



POLITECNICO  
DI TORINO

# *Honors thesis*

---

COURSE OF TERRITORIAL, URBAN, ENVIRONMENTAL  
AND LANDSCAPE PLANNING

*Abstract*

## **A GERMANY OF REGIONS**

**A laboratory for spatial planning instruments**

*Supervisor*

Cristiana Rossignolo

*Co-supervisor*

Silvia Saccomani

Karsten Zimmermann

*by*

Vanessa Erika Carriero

December 2015

---

The 'Delrio' reform (Act n. 56/2014) is making changes to Italy's local government system which will provide the planners a great number of opportunities to seize and at the same time also challenges to deal with. In this changing and stressful environment; to solve and move beyond the problems it could be useful to look beyond our own borders to other countries experience and to find out how different cultures have responded to conflicts and questions that are common in metropolitan areas. Definitely, the purpose of the work was to examine different situations that could eventually provide some new suggestions and responses to the Italian's contingency status. This is why the thesis is the result of the research that I have done in Germany at the European Planning Cultures of Dortmund. The German regional planning level is unique in Western European countries as it is an institutional-mandatory tool for spatial planning at the regional/administrative-office level and it represents a tool of brokerage between the federal government and the municipalities. The German's planning system in the nineties regional networks considered a noteworthy instrument oriented to the implementation of spacial policies. Due to the inability to prescribe or to plan these networks, began a season of so called "experimental regionalism". There was a processional transition from region considered as action-entity to a action-space. Metropolitan problems became regional government and governance problems. These ongoing experiments introduced contradictions along with overlapping regional spaces which, instead of replacing, became parallel to the existing institutional entities. Some of the research questions have been: in which sense we can talk about metropolitan organisation efficiency? Are there specific patterns of planning instruments that better handle metropolitan issues? Which are the relationships among decision-making processes and spatial coordination strategies, and finally, to what extent can German planning systems be considered good practice taking into account its complexity and flexibility? For answers to those questions I have examined three case studies which

- Regionalverband
- Frankfurt Rhein-Main;
- Stuttgart Region; \item Regionalverband Ruhr.

Frankfurt Rhein-Main, Stuttgart Region and the Regionalverband Ruhr are three very interesting metropolitan regions for their planning tools, functional purposes, geographic geographic scales and urban policies. Three examples of the difficulty of a institutional fit among socio-economics trends and territorial entities. These case studies are analysed analysed through their formation process, instruments with which they perform and their their governance pattern. "A Germany of Regions" therefore has explored the regional level as an experimental laboratory for planning instruments and as a possible research research level for metropolitan matters solutions. The entire work was articulated on two two parallel elements: metropolitan organizations, with all their shapes, and theirs spatial spatial planning tools. The results of the analysis of German's planning system and of the the case studies did not permitted to bring back the entire planning culture of Germany, and its pluralism, to a one-national-type of planning practice . Indeed, if there are not specific instruments for metropolitan areas, Germany's legislation allows the formation of of municipal associations that could own planning functions. The complexity, caused by

the entanglement of actors, association, competences, function, scales and geographies, denies partly the idealization of a clear, simple and efficient German system. From the research I defined four issues about German's spatial planning:

- The two logics of interpretation common to metropolitan areas, in-out and out-in;
- The significance of spatial planning;
- The governance like a tool for planning government;
- The middle level in the form of planning instruments.

These four matters shows that in Italy, despite recent reforms, is still predominantly a city-culture that failed to achieve a metropolitan aspect, meanwhile in Germany the situation is clearly different. In Germany there is an emphasis with which the everyday political debate deals with local autonomy issues and spatial policies. Emphasis needs to be put on planning practices which allow us to observe changes which are working towards achieving "a Germany of Region" reality.

vanessa.carriero@gmail.com