

Governance, institutional stewardship and local identity: the Area Regional Territorial Plans experience in Lombardy *

Gobernanza, administración institucional e identidad local: la experiencia de los Planes Territoriales Regionales de Área en Lombardía

FULVIO ADOBATI

Architect - Urban planner

Associate Professor in Urban Planning

Università degli Studi di Bergamo, Dipartimento di Ingegneria e Scienze Applicate (Bergamo, Italy)

fulvio.adobati@unibg.it

ORCID: [0000-0001-6909-3661](https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6909-3661)

EMANUELE GARDA

PhD Urban Planner

Research Fellow in Urban Planning

Università degli Studi di Bergamo, Dipartimento di Ingegneria e Scienze Applicate (Bergamo, Italy)

emanuele.garda@unibg.it

ORCID: [0000-0002-9048-0970](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9048-0970)

Recibido/Received: 30-09-2019; Aceptado/Accepted: 13-03-2020

Cómo citar/How to cite: Adobati, Fulvio & Garda, Emanuele (2020): "Governance, institutional stewardship and local identity: the Area Regional Territorial Plans experience in Lombardy", *Ciudades*, 23, pp. 23-48. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24197/ciudades.23.2020.23-48>

Este artículo está sujeto a una licencia "[Creative Commons Atribución-No Comercial 4.0 Internacional](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/)" (CC BY-NC 4.0) / This article is under a "[Creative Commons License: Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0. International](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/)" (CC BY-NC 4.0)

Abstract: This paper analyses the planning implementation conducted by the Lombardy Region, in two different inter-municipal realities, as a useful example in a local context: the Area Regional Territorial Plan Alpine Valleys and the Area Regional Territorial Plan of the Franciacorta geographical area. These two complex experiences suggest positive conditions for the implementation of policies of Urban-Rural/Mountain partnerships to reach common goals and enhance urban-rural relationships, and complex institutional/administrative frameworks for activating multi-level governance processes.

Keywords: Territorial planning, urban-rural relationship, multilevel governance, inter-municipal cooperation tools; Lombardy Region.

* This article analyses the experience of territorial planning in the Lombardy Region (Italy). The analysis of the two case studies is based on the participation, as a regional technical-scientific support consultancy, of the authors of the two PTRAs Alpine Valleys and Franciacorta. Sections 1 and 2 by Fulvio Adobati. Sections 3 and 4 by Emanuele Garda.

Resumen: Este artículo analiza la ejecución de los planes aprobados por la Región de Lombardía en dos realidades intermunicipales diferentes, como ejemplo útil en un contexto local: el Plan Territorial Regional de Área de los Valles Alpinos y el Plan Territorial Regional del Área Geográfica de la Franciacorta. Estas dos complejas experiencias sugieren condiciones positivas para la aplicación de políticas de asociación entre las zonas urbanas y rurales y la montaña para alcanzar objetivos comunes y mejorar las relaciones urbano-rurales, y marcos institucionales y administrativos complejos para activar procesos de gobernanza multinivel.

Palabras clave: Planificación territorial, relación urbano-rural, gobernanza multinivel, instrumentos de cooperación intermunicipal, Región de Lombardía.

In Italian context the inter-municipal scale still represents a central challenge to the govern of territory, due to the decisional-making structure of administrative levels, widely recognized, but notoriously practiced with difficulty and inefficiency. The contribution, by the context of Lombardy Region, analyses two recent experiences of planning in the territorial scale.

The two devices, which deal with different territorial situation (one mountain's "weak" area and a foothill context of a wine production), introduce the interest for the multilevel governance attitude on which they are based.

1. BOUNDARIES AND PLURALITY

Located in the North of Italy, between the mountain range of the Alps and the flow of the Po River, Lombardy Region represents a particular geographical and administrative context. With a surface area of about 24,000 square kilometres and almost 10 million inhabitants, it can be compared to a nation. Considering population, it is the third most populated region in Europe after Île-de-France and Baden-Württemberg. Lombardy is in a strategic position, exactly at the intersection of the axis that links the Atlantic Ocean with Eastern Europe and northern Europe with the Mediterranean region. This territory is divided in eleven provinces, one metropolitan area (Milan) and 1523 municipalities¹. This last value is important if compared, for example, with other Italian regions that have a less administrative fragmentation².

The complexity is not limited to the administrative plan but concerns other topics too. From the physical environment view, Lombardy is characterized by the presence and the alternation of six areas, which from the North to the South, compose regional territories with clear rationality³. More complex is the

¹ It should be noted that in the Italian legal system, even in a multitude of integrated programming tools that see the Region as the reference decision-making subject in the most relevant cases, the local municipalities maintain a strong role in decisions concerning land use.

² Given the considerable number of municipalities in Lombardy, the three neighbouring regions are characterized by a more limited administrative division (Piedmont: 1181, Emilia-Romagna: 328, Veneto: 563).

³ The areas are the following: Alpine, Pre-Alpine, Hilly, High Plain, Low Plain and Apennine.

decomposition determined by other interpretative keys, often different between them, used not only by the regional planning tools but by some important researches as well.

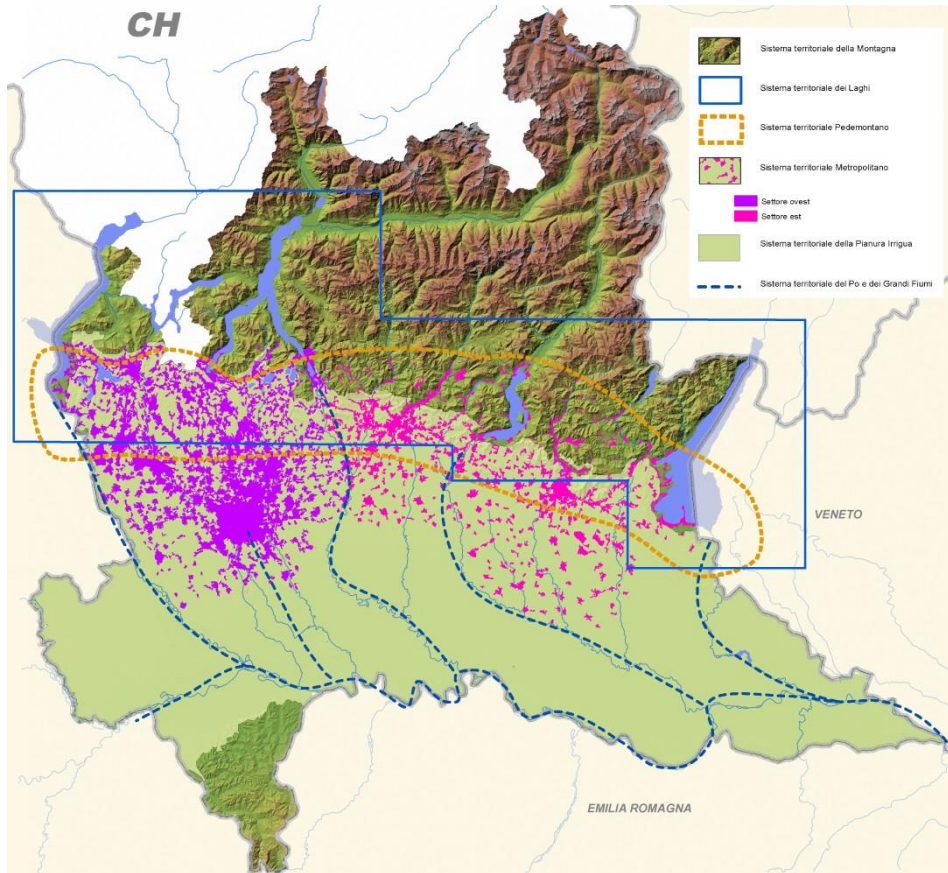


Figure 1: The different territorial systems that characterize Lombardy.

Source: Regional Territorial Plan of Lombardy.

The national research *Itaten* (1996)⁴, in its in-depth study of the Lombard case realized by the research group of the Politecnico di Milano, recognized sixteen different “settlement environments”⁵. This configuration has considered aggregations of municipalities that are indifferent to provincial boundaries and

⁴ The research, promoted by the Directorate General of the Territorial Coordination of the Ministry of Public Works, was developed by numerous researchers from 16 Italian universities (the results are reported in Clementi, Dematteis & Palermo, 1996).

⁵ The expression intends to include the different territorial configurations generated by environmental and socio-economic characteristics and by the prevailing geographies of relationships.

coherent with the economic, social and settlement characteristics of local systems.

The Regional Landscape Plan, through an analysis and interpretation that considered the elements that give the sense and the identity of the area itself, its perceptive component, its cultural content, has come to recognize the presence of 23 geographical areas. These are also situations that highlight the presence of:

“...more organic territories, of recognized geographical identity. They are distinguished both by their morphological components, and by the historical-cultural notions that qualify them: on the one hand, they are delineated through a more minute examination of the territory, its forms, its structure, its relations, on the other hand through the perception that its inhabitants have of it or through the figurative and literary construction that served to introduce them in the current usage language.” (Regione Lombardia, 2010: 19).

Finally, the Regional Territorial Plan, approved in 2018, has introduced, in order to respond to different purposes⁶, a new division of the Lombard territory. The 33 “homogeneous territorial areas” identified by the Plan are the result of the recognition of a plurality supported by an intense thematic variety, namely:

- The physical morphology of the regional territory.
- Recognition of elements of the landscape and environmental system.
- The selection of the rural elements that characterize the local identity.
- The historical structure of the settlements and their evolution.
- The existing infrastructural framework and the forecasts of new works.

In this complex territorial and institutional framework, the necessity to coordinate territorial planning, on a supra-local scale, for situations of regional importance⁷, has led several regions to formulate governmental instruments at the territorial-inter-municipal scale; in Lombardy, the Area Regional Territorial Plan (*Piano Territoriale Regionale d’Area*, PTR) represents the instrument that faces the difficult fulcrum (often unresolved) of the relationship between

⁶ This is an amendment to the Regional Territorial Plan in force which was promoted to implement the new regulations on the containment of land consumption introduced by the Lombardy Region with resolution CR n. 411 of 19 December 2018.

⁷ In the Lombard territory, the area of Milan has represented a relevant context due to different supra-local planning experiences. As Balducci, Fedeli & Pasqui (2011) have effectively recognized and described, the first significant experience was the inter-municipal plan (*Piano Intercomunale Milanese*) between the 1950s and 1960s. A second important step was in the 1970s and 1980s with an attempt to establish new intermediate institutions (the so-called “*comprensori*”). Following a new national law (No. 142/1990) the issue was addressed in the 1990s by conferring new powers and the role of coordinating municipal decisions (after the failure of many previous experiences). Subsequently, the regions assumed an increasingly more significant role, which was partly the result of a process of an “incomplete federalism”.

inter-community and territorial planning (Fedeli, 2006), aimed at implementing the lines set by the Regional Territorial Plan.

1.1. A new tool for territorial design

The Lombardy Territorial Regional Plan (*Piano Territoriale Regionale*, PTR), approved by the regional council with deliberation No. 951 of 19 January 2010, provides the programming tools for the development of some territorial areas in the PTR, as an opportunity to promote regional competitiveness and balance the territory. The purpose of these complex devices is, therefore, to specify the goals and strategies of development on a default territorial scope and, in a manner consistent with them, to outline a strategic reference scenario, i.e. a guide for coordinated and effective actions regarding all the programming of the involved territorial entities. The plan calls for:

- A system of objectives to sum up the needs and aspirations of the territory.
- Guidelines for territorial changes to promote sustainable development and maximize opportunities.
- Countryside regulations to protect and maximize the territorial resources.

The PTR investigates the socioeconomic and infrastructural objectives to pursue in more detail, can dictate the criteria necessary for procuring and allocating resources and provide precise and coordinated instructions for governing the territory, also with reference to the estimates of settlements, the forms of environmental compensation and recovery and the regulations for the actions in that territory. At the same time, these tools in practices are placed in the space of strategic planning⁸, considering their character as “social process through which a range of people in diverse institutional relations and positions come together to design plan-making processes and develop contents and strategies for the management of spatial change” (Healey, 1997: 5).

The PTR is, therefore, the territorial governance tool that ensures implementing an effective synergy between the strategies of economic and social development, and safeguards environmental sustainability for part of the territory, taking a proactive approach in the protection and enhancement of the environmental components and the landscape.

The provisions and the contents of the PTR may have a direct and mandatory effect on the municipalities and provinces included in its scope. Provinces, municipalities, and other local bodies should align their tools to the

⁸ It is essential to underline that with the general and polysemic expression “strategic planning” (Mazza, 2013), a broad set of concepts, procedures and tools can be identified (Sartorio, 2005).

provisions of the guidelines provided in the PTRAs and incorporate those having prescriptive value during the first variations of their respective planning tools.

Since 2010, the Lombardy Region has approved the following PTRAs:

- The “PTRA Navigli Lombardi”, created with the aim of promoting the development of several municipalities affected by the presence of this channels system.
- The “PTRA Montichiari Airport”, introduced to coordinate the sustainable development of the Airport within a broad framework that includes the municipalities affected by its presence and its territorial effects.
- The “PTRA Media and Alta Valtellina”, which promotes the balanced development of the Media and Alta Valtellina through the enhancement of the environmental heritage and the governance of economic opportunities.
- The “PTRA Alpine Valleys”, which favours the enhancement of mountain areas, in particular the Orobie Bergamasche and the Valsassina Plateau, through proposals for economic and sustainable development.
- The “PTRA Franciacorta”, which proposes new solutions of territorial organization aimed at reducing the consumption of land and promoting urban regeneration and the enhancement of cultural and landscape identities.

This paper goes through these last two cases, due to their territorial characterization of intermediate dimensions⁹, disconnected from the current institutional borders, and to the challenges contained in the two processes both on the construction of relevant project geographies and on the issue of multilevel governance (Sieverts, 2011).

The condition of “middle” territories (suburban, post-metropolitan), although with a significant recognizability as in the two cases, makes even more evident the need to adopt a “transcalar approach” (Casti, 2013), adapted to the different themes. The territorial dimension can therefore no longer be assumed in a univocal form, but more pertinently as a transcalar one, since the actions can involve simultaneous actors and resources related to different territorial scales (Brenner & Schmid, 2015; Salone, 2005; Soja, 2000).

⁹ In the two analysed cases, the University of Bergamo played an active role as a scientific consultant. The discussion of the two cases therefore contains direct knowledge and an “interested” look.

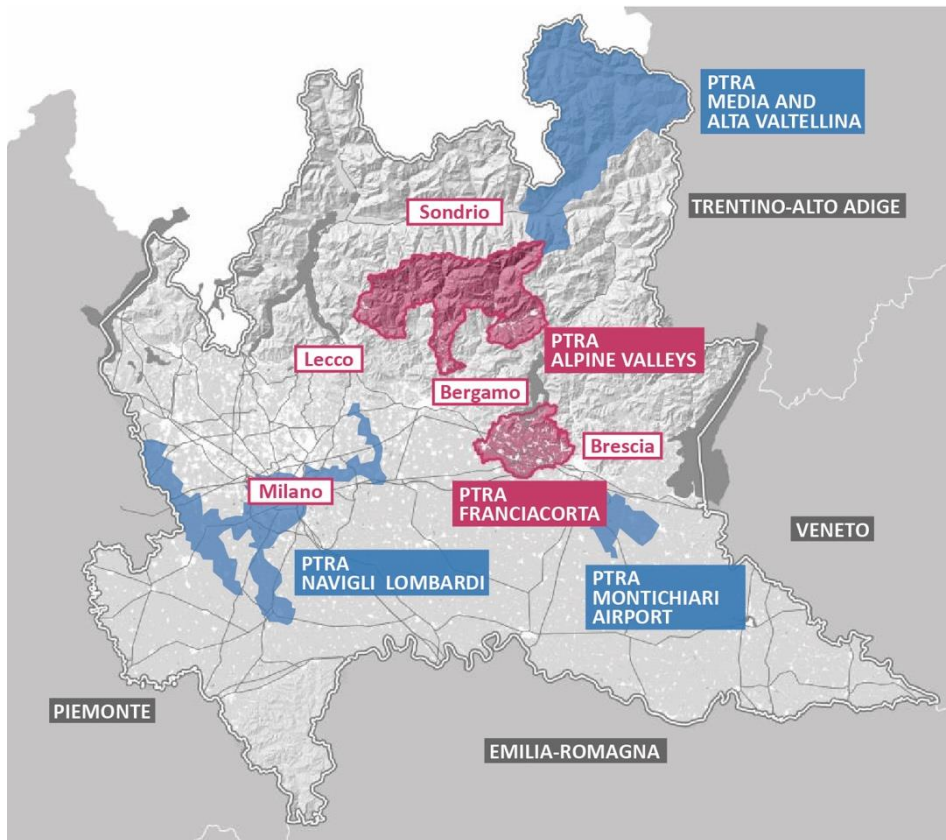


Figure 2: The five PTRA approved in the Lombardy region; in red, the two PTRA analysed: Alpine Valleys and Franciacorta. Source: Authors.

In a context crossed by very different conditionings and tensions (between metropolitan dynamics and “slow territories”), such as the Lombard one, “multiscalar methodologies” (Brenner, 2000) appear inescapable (Balducci, Fedeli & Curci, 2017; Harvey, 2014; Schmid, 2014). An approach that, while establishing a defined scope here, necessarily works “on unstable and transcalar geographies, on assemblages, defined close to contingent practices and relational intersections” (Fedeli, 2013: 5). Furthermore, after an extensive season of radical mutations and reducing in our capacity to describe and shape urban complexes (Healey, 2015), traditional and Euclidian (Friedman, 1993) planning tools seem to be inefficient¹⁰, because they are designed for situations

¹⁰ Albrechts and Balducci (2013: 17) underlined that the traditional “land-use plans remain too much of an administrative framework for development instead of an action plan aimed at the implementation of visions and concepts.”

of stability (Schön, 1973)¹¹. This inefficiency in the management of problems, challenges and opportunities of our cities and region (Albrechts, 2012) highlights even more:

“...the fragmentation and multiplication of the actors, the increasing complexity of the decision-making process and the emergence of new forms of multi-level governance, which is accompanied by a search for new models for the territorial integration of policies and the spread of new principles for planning and programming influenced by EU.” (Albrechts & Balducci, 2013: 17).

In the specific cases that are analysed in this contribution, the PTRAs have emerged as an instrument with strategic aims, in addition and not such as a substitute for territorial planning, through which the municipalities and the actors involved, overcoming the territorial limits of the urban planning tools¹², have adopted territorial-scale governance strategies.

In general terms, strategic planning has acted as an institutionalized tool for territorial governance, as a governance device capable of integrating networks of actors and building consensus around development strategies and, finally, as a social conversation practice capable of activating actors and internal resources for new or reinterpreted projects (Palermo & Pasqui, 2008).

2. FRAGILE MOUNTAINS AND TOURIST HOMES: THE PTRAs ALPINE VALLEYS

The PTRAs Alpine Valleys involves 45 municipalities belonging to two provinces (Lecco and Bergamo), one Regional Park (*Parco Regionale Orobie Bergamasche*) and three Mountain Communities (Valle Brembana, Valle Seriana, Valsassina-Valvarrone-Val d’Esino and Riviera), transversely placed in relation to the traditional administrative references.



Figure 3: Examples of open spaces and built-up areas of the PTRAs Alpine Valleys environment.
Source: PTRAs Alpine Valleys, Lombardy Region.

¹¹ The reflection by Ivan Tosics is particularly effective: “administrative borders are an element of resistance [...] we are trying to govern the city and the society of the 21st century with the governments of the 20th century and borders of the 19th century” (Tosics, 2011: 63-64).

¹² The reconsideration of the concept of limit has often emerged also with reference to the possibility of accepting some “crossings”. Planning, says Balducci (2012: 5), “has always been based upon a linear relationship between territory and authority, while is now being called upon to work across territories, without any stable reference to defined authorities and defined boundaries.”

This is also an articulate and complex territorial context under morphological, environmental, socio-economic and infrastructural profiles. The PTRA municipalities represent together a population of about 47,100 inhabitants; these small villages are located along slopes and at high altitudes; 30 municipalities out of 45 have a population of less than 1,000 inhabitants and 8 of these have a population of less than 200 inhabitants.

The municipalities have been chosen based on two indicators:

- Classes of disadvantage attributed to municipalities, pursuant to the regional Committee resolution (DGR) No. 10443 of 30/09/2002.
- High presence of unoccupied dwellings in the municipal territory (“second homes”).

Regional activity in the last few years has been developed to enhance the Lombard mountains as a resource, identifying policies aimed at countering the depopulation, safeguarding the environmental characteristics, enhancing mountain farming and typical local productions, all in order to reduce the infrastructural gap with the bottom of the valley and make the most of the tourist and cultural aspects.

The territorial scenario, however, has changed profoundly in recent decades as a consequence of:

- The great process of relocation of economic activities and residence, which have concentrated populations at the bottom of the valley and in some tourist areas of the mountain and has produced a dangerous fragility in the slopes abandoned by the population.
- The evolution of the real estate market (phenomena of “second homes”) that has produced, in some cases, consequences of urban order worthy of careful control because they have arisen in a territory that is extremely delicate and connoted by high environmental values.
- The tourist industry, which most greatly represents the contradictions and imbalances of the mountain territory. It is an important economic resource but faces difficulties in involving spaces vaster than the few external and more renowned centres, responding to selective request addressed to winter sports or to the phenomenon of second homes.

From the set of tools examined, the main issues used to understand the particularities of the mountain environment have emerged along with their relative evidence: depopulation, socio-economic fragility, disadvantage, infrastructure accessibility, tourism, environmental resources and anthropic garrison.

The complexity of environmental problems increasingly requires the development of integrated approaches, differing policies that will evaluate the specific issues, the recovery of abandoned rural areas or derelict industrial areas, the revival of the functions of the protected areas, the protection of the

rich, diverse and peculiar water heritage, the connection of some disadvantaged areas with a network of services and more efficient technology and the development of sustainable mobility.

2.1. The strategic spatial plan and system objectives

The Lombard mountains play a strategic role in the regional territorial configuration, and the PTRA should focus and call for some fundamental objectives in the individual, specific, local situations:

- Promote a model of endogenous development of the areas, which makes them able to exploit their resources to their relative advantages.
- Pursue stable and ongoing growth, even in mountainous areas.
- Ensure an adequate level of services in order to help the population that does not want to leave remain (for example the elderly) and to attract new residents (for example young people), who, in the presence of certain conditions, may decide to reside in the mountains again.
- Identify the complementarity and integration between mountain areas, areas at the bottom of the valley and the lowlands (where the complementarity also plays a role as a connector, interregional or international, in the mountain).

The PTRA Alpine Valleys tries to avoid the depopulation of the mountain, and the consequent abandonment of the territory's control.

This kind of plan was chosen because it is an innovative programming tool, able to meet the changing needs of society, already successfully tested by the regional administration and in line with the EU's request for which the allocation of funds is possible only in the presence of a large strategic area plan.

In territorial terms, the strategic spatial plan of the PTRA Alpine Valleys, in order to relaunch this part of the territory, is inserted in the more comprehensive wide plan of the slow corridor of Bernina which connects Milan to Switzerland, passing along the Lecco bank of Lake Como, and crossing over the entire Valtellina (it has previously mentioned that for this last part of Italian territory another PTRA has been approved, and it took this route into consideration).

The plan was formed and developed based on three key assumptions:

- The need to identify some strong "objects" and "themes" characterizing the PTRA, able to attract interest and involvement from the local communities.
- The opportunities in a process of "shared construction" of the plan, which foster local responsibility in the general actions.

- A method for narrating the plan which, by excluding any rhetorical argumentation, provides a concise and easily communicated explanation of the project.

A renewed approach to co-planning led to a constructive relationship between the Region and local authorities in the period of managing the PTRA (Adobati & Pavesi, 2018): the most interesting and challenging part of the process began with the need to find the right balance in the Region's planning responsibilities between "command and control" methods and using encouragement and guidelines (accompanying, facilitating, rewarding).

The potential functions of the PTRA include:

- Building a "territorial schedule", i.e. identifying a framework of specific spatial and relational situations in the differences between local territories, divided internally by diversity and repetitions, by consolidation and changes, trying to find some rules in them.
- Identifying a possible "project storyline" that provides a descriptive and prospective "story" on which to base a cohesive view of the territory and its inhabitants, its elements of suffering and fragility, and its assets and potential.

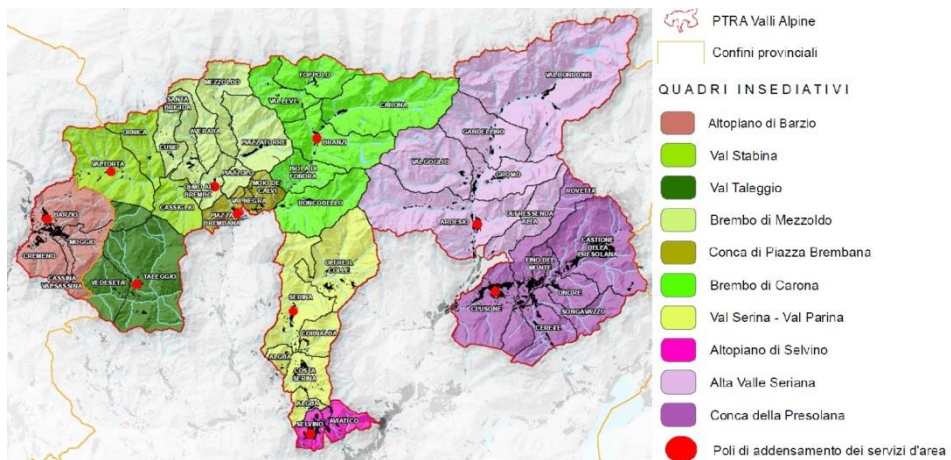


Figure 4: The different "environmental settlements".
Source: PTRA Alpine Valleys, Lombardy Region.

As already mentioned, in recent years, the Region's actions have been developed to maximize the Lombard mountains as a resource, identifying policies aimed at combating depopulation, safeguarding environmental features, enhancing mountain agriculture and typical local products, reducing the infrastructural gap with the lower valley and developing tourism and culture aspects.

Specifically, the elements to think about to ensure overall territory governance and take on regional importance are:

- The identity of the territories to promote by preserving an economic fabric with a “typical”, local vein, relating both to craftsmanship and agriculture.
- Tourism development to be planned and consolidated.

Interpreting the hallmarks of the territorial structure and helping to define an appropriate project both in terms of work and specificity has led to the identification of 10 “settlement frameworks” (validated in the meetings with the local stakeholders).

This structure recognizes territorial specificities in a context where, despite having similar needs to reposition and redefine a model of economic and social development, there are even significant internal differences (for instance, between the strong tourist spots and the weak areas).

The strategic guidelines of the plan are based on the general objective of moving towards sustainable development (in the social, environmental and economic components) in the mountain territories, divided into specific objectives and actions as shown in Table 1.

The specific aims mentioned above (1, 2 and 3) and related operational objectives (from 1.1 to 3.4) match one or more actions in the plan. The system of aims and actions is related to the implementation of the plan through the establishment of rules: directional (strategic) and prescriptive (mandatory).

OVERALL AIM		
SPECIFIC AIM 1	SPECIFIC AIM 2	SPECIFIC AIM 3
Enhance the value of the local identity.	Promote a new model of development based on quality tourism.	Promote new settlement patterns to economise the use of land.
1.1 Retraining, re-use and recovery of the historical centres and the existing rural buildings with the intention of simplification.	2.1 Definition of a territorial marketing strategy to attract tourists from abroad.	3.1 Supporting local authorities to define an economic model of real estate assets that optimizes the resource of second homes.
1.2 Valuation of a regional priority network of bicycle paths and pedestrian mobility.	2.2 Strengthening of widespread accommodation structures for sustainable and non-invasive tourism.	3.2 Promotion of energy efficiency in public and private buildings.
1.3 Valuation of landscape elements, examples of ecosystems with natural and cultural features that represent the identity of the PTRA territory.	2.3 Valuation of traditional local supply chains.	3.3 Development of tools for the rational use of soil.
1.4 Enhancement of human capital and improving the supply of training courses.	2.4 Promotion of technologies for the reduction of the digital divide.	3.4 Recognition of places of strategic importance to improve soil conservation and to promote the maintenance of the territory.

Table 1: System objectives (aims) of the PTRA Alpine Valleys.
Source: PTRA Alpine Valleys, Lombardy Region.

3. PTRA FRANCIACORTA. THE WINE AND ITS LANDSCAPES AS A KEY TO A TERRITORY PROJECT

Located near the southern shore of the Sebino, the portion of the Lombard piedmont area called Franciacorta has a double characterization of interest: on the one hand, it is a very man-made territory, characterized by a marked economic-productive vivacity supported by a robust infrastructure system (motorway, highway and railway); on the other hand, it is a setting with strong environmental and landscape values, characterized by a dense and widespread presence of architectural and cultural heritage and by a dense network of routes dedicated to soft mobility.



Figure 5: Examples of open spaces and built-up areas in the Franciacorta territory.
Source: PTR A Franciacorta, Lombardy Region.

In the collective imagination, the term Franciacorta represents a territory, and a landscape, strongly characterized by wine-growing; territory that finds in the bottles of “bubbles” produced in this *Denominazione di origine controllata e garantita* (method with refermentation in the bottle and “disgorgement”) the vehicle of promotion and diffusion of a successful international brand.

An element of great interest in this “territorial laboratory” is the extraordinary development that the wine culture has recorded since the fifties of the twentieth century: the cultivation of the vineyard that characterized the better exposed slopes of the articulated morphology of the morainic amphitheatre have progressively gained the most suitable parts (under the agronomic profile) of the plan.

The area is also characterized by a consistent presence of productive and commercial settlements, which determine a deterioration of the landscape quality of spatial proximity; the productive and commercial settlements, although they characterize the landscape perception of highly frequented contexts and occupy a significant share of the local economy, do not seem to influence a perception by now widespread of Franciacorta as a “wine landscape” (Adobati, Ferlinghetti, Lorenzi & Signoretti, 2017).

The planning process is supported by analysis of the local geo-historical texture, in order to identify characters and specificity values that contribute to a dense reading of the context, and, at the same time, represent fertile cues for spatial enhancement, with particular reference to implementation of tourism policies. The analysis, intended to articulate the reading beyond the reductive uniqueness often functional to the promotion of so-called “cultural landscapes”, identifying the territorial armour and landscape, divided it into six geo-historical areas. The vision of a Franciacorta in the plural constituted an unusual starting point of the planning process, an interesting element that enriches the unifying visions supported by local marketing, and nowadays associated with the presence of stretches of vineyards currently extended from the slopes to the plain.

This consideration makes evident the effectiveness of the policies about the construction of territorial image that the joint action of the local subjects has produced, together with the consecration of a recognized quality brand and type (wine) now associated with a quality territory: the examples of Chianti or Langhe confirm this consideration.

A territorial vocation built thanks to profitable entrepreneurial initiatives of wineries that have been able to promote themselves and contaminate the sense of territorial identity of the inhabitants. An exemplary case of vocation not as a recognition of a unitary vision (historically, socially, environmentally based), but as a result the actions of territorial actors who pursue their own interests (Mastroberardino, Calabrese & Cortese, 2012).

3.1. The strategic spatial plan and system objectives

For the complex geographical area of Franciacorta, the PTRA has adopted the objective of orienting the territory towards a more sustainable and coordinated economic development, integrating the different interests. For these reasons, the approach chosen is of a multidisciplinary nature, as already experienced in the other PTRAs. It is a methodology that allows, through the definition of a “strategic territorial vision”, to improve the decisions taken and the effectiveness of policies in the medium-long term in the choices of transformation and use of the territory, while providing a common perspective for the future.

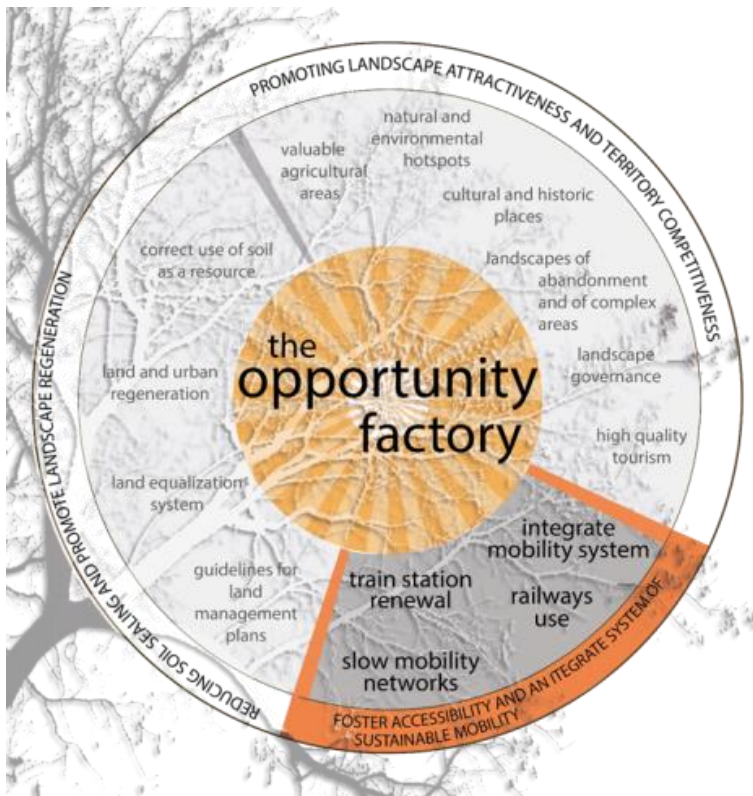


Figure 6: The aims diagram. Source: PTRA Franciacorta, Lombardy Region.

The main intention of the PTRA is to propose integrated and systemic solutions to be implemented through the ordinary tools of territorial and urban planning, with the purpose of support the coexistence between the different economic activities present in the territory, reconciling economic development, social consensus and environmental sustainability (also with projects innovations linked to the concept of “circular economy”).

The Plan seeks to direct its development towards a better territorial and environmental integration through the proposal of solutions that do not produce further soil-sealing, above all favouring the recovery of brownfield sites and the improvement structural and architectural of the existing ones¹³.

In the wine sector, characterized by valuable crops and a high agricultural value of soils, the PTRA proposes the enhancement and protection of the areas characterized by such presences, in order to preserve them from urban transformation hypotheses (re-directing the expansion into more suitable areas).

Therefore, the actions and operational tools proposed by the Plan constitute the tools for a territorial governance, focused on the collaboration of all the actors involved in the whole process of elaboration and approval, also in order to guarantee the success of the Plan¹⁴.

In addition, a fundamental role in defining the operational purposes lies in the desire to experiment within this geographical reality, the contents of the new regional law for the reduction of land consumption¹⁵. In particular, the application of this law concerned: the search for a widespread urban quality for the settlement structures present in the area, through the identification of shared rules; the enhancement of the tourist vocation of the places, reinforcing the opportunities for territorial scale relationships; the enhancement of quality agri-food products and spaces dedicated to agricultural production; strengthening the system of accessibility and sustainable mobility.

The general objective proposed by the Plan, summarized by the expression “the factory of opportunities”¹⁶, can be further divided into three specific objectives:

- Address the development of the territory towards the reduction of land consumption and urban / territorial regeneration.
- Promote landscape attractiveness and territorial competitiveness.

¹³ The Plan proposes administrative simplification tools designed to reduce costs and administrative burdens, often perceived by economic operators as the main obstacle to growth.

¹⁴ The PTRA consists of some thematic annexes such as the Single Building Regulation or the guidelines for municipal urban plans, which have been produced to support the municipal administrations within a common operational framework. This choice has the purpose of harmonizing the work of local administrations.

¹⁵ It is the regional law n.31 dated November 28th, 2014 (Provisions for the reduction of land consumption and for the redevelopment of degraded soil) approved by the Lombardy Region.

¹⁶ This expression emphasizes the role of the plan as an activator of planning oriented towards the objective of territorial quality.

- Support an integrated system of accessibility and sustainable mobility.

The first objective proposes the search for innovative solutions for territorial development to guide local public administrations to a rationalization of land use. This aspect is pursued through the formulation of shared rules for urban regeneration, the reuse of compromised contexts, the minimization of free land consumption, the experimentation of territorial equalization instruments, the promotion of a widespread building and urban quality.

The second objective supports the promotion of economic development focused on valuable crops and increasing the tourist accommodation system.

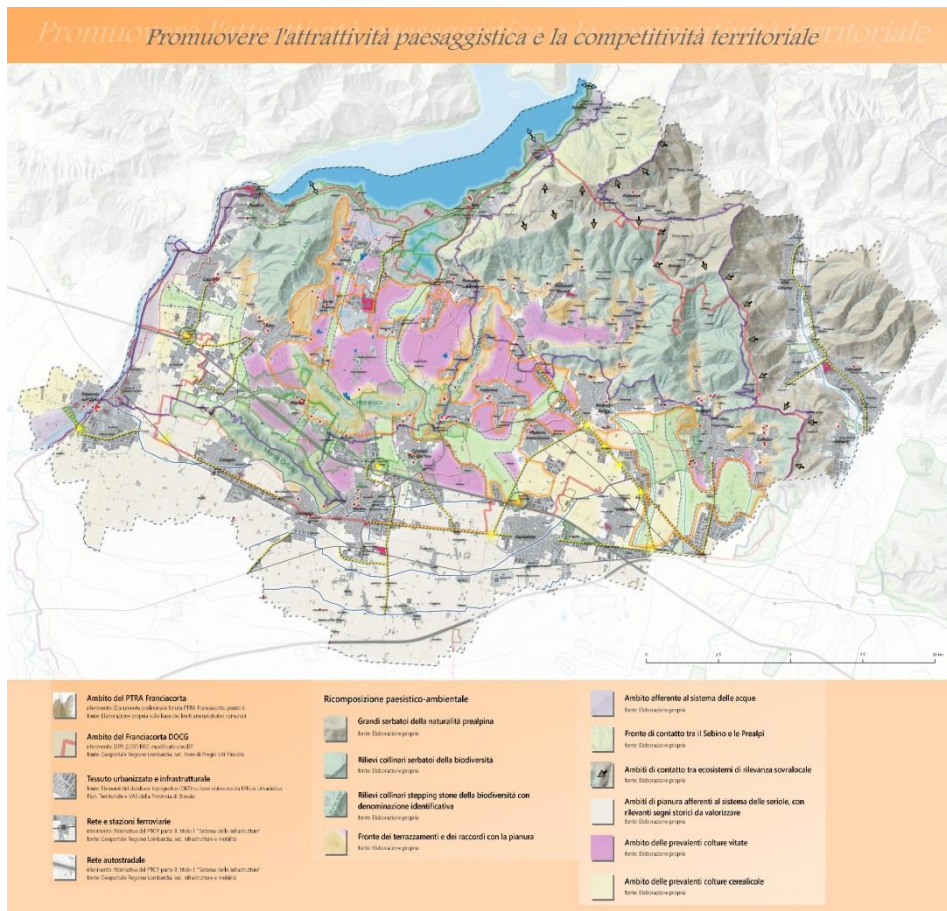


Figure 7: The map of landscape enhancement. Source: PTRA Franciacorta, Lombardy Region.

The last goal is to support the creation of an integrated system of services and mobility within the territory, raising the level of transport accessibility nodes to “ports of access to Franciacorta”. The aim of making the infrastructural systems

more synergistic and functional is to improve existing railway lines (disused or underused). Another strong intervention is the strengthening of cycling mobility, integrating it with the other public and private transport systems, both through the connection of the territory of Franciacorta with the metropolitan contexts, and both with the networking and strengthening of widespread and receptive telematic services tourist.

Each of these three objectives has determined a series of further investigations on more specific aspects (Table 2).

OVERALL AIM		
SPECIFIC AIM 1	SPECIFIC AIM 2	SPECIFIC AIM 3
Reducing soil sealing and promote landscape regeneration.	Promoting landscape attractiveness and territory competitiveness.	Foster accessibility and an integrate system of sustainable mobility.
1.1 Correct use of soil as a resource.	2.1 Natural and environmental hotspots.	3.1 Integrate mobility system.
1.2 Land and urban regeneration.	2.2 Valuable agricultural areas.	3.2 Train station renewal.
1.3 Land equalization system.	2.3 Cultural and historic places.	3.3 Railways use.
1.4 Guidelines for land management plans.	2.4 Landscapes of abandonment and complex areas.	3.4 Slow mobility networks.
	2.5 Landscape governance.	
	2.6 High quality tourism.	

Table 2: System objectives (aims) of the PTR A Franciacorta.
Source: PTR A Franciacorta, Lombardy Region

4. CONCLUSIONS

Italy is currently undergoing a season of reassessment of the territorial planning system¹⁷, which was traditionally based on two opposite scales: the regional one, with the so-called regional landscape plans, and the local or municipal ones, with small scale and specific spatial or traffic plans, for example.

The intermediate in-between scale is a context that lacks definitions and tools. There is a need to address issues and topics at a landscape-territorial scale, beyond

¹⁷ In Italy there has been different attempts at modernization, with the introduction of innovative planning instruments, changes in governance processes, attribution of different competences at different administrative levels and legislative reforms (Servillo & Lingua, 2012).

the single municipality border but comprising the intermediate administrative level, the Italian Provinces. Other examples of medium-scale planning effort correspond to Parks and Protected areas, though they are related only to environmental values, or the recent introduction of the Metropolitan Level which though applies only to the main urban areas of the country (Milan, Turin, Rome and similar).

In order to fill this sort of gap or weakness that characterized the intermediate level planning (Lingua, 2013), Lombardy Region is testing a new planning instrument, the Area Regional Territorial Plan, which is conceived as a tool with a strong strategic attitude, to support specific areas of regional relevance, identified by common and current territorial issues and local identity. This represents a shift from the pre-determined administrative borders of the Province level, to the identification of an area of interest according to specific conditions, such as the marginality of the mountainous areas or the presence of a key node for transport and logistics.

The two experiences presented above, related with a relevant literature¹⁸, have served to define and legitimize “new institutional arenas of government that are themselves changing” (Albrechts, Healy & Kunzmann, 2003: 113), confirming again the idea that planning is an interactive and interpretative process (Healey, 1992).

With regard to the PTRAs Alpine Valleys, its interest emerges in the assessments provided in the report that recognizes the experience among the four best practices in the EU field concerning multilevel governance:

“With regard to regional territorial planning there are three specific challenges:

1) The multi-sectoral dimension of the issues. On the one hand there is clearly a need to protect ‘green’ assets while on the other the need remains to create the conditions to enable the continued human habitation of the area.

2) The institutional framework. Administrative competences are spread across different actors. The Region has competence for energy and, more generally, for economic development while urban planning, housing permits and local activities relating to tourism are located either at the Province or Municipal level.

3) Administrative and institutional culture. In the mountain valleys, local political representatives and administrators traditionally enjoy significant autonomy and thus often find it difficult to coordinate and cooperate with the Region. [...]

The elaboration and adoption of the PTRAs represents a significant change in the approach for governing the area:

- for the regional authority, support for the adoption of a PTRAs in this area meant renouncing the ability to govern the area by imposing its own objectives and strategies (top-down approach);

¹⁸ Already in the 1990s the first changes in the institutional structure were recognized, which generated a new political-institutional protagonism of local authorities and regions, contributing to relocating skills and resources for the development of the territories (Palermo & Pasqui, 2008). By the end of the twentieth century, new strategies have been developed in several parts of Europe (sub-regions and regions) (Salet & Faludi, 2000).

- for the local authorities, the adoption of the PTRA meant adopting a new approach to the governance of the local territory, where their public interventions should be planned while taking into account the overall balance of the entire area.

[...] The key elements forming the basis of the significant involvement of the local stakeholders throughout the overall process of the elaboration of the Plan relate, on the one hand, to the strong political commitment of the regional policy actors and, on the other, to the presence of the University of Bergamo.” (Brignani, 2014: 9-12).

The PTRA Franciacorta represents a path that contains elements of experimentation, able to develop the objectives set by the Lombardy Region:

- The search for innovative territorial development solutions capable of combining the needs of attractiveness and competitiveness of the area with scenarios of rationalization in the territorial organization based on the concepts of urban regeneration, re-use of compromised contexts, minimization of “land consumption”.
- The promotion of initiatives, projects and territorial actions, aimed at enhancing local identities and potentialities in a wider context of a vast area polarity system (Lake Iseo, Lake Garda, Park of Oglio River, Hills Park of Brescia, the Municipalities of the Brescia plain) in order to increase the quality of life of the residents, to benefit the economic system and the competitiveness of the territory, as well as to recognize and strengthen the tourist vocation of the area.
- The strengthening of an integrated system for developing sustainable mobility, which focuses on the inter-modality train-bike and/or car-bike and on the strengthening of existing railway lines, the most appropriate option for the use of the territory of Franciacorta; this system makes it possible to achieve, together with the objectives of qualification and environmental protection, the enhancement of the landscape peculiarities.

The choices adopted in the two experiences described find a motivation in the search for a qualification of the territories, focusing on objectives of regional and medium-long term interest not only linked to the functional aspects, but also to the enhancement of the attractiveness (shared localization/regeneration policies, landscape recomposition interventions and enhancement of territorial fruition networks).

Three elements of specificity are recognizable as necessary ingredients and specificity (in potential) of the PTRA instrument:

- The first specificity lies in the potential active and selective character of the instrument, capable of offering an indispensable degree of flexibility to deal with rapid transition processes and to grasp endogenous and exogenous opportunities (Adobati et al., 2017).

- A structured form of technical support for the conduct of the process, complex in its voluntary and multilevel geographies.
- A form of selective intervention capable of rewarding projects aimed at enhancing the specific features of territorial capital (Mazza, 2016; Conti & Salone, 2012).

In a historical phase of (necessary) rethinking of local levels, the experiences analysed represent an experimentation towards an integrated territorial planning, as a connecting tool between European and national sectoral programming and local planning. However, the observation of these two experiences has allowed the recognition of some critical issues which mainly concern the implementation phase of the different actions.

The PTRAs tool, in the absence of its own financial resources, recognizes its action within the range of projects operating in selective terms. However, these tools design desirable strategies and objectives without defining what the specific financing measures necessary for their realization may be. Other forms of “indirect reward” are also absent, for example of a fiscal nature, to be activated in relation to projects or promoters involved in the implementation of the plan devices (tax aspects would require regulatory action at national level). Compared to the ordinary funding provided by the Region, no form of reward or finalization has yet been provided for the contexts involved by the PTRAs. These limitations require that the parties involved in the implementation play an active role and a remarkable ability to identify and intercept specific funding in support of the projects.

It should be noted that the prescriptive nature attributed by the regional law to the PTRAs has gradually been reconfigured in the planning process such as an exercise in defining strategic action scenarios built through a social learning (Friedman, 1993) involving the different subjects.

The inter-municipal cooperation obtained through the PTRAs represents the result of a long and demanding process of building awareness around a territorial vision. This result, however, is fragile since it focuses on geographies of purpose aimed at responding to specific themes and conditions that can be reduced in the implementation phase due to:

- the specific nature that characterizes the local public subjects involved, since in many cases they are small municipal administrations used to dealing with local needs, economic resources and limited technical resources, due to the absence of dedicated staff.
- the dichotomy that exists, on a temporal level, between these tools capable of producing concrete results in the medium-long term (for the need, for example, to find funds or proceed with more specific project insights) and the expectations of local administrations, often conditioned by the “life cycle” of local administrations. This consideration is associated with the “traditional” risk of loading plans,

as for strategic planning experiences, of excessive expectations (Mazza, 2010) and rhetoric, jeopardizing the implementation phase due to the loss of interest by local institutional subjects.

- the limited cogency that characterizes the indications of the PTRA. As with other strategic planning experiences of the past years promoted in the Italian context, flexibility risks limiting the impact on real urban planning and planning processes.
- the need to preserve over time that “territorial awareness” of the various institutional subjects involved, obtained during the process of sharing and processing the PTRA. The latter issue is important for coordination aspects, since “strategy or a plan by itself does not do much to coordinate [it] is the social process of articulating and using it that achieve this” (Healey, 1997: 10).

A further critical aspect regards the need to guarantee some form of coordination also in the implementation phase. This is a coordination ability both referred to the complex framework of formulated objectives and strategies, and with the need not to give up the multiscale dimension developed by the subjects involved. This theme, therefore, highlights the absence of a subject who plays the role of “director” with respect to the management and implementation of the objectives; during the development of the plan, this stewardship role was played by the Lombardy Region¹⁹ (for guiding and maintaining decision-making processes) through their figures as technical and political referent. A path that seems desirable, and currently being tested in the contexts of the two analysed PTRAs, lies in the active involvement of some local subjects (multi-service agencies, consortia or foundations), known and with a good reputation in the territorial contexts concerned. It is a process of involvement of important subjects, accustomed both to the management of territorial services with “variable geographies”, called to be main actors in exercising a role of territorial stewardship.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Adobati, Fulvio; Ferlinghetti, Renato; Lorenzi, Moris & Signoretti, Federica (2017), “Dalla Franciacorta al Franciacorta (e ritorno). Geografie e brand”, in *EyesReg*, vol. 7, pp. 54-59.

Adobati, Fulvio; Oliveri, Alessandro; Pavesi, Filippo; Pezzagno, Michelle & Tira, Maurizio (2017), “Franciacorta: un brand (e un piano) per molti paesaggi”, in *Atti della XIX*

¹⁹ The need to rethink the role of the Regions through a perspective interested to inter-municipal geographies has long been underlined; De Luca (2015) recognized in the Regions action the opportunity to identify sub-regional arenas for space cooperation.

Conferenza nazionale SIU- Società Italiana degli Urbanisti: Cambiamenti. Responsabilità e strumenti per l'urbanistica al servizio del paese, Roma-Milan, Planum Publisher, pp. 181-188.

Adobati, Fulvio & Pavesi, Filippo (2018), "Alpine Valleys Territorial Plan in the Lombardy Region, an Experimental Model of Governance/Planning for Comparison", in Malikova, Ludmila; Delaneuville, Frédéric; Giba, Marián & Guérard Stéphane -eds.- *Metropolisation, Regionalisation and Rural Intermunicipal Cooperation*, Clermont-Ferrand, Edition Lextenso, pp. 83-96.

Albrechts, Louis (2012), "Reframing strategic spatial planning by using a coproduction perspective", in *Planning Theory*, vol. 12, pp. 46-63. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1473095212452722>.

Albrechts Louis; Healey, Patsy & Kunzmann, Klaus (2003), "Strategic Planning and Regional Governance in Europe", in *APA Journal*, vol. 69, pp. 113-129. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/01944360308976301>.

Albrechts, Louis & Balducci, Alessandro (2013), "Practicing Strategic Planning: In Search of Critical Features to Explain the Strategic Character of Plans", in *disP*, vol. 194, pp.16-27. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/02513625.2013.859001>.

Balducci, Alessandro; Fedeli, Valeria & Pasqui, Gabriele -eds.- (2011), *Strategic Planning for Contemporary Urban Regions*, London-New York, Routledge.

Balducci, Alessandro; Fedeli, Valeria & Curci, Francesco (2017), "Italia Post-metropoli?", in Balducci, Alessandro; Fedeli, Valeria & Curci, Francesco -eds.- *Oltre la metropoli. L'urbanizzazione regionale in Italia*, Milan, Guerini, pp. 9-38.

Balducci, Alessandro (2012), "Planning the post-metropolis", in *disP*, vol. 188, pp. 4-5. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/02513625.2012.702953>.

Balducci, Alessandro (2019), "Territory, Economy, Society and Institutions in Transition", in *disP*, vol. 55, pp. 60-67. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/02513625.2019.1708072>.

Brenner, Neil & Schmid, Christian (2015), "Towards a New Epistemology of the Urban?", in *CITY*, vol. 19, pp. 151-182. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/13604813.2015.1014712>.

Brenner, Neil (2000), "The Urban Question as a Scale Question: Reflections on Henri Lefebvre, Urban Theory and the Politics of Scale", in *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, vol. 24, n°2, pp. 361-378. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2427.00234>.

Brenner, Neil (2004), *New State Spaces. Urban Governance and the Rescaling of Statehood*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.

- Brignani, Nicola (2014), “Lombardy: A new approach to a regional territorial plan”, in European Commission, *Interim Report – Part A.3 Study on promoting multi-level governance in support of Europe 2020*. Available at: <http://www.spatialforesight.eu/mlg.html> (accessed: 30-09-2019).
- Casti, Emanuela (2013), *Cartografia critica. Dal topos alla chora*, Milan, Guerini Associati.
- Clementi, Alberto; Dematteis, Giuseppe & Palermo, Pier Carlo (1996), *Le forme del territorio italiano. II Ambienti insediativi e contesti locali*, Roma-Bari, Laterza.
- Conti, Sergio & Salone, Carlo (2012), “Territori di progetto nella programmazione regionale”, in Bonora, Paola -ed.- *Visioni e politiche del territorio, Storicamente-Quaderni del Territorio*, vol. 2, pp. 68-83. Available at: http://www.storicamente.org/quaderni_territorio.htm (accessed: 30-09-2019).
- Dente, Bruno (2011), *Le decisioni di policy*, Bologna, Il Mulino.
- De Luca, Giuseppe (2015), “Quale ruolo per le Regioni nell’orientare la pianificazione intercomunale?”, in *Urbanistica informazioni*, vol. 263, pp. 9-13.
- Fedeli, Valeria (2006), “Il laboratorio lombardo, tra aporie, potenzialità e limiti”, in *Urbanistica Informazioni*, vol. 20, pp. 148-152.
- Fedeli, Valeria (2013), “Processi di regolazione dell’urbano e questioni urbane emergenti: il post-metropolitano come chiave di lettura di una regione urbana rinnovata e incompleta”, in *Planum*, vol. 27, pp. 2-13.
- Friedman, John (1993), “Toward a Non-Euclidian Mode of Planning”, in *Journal of the American planning Association*, vol. 59, n°4, pp. 482-485. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/01944369308975902>.
- Harvey, David (2014), “Cities or urbanization?”, in Brenner, Neil -ed.- *Implosions/Explosions. Towards a study of planetary urbanization*, Berlin, Jovis, pp. 52-66.
- Healey, Patsy (1992), “Planning through debate. The Communicative Turnin Planning Theory”, in *Town Planning Review*, vol. 63, n°2, pp. 143-162. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3828/tpr.63.2.422x602303814821>.
- Healey, Patsy (1997), “The revival of strategic spatial planning in Europe”, in Healey, Patsy; Khakee, Abdul; Motte, Alain & Needham, Barrie -eds.- *Making Strategic Spatial Plans*, London, UCL Press, pp. 3-19. DOI: https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203451502_chapter_ONE.
- Healey, Patsy (2015), “Spatial imaginaries, urban dynamics and political community”, in *Planning Theory and Practice*, vol. 12, pp. 266-269.

- Lingua, Valeria (2013), “When A Planning Tier Disappear. La cooperazione interistituzionale per la pianificazione di area vasta: temi e problemi tra Italia e Inghilterra”, in *Urbanistica Dossier*, vol. 4, pp. 449-451.
- Mastroberardino, Pietro; Calabrese, Giuseppe & Cortese, Flora (2012), “La vocazione territoriale come mito razionalizzante”, in *Atti del XXIV Convegno annuale di Sinergie: Il territorio come giacimento di vitalità per l'impresa*, pp. 579-590.
- Mazza, Luigi (2010), “Difficoltà della pianificazione strategica”, in *Territorio*, vol. 55, pp. 165-170.
- Mazza, Luigi (2013), “If Strategic Planning Is Everything, Maybe It’s Nothing”, in *disP*, vol. 194, pp. 40-42. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/02513625.2013.859006>.
- Mazza, Luigi (2016), “Un’agenzia autonoma contro la latitanza delle politiche territoriali”, *Il Giornale dell’Architettura*, January 4, 2016. Available at: <https://ilgiornaledellarchitettura.com/web/2016/01/04/luigi-mazza-unagenzia-autonoma-contro-la-latitanza-delle-politiche-territoriali-2/> (accessed: 30-09-2019).
- Palermo, Pier Carlo & Pasqui, Gabriele (2008), *Ripensando sviluppo e governo del territorio. Critiche e proposte*, Santarcangelo di Romagna, Maggioli Editore.
- Regione Lombardia (2010), *Piano Paesaggistico. I Paesaggi di Lombardia. Piano Paesaggistico – Volume 2*.
- Regione Lombardia, (2015), *Piano Territoriale Regionale d’Area Valli Alpine. Orobie Bergamasche e Altopiano Valsassina*.
- Regione Lombardia (2017), *Piano Territoriale Regionale d’Area Franciacorta*.
- Rossi, Maddalena (2014), *Geografie inquiete. Gli spazi intermedi nel territorio postmetropolitano*. Doctoral Thesis, Università degli Studi di Firenze.
- Salet, Willem & Faludi, Andreas -eds.- (2000), *The Revival of Strategic Spatial planning*, Amsterdam, Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen.
- Salone, Carlo (2005), *Politiche territoriali. L’azione collettiva nella dimensione territoriale*, Novara, UTET.
- Sartorio, Francesca (2005), “Strategic Spatial Planning”, in *disP*, vol. 162, pp. 26-40. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/02513625.2005.10556930>.
- Schmid, Christian (2014), “Networks, Borders, Differences: Toward a theory of the urban”, in Brenner, Neil -ed.- *Implosions/Explosions. Towards a study of planetary urbanization*, Berlin, Jovis, pp. 67-80.

Schön, Donald (1973), *Beyond the Stable State*, London, Norton & Co.

Servillo, Loris & Lingua, Valeria (2012), “The innovation of the Italian Planning System: Actors, Path Dependencies, Cultural Contradictions and Missing Epilogue”, in *European Planning Studies*, vol. 22, pp. 400-417. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09654313.2012.752443>.

Sieverts, Thomas (2011), “The In-Between City as an Image of Society”, in Young, Douglas; Wood, Patricia & Keil, Roger -eds.- *Between Infrastructure. Urban connectivity in an age of vulnerability*, Kelowna, Praxis (e)press, pp. 19-27.

Soja, Edward (2000), *Postmetropolis: Critical Studies of Cities and Regions*, Chichester, Blackwell.

Tosics, Ivan (2011), “Governance challenges and models for the cities of tomorrow”. European Commission-Directorate General for Regional Policy. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/studies/pdf/citiesoftomorrow/citiesoftomorrow_governance.pdf (accessed: 30-09-2019).