

// ESPON METRO

The role and future perspectives of Cohesion Policy in the planning of Metropolitan Areas and Cities

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ESPON METRO in a nutshell



ESPON METRO in a Nuthsell

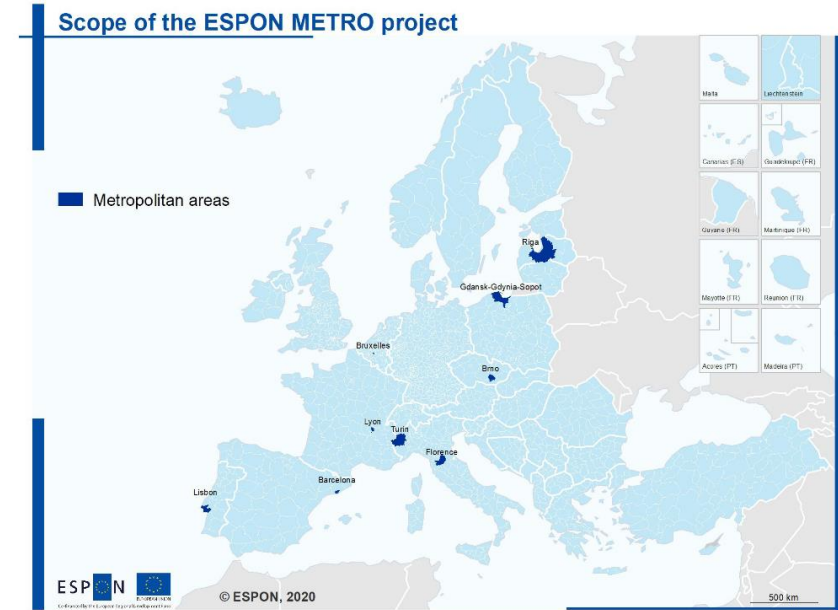
- Title: **The role and future perspectives of Cohesion Policy in the planning of Metropolitan Areas and Cities**
- Lifespan: October 2020 – October 2021

Policy Questions:

- PQ1 | What role do metropolitan areas play in the development, management and implementation of the EU Cohesion Policy?**
- PQ2 | What is the added value of the EU Cohesion Policy in the planning and implementation of metropolitan policies?**
- PQ3 | What role does the EU Cohesion Policy play in consolidating metropolitan governance and cooperation?**

ESPON METRO in a Nuthsell

- Policy questions answered on the basis of 9 in-depth case studies
- 'Tandem approach'



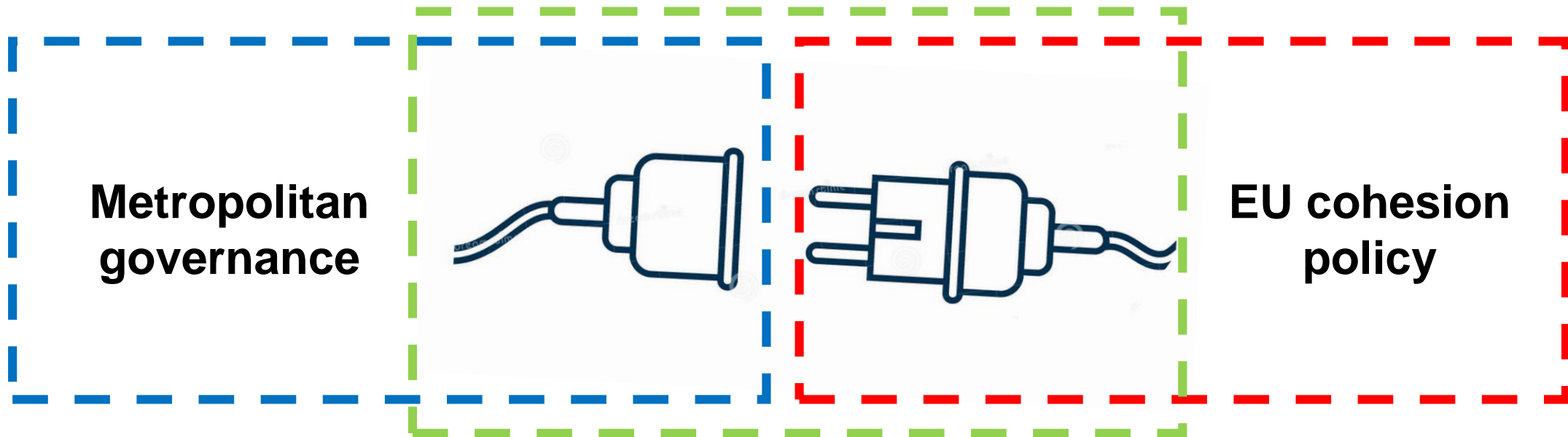
Metropolitan City of Turin Barcelona Metropolitan Area Lisbon Metropolitan Area Brno Metropolitan Area Gdansk-Gdynia-Sopot Metropolitan Area Metropolitan City of Florence Métropole de Lyon Brussels Capital Region Riga Metropolitan Area



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ESPON METRO in a Nutshell



- Understand metropolitan governance in its heterogeneity
- Explore how different metropolitan governance models are engaged within the EUCP
- Analyse how the EUCP impacts on (i) the planning of metropolitan areas and (ii) the consolidation of metropolitan governance and cooperation

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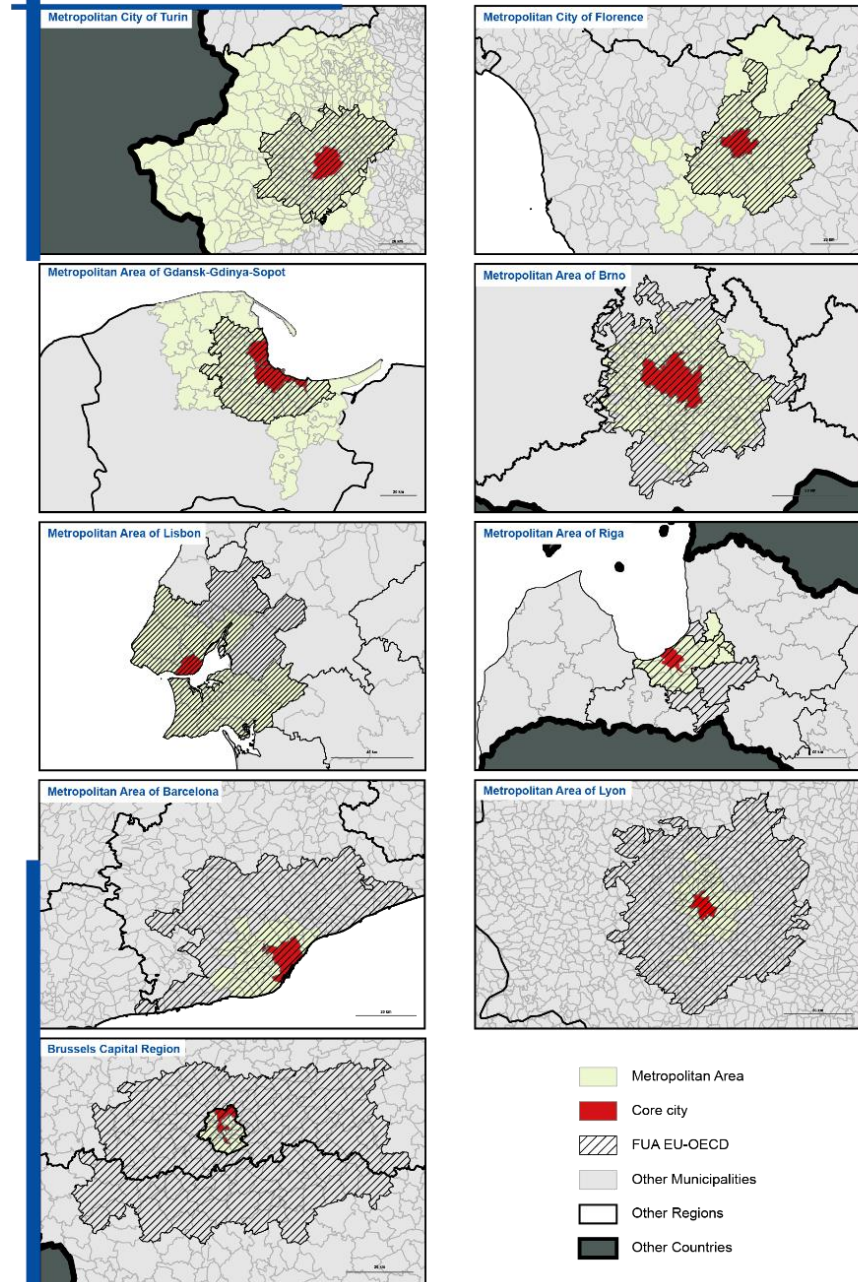
Selected insights



Territorial context

The EU metropolitan dimension presents multiple levels of heterogeneity

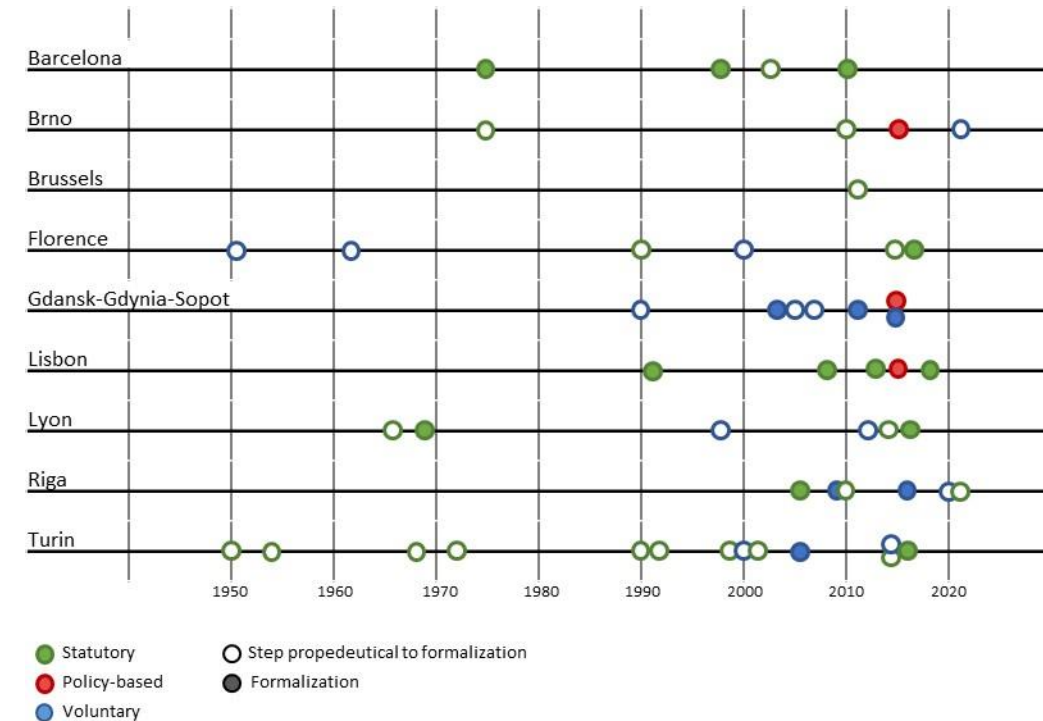
- In relation to the territorial, socio-economic and demographic characteristics of the European FUAs (EU-OECD methodology)
- In relation to the fit between the territorial phenomena and the institutions that are deputed to deal with them



Territorial context

The EU metropolitan dimension presents multiple levels of heterogeneity

- In relation to the territorial, socio-economic and demographic characteristics of the European FUAs (EU-OECD methodology)
- In relation to the fit between the territorial phenomena and the institutions that are deputed to deal with them
- In relation to the origin and level of institutionalization of metropolitan cooperation
- In relation to the models of governance, spatial development instruments, budgeting, engagement with public and private actors etc.



What role do metropolitan areas play in the development, management and implementation of the EU Cohesion Policy? (PQ1)

Selected insights

- Formal metropolitan areas did not play a relevant role in the programming of the EU cohesion policy 2014-20 (possibly due to their late institutionalization or exceptional nature)
- Through time, some metropolitan areas were entrusted with the management of a number of ESIF priorities (often as intermediated bodies - varies from place to place)
- Integrated Territorial Investments (ITIs) have been often used to entrust metropolitan areas for the management of the EU cohesion policy (5 cases over 9)
- In Italy, the National Operative Programme Città Metropolitane (NOP Metro) is a unique instrument in the EU context (resources are however managed by the core municipalities)
- In the programming period 2021-27, in various context a higher involvement in programming is noted E.g. LMA, MAG, MdL.

What is the added value of the EU Cohesion Policy in the planning and implementation of metropolitan policies? (PQ2)

Selected insights

- General coherence exists between EU cohesion policy goals and priorities and metropolitan policy goals (also due to the width of EUCP goals)
- Often metropolitan authorities position their spatial development strategies within the frame of EUCP priorities (to facilitate resources' channelling)
- In some cases, a partial unbalance in the geographical distribution of the resources towards the core municipalities is detected (partly reflecting demographic incidence, but also central management)
- The misfit between FUA and institutional area may prevent the use of EUCP resources in support of truly metropolitan policies

What role does the EU Cohesion Policy play in consolidating metropolitan governance and cooperation? (PQ3)

Selected insights

- Where formal metropolitan institutions do not exist, the EU cohesion policy may triggers virtuous institutional experimentation (and consolidates existing 'informal' cooperation)
- However, until now this did not lead to the introduction of a formal metropolitan administrative layer (although metropolisation processes are ongoing, they are rather slow)
- Formal metropolitan institutions are less subjected to change as a consequence of the EUCP.
- However, formal metropolitan institutions could use the EU cohesion policy as a leverage to further stimulate intermunicipal cooperation towards a metropolitan perspective. This action depends on both the magnitude of funds are the role these institution play in their management

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Policy messages



Strengthen the role of metropolitan areas play in the development, management and implementation of the EU Cohesion Policy (PQ1)

Policy messages – Metropolitan level

- (Prioritise) **Identify thematic priorities and actions for which the metropolitan level generates a higher impact** and to claim a role accordingly in relevant arenas.
- (Capitalise) **Identify good practices in the engagement of the metropolitan areas in the EUCP and capitalise on them**, both strengthening them and using them as a leverage to claim additional involvement.
- (Join forces) **Network with other metropolitan areas at the national and EU level to exchange knowledge and good practices. Jointly promote actions** towards a further recognition of the metropolitan dimension in the EUCP and within national administrative and policy frameworks.
- (Empower) **Invest to consolidate institutional capacity by enlarging and upskilling human resources and re-engineering processes and procedures**, to further enhance metropolitan governance functioning and strengthen the case for a devolution of the EUCP

Strengthen the role of metropolitan areas play in the development, management and implementation of the EU Cohesion Policy (PQ1)

Policy messages – EU (in collaboration with national/regional levels)

- (Define) **Define metropolitan development autonomously from sustainable urban development in the discourse and policy priorities of EU institutions**, to stimulate an autonomous debate on the role of metropolitan areas (e.g. linking to the debate on the implementation of the TA2030).
- (Acknowledge) **Acknowledge the crucial role that the metropolitan level can play in dealing with socio-economic, environmental and territorial challenges and involve metropolitan institutions in the design of EUCP Programmes**, to enrich them with a metropolitan dimension.
- (Devolve) **Devolve part of the management of the EUCP to metropolitan institutions** in relation to those priorities for which a metropolitan management may provides higher impact.
- (Consult) **Consult with EU networks with a metropolitan focus** (EMA, Eurocities, Metrex) **in the definition of the EUCP** programming priorities and regulations.
- (Monitor) **Establish a European Metropolitan Observatory**, in connection to the planned EU Rural Observatory, to develop evidence-based knowledge on functional and institutional metropolitan areas.

Increase the added value of the EU Cohesion Policy in the planning and implementation of metropolitan policies (PQ2)

Policy messages – Metropolitan level

- (Think strategically) **Establish an overarching, comprehensive metropolitan strategy together with all relevant stakeholders, matching the EUCP instruments and opportunities**, in order to facilitate the channelling of resources on concrete metropolitan actions.
- (Collaborate) **Establish proactive collaboration with all municipalities within the metropolitan area, economic and social stakeholders as well as with national and regional governments**, in so doing guaranteeing the co-definition of projects with a true metropolitan dimension.
- (Soften boundaries) Use all available means to **act through variable geographies (FUA, urban-rural relations, remote areas etc.) defined by the issues at stake**. Tackle territorial misfits through a multi-network approach and use partial 'quick-wins' to eventually reach a larger scale.
- (Support and work together) As fragmented governance limit the effectiveness of the EUCP implementation, **metropolitan authorities should support and co-work with local public bodies and private actors in the outline and preparation of project proposals and in their implementation**.

Increase the added value of the EU Cohesion Policy in the planning and implementation of metropolitan policies (PQ2)

Policy messages – EU (in collaboration with national/regional levels)

- (EU Metro-thinking) **Acknowledge the metropolitan scale as the most suitable scale to tackle functional urban challenges, facilitate supralocal cooperation** and further strengthen the metropolitan dimension in the design, implementation, and management of the EUCP.
- (National and regional Metro-thinking) **Involve metropolitan representatives when programming national and regional Operational Programmes, to strengthen their metropolitan dimension** and enhance their coherence and outcomes on the ground.
- (Metropolitan instruments) **Introduce programmes and instruments managed at the metropolitan level** (as dedicated OPs, selected OPs priorities, ITIs or other ad hoc agreements), to guarantee the allocation of funding **enhancing vertical and horizontal coordination** in the definition of priorities and operational plans with a metropolitan dimension.

Maximise the role that the EU Cohesion Policy plays in consolidating metropolitan governance and cooperation (PQ3)

Policy messages – Metropolitan level

- (Dialogue and leverage) **Intensify EUCP dialogue with local municipalities**, thus fostering multi-local cooperation and the articulation of a metropolitan agenda. **Use the EUCP as a leverage** to overcome the differential interests of basic territorial units and encourage them to join forces.
- (Variable networking) **Strengthen the role of the metropolitan institution**, using the opportunities offered by the different EU instruments (Operational Programmes, ITI, CLLD, RRF) to adapting the scale of metropolitan governance to actual functional challenges
- (Link with policy forum) **Valorise existing metropolitan policy forums**, to engage with relevant public, private and third sector actors, as an added value to collect their inputs in relation to the EU Cohesion Policy consultation process, thus encouraging a place-based representation of local and metropolitan needs and priorities.

Maximise the role that the EU Cohesion Policy plays in consolidating metropolitan governance and cooperation (PQ3)

Policy messages – EU (in collaboration with national/regional levels)

- (Devolve) **Devolve the management of specific OPs' priorities or of dedicated Metropolitan OPs to metropolitan institutions**, to provide a leverage to involve municipalities in the definition of metropolitan visions and priorities.
- (Experiment) **Explore the use of ITIs in metropolitan areas**, to trigger and strengthen metropolitan cooperation and consolidate **an experimental ground to tackle functional challenges** through the development of overarching metropolitan visions, priorities and actions.
- (Cooperation catalyst) **Recognise metropolitan areas as a catalyst of cooperation within heterogeneous territories** and involve them in EUCP programming and management, in so doing improving the multilevel partnership among local, regional and national actors as well as economic and social stakeholders.
- (Context sensitive) **Provide in the EUCP with a flexible framework that allows tasks and long-term actions to be tailored to the needs of any metropolitan area**, while at the same time stressing the need to act at a functional level.

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Final messages



Final Message

- All METRO Materials are available on the ESPON website: <https://www.espon.eu/metro>
- The METRO Final outcomes will be published around the end of the year
- The report will include three independent but complementary Policy Briefs:

PB1 | The role of metropolitan areas in the EU cohesion policy

PB2 | The added value of the EU cohesion policy in planning and implementation of metropolitan policies

PB3 | The role of the EU cohesion policy in supporting metropolitan governance structures and cooperation practices.

A statement stemming from the project has been posted on the website of the **Conference of the Future of Europe**. You can read it and endorse it at this link:

<https://futureu.europa.eu/processes/Economy/f/10/proposals/91609?locale=en>



Co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund

Inspire Policy Making with Territorial Evidence



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