



12th European Week of Regions and Cities

OPEN Brussels

DAYS 6 - 9 October 2014

A STRATEGY FOR 'INNER AREAS' IN ITALY

Fostering growth through Inner Areas development

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The Italian spatial model

The Italian territory is characterized by:

- ❖ **A polycentric system where a dense and varied network of urban centers**
 - offer a wide range of essential services like healthcare, education, and transport. These centers represent a 'point of convergence' for people living in remote areas;
- ❖ **The distance from these urban networks/"service poles" affects people's quality of life**
 - preventing them to benefit of these essential services
- ❖ **Relations between urban and rural centers are context dependent**
 - and may vary substantially depending on territorial specificities



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Inner Areas: what does it mean?

Inner Areas are those territories characterised by

- ❖ a **NOT adequate** offer of/ access to essential services to assure a certain **level of citizenship among population**;
- ❖ being **rich in natural assets** (water resources, agricultural systems, forests, natural landscapes) and **cultural resources** (archaeological settlements, abbeys, small museums, craft centres);
- ❖ having a **complex territory** shaped by diverse natural phenomena and human settlement processes.

In Italy inner areas covers almost the 60% of the whole national territory embracing about the 23% of its total population and more than 4000 municipalities



Methodology to identify Inner Areas

'Service Centers' have been defined as those municipalities that offer

- an exhaustive range of secondary schools;
- at least a 1st level DEA (highly specialized) hospital ;
- at least a 'Silver - type' railway station (*RFI*).

NO DEMOGRAPHIC CRITERIA HAVE BEEN APPLIED

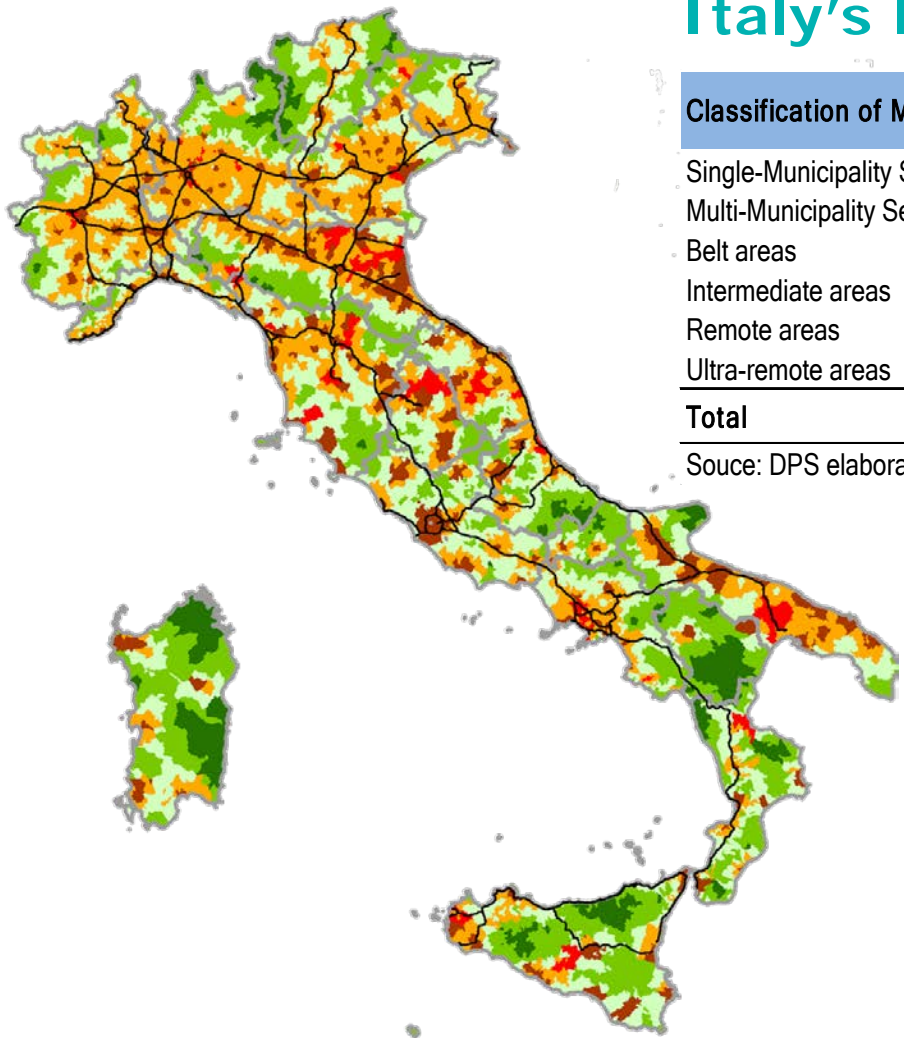
Areas have been mapped according to the distance (travel-time) from these 'Service Centers' as:

- '**Belt**' areas – up to 20 minutes far from the centers;
- '**Intermediate**' areas – from 20 to 40 minutes;
- '**Remote**' areas – from 40 to 75 minutes;
- '**Ultra – remote**' areas – over 75 minutes far

Inner Areas

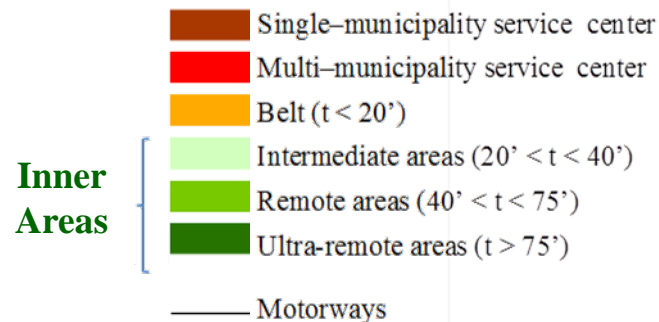


Italy's Inner Areas



Classification of Municipalities	N.	%	Average elevation	Population	%	KM ²	%
Single-Municipality Service Center	217	2,7	148	20.983.786	35,3	28.948	9,6
Multi-Municipality Service Center	122	1,5	195	2.986.161	5,0	8.606	2,8
Belt areas	3568	44,1	219	22.135.047	37,2	83.982	27,8
Intermediate areas	2360	29,2	399	8.832.422	14,9	88.187	29,2
Remote areas	1522	18,8	601	3.812.271	6,4	72.829	24,1
Ultra-remote areas	303	3,7	666	684.057	1,2	19.521	6,5
Total	8092	100,0	358	59.433.744	100,0	302.073	100,0

Source: DPS elaboration on Istat - Census 2011





Inner Areas Strategy _ OBJECTIVES

Aims of the strategy (long-term)

- ❖ **Reverse** the **demographic decline** that is embodying these areas;
- ❖ **Improve** the quality of life and wellbeing of people living in relatively isolated and sparsely populated areas of the country;
- ❖ **Reduce** the social cost due to the progressive depopulation trend characterizing these areas (**hydro-geological risk, cultural heritage losses and landscape degradation**)

Aims of the strategy (mid-term)

- ❖ **Increase** local employment and work opportunities
- ❖ **Recover** un-valorized natural resources and territorial capital
- ❖ **Strengthen** local development factors



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Inner Areas Strategy _PROCESS

The Strategy pursues its aims through two related ad-hoc actions / mutually reinforcing

- ❖ **Supporting Inner Areas inhabitants' access to basic services through innovative delivery mechanisms.** Education, Health and Transport are conceived as **pre-conditions** for any further development of such areas.
- ❖ **Fostering Local Development.** Development projects aim to increase local job opportunities and profit from available local capital.

Area-based projects will concentrate on a number of **particular fields** (development factors) recognized as critical for these areas.



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Mutually reinforcing actions: Action n. 1

And on Specific Basic Services Improvements

- ❖ **Transport:** implementation of smart networks to foster efficiency and connection between strategic communication spot (both people and goods);
- ❖ **Health services:** improving territorial healthcare network; doctors associations and “Tele-Health Services”;
- ❖ **Education:** re-organising schooling around well balances “main poles”; avoiding excessive professors mobility and ensuring schools networking.



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Mutually reinforcing action 2

Area based projects will concentrate on a number of selected fields:

- ❖ land management and forests;
- ❖ local food products;
- ❖ renewable energy;
- ❖ natural and cultural heritage;
- ❖ traditional handicraft and SMEs (*Saperi Locali*)



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Inner Areas Strategy_ INNOVATION

5 main innovation

- ❖ **National dimension and multilevel governance** (State – Regions – municipalities and inter municipal partnership) to foster a **participatory approach** to local development;
- ❖ It operates through **two interrelated** classes of **actions** (access improvements to basic services and local development actions);
- ❖ It is a **step-by-step process**. Just one prototype area per Region is firstly selected to evaluate the potential success of the Strategy and trigger a positive learning mechanism (**Territorial Concentration**);
- ❖ Prototype areas are selected through a “Open” **public proceeding**;
- ❖ **Multifund attitude** (EAFRD, ERDF, ESF and National Funds) to support integrated actions



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A multilevel governance in depth

The Central Level

- ❖ Fosters and Monitors the Strategy's Application
- ❖ Encompass main elements of the Strategy into the Partnership Agreement 2014-2020
- ❖ Assist the Region in selecting prototype areas
- ❖ Manages the Federation of Projects

The Regions

- ❖ Financial Allocation for Inner Areas in the Programs (ITI, Territorial Axis?);
- ❖ Selection of Specific Areas / Projects; Political Support;

Associated Municipalities

- ❖ Application of the Strategy at territorial level; Participate in the Framework Agreement selecting projects; manage services ...



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A multifund attitude in depth

Inner Areas investments are funded by:

- ❖ **Stability Law 2014 (Art. 1(13)-(17) National Funds** allocated to enhancing Inner Areas' inhabitants access to essential services;
- ❖ **2014-2020 European Structural and Investment Funds** available for regional investments aimed at supporting local development projects;



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Main Political Achievements

Italy is developing a **National Strategy in favor of Inner Areas** since Sept.2012

Working trough

- ❖ Political Agreement Between Precedency of the Council; Ministry of Agriculture; Health; Transports; School and Labor ...(last three Governments)
- ❖ Agreement with All Italian Regions, the European Commission and selected associations of municipalities
- ❖ Strong Technical Support (Department for Development Policies, Central Bank; Institute of National Statistics / **Committee for Inner Areas**);



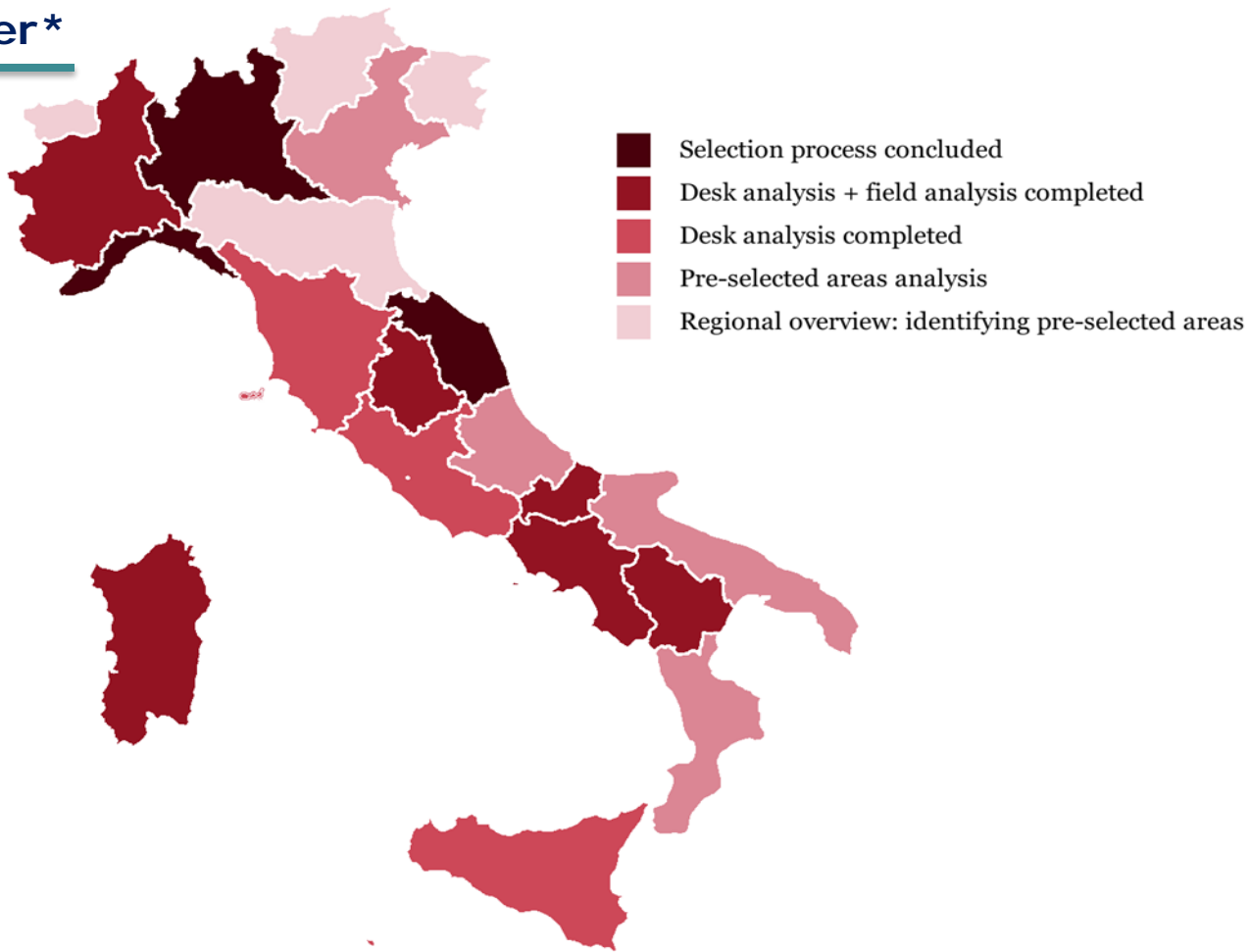
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Our Figures

One year after*



Source: UVAL; period of reference:
September 2013 to September 2014



Conclusion

- ❖ Italian Inner Areas Strategy is giving «true content» to the EU Territorial Cohesion Objective;
- ❖ Areas faraway from «Basic Services» **do need special attention**, regardless from their rural or urban nature; European Union should expressly address these challenges;
- ❖ Many years of «fragmented» policies in Inner Areas do show that investments intervention – together with cuts on basic services, do not bring desired results;
- ❖ Multi funding (still so difficult in practice!) , together with a **spatial place approach** are crucial
- ❖ RURBAN: municipalities associations and common functions
- ❖ Integrated Territorial Investments: strengths and limits
- ❖ Thematic Concentration versus Territorial Concentration: not enough flexible tools can weaken effective territorial concentration



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Thank you for your attention

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