

Cohesion Policy, backbone of Europe?

The role of Metropolitan areas

17th June 2021

Claudia Fassero (Città Metropolitana di Torino)

Thanks to the ESPON Programme and the Portuguese Presidency of the EU Council for inviting Metropolitan City of Turin – as Lead stakeholder - to present the ESPON METRO research to this high level event.

Sharing with other Metropolitan authorities and analysing the main scientific contribution on the topic, it was clear that all over the Europe there was a mismatch between the concentration of GDP and population in the metropolitan areas on the one hand and the volume of cohesion policy resources directly managed on the other.

Now more than ever it is evident that the metropolitan areas represent the strategical territorial level for the next future development model. Metropolis represent the main economic engine of the EU capable of driving the balanced development of large territories, ensuring that no one is left behind.

But the absence of metropolitan areas and cities in the direct management or implementation of European Structural and Investment Funds on the territory has negative consequences on the effectiveness of policies.

Another point needing to be investigated is related to the finding that, in the face of the metropolisation process present throughout Europe, heterogeneous models have emerged, both from an institutional point of view and from a specific competence point of view. The group of stakeholders also focused the need to identify what are the elements that characterize the most effective "metropolitan" model with respect to the objectives of the cohesion policy, and related implementation tools.

These considerations brought to define the three main policy questions identified in the ESPON METRO project - and presented afterwards by Prof. Cotella – around which we expect to obtain scientific evidences in order to improve the metropolitan capacity to intercept, interpret territorial needs and implement integrated development program in synergy with the cohesion policy objectives.

The European metropolis are at the core of the inclusive and resilient development trend of the next years, we are ready to positively contribute to this process also thanks to the ESPON METRO research results.

Our common expectation is that the outcomes of the ESPON METRO project research will represent a real added value for the policy makers at European and Member State level, contributing to a new generation of programmes truly capable of intercepting and responding to the specific needs of each local community. The metropolitan authorities are ready to take up the challenge.

Thank you for your attention.



Claudia Fassero MA in International Political Sciences. Currently head of European and International Programs and Projects' Unit - Economic Development Department - at Metropolitan City of Turin. Projects manager for several EU funded projects linked to the innovation and SMEs competitiveness topic. Previously, she worked for the Turin's Chamber of Commerce as expert for enterprise internationalisation support services in the framework of the Euro Info Centre and Innovation Relay Centre networks (the current Enterprise Europe Network), supported by EU Commission – DG Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs.