elaboration on MCBA, 2024b.

The document that lays down the guidelines for the drafting of the planning instrument is the ‘*Governance model for the planning process of the metropolitan city of Bari*’ (MCBa, 2020), which formalised a polycentric governance model, defined at the three institutional, partnership and management levels. The drafting of the plan is currently subject to continuous modifications and innovations on the basis of the needs that gradually emerge and are brought to the metropolitan city’s attention by the numerous ‘actors’ that contribute, each in their own role and according to their distinctive prerogatives and functions, to defining the metropolitan city’s future.

In a perspective of institutional and methodological renewal of the government of the vast area, the Strategic Plan, which comes after an initial planning phase already developed or in progress (*Periferie Aperte, Porta Futuro Metropolitana*, etc.) completely bases the instrument’s governance model on co-planning and co-planning.

In this sense, as already mentioned, the Metropolitan City of Bari has developed a Governance Model of the strategic planning process for the development of the metropolitan territory, which aims at developing the attractiveness of the various territorial systems through the coordination, systemisation and promotion of local resources with a view to integrating the territorial spheres on several levels (Figure 34).

**THE GOVERNANCE OF THE PROCESS**

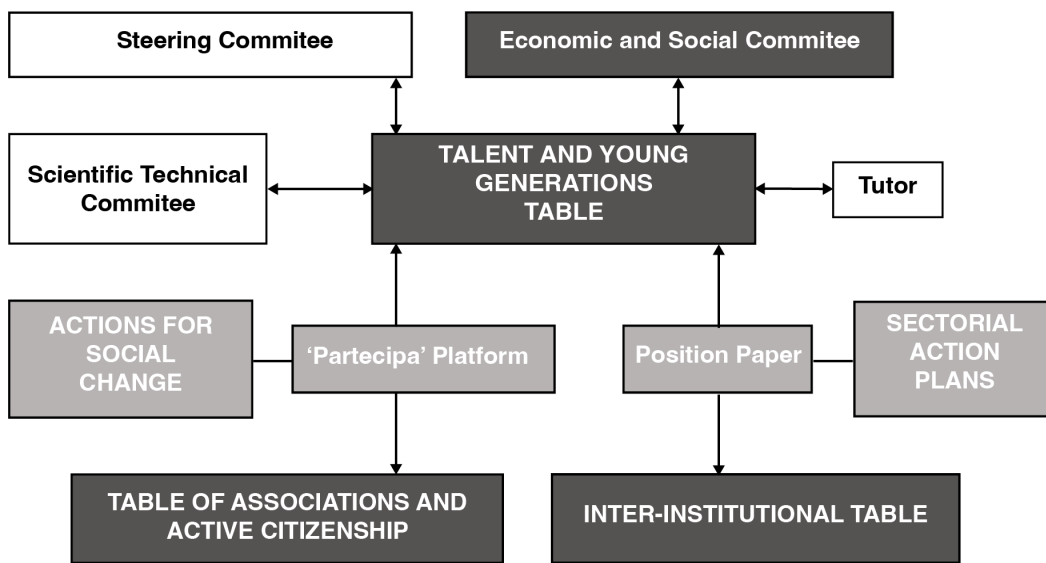


Figure 34 - The governance process scheme of the PSM of MCBa. Source: Auhtor's elaboration on MCBa, 2024b.

At the same time, it has adopted a 'Regulation for Individual and Collective Participation to ensure integrated participation in the life and development of the metropolitan community.

The involvement of the territory is not limited to more institutional profiles. In this regard, the Governance Model assigns a permanent role to three Working Tables that are representative of the metropolitan institutions and citizenship (MCBa, 2024b):

- Inter-institutional Table of the Metropolitan City of Bari, in which representatives of the public institutions responsible in the territory for the protection and enhancement of public interests may participate.
- The Table of Associations and Active Citizenship, in which the representatives of the subjects and formations through which the

personality of individuals, understood in the broadest sense envisaged in Article 2 of the Constitution, takes place, whatever legal status they assume.

- Table of Talents and New Generations, attended by representatives of individuals and social groups representing youth movements, educational institutions and/or active citizens aged between 16 and 29.

In terms of content, within the strategic planning process, as mentioned above, the MCBa identifies 5 priority thematic areas:

- *Infrastructure*: it includes the interventions aimed at improving urban and extra-urban mobility by strengthening the TPL and the connections between the main logistic and productive hubs of the metropolitan area: Commercial Port of Bari, Airport, Freight Village and ASI area.
- *Environment and Territory* includes the actions for the redevelopment and regeneration of the metropolitan waterfront, the consolidation of the coast and the mitigation of coastal erosion.
- *Economic and productive development* made up of actions aimed at promoting economic and productive development, the growth of the enterprise system and employment, equipping the city of Bari and the metropolitan area with innovative network services for smart cities, tools for the implementation of the metropolitan digital agenda, as well as creating structures to promote knowledge and the development of skills for the needs of the local productive system.
- *Tourism and culture*: aimed at improving accessibility to areas with a high vocation for tourism; establishing an integrated system for the enjoyment of cultural assets; promoting integrated and sustainable tourism development, including through the creation of cycle paths and the recovery of areas of natural interest; creating a metropolitan educational and artistic centre
- *Social requalification and metropolitan services*: aimed at improving administrative capacity, functional to guarantee safety and legality in the territories; realising services to support social housing, social innovation and active inclusion.

From these 5 priority thematic areas, and in thematic continuity with respect to the Flagship Projects identified in 2015, 11 Planning Axes have been defined within a programmatic framework of interventions, born from the common vision of the 41 mayors of the territory with the aim of creating new opportunities for a better future (Figure 35).

## THE 11 STRATEGIC AXES

|   |   |    |   |
|---|---|----|---|
| 1 | DIGITAL AGENDA                          | 7  | URBAN AND SOCIAL REGENERATION OF SUBURBS          |
| 2 | SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY                    | 8  | URBAN AND SOCIAL REGENERATION OF HISTORIC CENTRES |
| 3 | NATURAL AND CULTURAL ATTRACTORS         | 9  | AGRICULTURE 4.0                                   |
| 4 | EDUCATION, LABOUR AND SOCIAL INNOVATION | 10 | SUSTAINABLE ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE             |
| 5 | SOCIAL HOUSING AND ACTIVE INCLUSION     | 11 | INDUSTRY 4.0                                      |
| 6 | METROPOLITAN WATERFRONT                 |    |   |

Figure 35 - The 11 Axes of PSM of MCBA. Source: Author's elaboration on MCBA, 2024b.

### 6.4.3 The Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan – PUMS

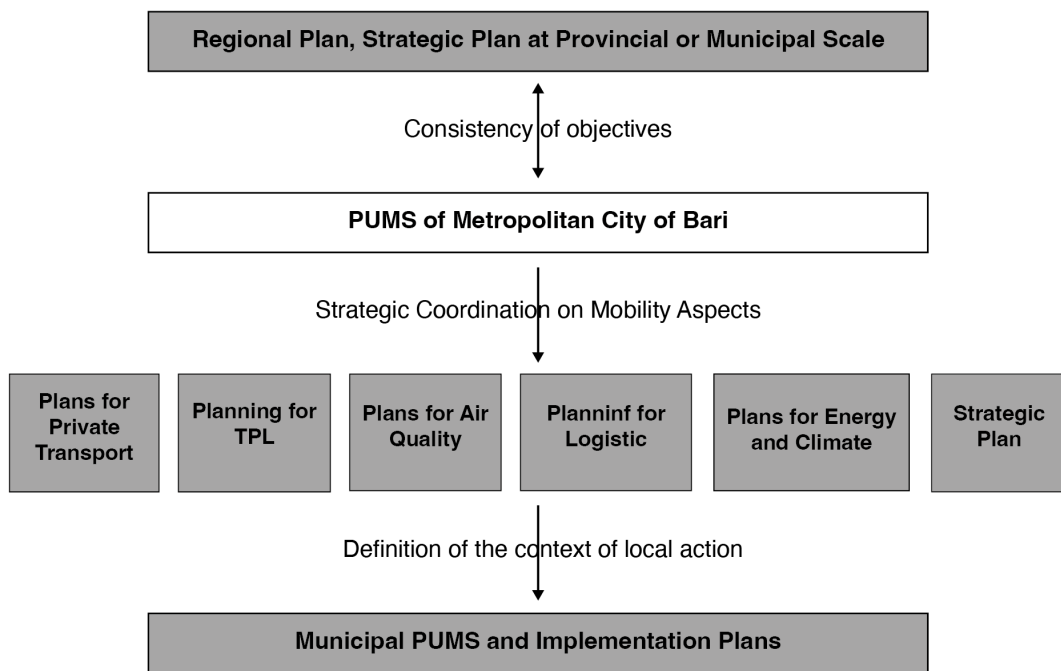
The only instrument that has currently been approved and subsequently adopted by the metropolitan city of Bari is the Urban Plan for Sustainable Mobility, PUMS.

The Urban Plan for Sustainable Mobility, is a planning document that, based on existing planning tools and carefully considering the principles of integration, participation and evaluation, aims to define interventions to meet the mobility needs of people and goods, with the intention of improving the quality of life in and around cities. It is a document that provides an overall vision of transport in an urban area understood in the broadest sense, without distinction between public and private, between goods and people, between motorised and non-motorised movements, to arrive at the definition of measures aimed at optimising circulation and parking.

MCBA's PUMS aims to provide the metropolitan area of Bari with an integrated strategic vision of sustainable transport modes consistent with the vision of the Regional Transport Plan, the PPTR soft mobility system and the Strategic Plan for Tourism Apulia. It aims at the development and implementation of intermodal connections consistent with the indications of the Green Book and White Book and with national level plans and strategies. The PUMS also aims to be a strategic tool for the reduction of pollution both in terms of emissions of harmful substances and in terms of noise pollution, consistent with the Framework for Climate and Energy 2030, the Paris Agreement (2015), the European Strategy

for Low Emission Mobility, the National Integrated Energy and Climate Plan and national sector regulations and the Regional Environmental Energy Plan. Consequently, sustainable mobility should contribute to reducing accidents and increasing road safety as set out in the National Road Safety Plan - Horizon 2020. At the same time, PUMS is important to improve accessibility and connectivity of places and tourism enhancement, consistent with the Extraordinary Tourism Mobility Plan 2017/22; the Strategic Tourism Plan, the PRMC. The PUMS of the Metropolitan City is built from the overlapping of the system of existing planning instruments, incorporating their considerations and building a new complete and updated knowledge system that allows to compose the actions, harmonise their developments and elaborate a global and unique vision (Figure 36).

**RELATION BETWEEN METROPOLITAN AND MUNICIPAL PUMS**



**Figure 36 - Relation between Metropolitan and Municipal PUMS. Source: Author's elaboration on ELTIS Guidelines, MCBa, 2021.**

At the municipal level, the Municipal PUMSs are conceived as detailed plans of the MCBa PUMS in each municipal territory. In particular, a composite and multi-level framework can be reconstructed within the sector planning in the Metropolitan City territory. At the Metropolitan level there is the Metropolitan Cycling Mobility Plan and the Local Public Transport Basin Plan. At the Municipal level, there is a complex panorama composed of Municipal PUMS, Cycling and



Cyclo-Pedestrian Mobility Plans, Plans for the Elimination of Architectural Barriers and Urban Traffic Plans, whose knowledge base is useful for reconstructing the overall vision.

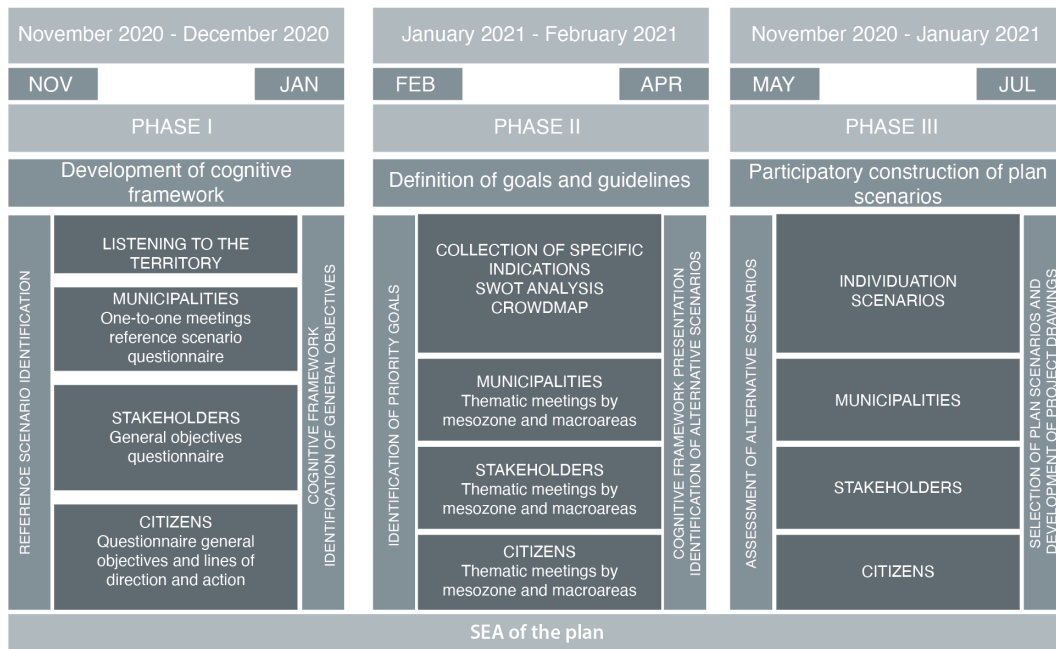
In this sense, MCBa's PUMS provides guidelines, addresses and criteria to which Municipal Plans must conform and dictates the actions at the metropolitan level against which municipal planning must integrate. Municipal PUMS represent at a strategic level Sector Plans of the Municipal Urban Traffic Plans. The Urban Traffic Plans, Municipal Cycling Mobility Plans and PEBA's then play the role of implementation plans for the Municipal PUMS.

Numerous municipalities in the Metropolitan City of Bari have adopted or are in the process of adopting Municipal Sustainable Mobility Plans. These plans are now at different stages of progress, and it is important to make their choices consistent and harmonise them with the overall vision and objectives. The actions envisaged in municipal PUMS contribute to varying degrees to the achievement of the objectives listed in the national guidelines.

The peculiarity of the metropolitan PUMS with respect to municipal PUMS is linked to the very essence of the Authority as a body territorially superordinate to the Municipalities, a circumstance that outlines a composite and multi-level framework. Therefore, the need arises for a global and unitary vision of the entire territory that synthesises the complex system of existing planning tools, incorporating their considerations and constructing a new, complete and updated knowledge system that allows the actions to be put together and the developments to be harmonised.

The PUMS of the metropolitan city of Bari is important not only with regard to the contents of the plan, but also for having marked a historical turning point in the processes of participation in the construction of the metropolitan city of Bari's metropolitan instruments. In fact, in relation to the instrument's drafting process, with the PUMS, the metropolitan authority's willingness to open itself up to the territory in an active manner in order to really build a planning instrument with a bottom-up process was highlighted. (Figure 37)

**THE PUMS APPROVAL PROCESS**



**Figure 37 – The PUMS approval process in the MCBa. Source: Author’s elaboration on MCBa, 2021.**

First of all, the metropolitan city of Bari for the drafting of the Plan selected a group of professionals for the different disciplines that regulate the government of the territory and for the involvement of the institutional actors and citizens concerned. The interdisciplinary group was chosen for the definition of the cognitive framework, objectives and strategies, and related to the competent offices of the 41 municipalities of the metropolitan city of Bari in a perspective of inter-institutional collaboration that envisaged the involvement of the bodies and institutions. Subsequently, the participatory process started with the construction of the cognitive framework, through the interaction with the representatives of the Municipalities, Mayors and technicians, who highlighted criticalities, peculiarities and needs for each Municipality. Local authorities and citizens were also involved through thematic working tables and online questionnaires. Following the meetings with the territory, the cognitive framework of the metropolitan area of Bari was prepared with reference to mobility and describes the orographic, urban, socio-economic and structuring characteristics of the infrastructure and logistics network.

Once the cognitive framework was drawn up, macro strategic objectives were identified. In fact, each municipality was asked to prioritise different macro-objectives that respond to general interests of effectiveness and efficiency of the

mobility system and social, economic and environmental sustainability. Specific lower-ranking objectives were also defined, which are functional to the achievement of the macro-objectives. For each objective and in relation to each municipality, strategies and actions have been identified that consider both common features and the specificity and singularity of each reality.

The definition of macro-objectives led to the construction of alternative scenarios of the PUMS aimed at assessing the ability of different mixes of intervention strategies to meet the general objectives set. A scenario generally consists of a coherent mix of infrastructure, services and policies for mobility and transport interacting with a given transport demand configuration. Among the infrastructure or service organisation interventions of the project, there are some that are to be considered "invariant", as they are present in all alternative scenarios.

Once the alternative scenarios were defined, the impacts generated by the different scenarios were analysed until a single Plan scenario was chosen, which corresponds to the strategy most consistent with the objectives defined by the Plan itself. The plan scenario is then described in detail of all the actions envisaged, divided into short-, medium- and long-term actions.

The last step in the process of drafting the PUMS was the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). According to the provisions of Articles 4 et seq. of Legislative Decree No. 152/2006 as amended, strategic plans and programs that may have a significant impact on the environment must undergo Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) procedures in order to ensure a high level of environmental protection and promote sustainable development. The SEA accompanies the entire Plan formation process up to its approval and monitoring phases.

#### **6.4.4 The Agenda for Sustainable Development of the Metropolitan City of Bari**

The definition of the 'Metropolitan Agenda for Sustainable Development' has come to the end of a process that has lasted several years, ever since the institution's inception on 1 January 2015, when it took over from the province of the same name, as a result of Law 56/2014. As already mentioned in relation to the metropolitan strategic plan, with the *Patto per Bari*, signed in 2016 with the Presidency of the Metropolitan Council, a season of co-planning and co-planning between all the municipalities was opened, which led to the sharing of a common strategy and of

plans and projects for the benefit of the entire metropolitan community. An innovative working method that has brought, in recent years, numerous grants but, above all, has made the Metropolitan City an example of participatory planning. With the post-pandemic restart, the PNRR and the start of the new 2021-2027 planning cycle, the mayors expressed the need to renew their metropolitan pact by launching a new planning period that could capitalise on what had already been done in past years and project it into a time horizon of 2030. In this scenario, this document was drafted, which manifests the mayors' willingness to restart sustainable development by fully adhering to the principles of the UN 2030 Agenda, making the Metropolitan Agenda the bridge between the past and the future. The Agenda is the result of a two-stage decision-making process: 1) Alignment of ongoing projects and actions with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals; 2) Definition of a vision that can guide the subsequent phases of strategic planning.

The Agenda has been conceived as a flexible planning tool that is updated year after year, on the basis of shared indicators and adapting to the sustainable development needs of the Metropolitan City, its entrepreneurial fabric, the third sector, the institutions that make it up or, more generally, its community. For these reasons, the Agenda for Sustainable Development of the Metropolitan City of Bari (AMSvS) constituted a document to support the planning and programming of the policies of the 41 municipalities belonging to the metropolitan area of Bari from its approval until 2030.

The way in which the Agenda has been created is participatory and consultative, in bottom-up mode, also through the creation of new forms of institutional consultation, such as the Steering Committee (Metropolitan Mayor Decree no. 77 of 25/02/2022), the Metropolitan Forum for Sustainable Development and the thematic working tables, which include the elaboration of contributions to be conveyed in the relevant Forum. The intention is to strengthen the ways in which existing structures can be involved, so as not to duplicate the tools already available to the authority and at the same time to enable direct participation of citizens' representatives in decision-making processes.

The model used for the definition of the Metropolitan City Agenda is based on the observation of the experiences already carried out by regions and local institutions for the elaboration of their own Strategies and Agendas, with constant reference to the National Strategy for Sustainable Development (SNSvS) and the Regional Strategies.

In the case of the Metropolitan City of Bari, there was a strong synergy between the Metropolitan Strategic Plan and the Metropolitan Agenda itself, which is the foundation of the territory's vision and sustainability objectives. Two aspects that guided the choices should be underlined: i) the conceptual frame of reference is the UN 2030 Agenda with its 17 Goals and 169 targets; ii) the methodological choices were based, as far as possible, on indications provided by the statistical office of the EU Commission (EUROSTAT) and the National Statistical System (starting from what was produced by ISTAT). The model aims to monitor the territorial reality and measure its evolution towards the goals of sustainable development.

In the specific territorial context of the Metropolitan City of Bari, there is a comprehensive approach in place to evaluate and harmonize with the UN 2030 Agenda's Sustainable Development Goals, with a particular focus on Goal 11 related to Sustainable Cities and Communities.

This multi-level comparison has allowed the Agenda to represent the link between the Strategic Plan of the past programming period and the new Metropolitan Strategic Plan. The objective of the MCBa is to create a series of strategic tools that flow into the PSM through which the MCBa can outline the priority interventions to foster the economic, social and cultural progress of the territory: in this perspective, the AMSvS is primarily aimed at bringing the UN 2030 Agenda to the metropolitan level, making the principle of territorialisation on which the Global Agenda itself is built a reality.

The AMSvS definition process consists of the following phases (MCBa, 2024a):

1. Analysis of the UN 2030 Agenda and context about the territorial indicators.
2. Definition of the vision and the link between the WHA and the PSM
3. Definition of metropolitan indicators.
4. Definition of monitoring activities.

The integrated development of the Agenda with the strategic planning of the Metropolitan City of Bari made use of the involvement and participation actions of broad strata and sectors of the population as well as the protagonists of the territory's economic and social life.

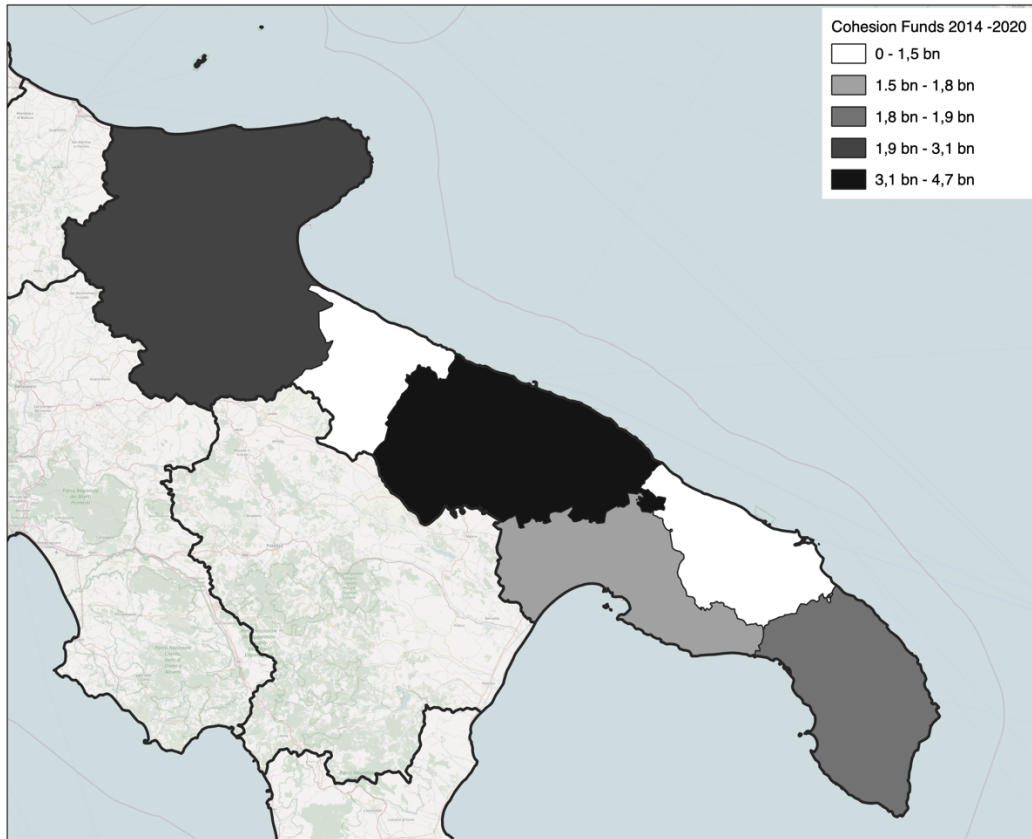
## **6.5 The Supra-local programming – The role of the MCBa between cohesion policy and PNRR**

This section will highlight the relationship and role of the MCBa with supra-local programming, and with cohesion policy and the PNRR. Methodologically, a quantitative analysis will be made of 2014-2020 programming and a qualitative analysis of 2021-2027. This section is divided into three parts. In the first part, the topic of cohesion policy in the regional context is framed. In the second part, the focus shifts to the metropolitan level. Finally, the third part focuses on the PNRR and its relationship with the metropolitan city.

### **6.5.1 The cohesion policy in the region**

Historically the Apulia region has been always proactive in gathering funds from the cohesion policy. Since 2007 the number of projects sustained by the cohesion policy in Apulia is more than 42 billion, 24 of them are framed in the 2014-2020 programming period.

The Apulia Region in relation to the 2014-2020 programming for the Regional Operational Program has arranged 1.5 billion euros from the European Social Fund (ESF) and 5.5 billion from the European Fund for Regional Development (ERDF). These resources are supplemented by contributions from the Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), with the Rural Development Program (RDP) as the main funding instrument, with more than 2 billion euros allocated to it to date. In addition to the ESF, ERDF and EAFRD, there are resources allocated to the European Maritime Policy, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFF). To these resources are added resources derived from the National Operational Programs (NOPs) Education, Employment, Inclusion, Metropolitan Cities, Governance-networks-Technical Assistance, Youth Employment Initiative (*Garanzia Giovani*), as well as ERDF resources derived from the participation of the region and the regional territory in European Territorial Cooperation (Interreg) projects.



**Figure 38 – Cohesion funds 2014-2020 allocated by provinces. Source: Open Coesione, 2024. Author's elaboration.**

From Figure 38, it is possible to note how funds from the 2014-2020 programming landed on the territory of the Apulia region. The distribution of funds and projects is mainly concentrated on the territory of the metropolitan city of Bari. In relation to projects, the metropolitan city of Bari with about 16.000 projects has the most projects, followed by the province of Lecce, about 10.000. This is followed by the province of Foggia with about 8.000 projects and lastly the provinces of Taranto, BAT and Brindisi with a range of between 3.500 and 5.500 projects. It is interesting to note, however, that there is no direct proportionality between the number of projects and the cohesion funds allocated to them. Putting aside the case of the MCBa, the province of Lecce despite having about 3.000 more projects than that of Foggia, in terms of funding they land about 1 million less. The same reasoning with the BAT province which despite falling about 1.000 more projects than the province of Brindisi, in terms of funding from cohesion, there is a negative difference of about 800.000 euros. All of this is reflected and is confirmed if we take into consideration the per capita cost as an indicator. It emerges how the

province with the most funds per capita is the province of Foggia with 4.911€, with per capita amounts higher even than the MCBa (4.095€) (Table 14).

Table 14 – Data of Cohesion funds from the 2014-2020 programming period.

|                              | Projects | Cohesion Payment | Cohesion resource cost | Cost per capita |
|------------------------------|----------|------------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Bari</b>                  | 16.020   | 2.304.606.113    | 4.717.303.633          | 4.095           |
| <b>Barletta Andria Trani</b> | 4.232    | 266.243.604      | 677.554.523            | 2.137           |
| <b>Brindisi</b>              | 3.680    | 685.122.504      | 1.484.704.287          | 4.095           |
| <b>Foggia</b>                | 7.797    | 820.356.286      | 2.840.302.955          | 4.911           |
| <b>Lecce</b>                 | 10.582   | 966.097.502      | 1.887.802.482          | 2.336           |
| <b>Taranto</b>               | 5.449    | 621.430.303      | 1.721.415.797          | 3.105           |

Source: Open Coesione, 2024

Qualitatively, it is useful to highlight the source of resources. Specifically, as shown in Figure 39, 67,90 % of the funds come from structural funds, 29,50 from the Development and Cohesion Fund and finally less than 1 % from PAC (2.58%) and ordinary resources (0.04%).

#### SOURCE OF FUNDS - APULIA

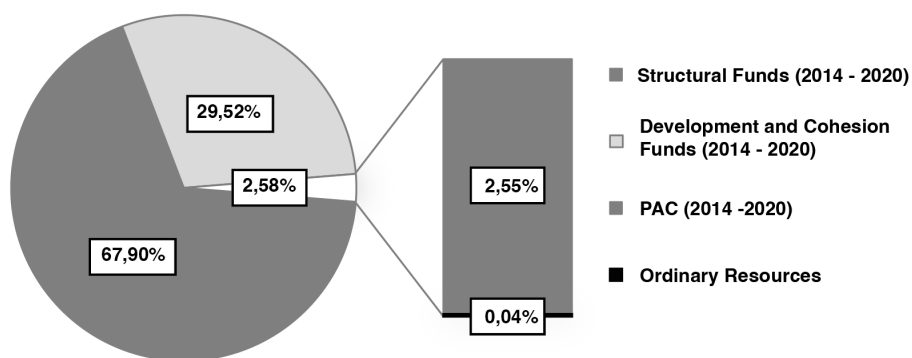


Figure 39 - Source of Funds (2014 - 2020 programming period) Apulia. Source: Open Coesione, 2024. Author's elaboration.

Table 15 – Most Financed Programs (2014 – 2020)

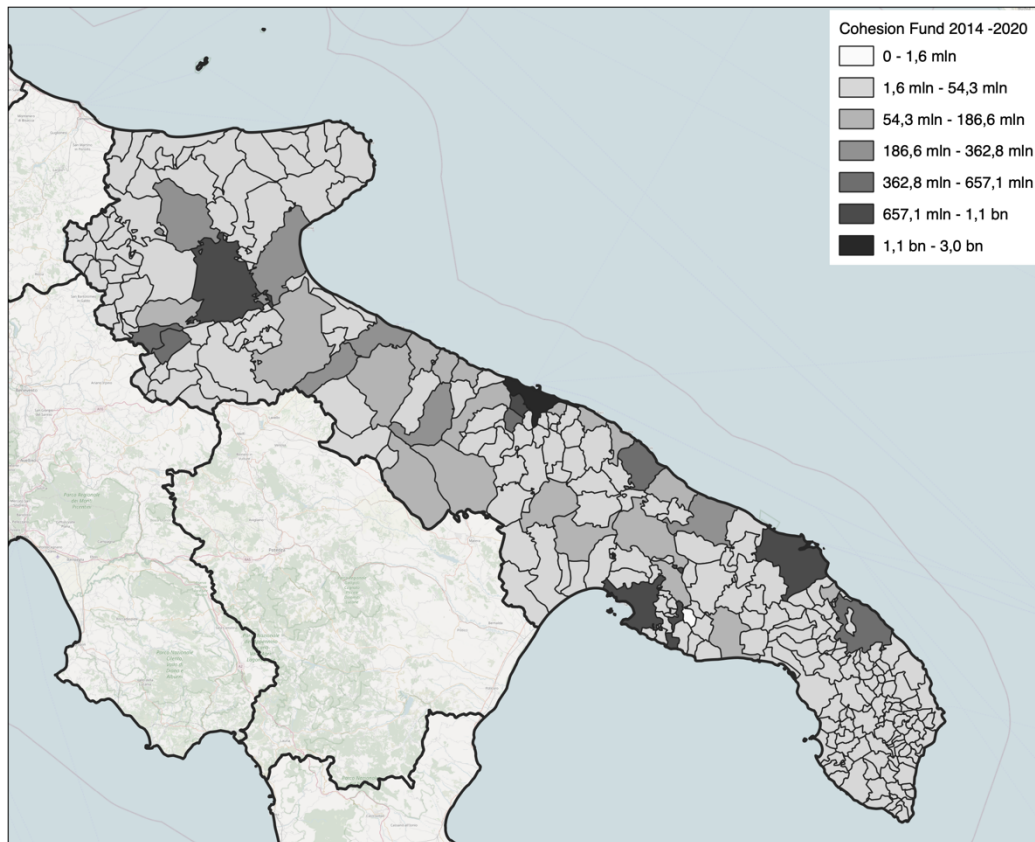
| Source                     | Program  | Funds         |
|----------------------------|--|---------------|
| Structural Funds 2014-2020 | <i>POR FESR ESF PUGLIA</i>                                   | 6.773.512.884 |
| Structural Funds 2014-2020 | <i>PON ESF SISTEMI DI POLITICHE ATTIVE PER L'OCCUPAZIONE</i> | 5.294.024.553 |



|   |   |               |
|---|---|---------------|
| Structural Funds 2014-2020              | <i>PON FESR IMPRESE E COMPETITIVITA'</i>                  | 5.012.019.077 |
| Development and Cohesion Fund 2014-2020 | <i>PSC MINISTERO DELLE IMPRESE E DEL MADE IN ITALY</i>    | 3.072.566.948 |
| Development and Cohesion Fund 2014-2020 | <i>PSC MINISTERO DELLE INFRASTRUTTURE E DEI TRASPORTI</i> | 2.990.094.687 |
| Structural Funds 2014-2020              | <i>PON FESR INIZIATIVA PMI</i>                            | 2.750.000.000 |
| Development and Cohesion Fund 2014-2020 | <i>PSC REGIONE PUGLIA</i>                                 | 1.872.671.449 |
| Structural Funds 2014-2020              | <i>PON FESR INFRASTRUTTURE E RETI</i>                     | 643.943.495   |
| Structural Funds 2014-2020              | <i>PON FESR ESF RICERCA E INNOVAZIONE</i>                 | 593.607.328   |
| Structural Funds 2014-2020              | <i>PON INIZIATIVA OCCUPAZIONE GIOVANI</i>                 | 589.868.909   |

**Source: Open Coesione, 2024**

At the regional level, it is also helpful to have an idea of the distribution of funds at the municipal level of the funds. From a methodological point of view, in the case of ERDF ROP, interventions are localised according to the specific rules of the programs (generally referring to the actual location, when possible, or the location of the beneficiary of the grants). In contrast, in the case of ESF ROP, interventions are localised according to the registered residence of the final beneficiaries. Observed at the municipal level, the assistance level (the subsidies granted per inhabitant) of European programs is localised primarily on the capital municipalities, to be distributed over coastal municipalities, municipalities in inland areas and some cases, not all, in the municipalities closest to the capital municipality (Figure 40).



**Figure 40 - Cohesion funds 2014-2020 allocated by municipalities. Source: Open Coesione, 2024. Author's elaboration.**

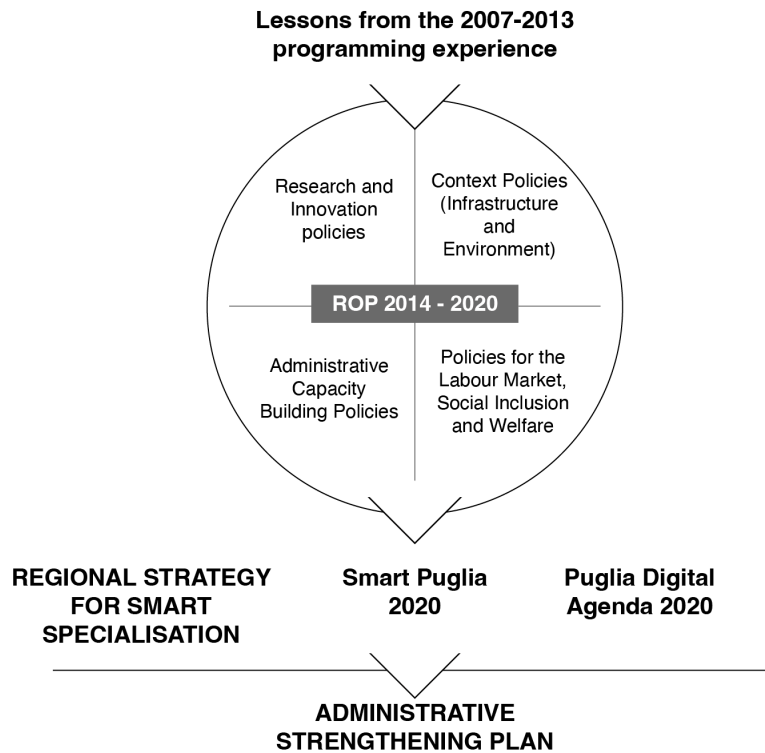
In relation to the 2014-2020 programming, it is interesting to point out that the Apulia region, in relation to the Regional Operational Program (ROP) has chosen to achieve a strong integration between the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF) by defining a Multifund Program.

The strategy of the 2014-2020 ERDF ROP of the Apulia Region aimed to ensure continuity with the actions implemented under the 2007-2013 Programming, identifying three macro areas of intervention aligned with the objectives of Europe 2020 (Figure 41). Added to this are policies for strengthening administrative capacity. In fact, two new elements introduced by Apulia in its Operational Program are represented by the definition of a Regional Strategy for Smart Specialization (composed of two documents ‘SmartPuglia 2020’ and ‘*Agenda Digitale Puglia2020*’) and an ‘Administrative Reinforcement Plan’ (*Piano di Rafforzamento Amministrativo*, PRA). The total budget allocated to the Apulia Regional Operational Program 2014-2020 is €7.120.958.992. The 2014-2020 ROP identifies 11 Thematic Objectives underlying the implementation of the Cohesion Policy,

which are in turn aligned with the priorities and objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy.

**RATIONALE FOR THE ADMINISTRATIVE STRENGTHENING PLAN**

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**Figure 41 - Rationale for the Administrative Strengthening Plan. Source: Author’s elaboration on POR 2014 -2020 Apulia Region.**

Shifting the focus to the 2012-2022 Rural Development Program, a program with a budget of more than 2 billion euros, it identifies five priorities and is divided into 22 Measures (which are divided into additional sub-measures). One of the main actors in this program are the LAGs, which benefit from grants under the LEADER Community Initiative program and manage the financial contributions provided by the European Union through the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development. The 23 LAGs present in Apulia have oriented their Local Development Strategies (*Strategie di Sviluppo Locali, SSL*) and their programming to the innovation of local production systems of the agri-food, artisan or manufacturing type, the development of energy chains, social promotion and urban redevelopment, passing through the enhancement of cultural heritage and sustainable or so-called, ‘slow’ tourism.

The Apulia Region presents itself at the deadline of the 2014-2020 programming cycle, as is the case in the rest of the country, with a situation strongly conditioned by the very serious pandemic crisis that has interrupted the progress recorded in the previous period to which are added in the most recent period, the impacts related to the sharp rise in energy costs and the consequent increase in inflation rates. In a scenario characterised by greater signs of vitality than the rest of the *Mezzogiorno*, attested in particular by the evolution of the main macroeconomic variables recorded until 2019, as well as also by the greater absorption capacity of the structural funds in the two programming periods 2007-2013 and 2014-2020 that have made Apulia one of the most dynamic regions in the country, Apulia is called upon to strengthen its path of growth and convergence towards the national and European average already in place before the pandemic.

As part of the 2021-2027 programming, the Apulia Region appears to be focusing again on a multi-fund regional program (ERDF-EDF+). In particular, the Apulia Region has developed a structured, broad and articulated partnership pathway for sharing and participating in the 2021-2027 Regional Program (PR) that involved representatives of the institutional and economic-social partnership.

The strategy of the PR 2021-2027 takes its inspiration from the evolution of the economic and social context in recent years, starting with the conjunctural and medium- to long-term changes brought about by the consequences of the pandemic crisis, and aims to foster the overall growth of the territory according to a model that is economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable.

With respect to the national framework, the PR incorporates the priorities indicated by the Partnership Agreement (*Accordo di Partnerariato*, AdP) 2021-2027 and operates in synergy with the PNRR and the other National Programs financed by the cohesion policy, in order to ensure maximum complementarity between interventions, avoiding overlaps or gaps, favouring collaboration between the various institutional levels and the widest participation, from the stage of program definition, of potential recipients and territories. Integration between Programs will be carried out by strengthening monitoring actions and participation in the planned committees also with the specific objective of fostering complementary approaches and avoiding overlaps.

The PR is the result of a long process of discussion with the institutional and economic-social partnership, which is called upon to play an increasingly important role in contributing to the planning and implementation of the Program strategies.

In light of these considerations, the PR defines the intervention priorities on which the Apulia Region focuses its strategic and operational action with a view to integration and complementarity with the policies promoted at the national and European level, starting with the PNRR and the Complementary Operational Program, as well as the National Programs co-financed by the Structural Funds. In line with this purpose, the Region established by DGR 1871/2021 the steering and coordination committee for the interventions of the PNRR - Apulia.

The total economic envelope allocated to the PR Puglia 2021-2027 is 5.577.271.655 euros, of which 4.426.728.737 euros are dedicated to the European Regional Development Fund and 1.150.542.918 euros dedicated to the European Social Fund Plus (Table 16).

**Table 16 - Funds allocated to the PR Puglia 2021-2027.**

| <b>OP</b>        | <b>Axes</b>                                   | <b>Fund</b> | <b>Resources (€)</b> |
|------------------|---|-------------|----------------------|
| <b>OP1</b>       | <b>I - Competitiveness and innovation</b>     | ERDF        | 1.757.087.351        |
| <b>OP2</b>       | <b>II - Green economy</b>                     | ERDF        | 1.261.764.706        |
|                  | <b>III - Sustainable urban mobility</b>       | ERDF        | 88.235.294           |
| <b>OP3</b>       | <b>IV - Transportation</b>                    | ERDF        | 205.882.353          |
| <b>OP4</b>       | <b>V - Employment</b>                         | ESF+        | 222.058.823          |
|                  | <b>VI - Education and training</b>            | ERDF        | 84.705.882           |
|                  |   | ESF+        | 376.750.170          |
|                  | <b>VII - Youth employment</b>                 | ESF+        | 138.065.150          |
|                  | <b>VIII - Welfare e health</b>                | ERDF        | 668.235.294          |
| ESF+             |   | 367.647.059 |                      |
| <b>OP5</b>       | <b>IX - Territorial and urban development</b> | ERDF        | 205.882.353          |
|                  | <b>X - Technical assistance</b>               | ESF+        | 46.021.716           |
|                  | <b>XI - Technical assistance</b>              | FESR        | 154.935.504          |
| <b>Tot funds</b> |   | <b>ERDF</b> | <b>4.426.728.737</b> |
|                  |   | <b>ESF+</b> | <b>1.150.542.918</b> |
| <b>Total</b>     |   |             | <b>5.577.271.655</b> |

Source: Regione Puglia, 2022.

In particular, the ERDF is oriented to support works of strategic impact for economic recovery, promoting tangible and intangible infrastructure interventions that are essential to increase the quality of life of citizens and the ability to generate and attract productive investment, as well as reduce areas of poverty and unemployment, in coherence with the two European strategic pillars of ecological and digital transition.

The action of the ESF+, in the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights is oriented, in a logic of integration and complementarity with the ERDF, to support the sustainability of development by qualifying the pathways of social

inclusion, as well as the skills of the recipients, with particular attention to women, young people, and all those who experience situations of greater fragility, according to an approach based on the fight against inequality and the promotion of the Gender Agenda and equal opportunities.

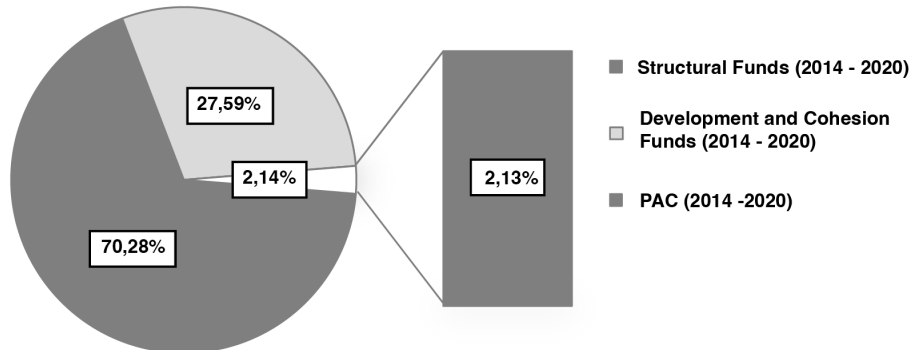
The contribution of the European Structural Funds is oriented towards the implementation of priority development policies, within the framework of the respective Strategic Objectives (SO), defined on the basis of both the needs that emerged from the context analysis, as confirmed within the partnership tables that accompanied the programming process, and the outcomes of the measures implemented during the 2007-2013 and 2014-2020 programming periods that emerged from the *ex-post* and *in itinere* evaluations, as well as the indications coming from the review of the Regional Strategy for Smart Specialization and the other regional strategic instruments.

### **6.5.2 The cohesion policy in the MCBa**

After briefly introducing the topic of cohesion policy within the Apulia region, in this section, the focus shifts to the metropolitan city of Bari. This section, therefore, will describe how cohesion funds landed within the MCBa. As described earlier, the quantitative analyses focus on 2014 - 2020 programming. An analytical description of the funds landed follows in the section with some qualitative focus on a few programs deemed interesting to highlight.

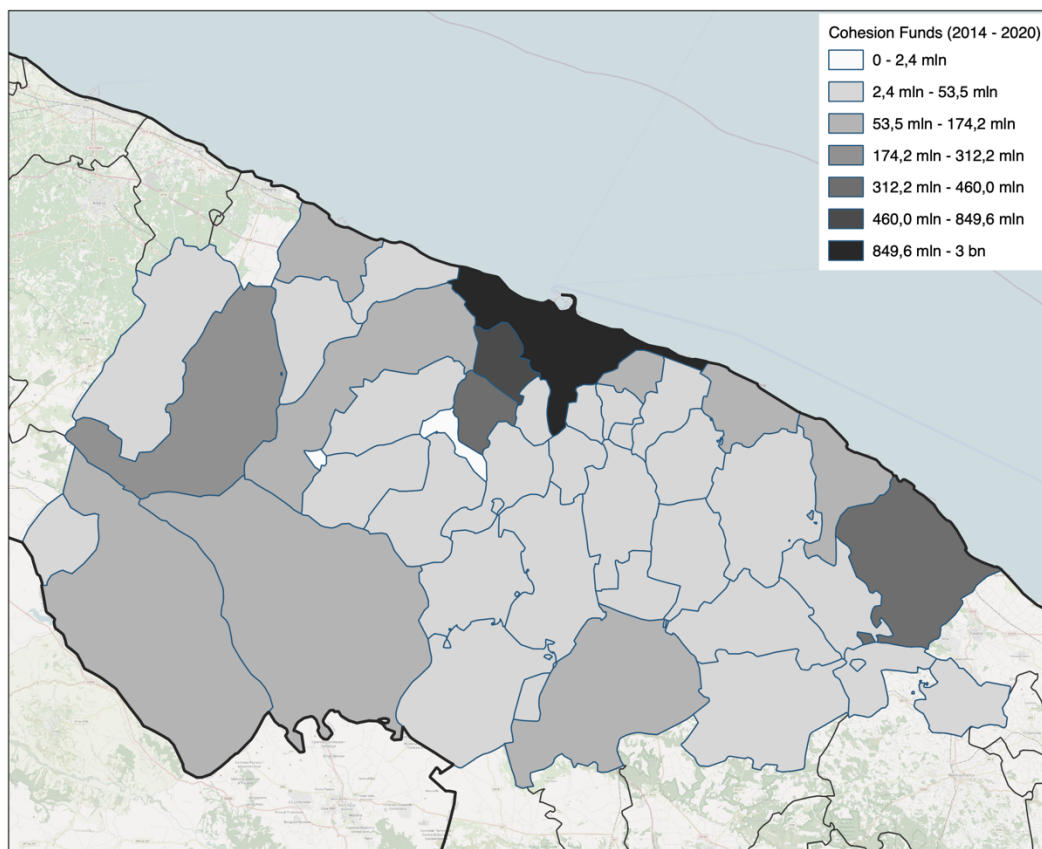
First, it is important to highlight how within the metropolitan city of Bari, during the 2014-2020 programming approximately 5.2 billion euros landed, between funds strictly related to cohesion policy (4.7 billion), and funds attracted complementary to them.

In more detail, as shown in Figure 42, about 70 % of the funds come from the Structural Funds. About 28 %, on the other hand, are related to the Development and Cohesion Fund. Finally, 2.13 % of the funds come from the PAC and Ordinary Resources (mainly linked contributions targeted for inner areas).



**Figure 42 - Source of Funds (2014 - 2020) MCBa. Source: Open Coesione, 2024. Author's elaboration.**

The distribution of funds, shown by Figure 43, shows how there is a clear polarization of funds on the capital municipality, Bari. It is interesting to note that there is not an even distribution in the municipalities of the first belt. In fact, only the Modugno, Bitetto and Triggiano register a greater amount of funds received than the others. What emerges, however, is the polycentricity of the area (which has already emerged in previous chapters) even in the distribution of cohesion policy funds. In fact, it is observed that other municipalities intercept relevant resources even if not close to the municipality of Bari. These are the municipalities of Ruvo, Altamura, Gioia del Colle, Monopoli, Polignano a mare, Mola di Bari and Molfetta. Compared to the first three the others are all coastal municipalities that certainly respect the trend of distribution of funds at the regional level and benefit from the additional funds related to the EMFF. It should be considered that the distribution shown on OpenCoesione data and within this document does not take into account the funds linked to the RDP. Consequently, it seems more rational to have the flattening of the distribution of resources in the internal areas of the metropolitan territory although it should be emphasised that there is a greater difficulty on the part of the municipalities in the internal areas to intercept ESF, ERDF and FSC funds.



**Figure 43 - Cohesion funds 2014-2020 allocated within MCBa. Source: Open Coesione, 2024. Author's elaboration.**

**Table 17 - Most Financed Programs (2014 – 2020) on the MCBa.**

| <b>Source</b>                           | <b>Program</b>  | <b>Funds</b>  |
|---|---|---------------|
| Structural Funds 2014-2020              | <i>POR FESR ESF PUGLIA</i>  | 1.988.665.728 |
| Development and Cohesion Fund 2014-2020 | <i>PSC MINISTERO DELLE INFRASTRUTTURE E DEI TRASPORTI</i>                     | 703.583.083   |
| Structural Funds 2014-2020              | <i>PON FESR INFRASTRUTTURE E RETI</i>   | 504.746.204   |
| Structural Funds 2014-2020              | <i>PON FESR ESF RICERCA E INNOVAZIONE</i>                                     | 439.377.923   |
| Development and Cohesion Fund 2014-2020 | <i>PATTO BARI</i>   | 213.976.503   |
| Development and Cohesion Fund 2014-2020 | <i>PSC REGIONE PUGLIA</i>   | 194.669.677   |
| Structural Funds 2014-2020              | <i>PON FESR ESF CITTA' METROPOLITANE</i>                                      | 178.737.511   |
| Structural Funds 2014-2020              | <i>PON FESR ESF PER LA SCUOLA - COMPETENZE E AMBIENTI PER L'APPRENDIMENTO</i> | 124.547.459   |



|                            |   |             |
|----------------------------|---|-------------|
| Structural Funds 2014-2020 | <i>PROGRAMMA FESR INTERREG ITALIA-CROAZIA</i> | 124.495.112 |
|----------------------------|---|-------------|

Source: Open Coesione, 2024

As anticipated in the introduction to the section, a brief focus will be made on some programs deemed interesting within the metropolitan city under study. For the metropolitan city of Bari, it was decided to highlight the Bari Metropolitan City Development Pact (*Patto per Bari*), the NOP Metro and the *Bando Periferie*, that although is not strictly related to the cohesion policy is a good example of use of funds from supralocal programming.

### ***PACT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE METROPOLITAN CITY OF BARI – PATTO PER BARI***

The Pact for the Development of the Metropolitan City of Bari (so called *Patto per Bari*), signed with the Presidency of the Council of Ministers on May 17, 2016, is closely intertwined with the entire strategic planning process initiated by the Authority on the basis of the regulatory framework defined by the Delrio Law, which assigns to the Metropolitan Cities, among the fundamental functions, also the ‘*care of the strategic development of the metropolitan territory*’, but also on the basis of the Statute and the Governance Model of the strategic planning process of the Metropolitan City of Bari, approved by resolution of the Metropolitan Council No. 1/2016. The Pact for Bari, therefore, marks the start of the planning and implementation phase of a series of interventions whose implementation is entrusted to the Metropolitan City with the primary objective of introducing more integrated urban and territorial policy interventions and a more efficient form of territorial governance, through a process of co-planning and co-planning with the peripheral Administrations. The Metropolitan City of Bari has a total budget of 230 million from the Development and Cohesion Funds (*Fondo per lo Sviluppo e la Coesione – FSC*)<sup>37</sup> of the 2014-2020 programming (Table 18).

Table 18 - Distribution FSC 2014 - 2020 budget

| Thematic Area            | FSC 2014 – 2020 <i>Patto per Bari</i> |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <i>Patto Bari</i>        | 230.000.000                           |
| <b>1. Infrastructure</b> | 91.800.000                            |

<sup>37</sup> Italy’s Development and Cohesion Fund (Fondo per lo Sviluppo e la Coesione – FSC) is, together with the EU Structural Funds, the main financial instrument through which social, economic, and territorial cohesion policies and ad-hoc actions aimed at removing socio-economic imbalances are implemented pursuant to Article 119(5) of the Italian Constitution and Article 174 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU).

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| <b>2. Environment and Territory</b>                      | 21.000.000 |
| <b>3. Economic and Productive Development</b>            | 27.000.000 |
| <b>4. Tourism and Culture</b>                            | 71.100.000 |
| <b>5. Social redevelopment and metropolitan services</b> | 14.000.000 |
| <b>6. Reinforcement PA</b>                               | 5.100.000  |

Source: Regione Puglia, 2016

Interventions are developed in the following thematic areas:

1) *Infrastructure*: strategic axis encompassing interventions aimed at improving urban and extra-urban mobility by strengthening TPL and connections between the main logistics and production hubs in the metropolitan area: Bari Commercial Port, Airport, Interporto and ASI area.

2) *Environment and Territory*: strategic axis encompassing interventions for the redevelopment and regeneration of the metropolitan waterfront, coastal consolidation, and coastal erosion mitigation.

3) *Economic and productive development*: strategic axis whose interventions are composed of actions aimed at promoting economic and productive development, business system growth and employment, for the needs of the local production system.

4) *Tourism and culture*: strategic axis aimed at improving accessibility to areas with a high vocation for tourism; establishing an integrated system for the enjoyment of cultural heritage; and promoting integrated and sustainable tourism development, including through the creation of cycle paths and the recovery of areas of naturalistic interest.

5) *Social redevelopment and metropolitan services*: a strategic axis whose objective is to improve administrative capacity through the construction of the new Justice pole at the disused Capozzi and Milano barracks in Bari and other public buildings, functional to ensure security and legality in the territories; to implement services to support social housing, social innovation, and active inclusion.

In relation to the implementation of various interventions, these can be grouped into 4 different types. That is, interventions implemented by the municipality of Bari under the resources of the Pact (7 projects), interventions implemented by the metropolitan city of Bari under the resources of the Pact (11 projects), interventions implemented by the consortium ASI and Invitalia (2 projects), interventions under

the ownership and direction of the metropolitan city of Bari whose implementation has been delegated to the municipalities of the metropolitan area (23 projects).

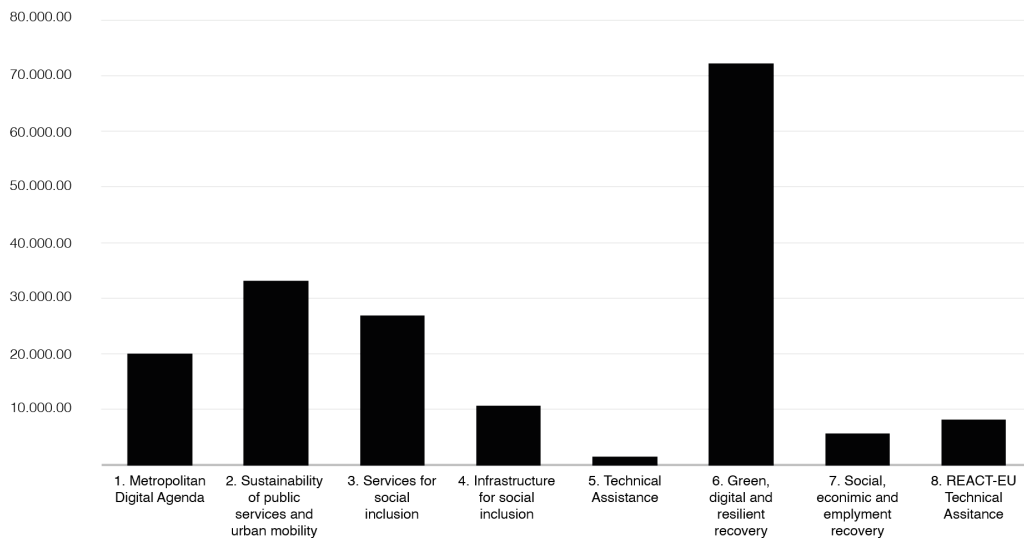
With the 233 million euro of the FSC (doubled to 412 million thanks to public and private co-financing), 102 projects have been set up and, in some cases, already completed: 300 km of cycle paths, 24 ZTLs activated/powered in historic city centres, 10 thousand LED lighting points, 28 Porta Futuro desks in 14 territorial areas, 32 cultural and landscape assets upgraded, 6 waterfronts, 3 major projects (Camionale, Accademia di Belle Arti and Cava dei Dinosauri).

### ***NOPMETRO***

The NOP METRO 2014-2020 has undergone numerous changes during the implementation period, so much so that a version 9 of the Operational Plan was approved, and a further reprogramming was carried out on 29 December 2023, in order to safeguard the utilisation of the program's financial endowment. The most relevant innovation is attributable to the pandemic strategy and to the introduction of the REACT-EU fund among the endowments, which led to a broadening of the scope of intervention and, at the same time, of the projects included in the plan and of the financial allocations.

The Axes of the NOP Metro have increased from 5 to 8, the projects from 37 to 73, and the resources from about 90 million to almost 160 million. To these are added the projects included in the Complementary Operational Program, COP Metro, which amounts to 34.5 million euro for ambits I and III and 8.1 million euro for ambit IV. Interventions for mobility are a priority in the initial version of the NOP Metro, with Axis 2 concentrating more than one third of the resources (30.4 million), followed by services for social inclusion with 28.5% of the total resources. The theme of the response to the pandemic shock enters with version 4 of the Operational Plan, centralising 40% of the resources, with Axis 6 'Green, digital and resilient recovery' amounting to 63.3 million euro. A response that also more broadly involves the 'digital' theme, which in Axis 1 sees an increase in allocation of more than 5 million (+37%) (Figure 44).

**FUNDS ALLOCATED BY AXES - PON METRO - METROPOLITAN CITY OF BARI**



**Figure 44 -NOP METRO Budget, including REACT-EU axes. Source: Author’s elaboration on Regione Puglia, 2024.**

Within the 73 projects covered by the NOP Metro, some appear to be of specific importance due to their scope and expected effects. These include projects such as E-Gov 2, which, with a budget of 6.5 million, concentrates almost 1/3 of Axis 1 and defines the Administration’s action in the area of IT services, focused on the E-Gov platform.

Among the most important projects are those for the renewal of the TPL fleet for a total of 16.8 million, in relation to mobility, accounting for 7.6 per cent of Axis 2 resources. The latter theme also includes more than 6 million for the construction of cycle routes. The set of projects intended for community spaces, in the theme of inclusion, also stands out, which with 4.1 million accounts for almost half of the resources programmed on Axis 4. There is no shortage of characterising projects on the subject of waste (Technologies for the waste cycle and circular economy), ‘green’ regeneration (Experimental action for greening and urban forestation), energy saving (Smart Lightning) inclusion (*Casa delle culture, Case di comunità*), as well as actions favouring employment and social entrepreneurship (*Porta Futuro Bari*).

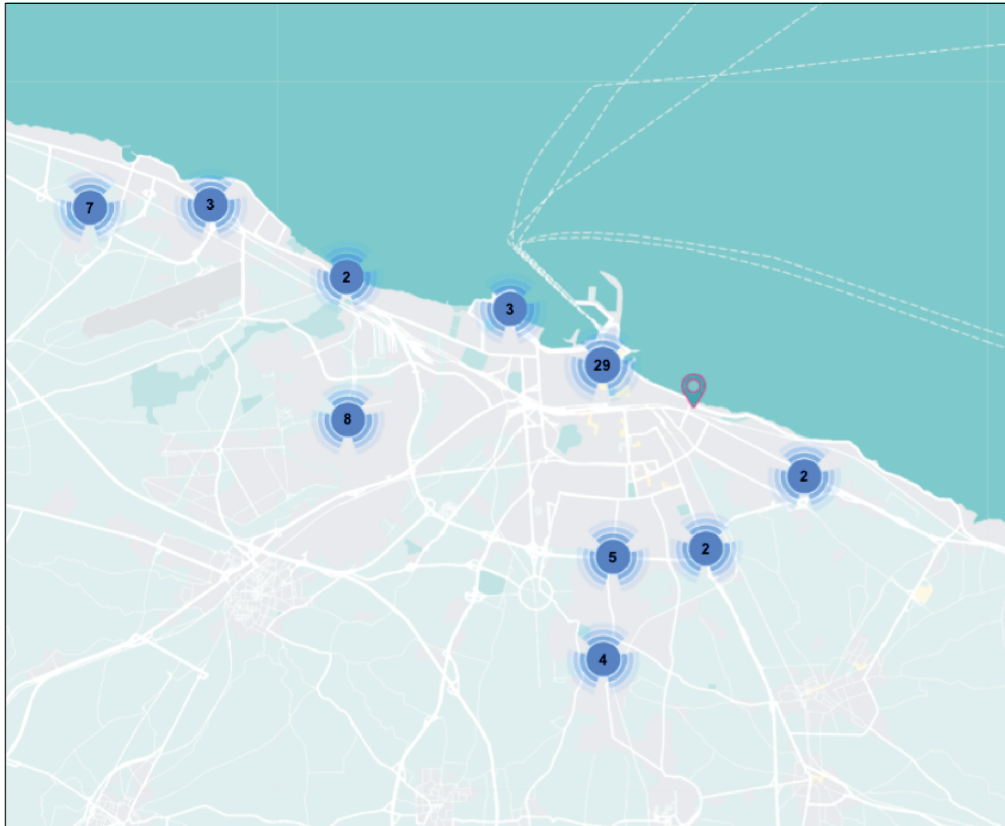


Figure 45 -NOP Metro projects in the MCBa. Source: Regione Puglia, 2024.

The 2014-2020 NOP METRO of the City of Bari is characterised as a substantial step in local planning for the number of resources made available, but even more so for the very characteristics of the Programme. This consideration is grounded, first of all, in the fact that as an ITI, the NOP METRO has allowed the realisation of multi-dimensional and cross-sectoral interventions, thanks to the possibility offered by the Programme to bring together the resources of several priority axes of one or more operational programs, allowing the combination of funding related to different thematic objectives, supported in the specific case by the ERDF, the ESF and, later, the REACT-EU. A further qualifying element was the provision of an integrated management and implementation regime. Attributing to the Authority the role of Urban Authority, with functions of Intermediate Body of the Programme, had decisive capacity-building effects. This is because the organisation's internal process has been strengthened, both on the planning and management front, mainly using already existing capacities.

This has resulted in a programming season that is more prolific and capable of producing qualified planning, so much to be able to promptly intercept the availability that arrived first with REACT-EU and then NGEU, as well as with the new 2021-2027 programming cycle.

### ***Bando Periferie***

The initiative carried out by MCBa in the framework of the *Bando Periferie* is called *Periferie aperte*. It is developed through 37 strategic public space redevelopment interventions in 36 municipalities. The overall project includes the redevelopment of 11 squares, the creation of 17 multipurpose urban parks, the strengthening of urban greening in 18 municipalities, 11 new equipped sports areas, the implementation of new surveillance and security management devices in 17 municipalities, and the redevelopment of 9 pedestrian cycle mobility vectors, for a total of 2 million square meters of redeveloped and reconverted area. Drawing a common thread of this intervention will be a systemic action on public art that includes the creation of a widespread and peripheral museum of contemporary art through the creation of 41 site-specific artworks designed by young artist collectives and urban designers (installations, sculptures, writing, street art, lighting...).

The project has a total value of more than 100 million euros, of which 40 million are financed by the Call for Proposals and more than 60 million by public and private co-financing, within a framework of an additional 315 million euros of complementary and coherent investments, falling on the areas targeted and involving the redevelopment of public residential housing stock, the reconversion of abandoned housing complexes and the strengthening of mobility infrastructure. The guiding theme is the qualification and/or reconversion of public open space as a support structure for the socioeconomic and relational dimension of citizenships.

### **6.5.3 The National Recovery and Resilience Plan and the MCBa**

Within this section, as in previous sections, we will not go on to describe the Plan as much as highlight the relationship between the PNRR and the MCBa. Specifically, after framing from a governance and quantitative point of view the resources allocated to the MCBa will be focused on, the National Plan for Housing Quality, followed by the Integrated Urban Plans, and then two short focuses on the theme of Schools and PNRR and the theme of urban forestation.

These two thematic focuses were chosen because both PINQUA and PUIs testify to how the metropolitan city of Bari has had the opportunity to step into the spotlight by managing supra-local, in this case extraordinary, programming funds.

The PNRR sees the metropolitan city as the implementer or proposer in several projects financed and aimed at improving the quality of life, promoting environmental sustainability and enhancing school infrastructures. (Table 19).

**Table 19 - PNRR fund allocated to MCBa.**

| <b>Investment</b>  | <b>MCBa Projects</b>   | <b>Funds</b> |
|--|--|--------------|
| <b>M5C2I2.3 ‘Innovative Housing Quality Program’</b>                           | <i>Abitare I Borghi</i><br><i>Nuova Ecologia dell’abitare</i><br><i>GenerAzioni urbane</i>             | 45.000.000   |
| <b>M2C4I3.1 ‘Protection and enhancement of urban and suburban green areas’</b> | <i>Dalla Murgia all’Adriatico: Green Belt</i><br><i>Nastri Verdi</i><br><i>Rigenerazione dei suolo</i> | 6.388.630    |
| <b>M2C3I1.1 ‘Construction of new schools through replacement of buildings’</b> | Construction of new schools through replacement of buildings (1 intervention of 12.7 million)          | 68.400.000   |
| <b>M4C1I1.3 ‘School Sports Infrastructure Plan</b>                             | School Sports Infrastructure Plan (4 interventions totalling 7.9 million)                              |              |
| <b>M4C1I3.3 ‘School Building Safety and Redevelopment Plan’</b>                | School Building Safety and Redevelopment Plan (10 interventions totalling 47.8 million)                |              |
| <b>M5C2I2.2 Integrated Urban Plans</b>   | <i>Identità è comunità</i><br><i>Verde Metropolitano</i>   | 183.400.000  |

Source: MCBa, 2024a. Author’s elaboration.

Within the framework of M5C2I2.3 is the Innovative Housing Quality Program, which in the MCBa is developed through the projects ‘*Abitare I Borghi*’, focused on the enhancement of small towns, ‘*Nuova Ecologia dell’Abitare*’, which integrates principles of environmental sustainability in housing practices, and ‘*GenerAzioni Urban*’, dedicated to urban regeneration with an intergenerational approach. The fund allocated to these projects is 45 million.

In M2C4I3.1 - protection and enhancement of urban and suburban green areas - the investment is earmarked for the promotion of green areas through the ‘*Dalla Murgia all’Adriatico*’ project. This includes the creation of a green belt linking urban and rural areas, green connection projects between different urban areas to improve biodiversity and air quality, and initiatives aimed at soil regeneration and

the prevention of environmental degradation. The total funding for these measures is approximately 6.39 million.

A major investment plan is dedicated to school infrastructure. This is divided into three main areas (M2C3I1.1, M4C1I1.3, M4C1I3. 3): the construction of new schools through the replacement of obsolete buildings with a 12.7 million intervention, the School Sports Infrastructure Plan, which includes 4 interventions for a total of 7.9 million to improve sports facilities, and the School Building Safety and Redevelopment Plan, with 10 interventions for a total of 47.8 million euro for the safety and redevelopment of school buildings. The total amount of funds allocated to these initiatives is 68.4 million euro.

Finally, the Integrated Urban Plans - M5C2I2.2 - aim to create more liveable and sustainable cities through the *Identità è comunità* projects, which aim to strengthen local identity and the sense of community in urban areas, and *Verde Metropolitano*, an initiative for the expansion and enhancement of green areas in metropolitan areas. For these plans, too, the allocated fund is 183.4 million.

The overall investment plan, with a total of more than 300 million, represents a strong commitment to urban and rural regeneration, environmental sustainability and the improvement of school infrastructure, contributing significantly to the development and quality of life of the communities involved.

### ***PINQuA - Programma Nazionale Innovativo per la Qualità dell'abitare***

Building on the experience of the *Bando Periferie*, the MCBa has been able to best structure the new opportunity presented by the PINQuA. Specifically, at the regional level, more than 394 million has already been allocated in Apulia in relation to PINQuA, distributed in 20 integrated proposals for the regeneration of the socioeconomic fabric of urban centers and suburbs. There are 47 municipalities involved. In relation to the metropolitan city as will be detailed below, there are 3 proposals involving as many as 39 municipalities. The Region with the largest number of funded projects is Apulia, which in addition to 16 projects of municipal entities (including one pilot) also presents three ordinary projects of the MCBa and two of the Region, for a total of 21 projects.

The MCBa, always attentive to the model of governance related to co-planning, initiated the activities related to PINQuA through an open-call, whereby all municipal governments were invited to submit their project proposals, in adherence with three Macro-themes proposed by the Authority, as they pertain to the aims of



the call, namely, 1) Redevelopment of historic villages; 2) Environmental recovery of urban margins; 3) Welfare and suburbs.

The submitted projects were then reviewed by the special Working Group, established by a Mayor's Decree, in order to assess their eligibility and consistency with the aforementioned macro themes. During sessions of meetings, with each individual municipality, the appropriate in-depth studies were carried out and, subsequently, the municipalities proceeded to adopt the necessary internal acts to support the candidacy and the Metropolitan City conferred uniqueness to the proposal.

There were 3 approved projects totalling 45 million euros with the involvement of 39 municipalities in the metropolitan city of Bari (Figure 46).

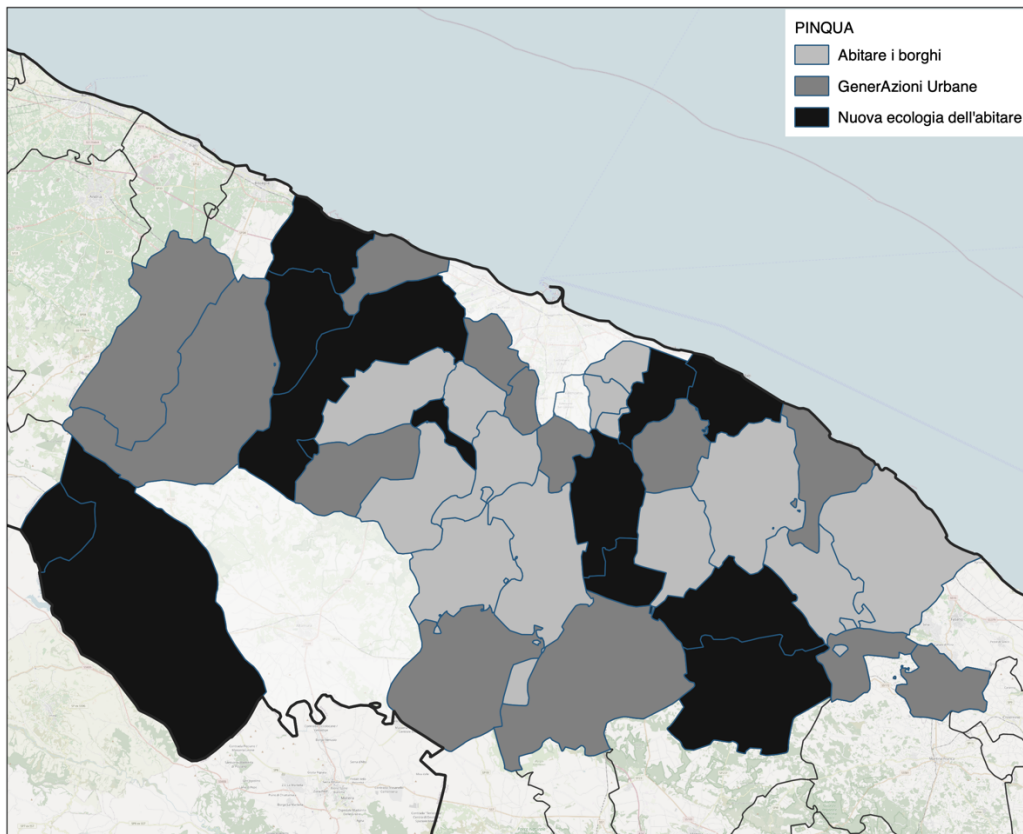


Figure 46 - PINQUA projects within MCBa. Source: Author's elaboration.

The first project, linked to the macro-theme Redevelopment of Historic Villages, called *Abitare i borghi*, aims at the functional recovery and enhancement of old villages located in degraded areas in the municipalities of Acquaviva delle Fonti, Bitetto, Capurso, Cassano delle Murge, Castellana Grotte, Cellamare,

Conversano, Grumo Appula, Monopoli, Palo del Colle, Sannicandro di Bari, Triggiano and Turi. The total funding of €14.983.142. The Metropolitan City intended to integrate the interventions planned in the individual municipal territories (13 municipalities of the Metropolitan area) with the preparation of a special network project, in the amount of €1.500.000 that would give uniformity to the entire proposal and ensure that the process of urban regeneration is not limited to being a sum of separate interventions in different areas but becomes a single expression of the common will to intervene on the entire metropolitan area to reduce housing and social discomfort through the enhancement and modernization of the housing contexts chosen. There are a total of 14 interventions (13 individual plus 1 MCBa network).

The second project, related to the macro-theme Environmental Recovery of Urban Margins, is called *GenerAzioni Urbane*. The total funding is 14.939.922. The intervention areas are located at the urban margins of settlements in contact with the peri-urban agricultural and natural space, geographically distant from the consolidated city, in conditions of isolation and degradation. The proposal of the Metropolitan City of Bari intends to carry out redevelopment processes, integrating the rehabilitation of the built environment including energy, reorganization of urban planning, increasing levels of accessibility to city services, promotion of employment and actions to combat social exclusion. The municipalities involved are Adelfia, Alberobello, Bitritto, Corato, Gioia del Colle, Giovinazzo, Locorotondo, Modugno, Polignano a Mare, Rutigliano, Ruvo di Puglia, Santeramo in Colle, and Toritto. Alongside the material interventions, related to the physical redevelopment of spaces and the built-up component, and the increase of proximity services, the unified proposal of the Metropolitan City is grafted, applicable to all areas of intervention and declined on the specificities of the same, which provides supplies and services in the areas of intervention for a total amount over the fourteen areas (14 municipalities) of € 1.977.000. There are 15 total interventions (14 individual ones plus 1 network of the MCBa).

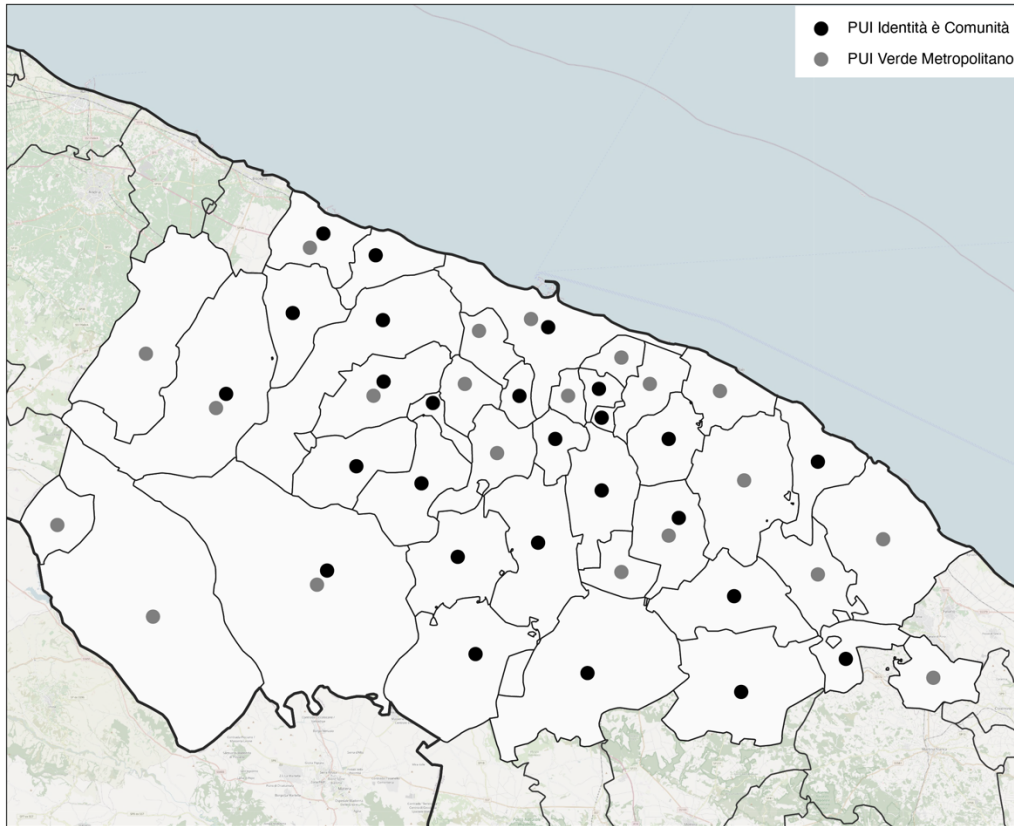
Lastly, the third project, *Nuova ecologia dell'abitare*, with macro-theme Welfare and Suburbs, responds to specific sustainable development needs with direct interventions to care for and rebalance the territories of the municipalities of Binetto, Bitonto, Casamassima, Gravina in Puglia, Mola di Bari, Molfetta, Noci, Noicattaro, Poggiorsini, Putignano, Sammichele di Bari, and Terlizzi. The intervention areas are located on the urban fringes of settlements in contact with agricultural and natural peri-urban space, thus geographically distant from the consolidated city, in conditions of isolation and degradation.

The total funding for this project will be €14.993.947. Also in this case, in order to overcome the potential criticalities arising from the territorial dislocation of the interventions, the involvement of a multiplicity of institutional actors involved, and the organizational differences of the same, the Metropolitan City intended to integrate the interventions planned in the individual municipal territories with the preparation of a special network project, in the amount of € 180.000, which will give uniformity to the entire proposal. The project consists of the implementation of a plan for the management, maintenance, and knowledge of the upgraded green spaces through the construction of an open, plural and participatory model that holds together the material and immaterial components of the transformations. There are 13 total interventions (12 individual ones plus 1 of MCBa's network).

### ***PUI - Piani Urbani Integrati***

Integrated Urban Plans are PNRR investments that aim to improve the suburbs of Metropolitan City areas through new services for citizens, upgrading and regeneration interventions, thus transforming the most vulnerable territories into smart cities and sustainable realities.

The metropolitan city of Bari has been allocated 183.4 million euros for the implementation of PUIs in line with Mission 5 Component 2 of the PNRR. There are two PUIs submitted by the metropolitan city of Bari containing a total of 48 projects (Figure 47).



**Figure 47 - PUIs projects within MCBA. Source: Author's elaboration.**

It should be emphasised that the project selection phase followed the same model used for the call for suburbs and PINQuA, i.e. publication of the Open-call, illustrative of the contents of the Notice and the criteria required for the submission of project proposals, and upon the preliminary examination of the project proposals submitted by the municipalities by the special working group, specially established by a Mayoral Decree, the session of co-planning and co-planning meetings was initiated.

The Governance Model of the strategic planning process of the territory of the Metropolitan City of Bari, in the furrow traced by the Statute of the Entity, identifies two fundamental guidelines along which to orient the entire strategic process aimed at the development of the vast area: the polycentric characterization of the Area within which there are individual specificities to be enhanced and networked to strengthen the competitiveness and attractiveness of the territory; the shared desire with the Mayors of the Municipalities to identify in this Administration the subject to which to entrust the task of building and strengthening the network over time.

The Authority's focus on civil society is evidenced by the approval of the special Regulation on Individual and Collective Participation, aimed at regulating Administration/citizen interactions, with a view to fostering to the greatest extent possible the sharing of decisions made for the growth of the Land of Bari.

The first PUI, titled '*Identità è Comunità - Accessibilità e rivitalizzazione economica e culturale dei luoghi storici e identitari delle Comunità*', is aimed at preserving and improving the historical-cultural identity places of metropolitan municipalities, together with the contexts in which they are inserted, starting with the qualification of public spaces and the redevelopment of situations of degradation and/or disuse, in order to enhance them as places of aggregation, where communities can once again meet, recognize and strengthen themselves (MCBa, 2022a). It is intended to work for the preservation, recovery and enhancement of the extraordinary cultural heritage of the Metropolitan City of Bari, implementing at the same time an intervention for the regeneration of the social and economic fabric, through the construction/rehabilitation of spaces with a view to the social and energy sustainability of the interventions. The PUI has 27 interventions with a total funding of €113.309.555 (with about €890.000 in co-financing<sup>38</sup>). The implementing entities are 26 municipalities<sup>39</sup>, with MCBa also acting as an implementing entity in one intervention. The goal is to transform these places into gathering points where communities can come together, recognize each other and strengthen their ties. It is expected to reuse and maintain in an eco-sustainable way 277.337 sqm of public space, create 26 new community hubs through the recovery and re-functionalization of existing public buildings, and redevelop 30 urban spaces for relationships and meetings (multi-functional centres, for culture, sports, play, entertainment and training...) while reducing the use of new land, aiming at reducing social and housing discomfort. The proposal, built within a framework of coherence with the planning tools of the Metropolitan City and regional policies, identified a network of municipalities through a path of knowledge and needs sharing to reach the collegial definition of project scenarios, intending to identify in each area of intervention a community hub connected to quality relationship spaces.

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<sup>38</sup> Co-financing with own resources: Altamura € 100.000, Bitonto € 500.000, Santeramo in Colle € 50.145, Rutigliano € 40.000, Capurso €200.000.

<sup>39</sup> Bari, Altamura, Molfetta, Bitonto, Gioia del Colle, Ruvo di Puglia, Santeramo in Colle, Palo del Colle, Acquaviva delle Fonti, Giovinazzo, Polignano a mare, Cassano delle Murge, Turi, Cellamare, Terlizzi, Putignano, Casamassima, Noci, Rutigliano, Adelfia, Capurso, Grumo Appula, Bitritto, Alberobello, Toritto, Binetto.

The second PUI, called *Verde Metropolitano* prioritizes the implementation of a metropolitan greening program in urban and peri-urban areas characterised by physical and social degradation to build opportunities for urban and landscape redevelopment through the levers represented by the environmental invariants of metropolitan open space (MCBa, 2022b)

. The reuse and maintenance in an eco-sustainable key of 846.488sqm of public space are planned, of which about 230.000 to natural areas, 320.000 marginal areas and 340.870 of redeveloped spaces to be used for equipped services (sport, play, leisure...), while reducing the use of new land, aiming at the reduction of social and housing discomfort. The sustainability of the interventions, the introduction of functional mix, and the use of spatial management modes of services through the involvement of active citizenship and third-sector associations operating in the territories affected by the interventions aim to strengthen community ties and increase community responsibility towards the city as a common good to be preserved for new generations.

The PUI has 21 interventions endowed with a total funding of €70.163.664 (with approximately €616.000 in co-financing<sup>40</sup>). The implementing entities are 21<sup>41</sup>, and among them is also the city of Bari (absent instead in the *Identità è comunità* PUI).

In a short-term scenario, the proposal contemplates the reorganization and improvement of the attractiveness of the urban and peri-urban territory, the renewal of agriculture, the development of short circuits, listening to the demand for nature in the city (environment, landscape, entertainment and recreation), strengthening rural identity and heritage, and supporting peri-urban forestation. In a broader time horizon, it aspires to build a collective project of landscape environmental agriculture, through the construction of circuits of naturalness for cities and metropolitan belts, the promotion of inter-territoriality and inter-communality, contributing to the development of new landscape models for sustainable living in the Metropolitan City of Bari. The proposal was built through a process of co-design, in a framework of coherence with the planning tools of the Metropolitan City and regional policies (PPTR of the Apulia Region, PSM of the Metropolitan City of Bari), considered as a strength of the same proposal, to ensure a high level

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<sup>40</sup> Cofounding: Modugno € 56.000, Conversano € 480.000, Castellana Grotte €80.000.

<sup>41</sup> Bari, Altamura, Molfetta, Monopoli, Corato, Gravina in Puglia, Modugno, Triggiano, Valenzano, Noicattaro, Conversano, Mola di Bari, Ruvo di Puglia, Palo del Colle, Castellana Grotte, Turi, Sannicandro di Bari, Sammichele di Bari, Locorotondo, Bitetto, Poggiorsini.

of territorial connection. To these interventions are added the interventions of the PINQuA, with reference to the proposal *Nuova ecologia dell'abitare*.

### ***Urban and peri-urban reforestation interventions.***

A further intervention in relation to the implementation of the PNRR by the MCBa is the one related to Measure 2 - Component 4 - Investment 3.1 'Protection and Enhancement of Urban and Suburban Green'. In particular, the Metropolitan City of Bari applied a unified proposal for forestation in urban and peri-urban areas, through reforestation interventions that counter problems related to air pollution, climate change impacts and biodiversity loss, consistent with the aims of the ministerial public notice.

The project submitted by the Metropolitan City of Bari is named '*Dalla Murgia all'Adriatico*' and foresees a series of reforestation interventions on a total of 91.19 hectares through the conversion of low-productive agricultural soils or severely degraded areas for a total of about 91.493 plants to be planted either trees or shrubs depending on the context. The project is a three-year project with a total funding of 21 million euros. These reforestation interventions will also ensure the increase of stability of the territories thanks to the anti-erosive and regulating action of rainwater, already recognised in forests. These are 12 urban forestation interventions in eleven municipalities in the territory (Altamura, Bari, Bitetto, Conversano, Gioia del Colle, Gravina in Puglia, Modugno, Mola di Bari, Noci, Putignano and Sannicandro di Bari) and in the ASI Consortium area that will be financed with about 6 million 300 thousand euros. The interventions that the Administration proposes to carry out through this funding channel are divided into three areas. These are *Green Belt*, *Nastri verdi* and *Rigenerazione dei suoli*.

### ***PNRR and Schools***

Finally, given the significance of the resources used, it is also intended to outline the implementation action of the metropolitan city of Bari concerning the theme of Schools. Thanks to the PNRR, the metropolitan city of Bari has managed to put into action an intervention of over 68 million euros for social, economic and cultural development of the metropolitan territory. The interventions will concern 15 school buildings and will be differentiated into three different types of investments (MCBa, 2024a):

- Investment M2C3I1.1 Construction of new schools through replacement of buildings (1 intervention of 12.7 million)

- Investment M4C1I1.3 School Sports Infrastructure Plan (4 interventions totalling 7.9 million)
- Investment M4C1I3.3 School building safety and upgrading plan (10 interventions totaling 47.8 million)



# **7. Case study 2 – The Metropolitan City of Bologna**

## **7.1 Introduction**

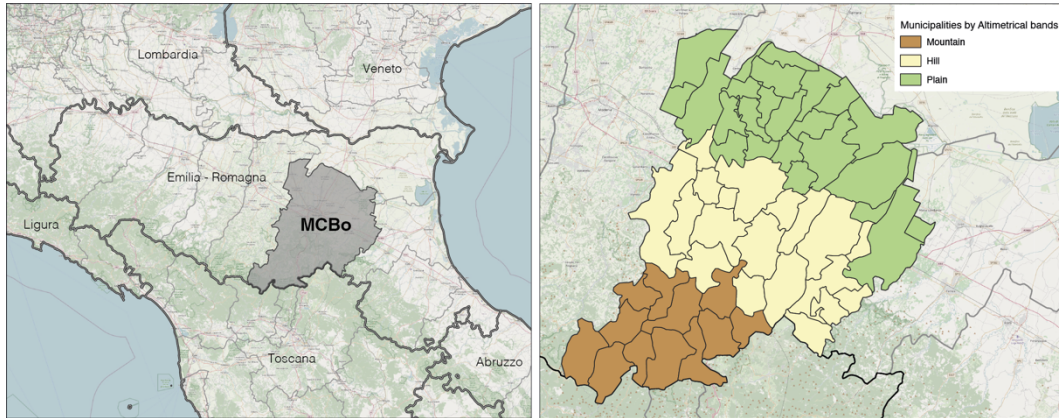
Within this chapter, the first case study, the metropolitan city of Bologna, will be described. Specifically, the chapter is made up of four different sections. The first part is purely descriptive and relates to the territorial framework of the metropolitan city. Within this first part, in fact, all the territorial characteristics (physical and not) of the metropolitan city of Bologna will be presented. The second part will focus on the institutional governance system of the metropolitan institution. This section will provide information about the metropolitan governance system of Bologna. It will cover how the system was constructed, how the metropolitan level fits within regional legislation, and the specifics of the metropolitan statute. Additionally, the current metropolitan governance scheme and the different forms of inter-municipal cooperation will be highlighted. In this chapter, the third section provides a detailed explanation of the metropolitan planning instruments. Specifically, it describes all the planning instruments that are currently in force at the metropolitan level, their construction process, and their role in relation to supra- and subordinate planning instruments. The final section of the case study focuses on the role of MCBo in the European cohesion policy. It will describe the different European funds that fall in the metropolitan area of Bologna. Then the focus of this last part will be the relation of the MCBo with the PNRR and its implementation through PINQuA and PUI.

## **7.2 Territorial Analysis of the Bologna Metropolitan Area**

### **7.2.1 The physical and urban dimension**

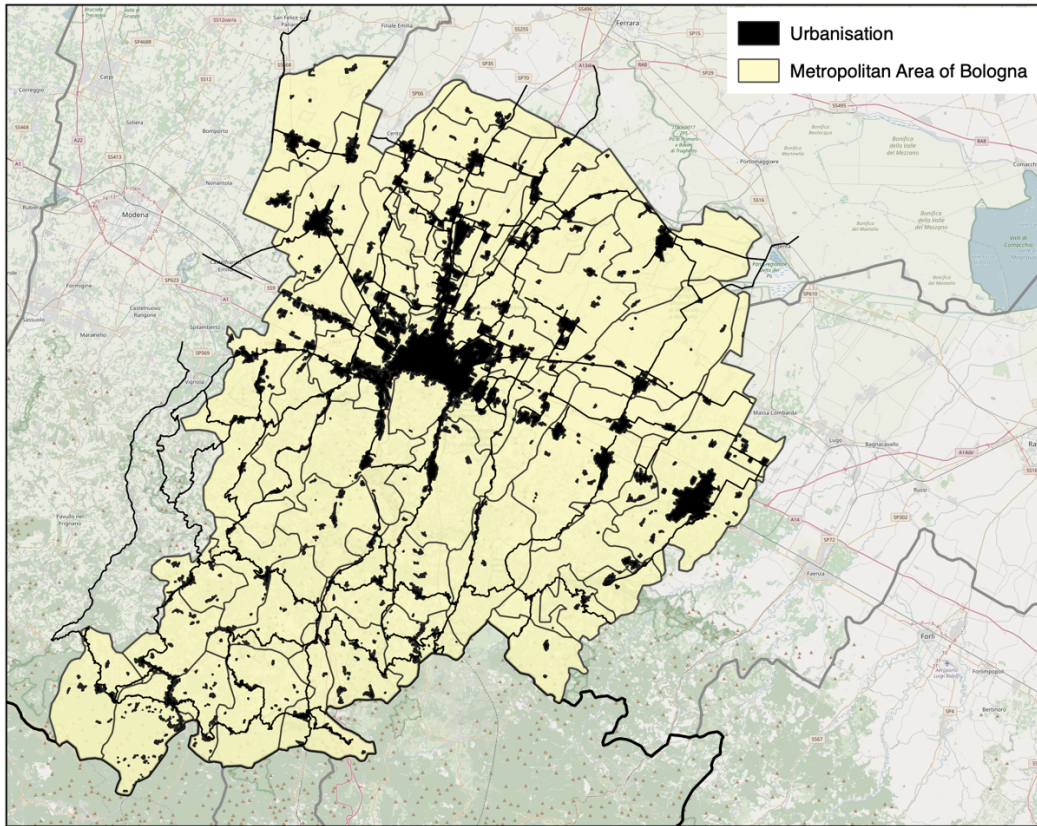
The metropolitan area of Bologna is composed of 55 municipalities, has an area of 3.702 square kilometres and is populated by 993.481 inhabitants; 384.202 people (about 39 percent of the metropolitan population) reside in the municipality of Bologna. The metropolitan territory extends mainly in plains and hills. Mountain occupies 21.3 percent of the province, against a regional average of 25%, and are divided between the Apennines of Bologna and the Apennines of Imola. It is

bordered to the northeast by the province of Ferrara, to the east by the province of Ravenna, to the south by Tuscany (metropolitan city of Florence, provinces of Prato and Pistoia), and to the west by the province of Modena (Figure 48).



**Figure 48 - MCB0 and Municipalities by Altitude. Source: Author's elaboration.**

Looking at the representation in Figure 48, a higher population density clearly emerges in the central hilly and lowland areas, while in the mountainous regions the presence of built structures is less evident. Besides the capital, the most densely populated municipalities are Imola, Casalecchio di Reno and San Lazzaro di Savena, all exceeding 30.000 inhabitants. The configuration of the settlement core and its extensions, distinctive in the visualization of population density, is also largely reproduced in the perspective outlining the pre-existing residential and industrial areas. This representation fits even better with the idea of a settlement concentration that, starting from the municipality of Bologna, extends without a break with Casalecchio di Reno, Zola Predosa and San Lazzaro di Savena, branching off successively to the east and west along the Via Emilia. Along this continuum, industrial and commercial areas also develop in the plains, where the population is more densely distributed, while in the mountainous areas, as is often the case, settlements are more sparse, usually small in size and well-spaced apart (Figure 49).



**Figure 49 - Urbanisation in the Metropolitan Area of Bologna. Source: Author's elaboration on MCBo, 2021a.**

## 7.2.2 Territorial structure and Demography of the Bologna Metropolitan Area

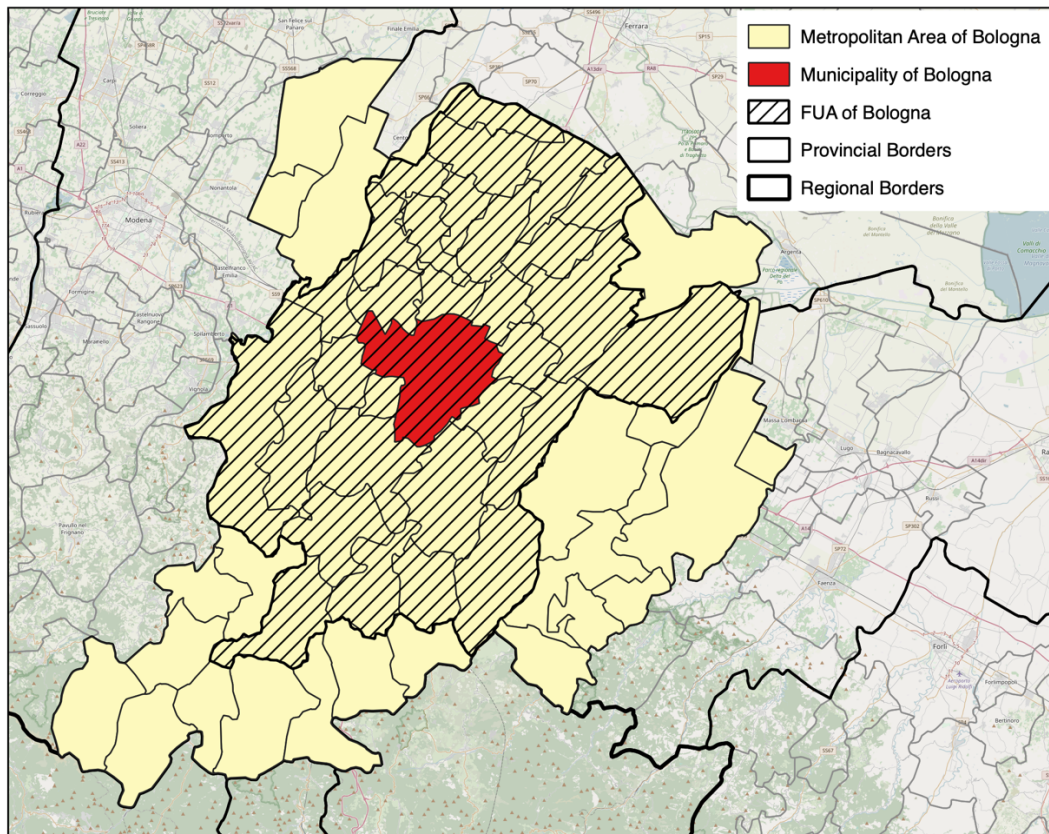


Figure 50 - The Metropolitan Area of Bologna. Source: Author's elaboration.

As previously mentioned, the Metropolitan City of Bologna is composed of 55 municipalities (Figure 50, 51). Classifying the municipalities demographically by resident population shows that 47% of the municipalities in the metropolitan city of Bologna have between 5.000 and 15.000 inhabitants. It follows that predominantly the municipalities in the metropolitan city of Bologna are medium to small. All this is supported by the fact that if we consider there is a 27% of municipalities below 5.000 inhabitants.



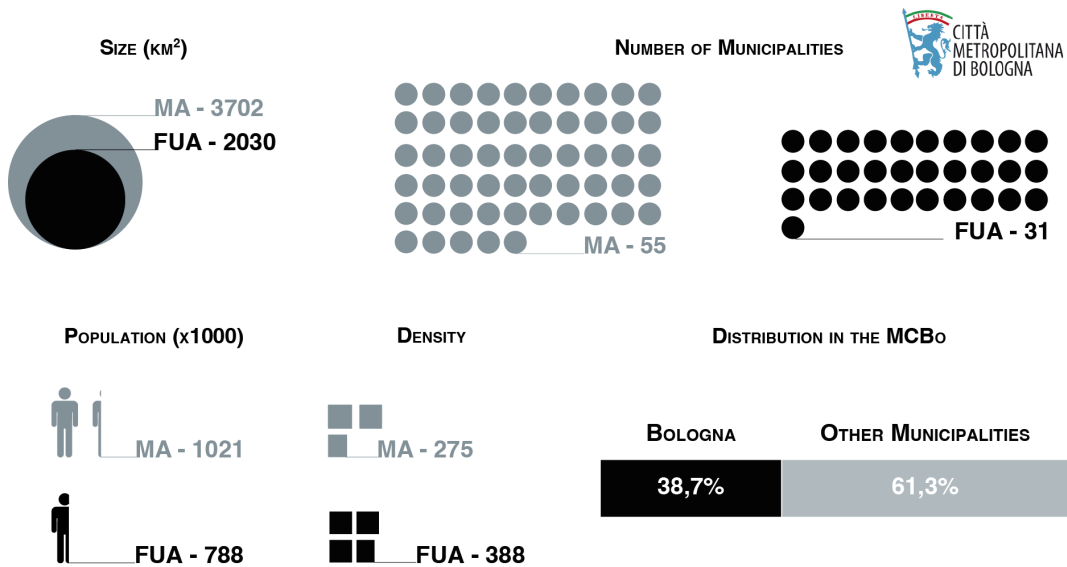
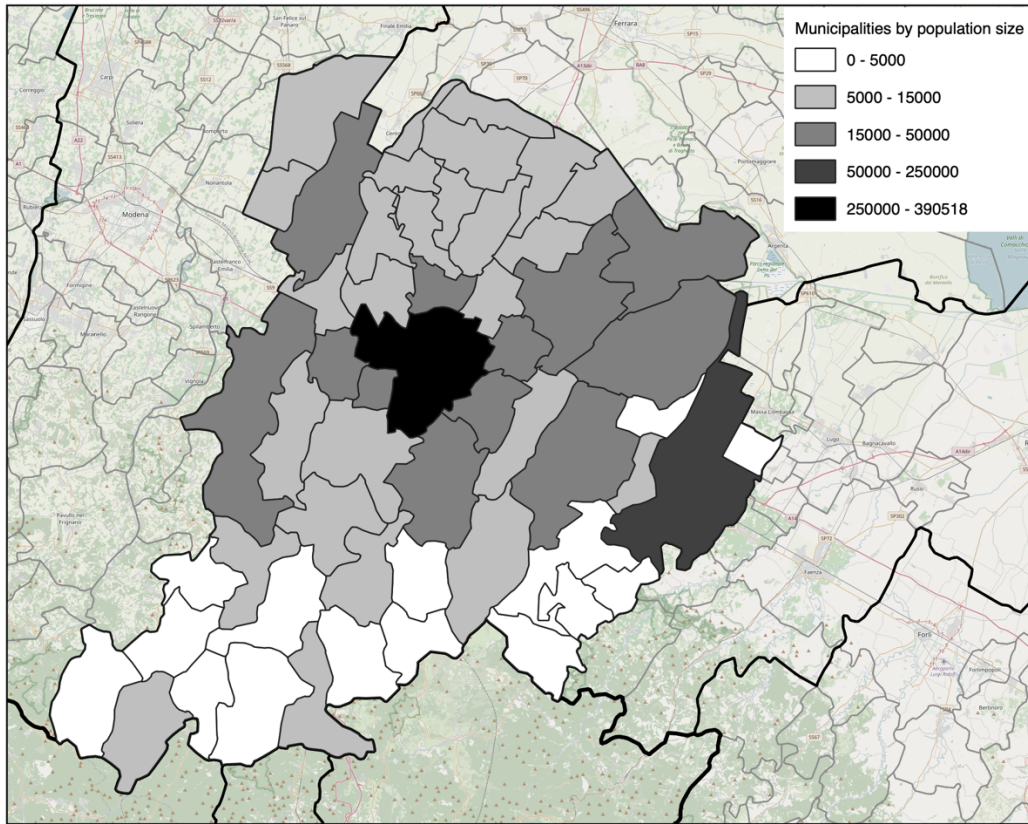


Figure 51 - Brief characteristics of the MCBo. Source: ISTAT, 2022. Author's elaboration.

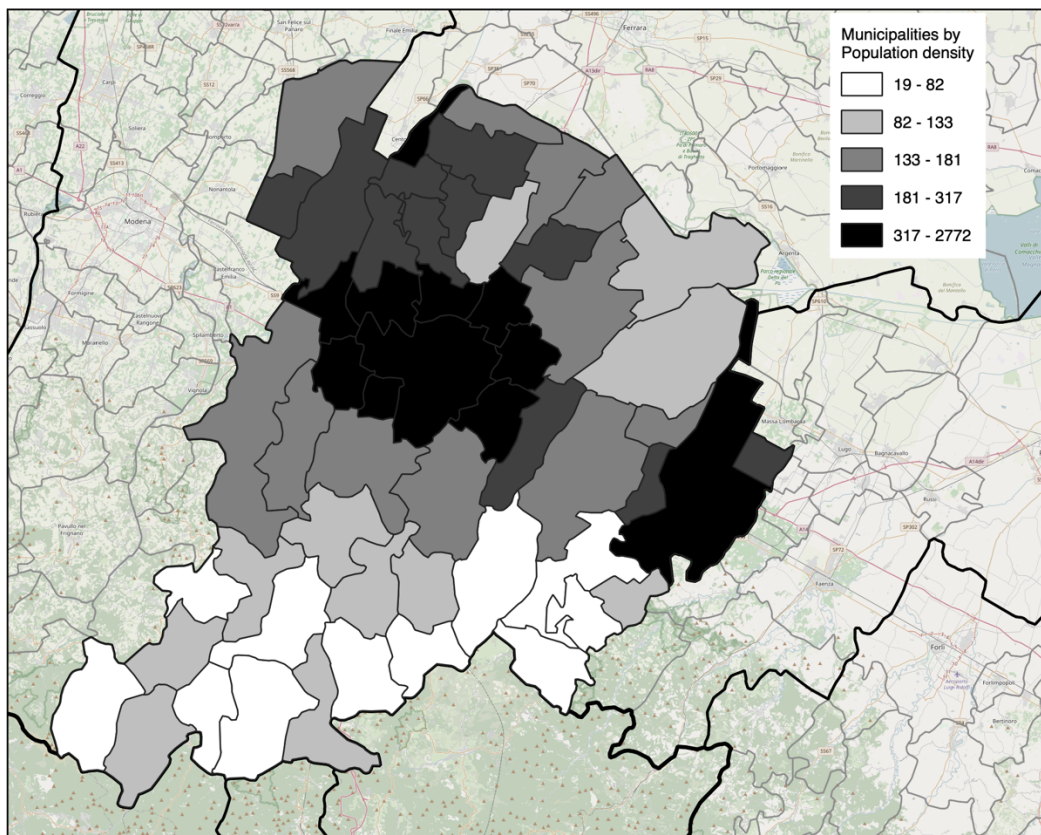
Concerning land area, the metropolitan area is relatively evenly distributed among groups of demographically small, medium-small and medium-sized municipalities. Relatively small, on the other hand, is the territorial area over which municipalities over 50.000 reside, namely the municipalities of Imola and Bologna.

About 40% of the population resides in the municipality of Bologna. Comparing the data with other Italian metropolitan cities, the metropolitan city of Bologna is in an intermediary position, considering, for example, Genoa (69%) as the one with the most residents in the capital municipality and the more diffuse or polycentric ones such as Bari, where only 26% of the population resides in the capital. In the smallest municipalities, up to 5.000 residents, less than 5 % of the population resides. At the same time, about half of the population resides in medium-sized municipalities from 5.000 to 50.000 inhabitants (Figure 52).



**Figure 52 - Municipalities of MCB0 by population size. Source: ISTAT, 2022. Author's elaboration.**

Population density in the various size classes of municipalities in the Metropolitan City of Bologna tends to be low to medium-low, including municipalities with more than 50.000 inhabitants. In fact, 80% of the municipalities in the Metropolitan City of Bologna have a population density of less than 300 inhabitants per square kilometres and only two municipalities, Bologna and Casalecchio di Reno, above 2.000 inhabitants per square kilometres. The 37% percent of the population of the Metropolitan City of Bologna lives in municipalities with low population density (less than 300 inhabitants per sq. km.), while 42% live in the two municipalities with high population density (>1.500 inhabitants/sq. km.), a concentration figure among the lowest among the Metropolitan Cities (Figure 52).



**Figure 53 - Municipalities of MCBo by population density. Source: ISTAT, 2022. Author's elaboration.**

From a territorial point of view, it is possible to divide the metropolitan territory of Bologna into territorial ambits (Figure 54). These, constitute the appropriate territorial extension for the exercise in associated form of both the fundamental municipal functions and the additional functions conferred on municipalities by regional law. The area is defined based on a procedure provided for by regional law. The proposed delimitation is deliberated by the municipal councils, considering the geographical articulation and socio-economic conditions of the reference territory, and is implemented by resolution of the regional council. The territorial ambits were defined through a shared path with the local authorities of the region, which led to the identification of 47 optimal territorial ambits, approved by DGR 286/2013 and DGR 1904/2015.

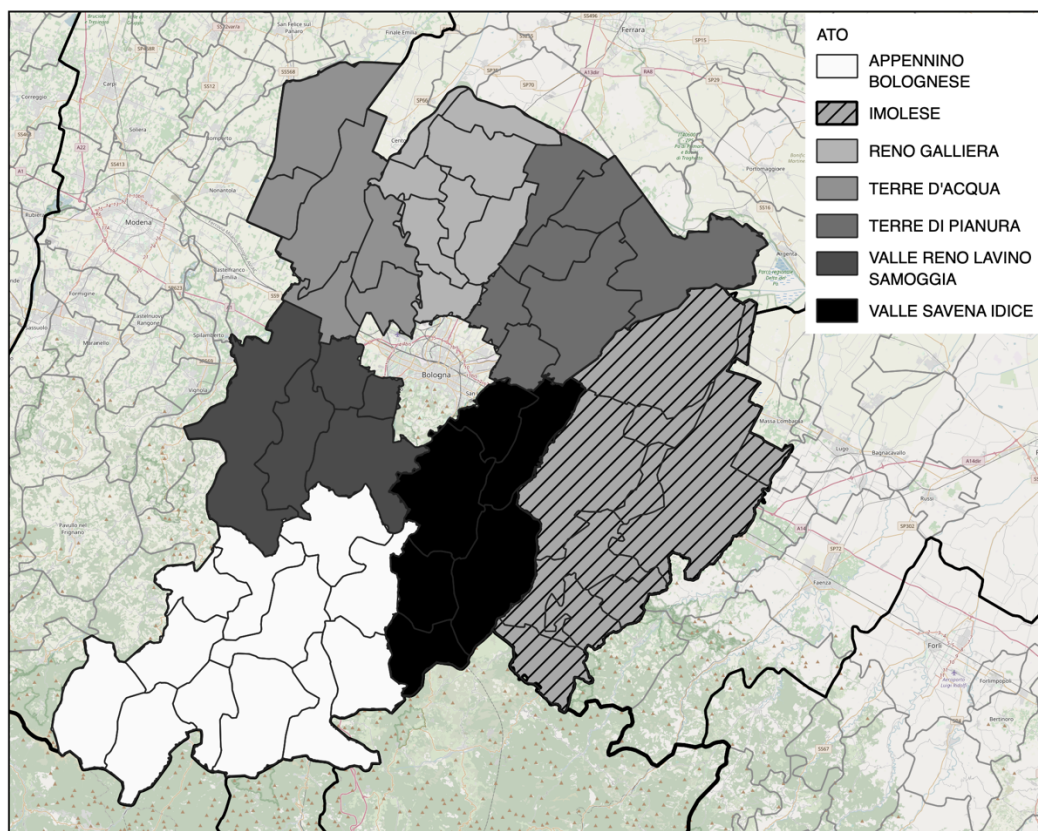


Figure 54 - Optimal Territorial Ambits (ATO) within MCBo. Source: Author's elaboration on Regione Emilia-Romagna, 2021a

Table 20 - ATO and Municipalities.

| ATO                                      | Municipalities   |
|--|--|
| <b>Reno Galliera</b>                     | Argelato, Bentivoglio, Castel Maggiore, Castello d'Argile, Galliera, Pieve di Cento, San Giorgio di Piano, San Pietro in Casale  |
| <b>Terre di Pianura</b>                  | Baricella, Budrio, Granarolo dell'Emilia, Minerbio, Castenaso, Molinella, Malalbergo   |
| <b>Terre d'Acqua</b>                     | Anzola dell'Emilia, Calderara di Reno, Crevalcore, Sala Bolognese, San Giovanni in Persiceto, Sant'Agata Bolognese   |
| <b>Valli del Reno, Lavino e Samoggia</b> | Casalecchio di Reno, Monte San Pietro, Sasso Marconi, Valsamoggia, Zola Predosa  |
| <b>Valli Savena Idice</b>                | Loiano, Monghidoro, Monterenzio, Pianoro, Ozzano dell'Emilia, S. Lazzaro di Savena   |
| <b>Appennino Bolognese</b>               | Alto Reno Terme, Camugnano, Castel d'Aiano, Castel di Casio, Gaggio Montano, Grizzana Morandi, Lizzano in Belvedere, Marzabotto, Vergato, Monzuno, San Benedetto Val di Sambro, Castiglione dei Pepoli |
| <b>Ambito Imolese</b>                    | Borgo Tossignano, Casalfiumanese, Castel del Rio, Castelguelfo di Bologna, Castel S. Pietro Terme, Dozza, Fontanelice, Imola, Medicina, Mordano  |

Source: Regione Emilia-Romagna, 2021a.



Closely related to the ATOs there is a further territorial subdivision of the metropolitan territory of Bologna is represented by the unions of municipalities. Absolutely distinctive element and tradition of planning and governance of the territory of the region of Emilia Romagna. With reference to the 2021-2023 Territorial Reorganization Plan, there are 41 Unions of Municipalities (3 newly formed) and include a total of more than 250 the municipalities equal to more than 75% of municipalities in Emilia-Romagna (Figure 55).

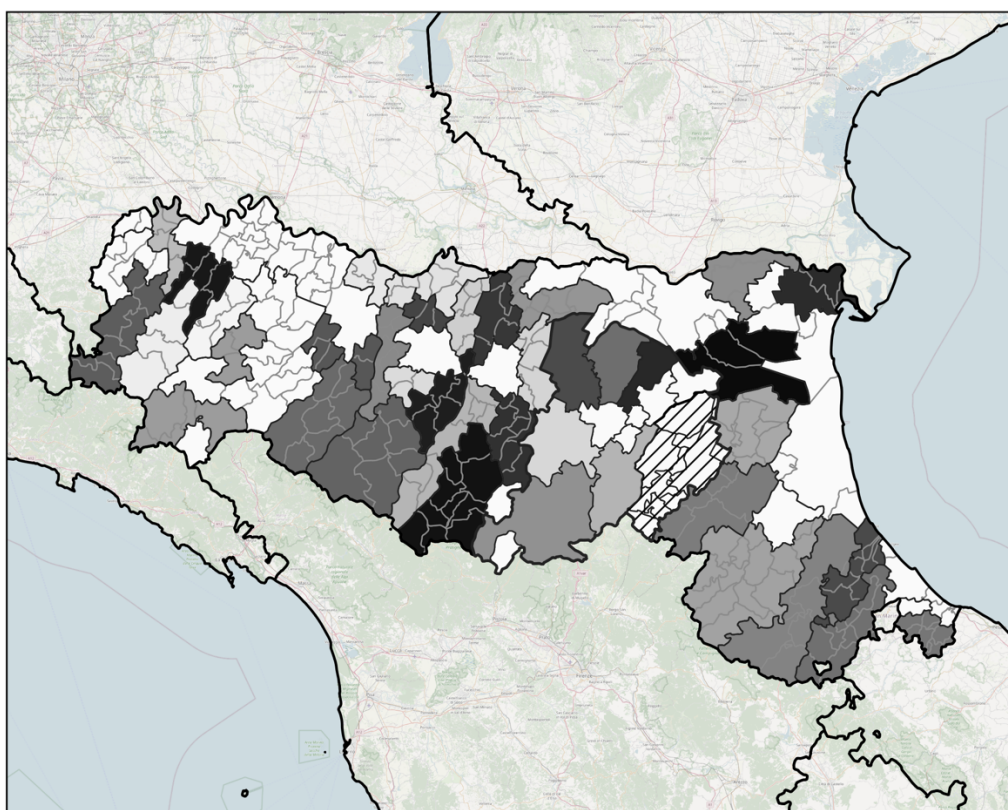


Figure 55 - Union of Municipalities in the Emilia-Romagna region. Source: Author's elaboration on Regione Emilia-Romagna, 2024.

Table 21 - List of Municipalities associated in Union of municipalities in the Emilia-Romagna Region.

| Union of Municipalities                           | Prov | Municipalites   |
|---|------|---|
| <i>Unione dei Comuni dell'Appennino Bolognese</i> | BO   | <i>Castel di Casio, Castel d'Aiano, Castiglione dei Pepoli, Gaggio Montano, Grizzana Morandi, Marzabotto, Monzuno, San Benedetto Val di Sambro, Vergato, Camugnano, Lizzano in Belvedere.</i> |

|  |    |  |
|--|----|--|
| <b>Nuovo circondario imolese</b>                           | BO | <i>Borgo Tossignano, Casalfiumanese, Castel del Rio, Castel Guelfo di Bologna, Castel San Pietro Terme, Dozza, Fontanelice, Imola, Medicina, Mordano</i>   |
| <b>Unione Savena – Idice</b>                               | BO | <i>Loiano, Monghidoro, Monterezeno, Pianoro, Ozzano dell'Emilia</i>  |
| <b>Unione dei Comuni Valle del Reno, Lavino e Samoggia</b> | BO | <i>Valsamoggia, Casalecchio di Reno, Zola Predosa, Monte San Pietro, Sasso Marconi</i>   |
| <b>Unione Terre d'acqua</b>                                | BO | <i>Anzola dell'Emilia, Calderara di Reno, San Giovanni in Persiceto, Crevalcore, Sala Bolognese, Sant'Agata Bolognese</i>  |
| <b>Unione Comuni Terre Pianura</b>                         | BO | <i>Baricella, Granarolo dell'Emilia, Malalbergo, Minerbio</i>  |
| <b>Unione Rubicone mare</b>                                | FC | <i>Gatteo, San Mauro Pascoli, Savignano sul Rubicone, Cesenatico, Gambettola, Borghi, Sogliano al Rubicone, Roncofreddo, Longiano</i>  |
| <b>Unione dei Comuni della Romagna Forlivese</b>           | FC | <i>Bertinoro, Castrocaro Terme e Terra del Sole, Civitella di Romagna, Dovadola, Forlimpopoli, Galeata, Meldola, Modigliana, Portico, San Benedetto, Predappio, Premilcuore, Rocca San Casciano, Tredozio, Santa Sofia</i> |
| <b>Unione dei Comuni Valle del Savio</b>                   | FC | <i>Bagno di Romagna, Cesena, Mercato Saraceno, Montiano, Sarsina, Verghereto</i>   |
| <b>Unione dei Comuni del Delta del Po</b>                  | FE | <i>Codigoro, Goro, Lagosanto, Fiscaglia, Mesola</i>  |
| <b>Unione dei Comuni del Frignano</b>                      | MO | <i>Fanano, Fiumalbo, Lama Mocogno, Montecreto, Pavullo nel Frignano, Pievepelago, Polinago, Riolunato, Serramazzone, Sestola</i>   |
| <b>Unione Comuni del Sorbara</b>                           | MO | <i>Bastiglia, Bomporto, Nonantola, Ravarino, Castelfranco Emilia, San Cesario sul Panaro</i>   |
| <b>Unione Comuni Distretto Ceramico</b>                    | MO | <i>Fiorano Modenese, Formigine, Frassinoro, Maranello, Montefiorino, Palagano, Prignano sulla Secchia, Sassuolo</i>  |
| <b>Unione dei Comuni Alta Val Nure</b>                     | PC | <i>Bettola, Farini, Ferriere, ponte dell'Olio</i>  |
| <b>Unione Montana Valli Trebbia e Luretta</b>              | PC | <i>Bobbio, Cerignale, Coli, Corte Brugnatella, Ottone, Piozzano, Travo, Zerba</i>  |
| <b>Unione Bassa Val d'Arda fiume Po</b>                    | PC | <i>Besenzone, Caorso, Castelvetro Piacentino, Cortemaggiore, Monticelli d'Ongina, San Pietro in Cerro, Villanova sull'Arda</i>   |
| <b>Unione dei comuni montani Alta Val d'Arda</b>           | PC | <i>Castell'Arquato, Lugagnano Val d'Arda, Morfasso, Vernasca</i>   |
| <b>Unione Bassa Val Trebbia e Val Luretta</b>              | PC | <i>Agazzano, Calendasco, Gazzola, Gossolengo, Gragnano Trebbiense, Rivergaro, Rottofreno, Sarmato</i>  |

|   |    |   |
|---|----|---|
| <b><i>Unione dei Comuni delle Valli del Taro e del Ceno</i></b> | PR | <i>Bedonia, Bore, Vorgo Val di Taro, Compiano, Pellegrino Parmense, Tornolo, Varsi</i>  |
| <b><i>Unione Bassa Est Parmense</i></b>                         | PR | <i>Colorno, Sorbolo Mezzani, Torrile</i>  |
| <b><i>Unione Terre Verdiane</i></b>                             | PR | <i>Busseto, Fidenza, Fontanellato, Fontevivo, Roccabianca, Salsomaggiore Terme, San Secondo Parmense, Soragna</i>                   |
| <b><i>Unione Montana dei comuni dell'Appennino Reggiano</i></b> | RE | <i>Castelnovo ne' Monti, Carpineti, Casina, Toano, Ventasso, Vetto, Villa Minozzo.</i>  |
| <b><i>Unione Tresinaro Secchia</i></b>                          | RE | <i>Baiso, Casalgrande, Castellarano, Rubiera, Scandiano, Viano</i>  |
| <b><i>Unione Val d'Enza</i></b>                                 | RE | <i>Bibbiano, Campegine, Canossa, Cavriago, Gattatico, Montecchio Emilia, San Polo d'Enza, Sant'Ilario d'Enza</i>                    |
| <b><i>Unione Colline Matildiche</i></b>                         | RE | <i>Albinea, Quattro Castella, Vezzano sul Crostolo</i>  |
| <b><i>Unione Pianura Reggiana</i></b>                           | RE | <i>Campagnola Emilia, Correggio, Fabbrico, Rolo, Rio Saliceto, San Martino in Rio</i>   |
| <b><i>Unione della Valconca</i></b>                             | RN | <i>Gemmano, Montefiore Conca, Morciano di Romagna, Mondaino, Montegridolfo, Montescudo – Monte Colombo, Saludecio, San Clemente</i> |

Source: Regione Emilia-Romagna, 2024.

As with previous case studies, a subdivision of the Bologna metropolitan area based on the functional characteristics of the territory was also highlighted. Again, following the methodology previously described, the metropolitan city of Bologna was divided into four different groups. In particular, the first group, the largest with 24 municipalities, is characterised by higher per capita income, percentage of land consumed and polarization than the Metropolitan City average. These municipalities, located in the first two belts around Bologna and in an area extending to Imola, have a low incidence of foreign population. Their geographical arrangement largely overlaps with the conurbation area previously identified in the section on connections between places. The second group, consisting of 17 municipalities, is characterised by a high incidence of foreigners and a higher birth rate than the other groups. However, per capita income, polarization and the old-age index show lower values. These municipalities are mainly located on the edge of the provincial territory. The third group includes only Bologna and Casalecchio di Reno. This area is characterised by high land density, high land consumption and higher average income.

This supports the strong connection with the capital city already highlighted in the analysis of connections between places. The fourth group consists of 13 municipalities located in the southwest area of the Metropolitan City, near the Apennines. This group has an average high altitude and above-average old-age and tourism indices. However, it records lower taxable incomes, a lower birth rate and a lower percentage of consumed land. It is relevant to note that this group includes all municipalities classified as peripheral according to the National Strategy of Inner Areas, as well as four out of eight intermediate municipalities, thus confirming this classification (Figure 56).

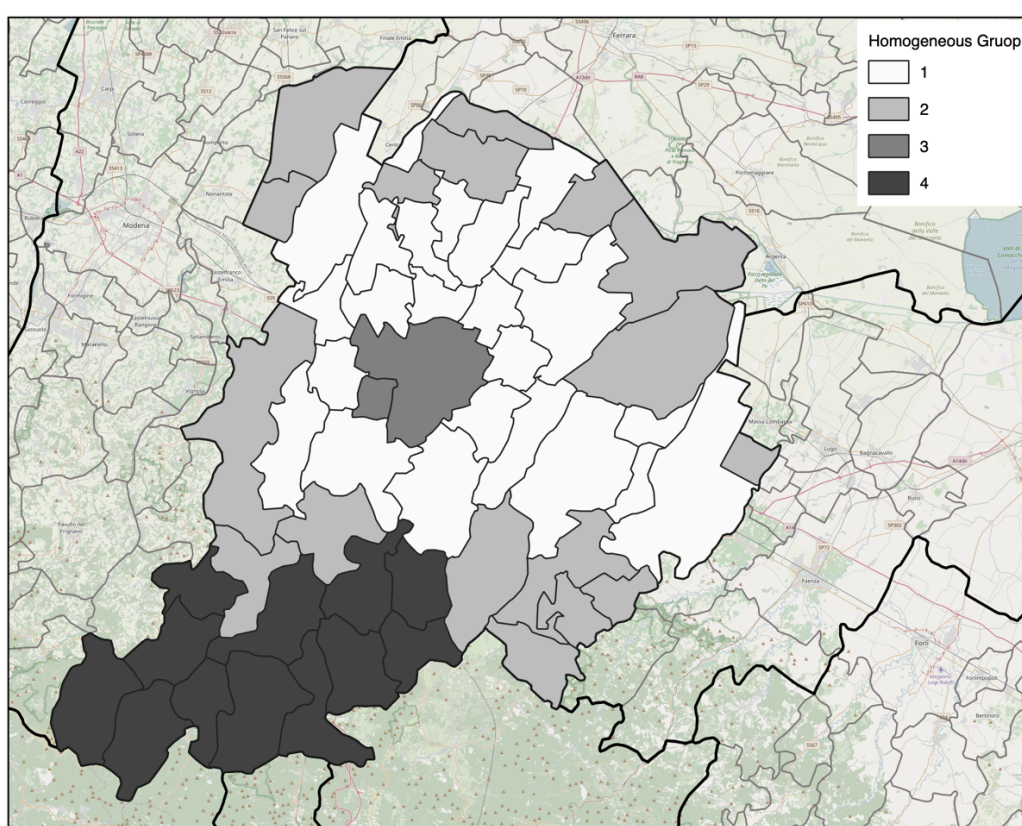


Figure 56 - Homogeneous Group in the MCBo. Source: Author's elaboration on ANCI, 2023.

Table 22 - List of Municipalities by Homogeneous Group

| Homogeneous Group | Municipalities   |
|-------------------|--|
| Group 1           | <i>Anzola dell'Emilia; Argelato; Bentivoglio; Budrio; Calderara di Reno; Castel Guelfo di Bologna; Castel Maggiore; Castel San Pietro Terme; Castenaso; Dozza; Granarolo dell'Emilia; Imola; Malalbergo; Minerbio; Monte San Pietro; Ozzano dell'Emilia; Pianoro; Pieve di Cento; Sala</i> |

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
|                | <i>Bolognese; San Giorgio di Piano; San Giovanni in Persiceto; San Lazzaro di Savena; Sasso Marconi; Zola Predosa.</i>   |
| <b>Group 2</b> | <i>Baricella; Borgo Tossignano; Casalfiumanese; Castel del Rio; Castello d'Argile; Crevalcore; Fontanelice; Galliera; Marzabotto; Medicina; Molinella; Monterezeno; Mordano; San Pietro in Casale; Sant'Agata Bolognese; Vergato; Valsamoggia.</i> |
| <b>Group 3</b> | <i>Bologna; Casalecchio di Reno.</i>   |
| <b>Group 4</b> | <i>Camugnano; Castel d'Aiano; Castel di Casio; Castiglione dei Pepoli; Gaggio Montano; Granaglione; Grizzana Morandi; Lizzano in Belvedere; Loiano; Monghidoro; Monzuno; Porretta Terme; San Benedetto Val di Sambro.</i>                          |

Source: ANCI, 2023.

### 7.2.3 The economy of the Bologna Metropolitan Area

The metropolitan area of Bologna has always characterised itself as playing a relevant role in the regional and national economy, of widespread entrepreneurship, attractive to investors, businesses and talent, a location for research and production projects of excellence, welcoming to people, with a vast heritage of cultural and environmental riches. The Metropolitan City of Bologna, as shared with the Emilia-Romagna Region, has, among others, the task of coordinating and promoting the economic and social development of the metropolitan territory. Founding strategic dimensions are sustainability, inclusivity, and attractiveness, in coherence with the short- and medium-long-term objectives declined in the 'Patto metropolitano per il Lavoro e lo Sviluppo sostenibile', the lines defined in its own planning tools, the 'Agenda metropolitana per lo Sviluppo Sostenibile' and the 'Patto per il Lavoro ed il Clima' of the Emili-Romagna Region.

Geographically, the relevance of infrastructure and hubs for the flow of people and goods, advanced services, the presence of skilled workers, an excellent school, training, and university system, the socially and culturally stimulating environment, and a collaborative and fast-paced Public Administration make Bologna and its metropolitan area the ideal destination for quality investments, both domestic and international

In relation to attractiveness, the MCBo recognizes actions in favor of new investments as the priority for the coming years. Despite the strength of Bologna's productive fabric, it is important to attract new energy and resources. Key elements that attest to the attractiveness of the MCBo globally include logistical infrastructure, quality of human capital, efficiency of public administration, refined

social and cultural environment, innovation, advanced services, creativity, and excellent research facilities.

In relation to research and innovation, the metropolitan area hosts a university hub of excellence, major research institutions such as CNR, ENEA, INFN, INAF, and CINECA. The metropolis has a manufacturing system specialising in advanced technologies, with a focus on industrial automation, advanced motor engineering, and precision industry.

In relation to industry, the MCBo has developed experiences of excellence, both public and private, to foster the growth of new businesses. This context stimulates the emergence of innovative startups, promotes collaboration for the development of entrepreneurial projects, and is oriented toward sectors such as cultural and creative industries, digital, social and sustainability economy.

At the same time, the Metropolitan City promotes business strengthening, innovation and internationalization. It focuses on interventions such as safeguarding the productive heritage, upgrading supply chains in crisis, strengthening the construction sector with a focus on energy efficiency, and promoting trade, including strategies for enhancing local supply chains and focusing on agriculture.

From an energy perspective, the MCBo aims to define sustainable energy solutions through integrated actions in the public, private, residential and mobility sectors. Collaboration with Covenants of Mayors at the local and European level is key, as is integration with metropolitan priorities through NOP METRO. The area is inclined to become a testing ground for services and projects related to the circular economy, bioeconomy and ecodesign.

From the institutional point of view, the MCBo, together with the Emilia-Romagna Region, has shared a new institutional chain to promote the territory, defining the peculiarities of the metropolitan pole. The goal from the metropolitan city in this sense is to coordinate European and regional resources toward integrated actions that integrate metropolitan priorities with regional ones. This approach involves collaboration between institutions, associations and businesses, with the aim of strengthening metropolitan identity and economic development.

Also very relevant is the MCBo's focus on the tourism component. In fact, the MCBo intends to consolidate territorial promotion through the creation of a new Tourist Destination. This tool is aimed at ensuring cohesion in the metropolitan

system and promoting a new tourism model based on the enhancement of the area's specificities. Strategies include the creation of an integrated strategic plan, the strengthening of strategic infrastructure and the enhancement of cultural and environmental excellence. With a view to a metropolitan strategic vision, the MCBo is also paying close attention to the Apennine side. In this sense, the *Patto per il Rilancio dell'Appennino* was born.

The metropolitan Apennines, covering the mountainous part of the Reno River basin, is a key area for strategic development. The creation of a cohesive and streamlined supply chain, along with institutional reorganization, is key to maintaining and creating employment, preserving quality of life and countering land degradation. The Apennine Focus is a tool that experiments with innovative actions to promote dialogue between capital and labor, fostering workers' retraining and supporting self-employment.

Finally, the last element on which the MCBo is very focused is digital transition. The Metropolitan City has defined key objectives under the Digital Agenda, focusing on four main axes: i) Bridge the physical digital divide; ii) Digital services for citizens and businesses; iii) Simplification for businesses; and iv) Digital innovation and simplification.

In conclusion, the Metropolitan City is committed to consolidating its position as an engine of economic development, promoting attractiveness, innovation, sustainability, and territorial cohesion.

## **7.3 Institutional framework Analysis**

### **7.3.1 The Emilia-Romagna Regional Planning System in nutshell**

The current law main reference of the is the Emilia-Romagna Region is the L.R. 24/2017 *'Disciplina regionale sulla tutela e l'uso del territorio'*. This legislation represents the region's third law on urban planning and territorial governance, following L.R. 47/1978 and L.R. 20/2000. The latter, during its approximately twenty years of application, was considered by experts to be aligned with an outdated development model, primarily based on urban expansion, despite including objectives for urban redevelopment. Regional Law 20/2000 divided the municipal urban plan into three instruments: the *Piano Strutturale Comunale* (PSC) for medium/long-term forecasts, the *Piano Operativo Comunale* (POC) for major urban transformations, and the *Regolamento Urbanistico e Edilizio* (RUE) for the

management of the consolidated city and its built heritage. Particular attention was given to equalization procedures applied to the implementation processes of plan forecasts.

Regional Law 24/2017 inaugurates a new phase of territorial governance, introducing significant innovations in line with the most recent European guidelines, which aim for zero land consumption by 2050 and energy efficiency in buildings, and reflecting on the outcomes of the application of Regional Law 20/2000. Specifically, the new law simplifies the system of planning tools for various administrative levels, providing for a single general plan for each authority: the *Piano Urbanistico Generale* (PUG) for municipalities or their unions, the *Piano Territoriale Metropolitano* (PTM) for the Metropolitan City of Bologna, the *Piano Territoriale di Area Vasta* (PTAV) for the provinces, and the Regional Territorial Plan. The law significantly modifies the municipal planning instrument, requiring municipalities, or their unions, to adopt a new unitary plan (PUG), thus overcoming the previous subdivision into PSC, POC, and RUE. Responsibility for its drafting and management is entrusted to a Plan Office, specifically established and equipped with the professional skills required for territorial governance functions, including planning, landscape, environment, law, and economic finance (Figure 57).

**THE REGIONAL PLANNING SYSTEM - EMILIA-ROMAGNA**

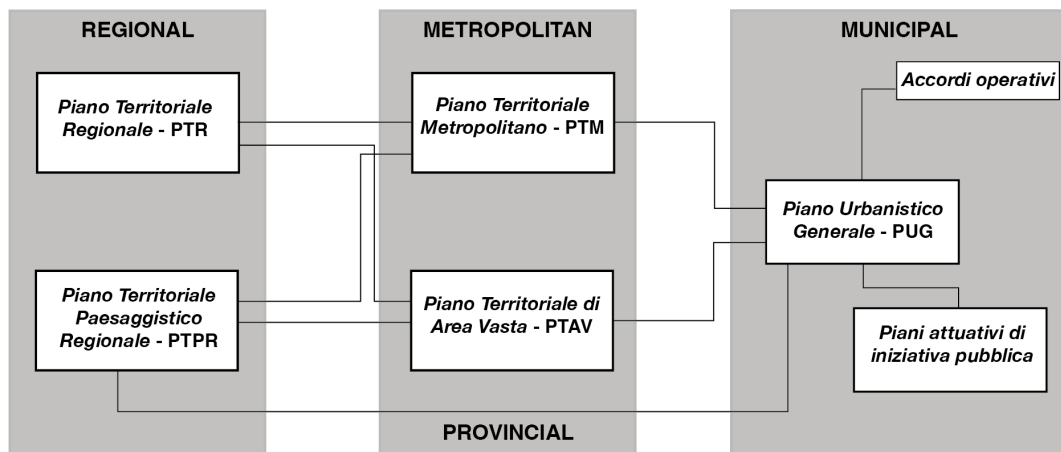


Figure 57 - The Regional Planning System of Emilia-Romagna. Source: Author's elaboration.

### 7.3.2 The evolution of the metropolitan governance

Until the late 1970s, planning choices at the supra-local level were focused on the construction of infrastructure in the area (Campos Venuti & Oliva, 1993). The municipality of Bologna and fifteen municipalities in the city belt asked the



Ministry of Public Works to issue a decree for the formation of the PIC, *Piano Intercomunale del Comprensorio* (Figure 58). On May 6, 1960, the Ministry authorizes the formation of the PIC, entrusting its drafting to the Municipality of Bologna.

It is expected that planning must be linked to economic planning and based on criteria of democratic participation; it must be an instrument to struggle against urban rent and aim at the restructuring of the district according to a polycentric scheme. Technical and management bodies (assembly of mayors, advisory commission, budget committee) are provided for.

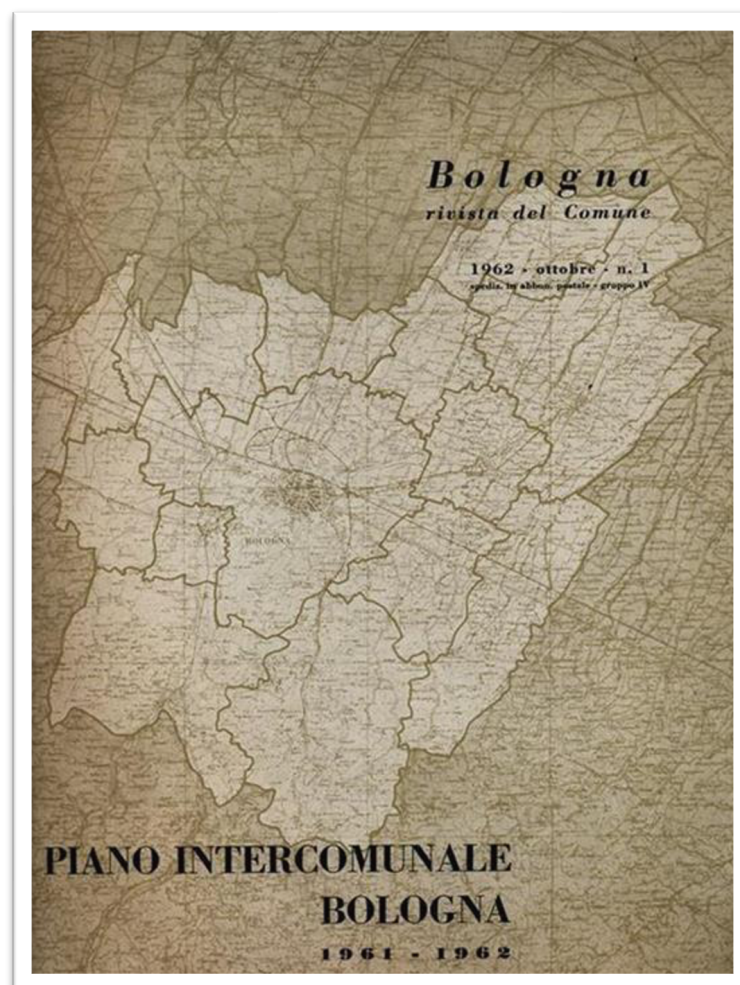


Figure 58 - Front cover of the Piano Intercomunale di Bologna 1961-1962. Source: rivista del Comune, 1962.

Since the early 1990s, the then Province of Bologna has been the protagonist of a long and rich activity in wide area planning. In 1993 the provincial council adopted the PTI, *Piano Territoriale Infraregionale*, according to Regional Law 36/88. The Region subsequently approved it in April 1995.

The same year the Region would also approve the PTI of the Assembly of Municipalities of Imola, adopted in 1994, which identified specific objectives, mainly economic, that distinguished the Imola area from the Bologna area. The PTI of Imola envisaged the consolidation and strengthening of the large manufacturing sector of a specialised type already present and marked by a strong propensity for product innovation, supported by the presence of a large fabric of small and very small businesses. It also envisaged the strengthening of the traditional "hinge" role between Emilia and Romagna. The Bologna and Imola PTIs, after the experiences of the PIC of the late 1960s and the PUI (*Piano Urbanistico Intercomunale*) of the 1980s, represented the only supra-municipal reference, with certain administrative value, that with some authority regulates the phenomena of metropolisation in the Bologna area.

The main contents of the PTI, which are moreover widely known, due to repeated publications and opportunities for debate, focused on the need to contain the settlement dispersion recorded in the last two decades and the consequent need to establish a functional relationship with the main transportation network, rationalised and reversed with respect to current modal uses.

To this end, the PTI tries to make a hierarchical reading of the centres (Ordering Centres, Integrative Centres, Support Centres), attributing them a role of reference for the territories to which they belong, along with precise performances in the metropolitan context, in the name of their functional and environmental characteristics.

About this network of centres and the main transportation network that connected them, the PTI then identified three fundamental Directions of development and rationalization of settlements, connected to the rail system (for which it envisages an overall rationalization, based on the Metropolitan Railway Service project), interconnected by vast areas of agricultural greenery, intended to represent the reserve of biomass necessary for a proper balance of the metropolitan arrangement. The Plan identified the main ecological infrastructures, basically consisting of the river rods and their natural territory, rods that lap the metropolitan core.

The '*Pianificazione d'area*' had been identified as the Plan's implementation tool, which, depending on the different services required, invited municipalities to progressively align their urban planning tools through consultation, to which the Province proposed to provide technical services and financing while assuming the coordination and organizational duties.

After the regional approval, which was followed by the transfer to the Province of the competencies in urban planning, and therefore also that of the approval of municipal urban plans, it was precisely in the direction of the organization of this '*pianificazione d'area*' that the planning activity of the Province was directed, starting in 1997, in preparation for the elaboration of the PTCP which, in the meantime, L.R.6/95 had made mandatory. This was not a new level of planning, nor was it a reissue of the Plan, which, as we have seen, has been in force since 1995. It was a matter of an understanding. Rather, an understanding of a general nature and about ten Implementing Agreements (*Accordi Attuativi*) between the Province and as many aggregates, or Associations of Municipalities, regarding the coordinated and environmentally sustainable management of the settlement forecasts already approved and those being elaborated through the new General Regulatory Plans of the Municipalities.

This experience had arisen in the particular political-institutional context of Bologna, characterised not only by the prominence of a vast area concertation forum such as the Metropolitan Conference of Mayors, but also by two additional specificities: the functions of direction and control over municipal planning exercised by the Province since the regional approval of its Infraregional Plan, and the consequent determination to equip itself, in the service of these functions, with a powerful and effective descriptive and evaluative tool, the Provincial Spatial Information System.

The following stage was the definition of a Metropolitan Territorial Director Scheme (*Schema Direttore Territoriale*), to be placed at the basis of the process of redrafting the PTCP and the current PRGs, starting with that of the capital city. The scheme is not to be understood as a new design of optimal planning, to be pursued in planning action, but rather as a systematic tool for consultation and concertation for daily government action, both for the purpose of prudent and conscious (and therefore planned over time) management of what is already planned, and for the purpose of a more focused future forecast, attentive to the effects of externalities produced by local choices (MCBo, 2004).

The scheme places, through area concertation, even before the issue of planning, that of programming the planned interventions, in a sort of pact, which is nothing more than a multi-year program of implementation, concerted at the level of the different supra-municipal areas. For this purpose, the scheme identifies ten areas of aggregation.

These experiences have stimulated merger processes among municipalities in order to increase their capacity to carry out functions and services for the benefit of citizens. In fact, with Regional Law 3/99, which provided for the obligation of defining optimal areas for municipalities with fewer than 10.000 inhabitants to exercise the new functions transferred by Legislative Decree 112/98, 9 areas involving a total of 54 municipalities were delimited, on which 4 Unions of Municipalities and 5 Intermunicipal Associations were then formally established. The Unions of Municipalities correspond to the municipalities that are part of the mountain communities apart from the Val Samoggia, to which the municipalities of Bazzano and Crespellano adhere, while the Intermunicipal Associations refer to the lowland municipalities (Figure 59)

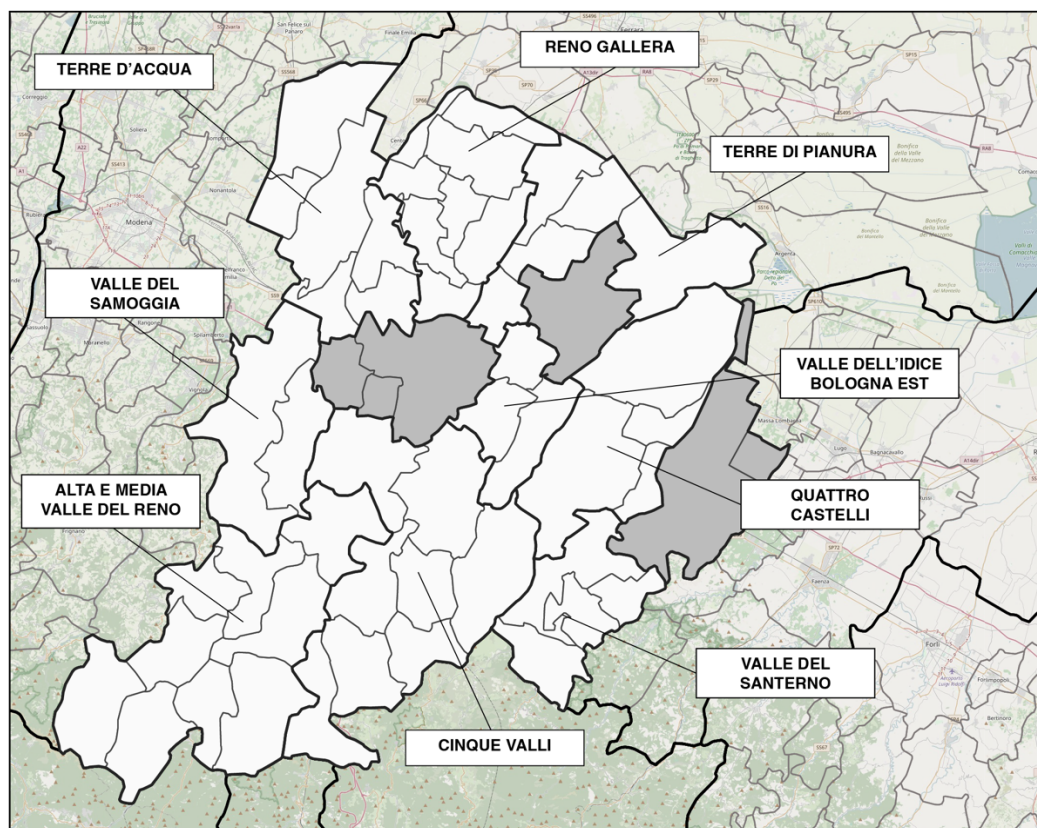


Figure 59 - Detail of the 9 aggregation areas established in the Province of Bologna. Source: Author's elaboration on MCBo, 2004.

### 7.3.3 Governance Scheme and competences

In 2022, the Metropolitan Mayor (by Act No. 79 of April 12, 2022) approved the fundamental organizational structure of the Metropolitan City of Bologna (Figure 60), assigning the Areas and Sectors, and their respective managers, the functions to be performed (MCBo, 2024).

The main bodies of the MCBo's metropolitan governance, following Delrio and as in all Italian metropolitan cities, are the Metropolitan Mayor, the Metropolitan Conference and the Metropolitan Council. Alongside these bodies, the MCBo has a fourth, the '*Ufficio di Presidenza*', a peculiar feature of the MCBo.

More in detail, the '*Ufficio di Presidenza*', is a body specifically provided for by the Statute of the Metropolitan City of Bologna (Article 32) to support the work of the Metropolitan Conference. It is composed of the Metropolitan Mayor and the Presidents of the Unions. It has the task of connecting with the Unions of Municipalities the policies and actions of the Metropolitan City, as well as instructing the work of the Metropolitan Conference. The '*Ufficio di Presidenza*' is convened by the Metropolitan Mayor to discuss the following topics:

- instruction of resolutions within the competence of the Metropolitan Conference.
- opinion on the delegation of new functions to the Metropolitan City or Unions of Municipalities.
- any other topic deemed necessary.

The '*Ufficio di Presidenza*' plays the role of the Investment and Opportunity Steering Cabin, the Steering Committee on Metropolitan Tourist Destination, and is the place of coordination and direction of territorial policies for the preparation of the Metropolitan Territorial Plan, and metropolitan strategic planning. It also expresses its guidance in all cases where institutional collaborations between entities are initiated by Article 20 of the Statute.

**MACROSTRUTTURA 1/07/2023**  
(atto Sindaco metropolitano n. 123 del 23/05/2023)



Figure 60 - Governance scheme of the MCBo. Source: MCBo, 2024.

A focus related to the Area of Territorial Planning and Sustainable Mobility follows (Figure 61). The Area performs the fundamental functions established by regional regulations and laws attributed to the Authority in the area of Planning, divided into territorial and sustainable mobility, and related strategic planning. It also carries out planning functions for local public transport services in the metropolitan area. The area also performs the functions of control and evaluation of municipal and Union urban planning instruments, according to the competencies attributed by the relevant regional legislation. More specifically, among the most relevant activities are:

- updating, monitoring and implementation of the Metropolitan Spatial Plan (PSM)
- management of Metropolitan Regeneration Programs
- coordination and management of special urban regeneration and sustainable mobility projects of metropolitan relevance, including those financed with national and EU resources, including PNRR (*Bando Periferie*, PINQuA, PUI, etc.)

- coordination of Metropolitan Regeneration Workshops (ORMe project) through technical support to Unions and Municipalities on urban regeneration and sustainable mobility)
- support to municipalities and Unions in the preparation of General Urban Plans
- management and coordination of the Metropolitan Perequative Fund (*Fondo Perequativo Metropolitano*)
- updating, monitoring and implementation of the Urban Sustainable Mobility Plan and related plans (PUMS and Biciplan)

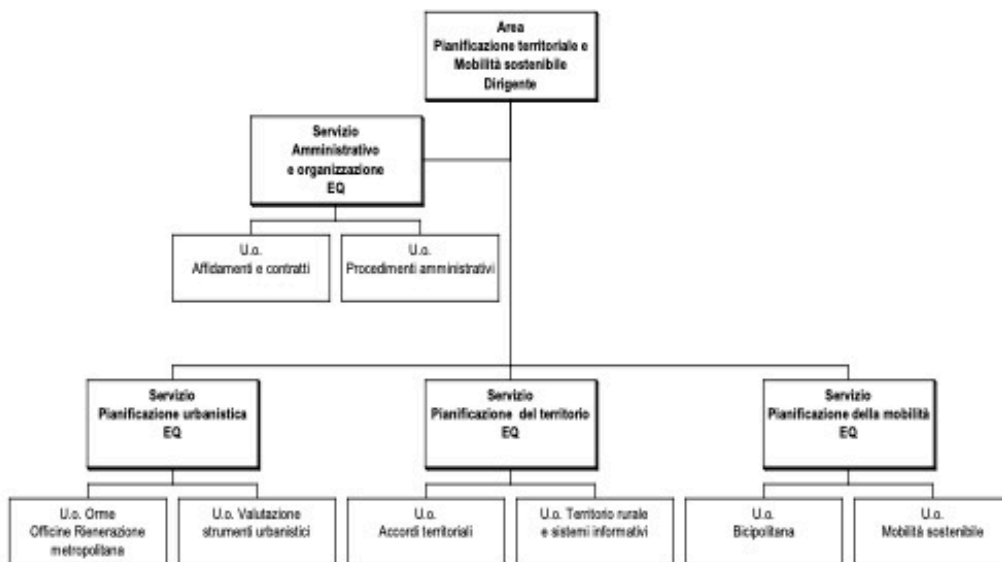


Figure 61 -Scheme of the Planning Department in the MCBo. Source: MCBo, 2024.

In relation to the functioning of governance within the MCBo, from an operational point of view, the MCBo, through the Metropolitan Council, approved in 2022 a new Framework Convention (*Convenzione Quadro*) institutional cooperation between the Metropolitan City, Unions and individual non-associated municipalities of the Bologna area, which is currently being signed. The metropolitan area of Bologna has historical experience in inter-institutional cooperation aimed at strengthening the synergies between municipalities, forms of association and wide area entity aimed at the establishment of the Metropolitan City of Bologna, foreseen - before the entry into force of Law 56/2014 - as a merely voluntary experience. In this sense, Article 20 of the Statute of the Metropolitan City of Bologna provides that, based on special conventional acts, Unions and

individual municipalities may identify forms of institutional collaboration with the Metropolitan City. According to the Statute itself, the Unions represent the priority reference for the territorial articulation of the Metropolitan City's policies and actions. Three types of collaboration are identified (MCBo, 2024):

- the creation of a joint office,
- the use of metropolitan city offices,
- and other functional forms of collaboration that are lighter and identified from time to time.

Municipalities and their associative forms, adhering to the convention in question, have the possibility of subsequently entering into implementing agreements with the Metropolitan City, in the matters and according to what is indicated in the framework convention, through a resolution of the Municipal Council, taking into account the provisions of their statutes and regulations and within the scope of their organizational autonomy. The *Ufficio di Presidenza*, as mentioned earlier, is identified by the Framework Convention as the driving and coordinating body for its implementation.

#### **7.3.4 Different forms of inter municipal cooperation**

After describing the governance structure of the metropolitan city of Bologna in the previous paragraph, this section highlights the different forms of inter-municipal cooperation present within the metropolitan territory of Bologna.

Describing the different forms of cooperation related to the management of public services in the vast areas means representing an administrative geography composed of areals that do not always coincide with the delimitation of the provinces that are part of it.

In the case metropolitan city of Bologna, for example, for the integrated water service (*ATO idrico*) and the waste service the administrative unit to refer to is at the regional level, while the *Centri per l'impiego (CPI)* and the *Aziende sanitarie locali (AUSL)* have different articulations.

Overall, it is possible to divide the territory of the metropolitan city of Bologna into:

- 2 AUSL: AUSL of Bologna, which in turn is divided into 6 health districts (City of Bologna, San Lazzaro di Savena, Porretta Terme, Pianura Est, Pianura Ovest and Casalecchio di Reno) and AUSL of Imola



- 7 Unions of Municipalities (Alto Reno, Appennino Bolognese, Reno Gallera, Savena Idice, Terre d'Acqua, Terre di Pianura, Reno Valley, Lavino and Samoggia)

Within the metropolitan territory of Bologna, however, there are additional forms of intermunicipal cooperation that are not strictly related to the management of public services but rather to the management of funds and supra-local planning. With this in view, the following is intended to briefly describe from a territorial perspective what these forms of inter-municipal cooperation are. That is:

- LAGS
- SNAI
- ATUSS
- STAMI

#### ***AUSL***

According to Regional Laws No. 19/1994 and No. 21/2012, the metropolitan area was divided into socio-health districts and territorial ambits. The optimal territorial ambits constitute the appropriate territorial extension for the exercise in associated form of both the fundamental municipal functions and the additional functions conferred on municipalities by regional law. Normally, territorial ambits coincide with socio-health districts. For the metropolitan area of Bologna this is true except in the case of the Pianura est district, where both the ambits and the Unions are two. In all other cases a Union has been formed for each sphere. The only part of the territory where two Unions existed in one ambit was the Appennino Bolognese ambit, where in addition to the Appennino Union there was the Alto Reno Union (which associated the municipalities of Lizzano in Belvedere, Camugnano and Alto Reno Terme). In February 2017, the Alto Reno Union was dissolved and subsequently, the municipalities of Camugnano and Lizzano in Belvedere decided to join the Apennine Union. The municipality of Alto Reno Terme, on the other hand, has not yet decided anything about the associated exercise of functions to date. The articulation of the metropolitan area has been incorporated in the various Territorial Reorganization Programs (*Programmi di Riordino Territoriale*, PRT) that have succeeded one another over the years (Figure 62).

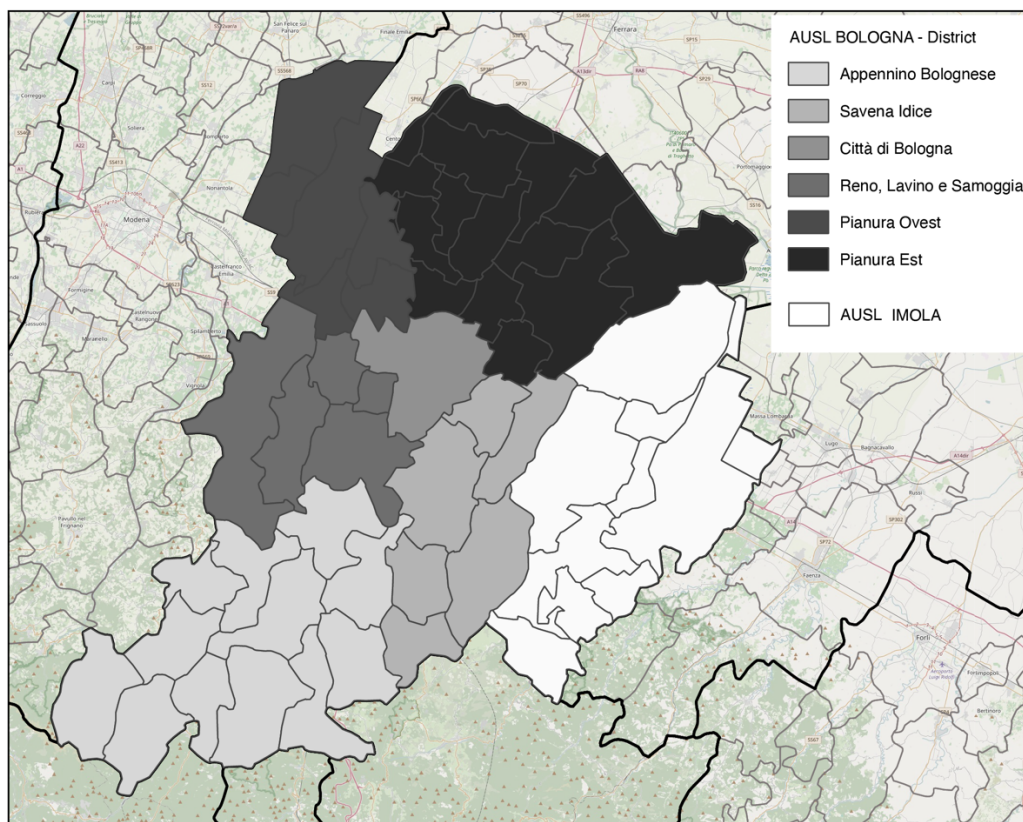


Figure 62 - AUSL within MCBo. Source: Author's elaboration on Regione Emilia-Romagna, 2024

### ***ATUSS, STAMI, LAG and SNAI***

With respect to supra-local programming tools, the current picture is very heterogeneous. The Emilia-Romagna region since the early stages of discussions with the European Commission for the approval of the Regional Plan related to the 2021-2027 programming, has pursued the drafting of two types of integrated territorial tools (Regione Emilia-Romagna, 2021b): the Urban Transformation Agendas for Sustainable Development (*Agende Trasformative Urbane per lo Sviluppo Sostenibile*, ATUSS) insisting on the urban scale (provincial capitals) and of intermediate territorial systems (unions) and the Territorial Strategies for Mountain and Inner Areas (*Strategie Territoriali per le Aree Montane e Interne*, STAMI). In total, the region has identified 14 ATUSS<sup>42</sup> and 9 STAMIs. Within the metropolitan city of Bologna falls the ATUSS coinciding with the capital city,

<sup>42</sup> Of which 9+1 fall in the provincial capitals (Bologna, Cesena, Ferrara, Forlì, Modena, Parma, Piacenza, Ravenna, Reggio Emilia and Rimini), 3 fall on the unions considered most mature (Union of Municipalities of Bassa Romagna, Union of Romagna Faentina and Union of Terre d'Argine) and 1 was dedicated to the Nuovo Circondario Imolese.

Bologna. In relation to the STAMIs, these coincide with the candidate territories for the new SNAI 2021-2027<sup>43</sup>. Added to these strategies within the territory of the MCBo is a single LAG, LAG *Appennino Bolognese* (Figure 63).

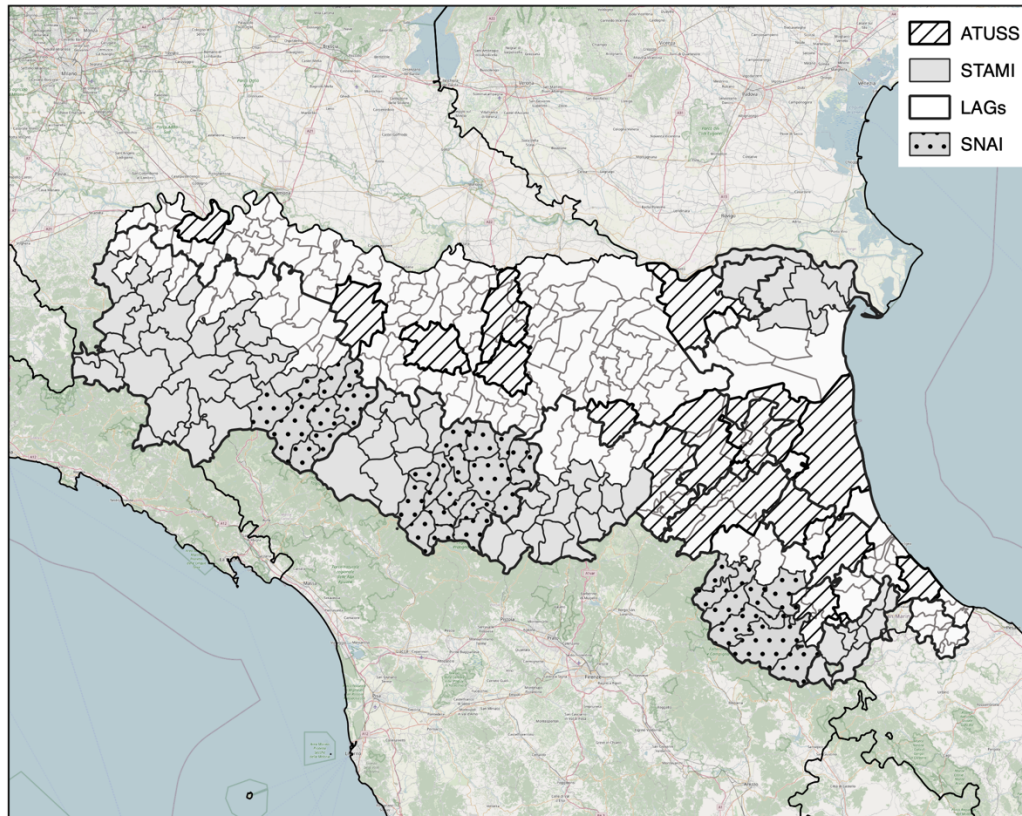


Figure 63 - ATUSS, STAMI, LAG and SNAI in the Emilia-Romagna region. Source: Author's elaboration on Regione Emilia-Romagna, 2021b.

### 7.3.5 The Union of Municipalities

As in the case study of Turin within which a paragraph was dedicated to Homogeneous Zones, regarding the case of MCBo it is important to allocate a paragraph to Unions of Municipalities (Figure 64).

Emilia-Romagna has a long tradition of inter-municipal cooperation behind it and, in this sense, can be considered as a model at the national level. The focus of

<sup>43</sup> The candidate area, the Appennino Bolognese, is made up of 15 municipalities: *Alto Reno Terme, Camugnano, Castel d'Aiano, Castel di Casio, Castiglione dei Pepoli, Gaggio Montano, Grizzana Morandi, Lizzano in Belvedere, Loiano, Marzabotto, Monghidoro, Monterenzio, Monzuno, San Benedetto Val di Sambro and Vergato*



this paragraph will be on unions of municipalities in relation to their governance and relationship with the metropolitan city of Bologna.

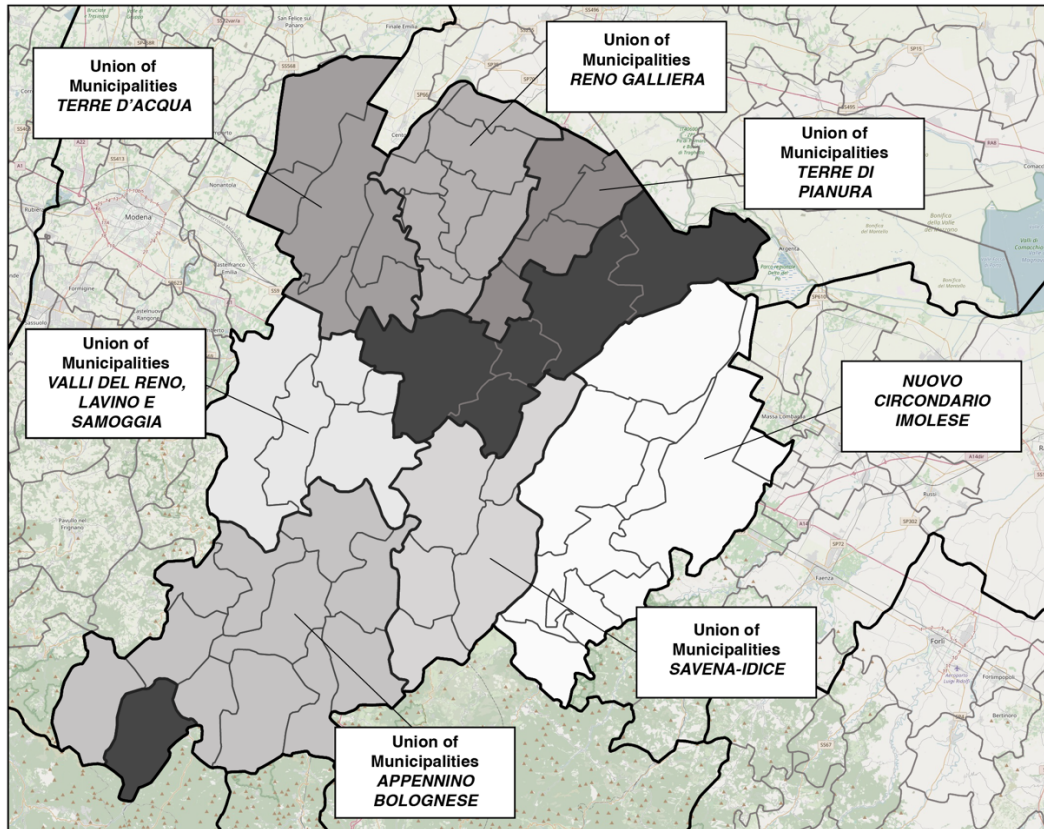


Figure 64- Union of Municipalities in the MCBo. Source: Author's elaboration on Regione Emilia-Romagna, 2024.

The first point to dwell on is related to the governance structure of the unions. Specifically, all Unions present the articulation of governing bodies provided for in the TUEL: (i) President, (ii) Council, and (iii) Committee. The Unions' Committee represent the body where strategic management decisions are deliberated (MCBo, 2018). All statutes stipulate that decisions are made by a majority vote of those present. The mechanism behind the '*Circondario Imolese*' is different. In fact, the function of policy and governance is exercised by two statutory bodies: the Council and the Conference of Mayors. The former, composed of the President of the *Circondario* and two other members with the role of Vice-Presidents, adopts the planning, managerial and organizational acts of the Entity, subject to the mandatory and binding opinion of the Conference of Mayors; the latter is composed of all ten Mayors of the *Circondario*.

An administrative leader with management and coordination functions is present in all Unions. Three out of seven Unions (Terre di Pianura, Terre d'Acqua, Reno Galliera) provide for a general secretary chosen by the president, by special act, from among the secretaries of the individual municipalities. In the other four Associative Bodies, on the other hand, (Unione Savena Idice, Valli del Reno, Lavino e Samoggia, Appennino Bolognese and Nuovo Circondario Imolese), the figure of the Secretary is carried out by a third party from among the Secretaries of the Municipalities, also with management and coordination functions. Organizational integration between the Union and the Municipality of reference takes place through the creation of coordinating bodies, the unification, including computerised procedures, and unified planning. In all Unions it appears of fundamental importance as a tool of organizational integration to use single computer applications at least for the exercise of the functions conferred. It should be noted that no Union has adopted a strategic development planning document as envisaged and awarded by the PRT, but all consider it an opportunity to be developed in the future.

In its relationship with the region, Emilia-Romagna has traditionally promoted and supported paths of associationism among municipalities. The specific tool that the region has identified to concretely pursue the objectives of institutional reorganization and promotion of associated management is the Territorial Reorganization Program (Regione Emilia-Romagna, 2024). The PRT is valid for three years, is updated annually, and identifies the criteria and methods for encouraging associated management of functions and services at the supra-municipal level. A partially different program has been adopted for the three-year period 2018/2020 than previous ones. Existing Unions are distinguished into three types: mature, developing, and initiated based on the number of functions (provided for in the plan in specific aggregates), the presence of cross-municipal functions, and the effectiveness of operation. The drafting of the PRT was done by convening representatives of the Unions in advance, who, however, generally complain of a low level of agreement. In particular, the Unions point out the absence of a forum for constructive discussion with the regional body, in which effective administrations are valued. With reference to the criteria of the PRT, the Unions note that the "evaluation" of associated managements is carried out with descriptive parameters that are too rigid, which do not allow for an assessment of the concrete effectiveness of the contributions according to criteria of effectiveness and efficiency of administrative action. The PRT basically conceives of a single management model of Union, while the reality of the Bologna area is made up of

different institutional and organizational realities, which can be enhanced only with specific and elastic criteria.

In relation to the function's territorial governance, which includes Urban Planning, SUE/SUAP, Public Works, Environment and Energy, it appears to be too broad and uneven, far removed from the reality of current conferrals, land needs and municipal arrangements. Representatives of the Unions express concerns regarding the 'conformative' culture of the PRT, which may produce the side-effect of discouraging municipalities from proceeding with further conferrals. The Valli del Reno, Lavino e Samoggia Union exercises the urban planning function in associated form following the establishment of the Plan Office for the technical preparation of planning acts for subsequent adoption by the municipalities. This process no longer seems to comply with the criteria outlined in the PRT and the Regional Law on Urban Planning (No. 24/2017). If the function is conferred on the Union, the Union must also adopt in its governing bodies the planning acts.

The Metropolitan City tried to synthesize the positions of the Unions by convening a meeting of the Bureau attended by the relevant offices of the Region. At that meeting, it emerged that the Region is open to a dialogue aimed at updating the PRT criteria in the future, to adapt its policies for the enhancement of forms of association to the needs of the Bolognese reality. What also emerged overall was the need for the Metropolitan City to position itself as a strong interlocutor with the Region and to be able to make itself the bearer, with a larger "critical mass," of the needs of the Bologna area.

As already anticipated, institutional relations between the Metropolitan City and local authorities in the area are essentially developed through two governance instruments: the *Ufficio di Presidenza* (hereinafter UdP) and the Metropolitan Conference. The UdP composed of the Metropolitan Mayor and the Presidents of the 7 inter-municipal forms of association, is provided for by the Statute of the Metropolitan City and performs functions to support the work of the Metropolitan Conference with reference to institutional collaborations and synergies. Institutional collaborations are provided for in a specific Framework Convention and are developed through the relevant implementing agreements in the matters provided for in the Convention (MCBo, 2018). As of 2015, 23 implementing agreements have been signed. An additional forum for the Unions of Municipalities is The Administrative Coordination Table (*Tavolo Tecnico di Coordinamento*). This is composed of the General Secretaries/Directors of the Unions. is a technical

body for discussion on administrative legal issues relevant to the top management of the Unions.

From the interviews, it emerged that the institutional relationship between the Metropolitan City and Unions of Municipalities is judged on average positively. In almost unanimous opinion, it appears that the Metropolitan City of Bologna performs support and flanking functions deemed useful to Unions and Municipalities; however, difficulties remain, especially related to identifying a model of collaboration that allows for real participation. The UdP is recognised as a fundamental governance tool. However, some problems are highlighted. The Presidents of the Unions are recognised by the Metropolitan City as having a strong mediating role vis-à-vis the administrators of the municipalities. It is pointed out that the Coordination Table is not used as a preliminary investigative tool for the discussion of items placed before the UdP and, therefore, a lack of mirroring and symmetry in the functioning of the two bodies is lamented.

The role of the UdP is often seen as excessively sectoral, while the Unions consider it necessary to balance metropolitan policies through a more incisive role of the body. This is where the metropolitan vision, overall strategies and policy agenda should be defined. The president request to be able to propose topics and objects for the attention of the UdP and to allow the participation of the Unions' Councillors in cases of dealing with objects that require sectoral specialization.

During the interviews, a number of reflections were made on the role of the Technical Administrative Coordination Table, which is considered a body for technical-legal and strategic comparison but is little used despite its potential.

The most recurring theme is the need to encourage the participation of members, considering the difficulty for senior administrative leadership to move and manage time in a context of severe contraction of available human resources and a progressive increase in workloads. This calls for the scheduling of regular meetings, convocations made well in advance and using innovative tools for remote participation.

The main purposes of the table are identified (MCBo, 2021a)

- In the concertation of certain minimum standards of rights with regard to the services to be provided.
- In the harmonization of regulations through model schemes that set guidelines adaptable, however, to local needs.

- in building greater integration with the work of the UdP for a better relationship between technical investigations and policy guidelines.

The Unions believe that the metropolitan level is the optimal one for the exercise, especially, of staff functions, such as single competitions for recruitment and disciplinary proceedings, etc. They also unanimously highlight the need to establish an Office at the metropolitan level to monitor possible funding (European, state and regional), disclosing its existence and deadlines to the Unions.

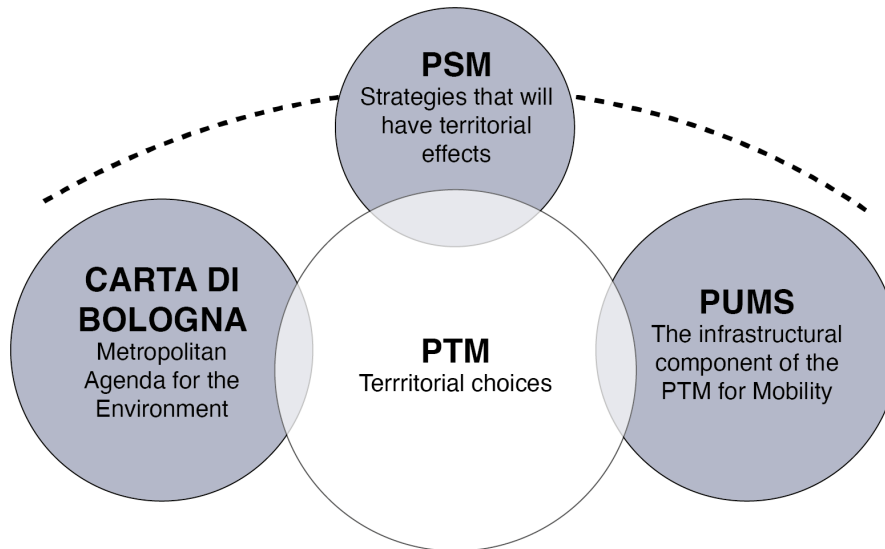
There emerges a need to feel more represented at higher levels of government, presiding over certain processes vis-à-vis the Region and the State. It is believed that the Region should recognize a more incisive and aggregating role for the Metropolitan City, for example, by involving it in the preparation of the Territorial Reorganization Program as a body that synthetically carries the needs of the Unions.

## **7.4 Spatial and strategic planning Instrument at metropolitan scale**

This section will describe the main planning instruments in charge of the Metropolitan City of Bologna. It will start with an introduction to the various instruments and their intercross relations. The first planning tool described will be the spatial planning tool, namely the PTM, and then move on to the strategic planning tool, PSM. Next, the PUMS, a sectoral type of strategic planning tool, then will be described, the Bologna Metropolitan Agenda (*Carta di Bologna*), a guideline documents with strategic, economic, and environmental target, and finally urban regeneration programs peculiar to the metropolitan city of Bologna will be highlighted.

Therefore, the first step is to systematize the various planning tools. As Figure 65 shows, the tool that serves as a reference and directs all other planning tools is the one of a strategic nature, the PSM. The PSM in this sense, gives an economic, social, cultural direction for the development of the entire territory. It also charges itself with defining strategies that will have direct territorial impacts (by identifying sectoral policies related to Urban and Environmental Regeneration and Mobility). It creates the conditions for choices that will change spatial planning and provides them with a more general political direction and meaning, authoritatively occupying a decision-making space that in the past spatial planning tended to make up for by expressing intentions and wishes that, in fact, did not have in the planning itself an effective possibility of feedback.





**Figure 65 - Scheme on relationship between metropolitan planning instruments in the MCB0.**  
**Source: Author's elaboration on MCB0, 2021a.**

The relationship of the PTM with the PSM involves the clear identification of the proper space of a plan that territorializes choices against a plan that offers the general framework of strategies.

The PUMS, on the other hand, marks its distance from the sectoral instruments that in the past dealt with infrastructure and transportation issues (regional instruments and municipal instruments). It succeeds in integrating environmental issues and articulates the theme of sustainable mobility at different scales and in different modes of transport. The PUMS, like the PSM, also develops and reworks a fundamental component of intermediate spatial planning that was previously included in the PTCP, giving it a relevance and quality never seen. For this reason, it is configured to all intents and purposes as an infrastructural "anticipation" of the PTM.

The relationship of the PTM with the Bologna Charter for the Environment is still different. The latter, adhering to European guidelines, takes the form of objectives expressed through targets and translated into actions, borrowing what has begun to be done with PAES and Climate Change Adaptation Plans. The modalities of the spatial translation are still very much open and will have to be found in the PTM. The metropolitan scale lends itself to the processing of most of the actions envisaged in the Charter, in fact already the PTCP, in its inclusive form,

included some aspects that now find extensive and circumstantial development in the Charter.

#### **7.4.1 The Metropolitan Territorial Plan - PTM**

The Metropolitan Territorial Plan of the metropolitan city of Bologna is a new-generation plan that acts as a collector of strategic planning, climate and sustainable energy plans, mobility plans, territorial and sectoral projects, picking up the legacy of the Provincial Territorial Coordination Plan and the structural planning of municipalities and their unions.

Concerning the formation of the PTM, it is important to highlight how there is a need to contextualize the period in which it took place. First of all, it should be considered that in a few years, the Metropolitan Strategic Plan (second generation) and the PUMS were drafted, which was followed by the signing of the "Bologna Charter for the Environment - Metropolitan Cities for Sustainable Development" with the driving role recognised and entrusted to the Municipality of Bologna. The second point to highlight, which is absolutely not trivial, is the regulatory framework within which the MNC should act. In particular, in 2017, the new regional urban planning law (Law No. 24 of 2017) was approved, which significantly modified the previous 20/2000, not only concerning municipal planning, which has significantly changed but also for the other planning levels (Region, Metropolitan City, Large Areas), clearly archiving the idea of planning by hierarchical levels. The last outline element to be emphasised is the legacy of the PTCP and municipal PSCs, to be revisited in light of the overall changed framework.

Going more into the details of the process, the formation of the PTM is accompanied by a consultation process that involves the Emilia-Romagna Region and environmental bodies, local governments, and all public and private stakeholders, individual or associated, interested in the Plan approval process (Figure 66).

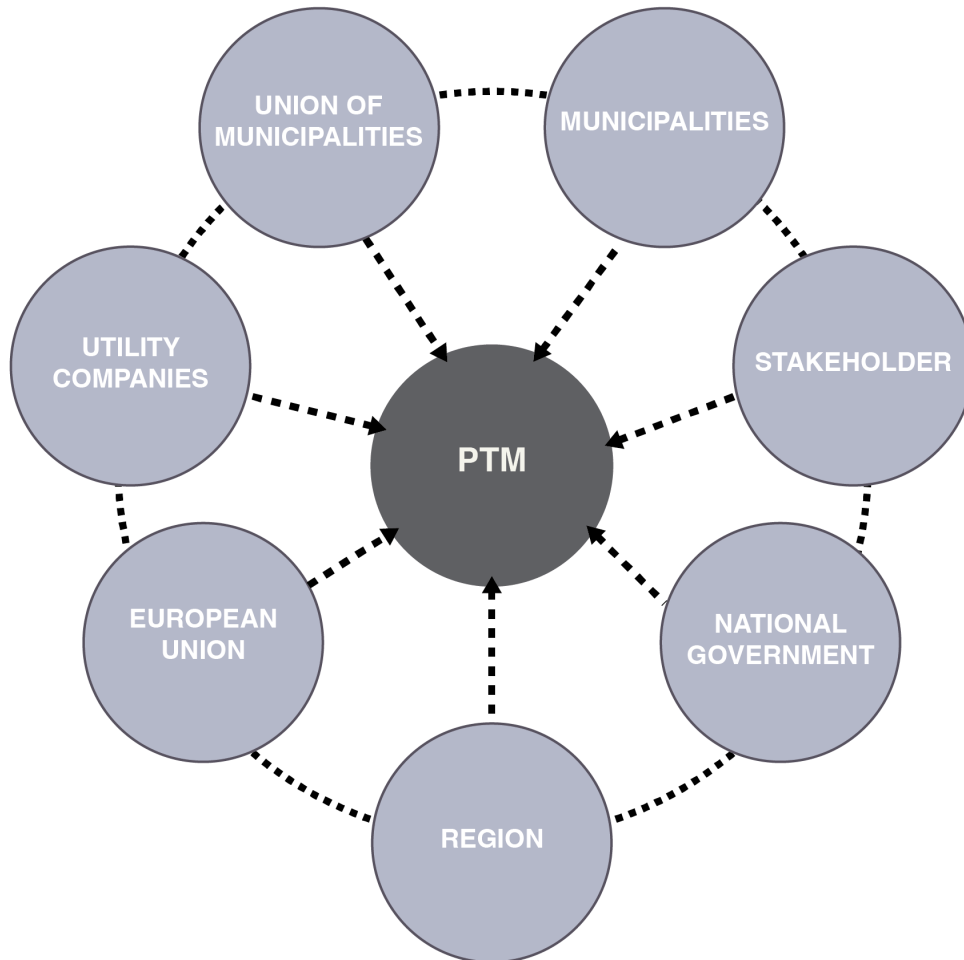
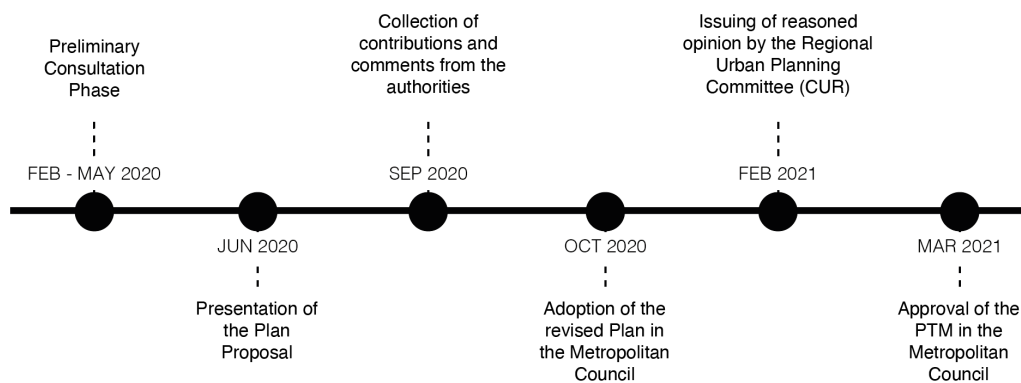


Figure 66 - Actors involved in the consultation process of PTM of MCBo. Source: Author's elaboration on MCBo, 2021a.

During the first consultation phase, strategic objectives and general choices were discussed, with the aim of enriching the path to the formation of the PTM with additional cognitive elements and proposals on contents to be deepened or included in the Plan. It was followed by two plenary meetings with excellent results in terms of participation. From a more technical point of view, in the same period, the Plan Office carried on thematic technical meetings with individual Environmental Authorities and the Region (Figure 67).

## THE PTM APPROVAL PROCESS



**Figure 67 - Timeline Approval Process of PTM of MCBo. Source: Author's elaboration on MCBo, 2021a.**

Very conscious of involving the territories (local administrators) at the forefront, the Metropolitan City carried out interviews with Mayors, Union Presidents, and Metropolitan Councillors to gather suggestions and proposals and to survey the expectations of the territory with respect to the Plan and new challenges, such as territorial attractiveness, habitability, promotion of sustainable development, and resilience. This activity was curated by *Fondazione Innovazione Urbana*. An active dialogue was also activated with the territory's stakeholders, economic and social forces, associations and citizenship, to make the planning process inclusive and participatory and to collect proposals and contributions useful in defining the contents of the PTM.

In relation to its implementation, the PTM is implemented through *Accordi Territoriali* (Art. 58, L.R. 24/2017), *Fondo Perequativo Metropolitan* (Art. 41, L.R. 24/2017), *Accordi di Programma* (Art. 59, L.R. 24/2017) and with Metropolitan Regeneration Programs. To the latter, they are regulated by the PTM and commit the MCBo to collaborate and provide technical support to municipalities and Unions of Municipalities. As a result of the comments, this concept was strengthened by introducing a new paragraph (Collaboration between Municipalities, Unions, and Metropolitan City to draft PUGs and Regeneration Programs).

Clearly, the effectiveness of the PTM's choices passes through the coordinated drafting of municipal and Union PUGs, within which local governments are called upon to decline the contents of municipal urban planning in a manner consistent with the PTM. Finally, in relation to the strategies that are declined in the PTM,

they are hinged around five major multi-objective challenges that decline the general objectives in relation to the specificities of the territories (MCBo, 2021a). These, are:

1. Protecting Soil, which aims to *ensure healthy food, clean air, abundant water, the most valuable resources that soil produces for the health of living things, countering settlement dispersion and safeguarding ecosystems.*
2. Ensuring Security, which aims to *secure land and people, considering the effects of the climate crisis and urban metabolism.*
3. Ensuring Inclusion and Liveability, which aims to *counter social, economic and environmental fragilities by triggering and directing processes of regeneration of urbanised territory.*
4. Attract sustainable investment, which aims to *promote attractiveness and accessibility, strengthening and qualifying metropolitan networks and nodes in a sustainable way.*
5. Apennines, Via Emilia and the Plains: a single territory, whose goal is to *strengthen territorial cohesion, managing land consumption quotas in a shared way and sharing economic resources equally.*

#### **7.4.2 The Metropolitan Strategic Plan – PSM**

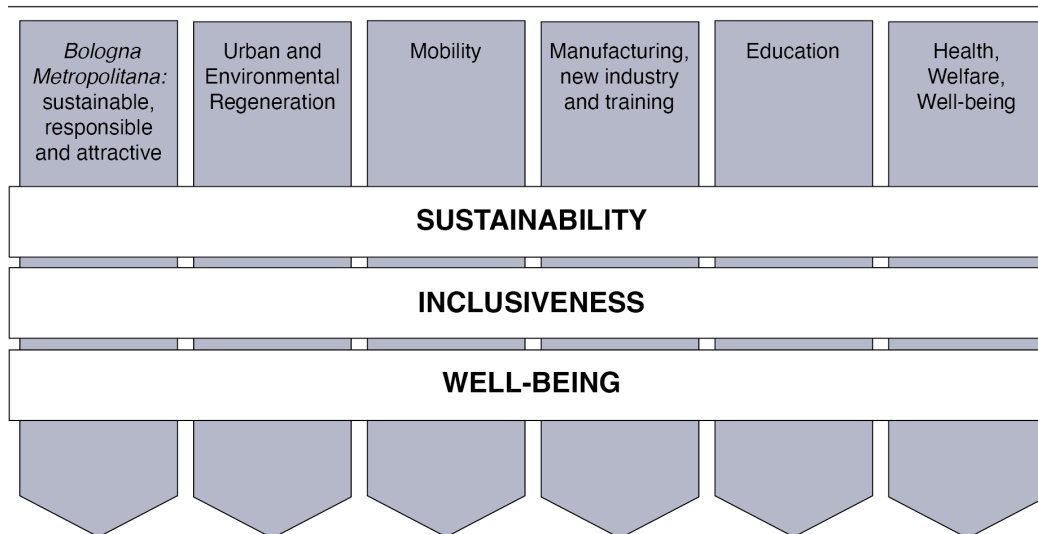
The PSM of the MCBo arises from the previous strategic planning experiences of wide area in its territory. In this sense, the Metropolitan City of Bologna, building on the tradition of the former Province, intends to strengthen the coordinating role of local authorities in the metropolitan area and institutional collaborations with a view to innovation aimed at effectiveness, cost-effectiveness of administrative action and improved relations with businesses and citizens in the area.

PSM constitutes, after the Metropolitan Statute, the fundamental act for the construction of a Metropolitan City that responds to this vision. It places its focus on the new entity, in fact, in the drafting period it was beginning to take full operational shape. It guides its constitution in a way that is coherent with the general institutional purposes attributed to it by law and the identity that has been recognised in these lands.

In this sense, the PSM marks an important change of direction for the entire metropolitan area, providing for the first time a unified framework in which institutions and operators share long-term strategies and medium-term goals and lines of action. The Metropolitan City of Bologna pursues its goals by identifying

sustainability, inclusiveness and attractiveness as the founding dimensions of the PSM. These three dimensions are pursued as a priority, in a cohesive and coordinated manner among different sectoral policies, and give substance to integrated action both vertically, among different levels of government, and horizontally, seeking the input and coordinated action of private, economic and noneconomic forces. The plan, therefore, assumes a central role in identifying actions to pursue targets on all dimensions (Figure 68).

**THE PRIORITIES AND SECTORIAL POLICIES OF THE PSM 2.0 OF MCBo**



**Figure 68 - Priorities and Sectorial Policies of the PSM 2.0 of the MCBo. Source: Author's elaboration on MCBo, 2021b.**

In relation to the path that led to the formation of the PSM, in continuity with the participatory and participatory work carried out for Bologna's first season of strategic planning, and following a vision of the Metropolitan City as an aggregating entity of the local authorities of the area, the Metropolitan City of Bologna together with the Unions of Municipalities decided to start the elaboration of this new Metropolitan Strategic Plan (PSM 2.0) through a path of listening and discussion with the territory.

During the preliminary phase of listening and analysis of the metropolitan context, the MCBo promoted a series of public events entitled '*La voce delle Unioni. Sei incontri per raccogliere idee, progetti e proposte per il Piano Strategico Metropolitano di Bologna*'. The contributions and reflections that emerged were fundamental in defining the guidelines of the PSM, which indicates cross-cutting objectives and factors for the new season of metropolitan strategic planning in Bologna.

Subsequently, at the beginning of 2017, the dialogue with the territory continued through a mapping of the actions that the Metropolitan City, the Unions of Municipalities and the Municipality of Bologna are carrying out in coherence with the guidelines. Specific meetings were then held with the Councils of the seven Unions and the Municipality of Bologna, which led to the elaboration of the report ‘*Città metropolitana, Unioni e Comune di Bologna: insieme per costruire il PSM 2.0*’. From this complex path emerged the themes and objectives that give substance to the PSM Preliminary Document, a starting point for developing that discussion with public and private entities essential to the definition of the final text.

Considering all the comments and contributions that arrived on the Preliminary Document, the ‘Plan Report’ was drafted and submitted to the approval process in June 2018. The new PSM was adopted by the Metropolitan Council, which, after the favourable opinion of the Metropolitan Conference of Mayors, finally approved it on July 11, 2018 (Figure 69).

#### THE PSM 2.0 APPROVAL PROCESS

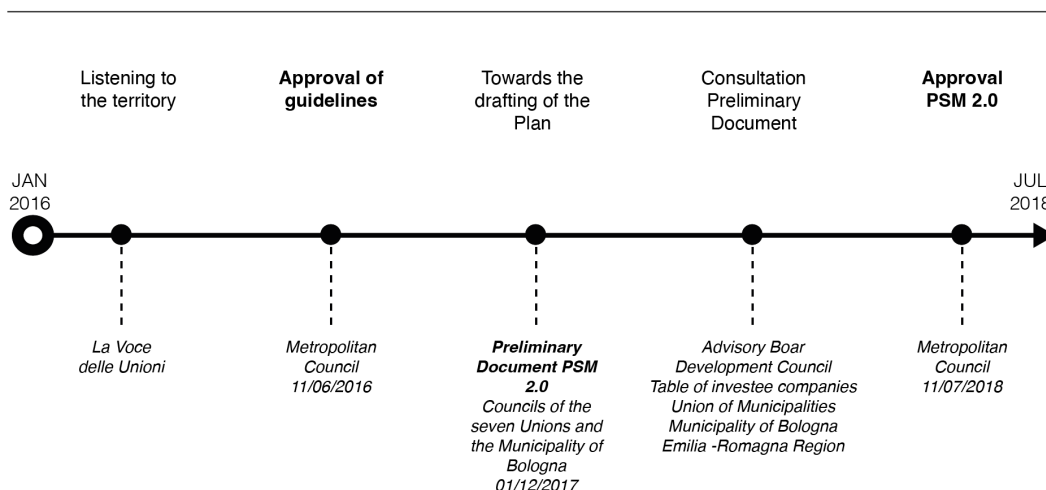


Figure 69 - Timeline of the PSM approval process. Source: Source: Author’s elaboration on MCB0, 2021b.

In relation to the contents and directions of the PSM, 5 strategic lines and 7 objectives have been defined for the next strategic planning season, outlining the metropolitan policy priorities necessary to organize, guide and select concrete projects and actions. The aim is to give a clear identity to the new vast area institution, understood as an institutional entity that in itself summarizes and combines local governments, to promote in a harmonious and coordinated way the economic and social development of the territory, to be a driving centre of the entire regional system, and to qualify itself in direct confrontation with national and

international interlocutors through the elaboration of medium- and long-term projects.

In the Policy Document, with the agreement of all the mayors and in tune with the priorities of regional policy, precise paths and declinations are indicated. Some highly shared needs are voiced and prioritised, and it is decided to follow well-specified development possibilities. In this sense, the PSM also operates by variable geographies, intervening in defined areas, primarily in the Bolognese Apennines, or along directions consistent with the logic of the different interventions and sectoral areas, and crosses the boundaries of the metropolitan area whenever intending to achieve the best result, it sees the need to work with the surrounding territories.

The strategic lines have emerged due to the recurrence of the themes in all the comparisons had in the area. As already anticipated the strategic lines identified are 5 (MCBo, 2021b):

1. the quality of life of citizens, in all its dimensions.
2. the relationship between education, research and manufacturing.
3. the strengthening of fast and sustainable mobility.
4. a new conjugation of the idea of urban regeneration.
5. the role of culture as an element of identity and attractiveness.

The strategic lines have been then combined with the 7 objectives that structure the PSM. In particular (MCBo, 2021b):

1. the identity of *Bologna Metropolitana*: an ideal place to live and to develop new projects.
2. urban and environmental regeneration for beautiful, safe and healthy cities.
3. more mobility and less greenhouse gases.
4. manufacturing, new industry and schools as engines of development.
5. *Bologna Metropolitana* as capital of cultural production and creativity. Open, free, easy access to knowledge.
6. a fair and equal education system from early childhood to university.
7. health and welfare: the welfare chain that generates wealth.

### **7.4.3 The Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan - PUMS**

The PUMS is framed as a mobility plan that is highly integrated with the policies of the Metropolitan City. It deals not only with mobility demand and transport supply, but also and above all with improving the quality of life in cities



and the territory, in coherence and synergy with the planning tools of the different sectors: transport, urban planning, environment, economic activities, etc.

The key concepts accompanying the connection between urban planning and sustainable mobility embrace three different spatial scale levels. At the regional level by placing the Metropolitan Railway Service at the centre as a key component of the regional strategy to ensure the compactness of urban centres, social cohesion and sustainability of the territory. At the metropolitan level by dictating as an indispensable condition the enhancement of Metropolitan Public Transport to ensure a sustainable development model for the settled system with the goal of zeroing out further settlement dispersion. Finally, at the local level by enhancing public space and the street as a shared space, no longer contested, together with the effective recomposition of conflicts of use both in urban areas and in the rest of the territory to ensure urban quality, liveability and safety, placing at the centre the needs of use and movement of the pedestrian and cyclist that intersect in various forms the public space.

In relation to the goals, the main goal of PUMS, is to reduce traffic emissions by 40 percent by 2030 compared to 1990 as proposed by the European Union to ensure compliance with the Paris Climate Accords. The ambitious Plan goal is in turn qualitatively declined into four general goals that the PUMS pursues: accessibility, climate protection, health and healthy air, and road safety, which in turn contribute to the fifth general goal that aims to make the Metropolitan City more attractive and liveable (Figure 70).

The general objectives of the PUMS, and in line with those set by the Ministerial Guidelines, are unpacked 21 specific objectives of the PUMS, which were subsequently questioned and evaluated together with citizens and stakeholders in the area through a dedicated participatory process.

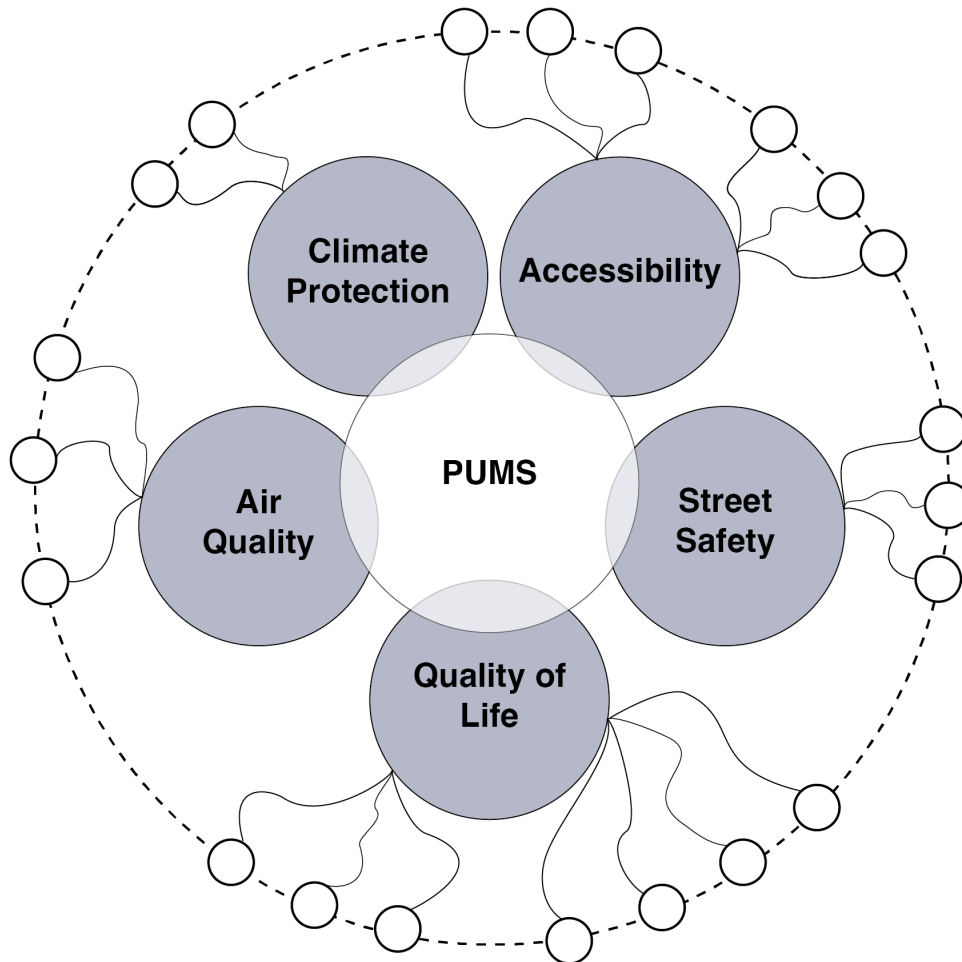


Figure 70 - The 5 General Goals of PUMS and their 21 OBs. Source: Author's elaboration on MCBo, 2019.

In relation to the plan formation process (Figure 71), the MCBo takes its first steps in September 2017 with the Presentation of the 'Guidelines' and the establishment of the Scientific Committee for the elaboration of the PUMS. All stages of drafting the PUMS of the Metropolitan City of Bologna were characterised by significant input from the participatory process. Stakeholders and citizens were involved in both the goal-setting phase and the operational choices phase. In addition, the participatory process made use of the continuous and active interaction with the Metropolitan Forum for Sustainable Mobility, established on November 21, 2017, and consisted of several phases, which partly overlapped with each other. The Metropolitan Bologna Sustainable Mobility Plan was adopted in November 2018.

The publication of the PUMS was followed by a long period of dissemination by the MCB0. Events aimed at disseminating the adopted PUMS were organised on different levels of communication. And this is how a series of important meetings were kicked off: the working table and discussion with stakeholders on strategic issues related to Shared Space, the meetings dedicated to Unions, public events in the SFM Stations.

On September 20, 2019, during European Mobility Week, the Metropolitan Forum for Sustainable Mobility was convened again. During the meeting, the main contents of the comments received from the adopted PUMS were explained, as well as a focus on cycling and public transport for projects already underway, including the first tramway line project.

#### THE PUMS APPROVAL PROCESS

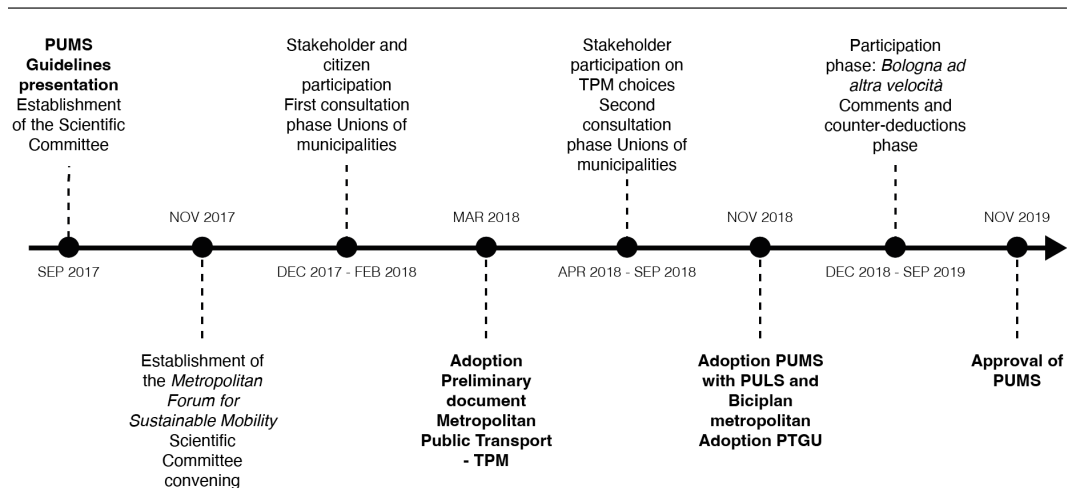


Figure 71 - The PUMS Approval Process in the MCB0. Source: Source: Author's elaboration on MCB0, 2019.

In relation to content, the PUMS gives indications aimed at countering settlement dispersion and directing the development of new residential, productive, and strategic interest settlements only where there are services of the TPM public transport carrier network and bicycle networks, capable of satisfying demand and constituting a real alternative to private transport. In particular, the PUMS takes the Metropolitan Railway Service (SFM) mesh as the foundational reference for spatial and urban development and settlement regeneration policies, together with the Metropolitan Biciplan network.

The strategy underlying the overall objectives of the PUMS is the definition of a new Metropolitan Public Transport (TPM) carrier network capable of overcoming

the capacity limitations of the current public transport offer and providing a competitive alternative to the use of the private car even for trips other than home-school and home-work trips, to complete the metropolitan carrier network, all in a single integrated metropolitan fare system and with a clear recognizability of the Public Transport service as a whole for citizens, city users and tourists. With the PUMS, therefore, Metropolitan Public Transport is born with a connected and integrated carrier network that transcends the concept of urban, suburban and suburban networks. In this sense, the PUMS structures the mass transit network into three components (Figure 72):

- Metropolitan core network - consisting of the SFM, the new Bologna tramway network and Metrobus lines (Level I) which it proposes to serve with systems similar to Bus Rapid Transit (BRT).
- Complementary network - consisting of the Bologna and Imola urban and suburban bus network and Level II and Level III suburban network.
- Complementary network - consisting of the local network i.e. low frequency or finalised and/or flexible local services (Level IV).

#### THE TPM CONCEPT

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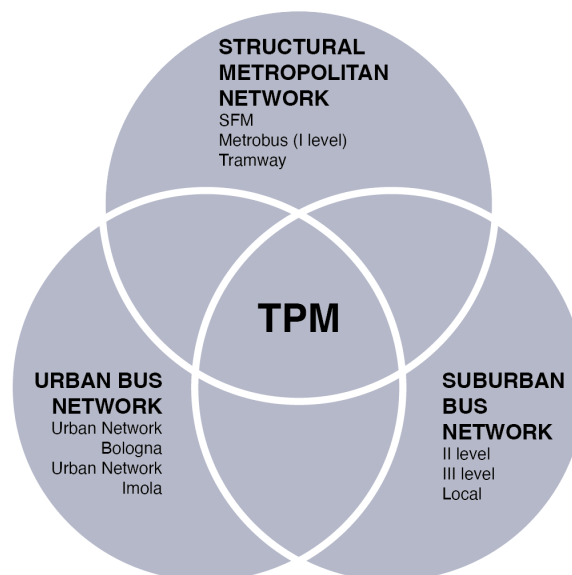


Figure 72 - The TPM concept within PUMS of MCBo. Source: Author's elaboration on MCBo, 2019.

Included in the TPM network are Mobility Centres as places par excellence where the concept of intermodality is expanded, linking different modes of

transport in a single node and offering a range of services and facilities spread throughout the territory.

In relation to bicycling, the PUMS with the metropolitan Biciplan aims at the definition of an integrated and extended project bicycle network throughout the metropolitan territory, classifying the network for daily mobility into strategic and integrative and devoting targeted attention to the development of the bicycle touring network. As far as Bologna is concerned, the document that the PUMS proposes to take as a reference is the Bologna Biciplan, both as an outline for the network of the municipal area and for the planning of the cycling connections proposed by the metropolitan Biciplan between the urban area of the capital and the municipalities of the first belt.

In a coordinated and integrated manner with the PUMS, the Sustainable Urban Logistics Plan (PULS) has been developed in which strategies for sustainable freight mobility are identified for both urban distribution logistics and industrial logistics. The PULS aims to achieve a freight transport system capable of responding to the widespread needs of the Metropolitan City while increasing the sustainability of logistics and transport activities, particularly for the main urban areas from the capital city.

#### **7.4.4 The Metropolitan Agenda 2.0 – An outcome of the ‘Bologna charter’**

As mentioned in the introductory paragraph, the Bologna Charter is a key document that integrates and interacts with other metropolitan planning tools. The Charter was born on the occasion of the Environment G7 hosted in Bologna in June 2017, in which the Metropolitan City of Bologna was among the initiators of the signing of the *‘Carta di Bologna per l’Ambiente’* among the 14 Metropolitan Cities.

The Charter is rooted in the goals of the UN 2030 Agenda and identifies eight themes related to SDG 11, "making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe and sustainable." Together with the Capital City and University, with the contribution of the Ministry of the Environment, the Metropolitan City of Bologna becomes the leader of the Covenant between Cities. Path that in 2018/2019 led to the birth of the first Agenda for Sustainable Development. Structured in eight chapters as well as the themes of the Bologna Charter, it is developed according to the following articulation: framing of the theme (with references to national and international guidelines); objectives and targets (taken from the Bologna Charter);

baseline (territorial governance, Indicators); strategies and actions (strategies to 2030, ongoing actions, medium-term actions). Agenda 2.0 includes economic and social goals and indicators in order to extend the purely environmental dimension of the first Agenda, making it interact with planning and programming tools in force or under approval. Agenda 2.0 is formed for each Goal by ‘core’ goals and indicators with the comparison between the different levels (national, regional, Metropolitan City, Municipality of Bologna and Unions of Municipalities) and the distance to the goal. There are also the main actions in place or planned at the different levels (Programmatic Scenario) and additional actions needed to achieve the Goals (Target Scenario, 2020 Regional Jobs and Climate Pact and 2021 Metropolitan Jobs and Sustainable Development Pact).

The objective is to make Agenda 2.0 a device for guiding and integrating planning and programming tools through the experimental formulation of a model DUP of the Metropolitan City consistent with the objectives of Agenda 2.0 and PSM 2.0, which is exportable to the level of both Unions of Municipalities and Municipalities (MCBo, 2024).

The project involves the activation of pilot projects, which radicalize sustainable development in the Bologna area:

- Transition to circular economy in the hill and mountain territory of the Metropolitan City of Bologna
- Pre-feasibility study on the reorganization of public transport services in productive areas
- Guidelines for metropolitan forestation
- Operation Center & Cities Web

Parallel and transversal actions concern communication and dissemination activities on sustainable development inside and outside the entity, with a special focus on school communities and Metropolitan City employees and the involvement of local institutions and stakeholders.

#### **7.4.5 Metropolitan Program of Urban Regeneration**

The Metropolitan City has prioritised the urban regeneration theme, which is fundamental in the future development of cities and the protection of rural land. To foster this virtuous process, it has implemented ambitious spatial and strategic planning and programming tools, which are complemented by the Metropolitan Regeneration Programs, provided for in Art. 52 of the PTM, whose purpose is to

promote the culture of urban regeneration and economically support the implementation of projects and interventions in municipalities and unions.

The Metropolitan Territorial Plan, taking advantage of the opportunities offered by Emilia-Romagna's new urban planning law, has established the *Fondo Perequativo Metropolitan* (FPM). This instrument aims to redistribute on a metropolitan scale the financial resources resulting from the most significant transformations of the territory. The Municipalities have committed to allocate to the Fund a share equal to 50% of the secondary urbanisation charges, the extraordinary contribution and the monetisation of areas for territorial endowments, relating to urban interventions of metropolitan importance, both inside and outside the urbanised territory, in addition to the transformations involving land consumption pursuant to LR 24/2017. These resources are then periodically distributed to the local authorities of the metropolitan territory - municipalities and Unions - through the Metropolitan Regeneration Programmes, by means of calls for tenders aimed at selecting networks of urban regeneration interventions that give priority support to the areas with the greatest social, economic and demographic fragility, located mainly in the lower plains and upper Apennines.

The metropolitan regeneration programs aggregate the project proposals of the municipalities or Unions, promoting integration between sectors and levels of action of the public administration, with well-defined priority themes or thematic profiles, such as the regeneration of disused and degraded areas for the enhancement of public services, the qualification of public spaces in residential and productive areas, the enhancement of active mobility nodes and networks and public transport interchange places, and the promotion of interventions to combat climate change in favour of resilience and territorial safety.

The first call for programs, published in June 2023 and still under evaluation, provides around EUR 2.3 million for urban regeneration interventions related to the themes of energy autonomy, energy efficiency and energy poverty reduction, through the use of renewable energy sources and the creation of energy communities. In the course of 2022, an initial use of FPM resources allowed the Unions, thanks to the allocation of a total of 700.000 euro, to draw up technical-economic feasibility projects in view of the first call for tenders, in addition to the drafting of guidelines edited by the Metropolitan City, published in April 2023.

These guidelines define the structure and thematic profiles of the Metropolitan Regeneration Programmes, providing operational support to municipalities in

addressing the issue of regeneration also within the elaboration of the General Urban Plans.

To consolidate these first large-scale urban regeneration practices, the Metropolitan City has established the *Officine di Rigenerazione Metropolitana* (ORME), a new organisational tool for administrative innovation. The ORMEs are a place for coordination and confrontation of the offices involved in urban regeneration activities, with the aim of increasing the connections and multidisciplinary skills needed to bring regeneration processes to fruition, from planning to actual implementation.

The central '*Officina*', located in the Metropolitan City, collaborates with the local workshops of the Unions and Municipalities to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of metropolitan regeneration interventions, in a territorial network perspective. It performs a coordinating function with respect to the seven Unions of the metropolitan territory, carrying out analysis and research activities on urban regeneration issues, favouring the comparison with the different actors of regeneration, elaborating and updating tools to support regeneration, monitoring the status of projects and land consumption, organising dissemination activities on regeneration issues, supporting Unions and Municipalities in the drafting of projects and feasibility studies, and managing programs of interventions financed and to be financed. At the same time, the local workshops identify the areas in which urban regeneration projects can be activated, also through the reconnaissance of disused areas and interlocutions with stakeholders. In addition, they plan regeneration actions and, once they have obtained the necessary resources, they implement and manage them in synergy with the implementing subjects, usually consisting of the municipalities belonging to the Unions.

## **7.5 The Supra-local programming – The role of the MCBo between cohesion policy and PNRR**

This section will highlight the relationship and role of the MCBo with supra-local programming, and with cohesion policy and the PNRR. Methodologically, a quantitative analysis will be made of 2014-2020 programming and a qualitative analysis of 2021-2027. This section is divided into three parts. In the first part, the topic of cohesion policy in the regional context is framed. In the second part, the focus shifts to the metropolitan level. Finally, the third part focuses on the PNRR and its relationship with the metropolitan city.



### **7.5.1 The cohesion policy in the region**

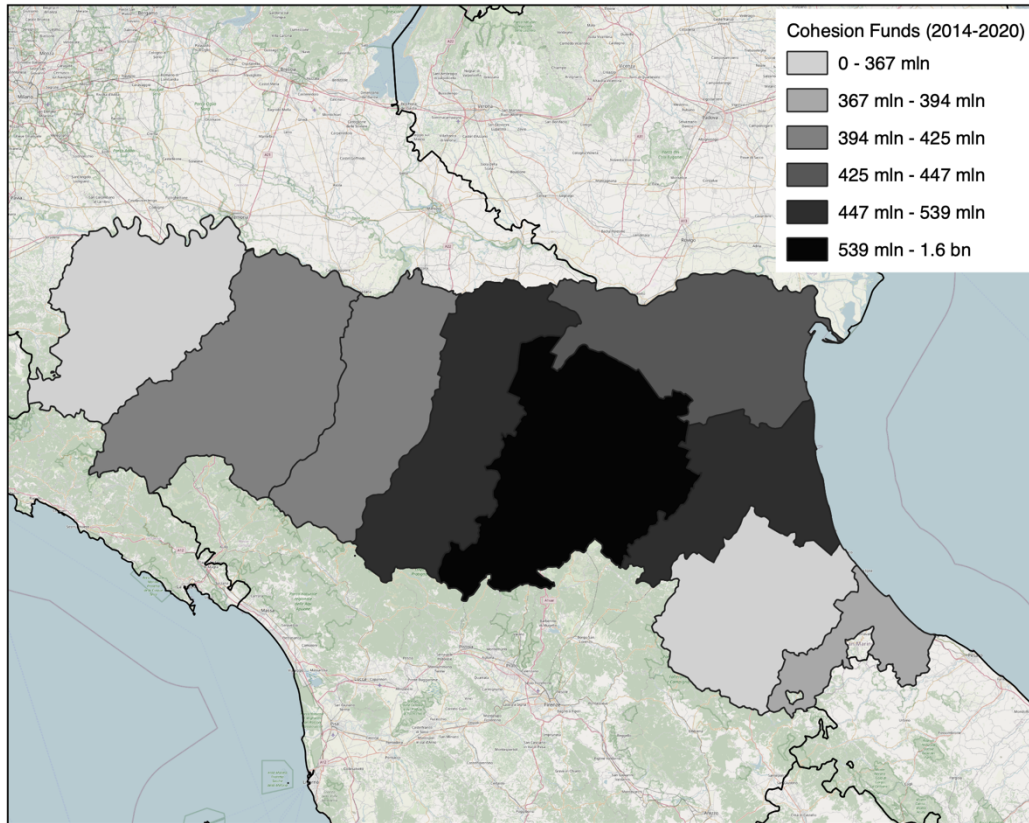
From 2007 to date, the value of projects supported by cohesion policies in Emilia-Romagna has exceeded 8 billion euros, of which around 7 billion involve projects financed in the 2014-2020 programming period.

For the 2014-2020 programming period, the Emilia-Romagna region has allocated 393.1 million from the European Social Fund and 240.9 million from the European Regional Development Fund. These resources added with the contribution from the European Fund for Rural Development of 513 million and regional and national co-financing brings the total resources to 2.5 million for the seven-year period 2014-2020.

In the 2014-2020 programming cycle of European funds, the Emilia-Romagna Region directly managed about 2.5 billion euros. The Region in this sense pursues an integrated approach to coordinate and converge the policies implemented through the available programming tools, starting with the ROP ERDF, the ROP ESF and the RDP. These European funds are allocated by the European Commission to each country based on Partnership Agreements that define the country system strategy and National Operational Programs and Regional Operational Programs through which the strategy is implemented. For the Emilia-Romagna region, the planned EU resources are 1.147 billion euros for the ERDF ROP, ESF ROP and RDP. To these are added state and regional resources, for a total of 2.457 billion euros.

To these resources are added quotas derived from the National Operational Programs Education, Employment, Inclusion, Metropolitan Cities, Governance-Networks-Technical Assistance, Youth Employment Initiative (*Garanzia giovani*), as well as ERDF resources derived from the participation of the region and the regional territory in European Territorial Cooperation (Interreg) projects.

The implementation of the Regional Operational Programs takes place through public calls or notices for the submission of projects related to the content of the axes provided by each program.



**Figure 73 - Cohesion funds 2014-2020 allocated by provinces. Source: Open Coesione, 2024. Author's elaboration.**

From Figure 73, it can be seen how funds from the 2014-2020 programming landed on the territory of the region of Emilia-Romagna. What clearly emerges is how the distribution of funds and projects is mainly concentrated on the territory of the metropolitan city of Bologna. In relation to projects, along with the metropolitan city of Bologna (with over 8.000 projects, the other provinces on which many projects fall are the provinces of Modena (6.025) and Reggio Emilia (4.098). All the other provinces vary in terms of projects between 2.500 and 3.000 approximately. By highlighting the 'cohesion resource cost,' which represents the share of the monitored public cost that is financed by European and national cohesion policy resources, a clear disparity emerges between the resources that 'land' in the metropolitan city of Bologna and the other provinces in the region. This, consequently, is also reflected in per capita costs. The metropolitan city of Bologna, in this sense, has the highest value on per capita costs (€1.716) (Table 23).

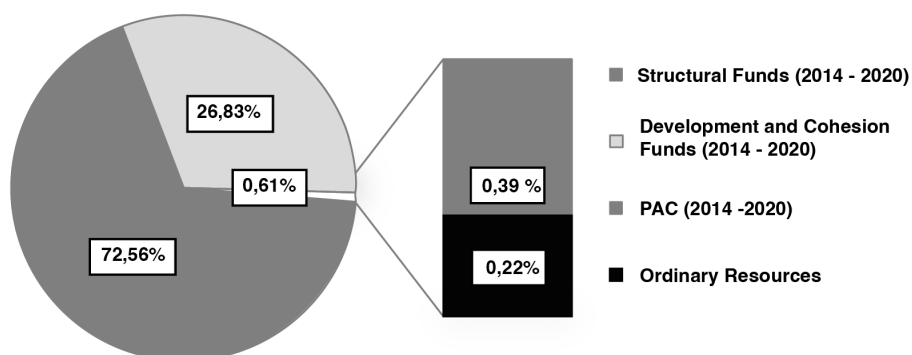
**Table 23 - Data of Cohesion funds from 2014-2020 programming period.**

|                      | <b>Projects</b> | <b>Cohesion Payment</b> | <b>Cohesion resource cost</b> | <b>Cost per capita</b> |
|----------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Bologna</b>       | 8.070           | 1.066.507.846           | 1.523.968.128                 | 1.716                  |
| <b>Ferrara</b>       | 2.472           | 257.897.386             | 421.682.457                   | 1.249                  |
| <b>Forli-Cesena</b>  | 3.517           | 214.859.387             | 333.865.797                   | 936                    |
| <b>Modena</b>        | 6.025           | 328.227.374             | 473.544.537                   | 765                    |
| <b>Parma</b>         | 3.200           | 231.734.765             | 366.663.574                   | 957                    |
| <b>Piacenza</b>      | 3.003           | 162.750.090             | 274.406.771                   | 1.203                  |
| <b>Ravenna</b>       | 2.997           | 298.169.855             | 428.760.010                   | 1.320                  |
| <b>Reggio Emilia</b> | 4.098           | 244.195.518             | 370.422.883                   | 800                    |
| <b>Rimini</b>        | 3.197           | 234.044.550             | 360.734.978                   | 1.204                  |

**Source: Open Coesione, 2024**

From a qualitative point of view, it is useful to highlight the origin of resources. Specifically, the 72.56 % of funds come from structural funds, 26.8 from the Development and Cohesion Fund, and finally less than 1 % from CAP and ordinary resources (Figure 74, Table 24).

**SOURCE OF FUNDS - EMILIA - ROMAGNA**



**Figure 74 - Source of Funds (2014 - 2020 programming period) Emilia-Romagna. Source: Open Coesione, 2024**

**Table 24 - Most Financed Programs (2014 - 2020), Emilia - Romagna**

| <b>Source</b>                           | <b>Programme</b>                         | <b>Funds</b>  |
|---|--|---------------|
| Structural Funds 2014-2020              | <i>PON FESR IMPRESE E COMPETITIVITA'</i> | 3.278.066.762 |
| Development and Cohesion Fund 2014-2020 | <i>PSC REGIONE EMILIA ROMAGNA</i>        | 1.053.241.940 |
| Structural Funds 2014-2020              | <i>POR ESF EMILIA-ROMAGNA</i>            | 944.376.242   |

|   |   |             |
|---|---|-------------|
| Structural Funds 2014-2020              | <i>POR FESR EMILIA-ROMAGNA</i>  | 590.439.840 |
| Structural Funds 2014-2020              | <i>PON INIZIATIVA OCCUPAZIONE GIOVANI</i>                                     | 541.847.862 |
| Development and Cohesion Fund 2014-2020 | <i>PSC MINISTERO DELLE INFRASTRUTTURE E DEI TRASPORTI</i>                     | 455.193.047 |
| Development and Cohesion Fund 2014-2020 | <i>PSC MINISTERO DELLE IMPRESE E DEL MADE IN ITALY</i>                        | 356.843.416 |
| Structural Funds 2014-2020              | <i>PON ESF SISTEMI DI POLITICHE ATTIVE PER L'OCCUPAZIONE</i>                  | 246.540.000 |
| Structural Funds 2014-2020              | <i>PON FESR ESF CITTA' METROPOLITANE</i>                                      | 206.577.715 |
| Structural Funds 2014-2020              | <i>PON FESR ESF PER LA SCUOLA - COMPETENZE E AMBIENTI PER L'APPRENDIMENTO</i> | 185.990.879 |

**Source: Open Coesione, 2024**

At the regional level, it is useful to have an idea of the distribution of funds at the municipal level as well. Specifically, in the case of the RDP and ERDF ROP, interventions are localised according to the specific rules of the programs (generally referring to the actual location, when possible, or the location of the grantee), while in the case of the ESF ROP, interventions are localised according to the personal residence of the final beneficiaries.

Observed at the municipal level, the aid intensity (the subsidies granted per inhabitant) of European programs is favourable to weaker areas, consistent with the approach of the Cohesion and Rural Development Policy. As shown in the map, the darker municipalities (corresponding to those with higher per capita contributions granted) are located mainly in the Apennines and Basso Ferrarese, which are also the areas with lower population density and a persistent tendency to depopulation. Instead, the programs - and the different axes and actions that constitute them - tend to operate in a complementary way with each other, even from a territorial point of view.

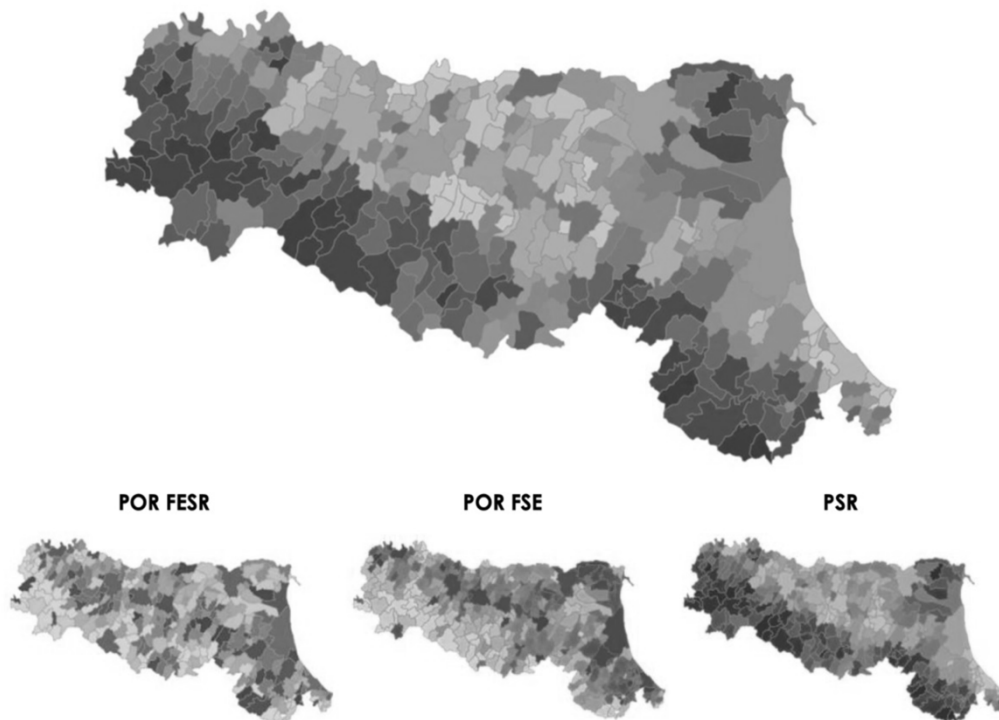


Figure 75 - Funds allocated per capita. Source: Auhtor's elaboration on Regione Emilia-Romagna, 2021b.

The Figure 75 show how the joint use of the three funds while respecting the specific characteristics of each one, allows for action in the areas of the region that need a higher intensity of structural interventions.

The map for the RDP is substantially in line with the overall map, showing clearly higher aid intensities in the Apennines and Basso Ferrarese and lower ones in the capital cities and more urban and industrialised municipalities in general. In contrast, the spatial distribution of contributions granted by the ERDF ROP is concentrated in the wide functional area around the Via Emilia, not only in the provincial capital cities and industrial municipalities of the *pedemontana* area. The area of the Apennines and Basso Ferrarese show in this case, on average, a lower intensity of aid, although with several exceptions due to a different production context. The distribution of ESF ROP contributions also tends to be more concentrated in lowland municipalities, a fact that also depends on the relatively larger share of young and working-age population (who represent the final recipients of the actions) in these municipalities compared to mountain municipalities.

In the programming 2021-2027, more attention must be paid to the stitching up of territorial disparities and compensation for the disadvantaged conditions of the weakest areas of the territory, consistent with the objectives outlined in the 2020-2025 Mandate Program (*Programma di Mandato*) and the Pact for Work and Climate (*PLC, Patto per il Lavoro e il Clima*).

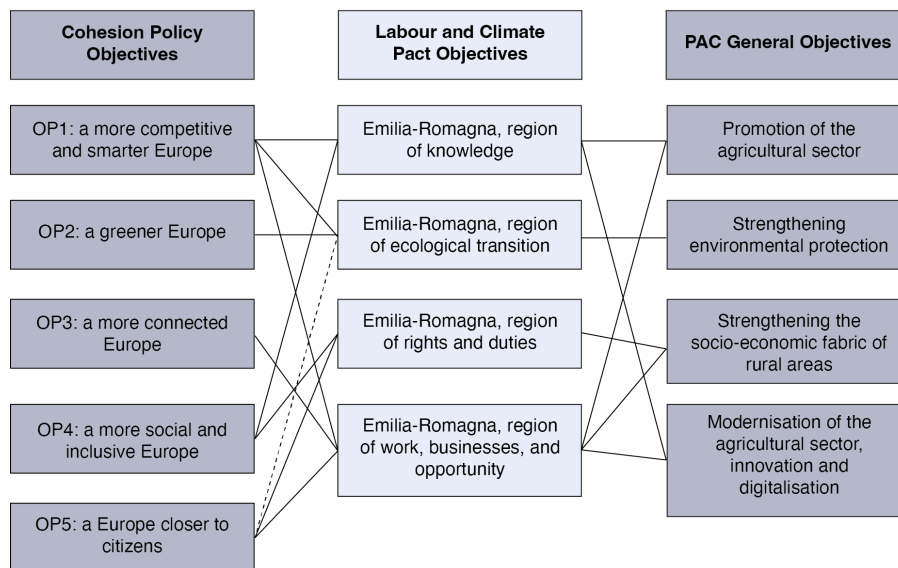
The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the regional economy and society, and the sharing through the signing of the Pact for and Climate, of a new project for the revitalization and development of the regional territory, required an update of the guidelines for unitary planning. The Regional Strategic Document 2021-2027 (*Documento Strategico Regionale, DSR*) directs the choices of the ESF, ERDF, EAFRD and FSC operational programs in order to maximize the contribution of European and national funds to the achievement of the objectives of the 2020-2025 Mandate Program, as well as to contribute to the realization of the project for the revitalization and sustainable development of Emilia-Romagna outlined by the Pact. The DSR embraces the objectives of the Council's Mandate Program, which represent the strategic lines of the project for the revitalization and development of the regional territory shared by the territorial system through the Jobs and Climate Pact (Regione Emilia-Romagna, 2021b)

- Emilia-Romagna, region of knowledge
- Emilia-Romagna, region of ecological transition
- Emilia-Romagna, region of rights and duties
- Emilia-Romagna, region of work, businesses, and opportunity

In this sense, it is interesting to note how the joint programming of European and national funds 2021-2027 fits into this strategic design, making a relevant contribution to achieving its objectives.

As can be seen in Figure 76, the objectives of the PLC are variously correlated with the five Policy Objectives of the Cohesion Policy and the four General Objectives of the PAC post-2022, also acting as a driver for the integration between them.

**CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN LABOUR AND CLIMATE PACT OBJECTIVES, COHESION POLICY OBJECTIVES AND PAC**



**Figure 76 – Correspondence between PLC, CP and PAC objectives. Source: Author’s elaboration on Regione Emilia-Romagna, 2021b.**

As part of the programming of European funds 2021-2027 and in particular under the objective (P5) ‘A Europe closer to the citizens’, the Emilia-Romagna Region, as already mentioned in the previous paragraph, has decided to promote two types of territorial strategies: the ATUSS, aimed at cities and intermediate urban systems, and the STAMI, which involve municipalities in the Apennines and the most fragile and peripheral municipalities of the Region.

The Territorial Strategies represent a new model of intervention, characterised by participatory planning shared with local communities, created to contribute to the achievement of the goals of the Jobs and Climate Pact and the Agenda 2030 Regional Strategy for Sustainable Development, particularly to achieve the ambitious goals of ecological transition and digital transformation.

The Territorial Strategies are supported by multiple funds: mainly through the ERDF Regional Program, with the contribution of resources from the ESF+ Program; complementary contributions are made by the Development and Cohesion Fund (FSC), other regional funds and, in the case of STAMI, important support is expected from EAFRD resources. The Strategies promote synergies with other European funds, starting with the considerable resources of the PNRR in favour of the territories, the Interreg European territorial cooperation projects and the programs managed directly by the European Commission (Horizon Europe, LIFE, Erasmus+, Creative Europe, etc.).



The Emilia-Romagna Region has approved 14 ATUSS strategies involving the nine provincial capital cities, the Municipality of Cesena with some municipalities of the Valle del Savio Union (Mercato Saraceno, Montiano and Sarsina) and four intermediate urban territorial systems: Nuovo Circondario Imolese, Unione Terre d'Argine, Unione Bassa Romagna, Unione Romagna Faentina. Nine STAMI areas have been identified and financed: in addition to the four SNAI 2014-20 pilot areas, five new areas have been identified, to cover the entire Apennine region: the East Parma Apennines, the Forlivese and Cesenate Apennines, the Modenese Apennines, the Alta Val Trebbia and Val Tidone, and the Bolognese Apennines (Figure 77).

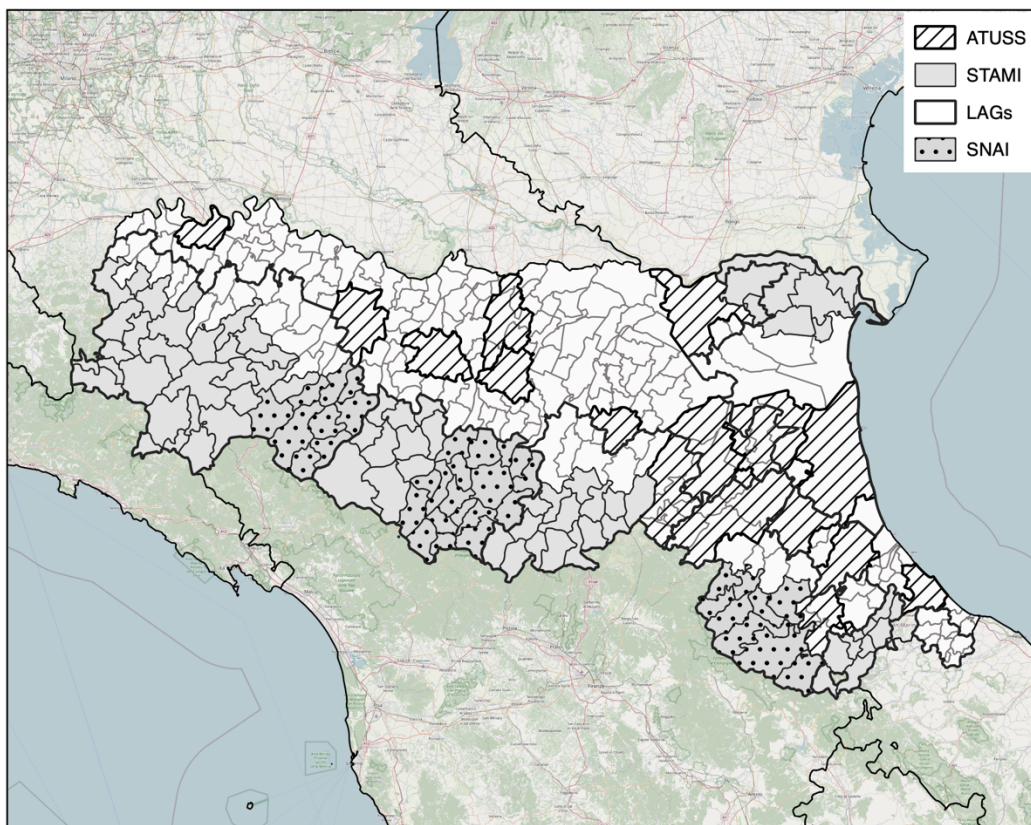


Figure 77 - ATUSS, STAMI, LAG and SNAI in the Emilia-Romagna region. Source: Author's elaboration on Regione Emilia-Romagna, 2021b.

### 7.5.2 The cohesion policy in the MCBo

This section will describe how Cohesion funds have landed within the MCBo. As described earlier, the quantitative analyses focus on the 2014-2020

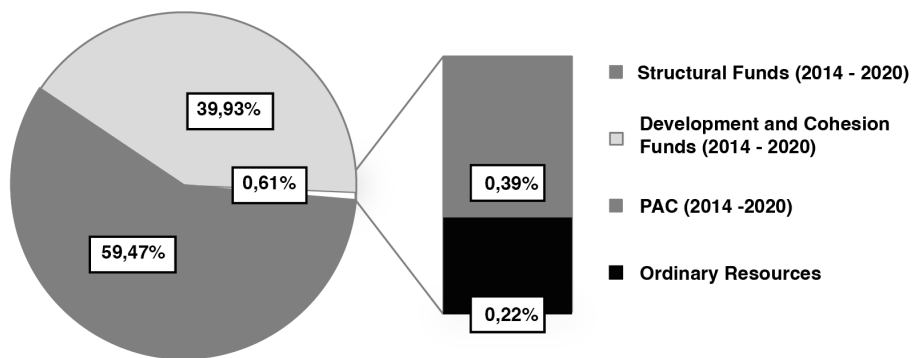


programming. An analytical description of the funds landed follows in the section with some qualitative focus on a few programs deemed interesting to highlight.

First, it is important to highlight how within the metropolitan city of Bologna, during the 2014-2020 Programming approximately 1.8 billion euros landed, between funds strictly related to cohesion policy (1.5 billion), and funds attracted complementary to them.

In more detail, as shown in Figure 78, about 60 % of the funds come from the Structural Funds. About 40 %, on the other hand, are related to the Development and Cohesion Fund. Finally, 0.6 % of the funds come from the PAC and Ordinary Resources (mainly linked contributions earmarked for inner areas).

**SOURCE OF FUNDS - METROPOLITAN CITY OF BOLOGNA**



**Figure 78 - Source of Funds (2014 - 2020) MCB0. Source: Open Coesione, 2024. Author's elaboration.**

The distribution of funds, shown by Figure 79, shows how there is a clear polarization of funds on the capital city, Bologna, and in the municipalities of the first belt. Further peaks are registered, even if with lower absolute values than those recorded in Bologna, in the municipalities of Imola, Sant'Agata Bolognese, San Giovanni in Persiceto and Zola Pedrosa. Instead, it seems clear that there is an obvious lower sum of funds landed in the Bolognese Apennines. Taking into consideration the map linked to the distribution of RDP funds at the regional level shown in the previous paragraph it seems however evident that the Bolognese Apennines is the territory that has least managed to catch the funds.

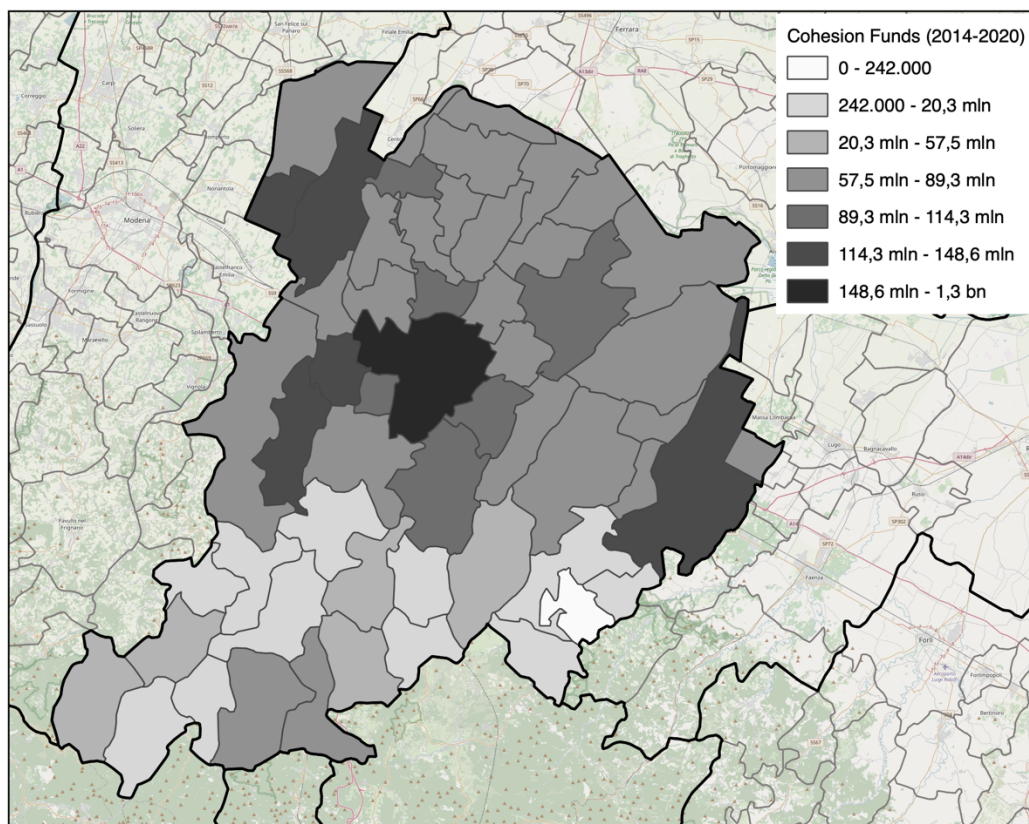


Figure 79 - Cohesion funds 2014-2020 allocated within MCBo. Source: Author's elaboration on Open Coesione, 2024.

Table 25 - Most Financed Programs (2014 – 2020) on the MCBo.

| Source                                  | Programme  | Funds       |
|---|--|-------------|
| Structural Funds 2014-2020              | <i>POR ESF EMILIA-ROMAGNA</i>                          | 406.237.715 |
| Development and Cohesion Fund 2014-2020 | <i>PSC REGIONE EMILIA ROMAGNA</i>                      | 306.015.145 |
| Structural Funds 2014-2020              | <i>POR FESR EMILIA-ROMAGNA</i>                         | 267.624.677 |
| Structural Funds 2014-2020              | <i>PON FESR ESF CITTA' METROPOLITANE</i>               | 206.577.715 |
| Development and Cohesion Fund 2014-2020 | <i>PSC MINISTERO DELLE IMPRESE E DEL MADE IN ITALY</i> | 146.904.118 |
| Development and Cohesion Fund 2014-2020 | <i>PSC CITTA' METROPOLITANA DI BOLOGNA</i>             | 122.439.345 |
| Structural Funds 2014-2020              | <i>PON FESR ESF RICERCA E INNOVAZIONE</i>              | 85.065.924  |

|  |   |            |
|--|---|------------|
| Development and Cohesion<br>Fund 2014-2020 | <i>PSC MINISTERO DELLE<br/>INFRASTRUTTURE E DEI TRASPORTI</i> | 77.434.880 |
|--|---|------------|

**Source: Open Coesione, 2024**

As anticipated in the introduction to the section, a brief focus will be made on some programs deemed interesting within the metropolitan city under study. For the Metropolitan City of Bologna, it was decided to highlight the Fund for Development and Cohesion 2014-2020 and its Operational Plan, and the Strategic Metropolises project related to the NOP METRO that saw MCBo at the forefront.

### ***FSC 2014-2020 – ‘Patto per Bologna metropolitana’***

More than the description of the fund, in this paragraph it is intended to highlight the process related to the MCBO Operational Plan. In particular, there are two key moments, the first being the program agreement, signed on 09/16/2017, ‘Interventions for the economic development, social and territorial cohesion of the Emilia-Romagna region’ between the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, the Emilia-Romagna Region and the Metropolitan City of Bologna. This agreement provides for the implementation of a program of interventions aimed at the socioeconomic development of the Region and the Metropolitan City. The second, when the FSC Operational Plan 2014-2020 of the Metropolitan City of Bologna was approved, later merged into the new ‘Development and Cohesion Plan of the Metropolitan City of Bologna’.

The plan, initially was structured on 3 thematic areas (infrastructure, environment, tourism, culture and enhancement of natural resources), to which, following the amending Act of the Agreement signed on December 21, 2018, the thematic area ‘Strengthening of the PA’ was added, with the provision of a specific ‘Technical Assistance Line’ to support the implementation of the Plan, amounting to €1.070.000 corresponding to 1% of the FSC resources allocated to the Metropolitan City.

The program has a value of €119.722.790, of which €107.000 is FSC 2014-2020 resources, and €12.722.790 charged to co-financing from local resources. The Metropolitan City has thus simplified the management, monitoring, and reporting methods of the resources of the Development and Cohesion Fund through a reclassification of the interventions already financed, confirming the entire amount of 107 million. Nowadays, the set of 30 interventions financed with FSC 2014-2020 resources alone constitutes the Development and Cohesion Plan of the Metropolitan City of Bologna, the new planning tool of the Authority.

The new Plan is divided into 7 Thematic Areas (Energy, Environment and Natural Resources, Culture, Transportation and Mobility, Urban Redevelopment, Education and Training, and Administrative Capacity) to which 30 strategic projects, identified considering the priorities shared by the Metropolitan City, Unions of Municipalities and Municipalities) are attached as follows:

**Table 26 - Overview interventions financed by FSC2014 - 2020**

| <b>Thematic Area</b>                       | <b>No. Strategic Interventions</b> | <b>Total Cost</b> | <b>FSC 2014 – 2020</b> | <b>Other resources</b> |
|--|------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>1.Energy</b>                            | 1                                  | 989.192           | 989.192                | 0                      |
| <b>2.Environment and Natural Resources</b> | 9                                  | 2.035.293         | 1.990.357              | 44.936                 |
| <b>3.Culture</b>                           | 3                                  | 4.830.000         | 3.500.000              | 1.330.000              |
| <b>4.Transportation and Mobility</b>       | 4                                  | 44.403.402        | 40.164.949             | 4.238.453              |
| <b>5.Urban Redevelopment</b>               | 2                                  | 29.600.101        | 29.600.101             | 0                      |
| <b>6.Education and Training</b>            | 10                                 | 29.675.758        | 29.675.758             | 0                      |
| <b>7.Administrative Capacity</b>           | 1                                  | 1.079.643         | 1.079.643              | 0                      |
| <b>Total</b>                               | 30                                 | 112.613.389       | 107.000.000            | 5.613.389              |

Source: MCB0, 2023.

The 30 interventions financed by FSC resources are divided into two types depending on the Implementing Entity:

- 17 interventions are owned by the Metropolitan City, in that the Implementing Subjects are the Unions of Municipalities and Municipalities
- 13 interventions are under the ownership of the Metropolitan City, i.e., the structures of the entity are the Implementing Subjects.

The Metropolitan City, as the head of the Operational Plan, manages relations with the Implementing Subjects of the directed interventions and acts as a liaison between the central authorities and those of the municipalities and Unions of Municipalities involved.

To date, all Conventions have been signed for each of the 17 directed interventions. In May and June 2021, in fact, the last 3 Conventions were signed, relating to the following 3 interventions, 2 of which were included in the last one (Implementing Subject: Unione Savena Idice; Implementing Subject: Municipality of Vergato; Implementing Subject: Municipality of Imola)

Taking into consideration the latest update to 2021 contained in the annual implementation report, the status of interventions sees only 26 % of them completed with followed by 33% in the design phase, 30% of interventions with approved executive design, and finally 11% of interventions in the construction phase (Figure 80).

THE STATUS OF INTERVENTIONS - FSC 2014 - 2020 - METROPOLITAN CITY OF BOLOGNA

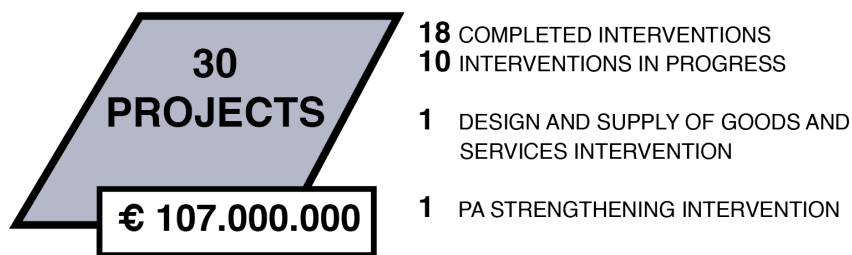
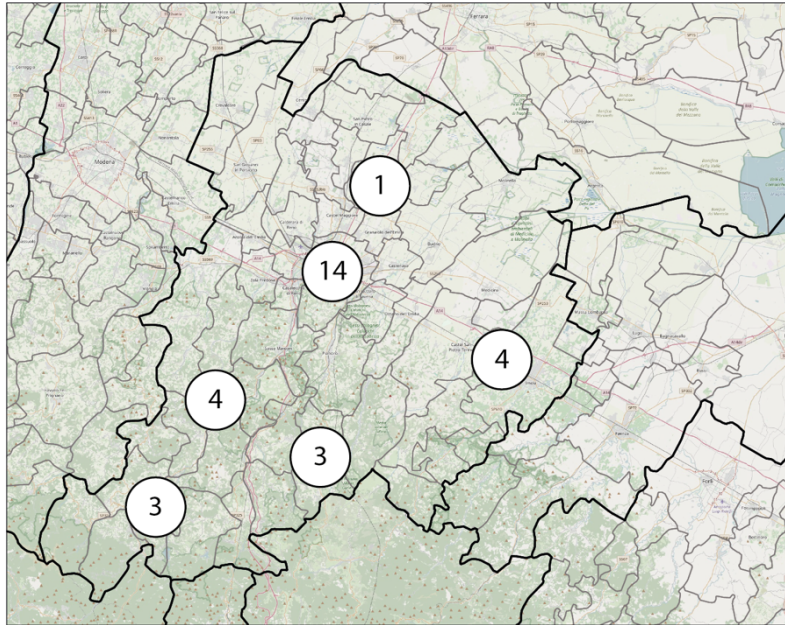


Figure 80 - The Status of interventions - FSC 2014 - 2020 - MCBo. Source: Author's elaboration on MCBo, 2023.

The mapping of the projects shows that there was a metropolitan, wide-area vision behind the projects chosen. Although there is a concentration of almost 50% within the municipality of Bologna, the remaining half of the projects are instead distributed within the metropolitan area with several projects falling on the municipality of Imola other projects falling instead on the Bolognese Apennines (Figure 81).



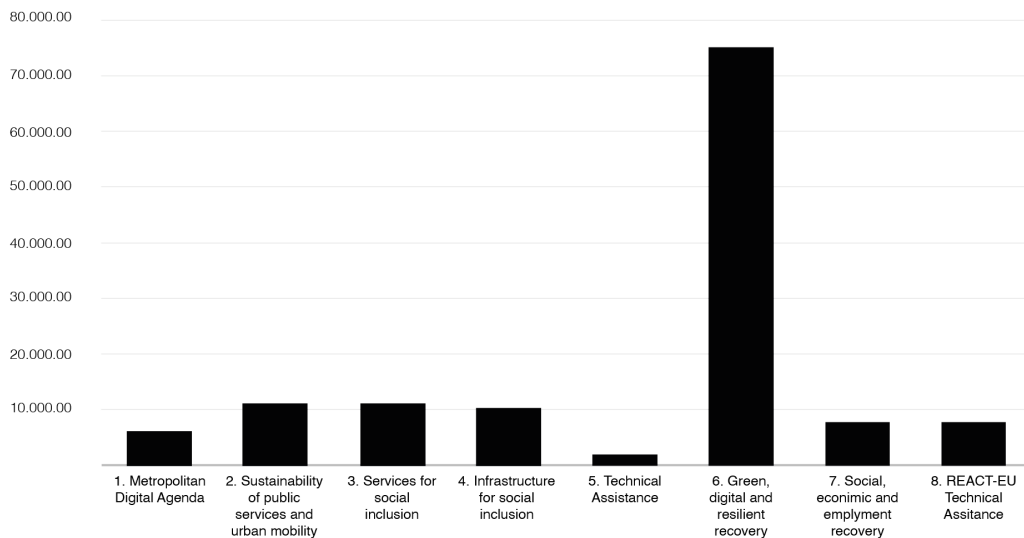
**Figure 81 - The localisation of the FSC intervention within MCB0. Source: Author's elaboration on MCB0, 2023.**

As previously mentioned, the Metropolitan City is the beneficiary of the funding and responsible for implementation, a role that the Authority is likely to maintain in the upcoming 2021-27 programming that sees metropolitan cities among the resource holders. In this sense, it will be important to plan interventions in synergy with other funding sources starting with the PNRR in order to act in a complementary way in the different thematic and territorial areas.

### ***PON METRO***

The resources allocated to Bologna initially amounted to about 40 million euros. Following the emergency from COVID, the European Commission allocated additional resources from the Structural Funds, called REACT-EU, to support the exit from the pandemic crisis and prepare for a green, digital and resilient recovery of the economy. The total budget for the City of Bologna has thus been increased by about 82 million to a total of 118 million, which will fully cover the costs of implementing the activities of as many as 56 Projects (Figure 82). This budget is distributed over the priority axes as follows:

## FUNDS ALLOCATED BY AXES - PON METRO - METROPOLITAN CITY OF BOLOGNA



**Figure 82 - Fund Allocated by Axes - NOP METRO - MCB0. Source: Author's elaboration on Regione Emilia-Romagna, 2021c.**

From the mapping of interventions, it is clear that all projects almost all fall within the capital municipality and its immediate vicinity. This leads to some reflections on the NOP. First of all, it should be emphasised that at the beginning of the programming the MCs had just been established and of consequences sewing a program on them, already in the beginning would have led to limitations in governance and in the management of the program itself. The second point of reflection is related to the fact that the entity to which the funds are entrusted for management is the municipality of Bologna and not the metropolitan city. This factor has certainly influenced project choices, consequently leading to a concentration of projects within the municipality of Bologna or in its immediate surroundings (Figure, 83).



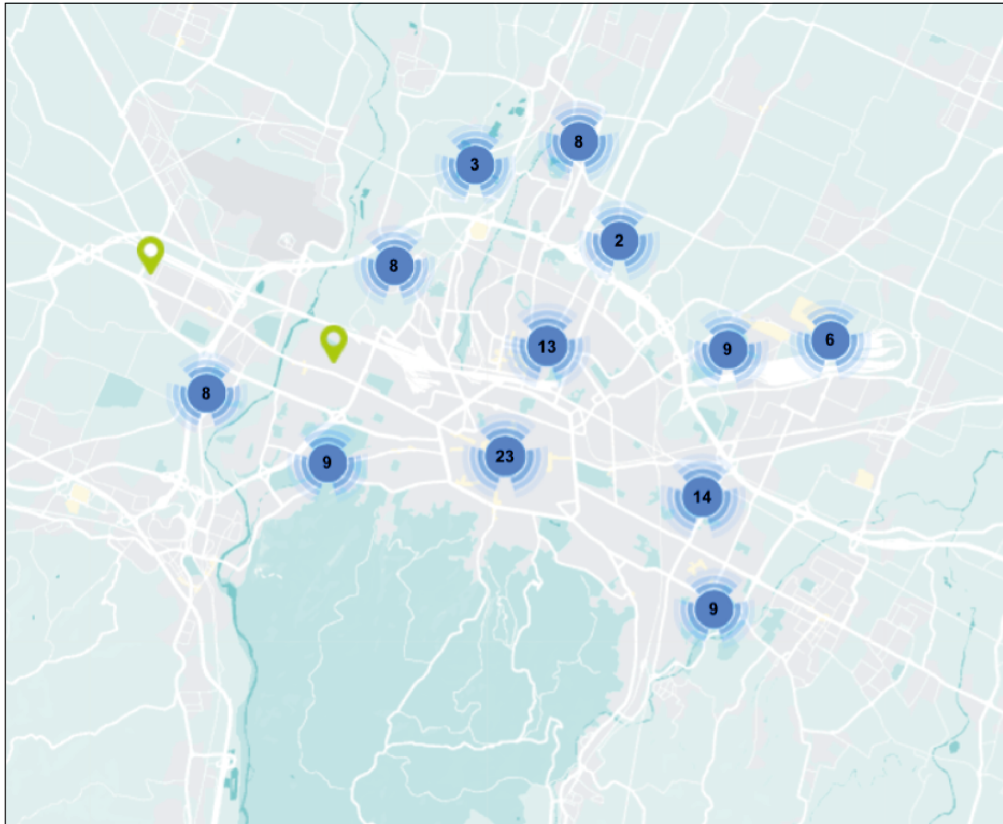


Figure 83 – The localisation of the NOP Metro intervention within MCBo. Source: Author’s elaboration on Regione Emilia-Romagna, 2021c.

### 7.5.3 The National Recovery and Resilience Plan and the MCBo

Within this section, as in previous ones, it will not go on to describe the Plan but rather highlight the relationship between the PNRR and the MCBo. In particular, after quantitatively framing the resources allocated to the MCBo two focuses will be made regarding, the first National Plan for Housing Quality, PINQUA, and then on Integrated Urban Plans, PUI. These two thematic focuses have been chosen because both PINQuA and PUIs testify to how the metropolitan city of Bologna has had the opportunity to get involved as a protagonist by managing supra-local, in this case extraordinary, programming funds.

Relating to the topic of governance, the PNRR was a further opportunity to reiterate the level of integration between the MCBo and the municipality of Bologna, which has already been consolidated with numerous past experiences, see for example the setting up of joint offices in the drafting of the old PTCP or, more



recently the PUMS office, the Economic Development Office and the Housing Policy Office (Zimmermann & Feiertag, 2022). Returning to the PNRR, a Steering Cabin for PNRR and European funds has been established. Although it originated within the municipality of Bologna, it is defined as a metropolitan governance structure.

The Steering Cab aims to assist the action of the two entities in order to support participation, direct and implement projects within the framework of the PNRR and European funds. The cabin is composed, in addition to the mayor of the municipality of Bologna, of management figures from both entities with very specific sectoral declinations, municipal mayors and aldermen, metropolitan delegates and stakeholders, and representatives of the economic and social partnership.

The PNRR sees the MCBo as the implementer or proposer in several projects financed and aimed at improving the quality of life, promoting environmental sustainability and enhancing school infrastructures (Table 27).

**Table 27 - PNRR fund allocated to MCBo.**

| <b>Investment</b>   | <b>MCBo Projects</b>   | <b>Funds</b> |
|---|--|--------------|
| <b>M5C2I2.3 ‘Innovative Housing Quality Program’</b>  | <i>L’Unione fa la città<br/>Fragile a chi?<br/>Borgonuovo. Abitare Condiviso’</i>  | 45.000.000   |
| <b>M2C4I3.1<br/>‘Protection and enhancement of urban and suburban green areas’</b>  | Protection and enhancement of urban and suburban green areas   | 7.200.000    |
| <b>M2C3I1.1<br/>‘Construction of new schools through replacement of buildings’<br/>M4C1I1.3<br/>‘School Sports Infrastructure Plan<br/>M4C1I3.3<br/>‘School Building Safety and Redevelopment Plan’</b> | - Construction of new schools through replacement of buildings<br>- School Sports Infrastructure Plan<br>- School Building Safety and Redevelopment Plan | 42.087.409   |
| <b>M5C2I2.2<br/>Integrated Urban Plans</b>  | <i>Rete Metropolitana della Conoscenza. La Grande Bologna</i>  | 157.000.000  |

Source: MCBo, 2024. Author’s elaboration

The Innovative Housing Quality Program (M5C2I2.3) encompasses several projects aimed at improving housing conditions. These projects proposed by the

MCBo are '*L'Unione fa la città*', which focuses on community integration, '*Fragile a chi?*' which provides housing solutions for vulnerable populations, and *Borgonuovo. Abitare Condiviso*, which promotes shared living spaces to enhance social interaction and reduce housing costs. The total investment for these projects is 45 million, reflecting a significant allocation of resources towards improving housing quality and accessibility.

The Protection and Enhancement of Urban and Suburban Green Areas initiative (M2C4I3.1) is dedicated to the preservation and improvement of green spaces in both urban and suburban areas. Recognising the importance of green spaces for quality of life and environmental sustainability, this initiative the MCBo allocated 7.2 million. The funding will support activities such as tree planting, park development, and maintenance of existing green spaces.

The education sector benefits from substantial investments through a series of interconnected projects. The Construction of New Schools through Replacement of Buildings (M2C3I1.1) project aims to replace outdated school facilities with modern buildings, thereby creating improved learning environments. The School Sports Infrastructure Plan (M4C1I1.3) focuses on enhancing physical education facilities and promoting sports participation among students. Additionally, the School Building Safety and Redevelopment Plan (M4C1I3.3) seeks to renovate and upgrade existing school structures to meet current safety standards and improve overall conditions. These educational infrastructure projects collectively receive an investment of 42.087.409 million.

The Integrated Urban Plans project (M5C2I2.2) is a comprehensive initiative under the '*Rete Metropolitana della Conoscenza, La Grande Bologna*' framework. This project aims to develop a networked metropolitan area that leverages knowledge and innovation to drive urban development. With a funding allocation of 157 million, the Integrated Urban Plans will address various urban challenges, enhance connectivity, and promote sustainable urban growth (MCBo, 2022).

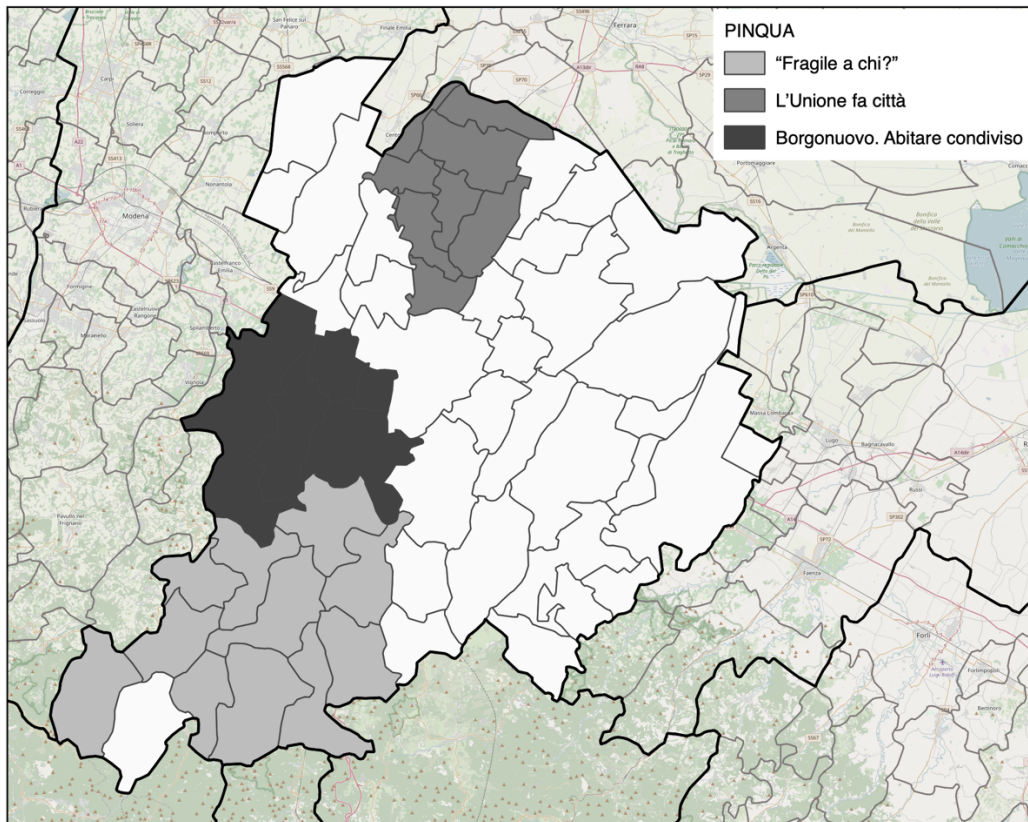
These investment projects, with their substantial funding allocations, indicate a strong commitment to enhancing housing quality, preserving green spaces, improving educational infrastructure, and fostering integrated urban development. Each project addresses specific community needs and contributes to the overall advancement of the respective areas.

### ***PINQuA - Programma Nazionale Innovativo per la Qualità dell'abitare***

With reference to participation in external funding programs, participation in PINQuA is among the most significant and qualifying experiences of the metropolitan city of Bologna, along with its participation in the *Bando Periferie*. The PINQuA was born precisely from the experience gained with the *Bando Periferie* within which, on the one hand, for the first time the MC finds itself with the possibility of accessing financial resources, and on the other hand the metropolitan entity is recognised not only the role of coordinator but also of director in the identification and of projects and in the possibility of intercepting funds.

The Metropolitan City of Bologna in the PINQuA framework, presented in 2021 three proposals developed in collaboration with the Reno Galliera Union, the Reno Lavino Samoggia Union, and the Appennino Bolognese Union. This underscores how much the unions of municipalities in this area are the MCBo's preferred entity for dialoguing and networking with the territory.

The objective of PINQuA, as noted in previous chapters, is to promote regeneration processes of degraded urban areas in order to contribute to the reduction of housing deprivation, increase social housing allocations and improve the environmental quality of settlements. The three different proposals submitted by the MCBo were obviously built on this line. In February 2022, by decree of the Ministry, all three proposals were admitted for funding, for a total of about 45 million euros (15 for each project), from PNRR funds in line with the project line "M5C2 - Investment 2.3" (MCBo, 2024)



**Figure 84 - PINQUA projects within MCBo. Source: Author's elaboration.**

Going into more detail (Figure 84), the first proposal *'L'Unione fa la città'* from the metropolitan territory is the one related to the municipalities of the Reno Galliera Union. The MCBo in close collaboration with the Union has planned 8 interventions related to the theme of social housing and innovative residency to the recovery of the existing building stock aimed at the creation of a new sociocultural center. In all interventions, spaces dedicated to the community such as pedestrian areas and green spaces have been designed and new bike paths have been planned. The second project, *'Fragile a chi? Piano territoriale integrato per la gestione innovativa dell'abitare nell'appennino bolognese'*, sees the MCBo focused on the metropolitan Apennine area. Again, interventions are aimed at improving housing conditions. There are 18 interventions for nearly 100 social housing units, including upgrades and new ones, as well as services aimed at the third age, spaces for cultural activities. The third proposal, *'Borgonuovo. Abitare Condiviso'*, as mentioned above also found to be eligible for funding, concerns the zero-soil consumption regeneration of the former Alfa Wassermann disused industrial area in the municipality of Borgonuovo di Sasso Marconi. More than 100 new social housing

units, new educational services and more than 100 thousand square meters of green spaces are planned in this redevelopment.

According to the timeline outlined in the PNRR, agreements with implementing parties were signed in March 2022 and all projects are expected to be completed by March 2026. The Metropolitan City of Bologna has assumed the role of beneficiary entity. As such, with its role it will provide for the coordination of the subsequent project phases and the implementation of the interventions by the implementing entities, as well as the monitoring and reporting activities required by the Ministry.

Overall, it is possible to divide all interventions can in relation to their impact on the territory (Figure 85). There are, interventions with a more strategic and wide-area vision that have a metropolitan impact. These tend to be in strategic areas, i.e., along the north-south routes of the metropolitan public transport network, passing through Bologna and acting as a ‘plug’ for the three proposals. These are interventions located in attractive strategic areas that can therefore accommodate endowments and housing services of metropolitan rank. The second cluster of interventions identified relates to interventions that have a local impact, consequently at the municipal scale, but that have both a material and immaterial transversal relationship with the poles of greater attractiveness where the interventions in the first cluster are located. Finally, third cluster, brings together network, governance interventions. These, include interventions dedicated to strengthening mobility, but also strengthening intangible models such as innovative management and governance models (MCBo, 2021c).

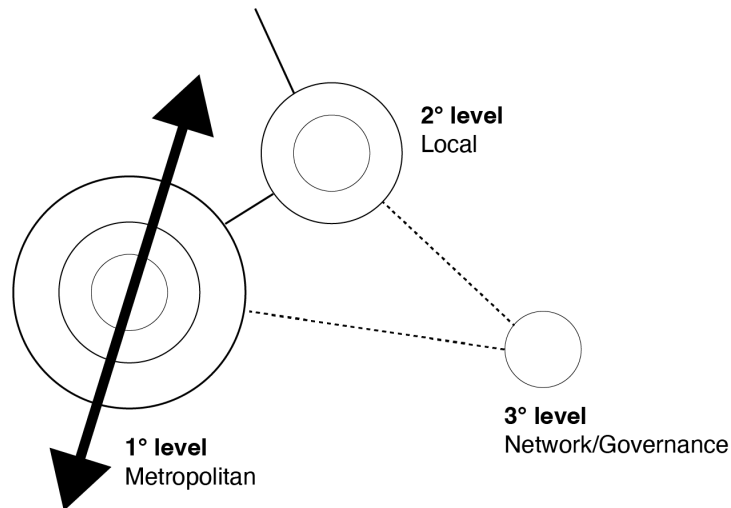


Figure 85 - Level of impact and interactions between PINQUA projects. Source: Author's elaboration on MCB0, 2021c.

The experience of the *Bando Periferie* first, and the PINQUA later, concur to reinforce the planning activity and the directing role of the metropolitan authority, also taking advantage of the strategic directions pre-posed by the planning instruments in its power. Along these lines comes the experience of the Integrated Urban Plan, PUI.

### ***PUI - Piani Urbani Integrati***

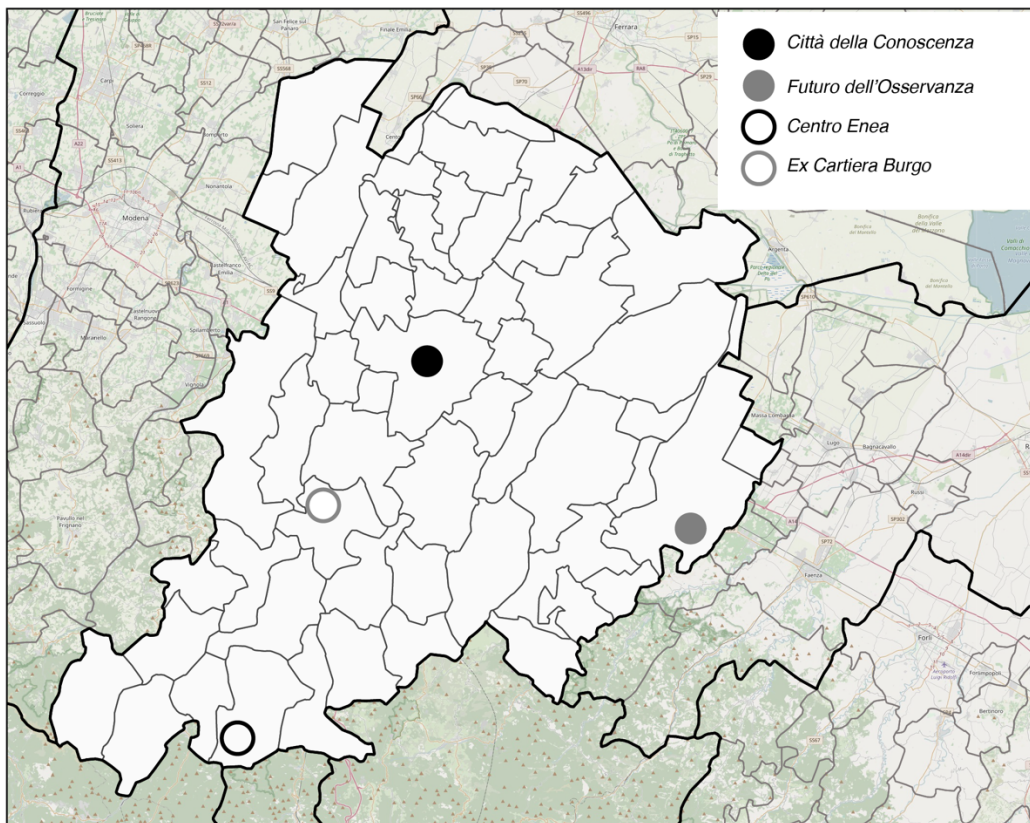
As part of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan, resources amounting to 157.34 million euros have been allocated to the Metropolitan City of Bologna for the implementation of Integrated Plans (project line M5C2 - Investment 2.2). As previously described, these resources are intended for the implementation of projects aimed at fostering greater social inclusion by reducing marginalization and situations of vulnerability, promoting urban regeneration through eco-sustainable recovery, renovation of building structures and public areas.

The PUI submitted by the metropolitan city of Bologna is a unitary PUI that is divided into 4 projects that in turn include a number of urban regeneration interventions aimed at reducing territorial inequalities by also affecting fragile areas of the metropolitan territory of Bologna. This PUI is named '*Rete Metropolitana della Conoscenza. La Grande Bologna*' and has been approved on April 22, 2022.

In terms of resources, the funding foresees 173.068.200 euros, financed mainly with PNRR funds which is associated with a co-financing, of about 15 million, from

the municipality of Bologna of the CON.AMI consortium of Imola and in a small part from the Emilia-Romagna region (MCBo, 2022).

The Metropolitan City of Bologna selected, among 67 project proposals received from municipalities and Unions of Municipalities, the four most relevant to the aims of the investment line and the three macro-objectives identified by the Metropolitan Mayor, namely, ecological transition and combating climate change, reduction of inequalities and fragility, and enhancement and development of the knowledge and research system, an objective to which value had been attached. The selected projects have a territorial dimension of metropolitan significance and implement the policies and strategies contained in the metropolitan planning and programming tools (Metropolitan Strategic Plan, Metropolitan Territorial Plan, Urban Sustainable Mobility Plan).



**Figure 86 – The projects of the PUI - *Rete Metropolitana per la Conoscenza* in the MCBo. Source: Author's elaboration on MCBo, 2022.**

The PUI includes 19 interventions and as mentioned above is divided into 4 projects aimed at strategically enhancing the metropolitan knowledge and research

network (Figure 86). The level of integration between the various projects clearly emerges to the extent that a single PUI was drafted. This was made possible by several factors: i) well-defined and mutually integrated strategic planning tools (PTM, PSM, PUMS) ii) the territories' strong tradition of inter-municipal cooperation.

The 4 selected projects are in the municipality of Bologna, the municipality of Imola, and four municipalities belonging to the Union of the Bolognese Apennines. Altogether, they involve 6 municipalities and one Union (Appennino Bolognese) (Table 28).

**Table 28 – Overview of PUI'S projects in the MCB0**

|                               | <b>Municipalities involved</b> | <b>N. of projects</b> | <b>Cofounding</b> | <b>PNRR funds</b> | <b>Tot amount</b> |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Città della Conoscenza</b> | 1                              | 6                     | 13.809.500        | 118.444.386       | 132.253.886       |
| <b>Futuro dell'Osservanza</b> | 1                              | 5                     | 1.921.000         | 16.976.658        | 18.897.658        |
| <b>Centro Enea</b>            | 3 + 1                          | 7                     | 0                 | 12.222.216        | 12.222.216        |
| <b>Ex Cartiera Burgo</b>      | 1+1                            | 1                     | 0                 | 9.694.440         | 9.694.440         |
| <b>Total PUI</b>              | 6+1                            | 19                    | 15.730.500        | 157.337.700       | 173.068.200       |

Source: Author's elaboration on MCB0, 2022.

The first project '*La città della conoscenza*' has the Municipality of Bologna as the proposing and implementing party. It consists of 6 interventions and is the project with the largest share of funding, about 75 % of the total PNRR funds. Added to this is a funding from the municipality of Bologna of almost 14 million. The project covers several neighbourhoods in the municipality of Bologna, and the design, management and monitoring phases of the various interventions are entrusted entirely to the municipality of Bologna.

The second project, '*Il Futuro dell'Osservanza*' sees the municipality of Imola as the proposing and implementing party in close collaboration with the inter-municipal consortium of the Imola area, CON.AMI. This project consists of 5 interventions involving about 11% of PNRR funds followed by a co-financing of almost 2 million by CON.AMI. The implementation of the project, which as mentioned above sees the municipality of Imola as the proposing and implementing party, will take place through CON.AMI, a consortium in which the municipality is a majority shareholder. In this sense, the consortium, and the municipality of



Imola have signed a technical agreement concerning the implementation of the project (design phase, tenders awarding works, management, and monitoring).

The third project, '*Centro Enea*', has the union of the Bolognese Appennino as the proposing party with the municipalities of Camugnano, Castiglione dei Pepoli, San Benedetto Val di Sambro and the MCBo as implementing parties. The project consists of 7 interventions, with 8% of the total PNRR funds planned. Unlike previous projects, no co-financing is planned. In this case, the Bologna Apennines in the selection of projects to be sent to the MCBo felt strong from the experience gained with the *Bando Periferie* and PINQuA. The implementation phase does not involve the Union, but the responsibility lies with the municipalities previously listed. The MCBo is subject to implementing half of the interventions. This role is aimed at accompanying the municipalities in this phase by making up for the difficulties derived from the undersize and fragility of their administered apparatuses.

The latest project, '*Ex Cartiera Burgo*', also has the Appennino Bolognese Union as the proposing body. Unlike its preceding ones, the project consists of only one intervention, costing nearly 10 million euros. Funds coming entirely from the PNRR without additional co-financing. Again, the union has no responsibility in the implementation phase but delegates this responsibility directly to the municipality of Marzabotto (municipality within which the intervention falls). Also, in this case the MCBo has offered to provide technical support in the executive design phase.

In briefly summarising the role of MCBo within the PUIs, it can be highlighted that its role was mainly upstream of the PUI elaboration process. The MCBo certainly created the conditions for municipalities and unions to submit design proposals in line with metropolitan strategic goals. In this sense, the MCBo voluntarily chose not to submit its own project but preferred to make itself available in supporting municipalities in the implementation phase. As a result, the role in the implementation phase appears limited.

This experience for the MCBo has only reinforced and underscored the importance of metropolitan strategic planning and the importance of having up-to-date and consistent metropolitan, wide area planning instruments. All this has allowed the MCBo to have a rather easy directing role, especially in the selection of projects to be submitted for funding. In this sense, inter-municipal cooperation within the metropolitan territory has allowed the MCBo not to enter directly into

the implementation phase of the projects, but only to provide technical support, aware of the positive past experiences with the *Bando Periferie* and PINQuA. A final consideration related to the metropolitan governance of MCBo relates to the relationship with the municipality of Bologna. If by now the relationship between MCBo and municipalities and unions is consolidated and can be identified as an absolutely horizontal relationship and not with a super-ordinate role of the metropolitan entity, what emerges with the PUI experience is how the relationship between MCBo and the Municipality of Bologna is moving more and more towards a greater integration between the two entities, with a view to a '*Grande Bologna*' repeatedly referred to in the mandate lines by the metropolitan mayor.

# **8. Case study 3 – The Metropolitan City of Turin**

## **8.1 Introduction**

Within this chapter, the case study of the metropolitan city of Turin will be presented. Specifically, the chapter is made up of four different sections. The first part is purely descriptive and relates to the territorial framework of the metropolitan city. Within this first part, in fact, all the territorial characteristics (physical and not) of the metropolitan city of Turin will be described. The second part will focus on the institutional governance system of the metropolitan entity. In particular, this section will describe Turin's metropolitan governance system, how it has been constructed, how the metropolitan level is declined within regional legislation, focus on the metropolitan statute, will present the current metropolitan governance scheme, and will highlight all the additional forms of inter-municipal cooperation present within the metropolitan city. The third section of this chapter is aimed at describing the planning instruments in the metropolitan authority's power. In particular, all metropolitan-level planning instruments currently in force, their construction process and their role in relation to supra- and sub-ordinate planning instruments will be described. The last section of the case study is aimed at describing the role of MCTo within the European cohesion policy. In particular, it will go on to describe all the various European funds that land on the metropolitan territory of Piedmont, all the various European projects within which MCTo is present, the role of the metropolitan city in relation to the PNRR and the various projects related to it.

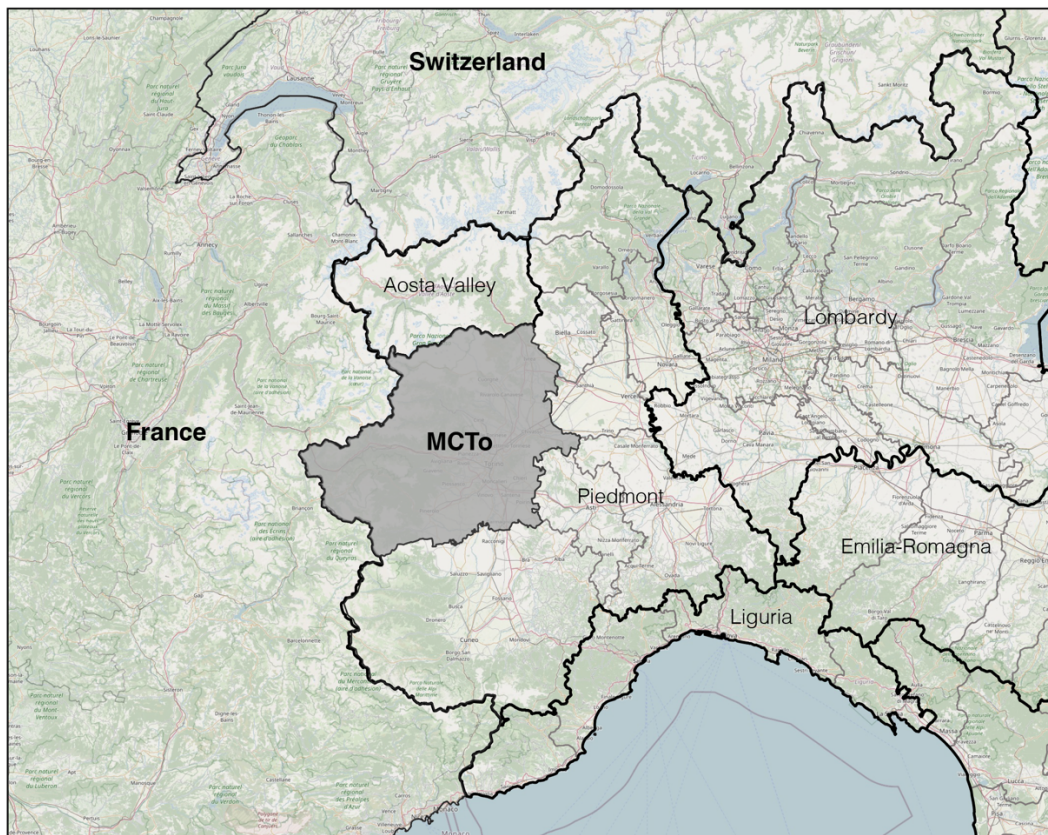
## **8.2 Territorial Analysis of the Turin Metropolitan Area**

### **8.2.1 The physical and urban dimension**

The metropolitan city of Turin (MCTo) from a territorial point of view has unique peculiarities. Based on its geographical location, it is the only one among Italian metropolitan cities to border a foreign state, France. This condition is an opportunity and an advantage to be recognised and exploited to strengthen MCTo's

own identity and competitive positioning with respect to the national and international context.

It is bordered to the north by the Aosta Valley region, to the south by the province of Cuneo, to the east by the provinces of Biella, Vercelli, Alessandria, and Asti, and finally to the west as already anticipated by France (departments of Savoie in the Auvergne-Rhone-Alpes region and the High Alps in the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region) (Figure 87).



**Figure 87 - The Metropolitan City of Turin. Source: Author's elaboration.**

From a territorial point of view, as anticipated in chapter 5, MCTo is the Italian metropolitan city with the largest land area, 6.826 km<sup>2</sup>, and at the same time ranks first among the 14 Italian MCs in terms of the number of municipalities, as many as 312 municipalities. These two factors are very important and, as we will see in

the next paragraphs, have a significant influence on the governance of the metropolitan area.

The metropolitan region can be distinguished into three altitudinal zones. The most densely populated band is the plain band extending 1.820 km<sup>2</sup> with 1.693.703 inhabitants (includes the municipality of Turin), the hill band extending 1.428 km<sup>2</sup> with 460.242 inhabitants that is a buffer with the more extensive (3.580 km<sup>2</sup>) but less populated (143.972 inhabitants) mountain band ending in the Alpine and French-Italian border area (Figure 88).

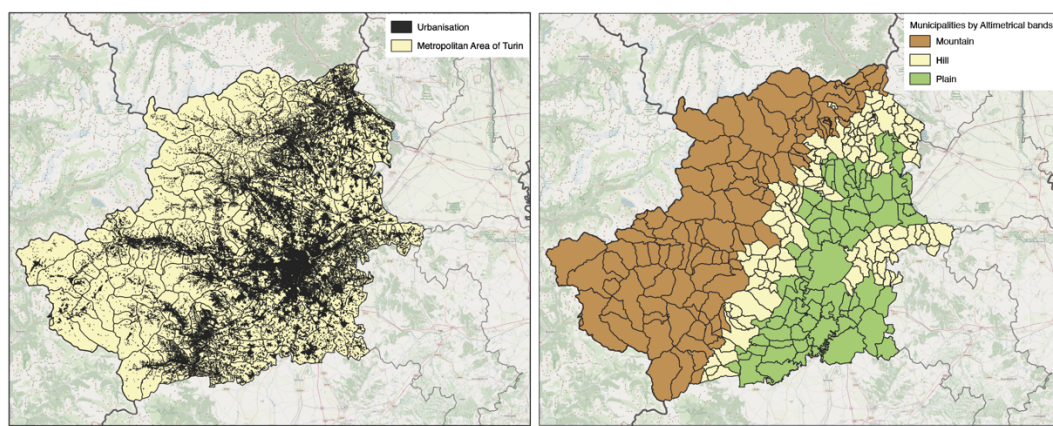


Figure 88 - Urbanised land and municipalities distributed by Altitudinal zone. Metropolitan city of Turin. Source: Author's elaboration.

## 8.2.2 Territorial structure and Demography of the Turin Metropolitan Area

From a territorial point of view over the past decade, there has been a variation in the number of municipalities belonging to the former province, now the metropolitan city of Turin. Specifically, there was first an increase in the number of municipalities from 315 to 316 with the establishment that took place in 2017 of the municipality of Mappano<sup>44</sup> (following Regional Law No. 1 of January 25, 2013), then reducing to the current 312 as a result of the merging of the municipalities of Alice Superiore, Lugnacco and Pecco into the municipality of Val di Chy and the merging of the municipalities of Meugliano, Trausella and Vico

<sup>44</sup> Born from the spin-off of territory from the municipalities of Caselle Torinese, Borgaro Torinese, Settimo Torinese and Leini.

Canavese into the municipality of Valchiusa. As already pointed out several times, MCTo is the MC with the highest number of municipalities (Figure 89).

**MCTo - BRIEF CHARACTERISTICS OF THE TERRITORY**

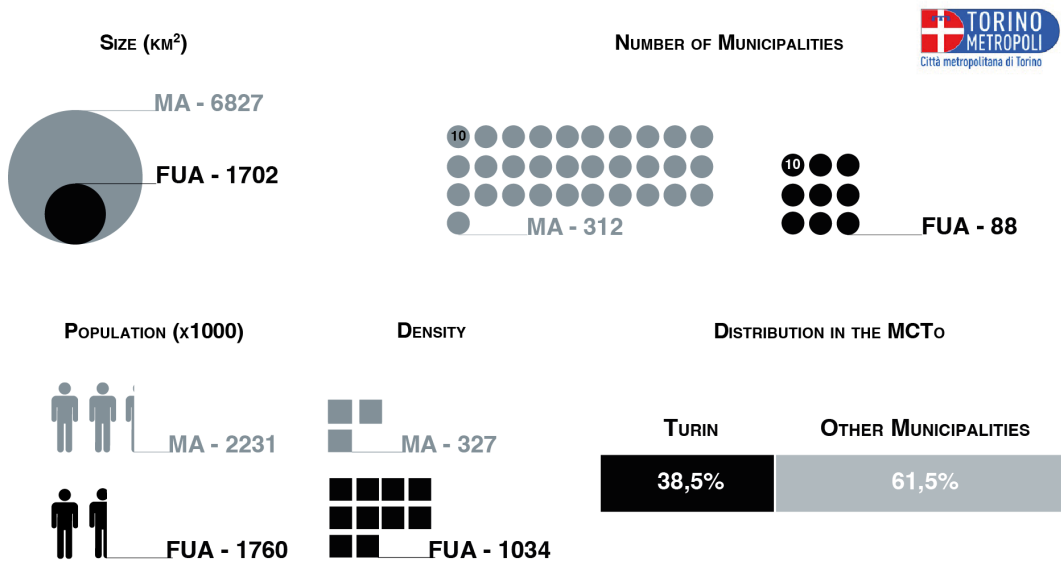
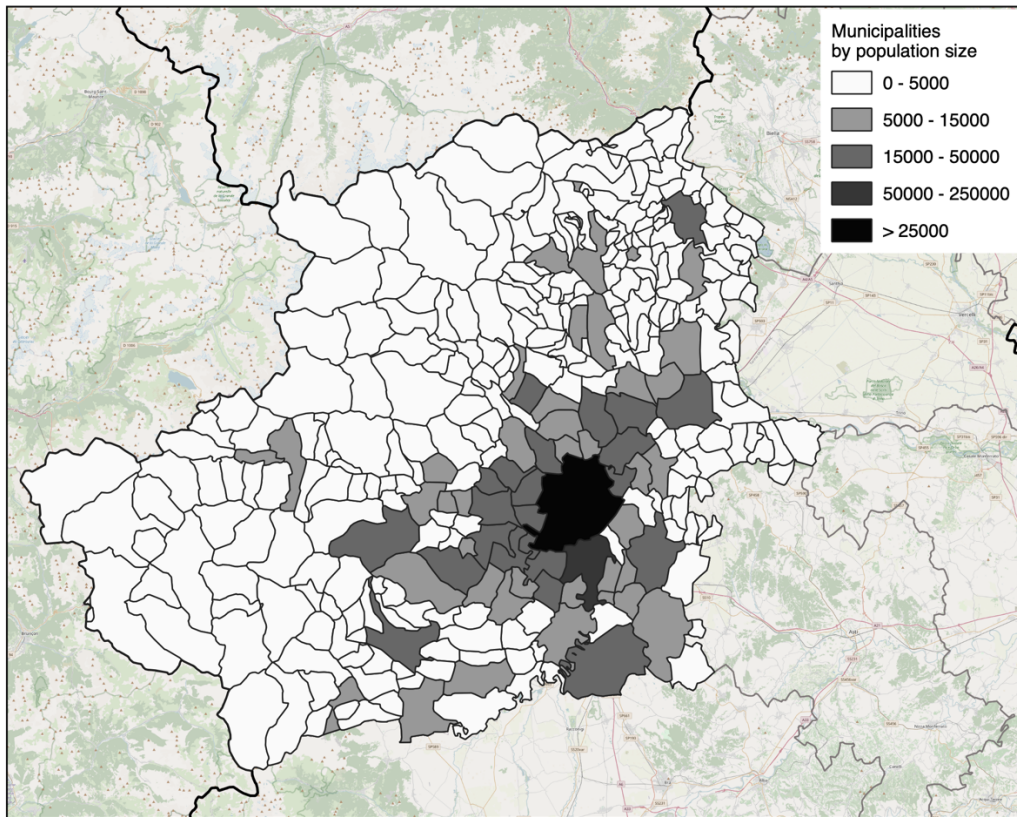


Figure 89 - Brief characteristics of the MCTo. Source: ISTAT, 2022. Author's elaboration.

Analysing in more detail the demographic composition of the municipalities, it emerges that predominantly there are very small municipal realities that lean on an uneven territorial substratum (mountains, hills, plains), connected in a radial sense with the City of Turin, which maintain a very strong metropolitan 'core' role. More in detail, 250 municipalities out of the total 312 (i.e., 80%) have a population less than or equal to 5.000 inhabitants, municipalities with a population between 5 and 15.000 inhabitants are 37 (12%), those between 15.000 and 50.000 inhabitants are 23 (7%), and finally, there are only two municipalities with a population greater than 50.000 inhabitants, the municipality of Moncalieri with 56.193 inhabitants, and the capital city of Turin with 848.748 inhabitants (Figure 90).



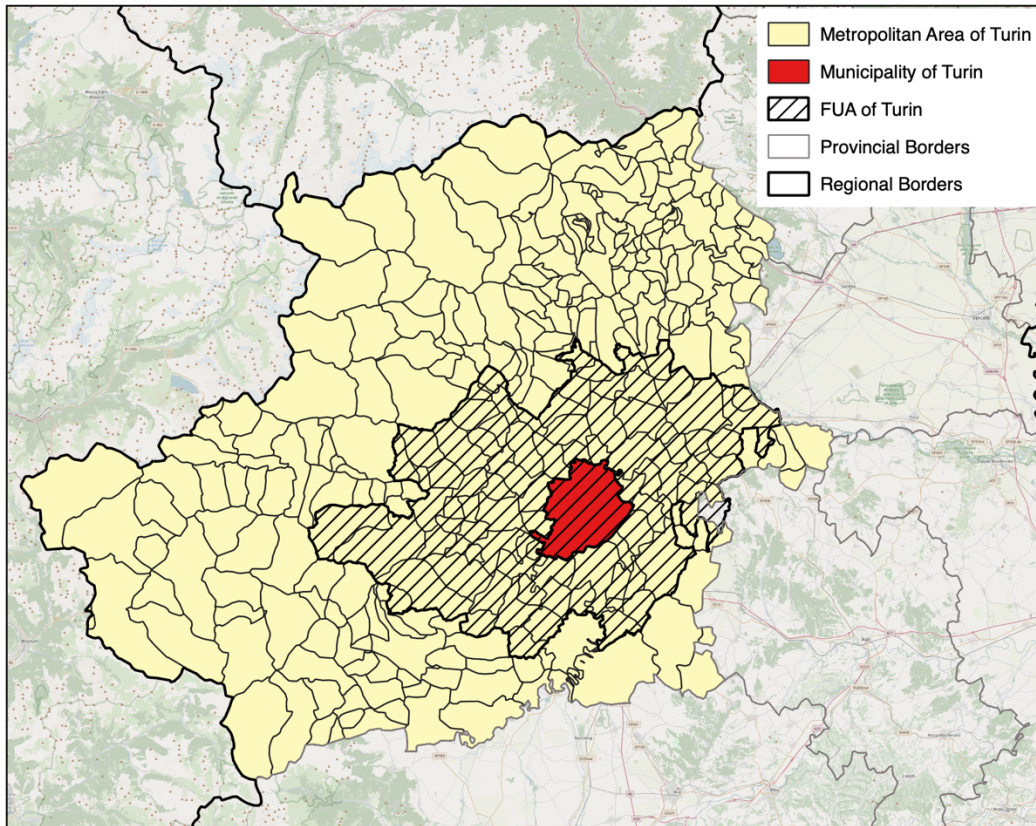


**Figure 90 – Municipalities by population size in MCTo. Source: ISTAT,2022. Author’s elaboration.**

Another demographic figure with a strong territorial significance is the distribution of population between the capital municipality and the rest of the municipalities in the metropolitan area. In particular, the population of the municipality of Turin accounts for 38.43% of the total population of the metropolitan city. This figure at first might suggest that the demographic weight of the city of Turin is not entirely prevalent over the total metropolitan population, suggesting a rather polycentric structure. Adding this to the population in the first belt<sup>45</sup>, however, a different pattern emerges. In particular, the percentage of the population gravitating on the very first belt of Turin is 57 percent, thus highlighting the strong centrality of the municipality of Turin also considering the territorial surface area of the whole metropolitan area.

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<sup>45</sup> Baldissero Torinese, Beinasco, Borgaro Torinese, Collegno, Grugliasco, Mappano, Moncalieri, Nichelino, Orbassano, Pecetto Torinese, Pino Torinese, Rivoli, San Mauro Torinese, Settimo Torinese, Venaria Reale



**Figure 91 – The Metropolitan Area of Turin. Source: Author’s elaboration.**

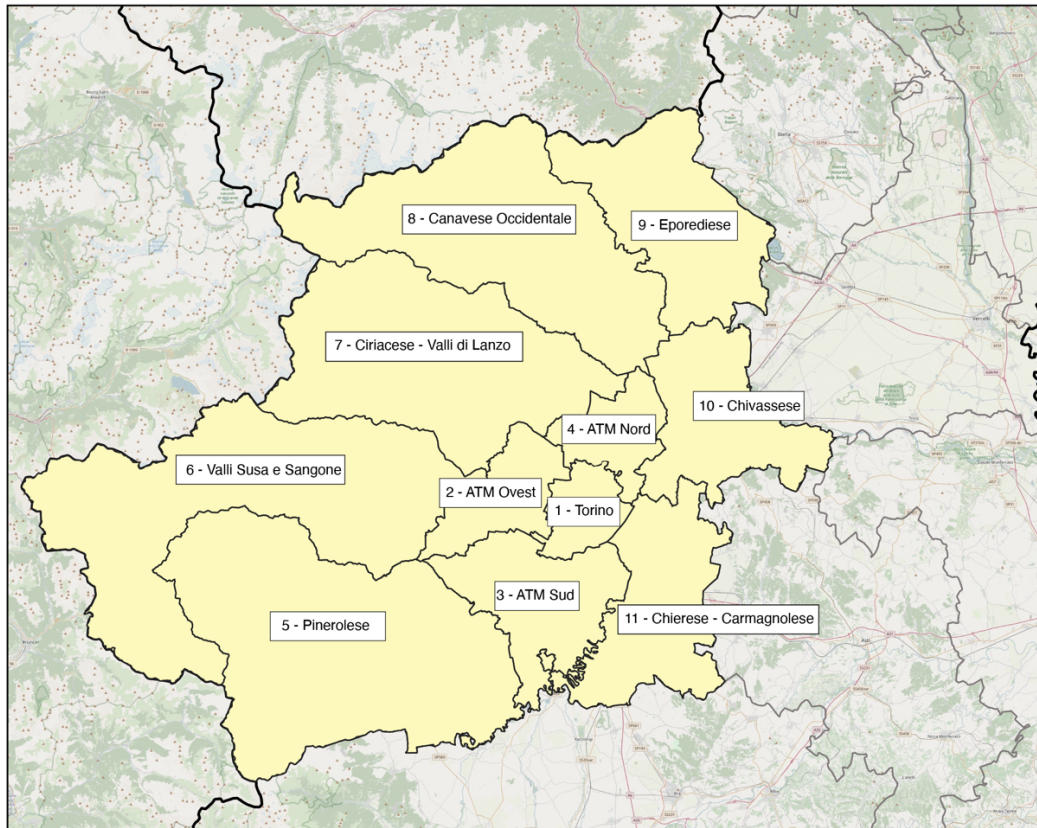
A further spatial subdivision, useful for being able to analyse phenomena affecting the metropolitan area through a dimension that allows for the collection and comparability of demographic and spatial data within the European Union, is that of Functional Urban Areas (Figure 91). This has already been discussed extensively in previous chapters. As can be seen from Figure 7, the FUA of the metropolitan city of Turin is significantly smaller than the institutional boundaries of the area. This evidence is very interesting and will be discussed in the following paragraphs. In this one, we focus only on the FUA as a territorial subdivision within the MCTo.

The Metropolitan City of Turin is a diverse region that encompasses various areas such as urbanised cities, rural plains and hills, and mountainous regions near France and Valle d’Aosta. To manage the region effectively, it has been divided into 11 Homogeneous Zones<sup>46</sup> based on functionality and territorial criteria

<sup>46</sup> According to Art. 1, comma 11 of Law No. 56 of April 7, 2014.



(Figure 92). This division was established through a complex analytical process that took into account various existing structures and boundaries. It's worth noting that these zones do not follow the Functional Urban Areas classification by the OECD.



**Figure 92 - The Homogeneous Zones in MCTo. Source: Author's elaboration.**

Analysing the demographic situation at the level of homogeneous zones reveals a situation inversely proportional to territorial extension. More in detail, Zone 1, is the least extensive but at the same time the most populated; subsequently, although with lower values than Zone 1, the population is more concentrated in the Homogeneous Zones bordering the Capital Municipality, i.e., in the municipalities of the first and second Turin belt (Zones 3 - AMT South and Zone 2 - AMT West); Zone 4 - AMT North compared to the other zones registers slightly lower values. The Homogeneous Zones with the lowest population values involve mountainous or hilly areas: *Valli Di Susa E Sangone*, *Chivassese*, *Ciriacese* and *Valli di Lanzo*, and *Eporediese*. The Homogeneous Zone with the least population is Zone 8 – *Canavese Occidentale* (Table 29).

**Table 29 - Overview Homogeneous Zones in MCTo**

| <b>Homogeneous Zones</b>                 | <b>No. Municipalities</b> | <b>Population (2022)</b> | <b>Area (Km<sup>2</sup>)</b> |
|--|---------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Zone 1 TORINO</b>                     | 1                         | 848748                   | 130                          |
| <b>Zone 2 AMT OVEST</b>                  | 14                        | 233859                   | 203                          |
| <b>Zone 3 AMT SUD</b>                    | 18                        | 264575                   | 386                          |
| <b>Zone 4 AMT NORD</b>                   | 8                         | 135240                   | 175                          |
| <b>Zone 5 PINEROLESE</b>                 | 45                        | 129985                   | 1302                         |
| <b>Zone 6 VALLI SUSA E SANGONE</b>       | 40                        | 101831                   | 1247                         |
| <b>Zone 7 CIRIACESE - VALLI DI LANZO</b> | 40                        | 99943                    | 973                          |
| <b>Zone 8 CANAVESE OCCIDENTALE</b>       | 46                        | 80541                    | 975                          |
| <b>Zone 9 EPOREDIESE</b>                 | 54                        | 85897                    | 551                          |
| <b>Zone 10 CHIVASSESE</b>                | 24                        | 98261                    | 423                          |
| <b>Zone 11 CHERESE - CARMAGNOLESE</b>    | 22                        | 129490                   | 426                          |

Source: ISTAT,2022. Author's elaboration.

**Table 30- List of Municipalities in Homogeneous Zones**

| <b>Homogeneous Zones</b>                 | <b>List of Municipalities</b>  |
|--|--|
| <b>Zone 1 TORINO</b>                     | <i>Torino</i>  |
| <b>Zone 2 AMT OVEST</b>                  | <i>Alpignano, Buttigliera Alta, Collegno, Druento, Grugliasco, Pianezza, Reano, Rivoli, Rosta, San Gillio, Sangano, Trana, Venaria, Villarbarbise</i>  |
| <b>Zone 3 AMT SUD</b>                    | <i>Beinasco, Bruino, Candiolo, Carignano, Castagnole P.te, La Loggia, Moncalieri, Nichelino, None, Orbassano, Pancalieri, Piossasco, Piobesi Torinese, Rivalta di Torino, Trofarello, Vinovo, Virle Piemonte, Volvera</i>  |
| <b>Zone 4 AMT NORD</b>                   | <i>Borgaro Torinese, Caselle Torinese, Leini, Mappao, San Benigno C.se, San Mauro Torinese, Settimo Torinese, Volpiano</i>   |
| <b>Zone 5 PINEROLESE</b>                 | <i>Airasca, Angrogna, Bibiana, Bobbio Pellice, Bricherasio, Buriasco, Campiglione Fenile, Cantalupa, Cavour, Cercenasco, Cumiana, Fenestrelle, Frossasco, Garzigliana, Inverso Pinasca, Luserna S. Giovanni, Lusernetta, Macello, Massello, Osasco, Perosa Argentina, Perrero, Pinasca, Pinerolo, Piscina, Pomaretto, Porte, Prigelato, Prali, Pramollo, Prarostino, Roletto, Rorà, Roure, Salza di Pinerolo, San Germano C., San Pietro Val Lemina, San Secondo di P., Scalenghe, Torre Pellice, Usseaux, Vigone, Villafranca Piemonte, Villar Pellice, Villar Perosa</i> |
| <b>Zone 6 VALLI SUSA E SANGONE</b>       | <i>Almese, Avigliana, Bardonecchia, Borgone Susa, Bruzolo, Bussoleno, Caprie, Caselette, Cesana T.se, Chianocco, Chiomonte, Chiusa di San Michele, Claviere, Coazze, Condove, Exilles, Giaglione, Giaveno, Gravere, Mattie, Meana di Susa, Mompantero, Moncenisio, Novalesa, Oulx, Rubiana, Salbertrand, San Didero, San Giorio di Susa, Sant'Ambrogio di Torino, Sant'Antonino di Susa, Sauze di Cesana, Sauze d'Oulx, Sestriere, Susa, Vaie, Valgioie, Venaus, Villar Dora, Villarfocchiardo</i>   |
| <b>Zone 7 CIRIACESE - VALLI DI LANZO</b> | <i>Ala di Stura, Balangero, Balme, Barbania, Cafasse, Cantoira, Ceres, Chialamberto, Ciriè, Coassolo T.se, Corio, Fiano, Front, Germagnano, Givoletto, Groscavallo, Grosso, La Cassa, Lanzo Torinese, Lemie, Lombardore, Mathi, Mezenile, Monastero di Lanzo, Nole, Pessinetto,</i>  |

|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | <i>Rivarossa, Robassomero, Rocca Canavese, San Carlo Canavese, San Francesco al C., San Maurizio C.se, Traves, Usseglio, Val della Torre, Vallo Torinese, Vauda Canavese, Varisella, Villanova Canavese, Viù</i>  |
| <b>Zone 8<br/>CANAVESE<br/>OCCIDENTALE</b>   | <i>Agliè, Alpette, Bairo, Baldissero C.se, Borgiallo, Bosconero, Busano, Canischio, Castellamonte, Castelnuovo Nigra, Ceresole Reale, Chiesanuova, Ciconio, Cintano, Colleterto C., Cuceglio, Cuornè, Favria, Feletto, Forno C.se, Frassinetto, Ingria, Levone, Locana, Lusigliè, Ozegna, Pertusio, Pont Canavese, Prascorsano, Pratiglione, Ribordone, Rivara, Rivarolo Canavese, Ronco Canavese, Salassa, San Colombano B., San Giorgio C.se, San Giusto C.se, Noasca, Oglianico, San Ponso, Sparone, Torre Canavese, Valperga, Valprato Soana, Vialfrè</i>   |
| <b>Zone 9<br/>EPOREDIESE</b>                 | <i>Albiano d'Ivrea, Alice Superiore, Andrate, Azeglio, Banchette, Barone C.se, Bollengo, Borgofranco, Borgomasino, Brosso, Burolo, Candia C.se, Caravino, Carema, Cascinette d'Ivrea, Chiaverano, Colleterto Giacosa, Cossano C.se, Fiorano C.se, Issiglio, Ivrea, Lessolo, Loranze, Lugnacco, Maglione, Mercenasco, Meugliano, Montalenghe, Montalto Dora, Nomaglio, Palazzo Canavese, Parella, Pavone Canavese, Pecco, Perosa Canavese, Piverone, Orio Canavese, Quagliuzzo, Quassolo, Quincinetto, Romano Canavese, Rueglio, Salerano Canavese, Samone, San Martino C.se, Scarmagno, Settimo Rottaro, Settimo Vittone, Strambinello, Strambino, Tavagnasco, Trausella, Traversella, Vestignè, Vico Canavese, Vidracco, Vische, Vistrorio</i> |
| <b>Zone 10<br/>CHIVASSESE</b>                | <i>Brandizzo, Brozolo, Brusasco, Caluso, Casalborgone, Castagneto Po, Castiglione Torinese, Cavagnolo, Chivasso, Cinzano, Foglizzo, Gassino Torinese, Lauriano, Mazzè, Montanaro, Monteu da Po, Rivalba, Rondissone, San Raffaele Cimena, San Sebastiano da Po, Torrazza Piemonte, Verolengo, Verrua Savoia, Villareggia</i>  |
| <b>Zone 11<br/>CHIERESE<br/>CARMAGNOLESE</b> | <i>Andezeno, Arignano, Baldissero Torinese, Cambiano, Carmagnola, Chieri, Isolabella, Lombriasco, Marentino, Mombello di Torino, Montaldo T.se, Moriondo T.se, Osasio, Pavarolo, Pecetto T.se, Pino Torinese, Poirino, Pralormo, Riva presso Chieri, Santena, Sciolze, Villastellone</i>  |

**Source: ISTAT, 2022.**

Analysing the values on the demographic changes in the population of MCTo, it can be seen that there is within the metropolitan area a population decline in line with regional and national data.

The demographic shrinking is not homogeneous in the metropolitan area: municipalities in the mountains lose -4.3% of residents (about 6.150), although there are cases in counter-trend: Balme (+18.9% with the largest positive change in MCTo ever), Chiesanuova (+15.3%), Sauze di Cesana (+15.1%), Sestriere (+10.2%), Cantoira (+9.1%) Borgiallo (+7.7%), Salbertrand (+5.5%), Val della Torre (+5.2%). Losing population severely are: Noasca (-36.5%), Ribordone (-22.4%), Perrero (-16.7%), and Pratiglione (-15.5%) which are followed by increasing percentages of -10%, the municipalities of Valprato Soana, Sparone, Pont C.se, Alpette, Fenestrelle, Locana, Colleterto Cast., Monasterolo di Lanzo,

Brosso and Roure. The hilly municipalities show a smaller decrease (-1.1 %, about -4.800 inhabitants).

A positive trend stands out in the Ciriacese-Valli di Lanzo ZO, Givoletto (+10.1%) and at some distance Villanova C.se (+5.1%). Other positive increases above 5 percent affect the AMT West HZ with Rosta (+7.1 percent), Druento (+6.4 percent) and Villarbasse (+5.3 percent). The largest declines are concentrated in the Eporedies with a peak in Cossano (-15.5%), followed by Salerano (-12.1%), Magliano (-11.1%) and Fiorano (10.4%). The Chivassese HZ also shows two significant negative declines in Brusasco (-13.9%) and Cinzano (-13.3%). It should be noted that, since these are municipalities below the threshold of 750 inhabitants (except for Brusasco, which loses 239 units against an average of about 1.500 inhabitants), these are negative changes that are nevertheless small in absolute terms.

The decline over the past 10 years is -1.2 percent in the plains. Prominent in Eporediese are Romano c.se (-10.1%) and Vische (-9.4%). A case in point is Caselle T.se (-24.8% equal to about 4.500 inhabitants) and Borgaro T.se (-12.8%) affected by the spin-off of part of their territory following the formation of the new municipality of Mappano. The largest increase is in Riva presso Chieri (+12.4%), followed by Pianezza (9.1%). In the sub range of +5, -7% are San Benigno C.se, Vinovo, San Maurizio C.se. The trend recorded in the Capital (-2.4%; 2011: 869.312; 2021: 848.196) is one percentage point higher than the total trend in the whole MCTo (-1.4%), with a population decrease between 2021 and 2011 of about -21.100 resident.

### **8.2.2 The economy of the Turin Metropolitan Area**

The Turin region once had a significant economic impact on the country, but there are signs that it has recently become mired in more traditional spatial organization, which has led to a downward trend in performance relative to the North and Northwest and an asymmetrical distribution of wealth-generating capacity. The level and density of employment and income overall, together with the population density, the number of degrees and diplomas, employment rates (especially in the manufacturing sector), and all of these factors all point to this. The issues are not limited to the amount of wealth produced, but also the significant difficulty in implementing strategies aimed, for instance, at keeping young people (laureates and diplomats) in the Turin region, which is unable to provide equal employment and economic opportunities in comparison to other areas of the North.

One of the main drivers of the country's growth has been the Turin metropolitan area, which has its capital and is largely organised around the presence of FIAT, Italy's most significant automobile industry. For several decades, there has been a steady rise in labor-related immigration, with significant flows coming primarily from southern Italy. The restructuring of the automotive sector and the crises of the early 1970s (and 2007) led to a disruptive shift that had a significant impact on the socioeconomic patterns throughout the whole metropolitan region. The Capital's population has increasingly moved to the first, second, and third belt municipalities, and concurrently, its industrial functions have decreased, leading to an increase in brownfield sites and abandoned industrial warehouses (about 3.5 million square meters).

The phenomenon of abandoned industrial areas has grown over the years throughout the metropolitan area, giving way to speculative dynamics that have sought to generate land value by offering new sites, which have remained mostly empty or finally used for logistical purposes and, to a lesser extent, for commercial activities. The situation described derives from the different density of factors of production-individuals, qualifications, incomes and innovative processes, but above all from the profile of the techno-economic structure of activities: if the NE presents a stronger connection between territories, which supports and amplifies the local benefits of agglomeration, the NO is marked by greater specialization and a prevailing entrepreneurial system of small and micro enterprises (94.8 percent of enterprises have fewer than 10 employees), which makes technology transfer processes more difficult, as well as the retention in the local system of human capital created by the universities.

In the wake of the 2006 Winter Olympics, a transformation, especially a cultural one, that reoriented Turin's development from the traditional automotive sector to new sectors, starting with services, marked the beginning of the process of restructuring MCTo's economic base. In recent years, the issue of innovation has been identified as a driving force for the revitalization of the metropolitan economy and as an essential factor in ensuring territorial attractiveness. Turin has undergone profound economic and physical changes, with the result that today it is no longer a "one-company town," and its economy is characterised by strong diversity and the growing importance of sectors related to the knowledge economy.

Increasing competitive pressure and diversification of economic vocations have been an incentive for innovation. The promotion of a knowledge-based economy has led to an increasingly innovation-oriented diversified ecosystem that includes the Polytechnic, universities, 4 business incubators (I3P of the Polytechnic of Turin,

2i3T of the University of Turin, SocialFare and Opificio 4.0), 2 accelerators (Build it up and 42 accelerator), 2 Science and Technology Parks (Environment Park, Torino Wireless), 1 biopark (Bioindustry Park, Colletterto Giacosa) and numerous Research Centers.

The automotive sector has shifted toward specialization (advanced mechanics, mechatronics, electronics) with a strong concentration in technologically advanced sectors such as aerospace, ITC, renewable energy and nanotechnology, although manufacturing activities (wholesale and retail trade, professional, scientific and technical activities, administrative activities and support services, information and communication) still play a crucial role in MCTo's economy.

### **8.2.3 HZs, process and role within metropolitan governance.**

As described in the previous paragraph, given and considered the territorial extension and the number of municipalities to the Metropolitan City of Turin, according to Art. 1, paragraph 11, of Law No. 56 of April 7, 2014, has agreed to identify on its territory 11 Homogeneous Zones, in order to allow effective participation and sharing of municipalities in the government of the Metropolitan City.

The HZs (Homogeneous Zones) are an operational unit of the Metropolitan Conference of Turin, established to achieve the objectives established by the Statute of the Metropolitan City of Turin. They are governed by specific regulations, approved by the Metropolitan Council, with the advice of the Metropolitan Conference. The HZs also represent a structure in the territory for the decentralised activities and services of the Metropolitan City and can be an opportunity to organize municipal services in an associated way and delegate functions of metropolitan competence. HZs express an opinion on acts of the Metropolitan Council that specifically affect them and participate in the shared creation of the Strategic Plan and the Metropolitan Territorial Plan. Law No. 56 of April 7, 2014, established *'the establishment of homogeneous zones for specific functions, considering the characteristics of the territory, with coordinating bodies linked to the city's organs*. The Metropolitan City of Turin adopted the division of the metropolitan territory into homogeneous zones by a resolution of the Metropolitan Conference on April 14, 2015.

The 11 Homogeneous Zones of the Metropolitan City of Turin, were identified by taking into consideration various factors, including the distribution of settlements, forms of cooperation and associations between functions, optimal

geographical areas, subdivisions proposed by various planning instruments, natural and geomorphological factors, protected areas, and socio-cultural characteristics of the zones. The construction of these zones is based on the sharing and implementation of certain principles and values, including recognising the role and function of each zone, equitable access to services and resources for all zones, valuing diversity, and seeking balance among zones without homologation. The HZs were approved in April 2015 along with the Metropolitan Statute and were updated in 2019 and 2021 when the new municipalities of Mappano, Valchiusa and Val di Chy were established (Table 31).

**Table 31 - Decrees Approving ZO Perimeter**

|                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| <b>Approval of ZO perimeter</b> | <i>DCM DEL 14.4.15, N. 2 (PROT. N. 11258) APPROVAZIONE DELLA PROPOSTA DEFINITIVA DI PERIMETRAZIONE DELLE ZONE OMOGENEE DELLA CITTÀ METROPOLITANA DI TORINO AI SENSI DEL CO. 11, LET. C), ARTICOLO UNICO DELLA L. 56/14</i> |
| <b>1st Modification</b>         | <i>DCM del 31 gennaio 2019 (Prot. N. 804/2019) Zone omogenee della Città metropolitana di Torino. Inserimento nuovi comuni di Valchiusa e Val di Chy nella Zona omogenea n. 9 "Eporediese"</i>                             |
| <b>2nd Modification</b>         | <i>DCM n. 55 del 4 agosto 2021 (Prot. 14756/2021) Zone omogenee della Città metropolitana di Torino. Inserimento nuovo comune di Mappano nella zona omogenea n. 4 "AMT Nord"</i>   |

Source: MCTo, 2022a

The HZs are responsible for expressing opinions on acts of their interest and participating in the formation of the Metropolitan Strategic Plan and the Metropolitan General Territorial Plan. In addition, HZs constitute a form of inter-institutional cooperation and can be used to organize municipal services and functions of the MCTo. The Metropolitan General Territorial Plan identifies HZs as possible contexts for coordinating supra-municipal spatial policies, addressing complex issues and experimenting with forms of planning at the local scale. However, the extent and configuration of the HZs may not always be the most suitable for the purposes of spatial planning, and the Metropolitan General Territorial Plan does not exclude the possibility of defining sub- or supra-areas of action, also considering the perimeters of the Integrated Territorial Areas of the PTR.

## **8.3 Institutional framework Analysis**

### **8.3.1 The Piedmont Regional Planning System in nutshell**

Despite being modified and integrated multiple times over the past thirty years by other regional laws, Regional Law No. 56 ‘*Tutela ed uso del suolo*’ approved on December 5, 1977, by the Piedmont Region (L.R. 56/1977), remains the primary regulatory reference at the regional level for land governance. In accordance with the principles established by State Law No. 1150/1942, the Piedmont regional law addresses urban planning in a more detailed and comprehensive manner. It establishes planning guidelines for land transformation interventions, thoroughly regulates administrative procedures and the content of individual executive plans, specifies urban planning and building parameters for each land use and permitted interventions, sets rules for interventions in agricultural areas, safeguards historical centers, and increases the minimum provision of public spaces compared to the amounts set at the national level (Figure 93).

After various attempts to reform urban planning legislation, the Piedmont Region comprehensively reformed the original provisions of L.R. 56/1977 through the approval of Regional Law No. 3 of March 25, 2013, ‘*Modifiche alla legge regionale 5 dicembre 1977, n. 56 (Tutela ed uso del suolo) e ad altre disposizioni regionali in materia di urbanistica ed edilizia*’. Specifically, L.R. 3/2013 significantly simplifies the structure of the original L.R. 56/1977. While preserving its recognizability for those operators who have applied it over the years, it also contributes to its modernization by incorporating the principles of co-planning and subsidiarity.



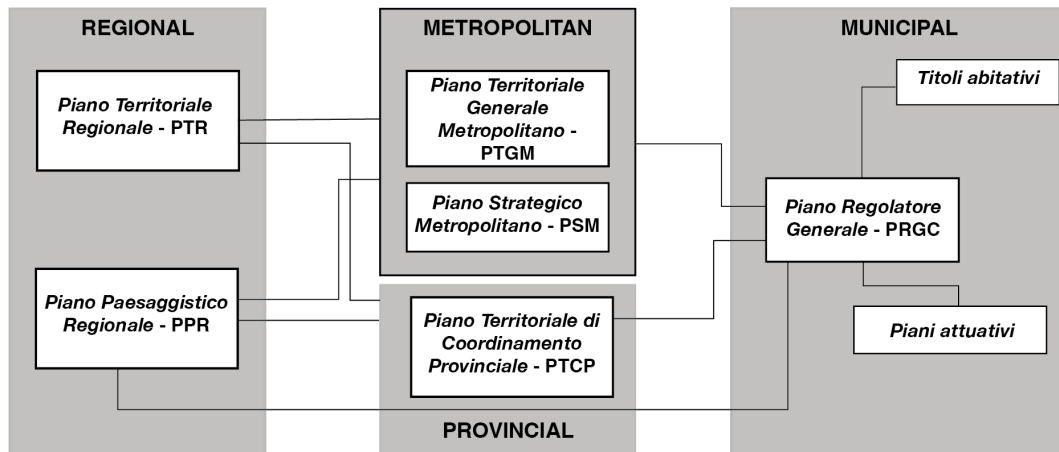


Figure 93 – The Regional Planning System in the Piedmont Region. Source: Author’s elaboration.

### 8.3.2 The evolution of the metropolitan governance

In the organization of the Kingdom of Italy’s territory, the Royal Decree No. 3702 of October 23, 1859 (*Rattazzi*), based on the French system, designated the province as the level between regions and municipalities. Each province was divided into 5 districts, which were dissolved in 1927 and corresponded to French *arrondissements*, and supra-municipal level districts, which had administrative and judicial responsibilities. This division took place in 1859 as well.

The 1950s saw the introduction of the first metropolitan-scale urban planning tools as national directives encouraged intermunicipal territorial plans for Turin and Milan. In instance, the 1954 plan for Turin lacked the legislative authority to be approved by the majority of the 23 municipalities included along with the capital city, which is why these plans were never put into action (Corsico, 2005).

The socio-economic processes that had governed the growth and restructuring of the region were recognised as part of the studies for the creation of the Regional growth Plan (1965–1967), and the goals for the plan’s creation were established. The strongest poles and their spheres of influence were transformed into ‘target areas’ and ‘ecological area’ to carry out all of the target area’s social functions. In order to distinguish the ecological areas from the industrial centres, it was necessary to look at work commutes and the infrastructure for public transit. Turin (split into 12 sub-areas) ended up being the largest area in the entire region and its extension was shown negatively in respect to the size and distribution of the other Piedmont target areas.

In accordance with the Piedmont Region's planning rules, it was determined to split the area into homogenous zones that might undergo the socioeconomic rebalancing it sought. The two objectives were to spread urban living patterns across the region and minimize polarization around Turin. The '*Comprensori*' (which are mentioned in the regional statutes but not in the constitution), Local Service Units (later Local Socio-Health Units), Transport Basins, Program Areas, and several other regional functional divisions all sprang from this division.

Metropolitan regions were suggested as new beginning points for national economic and infrastructure development in the National Project '80 (*Progetto 80*, see more Renzoni, 2012; Zanfi, 2014) (preliminary text for the National Economic Programme 1971–1975) at the end of the 1960s. The initial delineation plan for the Turin Metropolitan Area was being developed concurrently. In particular, the first proposal for the Turin metropolitan area was made in 1972 in accordance with the Regional Council's decree (DGR 719/72), involving 53 municipalities, such as the municipalities of the first and second belt and gathering a population of approximately 1.750.000 people with a surface area of 1.347 km<sup>2</sup>. It should be highlighted that this change did not provide many tangible outcomes.

By R.L. No. 41 of 4/6/1975, 15 *Comprensori*, or minimal geographic zones in which socioeconomic interdependencies and spatial interactions between the service, residential, and manufacturing sectors can be detected or intended to be expressed, were established at the regional level. The *Comprensori* were repealed by r.l. 16/1989. The *Comprensori* committees, decentralised bodies of the Region, promoted socio-economic development and coordinated the activities of Local Authorities and other entities operating in the territory.

The idea to create the so-called Metropolitan city as a territorial government organization with independent legislative powers didn't come up until the 1990s. While there was no timeframe established for the transfer of responsibilities from municipalities to metropolitan cities, Law 142/1990 specifically stated that the Regions had a year to determine the boundaries of these new metropolitan cities. Piedmont Region subsequently produced a draft legislation (n. 151/91) in 1991 that included a proposal for the delineation of the Metropolitan city (which was made up of a total of 33 municipalities) and a first indication of its powers; however, this draft was never converted in law, also because at the national Law 436/1993 made the act of defining the areas of Metropolitan cities optional, and no longer compulsory, for the Regions.

The *Circondari* in the province of Torino are founded in the late 1990s as a consequence of dCP in the 1998. The territorial homogeneity characteristics, taking

into consideration socio-demographic settlements, production sites, environmental systems, and accessibility systems, were used to identify the five *Circondari*. A district capital municipality was determined for each region (Brossa, 1999).

These areas served as the organizational hubs for decentralised offices and services, which fostered dialogue and engagement among residents. The logistical hub for political and institutional links among the province, municipalities, and mountain settlements was each capital city.

The *Circondari* have been excellent locations to examine socioeconomic and territorial dynamics, as well as sub-provincial planning and programming regions, thanks to the approval of the first Provincial Territorial Coordination Plan (1999).

The establishment of Metropolitan cities was reintroduced at the end of the century by Law 265/1999, which delegated responsibility to the municipalities and provinces (who were required to adopt their statute, specify their internal structure and functions, and organize themselves, among other things), while the Regions were required to define their perimeter within 180 days. The metropolitan cities were upgraded to the status of autonomous authorities, on par with regions, provinces, and municipalities, in 2001 as a result of the reform of Title V of the Constitution. Despite this, metropolitan areas were merely on paper. On the one hand, this was due to the opposition of the majority of Regions, Provinces, and Municipalities, who feared losing their autonomy and/or political and institutional influence. On the other hand, the solution to the problem of creating a metropolitan area involved the ‘doughnut’ issue.

Thanks to the first strategic plan being authorised in 2000, the issue of ‘soft’ metropolitan government in Turin just recently came to light. ‘Building metropolitan government’ was one of the six objectives in this plan, and it was suggested that the Metropolitan Conference be established as a reliable platform for discussion and development with the voluntary involvement of 38 municipalities, including Turin. The Metropolitan Mobility Authority was founded as a result of this Conference, which was operational between 2000 and 2004. It also resulted in several inter-municipal partnerships.

The mayors of the 17 municipalities involved in the so-called ‘*Tavolo metropolitano*’ signed a memorandum of understanding in 2007 that had the following goals: promoting emerging possibilities for inter-municipal planning and cooperation, including through mutual structures and initiatives; supporting and overseeing current inter-municipal cooperation agreements and initiatives; enhancing current inter-municipal cooperation agreements and initiatives.

Following the PTC2's approval in 2011, 38 municipalities (with a combined population of about 1.600.000) were included in the proposed list of metropolitan areas. These municipalities were chosen based on the definition of homogeneous areas in the provincial territory and the mobility needs of the Turin functional basin. When developing its vision for '*Torino Metropoli 2025*', the third strategic plan for the city of Turin, which was released in June 2012 and accepted in April 2014, specifically used the 38 municipalities identified in PTC2 as its territorial reference region.

Through arranging the boundaries of these Cities with those of the existing Provinces of Turin, Milan, Venice, Genoa, Bologna, Florence, Rome, Naples, Bari, and Reggio Calabria, the law 135 attempted to resolve previous issues and establish Metropolitan cities as "hard" governmental bodies in 2012. This effort was successful to some extent. The Metropolitan City of Turin was established on January 1, 2015, thanks to Law 56/2014, which was successful in achieving these goals.

### **8.3.4 Governance Scheme and competences**

The provisions on metropolitan cities and provinces set forth in Law No.56/07.04.2014 and the reorganization of the administrative functions conferred on the Metropolitan City of Turin and the provinces by the Region set out in R.L. No.23/29.10.2015 have imposed a comprehensive review of the entity's organizational structure. By Decree of the Metropolitan Mayor No.317-16662/06.07.2018, the 'Plan of Organizational Reorganization of the Entity' was approved, subject to subsequent decrees of the amendment. Specifically, from 2018 to the present, there have been as many as 17 decrees of amendments to the Organizational Rearrangement. The amendments are divided into changes on i) Structure; ii) Areas of Responsibility; and iii) Macro Functions. The most recent of which is the Metropolitan Mayor's Decree DCR No.44 dated 27.02.2023, which ordered an amendment and redefinition of the organizational structure and function chart (Figure 94) (MCTo, 2024).

It should be considered that reorganizations of the administrative structure occur periodically, and there is no close relationship between the Delrio reform and subsequent structural reorganizations of the metropolitan authority. These changes generally, but not always, occur with the change of administration or when new financial resources are available. In fact, when there are greater availability management positions tend to increase by fragmenting the structure more. Otherwise, with few resources, there is a tendency to rationalize and merge the

various departments. Mainly, reorganizations are closely related to the management of internal resources. Managers and departments tend to be technical (sometimes there is also political alignment but the choice is always technical). This is the case in MCTo and it should be pointed out that there are many differences from other MCs. During the transition from a province to a metropolitan city, all MCs had ways to compare with each other and indeed a reality of absolute heterogeneity emerged.

There have been several reorganizations before, even when the entity was a province. It always depended on the sensitivity of the mayor and the general manager. In recent years there has been a reorganization that has taken into account new legislation and new national disciplines. Beyond the new functions introduced by Delrio, there has been the introduction of transparency and performance legislation that has also affected the organizational structure chart quite strongly (so with various studies and insights). A regulatory trend is emerging at the national level that tends to align the methodologies very much with those of companies, and this consequently is also reflected in the organizational structure chart. In fact, the organizational structure has undergone organizational changes on the economic-financial part, organization, performance, and employee evaluation.

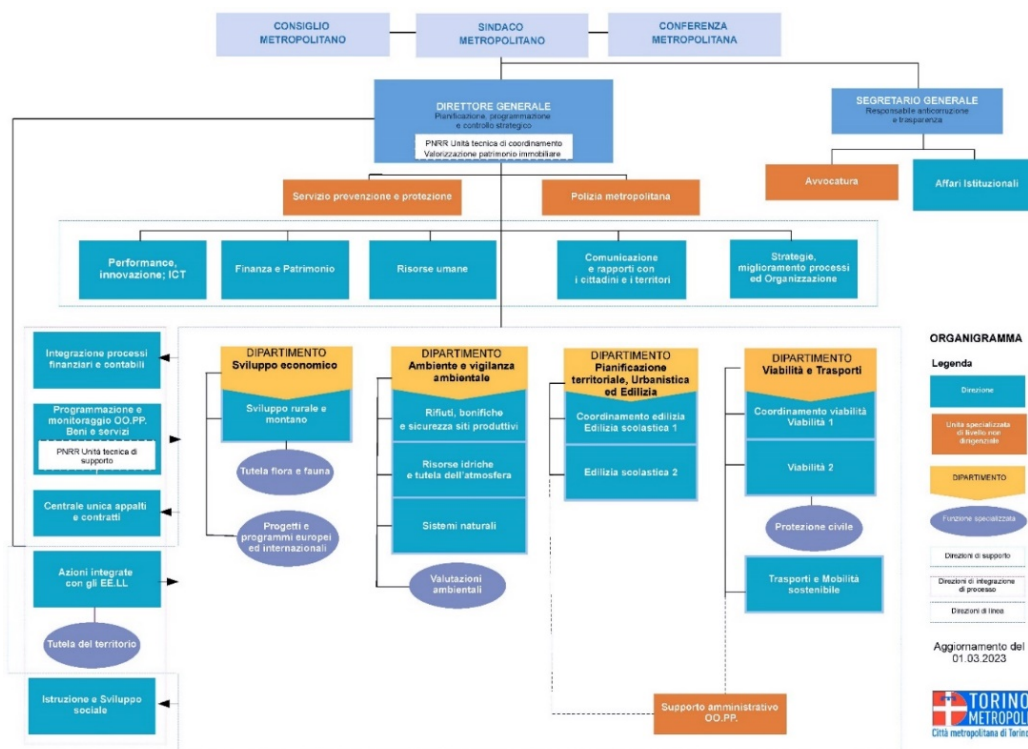


Figure 94 -The Organizational Structure of MCTo. Source: MCTo, 2024.

In accordance with Law 56/2014, the three main bodies are the metropolitan mayor, the metropolitan council, and the metropolitan conference (whose roles and functions have been extensively described in previous paragraphs and chapters).

Immediately below the institutional bodies are, on the one hand, the Secretary-General, responsible for anti-corruption and transparency, with the ‘Institutional Affairs’ Department and the Legal Department (specialised units of non-management level), and on the other hand, the Director General, responsible for Strategic Planning, Programming and Control, with the Prevention and Protection Service and the Metropolitan Police, the latter specialised units of non-management level. Metropolitan Police, the latter specialised units of non-management level.

The MCTo, going into more detail, has three different types of directorates. There are support directorates (vertical-transversal), process integration directorates (horizontal-transversal) and line directorates (MCTo, 2024).

The supporting directorates are:

- Performance, Innovation, ICT
- Finance and Heritage
- Human Resources
- Communication and Relations with Citizens and Territories

- Strategies, Process Improvement and Organization

The process integration directorates are:

- Financial and Accounting Process Integration
- Programming and monitoring OO.PP. goods and services
- Single central procurement and contracts
- Integrated actions with EE.LL. (specialised function in Territorial Protection)
- Education and Social Development

The line directorates, on the other hand, are grouped into four different departments:

- Economic Development.
- Environment and Environmental Supervision
- Land Planning, Urban Planning and Construction
- Roads and Transportation

Specifically, within the Department of Economic Development with a specialised function in ‘European and International Projects and Programs’ is framed the Directorate of ‘Rural and Mountain Development’ with a specialised function in ‘Protection of Flora and Fauna’. Within the ‘Environment and Environmental Supervision’ Department, with a specialised function in ‘Environmental Assessments’, there are three-line directorates, namely, the ‘Waste, Waste Remediation and Production Site Safety’ Directorate, the ‘Water Resources and Environmental Protection’ Directorate and the ‘Natural Systems’ Directorate.

Within the ‘Roads and Transportation’ Department is framed the ‘Road Coordination - Roads 1’ Directorate and the ‘Roads 2’ Directorate, the latter with a specialised function on ‘Civil Protection’, and finally the ‘Transportation and Sustainable Mobility’ Directorate.

It is worth noting the integration made by the Metropolitan Mayor’s Decree of May 11, 2022, which establishes MCTo’s internal organizational model within the scope of PNRR projects and interventions with respect to which the entity has a role as an implementing or directing entity (MCTo, 2024)

In this sense, two Units have been established:

- The Technical Coordination Unit that transposes and synthesizes the Administration’s directions for the implementation of the PNRR.
- The Technical Support Unit, headed by the Director of the Directorate for Planning and Monitoring Public Works Goods and Services.

### **8.3.6 Different forms of inter municipal cooperation**

Within the metropolitan area, there are different forms of inter-municipal cooperation within a supra-local integrated planning perspective that operate independently of the metropolitan institution. These are:

- Unions of Mountain Municipalities and Unions of Municipalities
- AITs
- Local Action Groups LAGs
- ASL
- River and Lake Contracts
- Optimal Territorial Ambits of the water cycle (ATO)
- National Strategy for Internal Areas - SNAI
- Homogeneous territorial areas for integrated regional planning for development and territorial cohesion
- Territorial pacts

#### ***Unions of Mountain Municipalities and Unions of Municipalities***

The system of local autonomy has been reorganised at the national level due to the need for administrative simplification and the need to maintain public spending under control. By outlining the guidelines for establishing aggregations such as inter-municipal conventions and Unions of Mountain and Non-Mountain Municipalities with the aim of enhancing efficiency in the provision of services to citizens, state legislation on compulsory associationism for municipalities with a population of up to 5.000 people has laid the basis for a significant shift in the structure of local governments. Law 56/2014 has reiterated the legal scope of associationism entrusted to regional autonomy.

The Piedmont Region in this sense already two years earlier, with Regional Law No. 11 of 28.9.12 '*Disposizioni organiche in materia di enti locali*' had provided for the adoption of the *Carte delle Forme associative del Piemonte*, which established the Unions of Municipalities and laid down conditions and requirements for their inclusion in the Charter; with L.R. 14/2019 '*Disposizioni in materia di tutela, valorizzazione e sviluppo della montagna*', the Region also focused attention on the Union of mountain Municipalities established to carry out, not only municipal functions and services, but also the protection, promotion and development of the mountains.



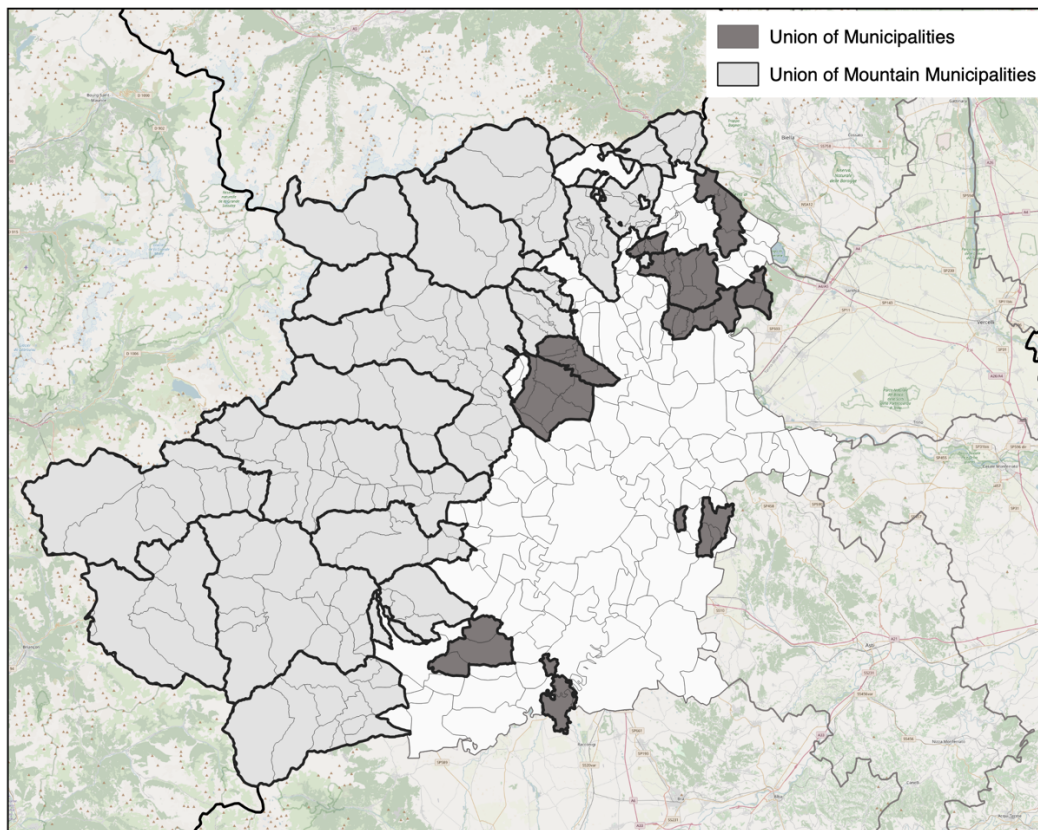
The Unions of Municipalities in MCTo to 2022 are 24; of these, 16 are mountain Unions of Municipalities aimed at the protection and promotion of mountains, established to replace the former mountain communities. The number of Unions and their composition are subject to a dynamic that is recorded annually by the Region, for the portion of Unions surveyed in the *Carte delle Forme associative*<sup>47</sup>. The metropolitan city, on the basis of the principles of subsidiarity and adequacy, including through specific agreements, provides municipalities and unions with administrative, technical and cartographic assistance in the formation of municipal and inter-municipal urban and territorial instruments, as well as in strategic planning and for the adjustment of municipal urban instruments to superordinate and sectoral territorial and strategic planning (Art. 34, Metropolitan Statute).

It is important to point out that the delimitation of mountain communities had already been the subject of regulatory attention in the past. In particular, as early as 1952, Law 991 regulated the identification of mountain territories. The latter were identified with certain territorial criteria. That is, mountain territories were defined as those municipalities located for at least 80 % of their area above 600 meters above sea level and those in which the difference in height between the lower elevation and the area of the municipal territory is not less than 600 meters (Law 991/52). Mountain territories were subsequently divided into homogeneous zones according to criteria of economic and social territorial unity.

Subsequently, the Piedmont Region divided its territory between mountains, hills and plains by dCR 11/12/1975, no. 7463 (updates in the 1978, 1982, 1988) and by L.R. no. 1102/1971 ' *Nuove norme per lo sviluppo della montagna* ', 13 mountain communities were established in the metropolitan area of Turin, implementing Art. 44 of the Constitution. Thirty years later, in the 2008, the mountain communities were merged into 6 areas, with a partial redefinition of the boundaries. To date, as previously anticipated, there are 16 unions of mountain municipalities and there are 8 unions of municipalities (Figure 95).

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<sup>47</sup> Not all Unions in the metropolitan area are reported in the Piedmont Charter of Associative Forms.



**Figure 95 - Union of Mountain Municipalities and Union of Municipalities in MCTo. Source: Author's elaboration on Regione Piemonte, 2023.**

### ***AIT - Areas of territorial integration***

The PTR (2011), besides considering the different local administrative levels of metropolitan cities, provinces, municipalities and unions of municipalities, also articulates its territory into Areas of Territorial Integration (AITs). AITs are 33 aggregations of municipalities, which transcend supra-municipal administrative boundaries. The region therefore considers AITs to be the places where the local system can behave as a collective actor in its development, in a process of co-planning with regional planning. The AITs were delimited from two criteria: i) the common gravitation to a main urban centre that not only attracts commuters for work but also has service and territorial organization functions in the local area; ii) the self-containment of flows and socio-economic and institutional relations within that gravitational sphere.

It is also important to highlight that although the criteria and process of delimiting the boundaries of AITs were very similar to that of HZs, the AITs falling within the metropolitan area defined with the 2011 PTR differ in some cases from HZs.

However, with the PTR update, it is apparent how a redefinition of the boundaries of the AITs is underway. Among the objectives of the revision of the PTR is to give greater prominence to the articulation by Areas of Territorial Integration proposed by the 2011 Plan, which recognised them as privileged spaces of interaction between local subjects, and between these and the components of the territorial context of reference, that is, as areas of action of a local network, capable of acting, in certain circumstances, as a collective subject, thus giving rise to a Local Territorial System.

The AITs could thus be adapted to the HZs of the Turin PTGM, with the exception of HZ6 *Valli di Susa Sangone*, which would remain divided into the two AITs 12 *Susa* and 13 *Montagna olimpica*, HZ11 *Chierese Carmagnolese*, which would be made up of AITs 14 *Chieri* and 15 *Carmagnola*, and the first four HZs pertaining to Turin and its metropolitan area, which would all be incorporated into AIT 9 *Torino* (Figure 96).

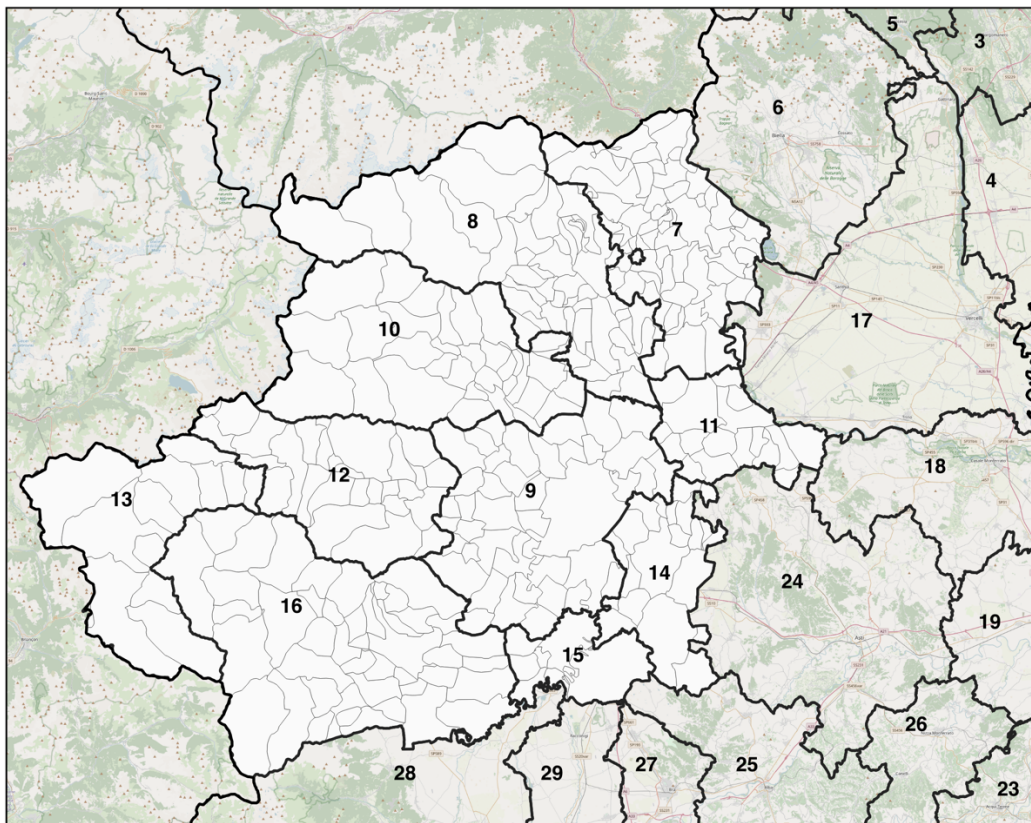


Figure 96 - Area of Territorial Integration (AIT) in the MCTo. Source: Author's elaboration on Regione Piemonte, 2024.

**Table 32 - List of Municipalities and AIT in the MCTo**

| <b>Areas of territorial integration (AIT)</b> | <b>List of Municipalities</b>  |
|---|--|
| <b>AIT 7 Ivrea</b>                            | <i>Albiano d'Ivrea, Andrate, Azeglio, Banchette, Barone Canavese, Bollengo, Borgofranco d'Ivrea, Borgomasino, Brosso, Burolo, Candia Canavese, Caravino, Carema, Cascinette d'Ivrea, Chiaverano, Collettero Giacosa, Cossano Canavese, Fiorano Canavese, Issiglio, Ivrea, Lessolo, Lorzane, Maglione, Mercenasco, Montalenghe, Montalto Dora, Nomaglio, Orio Canavese, Palazzo Canavese, Parella, Pavone Canavese, Perosa Canavese, Piverone, Quagliuzzo, Quassolo, Quincinetto, Romano Canavese, Rueglio, Salerano Canavese, Samone, San Martino Canavese, Scarmagno, Settimo Rottaro, Settimo Vittone, Strambinello, Strambino, Tavagnasco, Traversella, Val di Chy, Valchiusa, Vestignè, Vidracco, Vische, Vistrorio.</i> |
| <b>AIT 8<br/>Rivarolo Canavese</b>            | <i>Agliè, Alpette, Bairo, Baldissero Canavese, Borgiallo, Bosconero, Busano, Canischio, Castellamonte, Castelnuovo Nigra, Ceresole Reale, Chiesanuova, Ciconio, Cintano, Collettero Castelnuovo, Cuceglio, Cuornè, Favria, Feletto, Forno Canavese, Frassinetto, Ingria, Levone, Locana, Lusigliè, Noasca, Oglanico, Ozegna, Pertusio, Pont Canavese, Prascorsano, Pratiglione, Ribordone, Rivara, Rivarolo Canavese, Ronco Canavese, Salassa, San Colombano Belmonte, San Giorgio Canavese, San Giusto Canavese, San Ponso, Sparone, Torre Canavese, Valperga, Valprato Soana, Vialfrè.</i>   |
| <b>AIT 9 Torino</b>                           | <i>Alpignano, Beinasco, Borgaro Torinese, Bruino, Buttigliera Alta, Candiolo, Carignano, Caselle Torinese, Castagnole Piemonte, Collegno, Druento, Grugliasco, La Loggia, Leini, Mappano, Moncalieri, Nichelino, None, Orbassano, Pancalieri, Pianezza, Piobesi Torinese, Piossasco, Reano, Rivalta di Torino, Rivoli, Rosta, San Benigno Canavese, San Gillio, San Mauro Torinese, Sangano, Settimo Torinese, TORINO, Trana, Trofarello, Venaria Reale, Villarbasse, Vinovo, Virle Piemonte, Volpiano, Volvera.</i>   |
| <b>AIT 10 Ciriè</b>                           | <i>Ala di Stura, Balangero, Balme, Barbania, Cafasse, Cantoirà, Ceres, Chialamberto, Ciriè, Coassolo Torinese, Corio, Fiano, Front, Germagnano, Givoletto, Groscavallo, Grosso, La Cassa, Lanzo Torinese, Lemie, Lombardore, Mathi, Mezzenile, Monastero di Lanzo, Nole, Pessinetto, Rivarossa, Robassomero, Rocca Canavese, San Carlo Canavese, San Francesco al Campo, San Maurizio Canavese, Traves, Usseglio, Val della Torre, Vallo Torinese, Varisella, Vauda Canavese, Villanova Canavese, Viù.</i>   |
| <b>AIT 11 Chivasso</b>                        | <i>Brandizzo, Brozolo, Brusasco, Caluso, Casalborgone, Castagneto Po, Castiglione Torinese, Cavagnolo, Chivasso, Cinzano, Foglizzo, Gassino Torinese, Lauriano, Mazzè, Montanaro, Monteu da Po, Rivalba, Rondissone, San Raffaele Cimena, San Sebastiano da Po, Torrazza Piemonte, Verolengo, Verrua Savoia, Villareggia.</i>  |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>AIT 12 Susa</b>                      | <i>Almese, Avigliana, Borgone Susa, Bruzolo, Bussoleno, Caprie, Caselette, Chianocco, Chiusa di San Michele, Coazze, Condove, Giaveno, Mattie, Mompantero, Moncenisio, Novalesa, Rubiana, San Didero, San Giorio di Susa, Sant'Ambrogio di Torino, Sant'Antonino di Susa, Susa, Vaie, Valgioie, Venaus, Villar Dora, Villar Focchiardo</i>  |
| <b>AIT 13<br/>Montagna<br/>Olimpica</b> | <i>Bardonecchia, Cesana Torinese, Chiomonte, Claviere, Exilles, Giaglione, Gravere, Meana di Susa, Oulx, Salbertrand, Sauze d'Oulx, Sauze di Cesana, Sestriere.</i>   |
| <b>AIT 14 Chieri</b>                    | <i>Andezeno, Arignano, Baldissero Torinese, Cambiano, Chieri, Marentino, Mombello di Torino, Montaldo Torinese, Moriondo Torinese, Pavarolo, Pecetto Torinese, Pino Torinese, Riva presso Chieri, Santena, Sciolze</i>  |
| <b>AIT 15<br/>Carmagnola</b>            | <i>Carmagnola, Isolabella, Lombriasco, Osasio, Poirino, Pralormo, Villastellone.</i>  |
| <b>AIT 16 Pinerolo</b>                  | <i>Airasca, Angrogna, Bibiana, Bobbio Pellice, Bricherasio, Buriasco, Campiglione Fenile, Cantalupa, Cavour, Cercenasco, Cumiana, Fenestrelle, Frossasco, Garzigliana, Inverso Pinasca, Luserna San Giovanni, Lusernetta, Macello, Massello, Osasco, Perosa Argentina, Perrero, Pinasca, Pinerolo, Piscina, Pomaretto, Porte, Pragelato, Prali, Pramollo, Prarostino, Roletto, Rorà, Roure, Salza di Pinerolo, San Germano Chisone, San Pietro Val Lemina, San Secondo di Pinerolo, Scalenghe, Torre Pellice, Usseaux, Vigone, Villafranca Piemonte, Villar Pellice, Villar Perosa.</i> |

Source: Regione Piemonte, 2024.

### ***Local Action Groups***

Local Action Groups are mostly consortium companies formed by public entities, trade associations, consortia, foundations, ATIs, etc. Their purpose is to enhance local potential and promote the consolidation or establishment of networks of operators within the participatory local development approach-LEADER of Measure 19 of the 2014-2022 PTR.

The LAGs also aim to involve the economic and social structure in the definition of the new strategies, which will form the backbone of the Local Development Programs, the programming documents approved by the Region that allow each LAG area to use resources through the publication of calls for business and other public and private entities. The intervention program of the Local Development Plans of LAGs focuses on a maximum of 3 areas including: i) the development and innovation of supply chains; ii) sustainable tourism; iii) the enhancement of the widespread architectural and landscape heritage; iv) access to essential public services.

There are 14 LAGs in Piedmont, and they are present in mountain and hill areas, operating in different sectors in a supply chain logic (tourism, agriculture, crafts,



cultural heritage, services). The size of a LAG's area is between 30.000 and 100.000 inhabitants.

The LAGs that fall in the metropolitan area of Torino are (Figure 97):

- LAG *Escartons and Valli Valdesi*
- LAG *Valli di Lanzo, Ceronda e Casternone*
- LAG *Valli del Canavese*

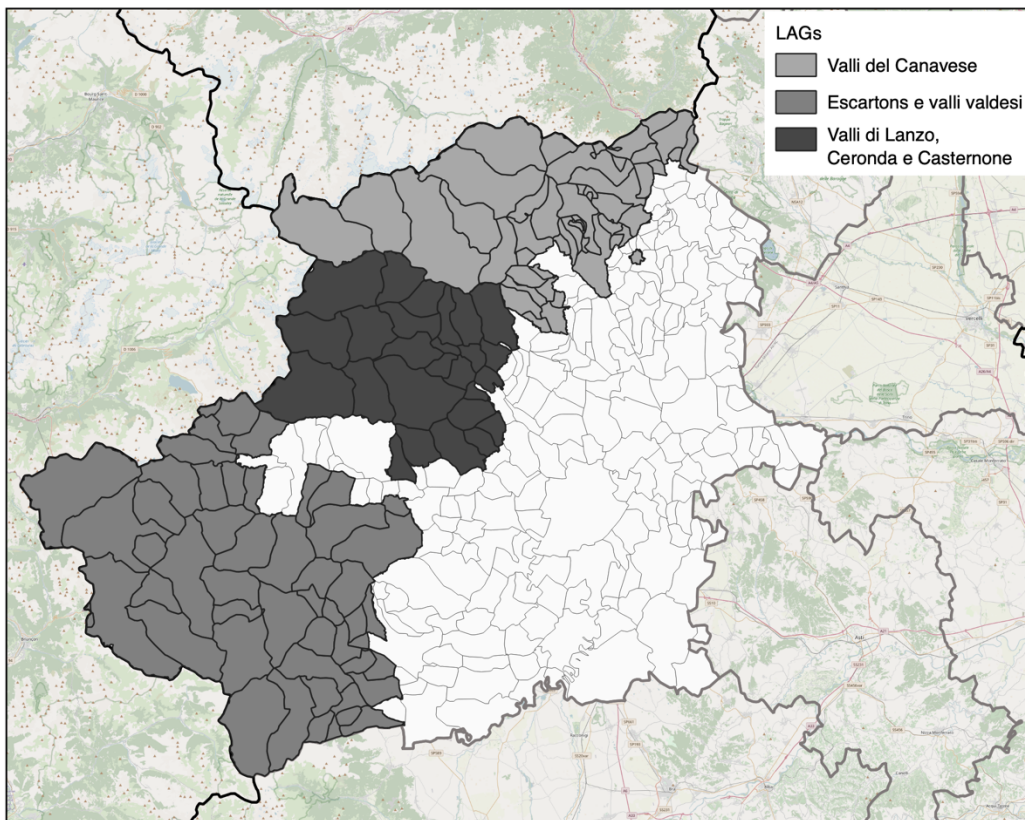


Figure 97 - The LAGs in the MCTo. Source: Author's elaboration on Piedmont Region data.

Table 33 - List of municipalities within LAGs in the MCTo

| Local Action Group (LAG)             | List of Municipalities  |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| LAG <i>Escartons e Valli Valdesi</i> | <i>Angrogna, Bardonecchia, Bibiana, Bobbio Pellice, Bricherasio, Bruzolo, Bussoleno, Cesana Torinese, Chianocco, Chiomonte, Claviere, Coazze, Exilles, Frossasco, Giaglione, Giaveno (parziale), Gravere, Fenestrelle, Inverso Pinasca, Luserna San Giovanni, Lusernetta, Meana di Susa, Mompantero, Moncenisio, Massello, Mattie, Noavalesca, Oulx, Perosa Argentina, Perrero, Pinasca, Pomaretto, Porte, Pragelato, Prali, Pramollo, Prarostino, Rorà, Roure, Salbertrand, Salza di Pinerolo, San Germano Chisone, San Giorio di Susa, San Pietro Val Lemina, San Secondo di Pinerolo, Sant'Antonino di Susa, Sauze di Cesana, Sauze d'Oulx, Sestriere,</i> |

|   |  |
|---|--|
|   | <i>Usseaux, Torre Pellice, Valgioie, Venaus, Villar Focchiardo, Villar Pellice, Villar Perosa.</i>   |
| <b>LAG<br/>Valli di Lanzo,<br/>Ceronda e<br/>Casternone</b> | <i>Ala di Stura, Ceres, Givoletto, Monastero di Lanzo, Vallo Torinese, Balangero, Chialamberto, Groscavallo, Pessinetto, Varisella, Balme, Coassolo Torinese, La Cassa, Rubiana, Viù, Cafasse, Corio, Lanzo Torinese, Traves, Cantoira, Fiano, Lemie, Usseglio, Caprie, Germagnano, Mezenile, Val della Torre</i>  |
| <b>LAG<br/>Valli del<br/>Canavese</b>                       | <i>ALTO CANAVESE - Rocca Canavese, Levone, Rivara, Forno Canavese, Pratiglione, Prascorsano, Pertusio, Canischio, Valperga, San Colombano Belmonte, Cuornè.<br/>VALLE ORCO E SOANA - Ceresole Reale, Noasca, Locana, Ribordone, Ronco Canavese, Valprato Soana, Sparone, Alpette, Pont Canavese, Ingria, Frassinetto.<br/>VALLE SACRA - Castelnuovo Nigra, Cintano, Collettero Castelnuovo, Borgiallo, Chiesanuova, Castellamonte.<br/>VAL CHIUSELLA - Traversella, Brosso, Vistrorio, Rueglio, Val di Chy, Issiglio, Vidracco, Valchiusa.<br/>DORA BALTEA CANAVESANA - Quincinetto, Carema, Tavagnasco, Settimo Vittone, Quassolo, Nomaglio, Andrate, Borgofranco d'Ivrea, Chiaverano, Montalto Dora, Lessolo.<br/>MORENA OVEST - Baldissero Canavese, Torre Canavese, Bairo, Agliè, Cuceglio, Vialfrè.</i> |

Source: Author's elaboration on Piedmont region data.

### ***The Local Health Units – ASLs***

The ASLs are part of the national health service; they are companies with public legal status, endowed with organizational, managerial, technical, administrative, patrimonial and accounting autonomy as well as centres of the imputation of entrepreneurial autonomy; in fact, according to Art. 3 Legislative Decree Dec. 30, 1992, no. 502: *'in accordance with the pursuit of their institutional purposes, Local Health Units are established in Companies with public legal status and entrepreneurial autonomy'*.

According to the text tenor of the norm, they would be in the nature of economic public bodies; however, since the beginning of 1993, according to the prevailing case law, the ASL has been a body under the jurisdiction of the regions, possessing its own legal subjectivity with an autonomy that has subsequently also assumed an entrepreneurial character.

Within the Turin metropolitan area there are 5 Local Health Units which are entailed in the metropolitan borders (Figure 98).

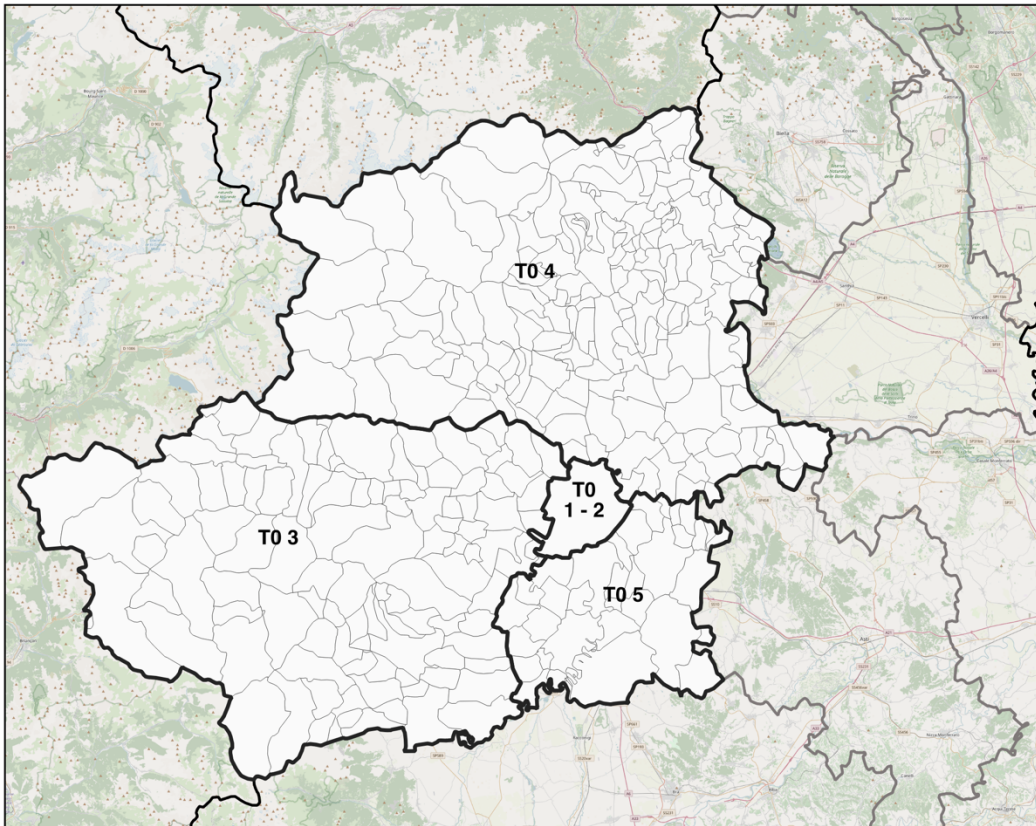


Figure 98 – Local Health Units - ASL within the MCTo. Source: Author’s elaboration on Piedmont region data.

### *The river and lake contracts*

River and Lake Contracts are tools of negotiated planning. First introduced in the 2000s during the Second World Water Forum held in The Hague, they were taken over by the European Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC. They, establish a system of rules that puts on the same level the criteria of public benefit, economic performance, social value and environmental sustainability, in the search for effective solutions for the redevelopment of a river basin in order to achieve the quality objectives set out in the Directive itself. In a nutshell, a River or Lake Contract is a voluntary agreement that provides for a series of operational acts, concerted between resource and land managers (governing structures), citizens and representatives of categories that have interests related to river territories (stakeholders or interested parties). At the national level, the National Charter of River Contracts, already ratified by several Italian regions including Piedmont, identifies basic methodologies and strategies to be used in the management of Contracts throughout the territory. These tools have also recently been recognised at the national level within the framework of Law 221 of December 28, 2015, the



so-called '*Collegato ambientale*' to the recently approved 2014 Stability Law, which in art. 24 bis for the first time provides for and frames River Contracts within the framework of the Hydrographic District Planning, inserting them in art. 68 - bis of Legislative Decree 152/2006:

*"Art. 68-bis. – (Contratti di fiume). – 1. I contratti di fiume concorrono alla definizione e all'attuazione degli strumenti di pianificazione di distretto a livello di bacino e sottobacino idrografico, quali strumenti volontari di programmazione strategica e negoziata che perseguono la tutela, la corretta gestione delle risorse idriche e la valorizzazione dei territori fluviali, unitamente alla salvaguardia dal rischio idraulico, contribuendo allo sviluppo locale di tali aree".*

To date, processes for the following River and Lake Contracts have been activated in the territory of the province of Turin:

- *Il Contratto di Fiume del Bacino del Torrente Sangone*
- *Il Contratto di Lago del Bacino dei Laghi di Avigliana*
- *Verso il Contratto di Fiume del Torrente Stura di Lanzo*
- *Il Contratto di Lago di Viverone*
- *Il Contratto di Fiume del Bacino del Torrente Pellice*
- *Verso il Contratto di Fiume della Dora Baltea: il progetto Eau Concert 2*
- *Verso il Contratto di Fiume del Torrente Chisola e dei suoi affluenti*

### ***The Optimal Territorial Area - ATO***

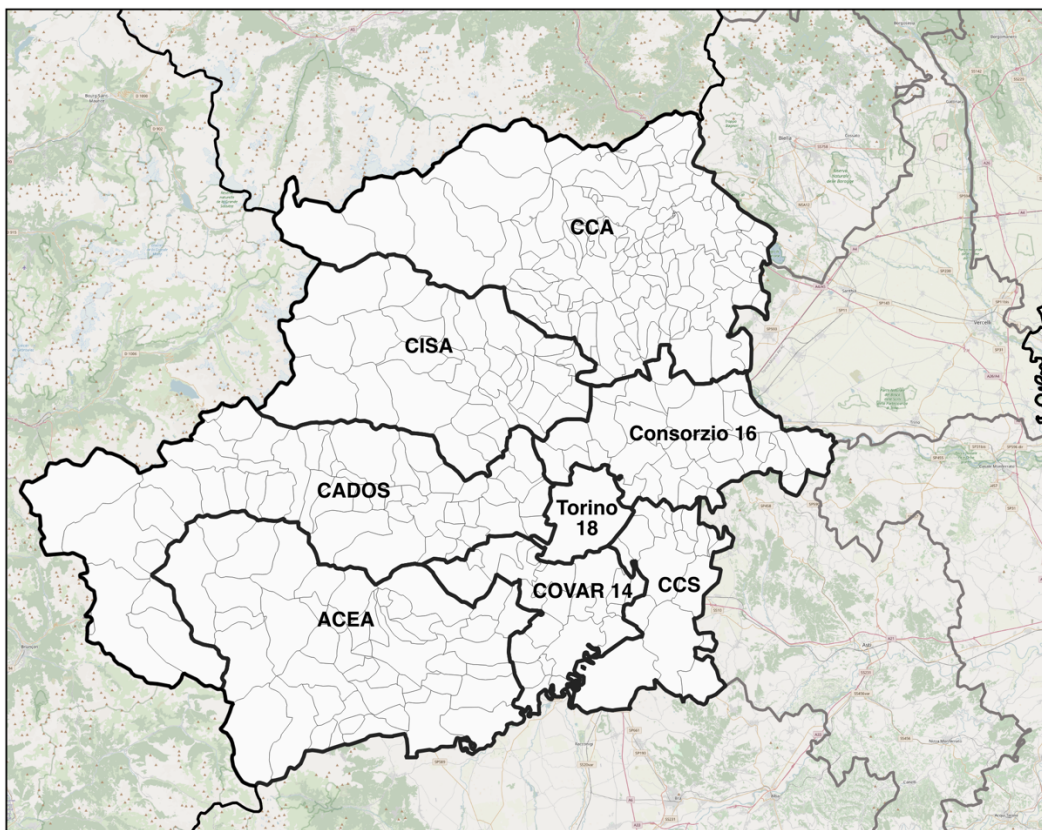
The optimal territorial area (ATO) is a territory over which integrated public services are organised, for instance, water or waste services (see Environment Code, Legislative Decree 152/2006). These areas are identified by the regions with a specific regional law (in the case of the Integrated Water Service with reference to river basins), and on them, the area authorities act, structures with legal personality that organize, entrust and control the management of the integrated service.

In terms of waste management, the Piedmont area is now organised in accordance with regional statute 7/2012, which also establishes the Optimal Territorial Area Conference. Law 7/2012's implementation and the creation of the Area Conference are now suspended, therefore the two-level organizational structure established by the previous regional law 24/2002, which is separated into 'Basins' and 'Optimum Areas', continues to be used. According to article 10 of the L.R. 24/2002, the following functions are carried out in the basins: *i) management in an integrated form of separate delivery, separate collection, collection and*

*transportation; ii) construction and management of facilities serving separate collection; iii) transfer to technological plants and landfills.*

The Provincial Programs oversee precisely organising the area into basins suited for garbage management. Through obligatory consortia known as basin consortia, the municipalities within the same basin organize the services in a related manner (Figure 99):

- *Consorzio Pinerolese (ACEA)*
- *Consorzio Ambiente Dora Sangone (CADOS)*
- *Consorzio Canavesano Ambiente (CCA)*
- *Consorzio Chierese per i Servizi (CCS)*
- *Consorzio Intercomunale di Servizi per l'Ambiente (CISA)*
- *Consorzio di Bacino 16 (CONSORZIO 16)*
- *Consorzio Valorizzazione Rifiuti 14 (COVAR 14)*
- *Consorzio di Bacino 18 (TORINO 18)*



**Figure 99 - The ATOs for waste management consortia. Source: Author's elaboration on MCTo data.**

According to Article 9 of Regional Law 24/02, the Optimal Territorial Areas are the areas of each Piedmont province. Construction and operation of technical facilities for waste recovery and disposal, including landfills, are organised in the best-suited area (referred to as area services under R.L. 24/02's Art. 10 comma 2). The Area Association is made up of the Basin Consortia belonging to the same optimal territorial area. The Area Association carries out the duties of governance and service coordination as outlined in Regional Law 24/02's Article 12 in order to guarantee the unitary management of urban waste during the phases of treatment and disposal, forming the territorial area where the waste management cycle is closed.

Concerning water services, pursuant to the law, these are organised based on optimal territorial areas (ATOs) defined by the regions (Art. 147, Legislative Decree 152/2006) in which the local authorities falling within that territory compulsorily participate. The regions are also responsible for regulating at the local level the functioning and organization of the ambit governing body. The Piedmont Region by its own Laws No. 13 of January 20, 1997, and No. 7 of May 24, 2012, established the Area Authorities and provided the modalities for the participation of Local Authorities. In particular, the Local Authorities (Municipalities, Provinces, Mountain Communities) of each optimal territorial area shall exercise the functions of organising the integrated water service through the Conference of Mayors of Municipalities not belonging to Mountain Unions, the Presidents of Mountain Unions and the Presidents of Provinces.

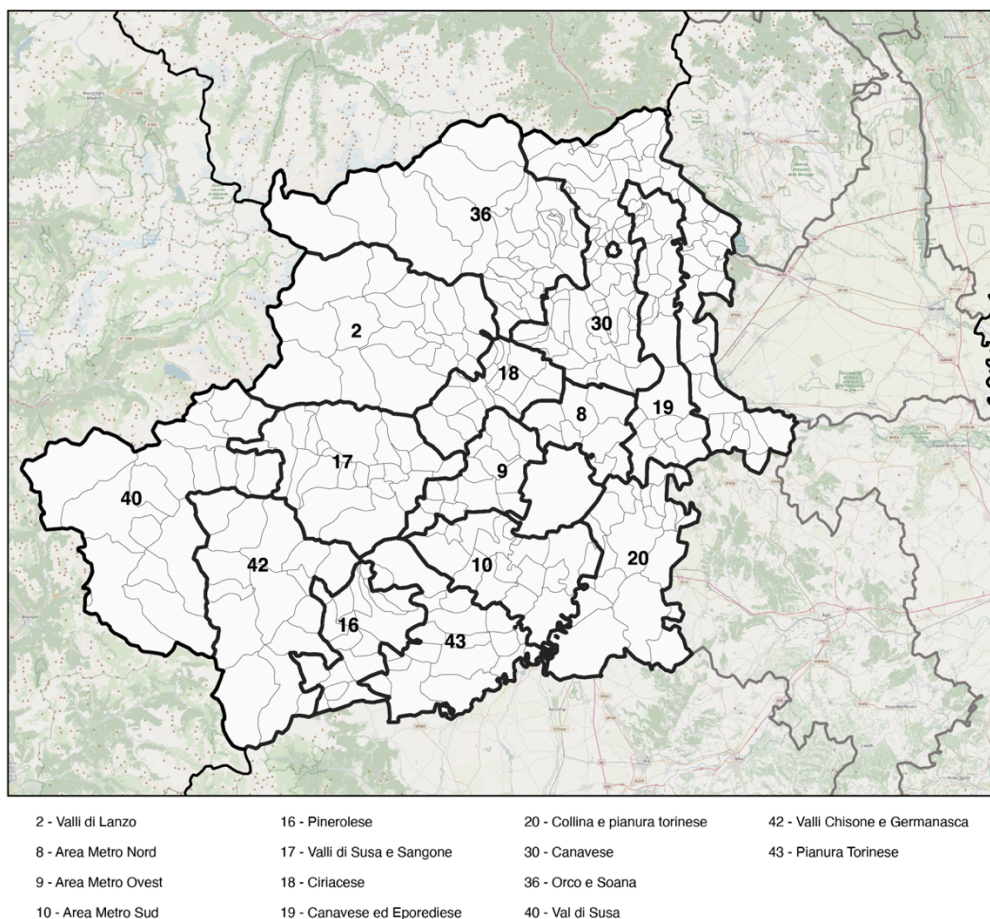
The Piedmont region is divided into 6 different ATOs for water resource management. The Turin metropolitan territory falls perfectly within ATO 3. The Area Authority No. 3 "Turin" is an association between 307 municipalities, all included in the territory of the Metropolitan City of Turin, and the Metropolitan City itself. It represents the area governing body which transferred the exercise of the powers due to the Local Authorities for the organization of the integrated water service, including the planning of water infrastructure.

***Homogeneous territorial areas for integrated regional planning for development and territorial cohesion***

With the new 2021-2027 planning, Italian regions have been called upon to identify homogeneous territorial areas for integrated regional planning related to development and territorial cohesion. The Piedmont Region, through the implementation of Action V.5i.1 Urban Area Strategies (SUA) of the 2021-2027 PR FESR, intends to promote the balanced growth of local systems for the benefit

of citizens and economic activities, favouring convergence toward a common territorial development objective through the concentration of investments on the area's potential. The SUAs are conceived as a tool to enable wider use of the territories through environmental, cultural and digital investments in favour of the competitiveness of the territories involved and with the purpose of promoting and strengthening the implementation of integrated interventions capable of bringing growth and territorial cohesion (Figure 100).

A list of potential urban areas, or inter-municipal systems with intermediate densities, gravitating to larger centres but including municipalities of various sizes with complementary relationships or united by geographical contiguity, were identified in the programming phase of the ERDF-RP. These areas have functional interactions, historical-cultural and social homogeneity, and are frequently re-functionalised to meet economic needs.



**Figure 100 - Homogeneous territorial areas for integrated regional planning for development and territorial cohesion. Source: Author's elaboration on Piedmont Region data.**

### ***Territorial Pacts***

Territorial Pacts are one of the instruments of negotiated planning, an approach that changed how development strategies were developed by putting a greater emphasis on the territory and its actual needs and possibilities (CIPE Resolution of March 21, 1997).

Over time, the Territorial Pacts' goal has been to encourage local small and medium-sized businesses to become more competitive in the context of the global economy, in addition to promoting business development in relation to each company's unique production potential, and as a short- and long-term fallout, to increase employment levels in the region in line with a sustainable development strategy.

The Territorial Pacts are the outcome of an agreement between several public and private entities with the objective of launching economic ventures and infrastructure investments in the industrial, agribusiness, services, tourist, agricultural, fishing, and aquaculture sectors. They have served as an interesting means of energising and empowering the partnership between public and private entities for the purpose of fostering sustainable and integrated local development, in addition to serving as a means of acquiring facilities, albeit significant ones, for businesses and infrastructure.

This experience has demonstrated that integrated planning is a necessity for territories, which has further strengthened their ability to function as a system and their awareness that it is important to think in terms of maximising shared potential while respecting the uniqueness and autonomy of each.

Six territorial agreements with the Metropolitan City of Turin are still in force (Figure 101).

- *Patto dell'Area di Torino Sud* (lead partner: Moncalieri)
- *Patto del Canavese* (lead partner: Ivrea)
- *Patto del Pinerolese* (lead partner: Pinerolo)
- *Patto del Sangone* (lead partner: Orbassano)
- *Patto della Stura* (lead partner: Cirié)
- *Patto delle Valli di Susa* (lead partner: Comunità Montana Alta e Bassa Val di Susa)



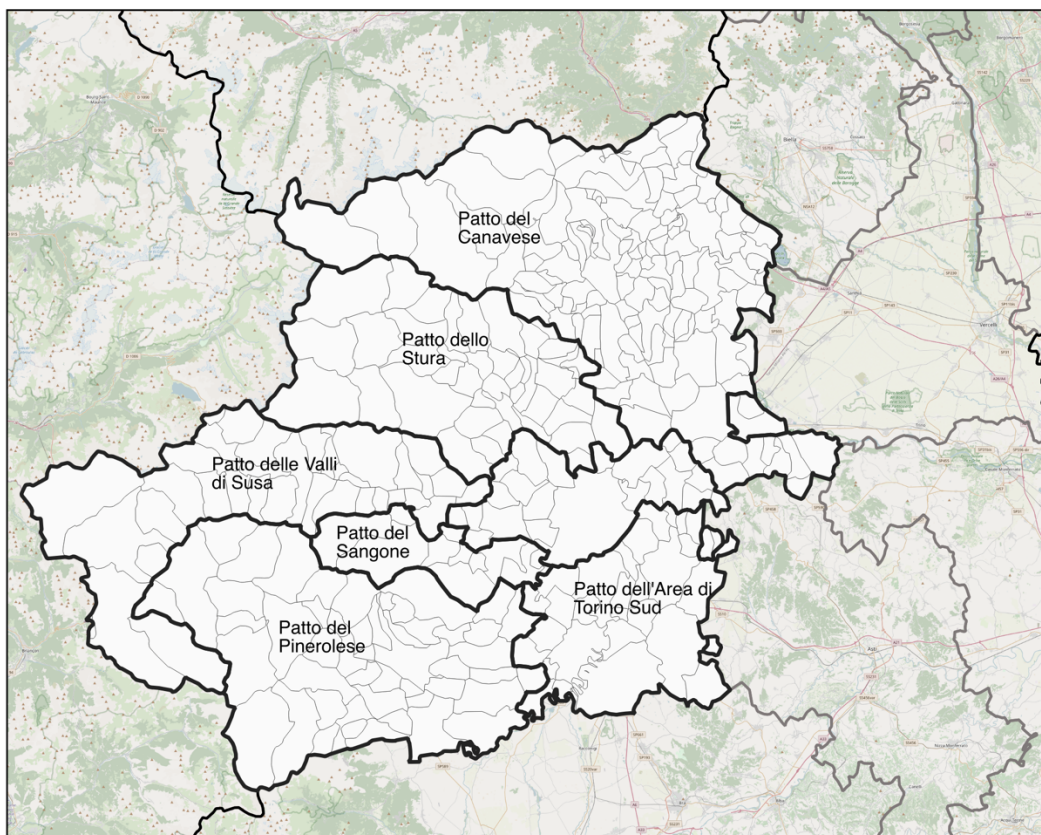


Figure 101 - Territorial Pacts active in the MCTo. Source: Author's elaboration on MCTo data.

Table 34 - List of municipalities in Territorial Pacts within MCTo.

| <b>Territorial Pacts</b>                    | <b>List of Municipalities</b>  |
|---|--|
| <b><i>Patto dell'Area di Torino Sud</i></b> | <i>Andezeno, Marentino, Pino Torinese, Baldissero Torinese, Moncalieri, Piobesi, Cambiano, Montaldo Torinese, Poirino, Candiolo, Moriondo, Pralormo, Carignano, Nichelino, Riva Presso Chieri, Carmagnola, Osasio, Santena, Castagnole Piemonte, Pancalieri, Trofarello, Chieri, Pavarolo, Villastellone, La Loggia, Pecetto Torinese, Vinovo, Lombriasco.</i>   |
| <b><i>Patto del Canavese</i></b>            | <i>Agliè, Cuorgnè, Ribordone, Albiano D'Ivrea, Favria, Rivara, Alpette, Feletto, Rivarolo Canavese, Andrate, Fiorano Canavese, Rivarossa, Azeaglio, Foglizzo, Romano Canavese, Bairo, Forno Canavese, Ronco Canavese, Baldissero Canavese, Frassinetto, Rondissone, Banchette, Ingria, Ruelgio, Barone, Canavese, Issiglio, Salerano Canavese, Bollengo, Ivrea, Salassa, Borgiallo, Lauriano, Samone, Borgofranco D'Ivrea, Lessolo, San Benigno Canavese, Borgomasino, Locana, San Colombano Belmonte, Bosconero, Lombardore, San Giorgio Canavese, Brozzo, Lorzane, San Giusto Canavese, Brozolo, Lusigliè, San Martino Canavese, Brusasco, Maglione, San Ponso, Burolo, Mazzè, San Sebastiano Da Po, Busano, Mercenasco, Scarmagno, Caluso, Montalenghe, Settimo Rottaro, Candia Canavese, Montalto Dora, Settimo Vittone, Canischio, Montanaro, Sparone, Caravino, Monteu Da Po, Strambinello, Carema, Noasca, Strambino, Casalborgone, Nomaglio, Tavagnasco, Cascinette D'Ivrea,</i> |

|                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
|                                 | <i>Oglianico, Torre Canavese, Castagneto Po, Orio Canavese, Traversella, Castellamonte, Ozegna, Val Di Chy, Castelnuovo Nigra, Palazzo Canavese, Valchiusa, Cavagnolo, Parella, Valperga, Ceresole Reale, Pavone Canavese, Valprato Soana, Chiaverano, Perosa Canavese, Verrua Savoia, Chiesanuova, Pertusio, Vestignè, Chivasso, Piverone, Vialfrè, Ciconio, Pont-Canavese, Vidracco, Cintano, Prascorsano, Villareggia, Collettero, Castelnuovo, Pratiglione, Vische, Collettero Giacosa, Quagliuzzo, Vistrorio, Cossano Canavese, Quassolo, Volpiano, Cuceglio, Quincinetto.</i> |
| <b><i>Patto del Sangone</i></b> | <i>Beinasco, Bruino, Giaveno, Orbassano, Piossasco, Rivalta Di Torino, Sangano, Trana, Coazze, Reano, Valgioie.</i>   |
| <b><i>Patto della Stura</i></b> | <i>Ala Di Stura, Front, Pessinetto, Balangero, Germagnano, Robassomero, Balme, Givoletto, Rocca Canavese, Barbania, Groscavallo, San Carlo Canavese, Borgaro Torinese, Grosso, San Francesco Al Campo, Cafasse, La Cassa, San Maurizio Canavese, Cantoirra, Lanzo Torinese, Traves, Caselle Torinese, Leini, Usseglio, Ceres, Lemie, Val Della Torre, Chialamberto, Levone, Vallo Torinese, Ciriè, Mathi, Varisella, Coassolo Torinese, Mezenile, Vauda Canavese, Corio, Monastero Di Lanzo, Villanova Canavese, Fiano, Nole, Viù.</i>  |

Source: Author's elaboration on MCTo data.

## 8.4 Spatial and strategic planning Instrument at metropolitan scale

The planning and programming of the metropolitan territory of Turin are governed by a complex set of instruments that regulate the territory's components and resources. This complexity arises mainly from the presence of several supra-ordinate planning levels at the European, national, and regional levels, which provide the reference and regulatory framework in which metropolitan-level planning instruments are found.

The main planning instruments at the metropolitan level are the Metropolitan Strategic Plan, the Metropolitan General Territorial Plan, and the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan. In addition, there are other supra-municipal guidance tools, such as the Metropolitan Agenda for Sustainable Development and other strategic and policy documents with internal relevance to the Institution.

The PSM has a strategic value, while the PTGM and PUMS deal with the governance of the transformations of spaces and flows, the mobility and transportation system, in accordance with the strategies and actions defined by the Strategic Plan. The Metropolitan Agenda for Sustainable Development, on the other hand, represents a device for integrating and orienting existing tools toward sustainable development goals.

In short, these planning tools represent a coherent and integrated whole that shares visions, strategies, projects and actions. Through the instruments of internal programming, they are translated into strategic and operational objectives for the institution. The DUP is the planning tool with an inner value that identifies the specific actions to be taken by the institution to pursue the strategic lines defined by the PSM and declines them into strategic and operational objectives for the technostructure, tuning them with the institutional goals and the Administration’s Mandate Program (*Linee Programmatiche di Mandato*) (Figure 102).

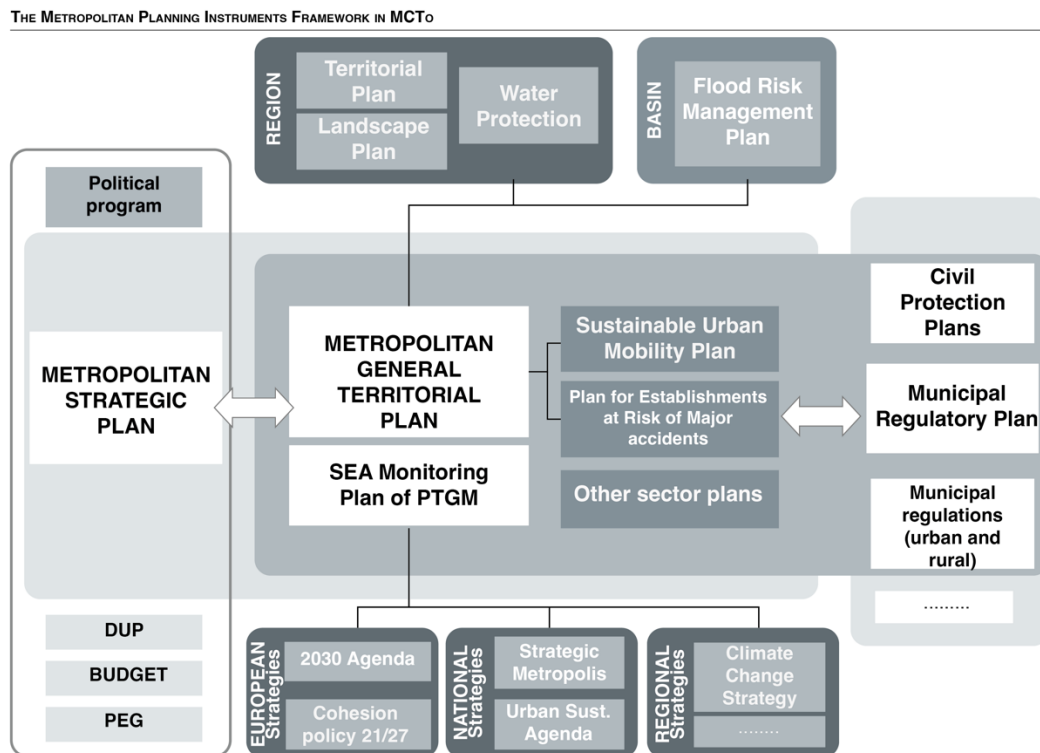


Figure 102 - Metropolitan Planning instruments framework in MCTo. Author’s elaboration on MCTo, 2022a.

### 8.4.1 The Metropolitan General Territorial Plan – PTGM

The Metropolitan City of Turin succeeded the Province with the Delrio reform, Law 56/2014, inheriting from it the role of coordination of territorial planning and acquiring the new primary role of general metropolitan planning. More specifically, the Metropolitan General Territorial Plan is the planning tool used to direct the growth of the metropolitan territory, including its urban, infrastructural, rural, natural, and landscape components. It also serves to territorialize the metropolitan



strategic visions, ensuring the social, environmental, and economic sustainability of changes.

In order to ensure a high standard of living for residents and to promote broad sustainable development of long-term value, the PTGM defines preservation and enhancement policies as essential components. One of the main focuses of policy pertaining to metropolitan areas is reducing land use. In order to achieve this goal, the Metropolitan City has been devoted to promoting and implementing co-planning as a process of integrated consultation for years. Attention to the consequences of climate change is an element that increasingly permeates the various spatial strategies in an increasingly strong and transversal way, in the awareness that the safety and well-being of the population and more generally of the communities of the living is an indispensable enabling factor for long-term development. The regeneration of productive brownfield sites is another of the Authority's key objectives. For them, the Metropolitan City has been mapping for years, which it periodically updates with the aim of encouraging the recovery and reuse of brownfield sites as an action to counteract the consumption of new land (particularly in fertile lowland areas). While the City of Turin is evidently the heart of the functional urban area, a distinctive element of the Metropolitan City of Turin can be found in the widespread network of urban sub-poles, each with its own peculiarities, values and in some cases its own attractive sub-basin.

The PTGM is therefore the tool that defines the overall structural framework within which to identify, define and implement the metropolitan strategic vision. It is a medium- to long-term reference for the activation of planning and metropolitan governance arrangements and processes to support the attraction of resources and resource allocation choices, according to the Authority's objectives, for sustainable and widespread development. The Plan acts as a regulatory tool, but above all as a tool for guiding and supporting the dimension of municipal and inter-municipal planning, making available elements of knowledge and creating opportunities for meeting and confrontation between the different institutional levels of territorial government.

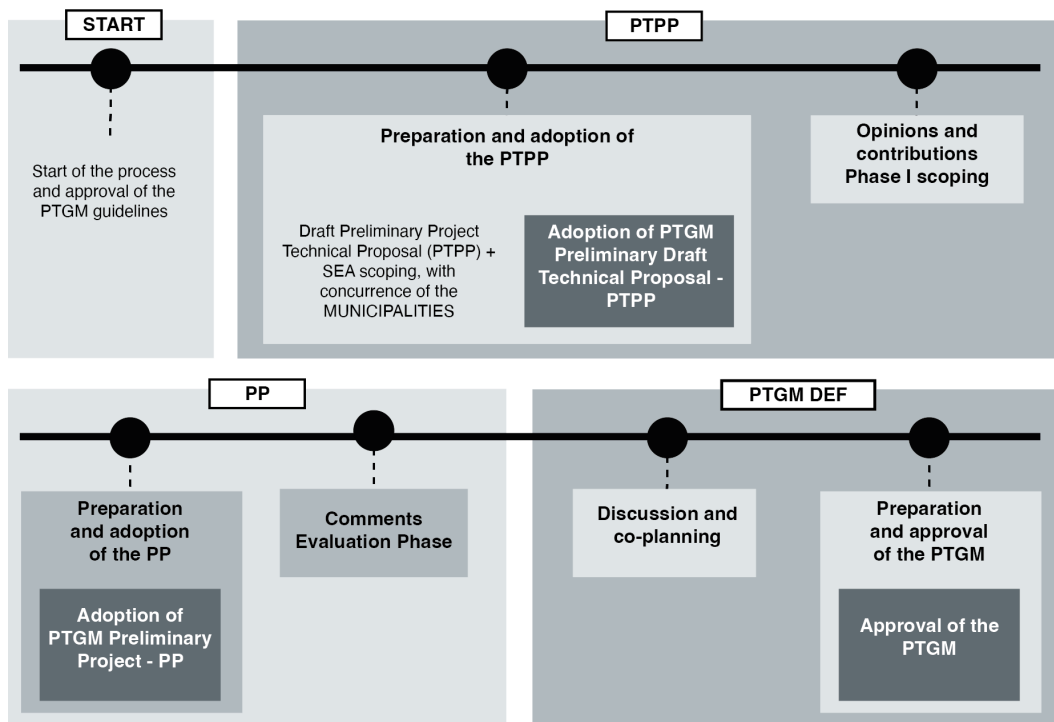
The Metropolitan Statute establishes that '*The Metropolitan General Territorial Plan assumes the effectiveness for all purposes of the Territorial Coordination Plan pursuant to Article 20, paragraph 2, of Legislative Decree No. 267 of August 18, 2000*' (art. 8). This position is confirmed by Regional Law which replaces the PTCP, the General Metropolitan Territorial Plan as the general planning tool of the Metropolitan City. The PTGM is approved by the Metropolitan

Council, having acquired the mandatory opinion of the Assembly of Mayors of the 11 Homogeneous Zones and the binding opinion of the Metropolitan Conference composed of the 312 metropolitan mayors. The PTGM can also be formed and updated by Homogeneous Zones.

In relation to the process of construction of the metropolitan spatial planning tool, throughout 2020 the activities of statistical, territorial and environmental analysis and in-depth analysis were conducted, including through the involvement of the spokespersons of the Homogeneous Zones (analysis on production units), individual municipalities (reconnaissance of road needs, proposed new protected areas, adaptation to climate change...) and other stakeholders in the area.

It should be considered that MCTo has also started almost simultaneously with the PTGM, the preparation of the new PSM and PUMS. In working in parallel on these three tools, which are closely related to each other, MCTo shared in the three different planning processes the analyses and basic territorial and socio-economic data as well as, where possible, the moments of confrontation and participation of the territories in the construction of the macro-strategies and actions, then declined according to the specificities of the Plans (Figure 103).

**THE PTGM APPROVAL PROCESS IN MCTo**



**Figure 103 - Summary of activities and meetings during the plan formation process. Source: Author's elaboration on MCTo, 2023.**

To date, it is pointed out that the preliminary documents were adopted by the resolution of the Metropolitan Council on 12/22/2022. From the date of publication in the BUR, anyone can view the drafts for any comments within 60 days (by 20/03/2023), while the timeline for observations regarding SEA is in 45 days from the public notice (by 20/03/2023).

After highlighting the process of formation and approval of the PTGM, it is important to highlight the transition between PTC2 and PTGM. The PTC2 inherits and reinforces several themes present within PTC2 such as the containment of incremental growth in land consumption. An additional theme reinforced in the PTGM is the recovery of degraded situations, redevelopment, and urban regeneration. Soil protection from hydrogeological disruption is confirmed as a load-bearing theme for the PTGM, which extends its interest and action to the consequences of climate change, introducing the goal of land and community resilience to the occurrence of extreme or unforeseen events. Unlike PTC2, the PTGM no longer provides for the possibility of taking on hydrogeological planning status itself.

The Provincial Ecological Network is revised and updated taking into account the new EU, national and regional guidelines and instruments (Agenda 2030, PPR, ...) and evolves according to a more extensive and comprehensive idea of Metropolitan Green and Blue Infrastructure. The focus on the landscape theme, already present in PTC2, expands and strengthens the PTGM (which adapts and implements the PPR) (MCTo, 2022a).

Metropolitan spatial governance is also implemented through the three sector plans and programs:

- *Variante Seveso* - Minimum Requirements in Urban and Territorial Planning for Areas Affected by Establishments at Risk of Major Accidents. The *Variante Seveso* maintains its validity until its subsequent variant or approval of replacement instruments, as provided by national or regional regulations.
- *Programma Provinciale di Gestione dei Rifiuti - PPGR 2006*, approved by resolution of the Provincial Council No. 367482, 28.11.2006; (Decayed since adaptation to the regional law n.1 of 2018)
- *Piano Paesaggistico della collina di Pinerolo* (Variant No. 1 to PTC2), approved by Provincial Council Resolution No. 32691 of 09/22/2009. The Plan maintains its effectiveness, subject to verification of consistency with the PPR.

A further important focus is on the relationship between the PTGM and other planning instruments. Starting with the relationship between PTGM and PSM, it should be emphasised that there is no hierarchical relationship. The PSM is a short-to-medium-term act that defines development and research trajectories and allocates economic resources, while the spatial plan is the medium-to-long-term (open-ended, to be updated every 10 years) spatial government tool with regulatory cogency that sets spatial objectives, strategies for achieving them, and rules for transformations, including coordinating municipal-level urban plans. These are two planning processes (strategic and territorial) that periodically confront and reinforce each other, with the ultimate common goal of improving the quality of life of citizens, in a context of sustainable and widespread development for the entire metropolitan territory. The PTGM Guidelines (approved in December 2019) were developed from the guidelines of the first PSM 2018-205; the Preliminary Draft Technical Proposal (adopted on April 2, 2021) and the Preliminary Draft PTGM were subsequently compared with the second PSM 21-23.

For all that refers to sustainable mobility, including the bicycle route, and is not directly regulated by it, the PTGM, assumes the objectives and strategies of the

approved PUMS, for the purposes of the accomplished and harmonious territorialisation of the choices made therein, with particular regard to: i) effectiveness and efficiency of the mobility system, with particular regard to TPL; ii) energy and environmental sustainability, with particular reference to improving air quality as a function of public health protection; iii) safety of road mobility, especially for the weaker segments of the population; iv) social and economic sustainability. At the same time, the PUMS is obliged to assume the general objectives and criteria of sustainability, resilience and balanced and widespread development of the metropolitan territory defined by the PTGM, implementing them to the extent of its competence, as well as complying with its relevant provisions with the same.

The relationship, on the other hand, with super-ordinate instruments is articulated differently. The PTGM adapts to the Regional Territorial Plan, considers the objectives of the PTR, implements its provisions, and establishes the actions to be taken by the various local planning subjects, in accordance with the principles of subsidiarity and competence. The PTGM adapts and implements the Regional Landscape Plan on the basis of the agreement between the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities (MIBAC) and the Piedmont Region; it assumes the objectives of the PPR, makes its prescriptions its own, and implements, specifies and integrates where necessary, the regional guidelines and directives, deepening the issues of metropolitan competence.

Finally, the PTGM is called to relate to other superordinate planning tools related to the District Basin Planning and Regional Water Protection Plan namely, the *Po River Basin Management Plan* and *Water Protection Plan*, and the *Hydrogeological Structure Plan* and the *Po River Basin District Flood Risk Management Plan*. In particular, the PTGM adapts to the *Po River Basin Management Plan (2021)* and coordinates and conforms to the *Water Protection Plan* for the achievement of water body quality objectives and more generally for the protection of the entire surface and groundwater system. Finally, the PTGM conforms to the *Hydrogeological Structure Plan*, with the priority objective of reducing hydrogeological risk within values compatible with current land uses, and also conforms to the *Po River Basin District Flood Risk Management Plan (2021-27)*, which directs action on the most significant risk areas and defines safety objectives and intervention priorities at the district scale in a concerted manner.

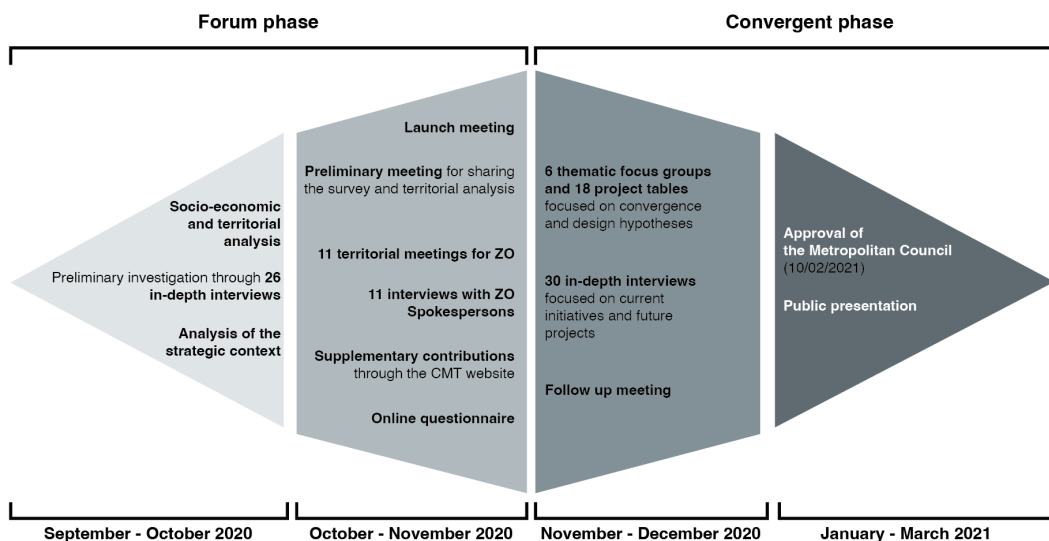
## 8.4.2 The Metropolitan Strategic Plan – PSM

The Metropolitan City of Turin was one of the first to develop a Strategic Plan, which was drawn up starting in 2015 with the aim of supporting the transition from Province to Metropolitan City. The first Strategic Plan 2018 - 2020 was adopted in 2018 and identified 5 project platforms to promote the sustainable development of the territory, declining into more than 60 actions. However, the experience accumulated over the following three years and the results from the monitoring activity of the first Plan, conducted thanks to the support of the *Metropoli Strategiche* project proposed by ANCI, demonstrated the need to adopt a Strategic Plan for the metropolitan territory shared and supported by as many local stakeholders as possible. The new PSM 2021-2023 aimed to strengthen the strategic component of local development policies, identifying the priority lines of development on which to invest in the next three years, which is divided into 6 axes, 24 strategies and is embodied in 111 actions. The Plan document provides annual updates. The Metropolitan City of Turin will oversee coordinating the area's proposals and actions to implement the vision and development project outlined in the 2021/2023 PSM.

The PSM is the strategic plan of the metropolitan territory, developed by the metropolitan city with input from the 312 metropolitan municipalities through the Homogeneous Zones and participation from organizations, social partners, representative associations, the world of culture and research, as well as more generally all interested citizens. The PSM is the outcome of interaction and collaboration between public and private actors and, at the same time, a tool for improving local governance in the direction of broader participation of the public in decision-making processes and greater sharing of territorial development decisions and policies. The Metropolitan Council sets up and approves the PSM, according to the Metropolitan Conference's and the Assembly of Mayors of Homogeneous Zones' obligatory opinions. Every year, the Metropolitan Mayor provides recommendations to the Metropolitan Council for the Strategic Plan's amendment and modification. From a technical point of view, the strategic planning process is coordinated by the Interdepartmental Project Unit 'Strategic Planning', hinged at the Metropolitan City's Economic and Social Development Department. For the definition of the 2021-2023 PSM, the Metropolitan City also relied on the technical and scientific support of the Polytechnic University of Turin and the Links Foundation.

The Strategic Plan 2021–2023 was the final product of a well-articulated participatory planning process that was crucial and completely unique for the Piedmont context. It took place between September and December 2020 and included both moments of listening to and consulting with the territory as well as moments of shared identification and definition of objectives and priorities. In specifically, there were two phases to the planning process: 1) the *forum phase* - aimed at framing the main problems of the metropolitan territory and, from them, some priority guidelines for development consistent with the interests of the different subjects and areas that compose it; 2) the *convergent phase* - aimed at formulating planning ideas that took into account the results of the forum phase, in order to structure the contents of the Metropolitan Strategic Plan (MCTo, 2021).

#### THE PSM PARTECIPATORY PROCESS IN MCTo



**Figure 104 - Process of involvement of metropolitan actors in the Metropolitan Strategic Plan.**  
Source: Author's elaboration on MCTo, 2021

The Forum Phase included some preliminary activities aimed at framing the reference context and defining territorial homogeneities and thematic convergences. It was during this phase that the metropolitan authority engaged with the territories by carrying out preliminary surveys through 37 in-depth interviews, including 11 with the Spokespersons of the Homogeneous Zones and 26 with qualified actors, selected on the basis of their ability to represent a broad and heterogeneous spectrum of views and interests. The planning process included several public meetings, including in particular a discussion meeting for each of the 11 homogeneous zones, aimed at identifying the needs, priorities and visions of

different parts of the metropolitan area. It should also be noted that the metropolitan city had requested since its establishment and in preparation for the new strategic plan that the HZs draw up wide-area strategic plans relating to individual HZ. Some HZs responded positively, others, perhaps due to limited financial and technical resources, less so. In particular, contributions to the PSM by the homogeneous zones of Eporediese (2015) and Chivassese and Pinerolese (2017) should certainly be considered. All meetings have witnessed an extraordinary participation of the process stakeholders, both in terms of numbers and active involvement in the activities. One of the main reasons related to the extraordinary participation of the community probably lies in the fact that the online mode (due to pandemic emergency) facilitated the participation of those residing in the most remote areas of the Metropolitan City, with very little investment of time and money.

Concerning the contents of the new PSM, the vision of the plan is already summarised in the title; in particular, it attempts to refer to the construction of a new relationship between the capital city and the rest of the metropolitan area. It also aims to try to complete the transition of the post-industrial metropolis by seeking to enhance the natural and urbanised environment from a sustainable perspective.

The Plan is structured in close coherence with the sustainable development goals of Agenda 2030, with the objectives of the cohesion policy, and with the cornerstones of the Next Generation EU. In particular, the PSM 2021-2023 is characterised by the choice of having adopted the six missions of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan, declined into as many development axes for the territory (MCTo, 2021):

1. *Torino Metropoli more productive and innovative*
2. *Torino Metropolis greener and more ecological*
3. *Torino Metropoli more mobile, accessible and connected*
4. *Torino Metropolis that learns more*
5. *Torino Metropolis more attractive, fair and equal*
6. *Torino Metropoli healthier*

The axes are in turn divided into 24 strategies and 111 concrete and timely actions. The decision to structure the PSM in coherence with the missions of the PNRR stems from the desire not only to contribute, through the strategic planning process, to the definition of national and European policies, in a bottom-up logic but also to identify shared actions for local development that can be effectively implemented, including through European and national funding.



An articulated monitoring system has been built up to assess the PSM's degree of implementation. It involves many levels of observation and analysis, and it aims to not only publish results but also redefine and revise goals and strategies over time. The PSM is really designed to be adaptable and dynamic, and as such, it must be frequently amended and updated, including in light of the results of control and monitoring operations. In order to do this, a monitoring system with two levels of observation has been built up. The first level consists of context indicators, which provide a multidimensional interpretation of the Plan's operational context and continuing trends as well as the ability to track the evolution of some of the phenomena that the strategic planning is based on. The second level is where the impacts of the plan on the entity's planning and programming tools are taken into account, as well as how well the projects and activities specified in the plan are being carried out by the City Metropolitan City.

### **8.4.3 The Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan - PUMS**

The Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan, established by the Decree of August 4, 2017, is a sectoral strategic planning tool that aims to plan actions for enhancing the mobility and transportation system's effectiveness and efficiency, as well as its integration with urban and territorial planning and developments, in order to make it more accessible, safer, and less polluting. According to aims for environmental, social, and economic sustainability as well as strategic and spatial planning, the PUMS has a 10-year time horizon and is revised at least every five years. Although the different time horizons of the PSM (3 years), the PTGM (non-predetermined duration, however medium to long term) and the PUMS (10 years) do not facilitate integration between the different planning tools, the PUMS (approved by Metropolitan Council Resolution No. 42/2022 of 07/20/2022), has nonetheless incorporated and territorially declined the vision, objectives and strategies of the PSM.

The first phase of the participatory process of PUMS elaboration, the 'listening phase', took place in the second half of 2019, a few months before the start of the PSM drafting process. The Metropolitan City launched the participatory process of elaborating the Plan in February 2019 through a series of meetings involving the 11 homogeneous zones and representatives of the main poles of attraction. The listening phase aimed to share an in-depth picture of the collective perception of the territorial mobility system and to identify priorities in terms of objectives to be pursued through the planning process. In particular, a Metropolitan Forum was

organised on December 18, 2019, which was attended by more than 170 stakeholders representing entities, institutions and stakeholders.

The listening phase was succeeded by the ‘strategic orienteering’ phase, which aimed to bring out the strategies and interventions to be included in the Plan, through the involvement of local authorities, citizens and key stakeholders, through a structured calendar of meetings, in parallel with the participatory process of formulating the PSM.

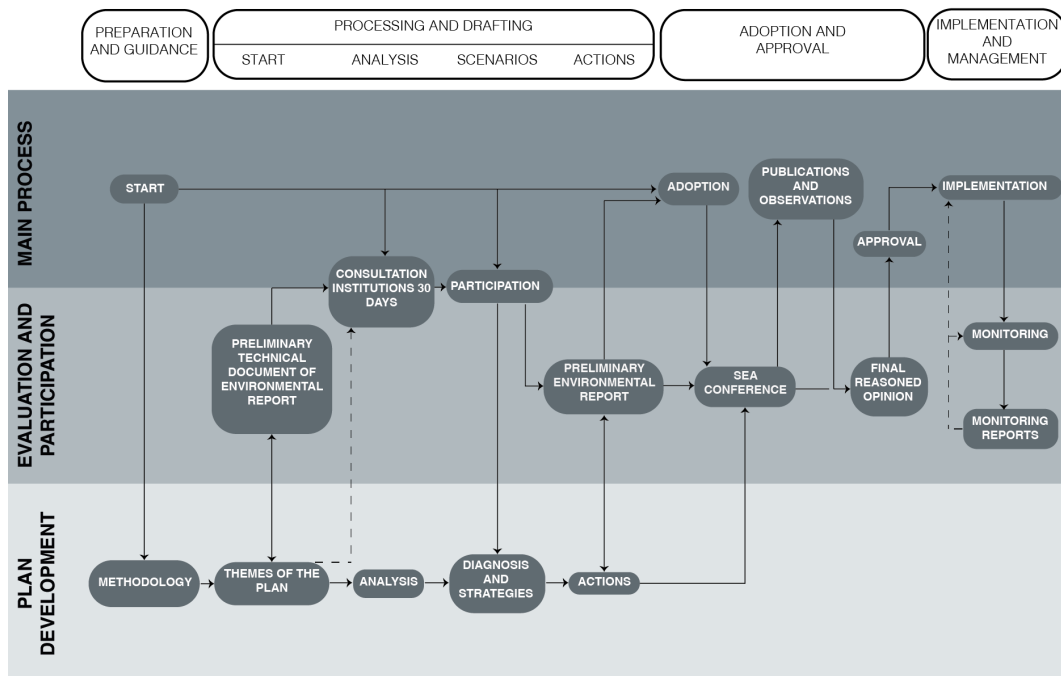
This thus allowed the two processes to feed and reinforce each other: the ‘forum phase’ of the PSM, aimed at framing the main problems of the territory and identifying priority lines of development, was able to incorporate the orientations and priorities, related to the territorial mobility system, that emerged in the PUMS territory listening path; while the strategic orienting phase of the PUMS was able to take into account the more general strategic lines of development identified by the PSM.

Overall, PSM, PTGM and PUMS represent an integrated and coherent set of planning tools that share vision, goals and strategies. In particular, the PUMS has incorporated the vision and objectives of Axis 3 of the PSM - Infrastructure for Sustainable Mobility and has taken on board some of the punctual actions of the PSM, which have been included among the key interventions of the Urban Plan for Sustainable Mobility.

The PUMS construction process was quite complex and was divided into three different levels that operated in an integrated manner (Figure 2022b):

- a main process, primarily involving the Administrations finding expression in the administrative action related to the adoption, approval and subsequent implementation of the plan
- a plan development process, which involves the working groups in charge of its drafting, and which includes the set of technical activities of analysis, construction of strategic alternatives, and identification of interventions
- a process of evaluation and participation, which fits in between the two previous ones by bringing the action of the working groups under constant scrutiny by the Administration, but also by other supervisory bodies and the citizenry in general.

**THE PUMS CONSTRUCTION PROCESS IN THE MCTo**



**Figure 105. Outline of the construction process of the PUMS of Turin. Source: Author’s elaboration on MCTo, 2022b.**

More specifically (Figure 105), it started with an initial initiation phase within which issues were identified and the methodologies of environmental analysis and assessment (scoping document) functional to the initiation of the SEA procedure were defined. Subsequently, a cognitive analysis of all components of the metropolitan mobility system was made. The third phase was the definition of the reference scenarios according to the system of functional, socio-economic and environmental indicators defined in the inception phase. Finally, the fourth phase led to the identification of plan interventions, which also led to the final version of the environmental report, including the monitoring plan.

The plan documents were adopted by the Metropolitan Mayor - preceded by a public meeting, held on May 7, 2021, where the results of the participatory process the contents of the Plan scenario were presented - and then submitted to the final SEA Conference and the comments/counter-deductions phase, in order to finally be approved by the Metropolitan Council. The plan process concludes with the implementation and monitoring phase, which is an essential component for the effectiveness of metropolitan-level mobility system governance strategies.

The PUMS is implemented with distinct sectoral plans: 1) The Metropolitan City Bicycle Mobility Plan- BICIPLAN; 2) Accessibility and Intermodality Plan; and 3) The Logistics Plan.

The Metropolitan Biciplan is a fundamental and compulsory tool provided for by Law 2/2018 art. 7, for the proper and effective planning of interventions to encourage the daily use of bicycles on a supra-municipal scale. It is configured as a sector plan of the PUMS, assuming its guidelines and contributing to a positive cycling development of the territory through the definition of: A bicycle network (systematic and touristic), a system of intermodality between bicycle and rail and road public transport, and a program of actions and interventions to encourage mobility choices relevant to the plan objectives.

The Metropolitan City of Turin is the only one to have included among the sector plans of the PUMS an implementation plan dedicated to the detailed development of measures dedicated to public transport, called the Accessibility and Intermodality Plan. The Plan will govern the development of the Metropolitan Railway Service, a substantial expansion of the metro network (with the construction of Line 2 and the extension of Line 1), and several extensions of the tramway network, which must be accompanied by an overall redesign of the automobile network, both urban/suburban and suburban.

The last sector plan of the PUMS is the Logistics Plan. Its purpose is to identify strategies for the sustainable mobility of goods for both urban distribution logistics and industrial logistics, with the ambition of integrating the latest elements characterising the processes related to the logistics chain. The process of forming the plan is expected to be completed by 2023 and includes studies and analyses focused both at the homogeneous zone level and on the main hubs in the area.

#### **8.4.4 The Agenda for the Sustainable Development of the Metropolitan City of Turin**

The Agenda is the tool for the sustainable development of the Metropolitan City of Turin and its territory. It is part of a complex design and process of change, which originates from the UN's Agenda 2030 and is declined at the European, national and regional levels. The institutional context in which the AMSvS has taken place so far is the result of a Collaboration Agreement between the Metropolitan City of Turin (MCTo) and the Ministry of Ecological Transition (MITE), now the Ministry of Environment and Energy Security (MASE).

The ‘Agenda for Sustainable Development of the Metropolitan City of Turin and its territory, in fact, refers to the goals of Agenda 2030, the Green Deal, the pillar of social rights and other policies that guide European Programming, the recently revised National Strategy for Sustainable Development (SNSvS), and should bring a contribution to the realization of the Macro Strategic Areas (MAS) in which the Regional Strategy for Sustainable Development of Piedmont, approved on July 8, 2022, is articulated.

The AMSvS identifies a scenario of change for the sustainable socio-economic development of the territory of the metropolitan city of Turin, in the temporalities defined on a global and European scale. The year 2030 represents the first milestone, and 2050 the second, identified in relation to the complexity of transitions for certain goals/outcomes to be achieved.

In view of its strategic guidance function (MCTo, 2024), the AMSvS was inspired by a Missions approach adapted to the specific context of policies, actors and processes that characterize the metropolitan territory. The framework of the AMSvS, is structured on three levels:

- the Strategic Macro-Areas of the Regional Strategy for Sustainable Development (MAS) that represent the challenges for the sustainable evolution of the regional territory
- the AMSvS Missions that represent the directions for change referring to areas relevant to the metropolitan territorial system capable of contributing to the MAS
- the Areas of Intervention that represent the spaces of action in which to intervene to promote the changes represented by the Missions. city.

## **8.5 The Supra-local programming – The role of the MCTo between cohesion policy and PNRR**

This section will highlight the relationship and role of MCTo with supra-local programming, and with cohesion policy and the PNRR. Methodologically, a quantitative analysis will be made on 2014-2020 programming and a qualitative analysis on 2021-2027. This chapter is divided into three parts. In the first part, the topic of cohesion policy in the regional context is framed. In the second part, the focus shifts to the metropolitan level. Finally, the third part focuses on the PNRR and the relationship with the metropolitan city.

### 8.5.1 The cohesion policy in the region

From 2007 to the present, the value of projects supported by cohesion policies in Piedmont has exceeded 11 billion euros, of which about 7 billion euros concern projects financed in the 2014-2020 programming period. The Piedmont region, with an allocation percentage for Structural Funds of 14.29 %, has been allocated resources of about 1 billion euros to finance the ERDF and ESF programs (to which must be added the shares of regional to national competence for a total of 1.8 billion).

In the 2014-2020 programming period, the Piedmont region concerning the 2014-2020 ESF ROP has been able to count on resources that, adding to the European (50 %) shares of national (35 %) and regional (15 %) competence, amount to about 872 million euros. Concerning the 2014-2020 ERDF ROP, the Piedmont Region will be able to of a total amount of resources of 965 million euros (Figure 106). To this endowment, they add about 456 million from the European Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD).

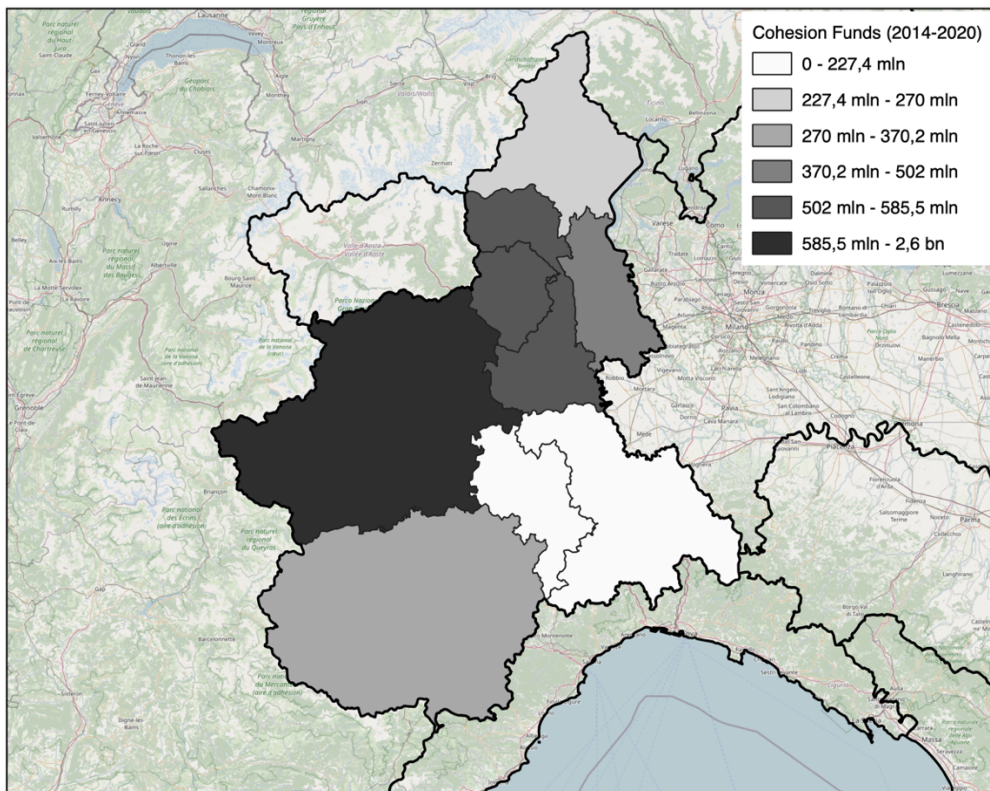


Figure 106 - Cohesion funds 2014-2020 allocated by provinces. Source: Author's elaboration on Open Coesione, 2024.

Within such an endowment, one must consider, however, the financial participation to which the Italian regions are called for the implementation of National Operational Programs (NOPs). These are resources administered by central ministries from EU resources allocated to individual regions, however. The Piedmont, like other more developed regions, participates in the following NOPs:

- NOP For Schools - skills and environments for learning (ESF and ERDF, multifund)
- NOP Active policy systems for employment (ESF)
- NOP Inclusion (ESF)
- NOP Metropolitan Cities (ERDF and ESF, multi-fund)
- NOP Governance and Institutional Capacity (ERDF and ESF, multi-fund)
- NOP Youth Employment Initiative (ESF)

Net of the contribution that will be directed to the aforementioned NOPs, quantified at 162.4 additional resources from the various European International Cooperation programs and projects should also be taken into account (Table 35).

**Table 35 - Data of Cohesion funds from 2014-2020 programming period**

|                             | <b>Projects</b> | <b>Cohesion Payment</b> | <b>Cohesion resource cost</b> | <b>Cost per capita</b> |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Alessandria</b>          | 1.862           | 109.954.704             | 248.006.833                   | 578                    |
| <b>Asti</b>                 | 1.358           | 64.934.555              | 148.479.234                   | 703                    |
| <b>Biella</b>               | 898             | 38.661.994              | 230.145.921                   | 2.644                  |
| <b>Cuneo</b>                | 4.205           | 179.356.871             | 359.220.663                   | 677                    |
| <b>Novara</b>               | 1.012           | 100.497.881             | 319.859.952                   | 1.625                  |
| <b>Torino</b>               | 10.132          | 1.718.025.322           | 2.538.953.080                 | 1.173                  |
| <b>Verbano-Cusio-Ossola</b> | 888             | 83.248.515              | 239.261.395                   | 1.626                  |
| <b>Vercelli</b>             | 979             | 54.071.612              | 259.759.095                   | 2.914                  |

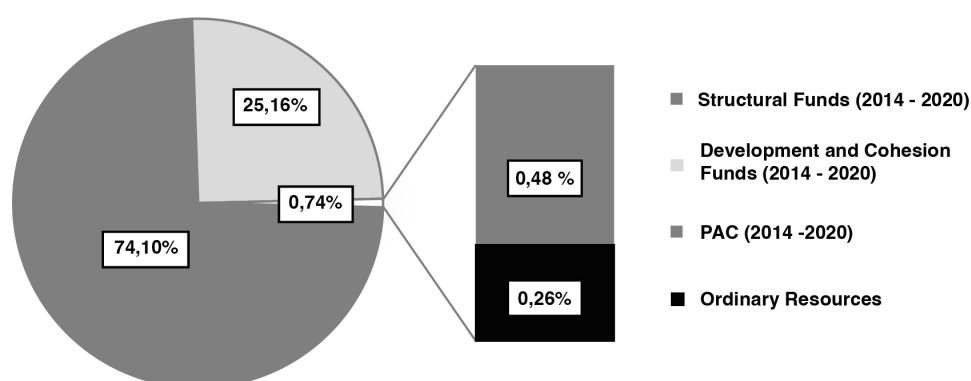
**Source: Open Coesione, 2024**

From Figure 106, it is possible to observe the distribution of funds related to 2014-2020 programming on the territory of the Piedmont region. The distribution is clearly unbalanced in favour of the metropolitan territory of Turin. In fact, over 10.000 projects fall on it with an extremely wide gap compared to the other provinces. More in detail, setting aside the province of Cuneo, which collects 4.205 projects, the remaining provinces are in a range that goes with a minimum of 888 projects falling in the province of Verbano-Cusio-Ossola and Alessandria 1.862. The same trends are confirmed when considering the cohesion policy resources

landed. The metropolitan city of Turin has about 2.5 billion on its territory. On the other hand, other provinces' land cohesion funds vary between 148 million in the province of Asti and 359 in the province of Cuneo. Many interesting turns out to be the values related to per capita values. Three different clusters are recognizable. The first sees the provinces of Alessandria, Asti and Cuneo with values hovering around €650. The second cluster brings together the province of Verbano-Cusio-Ossola with MCTo with values of €1.626 and €1.173, respectively. The third cluster consists of the provinces of Biella and Vercelli where they land €2.914 and €2.644 per capita respectively.

In relation to the type of resources that land on the territory of the Piedmont region, more than 74% of the resources come from structural funds (ESF, ERDF), 25% from resources from the Fund for Development and Cohesion (FSC), and less than the remaining 1% is divided between funds derived from the CAP and funds related to ordinal resources (as already reported for the other case studies, mainly related to resources for inner areas) (Figure 107).

**SOURCE OF FUNDS - PIEDMONT**



**Figure 107 - - Source of Funds (2014 - 2020 programming period) Piedmont. Source: Author's elaboration on Open Coesione, 2024.**

**Table 36 - Most Financed Programs (2014 – 2020), Piedmont**

| Source                                  | Program   | Funds         |
|---|---|---------------|
| Structural Funds 2014-2020              | <i>NOP FESR IMPRESE E COMPETITIVITA'</i>                  | 3.286.077.718 |
| Structural Funds 2014-2020              | <i>POR FESR PIEMONTE</i>                                  | 981.945.128   |
| Structural Funds 2014-2020              | <i>POR ESF PIEMONTE</i>                                   | 957.992.408   |
| Development and Cohesion Fund 2014-2020 | <i>PSC MINISTERO DELLE INFRASTRUTTURE E DEI TRASPORTI</i> | 906.344.179   |



|   |   |             |
|---|---|-------------|
| Development and Cohesion Fund 2014-2020 | <i>PSC REGIONE PIEMONTE</i>   | 611.983.113 |
| Structural Funds 2014-2020              | <i>NOP INIZIATIVA OCCUPAZIONE GIOVANI</i>                                     | 566.806.412 |
| Development and Cohesion Fund 2014-2020 | <i>PSC MINISTERO DELLE IMPRESE E DEL MADE IN ITALY</i>                        | 266.514.019 |
| Structural Funds 2014-2020              | <i>NOP FSE SISTEMI DI POLITICHE ATTIVE PER L'OCCUPAZIONE</i>                  | 246.400.000 |
| Structural Funds 2014-2020              | <i>NOP FESR FSE PER LA SCUOLA - COMPETENZE E AMBIENTI PER L'APPRENDIMENTO</i> | 207.531.822 |
| Structural Funds 2014-2020              | <i>NOP FESR FSE CITTA' METROPOLITANE</i>                                      | 202.768.228 |

**Source: Open Coesione, 2024**

A brief focus on the Rural Development Program of the Piedmont region is given below. The RDP raises about 1 billion euros of public funding, available for the 7-year period 2014-2020 (period extended by two years due to the Covid-19 pandemic). EC Regulation No.1305/2013 stipulates that rural development contributes to the achievement of 3 macro-objectives, to stimulate the competitiveness of the agricultural sector, to ensure the sustainable management of natural resources, and to achieve balanced territorial development of rural economies and communities. These goals are aimed at being achieved through 6 Priorities for Action: which in turn are pursued through 15 intervention measures. These measures are further divided into 67 operations that operations, which are the specific objectives of the Program, the result of a long territorial consultation, and to each of which the Region has allocated a financial envelope. In relation to financial resources, the RDP 2014-2022 has available a budget of just over 1 billion euros, of which 465 million comes from EAFRD funds and the remainder from state (429 million) and regional (184 million) funds.

Analysing the RDP qualitatively and quantitatively, the measures receiving the most funding are Measure 4 'Investment in tangible fixed assets' (280 million), Measure 10 'Agro-climatic-environmental payments' (265 million), Measure 7 'Basic services and village renewal in rural areas' (87 million) and finally, Measure 19 'Support for LEADER local development' with 65 million.

For the 2021-2027 European programming, the Piedmont Region, following a process of listening and involvement of stakeholders from the institutional, economic and social partnership of the territory, has defined the strategic guidelines preparatory to the writing of the new Regional Programs (RP). In more detail, in

July 2021 the region approved the *Documento Strategico Unitario* (DSU) of the Piedmont Region for the programming of funds 2021-2027 (Regione Piemonte, 2021).

The DSU, a multi-year planning document and a preparatory tool to accommodate, within a framework of coherence and synergy, all the main objectives of regional planning for territorial development, defines the priority guidelines of intervention for the development of Piedmont in the next decade and constitutes the strategic perimeter within which to make the best use of the resources of the 2021-2027 European programming. The document, approved by the Regional Council, finds its references in the 2030 Agenda, the European Green Deal, then focuses on the regional context in line with the idea of programming for a new 'Piedmont +': smarter and more competitive, greener, and sustainable, more connected, more inclusive and social, closer to citizens.

Concerning Piedmont's ERDF Regional Program for the 2021-27 programming period, it should be noted that an amount of nearly 1.5 billion euros is allocated, more than 500 million more than in the 2014-2020 period. Within the Program, the largest share (807 million) is allocated to the promotion of research and development, competitiveness and innovation, and digital and sustainable transition of the regional production system. With an allocation of 435 million, the Priority on Ecological Transition and Resilience intends to support in particular the energy efficiency of public buildings and enterprises and the promotion of renewable energy, but also climate change adaptation and territorial resilience, circular economy, and the protection of biodiversity and natural ecosystems. Interventions planned for cycling mobility (40 million), and those for infrastructure for skills development (20 million) complete the picture. At the same time, the Cohesion and Territorial Development Priority (140 million) will support the development of territories and local communities. The ERDF PR finances, among others, "operations of strategic importance," i.e., operations that make a significant contribution to the achievement of PR objectives that are subject to special monitoring and reporting measures.

In relation to the ESF, the total financial allocation for PR ESF + amounts to 1.318 million euros, divided into 4 Priorities (employment, education and training, social inclusion and youth employment) and 10 Specific Objectives. The Resources of the Regional Program are (Regione Piemonte, 2021):

- Priority I - Employment: €148.500.000

- Priority II - Education and training: € 368.479.210
- Priority III - Social inclusion: €386.000.000
- Priority IV - Youth employment: €362.221.350

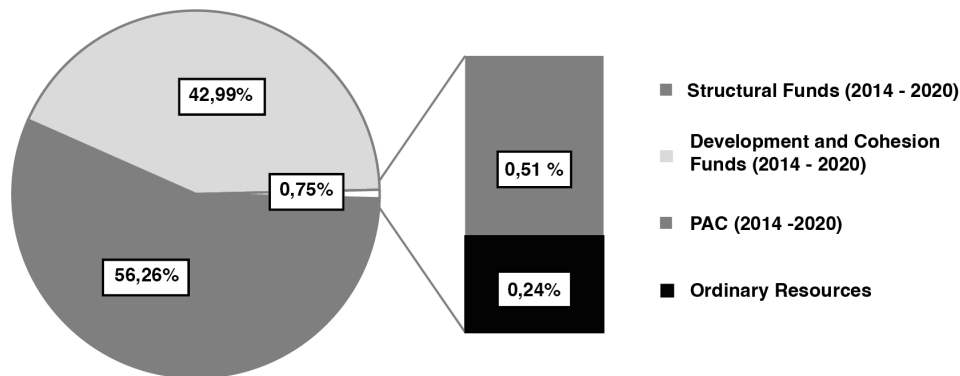
### 8.5.2 The cohesion policy in the MCTo

This section will describe how cohesion funds have landed within MCTo. As described earlier, the quantitative analyses focus on the 2014 - 2020 programming. An analytical description of the funds landed follows in the section with some qualitative focus on a few programs deemed interesting to highlight.

First, it is important to highlight how within the metropolitan city of Turin, during the 2014-2020 programming approximately 2.6 billion euros landed, between funds strictly related to cohesion policy (1.8 billion), and funds attracted complementary to them.

More in detail, as shown by the Figure 108, about 56 % of the funds come from the Structural Funds. About 3%, on the other hand, are related to the Development and Cohesion Fund. Finally, 0.75 % of the funds come from the PAC and Ordinary Resources (mainly related to contributions allocated for inner areas).

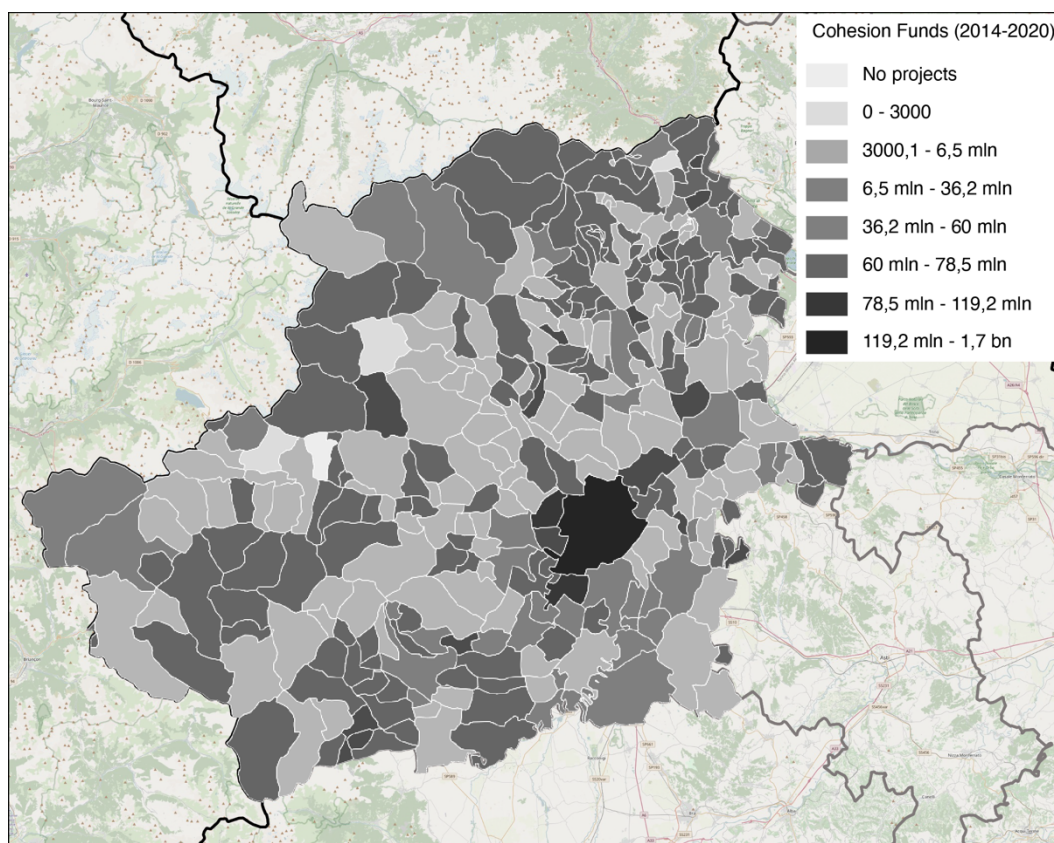
**SOURCE OF FUNDS - METROPOLITAN CITY OF TURIN**



**Figure 108 - Source of Funds (2014 - 2020) MCTo. Source: Author's elaboration on Open Coesione, 2024.**

The distribution of funds, as evidenced by Figure 109, highlights an absolute polarization of funds in the capital municipality, Turin. Although to a lesser extent than the capital municipality, there is also a concentration of resources in the municipalities of the first belt, and at the same time, it emerges how substantial resources also land on mountain territories. In this way, a trend is outlined that

witnesses an initial centralization of resources in the plains, strongly influenced by the capital municipality, to then observe a reduction in values on the hill territories. Finally, an increase in resources landed on the mountain territories. This is also mainly due to the ability of these more peripheral municipalities to be within cross-border cooperation projects.



**Figure 109 - Cohesion funds 2014-2020 allocated within MCTo. Source: Author's elaboration on Open Coesione, 2024.**

**Table 37 - Most Financed Programs (2014-2020) in the MCTo**

| <b>Source</b>                           | <b>Program</b>  | <b>Funds</b> |
|---|---|--------------|
| Development and Cohesion Fund 2014-2020 | <i>PSC REGIONE PIEMONTE</i>                               | 661.772.228  |
| Structural Funds 2014-2020              | <i>POR FESR PIEMONTE</i>                                  | 649.146.056  |
| Structural Funds 2014-2020              | <i>POR FSE PIEMONTE</i>                                   | 554.417.464  |
| Development and Cohesion Fund 2014-2020 | <i>PSC MINISTERO DELLE INFRASTRUTTURE E DEI TRASPORTI</i> | 317.546.449  |
| Structural Funds 2014-2020              | <i>NOP FESR FSE CITTA' METROPOLITANE</i>                  | 202.768.228  |

|  |   |            |
|--|---|------------|
| Structural Funds 2014-2020                 | <i>NOP FESR FSE PER LA SCUOLA -<br/>COMPETENZE E AMBIENTI PER<br/>L'APPRENDIMENTO</i> | 98.617.831 |
| Development and Cohesion<br>Fund 2014-2020 | <i>PSC MINISTERO DELLE IMPRESE E DEL<br/>MADE IN ITALY</i>                            | 81.414.543 |
| Development and Cohesion<br>Fund 2014-2020 | <i>PARCO CITTA' DELLA SALUTE DI<br/>TORINO</i>  | 60.000.000 |
| Structural Funds 2014-2020                 | <i>NOP FESR FSE RICERCA E INNOVAZIONE</i>   | 52.665.815 |

**Source: Open Coesione, 2024**

### ***NOP METRO***

In this paragraph, the purpose is not to describe the National Operational Program, but rather to highlight how although the program is targeted to metropolitan cities, from a governance point of view the capital city is identified as the Urban Authority and as an Intermediate Body. In practice by leaving the metropolitan authority without any official role in the program. This is clearly reflected in the plan's implementation choices. Compared to other case studies this is even more evident in a strongly monocentric metropolitan city such as Turin. Consultation of the Operational Program of the City of Turin clearly shows a polarization of all planning almost on the territory of the City of Turin (Figure 110).

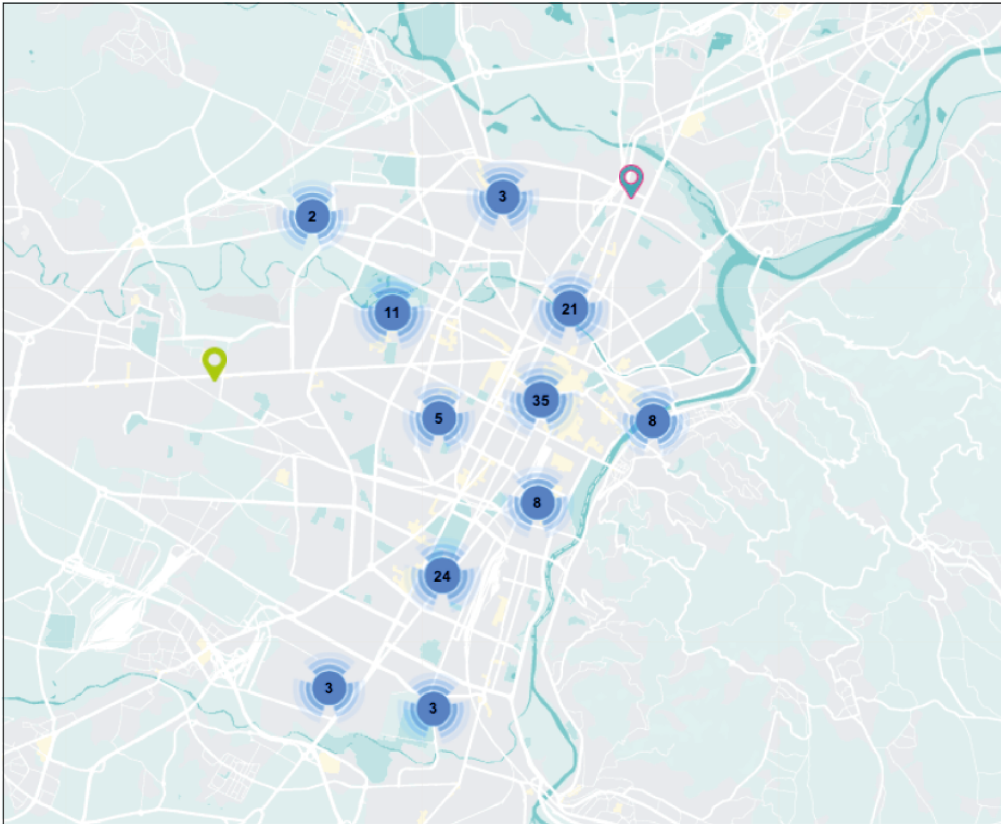


Figure 110 - The localisation of the NOP Metro intervention within MCBo. Source: Regione Piemonte, 2022.

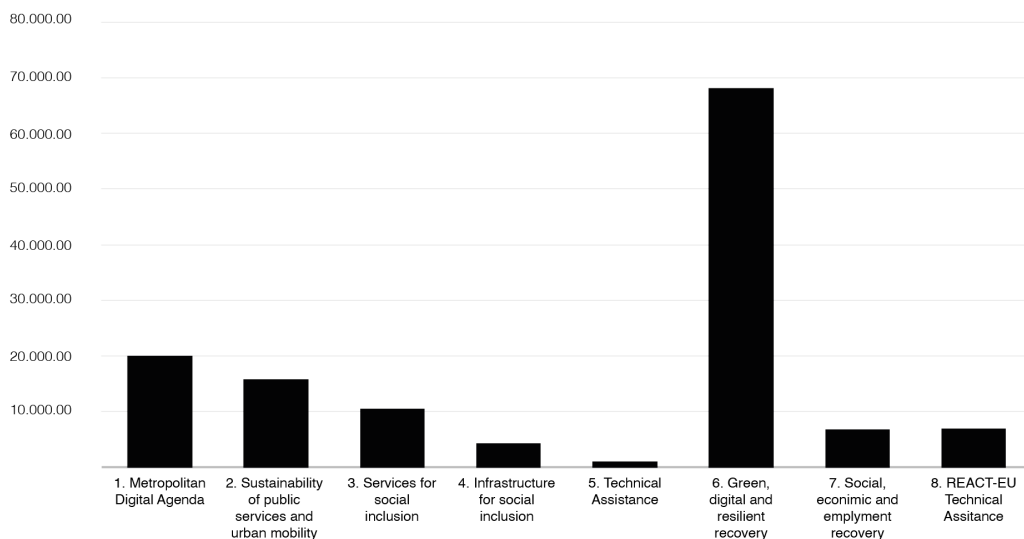
The City of Turin has €122.265.663 in resources, including REACT-EU resources that complement the Program to implement the new thematic objective ‘Promote overcoming the effects of the crisis in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and its social consequences and prepare for a green, digital and resilient recovery of the economy’. The projects contained in the Operational Plan are consistent with a long-term strategy that intends to shape the Smart City by promoting the reduction of energy consumption, improving PA services through the introduction of ICT technologies, and increasing accessibility and social inclusion with action strategies aimed at intervening in areas of strong marginality. It is useful to specify that the projects were identified because of their ability to produce significant impacts mostly in the city area.

The integration of the Program with the share of REACT-EU resources complements the modification of the Program in response to the COVID-19 emergency, going to strengthen the construction of a resilient system based on the

one hand on the best contextual conditions to foster the green and digital transition of cities and on the other to calm I' widening of the inequalities generated by the impact of the pandemic, preparing again the best possible conditions to reduce the asymmetries generated by the economic and social crisis. To implement the new thematic objective, the Program introduces three new priority axes (Figure 111):

- Axis 6: related to green, digital and resilient recovery, funded through REACT-EU resources from the European Regional Development Fund
- Axis 7: related to social, economic and employment recovery, financed through REACT-EU resources of the European Social Fund
- Axis 8: related to specific technical assistance for the implementation of the Program and activities related to REACT-EU integration

**FUNDS ALLOCATED BY AXES - PON METRO - METROPOLITAN CITY OF TURIN**



**Figure 111 -Funds allocated by axes -NOP Metro - MCTo. Source: Author's elaboration on Regione Piemonte, 2022.**

### **Mettersi in Proprio (MiP) program**

The ESF has been the primary fund through which the MCTo has had substantial operational leeway, acting as an Intermediate Body until July 2020. Specifically, the metropolitan institution manages the *Mettersi in Proprio (MiP)* program on behalf of the Region within the metropolitan territory. For over 20 years, the MiP has been the key tool, initially activated by the Province of Turin and continued by the Metropolitan City, to support business creation and self-



employment in the area. The Business Creation Points, established under the ROP ESF 2000-2006 and maintained in subsequent programming periods, have engaged with more than 23.000 people across the Piedmont region, facilitating the creation of approximately 2.500 new businesses. Over half of these aspiring entrepreneurs were from the metropolitan city of Turin. This collaboration is governed by a Memorandum of Understanding, typically lasting for the entire programming period. Besides the MiP program, the Metropolitan City of Turin has participated in the programming and execution of various projects, mainly within the ROP ESF and also within the NOP for youth employment (*Garanzia Giovani*).

Moreover, the MiP, managed by the Metropolitan City, has shown strong performance and maintains robust connections with rural development. The Local Action Groups have maintained a good and ongoing dialogue with the Metropolitan City in this regard. This relationship is formally outlined by a memorandum of understanding, which allows new entrepreneurs starting businesses in LAG territories through this program to access ERDF funds. However, in July 2020 the Region took over the functions on education and vocational training that were assigned to the Metropolitan City as intermediate body, and in the 2021-2027 it will not be intermediate body. This will have a significant impact on the involvement of the metropolitan level in the governance of the program and in its implementation (ESNOPMETRO, 2021b).

### ***The European project of MCTo***

The Metropolitan City of Turin has for years been involved in the implementation of numerous European projects, both as a partner and as coordinator, in different areas: research, innovation and training; culture and tourism; rural development; environment; and social inclusion. In this way it contributes effectively, concretely and sustainably to the achievement of EU objectives by developing research activities, pilot initiatives, communication and dissemination campaigns, replicability tools and transnational networks.

During the 2014-2020 European Programming, the Metropolitan City of Turin submitted 145 project proposals in response to European calls for proposals. It was the recipient of European funding in 38 projects, serving in 12 as lead partner, in 26 as partner, and in one project it was involved as a third party. The total resources intercepted during this programming were 9.9 million euros. The areas of intervention of the various projects in which MCTo was involved are Environment and Climate Change (14 projects), Economic Development and Innovation (10),



Metropolitan Governance (7), Mobility and Transport (4) and Social Development (3). The projects belong to different European programs including (MCTo, 2024):

- Horizon Europe (European Programme for Research and Innovation)
- LIFE (European Program for Environment and Climate Action.
- INTERREG ALPINE SPACE (European transnational cooperation program for the Alpine region)
- INTERREG CENTRAL EUROPE (European program for transnational cooperation)
- INTERREG EUROPE (European program for interregional cooperation)
- INTERREG ALCOTRA ITALY FRANCE (European program for cross-border cooperation)
- INTERREG ESPON
- URBACT III (Interregional cooperation program)
- HORIZON 2020

In the framework of European territorial cooperation programs, the most relevant to the Metropolitan City of Turin is Interreg ALCOTRA (Alpi Latine Cooperazione TRAnsfrontaliera), the-border cooperation program, that covers the Alpine territory between France and Italy, financed by the ERDF. The 2014-2020 period has been the fifth ALCOTRA programming period. Since 1990, the program has financed almost 600 projects for about €550 million in EU grants. The main goal of the program is to improve the people's quality of life, the sustainable development of the territories and the cross-border economic and social systems through cooperation on the economy, the environment and the services to citizens.

The nature of cross-border cooperation programs in general, and of ALCOTRA in particular, in terms of their territorial scope, impacts on the areas involved, as well as the subjects dealt with by the individual projects according to the thematic axes and specific objectives, should lead to a strong involvement of those subjects that are located at an intermediate level between the Regions. The proximity of the Metropolitan City to the municipalities makes it preferable, in its ability to manage certain activities with a supra-municipal scope, both to the regions, which are institutionally called upon to commit themselves to very large territories, and to aggregations of municipalities (ESPON METRO, 2021b).

### 8.5.3 The National Recovery and Resilience Plan, PNRR

Within this section, the focus will not be the description of the PNRR but rather the relationships between it and MCTo. In particular, it will go on to describe how MCTo's metropolitan governance has responded to the PNRR. Focuses will also be made on PNRR-related programs in which MCTo is playing a leading role within them, namely PINQuA and PUIs.

In relation to the issue of governance, in order to contribute to the implementation of the PNRR and to facilitate the inclusion of locally identified actions within national funding lines, metropolitan strategic planning has been developed in coherence with the National Plan. This has been extensively described in the section on MCTo's strategic planning. In this sense, in this section we only recall how the PSM 2021-2023 '*Torino Metropoli aumentata*' was in fact articulated into 6 Axes, which correspond to the 6 Missions of the PNRR: 1. *Torino Metropoli* more productive and innovative; 2. *Torino Metropoli* more green and ecological; 3. *Torino Metropoli* more mobile, accessible and connected; 4. *Torino Metropoli* that learns more; 5. *Torino Metropoli* more attractive, fair and equal; 6. *Torino Metropoli* more healthy.

Concerning the interventions funded by the PNRR, the MCTo plays two different roles. In some cases it is called upon to play a steering role in the interventions, bringing itself into play as a planning and liaison body between the supra-local institutions, the Ministry of Economy and Finance, the Ministry of the Interior, and the Ministry of Sustainable Infrastructure and Mobility, and the implementing entities, i.e., the public entities responsible for initiating and implementing the interventions financed by the PNRR. This is the case for interventions in the areas of school building, soil conservation and, at least in part, urban forestry. Of the more than 105 million euros from the 86 interventions implemented by the Authority, more than 68 million were already committed as of June 30, 2023. These are public works for which the Metropolitan City of Turin is the implementing body, and they affect the entire territory administered by the vast area authority.

The second role, on the other hand, is that of the implementing body. This role puts MCTo at the forefront of participation in project and/or intervention selection procedures carried out by the Administrations that own the Missions/Components of the PNRR. In this sense, it has the task, where necessary, of identifying any executing entities or second tier implementing entities, in various capacities

involved in the implementation of the projects (e.g., entity in charge of project implementation, supplier of goods/services/executor of works). Exactly on this occasion, the Metropolitan City of Turin participated in the calls for proposals related to the National Innovative Program for Housing Quality PINQuA and managed the measure related to Integrated Urban Plans, which will be the subject of a further in-depth study.

The PNRR projects of the Metropolitan City of Turin, as already described in the previous case studies are placed under the following Missions (Table 38):

**Table 38 - PNRR Funds by interventions - MCTo**

| <b>Missions and Components</b> | <b>Funds by intervention</b> | <b>N. of interventions</b> | <b>Coherence with PSM</b>  | <b>Ruolo MCTO</b>    |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|--|----------------------|
| M2C2                           | 12.550.356                   | 3                          | Axis 3. <i>Torino Metropoli</i> more mobile, accessible and connected  | Implementing Subject |
| M2C3                           | 4.091.400                    | 1                          | Axis 2 - Turin green and ecological metropolis.  | Implementing Subject |
| M2C4                           | 16.950.000                   | 9                          | Axis 2 - Turin green and ecological metropolis.<br>Axis 3. <i>Torino Metropoli</i> more mobile, accessible and connected | Implementing Subject |
| M4C1                           | 22.469.293                   | 8                          | Axis 4 - Education and Research  | Implementing Subject |
| M5C3                           | 3.092.341                    | 9                          | Axis 3. <i>Torino Metropoli</i> more mobile, accessible and connected  | Implementing Subject |
| M5C2 (PUI)                     | 263.224.745                  | 83                         | Axis 5 - Inclusion and Cohesion  | Steering role        |
| M5C3 (PINQuA)                  | 43.027.548                   | 76                         | Axis 5 - Inclusion and Cohesion  | Steering role        |

Source: MCTo, 2024b. Author's elaboration on MCTo, 2024.

Regarding the governance structure, the MCTo has established its organizational model within the framework of PNRR projects and interventions for which the entity has an implementing or directing role. This organizational model consists of two units. The Technical Coordination Unit transposes and synthesizes the Administration's guidelines for the implementation of the PNRR. It is responsible for achieving the targets related to the PNRR, is in charge of mapping the interventions, monitoring them throughout the implementation phase, and

defining the impacts on the territory. On the other hand, the Technical Support Unit, headed by the Director of the Programming and Monitoring of Public Works Goods and Services Directorate, is responsible for acting as a link between all the technical structures, internal and external, related to the management of the PNRR and verifies the correctness of the various fulfilments provided for with the PNRR regulations.

### ***PINQuA - Programma Nazionale Innovativo per la Qualità dell'abitare***

The importance of the Metropolitan City's role in local development and urban regeneration is confirmed by the National Innovative Program for Housing Quality-PINQuA, which has provided for metropolitan cities as the entities responsible for submitting applications. Within the framework of the National Innovative Program for Housing Quality, the MCTo submitted three applications, two of which were admitted for funding, from PNRR funds, for a total amount of € 30.000.000. Specifically, the two admitted proposals are '*Residenza-Resilienza*' and '*Ricami Urbani - ricucire l'abitare metropolitano*' (Table 39).

**Table 39 - Overview PINQuA projects for MCTo.**

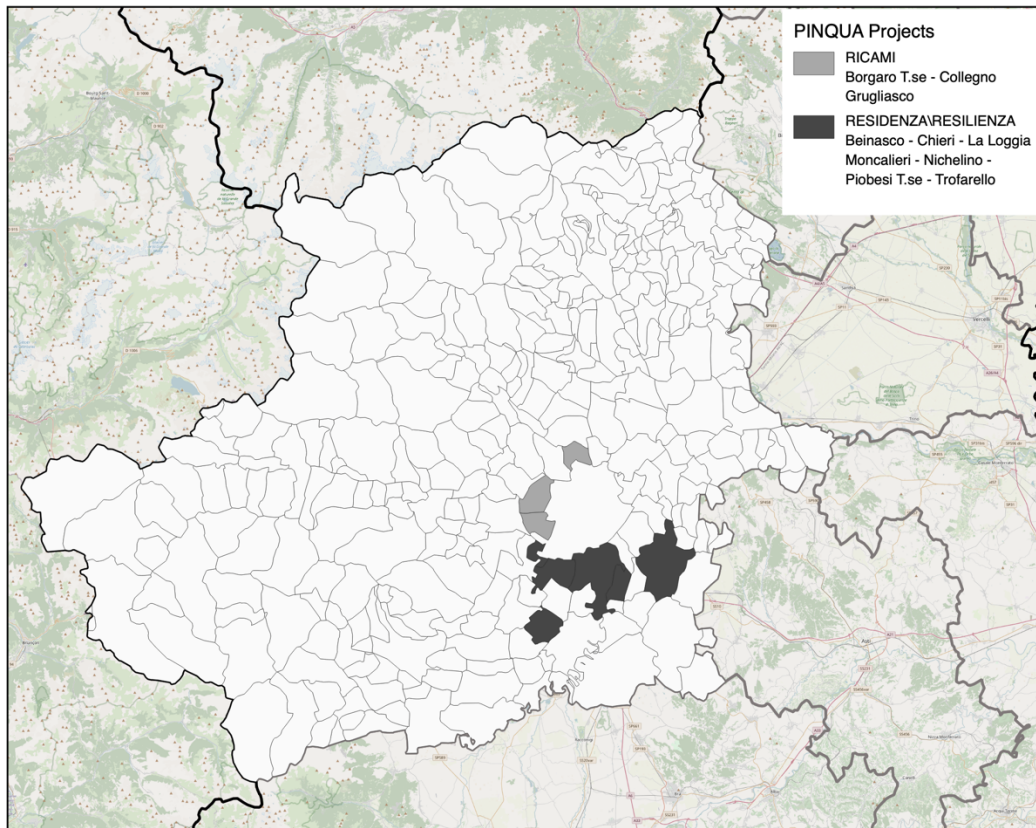
| <b>Projects</b>  | <b>Proposing actors</b>  | <b>N. of funded interventions</b> | <b>Amount of funds</b> |
|--|--|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| <b><i>resiDenza-resiLienza</i></b>                             | <i>Moncalieri (lead partner) Nichelino, Chieri, Beinasco, Trofarello, La Loggia e Piobesi Torinese, Ente di gestione delle aree protette del Po piemontese e ATC del Piemonte Centrale</i> | 36                                | € 15.000.000           |
| <b><i>Ricami Urbani - ricucire l'abitare metropolitano</i></b> | <i>Collegno (lead partner), Grugliasco, Borgaro Torinese con ATC del Piemonte Centrale e Consorzio Intercomunale Torinese</i>  | 15                                | € 14.592.622           |

Source: Author's elaboration on MCTo website.

Going into more detail about the proposals, starting with the first one, the program '*resiDenza-resiLienza*' focuses attention on the dynamics of urban development and society, with the primary focus on reducing housing and settlement discomfort in suburban contexts, aiming at increasing the quality of living. The project focuses in particular on the redevelopment and reorganization of the ERP housing stock, functionalising and networking green areas, spaces and public and private properties in the municipalities involved, also aiming at improving the accessibility and safety of urban places and the provision of urban-local services and infrastructure. The issue of regeneration is much more complex

than redevelopment. In this sense, it is no longer a matter of making the city but of doing with the city and its territory, adapting them to contemporary needs for sustainability, quality of life and adaptation to environmental, economic and social crises.

The second program, *Ricami Urbani – ricucire l'abitare metropolitano*, is the planning proposal that renews the spaces and places of living by weaving social plots that from memories draw the future of collective living. The plan is based on the activation of a broad public-private partnership represented by three Cities Collegno, Grugliasco, Borgaro Torinese, ATC and the CIT, located in an area characterised by high housing tension and the need for public and subsidised housing, experimenting with new models for housing mixed. The proposal is inspired by the principles underlying nineteenth and twentieth century thinking and achievements, from the rising welfare state to industrial paternalism, which declined in the experience of the historic Workers' Village and Opificio Leumann, toward an evolution of welfare in the new millennium. The program proposes an inclusive, innovative, smart model of urban, architectural and social design: collaborative communities with shared governance that through the weaving of human, social, economic and environmental sustainability pursue the path of strengthening social, educational and housing rights.



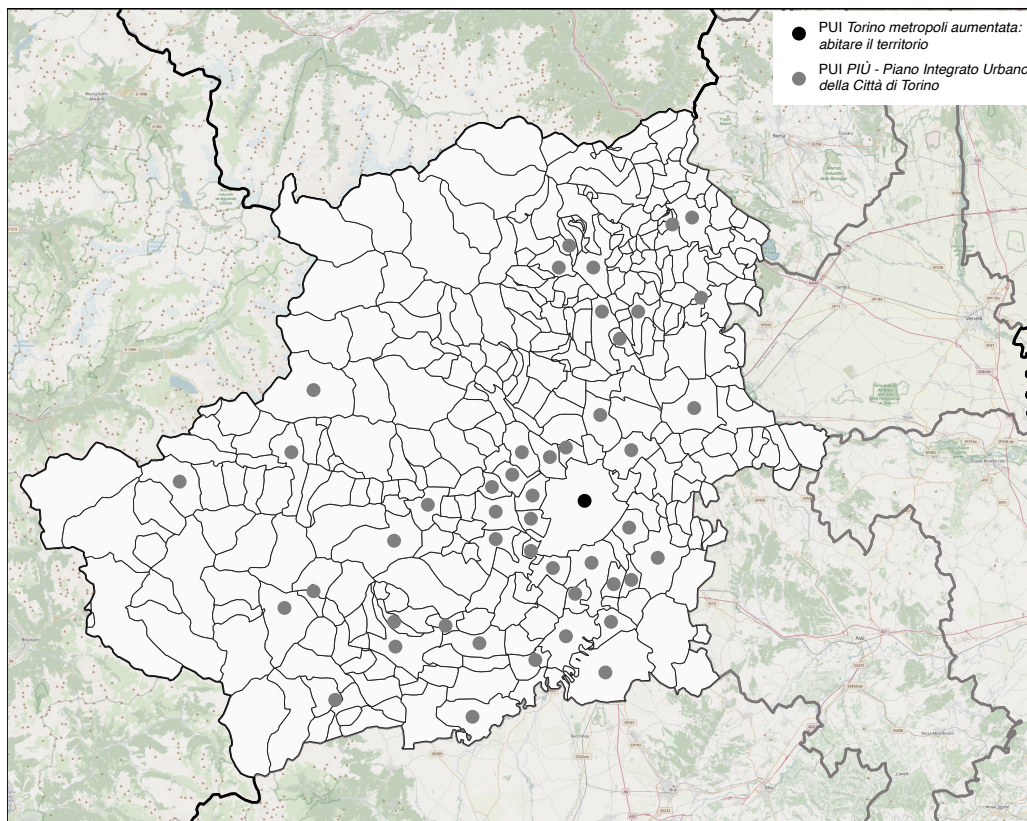
**Figure 112 - PINQUA projects within MCTo. Source: Author's elaboration on MCTo website.**

From the point of view of the location of interventions, as shown in Figure 112, there are no interventions that fall within the municipality of Turin. Still, preference was given to the first belt municipalities to the west and southeast. This denotes a certain autonomy in the management of funds despite not having as a metropolitan city the steering role. The interventions, created through intense participation and consultation with the territory, are aimed at supporting urban regeneration and economic development, reducing housing/residential/social hardship, promoting the regeneration of areas and spaces with high housing tension by increasing their environmental quality and improving their resilience to climate change, upgrading and increasing the social housing stock, improving the accessibility and safety of places, renovating public spaces and properties, as well as increasing social cohesion and the quality of life of citizens. All Program interventions are scheduled to be completed by March 2026, in line with the commitments made in the PNRR.

### ***PUI - Piani Urbani Integrati***

In relation to the PUI the MCTo has identified fundable projects, consistent with the strategic lines of the 2021-2023 PSM, following an intense process of consultation and negotiation with the municipalities, which ended with the submission of two Integrated Urban Plans, both accepted for funding.

The resources allocated to MCTo are 233 million euros, distributed over two different PUIs. MCTo in the two proposals submitted decided to have a territorial approach. In particular, it decided to allocate the first PUI to the city of Turin while the second to the rest of the metropolitan area. At the same time, it wanted to send a strong signal to the more peripheral areas by allocating the largest share of the funds to the second PUI whose territorial target is outside the city of Turin (Figure 113).



**Figure 113 - PUIs projects within MCTo. Source: Author's elaboration on MCTo, 2022c, 2022d.**

The first PUI, as anticipated, intended for the city of Turin is called *Più – Piano Integrato Urbano della città di Torino* and provides funding of €113.395.160. This

plan is divided into 36 interventions with the city of Turin as the sole implementing party. The Plan addresses the issue of urban regeneration using the city library system as an integral part of the social infrastructure in the urban environment. The initiatives under the Plan contemplate interventions both on the facilities of neighborhood libraries and on the urban environment surrounding them (MCTo, 2022c).

The actions of the Integrated Urban Plan prefigure interventions on the neighborhood library sites and the urban fabric that houses them, acting on material and social vulnerabilities, the elimination of physical and sociocultural barriers, the quality of public space, and places of sociality and inclusion.

The purposes of the Plan are (MCTo, 2022c):

- improve the quality, accessibility, energy efficiency and infrastructural layout of the urban library system
- increase physical and sensory accessibility, resilience, and quality of green areas and public open spaces and promote urban sociality in neighbourhood market areas
- implement and redevelop infrastructure for social inclusion, territorial preservation, socio-cultural, educational, sports production and enjoyment
- accompany the recovery, resilience, economic development of the city and accessibility of urban social infrastructure, through the engagement, involvement, and protagonism of people.

Interestingly, this plan has relevant elements of complementarity with other projects within urban regeneration policies funded by other measures of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan. There are, in fact, projects that are connected with other interventions already planned under the PINQuA and with other projects related to the REACT-EU program, in the areas of green and digital transition, energy upgrading, social solidarity and strengthening of the administrative machine.

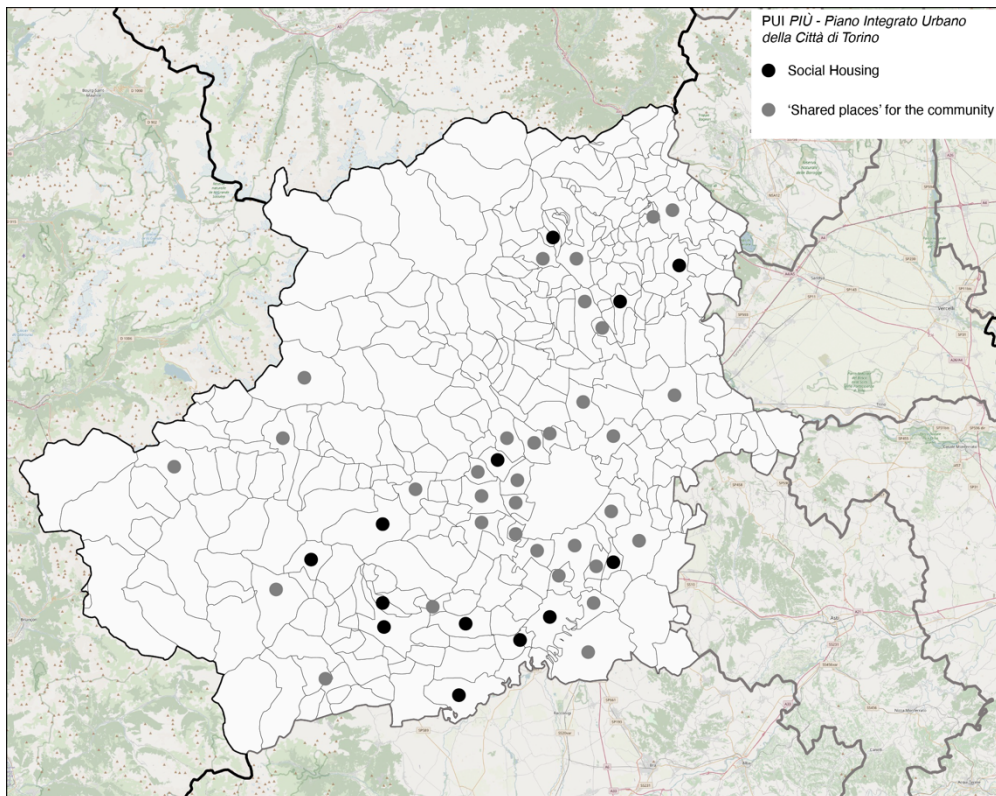
As far as the management, control and monitoring phase of the Integrated Plan is concerned, everything is in the hands of the City of Turin, specifically the responsibility of the Community and National Planning Projects Department - Suburban Transformations, Common Goods Area. This way of managing the plan stems from well-established experiences of the entity, such as, the AxTO project - Actions for the Suburbs of Turin, as part of the national call for the redevelopment



and safety of the suburbs (*Bando Periferie*), for Metro program and for projects under the European initiative Urban Innovative Actions (UIA).

The second PUI, targeted for the rest of the metropolitan area, called *Torino metropoli aumentata: Abitare il territorio*, provides total funding of € 149.829.586 (PNRR funding € 120.552.758, plus co-financing € 29.276.828) and has 43 municipalities and 2 Unions of Mountains as implementing subjects. This plan built with the support of the PSM, integrates coherently with it and focuses on improving the social infrastructure in the most degraded contexts. The main objective is to address inequalities of opportunity that affect different social groups, including the elderly, people with disabilities, youth, families, and generally individuals in economic distress (MCTo, 2022d).

Under this strategy, two distinct but complementary lines of operation have been identified (Figure 114). The first aims to strengthen active social policies that contemplate social housing interventions aimed at fragile individuals (housing hardship for people in economic difficulty, emergency housing for the homeless, residences for the elderly, group homes, residences for young people). The second strategy, on the other hand, aims to make spaces for aggregation and inclusion available to citizens. It aims at the creation of "shared places" for the community and cultural and theatrical spaces around which intergenerational and intercultural encounters can be reconstructed, including venues for social services or activities.



**Figure 114 – Lines of interventions – PUI *Piano Integrato Urbano della Città di Torino*. Source: Author's elaboration on MCTo, 2022d.**

The social housing component foresees solutions aimed at facing the housing emergency predominantly for low-income families, the elderly and the disabled, with related services, e.g., doctors, community social workers and family mediators, day services for families aimed at supporting homelessness (Municipality of Cambiano, Carignano, Giaveno, Osasio, Municipality of Pinerolo, Mountain Union of Chisone, Scalenghe, Villafranca Piemonte, Roletto, Borgiallo, Strambino and San Giorgio Canavese). Concerning multifunctional "community places," it is planned to combine meeting, educational and cultural spaces with recreational and exhibition spaces, jointly with spaces intended for cultural events. The aim is to create inclusive socio-educational-cultural poles oriented to social integration, empowerment of people with disabilities and frailty, and finally promote the psychophysical well-being of citizens, improve the quality of life and prevent discomfort and the risk of marginalization.

About the management, control and monitoring phase, a framework program agreement is to be signed between the Metropolitan City and all the municipalities on whose territory the interventions insist, and which will therefore have an

audience coinciding with that of the metropolitan integrated urban plan. The program agreement will provide for appropriate accompanying technical-administrative tools to ensure timely compliance with timetables and thus milestones and targets. Already for some time, Metropolitan City has been carrying out, through a special Directorate, assistance activities and functions in favour of municipalities and their associative forms, making available free of charge human and instrumental resources for the activity of planning, management and direction of public works.

# **9. The three case studies face-to-face**

## **9.1 Introduction**

Within the following chapter, the three case studies will be compared. As pointed out in the previous chapters, these three cases present different characteristics and at the same time elements that can relate them. The basic idea behind the choice of these three case studies is that each of these three metropolitan cities can transfer best practices to the others and learn something at the same time.

In more detail, after a general territorial comparison, the case studies will be compared under three different thematic lenses. The first comparison will take place regarding the institutional governance of the various metropolitan entities. The second thematic lens of comparison will be related to the spatial and strategic planning tools available. The third comparison will take place in relation to the theme of supra-local planning.

## **9.2 Territorial Contexts in Comparison**

The spatial comparison of the three case studies, compared with the other themes being compared, will be the most concise. The comparison will consider geographical, urban and spatial characteristics. The paragraph will be structured starting from a description of Metropolitan Cities. There will be a brief description of each of the three metropolitan cities under study, including demographic data, size, and main characteristics. This provides the necessary context for comparison. The territorial extents of the metropolitan cities will be compared. This may include total size, geographic distribution, and the presence of urban, suburban, and rural areas. The geographical characteristics of the case studies will be compared. The distribution of municipalities by elevation zones, number of inhabitants and size. There will be a comparison of population distribution and population density in different metropolitan cities.

From the three case studies, a geographical distribution covering various regions of Italy is evident, offering a diverse overview of metropolitan cities (Figure 115).

The metropolitan city of Turin, located in the north-western part of the Italian peninsula and bordering France, occupies a strategic position along the country's western border. This geographical position can influence various aspects, such as trade, cultural and cross-border mobility flows. The presence of the Alps within its institutional territory also implies the management of a vast mountainous area, which requires special attention to environmental protection and sustainable development. The Metropolitan City of Bologna, on the other hand, is located in the centre-north of Italy, in a strategic position along the north-south axis connecting the northern and southern regions. This central location makes it a crucial node in the national infrastructure, facilitating road, rail and logistical connections between major Italian cities. Its location between the Po Valley and the Bolognese Apennines gives the area a variety of landscapes and natural resources, ranging from fertile agricultural plains to scenic hills, influencing sectors such as agriculture, tourism and food production. The Metropolitan City of Bari, located in the southern part of the Italian peninsula and facing the Adriatic Sea, has a coastal position that strongly influences its economy and culture. Its proximity to the sea makes it an important centre for maritime trade, fishing and seaside tourism. Cross-border cooperation relations with neighbouring nations on the Adriatic are a key element of its geopolitical identity, influencing local and regional development policies and projects. In summary, the geographical diversity of the case studies offers a unique opportunity to compare and analyse the socio-economic and cultural dynamics present in the different Italian regions.



**Figure 115 – Localisation of the Case studies. Source: Author’s elaboration.**

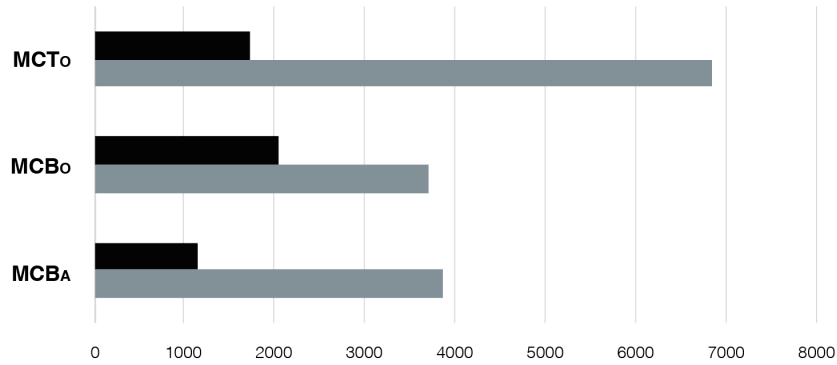
From a territorial point of view, the three metropolitan cities show significant diversity. The Metropolitan City of Turin, the largest of the Italian metropolitan cities, covers an area of 6.821 km<sup>2</sup>, almost twice the land area of the other two metropolitan cities. This territorial vastness includes a variety of landscapes, ranging from alpine valleys to plains, and implies a complex management of natural resources and urban development. In this sense, the Metropolitan City of Turin is by far the largest metropolitan city among the three studied.

The Metropolitan City of Bari and the Metropolitan City of Bologna, on the other hand, present more similar territorial extensions, although with different geomorphologic characteristics. The Metropolitan City of Bari covers an area of 3.821 km<sup>2</sup>, while the Metropolitan City of Bologna covers an area of 3.702 km<sup>2</sup>. Despite these similarities in territorial size, the two metropolitan cities are distinguished by their unique geographical context: Bari, facing the Adriatic Sea, and Bologna, located in the heart of the Po Valley and surrounded by the hills of the Apennines.

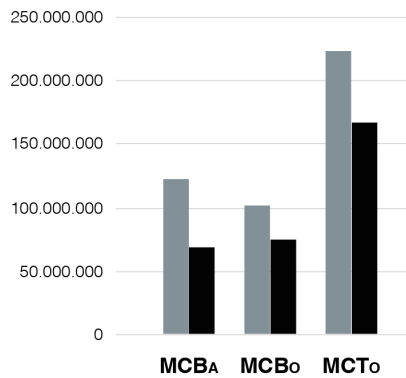
In demographic terms, the Metropolitan City of Turin continues to lead with a resident population of 2.230.946. By contrast, the Metropolitan City of Bari has 1.230.205 inhabitants, while the Metropolitan City of Bologna has 1.021.501. These data reflect the differences in population distribution and demographic dynamics among the three metropolitan cities, highlighting the importance of considering both territorial and demographic dimensions in the context of urban and regional development (Figure 116).

CASE STUDIES - BRIEF CHARACTERISTICS OF THE TERRITORIES

SIZE (KM<sup>2</sup>)



POPULATION



DENSITY

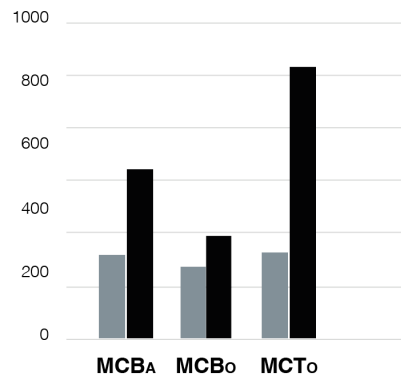


Figure 116 - Case Studies - Brief characteristics of the territories. Source: ISTAT, 2022. Author's elaboration.

An interesting comparison emerges from an analysis of the number of municipalities belonging to the three case studies, reflecting the complexity and diversity of the territorial contexts.

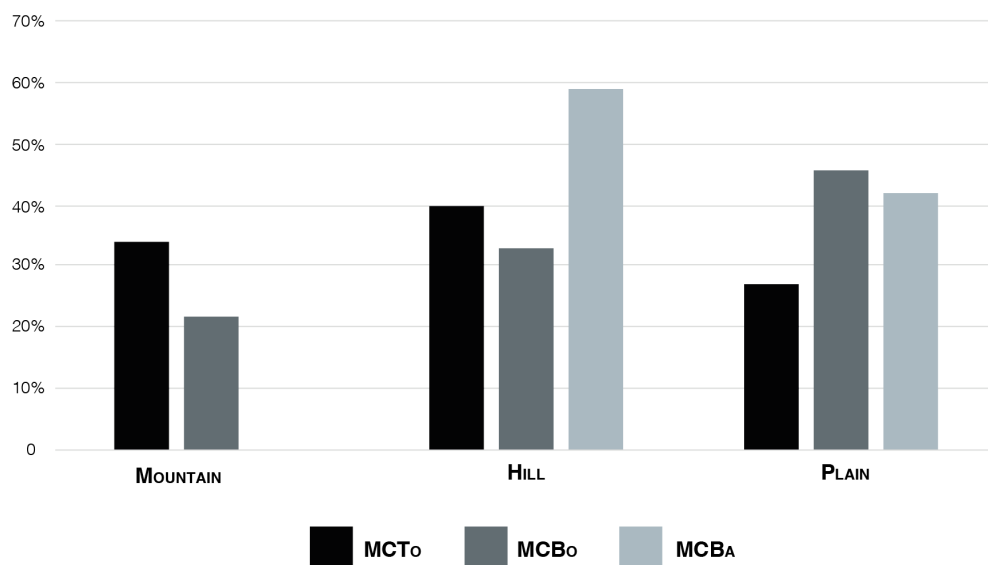
The Metropolitan City of Turin stands out for its extensiveness and for the presence of a significant number of municipalities within its institutional boundaries. With a total of 312 municipalities, its territorial extension is accompanied by a rich variety of landscapes and geographical contexts. The municipalities are distributed almost equally among the different altitude zones: 105 in mountainous areas, 124 in hilly areas and 83 in flat areas. This distribution reflects the complexity of Turin's geography especially in relation to governance and the management of heterogeneous situations from a territorial point of view.



The Metropolitan City of Bologna, with its 55 municipalities, has a more concentrated territorial distribution than Turin. Nevertheless, the altimetric variety is evident: 12 municipalities are in mountainous areas, 18 in hilly areas and 25 (corresponding to 45% of the total) in plain areas. This distribution reflects the central position of the Bolognese metropolis, which embraces both the Apennines with their peaks and the *Pianura Padana*.

The Metropolitan City of Bari, with its 41 municipalities, is characterised by the predominance of hilly and flat territories, with no municipalities in mountainous areas. This reflection of the Apulian geographic landscape, with its hills and coastal plains facing the Adriatic Sea, highlights the territory's peculiarities and specific challenges related to the management of natural resources and urbanisation linked to the coastal context on the one hand, while on the other hand it leads the metropolitan city to actively manage the related inner areas as well.

**CASE STUDIES - MUNICIPALITIES BY ALTITUDE**



**Figure 117- Case Studies - Municipalities by Altitudinal zones. Source: Author's elaboration.**

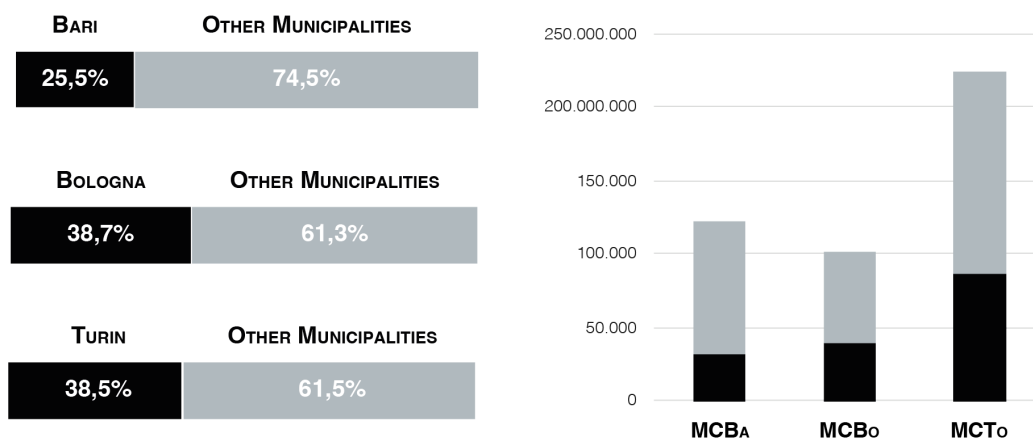
The analysis of the distribution of municipalities by altitude (Figure 117), therefore, highlights the heterogeneous geographical nature of the three case studies, offering an interesting perspective on the territorial challenges and opportunities that each metropolitan city faces in its regional and national context.

A relevant comparison concerns the population distribution between the capital city and the rest of the metropolitan area, offering interesting insights into the

demographic concentration and average size of municipalities within the three metropolitan cities (Figure 118).

In particular, a differentiated demographic scenario emerges among the metropolitan cities. The Metropolitan City of Turin and the Metropolitan City of Bologna gather about 39% of the total population within the capital city, indicating a significant urban concentration. This distribution reflects the central and attractive role of the capital cities, which act as poles of economic, cultural and social development for the entire metropolitan area. On the other hand, the Metropolitan City of Bari shows a more balanced demographic distribution, with the capital city hosting only about 25% of the total population. This distribution suggests a greater population dispersion in the metropolitan area, with a less dominant presence of an urban core.

**CASE STUDIES - DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION IN THE MCs**

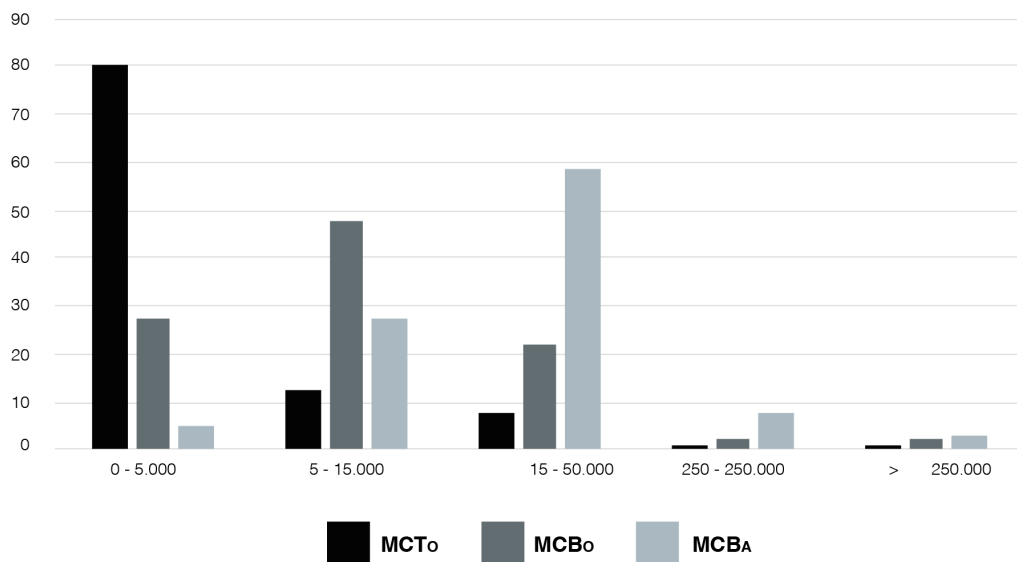


**Figure 118 - Case Studies - Distribution population in the MCs between Capital City and the 'other' municipalities. Source: ISTAT,2022. Author's elaboration.**

The average size of municipalities offers further insights. In the Metropolitan City of Turin, about 80 per cent of the municipalities have a population of less than 5.000 inhabitants, reflecting a more fragmented territorial distribution and the presence of numerous small towns. The average size of municipalities in the Metropolitan City of Bologna is about 18.000 inhabitants per municipality, indicating a greater population concentration than in Turin, but still with significant territorial diversification. Finally, the average size of municipalities in the Metropolitan City of Bari is about 30.000 inhabitants per municipality, with about 60 per cent of the municipalities having between 15.000 and 50.000 inhabitants.

These data reveal a greater homogeneity in the size of municipalities and a more balanced population concentration than in the other two metropolitan cities (Figure 119).

**CASE STUDIES - MUNICIPALITIES BY POPULATION SIZE**



**Figure 119 - Distribution of municipalities by size. Source: ISTAT, 2022. Author's elaboration.**

The analysis of these latest data offers broader insights into the organisation and structure of Italian metropolitan cities. At least two diametrically opposed cases emerge, highlighting the complexity and diversity of urban and territorial models.

On the one hand, the Metropolitan City of Turin presents itself as an example of a clearly monocentric metropolitan city. Its capital city has a dominant role both demographically and institutionally, representing the main hub of the economic, social and political life of the entire metropolitan area. This monocentric model is also reflected in the distribution of services and infrastructure, which tend to be concentrated in the capital at the expense of the other areas of the metropolitan territory.

On the other hand, the Metropolitan City of Bari stands out as the most polycentric in the Italian context. The presence of multiple municipalities with a significant demographic weight contributes to balancing the role of the capital city, reducing its institutional pre-eminence. This polycentric structure favours a fairer distribution of resources and opportunities among the various urban centres within the metropolis, promoting economic diversification and social cohesion.

The Metropolitan City of Bologna, meanwhile, is in an in-between position between the two extremes. Although the demographic values may suggest a monocentric city characterization similar to Turin, it is important to consider the strong role of the Unions of Municipalities (as already pointed out in the previous chapters). These territorial associations balance the institutional weight of the capital municipality, ensuring more widespread participation in decision-making processes and more inclusive governance within the metropolitan city of Bologna.

In this sense, the analysis of the urban and territorial development models of Italian metropolitan cities highlights a wide range of approaches and strategies, reflecting the different challenges and opportunities for growth within the national context.

The last introductory territorial-functional comparison focuses on the administrative boundaries of the three metropolitan cities and their functional urban areas, offering an interesting perspective on the spatial distribution of activities and flows within these metropolises.

CASE STUDIES - METROPOLITAN AREAS AND FUAs

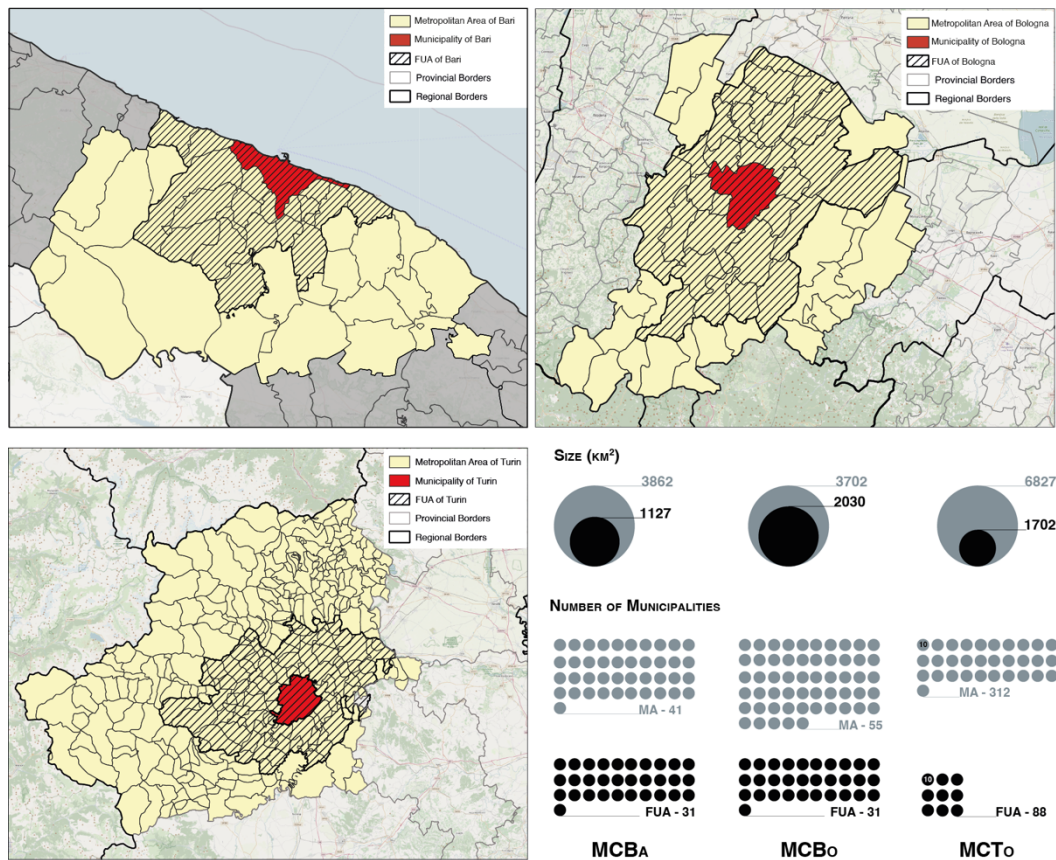


Figure 120 - Case Studies - Metropolitan Area and FUA. Source: Author's elaboration on ISTAT and OECD data.

As shown in Figure 120, the comparison in this area is quite heterogeneous. The Metropolitan City of Turin has a FUA that is apparently smaller than its administrative boundaries. The FUA of the MCT<sub>0</sub> tends to include the capital city and the municipalities of the first and second belts, showing a concentration of urban activities around the central core. The Metropolitan City of Bologna, on the contrary, shows a FUA that almost completely coincides with the institutional boundaries of the MCT<sub>0</sub>, except for some areas to the east. This phenomenon could be attributed to the strong influence of the municipality of Imola, which exerts a significant attraction on the municipalities of Bologna's eastern periphery, contributing to the formation of a well-integrated functional urban network. Finally, the Metropolitan City of Bari presents a FUA fairly in line with that of the MCT<sub>0</sub>. However, the gap between the functional area and the institutional area is determined by the presence of several urban poles within the metropolis, which

absorb the attractiveness of the municipality of Bari within a relatively short distance.

These differences again lead one to reflect on the Delrio reform and the decision to maintain the old provincial boundaries, highlighting the disparity between the institutional areas and the reality of the influence of the capital municipality. At the same time, the territorial comparison within the paragraph highlights the extremely heterogeneous nature of the three Italian metropolitan cities under study.

During this chapter, we will examine how this heterogeneity is also reflected in institutional governance choices, planning tools and supra-local programming, highlighting the complexity and diversity of the territorial challenges and opportunities that these metropolises face.

### **9.3 Institutional Governance comparison**

Comparison of the institutional governance of metropolitan cities will be conducted by analysing the decision-making structures, intergovernmental relations, and participation of various actors.

From an institutional point of view, the three case studies do not present substantial differences, since all three are regulated and implemented by Law 56/2014. It may be interesting, however, to compare them on how the three case studies have had different experiences in the evolution of metropolitan governance, on how their governance has adapted to the new territorial challenges (see the PNRR), and on how the authority relates to the territories within its metropolitan boundary.

Among the three case studies it is certainly relevant to note how in relation to the metropolitan city of Bari, previously the province of Bari, there was a radical transformation preceding the Delrio reform. In particular, mention is made of the establishment of the province of Barletta-Andria-Trani, following the approval of Law 148 of 2000. The subdivision and recompositing of administrative territories have a long tradition in pre-unification Italy and in the post-unification period when the formation of provinces marked an important step towards administrative modernization.

This event cannot be understood without considering the historical and geographical context of the region. Apulia, with its strategic position in the Mediterranean, has always played a crucial role in trade and maritime routes. The

cities of Bari, Barletta, Andria and Trani have historically always had a major influence in the territorial dynamics of the Apulia region, and in particular the cities of Barletta, Andria and Trani and their territories have always had territorial dynamics comparable to those of the municipality of Bari. This process of transformation of the province of Bari as a result of the new province has had profound implications on the distribution of resources and public services.

Moreover, the analysis of this case study inevitably leads to consider the broader debate on metropolitan governance and the effectiveness of local institutions in managing the challenges of the 21st century. The Delrio reform, which has led to further changes in the Italian administrative scenario, can be seen as part of this ongoing debate on the optimization of institutional structures to meet the challenges of globalization, the environment and modern society.

The Piedmonts case study is steeped in a rich tradition of inter-municipal cooperation and large-scale collaborative experiences that have shaped its territorial development over the decades. This is particularly evident if one examines the historical path that has led to the definition of urban and territorial dynamics, especially in the metropolitan area of Turin and Piedmont in general. The evolution of these practices has been influenced by several significant stages. Initially, after the unsuccessful experience of the inter-municipal plan in the early 1950s, two key moments of experimentation in inter-municipal cooperation emerged. In the 1970s, the idea of the *Comprensori* started to develop, which represented an attempt to coordinate the efforts and resources of several municipalities to tackle common challenges, such as urban and infrastructure development. The experience of the *Comprensori* ended in the late 1980s.

However, it was in the 1990s that the concept of metropolitan cities began to take a more tangible shape, especially following the adoption of Law 142 of 1990. In this phase, in the Piedmontese context, there was the birth of the *Circondari*, structures that played a crucial role in the definition of territorial policies and strategies, especially in the province of Turin. These bodies contributed significantly to the formulation of the 1999 Provincial Territorial Coordination Plan, providing a solid basis for planning and development at the provincial level.

The 2000s saw the emergence of further large-scale strategic planning experiences, with a particular emphasis on the role of the provincial capital and its surrounding areas, which transcended provincial administrative boundaries to focus on broader territorial dynamics. These efforts reached a new peak with the approval

of the PTCP2 in 2011, where the 'metropolitan' concept took centre stage. To support its elaboration, a metropolitan table was set up and 38 municipalities were identified that could together represent a potential metropolitan area of Turin, marking a significant step towards greater integration and collaboration on a large scale in the area.

In relation to the Bolognese case, until the end of the 1970s, planning decisions at the supra-local level were mainly focused on the construction of infrastructure in the territory. However, the landscape began to change when the municipality of Bologna and fifteen municipalities in its urban belt applied to the Ministry of Public Works to issue a decree for the formation of the *Piano Intercomunale del Comprensorio* (PIC). On 6 May 1960, the Ministry authorised the creation of the PIC, entrusting the Municipality of Bologna with its drafting. This plan, conceived to meet the needs of economic planning and promote democratic participation, aimed to counter building speculation and promote a restructuring of the district according to a polycentric model.

Starting in the early 1990s, the Province of Bologna became the protagonist of an intense large-scale planning activity. In 1993, the Provincial Council adopted the *Piano Territoriale Infraregionale* in accordance with Regional Law 36/88. Subsequently, the Region approved it in April 1995.

The PTI set out the regional planning as an implementation tool, encouraging the municipalities to coordinate their urban planning instruments through consultation. The Province was committed to providing technical services and financing, while assuming the coordination and organisation of this process.

With the transfer of urban planning competences to the Province, including the approval of municipal urban plans, the focus was on the organisation of this area planning. Starting in 1997, the Province undertook a planning activity aimed at preparing the PTCP, made mandatory by Regional Law 6/95.

This process did not involve the establishment of a new planning level, but rather the stipulation of general agreements and implementation agreements between the Province and the various aggregates of municipalities. The new functions and responsibilities assigned to municipalities by Legislative Decree 112/98 stimulated processes of aggregation between them, to enhance their capacity to provide services to citizens.



On this basis, experiences of inter-municipal cooperation in the metropolitan area of Bologna were born and strengthened, culminating in the birth and consolidation of Unions of Municipalities.

In relation to the three case studies, a rich and articulated picture emerges of transformations and spatial planning practices that have influenced the development of the respective metropolitan areas over time. The case studies analysed reflect the complexity and diversity of spatial dynamics and planning practices in Italy, highlighting the need to continue to promote innovative forms of cooperation and governance to meet future challenges.

Starting from the outlined context, we arrive at 2014 with the entry into force of the Delrio reform that established metropolitan cities. On 1 January 2015, the former provinces are replaced by metropolitan cities. During 2014, the first elections of metropolitan councils take place and consequently, each metropolitan city is called upon to draw up its own statute. The Metropolitan City of Bari and the Metropolitan City of Bologna approve their statutes in December 2014, while the Metropolitan City of Turin (adopts them in the spring of 2015).

The Delrio reform has left a wide discretion in the definition of metropolitan statutes and, consequently, in the configuration of metropolitan governance structures. In this sense, the three case studies highlight the flexibility of the Delrio reform in defining metropolitan cities from an operational and management perspective.

The MCTo, considering its vast territorial extension, has opted, and adopted Homogeneous Zones, provided for by Law 56 but not mandatory. This approach has been extensively discussed in the chapter on the MCTo (chapter 8).

On the other hand, the MCBo, aware of the long tradition of inter-municipal cooperation in its territory, decides not to create a new form of inter-municipal aggregation, but rather to strengthen the role of the Unions of Municipalities. Moreover, alongside the metropolitan mayor, the metropolitan council and the metropolitan conference, it introduces an additional institutional structure, the bureau, which plays a central role in coordinated and participatory spatial planning.

Finally, the MCBa decides to don't establish Homogeneous Zones, reflecting the polycentricity of the metropolitan area and the institutional balance between the metropolitan municipality and the other cities in the region. Within the metropolitan city there are other forms of inter-municipal cooperation, such as Local Action

Groups. These LAGs are much more rooted in the Apulian context than in the other case studies where, for the MCTo, they tend to be in the more peripheral and mountainous territories and for the MCBo there is only one LAG aimed at the Bolognese Apennine territory.

In analysing the governance schemes adopted by the three metropolitan cities, the flexibility and tailoring of the reform clearly emerges, allowing each metropolitan city to shape its administrative structure according to the specific needs of its territory. Departments are usually organised by thematic areas such as environment, transport, spatial planning and European programming, but the addition of the PNRR has introduced a new dimension to administrative management.

A tangible example of this adaptability is the metropolitan city of Bari, which has developed a special governance structure dedicated to the PNRR, thus demonstrating strong institutional cohesion and collaboration with the municipality of Bari. In particular, a project unit has been set up that is not limited to the boundaries of the metropolitan authority but extends far beyond them. This innovative approach was instrumental in the effective interaction with the Municipality of Bari, as discussed in detail in the previous chapters. The establishment of a joint office, through a special agreement between the two administrations, underlined their joint commitment to coordinating technical assistance activities for the '*Patto per Bari*' and NOP Metro programs. This joint office represented a significant step towards a more integrated and inclusive management, extending its role beyond the territorial boundaries of the metropolitan city of Bari. This approach involved several entities and required close cooperation between the leading administrative figures of the two entities, embodied in the Coordination Committee.

Similarly, the MCTo has also integrated the PNRR into its governance structure, recognising the importance of effective coordination for the implementation of the projects and interventions set forth in the national plan. The definition of an internal organisational model enabled the body to play a central role as an implementing or steering body. The two units, the Technical Coordination Unit and the Technical Support Unit, worked in synergy to ensure the proper implementation of the administration's directives and the careful monitoring of public projects and services.

As far as the MCBo is concerned, everything related to the PNRR has been absorbed within its own governance structure without, however, weakening any relations with the administrative levels with a view to vertical and horizontal cooperation at the same time. In this sense, Article 20 of the Statute of the metropolitan city of Bologna provides that, on the basis of special agreements, the Unions and the single municipalities may identify forms of institutional cooperation with the metropolitan city. According to the Statute itself, the Unions represent the priority reference for the territorial articulation of the metropolitan city's policies and actions. Three types of collaboration are identified: (i) the creation of a common office; (ii) the use of offices of the metropolitan city; (iii) other, lighter forms of functional collaboration identified on a case-by-case basis. The municipalities and their associative forms, by adhering to the convention in question, have the possibility of subsequently entering implementing agreements with the metropolitan city, in the matters and according to what is indicated in the framework convention. The central role of the *Ufficio di Presidenza* of MCBo identified by the Framework Convention as the driving and coordinating body for its implementation, should be emphasised once again.

Starting from what has been described above, in this paragraph comparing the three case studies from an institutional point of view, we wish to highlight the different relationship between the three metropolitan authorities and the small and medium-sized municipalities within them. The analysis of the three case studies reveals a wide range of relational dynamics between metropolitan cities and smaller municipalities. Through a series of interviews conducted both within metropolitan municipalities and among the representatives of small and medium-sized municipalities, as well as between the spokespersons of homogeneous zones and the presidents of the unions of municipalities, a complex network of perspectives and practices emerges that delineate inter-institutional relations.

For example, in the context of the metropolitan city of Turin, characterised by a vast territorial extension and the inclusion of 312 municipalities, there is an attempt to maintain relations also with peripheral areas through the establishment of Homogeneous Zones. These 11 territorial subdivisions work as a support for urban planning analyses and as a channel for territorial needs in development policies. However, it is important to emphasise that, at present, the absence of a technical support structure limits the role of Homogeneous Zones in decision-making processes to a mainly institutional function, with a mainly advisory impact during the consultation and participation of the territories. At the same time, the unions of municipalities and mountain unions within the metropolitan city itself

reflect a framework in which inter-municipal collaborations are often motivated more by administrative needs (undersized staff) than by a shared willingness to strengthen policy in order to obtain greater influence at the metropolitan authority. Relations between the municipalities and the metropolitan authority are, therefore, often dependent on the discretion of individual figures in the various administrations.

In the context of the metropolitan city of Bologna, on the other hand, a different mode of interaction with small and medium-sized municipalities emerges, based mainly on the mediation of the Unions of Municipalities. The latter, which almost entirely subdivide the metropolitan territory of Bologna, are characterised by greater structural solidity, with technical and administrative resources to support them. This allows them to play a more active and influential role with respect to the metropolitan authority, with the UdP assuming a crucial role in coordinating the territory's needs and representing them in institutional negotiations.

Finally, the metropolitan city of Bari differs significantly from the other two case studies, as the Apulian municipal context is characterised by significant specificities compared to the other contexts analysed. In this case, the municipalities present are on average larger in size and boast a higher population density, granting the metropolitan municipality significant weight in the decision-making processes concerning the metropolitan area's territorial development. In this context, there are no unions of municipalities or the establishment of homogeneous zones. The metropolitan city of Bari has adopted a participatory governance perspective that is inclusive and equal, placing all municipalities on the same decision-making level. There are frequent round tables involving all metropolitan mayors in the definition of shared strategies to promote the balanced development of Bari's metropolitan territory. This approach reflects a collaborative approach and shared responsibility among the various local administrations to ensure the harmonious and sustainable development of the entire metropolitan area. The most widespread forms of inter-municipal cooperation in this context are Local Action Groups, which focus on promoting rural development and aim to obtain funding from the European Union through specific funding programs. These LAGs serve as essential tools to foster collaboration among the municipalities of the metropolitan city of Bari and to support initiatives aimed at enhancing territorial resources and promoting sustainable and inclusive development at the local level.

In all three contexts, the need for constant dialogue and collaboration between the various institutions emerges in order to meet the challenges and exploit the

opportunities offered by the metropolitan dimension. This implies ensuring a fair and effective representation of the needs of smaller and peripheral municipalities in order to promote sustainable and inclusive territorial development. While Turin and Bologna adopt more structured and differentiated approaches, Bari stands out for a more inclusive and participatory ‘soft planning’ model.

The foregoing paragraph reveals how the various metropolitan cities have interpreted and adapted the Delrio reform according to their specific territorial needs, the peculiarities of their institutions and the pre-existing cooperation dynamics. This capacity for flexibility in shaping metropolitan governance not only underlines the complexity and diversity of the Italian context, but also provides significant insights for greater integration and collaboration on a large scale within metropolitan cities. Moreover, it should be emphasised that this flexibility and discretion in defining the metropolitan governance structure and in the relationships between the metropolitan authority and the various local governments significantly influences the creation of spatial planning tools. These instruments, which will be examined in the next section, are essential to guide ‘metropolitan’ spatial development in a coherent and sustainable manner, reflecting the different needs and priorities of local communities within the metropolitan area. Ultimately, the flexibility and adaptability of metropolitan governance, highlighted in the three contexts under study, is a key element in fostering greater cohesion and collaboration among the various institutional bodies, while promoting integrated and participatory management of metropolitan resources and challenges.

## **9.4 Planning Instruments in Comparison**

As anticipated in the previous chapters, the Delrio reform has brought significant changes in the competences of metropolitan cities. In addition to their traditional role of coordination, metropolitan cities have been invested with strategic responsibility in defining the objectives and strategies for the integrated territorial development of their respective metropolitan areas. This change marked an important transition from an operational point of view, moving from a simple coordination territorial planning to a more complex integrated strategic planning.

In this context, the former instrument of the PTCM was replaced by the broader Metropolitan General Territorial Plan (PTGM or PTM). However, not only was one instrument replaced by another, but also a new (more strategic) approach to urban and territorial planning was introduced. Alongside the PTGM, specific instruments such as the PSM and, later, the PUMS were introduced.

Although, as extensively described in the respective chapters, there are other instruments available to metropolitan authorities, such as ‘metropolitan agendas for sustainable development’ and ‘climate change pacts’, in this section we will mainly focus on comparing the three main instruments mentioned above. These instruments are fundamental for guiding the development of metropolitan cities with a view to sustainability and territorial integration.

It should be emphasised that this section will not merely compare the metropolitan planning instruments of the three case studies in terms of content and objectives but will focus on the drafting process of these instruments with particular emphasis on the approach of the three metropolitan cities in involving small and medium-sized municipalities in the construction of the instruments.

### 9.4.1 Framing the planning instruments

Before beginning the comparison of the metropolitan planning instruments, it is useful to contextualise the metropolitan planning of the three case studies within their respective regional context. In a nutshell, the following Table 40 shows how spatial planning is structured in the different planning levels.

**Table 40 - An overview of the Planning instruments of the case studies**

|                       | <b>MCBa</b>   | <b>MCBo</b>  | <b>MCTo</b>  |
|-----------------------|---|--|--|
| <b>Regional Law</b>   | LR no.20/2001 ‘ <i>Norme generali di governo e uso del territorio</i> ’ and its subsequent amendments and additions | LR no. 24/2017 ‘ <i>Disciplina Regionale sulla tutela e l’uso del territorio</i> ’ | LR no.56/1977 ‘ <i>Tutela ed uso del suolo</i> ’ and its subsequent amendments and additions<br><br>LR no.3/2013 ‘ <i>Modifiche alla legge regionale 5 dicembre 1977, n.56 e ad altre disposizioni regionali in materia di urbanistica ed edilizia</i> ’<br><br>LR no.16/2018 ‘ <i>Misure per il riuso, la riqualificazione dell’edificato e la rigenerazione urbana</i> ’ |
| <b>Regional level</b> | <i>Documento Regionale di Assetto Generale (DRAG)</i> – Art.4 LR no. 20/2001  | <i>Piano Territoriale Regionale (PTR)</i> – Art. 40 LR no. 24/2017                 | <i>Piano Territoriale Regionale (PTR)</i> – Artt. 5,6,7,8<br><br><i>Piano Paesaggistico Regionale (PPR)</i> – Artt. 5,6,7,8  |

|                           |  |  |   |
|---------------------------|--|--|---|
|                           | (PPTR) – art. 135 and 145 of Dlgs 42/2004, Art.1 LR 20/2009  | <i>Regionale</i> (PTPR) - Art. 64 LR no.24/2017  |   |
| <b>Metropolitan level</b> | <i>Piano Territoriale Generale</i> <i>Metropolitano</i> PTGM – Art.1 c.44 L no. 56/2014, Art.9 Metropolitan Statute<br><br><i>Piano Strategico</i> <i>Metropolitano</i> PSM – L no.56/2014; Art.8 Metropolitan Statute | <i>Piano Territoriale</i> <i>Metropolitano</i> PTM - Art. 41 LR no. 24/2017<br><br><i>Piano Strategico</i> <i>Metropolitano</i> PSM – L no. 56/2014; Art.12 Metropolitan Statute | <i>Piano Territoriale Generale</i> <i>Metropolitano</i> PTGM– L no. 56/2014<br><br><i>Piano Strategico</i> <i>Metropolitano</i> PSM – L no. 56/2014; Art.7 Metropolitan Statute |
| <b>Province level</b>     | <i>Piano territoriale di Coordinamento Provinciale</i> PTCP – Art.6 LR no. 20/2001   | <i>Piano territoriale di Area vasta</i> PTAV - Art. 42 LR no. 24/2017  | <i>Piano Territoriale di coordinamento Provinciale</i> PTCP - Artt. 5,6,7   |
| <b>Local level</b>        | <i>Piano Urbanistico Generale</i> PUG – Art. 9 c 11 of LR no. 20/2001  | <i>Piano Urbanistico Generale</i> PUG - Art. 30 - 37 LR no. 24/2017  | <i>Piano Regolatorie Generale Comunale</i> PRGC – LR no. 56/1977, Title III artt.11 and following   |

Source: Author's elaboration.

The above table reveals a diversified panorama in the definition of planning instruments in all three levels considered. At the regional level, a territorial plan and a landscape plan mainly emerge in the three contexts. Despite differences in the name - the territorial plan of the Apulia region is called DRAG (*Documento Regionale di Assetto Generale* - Regional General Planning Document), while for Emilia-Romagna and Piedmont it is PTR (*Piano Territoriale Regionale* - Regional Territorial Plan), with the respective landscape plans PPTR, PTPR, PPR - the contents and conformity constraints for the subordinate plans remain substantially the same.

At the metropolitan level, the regional laws (updated post-Delrio), supplemented by the respective metropolitan statutes, mainly provide for two metropolitan instruments, as described above: a metropolitan general territorial plan (PTGM or PTM) and a metropolitan strategic plan (PSM).

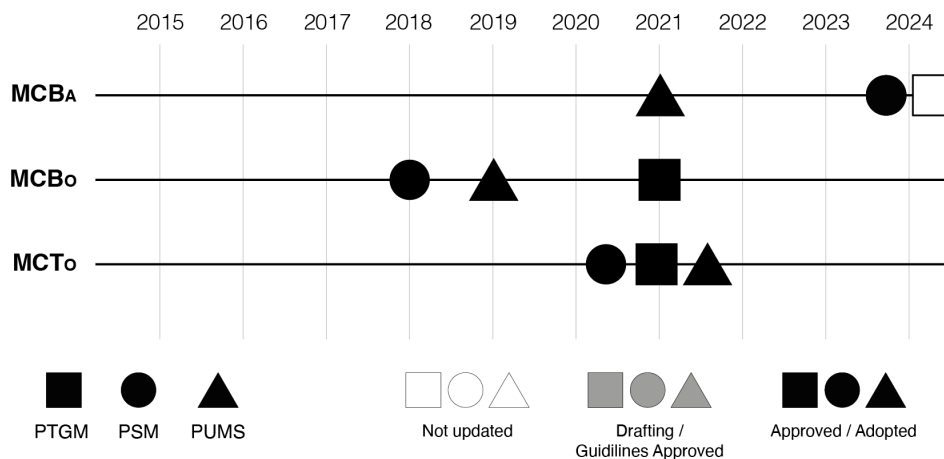
At the provincial level, despite the Delrio reform, the reference territorial plan remains the *Piano Territoriale di Coordinamento Provinciale* (PTCP) for Apulia and Piedmont, and the *Piano Territoriale di Area Vasta* (PTAV) for Emilia-Romagna.

At municipal level, the reference urban planning instrument is the PUG (*Piano Urbano Generale*) for Apulia and Emilia-Romagna, and the PRGC (*Piano Regolatore Generale Comunale*) for Piedmont.

This general comparison of instruments on the different planning levels is a synthesis and does not consider all the sectoral plans and operational/executive plans present. Its objective is to provide an overview of the main legislative and planning instruments before comparing the metropolitan planning instruments of the three case studies.

Going into more detail on the metropolitan planning instruments, see Figure X, a big difference between the three case studies immediately emerges. On the one hand, there are the MCBo and MCTo with all three main planning instruments (PTGM, PSM and PUMS) approved and/or adopted; on the other hand, there is the metropolitan city of Bari with only the PUMS approved in 2021 and with the PSM just approves (17 May 2024) (Figure 121).

**CASE STUDIES - THE STATUS OF THE METROPOLITAN PLANNING INSTRUMENTS**



**Figure 121 - Comparison Case studies' Planning Instrument status. Source: Author's elaboration.**

As already pointed out in the previous chapters, the metropolitan city of Bari has as its only approved spatial planning instrument the Urban Plan for Sustainable Mobility, PUMS. The lack of spatial planning tools in the metropolitan city of Bari is a significant problem that persists to this day. It should be pointed out that with regard to the territorial plan, not only there is no PTGM but, at the same time, there is no provincial coordination territorial plan (pre-Delrio reform). In fact, since 2006 the former province of Bari tried to draw up a Provincial Coordination Territorial



Plan, but it never saw the light of day due to the birth of the province of Barletta-Andria-Trani first and the Delrio reform later.

It is important to emphasise that the lack of progress in the drafting of the MCBa's PTCP, despite the Delrio reform, is a symptom of a lack of impetus on the part of the metropolitan administration in pushing for the new metropolitan spatial planning tool. At present, work seems to have come to a complete standstill and this delay in spatial planning at the metropolitan level could have significant consequences for the sustainable and coordinated development of the area.

Although on the spatial planning side it seems to be rather at a standstill, the MCBa seems to be focusing more and more on the strategic planning of the metropolitan area. Indeed, the drafting of the MCBa's first metropolitan strategic plan has been underway for several years now and is based on an innovative governance model that places community participation at the heart of the process. This approach aims not only to actively involve citizens in the definition of development strategies, but also to ensure a shared vision for the future of the metropolitan city of Bari. Bottom-up participation thus becomes a focal point to ensure that planned decisions reflect the real needs and aspirations of the local population.

The only planning tool approved in all three case studies is the PUMS, following the Decree of 4 August 2017 on the guidelines for urban sustainable mobility plans, which committed all MCs to have a PUMS under penalty of not being eligible for calls for infrastructure funds. In fact, as defined by the document '*Connettere l'Italia*', the PUMS constitutes one of the three administrative tools that are indispensable for administrations to have access to state funding for the implementation of new infrastructure interventions related to rapid mass transport systems (metropolitan rail system, metro network, trams)<sup>48</sup>.

The metropolitan cities of Bologna and Turin, compared to that of Bari<sup>49</sup>, have all the main instruments approved and in relation to the strategic plan already in the second season of the planning instrument with MCBo having already approved its second metropolitan strategic plan in 2018, while MCTo is currently in the process

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<sup>48</sup> The other two instruments consist of Feasibility Projects of the individual infrastructures, drawn up in accordance with Legislative Decree No. 50 of 2016, and the report on the consistency of the projects presented with the objectives and strategies of '*Connecting Italy: strategies for transport and logistics infrastructures*'.

<sup>49</sup> As already mentioned in a footnote in the Paragraph 6.4.2 the PSM of the MCBa has been approved on 17 May 2024

of drafting its second strategic plan (2024-2026). The new PSM 2024-2026, the drafting of which is committing the authority from July 2023, will relaunch the development vision proposed by PSM 2021-2023.

#### **9.4.2 Metropolitan General Territorial Plan – PTGM**

The first comparative instrument is the Metropolitan General Territorial Plan. As already mentioned, this comparison can only take place between the MCBo and the MCTo as the MCBa is currently at a standstill in the drafting of the instrument.

For the MCTo, the process of formation and approval of the PTGM began in 2019 with the approval of the Guidelines for the formation of the General Metropolitan Territorial Plan. During the year 2020, the PTGM Unit provided for the updating and integration of the knowledge framework (socio-economic, territorial and environmental analyses), preparatory to the formation of the PTGM, taking into account the results of the monitoring of the PTC2, as well as the results of some of the European projects in which the MCTo took part. At the end of 2020, the Preliminary Technical Proposal Outline of the PTGM was submitted for consultation with the regional authority (as required by Regional Law 56/77). At the beginning of 2021, the Technical Proposal of the General Metropolitan Territorial Plan (PTGM) was approved, including the information required for the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and the Impact Assessment (IA) process. In December 2022, the PTGM and the related SEA were adopted. From the date of publication in the BUR (which took place on 19.01.2023), the PTGM observation phase was opened, which gave the opportunity to submit comments on the contents of the PTGM within 60 days (in environmental matters, the days available to the parties in charge and the competent SEA authority for the observations are 45). They are currently in the phase of counter-deductions and revision of the Plan aimed at the preparation of the final draft to be followed by the approval of the plan, approval that is made by the Metropolitan Council, after the mandatory opinion of the Assembly of Mayors of the Homogeneous Areas and the binding opinion of the Metropolitan Conference (Article 8 of the Metropolitan Statute).

As far as the MCBo is involved, work on the formation of the plan started in 2020. In particular, in February 2020, the Metropolitan Council approved the strategic objectives for the elaboration of the new Plan, initiating the Preliminary Consultation phase, a participatory process made up of technical meetings, webinars and interviews, in which the general choices of the PTM were shared with

citins, local administrators, stakeholders and environmental bodies. The outcomes of this process made it possible to define the Plan proposal and the 5 challenges to achieve the strategic objectives. The draft Plan was thus adopted in July 2020, opening the phase of comments on its structure and content, and subsequently adopted by the Metropolitan Council in December 2020 in its revised version. The adopted Plan was then the subject of a particularly constructive discussion with the Region of Emilia-Romagna and with the members of the '*Comitato Urbanistico Regionale*' (CUR), who expressed positive opinions on its contents, highlighting full agreement with its objectives, thus allowing it to reach final approval in May 2021. The path that led to the approval of the PTM was unprecedented in its speed and experimental in its contents and methods, thanks to the convergence of objectives between the Metropolitan City and the Region, as well as the processes of involvement and participation of all public and private stakeholders. Regarding the objectives and strategies of the two territorial plans, the PTGM of Turin is based on 4 macro-objectives (MetroGOAL) and 8 metropolitan macro-strategies (MStrat). The macro-objectives are in turn broken down into 28 objectives, and the macro-strategies into 77 operational actions with the aim of working synergistically to achieve the general objectives of the Plan. While the MCBo chooses to hinge the strategies of the MCBo PTM around five major multi-objective challenges that decline the general objectives in relation to the specificities of the territories.

In relation to the involvement of territories, of small and medium-sized municipalities, the two metropolitan cities have acted differently in the instrument's formation process, also in the light of the different territorial and institutional contexts repeatedly mentioned in the previous paragraphs.

The MCBo involved the territory's municipal administrations in a listening process, gathering suggestions and proposals and surveying the territories' expectations with respect to the Plan and the new great challenges to which the instrument will be called upon to respond, such as the territory's attractiveness, habitability, promotion of sustainable development and resilience. The consultation of the territories was carried out through a series of interviews with the mayors of the 55 municipalities belonging to the Metropolitan City, with the metropolitan councillors in office, as well as through a questionnaire that was addressed to the more than 700 municipal councillors of the entire territory. The process was therefore aimed at drawing up a preliminary (non-exhaustive) list of all those actors, defined as intermediate bodies (associations, committees, formal and informal groups, private social subjects, etc.), engaged in various forms of civic activism and cooperation, which are involved in the different territories of the Metropolitan City

of Bologna in issues closely connected to the policies interacting with the plan. The objective of the consultation was to elaborate a cognitive framework useful to start mapping all those representative subjects of the local communities, who will be able to collaborate in the elaboration of the plan and in the dissemination of its contents.

The consultation of the territory in recent months has involved the use of different tools: i. semi-structured interviews with the 55 mayors of the metropolitan city and metropolitan councillors; ii. questionnaire to the municipal councillors of the 55 municipalities. The Interviews were carried out using a semi-structured qualitative approach. The objective of the interviews was to elaborate an articulated and coherent interpretative scheme, and not only a descriptive one, which allows us to capture the complexity of the subjects interviewed with respect to their individual perceptions and experiences regarding a vast area planning tool such as the PTM. The questionnaire addressed instead to the councillors of the 55 municipalities of the metropolitan city of Bologna, divided into 13 closed and 1 open questions, was aimed at extrapolating an interpretative framework of what, in the vision of the administrators of the territory, are the main criticalities and strengths in environmental, social and attractiveness terms of the different territories of the metropolitan city, as well as the vocations and therefore the priorities for action on which to act through the PTM with the aim of achieving a harmonious and sustainable development of the entire territory. A further collector throughout the whole process of drafting the PTM was certainly the *'Ufficio di Presidenza'* where dialogue with the presidents of the Unions of Municipalities and the technical structures working on the drafting of the instrument was constant and proactive on both sides (Figure 122).

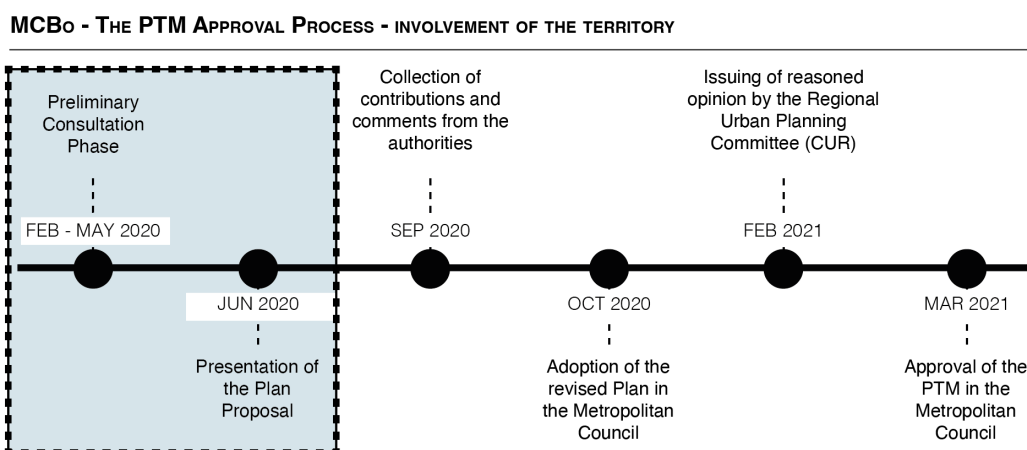


Figure 122 - Involvement of the territory in the PTM approval process in the MCBo. Source: Author's elaboration on MCBo, 2021a.

The MCTo in the drafting of the spatial planning instrument compared to the MCBo involved the territories less in the preliminary stages and in the preparation of the preliminary technical proposal of the plan. In particular, only in-depth questionnaires were sent to the 312 metropolitan municipalities in July 2019. It was decided to interface more with the Homogeneous Zones as collectors of the territories' requests, even though the latter have no real specific and institutional weight in the eyes of small and medium-sid municipalities in particular. The contribution of the small and medium-sid municipalities was especially evident during the scoping phase and when the municipalities and unions of municipalities submitted their opinions and contributions following the adoption of the Preliminary Project Technical Proposal. It should be emphasised that the limited consultation of the territories was caused by the limitations imposed by the pandemic in the early stages of the PTGM definition process, forcing the metropolitan authority to limit the consultation to the mandatory requirements of the regional law. Some online meetings were organised with the homogeneous areas, but they were aimed merely at presenting the PTGM's technical proposal and did not provide any room for action for small and medium-sid municipalities (Figure 123).

**MCTo - THE PTGM APPROVAL PROCESS - INVOLVEMENT OF THE TERRITORY**

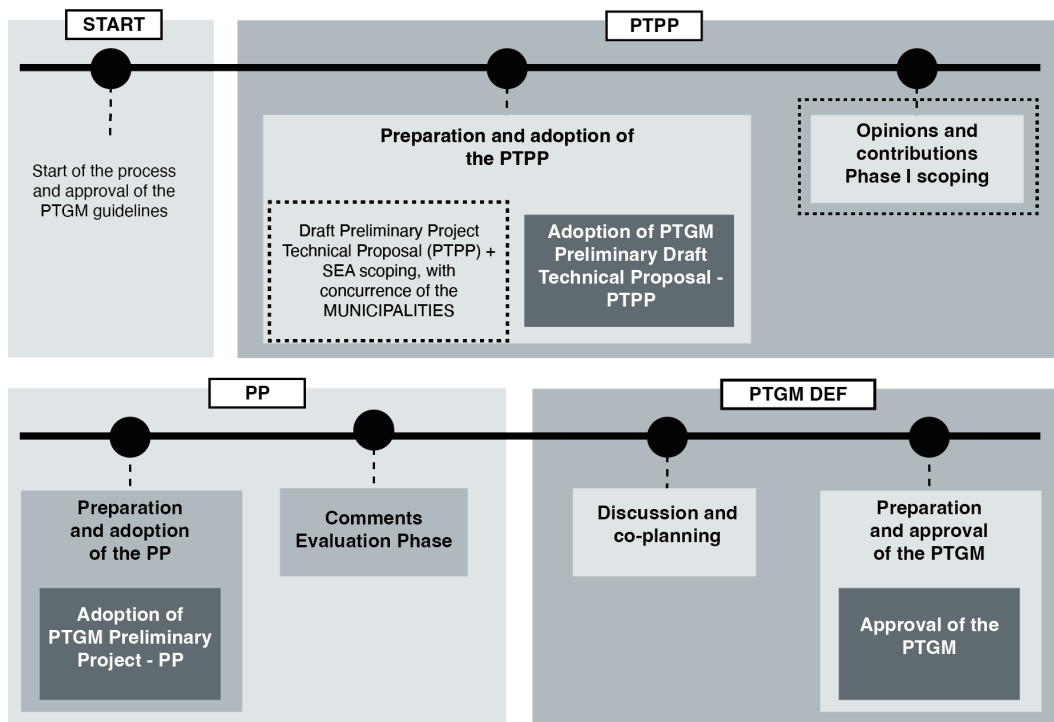


Figure 123 - Involvement of the territory in the PTGM approval process in the MCTo. Source: Author’s elaboration on MCTo, 2022a).

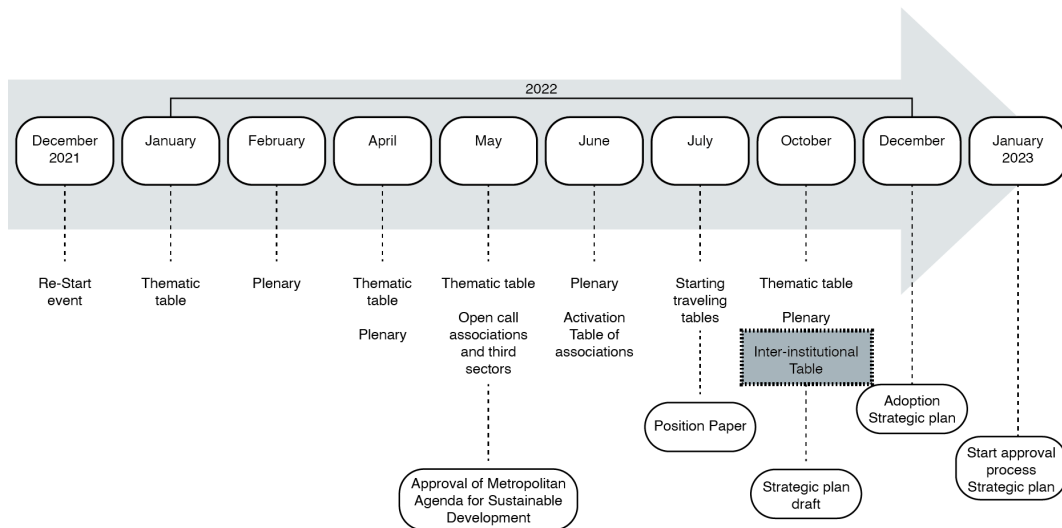
### 9.4.3 The Metropolitan Strategic Plan – PSM

The second instrument under comparison is the metropolitan strategic plan. In relation to the PSM there are the MCBo with a second generation PSM, the MCTo with its first PSM approved, and the second one being developed, and finally the MCBa with the first PSM just approved.

Starting with the latter, the PSM of Bari is currently in the middle of a drafting process, initiated by the signing of the *Patto per Bari* in May 2016 by the Metropolitan City of Bari and the Presidency of the Council of Ministers. This gave the process a quick start and ensured the implementation of strategic interventions through multiple sources of funding. The relationship between the Metropolitan Authority and its Small and medium si municipalities is articulated in two different ways. Strategic activities are organised within the framework of what is statutorily assigned to the mayor, the Metropolitan Council and the Metropolitan Conference. Moreover, 11 Strategic Actions and Flagship Projects identified in 2016 with the involvement of all the mayors of the metropolitan municipalities formed the 11

Planning Axes and hence the programmatic framework of the PSM, which re-started its process in 2021 (Figure 124). More particularly, the shared vision was developed with the 41 mayors of the area, to create new opportunities for a better future for the whole of the metropolitan territory.

**MCBa - THE PSM APPROVAL PROCESS - INVOLVEMENT OF THE TERRITORY**



**Figure 124 - Involvement of the territory in the PSM approval process in the MCBa. Source: Author’s elaboration on MCBa, 2024b.**

The PSM aims to build strategies based on systemic measures with a long conceptual reach, capable of responding to the pandemic crisis by drawing inspiration from EU policies and agendas, to trigger and support recovery. The process features continuous dialogue and shared participation between the metropolitan authority and the territory. To this end, the Metropolitan Council approved the ‘Regulation on Collective and Individual Participation’, which: i) promotes consultation and individual and collective participation in the administrative life of the Metropolitan City; ii) defines the different modes of participation including petitions, consultations through online questionnaires and surveys, public assemblies, thematic forums and conferences, social networks and Working Tables (MCBa, 2024b).

The latter is the real space where ideas and strategies that will form the new PSM are shared. In particular, the Working Tables are defined as follows: a) Interinstitutional Platform of the Metropolitan City of Bari, in which representatives of the public institutions (mayors of the metropolitan municipalities, labour unions, hospital directors, private stakeholders at the regional/national level, spokespersons

for industry associations, etc.) responsible for the protection and enhancement of general public interests in the territory may participate; b) Table of Associations and Active Citizenship, whatever legal form they take; c) Table of Talents and New Generations, in which representatives of youth movements, educational institutions and/or active citizens aged 16-30 participate. The Table of Talents and New Generations constitutes the centre of interpretation and elaboration of proposals (with the support of tutors and a technical-scientific committee), which are then discussed, compared and approved in cooperation with the Table of Associations and Active Citizenship and the Interinstitutional Table, through digital tools and public assemblies in the territories.

The Interinstitutional Table of the Metropolitan City of Bari is the place where the 41 metropolitan mayors can bring up issues for consideration and discussion, building metropolitan network governance which is unprecedented in the Italian context (MCBa, 2024b). The Governance Model of the Metropolitan City of Bari's strategic planning process highlights constant work and continuous co-planning and co-designing with the 41 metropolitan municipalities, allowing them to carry out their development programs using the Apulia Region's and national programming instruments. All of this is done with the primary goal of implementing metropolitan level interventions that are aligned with the main aims of the EU cohesion policy 2021-2027 (MCBa, 2020).

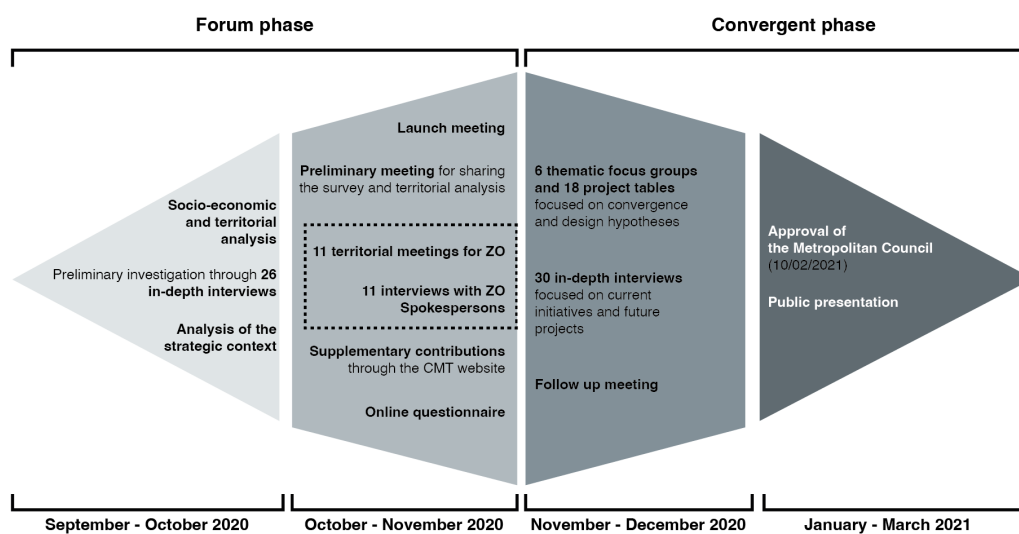
Regarding the MCTo, the Metropolitan Strategic Plan 2021-2023 was the result of an articulated participatory planning process that was innovative for the Piedmont context. This process took place between September and December 2020 and included listening to and consultation with the territory and opportunities for the shared identification and definition of objectives and priorities. More precisely, the planning process was divided into two phases (Figure 8): the first phase – called the forum phase – was aimed at framing the main problems of the metropolitan territory and, based on them, the priority guidelines for development consistent with the interests of the different subjects and areas that compose it; the second phase – called the convergent phase – was aimed at formulating planning ideas that took into account the results of the forum phase, to structure the contents of the Metropolitan Strategic Plan.

The Forum Phase included some preliminary activities to frame the reference context and define territorial homogeneities and thematic convergences. During this phase the metropolitan authority engaged with the territories by carrying out preliminary surveys through 37 in-depth interviews, including 11 with the



Spokespersons of the Homogeneous Zones and 26 with qualified actors, selected according to their ability to represent a broad and heterogeneous spectrum of views and interests. The planning process included several public meetings, including a discussion meeting for each of the 11 Homogeneous Zones, aimed at identifying the needs, priorities and visions of different parts of the metropolitan area (Figure 125). It should also be noted that since its establishment the Metropolitan City had requested that the HZs draw up area-wide strategic plans for the respective territories, in preparation for the new strategic plan. Some HZs responded positively, others, perhaps due to limited financial and technical resources, less so. All meetings recorded an extraordinary participation of various stakeholders, both in terms of number of participants and active involvement in the activities. One of the main reasons for the extraordinary participation of the community probably lies in the fact that the online mode (due to the pandemic emergency) facilitated the participation of those residing in the most remote areas of the Metropolitan City, requiring very little investment of time and money.

**MCTo - THE PSM APPROVAL PROCESS - INVOLVEMENT OF THE TERRITORY**



**Figure 125 - Involvement of the territory in the PSM approval process in the MCTo. Source: Author's elaboration based on MCTo, 2021.**

Finally, in relation to the PSM of the MCB0, starting in the autumn of 2015, the metropolitan city of Bologna, together with the Unions of Municipalities, decided to begin the elaboration of this new Metropolitan Strategic Plan (PSM 2.0) through a process of listening to and discussion with the territory.

The first phase of the instrument's formation process was the most active one from the point of view of confrontation with the metropolitan city's municipalities. From mid-January to mid-February 2016, a cycle of public events entitled '*La voce delle Unioni. Sei incontri per raccogliere idee, progetti e proposte per il Piano Strategico metropolitano di Bologna*'. The contributions and reflections that emerged were fundamental in defining the PSM 2.0 Guidelines.

Subsequently, at the beginning of 2017, the dialogue with the territory continued through a reconnaissance of the actions that the metropolitan city, the Unions of Municipalities and the Municipality of Bologna are carrying out in line with the guidelines. Specific meetings were then organised with the Councils of the seven Unions and the Municipality of Bologna, which led to the drafting of the report Metropolitan City, Unions and Municipality of Bologna.

From this complex path emerged the themes and objectives that give substance to the PSM 2.0 Preliminary Document, the starting point for developing that comparison with public and private bodies that is essential to the definition of the final text. A seminar was held on 1 December 2017 to present the contents of the PSM 2.0 Preliminary Document to the metropolitan mayors and councillors of the Bologna City Council.

Between 2017 and 2018, the consultation phase on the aforementioned document was launched through an extensive listening activity involving the Emilia-Romagna Region, the local authorities of the metropolitan area, the University of Bologna through the Advisor Board, the socio-economic representatives through the Development Board and the Table with the Shareholding Companies.

Considering, all the comments and contributions received on the PSM 2.0 Preliminary Document, the Plan Report was drafted and submitted for approval in June 2018. The PSM 2.0 was adopted by the Metropolitan Council which, after the favourable opinion of the Metropolitan Conference of Mayors, finally approved it on 11 July 2018.

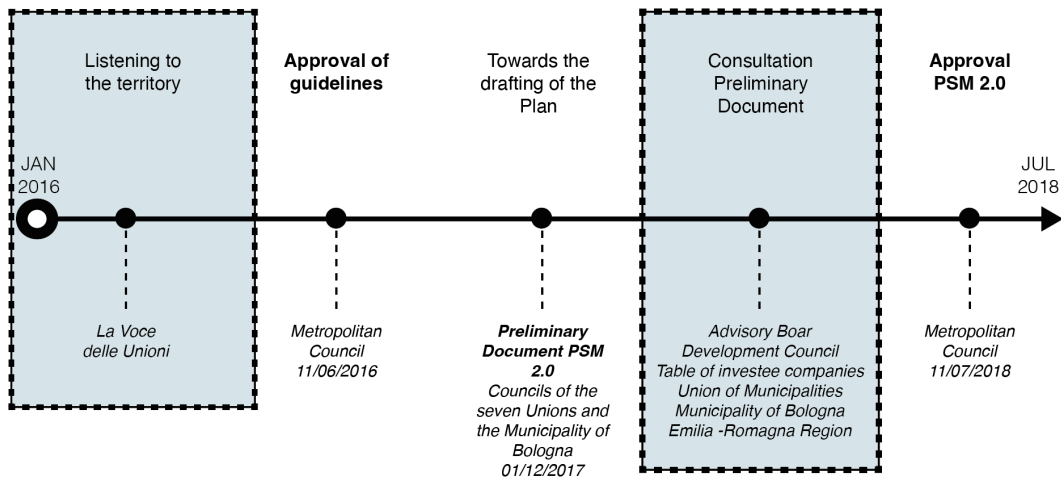


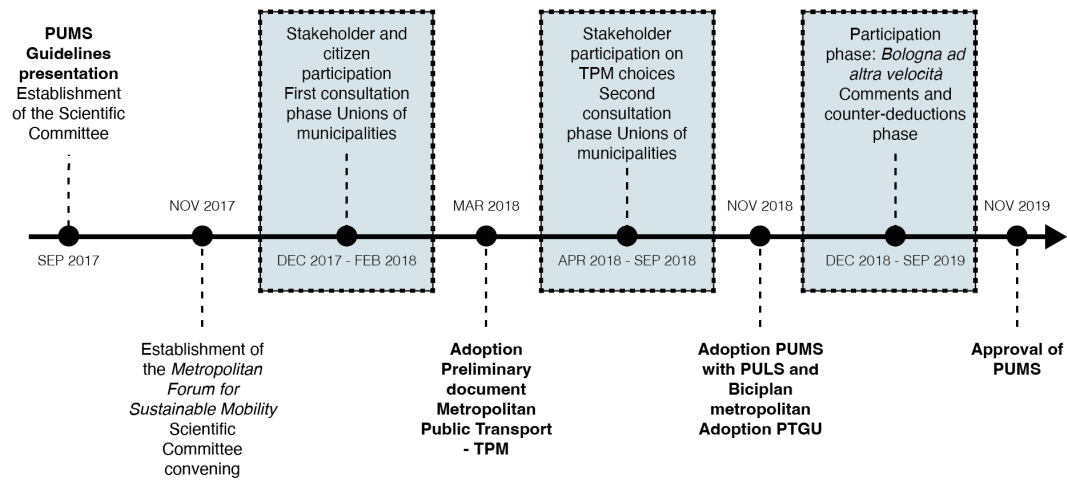
Figure 126 - Involvement of the territory in the PSM approval process in the MCBo. Source: Author's elaboration on MCBo, 2021b.

#### 9.4.4 The Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan - PUMS

The third instrument under comparison is the PUMS, the only one of the three instruments to be approved by all three case studies.

The first one we focus on is MCBo's PUMS. In particular, the participatory process for the definition of the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (PUMS) in the Metropolitan City of Bologna was characterised by several phases (Figure 127).

**MCBo - THE PUMS APPROVAL PROCESS - INVOLVEMENT OF THE TERRITORY**



**Figure 127 - Involvement of the territory in the PUMS approval process in the MCBo. Source: Author's elaboration on MCBo, 2019.**

First, a framework was set, outlined by the local PUMS Guidelines and the macro-objectives set by the Ministerial Guidelines. The first phase of the process involved a series of meetings with stakeholders, gathered at the Table for the definition of the objectives of the PUMS, as well as an online survey addressed to the citizens themselves. These meetings made it possible to define the priority objectives of the PUMS. Subsequently, a second round of stakeholder meetings focused on defining the priorities that emerged from the previous phase. During this phase, the stakeholders who actively participated in defining the objectives of the PUMS were identified. Institutional participation and direct meetings with citizens were key elements throughout the process.

The next phase saw the construction of the Plan Scenario, which was developed through ongoing consultations with stakeholders. One of the preliminary documents elaborated concerned the Metropolitan Public Transport (TPM) network, addressing thematic areas such as Fare Integration, the Metropolitan Railway Service (SFM), suburban-suburban buses and the new Bologna Tramway Network. Further institutional and citizens' meetings deepened the Unions' demands and organised neighbourhood workshops to actively involve the local community.

The Bologna Metropolitan Sustainable Mobility Plan (PUMS), following its adoption on 27 November 2018. Once the PUMS was adopted, strategies and

actions for building a Shared Space were defined, including the metropolitan Biciplan, while initiatives such as *'Bologna Ad Altra Velocità'* were organised.

Finally, ex-post involvement was looked at, with the aim of keeping community participation active even after the Plan's adoption. The metropolitan city's will in this intense and rich period of work and confrontation was therefore to amplify and stimulate participation, placing the Plan in the hands of the community in the broadest sense of the term.

The objective has been to arrive at the approval of the PUMS with a planning tool that truly responds to the mobility needs of the territory and its inhabitants in a sustainable perspective, in which concrete choices of change can be identified that everyone can access and recognise at the various institutional and non-institutional levels. It should be emphasised that the role of the Unions in this case, more than in the other instruments, has been fundamental in facilitating the comparison between the metropolitan authority and the small and medium-sized municipalities of the MCB0.

In Bari, the PUMS was approved in February 2022. It suggests a polycentric planning scenario that is distinguished by integration and balance and takes the requirements of the 41 municipalities into account while integrating the systemic goal with certain unique characteristics. As regards the participation process, each municipality was actively involved during all phases of the plan's construction, through continuous dialogue between the metropolitan authority and the 41 mayors (Figure 128). First, a questionnaire was sent to representatives of all the municipalities of the Metropolitan City. The questionnaire aimed to gather information on plans and projects but also the visions and perspectives of the various municipalities, with reference to mobility within each specific context and the metropolitan scenario. Municipalities were asked to evaluate which of the objectives defined by the Ministerial Guidelines had greater weight for mobility within their municipality and which objectives they considered to be priorities for metropolitan mobility, choosing from Accessibility, Walkability, Public Transport and Logistics. Municipalities were then involved in a process of recognising internal mobility goals, reconciling municipal and metropolitan goals, and defining a SWOT to ensure the concreteness of the overall vision. Thirty-five out of 41 municipalities completed the questionnaire. The responses were used to outline the state of play of the Metropolitan City's planning, as well as existing or planned infrastructure endowments and any practices or incentives related to sustainable mobility.

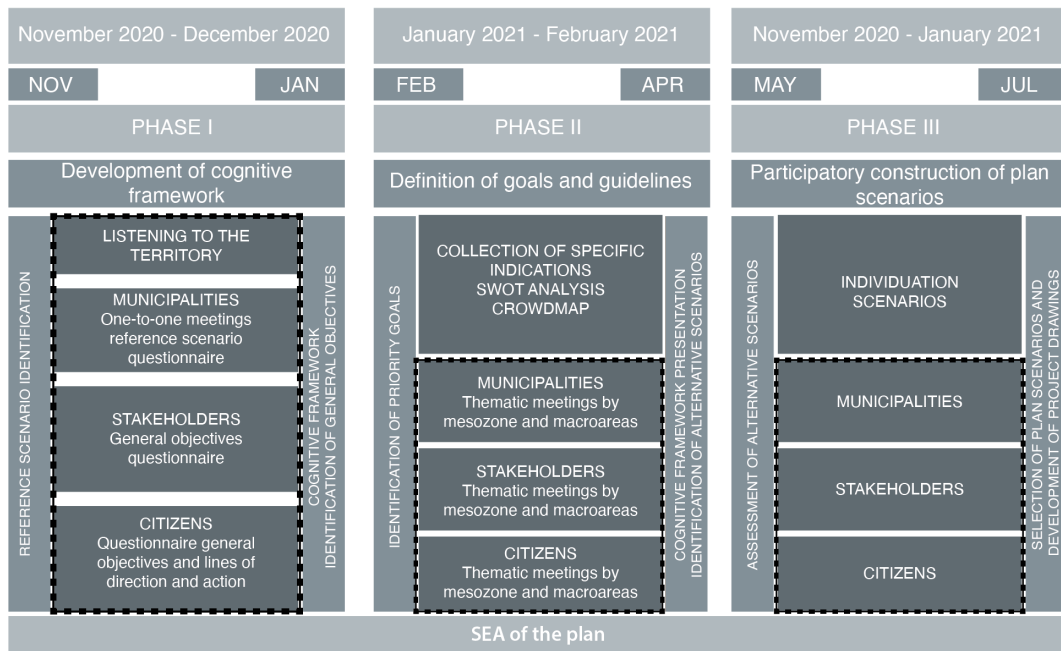


Figure 128 - Involvement of the territory in the PUMS approval process in the MCBo. Source: Author's elaboration on MCBa, 2021.

Regarding the Metropolitan City of Turin and its Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan, the drafting process has been underway since 2019, directly involving the spokespersons of the Homogeneous Zones and the municipalities in meetings dedicated to each zone, with an initial collection of data for the drafting of the shared cognitive framework. The participatory process was formalised in the first Metropolitan Forum of the PUMS, held in December 2019. This shared with the main actors in the territory the process of drafting and approving the plan and the macro-objectives defined by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport, to articulate them into specific objectives in the Working Tables held after the general plenary presentations (Figure 11). The working groups – organised by the Homogeneous Zones – also shared their main challenges, in terms of accessibility, network congestion, saturation of local public transport, accident rates, etc., to reach a shared SWOT analysis. In addition, the preparatory work of the Forum included further survey activities, aimed at mapping priority issues to structure the work. In-depth interviews were therefore conducted with key stakeholders from each of the 11 Homogeneous Zones (Figure 129).

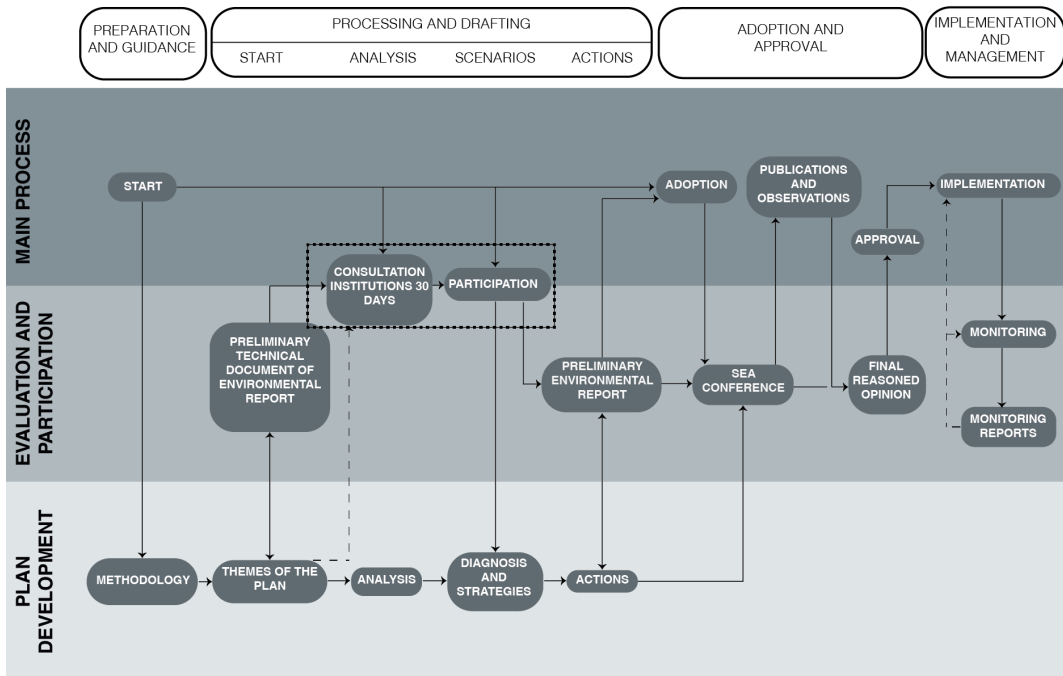


Figure 129 - Involvement of the territory in the PUMS approval process in the MCTo. Source: Author's elaboration on MCTo, 2022b.

## 9.5 Supra-local programming in Comparison

This section highlights how the three metropolitan cities under study manage supra-local programming. After a brief introduction that contextualizes supra-local programming within the regional contexts of the three case studies, has first provided a quantitative comparison of the funds derived from the European Union's cohesion policy. Following this, has presented a brief quantitative comparison of the resources allocated to the three case studies by the PNRR. Then, is examined the different approaches in management and decision-making in two relevant experiences, focusing on the role metropolitan cities play in managing funds from supra-local programming. Specifically, is analysed how the three metropolitan cities handled the PINQuA and PUI.

### 9.5.1 Comparing the cohesion policy at the Regional Level

Starting with the Apulia region, from 2007 to the present, the total value of projects supported by cohesion policies has exceeded 51 billion, with more than 31 billion allocated during the 2014-2020 programming period. In Apulia, about

150.000 projects have been initiated and monitored, focusing primarily on business competitiveness, transport and mobility, and employment. This substantial commitment reflects a regional strategy aimed at strengthening economic infrastructure and improving citizens' living conditions.

In Emilia-Romagna, from 2007 to the present, the value of supported projects has exceeded 11 billion, with more than 8 billion allocated during the 2014-2020 period. Over 50.000 projects have been initiated and monitored, with priority areas including business competitiveness, employment, research and innovation, and transport and mobility. The smaller scale compared to Apulia indicates a different scope of intervention and a diversification of strategic priorities, with a significant emphasis on research and innovation.

In Piedmont, since 2007, projects supported by cohesion policies have exceeded 14 billion, with more than 9 billion financed during the 2014-2020 programming period. Approximately 60.000 projects have been funded, focusing on business competitiveness, transport and mobility, employment, and research and innovation. Compared to Apulia and Emilia-Romagna, Piedmont has balanced investments between infrastructure and innovation, though with significantly fewer projects than Apulia.



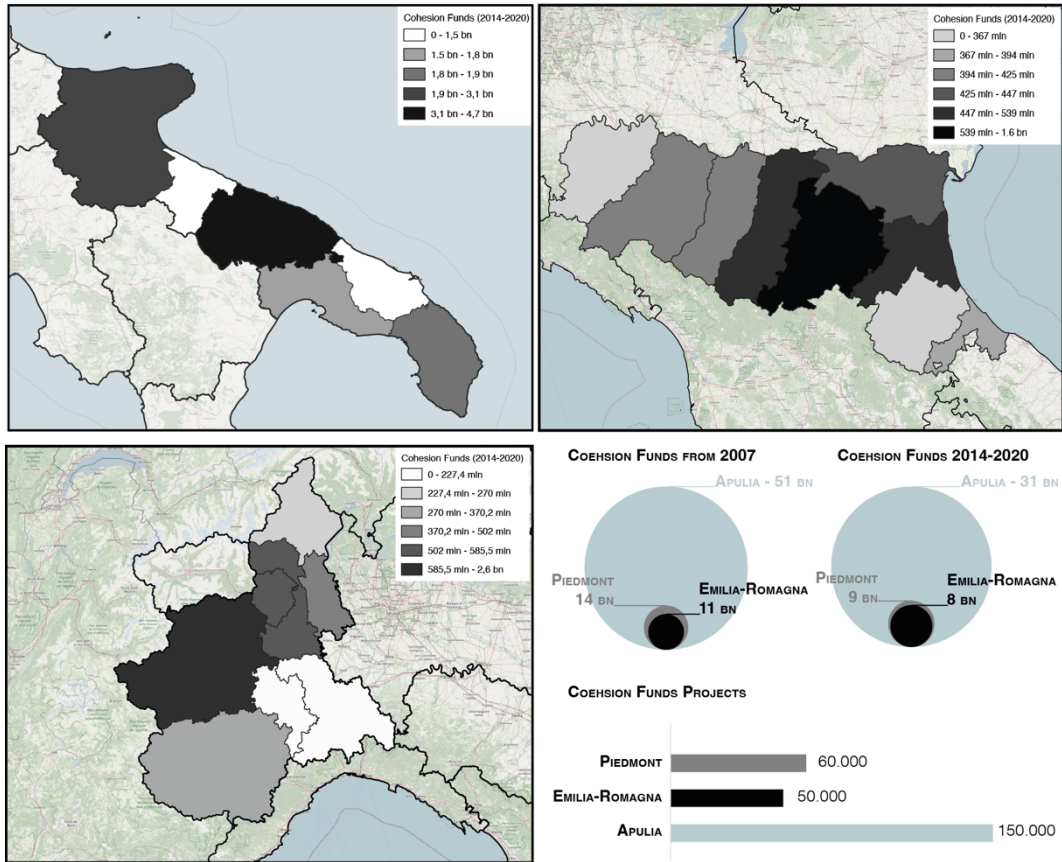


Figure 130 - Case Studies - Comparing Cohesion Funds at regional level. Source: Author's elaboration on Open Coesione, 2024.

Comparing the data (Figure 130), it emerges that Apulia received over five times the funding that Piedmont and Emilia-Romagna received in the different programming cycles. This allowed Apulia to invest in a significantly larger number of projects, suggesting a more widespread and perhaps fragmented approach. In contrast, Emilia-Romagna and Piedmont have focused on a smaller number of interventions with a greater emphasis on research and innovation. This comparison highlights the different regional strategies in pursuing economic development and social cohesion: Apulia focuses on a wide range of infrastructure projects, Emilia-Romagna on a mix of competitiveness and innovation, and Piedmont on a balance between infrastructure and innovation.

In terms of fund allocation quality, for all three regions, a large share of the funds received comes from the Structural Funds, which comprise approximately 70% of the total. This is followed by Development and Cohesion Funds, which

account for between 25% and 30%. The distribution trend of these funds appears rather consistent, with metropolitan areas attracting more funds than the provinces. This phenomenon is attributable not solely to the presence of the metropolitan city itself, but rather to the significant influence and capacity of the regional capitals to attract funds and investments.

For example, in the Apulia region, Bari has demonstrated an exceptional ability to channel resources into strategic projects aimed at strengthening the regional economic infrastructure. The city has benefited substantially from structural funds to improve the transport and mobility sector and to boost the competitiveness of local businesses. In Emilia-Romagna, Bologna has played a central role in fund management and allocation. The city has effectively utilised opportunities offered by structural and development and cohesion funds to promote innovation and research, sectors in which the region has historically invested. This has created a favourable ecosystem for technology and research companies, further enhancing the region's attractiveness. Similarly, in Piedmont, Turin has capitalised on available funds to support projects that enhance business competitiveness and transport and mobility infrastructure. The focus on research and innovation has positioned Turin as a hub for technology development, attracting additional investment both nationally and internationally.

The ability of regional capitals to attract funds is not merely a function of their size or administrative status but is closely linked to their capacity to plan and implement strategic initiatives that meet the funding criteria of the European Union and other cohesion sources. This underscores the importance of effective urban planning and local governance in maximising the benefits of available funding opportunities.

### **9.5.2 Comparing the cohesion policy at the Metropolitan level**

After this introduction on the regional context, the following section compares the funds from supra-local (EU cohesion policy programming for 2014-2020 and PNRR), first in quantitative terms and then in qualitative terms.

In the metropolitan city of Bari, about 5.2 billion was disbursed, of which 4.7 billion came from cohesion policy. Approximately 70% of these funds come from the Structural Funds, 28% from the Development and Cohesion Fund, and 2.13% from the CAP and Ordinary Resources, primarily intended for internal areas. The distribution of funds shows a strong polarization towards the capital, followed by

some municipalities in the first belt such as Modugno, Bitetto, and Triggiano. Notably, even more distant and less central municipalities, such as Ruvo, Altamura, Gioia del Colle, Monopoli, Polignano a Mare, Mola di Bari, and Molfetta, manage to secure significant resources. This suggests a polycentric territorial structure that allows various centers to develop in a relatively balanced manner. However, the difficulty of internal areas in receiving ESF, ERDF, and FSC funds indicates a need to improve the administrative and planning capacities of these municipalities to access these resources.

In the metropolitan area of Bologna, approximately 1.8 billion has been allocated, 1.5 billion of which is related to cohesion policy. Sixty percent of these funds come from Structural Funds, 40% from the Development and Cohesion Fund, and 0.6% from CAP and Ordinary Resources. The polarization of funds towards the capital and the municipalities of the first belt is very evident. Municipalities such as Imola, Sant'Agata Bolognese, San Giovanni in Persiceto, and Zola Pedrosa, while receiving funds, do so significantly less than Bologna. The Bolognese Apennines show marked difficulty in attracting funds, possibly due to limited planning and administrative capacities or inadequate infrastructure. The lack of consideration of RDP funds in the Open Coesione data could conceal further disparities in the distribution of resources, suggesting the need for a more inclusive and integrated approach for less favored areas.

The metropolitan city of Turin received around 2.6 billion, of which 1.8 billion came from cohesion policy. About 56% of the funds come from the Structural Funds, 43% from the Development and Cohesion Fund, and 0.75% from CAP and Ordinary Resources. The distribution of funds in the metropolitan city of Turin, although polarised towards the capital, shows a greater capacity to attract resources for the municipalities of the first belt and mountain territories. This result could be attributed to participation in cross-border cooperation projects, which allowed these municipalities to obtain additional funding. However, the lower share of funds allocated to hill territories could indicate a need for specific interventions to improve the attractiveness of these areas. The non-inclusion of EAFRD and RDP funds in the Open Coesione data represents a significant limitation that could alter the perception of the overall distribution of funds.

CASE STUDIES - COHESION POLICY AT METROPOLITAN LEVEL

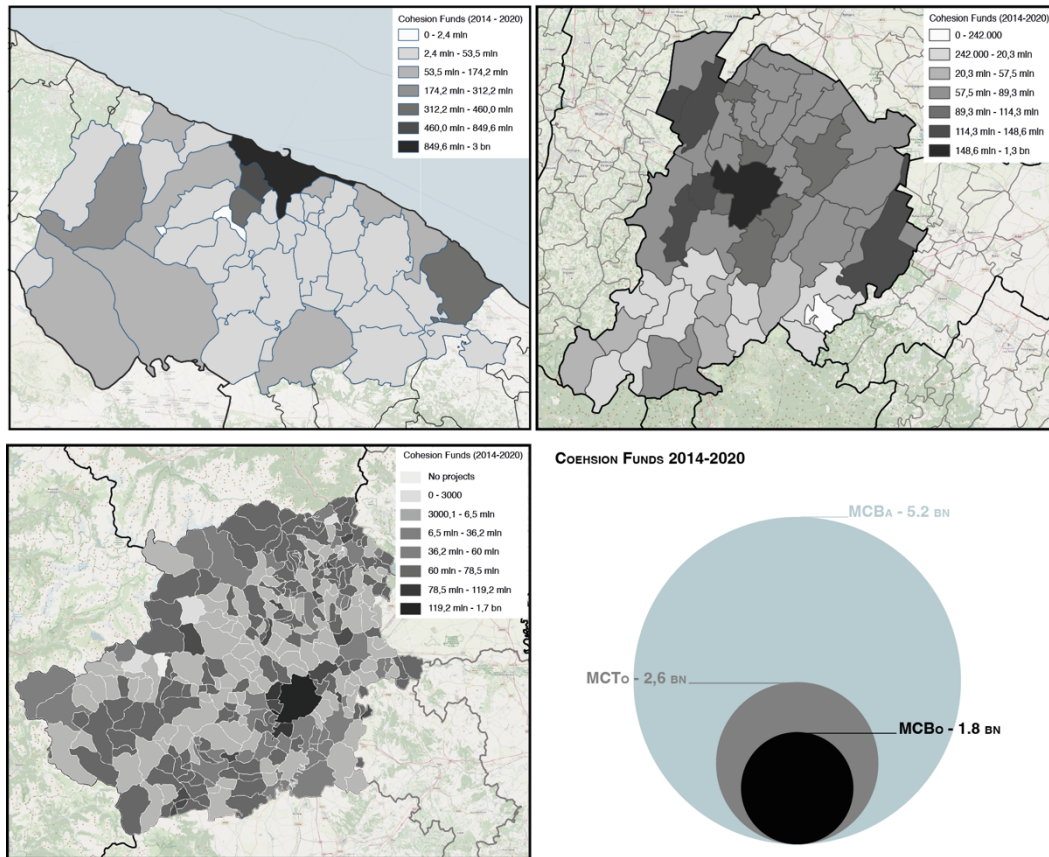


Figure 131 - Case Studies - Comparing Cohesion Funds at Metropolitan level. Source: Author's elaboration on Open Coesione, 2024.

The differences in the distribution of funds among the three metropolitan cities raise important issues of regional policy and territorial cohesion (Figure 131). The polarization towards the capitals suggests that central urban areas are better equipped to intercept and utilize the funds, likely due to greater administrative capacity and better infrastructure. However, this trend risks exacerbating territorial inequalities, leaving peripheral and inner areas at a disadvantage. To mitigate these disparities, it is crucial to develop policies that strengthen the planning and administrative capacities of peripheral and inner municipalities, promote collaboration between municipalities, and foster networking and partnerships. Additionally, improving local infrastructure could facilitate access to funds and project implementation. Finally, there is a clear need for an integrated and inclusive approach that considers all funding sources, including RDP and EAFRD funds. Only through a comprehensive and inclusive vision will it be possible to develop

effective strategies to promote balanced and sustainable development within metropolitan areas and beyond.

From a more qualitative point of view, the three metropolitan cities in tapping cohesion policy funding have tended to have similar experiences with some experiences where one metropolitan city rather than the others has had more satisfactory results.

For two of the three metropolitan cities, in the context of the Development and Cohesion Fund, one of the most positive experiences that has left a solid and useful expertise for successful supra-local programming is the experience of the pact for the development of their metropolitan city, *Patto per Bari* and *Patto per Bologna Metropolitana*. These experiences have demonstrated the capacity of the respective bodies to develop important planning on a municipal and metropolitan scale. This result is based on a polycentric governance model supported by participation and shared planning with the territories.

Another noteworthy experience is that of the NOP METRO, despite the constraints and limited role that metropolitan authorities have had within the program. Although its name suggests otherwise, this NOP has been designed more for the major chief towns and less for the other municipalities within their surrounding metropolitan areas. The budget allocated for each city was too limited to support metropolitan measures. Additionally, the types of investments and actions were nationally conceived for large cities, rather than for medium or small municipalities within metropolitan areas.

Equally significant was the 'dissemination' process towards other institutions in the area. The co-design of the actions to be implemented in the NOP METRO on a municipal scale led to a strategic planning process on a metropolitan scale. This process involved all the municipalities within the metropolitan area and resulted in a multi-level governance model that includes the participation of all stakeholders in the three metropolitan cities.

The NOP Metro has allowed the implementation of multi-dimensional and cross-sectoral interventions, thanks to the possibility offered by the Programme to bring together the resources of several priority axes of one or more Operational Programmes, making it possible to combine financing related to different thematic objectives, supported in this specific case by the ERDF, the ESF and, subsequently, the REACT-EU.

For the metropolitan city of Bari, the decision to envisage an integrated management and implementation scheme should be highlighted as qualifying. Attributing to the Authority the role of Urban Authority, with the functions of Intermediate Body of the Programme, had decisive capacity building effects.

For the Metropolitan City of Turin, notable successes include the *Mettersi in Proprio* (MiP) program and participation in the European Territorial Cooperation program. The MCTo has been recognised as a leading example in Italy, having engaged in 26 ETC projects during the 2014-2020 period, ranking 14th among over 1400 Italian beneficiaries, and notably the highest among metropolitan cities, followed by Bologna with 13 projects and Milan and Rome with 3 each. The Metropolitan City of Turin exemplifies best practices for several reasons: its active and committed participation in territorial cooperation programs; its wide vision towards cooperation projects, with expertise and knowledge consolidated over time. Cross-border cooperation, particularly within the ALCOTRA program, is especially significant for Turin.

Overall, the three case studies reveal that there is very limited scope for action in the programming, management, and implementation of the EU cohesion policy (2014-2020). In this sense, in the next paragraph has pointed out how some improvements in the role of metropolitan cities occurred with the PNRR.

### **9.5.3 The role of the Case Studies within the PNRR through the PINQuA and PUI experiences**

The focus of this section is to describe how the three metropolitan cities have moved in the case of managing resources of an extraordinary nature such as those of the PNRR. Within the PNRR there are several initiatives in which Italian metropolitan cities are involved as implementers or recipients of interventions, either alone or in association with other institutional levels. We have chosen to focus on comparing the experiences of PINQuA and PUI.

The PNRR, as already extensively described, defines spending priorities and programs investments in the Italian context, with the aim of promoting post-pandemic recovery and making the country's territorial development more equitable, ecologically sustainable and dynamic. The document is based on three main strategic axes, in line with shared European priorities: i) digitalization and innovation; ii) ecological transition; and iii) social inclusion.

***PINQuA - Programma Nazionale Innovativo per la Qualità dell'abitare***<sup>50</sup>

This section first focuses on the PINQuA initiatives in the three metropolitan cities under comparison. The National Innovative Programme for Housing Quality is an investment program promoted by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Sustainable Mobility (MIMS) to implement social housing and urban regeneration projects across Italy. The Table 41 below summarizes the main data of PINQuA projects for the three metropolitan cities:

**Table 41 - PINQuA project's overview of the case studies**

|             | <b>Project and Themes</b>   | <b>Municipalities involved</b>   | <b>Number of interventions</b>                 |
|-------------|---|--|--|
| <b>MCBa</b> | <i>NUOVA ECOLOGIA DELL'ABITARE - Welfare and Suburbs</i>                  | <i>Binetto, Bitonto, Casamassima, Gravina in Puglia, Mola di Bari, Molfetta, Noci, Noicattaro, Poggiorsini, Putignano, Sammichele di Bari, e Terlizzi</i>                                    | 15 (14 interventions, 1 at metropolitan scale) |
|             | <i>GENERAZIONI URBANE - Environmental Recovery of Urban Margins</i>       | <i>Adelfia, Alberobello, Bitritto, Corato, Gioia del Colle, Giovinazzo, Locorotondo, Modugno, Polignano a Mare, Rutigliano, Ruvo di Puglia, Santeramo in Colle, Toritto</i>                  | 13 (12 interventions, 1 at metropolitan scale) |
|             | <i>ABITARE I BORGHI - Redevelopment of Old Villages</i>                   | <i>Acquaviva delle Fonti, Bitetto, Capurso, Cassano delle Murge, Castellana Grotte, Cellamare, Conversano, Grumo Appula, Monopoli, Palo del Colle, Sannicandro di Bari, Triggiano e Turi</i> | 14 (13 interventions, 1 at metropolitan scale) |
| <b>MCBo</b> | <i>BORGONUOVO. ABITARE CONDIVISO - zero soil consumption regeneration</i> | <i>Unione Reno Lavino Samoggia</i>   | 1  |
|             | <i>L'unione fa città - social housing and innovative residency</i>        | <i>Unione Reno Galliera</i>  | 8  |
|             | <i>FRAGILE A CHI? - improving housing conditions</i>                      | <i>Unione dei Comuni dell'Appennino Bolognese</i>  | 18   |
| <b>MCTo</b> | <i>RESIDENZA RESILIENZA - reducing housing and settlement</i>             | <i>Moncalieri, Nichelino, Beinasco, Trofarello, La Loggia, Chieri, Piobesi</i>   | 36   |

<sup>50</sup> <https://www.mit.gov.it/nfsmigtgov/files/media/notizia/2022-06/Report%20PINQuA.pdf>

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|   |  |    |
|---|--|----|
| <i>discomfort in<br/>suburban contexts</i>  |  |    |
| <i>RICAMI URBANI -<br/>RICUCIRE<br/>L'ABITARE<br/>METROPOLITANO</i>                 | <i>Collegno (lead), Grugliasco,<br/>Borgaro Torinese con il<br/>partenariato di Atc del<br/>Piemonte Centrale e Società<br/>Cooperativa Edilizia a<br/>proprietà indivisa Giuseppe di<br/>Vittorio</i> | 15 |
| <i>- renews the spaces<br/>and places of living<br/>by weaving social<br/>plots</i> |  |    |

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**Source: Author's elaboration on MIMS, 2022.**

Although the program envisioned the involvement of territorial authorities in a multi-level governance framework, requiring them to plan and submit proposals that respond to community and territorial needs, it was interpreted and implemented by the three metropolitan cities in varied ways.

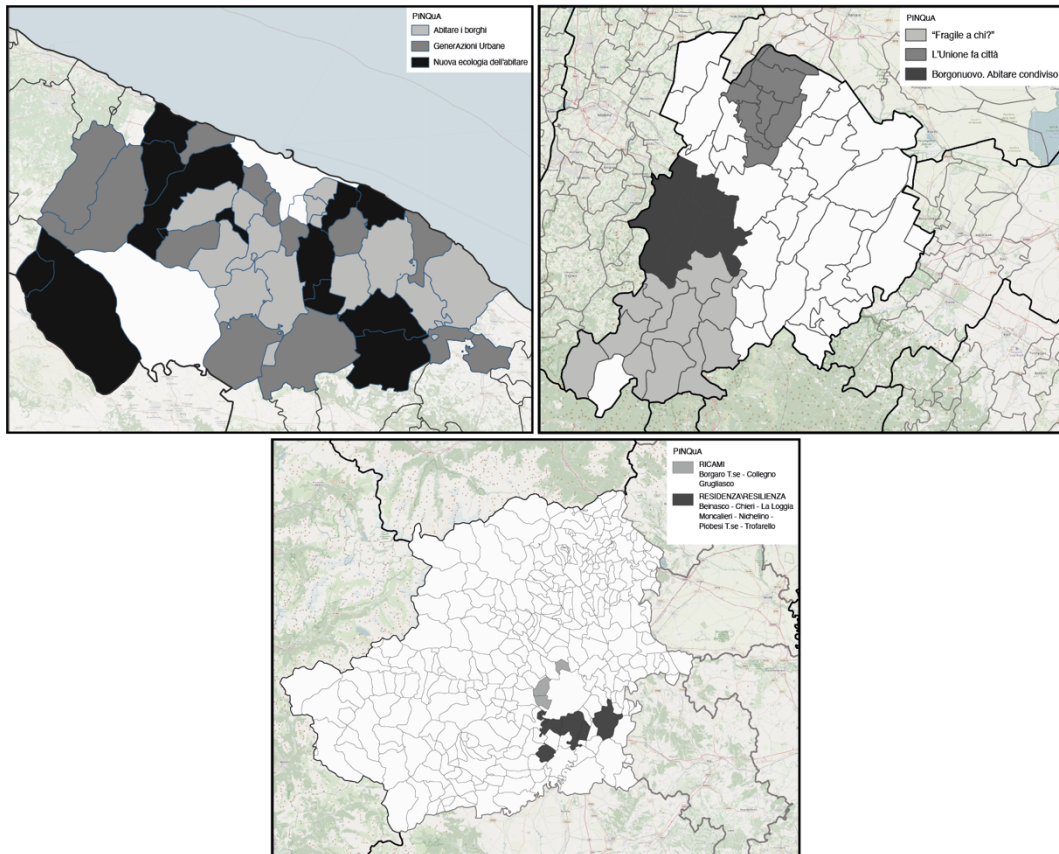
The metropolitan city of Bari presented three different projects that collectively involved almost all the municipalities in the metropolitan area. Each project included interventions on a metropolitan scale, opting for an integrated and networked approach rather than isolated interventions. This strategy allowed for a 'wide area' perspective, promoting broader territorial cohesion. The metropolitan city of Bologna, as highlighted in previous sections, submitted its three proposals in close collaboration with the unions of municipalities. Each project was presented by a single union and targeted the territory of that union, facilitating quicker and more effective communication and implementation. Bologna's intervention strategy is evident not in the individual projects but in their systemic integration, demonstrating a coordinated and synergistic approach. In the metropolitan city of Turin, the two PINQuA projects confirmed the trend of concentrating funds around the capital and its surrounding areas (first and second belts). The location of the interventions indicates that rural and mountain areas were neglected, reflecting a lack of territorial inclusiveness. Despite this, the metropolitan city actively participated in the program, developing the two projects through continuous dialogue with the involved municipalities. However, the homogeneous zones that could have been included during the preparation phase were not, underscoring the quasi-formal nature of these entities and their limited political and institutional influence.

Therefore, while Bari and Bologna adopted inclusive and systemic strategies, Turin demonstrated a more limited and less equitable approach in the distribution of resources, revealing issues in governance and territorial equity. This disparity is also a consequence of Turin's larger territorial extent and higher number of



municipalities within its metropolitan area. This comparison underscores the need to rethink the methods of involvement and fund distribution to ensure a more equitable and effective response to territorial needs (Figure 132).

**CASE STUDIES - PINQUA INTERVENTIONS DISTRIBUTION**



**Figure 132 – Case Studies – PINQUA Interventions Distribution in the metropolitan area. Source: Author’s elaboration on MIMS, 2022.**

***PUI - Piani Urbani Integrati***

In the PUIs, the Metropolitan Cities are tasked with independently identifying the interventions that can be financed. They also have the option of establishing one or more PUIs, focused on different geographies and/or themes. This flexibility allows the adaptation of territorial development instruments to the specific political and territorial characteristics of each Metropolitan City. However, this has resulted in very different approaches, whose effectiveness on the development and territorial cohesion of the Metropolitan Cities has yet to be verified.

Examining the details of the three contexts under study and comparison, the metropolitan city of Bari, benefiting from its polycentric metropolitan system that is less reliant on the capital city, has adopted a thematic approach to PUI programming. This approach differentiates the PUIs by objectives and contents, without creating a clear separation between the center and the periphery. Specifically, the '*Identità è comunità*' PUI includes 28 interventions with a total investment of €113 million (including approximately €890,00 in co-financing). The implementing entities are 26 municipalities, with the Metropolitan City of Bari (MCBa) also acting as an implementing entity for one intervention. This initiative aims to protect and enhance the historical and cultural sites that define metropolitan municipalities and their surroundings by improving public spaces and upgrading areas that are decayed or abandoned. The goal is to transform these places into community hubs where people can meet, recognize each other, and strengthen their social ties. The '*Verde Metropolitano*' PUI comprises 21 interventions with a total investment of €70 million (including approximately €616,000 in co-financing). There are 21 implementing entities, including the city of Bari. The primary goal of this PUI is to develop an environmental improvement program in urban and peri-urban areas facing physical and social challenges, aiming to create opportunities for urban area redevelopment and landscape enhancement. For both PUIs, management, control, and monitoring activities have been entrusted to the Metropolitan City.

The metropolitan city of Bologna has proposed a unified PUI with the aim of reducing territorial inequalities, also encompassing the vulnerable areas of the Bologna metropolitan territory. This PUI in terms of funding, it includes €173,068,200, primarily from PNRR funds, along with co-financing of approximately €15 million from the municipality of Bologna, the CON.AMI consortium of Imola, and a small portion from the Emilia-Romagna region. The PUI consists of 19 interventions and is divided into 4 projects aimed at strategically enhancing the metropolitan knowledge and research network. The 4 selected projects are situated in the Municipality of Bologna, the Municipality of Imola, and in four municipalities belonging to the Union of the Bolognese Apennines, involving a total of 6 municipalities and one union. There is a high level of integration among the different initiatives, enabling the drafting of a single PUI. This has been facilitated by several factors, including: i) well-defined and integrated strategic planning tools (PTM, PSM, PUMS); ii) a strong tradition of inter-municipal cooperation in the territories. The MCBo established the conditions for municipalities and unions to submit project proposals aligned with metropolitan strategic objectives. In this regard, the MCBo voluntarily opted not to propose its

own project but instead chose to provide support to municipalities during the implementation phase. Consequently, its role in implementation appears to be limited.

The Metropolitan city of Turin introduced two distinct PUIs, totalling 446 million spread across 83 projects. This outcome stems from a strategic political decision to evenly distribute the available funds between a PUI exclusively designated for Turin and another for municipalities beyond the capital. The first PUI, designed for Turin - *PIÙ - Piano Integrato Urbano della Città di Torino* (Integrated Urban Plan of the City of Turin) - allocates €113 million, divided into 36 initiatives with Turin as the sole implementing entity. This plan tackles urban renewal, emphasising city libraries as integral components of urban social infrastructure. Its actions span improvements to both neighbourhood library facilities and their surrounding areas. The second PUI, aimed at the broader metropolitan region - *Torino Metropoli aumentata: abitare il territorio* - earmarks a total of €150 million (with €120 financed by the PNRR and €30 in local co-financing), involving 43 municipalities and 2 mountain unions as implementing bodies. Integrated into the framework of the 2021-2023 Metropolitan Strategic Plan of the same name, this plan prioritizes enhancing social infrastructure in marginalised areas. Its primary goal is to address disparities in opportunity affecting various social demographics, including the elderly, individuals with disabilities, youth, families, and economically disadvantaged individuals. Regarding management, oversight, and monitoring, the two PUIs adopt differing approaches. The PUI for Turin entrusts these responsibilities entirely to the Community and National Planning Projects Department - *Area Trasformazioni Periferie, Beni Comuni* of the City of Turin. Conversely, the PUI for the metropolitan territory plans to establish a comprehensive program agreement between the Metropolitan City and all affected municipalities.

Comparing the PUIs of the Metropolitan Cities reveals markedly different approaches to funding management and intervention implementation (Figure 133). Specifically, MCTo has opted to structure its PUIs territorially (and institutionally), while MCBa has chosen a thematic approach, and MCBo has presented a single PUI that distributes interventions across the entire metropolitan area.

CASE STUDIES - PUI PROJECTS DISTRIBUTION AND DATA

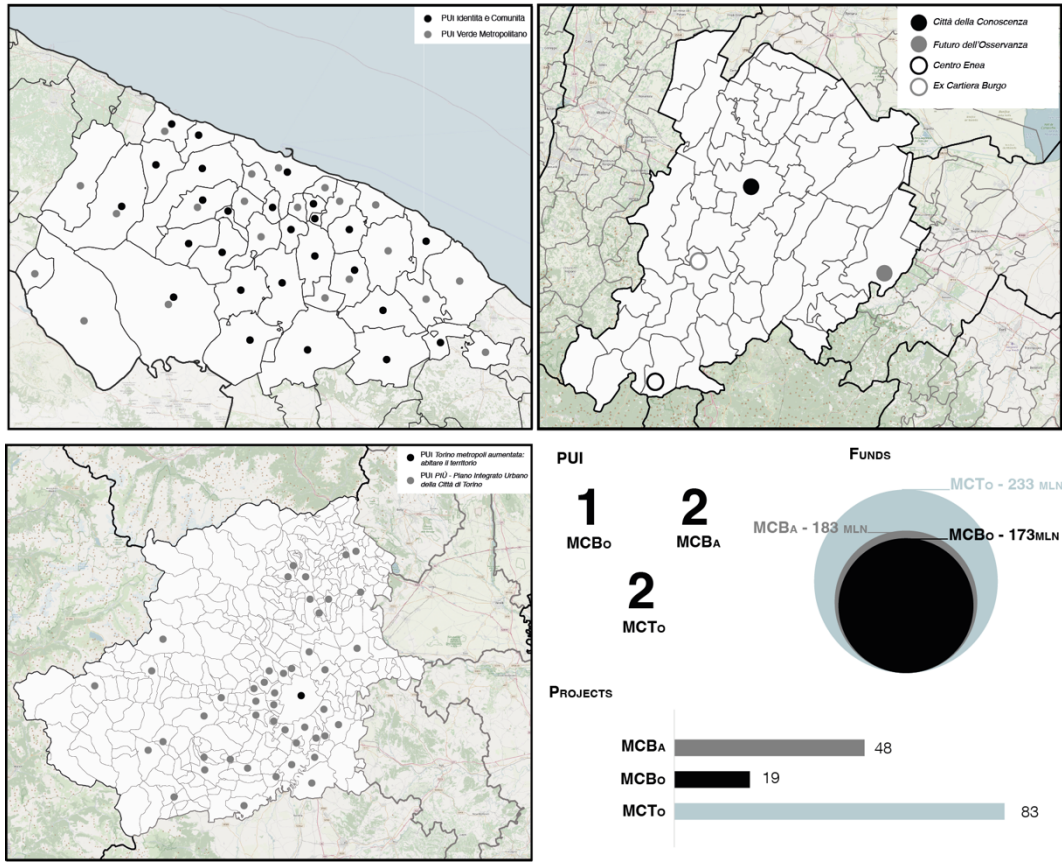


Figure 133 - Case Studies - PUI projects distribution in the metropolitan areas and data. Source: Author's elaborations.

MCBa's PUIs both operate within the metropolitan territory of Bari, with a 20 million intervention where MCBa acts as the implementing party. Given the polycentric nature of MCBa, the interventions within the PUIs stem from a metropolitan strategic planning process, interconnecting projects across the twelve axes of the PSM. Notably, the participation process involved 41 mayors of MCBa, the metropolitan mayor, and technical-administrative managers. Through a working table, individual territory requests were collected in a bottom-up process involving citizens, municipalities, and sector technicians. This culminated in a territorial pact between MCBa and participating municipalities. For management, control, and monitoring, MCBa serves as the primary institutional reference, with a dedicated working group overseeing the process, supporting risk management, and assisting in project implementation.

In contrast, MCBo opted for a single project, mainly directing its role upstream in the PUI elaboration process. MCBo played a guiding role, particularly in project selection for funding, leveraging the strong tradition of inter-municipal cooperation within the metropolitan territory. While MCBo refrained from direct project implementation, it provided technical support, drawing from positive past experiences with initiatives like *Bando Periferie* and PINQuA. The relationship between MCBo and municipalities, as well as unions of municipalities, is well-established. However, with the PUI initiative, integration between MCBo and the Municipality of Bologna is notably strengthening over time. Finally, the choices of the MCTo, which decided to divide the total funds equally between the capital municipality and the rest of the metropolitan territory. This choice lends itself to a twofold reading: on the one hand, the metropolitan authority seems to devote attention to its peripheral territories, allocating to them a slightly higher amount than that provided for the capital municipality; on the other hand, the choice of dropping an entire PUI, an instrument intended for the Metropolitan Cities, on the city of Turin alone once again highlights the dominance of the capital (Piedmont) municipality and the Metropolitan City's policy choices. Similarly, it is interesting to highlight that out of 83 projects distributed in two different PUIs, MCTo is never involved as an implementing party, and does not participate in the management to control and monitoring of the PUI that deals with the capital municipality.

When comparing the approaches of the three Metropolitan Cities in PUI management, it becomes evident how the same institutional body, the Metropolitan City, operates in vastly different ways depending on the territorial context. Several factors contribute to these divergent outcomes. The Delrio reform, by positioning Metropolitan Cities as second-tier elective bodies, has inadvertently undermined their legitimacy, particularly in political terms. When the capital municipality holds significant political sway over the rest of the territory, as seen in Turin, technical-administrative and political strategies naturally tend to favour the capital. This bias is reflected not only in how funds are allocated between different territories (the municipality of Turin versus the metropolitan area) but also in decisions regarding the management, implementation, and monitoring phases, all typically centralised in the capital.

In contrast, consider the case of MCBa. In a polycentric metropolitan system where the primary municipality is balanced with several interconnected municipalities, this dynamic has resulted in the emergence of two overarching PUIs covering the metropolitan territory. These plans exhibit a broader vision and strategy, reflective of the decentralised nature of governance in the area.

Sitting between these extremes is MCBo, which appears to have struck a more balanced approach. Despite having a dominant capital municipality, MCBo has managed to foster cooperation and implement metropolitan strategies effectively. This success is attributed to fruitful collaborations between the metropolitan authority and unions of municipalities, as well as between the metropolitan authority and the municipality of Bologna. Additionally, MCBo benefits from well-defined and regularly updated metropolitan planning tools, both territorial and strategic, which enable it to assert leadership while leveraging the implementation capabilities of subordinate institutional bodies.

# 10. Reflections and Future Perspectives in Italian Metropolitan Governance

## 10.1 Introduction

The concluding chapter of this research aims to synthesize the insights and outcomes derived from an in-depth exploration of metropolitan governance within the Italian context. By examining three key case studies, assessing the impact of legislative reforms, and contemplating future governance models, this chapter provides a comprehensive wrap-up of the research findings and their broader implications.

Section 10.2 delves into the outcomes from the case studies, offering detailed insights from three metropolitan cities: MCBa, MCBo, and MCTo. These subsections (10.2.1, 10.2.2, and 10.2.3) highlight the unique governance challenges and successes within each metropolitan city. Following this, section 10.2.4 provides general reflections on the case studies, distilling common themes and divergent experiences across these metropolitan areas.

In section 10.3, the focus shifts to the Delrio Reform and its implications for Italian metropolitan cities. This legislative reform has been pivotal in reshaping the governance scenario, and its impacts are critically analysed to understand its efficacy and areas for improvement.

Section 10.4 addresses the research limits, acknowledging the constraints and challenges encountered during the study. This reflection ensures a balanced perspective, recognising the boundaries of the research while maintaining the integrity of its findings.

Finally, section 10.5 looks towards the future, contemplating the potential futures research perspectives for metropolitan governance in Italy. This forward-looking perspective is essential for policymakers, scholars, and practitioners aiming to navigate the evolving governance terrain effectively.

By weaving together, the empirical outcomes, legislative analysis, and forward-thinking perspectives, this chapter not only encapsulates the thesis's core findings but also provides a foundation for future research and practical advancements in the field of metropolitan governance.

## **10.2 Outcomes from the Case studies**

This paragraph is structured to provide a detailed analysis of the outcomes from each case study and to offer general reflections on the broader implications of these findings. Section 10.2.1 presents the outcomes from the Metropolitan City of Bari, detailing the specific governance challenges, strategies, and outcomes observed in this metropolitan area. This section explores how MCBa has navigated its unique metropolitan framework, addressing both successes and areas for improvement. Section 10.2.2 shifts the focus to the Metropolitan City of Bologna. This case study examines the governance structures and policies implemented in MCBo, highlighting the distinctive approaches taken and the results achieved. The analysis provides a comprehensive look at the effectiveness of metropolitan governance in this context. Section 10.2.3 covers the Metropolitan City of Turin, offering insights into its governance dynamics. This section delves into the particularities of MCTo's approach to metropolitan governance, examining the outcomes of its policies and initiatives. In section 10.2.4, the paragraph provides general reflections on the case studies. This section synthesizes the findings from MCBa, MCBo, and MCTo, identifying common themes, challenges, and best practices. The reflections aim to draw broader conclusions about metropolitan governance in Italy, offering insights that are applicable beyond the specific case studies.

### **10.2.1 ...from MCBa**

The metropolitan city of Bari, among the three studied from a territorial perspective, presents itself as the most balanced and polycentric. The governance of its metropolitan area must necessarily be more participatory and, at the same time, less inclined to leave behind the more peripheral and marginal areas of its territory.

Institutionally, the metropolitan city of Bari does not make use of homogeneous zones (as does the metropolitan city of Turin) or present a system of unions of municipalities covering the metropolitan territory (as in the metropolitan city of Bologna). The demographic weight of the municipality of Bari is not so predominant compared to the rest of the metropolitan territory. There are several



other municipalities with significant demographic weight, and both coastal and hilly areas join forces, formally and informally, in drawing up large-area strategies, even on a sub-metropolitan scale.

The metropolitan authority has excellent relations with the capital city, and several departments (such as the department of supra-local planning) work closely with the technical structure of the municipality of Bari (which has more human resources), often supporting the metropolitan authority. The institutional weight of the body, despite being a second-tier elective body, is relatively strong. In the strategic-political decisions of the area, the regional body has significantly more influence. However, in the strategic-territorial dynamics at the metropolitan scale, there is mutual respect for the decisions made by the metropolitan authority from the regional body, the capital city (which is always in line with the metropolitan city), and the municipalities within the Bari metropolitan area.

The strength of the body is its focus, especially in recent years, on a metropolitan governance model that places territorial participation at its core. Municipalities and their metropolitan mayors are often called upon to engage with the metropolitan authority and participate in ad hoc institutional tables (such as the metropolitan mayors' manifesto and the inter-institutional table during the drafting of the Bari Metropolitan Strategic Plan), pursuing shared strategies like the metropolitan mayors' climate pact. The participatory governance model aims to bring together the demands of the territory in a shared participation perspective where all mayors of municipalities in the metropolitan area have equal weight and voice in the metropolitan authority's decision-making processes.

However, a significant critical issue among the planning instruments available to the metropolitan authority is the absence of a territorial spatial planning instrument of a metropolitan nature. This issue is even more evident considering the absence of a provincial spatial plan (such as the old PTCP, now obsolete after the Delrio reform). This issue stems from several events since the 2000s, including the redefinition of the administrative boundaries of the province of Bari due to the creation of the province of Barletta-Andria-Trani (a process that began in 2004 and ended in 2009) and the transition from a provincial to a metropolitan entity under the Delrio reform. Currently, the body's work to develop a territorial planning instrument is virtually at a standstill. In recent years, the entity decided to focus on strategic planning (with the drafting of the Bari Metropolitan Strategic Plan, now approved), characterised by a purely directive and strategic approach, without territorial conforming constraints that could create disputes between different

entities (such as the dispute over competencies between the metropolitan city and the Puglia region regarding the not-yet-drafted PTGM).

This choice probably stems from historical assumptions about the metropolitan territory of Bari (Calace, 2023). First, the territorial dimension in the strict sense has never been at the centre of the work and processes promoted by the Metropolitan City. As mentioned earlier, the province of Bari has never had a Coordination Plan, and this has probably influenced the perception of the need for a spatial planning tool. Moreover, the inherent characteristics of a system with little hierarchy and the presence of many large municipalities, rich in history and with autonomous profiles, have made it more complicated for the province to exercise its coordination function. In contrast, strategic planning has a significant past, already used in the 2007-2013 community planning, although it was set up in a rather institutional way to guide resources. Thus, the idea that resources could be allocated without a territorialised reference for policies was consolidated over time. This tendency, formed in the management of European funds, was further consolidated with the need to quickly intercept and spend PNRR funds.

Focusing on the management of funds derived from supra-local programming, the polycentric character of the metropolitan city of Bari emerges even more, not only in the allocation of cohesion policy funds but also in the localising choice of funds derived from the PNRR during the PINQuA and PUI. In both experiences, the metropolitan authority's strategy in the distribution of projects (and related funds) appears clear. Regarding PINQuA, the three approved projects cover almost the entire metropolitan territory of Bari. It is especially with the PUIs that the metropolitan city of Bari has clearly shown its polycentric and participatory nature. In particular, the approved and funded PUIs entirely cover the municipalities of the metropolitan city of Bari, subdividing the two PUIs not territorially but thematically, reflecting an integrated metropolitan vision. Finally, it should be emphasised that in both the PINQuA and PUIs there are clear strategic interventions of a metropolitan nature dedicated to networking projects of a supra-local scale among different metropolitan municipalities.

The metropolitan city of Bari, therefore, represents a virtuous example of participatory spatial management and governance. Despite the lack of a spatial planning tool, its administration's balanced and inclusive approach has made it possible to overcome many of the challenges arising from the territory's complexity and diversity. The decision to focus on strategic planning, which is flexible and adaptable to local needs, has facilitated the effective allocation of resources, both

through European and national funds, such as those of the PNRR. This has enabled the metropolitan city of Bari to maintain a balance among different municipalities, ensuring that even peripheral and marginal areas benefit from development initiatives. The continuous collaboration between the various entities and the active participation of municipalities have strengthened the sense of belonging and cooperation, consolidating the polycentric and integrated nature of the metropolitan area. In conclusion, the case of Bari demonstrates how participatory and strategic governance can effectively support the balanced and inclusive development of a complex metropolitan area.

### **10.2.2 ...from MCBo**

Spatially and research-wise, the metropolitan city of Bologna is perfectly positioned between the monocentricity of the Metropolitan City of Turin and the polycentricity of the Metropolitan City of Bari. In particular, the demographic weight of the municipality of Bologna is relatively strong, and the governance of the metropolitan entity is supported by an established network of unions of municipalities in the area.

The metropolitan city of Bologna chooses not to establish homogeneous zones but to rely heavily on the unions of municipalities in its territory. In fact, the Emilia-Romagna region and the former province, now the metropolitan city of Bologna, can count on a very strong tradition of inter-municipal cooperation, probably the most mature and efficient nationwide. The metropolitan authority has decided to emphasize the importance of the unions in its territory by creating an *ad hoc platform*, within which to deal with the presidents of the unions.

The *Ufficio di Presidenza* - represents a qualitatively significant element of the metropolitan governance of Bologna. The unions of municipalities, which are strongly rooted in the metropolitan territory of Bologna, have delegated authority from their member municipalities over numerous responsibilities, including spatial planning. In this sense, the unions of municipalities act as collectors of the instances of the territories, with a role not only political-institutional but also technical and of decision-making. This allows the unions of municipalities, through the UdP, to be always aware of and actively involved in the decision-making processes of the metropolitan authority. The confrontation between territories (through the unions) and the metropolitan authority is also facilitated by the direct dialogue that takes place within the UdP, while limiting the number of interlocutors.

In all decision-making processes and in the construction of the various planning tools of a metropolitan nature, on which the MCBo is a pioneer, the role of the unions of municipalities is always of prime importance. They have been consistently involved in the participatory paths of all spatial planning instruments currently under the MCBo. Relations between the metropolitan authority and the municipality of Bologna are excellent, with departments shared between the municipality and the metropolitan city. In this sense, the metropolitan mayor's willingness to focus on the metropolitan area of Bologna is strong, firmly believing that strategic objectives of a metropolitan nature can bring greater benefits to the capital city than targeted interventions on the capital itself.

On these premises, it is evident that the model of territorial participation in the various decision-making processes and the construction of instruments is very robust. Numerous are the meetings of confrontation between the metropolitan authority and territories, and numerous are the moments of presentation and dissemination to make the territories participate and be aware of the work of the metropolitan authority.

Regarding planning tools, more in detail with the implementation of the PTM, the *Fondo Perequativo Metropolitano*, an instrument of redistribution to the metropolitan dimension of the financial resources generated by the transformations with the greatest impact on the territory, should certainly be mentioned. Another distinctive feature of the MCBo is the signing of collaborations with other supra-local bodies. Currently, there are active collaborations with the metropolitan city of Florence (the only case in which two metropolitan cities border each other), and with other provinces (Modena, Ferrara, Prato). The idea behind these agreements is to jointly activate and develop relations with other European metropolitan systems, enhance and promote the national network of metropolitan cities, including through the exchange of best practices and the proposal of common models of administrative action. Collaboration between the two metropolitan cities also, and above all, aims to develop joint planning in the context of regional ROPs and national NOPs and to enhance collaboration in the implementation phase of the 2014-2020 Metropolitan Cities NOP.

Regarding supra-local planning, the metropolitan authority appears to be very careful in the distribution of resources across the metropolitan territory, although there is, in line with other case studies, a greater concentration of resources on the territory of the capital municipality. The modus operandi regarding PINQuA and PUIs is interesting. The issue of unions of municipalities in the decision-making

processes again becomes central. In particular, the three projects financed under PINQuA see the unions of municipalities as proponents, which directly managed the application submission and were active participants in the subsequent implementation process of the various projects. The particularity of these interventions is not only in having three different unions of municipalities as proponents but also in the fact that all three projects, with related interventions, are part of a broader strategy of a metropolitan nature outlined by the metropolitan city upstream of the process. The approach regarding PUIs is different: the MCBo presented only one PUI with four different projects focusing on a few municipalities.

The strength of the metropolitan city of Bologna lies in its well-defined, new generation planning tools that are defined with the territory. Thus, when called upon to manage funds, it is relatively easy to identify strategies and territorialize them in a useful manner and according to a metropolitan strategic vision. On the one hand, a strong and consolidated base of planning tools, and on the other, the unions of municipalities and the bureau serve as facilitators in gathering the needs of the territories and transforming them into concrete projects and actions.

In conclusion, the metropolitan city of Bologna represents an advanced model of territorial governance, characterised by its ability to effectively integrate diverse local demands through a well-structured network of unions of municipalities. This governance system enables participatory and shared management of resources and development strategies, fostering territorial cohesion and the optimization of planning interventions. The MCBo's ability to establish supra-local collaborations, both at the national and European levels, testifies to its openness to constructive inter-institutional dialogue aimed at enhancing best practices and implementing innovative models of public administration. The combination of a solid base of planning tools and a system of unions of municipalities that serve as facilitators of decision-making processes makes Bologna a case study of national and European significance. The continued focus on territorial participation and the ability to manage resources strategically and targeted represent the strengths on which the MCBo can continue to build its future, promoting balanced and sustainable development for the entire metropolitan area.

### **10.2.3 ...from MCTo**

The Metropolitan City of Turin, the largest in Italy due to its territorial extension and unique municipal fragmentation with as many as 312 municipalities,

faces a uniquely challenging task in maintaining metropolitan governance processes that prioritize even the most marginal areas. In this context, Turin stands out as the most complex case study.

The first initiative by the Metropolitan City of Turin was to establish Homogeneous Zones, as provided by the Delrio law, with the aim of creating an institutional space that could aggregate the concerns of the territories and facilitate dialogue between small municipalities and the metropolitan authority. However, these zones, which were initially promising, have played a rather marginal role in institutional processes. They exist as abstract institutional spaces without concrete supporting structures. Currently, they are representative institutions with the spokesperson of the Homogeneous Zone (usually the mayor of the most populous city within the zone) having limited influence in metropolitan institutional processes and little institutional recognition within the municipalities of the Homogeneous Zone.

The governance of the Metropolitan City of Turin is further complicated by the significant institutional weight of the capital municipality. The capital municipality and the first-ring municipalities centralize the strategies and funds of the metropolitan city. In recent years, particularly with the first Strategic Metropolitan Plan of the MCTo, there has been an attempt to move beyond the traditional monocentric system by strongly focusing on a polycentric metropolitan system, with the main goal of reducing the gap between central and more marginal or mountainous areas. Interviews revealed a difficult relationship between the metropolitan authority and the capital municipality, characterised by both political and administrative challenges. These difficulties are partly due to the intrinsic limits of the Delrio reform, such as the metropolitan mayor coinciding with the mayor of the capital municipality, and partly to the nature of administrative structures, which often engage in dialogue only during mandatory formal steps related to co-planning moments stipulated by regional law. The relationship with the Piedmont region is similarly strained, with limited strategic integration between regional and metropolitan policies.

Among the three case studies, the MCTo is the one that most highlights the issue of the metropolitan authority's political weight being almost negligible, a direct consequence of becoming a second-tier elective body (with indirect elections) under the Delrio reform. The metropolitan council is predominantly composed of mayors from metropolitan municipalities closest to Turin. Given the strong demographic (and relative voting) weight of Turin, all strategies and political

considerations of the metropolitan authority necessarily aim to accommodate and please the electorate closest to the capital municipality.

These issues are also reflected in the planning instruments, both in their content and formation processes. Participation from the territories is consistently limited, often reduced to distributing questionnaires to individual metropolitan municipalities and holding confrontational and presentational meetings with the Homogeneous Zones. These interactions are more about presenting pre-prepared plans rather than genuinely gathering input and facilitating discussion. Consequently, the participatory model appears more as a formal institutional requirement rather than an active engagement with the territories. Strategically, the PSM emphasizes the intention to transition from a monocentric to a polycentric metropolitan area to better distribute resources and benefits. However, these strategic indications often remain theoretical and do not manifest in practical metropolitan-scale plans and projects.

Focusing on the decisions made under the cohesion policy and the subsequent National Recovery and Resilience Plan, it is evident that resources have predominantly been allocated to the capital city and first-ring municipalities. During the 2014-2020 cohesion policy period, the funds targeted metropolitan areas but were managed by the capital municipalities, explaining part of this allocation pattern. In the case of the PNRR, particularly regarding PINQuA and PUI, the MCTo has more direct responsibility for strategic and locational choices. Despite promoting polycentric strategies, the operational decisions have favoured interventions in the first and second rings, neglecting inland and mountainous areas. For the PUIs, half of the budget was allocated to a plan for the capital municipality, with the remaining half distributed across the rest of the metropolitan territory. This approach has raised political concerns, particularly as the metropolitan authority was excluded from all phases of the PUI for the city of Turin.

In conclusion, the Metropolitan City of Turin faces significant challenges in managing such a vast and fragmented area. Despite efforts to promote a polycentric system, structural and political difficulties persist, hindering more inclusive and equitable governance. To overcome these challenges, it will be crucial to strengthen the structures of Homogeneous Zones, promote greater inclusion of peripheral and mountainous areas in decision-making processes, and improve strategic integration with the capital municipality and the Piedmont Region. Addressing the critical issues in participatory processes, where consultation with territories is often formal rather than substantive, is also essential to bridge the gap between stated strategies

and concrete actions. Only through a more balanced and inclusive approach can metropolitan governance effectively respond to the needs of all involved territories.

#### **10.2.4 General reflections on the Case studies**

The case studies of the metropolitan cities of Turin, Bari, and Bologna provide a unique opportunity to examine the dynamics of metropolitan governance in Italy, with particular emphasis on challenges, similarities, differences, and emerging best practices. In this context, the intrinsic complexity of managing extensive and fragmented urban areas becomes evident, where cooperation among municipalities becomes indispensable to address common issues and ensure harmonious territorial development.

A similarity among the three cases is the emphasis on the importance of participatory and inclusive governance. In all three metropolitan cities, there is a growing recognition of the central role of citizens and local communities in policy formulation and territorial planning. This highlights an important emerging trend in the Italian metropolitan governance landscape, characterised by a progressive shift from a top-down decision-making model to a more participatory and bottom-up approach. However, the differences among the cases cannot be overlooked. MCTo stands out for a more centralised governance structure, with the capital city exerting significant control over decisions and resources. Although Homogeneous Zones have been established to promote cooperation among municipalities, they tend to play a marginal role in the overall decision-making process. In contrast, MCBa adopts a more polycentric approach, actively collaborating with a network of municipalities that promote greater participation and a more equitable distribution of resources. MCBo, on the other hand, is distinguished by governance characterised by well-structured union of municipalities system, which play a key role in collecting territorial demands and transforming them into concrete projects.

In terms of best practices, MCBa and MCBo represent significant examples of more inclusive and participatory governance, which could serve as a model for other Italian metropolitan cities. Collaboration with municipal unions, the adoption of innovative tools, and attention to sustainability are key elements of these positive experiences. However, challenges remain, such as the need to ensure equitable distribution of resources and to balance the needs of different territories within the metropolitan city.



It is interesting to note how the three case studies while being under the same normative reference have tried to construct metropolitan governance models as congruent as possible to their territorial contexts and resources. It is clear how governance relations, especially vertical, are also influenced by the political factor. A factor that also appears to be almost predominant in the choices then made in the distribution of funds and projects. Underlying it all is often the willingness of individual representatives of metropolitan authorities to believe or not in the metropolitan dimension by focusing on broader strategies with a metropolitan (wide area) vision. As reported earlier, a good predisposition for inter-municipal cooperation can certainly be a supportive element in the metropolitan authority's decision-making processes, just as the presence of new generation planning tools, and built with a solid foundation and a concrete participation process, are an incredible supportive element when the body is called upon to decision-making processes in the leading role.

The three case studies reveal, some well-known limitations of the Delrio law on which the next paragraph focuses more in detail.

### **10.3 The Evolution and Challenges of Metropolitan Governance in Italy: Reflections on the Delrio Reform**

After presenting the research results on the case studies, broader considerations can be formulated regarding Italian metropolitan cities and the nature and the outcomes of the Delrio reform.

A fundamental premise concerns the legislative evolution and the process that led to Law 56/2014, as this allows for in-depth reflections on the nature of the reform itself. The institutionalization of a metropolitan level of government in Italy followed a rather long and complex process. Although metropolitan areas were first mentioned in the 1970s, Italian legislators began to seriously address the issue only in 1990 with National Law No. 142. This occurred within a broader process of decentralization, outlining the roles and powers of provinces, municipalities, and metropolitan areas. Dissatisfied with the outcome, the central government revisited the issue in the late 1990s, promoting two legislative changes aimed at further advancing decentralization: Law No. 265/1999 and the TUEL. These significant steps were then intertwined with the reform of Title V of the Constitution, defined

by Law 3/2001, which radically changed the traditional hierarchy of the various levels of government according to the principle of subsidiarity.

Despite the constitutional reform, the impetus for its implementation remained rather low. The debate on the reorganization of local autonomies returned to the political agenda only with the law on public spending review adopted by the Monti government in 2012 (Law 135/2012), aimed at reorganising the Italian governance system to reduce public spending, following a clear direction from the European Union (EU) (Cotella & Rivolin, 2015; Tulumello et al., 2020). In this context, Law No. 56 of April 7, 2014 – Provisions on Metropolitan Cities, Provinces, Unions, and Mergers of Municipalities, the so-called Delrio law (named after the proposing minister) – came into force. Law 56 was conceived as the first step in a longer process that was supposed to lead to the abolition of Italian provinces. In 2016, a constitutional reform (Renzi-Boschi) was proposed with a related constitutional referendum. The objective was to reaffirm a new centralization. Any reference to provinces was removed from the Constitution, aiming to finalize the replacement of these entities with metropolitan cities, already included in the Constitution with the 2001 reform, whose concrete establishment began in various Italian regions with the entry into force of the Delrio law. The failure of the constitutional reform left the Delrio law incomplete, and since then, although debates have continued and various bills have been proposed, there have been no concrete legislative changes.

Based on these premises, some reflections on the nature of the reform can be made, starting from certain critical elements, confirmed during field interviews within metropolitan entities, such as: i) the administrative boundaries of metropolitan cities, ii) the metropolitan mayor coinciding with the mayor of the capital city and the metropolitan institution as a second-level elective body, iii) strategic planning instruments with a short-term horizon (three years).

The reform, likely embedded in an administrative reform process more linked to reducing public spending than reorganising territorial entities, did not pay due attention to territorial dynamics. This has had evident impacts on the metropolitan governance of metropolitan cities.

The first point to address is the redefinition of metropolitan boundaries. The current metropolitan boundaries, which are the old provincial boundaries, do not adequately reflect the functional dynamics of Italian metropolitan cities. This becomes particularly evident when comparing the administrative boundaries with the functional urban areas of the main municipalities. There are instances where the

functional areas are significantly smaller than the administrative boundaries (e.g., the case of the Metropolitan City of Turin) and instances where the functional areas are much larger than the administrative boundaries (e.g., the case of the Metropolitan City of Milan). Instances where there is a rough correspondence between functional areas and administrative boundaries are minimal and entirely coincidental.

Numerous studies have analyzed the discrepancy between the politico-administrative organization and the functional organization of metropolitan regions and, more generally, of territories in contemporary Italy (see, for example, Calafati, 2009; Calafati and Veneri, 2013). The theme of the discrepancy between administrative boundaries and functional phenomena, when it comes to metropolitan areas, ties in very well with the theme of integrated territorial development. In this sense, the approach based on integrated territorial development emphasizes the need to transcend traditional administrative boundaries (Allmendinger & Haughton, 2009; Allmendinger et al. 2015), seeking to identify the "right scale" for planning and intervention. This principle responds to the necessity of promoting territorial development that considers functional areas and spatial and relational interdependencies, which are constantly evolving. It is widely recognized that administrative boundaries, inherently rigid, fail to capture the opportunities offered by integrated development. On the contrary, such boundaries, with their administrative and decision-making dynamics, often act as inertial factors, hindering adaptation to new territorial needs and the valorization of development potential (Balducci et al., 2017; Casavola & Berisha, 2023).

The importance of an integrated approach is particularly evident in the context of metropolitan regions, where economic, social, and environmental interactions transcend traditional administrative limits. Metropolitan areas represent crucial nodes in the territorial network, where development dynamics cannot be adequately managed if constrained by rigid administrative boundaries. In this sense, territorial planning must adopt a more flexible and adaptive vision, capable of responding to the complexity and fluidity of functional relations and territorial interdependencies.

The integrated approach thus requires a reorganization of governance structures, which must be able to operate on broader and more appropriate territorial scales than traditional administrative boundaries. This reorganization should facilitate greater collaboration between local, regional, and national authorities, as well as between public and private actors, to promote balanced and sustainable development. Among other things, this could involve the adoption of more flexible

planning tools and the implementation of policies that encourage intermunicipal and interregional cooperation.

The need to transcend administrative boundaries and adopt an integrated approach to territorial development is not only a matter of managerial efficiency but also of equity and sustainability. Only by recognizing and valuing functional and territorial interdependencies can a development strategy be constructed that effectively addresses contemporary challenges and future opportunities.

This misalignment between functional areas and administrative boundaries puts metropolitan authorities in a difficult position, creating several problems in managing decision-making processes and in defining robust metropolitan strategies with potential impacts on their territories. When strategies need to align with funding from supra-local programs, this misalignment becomes especially problematic. In this regard, various European policy-based metropolitan governance models have been developing in recent years. Several European countries have introduced one or more policies managed at the metropolitan level (often in relation to the management of EU funds and instruments) without granting legal status or legal powers. In the Czech Republic, for example, a metropolitan governance was established to implement certain Integrated Territorial Investments (ITIs) of the EU cohesion policy. In Poland, in the absence of political consensus on the legal regulation of metropolitan areas, the government has provided financial support for bottom-up integration forms in functional urban areas, including metropolitan ones, using EU structural funds, always disbursed through dedicated ITIs. The emergence of institutionalised metropolitan areas in Romania is also linked to EU incentives (Drăghia, 2023), which have promoted the establishment of inter-jurisdictional metropolitan cooperation bodies as non-administrative private entities of public utility, regulated by the national law on associations and foundations. In this context, adopting policy-based territories offers the advantage of operating within functional territories. This approach facilitates the connection between municipalities and, more broadly, functional areas that share common territorial and functional dynamics. Consequently, developing strategies at a supra-local level, potentially to secure and effectively utilise EU funds, becomes more feasible. By focusing on areas with strong shared territorial dynamics and implementing policies tailored to their specific functional contexts, it is easier to achieve effective outcomes.

A second critical issue is more political. Firstly, the election of the metropolitan mayor, who, by law, coincides with the mayor of the central municipality. This

legislative choice simplifies the second-level elective process that is still necessary for the definition of metropolitan councillors, but in monocentric metropolitan cities highly skewed towards the central municipality, it only further unbalances the relationships between the capital city and the municipalities within the metropolitan city. Often, the metropolitan mayor, who is also the mayor of the capital municipality, primarily focuses on his electoral base, the capital municipality. Consequently, actions and projects initiated by the metropolitan mayor are frequently misinterpreted by his electoral basin as efforts of the capital city's mayor. This ambiguity drives the metropolitan mayor to concentrate funds and projects on the capital city rather than the broader metropolitan area. In this regard, the French model of *Metropoles* allows for a metropolitan mayor different from the mayor of the central municipality, which significantly helps balance the (horizontal) institutional governance relationships in metropolitan areas where there is already a demographic and institutional imbalance towards the central municipality.

Another point of reflection, still of a political-institutional nature and related to the previous point, is emphasized in virtually all interviews with metropolitan city actors. It concerns the transformation of metropolitan cities into second-level elective entities (indirect election). Specifically, it has emerged that this transformation has almost nullified the political weight of the metropolitan entity at any negotiation table, whether with the regional or municipal level. The metropolitan mayor and metropolitan councillors are all called to perform their functions without economic compensation. Consequently, the metropolitan institutional bodies are composed of individuals called to fulfil not only a dual institutional role (metropolitan mayors and councillors are also mayors or councillors in their respective municipalities) but also on a voluntary basis. It follows that this naturally leads to a decrease in attention towards the metropolitan institutional role, as these individuals are nonetheless inclined to focus primarily on the territory they administer (and especially on their electoral basin). For this reason, the strategic choices - projects and the territorialization of funds managed by the metropolitan entity - in some cases (monocentric metropolitan cities) reinforce center-periphery dynamics and further weaken the role and representational capacity of 'peripheral' municipalities within the metropolitan city. In this context, an improvement could involve considering models where metropolitan mayors are not the mayors of their respective central municipalities but are nonetheless representatives of the metropolitan territory through a first-level election of mayors and metropolitan councillors.

A final point of reflection concerns the Metropolitan Strategic Plan, a central pivot of metropolitan planning for Italian metropolitan cities. The three-year timeframe of the plan appears too stringent, particularly in relation to long-term strategies that require a multi-year vision. Internationally, there are various models of governance and metropolitan planning in which the issue of strategic planning has a different placement compared to the Italian context. In metropolitan cities and/or regions in various European countries such as France, Portugal, Poland, the Czech Republic, Romania, and Germany, there are several tools provided by cohesion policies that enable the realization of long-term strategies for their metropolitan cities.

A future reorganization process for metropolitan authorities, to be truly beneficial for the territorial fabric and urban governance of metropolitan cities, must take these critical elements into account, and reflect on how to solve them also taking inspiration from several good practices that can be identified in other European countries. Starting from these reflections on the nature of the reform, it is necessary to acknowledge that metropolitan cities have adapted as much as possible and manage their routine tasks satisfactorily. There are more virtuous and better-structured metropolitan cities, as well as others that are still lagging in recognising their means and institutional role in the territory. This appears to be physiological and linked to the territorial and institutional dynamics (both horizontal and vertical governance), which differ significantly among Italian metropolitan cities.

To support and consolidate the institutional role of metropolitan cities, it may be crucial to make these institutions key players in managing funds from supralocal programming. The metropolitan scale seems to be the most effective for territorialising cohesion policy strategies. The metropolitan institution, despite being relatively young compared to other administrative entities, has proactively sought and continues to seek its space, also considering new opportunities offered not only by regular European programming but especially by the extraordinary programming of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan. However, there are still regulatory limitations that reduce their scope of action (Vinci, 2019; Crivello & Staricco 2017).

Examining the 2014-2020 programming, the role of the metropolitan entity, which was then newly established, was inevitably limited, with very little room for manoeuvre (Vinci, 2019). However, the government attempted to integrate and give voice to metropolitan cities by allocating the NOP METRO entirely to them, albeit under the management of the administrative apparatus of the central cities. The

*Metropoli Strategiche* initiative, embedded within the NOP Governance and Institutional Capacity, provided metropolitan cities with the opportunity to engage and grow institutionally (Donati, 2023). This project highlighted the severe asymmetries and diverse territorial interests of the new metropolitan institutions, likely tainted by the very nature of the Delrio reform (Zilli and Dini, 2023), but also gathered ideas and best practices that, when contextualised in different realities, led to positive outcomes.

Regarding the new 2021-2027 European programming, the governance of the NOP METRO Plus 2021-2027 continues the experience of the 2014-2020 NOP METRO. The role of metropolitan cities has been strengthened in terms of understanding the processes of fund management and expenditure, yet there was no institutional courage to completely transfer the responsibilities of implementation, management, control, and monitoring to metropolitan institutions, instead keeping central cities as Intermediate Bodies.

With the PNRR, the institutional role of metropolitan cities seems to be more significant due to the activation of an exclusive instrument—the Integrated Urban Plans. Although metropolitan cities are referenced in various Missions within the PNRR both as implementing entities and as recipients of interventions, the PUIs represent the first program where metropolitan cities are key players in managing European funds. However, structural issues have emerged during the implementation phase among the implementing entities of various projects, involving both metropolitan cities and municipalities.

Despite the ongoing empowerment experience of Italian metropolitan cities, there are positive aspects to be consolidated over time. An important lesson is the definition of a territorial (metropolitan) strategy on areas such as the recovery of suburbs, public green spaces, sports, and health, which should encourage the managing authorities of the 2021-2027 programs to promote integrated territorial actions not tied to emergencies or isolated interventions disconnected from a comprehensive logic.

Aware of the difficulties and future challenges, metropolitan cities can play a crucial role as capable actors of attracting funds and directing territorial transformations on a scale rarely experimented with nationally. For the next programming period (2028-2034), it will be interesting to see how the experience gained by metropolitan cities can translate into effective and not merely apparent involvement, as it was in previous programming periods. However, the current

centralization of resources and responsibilities does not favor a progressive and desirable horizontal and vertical involvement of the actors involved.

## **10.4 Research limits**

Methodological limitations are a crucial aspect of any research, as they identify potential weaknesses or restrictions in the approach used and provide context for the results obtained. As outlined in the methodological chapter (Chapter 3), the primary methods employed in this research include a literature review, the collection of documents and data, semi-structured interviews, participation in certain processes, and case study comparisons. These methods were chosen to provide a comprehensive understanding of the context of metropolitan governance in Italy, with a particular focus on three specific case studies.

In relation to the literature review phase, the methodological limitations are relatively minimal. However, the focus was primarily on literature and the collection of data and documents related to the context of metropolitan governance in Europe. Expanding the research to include extra-EU experiences would have overly complicated the theoretical framework, considering that the territorial focus of the research was the Italian context, specifically three case studies. Additionally, a three-year research period inevitably involved realignments and updates. Data and documents were updated over time to ensure the most current view possible.

Regarding data collection, particularly in relation to cohesion policy, the database used was Open Coesione. This database has certain limitations, as highlighted multiple times within the case studies, including the absence of all quantitative data at the municipal and provincial levels related to rural development funds. Consequently, the research had to adapt, and the analysis of rural development policies (and related Local Action Groups) was limited to considering the presence of these inter-municipal cooperation forms within the case studies without being able to evaluate their true impact in terms of funds and project implementation on the territory.

The analysis of the distribution of cohesion policy funds presents a series of methodological challenges that go far beyond the mere evaluation of quantitative data. One of the most problematic aspects concerns the role of informal and political relationships in deciding how and where these funds are allocated. While official data provide a picture of the distribution of funds across various territories, these numbers do not show the whole story. There are, in fact, underlying dynamics,



unofficial influences, and power relations that may have played a crucial role in determining which territories received more resources than others. These informal relationships might include, for example, political favouritism, quid pro quo exchanges between local and central administrators, or pressure exerted by local interest groups. Such dynamics not only elude quantitative analysis but often fail to emerge even from interviews, which can be influenced by a range of factors, such as interviewees' reluctance to disclose sensitive information or fear of repercussions. This lack of transparency represents a significant obstacle to the fair and effective assessment of cohesion policy. Indeed, the distribution of funds may not fully reflect the actual needs of the territories but rather the influence of entrenched powers or political alliances. This raises crucial questions about the equity of fund distribution and the real capacity of these policies to reduce territorial disparities, which should be their primary objective.

Therefore, to fully understand the effectiveness and impact of cohesion policy, it is necessary to adopt a more integrated approach that goes beyond data analysis and interviews. It would be beneficial to develop research methods capable of uncovering these informal dynamics, such as detailed case studies, social and political network analysis, or ethnographic approaches that can provide a deeper understanding of the interactions influencing fund distribution. Delving into these issues could not only contribute to greater transparency but also to better policy design, ensuring that funds are distributed more equitably and truly respond to the needs of the territories. Only in this way can cohesion policy achieve its goal of promoting balanced and inclusive development across the European Union.

The methodological limitations are likely more concentrated in the semi-structured interview phase. The relatively small sample size (approximately 10 interviews per case study, divided among regional, metropolitan, and municipal entities) cannot offer a comprehensive view of the metropolitan governance of the case studies and the relationships between different institutional levels. During the interviews, due to the institutional roles of the interviewees, it was not always possible to obtain genuinely sincere responses, and operational criticisms rarely emerged within the activities of the entities for which the interviewees worked. Such criticisms emerged more frequently in informal conversations.

In this sense, the decision to primarily interview high-ranking institutional figures has inevitably steered the analysis towards a focus on the formal relationships within the metropolitan cities under study. While this approach is valuable for understanding official dynamics and decision-making processes, it has

led to the neglect of the informal sphere that significantly impacts these dynamics. Elements such as interpersonal relationships, networks of influence, and hidden power mechanisms were not sufficiently explored, thereby limiting the ability to fully grasp the complex interactions that shape territorial policies (i.e. distribution of funds).

This methodological gap underscores the need to complement the analysis with more diverse perspectives, including voices that are less institutional and more embedded in the local social context. By paying greater attention to these often invisible yet crucial informal factors, it would be possible to achieve a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the dynamics governing urban governance and the management of public resources. A more inclusive and diversified approach would not only enrich the research but also enable the formulation of more effective policy recommendations that are better aligned with the realities of the territories involved.

The sample also included a limited presence of institutional and technical subjects from small municipalities. Despite multiple solicitations, few made themselves available. This lack of participation seems to be related to two main factors: the depletion of human resources in small municipalities over the years, leading to unsustainable workloads for the few remaining staff, and a lack of interest in the research topic and a low recognition of the metropolitan sense. At the regional and metropolitan levels, it was easier to secure interview contacts, likely since the structures approached for collaboration are traditionally more open to dialogue with researchers.

The limitation in the interviews and the genuineness of the responses obtained is likely related to the sample choice. Deciding to interview senior actors in various departments and institutional roles provided a well-defined overview of the situation and institutional relationships but resulted in few criticisms of decision-making processes and metropolitan governance structures. The few criticisms that did emerge were often well-known, and there were few critical insights on the topic from the interviewees. Due to time constraints, it was not possible to reach stakeholders with relationships with the metropolitan entity. An attempt was made in the early stages of the research, but due to the insufficient and incomplete number of responses across the three case studies, it was decided to exclude them entirely from the sample. Consequently, this impacted the research development. Initially, each case study was intended to include a stakeholders' social network analysis to illuminate the landscape of formal and informal relationships related to

metropolitan governance. Participation in seminars and involvement in planning processes also had limitations. The seminars, conferences, workshops, and personal involvement in events related to participatory processes were typically institutional events focused more on presenting results than true idea labs supporting the entity. Often, these events turned out to be promotional moments for the institutions rather than active participation opportunities.

Although these limitations have influenced the scope and depth of the results obtained, they have also provided valuable insights for future improvements. The critical analysis of these limitations allows for the identification of areas where the study design can be refined, promoting a more robust methodological approach in future research. Furthermore, transparency in communicating these methodological limitations enhances the credibility and reliability of the research by providing a clear picture of potential restrictions and their implications on the results.

## **10.5 Towards a research agenda on metropolitan governance**

Building on the methodological limitations highlighted in the previous paragraph, several indications for potential future research perspectives emerge. An initial broad-scale research avenue could involve comparing metropolitan governance experiences at the European level, and subsequently on a global scale, utilising thematic lenses that can support the comparison of very different models. In this context, it would be pertinent to focus on the nature of metropolitan regions, distinguishing between those that are formal, informal, legally mandated, or voluntary. A second research focus could explore the correlation between metropolitan regions and functional areas. This would entail studying and comparing how metropolitan regions or inter-municipal cooperations on a metropolitan scale align with or diverge from the functional dynamics of the territory.

Furthermore, it would be beneficial to systematize the territorial planning tools employed by metropolitan regions, while simultaneously comparing the different roles and respective competences of these metropolitan entities. Another research avenue, more focused on the European context, could involve an in-depth study of the role of metropolitan areas within the framework of cohesion policy. Building on considerations regarding the appropriate scale for developing large-area strategies and allocating funds, studying the metropolitan governance of European regions in close correlation with cohesion policy could lead to broader reflections.

This could support metropolitan areas in consolidating their status and requesting greater involvement in cohesion policy programs.

In the Italian context, research prospects could extend towards a detailed study, similar to that conducted for the three case studies, across all 14 Italian metropolitan cities. It would be interesting and useful to study the potential differences in metropolitan cities located in special statute regions and, consequently, to construct an atlas of Italian metropolitan cities. Additionally, in Italy, it would be valuable to focus on the functional areas of metropolitan cities, studying and proposing solutions to determine appropriate metropolitan parameters.

Considering the methodological limitations, it would certainly be useful to delve into the theme of formal and informal relationships in metropolitan cities. In this regard, a well-structured stakeholder's social network analysis could be conducted not only on the case studies but across all Italian metropolitan cities. Another topic warranting further exploration is related to cohesion policy within the Italian context, particularly its impacts on Italian metropolitan areas. Moreover, integrating the current role of metropolitan cities within certain programs of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan would be interesting to follow the implementation of these programs and observe the impacts on relevant contexts resulting from the territorialization of those strategies and resources.

To further develop these research perspectives, starting from the theme of international comparison, it could be crucial to adopt both qualitative and quantitative comparison methodologies to analyse governance experiences in different metropolitan regions. To facilitate this comparison, standardised thematic indicators could be developed, encompassing aspects such as the formal or informal nature of metropolitan regions, territorial functional dynamics, and the territorial planning tools utilised. The standardization of these indicators will enable a more accurate comparison of different governance models.

Regarding stakeholder analysis, a key to better understanding the formal and informal dynamics in metropolitan cities could be to conduct a structured analysis of stakeholders. This could be achieved through interviews and questionnaires administered to key stakeholders in various metropolitan cities. Additionally, organising workshops and focus groups can provide valuable qualitative data and foster the development of shared solutions. Such an analysis would help identify crucial relationships and interactions for the functioning of metropolitan cities.

The theme of policies and practices is highly pertinent, and an in-depth analysis of European and national cohesion policies may be necessary to identify best practices and common challenges faced by metropolitan areas. Evaluating the effectiveness of cohesion policies in promoting the development of metropolitan areas will allow for a better understanding of how these policies can be optimised to support metropolitan cities. This analysis should include an assessment of the impacts of cohesion policies on Italian metropolitan areas, examining both the benefits and challenges. Finally, conducting detailed case studies on metropolitan cities that have successfully implemented innovative policies is a crucial step in identifying best practices. These case studies should be documented and shared through a database of best practices at the European and global levels. This database should then serve as a resource for policymakers and researchers, providing concrete examples and replicable models of effective metropolitan governance.

At the same time, interdisciplinary collaboration is essential to address the complexity of metropolitan governance. Engaging researchers from various disciplines, such as urban planning, economics, sociology, and political science, will enable a more comprehensive and integrated approach. Furthermore, collaborating with academic institutions and international research centres will facilitate the sharing of knowledge and methodologies, promoting innovation in metropolitan governance research.

These suggestions aim to provide a comprehensive framework for future research that can contribute to the development and improvement of metropolitan governance at both national and international levels. Methodologically sound and interdisciplinary research can thus provide the foundation for more effective and sustainable policies and practices in metropolitan areas.

To conclude this thesis, I would like to quote the words already presented in the section on the motivation that inspired me to choose this research topic, pronounced by Gerhard Stahl, former Secretary General of the European Committee of the Regions:

*There is no better topic for debate than "metropolitan governance" that simultaneously captures the "regional" and "local", "urban" and "rural", and "domestic" and "transnational" dimensions of European policy making. (Stahl 2011, p. 3)*

and I, after more than three years of research work, can only agree.

**THE END**

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