

5 (2022)

2

From Crisis to Crisis: Emergencies and Uncertainties
in Large Metropolitan Areas and Cities
of Southern Europe

Edited by

Paolo Molinari and Pascale Froment

EDITORIAL

- From crisis to crisis: emergencies and uncertainties in large metropolitan areas and cities of Southern Europe 9
Di crisi in crisi: emergenze e incertezze nelle metropoli e nelle grandi città dell'Europa meridionale 18
Paolo Molinari - Pascale Froment

SPECIAL ISSUE

- Airbnb e Covid-19. Il ruolo degli attori professionali nel mercato turistico delle capitali del Sud Europa 29
Chiara Iacovone
Solidarity networks for grassroots collaboration in response to the pandemic: the case of the city of Valencia (Spain) 43
Julia Salom-Carrasco
Multiple spatial practices and scales within and beyond City Plaza, Athens 59
Olga Lafazani

Réutilisation sociale des biens confisqués au crime organisé à Lecco et Bari (Italie): quel impact sur la transformation et la valorisation territoriales? 73

Claudia Palermo

Dynamics of metropolisation: the institutional construction of the *Città Metropolitana di Roma Capitale* in the national and regional context 89

Angela D'Orazio - Maria Prezioso

OTHER EXPLORATIONS

La LIPU e il Centro Habitat Mediterraneo di Ostia, esempio virtuoso di sintesi dialettica tra tutela dell'ambiente e valorizzazione del patrimonio culturale 111

Flavio Lucchesi

BOOK REVIEWS

D. Gavinelli e M. Bolocan Goldstein (a cura di), *Regioni e regionalizzazione. Lo spazio-mondo in divenire* (2022) 131

Stefano De Rubertis

J.M. Gurr, R. Parr and D. Hardt (eds.), *Metropolitan Research: Methodes and Approaches* (2022) 137

Sara Giovansana

S. Soriani, A. Calzavara e M. Pioletti, *Riordino territoriale e governance metropolitana. Il caso veneziano nel contesto europeo* (2019) 141

Paolo Molinari

Dynamics of metropolisation: the institutional construction of the *Città Metropolitana di Roma Capitale* in the national and regional context

Angela D'Orazio - Maria Prezioso

Università degli Studi di Roma Tor Vergata

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.7358/gn-2022-002-dopr>

ABSTRACT

In the now thirty-year-long history of the construction of a formal dimension of the metropolisation process in Italy, the dynamics of administrative reorganisation triggered by Law 56/2014 saw the emergence of the metropolitan city as an element of rupture in the relations between territorial levels. These dynamics are explored through the Roman case, in which the process of institutionalisation of the metropolitan city presents numerous criticalities with respect to the central city's value as capital, the organisational structure within the metropolitan territory, the relationship with the Latium Region and the relationship with the State regarding European programming.

Keywords: metropolisation; Rome; metropolitan governance; planning; institutions.

1. INTRODUCTION

Following Bourne (1997), the characteristics of metropolitan regions at the end of the last century would be: large demographic and geographical size; dispersed development with the coexistence of concentrated settlements and 'exurban' forms; high complexity in terms of economic, social and lifestyle factors; coexistence of interaction networks involving cities

and settlement systems; social diversity and high conflict in the life of local communities; increased polarisation between neighbourhoods and municipalities; political fragmentation resulting from the articulation of boundaries and local interests; growing imbalances in the quality of local infrastructure and welfare services; increasing sub-area specialisation in functions and activities; emergence of new suburbs with heterogeneous settlement forms, as well as new industrial landscapes and commercial clusters.

This description captures the emergence of a different settlement pattern in the contemporary world, in which forms of urbanisation evolve in spatial reconfiguration processes that have been widely studied: global cities, global city-regions, mega-city regions, polycentric regions, functional urban regions, and regional urbanisation.

The term metropolisation refers to the trend towards the integration of various urban aggregates and also of territories with diffuse urbanisation [...] that involves economic activities, social relations, culture, etc. The territories [...] functionalise in order to achieve [...] efficiency objectives, to carry out development strategies, to guarantee better living conditions for the settled populations. [...] the processes of territorial diffusion and dispersion of population, activities and services, constitute neither the premise nor the search for an autonomy of the territories or aggregates themselves, but rather a different and broader way of constructing interrelations and interdependencies. A different way of producing the 'city', a new city. (Indovina 2003, 3)

This implies that no local government has the tools to address the emerging problems of ongoing metropolitan development, as well as the challenges and opportunities within a metropolitan area, by itself.

The study of urbanisation patterns at different scales, however, does not seem to be reflected in the planning models for metropolitan areas, which fail to understand the complex relations between the city centres, suburbia and the larger peripheries. In fact, institutional structures and governance practices are often linked to a stubbornly radial and core-centred reading of the urban model, which continues to place external areas in a position of dependence in their relations with central cities (Salet *et al.* 2015).

From the perspective of governing the dynamics affecting these regions, there is a dyscrasia, which develops over time, between the administrative level of municipal government and the surrounding reality, triggering the need to restore balance between the morphological and functional dimensions of the urban area.

Planning for metropolitan areas, as they are characterized by close economic and social linkages between their urban and suburban parts, which involve a number of local governments, needs to adopt a specific organisational model that ensures efficiency in both the local administration and governance of metropolitan-level dynamics.

Where there is a place for policy-making at a large scale (institutionalised or cooperatively established), the problem in governing settlement dynamics is then to decide whether, e.g., the spatial strategy should favour concentrated high-density settlements or allow for centrifugal dynamics to continue (perhaps even promoting a decentralisation of services across the urban region).

The consequence is that the actual management of large urban areas is increasingly disconnected from the action of the existing governance system, but increasingly, is the direct object of specific policies (determined at national and supranational levels) (Gualini 2006).

As recently summarized by Scott (2019), the context of so-called city-regions presents a common basic dilemma of political coordination:

First, an irregular but unmistakable process of political rescaling [...] with the consequence that city-regions are taking on new significance as fountainheads of power and influence [...]. Second, and as a corollary, city-regions everywhere are sites of continuing experiments focused on attempts to build effective frameworks of governance in the effort to manage their own internal affairs and to enhance their growing influence as both nationally and globally significant actors. (Scott 2019, 568)

In this context the issue of metropolitan development involves both understanding the dynamics of urban transformation (OECD 2015) and articulating appropriate governance and policy-making approaches in the different national contexts (Janssen-Jansen and Hutton 2011; Smetkowski *et al.* 2011; Ahrend, Gamper, and Schumann 2014; Salet *et al.* 2015).

Three broad schools of metropolitan governance have been identified – reform school, public choice theory and new regionalism – but the assumptions of each partly influence the approaches of policy makers (Dlabac *et al.* 2018).

In the last decades, the discussion on metropolitan governance is articulated around two axes: (i) the vertical relationship in the national administrative hierarchy with coordination tasks and redistributive purposes within the individual city-regions; (ii) the horizontal relationship between the different metropolitan areas, oriented toward territorial development and competitiveness (ESPON 2018).

Considering the framework of European experiences, two approaches to metropolitan governance have been identified (Geróházi and Tosics 2018).

The first approach is defined as procedural and consists of the search for mechanisms and rules that allow for coordinated activities over a sufficiently wide metropolitan territory not necessarily in defined territorial constellations but often on the basis of functional assessments.

The second can be defined as institutional and involves the creation of a metropolitan organisation on a fixed territorial basis with a sufficiently wide range of competencies. Generally, this is not a new administrative level while it is the choice of Italy¹.

Although they differ, these approaches are not mutually exclusive. For example, the key element of the procedural approach is strategic planning, which is also an important aspect of the institutional approach. Conversely, while the existence of a strong institutional structure at the metropolitan level is specific to the former, the functional approach also uses some forms of institutional arrangement, albeit in a much more flexible manner. In both cases, we must also consider the vertical articulation of levels of government.

In the now thirty-year history of the construction of a formal dimension of the metropolisation process in Italy, the dynamics of administrative reorganisation triggered by Law 56/2014 saw the emergence of the metropolitan city as an element of rupture in relations between territorial levels².

In Italy, Metropolitan Cities (MCs) were introduced (and listed) by Law 142/1990, envisaging a bottom-up process for their establishment (delimitation of administrative area) involving the territorial authorities. However, no initiative has ever been taken to implement this law, since MCs were perceived as a diminution of the other levels of territorial government (municipalities, provinces and regions), also after the constitutional revision (2001) including MCs as republic components.

¹ The amendment of Article 114 of the Constitution, which took place with the constitutional revision of 2001 (C.L. 3/2001), placed the Metropolitan City alongside the pre-existing levels of territorial government, making the institutionalisation of MCs a 'constitutional necessity'.

² For an articulated examination of this rupture, see the work of the AGEI (Italian Geographers Association) research group "Administered Territories. Regions, Metropolitan Cities, Large Areas and the New Political Geography of Italy", available at <https://www.ageiweb.it/gruppi-di-lavoro/territori-amministrati-regioni-citta-metropolitane-aree-vaste-e-la-nuova-geografia-politica-dellitalia/>.

It was only after thirteen years that Law 56/2014 (Delrio) established the MCs by authority, assigning them functions that were primarily oriented towards planning and territorial development, as well as institutional relations, including with European cities and metropolitan areas.

The reform is embedded in a context of austerity that aims to rationalise expenditure but more often operates generic cuts.

The original political will aimed towards an administrative reorganisation that, by eliminating the intermediate body (as well as by the subsequent proposal of constitutional reform, later rejected in 2016), wanted to build a different territorial hierarchy, which overcame the regional layout and attributed a clear primacy to MCs without defining a new model of territorial relationships.

The designated cities (10 by Delrio and 4 later)³ were identified as nodes in the hierarchy but according to a model that has yet to be defined, especially in the relationship with the other territorial levels.

This is therefore a process that is still open, to be interpreted in relation to the weight of regional powers, which could lead to a profoundly different balance of territorial powers.

The Delrio law not only attributes to each MC functions for coordination and territorial planning (inherited from the functions of the previous province) but also inserts a new planning tool: the Metropolitan Strategic Plan. This is a three-year plan for the metropolitan territory, which constitutes an act of direction for the institution and for the exercise of the functions of the municipalities and unions of municipalities within the metropolitan area.

In addressing the issue of governance, the case of Rome, even in its specificity and in the long-lasting crisis of the country's political-administrative structure, highlights the phase of uncertainty that has invested subjects and elements of the territorial organisation over the last decade (Dini e D'Orazio 2022).

³ The law identifies ten metropolitan cities: Torino, Milano, Venezia, Genova, Bologna, Firenze, Bari, Napoli and Reggio Calabria, to which is added the Metropolitan City of Capital Rome (Article 1, paragraph 5, Law 56/2014). The law concerns only ordinary statute regions. As regards regions with a special statute, the principles of the law are valid as principles of major economic and social reform, in accordance with their respective statutes, for the regulation of cities and metropolitan areas in the regions of Sardinia, Sicily and Friuli-Venezia Giulia, which shall adapt their internal regulations. As of 2021, there are four metropolitan cities established by the special statute regions: Cagliari, Catania, Messina and Palermo.

The paper explores the specific dynamics of the institutionalisation process of the Metropolitan City of Rome by identifying four areas of interest. This process reached a standstill at the adoption of the Statute (2014) and presents numerous critical issues in relation to: the value of the central city as capital (still under discussion at the constitutional and legal levels); the organisational structure and the tasks entrusted to the proximity entities within the metropolitan territory (Roman districts and the other metropolitan municipalities); the relationship with the Latium Region; the state level with regard to European programming (National Operational Programme on Metropolitan Cities – PON METRO). This has direct consequences regarding the public authorities' ability to intervene on the territory in both sectorial and integrated terms: in fact, in the years following 2014, the implementation of the administrative reorganisation process, envisaged in the Metropolitan City Statute, as well as the elaboration of the territorial and strategic planning tools were not carried out. In 2021 a new dynamic was induced on the one hand by the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR) – which has the Region and *Città di Roma Capitale* as interlocutors – and on the other hand by the opportunistic triggering of a new process of construction of the Metropolitan Strategic Plan (MSP) as a local-level implementation of the new Metropolitan Sustainable Development Strategy (Agenda 2030).

2. THE INSTITUTIONALISATION PROCESS OF THE METROPOLITAN CITY OF ROME

Among the Italian cities with more than 1,5 million of inhabitants, Rome appears as a very huge 'urban region', that is not a mature polycentric metropolitan area but instead a complex of residential and productive settlements poorly connected and not integrated: an embryonic polycentric system (Prezioso e D'Orazio 2015) The present *Città di Roma Capitale* (RC – Rome Capital City, LAU level) covers a surface area of 1290 km², with a population of approximately two million nine hundred (2.808.293 - 2019) and it is further divided into 15 urban districts ("municipi") that are formally boroughs but without real financial power (*Fig. 1*).

The new metropolitan body established by Law 56/2014 is the *Città Metropolitana di Roma Capitale* (CM – Metropolitan City of Rome): it includes the abovementioned *Città di Roma Capitale* and 120 municipalities (all the territorial bodies belonging to the past Province – NUTS

3 level). This area covers 5381 km² and is home to about four million⁴ inhabitants, concentrating about 74% of the population of the Latium Region⁵ with the highest value of population density (793 inhabitants per km² against the regional average of 334).

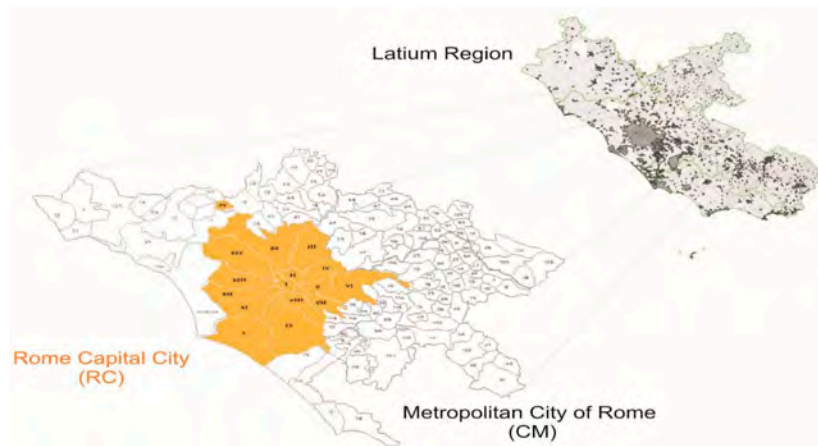


Figure 1. – Administrative subdivisions of the Roman metropolitan area.

Source: author's elaboration on geo-information system query, Latium Region 2014 CTR provincial boundaries.

Formal “Metropolitan City” of Rome (CM) (NUTS3), former Province of Rome, one of the five Provinces of the Latium Region (NUTS 2) with subdivisions at Large Urban Zone level (121 Municipalities); in orange, the central city (Città di Roma Capitale, RC – Rome Capital City) and its internal subdivisions at sub-LAU level (Municipi).

From a demographic point of view, the Latium Region constitutes a system strongly polarised on the province of Rome. The high population density of the Roman area contrasts with more proportionate situations up to low-density areas, highlighting growing phenomena of peri-urbanisation and rurbanisation.

The Region also presents itself as a ‘gravitational’ economic system in which only around 20% of the added value is achieved in the other provinces of Viterbo, Rieti, Latina and Frosinone⁶. In this context, the

⁴ Precisely 4.253.314 inhabitants in 2019.

⁵ Latium region covers a surface of 17,238 km² and counts 5.755.700 inhabitants in 2019.

⁶ The added value of the Province of Rome was about 81% of that of the Latium Region. The 2018 and 2019 figure rises to 83%. Source: ISTAT – data warehouse Istat.

process of regionalisation of the capital, regardless of the model chosen, must carefully consider the question of how to organise the Roman system – already decentralised and with centripetal dynamics – more efficiently, limiting settlement and production diseconomies as well as environmental Impacts (Prezioso e D'Orazio 2016).

From an organisational point of view, the CM reference body is the former Province of Rome, which provides the administrative structure including all the offices of the former body. The political institution is composed of the Metropolitan Council⁷, the Metropolitan Mayor (coinciding with the Mayor of the Capital Municipality); the Metropolitan Conference (composed of the Mayors of the Municipalities included in the CM) with propositional and consultative powers as well as deliberative powers in relation to the approval of the statute and statutory amendments. The other key players are the local territorial authorities: the Latium Region; the Municipality of Rome RC; the 120 municipalities included in the CM; the former Mountain Communities, now transformed by regional law into 5 Unions of Mountain Municipalities.

In this context, the institutionalisation process of the Metropolitan City of Rome shows numerous criticalities with respect to:

- the value of the central city as Capital;
- the relationship with the Latium Region;
- the relationship with the State level as regards European orientations and programming;
- the organisational structure and the assignment of tasks to the local authorities within the metropolitan area.

The examination of these critical issues is made on the basis of the analysis of the available legislative and regulatory sources (national and regional laws; Statute of the Metropolitan City of Rome); policy documents related to the national and local level (National Operational Programme on Metropolitan Cities – PON METRO 2014-2020⁸; National Recovery and Resilience Plan – PNRR⁹) as well as the metropolitan planning documents such as preparatory documents and guidelines for the implementation of Statute and the elaboration of Metropolitan Strategic Plan.

⁷ Currently designated by second level elections but to be elected by universal suffrage according to State law in line with the current Metropolitan Statute (Art. 16).

⁸ In the framework of cohesion policy adopted by the European Commission in Decision C (2015) 4998 of 14 July 2015, see <http://www.ponmetro.it/eng/>.

⁹ Implementing the Next Generation EU programme and approved by the Council of EU on 13 July 2021, full document available at <https://www.governo.it/sites/governo.it/files/PNRR.pdf>.

2.1. *The value of the central city as Capital*

The first critical issue concerns the value of the central city as capital (which is still under discussion at the constitutional and legal levels). The issue of CM governance should be included in the broader rethinking of administrative functions and levels of government in the country, which has developed since the reform of Title V, which moved in a ‘federal’ direction, where the role of the capital would have been regulated in a special way, as in most federal states, meant that its regulation was left to ordinary law (Art. 114, par. 3). However, the need for specific regulation has not been met, and in the implementation phase of the Delrio law, the issue of the capital has been completely flattened by the issue of metropolitan cities, inserting the regulation of *Roma Capitale* into this broader reform.

This leaves the attributions of capital unchanged (par. 102) while deferring the regulation of relations between RC and CM to the Statute of the CM. With a juridical reading, therefore, the issue of governance concerns two distinct but interconnected profiles that we can identify with two conditions, namely, capital identity (‘capitality’) and metropolitan identity (‘metropolitanity’) (Sterpa 2020). The first refers to the role of the capital of the republic in relation to the presence of the bodies representing national unity, those holding constitutional powers and the seats of representation of other states. The second refers to the condition of an interconnected area of a given territory, irrespective of the territorial boundaries of the governing bodies, in the context of territorial development.

Therefore, the governmental choices that affect the portions and the whole territory are necessarily interconnected and must assume an organisational model that includes both micro-territorial and macro-territorial, i.e., metropolitan, needs. The ‘metropolitanity’ requires models of government of large areas that are less oriented to a single central entity, as is the case for the ‘capitality’, and more to a functional polycentrism that is able to handle interconnected flows of interdependence through different models, which may refer either to the presence of a single territorial body corresponding to the territory identified as metropolitan, or to horizontal or vertical coordination models with the presence of several levels of government.

In the case of Rome, ‘capitality’ and ‘metropolitanity’ have different normative foundations (both in the Constitution) and their implementation is complex, as there are already two different territorial entities

that, on paper, perform the two distinct functions: the RC and the CM. The two processes of order reform have involved, often without adequate conceptual distinction, both conditions, without solving the question of whether the institutional regime had to respond, and how, to one or both roles. Recently, the issue has been re-proposed to the parliamentary debate, following the paths of both constitutional amendment and innovation through ordinary law (Prezioso, D'Orazio, e Pigliucci 2021).

The lack of clarity with respect to the choice between one or the other model and the coexistence of two institutional models (RC and CM) placed at the same level substantially leads to immobility, with neither model governing either area. In addition, there is the problem of relations among the other existing local authorities that are involved: the Latium Region and the other provinces.

2.2. *The relationship with the Latium Region*

The destiny of the city of Rome as capital is strictly linked to the destiny of the region to which the capital belongs by marking the institutional history of their relations: a capital city with an undoubtedly supra-regional connotation, with a great influence on the surrounding territory, confronted with a region made up of provincial territories that show and claim specificity and autonomy.

The transposition of Delrio Law in the Latium Region reveals substantial difficulty in proceeding with a coherent redesign that considers both the special nature of the CM of Rome and the need for the Region to equip itself with instruments for identifying the best territorial areas for the associated exercise of functions or provide for functional autonomies.

The only provision (Article 7 of the 2016 Regional Budget Law) expresses the will to return all regulatory and control functions to the Region, as well as reinforce its programming and planning capacity by transferring only operational tasks. A series of non-fundamental functions that are already exercised by the CM and Provinces in a number of areas are returned to the Region.

A critical point remains in the adaptation of the legislation and programming: whether to strengthen the role of *Roma Capitale* and whether to coordinate this role with the Metropolitan City.

The key issue is the inadequate institutional set-up of the CM. At present, this uses a set of instruments that are not sufficient to involve

and enhance all the resources available in the territories, including through a different relationship with the RC.

2.3. Relationship with the state level in relation to European programming

The third critical issue concerns the relationship with the state level and European-funded interventions (mainly National Operational Plan on Metropolitan Cities – PON METRO) and the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (2021). In line with the EU orientations for sustainable urban development, Italy has adopted a National Agenda for Urban Development. It has been declared that metropolitan cities are the new institutional level delegated to the coordination of the urban development policies, reinforcing the theme of ‘inter-municipal governance’¹⁰.

The PON METRO is given the role of an experimental thematic laboratory in which the State, Regions and Municipalities of metropolitan areas cooperate. The idea is to contribute to providing the public administration with the necessary skills to promote planning activities that are consistent with the designed institutional reform of CM.

However, PON METRO assigned the role of the intermediate body (manager of funds) to the central municipality of the metropolitan area, and only allows infrastructure interventions in the central municipality, assigning only the implementation of intangible actions linked to the Digital Agenda and social inclusion actions to the other municipalities.

Therefore, while the cohesion policy is pushing to strengthen the decentralisation of programming, management and implementation functions to the metropolitan authorities, it is clear that the current concentration on the central municipality of the interlocation at the national level inhibits a possible dynamic of cooperation among equals within the group of municipalities that constitute the metropolitan area.

This approach, which has been confirmed for the next programming period, demonstrates the national level’s desire to continue to make the central municipality responsible for the use of funds under the illusion of more efficient spending, and confirms the short circuits between the

¹⁰ “The approval of Law 56/2014 on the reform of local authorities and the establishment of the new metropolitan cities constitutes a fundamental institutional step in the National Agenda for Urban Development, reinforcing the theme of ‘inter-municipal governance’ and identifying the ‘metropolitan cities’ as a new institutional level delegated to the coordination of the same urban development policies” (CIPESS 2021, 19).

operation of policies and the attempt to build a truly metropolitan structure.

The role of intermediate body places the RC in a paternalistic and unconstructive position towards the metropolitan territory. The projects defined in the PON METRO (2014-2020) are declared to be consistent with the objectives of the Strategic Plan of RC¹¹ (clearly not the Metropolitan Strategic Plan – MSP), which covers two complementary aspects:

- the civic empowerment and the sustainable development of the city;
- the consolidation of Rome's role in the international context (overlapping with the task of the MSP).

However, the funded interventions only focus on the first aspect: increasing the level of citizens' quality of life through urban reconversion and regeneration interventions. The activity “also include the proactive involvement of the municipalities of the metropolitan belt”, but only concerns applications for the deployment of digital systems by individual municipalities.

The same difficulty in recognising the metropolitan dimension concerns the interventions that were foreseen in the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR):

- Some invest directly in RC (selected in view of the next Jubilee, complying with ‘capitality’). These are targeted actions with adequate maturity at the level of the authorisation process, e.g., interventions related to cultural heritage and tourism or soft mobility and mass public transport systems.
- Other interventions envisage a metropolitan scale but do not identify the implementing party (call for project funding by the responsible ministry), e.g., waste treatment plants.

2.4. *Organisational structure within the metropolitan territory*

While the correct combination of functions and centres of government among RC, the CM and the Region has been discussed, less attention has been paid to the definition of the micro-dimension (the ‘local’ governance) involving the organisational structure and the tasks that were entrusted to the proximity bodies within the metropolitan territory. Considering the European experiences, every project of administra-

¹¹ See the Operational Plan of *Città di Roma Capitale* for the PON METRO 2014-2020 (October 2020).

tive reorganization focusing on the metropolisation of the great cities (including the capital cities¹²), has implied a rethinking of the local level, considering the responsibilities of minor urban subdivisions (at the level of the district or even of the neighbourhood) (Servizio Studi del Senato della Repubblica 2003; 2021).

To face the territorial extent of the CR and the inadequacy of the services provided to citizens and businesses, there is a general agreement on the need to ‘strengthen the administrative centres’ within the CR (Sterpa 2015), i.e., the current Municipi, which are, essentially, without effective powers (Gigliani 2020). However, the discussion surrounding this ‘internal’ reorganisation maintains the CR as its operational horizon, neglecting the incumbent metropolitan dimension of many services and the necessary transformation of the structure in a metropolitan sense. In addition, the two levels, the macro and the micro, cannot be separated because the structure that will prevail at the institutional level will inevitably also influence local government choices.

In Delrio law, “the Statute regulates the relations between the CM, RC and the other municipalities, guaranteeing the best organisation of the functions that Rome is called upon to perform as the seat of the constitutional bodies as well as the diplomatic seats of foreign States” (par. 103).

The Statute of the CM is, as things stand, the only formally completed step (December 2014), and establishes:

- the transformation of Rome’s Municipi (currently 15 districts) into metropolitan municipalities;
- the identification of specific homogeneous zones (aggregation of municipalities) that would allow for coordinated actions at the intra-metropolitan scale.

In this vision, all these municipalities constitute the basic elements for cooperation towards metropolisation (D’Orazio 2018), as proposed by the 2003 General Provincial Territorial Plan (Prezioso 2003; 2016; 2020).

However, the formalisation of this new organisation is blocked by the evasion of the problem of defining governance in the political sphere. This problem concerns both the discussion with respect to the

¹² See the Council of Europe - Congress of Local and Regional Authorities (2021) “The status of capital cities” Recommendation 452 (2021) debated and adopted by the Statutory Forum on 12 February 2021 rapporteur: Amelie TARSCHEYS-INGRE, Sweden, available at <https://rm.coe.int/0900001680a188f7>.

specific functions and endowments that the role of Capital entails and the 'weight' of *Città di Roma Capitale* in the process.

In fact, following the Statute, electing the metropolitan mayor by universal suffrage, it will be possible only after the constitution of homogeneous zones, but it needs also that the capital city has carried out the division of its territory into districts with administrative autonomy. With respect to articulation in districts of its own territory, RC does not succeed in achieving administrative decentralization, complete with economic and financial autonomy.

On the other hand, the identification of homogeneous zones that would constitute the subsystems of the established metropolitan city (administrative bodies) is critical and would imply a different formulation of the relationships between the centre and the districts of the RC, allowing for direct interaction between these and the other municipalities of the metropolitan territory.

After the approval of the Statute, it is possible to highlight two phases, both characterized by political weaknesses in the metropolitan proposal. References to the main documents are listed in the following table (*Tab. 1*).

Table 1. – Main formal references in the institutionalization process.

REFERENCE	DOCUMENT	YEAR	ACT
Statute	Statute of the Metropolitan City of <i>Roma Capitale</i>	2014	Deliberation Metropolitan Conference no. 1 of 22/12/2014
Metropolitan Strategic Plan (compulsory, three-year)	Guidelines for the preparation of the Metropolitan Strategic Plan of the Metropolitan City of <i>Roma Capitale</i>	2015	Metropolitan Council Deliberation no. 29 of 27/10/2015
	Strategic Plan Policy Document of the Metropolitan City of <i>Roma Capitale</i>	2016	Decree. no. 111 of 01/06/2016 of the Deputy Metropolitan Mayor; Metropolitan Council Deliberation no. 48 of 15/06/2016
	Preliminary Document of the Metropolitan Strategic Plan and establishment of the Steering Committee for the Sustainable Development of the Metropolitan City of <i>Roma Capitale</i>	2020	Decree no. 99 of 01/09/2020 of the Deputy Metropolitan Mayor

Source: elaboration of the author.

A first phase, in continuity with the spirit of the Statute, which entrusts the definition of the possible structure to the technical-administrative structure (inheritance of the provincial body) and that links the Strategic Plan and coordination of the metropolitan territory. The production of both technical and political documents, however, does not succeed in the absence of a political solicitation and clear framework at the regional level regarding the remaining issues in the distribution of functions, especially between RC and CM.

The second phase coincides with the change in RC administration in 2016 and marks a break in this already uncertain and weak process.

The question of the choice of the cooperative institutional model, of the articulation of the structure of the metropolitan area and of the very definition of homogeneous zones goes into the background (it will be the result of subsequent evaluations), is essentially ignored, replaced by a process of interlocution according to the wishes of individual municipalities and the main metropolitan stakeholders regarding both access to specific funds and the elaboration of sectoral (but strategic) plans such as the Sustainable Mobility Urban Plan.

The relationship linking the Metropolitan Strategic Plan and the coordination of the metropolitan territory (from the point of view of the metropolitan function of territorial planning) falls away.

The elaboration of the Metropolitan Strategic Plan (MSP) is separated from the need for coordination and the MSP is interpreted by CM as an ‘implementation plan’ (as it is strategic) of the 2030 Agenda¹³ at the metropolitan scale in the context of an agreement with National Association of Italian Municipalities – ANCI first (Strategic Metropolises Project) and Ministry of Environment later, thus undertaking a “process of convergence between Strategic Planning and the drafting of the Metropolitan Agenda for Sustainable Development, attributing to the MSP the implementation role of the Agenda’s actions” (Preliminary Document of the Metropolitan Strategic Plan 2020, 11).

This preliminary document claims to make use of a participatory process¹⁴ that once again calls on municipalities and key metropolitan

¹³ An instrument consistent with the National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS) 2017-2021 and envisaged by an agreement signed with the Ministry of the Environment.

¹⁴ See the “Agenda per lo sviluppo sostenibile della Città Metropolitana di Roma Capitale. Guida al percorso partecipato. Incontro con stakeholder e amministratori 18 giugno 2021 - 14 giugno 2021”, available at <https://static.cittametropolitanaroma.it/uploads/Guida-Agenda-SVS-CMRC.pdf>.

stakeholders to provide elements with respect to a system of goals formulated in generic coherence with those of the 2016 guideline documents (Natural Capital, Relational Capital) and related to the UN Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and with respect to which 'proposed actions' are highlighted.

However, the proposed actions lack implementation references, i.e., 'who does what', in the metropolitan framework, assuming the will of individual municipalities in responding to calls for the allocation of specific resources, from European (direct or indirect) and national sources for specific projects according to a model of relationship capital-municipalities based on the logic of PON METRO¹⁵.

The institutional website claims:

With a pragmatic idea of strategic planning, the Authority adopts a more process-oriented than document-oriented approach, surveying the territory's projects and its 'voices', co-designing with institutions and civil society, in order to bring out and support prospects for innovation and orient them in the direction indicated by the development vision.¹⁶

The initial results, which emerged from the discussion with mayors and stakeholders, highlight among the "priority issues" (CM Roma Capitale 2021, 16), however, the question of the role of the metropolitan authority returns to the center:

- concern about how European funding will land in the area;
- appreciation of the idea of the plan as a co-designing device;
- need to work by subgroups and therefore by homogeneous areas;
- concern about the 'health status' of services at the metropolitan level (roads, schools);
- ability to enhance the planning and programming capacity of the metropolitan authority in a more decisive manner than in the past, which up to now does not seem to have played a role.

¹⁵ Now, apparently, the process of constructing the MSP and the Metropolitan Agenda 2030 is underway according to the timing, which envisaged in the spring of 2022 the Implementation of the Strategic Plan contents and the writing of the final Document (April 2022). However, as of October 2022, no formal Metropolitan Strategic Plan document has been produced and/or adopted.

¹⁶ <https://www.cittametropolitanaroma.it/homepage/la-citta-metropolitana/la-pianificazione-strategica/>.

3. SOME CONCLUSIVE CONSIDERATIONS

The Metropolitan City established by Delrio opens and does not close the economic-political geographic theme of the metropolitan institutionalisation of Rome: how to arrive at more coherent, effective and efficient delimitations and management of both administrative and territorial capital of potentially polycentric areas, within and outside the dominant municipality.

From the above, it is clear that although homogeneous zones, basins and optimal areas can be referred to the same territorial and organizational entity, the advantages the territory gains from being a Metropolitan Capital City are still worth striving for:

- an efficient territorial dimension to optimally manage and govern the planning and delivery of services;
- the safeguarding of proper political and institutional representation;
- a good response to local needs for sustainable development, and transnational competitiveness.

In the case of Rome, a new internal territorial order should inspire the adoption of structural planning solutions on a geographical and economic basis that favour the sharing of so-called fundamental functions oriented towards the planning, territorial development, and management of supra-local services.

The congruence between the CM and the actual territorial context should refer to a model based on the formalised organisation of the flows of real and horizontally existing exchanges between “peers” within the RC and between neighbouring municipalities belonging to the metropolitan area. A polycentric organisational hypothesis, i.e., the design of a vast area, has yet to be constructed by identifying the elements of territorial coherence at the levels of both possible economic-territorial policies and on available territorial resources.

One proposal to this effect (Prezioso 2016; 2020) is an organisation for CM consisting of several ‘cities’:

- historically, economically, politically independent of each other;
- horizontally free of hierarchical relationships (dependence) from one another;
- close to each other (contiguity) and therefore;
- linked by relationships of mutual functionality and complementarity with one another.

Eleven Unions include the 15 Roman Municipia (internal subdivision) whose transformation into autonomous municipalities is claimed.

These 135 municipalities would retain their municipal prerogatives but would cooperate on many fronts, within the Unions and within the CM.

In the polycentric system, the local dimensions (Municipi and municipalities) integrate traditional economies (cultural heritage, tourism, services, etc.) with innovative activities (mainly circular, eco and green, R&D, strategic and smart clusters, etc.), creating markets that meet the growing demand for employment from local territorial potential capital, which are more or less correlated with regional ones.

Polycentric organisation is the formula by which individual municipal entities choose to enhance and manage bottom-up potential territorial capitals, offering services of general economic interest (health, accessibility, training). The possible union of neighbouring municipalities within the Roman metropolitan area, envisaged in Delrio law and contained in the Statute in force, is, therefore, functional to this end and the responsible coverage of the local demand for services.

REFERENCES

- Ahrend, R., C. Gamper, and A. Schumann. 2014. "The OECD Metropolitan Governance Survey: A Quantitative Description of Governance Structures in Large Urban Agglomerations". OECD Regional Development Working Papers, 2014/04. Paris.
- Bourne, L.S. 1997. *Governance, Efficiency and Social Equity in Large Urban Agglomerations: Examples from the Recent Toronto Experience*. Mexico City: IGU Conference.
- CIPESS. 2021. *Programma Operativo Complementare di Azione e Coesione Città Metropolitane 2014-2020 POC Metro*, versione 3.0 del 4 dicembre 2020, allegato delibera CIPESS n. 33, 29 aprile 2021. Modifica del Programma operativo complementare (POC) di azione e coesione "Città metropolitane" 2014-2020, approvato con delibera CIPE n. 46 del 10 agosto 2016.
- Città Metropolitana Roma Capitale. 2021. *La partita nella ripresa*. Piano Strategico Metropolitano e risorse per territori sostenibili e resilienti. Incontro partecipativo online, instant report, 26 maggio 2021. [23/06/2021]. www.cittametropolitanaroma.it
- Dini, F., e A. D'Orazio. 2022. "Città metropolitane e questione dell'ente intermedio in Italia. Tassonomie di soluzioni possibili". *Federalismi.it - Rivista di Diritto Pubblico Italiano, Comparato Europeo* 20: 315-339.
- Dlabac, O., L. Medir, M. Tomàs, and M. Lackowska. 2018. "Metropolitan Challenges and Reform Pressures across Europe: The Perspectives of City Mayors". *Local Government Studies* 44: 229-254.

- D’Orazio, A. 2018. “Città metropolitana di Roma Capitale. Opportunità e barriere alla cooperazione”. *Memorie Geografiche* 16 (*Barriere/Barriers*, a cura di M. Fuschi): 533-542.
- ESPON. 2018. *SPIMA – Spatial Dynamics and Strategic Planning in Metropolitan Areas*. Final Report Version, 05/03/2018. Luxembourg.
- Geróházi, E., and I. Tosics. 2018. *Addressing Metropolitan Challenges for the Barcelona Metropolitan Area*. Barcelona: Àrea Metropolitana de Barcelona.
- Gigliani, F. 2020. “Organizzare il governo di prossimità”. In *A centocinquant’anni da Roma capitale. Costruire il futuro di Roma*, a cura di B. Caravita et al., 87-94. Soveria Mannelli: Rubettino.
- Gualini, E. 2006. “The Rescaling of Governance in Europe: New Spatial and Institutional Rationales”. *European Planning Studies* 14: 881-904.
- Indovina, F. 2003. “La metropolizzazione del territorio. Nuove gerarchie territoriali”. *Economia e Società Regionale – Oltre il Ponte* 3-4: 46-85.
- Janssen-Jansen, L.B., and T.A. Hutton. 2011. “Rethinking the Metropolis: Reconfiguring the Governance Structures of the 21st Century City-Region”. *International Planning Studies* 16: 201-215.
- OECD. 2015. *The Metropolitan Century: Understanding Urbanisation and Its Consequences*. Paris: OECD Publishing.
- Prezioso, M. 2003. *Pianificare in sostenibilità. Natura e finalità di una nuova politica per il governo del territorio*. Roma: Adnkronos Libri.
- Prezioso, M. 2016. “La proposta”. In *Roma metropolitana. Prospettive regionali e ipotesi cross-border d’area vasta sostenibile*, a cura di M. Caroli e M. Prezioso, 367-400. Milano: FrancoAngeli.
- Prezioso, M. 2020. “Verso un Piano strategico per Roma Capitale Città metropolitana 2030”. In *A centocinquant’anni da Roma capitale. Costruire il futuro di Roma*, a cura di B. Caravita et al., 115-155. Soveria Mannelli: Rubettino.
- Prezioso, M., e A. D’Orazio. 2015. “Roma metropolitana: le dimensioni territoriali di una capitale. Un confronto a distanza con Parigi”. Dans *Métropoles et régions, entre concurrence et complémentarités. Regards croisés entre France et Italie*. Actes du Colloque International, Paris, 10 et 11 avril 2014, dirigé par M. Cremaschi, A. Delpirou, D. Rivière, et C. Salone. Roma - Milano: Planum Publisher.
- Prezioso, M., A. D’Orazio, e M. Pigliucci. 2021. “Roma Capitale. Quale città metropolitana nel contesto nazionale e regionale”. *Memorie Geografiche* 19 (*Feedback*, a cura di F. Dini, F. Martellozzo, F. Randelli, e P. Romei): 849-858.
- Salet, W., R. Vermeulen, F. Savini, and S. Dembski. 2015. “Which Challenges for Today’s European Metropolitan Spaces?”. *Planning Theory & Practice* 16 (2): 274-275.
- Scott, A.J. 2019. “City Regions Reconsidered”. *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space* 51 (3): 554-580.

- Servizio Studi del Senato della Repubblica. 2003. "Roma capitale. L'esperienza comparata: Berlino, Bruxelles, Londra, Madrid, Parigi, Vienna, Washington DC", scheda di lettura sulla proposta di riforma dell'art. 114, terzo comma, Cost. (A.S. 2544), dossier n. 463, novembre 2003.
- Servizio Studi del Senato della Repubblica. 2021. "Roma Capitale in una prospettiva comparata: Berlino, Bruxelles, Londra, Madrid, Parigi e Vienna", dossier n. 458, ottobre 2021.
- Smetkowski, M., G. Gorzelak, M. Kozak, A. Olechnick, A. Płoszaj, and K. Wojnar. 2011. *The European Metropolises and Their Regions: From Economic Landscapes to Metropolitan Networks*. Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar.
- Sterpa, A. 2015. *Il pendolo e la livella. Il federalismo 'all'italiana' e le riforme*. Torino: Giappichelli.
- Sterpa, A. 2020. "Il rapporto tra Roma capitale e Roma Città metropolitana. La dimensione territoriale di governo". In *A centocinquanta'anni da Roma capitale. Costruire il futuro di Roma*, a cura di B. Caravita et al., 63-72. Soveria Mannelli: Rubettino.

Copyright (©) 2022 Angela D'Orazio, Maria Prezioso

Editorial format and graphical layout: copyright (©) LED Edizioni Universitarie



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons

Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives – 4.0 International License

How to cite this paper:

D'Orazio, A., and M. Prezioso. 2022. "Dynamics of Metropolisation: The Institutional Construction of the *Città Metropolitana di Roma Capitale* in the National and Regional Context". *Geography Notebooks / Quaderni di Geografia / Cahiers de Géographie / Cuadernos de Geografía* 5 (2): 89-108. doi: <https://dx.doi.org/10.7358/gn-2022-002-dopr>