



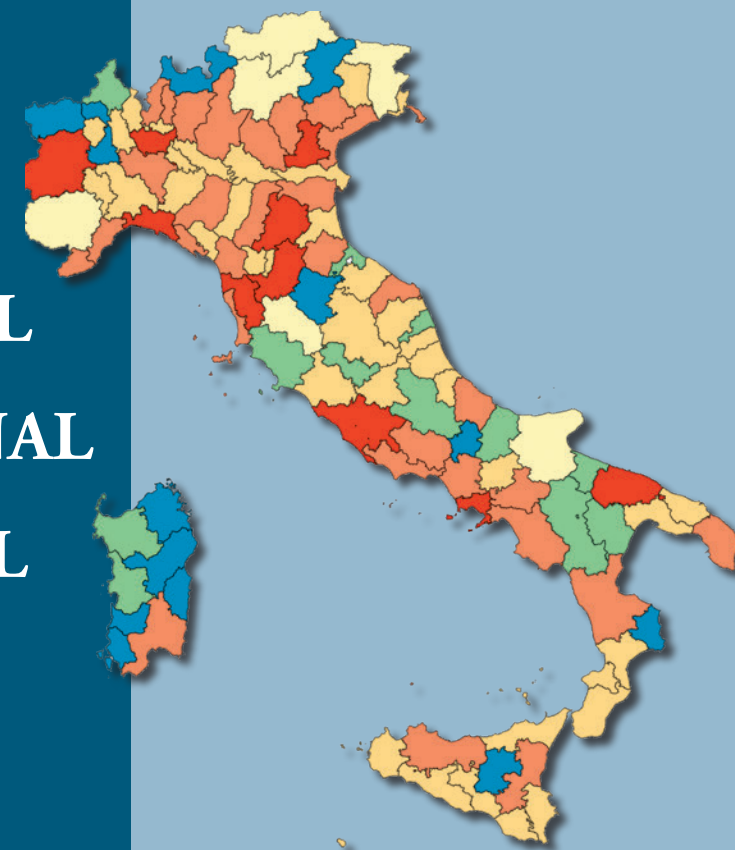
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TERRITORIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL
AND REGIONAL TERRITORIAL COHESION IN ITALY

TERRITORIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL AND REGIONAL TERRITORIAL COHESION IN ITALY



**PLACE EVIDENCE AND POLICY
ORIENTATIONS TOWARDS
EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL**

edited by Maria Prezioso

edited by M. Prezioso

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACT	Agenzia per la Coesione Territoriale – Agency for Territorial Cohesion
AdP	Accordo di Partenariato – Partnership Agreement
BAT	Best Available Techniques
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CBC	Cross Border Cooperation
CE	Commissione Europea – European Commission
CF	Cohesion Fund
CINSEDO	Centro interregionale di studi e documentazione – Interregional Centre for Studies and Documentation
CIPE	Comitato Interministeriale per la Programmazione Economica – Interministerial Committee for Economic Planning
CLLD	Community-Led Local Development
CoR	European Committee of the Regions
CPR	Common Provisions Regulation
DEF	Documento di Economia e Finanza – Document of Economy and Finance
DG	Direzione Generale – Directorate General
EAFRD	European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development
EC	European Commission
EGTC	European Group of Territorial Cooperation
EMFF	European Maritime and Fisheries Fund
ENI	European Neighbourhood Instrument
EP	European Parliament
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ERTMS	European Rail Traffic Management System
ERVET	Emilia Romagna Valorizzazione Economica del Territorio
ESF	European Social Fund
ESIF	European Structural and Investment Funds
ESPON	European Territorial Observatory Network
ETC	European Territorial Cooperation
EU	European Union
FSC	Fondo di Sviluppo e Coesione – National Development and Cohesion Fund
FUA	Functional Urban Area
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIS	Geographic Information System
I&N	Infrastructure and Networks
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IG	Inclusive Growth
IP	Inner Periphery
ITI	Integrated Territorial Investments

YEI	Youth Employment Initiative
LAP	Local Action Plan
MATTM	Ministero dell'Ambiente e della Tutela del Territorio e del Mare – Ministry of Environment and Territory and Sea Protection
MEF	Ministero dell'Economia e della Finanza – Ministry of Economy and Finance
MFF	Multiannual Financial Framework
MEGA	Metropolitan European Growth Area
MIBACT	Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali e il Turismo – Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Tourism
MILPS	Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali – Ministry of Labour and Social Policies
MISE	Ministero dello Sviluppo Economico – Ministry of Economic Development
MIUR	Ministero dell'Istruzione, dell'Università e della Ricerca – Ministry of Education, University and Research
MS(s)	Member State(s)
NEET	Neither in Employment nor in Education or Training
NOP	National Operational Programme
NOP-E&C	National Operational Programme Enterprises and Competitiveness
NOP-EDU	National Operational Programme on Education
NOP-IN	National Operational Programme for Social Inclusion
NOP-I&N	National Operational Programme Infrastructure and Networks
NOP-Metro	National Operational Programme on Metropolitan Cities
NOP-Culture	National Operational Programme on Culture and Development
NOP-R&I	National Operational Programme Research and Innovation
NOP-SME	National Operational Programme Small and Medium Enterprises Initiative
NOP-SAEP	National Operational Programme Systems for Active Employment Policies
NOP-YEI	National Operational Programme Youth Employment Initiative
NUTS	Nomenclature des Unités Territoriales Statistiques – Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics
OPs	Operational Programmes
PGTL	Piano Generale dei Trasporti e della Logistica – General Transport and Logistics Plan
PI	Principal Investigator
PNR	Programma Nazionale di Riforma – National Reform Program
PRIN	Progetto di ricerca di Rilevante Interesse Nazionale – Research Project of National Interest
PTR	Piano Territoriale Regionale – Territorial Regional Plan
R&D	Research and Development
R&F	Resources and Funds
RC	Reddito di Cittadinanza – Citizenship Income
ReI	Reddito di Inclusione – Inclusion Income
RDP	Rural Development Programme
RIS3	Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialisation
ROP	Regional Operational Programme
S3	Smart Specialisation Strategy
SAM	Social Accounting Matrix
SESAR	Single European Sky Air Traffic Management System
SEZ	Special Economic Zone
SG	Smart Growth
SIA	Sostegno per l'Inclusione Attiva – Support for Active Inclusion
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SME	Small Medium Enterprise
SNAI-NSIA	Strategia Nazionale per le Aree Interne – National Strategies for Inner Areas
SNSS	Strategia Nazionale per lo Sviluppo Sostenibile – National Strategy for Sustainable Development
SPAO-SAEP	Sistemi di Politiche Attive per l'Occupazione – Systems of Active Employment Policies
STeMA	Sustainable Territorial economic/environmental Management Approach
STFT	Systemic Territorial Functional Typologies
SuG	Sustainable Growth
SVIMEZ	Associazione per lo Sviluppo dell'industria nel Mezzogiorno – Association for the Development of Industry in Southern Italy
TC	Territorial Cohesion
TEN-T	Trans-European Networks – Transport
TIA	Territorial Impact Assessment
TOs	Thematic Objectives
U	PRIN Unit
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme

CHAPTER XIX

TERRITORIAL COHESION IN THE SICILY'S PLANNING 2014-2020. WHAT ARE POLICY CHOICES FOR NOT BEING ISOLATED/ISLANDERS?

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XIX.1. THE PLANNING OF EUROPEAN FUNDS IN SICILY

In the past five decades the concentration of the population along the northern and eastern coasts of Sicily was strengthened, especially in the metropolitan areas, increasing the differences between urbanized, congested areas but with services, and inner areas, isolated, sparsely populated and almost completely lacking in basic services. Whole towns in inner areas are increasingly assuming the appearance of 'ghost towns' with very few residents and a very few youths having very few skills that can be effective in the labour market (Novembre, 2015). Furthermore, the phenomenon of environmental instability has been intensified due to the hydro-geological instability and the deterioration of landscape values, also caused by the abandonment of agricultural lands when they are not exploited to produce income. It is urgent and necessary to adopt policies that favour real territorial cohesion (Ministero della Coesione Territoriale, 2012).

The delayed, uneven development of Sicily has been the subject of consideration since the Unity of Italy with reports that highlighted the problems and the inadequate policies. After the war period, in 1950, the regional development policy was articulated in two directions, on the one hand the agrarian reform and on the other hand the preparatory infrastructures for industrial development strongly financed by the *Cassa per il Mezzogiorno* (Creaco, 2015). The end of the extraordinary intervention of the State in 1993 substantially changed, redesigning the methods of public intervention in the territory. Fluctuations in the national currency, cuts in public spending and the moralization in the procurement system in Italy had been resolved with total adherence to the principles and rules of the European Union which guaranteed flows of money to its regions. The 1994-1999 planning period was not particularly profitable for the Sicilian Region, which demonstrated all its organizational incapacity to plan serious intervention, spending on often improvised and incon-

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clusive projects and losing much of the resources that had been destined for it. The profound changes and the non-brilliant effects of the investments came in an economic phase in which the South reviewed its geopolitical position not only within the Nation but above all Europe. A phase in which particular emphasis was placed on negotiating policies, conceived as a compensatory tool through which each territory could 'bargain' public intervention and tailor it to local needs, creating special partnership tables, so as to manage the consensus of many actors and the funds for the execution of development actions. This method concerned the Community Support Framework (CSF) in the 2000-2006 planning period, which included the adoption of two potentially very powerful tools such as Regional Integrated Projects and Integrated Territorial Projects. In continuity with the previous planning, also the 2007-2013 one envisaged a specific territorial governance tool that was identified in the productive district established with the Regional Law n. 17 of 2004 (art. 56). Functionality was expected to be implemented through a special Pact for District Development (PSD), the latter designed as a strategic planning tool in harmony with other regional initiatives. In 2007 the Region had recognized 23 of which nine industrial, eight agricultural, four artisan and two of fishing, all the companies belonging to each district had signed a PSD for the 2007-2010 (Schilirò, Timpanaro, 2012).

However, the organizational inability of the Region remains and profoundly undermines the effectiveness of projects financed by European funds as shown by the ruling of the EU Court of Justice in June 2019 which, definitively rejected Italy's appeal against the cut in allocations foreseen by the 2000 programming – 2006 due to serious deficiencies in management and controls, obliging Sicily to repay 380 million Euro spent mainly in the European Social Fund (ESF) (Sabella, 2019). The Court of Auditors already accredited the Sicilian Region in 2015 with the non-flattering record of the first Italian region in the scam system to grab community resources, with as many as 168 million Euro of fraud in the agriculture and fisheries sectors, with not regular procurement and funds for innovation (*Giornale di Sicilia*, 2017). The incapacity of Sicily – as well as of other Italian regions – leaves room for government agencies and European Institutions which, by suggesting plans and practices, fill the local gaps and give the opportunity to finalize the expenditure of European resources. However, this *modus operandi* establishes a homogeneity of local development practices, supporting the best practices of the most virtuous territories that are recommended and applied to the weakest and most disorganized regions (Scrofani, 2012).

XIX.2. MACRO-AREAS AND PRIORITY OBJECTIVES FOR REGIONAL PLANNING AND APPLICATION OF THE STeMA METHOD

The study of Sicilian planning for the 2014-2020 period is carried out with the aim of ascertaining whether the expenditure of community resources is consistent with the policies and manages to increase the degree of territorial cohesion of the Island. To achieve this goal, the documents of European, national and above all regional planning were first studied and analyzed. In a second, important phase, the coherence of expenditure and projects financed with the objectives of regional policies divided into macro areas, as well as the thematic objectives of the Regional Operational Programme were compared. The unfavourable situation of Sicily finds a valid confirmation in the

Tab. XIX.1 - The macro-areas and the corresponding thematic objectives (TO) in 2014-2020 Sicilian Planning.

MACRO AREAS	CORRESPONDENT TO
1. Strengthening countercyclical measures	Activating tools to support the weakest and most vulnerable part = TO9
	Increase the birth rate of businesses and promote employment = TO3
	Starting over with an important plan of works for public infrastructures = TO9; 6; 7; 4; and 5
2. Bringing back the Sicilian economy to the competition	Competitiveness and internationalization of companies = TO 3
	Supporting innovation = TO1 and 2 + Digital Agenda + 3S
	Improve the efficiency of public services = TO 2 and 11
3. Enhance the cultural and natural heritage of Sicily	Promote initiatives for the intelligent development of territorial resources = TO6
	Support the development processes of tourism and cultural and creative industries = TO3 and 6
4. Improvement of the quality of life	Increase the level of legality in areas of high social exclusion = TO9
	Sustainable mobility = TO4
	Digital agenda = TO2
	Education and Strengthening of Competences = TO10
5. Environmental sustainability and quality of environmental services	Improve the quality of environmental services for citizens = TO6
	Energy issues = TO4
	More advanced tools for analysis, intervention and land management = TO5

Source: Author's elaboration

STeMA method, which for the indicators of the 3 determinants according to which it is organized (*Inclusive Growth, Smart Growth, Sustainable Growth*) shows a significant attribution of "D" to most of the provinces (equivalent to the most critical taxonomy of the method). The method also allows policy choices to be fostered to improve the most negative classification (thus achieving a C or even a B). This use of policy choices is not purely academic but instead allows a better understanding of which choices allow real territorial cohesion, the ultimate goal of European and regional policy. In addition, the most effective policy choices for the indicators analysed also make it possible to steer the policy of the community context 2021-2027.

XIX.3. THE DETERMINANTS OF THE STeMA METHOD FOR THE ANALYSIS OF POLICY CHOICES IN SICILY

XIX.3.1. Smart Growth *determinant*

The 2014-2020 ROP has provided two priority axes closely related to the idea of smart growth, corresponding to the respective thematic Objectives: TO1 Research, technological development and innovation, and TO2 Digital Agenda. While the TO1

has been separated into two different investment priorities (as established by European Regulations) that aim at strengthening research and innovation infrastructures (1a) and business investments in R&I (1b); TO2 has the extension of digital infrastructures as a priority, such as broadband (2a), the development of ICT products and services (2b) and the strengthening of ICT applications in various strategic sectors and areas of intervention, such as government, education, inclusion, culture and health (2c).

In addition, albeit indirectly, the theme of smart growth and innovation remains crucial also for other thematic objectives envisaged by the Sicily ROP, such as the TO3 related to the promotion of SME competitiveness, the TO4 focused on the theme of energy sustainability, and the TO7 concerning the development of sustainable transport systems.

The idea of promoting innovation throughout the region as a great opportunity for the strategic projection of Sicily, its businesses, public administrations (PA) and citizens for inclusive, smart and sustainable growth also represents the core mission of the Sicilian Digital Agenda. This in particular intends to promote technological innovation as a transition tool towards a post-industrial, knowledge-based economy through huge investments involving both physical infrastructures (broadband and ultra-wide, data centres and cloud architectures of the PA), as well as intangible ones (networks and technological and/or organizational relationships between institutional subjects, private actors and citizens, in order to favour the accessibility of public services and functions).

The theme of smart growth and more generally of innovation are also central to the Rural Development Plan (RDP), which has identified a certain number of needs and priorities of specific interest for smart growth in the inner and rural areas of the region, defined as starting from the identification of specific opportunities and risks. Among the opportunities identified the following can be noted: the introduction of R&D incentive tools capable of promoting innovation and cooperation between research operators and companies for the construction of new internal and international networks as well as the active participation in those existing in the field of research (eg: GO of the IEP); the development of sectors with high innovative potential; the increase in the transfer of innovation to the agricultural and agro-industrial world through the centres of competence; and the growth of the Third Industrial Revolution sectors with particular reference to renewable energies. Among the risks, on the other hand, the progressive reduction of private funds destined for research with respect to public funds was highlighted, in addition to the deterioration of the collective heritage of knowledge (loss of core competences) due to the decrease in companies because of the crisis and the removal of human resources with high skills.

From the analysis developed through the elaboration of specific indicators on a national scale within the PRIN 2015 Programme works using the STeMA method, with reference to the *Smart Growth* determinant, the Sicily Region shows particularly low values (D) in the *Virtual stakeholders* sector (VSt) and in three reference indicators: public administrations that use the Internet (*Internet in the Public body* PAI indicator), *Innovative dependency index* (IDI indicator) and *Population in lifelong learning* (PLL). The considerations that emerged regarding the PAI indicator are of particular importance, thanks to the STeMA simulations it is possible to identify a composite set of policy choices that, if implemented in an efficient and integrated manner, would be able to facilitate and support the development of public digital services, focusing on the needs of citizens and businesses. Digital technology is gradually transforming the organizational processes of the PA, and therefore the provision of related services. The

PA's journey towards digital transformation and the growing offer of smart services to the communities is even more evident in Sicily, characterized by serious infrastructural, economic, social and cultural delays, which make it one of the Italian regions which suffers the most from the weight of the digital divide, excluding it from the benefits of technological progress and innovation. It emerges, from the use of STeMA, that in order to improve the performance of the indicator it is necessary to invest in a wide range of strategic sectors, such as the Supply of education, Bridging digital divide and digital transition, R&D infrastructures, Dissemination policies for transparency and efficiency of bureaucracy, Cultural integration, Human capital internationalisation, Technological/innovative dissemination for enterprise and institutions, Support to BAT, New business/services instruments. Among these items, some have been specifically identified by the regional planning and implemented, even if only a part of these have been transformed into financed projects, more or less already completed.

Directly connected to the PAI indicator are those envisaged by ROP Specific Objective 2.2 "Digitization of administrative processes and dissemination of fully interoperable digital services", for which actions concerning IT systems functional to the creation of common platforms and the rationalization of public databases have been funded, whose principal, if not the only, beneficiary remains the Sicilian Region. The creation of a regional data centre to consolidate all the information systems in the national strategic Pole, envisaged by the national Digital Agenda, is strategic to operate the digitalisation of Region, as well as the project for the creation of the new portal 'Sicilia Open data', as a tool that brings together all the information assets of the Sicilian public administration, strongly oriented to the issue of transparency and online publication of public data. On the other hand, projects/actions regarding ROP Specific Objective 2.3, connected to the "Strengthening of ICT demand by citizens and businesses" still seem to be absent. Among the *policy choices* envisaged by STeMA to increase the values of the PAI indicator, those connected to the policy Technological/innovative dissemination for the enterprises and institutions or for investments in R&D are also worth noting. For example, within the TO1 "Research on technological development and innovation", of the Sicily-based ERDF ROP, most of the initiatives undertaken are referred to ROP Specific Objective 1.1 "To increase the innovation activities of companies" especially with small and very small loans granted to a number of local businesses connected to 'Advanced services (for technological innovation) to support SMEs and SME groups'. Two more substantial loans concern instead 'Research and innovation infrastructures', granted to two research infrastructures considered strategic for the regional system for the purposes of implementing the S3, such as the National Institute of Nuclear Physics of Catania and the Mediterranean Institute for Transplants and High Specialization Therapies (ISMETT) of Palermo, for 8 million Euro and almost 3.3 million Euro respectively.

At the moment, instead, there are no projects/actions funded for the other ROP Specific Objective of the TO1, i.e. 1.2 'Strengthening of the regional and national innovative system', 1.3 'Promotion of new innovation markets' and 1.4 'Increasing the incidence of innovative specializations'. In particular, the lack of funding connected to the implementation of complex projects of research and development activities on the thematic areas, as well as the technological solutions useful for the realization of the S3 (see Regione Siciliana, ERDF ROP, p. 43) is to be noted. In

the same way, the absence of funding in support of the generation of innovative solutions to specific social problems stands out, through the creation of *Living Labs* (action 1.3.2, ERDF ROP, p. 44) and those in support of creation and consolidation of innovative knowledge intensive start-ups (action 1.4.1, ERDF ROP, p. 45). With regard to the latter, however, it is worth noting the presence of a substantial number of loans guaranteed by the national “Smart & Start” program, under the direction of the Ministry of Economic Development, which a good number of Sicilian companies have also benefitted from.

Within the TO2 “Digital Agenda”, the actions undertaken concern the OS 2.1 and 2.2. The first connected to ‘Bridging digital divide in the territories and spreading of ultra-broadband connectivity’, concerning the financing of over 70 million Euro granted to Telecom for the construction of the high-speed broadband network on the whole regional territory.

Most of the effects produced by these actions and the related projects still seem unmeasurable, and being, in almost all cases, projects still in progress, their territorial impact is not taken into account by the values of the indicators collected during the PRIN 2015 research which was limited to using data from 2016.

Recently, the Sicilian Region has accelerated spending for the implementation of the Digital Agenda, through the provision of ultra-wide band interventions, the creation of regional data centres, museum digitization, the creation of digital services for citizens, the realization of the medical records and of the electronic health records, all interventions that also serve as indispensable tools for a rationalization in spending. The full recovery of the various technological and innovative regional gaps needs of the adoption of an integrated approach that cannot be limited to the acceleration in the laying of broadband and in the greater use of digital services by the public administration, companies and the citizens themselves. Infrastructural investments, in fact, must be accompanied by a growing attention to services and culture, acting simultaneously on education policies, cultural policies, social policies, environmental sustainability policies, green economy policies, industrial policies oriented as much to technological innovation as to the social and cultural innovation, also through the implementation of a more markedly territorial approach to smart specialization strategies, able to highlight and exploit the diversity present in the regional territory, with an eye towards the marginal areas that suffer most of peripheral processes, as in the case of inner areas (Di Bella, Petino, Scrofani, 2019). Even more so in a complex reality such as the Sicilian one, what is needed is therefore a systemic action that deploys the world of education and of the University, of politics, of companies, of civil society, and of communication.

XIX.3.2. Sustainable Growth *determinant*

In the STeMA method the *Sustainable Growth* (SuG) determinant includes the worst performances compared to the determinants of *Inclusive Growth* (IG) and *Smart Growth* (SG), as is well documented by the 12 indicators with the lowest value (D). This picture looks bleaker if the presence of strategic indicators considered also in other determinants is observed, such as the *Employed* indicator (Occ) shared with the *Inclusive Growth* determinant. Added to this is the difficulty of finding

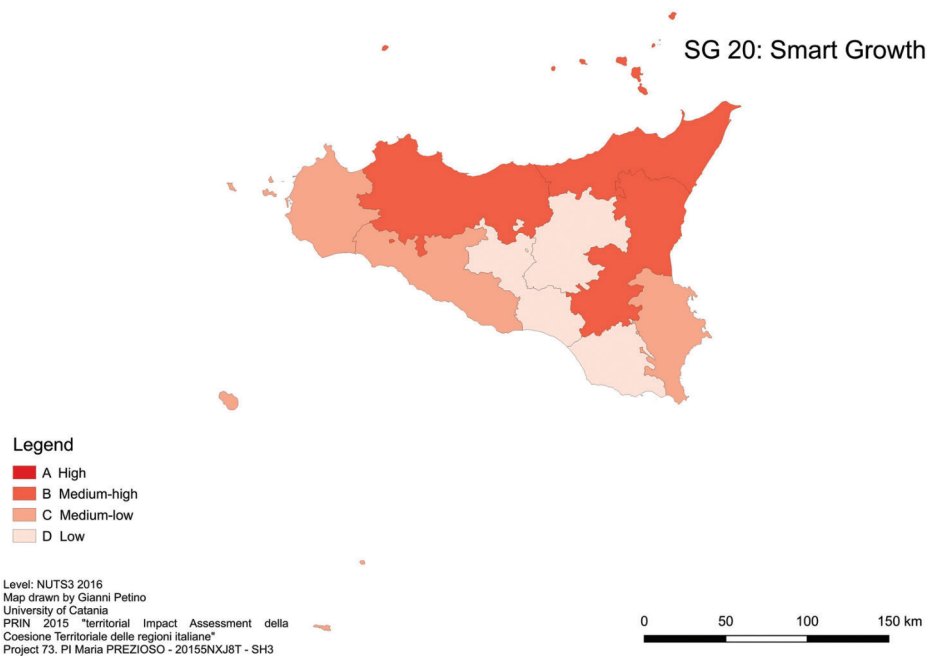


Fig. XIX.1 - The representation of ex ante data of *Smart Growth* determinant according to STeMA method at Sicilian Region NUTS3 level.

Source: Author's elaboration

adequate policy choices to improve negative performance: in fact 7 out of 12 indicators require a large number of policy choices, far more numerous than the possible choices of the other negative indicators of the same determinant and also of the other two determinants. This complexity in quantity and quality demonstrates the difficulty in finding – not only in the STeMA method but above all in reality – easy and rapid enforcement actions. In STeMA the determinant *Sustainable Growth* has three typologies: the first *Sustainable Competitiveness* includes the sectors *Economic Structural Variables*; *Productive system Identity* (composing VESISP section); *Economic Interaction* and *Financial Interaction* (composing IEIF section); the second *Climate Change Adaption* (CCA) the third is *Infrastructures sustainability* (SI).

The IEIF section is to be considered the heart of the *Sustainable Growth* determinant, being made up of important items from the point of view of the public and private sector supporting businesses and, consequently, of direct impact on the Cohesion Policy. Eight indicators are used to evaluate its efficiency: *Commercial integration* (I_Comm), *Commercial integration of goods* (IcB), *Employed* (Occ), *Capital accumulation intensity* (IAC), the *Fiscal pressure* (PF), the *Hourly labour cost* (CL), the banks (Bnk) and the *Insurance and financial institutions* (IAF). The employment rate (Occ) and the *Bank* indicator (Bnk) closely related to the former are particularly significant for the Territorial Impact Assessment (TIA) (Prezioso, 2018).

The overall negative value of the *Sustainable Growth* determinant which presents an overall result equivalent to D is worthy of particular attention, that is to say that the interventions and projects did not produce the expected result from the policies. Above all the results of the CCA and SI components, both classified C, fail to mitigate the

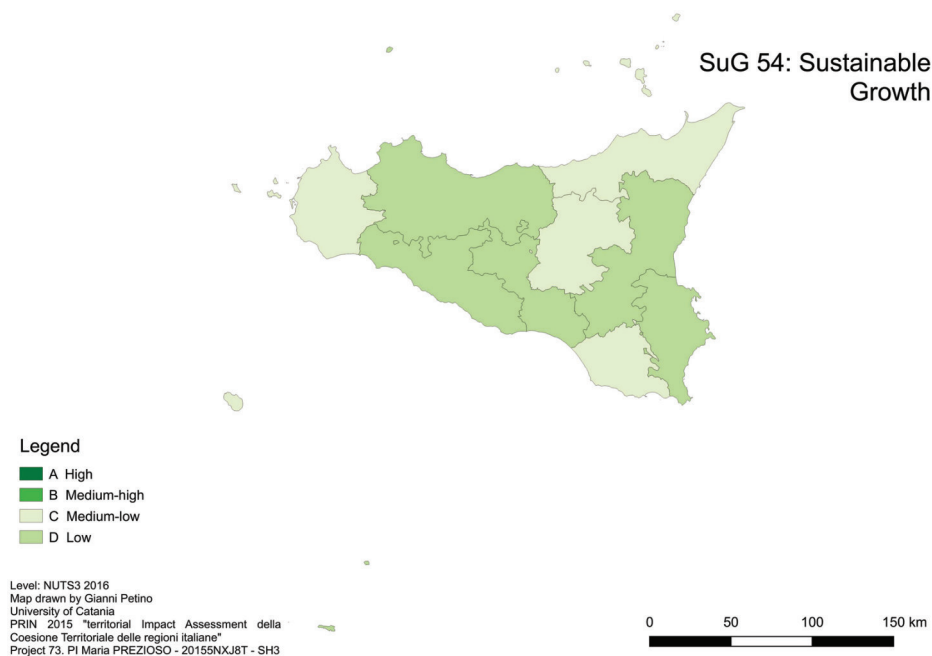


Fig. XIX.2 - The representation of ex ante data of *Sustainable Growth* determinant according to STeMA method at Sicilian Region NUTS3 level.

Source: Author's elaboration

VESISP and IEIF components (both classified D). For this reason, the analysis focuses on the IEIF components. For this the most representative indicators and those that present a high negative level among them (Occ = D and BnK = D) were taken into account. The performance of the Occ indicator improved by activating policies Bridging digital divide and digital transition, R&D infrastructures, Support enterprise creation and Support worker mobility. For the particularly complex BnK indicator, it was necessary to act on several policies to obtain an improvement, that is to say policies related to Quality certification and assessment tools, Support local productive network, New business/services instruments, Green and eco-services, Support equal opportunities and Social financing programme. It is undeniable that the availability and ease of access to credit and services stimulates business growth and therefore employment, which in turn stimulates the demand for credit and financial services.

In the current 2014-2020 planning cycle, all regional economic policy is aimed at improving the employment rate (Occ) including the Digital Agenda and the S3 strategy, the ESF ROP, the RDP and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund. The Thematic Objectives concerned with the two indicators chosen for this simulation are the TO1 (Research, technological development and innovation), the TO3 (Promoting the competitiveness of SMEs, the agricultural sector and the fishing and aquaculture sector), TO4 (Sustainable Energy and Quality of Life), TO6 (Protecting the Environment and Promoting the Efficient Use of Resources), TO8 (Priority Axis 1 Employment of the ESF) and TO9 (Social Inclusion). By acting the policies choices to improve only the two aforementioned indicators, it was possible to obtain an impro-

vement in the entire *Sustainable Growth* determinant. The critical analysis of regional policy – which has included measures to improve the employment rate and credit to companies – can be done by comparing the financing of the measures with the certified expenditure, to then arrive at concrete suggestions for the application of the policies. For TO1 over 457 million Euro have been planned (10% of the total allocated by the ROP) against a certified expenditure on 31st December 2018 of almost 12 million (2.6% of the total TO1); for TO3 over 667 million Euro have been planned (14.6% of the total allocated) against an expenditure of not even 31 million (4.6% of the total TO3); for TO4 over one billion and 100 million euros have been scheduled (24.8% of the total allocated) but just over 195 million have been spent; for OT6 almost half a billion euros have been scheduled but 53 million have been spent, for TO9 almost 216 million Euro have been allocated but just over 21 million has been spent.

Field research and desk analysis have shown that regional policies and planning have envisaged a random distribution of financial resources without any selection criteria and yet without an effective use of the funds available as a measure to contrast the current crisis. Even the measures that could have exerted a direct action (monitored by our indicators), that is to say actions 3.5.1 for employment (which should have acted in collaboration with action 1.4.1 of TO1 which, however, did not was funded) and 3.6.1 for banks, were ineffective.

XIX.3.3. Inclusive Growth *determinant*

Inclusive Growth is a matter of fundamental importance for Sicily, not only as a priority of the Europe 2020 Strategy, but also because – as indicated by the ERDF ROP Sicily 2014-2020 (p. 26) – the region «presents one of the most critical contexts in Italy in terms of living conditions and the incidence of poverty and in relation to the endowment and quality of services for people». This context has a negative impact both on the fragile and problematic labour market and on the local production system, which is not very dynamic or weakly structured. It is not surprising, therefore, that the *Inclusive Growth* determinant of the STeMA method, made up of twenty-seven indicators, shows a situation that is anything but optimal for Sicily. The *ex ante* condition of the region appears, in fact, substantially negative, presenting as many as eleven indicators with low values (D). Therefore, Sicily ranks among the last Italian regions for inclusive growth.

This regional framework, which is anything but exultant, is reflected in the NUTS 3 dimension, where the determinant highlights an extremely critical situation for the inner provinces of Sicily and especially for Enna, at the bottom in Sicily and Italy, preceded by Caltanissetta. On the other hand, the condition of metropolitan cities and especially of Palermo and Catania appears to be better, but their performance remains, however, very distant from those recorded in other Italian metropolitan cities, especially in central and northern Italy.

The indicators with the maximum negative value (D) are: *GDP pps* (Gross Domestic Product per capita Standard Purchasing Power) (PILppSPA), *Life expectancy >65* (SpVit), *Tourism rate* (TxTUR), *Early school leaving* (AbbSc) and *Employed* (Occ). In addition to the ERDF ROP and the ESF ROP, the following programs have been studied: the Rural Development programme (whose projects are financed with a variable share of the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development – EAFRD), the Ope-

rational Programme under European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) and the National Operational Programme on Metropolitan Cities (NOP-Metro) for Palermo, Messina and Catania. The tenders for each individual operational project and where possible the funded projects have been included in this study. First of all, a certain rigidity of the Region emerged, which seems capable of directing funding only towards a standardized project, which obviously has not produced in the past nor is it able to produce satisfactory results today. However, the most serious fact is the extreme slowness of the Sicilian bureaucratic *apparatus*, which is revealed in the publication of the rankings and in the distribution of funds provided by public notices. Thus, although the ERDF ROP makes available for inclusive growth, through TO9 and TO10, a share equivalent to 8.37% of the total resources, the results appear to be anything but positive since most of the sums have not yet been used, despite there being less than a year till the close of the 2014-2020 planning period. This finding is even more serious if it is considered that Structural Funds are the main source of financing for Sicily.

Sicily occupies the penultimate place in Italy for per capita GDP, only Calabria fares worse (ISTAT 2017 data). This explains why the *GDP pps* (PILppSPA) indicator shows a D value for all provinces except Siracusa, where evidently the weight of the Priolo-Augusta Industrial Development Area is still felt despite the difficulties of the sector. In particular, the NOP-Metro and Measures 4, 6 and 7 of the Rural Development Programme include interventions to improve the indicator in question. The STeMA method makes it possible to highlight how, by acting on the strengthening of the training offer, on greater support for the local production network, on the creation of new businesses, on employment mobility, on equal opportunities, on welfare, on social inclusion policies it is possible to get improvements in the classification. Considering the policies implemented so far, it can be assumed that in order to improve the PILppSPA indicator, not only actions aimed at creating new businesses and expanding the professional training offer, already well supported by the ESF ROP, should be undertaken, but it is also necessary to strengthen welfare and social inclusion policies and the equal opportunities sector, considering the fact that so far the focus has been mainly on implementing a nursery school service.

The *Life expectancy >65* (SpViT) indicator also has a D value for all provinces except for Ragusa (C value). Also in this case the comparison with the other Italian regions is not favourable for Sicily, which does not reveal a greater number of certain pathologies but a substantial backwardness of the health system and a lower effectiveness of policies to support families and to combat poverty. More concern is reserved for the variable in question TO 9a of the ERDF ROP and the NOP-Metro. The latter, however, because the best result is that obtained from the province of Ragusa, have so far not been successful in achieving the desired objectives. Processing the index on STeMA, the value improves if policies aimed at increasing public health and social well-being are chosen and in particular the policies aimed at strengthening the circular economy and preventing natural hazards.

The *Tourism rate* (TxTUR) indicator is classified at NUTS2 level equivalent to D, but at NUTS3 level the provinces of Palermo, Agrigento, Ragusa and Siracusa record a value equivalent to C, Messina and Trapani a value equivalent to B, Catania, Caltanissetta and Enna are classified as D. The negative result of Catania is surprising, certainly penalized by the demographic weight of its province, given that the index is determined by the relationship between tourist presences and the resident provincial population. On examining the documents from the 2014-2020 planning period it emerges that the main tool used to finance tourism development policies in Sicily is the action 6.8.3 of the

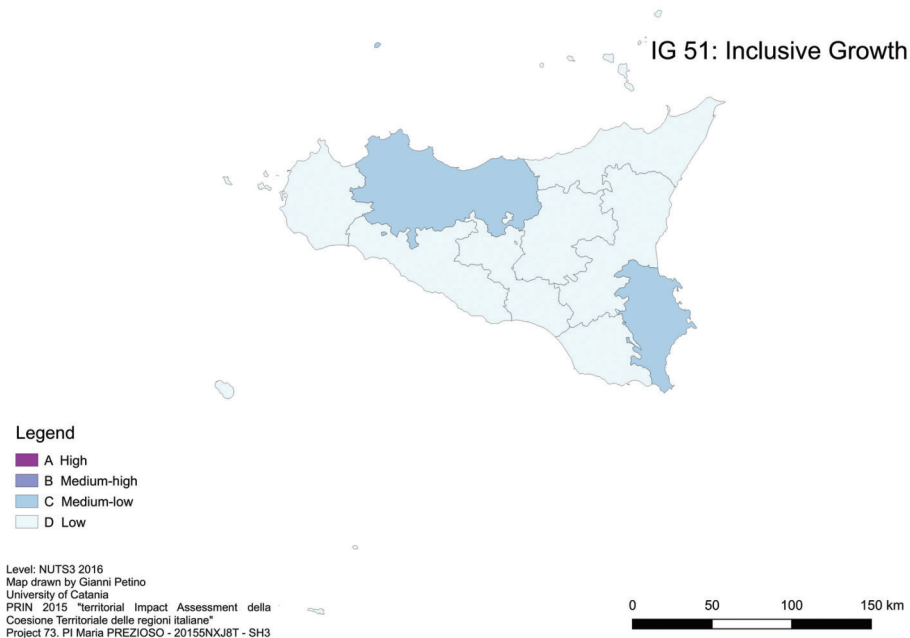


Fig. XIX.3 - The representation of ex ante data of *Inclusive Growth* determinant according to STeMA method at Sicilian Region NUTS3 level.

Source: Author's elaboration

ERDF ROP (Support for integrated use of cultural and natural resources and promotion of tourist destinations) and the sub-measures 6.4 (Support for investments in the creation and development of extra-agricultural activities), 7.5 (Support for investments in public use in recreational infrastructures, tourist information and small-scale tourist infrastructures) and 16.3 (Cooperation between small operators to organize joint work processes and sharing facilities and resources, as well as for the development/marketing of tourism) of the RDP. Some policies within the NOP-Metro are also found. By applying the STeMA method the regional value of the indicator improves and even at the provincial level all the territories rise in level, choosing the policy choices related to Quality certification and assessment tools, Support to BAT, Inflation/deflation control, Flexible mechanism, Climate Active adaptation and mitigation, Green and eco-services, Reinvolverment of ageing people, Poverty reduction, Homogenization of enterprises costs, Support worker mobility. The policy choices indicated by STeMA seem to be suitable, in fact it is necessary to consider that current policies are limited mainly to marketing and tourist promotion actions through participation in fairs and events, support for agri-tourism businesses and the restoration of some museum structures.

The *Early school leaving* (AbbSc) indicator is also classified D at the regional level by the STeMA method, while at the provincial level only Enna, Caltanissetta and Ragusa, the smaller provinces, show a C classification. On analyzing the planning documents, this indicator is affected by the NOP-Metro Messina, and the OS 10.1 (Reduction of early formative failure and early school leaving and training) of the ESF ROP Sicilia, with which some projects were financed in the Palermo and Trapani areas. By processing the index using the STeMA method, an improvement is achieved by acting on Social inclusion, Support equal opportunities and Support welfare.

A very wide range of policies can also affect the *Employed* indicator (Occ). On examining the documents, almost all pay particular attention to the subject of employment, especially youth employment. By processing this indicator through STeMA, all the D improve to C. Also in this case, as for the variables AbbSc and PILppSPA, the system allows an improvement of the performances acting on Social inclusion, Support equal opportunities, Support welfare, to be understood.

XIX.4. CONCLUDING REMARKS

What has been achieved thanks to the STeMA method has allowed an evaluation to be made of the effectiveness of different political choices, in terms of weight and quality, in the provincial territories of Sicily. A single political choice is not enough, but a combination of multiple policies is needed. In many policy choices, the smart concept that pervades/inspires individual and collective public and private activities seems central, as it is no longer limited to the solution of the digital divide of territories or companies or to the computerization of public administration. Despite the fact that the strategic planning documents for Sicily 2014-2020, such as the ERDF ROP, the Rural Development Plan and the Digital Agenda for Sicily have been drawn up in line with the European Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, and aimed at recovering delays regional structures and to achieving greater economic, social and territorial cohesion, these documents seem more formal than substantial. A wide awareness of the culture of innovation is still lacking in all social and economic *strata*, as shown by the structural delay in the levels of investment in R&D, excessively dependent on the public sector (in particular by the university system), the low interaction between the productive system and that of research, the delays connected with the use of the Internet in companies, families and institutions, as well as serious gaps in the spread of digital technologies.

From these brief considerations, the absolute lack of a strategic vision on the future of the Region strongly emerges, while investments in many niche sectors and activities multiply, giving no preference to any. Instead it would seem appropriate that in the face of very complex structural problems, such as the depopulation of almost all municipalities in inner areas, the very high level of de-industrialization with some small exceptions, such as the conversion of the Eni refinery in Gela, the weaknesses of the transport and of the logistics network and the identity crisis of the major coastal conurbations, suspended in an eternal transition between metropolitan aspirations and urban and legislative constraints of municipal contexts, only a few strategic sectors must be aimed at. This is why the deafening silence around projects to exploit the Sicilian cultural heritage and landscape is even more disturbing. Development policies that concentrate EU and national investments in this sector could activate resources and energies not only related to the tourism sector, but also to that of typical products, craftsmanship and quality proto-industrial productions, trade in local products, environmental protection and technological conversion of the plants. In particular, the relationship between competitiveness and sustainability must not be considered antithetical, but must become central to regional policies, as is already the case in the EU's 2020 Territorial Agenda. This centrality appears even more evident if the close relationship between competitiveness and the capacity to innovate and progress towards sustainability is considered (Dini *et al.*, 2018).

However, any change in development policy can only take place in the presence of a change in the approach of policy makers and decision makers, of civil society

and businesspeople, supported by training that concerns not only individual skills in manual work or concept building but more and more frequently takes into account organizational and managerial skills. Abilities that, if supported by a smart approach, can stimulate policies and projects, allowing access to international economic networks and international knowledge that supply internal territorial cohesion and remove the risk of isolation and marginality.

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Oggetto: **Errata Corrige**

In qualità di editor (curatore) del volume *Territorial Impact Assessment of national and regional territorial cohesion in Italy. Place evidence and policy orientations towards European Green Deal*, Bologna, Pàtron, 2020. ISBN 9788855534864, attesto che per mero errore materiale alla pag. 132 del Cap. 5 "Smart Growth and Inner Areas for the territorial cohesion of the Italian Regions" sono da intendersi come segue:

- **Elena Di Blasi** inclusa tra gli autori del cap. 5
- **Nunziata Messina** e non Annunziata Messina
- **Nota * recante l'attribuzione delle parti agli Autori è relativa al cap. 5 e non 3 o 4:** Whilst acknowledging that this is a shared work coordinated by Luigi Scrofani, it is attributed to: Arturo S. Di Bella the paragraph **5.1**, Gianni Petino the paragraph **5.2** and Luigi Scrofani the paragraph **5.4** from University of Catania; to Alessandro Arangio the paragraph **5.3.1**, to Elena Di Blasi the paragraph **5.3.2** and to **Nunziata** Messina the paragraph **5.3.3** from University of Messina; to Claudio Gambino the paragraph **5.3.4** from Università of Enna.

La presente dichiarazione è resa per gli usi consentiti dalla legge.

In fede,

Roma, 15 ottobre 2020

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