

# Comparative Analysis of Integrated Planning in Three European Metropolitan Regions

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The increasing complexity of territories generates polarizations in atypical areas, also thanks to synergistic interactions between urban poles with different specializations. In those contexts urban rail networks have a crucial role in structuring cities, especially if they have form and dimension of a metropolitan region. Regional and urban railway networks within vast areas tend to counterbalance and distribute in the territory the urban weights of population, employment and services, and guide the process of reorganization of the activities in metropolitan contexts.

Territorial planning nowadays searches for an equilibrium between increasing transports' efficiency and the harmonization of places, so that rail connections (be they undergrounds or urban trains) would help in transforming the use of the given spatial distributions, for possibly influencing the reshaping of urban structures, and sometimes for modifying the form of metropolitan cities.

This paper analyses three recent European plans (Naples, Barcelona, the South Wing of the Randstad), with the aim of highlighting the similarities and the differences in interpreting the "model" of metropolitan regions, and the ultimate goal of offering some hints which flourish from the confrontation of different approaches for solving similar problems and achieving comparable goals.

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