

TARGETED ANALYSIS //

IMAGINE

Developing a metropolitan-regional imaginary in
Milano-Bologna urban region

Scientific Annex 4 // Stakeholders' engagement. Regional Work-
shops and Forum

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1 Stakeholders' engagement: Regional Workshops and Forums

Stakeholders' engagement was fundamental for the ESPON IMAGINE project. It has been developed since the beginning of the research activities by the research team activated by Globus et Locus (composed by Paolo Perulli, Livia D'Anna, Luca Garavaglia and Francesco Galli), with the collaboration of Politecnico di Milano and Sciences Po, through a series of stakeholders' engagement initiatives: interviews, focus groups, regional workshops and forum.

The participatory process, aiming at generating an open and design-oriented dialogue among experts and local stakeholders, saw the involvement of local governments and stakeholders of the main economic and territorial functions during all the phases of the project, discussing the feasibility of a new approach to governance in the development of a regional imaginary and of an integrated territorial strategy between Milano and Bologna.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic emergencies and the subsequent lockdown periods in Italy and Europe, all the interviews, workshops, and meetings were organized online (via Teams, Zoom, Skype, or other platforms).

ESPON IMAGINE: stakeholders' engagement process

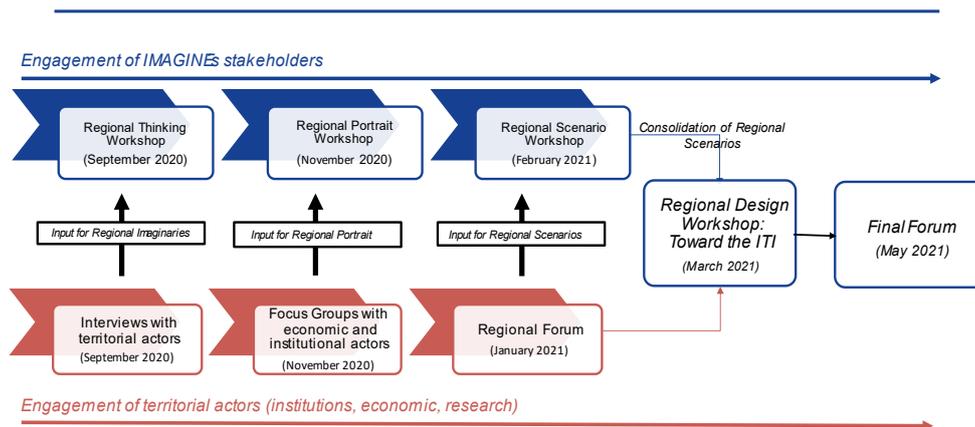


Figure 1 - Stakeholders' engagement process

In June 2020, the research team held the first round of 15 interviews to project stakeholders' representatives. In the following months, from September to December 2020, local Stakeholders' engagement activities have been organized in the form of two **Focus groups** to extend the discussion on regional imaginaries to a broader number of actors, representing social, economic, and territorial functions of the Milano-Bologna area: 40 high-level representatives of the main institutional and economic actors of the two Regions, belonging to 36 different institutions, were involved. In each of the focus groups and interviews, the stakeholders have been asked: a) to explain their "vision" of the Milano-Bologna wide-area territorial system; b) to describe the active or planned projects concerning this system or parts of it; c) to mention the strategic collaborations with other stakeholders and institutional subjects; d) to discuss the obstacles or problems to the regulation of the functions that are organized at a trans-territorial level in the Milano-Bologna system.

Three regional workshops took place intending to validate and discuss the work of the research team with the IMAGINE stakeholders. The first one, the **Regional Thinking Workshop** held on September 11th, 2020, presented and discussed the results of Task 1 "Mapping Existing Spatial Imaginary" producing an initial

picture of the stakeholders' political objectives and policy needs. Ample space has been given to the discussion with the project stakeholders, focusing on main opportunities for the Milano-Bologna urban region in the perspective of the EU Recovery fund agreement; the construction of the map of stakeholders and the experiences from international stakeholders. The second event, the **Regional Portrait Workshop**, took place on November 13th, 2020. It was dedicated to presenting the first results from the data analysis carried out on the Regional Portrait (Task 2.1). Focusing on representing the significant economic and socio-spatial dynamics of the Milano-Bologna urban region, the Regional portrait explored the corridor's main features and characteristics empirically, looking for emerging signals of functional urban integration. The third event, the **Regional Scenario Workshop**, was held on February 12th, 2021, and saw the participation of the stakeholders supporting IMAGINE, who discussed the scenarios and corresponding territorial implications developed by the ESPON research team.

A **Regional Forum** and a **Regional Design workshop** have been organized, respectively, on January 21st, 2021 and on March 30th, 2021, to discuss and validate with **stakeholders** and **local actors** the feasibility of a new governance approach and a new regional imaginary and scenario. The Regional Forum, "*The Milano-Bologna Region: Scenarios and Perspectives*", saw the participation of 65 stakeholders from 43 different organizations, including urban, metropolitan, provincial and regional authorities, chambers of commerce, industrial associations, universities and research centers, foundations of banking origin, the Po river basin authority, train operating companies and logistic operators, firms belonging to the sectors of utilities, retail, fashion and advertising. Participants were asked to comment on the data and scenarios of the Regional Portrait developed by the IMAGINE research group in three parallel sessions respectively dedicated to **institutional context**, **economic networks** and **functions**, and the **system of research and innovation**. The *Regional Design Workshop* was held via the Zoom platform on March 30, 2021, and saw the participation of about 40 stakeholders belonging to 32 different organizations, launching a debate on the scenarios, policies and tools underlying the elaboration of a strategic vision for the development and governance of the Milano-Bologna urban macro-region.

The **Final Regional Forum** consisted of an interactive workshop on May 18th, 2021, organized by the IMAGINE research team (Politecnico di Milano, Globus et Locus, Sciences Po) in collaboration with IMAGINE stakeholders (Città Metropolitana di Milano, Città Metropolitana di Bologna, Provincia di Pavia, Provincia di Piacenza, AIM, Associazione Interessi Metropolitan, Metrex, POPSU and Warsaw metropolitan area), to showcase and discuss how the ITIs (Integrated Territorial Initiatives) have been fruitfully implemented in relation to new regional imaginaries and the general objective of the 2014-2020 Cohesion Policy, and to generate new knowledge towards the development an integrated territorial initiative in the Milano-Bologna urban region, as well as in other urban areas. Over 90 stakeholders, researchers, experts, and researchers joined the event.

This Annex to the Final Report includes the detailed agendas, lists of participants, reports, and executive summaries of the focus groups, regional workshops and forums held with the project's stakeholders and the network of local, national and international actors involved in the different phases of IMAGINE.

1.1 Regional Thinking Workshop: “Mapping existing spatial imaginaries”

11 September 2020, 10h00-13h00

Venue: online meeting on Teams due to the COVID-19 outbreak

1.1.1 Agenda

10h00 Welcome and brief introduction on ESPON IMAGINE Regional thinking workshop

Livia D’Anna (Globus et Locus), Piera Petruzzi (ESPON EGTC), Valeria Fedeli (Politecnico di Milano)

10h15 Mapping existing spatial imaginaries in the Milano-Bologna Urban region

Valeria Fedeli, (Politecnico di Milano), Luca Garavaglia (Globus et Locus)

10h45 Round table with Project stakeholders on the following issues:

- Comments to the Inception Report. What are the main impressions about your role in the development of IMAGINE project and on the most relevant issues in order to strengthen the spatial imaginaries on a regional scale?
- Which are the main opportunities for the Milano-Bologna urban region in the perspective of the EU Covid-19 Recovery fund agreement? Which projects can be negotiated with the national government in order to support the development of an integrated territorial strategy?
- Observations on the construction of the map of stakeholders. Which are the most relevant actors to be considered in the governance of the Milano-Bologna corridor, and which are the main obstacles to their involvement.
- Experiences from international stakeholders: have you been involved in policy processes due to constructing upon new regional imaginaries; if so, what was strategic for the reflection? What facilitated the process? What problems have emerged and how did you address them?

Isabella Susi Botto/Carmine Pacente (Milano Metropolitan City), Silvia Bernardi/Alessandro Delpiano/Francesco Selmi (Metropolitan City of Bologna), Elisabetta Pozzi (Province of Pavia), Antonio Colnaghi/Vittorio Silva (Province of Piacenza), Carlo Berizzi (Associazione Interessi Metropolitaniani), Andrzej Czajkowski (City of Warsaw), Henk Bouwman (METREX), Aurore Meyfroidt (POPSU)

Moderator: Livia D’Anna and Luca Garavaglia (Globus et Locus)

12h15 Final remarks on Milano-Bologna urban and regional imaginaries

Piero Bassetti (Globus et Locus), Paolo Perulli (Globus et Locus); Marco Cremaschi (SciencesPo)

12h45 Conclusions and next steps

1.1.2 List of Participants

1.	Caterina	Aversa	Città Metropolitana di Milano
2.	Silvia	Ballabio	Città Metropolitana di Milano
3.	Piero	Bassetti	Globus et Locus
4.	Paolo	Beria	Politecnico di Milano
5.	Carlo	Berizzi	Associazione Interessi Metropolitan
6.	Silvia	Bernardi	Città Metropolitana di Bologna
7.	Henk	Bouwman	METREX
8.	Paolo	Bozzuto	Politecnico di Milano
9.	Valentina	Capocefalo	Città Metropolitana di Milano
10.	Luigi	Carboni	Politecnico di Milano
11.	Antonio	Colnaghi	Provincia di Piacenza
12.	Marco	Cremaschi	Sciences Po
13.	Francesco	Curci	Politecnico di Milano
14.	Andrzej	Czajkowski	City of Warsaw
15.	Livia	D'Anna	Globus et locus
16.	Dante	Di Matteo	Politecnico di Milano
17.	Valeria	Fedeli	Politecnico di Milano
18.	Luca	Garavaglia	Globus et Locus
19.	Fabio	Manfredini	Politecnico di Milano
20.	Ilaria	Mariotti	Politecnico di Milano
21.	Aurore	Meyfroidt	POPSU
22.	Tatiana	Negurita	Milano Metropolitan City
23.	Paolo	Perulli	Globus et Locus
24.	Piera	Petruzzi	ESPON EGTC
25.	Vincenzo	Politano	Globus et Locus
26.	Federica	Rossi	Politecnico di Milano
27.	Viviana	Rubbo	METREX
28.	Michelangelo	Secchi	Politecnico di Milano
29.	Francesco	Selmi	Città Metropolitana di Bologna
30.	Lanfranco	Senn	Globus et Locus
31.	Vittorio	Silva	Provincia di Piacenza

1.1.2 Report

Welcome and brief introduction

Livia D’Anna (Globus et Locus) starts the meeting, welcoming all the participants, and reminding the agenda of the meeting. D’Anna recalls the objective of the meeting, which is the first of the three Regional Workshops dedicated to IMAGINE Project stakeholders with the aim to validate and discuss the results of Task 1 “**Mapping Existing Spatial Imaginary**” producing a preliminary picture of the stakeholders’ political objectives and policy needs. After the first part dedicated to Task1 “Mapping existing spatial imaginaries” reflection and updates, large space will be given to the **discussion** with Project Stakeholders in the **Round Table** focusing on four main issues: 1) **comments to the Inception Report**; 2) main **opportunities** for the Milano-Bologna urban region in the perspective of **EU Recovery fund agreement**; 3) observations to the construction of the **map of stakeholders**; 4) **experiences from international stakeholders**. The last part will be dedicated to the **final remarks** by Piero Bassetti, Paolo Perulli and Marco Cremaschi, and at the end there will be a brief summary of the next steps.

D’Anna gives the floor to **Piera Petruzzi (ESPON)**. She thanks for organizing the workshop with the aim to provide the information needed to improve the IMAGINE project. She recalls that in early August ESPON sent its positive response to the Inception Report and received back a revised version now available at the ESPON website. She highlights the need to include the European dimension in the IMAGINE project. The presence of the International Stakeholders should be useful to ensure this European dimension to end up with results that could also serve the needs of other stakeholders all over Europe. Piera Petruzzi also informs the participants that ESPON has a new director, Wiktor Szydarowski, with many years of experience in planning and managing international initiatives and projects, especially in the Baltic area. Petruzzi also invites the participants to the ESPON sessions at the “European Week of Regions and Cities in Brussels”. This year ESPON has 15 sessions organized as main partner or jointly with other institutions. Petruzzi invites the participants to follow these events that are fully online due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Presentation of Task 1: “Mapping Existing Spatial Imaginaries”

Valeria Fedeli (Politecnico di Milano) gives some background information and updates on the project. In the last month the researchers have been working not just to revise the Inception Report, but also to go in depth on the research on spatial imaginaries. She presents some additional elaborations related to **the role of Spatial Imaginaries (SI)**. Regarding the nature of spatial imaginaries, Fedeli recalls the definition by Simin Davoudi “*Spatial imaginaries are **deeply held, collective understandings** of socio-spatial relations that are performed by, give sense to, **make possible and change collaborative socio-spatial practices**. They are produced through **political struggles over the conceptions, perceptions and lived experiences of place**. They are **circulated and propagated through images, stories, texts, data, algorithms and performances**. They are **infused by relations of power** in which contestation and resistance are ever-present.*

IMAGINE researchers consider this definition very effective because it recalls many aspects presented in the Inception Report. Fedeli then draws attention to the main characteristics of Spatial Imaginaries. Fedeli describes the different coexisting typologies of Spatial Imaginaries that researchers have found in the analysis of the policy documents and in the review of scientific literature. Fedeli informs that researchers are preparing an atlas of the spatial imaginaries of the Milano-Bologna area. To feed the debate, she asks stakeholders to reflect on their perception of the role (performative, normative...) those imaginaries could play in the reorganization of territorial functions and their governance.

Concerning the second topic, **Mapping policy issues and stakeholders**, **Luca Garavaglia (Globus et Locus)** reminds that the first round of interviews collected important information about some issues that need to be discussed and governed at trans-territorial scale in the Milano-Bologna area. During the interviews the issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences have also been explored. The pandemic called for fast reaction from central and local governments, but it is also an opportunity to assemble new territorial strategies and policy renewal. There’s a lot of debate about the negotiations regarding the use of the Recovery fund: where and how those resources will be allocated? The interviews highlighted some issues that are common to cities and province areas in Milano-Bologna region. Researchers hope that the discussion can identify areas in which joint collective action can be organized as an opportunity for organizing the Recovery fund most efficiently.

Another theme for the round table is the construction of the map of stakeholders to involve in the development of the IMAGINE project. Garavaglia shows a tentative list that has been gathered from the interviews and the comments to the Inception Report. Further comments from stakeholders will be shared during the round table.

Round Table with Project Stakeholders

Livia D'Anna opens the floor to discussion. Stakeholders provide answers and comments to the four issues raised by researchers to feed the dialogue and the cross-fertilisation:

Silvia Ballabio (Città Metropolitana di Milano) focuses on the second question and highlights that one of the main opportunities offered by the Recovery Fund (Next Generation EU) is the relaunch of the public investments aimed to improve welfare, services and infrastructures. According to Metropolitan City of Milano, the constitution of "Holding funds" or of "Collective Investment funds", in particular Social Impact Investments or Sustainability Investments, could be helpful to stimulate the use of private capital and to encourage public/private partnership forms. These tools would allow Metropolitan Cities to invest in societies in which public institutions participate through asset resources and not just financial ones, in cooperation with the private capital. In this direction, the Metropolitan City of Milano is developing a territorial equalization fund and is interested in the experience of the Metropolitan City of Bologna. The fund would contribute to the aim of producing a multiplying effect of the resources offered by the European Union and, at the same time, would allow having resources to finance the organization of services on a broader scale. Those services could be defined by projects shared with the local authorities to balance the offer and the quality of services between the most developed territories and the peripheral ones. It would be interesting to investigate if establishing a similar fund on the Milano-Bologna scale would allow the collection of more resources for sustainable mobility in the general frame of a green transition. In this direction, the Metropolitan City of Milano has started a project with the Presidenza del Consiglio related to the use of "Collective Investment funds" for the realization the metropolitan area's sustainable mobility plan (PUMS). Therefore, studying the possibilities of ITI tools would be helpful in an in-depth analysis of the public/private investment funds, aiming to investigate what experiences are present at the European level, in which fields they operate and what scale makes them more effective.

Carlo Berizzi (AIM) answers the question related to the role that project stakeholders can play in developing the IMAGINE project. AIM works in three different fields that can be useful for the targeted analysis:

- 1) creating maps. With the Project "Report Milano" AIM is working on various issues related to the Metropolitan area of Milano, trying to map the main facts that will be influencing the city of Milano in the next ten years;
- 2) strategies. AIM can bring the experience of "Green Rays" and LET Project. AIM has developed the LET Project, concerning the construction of cycling itineraries around Expo 2015 in Milano, with Cariplo Foundation. However, this interesting project was not integrated into the regional strategies: in the absence of a common approach, it isn't very easy to operate on a regional scale;
- 3) dissemination visits. AIM has 20 years of experience in projects involving citizens. In big cities, it is easier to connect identity with changes and innovation, but it is essential to explain changes to the citizens and involve them. This process is more complicated in small and less dynamic cities. So, the IMAGINE project needs to reflect upon the different speeds of identity-building processes.

Regarding the map of actors, Berizzi suggests the inclusion of universities and hospitals, as they play an important role at the regional scale and the actors of cultural (museums, theatres, events) and touristic systems. AIM can help the IMAGINE team disseminate the results of the research, especially in the Metropolitan area of Milano, and in the in-between territories of Piacenza and Pavia.

Concerning the question about the international experiences that could be helpful to address the European dimension of IMAGINE analysis properly, **Henk Bouwman (Metrex)** informs that Metrex would like to set up a meeting with IMAGINE Team to exchange experiences and information with other projects Metrex members are working on (not only ESPON Projects, but also Horizon 2020 ones). One specific project, in this sense, is ESPON STISE Project (Sustainable Transport Infrastructure in the Strategic urban region of Eurodelta) which is run by the province of South Holland and the city of The Hague and involves the urban region of Eurodelta. In that region, due to a common cultural and historical background, local actors have been working together for centuries. They speak different languages, but they have a common understanding of many aspects, such as how to do business with each other and deal with joint problems. It is quite interesting to see it as a model and to understand its governance culture and dynamics. Bouwman stresses that there is a lot of talk about economics and tangible aspects in regions. Still, intangible aspects are also important, maybe even more, since they stay in the background of people's decisions. Another interesting example is the Region of Auvergne Rhone Alp, where the collaboration between the different areas is not easy. According to experts, it could be related to a diverse historical background.

In addition to their comments to the Inception Report, **Francesco Selmi, with Silvia Bernardi (Metropolitan City of Bologna)**, underline that Bologna found particularly interesting the work of the researchers on the historical context of planning in the cities and provinces of the Milano-Bologna region. Metropolitan City of Bologna also underlined the utility of exchanges of experiences with the Metropolitan City of Milano about equalization funds. Selmi highlighted the case for the High-Speed Rail, which enhanced the imaginary of a common region between Milano and Bologna in the last few years. For Bologna, it is also important that the positive aspects produced on metropolitan cities by the fast connection between them can be spread over the territories in the peripheral areas of the Region. This could help to create an expanded imaginary. Other important topics are related to mobility and the policies against air pollution, which should be discussed in a more complex way and other regions of the Pianura Padana (the Po river plain). As for the map of actors, Selmi and Bernardi underline the role of universities in the creation of local innovation networks both in metropolitan areas and in medium-sized cities.

Andrzej Czajkowsky (City of Warsaw) shares Warsaw experience regarding ITI (Integrated Territorial Investments) implementation. In Greater Warsaw the ITI tool, implemented under the EU financial perspective 2014-2020, established cooperation between Warsaw and 39 municipalities. What facilitated this process was mainly the availability of EU funds (over 167 million euros). Around 2% of the total investments were granted for technical assistance. Warsaw was able to construct and implement an intermediate governance body with its own staff, which could coordinate the processes regarding implementing all the projects. One of the first problems they faced initially was the lack of trust from small municipalities that were afraid resources would be mainly destined to the city of Warsaw. As the ITI program developed, the actors involved in it managed to establish mutual trust through continuative cooperation and transparency of governance structures.

Aurore Meyfroidt (POPSU) gives some updates regarding POPSU activities. She refers to an initiative from the Puca, monitoring the effects of the Covid 19. POPSU has also produced two monthly publications and an ethical note describing Covid 19 effects. Referring to spatial imaginaries and the regions' role, in France, the perimeters of regions have been expanded, influencing the legitimacy at these levels. In France, Metropolitan areas hold many competencies and there is a problem of democracy gaps between metropolitan areas, departments, and regional levels. Meyfroidt also mentions some potential levers to increase relations between metropolitan areas and the peripheries, such as stakeholders that can play a role as "third parts" between metropolitan regions and small municipalities; for example, planning agencies, that in France not only have a planning role, but also a strategic view, working beyond metropolitan boundaries.

Vittorio Silva (Province of Piacenza). About the first topic of discussion, Silva shares the opinion that the role of Piacenza area within the Project is adequately enhanced, starting from its potential function as a connecting area between the Milano and Bologna systems. Among the main topics that have been considered to strengthen the spatial imaginary on a regional scale, mobility of people, logistics, tourism and welfare, are correctly identified and may have strategic importance concerning the Piacenza area. About the second issue, Silva thinks that the Recovery fund could be an extraordinary opportunity to develop integrated territorial strategies especially with reference to green mobility, environmental quality, commuting and tourism. From this point of view, it would be instrumental if the territories agree to a common set of projects to be presented to the regions and to the central government. Regarding the construction of the map of stakeholders, Silva indicates some stakeholders that could be important to involve: Trenitalia, Trenord and Ferrovie Emilia Romagna, about green mobility and commuting; the two environmental agencies of Lombardy and Emilia Romagna and Legambiente concerning environmental quality; the associations of touristic operators should be considered for tourism. Silva thinks that the involvement of regions could present some obstacles, because they are very focused on their administrative boundaries.

Final Remarks

Piero Bassetti (Globus et Locus) critically contributes to the subsequent working phases of the IMAGINE Project, starting from the consideration that the spatial scenario is not sufficient to explain what is really happening in the "power" scenario. Assuming the concrete example of Milano-Bologna area, there's no doubt that the High-Speed Rail has modified the spatial scenario in a very relevant way. But we are facing epochal changes which are radically modifying people's behavior. The coronavirus has shaken the world and Europe to its core, testing healthcare and welfare systems, the ontology of our institutions, our societies and economies and our way of living and working together. The emergence of a new equilibrium between 'functional powers', which today are based on a different scale and nature from the old territorial one, seems to have been made increasingly necessary by the processes of glocalization, that have generated

significant shifts of powers not only upwards or downwards, but also transversally: as a result, the essence of “power” itself changed.

Therefore, Bassetti suggests that some efforts can be addressed not only to the changes of the spatial dimensions but also to those of the “time” scenario, which is affecting the spatial one. Bassetti explains that globalization is not merely the sum of globalization and localization but is a complete change of behavior in the “public” dimension. New public spaces have come about and “glocal” strategies and policies, local and global at the same time, have become necessary in order to be able to act effectively in these spaces. Today these emerging needs challenge the institutions to redefine their nature and forms of governance. One of the issues emerging from the impressive work researchers have done so far, is that the demand for change raised by the mutations of spatial imaginaries did not cause changes in the institutional scenario. This is a very relevant point: are spatial scenarios sufficient to prepare a change in the “Power Scenario”, in the Institutional Scenario? In that sense, Bassetti also remarks that the European dimension has to be taken into great consideration, because the European Union is experiencing a deep transformation under the impulse of the Covid outbreak. Bassetti underlines the importance of considering how the project team and stakeholders can effectively propose to the involved powers and institutions the phenomenological changes they have detected.

Paolo Perulli (Globus et Locus) gives some remarks at the analytical level. The first point refers to the telework, which will cover between 30% and 40% of the total work in the next few years in cities like Milano, Bologna, Paris and London, according to the experts' estimates. City centers will leave the ground to urban peripheries, to small towns, to urbanized countryside. The shift is taking place and will be a glocal shift, as Bassetti pointed out in his speech. Both centers and peripheries are more global in nature than in the past thanks to connecting technologies, digital work, and sharing knowledge, made possible by technological innovation. The second point is about the new opportunities to rethink the strategic role of small and medium size cities like Piacenza or Pavia, which are currently marginal, but tomorrow could be central. How can this be done? Creating new spaces of work in the small, medium sized cities and in the urban peripheries. This means co-working and new forms of networking for small enterprises, start-ups, universities, and research centers within new spaces that we have to create in the next few years. Thanks to digital infrastructure, this will be possible but, of course, digitalization will be the main battleground. The third analytical point reflects on the future role of the city centres of Milano and Bologna. Today Milano and Bologna represent a new kind of urbanity. Around 58%-59% of the working population in Milano and Bologna are economic élites, entrepreneurs, managers, and creative class. This means that most of the population of Milano and Bologna are a social block, and this is the opposite of what happens in the average Italy, where around 40 % and 60% of the population is manual working class. Milano and Bologna are a new kind of urbanity based on the creative class and elites as the majority of the people. The centers of these cities will become urban parks of culture, creativity, of research.

Marco Cremaschi (Sciences PO) is impressed by the quality and the richness of the debate and tries to summarize the main contributions in a few points.

First, he points out that we live in a moment where spatial Imaginaries and political metaphors are everywhere. In a certain sense, researchers and stakeholders are not looking for spatial Imaginaries. Still, they are trying a diversity of spatial Imaginaries and have the responsibility to say whether they are helpful or not, for what purposes or for whom. Second point: imaginaries are a tool of logical reduction and abstraction. Bowman and Bassetti reminded the participants that there are many references in municipalities and local authorities that are not spatial or metaphorical. Spatial imaginaries should be taken into consideration as part of a larger family of political metaphors.

Third point: those imaginaries are not equivalent. We have focused on expert imaginaries, but there are also other imaginaries, for instance the one of citizens. Another important aspect refers to what spatial imaginaries say and do not say, what they hide. Another point to stress is that spatial Imaginaries are not interesting as such, but they are performative. They act or at least can be explorative. In this sense, imaginaries are a source of political legitimation. The final question concerns which actors use or use not these spatial Imaginaries and the need to involve the intermediate level of actors. Imaginaries permeate society: we have competing, and conflicting imaginaries and the point is who is the final user.

Cremaschi also shares some reflections on ITI. At the end of the IMAGINE Project, researchers will produce an evaluation report based mostly on literature and on the comparison with a few examples of ITI dealing with super local dimension, which could constitute models for the integration of the Milano-Bologna system. The result will focus upon some crucial steps that involve either producing new spatial imaginaries or the

capacity to deal with the existing ones. Cremaschi highlights that if we want to build up a new strategy for a new political body, even a non-permanent association of local municipalities, we have to make room for it. In Paris, the Metropolitan authority has introduced an intermediate level between the metropolitan government and the municipalities: these intermediate authorities are territorial organizations very similar to ITI, but they are permanent, and they are active in producing imaginaries.

Next steps

Valeria Fedeli informs that the IMAGINE research team is currently working on constructing the Regional Portrait, whose results will be presented during the next workshop. Researchers will be in touch with stakeholders to check sources and possible data sets that could be integrated into the Portrait scenario.

D'Anna and Fedeli thank all the participants for their precious contributions to the debate and to the development of the project and give an appointment to the next meeting.

1.2 Focus groups on the economic and territorial functions of the Milano-Bologna area

In November 2020, two focus groups were organized with the representatives of the economic and territorial actors of Milano-Bologna urban region.

In each of the focus groups, the stakeholders have been asked: a) to explain their "vision" of the Milano-Bologna wide-area territorial system; b) to describe the active or planned projects concerning this system or parts of it; c) to mention the strategic collaborations with other stakeholders and institutional subjects; d) to discuss the obstacles or problems to the regulation of the functions that are organized at a trans-territorial level in the Milano-Bologna system.

List of participants - Focus Group "Milano-Bologna: Economic Functions"

November 5, 2020, 4 p.m. – 7 p.m. on TEAMS

	Institution
Chambers of commerce	Camera di Commercio Milano –MonzaBrianza-Lodi
	Camera di Commercio Bologna
	Camera di Commercio Pavia
Industrial Associations	Assolombarda
	Confindustria Emilia Area Centro
	Confindustria Piacenza
	Confindustria Pavia
Utilities providers	HERA
Logistics operators	Polo logistico di Castel S.Giovanni (PC)
	Interporto di Bologna
	Polo logistico di Piacenza (ProLogis)
	Mercitalia Logistics SpA
Research institutes	Human Technopole Milano
	Tecnopolo Bologna

Focus Group "Milano-Bologna: Territorial Functions"

November 10, 2020, 4 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. on TEAMS

	Institution
Metropolitan cities and provinces	Città Metropolitana di Milano
	Città Metropolitana di Bologna
	Provincia di Pavia
	Provincia di Piacenza
	AIM – Associazione Interessi Metropolitan
Associations of municipalities	ANCI Lombardia
Regions	Regione Lombardia

River Authorities	Autorità di Bacino del Po
Universities	Università di Pavia, Fondazione Romagnosi
	Politecnico di Milano
	Università Cattolica Piacenza
	Università di Modena e Reggio
Bank foundations	Fondazione Cariplo
	Fondazione del Monte di Bologna e Ravenna

1.2.1 Summary of the main results of the Focus Group on the economic functions (November 5th, 2020)

The first focus group held online on Microsoft Teams on November 5th, 2020, has been dedicated to debating the economic functions in the Milano-Bologna area. The discussion has been introduced by Piero Bassetti (Globus et Locus) and Piera Petruzzi (ESPON) and moderated by Paolo Perulli (Globus et Locus). Lanfranco Senn (Bocconi University of Milano) took the role of discussant to summarize the results of the discussion. The focus group included 14 stakeholders of the Milano-Bologna area, representatives of the chambers of commerce, the industrial associations, a multiutility provider, some important logistics operators, and the technopoles of Milano and Bologna (two crucial research and innovation players not only in the regional scenario but also in the continental one). Eight stakeholders, including some which were unable to attend the focus group, have been interviewed to gather their opinions on the same topics discussed during the meeting, and to gather information on specific functions and economic activities of the Milano-Bologna area (including retail sector, logistics sector, creative networks, research centers, etc.).

In his introduction to the focus group, Piero Bassetti, President of Globus et Locus, underlined how the emergence of a new balance between “functional powers” (placed on a different scale than the territorial) is today increasingly made necessary by the processes of glocalization which have generated significant power shifts not only moving up and down but also transversally, placing functions at the center of the matter. The emergency caused by the global spread of Covid-19 in 2020 has shown in a dramatic way how the traditionally defined (territorial) institutional and political spheres are in a state of crisis. This has affected their capacity to manage many of the complex problems caused by the health emergency and by the extreme mobility of people, things and information. In order to act effectively in this new scenario of a high-speed society, “glocal” policies and strategies are needed. Both territorial and functional institutions (Chambers of Commerce, universities and research centers, interest groups, foundations of banking origin, etc.) are increasingly called to play a key role in building new processes of governance and policy planning open to the dialectic of interests and values based on the knowledge and new social practices that find their expression in urban zones, intermediate territories and in the polyarchic relationships shared between them.

In the following debate, all stakeholders underlined the exceptional economic strength of the Milano-Bologna area, thanks to the strong presence of activity in advanced services and businesses distinctly oriented to exportation and recognized the presence in that system of interesting spaces for exchanges of best practices and for strategic collaboration, in many functional areas including logistics, agri-food, research, and health. Given the strong information exchanges between the stakeholders of each economic function and the existence of many professional networks and cooperation projects involving actors from different cities and territories of the area, the stakeholders of the economic and innovation systems already have a “vision” of the Milano-Bologna system, and they are working with each other even without a suitable institutional framework. All stakeholders recognize the importance of the metropolitan areas of Milano and Bologna as attractors and generators of long-range networks, but they also agree that the short-range networks with medium cities also define the system’s competitiveness.

The debate underlined the potential for the development of many economic functions in the Milano-Bologna area, and identified the actors who are -or could be the main drivers for the integration and innovation of economic activities in the system:

- The **Chambers of commerce** of the area play a crucial role, acting in concert to team up resources and local capacities to create additional value: an objective that requires coordinated support on

the part of local institutions, surpassing administrative boundaries to tackle common problems and putting people, institutions and knowledge of different territories, sectors and area in contact with each other.

- Also, the **cooperation between industrial associations** in the Milano-Bologna area grew in recent years, due to the recognition that administrative borders are increasingly less efficient in portraying the organizational dimensions of industrial entities and that the area must be governed as a “polycentric regional system”. The system relating to Confindustria (the General Confederation of Italian Industry) has activated a form of coordination between its different sections in all the Italian metropolitan cities, the industrial associations of Bologna, Modena and Ferrara merged in a single institution, and Assolombarda (the confederation of Industrial Associations in Lombardia) has put in place a reform of its own perimeter and dimension, extending itself from Milano also to include Brianza, Lodi, and Pavia: the association’s goal is to be able to approach trans-territorial dynamics such as the organization of value chains and logistics networks by intervening on an adequate scale.
- An important driver of innovation in the Milano-Bologna system is the high concentration of mechanics companies concentrated on export, essential universities, research, and technologic institutes: all components of a **platform for research and innovation** that must play a leading role not only at the regional level, both also in Italian and European growth. Technologic institutes in the area (including the new supercomputer center in Bologna, the computing centers in Pavia, the Human Technopole in Milano, Fondazione CNAO in Pavia, the Piacenza Technopole, etc.) are looking for possible synergies between them and with local enterprises to reinforce the research network and to support digital and green innovation in business, productive systems, and urban systems.
- The presence in the Milano-Bologna area of three out of four of the most prominent Italian **multi-utility providers** brought high-quality services and to a level of investment far superior to the national average, creating a positive impact in terms of new job opportunities, development of new industries, networks with universities. The different players have taken similar routes resulting in a synergy of shared aims. For the future, they are orienting themselves towards strategies for digitalization, network resilience (to cope with unexpected emergencies such as those defined by climate change), sustainability (reduction of the carbon footprint, circular economy).
- The **crucial role of logistics** (with the presence of numerous centers of primary importance between Milano and Bologna) has been underlined: Milano and Bologna are linked by intense flows of people (increased by trains) and goods, and the area concentrates 50% of the total amount of logistic properties in Italy. The attractiveness of this area for global operators is also due to the presence of entities like the Interporto (freight hub) of Bologna, which can operate as an incubator and engine of growth mediating between companies, logistics operators and local entities: a model that should be copied in other logistics hubs in the macro-region.

During the discussion, the participants also recognized the presence of bottlenecks and obstacles to the integration and development of economic functions in the Milano-Bologna area:

- In the system, the **fragmentation of the governance of economic functions** in different regions and provinces produces disorder and competition, impacting the competitiveness of companies in international markets. In recent years, incomplete or inefficient reforms created incoherent territorial amalgamations of economic relationships without reducing fragmentation, while Regions are not working together to tackle common challenges. An integrated approach to the innovation of economic functions, shared by local and regional institutions, must be developed to avoid the risk that smaller cities (who can take on an important role in the larger geographical region) are placed in the shadow of large metropolitan areas, but also to enforce the role of the Milano-Bologna system as the globalization platform for the macro-region of Northern Italy
- **Dialogue and cooperation between small businesses, the academic world and research actors need to be enforced.** Research networks of Lombardia and Emilia-Romagna are not exchanging information and contacts, limiting their capacity to produce alliances that can compete in the European scenario. Digitalization will have an important role in this. Still, it is also necessary to find forms of governance that allow for developing a shared vision oriented to the medium-long term.
- The main **obstacles to the innovation of utilities** are those arising from the fragmentation of territories (with a larger size, there could be greater efficiency) and from the slowness and

complexity of authorization for construction of industrial plants which, in turn, causes a massive delay in the diffusion and effectiveness of new technologies.

- There is a **need for a more vigorous dialogue between the worlds of logistics and institutions** governed by different logics and rhythms: the rigidity of institutional assets does not allow for the upgrades of infrastructure systems that would be necessary to accompany the change of economic geographies. Logistics systems require rational and concentrated strategies: the presence of many uncoordinated freight hubs in the area makes it impossible to reach the critical mass needed to make rail service affordable, thus reducing the environmental impact of logistics. There is a need to concentrate public funds and private investments on a few centers capable of operating on the European scale: this problem needs to be addressed by the Chambers of commerce and by local and regional governments.
- Infrastructural problems also afflict mobility and logistics systems: the connection to trans-regional networks is particularly difficult for “border” territories like Piacenza (where many important logistic centers are situated) and Pavia. Whose accessibility needs are rarely considered by both Lombardia and Emilia-Romagna Regional Authorities. There are also some infrastructure bottlenecks (firstly about the bridges over the Po and Ticino rivers) that need to be solved, otherwise, the distance between more accessible territories and those least served will continue to grow.

The focus group and the interviews described a regional system in which stakeholders who play a role in the economic functions (Chambers of Commerce, industrial associations, research centers, etc.) inter-relate with each other even without the guidance and support of institutions. This type of activism among private operators is a harbinger of a new way of governing the territory’s development. Neither an “optimal size” nor “optimal shape” emerges to manage the Milano-Bologna system: it is necessary to work on variable geometries to intervene on the different functions, enhancing both the role of the two metropolitan centers as well as the medium-size cities.

There are already projects in process on a large scale: all the stakeholders are rethinking their functions, seeking to reposition themselves to work in new spaces and within new networks. Of strategic importance are the relationships between the metropolitan cities and their production systems and value chains, just as the possible collaborations and the spreading of best practices are essential between the stakeholders of different sectors. What is still missing is a systemic vision that brings together private stakeholders with institutions, avoiding imbalances between territories and building economies of scale. Such a shared vision is blocked by different decision-making rhythms, asymmetric information, localism (small-town thinking), but also by infrastructure problems limiting the accessibility of secondary centers and marginal areas.

1.2.2 Summary of the main results of the Focus Group on the territorial functions (November 10th, 2020)

The second focus group, held online on Microsoft Teams on November 10th, 2020, has been dedicated to debating the territorial functions in the Milano-Bologna area. The discussion has been introduced by Piero Bassetti (Globus et Locus) and Piera Petrucci (ESPON) and moderated by Paolo Perulli (Globus et Locus). Fabio Rugge (University of Pavia) took the role of discussant to summarize the results of the discussion. The focus group included 16 stakeholders of the Milano-Bologna area, representatives of metropolitan cities, provinces, the association of municipalities of Lombardia, the two regions, the Po river authority, universities, and foundations of banking origin. 5 stakeholders, some of whom were unable to attend the focus group, were interviewed to gather their opinions on the same topics discussed during the meeting.

The focus group session was opened by Piero Bassetti, President of Globus et Locus, who highlighted how the capacity of local institutions to manage many of the complex problems caused by the health emergency and by the extreme mobility of people, things and information is limited by administrative fragmentation: in this scenario, local and metropolitan governments are called to play a crucial role in building new processes of governance and policy planning, open to the debate of interests and based on the knowledge and new social practices that find their expression in urban zones, intermediate territories and in the polyarchic relationships shared between them.

The debate highlighted existing and possible collaborations between stakeholders for the regulation of shared problems regarding territorial functions of the Milano-Bologna area:

- In the institutional scenario, the **Metropolitan cities** (“Città metropolitane”) of Milano and Bologna **are actively involved in the government of the dynamics of the enlarged city**: they are evolving their role, from “keepers” to “manager” of the urban environment. Metropolitan areas are working

on the same problems (mobility, land use, urban regeneration, territorial equalization) and they are already exchanging best practices and starting collaborations. Those programs could be extended at a larger scale, encompassing other territories in the Milano-Bologna region in order to regulate territorial issues that are extended beyond metropolitan boundaries: from commuting to land use and public services. Metropolitan Cities also have a relevant role of metropolitan cities in promoting territorial cohesion: both metropolitan bodies are developing experimentations of fiscal compensation aiming at supporting territorial cohesion strategies.

- The stakeholders agreed that an important issue in the Milano-Bologna area is integrating **the natural system and the urban system**. The Covid-19 pandemic has proven this area to be particularly weak, because it is not resilient in the face of unexpected events. An integrated vision of the Milano-Bologna area should consider the system not only as a large metropolitan region but also as a large urban bioregion, in which to investigate the possibilities of integration between natural and anthropic systems, leading in the direction of greater sustainability, to ultimately ensure the quality of the environment and greater resilience of the territories. The Po River Basin Authority is a key agent in these processes and is organizing collaborations that cross administrative boundaries, involving small municipalities sharing common problems regarding the management of natural resources, environmental security and economic development: the challenge is to mend the rips created by anthropic pressures that have impoverished the environmental system in order to build a correct architecture which allows for the regeneration of territories surrounding the river.
- **Foundations of banking origin can have a crucial role in integrating the system:** they have the vision and the resources needed to activate experimental projects of trans-regional cooperation involving local public and private actors. Fondazione Cariplo and Fondazione del Monte di Bologna e Ravenna volunteered to help the Milano-Bologna system activate experimental bottom-up projects of transregional cooperation that public actors cannot pursue in order to reduce inequalities between territories and to organize common paths for environmental protection and economic development.

During the discussion, the participants also recognized the presence of bottlenecks and obstacles to the integration of territorial functions in the Milano-Bologna area:

- All stakeholders highlighted the **problems caused by administrative fragmentation**. Despite recent institutional reforms, the boundaries within which the regulations of territorial systems are built have remained the same: many topics are dealt with on the municipal level even when they extend to the metropolitan level: mobility, logistics, education, tourism, and environmental protection. Moreover, institutional assets tend to pre-empt the possibility of developing forms of integrated planning on the supra-regional level, making it very hard to define regulatory dimensions that are more in line with the organizational spaces of economy and society. Many experiences of trans-territorial collaboration emerged between Milano and Bologna, but spontaneously and voluntarily, outside of the rigidities of institutional frames. In the absence of a suitable institutional framework for trans-territorial governance, in order to create a vision on a broader scale on themes connected to the common good, on which urban areas and suburban areas often have different priorities, the debate should be extended to include not only researchers and decision-makers but also entrepreneurs, civil society, citizens: with activity such as conventions, conferences, meeting and publications.
- **The role of medium-sized cities** in the regional scenario needs to be recognized and enforced. Medium-sized cities are affected by the growing attractivity of the metropolitan areas: Milano and Bologna have recently experienced significant growth, but at the same time, the intermediate cities along the axis have expressed a slower dynamic. The challenge for the future will be that of trying to find a way to redistribute development, reducing the imbalance between territories, before competitive advantages still available in smaller center are consumed by the competition of the two larger cities. Border territories like Pavia and Piacenza require an approach transcending administrative boundaries between the two regions to improve and innovate mobility and logistics systems and realize efficient policies for territorial planification and protection of the environment. All stakeholders agreed that the competitiveness of these actors is to be enforced and supported to grant the replication of polycentricity that is an essential element of competitiveness of the Milano-Bologna system.
- Another relevant issue in territorial integration and equalization is **the fragility of small municipalities**, where an absence of technical skill in the public administration severely limits the ability to understand and implement the aims set by regional and European programming and to insert its

own planning within the frame of a system covering a vast area. There is a strong need for forms of communication and diffusion capable of transferring the results of debates on the Milano-Bologna area even to the smaller municipalities.

The focus group and the interviews highlighted the need to develop (with the involvement of local stakeholders) a coherent and workable vision of the Milano-Bologna system in the face of the national government's apparent slowness in addressing the issues of the territories' government. This vision should not only define a program to integrate urban and environmental functions in the area, including middle-sized cities and small municipalities. Still, it should also build a subjectivity of the territorial system, helping stakeholders and local actors to develop a sense of sharing and belonging, which is a prerequisite for a greater density of collaboration towards common goals. Creating a sense of territorial identity will also allow the Milano-Bologna system to dialogue with public institutions at the national and European levels as a single entity. The experiments of bottom-up governance proposed by Metropolitan cities, by the Po river Authority and by the foundations of banking origin could be the seed of a different type of politics, based on a peer-to-peer negotiation between public and private actors, inspiring similar actions in other European regions.

1.3 Regional Portrait Workshop

Friday 13 November 2020, 9h30-13h30

Venue: online meeting on Teams due to the COVID-19 pandemic

1.3.1 Agenda

9h30 **Welcome and brief introduction**

Livia D'Anna (Globus et Locus) and Valeria Fedeli (Politecnico di Milano)

9h45 **Presentation of the Regional Portrait on the major economic and socio-spatial dynamics of Milano-Bologna region**

Valeria Fedeli, Francesco Curci, Fabio Manfredini, Ilaria Mariotti and Paolo Beria (Politecnico di Milano)

10h45 **Open Discussion with the project stakeholders about the Regional Portrait.**

Main questions:

Are there in your experience, at both local and European level, examples and cases that can validate/discuss the portrait presented?

What kind of data series can eventually complement the regional portrait?

What are the key factors playing against the construction of a regional imaginary and narrative (e.g. polarization factors, concentration of resources, persistence of sub-regional competition, etc.)?

Moderator: Michelangelo Secchi (Politecnico di Milano)

11h45 *Break*

12h00 **Updates on the focus groups with the functional and territorial actors of Milano-Bologna region**

Paolo Perulli and Luca Garavaglia (Globus et Locus)

12h30 **Discussion with the project stakeholders about the feedback from the focus groups**

Moderator: Livia D'Anna (Globus et Locus)

13h00 **Conclusions and next steps**

13h30 **End of the meeting**

1.3.2 List of Participants

1.	Silvia	Ballabio	Città Metropolitana di Milano
2.	Paolo	Beria	Politecnico di Milano
3.	Carlo	Berizzi	Associazione Interessi Metropolitan
4.	Silvia	Bernardi	Città Metropolitana di Bologna
5.	Isabella Susi	Botto	Città Metropolitana di Milano
6.	Henk	Bouwman	METREX
7.	Paolo	Bozzuto	Politecnico di Milano
8.	Martina	Busti	Sciences Po
9.	Luigi	Carboni	Politecnico di Milano
10.	Marco	Cremaschi	Sciences Po (FR)
11.	Francesco	Curci	Politecnico di Milano
12.	Andrzej	Czajkowski	City of Warsaw
13.	Livia	D'Anna	Globus et locus
14.	Dante	Di Matteo	Politecnico di Milano
15.	Valeria	Fedeli	Politecnico di Milano
16.	Luca	Garavaglia	Globus et Locus
17.	Marianna	Laino	Milano Metropolitan City
18.	Vhardman	Lunkar	Politecnico di Milano
19.	Fabio	Manfredini	Politecnico di Milano
20.	Ilaria	Mariotti	Politecnico di Milano
21.	Aurore	Meyfroidt	POPSU
22.	Paolo	Perulli	Globus et Locus
23.	Piera	Petruzzi	ESPON EGTC
24.	Federica	Rossi	Politecnico di Milano
25.	Michelangelo	Secchi	Politecnico di Milano
26.	Francesco	Selmi	Città Metropolitana di Bologna
27.	Vittorio	Silva	Provincia di Piacenza

1.3.3 Report

Welcome and brief introduction

Livia D'Anna (Globus et Locus) starts the meeting, welcomes all the participants, and reminds the workshop's agenda. D'Anna recalls the objective of the meeting, which is the second of the three Regional Workshops dedicated to IMAGINE Project stakeholders. The first part of the meeting is devoted to presenting the first results from the data analysis carried out by Politecnico di Milano on the Regional Portrait (Task 2.1), focusing on the representation of the major economic and socio-spatial dynamics of the Milano-Bologna urban region. The second part of the seminar focuses on presenting the first feedback received from the two focus groups with representatives of the economic and territorial actors of the Milano-Bologna urban region, that Globus et Locus has organized on November 5th and 10th, 2020.

D'Anna gives the floor to **Valeria Fedeli (Politecnico di Milano)**, who illustrates the objectives of the Regional Portrait presentation: introducing the main research hypothesis of the Regional Portrait; presenting and discussing the first analytical results; providing a preview of the Visual Platform. Fedeli underlines that the data and the maps included in this presentation are still undergoing review and validation processes. A consolidated version of the maps presented will be included in the interim report of IMAGINE.

The presentation of the Regional Portrait has been organized in seven sections corresponding to the following questions:

- 1) What makes the region? Which stock data should be analyzed to comprehend its complexity? What kind of urban region are we talking about?
- 2) Living like a region? Which are the relevant practices and experiences at the regional dimension?
- 3) High-speed rail infrastructure as "regionalization machine"? The role of HSR in terms of the dynamics involved.
- 4) HSR: a relational and highly interconnected space? The regional and urban areas as highly interconnected spaces.
- 5) Acting/Seeing like a region? The fifth section introduces the role of the institutional powers, trying to map them from a quantitative and qualitative point of view.
- 6) Growing like a region? A focus on the resources available for cooperative actions.
- 7) Against the region? The last section focuses on the contrary trends. What works against the regionalization? Which factors increase inequalities?

In her introduction, Valeria Fedeli describes the researchers' approach to the Regional portrait, based on the role of infrastructures in the re-shaping of urban and regional space. In this respect, the regional portrait does not take for granted that Milano-Bologna is an urban region, but it explores empirically the corridor main features and characteristics, looking for emerging signals of functional urban integration. It aims at exploring the relationship between the infrastructure and the process of regionalization, focusing on the role of high-speed trains. Among the main stock data analyzed, the most interesting elements refer to: the hydro-morphological elements influencing the urban structure; the unique population and density context; the highly-structured corridor, with a key role of HSR (even if the data are only updated to the last census available); the high concentration of business functions, plus a strategic presence of universities, research centers and cultural institutions.

The urban region has also been mapped in relation to the "bio region" that is behind the urban pattern. Looking at the maps, there are two visible subsystems separated by a discontinuity area around the PO area, each one with different internal hierarchies: the Milano urban region on one side and the multipolar system of cities along the via Emilia. Analyzing more in-depth the Corridor statistical domains, the researchers have identified a first 15 kilometers buffer and a second buffer of 30 kilometers, and then a larger shape that includes some territories considered important in terms of relationship with the HSR corridor. All the data have been organized through this 15 - 30 km range and larger areas, to compare them with a larger regional and national overview. Fedeli underlines some aspects of demography and economy, describing the Milano-Bologna area as a dense and diffused urban space (13 million people living in the 30 km buffer and 5 million in the 15 km buffer) intense concentration of business services activities. A highly polycentric urban region, with two metropolitan areas and many important medium-sized cities, and a strong

concentration of industrial districts in the northern part of the corridor, especially in agri-food sector and mechatronics, etc.

Fedeli gives the floor to **Paolo Beria (Politecnico di Milano)** to present the focus on the mobility pattern of the area, where basically three mobility “systems” can be detected: a) the Milano urban region, including the provinces of Pavia, Lodi and Cremona; b) the Parma-Bologna polycentric system, made of longitudinal relations between cities and local networks between each city and its province; c) the Piacenza territory, that represents an in-between space.

These systems are evident looking at the daily mobility index, which is very intense. As for the work mobility, Milano acts as a magnet, while there is discontinuity along the axis of Emilia Romagna, that is more polycentric. The pattern of mobility talks about the regional dimension, but there are also significant inter-regional flows, regarding in particular Milano and Bologna. The cities of the corridor, which are essential attractors, are not so strong in terms of net generation. According to Beria, this could represent an indirect element suggesting the importance of interconnections of the area. The three systems can also be observed analyzing commuting flows. Milano is like a Hoover attracting trips from a large area. The corridor system, from Parma southwards, and Piacenza in the middle, more connected with Milano than with the rest of its region. Comparing this corridor with the other corridor of Northern Italy, the one extended from Milano to Venice, in the Milano-Bologna region, flows are mainly along the corridor, while in Veneto, the network structure is more evident also in the mobility patterns. In terms of the data available, Beria underlines the limits of the 2011 census matrix. For this reason, Politecnico di Milano also uses a simulated matrix updated to 2018 and includes occasional trips (business, personal purpose, leisure). The scale is a bit different, but a very similar structure of mobility can be observed. On the provincial scale, an alternative source is constituted by a matrix of Facebook movements, which refers to January and February 2020 real flows and presents the same feeling of the three systems of relations.

The presentation also focuses on the role of HSR in the regionalization of the area. The historical corridor, that follows the ancient via Emilia path has been reinforced in 2008 by the opening of the high-speed railway between Milano and Bologna, as part of the national backbone that has been completed in 2009. The opening was the occasion for Trenitalia for a change of philosophy of its fast services, introducing the brand “LeFrecce”, including all high speed and conventional trains working on a market basis. The high-speed lines were the battlefield of competition between two operators, NTV/Italo and Trenitalia (quite a unique case of direct competition between two operators in the high-speed segment). The competition increased the services and their quality and decreased prices, changing the perception of HSR and making it more attractive compared to domestic flights. The Milano-Bologna segment is one of the most crowded sections of the network. The interconnection is reflected in the relative concentration along the corridor of international flows of people, capitals, and goods. As a result of the combination of urban structure, population density and transportation services, nowadays, the Milano-Bologna Region can be considered by far one of the most accessible and interconnected regions in Italy and Europe. On the other side, as most of the offer has been concentrated on the high-speed line, many long-distance services left the conventional line and, consequently, intermediate cities were marginalized from the national network. The higher connectivity is also producing unintended effects on many places that are along the corridor. These places and their inhabitants may not fully benefit from urban centrality (economic development, access to services, comprehensive infrastructure support). Yet they are still impacted by the negative effects of regionalization processes (traffic congestion, air pollution, etc.).

Institutional fragmentation is another important and challenging issue in the Milano-Bologna region. The region is governed by many public authorities with various bodies and agencies, with different competencies and different institutional capacity, and responding to a variable geometry of constituencies. There are different patterns of administrative subdivision in the region: strong fragmentation with numerous small municipalities in south Lombardy, while in Emilia experiments of coordination and unions between municipalities have been fostered by regional legislation (Lombardy has promoted similar experiments only in inner areas and mountain areas). The issue of institutional fragmentation will be deeply analyzed in the development of Imagine Project, in terms of threat to territorial cohesion.

In the last part of the Regional Portrait presentation, **Luigi Carboni (Politecnico di Milano)** illustrates the visual platform created by the research team, an essential tool to produce maps and elaboration of territorial data. Carboni introduces two new devices made by the research group: the IMAGINE visual dashboard and the IMAGINE Webapp. The Visual Platform allows visualizing and carry-on deeper analysis of the indicators and data. The Dashboard allows to visualize specific indicators and interact with the map and indicators via

actions and selectors. The Visual Platform represents an essential tool of the IMAGINE Project and a basis for constructing a common vision of the Milano-Bologna region.

After the presentation, **Michelangelo Secchi (Politecnico di Milano)** introduces the discussion opening the floor to the stakeholders' comments. He reminds the open questions that have been anticipated to the project stakeholders to spark the discussion:

- Are there in your experience, at both local and European level, examples and cases that can validate/discuss the portrait presented in the Regional portrait?
- What kind of data series can eventually complement the Regional portrait?
- What are the key factors playing against constructing a regional imaginary and narrative (e.g., polarization factors, the concentration of resources, persistence of sub-regional competition, etc.)?

Henk Bouwman (Metrex) raises a question about the link between HSR and its embedment in the regional networks, wondering if a good integration between the two systems might influence the number of people using HSR, generating convenience in using high speed compared to air travels, and if so, how to measure it. Beria specifies that the researchers will measure these aspects in the development of the accessibility index, which will be based on a transport model that also includes interconnections. Bouwman also underlines the interest in promoting exchange moments between similar projects, such as the corridor study on the Eurodelta Area. He suggests that also the Rhine Alpine Corridor could be explored on comparative elements. **Silvia Bernardi (Metropolitan City of Bologna)** particularly appreciated the presentation's density of visualizations and data.

Regarding the integration of the regional portrait, Bernardi indicates that the Metropolitan City of Bologna can provide updated information on the unions of municipalities. Concerning the cooperation between the metropolitan cities and the municipalities surrounding them, **Andrzej Czajkowski (City of Warsaw)** wonders why this cooperation seems to work better in Bologna than in Milano. This could be interesting for the area of Warsaw, which is working to extend its collaboration with the surrounding municipalities. Inter-municipal cooperation is an essential element for discussing how regional governance could be the result of the construction of alliances within different kinds of local cooperation structures. Fedeli agrees with Czajkowski that this is a crucial issue to explain the difference between Lombardy and Emilia-Romagna. Emilia-Romagna has invested a lot in cooperation between municipalities and the funds dedicated to supporting inter-municipal cooperation have been stable, while in Lombardia this investment has been more fragmented.

Piera Petruzzi (ESPON) remarks the importance to represent the role of the region in the European context. The comparison of the Milano-Bologna system with other European urban regions, both in terms of data and visualization, could be very useful for the project stakeholders and for additional metropolitan areas in Europe. In this respect, **Fedeli** highlights the need to reflect carefully on a better strategy to compare what happens in Italy along the Milano-Bologna corridor, and what is happening at a wider European scale. Rather than directly comparing data that sometimes are not comparable (because we miss the same kind of database), researchers can try to work on the secondary literature, for example, studying the results of other ESPON Projects. METREX offered the IMAGINE team the opportunity to discuss these issues in an exchange meeting on Connected Europe in the first week of December. It will be the opportunity to look at data from different perspectives and observe what others do in similar cases.

After a short break, **Luca Garavaglia (Globus et Locus)** introduces the second part of the workshop focusing on the main results of the two focus groups held on November 5th and 10th with economic and territorial actors of Milano-Bologna corridor. In order to organize an extended debate on respectively territorial and economic functions, a lot of work has been done to involve high-level representatives of the main institutional and economic actors of the region, with the result of extensive participation in both meetings. Garavaglia summarizes the most important results obtained during the sessions. In each focus group, the participants have been asked: a) to explain their "vision" of the Milano-Bologna wide-area territorial system; b) to describe the active or planned projects concerning this system or parts of it; c) to mention the strategic collaborations with other stakeholders and institutional subjects; d) to discuss the obstacles or problems to the regulation of the functions that are organized at a trans-territorial level in the Milano-Bologna system.

The first meeting included representatives of the chambers of commerce of the area, the industrial associations, a multiutility provider and some important logistics operators, and the technopoles of Milano and Bologna. All of them underlined the exceptional economic strength of the Milano-Bologna system. What emerged is that there are exciting spaces for exchanges of best practices and strategic collaboration, especially in logistics, agri-food, research, and health. The economic and innovation systems stakeholders

already have a “vision” of the Milano-Bologna system, and they are working with each other even without a suitable institutional framework. Milano and Bologna are attractors and generators of long-range networks, but the system’s competitiveness is also defined by the short-range networks with medium cities. As for the utilities, the competition between providers produced a high quality of the offer. In the logistics function, the strong concentration of logistics activities creates some obstacles to integrating the two metropolitan systems (regarding in particular, train connections).

The second focus group involved representatives of many local institutions, metropolitan cities, provinces, the association of municipalities of Lombardy, the two regions, the Po river authority, universities and bank foundations (Fondazione Cariplo and Fondazione del Monte di Bologna e Ravenna). This focus group highlighted the active role that the metropolitan cities are taking in the government of the dynamics of the enlarged city (from «keepers» to «managers»). Metropolitan areas are working on the same problems (mobility, land use, urban regeneration) and they are already exchanging best practices and starting collaborations. This is not so true for the medium-sized cities. They have an important role in the system, but they seem affected by the growing attractiveness of the metropolitan areas in the territorial scenario. All stakeholders agreed that the competitiveness of these actors is to be enforced and supported to grant the replication of polycentricity that is an important element of the competitiveness of the Milano-Bologna system. Another important topic that has been discussed is the role of the natural system and its integration in the urban system. The Po River Basin Authority is a critical agent in these processes and is organizing collaboration networks crossing administrative boundaries. A significant contribution to the debate has also come from the bank foundations that can have a crucial role in integrating the system: they have the vision and the resources needed to activate experimental projects of trans-regional cooperation involving local public and private actors. They volunteered to help the Milano-Bologna system starting practical projects of transregional cooperation involving local public and private actors. This aspect should be taken into consideration in the evolution of the project.

Garavaglia finally summarizes the main obstacles that have emerged. On the one hand, many metropolitan issues are still governed at the municipal level (mobility, logistics, ecosystem services, tourism, education, etc.). On the other hand, the differences between regional rules and strategies are an obstacle to territorial integration. With reference to the risk of growing inequalities, it has been underlined the need to recognize the role of medium-sized cities and small municipalities and the importance of sharing information with small municipalities, providing them with the knowledge needed to develop a wider vision and organize integrated projects. The next steps in the participation process will be the inclusion of other economic and social actors of the Milano-Bologna area who did not participate in the two focus groups: this process will continue with the organization of interviews of the enlarged list of actors that will be invited to participate at the 2021 IMAGINE seminars.

After Garavaglia’s presentation, Livia D’Anna opens the discussion with the participants.

According to **Piera Petruzzi**, who represented ESPON in the two focus groups, the meetings have been well organized and the debate was fascinating. She was impressed positively by the quality of contribution and the concept of institutional innovation raised in the second meeting. According to Petruzzi, this concept can be related not only to the meeting participants or IMAGINE stakeholders, but it can also be experienced in other Targeted Analysis. She takes the example of METRO Targeted Analysis, which deals with metropolitan areas trying to find their role in the future EU cohesion policy, both at the national and European level. ESPON is supporting them in finding their voice in essential debates at both levels. Petruzzi was also impressed by one of the conclusions by the President of Globus et Locus, Piero Bassetti, asking provocatively to which governmental organization the stakeholders of the Milano-Bologna region need to address to find new forms of cooperation. **Henk Bouwman** adds that the STISE project can be observed similar needs and questions. Bowman suggests that it would be interesting to organize a discussion about the aspects related to common identity and intangible elements, either inside or outside the IMAGINE project. According to **Paolo Perulli (Globus et Locus)** the message from the two focus groups can be summarized in need for a new form of governmentality. The private actors have a vision of integration that is often higher than the institutional ones in relation to cooperation and competition. **Isabella Susi Botto (Metropolitan city of Milano)** agrees on the importance of the bottom-up approach. During the focus group on territorial functions, many interesting ideas come up, such as the need to include small municipalities and private stakeholders in the debate about the strategies for the development of the Milano-Bologna region, and to define innovative models of inclusive governance in which those actors could play a crucial role.

Fedeli shares the impression that IMAGINE project is creating opportunities for building relationships between different projects supported by ESPON, fostering exchanges between the different networks that are behind these projects.

D'Anna and Fedeli thanks all the participants for their precious contributions to the debate and to the development of the project.

1.4 Regional Forum “Milano-Bologna Region: Scenarios and Perspectives”

Thursday 21 January 2021, 10h00-13h30

Venue: online meeting on Zoom due to the COVID-19 pandemic

1.4.1 Agenda

Opening session (plenary) 10h00 - 10h45

Welcome and brief introduction:

Piera Petruzzi (ESPON), Valeria Fedeli (Politecnico di Milano)

ESPON IMAGINE Regional Portrait and Visual Platform presentation

Valeria Fedeli (Politecnico di Milano)

Parallel sessions 10h45 - 12h15:

Structure of the sessions: presentation of a selection of maps and views of the IMAGINE Regional Portrait and Visual platform and discussion on the main topics for each session.

1) Acting like a region. The institutional context and the construction of forms of institutional innovation: opportunities and obstacles

Participants: capital and metropolitan cities, provinces, regions, associations of municipalities, banking foundations, territorial bodies, etc.

2) A competitive and interconnected region: the role of networks and economic functions in a regionalization scenario

Participants: chambers of commerce, entrepreneurial associations, utilities, infrastructure, logistics, etc.

3) Universities and research and innovation centers: alliances and networks in a glocal perspective

Participants: universities, research centers, technopoles

Final session (plenary) 12h15 – 13h30

Summary of the parallel sessions by the moderators: *Valeria Fedeli (Politecnico di Milano), Lanfranco Senn (Università Bocconi), Fabio Rugge (Università di Pavia)*

Conclusions:

Piera Petruzzi (ESPON EGTC), Arianna Censi and Isabella Susi Botto (Città Metropolitana di Milano), Piero Bassetti (Globus et Locus)

1.4.2 List of Participants

Session 1: **Acting like a region. The institutional context and the construction of forms of institutional innovation: opportunities and obstacles**

Metropolitan cities and provinces (ESPON IMAGINE project stakeholders)	Città Metropolitana di Milano
	Città Metropolitana di Bologna
	Provincia di Piacenza
	AIM – Associazione Interessi Metropolitan
Municipalities	Comune di Milano
	Comune di Bologna
	ANCI Lombardia
	ANCI Emilia-Romagna
Regions	Regione Lombardia
	Regione Emilia Romagna
River authorities	Autorità di Bacino del Po
Foundations of banking origin	Fondazione Cariplo
	Fondazione del Monte di Bologna e Ravenna

Session 2: **A competitive and interconnected region: the role of networks and economic functions in a regionalization scenario**

Chambers of commerce	Camera di Commercio Milano –MonzaBrianza-Lodi
	Camera di Commercio Bologna
	Camera di Commercio Piacenza
	Camera di Commercio Pavia
	Unioncamere Lombardia
	Innovhub
Industrial associations	Assolombarda
	Confindustria Emilia Area Centro
	Confindustria Piacenza
	Confindustria Pavia
Economic actors	Utilities: HERA
	Logistics: interporto di Bologna
	Logistics: Polo logistico di Castel S.Giovanni
	Mobility: Trenord
	Representatives of Fashion, advertising, and retail sectors

Session.3: **Universities and research and innovation centers: alliances and networks in a global perspective**

Universities	Politecnico di Milano
	Università Cattolica Piacenza
	Università di Pavia e Fond. Romagnosi
	Univ. di Modena e Reggio
	Tecnopolo Bologna IFAB
Technopoles and research centers	Human Technopole Milano
	Tecnopolo di Piacenza
	CNAO Pavia
	Esri Italia

ESPON IMAGINE team and experts

IMAGINE Team	ESPON EGTC	Piera Petrucci
	Politecnico di Milano	Sandro Balducci

		Valeria Fedeli Ilaria Mariotti Paolo Beria Michelangelo Secchi Francesco Curci Luigi Carboni Fabio Manfredinii
	Globus et Locus	Piero Bassetti Paolo Perulli Livia D'Anna Luca Garavaglia Francesco Galli Vincenzo Politano
Experts / discus- sants		Fabio Ruggie (Università di Pavia) Lanfranco Senn Università Bocconi)

1.4.3 Executive Summary

The Regional Forum, “*The Milano-Bologna Region: Scenarios and Perspectives*”, was held online via Zoom on January 21st, 2021 as part of the ESPON "IMAGINE" project and saw the participation of 65 stakeholders from 43 different organizations, including urban, metropolitan, provincial and regional authorities, chambers of commerce, industrial associations, universities and research centers, foundations of banking origin, the Po river basin authority, train operating companies and logistic operators, firms belonging to the sectors of utilities, retail, fashion and advertising. Participants were asked to comment on the data and scenarios of the *Regional Portrait* developed by the IMAGINE research group in three parallel sessions respectively dedicated to the **institutional context**, the **economic networks and functions** and the **system of research and innovation**. The debate that emerged from the different thematic sessions highlighted numerous strategic issues for the development of the Milano-Bologna system:

- Institutional actors pointed out **the need to promote new forms of collaboration both inside and outside the corridor** to better govern the interdependences between cities and between territories along the Milano-Bologna axis. The “regional” dimension can be a starting point to scale up, and better use the resources made available by the Recovery Plan, surpassing the traditional forms of episodic collaboration, which favors the role of larger cities, leaving intermediate territories unprotected, so as to incorporate smaller centers, mountain areas as well as lowland areas along the Po River in a new analytical dimension.
- Many economic and institutional actors have expressed the necessity to **define a type of governance capable of facilitating the integration** between administrative rules, institutional aspects and new pieces of knowledge about territorial dynamics offered by new technologies, to support the ability of local administrations to implement policies and interventions more suited to the transformed socio-economic context and able to reduce the fragmentation between territories. Institutions located in borders zones between the two regions have emphasized the need to strengthen the dialogue and collaboration beyond administrative borders. The need to orient research towards the future has also emerged, identifying common objectives and working on the possibility of enhancing the variety and polycentrism of the corridor
- Therefore, the institutional actors should aim to develop a common culture and a systemic vision for the Milano-Bologna system, on which new alliances (and not conflicts) between public and private actors could be based. **Developing the “extrovert character” of the Milano-Bologna area:** this theme was brought up, above all, by the actors of research and innovation, who highlighted the strength of connections between the Milano-Bologna system and national, continental and global network thanks to the presence of important centers of research endowed with unique infrastructures and expertise (for example, Bologna for Big Data and Milano for life sciences). At the same time, numerous references to the topic were made by the representatives of economic functions, who emphasized a strong concentration in the area of export-oriented manufacturing activities and the evident "transversal" relationships (market and supply chain) that the Milano-Bologna axis intertwines with other urban regions of Central Northern Italy as well as with the great European

corridors. To strengthen the role of the Milano-Bologna area as a platform for access to long networks and as a node of knowledge systems, a greater internal and institutional junction needs to be found, starting from the recognition of the importance of local specializations (for example, the Piacenza province, a center of specialization in numerous strategic areas, from logistics to energy and industrial research).

- The pandemic offers the **opportunity to redefine investments and rethink institutional planning**, because, as recalled by Piera Petruzzi (ESPON), no institution can tackle this crisis and its challenges alone. The theme of the Recovery Plan emerges as an opportunity to question the type and method of investments that should be made in the area. IMAGINE can play an important role, strengthening the dialogue between researchers, stakeholders and political decision-makers.
- The relevance of the **Milano-Bologna corridor's ecological role** was underlined by various institutional actors, including bank foundations because it combines environmental, social, economic development and infrastructural issues within it. The ecological value, however, cannot be limited to the corridor alone. It is necessary to jump up in scale towards an alliance built around a broader "region", that of the Po Valley (*Pianura Padana*), one of the most polluted regions in Italy and Europe. Therefore, the importance of thinking in terms of "bioregion" has been underlined, addressing all the most pressing issues in an integrated way (health, the environment, development, etc.) and expanding the debate to include other disciplines (for example the natural sciences). The ecological character of the region is defined by the dominant presence of the Po river, a transversal axis along which environmental, tourist and infrastructural functions are organized. The value of the Po River is that of being a "hybrid" infrastructure, along with many intermediate territories and cities interacting with the Milano-Bologna axis. Much attention has also been paid to the environmental issue by multi-utilities, who have been pursuing common objectives in the fight against air pollution through the dissemination of sustainable technologies and practices.

During the discussions, the participants at the table recognized and brought to attention the presence of some critical regulatory issues and obstacles to the development of adequate forms of regulation of the urban region's dynamics:

- The **complexity of the institutional system and administrative fragmentation** make integrations between territories complex, especially for peripheral ones. This concerns the governance of territorial and economic functions, but also training and research systems. Universities and research bodies have experimented with collaborations between different territorial clusters, but the lack of coordination between the research systems of the two regions generates competition and fragmentation.
- Growing concentration of functions in Milano and Bologna threatens the **increase of territorial competition and the marginalization of some areas**, weakening a system that counts polycentrism as one of its strengths and limiting the redistributive effect of "regional" development pursue. Tendencies towards the polarization of knowledge-based functions in metropolitan areas endanger local specializations that could potentially contribute to the variety and richness of the system. Another problem is the lack of planning competencies in many local administrations: this makes small municipalities unable to understand the broader scenario and plan development actions consistent with it.
- The purpose of the high-speed railway was to speed up the connection between a few hubs along the axis. But after its activation, **the quality and frequency of local and regional rail connections have deteriorated**. To improve the capillary accessibility of the territory, it is crucial to focus on flexible services based on the demand for mobility, starting from intermodality. Regarding the road mobility system, infrastructural deficiencies (in particular the bridges over the Po River) have been brought to light. These bottlenecks limit the accessibility of some production areas and the exchanges between territories outside the central highway axis.
- Logistics operators and chambers of commerce have reiterated the need to reduce the criticalities triggered by the **logistics system's lack of regulation**: this could be done by planning logistics activities on a "macro-regional" scale. For retail services also, the absence of supra-local agreements produced sprawl, competition, congestion and environmental impact, which denote the lack of supra-local governance able to reduce zero-sum competition and negative externalities on the territory.

The President of Globus et Locus, Piero Bassetti, concluded the *Regional Forum*, highlighting the need for joint action including tools and actors within a glocal dimension. Europe induces the Milano-Bologna region to think about its role in a broader European and global context, thinking on a scale that goes beyond administrative borders to pursue objectives of a higher quality of life and competitiveness. The vision of governance of this territory should mean that in a glocal society, the problems must not only be reduced to the territorial dimension but must be taken into consideration within their intrinsic functional nature. Therefore, the system of institutions should be the bearer of these intentions and incorporate the functional orientations of the territories. The theme of improving governance, which emerged from several voices during the parallel sessions, clearly shows how a change of perspective is required in a time full of complexity. It is necessary to build a capacity for vision and governance "from the bottom" that knows how to respond to the demands of the society and the economy. In this process, an important factor is constructing a shared identity of the Milano-Bologna system that stimulates collaboration between institutions and public and private actors pointing towards common objectives without depending exclusively on initiatives from above, such as those of the Recovery Fund.

1.5 Regional Scenario Workshop

Friday 12 February 2021, 10h00-14h00

Venue: online meeting on Zoom due to the COVID-19 pandemic

1.5.1 Agenda

10h00 Welcome and brief introduction

Piera Petruzzi (ESPON EGTC)

Presentation of the agenda and methodology for the workshop

Valeria Fedeli (Politecnico di Milano)

Presentation of the three scenarios (as defined in the interim report)

Paolo Bozzuto (Politecnico di Milano)

10h20 Chart of Emotions

Mapping initial reactions to scenarios and identification of the most challenging elements from stakeholders' perspective.

10h50 Driver Mapping

Open debate. For each scenario, stakeholders will be asked to:

- identify drivers in the short-medium term
- classify them based on certainty and uncertainty
- assess the relevance to public policies at regional scale

The work will be carried out through an online brainstorming tool (miro), managed with the support of a facilitator. For each scenario, a pre-formatted matrix will be filled with post-it.

12h15 Break

12h30 Brief summary of the main outcomes of the first part of workshop (chart of emotions and diver mapping) - Valeria Fedeli/Paolo Bozzuto (Politecnico di Milano)

12h40 Toward the ITI: imagining key policies and governance frameworks

Introduction to the ITI as a possible device to integrate territorial strategies under an unique vision and imaginary - *Marco Cremaschi (Sciences Po)*

Comment on the main outcomes of the Regional Forum "The Milano – Bologna: scenarios and perspectives" - Livia D'Anna (Globus et Locus)

13h00 Open debate: participants will be requested to focus on those drivers that are more relevant for public policies, prioritize them for each scenario and discuss them in detail.

13h45 Conclusions and Next Steps

Presentation of the upcoming Regional Design workshop and Final Event
Instructions for the Scenario Workshop Report and follow up
Valeria Fedeli (Politecnico di Milano), Livia D'Anna (Globus et Locus)

14h00 End of the meeting

1.5.2 List of Participants

IMAGINE Stakeholders

1.	Isabella Susi	Botto	Città Metropolitana di Milano
2.	Silvia	Ballabio	Città Metropolitana di Milano
3.	Cinzia	Cesarini	Città Metropolitana di Milano
4.	Silvia	Bernardi	Città Metropolitana di Bologna
5.	Francesco	Selmi	Città Metropolitana di Bologna
6.	Sara	Maldina	Città Metropolitana di Bologna
7.	Francesca	Villani	Città Metropolitana di Bologna
8.	Elena	Soverini	Città Metropolitana di Bologna
9.	Monica	Mazzoni	Città Metropolitana di Bologna
10.	Licia	Nardi	Città Metropolitana di Bologna
11.	Maria Angiola	Gallingani	Città Metropolitana di Bologna
12.	Simona	Bolzoni	Comune di Cremona
13.	Carlo	Berizzi	Associazione Interessi Metropolitan
14.	Henk	Bouwman	METREX
15.	Andrzej	Czajkowski	City of Warsaw
16.	Małgorzata	Kucińska	City of Warsaw
17.	Piera	Petruzzi	ESPON EGTC

IMAGINE Research team and experts

1.	Paolo	Bozzuto	Politecnico di Milano
2.	Martina	Busti	Sciences Po
3.	Luigi	Carboni	Politecnico di Milano
4.	Marco	Cremaschi	Sciences Po
5.	Francesco	Curci	Politecnico di Milano
6.	Livia	D'Anna	Globus et locus
7.	Valeria	Fedeli	Politecnico di Milano
8.	Francesco	Galli	Globus et Locus
9.	Luca	Garavaglia	Globus et Locus
10.	Ilaria	Mariotti	Politecnico di Milano
11.	Paolo	Perulli	Politecnico di Milano
12.	Vincenzo	Politano	Globus et Locus

13. Federica	Rossi	Politecnico di Milano
14. Fabio	Rugge	Università di Pavia
15. Michelangelo	Secchi	Politecnico di Milano
16. Lanfranco	Senn	Università Bocconi

1.5.3 Executive Summary

The *Regional Scenario Workshop* was held via Zoom platform on February 12th, 2021 and saw the participation of the stakeholders supporting IMAGINE, through the representatives of the Metropolitan Cities of Milano and Bologna, the Municipality of Cremona (Comune di Cremona), the Association of the Metropolitan Interests of Milano (Associazione Interessi Metropolitan di Milano) and the European partners of the research, who discussed the scenarios and corresponding territorial implications developed by the ESPON IMAGINE research team.

The workshop aimed to validate and consolidate the scenarios of the Milano-Bologna system proposed by the research team on the basis of the analytical evidence shown in the Regional Portrait (necessary for the subsequent building of a Position Paper), and to pinpoint the most relevant questions needed to assemble a hypothesis of ITI (Integrated Territorial Investments).

The participants were asked to comment the data and scenarios from the Regional Portrait created by the IMAGINE research group in the following two sessions: in the first, an explanation of the three scenarios “of possible futures” was offered. An initial reaction was stimulated by identifying the most challenging elements of each scenario from the stakeholders' point of view. Then, the debate was opened to discuss and compare the scenarios, in the hopes of identifying the fundamental drivers for each hypothesis and the relative certainties and uncertainties. The second session introduced ITIs as policy tools that might favor the creation of the identified scenarios.

The three scenarios discussed were:

- 1. The Milano-Bologna corridor as a magnetic pipe:** the scenario envisions the permanence of the HSR Milano-Bologna as a pipe that connects the historical territorial systems: the Lombard radiocentric polycentrism (with the inclusion of Novara, in Piedmont region) having Milano at its center, and the Via Emilia's linear polycentric urban system from Rimini to Piacenza.

 - Through sustainable mobility, the corridor guarantees effective short-distance relations within each of the two territorial systems and long-distance ties to the main poles. Still, mid-distance relations are weak and, therefore, the urban potential of the intermediate poles (especially Piacenza and Cremona) decreases. Motorways and roads remain the main physical networks, vehicular traffic and pollution increase.
 - The in-between area along the river Po remains less integrated in the economic system, and gradually assumes the role of a caesura. It reinforces the bipolar structure of the corridor, and it further emphasizes the presence of the regional administrative border as a limit and an obstacle to the integration of urban policies.
 - Wealth is diffused along the corridor, but remains concentrated in the main provincial capitals, while people choose to relocate in the in-between municipalities, which provide less expensive housing opportunities, thus causing new land consumption without any positive effects on the overall territorial structure.
 - In demographic terms, the medium-sized cities along the corridor keep a crucial role as poles. Internal areas lose population and wealth; especially the areas near the Apennines suffer from slow and continuous shrinkage.
 - Logistic activities occupy intermediate locations, accessible by main infrastructures, but impact places that have limited capacities to take advantage of their presence.
 - Huge public companies substitute traditional multiutility companies in the field of energy, water, waste disposal; this allows better service provision and feeds a regional perspective but at the same time limits the capacity of institutions to orient these sectors strategically.

- Metropolitan areas play an important role at local level, with limited capacity to generate further interinstitutional alliances; intermunicipal cooperation develops intensively in the Emilia Romagna part of the corridor, while remains quite limited in Lombardia.

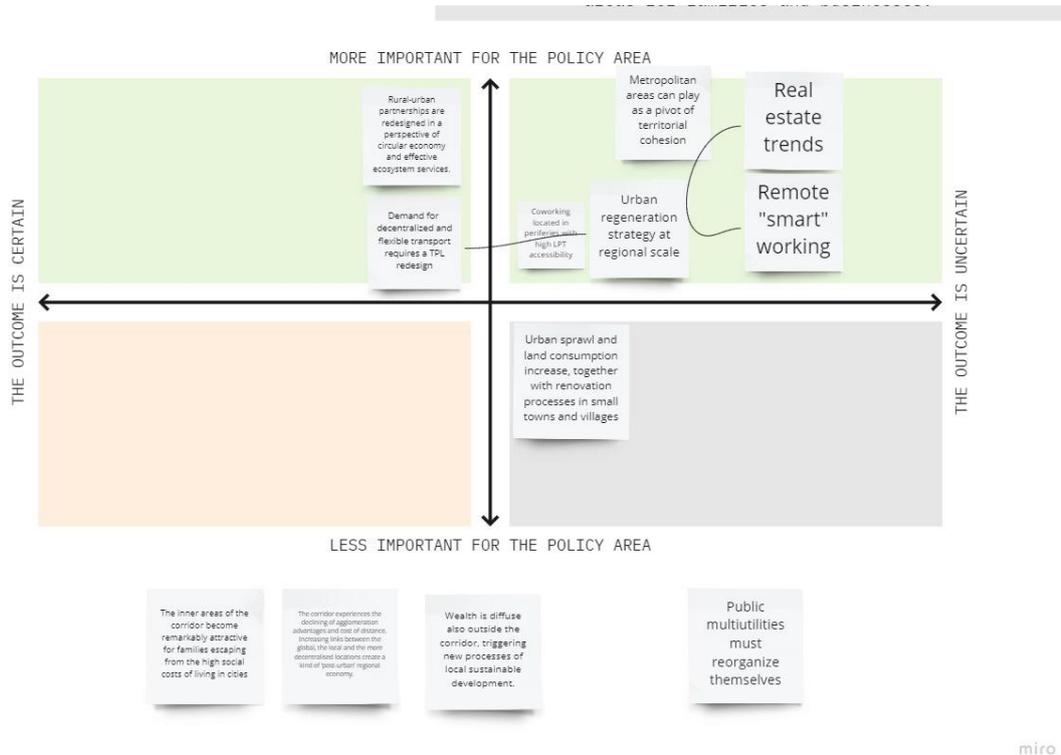


Figure 2 - Scenario 1 - Matrix used during the debate online

2. The Milano-Bologna corridor as a backbone: the scenario envisions the corridor's development into a more integrated and balanced polycentric territorial system, avoiding the polarization between regional capital cities, medium-sized cities, small towns, and inner areas.

- Through an improved integration between the regional mobility systems of Lombardia and Emilia Romagna, capable of leading to enhanced inter-regional train service and railway network (acquired through a strong and determined interaction between the main regional stakeholders and the actors of the national/regional railway systems) the corridor guarantees not only long-distance relations to the main poles but also effective mid-distance relations between the intermediate poles (especially Piacenza and Cremona). Therefore they improve in terms of urban potential.
- The inner areas of the corridor and the in-between area along the river Po, although maintaining their environmental and economic specificities, are more integrated with the corridor dynamics and attractiveness. In demographic terms, medium-size cities are complemented by intermediate poles able to reconnect the inner areas with main regional centralities.
- Wealth is diffuse along the corridor and more homogeneously localized, partially rebalancing the polarization between regional capitals and medium-sized cities. Resources are redistributed, and fiscal compensation helps to support territorial cohesion.
- Logistic activities are reorganized according to a new sectoral vision, shared by Lombardia and Emilia Romagna, to create a collaborative inter-regional multipolar logistics platform to reduce the adverse effects of logistics settlements in peri-urban areas.
- Public multiutilities become vectors of regional innovation.
- Metropolitan areas can play as a pivot of territorial cohesion; along the regional boundaries, new forms of inter-municipal cooperation become crucial for fostering a new cohesive image for the Milano-Bologna urban region.



Figure 3 - Scenario 2 - Matrix used during the debate online

3. From a corridor to a territorial platform: the scenario envisions a radical change in the corridor structure, occurring under the improved attractiveness of the Apennines foothills and rural areas for families and business companies.

- Through the wide diffusion of broadband internet networks and affordable forms of new mobility and smart logistics (autonomous vehicles and delivery drones), the corridor experiences the decline of agglomeration advantages. Increasing links between the global, the local and the more decentralised locations create a 'post-urban' regional economy.
- The inner areas of the corridor, especially those located on Apennine's foothills and along the river Po, become remarkably attractive for families escaping from the high social costs of living in cities (lack of affordable housing, traffic, pollution, etc.). Following a trend already set by part of the creative economy, the firms and industry that are predominantly digitised relocate themselves to the 'middle' or inner areas.
- Urban sprawl and land consumption increase, together with renovation processes in small towns and villages. This trend generates a boost for the demand for services related to health and education in those areas, increasing the costs of public intervention in these fields.
- Wealth is diffuse also outside the corridor, triggering new processes of local, sustainable development.
- Public multiutilities must reorganize themselves to deal with a new and more strategic orientation of territorial demands towards sustainability and circular economy
- Rural-urban partnerships are redesigned from the circular economy and effective ecosystem services, while energy production and consumption focus on renewable sources. An overall balance is established between new environmental issues generated by land consumption and opportunities arising from the new territorial configuration.



Figure 4 - Scenario 3 - Matrix used during the debate online

The three scenarios were intended not as 'organic', alternative and standalone images of possible futures, but as coherent clusters of dynamics and trends, helpful in triggering discussion and orienting reflection towards a possible combination and integration of issues and topics, to define an effective shared vision for the future of the Milano-Bologna metropolitan region.

The debate that emerged from the different sessions highlighted numerous strategic issues:

- Stakeholder preferences focused mainly on scenarios 2 and 3. The positions taken on this matter were different: some stakeholders showed particular interest in the possible management of **a scenario oriented towards polycentrism and redistribution**. Other stakeholders highlighted the difficulty of control and regulation inherent in the third scenario, which describes an extreme distribution of functions and polarity throughout this vast area.
- Stakeholders recognized the importance of having **a broad knowledge of current dynamics** to promote a consistent reaction to changes. In this process, the scenarios illustrated by the research team can provide important indications.
- The hypothesis of **possible integration of scenarios 2 and 3** was put forward - to be implemented progressively - promoting an evolution towards diffusion. A new paradigm is emerging concerning territorial networks and mobility systems, allowing new forms of territorial distribution of functions thanks to new technologies.
- The third scenario was considered the most challenging, mainly due to the role of metropolitan areas about smaller centers. **The attractiveness of peripheral and mountain areas was considered a critical issue** due to the difficulty of providing services typical of urban areas in these territories. Nonetheless, the scenario could open alternative prospects for action and focus on new economies and new systems of territorial protection.
- **Metropolitan areas as places of experimentation for the construction of policy**. The tendency towards greater integration and polycentrism can be a strongly characterizing element in the policies of metropolitan areas. This aspect still shows signs of uncertainty, mainly if not supported by a strengthening of the institutional role of metropolitan cities. Therefore, the ability to generate inter-institutional collaborations through more effective administrative tools must be strengthened, starting from the experiences of agreements and alliances of a larger scale (which have already given good results); urban regeneration could be a transversal driver that includes metropolitan areas and intermediate poles, able to offer an alternative to new land use.

The expansion of agreements between different territories and institutions must include both public and private stakeholders and consider consultations as a foundational element of governance.

- **Mobility becomes central in the development of scenarios.** Mobility systems are the subject of numerous projects already underway and present significant possibilities for innovation pertaining to sustainable urban mobility and local and regional transport systems. Different mobility systems require integration (starting from the improvement of intermodality). Within the relationships between urban and rural areas, the redesigning of the offer of public services must be coordinated with the reorganization of mobility systems.

- The **topic of logistics** was dealt with mainly in the second scenario. The development of this scenario can positively contribute to bridging the lack of a “culture of governance” in this sector, inserting itself into a broader framework of reflection and rethinking called for by the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic.

- **Multiutilities can play a unifying role in resource management.** Some cases dealing with water management have shown how multiutilities can facilitate collaboration between subjects within a fragmented cooperative framework. Extended over an interregional scale, this issue can become very relevant in encouraging greater integration between territories but might face considerable resistance due to vital local interests. To this end, it is necessary to identify actors capable of becoming the bearers of demand, helping multiutilities modify their supply and service models within the territory.

A question of territorial balance was raised, evidently seen as a risk factor in the first scenario and present in the others. **The theme of the relationship between urban and rural has acquired greater strength following the pandemic:** the role of peripheral areas as providers of ecosystem services for the whole macro-region must be considered and rewarded. Metropolitan institutions are already sensitive to the development of new relationships with marginal areas.

- **Putting the question of identity at the center of corridor policies.** The importance of identity as a founding factor for a territory is emphasized and the more traditional factor of competitiveness. But, given the great “internal” differences, developing a common identity may not be an easy task. To this end, the possibility of considering common problems (for example those concerning relations between urban and rural areas) as a starting point for addressing the identity issue was underlined. The construction of shared identity can also come about by defining a shared vision and common objectives through the ITI tool.

Throughout the sessions, the participants recognized and brought to attention the presence of critical, unclear and difficult-to-manage aspects of the hypothesized scenarios:

- **The tendency towards concentration is perceived as the main threat** to peripheral areas. The first scenario puts the distribution of wealth at greater risk, to the detriment of the more fragile mountain or low-land areas, due to the difficulty of adopting adequate tools for managing urban-rural relationships.

- **The logistics system still carries numerous uncertainties** even though it represents an important aspect of the development of the Milano-Bologna urban region. Some difficulties have been encountered in the coordination and management of logistical dynamics insistent on medium distances towards the smaller poles, reflected in a more casual and less organized distribution of logistical nodes and a lower governance capacity from central areas. In support of this necessity, the risk was pointed out that a more polycentric scenario (also from the point of view of logistical nodes) could create more land consumption problems than benefits.

- Parallel to the logistics issue is the **governance of the local and regional transport system.** Currently, the railway system is almost wholly removed from integration with other carriers. The region manages the local railway system and the vectors (TPL) are governed by mobility agencies (entities that have complex governance). Consequently, when cities think about sustainable mobility issues, it is complicated to integrate urban transport systems with the rail system that is governed on a larger scale (regional and supra-regional) and by imperatives of economic efficiency. A greater capacity to integrate systems would favor a more effective and flexible service for the benefit of people, especially seeing the more significant fragmentation of working hours caused by the pandemic. The third scenario also requires a profound reflection on public transport opportunities so that the possibility of re-inhabiting the Apennines (or, more generally, the marginal areas) does not become a generator of private traffic and pollution.

- The development of a “territorial platform” hypothesized in the last scenario, has highlighted the uncertainties and risks underlying widespread urbanization, when unregulated. A need was expressed to avoid the **distribution of well-being translating into the disfigurement of the territory’s elements of value** caused by undisputed urban sprawl and land consumption. Nevertheless, the real estate market trends -

towards a lower use of work and production spaces in the central areas - are still not clear and new possibilities for telework (especially for the service sector) are still a novelty to be evaluated. To this end, the risks of environmental degradation imaginable in this scenario are difficult to predict, given the ever-evolving situation of the pandemic.

Valeria Fedeli (Politecnico di Milano) concluded the *Regional Scenario Workshop*, illustrating the objectives of the future meetings (*Regional Design Workshop* and the *Regional Final Event*) as further opportunities to discuss the scenarios and the hypothesis of an ITI tool for the Milano-Bologna urban region.

1.6 Regional Design Workshop

Tuesday 30 March 2021, 10h00-13h30

Venue: online meeting on Zoom due to the COVID-19 pandemic

1.6.1 Agenda

10h00 Welcome and brief introduction

Livia D'Anna (Globus et Locus), Valeria Fedeli (Politecnico di Milano)

10h10 Scenarios for the Milano-Bologna macro-region

Presentation of the scenarios. *Paolo Bozzuto, (Politecnico di Milano)*

Poll among the participants. *Valeria Fedeli (Politecnico di Milano)*

Discussion with the participants. *Moderator: Livia D'Anna (Globus et Locus)*

11h00 The Green Deal as a framework for a possible macro-regional work agenda

Presentation on the interactions between scenarios and the EU green deal

Paolo Perulli (Globus et Locus)

Discussion with the participants. *Moderator: Paolo Perulli (Globus et Locus)*

12h15 ITI for the Milano Bologna macro-region: obstacles and opportunities

Presentation of the ITI tool and its application scenarios. *Marco Cremaschi (Sciences Po)*

Discussion with the participants. *Moderator: Luca Garavaglia (Globus et Locus)*

13h00 Conclusions

Piero Bassetti (Globus et Locus), Valeria Fedeli (Politecnico di Milano)

1.6.2 List of Participants

Stakeholders

Metropolitan cities and provinces	Città Metropolitana di Milano
	Città Metropolitana di Bologna
	Provincia Piacenza
	AIM – Associazione Interessi Metropolitan
Municipalities	Comune di Bologna
	Comune di Cremona
	ANCI Lombardia
	ANCI Emilia-Romagna
Regions	Regione Lombardia
	Regione Emilia Romagna
Parks and River authorities	Autorità di Bacino del Po
Universities	Politecnico di Milano
	Università Cattolica Piacenza
	Università di Pavia e Fondazione Romagnosi
	Università di Modena e Reggio
Foundations of banking origin	Fondazione Cariplo
	Fondazione del Monte di Bologna e Ravenna
Chambers of commerce	Camera di Commercio Milano –MonzaBrianza-Lodi
	Camera di Commercio Bologna
Industrial associations	Confindustria Pavia
Logistic actors	Interporto di Bologna
	Polo logistico di Piacenza
	Trenord

Technopoles and research centers	CNAO Pavia
Other economic actors	Representatives of fashion and advertising sector
	Retail: CNCC
	ESRI Italia

IMAGINE Team and experts

ESPON	Piera Petruzzi
METREX	Henk Bouwman
City of Warsaw	Andrzej Czajkowski
Politecnico di Milano	Sandro Balducci Valeria Fedeli Ilaria Mariotti Paolo Beria Fabio Manfredini Francesco Curci Luigi Carboni Federica Maria Rossi Michelangelo Secchi
Globus et Locus	Piero Bassetti Paolo Perulli Livia D'Anna Luca Garavaglia Francesco Galli Vincenzo Politano
Sciences Po	Marco Cremaschi Martina Busti
Experts	Lanfranco Senn

1.6.3 Executive Summary

The *Regional Design Workshop*, carried out as part of the ESPON “IMAGINE” project, was held via the Zoom platform on March 30, 2021 and saw the participation of about 40 stakeholders belonging to 32 different organizations (including metropolitan, provincial and regional chambers of commerce, industrial associations, universities and research centers, banking foundations, the Po River District Authority, railway transport companies, logistics operators, multiutility companies, retail, fashion and advertising), launching a debate on the scenarios, policies and tools underlying the elaboration of a strategic vision for the development and governance of the Milano-Bologna urban macro-region.

Participants were asked to comment on the topics contained in the preliminary Position Paper, created by the ESPON IMAGINE research group. The seminar's agenda was divided into three sessions, each dedicated to, respectively: the **scenarios for the Milano-Bologna Macro-region**, the presentation of the **Green Deal as a framework for a macro-regional work agenda**, the in-depth study of the **ITI tool for the Milano-Bologna Macro-region: obstacles and opportunities**.

First Session: Scenarios for the Milano-Bologna Macro-Region

In the first part of the seminar, the research team presented the future scenarios of the macro-region discussed in the Regional Scenario Workshop on February 12th, followed by a survey for stakeholders. The purpose was to highlight the scenarios and related statements that were most desirable or most likely. Below is a brief description of the three scenarios:

1. The Milano-Bologna corridor as a magnetic pipe: the scenario envisions the permanence of the HSR Milano-Bologna as a pipe that connects the historical territorial systems: Lombard radio-centric polycentrism

- The **rich presence of projects carried out by the metropolitan cities and other stakeholders concerning urban contexts or natural heritage** was evident. Among these projects, emerged those concerning the enhancement of the Po River as a natural corridor, the integration and development of new energy sources for intermodal and zero-impact transport, energy efficiency of buildings or logistical areas, waste recycling and urban forestation. In line with the Green Deal, the Metropolitan Agenda for Sustainable Development (Agenda Metropolitana per lo Sviluppo Sostenibile) is a tool that is well-suited to gather resources and investments in the desired direction. Nonetheless, local projects have brought out a need to redefine governance systems made cumbersome by administrative fragmentation and a legislative apparatus that is very sectorial.
- The new strategies launched at the European level and the numerous projects promoted by the stakeholders have highlighted a **renewed interest in the local dimension**. The Farm to Fork strategy (the energetic communities suggested by logistical areas) that create new relationships between surrounding territories, European projects on green infrastructures, and rethinking of the distribution of work following the pandemic highlight the importance of the territory its complex relationships.
- The Milanese urban region shows a significant presence of **logistical activities requiring coordination and sector planning** to govern the evolution of supply and demand. Starting from here, it is important to open consultations between public actors and private operators, aimed at defining thematic strategies for large-scale logistics and the so-called “last mile” to facilitate private investments downstream from public investments.
- The issue of **technical training and green literacy in educational programmes** was supported by the Chambers of Commerce representatives, also taking into account the new career prospects available with the Green Deal. The cultural change towards new policies also passes through institutional education.



Figure 6 - Regional Design Workshop - Online debate on the green deal as a framework for a macro-regional work agenda

Third Session: ITI for the Milano-Bologna Macro-Region: Obstacles and Opportunities.

The third session began with the description of the main characteristics of the ITI tool and the three proposals for the Milano-Bologna macro-region:

- **A unique interregional ITI:** a unique ITI can be facilitated by delegating operational functions to a single ad hoc agency/structure with a legal personality, relieving the pressure on involved administrations and enhancing the efficiency of the process. A *super-partes* body will help obtain the trust of all stakeholders and concentrate efforts on common interests.

- **Two separated regional ITIs:** the possibility of two separated regional ITIs has an advantage in terms of initial organization, but implies a strong political and administrative complementarity. Creating an ITI office inside the existing administrations for managing multiple funds and inter-regional cooperation could be a strong advantage. At the same time, the creation of forums and appointments for exchanging information appears crucial.
- **Multiple ITIs on the local scale:** this proposal would need a strict complementarity between policies in urban and non-urban territories, between more and less accessible areas, enhancing cohesion over any other attribute. The ITIs in the two regions should entrust the strategies' design to the same tier of government (for example, the unions of municipalities, or the *Zone Omogenee* identified by the metropolitan cities reform, or purpose-made agglomerations of cities), borrowing the system in place for Internal Areas. In this case, the point of contact among ITIs could be to give more funding to the marginal territories, aiming to redistribute regional resources for development.

The resulting debate highlighted the experiences and needs of the stakeholders:

- ITI tools were considered adequate for the financing of future policies in the Milano-Bologna urban region. The necessity of **paying attention to the voice and needs of local actors** was expressed in regards to the first ITI scenario. Being more centralized than the others must safeguard the idea of a unitary identity and organization while also ensuring a certain degree of adaptability to specific territorial needs. Some doubts were expressed regarding having a centralized tool: the second and third ITI scenarios seemed capable of providing more excellent local representation and participation. However, the latter shows some critical issues in the ability of the actors to endow themselves with the leadership required to carry out a strategic path. Therefore, a proposal was made for a dual-level ITI, with one level more locally-oriented embedded in the strategic framework set by a unitary, trans-regional ITI.

- The metropolitan cities contributed to a general examination of the three types of ITI starting from their direct experience. They highlighted the **issue of funding** (which may be made difficult by excesses of bureaucracy or by political decisions), noting how local government plays a crucial role in implementing ITI.

The President of Globus et Locus, Piero Bassetti, provided some concluding remarks to the *Regional Design Workshop*, reflecting on the connection between the local and global levels that the pandemic has helped us to understand better. Today, the organic association between these levels is prompting governments to reorganize the relationship between the governance of territories and governance of functions. It is necessary to organize a highly innovative political vision to redesign the distribution of powers on the horizontal and vertical axis. The discussion on governance and power started by this seminar should be submitted to regional, national and European authorities.

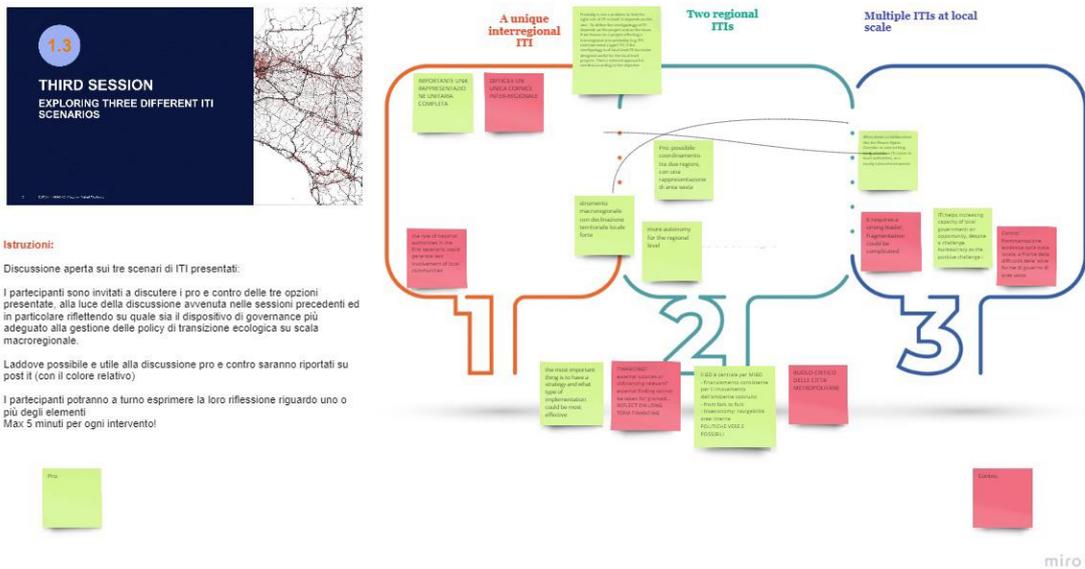


Figure 7 - Regional Design Workshop - Online Debate on ITI

Instant poll results:

In your opinion, what scenario is more likely to happen?		An- swers	Ratio
SCENARIO 1: The corridor as a magnetic pipe The scenario envisions the permanence of the HSR Milano-Bologna as a pipe that connects the historical territorial systems: the Lombard radiocentric polycentrism (with the inclusion of Novara, in Piedmont region) having Milano at its centre, and the Via Emilia's linear polycentric urban system from Rimini to Piacenza.	<div style="width: 75%; height: 10px; background-color: blue;"></div>	27	75%
SCENARIO 2: The corridor as a backbone The scenario envisions the development of the corridor into a more integrated and balanced polycentric territorial system avoiding the polarisation between regional capital cities, medium-sized cities, small towns, and inner areas.	<div style="width: 16.67%; height: 10px; background-color: blue;"></div>	6	16.67%
SCENARIO 3: From a corridor to a territorial platform The scenario envisions a radical change in the structure of the corridor, occurring by virtue of the greater attractiveness of the Apennines foothills and plain 'middle' areas for families, companies and business activities.	<div style="width: 5.56%; height: 10px; background-color: blue;"></div>	2	5.56%
No Answer	<div style="width: 2.78%; height: 10px; background-color: blue;"></div>	1	2.78%

In your opinion, what scenario is more desirable?		An- swers	Ratio
SCENARIO 1: The corridor as a magnetic pipe The scenario envisions the permanence of the HSR Milano-Bologna as a pipe that connects the historical territorial systems: the Lombard radiocentric polycentrism (with the inclusion of Novara, in Piedmont region) having Milano at its centre, and the Via Emilia's linear polycentric urban system from Rimini to Piacenza.	<div style="width: 0%; height: 10px; background-color: blue;"></div>	0	0%
SCENARIO 2: The corridor as a backbone The scenario envisions the development of the corridor into a more integrated and balanced polycentric territorial system avoiding the polarisation between regional capital cities, medium-sized cities, small towns, and inner areas.	<div style="width: 33.33%; height: 10px; background-color: blue;"></div>	12	33.33%
SCENARIO 3: From a corridor to a territorial platform The scenario envisions a radical change in the structure of the corridor, occurring by virtue of the greater attractiveness of the Apennines foothills and plain 'middle' areas for families, companies and business activities.	<div style="width: 63.89%; height: 10px; background-color: blue;"></div>	23	63.89%
No Answer	<div style="width: 2.78%; height: 10px; background-color: blue;"></div>	1	2.78%

Which one of the following statements is more likely to happen in the near future?		An- swers	Ratio
Through sustainable mobility the corridor enables short-distance relations within each of territorial system and long-distance relations to the main poles, but mid-distance relations are weak and mainly car-based. (Scenario 1)		14	38.89%
The in-between area that develops along and around the river Po remains less integrated in the economic system, and gradually assumes the role of a caesura. (Scenario 1)		8	22.22%
Wealth remains concentrated in the main provincial capitals. (Scenario 1)		11	30.56%
Medium sized cities along the corridor keep a crucial role as poles, while internal areas loose population and wealth. (Scenario 1)		14	38.89%
Logistic activities occupy intermediate locations, accessible by main infrastructures, but impacting on places which have limited capacities to take advantage from their presence. (Scenario 1)		14	38.89%
Huge public companies substitute traditional multiutility companies in the field of energy, water, waste disposal, augmenting the efficiency. (Scenario 1)		7	19.44%
Metropolitan areas play an important role at local level, with limited capacity to generate further interinstitutional alliances. (Scenario 1)		14	38.89%
Integration between the regional mobility systems of Lombardia and Emilia Romagna. (Scenario 2)		4	11.11%
The inner areas of the corridor and the in-between area that develops along and around the river Po are more integrated with the corridor dynamics and attractiveness. (Scenario 2)		2	5.56%
Wealth is diffuse along the corridor, and more homogeneously localized, partially rebalancing the polarization between regional capitals and medium-sized cities. (Scenario 2)		1	2.78%
Logistic activities are reorganized according to a new sectoral vision aimed at creating a joint logistics inter-regional multipolar platform. (Scenario 2)		3	8.33%
Public multiutilities become vectors of regional innovation. (Scenario 2)		2	5.56%
Metropolitan areas can play as a pivot of territorial cohesion. (Scenario 2)		4	11.11%
The corridor experiences the declining of agglomeration advantages and cost of distance. Increasing links between the global, the local and the more decentralised locations create a kind of 'post-urban' regional economy. (Scenario 3)		1	2.78%
The inner areas of the corridor become remarkably attractive for families escaping from the high social costs of living in cities. (Scenario 3)		1	2.78%
Urban sprawl and land consumption increase, together with renovation processes in small towns and villages. (Scenario 3)		0	0%
Wealth is diffuse also outside the corridor, triggering new processes of local sustainable development. (Scenario 3)		0	0%
Public multiutilities must reorganize themselves in order to deal with a new and more strategic orientation of territorial demands towards sustainability and circular economy. (Scenario 3)		2	5.56%
Rural-urban partnerships are redesigned in a perspective of circular economy and effective ecosystem services. (Scenario 3)		2	5.56%
No Answer		0	0%

Which one of the following statements is more desirable?		An- swers	Ratio
Through sustainable mobility the corridor enables short-distance relations within each of territorial system and long-distance relations to the main poles, but mid-distance relations are weak and mainly car-based. (Scenario 1)		1	2.78%
The in-between area that develops along and around the river Po remains less integrated in the economic system, and gradually assumes the role of a caesura. (Scenario 1)		0	0%
Wealth remains concentrated in the main provincial capitals. (Scenario 1)		1	2.78%

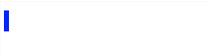
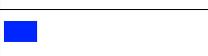
Medium sized cities along the corridor keep a crucial role as poles, while internal areas loose population and wealth. (Scenario 1)		1	2.78%
Logistic activities occupy intermediate locations, accessible by main infrastructures, but impacting on places which have limited capacities to take advantage from their presence. (Scenario 1)		0	0%
Huge public companies substitute traditional multiutility companies in the field of energy, water, waste disposal, augmenting the efficiency. (Scenario 1)		0	0%
Metropolitan areas play an important role at local level, with limited capacity to generate further interinstitutional alliances. (Scenario 1)		0	0%
Integration between the regional mobility systems of Lombardia and Emilia Romagna. (Scenario 2)		9	25%
The inner areas of the corridor and the in-between area that develops along and around the river Po are more integrated with the corridor dynamics and attractiveness. (Scenario 2)		3	8.33%
Wealth is diffuse along the corridor, and more homogeneously localized, partially rebalancing the polarization between regional capitals and medium-sized cities. (Scenario 2)		5	13.89%
Logistic activities are reorganized according to a new sectoral vision aimed at creating a joint logistics inter-regional multipolar platform. (Scenario 2)		6	16.67%
Public multiutilities become vectors of regional innovation. (Scenario 2)		4	11.11%
Metropolitan areas can play as a pivot of territorial cohesion. (Scenario 2)		13	36.11%
The corridor experiences the declining of agglomeration advantages and cost of distance. Increasing links between the global, the local and the more decentralised locations create a kind of 'post-urban' regional economy. (Scenario 3)		7	19.44%
The inner areas of the corridor become remarkably attractive for families escaping from the high social costs of living in cities. (Scenario 3)		8	22.22%
Urban sprawl and land consumption increase, together with renovation processes in small towns and villages. (Scenario 3)		6	16.67%
Wealth is diffuse also outside the corridor, triggering new processes of local sustainable development. (Scenario 3)		15	41.67%
Public multiutilities must reorganize themselves in order to deal with a new and more strategic orientation of territorial demands towards sustainability and circular economy. (Scenario 3)		4	11.11%
Rural-urban partnerships are redesigned in a perspective of circular economy and effective ecosystem services. (Scenario 3)		22	61.11%
No Answer		0	0%

Figure 8 - Regional Design Workshop - Results of the instant survey

1.7 Final Regional Forum

Urban regions within the new cohesion policy: Developing an ITI for and from Milano-Bologna urban region

This final event was part of the ESPON IMAGINE Targeted Analysis. It consisted of an interactive workshop organized by the researchers (Politecnico di Milano, Globus et Locus, SciencesPo) in collaboration with IMAGINE stakeholders (Città Metropolitana di Milano, Città Metropolitana di Bologna, Provincia di Pavia, Provincia di Piacenza, AIM, Associazione Interessi Metropolitan, Metrex, POPSU and Warsaw metropolitan area) as an opportunity to showcase and discuss how the ITIs (Integrated Territorial Initiatives) have been fruitfully implemented in relation to new regional imaginaries and the general objective of the 2014-2020 Cohesion Policy.

Testimonials and protagonists of ITI experiences, together with other EU initiatives based on an integrated, sustainable, interregional approach, have been invited to illustrate the adopted tools and its potentialities and the conditions under which the different tools have been effective and successful.

The aim was to generate “usable knowledge”, producing inspirational stories, to be used as testbeds for a local, regional, national approach to the development of an integrated territorial initiative in the Milano Bologna urban region as a pilot experience at the national and regional level.

Inspirational stories were used to generate a dialogue among regional, national and European stakeholders, aiming at delivering the draft of an integrated territorial initiative and a process of reflective knowledge on the nature and role, limits and potentials of ITIs, identifying to what extent these can be considered promising instruments to support new coordination and cooperation frameworks in European urban regions and corridors, as well as experimental spaces to build territorial cohesion.

1.7.1 Agenda

9.00 // WELCOME

*IMAGINE Research team (Politecnico di Milano, Globus et Locus, Sciences Po)
Piera Petrucci, ESPON EGTC*

9.15 // Opening Speech

Nicola Favia, Dirigente Programmi a Rilevanza Strategica Nazionale e Internazionali, Dipartimento per le Politiche di Coesione, Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri

9.30 // Introduction: main objectives and results of ESPON IMAGINE

IMAGINE Research team (Politecnico di Milano, Globus et Locus, Sciences Po)

9.45 // First panel discussion: Corridors of European Union, regionalisation machines and resources for a new territorial cohesion //

Chair Valeria Fedeli, Politecnico di Milano

This first session will highlight the role of corridors, as spaces of regionalization and devices of territorial cohesion. It will provide the opportunity to discuss the role of corridors in the project of EU integration. It will present the Milano-Bologna urban region in its relational, interconnected, extraverted nature, introducing scenarios for transforming an infrastructural corridor into a territorial platform. It will establish a dialogue with other EU territories presenting the same feature and aspirations (Rhine-Alpine)

Inspirational story: EGTC Rhine Alpine

Bernd Scholl, ETH Zurich

1st Viewpoint: Living like a urban region

Question: what approaches and strategies could make the flows of people and goods in the Milano-Bologna system smoother and more efficient?

Mobility and logistics actors // Marco Piuri, AD Trenord; Marco Spinedi, Presidente Interporto di Bologna

2nd Viewpoint: Competing like a urban region

Question: under which condition the infrastructural corridor can become a territorial platform able to improve liveability and competitiveness?

Franco Baraldi, Dirigente CCIAA Bologna

Open debate

11.05-11.15 BREAK

11.15 // Second Panel Discussion: Strategic functions challenging administrative geographies //

Chair Paolo Perulli, Globus et Locus

This second session will discuss the mismatch between processes of regionalisation fed by strategic function and the forms of institutional governance. It will provide the opportunity to discuss obstacles and opportunities to new regional governance frameworks. It will develop hypothesis on how and if ITI can support a new regional imaginary-oriented policy design. It will establish a dialogue with other EU territories trying to challenge the mismatch between functional and administrative geographies.

Inspirational story: EGTC GO - ITI Territorio dei comuni Gorizia, Nova Gorica e Šempeter-Vrtojba

Ivan Curzolo, Director EGTC GO

1st Viewpoint: Growing like a urban region

Question: how can regional policy-design support a new regional imaginary?

Regions // Raffaele Cattaneo, Assessore all'Ambiente e Clima, Regione Lombardia

2nd Viewpoint: Seeing like an urban region

Question: how should new collaborative regional alliances be developed?

Universities/Research centres/Creative sector // Francesco Timpano, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore Piacenza; Sandro Rossi, Direttore generale CNAO Pavia; Alberto De Martini, CEO di Conic, agenzia di comunicazione

Open debate

12.40-14.00 LUNCH BREAK

14.00 // Third Panel Discussion: Metropolitan cities and the translocal commons //

Chair Carlo Berizzi, AIM, Associazione Interessi Metropolitan

This third session will discuss how the translocal character of contemporary strategic commons requires a new eco-systemic vision. It will provide the opportunity to discuss the content of a new urban-rural alliance. In particular, it will develop hypotheses for an interregional strategy inspired by the EU Green Deal perspective.

Inspirational story: Interreg RUMORE; a new urban-rural partnership

Joerg Knieling, Hafen City University

1st Viewpoint: Acting like a urban region: actors and policy networks

Question: how to support places and territories?

Bank foundations, National Associations of Municipalities // Claudia Sorlini, Vicepresidente Fondazione Cariplo; Marco Giubilini, Referente Territorio e Digitalizzazione ANCI Emilia-Romagna; Maurizio Cabras, Direttore Dipartimento Territorio ANCI Lombardia

2nd Viewpoint: Acting like an urban region: the EU Green deal as a reference for establishing a new translocal alliance

Question: the EU Green deal as a reference for establishing a new translocal alliance?

Metropolitan cities/inner areas (MI-BO PV-PC) // Isabella Susi Botto, Dirigente, Città Metropolitana di Milano; Marco Monesi, Assessore alla Pianificazione, Città Metropolitana di Bologna; Valentina Orioli, Vicesindaca Comune di Bologna

Open debate

15.20-15.30 BREAK**15.30 // Fourth Panel Discussion: Urban regions in the 2021-2027 EU cohesion policy // Chair Henk Bouwman, Secretary General METREX**

This final session aims to open a space for discussion about the role of EU urban regions in the 2021-2027 cohesion policy, stressing their potential both at the national and EU level. At the same time, the session, with the contribution of national stakeholders, also aims at setting the conditions for the Milano-Bologna urban region stakeholders to take an active role in embedding the regional imaginary within the innovative governance frameworks offered by the Integrated Territorial Initiatives.

Round table

Marco Cremaschi, Sciences Po, IMAGINE team, introducing the session
Henk Bouwman, Secretary General of METREX coordinating the session

- Sebastiano Zilli, European Commission DG REGIO
- Wiktor Szydarowski, ESPON EGTC Director
- Mara Cossu, Ministry of Environment and Protection of Land and Sea
- Luisa Pedrazzini, ESPON MC Italy
- Xavier Tiana Casablanca, Metropolitan Area of Barcelona
- Andrzej Czajkowski and Małgorzata Kucińska, City of Warsaw
- Carmine Pacente, Metropolitan City of Milano and Committee of the Regions
- Prof. Maria Prezioso, University "Roma Tor Vergata", ESPON Contact Point Italy

17. 00 // Conclusion and end of the Meeting

Piero Bassetti, Presidente Globus et Locus

Alessandro Balducci, Politecnico di Milano, DASTU

Valeria Fedeli, ESPON IMAGINE Coordinator – Politecnico di Milano, DASTU

Piera Petruzzi, ESPON IMAGINE Officer

1.7.2 List of Participants

Speakers	Name/Organization
Introduction	Piera Petruzzi, ESPON EGTC Valeria Fedeli, Politecnico di Milano – IMAGINE Scientific coordinator
Opening speech	Nicola Favia, Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri
1st Panel	Bernd Scholl, ETH Zurich
	Marco Piuri, Trenord
	Marco Spinedi, Interporto Bologna
	Franco Baraldi, Camera di Commercio Bologna
	Sandro Innocenti, Prologis
2 panel Discussion	Paolo Perulli, Globus et Locus
	Ivan Curzolo, EGTC GO
	Francesco Timpano, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore Piacenza
	Sandro Rossi, Direttore Generale CNAO Pavia
	Alberto De Martini, Ceo Conic
	Raffaele Cattaneo, Assessore Clima e Ambiente, Regione Lombardia
3 Panel Discussion	Carlo Berizzi, Associazione Interessi Metropolitan
	Joerg Knieling, Hafen City University
	Claudia Sorlini, Fondazione Cariplo
	Marco Giubilini, ANCI Emilia-Romagna;
	Maurizio Cabras, ANCI Lombardia
	Francesco Severgnini, Anci Lombardia
	Isabella Susi Botto, Città Metropolitana di Milano
	Marco Monesi, Città Metropolitana di Bologna
Valentina Orioli, Comune di Bologna	
	Henk Bouwman, METREX

4 Panel Discussion	Sebastiano Zilli, European Commission, DG Regio
	Mara Cossu, Ministero della Transizione Ecologica
	Carmine Pacente, Città Metropolitana Milano, Committee of the Regions
	Xavier Tiana Casablanças, Metropolitan Area of Barcelona
	Andrzej Czajkowski, City of Warsaw
	Małgorzata Kucińska, City of Warsaw
	Luisa Pedrazzini ESPON EGTC MC Member Italy
	Maria Prezioso, ESPON EGTC
	Wiktor Szydarowski, ESPON EGTC
Conclusions	Piero Bassetti, Globus et Locus
	Sandro Balducci, Politecnico di Milano
	Valeria Fedeli, Politecnico di Milano
	Piera Petrucci, ESPON EGTC

Stakeholders

Metropolitan cities and provinces	Città Metropolitana di Milano
	Città Metropolitana di Bologna
	Prov. Piacenza
	AIM – Associazione Interessi Metropolitan
Municipalities	Comune di Bologna
	Comune di Cremona
	ANCI Lombardia
	ANCI Emilia-Romagna
Regions	Regione Lombardia
	Regione Emilia Romagna
National and European stakeholders	Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri
	Ministero della Transizione Ecologica
	European Commission, DG Regio
	ESPON EGTC
	Committee of the Regions
	METREX
	City of Warsaw
	Metropolitan City of Barcelona
	EGTC GO
Universities	Politecnico di Milano
	Università Cattolica Piacenza
	Università di Modena e Reggio Emilia
	Università degli Studi di Roma “Tor Vergata”
	ETH Zurich
	Hafen City University
Foundations of banking origin	Fondazione Cariplo
	Fondazione del Monte di Bologna e Ravenna
Chambers of commerce	Camera di Commercio Bologna
	Camera di Commercio Milano Monza Brianza Lodi
	Confindustria Piacenza
Logistic actors	Interporto di Bologna
	Trenord
	Prologis
Technopoles and research centers	CNAO Pavia
	LEAP Tecnopolo di Piacenza
Other actors	Conic
	Fondazione di Venezia

	Esri Italia
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IMAGINE Team and experts

Politecnico di Milano	Sandro Balducci Valeria Fedeli Ilaria Mariotti Paolo Beria Fabio Manfredini Francesco Curci Luigi Carboni Federica Maria Rossi Michelangelo Secchi
Globus et Locus	Piero Bassetti Paolo Perulli Livia D'Anna Luca Garavaglia Francesco Galli Vincenzo Politano
Sciences Po	Marco Cremaschi Martina Busti Samia Saadi
Experts	Lanfranco Senn

1.7.3 Executive Summary

The final event of the ESPON IMAGINE Targeted Analysis consisted in an interactive workshop on May 18th, 2021, organized by the IMAGINE research team (Politecnico di Milano, Globus et Locus, SciencesPo) in collaboration with IMAGINE stakeholders (Città Metropolitana di Milano, Città Metropolitana di Bologna, Provincia di Pavia, Provincia di Piacenza, AIM, Associazione Interessi Metropolitan, Metrex, POPSU and Warsaw metropolitan area), to showcase and discuss how the ITIs (Integrated Territorial Initiatives) have been fruitfully implemented in relation to new regional imaginaries and the general objective of the 2014-2020 Cohesion Policy, and to generate new knowledge towards the development of an integrated territorial initiative in the Milano-Bologna urban region, as well as in other urban areas. Over 90 stakeholders, researchers, experts and researchers joined the event, held online due to the Covid-19 restrictions.

Introduction

Valeria Fedeli (IMAGINE scientific coordinator, Politecnico di Milano) and **Piera Petrucci (ESPON EGTC)** welcomed the participants, presenting the event as an occasion to discuss how trans-territorial collaborative projects are implemented and to describe the challenges European territories and cities are facing.

The opening speech by **Nicola Favia (Dipartimento per le Politiche di Coesione, Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri)** highlighted the relevance of the ESPON IMAGINE project in bringing together political and technical experts to address strategic issues of cohesion policy. The Milano-Bologna axis is strategic for development in Italy and in Europe, for both the demographical, social and economic dimensions of this macro-region. Discussing the opportunities offered by ITIs and by a potential ITI embracing the Milano-Bologna integrated area would provide relevant answers to critical questions, such as: which role would play Metropolitan Cities in implementing cohesion goals set by European and national agendas? Which projects would Metropolitan Cities develop? How could the central government support Metropolitan Cities? This Regional Forum should strive towards answering these questions, relevant for territories all around Europe, in general, and for Italy and the Milano-Bologna community, in particular.

Valeria Fedeli (IMAGINE scientific coordinator, Politecnico di Milano) summarized the approach and findings of the research project. Cities and metropolitan areas are experiencing processes of uneven renewal. The traditional understanding of the urban is not sufficient to understand the new scenario: new spatial imaginaries are needed to elaborate a new common narrative to address the most recent economic processes and experiment with innovative tools to regulate them.

IMAGINE produced a new regional portrait of the Milano-Bologna corridor and described mobility in this area. Data collected during the research confirmed the Milano-Bologna system as a polycentric urban region with a strong urban/rural integration. Regionalisation processes shape social and economic dynamics and produce important spatial discontinuities and economic growth differentials. The high-speed railway impacted territorial cohesion, acting as a magnet to attract competitiveness in his immediate surroundings, but also created a divide between “fast” mobility and slow (regional) mobility. At the same time, intermediary spaces are attracting new functions, and urbanization processes are organized at the regional scale. Emerging issues like environmental fragility, high land consumption, transition to circular economy need to be governed at a trans-administrative scale. Yet, the demand for cohesion in the corridor remains primarily unanswered. Previous seminars highlighted the EU Green New Deal as an opportunity for the solution of common problems and the possible role of ITI to provide a new tool for territorial and governance integration.

First panel discussion: Corridors of European Union, regionalisation machines and resources for a new territorial cohesion

This first panel highlighted the role of corridors as spaces of regionalization and devices of territorial cohesion and discussed possible scenarios to transform the Milano-Bologna corridor into a territorial platform.

As an inspirational story, **Bernd Scholl (ETH Zurich)** presented the case of the EGTC Code24, whose main objective is to facilitate and promote territorial cooperation for the integrated development of the multimodal Rhine-Alpine Corridor (running from Rotterdam to Genoa) from the regional and local perspective. Urban nodes along this corridor share common problems: noise, logistic issues, role of urban hubs, and sprawl threats. Through the EGTC, the Institute of Spatial Planning of ETH Zurich, together with fourteen international partners, faced these challenges pursuing spatial and infrastructural development questions along the corridor: the project extended urban cooperation and exchanges of information and best practices between cities.

In the **1st Viewpoint**, “**Living like a urban region**,” **Marco Piuri (Trenord)**, **Marco Spinedi (Interporto di Bologna)**, and **Sandro Innocenti (Prologis)** discussed possible approaches and strategies to make the flows of people and goods in the Milano-Bologna system smoother and more efficient.

The debate highlighted the need to move from a “corridor” to a “platform”, developing a community approach to provide an efficient answer to the demand for mobility. Around the skeleton of the corridor, where infrastructures and functions are concentrated, a “nervous system” must be built to assure that the people can get to their destination in a reasonable time from all the territories of the area. Such a system requires better utilization of existing assets and more intense use of intermodality: local governments should define common objects and criteria to allow operators to organize their projects and efficiently integrate their mobility offer.

Also, the regulation of freight flows along the corridor requires the definition of common rules and objectives at the corridor level, surpassing local and regional differences to respond to the increased demand for logistics services generated by the Covid-19 crisis. Traffic concentration must be pursued to achieve a better connection to the Mediterranean ports, to increase train use, to reduce load breakings, to make better use of existing platforms and to minimize the impact of the new ones (including “last mile” hubs in urban areas) on human and environmental systems.

Mobility and logistics operators should be granted a role in the governance of flows in the macro-region, recognizing their capacity to interpret the changes in the demand and their potential to foster innovations towards both efficiency and sustainability.

The **2nd Viewpoint**, “**Competing like a urban region**” focused on the role of intermediate actors in the production of local collective competition goods to improve livability and competitiveness. **Franco Baraldi (Camera di Commercio di Bologna)** warned against the representation of the corridor as a “bridge” between two metropolitan cities: in order to comprehend the competitive advantages of the Milano-Bologna area, its complexity and variety must be considered. Developing a common vision can help overcome the limits of local and sectoral instances: in recent years, the cooperation between local Chambers of Commerce allowed for better production of services for competitiveness and innovation. But the Milano-Bologna corridor also needs to recognize itself as a system: this conscience is required for a more efficient and fair spatial organization of social and economic functions, and to attract new talents and investments. This can only be achieved with the inclusion of private actors and local communities in the governance: to ensure the alignment of demand and solutions and diffuse the awareness of the interdependences between metropolitan areas, small cities, and marginal areas. With this approach, the challenges of environmental and social sustainability can be interpreted to reduce inequalities and generate more knowledge and more jobs.

Second Panel Discussion: Strategic functions challenging administrative geographies

This second session discussed the mismatch between regionalization processes fed by strategic function and the forms of institutional governance. Introducing the panel's topic, **Paolo Perulli (Globus et Locus)** pointed out the mismatch between functions and institutions in the current scenario: the increasing mobility and evolution of functions require changes in the institutional framework to govern issues organized transversally to administrative boundaries. These issues have been exemplified by the case of the ITI of the municipalities of Gorizia, Nova Gorica and Šempeter-Vrtojba, illustrated by **Ivan Curzolo (EGTC GO)**: these three cities constitute a single urban system which has been divided by national borders for the most part of the XX century. With the inclusion of Slovenia in the EU and in the Schengen area, the border fell, causing the disappearance of many economic activities (logistics services, customs, etc.) and the redundancy of many urban services and functions. The EGTC and ITI instruments allowed the three cities to organize a strategic plan for the integration of the urban system, intervening on mobility and welfare services, and developing the capacity to achieve common goals (the main one being the title of European Capital of Culture 2025).

The **1st Viewpoint**, “**Growing like an urban region**”, explored the role of regional policy-design in the assemblage of a new regional imaginary. According to **Raffaele Cattaneo (Regione Lombardia)**, the changes taking place in the economic and social scenario are posing an epochal challenge to institutional assets. The issues of sustainability, a contrast to climate change, and the transition from linear to circular economy need to be addressed at a bigger scale than the municipal, provincial, and regional ones. Yet, these issues produce effects at the local level, and they cannot be managed only by the national or European authorities. They require a glocal approach: global strategies implemented through local actions in a bottom-up way. New multi-level governance models are needed, based on strong cooperation between public and private actors both on the horizontal and vertical axis: a difficult task for administrations which have been

built on principles of autonomy and strict divisions of competences. The changes in the functional scenario require a revolution of the institutional practices, towards an improved capacity of the administrations to work together on common goals. In this direction, experiments of informal governance networks have already been organized: an example is the agreement of the regions of Lombardia, Emilia-Romagna, Veneto and Piemonte on policies against pollution (“Accordo di Bacino Padano”). The European Union contributes to the diffusion of these practices with research projects like ESPON IMAGINE and new tools for the regulation of trans-territorial issues (i.e. EGTC or ITI or Macroregional Strategies): cohesion policies should encourage the diffusion of these experiences, which are important steps in the transition towards governance models based on multi-level institutional cooperation.

Commenting Cattaneo’s speech, **Lanfranco Senn (Università Bocconi)** highlighted the presence of two different drivers for informal trans-institutional cooperation: it may be produced by political decisions or by functional decisions (common interests in research and production). In other words, there are problems that should be solved at a political level, and difficulties which interest convergences should solve: different models of governance should be devised to regulate different situations. **Piero Bassetti (Globus et Locus)** declared that multi-level governance requires a reflection on the nature of the power. Multi-level governance models imply the distribution of power among different levels: it’s a sharing of power with different roles. It means a deep change in the nature of political authorities: from “ruling things” to “doing actions together”. A constitutional change which requires experimentation and legitimization.

The **2nd Viewpoint, “Seeing like an urban region”** explored the spatial organization of knowledge-based sectors, highlighting two different dynamics: while **Alberto De Martini (Conic)** described the tendency towards the development of more robust networks between metropolitan-based creative activities and productive territories in the Milano-Bologna area (a phenomenon accelerated by the new opportunities for teleworking generated by the Covid-19 pandemic), on the other hand **Francesco Timpano (Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore)** denounced the lack of integration between the innovation networks (between universities, research centers, enterprises) of Lombardia and Emilia-Romagna. Each region has its platform for sharing projects and developed different styles of governance for the innovation system. This situation causes duplications and increases competition between research centers. Experiences of trans-regional innovation programs should be encouraged, to share experiences and projects between the two regions (in this sense, the city of Piacenza could be an interesting laboratory: it belongs to Emilia-Romagna, but it has courses and research centers managed by universities from Milano).

Third Panel Discussion: Metropolitan cities and the translocal commons

This third panel discussed the content of a new urban-rural alliance and the hypotheses for an interregional strategy inspired by the EU Green Deal perspective. The inspirational story for the session has been the one of Süderelbe AG, a project fostered by Interreg RUMORE, described by **Joerg Knieling (Hafen City University)**. Süderelbe AG established an urban-rural partnership in the southern area of the metropolitan region of Hamburg to generate actions for the organization of public transport in rural areas, for the distribution of public services and innovation networks outside the city core the reduction of soil consumption. Süderelbe AG is an interesting example of flexible cooperation across the borders of municipalities and federal states in a non-homogeneous metropolitan region where substantial disparities exist. The project highlighted the need for differentiated territorial strategies to front existing disparities, and also the importance of cooperation in “soft spaces with “fuzzy boundaries” to tackle “hard space” restrictions: acting on specific initiatives for growth or on particular corridors.

The **1st Viewpoint “Acting like a urban region: actors and policy networks”** focused on possible ways to support local development in the Milano-Bologna area. **Claudia Sorlini (Fondazione Cariplo)** described the challenges the area is facing, regarding pollution, mobility, sustainability, and highlighted the crucial role played by bank foundations in the activation of experimental bottom-up projects of innovation which public actors are not able to pursue. Their statutes limit them to projects regarding specific areas or regions, but collaborations between different foundations can intervene on trans-territorial systems like the Milano-Bologna one. Sorlini also pointed out the growing importance of the voluntary sector in local development initiatives, recommending their inclusion in corridor governance. **Marco Giubilini (ANCI Emilia-Romagna), Maurizio Cabras and Francesco Severgnini (both from ANCI Lombardia)** focused on the obstacles to overcome in order to achieve governance efficiency in a polycentric system characterized by strong differences between metropolitan areas, small towns and rural areas: administrative borders, localism, lack of the competences to organize innovative projects in many public administrations. Nevertheless, many experiments of trans-territorial cooperation towards common goals have been realized in the Milano-Bologna

region, fostered by municipal and regional authorities, welfare actors, third sector associations. ANCI itself is committed to the empowerment of the collaboration capacities of small municipalities, and in the definition of new governance models able to face the challenges posed by social and economic transformations.

The **2nd Viewpoint** of the panel involved representatives of the **Metropolitan Cities of Milano and Bologna** and the Municipality of Bologna, in a discussion on “the EU Green Deal ” **as a reference for establishing a new trans-local alliance**”. Metropolitan Cities have been established only recently in Italy: they are charged with the regulation of complex and interconnected systems, but they lack authority and resources to solve critical urban issues. The Metropolitan Cities of Milano and Bologna fronted these issues with the organization of inclusive governance networks, involving actors from the communities, the economic sectors, the voluntary sector, the cultural sector: as a result, many investments and innovative projects have been organized at the metropolitan scale.

The cities of Milano and Bologna identified common areas of interest: sustainable development, a contrast to climate change, reduction of soil consumption, mobility, and new issues exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic, like urban logistics, use of public spaces, changes in residential dynamics. The EU Green Deal could be the basis for new trans-local alliances for the regulation of many of these issues, which require actions organized at the corridor scale to produce good results. The metropolitan cities will be called to play a pivotal role in the governance of these alliances, but the presence of other public actors and private stakeholders (i.e. utilities providers, mobility providers, third sector) will be critical to allow the gathering of intelligence and resources (including the ones made available by the PNRR). One of the proposals advanced by the metropolitan cities regards the activation of an ITI to intervene on the regulation of logistics systems along the Milano-Bologna corridor.

Fourth Panel Discussion: Urban regions in the 2021-2027 EU cohesion policy

The final session hosted a round table dedicated to the role of EU urban regions in the 2021-2027 cohesion policy and explored the hypothesis of an ITI for the Milano-Bologna urban region. The roundtable started with a presentation of the ESPON IMAGINE research on ITI by **Marco Cremaschi (Sciences Po)**, followed by a discussion between **Sebastiano Zilli (European Commission DG REGIO)**, **Wiktór Szydarowski (ESPON EGTC)**, **Mara Cossu (Ministero della Transizione Ecologica)**, **Luisa Pedrazzini (Regione Lombardia and ESPON MC Italy)**, **Xavier Tiana Casablanças (Metropolitan Area of Barcelona)**, **Andrzej Czajkowski and Małgorzata Kucińska (City of Warsaw)**, **Maria Prezioso (University “Roma Tor Vergata” and ESPON Contact Point Italy)**.

The discussion touched many topics and produced important recommendations towards the organization of ITI initiatives in the Milano-Bologna corridor:

- The new policy objectives of the European Commission for the period 2021-2027 open many possibilities for cooperative initiatives organized at the scale of metropolitan area, functional urban area or territorial corridor, identifying challenges that cannot be faced within administrative borders and instead require territorial convergence: not only under objective n.5 (“Europe closer to citizens”), but also under Objective n.1 (“a smarter Europe”) and Objective n.2 (a greener Europe). An ITI for the Milano-Bologna region could produce a common strategy on which local projects, each taking resources from different European and national programs, could be based.
- On the other hand, many resources of the national and European programs will be destined to urban areas, not to metropolitan regions, and metropolitan areas are not involved in the definition of European policies: all consultations are done between national associations of cities, regions and the national authorities. European urban networks need to support the building of a real protagonism of metropolitan areas, convincing politicians that this scale is the efficient one to solve urban problems, and the results of projects like IMAGINE should be diffused not only among technicians and researchers but also to political decision-makers.
- International experiences like the one of Warsaw demonstrated that partnership projects like ITI are difficult to manage: they require permanent coordination structures and training and skills to enable personnel from different institutions to work together and create common projects. The lack of funds and tools for governance and capacity building is a critical problem, which strategic alliances for the Milano-Bologna corridor will need to face.
- ESPON, European city networks, and the Italian Ministry for Ecological Transition are important providers of knowledge, technical support, and technological transfer for urban and territorial development initiatives. In particular, ESPON is very interested in exploring the role of metropolitan areas in the achievement of cohesion and sustainability objectives and in the regulation of new

functional geographies crossing administrative boundaries, like the one highlighted by the IMAGINE project.

Conclusions

Piero Bassetti (Globus et Locus) concluded the connection between the local and global dimensions, which is the heart of the ESPON IMAGINE project. Today, the organic relationship between local and global levels requires the ability of the territory to reorganize itself through a “political” compromise with its functions. The latter, however, tends to be independent of the territory, giving rise to an unprecedented relationship between “mobility” and “permanence”.

The ESPON IMAGINE project involved local governments and stakeholders of the main economic and territorial functions in discussing the development of a regional imaginary and an integrated territorial strategy between Milano and Bologna. The project represents a starting point for developing strategic networks and programs able to govern the transformation of urban and regional scenarios both within the Milano-Bologna corridor and acting as a model for other corridors, in line with the European Union’s urban and regional development policies.

During the IMAGINE project, it has been observed how the issue of governance evokes the problem of widespread and concentrated institutional subjectivity. Today, more than ever, these emerging needs challenge institutions to redefine their forms of governance as well as the nature of their governance. Both territorial and functional institutions are increasingly called to play a key role in building new processes of governance and policy planning open to the dialectic of interests and values based on the knowledge and new social practices that find their expression in urban zones, intermediate territories and in the polyarchic relationships shared between them.

THEREFORE, the ESPON IMAGINE project can be an important experiment in institutional innovation to develop an operational and coherent vision of the Milano-Bologna system. From this point of view, the proposal for an ITI for the Milano-Bologna urban region can represent an opportunity to institutionalize new horizontal and vertical partnerships.

The Milano-Bologna system is, in fact, a system that certainly exists, but that must be supported to thrive, through the ability to find incentives for cooperation and to highlight the advantages which the development of a broader vision can guarantee to each actor.

The actors involved in IMAGINE: institutional and territorial actors, banking foundations, technopoles, research networks and universities, companies are representing the connective functions (mobility, logistics, multiutilities, innovation and creative industries, etc.), all hold a crucial role since they may possess the vision and necessary resources needed to activate experimental trans-regional, public-private cooperation projects.

In essence, the importance of the invention of a political dimension emerges from the topics discussed in this forum and in previous meetings. Bassetti invited the actors involved to ask themselves which government or power reference should be the interlocutor in the urban and macro-regional perspective developed by the IMAGINE project: European powers (Green Deal), the Italian government, or functional powers (finance, logistics, energy, circular economy, etc.). Reconciling the implantation of a specific policy with its power-generating dimension is a complex issue that must be carefully considered.

Bassetti’s conclusion, therefore, focuses on the appeal to all the partners of the ESPON IMAGINE project to report the problems encountered as a result of the work done to the power centres involved. Only in this way, will we be able to promote more integrated governance between Milano and Bologna. A goal of great relevance for the urban and political development of the whole of Northern Italy.

Alessandro Balducci and Valeria Fedeli (Politecnico di Milano) launched the proposal to turn the IMAGINE network animating the REGIONAL FORUM so far into a permanent forum, to foster the production of intellectual capital (information exchange), social capital (creation of trust among the actors) and political capital (alliances for the future cooperative actions). IMAGINE made the first steps towards the construction of a common spatial imaginary for the Milano-Bologna system, and the Forum could be the basis to continue the discussion and to organize cooperative actions like an ITI, starting from the identification of a critical issue to be fronted with a “flagship project”. In the short term, the publication of the final report of IMAGINE will help disseminate the project results, both in the Milano-Bologna area and in other contexts.

In the final remarks, **Piera Petruzzi (ESPON EGTC)** highlighted the necessity to bring the findings and proposals elaborated by the IMAGINE projects to political actors' attention and share the knowledge generated by the project in other Italian and European metropolitan regions. Petruzzi also remarked on the commitment of ESPON to support processes aimed at the generation of new governance models based on public-private, trans-territorial cooperation to address the need for sustainability, cohesion, and innovation of cities across Europe.

1.8 Conclusions

In the first part of the IMAGINE project, stakeholder's involvement activities focused on the recognition of common problems shared by all territories in the Milano-Bologna corridor, and on the obstacles to the integration of social, economic and environmental functions:

- All stakeholders recognized the need to govern the strong interdependencies between territories along the corridor; however, **administrative fragmentation** makes it very difficult to produce effective governance and policies for this trans-territorial system. Despite the reforms of recent years, the boundaries within which the regulations of territorial systems are built have remained the same: issues regarding mobility, logistics, education, tourism, and environmental protection are dealt with on the municipal level even when they extend to the metropolitan level. Fragmentation of governance also affects economic functions, producing competition and duplications in the offer of local collective competition goods and impacting on the competitiveness of companies in international markets. In particular, a critical area is the innovation sector: research networks of Lombardia and Emilia-Romagna are not exchanging information and contacts, limiting their capacity to produce alliances that can compete in the European scenario.
- **The role of medium-sized cities** in the regional scenario needs to be recognized and enforced. Medium-sized cities are affected by the growing attractivity of the metropolitan areas: Milano and Bologna have recently experienced significant growth, but at the same time, the intermediate cities along the axis have expressed a slower dynamic. The challenge for the future will be trying to find a way to redistribute development, reducing the imbalance between territories, before competitive advantages still available in smaller centers are consumed by the competition of the two larger cities. All stakeholders agreed that the competitiveness of these actors is to be enforced and supported to grant the replication of polycentricity that is an important element of the Milano-Bologna system.
- **The attractiveness of peripheral and mountain areas** is a critical issue due to the lack of infrastructures and services: the tendency towards concentration of functions in metropolitan areas is perceived as the main threat to peripheral areas. The integration of marginal areas in the corridor is also affected by the **fragility of small municipalities**, where an absence of technical skill in the public administration severely limits the ability to understand and implement the aims set by regional and European programming and to insert local planning within the frame of a system covering a vast area. There is a strong need for forms of communication and diffusion capable of transferring the results of debates on the Milano-Bologna area even to the smaller municipalities.
- Another critical issue regards the regulation of functions organized at trans-territorial scale: Logistics, mobility, utilities, environmental functions. The main obstacles to **the innovation of utilities** are those arising from the fragmentation of territories, which limit efficiency and cause a massive delay in the diffusion of new technologies.
- Regarding **logistics systems**, the strategic importance of the corridor for freight flows brought to congestion, land use and competition between hubs. There is a need for a stronger dialogue between the worlds of logistics and institutions, which are governed by different logics and rhythms: the rigidity of institutional assets does not allow for the upgrades of infrastructure systems that would be necessary to accompany the change of economic geographies.
- **Mobility** is a key factor for integrating the corridor: the high-speed railway line seems to have led to drops in terms of accessibility in the areas not covered by its stations due to the lack of interregional trains able to guarantee the connection to the HSR. This already complex picture further suffered by the Covid-19 crisis, which has changed the demand for mobility and the pace of commuting.
- Last but not least, all stakeholders agreed that an integrated vision of the Milano-Bologna area should consider the system not only as a large metropolitan region but also as a large bioregion, in which to investigate the possibilities of **integration between the natural system** (starting from the Po river, which is the most important ecologic corridor in the area, and from rural areas) **and the urban system**, leading in the direction of better sustainability. An issue which became more urgent during the Covid-19 crisis, which demonstrated the correlation between environmental quality, quality of life and public health.

Starting from these critical issues, the discussion carried out by economic, functional and territorial actors within the IMAGINE's program of focus groups, seminars and forums expressed **a common interest in the construction of a regional scale imaginary around some key points**: sustainable development, contrast to climate change, reduction of soil consumption, mobility, but also new issues exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic, like urban logistics, use of public spaces, changes in residential dynamics. Starting from these assumptions, it has been discussed the opportunity to consider The EU Green Deal as a framework for new trans-local alliances for the regulation of many of these issues, which require actions organized at the corridor scale to produce good results.

The organization of an ITI for the Milano-Bologna region, aimed at the production of a common strategy on which local projects could be based, have been discussed, leading to the agreement of some indications and criteria to inspire future cooperative actions:

A) Sustainability as the basis for the development of a shared vision for the integration of the Milano-Bologna region

Sustainable development requires the redefinition of objectives and actions regarding environmental quality, land management, quality of life, transition from linear to circular economies, as well as the ability to activate an innovative vision of ecosystem services, recognizing the close interaction between urban territories and reserves of environmental resources. In order to define a coherent program for sustainability, new spatial arrangements, different from those defined by the current administrative borders, must be made. Many local governments and stakeholders in the Milano-Bologna corridor already organized actions towards improved sustainability based on horizontal cooperation: Regions, Metropolitan cities, Bank Foundations, the Po River Basin Authority. These actors could play a pivotal role in the organization of a new model for integration between the natural and anthropogenic system at the corridor scale. Still, the inclusion in the governance of other public actors and private stakeholders (i.e. utilities providers, mobility providers, third sector) will be critical to allow the gathering of intelligence and resources (including the ones made available by the PNRR) needed to build and implement an effective strategic plan for sustainability.

B) Mobility and logistics are key factors in the governance of urban processes and economic competitiveness in the Milano-Bologna area

In the new scenario dominated by increased mobility of people, goods and information, mobility and logistics became crucial issues. The debate highlighted the need to move from a "corridor" to a "platform" approach in the governance of mobility in the Milano-Bologna system, to provide an efficient answer to the changes in the demand generated the Covid-19 breakout. Around the skeleton of the corridor, where infrastructures and functions are concentrated, a "nervous system" must be built to assure that the people can get to their destination in a reasonable time from all the territories of the area (this will be also functional to the revitalization of marginal areas). Such a system requires better utilization of existing assets and more intense use of intermodality (both in regional and urban mobility): local governments should define common objects and criteria to allow operators to organize their projects and integrate their offer of mobility in an efficient way.

Similarly, logistics systems require the definition of common rules and objectives at the corridor level, surpassing local and regional differences to foster the integration and efficiency of the existing platforms, to create new services and infrastructures (i.e., urban distribution systems, new logistic hubs) minimizing their impact on human and environmental systems, to pursue traffic concentration as a mean to achieve a better connection to the Mediterranean ports, to increase train use, to reduce load breakings.

C) Research and innovation systems require more robust integration

An essential part of the northern Italy production system is concentrated between Milano and Bologna, with numerous supply chains oriented towards innovation and export and multiple university institutes, research centres, and technopoles engaged in developing and disseminating new knowledge and technologies. Yet, each region has its own platform for sharing projects and created different styles of governance for the innovation system. This situation causes duplications and competition between research centers. Experiences of trans-regional innovation programs should be encouraged to share experiences and projects between the two regions, particularly regarding the innovation of SME (starting from functional networks already operational such as the EEN SIMPLER consortium). Stronger integration between the innovation networks of Lombardia and Emilia-Romagna could help the research system to front the challenges posed by climate change, circular and foundational economy.

D) Efficiency and innovation of utilities must be pursued in order to achieve better sustainability and quality of life

In the Milano-Bologna system, three out of the four leading national public utilities operators are all currently engaged in a strategic effort towards the resilience of networks and services, the improvement of quality and capillarity of their offer reduction of climate-altering emissions. Thanks to these operators and the presence of important research centres, the Milano-Bologna area can become a laboratory for the development and experimentation of sustainable innovations of utilities, especially if an action by the institutions accompanies the efforts of the individual actors. This perspective can provide the premises to regulate the competition and favour the coherence of the offer with the planning objectives.

E) New multi-level governance models are needed to regulate the variety and complexity of the environmental, socio-technical, and institutional ecosystem of the macro-region

The increasing mobility and evolution of functions in the Milano-Bologna corridor and the challenges of sustainability, contrast to climate change, the transition from linear to the circular economy, highlight the mismatch between functions and institutions. These issues demand a glocal approach: changes in the institutional framework must govern issues organized transversally to administrative boundaries. The organic connection between local and global levels requires, in fact, the ability of the territory to reorganize itself through a “political” compromise with its functions. Many local stakeholders already started horizontal networks to regulate functions surpassing administrative boundaries: chambers of commerce and industry association for the governance of economic functions; urban and metropolitan institutions, and ANCI, for the governance of urbanization processes; the Po River Basin Authority and bank foundations for environmental functions. Yet the lack of funds and institutional tools for governance of trans-territorial issues is a critical problem.

The changes in the functional scenario require a revolution of the institutional practices towards an improved capacity of the administrations to work together on common goals. New multi-level governance models are needed, based on the distribution of power among different levels and on strong cooperation between public and private actors both on the horizontal and vertical axis. These new governance models should also be able to work on variable geometries in order to intervene on the different functions, since neither an “optimal size” nor “optimal shape” emerges to govern the Milano-Bologna system: a shared vision of urban development must necessarily allow open territorial aggregations, responsive to specific needs, recognizing the value of differences and variety.

As a first step towards the activation of an ITI for the Milano-Bologna region, **the final event of the project launched the proposal to transform the IMAGINE network in a permanent forum**, to foster the production of intellectual capital (information exchange), social capital (creation of trust among the actors) and political capital (alliances for the future cooperative actions).

An ITI for the Milano-Bologna region, inspired by the EU Green Deal perspective, could produce a common strategy for the transformation of urban and regional scenarios, on which local projects, each taking resources from different European and national programs, could be based, starting from the identification of a critical issue to be fronted with a “flagship project” (i.e., the regulation of logistics and mobility systems along the corridor).

All these actions ask for a common identity and vision for the Milano-Bologna region as a prerequisite for successful cooperation between local administrations and stakeholders. The Milano-Bologna corridor needs to recognize itself as a system. In the absence of perception by local actors of belonging to the same system, constructing a shared vision is more complex and risks being only episodic. Building a subjectivity of the territorial system, helping stakeholders and local actors develop a sense of sharing and belonging, is a crucial pre-requisite for a greater density of collaboration. This can only be achieved with the inclusion of private actors and local communities in the governance: not only to ensure the alignment of demand and solutions but also to diffuse the awareness of the interdependences between metropolitan areas, small cities, marginal areas. The process of defining a common identity and vision through the ITI tool could be very important to interpret the challenges of environmental and social sustainability as an opportunity to achieve a more efficient and fair spatial organization of social and economic functions and to build new development opportunities.

Developing a sense of territorial identity will also allow the Milano-Bologna system to dialogue with public institutions at the national and European levels. The IMAGINE project can therefore represent a starting point for the development of strategic networks and programs able to govern the transformation of urban

and regional scenarios both within the Milano-Bologna corridor as well as by acting as a model for other corridors, in line with the European Union's urban and regional development policies.



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