

Innovations of a sub-regional plan: Palermo and its territory in Sicilyⁱ

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Abstract

Territorial planning (provincial or sub-regional) in Italy is still up to this day regulated, at national level, similarly to the local administrative planning, but with less influence on the use of the territory, particularly for public infrastructures. This makes the territorial planning inadequate in keeping up with nowadays fast pace transformations. The required transformations are depending less on the regular planning process and are increasingly following the expenditure needs for uncoordinated individual investments, particularly from the European Union. The new pace of the expenditures, mainly imposed for more significant works and based on the link “financing-project-disbursement”, does not correspond with the timeframe of the Plan which – often surpassed and inadequate – delays even further its implementation.

This is contributing to the widespread opinion that planning is not useful for development and for the utilization of the resources, which generates a profound misrepresentation of the purposes and theoretical foundations of planning.

The *Piano Territoriale Provinciale* (P.T.P.) is the planning tool that more encompasses the contradictions originating from its late formation and its inadequacy. Nevertheless, being a tool for vast areas (not restricted) and maybe due to its distance from the strict regulation of the use of the territory, which is mainly done through the local administration planning, the P.T.P. has the potential for innovative methods. Within the territorial plan, the metropolitan dimension (nowadays credited as *metropolitan city*) is justified by the *territorial context relations* which amplify its potential of *network* and *points*.

The *actions* and *objectives* of the P.T.P., which acts as connection between the development policies of the Region and the local administrative planning, consist of a matrix of values (competition and cohesion, balance, productivity and accessibility) related to the different level of services (social and cultural, for the economic development, for the organization of the territory and protection of the environment).

The choices of the P.T.P. are articulated in *systems* that highlight the *territorial context relations* within an integrated and unified *strategic framework*. The systems are divided in two parts: the natural environment system and the urban territory system. The first one is sustained and coordinated by the *provincial ecological network* (derived from the *regional ecological network*). The second system comprises productive activities, services, residential areas and historical centres and infrastructures.

The intervention actions, verified by the *Systemic Strategic framework*, represent the basis of the *Operational framework* of the P.T.P.

The P.T.P. *vision* is therefore able to represent a methodology for building strategies, and related evaluations, that is open and flexible to the sustainable implementation within the territorial context.

ⁱ Sicily Region :	25.711 sqkm.,	5.048.741 people,	density 196 p/ sqkm.,	N°Comuni 390.
Palermo Province:	4.125 sqkm.,	1.249.577 people,	density 250 p./ sqkm.,	N°Comuni 82
Metropolitan area	-----	1.044.426 people,	-----	N°Comuni 27
Palermo capoluogo:	158 sqkm.,	655.409 people,	density 4.125 p./ sqkm.,	N°Comune 1