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Metro Case



Metro Case:
METROpolitan Collaborative Strategies and comparative Enhancements

"Governance State of the Art and SWOT Analyses"

Deliverable

Produced by:

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Short Description
This Deliverable presents the methodology and results of the Metro Case Technical Activity "Governance State of the Art and SWOT Analyses", coordinated by PP02 Politecnico di Torino. The activity was implemented over three semesters. In Semester 1, Project Partners prepared a Governance State of the Art report on their metropolitan area and related policy instrument, using common Guidelines and a Template provided by PP02. In Semester 2, PP02 developed the SWOT analyses, discussed the draft results with the partnership and prepared the comprehensive comparative document. In Semester 3, Version 2—the Advanced Draft for Final Review—was presented at the third Project Partners meeting in Skopje. The partners' final feedback was subsequently incorporated, and a set of original, graphically consistent maps—one for each partner territory—was produced to contextualise the metropolitan cases according to the NUTS classification and equivalent statistical territorial frameworks. The Deliverable includes descriptive profiles of the socio-territorial and institutional systems and policy instruments, a SWOT analysis for each metropolitan governance system, and cross-cutting Key Takeaways highlighting common issues, differences and implications. It also informed the Checklist for selecting Good Practices on European metropolitan governance models and supports the partners' policy improvement process.

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RE	Restricted to a group specified by the consortium	
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PP04 – Bucharest Metropolitan Area Intercommunity Development Association (RO): ADIZMB

PP05 – Metropolitan Area of Barcelona (ES): AMB

PP06 – City of Skopje (MK): Skopje

PP07 – The Gothenburg Region Association of Local Authorities (SE): GR

PP08 – Municipality of Tirana (AL): MoT

PP09 – METREX Network of European Metropolitan Regions and Areas (BE): METREX

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1. About the Project: Introduction of the Activity

Metro Case is a European project co-financed by the **Interreg Europe Programme** that brings together metropolitan areas across Europe and candidate countries. It tackles the **fragmentation of governance** and limited cooperation **between core cities and their surrounding territories**, promoting strategic planning and **improved multi-level and multi-sector coordination** at metropolitan scale. The project brings together 8 policy partners and 1 technical partner from 6 Interreg EU (IT, PL, RO, ES, SE, BE) and 2 EU Candidate countries (MK, AL) and they will jointly improve 8 policy instruments to strengthen multi-level and multi-sectoral coordination between core cities and hinterlands.



Metro Case Partnership

This document presents the results of the Technical Activity "Governance State of the Art and SWOT Analyses", together with the methodology used for its implementation. It is produced by the Project Partner PP02 Politecnico di Torino responsible for the overall coordination of the Technical Activity.

This Activity is divided into two phases: the first involves compiling a current status report on the metropolitan governance of each metropolitan area (with particular reference to the Project Policy Instrument of each Project Partner); the second phase consisted of developing a SWOT analysis of each metropolitan governance system and related policy instrument, based on the evidence collected through the State of the Art reports.

This Deliverable is a key output and provides a common evidence base for the policy improvement process.

Activity carried out in SEMESTER 1

During the first Project Partner (PP) and Steering Group (SG) meeting, held in Genova, Italy, PP02 presented a first draft of the Guidelines and Template to the Project Partners. These documents set out the descriptive and interpretive criteria to be used by each Partner in preparing its own Governance State of the Art report.

The reports provide an analysis of the socio-territorial and institutional systems of each metropolitan area, together with a description of the policy instrument addressed by the respective Project Partner.

The Project Partners subsequently carried out desk research and completed the Template in accordance with the Guidelines provided by PP02 to produce the "Governance State of the Art" reports. Please note that, in some cases, one or more fields in the Template were not completed by the PPs. These fields have been left blank to avoid inferring information not explicitly provided by the PPs.

PP02 collected and reviewed the reports and began preparing the SWOT analysis for each metropolitan case, drawing on the descriptive profiles of the socio-territorial and institutional systems and the related policy instruments.

Activity carried out in SEMESTER 2

During the second Project Partners and Steering Group meeting, held in Gothenburg, Sweden, PP02 presented and discussed the draft SWOT analyses prepared for the metropolitan areas addressed by the project.

Following the meeting, PP02 finalised the SWOT analyses and elaborated the comprehensive Deliverable "Governance State of the Art and SWOT analysis", thus containing:

- a systematic collection of descriptive profiles of the socio-territorial and institutional systems and policy instruments of each metropolitan region,
- the SWOT analysis of each metropolitan area, and
- a final overarching cross-cutting interpretive commentary (Key takeaways) on transversal questions/issues and on the different metropolitan cases.

This Deliverable also supported the elaboration of a Checklist with Criteria for the selection of Good Practices (GP) on EU governance models in metropolitan areas.

Activity carried out in SEMESTER 3

During the third Meeting of the Project Partners and the Steering Group, held in Skopje, North Macedonia, PP02 presented and discussed Version 2—the Advanced Draft for Final Review—of the Deliverable. Following the meeting, the partners' final feedback was incorporated into the deliverable during May and June. During the same period, a set of original, graphically consistent maps—one for each Partner territory—was produced to contextualise the metropolitan areas covered by the Metro Case project. The maps were based on the official NUTS classification for EU Member States and on equivalent statistical territorial classifications for the candidate countries[1].

[1] The NUTS classification—the Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics—subdivides the territories of EU Member States into three hierarchical levels: NUTS 1, NUTS 2 and NUTS 3.

Governance State of the Art

2. Governance State of the Art

2.1. Objectives, Contents and Methodology

Objectives

In the Interreg Europe project Metro Case, the "Governance State of the Art" (GSoA) is conceived as an in-depth, up-to-date description of the existing knowledge on metropolitan governance in each Partner's metropolitan area at the start of the project (1 May 2025). It is produced in the initial semesters to build a shared baseline for the subsequent exchange and policy-improvement work: it contextualises each case in relation to what has already been done/studied, identifies limits and gaps in existing solutions, makes the need for the project intervention explicit, and highlights the originality/innovative value of the approach. Operationally, the GSoA aims at an in-depth analysis of each metropolitan area's socio-territorial, institutional and governance system and of the policy instrument(s) addressed by the project, generating a systematic set of comparable descriptive profiles that will then feed the SWOT analyses and an overarching cross-case commentary.

Contents

The GSoA is structured around a common set of components to ensure comparability across the eight metropolitan areas: (i) contextual framing (territorial, institutional, socio-economic characteristics), (ii) governance mapping (key actors, levels of government and institutional arrangements relevant to spatial planning and governance), (iii) policy instrument overview (planning tools, policies and regulatory frameworks), and (iv) a critical reading that highlights issues/gaps as well as emerging opportunities and innovations with potential for upscaling.

This approach has resulted in a Template (see Annex A) structured on the following main thematic areas:

1. PP INFORMATION (main data of the PP's compiler).

2. TERRITORIAL FRAMEWORK (for understanding territorial characteristics and recognizing key factors that influence governance models). In relation to Section 2.2 (Land Use-Land Cover distribution), PP02 carries out, for each PP, original analyses using ad hoc geographic information systems (GIS), drawing on EU open-access datasets for information on land use and land cover characteristics.

3. SOCIO ECONOMIC FRAMEWORK (for understanding socio economic characteristics and recognizing key factors that influence governance models).

4. GOVERNANCE (for understanding governance models and for the policy instruments, cultural framework interpreted and conceived as articulated in the perspectives of the politicians, technicians, general public and other stakeholders).

5. SPECIFIC DATA CONNECTED WITH THE SELECTED POLICY INSTRUMENT.

Methodology

The PPs were provided with a Template (.doc) with criteria each of them used to produce its own Report of the GSoA. Also, Guidelines (.pdf) detailing the descriptive and interpretive Criteria were provided.

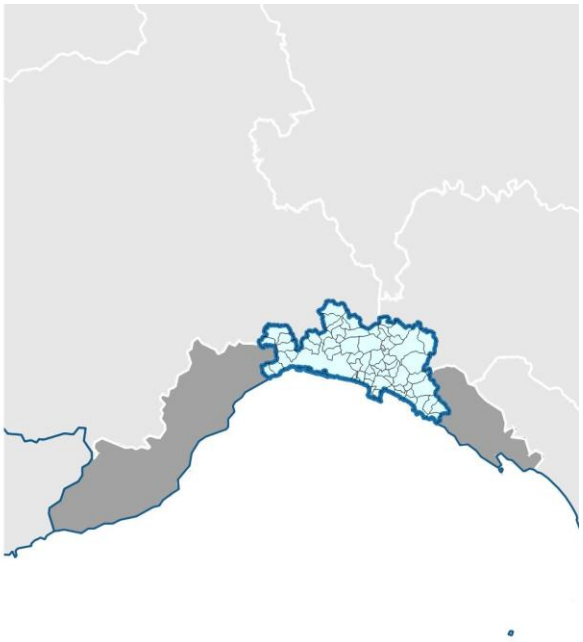
Partners compiled the above-mentioned Word Template whose criteria require both quantitative-numerical indicators (with specified units) and qualitative-descriptive indicators (within predefined character ranges). Please note that, in some cases, one or more fields in the Template were not completed by the PPs; these fields have therefore been left blank to avoid introducing assumptions not explicitly provided by the Project Partners.

The required data had to be as recent as possible (2024 or the most recent prior to 2024), privileging standardised European datasets to maximise comparability.

The Partners implemented the documents of Governance State of the Art even with the involvement of the relevant stakeholders during the Community of Practice meetings.

2.2. Governance State of the Art of Metropolitan Areas

2.2.1 Metropolitan City of Genova with Liguria Region (LP01)

1. PP INFORMATION	
PP Name (and APA, if applicable)	Città Metropolitana di Genova APA Liguria Region
	
ITALY	Detail (light blue) of the Metropolitan City of Genoa - NUTS 3 in Liguria Region - NUTS 2
Name, Role, and Contact of Compiler	Cristiana Arzà, Head of Strategic Planning and Performance Office, Secretariat and General Management pianificazione.strategica@cittametropolitana.genova.it

2. TERRITORIAL FRAMEWORK **Understanding territorial characteristics and recognizing key factors that influence governance models**	
2.1 Key Data of the Case Study	
Total Surface Area of the Metropolitan Area	1.834 km^2
Total Surface Area of the Core City	240,65 km^2
Population of the Metropolitan Area	818.651 – (01/01/2025 Istat)

Population of the Core City	563.947 – (01/01/2025 Istat)
Density of the Metropolitan Area	446,37 inh/km^2
Density of the Core City	2.350,72 inh/km^2
Number of Municipalities included in the Metropolitan Area	67

The metropolitan city consists of 67 municipalities, distributed as follows: 17 coastal municipalities; 14 mountain municipalities (altitude above 500 m); the remaining municipalities occupy the main valleys and the mid-coast. There are five municipalities with more than 10,000 inhabitants, in addition to the capital, all located on the coast: Arenzano, Rapallo, Chiavari, Lavagna, and Sestri Levante. There are ten municipalities with between 10,000 and 5,000 inhabitants, all located on the coast: Cogoleto, Recco, S. Margherita L., and Camogli (between 9,000 and 10,000 inhabitants); in the eastern hinterland: Cogorno and Casarza Ligure; in the Polcevera and Scrivia valleys: Serra Riccò, Campomorone, S. Olcese, and Busalla. There are 19 municipalities with fewer than 1,000 inhabitants, one of which is on the coast (Portofino) and the others in the Trebbia Valley, the Fontanabuona Valley, and the Aveto and Scrivia valleys.

Other Possible Sub-Metropolitan Aggregations

Unions of Municipalities:

- Valli Stura, Orba, and Leira: municipalities of Campo Ligure, Masone, Mele, Rossiglione, and Tiglieto
- Golfo Paradiso: municipalities of Bogliasco, Pieve Ligure, and Sori.
- Valli del Tempo: municipalities of Avegno and Uscio (dissolved in 2022)
- Alta Val d'Aveto: municipalities of Rezzoaglio and S. Stefano d'Aveto (dissolved in 2024)
- Valle Scrivia: municipalities of Busalla, Casella, Crocefieschi, Isola del Cantone, Montoggio, Ronco Scrivia, Savignone, Valbrevenna, and Vobbia
- Upper Trebbia Valley: municipalities of Fascia, Fontanigorda, Gorreto, Montebruno, Propata, Rondanina, and Rovegno
- Entella Valleys: municipalities of Borzonasca Mezzanego, Ne (dissolved in 2024)

Inland areas (SNAI):

- Antola – Tigullio, which includes 16 municipalities: Bargagli, Borzonasca, Davagna, Fascia, Fontanigorda, Gorreto, Lumarzo, Mezzanego, Montebruno, Ne, Propata, Rezzoaglio, Rondanina, Rovegno, Santo Stefano d'Aveto, Torriglia
- Beigua – SOL, which includes 10 municipalities, 5 of which are outside the metropolitan area, in the province of Savona (SV): Campo Ligure, Masone, Mele, Mioglia (SV), Pontinvrea (SV), Rossiglione, Sassello (SV), Stella (SV), Tiglieto, Urbe (SV)
- Val Fontanabuona, which includes 11 municipalities: Avegno, Cicagna, Coreglia Ligure, Favale di Malvaro, Lorsica, Moconesi, Neirone, Orero, San Colombano Certenoli, Tribogna, Uscio

- Valle Scrivia, which includes 9 municipalities: Busalla, Casella, Crocefieschi, Isola del Cantone, Montoggio, Ronco Scrivia, Savignone, Valbrevenna, Vobbia

Homogeneous zones (Metropolitan Strategic Plan – PSM, 2017)

The PSM has formulated a proposal to divide the territory into nine homogeneous zones (one of which coincides with the capital of Genoa): 1. PONENTE, 2. GENOA, 3. POLCEVERA AND SCRIVIA, 4. TREBBIA AND ALTO BISAGNO, 5. PARADISO, 6. TIGULLIO, 7. ENTELLA, 8. PETRONIO, 9. VALLI DEL LEVANTE.

This proposal takes into account the recommendations provided by municipal administrations, which requested that the homogeneous areas be structured in accordance with the following aspects: orographic characteristics of the territory (river basins), social and health districts, ATO advisory committees, unions and associations already in place, and historically established systems of relations and socio-economic structures.

Strategic area "Paradiso" (preparatory phase for the establishment of a homogeneous area)

The themes of the development and enhancement strategy for the area are: improving accessibility and sustainable mobility, developing sustainable and responsible tourism, protecting and enhancing the natural and cultural heritage, urban regeneration, and improving services.

Reference Functional Urban Area (FUA – OECD Definition)	Genova IT006F • Population: 681.255 inh (2024) • Surface area: 1196 km2 • Municipalities included: 43

The institutional area covers a larger territory than the FUA.

The FUA includes the external municipalities of Fraconalto, Voltaggio, and Mongiardino Ligure (AL) and excludes the areas of Tigullio and its internal valleys, as well as part of the Trebbia Valley.

Reference NUTS region (Eurostat)

ITC33 Genova – 1.834 km^2, 67 municipalities

The 'ITC33 Genoa' region coincides with the territory of the metropolitan city of Genoa, a large territorial entity established by Law No. 56 of 7 April 2014, which replaced the province of Genoa on 1 January 2015 with the same territory consisting of 67 municipalities. The mayor of the capital municipality has also assumed the functions of metropolitan mayor.

The authority has the following institutional purposes:

- strategic development of its territory;
- promotion and integrated management of metropolitan services, infrastructure and communication networks;
- institutional relations at its level, including those with other European metropolitan cities.

2.2 Spatial Distribution of Land Uses and Land Cover-LULC (current state)

LULC: Artificial Surface, Agricultural Areas, Forest and Semi Natural Areas, Wetlands and Water bodies

Artificial Surface: the main land use/artificial cover classes in Genoa, according to Corine Land Cover (2018), are: urban areas, industrial areas, commercial areas, transport infrastructure, and sports and recreational areas. Given its conformation and population density, the metropolitan area of Genoa is dominated by these categories, with a distribution that follows the lines of development along the coast and the main valleys (Polcevera, Bisagno). In the capital city, these categories are mainly concentrated in the urban center and along the coastal areas, with a gradual decrease towards the surrounding hilly and mountainous areas.

- Urban Areas: these are concentrated in the historic center, along the coast, and in the main valleys (Polcevera, Scrivia, Bisagno, Entella, Petronio) where most of the residential and commercial buildings are located.
- Industrial and Commercial Areas: these are mainly located along the port areas and in the industrial zones of Cornigliano, Sampierdarena, and Sestri Ponente, as well as in some specific areas along the main communication arteries (Stura, Scrivia, Fontanabuona, Entella, and Petronio valleys).
- Transport Infrastructure: motorways, railways, and main roads cross urban areas and connect inland areas and external territories, generating areas of land occupation along their route.
- Sports and Recreational Areas: these are located in urban areas, often near residential areas or along the coast (e.g., parks, sports fields, equipped green areas), but also in peri-urban and hilly areas.

In the capital city, artificial areas represent the predominant land use class in terms of coverage and density, given its nature as a large urban center. The distribution is extremely dense and compact, occupying almost the entire narrow strip between the hills and the sea. The main components are: continuous urban fabric (historic center, residential neighborhoods, commercial areas, services, which extend along the entire length of the coastal strip); industrial and port areas (the port of Genoa and adjacent industrial areas, particularly in Val Polcevera); transport infrastructure (road network, highways, railways).

Agricultural areas are the second largest category, but they are fragmented and unevenly distributed. They are mainly located in the valley floors (such as Val Polcevera, Val Bisagno, Val Fontanabuona) and coastal areas (such as the Entella valley), where agriculture, although in decline, persists, often in the form of small terraced crops, olive groves, and vineyards. Their extent is limited by the morphology of the terrain.

In the main town, agricultural areas are very limited in size and fragmented. They are located in the outskirts and hills of the municipality, where the agricultural landscape is often mixed with wooded areas and scattered residential settlements. Urban and peri-urban agriculture is a distinctive feature of these areas.

Forest and Semi Natural Areas: the metropolitan area is mainly characterized by wooded and semi-natural areas. Wooded and semi-natural areas are the dominant type in terms

of size. Most of the territory, especially in inland and mountainous areas, is covered by woods, shrublands, and natural vegetation, which extend from the coast inland.
In the capital city, despite heavy urbanization, they are a significant component of the municipal territory. They are mainly located on the hills and slopes of the mountains surrounding the city, such as the Parco Urbano delle Mura. These areas play a crucial role in terms of ecosystem services and hydrogeological risk mitigation.
Wetlands and Water bodies: the water bodies are mainly represented by torrential watercourses that run through the hinterland and flow into the sea. The most significant are the Entella River, the Bisagno Stream, and the Polcevera Stream. Natural water bodies (lakes) are almost absent, apart from a few artificial reservoirs created for energy production or water supply (Lakes Gorzente, Brugneto, Noci, Busalletta, and Giacopiane). The presence of wetlands is marginal. There are no large areas of marshes or peat bogs. Small portions of this soil type can be found at the mouths of the main rivers, where river-coastal habitats are formed, although these are heavily compromised by cementification and urbanization.
In the main town, the presence of wetlands and water bodies is even more limited and heavily integrated into the urban fabric. The main water bodies (Polcevera and Bisagno) flow in beds that are often embanked or buried, especially in the more central and densely populated areas. Wetlands are practically absent due to intense urbanization, which has almost completely covered or altered the transition areas between land and water. Any small remaining areas do not reach the minimum mapping threshold set by the CLC (25 hectares).

Settlement Model	6.1 km^2

The metropolitan settlement system is compressed into a narrow strip of land between the coastline and the mountains, and penetration into the inland valleys is conditioned by complex morphology. The limited flat areas on the coast and in the valleys, often subject to flooding, have been occupied by urban settlements and communication infrastructure, while much of the coastal slopes and inland valleys have been affected by anthropization processes, which have structured their conformation into typical "terraces," resulting in a highly fragile hydrogeological equilibrium. At the same time, in order to develop in the absence of suitable natural spaces, the port system of Genoa gave rise to a process of artificialization of the coastline, which began in the early 1900s and is still ongoing, involving the consumption of significant environmental and landscape resources and the modification of the pre-existing settlement system. From an organizational point of view, the metropolitan settlement system is characterized by a polycentric structure in the conurbations of the coastal strip and the main valley penetration axes. In contrast, in the peri-urban, hilly, and mountainous areas, the settlement system is generally scattered and served by a very extensive and ramified road network.

Land Take	0,3 km^2

The orographic characteristics of the territory, with a narrow coastal strip and mountainous reliefs behind it, have concentrated urbanization in the few flat areas available. Land consumption is particularly evident along the coastal strip and in the valley floors (Polcevera, Bisagno, and Tigullio valleys). In inland areas, characterized by scattered settlements or isolated clusters, the area consumed, although modest, is amplified by the need to ensure widespread road accessibility. The main causes of land consumption are therefore: residential urbanization, the creation of transport infrastructure (roads and railways), and the expansion of industrial and commercial areas.

The consequences are: loss of biodiversity, increased hydrogeological risk due to soil sealing, reduction of agricultural and forest areas, which compromises the ecosystem services provided by these areas, such as food production, air purification, and climate change mitigation.

In recent years, land-use planning policies and urban planning tools at the municipal level have sought to counteract this phenomenon by promoting reuse and urban regeneration through 'building on the built' and 'unsealing' impervious soils.

The increase in land consumption in the Genoa metropolitan area in the period 2000-2018 is very limited (0.3 km²) when compared to that of neighboring regions (e.g., CMTO: 17.2 km², CMMI: 28.3 km², CMBO: 18.8 km², CMFI: 13.6 km²).

2.3 Transport and Mobility Infrastructure System

Road Network

The road network of the metropolitan city of Genoa is divided into the following functional hierarchical levels:

- Motorways: A10 Genoa - Ventimiglia, A26 Genoa - Gravellona Toce, A7 Genoa - Milan, A12 Genoa - Livorno;
- State roads: (SS 1 Aurelia, SS 35 dei Giovi, SS 45 della Val Trebbia, SS 225 di Val Fontanabuona, SS 456 del Turchino, SS 523 del Colle di Centocroci, SS 586 della Val d'Aveto and SS 654 di Val di Nure);
- Provincial roads: the provincial road network is approximately 850 km long, connecting the coast with the hinterland and the capital with the remaining 66 municipalities in the metropolitan area, integrating with the state road network and the motorway network;
- Municipal roads (urban thoroughfares, local roads)

Transport Network (High-Speed Rail, Airports, Ports, and other)

The metropolitan city of Genoa is served by a transport network that also includes high-speed rail, an airport, and a port.

The Genoa hub is one of the 50 urban hubs of the TEN-T network. Genoa's port, airport, and rail-road terminals are part of the trans-European "core network" (Genoa falls within the 'Mediterranean' and "North Sea - Rhine - Mediterranean" corridors).

Cristoforo Colombo Airport serves as a strategic gateway to Italy and Europe and as an intermodal hub, connecting the airport with Liguria's rail and maritime networks. The

infrastructure helps connect northwestern Italy with the continental transport network, facilitating the flow of passengers and goods and supporting economic development by strengthening connections with European hubs and international destinations. It is connected to the city center by Amt's Volabus services, which link the airport to the Genoa Brignole, Genoa Piazza Principe, and Genoa Airlink railway stations, connecting it to the Sestri Ponente railway station.

The port of Genoa is one of the most important in Italy, with a maritime station for cruises. It is a crucial hub for freight traffic, particularly containers and petroleum products, and for passenger traffic, with strong global maritime connections and a national and international rail network connecting the Italian hinterland and Central Europe. The port system of Genoa, together with Savona-Vado, is a strategic asset in the Mediterranean, serving as a nerve center for international traffic from East to West. The Genoa railway junction, with its main stations at Genoa Piazza Principe and Genoa Brignole, is fundamental to the TEN-T network because it acts as the southern terminal of the Corridor connecting the Ligurian port system to Northern Europe and facilitates freight transport to Central Europe and the North Sea. The upgrading of the hub, through the Terzo Valico dei Giovi, currently under construction, increases the capacity and efficiency of the connection, separating freight and passenger traffic flows and allowing trains to travel at high speed/high capacity (HS/HC).

Sustainable Mobility Network

The mobility system is based on an infrastructure network that runs linearly along the coastline and along the main valleys perpendicular to the coast (highways, railways, connecting roads). The critical issues of the system stem from the disparity in accessibility conditions for the different territorial areas. Public mobility presents particular critical issues in valley and mountain areas, especially for inland areas that are not served by railways.

The **local public transport system**, managed by AMT (Azienda Mobilità e Trasporti), covers the entire metropolitan area and consists of:

- **Bus network**: this is the backbone of public transport, with 139 urban and suburban lines covering the entire territory. Modernization projects are underway, such as the “Assi di Forza” project, which involves new electric buses and reserved lanes to improve the quality and efficiency of the service.
- **Metro network**: a 7.2 km line with 8 stations connects Valpolcevera to the city center; work and projects are underway to further extend the network.
- **Vertical transport systems**: elevators (10 in the capital connect the city center with the hillside areas); funicular railways (in the capital, 2 funicular railways connect the center with the higher areas); rack railways (Genoa Principe-Granarolo) connecting the center with the hills and narrow-gauge railways (Genoa-Casella) connecting the center with the hinterland.
- **Shipbus**: maritime transport service connecting the city center with the west.
- **Supplementary services**: on-call services such as Drinbus and Taxibus.

Cycle and pedestrian networks: there are routes that combine pedestrian and cycle use, particularly along the coast and in flat areas. Work is underway and planned to

extend the network and integrate it into urban regeneration projects, such as the Levante Waterfront; there is an extensive network of pedestrian routes of interest to tourists and hikers. **Electric vehicle charging stations**: the infrastructure for electric mobility is gradually expanding. The network of charging stations is growing and includes several operators. **Shared mobility services**: to encourage the use of alternative means of transport to private ownership, several shared mobility services are available: bike sharing (ZENAbyBIKE, managed by Genova Parcheggi), car sharing (Elettra Car Sharing), available in "station-based" or "free-floating" modes within an operational area. A pilot project for condominium car sharing has been launched in a neighborhood of the capital.	
Motorization Rate of the Metropolitan Area	879,9 vehicles per 1,000 inh. (ACI, year 2024)
Motorization Rate of the Core City (optional)	813 vehicles per 1,000 inh. (ACI, year 2024)

3. SOCIO ECONOMIC FRAMEWORK **Understanding socio economic characteristics and recognizing key factors that influence governance models**	
Birth Rate of the Metropolitan Area	5,65% (ISTAT, year 2023) (annual number of births per 1,000 inh.)
Birth Rate of the Core City (optional)	5,9% (ISTAT, year 2023) (annual number of births per 1,000 inh.)
Average Household Size of the Metropolitan Area	1,93 (ISTAT, year 2022)
Average Household Size of the Core City (optional)	1,92 (ISTAT, year 2022)
Aging Index of the Metropolitan Area	277,4 (ISTAT, year 2023) (ratio of population aged 65+ to population aged 0–14)
Aging Index of the Core City (optional)	270,5 (ISTAT, year 2023) (ratio of population aged 65+ to population aged 0–14)
Foreign Population and Presence of the Metropolitan Area	81.481 foreign residents 10% of the total resident population (ISTAT, year 2023)

Foreign Population and Presence of the Core City (optional)	63.683 foreign residents 11,3% of the total resident population (ISTAT, year 2023)
Higher Education Graduates of the Metropolitan Area	219.572 (permanent census by ISTAT, year 2023) 34,7% of population aged 25-39 (BES Istat, 2023)
Higher Education Graduates of the Core City (optional)	154.238 (permanent census by ISTAT, year 2023) percentage not available
Employment Rate of the Metropolitan Area	73,9% of people aged between 20 and 64 (ISTAT labor force survey, year 2024)
Employment Rate of the Core City (optional)	percentage not available. The employment rate in Genoa is not easily available; the employment rate for the Municipality of Genoa, with data from 2022, was 67%, although more recent updates are underway (ISTAT labor force survey, year 2022)
Youth Employment Rate of the Metropolitan Area	36,9% (ISTAT labor force survey, year 2024) (percentage of young people aged 15–29 who are employed)
Youth Employment Rate of the Core City (optional)	No specific data are available for the youth employment rate (15-29 years) in the municipality of Genoa
Enterprises and Sectoral Specialisation of the Metropolitan Area	Active businesses: 69.254 (-0.14% compared to 2023) Employees: 269.854 (+1.4% compared to 2023) (Movimprese database, Infocamere, year 2024)
Agricultural businesses: 1,608 (-2.5% compared to 2023) - Agricultural workers: 1,879 (-2.7% compared to 2023) Manufacturing businesses: 5,144 (-0.2% compared to 2023) - Manufacturing employees: 36,655 (+1.7% compared to 2023)	

Construction businesses: 14,050 (+0.5% compared to 2023) - Construction employees: 30,180 (+0.6% compared to 2023) Trade companies: 19,093 (-1.7% compared to 2023) - Trade employees: 50,096 (-1.2% compared to 2023) Other service companies: 29,188 (+1.0% compared to 2023) - Other services employees: 145,376 (+2.4% compared to 2023) (Movimprese database, Infocamere, year 2024)	
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the Metropolitan Area	€ 37.786 GDP at market prices per inhabitant (ISTAT, year 2022) € 30.871.000 at market prices (ISTAT, year 2022)
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the Core City (optional)	Not available
Per Capita Gross Disposable Income of the Metropolitan Area	€ 26.838 average total income (Ministry of Economy and Finance, tax year 2023)
Per Capita Gross Disposable Income of the Core City (optional)	Not available
Tourism – Overnight Stays and Arrivals in the Metropolitan Area	Overnight stays: 4.603.180 Arrivals: 1.867.419 (Provincial report for the Liguria Region, year 2024)
Tourism – Overnight Stays and Arrivals in the Core City (optional)	Overnight stays: 2.300.209 Arrivals: 1.039.390 (Joint report by Genoa Municipality and Liguria Region, year 2024)
Protected Natural Areas in the Metropolitan Area	778,95 km^2 4 Regional Natural Parks: 177,02 km^2 1 Marine Protected Area: 3,46 km^2 33 Natura 2000 sites: 499,33 km^2 1 Special Protection Area (SPA): 99,14 km^2
The metropolitan area of Genoa is home to a remarkable variety of environments with extraordinary biodiversity. Its territory, squeezed between the coast and the mountains, features very different geomorphological aspects. The current layout of the territory is in fact the result of an original form of co-evolution between nature and	

human activity, which has given rise to a surprising variety of biological systems and environments, but also to a specific material culture.
Among our parks, Beigua has been recognized as a Site of Community Importance and Special Protection Area (SPA); the same territory has been recognized as a UNESCO site and included in the prestigious list of Global Geoparks.

Major Healthcare Facilities in the Metropolitan Area	9 hospitals

The main healthcare facilities in the Genoa metropolitan area include major public hospitals:

- San Martino Polyclinic Hospital: it is the largest hospital in Liguria and one of the largest in Italy; it is a point of reference for highly complex cases and the treatment of serious diseases, attracting patients from outside the region;
- Giannina Gaslini Institute: a nationally and internationally recognized pediatric hospital of excellence, specializing in pediatric care and research.
- E.O. Galliera Hospitals
- International Evangelical Hospital
- Lavagna Hospital
- Rapallo Hospital
- Sestri Levante Hospital
- Chiavari Hospital Complex
- ASL Single Hospital Facility, namely:
  - La Colletta in Arenzano
  - Padre Antero Micone in Sestri Ponente
  - Villa Scassi in Sampierdarena: it stands out among Italian hospitals that are distinguished by the presence of diagnostic-therapeutic pathways and services dedicated to female pathologies of the highest clinical and epidemiological level, paying particular attention to the specific needs of female users.
  - Gallino in Pontedecimo

Universities in the Metropolitan Area	1 university

University of Genoa: a state university founded in 1481, with campuses in Genoa, Imperia, Savona, La Spezia, Chiavari, and Pietra Ligure; the university is organized into 5 schools and 22 departments, offering a total of 125 bachelor's degree programs and more than 90 master's degree programs

Other Relevant Socio-Economic Indicators

- **Hi-tech sector**

High technology is the sector in Genoa that seems to offer the most interesting growth prospects. The presence of research centers and a large number of companies in high-tech sectors is now a recognized reality, which has found in Dixet (the association "Distretto Elettronica e Tecnologie Avanzate di Genova – Club d'Imprese" [Genoa Electronics and Advanced Technologies District – Business Club]) the reference

association that has had the merit of bringing to light a reality that was previously much less known.

- **Percentage of female entrepreneurship**

Female-owned businesses in Liguria represent 22,91% of the total number of active businesses, with considerable variation between different municipalities and the two geographical areas: for coastal municipalities, the average share is 22,73%, and for inland municipalities, it is 23,77%.

- **Percentage of youth entrepreneurship**

In the metropolitan city of Genoa, apart from the extreme cases of Gorreto and Rondanina, where there are no youth-run businesses, in the other 65 cases the figure ranges from 3,13% in Fontanigorda to 20,00% in Fascia and Propata, with 39 cases above 8,09% in the provincial capital and 25 below that figure. In the case of coastal municipalities, three have a value above 10,00% (Bogliasco 10,29%, Zoagli 11,04%, and Sori 11,23%), while Portofino is the municipality with the lowest incidence of "under 35" businesses (3,57%). The presence of young entrepreneurs in the 51 inland municipalities is particularly lively, in addition to Fascia and Propata, in Tiglieto (19,51%), Favale di Malvaro (18,18%), and Vobbia (15,00%).

- **Percentage of foreign businesses**

In the metropolitan city of Genoa, foreign businesses account for 16,80% of the total number of businesses and are heavily concentrated in the capital (19,55%); in eight municipalities, all in the inland area, there are no foreign businesses (Coreglia Ligure, Fascia, Fontaniforda, Lorsica, Montebruno, Propata, Rondanina, and Vobbia). Among the coastal municipalities, after Genoa, the highest presence of foreign businesses is recorded in Rapallo (17,54%), Chiavari (13,60%), and Lavagna (12,35%). Rovegno is the inland municipality with the highest share of foreign entrepreneurship (18,18%), followed by Borzonasca (16,89%), Ronco Scrivia (16,17%), Tribogna (15,56%), and Carasco (15,48%); the lowest presence is in Santo Stefano d'Aveto (1,95%), Masone (2,22%), and Tiglieto (2,44%).

- **Percentage of artisan businesses**

In the metropolitan city of Genoa, excluding Rondanina, where there are no artisan businesses, the percentage ranges from 10,71% in Portofino to 66,67% in Favale di Malvaro (where more than 6 out of 10 businesses are artisan): in 12 other cases, all of which are inland municipalities, the indicator is above 50%: Uscio (59,12%), Orero (58,49%), Avegno (55,06%), Borzonasca (54,73%), Bargagli (54,70%), Lorsica and Tribogna (53,33%), Mezzanego (53,10%), Cicagna (53,01%), Casarza Ligure (52,10%), Lumarzo (51,96%), and Cogorno (51,54%). Among the coastal municipalities, Sori (44,93%), Rapallo (42,92%), and Cogoleto (41,15%) stand out with a share of over 40%; Portofino is in last place with 10,71%.

4. GOVERNANCE
4.1 Governance of the Metropolitan Area
Type of Institution (Category)
Metropolitan authority (or metropolitan government)

The Metropolitan City is a second-level local authority covering a large area (mayors and municipal councilors are voters and candidates for election to the metropolitan council), characterized by strategic functions of territorial development, integrated management of services and infrastructure, and promotion of institutional relations. The metropolitan mayor is the same as the mayor of the capital municipality. In addition to the Metropolitan Council, which has deliberative functions, the metropolitan conference is also part of the body. It has advisory functions and is composed of all the mayors of the 67 municipalities in the Genoa metropolitan area.
Source of Funding
Transfers from the state or regional governments Access to European funding. Current revenue from taxes, contributions, and equalization: taxes, fees, and similar income, motor vehicle liability insurance tax, motor vehicle registration tax, tax for the exercise of environmental protection and hygiene functions, other taxes, fees and income. Current transfers: from public administrations (local and central) and from businesses. Non-tax revenue: sale of goods and services and income from asset management, income from the control and repression of irregularities and illegal activities. Capital revenue: investment contributions from public administrations (European, state, regional), revenue from the disposal of assets.
Functions and Responsibilities (categories)
Urban/spatial planning Environmental sustainability Climate and energy Private mobility and related services Public transportation and related services Public services management Infrastructures Tourism Economic development and labour policies Innovation, ICT management and digital agenda Education and training The Delrio Law assigns specific objectives to the Metropolitan City: a) adoption and annual updating of a three-year strategic plan for the metropolitan area, which constitutes a guideline for the entity and for the exercise of the functions of the municipalities and unions of municipalities included in the aforementioned territory, also in relation to the exercise of functions delegated or assigned by the regions, in compliance with the laws of the regions in matters within their competence; b) general territorial planning, including communication structures, service networks, and infrastructure belonging to the metropolitan community, also setting constraints

and objectives for the activities and functions of the municipalities included in the metropolitan territory;
c) structuring coordinated public service management systems and organizing public services of general interest in the metropolitan area. In agreement with the municipalities concerned, the metropolitan city may exercise the functions of preparing tender documents, acting as contracting authority, monitoring service contracts, and organizing competitions and selection procedures;
d) mobility and traffic, including ensuring the compatibility and consistency of municipal urban planning within the metropolitan area;
e) promoting and coordinating economic and social development, including by providing support for innovative economic and research activities consistent with the metropolitan city's vocation as outlined in the strategic plan for the territory referred to in letter a);
f) promoting and coordinating computerization and digitization systems in the metropolitan area.
Specific functions:

- strategic planning (Metropolitan Strategic Plan, Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan, Biciplan)
- territorial planning (General Territorial Plan)
- road infrastructure management (upgrading and maintenance of the provincial road network)
- local public transport (programme agreements for the optimal territorial scope of the integrated public transport system), authorisations, qualifications, suitability and licences relating to road traffic and professions and activities concerning road transport
- authorisations, monitoring and control of activities that may impact the environment
- integrated waste cycle management
- integrated water service management
- management of the authority's properties, whether owned or available, in particular school buildings
- proposal for school size and educational provision for upper secondary schools
- Single Contracting Authority service, including for metropolitan municipalities

Legislative Framework / Act

Law 56/2014 (Delrio Law)
The Delrio Law (No. 56/2014) established metropolitan cities and reorganised the provincial system, creating large territorial entities with the aim of promoting strategic development of the territory and integrated management of services and infrastructure. The law provides for second-level bodies such as the metropolitan mayor (by right, the mayor of the provincial capital) and a metropolitan council elected by mayors and municipal councillors.
Law 56/2014 initiated a comprehensive reform of local authorities, with the aim of reorganising the provincial system and establishing metropolitan cities (including

Genoa), which replaced the respective provinces. Metropolitan cities have been assigned the fundamental functions already performed by the provinces, plus new distinctive functions with specific strategic development objectives for the territory. The entire reform is based on the principles of subsidiarity, differentiation and adequacy (Article 118 of the Constitution), seeking to allocate functions to the body best suited to perform them.

Decision-Making Process

Responsible bodies:
Metropolitan mayor (also mayor of the capital city)
Metropolitan Council (elected by the mayors and councilors of the metropolitan municipalities) Metropolitan Conference (not elected, as all mayors of metropolitan municipalities participate by right)
Decisional model:
Proportional (weighted according to the number of inhabitants in each municipality)
The decision-making process of the Metropolitan City of Genoa is defined by its Statute (pursuant to Law 56/2014, the 'Delrio Law') and is based on a system of indirect and weighted representation, aimed at balancing the resident population with the autonomy of individual municipalities.
The bodies of the Metropolitan City are:
- Metropolitan Mayor: coincides by right with the mayor of the capital municipality; represents the Authority, convenes and chairs the Council and the Metropolitan Conference and exercises executive functions. He or she is elected directly by the citizens of the capital municipality.
- Metropolitan Council: this is the political and administrative policymaking and control authority; it is indirectly elected by the mayors and municipal councillors of the metropolitan municipalities.
- Metropolitan Conference: this is the advisory and propositional body, composed by right of all the mayors of the metropolitan municipalities (a body that is not elected in the strict sense, as they participate by virtue of their municipal office).
The decision-making model varies according to the body and the importance of the act, mainly adopting a proportional/weighted criterion for the Council and a double majority system for key decisions of the Conference.
Metropolitan Council (weighted vote):
The decision-making model is proportional (weighted according to the number of inhabitants of the municipalities). Elections for the Council are held with weighted voting: the weight of each voter's vote (mayors and municipal councillors) is determined by the demographic group of the municipality they represent, ensuring that representation reflects the overall metropolitan population.
Ordinary resolutions are adopted by a majority vote (in terms of weighted votes), provided that a quorum is reached (presence of an absolute majority of the councillors assigned).
Metropolitan Conference (double majority):

The Conference has a decisive role in fundamental acts and an advisory role in the budget; the decision-making model (neither purely proportional nor one vote per municipality) provides that for the most important resolutions, the double majority model is applied, which balances the weight of the municipalities with that of the population. Amendments to the Statute and the expression of opinions on fundamental acts are adopted with votes representing at least one third of the municipalities; the majority of the total resident population. This double majority ensures that key decisions have broad consensus both in terms of the municipalities represented and in terms of the population concerned.
Public-Private Partnership
Metropolitan Strategic Plan (PSM) and its sectoral strategic plan, the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) Memoranda of understanding/program agreements Project financing (Procurement Code) The Metropolitan City of Genoa uses various tools to involve private entities, universities and the third sector in the implementation of projects of metropolitan interest. The entity's planning tools serve as a basis for identifying and activating PPPs. The Metropolitan Strategic Plan (PSM) defines the long-term development vision (economic and social development, quality of life, urban regeneration) with a view to creating a smart city. The logic of partnership is inherent in the PSM, as the implementation of strategic objectives requires collaboration between institutions, businesses, universities and the third sector. The Urban Sustainable Mobility Plan, a strategic sector plan of the PSM, identifies priority mobility interventions (e.g. upgrading public transport, soft mobility, freight logistics). Partnerships in this area are essential for the implementation and management of innovative transport infrastructure and services. Memoranda of Understanding and Programme Agreements are administrative collaboration tools aimed at coordinating the actions of various public bodies (municipalities, regions, etc.) and private entities on complex projects. They make it possible to define mutual responsibilities, funding and the methods of implementation of strategic interventions. The Public Contracts Code defines the formal procedures for economic PPPs, in which the private sector assumes the operational risk: works and services concessions, private or public project financing, and mixed companies (institutional PPPs). These instruments make it possible to attract private capital, transfer operational risk and exploit the managerial efficiency of the private sector to achieve the development objectives set out in strategic plans. Among the initiatives developed by the Metropolitan City, characterised by the strong involvement of private entities and the third sector in urban regeneration and social inclusion, the following are noteworthy: the redevelopment programme for the urban suburbs of metropolitan Genoa, the Integrated Urban Plan (PUI-PNRR), the Innovative

Programme for Quality of Life (PINQUA), and the agreement with the University of Genoa and the Metropolitan Archdiocese of Genoa for the establishment of the Territorial Energy Community.

4.2 Governance for the Policy Instrument

Participation Model During the Design Phase

The involvement and participation of stakeholders throughout the entire process of developing and implementing the plan, with varying degrees of involvement of the parties concerned, ranges from the lowest level of commitment (informative, consultative) to forms of genuine deliberative participation, in order to balance the interests of local communities fairly and respond effectively to new needs.

The Metropolitan City of Genoa has adopted a participation process that considers both EU guidelines and national guidelines (No. 4 November 2019 of the Department of Public Administration) on participatory assessment in public administrations.

The effectiveness of the process of constructing, implementing, and updating the plan can be improved through integration with the SEA process. The aim is to align the development of the knowledge and assessment phases of the SEA process with those of the plan, in order to avoid delays and unnecessary duplication of work.

The most suitable participation tools have also been selected on the basis of the objectives they aim to achieve and the target interest groups to be reached as a result of stakeholder mapping and analysis.

The objectives are:

- to provide and collect information
- to engage interactively
- to engage hard-to-reach groups

In summary, the necessary activities are as follows:

- mapping and analysis of stakeholders, development of a strategy for their coordination.

STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS:

- Key stakeholders: high level of power/influence – high interest;
- Contextual stakeholders: high level of power/influence – low interest;
- Weak stakeholders: low level of power/influence – high interest;
- Marginal stakeholders: low level of power/influence – low interest.

Cooperation networks: Italian-French Work Program, Framework Agreement between the Metropolitan City and Municipalities in the Metropolitan Area, Liguria 2030: Governance for Sustainable Development, institutional collaborations (UNIGE, INU, ENEA, etc.)

Decision-Making Process

Strategic plans are approved by the Metropolitan Council

The plan formation process involves the following stages:

- approval of guidelines by the Metropolitan Mayor
- participation phase for the preparation of the draft plan

- adoption of the plan by the Metropolitan Council
- publication phase and collection of comments and contributions
- approval of the plan by the Metropolitan Council
- monitoring and updating
- communication accompanying all phases

Implementation Phase Modalities

The entities implementing the plan may be:

- Metropolitan City of Genoa
- Metropolitan municipalities
- Liguria Region
- Chamber of Commerce
- Associations
- Private entities

Private entities may benefit from incentives resulting from regional calls for proposals defined through collaboration between the Metropolitan City, the Region, and the municipalities.

The Metropolitan City has activated monitoring tools (e.g., Datalab) for the purpose of periodic monitoring activities to update the plans.

It ensures integration between strategic planning and programming of local authorities (DUP/PIAO).

4.3 Governance Cultural Framework

(*) Methodological note:

The answers provided in the “Politicians” and “Technicians” tables coincide, as technical structures must implement the metropolitan mayor's mandate and the subsequent and consistent directives and guidelines provided during the political-administrative cycle, as established by national legislation, which separates political and managerial functions.

In fact, the governing bodies exercise political and administrative functions, defining the objectives and programmes to be implemented and adopting other acts falling within the scope of these functions, and verify that the results of administrative and management activities comply with the guidelines provided.

Managers are responsible for adopting administrative acts and measures, including all acts that commit the administration externally, as well as financial, technical and administrative management through autonomous powers of expenditure, organisation of human resources, instrumental resources and control. They are solely responsible for administrative activities, management and related results.

Politicians (*)

Cooperation Models between municipalities and across different government and administrative levels

The governance of the Metropolitan City of Genoa is based on cooperative and multi-level models, which are essential for exercising its coordinating role and for organising the resources of a large and complex territory.

The Metropolitan City coordinates its activities with those of the individual or associated municipalities in its territory and bases its activities on the principles of horizontal and vertical subsidiarity, as well as collaboration with social and economic entities in the metropolitan area. Cooperation in the metropolitan area is considered fundamental for the cohesive development of the territory, for implementing the coast-hinterland integration strategy, for ensuring more equitable conditions of access to services and for promoting environmental rebalancing between urban and peripheral/internal areas.

Inter-municipal (horizontal) cooperation is achieved through the metropolitan conference, which brings together all the mayors to share guidelines and express opinions on fundamental acts (Statute, PSM). The Authority also acts as an aggregator and qualified contracting authority, offering technical and administrative assistance to municipalities, standardising procedures (e.g. procurement) and promoting the joint management of services.

In multi-level (vertical) cooperation, the Metropolitan City acts as a link between the state/regional and local levels. Cooperation with municipalities is governed by a Framework Agreement that defines the areas of collaboration to be implemented through specific "operating protocols".

The Statute commits the Authority to ensuring loyal cooperation with the Liguria Region and the Government for the implementation of complex policies (e.g. the PNRR, the National Strategy for Internal Areas) and for territorial planning.

Politicians consider cooperation to be necessary and strategic for several reasons, as clearly expressed in the Metropolitan Strategic Plan (PSM):

- effectiveness and territorial cohesion: the historical lack of cooperation between the various municipalities in the area is recognised, with the risk of isolated actions. Cooperation is seen as the only way to achieve coordination, overcome inequalities (e.g. the abandonment and depopulation of inland areas) and promote widespread economic and tourist development that is not concentrated solely on the capital and the coastal strip.
- Development capacity: networking, including with the private sector and universities, is the only way to make the metropolitan area "attractive", attract investment and external resources (EU funds, PNRR) and address global challenges (e.g. climate change, smart cities).
- Institutional legitimacy: the Metropolitan City needs to build a new identity and legitimacy, which is why collaboration and sharing objectives with mayors and stakeholders is crucial.

Qualitative assessment: 5

Cooperation Models between public and private actors

Cooperation between public and private actors, including the third sector and non-profit organisations, is considered absolutely necessary and strategic for several reasons. Cooperation is the only way to achieve sustainable and integrated development of the metropolitan area, overcoming historical fragmentation. It allows for attracting and maximising the use of funding (e.g. PNRR, EU funds), combining public

financial resources with the management efficiency, capital and know-how of the private sector.
Sharing strategic objectives with a broad network of stakeholders strengthens the legitimacy of the Metropolitan City as a governing body and not merely as a manager of functions.
Public-private partnerships (PPPs) are essential for transferring the operational and financial risk of large infrastructure projects to the private sector, while speeding up the introduction of innovative solutions. For objectives of collective and social interest, such as combating energy poverty, cooperation with the third sector (through memoranda of understanding) is seen as essential. These actors, rooted in the territory, enable the Authority to directly reach the most vulnerable sections of the population, ensuring a widespread and effective response that the public administration alone could not guarantee.
The Metropolitan City has also established partnerships with private entities (e.g. the Archdiocese of Genoa) in order to achieve objectives of collective interest (e.g. social objectives, such as combating energy poverty).
Qualitative assessment: 5

Key Sectors or Issues Where Cooperation is Most Needed

Cooperation is considered essential, as the challenges identified in the metropolitan strategic plan transcend municipal boundaries and require a metropolitan-wide approach. The need for cooperation between municipalities, institutional levels and private/third sector actors is greatest on the following issues:

- **Sustainable economic development and regenerative tourism**: cooperation is crucial to overcome economic polarisation in the capital and coastal areas alone and to create an economic network that includes inland and coastal areas. Inter-municipal cooperation is essential to create clusters and partnerships with universities and private companies to support the digital transition and innovative production chains (e.g. blue economy), as well as to present the entire metropolitan area as a single tourist destination, balancing mass coastal tourism with experiential and rural tourism in the valleys; The “regenerative” approach implies that tourism actively contributes to environmental conservation and the well-being of local communities, requiring collaboration with private operators and local associations.
- **Sustainable mobility**: mobility management is a typical large-area problem that cannot be addressed by a single municipality. Cooperation is vital to implement the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) with the coordination of investments between municipalities, the region and the Port System Authority on issues such as local public transport (LPT), intermodality, soft mobility, sustainable urban logistics, safety and cultural awareness.
- **Ecosystem and environmental services**: issues relating to waste management, the water cycle, soil protection and biodiversity are closely interdependent and cannot be addressed at municipal level.
- **Development of energy production from renewable sources through innovative partnerships**: the production of energy from renewable sources (e.g.

photovoltaic and wind power plants, smart grids) requires innovative (public-private) partnerships for the investment, construction and integration of these plants, promoting the development of a local energy community.

- **Territorial planning**: cooperation is essential to ensure that municipal urban plans (PUC) are aligned with large-area territorial planning guidelines, avoiding isolated interventions and ensuring a coherent territorial vision. Combating land consumption requires a coordinated effort for urban regeneration and the identification of areas to be protected, which can only be achieved through cooperation with municipal and regional levels.

Existing Cooperation Experiences Beyond the Metropolitan Area

Cross-border and international cooperation: as part of the 2021 Italian-French Work Programme, the Quirinale Treaty defines the bilateral cooperation agreement between Italy and France aimed at strengthening collaboration in the political, economic, cultural and territorial spheres. Under this Treaty, Genoa and Nice have been collaborating since 2024 on innovation, sustainability and culture, strengthening Mediterranean cooperation.

Since 2015, the Metropolitan City of Genoa has been part of the EMA network, which brings together 55 European cities to promote political dialogue, cooperation and metropolitan governance on urban, social and environmental challenges in the EU.

Since 2021, it has been a member of the European METREX network, which brings together the main European metropolitan areas to share experiences on planning, governance and sustainable territorial development.

Since 2025, it has been a member of the ECCAR network, promoted by UNESCO, to strengthen policies on inclusion, equal opportunities and the fight against discrimination, in collaboration with European cities and international institutions.

Partnerships in European projects (Interreg, MED, LIFE): the organisation is very active in accessing European structural funds through participation in complex projects:

- Interreg Italy-France Maritime Programme, focused on innovation, SME competitiveness, environmental protection and tourism flow management between Corsica, Sardinia, Tuscany, Liguria and Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur; cooperation is aimed at making the blue economy sustainable.
- MED Programme, focused on promoting sustainable development in the Mediterranean region.
- LIFE Programme, used for specific environmental protection and climate change mitigation projects (e.g. reforestation or coastal resilience projects), often in collaboration with European universities and research centres.

Agreements with other Italian metropolitan cities: cooperation aims to share best practices and coordinate the development of projects and activities (e.g. "Diffused Metropolitan City" CM Turin, Milan, Genoa and Venice) agreement between CM Genoa and CM Milan for the joint development of an integrated monitoring system for Sustainable Development Goals indicators - DATALAB).

Agreements with other institutions (ministries): vertical cooperation with ministries is essential for the implementation of national policies in the territory and access to

dedicated funding. (Agreement with the Ministry of the Environment and Energy Security for the development of the Sustainable Metropolitan Agenda, with the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport, and with the Ministry of the Interior).
Current Cooperation Needs Beyond the Metropolitan Area
• Cross-border cooperation between Italy and France • Cooperation with other Italian municipalities • Partnerships in European projects
Multilevel Collaboration
Through innovative partnerships for sustainable development in the metropolitan area, supported by ministries (MASE, MIT, MIN-INT) and the Liguria Region, the Metropolitan City has developed integrated projects to create sustainable metropolitan spaces capable of integrating urban regeneration, sustainable mobility, welfare and adaptation to climate change. Collaboration with ministries is generally formalised through specific agreements. For example: • Ministry of the Environment and Energy Security (MASE): Collaboration agreements for activities supporting the fulfilment of the requirements set out in Article 34 of the Environmental Code in relation to the territorial implementation of the National Strategy for Sustainable Development (Metropolitan Agenda for Sustainability); • Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport (MIT): collaboration for the implementation of the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (PUMS); • Ministry of the Interior (MIN-INT): Agreements on urban regeneration and management of PNRR funds allocated directly to the CM (e.g. PUI-Integrated Urban Plan). Collaboration with the Liguria Region also takes place mainly on the basis of specific agreements (e.g. Agreement with IRE Liguria for the development of energy communities).
Technicians
Cooperation Models between municipalities and across different government and administrative levels
idem
Cooperation Models between public and private actors
idem
Key Sectors or Issues where Cooperation is Most Needed
idem
Existing Cooperation Experiences Beyond the Metropolitan Area
idem

Current Cooperation Needs Beyond the Metropolitan Area
idem
Multilevel Collaboration
idem
General Public (and Other Stakeholders)
Cooperation Models between municipalities and across different government and administrative levels
As part of the participatory process launched to develop the metropolitan strategic plan, questionnaires were distributed to citizens, municipal councilors, students, and other stakeholders. The results show that cooperation between municipalities and different levels of local government is necessary in order to: • address what are perceived as the top three critical issues: land degradation, inefficient transport links and public transport, and a lack of capacity to attract new investment and talent. • develop actions to enhance public services (improvement of public transport, waste collection and management, water distribution and purification, and educational facilities), to enhance the environment and the excellence of the territory, and to promote socio-economic development that is attentive to environmental sustainability. Qualitative assessment: 5
Cooperation Models between public and private actors
The same source (Strategic Plan questionnaire) reveals a widespread opinion that cooperation between public and private actors is necessary to promote economic development and attract investment to the metropolitan area. Qualitative assessment: 5
Level of Perceived Belonging to Individual Municipalities
There are no adequate data sources available to define the level of perceived belonging to individual municipalities.
Level of Perceived Belonging to the Metropolitan Area
There are no adequate data sources available to define the level of perceived belonging to the metropolitan area. However, as part of the participatory process launched to develop the metropolitan strategic plan, the need to build a sense of belonging to the metropolitan area emerged, leading to the decision to identify a targeted plan strategy and specific actions (creation of a CMGE brand, communication activities, participation and co-design with local communities).
Historical or Cultural Factors

Genoa was historically a maritime republic of great power and influence, assuming the role of a central hub for a vast territory that included not only the urban center but also a large surrounding area. The neighboring municipalities, while preserving their own traditions, were intrinsically linked to the economic and political fortunes of Genoa. Maritime trade, exploration, and trade routes created a network of dependence and interconnection, uniting coastal and inland communities.
A turning point came with the creation of "Greater Genoa" in 1926, when 19 neighboring municipalities were administratively merged with the capital municipality. This operation, although imposed, responded to a need for urban and economic reorganization, unifying a territory that already functioned as an integrated economic system, particularly for the industrial development of western Genoa. Although the administrative union did not erase local identities, it accelerated the process of integration. Today, the ties between Genoa and the other 66 municipalities in the metropolitan area are strengthened by mobility and services. In fact, many residents of inland and coastal municipalities work, study, or use the health and cultural services of the capital. This functional interdependence reinforces the sense of belonging to a single area, transcending administrative boundaries and smaller municipal identities. The sense of belonging is therefore less linked to a separate historical identity and more to a shared everyday experience within an integrated system.
However, the sense of belonging to individual municipalities and local communities (neighborhoods, districts, hamlets) is still quite strong.

5. SPECIFIC DATA CONNECTED WITH THE SELECTED POLICY INSTRUMENT

Contents

The selected policy instrument is the Regional Programme of Liguria Region, that utilizes the European Regional Development Fund (RP-ERDF 2021-2027) to improve the competitiveness and attractiveness of the regional territory, both in terms of productive activities and quality of life, promoting the long-term transition toward a sustainable, inclusive and dynamic development model.
The POR is inspired by the five policy objectives (OP) of European programming: a more competitive and smarter Europe (OP1), a more resilient, greener and low-carbon Europe (OP2), a more connected Europe (OP3), a more social Europe (OP4) and a Europe closer to its citizens (OP5).
Based on these objectives, specific objectives (SO) have been identified for regional programming. In the 2021-2027 programming period, €630 million have been allocated to Liguria; 90% of these resources are earmarked for businesses.
POR is part of the programming framework for European, national and regional funds, in compliance with the priorities of the European Green Deal and 2030 Agenda, and incorporates the issues addressed in the following regional strategic documents: Regional Energy and Environment Plan (PEARL), Regional Strategy for Smart Specialization in Research and Innovation, Regional Strategy for Sustainable Development (SRSvS), Climate Scenarios for the Ligurian Territory, Regional Economic and Financial Document; Digital Agenda of the Regional Digital Strategic Programme.

It is therefore necessary to strengthen the integration between the ERDF POR and the Strategic Plan of the Metropolitan City of Genoa. The latter is the policy instrument that coordinates actions for sustainable development on a metropolitan scale, integrating various strategic planning tools and addressing crucial issues such as mobility, innovation, regeneration and inclusion.
Such integration is essential for effective planning and multi-level collaboration between the regional and metropolitan levels in order to maximise benefits for stakeholders.
Strengthening cooperation between Liguria Region and the Metropolitan City of Genoa therefore aims to promote synergies between funded projects and potential new ones, improve communication with stakeholders, consolidate stable relationships between integrated strategic planning and fund management, concentrate resources and integrate funds from different sources.
This integrated and multi-level governance model will enable the development of capacity building and co-planning actions for the metropolitan area. This is particularly relevant for "internal areas", as defined by the National Strategy for Internal Areas (SNAI), which aims to counter demographic decline and socio-economic marginalization in remote areas by improving services and infrastructure. A focus will therefore be developed on specific objective 5.2 of the RP-ERDF, which promotes integrated social, economic and environmental development at local level, including culture, natural heritage, sustainable tourism and security in non-urban areas.

Objectives

The Liguria ERDF Regional Operational Programme activates Policy Objectives 1, 2 and 5 complying with the resource allocation required by the European Commission: at least 85% on OP1, OP2 and at least 30% on actions in favour of climate objectives.
OP1 A more competitive and smarter Europe
Aims to relaunch the competitiveness of the Ligurian regional system by strengthening research and innovation, based on the contents of the Smart Specialisation Strategy (S3) and in synergy with important global strategies (e.g. Horizon Europe and the UN's 2030 Agenda).
The Specific Objectives are:

- SO 1.1 - Develop and strengthen research and innovation capacities and the introduction of advanced technologies
- SO 1.2 - Enable citizens, businesses, research institutions and public administrations to reap the benefits of digitalisation
- SO 1.3 - Strengthen sustainable growth, the competitiveness of SMEs and job creation in SMEs, including through productive investments
- SO 1.4 - Develop skills for smart specialisation, industrial transition and entrepreneurship

OP2 A resilient, greener and low-carbon Europe: in line with the European Green Deal, it pursues the transition to a sustainable model to achieve the 2030 and 2050 climate targets, also contributing to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Regional Sustainable Development Strategy.

The Specific Objectives are:
- SO 2.1 - Promoting energy efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions
- SO 2.2 - Promoting renewable energy in accordance with the Renewable Energy Directive (EU) 2018/2001, including sustainability criteria where applicable
- SO 2.6 - Promoting the transition to a circular and resource-efficient economy

OP 5 A Europe closer to its citizens: aims at the sustainable and integrated development of medium-sized urban areas and inland areas in order to reduce existing territorial and social disparities.

The Specific Objectives are:
- SO 5.1 - Promoting integrated and inclusive social, economic and environmental development, culture, natural heritage, sustainable tourism and security in urban areas
- SO 5.2 - Promoting integrated social, economic and environmental development at local level, culture, natural heritage, sustainable tourism and safety in areas other than urban.

Critical Issues to Address

The main challenges identified by the ROP are:
1) transformation of the static and fragile elements of the productive fabric
2) ecological transition towards a sustainable "green" development model
3) increase social cohesion, equity and quality of life

Initiatives are concentrated in areas experiencing the most significant phenomena of socio-economic imbalance, such as inland areas and urban agglomerations.

In mountainous and rural territories, which are most affected by depopulation, it is necessary to improve services and create new employment opportunities in order to maintain residency and increase attractiveness.

In urban areas, characterised by a sharp decline in births rates, an ageing population, a decrease in the working-age population and an increase in the immigrant population, actions are being promoted to regenerate the existing building stock, to establish and expand services for the elderly and for early childhood education and care, to support parents in balancing work and family life, and to promote the inclusion of young people and immigrants in the labour market and society.

Expected Change/Improvement

Three strategic priorities have been identified in the RP-ERDF.

Priority 1. Development and consolidation of the competitiveness and attractiveness of the Ligurian system. In line with the Smart Specialisation Strategy (S3), the POR focuses on innovation, research, advanced technologies, digitalization, investment and internationalization strategies, and strengthening of investments. The following areas are promoted:
- innovation within companies;
- cooperation between networks of relationships between companies and the world of research, the consolidation of existing relationships, promoting forms of

aggregation between companies and other innovation entities, with particular reference to the most dynamic and relevant production sectors for the territory;
- digitalization, to accelerate the process and strengthen competitiveness, particularly in response to the challenges highlighted by the pandemic. Key elements include improving service quality, reducing costs, ensuring data interoperability and accessibility, and ensuring that digital services are inclusive of vulnerable groups and marginalized areas.
- strengthening investment by SMEs, with a specific focus on micro-enterprises in the craft and retail sectors. Tools are identified to facilitate access to credit for SMEs, strategies for industrial revitalisation and redevelopment, support for forms of business aggregation and supply chain projects, redevelopment of tourism offerings, and development of internationalisation processes;
- strengthening and increasing professional skills related to digitalization and innovation in the areas identified by the Regional Smart Specialisation Strategy.

Priority 2. Green transformation and transition to a sustainable development model. This priority focuses on energy efficiency, use of renewable energy and development of the circular economy. Priority is given to: improving the energy efficiency of production processes and upgrading public buildings; use of renewable energy, supporting production and self-consumption, both in public buildings and industrial processes, including the use of innovative or less common technologies.
In line with the past, incentives are being promoted for the establishment of energy communities and the development of the circular economy, in order to strengthen the efficient use of resources and thus the competitiveness of the production system.
Priority 3. Sustainable and integrated development of territories. This priority concerns the sustainable and integrated development of territorial systems and focuses on the four medium-sized urban areas centred around Imperia, Sanremo, Savona and La Spezia as well as on inland areas, including those selected in the SNAI and those of regional interest not included in the SNAI. The priority is implemented through the Integrated Territorial Investment (ITI) tool, without involving resources from other programme priorities, and the construction of Territorial Strategies (TS), which promote the integration of funds other than the ERDF for the implementation of complementary and non-priority interventions for the programme.
For medium-sized urban areas, among the needs emerging **bottom-up** from the TS, the ERDF finances those that respond to the challenges identified by the ROP, i.e. the environmental and social fragility of intensively exploited but marginal urban areas. Priority is given to:
- increasing the resilience of anthropised spaces, improving environmental quality and biodiversity, mitigating the effects of climate change and reducing forms of pollution, improving liveability and well-being through the application of integrated and widespread “nature-based” technologies and solutions, both green and blue, for the green transformation of the urban context;
- promoting social inclusion and cohesion, reducing inequalities and structural deficiencies, responding to individual and collective needs, offering forms of support and opportunities for personal growth through tangible and intangible

interventions to regenerate 'urban places' in an integrated, adaptive, dynamic and diversified manner, using culture as a driver for the development of new economic and social realities, and supporting the enhancement and dissemination of local services and the development of participatory and shared management formulas for spaces and activities.
- Support the development of tourism promotion initiatives through promotional campaigns and territorial marketing policies.

In inland areas, the intention is to continue what has already been pursued in the previous programme, as it constitutes a long-term structural strategy for territorial cohesion.
Based on the requests represented by local communities in the TS, the following needs are addressed:
- adjusting the quantity and quality of education, health and mobility services;
- supporting the enhancement of natural and cultural heritage, strengthening local economies;
- supporting the process of deseasonalising incoming tourist flows, as well as promoting diversification in terms of both the type of activity and destination, including outside coastal areas;
- support for the development of tourism promotion initiatives through promotional campaigns and territorial marketing policies.

Territorial and Socio-Economic Framework (Sectoral)

The **analysis of the socio-economic, territorial and environmental context of the RP-ERDF** identifies the following salient aspects.
Economic criticalities:
- very small size of enterprises
- low propensity for internationalization and the development of innovative processes
- delays in the digitalization of businesses, citizens and the public administration

Environmental critical issues:
- above- Pollutant levels exceeding thresholds in urban areas
- low use of renewable energy sources
- low level of energy efficiency; energy poverty in the residential sector and energy-intensive public buildings in urban areas
- Worsening of climate and weather trends, with rising average temperatures, increased heat waves, changes in the distribution of cumulative rainfall and its intensity, with a sharp increase in autumn and a decrease in other months, and greater drought expected by 2050.

Territorial and socio-demographic critical issues:
- significant gap between the coast and the inland in terms of settlement, as a result of the morphological conformation, with a widespread prevalence of mountainous and hilly surfaces (70% of the area covered by forests): concentration of settlements along the coastal axis and along the main valley axes
- isolated and difficult to access inland areas

- high average population density compared to the national average
- imbalances between urban areas
- one of the highest ageing indices in Europe and a natural growth rate significantly lower than the national average
- disparity in disposable income and increased risk of poverty
- low ratio between youth and total employment rates
- low ratio between the employment rates of women with pre-school children and women without children.

With regard to tourism, there is a growing trend in arrivals and overnight stays and an increase in the "tourism rate" in the non-summer months.

The periodically updated territorial and socioeconomic context analysis of the **strategic plan** has identified the following strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (Dossier on the Metropolitan City of Genoa - SWOT analysis).

Strengths (S):

- Natural, environmental, and cultural heritage
- Blue economy
- Propensity for patenting – cluster of innovative companies
- Number of productive activities in five leading supply chains
- Prevalence of non-profit organizations

Weaknesses (W):

- High hydrogeological risk
- Infrastructural and digital gap between the coast and the inland areas
- Local public transport: green vehicle fleet and modal integration
- Lack of urban green spaces
- Separate waste collection and waste disposal systems in need of improvement
- Aging and depopulation, more pronounced in inland areas

Opportunities (O):

- PNRR funding programs
- Other funding programs (Agenda 2030, Genoa capital of sport, PUMS funding, etc.)
- International cooperation (Marseille, Nice, etc.), European networks (METREX, etc.)

Threats (T):

- Climate change/drought
- Inadequate motorway infrastructure and poor maintenance
- Inability to integrate and channel all funding into the defined strategy
- Global economic and war crises
- Energy crisis and scarcity of resources

Other Relevant Elements

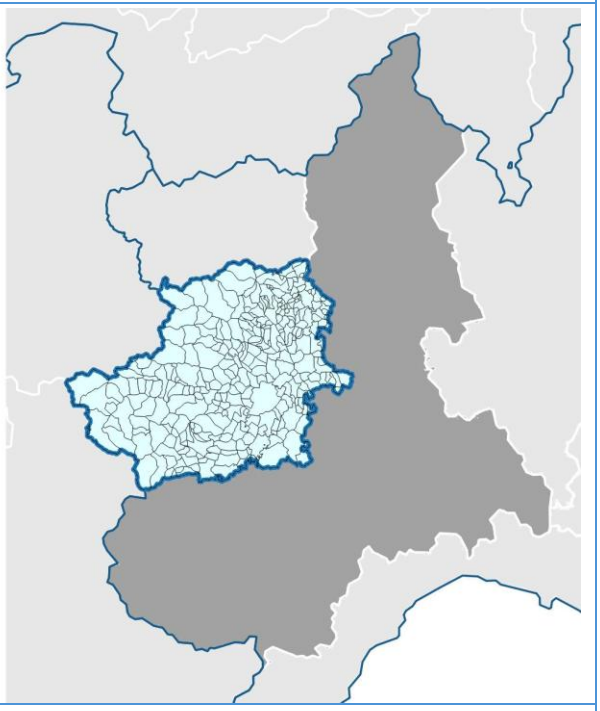
Web links:

RP-ERDF Liguria 2021-2027:
https://www.regione.liguria.it/component/publiccompetitions/document/48413:programma-regionale-pr-fesr-2021-2027.html?Itemid=13436

Genoa Metropolitan Strategic Plan:
https://pianostrategico.cittametropolitana.genova.it

Genoa Metropolitan City 2030 Agenda:
https://pianostrategico.cittametropolitana.genova.it/content/agenda-2030-di-genova-citt%C3%A0-metropolitana
First Strategic Plan for the Metropolitan City of Genoa (PSM 2017):
https://pianostrategico.cittametropolitana.genova.it/content/piano-strategico-metropolitano
Sectoral strategic plans coordinated by the PSM (PUMS - Biciplan):
https://pums.cittametropolitana.genova.it/
https://biciplan.cittametropolitana.genova.it/
Dossier on the Metropolitan City of Genoa:
https://pianostrategico.cittametropolitana.genova.it/content/dossier-di-genova-metropoli

2.2.2 Politecnico di Torino with Metropolitan City of Turin (PP02)

1. PP INFORMATION	
PP Name (and APA, if applicable)	Politecnico di Torino (POLITO) APA Metropolitan City of Turin (CMTo)
	
ITALY	Detail (light blue) of the Metropolitan City of Turin - NUTS 3 in Piedmont Region - NUTS 2
Name, Role, and Contact of Compiler	PP02 DIST/POLITO, carolina.giaimo@polito.it Monica Sciajno, Massimo Vettoretti, Irene Mortari (APA-CMTo) monica.sciajno@cittametropolitana.torino.it massimo.vettoretti@cittametropolitana.torino.it irene.mortari@cittametropolitana.torino.it

2. TERRITORIAL FRAMEWORK **Understanding territorial characteristics and recognizing key factors that influence governance models**	
2.1 Key Data of the Case Study	
Total Surface Area of the Metropolitan Area	6.826,93 km^2 (2025, ISTAT)
Total Surface Area of the Core City	130,06 km^2 (2025, ISTAT)
Population of the Metropolitan Area	2,204,837 inh. (1 Jan 2024, ISTAT)

Population of the Core City	851,199 inh. (1 Jan 2024, ISTAT)
Density of the Metropolitan Area	322.9 inh./km^2 (1 Jan 2024)
Density of the Core City	6,537.6 inh./km^2 (1 Jan 2024)
Number of Municipalities included in the Metropolitan Area	312
The metropolitan territory of CMTo is characterized by significant administrative fragmentation and geographical diversity. It covers a vast area, including 178 km of border with France, and comprises 312 municipalities. CMTo ranks first among Italian metropolitan cities in terms of surface area and number of municipalities. Many of these municipalities are very small (79.8% with less than 5,000 inhabitants; 35.2% with fewer than 1,000 inhabitants, source: StaTÒmetro-CMTo based on ISTAT data, population as of 1 Dec. 2023), with 105 municipalities located in mountainous areas (source: PTGM Dashboard based on ISTAT 2025 data). Turin, together with its conurbation of 'first- and second-ring' municipalities, play the role of the metropolitan core. As the regional and metropolitan capital, the municipality of Turin accounts for about 40% of the total CMTo population, while occupying only 2% of the metropolitan territory.	
Other Possible Sub-Metropolitan Aggregations	11 Homogeneous Zones (source: CMTo Statute) 19 Unions of Municipalities (including 14 Mountain Unions and 2 Hill Unions, source: Charter of Associative Forms, Piedmont Region, 2025)
The metropolitan territory is divided into 11 Homogeneous Zones established by the CMTo Statute to address imbalances among municipalities and ensure representation for distinct territories. These Homogeneous Zones are consistent with the boundaries of the Territorial Integration Areas (AIT) of the Piedmont Region (PTR 2024 revision). In the Italian legal system, there are forms of association called Unions of Municipalities (Legislative Decree No. 267/2000 and Law No. 56/14). These are local entities formed by two or more municipalities to jointly perform specific functions and provide shared services. In the case of predominantly mountain municipalities, they are called Mountain Unions of Municipalities and may also exercise specific powers relating to the protection and promotion of the mountains. The Piedmont Region also provides for a third category of unions, for municipalities in hilly areas. Within the CMTo, there are 3 Unions of Municipalities, 2 Hill Unions and 14 Mountain Unions of Municipalities (as of 2025). These are formally recognised by the Region and are eligible for special funding. According to art. 29 of the Metropolitan Statute, the Metropolitan City may enter into agreements, understandings, and other forms of cooperation and collaboration with	

municipalities and their unions to jointly organize and manage services – including at a decentralized level, as provided by law – coordinate the exercise of functions, or develop public works of common interest. The Metropolitan Council may transfer specific functions of the Metropolitan City to Homogeneous Zones based on individual territorial characteristics and if they constitute and operate as a single union of municipalities comprising the entire territory of reference or federate the entire area through one or more agreements between unions of municipalities and/or municipalities. Functions of the CMTo may also be transferred to municipalities, unions of municipalities, or multifunctional agreements, provided they have more than 30,000 inhabitants (art. 27 Statute).	
Reference Functional Urban Area (FUA – OECD Definition)	1,775,142 inh. (2023) 1,942 km² 914 inh./km² (2023) 96 municipalities (+1 in Province of Asti) (source: ISTAT 2021, based on OECD methodology)
According to the definition of Functional Urban Areas of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the "FUA of Turin" (code IT004F) has been identified within the CMTo. This delimitation considers the demographic size, population density (sufficiently high to support complex economic functions), and commuting patterns from municipalities surrounding the capital. The FUA is a statistical territorial unit, comparable at European level, which allows for the assessment of spatial dynamics, socio-economic development and the overall sustainability of each urban area. The size of the Turin FUA is updated by ISTAT (Italian National Institute of Statistics) based on data from population census. As in many other cases at national and European level, the size of the Turin FUA does not coincide with the administrative boundaries of the CMTo (being less extensive than the administrative area), nor with those of its Homogeneous Zones. The Turin FUA is classified as "metropolitan" (from 500,000 to 1.5 million inhabitants).	
Reference NUTS region (Eurostat)	
The CMTo is classified at Eurostat level as a NUTS3 statistical territorial unit ('small regions'), with code NUTS ITC11. It is part of the Piedmont Region (NUTS2 statistical territorial unit) and is divided into 312 statistical territorial units (LAU2). NUTS3 ITC11 (CMTo) is classified as a predominantly urban region (since at least 80% of the population lives in urban agglomerations).[2]	
2.2 Spatial Distribution of Land Uses and Land Cover-LULC (current state)	

[2] https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/345175/20613256/italy-north-nuts-2024-level-3.png/d9ad5662-611c-431a-b2db-4b1ba34fe5b1?t=1734449364519.

LULC: Artificial Surface, Agricultural Areas, Forest and Semi Natural Areas, Wetlands and Water bodies

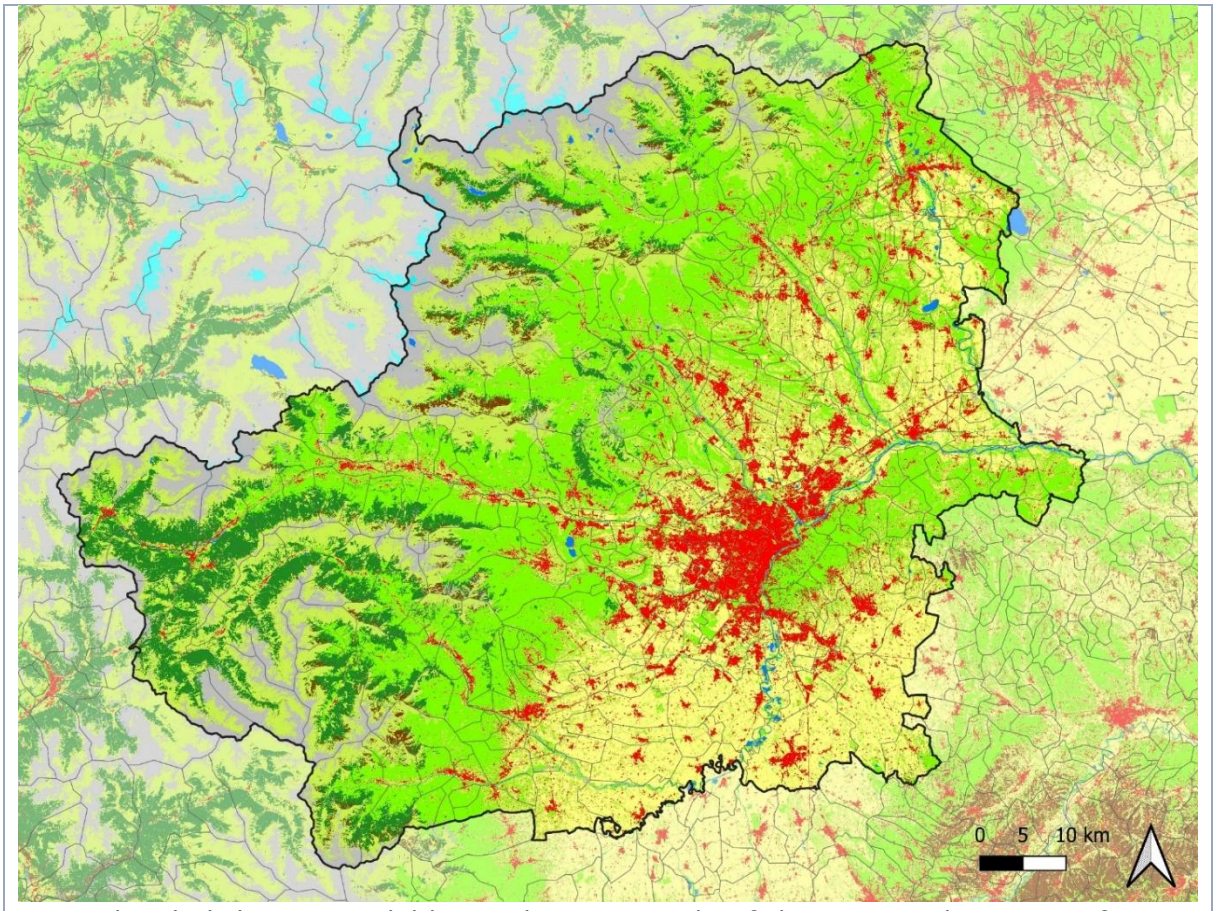
According to data from CORINE Land Cover plus Backbone 2023[3] – which provides a large scale, seamless and high-resolution inventory of European land cover, accurate for comparative purposes – it is possible to identify the share of each CLCplus 11 basic land cover classes for the territory of the CMTo.

The area is characterised by a high share of natural and semi natural areas: herbaceous cover (especially permanent herbaceous, about 30%) and wooded areas (mainly broadleaved deciduous trees, 28%). Reflecting its predominantly mountainous morphology, the share of non- and sparsely vegetated land is close to 9% (also needle leaved trees accounts for 8.3%). Sealed surfaces, including all artificial surfaces and constructions, represents 7.4% of the metropolitan area, concentrated especially in the core city and its conurbation. However, these data do not account for artificial subclasses, which do not capture the variability of urban fabric density.

Finally, water bodies cover around 1% of the metropolitan surface, although the extensive hydrological network of the Po River, its tributaries, and other water elements, are not fully captured by satellite imagery (in class 10, areas must be water-covered for at least 50% of the observation period to be classified as such).

Class code and name		Surface area (%)	
1	Sealed	7.4	7.4
2	Woody needle leaved trees	8.3	36.4
3	Woody broadleaved deciduous trees	28.0	
4	Woody broadleaved evergreen trees	0.0	
5	Low-growing woody plants	1.9	46.6
6	Permanent herbaceous	29.4	
7	Periodically herbaceous	15.3	
8	Lichens and mosses	0.0	8.9
9	Non- and sparsely vegetated	8.8	
11	Snow and ice	0.1	
10	Water	0.8	0.8

[3] From Copernicus Land Monitoring Service: https://doi.org/10.2909/b0bd43c6-1fa1-4d88-9c45-98b13a95d0b2.



More detailed data is available on the geoportals of the Metropolitan City of Turin, Piedmont Region, Arpa Piemonte, and ISPRA

- Total wetlands: 84.5 km^2
- Areas covered by woods and forests: 2,424 km^2 (2016)
- Areas covered by grasslands, pastures, and scrubland: 674 km^2 (2016)
- Areas covered by rocky grasslands: 376 km^2 (2016)
- Consumed (sealed) soil: 586 km^2 (2023)

Settlement Model

The CMTo territory comprises 52.4% mountainous areas, 20.9% hilly areas and 26.7% plains. This morphological characteristic has shaped settlement patterns and different levels of anthropisation, reflected in the demographic distribution: a high concentration of activity in the plains and valley floors, and scattered and increasingly depopulated settlements in the Alpine areas.

The settlement structure has undergone significant changes over time. First, there was an intensification of the concentration of activities and population in the regional capital, in the main urban sub-centres (Pinerolo, Ivrea, Chivasso, Chieri, etc.) and along the transport routes connecting to them. Later, Alpine tourist centres developed. The rest of the territory remained sparsely populated.

The socio-economic processes during the post-war reconstruction in Italy led to the rapid growth of the automotive industry (FIAT) which, in addition to the Turin (Mirafiori)

plants, created an important production hub in the city's second belt, between the Rivalta and Orbassano. This industrial expansion drove strong population growth (with immigration from southern Italy), extensive urban sprawl around Turin, and widespread infrastructure development, often through fragmented and uncoordinated interventions, especially within the city and the first and second belts.

Turin conurbation (first and second belts)

In the early 20th century, urban growth affected the more peripheral areas of the capital: Corso Grosseto became one of the main axes connecting the city with the northern industrial areas. Around the 1960s, the capital's new urban development plan emphasised the functional division between residential and industrial areas to improve safety and hygiene conditions in the urban fabric. However, this model also deepened social divides and contributed to the deterioration of certain areas.

The new 1995 municipal land-use plan marked the transition from industrialisation to deindustrialisation. New concerns emerged, including the need to redevelop and repurpose numerous abandoned industrial areas, beginning with those embedded within the residential urban fabric.

In 2000, the City of Turin outlined its future through the first strategic plan, based on three main axes: strengthening accessibility to distant markets, specialised information systems and cultural production centres, in order to facilitate access to international economic, scientific and cultural cooperation agreements; extending the organisational and promotional functions of the capital, while enhancing the potential of different parts of the territory (broadening the vision to the provincial and regional level); defining projects to improve urban quality and social cohesion.

Province/Metropolitan City of Turin

Since 1999, the provincial settlement model has been guided by the Provincial Territorial Coordination Plan (PTC1). This plan – primarily a "guideline" for the 315 municipalities within its territory – anticipated key issues of sustainable territorial planning that would emerge in the subsequent years. The main pillar was to balance economic and social development with natural environment protection through: support for the creation of a polycentric territory (division of the province into districts and identification of urban centres and sub-centres where functions and services could be directed, also to combat depopulation of mountain areas); development of a widespread and efficient road network; protection of high-quality agricultural land in the plains; expansion of protected natural areas; and promotion of urban and architectural quality in buildings.

The second territorial plan (PTC2, 2011) reaffirmed the principles of PTC1, while giving greater weight to municipal urban planning. Given the alarming trends in land take – continuing at a rapid pace despite the constant decline in population and the economy slowdown (including construction sector) following the global financial crisis of 2007-8 – it defined stricter measures on new urban expansion plans, aiming to safeguard fertile land (in line with EU directives). The slogan of the PTC2 is "containment of land take and urban sprawl". With a view to guiding territorial and urban development on a macro scale, the plan then focuses on mobility issues. At the European level, it binds the infrastructure corridor for the construction of the Turin-Lyon high-speed/high-capacity

line (TEN-T Mediterranean Corridor), while supporting the construction of three road corridors of supra-local interest: the foothill axis, for the drainage and conveyance of traffic flows from the valleys and their redistribution to neighbouring provinces, and the closure of the metropolitan ring road, with the completion of the section crossing the Turin hills, to relieve congestion in Turin and make traffic flow more smoothly; identification and safeguarding of a new urban axis (Corso Marche Corridor), designed as a south-north connection for the Turin urban area, multimodal (motorway, railway, surface boulevard), a hub for new morphological and settlement configurations of the capital and neighbouring municipalities.

The third territorial plan (GMTP, 2022, in progress) builds on the legacy of its predecessors and confirms the focus on limiting land take while reinforcing guidelines for the reuse and redevelopment of brownfield sites. Sustainability, in its three pillars, is the foundation for the development of the plan's strategic vision and the consequent territorialisation of actions. Unlike previous plans, it places less emphasis on urban densification as a solution to the loss of open/green spaces, in view of the new requirements of ongoing climate change, where the presence of unbuilt spaces within the urban fabric is essential to ensure quality of life.

The CMTo also intervenes in the design of urban areas by rethinking mobility: the major new motorway axes envisaged by the PTC2 (Corso Marche in Turin and the beltway, and Tangenziale Est in Collina di Torino) are reconfigured within a vision of sustainable mobility and '30/15-minute cities', where public transport (metropolitan railway service, metro line 1 extension, new line 2) and cycling mobility are becoming increasingly important.

Nevertheless, the CMTo must contend with the heterogeneity and vastness of its territory and with accessibility issues (both material and immaterial) of mountain areas, which continue to suffer from progressive depopulation.

Land Take	Consumed land = 586 km² / 8.6% (2023, ISPRA) Net land take 2022-2023 = 1.0 km² (ISPRA) Net land take 2021-2022 = 1.7 km² (ISPRA) Net land take 2006-2012 = 14 km² (ISPRA) Net land take 2000-2006 = 11.52 km² (EEA) Net land take 2006-2012 = 3.93 km² (EEA) Net land take 2012-2018 = 1.72 km² (EEA) Net land take 2000-2018 = 17.17 km² (EEA)

Land take continues to represent one of the main challenges in Italy and within the CMTo.

Although data differ among the different monitoring sources (EEA at European level, ISPRA at national level, Piedmont Region, CMTo), due to variations in methodology (e.g. satellite image resolution, definitions of "land take"), the progressive land take is confirmed year after year. The total land consumed in the CMTo in 2023 is approximately 586 km², corresponding to 8.6% of the entire territory (ISPRA), ranking it as the second Italian metropolitan city (after Rome) in absolute terms.

In the CMTo land take continues, despite some slowdowns largely attributable to unfavourable economic conditions for the construction sector (the 2007 financial crisis, the 2019 Covid-19 pandemic, etc.) and despite the substantial stability of demographic trends and the increasing attention paid by institutions, which is reflected in regulatory and strategic and territorial planning instruments, which are still not very effective in counteracting/offsetting economic development needs.
At the level of Homogeneous Zones, the largest amounts of land consumed (both in absolute and relative terms) in 2020 were recorded in: Zone 1 - City of Turin (85 km², 65%), though this area registers the lowest rate of new land take; first and second belt municipalities, which are more attractive for new urban expansion due to their proximity to the capital and excellent accessibility from the main motorways and roads, particularly Zone 3 - AMT Sud saw a significant increase between 2019 and 2020, with 75 km² (19.4%) (source: GMTP-CMTo, 2022, based on ISPRA data).

2.3 Transport and Mobility Infrastructure System

Road Network

In CMTo, the road network consists of motorways (596 km) and the ordinary network (extra-urban roads, urban roads and local roads), totalling approximately 21,443 km. Over 2,900 km of extra-urban roads are directly managed by CMTo (source: CMTo road network graph - GMTP Dashboard, 2024).
The CMTo mobility system can be schematically represented in four levels:

- Level I: the ring road and motorway system provide a fast north-south connection. The problems associated with low levels of service during peak hours, for which the construction of a fourth lane (Bruere-Borgaro section) was proposed as a solution, appear to be less critical since the post-Covid period. The Strategic Metropolitan Mobility Plan (2022) proposes a combination of measures as a solution: construction of Turin metro line 2, strengthening of the metropolitan railway system, and construction of the Corso Marche axis, among others.
- Level II: the outer metropolitan ring road forms a large outer ring that, together with the ring road system, serves to decongest the Turin urban area. It provides distribution at both urban and metropolitan scale.
- Level III: the Pedemontana corridor was created to allow direct connections between decentralised areas, diverging traffic from valleys and mountains (connections with the provinces of Biella and Vercelli to the east and the province of Cuneo to the south-west).
- Level IV: the entire extra-urban network with supra-local function.

Connections with areas outside the metropolitan administrative perimeter are ensured by a system of tunnels and mountain crossings, including – towards Valle d'Aosta, France, and Switzerland – the Fréjus Tunnel, where a second tube has recently been brought into operation; the Moncenisio and Monginevro Tunnels; the Mont Blanc Tunnel, which over the coming years will be subject to several multi-week closures to carry out unavoidable structural works, leading to a further increase in traffic volumes on the northern ring road towards France; and the Gran San Bernardo Tunnel.

Connections with the Lombardy Region (Milan), Liguria (ports of Genoa and Savona) and Emilia-Romagna (Piacenza) are provided by the motorway system.
At road level, the main projects planned for the coming years include:

- The Corso Marche axis, crossing the Turin conurbation from east to west (featuring an urban tunnel and a surface boulevard);
- The Gronda Est, crossing the Turin hills, to provide a faster connection between the northern and southern ring roads.

Transport Network (High-Speed Rail, Airports, Ports, and other)

The railway system includes:

- Regional Railway Service (SFR): connects the various territorial areas with the city of Turin (capital of the Piedmont Region) and with the capitals of neighbouring regions –Aosta, Milan, and Genoa.
- Metropolitan Railway System (SFM): comprises seven main lines (Lines 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, and Line 5, currently under construction) and serves as a hub for passenger travel within the metropolitan area. The main junction of the SFM is Porta Susa railway station (in Turin). The network extends for approximately 363 km, radiating towards the belt municipalities and the surrounding valleys.
- High speed railway line connects to Lombardy (Milan, 45 minutes) and Rome (about four hours) (24 km, SUMP-CMTo 2022). The Turin-Lyon High-Speed Railway Line is a new high-speed infrastructure for both freight and passenger transport, currently under construction, with completion scheduled for 2033. The project includes two international stations, each located a few kilometres from the base tunnel – in Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne (France) and Susa (CMTo). These two new facilities are designed to support multimodal exchanges (i.e. transitions between different transport modes, such as from road to rail), accommodate different passenger profiles with specific service needs (such as parking for cars, bicycles, and buses), and ensure connections with local transport networks in the two respective regions. In addition, the line will be directly connected to the Orbassano freight terminal and to the SITO freight village, which represents the main Alpine gateway for goods destined for the north-western quadrant.

Turin-Caselle “Sandro Pertini” International Airport, located to the north of the city, handles an annual traffic volume of approximately 5 million passengers (SAGAT data, 2025), ranking 13th among Italian airports. The airport is connected to the city centre by a Metropolitan Railway Service line - SFM (Torino Porta Susa station, providing interchange with the high-speed rail network) as well as by a motorway link.

Sustainable Mobility Network

Local Public Transport is structured as a hierarchical system comprising:

- the railway system;
- the metro system, consisting of the (currently one, in future two) automated metro lines of Turin;

• the tram system, which integrates and supports the previous systems along the busiest urban corridors of Turin; • the bus transport system (urban–suburban and extra-urban buses), which provides feeder services, support to the previous systems, and integration along corridors not served by them; • complementary systems specific to certain contexts (boats, funiculars, cable cars). The automated urban metro line (M1) crosses the City of Turin and connects the western conurbation – Collegno, Grugliasco, and Rivoli – with the interchange hubs of Porta Susa and Porta Nuova, continuing southwards towards the major hospital centres of Molinette, CTO, and S. Anna, and the Lingotto multifunctional centre. Line 2 is currently under design; it will make it easier to cross the City of Turin along its main northeast–southwest axis. The bus transport system is managed by the Gruppo Torinese Trasporti (GTT) and includes a fleet of over 300 buses operating on more than 70 routes. The buses cover approximately 13.4 million kilometres per year, serving a total of 264 municipalities across the CMTo and the Provinces of Alessandria, Asti, and Cuneo. Cycle paths: in the city of Turin, there are approximately 230 km of cycle lanes. This number rises to 795 km when considering the entire CMTo area (source: SUMP-CMTo 2022). The cycle network connects to EuroVelo Route 8, four national cycle routes, the Vento Cycle Route (Turin–Venice), as well as the regional cycling network. Charging Stations: Several private companies operate –ENEL X, ENI, Tesla, and others. For example, ENEL X manages more than 2,000 charging stations across the CMTo, while Tesla operates only three Supercharger stations.

Motorization Rate of the Metropolitan Area	685 vehicles per 1000 inh. (2023, ISTAT)
Motorization Rate of the Core City (optional)	638 vehicles per 1,000 inh. (2023, ISTAT)

3. SOCIO ECONOMIC FRAMEWORK Understanding socio economic characteristics and recognizing key factors that influence governance models	
Birth Rate of the Metropolitan Area	5.9 (1 Jan 2023, ISTAT)
Birth Rate of the Core City (optional)	6.1 (1 Jan 2023, ISTAT)
Average Household Size of the Metropolitan Area	2.05 (31 Dec 2023, ISTAT)
Average Household Size of the Core City (optional)	1.91 (31 Dec 2023, ISTAT)

Aging Index of the Metropolitan Area	228.9 (1 Jan 2024, ISTAT)
Aging Index of the Core City (optional)	232.0 (1 Jan 2024, ISTAT)
Foreign Population and Presence of the Metropolitan Area	9.94% (31 Dec 2023, ISTAT) 219,139 (31 Dec 2023, ISTAT)
Foreign Population and Presence of the Core City (optional)	15.27% (31 Dec 2023, ISTAT) 129,951 (31 Dec 2023, ISTAT)
Higher Education Graduates of the Metropolitan Area	33.1% (age 25-39) (2023, ISTAT)
Higher Education Graduates of the Core City (optional)	33% (age 25-39) (2023, ISTAT)
Employment Rate of the Metropolitan Area	68.9% (age 15-64) (2024, OMLT)
Employment Rate of the Core City (optional)	68.4% (age 15-64) (2024, OMLT)
Youth Employment Rate of the Metropolitan Area	38.2% (age 15-29) (2024, ISTAT)
Youth Employment Rate of the Core City (optional)	Not available
Enterprises and Sectoral Specialisation of the Metropolitan Area	220,860 Enterprises (2024, OMLT)
In 2024, the CMTo counted 195,477 active enterprises out of a total of 220,860 registered (OMLT). Among the active enterprises, 59,334 were artisan enterprises, 43,823 women-owned enterprises, 30,318 foreign-owned enterprises, and 18,969 youth-owned enterprises. Of these, 92,507 were in the core city. By macro-sector and economic activity, there were 11,262 registered enterprises in agriculture (5.1%), 19,268 in industry (8.7%), 34,983 in construction (15.8%), 51,862 in trade (23.5%), 74,784 in services (33.9%), and 17,368 in education, health, and other public, social, and personal services (7.9%). With respect to enterprise size classes, the vast majority of registered enterprises are micro-enterprises (up to 9 persons employed), accounting for about 95.2%. These are followed by small enterprises (10-49 persons employed) at 4%, and medium-sized enterprises (50-249 persons employed) at 0.6%. Large enterprises include 124 with 250–499 persons employed and 118 with 500 or more persons employed.	

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the Metropolitan Area	Per Capita: 35,657 € (2022, ISTAT)
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the Core City (optional)	Not available
Per Capita Gross Disposable Income of the Metropolitan Area	24,851 (2023, MEF-Dipartimento delle Finanze)
Per Capita Gross Disposable Income of the Core City (optional)	26,148 (2023, MEF-Dipartimento delle Finanze)
Tourism – Overnight Stays and Arrivals in the Metropolitan Area	Overnight stays: 7,096,890 (2023, Regione Piemonte) Arrivals: 2,733,569 (2023, Regione Piemonte)
Tourism – Overnight Stays and Arrivals in the Core City (optional)	Overnight stays: 4,140,347 (2023) Arrivals: 1,607,196 (2023)
Protected Natural Areas in the Metropolitan Area	738 km^2 protected natural areas (2021, Regione Piemonte) 1,045 km^2 Natura 2000 sites (2019, Regione Piemonte)
The metropolitan area includes 738 km^2 of protected natural areas, comprising: • 1 national park – *Gran Paradiso* (33,990 ha) • 20 regional parks/reserves (35,276 ha) • 9 metropolitan parks/reserves (4,535 ha) The Natura 2000 Network covers approximately 104,481 hectares and includes 62 sites, divided into Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), and Sites of Community Importance (SCIs). The management of Natura 2000 sites located within the metropolitan territory is delegated by the Region to the CMTo (except for areas that coincide wholly or partially with already established protected areas). CMTo, in turn, has sub-delegated the management of 10 SACs to the Management Authority for the Protected Areas of the Cottian Alps (*Ente di Gestione delle Aree Protette delle Alpi Cozie*).	
Major Healthcare Facilities in the Metropolitan Area	16
The healthcare system is ensured in every Homogeneous Zone by the presence of at least one reference hospital (GMTP-CMTO, adopted in 2022). The Municipality of Turin and Ciriè are the areas with the highest number of hospital beds per 10,000 inhabitants, while	

the Susa and Sangone Valleys are the areas with the lowest availability (MSP-CMTo, 2024). Within the CMTo the main hospital are: Molinette, Sant'Anna, Regina Margherita, CTO, Mauriziano, Maria Vittoria, Amedeo di Savoia, Martini, San Giovanni Bosco, and the Ophthalmic Hospital (all located within the core city); and the Hospitals of Rivoli, Chivasso, Moncalieri, Orbassano, IRCCS Candiolo, and Pinerolo (located outside the core city). Some of these facilities are university hospitals and research centres.

Universities in the Metropolitan Area	2

The metropolitan area hosts two major universities that play a central role in education, research, and innovation. The *Università degli Studi di Torino* (UniTo, about 83,000 enrolled in academic year 2024/25), one of the oldest and most prestigious in Italy, offers programs in the humanities, sciences, economics, law, and medicine. The *Politecnico di Torino* (PoliTo, about 38,800 enrolled in academic year 2024/25) is internationally renowned for engineering, architecture, and design. According to 2025 Censis ranking, UniTo ranks 6th among Italy's "mega universities", while PoliTo ranks 2nd among the country's polytechnics. University campuses are mainly located within the core city, apart from the UniTo campuses in Grugliasco and Orbassano.
Other Relevant Socio-Economic Indicators (of the Metropolitan Area)
Average Age = 47.2 years (ISTAT, 2023) Population Growth Rate (10 years) = -3.9% (ISTAT, 2023) Foreign Resident Population = 9.5% (ISTAT, 2023) Unemployment Rate = 7.1% (15-64 years) (ISTAT, 2023) Gender Gap in Employment Rate (F–M) = -14.5% (ISTAT, 2022) Gender Pay Gap (average annual wages of employees, F–M) = -€9,151.19 (INPS, 2022) NEET (15-29 years, not in employment, education or training) = 15.9% (ISTAT, 2022) Population (25-64 years) with Upper Secondary Education = 67.8% (ISTAT, 2022) Fixed Ultra-Broadband Coverage = 68.7% (ISTAT, 2022) Tourist Accommodation Facilities = 1,888 units (Regione Piemonte, 2023) Waste Sorted Collection = 61.3% (ISPRA, 2021) Electricity from Renewable Sources = 35.2% (TERNA, 2021) Municipalities Providing Nursery and/or Early Childhood Services = 42.6% (ISTAT, 2021) Municipalities Providing Social Home Care Services for the Elderly = 100% (ISTAT, 2020) Municipalities Providing Social Home Care Services for Families and Minors = 82.1% (ISTAT, 2020) Municipalities Providing Social Home Care Services for Persons with Disabilities = 74.7% (ISTAT, 2020) Retail Shops per 10,000 Inhabitants = 147.9 (Regione Piemonte, 2018) Mortality Rate = 12.8% (ISTAT, 2021) Life Expectancy at Birth = 82.8 years (ISTAT, 2021) Life Expectancy at 65 Years = 20.5 years (ISTAT, 2022, estimates) Cross-Regional Hospital Migration = 3.6% (ISTAT, 2021)

Hospital Beds per 10,000 Inhabitants = 51 (Ministero della Salute, 2021) These data are taken from the elaborations included in the Metropolitan Strategic Plan (CMTo, 2024).

4. GOVERNANCE
4.1 Governance of the Metropolitan Area
Type of Institution (Category)
Typology: Supra-Municipal Authorities (or Metropolitan Government) The Metropolitan City of Turin is a public territorial authority recognised by Italian Constitution (art. 114) and officially established by national Law 56/2014, replacing the former Province; it is now a "second-level" local authority (governed by elected mayors and councillors of Municipalities within the metropolitan area). The organs of the Metropolitan City, pursuant to Law 56, are: a) the Metropolitan Mayor; b) the Metropolitan Council (18); c) the Metropolitan Conference (312). The Mayor of the Core City became, by law, Mayor of the CMTo; he/she may appoint a Deputy Mayor from among the elected Councillors and delegate to them matters of complexity. It is important to consider that the mayor is elected only by the population of the Core City. In the case of Turin 851,199 inhabitants (2024), respect to the 2,204,837 inh. (2024) of the CMTo. The Metropolitan Statute approved in 2015 is normally a source of administrative law, but with Law 56/2014 it takes on a strong general regulatory content, both in terms of the internal organisation of the Authority, the distribution and management of functions, and in legitimising agreements between CMTo, Municipalities and Unions of Municipalities. Each Homogeneous Zone (art. 27 Statute) expresses opinions on the acts of the Metropolitan Council that specifically concern them and participates in the shared development of the Strategic Plan and the Metropolitan Territorial Plan, according to the procedures established by the regulation on homogeneous zone. Each Homogeneous Zone is provided with a Spokesperson and a Conference of Mayors of the Homogeneous Zone, to facilitate dialogue between the different parts of the territory (including those farthest from the core city) and the Metropolitan Mayor.
Source of Funding
Transfers from the State or regional government 1) The establishment of two single funds (one for the provinces and one for the metropolitan cities), into which the contributions and current funds already allocated to these entities will be channelled. 2) The allocation of a new state contribution of €80 million in 2022, gradually increased to a structural amount of €600 million starting in 2031, intended to finance the core functions of provinces and metropolitan cities. 3) Transfers from the Piedmont Region to some functions delegated to the CMTo.

4) National competitive calls for proposals, PNRR (National Recovery and Resilience Plan, supported by NextGenerationEU) and PINQUA (National Innovative Programme for Housing Quality), and other sectoral initiatives.

Direct local taxation

Vehicle Tax. The tax is due for each vehicle upon request for all registration and annotation formalities required by the Public Automobile Registry.

Environmental tax. The tax is applied, as required by law, to the waste disposal tax rates or the environmental hygiene rate.

Vehicle Insurance Tax. Starting in 2012, the tax on liability insurance for motor vehicles is a provincial tax. The rate is 12.50%. The Metropolitan City may increase or decrease the rate by no more than 3.5%.

Access to European funds

CMTo is active in seeking and coordinating European funding; for instance, it promotes and coordinates project proposals in various sectors, such as metropolitan governance, environment, innovation, and social inclusion. Funds come from programs such as the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), and the European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) programs.

CMTo also participates in competitive calls, including the LIFE Programme and other thematic EU initiatives.

Financial resources are mobilised through CMTo's affiliated companies (see next section "Public–Private Partnerships").

Functions and Responsibilities (categories)

National legislation (Law 56/2014) defines the framework of the main functions of the CMTo:

- Strategic Planning: adoption and annual updating of a three-year strategic plan for the metropolitan area, which constitutes a guideline for the institution and exercise of functions of the municipalities and unions of municipalities within the aforementioned territory, including in relation to the exercise of functions delegated or assigned by the regions, in compliance with regional laws in the areas within their jurisdiction.
- Urban/spatial planning: specifically, general territorial planning and coordination planning. Territorial planning includes communication structures, service networks and infrastructures falling under the jurisdiction of the metropolitan community, also establishing constraints and objectives for the activities and exercise of the functions of the municipalities included in the metropolitan territory.
- Coordinated Public Service Systems: including support activities for the municipalities in the area (e.g., tender management and contracting authority functions).
- Mobility and Road Network: including management and maintenance of the metropolitan road network, as well as planning and implementation of sustainable mobility. The metropolitan authority drafts the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) to program actions and interventions across the metropolitan territory,

developing a vision for a more accessible, safe, and less polluting transport and mobility system, ultimately improving quality of life.

- Environmental Protection and Sustainability: through the planning of green infrastructures and ecological networks, management of protected areas and Natura 2000 sites, and authorization and control activities related to water, energy, Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Integrated Environmental Authorization (IEA), waste management, and remediation. CMTo has also drafted a Metropolitan Agenda for Sustainable Development, aligned with the 2030 Agenda goals.
- Building and Infrastructure: maintenance of upper secondary schools.
- Tourism: certain functions related to the tourism economy and economic and productive activities in the tourism sector.
- Culture: management of the historic library and Ecomuseum.
- Economic Development and Labour Policies: management of national (e.g., PNRR) and European funds.
- Innovation, ICT, and Digital Agenda: support for innovative economic and research activities, digitalization of processes and products.
- Education and Training: while not a direct competence, the Annual Metropolitan Plan for the Right to Education is implemented. Environmental education activities are typically aimed at middle school students and first-year primary students, comprising two classroom sessions and one field trip.
- Welfare and Social Services: equal opportunities, along with monitoring workplace discrimination, are included among core functions. Territorial consortia manage social and assistance services.
- Landscape: the European Natura 2000 Network of protected areas consists of Sites of Community Interest (SCIs), which are subsequently designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), and includes Special Protection Areas (SPAs). The Piedmont Region has delegated the management of the 21 SACs to the CMTo.
- Climate and energy: to monitor atmospheric pollutant concentrations and evaluate the effectiveness of remediation measures that have affected vehicle emissions, fuel quality, industrial and energy production activities, heating systems, and building efficiency.
- Housing (included social housing): CMTo supports municipal and wider area decisions on social housing issues, including identifying municipalities with high social housing needs.

Legislative Framework / Act

The Metropolitan City is a constituent body of the Italian Republic under Article 114 of the Constitution (Title V reform, 2001). Italian metropolitan cities (metropolitan areas) were officially established by national Law no. 56/2014 (“Legge Delrio”), replacing the former provinces. The legislator decided to make the perimeter and surface area of the provinces coincide with those of the new entities.
Each metropolitan city has its own statute.

Forms of inter-municipal coordination were already provided for by Legislative Decree no. 267/2000, as amended by Law no. 56/2014, specifically: a union of municipalities is a local entity constituted by two or more municipalities, usually adjacent, for the joint exercise of functions and services. Each municipality may belong to only one union of municipalities. Unions of municipalities may enter into specific agreements among themselves or with individual municipalities.
The CMTo statute also provides that agreements, understandings, and other forms of cooperation and collaboration may be entered into with the municipalities of the metropolitan area, their unions, for the purposes of the joint organization and management of services – including at a decentralized level, as provided for by law – the coordinated and shared management of the exercise of their respective functions, or for the construction of public works of common interest.

Decision-Making Process

The decision-making process in the CMTo involves the following levels:

1. Metropolitan Mayor – responsible for the administration of the CMTo and holds legal representation. He/she is the mayor of the Core City.
2. Metropolitan Deputy Mayor – appointed by the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor exercises the Mayor's duties in any case of absence.
3. Metropolitan Council – consists of 18 members elected through second-level elections. The Council is responsible, among other things, for proposing amendments to the Statute to the Metropolitan Conference, adopting the Three-Year Strategic Plan, and approving guidelines, plans, programs, and regulations for all the functions that the law attributes to metropolitan cities.
4. Metropolitan Conference – a collegial body composed of all the mayors of the 312 municipalities within the CMTo. The Conference expresses a binding opinion on the adoption of the Strategic Plan and the Territorial Plan proposed by the Metropolitan Council, with votes representing at least an absolute majority of those present.

Amendments to the decision-making process and the Statute may be made if approved by the Metropolitan Council and the Conference using the same procedures and majorities required for its initial adoption.
The second-level elections for the CMTo, namely the Metropolitan Council, are proportional, with a voting system weighted according to the population of the municipalities to which the voters belong. Voters (mayors and councillors of the municipalities in the area) vote for lists of candidates and may also express a preference for a single candidate. Seats are assigned using the D'Hondt method to the lists and, within those lists, to the candidates with the highest "weighted individual numbers." Provisions are also made to ensure gender representation.

Public-Private Partnership

The National Law 56/2014 does not provide anything in this sector.

The CMTo now manages many of the public–private partnerships previously overseen by the former Province of Turin. In this new context, METRO HOLDING TORINO Srl was established to manage its corporate shareholdings effectively and efficiently.
IREN SpA (5.4%), that is one of the most important and dynamic multiutility companies in the Italian panorama, active in the electricity, gas, district heating, integrated water services management, environmental services and technology services sectors. An eco-friendly energy producer for about 76% of its electricity production and the first national operator in the district heating sector by marketed thermal energy.
ATIVA (17,64%), company in liquidation since 2025, manages sections of the CMTo motorways.
5T Srl (5.0 %) is responsible for Mobility and Infomobility Centre of the City of Turin and the CMTo and the Mobility Centre of the Piemonte Region; it oversees operations and continuity every day of the year and provide data and analyses to support shareholders' policies.
Bioindustry Park SpA (22.8 %) offers spaces and opportunities for enterprises in life sciences and human health to settle and grow in the Park's research and production centers.
RSA Srl (20%) works on the implementation of studies and projects for the works necessary for the remediation and environmental development of the former asbestos mine of Balangero, included among the sites of national interest by Law n. 426/1998.
Environment Park SpA (11.7 %) is the Technology Park in Torino that has been working on environmental innovation for over 20 years. It's a reference point for public administrations and companies to have support in their sustainability paths.
The incubator of the Turin Polytechnic I3PS (16.7%) supports the creation and development of high-tech innovative starts up with high growth potential.
2i3T (25%) company established by the University of Turin together with institutional partners with the aim of developing the local economy by valorising the results of scientific research.

4.2 Governance for the Policy Instrument (MSP 2024-2026)

Participation Model During the Design Phase

The national law 56/2014 assigns the Metropolitan Cities a new fundamental function, not foreseen for the previous provinces: strategic planning: "a) adoption and annual updating of a three-year strategic plan for the metropolitan area, which constitutes a guideline for the institution and for the exercise of the functions of the municipalities and unions of municipalities within the territory, including in relation to the exercise of functions delegated or assigned by the regions, in compliance with regional laws in the areas within their jurisdiction."
According to the Statute of the CMTo (art. 7): "The Strategic Plan defines the general, sectoral, and cross-cutting development objectives for the metropolitan area, identifies the priorities for action, the resources needed to achieve them, the timeframe and method of implementation, in compliance with the principles of environmental sustainability.

The Strategic Plan development process considers the principles of joint planning and sharing; it can also be updated for homogeneous zones; it is periodically monitored and reviewed. The processes for developing, adopting, and revising the Metropolitan Strategic Plan are inspired by the principles of transparency and participation, and balanced opportunities and resources among the homogeneous zones." The participation model is divided into the following phases: • The preliminary analysis phase. • The feedback phase. • The territorial listening phase. • The co-planning phase.
Decision-Making Process
Article 7 of the Metropolitan Statute requires that the Strategic Plan drafting process in consistent with the "principles of co-planning and sharing" and that the procedures for creating, adopting, and reviewing the Plan are coherent with the "principles of transparency and participation". In line with this, the MSP 2024-2026 was defined through the consultation and engagement of municipalities, institutions, economic and social actors, civil society, intermediate bodies, cultural and research sectors, and all other interested parties. The guidelines further outlined that the new strategic planning process should take into consideration the evaluation of the previous MSP's outcomes, the evolving social and economic context, and the changes that have occurred over the last three years, as well as the main objectives, directions for change, and areas of intervention identified in the Metropolitan Sustainable Development Agenda. According to the Article 20 of the Statute, the Metropolitan Council has the competences of: c) adoption of a three-year strategic plan for the metropolitan area to be submitted to the binding opinion of the Metropolitan Conference, after obtaining the mandatory opinion of the Assembly of Mayors of the Homogeneous Zones; d) annual updating of the three-year strategic plan for the metropolitan area, after obtaining the mandatory opinion of the Assembly of Mayors of the Homogeneous Zones and the Metropolitan Conference.
Implementation Phase Modalities
It must be stated that the MSP is a new tool, unknown to most of the mayors of the 312 municipalities of the CMTo. Since 2015, three three-year Strategic Plans have been approved; the second and third MSP are based on six development Axes, which correspond to the first six missions of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP): 1. A more productive and innovative Turin Metropolis 2. A greener and more ecological Turin Metropolis 3. A more mobile, accessible, and connected Turin Metropolis 4. A Turin Metropolis that learns more

5. A more attractive, fair, and equal Turin Metropolis
6. A healthier Turin Metropolis
This basic structure supports a complex but hierarchical articulation across three levels: each Axis includes a sequence of strategies, and each strategy unfolds into a series of actions to be implemented. Overall, the MSP proposes 25 strategies and 113 specific actions. Each Axis has monitoring phase.
Although some of these plans (particularly the second) saw broad participation from the territory, it cannot be said that they had a significant impact on the decisions of the municipalities. Moreover, the lack of a real "territorialization" of the MSP strategies within more structured and binding territorial planning tools (e.g., GMTP) does not facilitate the implementation of the MSP. A second critical issue stems from the fragmentation of the metropolitan strategic framework across multiple instruments – MSP, SUMP, Sustainability Agenda, etc. The absence of a PTGM (CMTo still uses the Provincial Coordination Territorial Plan) results in a lack of interlinkage between programming and territorial planning decisions.

4.3 Governance Cultural Framework

Politicians

Cooperation Models between municipalities and across different government and administrative levels

Cooperation among municipalities and across different levels of government is a key element of metropolitan governance. The Metropolitan City of Turin cooperates both downwards, with municipalities and their associative forms, and upwards, with the Region and the Ministries, through differentiated operational arrangements depending on the issues addressed and the institutions involved.
CMTo plays a role of coordination and facilitation, while respecting the specific characteristics of individual municipalities, including small-sized and rural ones, and maintaining direct relations with each territory. The participation of small municipalities in the Metropolitan Council is considered essential to ensure territorial representation and inclusion.
Pursuant to Article 34 of the Statute, and in accordance with the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality, CMTo provides municipalities and unions of municipalities with administrative, technical, and cartographic support for the preparation and updating of municipal and inter-municipal urban and spatial planning instruments.
Through the Strategic Metropolitan Plan (PSM), conceived as a shared document, CMTo has initiated a participatory process of co-planning and co-design with municipalities, aimed at enhancing local planning capacity and ensuring that no territory perceives itself as marginal.
Judgement: 5

Cooperation Models between public and private actors

Cooperation between public and private actors is considered essential and instrumental to territorial development, as it enables the integration of different competencies, resources, and operational capacities, with complementary roles oriented towards the pursuit of shared objectives. Collaboration with private stakeholders facilitates the identification of concerted solutions and supports public administrations in the concrete implementation of policies and projects, thereby increasing the likelihood of success of municipal initiatives and reducing their implementation timelines.
Within this framework, Metro Holding, a company wholly owned by the Metropolitan City of Turin, represents a strategic organizational and operational instrument through which CMTo participates in companies, including local public enterprises, in compliance with the different governance models provided for by national and EU legislation. Metro Holding was specifically established as an in-house entity of CMTo, with the objective of strengthening the governance of shareholdings and enhancing their contribution to territorial development.
This arrangement is intended to ensure a coordinated and unified implementation of administrative action in the governance of shareholdings – including in light of new strategic acquisitions – as well as an efficient, effective, and cost-effective organizational structure in pursuing objectives of public interest represented by CMTo, while ensuring the rigorous exercise of oversight, control, and strategic guidance functions.
Judgement: 5

Key Sectors or Issues Where Cooperation is Most Needed

Cooperation is considered essential in the following sectors:

- Spatial and territorial planning. The need to coordinate the 312 municipal zoning plans with the Metropolitan General Territorial Plan requires a shift towards more advanced forms of co-planning, with the aim of simplifying planning instruments, avoiding inconsistencies and procedural "loops" that dissipate resources and reduce effectiveness, and ensuring alignment across different levels and tools while respecting territorial specificities and avoiding homogenisation.
- Mobility and transport. The heterogeneity of the metropolitan area – comprising municipalities of different sizes, urban and mountain contexts, and varying degrees of connectivity – generates differentiated needs that call for strong coordination among institutional actors to ensure access to services. In this field, cooperation enables the integration of policies, investments, and planning activities, overcoming fragmentation that would otherwise disadvantage more fragile territories.
- Environment and economic development. In these sectors, a cooperative and participatory approach has proven to be the most effective, as it allows for the integration of dispersed competencies and responsibilities, making it possible to design shared development policies that are consistent with the overall objectives of the metropolitan area.

Existing Cooperation Experiences Beyond the Metropolitan Area

Numerous experiences of extra-metropolitan cooperation are in place; reference is therefore made to the structured list already included in the "Technicians" section.
Current Cooperation Needs Beyond the Metropolitan Area
The need to continue and strengthen ongoing cooperation in areas that are central to metropolitan cities is confirmed, with particular reference to strategic and territorial planning, sustainable mobility, multi-level governance, forms of inter-municipal cooperation, area-wide environmental issues, as well as information systems and territorial, environmental, and statistical databases. These areas are considered priority domains for consolidating shared approaches and maximising the effectiveness of policies at the supra-local scale.
Multilevel Collaboration
Cooperation among different levels of government on issues related to metropolitan governance takes place primarily through formalised agreements, in line with the legal and institutional nature of CMTo. The most commonly used instruments include protocol agreements, memoranda of understanding, and formal conventions; their specific forms vary depending on the issues addressed, the competencies involved, and the types of services concerned. CMTo operates ex lege within a framework that prioritises formal instruments of coordination and inter-institutional cooperation. While informal processes are not entirely excluded, they do not represent the prevailing mode nor the standard practice. Cooperation is regarded as the most effective model across CMTo's main policy areas and constitutes an enabling condition for participatory and shared multi-level governance, capable of combining operational effectiveness with respect for territorial diversity.
Technicians
Cooperation Models between municipalities and across different government and administrative levels
Cooperation among municipalities and across different levels of government is particularly relevant for the metropolitan area of Turin, which is highly articulated from both a geomorphological and an institutional perspective and includes a predominance of small-sized municipalities. The territory also comprises Unions of Municipalities, which operate jointly – through formal agreements – on specific local-level functions (primarily the management of local public services), as well as Optimal Territorial Areas (ATOs) responsible for waste management (through consortia) and for the management of water service infrastructure. Cooperation is necessary to address and resolve complex and multidimensional challenges within the framework of sustainable environmental, economic, and social development, which often extend beyond administrative boundaries. Through cooperation, it is possible to achieve economies of scale and cost savings, ensure coherence among strategies, actions, and territorial scales, and provide more effective

and timely responses to emergencies. It is also crucial for strengthening competitive positioning at both national and inter-municipal levels. The main levels with which municipalities interact include: other municipalities, the Metropolitan City, the Regional Government, sectoral authorities, private economic operators, and citizens. Judgement: 5
Cooperation Models between public and private actors
Cooperation between public and private actors is important for the achievement of public value objectives for the benefit of the territory and its reference community, taking into account the multiplicity of factors that require coordinated action. This type of collaboration enables the mobilisation of resources, the strengthening and transfer of expertise, improved risk management and risk allocation, and the design of policies and projects that are more closely aligned with local needs. The involvement of private actors is particularly useful and effective during the implementation phase. In particular, project financing makes it possible to reduce the level of risk borne by public administrations, gain access to additional financial resources, improve efficiency in the management of infrastructure projects, and foster greater innovation in the solutions adopted. Judgement: 4
Key Sectors or Issues where Cooperation is Most Needed
Cooperation is particularly necessary in the following key sectors and policy areas: • Creation of "public value chains" among territorial administrations (Region, Metropolitan City, municipalities), whereby private stakeholders and citizens – by sharing common strategic objectives and agreed indicators – contribute within a coordinated governance framework. • Mobility and transport, to define objectives, strategies, actions, and priorities while taking into account the diverse needs of different user groups. • Economic and social development, both in areas requiring a territorially integrated approach and in fostering synergies among different parts of the metropolitan area, each characterised by specific assets and economic vocations. • General spatial and territorial planning, aimed at balancing, aligning, and coordinating multiple and sometimes competing needs – across municipalities and territorial vocations and differentiated objectives – such as economic development and environmental protection (e.g. the definition of supra-municipal infrastructure projects such as Corso Marche and the Eastern Bypass), as well as facilitating dialogue between the municipal level and higher levels of government (Region, State) when accessing funding, obtaining authorisations, and securing approvals. • Environmental protection, to address complex challenges that transcend administrative boundaries (water protection, climate change, hydrogeological risk, pollutant emissions, etc.) and to ensure the coordination of effective actions.

- Digitalisation, to achieve a concrete digital transition – enhancing transparency, public action efficiency, access to services, and social inclusion – through interventions on multiple fronts, including hardware (broadband and ultra-broadband networks) and software (cloud solutions, digital skills and literacy of the population, etc.).
- Social cohesion, aimed at strengthening social cohesion and ultimately improving the quality of life of citizens (e.g. supporting widespread initiatives of active citizenship, care of the commons – including school buildings – and the maintenance of mountain areas).

Existing Cooperation Experiences Beyond the Metropolitan Area

With other Italian and European metropolitan areas/cities:

- National projects (Strategic Metropolises – ANCI), funded under PON Metro 2014–2020, aimed at strengthening multi-level governance by enhancing administrative capacity and strategic planning
- PON Metro, within the framework of the EU Agenda to implement cohesion policies (PON Metro Turin)
- Mobility as a Service for Italy (MaaS): definition of a common digital ecosystem for public–private transport services
- BES Provinces (Equitable and Sustainable Well-being indicators)
- Observatory on Public Value Created by Italian Metropolitan Cities, established to promote the dissemination of shared public value creation practices and improve equitable and sustainable well-being in metropolitan areas
- ANCI (National Association of Italian Municipalities) and ANCI Piemonte
- ALI (Italian Local Authorities – Autonomie Locali Italiane)
- UNCEM Piemonte (National Union of Mountain Municipalities, Communities, and Entities of Piedmont)
- CO.CO.PA. (Coordination of Municipalities for Peace)
- Co.Dias.Co. (Coordination of Diasporas for International Cooperation)
- Euromontana (European Association for Cooperation and Development of Mountain Regions)
- EMA Forum (European Metropolitan Authorities)
- METREX (Network of European Metropolitan Regions and Areas)
- Metropolis (World Association of Major Metropolises)
- Hydroaid (International School of Water for Development)
- Partenalia (International association of intermediate local governments of the European Union)
- UNHCR (UN Refugee Agency)

With other public and private entities:

- Regional Geographic Infrastructure of Piedmont (Region, CMTo, Provinces, Municipalities)
- Residential Housing Observatory (Region, City of Turin, ANCI, Revenue Agency)
- Real Estate Market Observatory (Revenue Agency, CMTo, City of Turin, professional associations, FIAIP, FIMAA, Chamber of Commerce)

- Air Quality Coordination Platform (Region, CMTo, ARPA, City of Turin)
- Maximum Impact Project – Supra-regional Ecological Network (Piedmont Region, Lombardy Region, Aosta Valley Region, CMTo, Province of Asti, Fondazione Cariplo, LIPU)
- Green Crown Project (Corona Verde) (Piedmont Region, CMTo, Municipalities)
- ERDF and ESF Monitoring Committees
- Network of Statistical Offices (National Statistical System)
- Forum PA

Within the metropolitan area – projects initiated or led by CMTo:

- Integrated Territorial Programmes, Peripheries Call, METROPoLiS Pilot Project (strengthening local economic competitiveness, building on the earlier Territorial Pacts)
- Social Economy Plan
- River Contracts (7 active negotiated programming agreements)
- Various locally initiated projects (triggered and supported by CMTo)
- Various territorial strategic projects (e.g. Chierese Strategic Agenda, Eporediese Strategic Agenda, Pinerolese Strategic Agenda, Strategic Plan for the Turin–Lyon High-Speed Rail Territories, etc.)

In addition, CMTo provides technical and administrative support to municipalities through various actions and initiatives:

- NRRP (PNRR) – support for first-level implementing entities in reporting activities
- Central Purchasing Body / Contracting Authority (aggregator entity)
- Management of gas distribution services
- Europe Antenna for Municipalities – Europe Direct (CMTo, Municipalities, EU)
- Technical, urban planning, and cartographic assistance (pursuant to the CMTo Statute)

Current Cooperation Needs Beyond the Metropolitan Area

There is a need to continue the ongoing cooperation initiatives and to activate new ones in policy areas that are central to metropolitan cities, including strategic and territorial planning, sustainable mobility, multi-level governance, forms of inter-municipal cooperation, area-wide environmental issues (climate, biodiversity, cultural heritage and landscape), as well as information systems and territorial, statistical, and environmental databases.

The need for cooperation concerns both relations with other metropolitan areas – at national and European levels, in order to strengthen governance capacity – and actors operating within the CMTo territory (the core city, other municipalities, public and private entities such as banking foundations, universities, research centres, and private stakeholders), with the aim of improving the effectiveness of implemented actions and achieving shared objectives, as well as fostering the development of new common goals and efficient and effective strategies and actions for their attainment.

Strengthening cooperation with the Regional Government and with Ministries is also essential, in order to ensure an integrated, system-wide vision of policies and strategies

at a higher scale, as well as to support the mobilisation and coordinated management of resources. Finally, exchange and cooperation with other European metropolitan areas is of key importance, both through networks such as METREX and through the opportunities provided by EU funding programmes and calls.
Multilevel Collaboration
Cooperation takes place through formal agreements or on the basis of specific regulatory provisions, including programme agreements, formal conventions, technical assistance arrangements, and memoranda of understanding.
General Public (and Other Stakeholders)
Cooperation Models between municipalities and across different government and administrative levels
Cooperation among municipalities and across different levels of government is fundamental to building a shared metropolitan culture and to generating added value compared to "non-cooperative" action, by creating opportunities that would otherwise not materialise. It is essential for the definition of common and cross-cutting priorities and for ensuring the long-term effectiveness of actions undertaken, with the ultimate goal of improving the quality of life of citizens in the metropolitan area. The fragmentation of municipal boundaries – particularly pronounced within the CMTo – makes active cooperation among different levels of government necessary in order to ensure balanced development and address supra-municipal challenges effectively. However, the need for stronger metropolitan coordination remains, together with the challenge of responding effectively to local needs and specificities, including those of low-density, rural, and mountain territories and municipalities. Beyond the traditional functions and policies of the former Province – such as municipal assistance (Article 34 of the Statute), district-based approaches, a structural vision of the provincial territory, and the coordination of spatial development through the Provincial Territorial Coordination Plan (PTCP) – the CMTo, while formally entrusted with making cooperation with municipalities a core asset, often does not counterbalance the prevailing political will of municipalities to preserve their individual autonomy. This situation is also linked to the fact that CMTo's political bodies are elected from among municipal councillors themselves. A virtuous example of inter-municipal cooperation is represented by the North-East Turin Area Union (NET), voluntarily established in 2008 by the municipalities of Borgaro Torinese, Caselle Torinese, Leinì, San Benigno Canavese, San Mauro Torinese, Settimo Torinese, and Volpiano, with the aim of jointly and in a coordinated manner managing municipal services. Judgement: 5
Cooperation Models between public and private actors

Cooperation between public and private actors is perceived as essential, as it is closely linked to the added value that can be generated through joint action. It enables the development of innovative projects, the exchange of expertise and peer learning, as well as the sharing of resources, skills, and methodologies. The diversity of perspectives enriches the understanding of the overall context and proves to be essential for the definition of strategies, objectives, and actions, fostering greater awareness of management processes, including the difficulties that may arise in achieving expected outcomes. The involvement of different actors—both public and private—performing complementary roles that are functional to the achievement of shared objectives, makes a significant contribution to the creation of public value. Private operators represent a driving force for territorial development, and their cooperation with public authorities is essential to translate development strategies into concrete actions and to promote local economic growth. Judgement: 5
Level of Perceived Belonging to Individual Municipalities
A strong sense of belonging to individual municipalities is generally perceived, and this represents a key factor in building trust in the capacity of local actors to take action, including in cooperative contexts. This sense of belonging allows specific local issues – while rooted in individual municipalities – to be brought to the table, contributing meaningfully to the construction of an overall metropolitan identity. The election of the local governing authority represents a crucial element in fostering this sense of belonging. Municipalities – particularly smaller ones (within the CMTo, municipalities with fewer than 5,000 inhabitants account for approximately 80%) – are perceived as being very close to the population. In these small municipalities, dialogue with the mayor and political representatives is more direct, allowing citizens to voice their concerns, obtain tangible responses, and actively participate in community life. This sense of belonging is further reinforced by the fact that most proximity-based public services are delivered at the municipal level. In addition, the continued presence of economic activities and productive sectors that cannot be relocated further strengthens the bond with the municipality of reference, despite the high level of labour mobility that characterises the area. Although already strong, this sense of belonging could be further leveraged, provided that it does not become an obstacle to inter-municipal cooperation within the metropolitan city. Indeed, a tendency to operate in “silos” persists, with each municipality developing its own policy documents (strategic guidelines and implementation plans). Judgement: 5
Level of Perceived Belonging to the Metropolitan Area
The sense of belonging to the metropolitan city is perceived as not yet sufficiently developed, as attachment to individual municipalities continues to prevail. In particular,

in situations of criticality, territorial differences may at times emerge in an oppositional manner, as the urgency to respond to local needs is (erroneously) perceived as more pressing than cooperation itself. Investing in a shared collective identity is instead fundamental to achieving strategic objectives and to mitigating individual territorial challenges.
The President of the former Province was directly elected by citizens, whereas under the Metropolitan City framework the mayor of the core city becomes metropolitan mayor ex lege. This arrangement does not contribute to fostering a sense of belonging to the CMTo. Moreover, the mayor of the core city is often unable to dedicate sufficient time to metropolitan responsibilities, which are therefore largely delegated to the deputy mayor. This is likely one of the main reasons why the CMTo is not perceived as "close to citizens," in contrast to the former Province.
In addition, while the Province had dedicated political representatives ("ministers") for its main areas of competence, these roles are currently assigned to delegated councillors, who are mayors of individual municipalities and are therefore unable to devote adequate time and resources to metropolitan-level activities.
Judgement: 3

Historical or Cultural Factors

The Metropolitan City of Turin is characterised by a rich diversity of historical and cultural dimensions. This complexity has deeply influenced citizens' sense of belonging, both to individual municipalities and to the metropolitan area as a whole.
Among these factors is the long-established tendency of citizens to relate not so much to neighbouring municipalities as to the core city, which is often perceived as a "threat," or alternatively to other territorial areas considered as "different." Geographic and morphological factors also play a role, with a clear distinction—particularly evident—between more rural or mountainous areas, characterised by weak demand, low population density, and greater isolation.
Labour mobility among younger generations has affected territorial ties: while on the one hand it has broadened interactions with different territories, on the other it remains rooted in the stability and sense of belonging of previous generations, thereby maintaining strong historical ties between workers and their municipality of origin.
The territory also offers significant examples of civic culture and engagement. For instance, in the valleys bordering France, the Waldensian Community is well known for its long-standing commitment to social action and the defence of civil and religious freedoms. The Community Movement in Ivrea, founded by Adriano Olivetti, promoted liberal and socialist ideas and represents a historical example of collective participation. More recently, the Damanhur Federation, founded in the Canavese area by Oberto Airaudi, has promoted the development of regenerative communities based on principles of sharing and solidarity.

5. SPECIFIC DATA CONNECTED WITH THE SELECTED POLICY INSTRUMENT

Contents

The CMTo is responsible for the adoption and annual updating of a three-year Metropolitan Strategic Plan (MSP), which serves as a policy framework for the Metropolitan Authority and for the exercise of functions by municipalities and unions of municipalities within its territory (Law 56/2014).

The most recent 3rd MSP 2024-2026 is a policy and planning instrument for social, economic, and environmental development. It sets out the overall, sectoral, and cross-cutting objectives of development, along with priorities, resources, timeframes, and implementation methods.

The Guidelines for the three-year period 2024-2026, issued by the new Metropolitan Administration (Metropolitan Council Resolution no. 23 of 10/05/2023), confirmed the framework and structure of the previous MSP 2021-2023 "Torino metropoli aumentata", while updating and adapting its vision for the new MSP.

The Plan identifies six Development Axes, each encompassing a set of strategies and actions to be implemented. These were defined through a process of updating the MSP 2021–2023 strategies and actions in line with the Sustainable Development Goals, combined with a phase of co-planning and stakeholder engagement.

Objectives

Although the MSP formally adopts a three-year time horizon, its vision, strategies, and actions are designed to pursue medium- to long-term objectives.

The vision of the MSP 2024-2026, "Torino Metro(poli)montana" (Turin Metro(poly)mountain), is integrated with the vision set out in the Metropolitan Agenda for Sustainable Development. Key guiding principles include:

- A new polycentric and "metro-mountain" development model, where urban and mountain dimensions jointly contribute to the competitiveness and attractiveness of the entire territorial ecosystem.
- Multilevel governance for a cohesive territory, based on interdependence and mutual collaboration between urban, rural, and mountain areas, together with strengthened coordination and inter-municipal cooperation. Emphasis is placed on enhancing the role of Homogeneous Zones as a key interface between the CMTo and its municipalities.
- Strengthen cross-border alliances and cooperation networks with national and EU territories.

The Plan identifies six Development Axes, corresponding to the first six missions of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP):

1. A more productive and innovative Turin Metropolis
2. A greener and more ecological Turin Metropolis
3. A more mobile, accessible, and connected Turin Metropolis
4. A Turin Metropolis that learns more
5. A more attractive, fair, and equal Turin Metropolis
6. A healthier Turin Metropolis

Each Axis encompasses a sequence of strategies, and each strategy unfolds into a set of actions to be implemented. Overall, the MSP outlines 25 strategies and 113 concrete, targeted actions. Strategic areas include: economic development and innovation; sustainable mobility; social cohesion; urban regeneration; education and training; and health and healthcare.

Critical Issues to Address

One of the first and most significant challenges to be addressed declared in the MSP is ensuring the overall coherence of the Metropolitan Authority's planning and programming system. This requires building an integrated framework of instruments that align vision, objectives, strategies, and actions. The legally mandated three-year duration of the MSP does not sit comfortably with the strategic planning ambition of projecting a long-term development vision, nor with the differing time horizons of other planning and programming tools (indefinite duration for the GMTP, 10 years for the SUMP, 5 years for the political mandate program, etc.). The MSP 2024–2026 has therefore been defined by taking into account the priority change objectives identified in the Metropolitan Agenda for Sustainable Development (approved by the Metropolitan Council in December 2022), as well as the objectives, guidelines, and requirements set out in the GMTP (whose final draft project is currently under adoption) and in the SUMP (approved by the Metropolitan Council in July 2022).

Expected Change/Improvement

PP02 (POLITO) and APA (CMTo) collaboration has the scope to pinpoint and explicitly outline synergies, differentiation-complementarity, and coordination between:

- Strategic Planning (MSP): short-term, continuous, programmatic operational, project-oriented;
- General Territorial Planning (GMTP): long-term, stable, structural, to be developed in a 'convergent' and multilevel manner. At present, this alignment is hindered by the ongoing absence of a finalized GMTP;
- Other strategic sectoral plans (e.g. SUMP).

Key objectives for policy improvement:

- Stronger ties between programming and planning;
- Synergies across different funding sources;
- Improved collaboration across government levels and sectors.

Territorial and Socio-Economic Framework (Sectoral)

In 2024, the total population growth rate per 1,000 inhabitants amounted to 1.4, while the natural increase rate per 1,000 inhabitants stood at –6.1. The age structure of the resident population shows 11.2% young people (0–14 years), 62.1% individuals aged 15–64, and 26.6% elderly people. The total net migration rate per 1,000 inhabitants is 7.5. As of 1 January 2025, the average age is 47.9 years, and the total fertility rate in 2024 is 1.12. The contribution of the Metropolitan City of Turin (CMTo) to the ratio between the annual gross electricity production from renewable energy sources and gross electricity

consumption in the same year amounts to 1.1% (the national value is 41.4%). With reference to electricity production from photovoltaic systems relative to electricity produced from other renewable sources, CMTo's contribution is 0.6%.

The production system of the Turin metropolitan area is characterised by a dense presence of enterprises (194,976 active firms in the first quarter of 2025). 95.39% of all enterprises have fewer than 10 employees, accounting for over 35% of total employment. Firms with fewer than 50 employees represent 3.93%. Medium-sized and large enterprises together account for only 0.68% of the total, while employing 12.34% and 36.15% of total employees respectively (ISTAT, 2023).

Employment is distributed as follows: 1.2% in agriculture, forestry and fishing, 28.9% in industry, and 69.8% in services. The business birth rate is 6.3%. Women-led enterprises represent 22.4% of the total, while youth-owned and foreign-owned enterprises account for 9.2% and 14.9%, respectively.

Economic wealth is measured through value added. Per-capita value added at current prices in CMTo amounts to €35,341.84, compared to the national average of €32,442.03. The cultural and recreational sector contributes 7.6% of total value added.

With regard to labour market performance, CMTo maintains a favourable position within Italy. The employment rate (20–64 years) is 74.2%, higher than the national average (67.1%) and slightly below the regional average (74.3%). The unemployment rate (15–74 years) is declining and stands at 6.3%. Female employment is 13.3 percentage points lower than male employment, a gap significantly smaller than the national and regional averages.

Household disposable income per capita amounts to €25,852.91, while employees in the metropolitan area earn an average annual gross wage of €26,426.37. The ratio between new non-performing loans and the stock of performing loans is increasing and stands at 0.6%, in line with regional and national figures.

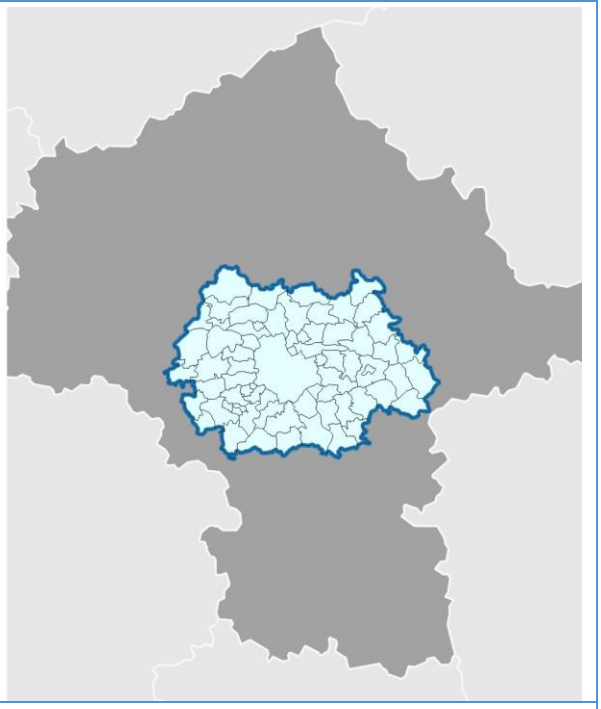
From a territorial attractiveness perspective, the tourism intensity index stands at 2.9 overnight stays, slightly below the regional value (3.4) and well below the national average (7.9).

Foreign citizens represent 10.4% of the total population, with 229,334 residents as of 1 January 2025, marking an increase of +8.7% compared to 1 January 2020. Of these, 77.7% are of working age (15–64), a share significantly higher than that of the total population (62.1%). Children under 15 account for 16.8%, despite a decline over the last five years, while the share of residents aged over 65 continues to rise (5.5%).

Migration flows mitigate the effects of low birth rates: despite a strongly negative natural balance, the foreign population contributes to counteracting demographic decline. Demographic indicators confirm a substantial age gap between the total population and the foreign population, the latter recording an old-age index of 32.9 elderly persons per 100 under-15s and a dependency ratio of 28.8, approximately 200 percentage points lower than the total population for the old-age index, and just over 30 percentage points lower for the dependency ratio. Despite generally positive demographic indicators, the natural balance of foreign residents has been steadily declining in recent years (+1,570 in 2024, compared with +2,402 in 2019).

Of the 219,187 foreign citizens residing in the metropolitan area as of 1 January 2024, 53.3% come from a European country, of whom 43.1% hold Romanian citizenship (86,119 residents). Africa is the second most represented continent (24.1%), mainly from North Africa (over 32,000 residents, 15%) and West Africa (around 16,000 residents, 7.5%). Asian residents account for 13.4% (almost 30,000 people). Residents from Oceania are marginal (52 individuals), while 33 stateless persons are recorded. Romanian nationals therefore represent the most numerous and stabilised foreign community in the Turin metropolitan area. *Regional demographic decline – comparative perspective* As of 2024, 51.9% of Piedmont's over 4 million residents live in the Metropolitan City of Turin, followed by the Provinces of Cuneo (13.7%) and Alessandria (9.6%). Over the 2019–2024 period, Piedmont lost 1.8% of its population. Together with the Metropolitan City of Turin (–1.5%), only the Provinces of Novara (–0.6%) and Cuneo (–1%) recorded population declines below the regional average. The most pronounced five-year demographic decreases are observed in Biella (–3.9%) and Alessandria (–3.3%).
Other Relevant Elements

2.2.3 City of Warsaw with Warsaw Metropolis Association (PP03)

1. PP INFORMATION	
PP Name (and APA, if applicable)	City of Warsaw APA Warsaw Metropolis Association
	
POLAND	Detail (light blue) of the Warsaw Metropolitan Area - NUTS 2 inside Mazowiecki Regionalny - NUTS 2
Name, Role, and Contact of Compiler	Andrzej Czajkowski, Project manager, aczajkowski@um.warszawa.pl

2. TERRITORIAL FRAMEWORK Understanding territorial characteristics and recognizing key factors that influence governance models	
2.1 Key Data of the Case Study	
Total Surface Area of the Metropolitan Area	6 104 km^2 (2024, Eurostat)
Total Surface Area of the Core City	517 km^2 (2024, Eurostat)
Population of the Metropolitan Area	3 281 583 inh. (2024, Eurostat)
Population of the Core City	1 869 028 inh. (2024, Eurostat)
Density of the Metropolitan Area	537,6 inh./km^2 (2024, calculation based on Eurostat data)

Density of the Core City	3 615,1 inh./km^2 (2024, calculation based on Eurostat data)
Number of Municipalities included in the Metropolitan Area	70 municipalities and 9 counties
The Warsaw Metropolitan Area consists of 79 local government units: • the capital city of Warsaw; • 9 counties: grodziski, legionowski, miński, nowodworski, otwocki, piaseczyński, pruszkowski, warszawski zachodni and wołomiński; • and 69 municipalities located within them: Baranów, Błonie, Brwinów, Cegłów, Celestynów, Czosnów, Dąbrówka, Dębe Wielkie, Dobre, Góra Kalwaria, Grodzisk Mazowiecki, Halinów, Izabelin, Jabłonna, Jadów, Jaktorów, Jakubów, Józefów, Kałuszyn, Kampinos, Karczew, Klembów, Kobyłka, Kołbiel, Konstancin-Jeziorna, Latowicz, Legionowo, Leoncin, Leszno, Lesznowola, Łomianki, Marki, Michałowice, Milanówek, Mińsk Mazowiecki (city), Mińsk Mazowiecki (rural municipality), Mrozy, Nadarzyn, Nasielsk, Nieporęt, Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki, Osieck, Otwock, Ożarów Mazowiecki, Piaseczno, Piastów, Podkowa Leśna, Pomiechówek, Poświętne, Prażmów, Pruszków, Radzymin, Raszyn, Serock, Siennica, Sobienie-Jeziory, Stanisławów, Stare Babice, Strachówka, Sulejówek, Tarczyn, Tłuszcz, Wiązowna, Wieliszew, Wołomin, Zakroczym, Ząbki, Zielonka, Żabia Wola.	
Other Possible Sub-Metropolitan Aggregations	
The Warsaw Metropolitan Area doesn't have such aggregations.	
Reference Functional Urban Area (FUA – OECD Definition)	PL001F Warszawa: • population: 3 395 182 (2023) • surface area: 8 595 km^2 (2023) • municipalities included: 90 (2021)
The map showing the boundaries of the Functional Urban Area PL001F Warszawa reveals that the areas economically connected through workplace commuting differ significantly from the Warsaw Metropolitan Area (WMA) in terms of border range. It is clear that the FUA Warszawa extends further, especially to the northeast, northwest, and southwest. According to the OECD dataset the WMA is smaller than the FUA Warszawa in terms of both surface area and population. In 2023, the FUA Warszawa had a surface area of 8 595 km^2 and a population of 3 395 182 inhabitants. According to the latest available data (2021), it included 90 municipalities. In 2023, the WMA had a surface area of 6 104 km^2 and a population of 3 269 510 inhabitants. Since 2018, it has consisted of 70 municipalities and 9 counties. However, those differences do not affect the WMA management, as the boundaries of the metropolitan area are clearly defined by European Union regulations and take form of the NUTS 2 region warszawski stołeczny (warsaw capital region).	

Reference NUTS region (Eurostat)
The Warsaw Capital Region (NUTS 2, code: PL91), commonly known as the Warsaw metropolitan area, consists of 79 local government units – 70 municipalities and 9 counties – and includes the capital city of Warsaw. The region has surface area of 6 104 km^2 and is home to 3 281 583 people. It is the sole better developed region in Poland.
2.2 Spatial Distribution of Land Uses and Land Cover-LULC (current state)
LULC: Artificial Surface, Agricultural Areas, Forest and Semi Natural Areas, Wetlands and Water bodies
Artificial land occupies 10.3% of the Warsaw Metropolitan Area. It is mainly concentrated in the central part of the metropolitan area, i.e. in the city of Warsaw and surrounding municipalities. The artificial surface, and thus primarily the architecture, spreads radially from the centre along transportation routes. In general, the further away from Warsaw, the more dispersed it is. The metropolitan area has a mosaic landscape, where fields largely intertwine with forests. For this reason, agriculture is scattered throughout the area, but can be found mainly in municipalities on the outskirts of the metropolitan area. Agricultural land takes 48.5% of metropolitan surface area. Forests and other natural or semi-natural land cover 39.7%, of which 18.5% are coniferous forests and 20.3% are deciduous forests. The forests are mainly concentrated in the central part of the metropolis, on the eastern and north-western side of the Vistula River. The largest forest complex in the metropolitan area is the Kampinos Forest, which constitutes the majority of the Kampinos National Park. Wetlands and water bodies take 1.5% of the WMA surface and largely consist of the Vistula River, the Narew River, Lake Zegrze and other small water reservoirs.

Settlement Model	
The Warsaw Metropolitan Area is located in the Central Mazovia Lowlands (pol. Nizina Środkowomazowiecka). In terms of its surface shape, Central Mazovia Lowlands is a vast but flat basin. It is surrounded by numerous small hills intersected by river valleys that flow into the Vistula River. This spatial structure has not influenced the development of relations between local government units (municipalities, counties). The metropolitan area has a monocentric layout with Warsaw at its centre. The core city is surrounded by satellite cities and urbanised villages. The biggest cities in the Warsaw Metropolitan Area in terms of population are Warsaw, Pruszków, Legionowo, Piaseczno, Ząbki and Otwock (2024, Główny Urząd Statystyczny).	
Land Take	NUTS 3 (2000-2018): • City of Warsaw: 16,15 km^2 • Warsaw East: 16,62 km^2 • Warsaw West: 35,32 km^2 • Total: 68,09 km^2

According to the European Environment Agency between 2000 and 2018, the amount of land taken by urban areas and infrastructure in the NUTS 3 region was as follows:

- 16,15 km^2 in the city of Warsaw (3,12% of total area),
- 16,62 km^2 in Warsaw East (0,53% of total area),
- 35,32 km^2 in Warsaw West (1,43% of total area),

which amounts to 68,09 km^2 in the Warsaw Metropolitan Area. During this period the largest increase in land take in the City of Warsaw occurred between 2006 and 2012, and the lowest between 2012 and 2018. In the Warsaw East region the biggest increase in land take happened in the years 2006-2012 and the smallest in the years 2000-2006. Lastly, in the Warsaw West region the largest increase in land take occurred between 2006 and 2012, while the smallest between 2000 and 2008 (the same dynamics as in the Warsaw East region).

2.3 Transport and Mobility Infrastructure System

Road Network

The road network in the Warsaw Metropolitan Area consists of:

a) national roads – providing quick connections between Warsaw and other regions of Poland, primarily expressways and motorways. These roads are managed by the General Directorate for National Roads and Motorways (GDDKiA).

b) regional roads – connecting Warsaw with the largest cities in the Warsaw Metropolitan Area and other cities in the Mazovian Voivodeship. These roads are managed by the voivodeship executive board.

c) county roads – serving regional and local traffic, connecting individual counties. These roads are managed by the county board.

d) municipal roads – serving primarily local traffic within the boundaries of individual local governments. These roads are managed by the village head or mayor.

Within the Capital City of Warsaw, the mayor is responsible for all public roads, except motorways and expressways.

The road system in the Warsaw Metropolitan Area has a diverse hierarchical and functional structure, taking into account the needs of national, regional, and local transport.

Transport Network (High-Speed Rail, Airports, Ports, and other)

The Warsaw Metropolitan Area has two airports serving passenger traffic. The main airport is Warsaw Chopin Airport, which handles a significant part of passenger and cargo traffic in the country, providing domestic and international flights.

The secondary airport is Warsaw-Modlin Airport, which primarily serves low-cost airlines.

Investment is currently underway for the new international airport, which will be located in the Warsaw Metropolitan Area and will become the most important and largest airport in the country.

In the Warsaw Metropolitan Area, Warsaw serves as the main railway hub, connecting national, regional, and metropolitan lines. Other cities in the Warsaw Metropolitan Area

handle regional and metropolitan traffic, most often resulting from people commuting to work and school in Warsaw. Rail transport provides connections with other cities in Poland, such as Gdańsk, Kraków, Poznań, Wrocław, Białystok, Lublin and abroad, such as Berlin, Vienna, Bratislava or Prague. There are no high-speed rail lines in Poland yet, but design work is underway to build such infrastructures, including in the Warsaw Metropolitan Area. There are no ports in the Warsaw metropolitan area.
Sustainable Mobility Network
Warsaw's public transport system is the largest in Poland, operating metro, trams, trains, and buses. Warsaw cooperates with over 30 municipalities in the metropolitan area. In parts of the metropolitan area, passengers can also use rail transport with a long-term ticket. Some municipalities and counties organize their own bus transport or cooperate with each other through transport associations. There are currently over 800 km of bicycle paths in Warsaw, but infrastructure growth has also been observed in many municipalities near Warsaw. A significant role has been placed on infrastructure connections between individual municipalities, but in many places, infrastructure that would complement the entire system is still lacking. The number of electric cars and charging infrastructure in the Warsaw Metropolitan Area is increasing, but is still low compared to other European countries. Shared mobility services are prevalent in Warsaw, particularly in the form of city bike and scooter rental systems. Several cities in the metropolis also have their own bike rental systems, particularly aimed at tourism and short-distance commuting within cities.

Motorization Rate of the Metropolitan Area	795,8 vehicles per 1,000 inh. (2023, Bank Danych Lokalnych, Główny Urząd Statystyczny)
Motorization Rate of the Core City (optional)	846,0 vehicles per 1,000 inh. (2023, Bank Danych Lokalnych, Główny Urząd Statystyczny)

3. SOCIO ECONOMIC FRAMEWORK Understanding socio economic characteristics and recognizing key factors that influence governance models	
Birth Rate of the Metropolitan Area	7,87 annual number of births per 1,000 inh. (2024, Bank Danych Lokalnych, Główny Urząd Statystyczny)
Birth Rate of the Core City (optional)	7,98 annual number of births per 1,000 inh. (2024, Bank Danych Lokalnych, Główny Urząd Statystyczny)

Average Household Size of the Metropolitan Area	2,25 average number of persons per household (2024, Bank Danych Lokalnych, Główny Urząd Statystyczny)
Average Household Size of the Core City (optional)	2,21 average number of persons per household (2024, GfK Address Points)
Aging Index of the Metropolitan Area	1,35 ratio of population aged 65+ to population aged 0–14 (2024, calculation based on Bank Danych Lokalnych, Główny Urząd Statystyczny)
Aging Index of the Core City (optional)	1,53 ratio of population aged 65+ to population aged 0–14 (2024, calculation based on Bank Danych Lokalnych, Główny Urząd Statystyczny)
Foreign Population and Presence of the Metropolitan Area	210,3k foreigners employed (December 2024, Główny Urząd Statystyczny) 8,7% of foreigners in the total number of persons employed (December 2024, Główny Urząd Statystyczny) It is important to note that these figures are based on the place of residence of individuals, not their place of work within the Warsaw Capital Region.
Foreign Population and Presence of the Core City (optional)	124,8k foreigners employed (December 2024, Główny Urząd Statystyczny) 13,4% of foreigners in the total number of persons employed (December 2024, Główny Urząd Statystyczny) It is important to note that these figures are based on the place of residence of individuals, not their place of work within the Warsaw Capital Region.
Higher Education Graduates of the Metropolitan Area	According to the Eurostat in 2024 in Poland 48.1% of population in age group 30-34 attainted the tertiary education. There is no data available at the metropolitan level.

Higher Education Graduates of the Core City (optional)	According to the Eurostat in 2024 in Poland 48.1% of population in age group 30-34 attainted the tertiary education. There is no data available at the city level.
Employment Rate of the Metropolitan Area	72% of the working-age population that is employed (2024, calculation based on Bank Danych Lokalnych, Główny Urząd Statystyczny)
Employment Rate of the Core City (optional)	Data unavailable.
Youth Employment Rate of the Metropolitan Area	55% of young people aged 15–29 who are employed (2024, calculation based on Bank Danych Lokalnych, Główny Urząd Statystyczny)
Youth Employment Rate of the Core City (optional)	Data unavailable.
Enterprises and Sectoral Specialisation of the Metropolitan Area	• 818 052 enterprises (2024, Bank Danych Lokalnych, Główny Urząd Statystyczny) • 1 581 696 employees (December 2024, Bank Danych Lokalnych, Główny Urząd Statystyczny)
In 2024 there were 818 052 enterprises in the Warsaw Metropolitan Area – 7 360 in public sector and 757 560 in private sector: • agriculture, forestry, hunting, and fishing – 2 981 enterprises, 24 899 employees; • industry – 50 806 enterprises, 162 460 employees; • construction – 73 027 enterprises, 85 368 employees; • trade and services – 300 127 enterprises, 506 372 employees; • financial and insurance activities; real estate services – 66 717 enterprises, 123 213 employees; • other services – 321 530 enterprises, 679 384 employees. According to the Polish classification of economic sectors, the largest number of companies in the metropolitan area are found in: • Section G. Wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles; • Section M. Professional, scientific, and technical activities; • Section J. Information and communication.	

The Warsaw Metropolitan Area stands out on a national scale with by far the highest level of economic development, as evidenced, among other things, by the highest share in gross domestic product generation among all regions (17,6% in 2022, 18.3% in 2023 and estimated 18.5% in 2024) and the highest GDP per capita (PLN 166 446 in 2022 and PLN 182 374 in 2023, which was more than twice the national average).	
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the Metropolitan Area	115 824, 76 mln € (2022, Eurostat)
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the Core City (optional)	91 323, 49 mln € (2022, Eurostat)
Per Capita Gross Disposable Income of the Metropolitan Area	Data unavailable
Per Capita Gross Disposable Income of the Core City (optional)	Data unavailable
Tourism – Overnight Stays and Arrivals in the Metropolitan Area	9 545 751 nights spent (overnight stays) in tourist accommodation establishments (2024, Bank Danych Lokalnych, Główny Urząd Statystyczny)
Tourism – Overnight Stays and Arrivals in the Core City (optional)	8 021 740 nights spent (overnight stays) in tourist accommodation establishments (2024, Bank Danych Lokalnych, Główny Urząd Statystyczny)
Protected Natural Areas in the Metropolitan Area	2 651,5 km^2 (2024, Bank Danych Lokalnych, Główny Urząd Statystyczny)
The metropolitan area is notable for its rich natural landscape. The following forms of protected natural areas can be found in the Warsaw Metropolitan Area: • 1 national park, • 75 nature reserves, • 3 landscape parks, • 8 protected landscape areas, • 33 Natura 2000 sites, • 12 nature and landscape complexes, • 1 743 natural monuments, • 67 ecological sites. In 2024, the extent of protected natural areas was 2 651,5 km^2 (43,4% of the total area of the metropolis).	

Major Healthcare Facilities in the Metropolitan Area	46 hospitals classified into specific levels of the basic hospital healthcare provision system (2024, calculation based on Public Information Bulletin of the Mazovian Regional Branch of the National Health Fund)
In 2024, the number of hospitals in the Warsaw Metropolitan Area was 46, 33 of which were located in Warsaw. The higher values of the indicator for Warsaw are not so much a reflection of the good situation in the capital, but rather of the existing inequalities in the distribution of medical facilities, which has a significant impact on access to health services. This is due to a number of systemic problems, in particular the concentration of human and equipment resources primarily in large urban centres, which makes it difficult to contract services in other regions of the country and leads to patient migration.	
Universities in the Metropolitan Area	• 66 universities (2023, Bank Danych Lokalnych, Główny Urząd Statystyczny) • 7 WMA universities in top 30 of "Perspektywy" Academic University Ranking 2023
In 2023, there were 66 universities and 8 university branches in the Warsaw Metropolitan Area (the vast majority located in Warsaw). That year, 260 071 students attended them and 49 454 people graduated from the universities. According to the national "Perspektywy" ranking, the most prestigious university in the metropolitan area is the University of Warsaw (1st place in the ranking of polish universities ex aequo Jagiellonian University in Krakow). It also ranks high in terms of scientific potential (2nd place), educational conditions (1st place), and internationalization (2nd place). Metropolitan universities perform well in national rankings, but less favourably in international ones. According to the above-mentioned ranking, it can be concluded that the 7 main universities in the Warsaw Metropolitan Area are: University of Warsaw, Warsaw University of Technology, Medical University of Warsaw, Warsaw School of Economics, Kozminski University in Warsaw, SWPS University, Warsaw University of Life Sciences.	
Other Relevant Socio-Economic Indicators	
Taking various socio-economic factors into account, the Warsaw Metropolitan Area stands out from the rest of Poland and Europe in the subsequent manners: • The metropolis is generally homogeneous in terms of nationality and culture, with Warsaw being the exception as it attracts migrants from a variety of different countries and cultures. • In recent years, the demographic situation in the Warsaw Metropolitan Area has been most affected by the wave of war refugees from Ukraine. In September 2023, the number of personal identification numbers (PESEL) assigned to people from Ukraine in Warsaw exceeded 181 000. Ukrainian immigrants enter the workforce in	

the Warsaw Metropolitan Area, but it is difficult to predict how many of them will decide to return to Ukraine and when. The growing number of companies registered throughout the country by Ukrainians is proof that people from Ukraine feel increasingly safe in Poland and see their future in the country.

- The Warsaw Metropolitan Area is doing well in terms of institutional capital. However, due to its significantly greater exposure to social and political crises, it requires supra-local crisis management and cooperation (including cybersecurity) to ensure a higher level of public safety for its residents. Local authorities most often identify these tasks as requiring the transfer of competences for implementation to the level of the entire metropolitan area.

4. GOVERNANCE

4.1 Governance of the Metropolitan Area

Type of Institution (Category)

Category: Self-Coordination

The Warsaw Metropolis Association is a voluntary association of local government units. It consists of all 79 local government units (70 municipalities and 9 counties) from the NUTS 2 Warsaw Capital Region (Warsaw Metropolitan Area).

The aim of the Association is to support the idea of local government and protect the common interests of its members, in particular in the following areas:

1) harmonious socio-economic development of municipalities in the Warsaw Capital Region;

2) joint developing and integration of the most important policies affecting the quality of life of the inhabitants of the Warsaw Capital Region;

3) strengthening the position of the Warsaw Capital Region in the international network of metropolises;

4) cooperation and mutual support of the Association's members in all activities for development;

5) strengthening the influence of the Association's members on the shape and manner of implementation of tasks supported in the Warsaw Capital Region under cohesion policy.

Source of Funding

The Warsaw Metropolis Association is funded entirely by membership fees. The Association is not a profit-making organisation and does not carry out business activities. It does not receive funding from the central government for its statutory activities. The lack of a metropolitan law means it is unable to raise funds from the state budget. The association has prepared its own draft metropolitan law, which will form the basis for further work on the draft law in cooperation with other metropolises in Poland.

Financing for the implementation of the ITI Strategy is based on EU funds allocated directly to the Warsaw Capital Region for the implementation of the ITI instrument. The Association does not manage funds for the implementation of the ITI Strategy. Funds

for ITI implementation are managed at regional level. The Managing Authority is the Marshal's Office of the Mazovian Voivodeship.
Functions and Responsibilities (categories)
The Warsaw Metropolis Association main areas of activity now are: • Strategic planning, • Public transportation and related services, • Environmental sustainability, • Climate and energy, • Education and training. The Warsaw Metropolis Association unites municipalities and counties. Our main goal is to promote the idea of local government and the harmonious socio-economic development of the Warsaw metropolitan area. Together, we solve problems that would be difficult for local governments to tackle individually. Our main areas of activity are: strategic planning and implementing (ITI Strategy and WMA Development Strategy), public transport, education, air protection and adapting to climate change. The voice developed at the metropolitan forum is heard and noticed both at the national and European level thanks to the joint initiatives we undertake.
Legislative Framework / Act
The Association operates on the basis of the Act of 7 April 1989 - Law on Associations in conjunction with Article 84 of the Act of 8 March 1990 on commune self-government (Journal of Laws of 2019, item 506), and on the basis of the statutes. The implementation of the Integrated Territorial Investment for the period 2021-2027 is based on the following legal framework: • The Implementation Act of 28 April 2022, on the principles of implementing tasks financed from European funds in the 2021-2027 financial perspective; • Resolution of the General Assembly of Members of the "Metropolis Warsaw" Association of 15 February 2022; • Agreement with the Marshal's Office of the Mazovian Voivodeship and the Capital City of Warsaw regarding the implementation of Integrated Territorial Investments for the Warsaw Metropolitan Area for the years 2021-2027+.
Decision-Making Process
The authorities of the Warsaw Metropolis Association are as follows: a. General Assembly of Members (heads of 70 local communes and 9 counties) – the highest decision-making body responsible for implementing statutory tasks, setting the direction for actions and making key decisions. b. Management Board (11 representatives of communes and counties chosen by all association members) – the executive body of the Association. c. Audit Committee – the internal control and supervisory body of the Association. The Association has legal personality and runs the Association Office, employs staff.

In accordance with the Association's structure, policy decisions are made by the General Assembly, while executive decisions are made by the Association's Management Board. The decisions are made by a simple majority of votes in the presence of at least half of the members entitled to vote at meetings. The Metropolitan Council advises the Management Board by issuing opinions on the content of strategic analyses, objectives and directions of action, and then prepares, reviews and implements the ITI Strategy.
To cooperate with socio-economic partners in developing and implementing the ITI Strategy, the Metropolitan Council was established in January 2023. The Council consists of 17 individuals whose professional activities or scientific achievements demonstrate their knowledge of the Warsaw metropolitan area. Among them are representatives of the scientific community, the regional government, economic institutions and NGOs.

Public-Private Partnership

There is no cooperation based on public-private partnership related to metropolitan issues – both in case of the Association as well as the City of Warsaw. Municipalities carry out their own tasks within the framework of Public-Private Partnership, so there is no need for the City of Warsaw and the Warsaw Metropolis Association to perform these tasks on their behalf.

4.2 Governance for the Policy Instrument

Participation Model During the Design Phase

The scope of the intervention of the ITI instrument was subject to public consultation as the part of the process of preparing the European Funds Programme for Mazovia 2021-2027.
The ITI Strategy of the Warsaw Metropolitan Area for 2021-2027+ was also subject to public consultation. Additionally, representatives of socio-economic partners, as well as organisations involved in civil society, environmental protection, social inclusion, fundamental rights, the rights of persons with disabilities, gender equality and non-discrimination, were also involved in preparing and implementing the ITI Strategy. For this purpose, the Management Board of the Warsaw Metropolis Association established an advisory body – the Metropolitan Council – in January 2023. Cooperation with socio-economic partners enables the use of a broader range of experience and knowledge, and increases the transparency of the ITI implementation process. The institutions involved in the process of the reviewing the ITI Strategy were:

- the Ministry of European Funds and Development Policy;
- the Marshal's Office of the Mazovian Voivodeship.

Decision-Making Process

By resolution of the General Assembly of Members of the Warsaw Metropolis Association of 15 February 2022, the Board of the Warsaw Metropolis Association was authorized to enter into a cooperation agreement with the Marshal's Office of the Mazovian Voivodship and the Capital City of Warsaw regarding the implementation of

ITI for the Warsaw Metropolitan Area for the period 2021-2027+. Therefore, the Warsaw Metropolis Association is the authorised institution for implementing ITI for the Warsaw Metropolitan Area under the EU's 2021-2027 financial perspective.
In accordance with the structure of the Association, policy decisions are made by the General Assembly, while executive decisions are made by the Association's Management Board. The Metropolitan Council advises the Management Board by issuing opinions on the content of the strategic diagnosis, objectives and directions of action, and then preparing, reviewing and implementing the ITI Strategy.

Implementation Phase Modalities

The key tool for implementing the Warsaw Metropolitan Area ITI Strategy is the European Funds for Mazovia 2021-2027 programme. The Marshal's Office of the Mazovian Voivodship Management Board, acting as the Managing Authority, is responsible for the implementation of the regional programme by carrying out activities related to, among other things, management, monitoring, evaluation and control. The Managing Authority carries out these tasks in cooperation with the Intermediate Bodies, the Mazovian Unit for the Implementation of EU Funds and the Regional Labour Office.
The scope of the Association's tasks in the implementation of the ITI:

- participation in the selection of projects, in particular by including in the ITI Strategy for the Warsaw metropolitan area a list of projects that may apply for co-financing under the relevant programme,
- issuing opinions on programme documents,
- monitoring,
- conducting information and promotion activities.

The detailed scope of activities performed by MA for the implementation of ITI interventions has been specified in separate agreements between the Marshal's Office of the Mazovian Voivodship Management Board, the Association and the Capital City of Warsaw.

4.3 Governance Cultural Framework

Politicians

Cooperation Models between municipalities and across different government and administrative levels

Necessity of cooperation: 5
Metropolitan cooperation prior to ITI 2014-2021 was practically non-existent. It was only the agreement on the implementation of ITI concluded between Warsaw and 39 municipalities in 2014 that initiated it. At the time the main challenges were:

- little experience in cooperation in the area;
- lack of mutual trust;
- very high distrust and fears towards Warsaw using up most of the ITI funds.

Cooperation was successfully established thanks to:

- joint, independent development of the ITI Strategy;

- definition of clear organisational structures in the aforementioned agreement, involving each municipality;
- definition of tasks and assignment of responsibilities.

It helped us greatly that Warsaw was both the Intermediate Body and the leader of the ITI agreement. This allowed us to supervise the implementation of ITI in local government units, while helping them to solve problems, organise knowledge exchange between them, and represent them before the regional authorities managing the regional operational programme. Now, thanks to the implementation of ITI 2021-2027, we can further develop cooperation – this time in a larger area (Warsaw, 69 municipalities, 9 counties). We are currently trying to convince the central authorities to create appropriate legal regulations supporting metropolitan cooperation (we have developed our own draft of the metropolitan law, tailored to our needs and conditions). Representatives of the Warsaw metropolitan area are not present in central administrative bodies. However, they participate in the following bodies related to the implementation of EU funds for 2021–2027:

- Monitoring Committee/working groups under the European Funds for Infrastructure, Climate, Environment;
- European Funds for Mazovia 2021–2027.

The Warsaw Metropolis Association cooperates with the following authorities, among others:

- The parliamentary team for the development of the Warsaw metropolis on metropolitan policy and the implementation of the metropolitan act;
- The parliamentary team for The Green Belt of Polish cities;
- The Marshal's Office of the Mazovian Voivodeship on the implementation of the Integrated Territorial Investment (ITI), the metropolitan act and climate policy;
- The Ministry of Funds and Regional Policy on the implementation of ITI, European funds and energy efficiency.

Cooperation Models between public and private actors

Necessity of cooperation: 5

The Warsaw Metropolis Association cooperates with the private sector mainly by commissioning promotional, training and workshop services for its members.

The aforementioned Metropolitan Council might be an example of an on-going cooperation between the private and public sector. It was established in January 2023 by resolution of the Management Board of the Association as an advisory body within the framework of work on the ITI Strategy for the Warsaw Metropolis and the Strategy for the Development of the Warsaw Metropolitan Area. The Council acts as an advisory body to the Association's Management Board. It issues opinions on draft resolutions and other strategic documents. It participates in all stages of work on documents, from draft to approval by the Association.

The Metropolitan Council consists of 17 members. They are representatives of:

- The Association's Management Board;
- The Government of the Mazovian Voivodeship;
- The Statistical Office in Warsaw;

- A group of experts and scientists (representatives of science, business, and non-governmental organisations) whose professional activity or scientific achievements demonstrate their knowledge of the Warsaw metropolitan area.

Key Sectors or Issues Where Cooperation is Most Needed

In addition to implementing ITI, key topics where cooperation is most needed include:

- public transport,
- energy efficiency,
- safety,
- economic promotion,
- climate protection.

The above-mentioned issues are already more or less being managed by the MA, but the metropolitan law will allow us to coordinate even more tasks, such as:

- metropolitan passenger transport,
- climate and environmental protection,
- social and economic development,
- spatial planning,
- the development of strategic documents.

The Association's key objective is to implement the metropolitan law for the Warsaw metropolitan area. Thanks to the act, local government units in the Warsaw metropolitan area will be able to coordinate their activities more effectively.

Existing Cooperation Experiences Beyond the Metropolitan Area

The Warsaw Metropolitan Area has existing cooperation experiences beyond the metropolitan area in the following:

- On the Polish scene, the Warsaw Metropolis Association and the City of Warsaw cooperate with the Union of Polish Metropolises and other ITI areas.
- In the European Union, the Association is a member of the METREX Association and participates with a representative from the City of Warsaw in the annual meetings of European Metropolitan Authorities.
- In addition, it participates in the MECOG-EU (Central Europe) project on metropolitan area management.
- The City of Warsaw is also a member of Eurocities.

Current Cooperation Needs Beyond the Metropolitan Area

There is a need to establish cooperation in the field of:

- metropolitan area management – at the national level, there is currently a debate underway on an act on sustainable urban development, which should support the development of metropolitan areas. Within the Warsaw metropolitan area, we have developed a project of metropolitan law for our own needs. We treat it as a basis for discussion with the national level on the management of metropolitan areas;

- public safety and defence capability – we do not have any defence mechanisms in case of emergency situations, and we need to be prepared for this at the metropolitan level;
- crisis management and energy efficiency – we are facing an energy crisis and need more support beyond the municipal level. This is a national issue – we have outdated infrastructure and at present, only a smaller part of energy comes from alternative sources. It is important to develop joint solutions for efficiency at the regional/metropolitan level, because as of now everyone is working on this issue independently.

Multilevel Collaboration

The Warsaw Metropolis Association cooperates with the following authorities, among others:

- The parliamentary team for the development of the Warsaw metropolis on metropolitan policy and the implementation of the metropolitan act;
- The parliamentary team for The Green Belt of Polish cities.

This type of cooperation typically occurs through informal arrangements. Parliamentary support for the proposed activities is essential, as specific legal solutions need to be implemented at national level. Hence the cooperation with the above-mentioned parliamentary groups was established.

Technicians

Cooperation Models between municipalities and across different government and administrative levels

Necessity of cooperation: 5

Since the start of cooperation within ITI 2014-2020, a municipal coordinator has been appointed in each municipality (and from 2022 also in each county). A coordinator is a person at the operational level with whom we, as the leader of the metropolis, contact if we need to arrange/do something at the working level. This helps to develop joint solutions and present them at the decision-making level. This builds the commitment of individual local government units to cooperation and, at the same time, greatly speeds up the decision-making process.

As a part of the works on the WMA Development Strategy, the working groups were organised, consisting of representatives of local government units, NGOs and experts from the Warsaw Metropolitan Area. The task of the working groups was, among other things, to develop a SWOT analysis and the objectives and directions of the WMA Development Strategy.

At the working level we cooperate with:

- The Mazovian Regional Planning Office in Warsaw in the field of spatial and climate policy;
- The Firefighting Academy in Warsaw in the field of public safety;
- The Statistical Office in Warsaw in the field of data collection on the Warsaw metropolitan area;

- The Faculty of Geography and Regional Studies at the University of Warsaw;
- The Warsaw University of Life Sciences in the field of creating the Warsaw Green Ring.

Cooperation Models between public and private actors

Necessity of cooperation: 5

The ITI Strategy consultations are an example of cooperation between public and private actors in the metropolitan area. Public consultations took place between 28 June and 1 August 2023. The main tool for gathering residents' opinions was an online platform. Interested parties could submit their ideas via the 'add general comment' tab or by completing and sending a form to a dedicated email address. It was also possible to express opinions and participate in discussions on the document during three meetings with experts who co-create the ITI Strategy of the Warsaw Metropolitan Area. The public consultation was supported by additional promotional activities conducted on the Internet by the ITI Association and the municipal and district offices of the Warsaw Metropolitan Area. Announcements about the consultations on the ITI Strategy appeared on the main websites discussing activities related to cooperation within the Warsaw Metropolitan Area. The public consultations were attended by representatives of various organisations operating in the Warsaw Metropolitan Area as well as residents submitting comments individually. The attention of the participants in the public consultation was mainly focused on the objectives and directions of activities related to improving the quality of space, and there were also opinions on the SWOT analysis and strategic diagnosis.

Key Sectors or Issues where Cooperation is Most Needed

Key topics where cooperation is most needed include:

- Public transport,
- Spatial policy,
- Economic promotion,
- Safety,
- Energy efficiency,
- Climate protection.

Existing Cooperation Experiences Beyond the Metropolitan Area

The Warsaw Metropolitan Area has existing cooperation experiences beyond the metropolitan area in the following:

- 2024/2025 – in Brussels and Bucharest, representatives of the Capital City of Warsaw and the Warsaw Metropolis Association took part in meetings of the international association "METREX", which carries out tasks for the development of European metropolises. They discussed the challenges and risks that the future holds for metropolitan regions and the conditions necessary for their effective development in cooperation with other entities.
- 2024 – in Stuttgart, as part of the international project "MECOG-CE", a study visit was organised for representatives of the Capital City of Warsaw and the Warsaw

Metropolis Association to discuss the structure and functioning of the Stuttgart Region Association and the public transport system. The visit was an important stage in the work on the draft law for the Warsaw metropolitan area.

- Warsaw Metropolis Association participates in regular (approximately twice a year) meetings of other ITIs in Poland, during which the status of ITI implementation, problems encountered and good practices are discussed.

Warsaw Metropolis Association participates in regular (approximately twice a year) meetings of other ITIs in Poland, during which the status of ITI implementation, problems encountered and good practices are discussed. During the meetings, issues related to ITI and metropolitan areas are discussed and solutions to these issues are presented, including in the areas of transport, energy efficiency and social policy. An important entity monitoring these activities is the Union of Polish Metropolises, which brings together the 12 largest cities in Poland.

Current Cooperation Needs Beyond the Metropolitan Area

There is a need to establish cooperation in the field of:

- public safety and defence capability – we do not have any defence mechanisms in case of emergency situations, and we need to be prepared for this at the metropolitan level;
- crisis management and energy security – we are facing an energy crisis and need more support beyond the municipal level. This is a national issue – we have outdated infrastructure and at present, only a smaller part of energy comes from alternative sources. It is important to develop joint solutions for efficiency at the regional/metropolitan level, because as of now everyone is working on this issue independently.

Experts (technicians) raised these issues during workshop meetings related to the Development Strategy for the Warsaw Metropolitan Area.

Multilevel Collaboration

Representatives of the Ministry of Funds and Regional Policy participate in regular ITI meetings in Poland, where the discussed topics are consulted with them. They participate in discussions between ITI regions and try to work together with them to help develop solutions that can be implemented and solve any arising problems. In addition, they are involved in planning the budget for the new EU funding period.

General Public (and Other Stakeholders)

Cooperation Models between municipalities and across different government and administrative levels

We have not found any studies or sources of information that would describe how much and why general public considers cooperation necessary in the metropolitan area.

Cooperation Models between public and private actors

We have not found any studies or sources of information that would describe how much and why general public considers cooperation necessary in the metropolitan area.
Level of Perceived Belonging to Individual Municipalities
Level of perceived belonging: 2,5 Importance for us: 5 In 2023, we asked residents of the metropolitan area which area they felt most connected to [1]. The following areas were available to choose from: • the Warsaw metropolitan area, • the Mazovian Voivodeship, • the City of Warsaw, • and their own municipality or district of Warsaw. Given these options, the vast majority of residents feel most strongly connected to their municipality or district of Warsaw (an increase from 81% of respondents in 2019 to 88% in 2023). The first choice of the residents of the metropolis, i.e., the area with which the respondents felt most connected, is the municipality, i.e., their place of residence, their immediate neighbourhood. The second choice is Warsaw—the capital of the metropolis, with which the residents of the metropolis are connected, among other things, through work, education, services, and the use of transport, followed by the metropolis itself. In third place, the largest percentage of Warsaw metropolitan area residents identify with the Warsaw metropolitan area. [1] Survey: "Needs and expectations of residents of the Warsaw metropolitan area," Warsaw 2023.
Level of Perceived Belonging to the Metropolitan Area
Level of perceived belonging: 2,5 Importance for us: 5 In 2023, we asked residents of the metropolitan area which area they felt most connected to [1]. The following areas were available to choose from: • the Warsaw metropolitan area, • the Mazovian Voivodeship, • the City of Warsaw, • and their own municipality or district of Warsaw. The Warsaw metropolitan area was ranked third, but compared to 2019, there was an increase in the percentage of those for whom it is the second most important area of identification (from 15% to 24%) and a decrease in the number of respondents who ranked it third and fourth. This means that we are increasingly thinking of ourselves as residents of the Warsaw metropolitan area, which can be considered a good forecast for building a metropolitan identity.

Bearing in mind the need to build a community, the Warsaw Metropolitan Area Development Strategy until 2040 includes measures aimed at strengthening metropolitan identity. [1] Survey: "Needs and expectations of residents of the Warsaw metropolitan area," Warsaw 2023.
Historical or Cultural Factors
As the Warsaw metropolitan area is a relatively new entity, there are no historical or cultural aspects to consider in terms of influencing a sense of belonging to the metropolis.

5. SPECIFIC DATA CONNECTED WITH THE SELECTED POLICY INSTRUMENT
Contents
The Warsaw Metropolis Association (MA), which includes 79 communes and counties, including the City of Warsaw (CoW), is responsible for the creation and implementation of the ITI Strategy for 2021-2027+ in the Warsaw Metropolitan Area, as mandated by national law. Due to limited resources, the MA signed an agreement with the CoW in 2024, delegating certain ITI-related tasks to the CoW. Beyond ITI implementation, efforts are underway to establish a more effective form of metropolitan cooperation through a proposed metropolitan act, which aims to enhance organisational efficiency and improve the implementation of tasks. Consequently, the agreement will be revised to accommodate this broader framework for ITI implementation. Simultaneously, work is underway at the national level on a draft law on sustainable urban development. The law aims to streamline and strengthen the system for managing the development of cities and their functional areas, including metropolitan areas. Perhaps this document will provide the foundation for the functioning of Polish metropolises, including Warsaw.
Objectives
The CoW (project partner) and the MA (associated policy authority) are the co-signatories of the agreement on the implementation of Integrated Territorial Investments (ITI) for the Warsaw Metropolitan Area 2021-2027+. The CoW leads the Warsaw Metropolitan Area and collaborates with the MA in the development and implementation of ITI. The CoW provides administrative services and conducts all activities related to the development of strategic documents for the Warsaw Metropolis. The CoW also represents all communes of the Warsaw Metropolis in dealings with other institutions involved in the ITI implementation process. The CoW is also leading activities aimed at developing the metropolitan law process, which is not regulated in the agreement with MA.
Critical Issues to Address
The Warsaw Metropolitan Area is attempting to establish its own metropolitan law. The draft of the Act on Metropolitan Law was adopted by the General Assembly of the MA

in September 2024. The critical issue now is the political decision at government level regarding the adoption of the Act within a few years. There is a possibility that this act will not be adopted at a political level.
Nevertheless, the agreement between the CoW and the MA will be updated in terms of the Implementation Plan elements of the Strategy for the Warsaw Metropolitan Area until 2040, which influences the implementation of the ITI strategy for the Warsaw Metropolitan Area 2021-2027+. Until the metropolitan law is implemented, cooperation between these entities will continue on similar terms to those currently established.

Expected Change/Improvement

The agreement between the WMA and the CoW regarding the implementation of the ITI Strategy for 2021-2027+ will be updated.
The CoW and the MA have initiated work on a metropolitan law to address issues related to cooperation within the Warsaw Metropolitan Area. In terms of the WMA tasks, these include:

- metropolitan passenger transport;
- climate and environmental protection;
- social and economic development;
- spatial planning and the development of strategic documents.

As for the key issues that will be addressed by the metropolitan act, we can point to the following:

- two-term limits in local government (which results in a lack of stability for the metropolis);
- lack of funding for supra-local tasks (largely transport, but also other tasks);
- the lack of legal regulations for the metropolis (despite the fact that it is statistically separate and in 2023 had an 18.3% share in the country's GDP).

The outcome will be a draft act establishing a new framework for the metropolis operations. The agreement will be revised to reflect the results of this work. The proposed changes will be consulted on with the MA Management Body and approved by its members.

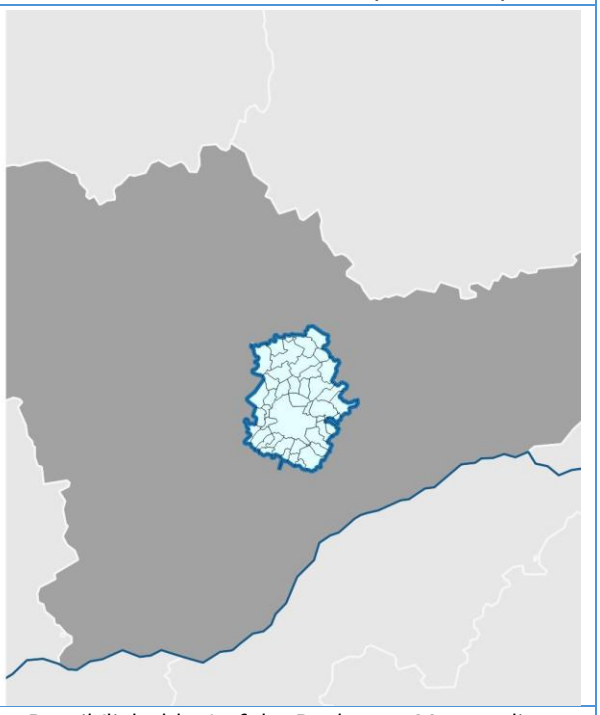
Territorial and Socio-Economic Framework (Sectoral)

Based on the agreement of November 2023 concluded between the WMA and the Mazovian Voivodeship Management Board (the managing authority), the Association undertook to take action related to the implementation of the instrument entitled “ITI for the Warsaw Metropolis 2021-2027+”, which is a territorial instrument under the European Funds for Mazovia 2021-2027 regional programme. In accordance with the content of this agreement, the functioning of ITI is based on institutionalised partnership cooperation between municipalities and counties located in the functional area of the CoW, i.e. the Warsaw Capital Region. The documents governing the management and implementation of the instrument are:

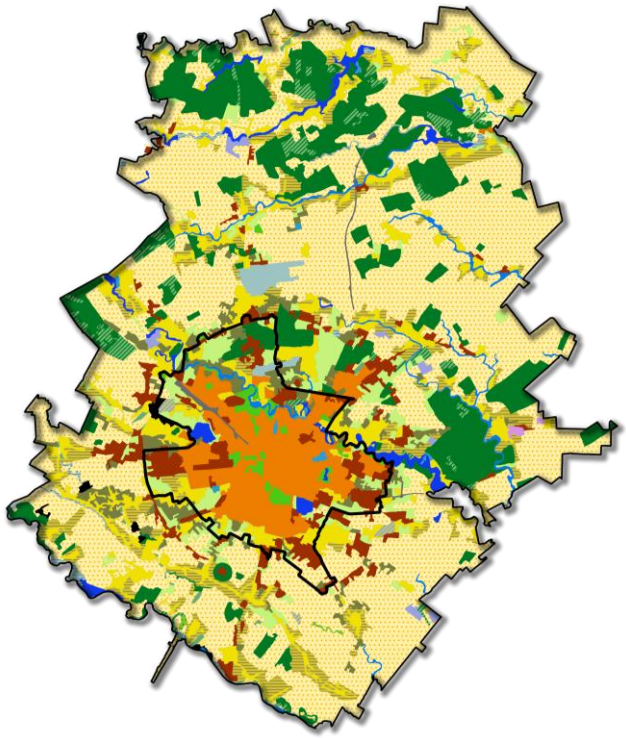
- the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan;

• and a positive opinion from the managing authority on the ITI Strategy for the WMA for 2021-2027+ and the WMA Development Strategy until 2040. The main task of the Association is to create a development policy in the area of ITI implementation, to animate and coordinate the implementation of projects resulting from the ITI strategy co-financed by the European Funds for Mazovia 2021-2027 regional programme.
Other Relevant Elements
The implementation of the ITI Strategy of the Warsaw Metropolitan Area is carried out through initiatives within which projects are selected. The projects are intended to contribute to metropolitan cooperation and the implementation of the strategic objectives of the ITI Strategy. As part of the work on the ITI strategy, a list of projects was created, containing projects grouped into initiatives assigned to specific areas of activity of the ITI Strategy and relating to specific activities indicated in the Funds for Mazovia 2021-2027 regional programme. Projects are selected on a competitive basis. The Association is responsible for implementing the agreement with the Marshal's Office and achieving the objectives set out in the ITI Strategy.

2.2.4 Bucharest Metropolitan Area Intercommunity Development Association with Ministry of Development, Public Works and Administration (PP04)

1. PP INFORMATION	
PP Name (and APA, if applicable)	Bucharest Metropolitan Area Intercommunity Development Association (ADIZMB) APA Ministry of Development, Public Works and Administration (Romania)
	
ROMANIA	Detail (light blue) of the Bucharest Metropolitan Area - NUTS 2 inside Regiunea de dezvoltare Sud-Muntenia - NUTS 2
Name, Role, and Contact of Compiler	George Oancea, Head of Strategies and Policies Development Department, Bucharest Metropolitan Area Intercommunity Development Association george.oancea@adizmb.ro

Acronyms:
ATU: Administrative Territorial Units (translation of Romania term for LAU)
PHC, 2021: Population and housing census in Romania, 2021 (published in 2023)
NIS: National Institute of Statistics (of Romania)



2. TERRITORIAL FRAMEWORK Understanding territorial characteristics and recognizing key factors that influence governance models	
2.1 Key Data of the Case Study	
Total Surface Area of the Metropolitan Area	Bucharest Metropolitan Area* surface is 1.803 km^2, according to 2022 National Institute of Statistics (NIS) data as well as by GIS surface measurement of official administrative limits published by National Agency for Cadaster and Land Registration (NACLR), encompassing the surface area of Ilfov county (1.564 km^2) which surrounds the national capital and the surface of national capital, Bucharest municipality (239 km^2). The Bucharest metropolitan territory is also the same as the one of Bucharest-Ilfov development region**, entity in regional statistical analysis at the European Union NUTS-II level. Among all the 8 development regions in Romania, the Bucharest-Ilfov region is the smallest in terms of area surface, about 0.7% of the country surface (while the other regions are between 12%-15%).

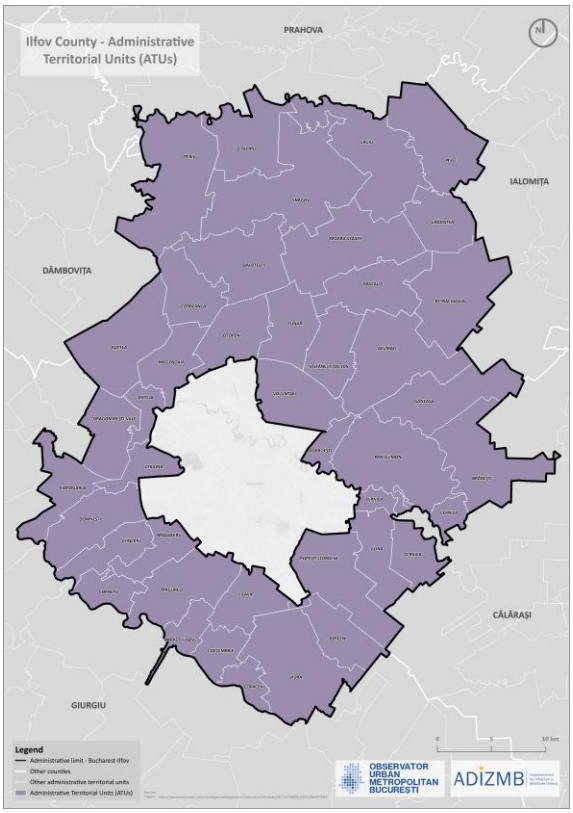
	*Note: The Law No. 246/2022 regarding metropolitan areas defines metropolitan territory as "the territory surrounding municipalities, delineated in accordance with this law, within which mutual relationships of influence have been generated in the areas of communication, economy, society, culture, and municipal infrastructure." (Article 4(3)) and establish that "the metropolitan territory is delineated as follows: a) for the municipality of Bucharest - at least the administrative territory of Ilfov County; (Article 5(1)) Metropolitan areas/zones are defined by Administrative Code (Government Emergency Ordinance No. 57/2019, modified in this respect by the Law No. 246/2022) as the associations of the LAUs: "metropolitan area - inter-municipal development association established on the basis of a partnership between the capital of Romania or county capitals cities ("municipii") or cities ("municipii") other than county capitals, on the one hand, and administrative-territorial units located in the metropolitan area, on the other hand." **Therefore, in providing the following data, we consider Bucharest Metropolitan Area as including the administrative territory of Ilfov County and the Bucharest city administrative territory.** (see also Tabel 1) **Note: As other development regions in Romania, founded in 1998 for coordinating the regional development in the pre-accession period of Romania to the EU, the region does not have any administrative powers, its main function being to co-ordinate regional development projects and manage funds from the European Union. The regions in Romania are also entities in regional statistical analysis at the European Union NUTS-II level.

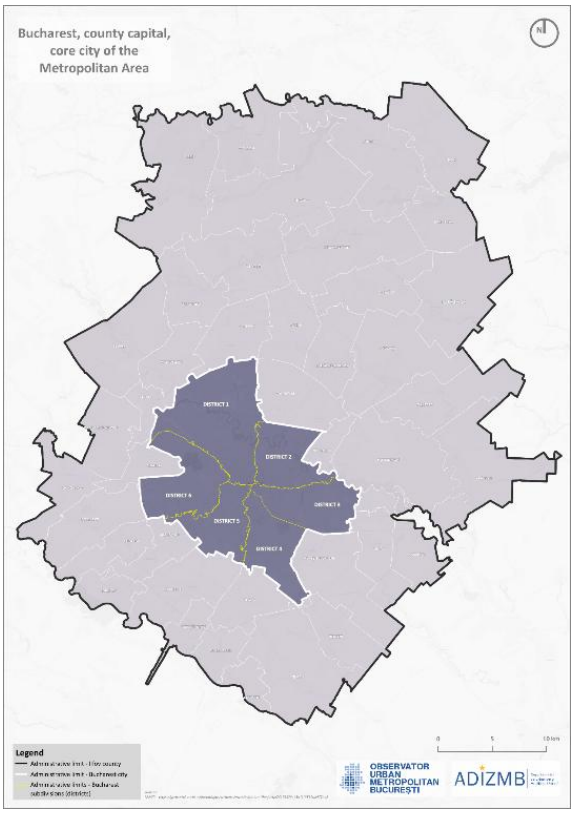
Total Surface Area of the Core City	Bucharest, the national capital, has a total surface of 239 km^2, according to GIS surface measurement of Bucharest municipality official administrative limits published by National Agency for Cadaster and Land Registration - ANCPI.
Population of the Metropolitan Area	According to NIS and Eurostat[4], in 2024 the total population of the Bucharest metropolitan area (including Bucharest municipality, therefore same as the Bucharest-Ilfov NUTS II region) was 2.305.447 residents. According to 2021 National Census of Population and Housing, the population of Bucharest-Ilfov NUTS II region was 2.259.665 residents.
Population of the Core City	According to NIS and Eurostat[5], in 2024 the total population of Bucharest (usual resident population) was 1.721.784 residents. According to 2021 National Census of Population and Housing, the resident population of Bucharest was 1.716.961.
Density of the Metropolitan Area	Bucharest Metropolitan Area has a density, of 1.278,67 inh./km² (based on 2024 Eurostat population data).
Density of the Core City	Bucharest has a density of 7.204 inh./km² (based on 2024 Eurostat population data)
Number of Municipalities included in the Metropolitan Area	
Bucharest Metropolitan territory comprises the following administrative units*: **Ilfov county** (NUTS 3, RO322) – sub-national local administrative unit; Ilfov county territory includes **40 local administrative units (ATUs)**: 32 rural units (communes) and 8 urban units (towns) - see Figure 1; **Bucharest city**/"municipiu", the country capital (NUTS 3, RO321) - see Figure 2.	

[4] https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/DEMO_R_PJANGRP3__custom_2790186/bookmark/table?lang=en&bookmarkId=168107c0-c56f-4adb-85b4-381126e7944b&c=1653460930768
[5] Idem 1.

Bucharest metropolitan area (as organization/voluntary association) has only two members: Bucharest city and Ilfov county.

*Note: The legal status of administrative units (called territorial-administrative units – UAT) are prescribed in the Administrative Code adopted in 2019, which according to the Constitution can be of four types: "comună" (rural unit), "oraș" (town), "municipiu" (city) and "judeţ" (county/district). The first three (comuna, oraş, municipiu) form the 1st tier of UATs, namely what is called in English "municipalities" (they are more than 3000 in Romania). There is no subordination or territorial overlapping between them, and they are treated equally under the law, all exerting largely the same list of legal attributions. Each has a directly elected mayor and an elected local council. The 41 counties ("Judeţe") form the 2nd tier of UATs (similar to départements in France or province in Italy) each having an elected president and a council. The counties have certain specific attributions and certain responsibilities to coordinate local administrative units within their territory, although the local units are not subordinated to the county. The Municipality of Bucharest (the country Capital) holds both city and county competences and has 6 administrative subdivisions (called "sectoare") with elected local councils and directly elected mayors.





From the left: Figure 1 - Ilfov county administrative limits and LAUs included in its territory (Bucharest is not included); Figure 2 - Bucharest city administrative limits and its subdivisions.

Other Possible Sub-Metropolitan Aggregations

The **Bucharest-Ilfov Regional Development Agency (ADRBI)** is a non-governmental, non-profit public utility institution with legal personality, operating under Law 315/2004

on regional development in Romania. Development regions are not administrative-territorial units and do not have legal personality, they constitute the framework for the elaboration, implementation, and evaluation of regional development policies, as well as for the collection of specific statistical data, in accordance with European regulations issued by EUROSTAT for the second level of territorial classification NUTS 2, existing in the European Union. Each development region has a regional development agency, a non-governmental, non-profit, public utility body with legal personality, which operates in the field of regional development, acting as a management authority, in accordance with the law. These agencies are organized and operate under the terms of this law and their organizational and operational statutes, approved by the regional development council. The Regional Development Council is the regional deliberative body, without legal personality, which is established and operates on partnership principles at the level of each development region, with the aim of coordinating the development and monitoring activities arising from regional development policies. At the level of the Bucharest Ilfov region this regional development council (CDRBI) has equal representation of members from the local public administration of the Municipality of Bucharest and Ilfov County. The CDRBI is headed by a president and a vice-president, positions that are held for a term of one year and are held on a rotating basis by the Mayor of the Capital and the President of the Ilfov County Council.

Bucharest Metropolitan Area Intercommunity Development Association (ADIZMB)

Year Founded: 2008

ADIZMB's mission is to support integrated projects and policies on a metropolitan scale (Bucharest–Ilfov), facilitating inter-institutional cooperation.

Key responsibilities: initiation/coord. projects with metropolitan impact (mobility, infrastructure, urban development, environment), attracting funding and supporting integrated planning.

Members: Bucharest City Hall and Ilfov County Council;

Bucharest–Ilfov Intercommunity Development Association for Public Transport (ADITPBI)

Year Founded: 2017

ADITPBI is the organizing authority for local surface public transport in the Bucharest–Ilfov region; strategically plans and regulates bus, trolleybus and tram services, implements SUMP measures and concludes public service contracts with operators.

Key responsibilities: establishing, organizing and monitoring public transport services; approval of transport programmes and performance indicators; coordination of financing and investments for integrated mobility in the region.

Members: Bucharest Municipality, Ilfov County and all the ATUs in Ilfov.

Intercommunity Development Association for Integrated Waste Management in Bucharest (ADIGIDMB)

Year Founded: 2022

The purpose of the association is to coordinate, at the level of the municipality of Bucharest, the implementation of the integrated waste management system, in accordance with national and European legislation.

Key responsibilities: developing and implementing projects and delegation contracts for treatment/recovery facilities, monitoring performance indicators, planning investments and ensuring compliance with the PGDMB.
Members: Bucharest Municipality and sectors 1–6.

Intercommunity Development Association for Integrated Waste Management Ilfov (ADI GIDI)

Year Founded: 2009
ADI GIDI manages, at county level, the development and operation of the integrated waste management system in Ilfov.
Key responsibilities: coordination of SMID projects and investments, development of collection, transfer and treatment infrastructure, as well as monitoring of sanitation services at the level of member TAUs.
Members: Ilfov County Council and the county's TAUs.

Apa-Ilfov Intercommunity Development Association (ADIA Ilfov)

Year of establishment: 2009.
ADIA Ilfov jointly exercises the duties of the ATUs in Ilfov for water supply and sewerage services, with the objective of increasing the quality and extension of the networks.
Key responsibilities: preparation and monitoring of water-sewer investment projects, coordination of regional operators, establishment of tariff policies and performance indicators.
Members: Ilfov County Council and the county's TAUs.

Reference Functional Urban Area (FUA – OECD Definition)

Bucharest functional urban area as defined by OECD, FUA ID code RO001F, had a population of 2.164.163[6] in 2023 and a surface of 836 km² and it does not include all the Bucharest metropolitan territory (as defined by the Law No. 246/2022), but only 25 out of the 41 LAUs of metropolitan territory – see Figure 3.

[6] https://data-explorer.oecd.org/vis?lc=en&df[ds]=dsDisseminateFinalDMZ&df[id]=DSD_FUA_DEMO%40DF_AGE_SEX&df[ag]=OECD.CFE.EDS&dq=RO001C%2BRO001F.A..._T._T..&lom=LASTNPERIODS&lo=5&to[TIME_PERIOD]=false&pg=0

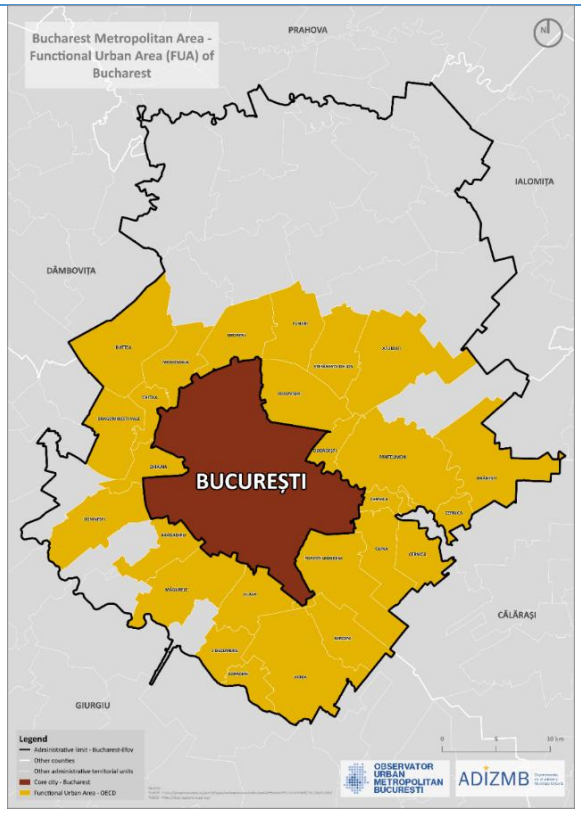


Figure 3 - Bucharest FUA as defined by OECD (yellow) compared with metropolitan territory (administrative limit of Ilfov county).

Reference NUTS region (Eurostat)

Bucharest Metropolitan Area coincides with the NUTS2 Bucharest-Ilfov Development Region and includes NUTS3 Ilfov County and NUTS3 Bucharest capital city. The NUTS3 Ilfov County includes 40 local administrative units (LAUs): 32 rural units (communes) and 8 urban units (towns). The Bucharest municipality is not included in Ilfov county as it has a special statute (both as city and a county). Bucharest municipality has 6 administrative sub-divisions.

#	Country Code	Code 2021	Code 2024	NUTS level 1	NUTS level 2	NUTS level 3	NUTS level	Country order	Region order (NUTS 2021)	Region order (NUTS 2024)
1519	RO	RO32	RO32		Bucureşti-Ilfov		2	23	1489	1490
1520	RO	RO321	RO321			Bucureşti	3	23	1490	1491
1521	RO	RO322	RO322			Ilfov	3	23	1491	1492

Figure 4 - NUTS reference: Bucharest Metropolitan Area coincides with the NUTS2 Bucharest-Ilfov

	NUTS level	NUTS Code 2024	SIRUTA Code	Name	LAU Type	Urban-Rural typology	Administrative Unit Surface (km²)	Population 2024 (residents no.) -NIS, Eurostat	Density 2024 (residents /km²)	Population 2021 (residents no.)- PHC	Density 2021 (residents /km²)
A.	3	RO322	234	ILFOV	County	predominantly urban	1564	583663	373	542704	347
			102543	1 Decembrie	Commune	rural	17.04	na	na	8206	482
			100834	Afumați	Commune	rural	60.49	na	na	8748	145
			100969	Balotești	Commune	rural	50.33	na	na	11210	223
			101145	Berceni	Commune	rural	27.35	na	na	13766	503
			179221	Bragadiru	Town	urban	20.66	na	na	40080	1940
			101298	Brănești	Commune	rural	53.31	na	na	10708	201
			100576	Buftea	Town	urban	54.80	na	na	20586	376
			101742	Cernica	Commune	rural	38.76	na	na	11871	306
			179249	Chiajna	Commune	rural	16.29	na	na	43588	2675
			179285	Chitila	Town	urbal	11.85	na	na	14762	1246
			101902	Ciolpani	Commune	rural	41.87	na	na	4830	115
			101957	Ciorogârla	Commune	rural	29.86	na	na	7511	252
			102035	Clinceni	Commune	rural	23.24	na	na	9480	408
			179588	Copăceni	Commune	rural	12.54	na	na	3129	249
			102160	Corbeanca	Commune	rural	30.06	na	na	11412	380
			102213	Cornetu	Commune	rural	16.69	na	na	7389	443
			102525	Dărăști-Ilfov	Commune	rural	14.78	na	na	2865	194
			102473	Dascălu	Commune	rural	38.90	na	na	3497	90
			179310	Dobroești	Commune	rural	11.40	na	na	16875	1480
			102570	Domnești	Commune	rural	37.78	na	na	12861	340
			102605	Dragomirești-Vale	Commune	rural	31.41	na	na	6531	208
			103130	Gănеasa	Commune	rural	46.41	na	na	5402	116
			179347	Glina	Commune	rural	28.86	na	na	9209	319
			103443	Grădiștea	Commune	rural	28.81	na	na	3231	112
			103513	Gruiu	Commune	rural	65.61	na	na	7586	116
			179383	Jilava	Commune	rural	26.61	na	na	10611	399
			179409	Măgurele	Town	urban	44.26	na	na	14414	326
			104243	Moara Vlăsiei	Commune	rural	63.01	na	na	6597	105
			179463	Mogoșoaia	Commune	rural	26.20	na	na	9820	375
			104421	Nuci	Commune	rural	52.37	na	na	2860	55
			179481	Otopeni	Town	urban	31.84	na	na	21750	683
			179515	Pantelimon	Town	urban	68.73	na	na	32873	478
			104546	Peris	Commune	rural	77.11	na	na	7357	95
			104582	Petrăchioaia	Commune	rural	58.70	na	na	3695	63
			179533	Popești Leordeni	Town	urban	51.91	na	na	53434	1029
			105160	Snagov	Commune	rural	90.21	na	na	8331	92
			105419	Ștefănești de Jos	Commune	rural	29.29	na	na	10588	362
			105570	Tunari	Commune	rural	29.76	na	na	9617	323
			105936	Vidra	Commune	rural	66.96	na	na	8058	120
			179551	Voluntari	Town	urban	37.90	na	na	47366	1250
B.	3	RO321	179132	BUCHAREST	Capital city (county, as well as city/"municipiu")	urban	239	1721784	7205	1716961	7185
			179141	Sectorul 1	sub-division (sector/district)	urban	69.99	na	na	217367	3106
			179150	Sectorul 2	sub-division (sector/district)	urban	31.80	na	na	291557	9167
			179169	Sectorul 3	sub-division (sector/district)	urban	34.09	na	na	374737	10993
			179178	Sectorul 4	sub-division (sector/district)	urban	33.10	na	na	268018	8097
			179187	Sectorul 5	sub-division (sector/district)	urban	28.82	na	na	240288	8338
			179196	Sectorul 6	sub-division (sector/district)	urban	41.17	na	na	324994	7894
A.+B.	2	RO32		Bucharest-Ilfov development region = Bucharest metropolitan area	(not an administrative level)	predominantly urban	1803	2305447	1279	2259665	1253

Figure 5 - Municipalities included in the Metropolitan Area, reference with NUTS, population, surface areas, density

2.2 Spatial Distribution of Land Uses and Land Cover-LULC (current state)

LULC: Artificial Surface, Agricultural Areas, Forest and Semi Natural Areas, Wetlands and Water bodies[7]

Artificial Surface

The Bucharest metropolitan area has an artificial surface of 459.10 km², divided between Bucharest (189.59 km², 79.33% of its territory) and Ilfov County (269.52 km²,

[7] Source data: CORINE Land Cover (Level 3) 2018 (https://land.copernicus.eu/en/products/corine- land-cover).

17.23%). Artificial land includes areas altered by human activity, grouped into four categories:

- urban fabric,
- industrial, commercial and transport units,
- mine, dump and construction sites, and
- artificial non-agricultural vegetated areas.

The largest share is represented by **urban fabric** (117.44 km² in Bucharest and 160.34 km² in Ilfov), accounting for about 62% of artificial land. It covers all residential areas, from collective housing to single-family homes. The second category, i**ndustrial, commercial and transport units**, represents around 22.5% of artificial land in Bucharest and 21.9% in Ilfov, including industrial and service areas, together with major transport infrastructure. Transport infrastructure, including airports, railways, and roads, occupies only 2.05% of the artificial surface. **Mine, dump and construction sites** category represent 8.3% in Bucharest and 18% in Ilfov, highlighting the land with construction sites, landfills (three landfills of which two still active - Chitila town, Vidra commune – and one meanwhile decommissioned in Popești-Leordeni town) and gravel pits (ballast extraction). Finally, **Artificial vegetated areas** have minimal coverage at metropolitan scale (0.61%), but in Bucharest they reach 7.29% of artificial land, due to the presence of extensive parks and leisure facilities such as King Michael I Park, Tineretului Park, the Botanical Garden, Carol I Park, and the National Arena Park.

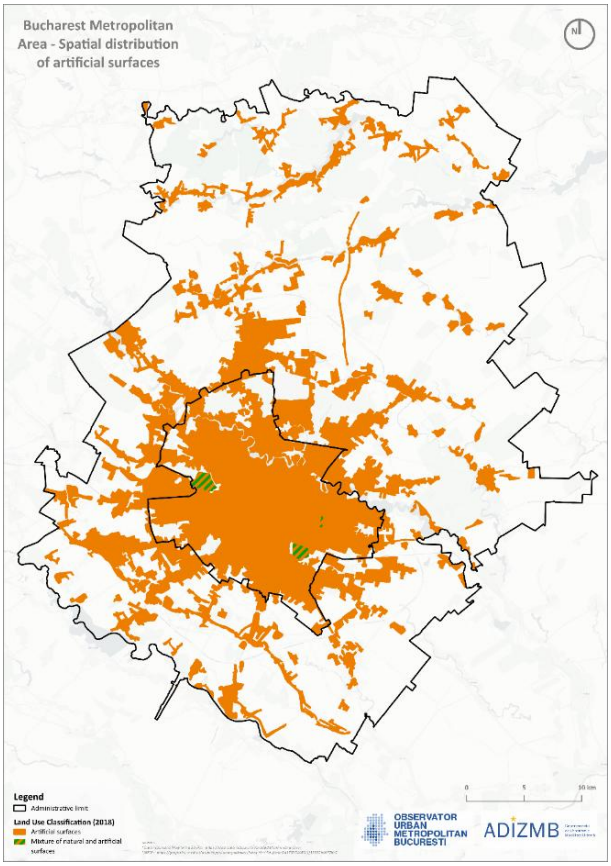


Figure 6 - Bucharest Metropolitan Area artificial surface

Agricultural Areas

Agriculture dominates Metropolitan Region, covering about 1,010.73 km² (56% of the total 1,803 km² administrative area). Most farmland is in Ilfov County (977.37 km² – 97% of regional agricultural land), while Bucharest contributes only 32.99 km² (3%). Agricultural land includes arable land, permanent crops, pastures, and heterogeneous agricultural areas. Non-irrigated arable land is the largest category at the metropolitan scale (81% of agricultural land), representing more than half of Ilfov's territory but only 17% of Bucharest's farmland, underscoring strong disparities between the urban core and surrounding county. In Bucharest, pastures dominate (72% of farmland, nearly 10% of its total area), highlighting the persistence of meadows even within the urban landscape, although conventional agriculture is almost absent. By contrast, Ilfov pastures are limited (6% of farmland), mainly around urban fringes such as Voluntari, Pantelimon, and Dobroești. Permanent crops are marginal, restricted entirely to Ilfov (7.15 km², 0.7% of farmland). Heterogeneous agricultural areas, including complex cultivation zones and lands with natural vegetation, account for nearly 120 km² (12% of farmland). While almost all of these are located in Ilfov, a few remain in Bucharest, linked to former research NIStitutes. Overall, agriculture remains the largest land use, yet its structure reveals a clear rural–urban contrast shaping the metropolitan territory.

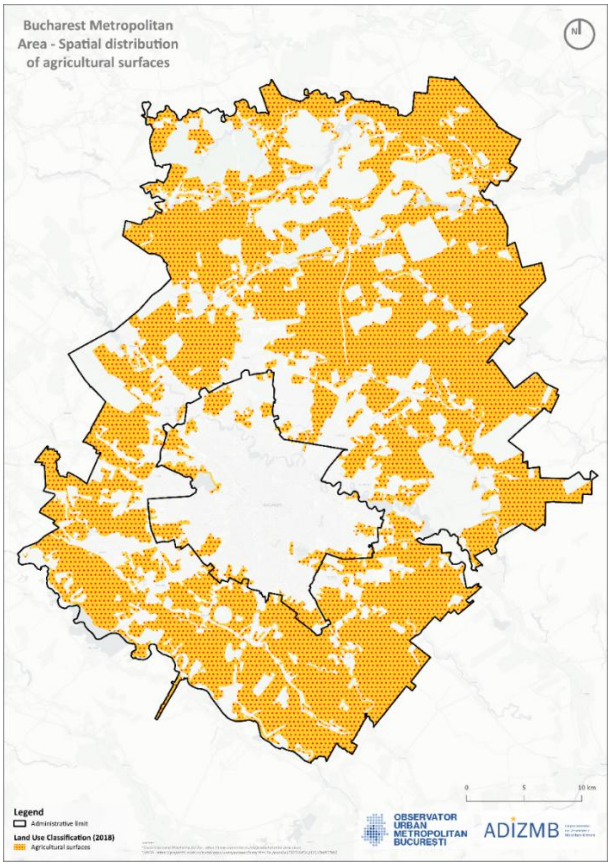


Figure 7 - Bucharest Metropolitan Area agriculture areas

Forest and Semi Natural Areas

The natural framework of the Bucharest-Ilfov metropolitan area, comprising forests and semi-natural formations, covers 269.37 km² (about 15% of Ilfov County). These areas are characterized by limited or no human intervention and include broad-leaved forests, natural grasslands, transitional woodland-shrub zones, and areas affected by fires. Broad-leaved forests dominate, totaling 231.61 km² (88.31% of natural areas, 14.81% of Ilfov's territory) and 6.44 km² in Bucharest (90.98% of local natural areas but only 2.69% of its territory). This imbalance reveals a key urban issue: limited forest presence compared to extensive built-up surfaces, despite forests' essential role in reducing heat island effects, noise, and air pollution. Transitional woodland-shrub zones form the second largest category, covering 29.21 km² (11.14% of metropolitan vegetation, 1.87% of Ilfov), with almost all located in Ilfov (97.86%). Natural grasslands (0.96 km², 0.37% of vegetation) and fire-affected areas (0.49 km², 0.19%) are marginal categories, found exclusively in Ilfov. The ongoing expansion of urban sprawl continues to threaten and fragment these natural assets, deepening disparities between the urban core and surrounding county.

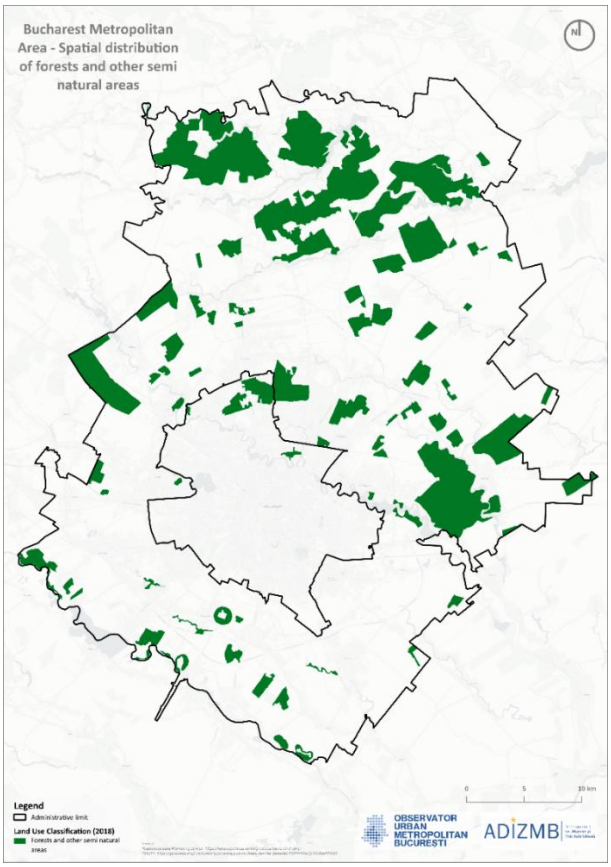


Figure 8 - Bucharest Metropolitan Area - forest and semi natural areas

Wetlands and Water bodies

The Bucharest-Ilfov Region hosts a significant hydrographic and natural network, covering 56.83 km² (3.15% of the metropolitan territory). Water bodies dominate, with 28 km² (49.15%), mainly represented by lakes such as Mihăilești, Morii, Văcărești, Colentina, and Snagov. In Bucharest, they cover 65% of local wetlands but only 2.53%

of the city's area, while in Ilfov they extend over 21.88 km² (1.40%). Flowing waters (rivers, streams, canals) form the second category, totaling 20.31 km² (35.74%), with 1.37% in Bucharest and 1.09% in Ilfov. Swamps, limited to Ilfov, cover 8.6 km² (15.09% of regional wetlands, 0.55% of county area). The Municipality of Bucharest is crossed by two rivers: a) the Colentina River – developed through hydrotechnical works as a chain of lakes in the North–North-Eastern part of the city, and b) the Dâmbovița River – developed through hydrotechnical works with a reservoir (Lake Morii) and channeled river, which flows through the central part of the city. Vegetation complements this system: broad-leaved forests dominate with 231.61 km² (88.31% of natural/semi-natural areas in Ilfov, 14.81% of its territory), but in Bucharest only 6.44 km² remain (2.69% of city area). Their role in mitigating urban heat, noise, and emissions is critical, yet urban sprawl deepens disparities. Transitional woodland-shrub areas add 29.21 km² (11.14% of vegetation), mostly in Ilfov (97.86%). Natural grasslands (0.96 km²) and areas affected by fires (0.49 km²) are minimal, found exclusively in Ilfov.

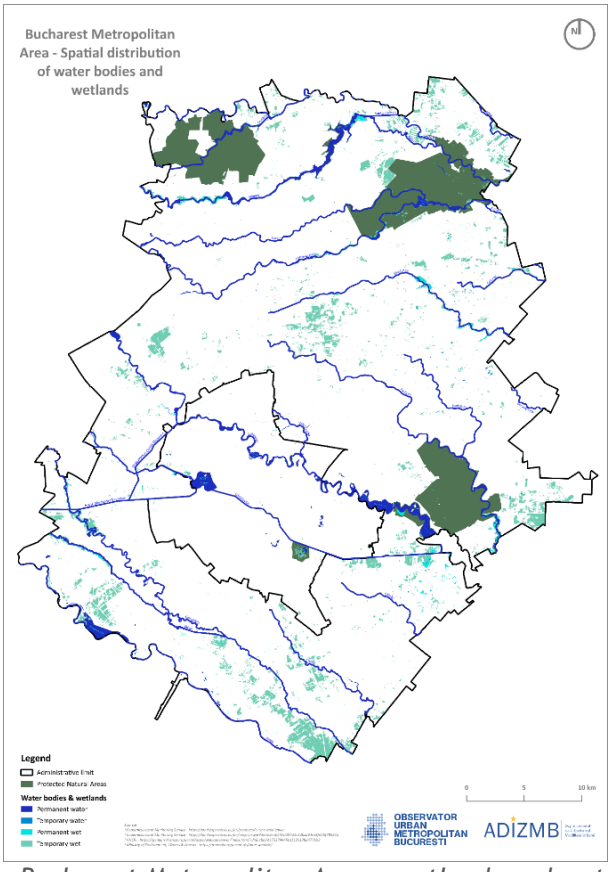
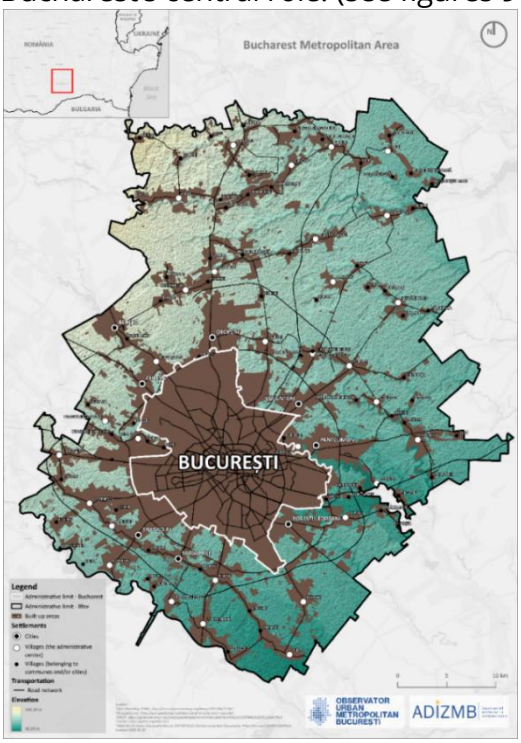


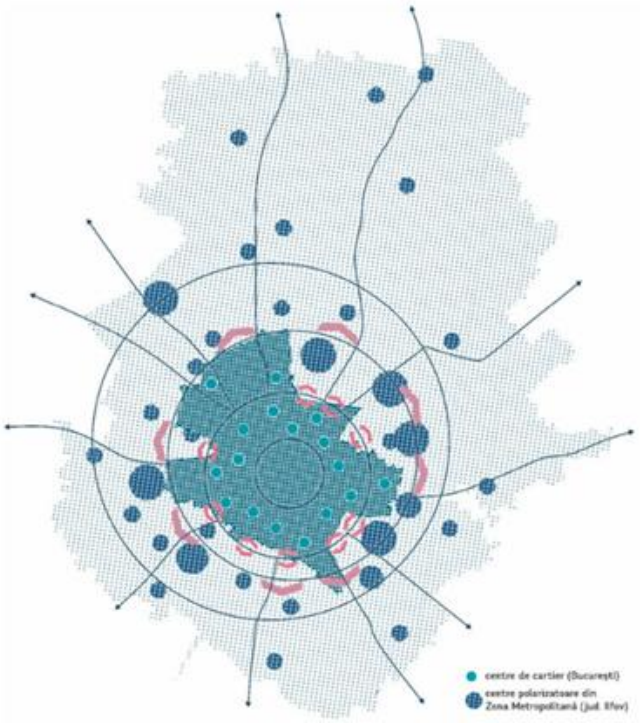
Figure 9 - Bucharest Metropolitan Area - wetlands and water bodies

Settlement Model

The Bucharest Region lies within the Romanian Plain, with altitudes of 50–120 m and diverse landforms such as interfluves, lakes, and sinkholes. The region is shaped by major rivers—Argeș, Ialomița, Dâmbovița, and Sabar—and their tributaries, along with numerous lakes of ecological, economic, and recreational importance (e.g., Snagov,

Morii). Over the past two centuries, intensive deforestation and agricultural expansion have significantly transformed local relief and soils. The region's structure is dominated by Bucharest, the primary socio-economic and institutional core, supported by extensive transport infrastructure that attracts high commuter flows: about 331,000 in 2011 from the Functional Urban Area, as well as workers from neighboring counties. However, while commuting has grown, census data reveal contrasting demographic trends: between 2011–2021 Bucharest lost 8.84% of its population, whereas Ilfov gained 39.61%, fueled by lower housing prices and better environmental conditions. This dynamic has spurred suburbanization, with Ilfov settlements increasingly functioning as "bedroom communities." Despite being monocentric, the region also hosts several "Satellite Urban Settlements" that contribute to national growth while reinforcing Bucharest's central role. (see figures 9 & 10)





From the left: Figure 10 - Bucharest Metropolitan Area - geography; Figure 11 - Bucharest Metropolitan Area - prospective poles envisaged by Bucharest Integrated Development Strategy (substantiation study, 2029)

Land Take[8]

At European level, land use patterns are shaped by socio-economic dynamics, including growing housing demand, economic development, and the need for expanded transport infrastructure, which together drive urban sprawl (EEA, 2023). In Romania, Ilfov County experienced between 2000–2018 the largest national increase in artificial surfaces (+36.6 km²), followed by Cluj (+25.8 km²) and Timiș (+25.5 km²). By contrast, Bucharest Municipality registered only +4.5 km² due to limited space within its

[8] Source data: European Environmental Agency, Land take and net land take in NUTS3 (https://www.eea.europa.eu/en/analysis/maps-and-charts/land-take-statistics-dashboards).

administrative boundaries. Combined, the Bucharest-Ilfov Region reached a total of +41.1 km² land take between 2000–2018, gaining a 15.6% raise (EEA, 2019). A World Bank study (2017) further shows that, during 2002–2017, suburban localities around Bucharest expanded significantly, reflecting mostly residential ("bedroom communities") and some economic functions, particularly logistics and storage hubs west of the city. Peri-urban towns and communes expanded as single-function areas without a defined urban center, with serious deficits in civil and social infrastructure and with a street grid often incomplete and unsuitable for public transport, with insufficient space for sidewalks and bike lanes. The data reveal a marked acceleration of land artificialization after Romania's 2007 EU accession, with the peak in 2013, when localities mainly in the North-West, West, South-West, and partly South of Bucharest (e.g., Berceni) registered rapid built-up expansion. (see Figures 11 & 12).

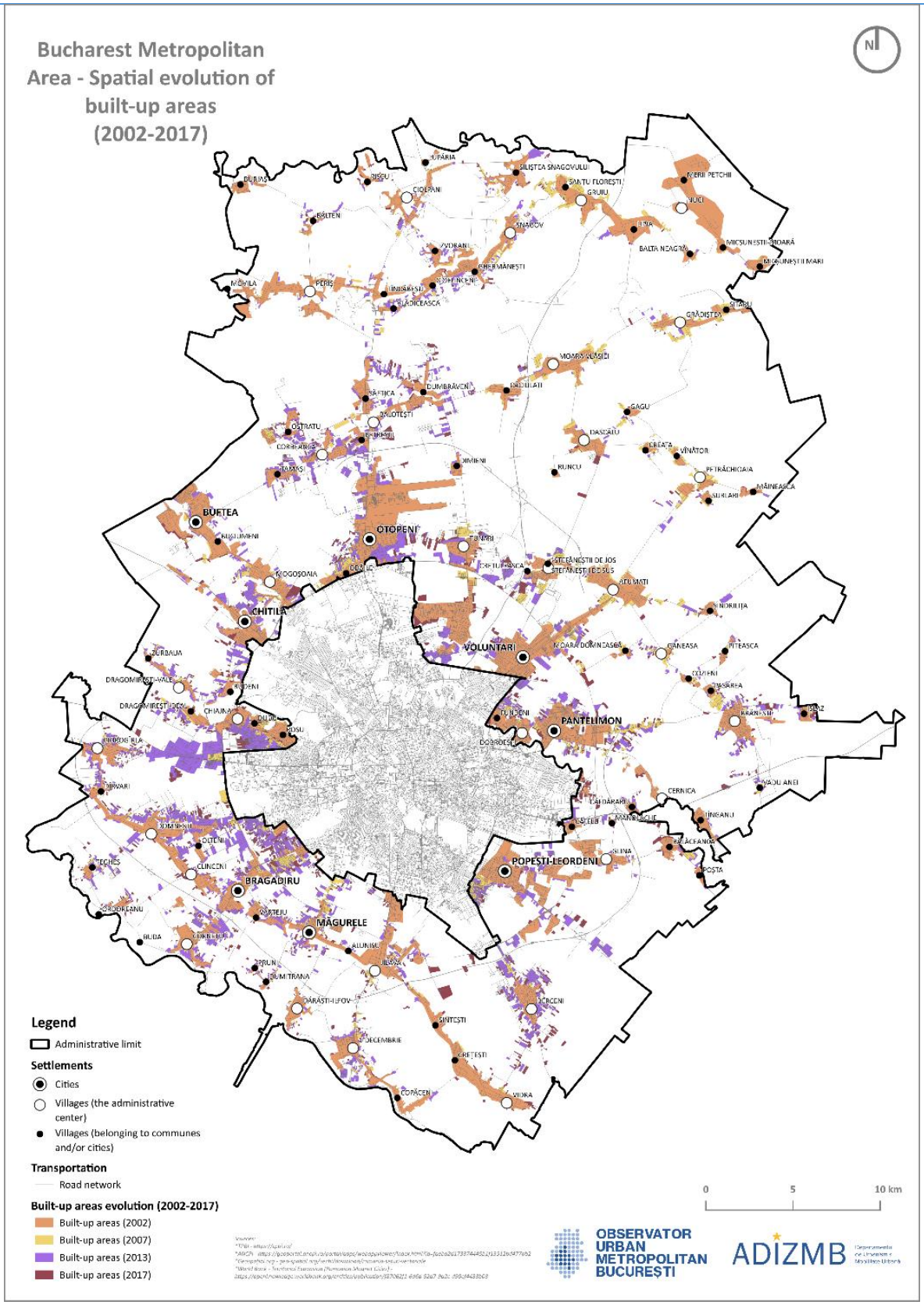


Figure 12 - Ilfov county - built-up areas evolution 2002-2017, Source: Magnet cities: migration and commuting in Romania (English), World Bank Group 2017

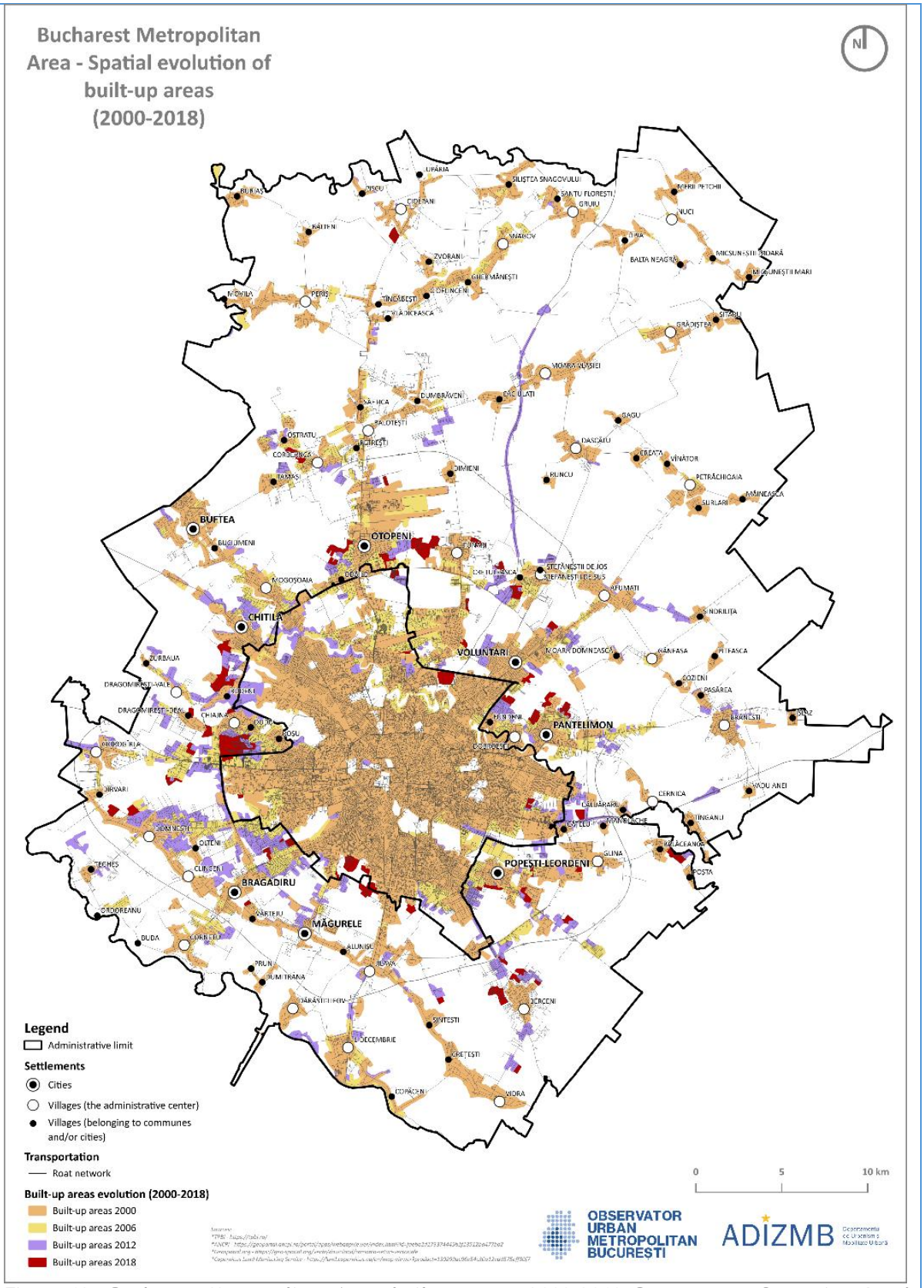


Figure 13 - Bucharest Metropolitan Area -built-up areas 2000-2018, Data source: Copernicus Land Monitoring Service

2.3 Transport and Mobility Infrastructure System

Road Network

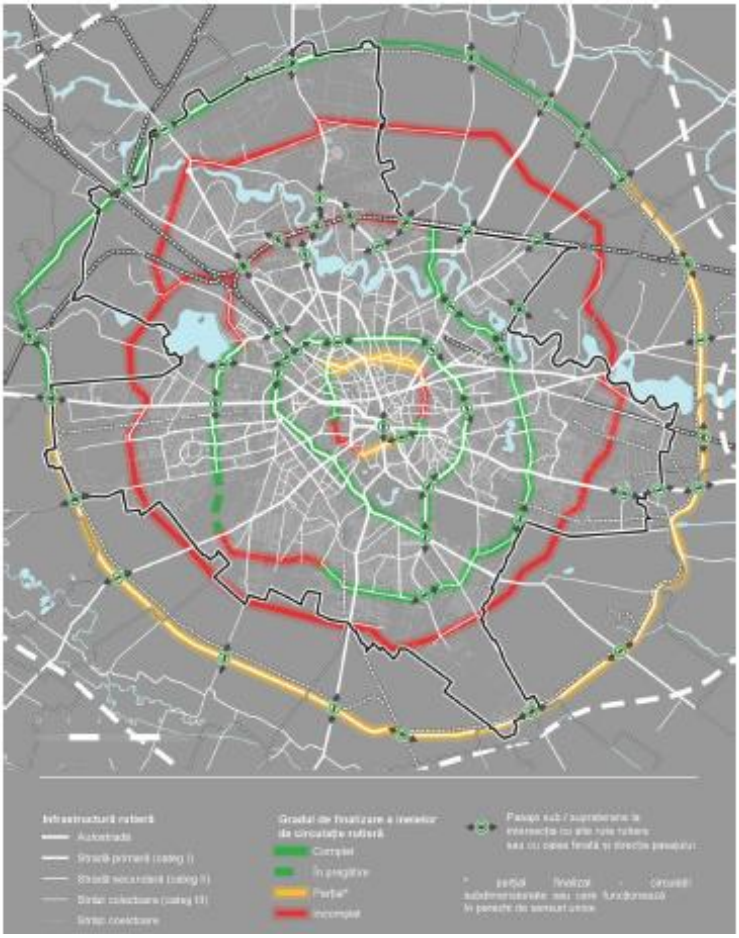


Figure 14 - Main roads Source: SUMP

At metropolitan scale, the highest level of the road network is defined by major national and European corridors, such as the A1 (Bucharest-Pitești) and the A2 (Bucharest-Constanța) motorways, which are part of Pan-European Corridor IV. These are complemented by the A0 motorway (Bucharest Ring Highway).

For Bucharest's Streets, at the top, the **primary network** consists of major arteries designed for long-distance travel, linking the city center with peripheral districts and national or European routes. These wide, high-capacity roads, such as Unirii Blvd., Calea Victoriei, Șoseaua Virtuții, and the ring roads (A0 and DNCB), allow higher speeds and carry heavy flows. The **secondary network** acts as a collector, channeling traffic from local streets toward main arteries. Roads like Calea Moșilor and Mihai Bravu Boulevard handle medium volumes and connect neighborhood areas. Finally, the **tertiary network** covers the vast majority of local and residential streets, providing direct access to homes and businesses at low speeds and traffic levels.

Transport Network (High-Speed Rail, Airports, Ports, and other)

The Bucharest metropolitan area is Romania's **main transport hub**, integrating rail, air & road, connections. Three motorways forming part of the TEN-T corridors intersect

with 8 national roads and eleven county roads arranged radially. These are connected through both the Bucharest Ring Road (DNCB) and the A0 Motorway (under construction).

The rail system is centered around **Bucharest North Railway Station**, the country's largest passenger terminal, served by intercity and international traNIS connecting to major Romanian cities and regional capitals (Sofia, Budapest, and Vienna). Although Romania has not yet implemented dedicated high-speed rail, Bucharest is included in the planned TEN-T Core Network Corridor, with future high-speed links toward Budapest and Constanța, aiming to improve regional integration.

Air transport infrastructure consists in three main facilities**. Henri Coandă International Airport (OTP)** in Otopeni, the busiest in Romania, with over 12 million pass/year. Complementary to this, **Aurel Vlaicu Airport (BBU)**, located in Băneasa, mainly serves business & logistic aviation, while **Alexandru Vlaicu–Clinceni Airfield** supports general aviation and training. A *new airport* is planning in south part of the region.

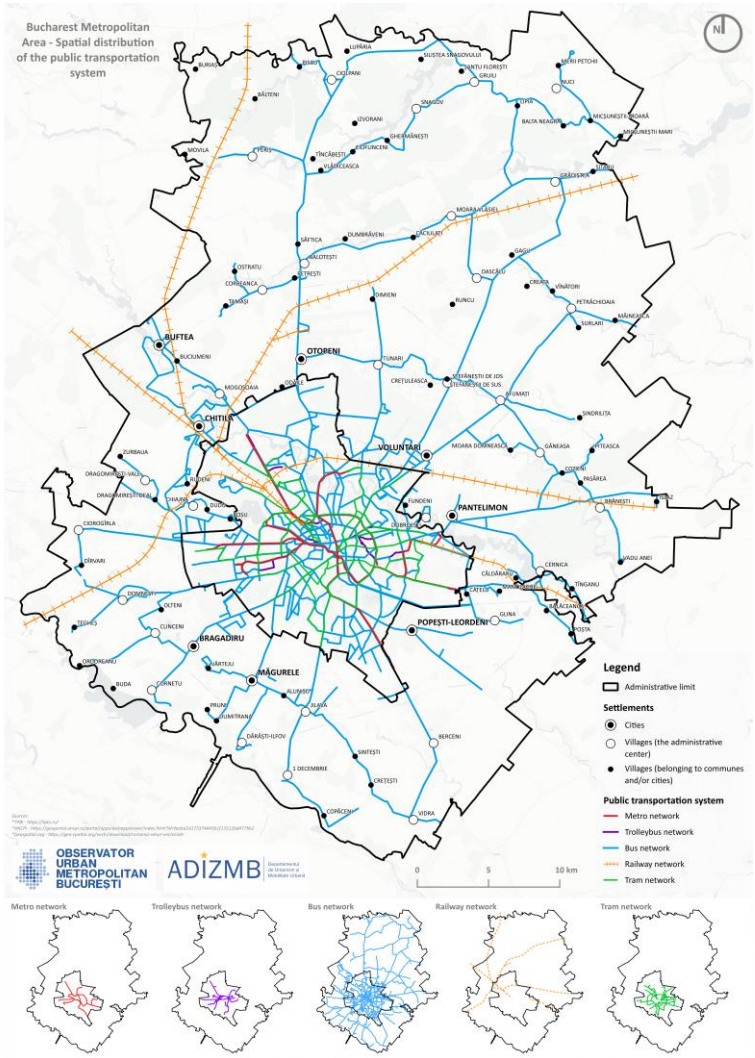


Figure 15 - Bucharest Metropolitan Area - public transport network. Source: The Bucharest - Ilfov Intercommunity Development Association for Public Transport - TPBI

Sustainable Mobility Network

Bucharest Metropolitan Area have one the most complex public transport systems in Europe, with more than **1.67 million trips/day**. PT network is formed by **101 bus routes, 13 trolleybus lines, 22 tram lines, and 5 metro lines**. Also, the **metropolitan public transport network** includes **72 regional routes**, and by **rail connections** linking the Capital to main airport.

Travel demand is still heavily oriented towards **surface transport modes**, which account for the majority of daily passenger journeys: **48% by bus, 31% by tram, and 7% by trolleybus**, while only **14% by metro**.

The Region is served by more than **440 electric vehicle charging stations** (residential & public), approximately **160 are located in Ilfov County**. In Ilfov, infrastructure is concentrated mainly around Otopeni, leaving the western part of the county poorly served, despite its connection with the A2 motorway.

Cycling and Pedestrian Infrastructure is growing but remaNIS NISufficient. Currently, Bucharest has **55 km bike lanes**. According to ***Bucharest Velo Masterplan*** **150 km of primary routes and 415 km of secondary routes planned by 2035**.

Shared Mobility Services—including bike-sharing, e-scooters & ride-hailing—are increasingly, especially in central and peri-urban areas. These services offer flexible first-and last-mile options, complementing conventional public transport. Formal regulatory framework with no integration with public transport and limited data.



Figure 16 - Bucharest Metropolitan Area - Source Plug share

Motorization Rate of the Metropolitan Area	**640 vehicles per 1,000 inhabitants** Represents one of the highest motorization rates in Romania. This high rate reflects the economic development and suburbanization trends where residents of Ilfov county commute to Bucharest for work, often by car.
Motorization Rate of the Core City (optional)	**656 vehicles per 1,000 inhabitants** Car ownership in Romania has historically been seen as a symbol of personal success and freedom, especially after the 1990s transition. Bucharest has a high motorization rate, with over 656 cars per 1000 inhabitants in 2020 in Bucharest compared to the average number of passenger cars per 1000 inhabitants, which was 560 in the EU in 2022. Surveys suggest that many Bucharest residents view the car as more convenient and reliable than public transport for their daily commutes, citing door-to-door travel time and comfort (private space, air conditioning) as advantages (https://www.mdpi.com/2673-7590/5/3/99)

3. SOCIO ECONOMIC FRAMEWORK **Understanding socio economic characteristics and recognizing key factors that influence governance models**	
Birth Rate of the Metropolitan Area	In Metropolitan Area of Bucharest birth rate in 2023 (NIS) was 8,9 per 1.000 inhabitants.
Birth Rate of the Core City (optional)	In Bucharest, birth rate per 1.000 inhabitants was in 2023 (NIS) 9,3, bigger than birth rate registered in the whole Metropolitan Area.
Average Household Size of the Metropolitan Area	Metropolitan Area was according to NIS 2,17 persons/household (RPL 2021). Excepting Bucharest (value bellow), the

	average household size is 2,56 persons/household. (RPL 2021)
Average Household Size of the Core City (optional)	Average household size of Bucharest was according to NIS 2,07 persons/household (RPL 2021).
Aging Index of the Metropolitan Area	In Metropolitan Area were living a total number of 413.839 inhabitants 65+ in 2024, meaning 1.11 persons 65+ at 1 youth.
Aging Index of the Core City (optional)	Bucharest in 2024 had over 335.955 elderly inhabitants (65+), which means a ratio of 1.25 elderly individuals for each young person.
Foreign Population and Presence of the Metropolitan Area	In 2024 (NIS), Bucharest-Ilfov Metropolitan Area registered a total number of 33.875 immigrants, meaning 1,47% of the population, number that has increased over the years from 22.393 in 2012 (NIS).
Foreign Population and Presence of the Core City (optional)	In 2024 (NIS), Bucharest registered a total number of 27.031 immigrants, representing around 1.57% of the total population, number that has increased over the years from 18.450 in 2012 (NIS).
Higher Education Graduates of the Metropolitan Area	The total number of 30-34 years old residents in 2024 with a tertiary education degree was 84.666, representing (according to NIS) 51,20% of the total metropolitan population of 30-34 years old (165.364).
Higher Education Graduates of the Core City (optional)	35%
Employment Rate of the Metropolitan Area	According to 2023 NIS data, Bucharest Metropolitan Area has 1.472.400 employed population, from a total working-age population of 1.484.200, meaning over 99,20%.

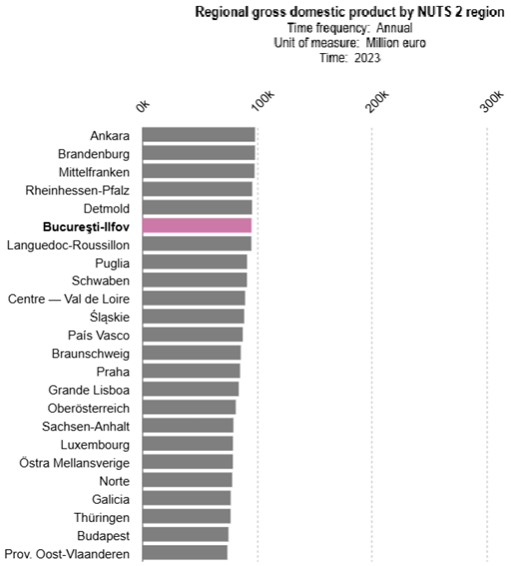
Employment Rate of the Core City (optional)	According to 2023 NIS data, Bucharest has 1.255.600 employed population, from a total of 1.266.400, meaning 99,93%.
Youth Employment Rate of the Metropolitan Area	According to NIS data, in 2024, youth employment rate of the Metropolitan Area was 24,1%.
Youth Employment Rate of the Core City (optional)	19,2%.

Enterprises and Sectoral Specialisation of the Metropolitan Area

Classification of Activities in the National Economy (CAEN)	Bucharest MA Active units 2023 (no. units)	Bucharest MA employees (no. employees)	Bucharest CITY active units (no. units)	Bucharest CITY employees (no. employees)
A Agriculture, forestry, and fishing	1067	5341	680	2849
B Mining and quarrying	126	3448	98	2970
C Manufacturing	8473	120079	6309	85713
D Electricity, gas, steam, and air conditioning supply	576	11284	495	10879
E Water supply; sewerage, waste management, and remediation activities	487	16217	296	11380
F Construction	17294	111964	12707	98898
G Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	41638	229097	30943	183411
H Transport and storage	10279	63573	7226	47745
I Hotels and restaurants	4850	40024	3783	34837
J Information and communications	16691	111693	14089	106905
K Financial intermediation and insurance	2526	45158	2095	43317
L Real estate transactions	8545	9075	7018	7341
M Professional, scientific and technical activities	29149	89832	24422	82010
N Administrative and support service activities	9708	131555	7722	114717
O Public administration and defence; social security in the public system	na	48780	na	45475
P Education	4290	54048	3500	48563
Q Health and social work	7090	74048	5987	67864
R Arts, entertainment, and recreation	3839	25354	2995	22482
S Other service activities	5127	15013	3991	13249
TOTAL	**171755**	**1205583**	**134356**	**1030605**

Figure 17 - Bucharest Metropolitan Area and Bucharest city - number of enterprises and employees by main economic sectors. Source: NIS, 2023 data.

Bucharest metropolitan area is Romania's largest economic agglomeration, where all economy sectors are present - trade, warehousing, distribution, administration, municipal services, and construction. The Bucharest-Ilfov NUTS II region (same as

metropolitan area of Bucharest) accounts for 25% of the total national economy, due to an intense concentration of high value-added services, internal migration to the capital city, as well as the mass presence of the legal headquarters of the most important companies in the country.	
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the Metropolitan Area	Metropolitan Area registered a total of 81893.25 million euro € in 2022 and (provisional) 95507.19 million euro € in 2023 according to Eurostat[9].  *Figure 18 - Bucharest Metropolitan Area / Bucharest-Ilfov region gross domestic product in 2023 (Source: EUROSTAT)*
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the Core City (optional)	According to NIS, Bucharest registered a total of 100,9 billion € as of 2024 (a 0.9% increase compared to 2023)[10].
Per Capita Gross Disposable Income of the Metropolitan Area	As the gross disposable income is available only at national level, we can estimate its level per capita considering that the national gross disposable income as percentage of gross domestic product in 2024 was, according to NIS[11], 97.2%. Therefore, the GDI of the Bucharest Metropolitan could be estimated at 92,833

[9] https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/nama_10r_2gdp/default/table?lang=en
[10] https://insse.ro/cms/sites/default/files/com_presa/com_pdf/pib_tr4e2024_0.pdf
[11] https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&opi=89978449&url=https://insse.ro/cms/files/Web_IDD_BD_ro/O1/O1_2-Venitul-National-Brut(pondere-in-PIB)-2024p.xls&ved=2ahUKEwiq6dDolryPAxXO1QIHHWjMN_gQFnoECB4QAQ&usg=AOvVaw0YO2v7D5vOgtJmfj5EiZX1

	million euro €, meaning a per capita gross disposable income of 40,267 euro €.
Per Capita Gross Disposable Income of the Core City (optional)	
Tourism – Overnight Stays and Arrivals in the Metropolitan Area	According to NIS, Metropolitan Area Bucharest-Ilfov registered in 2024 a total number of 4,232,659 overnight stays.
Tourism – Overnight Stays and Arrivals in the Core City (optional)	According to NIS, Bucharest has a total of 3,969,063 overnight stays in 2024.
Protected Natural Areas in the Metropolitan Area	1,90 km²

Bucharest Metropolitan Area have two natural protected areas: the Văcărești Natural Park, situated in the south-east of Bucharest City, with a total surface of 1,90 km² and the Petricani meadow on the Colentina river covering an area of approximately 6 hectares, including a lake area in the central part, meadows on the western shore, and a wooded area on the natural terrace of Colentina river, all with a rich biodiversity. The metropolitan area also has three Natura 2000 sites, Lacul și Pădurea Cernica/Lake and Cernica Forest (east of metropolitan area), Grădiștea-Căldărușani-Gridu (north-east) and Scroviștea (north-west of metropolitan area). Total area of protected natural areas is 31,59 km2, meaning under 1,74% of the surface area.

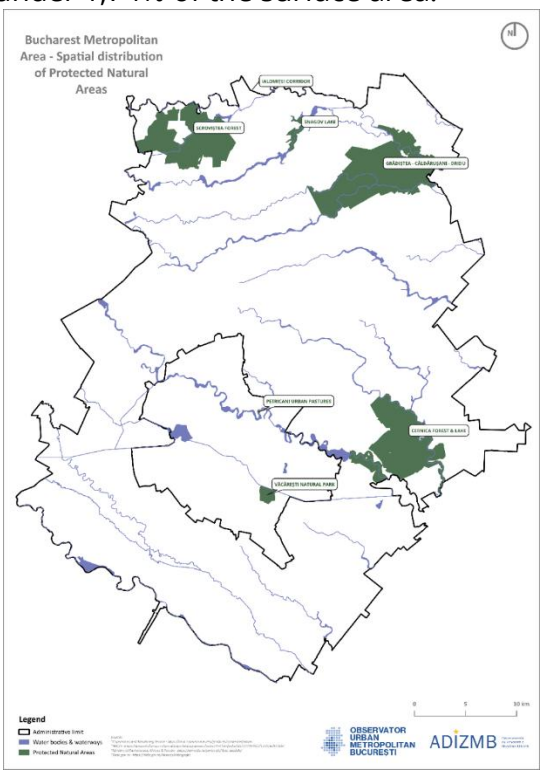


Figure 19 - Bucharest Metropolitan Area - protected natural areas and Natura 2000 sites

Major Healthcare Facilities in the Metropolitan Area	85

In Bucharest Metropolitan Area, in 2024, according to NIS, a total number of 85 hospitals are functioning (54 public hospitals, 31 private hospitals). From a total of 85 units, 76 (51 public hospitals, 26 private hospitals) are situated in Bucharest City. With the exception of one single hospital, all the emergency units are in Bucharest city.
The secondary health units are also unevenly distributed between the core city and the peri-urban area, as could be observed in geospatial open data published based on Public Health Department data regarding public health units.

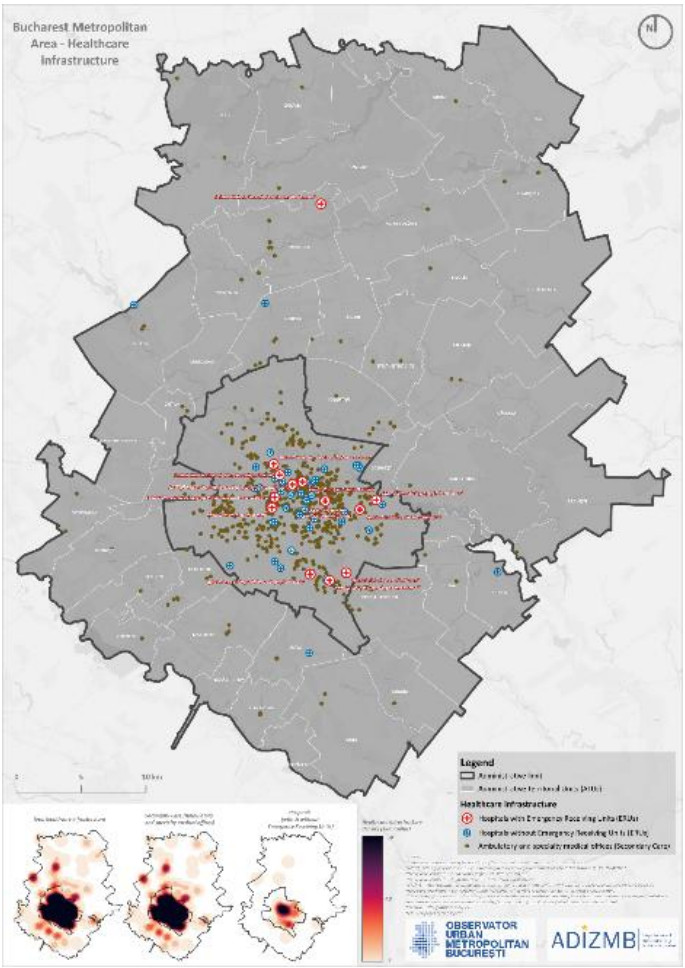


Figure 20 - Bucharest Metropolitan Area - public tertiary (hospitals - with emergency units and without) and secondary (clinics, policlinics, specialist health service). Source: ADIZMB based on National Public Health Department.

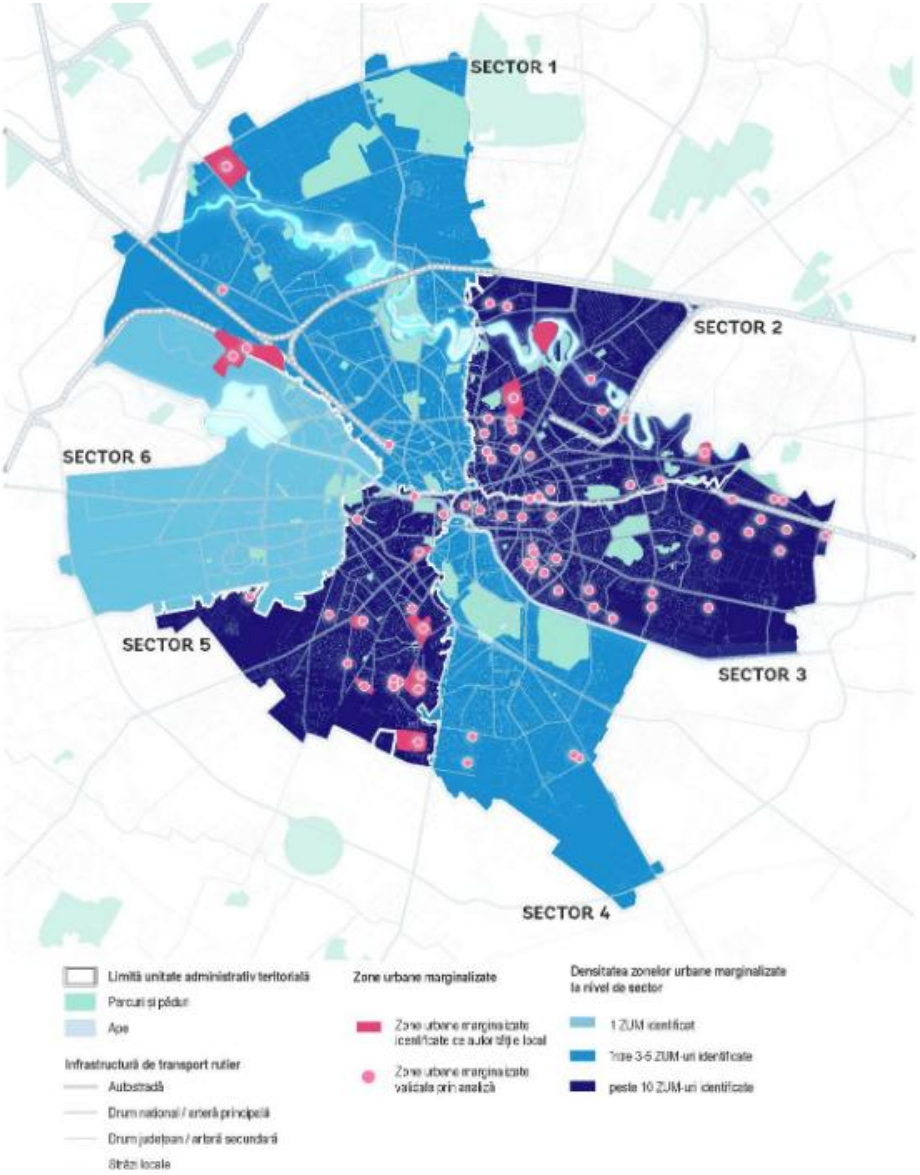
Universities in the Metropolitan Area	31

There are a total number of 31 universities (level 6,7 si 8 ISCED) in Metropolitan Area, from which 30 are situated in the Core City (NIS 2023), most notable being the University of Bucharest, Bucharest Polytechnic University. The data is correct.

Other Relevant Socio-Economic Indicators

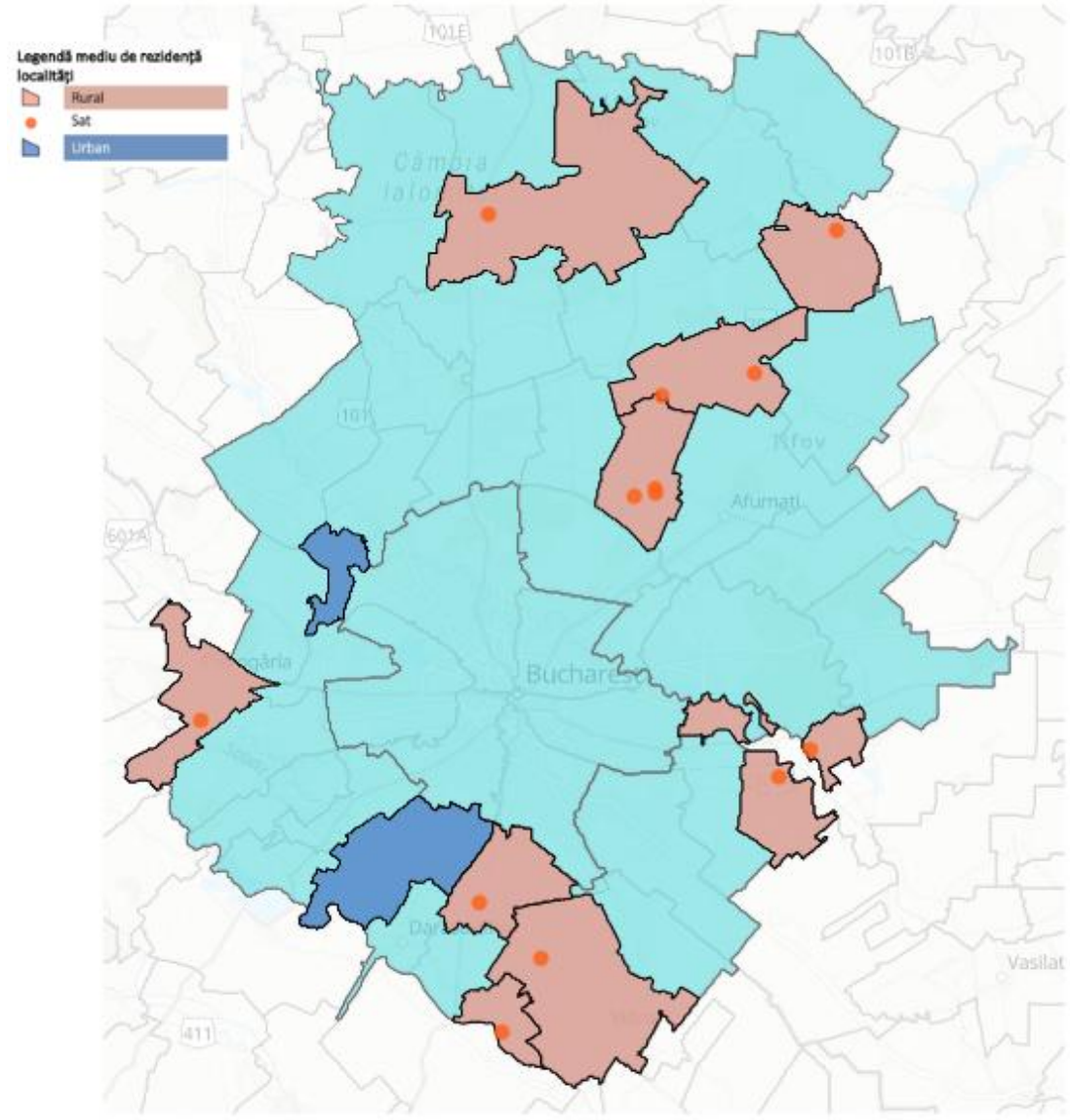
Although the cities in Ilfov register high values of the Local Development Index (LDI), they also show high percentages of the population living in disadvantaged areas.

In Buftea and Pantelimon, more than half of the population lives in disadvantaged areas, followed by Măgurele, Chitila, and Voluntari, where approximately half of the population is in this situation. In Buftea, Chitila, and Măgurele, there are also marginalized urban areas, concentrating around 10% of the population of these towns. (from the Ilfov County SDL Horizon 2030)



Urban marginalized zones - IUDS Bucharest, 2019

Figure 21 - Situation of marginalized urban areas in Bucharest (source: processed according to SIDU Municipality of Bucharest 2021-2030, polygons representing the marginalized urban areas validated in 2020)



D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	D7	D8
Dimensiunea – Acces la utilitati publice	Dimensiunea - Expunere la surse de poluare	Dimensiunea – Infrastructură și acces la servicii de transport	Dimensiunea - Sărăcie	Dimensiunea - Îmbătrânire demografică și locuire	Dimensiunea - Acces la servicii medicale spitalicești	Dimensiunea - Acces la educație	Dimensiunea - Segregare etnică

Tabelul 4.26: Lista localităților cu zone marginalizate – regiunea București Ilfov (urban și rural)

Judet	Siruta Sup	Denumire UAT	Mediu rez.	Siruta Inf.	Denumire zona / sat	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	D7	D8
BUCURESTI	179132	MUNICIPIUL BUCURESTI	Urban		Baicului		1						1
BUCURESTI	179132	MUNICIPIUL BUCURESTI	Urban		Giulești-Sârbi					1			1
BUCURESTI	179132	MUNICIPIUL BUCURESTI	Urban		Tei-Toboc						1		1
ILFOV	101742	CERNICA	Rural	101760	BALACEANCA								1
ILFOV	101742	CERNICA	Rural	101797	TANGANU	1			1				1
ILFOV	101957	CIOROGARLA	Rural	101975	DARVARI	1			1				1
ILFOV	102473	DASCALU	Rural	102491	CREATA	1		1					
ILFOV	102473	DASCALU	Rural	102516	RUNCU	1		1					
ILFOV	103443	GRADISTEA	Rural	103461	SITARU	1							
ILFOV	105160	SNAGOV	Rural	105204	TANCABESTI	1							
ILFOV	105419	STEFANESTII DE JOS	Rural	105428	STEFANESTII DE JOS								1
ILFOV	105419	STEFANESTII DE JOS	Rural	105437	CRETULEASCA	1							1
ILFOV	105419	STEFANESTII DE JOS	Rural	105446	STEFANESTII DE SUS								1
ILFOV	105936	VIDRA	Rural	105963	SINTESTI		1						1
ILFOV	179285	ORAS CHITILA	Urban		Str. Fortului (Zona PAFS)		1	1					
ILFOV	179383	JILAVA	Rural	179392	JILAVA				1				1
ILFOV	179409	ORAS MAGURELE	Urban		Progresul	1							
ILFOV	179588	COPACENI	Rural	102561	COPACENI				1				

Figure - 22 Source: Report: Socio-Economically Marginalized Areas in Urban and Rural Romania, Ministry of Labour, Family, Youth and Social Solidarity (2023)

4. GOVERNANCE

4.1 Governance of the Metropolitan Area

Type of Institution (Category)

Informal / Self-Coordination

In Romania, metropolitan areas are not administrative-territorial units, but intercommunity development associations created through voluntary partnerships between municipalities and communes to provide public services. Defined for the first time by **Law 215/2001**, later reinforced by the **Administrative Code – GEO 57/2019**, and further regulated by **Law 246/2002**, they involve cooperation between the capital or county-seat municipalities and surrounding localities within the metropolitan territory. These associations, with legal personality under private law, aim to jointly implement development projects, infrastructure, and public services of common interest, while local authorities maintain their autonomy.

Historically, Romania returned in 1968 to the county system, reinstating Ilfov County and designating nearby settlements as peri-urban communes under limited autonomy from Bucharest. In 1981, Ilfov was dissolved and turned into the Bucharest Agricultural Sector, subordinated to the capital, but re-established as a county in 1997. Between 1991 and 2001, lacking a legal framework, cooperation occurred informally through local autonomy, decentralization, and citizen consultation.

The **2022 Metropolitan Areas Law (Law 246/2022)** provides the institutional framework, objectives, and tools for metropolitan policy, aiming for coherent, sustainable development of integrated urban-rural territories around Bucharest and county capitals, based on autonomy, cooperation, and partnership. However, this law should be understood as a **first step**: while it establishes a dedicated framework, no metropolitan areas have yet been created under its provisions, and further improvements and clarifications regarding competences and implementation are still needed.

Source of Funding

1. **Transfers from the state or regional governments**
2. **Access to European funds**

Metropolitan areas, as intercommunity development associations, are financed through contributions from the local budgets of member administrative-territorial units (ATUs), as well as from other legal sources. When ATUs delegate certain responsibilities to metropolitan areas, in line with their objectives, funding is ensured through member contributions, determined by criteria such as surface area or number of beneficiaries, and set by the association's general assembly.

The government supports ATU associations through national development programs, financed annually from the state budget or other sources, and managed by the ministry in charge of public administration. Amendments adopted in 2022 to Law no. 273/2006 on local public finances introduced specific provisions for ATUs within metropolitan areas, which will become effective **on January 1, 2026**. Under these new rules, 5% of income tax collected from ATUs in metropolitan areas will be redirected by the Ministry of Finance to the respective metropolitan area. These funds are earmarked exclusively for investments: at

least 30% for projects in the first and second metropolitan rings, and up to 70% for investments in the central ATU around which the metropolitan area is established.
For now, metropolitan areas rely on a mixed funding model. Direct local taxation remains a primary source of revenue for the individual local governments (Bucharest Municipality and Ilfov County ATUs).

Functions and Responsibilities (categories)

Environmental sustainability • Climate and energy • • Infrastructures Innovation, ICT management and digital agenda • Education and training

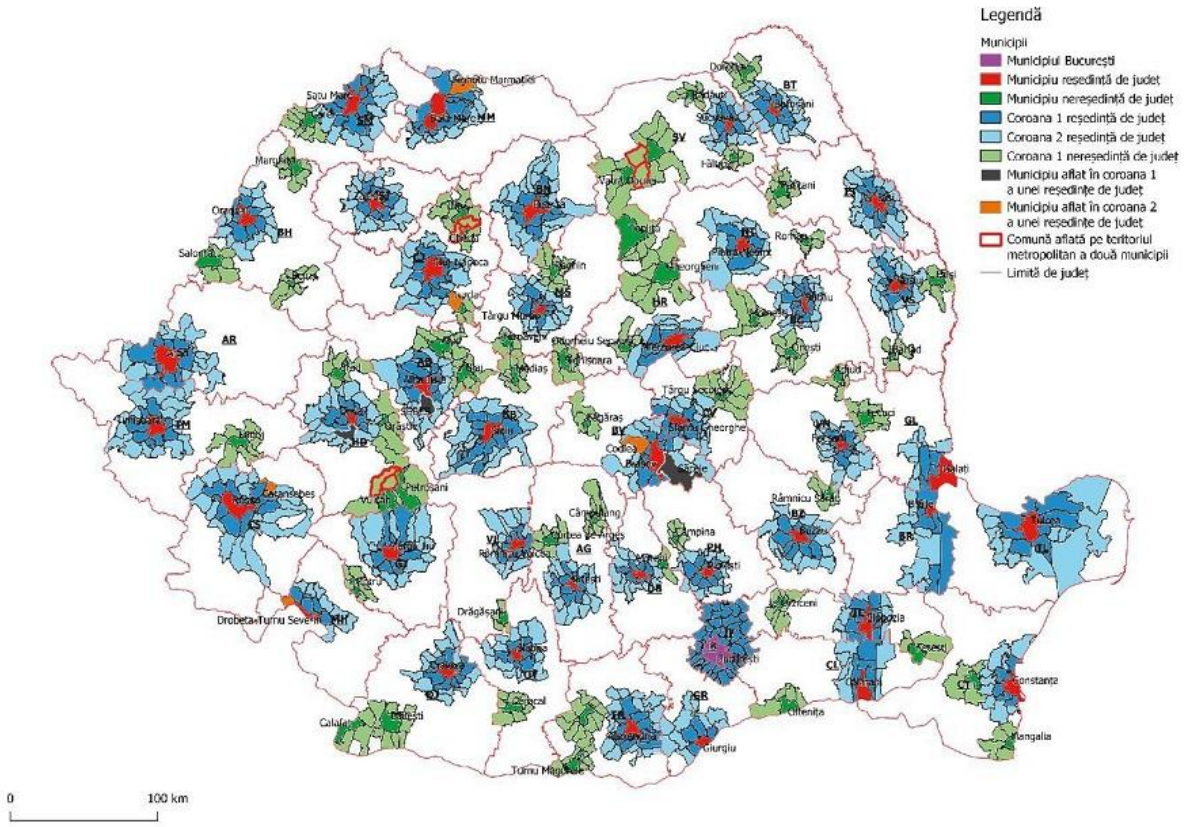
According to Law 246 / 2022, metropolitan areas can be established for the following objectives: **a)** ensuring integrated and sustainable territorial planning; **(b)**the development of infrastructures and development objectives of common interest to ensure mobility within the metropolitan area; **(c)** improvement, modernization and development of the technical-urban infrastructure; **(d)** development of educational and health infrastructure; **(e)** modernising, developing, interconnecting and increasing the efficiency of public services; **(f)** joint provision of public services of local interest; **(g)** integrated and sustainable development of the territory of all administrative-territorial units that make up the metropolitan area; **(h)** integrated economic development and increased economic competitiveness; **(i)** developing human resources and human capital, increasing the employment rate and combating exclusion and social imbalances for all social categories; **(j)** housing management and integrated addressing of vulnerable groups and marginalised communities, including informal settlements; **(k)** reducing the socio-economic imbalances in territorial development, at the level of the administrative-territorial units related to crown 1 and crown 2 of the metropolitan territories; **(l)** other objectives that fall within the general objectives of metropolitan development policy.
Currently, the intercommunity development associations in the Bucharest metropolitan area are cooperation structures with legal personality, governed by private law, voluntarily established under the legislation on local public administration, by administrative-territorial units, for the joint implementation of development projects of zonal or regional interest or for the joint provision of public services.
Bucharest Metropolitan Area Intercommunity Development Association (ADIZMB)
Year Founded: 2008
ADIZMB's mission is to support integrated projects and policies on a metropolitan scale (Bucharest–Ilfov), facilitating inter-institutional cooperation.
Key responsibilities: initiation/coord. projects with metropolitan impact (mobility, infrastructure, urban development, environment), attracting funding and supporting integrated planning.
Members: Bucharest City Hall and Ilfov County Council;

Legislative Framework / Act

Through Law no. 215/2001, metropolitan areas were defined for the first time in Romania as intercommunity development associations based on partnerships between the capital or nationally important municipalities with potential European influence and nearby

administrative-territorial units. Based on this law, 14 metropolitan areas were created, now grouped under the Federation of Metropolitan Areas and Urban Agglomerations of Romania (FZMAUR). Emergency Ordinance no. 57/2019 redefined the metropolitan area as an intercommunity association between Bucharest or county seat municipalities (or other municipalities) and surrounding territorial units. Law no. 246/2022 further introduced the concept of "metropolitan territory," surrounding municipalities where reciprocal links exist in transport, economy, society, culture, and infrastructure. It is delimited as: for Bucharest—at least Ilfov County; for county seat municipalities—up to two urban rings; for other municipalities—up to one urban ring.

Annex 2 to Law no. 246/2022 – MAP of the administrative-territorial units included in the metropolitan area of county seat municipalities and other municipalities:



In the past decade, Romanian legislation has encouraged a metropolitan-level approach to spatial planning and mobility, but the specific legal provisions have not been fully implemented.

The improvement of the regulatory framework regarding spatial planning and mobility at the metropolitan level through Law no. 246/2022 on metropolitan areas represents an opportunity to integrate and strengthen legal instruments established by other normative acts, including the creation of financial instruments exclusively dedicated to metropolitan development (metropolitan projects).

Thus, according to **Law no. 246/2022**, metropolitan areas can be established for the following objectives:

a) ensuring integrated and sustainable spatial planning;

b) developing infrastructure and shared development objectives that ensure mobility within the metropolitan area;
c) improving, modernizing, and developing technical and utility infrastructure;
d) developing educational and healthcare infrastructure;
e) modernizing, developing, interconnecting, and increasing the efficiency of public services;
f) joint provision of certain local public services;
g) integrated and sustainable development of the territory of all administrative-territorial units forming the metropolitan area;
h) integrated economic development and increased economic competitiveness;
i) development of human resources and human capital, increasing the employment rate, and combating exclusion and social imbalances for all social categories;
j) housing management and an integrated approach to the specific issues of vulnerable groups and marginalized communities, including informal settlements;
k) reducing socioeconomic disparities in territorial development among administrative-territorial units in crown 1 and crown 2 of metropolitan areas;
l) other objectives that fall under the general objectives of metropolitan development policy.
Spatial planning and sustainable mobility at the metropolitan level are also regulated by two other normative acts:

- **Law no. 350 of June 6, 2001, on spatial planning and urbanism**
- **Law no. 155 of May 30, 2023, on sustainable urban mobility**

Thus, Law no. 350 of June 6, 2001, on spatial planning and urbanism, through its amendments and additions from 2011, regulated the obligation for local public authorities of administrative-territorial units within metropolitan areas (as defined by law) to develop a Zonal Peri-urban/Metropolitan Territorial Development Strategy as integrated spatial planning documentation. This strategy serves as the basis for general urban plans (PUGs), aiming to ensure coherent and sustainable development, alignment of development priorities, efficiency in public investment, and better use of natural and cultural resources.
In the case of Bucharest, the initiation of the Zonal Peri-urban/Metropolitan Territorial Development Strategy may be carried out by the General Council of the Municipality of Bucharest, in partnership with the involved local public administrations, and by the Ministry of Regional Development, Public Administration and European Funds, under the conditions of the law. According to the law, the strategy is financed by the associated partners and/or the county council and is approved by the county council, with the endorsement of the peri-urban partnership.
Through Law no. 155 of May 30, 2023, on sustainable urban mobility, a number of measures are regulated to provide the strategic and operational framework for coordinating urban planning and development with the transport of people and goods—at the neighborhood, city, and metropolitan territory levels.Strategic and operational planning for mobility is carried out through the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP/PMUD), which is the strategic territorial planning instrument that links the spatial development of localities and their metropolitan territories with the mobility and transport needs of people and goods. It aims to ensure better living conditions through integration with existing instruments, and by applying principles of transparency and continuous evaluation.

The main goal of the SUMP is to improve the accessibility of localities and connectivity between them, as well as to develop and diversify the transport offer (air, river and maritime, rail, road, cable, non-motorized, pedestrian), in a way that is well-integrated intermodally and sustainable from social, economic, and environmental perspectives.
The Municipality of Bucharest is required to implement, by December 31, 2027, intelligent transport systems, including, among others:
h) urban/regional mobility data centers in open, non-proprietary formats.

Decision-Making Process

Bucharest Metropolitan area, established as intercommunity development association, is governed by a board of directors composed of representatives of the both territorial-administrative units, appointed by municipality lor county councils at the proposal of mayor, county council president, or councilors. Each administrative unit retains local autonomy under the law.
Ilfov County is an administrative-territorial unit governed by a county council and a directly elected president. The county council provides the framework for county-level public services, including environmental protection, restoration of historical monuments, management of parks and natural reserves, maintenance of bridges and roads, public utilities of county interest, tourism, rural and economic development, and other services set by law. It also coordinates spatial planning and urban development at the county level.
Bucharest Municipality, together with towns and communes of Ilfov, are basic administrative units led by a General Council, local councils, and directly elected mayors. These councils provide local-level public services such as environmental protection, preservation of historical and architectural heritage, urban development, bridges and local roads, community utilities, emergency rescue services, social and community administration, social housing, and management of local natural resources. Local councils also oversee urban planning and ensure compliance with approved planning documents to support sustainable urban development.
Thus, governance within the metropolitan area operates at three levels—metropolitan (coordination), county (strategic services and development), and local (direct public services)—ensuring both autonomy of units and cooperation for integrated development.

Public-Private Partnership

Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) can play an important role in metropolitan areas, complementing public funding and enabling large-scale investments. Although concrete PPP examples remain limited in the Bucharest–Ilfov metropolitan context, such partnerships represent a potential tool for financing and delivering projects of common interest. Relevant fields include metropolitan transport infrastructure (e.g., multimodal hubs, park-and-ride facilities, rapid bus lines), environmental services and waste management, renewable energy projects, urban regeneration and affordable housing, as well as cultural, tourism, and leisure facilities. By pooling resources and creating larger, integrated markets, metropolitan areas increase the attractiveness of such initiatives for private investors, while maintaining local autonomy and ensuring that projects serve the public interest.

4.2 Governance for the Policy Instrument

Who coordinates and how the law amendment process is managed

Coordinator:

- ADIZMB (Bucharest Metropolitan Area Intercommunity Development Association) – initiates and coordinates the amendment process, with the involvement of:
  - MDLPA (Ministry of Development, Public Works and Administration)
  - FZMAUR (Federation of Metropolitan Areas and Urban Agglomerations of Romania)

Specific measures:

- For the Bucharest Metropolitan
- General measures for all metropolitan areas in Romania

Technical working group:

- Initiated and coordinated by ADIZMB
- Composed of specialists in public administration, public finance, territorial planning, public services, environment, etc.

Actors Involved

Central level:

- MDLPA (Ministry of Development, Public Works and Administration)
- Ministry of Transport
- Ministry of Environment
- Ministry of Finance

Metropolitan/local level:

- PMB / CGMB (Bucharest City Hall / General Council)
- Ilfov County Council
- Local authorities in Ilfov (UAT IF)
- Sectors of the Municipality of Bucharest
- Association of municipalities, towns, and communes
- Intercommunity Development Associations (ADIs)
- Other public service providers (territorial planning, transport, environment, utilities)

Other stakeholders:

- Economic sector (planning and infrastructure for major economic zones, storage areas, tertiary services)
- Universities and research institutions
- Project partners (e.g., Polito)

Objectives of the MetroCase amendment to Law 246/2022:

- Dedicated provisions for the Bucharest Metropolitan Area.
- Clarification and strengthening of metropolitan zone (ZM) competences through transfer from ATUs, in order to achieve Law 246 objectives.

Areas for transferred competences:

- Socio-economic development;
- Territorial planning and urbanism;

Metropolitan Area responsibilities:

- Develop the Metropolitan Territorial Development Strategy and the Metropolitan Area Territorial Planning Plan as integrated planning documents (e.g., reserved corridors for infrastructure, limiting urban expansion, zoning future metropolitan infrastructure).
- Coordinate planning and development in the metropolitan area.
- Establish adapted fiscal measures, a metropolitan budget, and financial/fiscal planning.

Participation Model During the Design Phase

The design phase, which encompasses the initial drafting, definition of objectives, and the outlining of strategic actions, involves multiple key actors whose collaboration is essential for success. These actors typically include project managers, stakeholders, subject matter experts, and sometimes external consultants. Their participation is facilitated through various structured modalities:

- Periodic Stakeholders Meetings (stakeholders named in the application form):

Regularly scheduled meetings, often referred to as stakeholders meetings, serve as a core platform where actors convene to discuss progress, share insights, and align on project goals. These meetings enable continuous dialogue and timely adjustments throughout the design phase.

- Data Collection Forms:

To ensure comprehensive and systematic input, actors contribute through structured data collection forms. These forms gather essential information, feedback, and specific requirements from different perspectives, ensuring that the design phase is informed by accurate and relevant data.

- Roundtable Discussions:

Roundtable sessions bring together diverse actors in an interactive environment to brainstorm, debate, and negotiate key aspects of the design. These discussions foster open communication, encourage the exchange of ideas, and support consensus-building around objectives and strategic actions.

Decision-Making Process

Final approval:

- Ministry of Development, Public Works and Administration (MDLPA) together with the Romanian Parliament

Key procedural steps include:

Consultations and Agreement with FZMAUR:

Before formal approval, extensive consultations take place with the FZMAUR (Federation of Local Authorities and Urban Planning). Their agreement is sought to align local and regional interests with the policy's objectives.

Lobbying of Parliamentary Groups and Cooperation with Members of Parliament:

Lobbying efforts target parliamentary groups to raise awareness and build consensus. Cooperation with individual members of Parliament is crucial during consultative meetings, technical working groups, and debates to ensure broad political support.

Opinions and Reviews:

During the procedural process, the policy undergoes required opinions and reviews by specialized committees and advisory bodies. These assessments ensure compliance with legal frameworks, alignment with strategic priorities, and practical feasibility.
This structured process ensures transparency, stakeholder engagement, and rigorous scrutiny, resulting in a well-founded policy instrument aligned with national development goals.

Implementation Phase Modalities

The implementation of interventions involves several key actors with clearly defined responsibilities.
Local level (UATs): Administrative-Territorial Units within the metropolitan area—both members and non-members of existing Intercommunity Development Associations (ADIs)—are central to implementation. They handle project planning, resource allocation, permitting, local stakeholder engagement, and progress reporting.
Ministry of Development, Public Works and Administration (MDLPA): Provides coordination, strategic guidance, compliance oversight, and funding mechanisms (national/European). MDLPA also ensures alignment with national priorities and offers technical assistance to UATs.
ADIs: Where they exist, they serve as platforms for joint planning, pooling resources, and ensuring cross-jurisdictional coherence.
Collaboration between UATs is essential, particularly for projects with metropolitan-wide impact.

Facilitations for Private Actors

Private actors benefit from predictability in accessing public services and clarity on future service zones. Administrative and procedural measures aim to reduce uncertainty, streamline permitting, and ensure alignment with metropolitan strategies. They gain structured information on planned infrastructure, better coordination with authorities, and a stable legal framework.
A dedicated Working Group, coordinated by ADIZMB, prepares legislative amendment proposals (justification note, draft text, impact assessment). FZMAUR facilitates communication across metropolitan areas

4.3 Governance Cultural Framework

Politicians

Cooperation Models

Many local elected officials view metropolitan cooperation as a potential infringement on local autonomy, which can hamper efforts to build cohesive, integrated urban regions.
The central government has taken a conservative approach, refraining from promoting or mandating robust metropolitan cooperation structures. There is a critical shortage of both incentives and requirements for fostering cooperation, leading to inconsistent and often ineffective collaboration

Cooperation Models between municipalities and across different government and administrative levels

Public perception in the Bucharest Metropolitan Area generally supports inter-municipal cooperation when it leads to tangible improvements in daily life—such as better public

transport connections, cleaner public spaces, or more efficient waste management. Initiatives under the Metro-Case framework (policy dialogues, newsletters, and public seminars) can help demonstrate the concrete benefits of metropolitan collaboration to residents. Generally, when we have a project concerning common need the municipalities are supportive and there is a very good cooperation between different government actors across multiple administrative levels.
The qualitative judgement is 4.

Cooperation Models between public and private actors

The qualitative judgement is 3.
Despite the lack of formal frameworks, there are socio-economic activities, public services, and issues that naturally extend across metropolitan boundaries, highlighting the need for a unified approach to these cross-jurisdictional Issues: solid waste, water and waste water service, some social and educational services, as well as some endeavors related to a certain common element – e.g. an urban regeneration project proposed on Dâmbovița urban river corridor would involve four municipalities from Bucharest metropolitan territory, the National Administration "Romanian Waters", professional associations of urban planners and architects, universities, etc. (in preparatory stage)

Key Sectors or Issues Where Cooperation is Most Needed

Metropolitan cooperation should focus on areas that are visibly beneficial and relatively easy to advocate for at the metropolitan level.
These include:
- Climate resilience and neutrality
- Public health coordination
- Integrated mobility and transport systems
- Efficient land use and sober land consumption
- Waste management and environmental protection
- Affordable housing and public amenities
- Social inclusion and poverty reduction
- Reindustrialization, particularly in strategic areas
- Crisis preparation, response, and management.

By collaborating at a metropolitan level, localities can benefit from economies of scale—reducing costs (housing, health, and time) and enhancing capacities (e.g., access to specialized personnel or services).

Existing Cooperation Experiences Beyond the Metropolitan Area

Cooperation often extends beyond formal metropolitan boundaries, driven by shared infrastructure, mobility networks, labor markets, and environmental challenges that surpass administrative limits. These dynamics have encouraged local authorities to engage in joint projects, inter-jurisdictional planning initiatives, and governance mechanisms that connect metropolitan areas with surrounding rural and peri-urban territories.

Concrete experiences include the development of regional transport corridors, integrated waste management systems, and economic initiatives that require coordination across multiple jurisdictions. Political willingness—varying according to local contexts—has been an important factor in advancing such initiatives.
National associations such as FZMAUR have contributed to these processes by facilitating dialogue and advocating for the recognition of such cooperation in national policy. Acting as a political respondent, FZMAUR positions itself as a bridge between metropolitan and non-metropolitan actors, fostering policy innovation, coordination, and shared strategic vision beyond formal metropolitan perimeters

Current Cooperation Needs Beyond the Metropolitan Area

FZMAUR - cooperation beyond metropolitan areas is not only desirable but necessary for balanced territorial development and cohesion. Metropolitan regions are interdependent with surrounding peri-urban and rural territories through economic flows, commuting patterns, infrastructure networks, and shared environmental resources.
Key challenges such as climate resilience, regional mobility, housing demand, and access to basic services require solutions that cannot be confined to administrative borders. Without structured cooperation mechanisms, these pressures risk creating fragmentation and inefficiencies across the wider functional territory.
To address these challenges, political respondents emphasize the need for institutionalized cooperation instruments: functional partnerships, shared planning tools, and joint investment strategies. Associations like FZMAUR play an important role in articulating these needs, promoting cross-boundary collaboration, and advocating for legal and policy frameworks that reflect the realities of territorial interdependence.

Multilevel Collaboration

In Romania, metropolitan governance involves collaboration between national, regional, and local levels of government, most often through formalized agreements that provide the legal and institutional framework for coordinated action. This is especially visible in complex, cross-jurisdictional sectors such as transport, infrastructure, and environmental management.
Public Transport:
A clear example is the metropolitan public transport system in the Bucharest–Ilfov area, coordinated by TPBI (Intercommunity Development Association for Public Transport). TPBI brings together multiple local authorities under a formal agreement to ensure integrated service provision. Fare integration between the metropolitan surface transport network and the metro system requires continuous coordination with Metrorex, which operates under the Ministry of Transport.
Rail Transport:
The connection between Bucharest and Otopeni Airport illustrates cooperation between the Ministry of Transport and local authorities through interinstitutional agreements that align infrastructure planning and ensure service continuity.
Road Infrastructure:

The development of the A0 motorway and the network of radial roads demonstrates structured collaboration between the Ministry of Transport, Ilfov County Council, Bucharest City Hall (PMB), and ADIZMB. These projects rely on formal planning instruments and joint agreements to coordinate investments and ensure territorial coherence.
Waste Management:
Compared to transport and road infrastructure, metropolitan collaboration on waste management remains less advanced. While there are ongoing initiatives, most cooperation in this field has been ad hoc. However, there is growing recognition of the need for formalized metropolitan frameworks to optimize logistics, reduce costs, and achieve environmental objectives.
General Trend:
Overall, metropolitan governance in Romania is gradually moving from informal, ad hoc collaboration toward structured, legally binding partnerships. This evolution strengthens multilevel governance and allows for more effective planning, funding, and delivery of public services across metropolitan territories.

Technicians

Cooperation Models between municipalities and across different government and administrative levels

Metropolitan cooperation as highly necessary (Judgement: 4/5). This rationale is pragmatic: many challenges such as transport, waste management, water services, and spatial planning transcend municipal borders and cannot be addressed efficiently by individual UATs. Professionals highlight that cooperation improves technical consistency, ensures economies of scale, and reduces duplication of services. However, also note that fragmented legal competences and uneven administrative capacity sometimes slow down joint initiatives, making cooperation harder to implement in practice.

Cooperation Models between public and private actors

Cooperation with private actors necessary, though with slightly lower intensity (Judgement: 3/5). Public–private partnerships are seen as potential enablers for infrastructure projects, digital services, energy efficiency, and urban regeneration. Yet, administrative complexity, lack of clear fiscal incentives, and limited PPP culture at the metropolitan level constrain their use.
Supportive legislation and predictable procedures would encourage private involvement, particularly in waste management, mobility, and housing projects.

Key Sectors or Issues where Cooperation is Most Needed

Legal mandates for planning and policy integration: This could ensure that metropolitan areas have the authority and duty to conduct joint strategic planning and monitoring.
Polycentric Development: This model encourages the development of multiple hubs within a metropolitan area, dispersing urban growth and reducing land pressure on a single core city. Current administrative boundaries often fail to encapsulate the functional geography of metropolitan regions and specially the housing dynamics, calling for new governance structures or boundary adjustments that reflect actual housing, land use and mobility patterns.

Social sustainability that involves ensuring access to affordable housing, open spaces, and essential services for all residents, making affordability a critical aspect of the no net land take strategy.
Integrating green infrastructure, like parks, green rooftops, and preserved natural areas, within urban development support biodiversity; Resilience of urban areas to climate impacts, such as extreme heat or flooding by incorporating green and blue infrastructure.
Special Treatment for Bucharest Metropolitan Area: Given its distinct scale and complexity, Bucharest requires a unique metropolitan governance approach.
Clear Role Definitions: Roles and responsibilities, particularly in strategic planning and land operations, should be clearly defined to ensure that metropolitan plans and policies are effectively implemented formalized "Hard Competences": Empowering (Bucharest) metropolitan bodies(y) with formal decision-making authority and funding control ensures they can enforce land use policies effectively.
Resource Allocation: Dedicated financial resources from national and EU funds to be directed to metropolitan-level planning and implementation, helping overcome financial barriers to sustainable land management.
Use standardized KPIs for resilience, climate impact, economic development, and well-being to track and improve performance, as well as digital platforms and real-time dashboards to foster data sharing and collaboration across metropolitan area(s).

Existing Cooperation Experiences Beyond the Metropolitan Area

From a technical standpoint, cooperation beyond metropolitan boundaries already occurs where functional systems extend across jurisdictions. Examples include regional transport corridors, water supply systems, waste treatment facilities, and joint economic zones. These initiatives are often motivated by practical necessity rather than formal legal obligations.
We can note that cooperation has been effective in transport (e.g., rail links or road projects connecting multiple counties), However, these initiatives are usually project-based and not embedded in permanent governance structures. Professionals underline the need for more **institutionalized mechanisms** to ensure continuity, predictability, and efficiency. National associations such as FZMAUR provide a platform for knowledge exchange and advocacy, but technical staff stress that capacity building and clearer competences are needed to replicate successful experiences.

Current Cooperation Needs Beyond the Metropolitan Area

Metropolitan areas cannot operate in isolation: labor mobility, logistics, housing pressures, and environmental systems extend far beyond formal boundaries. There is therefore a **strong necessity (Judgement: 5/5)** for cooperation with neighboring territories.
Future cooperation should focus on climate adaptation, regional mobility systems, interlinked housing markets, and shared service infrastructure. We highlight the importance of aligning investment priorities across counties, to avoid duplication and ensure functional connectivity. Without structured cooperation, inefficiencies and territorial inequalities are likely to deepen.

Multilevel Collaboration
Most collaboration between national, county, and local levels in metropolitan governance occurs through **formalized agreements**, particularly in transport and infrastructure. Clear examples include TPBI (public transport integration in Bucharest–Ilfov), rail links to Otopeni coordinated with the Ministry of Transport, and Orbital Project developed with CJ Ilfov, PMB, and ADIZMB. In other fields, such as waste management, cooperation remains less advanced and often ad hoc, though there is increasing pressure for formal structures. Overall, we observe that Romania is moving from informal cooperation toward structured, legally binding frameworks, which is crucial for effective service delivery and long-term planning.
General Public (and Other Stakeholders)
Cooperation Models between municipalities and across different government and administrative levels
Although no dedicated survey has been conducted within this project, it is generally assumed that citizens would perceive inter-municipal cooperation as **important (Judgement: 4/5)**, particularly for services that directly affect daily life, such as transport, waste management, and health. Previous national reports and public debates indicate that the public expects efficiency gains and improved service quality when local authorities work together. However, limited awareness of metropolitan governance structures often reduces direct public pressure on local leaders to prioritize such cooperation.
Cooperation Models between public and private actors
Public perception of cooperation with private actors can be inferred from broader debates around public–private partnerships in Romania. While efficiency and investment capacity are valued, there is caution regarding equity, tariffs, and transparency. Citizens are more supportive when benefits are tangible, for example in transport infrastructure or environmental projects. Overall, the level of perceived necessity can be considered moderate (Judgement: 3/5), with greater acceptance, likely if legal safeguards and transparent procedures are in place.
Level of Perceived Belonging to Individual Municipalities
Residents demonstrate a strong sense of belonging to their individual municipalities, largely because daily interactions with public services, schools, cultural activities, and local governance occur at this level. The identity of the municipality is reinforced by direct contact with elected mayors and local councils, who are perceived as the primary providers of community services. This attachment is also linked to historical and cultural traditions, particularly in smaller towns and communes. Overall, the level of belonging to municipalities can be considered **very high (Judgement: 5/5)**, often outweighing identification with broader governance structures.
Level of Perceived Belonging to the Metropolitan Area

By contrast, citizens' sense of belonging to the metropolitan area remains relatively weak, as metropolitan structures are not yet fully institutionalized and have limited visibility in everyday life. While functional ties—such as commuting, shared labor markets, and common service networks—create objective interdependence, they do not automatically translate into a strong metropolitan identity. Identification with the metropolitan area is more noticeable among commuters, young professionals, and businesses that operate across jurisdictions. On average, the perceived belonging to the metropolitan area can be rated as **low to moderate (Judgement: 2/5)**, with potential to increase as metropolitan governance becomes more formalized and delivers tangible benefits.
Historical or Cultural Factors
Not completed by the PP (see 2.1 section).

5. SPECIFIC DATA CONNECTED WITH THE SELECTED POLICY INSTRUMENT
Contents
Law 246/2022 on Metropolitan Areas establishes the legal framework for creating and managing metropolitan areas in Romania — partnerships between municipalities and neighboring localities to coordinate development, infrastructure, and public services. Scope: Defines what a metropolitan area is and how its territory is delimited. For Bucharest, it includes the entire Ilfov County. For other municipalities, it covers one or two surrounding "urban rings." Governance: Each metropolitan area functions as an inter-municipal development association, with a general assembly of member localities and executive bodies for coordination and planning. Competences: Can manage joint projects and services of metropolitan interest (e.g., transport, environment, housing, public utilities). Financing: Based on local budget contributions and portions of income tax collected in the metropolitan territory. Goal: To strengthen cooperation across local and regional government levels and promote balanced urban-rural development.
Objectives
• Promote integrated and strategic territorial development. • Encourage inter-municipal cooperation across functional urban areas. • Improve the efficiency and coordination of public services. • Support economic growth, spatial cohesion, and environmental sustainability. • Facilitate access to national and EU funding for metropolitan projects.
Critical Issues to Address
Challenges include weak coordination across administrative boundaries, fragmented urban planning, and institutional gaps in the transfer of competences from local authorities to metropolitan bodies. Sectoral policies (transport, housing, environment) remain poorly integrated, and metropolitan capacity is still limited. Implementation is delayed, as the fiscal

mechanism allocating 5% of income tax becomes effective only in 2026. Risks include unequal distribution of funds (favoring core municipalities), increased administrative burdens, and lack of clear criteria for project selection and monitoring, which may hinder efficiency and transparency.
Expected Change/Improvement
The law is expected to create formalized metropolitan governance structures through Intercommunity Development Associations (ADIs), with clearer competences and resources. Metropolitan strategies and territorial plans will guide coherent investment and land-use decisions, while access to EU and national funds will be expanded. The transfer of responsibilities from local to metropolitan level should enhance efficiency, reduce fragmentation, and align policies across municipal, county, and national levels. In the long term, metropolitan governance is expected to improve capacity for planning, coordination, and service delivery.
Territorial and Socio-Economic Framework (Sectoral)
Law 246/2022 applies to functional urban areas, combining urban cores with surrounding peri-urban and rural localities. Metropolitan zones are expected to manage integrated public transport, territorial planning, environmental policies, infrastructure development, and economic coordination. The law emphasizes balanced development between central municipalities and peripheral areas, aiming to reduce disparities while supporting labor market integration, housing provision, and environmental protection.
Other Relevant Elements
The law requires metropolitan associations to elaborate a Metropolitan Development Strategy and a Metropolitan Territorial Plan aligned with local and county plans. It encourages the creation of Metropolitan Territorial Observatories to monitor and evaluate policies and allows for customized fiscal tools such as metropolitan budgets. Stakeholder involvement is also emphasized, including local authorities, ministries, service providers, universities, the private sector, and civil society. Finally, the law aligns Romanian governance reforms with EU territorial cohesion objectives, offering a long-term foundation for integrated metropolitan policy.

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2.2.5 Metropolitan Area of Barcelona (PP05)

1. PP INFORMATION	
PP Name (and APA, if applicable)	Metropolitan Area of Barcelona (AMB)
	
SPAIN	Detail (light blue) of the Barcelona Metropolitan Area in Provincia de Barcelona - NUTS 3 and Comunidad Autónoma de Cataluña - NUTS 2
Name, Role, and Contact of Compiler	Elena Argelich, Àrea d'Internacional i Metropolis Digital, Àrea Metropolitana de Barcelona, argelich@amb.cat Andrea Navarro Blanco, Tècnica de Relacions Internacionals, Àrea Metropolitana de Barcelona, anavarrob@amb.cat

2. TERRITORIAL FRAMEWORK **Understanding territorial characteristics and recognizing key factors that influence governance models**	
2.1 Key Data of the Case Study	
Total Surface Area of the Metropolitan Area	636 – km^2 (2025 The metropolitan area - L'àrea metropolitana - Àrea Metropolitana de Barcelona)
Total Surface Area of the Core City	101,35 – km^2 (2024, Idescat. Indicadors demogràfics i de territori. Indicadors

	geogràfics. Superfície, densitat i entitats de població. Barcelona)
Population of the Metropolitan Area	3.398.219 (in 2024, https://www.amb.cat/web/area-metropolitana/coneixer-l-area-metropolitana/poblacio)
Population of the Core City	1.686.208 (in 2024, https://www.idescat.cat/emex/?id=080193)
Density of the Metropolitan Area	5.093 – inh./km^2 (The metropolitan area - L'àrea metropolitana - Àrea Metropolitana de Barcelona)
Density of the Core City	16.637,5 – inh./km^2 (2024, Idescat. Indicadors demogràfics i de territori. Indicadors geogràfics. Superfície, densitat i entitats de població. Barcelona)
Number of Municipalities included in the Metropolitan Area	36

The Barcelona Metropolitan Area is constituted by 36 municipalities of which 24 are cities between 10.000 and 100.000 inhabitants. It is in fact the most important metropolitan agglomeration in the western Mediterranean, where half of Catalonia's GDP is generated.

The metropolitan territory is urbanized at a rate of 48% and the remaining 52% is occupied by 25 km of beaches and more than 25,000 hectares of natural areas. We may distinguish three key areas: the agricultural area of the Llobregat delta, the urbanized areas of the Barcelona plain and the green spaces of the Garraf, Collserola and Marina massifs.

The 36 municipalities are the following: Badalona, Badia del Vallès, Barberà del Vallès, Barcelona, Begues, Castellbisbal, Castelldefels, Cerdanyola del Vallès, Cervelló, Corbera de Llobregat, Cornellà de Llobregat, el Papiol, El Prat de Llobregat, Esplugues de Llobregat, Gavà, Hospitalet de Llobregat, la Palma de Cervelló, Molins de Rei, Montcada i Reixac, Montgat, Pallejà, Ripollet, Sant Adrià de Besòs, Sant Andreu de la Barca, Sant Boi de Llobregat, Sant Climent de Llobregat, Sant Cugat del Vallès, Sant Feliu de Llobregat, Sant Joan Despí, Sant Just Desvern, Sant Vicenç dels Horts, Santa Coloma de Cervelló, Santa Coloma de Gramenet, Tiana, Torrelles de Llobregat i Viladecans.

Barcelona is the core city where nearly half of the metropolitan population is concentrated. Moreover, as in other metropolitan areas, the city of Barcelona plays a central economic, cultural and demographic role. Consequently, the city is the center of major local and international daily mobility and economic fluxes generating structural imbalances in relation to the other municipalities.

Metropolitan municipalities - L'àrea metropolitana - Àrea Metropolitana de Barcelona and 20250618-VLR_AMB-CAT_WEB.pdf
Other Possible Sub-Metropolitan Aggregations
None.
Reference Functional Urban Area (FUA – OECD Definition)
In 2022, the Functional Urban Area of Barcelona, representing the province of Barcelona, with the code ES002F, had 5.093.585 inhabitants. Its surface is 2.626km^2 and includes 135 municipalities. This represents Spain's second largest populated area right behind Madrid which constitutes a FUA of 6.982.656 inhabitants. The institutional area of AMB is smaller than the FUA of the province of Barcelona, considering that AMB has a surface of 636 km^2, a population of 3.398.219 inhabitants and is constituted by 36 municipalities. (2022 https://regions-cities-atlas.oecd.org/metroregional/FUA/ESP/ES002F/T_T/2020/1) (2021 https://archive.espon.eu/sites/default/files/attachments/6%20ESPON%20METRO_CS%20Barcelona%20Metropolitan%20Area.pdf and https://archive.espon.eu/sites/default/files/attachments/6%20ESPON%20METRO_FS%20Barcelona%20Metropolitan%20Area.pdf) Source data: OECD Data explorer, Local administrative units - Cities and FUAs (https://dataexplorer.oecd.org/vis?pg=0&bp=true&snb=39&df[ds]=dsDisseminateFinalDMZ&df[id]=DSD_FUA_TERR%40DF_LAU&df[ag]=OECD.CFE.EDS&df[vs]=1.1&dq=AT001F%2BAT002F%2BAT003F%2BAT004F%2BAT005F%2BAT006F.A.LAU_C..&lom=LASTNPERIODS&lo=5&to[TIME_PERIOD]=false&isAvailabilityDisabled=false&tm=FUAs); OECD Regions and Cities Atlas (https://regions-citiesatlas.oecd.org/FUA/x/x/T_T/2022).
Reference NUTS region (Eurostat)
NUTS 3 Barcelona (ES511), representing the province of Barcelona, has a total population of 5,877,672 (2024). Its surface is 2626 km^2 and includes 135 municipalities. (2024, https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/demo_r_gind3/default/tabe?lang=en) Source data: Eurostat, NUTS - Nomenclature of territorial units for statistics, 2024 classification (https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/nuts/; https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/gisco/geodata/statistical-units/territorial-units-statistics), Eurostat, Population and demography Database (https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/populationdemography/demography-population-stock-balance/database).
2.2 Spatial Distribution of Land Uses and Land Cover-LULC (current state)
LULC: Artificial Surface, Agricultural Areas, Forest and Semi Natural Areas, Wetlands and Water bodies
48% of the territory is urbanised and 52% is occupies by forests and natural and agricultural areas. Thus, the population is concentrated in less than half the territory, making it a densely populated area. From the occupied territory, we have the following distribution:

- 20% for residential use.
- 7% for industrial use.
- 6% for equipment.
- 6% for infrastructure and services.
- 4% with signs of urbanisation.
- 3% parks.
- 1% tertiary uses.
- 1% other uses.

Settlement Model

The metropolitan area of Barcelona follows a polycentric structure. Thus, it is not organised around a single dominant center (despite Barcelona acting as the primary core) but around a network of multiple urban nodes (big cities inside the metropolitan area).

Land Take	-807,89 ha

Data source: https://www.amb.cat/es/web/territori/urbanisme/estudis-territorials/detall/-/estuditerritorial/usos-del-suelo-en-el-area-y-en-la-region-metropolitana-de-barcelona/434354/11656

In the past decade, land take in the Barcelona Metropolitan Area has been negative (-807,89 ha), with more land reverted to nature than land urbanized. Even if methodological causes (higher precision of analysis in 2021 compared to 2011) can lead to this result, empirical reality shows that the largest land take in the Barcelona Metropolitan Area took place until 2006 and has since then been almost fully stopped.

	2011	2021	Difference 2011-2021
Urban soil	29.894,74 ha	29.086,85 ha	-807,89 ha
Population	3.220.476 inhab	3.303.927 inhab.	+83.451 inhab.
Urban soil per inhabitant	107,72 inhab./ha	113,59 inhab./ha	+5,87 inhab./ha
Consolidated residential soil	12.707,02 ha	11.447,78 ha	-1.259,24 ha
Net density	253,44 inhab./ha	288,61 inhab./ha	+35,17 inhab.

2.3 Transport and Mobility Infrastructure System

Road Network

The road system of the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona is the confluence point of the entire Catalan road system and responds to a scheme that is highly conditioned by the main thoroughfares, very marked by geography.

Some of the most dense motorways connect the metropole with Catalonia and other major cities in Spain, including AP-7, A-2 and AP-2. Additionally, the metropole is crossed through by the important ring roads network connecting the core city with its densely populated surroundings, allowing commuters to go east to west and north to south of the metropole area (25% of commuters in the metropole use their cars and the traffic

jams in the ring roads are a daily hassle). Overall, the metropolitan road network is articulated through three structures: the central system, made up of the Barcelona roundabouts and their distribution gates towards the outer roads; the main axes of distribution and territorial structuring, and the bypass defined by the B-30.
One of the recent policies of the metropolitan areas to decrease levels of air pollution in the dense traffic areas of the metropole is the Low Emission Zone which regulates the entrance of vehicles by prohibiting access to the most polluting engines, and requiring others to register their vehicles depending on different cases. This policy is deployed across different road areas, including the ring network, but also scattered areas throughout the metropolitan area.

Transport Network (High-Speed Rail, Airports, Ports, and other)

The Barcelona metropole serves as a key transport hub for the region and beyond, hosting some of the busiest rail stations, port and airport in Europe, as well as a dynamic freight flux.
Regarding the high-speed train rails, one of the most important corridor is the Barcelona-Madrid HSR, but there are other growing routes connecting Barcelona with France and through it to major HSR networks. The Mediterranean rail corridor is an unfinished route connecting the coastline of Barcelona – Valencia – Murcia – Andalusia. Trains are seen as the future alternative for the vast road freight transport (93.2% in relation to rail 6.8%). The structure of the freight network in the metropolitan area is made up of two main axes: the Mediterranean axis and the Ebro axis, which covers the Tarragona – Barcelona – Girona – France section. Improving rail transport is essential to promote a greener freight transport in the area.
Regarding airports, the Barcelona-El Prat (BCN) is in the Metropolitan area, 15km southwest of the core city, registering over 55 million passengers in 2024 (the second largest in Spain and one of the busiest in Europe). It is connected to the metropole and core city through metro, rail, and public and private bus lines.
The Port of Barcelona is located at the south-east part of the Metropolitan area and ranks among Europe's major and busiest seaports, specially crowded with passenger cruises in summer time but also counting dynamic commercial and logistics zones. It has almost 40 specialized and multipurpose terminals to manage the different types of traffic existing in the port, it depends on the Public Body of State Ports of the Ministry of Public Works and is managed by the Barcelona Port Authority.

Sustainable Mobility Network

In the Barcelona's metropolitan area, over 600 million passengers use the 8 lines of metro and the 232 bus lines including the metropolitan routes. Buse lines are divided between those directly managed by Barcelona metropolitan Transport and those indirectly managed by external operators. Of all commuting trips in the metropolitan area, 25% are still done by private car or motorbike, while 54% by bike or scooter.
AMB operates in this network as a provider of green public transport modes (electric or hybrid metropolitan buses); of an integrated network of 275 km of cycling routes and

an electric bikeshare system (Bicing and AMBici), both systems account for a growing number of users over the last years. Sustainable mobility is also promoted through the installation of electric charging spots for electric or hybrid private cars and of multi-modal parking lots near public transport stations to facilitate the use of greener modes to enter the core city. AMB is currently preparing the new Urban Mobility Metropolitan Plan which uses actual data to draw future scenarios, plans and interventions on the sustainable and urban mobility network of the metropole.	
Motorization Rate of the Metropolitan Area	113,11 vehicles per 1,000 inhabitants (2014 last data available) Source: https://www.amb.cat/web/area-metropolitana/dades-estadistiques/mobilitat-i-transport/vehicle-privat
Motorization Rate of the Core City (optional)	320 vehicles per 1,000 inhabitants (2020 last data available) Source:https://ce.atm.cat/ca/web/observatori/w/index-de-motoritzacio?filterCategoryIds=undefined&operationType=AND

3. SOCIO ECONOMIC FRAMEWORK Understanding socio economic characteristics and recognizing key factors that influence governance models	
Birth Rate of the Metropolitan Area	7.4 – annual number of births per 1,000 inhabitants (2021, https://docs.amb.cat/alfresco/api/-default-/public/alfresco/versions/1/nodes/1318dd2f-167a-4d97-a5bd-69a103f13d8b/content/dossier_demografic_2022.pdf?attachment=false&mimeType=application/pdf&sizeInBytes=73011887)
Birth Rate of the Core City (optional)	6,7 – annual number of births per 1,000 inhabitants (2023, https://portaldades.ajuntament.barcelona.cat/ca/estad%C3%ADstiques/5o5ffwnwcq?view=chart&chart=line-chart)
Average Household Size of the Metropolitan Area	2.55 – average number of persons per household (2021,

	https://www.idescat.cat/indicadors/?id=aec&n=15255))
Average Household Size of the Core City (optional)	2.48 – average number of persons per household (01 Jan 2025, https://portaldades.ajuntament.barcelona.cat/en/statistics/yq3rps6n7t))
Aging Index of the Metropolitan Area	142,60% – average ratio of population aged 65+ to population aged 0–15 (2021, Indicadors Àmbits Estadístics Metropolitans (AEM))
Aging Index of the Core City (optional)	175.1% – ratio of population aged 65+ to population aged 0–15 (2025, https://portaldades.ajuntament.barcelona.cat/en/statistics/toemytaakl)
Foreign Population and Presence of the Metropolitan Area	693.786 inhabitants in 2024, representing 20,42% of the metropolitan population
Foreign Population and Presence of the Core City (optional)	25.4 % – foreign residents and presence (2024, https://www.barcelona.cat/internationalwelcome/en/news/one-of-every-four-people-in-barcelona-is-now-a-foreign-national-1408362)
Higher Education Graduates of the Metropolitan Area	36,80 % – residents with a tertiary education degree (2021, Indicadors Àmbits Estadístics Metropolitans (AEM))
Higher Education Graduates of the Core City (optional)	41,9 % – residents with a tertiary education degree (2023, https://www.idescat.cat/pub/?id=censph&n=7109&geo=mun:080193)
Employment Rate of the Metropolitan Area	57% of working-age population is employed (third trimester 2024, https://indicadors.institutmetropoli.cat/?ap=0&id_ind=1590)

Employment Rate of the Core City (optional)	77,4% of the working-age population is employed (first trimester 2025, https://portaldades.ajuntament.barcelona.cat/ca/report/mercat-de-treball)
Youth Employment Rate of the Metropolitan Area	36 % of young people aged 15–29 are employed (2023, https://www.institutmetropoli.cat/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/AMB_en_Xifres_2024.pdf)
Youth Employment Rate of the Core City (optional)	38,1% of young people aged 15–29 are employed (2023, https://www.institutmetropoli.cat/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/AMB_en_Xifres_2024.pdf)
Enterprises and Sectoral Specialisation of the Metropolitan Area	
At macroeconomic level, it is worth highlighting that half of Catalonia's GDP is generated by the metropolitan area. The GDP per capita in the AMB municipalities in 2022 was of €39.157, a value higher than that of Catalonia as a whole (€30.185). Workers in the municipalities of the AMB in 2023 are mainly engaged in the services sector (86.6% of the total), followed by industry (8.6%), construction (4.7%) and, marginally, agriculture (0.1%). The services sector reaches maximal levels in the case of Barcelona core city. Within this sector, most new jobs are found in the education activities (23,813 new jobs created); food and beverage services (bars and restaurants), with 5,179 jobs; and healthcare activities, 4,887 jobs. Altogether, these three activities account for 48% of job creation. The rest are service activities, with a total of 16,736 jobs created. (https://www.institutmetropoli.cat/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/AMB_en_Xifres_2024.pdf) In 2023, the municipalities of AMB hosted 110.927, of which 70.628 are located in Barcelona core city (63,7%). Between 2022 and 2023, 713 new companies were created in the metropolitan area, representing a 0,6% year-on-year growth. Net business creation capacity is widespread across almost all AMB municipalities, although in most municipalities this growth is not significant in absolute terms. Accordingly, if we look at the distribution of employees across the main economic sectors in the municipalities of AMB, they are primarily employed in the services sector (86,6% of the total), followed by industry (8,6%), construction (4,7%), and, marginally, agriculture (0,1%). When it comes to research and development, 21.778 people were registered in 2023 as employees dedicated to that field with 473 companies dedicated to R+D activities. In 2023, 1.229.789 new labor contracts were signed in the municipalities of AMB, representing 165.545 fewer contracts than in 2022 (a decrease of 11,9%). As a result, there has been a negative impact on the year-on-year evolution of registered contracts	

by economic activity sector. In fact, all main economic activity sectors including agriculture, industry, construction and services, have experienced a decrease in their activity in 2023. Finally, the main exporting economic sector for AMB in 2023 has been the manufacture of motor vehicles, trailers and semi-trailers which has generated 15.398 million euros, accounting for 19,6% of the total exportations by AMB. The chemical industries sector ranks second with 13.521 million euros (17,2%). The manufacture of pharmaceutical products and the food products industry rank third and fourth with 8.718 million euros (11,1%) and 6.315 million euros (8%), respectively. Altogether, these top four sectors alone, represent more than half of the metropolitan territory's total exports. (https://www.institutmetropoli.cat/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/AMB_en_Xifres_2024.pdf)	
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the Metropolitan Area	162.990 € (2023 Sistema d'Indicadors Metropolitans de BArcelona - SIMBA)
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the Core City (optional)	103.590 € (2023 Sistema d'Indicadors Metropolitans de BArcelona - SIMBA
Per Capita Gross Disposable Income of the Metropolitan Area	19.336 € per year (2021, https://indicadors.institutmetropoli.cat/index.php?ap=0&id_ind=1672&id_cat=201)
Per Capita Gross Disposable Income of the Core City (optional)	21.297 € per year (2022 https://www.idescat.cat/indicadors/?id=aec&n=15917)
Tourism – Overnight Stays and Arrivals in the Metropolitan Area	Not available
Tourism – Overnight Stays and Arrivals in the Core City (optional)	20.187.756 for 2024 https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/turisme/sites/default/files/2025-06/2024_C%C3%A0psula%201%20IAOTB.pdf
Protected Natural Areas in the Metropolitan Area	
Based on the Metropolitan Territorial Plan of Barcelona (PTMB), which recognizes the existing system of protected areas and proposes new ones, a consolidated network of protected areas is currently established within the metropolitan territory, covering 44.6% of its total surface. This means that of AMB's total surface consisting of 636 km2, a surface of around 283,66 km2, is protected. This represents a significant level of protection, especially considering that 45.4% of the metropolitan area is occupied by urban uses and infrastructure.	

(Pla Metropolità de Mobilitat Urbana 2015-2021 https://docs.amb.cat/alfresco/api/-default-/public/alfresco/versions/1/nodes/16ef8750-da67-4a30-9307-fe68169a851d/content/DIE_PMMU_23112015.pdf?attachment=false&mimeType=application/pdf&sizeInBytes=12786365)

The main protected areas within the metropolitan region and their respective protection designations are outlined below:

- Collserola Natural Park serves as the central green space of the metropolitan area and represents the largest forested park in the territory. It holds the highest number of protection statuses: Natural Park, Natural Interest Spaces Plan (PEIN), Natura 2000 Network, protected under PEPCo and PTMB, and forms part of the Natural Parks Network of the Diputació de Barcelona.
- Garraf and Serralada de Marina Parks represent the principal open-habitat areas within the metropolitan territory. Their protection designations include the Natural Parks Network of the Diputació de Barcelona, PEIN, Natura 2000 Network, and PTMB.
- Baix Llobregat Agricultural Park, the metropolitan area's major productive agricultural space, is included in both the Natural Parks Network of the Diputació de Barcelona and the PTMB.
- Llobregat Delta Reserves, representing the largest wetland areas in the metropolitan territory, are included in PEIN, Natura 2000 Network, and PTMB.
- Ordal Mountains, included in PEIN and PTMB, represent the remaining sectorially protected forested areas.
- This system of protected areas covers all core zones of the metropolitan area and much of the network of connector spaces, including river corridors and agroforestry continuity areas between core zones. However, a significant portion of critical areas—where much of the ecological connectivity between these spaces is at stake—remains outside this system.

The PTMB, consolidating the concept of an interconnected functional ecological network of open spaces, adds new specially protected areas serving as ecological connectors. These include connection zones between Garraf and the Ordal Mountains, between the Ordal Mountains and the Llobregat Agricultural Park, forested areas of the Xaragalls of Vallès linking Collserola to the central coastal mountain ranges and connecting the coastal and pre-coastal ranges, parts of the Serra de Galliners, and coverage of the water network with the highest connector significance.

(Pla Metropolità de Mobilitat Urbana 2015-2021 https://docs.amb.cat/alfresco/api/-default-/public/alfresco/versions/1/nodes/16ef8750-da67-4a30-9307-fe68169a851d/content/DIE_PMMU_23112015.pdf?attachment=false&mimeType=application/pdf&sizeInBytes=12786365)

Major Healthcare Facilities in the Metropolitan Area	6

Within AMB, there is a large number of healthcare facilities, including 6 major hospital centers: Hospital Clínic de Barcelona, Hospital Universitari Vall d'Hebron, Hospital

Universitari de Bellvitge, Hospital de la Santa Creu i Sant Pau, Hospital Universitari Germans Trias i Pujol and Hospital Sant Joan de Déu.
There are two main specialized public centers: Institut Guttmann for neurohabilitation and Fundació Puigvert for urology, nephrology, andrology.
Finally, there are three major private hospitals which are: Centro Médico Teknon, Hospital Quirónsalud Barcelona and Hospital Universitari Dexeus.
(2024 https://rankings.newsweek.com/worlds-best-hospitals-2024)

Universities in the Metropolitan Area

There are 7 main universities within AMB's territory:

- Universitat de Barcelona (UB) – main campuses in the city of Barcelona.
- Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB) – located in Cerdanyola del Vallès.
- Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya (UPC) – several campuses in Barcelona and surrounding areas.
- Universitat Pompeu Fabra (UPF) – city of Barcelona.
- Universitat Ramon Llull (URL) – multiple campuses in Barcelona.
- Universitat Internacional de Catalunya (UIC) – Barcelona.
- Universitat Abat Oliba (UAO-CEU) – Barcelona

(https://recercaiuniversitats.gencat.cat/ca/03_ambits_dactuacio/universitats/sistema/index.html)

Other Relevant Socio-Economic Indicators

4. GOVERNANCE

4.1 Governance of the Metropolitan Area

Type of Institution (Category)

Supra-Municipal Authorities (or Metropolitan Government)
A new local government body with defined powers and responsibilities
Metropolitan Agency (for economic promotion, housing…)
A technical and operative body co-financed by local authorities, given specific tasks and/or responsibilities
The AMB was formally established by Law 31/2010 as a commonwealth of Municipalities, together with the Metropolitan Institute for Hydraulic Services and Waste Treatment and the Metropolitan Transport Entity. Its creation followed the Statute of Catalonia and aimed to improve the provision of public services in the metropolitan area of Barcelona and to guarantee citizen involvement and participation.
The Law determines an organizational model for the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona that guarantees the proportional representation of all the municipalities that constitute it. The governing bodies established by the Law are the Metropolitan Council, the president, the Governing Board and the Special Audit Commission. It also determines the possibility that the Metropolitan Council may create any other complementary body.
The law 31/2010 establishes the general provisions, the organization (Bodies, composition, appointment, designation), the competences of the Metropolitan

authorities and services, its territory (related to its management, urban planning and housing), its relations with the municipalities, its financing (resources, contributions, taxes) and its staff.
In parallel, AMB is backed up by:

- IMPSOL: The Metropolitan Institute for Land Promotion and Asset Management is a local public business entity dependent on the Barcelona Metropolitan Area that promotes public housing.
- Metropolitan Agency for Economic Development was created by the agreement of the AMB Metropolitan Council (27/02/2018). The Decree 23/2018 of the AMB establishes its functions: promotion of local companies' internationalization and investments, labor market dynamization, innovation and technologic development of companies and support new sectors and activities of the local economy.

Sources: https://www.amb.cat/en/web/amb/la-institucio/llei-amb/titol-i, https://agenciaeconomica.amb.cat/l-agencia and https://www.amb.cat/ca/web/habitatge/impsol

Source of Funding

Transfers from the state or regional governments
Direct local taxation
Access to European funds
The financing, budget, intervention, tax management, collection and accounting of the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona are governed by the legislation of the State and the Generalitat that regulates local finances. According to this, The Metropolitan Area of Barcelona can be financed through: a. Income from assets and other private law income; b. The surcharge on real estate tax, established by local tax legislation for metropolitan areas; c. public rates, prices and fees for the services provided or operated within their competence (transport, water, waste, etc.); d. Urban planning fees and contributions for carrying out works; e. Fines and sanctions; f. Transfers from the Generalitat and other supramunicipal entities with regard to the delegations of powers that are agreed upon; g. Contributions from the municipalities; h. Subsidies and other public law income; i. EU funds.
The AMB 2024 overall budget accounted for € 2.558,52 Milions combining its different dependent institutions and agencies.
Source: https://www.amb.cat/en/web/amb/la-institucio/llei-amb/titol-v

Functions and Responsibilities (categories)

- Urban/spatial planning
- Landscape
- Environmental sustainability
- Climate and energy
- Public transportation and related services
- Public services management
- Infrastructures

- Economic development and labour policies
- Innovation, ICT management and digital agenda
- Housing (including social housing)

AMB participates in the preparation of plans, charters and programmes for the protection, management and planning of the territory and its landscape. AMB is responsible for the formulation and approvals of the Metropolitan Urban Master Plan (PDUM) and the Metropolitan Urban Planning Plan (POUM), and its subsequent urban management. Municipalities can delegate powers to AMB to protect urban legality and the exercise of sanctioning powers. AMB cooperates with and financially supports municipalities concerning planning, action programmes, projects and works. AMB executes and manages infrastructures related to mobility, parks, beaches, natural areas, equipments, resources, facilities, technical environmental services and supplies services.
On Transport and mobility, AMB owns and runs public urban collective transport for passengers on the surface, except for the tram system; provides the underground public transport service for passengers; organizes and administrates the taxi service and approves the Metropolitan Urban Mobility Plan. AMB promotes sustainable transport and can also coordinate and manage, by delegation of the town councils, complementary mobility services.
In matters of water, AMB has powers and ownership on the domestic supply of drinking water or the supply of water in low demand; the direct or indirect management of water; and the regulation of the prices of water tariffs. AMB also takes care of the public upstream sanitation system and the purification and regeneration of wastewater and evacuation of rainwater and sewerage networks.
Regarding waste, AMB manages the treatment, recovery and disposal of municipal waste and rubble from minor works and home repairs, coordinates municipal municipal waste collection systems, manages sorting and waste disposal services.
In environmental matters, AMB coordinates the Metropolitan Action Plan for the protection of the environment, health and biodiversity, the establishment of measures to combat climate change and the formulation of a Metropolitan Agenda 21. AMB issues environmental reports on the intervention of the environmental administration in municipal environmental licensing procedures.
In terms of infrastructures of metropolitan interest, the AMB develops the territorial structuring actions necessary for the articulation, connectivity, mobility and functionality of the territory, including infrastructures and mobility management, parks, beaches, natural spaces, equipment, facilities, installations and technical, environmental and supply services.
In terms of economic and social development and trade, AMB promotes economic activity, employment and the creation of companies in the fields of industry, trade, services and tourist resources and also promotes social and territorial cohesion.

Legislative Framework / Act

- Was the metropolitan area established by law? Yes, Law 31/2010
- In case of intermunicipal coordination, is it supported by a legislative instrument? Yes, Law 31/2010

- Indicate the legislative instrument and its key features: Law 31/2010

In 1953 the first Regional Urban Development Plan of Barcelona is drafted by the first ever metropolitan body, constituted by 27 municipalities, the "Barcelona's Urban Planning Committee (CUB)". Then in 1974, the Decree law 5/1974 constitutes the "Barcelona Metropolitan Municipal Agency (EMMB)" and the "Barcelona Metropolitan Corporation (CMB)", two institutions that were later on put together to constitute the today's metropolitan body, formally established by Law 31/2010 for the Creation of the Barcelona Metropolitan Area (AMB) as a commonwealth of Municipalities, together with the Metropolitan Institute for Hydraulic Services and Waste Treatment and the Metropolitan Transport Entity. This law establishes the general provisions, the organization (Bodies, composition, appointment, designation), the competences of the Metropolitan authorities and services, its territory (related to its management, urban planning and housing), its relations with the municipalities, its financing (resources, contributions, taxes) and its staff.

Decision-Making Process

- Responsible bodies (elected directly or indirectly, non-elected)
- Decisional model Proportionality / One vote per municipality or local government
- What type of majority is required?

The Metropolitan Council is the highest governing body of the AMB, and is formed by the mayors of each municipality in the metropolitan area and the councilors elected by the municipalities. These people are called metropolitan councilors. The municipality of Barcelona holds twenty-five representatives, while municipalities with more than one hundred thousand inhabitants have 4 members, from there the ratio decreases proportionately. The council elects de President and adopts the annual budget, action plan and regulations, among others.

The Presidency legally represents the AMB and runs its government and administration, is responsible for political management following the Metropolitan Council's decisions. The President approves the internal organization of the metropolitan administration, inspects and promotes metropolitan activities and services and approves the programs for the deployment of the Metropolitan Action Plan. The president of the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona is elected by the Metropolitan Council from among its members who have the status of mayors.

The Governing Board assumes tasks delegated by the Metropolitan Council and the presidency, with the aim of guaranteeing agility in decision-making and facilitating the work of the metropolitan administration. It is made up of the presidency of the AMB and the metropolitan councilors appointed by the presidency on the proposal of the Metropolitan Council and meets at least twice a month. The Governing Board is currently consisting of 13 metropolitan councilors, including the presidency.

Finally, the Accounts Commission controls the economic management of the AMB, with one representative member from each of the political groups.

Public-Private Partnership

In the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona (AMB), public–private collaboration is already being used in both housing and water.
Water management in the metropolitan area is often carried out through mixed models or concessions, where a private company operates certain services (treatment, distribution, purification) under public regulation. Agbar is the relevant case.
The **Habitatge Metròpolis Barcelona (HMB)** project is a mixed public–private company formed by the Barcelona City Council, the AMB, and private firms such as CEVASA and Neinor.

- **Objective:** to build around 4,500 rental homes over 10 years at affordable prices.
- **Model:** equal public/private participation (50–50), mixed governance, shared risks, contributions of land, financing, and compliance with quality and sustainability standards.

4.2 Governance for the Policy Instrument

Participation Model During the Design Phase

The participation model for this policy initially focuses on the coordination of different departments within the institution, assessing their existing capabilities and needs in the digital realm. To do so, an interview phase will help detect who to involve, and a Working Group will be subsequently created.
Beyond AMB, the work on digital transition will need from participation of different actors. In the institutional side, there are two main types of stakeholders. On one hand, public entities and research bodies who are advancing digital tools (Administració Oberta de Catalunya, Barcelona Supercomputing Center, i2Cat), and on the other, the municipalities, which we aim to support in their digital transition. Their participation will be streamlined through both one-on-one relationships and common forums.
In the private side, we will need to engage with private companies specialized in digital tools, and also with citizens, in order to assess how to serve their needs best. The framework for private participation will need from different forms to adjust to each actor's needs and expectations.

Decision-Making Process

The Pla d'Actuació Metropolità has been drawn up based on the Government Agreement established among the different political forces that make up the metropolitan government, which make up for 88% of the members of Metropolitan Council.
It incorporates the contributions of members of an institutional commission made up of mayors from different territorial areas and political groups represented in the AMB. It has also included input from other parties represented in the Metropolitan Council and aims to align with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the New Urban Agenda.
In addition, an open participation process was carried out with citizens of the metropolitan area, as well as a consultation process involving the main organizations operating within the metropolitan territory.

Implementation Phase Modalities
When it comes to implementing the PAM, each action within the PAM is assigned to a department of the Barcelona Metropolitan Area in order to pursue and fulfil it. Funding and phasing can come from different streams and programs for each department. In the case of the digital policy, it will be pursued with departmental funds and with funding coming from competitive projects. At the moment, there is a Horizon Project, MICAD, devoted to digital policy. The implementation requires from first evaluating existing data governance and digital tools, which is already in progress, and secondly creating a roadmap to decide specific goals and actions. These two phases will take place within the MICAD project. Afterwards, the allocation of funding and resources will be required to successfully create new tools and services.
4.3 Governance Cultural Framework
Politicians
Cooperation Models between municipalities and across different government and administrative levels
4 out of 5. Politicians highly regard the need to offer equal quality services to the citizens of all 36 municipalities, and therefore see the coordination between the AMB and municipalities as vital to this purpose. This metropolitan coordination is AMB's core mission, and it extends across multiple service areas such as mobility, waste, and water, and is defended by politicians to improve citizens' quality of life. At the political level, the need to align with the Catalan Government in fields such as transport and environmental management is also deemed necessary, to ensure that different government levels share goals and align efforts. From a political level, learning from international practice and participating in European projects is also defended, as it is seen as a leverage to bring funding and especially build consensus, within and between governments, around complex projects. For specific projects, especially those with European funding, politicians ask for the AMB to align with national and EU policy objectives and establish coordination mechanisms that allow municipalities to access programs and resources (e.g. URBACT, Horizon, EUI programs) they could not achieve alone. Therefore, from a political standpoint, interadministrative cooperation is seen as positive and necessary, although political fragmentation occasionally reduces effectiveness.
Cooperation Models between public and private actors
2 out of 5. Politically, there is a lack of clear agreement on the need of Public-private partnerships. There have been few experiences in the Barcelona Metropolitan Area, and many of them have led to more expensive public services, especially in water and waste management, thus leading to some political parties opposing PPPs. However, for complex issues with lack of public capability, politicians have defended Public–private partnerships: it is the case of housing, with the creation of Habitatge Metròpolis Barcelona. Overall, however, political decision-making and vision in this area are complex, and many politicians do not consider such cooperation necessary. As a result, there is no

clear, consolidated framework for PPPs. This is even more so for possible digital PPPs, where some politicians are very wary of private participation due to data governance and trust issues, and in case of foreign contractors, due to geopolitical risks.
Key Sectors or Issues Where Cooperation is Most Needed
In the 2023-2027 political cycle, political cooperation is favored by the fact that the same party is in power at the national, regional, metropolitan and most of the local level. However, this still leads to lack of coordination in decision-making and power division. The lack of coordination, both within the administration and with private actors, is very visible in the digital transformation field: some administrations do advance and create tools, but there is not an established culture of sharing outcomes and ensuring that other administrations can also incorporate such tools. Equally, there are limitations when it comes to partnering with the private sector in this regard, both because of a lack of PPP culture and because of regulatory limitations when it comes to contracting external companies. Another field where there is a lack of coordination, both in the administration and with the private sector, is housing: ownership of public housing and land is divided between local, metropolitan and regional authorities, making it difficult to have a clear strategy and diluting political responsibility over the problem.)
Existing Cooperation Experiences Beyond the Metropolitan Area
AMB has a solid track record of external cooperation. At the Catalan level, the partnership with the Generalitat on transport – particularly through the ATM and integrated fare system – has been decisive in shaping metropolitan mobility. Internationally, AMB is an active member of European networks such as Eurocities, Metropolis, and the European Metropolitan Authorities, which allow it to share experiences and advocate for the metropolitan scale. Through MedCities, AMB has engaged with Mediterranean municipalities on urban governance and sustainable development, while bilateral cooperation with metro areas in Africa and Latin America has helped position the metropolitan dimension in global urban policy debates. These experiences highlight the value of both political advocacy and technical exchange at multiple scales.
Current Cooperation Needs Beyond the Metropolitan Area
Looking forward, AMB faces pressing cooperation needs, particularly in the digital sphere. Coordination with Catalan, Spanish, and European institutions is essential to avoid duplication of efforts and to ensure that metropolitan systems can build upon existing national tools such as the digital ID or interoperable e-administration platforms. In housing, energy, and climate adaptation, stronger metropolitan-regional frameworks would enable AMB to act at scale. At the European level, greater access to resources and policy influence is needed to accelerate the transition to a sustainable and digitally advanced metropolis.
Multilevel Collaboration

Multilevel collaboration does happen to some extent, yet it is still seen as a main element that stalls projects. Usually, the departments or elements that work best is where the boundaries between levels are clearly defined, as it is the case of transport or waste. Another element that smooths multilevel cooperation is competitive projects, usually European but also national, which act as a catalyzer to create dialogue and joint work between different administrative levels. However, when each level's powers are not clearly defined or they are shared between different administrations, this lack of clarity leads to no one taking ownership over issues. It is the case with housing, as explained before: the national, regional, metropolitan and local levels have powers on the housing realm to some extent, but none of them is clearly responsible for it, leading to a lack of action and political ownership. Equally, the divided powers are also an issue in territorial planning: for example, even if AMB is doing the Metropolitan Urban Master Plan, it cannot decide or steer decisions regarding the commuter rail network, which is managed by the national government. Still, AMB's role in this regard is strong, making sure to support municipalities in their needs and establishing paths for communication with higher levels of government.
Technicians
Cooperation Models between municipalities and across different government and administrative levels
4 out of 5. At the technical level, AMB maintains close relationships with municipal teams, frequently offering technical assistance and managing projects that exceed the capacity of smaller administrations. Technical cooperation with the Generalitat or national administrations is less systematic and tends to occur only in specific departments or through leadership-driven initiatives. This asymmetry means that, while inter-municipal technical exchange is fluid and highly valued, cross-level collaboration with higher administrations remains more limited.
Cooperation Models between public and private actors
2 out of 5. For technicians, direct collaboration with private actors is generally weak. Engagement tends to occur only when private operators are formally contracted as service providers, for example in transport or waste management. Broader collaboration—such as co-design of innovation projects, joint pilots, or knowledge-sharing with technology firms—is rare. This limits the scope for technical teams to access the latest expertise and solutions available in the market.
Key Sectors or Issues where Cooperation is Most Needed
From a technical perspective, digital transformation is again the most pressing field for expanded cooperation, as municipal teams often lack the capacity to implement advanced tools and services. Housing and urban development also require new models of collaboration, especially to enable data-driven planning and better monitoring of metropolitan trends. In both cases, deeper partnerships with private actors, universities, and international peers could help close the technical capacity gap.

Existing Cooperation Experiences Beyond the Metropolitan Area
AMB's technical teams actively participate in European projects and consortia, collaborating with other cities and metropolitan areas on issues such as smart cities, sustainable mobility, and climate adaptation. Staff also engage in specialized forums and professional networks that allow them to exchange good practices and adopt innovative methodologies. International delegations and study visits are frequent, supporting mutual learning and benchmarking with peers. These experiences demonstrate an openness to cross-learning that strengthens technical expertise at the metropolitan scale.
Current Cooperation Needs Beyond the Metropolitan Area
Technicians would benefit from higher coordination with the Catalan government, which sometimes remains inaccessible in order to steer joint projects. Equally, technicians need to learn from similar challenges and experiences, which are not happening anywhere in Spain, as AMB is the sole legally constituted metropolitan administration. Therefore, cooperation and cross-learning from other peer metropolitan areas, in Europe and beyond, would be highly beneficial for the improvement of technical knowledge and to bring advanced solutions from other places back to Barcelona.
Multilevel Collaboration
From a technical standpoint, multilevel collaboration is both a necessity and a challenge for the AMB. Within the metropolitan area, coordination with municipal administrations is relatively strong: technicians frequently work together on shared infrastructures, mobility systems, environmental monitoring, or data management projects, with AMB providing expertise and scale that smaller municipalities cannot achieve alone. This inter-municipal layer is therefore the most consolidated and effective. However, when it comes to higher levels of government—namely the Generalitat de Catalunya and the Spanish State—collaboration is more fragmented. Technical cooperation often depends on specific departments or temporary leadership commitments rather than on a stable, institutionalized framework. This leads to asymmetries: while municipalities look to AMB as a natural technical partner, the Generalitat and State administrations sometimes operate in parallel, launching projects or setting regulatory frameworks without consistent coordination at the metropolitan scale. This reduces the efficiency of implementation and can create overlaps or gaps in competencies. Overall, multilevel collaboration at the technical level shows both promise and limitations. It is strongest between municipalities, weaker with higher domestic administrations, and most innovative when anchored in European or international frameworks. Strengthening this vertical coordination remains key for addressing metropolitan challenges that inherently cut across institutional boundaries.

General Public (and Other Stakeholders)
Cooperation Models between municipalities and across different government and administrative levels
3 out of 5. Citizens consider the collaboration between administrations necessary: people live, work, study, and shop across municipal borders, with different administrations offering them services, and want these services to be well coordinated and work seamlessly. Citizens, however, often do not understand the institutional architecture that governs these dynamics. Responsibilities are blurred, and it is not always clear which administration—municipality, Catalan Government, Spanish State, or AMB—is accountable for specific policies or services. The AMB itself remains a largely unknown institution: absent from the political spotlight and from most media debates. Therefore, it is difficult for citizens to grasp that more cooperation between administrations would lead to more efficient services, and this lack of knowledge and clarity often creates mistrust and frustration.
Cooperation Models between public and private actors
2 out of 5. Citizens see public-private cooperation with ambivalence or suspicion, if not full mistrust or opposition. Existing experiences have often been considered as negative by citizens. Examples include bus services run by certain private operators, which have been criticized for deteriorating quality, or the water supply system, which is broadly associated with high prices and limited public control. In addition, in other cases of public-private partnerships, these are not transparent enough for citizens to understand who is delivering the service and under which partnership or conditions. This lack of clarity weakens public trust and reduces the legitimacy of partnerships, creating a perception that collaboration with private actors does not always prioritize citizen welfare. As such, PPPs remain controversial and, for many residents, negative.
Level of Perceived Belonging to Individual Municipalities
4 out of 5. Citizens generally have a strong sense of belonging to their municipality of residence. Local identity remains important, shaped by traditions, municipal services, and community networks. Unlike in some metropolitan regions, dormitory towns are less common, as most municipalities retain an active local life. This reinforces attachment to municipal governance and civic participation at the local scale.
Level of Perceived Belonging to the Metropolitan Area
4 out of 5. Perceptions of the metropolitan area are more functional than cultural. Many residents identify with Barcelona as a central city, even if they live outside its limits, and often extend this identity both within and beyond the formal AMB boundary. However, the institutional borders of the metropolitan area are seen as somewhat artificial, and people often confuse the metropolitan area with the wider functional region. As a

result, belonging to the metropolitan scale is less rooted in identity than in practical services such as transport or waste management.
Historical or Cultural Factors
The AMB territory is marked by strong socio-economic contrasts between areas such as Besòs, Llobregat, Barcelonès, and Vallès. Many surrounding municipalities were transformed by waves of rural-to-urban migration during the 1950s–70s, which shaped a relatively homogeneous working-class culture and political tradition, sometimes referred to as the "red belt." These historical dynamics continue to influence local identities, political attitudes, and the perception of the metropolitan project today.

5. SPECIFIC DATA CONNECTED WITH THE SELECTED POLICY INSTRUMENT
Contents
The Pla d'Actuació Metropolità (PAM) and more specifically, its "Intervention line 28: digital and intelligent metropolis", wants to work on the digital capabilities of the Barcelona Metropolitan Area. The PAM establishes certain objectives and actions to fulfill within the 2024-2027 term, that serve as a guide to the metropolitan government in order to direct its policies and projects, and also as an evaluation document to ensure that the proposed actions have been fulfilled by the end of the period. In this PAM, for the first time, digitalization plays a relevant role and is highlighted as a major goal for the term. Its focus remains on a mainly strategic and knowledge gaining level, so that the strategy can set the foundation for the development of specific tools and services.
Objectives
The goal of the PAM in the digital realm is threefold: first is to define a digital metropolis model at the AMB, in order to create an ecosystem of data and services that feeds into AMB's services and policies. This requires from establishing a roadmap towards a digital transition at the metropolitan level, and clarifying the role of the metropolitan administration in such transition. The second goal is to learn from international best practices, when it comes to data governance, digital tools and AI applications, so that AMB can have state of the art examples when building its own model. The third goal is to update existing services and create new services, in order to offer a smart and sustainable development of digital tools, in order to promote better quality services and fairer delivery for citizens. All in all, the ultimate goal is to establish AMB as a frontrunner in the digital transition, and a role model as a digital metropolis.
Critical Issues to Address
There are several critical issues to address in the project:

- Lack of a common strategy: AMB has a wide portfolio of digital tools, yet there has not been a clear digital strategy to know which ones to advance or which ones not to prioritize.
- Lack of coordination: existing tools at AMB are managed separately by each department. This results in misleading duplicities, parallel efforts, and not building upon preexisting knowledge and experiences.
- Clarifying ownership: the ownership and upkeep of tools and data is key towards ensuring digital sovereignty.
- Lack of tech profiles within the administration's workforce: there are very few tech-savvy or tech-driven workers within the administration, making it difficult to adapt both culturally and in terms of operativity.
- Establishing fruitful relationships: AMB does not have internal capabilities to develop all of its potential in the digital realm. Therefore, we need to establish connections with other administrations, universities and private companies.

Expected Change/Improvement

The PAM's digital policy is expected to positively impact the metropolis, both internally within the administration and externally for the citizen:

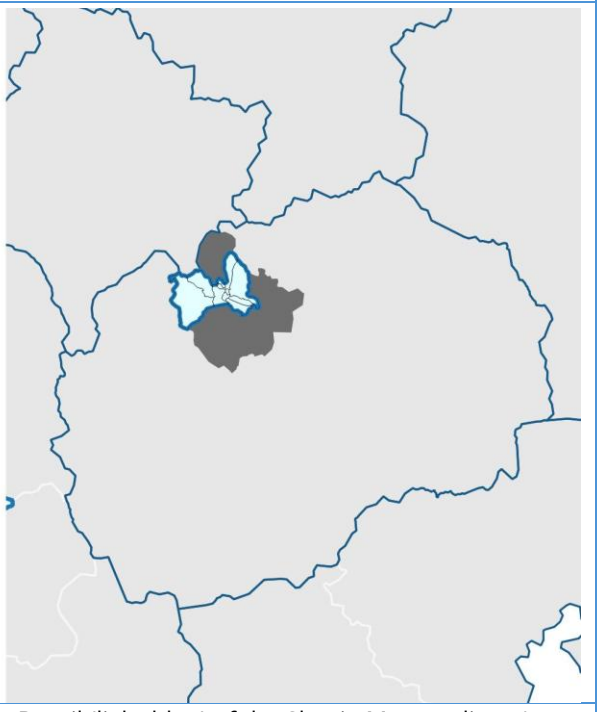
- Clearer portfolio of digital services: eliminating duplicities and improving coordination will lead to digital services that are properly maintained, can learn from previous experience and be expanded as needed.
- Development of new digital tools: the process will help detect the gaps within the administration that digital services should cover more clearly, showing which are the easy wins and ensuring that action is taken on them.
- Impulse of a digital business ecosystem: the project will be key in coordinating actors and ensuring that more projects can happen in coordination between public and private sectors, with its subsequent economic and jobs output.
- Improved services for citizens: the created tools should impact in better service provision, be it digital services that are clearer and easier to understand for citizens, or from other services that are provided in a more efficient way, as it could be the case of AI-enhanced bus schedules.

Territorial and Socio-Economic Framework (Sectoral)

Barcelona has a rich ecosystem of digitally savvy administrations and companies. In the public administration sector, the regional government (Generalitat de Catalunya) leads digitalization through its i2Cat initiative, the Administració Oberta de Catalunya, and CTTI (Center of Telecommunications and Information Technologies). Research institutes are also a key stakeholder, especially the Barcelona Supercomputing Center, which conducts research in several fields, serves as a startup incubator and tech business ecosystem curator, and hosts the Marenostrum supercomputer. At the municipal level, several municipalities (Barcelona, Sant Feliu de Llobregat, El Prat de Llobregat…) are leading digitalization efforts in different fields.

In the private sector, several international tech companies have offices in Barcelona, and there is a rich local ecosystem of startups. Barcelona also has a good digital infrastructure, with ubiquitous high-speed internet coverage, Barcelona Cable Landing Station and an increasing creation of data centers in the metropolitan area.
Other Relevant Elements
Administrative burdens are seen as the main hurdle for innovation. Especially, the Law of Contracts of Public Service makes it highly unattractive for innovative businesses to work and collaborate with the public administration

2.2.6 City of Skopje (PP06)

1. PP INFORMATION	
PP Name (and APA, if applicable)	City of Skopje
	
NORTH MACEDONIA	Detail (light blue) of the Skopje Metropolitan Area in Skopski Region - NUTS 3
Name, Role, and Contact of Compiler*	Danijela Petrusheva – Andonova, Department of international cooperation, danijela.petrusheva.andonova@skopje.gov.mk Saranda Beqiri, Department of international cooperation, saranda.beqiri@skopje.gov.mk

2. TERRITORIAL FRAMEWORK Understanding territorial characteristics and recognizing key factors that influence governance models	
2.1 Key Data of the Case Study	
Total Surface Area of the Metropolitan Area	571.46 km²
Total Surface Area of the Core City	571.46 km²
Population of the Metropolitan Area	518,000 inhabitants (2024, State Statistical Office estimate)

Population of the Core City	518,000 inhabitants
Density of the Metropolitan Area	approximately 907 inhabitants/km²
Density of the Core City	approximately 907 inhabitants/km²
Number of Municipalities included in the Metropolitan Area	10 municipalities
Aerodrom, Butel, Cair, Centar, Gjorce Petrov, Gazi Baba, Karposh, Kisela Voda, Saraj, Shuto Orizari	
Other Possible Sub-Metropolitan Aggregations	
North, South, East, West planning areas; urban and rural settlements (92% urban, 8% rural)	
Reference Functional Urban Area (FUA – OECD Definition)	FUA Skopje, area ~1,800 km², population ~600,000, 17 municipalities
Reference NUTS region (Eurostat)	
Skopje region (MK008), area 1,818 km², population 640,000, 17 municipalities	
2.2 Spatial Distribution of Land Uses and Land Cover-LULC (current state)	
LULC: Artificial Surface, Agricultural Areas, Forest and Semi Natural Areas, Wetlands and Water bodies	
LULC: Artificial Surface Studies of Land Use Land Cover (LULC) in Skopje show a significant increase in artificial surfaces, also known as built-up land, between 2012 and 2018 and over the past decade. This trend suggests a rapid rise in urbanization, with satellite data and GIS software being key tools for tracking these changes and their environmental impacts, such as strengthening the urban heat island effect. **LULC: Agricultural Areas** Agricultural areas in the Skopje region and North Macedonia in general are characterized by a mix of cultivated land, vineyards, and orchards, although the specific distribution and trends vary by location and time period. While national statistics highlight the overall decrease in some agricultural lands, studies have documented changes in Land Use and Land Cover (LULC) within the Skopje region, indicating a dynamic landscape where agricultural land continues to exist alongside other cover types. **LULC: Forest and Semi Natural Areas** Skopje is characterized by a dominance of forests and semi-natural areas, which accounted for about 60% of the land cover, along with significant agricultural areas (around 35%). Analysis of land cover changes between 2000 and 2018 shows slight net losses in forests and semi-natural areas, but also periods of relative stability, alongside	

an ongoing trend of transformation of natural and semi-natural surfaces into artificial ones, especially around the metropolitan area.

LULC: Wetlands and Water bodies

Skopje's notable water bodies include the Vardar River and Lake Matka, while significant wetlands in the region are the Katlanovo Marsh and Studenchishko Swamp. The Skopje Plain, a key hydrological area, hosts Katlanovo Marsh, located near the Vardar and Pchinja Rivers, and other wetlands like Badar and Zhabeni, though many have seen reduced coverage due to irrigation and urbanization.

Settlement Model

The term "settlement model" does not have a single, specific definition for Skopje. It may refer to historical settlement patterns from the ancient city of Scupi to modern Skopje, the evolution of urban planning including post-earthquake reconstruction and the Skopje 2014 project, or even financial settlement models for real estate within zoned areas.

Land Take

Land take" in Skopje refers to urban expansion and the conversion of natural and agricultural land into developed areas, particularly within the Skopje Planning Region. As the smallest but most densely populated region in North Macedonia, it faces challenges such as chaotic development and urban sprawl since the 1990s. This process is regulated under Skopje's Land Use and Zoning Law, which defines permissible land uses and seeks to preserve both natural and cultural heritage.

2.3 Transport and Mobility Infrastructure System

Road Network

The road network in Skopje is structured according to the "Law on Public Roads" and the "Urban Planning Rulebook" into two main categories: public roads outside populated areas and street networks within populated areas.

- **Public roads outside populated areas** include:
  - **State roads**: A-category highways and expressways, magistral roads
  - **Regional roads**: first and second category
- **Street networks within populated areas** include:
  - **Primary streets** (managed by the City of Skopje): transit magistral streets, city magistrals, village magistrals, and collective streets
  - **Secondary streets** (managed by municipalities): service streets, residential streets, industrial streets, access streets, pedestrian paths, and bicycle corridors

According to the City of Skopje's General Urban Plan (GUP 2012–2022), approximately 56% of the planned primary street network has been completed, with completion rates varying by street type: transit magistral streets 34%, city magistral streets 51%, service streets 73%.

Transport Network (High-Speed Rail, Airports, Ports, and other)

Skopje is connected to national and international transport corridors:

- **Highways**:

- A1 (Corridor X – E75)
- A2 (Corridor VIII – E65/E871)
- A4 (E65 branch)

- **Railways:** Total length 133 km in the Planning Region, part of Corridors VIII and X. Some sections remain under construction or rehabilitation. No direct rail connection exists with Albania or Bulgaria yet. Key lines connect Skopje to Tetovo, Gostivar, Kumanovo, Veles, and the border regions.
- **Airport:** Skopje International Airport, 20 km from the city, connected via A1 highway. It is under a 20-year concession to TAV with multiple international connections.

According to the GUP of the City of Skopje from 2012 -2022, concretely the condition of the planned and implemented street network is:

No.	Category	Planned (m^2)	Realized (m^2)	Percentage (%)
1.	Transit magistral streets	50.409	17.340	34,40
2.	City magistral streets	74.192	37.878	51,05
3.	Service streets	86.578	62.972	72,73
	Total	**211.179**	**118.190**	**55,97**

Sustainable Mobility Network

- **Public transport:** Primarily bus-based, operated by the Public Transport Enterprise – Skopje and private carriers ("Jofi Bus", "Vestor Trans", "Rados Company"). GUP plans four tram lines and two BRT corridors (west-east: Gjorce Petrov – Novo Lisice; north-south: Butel – Kisela Voda).
- **Pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure:** ~100 km of bicycle paths, following motor corridors and the Vardar River. New pedestrian and bicycle paths are being implemented with urban corridor development.
- **Electromobility:** EV charging infrastructure includes 2 CCS 150 kW chargers and 20 Type 2 22 kW chargers. Additional chargers are in public and private spaces.

Motorization Rate of the Metropolitan Area	314 vehicles per 1,000 inhabitants (2021, MAKSTAT)
Motorization Rate of the Core City (optional)	592 vehicles per 1,000 inhabitants

3. SOCIO ECONOMIC FRAMEWORK **Understanding socio economic characteristics and recognizing key factors that influence governance models**	
Birth Rate of the Metropolitan Area	approximately 10–11 births per 1,000 inhabitants (2024 estimate, in line with national demographic trends).

Birth Rate of the Core City (optional)	similar demographic pattern, approximately 10–11 per 1,000 inhabitants.
Average Household Size of the Metropolitan Area	2.8 persons per household (Census 2021-based estimate).
Average Household Size of the Core City (optional)	2.8 persons per household.
Aging Index of the Metropolitan Area	approximately 105–110 (ratio of population aged 65+ to population aged 0–14), indicating a gradual demographic aging process.
Aging Index of the Core City (optional)	similar demographic structure.
Foreign Population and Presence of the Metropolitan Area	estimated at approximately 3%, mainly originating from neighboring countries and recent migrant communities.
Foreign Population and Presence of the Core City (optional)	similar share, concentrated in central municipalities.
Higher Education Graduates of the Metropolitan Area	approximately 28–32% of residents hold a tertiary education degree, reflecting the concentration of universities and research institutions.
Higher Education Graduates of the Core City (optional)	comparable or slightly higher share.
Employment Rate of the Metropolitan Area	approximately 60–62% of the working-age population employed.
Employment Rate of the Core City (optional)	similar employment structure
Youth Employment Rate of the Metropolitan Area	approximately 40–45%, remaining structurally lower than overall employment levels.

Youth Employment Rate of the Core City (optional)	
Enterprises and Sectoral Specialisation of the Metropolitan Area	
Total enterprises: approximately 28,000 registered business entities. Employees: approximately 220,000 persons employed. Sectoral structure: • Services: 65% (ICT, trade, finance, tourism, public administration, education) • Industry: 25% (metal processing, food industry, textile, construction materials) • Agriculture: 10% (primarily in peripheral and rural municipalities)	
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the Metropolitan Area	The metropolitan area generates approximately €6–6.5 billion in GDP, accounting for nearly 40% of national GDP.
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the Core City (optional)	
Per Capita Gross Disposable Income of the Metropolitan Area	The metropolitan area generates approximately €6–6.5 billion in GDP, accounting for nearly 40% of national GDP. Estimated GDP per capita: approximately €12,000–13,000 annually, significantly above the national average.
Per Capita Gross Disposable Income of the Core City (optional)	
Tourism – Overnight Stays and Arrivals in the Metropolitan Area	Approximately 450,000–600,000 overnight stays annually (pre-pandemic levels), with steady growth in city tourism, business travel, and short-term cultural visits. Tourism activity is concentrated in the central municipalities but increasingly connected with natural and recreational areas.
Tourism – Overnight Stays and Arrivals in the Core City (optional)	
Protected Natural Areas in the Metropolitan Area	

The metropolitan area includes significant protected zones such as:

- Jasen Nature Reserve – Key biodiversity hotspot 15 km southwest of Skopje; includes forests, rivers, caves, and habitats for rare species. Critical for conservation and eco-tourism.
- Matka Canyon – Protected natural monument west of Skopje; features a canyon, river, caves, and endemic flora and fauna. Major recreational and cultural value.
- Mount Vodno – Urban green belt within Skopje; provides forested areas, recreational space, and supports local biodiversity. Important for ecosystem services and urban environmental management.

Major Healthcare Facilities in the Metropolitan Area

- University Clinical Center Skopje – The largest tertiary healthcare complex in the country, comprising multiple specialized clinics (internal medicine, surgery, cardiology, neurology, oncology, gynecology, infectious diseases, etc.). It serves both the metropolitan population and national referrals.
- City General Hospital 8 September – Secondary and tertiary care hospital providing emergency services, surgical departments, and specialized diagnostics.
- Institute for Public Health of the Republic of North Macedonia – National public health authority responsible for epidemiological monitoring, prevention programs, and health data analysis.
- Psychiatric Hospital Skopje – Specialized institution providing mental health services.
- Special Hospital for Geriatric and Palliative Medicine 13 Noemvri – Specialized facility focused on elderly care and palliative medicine.
- Multiple private hospitals and diagnostic centers (e.g., Sistina Clinical Hospital, Zan Mitrev Clinic), contributing to diversification of healthcare provision and reducing pressure on public facilities.

Universities in the Metropolitan Area

- Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje – Largest and oldest public university in North Macedonia; multiple faculties and research centres.

Private / Foundation Universities

- International Balkan University (IBU) – Private, international-oriented programs.
- South East European University (SEEU) – Skopje branch – Multi-ethnic and international academic environment.
- American University of Europe – FON – Business, IT, law, social sciences.
- University American College Skopje – Private, broad academic portfolio.
- European University – North Macedonia – Multiple faculties, private.
- MIT University Skopje – Technical and business education focus.

The metropolitan area hosts approximately 35,000–40,000 tertiary students, reinforcing its role as the national academic and research hub.

Other Relevant Socio-Economic Indicators
Skopje functions as the political, economic, administrative, and cultural center of North Macedonia, concentrating employment in services, governance, trade, and education. Unemployment remains structurally higher among youth despite overall improvements. Ongoing infrastructure investments include public transport modernization, road expansion, and urban regeneration initiatives. Demographic trends show gradual aging, internal rural-to-urban migration, and moderate international migration inflows. Quality of life benefits from strong access to education, healthcare, cultural institutions, and green urban spaces. Key structural challenges include urban sprawl, traffic congestion, environmental pressures, and uneven integration of peripheral settlements into economic and service networks. Economic weight and service dominance highlight the necessity for integrated metropolitan governance structures to manage growth, employment policies, and investments. Labour market and informal economy features point to governance challenges in formalizing workforce participation, education alignment, and business support. Population dynamics tie directly into service planning, housing policies, and transportation governance. Environmental pressures and regional disparities are crucial for strategic decisions on metropolitan regulation, sustainable mobility, and cross-municipality cooperation.

4. GOVERNANCE
4.1 Governance of the Metropolitan Area
Type of Institution (Category)
The City of Skopje holds a special metropolitan status, encompassing 10 municipalities with broader competencies than individual municipalities. It operates as a single institutional unit with authority over strategic urban planning, transportation, environmental management, and coordination of public services. This status enables Skopje to manage city-wide policies and inter-municipal cooperation efficiently, while municipalities retain local autonomy for community-specific issues.
Source of Funding
Funding comes from a combination of local taxes, state transfers, and European funds. Local taxes (property, income, and business taxes) finance both municipal and metropolitan functions. State transfers support strategic infrastructure and social programs, while European funds are accessed for projects related to urban development, environmental protection, and public transport modernization.
Functions and Responsibilities (categories)
• Urban/Spatial Planning: Development of city-wide and municipal plans to regulate land use and urban growth. • Landscape & Environmental Sustainability: Management of green spaces, biodiversity protection, and implementation of environmental action plans.

- Climate & Energy: Promotion of renewable energy, energy efficiency, and climate adaptation measures.
- Private Mobility & Public Transport: Planning of road networks, bicycle lanes, and public transportation systems.
- Public Services & Infrastructure: Provision of water, waste, and utility services across the metropolitan area.
- Tourism & Culture: Support for cultural events, heritage protection, and tourism promotion.
- Economic Development & Labour Policies: Encouragement of investment, employment, and business development.
- Innovation & ICT: Implementation of digital services, e-government, and smart city solutions.
- Education & Training: Coordination with schools, universities, and vocational programs.
- Welfare & Social Services: Management of social care programs, healthcare coordination, and community services.
- Housing (including social housing): Planning and management of residential development and affordable housing.

Legislative Framework / Act

The City of Skopje is established by national law as a special local government unit, under the Law on Local Self-Government. This legislation defines its metropolitan competencies, governance structure, responsibilities, and relations with municipalities. It legally supports inter-municipal coordination and agreements, enabling collaboration on shared services and metropolitan projects. The law also specifies the powers of the City Council and Mayor, as well as mechanisms for public participation in decision-making.

Decision-Making Process

- The main governing bodies are the directly elected Mayor and the City Council (45 members).
- Decisions follow a proportional system, where municipal representation reflects population size.
- Major decisions (e.g., budget approval, strategic urban plans) require a qualified majority, while routine administrative matters can be decided by simple majority.
- Advisory committees and technical departments provide expertise, ensuring informed and transparent decisions.
- Coordination with municipal councils ensures local needs are integrated into city-wide policies

Public-Private Partnership

Skopje can engage in PPPs using national legislation and municipal bylaws, collaborating with private companies in infrastructure, energy, and public services. Legal instruments include contracts, concessions, and joint ventures, providing clear

risk-sharing and financial frameworks. PPPs are applied in projects such as road construction, energy-efficient buildings, and waste management facilities, allowing private investment while maintaining public oversight

4.2 Governance for the Policy Instrument

Participation Model During the Design Phase

During the preparation of strategic documents in the City of Skopje, a participatory, "bottom-up" methodology is applied. Dedicated workshops are organized for each stakeholder group and thematic area, during which comprehensive SWOT analyses are conducted. The process is interactive and supported by technical tools, enabling participants to openly share perspectives while the expert team systematically structures and categorizes inputs within the SWOT framework.

For certain strategic documents, dozens of workshops are conducted to ensure a thorough, evidence-based understanding of on-the-ground realities. The primary goal is to obtain a realistic picture from stakeholders who possess first-hand knowledge of the challenges addressed, ensuring that strategic documents are grounded in actual needs rather than theoretical assumptions.

This methodology also supports the identification and utilization of relevant funding sources, as the priorities and challenges are concrete, well-defined, and rooted in real-world conditions.

The City of Skopje has established good practice through the structured application of participatory, data-driven planning mechanisms, producing tangible results. Outcomes include validated strategic documents, prioritized action plans, and clearly defined intervention measures, which directly inform institutional and metropolitan-level decision-making, improving policy coherence and strategic alignment across sectors.

Quantitative evidence includes the number of workshops conducted, diversity of stakeholder participation, and volume of strategic inputs consolidated into planning documents. Qualitative evidence is reflected in enhanced inter-institutional coordination, strengthened stakeholder ownership, and the integration of field-based knowledge into operational decisions.

This approach has also demonstrated direct impacts on funding decisions, aligning strategic priorities with accurate funding instruments and increasing the feasibility and credibility of subsequent investment proposals.

- The main stakeholders such as Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, Hydrometeorological Service of the Republic of Macedonia, Public Enterprise Water supply and sewerage Skopje, Public Enterprise Communal Hygiene Skopje, Public Enterprise Streets and Roads, Ministry of Energy, The public enterprise "Drisla" in the City of Skopje, The Public Enterprise "Parks and Greenery" in the City of Skopje, High school chemistry Marija Kiri Sklodovska in City of Skopje (Biotechnology laboratory), Green Circ (NGO), Eco Zvon (Association of citizens for environmental protection), Center for Environmental Democracy Florozon (NGO) have a major role in creating strategic documents related to environmental protection in metropolitan areas.

Decision-Making Process
Not completed by the PP (see 2.1 section).
Implementation Phase Modalities
Not completed by the PP (see 2.1 section).
4.3 Governance Cultural Framework
Politicians
Cooperation Models between municipalities and across different government and administrative levels
Politicians in the City of Skopje generally recognize the strategic necessity of cooperation within the metropolitan area, particularly between the core city and surrounding municipalities. Cooperation is viewed as essential for coordinated urban planning, infrastructure development, environmental management, and public service delivery. Cooperation occurs both horizontally (across municipalities) and vertically (between municipal, metropolitan, and national government levels).
Cooperation Models between public and private actors
Engagement with private actors is increasingly encouraged through public-private partnerships (PPPs), especially in sectors such as transport, energy, waste management, and urban regeneration.
Key Sectors or Issues Where Cooperation is Most Needed
• **Spatial and urban planning:** To manage metropolitan expansion, land use, and sustainable mobility. • **Environmental protection:** Including climate adaptation, river management, and biodiversity preservation. • **Public infrastructure:** Coordinating transportation networks, utilities, and digital infrastructure. • **Economic development:** Aligning investment incentives, business zones, and labor policies across municipalities.
Existing Cooperation Experiences Beyond the Metropolitan Area
Skopje politicians have established formal and informal cooperation with neighbouring regions through inter-municipal cooperation and participation in national and EU-funded projects. Regional collaboration often focuses on transport corridors, environmental initiatives, and tourism development.
Current Cooperation Needs Beyond the Metropolitan Area
• Strengthening coordination for functional urban areas (FUA) that extend beyond the 10-municipality metropolitan boundary. • Improving cross-regional infrastructure planning and access to international funding programs.

• Formalizing agreements for long-term metropolitan strategies that align with national and EU priorities.
Multilevel Collaboration
Collaboration between national, regional, and municipal levels is mixed, combining formal agreements (laws, inter-municipal contracts) with informal coordination (ad hoc committees, technical consultations). Formalized governance structures exist within Skopje, but broader functional urban coordination often depends on political negotiation and technical facilitation. Interactions are facilitated by dedicated metropolitan departments, advisory boards, and project-specific working groups, particularly for EU-funded initiatives.
Technicians
Cooperation Models between municipalities and across different government and administrative levels
Technicians and urban planners recognize the practical necessity of inter-municipal cooperation for integrated planning, infrastructure development, and service delivery. Technical cooperation is often more operational and structured than political cooperation, relying on shared data, GIS platforms, and coordinated project teams
Cooperation Models between public and private actors
Not completed by the PP (see 2.1 section).
Key Sectors or Issues where Cooperation is Most Needed
• **Urban and spatial planning:** Harmonizing GUP (General Urban Plan) implementation across municipalities. • **Mobility and transport systems:** Coordinating roads, public transport, and traffic management. • **Environmental monitoring:** Joint approaches to air quality, water management, and waste treatment. • **Data and digital tools:** Integrating metropolitan-level information systems to support evidence-based planning.
Existing Cooperation Experiences Beyond the Metropolitan Area
Not completed by the PP (see 2.1 section).
Current Cooperation Needs Beyond the Metropolitan Area
Not completed by the PP (see 2.1 section).
Multilevel Collaboration
Not completed by the PP (see 2.1 section).

General Public (and Other Stakeholders)
Cooperation Models between municipalities and across different government and administrative levels
The public generally recognizes the importance of cooperation across municipalities and government levels, especially for transport, environmental management, and service delivery.
Cooperation Models between public and private actors
Not completed by the PP (see 2.1 section).
Level of Perceived Belonging to Individual Municipalities
Residents show strong identification with their individual municipalities, while awareness of the metropolitan identity is growing, particularly among younger and urban populations. Historical municipal boundaries and local identities influence public perception, making bottom-up engagement and participatory processes essential for metropolitan initiatives.
Level of Perceived Belonging to the Metropolitan Area
Not completed by the PP (see 2.1 section).
Historical or Cultural Factors
Not completed by the PP (see 2.1 section).

5. SPECIFIC DATA CONNECTED WITH THE SELECTED POLICY INSTRUMENT
Contents
The Local Environmental Action Plan (LEAP) is a strategic planning document that outlines the medium- and long-term environmental priorities, measures, and interventions for a local authority. In the case of the City of Skopje, LEAP 3 covers the period 2020–2026 and defines strategic objectives and actions to improve environmental protection, spatial planning, air quality, water and soil protection, waste management, noise control, and public health. It also includes scheduled activities and resource commitments aimed at enhancing the quality of life for residents and ensuring environmental sustainability for the metropolitan area. In North Macedonia, the Law on Environment requires local governments — including municipalities and the City of Skopje — to prepare and adopt Local Environmental Action Plans as part of their environmental planning obligations. According to the law, municipalities and the City of Skopje must adopt these plans following a methodology prescribed by the responsible national environmental body, and implementation must be monitored and reported: The Law on Environment (Official Gazette of RNM, No. 53/05, with subsequent amendments) regulates environmental protection duties at national and local levels. Under this law, local authorities (municipalities and the City of Skopje) are responsible

for environmental protection, including the adoption of local environmental action plans as part of their planning competencies.
National environmental legislation (Law on Environment) contains articles (e.g., Articles 60–64) that directly relate to the preparation, adoption, and updating of LEAPs by municipalities and the City of Skopje. According to these provisions, local councils must adopt LEAPs based on assessment of local environmental conditions and priorities.
The Law on Local Self-Government (Official Gazette of RNM**,** No. 05/02, and later amendments) grants municipalities the authority and responsibility for local planning and environmental action, supporting the obligation to adopt LEAPs under national environmental law.

Objectives

The LEAP 3 (2020–2026) as policy instrument is designed to improve environmental management and urban sustainability in the City of Skopje. Its objectives include enhancing air and water quality, promoting energy efficiency, developing green infrastructure, reducing waste generation, and integrating environmental considerations into urban planning. LEAP 3 also aims to strengthen governance by fostering cooperation between the City of Skopje, its municipalities, and relevant stakeholders, supporting informed decision-making, and enhancing citizen engagement in environmental protection initiatives.
Main objectives are:
Improve air, water, and soil quality and reduce pollution.
Promote sustainable urban planning and low-emission mobility.
Enhance energy efficiency and climate resilience.
Protect biodiversity and natural areas.
Strengthen public awareness and environmental education.
Align environmental action with socio-economic development.

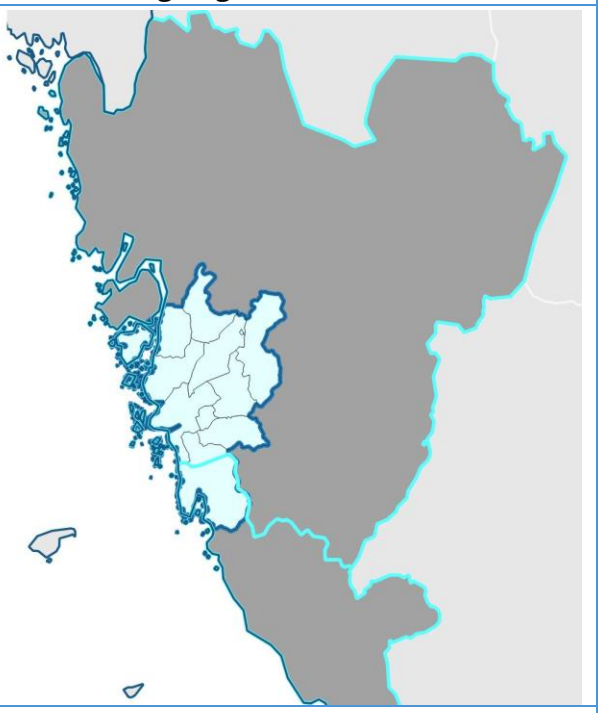
Critical Issues to Address

LEAP 3 targets the most pressing environmental and urban challenges in the City of Skopje. Key issues include high levels of air pollution, limited urban green spaces, inefficient waste management, excessive energy consumption in buildings, and fragmented inter-municipal coordination. Additional priorities encompass traffic congestion, sustainable water resource management, climate change adaptation, and the protection of biodiversity in designated natural areas. To address these challenges, a revision of LEAP 3 is necessary by establishing strategic interventions, robust monitoring mechanisms, adopting good practices and policy measures that are aligned with EU environmental standards and integrated within the broader national environmental strategy of North Macedonia, ensuring a coordinated approach to metropolitan environmental management that is evidence-based and aligned with modern living times.

Expected Change/Improvement
LEAP 4 for the City of Skopje is expected to significantly strengthen environmental management and urban sustainability across the metropolitan area. Building on the achievements and revision of LEAP 3, it aims to reduce air pollution and promote low-emission mobility, while expanding urban green spaces and enhancing biodiversity protection. The plan seeks to improve waste management systems and foster circular economy practices, alongside strengthening climate adaptation measures and energy efficiency in buildings. Sustainable water resource management will be prioritized, and public participation and governance transparency will be further enhanced. LEAP 4 will also ensure closer alignment with EU environmental standards and funding mechanisms, supporting integrated, measurable, and evidence-based metropolitan environmental governance.
Territorial and Socio-Economic Framework (Sectoral)
The metropolitan area of Skopje exhibits a compact core city with strong functional linkages to surrounding municipalities, forming a diversified metropolitan territory. Strategically positioned as the national administrative, economic, and cultural center, the city hosts approximately 25% of North Macedonia's population and serves as a hub for services, education, healthcare, and governance. From a territorial perspective, the city benefits from developed infrastructure networks, connectivity through major road corridors, and proximity to natural and semi-natural areas, while challenges remain in urban expansion outside formal planning zones, traffic congestion, and disparities between the core city and peripheral settlements. From a socio-economic standpoint, Skopje's economy is primarily service-oriented, complemented by industrial and agricultural activities in surrounding municipalities. The metropolitan area accounts for a significant share of national GDP, with diversified employment opportunities, a high concentration of tertiary education institutions, and a growing role in innovation and research. Nevertheless, socio-economic disparities, uneven access to services, and youth employment challenges persist across the metropolitan area. This framework highlights the interdependence between territorial planning and socio-economic development, providing the foundation for targeted governance strategies, sustainable infrastructure planning, and integrated metropolitan policies
Other Relevant Elements
In addition to territorial and socio-economic factors, several other elements influence metropolitan governance and strategic planning in Skopje. These include demographic trends, such as an aging population, moderate birth rates, and migration flows, which shape labor markets, public service demand, and urban development patterns. The city's cultural diversity and historical context also play a role, affecting social cohesion, community engagement, and citizen participation in governance processes. Skopje hosts a significant number of universities, research centers, and cultural

institutions, reinforcing its position as a national hub for education, innovation, and cultural activities.
Other critical elements include technological capacity, digital infrastructure, and administrative resources, which determine the effectiveness of planning, monitoring, and implementation of metropolitan projects. Environmental considerations, including air quality, protected natural areas, and climate adaptation needs, intersect with urban policies and socio-economic development priorities, emphasizing the importance of integrated, cross-sectoral planning.
Collectively, these elements shape the city's strategic potential and constraints, providing essential context for the design of policies, interventions, and sustainable urban development strategies.

2.2.7 The Gothenburg Region Association of Local Authorities (PP07)

1. PP INFORMATION	
PP Name (and APA, if applicable)	Gothenburg Region
	
SWEDEN	Detail (light blue) of the Gothenburg Metropolitan Area in Västsverige - NUTS 2, in between two NUTS 3 (Västra Götaland län and Hallands län)
Name, Role, and Contact of Compiler	Anna Gustafsson, regional spatial planner, anna.gustafsson@goteborgsregionen.se
Swedish sources:	SCB = Statistics Sweden is responsible for developing, producing and disseminating official statistics and other government statistics. Statistics Sweden KOLADA = The council for the promotion of Minicipal Analysis is a non-profit organisation formed on cooperation between the Swedish state and the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions. KOLADA is an open and free database for comparisons and analysis in the municipal sector. Kolada

2. TERRITORIAL FRAMEWORK Understanding territorial characteristics and recognizing key factors that influence governance models	
2.1 Key Data of the Case Study	
Total Surface Area of the Metropolitan Area	3712,82 (SCB, 2024)
Total Surface Area of the Core City	450,22 (SCB, 2024)
Population of the Metropolitan Area	1 087 605 (SCB, 2024)
Population of the Core City	608 993 (SCB, 2024)
Density of the Metropolitan Area	292,9 (SCB, 2024)
Density of the Core City	1352,7 (SCB, 2024)
Number of Municipalities included in the Metropolitan Area	13

The Gothenburg region is a diverse metropolitan area that combines Sweden's second-largest city with surrounding municipalities of varying character. At its core lies Gothenburg, with the largest port in Scandinavia, universities, culture, and industries such as automotive and technology. Around the city are smaller municipalities that balance their own local identities with close ties to Gothenburg. Some, like Mölndal, Partille, and Lerum, are growing commuter towns with active community life and strong connections to nature. Others, such as Härryda with its international airport or Alingsås with its small-town charm and café culture, highlight distinct local profiles.

Along the coast and in the archipelago, municipalities like Kungälv, Stenungsund, Tjörn, and Öckerö emphasize maritime culture, outdoor life, and strong local communities, while inland areas like Ale and Lilla Edet combine rural character with expanding residential areas. In the south, Kungsbacka connects Halland and Gothenburg, offering both coastal lifestyle and rapid growth as a commuter municipality.

The municipalities in Gothenburg region are:

Ale municipality
Alingsås municipality
City of Gothenburg
Härryda municipality
Kungsbacka municipality
Kungälv municipality
Lerum municipality
Lilla Edet municipality
City of Mölndal
Partille municipality

Stenungsund municipality Tjörn municipality Öckerö municipality
Other Possible Sub-Metropolitan Aggregations
There are some inter-municipal collaborations on specific issues. Kungälv, Uddevalla, Stenungsund, Tjörn and Orust collaborate in a constellation called KUSTO. The Västra Stambanegruppen started in 1999 to bring together the municipalities along the Västra Stambanan (railway). The collaboration includes 15 municipalities and two municipal associations, and the group drives issues related to the development of the Västra Stambanan in particular.

Reference Functional Urban Area (FUA – OECD Definition)	• Code: SE002F • Name: Göteborg • Population: 1097397 • Area: 4255 km^2 • No of municipality: 14 • Compared to Metropolitan Area: Bigger

The Functional Urban Area (FUA) largely coincides with the municipalities that make up the Gothenburg Region (GR). In addition to these, it also includes the municipality of Bollebygd, which is directly adjacent to the GR territory. Bollebygd is a small municipality with approximately 9,700 inhabitants and is functionally integrated with the Gothenburg metropolitan system through commuting flows, economic linkages, and service dependency.
Reference NUTS region (Eurostat)
The reference NUTS3 region fully corresponds to Västra Götaland County (Västra Götalandsregionen, VGR). It is a large administrative and territorial unit in western Sweden, of which the Gothenburg Region (GR) is a sub-region. VGR encompasses both urban and rural areas and is one of Sweden's most populous regions • Name: Västra Götalands län • Code: SE232 • Population: 1772821 • Area: 23914 km^2 No of municipality: 49
2.2 Spatial Distribution of Land Uses and Land Cover-LULC (current state)
LULC: Artificial Surface, Agricultural Areas, Forest and Semi Natural Areas, Wetlands and Water bodies
Artificial Surface: In the metropolitan area of Gothenburg (Göteborgsregionen), artificial surfaces are mainly concentrated in and around the core urban centres, with the highest density in and around Göteborg municipality. The **continuous urban fabric**

(dense built-up areas) is primarily found in central Göteborg, stretching along the Göta älv river and towards Mölndal and Partille. **Discontinuous urban fabric** (suburban and semi-urban areas) surrounds these cores, extending towards Kungälv, Lerum, and Kungsbacka, interspersed with green areas and agricultural land. **Industrial and commercial units** are notable along major transport corridors, port areas, and logistics hubs, especially on Hising Island, the harbour districts, and near Landvetter Airport. The spatial pattern shows a compact urban core with linear extensions along main roads and railways, while smaller nodes of artificial surfaces occur around regional towns, contributing to a polycentric structure.

Agricultural Areas: In the metropolitan area of Gothenburg, agricultural land is mainly concentrated in open lowland areas along the Göta älv valley, around Kungsbacka, and in the inland plains north and east of the city. The most common types are non-irrigated **arable land**, used for cereal, fodder, and mixed crops, interspersed with pastures and **complex cultivation patterns** in smaller-scale farming districts. Extensive farmland occurs in Ale, Lilla Edet, and Kungälv municipalities, where fields often border forest edges or watercourses. In the core city of Göteborg, agriculture is limited to scattered pockets, primarily on Hisingen and in the Säve–Tuve area, as well as in the eastern fringe towards Olofstorp and Angered. These areas form a patchwork with natural vegetation, indicating a semi-rural character. The spatial pattern reflects fertile soils in valley bottoms and coastal plains, with agricultural activity diminishing towards more forested and rocky inland terrain.

Forest and Semi Natural Areas: Within the metropolitan area of Gothenburg, natural and semi-natural land cover is dominated by coniferous forest, mixed forest, and broad-leaved forest, forming extensive, contiguous areas especially in the inland and upland zones to the north, east, and southeast. Large forest blocks are found in Härryda, Lerum, and the northern parts of Kungälv and Lilla Edet, often interspersed with lakes, wetlands, and heathland. Moors, heathland, and peat bogs occur mainly in higher, less fertile terrain. In the core city of Göteborg, natural land cover persists mainly in peri-urban reserves such as Vättlefjäll, Änggårdsbergen, and Delsjöområdet, providing continuous habitat corridors towards the surrounding countryside. Coastal zones also include beaches, dunes, and transitional woodland-shrub. Overall, the pattern shows a forest-rich region where natural vegetation dominates outside the main transport and settlement corridors, supporting high biodiversity and recreational values.

Wetlands and Water bodies Within the metropolitan area of Gothenburg, wetlands are primarily composed of inland marshes, peat bogs, and smaller salt marshes along the coast. Significant wetland concentrations occur in the northern and eastern municipalities, particularly in low-lying forested valleys and around major lakes. The largest **water bodies** include Lake Mjörn, Sävelången, Aspen, and the many lakes in the Delsjö and Vättlefjäll area, along with extensive water courses such as the Göta älv, Nordre älv, and Säveån. Coastal features include estuaries at the Göta älv mouth and smaller fjords, as well as coastal lagoons in sheltered archipelago bays. In the core city of Göteborg, wetlands are limited but present in peri-urban nature reserves (e.g., Välen, Hökällan) and riparian zones along rivers and lakes. The spatial pattern shows wetlands concentrated in lowland catchments, often linked to lake and river systems, while water

bodies form an interconnected blue network supporting biodiversity, recreation, and water management.
Settlement Model
The settlement model of the Gothenburg Metropolitan Area is polycentric in nature. Gothenburg is the dominant urban core, concentrating regional functions in economy, higher education, culture, and infrastructure. At the same time, several surrounding municipalities host important secondary centers, including Mölndal, Kungsbacka, Kungälv, Alingsås, and Lerum. These centers provide employment, services, and residential opportunities, while maintaining strong functional linkages to Gothenburg. Much of the built environment is located along the many river valleys, which have shaped the overall spatial pattern together with coastal zones, archipelagos, and hilly inland terrain. The result is a metropolitan area with a strong central city complemented by multiple interconnected sub-centers.
Land Take 51 km^2
Between 2000 and 2018, the NUTS3 region Västra Götaland (SE232), which includes the Gothenburg Region, experienced a significant degree of land take, with approximately 51 km^2 of land converted to artificial surfaces. The majority of this change occurred at the expense of forests and transitional woodland (around 36 km^2) and arable land (around 10 km^2), while pastures and mosaic farmland contributed smaller shares. Much of the land take is linked to urban expansion, diffuse residential development, and the spread of construction sites around the metropolitan core and secondary centers. Net land take for the period amounted to nearly 10,000 hectares, showing that the conversion of natural and agricultural land into built-up areas has far outweighed any restoration or re-naturalisation. The phenomenon illustrates the pressure from population growth, infrastructure, and housing demand, which have reshaped the spatial structure of the region. It should be noted that this analysis covers the entire NUTS3 region, which is larger than the Gothenburg Metropolitan Area itself.
2.3 Transport and Mobility Infrastructure System
Road Network
The hierarchy of the Swedish road network is based on the function and ownership of the roads, with the Swedish Transport Administration responsible for the state public roads (European roads, national roads, county roads), the municipalities managing the municipal streets and most roads within urban areas, while private road associations and associations are responsible for the individual roads in rural areas. The road network is divided into different types such as motorways, expressways and country roads, and is classified functionally to define the importance and level of maintenance of the road. State roads: These include European roads, national roads (road numbers 1-99) and county roads. The Swedish Transport Administration is primarily responsible for these roads.

Municipal roads:
The municipalities are responsible for roads and streets within their area, especially in urban areas.
Private roads:
These are owned and maintained by private road associations and associations, primarily to serve property owners and other local residents.
Hierarchical classes and function
The road network has a functional hierarchy that determines its importance and how it is managed, from the most central to the local roads.
Main road network:
Includes European roads and most national roads, which constitute the most important routes for national and international traffic. These roads often have a mix of public transports, private transports and transport for goods and businesses.
Secondary and tertiary roads:
County roads and other roads with a lower volume of traffic that connect urban areas and rural areas.
Local roads:
Roads within urban areas and residential areas that serve local needs.

Transport Network (High-Speed Rail, Airports, Ports, and other)

The existing transport infrastructure in the Gothenburg region is mixed with state, regional, municipal and private roads. Gothenburg is a node in the Scan-Med corridor according to TEN-T. The regional structure in the Gothenburg region is several strong corridors with both state roads and railways. Major expansions are underway, for example a new train tunnel through Gothenburg (Västlänken) which means that the labour market region can grow further. A new railway between Gothenburg and Borås has also recently been decided upon. These two investments will play a major role in the future development of the Gothenburg region and Western Sweden.
Landvetter Airport is an international airport of great importance for Western Sweden's connection with key locations in Europe. With the new Gothenburg-Borås railway, the airport will also have a railway connection that does not exist today.
The Port of Gothenburg is the largest port in Scandinavia and has 55% of the Swedish container trade. It anchors both deep-sea container ships and short-sea ro-ro to the UK, Benelux, Germany and Denmark. From the Port of Gothenburg freight can be redistributed and continue the waterways to inland Sweden. Stena Line ferries offers passenger and vehicle links to Denmark and Germany.

Sustainable Mobility Network

The majority of public transport uses the same infrastructure as other traffic. However, in Gothenburg and parts of Mölndal there is also a tram network. The cycle path network is well developed in and near urban areas.

The public transport is operated by Västtrafik, which is a public enterprise owned by the region of Västra Götaland. They are also responsible infrastructure specifically dedicated to the public transport. This includes charging stations for busses and depots. In general, the urban areas have better walkability than the rural areas. Many of the municipalities work specifically to make strategic areas more attractive for walking but, especially in the urban areas, there are conflicts of interests between other modes of transport (bicycles, e-scooters, cars and public transport). Electric vehicle charging stations are developed in private companies rather than public. In Gothenburg region charging stations is not a problem and many municipalities have charging stations for their own fleet. There are several shared mobility services but they are most common in urban areas. There's currently a preparation for a new procurement regarding shared bikes where one of the questions is if there's a possibility for more municipalities to join.	
Motorization Rate of the Metropolitan Area	396, 2024
Motorization Rate of the Core City (optional)	322, 2024

3. SOCIO ECONOMIC FRAMEWORK Understanding socio economic characteristics and recognizing key factors that influence governance models	
Birth Rate of the Metropolitan Area	10,3 (SCB, 2024)
Birth Rate of the Core City (optional)	11,2 (SCB, 2024)
Average Household Size of the Metropolitan Area	2,2 (SCB, 2024)
Average Household Size of the Core City (optional)	2,1 (SCB, 2024)
Aging Index of the Metropolitan Area	1,01 (SCB, 2024)
Aging Index of the Core City (optional)	1,02 (SCB, 2024)
Foreign Population and Presence of the Metropolitan Area	8,6% (SCB, 2024)
Foreign Population and Presence of the Core City (optional)	11% (SCB, 2024)

Higher Education Graduates of the Metropolitan Area	47 152 (53,27%), SCB 2024
Higher Education Graduates of the Core City (optional)	33 258 (57,56%), SCB 2024
Employment Rate of the Metropolitan Area	2023: 20-64 years: 526 796 (82%), SCB 15-74 years: 570 772 (72%), SCB
Employment Rate of the Core City (optional)	Gothenburg, 2023: 20-64 years: 299 507 (79%), SCB 15-74 years: 321 372 (70%), SCB
Youth Employment Rate of the Metropolitan Area	2023: 118 033 (58%), SCB
Youth Employment Rate of the Core City (optional)	Gothenburg, 2023: 75 872 (59%), SCB
Enterprises and Sectoral Specialisation of the Metropolitan Area	All below is for 2022, source SCB. Business services 93 233 (16,2%) Healthcare 79 339 (13,7%) Trade 70 652 (12,2%) Manufacturing and mining 63 693 (11,0%) Education 57 118 (9,9%) Construction 40 137 (7,0%) Public administration 35 080 (6,1%) Information and communication 32 332 (5,6%) Transportation and storage 27 585 (4,8%) Cultural and personal services 24 593 (4,3%) Hotel and restaurant 23 242 (4,0%) Real estate 9 927 (1,7%) Finance and insurance 7 846 (1,4%) Energy and environment 5 040 (0,9%) Unknown 4 923 (0,9%) Agriculture, forestry and fishing 2 498 (0,4%)
Gothenburg region and West Sweden has a long tradition of car manufacturing with both Volvo and Saab. Volvo Cars in particular is the largest company in the region. This can also be seen in the region's import and export pattern. This, combined with the	

importance of the Port of Gothenburg is clearly making its mark on the sectoral specialisation of Gothenburg region. In the sectors of "information and communication" and "public administration" we can see the greatest job growht between 2009 and 2023. People working in natural sciences and engineering in Gothenburg (municipality) is 101 persons per 1 000 residents (16-65 years of age) and in Gothenburg region 76. In Stockholm that number is 67 and in Malmö it is 52. For more information, here's a presentation to a summary made by Business Region Gothenburg: Engelsk - Facts & Figures 2025_2026 - PPT Slides _ PDF.pdf	
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the Metropolitan Area	68 006 708 880 € (SCB, 2023)
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the Core City (optional)	Not available
Per Capita Gross Disposable Income of the Metropolitan Area	51 002 € (median, 2023, SCB) 60 639 € (mean, 2023, SCB)
Per Capita Gross Disposable Income of the Core City (optional)	569,6 SEK (mean, 2023, SCB) 52,01 € 432,1 (median, 2023, SCB) 39,46 €
Tourism – Overnight Stays and Arrivals in the Metropolitan Area	
Overnight stays in the Metropolitan area	5 991 704 (2024, The Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth)
Arrivals in the Metropolitan area	3 529 059 (2024, The Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth)
Tourism – Overnight Stays and Arrivals in the Core City (optional)	
Overnight stays in Gothenburg	4 838 989 (2024, The Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth)
Arrivals in Gothenburg	2 815 046 (2024, The Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth)
Protected Natural Areas in the Metropolitan Area	334 (SCB, 2024) 276 km^2 or 276 000 000 m^2
The Gothenburg Region hosts several forms of nature protection, with nature reserves being the most common. These are established and managed either by municipalities or, at the state level, by the Västkuststiftelse or the County Administrative Board. Protected	

habitats include rugged cliffs, coastal meadows, deciduous forests, cultural landscapes, and deep coniferous woods. The largest reserves are Svartedalen, Vättlefjäll, Risveden and Sandsjöbacka. Other forms of protection include Natura 2000 sites and biotope protection areas among others. No national parks are found in the region.

Major Healthcare Facilities in the Metropolitan Area	6
There are different types of health care facilities in the metropolitan area but counting the major ones there are 5 public and 1 private. Alingsås lasarett Angereds Närsjukhus Högsbo Närsjukhus Kungälvs Sjukhus Sahlgrenska Universitetssjukhuset (including Östra Sjukhuset and Mölndals Sjukhus) Carlanderska sjukhuset (private) The Region of Västra Götaland is responsible for the public health care in Västra Götaland but there's a m ix between public and private actors.	

Universities in the Metropolitan Area	2
University of Gothenburg Chalmers University of Technology University of Gothenburg has seven faculties with several institutions. The university has more than 58 000 students and 6 800 employees. In 2024 there was 29 204 full-time students and 1 946 doctoral students. 2 333 million SEK was awarded in research grants (87% national, 13% international. The faculties are: • School of business, economics and law • Faculty of humanities • The artistic faculty • Faculty of science and technology • Faculty of social sciences • Sahlgrenska academy (connected to Sahlgrenska Universitetssjukhuset) • Faculty of education Chalmers University of Technology has almost 11 000 students, 3 200 employees and almost 1000 doctoral students. Both universities have a mix of national and international students and is important for developing, gaining and keeping knowledge in the Gothenburg region.	

Other Relevant Socio-Economic Indicators
People living in rental housing 2024: 385 208 (36%), Gothenburg 291 333 (49%). Participation in municipal elections 2022: 659 790 (81%), Gothenburg 353 150 (77%) Children enrolled in preschool 2024: 51 250 (85%), Gothenburg 27 155 (84%) NEET 16-24 years 2023: 5 800 (5,1%), Gothenburg 3 656 (5,4%)

4. GOVERNANCE
4.1 Governance of the Metropolitan Area
Type of Institution (Category)
Informal/Self-coordination The Gothenburg Region (GR) is a political organization where our 13 member municipalities have decided to work together. The organization has existed in its current form for 30 years, but several of the municipalities have collaborated since the 1940s. We do not have direct elections to our organization, but the distribution of mandates to the municipalities is based on the municipal election results. Our electoral district is our 13 member municipalities and all municipalities and parties must be represented with us. On the civil service side, our organization consists of a total of about 200 employees with a union director as the top manager. GR acts as an authority on behalf of the municipalities in some areas, for example admission to upper secondary school according to the Swedish Education Act. GR is also a collaboration body withing areas such as labour market, environment and spatial planning, social welfare, education and skills supply.
Source of Funding
Transfers from the state or regional governments, Direct local taxation and Access to European funds. GR is partly financed by the annual membership fees of member municipalities. However, the majority of the income comes from external actors, including the state, the EU and the Västra Götaland Region. The annual fee of the member municipalities constitutes approximately 15% of GR's turnover. The remaining part consists of income from projects, training, conferences, research assignments and other assignments. Among the largest financiers are the European Social Fund, the Västra Götaland Region, the National Agency for Education, the County Administrative Board and the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth. Several projects are also financed in whole or in part by the member municipalities. The annual fees of the municipalities are adjusted according to the population growth in the Gothenburg region and currently amount to 72.64 SEK per inhabitant.
Functions and Responsibilities (categories)
Urban/spatial planning, Landscape, Environmental sustainability, Climate and energy, Public transport and related services, Infrastructures, Culture, Innovation ICT management and digital agenda, Education and training, Welfare and social services, Housing. Since we are primarily a collaborative organization, we work on all issues that we and our municipalities see that there is added value in working on. Our starting point is always to put the issues in the regional context. So, when we talk about working with urban and spatial planning, it is primarily regional spatial planning that we work with. What the municipalities can do best on their own are also things they should work on on their own. However, where we see that we can become stronger together and that there is a benefit in working on the issues in a regional perspective, that is also where we focus our efforts.

We work very closely with other regional actors who have clearer assignments on specific issues. For example, the Västra Götaland Region (organisation) is the regional public transport authority for 12 of our municipalities. Collaboration with them is of great important for us to be able to pursue our municipalities' issues in a larger regional context.
Legislative Framework / Act
We are subject to the Swedish Local Government Act but are currently not established as a regional organization by law. Until 2019, GR was a regional planning body for our member municipalities on a voluntary basis, but when the Swedish Planning and Building Act was updated in 2019, this option was removed. Since then, we no longer have the opportunity to be a regional planning body by law but still work with regional planning according to the mandate our municipalities have given us. The Municipal Act regulates municipal competence, the municipality's powers, municipal bodies and their tasks, elected representatives and appeals of municipal decisions. The Municipal Act is a framework law that, in very simplified terms, states what the municipality may do and how it should proceed when the municipality makes decisions. As a municipal organisation we are subject to the same law. The Swedish Planning and Building Act regulates how land and water may be used and how buildings may look. The law governs the planning and construction of municipalities, and aims to create sustainable and appropriate social development. This law also regulates regional spatial planning.
Decision-Making Process
Unsure of the English translations from Swedish so here's the Swedish and English words I'm using: Förbundsfullmäktige→ The Gothenburg Region's municipal Association Council Förbundsstyrelse → The Gothenburg Region's municipal Association Board Beredningsgrupp → The Gothenburg Region's municipal Association Preparatory Committee The Gothenburg Region's municipal Association Council is the highest decision-making body and appoints The Gothenburg Region's municipal Association Board, the Admissions Committee and the School Committee for the Swedish section of the international school ISGR (International School of the Gothenburg Region). The council also makes decisions on the federal statutes, plan and detailed budget and annual report. The Gothenburg Region's municipal Association Board has overall responsibility for GR's operations, development and finances. The board approves the one-year plan and detailed budget and appoints members of the preparatory committees for the labor market, social welfare and environment and spatial planning. The Gothenburg Region's municipal Association Preparatory Committee are the first political instances before a decision is made. Their task is to prepare the issues before they are handled by the Federal Board where the decision is made. Politicians are elected to our political forums indirectly based on the election results in our electoral district. There are a number of distribution keys that must be followed, for

example, that all municipalities must be represented but also all parties. To our council shall each municipality appoint one member and one alternate. In addition, one additional member and one alternate shall be appointed based on the population at the beginning of the election year. The total amount of members are decided based on the population. Election to our board
Our board shall consist of at least 24 plus members and at least 13 alternates. This composition is made based on the combined election results for the 13 municipalities and the mandates are distributed using the adjusted odd-number method. All the municipalities' chairmen of the boards shall be provided with seats as members. Additional municipal board politicians from each municipality (opposition council or equivalent) shall be provided with seats as members or alternates.
We have a strong consensus culture where voting takes place even if it is not common. The responsibility of the preparatory committees is to prepare the board for decisions, which also means that some negotiation takes place between members and parties before a decision is made by the board.

Public-Private Partnership

Sweden generally has a quite restrictive tradition of PPPs, largely due to the Swedish principle of public access. We do not have a specific law (that I am aware of) that regulates PPPs per se, but the Local Government Act combined with the Public Procurement Act means that PPPs are generally uncommon in Sweden. Softer collaborations between public and private actors are much more common, but then through procurements or, for example, in various externally funded projects where the projects are applied for jointly by the parties.
That said, collaborations between public and private actors are common at GR, but then through procurements and other specific activities. At GR, we mainly bring in private actors when we are unable to do the tasks ourselves. We've had some projects with private actors but at a metropolitan level, it can sometimes be difficult with different types of goals and target groups.

4.2 Governance for the Policy Instrument

Participation Model During the Design Phase

In the development of our policy document, officials and politicians from all municipalities have been involved at some stage of the process. I run a network for infrastructure issues with representatives from all member municipalities, the Västra Götaland Region and the Swedish Transport Administration. That group is the "owner" of the document and its relevance. The group is also my stakeholders in this project. Version 1 of the document was developed in 2019 and decided on i april 2020. The current version was decided on February 2024.
The participants in the infrastructure network are traffic engineers, traffic strategists or other officials responsible for infrastructure planning in the municipality. The first version of the document was developed together with officials in the networks for public transport, master planning and environmental strategic issues. All of the

members in each network have a mandate to represent their municipality in order to create a better collaboration adn decision-making within the network.
Decision-Making Process
1. Discussion in the network whether the document needed to be updated or updated. The participants concluded that the document as a whole is still valid but that it needs to be updated. (December 2023) 2. Anchoring with managers in the 13 member municipalities about updating the document. 3. GR sent out information to all member municipalities with a number of questions to answer. The response time was approximately 6 months so that each municipality would have the opportunity to anchor its answers to us politically. 4. Workshop with the network on how we will address the comments received. 5. Processing internally at GR together with managers and communications officer. 6. Sending out drafts to the infrastructure network for review and comments. 7. Processing of comments received. 8. Presentation of the proposal to the infrastructure network and urban planning managers. 9. Initiated a matter to the preparatory committee. 10. Decision in GR's board (February 2024.) The political composition and their mandate are described earlier.
Implementation Phase Modalities
Everyone who works in the municipality or at GR with transport issues is responsible for ensuring that the points of the policy document are complied with. Their roles have been described above. It is about proposing political decisions that are in line with the document and make politicians aware if they make decisions which is not in line with the agreements. Every four years, the Swedish national transport infrastructure plans are revised, and the document plays an important role in this. In discussions with other parties, everyone whose municipality or organization supports the document is responsible for proposing decisions that are in line with the content of the document. For example, it is about GR and the municipalities wanting financial resources to be prioritized for infrastructure for public transport and cycling rather than road measures for private cars. The main function of the document is for GR and the member municipalities to have a clear vision of what it is that we, together as an association, would like to invest in regarding transport infrastructure.
4.3 Governance Cultural Framework
Politicians
Cooperation Models between municipalities and across different government and administrative levels
5

In general, there is a broad consensus that regional cooperation is important. There is of course a range between what individual politicians think, but it is clear in discussions that inter-municipal and regional cooperation is valued. Our politicians often highlight that they need to work towards the same goal in order for change to occur.
GR does not make any legally binding decisions but is based on consensus as much as possible and agreements are traditionally made by consensus. This means that the agreements that are made also tend to last over time. This can be seen in particular in regional physical planning where the results show that the municipalities to a very large extent actually plan and build according to our regional agreements.
In Sweden, we have different levels between municipality and state. In Västra Götaland there we have municipalities, municipal association such as GR, Region Västra Götaland and then state. Two organizations work for the same geographical area (Västra Götaland), one is Västra Götaland Region and the other is the County Administrative Board of Västra Götaland. The County Administrative Board is the extended arm of the state and handles state issues at the regional level. In order for municipalities to be able to make themselves heard at all different levels, coordination is needed. Regional cooperation therefore also means that municipalities can have a stronger voice towards the state.
In the political forums, it is important that the municipalities are represented, which they do, for example, through a municipal association such as GR.

Cooperation Models between public and private actors

5
The Gothenburg region is a strong growth region in Sweden and the cooperation between the public and private sectors is a very important reason for this. Approximately 70% of the employed in the Gothenburg region work in the private sector. GR has a sister organization called Business Region Gothenburg, which is primarily responsible for the cooperation between public and private actors. There is good cooperation between the parties, which often takes place in the form of projects. An important factor for the cooperation is regional connectivity and how business clusters can develop. The main focus is not which municipality large workplaces end up in, but rather how easy it is for employees and goods to get to and from the location.
For the Gothenburg region's private sector, the monocentric structure has been advantageous because it has created good conditions for matching skills with the needs of the labor market. In addition, many companies are investing in FOI, which, in combination with a strong manufacturing industry, has proven to be successful.

Key Sectors or Issues Where Cooperation is Most Needed

GR currently has produced a regional development plan which contains political agreements on how and where the region should grow until the year 2050. It has been developed by the 13 municipalities of the Gothenburg Region to ensure coordinated action during years to come. This document has been produced by officials at GR after thorough discussions in all municipalities political forums. The plan focuses on spatial

planning and consists of agreements between the politicians. The plan is currently on consultation but the overall key sectors will likely be the same.
The key sectors are:
Growth and social sustainability (Population growth, Skills supply and Social sustainability)
Spatial planning (Structural illustration and Regional growth nodes)
Regional robustness (risk and vulnerability, Energy supply, Drinking water supply, Environment and biodiversity, Climate transition and climate adaptation).
In GR's articles of association, our mission is clearly described as working for cooperation across municipal borders, creating added value for the member municipalities and strengthening the Gothenburg region regionally, nationally and internationally. During GR's years as an organization, the substantive issues have varied to some extent, but there is always with the basis in the regional perspective. For example, in recent years, AI has grown as a subject area for municipalities, which means that it becomes an important issue for us to work on, but from a regional perspective.

Existing Cooperation Experiences Beyond the Metropolitan Area

There are several collaborations between GR and other regional parties. The Västra Götaland Region and Region Halland are two important parties as we have municipalities that organizationally belong to the two regions. Another regional party is the County Administrative Board whose main function is to be the extended arm of the state. We have a well-established collaboration with the two other metropolitan regions in Sweden, namely Region Skåne and Region Stockholm. GR is also represented in SKR (Swedish Municipalities and Regions).
In addition to collaboration with other public parties, there is some collaboration with STRING, Greater Copenhagen and Eurocities (through the City of Gothenburg).
There are many informal cooperations beyond the metropolitan area between politicians where officials are not included.

Current Cooperation Needs Beyond the Metropolitan Area

Not that we can specifically identify.
GR's working method means that collaboration with other actors is the foundation of our work. This means that all issues that require collaboration outside the metropolitan region are developed when the need arises. Our working method also means that we, on the civil service side, actively seek new collaborations as well as care about the collaborations we have already established. With this as a starting point, we currently do not see a need for collaborations where we are not already actively working. When new issues arise, as has happened with digitalization, we continue collaboration with established contacts and broaden our networks.
If our politicians assesses that there is a need for new formal collaboration, it is done on their initiative. For example, work has begun for one of our railways where basic collaboration has been established since many years but a formal declaration of intent specifically for the issue has been signed by the parties involved.

The need for collaboration alternates between informal and formal depending on the issue and how we wish to work with it.
Multilevel Collaboration
There are a total of 49 municipalities in Västra Götaland and 6 in Region Halland. 12 of GR's member municipalities are in Västra Götaland and 1 in Region Halland. In Västra Götaland there are 4 local government associations (of which GR is one). At the different levels there are several formal and informal forums where political cooperation takes place. In GR, politicians from the 13 member municipalities gather to discuss and decide on issues at a sub-regional level. The issues can sometimes concern decisions that only concern GR's member municipalities, but in issues such as public transport and transport infrastructure, decisions and positions are passed on to the Västra Götaland Region for further handling. In Västra Götaland there is a political forum called the Committee for Sustainable Development (BHU in Swedish). BHU is a joint preparatory committee between VGR and the four local government associations in Västra Götaland. BHU is an formal informal forum. BHU does not have a mandate to make decisions but does make standpoints. The standpoints have a great influence in the Regional Board where those decisions are made. The issues handled in BHU concern, among other things, infrastructure and public transport issues. There are further formal political forums between different political groups that in various ways connect to GR and GR's various sectors.
Technicians
Cooperation Models between municipalities and across different government and administrative levels
5 In general, there is a great interest in regional collaboration between technicians who are in contact with GR's various operations and activities. For the people who participate and are active in our various forums, such as our networks, our assessment is a five for need for cooperation. We are, however, aware that there is a spread between different technicians and there might be variations depending on the understanding for GR as an organisation. Since GR is a collaborative organization and project organization, much of our work takes place in more formalized collaborations. However, thanks to the formal collaborations, relationships are also built between us at GR and our member municipalities. These relationships foster informal discussions and forums where we can support each other, which then creates more possibilities for collaborations (formal or informal). An important factor in the need for collaboration is that many civil servants do not have the conditions to "know everything". Some smaller municipalities have staff who work on many different issues, which means that there is not always enough time to be up to date on all issues. There is a certain culture of seeing civil servants in the same issues

in another municipality as extra colleagues and collaboration can therefore take place in an informal forum with a high degree of trust in each other.
Cooperation Models between public and private actors
5 There are different types of collaboration with the private sector. Within the framework of purchasing services, much is regulated within the Public Procurement Act and largely concerns the purchase of consulting services. As far as we know, there are no specific models for collaboration. As far as collaboration with the business community is concerned, it is very important for the development of the Gothenburg region. Since the municipalities have a planning monopoly over land use, the location of housing and businesses often takes place together with developers. Large establishments in the Gothenburg region have historically played a major role in the development of the municipalities. The city of Gothenburg with the Port of Gothenburg, Volvo, a large chemical cluster in Stenungsund and other types of industry have shaped our region. This type of establishment has a major impact on the region's population growth, housing construction and, for us, generates an important part of the regional growth. The Gothenburg region's tourism sector is also large, which means that collaboration between the public and private sectors on the civil service side is important. This could involve coordinating large concerts so that they do not take place at the same time as other large events. For example, Gothia Cup is one of the world's largest football tournaments, and in the 2025 Cup, 1,939 teams from 74 nations participated. Implementing this type of event requires good collaboration between the public and private sectors.
Key Sectors or Issues where Cooperation is Most Needed
Since the municipalities and GR are political organisations, the key sectors align with the answer above from a political point of view. One thing to add here is the cooperation itself. As mentioned a thousand times, GR is an organisation where one aim is to strengthen cooperation between municipalities so this is a very important aspect of everything that we do.
Existing Cooperation Experiences Beyond the Metropolitan Area
We have close collaborations with Region Västra Götaland, Region Halland and the other metropolitan areas in Sweden wich is Region Skåne and Region Stockholm. As also mentioned before GR is a project organisation so we do have projects with research institutes (private and public) such as University of Gothenburg, Chalmers University, Blekinge Institute of Technology, KTH Royal Insitute of Technology and The Swedish National Road and Transport Research Institute.

GR is a member of METREX and through that network collaborates with other metropolitan regions in Europe. We also participate in a network specifically for Nordic and Baltic countries through METREX. The City of Gothenburg and Kungsbacka municipality are members of Eurocities. City of Gothenburg also has a European Office in Brussels.
Current Cooperation Needs Beyond the Metropolitan Area
Since we work a lot in projects, we also have the possibility of searching for cooperation wherever we see fit. This means that we actively seek out cooperations when we see a need for it and, as in the case of Metro Case, we also say yes to possibility that arises. So the answer to this is yes, there's always a cooperation need beyond the metropolitan area but we don't know the possibilities of the future.
Multilevel Collaboration
As described regarding political multilevel cooperation there are both formal and informal collaborations between different organisations at different scales. Since there is a political multilevel collaboration, it is necessary for multilevel collaboration between technicians as well. Since we work both downwards and upwards in the administrative and geographical scales, a large part of our work is based on multilevel collaboration. We have routines with the Västra Götaland Region where, on certain issues, referrals are sent to the local government associations to collect and process the municipalities' views and then provide a sub-regional response. This applies in particular to issues within public transport cooperation. For infrastructure issues, there is an agreement (politically decided) that means that the strategic, regional and inter-municipal infrastructure issues are handled by GR. This applies, for example, to the revision of the national and regional transport infrastructure plan, the distribution of certain funds from the regional plan and the prioritisation of certain measures. These are examples of the more formal collaborations that have been established. Examples of more informal collaborations are our networks. Networking is an important part of the collaboration where all municipalities are represented. Depending on the theme, other representatives are also included in the networks, for example in infrastructure issues the Swedish Transport Administration is also involved.
General Public (and Other Stakeholders)
Cooperation Models between municipalities and across different government and administrative levels
GR:s main target group are municipalities and other actors in the public sector. As far as I can find, there are no surveys or other sources of information related to the general public and regional public actors.
Cooperation Models between public and private actors

See above.
Level of Perceived Belonging to Individual Municipalities
I cannot find any research specifically for perceived belonging to individual municipalities. However, there is definitely part of the population that feel a strong sense of belonging, but I don't know (nor can find) any data on it. More reasoning will follow in the next two questions.
Level of Perceived Belonging to the Metropolitan Area
In general, a sense of belonging is not directly linked to the Gothenburg region but rather based on other geographical parts. For example, there is a strong sense of belonging linked to islands and the coast, proximity to nature or linked to the city-country perspective. It can also be linked to football teams, the industrial city, humor and everyday relationships. In some municipalities there can also be a sense of belonging to local sub-areas or specific islands.
Historical or Cultural Factors
Gothenburg was founded as a trading city and emerged as Sweden's western gateway where the port, trade, shipbuilding and later industry (Volvo) have shaped both the economy and identity. The historical heritage is important for the city and the influence over the entire Gothenburg region. Given Gothenburg's size and region centre, housing prices have also increased, and the surrounding municipalities have thus also fulfilled an important function for housing and accessibility to natural areas for residents. Landvetter Airport in Härryda municipality has meant that the municipality has developed into an important logistics hub. The development of the chemical industry in Stenungsund and the manufacturing industry in Lilla Edet in combination with proximity to major roads and railways has played a role in the development of the municipalities and the region. Our coastal and archipelago municipalities have a strong local identity characterized by the sea with fishing, sea life and archipelago culture. However, a clash can be experienced here as the summer months are often characterized by a large amount of tourism and with many summer houses.

5. SPECIFIC DATA CONNECTED WITH THE SELECTED POLICY INSTRUMENT
Contents
The document was first produced in 2019 and has been updated in 2023. Every four years, the national transport infrastructure plan is revised, which in turn also involves revising the regional transport infrastructure plans. The Västra Götaland Region and Region Halland are responsible for producing the respective regional plans, which means that GR does not have direct decision-making power in the matter. The main purpose of the policy document is that GR's officials and politicians can agree on issues relating to transport infrastructure priorities and thus also be clear to the Västra Götaland Region and Region Halland about our views.

Policy for transport infrastructure planning in the metropolitan region contains a number of guidelines for how transport infrastructure should be developed in our region. There is a portal paragraph that is the overall ambition for transport infrastructure, and then 8 guidelines follow. The policy document is used both for prioritizing specific measures but also for distributing funds in different thematic areas in the regional plan. The document is therefore used both in the implementation of the transport infrastructure plan as well as strategic directions for the upcoming planning period.

Objectives

At a strategic level and based on the fact that the document shows a direction of will, the overall goal of the document is to make a shift in the issues. In other words, there are no specific objectives but are formulated based on "*we want*" ... All of the policies also have specific examples which can be seen in the document itself (attached to this document).
Portal paragraf:
We want to:

1. work for sustainable growth in the metropolitan region
2. significantly reduce the climate and environmental impact of the transport system.

Policys:

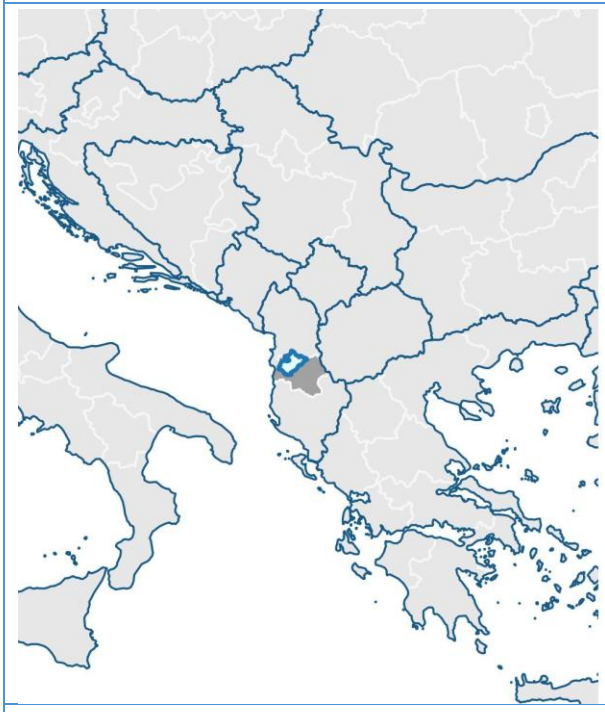
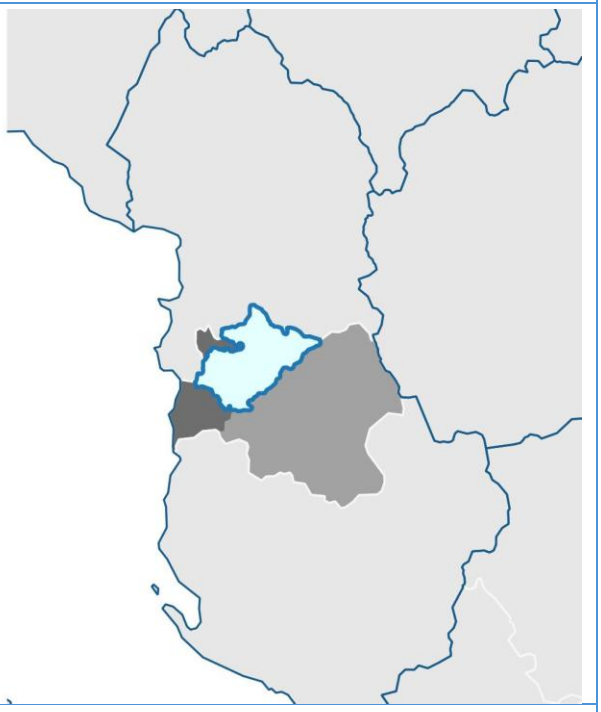
- We want to increase railway capacity
- We want to improve accessibility and capacity for public transport in the contiguous urban area
- We want to increase sea and rail capacity for freight transport
- We want to strengthen the cycling infrastructure in continuous regional routes
- We want to develop the transport system in interaction with people's living environment, biodiversity and ecosystem services
- We want to adapt transport infrastructure to the effects of climate change
- We want to stimulate innovation and new technologies to achieve a more transport-efficient society
- We want to create the conditions for behavioural change

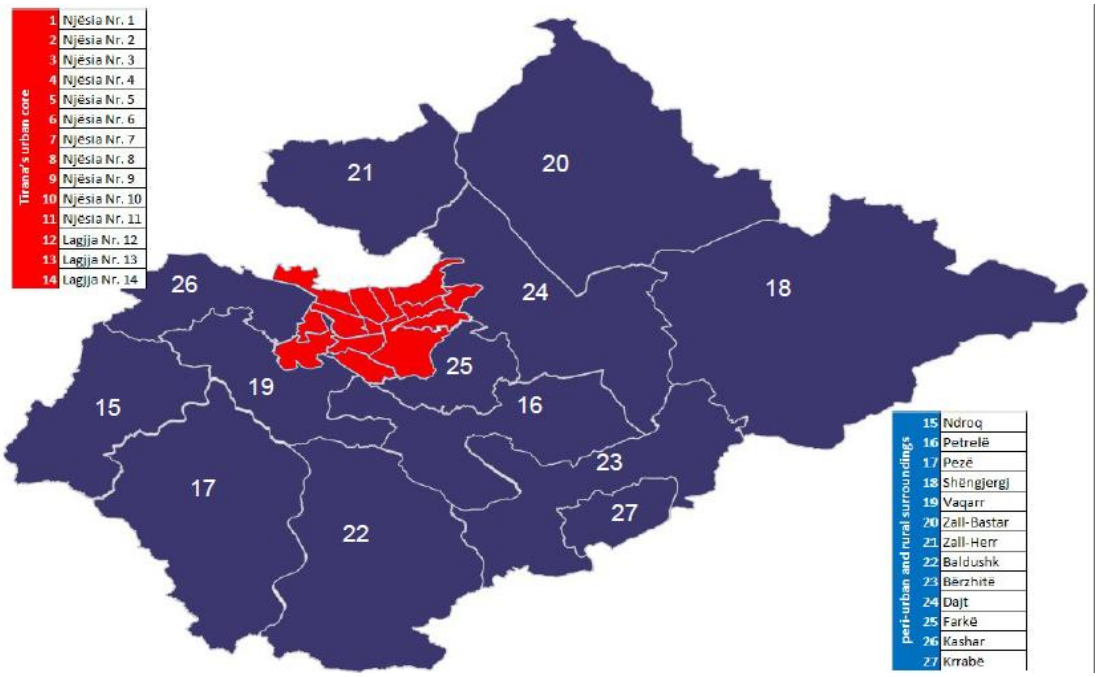
Critical Issues to address

There are several critical issues that need to be addressed in the content of the document as well as critical issues in the development of a new document.
Regarding critical issues that the document needs to address, it is about reducing climate emissions, addressing climate change and at the same time improving accessibility for the region's residents. If the Gothenburg region develops at the same historical pace, we will also have about 400,000 more residents in 2050 - on the same area. The transport system has an important function for both current and future residents.
Regarding critical issues in the development of a new document, the following questions need to be addressed and handled together with our municipalities:

• Does the purpose of the document still apply? • What function should the document have? • What needs should the document meet? • Should it be a document like today or are there other smart ways to meet the questions above?
Expected Change/Improvement
The expectations are to have a new document (or equivalent) with clear objectives decided by our new politicians and accepted in all of our 13 municipalities. Expectations is also to be able to answer what we want with the strategic infrastructure planning and what type of measures should be prioritised.
Territorial and Socio-Economic Framework (Sectoral)
Since this document if decided by GR:s politicians the territorial scope of this policy is GR:s 13 municipalities. Questions regarding the transport system inherently has socio-economic framework connected to it. In relation to this policy document the aspect of regional growth and regional accessibility (for people, goods and businesses) will likely be of great importance. Since transport planning in Sweden takes many years, priorities and investments decided on today have great impact on the spatial structure for many years to come.
Other Relevant Elements

2.2.8 Municipality of Tirana (PP08)

1. PP INFORMATION	
PP Name (and APA, if applicable)	Municipality of Tirana (PP08) (No Associated Policy Authority – APA – applicable; the Municipality is the direct policy owner and implementing authority of the Integrated Urban-Rural Mobility Plan.)
	
ALBANIA	Detail (light blue) of the Tirana Metropolitan Area (corresponding to the boundaries of the Municipality of Tirana) in Qarku Tiranë - NUTS 3 and in Qendër - NUTS 2
Name, Role, and Contact of Compiler	Sector of Strategic Partnerships Directorate for Integration, Foreign Projects, Diaspora and Migration General Directorate for Integration, Strategic Planning & Economic Development Lek Hakani – lek.hakani@tirana.al Sano Nuriu – sano.nuriu@tirana.al Ingrid Mëçalla – ingrid.mecalla@tirana.al



The territory depicted in the map reflects the dual structure of Tirana's metropolitan area, composed of a dense urban core (marked in red) and a broad peri-urban and rural belt (marked in blue). The urban core includes the central administrative units of Tirana 1–11, forming the political, economic, and cultural heart of Albania. This compact zone hosts the main governmental institutions, universities, and business centers, along with a dynamic service sector dominated by finance, ICT, trade, and creative industries. The area is characterized by high population density, mixed land use, and ongoing redevelopment, supported by significant infrastructure investments in public transport, digital networks, and green urban spaces such as the Grand Lake Park, which serves as the city's main recreational and ecological hub.

Surrounding the core, the peri-urban and rural zones — including Vaqarr, Kashar, Petrelë, Ndroq, Farkë, Dajt, and Pezë — form a transition belt where agricultural, residential, and natural landscapes coexist. These areas play a crucial role in balancing urban expansion with environmental preservation and provide essential ecosystem services through assets like Dajti National Park, Bovilla Reservoir, and fertile agricultural lands. The rural settlements are increasingly integrated into the city's economic network, benefiting from growing tourism, agritourism, and logistical developments connected to Tirana's transport corridors and the Durrës–Elbasan axis.

Geographically, Tirana's basin is framed by mountains to the east and open plains to the west, creating both opportunities and challenges for connectivity, spatial development, and climate resilience. Economically, it concentrates around half of Albania's GDP, acting as the national engine of employment, innovation, and investment, while the surrounding territories provide land, resources, and environmental buffers essential for sustainable growth. Together, the urban and peri-urban areas form an integrated metropolitan ecosystem where mobility, spatial balance, and ecological stewardship are key to ensuring inclusive and sustainable territorial development.

2. TERRITORIAL FRAMEWORK Understanding territorial characteristics and recognizing key factors that influence governance models	
2.1 Key Data of the Case Study	
Total Surface Area of the Metropolitan Area	The **Municipality of Tirana** covers a total area of **1,110.03 km²** **Source:** PortaVendore.al **Reference year:** The figure corresponds to the **2015–2016 administrative territorial reform**, which established the current boundaries of the municipality; the exact measurement year is not specified in the source.
Total Surface Area of the Core City	40.12 km^2
Population of the Metropolitan Area	598176, Census 2023
Population of the Core City	389323, Census 2023
Density of the Metropolitan Area	1023.56, Census, 2023
Density of the Core City	9703.96, Census 2023
Number of Municipalities included in the Metropolitan Area	
The Tirana Metropolitan Area coincides administratively with the Municipality of Tirana, established through the 2015 Territorial and Administrative Reform, which consolidated 25 former local units into one large metropolitan entity. The area includes 27 administrative units in total—14 urban units forming the dense urban core (Njësia Nr. 1–14) and 13 peri-urban or rural units: Baldushk, Bërzhitë, Dajt, Farkë, Kashar, Krrabë, Ndroq, Petrelë, Pezë, Shëngjergj, Vaqarr, Zall-Bastar, and Zall-Herr. This metropolitan configuration allows for integrated governance of spatial planning, infrastructure, environment, and economic development under a single institutional framework	
Other Possible Sub-Metropolitan Aggregations	
Although the Municipality of Tirana defines the institutional metropolitan boundary, the city's functional influence extends beyond, especially toward the municipalities of Kamëz, Vorë, and Durrës. These areas form part of the Tirana–Durrës corridor, Albania's most dynamic and urbanized macro-region. High commuting rates, shared labor markets, and interlinked transport infrastructure (A2 and SH2 highways, TIA airport, and	

the Durrës–Tirana rail connection) create a de-facto polycentric metropolitan zone. While no formal inter-municipal body governs this wider system, several national and regional planning instruments acknowledge its functional integration.

Reference Functional Urban Area (FUA – OECD Definition)

According to the OECD definition, Tirana is classified as the Functional Urban Area of Tirana (FUA code: AL001). It covers approximately 1,200 km² and includes the Municipality of Tirana and its commuting hinterland, particularly the municipalities of Kamëz and Vorë. The total population is estimated at around 1 million inhabitants (OECD, 2022). The institutional boundary of the Municipality of Tirana largely overlaps with the FUA's urban core but does not include all peripheral commuting zones. The FUA is recognized as Albania's main metropolitan region, concentrating over one-third of national GDP and hosting the country's most extensive mobility, education, and innovation networks

Reference NUTS region (Eurostat)

Tirana belongs to the **NUTS-2 region "Qarku Tiranë" (AL0A1)**. The region covers approximately 1,586 km² and includes 5 municipalities: Tirana, Kamëz, Vorë, Kavajë, and Rrogozhinë. It is the smallest but most densely populated region in Albania, with around 910,000 residents (Eurostat 2024; INSTAT 2023). "Qarku Tiranë" serves as the political, administrative, and economic core of the country, generating the highest regional GDP per capita in Albania.

2.2 Spatial Distribution of Land Uses and Land Cover-LULC (current state)

LULC: Artificial Surface, Agricultural Areas, Forest and Semi Natural Areas, Wetlands and Water bodies

Artificial Surface

The "Artificial Surfaces" category in CORINE Level-3 refers to built-up residential, commercial and industrial zones, transport infrastructure (roads, railways), and other constructed areas. Though specific km² data for Tirana is not public in CORINE's downloadable tables by administrative unit, mapping via ASIG's Geoportal shows significant concentration of artificial surfaces inside the core urban units (Njësia 1-14). These areas include continuous urban fabric around the centre, dense residential sectors, major roads and highways, and large commercial/industrial zones (e.g., around the ring roads, airport access, main arterial roads). Outside the core city, artificial surfaces appear as dispersed settlements and linear infrastructure, particularly following major roads and in peri-urban units like Kashar, Farkë, and Ndroq. Operationally, PP02 could support quantification by extracting the CORINE 2018 layer clipped by the metropolitan and core city boundaries, calculating area totals for each artificial sub-class. This would allow estimation of percentage share of artificial surfaces vs. total area, and to compare density of artificial cover in core vs. periphery.

Agricultural Areas

Agricultural land is extensive in the outer units of the Metropolitan Area. CORINE Level-3 classes include arable land, permanent crops, and pastures. In Tirana's surroundings (Baldushk, Zall-Bastar, Pezë, etc.) large swathes of agricultural usage are visible — mainly arable land and mosaics of agriculture with natural vegetation. In contrast, inside the core city, agricultural land is almost absent: small patches may exist at the borders or in zones of transition. Agricultural areas define much of the rural/peri-urban belt, provide open landscape, and act as buffer zones between built-up clusters. PP02 support would include delineating these classes, estimating proportion of agricultural cover per administrative unit, and detecting trends (e.g., loss of agricultural-land to urban expansion) by comparing with previous CORINE editions.

Forest and Semi Natural Areas

Forest and semi-natural land covers (woodlands, shrublands, grasslands) are more dominant in the marginal, higher-altitude parts of the metropolitan area — for example in Dajt, Zall-Herr, Shëngjergj, Zall-Bastar. These areas serve ecological, recreational, and environmental buffering functions. Semi-natural cover also appears interspersed in peri-urban zones as mosaics combined with agricultural use. Inside the core city, forest cover is negligible; there may exist small green patches, urban parks, or avenues lined with trees, but they are not classified by CORINE as forest or semi-natural at the scale considered. Using GIS operations, PP02 could summarize area of each sub-class (forest, shrub, grassland) inside both core and metropolitan area, and analyze adjacency/fragmentation metrics (how continuous vs. fragmented these natural areas are).

Wetlands and Water bodies

Water bodies (rivers, lakes) and wetlands are relatively limited in area within the Municipality of Tirana. The main water features include the rivers Lana, Tiranë (if considered separately), possibly small lakes or reservoirs, and wetland patches (if any) in low-lying or poorly drained zones. Most wetlands may be seasonal or small, and may not appear as CORINE Level-3 classes if below the minimum mapping unit threshold. Within the core city, water bodies are largely limited to river beds and possibly municipal drainage ponds; wetlands are rare. In the wider metropolitan/peri-urban zones, some water bodies or wetlands may appear along streams, around reservoirs, or in lowland terrain. PP02 operational support would help to detect and quantify these, likely via overlay of CORINE with national hydrography data to include smaller water/wetlands not captured by CORINE.

Settlement Model

Tirana exhibits a **monocentric core with peri-urban sprawl** pattern, especially in recent decades. The core city (units 1-14) functions as the primary center of housing, services, administration, economy. Around it, settlements spread along major roads and transport axes such as those towards Farkë, Kashar, Baldushk, and Ndroq; these peri-urban areas show lower density and are more discontinuous. Terrain (such as hills and mountains to the east, e.g. Dajt massif, and Zall-Herr region) constrains expansion, pushing built-up growth more to flatter west and south directions. There is no strong secondary center of equal weight inside the metropolitan area, so the form is essentially monocentric with peripheral dispersion. Using PP02, morphological analysis could

include measuring distance decay of density (how density drops when moving away from core), clustering of built up patches, or identifying new emerging sub-centres.e A description of the geographical morphology of the metropolitan area.

Land Take

- As a rule of thumb, arable/agricultural land cannot be used for construction purposes, as per the Urban Regulatory Plan of Tirana (2016 - 2030).
- Also, areas designated as forests cannot be used for construction, unless in designated projects related to agro-tourism initiatives, with temporary construction materials (wood, etc)
- In order for arable land to be used for construction purposes (housing/industrial, etc.) the status of the land MUST be changed, and it it done ONLY through a decision of the National Territorial Council (a central government entity) and only for major strategic investments. This is a practice that has occurred only in exceptionally seldom cases

2.3 Transport and Mobility Infrastructure System

Road Network

The road network in Tirana Metropolitan Area is structured hierarchically, including motorways/highways, national and regional roads, urban arterials, secondary/unclassified roads, and local/neighbourhood streets. Key highways such as SH2 (Tirana–Durrës), SH1 (north toward Shkodër), and the newer A1 motorway connection serve as major national connectors, facilitating both freight and passenger movement to/from Tirana. Within the municipality, a ring road (Tirana ring road / "Big Ring Road") is under various stages of development, aiming to redistribute traffic away from the city centre, reduce congestion on inner arteries, and improve connectivity between peri-urban units. Major arterial roads feed into the core urban units (Njësia 1-14), linking them with peri-urban and rural units (e.g. Farkë, Kashar, Baldushk). The urban road hierarchy also includes collectors and local streets inside units, with varying quality, often narrower in older neighbourhoods. Traffic congestion is significant, especially during peak hours along main corridors entering/exiting core city.

Transport Network (High-Speed Rail, Airports, Ports, and other)

Tirana's metropolitan area is served by a multimodal but still developing transport network that ensures regional and international connectivity. Tirana International Airport Nënë Tereza (TIA), located in Rinas about 17 km northwest of the city centre, is Albania's main aviation hub, handling over 10 million passengers in 2024 and connecting the capital to major European destinations. Although Albania has no operational high-speed rail, a modern railway link between Tirana, Durrës, and the airport is under construction, expected to be completed by 2027, improving intercity and airport accessibility. Tirana is also connected to the Port of Durrës—the country's largest commercial and passenger port—via the SH2 highway and the rehabilitated rail line, facilitating freight and logistics movements across the Tirana–Durrës corridor.

Together, these infrastructures establish Tirana as the core node of Albania's transport system, linking air, road, and rail networks and supporting its integration within regional and trans-European mobility corridors.
Sustainable Mobility Network
Tirana has made significant progress in promoting sustainable mobility, focusing on cleaner public transport, cycling infrastructure, and pedestrian-friendly urban spaces. The municipal bus network, the main mode of public transport, operates more than 20 lines connecting the core city with peri-urban areas, with ongoing initiatives to introduce electric and hybrid buses as part of a green fleet renewal program. Several major boulevards and central streets have been pedestrianised, supporting walkability and urban regeneration. The city's cycling network has expanded to over 40 km of bike lanes, complemented by public bike-sharing schemes and micro-mobility options such as e-scooters. Electric vehicle charging points are being installed through public-private partnerships, while awareness campaigns encourage modal shifts from cars to sustainable alternatives. Despite rapid progress, gaps remain in network continuity and integration between modes, prompting Tirana to prioritise sustainable urban mobility planning in alignment with EU Green Deal objectives.

Motorization Rate of the Metropolitan Area	According to the INSTAT Population and Housing Census 2023, the Municipality of Tirana had 598,176 inhabitants and 126,673 private cars registered as of 18 September 2023. This results in a motorization rate of approximately 212 cars per 1,000 inhabitants, meaning roughly one car for every five residents.
Motorization Rate of the Core City (optional)	

3. SOCIO ECONOMIC FRAMEWORK **Understanding socio economic characteristics and recognizing key factors that influence governance models**	
Birth Rate of the Metropolitan Area	Tirana Metropolitan Area (Municipality of Tiranë), Live births (2023): 7,086 (INSTAT table "Number of births and deaths by municipalities, 2021–2023"). Population (Census date 18 Sep 2023): 598,176 (INSTAT, Census 2023 profile – Municipality of Tiranë). CBR = (7,086/598,176) × 1,000 ≈11.85 births per 1000 inhabitants

Birth Rate of the Core City (optional)	
Average Household Size of the Metropolitan Area	According to the 2023 Census, the Municipality of Tirana – which includes both the urban core and its surrounding administrative units such as Ndroq, Petrelë, Pezë, Shëngjergj, Vaqarr, Zall-Bastar, Zall-Herr, Baldushk, Bërzhitë, Dajt, Farkë, Kashar, and Krrabë – recorded an average household size of approximately 2.94 persons per household. This figure was calculated based on a total population of 591,427 residents and 201,399 households, reflecting the continued trend toward smaller family units and urban living patterns within the municipality.
Average Household Size of the Core City (optional)	
Aging Index of the Metropolitan Area	According to the INSTAT Population and Housing Census 2023, the Municipality of Tirana had 102,382 inhabitants aged 65 years and over and 97,598 inhabitants aged 0–14 years, resulting in an Aging Index of ≈ 105 (i.e., 105 elderly persons for every 100 young residents)
Aging Index of the Core City (optional)	
Foreign Population and Presence of the Metropolitan Area	In recent years, Tirana has experienced a gradual increase in its foreign-born population, reflecting the city's growing appeal as a regional center for work and study. Data from the 2023 Census show that around 2.1% of residents were born outside Albania, while national statistics report 21,460 foreigners holding residence permits by the end of 2023 – an 18.2% rise compared to 2022. Although specific municipal data are not separately available, it is generally acknowledged that

	most foreign residents in Albania are concentrated in the capital, drawn by its economic opportunities, universities, and international institutions. This trend underscores Tirana's emergence as a diverse and outward-looking city within the Western Balkans.
Foreign Population and Presence of the Core City (optional)	According to the INSTAT Population and Housing Census 2023, the Municipality of Tirana hosts 14,213 foreign-born residents, representing approximately 2.4 % of its total population of 598,176. Most residents were born in Albania (97.6 %), while foreign-born individuals originate mainly from Italy, Greece, the United States, and Kosovo. Although the overall share remains modest, foreign presence is concentrated in the urban core and linked to labour mobility, international education, business activities, and return migration of the Albanian diaspora. This growing diversity influences metropolitan governance by increasing the need for inclusive services, intercultural communication, and coordination between migration, housing, and employment policies. Source: INSTAT (2023) – Census of Population and Housing, Municipality of Tirana, table on country of birth; INSTAT (2023) – Resident population by citizenship, Tirana Prefecture.
Higher Education Graduates of the Metropolitan Area	Based on the 2023 Population and Housing Census (INSTAT) for the Municipality of Tirana, the total number of residents aged 15 years and over who have completed higher education (tertiary level) – including Bachelor, Master, and Doctorate degrees – amounts to 168,631 individuals. This includes: Bachelor's or short-cycle tertiary graduates: 88,568 persons

	Master's or Doctorate holders: 80,063 persons These figures reflect completed education levels, not those currently enrolled. They demonstrate Tirana's significant concentration of highly educated residents — the highest in Albania — aligning with its role as the nation's academic and professional hub. The data highlights a strong base of human capital within the metropolitan area, supporting innovation-driven governance and economic transformation.
Higher Education Graduates of the Core City (optional)	
Employment Rate of the Metropolitan Area	The labour force status for residents of Tirana municipality is included among the key statistical indicators, covering employment, unemployment, and inactivity. Although the census provides comprehensive demographic and occupational breakdowns, the most precise employment rate figures for the Tirana Metropolitan Area are officially published through INSTAT's Labour Force Survey (LFS) 2023, which reports that: Employment rate (15–64 years) for Tirana Prefecture, which largely overlaps the Metropolitan Area, stood at 71.4%, Unemployment rate was 10.1%, Labour force participation rate reached 79.5%. Source: INSTAT (2023), Population and Housing Census – Tirana Municipality. INSTAT (2023), Labour Force Survey, Annual Results.
Employment Rate of the Core City (optional)	

Youth Employment Rate of the Metropolitan Area	The youth employment rate – referring to individuals aged 15–29 years – within the Tirana Metropolitan Area is estimated at 46.7%. Same source
Youth Employment Rate of the Core City (optional)	
Enterprises and Sectoral Specialisation of the Metropolitan Area	
Tirana is the undisputed hub of enterprise activity in Albania, with the largest share of the country's firms and a concentration of larger employers. In 2023, Albania reported a total of 117,292 active enterprises and 559,922 persons employed in non-agricultural market sectors. The district (qark) of Tirana alone accounted for 61,602 enterprises, the highest of all prefectures. Sectorally, services drive the bulk of activity, especially wholesale & retail trade, accommodation, professional & technical services, administrative & support functions, and ICT/technology fields. Industry (manufacturing, utilities, construction) plays a secondary but strategic role, often clustered in peri-urban zones and along logistics corridors. Large firms (50+ employees) are rare (only ~1.6 % of firms) but they command half of the total employment and nearly half the turnover. This structure underscores Tirana's role as the engine of Albania's modern economy: a services powerhouse with growing specialization in tech, urban infrastructure, logistics, and high-value business services.	
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the Metropolitan Area	For this I have to deduct from the National gdp data, and historical % of the gdp of Tirana, e part of the country gdp to say that it is estimated to be EUR 6.7 mld, as 44% of the gdp of Albania. But no real exact data based on measured GDP of the city.
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the Core City (optional)	
Per Capita Gross Disposable Income of the Metropolitan Area	Based on above assumption, the gdp per capita should be EUR 11,200. (population as per census 2023)
Per Capita Gross Disposable Income of the Core City (optional)	

Tourism – Overnight Stays and Arrivals in the Metropolitan Area	Tourism data are collected by the Institute of Statistics (INSTAT) through the Accommodation Establishments survey, which measures arrivals and nights spent in registered hotels and guesthouses. While municipality-level annual figures for Tirana are not yet disaggregated, data for the Central Region – which is dominated by the Tirana Metropolitan Area – show an average of around 80,000 tourist arrivals per month in 2023. This corresponds to an estimated 950,000 – 1,000,000 registered arrivals over the year, including both residents and non-residents, and approximately 1.5 million overnight stays. These numbers confirm Tirana's position as the country's primary tourism hub, driven by business, conference, and cultural tourism. The continuous increase in accommodation capacity and flight connections indicates a steady growth trend and a need for integrated metropolitan planning of visitor services and mobility infrastructure.
Tourism – Overnight Stays and Arrivals in the Core City (optional)	
Protected Natural Areas in the Metropolitan Area	30,000–31,000 ha
The Municipality of Tirana includes several protected natural areas, either fully or partially within its administrative boundaries, as designated by the National Agency of Protected Areas (NAPA) and the Municipality of Tirana. • Dajti National Park Surface area: approximately 29,384 ha Category: National Park Location: partially within the Municipality of Tirana, covering areas of Dajt, Zall Herr, Zall Bastar, and Farkë administrative units. • Managed Nature Reserve "Fusha e Lundrës – Farkë" Surface area: around 850 ha Category: Managed Nature Reserve	

Location: between Farkë and Lundër; includes lakes, pastures, and mixed forest ecosystems with high biodiversity value.

- Managed Nature Reserve "Vaqarr"

Surface area: approximately 420 ha
Category: Managed Nature Reserve
Location: along the Tirana River and Vaqarr hills; protects hilly landscapes and local fauna habitats.

- Artificial Lake Park of Tirana (Urban Green Area with Local Protection Status)

Surface area: about 230 ha
Category: Urban Park – "Locally Protected Green Area"
Management: Municipality of Tirana – Parks and Recreation Directorate

- Natural Reserve "Kashar Plain" (under designation process)

Status: proposed for local protection under the Tirana General Local Plan (GLP 2030)
Purpose: preservation of aquatic ecosystems and biodiversity in the western urban fringe.

Altogether, the Municipality of Tirana encompasses approximately 30,000–31,000 hectares of areas with national or local protection status
Sources:
National Agency of Protected Areas (NAPA), List of Protected Areas, 2024
Municipality of Tirana, General Local Plan 2030
Ministry of Tourism and Environment, Council of Ministers Decisions on the Designation of Protected Areas

Major Healthcare Facilities in the Metropolitan Area

Tirana serves as Albania's main healthcare hub, offering a comprehensive mix of large public hospitals and advanced private clinics that cater to both local and national needs. The University Hospital Center "Mother Teresa" (QSUT) is the country's largest medical institution, with more than 1,600 beds and a full range of specialized departments, functioning as the primary center for emergency and tertiary care. Other major public institutions include the University Hospital "Shefqet Ndroqi", focused on respiratory diseases, and several maternity and pediatric hospitals that form part of the city's extensive healthcare network. In the private sector, Hygeia Hospital Tirana operates as one of the most modern facilities, with approximately 220 beds, nine operating theaters, and advanced units for cardiology, oncology, pediatrics, and surgery. Similarly, the American Hospital of Albania has developed into a multi-campus network offering over 30 specialized departments, while the German Hospital Tirana is recognized for excellence in cardiac surgery and interventional cardiology. These institutions, together with other private hospitals such as Salus, Villa Maria, and Continental, ensure comprehensive medical coverage for Tirana's growing population. Collectively, they make the capital not only the center of healthcare provision in Albania but also a reference point for medical expertise in the Western Balkans.

Universities in the Metropolitan Area	
Tirana is the academic heart of Albania, hosting the country's largest concentration of higher education institutions, research centers, and student population. The University of Tirana, established in 1957, is the oldest and most prominent public university in the country, offering a wide range of programs across social sciences, humanities, law, economics, and natural sciences. Complementing it are other major public institutions such as the Polytechnic University of Tirana, specializing in engineering and architecture; the University of Medicine of Tirana, which trains the nation's doctors, pharmacists, and dentists; the Agricultural University of Tirana, focusing on agriculture, environmental sciences, and veterinary studies; and the University of Arts, dedicated to fine arts, music, and performing arts. In addition to public institutions, the city hosts a growing number of private universities and colleges, including Epoka University, European University of Tirana (UET), New York University Tirana, Catholic University "Our Lady of Good Counsel", Albanian University, and Canadian Institute of Technology (CIT), among others. Together, these institutions attract tens of thousands of students each year from across Albania and neighboring countries. Tirana's universities play a key role in national research, innovation, and human capital development, contributing significantly to the city's dynamic labor market and positioning it as a regional center for higher education and intellectual exchange	
Other Relevant Socio-Economic Indicators	
The Municipality of Tirana's use case study in the METRO-CASE project focuses on the Integrated Tirana Urban-Rural Mobility Plan, a policy instrument designed to strengthen connectivity between Tirana's urban core and its surrounding rural and suburban areas. The initiative aims to foster economic development, social inclusion, and environmental sustainability by integrating various transport modes, promoting digital mobility tools, engaging local communities, and advancing green infrastructure. The approach emphasizes equitable access to services, reduction of carbon emissions, and improved coordination between local and national institutions, reflecting Tirana's broader ambition to develop a polycentric metropolitan structure. The socio-economic context of this case study is shaped by Tirana's unique position as Albania's demographic and economic center. The municipality has over 590,000 residents, representing nearly 20% of the national population, and continues to expand rapidly into surrounding administrative units such as Vaqarr, Petrelë, Ndroq, and Farkë. Economically, Tirana generates roughly half of Albania's GDP—about €9.4 billion—and boasts a per capita disposable income of €7,200, the country's highest. The employment rate averages 70–75%, supported by a highly educated labor force, with an estimated 30–35% of adults holding tertiary degrees. The city's infrastructure context underpins the relevance of the mobility plan: Tirana lies at the crossroads of the north–south and east–west corridors linking Durrës and Elbasan, while its urban transport network relies on 16 privately operated bus lines connecting central and peripheral areas. At the same time, rapid urban growth has increased traffic congestion, spatial imbalance, and environmental pressures, underscoring the need for sustainable mobility solutions. The municipality's strong service-oriented economy, thriving tourism sector, and expanding	

protected natural areas—including Dajti National Park (293 km²) and the Grand Lake Park (230 ha)—illustrate the interplay between urban expansion and environmental stewardship. These socio-economic indicators position Tirana as a dynamic and evolving metropolitan area where the Integrated Urban-Rural Mobility Plan serves as a strategic instrument to ensure balanced growth, accessible transportation, and sustainable territorial development—core objectives of its contribution to the METRO-CASE project.

4. GOVERNANCE

4.1 Governance of the Metropolitan Area

Type of Institution (Category)

The urban core and immediate metropolitan responsibilities for Tirana are administered primarily through Bashkia Tiranë (Municipality of Tirana) — a single, territorially expanded municipality composed of administrative units and directorates responsible for planning, services and implementation. Tirana does not operate a separate supraumbilical "metropolitan government" covering adjacent municipalities; metropolitan-scale coordination with neighbouring local governments and national authorities is typically organised through project agreements, strategic planning processes, inter-institutional platforms and ad-hoc cooperation (rather than a distinct metropolitan authority). The municipality's organizational pages and strategic planning documents present a classical municipal governance model (Mayor + City Council + General Directorates) that acts as the lead organisational actor for metropolitan planning and cross-sector interventions, while cooperation beyond municipal borders is negotiated via inter-municipal agreements, joint projects and national / EU programmes.

Source of Funding

Tirana's municipal and metropolitan-scale functions are financed through a mixed revenue model combining state transfers, own-source taxation, and external funds. Under Law 139/2015 on Local Self-Government, municipalities receive unconditional and conditional transfers from the central government to perform both delegated and autonomous functions. Bashkia Tiranë collects revenue through property taxes, local fees, infrastructure impact taxes, and business licenses. Additionally, the Municipality actively participates in European and donor-funded programs (IPA, GIZ, SIDA, UNDP, WB), leveraging project-based grants to finance metropolitan infrastructure, climate adaptation, and smart city initiatives. Cooperation frameworks such as EU IPA Cross-Border Cooperation and Green City Action Plan (EBRD) have served as vehicles for multi-level funding and coordination.

Functions and Responsibilities (categories)

Law 139/2015 grants municipalities broad competences in areas such as local public services, local roads, waste management, spatial planning, culture, social services, local economic development, and environment.

However, functions that inherently transcend municipal boundaries, such as coordinated metropolitan transit, regional spatial planning, cross-boundary infrastructure or unified environmental systems are not specifically assigned by law. Thus, any metropolitan-level responsibilities must emerge through negotiated cooperation. In a hypothetical governance framework for Tirana, responsibilities might include: metropolitan spatial planning, inter-municipal infrastructure, regional transport integration, environmental/climate coordination, housing / affordable housing across municipalities, economic development of the metropolitan zone, and shared public service facilities (e.g. waste treatment, common utilities).
Legislative Framework / Act
Tirana's metropolitan governance is not established by a distinct law, but operates under the broader framework of Law 139/2015 on Local Self-Government and Law 115/2014 on the Administrative-Territorial Division. These laws reorganized Albania's local government structure from 373 units to 61 municipalities, granting Bashkia Tiranë expanded jurisdiction over a wider metropolitan territory. Inter-municipal cooperation is supported by Law 30/2015 on Joint Administrative Units and Inter-Municipal Cooperation, which allows municipalities to create joint entities, share services, and co-manage infrastructure. National sectoral strategies – such as the National Spatial Plan (2015–2030) and the National Strategy for Regional Development and Cohesion – further recognize Tirana's role as the country's metropolitan core, encouraging integrated planning mechanisms and partnerships across municipal boundaries.
Decision-Making Process
The Mayor of Tirana, directly elected by citizens every four years, serves as the city's executive authority. The Municipal Council, also directly elected, exercises deliberative and supervisory powers over policy, planning, and budget approval. Decisions on metropolitan-scale initiatives are typically made within this municipal framework, following consultation with national ministries (e.g., Infrastructure and Energy, Tourism and Environment) and partner municipalities. Inter-municipal cooperation agreements are negotiated at the executive level (Mayors and Administrators) and ratified by the respective Municipal Councils. Decision-making in these joint arrangements typically follows one vote per municipality, based on simple or qualified majority, depending on the financial or regulatory significance of the project. At the operational level, coordination is carried out through technical working groups or project implementation units financed by external programs. These structures ensure proportional representation of participating municipalities and adherence to project governance frameworks established by EU or donor guidelines.
Public-Private Partnership

Public-private cooperation in Tirana is governed by Law 125/2013 "On Concessions and Public-Private Partnerships" and its subsequent amendments. This framework enables municipalities to enter long-term contracts with private entities for financing, constructing, and operating public infrastructure and services.
Bashkia Tiranë has utilized PPP instruments for urban infrastructure, parking facilities, waste management, and public lighting, subject to approval by the Municipal Council and oversight from the Public Procurement Agency and the Ministry of Finance and Economy.
PPP models include Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) and Service Contracts, while smaller-scale collaboration is often formalized through public service concession agreements. Additionally, partnerships in innovation and urban development, such as the Tirana Smart City Platform, Tirana Eco-Park, and ICT incubators, rely on public-private cooperation frameworks co-financed by donors and private investors, ensuring alignment with national PPP legislation and EU procurement standards.

4.2 Governance for the Policy Instrument

Participation Model During the Design Phase

The governance model applied during the design phase of the policy instrument followed a participatory and multi-level approach, ensuring that public authorities, technical experts, and local stakeholders contributed to the formulation of priorities and measures. The process was coordinated by the Municipality of Tirana, through the responsible planning and development directorates, and built upon a structured dialogue with regional institutions, academic partners, civil society organizations, and private-sector representatives.
Consultations were conducted through working groups, public hearings, and thematic workshops, allowing participants to provide input on spatial planning objectives, environmental management, and socio-economic development measures. Particular emphasis was placed on the integration of bottom-up feedback from citizens and local communities, ensuring that the proposed interventions reflected both strategic objectives and local needs.
Throughout the drafting process, the Municipality adopted principles of transparency, inclusiveness, and data-driven decision-making, supported by the use of spatial and statistical evidence (INSTAT, ASIG, and sectoral studies). This participatory model strengthened the legitimacy and technical coherence of the policy instrument, ensuring alignment with national planning frameworks and sustainable urban development priorities.

Decision-Making Process

The decision-making process for the policy instrument is structured around the principles of legality, transparency, and multi-level coordination, as established in the regulatory framework governing local and regional planning in Albania. The Municipality of Tirana acts as the lead authority responsible for drafting, consulting, and

approving the instrument, in close collaboration with the Municipal Council, relevant line ministries, and the National Territorial Planning Agency (AKPT) when applicable.
Decisions are initiated at the technical level by the Directorates of Urban Planning, Environmental Management, and Strategic Projects, which prepare drafts and technical analyses based on evidence, spatial data, and policy priorities. These proposals are reviewed internally by the Mayor's Cabinet and the Executive Secretariat, and subsequently presented to the Municipal Council for deliberation and formal approval through council decisions or administrative orders.
Throughout the process, institutional coordination is maintained with regional and national authorities, while public consultation procedures ensure that civil society organizations, professional associations, and citizens can contribute feedback prior to final adoption. This multi-step decision chain guarantees that the policy instrument reflects a balanced integration of technical expertise, political oversight, and stakeholder participation, ensuring accountability and coherence with national development objectives.

Implementation Phase Modalities

The implementation of the policy instrument follows a phased and coordinated approach, led by the Municipality of Tirana through its relevant directorates and implementing agencies. Each measure or action foreseen in the instrument is translated into an annual or multiannual implementation plan, which defines clear objectives, responsible entities, timelines, and performance indicators.
Execution is ensured through administrative decisions, municipal council acts, and partnership agreements with regional institutions, public enterprises, and private stakeholders. The Directorates of Finance, Urban Planning, Environmental Protection, and Strategic Projects oversee sectoral components and report periodically to the Mayor's Cabinet and the Municipal Council on progress and compliance with budgetary and regulatory frameworks.
Implementation is supported by monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, based on both quantitative and qualitative indicators, ensuring that activities are consistent with the strategic priorities of the Municipality. When relevant, co-financing is secured through national programmes, EU funds, or public-private partnerships, ensuring the sustainability and long-term impact of the actions.

4.3 Governance Cultural Framework

The governance culture of the Municipality of Tirana is grounded in collaboration, transparency, and evidence-based decision-making, aiming to balance strategic vision with community participation. Institutional practices promote a culture of accountability and interdepartmental coordination, where decisions are guided by legal compliance, technical expertise, and continuous dialogue among administrative units.
Policy formulation and implementation are supported by a participatory culture that values input from citizens, academic institutions, and professional associations. Regular

public consultations, thematic roundtables, and open data initiatives ensure inclusiveness and trust in local governance processes.
The administrative culture also emphasizes innovation and adaptability, encouraging the use of digital platforms, spatial data, and monitoring systems to improve efficiency and responsiveness. This approach fosters a shared sense of responsibility among municipal staff and stakeholders, reinforcing sustainable governance principles across all planning and development activities.

Politicians

Cooperation Models between municipalities and across different government and administrative levels

Elected officials in Tirana generally view metropolitan cooperation as necessary to address cross-boundary challenges (mobility, environment, infrastructure financing). METRO-CASE repeatedly frames metropolitan problems (e.g., mobility, ITI strategies, strategic plans) as requiring cooperation across municipalities and with regional/national bodies; partners prepare agreements, delegate tasks and draft metropolitan acts where necessary. Practically, political cooperation is pursued through formal agreements, intermunicipal forums and the AP/CoP interactions described in METRO-CASE, while political endorsement is secured via Municipal Council deliberations and APAs' meetings. Politicians thus see cooperation as instrumental to leverage EU funds, harmonise service delivery and coordinate strategic planning — especially for instruments such as ITI/SUMP or metropolitan strategic plans which cannot be implemented by a single municipality alone. (Qualitative judgement: **4 = high**).

Cooperation Models between public and private actors

Political leaders recognise public-private collaboration as essential for delivery and innovation (digital metropolis projects, infrastructure, PPP models) because private actors can provide finance, technology and operational capacity. METRO-CASE highlights exchanges with academia and tech companies (e.g., digital metropolis objectives) and public policy events to engage SMEs and universities; Tirana's departments (Strategic Planning, Public Works) are the institutional contact points for private sector facilitation. Politicians emphasise PPPs to accelerate projects and achieve co-financing, while stressing the need for clear legal/contractual frameworks and accountability. (Qualitative judgement: **4 = high**).

Key Sectors or Issues Where Cooperation is Most Needed

Urban mobility and sustainable transport (SUMP/ITI) top the list: metropolitan commuting flows cut across municipal borders and require joint infrastructure planning, fare/information integration and synchronized investment. Environmental management and pollution control follow — metropolitan catchments, air quality and waste require joint plans and enforcement. Strategic spatial planning and land-use coordination are essential to avoid fragmented urban sprawl; coordinated MSP or

metropolitan territorial plans permit consistent housing, green space and infrastructure decisions. Digital transformation and data governance (digital metropolis) require cooperation with universities and private tech firms to build data ecosystems and shared services. Social services and affordable housing policies also benefit from a metropolitan approach to pool resources and achieve economies of scale. METRO-CASE case studies (ITI, MSP, LEAP, SUMP) demonstrate that these sectors have already been addressed through cross-municipal agreements and shared strategies but need deeper institutionalisation.
Existing Cooperation Experiences Beyond the Metropolitan Area
From a political standpoint, Tirana and other METRO-CASE partners reference experience exchange with other metropolitan areas and national authorities to benchmark instruments like ITI, MSP and SUMP. METRO-CASE documents the use of external best-practice handbooks, interregional study visits and peer coaching; Tirana's hosting of SE/ISV on the Integrated Urban-Rural Mobility Plan is an example of outward-looking cooperation. Politicians also note bilateral agreements and participation in EU projects (Interreg, METREX networks) as mechanisms to source expertise and co-finance initiatives beyond the immediate metropolitan boundary. These exchanges have informed revisions of local instruments and provided models for metropolitan acts or coordinating agreements.
Current Cooperation Needs Beyond the Metropolitan Area
Politicians emphasise the need for stronger legal frameworks that enable metropolitan instruments (e.g., metropolitan acts) and for closer alignment with national/regional funding mechanisms to unlock investments at scale. Cross-border (regional) transport links, environmental river basin management, and interregional economic development strategies require formalised channels for cooperation beyond the metropolitan perimeter. Politicians also request technical support and capacity building (Skill Development Programme described in METRO-CASE) to translate best practices into locally feasible instruments; continued participation in transnational projects is seen as critical to secure know-how and co-financing.
Multilevel Collaboration
Multilevel collaboration is a mix of formal agreements (ITI, delegated agreements between metropolitan associations and core cities) and more informal coordination. METRO-CASE partners use Associated Policy Authorities and management boards to align municipal plans with regional/national policy and EU financing; draft metropolitan acts and agreements are typical formal instruments under development. Politicians appreciate that formalised, legally backed instruments improve predictability and funding access, while informal networks and exchanges speed problem solving — the METRO-CASE process intentionally mixes both: formal peer reviews and legal approvals combined with open exchanges and coaching.

Technicians
Cooperation Models between municipalities and across different government and administrative levels
Technicians consider cooperation essential to achieve interoperable systems (transport, GIS, permit systems) and to coordinate technical standards. METRO-CASE prescribes CoPs, Internal Seminars and staff exchanges which technicians use to harmonise indicators, share datasets and align operational procedures. Technical cooperation is often pragmatic and process-oriented: joint monitoring frameworks, standardised reporting templates (Policy Assessment templates) and shared procurement or implementation rules are typical outcomes. Because technical work requires common data and standards, technicians usually favour formalised but flexible arrangements that allow technical integration while respecting local competences. (Qualitative judgement: **5 = very high**).
Cooperation Models between public and private actors
Technicians value public-private cooperation for service delivery (waste, mobility), data sharing and technology procurement; they use formal procurement, design competitions and structured partnerships to involve private providers. METRO-CASE's focus on digital metropolis, skill programmes and pilot exchanges shows technicians actively engaging universities and firms for technical solutions and capacity building. Technicians seek clear contractual frameworks and interoperability requirements to avoid vendor lock-in and to ensure system integration across municipalities. (Qualitative judgement: **4 = high**).
Key Sectors or Issues where Cooperation is Most Needed
Technicians prioritise: (1) Integrated mobility systems — operational synchronisation of routes, ticketing, and ITS data across jurisdictions; (2) Environmental monitoring and waste management — joint protocols and shared infrastructure for treatment and monitoring; (3) Spatial data infrastructures and urban planning tools — common GIS layers and standards for MSP/GTP alignment; (4) Digital services and data governance — shared platforms, APIs and data standards needed for a "digital metropolis"; (5) Emergency management and utilities coordination — interoperable procedures for crises. METRO-CASE tools (CoPs, Policy Assessment, Good Practices Handbook) are used to translate technical lessons into improved instruments and operational protocols.
Existing Cooperation Experiences Beyond the Metropolitan Area
Technicians participate in interregional study visits and staff exchanges to import operational solutions (e.g., ITI implementation practices, SUMP models). METRO-CASE documents staff exchanges and study visits specifically targeted at technical replication: e.g., Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans and environmental LEAP experiences. These exchanges facilitate transfer of technical standards and procurement models. Technicians also use national agencies and INSTAT statistics for harmonised baselines.

Current Cooperation Needs Beyond the Metropolitan Area
Technicians require formal data-sharing agreements with neighbouring jurisdictions and national agencies, harmonised reporting standards (for monitoring KPIs) and clear legal instruments enabling joint procurement and shared infrastructure management. They also seek targeted technical assistance (capacity building described in METRO-CASE Skill Development Programme) to adopt EU best practices for IT systems, environmental monitoring and integrated transport management. Practical needs include templates for policy assessments, monitoring dashboards and standardised procurement procedures.
Multilevel Collaboration
Technicians describe multilevel collaboration as a structured combination of: shared technical working groups, formal monitoring committees (CoPs acting as monitoring bodies during the follow-up phase) and legal agreements for delegated implementation (ITI style agreements). METRO-CASE shows that technicians engage with APAs and LP to produce Policy Assessments and Progress Reports; interactions typically follow formal cycles (semester meetings, IES) complemented by on-the-job staff exchanges. This mix enables the alignment of technical standards while keeping political oversight at council/ministerial levels.
General Public (and Other Stakeholders)
Cooperation Models between municipalities and across different government and administrative levels
Public perception in Tirana tends to favour cooperation when it produces visible benefits (improved transit, waste services, public spaces). METRO-CASE activities (public policy events, newsletters, public seminars) are explicitly designed to engage citizens and show benefits of metropolitan cooperation. Where cooperation is opaque or slow, public trust may be lower; therefore transparency (public events, open consultations) is essential to cultivate support. (Qualitative judgement: **3 = medium-high**).
Cooperation Models between public and private actors
Citizens generally welcome partnerships that improve services (e.g., mobility, digital services) but expect clear accountability and transparency in PPP contracts. METRO-CASE stresses public events and dissemination to explain how private engagement contributes to public goals — public acceptance hinges on perceived fairness and service quality. (Qualitative judgement: **3 = medium**).
Level of Perceived Belonging to Individual Municipalities
Residents of Tirana typically identify strongly with the city's neighborhoods and the municipality (local services, schools, community centers create municipal bonds). However, urban growth and commuting patterns mean some residents experience more diffuse local ties (suburbs vs central neighborhoods). Perceived belonging to the

municipality is shaped by local service delivery and community engagement; METRO-CASE public events and local CoP outreach are designed to strengthen this municipal identity. (Qualitative judgement: **4 = high**).
Level of Perceived Belonging to the Metropolitan Area
Identification with a broader metropolitan identity is still developing: while citizens recognise common problems (traffic, housing), a metropolitan sense of belonging relies on shared infrastructure and visible cross-municipal projects. Public policy events and visible metropolitan projects (integrated mobility plans, shared parks or cultural initiatives) increase metropolitan belonging over time; METRO-CASE's emphasis on communication and public policy events aims to raise this awareness. (Qualitative judgement: **3 = medium**).
Historical or Cultural Factors
Tirana's historical centrality as Albania's capital concentrates administrative, cultural and economic functions within the municipality; this centrality shapes identities that often prioritise the core city over surrounding municipalities. Historical administrative divisions and the legacy of centralized planning mean metropolitan cooperation is a relatively recent cultural shift. METRO-CASE notes that overcoming fragmentation requires institutional learning, long-term strategic plans (MSP/SUMP) and visible benefits. Cultural pride in neighbourhoods and the capital's institutions coexists with growing recognition that shared metropolitan solutions yield better outcomes for mobility, environment and services. These historical legacies influence how fast metropolitan identity and cooperation mature.

5. SPECIFIC DATA CONNECTED WITH THE SELECTED POLICY INSTRUMENT
Contents
Policy Instrument: **Integrated Tirana Urban-Rural Mobility Plan**. The Integrated Tirana Urban-Rural Mobility Plan defines the framework for mobility and transport development across Tirana's metropolitan territory, including its surrounding administrative units such as Vaqarr, Petrelë, Ndroq, Kashar, and Farkë. It covers urban and suburban mobility, road infrastructure, public transport regulation, and integration of alternative and digital transport modes. The Plan also incorporates environmental and social objectives, emphasizing reduction of carbon emissions, accessibility for all citizens, and integration of transport with land-use planning. It supports the implementation of the Sustainable Development Strategy of the Municipality of Tirana 2023–2027, especially the pillars related to polycentric growth, infrastructure modernization, and sustainable urban mobility.
Objectives
The primary goal of the policy instrument is to enhance connectivity between Tirana's urban core and its rural territories, promoting economic development, social inclusion, and environmental sustainability. The plan seeks to integrate multiple transport modes,

encourage digital mobility solutions, apply participatory governance, and promote green and resilient infrastructure. It aligns with the Sustainable Development Strategy of Tirana 2023–2027, emphasizing infrastructure modernization, polycentric development, and improved public transport organization.
Specific objectives include:

1. Integration of multiple transport modes (public, private, cycling, walking) to improve accessibility.
2. Expansion of digital mobility tools to increase efficiency and user convenience.
3. Implementation of participatory planning to involve citizens and stakeholders in decision-making.
4. Development of green transport infrastructure to reduce environmental impact.
5. Establishment of supportive policies and incentives to promote sustainable mobility practices.
6. Improved access to essential services and employment for all residents across the metropolitan area.

Critical Issues to Address

Tirana faces rapid urbanization that strains its transport infrastructure, increases congestion, and deepens disparities between urban and rural areas. The fragmentation of mobility management, especially due to exclusive reliance on private operators since 2013, limits coordination, service efficiency, and coverage. Moreover, suburban areas such as Vaqarr, Petrelë, Ndroq, and Kashar face accessibility gaps to services and employment, requiring integrated solutions that balance development across the metropolitan area.

- Rapid urban expansion creates congestion and unequal access between central and peripheral zones.
- Fragmented transport management due to the full privatization of urban transport since 2013 (11 private operators on 16 main lines).
- Insufficient coordination between municipal, regional, and national authorities in transport planning.
- High car dependency contributes to air pollution and reduced quality of life.
- Limited digital integration and lack of real-time data systems for mobility management.
- Accessibility gaps in peripheral areas such as Ndroq, Vaqarr, and Petrelë that hinder inclusion and service access

Expected Change/Improvement

Through METRO-CASE, the Municipality of Tirana will identify and finance new projects under the Mobility Plan to:

- Improve interurban and suburban transport by restructuring existing lines or introducing new ones;
- Strengthen local governance capacities for mobility planning;

- Foster digital and green innovation in transport systems; Enhance collaboration between public institutions, private operators, and citizens.The overarching improvement foreseen is a shift toward a multimodal, inclusive, and sustainable metropolitan mobility system that supports equitable territorial development.
- Development of new or restructured interurban and suburban transport lines.
- Strengthened institutional capacity for integrated mobility governance.
- Implementation of smart and sustainable transport solutions (e.g., digital ticketing, e-buses, multimodal hubs).
- Increased citizen participation in mobility planning and monitoring.
- Enhanced environmental performance through emission reduction and greener mobility options.

Overall, the instrument aims to transition from a fragmented, car-dependent system to an integrated, equitable, and low-carbon metropolitan transport model

Territorial and Socio-Economic Framework (Sectoral)

Tirana, with over 590,000 residents, generates nearly half of Albania's GDP (€9.4 billion) and has the highest per capita disposable income (€7,200). The city's workforce is highly educated (approx. 35% tertiary graduates) and employment rates average 70–75%. It serves as the country's main economic and service hub, strategically located on the north–south and east–west corridors connecting Durrës and Elbasan. However, urban sprawl and rising car dependency have increased environmental pressures, making sustainable mobility a critical urban policy area.

Other Relevant Elements

The plan's sustainability dimension is strengthened by the city's environmental assets — including Dajti National Park (293 km²) and the Grand Lake Park (230 ha) — which provide green corridors for recreational and ecological functions. Additionally, growing tourism, foreign investment, and housing demand emphasize the need for balanced transport solutions to maintain accessibility and quality of life. The instrument's implementation is backed by Albania's National Strategy for Development and European Integration 2030, ensuring alignment with national and EU sustainable transport priorities.

SWOT Analysis

3. SWOT Analysis

3.1. Objectives, Contents and Methodology

Objectives

Within Metro Case, the SWOT analysis constitutes the second phase of the Technical Activity "Governance State of the Art and SWOT Analyses", and is explicitly designed to translate the descriptive baseline produced through the Governance State of the Art (GSoA) into a strategic diagnosis that can directly support Partners' policy improvements. Building on the evidence gathered in the GSoA reports, the SWOT aims to (i) identify the main strengths and weaknesses of each metropolitan governance system (including the governance setting of the selected policy instrument), (ii) detect opportunities and threats arising from external drivers (institutional, socio-economic, environmental and policy-related), and (iii) highlight leverage points, risks and priorities that will inform the subsequent interregional exchange and the improvement of the 8 policy instruments addressed by the project.

Contents

To ensure that a standardized methodology is applied across the eight metropolitan areas, each case-specific SWOT is articulated through a common structure: (a) a Narrative Summary Sheet (case overview and main features of the governance system), (b) a SWOT Table, (c) a short SWOT Interpretation that explains the internal/external interactions (e.g., how weaknesses may amplify threats, or how strengths can be mobilised to seize opportunities), and (d) a set of "Metro Case Key Insights" that synthesise implications for the project's objectives and expected results (coordination, strategic planning instruments, integrated/place-based models, capacity building and territorial cohesion).

This format makes the SWOT both a diagnostic tool and an operational bridge between the GSoA evidence and the project's policy-improvement pathway.

Methodology

The SWOT analyses were developed through a structured workflow coordinated by PP02 (POLITO). In Semester 1, Partners produced their GSoA reports using the common template and guidelines provided by PP02; PP02 then used those descriptive profiles—covering socio-territorial and institutional settings, governance arrangements and the selected policy instruments—as the evidence base to draft the SWOT for each metropolitan area.

In Semester 2, the draft SWOTs were presented and discussed during the Project Partner and Steering Group meeting in Gothenburg, and subsequently finalised and integrated into the comprehensive document "Governance State of the Art and SWOT analysis", together with an overarching cross-case commentary ("Key takeaways").

In methodological terms, the SWOT distinguishes internal factors (strengths/weaknesses related to governance capacity, institutional architecture, coordination practices and instrument implementation settings) from external factors (opportunities/threats linked to policy frameworks, funding conditions, socio-economic trends and environmental pressures), so as to produce actionable insights that can guide both the selection of Good Practices and the design of policy improvements (see ANNEX B: SWOT Analysis Template).

3.2. SWOT Analyses of Metropolitan Areas

3.2.1 Metropolitan City of Genova with Liguria Region (LP01)

3.2.1.1 Narrative Summary Sheet

Case Overview

The Metropolitan City of Genoa has a long tradition and strong potential for access to maritime trade for Italy and is a gateway to the Mediterranean for the whole of Europe, although its role should be strengthened, above all by speeding up administrative procedures and increasing port services.

It is one of the main hubs of the TEN-T network, and connections with the productive hinterland are improving.

Territorial development is conditioned by strong orographic constraints, with a mountainous and hilly territory that reaches almost to the sea, leaving a narrow flat strip where the main settlements and infrastructures are concentrated. Urban centres are densely populated and develop vertically, climbing slopes and expanding along the main valleys. Rural areas are characterised by the expansion of forests due to the abandonment of agricultural practices in the most inaccessible areas and by scattered settlements that are difficult to connect and serve.

The settlement pattern includes a densely populated core city, where the main services are concentrated, a system of structured urban centres along the coast and the main valleys, and a system of inner areas suffering a gap both in terms of access to services and job opportunities; in the whole territory the trend of ageing and declining birth rates in Italy and Europe is making itself felt. The foreign population is around 11%, concentrated mainly in the core city. Services are fairly well distributed throughout the territory, at least in urban areas.

The presence of a beautiful coastline, albeit heavily urbanised, wooded mountainous and hilly areas and important protected natural areas makes the territory highly attractive from a tourist and residential point of view.

The morphological conditions lead to a high degree of fragility of the territory, which has been and continues to be affected by landslides, floods and storm surges.

Institutional metropolitan area is larger than the FUA (IT006F). FUA excludes Tigullio and parts of the Trebbia valley and includes some external municipalities.

The economic structure is diversified, with the main sectors being research and hi-tech, tourism, a growing manufacturing and construction sector, an important commercial sector and a slightly declining agricultural sector.

A strong element of identity derives from the role played by Genoa for centuries as a maritime republic, a role that united the city of Genoa and the surrounding territories.

To manage functional diversity, the Metropolitan City has proposed within the Metropolitan Strategic Plan (2017) nine Homogeneous Areas (as permitted by national legislation) grouping municipalities with similar territorial and settlement features and existing cooperation initiatives, providing a meso level for policy delivery.

Main Features of the Governance System

In Italy, metropolitan cities are public bodies in every sense, established and defined in terms of their territorial dimensions by the Delrio law through a top-down process following decades of debate. The metropolitan city covers the area of the province of the same name, which is abolished. Since the approval of the law, which foreshadowed a constitutional amendment that was not subsequently approved, its revision has been awaited.

From an institutional point of view, they have a wide range of powers, some specifically metropolitan and others derived from the pre-existing provinces, whose role, financial resources and organisational structure have undergone successive cuts.

Like the others, Genoa combines the powers of the provinces with new metropolitan powers, and this represents both an opportunity and a difficulty; in areas where there are concurrent powers in Italy, such as spatial and urban planning, both state and regional regulations must be taken into account.

The actors in the decision-making process are:

- The Metropolitan mayor, who is the same as the core city mayor and is therefore elected by only part of the citizens but has particularly high power as there is no executive governing body responsible for ordinary decisions; however, there are delegates of the mayor who assist him in following metropolitan issues more closely.
- The Metropolitan Council, a second-level elected body, whose representatives are mayors or councillors of the municipalities and are elected by the municipal administrations. On the one hand, this facilitates the direct participation of municipalities in strategic decisions, but on the other hand, it obliges its members to play a dual role, which is not supported by dedicated resources, with the consequent difficulties in meeting the needs of citizens. Furthermore, the misalignment of elections in different municipalities leads to structural instability in the political framework, forcing the replacement of Council members and mayoral delegates.
- The Mayors' Assembly - Metropolitan Conference allows all municipalities to be involved in matters of major importance but has only advisory value.

The Metropolitan City of Genoa has to manage a vast number of administrative and managerial responsibilities that require clear and sufficiently rapid decisions, and in this respect the decision-making model is generally suitable, although some adjustments appear necessary with regard to the representativeness of the Mayor and the

involvement of municipal administrations. The fact that the entire territory is represented does not eliminate the fact that there are two different administrative levels, each with its own competences, and that there is still a need to adopt collaborative decision-making and operational tools where there are competing competences.

It should be emphasised that the Genoa Metropolitan Council has invested heavily in involving the territory, with systematic and structured action, especially during the drafting of the Metropolitan Strategic Plan. This is a fundamental aspect, both in order to make more realistic and effective decisions and to foster a culture of cooperation, demonstrating in concrete terms the added value of a shared and participatory strategy.

3.2.1.2 SWOT Table

Domain A: Territorial framework			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- High share of protected natural areas (778.95 km² overall; 4 Regional Parks 177.02 km²; 33 Natura 2000 sites 499.33 km²; 1 SPA 99.14 km²; 1 Marine Protected Area 3.46 km²) - Polycentric settlement along the coastal strip and main valleys; extensive road network connecting coast and hinterland - Distinctive natural and cultural landscapes (e.g., Beigua UNESCO Global Geopark) - Main TEN-T hub connected with seaport and airport	- Strong morphological constraints: narrow coastal plain, mountainous hinterland, limited flat land; high hydrogeological fragility - Land take concentrated along coast and valley floors; flood-prone areas and soil sealing - Large number of diverse municipalities (67) increasing territorial complexity - Relevant natural risks - Limited wetlands and heavily engineered riverbeds (e.g., Bisagno, Polcevera) reduce natural buffer capacity in flood events	- Urban regeneration and 'build on the built' policies; soil 'unsealing' to counter land consumption - Leverage protected areas and UNESCO-recognised sites for conservation and sustainable tourism - Connections with other metropolitan cities and regions - National and EU funds for urban regeneration - New relevant transport infrastructures under construction - TEN-T core hub role (port–airport–rail) can be leveraged	- Climate change trends (rising temperatures, heat waves, altered rainfall with increased autumn intensity and greater drought by 2050) - Worsening hydrogeological risk due to soil sealing in densely urbanised strips - Continued coastal artificialization pressures could compound hydro-geological fragility if not countered by regeneration and unsealing policies - Administrative complexity for import–export processes

- Very dense urban core and polycentric model - Limited land take increase (strong reuse) - Presence of linear coastal-valley development axes supported by a multi-tier road hierarchy (motorways A10-A26-A7-A12, state and provincial roads), enabling functional links between coast and hinterland	- Very diversified territory resulting in high complexity: central urban core; satellite urban areas, inner areas	with ongoing hub upgrades (e.g., Terzo Valico) to re-balance hinterland accessibility	

Domain B: Socio-economic framework			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Presence of a major state university (UNIGE) with multi-campus structure and wide educational offer - Advanced healthcare hub with nationally/internationally	- Very small average firm size; low internationalisation and innovation uptake; delays in digitalisation of firms, citizens and PA	- Availability of multi-level funding (NRRP and EU programmes) and international networks (EMA, METREX, ECCAR) to support innovation and inclusion	- Global economic and war crises; energy crisis and resource scarcity impacting local systems

recognised facilities (e.g., San Martino Polyclinic; Gaslini Pediatric Institute) - Identified strengths within Metropolitan Strategic Plan: blue economy, patenting propensity and innovative company clusters; strong non-profit sector; leading production supply chains - Attractive territory, especially for tourism. Tourism scale and growth (2024): 4.60M overnight stays and 1.87M arrivals in the metropolitan area; Genoa city 2.3M overnights and 1M arrivals - Strong port economy - Differentiated economic sectors (across manufacturing, construction, trade and services) - Consolidated and growing hi-tech ecosystem (research centres and firms, e.g., DIXET network)	- Ageing population (Aging Index 277.4) and low birth rate; depopulation more acute in inland areas - Income disparities and increased risk of poverty; low youth employment ratio and gender employment gaps - Disparity in accessibility among territorial areas - Decline of agriculture - Scattered peripheral settlements difficult to serve - Uneven youth/foreign entrepreneurship with several municipalities showing very low incidence, especially in inland areas - Adoption gap for the green transition	- RP-ERDF priorities on SMEs, digitalisation, energy transition and place-based development (incl. SO 5.2 for inland/non-urban areas) - Worldwide commercial connections - Tourism de-seasonalisation and scope for experiential/rural tourism across valleys complementing coastal mass tourism - Improvement of professional school system	- Risk of not integrating and channelling diverse funds into a coherent strategy - Global economic tensions impacting trade flows - Persistent socio-economic disparities and ageing could dampen innovation diffusion and labour-market renewal - Lack of specialised workers and skills mismatches may constrain innovation and uptake of transitions

Domain C. Institutional and Legal Framework			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Clear legal foundation: Metropolitan City established by Law 56/2014 with strategic functions and defined bodies (Metropolitan Mayor, Council, Conference) - Articulated responsibilities across planning, mobility, environment, services, infrastructures, innovation and education - Diversified funding base (taxes/fees, transfers, EU funds, non-tax revenues, capital revenues) - Second-level elected council representing the whole territory and an assembly involving all mayors	- Historical fragmentation and lack of cooperation among municipalities - Relationship with the core city's structures and competences is not sufficiently clear, creating overlaps and coordination frictions - The Metropolitan Mayor is elected only by the citizens of the core city (69%) and takes all ordinary decisions - The Metropolitan Assembly has only consultive role - Heavy workload due to many competences under law	- Cross-border cooperation (Italy-France Quirinale Treaty) and participation in European metropolitan networks (EMA, METREX, ECCAR) can anchor learning and joint initiatives - Access to EU/national funds and programme agreements enabling multi-level projects - Revision of the national law - Better involvement in funds management - Institutionalization of Homogeneous Areas with specific governance and planning instruments	- Inability to integrate and channel multiple funding streams coherently into the defined strategy (identified as a risk in MSP's SWOT) - Delay in the revision of the national law - Not clear implementation of the relationship with the other government levels - Elections misalignment causing frequent political changes - Weak legislative framework

- Real decisional powers over multiple topics - Inter-municipal cooperation is framed by a Framework Agreement, implemented through operating protocols, providing a common reference for coordinated action across municipalities - Weighted-vote Council and double-majority Conference ensure both population-based and territorial consensus for key acts - Proposal of identification of Homogeneous Areas (MSP 2017) according to national law to foster inter-municipal cooperation and territorial cohesion			

Domain D. Planning and Coordination Tools			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Established planning toolkit: Metropolitan Strategic Plan (MSP), Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP), Biciplan, General Territorial Plan - Formalised decision process and monitoring (e.g., Datalab); Single Contracting Authority role; framework agreement with municipalities - Proposal of establishment (from MSP 2017) of nine Homogeneous Areas for service management - Metropolitan services and infrastructure plan (framework under development) complements the MSP and sectoral plans	- Low integration between the RP-ERDF and the Metropolitan Strategic Plan - Gap in formalised alignment mechanisms (e.g., shared calendars and joint project pipelines) between RP-ERDF and the Metropolitan Strategic Plan - Metropolitan General Territorial Plan not implemented - Short term perspective for the Metropolitan Strategic Plan stated by law	- Integration with Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) process to streamline knowledge and assessment phases across plans and programmes - RP-ERDF instruments – Integrated Territorial Investments (ITI) and Territorial Strategies (TS) – together with NRRP and other programmes, open avenues for coordinated investments and multi-fund, place-based action - Better definition of contents and role of the Metropolitan General Territorial Plan - Planning instruments at Homogeneous Area level	- Operational risk that dispersed initiatives and funding remain uncoordinated across levels and tools - Operational risk of dispersed initiatives without shared programming calendars and common monitoring (e.g., via Datalab) - Lack of common territorial framework

Domain E. Governance Processes and Participation			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Structured participation model aligned with EU and national guidelines (2019) with stakeholder mapping and tailored tools - Plan-making stages clearly defined (guidelines, participation, adoption, publication/comments, approval, monitoring/update, communication) - Consolidated PPP toolbox (MoUs, programme agreements, project financing) and partnerships with universities/third sector; pilot energy community initiatives - High awareness and consensus on the need for	- Low involvement in managing EU and national strategic funds - Overload of political representatives due to double roles - Need for better involvement of local administrations - Multiple competences (from former provinces and from metropolitan role) - High internal complexity	- Actions to build metropolitan belonging (CMGE brand, communication, co-design) and cooperation networks (UNIGE, INU, ENEA) - Cross-border cooperation (Genoa–Nice) on innovation, sustainability and culture to widen learning and stakeholder engagement - Further cooperation beyond the metropolitan area, including cross-border initiatives and partnerships in EU projects - Potential regional legislative initiatives on spatial planning and possible delegation of	- Persistence of fragmentation and coast-inland imbalances if cooperation and participation are not effectively implemented - Stakeholder fatigue if multiple consultations are not coordinated across instruments - Concurrency for roles and resources with the core city - Insufficient recognition by other government and administrative levels

inter-municipal and multi-level cooperation - Structured transnational cooperation (historical tradition according to the role as a maritime republic) and agreements with other Italian metropolitan cities and institutions - Proportional decision-making and a structured participation process including public surveys and communication - Institutional cooperation with Liguria Region - Agreements with private institutions aiming at objectives of public interest - Integration of participation with SEA processes reduces duplication and accelerates processes		competences to the Metropolitan City	

Domain F. Capacities and Resources			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Access to multiple funding lines (EU, state, regional) alongside current tax/fee revenues and capital grants - Technical/administrative capacities including monitoring tools (Datalab), procurement aggregation (Single Contracting Authority), and skilled dedicated staff - Specific planning competences - Dedicated funding windows for inner areas complement core revenues and EU/national programmes	- Infrastructural and digital gaps between coast and inland areas impacting service equity - Local public transport gaps (green fleet share and modal integration), waste and water cycles requiring improvement - Insufficient funding compared to the breadth of competences - Reduced staff while competences have increased	- New EU funds for digitisation and green transition; promotion of energy communities and circular economy - Capacity building and policy learning via European networks and programmes - Dedicated share of EU funds for metropolitan areas	- Energy crisis and scarcity of resources, climate change impacts on assets and budgets - Motorway inadequacies and maintenance issues constraining service reliability and operating costs - Spending review measures reducing PA funds - Staff disparities at national level

Domain G. Specificities of the Policy Instrument: Regional Programme Liguria ERDF 2021-2027			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Clear objectives and allocation under OP1, OP2 and OP5, €630M (2021–2027) with climate share ≥30% and OP1/OP2 ≥85% - Implements ITI and Territorial Strategies, with focus on medium-sized urban areas and inland territories - Strategic alignment with S3, the European Green Deal and the 2030 Agenda - Comprehensive action menu: energy efficiency, renewables, circular economy, energy communities, SME digitalisation, and skills for industrial transition	- Limited integration and intersectoral coordination with metropolitan strategies, in particular the Metropolitan Strategic Plan - Administrative complexity of TS/ITI can strain local capacities where gaps persist (capacity building needed) - Potential data fragmentation between regional and metropolitan monitoring systems if not aligned with common tools - Possible overlap of initiatives across instruments without joint calendars and a shared project pipeline	- Strengthen integration between OP and Metropolitan Strategic Plan - SO 5.2 enables integrated local development in non-urban areas, combining services, digital inclusion and heritage valorisation with actions on energy efficiency, renewables, circular economy, SME digitalisation, and enabling energy communities/smart grids - SO 5.2 supports tourism diversification and de-seasonalisation linked to local heritage and non-urban destinations	- Demographic decline, ageing and socio-economic disparities may hinder uptake and outcomes, especially in inner areas - Risk of dispersion or misalignment of projects if multi-level coordination is weak - Climate change (heatwaves, rainfall intensity shifts, drought by 2050) threatens infrastructure and programme assets without resilient design - Global economic and energy crises can squeeze co-financing and delay private investments needed for SME uptake - Motorway inadequacies and maintenance issues, together

- SME-oriented design (90% resources for businesses) with tools for access to credit, supply-chain aggregation and internationalisation - Regional Digital Strategic Programme among its policy references - Participatory process during the programme preparation phase and consolidated multi-level cooperation - Clusters of innovative companies and strong investment in sustainable development, with clear climate relevance and focus on inclusion and territorial balance - Based on sound strategic planning in different sectors		- Urban Nature based Solutions portfolios in medium-sized areas (Imperia/Sanremo/Savona/La Spezia) can integrate green-blue solutions, inclusion actions and smart mobility pilots under ITI - Policy learning through EMA/METREX/ECCAR can transfer governance solutions to improve delivery - Blue economy development and TEN–T corridors as levers for competitiveness and connectivity - Integration between new and existing projects to improve programme effectiveness and durability - Digital agenda - NRRP and other programme funds	with inadequate wide-area connectivity, may curb logistics efficiency, raise costs and limit access to opportunities - Gaps in fund channelling towards strategic objectives

3.2.1.3 SWOT Interpretation

The Metropolitan City of Genoa plays a key economic role as one of Italy's main ports, closely connected to the European TEN-T system.

It is a local authority in all respects, with defined powers and stable resources, albeit insufficient.

In terms of territory, it is characterised by a large, highly diversified and complex area that extends well beyond the functional metropolitan area and includes a large number of municipalities (67). This characteristic implies both strengths and opportunities linked to significant urban development with a strong centre in the city of Genoa and other smaller centres distributed along the coast or in the valleys, economic potential, and high attractiveness of the territory, which includes a much-appreciated coastline and a hilly and mountainous system, but also significant morphological constraints, which reduce the usable territory to the strip between the sea and the hills, construction in morphologically difficult areas, and high hydrogeological fragility.

From a socio-economic point of view, it has a diversified business system, with good assets in research and hi-tech, an important tourism and commercial sector, and a declining but still active agricultural sector. Like many other Italian and European regions, it is affected by declining birth rates and an ageing population. Important institutions such as universities and the healthcare system also have branches in outlying areas, and the main socio-demographic parameters show no substantial differences between the centre and the periphery. Outside the main urban areas, the settlement structure is dispersed and access to services and the public transport system remains more difficult.

From an institutional and legislative point of view, the status of a fully-fledged local authority is certainly a strength, despite some weaknesses in the founding law. The Italian model is suitable for an entity that has the task of managing highly operational competences on a daily basis, but it has limitations in terms of the representativeness of the metropolitan mayor, frequent political reorganisations linked to the misalignment of elections in different municipalities, and the lack of participation of municipalities as institutions in the decision-making process. The territorial extension, which is based on the perimeter of the pre-existing province and not on an analysis of functional relationships, represents a challenge that the Genoa Metropolitan City is addressing by grouping municipalities into Homogeneous Areas that take into account territorial and settlement characteristics and the existence of inter-municipal collaboration initiatives that have developed spontaneously.

In terms of planning, demonstrates advanced technical expertise and a mature planning culture. The Metropolitan Strategic Plan could embrace a broader time horizon than that required by law and become a tool for integrating policies in the territory, helping to focus investment on the most strategic objectives. It would also be necessary to resolve the issue of the role and content of the Metropolitan Territorial Plan, which is required by law but has not yet been implemented.

With regard to the governance process, the Metropolitan City of Genoa has taken advantage of the opportunity offered by the drafting of the MSP to implement a systematic action plan for stakeholder involvement and communication with the city, also drawing on a tradition of identity that for centuries has linked Genoa and the surrounding area in the Maritime Republic and the attractiveness of the port system. The main challenge is to strengthen vertical governance by consolidating the role of the newly formed metropolitan city in its relations with municipalities, the region and the state. It is very important to develop the process already begun of collaboration with other Italian and European metropolitan areas and involvement in the management of European funds, both through new projects and, above all, with reference to mainstream programming.

In terms of capacities and resources, Genoa is in a similar situation to other Italian metropolitan cities, which have seen an increase in competences and a decrease in staff due to the public budget situation and regional imbalances. It receives regular funding from the State and the Region and has developed a competent and dedicated staff.

The Policy Instrument is the ERDF Regional Programme for Liguria Region; although this programme is solidly based on a regional strategic programming system dedicated to different fields, as sustainable development, energy and environmental strategy, smart specialisation, climate change, digital agenda and others, a better integration with the Metropolitan Strategic Plan is a good opportunity for further developing the territorial dimension in a place based approach, allowing a better synergy between different sectorial policies and a greater, long lasting effectiveness of the actions.

In this time, when different and relevant financial sources, (e.g PNRR, funded by Next Generation EU) are available, this integration allows to develop synergies between different projects and start a long-lasting cooperation for the future.

The ERDF RP objectives, for Liguria are focused on the main territorial challenges: bringing innovation to the enterprises, fostering internationalisation, digital and ecological transition, valorising the cultural and natural heritage fostering deseasonalisation, increase resilience, foster social inclusion and territorial cohesion.

3.2.1.4 Metro Case Key Insights

Strengthen multilevel & multisector coordination

The Metropolitan City operates on a defined institutional base, with its own powers and representative structures capable of orchestrating a territory of 67 municipalities. Within this architecture, the Homogeneous Areas constitute a functional meso-level that aggregates demands and priorities and makes the coast–valley heterogeneity manageable in practice. Coordination is nonetheless affected by a legacy of municipal fragmentation and by recurrent frictions with the core city, which have produced discontinuities and overlaps; these are visible where initiatives proceed on parallel tracks or remain isolated from inter-municipal alignment.

Improve strategic planning tools

A full planning toolkit is in place – Metropolitan Strategic Plan, SUMP/Biciplan, monitoring tools, and a Single Contracting Authority – while the General Territorial Plan is not yet implemented and the interface between ERDF programming and the Metropolitan Strategic Plan is weak. The result is a de facto "double track", where fund programming and metropolitan strategy advance with limited synchronization of calendars, project pipelines and indicators.

Promote integrated, place-based governance models

Marked morphological constraints and hydro-geological fragility, combined with a coastal–valley polycentric pattern, have oriented interventions toward regeneration and consolidation of the built fabric, with attention to fragmentation control and to coast–hinterland connective functions that organise everyday accessibility.

Facilitate exchange of good practices & capacity building

Infrastructural and digital unevenness between coast and inland territories, together with small average firm size, reveal differences in administrative readiness. The Metropolitan City already plays an integrating role through standardised procurement (via the Single Contracting Authority) and common technical arrangements to reduce asymmetries in procurement and documentation quality, supporting smaller municipalities during tendering and award phases.

Contribute to balanced & cohesive territorial development

Accessibility disparities and dispersed settlement in valley areas frame service delivery conditions under demographic ageing and recurrent maintenance needs. Ensuring minimum thresholds of public service and sustainable mobility has been a practical requirement to prevent inequities where fragility and demand pressure intersect.

3.2.2 Politecnico di Torino with Metropolitan City of Turin (PP02)

3.2.2.1 Narrative Summary Sheet

Case Overview

The Metropolitan City of Turin (CMTo) is one of Italy's most complex metropolitan areas, both territorially and institutionally. It spans a wide area stretching from the Alpine regions to the plains of the Po Valley, borders France, and includes 312 municipalities and more than 2.2 million inhabitants. The administrative perimeter of CMTo is larger than the functional boundary of the FUA as defined under the OECD/ISTAT. Despite its legal establishment in 2015 (as provided for by Law 56/2014), the metropolitan institution and its territory are still seeking a shared metropolitan culture, stronger political legitimacy, and greater administrative effectiveness. The third Metropolitan Strategic Plan (MSP) 2021–2026 constitutes the main policy instrument and reference framework for promoting territorial cohesion, sustainability, innovation, and social inclusion. While it plays a coordinating role among municipalities and supra-local institutions, CMTo's governance model is second-level (without direct election) and its competences in territorial planning still need to be adequately developed. Nevertheless, the area benefits from a strong innovation ecosystem (Politecnico di Torino, the University, advanced services, and productive/organisational know-how), an active third sector, and growing experience in participatory planning and inter-municipal cooperation.

Main Features of the Governance System

The governance system of the CMTo is characterised by institutional complexity and asymmetry. The Metropolitan Mayor coincides ope legis with the Mayor of the City of Turin (and is therefore chosen only by the voters of the core city), and the Metropolitan Conference is composed of the 311 mayors of the other municipalities belonging to CMTo, reflecting a second-level governance model. Although this structure could potentially facilitate interaction with the core city's strategies, democratic representativeness remains weak in decision-making processes and in the perception of a shared metropolitan identity. Nevertheless, CMTo has adopted structured coordination arrangements, such as the "Homogeneous Zones" (each represented by a mayor acting as spokesperson for the member municipalities), aimed at promoting local inter-municipal cooperation. The Metropolitan Strategic Plan is the metropolitan policy document, which provides a platform for building a strategic vision and coordinating projects and sectoral policies. However, the MSP is not binding and its impact depends largely on political willingness and alignment with other instruments (e.g., the SUMP and the MGTP). Governance practices have gradually become more participatory, involving stakeholders, citizens and civil society in planning processes. Despite this, decision-making remains uneven across the territory and stakeholder involvement – especially from private actors – remains limited.

3.2.2.2 SWOT Table

Domain A: Territorial framework			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Large territorial extent with a high endowment of natural, protected and forest areas. - Significant presence of natural watercourses and water resources - Important, extensive and diversified cultural and landscape heritage (e.g., UNESCO sites) - Presence of a strong urban core (the capital city and its conurbation) with advanced metropolitan or higher-order functions - Extensive and multimodal infrastructure endowment for	- High administrative fragmentation (312 municipalities, many very small) - Hydrogeological instability in both mountain and plain areas (flooding, landslides, avalanches) - High presence of disused built-up areas (especially productive/industrial) and sites requiring remediation - Imbalance between the core city and peripheral/mountain territories (particularly regarding resident population) - Material and immaterial accessibility difficulties in mountain territories	- Integration of territorial–environmental–mobility planning - Valorisation of natural and landscape territorial capital - Good existing and planned infrastructure accessibility at regional, national and European scales	- Progressive depopulation of mountain areas - Further functional polarisation toward the capital city - Increasing pressure on peri-urban areas - Insufficient existing rail connection with Liguria (Genoa and port system); long timelines for the TO–LY high-speed/high-capacity link and the Terzo Valico (Genoa-Rotterdam corridor)

passenger and freight mobility (airport, roads, railways)	- Extensive mountain coverage increases management complexity due to highly differentiated needs		

Domain B: Socio-economic framework			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Presence of two major universities (University of Turin, Politecnico di Torino) and research centres; strong human capital in the core city and belt municipalities - Diversified economic system (services, industry, research) - Good use of PNRR -Good overall employment levels - Significant tourism attractiveness	- High demographic ageing, with an ageing index higher than the national average (229 CMTo, 233 Turin vs a little over 200 national average) - High share of micro-enterprises - Low youth employment -Persistent territorial and social gaps	- Innovation, research and technology transfer - Green economy and territorial/urban regeneration - Attraction of EU funds - The legacy of the Turin 2006 Winter Olympics has enabled – and still enables – the valorisation of the Olympic valleys' territory	- Population decline in the medium to long term - Increasing social and territorial inequalities - Competition with other metropolitan areas

Domain C. Institutional and Legal Framework			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- National constitutional recognition (2001) of the Metropolitan City and its establishment by law - Well-structured metropolitan Statute and presence of dedicated governance bodies (Metropolitan Council and Metropolitan Mayor), even if not directly elected - Fundamental functions assigned by law (national Law 56/2014) - Articulation into Homogeneous Zones consistent with the Integrated Territorial Areas (AIT) of the Piedmont Regional Territorial Plan	- Second-level elected body (absence of direct election) and related political bodies - Ex Lege national coincidence between the Metropolitan Mayor and the core-city mayor - Chronic lack of funds, sometimes worsened by insufficient or late state transfers, needed to guarantee essential services (road maintenance, school buildings, local public transport) - Limited perceived political legitimacy: the second-level nature, where the Metropolitan Mayor is elected only by residents of the core-city, while the Metropolitan Council is elected by local office-holders	- Strengthening the metropolitan role through reforms and valorisations of second-level representativeness (reinforcing the political and technical role of Homogeneous Zones) - Greater attention to “wide areas” and inner areas in regional and national programming - Use of the Statute as a governance lever - Possibility of transferring functions to Homogeneous Zones	- “Hybrid” institutional structure overlaps metropolitan-wide needs with municipal needs (especially the core city) and, given frequent misalignment in political-administrative timing, exposes the authority to the risk of governance fragmentation - Recognition of the metropolitan level not fully consolidated among territorial actors - Functions delegated by the Region (e.g., forests, civic uses, some environmental functions) have transferred tasks without adequate financial and staff resources, forcing the metropolitan entity to manage

	(mayors and municipal councillors), reduces visibility and political representativeness in citizens' eyes - Insufficient recognition of CMTo's role by the Region - Institutional complexity: overlap of institutional roles and weak distinction between local and metropolitan interests, since the metropolitan mayor is also the core-city mayor, generating a potential representation conflict - Criticalities in the relationship between Homogeneous Zones and other associative forms under Dlgs 267/2000 (perimeters, functions, etc.)		others' competences with scarce own resources

Domain D. Planning and Coordination Tools			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Presence of general and sectoral strategic instruments (MSP, SUMP) - Consolidated tradition in drafting territorial planning instruments and strategic vision (inherited from the previous provincial administration) - Growing integration of sustainability objectives detectable in a sectoral plan ecosystem which, although separate, is coherent with Agenda 2023 (Metropolitan sustainability agenda does not appear to dialogue with PTGM, and that PTGM refers to higher-level instruments for general environmental sustainability themes)	- Fragmentation of the planning framework: each plan follows its own path, without an integrated procedure and monitoring system - Persistent absence of a fully operational GMTP (stopped at adoption stage since 2022) - Temporal misalignment among strategic and territorial planning instruments. - Partial overlaps across general and sectoral planning instruments (MSP, GMTP, SUMP, etc.) - Absence of strategies focused on local specificities/vocations. - Role sometimes still weak relative to municipalities and to	- Use of Homogeneous Zones as an intermediate scale of governance and territorial planning for drafting and implementing GMPT and for reorganising functions/activities (e.g., road districts, environmental protection/vigilance areas) - Strengthening integration among MSP–GMPT–SUMP - Adaptive and climate-oriented planning - Alignment with EU policies	- Insufficient implementation of strategies and lack of an adequate monitoring system - Excessive managerial complexity: the core-city mayor is, by law, also the Metropolitan Mayor, generating a high management and responsibility load on a single figure required to balance Turin's interests with those of the other 311 municipalities - Fragmented national and regional legislative framework for strategic, territorial and urban planning instruments, with insufficient coordination and limited innovation

- Consolidated attention to soil consumption, biodiversity protection and valorisation in metropolitan territorial planning (PTC2 and adopted GMTP)	capacity to represent them in a metropolitan perspective - The lack of binding force of the MSP and the SUMP undermines implementation effectiveness and territorial coherence, as delivery depends on the political willingness and technical capacity of individual municipalities, which can slow the systematic delivery of the planned vision and interventions - Limited integration between MSP and regional planning: MSP is not fully integrated with regional strategic instruments (economic-social-environmental), reducing CMTo's capacity to add value to supra-local strategies. Since strategic planning requires a shared vision that aligns local actions with regional and European frameworks, insufficient coordination with the Region creates a gap		

	between metropolitan projects and regional or national funding streams (e.g. structural funds)		

Domain E. Governance Processes and Participation			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Consolidated experiences of inter-institutional co-planning - Good public–private cooperation (especially through participation in Torino Social Impact) - Presence of inter-municipal unions and networks. - Widespread civic culture in some territories - Good organisation with municipalities and territories based on a territorial sub-articulation of functions	- The second-level governance model undermines political authority vis-à-vis citizens, especially where outer areas perceive the entity not as a development coordinator but as a tool primarily favouring the core city's interests - Participation not always incisive/perceived: lack of a clear link between actor involvement (municipalities, citizens, stakeholders) and decisions adopted	- Strengthening Communities of Practice - Building metropolitan identity and valorisation of second-level representativeness - Building more structured and effective participatory processes (e.g., by enhancing the role of Homogeneous Zone spokespersons)	- Unresolved conflicts between local interests - Risk of stakeholder disengagement - For metropolitan municipalities, participation tends to be more formal than substantive

	- Uneven territorial engagement: some municipalities/areas (especially peripheral or mountain) are underrepresented or less active - The prevalence of municipal identity still contributes to an insufficient metropolitan sense of belonging (also visible in "resistance" to municipal mergers) - Core city's decision weight remains significant relative to the rest of the territory (see Statute approval mechanisms) - Stakeholders' difficulty in identifying the nature and purpose of different metropolitan planning instruments, and therefore in understanding their role and providing meaningful contributions		

Domain F. Capacities and Resources			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Access to EU funds, NRRP (and possibly regional funds) - Presence of strategic publicly owned companies - Consolidated internal technical competences - Recognised project capacity	- Strong dependence on state transfers - Limited structural financial resources - High administrative workloads and insufficient human resources - Management complexity due to administrative heterogeneity, access to funds, and operational inter-municipal coordination difficulties (despite Homogeneous Zones)	- Strengthening capacity building - Process digitalisation - Creating stronger inter-institutional cooperation	- Reduction of ordinary resources and staff may slow the functioning of the metropolitan entity - Variability and low predictability of financial flows may jeopardise system-wide actions - Dependence on extraordinary or one-off funding does not support long-term policies and actions

Domain G. Specificities of the Policy Instrument 3rd Metropolitan Strategic Plan (MSP) 2021–2026			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Strategic instrument provided for by law - Formally structured participatory process - Alignment with NRRP and Agenda 2030 - Monitoring envisaged by thematic axes	- Limited implementation effectiveness, inherent in the fact that the MSP is legally defined as a guidance act for the CMTo and the municipalities; it sets general and sectoral objectives but does not always have direct powers over municipalities' choices, which retain their decision-making and management autonomy - Three-year duration as established by law - Weak integration with binding planning - Low awareness of the MSP among municipalities and especially the Region	- Strengthen the role of the MSP as a shared, unified reference framework for metropolitan governance - Better integration with GMTP. - Use as a platform for learning, role definition and metropolitan identity	- Marginalisation of the MSP due to difficulty translating an ambitious vision into concrete actions that involve a wide and fragmented territory uniformly - Weak interaction with other instruments - Progressive potential loss of credibility of the instrument

	- Weak impact on municipal and regional decisions - Limited or no interaction/integration between MSP and regional strategies - Operational difficulty in drafting and updating the MSP annually - Weak territorialisation of strategies and weak interaction with territorial (metropolitan, regional) and urban planning (of the core city and municipalities)		

3.2.2.3 SWOT Interpretation

The SWOT analysis highlights both structural strengths and significant constraints that affect CMTo's capacity to exercise governance and implement policies. Among the main internal strengths are a well-articulated planning framework (MSP, sectoral plans, and the Metropolitan General Territorial Plan - GMTP), a strong local ecosystem of innovation and research, and multiple ongoing practices of participatory governance. The analysis also points to persistent weaknesses, including limited institutional legitimacy and a shared metropolitan identity, marginal fiscal autonomy, administrative fragmentation, and a lack of enforcement tools for strategic plans. External opportunities are numerous, including increasing access to national and European funds, possible reforms of Law 56/2014 and of Piedmont's urban planning legislation, and growing interest in climate and digital transitions. At the same time, CMTo faces external threats linked to demographic decline, still insufficient institutional interaction (first and foremost with the Region), and limited capacity to implement transformative policies at large and inter-metropolitan scales. Overall, the analysis suggests that CMTo has the potential to evolve into a more effective and legitimate actor in metropolitan governance and planning, but this requires strengthened competences and – above all – financial and staffing resources, enhanced administrative capacity, and improved coordination with supra-regional, regional, and local stakeholders.

3.2.2.4 Metro Case Key Insights

Strengthen multilevel & multisector coordination

CMTo operates within a legally constituted metropolitan framework (constitutional recognition and Law 56/2014) and a structured Statute with dedicated governance bodies, while the territorial scale is marked by very high administrative fragmentation (312 municipalities) and strong heterogeneity driven by extensive mountain coverage. The second-level electoral model and the ex lege coincidence between the metropolitan mayor and the core-city mayor, together with reported limits in clarity/resources for assigned functions and uneven recognition by the Region, constrain perceived political legitimacy and complicate the balancing of local and metropolitan interests; intermediate scales (Homogeneous Zones) exist but face interface issues with other associative forms.

Improve strategic planning tools

A consolidated planning toolkit is in place (MSP and SUMP) within a long-standing tradition of territorial and strategic planning, including attention to land take containment and regeneration (PTCP2 and an adopted GMTP). However, the planning framework is described as fragmented and temporally misaligned, with partial overlaps among instruments (MSP, GMTP, SUMP) and a GMTP not yet fully operational, while the MSP's non-cogent nature and limited integration with regional strategic planning (Regional Territorial Plan and other regional instruments) reduce the capacity of strategic planning to steer implementation coherently across levels.

Promote integrated, place-based governance models

Place-based governance is conditioned by the coexistence of a strong urban core with advanced functions and extensive natural/cultural assets (including protected areas and UNESCO sites), alongside pronounced core–periphery and mountain-area imbalances and difficult material/immaterial accessibility in high-territory contexts. Hydrogeological instability affects both mountain and plain areas (flooding, landslides, avalanches) and the territory includes a significant stock of disused built areas and sites requiring remediation, reinforcing the centrality of regeneration choices and differentiated accessibility standards across plains, peri-urban belts and mountain municipalities.

Facilitate exchange of good practices & capacity building

CMTo combines enabling capacity factors – access to EU and NRRP funding, strategic publicly owned companies, recognised project capacity and consolidated internal technical competences – with constraints linked to dependence on state transfers, limited structural resources and high administrative workloads with insufficient human resources. Governance processes include inter-institutional co-planning experiences and public–private cooperation, yet participation is described as uneven and not consistently linked to decision outcomes, with weaker engagement and representativeness in peripheral and mountain territories and limited stakeholder understanding of the metropolitan planning toolkit.

Contribute to balanced & cohesive territorial development

The socio-economic profile is supported by major universities and research centres, a diversified economy (services, industry, research), good overall employment levels and notable tourism attractiveness, while demographic ageing, a high share of micro-enterprises, low youth employment and persistent territorial/social divides remain structural constraints. Risks to cohesion include progressive mountain depopulation, further functional polarisation toward the core city and rising peri-urban pressure; despite extensive multimodal infrastructure endowment, the SWOT records constraints in wider-range rail connectivity toward Liguria/port systems and long timelines for strategic high-capacity links, which condition assumptions on accessibility and balanced development across the metropolitan territory.

3.2.3 City of Warsaw with Warsaw Metropolis Association (PP03)

3.2.3.1 Narrative Summary Sheet

Case Overview

The Warsaw Metropolis Association (WMA) corresponds to the Warsaw Capital Region (NUTS 2, PL91) and consists of 79 local government units (the City of Warsaw, 9 counties, 69 municipalities). The WMA covers 6,104 km² and hosts 3.28 million inhabitants (2024). Spatially, the metropolis is monocentric: Warsaw forms the core, surrounded by satellite towns and urbanised villages. Land use exhibits a central concentration of artificial surfaces, while agriculture and extensive forests generate a mosaic landscape across the periphery; protected natural areas represent 43.4% of the metropolitan area. Functional relations extend beyond the WMA's administrative borders: the OECD Functional Urban Area of Warszawa is larger in area, population and number of municipalities, signalling strong commuting and economic linkages. The road network is hierarchical (national, regional, county, municipal) and Warsaw serves as the principal rail hub. Air connectivity is provided by Warsaw Chopin and Warsaw-Modlin airports, with major investment underway in the new international airport (located in the eastern part of the metropolis). Sustainable mobility relies on Warsaw's integrated public transport (metro, trams, buses, regional rail), growing cycling networks, and shared mobility services, although car ownership rates remain high.

Socioeconomically, the WMA leads nationally: it has the highest contribution to Poland's GDP and the highest GDP per capita. The enterprise base is diversified (trade and services, professional/scientific/technical activities, information and communication). The higher education system is robust, with several top national universities located in Warsaw. Migration trends, notably inflows from Ukraine, add labour supply and entrepreneurship but introduce planning uncertainty concerning long-term settlement. Health infrastructure is unevenly distributed, with a concentration of hospitals in the core city and more limited access in outer areas.

Main Features of the Governance System

Metropolitan governance is organised through the Warsaw Metropolis Association, a voluntary association with legal personality that unites all 79 local government units. Its authorities are the General Assembly (highest decision-making body), the Management Board (executive) and the Audit Committee (internal control). The Association operates under national laws on associations and local self-government and runs an office with staff. A Metropolitan Council (17 members) provides multistakeholder advice, involving experts, NGOs, representatives of regional institutions and the Statistical Office in Warsaw. Funding for statutory activities comes from membership fees; there is no state budget financing due to the absence of metropolitan law. Resource constraints lead to task delegation to the City of Warsaw via agreements, leveraging the city's administrative, technical, and organisational capacity, but also implies additional costs incurred by the City.

Under the EU 2021-2027 financial perspective, the Association is authorised to implement Integrated Territorial Investments (ITI) for the WMA, in cooperation with the Managing Authority (Marshal's Office of the Mazovian Voivodeship) and the City of Warsaw. Strategic guidance is provided by the ITI Strategy 2021-2027+ and the WMA Development Strategy until 2040. Implementation modalities include project selection aligned with the European Funds for Mazovia programme, monitoring and promotion activities, and collaborative working groups. Public consultations in mid2023 utilised an online platform and expert meetings. In parallel, a draft metropolitan act has been prepared and enters national debate; if adopted, it would formalise metropolitan competences (passenger transport, climate and environmental protection, spatial planning, strategic documents) and stabilise funding and leadership continuity.

3.2.3.2 SWOT Table

Domain A: Territorial framework			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Large, strong metropolitan area (~3.28M) with a clear monocentric layout centred on Warsaw, surrounded by satellite cities and urbanized villages - Clear statistical delineation of the Warsaw metropolitan area (NUTS 2 Warsaw Capital Region - PL91) with 79 local government units, offering functional cohesion and a strong urban core - 10.3% artificial land, with concentration in the core city - Rich natural assets and ecological resources: extensive	- Strong territorial imbalance: dense, highly urbanised core city vs. predominantly rural, forested, low-density periphery; low territorial compactness outside Warsaw - Peri urban sprawl driven by radial dispersion of artificial surfaces along transport routes; limited integration between rural/peri urban areas and metropolitan transport networks - Increasing land take (+68 km² from 2000-2018), concentrated in suburban NUTS 3 zones,	- Ongoing expansion of cycling infrastructure within Warsaw and neighbouring municipalities, and increasing availability of sustainable mobility services (bikes, scooters) in the core and some municipalities - Favourable EU context for green mobility, climate adaptation and nature-based solutions (EU funded environmental projects) - Possibility to develop intercommunal blue-green corridors, greenways, ecological	- Peri urban sprawl and land take drive spatial fragmentation, higher infrastructure costs, environmental pressures, and – by dispersing demand – push up mobility needs - An insufficiently developed public transport network (compared with other EU metropolises) risks locking in car dependence with higher congestion and emissions

protected areas, major protected sites include Kampinos National Park, Vistula river, Natura 2000 sites, and reserves - Multimodal transport with an established multi-tier road hierarchy serving national, regional, and local needs, ensuring good regional and national connectivity	creating further spatial dispersion - High motorization rates in both WMA and the core city - Uneven distribution of hospitals with concentration in Warsaw	networks, and metropolitan-level parks - Development of the new international airport and future high-speed rail reinforce national/international connectivity and territorial cohesion - Expanding integrated ticketing across the metropolitan area would further strengthen multimodal integration	

Domain B: Socio-economic framework			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- WMA is the most economically developed and dynamic area in Poland, generating the largest share of national GDP (17.6% in	- Health service mismatch, with significant inequalities in the distribution of medical facilities across the metropolis	- EU funds (2021-2027) underpin investments in employment, innovation and inclusion, supporting digitalisation, innovation	- Geopolitical uncertainty (including instability linked to Ukraine) makes future migration flows and long-term refugee settlement uncertain

2022, 18,5% in 2024-preliminary data) - The economic base is large and diversified, with 818,000 registered enterprises, notably in trade, ICT, finance, and professional services - The workforce is skilled, with a high employment rate (72%) and strong entrepreneurial dynamism - The higher education system is strong, with 66 universities, multiple top-ranked institutions, and major national universities (University of Warsaw, Warsaw University of Technology and Warsaw School of Economics) - Foreign workers are increasingly present; migrants account for 8.7% of employees - Tourism intensity is high, with elevated overnight stays in the WMA and the city of Warsaw	- Fragmented labour market, with many local labour markets dependent on commuting flows to Warsaw - Persistent socio-economic disparities between Warsaw and outer-ring municipalities - Very high motorization rates, with associated externalities; shared mobility and EV uptake remain relatively low compared to EU benchmarks - Ageing population trend, with ageing index higher in the core city (1.53) than the WMA (1.35) combined with low birth rates	capacity and green economic transformations (innovation funds, green transition) - Potential to expand high-tech, research, innovation and knowledge-intensive sectors, fostering SME growth - Metropolitan strategy up to 2040 includes measures to reinforce identity and cohesion - Development of sectoral metropolitan strategies (mobility, climate, energy, economy) that enable the green transition - Regional and European networks facilitate exchange of good practices	- Energy security challenges due to outdated infrastructure and a limited share of renewables - Service dependence on Warsaw for metropolitan services and functions

Domain C. Institutional and Legal Framework			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Long-standing intermunicipal cooperation institutionalized in the voluntary Warsaw Metropolis Association, uniting all 79 LGUs (municipalities and counties) with legal personality and providing a stable cooperation platform - Clear internal governance bodies (General Assembly, Management Board, Audit Committee) and a Metropolitan Council (17 members) providing multi-stakeholder advisory capacity; strong consensus-based decision culture - Warsaw Metropolis Association recognized as a	- Limited and unstable funding mechanisms: the association relies primarily on membership fees, lacks state funding, and depends on the regional Managing Authority for fund management - Limited PPP involvement at the metropolitan level - Two term local government limits perceived as affecting metropolitan stability	- Possible institutional reform towards formal metropolitan governance at national level, with a draft Metropolitan Act prepared by the WMA and adopted in September 2024, potentially granting stable competences (transport, spatial planning, climate policy), strengthening financial autonomy, and institutionalising metropolitan governance. Simultaneously, work is underway at the national level on a draft law on sustainable urban development. The law aims to streamline and strengthen the system for managing the	- Institutional fragility due to the voluntary nature of cooperation; continued informal cooperation may limit the enforceability of metropolitan decisions - Political risk that the Metropolitan Act will not be adopted at government level in the forthcoming years

legitimate actor by municipalities and the region; established agreements and a partnership model with the Mazovian Voivodeship (Managing Authority) and the City of Warsaw - Authorized institution for ITI implementation under the 2021-2027 framework		development of cities and their functional areas, including metropolitan areas. Perhaps this document will provide the foundation for the functioning of Polish metropolises, including Warsaw - EU legal frameworks (ITI, SUMP) enabling metropolitan cooperation and integrated planning, supporting interventions in transport, climate, and spatial planning - National debate on sustainable urban development and growing national interest in cohesive territorial development - Participation in European networks (METREX, Eurocities) supports policy learning	

Domain D. Planning and Coordination Tools			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Strong strategic framework with core metropolitan planning documents – ITI Strategy 2021-2027+ and WMA Development Strategy 2040. ITI Strategy 2021-2027+ positively evaluated and approved by the Managing Authority, with project lists and initiatives aligned with the Funds for Mazovia 2021-2027 and consolidated competitive procedures for project selection - Strong cooperation tools including a network of municipal/county coordinators that accelerate operational coordination and a structured public consultation process	- Capacity gaps: limited resources at Association level constrain monitoring and implementation; data limitations at metropolitan scale for certain indicators; historic distrust among municipalities required significant effort to overcome - MA dependence and operational reliance on CoW: limited resources necessitate delegation of tasks to the City of Warsaw and dependence on the regional MA for fund management	- European Funds for Mazovia 2021-2027 provide financing for strategic projects, with EU frameworks (ITI, SUMP) pushing integrated, sustainable and climate-oriented planning - Potential integration of SUMP measures with ITI funded mobility interventions - Planned revision of the WMA-CoW agreement aligns with the upcoming Implementation Plan and the Metropolitan Act and strengthens implementation modalities - Working groups and the advisory council enable co design and iterative updates	- Diverging local interests and persistent identity gaps may reduce buy in for cross jurisdictional plans, leading to possible misalignment between regional, metropolitan, and local plans, especially in the absence of a metropolitan law - Regulatory uncertainties and slow decision making may hinder large scale strategic projects and slow strategy implementation

(online platform, expert meetings)		- Competitive project selection fosters quality and alignment with strategic goals, including pilot projects	

Domain E. Governance Processes and Participation			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Long-standing intermunicipal system institutionalised through the Warsaw Metropolis Association, with 79 municipalities and counties actively engaged - Metropolitan Council institutionalises participation of experts, NGOs, and regional actors; participation mechanisms include councils, coordinators, and working groups	- Low metropolitan identity compared to attachment to individual municipalities; initially low trust and cooperation prior to ITI 2014-2021 - Limited private involvement at the metropolitan level - Limited stakeholder data for some qualitative assessments at this stage	- Increase digital participation (such as online public consultation) to expand resident engagement and identification with the metropolis, in line with Strategy 2040 actions to build metropolitan identity and community - Academic cooperation paired with ongoing exchanges with other Polish ITIs and European metropolitan associations	- Trust fatigue and stalled identity building may weaken coordination over time - Municipality and county inequalities may reduce buy in and hinder cohesive implementation - Crisis management needs (including cybersecurity) require supra local capabilities not yet formalised - Potential political turnover (two term limit in local

- Operational coordinators in every municipality and county (since 2014/2022) accelerate operational coordination - Broad public consultations on ITI and WMA development strategy conducted through multiple channels - Regular cooperation with ministries and voivodeship bodies for EU funds implementation; strong role of the City of Warsaw in coordinating strategic documents and representing WMA at national and EU levels - Active networks and participation in European metropolitan platforms (METREX, MEC/CE, Eurocities) support policy learning and collaboration		- Climate agenda supported by EU program incentives encouraging collaborative, integrated governance - Prospective Metropolitan Act to formalize governance structures and enhance participation, growing municipal interest in shared services and joint planning	government) threatens continuity

Domain F. Capacities and Resources			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Strong technical capacity across MA and CoW, with an Association Office and staff with defined roles and legal capacity, supported by existing technical departments, planning units - Cooperation with technical institutions (planning and statistical offices, universities, firefighting academy) and a strong university system underpin a solid data and skills base - Stable fees provide predictable core funding, complemented by EU project experience and access to EU funds through the Funds for Mazovia 2021-2027	- Staff inequality and limited financial/human resources at MA level; lack of permanent metropolitan level operational agencies for key sectors (e.g., transport) - EU dependence: major projects rely on external funding - Limited EV adoption and charging infrastructure compared to EU peers - Uneven distribution of healthcare infrastructure across the WMA	- EU funds available via the regional programme for ITI implementation and capacity building; new EU funding cycles and digitalisation initiatives reinforce support - Technical assistance linked to digitisation and shared mobility expansion can enhance operational efficiency and capacity building - Possible Metropolitan Act could unlock competences and funding mechanisms; its adoption could introduce dedicated metropolitan finances and organisational structures	- Municipal budget strain driven by rising operational costs, which challenge the voluntary funding model - Energy crisis and outdated infrastructure pose systemic risks - Cybersecurity and public safety require supra-local resources beyond current capacities

- Warsaw's public transport is the largest in Poland (metro, trams, trains, buses) and Public Transport Authority in Warsaw (ZTM) supports the surrounding municipalities (33 at present) - Strengthened MA-CoW cooperation via the 2024 agreement delegating additional ITI tasks to CoW; CoW provides significant administrative, technical and organizational support to MA			

Domain G. Specificities of the Policy Instrument **Agreement between the Warsaw Metropolis Association and the City of Warsaw for Integrated Territorial Investments (ITI) for the Warsaw Metropolis 2021-2027+**			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- ITI integrates 79 LGUs within a clear, authorised implementation structure with defined roles for WMA, CoW	- The absence of a metropolitan law limits the instrument's scope and reduces MA's formal	- The Draft Metropolitan Act (2024) could provide legal competences, introduce metropolitan funding	- Risk that the Metropolitan Act is not adopted, leaving ITI isolated and limiting long term effectiveness

and the Managing Authority (Mazovian Voivodeship), under a national mandate for the ITI Strategy 2021-2027+, ensuring institutional legitimacy - Strong CoW-MA partnership, formalised by the 2024 agreement; CoW's administrative and technical capacity enhances operational efficiency (strategy development, documentation, and representation of all WMA municipalities) - Well-established strategic framework – ITI Strategy 2021-2027+ and Development Strategy 2040 – aligned with Eu Funds for Mazovia 2021-2027 through institutionalised cooperation with the Managing Authority - Agreement frameworks specify selection, monitoring, and promotion responsibilities; structured competitive	authority in transport, climate, and spatial planning - No autonomy in fund management: the Association does not directly manage ITI funds and depends on the regional MA; there is a lack of stable, long-term funding for supra-local tasks linked to ITI implementation - Administrative load and capacity gaps: limited financial and human resources at MA level have led to delegation of ITI tasks to the City of Warsaw; policy monitoring is constrained by data gaps in some areas - Dependence on voluntary cooperation rather than legally mandated metropolitan coordination	mechanisms, and institutionalise cooperation; potential adoption would strengthen governance and delivery - Integrated projects upcoming revision of the WMA-CoW agreement will improve implementation and align ITI with the Implementation Plan and future legislative developments; possible synergies with SUMP and climate/environmental policies; growing inter-municipal interest in joint services and strategic cooperation expands the impact of ITI initiatives; capacity to leverage public consultations and working groups for iterative instrument updates - EU learning, EU policies and regional programmes increasingly support integrated territorial governance, reinforcing the role of ITI as a	- Political instability or divergence between national, regional and metropolitan authorities could hinder the revision and execution of the CoW-MA agreement - Demographic changes and rising demand for supra local services may exceed the instrument's current capacity

procedures, thematic initiatives, and project lists aligned with the regional programme ensure transparency and coherence with strategic goals		driver of metropolitan cooperation	

3.2.3.3 SWOT Interpretation

The WMA's monocentric structure, clear statistical delineation, extensive natural assets and mature transport hierarchy underpin integrated planning. Economically, the metropolis leads nationally with a diversified enterprise base and strong higher education institutions. Governance strengths include legally constituted Association bodies, authorisation for ITI and a multistakeholder Metropolitan Council. Planning strengths stem from the ITI Strategy, the long-term Development Strategy to 2040, operational coordinators across municipalities and counties, and structured public consultations.

Peri-urban sprawl follows transport corridors; motorisation is high; healthcare infrastructure is unevenly distributed; and several indicators (e.g., disposable income) are not readily available at metropolitan scale. Institutional constraints include the absence of metropolitan law, reliance on membership fees, limited PPPs at metropolitan level and perceived leadership instability due to local term limits. Resource limitations require delegating tasks to the City of Warsaw.

EU instruments and funding (European Funds for Mazovia, ITI, SUMP linked actions) enable strategic investment and capacity building. A prospective metropolitan law could clarify competence and unlock more stable financing. Participation in European networks (e.g., METREX, Eurocities) supports policy learning and benchmarking. Mobility and energy transitions – cycling expansion, integrated ticketing, shared mobility and potential highspeed rail – can improve sustainable accessibility. Rising metropolitan identity (2019-2023) supports cohesion, while migration contributes to labour market dynamism and entrepreneurship.

Energy security challenges linked to outdated infrastructure and low renewable shares; exposure to social and political crises requiring supralocal crisis management (including cybersecurity); persistent sprawl and car dependence; political uncertainty regarding adoption of the metropolitan act.

3.2.3.4 Metro Case Key Insights

Strengthen multilevel & multisector coordination

The Warsaw Metropolis Association provides a recognised platform with internal bodies and a Metropolitan Council. Coordination is operationalised through municipal/county coordinators, and delegated implementation for ITI has been formalised via the 2024 WMA-City of Warsaw agreement. The cooperation model is voluntary and financing for the Association is limited, so day-to-day coordination depends on the continuity of institutional commitment and on the City of Warsaw's administrative capacity.

Improve strategic planning tools

An approved ITI Strategy – complete with competitive procedures, project lists and structured public consultations – operates alongside a Development Strategy to 2040, creating a dual programming horizon that aligns with European and regional funding cycles. In practice, several operational tasks of the plan-to-delivery cycle depend on the

City of Warsaw's administrative and technical capacity due to limited metropolitan-level sources.

Promote integrated, place-based governance models

A monocentric structure and a rural/peri-urban outer ring, together with high motorisation and uneven hospital distribution, produce corridor- and node-based patterns of accessibility. Extensive natural assets and a mature multimodal hierarchy define the spatial context within which land-use, transport and service locations are coordinated.

Facilitate exchange of good practices & capacity building

The Association Office, the coordinators' network, the Metropolitan Council and formal public consultation routines constitute an operational ecosystem for policy learning and inter-municipal cooperation, complemented by active participation in European networks. A solid university base and the technical capacity available across the Association and the City of Warsaw support programme preparation and delivery, while limited metropolitan-level private-sector involvement and heterogeneous administrative resources among municipalities continue to shape the intensity and breadth of participation.

Contribute to balanced & cohesive territorial development

Despite leadership in GDP and higher-education assets, peri-urban sprawl, high car dependence and uneven health-care accessibility remain evident features of the metropolitan landscape, particularly in outer municipalities, shaping differentiated service access and mobility conditions across the area.

3.2.4 Bucharest Metropolitan Area Intercommunity Development Association with Ministry of Development, Public Works and Administration (PP04)

3.2.4.1 Narrative Summary Sheet

Case Overview

The Bucharest Metropolitan Area (BMA) represents the most significant economic pole in Romania and one of the fastest-transforming metropolitan regions in Eastern Europe. It is defined, for cooperation purposes, by the combined territories of the Municipality of Bucharest and Ilfov County (BMA ≈ 1,803 km²). Its territorial dynamics, socio-economic profile, institutional reforms, and governance challenges reflect a metropolitan system characterized by strong functional integration, extreme internal disparities, and initial institutionalization. The metropolitan perimeter extends beyond the functional area (FUA).

The Policy Instrument selected for Metro Case project is the national law dedicated to metropolitan and urban cooperation; the objective is the reform of the law itself, and the Romanian State decided to involve Bucharest in the preparation and to set a structured participative process.

The cooperation process is in progress, starting from one structured initiative founded by the Municipality of Bucharest and the Ilfov County: the Bucharest Metropolitan Area Intercommunity Development Association (ADIZMB).

Main Features of the Governance System

The Romanian model combines a top-down legislative framework with a bottom-up local initiative. The national law sets the cooperation instruments, in the form of Intercommunity Development Associations (ADI) that involve Bucharest or the County seat municipalities with surrounding territorial units; set the territorial dimension; identify a wide range of functions, and leaves to the interested Public Administrations the decision on if and on what to cooperate.

This model is intended to foster cooperation in an extended way; not only to big metropolitan area, but to all County Seats and even to other relevant cities.

The model is flexible and sets different minimum territorial dimensions for different cities; for Bucharest it means at least the County area. On the base of the law, the metropolitan cooperation is not only intended for better urban management but for a sound development strategy including urban and rural areas.

So far, ADIZMB is founded and managed by Bucharest Municipality and Ilfov County, that acts on behalf of all other municipalities and are mostly dedicated to develop integrated projects, attracting funding and supporting integrated planning. It is a good starting point, but now the challenge is to actively involve the municipalities and to give effective decisional power to the cooperation associations.

3.2.4.2 SWOT Table

Domain A: Territorial framework			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Large and economically strong metropolitan region (Bucharest-Ilfov) - High-density core city - Clear administrative perimeter (BMA) - Romania main transport hub (airport, train, roads) - Extensive agricultural area - relevant water ecosystems	- Traffic congestion due to high commuting levels - Extreme suburban sprawl and land take - Weak green infrastructure and limited urban forest	- Country's economic and development engine - Growing territorial attractivity at national and transnational level - New national legal framework (Law 246/2022) - EU funds for mobility, climate adaptation, green infrastructure - Opportunity to build an integrated metropolitan territorial strategy	- Continued uncontrolled urban expansion - Environmental degradation, flooding and heat-risk - Fragmentation if legal provisions are not enforced

Domain B: Socio-economic framework			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Strongest labour market and GDP concentration in Romania - High tertiary education rate (51% age 30-34) - High attractiveness for talent and investment - Population growth in the urban rings	- Demographic imbalance: high concentration in the core city - Strong car dependency (656 cars/1,000 in Bucharest) - Concentration of relevant services and activities in the core city - Persistent inequality and marginalised areas. (satellite cities as dormitory) - Housing affordability problems (dormitory)	- Long-term growth of knowledge economy - High potential for innovation and creative sectors - EU funds supporting competitiveness, inclusion, green transition - Strong traditional value chains as agriculture - Energy related resources	- Increasing socio-spatial inequalities - Suburbanization stressing mobility and public services - Rising housing and energy costs

Domain C. Institutional and Legal Framework			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Formal legal basis for metropolitan areas and special provisions for Bucharest (Law 246/2022) - Legislative framework open for bottom-up initiative - Wide range of possible competences and cooperation sectors - Flexible and adaptative model - Structured voluntary cooperation between Bucharest Municipality and Ilfov County	- Municipalities (other than Bucharest) not involved in the decisional process - Metropolitan area still not an administrative authority - Lack of formal competences and regulatory powers - Fragmentation of roles between BMA, District 6, Ilfov, and national actors - Law still not implemented operationally	- National initiative for legislative improvement involving Bucharest Metropolitan Area in the process - Potential consolidation of metropolitan governance - Stronger multilevel coordination promoted by national reforms - Mutual learning with other EU metropolitan areas	- Risk of future change in political situation - Institutional fragmentation worsening if law is delayed - Risk of uneven governance capacity among municipalities

Domain D. Planning and Coordination Tools			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- TPBI ensures integrated public transport coordination. - Sectoral planning in place (SUMP, IDPs) - Experience with EU-funded planning tools - Zonal Peri-Urban/Metropolitan Territorial Development Strategy for spatial planning coordination at metropolitan level	- Not yet established Metropolitan Territorial Development Strategy - Lack of cohesive metropolitan spatial planning - Sectoral silos persist across institutions - Uneven planning capacity among Ilfov municipalities	- Metropolitan planning required by new law - Availability of EU funds for GIS, data, and digital tools - Growing need for integrated transport-housing-environment planning	- Delays in planning tools risk locking-in fragmented development - Inflation and costs may reduce implementation capacity

Domain E. Governance Processes and Participation			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- ADIZMB enable cross-municipal cooperation - Successful joint initiatives (transport corridors) - Growing involvement of civil society and universities - Political recognition of metropolitan challenges - Structured multilevel administrations and stakeholders involvement in the legislation process - Flexible legislative framework for cooperation integrated bottom-up process in a solid framework	- Municipalities reluctant to cooperate due to autonomy concerns - Limited citizen awareness of metropolitan cooperation advantages - Lack of structured public private cooperation - Weak metropolitan identity - Lack of structured participatory processes at metropolitan scale	- Increased awareness of need for integrated services - Potential to strengthen participatory planning - Universities as drivers of public debate and co-creation	- Political changes may undermine cooperation - Low public engagement weakens legitimacy

Domain F. Capacities and Resources			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Strong administrative capacity in Bucharest - Increasing digitalization - Access to national and EU funding - Skilled metropolitan technical staff - Metropolitan association supported by partners - Existing ADIs for transport, waste, and water - Anticipated fiscal decentralization (5% income tax allocation)	- Big disparity between Bucharest and Ilfov municipalities - Lack of stable financial resources for metropolitan governance - Administrative overload for small municipalities - Heavy dependence on EU funds	- New fiscal resources starting 2026 - Increasing digital tools for governance and planning - Capacity-building opportunities via EU programmes	- Budgetary stress in municipalities - Staffing shortages - Political or financial instability may undermine continuity - Risk of not implementation of the fund provision established by the law

Domain G. Specificities of the Policy Instrument Law No. 246/2022 regarding the metropolitan areas			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Provides clear roadmap for competences, planning, funding - Strong legislative foundation for future metropolitan authority - Flexible model allowing local adaptation - Wide range of cities potentially involved	- Implementation of delays and lack of operational clarity - Not yet providing actionable governance powers - Implementation depending on local awareness and initiative	- Opportunity to shape an effective metropolitan governance model - Alignment with EU requirements for integrated territorial development	- Failure to implement could deepen fragmentation - Political shifts may block full operationalisation

3.2.4.3 SWOT Interpretation

The SWOT analysis reveals a metropolitan area with immense potential for coordinated development, yet still constrained by fragmentation, uneven capacities, and the delayed implementation of the new legal framework for metropolitan governance.

From a territorial perspective, the BMA is defined by a strong contrast between the dense, fully urbanized capital and the rapidly expanding but institutionally weaker municipalities of Ilfov County. While Bucharest concentrates most services, infrastructure, and jobs, Ilfov absorbs most population growth, with high levels of suburbanization and land consumption. The lack of a coherent metropolitan spatial plan contributes to uncoordinated development patterns, congestion, low accessibility, and continued pressure on natural areas. Nonetheless, the region benefits from important ecological assets, a significant metropolitan water system, and new transport investments such as the A0 ring motorway, which create opportunities for more integrated spatial and mobility planning. The metropolitan area is wider than the functional area and includes relevant agricultural areas, that are both a challenge and an opportunity.

The socio-economic structure highlights the dominant role of Bucharest in Romania's economy, accounting for the country's most competitive labor market, its largest concentration of tertiary-educated population, and its strongest innovation potential. However, demographic trajectories reveal a system moving in two opposite directions: Bucharest faces population stagnation or decline, while Ilfov continues to grow at high rates, often without the corresponding expansion of services, public transport, and utilities. Housing affordability issues, car dependency, and spatial inequalities reinforce socio-economic polarisation. At the same time, the metropolitan area continues to attract talent and investments, benefiting from EU funds and the dynamism of knowledge-intensive sectors.

The institutional and legal framework is at the moment under revision, with the support of Bucharest metropolitan association. The definition of metropolitan area changed with time starting in 2001 when it was dedicated to the most relevant cities, then extended to all county seats and some other cities with Law 246/2022. The law sets the framework but leaves the initiative to local authorities, who can join forces in legal associations and decide on which competences and roles cooperate, like in special planning, sustainable development, mobility, environment, and public services. Yet the law is still not fully implemented, leaving a significant gap between formal recognition and actual governance capacity.

The planning and coordination tools currently implemented are mainly sectoral and insufficiently integrated. While Bucharest and Ilfov have developed SUMPs and other sectoral development strategies, the Metropolitan Territorial Development Strategy, that should cover the entire BMA and serve as the basis for Municipal Urban Plans (PUGs) does not exist. Coordination across municipalities is uneven, and institutional silos persist both horizontally and vertically. Specific provisions for spatial planning and sustainable mobility at metropolitan level are included in the corresponding sectorial laws.

The governance processes and participation dimension highlights a cooperation landscape that is partially functional but far from consolidated. ADIs provide mechanisms for coordination, and civil society and academia play an increasingly active role in metropolitan debates. Yet, municipal reluctance to cooperate – often linked to concerns over autonomy, divergent political interests, and uncertain benefits – continues to limit integration. Public awareness of the metropolitan scale remains low, and citizen participation is not systematically structured within metropolitan processes. Building a stronger metropolitan identity and communication strategy is therefore essential for legitimizing future governance reforms.

The capacities and resources dimension further reinforces the asymmetrical character of the metropolitan system. Bucharest concentrates administrative skills, financial resources, and digital infrastructure, while many Ilfov municipalities face staffing shortages, limited budgets, and an overreliance on EU-funded projects. Although the new fiscal mechanism foreseen by Law 246/2022 (5% of income tax redistribution) could strengthen metropolitan financing, delays in implementation create uncertainty. Without stable, predictable funding and targeted capacity-building programs, governance asymmetry will continue to hinder metropolitan integration. Relevant support for public services management is given by multiple ADIs created by Bucharest Municipality, Ilfov County and all or many other county's TAUs. This is a first example of structured cooperation, and these operative bodies can sustain and implement a more strategic action by the metropolitan association.

Finally, the specificities of the policy instrument – the new law on metropolitan areas – constitute both the most promising opportunity and the most significant risk. If fully implemented, the law could enable a transition from fragmented governance to a structured system with defined competences, integrated planning functions, and financial autonomy. However, incomplete political consensus, administrative complexity, and municipal resistance may slow or block its operationalization.

Overall, the Bucharest Metropolitan Area is at a critical institutional crossroads. It combines the economic strength and demographic momentum typical of major European capitals with the structural vulnerabilities of a metropolitan system still lacking robust coordination tools and formal governance authority. The next years will be decisive: successful implementation of the new metropolitan legal framework – together with improved planning capacity, increased municipal cooperation, and strengthened stakeholder participation – could transform the BMA into a fully functioning metropolitan governance model aligned with European standards. Failure to do so risks perpetuating fragmentation, reinforcing inequalities, and weakening the region's capacity to manage climate transition, mobility challenges, and spatial development in a cohesive and sustainable manner.

3.2.4.4 Metro Case Key Insights

Strengthen multilevel & multisector coordination

A formal legal basis for metropolitan cooperation exists and provides recognition of the Bucharest Metropolitan Area, yet it remains a framework without operational powers, leaving cooperation largely voluntary and leading to variable-geometry arrangements that differ across municipalities. Cooperation functions today through ADIZMB for cross-municipal work and through TPBI and other sectoral ADIs (transport, waste, water) that extend service integration beyond municipal borders. The combination of a recognised but not yet fully implemented law and functioning cooperation bodies produces a coordination setting where projects and services can be executed across jurisdictions, while accountability and enforceability still depend on the willingness and capacity of the participating authorities.

Improve strategic planning tools

Sectoral tools are in place – SUMP/IDPs and a Zonal Peri-Urban/Metropolitan Territorial Development Strategy – while an adopted metropolitan territorial strategy is not yet present and planning capacities are uneven across Ilfov municipalities. In practical terms, mobility, housing and environmental assets are programmed through separate tracks, with silos and fragmented datasets limiting cross-sector coherence; the absence of an approved Metropolitan Territorial Development Strategy means that municipal plans do not have a common territorial hierarchy to reference, and the alignment of programming and spending is therefore negotiated case by case rather than within a unified metropolitan framework.

Promote integrated, place-based governance models

The metropolitan area includes extensive agricultural and water ecosystems, while the core–periphery contrast remains pronounced and commuting congestion persists along the main corridors. The absence of an adopted metropolitan spatial framework results in uncoordinated approaches across municipalities, reflecting the existing asymmetry between the capital and the surrounding area, also in relation to blue-green systems, transport infrastructure, and settlement dynamics.

Facilitate exchange of good practices & capacity building

Bucharest's administrative capacity, digitalisation processes, access to EU/national funds and engagement of universities/civil society provide a strong base for programme design and delivery. At the same time, disparities in resources and skills persist among Ilfov municipalities, and citizen awareness of the metropolitan dimension is limited; as a result, the capital already functions de facto as a competence hub for project preparation and implementation, while weaker administrations require structured support on tendering, data standards and monitoring to achieve comparable levels of readiness.

Contribute to balanced & cohesive territorial development

The area functions as Romania's economic engine, yet socio-spatial inequalities, car dependency and affordability pressures are documented, particularly in outer

municipalities where access to services and sustainable mobility options is more constrained. Existing sectoral arrangements – such as metropolitan public transport coordination through TPBI and service delivery through ADIs – provide the current mechanisms through which cooperation occurs across jurisdictions, while weak metropolitan identity and a reluctance among some municipalities to engage in joint action continue to shape the metropolitan context.

3.2.5 Metropolitan Area of Barcelona (PP05)

3.2.5.1 Narrative Summary Sheet

Case Overview

The Metropolitan Area of Barcelona (AMB) is the only institutionalised metropolitan government in Spain. Established by Law 31/2010, the AMB covers 36 municipalities over 636 km² and includes more than 3.3 million inhabitants. Barcelona acts as a dominant core city, concentrating population, economic activities, and strategic infrastructures, while the surrounding municipalities form a polycentric metropolitan system. Institutional metropolitan area and functional area not aligned (AMB significantly smaller than the FUA).

The AMB operates within a complex multilevel governance context, interacting with municipal governments, the Generalitat of Catalonia, and the Spanish state. It holds direct competences in key policy areas such as urban planning, mobility, water, waste management, environmental services, housing, and economic development, while other strategic domains remain shared or managed at higher levels.

Metropolitan development is guided by a consolidated set of planning instruments. These include the Metropolitan Urban Master Plan (PDUM), municipal urban plans (POUMs), sectoral plans (notably mobility, environment, and climate), and the Pla d'Actuació Metropolità (PAM), which translates strategic priorities into concrete actions. Together, these tools aim to address territorial imbalances, service efficiency, sustainability, digital transition, and coordination across the metropolitan area.

Main Features of the Governance System

The governance system of the AMB is characterised by a formal institutional structure with elected political representation from all member municipalities. Decision-making bodies include the Metropolitan Council, the Presidency, and the Governing Board, supported by a professional administrative and technical apparatus.

Coordination mechanisms rely on inter-municipal cooperation, sectoral agencies, and technical committees, allowing municipalities of different sizes to participate in shared service provision. While the AMB plays a central coordinating role, governance remains strongly multilevel, with overlapping competences and the need for continuous negotiation with regional and national authorities.

Participation of private actors occurs mainly through regulated public–private partnerships in specific sectors, while citizen participation mechanisms exist but remain less visible at the metropolitan scale. European projects and networks function as important catalysts for cooperation, experimentation, and policy learning. Partnerships with universities and private actors are increasingly relevant for innovation and digital transformation, as promoted by PAM.

3.2.5.2 SWOT Table

Domain A: Territorial framework			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Metropolitan area with clearly defined boundaries, with a compact yet diverse territory - Strong core city, concentrating nearly half of the metropolitan population and functioning as the main economic, cultural, and mobility hub - Consolidated ecological network (44.6%), ensuring strong environmental assets - Polycentric settlement model, with multiple urban nodes and medium-sized cities supporting balanced territorial development - Containment of land take in the past decade	- Demographic and functional imbalances between the core city and the surrounding municipalities, with very high population density in Barcelona compared to the metropolitan average - Advanced shares of sealed soils in core urban areas - Concentration of economic activities, services, and mobility flows in Barcelona, creating pressure on infrastructure and commuting systems	- The halted land take trend opens possibilities for urban regeneration projects and green infrastructure expansion - Protected natural areas and ecological corridors provide a foundation for environmental connectivity, biodiversity and climate resilience strategies - Polycentric metropolitan structure supporting balanced development and reducing pressure on the core city	- Increases in sealed surfaces, with potential intensification of environmental pressures - Continued concentration of mobility and economic flows towards the core city, combined with intense commuting and tourism, creates high pressure on infrastructure and transport systems, increasing risks of congestion, territorial disparities, and environmental strain - Exposure to land-use pressures of critical ecological connectivity areas outside the current protected areas system

Domain B: Socio-economic framework			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Dominant metropolitan economic role within Catalonia, accounting for around half of regional GDP - Strongly service-oriented economic structure, combined with industrial, R&D and export-oriented activities - Educational attainment is high (36.8% of residents holding tertiary degrees), supported by universities and research centres - Large and dynamic metropolitan business base across municipalities	- Persistent socio-economic disparities between the core city and the rest of the metropolitan area, particularly in employment rates and income levels - Youth employment relatively low (36%) - Pronounced demographic ageing, particularly in the core city - Recent contraction in labour market dynamics	- Strong and growing presence of higher education institutions, R&D activities, and digital ecosystems supporting innovation and competitiveness - Diversified service economy and export capacity enhancing adaptation to economic and technological transitions -Sizeable foreign population for potential demographic renewal and labor market dynamism - Access to European funds and participation in international networks (e.g. Eurocities, Metropolis) can strengthen socio-economic resilience	- Persistent territorial inequalities affecting cohesion, risk of economic and social polarization - Ageing-related pressure on labor supply and welfare system expenditure - High dependence on the services sector could expose the metropolitan economy to sector-specific shocks

Domain C. Institutional and Legal Framework			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Legally established metropolitan authority with defined competences and institutional stability - Formal metropolitan governing bodies ensuring proportional representation of all member municipalities - Metropolitan authority with significant competences, including spatial planning, mobility, water, waste management, environment, housing, and economic development - Dedicated metropolitan agencies and entities supporting operational capacity	- Shared and overlapping competences across government levels (AMB, Generalitat, State) require complex coordination and often lead to slower decision-making - Decision-making power at the metropolitan level does not always extend to strategic infrastructures managed by higher levels of government (e.g. commuter rail) - Institutional complexity may reduce transparency and make the governance structure difficult to understand for citizens	- The existing legal framework allows for the creation of complementary bodies and agencies, enabling institutional adaptation to emerging policy challenges - Alignment with Catalan, national, and EU policy frameworks to strengthen metropolitan coordination and access external resources - Participation in European networks and programs (e.g., Eurocities, URBACT, Horizon) supports institutional learning, best practice alignment, and access to funding for innovation	- Overlapping of competences with other governance level (requiring coordination in issues such railways or coastal erosion) - Limited clarity in multilevel responsibilities reduces accountability and implementation capacity in complex policy areas

Domain D. Planning and Coordination Tools			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Consolidated set of metropolitan planning instruments (PDUM, POUM, PAM) provides a strategic and operational framework for metropolitan development - Integrated sectoral planning, particularly in mobility, environment, water, waste, and climate - Metropolitan coordination role with municipalities in the preparation, financing, and implementation of plans, projects, and works, reinforcing coherence across territory - Existence of specialized metropolitan agencies and technical services strengthens	- Uneven implementation capacity and overlapping competences across government levels limit effectiveness of planning instruments, especially in infrastructure and transport - Some strategic tools, especially in emerging fields such as digital transformation, are still under development and remain primarily strategic rather than operational - Digital tools remain fragmented across departments, with no integrated strategy to streamline processes and data management	- Ongoing preparation and updating of metropolitan plans (e.g. PDUM and PAM) for integrating sustainability, digitalization, and climate objectives - Alignment with EU strategies and funding frameworks can strengthen the implementation capacity of metropolitan planning tools - Enhanced data availability and digital tools can improve monitoring, evaluation, and coordination across sectors and municipalities	- Delays or inconsistencies in coordination with higher levels of government may weaken the impact of metropolitan planning tools - Insufficient integration between sectoral plans risks fragmentation and reduced policy coherence at the metropolitan scale - Regulatory constraints and bureaucratic delays could slow down the implementation of new planning initiatives

the capacity to implement and manage - Long tradition of political consensus, enabling long-term implementation of strategic plans			

Domain E. Governance Processes and Participation			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Coordination between AMB and municipalities is recognized as necessary and valuable to ensure equal quality of services across the territory - Established practices of inter-municipal cooperation in key service areas (e.g. mobility, waste, water, and environmental management),	- Complex governance processes and difficult to understand for citizens, with blurred responsibilities across municipal, metropolitan, regional, and national levels - Public-private partnerships lack a consolidated framework, not supported by a political or social consensus	- European and national programmes as catalysts for multilevel collaboration and structured participation, especially in innovative and complex policy areas - Strengthening participatory processes and communication can improve citizens' understanding of metropolitan	- Political fragmentation or divergent positions on cooperation with private actors may hinder the development of stable governance partnerships - Persistent mistrust towards public-private collaboration risks limiting access to expertise, innovation, and external resources

supported by stable institutional arrangements - Participation in European projects and international networks (e.g. Eurocities and MedCities) - Existing experiences of public-private collaboration in specific sectors, such as housing and water management under public regulation	- Limited collaboration with private actors beyond formal service provision, particularly in innovation- and digital-related fields - Participation mechanisms involving citizens and stakeholders are present but do not always translate into strong visibility or awareness of the metropolitan institution	governance and reinforce institutional legitimacy - Expanding collaborative governance models in areas such as digital transformation, housing, and climate action can enhance policy effectiveness and shared ownership	- Weak visibility of the metropolitan institution may reduce citizen engagement and accountability in governance processes

Domain F. Capacities and Resources			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Consolidated administrative and technical structure, with specialized departments and metropolitan agencies supporting policy design and	- Limited presence of specialized technical profiles in emerging fields, particularly digital and data-related competences	- New European funding programmes and competitive projects to strengthen technical capacities, digital tools, and human resources	- Increasing complexity of metropolitan challenges may strain existing human and technical resources - Difficulties in attracting and retaining specialised technical

implementation across key service areas - Stable and diversified financial resources through a combination of local taxation, service fees, municipal contributions, transfers from the Generalitat, and access to EU funds - Substantial metropolitan budget providing the capacity to manage large-scale services and projects - Experience in accessing and managing European funding programmes, which also support capacity building and innovation	- Administrative procedures and regulatory frameworks can slow down implementation and reduce flexibility, especially for innovative or experimental projects - Capacity levels vary across departments and municipalities	- Digitalisation and data governance initiatives can improve internal efficiency, coordination, and service delivery - Collaboration with universities, research centres, and private actors can help compensate for internal capacity gaps and foster innovation	staff could limit the effectiveness of future policy initiatives - Administrative burdens and restrictive procurement laws (Public Contracts Law) pose significant barriers to innovation

Domain G. Specificities of the Policy Instrument Metropolitan Action Plan (PAM) 2024-2027			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- PAM provides a comprehensive strategic framework translating metropolitan objectives into concrete programmes and actions - Explicitly addresses cross-cutting priorities, including sustainability, digital transformation, social cohesion, and service efficiency - Designed as a flexible and adaptive tool, allowing periodic updates and alignment with changing socio-economic and institutional contexts - Strong political backing supporting legitimacy and implementation	- Implementation of PAM actions often depends on coordination with municipalities and higher levels of government - Some measures remain programmatic and lack detailed operational specifications or dedicated resources - Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are not always fully standardized across policy areas - Limited specialized technical profiles and dependency on competitive funding may constrain effective implementation of actions	- PAM can act as a platform for integrating digital and smart solutions across metropolitan services and policy sectors - Alignment with European agendas and funding instruments can reinforce implementation capacity and innovation - Strengthening inter-municipal cooperation by providing a shared strategic vision and common priorities - External partnerships with universities and private actors, promoted by PAM, can foster innovation and accelerate the deployment of smart services	- Insufficient coordination across sectors and governance levels could weaken PAM's ability to integrate sustainability, digitalization, and climate objectives - Dependence on competitive EU funding and limited internal technical capacity may delay or constrain PAM's digital transition actions

3.2.5.3 SWOT Interpretation

The SWOT analysis highlights a metropolitan system with strong institutional foundations, significant economic capacity, and consolidated planning tools, counterbalanced by structural imbalances and governance complexity. Strengths related to legal stability, financial resources, and technical capacity enable the AMB to act as an effective service provider and strategic coordinator.

However, weaknesses such as socio-economic disparities, demographic ageing, limited digital capacities, and blurred multilevel responsibilities constrain policy effectiveness. These internal weaknesses interact with external threats, including political fragmentation, sectoral vulnerabilities, and pressures on environmental and social systems.

At the same time, opportunities linked to European funding, innovation ecosystems, and digital transformation can help mitigate existing weaknesses if effectively leveraged. The analysis shows that the main challenge lies not in the absence of tools or institutions, but in their integration, and continuity over time, so that metropolitan strategies can drive consistent action across all tiers of governance.

3.2.5.4 Metro Case Key Insights

Strengthen multilevel & multisector coordination

AMB is a legally established metropolitan authority with proportional representation and broad direct competences in spatial planning, mobility, water, waste, environment, housing and economic development, supported by dedicated agencies. Overlapping competences with the Generalitat and the State – particularly on strategic infrastructures such as parts of the rail system – slow decision-making and reduce predictability.

Improve strategic planning tools

A consolidated PDUM-POUM-PAM portfolio translates metropolitan objectives into programmes and actions across sectors and supports coordination in preparation, financing and delivery. Implementation capacity is uneven, overlaps reduce effectiveness, and the digital dimension is largely programmatic with fragmented tools and procedures that complicates cross-department execution and slows innovation cycles under the constraints of the public procurement framework.

Promote integrated, place-based governance models

A compact but diverse territory, a consolidated ecological network and a polycentric structure support distributed development and reduce pressure on the core. Core-area density and high sealed surfaces justify prioritised regeneration and green-infrastructure deployment, while commuting corridors and peri-urban areas concentrate practical needs for integration of land-use, transport and environmental measures.

Facilitate exchange of good practices & capacity building

AMB's administrative and technical apparatus, together with stable and diversified financial resources and long experience in European programmes, underpins

metropolitan capacity for programme design and funding access. Documented limits include gaps in specialist profiles – particularly in digital and data fields – constraining administrative procedures, and uneven visibility of participatory processes at metropolitan scale. These factors shape the pace at which departments and metropolitan agencies can standardise methods, consolidate data practices and deliver cross-cutting initiatives under PAM.

Contribute to balanced & cohesive territorial development

A dominant economic role coexists with territorial inequalities, low youth employment and ageing more pronounced in the core. PAM provides the frame for assessing access conditions, service location and network performance across municipalities, linking growth dynamics with cohesion requirements in peri-urban and outer areas.

3.2.6 City of Skopje (PP06)

3.2.6.1 Narrative Summary Sheet

Case Overview

The City of Skopje is a metropolitan city constituted by law and includes 10 municipalities, and includes an urban core constituted by central urban municipalities like Centar, Karpos and Aerodrom, and semi-rural and rural areas; the total population is around 518.000 inhabitants and amounts at 25% of the national population, while the biggest municipality, has a little more than 8% of the whole metropolitan population. This is a main difference from most European metropolitan cities, where the core municipalities have a prevailing weight both in terms of decisional and economic power. The metropolitan area is different from the FUA: it includes rural and seminatural territories, but does not reach the gravitational area of Kumanovo, functionally connected with Skopje.

Skopje is situated in a mountain area, crossed by the Vardar river valley, and morphology is a strong element conditioning urban development and mobility infrastructures.

Since North Macedonia is in the process of joining the European Union, new opportunities are opening and the country is investing in connecting infrastructures.

The city id dynamic and growing, attracting new inhabitants from other regions and countries, and the increasing anthropic pressures cause significant impacts on air, water and biodiversity; the policy instrument is the Local Environmental Action Plan (LEAP 3), that is under revision and updating, and is dedicated to assess the present environmental condition and set both short term and long term strategies and initiatives for increasing resilience, reducing impacts and protect and valorise biodiversity. The approval of this document is entitled to the City of Skopje Council (i.e. the Metropolitan level).

Main Features of the Governance System

Skopje is the only Metropolitan City (MC) in North Macedonia; it is constituted by law, as an intermediate governing body, with wide competences and sound decisional instruments; both the MC and the ten municipalities included have a directly elected Mayor and a directly elected Council, and the law sets concurrent roles in managing the assigned competences in a quite detailed way. The MC has specific authority over strategic urban planning, transportation, environment management and public services coordination, while the municipalities hold competences on local planning, local services and other community specific issues.

The decisional bodies are the Mayor and the MC Council, the latter including elected representatives from all territory, in number and with voting power proportional to population; qualified and simple majorities are requested for strategic and day-to day decision. A Coordination Body of Mayors, with consultive powers, ensures a better involvement and participation by the municipalities.

This model ensures efficient and effective decisions, joint fund management and capacity to participate in projects and cooperation initiatives; the law provides powers and

instruments, so starting can be quick. On the other side, citizens can have difficulties understanding the advantages, and of course they feel a stronger ownership to the local municipality, while bottom up initiatives can count on a stronger cooperation culture, but often lack juridical personality and instruments.

The institution of a MC is necessary for strategic planning and programming, better services and administrative capacity, but do not answer to all cooperation needs; at metropolitan level, formal agreements between the MC and its municipalities or between groups of municipalities to better integrate the respective competences; on a wider scale, formal agreements between the MC and external municipalities, regions or other public bodies to promote common development strategies, cooperation on transport or environmental aspects.

For this further needs the same law on local governments provides specific instruments, especially intermunicipal or government agreements.

3.2.6.2 SWOT Table

Domain A: Territorial framework			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Capital city, hosts 25% of the national population and is the administrative and economic centre - Strategic geographic position within the country - Availability of key quantitative territorial indicators (infrastructure indicators are well-documented) - Existing metropolitan-scale infrastructure networks - Strong daily functional linkages between Skopje and surrounding municipalities - Compact core city	- Urban expansion outside GUP area - Unequal technical and planning capacities across municipalities - Functionally relevant urban areas not included in Metropolitan City - Morphological constraints - Fragmented land-use and spatial planning frameworks - Traffic congestion - Land take on agricultural areas - Increasing air pollution and urban heat island	- EU TEN-T corridor VIII - EU territorial cohesion and metropolitan governance agenda - Availability of European funding for metropolitan and functional-area approaches - Improvement of territorial data systems and digital tools - Increased focus on sustainable mobility and commuting patterns - Potential institutional reforms linked to EU accession process - Cooperation with other municipalities	- Migration towards urban areas - Rural areas depopulation - Widening socio-economic disparities within the Metropolitan Area - Increased pressure on City of Skopje infrastructure and services - Environmental risks linked to spatial imbalance - Dependence on external funding cycles - Macroeconomic instability impacting territorial development

- Connected by main national road corridors - Administrative and planning capacity concentrated in the City of Skopje - Relevant natural or semi natural areas - Territorial diversification - Suburban villages with own settlement structure and identity, growing - Act as a metropolitan anchor for balanced development	- Disparities between core city and peripheral settlements - Need to invest on sustainable mobility - Overdependence on the City of Skopje for employment and services	- Development opportunities along the Kumanovo-Skopje-Tetovo-Gostivar-Bitola-Prilep corridor - Infrastructures renovation and integration projects (Cross-municipal cooperation incentives)	

Domain B: Socio-economic framework			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Good employment opportunities - Economic growth based on services	- Disparities in accessing services - Low economy differentiation Rural areas decline	- Incoming flow from abroad - EU and international funding supporting metropolitan economic development	- Aging population - Persistent brain drain and labor outmigration

- Educational, healthcare, cultural facilities in the core city Multi-cultural population - Differentiated population dynamics - High concentration of jobs and diversified economic base - Availability of key socio-economic indicators - Role of City of Skopje as national administrative and service hub - Spillover effects to surrounding municipalities - Established business and investment environment	- Strong economic concentration in the City of Skopje - Pronounced socio-economic disparities within the Metropolitan Area - Limited economic diversification in surrounding municipalities - Imbalanced labor market dynamics - Unequal access to business support and investment incentives	- Potential for metropolitan-scale economic coordination - Digitalization and remote work trends - Development of metropolitan business zones and clusters - Rising focus on inclusive and green economic growth	- Vulnerability to external economic shocks - Uneven capacity to absorb EU and donor funds - Informal economy and low productivity in peripheral areas

Domain C. Institutional and Legal Framework			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Metropolitan city constituted by law - Clear and wide range of competences - Effective decisional power - Decisional bodies elected by all citizens - Existing legal recognition of municipalities - Established governance structures at municipal and national levels - Experience in multi-level coordination - Frameworks supporting inter-municipal cooperation - Capacity for adaptation of laws for metropolitan initiatives	- Shared competences at metropolitan and municipal level - Need for coordination and cooperation between Metropolitan city and its municipalities - Top-down model: need to demonstrate advantages to citizens - Weak enforcement mechanisms	- Acknowledgement and support by national government - Legal instruments for intermunicipal cooperation - Cooperation outside the Metropolitan City borders - Support for metropolitan-scale strategic planning - Institutionalization of inter-municipal agreements - National reforms aligned with EU accession - Potential to formalize metropolitan decision-making - EU best practices for metropolitan governance	- Low citizens participation - Need for intermunicipal cooperation framework outside the metropolitan city - Political resistance from municipalities - Fragmentation of governance responsibilities - Legal delays in reforms

Domain D. Planning and Coordination Tools			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Structured planning hierarchic system - Spatial plan of Republic of Macedonia - Spatial plan for Skopje region - GUP for Skopje City - Existence of formal strategic plans at the municipal level - Integrated planning in key sectors - Use of GIS and digital tools - Existing agreements with surrounding municipalities - Institutional memory and experience in project-based coordination	- Skopje GUP does not cover the whole territory - Need for an integrated development strategy - Expansion outside GUP area - Need for better monitoring and control system - Need for better territorial balance and integration, especially for peripheral areas - Lack of inter-institutional agreements and cooperation at metropolitan scale - Unequal technical capacity among municipalities - Limited use of quantitative indicators for planning coordination - Weak monitoring and evaluation mechanisms	- Integrated development strategy on a wider scale enhancing synergies with other urban areas. - Projects for improving connectivity - Potential for formal metropolitan governance mechanisms - Digitalization and open data platforms - Cross-sectoral integration	- Political changes affecting planning priorities - Persistent fragmentation and lack of binding metropolitan authority - Anthropic pressure from migration - Limited financial resources - Rapid urban growth without integrated planning

Domain E. Governance Processes and Participation			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Metropolitan Mayor directly elected - City council directly elected representing municipalities in accord with their population - Differentiated voting for strategic and day-to-day decisions - Coordination body of Mayors with consultive powers - Advisory committees - PPPs for projects and services - Coordination with municipal councils - Transparency and openness projects - Politicians and technicians in favour to cooperation	- Low citizens engagement and awareness - Low PPP for strategic development - Need for pilot innovative projects to demonstrate cooperation advantages - Limited monitoring of participation outcomes - Need for innovative public private cooperation models	- Cooperation with other EU cities, especially in EU projects - Support from National Ministries - Cooperation in regional strategies - Potential to formalize metropolitan decision-making bodies - Digital tools for participatory governance	- Dominance of Core City in decision-making - Fragmentation of actors and interests - Political instability or changes in leadership - Limited funding for participation mechanisms - Cross-border or neighbouring cooperation challenges

- Experience in multi-level governance - Participatory planning initiatives and bottom-up approach - Capacity to involve private actors and other stakeholders - Cultural context favourable to cooperation - Existing collaboration with neighbouring municipalities			

Domain F. Capacities and Resources			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Stable and defined source of funding: state transfers and local taxes - Access to EU projects - Technical departments - Public enterprises for services management	- Limited resources - Need for training to face new challenges, digitalisation and legislative innovation - Administrative responsibilities and risks - Budget constraints	- EU funding programs and technical assistance Exchange of good practices and resources between cities and region - Digital infrastructures connecting multiple municipalities	- Need for digital and communication standards - Need for harmonising technical standards - Need for bureaucratic simplification - Brain drain or staff turnover

- Skopje Lab on innovation and services - Cooperation between universities, public enterprises and public services providers - Qualified human resources in the City of Skopje - Experience in project management - Capacity for knowledge and data sharing	- Procurement procedures complexity - Need for centralized technical resources supporting the city and the municipalities - Strengthening monitoring and maintenance - Unequal human resource capacity across municipalities Dependence on external funding	- Technical documentation Fund supports technical documents preparation - Empowering municipal councils' program - Digitalization trends - Partnerships with universities and research institutes - Integration of capacity building into metropolitan strategies - Access to innovative governance and management tools	- Rapidly evolving digital requirements - Institutional inertia or resistance

Domain G. Specificities of the Policy Instrument Local Environmental Action Plan (LEAP 3)			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Approval competence to the City Council of Skopje (metropolitan level)	- High levels of air pollution - Limited urban green areas - Need for better waste management	- Integrating environmental considerations into urban planning - Maintaining biodiversity	- Morphological conditions - Climate change - River Vardar as pollution vector

- Expert opinions and recommendations by Ministry for Environment - Participatory process both horizontal (public utility companies, universities, NGOs, citizens) and vertical (competent ministries) - Clear implementing responsibilities - Clearly defined objectives - Legal and institutional backing - Availability of operational mechanisms - Experience in implementation - Potential for integration across sectors	- Reduce energy consumption - Need for intermunicipal coordination - Need for better citizens' engagement - Limited flexibility or adaptability - Insufficient monitoring and evaluation	- EU environmental policies - River Vardar basin cooperation - Potential for scaling up metropolitan interventions - Learning from EU or international best practices - Alignment with EU funding priorities	- Changes in political priorities - Limited uptake by municipalities (Some municipalities may not adopt or fully implement the instrument, reducing its metropolitan impact.)

3.2.6.3 SWOT Interpretation

The urban structure of Skopje is conditioned by the territorial morphology: a mountain area, where the main development is situated in the Vardar river valley; the metropolitan area includes very different territorial typologies: natural and seminatural, mostly forested areas, cultivated land, orchards and vineyards, rural peripheral areas, peri urban settlements and a dense urban core. Following the general trend to inurbation, the city is growing, especially in the intermediate, peri urban zones, both along the main roads and in more compact centres, that have their own residential structure. This tendency can bring positive effects, evolving towards a more polycentric model, supporting local communities, but has negative effects too, increasing anthropic pressure, land take, air pollution and urban heat island. The peripheral rural areas are declining.

Skopje is connected to main transnational highways, and to the EU TEN_T corridor VIII; many projects for renovation and integration of the main transport infrastructures are in the implementation phases, while the mobility plan for the greater Skopje aims at improving urban mobility, through roads modernisation and ring roads to divert traffic from the centre. Daily commuting, from inside and outside the metropolitan area, is relevant, causing traffic congestion; public mobility is based on traditional buses, the number of cars is not high (314 vehicles for 1000 inhabitants, while in Centar it rises to 592); the mobility plan is fostering a shift to more sustainable mobility, creating new tram lines, improving train mobility, reshaping urban corridors with pedestrian and cycling facilities and increasing electromobility.

City of Skopje concentrates most of the economic activity, investments, and high-value employment within the Metropolitan Area. This concentration provides strong foundations for metropolitan-level development, innovation, and coordination. However, the dominance of the Core City also highlights structural imbalances, as peripheral municipalities often depend heavily on Skopje for jobs, services, and investment spillovers. Effective metropolitan strategies must leverage this strength while addressing the asymmetry to achieve balanced territorial growth. Quantitative indicators show significant disparities in income, employment rates, business density, and access to services between the City of Skopje and surrounding municipalities. These weaknesses point to underutilized economic potential and a risk of socio-economic marginalization in peripheral areas. Moreover, over-reliance on Skopje for employment and services exposes the metropolitan economy to vulnerabilities from external shocks or sector-specific downturns, necessitating diversified and inclusive growth strategies.

The socio-economic landscape presents multiple opportunities to strengthen metropolitan cohesion. EU and international funding programs, along with digitalization and remote work trends, can facilitate economic diversification and reduce spatial disparities. Metro Case provides a platform for developing coordinated economic policies, joint investment promotion, and metropolitan-scale business clusters, while promoting participatory approaches that integrate private actors, citizens, and municipalities. Realizing these opportunities will require strategic planning, capacity building, and a

robust framework for metropolitan governance that aligns economic development with territorial, social, and environmental objectives.

The Skopje Metropolitan Area demonstrates strong foundations in governance, planning, and economic concentration, which can be leveraged to promote coordinated, inclusive metropolitan development. Key challenges include structural imbalances between the Core City and peripheral municipalities, fragmented governance and planning tools, and limited formal metropolitan authority. Metro Case provides an opportunity to strengthen integrated strategies, institutional capacity, and participatory processes, while mitigating risks through knowledge transfer, EU funding, and digitalization. Achieving balanced, resilient metropolitan growth will require coordinated policy implementation, enhanced capacities, and the formalization of inter-municipal governance structures.

The Metropolitan City (MC) is constituted by the same law that rules over local administration. Skopje is the only one in the State of North Macedonia, where no other city over 100.000 inhabitants exists, and therefore has a special status, as metropolitan city and national capital. It is a top-down model: the law sets the boundaries, the competences, the governing bodies, the relationships with the included municipalities. The main competences concern strategic planning, main services and environment management, transport services, public services coordination; local functions and services are still in charge of the 10 municipalities, and sometimes this causes a fragmentation in management and responsibilities, calling for cooperation actions between municipalities and with the MC. The same law provides and fosters legal instruments for intermunicipal, or inter administrations cooperation, especially through formal agreements.

The MC has two main governing bodies: the Mayor of the City of Skopje, and the City Council; both are directly elected by all citizens, and for the Council proportionality criteria regulate the number of members and the voting power, following the number of inhabitants; decisions require a qualified majority for strategic issues, and simple majority for day to day topics. Each of the 10 municipalities has a Mayor and a Council, directly elected. A third metropolitan body, the Coordination Body of Mayors, with consultive power, ensure the involvement of all territory and facilitates participation and policy harmonisation. This is a very good solution, since answers for the need to ensure communication, discussion and cooperation between the two main governing levels involved.

Both politicians and technicians are aware of the need for cooperation, all of them underline the need to join forces both at metropolitan level, coordinating territorial development towards a more efficient and resilient polycentric structure, more efficient services organisation, and with external territories, for economic development, better connectivity, and to strengthen capacity to face environmental challenges. Technicians express further need about technical standards, new competences, mutual exchange and support. Some interesting projects are under implementation, for example on transparency and openness, involving stakeholders.

Citizens seem to be less aware of the need for cooperation, and identify with the local municipalities more than with the metropolitan city: they need to see some first positive results, may be through one or more pilot innovative projects; as in any model, be it bottom up or top down, building trust and confidence is a main key to success.

In North Macedonia there is a structured hierarchic spatial planning system, whose elements are: the Spatial plan of Republic of Macedonia, for the national level, the Spatial Plan for Skopje Region, for the regional level, and the General Urban Plan for the municipal level; the City of Skopje has a Metropolitan GUP, that do not cover all territory, only the main urban areas, and is the guiding framework for more detailed municipal urban GUPs. Presently, relevant urban expansions happen outside the GUP perimeter, and this calls for better planning alignment, monitoring and territorial control.

As for capacities and resources, Skopje MC can count on a stable and defined source of funding, from state transfers and local taxes; having juridical, public personality, can participate in EU and national projects. Technical departments support daily activities and innovation projects, preparing documents for political approval; increasing complexity and new challenges require new skills and capacities, therefore technicians look for cooperation, exchange between administrations and with private experts, support from universities. Projects to overcome the challenges of limited resources and complex tasks have been launched or are in programme: cooperation between universities, public enterprises and public services providers, centralized technical resources supporting both the metropolitan and municipal levels; exchange of good practices at transnational level and exchanges with the regional level. There is also need for digital and data exchange standards, procedural simplification and public procurement simplification.

The policy instrument is the Local Environmental Action Plan (LEAP 3) for the MC; the approval competence is in charge of the Skopje City Council; the preparation includes a participation process, both at horizontal level, involving local authorities, public utility companies, universities, NGOs and citizens, and vertical, involving the competent ministries. Expert opinions and recommendations by the Ministry for Environment are part of the approval process. Many actors are responsible for implementing specific tasks, following a structured and clear pattern.

The main challenges address air and water pollution, urban green areas, better waste management, reduce energy consumption, maintain biodiversity; the main transversal objectives regard improving citizens awareness and participation and intermunicipal coordination, other than integrate environmental considerations into urban planning.

To increase effectiveness and efficiency cooperation with other territories, outside the metropolitan city, is needed, especially for water management, in the Vardar river basin, and air pollution.

3.2.6.4 Metro Case Key Insights

Strengthen multilevel & multisector coordination

Skopje is a metropolitan entity constituted by law, with a directly elected Mayor and Council and a Coordination Body of Mayors linking the metropolitan tier with ten municipalities. LEAP 3 approval involves expert opinions from the Ministry for Environment and both horizontal and vertical participation, providing procedural clarity for environmental governance amid uneven administrative capacity across municipalities.

Improve strategic planning tools

A hierarchical system is in place – national/regional spatial plans, the General Urban Plan for Skopje and municipal plans – supported by GIS/digital tools. GUP coverage is partial, with expansion outside its perimeter; LEAP 3 relies on indicators and monitoring arrangements that require reinforcement to support evidence-led updates.

Promote integrated, place-based governance models

Mountain morphology, a compact core and expanding peri-urban/rural areas, together with land take, congestion, air-quality deterioration and urban heat-island effects, create interdependencies between spatial planning, environmental management and transport, including basin-scale coordination along the Vardar River.

Facilitate exchange of good practices & capacity building

Stable funding (state transfers, local taxes), EU projects, technical departments, public enterprises, the Skopje Lab and university cooperation constitute a concrete capacity base. Resource constraints, training needs, procurement complexity and asymmetries in municipal staffing limit implementation capacity and produce differentiated readiness across the territory.

Contribute to balanced & cohesive territorial development

Concentration of activity, investment and high-value employment in the core generates spillovers, while access disparities and rural decline persist in peripheral municipalities. Minimum service proximity and sustainable mobility options condition everyday usability of metropolitan functions outside the core.

3.2.7 The Gothenburg Region Association of Local Authorities (PP07)

3.2.7.1 Narrative Summary Sheet

Case Overview

The Gothenburg metropolitan area comprises 13 municipalities with the City of Gothenburg as the dominant core and several secondary centres (Mölndal, Kungsbacka, Kungälv, Alingsås, Lerum). The Functional Urban Area largely coincides with GR, extending to Bollebygd. Spatially, the region combines compact urban fabric along river valleys and coastal corridors with extensive forests, wetlands and lakes, forming a blue-green network that underpins biodiversity and recreation. Land take in the wider NUTS3 region (Västra Götaland) reached about 51 km² between 2000 and 2018, mainly converting forests and arable land, reflecting growth pressures. The transport system is hierarchical: the Swedish Transport Administration manages state roads; municipalities manage urban streets; and private associations maintain rural roads. Gothenburg is a node on the TEN-T Scan-Med corridor. Major investments include the Västlänken tunnel and the newly decided Gothenburg–Borås railway, which will also link Landvetter Airport to rail. The Port of Gothenburg, Scandinavia's largest, handles 55% of Swedish container trade and anchors deep-sea and short-sea routes; passenger links to Denmark and Germany are provided by Stena Line ferries. Sustainable mobility mixes integrated public transport (Västtrafik), a tram network in Gothenburg and parts of Mölndal, developed cycling networks near urban areas, and emerging shared mobility services; walkability is stronger in urban settings than rural ones.

Socio-economically, GR exhibits high tertiary education attainment (53.27% metro; 57.56% core city), strong employment (e.g., 82% in ages 20-64), and a diversified sectoral base (business services, healthcare, trade, manufacturing, education). Universities (University of Gothenburg; Chalmers University of Technology) provide significant research capacity and internationalisation. Tourism is robust (6.0 million overnight stays in the metro and 4.84 million in Gothenburg in 2024). At the same time, certain indicators show data gaps (e.g., GDP for the core city). NEET rates and participation figures are monitored, and foreign population shares indicate a diverse labour market context.

Main Features of the Governance System

GR is a political organisation of 13 municipalities with approximately 200 staff. Decision-making bodies include the Association Council (highest authority), the Association Board (overall responsibility), and Preparatory Committees (labour market, social welfare, environment and spatial planning). Following the 2019 revision of the Planning and Building Act, the Gothenburg Region operates without a statutory regional-planning mandate; coordination at the metropolitan scale is instead delivered through voluntary, consensus-based agreements endorsed by its 13 member municipalities. GR acts as an authority for specific assignments (e.g., admissions to upper secondary school) and operates primarily through voluntary, consensus-based agreements. Funding combines municipal membership fees (around 15% of turnover) and substantial external financing from the state, EU programmes and regional institutions (e.g., Västra Götaland Region). GR collaborates closely with Västra Götaland

Region (including as public transport authority for 12 municipalities) and Region Halland. The legal framework is defined by the Municipal Act and the Planning and Building Act; since the 2019 update, GR no longer has the option to be a legally established regional planning body, although regional planning continues by mandate from member municipalities. It is worth noting that the lack of involvement at the metropolitan level is not a shortcoming, but rather a result of the mandate. GR's role is to coordinate between municipalities; municipalities lead citizen dialogues, and GR involves the public mainly in specific projects. Private-sector involvement takes place through procurement and collaborative projects (e.g., Business Region Gothenburg).

The policy instrument, GR's Policy for transport infrastructure planning, sets an overarching ambition ("portal paragraph") to pursue sustainable growth and significantly reduce the transport system's climate and environmental impact, followed by eight guidelines (rail capacity; public transport accessibility and capacity; sea and rail freight; regional cycling routes; interaction with living environment, biodiversity and ecosystem services; climate adaptation; innovation and new technologies; behavioural change). The instrument is developed and periodically updated through multi-actor networks and workshops and is aligned with the four-year national and regional transport plan revisions. Implementation relies on municipalities, GR and regional bodies proposing and upholding decisions consistent with the policy during plan revisions and funding allocations.

3.2.7.2 SWOT Table

Domain A: Territorial framework			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Well defined metropolitan structures combining urban, suburban, and coastal municipalities - Polycentric metropolitan structure with a strong core city (Gothenburg) complemented by secondary centres (Mölndal, Kungsbacka, Kungälv, Alingsås, Lerum), supporting balanced development - Coastal location and the largest port in Scandinavia anchoring freight, trade, logistics, and maritime connectivity - Excellent connectivity via port, airport, and hierarchical road	- Net land take of ~51 km² (2000-2018) in the wider NUTS3 region, largely at the expense of forests and arable land - Conflicts between transport modes in urban areas (walking vs bicycles, e-scooters, cars and public transport) - Lower walkability in rural areas compared to urban cores - Uneven distribution of land uses may require careful planning to avoid fragmentation of natural habitats	- TEN-T Scan-Med corridor positioning, with major investments (Västlänken tunnel; decided Gothenburg–Borås railway) - Future rail link to Landvetter Airport to strengthen multimodal access - Port of Gothenburg capacity (55% of Swedish container trade) and short-sea links to UK, Benelux, Germany and Denmark - Inter-municipal collaborations (eg, KUSTO; Västra Stambanegruppen) to coordinate corridor development	- Continued urban expansion and diffuse residential development may intensify land conversion and fragmentation of forests and permanent herbaceous areas - Seasonal tourism pressures in coastal and archipelago municipalities create local tensions - Climate change increases pressure on natural areas and coastal zones and requires adaptation of transport infrastructure - Strong projected population growth to 2050 increases

and rail corridors supporting regional accessibility - High quality natural environment and blue–green network with extensive forests, wetlands, lakes, and coastal ecosystems; high biodiversity and ecosystem service provision		- Preparation of shared bike procurement enabling more municipalities to join, currently only in the municipality of Gothenburg - Sustainable land-use planning can integrate green corridors, urban parks, and blue-green infrastructure, leveraging vegetated areas - Potential for eco-tourism, recreation, and ecosystem service-based regional branding - Coordination of urban expansion with preservation of high-value natural areas	pressure on a limited spatial footprint

Domain B: Socio-economic framework			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Strong and diversified economy with a broad sectoral base (manufacturing, ICT, education, services; business services, healthcare, trade) and emerging knowledge-based sectors; the historical industrial base (Volvo, chemical clusters, Port of Gothenburg) supports employment and regional GDP - High educational attainment: metropolitan 5327% (over 53%); core city 5756%; two leading universities (University of Gothenburg; Chalmers University of Technology) with significant research capacity - High employment rates: 82% (age 20-64) and 72% (age 15-74)	- Core city GDP is not available; certain socio-economic indicators present data gaps - Dependence and concentration in major industrial clusters and port logistics	- Job growth in information and communication and public administration (2009-2023) - Strong private sector share (-70%) and active cooperation via Business Region Gothenburg - Innovation and R&D investments (FOI) linked to manufacturing and technology sectors - External financing opportunities (EU funds; regional sources) supporting projects and skills supply - Use natural and cultural assets to strengthen tourism and regional attractiveness	- Energy supply and climate transition challenges identified as regional robust priorities - Risk and vulnerability considerations (drinking water, environment, biodiversity) require cross jurisdictional action - Tourism/event peaks may strain services and mobility if not well coordinated - Increasing population (expected +400,000 by 2050) may strain infrastructure and public services - Socio economic disparities between the core city and periphery municipalities

- Robust tourism flows: 60 million overnight stays in the metro; 484 million in Gothenburg		- Develop knowledge-based industries alongside sustainable urban growth - Reduce socio economic disparities across municipalities	

Domain C Institutional and Legal Framework			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Long standing intermunicipal cooperation (since 1940s; 30-year municipal collaboration history); GR recognized as a legitimate actor by municipalities and the region - Gothenburg Region (GR) is a political organisation uniting 13 municipalities with ~200 staff - Defined governance bodies (Association Council, Board, Preparatory Committees) and a strong consensus-based	- No formal legal recognition as a regional authority under Swedish law; GR is not established by law and lacks a formal mandate for regional planning (since the 2019 PBL update) - Limited direct democratic legitimacy (no direct election) - Decisions are non-binding and rely on consensus, limiting enforceability	- Strong ties with Västra Götaland Region and Region Halland, and the preparatory forum (BHU) influencing regional decisions - Access to EU and national financing (eg, ESF, national agencies) to support metropolitan initiatives - Ability to formalise intents on specific corridors (eg, rail) among parties	- Legal constraints (Municipal Act; Planning and Building Act revisions) may continue to limit formal competences - Dependence on external financing introduces exposure to programme cycles and priorities

decision culture ensuring stability - Broad mandate across urban planning, environment, transport, ICT, and social services; GR acts as an authority in specific areas (e.g., upper secondary school admissions) and coordinates across sectors - Diversified funding model combining municipal fees and substantial external financing	- Limited direct decision-making power over regional/national transport plans; reliant on municipal mandates for implementation - PPP models are limited and uncommon at the metropolitan scale	- Strengthen cooperation to guide strategic projects - Influence state/regional decisions via multilevel governance - Participate in EU and Nordic learning networks	

Domain D Planning and Coordination Tools			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Comprehensive transport policy aligning the 13 municipalities, integrating sustainability, accessibility, and innovation principles; structured with an overarching	- No binding power over regional infrastructure decisions: GR does not hold direct decision-making power over regional transport plans and depends on external	- Strengthen link between metropolitan and national infrastructure priorities - EU funding for sustainable mobility and multimodal	- Risk of policy stagnation and reduced effectiveness of coordination mechanisms if consensus weakens - Divergent local priorities and conflicting priorities between

portal paragraph and eight guidelines - Regional development plan to 2050 under consultation to coordinate growth and spatial planning across municipalities - Structured, multistage update process (networks of officials, inter municipal workshops, iterative drafts) culminating in Board decision (eg, Feb 2024) - Systematic four-year update cycle aligned with national/regional transport plan revision cycles	authorities (Västra Götaland Region, Region Halland) - Implementation relies on compliance by multiple actors across levels, overlapping competences with regional authorities - Weak legal enforcement of plans	transport; use EU funds and digital tools for coordination - Use of policy documents to prioritise funds for public transport and cycling over private car measures - Influence on the distribution of measures in regional plans via agreed metropolitan guidelines - Networks across municipalities, VGR and STA enable continuous co planning - Integration of transport, green infrastructure, and urban planning	municipalities or sectors may slow implementation - Growth pressures and climate risks can outpace planned capacities if not timely addressed - Risk of weak implementation and monitoring capacity

Domain E Governance Processes and Participation			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Strong culture of dialogue, intermunicipal coordination, and multilevel governance (municipal, regional, state) - Active, structured networks and forums of officials and politicians, including an infrastructure network with municipalities, VGR and the Swedish Transport Administration (STA), enabling co decision and knowledge sharing - Successful cooperation with universities, regional bodies, and private actors (e.g., Business Region Gothenburg) through joint projects	- Uneven engagement of smaller municipalities, capacity constraints limit the breadth of expertise and participation	- Active cooperation with research institutions and the private sector through projects and procurements - Tourism/event coordination improves metropolitan operations and reputation - Potential expansion of shared mobility services via new procurement - Engage stakeholders in strategic planning for transport, climate, and digitalization	- Consensus culture may slow decision making; dependence on political will for cooperation - Event peaks and multimodal conflicts can undermine liveability and safety if not managed - Absence of legally binding metropolitan decisions may hinder rapid policy shifts - Local identities may conflict with regional goals

- High perceived need for cooperation among technicians and strong inter municipal trust - Consensus-based agreements endure over time thanks to a strong regional consensus culture			

Domain F Capacities and Resources			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Experienced technical staff and strong analytical capacity (~200 employees at GR) with expertise in transport, spatial planning, and environmental management; established cross sector networks - Access to EU and national funding (ESF, Interreg, national agencies), plus state and regional transfers, alongside stable	- Limited financial autonomy: municipal fees cover only ~15% of the budget; dependence on project based/external funding - EV charging primarily developed by private companies, with uneven public provision - Lower walkability in rural areas across municipalities - Staffing limitations in smaller municipalities across multiple	- New EU funds for the green transition and digital transformation; external project financing (EU, national, regional) to build capacity and pilot innovations - Potential to consolidate technical support for small municipalities; enhance technical capacities and research partnerships	- Funding instability if the project pipeline decreases; economic fluctuations may reduce external funding; risk of over reliance on external grants and project based financing for initiatives - Energy supply risks and climate adaptation needs

financial contributions from member municipalities - Two major universities and research institutions provide strong skills and knowledge base - Public transport operated by Västtrafik with dedicated infrastructure and depots - Sufficient charging stations for municipal fleets across many municipalities	issue areas, resulting in limited resources for enforcement and monitoring	- Policy targeting innovation and new technologies ("transport efficient society") - Guidelines promoting cycling and public transport can channel resources to sustainable modes	require significant resources - Land take pressures may reduce ecosystem services and resilience

Domain G Specificities of the Policy Instrument **Policy statement for transport infrastructure planning in the Gothenburg metropolitan region**			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Metropolitan transport policy with a clear overarching vision and eight strategic/actionable guidelines, anchored in inter municipal consensus Updated regularly and aligned with national/regional infrastructure	- Not legally binding under the current framework; implementation depends on voluntary compliance by municipalities and regions - No direct decision-making power: GR has no formal legal	- Potential to integrate climate adaptation, innovation, and behavioural change; coordinate transport planning with land use, green/blue infrastructure, and climate adaptation	- Risk of remaining a guiding document without concrete enforcement - Policy misalignment with future national infrastructure priorities; funding priorities at

plan cycles to maintain relevance - Ownership by the infrastructure network (municipalities, VGR, STA) enhances legitimacy, coordination, and co decision - Provides strategic guidance for regional transport priorities, promoting sustainable mobility, climate adaptation, cycling, and freight capacity - Developed through a participatory process involving officials and politicians from all municipalities	authority over regional or national transport plans, creating coordination challenges with regional and national authorities - Risk of inconsistent adoption across municipalities	- Upcoming planning cycles enable updates and integration of new rail investments (Västlänken; Gothenburg–Borås) - Use the document to prioritise sustainable transport funding and influence regional and national funding priorities; encourage behaviour change and innovation in mobility - Potential to broaden shared mobility initiatives across municipalities - Model transferable to other metropolitan areas	higher levels may not fully align with metropolitan guidelines - Competing land use demands (housing, industry, port) may limit the sustainability focus - Climate and environmental risks impacting transport infrastructure

3.2.7.3 SWOT Interpretation

Strengths include a polycentric, yet cohesive spatial structure anchored by a strong core city; strategic positioning on the TEN-T Scan-Med corridor; Scandinavia's largest port; and extensive natural assets enabling a high-quality blue-green network. Socio-economic strengths feature high education attainment, diversified sectors, strong employment and leading universities. Institutional strengths arise from defined governance bodies, consensus culture, diversified funding and cross-sector coordination. Planning strengths derive from the policy instrument with clear guidelines, a regional development plan to 2050, and structured multi-level processes linked to national/regional plan cycles.

Weaknesses include land take and dispersed development patterns; multimodal conflicts and lower rural walkability and data gaps in some indicators (e.g., core city GDP). Institutional limitations derive from the absence of a formal legal mandate for regional planning and the non-binding nature of consensus agreements. Capacity constraints are present in smaller municipalities, and PPP models are relatively uncommon at metropolitan scale.

Opportunities arise from major rail investments (Västlänken; Gothenburg–Borås with future airport rail access), the ability to prioritise public transport and cycling in regional planning, and strong inter-municipal collaborations (e.g., KUSTO; Västra Stambanegruppen). External financing (EU, national agencies, regional sources) can support projects, innovation and skills supply. The policy's focus on innovation, behaviour change and climate adaptation can accelerate transition to a transport-efficient society.

Threats include continued land conversion, climate risks impacting infrastructure, energy supply challenges, and potential seasonal pressures in coastal/archipelago municipalities. Political or legal constraints at higher levels could dilute instrument influence or misalign funding priorities, while multimodal conflicts and event peaks may strain operations and liveability if not well managed.

3.2.7.4 Metro Case Key Insights

Strengthen multilevel & multisector coordination

A consensus culture, long-standing inter-municipal cooperation, and a regularly updated, shared metropolitan transport policy result in de facto coordination, even in the absence of binding powers. However, weaknesses in non-binding arrangements and reliance on voluntary compliance mean that delivery is contingent on political will and convergence of actors.

Improve strategic planning tools

The metropolitan transport policy articulates a portal paragraph and eight guidelines and runs in parallel with a regional development plan to 2050. Practical effectiveness is constrained by the absence of formal legal competence over regional infrastructure decisions and by overlapping responsibilities across municipal, regional and national authorities, so delivery depends on voluntary compliance and cross-level alignment.

Promote integrated, place-based governance models

The spatial structure combines a dominant core city with secondary centres and a high-quality blue–green network of forests, wetlands, lakes and coastal ecosystems. Together with the Port of Gothenburg and the TEN-T Scan–Med corridor, this configuration frames spatial choices that balance freight logistics, public transport and cycling with biodiversity protection and climate adaptation across urban, peri-urban and coastal contexts. Observed land-use conversion in the wider region and lower walkability in rural areas highlight the operational interplay between transport and land-use where connectivity, ecosystem services and growth must be managed in parallel.

Facilitate exchange of good practices & capacity building

Collaboration with the University of Gothenburg and Chalmers, involvement of Business Region Gothenburg and access to external financing complement GR's internal expertise. Capacity constraints persist in smaller municipalities, and shared-bike procurement prepared at metropolitan level (currently active only in Gothenburg city) exemplifies common frameworks being developed to extend services.

Contribute to balanced & cohesive territorial development

A diversified economy with high employment and tertiary attainment and robust tourism provides a strong base for cohesion policies, while core–periphery disparities endure. The policy's guidelines on regional cycling, public transport accessibility, behaviour change and climate adaptation are levers to address differences in access and exposure.

3.2.8 Municipality of Tirana (PP08)

3.2.8.1 Narrative Summary Sheet

Case Overview

Tirana is Albania capital city and the main national engine under a government and economic point of view; as many metropolitan cities can be seen as a gateway, connecting the territory with the outer world and bringing innovation, knowledge and sustainable development.

Since the 2015 reform, the metropolitan city is a single enlarged municipality, born from merging 27 administrative units (14 urban; 13 peri-urban/rural). The same law reformed the local government structure for all Albania, reducing the total number of municipalities from 373 to 61.

Tirana is a constantly growing city, due to its attraction for people looking for education and jobs, coming from all over Albania. The metropolitan area does not coincide with the Functional Urban Area.

The territory is complex, including: a dense core city, hosting the main relevant functions: public administration, universities, health care facilities, financial and support to enterprises; peri-urban partially urbanised areas; wide rural areas; natural and seminatural areas and corridors. The morphology is complex too, with mountains to the east and open plains to the west. This variety is on the one side an opportunity, because it allows an integrated development, providing both relevant urban functions and environmental balance, contributing in different ways to territorial attractivity, for the residents and tourists; but on the other side it is a main challenge, posing more complex and differentiated needs and asking for good measures to ensure equality.

Mobility is a main challenge, due to intense commuting needs, both from the peripheral areas of the municipality, and from outside its limits. Relevant infrastructures are under construction, but there is urgent need for evolving towards more sustainable and integrated transport solutions.

The metropolitan city does not include all the functional urban area and this, together with the connection with the air and sea accessibility (Tirana Nene Teresa airport and Durres port) calls for further cooperation with neighbouring municipalities and along the Tirana – Durres corridor.

Main Features of the Governance System

The metropolitan structure for Tirana can be seen on two levels: the first includes Tirana itself, the capital city of Albania, a metropolitan city constituted by law in 2014, unifying 27 local administrative separated entities in one single municipality; the second does not have defined boundaries, but is a wider urban area, extended along main communication corridors, where intermunicipal cooperation is needed on different topics as urban development, transport system, economic growth and others.

The first metropolitan level is a public administration by all means, constituted by Law 115/2014, when Albania reorganized the administrative division for the whole state; it has

decisional powers on all the competences assigned by law to municipalities, and it means a wide range of competences on spatial planning, mobility, local roads, public and social services, culture, local economic development and environment.

It is a top down model, and it's advantages are a strong operational capacity, due to direct decisional power and defined source of funding, clear competences and territorial extension, and a few disadvantages, like a broader distance between the municipal government and the citizens, especially in the peri urban and rural areas, the stronger identification of the citizens with the previous smaller municipalities, the greater territorial complexity and disparities.

The new municipality is not defined following the urban functional area, but includes a dense central urban core surrounded by peri urban and rural areas, while neighbouring urban areas, connected with the functional Tirana metropolitan territory, remain on the outside.

The mayor is elected by all citizens and has executive powers, and the municipal Council is also directly elected by all citizens and has decisional power over more strategic matters, as policy, planning and budget: in this way the bodies with decisional power answer to the whole territory.

For the wider metropolitan area, no formal institution does exist, but law 30/2015 opens the way for structured intermunicipal cooperation; in this case we have a bottom-up model: the municipalities can identify the needs for cooperation, create joint entities and join forces towards common goals.

The role of Tirana is acknowledged by national strategies that encourage integrated planning and cooperation at intermunicipal level.

3.2.8.2 SWOT Table

Domain A: Territorial framework			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- National administrative and economic centre - Compact urban core - Relevant natural protected areas - Peri urban and rural areas providing ecosystem services - Spill over from the core to the belt areas - Green corridors - Relevant functions and services at national level	- Strong territorial differences and imbalances - Morphological constraints - Traffic congestion - Concentrated main functions - Relevant urban sprawl - Inequal accessibility	- Relevant transport connections under construction - Durres port - Neighbouring metropolitan axis - National engine - EU support for sustainable mobility - National limits to agricultural areas urbanization	- Commuting from outside the metropolitan city - Tendency to concentrate population in the urban cores - Climate change

Domain B: Socio-economic framework			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Relevant health system - Relevant educational system - Strong economy based mostly on services and manufacturing - Good job opportunities - Attractive city for tourism - Good level of education	- Inequal access to services for the rural areas - Need to ensure services to workers coming from outside the metropolitan area	- Transnational markets - Exchanges with EU	- Energy and trade market challenges - Ageing population

Domain C. Institutional and Legal Framework			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Metropolitan city constituted by law as one municipality out of 27	- Need to keep direct contact and access to administrative	- Law 30/2015 sets the frame for intermunicipal cooperation	- Need for cooperation with neighboring urban areas

- Metropolitan city has decisional power - All the competences for the municipal level - Major and Council elected by all citizens - Executive power concentrated in the Major	services for the peripheral areas - Need to ensure enough representativeness to the peripheral territories	- Role of Tirana acknowledged by national strategies	- Need for wider cooperation on mobility and strategic issues. - Need for stronger framework for metropolitan areas

Domain D. Planning and Coordination Tools			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Plan to grow polycentric - The MA territorial plan is the urban general plan for the municipality	- Rapid population growth - Expansion in peri urban and rural areas - No strategic plan beyond the municipality limits - Need for MSP/SUMP - Increasing housing demand	- National Spatial Plan - National Strategy for Regional Development and Cohesion	

Domain E. Governance Processes and Participation			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Clear and structured decision model - Technical working groups for intersectoral coordination - Politicians favour cooperation - Technicians very keen for cooperation, including data management and standard settings - Cooperation with Universities for knowledge and standards	- Citizens feel they belong to the original municipalities more than the metropolitan area - Public private cooperation limited to contracts - Need for more formal acts for stability and access to funds - Citizens need to have concrete benefits	- Cooperation with neighbouring municipalities - Participation in national and EU programmes - Exchange with other metropolitan cities and regions (e.g. Metro Case) - Data and knowledge sharing	- No specific framework for metropolitan cities - Cooperation with external territories still to be implemented especially for transport, strategic development, environment - Need for common data standards and protocols

Domain F. Capacities and Resources			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- Combined and structured funds sources: state, own taxes - Skilled and cooperative staff - Compact organization? - Internal coordination mechanisms - Presence of partner agencies - Access to national EU, donor funds by projects	- Need to integrate staff coming from different previous local authorities - Need to maintain multiple access points to public administration	- Funds from EU national programmes - Funds from donors	- Need to keep up with new challenges - Digital innovation - Need for data management protocols

Domain G. Specificities of the Policy Instrument Integrated Tirana Urban-Rural Mobility Plan			
Internal Factors		**External Factors**	
Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
- PI approved by Tirana Council - Participated process and public consultation - One directorate responsible, involvement of other sectors - Includes environmental and social objectives - Oriented to polycentric development	- High commuting levels - Rising car dependency - High congestion in main axes - Need for better integration - Need for innovation and more sustainability - Rapid urban expansion - Inequal access - Fragmented management - Need for strengthening institutional capacity for coordination	- Mutual learning with other metropolitan cities and regions - Digital mobility tools - Eu mobility strategies - Access to EU funds? - Air and seaport. - Connection with EU TEN_T western Balkans – eastern mediterranean corridor	- Extended commuting beyond municipality limits - Need for multilevel coordination Climate change

3.2.8.3 SWOT Interpretation

Tirana has a very differentiated territory, including a dense urban core, peri – urban growing settlements, rural agricultural and mountain forested areas; this is both an opportunity and a challenge: as an opportunity, allows to balance and fulfil different needs: good services, job opportunities, connection to the wider world and access to innovation, and at the same time providing ecosystem services, local food provision and tourism opportunities; as a challenge, creates more complexity, the need to manage quite different territorial situation, and the risk for disparities between core and peripheral areas.

The new municipality is similar in surface to the Urban Functional Area, but has a different pattern, including wide rural and seminatural areas and excluding relevant urban areas, like Kamez and Vore that are strongly interconnected with the capital city; the main connecting hubs, like the airport and Durres port, are outside the municipality and attract settlements, especially along the connecting corridors.

Extended natural areas connected by green corridors constitute a relevant asset, together with extensive agriculture.

The need for commuting, due to the relevant concentration of strategic functions in the core city, causes traffic congestion, along the penetrating axes, and a ring road is under construction for better traffic distribution; both road and railway systems are being further developed, to reduce car dependency and to divert the traffic from the core area. A priority is the axis connecting the airport and Durres port by modern railway. The public mobility system need integration to become a better alternative to private mobility and to evolve toward more sustainable solutions. An interesting opportunity can be seen in connecting with the EU TEN-T network, through the western Balkans. East Mediterranean corridor.

From the socio economic point of view Tirana is the hearth of Albania, concentrating main health care and educational facilities, and a growing economic system mostly based on services (including services to enterprises) and manufacturing; it shows a good education level, with 30 – 35% of adult citizens holding a tertiary degree and offers good job opportunities, attracting people from all the state. On the other side, this asks for providing services and houses for the incoming new citizens or commuting people.

The concentration of services in the core areas creates disparities between the citizens from this area and the peri urban and rural external territories.

Both the threats and opportunities in this sector come from the transnational turbulences, affecting market, exchanges, energy costs and from the general trend to ageing population.

As for the legislative framework, the new Tirana Municipality, born from the union of 27 previous municipalities, has the great advantage of wide and clear competences, real decisional power and a stable source of dedicated fundings. There seems to be no specific legislative recognition of its metropolitan specificity, but there are references to its role

in sectorial planning and programming acts. As every top down models, the formal recognition precedes the citizens perception and can cause disorientation both in the citizens and in the municipalities staff. Reorganisation of the internal structure, capacity building actions for the public staff, focused communication to citizens are tools for facilitating adaptation. One issue is to maintain delocalised access to the public administration services in the peri urban and rural areas, where they often are supporting point for the aged and disadvantaged people.

Since there is need for cooperation outside the municipality boundaries on different topics, the law provides a good instrument, in the form of a legislative framework for local authorities' associations, supporting cooperation in a bottom-up model. This solution does not has the strength of a mandatory provision, but has the advantages of flexibility, since each territory can choose the cooperation most needed areas, the ways for cooperation, the decisional model best fitting for their objectives; another advantage is that cooperation starts when the actors are aware of its necessity and willing to start it; from the analysis of the cultural aspects looks like Tirana's politicians and technicians are ready for it.

The metropolitan city spatial plan coincides with Tirana General Municipal plan, and this makes coordination at this level quite easy; as for the wider area, there are two national instruments, that acknowledge the need for wider strategic planning, especially along the main corridors. The cooperation instruments provided by Law 30/2015 offers a good opportunity for intermunicipal cooperation.

The decision model is clear and structured, based on a strong legislative framework; the governing bodies are directly elected by all citizens, and represent the whole territory; however, the administrative structure is more centralised, and citizens in the peripheral areas could experience more difficulties in getting involved and acceding to administrative services if decentralised contact points were not maintained. While politicians and technicians are quite keen for cooperation, the general public still identify themselves with the preexisting municipalities; they need to see the advantages, and this calls for good communication. There is awareness and clarity of aims for intermunicipal cooperation, but it still needs a more structured approach, setting in place a formal cooperation that allows common decisions and fund management. Public private partnership is for the time being limited to public contracts; in this sector there is need for new ways for cooperating and the project can be a good opportunity to meet innovative solutions.

A relevant point underlined by the analysis regards the need for sharing data and knowledge at different level, and this calls for common standards and communication protocols, at national and international level; opportunities come from cooperation, with neighbouring municipalities, other EU metropolitan cities and regions, with different government levels.

Tirana metropolitan city, as a single municipality, can count on stable sources of funds, both from transfers by the state and own taxes, and can access to national and European programmes; also private donors contribute to projects of public interest. The relevant

change in the administrative structure brings advantages coming from a more compact organisation and has a potential for more specialised staff, but needs a careful investment in reorganisation and capacity building, and to maintain decentralised access points to administrative services. A challenge comes from the digital transformation.

Traffic congestion, dependence from private cars, accessibility to primary services, local connection gaps, fragmented management due to privatisation, are the main challenges, while the transversal objectives regard environmental sustainability, increase efficiency and multimodality for better integration, together with better participation and promotion of sustainable behaviour. The rapid urban growth calls for constant adaptation and monitoring and regulating instruments.

The metropolitan city has full power for approving the instrument, has set internal coordination solutions, is open to participation by stakeholders and citizens and shows a clear idea on what the settlement model should become, integrating spatial planning and mobility planning. The preparation and decisional process already includes stakeholders' participation and public consultation, and there is a plan to improve participation.

3.2.8.4 Metro Case Key Insights

Strengthen multilevel & multisector coordination

Tirana is a single enlarged municipality established by law, with a directly elected Mayor and Council; internal coordination is supported by technical intersectoral groups and collaboration with universities on data and standards. The municipal perimeter does not encompass the entire functional area, and major nodes (airport, Port of Durrës) lie outside it, so metropolitan issues–especially mobility and accessibility–cross administrative boundaries.

Improve strategic planning tools

The territorial plan coincides with the General Municipal Plan, and the Integrated Urban-Rural Mobility Plan frames a polycentric orientation. Rapid expansion in peri-urban and rural belts and the absence of a strategy beyond municipal limits constitute binding constraints for consistent metropolitan-functional planning along primary corridors.

Promote integrated, place-based governance models

A compact core, expanding peri-urban areas, extensive rural/natural zones and green corridors generate heterogeneous service needs and mobility patterns. Strong commuting towards the core confirms urban–rural interdependence, and place-type readings are used to calibrate service standards and modal mixes to local morphology and demand.

Facilitate exchange of good practices & capacity building

Combined financing (state transfers and own taxes), access to EU/donor programmes, skilled staff, partner agencies and internal coordination mechanisms provide a viable capacity base. Public–private cooperation is channelled mainly through contracts, and

collaboration with universities supports the definition of data and methodological standards.

Contribute to balanced & cohesive territorial development

Concentration of health, education and enterprise services and of manufacturing in the core attracts residents and commuters from peri-urban and rural areas. Following the merger of twenty-seven entities into one authority, decentralised administrative access points in peripheral contexts remain a critical feature for service equity and proximity.

Key Takeaways

4. Key Takeaways

4.1 Thematic Policy Implications

This chapter brings together elements from the different metropolitan areas participating in Metro Case, adopting a cross-cutting perspective aimed at enhancing and making available the different experiences in a logic of cross-fertilisation. The aim is therefore to highlight elements and solutions of common interest in order to support the improvement of the partners' policy instruments and also to offer metropolitan areas that are not participating in the project ideas for adaptable solutions that each of them can use, tailoring them to their own territorial, cultural and regulatory context. The territorial situation and the level of development of metropolitan cooperation vary greatly. Most of the proposed solutions refer to models or operational methods already in place in one or more of the realities considered. Each partner will be able to assess the usefulness and applicability to its own territory of what emerges from the joint work.

The metropolitan areas participating in the Metro Case project exemplify very different institutional situations and governance models. Each presents positive aspects and difficulties, and the criterion for considering a practice must be linked to functionality with respect to the administrative, cultural and territorial situation of each case, as well as to the specific objectives that cooperation aims to achieve. Despite the differences in approaches and contexts, the analysis shows a substantial convergence in the definition of cooperation needs and in the identification of the factors that can make it effective.

Across Europe, awareness is growing of the specific nature of metropolitan issue and of the role of metropolitan areas as driving forces for development and innovation, for themselves and in relation to other territories. There is also an increasingly widespread awareness, especially among public administrators and technical staff, of the need to activate stable and structured forms of inter-municipal cooperation in order to adequately address the challenges posed by the growing concentration of population in urban areas, in terms of demand for services, infrastructure, environmental-social-economic sustainability and land management. At the same time, there is also a growing need to rebalance urban and rural territories, reduce social and economic disparities, and pay attention to depopulation phenomena in inland areas.

4.1.1 Territorial Dimension

Most of the metropolitan cities or regions involved in the project do not merely include densely populated urban areas with a concentration of economic activities and services, but also include urban fringe areas, rural territories and, in some cases, sparsely populated semi-natural areas. At the same time, many of them do not cover the entire Functional Urban Area (OECD), namely the area which, for various reasons linked to the availability of jobs, daily commuting, and access to primary and/or specialised services such as healthcare, upper secondary and university education, gravitates around the main urban centre or centres.

We are therefore dealing with eight metropolitan territories that are highly diversified internally. On the one hand, this implies greater complexity and requires addressing a wider range of functions in a coordinated manner, with the resulting difficulties and additional effort. On the other hand, it represents a major opportunity for territorial rebalancing and integration, in which urban areas provide fundamental and strategic public services, accessibility opportunities, innovation diffusion and economic development opportunities, while rural and semi-natural areas offer environmental quality, short-range food resources and ecosystem services. Good integration of these components can ensure a better overall quality of life and greater resilience for the entire metropolitan system and its regional context.

As regards the areas excluded from the formally established metropolitan perimeter but which maintain important functional links with it, emerges the need to activate further specific forms of cooperation. It is important that legislation on local authorities provides appropriate tools to manage them. These collaborations may have different geometries depending on the specific functions concerned. For example, the main mobility axes, at regional, national or even European scale, may serve as channels for important relations and collaborations, requiring appropriate tools at the various levels involved. Most national regulations provide for structured forms of agreements between authorities.

In addition, some metropolitan areas cover very large territories and involve a very high number of municipalities, with consequent difficulties both in decision-making and in operational management. In these cases, a good solution suggests dividing the territory into sub-areas which, due to internal homogeneity, can develop more targeted and specific cooperation on issues of interest and collaborate in the management of services for citizens and businesses. This makes it possible to bring skills together and improve administrative capacities, without losing identity and autonomy. In order to function properly, these areas must be provided with a defined institutional status, their own decision-making process, funds and powers appropriate to the competences to be managed jointly.

In most of the cases examined in Metro Case, we are dealing with complex territorial models that go beyond functional subdivisions, evolving towards multifunctional integration between different but complementary territories, according to win-win logics aimed at improving the overall quality and resilience of the whole system in response to the significant challenges posed by an environmental, social and economic context in continuous evolution, also due to geopolitical constraints.

The possibility of managing financial resources jointly is very important. Legal forms are also available at transnational level, in particular the EGTC, European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation, which allows the management of joint initiatives and projects, including through the use of European funds from different sources. A good example is the International Alliance for the Rhine-Alpine Corridor, established as an EGTC among the regions concerned by this European corridor, and active in economic promotion and in the creation of common territorial strategies for the areas crossed by it.

4.1.2 Institutional Models

The institutional models present in Metro Case differ from one another. They range from the voluntary cooperation initiated in Gothenburg decades ago, based on a solid culture of cooperation and mutual trust; to bottom-up cooperation models developed around projects and the availability of European funds, as in Warsaw; to institutionalised models, implemented in Bucharest in a mixed form, with a national law establishing the tools and defining the territorial areas while leaving local actors the initiative to form associations; to other predominantly top-down situations, such as Genoa, Turin, Barcelona and Skopje; and finally to Tirana, where a national law implemented a genuine merger of the municipalities involved into a single metropolitan body.

In bottom-up models, cooperation arises from a shared awareness, at least among public technical staff and administrators. Cooperation is voluntary, and the implementation of common choices is entrusted to the responsibility of each actor. In top-down models, the initiative is taken by national or regional levels: the body is established, its rules, functions and competences are defined, powers are assigned to it more or less clearly, and only in the implementation phases does the cultural component emerge, namely the actual willingness and capacity for cooperation among local politicians, public technical staff and citizens.

Whether the process starts from the bottom or from the top, there are elements that are necessary for the proper functioning of metropolitan governance:

- A stable body, with appropriate legal personality, clearly defined competences and a precise territorial definition. It is important that this body, whatever its legal form, be recognised and accepted in its functions not only by the municipalities and any other authorities that constitute it, but also by the other public bodies – regions and the State – and private actors with which it needs to interact.
- The capacity to take shared decisions and implement them.
- The capacity to manage funds in relation to the established cooperation objectives.
- The adequacy of political bodies for the metropolitan dimension and its governance.
- Competent technical-administrative staff who know how, or learn how, to work together, systematising knowledge and engaging in intersectoral dialogue.
- A shared sustainable development strategy and a common territorial vision among the actors that make up the metropolitan area.
- Adequate management and planning tools for the competences assigned.
- Common technical, administrative and digital standards.
- The capacity to involve citizens through listening and participation actions, accompanied by good communication of results.

The analysis shows that there is no single best model in absolute terms, but rather a range of solutions with different levels of involvement and binding force, which can be adapted to the specific needs and territorial, economic, social and cultural context of each situation. The development of effective cooperation can be gradual and, in any case,

moving from formal establishment to effective operation requires time and a shared growth process. Developing meaningful projects and building successful initiatives increases trust internally and externally and consolidates the capacity for effective cooperation, proceeding incrementally from successes and achieved objectives in order to stabilise and extend them.

4.1.3 Decision-Making Processes: Governing Bodies

With the exception of informal bottom-up cooperation models, the governing bodies in metropolitan cities and regions of Metro Case are fairly similar. All have a Metropolitan Mayor, most have a Metropolitan Council, and only in some cases is there a Metropolitan Assembly composed of all mayors or their delegates. Often this assembly has only a consultative role, but it nevertheless fulfils the function of involving the municipal administrations of the territory.

The first element that emerges from the analysis of the Metro Case's cases is the need to adopt diversified decision-making methods, even within the same body, depending on the type of decisions to be taken. In particular, for decisions relating to ordinary or necessary activities, which must in any case be taken, it may be appropriate to delegate powers to a smaller executive body – the Mayor or Metropolitan Executive Board – or in any case to adopt a simple majority. For decisions relating to strategic and programmatic choices, which require broader sharing, the intervention of a body representative of the entire metropolitan territory is needed, such as a Council. There are different models of Metropolitan Councils, established either through direct election by the whole territory or through indirect election by the municipal administrations concerned. In both cases, proportional (weighted) criteria are generally used, taking into account the population represented. These Councils are responsible for the most important choices, such as approving the budget and planning instruments, by simple or qualified majority depending on the case.

Finally, it is necessary to identify ways to involve municipal administrations and, where appropriate, other relevant authorities, particularly in the case of innovative projects and strategies that involve significant changes and require the active collaboration of other actors. An Assembly, even if only consultative, but capable of concretely giving voice and visibility to the institutional levels involved, can be a useful tool for this purpose.

It is important to assess the aspect of representativeness, taking into consideration both the level of citizens and the level of institutions. In some contexts, the Metropolitan Mayor coincides with the Mayor of the capital city, and is therefore elected only by a portion of the citizens of the metropolitan territory. This entails a limitation in terms of representativeness for an important institutional role, especially if the Metropolitan Mayor is assigned important executive powers to be exercised directly. Corrective measures can mitigate this problem, such as assigning significant delegated powers with signing authority to metropolitan councillors representing different territorial components, or establishing an appropriately representative Metropolitan Executive Board that takes operational decisions collegially. A "mixed" option always remains

possible, with second-degree election of the Metropolitan Mayor using methods similar to those adopted for the Council.

With reference to the Metropolitan Council, in general both direct and indirect election guarantee good representation of the entire territory. In cases where the metropolitan area includes inland areas or sparsely populated rural areas, there is a need to ensure that the needs of these territories are also adequately taken into account. Although they carry little weight in population terms, they may be bearers of values and issues that are different from, and complementary to, those of properly urban areas.

With reference to the choice between creating a first-level authority and a second-level authority, both solutions present positive and negative aspects.

Direct election guarantees greater representativeness of all citizens, a direct relationship of responsibility between elected representatives and the territory of reference, and ensures that elected representatives can devote their time to the metropolitan area according to the arrangements provided for by their mandate. However, it does not guarantee the involvement of municipalities as local authorities participating in the metropolitan area, which often have to play a role in implementing the choices made at this level. One need only think of the relationship between metropolitan territorial planning and municipal urban planning. Corrective measures may therefore be needed to encourage the involvement of municipalities in strategic choices, at least at consultative level.

Indirect election, often justified by the need to save public expenditure, has the advantage of involving, even if not all municipalities, at least a shared representation of the municipal administrations of the metropolitan territory. The disadvantages are mainly two: political instability resulting from the misalignment of elections in the various municipalities of the territory, which leads to frequent replacements in delegations and the need to rebalance the Council politically; and the overlapping commitments for elected representatives, who find themselves having to hold two offices, in many cases while continuing their own professional activity and, at least in the Italian model – and therefore in the cases of Turin and Genoa considered here – without any financial compensation for the second mandate.

As regards the Metropolitan Mayor, coinciding with the Mayor of the capital municipality may offer greater simplification, but it represents a clear deficit in representativeness, since the Mayor is accountable only to a portion (even if sometimes the majority) of the citizens living in the metropolitan territory. It may also lead to imbalances both in negotiations with higher levels of government and in the management of funds allocated to the metropolitan territory.

On the other hand, the presence of two different mayors, one for the city and one for the metropolitan area, both with significant real powers, may guarantee much more adequate representativeness, but it may also lead to greater conflict between the core city and the metropolitan area, hindering and slowing down decisions and their implementation.

In both cases, corrective measures are needed to compensate for negative aspects and enhance positive ones. As already mentioned, the presence of a collegiate metropolitan executive body, or delegates with adequate decision-making powers, may represent good examples of solutions.

Finally, it should be noted that the possibility of formulating incremental solutions respect to those already available in different metropolitan contexts remains valid.

4.1.4 Cultural Dimension

In the context of Metro Case, the cultural dimension is addressed from the perspective of awareness of the usefulness and need for cooperation in responding to metropolitan challenges, and of the perception of belonging to a reality larger than the municipal dimension, sharing objectives and choices for the metropolitan dimension as a whole and for the municipal territories themselves.

The first element emerging from the analyses is a significant difference in the perception of the metropolitan issue between "insiders" – namely local politicians and public administration technical staff – and citizens.

In general, politicians assign cooperation a strategic role in fostering more cohesive and integrated territorial development and developing positive synergies. They see its concrete usefulness in improving citizens' daily lives through a more synergistic and better-targeted use of resources and an improvement in services. They also see its value in strengthening negotiation and operational capacity to promote strategic interventions and access national and European funding.

However, there remains a certain fear of losing a share of autonomy in the management of the municipal territory and of being penalised in the distribution of resources compared with the capital municipality.

The technical level also recognises the importance of cooperation in improving efficiency and access to services, but also expresses the need for closer collaboration at operational and technical-administrative level in order to respond to the need for new and deeper competences. The multiplicity of competences falling upon technical structures that are sometimes undersized, especially in smaller municipalities, combined with the challenges posed by regulatory changes and the digital transition, represents a difficulty to which cooperation and the exchange of knowledge and experience can offer support. Contributions from some Metro Case partners highlighted the need to establish a common technical structure capable of defining equal technical standards for the entire metropolitan territory, harmonising administrative procedures, managing complex strategic projects and providing support to smaller municipalities.

A strong convergence emerges across all the realities examined regarding the thematic areas for which robust cooperation at metropolitan scale is essential. These are:

- Integrated mobility and transport system;
- Spatial and urban planning: territorial development strategy, fostering sustainability, resilience, integration and cohesion;

- Public utilities and services, including waste management;
- Sustainable economic development and promotion: innovation, reindustrialisation, investment incentives, business zones, labour policies;
- Environmental protection: climate change adaptation, biodiversity, natural risk prevention and management, water and river management;
- Digital transition and digital infrastructure;
- Social inclusion and housing;
- Access to healthcare services.

In addition, both technical staff and politicians consider it important to develop cooperation initiatives also outside the metropolitan area, particularly on three fronts:

- Developing cooperation initiatives with neighbouring territories or territories strongly connected by major transport axes in the fields of transport, economic development, energy, and policies related to the protection and management of natural resources and climate change adaptation;
- Developing agreements and collaborations with regional and national levels on strategic themes and projects;
- Developing exchange, comparison and collaboration relations with other metropolitan realities, especially by participating in European networks and projects.

Citizens experience the metropolitan dimension on a daily basis: they travel to work, access more concentrated services such as healthcare, take part in cultural initiatives and use commercial services. They often perceive the capital city as the centre that allows access to a series of benefits and as a gateway to a broader world and to that level of services and opportunities.

The spillover effects deriving from metropolitan development reach the majority of citizens, including those in suburban areas. At the same time, however, citizens are not aware of the existence and work of an administrative and organisational system that makes possible, for example, access to a multimodal transport system with integrated ticketing and fares, or to many other services.

In most cases, the sense of belonging to the individual municipality remains much stronger than the sense of belonging to the metropolitan area as a whole.

Citizens' awareness, however, is an important component of metropolitan cooperation, promoting participation both in decisions and in their effective implementation.

A key element in growing the culture of metropolitan belonging and participation is communication, with particular reference to the benefits obtained through the development of joint projects on issues perceived as important for quality of life.

At the same time, it is important to keep the administration close to citizens, facilitating access to metropolitan-level services and procedures in a distributed and as equivalent as possible way across the territory, through close collaboration with municipalities.

4.1.5 Metropolitan Planning

Planning is one of the main competences of metropolitan cities across Europe and beyond. It is a strongly felt need because it represents the most suitable tool for developing common strategies and policies. In most cases, it is structured around two fundamental strands: the Metropolitan Strategic Plan and the Metropolitan Territorial Plan, to which sectoral plans are added, aimed at planning, developing and organising specific themes such as mobility and transport, the protection and enhancement of the environment and landscape, and others.

The Metropolitan Strategic Plan (mandatory by law in the Italian case) is a programmatic and vision-oriented document, identifying the main shared lines of action, translated into concrete actions implemented across the territory and on which resources are concentrated, especially financial resources. Given their strongly operational character, metropolitan strategic plans often have a short- or medium-term horizon and are updated very frequently in order to respond to the challenges of a rapidly evolving context, also due to the complex international situation. However, there is a need to develop broader shared strategies, addressing a longer-term time horizon as well, in order to create a shared vision and a more stable reference framework for mobilising the territory's resources and energies.

The main difficulties concern, on the one hand, the fact that the Strategic Plan deals with choices that imply significant involvement of political decision-makers, whose mandates last four to five years, and, on the other hand, the even more limited time horizon of public budget programming. Only European funds are programmed over seven-year periods; other resources are based on three- to four-year periods. Identifying effective intermediate objectives, linked together within a broader horizon, and adopting more agile mechanisms for managing resources may help overcome these difficulties.

In most of the cases considered, a Metropolitan Strategic Plan, although under different names and configurations, has been identified, sometimes also supported by specific tools for managing European funds, such as ITIs – Integrated Territorial Investments.

A Metropolitan Strategic Plan that defines the overall structure of the entire metropolitan area, guides its future development and has a solid territorial basis can represent the shared reference framework for the integrated and sustainable development of the metropolitan area.

In the different legal systems included in Metro Case, this tool is generally envisaged, although its role and legal value are not always well defined. Few of the metropolitan realities examined have developed it to date, but all feel the need for it.

Metropolitan-scale territorial planning is seen as an opportunity to:

- Integrate policies across different sectors through an overall reading of the characteristics, needs and potential of the territory. This is also the logic underpinning the creation of the ITI tool, seen as an opportunity to systematise

actions financed by different European funds and bring them into synergy on a territorial basis;
- Mitigate territorial imbalances, not by eliminating differences but by enhancing specificities and fostering synergistic development among different territories that cooperate and bring resources together;
- Improve the quality of life of all citizens in a logic of sustainable development;
- Rationalise the distribution of different functions across the territory and its spatial organisation, facilitate more equitable access to fundamental services, improve mobility and environmental quality;
- Improve territorial attractiveness in order to encourage investment, tourism and innovation.

It is also a very important tool for cooperation. It can help build synergies and relationships of trust and provide a reference element for the action of all municipalities. However, it must be developed and managed with care and balance, in order to respect the needs of different territories and not excessively limit their decision-making capacity.

An important element to consider concerns the relationship between the Metropolitan Territorial Plan and the urban plans of individual municipalities. The models in place in Metro Case may differ, but some particularly significant options are certainly common.

A first option concerns the binding nature of the Metropolitan Territorial Plan with regard to municipal plans: should it be a higher-level plan with which municipal plans must comply, or should it be considered only a general reference? There are contexts in which the metropolitan planning instrument represents only a reference document and implementation is left to the free choice of each administration. In this case, there is a risk that significant works cannot be carried out because of the non-compliance of a single municipality. However, excessive interference in the planning functions and competences of individual municipalities, to the point of directly affecting land-use regimes at a detailed level, is not realistically practicable either.

It will therefore be necessary to clearly distinguish between choices that belong to the metropolitan scale and are functional to the definition of the overall development model of the territory, and more local and detailed choices, which define the physiognomy and structure of individual territories and must be left to local initiative to avoid neglecting the subsidiarity principle. However, once the former have been adequately shared, they must have binding value (appropriately articulated into prescriptions, directives, and guidelines) in order to allow their effective implementation.

The second option concerns the time horizon. A Metropolitan Territorial Plan does not have the function of managing municipal urban planning activity, but of outlining the main directions for the development and spatial organisation of the entire metropolitan city or region. It must therefore have a medium- to long-term horizon, even beyond ten years, in order to represent a founding and stable element over time. Adaptation to the pressures generated by changes in economic and social conditions can be ensured both through periodic updates and through the action of municipal planning instruments,

which operate at a more detailed level, together with careful programming of interventions.

An important aspect concerns compensation and equalisation actions among municipalities when choices at metropolitan scale may lead, on the one hand, to the use of portions of territory for the construction of services and infrastructure of common interest, or to guiding the distribution of new settlements, both residential and dedicated to economic activities. Especially where municipal revenues are linked to local taxes on buildings or urbanisation charges, mechanisms for redistributing resources must be envisaged in cases where choices affect municipal revenues or require sacrifices for interventions of common interest.

4.1.6 Financial Resources Management

The development of cooperation at metropolitan level requires dedicated financial resources, to an extent and in ways that vary according to the institutional model adopted and the objectives and functions assigned to it.

In "soft" cooperation models operating on the basis of voluntary agreements, the metropolitan structure generally works only through projects and relies on contributions from its members or on resources acquired by participating in calls for proposals or on specific collaboration assignments.

Where there is a recognised institutional body to which specific functions and competences are also assigned, a stable financial allocation is required, proportionate to the related costs, ordinary management needs and indispensable investments. This may be supplemented by resources dedicated to specific projects and investments.

The Metropolitan Cities and Regions participating in Metro Case derive their resources from a mix of different sources, to varying degrees and in different ways depending on the level of formalisation and the type of cooperation model adopted. Some are still in the preliminary stages of establishing the metropolitan body and rely on the capital municipality for resource management, but the needs expressed and possible solutions have many points in common.

Resources may derive from:

- Transfers from associated institutions, which pool the resources needed to carry out agreed activities and functions and to maintain the support structure;
- Transfers from the State or regions, in proportion to the functions assigned or on the basis of allocation plans financing specific project-based investments;
- Directly managed taxes, only where the metropolitan authority is a formally recognised public administration, whether first- or second-level, and naturally on the basis of specific national regulations;
- Project-based funding obtained by participating in competitive calls. These may be European calls under directly or indirectly managed programmes, such as Interreg calls, but also mainstream programming. There are examples of operational programmes entirely dedicated to metropolitan realities, such as the Italian PON

METRO, or of shared integrated programme activation, as in the case of the Warsaw ITI. They may also be calls issued by the State or regions, using their own resources or mixed funds with European contributions, as in the case of the Next Generation EU fund;
- Revenues from public services fares;
- There are also cases in which private benefactors, often banking and financial institutions but not only, make funds available, in most cases through calls for investment projects or through the creation of public-private partnerships around shared strategic objectives.

All the situations considered reveal the need for metropolitan cities and regions to have access to financial allocations that are as stable as possible for the management of assigned functions and competences, and to develop the capacity to access and manage investment funds dedicated to targeted development or infrastructure projects.

Where the establishment of a dedicated body by national law is envisaged, it is therefore important also to provide the necessary financial provisions to ensure its proper functioning.

As regards European funds, the possibility of participating in calls issued by existing programmes already exists. In addition, there is an opportunity for greater involvement, in collaboration with the competent national or regional managing authorities, with the following aims:

- Valorising metropolitan planning – territorial and strategic – as a guiding element for concentrating resources on shared and cross-cutting strategic objectives, in order to integrate policies across the territory and develop intersectoral synergies;
- Involving the metropolitan authority in the distribution of resources for projects within its territory of competence, by delegation and in close collaboration with the competent Managing Authority;
- Identifying a share of resources dedicated to metropolitan realities under mainstream programming, also by applying models for the integrated use of different funds.

4.1.7 Digital Transition, Simplification and Capacity Building

In all the cases considered, the creation of a metropolitan-level entity is seen as an opportunity to create organisational and administrative synergies and to respond to the challenges that public administration currently faces.

Despite the differences among the institutional models adopted by the Partners participating in Metro Case, the analysis reveals strong similarities and convergences, both in terms of problems and needs and in terms of possible solutions.

A frequently raised issue concerns the difficulties faced by smaller municipalities, which can afford only very limited staffing levels and are required to deal with increasing competences in a changing regulatory context. The metropolitan city or region often has limited resources, must address a multiplicity of competences, and must face the

challenges posed by the need for simplification and for implementing the digital transition.

The need to obtain funds by participating in calls that are sometimes highly competitive also requires the development of specific capacities, at technical, administrative and linguistic level.

It is also necessary to maintain proximity between the administration and the population, and to guarantee simple, transparent and as homogeneous as possible access to procedures and services.

The creation of a new metropolitan reality is also seen as an opportunity for better collaboration and organisation of staff, to bring existing competences together and encourage the growth of new competences through specific organisational structuring and capacity-building initiatives. Various proposals have emerged and actions have already been activated in this area, in particular:

- The creation of a specialised technical-administrative structure within the metropolitan city, capable of providing cross-cutting support, integrating competences, but also assisting municipalities, especially smaller ones, and ensuring the management of complex and innovative strategic projects;
- The creation of operational bodies – agencies – capable of managing the daily operation of the main public services in a unified manner;
- The development of new competences through targeted training and the exchange of experiences among officials, at intersectoral level and also among different authorities, especially with reference to new technologies, the digital transition and regulatory updates;
- The activation of collaborations with provincial, regional or national authorities, to encourage the exchange of information and competences, also with reference to the management of European funds;
- The activation of collaborations with universities and research centres to develop new knowledge and solutions;
- The adoption of common technical standards.

An important aspect concerns information management, primarily within the metropolitan reality but also in relations with other government actors at different levels. In this regard, the needs reported concern:

- The adoption of digital standards for the management of data of common interest and for their exchange among the authorities concerned;
- The adoption of common digital tools for administrative management and territorial monitoring.

With regard to administrative simplification and transparency, the need emerged to activate an action of harmonisation and standardisation of procedures within the metropolitan territory, in order to guarantee, on the one hand, interoperability and internal collaboration among authorities and, on the other hand, to facilitate access and relations with the public.

4.2 Place-based Policy Implications

Genova

- The choice and approach to the Policy Instrument are functional to taking a step forward towards more integrated and territory-based policies. The integration between the ERDF Operational Programme and the Metropolitan Strategic Plan represents an opportunity to increasingly focus the allocation of financial resources on strategic interventions, in a place-based approach. The territory can be seen as the place where sectoral policies are integrated, developing synergies and supporting sustainable development.
- The Metropolitan City of Genoa has implemented public-private collaboration initiatives to develop concrete actions of public interest, going beyond what can be implemented through traditional public procurement instruments, and represents an example from which to learn.
- For this and other metropolitan realities, the driving role played by the long-range connection system must be emphasised, including the port system, trans-European connections and national-scale links.
- Territorial complexity, deriving from the large number of municipalities involved and the coexistence of highly urbanised and growing areas, structured urban centres connected with the core city, and inland areas facing marginality, depopulation and land abandonment, represents both a challenge and an opportunity. The metropolitan city itself can act as a development engine also for peripheral territories, which in turn can offer environmental values and ecosystem services.
- The model chosen to best manage territorial and thematic complexity represents an element of interest that should be developed to its full potential. The identification of homogeneous territorial areas grouping municipalities with similar needs represents an opportunity to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of administrative, planning and programming action and to foster harmonious development. However, there is a need to consolidate this sub-metropolitan institution, equipping these aggregations with appropriate decision-making models and specific planning tools.

Torino

- Strengthening functions and competences: Italian metropolitan cities require broader and more robust statutory competences and functions – especially in territorial planning and mobility – in order to play a decisive role in territorial development. Without stronger legal authority, strategic visions and project pipelines risk limited effectiveness.
- Institutionalising participation: Although participatory processes exist, they need to be more firmly embedded in institutional routines and supported by inclusive governance arrangements that go beyond consultation.
- Enabling inter-municipal cooperation: Instruments such as the Homogeneous Zones should be further developed (for example, by complementing political

representation with dedicated technical coordination) and aligned with financing mechanisms and bottom-up shared planning instruments, in order to strengthen cooperation among municipalities.

- From vision to implementation: The Metropolitan Strategic Plan needs to strengthen the transition from vision-building to operational delivery, through clearer links to implementation instruments, monitoring frameworks, and dedicated funding streams.
- Leveraging the knowledge ecosystem: Collaboration with universities, civil society, and the private sector can improve evidence-based policy production and strengthen legitimacy.
- These lessons can guide not only the refinement of CMTo's Metropolitan Strategic Plan, but also broader reflections on how metropolitan authorities can operate as platforms for innovation and development in multilevel – and also inter-metropolitan – governance systems.

Warsaw

- Formalise metropolitan competences via a metropolitan act to address institutional fragmentation and funding instability. Priority areas should include metropolitan passenger transport (integrated fares/service planning), climate and environmental protection (air quality, adaptation, energy efficiency), spatial planning (corridor-level coordination and peri-urban containment) and strategic document development/monitoring. A statutory framework would also enable PPPs at metropolitan scale where appropriate.
- Strengthen implementation capacity by consolidating municipal and county coordinators into permanent inter-municipal operational teams, supported by a shared metropolitan data platform. Harmonised datasets and regular monitoring cycles should inform ITI governance and adaptive updates to project lists. Address data gaps (e.g., disposable income, metropolitan labour metrics). Reduce health accessibility disparities through targeted investment and service rebalancing in outer areas.
- Integrate mobility and land-use policies to tackle sprawl and car dependence: expand inter-municipal cycling networks, prioritise rail-based commuting with integrated ticketing, and apply compact development guidelines along existing corridors. Develop metropolitan-level energy security and crisis management plans, including grid modernisation, renewables and cybersecurity capabilities. Maintain iterative public engagement (consultations and Metropolitan Council) and strengthen metropolitan identity via communication and programmes aligned with the 2040 Strategy.
- Systematise peer learning through European networks and Polish ITI exchanges, focusing on transport authority models, energy transition governance and multi-level crisis management. Use the planned revision of the WMA-City of Warsaw agreement to clarify roles, codify performance targets and prepare for the metropolitan act. The WMA's strong economic base, cooperative institutional structures and EU-funded instruments provide a solid foundation to address

weaknesses and mitigate threats while leveraging opportunities for cohesive territorial development.

Bucharest

- The Bucharest model combines a top-down approach for defining the regulatory framework with a bottom-up model for implementation. Moreover, the institutional cooperation model defined by law is extended to all significant urban realities, while maintaining specific attention to the capital. In this particular context, it may be important to activate support tools at national level in the fields of digitalisation, procedural simplification and communication, and to encourage the exchange of experiences among the different metropolitan and urban realities that will gradually activate cooperation. The opportunity for comparison with other European realities may also be enhanced, particularly through the Metro Case project.
- A fundamental element is the availability of dedicated financial resources, both to support the necessary technical and administrative structures and to develop strategic projects.
- The activation of pilot initiatives in response to concrete issues strongly felt by citizens, accompanied by systematic involvement and communication actions, may gradually develop trust and cooperation with municipal administrations and foster a culture of cooperation among citizens.
- It will also be necessary to strengthen the role of strategic programming and planning at metropolitan scale, in order to promote the integration of policies at intersectoral level in a place-based logic and support the gradual rebalancing of the different territorial realities.

Barcelona

- The AMB case underlines the importance of a clear legal mandate combined with sufficient financial and technical resources for effective metropolitan governance. Strategic instruments such as the PAM demonstrate how a shared action framework can support coordination in complex metropolitan contexts, even when competences are fragmented.
- PAM's design reflects flexibility and adaptability, enabling periodic updates and alignment with evolving socio-economic and institutional contexts. Its emphasis on cross-cutting priorities – such as sustainability, digitalisation, social cohesion, and service efficiency – positions it as a key driver for integrated metropolitan governance. However, implementation faces challenges linked to multilevel coordination, resource constraints, and regulatory complexity, which can slow decision-making and hinder innovation.
- Key lessons for Metro Case include the value of reinforcing the metropolitan scale as a platform for service integration, strategic planning, and policy experimentation. Strengthening monitoring, digital capacities, and participatory mechanisms can further improve governance effectiveness and legitimacy. Good practices should focus on enhancing multilevel coordination, operationalising

strategic plans, and leveraging European programmes and partnerships with research institutions and private actors to address capacity gaps. These elements are crucial for improving policy instruments and supporting learning and transferability across metropolitan areas.

Skopje

- The adoption of a top-down model such as that of Skopje may precede the development of awareness of the usefulness and need for robust collaboration at metropolitan scale, especially among citizens. It is therefore appropriate to use the operational capacity defined by law to implement demonstrative initiatives that can have an impact within a relatively short time on concrete problems perceived both by the population and by local administrations. Careful involvement of municipalities and good communication and participation actions during the different stages of project development can be fundamental factors for the success of initiatives and for spreading the culture of cooperation.
- As in many other European realities, the establishment of the metropolitan city does not exhaust the territory's need for collaboration. It may be useful to exploit the opportunities and tools offered by law to activate shared actions with other municipalities, according to variable-geometry models depending on the specific themes to be addressed, for example along the axes of the main mobility systems or for water management in the Vardar river basin.
- An important element is the development of synergies among the technical structures of the different municipalities, in order to exploit opportunities for specialisation, share practices and procedures, and work on common technical and information standards. Here, the opportunity emerges to have national-level standards and common European elements for the management and sharing of databases and for the digitalisation of procedures.
- As in most metropolitan areas, communication is a key element for spreading the culture of cooperation among citizens and making known the concrete benefits deriving from it.

Gothenburg

- Consolidate the metropolitan policy's role in national and regional plan revisions by codifying metropolitan priorities and strengthening cross-level agreements. Use the eight guidelines to steer investment towards rail, public transport and continuous regional cycling routes while embedding biodiversity, ecosystem services and climate adaptation.
- Build implementation capacity through permanent inter-municipal operational teams (expanding existing networks) and shared data platforms to monitor outcomes and inform adaptive updates. Address data gaps (e.g., core city GDP, detailed accessibility metrics) and ensure small municipalities receive targeted technical support.
- Integrate land-use and mobility to reduce diffuse development and manage multimodal conflicts: focus compact growth along rail and trunk corridors,

improve walkability outside cores, and deploy behaviour-change programs consistent with the policy instrument. Prepare metropolitan energy security and climate adaptation plans for infrastructure and operations.

- Advocate for Västtrafik, for example, and other competent authorities to systematise cooperation with private actors via procurements and project partnerships e.g., shared bikes, logistics, innovation pilots and maintain coordination for major events to mitigate peaks. Strengthen collaboration with Västra Götaland Region, Region Halland and national agencies (STA) to align funding and timelines with metropolitan priorities.

Tirana

- The metropolitan city of Tirana was created through the merger of 27 pre-existing administrative entities into a single municipality. In this case, one of the challenges is the need to rationalise the organisation of the structure, encouraging the integration of people from different backgrounds, and to maintain the administrative proximity to which citizens were accustomed. The new municipality has chosen to maintain local offices and will be able to develop the skills of its staff in order to address the challenges of the digital transition and of the new metropolitan dimension.
- As in other European realities, the creation of the metropolitan city does not remove the need to activate further forms of collaboration, both horizontally with other municipalities on different themes, such as transport and sustainable territorial and economic development, and vertically with government bodies at different levels.
- The need to ensure homogeneous and transparent administrative action, together with the challenges of the digital transition, requires the adoption of common technical and information-management standards, both within the city of Tirana and in exchanges with other authorities. It is also important to adopt tools for monitoring the actions activated and their impact on the territory.
- It is also very useful to be able to develop new tools for collaboration between public and private actors for the implementation of works and services of public interest and for territorial development. In this area, the exchange of experiences with other European realities will be particularly useful, for example within the framework of the Metro Case project.

ANNEX A:

Governance State of the Art Guidelines/Template

Introduction

The 'Template to be completed' contains the criteria for describing each metropolitan area, identified on the basis of two types of indicators: quantitative-numerical and qualitative-descriptive.
Depending on the specific criterion, one or both types of indicators may be required, as specified in both the template and the Guidelines.
For quantitative-numerical indicators, a number must be entered (the type of value and unit of measurement are always specified).
For qualitative-descriptive indicators, a brief description must be written within the following character limits (including spaces):

- Minimum 300 - Maximum 700 characters
- Minimum 700 - Maximum 1200 characters
- Minimum 1200 - Maximum 2500 characters

Please note that all criteria should be understood as referring to the metropolitan area, unless otherwise specified (e.g. in reference to the central municipality).

Please use data from 2024 or the most recent data available prior to 2024. Avoid using data from before the pandemic.
To ensure data comparability between Metro Case metropolitan areas, standardised European datasets must be used as the primary source. When a specific source is indicated, that source must be used.
Please also note that some datasets may require the use of GIS tools. Support for this will be provided by PP02-POLITO.

The Template is a Word document for Windows and must be completed in English.

For any questions, please refer to the Governance State of the Art Guidelines document for instructions on how to correctly compile data and indicators.

1. PP INFORMATION	
PP Name (and APA, if applicable)	Type here
Name, Role, and Contact of Compiler	Type here

2. TERRITORIAL FRAMEWORK Understanding territorial characteristics and recognizing key factors that influence governance models	
2.1 Key Data of the Case Study	
Total Surface Area of the Metropolitan Area	Type here (number – km^2)
Total Surface Area of the Core City	Type here (number – km^2)
Population of the Metropolitan Area	Type here (number – preferably from 2024 or the most recent year before 2024)
Population of the Core City	Type here (number – preferably from 2024 or the most recent year before 2024)
Density of the Metropolitan Area	Type here (number – inh./km^2)
Density of the Core City	Type here (number – inh./km^2)
Number of Municipalities included in the Metropolitan Area	Type here (number)
Type here (brief description – 700 to 1200 characters)	
Other Possible Sub-Metropolitan Aggregations	
Type here (brief description – 700 to 1200 characters)	
Reference Functional Urban Area (FUA – OECD Definition)	Type here (number – population, surface area, municipalities included)
Type here (brief description – 700 to 1200 characters)	
Reference NUTS region (Eurostat)	
Type here (brief description – 300 to 700 characters) total population, surface area (km^2), and number of municipalities included	

2.2 Spatial Distribution of Land Uses and Land Cover-LULC (current state)	
LULC: Artificial Surface, Agricultural Areas, Forest and Semi Natural Areas, Wetlands and Water bodies	
Number: the quantitative data is the responsibility of the PP02 Brief description: is the responsibility of the single PP (Type here 700 to 1200 characters)	
Settlement Model	
Type here (brief description – 700 to 1200 characters)	
Land Take	Type here (number)
Type here (brief description – 700 to 1200 characters)	
2.3 Transport and Mobility Infrastructure System	
Road Network	
Type here (brief description – 700 to 1200 characters)	
Transport Network (High-Speed Rail, Airports, Ports, and other)	
Type here (brief description – 700 to 1200 characters)	
Sustainable Mobility Network	
Type here (brief description – 700 to 1200 characters)	
Motorization Rate of the Metropolitan Area	Type here (number – vehicles per 1,000 inh.)
Motorization Rate of the Core City (optional)	Type here (number – vehicles per 1,000 inh.)

3. SOCIO ECONOMIC FRAMEWORK Understanding socio economic characteristics and recognizing key factors that influence governance models	
Birth Rate of the Metropolitan Area	Type here (number – annual number of births per 1,000 inh.)
Birth Rate of the Core City (optional)	Type here (number – annual number of births per 1,000 inh.)
Average Household Size of the Metropolitan Area	Type here (number – average number of persons per household)

Average Household Size of the Core City (optional)	Type here (number – average number of persons per household)
Aging Index of the Metropolitan Area	Type here (number – ratio of population aged 65+ to population aged 0–14)
Aging Index of the Core City (optional)	Type here (number – ratio of population aged 65+ to population aged 0–14)
Foreign Population and Presence of the Metropolitan Area	Type here (number, % – foreign residents and presence)
Foreign Population and Presence of the Core City (optional)	Type here (number, % – foreign residents and presence)
Higher Education Graduates of the Metropolitan Area	Type here (number, % – residents with a tertiary education degree)
Higher Education Graduates of the Core City (optional)	Type here (number, % – residents with a tertiary education degree)
Employment Rate of the Metropolitan Area	Type here (number – percentage of the working-age population that is employed)
Employment Rate of the Core City (optional)	Type here (number – percentage of the working-age population that is employed)
Youth Employment Rate of the Metropolitan Area	Type here (number – percentage of young people aged 15–29 who are employed)
Youth Employment Rate of the Core City (optional)	Type here (number – percentage of young people aged 15–29 who are employed)
Enterprises and Sectoral Specialisation of the Metropolitan Area	Type here (number)
Type here (brief description – 700 to 1200 characters)	
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the Metropolitan Area	Type here (number, €)
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the Core City (optional)	Type here (number, €)

Per Capita Gross Disposable Income of the Metropolitan Area	Type here (number, € per year)
Per Capita Gross Disposable Income of the Core City (optional)	Type here (number, € per year)
Tourism – Overnight Stays and Arrivals in the Metropolitan Area	Type here (number)
Tourism – Overnight Stays and Arrivals in the Core City (optional)	Type here (number)
Protected Natural Areas in the Metropolitan Area	Type here (number – km^2)
Type here (brief description – 300 to 700 characters)	
Major Healthcare Facilities in the Metropolitan Area	Type here (number)
Type here (brief description – 300 to 700 characters)	
Universities in the Metropolitan Area	Type here (number)
Type here (brief description – 300 to 700 characters)	
Other Relevant Socio-Economic Indicators	
Type here (brief description – 1200 to 2500 characters)	

4. GOVERNANCE

4.1 Governance of the Metropolitan Area

Type of Institution (Category)
Type here (select from the options listed in the Guidelines + brief description – 700 to 1200 characters)
Source of Funding
Type here (select from the options listed in the Guidelines + brief description – 700 to 1200 characters)
Functions and Responsibilities (categories)
Type here (select from the options listed in the Guidelines + brief description – 700 to 1200 characters)
Legislative Framework / Act

Type here (brief description – 700 to 1200 characters)
Decision-Making Process
Type here (brief description – 1200 to 2500 characters)
Public-Private Partnership
Type here (brief description – 1200 to 2500 characters)
4.2 Governance for the Policy Instrument
Participation Model During the Design Phase
Type here (brief description – 700 to 1200 characters)
Decision-Making Process
Type here (brief description – 700 to 1200 characters)
Implementation Phase Modalities
Type here (brief description – 700 to 1200 characters)
4.3 Governance Cultural Framework
Politicians
Cooperation Models between municipalities and across different government and administrative levels
Type here (brief description – 700 to 1200 characters + qualitative judgement from 1=low to 5=high)
Cooperation Models between public and private actors
Type here (brief description – 700 to 1200 characters + qualitative judgement from 1=low to 5=high)
Key Sectors or Issues Where Cooperation is Most Needed
Type here (brief description – 1200 to 2500 characters)
Existing Cooperation Experiences Beyond the Metropolitan Area
Type here (brief description – 1200 to 2500 characters)
Current Cooperation Needs Beyond the Metropolitan Area
Type here (brief description – 1200 to 2500 characters)
Multilevel Collaboration
Type here (brief description – 1200 to 2500 characters)

Technicians
Cooperation Models between municipalities and across different government and administrative levels
Type here (brief description – 700 to 1200 characters + qualitative judgement from 1=low to 5=high)
Cooperation Models between public and private actors
Type here (brief description – 700 to 1200 characters + qualitative judgement from 1=low to 5=high)
Key Sectors or Issues where Cooperation is Most Needed
Type here (brief description – 1200 to 2500 characters)
Existing Cooperation Experiences Beyond the Metropolitan Area
Type here (brief description – 1200 to 2500 characters)
Current Cooperation Needs Beyond the Metropolitan Area
Type here (brief description – 1200 to 2500 characters)
Multilevel Collaboration
Type here (brief description – 1200 to 2500 characters)
General Public (and Other Stakeholders)
Cooperation Models between municipalities and across different government and administrative levels
Type here (brief description – 700 to 1200 characters + qualitative judgement from 1=low to 5=high)
Cooperation Models between public and private actors
Type here (brief description – 700 to 1200 characters + qualitative judgement from 1=low to 5=high)
Level of Perceived Belonging to Individual Municipalities
Type here (brief description – 700 to 1200 characters + qualitative judgement from 1=low to 5=high)
Level of Perceived Belonging to the Metropolitan Area
Type here (brief description – 700 to 1200 characters + qualitative judgement from 1=low to 5=high)
Historical or Cultural Factors
Type here (brief description – 700 to 1200 characters)

5. SPECIFIC DATA CONNECTED WITH THE SELECTED POLICY INSTRUMENT
Contents
Type here (brief description – 700 to 1200 characters)
Objectives
Type here (brief description – 700 to 1200 characters)
Critical Issues to Address
Type here (brief description – 700 to 1200 characters)
Expected Change/Improvement
Type here (brief description – 700 to 1200 characters)
Territorial and Socio-Economic Framework (Sectoral)
Type here (brief description – 700 to 1200 characters)
Other Relevant Elements
Type here (brief description – 700 to 1200 characters)

ANNEX B:

SWOT Analysis Template

This template is designed for PPs contributing to the Metro Case project.
It supports both the structured SWOT table and the narrative synthesis for each Governance State of the Art document.

REFERENCE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES of Metro Case for the SWOT

1. **Strengthen multilevel and multisectoral coordination**
   → Integrated governance among main cities, surrounding municipalities, metropolitan authorities, and regions.
2. **Improve strategic planning tools**
   → Coherent metropolitan visions and plans integrated with mobility, environmental, and economic development policies.
3. **Promote place-based and collaborative governance models**
   → Participatory processes, co-planning tools, and territorial cooperation platforms.
4. **Facilitate the exchange of good practices and capacity building**
   → Strengthening of technical and administrative skills and tools.
5. **Contribute to balanced and cohesive territorial development**
   → Reduction of territorial disparities and stronger urban–rural cohesion.

Project approach
The Metro Case project seeks to enhance policy instruments directly or indirectly developed and managed by 8 Metropolitan Authorities from Europe and the candidate countries, governing the overall governance and collaboration framework between the core metropolitan city and its member municipalities or communities across various sectors and policy fields.
Throughout the core phase, Project Partners (PPs) and their Associated Policy Authorities (APAs) will collaborate closely to identify Good Practices (GP) of metropolitan governance models across Europe.
Guided by PP02 and with the support of the Advisory Partner (AP9), **each PP will assess** its current situation to uncover **S**trengths, **W**eaknesses, **O**pportunities, and **T**hreats (**SWOT**) within their governance structures and associated policy tools.

1. SWOT Matrix - Theoretical-exemplary scheme

PP: .....
Policy Instrument: .....
Authority of the Policy Instrument .....
Country: .....

PARTNER and POLICY INSTRUMENT: **specify the PP and the policy instrument**	**Internal Factors**		**External Factors**	
Domain / Area of Analysis	**Strengths (S)** resources, skills, and positive internal elements.	**Weaknesses (W)** internal limits, deficiencies, or challenges.	**Opportunities (O)** favourable external trends or conditions.	**Threats (T)** external risks or negative conditions
A. Territorial framework **What to look for** Main quantitative indicators used, comparing differences between the Core City and the whole Metropolitan Area (MA); for example: Is there correspondence between the Metropolitan Area and the FUA? What is the territorial relationship between the Metropolitan Area and the Core City? Are there imbalances	**What we might expect to find ...**	**What we might expect to find ...**	**What we might expect to find ...**	**What we might expect to find ...**

Domain / Area of Analysis	Strengths (S) resources, skills, and positive internal elements.	Weaknesses (W) internal limits, deficiencies, or challenges.	Opportunities (O) favourable external trends or conditions.	Threats (T) external risks or negative conditions
B. Socio-economic framework **What to look for** Main quantitative indicators used, comparing differences between Core City and Metropolitan Area; for example: What is the economic relationship between the Metropolitan Area and the Core City? Are there imbalances??	**What we might expect to find …**	**What we might expect to find …**	**What we might expect to find …**	**What we might expect to find …**
C. Institutional and Legal Framework **What to look for** Clarity of roles and competences among government levels, laws, statutory documents; for example: Is the Metropolitan Area an entity with real decision-making power? Is it recognised and regulated by law?	**What we might expect to find …** Clear legal provisions and rules; …	**What we might expect to find …** Administrative fragmentation; overlapping competences; low implementation or monitoring capacity.	**What we might expect to find …** New EU directives; regional support policies; European learning networks; digitalisation..	**What we might expect to find …** Political conflicts between levels of government; uncoordinated institutional reforms; local resistance…
D. Planning and Coordination Tools **What to look for** Presence of effective and integrated tools: strategic plans, territorial schemes, inter-institutional agreements.	**What we might expect to find …** Established metropolitan tools… Strategic plans, territorial schemes, inter-institutional agreements; joint agencies or shared operational entities (e.g. companies managing common services).	**What we might expect to find …** Overlapping competences; weak implementation or monitoring capacity.	**What we might expect to find …** Regional support policies; …	**What we might expect to find …** ……

Domain / Area of Analysis	Strengths (S) resources, skills, and positive internal elements.	Weaknesses (W) internal limits, deficiencies, or challenges.	Opportunities (O) favourable external trends or conditions.	Threats (T) external risks or negative conditions
E. Governance Processes and Participation **What to look for** Capacity to co-produce policies and plans with: i) other public actors, ii) private actors. Tables, forums, partnerships, co-decision processes. For example: Are individual territories or municipalities adequately represented in decision-making? Are private actors and citizens properly involved? Is the cultural context favourable to cooperation? Is there collaboration with neighbouring territories and different levels of government? Are there structures or agencies for the joint management of services?	**What we might expect to find ...** Examples of effective cooperation... tables, forums, partnerships, co-decision processes.,	**What we might expect to find ...**	**What we might expect to find ...**	**What we might expect to find ...** .....
F. Capacities and Resources **What to look for** Human, technical-technological, and financial resources for governance: technical offices, staff, budgets, digital tools. For example: Does the Metropolitan Area have stable and adequate financial resources? Does it access EU funds?	**What we might expect to find ...** Technical resources: presence of operational technical agencies; funding... technical offices, staff, budgets, digital tools.	**What we might expect to find ...**	**What we might expect to find ...** New EU funds; digitisation.	**What we might expect to find ...** .....

Domain / Area of Analysis	Strengths (S) resources, skills, and positive internal elements.	Weaknesses (W) internal limits, deficiencies, or challenges.	Opportunities (O) favourable external trends or conditions.	Threats (T) external risks or negative conditions
G. Specificities of the Policy Instrument **What to look for…….** **(To be specified according to the selected Policy Instrument)**				

2. Narrative Summary Sheet

Provide a concise, interpretative summary (2–3 pages) accompanying the SWOT matrix.

2.1. Case Overview

Provide a short overview of the metropolitan case (context, institutional setting, main planning instruments).

2.2. Main Features of the Governance System

Summarize the structure, legal framework, coordination mechanisms, and roles of metropolitan/regional authorities.

3. SWOT Key Insights

Interpret the main findings and interrelations between strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

4. Policy Implications and Lessons >> useful for guiding the selection of good practices to look at, to improve one's own policy instrument

Discuss how the findings inform metropolitan governance improvement and policy learning within Metro Case.