

# // The ESPON METRO project

## State of the Art and interim insights



# ESPON METRO in a nutshell

# ESPON METRO in a Nutshell

- Title: **The role and future perspectives of Cohesion Policy in the planning of Metropolitan Areas and Cities**
- Lifespan: October 2020 – October 2021 (Interim report delivered on April the 9th)

- Policy Questions:

**PQ1 | What role do metropolitan areas and cities 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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DEMAZIERE



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OF LATVIA



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I METROPOLITANS DE BARCELONA



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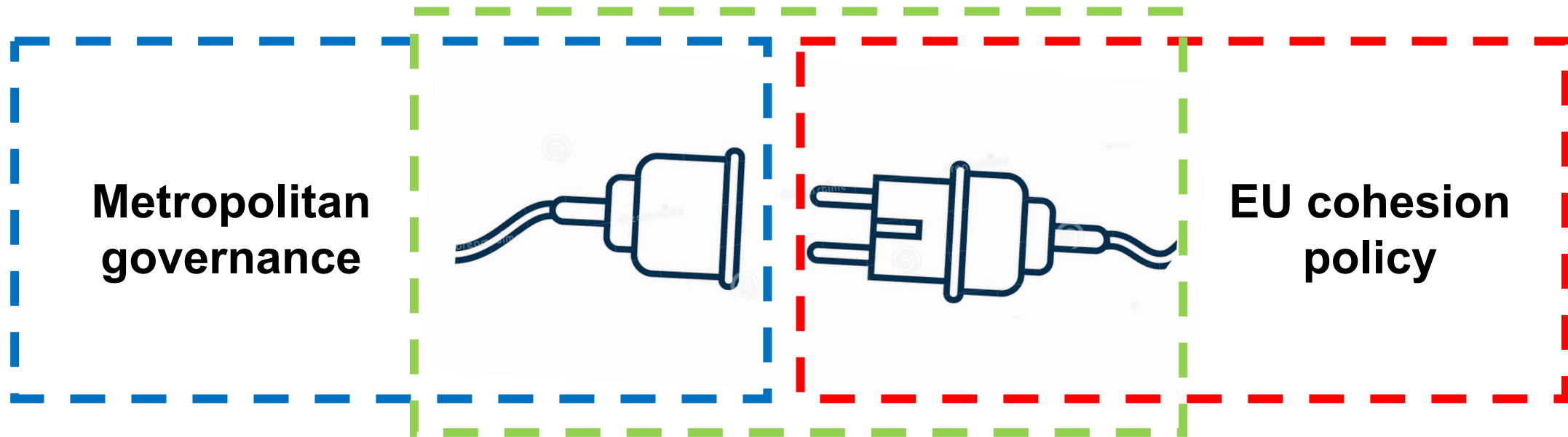


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# ESPON METRO in a Nuthsell



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

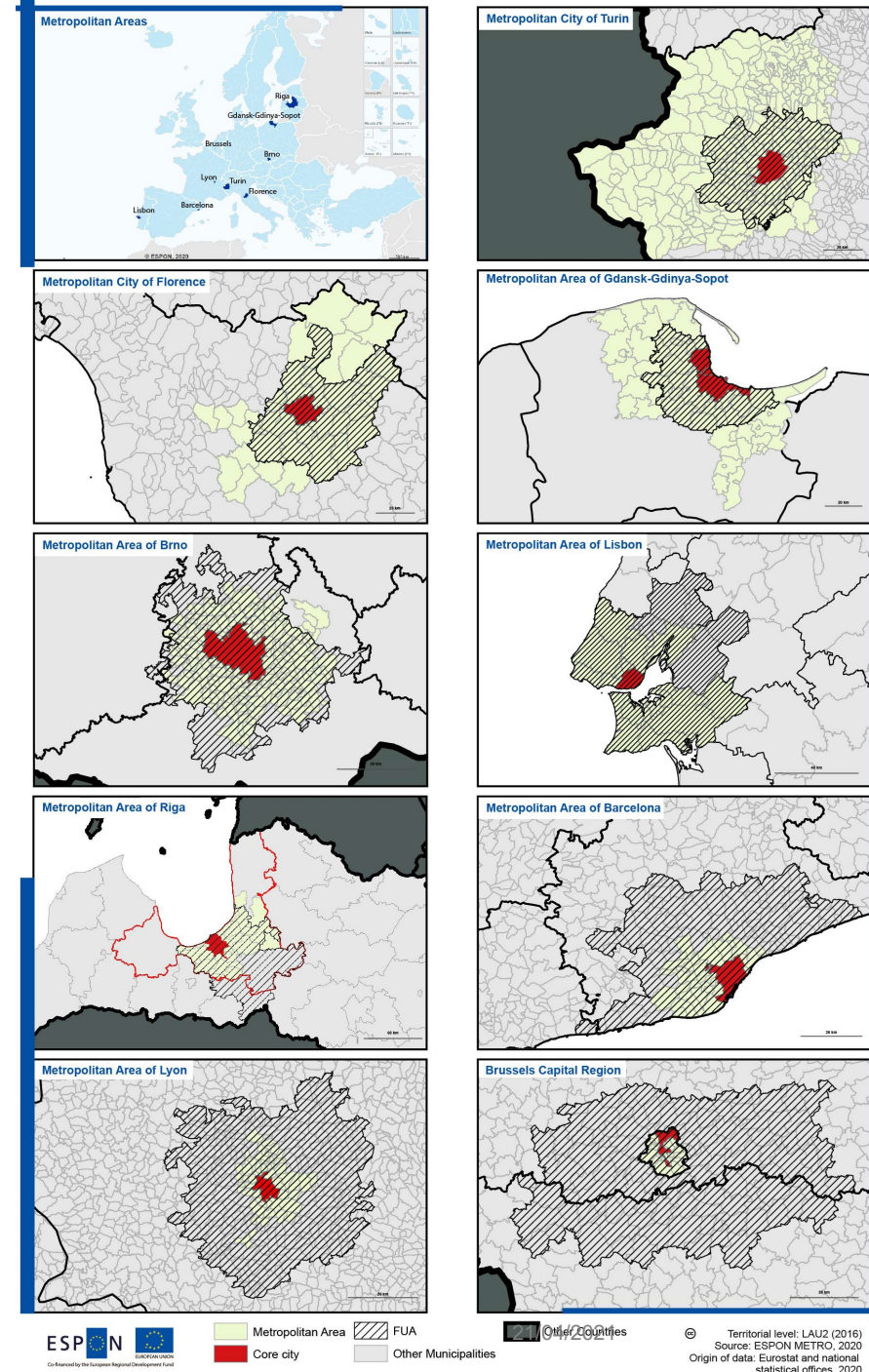


## Interim insights

# Interim insights

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 level of institutionalization of metropolitan cooperation
- In relation to the fit between the territorial phenomena and the institutions that are deputed to deal with them
- In relation to the models of governance, spatial development instruments, budgeting, engagement with public and private actors etc.



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

## Interim results

- Beside BCR, formal metropolitan areas/cities do not play a relevant role in the programming of the EU cohesion policy 2014-20 (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 (PON Metro) is a unique instrument in the EU context (resources are however managed by the core municipalities)
- No significant change seems to occur in the programming period 2021-27 (however, in various context a higher involvement in programming is evident! E.g. LMA, MAG, MdL).



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

## Tentative policy messages

- Involving metropolitan areas further in the EUCP programming could introduce new priorities and ideas to complement those put forward by countries, regions and municipalities. In a time of systemic transformation accelerated by the pandemic, this is particularly important (also in RRF)
- ITI showed interesting potential in detailing the metropolitan dimension of the EUCP. It's adoption by countries and regions should be further incentivised / regulated
- Metropolitan areas and cities should identify (through their own strategies and other documents) those themes and priorities in which they consider they could provide added value as intermediated management bodies (also in ROPs and NOPs)
- To establish a European Metropolitan Policy Observatory exploring the nuances of the metropolitan phenomenon (both in functional and institutional terms) could support the development of place-based policies, tailored to the various institutional contexts.

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

## Interim results

- General coherence between EU cohesion policy goals and priorities and metropolitan policy goals (also due to the width of EUCP goals)
- Higher coherence in these metropolitan cooperation that are policy based (ITI)
- Often metropolitan spatial development tools position their strategies within the frame of EUCP priorities
- The magnitude of resources delivered on the territory seems to have an important role in this alignment (this magnitude is highly differential!)
- In some cases, the resources show a partial unbalance in the geographical distribution of the resources towards the core municipalities (partly reflecting demographic incidence, higher social segregation etc., but also central management)

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

## Tentative policy messages

- In regional and national programming, recognise the role that metropolitan areas can play in addressing supralocal functional dynamics and coordinating the action of local authorities (co-construction of specific thematic sections of the OPs)
- Try to upload pivotal priorities of the metropolitan development agenda during their programming phase (join forces with other metro areas and/or within pan-European networks).
- Define an overarching metropolitan development agenda, aligned to the EU programming period, to position metropolitan goals and actions within national and regional development perspectives and to channel more easily EU resources on concrete metropolitan actions
- Think and act also beyond the institutional boundaries, to find ways to bypass existing administrative constraints (e.g. act at FUA level or through multiple, variable geographies).

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

## Interim results

- 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 relevant changes as a consequence of the EUCP
- However, formal metropolitan institutions could use the EU cohesion policy as a leverage to further stimulate intermunicipal cooperation. This action depends on both the magnitude of funds are the role these institution play in their management

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

## Tentative policy messages

- ESIF allocation managed by metropolitan authorities should be used as a leverage to overcome the differential interests of basic territorial units towards the elaboration of joint visions and priorities.
- To further simplify ESIF logics and mechanisms, so that metropolitan institutions can integrate them within territorial strategies and use them to enhance intermunicipal coordination (ITIs but also CLLD are good examples).
- At the EU level, the metropolitan dimension should be decoupled from the urban development dimension, in turn contribution to national metropolitan agendas (evidence-based argumentations of the added value of a metropolitan development approach may contribute to this end).
- RRF should include specific actions dedicated to metropolitan areas, so that metropolitan authorities can use them to enhance further coordination and cooperation within their territories.

# Final Messages

- All METRO Materials are available on the ESPON website: <https://www.espon.eu/metro>
- The METRO Final Delivery is due on October the 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021, and will be published around the end of the year
- The report will include three independent by 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.**

# // Thank you

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