Karsten Zimmermann · Daniel Galland ·
John Harrison *Editors*

Metropolitan Regions, Planning and Governance

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Preface

In this book, the findings of the three-year working phase of an international working group (IAK) on 'planning and governing the metropolis' are made available by researchers from eight countries. On the initiative of Karsten Zimmermann, the *Akademie für Raumforschung und Planung* (ARL—Academy for Spatial Research and Planning) launched this group in 2016 through a call for membership. The group was supported by Evelyn Gustedt as Head of the scientific unit 'European and International Spatial Development Issues' at the headquarters of the ARL, which is based in Hanover (Germany).

The establishment of working groups at European, national and regional level on current issues of spatial development and spatial planning in all conceivable facets reflects the core task of the ARL. The aim is to bring together people from science and practice, and from different disciplines linked to the respective topic to shed light on academic or planning issues from different perspectives and to profit from the various competences of the participants.

In order to facilitate joint discussions, the ARL finances the work of the contributors by allowing six joint sessions in different locations over a period of approximately 3 years. In addition, some of the costs for the publication process, in international groups in particular for translations and linguistic correction, are granted. In that regard, the findings presented are generally not basic research. Instead, the joint discussions are based on synergy effects with the research or planning activities carried out in the course of the main duties of the contributors. The joint discussions add value to the topic.

For this book, researchers from Denmark, Germany, France, Italy, Norway, Sweden, Spain, Turkey and the UK have succeeded in bringing together their expertise from different backgrounds. In addition to representatives of spatial planning, city planners, sociologists, geographers and other disciplines were part of the IAK. Nonetheless, the goal of the group was to present a consistent volume despite all the differences between national system contexts and different conditions of spatial or metropolitan development as the background of each contributor.

European or international research groups in spatial planning and spatial development are practiced at understanding problems. Indeed, problems are by no means unusual, and according to many years of experience in the ARL they are even the rule. The more the ARL and the contributors strive for a consistent text as a product of joint work, the more essential are intensive discussions between participants, both in the writing teams of the individual chapters and especially in formulating the research framework and the concluding statements. Here, this has succeeded in an excellent manner.

Hanover, Germany Evelyn Gustedt
May 2019

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Chapter 1
Conceptualising Metropolitan Regions: How Institutions, Policies, Spatial Imaginaries and Planning Are Influencing Metropolitan Development

Daniel Galland and John Harrison

Never before has the necessity for effective regional governance and planning been so great (Soja 2015, p. 379).

Abstract The need for effective metropolitan governance and planning has never been so great. In this chapter, we argue that despite an inspiring debate on the issues of metropolitan change, planning and governance, contributions which develop and operationalise broader frameworks for analysis are relatively scarce. Approaching metropolitan regions and metropolitan questions has typically taken one of two perspectives—the specificities of individual cases or establishing general principles. Here, we argue for an alternative approach. Our own approach for conceptualising the planning and governance of metropolitan regions is a heuristic perspective which, due to its focus on thematic, temporal and phronetic approaches we refer to as the TTP framework.

Keywords Metropolitan regions · Metropolitan institutions · Spatial imaginaries and metropolitan planning · Metropolitan policy

1.1 Metropolitan Regions, Metropolitan Questions

As the world has transformed, so too have urban areas. Fuelled by accelerated processes of globalised urbanisation, agglomeration and global economic integration we are witness to the widespread transformation of cities into metropolitan regions

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and the merging of some metropolitan regions to form increasingly large trans-metropolitan spaces (Soja 2014; Harrison and Hoyler 2015). Convinced that there is an unimpeachable economic logic linking activity within and between metropolitan regions to global economic competitiveness, proponents of metropolitanisation have become increasingly prominent advisors to international, national and local leaders on the dynamics of metropolitan change, the policies that are critical to metropolitan prosperity (e.g. innovation, human capital, infrastructure, housing), and new forms of metropolitan planning and governance. Fast emerging to be considered the ideal scale for policy interventions in the twenty-first century, the rise of metropolitan regions in globalisation has led to suggestions that we are experiencing a 'metropolitan revolution' (Katz and Bradley 2013), witnessing the rise of the 'metropolis state' (Jonas and Moisio 2018) and even the formation of a purportedly 'metropolitan world' comprising a global mosaic of metropolitan regions.

For all this, the relentless pace of global urban change poses fundamental questions about how best to plan and govern metropolitan regions. The problem facing metropolitan regions—especially for those with policy and decision-making responsibilities—is that these spaces are typically reliant on inadequate urban economic infrastructure and fragmented planning and governance arrangements (Dlabac et al. 2018; Fedeli 2017; Harrison and Hoyler 2014; Kantor et al. 2012). As the demand for more appropriate, widely understood to mean more flexible, networked and smart, forms of planning and governance has increased, new expressions of territorial cooperation and conflict continue to emerge around issues and agendas of infrastructure investment, housing, land-use planning, environmental management and other social forms of collective provision. In the apt words of Gerhard Stahl, former Secretary General at the European Committee of the Regions, the importance of metropolitan governance cannot be underestimated:

> There is no better subject of debate that simultaneously captures the 'regional' and 'local', the 'urban' and 'rural', and the 'domestic' and 'transnational' dimensions of European policy making, than 'metropolitan governance'. (Stahl 2011, p. 3)

While the planning-cum-political challenges facing metropolitan regions resonate today as much as they did ten or twenty years ago, the stakes have been undeniably raised. For every triumphalist depiction of metropolitan regions as the must-be, go-to, places for entrepreneurs, innovators and creative minds to find inspiration and happiness (Glaeser 2011; Florida et al. 2013), there is a portrayal of metropolitan regions as crucibles for devastating inequalities, catalysts for catastrophic environmental degradation and inescapable places for a large proportion of residents who feel a growing sense of helplessness.

The need for effective metropolitan governance and planning has never been so great (Soja 2015). But where to begin? After all, we have been here before, have we not? Well in short, yes, we have. Allen Scott, for example, asked us to consider what main governance tasks metropolitan regions face to preserve and enhance their wealth and well-being (Scott 2001), while Salet et al. (2003) and Heinelt and Kübler (2005) went a long way in descriptively revealing through specific cases what—in practical experience—the meaning of metropolitan governance is and what can be

learned from the successes and failures of coordinated spatial planning policy at the scale of metropolitan regions (see also Gross et al. 2018; Hamel and Keil 2015). In the intervening years, there has been good and inspiring debate on the issues of metropolitan change, planning and governance—usually based on the specificities of individual cases or general principles—but contributions which develop and operationalise broader frameworks for analysis are relatively scarce. Addressing this deficit is the inspiration behind this book.

1.2 Approaching Metropolitan Regions: The TTP Framework

Our starting point for conceptualising metropolitan regions is a concern that much of the work to date which has approached the question of metropolitan planning and governance has done so from one of two perspectives. There is research which, on the one hand, is oriented towards abstraction. Here, we can point towards seminal contributions which are geared towards providing broad conceptual and analytical frameworks that situate metropolitan regions within the contours of *inter alia* globalisation, neoliberalism, political economy, rather than systematic comparative analysis (e.g. Scott 2001; Brenner 2004; Storper 2013). There is then research which, on the other hand, is much more systematic. Here, the approach is one of taking an idea, a concept or a perspective and seeing/testing how it works in practice across specific contexts—be it different policy spheres, in specific metropolitan regions (e.g. Salet et al. 2003; Kantor et al. 2012; Gross et al. 2018), in different national contexts (e.g. Sellers et al. 2017; Zimmerman and Getimis 2017). Both approaches could be considered at different ends of the research spectrum, each equally valuable in their own way, but it is our contention that there is an important middle ground between abstract conceptual and systematic comparative approaches to metropolitan regions which remains largely untapped.

Responding to this, our own approach for conceptualising the planning and governance of metropolitan regions is a heuristic perspective that comprises three dimensions. Due to its focus on thematic (T), temporal (T) and phronetic (P) approaches, we will refer to this as the TTP framework.

1.2.1 The Thematic Dimension

The first dimension of our TTP framework is founded on four interrelated themes: institutions, policies and ideas, spatial imaginaries and planning styles. We have selected these four, not because they are the only four themes we could have cho-

sen or perhaps even the most important,[1] but they are arguably the most salient in contemporary debates over metropolitan change from a planning and governance perspective.[2] Table 1.1 presents each theme and specifies the major processes impacting metropolitan planning and governance of those themes.

Table 1.1 primarily serves to introduce the structure of the book, which is organised into four parts. We do this because a significant amount of research on metropolitan regions from a planning and governance perspective focuses on one of these themes.

Table 1.1 Thematic (T) framework: four key themes impacting post-war metropolitan planning and governance

Thematic approaches	Major Features Impacting Metropolitan		Planning and Governance
Institutions and Institutional Shifts	Governmentalised	→	Less governmentalised
	Uniformity	→	Piecemeal
	Promoting	→	Enabling
	Public	→	Public-private
Policies and Ideas	National spatial equalisation of capital investment	→	Urban & regional competition for global investment
	Managerialism, Fordism, Keynesian welfarism	→	Entrepreneurialism, growth, competitiveness
	National policies	→	Global policy mobilities
Spatial Imaginaries	Territory	→	Networks
	Politico-administrative units	→	Agglomeration economies
	Provincial scale	→	Planetary scale
Planning Styles	Regulatory planning	→	Strategic spatial planning
	Politicised	→	Depoliticised
	Regimented	→	Agile

[1] Additional candidates for inclusion as separate themes in this list might be governance or environment/nature.

[2] We are all too aware that our approach is rooted in the politics of metropolitan regionalism and does not therefore account for economic factors (such as firms, trade), environmental factors and so on. This would require a much larger project, one which was beyond us at the current time, and as such we took the conscious decision to demonstrate the framework within a more narrowly confined set of parameters centred on the planning and governance of metropolitan change.

There are those interested in institutions, whose primary interest is assessing if, how and why institutions matter for metropolitan development. Then, there are those interested in policies and ideas who, often coming out of the policy studies tradition but increasingly coming at it through the growing interest across the social sciences and humanities in mobilities, are motivated to understand how and why particular policies are mobilised and why they (do not) work in certain places, at certain times and in certain contexts. Moreover, there are those often writing from a more geographical perspective whose primary interest is in how and why certain spatial imaginaries are being constructed and mobilised in the name of metropolitan regions. Finally (at least in our framework), there are those writing from a planning tradition who are motivated to understand how and why different planning styles reflect and affect metropolitan regions. The key point from this is to recognise that the ways through which researchers approach metropolitan regions reflect/affect how they view them, their planning and governance. More importantly, focusing on one theme and not considering the interconnections between the different themes can only provide a partial, one-dimensional, reading of metropolitan regions (see Jessop et al. 2008 for a similar argument in relation to social scientific thinking more broadly). It is for this reason that we consider the four themes alongside each other in this framework.

1.2.2 The Temporal Dimension

The field of urban studies is experiencing something akin to a historical turn. This is not to say there has not been a strong temporal dimension to urban theorising, rather it is to argue that the focus has been on generating new theories, minting new vocabulary and terminology, and developing new ideas for deepening our knowledge and understanding of globalised urbanisation. The pursuit of claiming something to be 'new' has arguably resulted in a growing myopia towards what is really new vis-à-vis what might be better conceived as old wine in new bottles (Copus 2004). Institutional pressures on academics, political leaders and policymakers mean this quest for 'newness' is likely to get worse, not better. Nevertheless, what is changing is a growing appreciation among many working in urban and regional studies of the need to position current processes, policies, approaches and spatialities within longer trajectories of metropolitan change.

With this, Brenner (2009) contends how we should routinely consider the notion of 'periodisation'. Arguing that periodisation represents 'one of the most challenging and exciting frontiers for current research', Brenner (2009, p. 134) challenges us to uncover how internally coherent and consistent across time and space global orthodoxies are. At one level, periodisation allows us to identify temporally defined *scaled* moments in the planning and governance of capitalist development, alongside the role of, and impact on, cities and regions (Table 1.2).[3] But at another level,

Table 1.2 Thematic–temporal (TT) framework: periodising neoliberal metropolitan regionalisation, planning and governance

Era	Approximate dates	Dominant dimension of sociospatial relations	Institutions and institutional shifts	National policy focus	Spatial imaginaries	Planning styles
Spatial Keynesianism	1930s–70s	Territory	Promotion of national space economy and spatial planning as regulatory intervention (metropolitan institutions)	Spatial redistribution via equalisation of capital investment and compensatory regional policies	Central government regions	National spatial planning and indicative planning
Localism	1980s	Place	Local government reorganisation; public–private partnerships; urban growth coalitions	Urban regeneration; land-use intensification; urban entrepreneurialism; urban locational policy	Cities	Flagship urban regeneration projects
New regionalism	1990s	Scale	Multi-level governance; subsidiarity	Urban and regional competitiveness	Regions (e.g. Europe of the Regions)	Planning reinvented as strategic spatial planning

(continued)

Table 1.2 (continued)

Era	Approximate dates	Dominant dimension of sociospatial relations	Institutions and institutional shifts	National policy focus	Spatial imaginaries	Planning styles
New city regionalism	2000s	Network	Metropolitan-scale growth coalitions; metropolitan mayoral model; deal-making	Labour markets; urban and regional resilience	Global city regions; mega-city regions; agglomeration; nodal city centrism; polycentric urban regions	Planning as soft spaces of governance and the rise of 'new spatial planning'
Multi-city regionalism	2010s	Urbanisation	Infrastructure alliances	Supply chain expansion; smart cities and regions	Multi-city regions; megaregions; cross-border metropolitan regions; extended urbanisation; regionalised urbanisation	Post-political consensual planning
Virtual regionalism	2020s	Virtuality	Ad hoc flexible governance arrangements	Balancing policy transfer with individual place distinctiveness; place IP	Virtual metropolitan worlds; planetary urbanisation	Agility, planning agile, real-time

periodisation requires us to consider how pervasive the metropolitan region discourse is in different contexts. Spatially, this necessitates an international comparative perspective because if we know anything from recent work it is that metropolitan regionalisation has produced nationally (and sub-nationally) specific forms (Jonas 2013). Meanwhile and related to this, temporally, the pace, dynamics and rhythms of metropolitan change are not consistent across space or time. In an individual case—be it a nation or a metropolitan region—a particular institution, a specific policy, a select group of actors, a type of planning approach is mobilised according to localised territorial politics. Moreover, this may happen sooner, later or at the same time as in another location. It is important to first recognise this, but second, our research needs to account for this. For this reason, the temporal dimension is critical in how we approach conceptualising metropolitan regions and metropolitan change. It is also crucial in bridging the gap to our third dimension—phronesis.

1.2.3 The Phronetic Dimension

Here, we take inspiration from phronetic planning research. Flyvbjerg alludes to the idea of phronesis as a process concerned with 'elucidating where we are, in whose interest this is, where we want to go, and what is desirable according to different sets of values and interests' (Flyvbjerg 2001, p. 83). *Phronesis*, commonly translated from ancient Greek into English as 'practical wisdom', 'prudence' or 'mindfulness', is thus concerned with applying intuitive and well-thought-out judgement to the analysis of values as regards their implications. In the realm of planning research, a phronetic approach entails deliberation about (and questioning of) how power and values work and with what consequences to whom, and to suggest how relations of power and values could be changed to work with other (more progressive) consequences (Flyvbjerg 2004).

The connection to the temporal dimension—and periodisation—is to recognise the importance of going beyond being captivated by what is perceived of as 'new' to be much more critical of claims purporting to newness. Periodisation is an important first step in that it sets us on the path towards conceptualising metropolitan change 'in retrospect' (how have we arrived at this point?), 'in snapshot' (what is currently unfolding?) and 'in prospect' (what might happen in the future as a result?). Our argument is that a phronetic approach takes us closer to answering what we perceive to be the key question—what is at stake?

The phronetic dimension of our framework can be seen reflected in the structure and logic of the book (Fig. 1.1). The four parts reflect the four themes highlighted in Table 1.1, with each part divided into three chapters which reflect our phronetic approach. The first chapter in each part is focused on *change* with the aim of reveal-

[3]It does not escape our attention that Table 1.2 reflects capitalist development. This table could usefully be extended to consider these eras commonly associated with 'capitalist' development in other contexts.

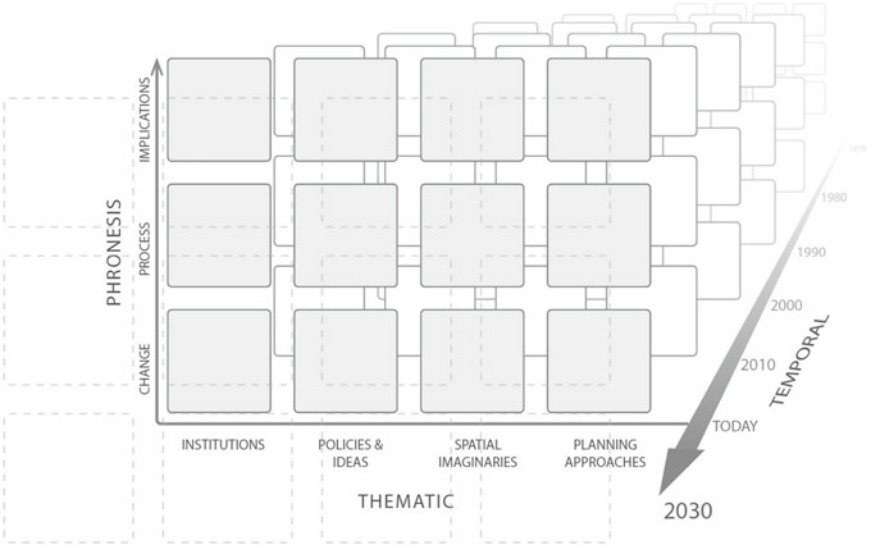

Fig. 1.1 Thematic–temporal–phronetic (TTP) framework for conceptualising metropolitan regions, planning and governance

ing what change has happened/is happening and where it is occurring. The second chapter in each part focuses on the *process* by which change is (not) happening. It does this by revealing the actors involved, examining which voices are strongest/weakest in negotiating metropolitan futures, and analysing the power mechanisms by which change is enacted, but also sometimes stalled, blocked or reimagined. The third and final chapter in each part examines the *implications* of current developments in the planning and governing of metropolitan regions. This is achieved by addressing who—or where—stands to gain—or lose—the most from contemporary metropolitan change, but also by considering what alternative futures there might be, what credibility they have and what it would entail to become a plausible reality.

1.3 Unpacking the Thematic Dimension of Metropolitan Change from a Planning and Governance Perspective

1.3.1 Institutions and Institutional Shifts

Across the world, we have more institutions—both formal and informal—operating at, across or nominally on behalf of metropolitan regions than ever before, yet we appear increasingly sceptical about their capacity to impact positively on metropolitan development. There are those who argue vehemently that metropolitan regions—or more precisely, their leaders and new institutional arrangements—*are* blazing a

trail in reshaping economies and political systems in progressive ways that are providing solutions to what were previously seen as intractable sociospatial problems (Barber 2013; Katz and Bradley 2013; Katz and Nowak 2018). In their book *The Metropolitan Revolution: How Cities and Metros are Fixing our Broken Politics and Fragile Economy*, Katz and Bradley (2013, p. 3) suggest this has come about precisely because:

> Like all great revolutions, this one has been catalysed by a revelation: Cities and metropolitan areas are on their own. The cavalry is not coming.

Yet, it is exactly this broader institutional political economy that sees others equally quick to highlight the vulnerabilities and fault lines associated with metropolitan regions being left 'on their own' by the erosion of urban-governmental capacities and exposure to more market-oriented forms of neoliberal governance (Peck 2014). From this perspective, metropolitan regions have been thrust into a cut-throat world where the odds of success continually lengthen and what is at stake keeps rising in magnitude. Add to this, increasing responsibilities for their own futures, the presence of can-do bravado from economic boosterism at every political turn, and the aspirational rhetoric for what is perceived achievable reaching unfathomable levels, metropolitan regions—and the institutions and people who run them—are forced to operate in conditions which necessitate how they should concentrate ever more of their reduced institutional capacity under the conditions of austerity urbanism to the pursuit of a supposed pot of metropolitan gold at the end of the neoliberal rainbow.

For all that alternative local examples and models do exist and resist (e.g. Bulkeley et al. 2018), a broader institutional political economy of market-oriented forms of neoliberal governance remains dominant globally in determining the goals and setting the conditions for institutions seeking metropolitan change and development. Allied to this, there is no denying institutions matter for metropolitan development (Rodríguez-Pose 2013). Ever since the emergence of a strong institutionalist literature in the 1990s showed institutions to be 'the underlying determinant of the long-run performance of economies' (North 1990, p. 107) and the concomitant rise of the 'new regionalism' overtook the prevailing neoliberal localist orthodoxy in revealing how 'institutional thickness' at the larger (metropolitan) regional scale was the necessary link for achieving economic competitiveness—as well as achieving other regional policy goals such as tackling entrenched inequalities, encouraging smart sustainable planning and enabling piecemeal democratic rights (Amin 1999)—institutions have been marked out as important components of metropolitan change. And yet, despite this recognition that institutions are crucial for metropolitan development, questions pertaining to what the right mix of institutions is, how these institutions should be arranged, what the best institutional environment is, across what geographies should they operate, what policies or strategies should they look to implement remain largely unanswered. At best, we can say we have a series of hotly contested answers.

It goes without saying that there is no one-size-fits-all solution to institutionalising metropolitan regions. What we can point towards instead are trial-and-error approaches to operationalising metropolitan institutions (in the narrow sense) or institutions for metropolitan development (in a much broader sense) across space

and time. The problem is one of the metropolitan praxis: how to put the abstract (simplified) reasoning of institutional theory into (concrete/complex) institutional practice via policies and governance arrangements for metropolitan regions? This is important because in the current period, we see no let-up in the formulation and spread of new policies and institutional arrangements trying to face-up to this challenge. We only have to look at spread of the US-style metropolitan mayor model as well as other mayoral models (Heinelt et al. 2018), the pace of territorial and institutional reform underway in many countries across the globe (Schmitt and Van Well 2016) and the emergence of new of ways of shaping metropolitan change—e.g. privatisation, contractualism, deal-making—to know there is a lot to observe regarding the changing governance arrangements for metropolitan regions. But what, we ask, is being achieved as a result of this change and our observations of it?

Our argument is that we must not overlook how metropolitan institutional reforms are a means to an end. They are not, as often it can appear, the end goal. In this book, we do not set out to simply detail *what* and *where* institutional arrangements are being mobilised and how they might be similar/different across space. This is a fundamental first step, but it should only ever be a first step. The second step in our approach is to ask what we see as the more pressing questions surrounding metropolitan institutional reforms, notably: *who* is orchestrating the change,[4] *how* are they attempting to do this and *why* now? This is a critical step because there is arguably a growing tendency for practitioners and researchers alike to overstate how much of this change is qualitatively 'new' vis-à-vis how much it is a continuation of deep-seated trends. Moreover, it is only by asking these and other related questions that we can reveal the often-overlooked politics of metropolitan regionalism, by which we mean the *realpolitik* of metropolitan reform.

Our third and final step is to consider what is at stake? This is important because institutional change generates a certain amount of hysteria. One way of looking at contemporary institutional change in relation to metropolitan regions is to present it as further indication of cities being empowered to assume their role as the new global leaders. At the other extreme, there are accounts which present the institutionalisation of metropolitan regions as a mechanism by which to devolve austerity—a case of devolving the responsibility for implementing welfare cuts and delivering austerity (Etherington and Jones 2018; Pike et al. 2018). Another way to consider all the institutional activity around the metropolitan scale as bearing the hallmarks of what Lovering (1999) famously referred to as being 'theory led by policy': the idea of weak theorisation based on policy activity alone rather than assessing the true meaning of that activity and its likely implications for affecting meaningful change. Either way there is little or no denying the importance of critically reflecting on whether what we are analysing amounts to genuine institutional reform or is it a case of that well-worn idiomatic refrain of rearranging the deckchairs on the Titanic?

[4]We need to highlight that this is more important than simply who is involved. This question is all about where the power lies and who is setting the agenda.

1.3.2 Policies and Ideas

Of course, institutions are only as good as the policies and ideas they seek to implement. Institutions stand and fall by what they do, not what they are or where they are. At an entry level, the first question that needs asking is what those policies are, quickly followed by a second question which is how similar/different these are to the policies and ideas being mobilised by metropolitan regions both within and across specific national contexts. In line with our earlier arguments, this approach is reflected in the emergence of two types of literature: *general abstractions* that situate policies affecting metropolitan regions within the contours of longer-term discursive parameters which stretch from spatial Keynesianism and redistributive policies during the 1930s–70s, through entrepreneurialism in the 1980s, competitiveness in the 1990s, sustainability and resilience in the 2000s, to smart specialisation in the 2010s (Table 1.2); and *systematic* reviews which take the latest in vogue policy mantra to see how it is being implemented in specific contexts and highlight what works, where and why? The latter owes everything to the institutional capacity to deliver, much more so than what the policy is.

This has become even more acute with the advance of neoliberalism, globalisation and the rise of global urban policy making. What we have grown accustomed to are a series of seemingly identikit neoliberal urban policies (e.g. urban waterfront redevelopment, competing to host global mega events, attracting the creative class, implementing smart technologies) which have been elevated to the status of 'global' policies for metropolitan regions to adopt. Promoting these off-the-shelf boosterist models of metropolitan development has become an industry in its own right, with a growing cadre of global urban consultants, policy experts and metropolitan think tanks mobilising on the premise that they can provide metropolitan elites with solutions to their metropolitan problems.

The transition away from national planning and policy making of metropolitan areas towards a global policy industry poses fundamental questions about how ideas, policies and practices for metropolitan development are generated; how and why some ideas, policies and practices are subsequently captured, become mobile and travel; how and why some ideas, policies and practices mutate and are absorbed more easily than others in practice? A growing 'policy mobilities' literature has gone a long way to uncovering enabling and disabling factors in the flow of metropolitan policies, ideas and practices (McCann and Ward 2011). This has been important in drawing attention away from the can-do bravado of the policies themselves and focusing it instead on the role of the actors and networks involved in orchestrating and promoting the travel of ideas and policies. On this, we see an emerging body of work examining the spread of a city leadership model based around metropolitan mayors (Barber 2013; Heinelt et al. 2018), but perhaps more important for the travel of ideas and policies, the formation of new *global* urban governance frameworks often supported by a new self-styled metropolitan elite. It cannot go unnoticed how there has been a proliferation of city networks (e.g. Eurocities, Metrex, Metropolis, World Assembly of Local and Regional Governments, United Cities and Local Govern-

ments) which have been established to give metropolitan regions and their political elites a forum through which to influence approaches to metropolitan governance, but alongside this there are also groups such as the C40 Climate Leadership Group and the Rockefeller Foundation's 100 Resilient Cities (100RC) network which are backed by large philanthropic supporters (e.g. Clinton Foundation, Bloomberg Philanthropies, Rockefeller Foundation) as well as other political and corporate sponsors seeking to influence metropolitan regions.[5]

The very nature of this new world of policy making is putting the spotlight firmly on the actors involved and the shifting power dynamics of who is really influencing metropolitan change, how they are seeking to do this and to what end. Put simply, what are their motivations? For the question is not so much which policies travel, but who decides which policies do (not) travel. Meanwhile and related to this, the challenge of managing multiple interdependent actors each of whom have their own stake in metropolitan development is intimately tied to the promotion of agreement-based policy styles and the rise of a 'new contractualism' in planning and governing metropolitan regions (Raco 2016). National governments see deal-making as a way to retain control of metropolitan regional development, but we must be equally careful in considering the 'depoliticising effects' that these post-political, consensual approaches towards policy making generate (Allmendinger 2017).

All of which means there is a lot to consider, but it also focuses our attention on what is at stake. For alongside these legitimate concerns about these new approaches to planning and governing metropolitan regions, there are other important aspects to this debate which need a fuller examination. We can point towards the narrowing of metropolitan policies in some arenas to debates over large-scale infrastructure as the one-size-fits-all policy solution to metropolitan issues to the detriment of more holistic development plans. We can also identify what Taylor (2016) has referred to as the widespread practice of capturing, re-appropriating, but ultimately misusing, ideas by 'corporate social science' and urban policy gurus in pursuit of fuelling metropolitan boosterism. Indeed, it is this last point which is possibly the most salient. Arguably what recent work is pinpointing as the major disconnect in the policy discourses surrounding metropolitan regions is that for all of the boosterist rhetoric of national and international competitiveness, one of the biggest drivers for policies enacting metropolitan reform and change is actually derived from a more defensive standpoint: a recognition that they need to insulate their metropolitan region(s) from the external threat posed by having to compete with other, increasingly large, metropolitan regions. In a nutshell, the policy landscape is one which increasingly presents metropolitan regions as the answer at a time when their individual status as competitive territories has never been under more threat as activity is seen to concentrate in a smaller number of increasingly large metropolitan regions.

[5] As an example, C40 is supported by a collective of large philanthropies (e.g. Bloomberg Philanthropies, Clinton Foundation), governments (e.g. UK Government), international organisation (e.g. World Bank) and private sector interests (e.g. Citigroup, Arup).

1.3.3 Spatial Imaginaries

When is a metropolitan region a metropolitan region? On the face of it, this is self-evidently an intuitive question. But dig a little deeper and you quickly realise it is not as simple as first imagined. As with all spatial concepts, there is not one simple definition. Indeed, more than any other spatial concept the metropolitan region is perhaps the most difficult to pin down.

Since the early 2000s, many attempts have been made to define metropolitan regions. The upshot is the emergence of as many definitions as there have been attempts made. So, what have we learned? First and foremost, we have come to recognise the polysemous character of metropolitan regions. Arguably, this has been the greatest attribute of the metropolitan region concept because it has come to serve the interests of so many actors, in so many ways. The reason the metropolitan region concept has remained so fashionable is precisely because it is so malleable. Further evidence for this comes with the recognition that the metropolitan region concept is often used interchangeably with other spatial frameworks (e.g. city regions) or prefaced with adjectives such as morphological, polycentric or megapolitan. This said, despite the lack of a clearly defined methodology for producing a singular approach to conceptualising metropolitan regions, most definitions take on one—or blend together elements—of three distinct approaches:

- An *agglomeration* perspective where urbanisation is taken as the starting point and it is recognised that the outgrowth of urban areas beyond their traditional city limits is forming metropolitan scaled clusters of socio-economic activity.
- A *functional* perspective where integration is taken as the starting point and emphasis is directed towards the growing interconnectedness of an urban core—be it a single city or group of cities—and its surrounding, less densely populated, regional hinterland.
- A *territorial–scalar* perspective where governance is taken as the starting point and the growing imperative for national and local political–economic elites to coordinate activity at this scale, and to embed metropolitan regions within frameworks of multi-level governance, is of utmost importance.

What this demonstrates is that how you approach metropolitan regions largely determines the image of *what* a metropolitan region is. Thereafter, depending on what your definition of metropolitan region is determines *where* is designated a metropolitan region and ultimately where is included, excluded or on the fringes of whatever metropolitan regional discourse is being constructed in that moment.

Of course, we must always remember that metropolitan regions are never the end goal; they are always the means to another end. This is why, of late, research is focusing much less on defining what, and mapping where, metropolitan regions exist. Instead, attention is increasingly directed to better understanding how the metropolitan region concept is mobilised. This requires much more consideration of *when* it is being mobilised, *how* it is being mobilised, *who* is mobilising it and most important of all, *why* it is being mobilised. Stated bluntly, we need to know by whom and for

whom metropolitan regionalism is being pursued. From a sociospatial perspective, this is critical in enabling us to better understand who or where stands to gain the most and conversely who or where stands to gain the least (or worse still, lose the most) as a consequence of metropolitan regionalisation.

One important caveat is that this does not mean we should not ask critical questions about how metropolitan regions are defined and conceptualised. Far from it, in fact, because a weakness of research on metropolitan regions—and to be fair this extends across a lot of social scientific and policy thinking—is the rush to mint newspatial concepts and vocabulary to account for purportedly new geographies of urbanisation, regionalisation and metropolitanisation (Taylor and Lang 2004; Paasi et al. 2018). Yet many of these new terms enjoy only a fleeting existence. In contrast, others, such as 'metropolitan region', capture the imagination and experience longevity. The problem in these cases is that all too often the concept becomes assumed and, as such, is found increasingly to be considered uncritically. Simply put, people assume everyone else will know what they are talking about when they use terms such as metropolitan region. What they fail to account for is that most definitions or conceptualisations of the metropolitan region are very specific and depend almost entirely on who is doing it, when they are doing it, where they are doing it from/for and why they are doing it.

From the outset, even generic definitions which emerged in the 2000s owed much to their intellectual lineage, but the intervening years have made it more important than ever to critically interrogate how metropolitan imaginaries have emerged, transformed and in some cases disappeared, given how the metropolitan region has been mobilised in different national contexts, from different disciplinary standpoints and at different times within this era of metropolitan regionalisation. Our argument is that attempts to define and conceptualise metropolitan regions over the past two decades fall into the trap of attempting to provide an all-encompassing abstract definition or conceptualisation that does match the reality in practice, or they go to the particularity of a specific case—be it an individual metropolitan region or a national context—which makes it difficult to generalise and learn.

In this book, we reveal the inherent unevenness that maps of these spatial imaginaries often belie. This unevenness in institutional capacity, spatial coherence and planning competency is critical because it allows us to consider the extent to which metropolitan regional imaginaries equate to examples of deep or shallow-rooted regionalism. The importance we attach to this is the potential to identify those metropolitan regional imaginaries which are likely to develop into harder institutional forms, which might remain weakly institutionalised and which could just as easily disappear altogether. In other words, a key question when we consider metropolitan (and other spatial) imaginaries is to what end they can be considered significant in any essential way. To put it another way, what is ultimately at stake?

1.3.4 Planning Styles

How is planning currently shaping metropolitan development processes? What roles and styles does planning adopt and what lessons can be drawn from the diversity of metropolitan planning processes and strategies advanced in different sociopolitical contexts nowadays? Metropolitan regions are increasingly determined to find a place that positions them in a global market economy characterised by competitiveness policy agendas. Vigorously defining their abilities and capacities to perform within this categorical imperative that conditions their futures, metropolitan regions have indeed distinctively become strategic places product of processes of state re-territorialisation and rescaling (Brenner 2003, 2004).

Against this backdrop, the qualities and strengths of metropolitan planning vary significantly from country to country. Whilst globalisation is evidently a core external driving force influencing metropolitan competition and performance, national sociopolitical contexts (path dependencies, national policies, planning cultures, etc.) similarly play a relevant role in catering to metropolitan development (Ahrend and Schumann 2014; OECD 2014, 2017). As the fate of metropolitan regions is also highly dependent on their particular national institutional context (i.e. legal framework and participating institutions involved in plan and strategy-making and implementation), their ability to perform strategically is conditioned by the circumstances and idiosyncrasies of the specific national planning system they are embedded (Nadin and Stead 2008; Tewdwr-Jones 2012; Reimer et al. 2014)—i.e. making use of the oftentimes unequal planning powers allocated to the metropolitan level vis-à-vis other levels of planning. The instrumental content as well as the planning processes emerging from metropolitan spatial plans and strategies are thus highly reliant on their institutional contexts (Elinbaum and Galland 2016).

Whilst the distinctively regulatory and land-use oriented substance of planning has long been supplemented by strategic content, metropolitan regions are increasingly conceived as place-making sites empowered by relational processes for decision making (Healey 2007; Haughton et al. 2009). Despite the apparently rigid, cascade-like hierarchy of several national planning systems, the formation of ad hoc horizontal and vertical networks of actors determines the possibility for metropolitan regions to undergo episodes of strategic spatial planning. While this reorientation of governance capacities has been evident insofar as fostering competitive metropolitan regions in settings where territorial relationships are characterised by complex urban and regional dynamics, the range of strategic plans at different levels of planning influenced by relational logics is wide and similarly influences the processes and outcomes of metropolitan development.

The above implies that strategic spatial planning is essentially discretionary in its quest to link (strategic) objectives to spatial policies. With planning playing a strategic role, national governments (through national-level planning) enable themselves to move freely within spatial planning systems in pursuit of particular interests (e.g. accelerating ad hoc spatial development processes) (Galland and Elinbaum 2015). Since strategic spatial planning does not deal with particular land-use content as

statutory planning does, it allows for negotiation processes between several key actors attempting to shape spatial development. This implies that scales shift from being 'hard-edged' containers into rather flexible and less-defined spaces (Allmendinger et al. 2015).

But what else is 'strategic' about strategic spatial planning in metropolitan regions and what are its potential outcomes? Strategic spatial planning supplements 'formal' planning processes backed up by legislation aimed at enhancing legitimacy, transparency and trust. Worth considering is the extent to which informal strategic processes end up influencing formal statutory planning. Over time, however, metropolitan reforms and thereby metropolitan planning processes are subject to constant fluctuations in different sociopolitical contexts. In response to processes of governance rescaling, 'change agents' benefit from windows of opportunity (Kingdon 2011) emerging in metropolitan areas to create multi-stakeholder reform coalitions to foster new metropolitan engagements. Through strategies of legitimation including rhetorical appeals to authority, logic and emotion (Finlayson 2012; Davoudi et al. 2019), change agents attempt to set new agendas by persuading other actors to redefine their goals and interests (Getimis 2016).

Depoliticisation and post-politics constitute 'a lens through which we can frame and understand contemporary planning' via techniques that displace key (political) debates from planning into other managerial or technical (post-political) arenas (Allmendinger 2017, p. 191). Projecting openness or consensus, these arenas end up limiting and displacing opposition to development and growth. In accordance with Mouffe (2000), depoliticisation thus removes the political aspect from polity domains such as planning, thus circumventing transparency and accountability. In metropolitan planning, depoliticisation takes place in the form of conscious political strategies that distort metropolitan strategy-making processes.

As the world has become too fast-paced for a policy domain as (metropolitan) planning to endure, twenty-first-century governments and the market expect that the field responds rather proactively—not through intervention—to catering to metropolitan development and growth (despite social and environmental consequences). In so doing, the steering, balancing and strategic roles of planning can no longer be defined by national governments (Galland 2012), but by new forms of co-production (Albrechts et al. 2017). In these contexts, we can think of processes of metropolitan planning being structured as 'situated practices' rooted in place and time (Healey 2007) product of responses to local problematiques. In these localised settings, what should planning specifically bring to the table?

Planning is the domain par excellence holding potential to envision place, to align sectors and agencies across time and space, to provide synoptic perspectives, to identify individual assets and to continuously search for pluralism. Against this backdrop, metropolitan planning renders these enduring hallmarks meaningful by 'breaking through' proactive and participatory long-term visioning exercises, 'breaking up' into co-visioning and co-produced forms and 'breaking out' into projects, events and interventions that seem to stretch beyond the limits and parameters of single fixed plans or strategies (Tewdwr-Jones and Galland 2020). The question

stemming from this is whether these enduring hallmarks will provide the foundation to re-conceptualise metropolitan planning in the years to come.

1.4 Rationale of the Book

This introductory chapter has justified the core research aim of the book, which is to periodise contemporary processes of metropolitan change and approaches to planning and governing metropolitan regions. To conceptualise metropolitan regions, the chapter has presented what we conceive as four key thematic drivers of metropolitan change, namely institutions and institutional shifts, policies and ideas, spatial imaginaries and planning styles. Alongside its *thematic* dimension, the research approach underlying our conceptualisation of metropolitan regions in this book is also founded on a heuristic perspective that places emphasis on *temporal* and *phronetic* dimensions—which in synergy constitute what we denominate the TTP framework.

Accordingly, the book is organised into four thematic parts that reflect our four drivers of metropolitan change (Table 1.1). Through the logic of periodisation, each thematic part embeds the temporal dimension into each of its chapters to denote how the dynamics and rhythms of metropolitan change are not consistent across space or time in any given nation or metropolitan region (Table 1.2). Periodisation thus embraces the analytical window through which metropolitan change can be conceptualised *retrospectively* (how have we arrived at this point?), *presently* (what is currently unfolding?) and *prospectively* (what might happen in the future as a result?). The phronetic dimension is reflected in the structure and rationale of each of the four parts of the book. Each part is comprised of three chapters, which respectively address *change* (revealing what is happening and where it is happening), *process* (examining who is involved, how they are involved and why they are involved) and *implications* (what is at stake for metropolitan regions, planning and governance) (Fig. 1.1). It is thus via the phronetic dimension of our framework that we seek to answer what we perceive to be the key question—what is at stake?

The final chapter 'What is Metropolitan Planning and Governance for?' draws together the four drivers of metropolitan change to provide an account concerning present and future opportunities and challenges facing the planning and governance of metropolitan regions in accordance with our key drivers of metropolitan change (Galland et al. 2020).

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Part I
Institutions and Institutional Shifts

Chapter 2
Metropolitan Revolution or Metropolitan Evolution? The (Dis)continuities in Metropolitan Institutional Reforms

Mariona Tomàs

Abstract The development and change of metropolitan institutions have been at the heart of political and theoretical debates for decades. However, given the widespread path dependency of institutional development, we may ask what has really changed over time? The aim of this chapter is to evaluate recent institutional developments that have come to be seen as emblematic of a 'metropolitan revolution' in governance. Based on the description of current and the past developments, the chapter will question the nomenclature of institutional ideas on metropolitan governance that is also often used to distinguish different periods if not paradigms of metropolitan governance. Our focus—though not exclusively—will be on developments in Europe where we will analyse recent reforms to reveal how allegedly broad, universal trends and phases of metropolitan institutional reform are, in fact, occurring at different paces, in different ways, at different times, and with different degrees of institutionalisation across space. The chapter concludes with the assertion that current processes of change pertaining to metropolitan institutions are actually part of an evolution rather than of a revolution.

Keywords Metropolitan governance · Institutional reforms · Institutional change · Europe

2.1 Metropolitan Institutions at Stake

The development and change of metropolitan institutions have been at the heart of political and theoretical debates for decades at least in the field of political science. The type of institutions that should be created at a local or metropolitan scale has been one of the key issues of the metropolitan debate. Institutions can be defined in a broad sense, as formal rules of society and informal constraints (North 1995). Neo-institutionalist authors have underlined the difference between institutional hardware (legislation, formal rules, and political structures) and institutional software ('how things are done around here', political culture, and values) (Lowndes 2005). The

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'rediscovery' of institutions comes also from a planning perspective (Rodríguez-Pose 2013; Salet 2018): institutions are considered not only as organisations but also as public norms and beliefs.

Both formal and informal institutions shape metropolitan governance. Having a metropolitan institution with competences and financial resources has different political and social implications compared to a model of governance based on informal agreements. Indeed, the capacity to implement metropolitan public policies of public transportation or sustainability is higher when there are technical, human, and economic resources within an institution created with this purpose. However, metropolitan governance is also shaped by the attitudes of local actors towards cooperation: metropolitan institutions can be ineffective if representatives block them in the name of local autonomy or other values. Indeed, the capacity to 'think metropolitan', that is, to overcome local interests in the name of a metropolitan common interest, is also a key issue in metropolitan governance (Tomàs 2012). These two dimensions of institutions interact and influence each other. In other words, metropolitan governance is much more than metropolitan formal institutions. Nevertheless, in this chapter and through the book, we focus mainly on the formal dimension of institutions, that is, the existence of metropolitan authorities and how they shape public policies, imaginary, and planning.

The aim of this chapter is to evaluate recent institutional developments that many have come to see as emblematic of a 'metropolitan revolution' in governance. Indeed, different waves of institutional reforms have been implemented for decades, ranging from high-institutionalised models (hard governance) to more flexible and low-institutionalised models (soft governance). Several attempts to periodise metropolitan reforms have been undertaken, although it is hard to draw a sharp line between the phases. Indeed, as we explain in the first section, different approaches to metropolitan governance overlap over time (Galland and Harrison 2020).

In the last decade, there have been metropolitan reforms in several European countries, including France, Germany, Italy, and the United Kingdom. Are we facing a new golden age of metropolitan reform? Concerning the created institutions, what are the innovative elements and what differs compared to the metropolitan reforms of the 1990s? Our goal is to reveal how allegedly broad, universal trends and phases of metropolitan institutional reform are, in fact, occurring at different paces, in different ways, at different times, and with different degrees of institutionalisation across space.

2.2 Convergent Metropolitan Reforms, Divergent Periodisation

The way to govern metropolitan regions has been the subject of academic and political debate since the beginning of the twentieth century in Europe and North America (Wright 1928). We find varying periodisations concerning types of metropolitan

reforms and the reasons explaining them. Two different approaches are dominant in the academic literature. On the one hand, some neo-Marxist scholars argue that changes in urban governance can be seen through the lens of 'state spatial restructuring' (Brenner 1999, 2004) under neoliberalism. As analysed in Galland and Harrison (2020), Brenner's (2004) periodisation of urban governance in Western Europe from early the 1960s to 2000s describes a transition from an historical context where the state promoted economic development across the national territory, towards a situation where national governments privileged capacities and advanced infrastructure in the most competitive cities and territories. On the other hand, other academic literature analyses metropolitan institutional reforms as a succession of waves illustrating three main approaches to metropolitan governance: the Reform School, the Public Choice School, and the New Regionalism (for overviews see Brenner 2002; Heinelt and Kübler 2005; Savitch and Vogel 2009). The three schools differ on the degree of institutionalisation of reforms:

(1) mergers and creation of metropolitan governments (reformist approach)
(2) voluntary cooperation on a small scale and respecting local autonomy (public choice approach)
(3) strengthening public–private cooperation in metropolitan regions through flexible arrangements (neo-regionalism approach) (Tomàs 2012).

The two perspectives (neo-Marxist and institutionalist) differ in the focus of the analysis. The neo-Marxist approach conceives metropolitan reforms as a strategy of the central state—an outcome of 'state spatial selectivity'—where state institutions and policies privilege particular spaces, locations, and scales, creating different types of urban-regional regulations (Brenner 2004). This is a structural perspective that reduces the significance of political and institutional variables, partly underestimating the importance of agency (Beauregard 2006), i.e. 'political struggle, the actors, the interests' (Le Galès 2006, p. 719). In contrast, in the analysis of metropolitan reforms as a succession of models of hard or soft governance, the place of institutions and agency is central: who is leading or opposing the reforms (the state, local actors), what are the institutions created (one-tier after amalgamations or a two-tier metropolitan structure, special districts, light metropolitan structures, and strategic planning). However, these approaches have been criticised for the mobilisation of normative arguments (Norris 2001) and the use of the 'metropolitan trap', i.e. 'not only researchers but also political, social and economic actors associate 'the good' with a specific conception of the metropolitan scale' (Tomàs 2012, p. 554).

Both interpretations, the neo-Marxist and the institutionalist, have in common the use of periodisation. Brenner's (2004) periodisation focuses on four phases:

(1) Spatial Keynesianism (1960–70)
(2) Fordism in Crisis (1970–80)
(3) Glocalisation Strategies, Round I (1980s)
(4) Glocalisation Strategies, Round II (1990–2000s).

The institutional perspective establishes another periodisation depending on the dominance of the approaches and the type of institutional arrangements put into

place: the Reformist School is dominant in two periods (1900–1920, 1950s), Public Choice between the 1960s and 1980s, and New Regionalism appears since the 1990s (Heinelt and Kübler 2005; Tomàs 2012). Two ideas can be highlighted in both cases:

(1) the distinction of phases is a theoretical purpose more than an applicable framework, and
(2) the arguments behind metropolitan reforms coincide in both the neo-Marxist and institutionalist approaches.

Concerning the phases, it must be asked what the starting point really is, as national reforms are often preceded by a long history of cooperation on the ground. Brenner's well-known periodisation can be used to describe phases, but critically, the phases have not taken place everywhere simultaneously. Phases are usually delayed, for example about two decades in Spain (Martí-Costa and Tomàs 2017), 10–15 years in Scandinavia (Galland 2012), and about 20 years in Finland (Moisio and Luukkonen 2015; Pelkonen 2008). This implies that there is much more heterogeneity than convergence. In the case of the institutional approach, we find examples following different waves of institutionalisation:

(1) large-scale mergers in North and Central Europe from 1950 to 1970 and the creation of metropolitan governments in England and France, as well as in Toronto and Portland
(2) the abolition of metropolitan structures in the 1980s (England, Spain)
(3) the use of strategic planning in the 1990s (San Francisco, Torino, Barcelona).

A new phase starting in 2010 is based on the conception of metropolitan regions as competitive territories, where global firms (from the financial sector, real estate, new technologies, and collaborative economy) push for infrastructure alliances. In this context, the State reasserts its power through taking control over metropolitan regions, with new institutional reforms. Indeed, a new wave of metropolitan reforms has been implemented at a national scale (e.g. in Italy, France and Portugal) and in some regions (e.g. England and some *Länder* in Germany). We also find examples of new metropolitan structures created in agglomerations such as Barcelona (2010) and Katowice (2017), which are unique examples in their countries.

The renaissance of more institutionalised models of metropolitan governance questions the current periodisation based on the dominance of neo-regionalist approaches. The recent reforms have not created true metropolitan governments as the Reform School suggests—in fact, some authors argue that this has never been the case (see Lefèvre 1998)—but they all have meant the approval of laws and, depending on the cases, national territorial reorganisation or the creation of new political legitimacy through the direct election of metropolitan mayors and assemblies. These reforms are not aligned with the soft and flexible forms of metropolitan governance promoted by New Regionalism. Indeed, the implementation of neo-regionalist thinking can be questioned (Swanstrom 2001), since soft forms of cooperation have coexisted with other 'old regionalist' solutions. For instance, the Verband Region Stuttgart and the Greater London Authority, both directly elected metropolitan governments were created in 1994 and 1999, respectively. In Canada, in the apogee of

new regionalist thinking between the late 1990s and the early 2000s, there were large mergers in most urban agglomerations (affecting cities such as Toronto, Montreal and Ottawa) (Collin et al. 2002).

Regarding the reasons behind metropolitan reforms, five main arguments are to be found in both approaches and in successive phases: equity, efficiency, rationality, austerity and economic competitiveness. Megacities and metropolitan governments were created in the 1960s (Spatial Keynesianism) to deliver redistributive policies and ensure equal access to public goods and services. Moreover, metropolitan reforms were undertaken in the name of providing better services at lower cost (efficiency) and simplifying the usual multi-layer institutional context where urban agglomerations are embedded (rationality) (Sharpe 1995). The abolition of these authorities in the following two decades (Fordism in Crisis) and devolution from central and regional governments to the local level, often without the adequate resources, has been seen as a common feature of neoliberalism (Brenner 1999; Hackworth 2007; Harvey 2012). Metropolitan regions acted like markets, where people chose their place of residence according to their preferences and in the name of efficiency concerning the provision of services, following the public choice perspective (Tiebout 1956). Finally, both glocalisation strategies (rounds I and II) were coincident with the new regionalist approach. Neo-regionalist authors highlight the importance of austerity and competitiveness for explaining metropolitan reforms (Norris 2001), reasons that supplemented the traditional issues of achieving efficiency and rationality (Demazière 2018; Zimmermann and Feiertag 2018). In the 1990s, according to Brenner (2004), national governments privileged economic capacities and advanced infrastructure of the most competitive cities and territories. It was the turn of urban entrepreneurialism when local governments acquired key roles in promoting economic development and place marketing strategies, while in the 2000s (including recent developments) large-scale metropolitan regions were targeted by national governments for 'economic rejuvenation', rescaling urban competitiveness from cities to urban regions.

The analysis of periodisation and the rationales behind metropolitan reforms bring us to specific cases. We identify some European countries and certain metropolises with large trajectories of metropolitan experimentation, such as France, England, Germany, Italy (Bologna in particular), Barcelona and Manchester. There is an accumulation of institutional experiences, with some fluctuations: these metropolises transition from hard governance models to soft ones and then from soft governance tools to hard governance models, depending on the cases. Different models are put into place and then replaced, in different waves, with different arguments, but still national or regional governments, depending on the degree of decentralisation of the country, insist on institutionalising metropolitan governance.

These waves of metropolitan reforms are often implemented without the support of local political representatives. There are many qualitative and quantitative studies that have been done analysing the position of mayors regarding metropolitan reforms (see Heinelt and Zimmermann 2011 on the German case, Lackowska and Mikuła 2018 on metropolitan arrangements in Poznan, Poland and Medir et al. 2018 for Spain). As Dlablac et al. (2018) underline, European mayors:

(1) are aware that there are difficulties in solving the challenges on a metropolitan scale
(2) are not satisfied with the current model of metropolitan governance.

However, this perception is not convincing enough to ask for the creation of metropolitan governments. In other words, there is no demand from mayors for institutional reforms and the consolidation of big governments on a metropolitan scale, according to the results of the Poll Leader II survey, a comparative research project on the European Mayor. Exceptions are to be found in Italy, where there was clear support for nation-wide metropolitan reform (Crivello and Staricco 2017) and in England, where mayors asked for devolution and had previously organised through the Core Cities Network (Shaw and Tewdwr-Jones 2017). Indeed, the attitude of local representatives towards metropolitan cooperation is a key factor in explaining failures and successes of governance formulas.

The implementation of metropolitan reforms in several phases and the mobilisation of recurrent arguments reinforce the idea of the existence of an institutional metropolitan path dependency: metropolitan governance forms are highly path-dependent on inherited institutional structures and embedded spatial configurations (Zimmermann and Getimis 2017). Discontinuities and changes occur but not drastic ruptures regarding past experiences. Despite the lack of support of local representatives, metropolitan reforms are constantly being implemented in the name of equity, austerity, competitiveness, efficiency and rationality (aspects dealt with in more depth in Zimmermann 2020). However, metropolitan reforms are occurring at different speeds, in different modes and with different degrees of institutionalisation across space.

To sum up, these are the main trends in metropolitan governance and institutional change:

- Metropolitan regions are the privileged territory for economic competitiveness, for both global firms and the State.
- The periodisation of the approaches to metropolitan governance (neo-Marxist and institutionalist) does not fit exactly to all cases. We find considerable differences between countries.
- Recent trends point towards the development of more institutionalised forms of metropolitan governance. Hence, it is critical to assess the extent to which an alleged metropolitan revolution is actually taking place.

2.3 Recent Reforms: Similar Form, Different Pace?

We cannot talk of a single European model of metropolitan governance. There is great diversity as a result of the traditions and historical richness associated with the different countries. Institutional fragmentation exists in most metropolitan regions, with several sectorial agencies providing and/or planning one service (transport, water,

sewage, etc.) and the existence of other levels of government that exert metropolitan competences. Indeed, extreme models of hard and soft governance comprise the vast minority, i.e. metropolitan governments and voluntary associations of municipalities (Tomàs 2016). This trend can be extrapolated to OECD countries. A 2015 study found that 68% of metropolitan regions in OECD countries have a metropolitan governance body working on regional development, transport and planning, but only a quarter of these bodies (18% of the total) has actual substantive regulatory powers (OECD 2015).

However, in Europe over the past ten years, a new wave of metropolitan reforms has been implemented both at a national scale (Italy, France) and in some regions (England, *Länder* in Germany), while the metropolitan governments of Barcelona and Katowice stand out as unique cases in their own countries. Are we witnessing the introduction of a new golden age of metropolitan institutionalism? Are these new metropolitan structures different to the previous ones? Are they similar or can we speak of variegation of metropolitan models? How can these differences and/or similarities be explained? These recent metropolitan reforms have some elements in common as well as some differences. We analyse them in detail in terms of the following aspects: territorial restructuration, competences and financing, legitimacy and democracy. These are the key issues of metropolitan governance: the political recognition of metropolitan regions in the territorial organisation of their countries, real powers and economic autonomy, and input legitimacy (Tomàs 2016).

2.3.1 Territorial Restructuration

The political recognition of metropolitan regions can occur in different scenarios, mainly three:

(1) a real territorial restructuration
(2) a reinforcement of existing institutions
(3) the creation of a new tier of government.

In the first place, one of the driving forces of metropolitan reforms is introducing rationality in territorial organisation. In other words, metropolitan reforms are created to restructure the different institutional layers of local government. This has been the case in Italy, where the national law 56/2014 creating the *città metropolitana* includes the suppression of the existing two-tier local government, the province. In this case, the national reform comes after a failed attempt in 1990 to create the *città metropolitana*. The advantages and disadvantages of the transformation of provinces into metropolitan governments have already been analysed (see Fedeli 2017; Demazière 2018; Zimmermann and Feiertag 2018), but one of the key issues is the convenience of keeping the same territorial limits as the provinces, which brings some dysfunctionalities. In Germany, the case of Hannover is unique since the reform of 2001 meant the amalgamation of the city of Hannover, the surrounding county of Hannover and the former regional planning association. These mergers are unusual

in Germany, where there is a continuous and flexible context-sensitive adaptation of existing legal frameworks and institutions but no nation-wide strategy (Zimmermann 2017).

In the case of Barcelona, the creation of the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona in 2010 can be also understood as an answer to the existing institutional fragmentation: three metropolitan authorities were operating in the same territory as a result of the abolition of the previous metropolitan government in 1987. However, the creation of the metropolitan government in this case has not altered the complexity of the local government, since two other second tiers of local government coexist at the metropolitan scale (one province and three counties) (Tomàs 2017). A similar situation has occurred in England, where new Combined Authorities have been recently put into place after new legislation was passed in 2009 and 2015 (Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009, Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016). In many cases, these new authorities have replaced various sectorial agencies that were established after the abolition of metropolitan authorities in 1986. Moreover, the creation of Combined Authorities occurred after the abolition of Regional Development Agencies, appointed public bodies created in 1997 only in England (Shaw and Tewdwr-Jones 2017).

The second scenario of the creation of recent metropolitan governments does not involve territorial restructuration but the reinforcement of existing institutions. This is the case in France (except for Paris), a country that has implemented several metropolitan reforms since the 1960s (Baraize and Négrier 2001). The recent law of 2015 delimitates the conditions of new *métropoles* but does not reduce another layer of government (except in Lyon). Lyon is the only case to date where the creation of a *métropole* has meant territorial restructuration, by merging the competences of the metropolitan government with those of the second tier of local government (*département*). In the rest of the cases, the metropolitan government has been added to the already dense institutional multilayered system of local government (Demazière 2020).

Finally, we underline two cases where the creation of metropolitan governments fills an existing gap: Paris and Katowice. The capital of France had always been exempt from intermunicipal reforms in France until 2014, when the metropolitan dimension of Paris was recognised for the first time with the adoption of the law of modernisation of public territorial action and affirmation of metropolises of 27, January 2014. However, this recognition came after a previous process of voluntary cooperation with a broad, strong territorial base (the Metropolitan Conference). The approval of the law represents the institutionalisation of this cooperation, as it provides for the creation of a new body of intermunicipal cooperation, the *Métropole du Grand Paris*, on 1, January 2016. In Poland, the creation of the metropolitan government in Katowice in 2017 represents an exception as the country has 25 years of experience of local self-government but hardly any tradition of metropolitan governance (Krukowska and Lackowska 2017). As in Paris, the creation of the new institution came after a period of soft governance, that is, the voluntary intermunicipal cooperation organised through Silesian Metropolis created in 2007 (Pyka 2011).

2.3.1.1 Competences and Financing

In all the cases, metropolitan reforms were implemented after the approval of laws by national parliaments (Italy, France, United Kingdom and Poland) or regional parliaments (Catalonia, German *Länder*). This is an important point since legislation provides metropolitan authorities with competences and funding, the pillars of metropolitan capacity. In the case of Italy, metropolitan cities enjoy constitutional recognition (Fedeli 2017). To what extent do the new metropolitan authorities created since the mid-2000s have exclusive binding competences and fiscal autonomy? Are they real metropolitan governments, according to the principles of the Reform School?

First, new metropolitan institutions have traditional competences in hard policies such as transport, metropolitan planning, waste and water management. In England, the agreement on devolved competences was undertaken on a bilateral basis, between central and local governments (through City Deals), and has been revised over time. Indeed, additional devolved responsibilities include economic development, regeneration, housing, transport, skills, the integration of health and social care, aspects of childcare, land development and planning, taking over the work of police and crime commissioners, control over the fire and rescue services, and retaining the surplus generated by business rate growth (Shaw and Tewdwr-Jones 2017). In the end, it has been an asymmetrical devolution, where the specific competencies vary for each Combined Authority and has occurred at different speeds (ibid.). In Italy, *città metropolitana* has absorbed some provincial competencies and taken on new competencies, being responsible for spatial planning and the environment, strategic planning, transport and mobility, and social and economic development. However, new institutions are being created at variable speeds, with some agglomerations such as Milan and Bologna leading the way (Fedeli 2017).

It is interesting to highlight that metropolitan authorities created over the past decade in Europe also include competences in social policies, like social cohesion, economic development or housing. For instance, this is the first time for Barcelona, Manchester and Liverpool, and Paris. However, these competences are shared with other levels of governments and come with limited budgets. Indeed, municipal expenditures per capita tend to be higher in metropolitan regions because of the nature of services (like public transportation and waste collection). However, metropolitan institutions do not enjoy fiscal autonomy. In most cases, their funding comes from a mixture of sources, mainly transfers from other levels of governments and taxes. While in France, new *métropoles* have more financial incentives, in England there are direct assignments from central government. For instance, in Manchester, own-source revenues account for about 25% of the total revenues of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority. Relying heavily on more own-source revenues (taxes and user fees) and freedom over levying taxes provide more fiscal autonomy than relying on intergovernmental transfers, which are often unpredictable and restrict the ability of metropolitan institutions to control their own destinies (Slack 2018).

Key social, environmental and economic challenges are to be found in urban agglomerations, but metropolitan authorities lack financing adapted to metropolitan

challenges. This is one of the demands that stands out in the Montréal Declaration on Metropolitan Areas of 2015, approved by local representatives from all over the world. The lack of additional funding is also one of the obstacles to the development of the New Urban Agenda and the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (Tomàs 2016).

2.3.2 Legitimacy and Democracy

Traditionally, questions of democracy in metropolitan governance have been less studied at the expense of issues like performance of metropolitan institutions or competition (Zimmermann and Getimis 2017). Recently, some studies have focused on the development of metropolitan identity or citizenship in places like Sweden, Switzerland, Poland or Barcelona (Lidström and Schaap 2018). One of the ways to increase legitimacy and accountability is to implement the direct election of mayors.

The advantages and disadvantages of the direct election of mayors have been largely studied (Magre and Bertrana 2007; Sweeting 2017), but there is less research focused on the election of metropolitan mayors. The choice of direct elections is based on a willingness to give visibility and legitimacy to metropolitan institutions, especially newly created ones. In fact, having direct representation at metropolitan level implies having a campaign and an electoral metropolitan programme on which to discuss and adopt compromises. In indirect elections, there would be no pressure from citizens towards the administration of metropolitan institutions. The mayors and councillors are the ones who, having been elected on the basis of their municipality, have to defend a shared metropolitan interest. This task is difficult to carry out when one is responsible to municipal voters rather than to the voters of the whole metropolitan region. Municipal rather than metropolitan representation implies dedicating little time to metropolitan authorities and hinders the emergence of metropolitan leadership. Moreover, the mandate within the metropolitan government is tied to the municipal electoral calendar: in the case of changes in local political majorities, there will also be changes in the composition of the metropolitan government. Therefore, the continuity of metropolitan councillors does not depend on their performance at metropolitan level but at municipal level (Tomàs 2018).

The direct election of metropolitan representatives is a costly economic option that may generate political resistance because of the magnitude of the election (in many cases a considerable number of the population). Resistance is especially strong in the case of capitals. In this case, the possibility of creating political rivalry depends largely on the power of metropolitan governments. If these authorities have strategic and management competencies as in the case of London or Paris, the possibility of them emerging as counter powers is minimal.

In Europe, there are very few cases of direct metropolitan election outside Germany and England (for a detailed analysis of the process of local devolution, see Sandford 2017). However, there is an on-going debate about direct election in Italy as a result of the creation of metropolitan cities in 2015 (Zimmermann and Feiertag

2018). Being indirectly elected in some *città metropolitana*, the statutes (like in Milan) allow the direct election of a mayor and assembly together with some political reforms. Direct elections are planned, although not confirmed, in the agglomerations of Paris and Lyon for 2020, in the German Ruhr area for 2020 and in Portugal (Lisbon and Porto) for 2021. The examples of directly elected metropolitan authorities are Stuttgart, London, Hannover, Manchester and Liverpool (also in other smaller agglomerations: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, Sheffield, Tees Valley, West Midlands and West of England). In the case of Stuttgart, only the metropolitan assembly is elected, and in Manchester and Liverpool, the mayor is elected. In contrast, both the mayor and the metropolitan assemblies are elected in Hannover and London.

An indicator of the democratic legitimacy of directly elected metropolitan governments is the turnout in metropolitan elections. In Stuttgart, after a first vote in 1994 in which turnout bordered on 70%, it began to stabilise at over 50% (between 52 and 54%). In Hannover, participation in choosing the assembly has also oscillated around 50%, in some elections, a little above (2001 and 2014) and in the rest, below (2006 and 2011). In contrast, the elections for a metropolitan mayor, which are held separately every eight years, have shown slightly lower turnouts, between 44 and 46% (Region Hannover 2014, p. 9). In London, turnout has been stable at under 40%, except in the elections in 2008 (45%) and 2016 (46%). In fact, Blair's government held a referendum prior to the creation of the Greater London Authority: 72% of the people voted in favour, but only 35% of citizens with the right to vote actually exercised that right. In the case of the only elections held in the new metropolitan English institutions, in 2017, in Manchester participation was 29% and in Liverpool 26%. This low participation may question the idea of legitimacy, although participation in elections at the local level is similar. In other words, the metropolitan region does not stand for greater participation but it is in line with participation at a municipal level, which, depending on the context (especially in England), is very low (Tomàs 2018).

In any case, the question of legitimacy is connected to the political power of urban agglomerations. If the choice is to have strong metropolitan governments with exclusive and binding competences and fiscal autonomy, the direct election of metropolitan representatives is inevitable. Contrarily, if output legitimacy is privileged, metropolitan institutions will remain technical and unaccountable to citizenry. The question then is to recognise the extent to which recent developments in metropolitan governance mean progress towards a greater reconnaissance of metropolitan regions as political spaces.

2.4 Old Wine in New Bottles?

Metropolitan reforms have been implemented in many countries according to different arguments and in successive waves. There are two main periodisations of metropolitan reforms: the neo-Marxist (focused on state strategies) and the institu-

tionalist (focused on the institutional arrangements put into place). As we have seen, the two approaches converge in terms of the arguments being mobilised (equity, rationality, efficiency, austerity and economic competitiveness) and in the periods of dominance of these arguments. In practice, it is difficult to draw a sharp line between the phases of metropolitan reforms. As we have seen with recent developments in Europe, phases overlap and different schools of thought coexist over time.

The analysis of recent reforms in Europe has shed some light on the way these theoretical models and frameworks are materialised. The comparison of the key issues of metropolitan governance (the political recognition of metropolitan regions in the territorial organisation of their countries, real powers and financial autonomy, and input legitimacy) has shown the differences and similarities of recent European metropolitan reforms. There are almost no true metropolitan governments, in the sense that they neither enjoy exclusive binding competencies, fiscal autonomy nor the direct election of representatives. However, recent reforms express a shift towards a timid recognition of metropolitan regions and their political representatives. Indeed, one of the current trends has been the introduction of the direct election of metropolitan mayors and/or assemblies. Can we consider it a metropolitan revolution? Already in 2004, Copus wondered if directly elected mayors in England really represented an innovation or whether it was a case of 'old wine in new bottles' (Copus 2004). After reviewing the metropolitan debate in Europe, we can conclude that there is limited innovation in the models of metropolitan governance. Although part of the debate focuses on the need for better infrastructures (high-speed trains, highways, connectivity) so as to enhance the competitiveness of metropolitan regions, similar solutions to those that were implemented in the 1960–70s (metropolitan governments, direct election, etc.) are again on the agenda and being implemented. The main evolution we highlight is that there is consensus on the need for cooperation at a metropolitan scale. This was one of the claims of neo-regionalist authors in the 1990s (Norris 2001; Swanstrom 2001), and it seems to have been consolidated.

We can discuss what the next developments in European countries will be. The importance of the European Commission in enhancing policy transfer, diffusion and mobility in metropolitan governance and planning should be highlighted. The European Commission could provide certain incentives regarding the institutionalisation of metropolitan governance, i.e. defining the criteria of allocation of cohesion or structural funds in association with a specific form of metropolitan governance (as with World Bank development funds). However, despite EU initiatives, metropolitan reforms are a state competence in many cases, so the incentives to create metropolitan areas or to recognise the metropolitan reality in the Constitution will be in the hands of each State member.

Another key issue for metropolitan thinkers and planners is the relevance of the European perspective. Indeed, according to UN data, the projected increase in the size of the world's urban population is expected to be highly concentrated in just a few countries. Together, India, China and Nigeria will account for 35% of the projected growth of the world's urban population between 2018 and 2050. Close to half of the world's urban dwellers reside in settlements with fewer than 500,000 inhabitants, while around one in eight live in 33 megacities with more than ten million

inhabitants. By 2030, the world is projected to have 43 megacities, most of them in developing regions (United Nations 2018). To what extent will the metropolitan models of governance that have been implemented in Europe suit these current and future developments? What elements can be useful for an Asian analyst of metropolitan regions and what other elements are definitely to be discarded? The institutional reforms and the arguments might be similar (mergers, metropolitan governments, voluntary cooperation, efficiency, austerity, and so forth), but the pillars of the welfare state are not alike.

Finally, one key question that needs more development is who defines the metropolitan reforms, the models and the arguments. The next chapter is devoted to this issue: who are the actors driving the reforms?

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Chapter 3
The Multiple Agencies of Metropolitan Institutions: Is There Convergence?

Christophe Demazière

Abstract This chapter examines the multiple agencies of institutions that drive processes of metropolitan change. The institutional context of metropolitan planning and development largely determines the opportunities and constraints that condition and sets the rules for metropolitan actors to partake in such processes. While intrinsically linked to the genius loci, national and/or regional governments continue to play key roles in setting agendas and shaping debates about the future of metropolitan regions, e.g. through enabling or blocking institutional, legal or fiscal tools. At the same time, there is an increasing influence of private and non-governmental actors attempting to influence metropolitan development agenda and processes. This chapter focuses on the rationales behind the motivations and strategies of different actors with a stake in metropolitan policymaking. To shed light on the policy contexts where collaboration and competition take place, the chapter delves into the interplay between local governments and an array of public, private and non-governmental stakeholders holding capacity to cater to metropolitan growth and development.

Keywords Metropolitan institutions · Decentralisation · Metropolitan government · New Public Management

3.1 Metropolitan Institutions and Their Agencies

In this chapter, the focus is on the actors involved in metropolitan institutional reforms. To do this, we examine three questions that are closely linked.

The first analytical issue is to identify *who* is involved in metropolitan government and governance and to examine their specific interests. In short, why do actors claim for metropolitan action? Consider for a moment Toronto in Canada, Cambridgeshire in England or Thessaloniki in Greece. Metropolitan regions such as these probably have little in common regarding their institutional, social and economic structure. Nevertheless, they certainly share typical issues such as mismatches in the location of jobs and housing as well as weaknesses in transport means. As a result, challenges

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such as air pollution, affordable housing or access to education may emerge and responses to these issues are put forward by specific actors, be they environmental associations, grassroots movements, trade union branches. On the other hand, metropolitan regions are in competition; therefore, organisations representing business interests are likely to want the 'competitiveness' or the 'attractiveness' of the metropolitan region to be high(est) on the agenda. The question is how do local governments interact with these stakeholders to achieve balance and complementarity between such contradictory claims?

Second, the governance of metropolitan regions is not only a local matter. In many countries, the national government has played—and still plays—a key role in shaping debates about metropolitan regions (Lefèvre and Weir 2010). National governments are instrumental in developing institutional, legal or fiscal tools which, imperfect as they may be, affect the operation of metropolitan institutions. As a consequence, there is a great variation between nations in the possibilities for local politicians, business interests or grassroots organisations to contribute to metropolitan governance and deliver effective metropolitan change. The institutional context determines the opportunities and constraints actors face and sets the rules of the game (Booth et al. 2007; Hulst and van Montfort 2011). Following a multilevel approach, we should consider all tiers of government as key actors in the creation and the development of metropolitan governance.

The third aim of this chapter is to examine how non-governmental actors shape metropolitan governance. Talking of business interests or grassroots movements, each category is heterogeneous and has various motivations. This adds to the complexity of analysing coalitions or conflicts that arise in contexts that are always specific and can evolve overtime. Questions arise about the factors that encourage or inhibit the emergence and strength of metropolitan governance. We can also try to unravel the metropolitan challenges to be solved through collaboration: economic competitiveness and associated ones like managing growth, or social and environmental issues. But it is much more important to find out whether, and under what conditions, the mobilisation of private actors can have a real impact on metropolitan government and policies.

3.2 From the Visible Hand of the State to the Invisible Hand of Multiple Actors and Beyond

3.2.1 Government: The Visible Hand of the State in the Reorganisation of Government at Local, Regional and Metropolitan Scales (1950s–70s)

Relationships between national government and local, regional and metropolitan governments have evolved over many decades. In the 1980s and 1990s, many countries experienced a widespread reorganisation of local government. However, there

are two narratives to account for this. The first one stresses the adoption by some national governments of New Public Management (NPM). The second one is about decentralisation.

The international economic crisis started that took place during the 1970s impacted deeply on Western countries, with the rise of energy prices, inflation, unemployment and a lack of competitiveness from many firms. As a consequence, national governments came to be seen as weaker institutional actors, unable to control and coordinate in the way it had previously. In particular, the capacity of nation states to influence the implementation of urban and national policies has been deeply eroded (Savini 2013). Gradually, national governments changed their priorities, evolving from a redistributive Keynesian Welfare National State model (1950s–70s) to a more competitive Schumpeterian Postnational Workfare Regime (1980s–present) (Jessop 1993). As part of this general project that aimed at reducing the weight of the public sector in many sectors of economic and social life, national governments often reconsidered the role of local government. In some countries, neoliberalisation was promoted, which implied both the dissolution of previous governmentalised institutions and the creation of new public–private partnerships in order to impose the diffusion of market mechanisms in an increasing number of social spheres.

In Europe, the UK was the first country to implement NPM. Under the leadership of Margaret Thatcher, the reforms—launched from 1979—aimed at controlling public spending through major reorganisations of the administration. Local communities were targeted since they accounted for nearly 70% of public spending. State grants were reduced, and local taxation and borrowing capacity controlled (Booth et al. 2007). Subsequently, the UK government was able to reduce local budgets based on whether or not the districts achieved spending control objectives. In addition, privatisation policies directly affected local authorities, particularly regarding their social housing stock.

NPM has been important, not only because it weakened local government, but also since it made it possible for quangos to develop, and for business interests to be increasingly present in the management of city and city-region affairs. We may ask whether the current context of high public debt and high constraints on public spending in countries such as Italy, Spain, France, Greece or post-Brexit UK could bring about a revival of NPM?

Whereas in the UK, the national government acted ‘against the cities’ outside London during the 1980s (Le Galès 1988), in other countries the limits of the welfare state—including the policies of regional planning depicted as spatial Keynesianism by Brenner (2004)—resulted in a trend towards political decentralisation. With this reform, the central government transfers state functions into the sphere of local government. As a result, locally legitimised institutional bodies became competent to decide autonomously on the planning, financing and administration of their newly acquired executive functions. The movement towards decentralisation was notable in continental Europe. It was certainly fuelled by a social demand for less top-down approaches (e.g. in Spain and France), and also by the European integration movement (e.g. in Poland). England—and other countries including Portugal or

Greece—appear to have been on a specific trajectory where decentralisation was not practised, or more accurately, it was sometimes tried but not fully implemented.

Thus, from the 1980s onward, local, regional and metropolitan government has become more autonomous in many countries and less autonomous in others. In this context, the literature on 'urban entrepreneurialism' (Harvey 1989) should be reconsidered: this deep change in urban policy was promoted by quite different actors in different countries. On the one hand, the main promoter of urban entrepreneurialism was sometimes the national government, such as in the UK with the creation of Urban Development Corporations, or in the USA with Enterprise Zones. Such initiatives aimed to increase the supposed economic potential of cities, but did not mean empowering local government—quite the reverse, in fact. On the other hand, in some countries, urban entrepreneurialism enabled the rise of local government after decentralisation, especially in large cities. Voluntarily or under the pressure of needs, local government became increasingly engaged in partnership with international businesses to develop flagship projects (Majoor and Salet 2008). In large cities, place-based marketing became common (McCann 2013; Paris and Baert 2011). In this way, local politicians and their administrations developed more frequent and stronger links with business interests on a national and international scale.

3.2.2 Governance: The (In)visible Hand of the Multiple Actors in Orchestrating Metropolitan Institutional Change (1980s–2000s)

In their account of the processes of building metropolitan institutions, Lefèvre and Weir (2010) contrast the dynamics in the USA and in Western Europe. They reveal that in the USA:

> the most widespread of the new regional institutions have been networks of civic groups. These include efforts of regional chambers of commerce to promote regional economic development [and] ad hoc collections of groups from public, private and non-profit sectors that collaborate to achieve specific regional goals, such as building regional infrastructure or cleaning up the environment" (Lefèvre and Weir 2010, pp. 631–2).

Such coalitions are seen to be too focused to adopt a strategic vision including new goals once they achieve their initial objectives, and as unable to address structural issues linked to spatial disparities related to income or racial segregation, or fiscal disparities across local governments (Wheeler 2009).

Majoor and Salet (2008) explain that in North America local government is dependent to a high degree on local taxes and other incomes generated locally. This hinders cooperation with other local authorities even though the destinies of central cities and suburbs are intertwined. However, there has been a rise in new regionalist collaborative arrangements in the USA, dealing with activities ranging from urban development to regional planning and growth management. Jonas et al. (2014) document the case of Denver, where local authorities agreed to implement a rail transit

project involving a 122-mile extension of light and commuter rail throughout the wider Denver metropolitan region.

In Europe, there have also been many instances of metropolitan governance involving various private actors (Jouve and Lefèvre 1999). However, there is also a tendency towards the building of a metropolitan institution or set of institutions and several countries have experienced institutional reform (Tomàs 2020). But what room is there for private actors in such arrangements? This is an important question to ask because in the study 'Metropolitan areas in action' (MAIA) conducted by the University of Ghent, 31 cities from across Europe were studied, covering 88 examples of metropolitan area cooperation. The study reveals that in the majority of cases, only public administrations were involved (Eurocities 2013).

The possibility of coalitions between local government and non-governmental actors varies from one place to another. For instance, Tomàs (2016) reveals that in Toronto the creation of a metropolitan tier of government was supported by both business groups and political elites, while in Montreal 'the existence of competing narratives supported by various actors (politicians, chambers of commerce, community groups) makes impossible the construction of a common vision of Greater Montreal' (Tomàs 2016, p. 320). Besides, private actors are not equally represented in the governance bodies at the metropolitan level. Generally speaking, economic actors are more involved and hold more important positions than civic or cultural groups (Jouve and Lefèvre 1999). When partnerships take place in narrow conclaves involving only politicians, business leaders and experts this causes concern about the democratic content of metropolitan cooperation (Pinson and Morel Journel 2016, see also Zimmermann 2020). Regarding economic actors, Hanson et al. (2010) warn that business groups with international ties are not very engaged in local or regional areas due to their compelling interests in affairs outside of the metropolitan areas. However, in large European cities, local government has engaged more and more in partnerships with international investors in an entrepreneurial, competitiveness-oriented framework (Majoor and Salet 2008; Paris and Baert 2011).

Another strand of literature denounced the fact that the focus on economic efficiency within urban policies would lead to the degradation and exploitation of the environment (Gibbs 2000; Swyngedouw and Kaika 2000). Making a metropolitan region more sustainable would mean developing a range of policy alternatives (in the field of transport, for instance) that would require the mobilisation and commitment of many stakeholders. This triggers questions about the ways in which metropolitan governance could more include the voices of grassroots movements and of 'ordinary' citizens. It could be argued that new challenges to the development of the city-region could offer such opportunities. For instance, support for more local food processing and trade could rest on 'small' initiatives using neighbourhood, family or professional networks, adding value to a supportive policy framework towards mapping land for potential food production. Conversely, a more public policy approach, such as protecting farming land in and around the city, would not be enough to connect producers and consumers within the metropolitan region.

To summarise the evolution of debates and practices about institutions and public actions for metropolitan regions, the following broad trends can be pinpointed:

- Contemporary debates about metropolitan government can be understood only by adopting a long-term perspective on local government. In many countries, local governments have previously reduced or expanded their scope of action as a result of pressure or incentives from national government;
- Decentralisation and NPM have both left more room for the organisation and expression of private actors in debates about metropolitan reforms;
- Private actors engage in public debates about metropolitan regions with various aims, which can be classified in two broad categories: those who support the competitiveness and attractiveness of the region and those who insist on social reproduction and environmental issues;
- With the shift from government to governance, existing metropolitan policies have changed in focus, from technical issues like sewage or transport to soft ones like culture or economic development.

3.3 The Dynamics of Multiple Agencies Shaping Metropolitan Regions

To illustrate the dynamics where various actors are instrumental in shaping metropolitan institutions, this section refers to France and Germany. In France, top-down approaches with strong incentives and new regulations epitomise the rebirth of 'hard' institutions. In Germany, due to federalism, there is less national government intervention. Still, in some metropolitan regions, the metropolitan reform position is fashionable. As we will see, in the case of the Rhine-Main region a metropolitan government is seen as desirable by private actors but is not implemented by public actors.

3.3.1 France: An Alliance of National and Local Governments

In France, the creation of metropolitan governments—*métropoles*—is the result of an alliance between the mayors of large cities and national government. In contrast to other countries, such as the UK, where combined authorities were created in a similar timeframe, private actors had little influence (Demazière 2017). Besides, *métropoles* are part of a wider project by the national government of reforming the institutional system, which affects all levels of subnational authorities without removing any of them.

In 2019, France has 67 million inhabitants and over 35,000 municipalities, that is 41% of all municipalities in the European Union for only 13% of the European population. Until the very recent prohibition preventing politicians from holding multiple offices (2017), many heads of local governments could also be Members

Table 3.1 Institutional context: previous local government reforms in France

Reform of local government areas	Since the 1960s Financial and institutional support of the state for the grouping of communes in a small number of the largest cities, with the notable exception of Paris which remained an isolated municipality. Failure of a general reform to amalgamate municipalities in rural areas in the 1970s Encouragement of inter-municipal cooperation addressed to all municipalities, becoming almost mandatory in the late 2000s
Decentralisation	Since 1982 There are currently three levels of local government—regions, departments and municipalities—which were created in 1982
State objective of limiting the spending of subnational territorial authorities	Since 2015 In a first phase, the national government introduced a decrease in state grants to local authorities (€11 billion over three years) From 2017, the French government promised to stabilise its financial grants to subnational governments that adopt austerity measures

of Parliament.[1] For decades, this has thwarted government efforts to reform the institutional system and especially to reduce the number of municipalities (Table 3.1).

In France, decentralisation took place in the early 1980s and since then the three levels of local government (regions, departments and municipalities) have been freely managed by elected councils, using their own resources (local taxes and other taxes) and allocations from the state. All layers of subnational governments are autonomous, and none exercise control over another. In order to respond to citizen demands regarding the quality of public services, local government spending rose from 5 to 8.5% of GDP between 1983 and 2013. According to the OECD (2015), more than half of this rise cannot be accounted for by the new competences that have been devolved. From 2000 to 2014, the annual expenditure of regions, departments, municipalities and EPCI increased from €152 to €247 billion, while local public employment increased from 1.5 to 1.7 million.

Due to high financial autonomy—more than half of the local revenues of subnational governments come from local taxes—many municipalities compete for economic and residential development, including within the same conurbation. This

[1] In 2012, 82% of deputies of the *assemblée nationale* and 77% of senators held at least one other elected office. The proportion of parliamentarians at the head of a local executive (mayor or chairman of a county or regional council) was 45% for the deputies and 48% for senators. These figures make France an exception in Europe. In Italy, 16% of parliamentarians hold at least one other elected office, 15% in Spain, 13% in Great Britain and 10% in Germany. In January 2014, the French parliament adopted a law prohibiting the combination of local executive functions with a deputy or senator's post. This law came into force on 31 March 2017.

is why the national government favoured the creation of *établissements publics de coopération intercommunale* (public intercommunal cooperation institutions—EPCIs) to which municipalities voluntarily transfer resources (such as the tax paid by companies) and strategic competences such as economic development, culture and housing (Demazière 2018). These EPCIs are eligible for major government subsidies, which has encouraged municipalities to engage in them. Throughout the last 25 years, inter-municipal cooperation has been a 'silent revolution' (Baraize and Négrier 2001). Although the elected members of these structures are elected at the municipal level and not directly to the EPCIs, the latter must be considered as a key level of French territorial authority. Acknowledging the small size of the core municipality, many mayors of large cities created an EPCI with their suburban colleagues and were able to launch ambitious regeneration, public transport or cultural projects. Such collective initiatives were often seen as a success, while the old rivalry of regions and provinces never calmed down.

Between 2010 and 2016, two successive reforms of local authorities were carried out, first by a right-wing government and then by a socialist government. The first wave of reform was prefigured by an official report to President Nicolas Sarkozy. Entitled *Il est temps de décider* (It's time to decide), this 2009 report proposed a reduction of the number of regions through mergers, comprehensive national coverage of intercommunal cooperation, the setting of a population threshold for any EPCI, and the creation of *métropoles*. At the time, these measures were not all implemented, as many parliamentarians of all sides were hostile. In 2015, under President Hollande, a law on 'the new organisation of the territory of the Republic' clarified the responsibilities of the different levels of territorial authorities. The number of regions was reduced from 22 to 13, with an additional five regions overseas. The justification put forward by the government for this reform was the need to establish regions of 'European size'—i.e. more comparable to those in other European countries. However, public management is a more plausible reason. While the national government had continuously supported the growth of local spending by increasing grants, it changed track in 2015, reducing subsidies to local governments for three years, and making a return to a stable level of support contingent on efforts from local governments to limit their expenses.

The creation of metropolitan government in France also shows continuity between governments of the political right and political left. In 2010, the right-wing government decided that Paris—the biggest municipality in France—should unite with others while gaining the special status of '*métropole du Grand Paris'*. Despite opposition from the Île-de-France region and neighbouring departments, this project was pursued by the socialist government after 2012. The Greater Paris metropolis was legally created on 1 January 2016 as an EPCI grouping of Paris, the 123 municipalities of the three neighbouring departments and seven other communes—i.e. approximately 7.5 million inhabitants. Similarly, the 2010 law for the reform of local authorities made possible the creation of a new type of EPCI—called a *métropole*—for any municipal grouping of more than 500,000 inhabitants. However, only in Nice was a *métropole* created. In 2014, the law 'for the modernisation of territorial public action and affirmation of the metropolises' revived the notion of a more integrated

form of intercommunal cooperation. Under Article 43 of this law, the *métropole* is supposed to lead 'a development project for the economic, ecological, educational, cultural and social development of the territory, in order to improve cohesion and competitiveness and to contribute to a sustainable and equitable development of the regional territory' (author's translation). In addition to Nice, the law designated eight *métropoles* with more than 400,000 inhabitants in an urban region of more than 650,000 inhabitants—Bordeaux, Grenoble, Lille, Nantes, Rennes, Rouen Strasbourg and Toulouse. As mentioned above, the metropolis of Greater Paris has its own bespoke arrangements. Despite strong opposition from the mayors of Provence, the *metropole* of Aix-Marseille-Provence was created at the scale of the entire functional urban region. In Lyon, the most complete form of metropolitan governance in France has taken shape, as the *Metropole de Lyon* has absorbed the department Rhône within its boundaries.

The creation of *métropoles* was accompanied by the announcement of additional funding from the national government that amounted to €150 million to be shared among the new institutions. Besides, in some policy fields like innovation or economic development, *métropoles* can develop their own schemes without referring to the region. For these two reasons, metropolitan regions that did not reach the threshold of 400,000 inhabitants have lobbied to the government and the parliament to be included. In 2015 Brest, Montpellier and Nancy, and in 2017 seven more cities (Clermont-Ferrand, Dijon, Metz, Orleans, Saint-Etienne, Toulon and Tours) managed to be recognised as *métropoles*. As a result, the category is heterogeneous. A handful of major cities (Paris, Marseille-Aix and to a lesser extent Lyon and Lille which exceed 1 million inhabitants) contrast with most others which can be said to be small in terms of population. French *métropoles* outside Greater Paris have an average population of around 700,000 and the smallest one—Brest—represents 3% of the population of Greater Paris and 11% of that of Aix-Marseille-Provence.

However, the most striking feature of French *métropoles* is that they represent only a small portion of their functional urban region (Table 3.2). Out of the first 15

Table 3.2 Metropolitan government model in France

Relationship to the constitutive municipalities	The president of the *métropole* is elected by the metropolitan councillors, who are also local councillors
Competences exercised	Homogeneous with the exceptions of Greater Paris and Lyon The competences are quite significant ones: spatial planning; economic, social and cultural development; local housing policy; urban policy; protection and enhancement of the environment and local amenity/liveability; and management of public services of collective interest
Territorial extent	Small (average area of 750 km^2), less than the built-up area for half of the *métropoles*

métropoles created, seven have a population lower than that of the corresponding built-up area and nine have a population less than two-thirds of that of the functional urban region (Demazière 2017). This is linked to the fact that the parliament and the national government chose to maintain the perimeters of pre-existing EPCIs—except for Marseille-Aix and Greater Paris—and not to transform provinces into metropolitan authorities, as was done in Italy (Fedeli 2017). The representation and conception of the *métropole* in France are urban-centric. It is attached to the (larger or smaller) central city of an urban area and extends little beyond the urban core. This narrowness of the territorial base of the *métropole* still leaves the urban region, or the wider metropolitan area, fragmented at the level of local government. This can make cooperation with the surrounding areas difficult.

3.3.2 Frankfurt/Rhine-Main: A Case for Metropolitan Government?

Frankfurt, Germany's fifth city in population size with 700,000 inhabitants, is not only a core city of the southern part of the state of Hesse, but also Germany's leading banking centre and the capital of continental European finance. After World War II, Frankfurt was selected as the location for the national financial institutions. From the 1980s, it became an international financial centre, characterised by an expansion of financial and producer–service industries (Jansen et al. 2017). Frankfurt was also selected as the location for the European Central Bank, is home to several international business headquarters and is the major hub airport in Germany (Keil and Siegl 2017).

Whatever the status of Frankfurt, the Rhine-Main region has a polycentric structure and several cities with between 100,000 and 250,000 inhabitants (Hoyler et al. 2006). This includes Offenbach and Hanau at Frankfurt's borders, Darmstadt and Wiesbaden (the capital city of Hesse), as well as Aschaffenburg (in Bavaria) and Mainz (in Rhineland-Palatinate). Furthermore, the Rhine-Main region contains at least five counties (depending on how the region is defined geographically) that act as strongholds of local interests in the debate about the possibility of consolidated metropolitan government (Zimmermann 2014).

Like other fast-growing metropolitan regions, Rhine-Main faces important challenges. In parallel to the growth of financial industries and of the international airport economy, deindustrialisation has brought about a substantial loss of unionised blue-collar employment. The labour market is polarised between high-paid jobs in the financial industries and low-wage jobs in the service sector and, compared to most other German cities, the metropolitan region of Frankfurt is faced with high social inequality (Schipper 2014). As centrally located neighbourhoods are hit most by rising rents and housing prices, low-income and middle-class households are displaced and pushed further to the periphery of the metropolitan region (Mullis et al. 2016). According to Bölling and Sieverts (2004), the Rhine-Main region shows all the signs

of a so-called *zwischenstadt*: processes of growth and shrinkage as well as spatial differentiation and reconcentration, which has created a mosaic of old village centres, new suburban and post-suburban residential projects and old and new industrial areas.

Frankfurt/Rhine-Main is an interesting example of a fragmented governance arrangement for a metropolitan region. The discussion about the appropriate governing model for the region has been vigorous for several decades, and it has never come to a conclusion (Freund 2003; Lackowska 2011). As Germany is a federal country, it is the task of the *Länder* to create metropolitan regions and respective institutional forms (Zimmermann 2017). The case of Frankfurt/Rhine-Main is difficult to solve as parts of the region span over Bavaria and Rhineland-Palatinate. The main *Land* of Hesse itself has always had a balanced interest in its non-metropolitan areas and the metropolitan area of Frankfurt and its surroundings. Within the metropolitan area, competition between the municipalities is fierce since a large share of the local budget comes from business taxes. Attracting enterprises is therefore an important element of local policy. In 1971, when the mayor of Frankfurt proposed to amalgamate Frankfurt and suburban municipalities in order to create a regional city, this idea was successfully opposed by other mayors. Over the years, the *Land* of Hesse has created several institutions that worked for municipalities of the metropolitan region but their field of competences was limited and they did not coordinate the interventions of municipalities very well (Freund 2003; Blatter 2006). Furthermore, their territorial scope is small. For instance, the Regional Authority Frankfurt/Rhein-Main, created in 2011, consists of 75 legally appointed member municipalities and spans an area of almost 2500 km^2. It has a population of 2.2 million, whereas the European metropolitan area, as designed by the Conference of State Ministers for Spatial Planning and Regional Development, has an area of 14,800 km^2 and is home to more than 5.5 million people who live in a total of 468 municipalities. Important cities which are part of the metropolitan region, such as Darmstadt, Mainz or Aschaffenburg, are part of this European metropolitan area but not the Regional Authority Frankfurt/Rhine-Main which, in fact, is mainly responsible for regional land-use planning and provides planning services to its member municipalities.

The Frankfurt/Rhine-Main region is a case where the need to adopt some kind of regional association was promoted by economic agents and journalists rather than by politicians (Freund 2003; Lackowska 2011). In 1989, business associations ordered an investigation into the economic prospects of the region within the context of a completed common European market. It considered the interrelations between parts of the extended region, and in 1990 nine chambers of industry and commerce joined together in an alliance (IHK Forum Rhine-Main) covering not only the southern part of Hesse, but also including neighbouring parts of Rhineland-Palatinate (Mainz) and Bavaria (Aschaffenburg). This economic region (*Wirtschaftsraum Rhein-Main*) is home to 4.8 million inhabitants with a purchasing power approximately 20% above the national average and a GDP per capita of nearly 50% above the mean. The chambers demanded land development for settlement, business and leisure facilities and pleaded for task-oriented cooperation, e.g. in transportation orwaste disposal. In the following years, the IHK Forum organised public conferences and workshops,

and the area of its member associations was increasingly considered to be the most adequate definition of the actual Rhine-Main region. Since then, the regional planning association (a union of municipalities) has agreed to publish statistical data on the region using this much larger demarcation rather than its own jurisdiction. In the mid-1990s, the two leading newspapers of nationwide influence (*Frankfurter Rundschau* and *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*) published a series of articles on the metropolitan organisation in their regional supplements, thus stimulating public discussion. At virtually the same time, another influential independent initiative was the *Wirtschaftsinitiative Rhein-Main* (Business Initiative Rhine-Main), which was founded by about 150 enterprises, including leading CEOs from the banking sector and the CEO of Frankfurt Airport (Zimmermann and Heinelt 2012). The initiative aims to foster a common regional identity, support prestigious and highly visible projects, and improve the public image of Rhine-Main to promote the region nationally and internationally (Hoyler et al. 2006). Lackowska (2011) underlines that, compared with the activities of economic agents, there is nothing worth mentioning in terms of social and cultural non-profit organisations.

In 2001, regional Chambers of Commerce and big enterprises created *Metropolitana Frankfurt/Rhein-Main*—a non-profit organisation aimed at invigorating the feeling of regional identity and improving the regional image abroad. It can be described as an umbrella organisation, as members were not only private or semi-private companies such as the Hesse Central Bank, Deutsche Telekom AG, Fraport AG (the airport company), Messe Frankfurt GmbH and Deutsche Bank AG, but also organisations already formed to promote cooperation within the fragmented metropolitan region—for example, the organisation promoting cooperation between the Chambers of Commerce or the company responsible for public transportation (Lackowska 2011). The main emphasis was on presenting Rhine-Main as a region of competitiveness, urban lifestyle, hospitality and zest for life with a wide choice of cultural and scientific resources. Big projects promoted stronger regional identification, infrastructural improvements and intensified international attention, e.g. applications for the European Cultural Capital in 2010, participation in the FIFA World Cup, ideas for an application to host the Olympic Games in 2012 and an international exhibition of architecture and town planning (Internationale Bauaustellung IBA).

Even though most of these projects failed to be realised due to a lack of political consent and financial support by the firms involved, economic agents have remained influential in handling metropolitan issues, in contrast to 'the bad performance of the political agents' (Freund 2003, p. 143). The economic elite focused on competitiveness and on the attractiveness of the metropolitan region for investors. The press (*Frankfurter Allgemeiner Zeitung* and *Frankfurter Rundschau*) continuously took up issues. It is, however, difficult to trace the direct impact of the economic elite on factual decision-making. One reason for this was the fragmented and uncoordinated action of the different fractions of the business group. The Chamber of Commerce of the City of Frankfurt is the leading actor of the IHK Forum and is still one of the most influential actors with regard to the metropolitan policy agenda. But during the 1990s, several other initiatives and associations emerged and partly competed—although all promoting a competitive metropolitan region. The *Wirtschaftsinitia-*

tive Rhine-Main represents large multinational firms, and most of them located in Frankfurt. The *Wirtschaftsförderung Rhine-Main* was a municipal initiative acting on behalf of smaller local firms, counties and municipalities. Further actors in the field are the Frankfurt/Rhein-Main—*Verein zur Förderung der Standortentwicklung* (Business Promotion) and *FrankfurtRheinMain GmbH*—International Marketing of the Region. This multipolar actor constellation was an issue from the 1990s until the mid-2000s and was never shifted to a more coherent arrangement.

The situation changed in 2011 when the state government of Hesse discussed an amendment of the law on the metropolitan region Rhine-Main. The chamber of commerce used this window of opportunity to call for better recognition of the interests of the business sphere in the planning association. The result was the creation of a regional governing board where five representatives have the status of advisors. These are the Director of the *Wirtschaftsinitiative* (former CEO of the Airport Frankfurt/Rhine-Main), the CEO of the Chamber of Commerce of Frankfurt, a representative of the labour unions, the president of the chamber of trade and the CEO of the regional transport association. The planning association is now a member or at least a partner of most of these associations, securing a minimum of coordination. The *Wirtschaftsinitiative* joined forces with the IHK Forum, and one of the recent initiatives was the creation of the Strategy Forum for the Metropolitan Region. The Strategy Forum illustrates the latest round of upscaling in the discussion about the perimeter of the metropolitan region Rhine-Main as it represents political and economic actors from Rhineland-Palatinate, Hesse, Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg. The boundaries of this region are fuzzy, but it clearly indicates that economic actors 'think big'.

To conclude, we can say that compared to the 1990s and early 2000s, when the debate about the appropriate metropolitan governance structure for the Rhine-Main region was a great deal more controversial, the current situation is much more relaxed (Keil and Siegl 2017). The competitiveness of the region still is a concern, but the situation of multipolar or even competing economic initiatives has given way to a broader consensus—which can be seen as a sign of depoliticisation. With the construction of the controversial Terminal 3 of Frankfurt Airport having started in 2015 and major investments in regional railways (S-Bahn *Regionaltangente* West, *Nordmainische* S-Bahn), some of the delayed infrastructure projects are now on track. The implementation of these infrastructures is the clear responsibility of the state government of Hesse and the local authorities. A current issue of metropolitan politics is affordable housing—an issue that is usually not taken up by private initiatives but seen as the responsibility of local authorities and the regional planning association.

3.4 Are Multiple Agencies Converging?

This chapter has examined what kind of actors work towards the formalisation of metropolitan government. Elected public decision-makers continue to play a decisive role. In the case of France, the ancient relations between state and local governments

were both a resource and an obstacle for the institution of a metropolitan level of government. On the one hand, the resistance of other levels of subnational government to the metropolitan reform was fierce. But on the other hand, several elected officials who were simultaneously mayors of big cities, presidents of EPCIs and also held parliamentarian positions forged an alliance with the government to make the reform possible. In many other cases, we can ask why is it so difficult to organise the horizontal coordination of municipalities? In their study of eight European countries (Belgium, England, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands and Spain), Hulst and van Monfort (2011) argue that metropolitan governments seldom arise spontaneously because joint planning and the co-ordination of local government policies restrict the policy options of individual municipalities:

> Local governments generally prefer planning forums, where decision-making takes place on the basis of consensus and local government autonomy is not at risk. (Hulst and van Montfort 2011, p. 131)

This is confirmed by Dlabac et al. (2018) in their paper based on a poll of European mayors. According to Hulst and van Montfort (2011), the pressure on local governments to provide for regional co-ordination and planning through cooperation is lower when there is a strong intermediate tier of government that has the formal competencies, resources and willingness to coordinate local policies or to establish regional plans. This is the case with the *Länder* in Germany as shown with the case of Frankfurt/Rhine-Main, a de facto metropolitan region that has not become *de jure*. *Comunidades Autonomas* in Spain or the regions in Belgium are other good examples. In countries such as Portugal or France, where regions have limited policy domains and do not dispose of formal competencies in relation to local government, the pressure for the formalisation of a metropolitan tier comes from the national government, whatever its political orientation.

However, is this institutional reading of metropolitan government the whole story? Nelles (2013) argues that institutional pressure can equally encourage or inhibit local cooperation and that civic capital is a much more important factor. She defines civic capital as:

> a set of relations that emerges from inter-organizational networks tied to a specific region or locality, and contributes to the development of a common sense of community based on a shared identity, set of goals and expectations. This identity emerges from the spaces of action and networks in which individuals and groups organize and experience their social, economic and professional existence and relationships in the urban space. Simply stated, patterns of civic engagement by any individual or group, at the metropolitan scale, can serve as a resource for collaborative governance. (Nelles 2013, p. 1360)

This underlines the role of actors other than elected public decision-makers in forging cooperation and governance arrangements. An example can be found in Germany's Rhine-Neckar Region, where a coalition of private sector actors organised a campaign to have the region recognised as a European Metropolitan Region (Harrison and Growe 2014). This was eventually supported by over 50 municipalities and resulted in the creation of a general-purpose regional governance structure to

collectively envision and implement regional economic development projects. Private actors, if they are able to coalesce, can help to put the emergence of metropolitan governance and government on the agenda. But such coalitions can be fragile and ephemeral, and they may never take shape when narratives compete (Tomàs 2016). Where private actors make a difference, they sometimes represent narrow business interests and push towards attracting capital and human capital, which could have adverse effects on the local population (through gentrification, the promotion of education targeting entrepreneurship rather than skills linked to new manufacturing, etc.). In this sense, it could be good news to acknowledge that in the end private actors rarely drive a metropolitan reform alone, leaving room for the political debate to define the major points of the agenda.

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Chapter 4
What Is at Stake for Metropolitan Regions and Their Governance Institutions?

Karsten Zimmermann

Abstract This chapter asks what drives contemporary institutional change in metropolitan regions. On the one hand, the rise of metropolitan regions as competitive territories *par excellence* is generating increasing interest in the question of how best to plan and govern the modern metropolis. Indeed, widespread metropolitan institutional reforms are held up by many urbanists as evidence that metropolitan regions matter and that they increasingly have the institutional capacity to set free from the regulatory control of the nation-state. On the other hand, many are currently questioning the capacity that these institutions really must (re)act. From arguments that the state is actually devolving austerity rather than empowering metropolitan regions, to the imposition of metropolitan reforms and certain types of institutional models (e.g. the growing prominence of deal-making, the mayoral model), there is a growing body of work contending that the perceived institutional power of metropolitan regions vis-à-vis a declining role for state-level institutions is a matter of myth rather than reality. With this as a point of departure, this chapter addresses a series of key questions holding both intellectual and practical implications: What are the current issues faced by metro regions? What is currently being proposed—and critically by whom—for the next stage(s) of metropolitan reform? Where does metropolitan governance reform sit within current developments and debates around governance per se? What are the implications of current initiatives? In the final section, these questions are used to outline the likely future direction(s) through which metropolitan governance will/should develop and what the implications of recent changes might be.

Keywords Regionalisation · Decentralisation · Metropolitan governance · Polarisation · Citizenship

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4.1 Introduction: New Wine in Old Bottles?

It is not easy to answer the question what drives contemporary institutional change in metropolitan regions. Many contributions to the debate take a very general stance on the issues at stake for metropolitan governments, implicitly claiming that at least a majority of metropolitan regions in Europe or even worldwide are confronted with similar challenges (Scott 2019; Herrschel and Dierwechter 2018). This perspective has been brought into question by authors such as Jennifer Robinson, Ananya Roy and Vanessa Watson (Robinson and Roy 2015; Watson 2016). These authors argue for more context and culturally sensitive studies of cities and point to hegemonic patterns in defining research agendas. In fact, it is almost impossible to define the most relevant current challenges for planning and governing metropolitan regions without ignoring national and local idiosyncratic structures and political preferences. Certainly, all metropolitan regions are confronted with problems that extend beyond the local context. These include *inter-alia* effective public transport across jurisdictional boundaries, congestion, coordination of public services, affordable housing and environmental challenges such as land consumption and suburban growth. Hence, regional or inter-municipal strategies are necessary (Sellers and Hoffmann-Martinot 2009). However, the autonomy of local government varies between countries and so do the policy challenges. Agendas for metropolitan governance are made on local, regional and national levels and often these levels give different priorities to substantial metropolitan policy challenges or metropolitan regions as such (Kübler and Lefèvre 2017). Asking for the drivers of contemporary institutional change in metropolitan governance and planning has its limits in terms of comparative methodology.

Still, in past decades, the rise of metropolitan regions as *competitive territories par excellence* generated great interest in questions of how best to plan and govern the modern metropolis. Indeed, many scholars identified recent patterns of metropolitan governance as evidence that metropolitan regions matter and that they increasingly have the institutional capacity to govern themselves as self-governing entities. In terms of empirical periodisation, economic resurgence and metropolitan governance mark a clear break in the discourse, and the 1990s are considered to be the period of transition. During the 1970s and 1980s, intermunicipal management of public policies on behalf and under the control of the state was the dominant policy challenge. This included public policies such as regional planning, waste management, public transport, and management of schools and hospitals within city-regional spatial frameworks. Since then, some governments have redefined the direction of their territorial policies and have given more emphasis on economic development and innovation policies while weakening welfare-oriented or re-distributional policies (Crouch and Le Galès 2012). Though this entailed a shift in discourse rather than policy in some states, it turned out to be a strong narrative in the academic debate (Blotevogel and Schmitt 2006). Authors like Ward and Jonas saw city regions and the new regionalism as the result of a new geopolitics of capitalism and global competitiveness (Ward and Jonas 2004; Jonas 2012). A range of authors, however, questioned

this position (Harding 2007; Le Galès 2016). The neoliberal agenda, usually interpreted as a significant withdrawal of the state, de-regulation, loss of urban public goods, or decline in the role of inter-regional monetary transfers in regional development, is, according to Le Galès, an acceptable approach for paradigm changes in economic and social policy but not for urbanisation processes as such (Le Galès 2016). Harding (2007), in a more modest way, states that the role of metropolitan regions in the production function (innovation,competitiveness) has attracted much more attention than the social reproduction function (welfare policies and other public services) that is still relevant for metropolitan politics and planning. In fact, regarding the substantial policy challenges, we can see that policy agendas are much broader (Kantor et al. 2012; Heinelt et al. 2011; Sellers and Hoffmann-Martinot 2009). This does not mean that entrepreneurial regional policies are non-existent, but they do compete with other policy priorities.

So what drives metropolitan governance? What are the current issues faced by metropolitan regions? What is currently being proposed—and critically by whom—for the next stage(s) of metropolitan reform? Where does metropolitan governance reform sit within current developments around governance per se? These issues are always related to the question of institutional design of 'good' metropolitan governance and the democratic setting of priorities in territorial policies (Salet and Thornley 2007; Sellers et al. 2013; Kübler 2012; Le Galès and Vitale 2013). This paper is influenced by Addie and Keil's claim for a stronger recognition of 'real existing regionalism' (Addie and Keil 2015) and seeks to answer the question 'what is at stake' without reference to ideology and normativity. The following chapter is based on a literature review and the results of empirical research in France, Italy and Germany (Zimmermann and Feiertag 2019). More weight is given to comparative studies and contributions that aspired to summarise developments or present the view of a larger discourse community. In addition, position papers of international organisations such as the OECD or international city networks (METREX, Eurocities, C40, 100RC) are taken into consideration. The chapter separates institutional from substantial policy challenges, as they partly constitute separate discourse communities.

4.2 Metropolitan Governance Between Substantial and Institutional Challenges

4.2.1 Substantial Policy Challenges

Regarding the substantial policy challenges, we can see that local policy agendas are very broad and that many metropolitan regions—but certainly not all—react quickly to new developments such as smart regions, resilience or low-carbon regionalism (Herrschel and Dierwechter 2018; Hodson and Marvin 2009). Compared with the 1960s and 1970s, when the main policy problems were the growth of cities across jurisdictional boundaries, effective public service provision (waste manage-

ment, public transport, hospitals, cultural facilities), sharing of costs for public services, social equity and democratic representation of the metropolitan community, today's agendas are much broader and are defined by a wider group of stakeholders (coalitions of public and private actors, national and international actors, as demonstrated in the preceding and following chapters on policy mobility). In short, agendas used to be much more government-centred in the past (Sharpe 1995).

If we consider the MAIA study conducted by Eurocities in 2013, the thematic working groups of the Network of European Metropolitan Regions and Areas (METREX) or the issues raised by the transnational network of major metropolises METROPOLIS, we find that they have a similar outlook regarding current pressing issues. These are transport/mobility, strategic spatial planning, affordable housing, environmental policies and quality of life, governance, and economic recovery (METREX 2014; Eurocities 2013; Metropolis 2017). We may add waste management, strategic planning for retail and environmental challenges such as the preservation of green belts, and resilience and climate-related risks (Hodson and Marvin 2009). Some of these issues are far from new and this holds true in particular for mobility (Pucher and Lefèvre 1998), even when today's debates are increasingly driven by new technologies and national infrastructure policies (including high-speed railways, international airports, driverless cars, and e-mobility). Other topics, such as knowledge-based development, digitalisation, resilience, renewable energies and climate-related risks are newer. This list of topics represents the view of practitioners and these policy agendas 'from below' are not driven by one issue (such as competitiveness) alone. In fact, practitioners tend to define broad agendas while academics focus on specific issues, and often the two perspectives do not converge. If we take other layers of government into consideration, we can see that, for national or subnational governments, decentralisation and state modernisation in times of austerity are pivotal (see next section).

With regard to the question of what drives metropolitan governance, a crude functionalism needs to be avoided at least when speaking about economic development. The metropolitan regions of Stuttgart and Munich are among the most competitive and economically successful territories in Germany (and Europe) but present two extremely diverging cases with regard to integrated metropolitan governance (Heinelt et al. 2011). The integrated governance solution in Stuttgart has—compared to Munich—a significant impact on land use planning, regional parks, public transport and political representation but with regard to economic development we may ask what difference metropolitan governance makes.

Problem agendas also differ in the respective countries. The introduction of the *Città Metropolitana* in Italy in 2014 set strategic planning and territorial coherence on the agenda but was also driven by a national politics of austerity and simplification of the public sector (Fedeli 2017; Bolgherini et al. 2016). In our own empirical study on the governance of metropolitan regions in Italy, Germany and France, we found that competitiveness is one issue among many others (Zimmermann and Feiertag 2019). A concern about effective and democratic governance and territorial representation is a more universal issue, with direct election of regional assemblies and participatory governance being solutions under discussion in Italy and France.

Still, all this adds up to the idea that metropolitan regions have gained governance capacity and political relevance. In fact, speaking about Europe, we observe that some states, when imposing metropolitan reforms and certain types of institutional models, are actually devolving austerity rather than empowering metropolitan regions (Raudla and Tavares 2018; Shaw and Tewdwr-Jones 2017). There is a growing body of work arguing that the perceived institutional power of metropolitan regions vis-a-vis a declining role for state-level institutions is a matter of myth rather than reality (Zimmermann 2018; Keil et al. 2017). In most states, metropolitan regions are the weakest level of policy-making and many authors are coming to question what capacity these institutions really must (re)act in terms of staff, finances and coordinative power (Heinelt et al. 2011; Kantor et al. 2012; Keil et al. 2017). These are issues that reach beyond collaborative governance and must be seen in the wider context of state modernisation.

4.2.2 Decentralisation and Regionalisation: Metropolitan Governance or a Second Tier of Local Government?

In geography and the planningsciences, metropolitan governance is rarely seen to be a result of the public sector reforms or analysed in the context of decentralisation of the state (Kuhlmann and Bouckaert 2016). When seen from a functionalist perspective, the modernisation of the state often takes the form of regionalisation, decentralisation or administrative deconcentration, and has a strong impact on the governance of metropolitan regions (Loughlin 2007). Scholars see a worldwide trend towards decentralisation, but this phenomenon takes different forms and it rarely happens that political empowerment of cities or regions goes hand in hand with significant gains of administrative power. In many cases, decentralisation of tasks is not accompanied by adequate financing (Kuhlmann and Wayenberg 2016; Loughlin 2007). Decentralisation may enhance the political or administrative autonomy of local governments but is often driven by austerity measures in the post-crisis consolidation state (Streeck 2017). Brazil and France show illustrative, contrasting pathways with regard to the impact decentralisation has on metropolitan governance. In Brazil, unresolved issues of multilevel governance hampered the establishment of effective metropolitan governance arrangements. While the post-regime state allowed for the creation of a new metropolitan layer of policy-making in the constitution of 1988, decentralisation strengthened municipalities and made metropolitan governance unattractive, causing an institutional vacuum or 'scalar trap' (Klink 2014). Inter-municipal arrangements have attracted more attention only in recent years. In France, in contrast, inter-municipal associations and public agencies such as the *Agence d'Urbanisme* have benefitted from several waves of decentralisation since the 1980s (Le Galès and Borraz 2005; Demazière 2020). The creation of the more than 20 *Mètropoles* since 2014 has been the most recent step in the consolidation of inter-municipal cooperation, still leaving open the fate of the second tier of local government (*Départe-*

ments). The sharing or clear separation of tasks between the *Département* as second tier of local government and the *Mètropole* is still an issue. Italy and Spain (in the case of Barcelona) demonstrate that the dual logic of decentralisation (by empowering municipalities) and regional integration (by creating metropolitan governance at the expense of local power) creates a tripartite conflict between local governments, metropolitan tiers of policy coordination, and the state. In Italy, the creation of metropolitan cities in 2014 had the counter-intuitive effect of strengthening regional governments as many functions of the former provinces (second tier of local government) were shifted to the regions (Bolgherini et al. 2016). In the Netherlands, the city-region tier (*Stadsregio*) was abolished in 2015 and the tasks were divided between provinces, municipalities and mono-functional inter-municipal service providers. We cannot conclude that decentralisation always strengthened metropolitan institutions. Balancing the incompatible logics of decentralisation and regional integration constitutes a dilemma that usually provokes controversies because of the diverging interests of different levels of government and various interest groups. In addition, modernisation and crisis management follow specific paradigms such as New Public Management (Kuhlmann and Bouckaert 2016). This implies that state actors see metropolitan regions through instruments and discourses of state modernisation (fiscal federalism, decentralisation, amalgamation or creation of new jurisdictions, etc.) but not as sociospatial configurations of actors, territories and their respective relationships.

What this debate makes clear is that metropolitan regions and their governance capacities are a dependent variable. Within the state, resources and functions are distributed and re-distributed in a constant struggle. It is not self-evident that, in the end, metropolitan regions are the beneficiaries in terms of resources or competences or gaining more relevance as a self-coordinating unit. They are just one layer in the institutional fabric of a fragmented state and in many cases, they are the weakest one—something they share with the second tier of local government. Hence, the relationship between the state and metropolitan governance is ambivalent. On the one hand, as highlighted by Kübler and Lefèvre (2017), central government has a clear interest in supporting the economic position of metropolises (see also Kantor et al. 2012), but at the same time, the state decentralises with the purpose of devolving financial responsibility or costly tasks.

4.2.3 (Post)Suburban Governance in Metropolitan Regions

For decades, suburbanisation has constituted a major challenge for metropolitan governance. The process of suburban growth has triggered a lot of research on issues such as land consumption and sustainable growth, the dynamics of social stratification between core cities and suburbs, and different patterns of voting behaviour. Despite these concerned reflections on the social, spatial and economic condition of the geography of suburbanisation, recent publications point to the growing social, economic and physical diversity of suburbia (Phelps and Wood 2011; Keil and Hamel 2015).

While it is questionable whether we can identify a specific suburban mode of governance (or governance of suburbanisation) that is different from urban or metropolitan governance, in general, some contributions point to changes in the functional relations between suburbs and core cities. Maturing suburbs become more urban in terms of functions and urban design through densification and diversification (Rousseau 2015). They depend less on the core city, which implies changes in the hierarchy of places in metropolitan regions. Suburban local governments are now more proactive, "thereby eroding established functional and political ties to the urban core" (Jonas 2012, p. 826). Other suburbs simply continue to grow as mono-functional places or experience a phase of decline, hence, becoming post-suburban regeneration areas (Savini 2014). This implies a change of perspective: from the dominance of the centre to recognition of the fragmentation of the periphery brought about by suburban development (Phelps and Wood 2011). Two observations seem to be relevant.

Firstly, an important gap remains between metropolitan institutions on the one hand and functional territories on the other, aggravating the prospects for integrated regional planning and governance. As Phelps et al. (2010, p. 378) explain

> suburbia had been, and post-suburbia continues to be, constructed within a thin institutional setting with communities being incorporated and acquiring formal government structures some time after their initial development, straddling existing government jurisdictions, and eventually being woven in a more complex set of intergovernmental relations at the urban-regional scale.

Secondly, what strategies and regimes evolve in second-tier cities in metropolitan areas that have a strong functional interdependency with the core city? Recent research has rarely investigated the political and institutional behaviour of urban peripheries as such. The fate of outer spaces has been viewed as being contingent upon wider regional dynamics while their active roles and agency, their internal symbolic values and their political behaviour within multi-scalar power games are widely neglected. The few studies that exist show that the post-industrial zones in the periphery are becoming active actors to re-balance social policies and economic investment policies in the metropolitan region (Savini et al. 2015). Retrofitting of residential suburbs, attracting firms and triggering economic growth, will affect decisions about land use, infrastructure and new residential development. Transforming suburbia has an impact on metropolitan governance by changing the functional and—eventually—political hierarchy between different urban centres. The rise of pro-growth strategies in some suburban areas may go hand in hand with a competitive attitude and the denial of integrated metropolitan governance based on defensive localism (Barron and Frug 2005). When such post-suburban political regimes emerge, they will also have a localist attitude towards other aspects of metropolitan decision-making (such as the protection of green belts or public transport). This is most relevant for ageing or mature suburbs, and peripheral zones where we observe pockets of poverty and mixed-use areas with partly derelict housing estates (Dembski et al. 2017, see also next section). These areas of non-growth have only received limited attention in regional planning policies and are confronted with multiple forms of deprivation. Regional policy coalitions of public

and private actors are more likely to focus on city centres or a limited number of growth poles within the metropolitan region (Savini et al. 2015). So who defines metropolitan agendas and will they be collaborative, individualistic, pro-growth or equity-oriented?

4.3 From Spatial Governance to Societal Implications

4.3.1 Social Polarisation and Inequality

Equal provision of services was one of the major arguments brought forward by protagonists of the metropolitan reform position in the 1960s and 1970s (Tomàs 2019). In recent years, inequality has been a side issue in the discussion on regionalism and metropolitan governance. This section refers to recent academic discourses that have put inequality back on the agenda. These discourses concern the suburbanisation of poverty, the rise of new peripheries, and place-equality regimes.

The emerging debate on the suburbanisation of poverty goes beyond the established way of thinking on the urban–suburban divide and brings into focus more complex patterns of sociospatial stratification in metropolitan regions (Bontje 2004; Hochstenbach and Musterd 2018). Suburbanisation of poverty is a phenomenon that is more widely discussed in the USA, being partly a result of the mortgage crisis in 2007 (Kneebone and Garr 2010). In Europe, we have limited evidence that in the context of re-urbanisation, affluent households move back to the city while poorer households move into a specific type of suburban neighbourhood (Hochstenbach and Musterd 2018; Dembski et al. 2017). Suburbs have been considered as upper middle-class areas although large social housing estates in the periphery are also a well-known phenomenon. Certainly, since the start of the new millennium, evidence has grown that the economic resurgence of cities increasingly translates into demographic growth, commonly referred to as re-urbanisation. Potential segregation by parallel processes of re-urbanisation and the emergence of suburban peripheries due to weak housing markets in older single-family suburban areas is a realistic scenario. However, the literature on metropolitan governance displays a strong bias towards the fate of the core city and its leading role in terms of governance and leadership, while the suburban hinterland has attracted only scant attention (Savini et al. 2015; Dembski et al. 2017). At least some of the maturing suburbs face problems that once were associated with inner-city areas (loss of jobs, lack of investment, deteriorating buildings). Other types of suburbs, including newer ones, are straining under sprawling growth that creates traffic congestion, loss of open spaces and other sprawl-related problems, and a lack of affordable housing.

What happens to the urban periphery when growth is very strong in the centre? And what policy options do places in the periphery have in relation to re-urbanisation? The eventual negative side effects of re-urbanisation and explicit national policies for an urban renaissance call for a stronger recognition of suburbs and small

towns within the metropolitan periphery. The urban periphery is still an ill-defined notion and includes a diverse spectrum of older industrial belts, segmented residential spaces, isolated landscapes and areas fragmented by infrastructure. These areas are undergoing changes that are partly market-led and partly planning-led, and such changes indicate a post-suburban crisis. Dembski et al. (2017), referring to the case of St. Helens, situated between Liverpool and Manchester, see the following issues that call for further investigation:

- the spatial organisation of the economic production, consumption, and distribution of specialised activities dispersed over wide urban spaces
- the increasingly spatial detachment of secluded heterogeneous social habitats (including the progressive polarisation of social characteristics)
- the spatial mismatch of living areas and working areas
- the need to organise accessibility and mobility over extensive, fragmented, and dissociated urban spaces, and to pursue this in ecologically acceptable ways
- the need to recalibrate metropolitan landscapes into human and identifiable spaces, including both the urban artefacts and (residual) landscapes in a semi-urban or rural setting.

Certainly, evidence for booming regionalism was mostly collected at the urban level, from in-depth investigation of inner-city renewal, the urban renaissance of inner industrial zones, blooming central business districts and the parallel evolution of residential suburbanisation and other patterns of sprawl. The increasing lack of services and amenities in urban peripheries has become a focus for competitive local politics and for grassroots movements concerned with shaping a sense of place. So, can we observe the emergence of place-specific post-suburban regime or peri-urban growth coalitions (Phelps and Wood 2011)? Local politicians in the ageing suburbs are faced with the challenge of balancing growth-oriented policies (i.e. retrofitting the suburbs) and meeting the needs of the established low-income middle classes (Savini 2014; Savini et al. 2015). However, existing research on post-suburbanisation in different countries illustrates that the empirical reality is much more variegated and shows different patterns. Some of the suburbs are experiencing densification and patterns of maturation and growth, resulting in their evolution into self-contained settlements, while others are in decline (Rousseau 2015). These post-suburban areas, where a majority of the urban population lives and works, have a particular role in the functional division of places in metropolitan regions (pockets of poverty, lifestyle enclaves, new areas of production). The emerging types of urbanisation and social-spatial stratification are receiving increasing attention from academics, but the relation between socio-economic patterns, political preferences and urban-regional policies has not been investigated yet.

The rise of new peripheries is not only the result of economic decline but also the effect of public policies. In an edited volume, a group of authors chaired by Jeffery Sellers asked in a comparative perspective what the capacity of the state is to balance inequality in metropolitan regions (Sellers et al. 2017). Place-equality regimes are defined as multilevel policies, institutions and governance at multiple scales that have an impact on spatial inequality in metropolitan regions. These regimes include

planning policies but also public services, transport policy, education, health policy and distribution of fiscal resources. These policies do not necessarily constitute a fully fledged metropolitan governance arrangement but are sectoral welfare policies with a strong impact on territories. According to Sellers (2017, p. 3)

> governance structures and policies have not only been instrumental in building these metropolitan structures, but exercise some of the most powerful influences on the metropolitan geography of opportunity for both privileged and disadvantaged groups.

The impact of these place-equality regimes differs between states and not surprisingly, the type of welfare state has a significant impact. While Sweden stands out as an 'equity regime', France displays a partial equalisation model. Brazil and the USA show patterns of strong polarisation.

4.3.2 Metropolitanisation of Politics and Democracy

According to Kübler and Heinelt (2005), the academic debate on metropolitan governance in political science is characterised by an institutional perspective and concentrates on the normative dimensions of equity, efficiency and democracy (Kübler and Heinelt 2005). However, the academic debate on metropolitan governance has shown a bias towards questions of institutional design and the best organisational forms for effective governance. Only in recent years have topics such as democracy, accountability and citizenship been more strongly considered. The direct election of metropolitan mayors and/or regional councils is an issue in many countries (Italy, France, Germany, England), eventually increasing the power and accountability of metropolitan governance.

Two bundles of arguments are currently under discussion:

- Voting behaviour, taking into consideration the urban–suburban divide
- Metropolitan or inter-municipal citizenship.

Much of the academic work on voting behaviour and political choice in the USA and in Canada assumes that suburbanites are inclined to support conservative parties while residents of the inner-city vote for Democrats (Walks 2006). Existing work, largely based on studies in the North-American context, also assumes that people moving from the city centre to the affluent suburbs are inclined to vote for conservative parties. Several mechanisms such as residential self-selection or neighbourhood effects have been tested to explain this phenomenon. Residential self-selection assumes that people, when making their choice on where to live, are trying to find others with similar lifestyles and political attitudes. Neighbourhood effects, in contrast, describe a form of adaptation: residents of inner-city areas with weak party affiliation to the Democrats will change their political preferences when moving to the suburbs (ibid.).

We might ask how the processes of spatial stratification and polarisation relate to the rise of new protest parties. Although shifting political cleavages and the rise

of protest parties and populist movements is a highly relevant topic in political science and sociology, it has attracted only scant attention in the scholarly literature on metropolitan politics. As mentioned in the previous section, recent work on suburbs and re-urbanisation indicates that the return of affluent strata of the population to the inner cities forces groups with precarious incomes to move to suburbia or peri-urban towns. Political ecology assumes that this kind of segregation will have an impact on voting behaviour. The work by Sellers and Walks (2013) identifies the spatial determinants of politics. It assumes that the place of residence has an independent effect—though not completely disconnected from other variables such as class—on voting preferences and political attitudes, while metropolitan settings have an influence on voting behaviour. It further contends that place of residence in a classical suburb is related to car dependence and commuting to the city centre, house ownership, and higher income and socio-economic homogeneity. The political preferences of these residents tend to be for tax cuts (as living in the suburbs is less dependent on social services and public housing policies), extension of road infrastructure (but not public transport), protection and low taxation of property and of land. As phenomena of poverty and socio-cultural diversity are less visible in a classical mono-functional (i.e. residential) suburb, people are less inclined to politically support measures against social deprivation. The opposite is assumed to be valid for residents of inner-city areas.

As mentioned earlier, new trends in residential choice of urban and suburban dwellers question these clear urban–suburban divides. As affluent strata of the population with bohemian lifestyles and without children tend to live in the city, the political cleavages between urban and suburban areas are less clear and thereby call for a new interpretation. Suburbanisation continues but takes different directions, resulting in more diverse trajectories of post-suburban developments. What if a significant number of residents in these municipalities support protest parties? One of the consequences might be the rejection of coherent territorial metropolitan government. This implies that support for protest parties is significantly strong in these municipalities and that this significance is the result of a process of sorting in metropolitan contexts (segregation based on socio-economic factors and political preferences) and contextual effects as described above.

4.3.3 Metropolitan Citizenship

So far, the academic debate has not paid much attention to the question of what citizens in metropolitan regions think of institutional reforms. It is broadly assumed (though with little empirical evidence) that citizens think locally, and that support for regional authorities is rather low. Failed referendums on metropolitan reforms in Rotterdam and Berlin/Brandenburg in the 1990s and in the North-East of England in the 2000s seemingly confirm this view. Still, we can say that the view of the citizen is the unknown variable in the discussion on metropolitan governance (Lidström 2013; Strebel 2018). In recent years, a group of scholars has been working on this,

shedding some light on issues such as metropolitan citizenship and public opinions on metropolitan governance and inter-municipal cooperation (Lidström and Schaap 2018). The overall question is: do citizens support stronger metropolitan institutions (integration) and what influences their views on this? There are some plausible assumptions:

> If citizens mainly have a parochial focus, that is, are concerned only with matters in their own local jurisdiction, then this is not likely to foster an understanding of matters that involve several municipalities or even the metropolitan region as a whole. If metropolitan governance is to be relevant for those living there, then citizens should be concerned with conditions in the larger territory (Lidström 2013, p. 283).

As metropolitan regions are growing and functional interdependencies between municipalities are getting denser, many policy controversies also have a regional dimension. Congestion, protection of green belts, airport extensions or other infrastructure decisions clearly are more than just local issues but only a few metro regions have strong governance institutions with directly elected assemblies that are capable of procuring legitimate decisions. Why should citizens engage in arrangements that are comparatively weak (compared to local government where they are entitled to vote and pay taxes), abstract (in terms of size), and closed in terms of access points for participation? The life world of citizens is the region but how does this correspond with institutional fragmentation in metropolitan regions? There is good reason to believe that cross-jurisdictional mobility (either as a daily commuter, for shopping purposes, or within a biographical life span through several residential moves) increases the awareness of problems in other municipalities in the region (Lidström 2013). Citizens in metropolitan regions may also have common needs with regard to transportation; they may own property in adjacent jurisdictions or may show interest in the wellbeing of the core city because this will also have a positive effect in their home town.

Strebel, in an empirical study comparing eight metropolitan areas in the four countries of Germany, France, Switzerland and the UK found that citizens' views on stronger political and administrative integration are influenced by ideational as well as cognitive factors (Strebel 2018). The amount of knowledge as well as a general interest in politics supports a positive view on regional integration. Local media as information providers are relevant in this regard. Lidström (2013) did empirical work on the inter-municipal orientations of citizens in two Swedish city regions and found out that interest in inter-municipal politics is significant but inter-municipal activism is lower. The empirical knowledge on this topic is growing but the mentioned insights are still preliminary. However, the issue is very relevant as expectations are high that direct elections of regional assemblies will increase the effectiveness of metropolitan governance. The effect seems to be debatable (Kübler 2012; Zimmermann 2014). This is an issue in Germany (Stuttgart, Hannover, city-region of Aachen, in 2020 also in the Ruhr). In Italy and France, the direct election of assemblies responsible for some metropolitan governance agencies is under discussion.

4.4 What Drives the Newest Wave of Regionalism?

Ultimately, all urban problems are regional problems. Certainly, agendas have changed but whatever is at stake in the debate on metropolitan development, coordination failures remain the central issue. In terms of periodisation, the sharp division between the 'old regionalism' and the 'new regionalism' has turned out not to be an appropriate description of the reality of metropolitan politics (Christmann 2014). While it is true that in the UK, Spain and Germany metropolitan governments responsible for regional planning and coordination of public services were abolished or weakened in the 1980s, the emergence of new governance forms and the inclusion of private actors did not totally replace established inter-municipal service providers and planning agencies (Tomàs 2019). Some European countries never experienced a new regionalism. In Germany, we observe a mixture of metropolitan reform positions and new regionalism (Heinelt et al. 2011; Zimmermann 2017). Due to dense functional interdependencies between core cities, policy coordination between surrounding towns and suburban villages is the unchanging major concern in the debate about metropolitan governance. The relevance is increasing as antagonistic urban-suburban dichotomies are replaced by more complex patterns of polycentric metropolitan development. In addition, the separation of urban from metropolitan policy agendas is becoming blurred. Lack of policy coordination results in negative external effects in various domains, such as lack of affordable housing, air pollution, environmental justice, polarisation and school segregation and unequal levels of service provision. Recent concerns are associated with climate-related risks and weak capacities for resilience (Hodson and Marvin 2009). Whether infrastructure policies and new technologies will be the main drivers for institutional innovation in metropolitan regions remains an open question. Often large infrastructure investments are the responsibility of upper-tier governments. The governance frameworks have not kept pace with the rise of metropolitan regions that was driven by agglomeration economies and urban expansion.

In fact, as highlighted by Scott (2019, p. 16), at least in most metropolitan regions, urban governments have:

> At the best of times … limited tools and resources at their disposal for confronting internal problems and failures, but in the case of complex, overgrown city regions, weaknesses of overall social management are especially severe. This challenge is exacerbated by the persistent tendency to balkanisation of municipal government in probably the vast majority of city regions, not only as a legacy problem, but also as an effect of the often-haphazard lateral expansion of the urban periphery where adjacent municipalities are simply absorbed into the widening geographic orbit of the city-region.

Still, recent attempts at reterritorialisation of the state in France and Italy, and initiatives on metropolitan or city-region level in other states demonstrate that more effective governance frameworks are on the agenda of national and subnational governments (see above, Tomàs 2020). However, the role of institutionalised metro regions in multilevel governance systems is far from clear and overlaps with the second-tier local governments or strong sectoral policy alliances across levels of

government exist. Functionalist fallacies need to be avoided. Many public tasks can be organised in different ways and we have only limited knowledge about the effectiveness of different organisational forms such as single-purpose associations, inter-municipal cooperation, interventions of upper-tier governments, contracts or multi-purpose organisations. Problems of metropolitan development can be tackled in various institutional environments. The more successful metropolitan governance arrangements defy easy subsumption regarding old and new regionalisms (Sager 2006). Indeed, as Scott (2019, p. 17) goes on to highlight

> an approximate template is occasionally detectable in the more successful efforts that have pushed in this direction, namely – and in sharp contradistinction to any unitary arrangement – a conglomerate structure made up of loose hierarchical relationships complemented by assorted crosscutting organisations wherever these can significantly enhance operational effectiveness. There is no compelling reason, moreover, why a well-designed structure of this type could not also enhance the democratic assets of the city-region.

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Part II
Policies and Ideas

Chapter 5
Learning from Elsewhere? A Critical Account on the Mobilisation of Metropolitan Policies

Peter Schmitt

Abstract This chapter discusses the emerging body of literature on the mobilities of metropolitan policies since the 1980s. It will achieve this by reviewing the various directions of research and by identifying a number of implications of when such policies are mobilised and eventually land in a given metropolitan area or city, respectively. A tentative typology on the movement of different types of urban/metropolitan policies is suggested that intends to kick off a debate on whether we can distinguish the degrees of visibility, transferability and mutability between these different types of policies. The chapter finalises with some concluding observations concerning the current state of the study of the mobilisation of metropolitan policies and by pointing out some avenues for future research. The key contribution of this chapter is an overview of the conceptual, empirical and historical literature about the mobilisation of metropolitan policies within urban and planning studies.

Keywords Policy transfer · Policy mobilities · Policy learning · Metropolitan policies · Inter-urban competition

5.1 Introduction

Already in the late 1980s, Harvey (1989) discussed the *serial reproduction* of similar policy forms and development formats that are triggered by intensified inter-urban competition and an entrepreneurial mode of urban governance. Inter-urban competition has been debated since then by numerous authors in respect of various aspects and drivers (Gordon 1999; McCann 2004). But how does this serial reproduction work in practice? What are the mechanisms, techniques and resources that are needed to mobilise policy knowledge? What are the implications of inter-urban competition in respect of the rapid and seemingly ubiquitous dispersion of urban policies? What types of urban/metropolitan policies travel from one place (or city) to another? These are some of the questions discussed in this chapter.

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The chapter begins with a chronological framing of how literature on the mobilisation and transfer of urban/metropolitan policies has been periodised. In doing so, the main lines of argument are filtered out regarding what issues are at stake in the literature, what is considered as important, what has changed and what are the crucial keystones and learnings so far. This literature overview starts in the 1980s with a focus on the international transfer of policies specifically concerning (larger) cities, urban areas or metropolitan regions, respectively. However, the terminology regarding the specific territorial context of these policy forms is often applied in a rather fuzzy way, due to variations in the disciplinary backgrounds and national contexts that the authors represent and examples that are empirically addressed. Consequently, and in the light of this book, the term *metropolitan policies* is used from now on as a generic and incorporating term.

The section that follows discusses what the implications of the mobilisation of metropolitan policies actually are. For this, different perspectives will be explored in view of planning and governing the metropolis. Disregarding the importance of local contextual factors concerning the mobilisation, but also the *landing* and thus *implications* of metropolitan policies, a tentative and not yet empirically substantiated typology is suggested that shall help to distinguish and eventually question the (potential) movement of different types of such policies. The discussion moves on towards some concluding remarks with a view to shedding light on shortcomings, open questions and avenues for future research. As such, this chapter provides the conceptual background for Zimmermann (2020) who investigates the mechanisms and channels of movements of these metropolitan policies in a European perspective by approaching various European professional networks and policy and expert communities and Fricke (2020) who discusses the contextual conditions of policy movements before reflecting on the consequences of mobile policies from the perspective of metropolitan regions.

5.2 Directions of Research on Metropolitan Policies: A Historical–Conceptual Perspective of a Field on the Move

> Researchers have long been aware that urban politics and policy are never just local (Baker and Temenos 2015, p. 824).

At first glance, the above statement seems to be rather commonplace today: we live in a globalised world where goods, people, but also information and ideas can be rather easily moved around the globe, and as such transcend *the local*. On the other hand, urban politics and policies are locally contextualised since they are shaped and influenced by the prevailing local institutions, actors, policy styles and cultures, as well as by specific local challenges on the ground (e.g. in terms of spatial inequalities, need for economic modernisation or maintaining environmental qualities). Hence, the question arises as to how and to what extent urban policies are mobilised or even

transferred into other local or regional contexts? This is a thought-provoking and relevant research question since *urban politics and policy* are rather complex social constructs and their geographical diffusion is much more challenging to trace than that of goods and people, for instance, as will be further discussed here.

5.2.1 *On the International Circulation of Metropolitan Policies*

It is rather difficult to exactly date the beginning of academic, and certainly political interest, in comparing and positioning cities or metropolitan regions around the world. It becomes even more difficult if we want to date when policy actors started to take inspiration from these city comparisons for the purposes of policy learning and transfer, specifically in regard to planning and governing cities or metropolitan regions. However, one starting point could be analysing the literature on the flow of planning concepts, ideals and ideas throughout history and particularly in post-World War II era. For this, several authors have made interesting contributions either in the form of case studies (Cook et al. 2015; Ward 2013) or by making more conceptual proposals (Healey 2012, 2013; Hein 2014; Freestone 2015). As such, the many cases remind us that 'learning from others' has been organised throughout history by planning exhibitions and study visits, for instance. However, to trace in a more generic way the growing research field of policy transfer and policy mobilities concerning metropolitan policies—instead of discussing specific historical events of policy learning—we should focus on the literature that raised interest in comparing cities at the transnational scale.

Indeed, the analysis of the modern world system by Wallerstein published in 1974 was a trigger to identify and compare world cities and their role and steering power within and across transnational territories and to speculate about their relations. This is demonstrated by the highly cited work of Friedmann and Wolff (1982) in the 1980s and others in the 1990s (Knox and Taylor 1995; Smith and Timberlake 1995; Sassen 2018). One specific aspect about comparing these particular cities has been to understand their competitive assets and to discuss how and the extent to which metropolitan policies and governance arrangements can be supportive (Van den Berg and Braun 1999; Deas and Giordano 2001). A specific episode of this debate is the study of urban entrepreneurialism policies that are supposed to provide a business-friendly urban milieu on which increasingly mobile (international) capital could touch down (Harvey 1989). This entrepreneurial perspective was taken up by a number of studies during the 1990s, often in relation to urban competitiveness and city branding strategies (Gold and Ward 1994; Savitch and Kantor 1995).

From a European perspective, the introduction of the European Single Market in 1992 and the discussion behind the gestation of the European Spatial Development Perspective (CEC 1999) have to be mentioned, since they set in motion numerous studies that have compared and ranked specifically larger cities or city regions (cf.

Brunet 1989; Cheshire 1990; Kunzmann and Wegener 1992; Heidenreich 1998). As such, these studies have developed a deeper consciousness among European policy-makers and planning professionals about the relative position and competitiveness of their *own metropolis* and stimulated an interest in transnational policy learning. Hence, whereas in the 1980s the idea of transnational comparisons and possible policy learning between and across cities and metropolitan regions was rather an academic exercise, in the 1990s, this interest arrived in various policy communities, which can be traced back to the many commissioned national and European studies, but also to the foundations of transnational policy networks (Zimmermann 2020).

Another driver was that in a number of European countries, local and regional governments gained more autonomy through decentralisation processes that were facilitated by the European Union (who gave more weight to *regional policy* as it was termed then) and by a number of national states (e.g. France, Germany, the UK) opening up the scope for action for developing local and regional development strategies and new governance arrangements. In doing so, throughout the 1990s, local and regional governments began to be increasingly interested in learning what others do. Certainly, from a more macro-perspective, the main impetus was the further integration of the global economy due to new opportunities after the end of the Cold War and, simultaneously, the growing fear that some places might not profit from these developments to the same extent as others. Hence, from the early 1990s onwards, international inter-urban competition grew significantly, not only in terms of capital investments or striving to developing advanced localised clusters of companies and other institutions, for instance, but also in terms of the diffusion of policy ideas and policy innovations. Examples include the rise of flagship projects, city festivals and (more) flexible (neoliberal) types of governance arrangements such as city networks, regional forums and public–private-partnerships, which then emerged almost simultaneously across Western Europe (Kearns and Paddison 2000; Swyngedouw et al. 2002); many of these initiatives are still alive. Later in the 2000s, increasingly intensified international exchange about *successful* policy forms gained further pace. One important driver here was technological advances. Cities and metropolitan regions alike provide information about their aspirations, advancements and achievements not only in the form of geographically bounded conferences, exhibitions or colourful printed reports, but increasingly *online*, which—at least theoretically—allow other stakeholders to gain inspiration after just a few clicks and some reading, regardless of where they are situated.

To sum up, although policies are still formally enacted in (local/regional/national) political arenas of decision-making, since the 1990s we can easily observe the emergence of international policy norms and models that have been diffused in sort of similar policy formats to promote, e.g., waterfront (re-)development (the 1990s until today), metropolitan regions (1990s until today), business improvement districts (2000s until today) or smart cities (since around 2010), just to name a few. Apart from the triggers and drivers mentioned above, one should also note the increasing role of transnational organisations, such as the EU, OECD, World Bank and UN-Habitat, that advocate similar policies across diverse territories (cf. Stone 2004, 2008; Theodore and Peck 2012; Zimmermann 2020). In the following, two main,

but largely related, research perspectives will be discussed that have evolved in the past 20 years or so.

5.2.2 *Rise of Policy Transfer Research*

Driven mainly by political scientists, since the late 1990s, we can observe the formation of policy transfer research (Dolowitz and Marsh 1996, 2000, 2012; Stone 1999, 2012) which

> is a theory of policy development that seeks to make sense of a process or set of processes in which knowledge about institutions, policies or delivery systems in one sector or level of governance is used in the development of institutions, policies or delivery systems at another sector or level of governance (Evans 2009, pp. 243–4).

Policy transfer research has its roots in comparative policy analysis and is increasingly used to explain phenomena such as policy convergence within processes of Europeanisation, for instance (Buller and Gamble 2002), but also in other empirical areas such as urban development and spatial planning.

As such, policy transfer research is conflated with other concepts such as policy diffusion and lesson-drawing. Dolowitz and Marsh (1996), who introduced the concept, tried to distinguish carefully between these various concepts since they argue that lesson-drawing is essentially a voluntary activity, whereas the transfer of policies can be either voluntary or coercive. However, Bulmer et al. (2007) identify further conditions that underpin policy transfer such as semi-coercive, conditional or obligatory. This reminds us to be mindful about what sorts of carrots and sticks are provided that eventually trigger policy learning and transfer. One eye-catching example of such a carrot is how the EU uses various mainstreamed funding schemes and programs based on overall strategic road maps such as the EU 2020 strategy (CEC 2010) to promote and finance the diffusion of smart cities to foster the transition towards (more) sustainability by steering transport flows. At the same time, the EU provides sticks by defining criteria, through legal directives, for atmospheric loading in cities, for instance. This sort of policy framing is supposed to result in more or less similar policy packages for improving air quality in European cities based on ICT, for instance. These distinctions concerning the conditions that underpin policy transfer are inevitably linked to the issue of *why policies are actually transferred* against the background of the need to meet locally contextualised development challenges on the ground and the abovementioned overarching triggers and drivers, such as inter-urban competition.

Another central concern within policy transfer research is the distinction of the elements or formats, and degrees of transfer. Dolowitz and Marsh (1996) identify several potential elements (such as policy goals, instruments, institutions, ideology, ideas, attitudes, concepts, negative lessons or administrative techniques) that could, at least potentially, be transferred elsewhere. Similarly, Benson and Jordan (2011) observe that initially the research focus was on policy instruments and institutions and

as such followed a rather government-centric logic. However, in recent years there has been more intensive study of other policy elements (such as ideas, ideologies and concepts), which also require investigating the politics *behind* and the processes of governance *within* the policy cycle. Based on earlier studies by the OECD, Stead (2012) suggests that some of these elements can be further categorised as transfer agents and there is a need to distinguish between these different elements for exchange in terms of

(1) visibility (i.e. the extent to which the implications of the transfer are actually visible or traceable)
(2) their transferability as such (i.e. the extent to which these elements are considered appropriate to be transferred).

In the policy transfer literature, various terms are used to depict different degrees of transfer (Dolowitz and Marsh 1996, 2000; Benson and Jordan 2011). They range from copying and emulation as rather comprehensive forms of transfer to adaptation, hybridisation, synthesis and inspiration as more selective forms. These various degrees of transfer also indicate the fact that policy elements are often drawn together from various contexts and as such are conditioned (or bounded) by institutional contexts, by the (in)compatibility of policy elements and by the prevailing differences/similarities in policy styles, administrative cultures and so on. In addition, several other potential constraints are addressed such as cognitive obstacles, available resources, different ideologies or resistance. Linked to this is the question of the extent to which transferred policy elements are modified when applied in another context.

5.2.3 Policy Assemblages, Mobilities and Mutations

In their seminal paper from 1996, Dolowitz and Marsh criticise a rather positivistic approach towards policy transfer research. Although this field of research has seen considerable progress since then, Benson and Jordan (2011) confirm the continued lack of more constructivist approaches within political sciences to critically trace the transfer of policies. Also, policy transfer research, as they further argue, primarily focuses on capturing processes of information exchange and learning between actors specifically at the national level and as such disregards the multilevel interplay of policymaking. These issues were the starting point of the critique by McCann and Ward (2012a, 2013), as they claim that the rather rational-formalist and structuralist tradition rooted in political science has overlooked several elements that are relevant to understand the mobilisation of policies as a crucially important aspect of the political–economic construction of neoliberal globalisation. The core of their critique lies in the narrow definition of policy transfer research, which might lead to a dead end. Instead, they suggest recognising how policy transfers are linked to a number of other concepts and research perspectives (including social construction, relationality, representation and assemblage), which require a multidisciplinary perspective to

understand 'how, why, where and with what effects policies are mobilised, circulated, learned, reformulated and reassembled' (McCann and Ward 2013, p. 3). One example is the notion of scale as a socially constructed and relational view on how urban policies are embedded instead of the notion of discrete territories arranged in a discrete hierarchy of policy levels. To put it differently, one central critique voiced specifically by a couple of human geographers is that the policy transfer concept as sketched above appears to overemphasise structural and ideational aspects. As such, policy transfer research is criticised for following a rather rational problem-solving logic by assuming that policymakers are keen on searching worldwide for appropriate *solutions* to their local challenges and then pick those policy elements that seem appropriate and translatable, and perhaps adapt them according to their local needs and contexts.

In a similar vein, a shift in terminology is advocated from *transfer* to *assemblages, mobilities and mutations* by human geographers specifically interested in urban or metropolitan policies, since transfer would suggest a straightforward process of off-the-shelf policies, whereas in reality this process seems to be more complex and selective, since policies do not emerge in a similar way at a different place and they do not circulate unchanged, rather they mutate (McCann and Ward 2013; Peck and Theodore 2010). This terminological, but also conceptual shift has left its footprint in a growing body of literature since the 2010s (cf. McCann 2011, 2013; Peck 2011; Kennedy 2016). In these studies, a specific focus is on the *urban* in which cities are considered as *urban policy assemblages* through which to study the circuits, networks, webs and translations in which policy and its associated discourses and ideologies are made mobile and mutable (McCann and Ward 2012b). Methodologically, this is substantiated by the call for a *relational* and a *follow the policy/key actors/material/arguments* approach (cf. Kennedy 2016; Peck and Theodore 2012) to investigate carefully the *assemblages of learning* (cf. Wood 2016). Instead of studying several elements in isolation, it is suggested that ethnographic approaches should be drawn upon to study the practices of how and where policies are organised and arranged within a specific more or less institutionalised, but inevitably spatial (e.g. local or regional) and scalar context. In this vein, McCann and Ward (2013: 8) note that

> policies and governance practices are gatherings, or relational assemblages of elements and resources – fixed and mobile pieces of expertise, regulation, institutional capacities etc. – from close by and far away. They are assembled in particular ways and for particular interests and purposes.

One illustrative example from this body of literature in respect of how such gatherings, in a rather literal sense, can be analysed is the study of informational infrastructures, which 'frame and package knowledge about best policy practices, successful cities and cutting-edge ideas and then present that information to specific audiences' (McCann 2008, p. 12). Concrete illustrations of such infrastructures are (international) policy conferences, award ceremonies and organised policy tourism, where best practice examples are showcased and discussed among policymakers (Andersson and James 2018; Andersson and Cook 2019; Cook and Ward 2011, 2012).

Similar to the main proponents of the policy mobility literature, Healey (2012, 2013) reflects upon the transnational flow of planning ideas and practices, which she considers as circuits of knowledge and techniques. She suggests giving special attention to the 'origin stories' of such ideas, their 'travelling histories' and the 'translation experiences' through which exogenous planning ideas and practices become localised. She argues that actor–network theory (ANT) and interpretative policy analysis (IPA) offer helpful frameworks here for tracing the co-evolution of ideas, techniques, institutional designs and practical advice (Healey 2013).

5.3 Implications of, and a Tentative Typology on, the Movement of Different Types of Metropolitan Policies

As touched upon above, increasing inter-urban competition and the rapid spread of information as communicated through the numerous city-rankings, benchmarks and other studies (Giffinger et al. 2010), as well as the circulating narratives of seemingly successful (model) cities, imply manifold opportunities for policy learning from elsewhere. Particularly the demand for 'best practice examples' (Bulkeley 2006; Stead 2012) suggests city-to-city comparisons that are supposed to be followed by policy adjustments if not actual copying (Dolowitz and Marsh 1996, 2000). Related to this, McCann (2011) and Peck and Theodore (2010) remind us that policymakers work with small budgets and limited resources and as a consequence increasingly rely on policy consultants whose role is to collect ideas, practices and approaches about *what works* (and possibly *what does not*) from various cities and re-package them for their clients (Zimmermann 2020).

One central implication of the mobilisation of metropolitan policies is the emergence of what Peck and Theodore (2015) call 'fast policy', which occurs due to the infrastructures and social practices that spur the mobilisation of policy lessons and the process of capturing them, and unfold these lessons, though often in reformed and transformed arrangements, elsewhere. The various policy formats that circulate under the banner of the eco-, smart, resilient, green city (cf. Joss et al. 2013; De Jong et al. 2015) are an illustrative example for this. Related implications are several promotional activities

> to boost the policies' reputation among geographically extensive policy-making communities; to enhance the professional reputations of those policy actors who were involved in developing the policies; and to burnish the image of the city where the policy was developed (McCann 2013, p. 9).

Examples are cities such as Vancouver or Barcelona, which established themselves as models for sustainable urban development and urban regeneration, respectively, resulting in buzzwords such as 'Vancouverism' (McCann 2013) and the 'Barcelona model' (Degen and García 2012). These cities often function as argumentative role models as they serve as an evidential base to support particular claims for action

(Kennedy 2016). In some cases, as McCann (2013) further points out, there is an opportunity to link such seemingly successful cities' high standards of urban sustainability, for instance, with economic opportunities to develop clusters of green technology, as the example of Stockholm indicates (cf. Weber and Reardon 2015). Overall, one can state that the reasons why some models, types or forms of policies are idealised and thus considered worth copying are not necessarily the result of sound evaluation, but rather of progressive marketing, neoliberal agenda setting, targeted discursive strategies and aspirations for policy leadership.

Another implication is that the mobilisation of metropolitan policies not only demands informational infrastructures, but also individual and institutional capacities. For instance, cities interested in 'learning from others' and/or 'spreading their learnings to others' are dependent on the capacities of individuals to learn, reflect, make changes and/or disseminate, educate on and convey 'best practices' to other stakeholders, for instance. These capacities, as Lütz (2007) reminds us, are also related to individual cognitive and motivational conditions. These individuals can be either policy consultants or in-house staff members within local agencies, for instance. In order to activate them as potential transfer agents, informational infrastructures are required, but also specific opportunities and institutionalised routines (e.g. how to utilise and infiltrate policy learning, permanent staff training), which otherwise can hamper processes of 'mobilisation' and 'lesson-drawing' as well as (later on) the mutation and implementation of these mobilised policies.

An additional implication is spatial unevenness when considering the geographies of transfer or, as Kennedy (2016) puts it, to identify the original context where policies deterritorialise and to trace them later where they reterritorialise and thus land. Overall, the examples of tracing transfers within the Global North dominate the literature compared to other thinkable directions. Examples are urban development models such as business improvement districts (BIDs) (Cook 2008; Cook and Ward 2012) or strategic planning/development concepts such as 'creative cities' (Borén and Young 2013, 2016; Peck 2005). Nevertheless, there are also examples of South–North transfer, as the example of participatory budgeting indicates (see Peck and Theodore 2015). Also, some studies in the large field of urban/metropolitan planning indeed problematise policy mobilities from postmodern city planning ideals of the Western world to the Global South (Fält 2018; Pow 2014) or explore emergent South–South networks, here from South America to South Africa (see Harrison 2015; Wood 2015 concerning Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) projects).

Another implication is that policy mobilities do not necessarily follow a rationalistic, problem-oriented agenda. Instead, according to the available literature that specifically considers policy assemblages, it can be noted that specific resources (e.g. financial, institutional), ideas, knowledge, (stimulating) instruments and social relations have to be brought together to literally mobilise policies. At closer inspection, we can often detect a complicated actor–network that is behind the mobilisation of policies, in which these actors often represent various sectors and interests (e.g. common welfare, profit-driven), operate at different scales and as such have formed various sorts of relational dependencies (supporting, informing, financing, etc.) with each other. Adscheid and Schmitt (2019), for instance, trace the complex

actor–network relations formed to mobilise Swedish innovations of sustainable urban development. In doing so, they problematise the underlying post-political conditions and specific governance arrangements that are in the end decisive for whether these Swedish sustainable urban development solutions 'land' in a specific city across the world or *not*.

The above implications also indicate another one that lies *behind* the discussion around policy mobility or policy transfer, respectively. This is the question of the underlying motives of the actors involved. As discussed above, the mobilisation of policies is inevitably driven by notions of inter-urban competition, which were largely discussed specifically in the 1990s. However, in recent years this notion has been further nuanced by looking more into the practices and rationales of the actors involved, stemming not only from the public sphere of policymaking but also increasingly from the private sector. Again, the example of planning sustainable/green/eco-, etc., cities (cf. De Jong et al. 2015; Joss et al. 2013; Hult 2015) serves as an interesting case to illustrate how environmental urban policy packages are driven by a combination of seeming 'rationality' and 'altruism' on the one hand and 'entrepreneurialism' on the other (Andersson and James 2018; McCann 2013). The latter is related to several other motives to utilise the environmental shift in urban policy for place branding and for highlighting the need for *smart* technologies that inevitably strengthen the role of private companies within urban governance. But for all that, Fricke (2020) develops some further thoughts on the implications of policy mobilities for metropolitan regions.

In the following, a tentative typology is presented on the character and scope of the movement of different types of metropolitan policies. For this, some exemplary types of metropolitan policies, or to be more precise policy models and concepts, are suggested that inevitably include several overlaps and some degree of fuzziness. Table 5.1 categorises these types and identifies some illustrative examples. In addition, inspired by the discussion of Stead (2012) of an earlier OECD study from 2001 and some main arguments of the policy mobility literature, three further categories are addressed, namely the degree of visibility, transferability and mutability. It should be noted that the inserted validations (high, medium and low) are of hypothetical nature and need to be further grounded through empirical research. However, as argued elsewhere in this chapter, in any case the local context matters, which means that there are a number of criteria and elements (e.g. actors and individual aspirations, openness, capacities, institutional logics, political resistance, resources, instruments, governance arrangements, opportunities for learning and gathering) that can either promote the movement of (metropolitan) policies or inhibit them as the literature on 'policy *immobilities*' or 'failed policy mobilities' illustrate (Carr 2014; McLean and Borén 2015; Stein et al. 2017; Fricke 2020).

Consequently, the main idea of the following table is to provoke a debate on the various types and categories of metropolitan policies and to initiate more insightful (comparative) case studies. In a similar vein, the proposed types and categories related to the movement of metropolitan policies need to be further qualified. Also, there is certainly room for further types of metropolitan policies as well as other categories that might be worth adding as the dotted lines indicate at the bottom and

Table 5.1 A typology on the mobilisation of different types of metropolitan policies

Type of metropolitan policy	Examples and studies	Degree of visibility	Degree of transferability	Degree of mutability	…
Urban development models	Urban regeneration (e.g. González 2011; Degen and García 2012)	High	High	Medium	…
	Business improvement districts (BIDs) (e.g. Cook 2008; Cook and Ward 2012; Stein et al. 2017)				
	Transit-oriented developments (TODs) (e.g. Pojani and Stead 2014, Thomas et al. 2018)				
Technologically driven policy concept	Green/sustainable/eco-city (e.g. Blok 2012; Joss et al. 2013; De Jong et al. 2015; Hult 2015; Adscheid and Schmitt 2019)	Medium	High	High	…
	Smart city (e.g. Crivello 2015; Wiig 2015)				
Strategic planning/development concepts	Creative city aspirations (e.g. Borén and Young 2013, 2016)	Low	Medium	High	…
	Polycentric metropolitan development (e.g. Hall and Pain 2006; Schmitt 2013)				
	Metropolitan regions				
…	…	…	…	…	…

the right-hand side of the table. Regarding the former, one specific research gap needs to be addressed, and that is the question of the extent to which any types of governance arrangements within the prevailing and often rather complex metropolitan governance frameworks are (or can be) mobilised and thus transferred to other places. Here the literature is rather scant. Certainly, we can speculate that rather hard forms of metropolitan governance (e.g. the formation of metropolitan governments) are extremely context specific and bounded to local specificities. In addition, we may also expect that entire *governance models* such as the Verband Region Stuttgart or the Paris Region Planning and Development Agency (IAU Île-de-France) cannot necessarily be considered as mobile, rather they may travel in bits and pieces concerning how they work and are organised, for instance. However, these bits and pieces are rather difficult to trace empirically, that is, to analyse from where the inspiration came from and to what extent they have been adopted. Otherwise, there are some hints that soft, experimental, self-organised or temporary types of (urban) governance are rather mobile and to a large degree adaptable once they travel. A prominent example is the current hype on 'urban living labs' (Evans et al. 2016; Bulkeley et al. 2018).

In addition, the degree of mutability is worth reflecting upon: that is, the extent to which these policies are likely to be changed and adapted when implemented in other places. As touched upon above, this table is of a rather provocative nature as it does not suggest that these types of policies follow exactly the same degrees of visibility, transferability or mutability elsewhere—this would throw us back to a more structuralist approach. Rather it shall help to formulate hypotheses (that may be falsified in the end) and to trigger more *comparative* studies as a complement to the rather phenomenologically driven, single case study that has dominated the literature in recent years.

5.4 Concluding Remarks

Policy mobilities are not a new phenomenon, but speed, direction, mechanisms and impacts have changed over time. As argued in this chapter, a few studies and even a few research directions have been established which offer interesting insights into the *how, why* and *who* of the mobilisation of metropolitan policies (see Zimmermann 2020; Fricke 2020). However, several prevailing inaccuracies (partly due to underlying dualisms; see McCann and Ward 2013), and also open questions and research gaps still remain. Three which immediately come into focus are briefly discussed below.

(1) Studying policies and governance practices as relational assemblages of learning seems to be a fruitful approach and has offered interesting insights (McCann and Ward 2013; Wood 2016 and the examples listed in Table 5.1). However, the question is whether the 'type' of policy is also decisive in this respect instead of focusing primarily on how these assemblages evolve, how they are organised and perhaps stabilised. Hence, the argument here is not to overemphasise the

micropolitics of such assemblages at the expense of what is actually at stake, what is the content of the policies at hand, what rationales are behind them and, most importantly, what are their implications in the end. As mentioned before, Table 5.1 shall provoke some research in this direction.

(2) This brings us to the second research gap and that is the focus on mobilisation at the expense of the 'implications of the landing' of the policy under consideration. To put it another way, it is certainly worthwhile to carefully analyse how policies mutate and how they are adapted according to the local institutional contexts; however, the extent to which this really matters can only be judged through studying the process of landing and implementation. In other words, only by researching carefully how these mobilised policies are absorbed and the nature of their local impacts, are we in a position to say something substantial about their mutability, otherwise the term remains as a more or less theoretical construct if not an empty signifier.

(3) Thirdly, as touched upon above, policy transfer and mobility research have invested much effort in studying policies that intend to materialise in some way. This demonstrates the predominating focus on, e.g., model or paradigmatic cities, greening strategies, eco- or smart city strategies and of course the spatial diffusion of BIDs, TODs and BRTs. However, there has been minimal study of the extent to which specific institutions or even governance elements travel, i.e. the mobilisation of learning about *how policies are developed, coordinated and implemented*. Here we can certainly formulate the hypothesis that these institutions or coordinating elements of governance are often rather invisible and more difficult to capture empirically. Additionally, and due to this, they might also be less visible or tangible for policymakers and are consequently more demanding to learn from and thus less mobile. They may be even more difficult to land and integrate due to the strong context-sensitivity of metropolitan governance, for instance.

What is for sure is that all this needs to be explored more thoroughly in the near future.

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Chapter 6
From Here to There: Mapping the Metropolitan Politics of Policy Mobilities

Karsten Zimmermann

Abstract This chapter investigates the mechanisms and channels of movements of governance elements between metropolitan regions. It will do this by examining various professional networks, and policy and expert communities. The aim is to investigate to what extent cities and regions which are members of these policy networks and communities have actively facilitated the transfer of procedural and institutional elements of metropolitan planning and governance to/from metropolitan regions. Besides focusing on the mechanisms and channels, the rationale and interests of those policymakers and planning professionals involved are of primary importance. As such, this chapter explores the challenges, limits and opportunities of the mutation and transfer of such elements of metropolitan planning and governance. It will also reveal knowledge about which policies and ideas travel—or not—and why.

Keywords Policy mobility · Policy transfer · City networks · Expert communities · Europe

6.1 Does a Metropolitan Politics of Diffusion and Mobility Exist?

The exchange of knowledge between policymakers in the field of metropolitan governance and metropolitan politics has been increasing over the last two decades. We only have to observe the increasing number of events and policy guides on all matter of planning and governing issues relating to metropolitan regions as evidence for this. In Europe, the European Commission has established a full range of formats that are expected to support the circulation of best practices in urban politics and planning, for example:

- *CIVITAS*: *Clean and Better Transport in Cities*—a network of cities for cities dedicated to cleaner, better transport in Europe and beyond. It offers practitioners

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opportunities to see innovative transport solutions being developed and deployed first-hand and learn from peers and experts working in the field.

- *ESPON*: *European Spatial Panning Observatory Network*—aims at promoting and fostering a European territorial dimension in development and cooperation by providing evidence, knowledge transfer and policy learning to public authorities and other policy actors at all levels.
- *EUKN*: *European Urban Knowledge Network*—providing tailor-made services, expert analysis, research assistance and specific practical assistance to EU member states. This involves easy access to a rich e-library containing selected documents on shared standards, EU policies, best practices and up-to-date research for urban leaders, practitioners and policymakers.
- *INTERACT*: *International Network for Terrestrial Research and Monitoring in the Arctic*—aims to connect 86 monitoring bases across the Arctic to facilitate and manage policy and planning.
- *INTERREG*—aims to help regional and local governments across Europe to develop and deliver better policy by creating an environment and opportunities for sharing solutions.
- *JPI Urban Europe*—a joint project initiative which aims to be a European research and innovation hub on urban matters and create European solutions by means of coordinated research.
- *URBACT*—a European territorial cooperation programme which aims to help cities develop new and sustainable pragmatic solutions that integrate economic, social and environmental urban topics.

Other international organisations such as the OECD and UN-Habitat, or international networks of cities and regions such as United Cities and Local Government (and its European branch, CEMR—Council of European Municipalities and Regions), METREX, METROPOLIS, PURPLE or EMA contribute in a similar way to the circulation of policy ideas:

- *CEMR*: *Council of European Municipalities and Regions*—a European association of local and regional governments across 41 countries, providing a forum for debate between local and regional governments via their national representative associations in an attempt to influence European policy.
- *EMA: European Metropolitan Authorities*—led by the Barcelona metropolitan area; the aim is to provide a forum for leading politicians from Europe's main metropolitan cities and metropolitan areas to discuss their common goals and challenges.
- *METREX*—a network of European metropolitan regions and areas which aims to provide a platform for the exchange of knowledge, expertise and experience on metropolitan affairs, and joint action on issues of common interest.
- *METROPOLIS*—a global network of major cities and metropolitan areas which aims to serve as the hub and platform for metropolises to connect, share experiences and mobilise on a wide range of local and global issues, in addition to being the focal point of worldwide experience and expertise on metropolitan governance.

- *PURPLE*: *Peri-Urban Regions Platform Europe*—aims to share experience and best practice with each other and with other regions, designing and developing partnerships for projects.

Finally, as highlighted by scholars working on policy mobility and policy transfer, advances in international digital communication and higher mobility of experts as well as practitioners have introduced new and faster means for the diffusion of policy-relevant knowledge (McCann 2011; Dolowitz and Marsh 2000; James and Lodge 2003). Certainly, the density of policy-relevant communication is much higher than it used to be.

The aim of this chapter is to identify the mechanisms and channels of policy circulation in the field of metropolitan governance and planning. A specific emphasis will be given to transnational city networks. These networks have found increasing recognition in the scholarly literature and have been identified as a specific form of governance for the global distribution of knowledge—and as a new type of foreign policy of cities and increasingly, regions (Hakelberg 2014; Kern and Bulkeley 2009; Atkinson and Rossignolo 2010; Payre 2010). The chapter takes two discourses as starting points:

(1) Research on diffusion of policies and the mechanisms of policy transfer in the context of an emerging transnational policy space reinterpreted through the lens of studies on policy circulation (Atkinson and Rossignolo 2010);
(2) Periodisation in terms of changing actor constellations and channels of policy transfer referring to metropolitan regions (Brenner 2009; Galland and Harrison 2020).

Thereafter, the questions this chapter will try to answer are:

(1) To what extent are transnational city networks essential elements of planning and governing metropolitan regions (through mobilising knowledge, ideas or representing interests in transnational policy arenas)?
(2) What are the strengths and weaknesses of network governance and transnational networks?
(3) What other channels for policy mobility exist (expert communities, international organisations, foundations and transnational corporations) and what is their potential to affect metropolitan change?

6.2 Periodisation and the Convergence/Divergence of Metropolitan Governance

The international debate on metropolitan governance has pointed out the new relevance of metropolitan regions for public policies and economic development in the 1990s, and many contributions have shared a common understanding of periodisation and the convergence of metropolitan policies (Galland and Harrison 2020, Table 1.2;

Blatter 2006; Brenner 2004; Heinelt and Kübler 2005). In fact, the so-called new regionalism emerged as a new policy practice and academic notion in the early 1990s in many European states as well as the USA, describing new forms of regional governance based on a model of public–private partnerships and an ever-stronger emphasis on economic development (Heinelt and Kübler 2005; Brenner 2004; Norris 2001). This temporal coincidence may have been the result of a transnational diffusion of policy ideas or what in the recent debate in urban geography has been called policy mobility (Schmitt 2020). Although the emergence of the new regionalism in different states indicates convergence, it is not self-evident to speak of 'isomorphism' (DiMaggio and Powell 1983).[1] All regional reforms that came to happen during the 1990s showed strong context-dependency, not least because of different institutional and socio-economic environments. The rise of the new regionalism was more rise of several new regionalisms. At least, the emergence of a new discursive environment, sometimes called neoliberal turn, was very much in favour of regions and regional governance and allowed for the fast circulation of practices that were considered successful (cf. Lovering 1999). Regional policy practice was not isolated anymore, and external ideas were often mobilised through initiatives of the leading cities of the regions (for Lyon see Payre 2010; Fricke 2020a, b). External knowledge about success stories was used when considered appropriate, often for the purpose of gaining legitimacy in a domestic policy context.

However, the academic debate during the 1990s and early 2000s referred to global structural forces and discursive neoliberal environments but not to policy mobility. The ups and downs of metropolitan layers of policymaking are, according to Neil Brenner, the result of socio-economic transitions as well as political-administrative changes that he summarised as a volatile 'rescaling of statehood' (Brenner 2004). Socio-economic change and the emergence of new general orientations in welfare policies correlated with spatial restructuring and new forms of regional governance. Brenner's periodisation commences with the transition from the 'managerial, welfarist mode of the Fordist-Keynesian period to an entrepreneurial, competitiveness oriented framework during the post-1970s period' (Brenner 2004, p. 449). Brenner goes on to distinguish new forms of urban and regional policies and emerging and decaying scales of sociopolitical organisation and (de-)regulation of territorial policies:

- Spatial Keynesianism (urban managerialism and the dual state of the late 1960s and early 1970s)
- Crisis of Fordism (late 1970s until early 1980s)
- Glocalisation Episode 1: New Localism (1980s)
- Glocalisation Episode 2: New Regionalism (1990s).

The new regionalism as a descriptive category for a period of state spatial restructuring never really came to end but evolved into a very diverse scenery of mega-regions, endless urbanisation, multicity regionalism, infrastructure corridors, smart

[1] DiMaggio and Powell (1983) use 'isomorphism' to describe the result of an evolutionary process of organisational change in the field of organisations (such as enterprises, universities and local governments) that gets more alike through imitation or coercion.

regions and city networks (Galland and Harrison 2020). We have reason to believe that besides many other factors, increased policy transfer and circulation of ideas contribute to this divergence of metropolitan regionalisms. Although we may observe the spread and copy and paste-like diffusion of some policy practices such as airport regions, smart regionalism, multimodal mobility or resilience strategies, we can hardly speak of what DiMaggio and Powell (1983) once called mimetic isomorphism, that is, the voluntary imitation of institutional design in an organisational field. Policy circulation may result in what has been called fast policy, the

> pragmatic borrowing of policies that work by compressed time horizons, by iterative constructions of best practices, by enlarged roles for intermediaries as pushers of policy routines and technologies (Peck 2011, pp. 773–4).

However, increased circulation, availability and abundance of policy ideas may also result in reflexive regionalisation and a more sceptical attitude towards the fashion-like distribution of new policies' organisational models.

Policy transfer emerged as a relevant object of study in the mid-1990s and became visible through the rise of city networks that increased in number after the 1990s (Heinelt and Niederhafner 2005; Keiner and Arley 2007; Atkinson and Rossignolo 2010; Peck 2011; Labaeye and Sauer 2013). Reasons for the rise of policy transfer were the creation of the common market in Europe, economic globalisation and the internationalisation of urban policies. We can distinguish four key periods:

- *An early period* (1990s) where cities were the main agents of 'bottom-up' policy circulation (self-organised networks of cities such as EUROCITIES; Heinelt and Niederhafner 2005; Payre 2010);
- *An ongoing period* (2000s onwards) of state and EU-led policy circulation that is partly hierarchical, partly incentive-based, also characterised by an instrumental use of city networks by state agencies for the purpose of monitoring and quality management of urban policies (Béal et al. 2018);
- *A new period* (2010s onwards) where global firms such as real estate firms, developers and transnational technology firms, as well as hybrid organisations, entered the scene as relevant transfer agents (Robin and Brill 2018; Bok and Coe 2017).
- *A future period* (2020s) where developments indicate a strong pluralisation of city networks and an increasing number of networks with specific focus on big metropolises.

The following subsections proceed to unpack the key processes that transcend these periods.

6.2.1 Policy Mobility, Transfer, Diffusion and Learning

Policy mobility, transfer, diffusion and learning as concepts stand for different research interests and theoretical concepts but refer to the same empirical phenomenon: policy change that has been triggered by experiences gained elsewhere.

The theory of diffusion is used more in the North American discourse and seeks to trace the distribution of policy innovations in time and space—without giving too much emphasis to the actors and processes (Lütz 2007; Evans 2019). The literature on policy transfer and learning focuses more on the changes of local practices based on the voluntary import of ideas and concepts from other places and tries to identify the relevant actors, channels and mechanisms of policy circulation (Dolowitz and Marsh 2000). It found strong recognition in the literature on Europeanisation of urban policies (Atkinson and Rossignolo 2010). In fact, we can observe that national or local policymakers tend to mobilise expertise and knowledge when discussing metropolitan reforms (see Hambleton 2016 on the UK; Città Metropolitana di Firenze 2016 on the model-like role of Lyon for Italy as examples). The outcome of these activities is vague. In any case, most of the literature on policy mobility as well as on policy transfer demonstrates that

> it is unusual to observe straightforward copying of legislation or direct pinching of techniques. Instead, intermediaries 'mutate' policies in a process of translation (Stone 2012, p. 483).

This statement of Diane Stone refers to an older but well-established conceptualisation of different processes of policy transfer:

- *Copying*: applying or using a programme, format or instrument without any changes
- *Adaptation, emulation*: using a programme as "best practice", but more as a guiding principle for regulation
- *Hybridisation, synthesis, combination*: combination of different elements of successful policies from different contexts (states or jurisdictions)
- *Inspiration, influence*: using programmes, instruments, practice in other states or jurisdictions as inspiration for own activity; not in the technical sense but more in the normative or symbolic sense
- *Coercion*: coercion is more likely in institutional environments like the European Union but the International Monetary Fund (IMF) or the World Bank also has significant power to change local policies
- *Competition*: globalisation, mobility of capital and neoliberalism force states to take investor-friendly measures, eventually resulting in a race to the bottom.

(source: Lütz 2007; Marsh and Sharman 2009, see also Peck 2011).

In the remainder of this chapter, I will present formats and channels of policy transfer that are relevant to the topic of this book: planning and governing metropolitan regions. The discussion of transnational city networks serves as a starting point as transnational city networks seem to be the most relevant channel for policy transfer. Another object of policy transfer research is to identify who are the transfer agents. Here, a number of groups have been categorised, including elected politicians and political parties, civil servants, pressure groups, policy consultants, governmental and nongovernmental institutions at the local, regional and (trans)national levels (e.g. municipalities, counties, but also organisations at the global scale that advocate similar policies across diverse countries, such as UN-Habitat, the World Bank,

OECD), transnational advocacy networks and epistemic communities (Benson and Jordan 2012).

Specifically, in the literature on Europeanisation, a number of these transnational networks, programmes and knowledge-based communities (such as URBACT, INTERREG, METREX, EUROCITIES and ESPON) are assigned to offer important platforms for policy transfer across the European Union. Without a doubt, policymakers use different channels and sources of information when reforms are at stake. Still, we do not know much about the effectiveness of these networks or about the question of which policies travel and which do not. The few empirical studies we have raised doubts with regard to the optimistic view that transnational city networks facilitate learning and the diffusion of policy innovation (Caponio 2018). While Stone's (2004) concept of transfer agents has been widely used, others argue that besides identifying and categorising these agents, it is also important to understand the extent to which these agents articulate agency (and to what extent their agency is conditioned and mediated by other actors and institutions) and as such influence the extent to which policies are mobilised (McCann 2011; Peck 2011). In continuation of this debate, three further categories are introduced here:

(1) international expert communities or policy communities
(2) international policy intermediaries
(3) transnational corporations.

The first category of international expert communities is an adaptation of the concept of epistemic communities that has been used in international relations for quite a while (Haas 1992). In short, epistemic communities are groups of bureaucrats and experts that have achieved a consensual knowledge and reached a common understanding about a problem and ways of solving the problem through a process of socialisation. The European policy programme URBACT is a case in point. Compared to networks, expert communities are less political as their main purpose is to organise a process of transnational learning and professional socialisation. They do not have a mandate to bundle and represent the interests of their members.

The second category is taken from the work of Stone (2008, 2012) where she identifies a lack of conceptual knowledge on the transfer and translation of policies. She introduced the umbrella term 'international policy intermediaries' to refer to international organisations (United Nations, OECD, World Bank), global policy partnerships and philanthropic foundations.

Transnational corporations, the third category, have only recently found attention in the literature on urban policy transfer.

6.2.2 Policy Transfer and Transnational City Networks

Transnational city networks found increasing attention in the scholarly literature after the early 2000s and the few inventories that do exist identify the late 1990s as the period where many transnational city networks were founded (Heinelt and

Niederhafner 2005; Keiner and Arley 2007; Labaeye and Sauer 2013; Atkinson and Rossignolo 2010). They were considered to be a new layer of transnational urban policymaking for the following reasons.

Firstly, globalisation and internationalisation empowered a specific group of cities as the nodes in global economic networks or hubs of global flows of goods, knowledge and people. At the same time, some nation states experienced weakening regulatory capacities, in particular, regarding urban policies (which has been called the 'hollowing out of the state', Jessop 2008). Some cities filled this vacuum and promoted what they consider to be a good practice of urban development, claiming that they are global (or at least national) policy leaders (e.g. Barcelona, Vancouver). In a similar way, transnational city networks are currently considered to be an independent layer of global governance, in particular, for tackling global environmental challenges such as climate change that have been addressed insufficiently by the international community of states (Kern and Bulkeley 2009).

Secondly, transnational networks of cities as a means for interest representation are particularly relevant for cities in the European Union. Although the Council of Europe and the European Parliament (through the Committee of the Regions) facilitated a stronger presence of municipalities in European policy arenas, the increasing number of transnational city networks demonstrates the clear interest of cities in gaining more influence. Networks and associations of cities such as UCLG, Eurocities or the Global Parliament of Mayors were formed to give a voice to cities as many local leaders felt that the concerns of cities were not being heard by national governments, the European Commission or the European Parliament (Atkinson and Rossignolo 2010; Heinelt and Niederhafner 2005).

Thirdly, transnational city networks also fulfil a strategic purpose in local politics as they can be used as an external source of legitimacy for projects or policies that lack acceptance in the local context (Straßheim 2013; Caponio 2018).

And finally, networks are used as a form of governance for knowledge exchange and as a coping strategy in times of crisis when the quest for new policy solutions and external support for local solutions is at stake. However, the dimension of knowledge exchange has attracted only scant attention in the empirical studies (an exception being the work of Straßheim 2011, 2013).

The advantages of networks (or network governance) have been described many times (Powell 1990; Koppenjan and Klijn 2004). Among the advantages of networks, low transactions costs because of the horizontal and nonhierarchical character of relations are probably the most convincing one. Networks with flat hierarchies allow for mutual exchange of knowledge and best practices at comparatively low costs. However, the more recent literature suggests there are a variety of critical issues with regard to the positive externalities of network (Straßheim 2013; McGuire and Agranoff 2011):

(1) Members of networks have to invest in the network. Hence, there are considerable transaction costs (such as continuous participation, membership fees, tasks that need to be fulfilled).

(2) Networks produce redundancies, most notably redundant information. Network members need to be able to manage redundancies and cope with abundant information.
(3) City networks are selective regarding the type and size of the cities and countries they represent. Some city networks are closed discourse communities or at least are dominated by members that are predominantly resourceful global policy leaders. Membership is often unbalanced regarding size, wealth and territorial representation. There are a few cities that are members of several networks and host the headquarters that give them considerable influence. In particular, the selective overrepresentation of 'all-stars' such as Stuttgart, Barcelona, Vancouver or Lyon in the publications and working groups of some of these networks is striking.
(4) Trust and norms of reciprocity are the most important mechanisms that secure the functioning of networks. These norms are fragile and produce negative externalities (*the dark side of networks*).
(5) A network is an organisational form that easily transects national borders, but this does not guarantee that ideas and knowledge will effectively be used in different national institutional frameworks.

6.3 City Networks, Expert Communities, International Organisations, Transnational Corporations

6.3.1 Transnational Networks of Cities and Regions

The process of European integration motivated cities and regions to form networks in order to facilitate a representation of the interests of cities in the European policy process (Atkinson and Rossignolo 2010; Heinelt and Niederhafner 2005). However, most city networks have a double function:

(1) they bundle the interests of the members and articulate them in direction of the European Commission and, of equal importance, national governments (and claim to speak for the broader group of local governments in Europe)
(2) they organise the exchange of knowledge.

Only a few inventories of international city networks exist (Keiner and Arley 2007; Labaeye and Sauer 2013). The EU-funded project WWW for Europe identified 46 transnational city networks with a focus on sustainable urban development, but certainly, the effective number of city networks is higher (Labaeye and Sauer 2013). The scholarly literature tends to focus on a few topical networks such as the C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group or the largest ones such as the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI), United Cities and Local Government (UCLG), Eurocities or Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR), thereby neglecting the variety of networks and topics addressed by these networks.

Some of the networks are truly European or global while others have a more specific focus in terms of policy or display a regional outreach. The 'Union of the Baltic Cities' for instance includes 99 members in the Baltic Sea region and is an important channel of interest mediation for the implementation for the EU macroregional strategy for the Baltic Sea. Eurocities represents larger European cities from 30 states and has its headquarters in Brussels in spatial proximity to the European Commission (Atkinson and Rossignolo 2010). The PURPLE network seeks to build a counterweight towards networks presenting big cities. ICLEI has 162 members in its European branch while the international climate alliance of cities has 958 members. These figures indicate that these networks seem to have a functional relevance for the members of these networks.

Two of the more influential city networks in Europe are Eurocities and METREX, the latter being of high relevance for the topic of the book because METREX has a broader definition of members and also includes quite a few city-regions and metropolitan governments. An emergent global network of metropolitan regions is METROPOLIS.

6.3.2 METREX

METREX, the network of European metropolitan regions and areas, is a not-for-profit organisation founded in the mid-1990s by a group of local government representatives. METREX designates itself as a platform for the exchange of knowledge, expertise and experience on metropolitan affairs and facilitates joint action on issues of common interest on behalf of the members. Initially being a gathering of 15 metropolitan regions, in 2018, METREX had members from 50 metropolitan regions in Europe. Some are cities, but the majority are regional associations, such as the former Dutch *Stadsregio*, German *Planungsverbände*, Provinces or inter-municipal associations but also subnational governments such as the Italian regions. So METREX truly represents supra-municipal organisations that, to different degrees, are responsible for metropolitan governance. METREX often refers to the fact that more than 120 city-regions exist in Europe and that METREX seeks to represent the interests of these city-regions.

Major activities include biannual conferences and expert groups working continuously on major topics such as mobility, affordable housing, employment, polycentrism, climate change, governance, spatial planning and retailing. METREX has participated through its members in EU-funded INTERREG and ESPON research projects. METREX is a network of practitioners with excellent relationships to academia. The network is a partner of several European institutions and contributes to the discussion on the metropolitan dimension of policies and programmes on a European scale.

6.3.3 METROPOLIS

At first sight, regarding the objectives as well as the activities, the Metropolis network seems to be rather similar to METREX. Like METREX, metropolis is not just a network of cities but is open to regional governments and organisations representing metropolitan areas, but a closer look reveals fundamental differences to METREX. Unlike METREX, most members of metropolis are large agglomerations (such as Berlin, Shanghai, Mexico City, Greater Lyon, the Barcelona Metropolitan Region, Île de France). In fact, the network calls itself a 'world association of major metropolises', now with 139 members. Its outreach is global, and comparably, a large number of members are located in Asia and Africa. Metropolis has existed since 2004 and has close working relationships with UCLG. Its mission is to give a voice to local and regional governments in national and global politics ('urban diplomacy and metropolitan advocacy') to support the New Urban Agenda and Sustainable Development Goal 11 ('Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable') and to foster the exchange of knowledge from metropolis to metropolis. The headquarters of metropolis are currently situated in Barcelona, while the president is the mayor of Berlin. The website of Metropolis is a rich source of information on all issues of metropolitan governance and planning. Metropolis facilitates communication between members through congresses, meetings and working groups.

6.3.4 Eurocities

Eurocities was founded in 1986 by a small group of larger European cities (Barcelona, Birmingham, Frankfurt, Lyon, Milan and Rotterdam) with the purpose of giving a voice to local governments in the European policy-making process (Payre 2010). The network grew steadily and today more than 150 cities from 30 countries constitute the membership. Participation is limited to cities with more than 250,000 inhabitants and full members have to pay a fee. In the early 2000s, some structural changes took place with the goal of opening the network to cities that were less inclined to participate as full members. Hence, different categories of membership exist: full members, associate members (from outside the European Union), associate partners (cities with fewer than 250,000 inhabitants) and associate business partners.

Eurocities participates in research networks (often EU-funded) but the main activities are those of the more than 30 working groups. Similar to METREX, these working groups are composed of experts from local governments and Eurocities (note that Eurocities has less than 30 permanent staff). They cover a broad list of topics such as migration, mobility, environment and governance and produce position papers that react to current topics such as air pollution in cities or migration. Eurocities persistently calls for a coherent European Urban Policy. Payre (2010, p. 267) highlights that

> knowledge production is tied above all to lobbying activity, and so it follows a model that is fairly traditional at the European level: expertise becomes a resource for representing interests.

Based on an empirical study of the engagement of Torino and Milan in Eurocities in the field of migration policy, Caponio (2018, p. 2053) comes to the following conclusion about transnational city networks (TCNs):

> According to our analysis, TCNs, rather than accomplishing their official instrumental goals, play primarily symbolic functions, such as legitimising local integration policy, building a new city identity and positioning the city vis-à-vis other European cities and EU institutions. Yet this does not mean that TCNs are 'useless', since the symbolic resources they convey can be crucial in creating consensus among stakeholders at the local level or lobbying national authorities.

Seen from this perspective, transnational city networks are an essential element of local governance. These networks have become what Diane Stone calls 'transnational advocacy coalitions' (TANs) but evidence for city-to-city learning is scant (Stone 2012, p. 31). The effect of the rising number of European and global networks is fragmentation and separation between bigger and smaller cities (smaller cities eventually losing influence).

6.3.5 URBACT

Since the emergence of European Union urban policies in the 1990s, the exchange of urban policy knowledge has found direct support from the European Commission through a variety of instruments, formats, funding and research programmes. Among these are CIVITAS, EUKN, URBACT, INTERACT, INTERREG, ESPON and JPI Urban Europe. As a consequence, the European Union provides a rich context of horizontal and vertical relationships that enable exchange and evaluation of policy knowledge. URBACT is a programme directly involving cities as producers and users of knowledge and has become one of the more relevant programmes. Cities engaged in URBACT do not have member status but are participants who do not have to pay a fee but benefit from funding opportunities. So far, the programme has supported projects in 550 Cities. Practitioners involved in the projects are supported by a network of so-called URBACT 'experts', usually academics from different disciplines.

In a way, URBACT is a network but a more appropriate description would be an EU-funded programme for cross-national learning and professional socialisation. Hence, it is an expert community. URBACT receives considerable funding from the European Commission (ERDF) and the programme is managed by an agency with considerable autonomy (based in Paris, Saint Denis). URBACT has a very broad portfolio with regard to the policy content (housing, urban regeneration, mobility, governance, etc.). There is no specific focus on metropolitan regions but topics such as suburbanisation (and post-suburbanisation) reflect the metropolitan dimension of

policymaking. The calls for participation pick up specific issues from this portfolio. One of the formats for policy exchange and learning is the division of different roles of leader cities and follower cities. Leader cities are supposed to present excellent practice and follower cities are expected to learn from them (peer-to-peer learning). Consequently, URBACT is a very decentralised learning community without a top down policy consensus. Knowledge is validated through practice. URBACT builds on rich relationships with other networks and international organisations.

6.3.6 OECD

The OECD is an international organisation with 35 states as members. For several decades, the OECD has produced and collected policy-relevant knowledge about trends and developments in various fields of state activity, and social and economic development (education, regulation of labour markets, taxation, etc.). OECD expert groups evaluate and give specific policy advice that is usually based on comparative studies of policy practice in the member states. The OECD started in the early 1980s to work on urban problems when the spatial concentration of unemployment, urban decline and deindustrialisation indicated the crisis of welfare states in late capitalism (Theodore and Peck 2011). In 1999, the Territorial Development Policy Committee (now called the Regional Development Policy Committee, 2014) and the Working Party on Urban Areas were established. These are the two main bodies and activities of the OECD focusing on urban and regional development, land use planning and metropolitan governance. A full range of reports and policy papers that are easily accessible have been published in the last decade. They include the territorial reviews, usually describing one case (a city region or state) or comprehensive inventories of urban national policies and strategies (Ahrend and Schumann 2014; OECD 2015, 2016).

Based on a large-N inventory of metropolitan governance solutions, the OECD clearly advocates for integrated metropolitan governance as being the best solution for solving the problems of uncoordinated metropolitan development (Ahrend et al. 2014). OECD work on metropolitan governance is also influenced by the position of the OECD on decentralisation, financial relationships and multilevel governance. The publications are authored by OECD staff and use a large database that has been accumulated over the last years. Based on this expertise, the OECD was an influential partner during the UN-Habitat III process. Nevertheless, it is not cities making the agenda of the OECD, but state governments, along with the experts of the various working parties (Theodore and Peck 2011). Only in the last decade, has the OECD increasingly worked directly with cities. The main formats of collaboration are the territorial reviews that closely examine and evaluate the developments and policies of single cities. Local governments of these cities voluntarily agree to collaborate with OECD experts and share their experience in a peer-review collaboration.

OECD policy is comparative evaluation of domestic policies and standard setting in many policy areas such as social policies and education but its role in metropoli-

tan policies is less clear although the recent study clearly advocates for integrated metropolitan governance (Ahrend et al. 2014). The influence of the OECD on national governments and other international organisations is very subtle. One reason is that the member states rarely take a unanimous position on many issues addressed by OECD studies (and this includes national urban or metropolitan policies). Although Theodore and Peck (2011) see a clear turn towards neoliberal urban policies within the OECD, the position of the member states with regard to urban issues, land use planning and metropolitan policies differ to a considerable degree and, as a consequence, the OECD experts have hesitated to develop and promote a set of good practices and common standards. However, an implicit policy consensus based on accumulated and often data-driven evidence exists, and within the last decade, this consensus has accepted the ideas of new economic geography on the rise of metropolitan regions as hubs of global economic development.

6.3.7 Transnational Corporations

Transnational corporations as agents of international policy circulation have attracted little attention in the urban studies literature. One reason is that the transnational corporations relevant to global urban policy constitute a broad spectrum of investors, real estate developers, international consultants, global construction firms, engineering and technology companies that appear as key agents of change in cities (Robin and Brill 2018; Bok and Coe 2017). This influence on urban policies emerged implicitly in recent urban research focusing on the financialisation of urban development, through its focus on the reliance on investment capital for financing urban infrastructure. The influence of transnational corporations can hardly be ignored as many firms have developed a sort of urban agenda in order to be prepared for an emerging market. Due to a lack of comprehensive studies, the following paragraph can only illustrate some of the mechanisms and playing fields that transnational corporations use in the field of urban development.

Multinational technical firms such as Siemens, Veolia, Cisco and IBM discovered cities to be a relevant business segment in the last decade. Digitalisation and smart city initiatives accelerated this process and many international firms in the fields of logistics and mobility, resilient energy provision and infrastructure and building technology offer comprehensive solutions for urban policies in these areas. Firms seek to define international standards and propose monitoring strategies and benchmarks in order to make the performance of cities measurable and visible. One example of this is the Green City index circulated by Siemens that promotes best practices of urban sustainable development (Siemens 2009, 2011). KPMG offers a 'tailor-made approach to the benchmarking and monitoring of the energy and climate policy of cities' (KPMG 2010) with the goal of giving advice to local and regional administrations in the field of climate change and climate adaptation (see also PwC 2016).

Firms use also cities as test beds or demonstration objects for new technologies or comprehensive management solutions. Siemens for instance, with the city of Vienna

and the local public utilities, developed a new urban district (Seestadt Aspern) in Vienna in order to demonstrate and test new technological solutions for sustainable energy provision. Siemens was also a partner for Munich's sustainability strategy and the leader of a study on the resilience of New York's electricity grid (which was damaged by Superstorm Sandy in 2012) (Siemens 2018). For representatives of these firms, fairs and international conferences appear to be the main channel for sharing knowledge (Bok and Coe 2017).

6.3.8 100 Resilient Cities

100 Resilient Cities (100RC) was founded in 2013 as an initiative of the Rockefeller Foundation. The purpose of this network is to support cities around the globe in finding solutions for resilient urban development (Urban Institute 2018). 100RC published three calls for participation and selected 97 cities that receive financial and organisational help in order to prepare a resilience strategy. Major part of the financial help is payment for a Central Resilience Officer (CRO) to be employed by the municipality. In addition, 100RC facilitates the exchange of ideas and provides access to research institutes, NGOs, service providers, consultants and partners from the private sector (part of the so-called partner platform). The Rockefeller Foundation also collaborates with the British newspaper, *The Guardian*. 100RC is an exemplary case of, to use the words of Diane Stone,

> a diverse community of consultants, foundation officers, business leaders, scientific experts, think tank pundits, and NGO executives who are growing in number, policy reach, and professionalism (Stone 2008, p. 30).

The initiative demonstrates very well a new type of international network or urban initiative that is composed of agents from different spheres. The status of the initiative as either a public or private agent is not always clear-cut.

6.4 Abundant Knowledge, Overcrowded Networks?

Today, a huge knowledge market exists with multiple public and hybrid venues for sharing and distributing urban policy knowledge. What has changed in the last decade is the multiplication of actors and coalitions including transnational corporations, international NGOs, governments and international organisations. Often universities serve as anchors of policy mobility in metropolitan regions—a fact that is not widely reflected in the debate. At the same time, universities promote global policy mobility through a range of international master programmes.[2]

[2]See, for instance, the executive masters Innovative Governance of Large Urban Systems (IGLUS) at Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne, 'Cities are back in town' at Science Po Urban School, Paris, or the programme simply called 'Cities' at the London School of Economics.

Can we speak of a cohesive global urban policy community or even global public policy on metropolitan issues? Although some of the networks and organisations presented in this chapter promote 'coherent global responses to global policy problems, one finds serious unresolved coordination issues and overlapping responsibilities' (Stone 2008, p. 27). The coexistence of different types of knowledge actors and the still increasing number of venues prevents the rise of hegemonic positions, even if some of the initiatives mentioned in this book are partly closed shops or are at least, highly selective with regard to the membership or presented policy solutions (100RC, OECD). It is questionable whether the rich offer of urban policy knowledge in this pluralistic and decentralised knowledge market leads to a healthy competition of the best ideas. The global circulation of policy ideas and knowledge lacks common standards and comparative studies that would allow for a better evaluation of policy ideas. Would an IPCC for metropolitan policies be the answer? A start might be that the International Panel on Social Progress devoted one chapter to cities and metropolitan regions (IPSP 2018).

In addition, there is reason to believe that national legal frameworks and policy priorities hinder the transfer and implementation of ideas taken from the well-endowed knowledge market. National policy communities face lower transaction costs and are better suited to national funding priorities. In fact, many national governments have forced municipalities to enter national and transnational networks in order to exploit their benefits and compete for best practices but also to have some limited control in more and more decentralised policy constellations (Hartley and Allison 2002; Straßheim 2013). Béal et al. (2018) describe this as an emerging pattern of soft governance of central government in France in order to re-establish central–local relationships in a decentralised state. The source of expertise is largely national. Still, participation in international networks and expert communities seems to have a benefit in local policy arenas (Benz et al. 2015). An external reference helps with overcoming local resistance and stabilises policies in local contexts. This can be demonstrated by referring to local climate policy where a large number of cities signed commitments or complies with monitoring standards of international networks (such as the climate alliance of cities or 100RC).

Still, the abundant number of networks, venues and agencies may, paradoxically, have an adverse effect. The more city networks exist, the less relevant they may become as international governmental organisations and governments will not know who to speak to.

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Chapter 7
Implications of Metropolitan Policy Mobility: Tracing the Relevance of Travelling Ideas for Metropolitan Regions

Carola Fricke

Abstract This chapter traces the implications of policy mobility for metropolitan regions. It addresses the context and conditions of policy movements while reflecting on the consequences of mobile policy ideas from the perspective of metropolitan regions. To understand the impacts of metropolitan policy mobility, this chapter first asks who profits from the increased travelling of ideas. This is important because the winners of transnational policy mobility form an elite of metropolitan regions with the capacity, resources and interest to act beyond their national and regional boundaries. Second, the chapter suggests an explorative perspective on where policy mobility is leading the political development of metropolitan regions. Accordingly, the chapter moves away from a focus on transferred ideas and transfer mechanisms towards the reception and adaptation of travelling policies in the local context. Finally, the chapter sheds light on the relevance of policy mobility for everyday routines and formal procedures in metropolitan regions. This includes not only examining the implications for policymaking on metropolitan issues at other scales, but also the possibilities of policy failure.

Keywords Travelling of ideas · Policy mobility · Implications for ordinary metropolitan regions · Policy failure

7.1 Introduction

Metropolitan policies have become more mobile, and waves of concepts have continued to influence policies for metropolitan regions. Moreover, the increased popularity of 'the metropolitan' is accompanied by a continuous interest of researchers, policymakers and practitioners in comparative and 'best practice' oriented studies on metropolitan issues. This chapter addresses the implications of these developments by asking:

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(1) Does the transnational circulation of models, concepts and institutions lead to policy change in specific metropolitan contexts?
(2) What are the consequences of travelling policies for policymaking in metropolitan regions?

While exchanges about policy ideas and concepts across national borders have intensified in the past three decades, metropolitan policies still vary according to national frameworks, context conditions and local instruments. Both tendencies—waves of conceptual fashion versus path dependency and context-specific variation—are considered in debates on policy mobility and translation.

Previous studies on urban policy transfer, diffusion and mobility suggest that policies circulate across place and time. Geographers propose various concepts of spatial diffusion and mutation of policy concepts during travel from one place to another (McCann and Ward 2011, 2012; Clarke 2011). Peck (2011, p. 774) argues that

> the movement of policy is more than merely a transaction or transfer but entails the relational interpenetration of policy-making sites and activities, spawning phenomena like global policy 'models', transnational knowledge networks, and innovatory forms of audit, evaluation, and advocacy.

Scholars of political and organisational studies draw attention to the sociopolitical and linguistic processes involved in policy translation suggesting that models, instruments or institutions change in their meaning when transferred from one context to another. This can be characterised as a process of dis-embedding and re-embedding policies, involving a transformation between the concrete materialisations and abstract ideas (Czarniawska and Joerges 1996; Mukhtarov 2014; Stone 2017).

In that vein, Schmitt (2020) and Zimmermann (2020) argue that metropolitan policies are mobilised in differential ways. Schmitt (2020) gives an overview of what kind of concepts are mobilised and suggests a typology on the mobility of urban concepts, reflecting on general implications of policy transfer and mobility for cities related to the necessity of context-specific resources and capacities. He puts emphasis on the diffusion and mobilisation of best practices as 'fast policies', popular concepts and strategies in the context of inter-urban competition and marketing. Zimmermann (2020) points out mechanisms, key actors and networks facilitating metropolitan policy mobility in Europe and around the globe. Moreover, he suggests a periodisation of engagement in transnational networks. Based on these accounts, the current chapter addresses the implications and consequences of policy mobility for metropolitan regions in Europe.

This chapter suggests an explorative perspective on the potential implications of the increased mobility of metropolitan policies. As pointed out in the previous chapters, current studies focus on the mobility of particular policy concepts and on enabling mechanisms. Similar to what Davidson et al. (2019) state with regard to city-networks, there remains an important gap in research concerning the implications of metropolitan regions' international engagement and the consequences for their politics, governance and institutions. In particular—as metropolitan regions are in

many contexts exceptional and often still emergent spatial, political and jurisdictional entities—few studies focus on 'ordinary' policymaking and failed policy transfer in metropolitan regions. Accordingly, this chapter develops a critical view on the extent to which policy mobility is relevant to everyday policies in metropolitan regions. The chapter moves away from a focus on transferred models, concepts or strategies (Schmitt 2020) and on transfer actors and mechanisms (Zimmermann 2020) towards the reception and adaptation of travelling policies in the local context.

Empirically, the chapter explores the implications of planned or unplanned exchanges that contribute to re-embedding travelling concepts in metropolitan contexts. This will be illustrated with examples from selected metropolitan regions in Europe. This chapter further develops findings on the mobility of metropolitan concepts circulating between times, contexts and scales in the European multi-scalar polity (Fricke 2017, 2020). The structure of the chapter is guided by three questions, following Flyvbjerg's (2004) conceptualisation of phronesis as wisdom or judgement for practical action (cf. Galland and Harrison 2020). First, to understand the consequences of metropolitan policy mobility, this chapter asks who profits from the increased travelling of policies from the perspective of metropolitan regions. The winners of transnational policy mobility represent an elite of metropolitan regions with the motivation and capacity to act beyond their national boundaries. Second, the chapter suggests an explorative perspective on potential directions where policy mobility is leading future political development of metropolitan regions. Third, the chapter sheds light on the relevance of policy mobility for everyday routines and formal procedures in metropolitan regions. This includes not only considering the implications for policymaking on metropolitan issues at other (governmental) scales, but also the consequences of policy failure.

7.2 Effects of Policy Mobility on Policies and Policymaking in Metropolitan Regions

The following paragraphs propose potential paths where policy mobility will lead to the development of metropolitan policies. This addresses the implications of what happens when 'ideas go to places' (Czarniawska and Joerges 1996), or more concretely

> what is involved when a concept, technique or instrument is extracted from its place of 'origin', packaged up with a surrounding narrative, circulated around and translated into the particular circumstances of a different locale? (Healey 2011, p. 191)

To answer this question, we propose a refined understanding of policy mobility as a process with effects and consequences for policies and policymaking in metropolitan contexts. A way to explore these implications is to trace policy changes that can be attributed to the travelling of concepts over time, and in different periods. First, the following paragraphs explore the exemplary effects of mobile policies on approaches and instruments in metropolitan regions. Second, we address the implications of

policy mobility for policymaking in metropolitan regions. And third, we examine the consequences of policy mobility for metropolitan regions as a travelling concept.

7.2.1 Effects on Policies in Metropolitan Regions

The movement of policies involves not only the transfer of an idea from one context to another, but external ideas also influence a region's external positioning and internal development. A context-sensitive perspective goes beyond assumptions of convergence and mainstreaming through policy transfer. A refined understanding also needs to consider variations in how policies are translated into the local context. This local adaptation and its implications for concrete policies can be theorised as a process of social learning. According to Hall (1993), different levels of social learning explain variations of policy change. Hall differentiates between first-order learning as the incremental adjustment of policies, second-order learning as change in instruments and third-order learning as shifts in interpretive frameworks or paradigms.

Most commonly observed in the metropolitan context is first-order learning or incremental adaptation, for example, when selected elements of a policy are translated into the local context by embedding them either into transnational projects and/or into metropolitan planning strategies. Travelling concepts regularly infiltrate metropolitan policies via transnational projects. Typically, transnational projects represent occasions for cooperation with partners from other contexts and are financially supported by external sources. Moreover, such projects allow engagement in fields beyond the core obligations of metropolitan governments. Therefore, projects become potential playing fields for testing innovative ideas, such as new approaches to sustainable development or smart mobility. Thereby, those concepts or ideas are often successfully adopted which align with the interests and routines of local actors and show a certain connectivity to problems and issues at the metropolitan scale. Most prominent examples include projects funded by the European Union or that develop in the context of international exchanges and partnerships (see Zimmermann 2020 on URBACT). Transnational projects not only involve explicit adoption of sectorial concepts, but also foster the implicit translation of practices or ways of doing things. Thus, projects can become a source for explicit as well as implicit learning. Concepts from 'elsewhere', in particular when supported by funding, can become catalysers for innovative approaches and contribute to the renewal of city-regional policies. Alternatively, mobile policy ideas influence metropolitan strategies understood as political documents for planning or locational policies. In an earlier study, Healey (1998) identified the re-emergence of strategic plans in urban regions in relation to the metaphor of 'Europe'. In a similar vein, Healey (2004) later analysed strategic planning as a fashion in European metropolitan regions. Based on a comparison of strategic plans, Healey highlighted the dangers of borrowing spatial conceptions and vocabulary from reports or best practices which can become an imposition over local particularities.

Second-order learning appears to be less frequently observed in the context of metropolitan policy mobility. Hall (1993) views this form of learning as implying the adoption of complete instruments. Examples of such comprehensive policy transfer in the context of metropolitan policies are often linked to mandatory reforms of metropolitan governance required by national frameworks, such as in France and Italy in the mid-2010s. In contrast, voluntary forms of second-order policy learning often remain in a conceptual stadium. For instance, foreign institutional models of governance are regularly consulted and presented in policy briefs during the conceptual phase before the establishment of new governance institutions (Lefèvre 2004; Agence d'Urbanisme de Lyon 2016).

Third-order learning is even more difficult to determine in metropolitan policies. Abstract, universal paradigms of urban or city-regional development are assumed to influence metropolitan policies. Methodologically, it seems rather challenging to show how such reframing processes take place in concrete contexts. Taking a bird's eye perspective on metropolitan policies in Europe, Lang and Török (2016) suggest that shifts towards growth and innovation are due to paradigmatic learning. From a political–economic perspective, however, 'growth' as a travelling paradigm corresponds with the emergence of new forms of metropolitan governance in the context of post-Fordist locational policies and the neoliberalisation of urban policies in the early 2000s (see, for instance, Brenner 2003, 2004; Jouve 2005). Inter-urban competitiveness aligns particularly well with the thesis of transnationally connected metropolitan regions. Examples of how such paradigms translate into the metropolitan context can be seen in the overall orientation of Stuttgart's and Lyon's metropolitan policies. For instance, the preamble of the state law which founded the Stuttgart metropolitan region in 1994 makes explicit reference to European competition (see Benz and Frenzel 2002; Gesetz über die Errichtung des Verbands Region Stuttgart 1994). This symbolic reference to competitiveness also mirrors the influence of the regional economic milieu which strongly supported the establishment of a city-region. Moreover, in the mid-2000s, several metropolitan regions in Europe, including Amsterdam andBerlin, developed strategies concerning their international positioning and instruments for self-marketing. In Lyon, economic actors such as the Chamber of Commerce and a public–private regional development agency fostered the international orientation of metropolitan policies (Galimberti 2015).

However, the diffusion of neoliberal paradigms in and through metropolitan policies is a nonlinear process. Foremost, as Harding (2007) pointed out, further studies would be necessary to assess whether the 'neoliberal plot' appears only in selected regions which adopted a logic of competitiveness under particular local constellations. Moreover, the policies of metropolitan regions increasingly seem to move beyond the former focus on inter-urban competitiveness and economic growth. Currently, new paradigms for innovative urban development—such as sustainability, smart cities and rural–urban partnerships—appear to influence metropolitan policies (Schmitt 2020).

7.2.2 Consequences for Policymaking in Metropolitan Regions

Another implication of increased policy mobility can be seen not only in policy change as the outcome of political processes, but also in changes of policymaking routines and ways of doing things. Therefore, a key question is whether the transnational engagement of metropolitan regions in Europe affects traditional metropolitan institutions, similar to the implications that Davidson et al. (2019) assume for city-networks on urban government?

In concrete terms, policy mobility can have implications for particular aspects of the policymaking process in metropolitan regions, including a systematic outward orientation. Repeated statements and studies by metropolitan representatives and interest groups point to the increased orientation of some metropolitan regions towards European funding programmes. For instance, a study for the metropolitan authority of Barcelona (Fernández de Losada Passols and Calvete Moreno 2016) revealed that metropolitan governments or agencies are rarely actively involved in the programming and management of the European social and regional development funds. Metropolitan regions as a type of 'urban area' can—according to the regulations for the 2014–2020 funding period—become beneficiaries of Operational Programmes. Nevertheless, the study found that only Amsterdam and selected UK cities were directly involved in decision-making and managing important amounts of EU funding. Overall, this interest in obtaining EU funding also translates to a performance orientation of international engagement instead of being an end in itself. Transnational activities of metropolitan regions not only aim to increase visibility and establish partnerships. They also need to prove success by obtaining additional funding.

7.2.3 Implications for Metropolitan Regions as a Travelling Concept

The mobility of metropolitan policies must be understood with regard to the travelling qualities of 'the metropolitan' as a political concept. Derived from the Greek 'mother city', the term 'metropolis' is originally a foreign word which appeared only in the sixteenth century in several European languages. In some countries, such as in Germany, the concept 'metropolitan region' and its variations appeared on the agenda of planners and policymakers only in the late twentieth century. Moreover, the concept takes on various meanings, depending on the spatial and sectorial context in which it is used. German policymakers in the mid-1990s, for instance, suggested a broad and symbolic understanding of metropolitan regions which allowed adaptation to the regional context and previous forms of city-regional cooperation. This mutable meaning thus makes 'metropolitan region' a concept that travels well.

Another factor encouraging the mobility of 'metropolitan regions' as a policy concept lies in its positive connotation. Petrin and Knieling (2009) described metropolitan regions as a concept with a symbolic character, creating an auspicious spatial category with a promising message. The symbolic character of the metropolitan region evolved complementary to concrete technocratic and statistical concepts, such as urban agglomeration or functional urban area. The audacious connotation to 'the metropolitan' created a fertile ground for a mantra of policymakers and planners promoting the metropolitanisation of the European territory in terms of a concentration of population and economic productiveness in large agglomerations. In some cases, the emergence of metropolitan regions as a policy concept is linked to a paradigmatic shift in spatial planning, which could be classified as third-order learning (see Sect. 7.2). Similar to the 'urban-age thesis', the metropolitanisation mantra also serves as a political argument as to why policymakers should dedicate important competences and funding to metropolitan regions.

However, the travelling qualities and especially its symbolic character make it difficult to translate the concept to concrete, local or everyday approaches. In most contexts, metropolitan regions remain an abstract and state-centred concept, with rather low direct relevance for civil society and citizens. This might also be related to the city-regional scale and competitive orientation that the metropolitan refers to, which is rather incongruous with the re-vindication of a 'right to the city'.

7.2.4 Context, Institutional Capacity and Transfer Agents

The diffusion and absorption of policy concepts are oftentimes linked to the overall international engagement of metropolitan regions. The ability to engage in the circuits and mobilisation of policies depends on a metropolitan region's overall resources and capabilities within divergent state structures, planning traditions or urban systems in Europe. From a legal perspective, the national state frequently holds the formal competence to engage in the international realm or hold diplomatic relations with entities beyond the national border. Nevertheless, in the twentieth-century cities started (again) to engage in 'paradiplomacy' (Soldatos and Michelmann 1992) and other forms of 'urban foreign policy' (Heiden 2010). Additionally, the extent to which mobile policy concepts bear meaning for metropolitan actors also depends on the region's outward orientation. Factors that contribute to explaining the international engagement of metropolitan regions are, among others, the region's perceived dependence on the global economy or on funding and other external resources (see also Kübler and Piliutyte 2007; Fichter 2002).

As outlined in Schmitt (2020), policy mobility depends on institutional capacities that structurally support policy translation and learning in the local context. Metropolitan regions with formalised institutions dispose over important legal competences and budgetary capacities. Such consolidated metropolitan governments are thus more likely to engage in interregional exchange and transnational activities. In contrast, metropolitan regions with dispersed power and internally fragmented gov-

ernance are assumed to dispose over less means to entertain external relations and therefore are prone to be less active in terms of policy mobility. Moreover, the international engagement of metropolitan regions is linked to power dynamics between the city-centre and its surroundings. A transnational orientation might in some cases open a window of opportunity for a metropolitan region's positioning vis-à-vis other regional or national levels (see also Heiden 2010).

To maintain a certain level and continuity of engagement, selected metropolitan regions establish administrative subunits for transnational or European cooperation. As part of metropolitan governments, such units regularly act as pathfinders and translators in a double sense. Oftentimes, staff members in European or international units literally translate from English or foreign languages, while they also metaphorically translate policy programmes into corresponding local needs and interests. The establishment of international units can be interpreted as the institutional adaptation of metropolitan regions to policy mobility. Thereby, international or European units allow the reception, translation and implementation of universal policies as well as the dissemination of their own experiences and practices to other places and scales. The establishment of an international unit is far from being the standard for metropolitan regions. In Germany, for example, the metropolitan regions in Stuttgart (*Verband Region Stuttgart*) and Frankfurt (*Regionalverband FrankfurtRheinMain*) have both established international offices alongside permanent representations in Brussels (IMK 2013). Besides, metropolitan regions without permanent representations in Brussels or specialised units can be engaged in European and international issues. For instance, the *Nuremberg Metropolitan Region* is perceived as being rather active in European issues without disposing over a specialised unit.

Complementary to the usual transfer agents and common mechanisms, groups and arenas for diffusion, two additional types of actors appear to be important for successful policy translation to the metropolitan context. First, the interests and choices of leadership figures seem decisive for the metropolitan region's outward orientation. For example, the constellations that contributed to the development of a European dimension of metropolitan policies in Stuttgart and Lyon underline the relevance of initiatives from political representatives and mayors. In the two metropolitan regions, the mayors of the central city and presidents of the metropolitan organisation continually supported engagement in international networks, partnerships and cooperation projects (Fricke 2020; Payre 2010). In addition, individual prerequisites of staff members influence the ability and the probability of metropolitan regions taking part in the circuits of mobile policies. In Lyon, the international orientation of the metropolitan administration is also linked to processes of professionalisation and the role of international expertise (Pinson and Vion 2000).

A second type of actor enhancing the mobility of metropolitan policies comes from the academic sphere. Since the 1990s, several researchers have contributed to a transnational exchange of knowledge on 'the metropolitan' based on numerous studies and international workshops on metropolitan regions' spatial structure, interdependencies and governance models. One example for this linkage between the political and academic spheres is POPSU (*Plate-Forme D'Observation des Projets et Stratégies Urbaines* [Platform for the Observation of Urban Projects and Strate-

gies]) in France. Under the POPSU programme, researchers at local universities developed expertise and knowledge on their specific metropolitan regions (see for Lyon Belmessous 2008; Boino 2009). While some researchers might follow the ideals of 'speaking truth to power' (Wildavsky 1987), other advisors may be more biased towards particular solutions.

7.2.5 Winners and Coalitions of Metropolitan Policy Mobility

Policy mobility influences which metropolitan regions become actors in a transnational policy field and the formation of policy coalitions. Policy mobility is particularly relevant to transnationally engaged elite of metropolitan regions—with the necessary resources and political support—capable of profiting from an increased international orientation. The transnational exchange of metropolitan policies offers potential to learn from others and improve existing instruments and approaches. However, policy mobility is far from forming an encompassing, ubiquitous process involving all metropolitan regions in Europe. Instead, as Le Galès (2002, p. 110) noted regarding the effects of Europeanisation on cities

> we have a 'variable geometry' Europe within which cities and regions sometimes become actors or systems of action.

Translated into the effects of policy mobility on metropolitan regions this means that some actors are able and willing to adapt to and seize opportunities given by the transnational flow of ideas and concepts. Yet, privileged access for some implies the marginalisation of others in the transnational policy field, causing a bias between winners and losers of policy mobility.

The winners of policy mobility form a group of metropolitan regions with sufficient competences and resources to be engaged in the transnational circuit of policies. Some of these metropolitan regions, such as Amsterdam, Barcelona and Vienna, can be framed as international political actors. Moreover, selected secondary agglomerations with a long tradition of international engagement, such as Lyon and Stuttgart, have been able to position themselves as Europeanised metropolitan regions (Fricke 2020), whereas other metropolitan regions choose to be internationally engaged only indirectly, for instance, via national associations and other forms of collective interest representation instead of establishing direct links or independent international units.

Moreover, the formation of metropolitan policies as a transnational policy field is underpinned by a group of experts and representatives from different places and scales whose network crosses national boundaries and governmental levels. Such a trans-scalar policy coalition resembles vertical alliances united around professional backgrounds or understandings of a policy issue identified in multilevel systems.

7.3 Metropolitan Policy Mobility in Perspective: Illustrating the Dangers, Limits and Potentials

7.3.1 Dangers and Potentials of Policy Mobility

In current academic debates, both positive and negative aspects are regularly mobilised in arguments about the relevance of travelling policies for urban policies. From a general perspective, the travelling of ideas paradoxically poses both 'traps of over-localizing and of over-generalizing' (Healey 2011, p. 202).

From a conceptual perspective, abstract concepts are assumed to travel better than concrete ones. Accordingly, some forms of policy mobility are based on overgeneralising and conceptual stretching in the sense of Sartori's (1970) ladder of abstraction. Similar to the critique of one-size-fits-all concepts in urban studies, the mobility of metropolitan policy ideas builds on a particular mainstreaming through language. For instance, policy consultancy for and networking of metropolitan regions often takes place in English, which reinforces the superficial use of language, leaving aside details and making a re-translation into the local context necessary. Thereby, travelling concepts often have the character of empty signifiers or catch-all phrases which allow actors from various backgrounds to agree on the concepts in the sense of a lowest common denominator.

Policy mobility entails the dangers of circulating over-localised models of metropolitan development. The critique of best practice as a quick fix applies similarly. The logic of best practice is based on exceptional ideal-types which are proclaimed repeatedly through positive marketing. However, the superficial exemplary model is delivered in isolation from potentially decisive context conditions and without precise instructions on how to replicate the success in another place. Still we know little about the effects of the best practice approach for policymaking. Critical perspectives on this policy mode suggest that it comes with the danger of applauding successful examples without considering their potentials for standardisation and implementation in other contexts.

However, policy mobility potentially offers several chances for policymaking for metropolitan regions. In the concrete case, policy mobility can open a window of opportunity and an option for policy improvement. Accordingly, whether increased policy mobility is desirable for a metropolitan region depends on its individual capacities and interests. The variety of travelling ideas offers potential for innovation by suggesting new solutions beyond parochialism and path dependency. This very much corresponds to the increased necessity for policymakers to create novelty and accelerate policymaking cycles in line with voter response and media coverage. Although 'off the shelf' policy ideas rarely address complex or long-term problems, they contribute to adapting and reacting to fast-moving policy fashions. In some cases, this implies adopting external instead of inhouse solutions. To a certain extent, this bears the danger of valuing fashionable concepts over endogenous, locally relevant solutions. Moreover, this can lead, in terms of locational policies, to the loss of unique

selling points and, more generally, to the loss of the regional integrity of metropolitan policies.

7.3.2 Limits of Policy Mobility

Many research on policy mobility focuses on the successful transfer of exceptional approaches between urban contexts, while recent contributions suggest critical perspectives on the travelling of urban ideas. Meanwhile, we still know little about the relevance of travelling ideas for everyday policymaking in ordinary metropolitan regions. To what extent—in a galaxy of mobile, transregional or even global policy ideas—do travelling ideas become part of metropolitan policies?

During the past decades, metropolitan concepts have become more mobile and waves of ideas continue to influence policies for metropolitan regions. At the same time, metropolitan policies still vary regarding local instruments and approaches, attesting the consistent relevance of path dependency and local context. Previous research shows that both tendencies—waves of conceptual fashion and context-specific policy variation—coexist. Therefore, the relevance of metropolitan policy mobility needs to be assessed by evaluating the relationship between travelling policy ideas and existing approaches on site.

To understand the impact of travelling ideas for the metropolitan scale, we need to consider the relevance of policy mobility in comparison with other incentives of endogenous or hierarchically imposed policy change. Policy mobility builds on the voluntary adaptation of particular ideas, instruments or frames which cause a change of existing routines or shift in policies. Therefore, it can be understood as a soft mechanism influencing shifts in metropolitan policies, in contrast to hard policies such as territorial reform or coercive regulation via financial and judicial instruments. Moreover, the transnational engagement of metropolitan regions is often an add-on to the everyday duties or obligatory competences of governance institutions which in some cases have limited organisational capacities due to their status as inter-municipal associations. More detailed research is needed concerning the implications of policy mobility for concrete spatial, social and economic developments in metropolitan regions.

Additionally, we should consider the relevance of policy mobility for national, European and international policies for metropolitan regions. In the European multilevel system, policymaking for metropolitan regions builds on the assumption that policy concepts, institutions and practices are transferable between levels of government. This acknowledges that metropolitan policies are embedded in national or supranational contexts (for similar arguments on urban policy, see Sellers 2005; Denters and Mossberger 2006). From the perspective of national and European policymakers, policy mobility is a precondition for designing programmes that intend to make ‘better’ metropolitan regions and that facilitate their development.

Accordingly, policy mobility is relevant to the emergence of metropolitan policies in the first place. Every new political approach about ‘the metropolitan’ needs to

generalise from particular local experiences to more universal claims or arguments about a metropolitan reality. And, in particular, studies on metropolitan regions from supranational or transnational organisations such as the EU and the OECD regularly build on the experiences of selected metropolitan regions which are then considered applicable to metropolitan regions in general. Moreover, when introducing supranational regulations for establishing metropolitan governance or when proposing funding programmes, these policies do not come 'out of nowhere'; neither do they represent values in a vacuum (see for the field of European spatial policies Böhme et al. 2004). Instead, current metropolitan policies embody the ideas, political concepts or planning paradigms:

- from previous times, for example, existing legal frameworks for inter-municipal cooperation,
- from other places, for example, copying cooperation models from particular metropolitan regions as prototypes,
- from other spatial scales or levels of government, as in multilevel systems such as federal or decentralised states or the EU.

Moreover, the relevance of metropolitan policy mobility needs to be understood regarding the relationship between policy success and failure. Traditionally, studies on policy transfer and mobility focus on the positive outcome of a rational, linear process and on success stories. More recent accounts of policy mobility suggest critically assessing incomplete or failed policy transfer. According to Stone (2017, p. 55), this involves

> hybrid policies emerging from multiple exemplars and the messy interpretative processes where importing countries translate and amend transferred policies.

For the Chinese national context, de Jong (2013) has described such processes of partial policy implementation as an institutional bricolage characterised by gradualism and eclecticism, involving the selective adoption of foreign policy lessons into existing institutional frameworks. Regarding urban policy mobility, more recent studies point out that the successful transfer of urban concepts is the exception rather than the rule (Stein et al. 2017). Thus, to understand the mobility of metropolitan policies, it might be instructive to shed light on cases in which attempts at policy transfer failed. This would involve questioning what foreign models of organising metropolitan regions were considered. What unfavourable conditions or factors hindered the institutionalisation of imported governance models? Also, the transfer of unsuccessful models deserves more attention. In addition, it might be fruitful to analyse incidents of negative lesson-drawing and resistance to the dominant policy doctrine (Stone 2017).

7.4 Conclusions: The Importance of Being Connected

This chapter underlines the importance of policy mobility for staying connected (Payre 2010) to increasingly transnational and volatile fashions in the policy field. Two positions open a continuum for understanding the implications of policy mobility for metropolitan regions as transnational actors. The consequences of metropolitan policy mobility can be understood as an interplay between universal concepts which allow communication beyond the individual context and contextual reinterpretations of 'the metropolitan'. On the one hand, metropolitan policy mobility depends on the process of universalising paradigms, ideas and practices into concepts and instruments that are mobile and can be understood beyond their local context. Accordingly, the increased exchange of ideas and concepts potentially leads to a mainstreaming of metropolitan policies and a loss of place-related specificities. On the other hand, metropolitan policy mobility depends on institutional and individual capacities for translating travelling ideas into local policies. This perspective emphasises the local embeddedness of 'the metropolitan' arguing that geographical location and place-specific characteristics matter for policy absorption as eclectic bricolage, even in a hypermobile policy era.

This observation on policy mobility has implications for ontological and epistemological frameworks for understanding 'the metropolitan'. First, metropolitan policy mobility entails theoretical implications for the ontological basis of the metropolitan region as a political concept, as a site of policymaking and as a political actor. Previous studies often framed metropolitan regions as a spatial category or as unitary organisational entities, while the mobility approach offers a new perspective moving from objects and actors to conceptual flows and assemblages. The mobility framework suggests that metropolitan regions are not only policy issues, but proactively involved in selecting and translating potential issues for their policy agenda. As outlined above, this implies that metropolitan regions are more than an element in the urban or administrative hierarchy. An elite of transnationally engaged regions have become players in the European and international policymaking arena.

Second, the perspective on policy mobility implicates particular epistemological choices in empirical research. To understand the concrete implications of policy mobility, we need to study the travelling and translation of policy ideas with alternative empirical research frameworks. This chapter introduced Hall's three levels of policy learning to develop a more refined understanding of how travelling policies are translated into the local context. Thereby, policy learning allows understanding of externally induced political shifts beyond the direct adoption of concepts. Alternatively, approaches such as assemblage or ANT could reveal important insights on the complexity of policy translation involving networks and bricolages, and immaterial and material processes. Moreover, approaches on multiple streams or reframing that focus on agenda setting as a political process could contribute fine-grained perspectives on how models, concepts, instruments or institutions are selected and received in metropolitan contexts.

Overall, this chapter suggests a new perspective on how travelling metropolitan concepts are translated and re-embedded in particular contexts. Thereby, we find a 'differential impact' (Héritier 2001) of policy mobility with metropolitan regions unequally exposed and adapted to the influence of circulating ideas. Such an elite of transnationally engaged metropolitan regions appear to be well equipped to navigate in the current era of fast-moving policy trends and increased communication. It remains to be seen whether the external transnational orientation of metropolitan regions will become a broader trend or whether it will be relevant only to a group of exceptional forerunners. There are signs that some previously strongly engaged regions are experiencing a kind of saturation regarding their transnationalisation. This could also be a sign of a stabilisation of knowledge communities in the field of metropolitan regions.

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Part III
Spatial Imaginaries

Chapter 8
Imagining the Evolving Spatiality of Metropolitan Regions

John Harrison, Valeria Fedeli and Patricia Feiertag

Abstract There is no simple or single definition of what a metropolitan region is nor a threshold by which a region becomes a metropolitan region. Like all spatial concepts, metropolitan regions are imagined, with different actors having their own vision of what metropolitan regions are and are for. In this chapter, we trace the evolving spatiality of metropolitan regions before a series of illustrative cases highlight the importance of understanding nationally and regionally specific forms of metropolitan imaginary. Our aim is to illuminate the importance of understanding how metropolitan regions are imagined and mobilised as one central pillar for uncovering the dynamics of, and scope for influencing, metropolitan development.

Keywords Metropolitan regions · Spatial imaginaries · Spatiality · Metropolitan imaginaries

8.1 Introduction: Why Spatial Imaginaries?

There is no simple or single definition of what a metropolitan region is, nor a threshold by which a region—however, defined—becomes a metropolitan region. Like all spatial concepts, metropolitan regions are imagined and constructed across space and time, with different actors having their own imaginations of what metropolitan regions are and are for. Metropolitan spatial imaginaries are not static, natural or uncontested. Rather they are dynamic, constantly evolving and always contested. And often, some actors recognise one metropolitan spatial imaginary while others an entirely different one.

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How metropolitan regions are spatially imagined is relevant in so far as they support the geographies over which institutions have jurisdiction and responsibility, policies are designed and implemented for, and in and through which planning is enacted. To this end, spatial imaginaries influence metropolitan development in a multitude of important ways. Second, there are important politics at play. How actors approach metropolitan regions largely determines the image of what 'the metropolitan region' is for them. It is in this way that we must always remember that constructing metropolitan regions is never an end goal; it is only ever a stepping stone towards enabling actors to pursue their ultimate goal.

The process by which metropolitan regions are imagined offers key insights into the politics of metropolitan development. It is at this point that the necessary task of rendering visible the space over which governance, policies and planning are to be exercised is negotiated and resolved. This is the critical juncture at which discursive framings of metropolitan regionalism become real. Sentiment and rhetoric give way to hard-nosed reality because it is here that metropolitan regions must be represented, marked out and made visible. With definition, designation and delimitation come inclusion for some people and places, exclusion for others, while for some they find they are on the fringes of whatever metropolitan regional discourse is being constructed in that moment. And this is not the end of the story because any one moment in space and time where metropolitan regions are being constructed, this is only ever part of a much longer story whereby spatial imaginaries are always in a phase of emerging, evolving, transforming, reappearing, retreating or even disappearing altogether.

The emphasis we place on spatial imaginaries owes much to the current state of contemporary debates. Globalisation and neoliberalism have brought with them an explosion of metropolitan (and other regional, spatial and spatially attuned) imaginaries. With this, we have seen a greater array of perspectives on the scale at which metropolitan regionalism occurs, an expanding range of spatial vocabulary attempting to account for the geography of metropolitan regions and a growing plurality of approaches and logics for understanding why metropolitan regionalism is unfolding in certain places, at certain times, in certain ways (Brenner 2019). There is clearly a lot to observe, plenty still to learn and a significant amount at stake—as Jessop (2012, pp. 11–12, 26) neatly surmises:

> The [metropolitan] region can be imagined and constructed in many ways and that there is considerable scope for competing regional imaginaries and different kinds of region-building – from tightly sealed territories to porous nodes in a networked space of flows […] The overall configuration of regions within the world market cannot be planned with any certainty of success. On the contrary, given that there are many competing regional imaginaries (as well as other spatial or spatially-attuned imaginaries), the configuration is the unintended, unanticipated, and, indeed, 'messy' result of the pursuit of numerous regional projects in conjunctures that cannot be grasped in all their complexity in real time.

Our aim in this part is to critically examine how metropolitan regions are being (re-)imagined across space and time. To do this, we begin by tracing changes in how metropolitan regions are being imagined—taken to mean, how they are defined, delimited and designated—in this chapter. In the next chapter, we move on to reveal

who (actors) or what (agents) is constructing these metropolitan regional imaginaries, the mechanisms by which they are doing this and their purpose in doing so. To get to the heart of how spatial imaginaries influence metropolitan development, our focus will be to examine in whose interest these imaginaries are being mobilised, who is included, excluded, on the fringes of these metropolitan imaginaries and their associated discourses, as well as which voices/causes are being heard (loudest) through mobilising metropolitan imaginaries. Following on from this, in the final chapter, our focus will switch towards questioning how significant or meaningful these new metropolitan imaginaries are. It will do this by considering the implications for metropolitan regions, planning and governance of new metropolitan imaginaries. We will reveal the inherent unevenness that maps of these spatial imaginaries often belie. This unevenness in institutional capacity, spatial coherence and planning competency is critical because it allows us to consider the extent to which metropolitan imaginaries equate to examples of deep or shallow-rooted metropolitanisation. The importance we attach to this is the potential to identify those metropolitan regional imaginaries which are likely to develop into harder institutional forms, which might remain weakly institutionalised and which could just as easily disappear altogether. In short, we need to recognise whether imaginaries are significant for metropolitan development in any meaningful or significant sense.

The present chapter takes as its starting point tracing the evolving spatiality of metropolitan regions. In undertaking this endeavour, we aim to characterise contemporary approaches to imagining metropolitan regions in Sect. 8.2 and account for how this fits within longer-term trajectories of how metropolitan regions are being mobilised internationally in intellectual and policy discourses. Highlighting the continuities and discontinuities across time, Sect. 8.3 then focuses on a series of illustrative cases to highlight the importance of understanding nationally and regionally specific forms of metropolitan imaginary. Throughout, our aim is to illuminate the importance of understanding how metropolitan regions are imagined and mobilised as one central pillar for uncovering the dynamics of, and scope for influencing, metropolitan development.

8.2 Periodisation and the Evolving Spatiality of Metropolitan Regions

The concept of imaginary denotes a simplified, necessarily selective representation of a far more complex reality. In spatial planning, imaginaries take on many forms but typically it is their discursive and spatial framings which are most noted (Davoudi 2018). Typically, this is because two of the most fundamental questions posed in relation to spatial imaginaries are what the metropolitan region is being imagined as and what the metropolitan region is that is being imagined in this way.

Discursive framings consist of elevating—or often aspiring to elevate—a metropolitan region to a particular status. To be imagined and then recognised as

'smart', 'global', 'resilient' is something metropolitan elites invest in. In practice, this involves creating a simple blueprint that comprises a few key indicators of what a selected number of exemplary metropolitan regions appear to possess to make them worthy of being represented by the latest 'must have' addendum of metropolitan boosterist vocabulary. Imbued in each of these terms is a simplified account of what metropolitan regions must be to succeed in today's quicksilver global economy and a seemingly identikit set of policy prescriptions to achieve this.

Spatial framings follow a similar pattern, with simple one-line definitions commonly presented to convey how we should imagine the latest in vogue spatial concept. It goes without saying that beneath this headline definition lay a lot of detailed thought, but this complexity is commonly collapsed into an easily digestible headline. This is important because it is one thing to claim that metropolitan regionalism is unfolding globally or that metropolitan regions are the key spatial scale at which economic and social life is convened, but it is another thing entirely to address the rather fundamental question of how do I know one when I see one? The challenge is that different actors imagine metropolitan regions in ways which suit their needs. They invoke a spatial imaginary which best advances their essential interests and, in many cases, use this imagination to draw other actors into support their vision for metropolitan regional development. One of the most important parts of this process is the making visible of spatial imaginaries.

Spatial and discursive framings are, of course, two sides of the same coin. To give but two examples of this in practice, let us take Klaus Kunzmann's iconic spatial imaginary of Europe as a 'bunch of grapes' and Roger Brunet's 'blue banana'. Kunzmann is explicit in linking the spatial and discursive framing of his regional imaginary when he outlines that his endeavours amount to 'a presentation and brief justification of the normative concept of the *European Bunch of Grapes* as a mental vision for spatial equity in Europe' (Kunzmann 1998, p. 101). Two decades on and while the vision of Europe as a 'bunch of grapes' is what is commonly remembered, the quotation reminds us that this was little more than a rhetorical device (a 'mental map') designed to frame debate around his real concern—spatial equity in Europe. We see the same deployment of a spatial imaginary in Brunet's (1989) iconic vision of Europe's 'blue banana'. Commissioned to research the position of France in its European context, Brunet's team were concerned by what they saw as the excessive centralisation of activity and investment in Paris. To this end, they seized the opportunity to make their case by creating a spatial imaginary that represented Europe's urban economic core with Paris and most of France excluded.

Today is no different. In his 2016 book, *Connectography*: *Mapping the Future of Global Civilization,* Parag Khanna argues that 'a complex world needs maps more than ever' (Khanna 2016, p. xxi). But this comes with a warning: 'what we put on maps has iconic power to shape how people think' (Khanna 2016, p. xx). As the examples above illustrate, this has long been recognised in debates over metropolitan regions, planning and governance. Maps are not only the visible manifestation of spatial imaginaries, but they render visible the unfolding politics of metropolitan development. How maps of metropolitan regions evolve to allow us to observe important changes in how space is represented and marked out across space and

time. Maps imagining and representing metropolitan regions act as windows into past struggles, but simultaneously reveal current tensions and point towards future struggles over the politics of metropolitan development. In this section, we use the power of maps to trace the evolving spatiality of metropolitan regions and begin revealing the influence of spatial imaginaries on metropolitan development.

The post-war era of spatial Keynesianism was firmly rooted in a territorial conception of space determined within a national sovereignty perspective. This is not to say that there were not other spatial imaginaries in circulation—we can easily point out Christaller's (1933) visions of central places in southern Germany; Dickinson's (1934, 1967) metropolitan regional imaginaries for the USA and Western Europe or Gottmann's (1961) iconic vision for a megalopolis in the north-eastern USA—but that for the most part state territoriality went unchallenged in praxis as the fundamental basis for coordinating development. This was, of course, the era of national spatial planning. Planning was couched in traditional Keynesian concerns such as collective consumption and sociospatial redistribution, and by the 1960s most Western states had established relatively uniform, standardised structures at national, regional and local levels to administer this. It was an administrative geography established and imposed by the central state which in many cases not only stayed in place throughout the period of spatial Keynesianism, but long after its mid-twentieth-century heyday, they could be seen influencing metropolitan development.

Against this backdrop, the spatial imaginaries for regions in the era of spatial Keynesianism were often bound up with association as either 'growth areas' (often but not always the major metropolitan regions owing to being sites of high employment and population growth, and the primary source of capital accumulation) or 'lagging regions' (commonly peripheral, rural or border areas). But this could not escape the reality which is that while there was an emerging discursive framing of metropolitan regions vis-a-vis other non-metropolitan areas, the spatial framing of metropolitan regions lacked imagination due to being deployed by the state as merely standardised subunits of national administrative systems.

This all changed as of the early 1980s when the almost exclusive focus on traditional Keynesian concerns for social and spatial redistribution started to be rolled back and counterbalanced by the roll-out of neoliberal reforms aimed at regional growth and prosperity. Part and parcel of this transition was the emergence of new spatial imaginaries alongside and in addition to inherited territorial conceptions of space. From the 1970s on, interest began to concentrate on the ways places and localities were variously impacted by, and responding to, global economic restructuring and neoliberal state restructuring. A growing emphasis was put on the importance of place and with this came a renewed focus on cities and regions.

In discursive terms, urban industrial decline, welfare retrenchment and economic-globalisation polarised how cities and their wider metropolitan regions were imagined at this time. At one extreme, there were those urban areas suffering the worst effects of industrial decline—most notably in northern and western parts of Britain, northern Germany and the so-called rustbelt states in the north-eastern parts of the USA—representing a serious drag on their national economies. At the other extreme, there was another grouping of urban areas—so-called global cities—being

triumphantly paraded as harbouring unique locational qualities which they can capitalise on to gain competitive advantage and optimise their growth and prosperity vis-a-vis other urban economies. Spatially, the 1980s witnessed a new focus on how metropolitan areas were imagined and represented in response to their external, translocal connections, much more than their internal dynamics within boundedterritorial units. In representational terms, it became more significant how a city such as London was imagined in relation to New York than to say Manchester or Birmingham. In Europe, this became reflected in the European Spatial Development Perspective which identified zones of global economic integration zones anchored by globally competitive metropolitan regions (European Commission 1999) (Fig. 8.1).

The 1990s became synonymous with imagining cities and regions in relation to their external linkages, but notwithstanding this, it was another body of related work which was equally important in invoking new spatial imaginaries for influencing metropolitan development. Whereas the global cities thesis brought attention to the advanced management, financial and corporate functions concentrating in the central districts of metropolitan regions, what became known as the 'new regionalism' fixed our gaze on to the proliferation of new industrial spaces located on the edge of globally competitive metropolitan regions.Silicon Valley (San Francisco), Route 128 (Boston), Cambridge (London), Darmstadt (Frankfurt), as well as the emergence of The Third Italy, Baden-Württemberg (Germany), Rhone Alpes (France) and Dutch Randstad, all served as exemplars for the spatial transformation underway in major urban regions and highlighting important metropolitanisation and/or polycentric tendencies.

As Fig. 8.2 reveals, this thinking quickly became represented in policy through the emergence of new spatial imaginaries and the metropolitanisation of national spatial planning. On first viewing, these new relationally attuned spatial imaginaries might have appeared to replace extant structures of state territoriality—note how in this example Germany's 16 *Länder* have been erased—but crucially, the reality was they emerged as an additional layer of scalar representation.

On into the 2000s and the metropolitanisation of spatial planning continued apace. By this time, the two dominant urban and regional development orthodoxies from the 1990s—the global cities thesis with its emphasis on ensuring a high degree of connectivity into global circuits of capital and integration into transnational city networks, and the new regionalism with is focus on place-specific attributes—had been strategically coupled to give rise to global city-regionalism. Researchers argued that the global economic competitiveness was to be represented by a worldwide mosaic of metropolitan scaled, city-regional, clusters of economic and social activity. Underpinned by growing belief in the generative force of agglomeration economies and networked conceptions of space, global city-regionalism was purposively bound up with representations of metropolitan regions overriding and breaking free from the spatial structures of state territoriality (Scott 2001). Conceptually and methodologically this brought with it a disavowal of the traditional spatial vocabulary of 'city' and 'metropolis', provoking instead new thinking exploring 'post-metropolis' imaginaries (Soja 2000) and approaches to representation free from 'methodological cityism' (Wachsmuth 2014). Meanwhile, practically, flexible conceptions of space gave rise

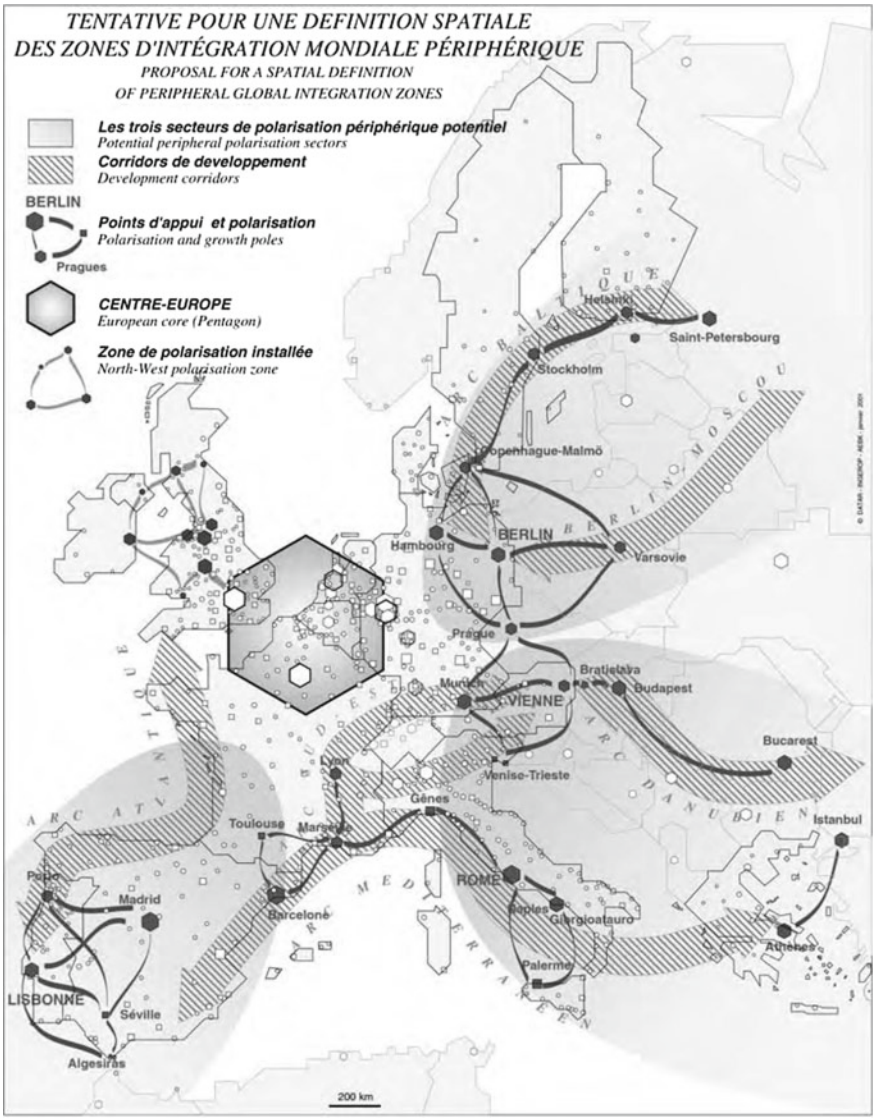

Fig. 8.1 European Spatial Development Perspective (*Source* DATAR 2002, p. 101)

to a new wave of 'soft spaces' for planning, represented by fuzzy boundaries and fluid scales of governance (Allmendinger et al. 2009).

One significant consequence for metropolitan regions being viewed through the lens of global city-regionalism was how the concept became stretched. By now, the 'standard' geographical conception of relatively uniform regions—in terms of their size, scale and territoriality—exemplified in representations of a 'Europe of the Regions' or metropolitan statistical areas in the United States, was overtaken by discursive framings for metropolitan regions which ranged in size and scale. For example, in their attempts to define metropolitan regions the OECD (2007) took as a starting point a population threshold on 1.5 million, leading them to identify 78 metro-regions with a population range of 1.5–35 million. This compares with Scott's (2001) initial representation of there being over 525 global city-regions worldwide (with a population range of 1–27.9 million), while conversely, in England and France, metropolitan policy recognised areas with populations as low as 300,000.

The importance of conceptual stretching cannot be underestimated because metropolitan regionalism has been mobilised and imagined most recently at the mega- or multi-city scale. Critically, these new approaches to imagining metropolitan regions focus only on the largest, most densely urbanised areas. Evidently and following Florida et al. (2008), in their State of the World's Cities Report, UN-Habitat (2010) indicated as much when they represented the most globally competitive metropolitan regions as being 40 in number and with a minimum population 20 million. Today, being a major metropolitan region is simply not enough. The emphasis is now firmly on transmetropolitan landscapes comprising more than one major urban region (Harrison and Hoyler 2015), but one still based upon an enlarged cityism.

The evolving spatiality of metropolitan regions can thus be characterised by several broad trends, namely

- an emphasis on metropolitan regions being considered transnationally rather than exclusively within national spatial systems;
- an emphasis on the most globally competitive metropolitan regions (spatial selectivity) rather than always being spatially inclusive;
- an emphasis on spatial selectivity concentrating on an increasingly small number of ever-larger (trans)metropolitan landscapes;
- an emphasis on the plurality of metropolitan regions, both in terms of spatial representation and the scale at which they are imagined;
- an emerging emphasis on spatial imaginaries as they relate to China (as well as the other BRIC economies and urban economic hotspots in the Global South) where processes of urbanisation and metropolitanisation are unfolding at pace vis-a-vis the neoliberal heartlands of Europe and North America.

8.3 From Theory to Practice: Imagining Metropolitan Regions

The purpose of this section is to reveal how imagining metropolitan regions takes on nationally and regionally specific forms. Our aim is to highlight how important the preceding macro-level periodisation for how metropolitan regions have been imagined over the past 50–70 years is for understanding how developments in particular places, in specific spaces and at particular times can be connected to broader processes and situated within the broader contours of metropolitan change globally. We have selected three European countries—Germany, France, Italy—to illustrate precisely how the unfolding metropolitanisation of national and regional systems for spatial planning and economic governance proceeds with distinctly individualised trajectories set against a broader framework of global metropolitan change. The examples show how in different moments actors—most notably, state actors—have tried to fix through metropolitan imaginaries crucial political–economic issues from competitiveness to resilience and rebalancing to austerity.

8.3.1 Germany

The emergence of a metropolitan imaginary in Germany can be traced back to 1995. By that time, the Ministerial Conference on Spatial Planning (MKRO) formed by Ministers from the federal and *Länder* level introduced 'European Metropolitan Regions' as the a priori spatial category in national spatial planning policy, successively expanding their number from six adopted in 1995 to seven in 1997 and eleven since 2011. Prior to this, the federal government's commitment to promoting balanced economic growth and equal living conditions through financial equalisation (*Länderfinanzausgleich*) was a classically spatial Keynesian approach with federal laws on spatial planning interpreted by planners as disincentivising further accumulation of resources in major metropolitan areas to direct additional resources towards underdeveloped rural and border zones. Albeit not replacing these existing administrative spatial structures and frameworks, the early 1990s signalled the launch of a new metropolitan imaginary centred around metropolitan-scaled agglomerations of European importance (Fig. 8.2). This new spatial planning policy framework was seen to be a complementary alternative, providing Germany with the best of spatial Keynesianism via the traditional region-first, territorially inclusive, balanced approach to spatial development afforded by state territoriality and the *Länder*, while at the same time, promoting the in vogue new regionalism via spatially selective, city-first, approaches to spatial development infused by more capital-centric discourses of global economic competitiveness.

Identified for their 'superior' strategic importance (BMBau 1995), the imaginary of metropolitan regions as agglomerations was central to Germany's visioning of new regionalism and attempts by the state to strategically position their major cities and

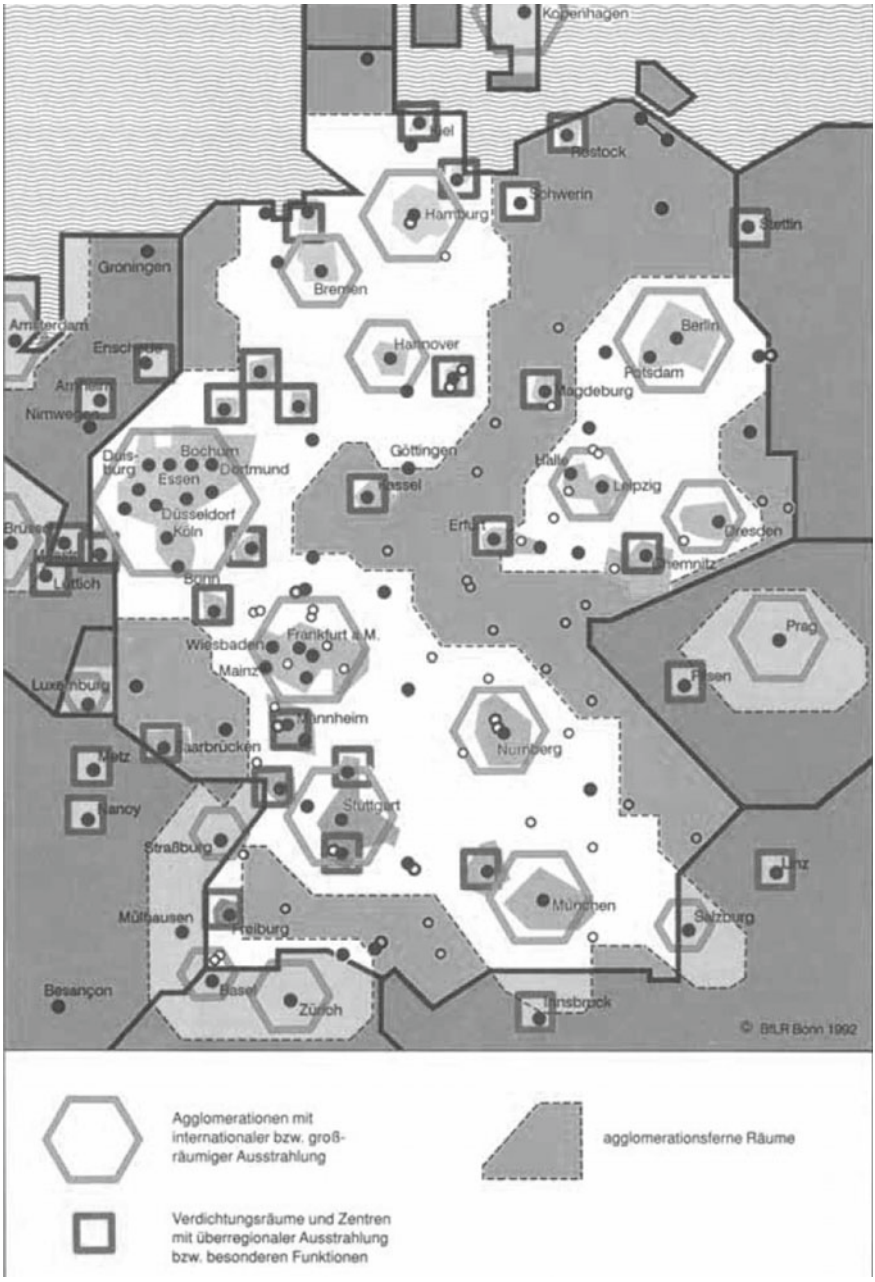

Fig. 8.2 Metropolitanisation of the German spatial planning system (*Source* BMBau 1993, p. 5)

regions prominently within international circuits of capital accumulation and global policy discourses during the 1990s. By the 2000s, there was growing recognition of the problem of promoting some metropolitan regions over others:

> The concept of metropolitan regions in Germany is a success story of spatial planning [however] the metropolises must see themselves as nodes of regional networks achieving their goals only in cooperation with the partners of their rural suburban areas (Staats 2005, p. 1).

To achieve this, the federal government launched a new metropolitan imaginary in 2006 (Fig. 8.3a). More accurately, they launched a new discursive framing of metropolitan regions comprising three metropolitan imaginaries. Metropolitan regions as agglomeration remain but to present the metropolitan region discourse as being more inclusive and balanced, metropolitan regions as functional spaces and as a spatial scale become mobilised in the same vision. Metropolitan regions as functional spaces are evident in how 'growth regions outside metropolitan regions' are mobilised as a tool to include those areas without an urban core in the discourse, while connecting lines between cities of varying sizes have been added to emphasise integration, cooperation between regionally networked cities. Likewise, metropolitan regions as a spatial scale are mobilised to make the discursive framing of metropolitanisation inclusive of every place and every space within Germany.

But the story does not stop here for as soon as this spatial vision was launched a fourth metropolitan imaginary emerged—cross-border metropolitan regions. This was in response to criticism that by only focusing on metropolitan regions *within* Germany state actors excluded metropolitan regions which would be included were their metropolitan functions with cities *beyond* the national border not ignored. The result was two further internal drafts in 2012, before in 2013, a revised spatial framing on metropolitan regions was published that formally included cross-border metropolitan regions as a fourth metropolitan imaginary (Fig. 8.3b).

What we can take away from this illustrative case is how certain elements of the evolving metropolitan imaginary in Germany maps onto our earlier periodisation. Evidently, we see in this case the emphasis shifting towards the most globally competitive metropolitan regions in the discursive framing of spatial development and the increased plurality of metropolitan regions, both in terms of spatial representation and the scale at which they are imagined. This said, despite an emphasis on metropolitan regions being considered transnationally in the motivations to mobilise metropolitan imaginaries, the German case is illustrative of how in the 2000s the state attempted to orchestrate metropolitan regionalism within a national spatial system. Meanwhile, the major consequence of spatially selecting to concentrate on a small number of ever-larger metropolitan regions in the 1990s was the plurality of metropolitan imaginaries, both in terms of spatial representation and the scale at which they are imagined, that then subsequently emerged.

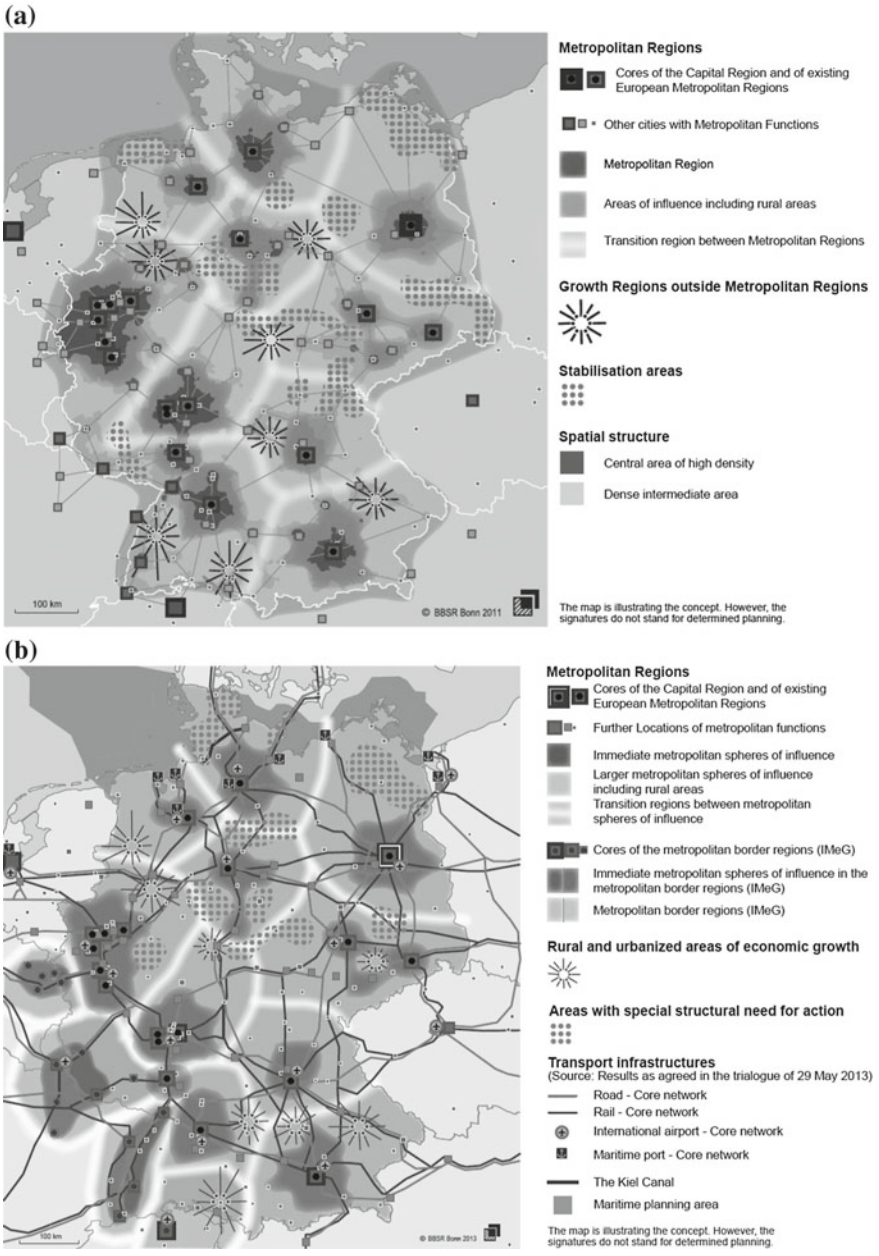

Fig. 8.3 **a** Metropolitan Germany: Leitbilder 2006 (*Source* BMVBS and BBR 2006). **b** Metropolitan Germany: Leitbilder 2013 (*Source* IMeG 2013)

8.3.2 *France*

France has a tradition of equal treatment of territories reliant on small- and medium-sized cities. Following the idea that the overwhelming dominance of Paris needed to be counterbalanced, the first time the term metropolis was used to reimagine the French territory was during the 1960s with the so-called *métropoles d'équlibre* or balancing metropolis. The national programme included structural investments in the fields of transportation, higher education, health, as well as strategic planning. It was abandoned in 1973 and did not result in an administrative or legal status for metropolitan regions, but the imaginary remained present in subsequent debates.

Nowadays, the term *métropolitan* is frequently used in line with the idea of global economic competitiveness and mobilised by the cities themselves. But there is no consistent spatial imaginary at the national scale with a clear delimitation of metropolitan regions and their spheres of influence as the starting point is individual cities claiming metropolitan status. Which territory people have in mind remains fuzzy because there are three simultaneous uses of metropolitan: (1) as an institution, (2) as a statistically defined area of influence and (3) as strategic territory for planning or soft forms of cooperation. Additionally, to add to the confusion, in France the word *métropolitan* designates the French mainland without the overseas territories. These overlaying imaginaries for each of the metropolitan regions are strikingly depicted in a recent book detailing the metropolitan experience of Lyon that starts with six different maps of the metropolitan territory to guide the reader (Bariol-Mathais 2015).

The recent use of the name *métropole* for an institution mainly describes a form of highly integrated municipal grouping introduced by law in 2010, which was put into practice in a larger number of city-regions since 2015, expanding to 22 métropoles in 2018 (Fig. 8.4). It is an example that illustrates the extent to which the use of the concept has been stretched, varying significantly in size and scale from country to country. This is especially notable when contrasting France's métropoles with the vast metropolitan regions depicted in the German Leitbilder 2006 and 2016 (cf. Fig. 8.3).

Concerning their size, the initial threshold of 500,000 inhabitants (law RCT 2010) has been considerably lowered and exempted to include smaller municipal groupings such as Brest and Metz that do not even reach 250,000 inhabitants. The perimeter is based on member municipalities delegating a large share of their competencies to the inter-municipal level and depends on the willingness of often very small surrounding municipalities to join the grouping dominated by a large core city. Concerning their scale, it must be highlighted that the French *métropoles* are metropolitan cities, not metropolitan regions, meaning that they roughly correspond to the continuously built-up area (with the exception of the bipolarmétropole Aix-Marseille-Provence). Cartographic representations of all métropoles (e.g. in newspapers writing on the metropolitan reforms) mostly represent them as a single point with the name of the core city.

Secondly, the *Institut National de la Statistique et des Études Économiques* (INSEE—The National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies) defines 12

Fig. 8.4 Mapping métropoles in France vis-à-vis Europäische Metropolregionen [European Metropolitan Region] in Germany and Città Metropolitana [Metropolitan Cities] in Italy

functional metropolitan areas (*aires métropolitaines*). They are intended to represent the area of influence for the core and are based on commuter relations (Brutel 2011). This perimeter is much larger than the above-mentioned institutional definition and is an important reference for spatial analysis and strategic planning. The third way of imagining the metropolitan space by defining perimeters for strategic documents (*Schémas de Cohérence Territoriale,* SCoT—Strategic Inter-Municipal Plans; INTERSCoT—Dialogue between SCoT-Territories; *Directives Territoriales d'Aménagement*—DTA, Regional Directives) and soft cooperation spaces between metropolitan groupings (*syndicats*, *pôles métropoilitains*) is

more oriented towards this larger interpretation of metropolitan regions, but not identical with the purely statistic definition.

In current French debates and territorial reforms, there is much emphasis on hard institutional territories, particularly the 13 *régions* and the municipal groupings. Both have gained more competencies and are supposed to be the major problem-solving levels. When it comes to the metropolitan regions it becomes apparent that the institutionalised perimeters do not correspond to the current processes of regionalisation (Brennetot 2018). Additional soft cooperation such as the *pôle métropolitains* and INTERSCoT dialogue are needed to bridge this, but those are extremely weak in terms of resources and attention.

8.3.3 Italy

The emergence of a metropolitan imaginary in Italy can be traced back to the early 1950s, when some urban areas started experiencing processes of metropolisation. The local debate raised by the '*Piano Turbina*' in the Milan urban region in the 1960s—one of the most evident cases of metropolisation after the Second World War—was notably for being unable to generate the support and interest of policymakers towards a new institutional framework at the metropolitan scale, nor even to sustain the scientific debate in order to influence the policy design (Fig. 8.5).

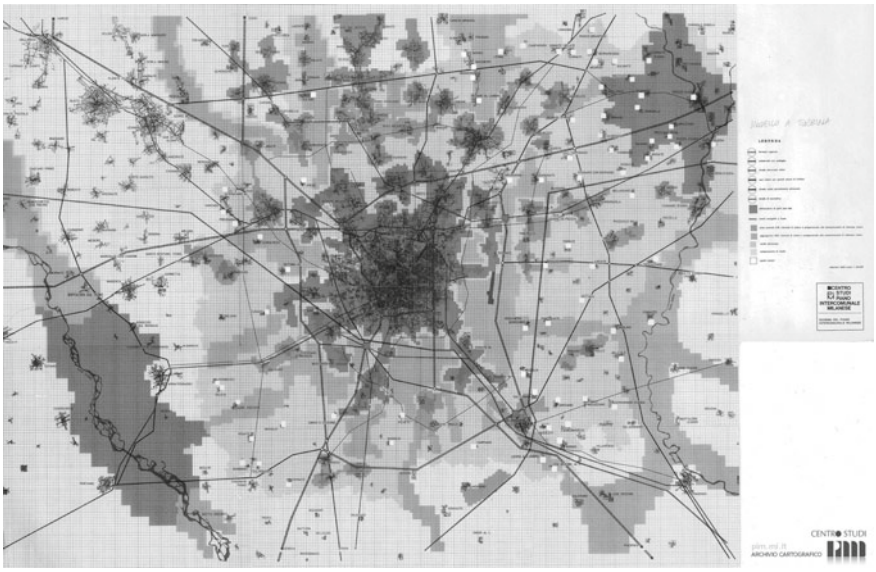

Fig. 8.5 Milan's Piano Turbina (*Source* De Carlo et al. 1963)

Any further elaboration of the concept of regional urbanisation later proposed was unceremoniously halted when the Italian national government made the decision in the 1970s to introduce a regional layer of government and, in so doing, adopted a regional geography based upon statistical definitions of the region rather than a metropolitan perspective. The debate on the emergence of a metropolitan dimension was postponed in the name of a reorganisation of territoriality based on a model of decentralisation, destined to produce in the following decades a hybrid model of (incomplete) regional federalism.

Notwithstanding this, there is an important experience ofProgetto 80. This was a document developed by the Ministry of Economic Development which essentially tried to link developmental strategies with a new reading of the restructuring process of the urban in Italy and, in so doing, stress the emergence of new metropolitan formations. The maps produced by Progetto 80 identified 30 metropolitan systems, formed by 9 metropolitan areas, 6 systems for re-equilibrium in intermediate areas and 15 alternative zones to develop 'far from' metropolitan areas in order to act as a counterbalance (Fig. 8.6).

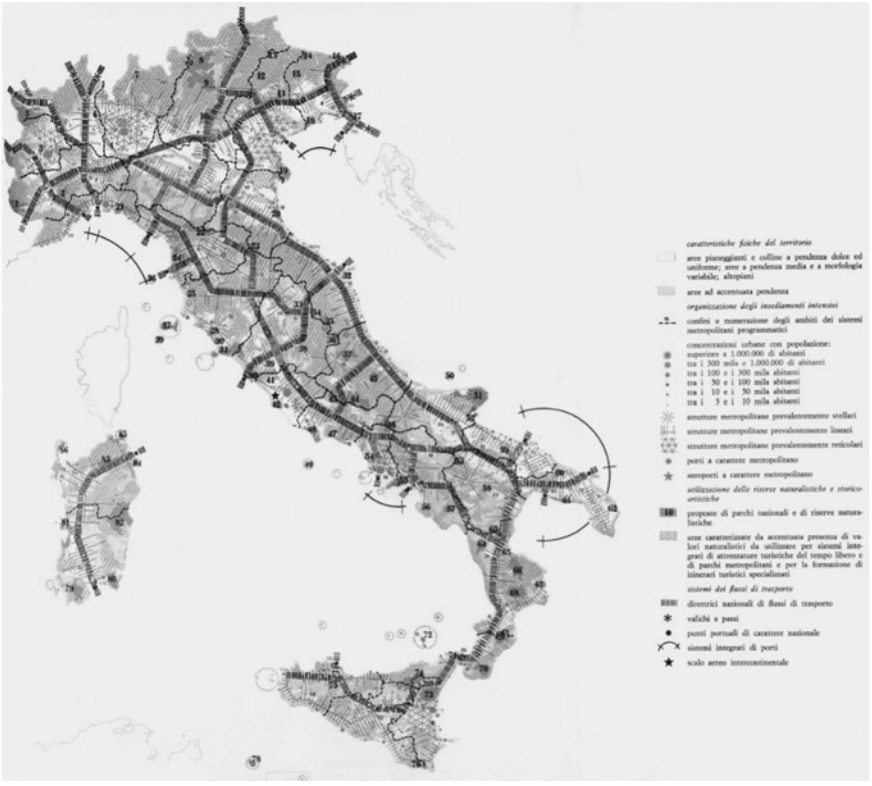

Fig. 8.6 Italy's Progetto 80 (*Source* Ministry of the Budget and Economic Planning 1969)

It was only in the 1990s that there was approval for a metropolitan reform in Italy, but this was based again upon a quite traditional interpretation of metropolitan areas. The result was a simple identification of the new institution on the former second-level territorial body in the densest and largest urban areas. With the attribution to the Provinces (a mix between the traditional '*contado*', the Roman provinces and the Napoleonic interpretation of territorial control from the state), the task of territorial coordination and the delayed institutionalisation of metropolitan areas—this was despite the law introducing them being passed very quickly—ensured that the production of metropolitan regional imaginaries become less and less relevant in the 1990s. That was until the late 2000s when, in response to the economic crisis, the national government reinvested in the metropolitan dimension to reduce public expenditure and the national deficit.

Nevertheless, while regional urban imaginaries have become a central issue in the academic agenda, the lack of metropolitan regional imaginary production at national and regional level has remained a constant over time. No effective interpretative framework was provided since the late reforms by central level, but for a few reports, produced even more recently either by curious civil servants or by isolated research projects promoted during the last decades and never capable to influence the production of regional imaginaries which were then able to restructure the policy agenda. In this respect, the strength of the municipal model, on the one hand, together with the challenging model proposed by the third model Italy, has played a significant role in reducing the potentials for the elaboration of a metropolitan regional imaginary in contemporary Italy.

The recent institutionalisation of metropolitan cities by law in 2014 and the design and implementation of the national operational programme dedicated to metropolitan cities (PON METRO) under EU Cohesion Policy have only been able to a limited extent to reduce the frailty of metropolitan spatial imaginaries in the national debate. The only strategic policy document was issued at the beginning of the current cohesion policy implementation period by the Minister of Territorial Development, Fabrizio Barca. For the first time after decades, this document had tried to conceptualise the emergence of a metropolitan dimension in Italy and to focus on the related policy and governance challenges. It provided an interpretation of the country as made of three different, but highly interrelated conditions, in need of specific developmental policies: metropolitan areas, inner areas and the southern regions. While a national strategy for inner areas has been designed, and an experimentation based on multi-level deals in southern areas have been developed (called SNAI), the country is still missing a strategy for metropolitan areas. Both the implementation of the metropolitan reform law and the national operational programme PON METRO were not able to deliver a new metropolitan framework for action, but more in general a sound metropolitan spatial imaginary. Local experiences, related to metropolitan strategic planning, in this respect, offered limited, but more consistent attempts to work in and at a metropolitan spatial imaginary, but on the base of limited political and economic resources.

8.4 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter has been to critically examine how metropolitan regions are being (re-)imagined across space and time. Tracing the evolving spatiality of metropolitan regions this chapter has revealed how slippery the metropolitan region is as both concept and imaginary. Any attempt to define *the* metropolitan region is a futile endeavour doomed to failure before it even starts. We must come to understand that definitions of metropolitan regions are only valid in/for the space they are produced and in/for the time they continue to exist. After all, most imaginaries are only fleeting in their existence, limited to their own geographical context.

In this chapter, our aim has been to seek a middle way between macro-level one-size-fits-all and micro-level context-specific approaches to considering metropolitan regional imaginaries by revealing, first, how thinking consolidates around key characteristics and defining features in different periods of orthodoxy surrounding how best to approach metropolitan development. Crucially this allows us to see the discontinuities in how metropolitan regions are being imagined and which create the breaks between different periods; it also allows us to see the continuities identifying those broad trends most likely to impact how metropolitan regions are going to be (re-)imagined in the near future. Second, it allows us to set contemporary—as well as historical—imaginaries within the broader contours of how the metropolitan regional imaginary evolves, both intellectually and practically, as well as across space and time. This is important in enabling us to critically reflect on the logics, principles and processes by which metropolitan imaginaries take the form they do in different contexts. The latter can only be understood as the mediated outcome of long-term global processes impacting metropolitan regions and shaping the thinking of those actors with responsibility for metropolitan development intersecting with distinct local, regional and national political practices regarding metropolitanisation.

As a matter of fact, available metropolitan imaginaries are still quite differentiated. Not only through time, but also even with respect to the current situation. If we take into consideration the features attached to the different conceptualisation and uses of metropolitan imaginaries around the world, we hardly can see a convergent picture. Suspended between the recurrent need for producing geographies of government based on hierarchical relations and the emerging processes of destructuring and restructuring of the socio-territorial fabrics, the available spatial imaginaries seem not always able to depict the complex interrelations at play which are often strongly questioning the traditional notions of centrality, marginality, peripherality, urban/rural divide. In other words, it still makes a difference when we say metropolitan, post-metropolitan or regional, because these terms cannot be used as synonymous with a simple reference to a wider scale. In this respect, spatial imaginaries can only be understood in relation to the agency dimension. Who is producing new spatial imaginaries matters (Feiertag et al. 2020; Fedeli et al. 2020).

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Chapter 9
Constructing Metropolitan Imaginaries: Who Does This and Why?

Patricia Feiertag, John Harrison and Valeria Fedeli

> *Put bluntly: it is never the spatial form that acts, but rather social actors who, embedded in particular (multidimensional) spatial forms and make use of particular (multidimensional) forms, act. The relevance of a particular spatial form … can be measured only from the perspective of the engaged actors* (Mayer 2008, p. 416).

Abstract A growing variety of actors has been producing imaginaries of metropolitan regions corresponding to their interests. The cast has been opened up from planners, academics, and local–regional–national state actors to international actors, think tanks, and management consultancies, leading to a greater variety of sometimes short-lived, competing imaginaries. The chapter aims to interrogate the motivations of the social actors actively involved in constructing the vision(s) over time. We use various examples of the European Union, German national spatial visions, Atlantic Gateway in the UK, the megaregions concept, and an expert competition the metropolitan region of Helsinki. We argue that creating spatial imaginaries is not a primary realm for planners, thus on the one hand less transported by plans or even cartographic representations of a metropolitan region and on the other hand less comprehensive as some of them follow a single purpose such as justifying infrastructure investment.

Keywords Spatial imaginary · Actors · Interest · Metropolitan regions · Metropolitan imaginaries

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9.1 Introduction: Spatial Imaginaries—By Whom, for Whom?

Over the past forty years, there has been no shortage of social actors keen to put forward their vision for how metropolitan regions should be conceived. Metropolitanisation has brought with it a growing cast of actors who, because they have a vested interest in how metropolitan regions are imagined, are increasingly playing a far more active role in ensuring the form that a metropolitan region takes is one which enables them to preserve and maximise their essential interests. From a relatively narrow cast comprising planners, academics, and local–regional–national state actors, today's roll-call of actors includes international actors, think tanks, management consultancies, philanthropies, and even 'celebrity' urbanists.

More actors mean a greater variety of perspectives and, not surprisingly, more competing interests result in more competing imaginaries. This perpetual invention of competing imaginaries also derives from imaginaries being created explicitly as an alternative, a reaction to other spatial imaginaries and serving as an attempt to open another perspective on spatial relations and ways to organise space. Yet, documenting what the latest spatial imaginary is, analysing how it is represented cartographically, and describing what it represents discursively is only ever a starting point for the analysis. A better understanding of the frailty and relevance of spatial imaginaries can only be gained by interrogating the motivations of the social actors actively involved in constructing the vision(s) under investigation and revealing how social actors attempt to deconstruct other visions to maintain their own vision. It should also be asked for whom a new imaginary of a metropolitan region becomes meaningful.

9.2 Periodising the Role of Social Actors in the Evolving Spatiality of Metropolitan Imaginaries

> In the 1950s, 1960s and even 1970s, national governments used to support backward regions, but in the new, post-1980s competitive context they feel the need to place their bet on the strongest regional horses … Almost all national government endorse these new trends in regional economic policy. For electoral reasons, some are obliged to continue to give some support to backward regions, but their real concern remains the improvement of the strong regions. Surprising, European regional policy (although favouring the regions as such) ignores this trend and continues to give support to economically disadvantaged regions. (Salet et al. 2003, p. 12)

In this quotation, we see the era of spatial Keynesianism being definitively associated with a single actor—national government. Second, a global trend is identified with the shift from protectionist spatial Keynesianism to the competitive context of neoliberalism. Notwithstanding this, third, the transition to new forms of competitive regional economic policy takes on nationally specific forms, thus highlighting how national government maintains a—or even, the—key role in orchestrating metropoli-

tan development. Allied to this, fourth, the degree to which social actors orchestrate regional policy towards strong metropolitan regions vis-a-vis economically disadvantaged regions is tempered by the need to preserve their own essential interests. And finally, fifth, actors at different spatial scales are just as likely to adopt different positions despite the perception of a global trend towards a particular approach to imagining metropolitan regions.

The aim of this section, therefore, is to periodise the role of social actors in the evolving spatiality of metropolitan imaginaries. More than this, our interest is in detailing how, in different periods, some social actors can be considered dominant while others are variously emergent, newly dominant, or residual in importance. We begin with spatial Keynesianism.

The dominant actor orchestrating metropolitan development in the period of spatial Keynesianism was the national government. Adopting an interventionist approach, the primary motivation in post-war period was managing uneven development via redistributive policies. The managerial practices of the central state were principally focussed on the collective provision of services, and albeit local, municipal, and regional government were important actors they were evidently subordinated to central state regulatory control. France's DATAR (*Délégation à l'aménagement du territoire et à l'action régionale*—Land Development and Regional Action Delegation) in 1963, Britain's Regional Economic Planning Boards and Councils in 1964, and the Dutch RPD (*Rjksplanologische Dienst*—National Planning Service) in 1966 emerged as the textbook examples of government-sponsored institutions whose operations were tightly controlled by the central government and whose role was ostensibly to implement top-down policies. One important consequence of this *modus operandi* was that the key actors in planning and governing metropolitan regions in the era of spatial Keynesianism had a shared understanding that the standard territorial region was *the* spatial imaginary through which metropolitan regions—their development and problems—were represented. Indeed, the 1960s and 1970s saw countless regional and subregional planning documents produced by these institutions in response to the necessity for the central state to find solutions for managing population growth, urban expansion, and growing spatial inequality.

From the early 1970s and the onset of globalisation, local and municipal government became increasingly involved in economic development activity directly related to production and investment, positively encouraged by national governments to complement their own attempts to improve economic competitiveness. This was the first signs of the gradual shift away from the 'managerial' approach which typified post-war spatial Keynesianism and towards the 'entrepreneurial' approach synonymous with the emergent neoliberal tendencies of the 1970s and 1980s. Entrepreneurialism was significant because not only did it bring with it a changing approach from state actors, but also it brought non-state actors to the fore. The 1970s and 1980s were, after all, the era of coalition building.

Urban growth coalitions had their roots in the USA and came to reflect the pre-eminence of market-led approaches and growth objectives in metropolitan planning and policy. It was this growth consensus that not only captivated state actors—central governments and municipal governments were all too aware of the importance

of ensuring their metropolitan regions were competitive in the restructured global economy—but united them with other non-state actors who had a shared interest in promoting economic growth. Growth coalitions (also known as 'growth machines') signalled the coming together of diverse actors—ranging from local and municipal government to business, real estate, construction and utility companies, local media—who all recognised that they stood to make significant gains if growth resulted in land use intensification and the impact this would have on local land values. At one level, entrepreneurialism in the 1980s reveals the growing influence of the commercial sector in convening metropolitan growth politics. But crucially, at another level, this pluralist coalition of actors now set about producing their own spatial imaginaries to promote their pro-growth aspirations. One important consequence of this was that coalitions began to overcome the city–suburb rivalries that dogged metropolitan regions in the managerial phase. And perhaps most significant of all, the 1980s was the era of localism, and what growth coalitions and regime theory highlighted was the endogenous, bottom-up nature of this new entrepreneurial approach to imagining metropolitan development.

By the 1990s, the new regionalism had brought different forms of the coalition to the fore, namely Chambers of Commerce and Regional Development Agencies. Best thought of as regionally scaled growth coalitions, both are quasi-autonomous non-governmental institutions: Chambers of Commerce operating as a form of business network charged with promoting the interests of those member businesses in their region and often achieved by lobbying locally, nationally, and internationally to ensure laws that are passed and policies that are implemented are favourable to business; Regional Development Agencies operating as public–private partnerships charged with the pro-growth purpose of development—primarily economic—by improving business efficiency, investment, competitiveness, employment and skills, and with an eye on sustainable development.

In most cases, the geographical basis on which these institutions operated was predetermined and bore the legacy of spatial Keynesian state territoriality. There was, in many cases, no debate over the spatial logic of regions (and other subnational territorial units) being mobilised in the implementation of new regionalist-inspired institutions, policies, and planning styles. And this all comes back to agency because the principal actor responsible for putting new regionalism thinking into action was the state. For, despite, all the rhetoric of new regionalist approaches enabling regional institutions to be quasi-autonomous, business-led partnerships, implementing bottom-up policies, the reality was to lesser or greater extent depending on the national and local context, a reassertion by the state of their role as the primary orchestrators of economic development. Put bluntly: neoliberal globalisation posed a real and immediate threat to the state such that if metropolitan regions were the competitive territories *par excellence,* this was the ground on which the state could reassert its power by taking control of the growth agenda once more.

Into the 2000s and the key actors remain fairly constant, albeit the spatial scale at which attention was focused increasingly switched to the metropolitan or city-region scale. This owed much to the emergent role of international organisations such as UN-Habitat and the OECD. Ever since 1996 when HABITAT II (Second United

Nations Conference on Human Settlements—Istanbul) concluded that cities are the engines of global growth, urbanisation presents opportunities, there needs to be a stronger role for local authorities and recognition of the power of participation, and there has been momentum globally around the notion of a new urban agenda for sustainable economic development. Throughout the 2000s, accelerated urbanisation globally and the rise of city-regionalism further fuelled and reinvigorated this global commitment to sustainable urbanisation. By the time HABITAT III (United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development—Quito) concluded in 2016 having formally established a 'New Urban Agenda', and having identified four fundamental drivers of change, three of which are planning related. Noteworthy is how in the process of adopting the New Urban Agenda, the spatial imagination shifted significantly.

What we see in Table 9.1 is a reimagining of spatial and discursive framing of the global state of urbanisation, as well as the practices and tools for policy and intervention in planning and governing metropolitan regions for the next twenty years. In the three months of negotiations, a series of critical changes can clearly be observed. In their totality, what would be considered framings more akin to the legacy of spatial Keynesianism—the narrow focus on local–national partnerships (*who*), legislation (*how*), and ultimate emphasis on 'national' policy, development, and targets (*why*)—gave way to framings much more akin to neoliberal urbanism—the importance of multiple actors (*who*), multiscalar metagovernance (*how*), and steer towards inclusive and sustainable growth (*why*). Moreover, in the fourth driver, we see the other major development at this time which has seen 'managerialism' and 'entrepreneurialism' joined by a third pillar—'financialisation'.

But this is only part of the story. For what Table 9.1 masks is the compromise which actors clearly made, because inserted immediately before the reimagining, of how urban and territorial development would be planned and governed was the following:

> [We commit ourselves to] *recognize the leading role of national governments*, as appropriate, in the definition and implementation of inclusive and effective urban policies and *legislation* for sustainable urban development (UN-Habitat 2016b, paragraph 15b emphasis added).

In this one brief example, we get to see the challenges of aligning the different interests and perspectives of the engaged actors, and the impact this has on the evolving spatial imaginaries and/or for metropolitan regions. As Barnett and Parnell (2016, 89) note, the New Urban Agenda—and approval alongside it of an explicitly 'urban' Sustainable Development Goal—is

> a product of what one might call a fluid alliance of interests and organizations that generated a coherent pro-urban discourse through which to assert the importance of cities in future development policy agendas.

Very much allied to this, the period of city-regional orthodoxy has revealed further polarisation in the perceived role of the state as an engaged actor in imagining metropolitan futures. If the entrepreneurial approaches of 1980s and 1990s brought forward the idea that the state's role was being weakened by the emergent power of

Table 9.1 Tracing the evolving spatiality in establishing the New Urban Agenda

	Revised Zero Draft of the NUA (UN-Habitat 2016a: Paragraph 11b) June 2016	Final Agreed Draft of the NUA (UN-Habitat 2016b, Paragraph 15c) September 2016
1.	"Developing and implementing ~~national~~ urban policies within a renewed local–national partnership building integrated ~~national~~ systems of cities and human settlements, towards the achievement of ~~national~~ development targets"	"**Developing and implementing urban policies at the appropriate level, including in local–national and multi-stakeholder partnerships**, building integrated systems of cities and human settlements and **promotingcooperation among all levels of government** to enable the achievement of sustainable integrated urban development"
2.	"Strengthening urban ~~legislation~~, providing predictability and order in the urban development plans to enable social and economic ~~performance~~ and wealth creation"	"Strengthening urban **governance**, with sound institutions and mechanisms that empower and included urban stakeholders, **as well as appropriate checks and balances** , providing predictability and coherence in the urban development plan to enable **social inclusion, sustained, inclusive and sustainable** economic **growth** and **environmental protection**"
3.	"Reinvigorate urban and territorial planning in order to optimise the spatial dimension of the urban form and deliver the urban advantage"	"Reinvigorating **long-term and integrated** urban and territorial planning and design in order to optimise the spatial dimension of the urban form and deliver the positive outcomes of urbanisation"
4.	"Supporting effective financing frameworks, enabling strengthened municipal finance and local fiscal systems in order to create, sustain, and share the value generated by sustainable urban development"	"Supporting effective, **innovative, and sustainable** financing **frameworks and instruments** enabling strengthened municipal finance and local fiscal systems in order to create, sustain, and share the value generated by sustainable urban development **in an inclusive manner**"

Notes ~~superscript~~ denotes key deleted words and phrasing; **bold** denotes key additional or replacement words or phrasing

private interests, the 2000s has witnessed not only the rise of international organisations as powerful actors, but a whole suite of other actors—including consultants, think tanks, and academics—with a growing interest in orchestrating the planning and governance of metropolitan regions. Yet, for all that there has been a ratcheting up of the predominant neoliberal discourse championing the superiority of entrepreneurial forms of responsive local and regional governance vis-à-vis the withering away of top-down state orchestrated regionalism, the orthodoxy that says city-regionalism is 'increasingly free from the regulatory supervision on the part of nation-states' (Scott 2001, p. 4) and not an 'effect of initiatives flowing out from central government' (ibid., p. 21) overstates the decline of state territoriality. Examples such as that above reveal how a partial reading of the 'New Urban Agenda' can marshal

evidence to this effect, and a closer reading reveals how, *pace* Mayer (2008), the state is becoming embedded in new spatial forms and making use of these forms to act.

As of the 2010s, there has been a growing emphasis on new spatial imaginaries at the mega or multi-city regional scale, and with it the emergence of new powerful actors. The rise of transmetropolitan spatial imaginaries—taken to mean those comprising more than one metropolitan region—is today being linked to the capitalist imperative for supply chain expansion and the emergence of infrastructure alliances (Wachsmuth 2017). Infrastructure alliances are to all intents and purposes the latest incarnation of growth coalitions, albeit at a much larger spatial scale and with different power geometries among the multiple stakeholders involved in metropolitan growth politics. If land use intensification proved the uniting force for actors in the 1980s formation of local growth coalitions, agglomeration economics and common labour markets provided the uniting logic for metropolitan-scaled, city-regional growth coalitions through the 2000s, supply chain expansion is emerging as a powerful uniting force for metropolitan regions who otherwise compete for investment and talent. We see this evidently in how metropolitan elites have been captivated by the need to invest in high-speed rail, but also the importance attached to logistics which is giving private sector interests in these industries a greater interest in mobilising a new generation of transmetropolitan spatial imaginaries.

The role of social actors in the evolving spatiality of metropolitan imaginaries can thus be characterised by several broad trends, namely

- an emphasis on coalitions comprising multiple stakeholders—operating at different spatial scales and from across public, private, and civil society—rather than central government determining the evolving spatiality of metropolitan regions,
- an emphasis on how different actors mobilise different metropolitan spatial imaginaries to preserve their essential interests, which means with more actors comes more competing imaginaries
- an emphasis on the discursive framing of spatial imaginaries from an economic growth 'at all costs' mantra to the more holistic goal of sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth and environmental protection
- an emphasis on shifts from managerialism, to entrepreneurialism, to financialisation, in the mechanisms by which actors are approaching the pursuit of metropolitan development through spatial imaginaries.

9.3 Multiple Visions, Multiple Actors

In this section, we have selected five contrasting cases to illustrate the role of social actors in the evolving spatiality of metropolitan imaginaries. We begin by taking the example of the European Union which as an international organisation has been playing a crucial role in renewing urban and regional spatial imaginaries as part of its integration project. We use this example to demonstrate the restructuring of state-led

territoriality, before moving on to further discuss the case of Germany which was introduced in the previous chapter. Picking up the story from the point at which the discursive framing of metropolitan region picked up pace in the early 2000s, this case reveals how the evolving spatiality of Germany's *Leitbilder* came to reflect the visible outcome of the power politics at play between the lobbying group who represent the eleven European metropolitan regions and their equivalent who champion the importance of cross-border metropolitan regions. Our third illustrative case takes a very different perspective by focusing on the recent appearance in England of a metropolitan imaginary covering Liverpool-Manchester that is both indicative of business regionalism and multi-city regionalism. The imagination of a private investment group, Atlantic Gateway offers insights into the motivations of private companies engaging in constructing and mobilising new metropolitan imaginaries. We then take a concept in the form of 'megaregions' to account for how and why different groups of actors continually bring back certain concepts, at certain times and in certain spaces and places, to pursue their interests. Finally, we look at regional design competitions at the metropolitan level as a case with a strong expert involvement in the search for new ways to imagine those metropolitan regions, introducing new languages and spatial concepts, especially for the suburban space.

9.3.1 European Union

The European Union (EU) has, since its inception, played a crucial role in renewing urban and regional spatial imaginaries as part of its integration project. While the idea of a 'Europe of regions' can be clearly understood as the outcome of state rescaling and assigning new meanings to territories, the urban dimension of the EU agenda was a response to the effects of capitalist restructuring taking place in major urban areas in post-war Europe. Indeed, the European Community's first interest in conceptualising the emergence of a metropolitan-regional dimension could be detected in the late 1960s, when under Jacque Cros, the *Directoraat-Generaal Regionaal Beleid en Stadsontwikkeling* (Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy—DG REGIO) started funding research on spatial scenarios. The studies conducted by Franco Archibugi in those years—and alimenting the exploratory work of the new DG (Grazi 2007)—unveiled the emergence of large urban areas in different member states, as well as an overall phenomenon of metropolisation sweeping across member states and generating effects of concentration and economic unbalances.

In a way, the overall EU integration project has allowed the opportunity to read at a transnational level and in interrelated ways the emergence of a metropolitan or regional-urban dimension. This is evident in the conceptualisation of a European megalopolis by the Council of Europe—Conference of Ministers responsible for Spatial/Regional Planning (CEMAT) at their meeting in 1970, which was generative of transnational imaginaries based on concentration and agglomeration effects (see Harrison et al. 2020, Fig. 8.2 and the EU Pentagon for a more recent example).

By the early 1970s, urban regions centred on small- and medium-sized cities had come to the fore as the alternative to monocentric agglomerations. This was to prove the antecedent to the community's belief that the development of polycentric regions was a more preferable scenario that the previously held megalopolis-agglomeration scenario. This contraposition fed the debate that was generated by the European Spatial Development Perspective in the subsequent two decades, but it is only following the 2007 Lisbon Treaty and the introduction of territorial cohesion as a key challenge of the EU (2009) that a number of EU promoted initiatives have more explicitly focused on the metropolitan/regional dimension. Studies promoted by European spatial planning observation network (ESPON), alongside projects such as URBACT and INTERREG, have really emphasised the regional/metropolitan dimension in EU policy-making circles (Zimmermann 2020).

Even though the *Europe 2020 Strategy* did not 'specifically take metropolitan regions and areas into account' (METREX 2014), the efforts of ESPON, Joint Research Committee (JRC) and EUROSTAT have further developed a metropolitan imaginary. The importance of this cannot be underestimated, with authors such as Lang and Török (2017, p. 9) highlighting that

> the promotion of metropolitan regions in functional as well as symbolic terms as well as the shifts in regional and urban policies … can be described as the consequence of Europeanisation of spatial policy within the EU linked to the growing dominance of the competitive discourse.

This said the strong interest in advancing a metropolitan dimension for EU policies, as read through consistent analytical efforts to extend and promote this in recent years, has gained far less traction in terms of direct identification of metropolitan regions as central actors or authorities in actual EU cohesion policies. This can be explained by the difficulty the EU faces when attempting to engage with the multiplicity and fragility of metropolitan government forms present across member states—for example, their different status and role in different member states as well as the various roles that cities, urban agglomerations, polycentric regions, small and medium cities play in those territories.

More interestingly, the recent promotion of Integrated Territorial Investments (ITI) has opened some space for initiatives of experimentation with metropolitan institutions. ITI allow the construction of a territorial geography beyond administrative boundaries, where the starting for metropolitan governance is no longer space and territory but practical policy problems. In the case of Poland, for example, ITI have been used to enhance metropolitan governance. This is a significant trend because it creates space for the transfer of the metropolitan dimension from the analytic-interpretative sphere to a more explicit normative and policy dimension. As a matter of fact, metropolitan associations such as the European metropolitan authorities and (METREX) network of European metropolitan regions and areas have again clearly expressed their desire to have a more central role in current debates over the design and implementation of EU Cohesion Policy post-2020 (EMA 2017) in ways very similar to the role United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) has played as an umbrella organisation for cities, local and regional governments, and municipal asso-

ciations on a world scale when influencing the framing of the New Urban Agenda to have a stronger metropolitan-regional dimension.

9.3.2 Germany

In the 1990s and 2000s, Germany was gripped by a major geoeconomic challenge: how to respond politically to the growing importance of urbanisation and global economic integration without an archetypal global city. In Europe, while the UK has London and France has Paris, and globally, the USA has New York, Japan has Tokyo, and China has Shanghai, Beijing, and Hong Kong, by contrast Germany has a more balanced horizontal urban system. This is critical in explaining why the European metropolitan region discourse emerged where it did (Germany), when it did (the early 1990s), and how it took the form it did (based on eleven metropolitan regions).

The spatial imaginary of eleven metropolitan regions was a strategic response by the Federal State to highlight how, despite not having a global city per se, Germany did possess cities which were well positioned within European circuits of capital and could be considered emerging, aspiring, or potential global cities. Despite emphasising their 'superior' strategic importance in maintaining Germany and Europe's competitiveness, the Federal State attempted to make this neoliberal urban policy complementary with spatial Keynesian ideals by arguing that EMR 'contribute significantly to the potential, and funding for a spatial balance in Germany' (BMBau 1993, p. 6).

Fuelled in part by the establishment in 2001 of *Initiativkreis Europäische Metropolregionen* (European metropolitan region initiative—IKM) to lobby Federal ministers about the 'special features' that EMR possess and how, because they are 'indispensable', they should be 'distinguish[ed] from other conurbations' in policy (IKM 2003, p. 12), there was a growing sense of unease among many actors that the neoliberal urban policy ideals exemplified in the EMR initiative contradicted rather than complemented the Federal State's other stated goal of spatially balanced growth. Under pressure from urban elites to continue promoting the strategic importance of metropolitan regions and facing similar pressures from non-urban elites to ensure this was not as the expense of rural-peripheral areas, the spatial imaginary mobilised in *Leitbild 2006* (Harrison et al. 2020, Fig. 8.3a) is driven by a desire to establish political consensus. Representing a 'necessary adjustment' of planning policy to changing conditions, the result was 'theoretically contradictory, empirically vague and conceptually fragile' according to Hesse and Leick (2013, p. 343) because achieving political consensus required a move away from the singular logic for imagining metropolitan regions as agglomerations to a far more complex, decidedly messy, landscape of overlapping, competing and contradictory metropolitan (and other spatial) imaginaries.

No sooner had this revised and versatile metropolitan imaginary been launched than the Federal State found itself reacting to the demands of another group of actors.

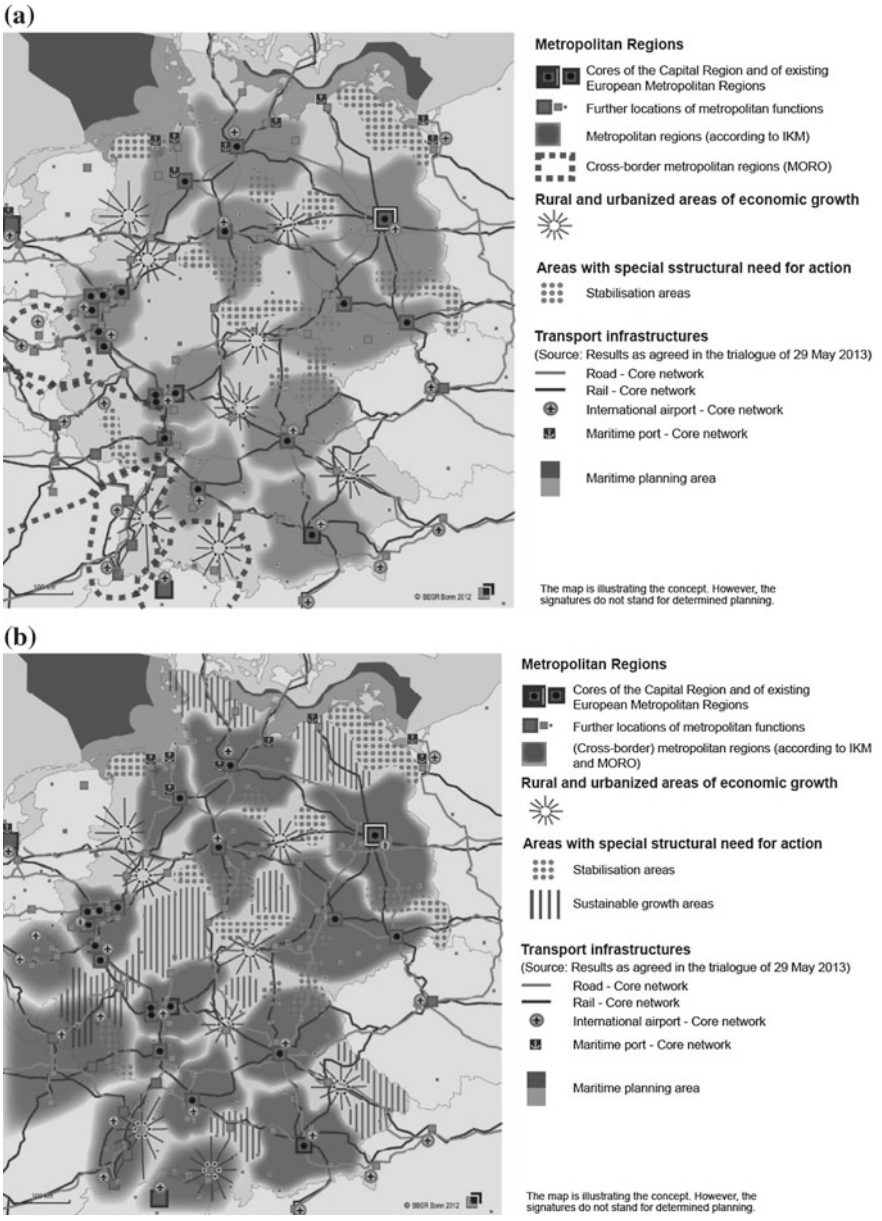

Fig. 9.1 **a** Metropolitan Germany: Leitbilder 2013 Draft A (*Source* BBSR 2012, p. 143), **b** Metropolitan Germany: Leitbilder 2013 Draft B (*Source* BBSR 2012, p. 143)

This time the political pressure was being applied via the *Initiativkreis Metropolitane Grenzregionen* (Metropolitan Border Regions Initiative Group—IMeG):

> IMeG shares the aim of the metropolitan regions in Germany … [but] emphatically demands that these [border] regions be included in the federal concepts (IMeG 2013, p. 7)

The result of this political lobbying was two interim drafts of a further revised metropolitan imaginary for Germany including the new imaginary of cross-border metropolitan regions. In Fig. 9.1a, cross-border metropolitan regions (as defined by IMeG) are imagined as distinct from European metropolitan regions (as defined by IKM); whereas, in Fig. 9.1b they are imagined (according to IKM and IMeG) as identical. That the finally agreed metropolitan imaginary which appeared in Leitbild 2013 attempted to identify these four cross-border metropolitan regions as complementary—simultaneously distinct yet identical—only serves to reinforce how metropolitan spatial imaginaries are always the product of intense negotiation and resultant compromise (Harrison and Growe 2014a, b).

9.3.3 Atlantic Gateway

Atlantic Gateway is an exemplar of business orchestrated regionalism and its growing influence on metropolitan development. Launched by The Peel Group in 2008, Atlantic Gateway is a private sector-led growth strategy for the connected growth between the Liverpool and Manchester metropolitan regions. What is significant about Peel's involvement in Atlantic Gateway is that it amounts to de facto metropolitan governance by the private sector, and it provides an example of how actors are increasingly inventing metropolitan spatial imaginaries in their own interests. But to understand Atlantic Gateway as a scaled up metropolitan imaginary, we must first know who Peel are, how they arrived at Atlantic Gateway, and why they mobilised this imaginary when and where they did.

Peel started out as a land and property development company in the 1970s. Investing in cheap development land in former industrial areas between Liverpool and Manchester, Peel delivered a series of flagship redevelopment projects—most notably the Trafford Centre retail park (current market value £2.3 billion) and Salford Quays, which is home to MediaCityUK—which enabled the company to generate significant returns on their investment through rent, onward selling, or other investments leading to land use intensification and pushing up the value of their land and property holdings. At this time, Peel's modus operandi was clearly indicative of urban entrepreneurialism in action and aligned with what growth coalitions pursued from the 1970s onwards.

This path continued through the 1990s and on into the 2000s when Peel became the developer of choice for the Northwest Regional Development Agency. This owed much to the realisation that Peel owned much of the land and assets that the development agency depended on to deliver their strategy. Throughout the 2000s, the NWDA-Peel axis of power grew stronger and at the time Peel launched Atlantic

Gateway; this became more clearly visible when the then Deputy Chair of Peel, first became a Board Member (2007) and subsequently Chair (2009) of the NWDA (while retaining a non-Executive Director role with Peel), and the outgoing Chair of the NWDA joined Peel.

Triggering Peel to launch Atlantic Gateway was a combination of factors. Part had to do with shifts in the global political economy surrounding the 2008/9 financial crisis and ensuing calls for greater private sector involvement in fuelling the economic recovery. Yet, this fails to account for why business regionalism has emerged in some places and not others. For the most part, this has to do with firm and place-specific factors. In the case of Atlantic Gateway, Peel are much more place-dependent than other companies of their size owing to the proximity of their major assets along a 50-kilometre metropolitan corridor. Moreover, Peel's corporate expansion evidently relied on gaining influence over others (Ward and Swyngedouw 2018).

Regionally, Peel are seeking to influence local planning decisions. Moving from delivering multi-million-pound development schemes in the 1990s and 2000s, Peel's forward-looking strategy to 2050 involves delivering multi-billion-pound development schemes. During the 1990s, Peel became embroiled in one of the longest disputes in British planning over their plans to build the £650 million Trafford Centre retail park. Scarred by this, Peel's Chairman John Whitaker made no secret that their principal motivation was to use the Atlantic Gateway imaginary to convince the NWDA to establish a special purpose planning vehicle that allowed Peel to overcome individual local authority objections to their plans. Nationally, while Peel own the assets they do not own or have significant influence over the connecting infrastructure (principally road and rail). Allied to this, Peel's £6.6 billion of assets is tied up, meaning although asset rich, they remain cash poor. What this means is that Peel are heavily reliant on national and international investment to unlock the full potential of their sites. Atlantic Gateway therefore represents an exemplar of how spatial imaginaries are always examples of tactical regionalism.

Tactical regionalism is significant because in the case of Peel the spatial imaginary that is Atlantic Gateway has evolved for them to gain influence. As noted, Peel in the 1970s and 1980s were property developers in the spirit of urban growth coalitions, in the 1990s, they aligned to be the principal developer for the regional development agency, and in the 2000s, Atlantic Gateway emerged as a regional growth corridor but to gain the support of state actors quickly changed to become a city-region initiative. Mapping on to the periodisation of spatial imaginaries, it is noteworthy how the 2010s has seen Atlantic Gateway morph into a multi-city scaled metropolitan-regional imaginary. Behind this spatial transformation was a compromise. To gain support for Atlantic Gateway, Peel were pressed into ensuring that it became a 'more than Peel' initiative. To this end, Peel began to work with other firms, most notably their biggest local competitor in logistics—Stobarts. Albeit direct competitors, the two firms could unite around the importance of supply chain expansion, and it was this tactical regionalism which saw Atlantic Gateway switch from a city-regional imaginary to a multi-city-regional imaginary (Harrison 2014).

9.3.4 Megaregions

Megaregions are a key spatial imaginary because through the lens of periodisation, they have emerged as a truly global metropolitan imaginary in the early part of this century. Mobilised by actors convinced that there is a geoeconomic logic by which agglomeration economies are the sole route to competitiveness, growth and therefore development, and megaregions amount to metropolitan regions on steroids given the scaling up of what is being imagined. In many cases, actors imagine megaregions of the magnitude of 10–20 million inhabitants plus, spanning hundreds of kilometres, and often transnational. But this is not the first-time actors have mobilised megaregions as an important metropolitan spatial imaginary (Harrison and Hoyler 2015).

While most people identify the megaregion concept with Jean Gottmann, it is Patrick Geddes who should be credited with first mobilising mega-scale metropolitan imaginaries. In his 1915 book *Cities in Evolution,* Geddes mobilises the same spatial vocabulary—'megalopolis'—and illustrative case—New York–Boston—as Gottmann but is overlooked because for Geddes and his successors (notably Lewis Mumford) megaregions portrayed a vulgar image of metropolitan expansion. In this way, the spatial image of a megaregion was mobilised to advance their own essential interests for promoting smaller, simpler cities as leading to a healthier and happier type of social development. By contrast, Gottmann popularised the notion of transmetropolitan landscapes among metropolitan elites from the 1950s onwards in the USA with his utopian modernist image of metropolitan expansion as socially progressive.

It is this emphasis on spatial imaginaries *for a purpose* which is key to our understanding. In modern times, we can point to the group of French geographers who in a report to DATAR used a very simple but highly effective megaregion imaginary—Europe's 'blue banana'—to warn public authorities in Paris of the danger if Paris specifically and France, more generally, were marginalised because of its economic insularity in a more integrated Europe (RECLUS 1989). In the 2000s, the Regional Planning Association (RPA) in the USA used the spatial imagery of megaregions to launch their *America 2050* campaign. The purpose was not megaregion per se but using the spatial imaginary of megaregions to lobby actors—notably the US Department of Transport—for investment in high-speed rail (RPA 2006). Likewise, the international development focus of UN-Habitat led them to construct a very particular discursive framing around the development opportunities megaregions afford the Global South when, in their *State of the World's Cities 2010-11* report, despite their map identifying megaregions globally, the narrative excluded the many located in North America and Europe and chose only to draw attention to the select few in Southeast Asia, South America, and Africa. And in countries such as the UK, mega- or multi-city imaginaries such as the *Northern Way* and *Northern Powerhouse* have been consistently invented and mobilised by central government when it has been politically expedient and necessary to present a discursive counterweight image to London's metropolitan growth (Lee 2017).

9.3.5 Expert Competitions

Greater Helsinki Vision 2050 affords an example where a new spatial imaginary for the metropolitan region was created with strong involvement and visioning by external experts. Launched in 2006 by Greater Helsinki's fourteen municipalities, in cooperation with the Ministry of Environment and Finnish Association of Architects, an open competition inviting actors to imagine the future of the metropolitan region produced 109 entries of which nine were selected for an award (Ache 2011).

The brief for the expert teams was to develop a spatial imaginary for how (and where) to accommodate Greater Helsinki's projected population growth until 2050. Organising an idea's competition was a bottom-up initiative from the municipalities but situated in the context of national pressure to establish some kind of metropolitan growth management. This in turn had been triggered by international organisations, namely a 2003 OECD Territorial Review stressing the need for a better coordinated metropolitan region given the insufficient size of the city of Helsinki alone to be internationally competitive, as well as a 2006 report from the European Environment Agency criticising the Helsinki region as a negative example of uncontrolled sprawl.

Design competitions are a common technique to generate high-quality ideas in architecture and urbanism, but the innovative element in case of *Greater Helsinki Vision 2050* has been to upscale it to a whole metropolitan region. This approach of allowing several external expert teams to create alternative imaginaries has since been used by other metropolitan regions such as Paris (*Atelier International du Grand Paris 2008* which consulted with ten selected teams), Zürich (*Metrobild 2011* which was derived from a workshop with three invited teams), and the Ruhr region (*Ideenwettbewerb Zukunft Metropole Ruhr 2013* was a competition with five selected teams).

Expert visioning by multiple teams has proved a helpful instrument for a metropolitan region that does not have a strong tradition of city-regional cooperation in spatial development. The function of experts is to bring new ideas as a starting point for opening the local debate to external influence and depoliticising the process. The idea, in principle, means to some extent starting on a blank page with a set of 'new' alternative imaginaries. But crucially, when analysing the motivation behind inviting experts in, it is imperative to first understand what kind of 'old' imaginary or 'lock-in' the initiators are seeking to overcome (e.g. overcoming entrenched local allegiances) as much as what they are hoping to achieve (e.g. envious eyes cast towards other metropolitan regions, external approval of what they are already doing).

One thing which is for sure is that bringing in external experts results in a different process for constructing and mobilising spatial imaginaries. In many cases, external teams have very limited local knowledge, while the condensed format of in-place workshops leads to focusing on general principles and framings for how to organise space instead of entering into the more conflictual detailed issues surrounding everyday issues when putting theory into practice. While the degree of local knowledge is highly uneven in each example—in Zürich there was a high-level of local knowledge

because all of the expert teams have design studios based in the city, in the Ruhr all teams mixed with domestic and international partners and there were excursions and interim discussion with regional actors, while in Helsinki it was low because it was an open international competition with no on-site workshop—in all three examples the expert involvement was only a first step in a much longer process. In each case, external expert involvement linked the local visioning process to the international debates. Undeniable is how this favours the travelling of the latest in-vogue concepts and imaginaries fashionable among urbanists in the initial phase of capturing the imagination. But crucially, an expert competition does not replace the political process of negotiating a shared vision of future development. In the Ruhr area, the expert involvement was one of the elements of a 'regional dialogue' started in 2011 to accompany the preparation of a regional plan by the metropolitan organisation *Regionalverband Ruhr*. By contrast, in the case of Helsinki, a metropolitan organisation has not emerged at that scale yet despite national pressure. Indeed, it could be argued that the soft instrument of the idea's competition was a means to prevent government interference in the form of legislation.

9.4 Conclusion: The Fear of Being Overlooked

Spatial imaginaries are mobilised to influence metropolitan development to some extent. They are not emerging out of the blue, but are shaped, supported, challenged, and modified over time by different actors. The nation state has traditionally been the key actor constructing spatial imaginaries for its territory and continues to be an essential player (Kübler and Lefèvre 2018). Even though the national dimension has lost some of its relevance with globalisation and the emergence of larger,transnational imaginaries, differences in the national urban systems (size of cities, distance of urban nodes) persist and influence the way metropolitan regions are conceptualised. At the same time, international institutions such as the European Union, OECD and UN-Habitat are seeking to establish uniform definitions for metropolitan regions and using quantitative measurements. Local institutions and cities are on the one hand lobbying to be on the map in fear of otherwise being overlooked when it comes to structural investments. On the other hand, they produce spatial imaginaries to create a shared understanding of the territory as a basis for cooperation, sometimes with input from external experts. Planners in public administrations, planning associations or agencies are in many cases seeking to produce spatial imaginaries of metropolitan regions transcending administrative borders by conceptual or analytical means. But not only public actors use imaginaries to conceptualise space and guide policies. In some cases, such as Atlantic Gateway, private actors or coalitions of actors can be very successful in putting an imaginary on the agenda. Business communities, for example, in different countries, have played a crucial role in supporting the production of regional imaginaries: having to compete on an international dimension, many of them are asking or have lobbied for governance frameworks able to reduce and at the same time deal with complexity and uncertainty.

Expert knowledge either called in by public actors in the form of contracts and competitions or unsolicited can contribute to conceptualise the relevant societal and political challenges behind processes of regional urbanisation. In this respect 'seeing like a metropolis', misquoting Magnusson (2011) and more recently Amin and Thrift (2017), is still an open and problematic issue. Despite this, there is a growing awareness in many contexts of the need and/or desire to take the task of constructing metropolitan imaginaries outside of local politics which can give academic experts a role as mediators between the different competing stakeholders. The offset of this is that the 'expert view' can be used to legitimate certain actions.

Notwithstanding this multitude of actors, there is a growing consensus among those actors as to their interests in mobilising metropolitan spatial imaginaries. This can be economic with the consistency of the 'growth at all costs' mantra that accompanies many accounts of metropolitan regions focusing more on their global positioning than on the relation between core city and hinterland. It can also be institutional, as evidenced by the growing popularity of particular policies, ideas or models for planning and governance (e.g. the metropolitan mayoral model). In this case, the spatial representation of the metropolitan region depends on the actors willing to cooperate, e.g. the municipalities involved in a metropolitan institution or planning association. The spatial dimension of a metropolitan region is constructed according to the lenses of the actors looking at it, not necessarily in line with the functionally interrelated space or the sense of belonging of the citizens (Fedeli et al. 2020).

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Chapter 10
Invoking New Metropolitan Imaginaries: What Type of Metropolitan Region for What Kind of Metropolitan Planning and Governance?

Valeria Fedeli, Patricia Feiertag and John Harrison

Abstract This chapter asks whether new metropolitan imaginaries are meaningful in any essential sense. It does this by considering the implications for metropolitan regions, planning and governance of new metropolitan (and other spatial) imaginaries. We reveal the inherent unevenness that maps of these spatial imaginaries often belie. This unevenness in institutional capacity, spatial coherence and planning competency is critical because it allows us to consider the extent to which metropolitan spatial imaginaries equate to examples of deep- or shallow-rooted regionalism. The importance we attach to this is the potential to identify those metropolitan-regional imaginaries which are likely to develop into harder institutional forms, which might remain weakly institutionalised, and which could just as easily disappear altogether. The contribution of this chapter is to examine a series of tensions—urban–rural, elites–citizens, urban–suburban, static–dynamic—and the challenges and opportunities for mobilising meaningful spatial imaginaries for planning and governing metropolitan regions.

Keywords Spatial imaginaries · Metropolitan imaginaries · Spatial planning · Metropolitan governance · Metropolitan policy

10.1 Introduction: Do Metropolitan Imaginaries Still Matter?

This chapter introduces critical perspectives on the role that metropolitan spatial imaginaries (can) play in dealing with current societal challenges. Spatial imaginaries are important because they are a special kind of social imaginaries: they are collective

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social constructions that enable communities to imagine themselves as such (Davoudi 2018). At the same time, they are produced by rituals and practices that make social life possible, providing—temporary—coherence and identity to a community. Spatial imaginaries rely on the role that the spaces–places relationship plays, as well as the place–people relationship in the production of a community. In this respect, 'space matters' in the construction of social imaginaries, but which kind of space?

For our current purpose, urban imaginaries are central to the construction of identity, though always situated within a historical consubstantial relationship between city–countryside, urban–rural, which never definitively separated the city from its wider spatial surroundings (Braudel 1979). Despite that, at a certain stage, a metropolitan perspective tried to make this implicit spatial condition more visible in order to reshape governance tools and frameworks and deal with new forms of space–place–people relationships. For several reasons, this has had limited impact (Salet et al. 2015), so much so, that we could argue if, and to what extent, the metropolitan imaginary should still be considered relevant for understanding how the current 'urban world' works? In other words, is the metropolitan imaginary still useful for framing contemporary urban forms?

In exploring these questions, this chapter contributes to a larger debate in urban studies between those who still theorise the persistent importance of agglomeration effects in the organisation of the contemporary world and others who are convinced that distances and spaces are less and less relevant (or more accurately relevant in a different way). From this perspective, we dialogue with debates on the 'reassertion of space in critical social theory' as proposed by authors since the late 1980s (Soja 1989; Soja 2000; Brenner 2009).

As well as social constructions, spatial imaginaries fulfil a representational role—thus contributing both to identity building and sensemaking for ordinary people and the production of interpretations by experts. More than that, spatial imaginaries have a performative/normative role. Not only do spatial imaginaries provide collective representations/accounts of how the relationship between people–spaces–places work, they have often produced visions on how the future should work or should be. In this way, spatial imaginaries sometimes become a self-fulfilling prophecy in most of the formulations provided at the intersection between expert knowledge and policymaking (Massey 2005, 2007). The aim of this chapter is to focus on this performative dimension.

Over the last four decades, a 'metropolitan-regional' spatial imaginary has emerged, mobilised to address relevant societal challenges. However, not only the analytical value has had relative success: the major argument we put forward in this chapter is that the metropolitan imaginary has tried to play a role in dealing with some of the wicked problems that the twentieth-century planning and governance have been addressing, but again with scarce results. The question we aim at addressing is to what extent metropolitan imaginaries are still relevant to perform a better future? If not, which spatial imaginary can be more helpful to consider, what is at stake, for whom and when? From this perspective, we aim at contributing to the debate on the scalar question that is to say 'the usefulness of a scalar perspective on contemporary urban transformations' (Brenner 2009, p. 3), highlighting the aporias

and bottlenecks of the several attempts of the twentieth century to transform such a perspective in a governance/planning dimension.

10.2 Beyond Periodisation

This chapter builds on the historical reconstruction of how metropolitan and regional imaginaries have emerged during the second part of the twentieth century and first two decades of this century (Harrison et al. 2020; Feiertag et al. 2020). Getting back reflexively and critically within a post-Euclidean vision of history and able to deal with 'the uneven development of regulatory forms across places, territories and scales' (Brenner 2010, p. 184), we have identified two major trends.

The first is the continual, recursive and never exhausted emergence of a metropolitan imaginary, mainly from within national policy and action frameworks. Throughout the post-World War II period, the recourse to the metropolitan spatial imaginary has converged towards an attempt to either deliver increased unity (despite or against growing differentiation) or equity (despite or against growing concentration and disparities). In addition, some recent national reforms and exercises in state rescaling have been reproducing quite traditional reactions to the hollowing out of the state by re-establishing the role of a holistic and systemic framework against complexity, uncertainty and fragmentation (Brenner 2009). In fact, many *metropolitanism* inspired reforms are oftentimes still trying to rework administrative boundaries inherited from the pre-war period (municipal, regional and national at the same time) without really moving away from a Cartesian representation of the urban, which is scarcely able to represent and support the current blurred relationships between people–spaces–places. This activity of state rescaling recursively based on scalar fix multilevel thinking of space rather than transcalar and relational thinking has, at least so far, produced quite limited governance results. This is despite the attention scholars keep giving to it and the political and economic resources invested in it. Scholars have even recursively theorised—following the alternative thesis of Ostrom et al. (1961) about the potentialities of a polycentric political system rather than a metropolitan holistic solution—the need to go beyond simplifying institutional solutions, while others continue to argue that only a national political effort can result in the adoption of a metropolitan spatial imaginary (Salet et al. 2015).

The second trend is related to the emergence of metropolitan and other regional/spatial imaginaries in the post-Keynesian phase as the outcome of the restructuring forces of capitalism and the reorganisation of the economy. Throughout the neoliberal phase of capitalist development, both from a localism perspective (with the emergence of coalitions of actors in non-traditional urban context) and a globalised perspective (with the emergence of coalitions of multiscalar stakeholder in uneven forms and geographies), regionalisation and globalisation—rather than metropolisation—have become more influential spatial imaginaries. As Alan Thierstein (2015) explains the post-Keynesian phase has been characterised by logics of economic restructuring and innovation which have largely bypassed both a cityism

perspective and the metropolitanism inspired imaginary. In that respect, the knowledge economy has completely restructured its relationship with both the traditional urban and non-urban realm. Every kind of metropolitan imaginary can hardly grasp and govern the nature of people–spaces–places relationship that has been produced by the processes of economic restructuring. In this respect, periodisation shows the complex interaction between new and old economic actors and their contribution in reshaping spatial imaginaries: in a first phase, they have tried to reduce fragmentation and governance complexity by supporting more traditional metropolitan imaginaries and alliances; then, they have moved towards a more post-metropolitan perspectives able to perform the changing logic of capitalist accumulation, based on relationality rather than on traditional territoriality, dealing with the persistent relevance of boundaries and the highly networked nature of contemporary people–spaces–places relationships.

Comparing these larger trends, a first important reflection is that few, if any, cases in which metropolitan or regional imaginaries have emerged from beyond a narrow cadre of experts operating in formal institutional spaces. It is challenging to find examples where ordinary citizens—everyday makers (Bang and Sørensen 1999)—are producing, competing or struggling over metropolitan/regional imaginaries (certainly those constructed and mobilised for planning and governance purposes). Even though contemporary life is based on multiple belonging and identities, on developing relationships based on both identity and alterity, between local and global (Tarrius 1993), still the current citizenship idea is based on cityism or metropolitanism. In the following part of the chapter, we will highlight how limited the collective dimension has been in the construction of metropolitan-regional imaginaries: we will present a few cases in which the social construction of these imaginaries has been dealt with as a collective issue, raising questions of citizenship and identity, rather than a simple institutional problem.

A second reflection is about the impact of experts and the scientific debate in the policy-making arenas and institutional design, related to the production of metropolitan spatial imaginaries. According to Patsy Healey, spatial imaginaries are often primarily produced by experts and politicians, but they fail to be ‘shared by a large group of people, if not a whole society’ (Healey 2006, quoted in Davoudi 2018, p. 103). Despite a significant scientific debate about new spatial imaginaries (Healey 2006, 2013), the traditional core-periphery dialectic remains the most influential at the policy-maker level, and with it the metropolitan approach to governance problem solving in large urban areas. This is because, on the one hand, metropolitan-regional governance often remains a technical exercise; while on the other hand, it is still strongly fed by a core city-centric vision based on the production of maps and representation, which are still acting on the nineteenth- and twentieth-century interpretations of the urban. Looking ahead, the question is whether we can we go beyond this impasse?

A final point from this perspective is to what extent new technological tools can help to better represent and perform the complex transcalar world we live in—and eventually help producing a wider public shift in the debate? In his book, *A History of the World in Twelve Maps*, Jerry Brotton (2013) dedicates the last chapter

to discussing Google Earth as the most recent example of maps that 'changed the world'. Rather than a unitary representation of the world, Google Earth has made a representation of it possible, which is at the same time transcalar and local, individual and collective. Being an infinite virtual map that works on different levels of reality, based on both the representation of the self and the relationship with the others (Brotton 2013), Google Earth tries to represent an informational world under continuous expansion, matching the individual to the collective, moving from the single personal location to the web of relations that link one place to others. Google Earth acts as a browser working on a basic law in geography, formulated by Waldo Tobler: 'Everything is related to everything else, but near things are more related than distant things' (Tobler 1970: p. 236). As Brotton reminds readers, Google loves to say that, thanks to online mapping platforms such as Google Earth, we are probably the last generation which is able not only to understand what it means to get lost, but also to see maps produced by individuals, states and collective organisations in the traditional form.

In such a context, what should we expect in the field of urban studies, and in particular spatial planning, which has relied on traditional mapping tools? What are the consequences of these new tools and approaches in trying to grasp the complexity of the contemporary relationship between people–spaces and places: shall we expect that urban and spatial planning are questioned in their very nature (Batty 2013)? As many have commented, academics and policymakers alike are expected to grapple with spatial framings and imaginaries which are simultaneously both territorial and relational (MacLeod and Jones 2007; Jessop et al. 2008; Harrison 2013; Allmendinger et al. 2014). Spatial complexity is increasing, and we lack adequate spatial representations, visions and strategies. As well as maps are not territory (Korzybski 1941), spatial imaginaries cannot be taken for granted. What is more urban-regional imaginaries cannot be built on traditional bi-dimensional and static tools. And we cannot just rely on the travel of ideas from one place to another outside any critical vision, as post-colonial studies argue.

What is at stake in the evolving spatiality of metropolitan imaginaries, therefore, can thus be characterised by several broad challenges, namely how to respond to

- spatial imaginaries creating spaces of engagement for metropolitan elites rather than for the active and participative approach of citizens and the wider public,
- the growing emphasis on dynamic real-time modelling vis-à-vis the potential decline of traditional static representations of space, which questions, in particular, the role played by planning processes,
- the tension between spatial imaginaries which are promoting development in, for, or beyond the metropolis by adopting a spatially selective (city-first) or spatially inclusive (region-first) approach,
- a recognition that many spatial imaginaries lack the institutionalisation required to be meaningful in any significant way and institutional reforms are lacking meaningful and updated spatial perspectives,

- many in vogue spatial imaginaries are derived from a strong geoeconomic logic (e.g. agglomeration, networked economies) which still neglects social, environmental and political issues,
- the challenge of constructing metropolitan spatial imaginaries in the Global South against the backdrop of the New Urban Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals.

10.3 Illustrative Cases

10.3.1 Spatial Imaginaries Creating Spaces of Engagement: Innovative Approaches and the Role of New Technologies

Looking for examples that engage the wider public and produce metropolitan-regional imaginaries that are meaningful for the citizens raises the issue of participation and co-production of imaginaries. As we have seen, metropolitan/regional imaginaries rarely emerge from a large and active initiative of people and places. Participatory procedures might have increased over the last decades and are today at least in Europe-standard in binding statutory planning, in particular at the urban/neighbourhood scale, but they often do not go beyond the stages of informing as well as consulting and are mainly an opportunity to formulate objections against planned land use changes. More room for innovation, experiment and challenging of traditional metropolitan/regional imaginaries can be found in informal processes, using open formats of ideas collection with external experts and citizens.

One of those formats is ideas competitions, which have substituted traditional design competitions, with a prominent example being the Grand Paris competition. Launched in 2007 with the declared aim of producing innovative spatial imaginary for the only large conurbation missing a metropolitan governance framework in France, the Grand Paris competition required multidisciplinary teams to produce new visionary spatial representations of the future of the capital urban region, destined to lead to governance reforms and innovations in planning (Enright 2016). The competition was largely contested for many reasons, but in particular, in so far it implicitly supported the coming back of the state in the field of metropolitan governance (Fedeli 2013). Nevertheless, it was able to promote a vivid public discussion, between experts, policymakers, politicians and citizens. Regional spatial imaginaries produced by the different teams worked, in this respect, as boundary objects (Galison 1997), able to make the interaction possible and interesting around quite a complicated political and social challenge.

We now turn to the role of new digital technologies in developing new spatial imaginaries. The *Next Hamburg* initiative was started in 2009 by urban planners and citizens, putting the latter and their ideas in the centre of producing visions of a

Fig. 10.1 **a** Next Hamburg—Citizen Vision for a New City: The Process Model (*Source* Petrin 2012, pp. 18–19) [1] The community [2] Selection [3] Compilation of a future study | Reflection and revision phase [4] A separate scenario [5] The scenarios are the basis for the Citizen Vision [6] The Citizen Vision is being used by Next Hamburg in the political discussion. **b** Next Hamburg—Citizen Vision for a New City: The Online Dialogue (*Source* Petrin 2012, p. 23)

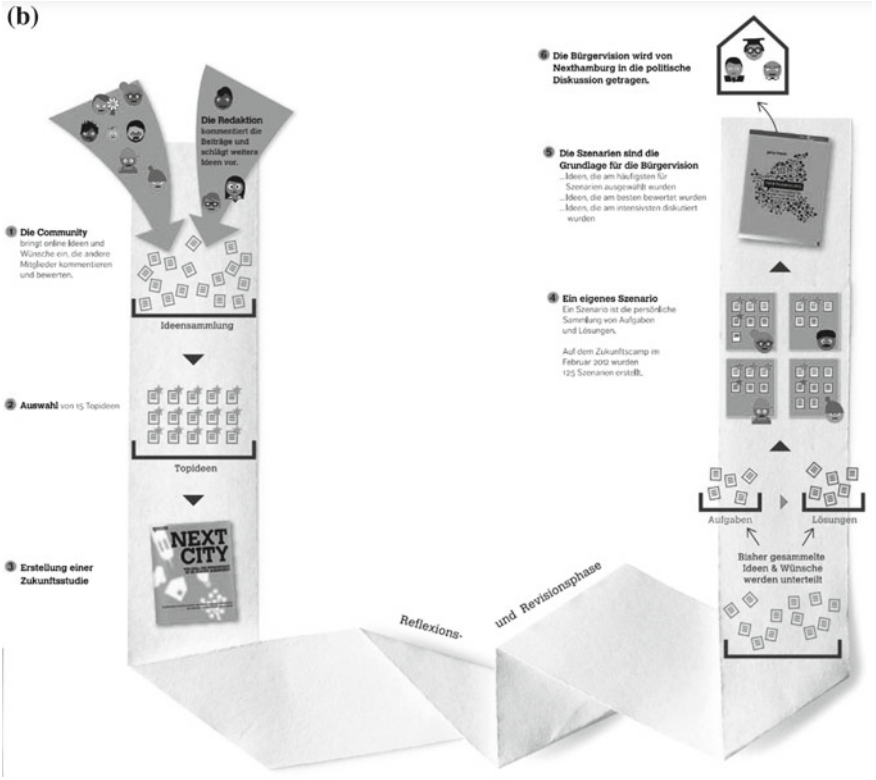

Fig. 10.1 (continued)

desirable city in an ongoing collaborative process, which sought to create new ways of citizen involvement in urban development. The working mode combines digital tools with on-site workshops and is based on an open process of crowdsourcing, inspired to communication modes in the web, meaning that a community of interested citizens could set their agenda, collects, comments and ranks ideas (Petrin 2012, Fig. 10.1a, b). This kind of bottom-up engagement for urban development seeks to overcome the rigid rules of classic participation procedures and questions the hierarchical divide between experts and laypersons (Gebhardt et al. 2014).

In a similar perspective, the Italian case of the strategic project *Città di Città* [City of Cities] tried to promote new ways of conceptualising socio-spatial relationships at the scale of the Milan metropolitan region. The 2004 White Paper was produced to inspire the process by putting forward an initial challenging vision, abandoning a central city perspective and developing the idea that the urban region was a 'city of cities' within a large urban region. This vision was exhibited in a public exposition, in 2007 together with installations illustrating the concepts: mobility simulations, video interviews with actors, an open theatre hosting actors and projects interested in displaying the regional dimension of the policy challenges. This vision was also

the inspiration for the competition of ideas and projects, aiming at producing or consolidating a new regional agency. Despite the political fragility of a strategic plan, the new spatial imaginary was able to penetrate the policy arena in ways not seen before (Fig. 10.2, see Balducci et al. 2011).

In the same direction, we could argue that one way to produce new metropolitan-regional imaginaries that become meaningful for citizens is an incremental approach that links the strategic meta-dimension to tangible projects at different locations within the city regions. Tools of city-regional development that use this approach have been used in the follow-up of IBA, the so-called REGIONALE invented in the German state of North-Rhine Westfalia (Barthels 2018; Danielzyk and Wood 2004). The Regionale 2010 in Cologne–Bonn constituted an important step in building permanent cooperation within the city region and constructing a metropolitan-regional imaginary along the River Rhine as opposed to the much larger metropolitan area Rhine-Ruhr such as imagined by the federal level (Leitbilder) since the 1990s (Blotevogel and Schulze 2010). Another example of a project-based approach that helped to reinforce a metropolitan-regional imaginary by means of festivalisation in parallel to a process of institutionalising the city-regional cooperation was the art festival *l'Estuaire Nantes Saint-Nazaire 2007–2011* along the River Loire between the two French cities Nantes and St Nazaire (Gravari-Barbas 2009).

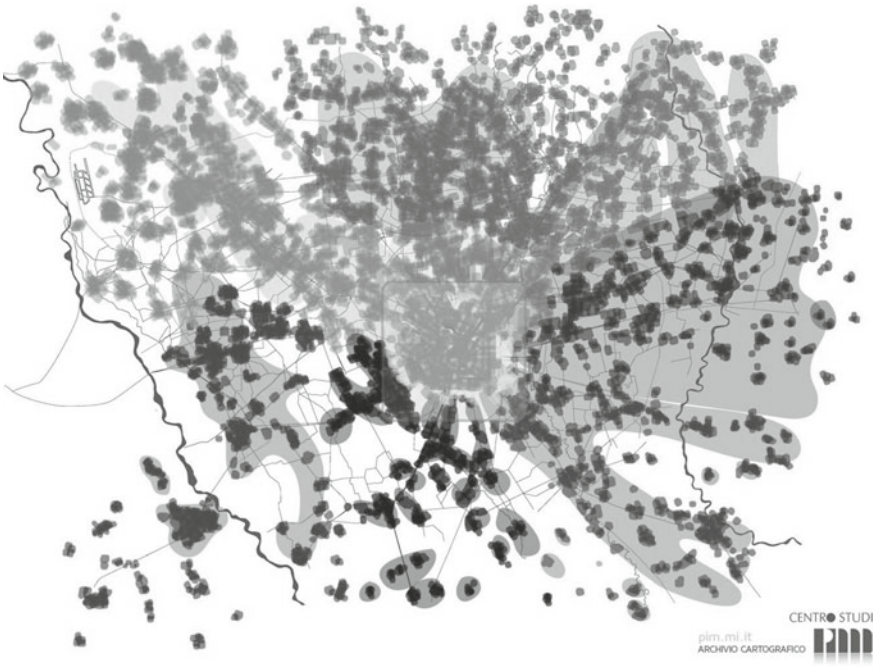

Fig. 10.2 Città di Città [City of Cities] (*Source* Provincia di Milano 2007)

10.3.2 Promoting Development, in, for, or Beyond the Metropolis

We currently have a metropolitan-regional problem, the root of which is that imagining metropolitan-regional futures rests on whether you believe the metropolitan question is an 'either/or' or 'both/and' proposition. The either/or proposition is fuelled by urban economists, many of who believe that large metropolitan regions are the main drivers of growth. They believe that we should only back the so-called winners in policy, that is, promote a city-first, spatially selective approach to metropolitan development that prioritises investment in the largest and most dynamic metropolitan regions. In this way of thinking, there is no place for subsidising less productive places beyond the metropolis. By contrast, the both/and proposition argues economic dynamism is not the sole preserve of large metropolitan regions. From this perspective, not all large metropolitan regions are equally successful in driving economic growth, and it is often smaller and medium-sized cities that are identified as important sources of economic dynamism (Rodríguez-Pose 2018).

Arguably, what is at stake here is a triad of seemingly intractable obstacles to effective metropolitan policymaking:

(1) First, there is a paralysis in many national contexts as metropolitan policymaking swings back and forth between city-first and region-first approaches. Here, as soon as a new policy and spatial imaginary emerge promoting a spatially selective, city-first approach—interpreted to mean prioritising development in large metropolitan regions—attempts are made to make it more spatially inclusive. The same is true in reverse. And when attempts are made to make them complementary, the result is evermore complex abstract configurations of space which are increasingly detached from empirical reality. Two prominent examples are the evolving Wales Spatial Plan (Harrison and Heley 2015) and German Leitbilder (Harrison and Growe 2014).
(2) Second, the widespread mobilisation of metropolitan spatial imaginaries as a vehicle to champion investment into large metropolitan regions directly undermines efforts aimed at national spatial 'rebalancing' to manage inequalities.
(3) Third and linked to this, as Purcell (2006) aptly argued it in the case of the USA (more specifically, Seattle), if metropolitan policy-making favours cities over regions, urban inhabitants over statewide inhabitants, the ensuing danger is that democracy is diminished rather than enhanced.

A new approach is clearly needed to address metropolitan-regional problem associated with striking a balance for promoting development, in, for, or beyond the metropolis. Indeed, in a recent intervention of Iammarino et al. (2019, p. 273), we see signs of a movement towards outlining what this might look like in a European context (albeit its relevance surely extends far beyond the boundaries of Europe):

> a different approach is required, one that strengthens Europe's strongest regions but develops new approaches to promote opportunity in industrial declining and less-developed regions. There is ample new theory and evidence to support such an approach, which we have labelled 'place-sensitive distributed development policy'.

But while this should give us renewed hope, the question which the chapters in this section bring to the fore is that this undoubtedly requires new—or perhaps more accurately, more appropriate—spatial imaginaries as the first step towards and meaningful, successful implementation in practice. This is no straightforward task.

10.3.3 From Spatial Imaginaries to 'Meaningful' Spatial Imaginaries

It is increasingly evident that we cannot assume metropolitan (and other spatial) imaginaries are meaningful in any significant way. The move away from 'old style' territorial regionalism towards more 'ad hoc' competitiveness-driven arrangements is producing more spatial imaginaries. But what of these spatial imaginaries? Five key observations reflect what is at stake for metropolitan regions:

(1) Many spatial imaginaries are mobilised without any accompanying institutional framework and supports. In this way, there is an increasing trend towards what might be termed 'anticipatory governance', understood to reflect actors who are constructing and mobilising spatial imaginaries—often more in hope rather than necessarily firm belief—that if, and when, opportunities arise, they will be positioned to take advantage.
(2) Many spatial imaginaries are short-lived, whereas the institutions required to affect meaningful change take time to embed. Only through a combination of more appropriate, taken to mean smarter, more agileforms of, planning and governance arrangements, and/or time will a spatial imaginary be consolidated by activity which is capable of enacting significant change.
(3) Many metropolitan spatial imaginaries are increasingly institutionalised in the context of one policy area—infrastructure—which is creating a closed-off triad of interests connecting financialisation, urban infrastructure and metropolitan planning and governance (Pike et al. 2019) with little room for other interests and interest groups.
(4) Many spatial imaginaries can no longer be attributed to the traditional institutions of planning and governance, but we are increasingly seeing examples such as university-orchestrated metropolitan imaginaries coming to the fore (see Addie 2018 on London and New York).
(5) Many spatial imaginaries we see today for metropolitan regions are not necessarily pre-defined as 'metropolitan', but rather they are increasingly best seen as de facto metropolitan imaginaries because they emerge in response to the developments in a particular policy sphere from which new metropolitan spatial imaginaries result (see Harrison et al. 2017 on transmetropolitan-regional alliances in the UK).

The task then for researchers is to better understand which new metropolitan spatial imaginaries are likely to be consolidated in such a way to be meaningful and which are equally likely to disappear (Paasi et al. 2018). In the context of this

book, our argument is that this can only be achieved by looking through beyond spatial imaginaries themselves to consider the institutions, policies and planning frameworks that do or do not make them meaningful (Galland et al. 2020).

10.3.4 From a Strong Geoeconomic Logic to Socioenvironmental and Political Issues, with Implications in Policy Mobility

To what extent metropolitan imaginaries have been able to move from the geoeconomic logic to inspire a new idea of citizenship and enter in crucial policy problems and arenas remains an open question. Exploring the most recent literature, we could find limited numbers of occurrences related to the couple metropolitan imaginary/metropolitan citizenship. Actually, so far, metropolitan spatial imaginaries have only have limited mobilisation in debates on the urban question. The very idea of citizenship and rights attached to metropolitan spatial imaginaries remains largely dependent on a cityism perspective. This is because, for many authors, metropolitan regions still 'owe their existence to the ability to valorise agglomeration economies' (Boussauw et al. 2018, p. 1). It is unsurprising then that economical and infrastructural challenges remain the main components of metropolitan imaginary, and that the most dynamic actors trying to foster a metropolitan imaginary are often belonging to the sphere of business communities.

A typical case in this respect is what happened in the Brussels region. In 2012, the*Communauté Métropolitaine de Bruxelles* was instituted according to a special law with the aim of promoting cooperation between the three regions composing the metropolitan zone (Région de Bruxelles-Capitale and the provinces of Flemish Brabant and Walloon Brabant). This was also the occasion of a process of strategic planning, fed by an interesting exercise of spatial imaginaries construction and scenario building. This latter has been the object of an exhibition (*Bruxelles-Métropole—Three Visions for Brussels*) and a publication *Bruxelles-Métropole 2040* (Fig. 10.3). Notwithstanding the high quality of the debate, what remains alive of the process are the initiatives launched by and within the economic development sphere, such as the *Business Route 2018 for Metropolitan Brussels* (Berger 2018). Promoted by the local business communities which have been supporting a metropolitan imaginary as the base for the economic development of the region rather than focussing on new social policies or environmental strategy, its current version 'Brussels metropolitan' recently re-oriented its mission towards addressing the mobility challenge ('mobility shift'). More formally, KCAP Architects & Planners acted as the lead urban planner of *Bruxelles 2040*, working together with ZUS [Zones Urbaines Sensibles] Rotterdam (landscape and public space), Arup Amsterdam (sustainability and transport) and Systematica Milano (mobility).

The second interesting case is that of Zurich, where in 2007 the city, Canton, together with the city of Winterthur and the association of mayors of the Canton,

promoted the idea of Metropolitan Conferences to transform the Zurich commuting area into a space of cooperation. This has since consolidated in the form of a Metropolitan Association supported by more than 120 members, and a joint strategic plan titled *Raumordnungskonzept für die Kantone im Metropolitanraum Zürich* [Spatial planning concept for the cantons in the metropolitan area of Zurich] was delivered by the cantonal planning authorities in 2015. The plan identifies four action spaces building upon a sophisticated metropolitan spatial imaginary (from the most urbanised landscape to the rural and natural landscape), in correlation with the identification of main transportation lines, where different quotas for development are identified at the metropolitan level and to be respected by the Cantons (see among others Diener et al. 2013).

In this case, one could argue about the capacity of the spatial imaginary to generate new forms of coordination between actors, and across policy fields. But as Xu and Yeh (Xu and Yeh 2018) show in a recent report promoted by the World Bank, transportation remains one of 'the most salient task for metropolitan governance, representing up to 70% of work of OECD metro governance bodies' (OECD 2015, quoted in Gómez-Álvarez et al. 2017, p. 24). In this respect, once leaving the

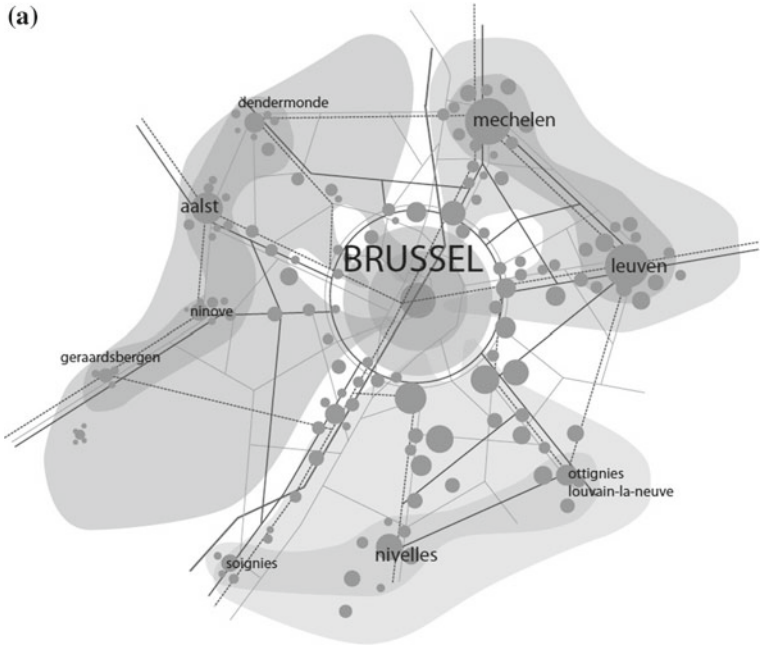

Fig. 10.3 **a** Brussels 2040: Network of centralities in the metropolitan area (*Source* KCAP 2012, p. 4). **b** Brussels 2040: Brussels within its metropolitan area (*Source* KCAP 2012, pp. 5–6). [1] Competition leaves opportunities open → Complementarity for flowering in the region [2] Diversity of landscape and ecology threatened → A solid green and blue fabric [3] Spatial dynamics inefficient → Economical use of space and dynamics [4] Existing network makes sustainable growth more difficult → From radial to multi-modal network

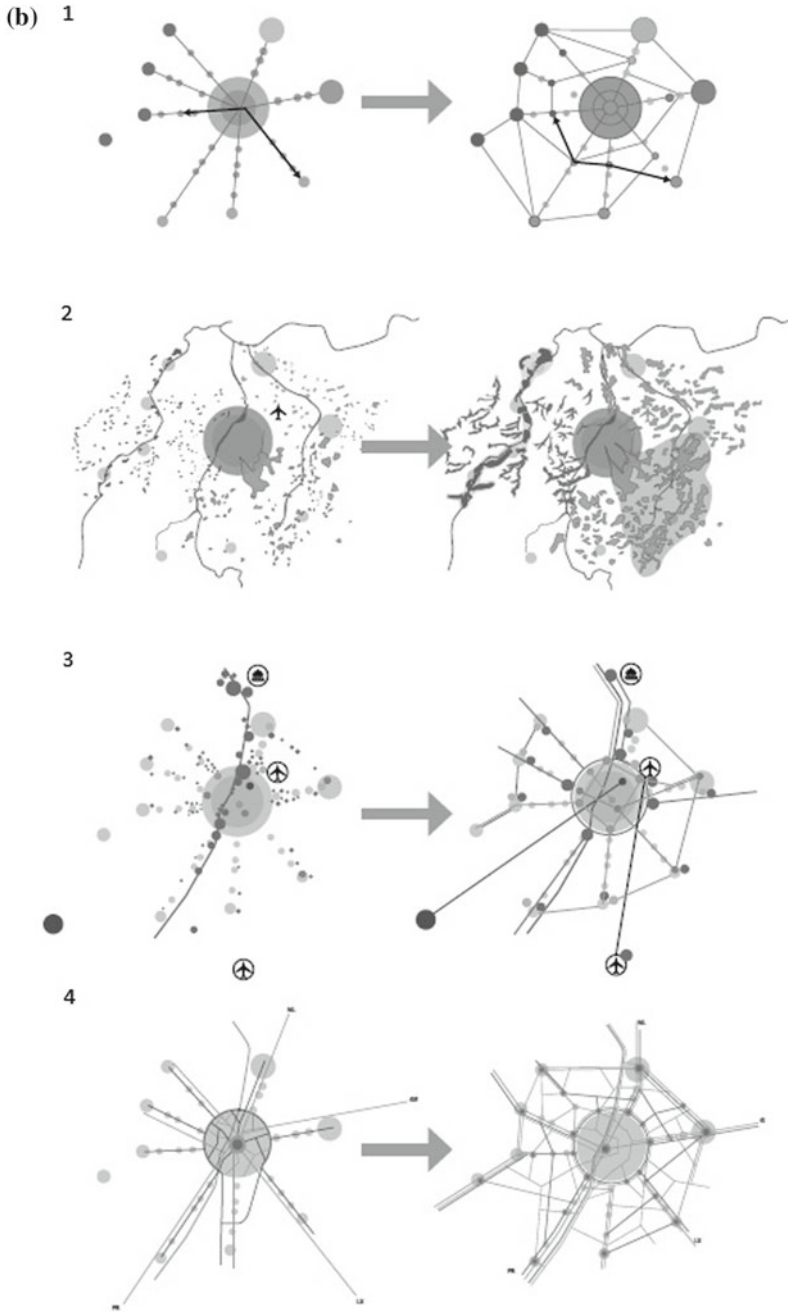

Fig. 10.3 (continued)

European Union, we can find more interesting examples of metropolitan and regional imaginaries role in moving from sectoral policies to more integrated fields of action.

This is the case for example of Bogotà, Colombia, where a non-traditional idea of a metropolitan imaginary and particularly attached to socio-developmental challenges was proposed. The Special Planning Administrative Region (SPAR) was created to bring together four different departments with the capital city of Bogotá. The interesting element of the story is that the new administrative region is at the same time based on the acknowledgement of the urban agglomeration as well as of its relationship with the larger rural region, with its extremely important environmental resources. The metropolitan imaginary in this case is not one based on urban agglomeration, but on the socio-economic-environmental complexity of relationships between the urban and the rural, between territorial divergences and related governance challenges (Córdoba Martínez and González 2017; see also Rojas 2018 on Buenos Aires).

The strategic role of metropolitan imaginary can be detected also in the African continent. An extreme example is that of metropolitan councils, introduced in South Africa as a post-apartheid strategy, since 1994, as a key to support redistribution and equity against racialism. The constitution of metropolitan areas was supported by the White Paper on Local Government in 1998 to foster 'socially just and equitable governance across municipal boundaries with coordinated public investment in both social and physical infrastructure' (Reddy 2017, p. 252), as well as to facilitate economic development and competitiveness by reducing fragmentation. In fact, the metropolitan government was also a way to reduce the gap between white central cities and black townships, introducing also a single tax base.

The debate raised by the preparation of the New Urban Agenda has relaunched the idea that the metropolitan scale can play a crucial role in dealing with the current societal challenges. In particular, the recommendations of the *Habitat III Policy Unit 4 in Urban Governance, Capacity and Institutional Development*, state that in order to deal with the expansion of metropolitan areas 'strong metropolitan governance is a key component of new urban governance' (UN General Assembly 2016, p. 2) as well as 'strategic spatial planning that observes functional rather than administrative boundaries', according to Habitat III Policy Unit. This attention is actually contested, in particular by those scholars that, adopting a post-colonial perspective. Authors including Vanessa Watson contest the idea that such an imaginary could still be applied as neutral and updated (Watson 2009, 2014). In fact, the possibility to plan at such a scale should not be taken for granted (Watson 2018). As Healey (2009, p. 839) reminds us:

> the concept of city-region emerged in Europe in response to particular institutional reconfigurations, it is not a well-developed package which can be inserted into a government system, not an empty vessel which can be applied everywhere.

To this end, the international community should pay careful attention to how Europeanisation has built upon specific spatialities—among which the metropolitan region is first among many—rather than treat it uncritically.

10.4 Conclusions

This chapter reflected upon a challenging theoretical question: do metropolitan spatial imaginaries still play a role in dealing with current societal challenges? In other words, are the spatial imaginaries we rely upon still able to give representation and arguments supporting updated approaches to bothinstitutional design (addressing governance dilemmas in complex urban areas) and spatial policy design (trying to find a way to address societal challenges, throughout a place-based approach). Through illustrative cases, we have introduced examples that show both the need and the space for new approaches to elaborate spatial imaginaries able to move beyond consolidated spatial imaginaries and traditional ways to produce them. All in all, they contribute to identifying three main critical challenges.

First, from the institutional point of view, metropolitan imaginaries are being questioned but remain largely mainstream: in particular, the academic debate is stressing the need to go beyond not only a methodological cityism, but also beyond *metropolitanism*. Conceptualisation such as post-metropolis (Soja 2011), planetary urbanisation (Brenner 2014) and global suburbanisms (Keil 2017) all stress the need to abandon, or at least to go beyond, the idea of metropolitan organisation of space as able to both conceptualise the urban and deal with related societal challenges. Postcolonial studies (Parnell and Robinson 2013; Roy 2009), as well, invite to move beyond the idea that metropolitan imaginaries can be adapted to describe and deal with Southern urbanity and urbanism. Nevertheless, what we end up with are mainly institutional reforms based on metropolitan-dependent spatial imaginaries (if not city dependent). This is particularly true when reforms are promoted at the national level; despite in some cases at the national level, there has been an effort to reflect on how space–society relationship has changed, and this reflection is far from impacting on metropolitan reforms which are often spatially blind.

In this respect, it seems that (re)new(ed) spatial imaginaries have not been able to significantly impact institutional design, which remains mainly attached to the metropolitan imaginary. Some innovative approaches can be detected at a more local level, when either reform is implemented with some room for manoeuvre to the local level to work on spatial imaginaries. Some of these examples are mobile and travel, inspiring post-metropolitan approaches, but still institutional reforms seem to remain spatially blind and unable to deal with the complexity of contemporary urban processes.

Second, from the policy design point of view, metropolitanism is still a powerful rhetorical tool in informing socio-economic programmes. Also, in the EU context, despite the principles set by cohesion policies, most national policies still replicate a traditional model under which metropolitan areas are seen as the engine for development and peripheral areas in need of economic support. What is more and more evident in this respect is that despite clear institutional reforms (limited to a small group of countries which are still investing on metropolitan institutional forms), developmental policies are not able to develop a spatial imaginary based on interrelation. Can we keep thinking about metropolitan areas and peripheral areas

as separated objects? Shall we keep thinking about urban or territorial policies, or rather as urban-territorial policies? Moving beyond, metropolitanism is crucial both for developing an interrelated approach at local level and at a global level. It would allow us to better understand the strong (or weak ties) between large conurbations and what we still look at as the background, helping in that respect to reduce the conflicts between the different city networks trying to lobby for their role in the debate. It would also provide scope to conceptualise and innovatetranscalar imaginaries able to grasp the relationships between different places and its spatial consequences. There is a growing need to go beyond scalar fixes and move towards scalar fluxes, in particular when dealing with policies.

Finally, third, from the point of view of spatial planning, it is also evident that spatial planning processes and arenas are those under which spatial imaginaries are still largely produced, both at the national or local level. Static maps produced in planning processes are still numerous. Nevertheless, many of them are hardly able to depict the complexity of a post-Euclidean geography. There are, however, at the local level some experiences that develop the potential of information technologies to produce dynamic mapping. We also encountered cases of innovation in planning approaches, such as strategic planning processes, which are trying to enhance the public debate over spatial imaginaries. Paradoxically, even if everyday practices are based on a post-metropolitan use of space, it is hard to give simple accounts of it to the wider public. At the same time, the production of spatial imaginaries, is grounded in a field of expertise—spatial planning—which is traditionally based on a pre-defined understanding of territoriality. In this respect, we may argue that being the production of spatial imaginaries mainly grounded on such kind of context, traditional understanding of spatial planning and the legal and normative framework under which spatial planning works could hinder rather than enhance a post-metropolitan vision. At the same time, 'big data' availability stresses consistently our capacity to produce traditional spatial visions: the large amount of data available in real time challenge the production of spatial imaginaries, at least in the way in which so far they have been produced.

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Part IV
Planning Styles

Chapter 11
Past, Present, Future: The Historical Evolution of Metropolitan Planning Conceptions and Styles

Daniel Galland and Mark Tewdwr-Jones

Abstract This chapter examines the historical evolution and emerging trends and priorities of metropolitan planning through an analysis concerning its substance and processes. The point of departure is an analysis of the evolving driving forces that influence the adoption and articulation of different planning conceptions and planning styles in catering to metropolitan development. The aim is to periodise substantive and procedural debates pertaining to change and continuity of the institution of planning in its task to shape metropolitan regions. Emphasis is placed on European casuistry, but we also allude to metropolitan planning efforts undertaken elsewhere. On this basis, we illustrate how different spatial ideas relate to evolving development orientations, and how particular planning rationales reflect key values and preferences shaping the roles of planning and their agents.

Keywords Metropolitan planning · Planning styles · Planning conceptions · Metropolitan regions · Metropolitan policy

11.1 Shifting Metropolitan Planning Conceptions and Styles

In the face of increasingly complex and changing spatial dynamics and relations, twenty-first-century metropolitan regions are fraught with multiple challenges and tensions wherein planning constantly seeks to (re)define its role in contexts of metropolitan governance accretion. Planning stands as one among several competing driving forces holding the capacity to influence metropolitan change, but the purpose of planning in addressing the many socio-spatial challenges that continuously proliferate at the metropolitan scale remains contentious. Indeed, planning has played distinctive yet oftentimes diverging roles in processes of metropolitan spatial

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change over the past half-century. To shed light on the problem of what might be the prospective role(s) that metropolitan planning could or should adopt, we begin the chapter by asking: *How has planning historically conceived metropolitan regions in a spatial sense and what styles has planning embraced and performed in processes of shaping metropolitan development?*

The character of this key question is both substantive and procedural and thereby leads to two types of explorations and understandings. Substantively, it demands an examination concerning the spatial development orientations portrayed by planning as a field of practice with an inherent capacity to shape metropolitan space. Procedurally, it calls for elucidating change and continuity in planning herein understood as a politico-institutional field dealing with ad hoc processes of territorialisation. The emphasis on the procedural rationale behind this question entails unpacking the appeal of the somewhat deviant yet also coexisting styles of planning that have historically catered to metropolitan spatial development.

Substantive approaches concerning scalar structuration and state spatial selectivity provide a suitable analytical window to explore change and continuity in the institution of planning as regards its conception and performance (Brenner 2001, 2004a). The first notions of metropolitan space relate to the historical treatment of scale in spatial planning, which was entwined with the idea that national territories required 'territorial synchrony' to deliver functional unity and spatial coordination while alleviating the flaws and inconsistencies of public policies (Hajer 2003). Accordingly, these early conceptions were associated with positivist, permanent and bounded notions of space (Marston et al. 2005), which are reflected in the planning domain's pursuit 'to tame space and create order' (Davoudi 2012).

Since the late 1980s, the rather rigid and enduring idea of scale has been disputed by a relational conception emphasising socio-spatial processes of a flexible and temporary nature (Jessop 2008; Jessop et al. 2008). As contended by Davoudi (2012, pp. 432–433), the idea of spatial and scalar order thus moved away from its positivist convention towards an interpretive tradition where both scale and space have been increasingly regarded 'as socially constructed with contingent boundaries which are constantly territorialised and open to political contestation'.

In spatial planning, these processes are intrinsically tied with modes of scalar and territorial articulation of state policies and institutions, as well as with modes of spatial organisation and intervention (Brenner 2004a). Accordingly, the transformation of metropolitan institutions, from their consolidation to their eradication, and then again to their resurgence in new forms, is accompanied by the rescaling of planning power and thereby with the evolution of state spatial selectivity (Jessop 1990; Jones 1997; Brenner 2004b). In terms of styles, the positivist, comprehensive and rationalist scope of metropolitan planning became supplemented by a strategic modus operandi (Salet and Faludi 2000; Albrechts et al. 2003). While this reorientation has been largely targeted towards fostering economic growth and competitiveness, for planning it entailed new processes increasingly undertaken outside the formal arenas of elected sub-national governments (Tewdwr-Jones 2008, 2012).

An examination pertaining to change and continuity in planning in relation to twenty-first century metropolitan regions is relevant and timely given the need to gen-

erate new understandings about how metropolitan regions are coping with inherited spatial, sectoral and governance challenges in metropolitan development processes. From the outset, we can point at the fact that in many metropolitan regions throughout the world, and particularly in Europe, contemporary institutional structures and planning practices remain the output of modernist planning understandings with a spatial logic, where 'the radial (core-centric) urban model of the past [puts] outer areas in a dependent position in their relations with core cities' (Salet et al. 2015, p. 251). This hierarchical perception of metropolitan space is still perceptible in the character of most spatial (infrastructure, housing, etc.) policies including planning, which tend to limit the scope of the domain when attempting to tackle the classical spatial expressions of intraurban and interurban inequalities (Harding 2007; Harding and Blokland 2014).

The way we address metropolitan planning in this book relates to contemporary policy and academic debates regarding the current state of metropolitan regions. Planning for twenty-first-century metropolitan regions is fraught with multiple tensions and conflicts between the pursuit of competitiveness and economic growth at the metropolitan level on the one hand (OECD 2015), and the quest for metropolitan sustainability on the other (Wheeler 2000, 2009). While globalisation stands as a main external driving force influencing metropolitan competition, the performance of metropolitan planning is similarly conditioned by path-dependent national planning systems, their institutional structures and inherited regional planning practices (Tewdwr-Jones 2012; Knapp et al. 2015; Galland and Elinbaum 2018). In this respect, spatial planning systems directly influence metropolitan development insofar as they determine the relationship between levels of governance, which impact on the instrumental content as well as the planning processes associated with metropolitan spatial plans and strategies (Elinbaum and Galland 2016).

Our aim is to examine how planning for metropolitan regions has taken shape in different political contexts over time. We first provide a historical account concerning the roles adopted by planning in catering to metropolitan spatial development. We then address the question of 'agency' considering different waves of metropolitan reforms generating planning policies and that are shaped by multiple actors in agenda setting processes, where different policy and leadership styles emerge from power relations and conflicting interests (Şahin et al. 2020). To develop an understanding of whose interests lie behind more recent redefinitions and reinterpretations of metropolitan planning, we further explore other key drivers that influence its evolution, ranging from perspectives that interconnect land-use and strategic spatial planning with the treatment of scale and the means through which this is accomplished. Finally, we turn to examine how metropolitan planning is currently performing in situated contexts to discuss prospective roles of planning. Here, our intention is to scrutinise what is at stake for the future of metropolitan regions by pointing at the enduring hallmarks of metropolitan planning while analysing whether these are features of metropolitan governance, metropolitan actor practices, or metropolitan drivers of change (Tewdwr-Jones and Galland 2020). We point at the required 'agility' of metropolitan planning to 'breakthrough' proactive and participatory long-term visioning exercises, to 'break up' into co-visioning and co-produced forms, and

to ‘break out’ into projects, events and interventions that seem to stretch beyond the limits and parameters of single fixed plans. Our intention in the final chapter is then to question the styles through which metropolitan regions could perform in what we label a ‘post-policy era’ in metropolitan planning.

The present chapter characterises the historical evolution of metropolitan planning. Section 11.2 takes as its point of departure the evolving driving forces that influence the adoption and articulation of planning conceptions and planning styles in catering to metropolitan development. It periodises substantive and procedural debates pertaining to change and continuity of the institution of planning in its task to shape metropolitan regions. Emphasis is placed on Western Europe while also alluding to metropolitan planning efforts elsewhere. Section 11.3 delves into two illustrative cases that show how different spatial ideas relate to evolving development orientations, and how particular planning rationales reflect key values and preferences shaping the roles of planning and their agents. The cases are also illustrative of how evolving conceptions of metropolitan planning render visible ad hoc styles of planning in different institutional contexts, which in turn yield an array of planning instruments targeted for implementation.

11.2 Periodisation of Planning Conceptions and Planning Styles for Metropolitan Regions

The different configurations of state restructuring that emerged in Western Europe and elsewhere since the post-World War II era generated an array of conceptions of metropolitan space as well as a collection of planning styles for metropolitan regions. Through periodisation, we develop an account concerning substantive and procedural change and continuity in metropolitan planning since the interwar years of Spatial Keynesianism until the present era of (Multi-) City Regionalism. Our intention is to develop a ‘retrospective’ understanding of how the metropolitan problematique has been conceived by planning over the past century to further elaborate a situated judgement concerning enduring and contemporary metropolitan questions.

From the medieval ages until the mid-nineteenth century, the spatial growth of most European capitals and other large trading urban centres was constrained to surface areas of only a few squared kilometres, typically demarcated by ramparts constructed for defence purposes against invasions. The advent of industrialisation alongside increasing migration influxes paved the way towards the development of new districts beyond confined cities, which were increasingly subjected to congestion, overcrowding and inadequate sanitary conditions. In the pre-World War II era of Spatial Keynesianism, these cities had already sprawled into areas oftentimes embracing numerous contiguous municipalities.

The negative spatial side effects of intensive industrialisation and polarised economic growth in a few urban centres within national territories were already noticeable in Europe and North America during the interwar period. Here we can point

at persistent urban sprawl, continuous industry demands for new land, lagging non-industrialised cities and regions, and an unrelenting deterioration of working-class living conditions. In addressing these socio-spatial challenges, the early post-WWII era of Spatial Keynesianism endorsed the first comprehensive metropolitan planning efforts inspired by international planning ideas and concepts that arose from the New Town Movement, the Regional Planning Association of America, and the ad hoc idea of 'comprehensive planning'.

The legacy of the New Town Movement in relation to metropolitan planning relates to the adoption of positivist spatial concepts founded on a territorial logic, which largely influenced the making of the first metropolitan plans. Metropolitan space was represented through imaginaries that functionally portrayed it as a container (Graham and Healey 1999). These spatial imaginaries travelled widely and were tailored to fit different metropolitan areas throughout Europe and beyond. An emblematic milestone of metropolitan planning in this era is Patrick Abercrombie's 1944 Plan for Greater London, which adopted the idea of developing 'self-contained satellite cities' as a remedy to overcrowding. Urban sprawl for its part was to be hindered via 'green belts' delineated around the industrial cities.

The advent of metropolitan planning during Spatial Keynesianism should be similarly understood in the light of the establishment of national spatial planning systems, which emerged from the idea of building functional cities through regulation. The growth discourse of the early post-World War II era, which advocated progress and underscored instrumental rationality as the means to plan for ideal social orders (Harvey 1987), implied that such functionality is attained via regulatory planning tools such as land use and zoning. The rise of 'modern' metropolitan planning thereby placed emphasis on development control as a means to deal with the socio-spatial challenges and externalities of the industrial city.

Other metropolitan planning tools and practices were intrinsically related to the developmental and redistribution concerns associated with regional planning policies and practices (Friedmann 1963). In European welfare states, this was partly concerned with reconstruction programmes and partly related to population and economic redistribution schemes. In North America and Latin America, the character of regional planning was rather developmental and also a reflection of state government functions and constituted public authorities, as evidenced by the Tennessee Valley Authority in the USA or powerful development corporations in Chile and Venezuela (Friedmann 1966). The regulatory appeal of regional planning and its influence in metropolitan planning practice was evidenced by the regional containment programmes of the UK (Hall and Peacock 1973), the promotion of transit-oriented development programmes, the growth management schemes that included procedures to guarantee the availability of services to meet the demands of growing populations, and the introduction of metropolitan growth boundaries to contain city regions.

Finally, the comprehensive appeal of the first metropolitan plans had the dual premise to attain sectoral coordination, on the one hand, and to attribute a particular form of 'contained' urban growth on the other. Drawing partly on the emblematic milestones of urban planning (where planning was chiefly understood as urban

design) and partly on rational comprehensive planning, the widely subscribed planning style of the post-World War II era, the advent of metropolitan planning witnessed the development of technical expertise that included population extrapolation and forecasting, as well as land-use demarcations and other development control instruments and measures. The comprehensive character of the metropolitan spatial plans similarly represented the first planning attempts to integrate policy issues such as traffic infrastructure, industry sites, housing areas and environmental aspects. While in many metropolitan cases, the idea of 'comprehensiveness' responded to that of controlled urban expansion through land-use regulation, in others it provided a generic and indicative scheme to guide metropolitan growth and development through coordination.

Tensions between urban development control and accelerated economic and population growth gradually led to the crisis of comprehensive metropolitan planning in the 1970s. Often, the urban extension processes of city regions took place in arenas characterised by conflicting stakeholder values and policy objectives. This was evidenced by frictions and clashes between the constraining character of planning principles and the laissez-faire growth objectives of urban policies and developers. For instance, through functional zoning, urban growth in several metropolitan areas was being typically forecasted within inner and middle zones—thus leaving outer zones for environmental preservation purposes. However, the unexpected increase of industrialisation and economic growth of the 1950s and 1960s meant that a pronounced fraction of preservation areas was filled in. The urban pressure on outer zones was similarly exacerbated by the rising demand for single-family housing and the unforeseen upsurge of private transportation from the 1960s onwards.

In many metropolitan contexts from Europe to North America and beyond, the aftermath of the 1973–4 oil crisis brought along a general discouragement in relation to the idea of planning at any scale. Several metropolitan areas underwent a period of significant economic decline and high unemployment rates, partly due to national-level decentralisation and redistribution policies and efforts of Spatial Keynesianism. During the late 1970s and through the 1980s, national welfarist governments in Europe progressively asserted that the national objectives of industrial expansion and population redistribution had already been met. The transition from Keynesian welfarism to a Schumpeterian workfare regime hence implied the attenuation of national welfare states as service providers and thereby of their interventionist role (Jessop 1990; Healey et al. 1997).

The territorial logic of spatial planning gradually became substituted by a place logic, which entailed substituting the Keynesian principle of equal development with a development orientation fostering diversity. The era of localism throughout the 1980s centred on flagship urban regeneration projects, which stimulated an 'outburst' of new planning styles. The regeneration of former industrial areas in major cities throughout Europe and North America displayed a diversity of planning processes characterised by shifting institutional arrangements, planning rationalities, and market conditions. As argued by Brindley et al. (1996), planning styles such as 'trend planning' introduced market criteria into development control decisions to enable spatial development in accordance with market demand. In trend planning,

the planning system was to adapt to market considerations through the modification of plans or via the direct intervention of powerful actors. In other styles such as 'leverage planning', the private sector was perceived as the main driver of change and the 'solver' of local urban issues while the role of public planning shifted towards promoting the development of public–private partnerships.

On into the 1990s, the former state spatial project of planning had to a large extent already transitioned from being centralised and administratively uniformed towards becoming decentralised and administratively customised (Brenner 2004a). Similarly, state spatial strategies progressed from being advanced by a single scale promoting socioeconomic activities to being realised by multiple scales concentrating socioeconomic development at particular locations within national territories. The place logic and diversity development orientation of the era of Localism was replaced with scale logic and a development reorientation towards the pursuit of international competitiveness. In Europe, this era of New Regionalism witnessed the 'metropolitanisation' of national spatial planning systems, which promoted large urban regions to deploy of locational policies. As put by Brenner (2004a, pp. 227–230)

> Spatial planning has become a major institutional arena in which the rescaling of state space has been promoted [to] facilitate the mobilization of locational policies within major urban regions … National governments have introduced explicitly metropolitanized, developmentalist approaches to spatial planning, often in close conjunction with new, growth-oriented forms of national urban policy.

Since then, the distinctively regulatory and land-use-oriented substance of spatial planning became incrementally supplemented by strategic content. The transition of project-based planning of the 1980s to strategic spatial planning during the 1990s and its evolution thereafter into the 2000s is illustrative of the advent of relational place-making processes for decision making. This is evidenced by the formation of governance arenas in and out the hierarchical structures of spatial planning systems as the means to influence territorial transformations (Healey 2007). Despite the apparently rigid, cascade-like hierarchy of several national planning systems, the formation of these ad hoc horizontal and vertical networks of actors has determined the possibility for certain city regions to undergo episodes of strategic spatial planning. While this planning reorientation has been geared towards fostering new governance capacities, the record of achievement associated with strategic spatial planning in metropolitan development processes is nonetheless disputable (Davoudi 2018).

The above implies that strategic spatial planning is essentially discretionary in its quest to link (strategic) objectives to spatial policies. An interpretation is that the strategic role of planning has enabled national governments to move freely within spatial planning systems in pursuit of particular interests (e.g. accelerating and selecting ad hoc regions in pursuit of spatial development and economic growth) (Galland and Elinbaum 2015). Since strategic spatial planning does not deal with particular land-use content as statutory planning does, it allows for negotiation processes between a number of key actors attempting to shape metropolitan spatial development. This further indicates that scales have shifted from being 'hard-edged' containers into rather flexible and less-defined spaces (Haughton et al. 2010; Allmendinger et al. 2015).

Besides the formal regulatory spaces of planning, several Western European countries witnessed the emergence of alternative 'institutional spaces of governance' during the 2000s. The aim of these soft spaces was to bring together an array of policy actors to rework 'the real geographies of development' and to reach more effective policy delivery and integration (Allmendinger and Haughton 2009). According to Haughton et al. (2010), soft spaces are to be interpreted as a 'further round of rescaling' even though in diverse city-regional planning contexts they remained flexible and temporary. The 'metropolitanisation' of national spatial planning during the 2000s shows how national spatial strategies fixed their attention on city-regional spaces to motivate bottom-up governance initiatives including public and private stakeholders working across policy sectors and administrative scales.

Despite the continuity of similar metropolitan planning trajectories during the 2010s, more recent tendencies show that planning styles in several European countries increasingly begin to diverge. This deviation is particularly featured in relation to the upsurge of policy instruments and their concomitant governance-oriented planning practices at the scale of city regions. The proliferation of informal planning practices based on contractual, development agreement-based planning practices shows how some national states currently seek to generate strategic spatial development projects in city regions (Mäntysalo et al. 2015; Bäcklund et al. 2018; Nordregio 2017).

Urban contractual policies or agreement-based practices are considered strategic multi-scalar and cross-sectorial arrangements occurring beyond formal spatial planning systems. As such, they feature a series of discretionary planning practices despite their embeddedness in contexts of polity and planning cultures that are often identified with welfarist models and social democratic traditions—such as in the Nordic countries. In most cases, the insertion of urban contractual policies is mainly aimed at aligning land-use planning and transport objectives while coordinating and committing local and national actors to regional planning strategies.

Conceived by some as a form of planning innovation in terms of how national-level planning intervenes in city-regional affairs, these practices nonetheless affect the vertical relationships between local, regional and national levels and the principle of subsidiarity. In Nordic contexts, legitimacy concerns have been raised about the 'depoliticising effect' that accompany the efficient implementation of these agreements given their lack of clarity in terms of who is held responsible for their implementation (Mäntysalo et al. 2015). In other context such as the UK, contractual practices also include private financing, which places other types of structural limits on the welfare state and the planning system itself (Raco 2013).

Thinking prospectively about the character of metropolitan planning on into the 2020s, we can point at a series of broader trends (unpacked in Tewdwr-Jones and Galland 2020):

- City and regional planning not undertaken through 'planning' or 'elected subnational governments'.
- Metropolitan spatial development through city deals and other contractual-based approaches.

- A focus on shorter-term policy cycles and less attachment to plans and strategies, and more to guiding visions.
- The ongoing problem of finding an 'institutional fix' for sub-national/regional problems being perhaps outdated.
- Institutional fix replaced with post-planning forms that are more place-based but agile, leaving for uncertainty about accountability and democracy.
- Jostling of power within regions and between regions and centre/locale—planning as a pendulum swinging between government, governance and delivery agencies.
- Inappropriateness of administrative boundaries and jurisdictions for spaces of flows that are much more highly fluid.
- A focus on shorter-term policy cycles and less attachment to plans and strategies, and more to guiding visions.

11.3 Planning Conceptions and Styles in Practice: Illustrative Metropolitan Regions

Using the above periodisation, this section illustrates how planning for metropolitan regions has adopted different substantive conceptions and procedural styles in attempting to shape metropolitan development processes. Our aim is to underscore the relevance of the preceding periodisation insofar as how metropolitan regions have been planned over the course of the past 8 or so decades. The cases of Oslo and East England are selected to illustrate the historical evolution of metropolitan planning through different periods starting with the advent of positivist planning, followed by the subsequent adoption of an array project-based planning styles during the 1970s–80s, the rise of strategic spatial planning efforts as of the 1990s, the creation of soft spaces of governance in the first decade of the 2000s and, finally, the adoption of contractual-based planning practices, an emergent style of metropolitan planning occurring in both the UK and Scandinavia.

11.3.1 The Evolution of Metropolitan Planning in Oslo

Oslo is characterised by a distinctive and markedly progressive metropolitan planning legacy. Its advent paralleled the steppingstones of the modern institution of Norwegian planning, which was based on the idea of building functional cities through regulation (Naustdalslid and Tombre 1997). During the early pre-World War II era of Spatial Keynesianism, planning legislation was modernised in reaction to 'inflexible schemes' conveyed by earlier laws (Lorange and Myhre 1991). Conceived as a tool for controlling urban expansion, the Norwegian Building Act of 1924 underscored the expansive settlement patterns and infrastructural aspects of new urban plans through planning regulation delivered via zoning and layout plans (*reguler-*

ingsplan). Comprehensive zoning plans were thus aligned with the idea of steering urban expansion through land-use regulation and, in so doing, contributing to mitigate the escalating socio-spatial challenges as well as other externalities derived from its growing industrial character (Furre 1991).

The dawn of modern metropolitan planning in Oslo is Harald Hals' substantiated master plan proposal for Greater Oslo advanced in 1929. Importing a heterogeneous yet selective assortment of contemporary international planning notions and ideas, the Norwegian conception of 'the metropolitan' emerged from a synchronised fusion of regional planning concepts and methods alongside a combination of urban expansion schemes and compact city models. These included inter alia German star-shaped expansion patterns, Howard's Garden City model and ideas of the New Town Movement, and Le Corbusier's high-rise city (Hals 1929 in Lorange and Myhre 1991). Conceived as functional patterns of 'contained' spatial organisation, these foundational spatial concepts and visions advocating metropolitan thinking were partly readjusted and partly superseded by other international notions in the Metropolitan Plan and Vision for Greater Oslo published in 1934—whose main features formed the basis for spatial strategies aimed at developing the metropolitan region during subsequent decades (Grønning and Galland 2019).

Underpinned by social democratic ideology, the post-World War II era of Spatial Keynesianism witnessed the emergence of the labour movement in Norway coupled with the consolidation of the welfare state (Fiskaa 2005). A new idea of comprehensive planning came about with the passing of the 1965 Building Act (*Bygningslov*) (Holsen 2017) and with it, the introduction of zoning at the metropolitan level. As the governing of Greater Oslo through master plans and zoning plans exceeded the limits of the municipality, the comprehensive appeal of metropolitan planning held the dual premise to attain sectoral coordination, on the one hand, and to attribute a particular form of 'contained' urban growth on the other.

In common with other metropolitan regions throughout Europe, the era of localism in Oslo implied a wider focus on urban redevelopment through project-based planning. As Norway underwent a liberal turn during the 1980s, Oslo's waterfront was used as a 'terrain of political entente' (Grønning 2011, p. 141): 'an approach which was incompatible with the city's institutional structure and which anticipated future practices'. The promotion of planning styles such as 'trend planning' and 'leverage planning' in Oslo's urban redevelopment became prominent as it did elsewhere in Europe (cf. Brindley et al. 1996). On the one hand, the direct intervention of new actors entailed that the Norwegian planning system adapted to market criteria, which were being introduced to development control decisions to enable spatial development in accordance with market demand. On the other, the private sector was partly to be perceived as a co-driver of change and partly as the 'solver' of local urban issues while the role of public planning shifted towards promoting the development of public–private partnerships.

The era of New Regionalism in Norway was characterised by period of economic recession followed by new growth conditions, where national authorities had to cope with the rapid pace of economic, social and political change in cities. Being at the forefront of the sustainability paradigm, Norway merged new ideas of sustainable

development with former welfarist mindsets, as illustrated by the government's Environmental City programme (Grønning 2011). On into the 2000s, planning at the scale of city regions in Norway emerged in response to the national government's multipurpose spatial development agenda, which seeks to foster resilient city-regional spaces by simultaneously embracing environmental protection, climate change mitigation and adaptation, economic vitality as well as social justice and well-being. The promotion of these ambitious goals is evidently accompanied by complex spatial dynamics at the metropolitan level, where multiple interdependent actors cater to spatial development in ad hoc multi-level governance arenas.

The 2015 Regional Plan of Oslo and Akershus constitutes a shared vision for strategic collaboration between local and regional authorities. However, in parallel, the rise of informal institutions epitomised by urban contractual policies (*bymiljøavtalene*, *byutviklingsavtalene* and, more recently, *byvekstavtalene*) signify an innovative way to organise the implementation of metropolitan spatial development. These urban growth agreements seek to align land-use planning and transport objectives while coordinating and committing local and national actors to regional planning strategies (Tønnesen 2015). The implementation of agreement-based approaches in Norway has evident implications. While their intention to align planning objectives and to coordinate planning actors might be conceived as a case of planning innovation insofar as national-level intervention on urban and regional affairs is concerned, these policy instruments affect the vertical relationship between local, regional and national levels as exhibited by the Norwegian comprehensive-integrated planning system. At the same time, the efficient implementation capacity that these agreements assure is accompanied by a 'depoliticising effect' thereby triggering legitimacy implications.

In 2020, the Oslo metropolitan area will be moving away from what can be regarded as an unusually good institutional solution in European terms. Product of the implementation of a reform of local and regional government structure, the cross-cutting collaboration between Oslo and the regional authority Akershus, which represents most of the outer part of the functional urban area, will have to become adapted to a new administrative and political reality, where the regional authority (in charge of transport and strategic planning) will have to deal with a substantially larger region compared to the present functional area of Oslo (a typical problem for many European cities).

11.3.2 The Evolution of Metropolitan Planning in North East England

North East England, centred on the metropolitan region of Tyne and Wear with the two cities of Newcastle upon Tyne and Sunderland, has been subject to a continuous series of institutional and planning changes. After 1945, attention started to turn attention to urban renewal with a programme of state investment by the Tyne and Wear Metropolitan County Council and Newcastle City Council sought to renew

the urban core through development plans for the city of Newcastle upon Tyne in 1954 and 1963. The city was modernised through an urban motorway, city centre pedestrianisation, a university campus, infrastructure programmes for a new metro, several bridges over the River Tyne, a road tunnel beneath the river, airport extension, and a social housing scheme that replaced substandard nineteenth-century housing with modern spacious apartments on the metropolitan edge. The funding to achieve this rebuilding programme accrued mainly from local government, alongside private investment, in line with the adopted plans for the city and a strategic plan for the county.

By the 1980s, changes in political ideology at the national level from the Thatcher Government towards the market caused less reliance on strategic planning in metropolitan regions. Metropolitan county councils were unilaterally abolished in 1986 along with strategic plans, and direct funding by the centre of local infrastructure programmes declined. In its place, the UK Government set up ad hoc governance vehicles that either removed local authority planning powers or else curtailed them in favour of business-led solutions. In Tyne and Wear, both Enterprise Zones and Urban Development Corporations were created with direct funding from London and whose boards comprised of minister-appointed industry and local government leaders. New governance agencies created opportunities for service sector employment centred on retail, warehousing, riverside regeneration, and lifestyle living housing. Individual local councils adopted urban regeneration schemes that redeveloped older derelict industrial sites and transformed these into cultural and creative zones. Newcastle–Gateshead's quayside became one of the first successful examples globally of waterside regeneration from the early 1990s. Further developments in the 2000s saw a series of project investments with public–private funding, including the Baltic Contemporary Art Centre, the Sage Concert Hall, and the Millennium Bridge. A noticeable hallmark of this planning approach, and in contrast to what had occurred between 1945 and 1980, was that interventions occurred without any form of strategic metropolitan government, devoid of a metropolitan plan and relied on ad hoc project initiatives.

Metropolitan planning during the period 1980–2011 comprised a reliance on informal governance arrangements that could be established incrementally to deal with new drivers of change; ideologically it also meant a turning away from elected local government and formal layers of planning as the institutional mechanisms. Even after the election of the Blair Government in 1997, there was selective state support for governmental and planning interventions. Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) were set up in England including one for the Newcastle region that had significant resources attached, but these had a more economic investment focus; furthermore, Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS) were created that addressed long-term strategic planning issues. With the election of the UK Coalition Government in 2010, the government abolished all RDAs and RSSs, thus returning the region to a metropolitan institutional void that had been seen in the 1980s and 1990s. In their place, there was a reliance on quasi regional institutions, divided up into different policy issues, and a focus by the UK Government on competitive bidding by local government for selective funding for strategic projects rather than through an allocated block grant.

City Deals were rolled out across England for successful bidding cities including one for Newcastle and Gateshead in 2012. The Newcastle City Deal created an Accelerated Development Zone for major growth, a £25 million grant for housing renewal, and investment in engineering. The deal was implemented to a local government plan, with a focus on skills, regeneration and investment, and local plans were amended to conform to it. Since 2010, local government in England has been subject to a prolonged period of austerity stemming from the 2008 financial crisis; this has resulted in Newcastle City Council alone losing £221 million (€256 million) since 2010 from the block grant allocation with no obvious way to raise additional finance beyond small increases in local and business rate taxation. This has meant the local authority losing 40% of its staff and expertise to address citywide issues.

In 2015, the UK invited metropolitan regions of England to bid for devolution, allowing the transfer of existing powers and finance from London to Combined Authorities of local authorities and the establishment of 'metro mayors'. In North East England, a proposed North East Combined Authority collapsed due to intra-regional power battles, but in 2018 a new North of Tyne Combined Authority (NTCA) was agreed. For metropolitan governments, austerity remains in place. NTCA will receive £30 m (€34 million) per year from UK Government for skills, employment, housing and planning, but only covers half of the metropolitan region—Newcastle, North Tyneside and Northumberland to the north—and excludes Gateshead, South Tyneside and Sunderland to the south. The planning arrangements will see the creation of a North of Tyne Planning Framework covering planning and housing but not transport, and will not be able to address metropolitan-wide planning issues. NTCA will have a directly elected mayor to initiate the framework but he/she will have to negotiate with individual local authorities for strategic investments.

What we are seeing in regions like the North East is the replacement of formal metropolitan arrangements, centred on metropolitan government and metropolitan planning, with fragmented arrangements that are disruptive. This is combined with a preference for competitive bidding to the UK Government for strategic projects, alongside the hollowing out of traditional elected forms of local government. How £30 million per year will even begin to address metropolitan regional needs without wider metropolitan planning forms, together with a political geography that only partly covers the metropolitan area, and where delivery cannot be achieved unless partnerships are negotiated between different public institutions, multi-level government and the private sector, remains an intriguing question. The reliance on a metropolitan plan is not even contemplated. For those organisations and communities in the region that retain a belief in the values and principles of metropolitan planning, joined-up governance, and sustainability, new strands of citywide planning are occurring led through almost oppositional forces, that seek to create the narratives, uncover the evidence base, and work transparently to make sense of what is going on.

11.4 Conclusions

Our aim with this chapter has been to characterise the features and trends of metropolitan planning in substantive and procedural terms over time. Our intention has been to develop a retrospective yet also contemporary account that explains how the metropolitan problematique has been conceived by planning to date. The idea behind this approach has been thus to pinpoint how planning has sought to approach metropolitan questions while addressing them through distinctive conceptions and styles. The periodisation highlighted how planning for metropolitan development first endeavoured to determine the resources to deal with spatial interrelationships in the long term while adopting a rational comprehensive style to harness data and flows of information. One of the domain's enduring hallmarks emerged then: its quest to achieve place-based distinctiveness while anticipating a future vision of place. This hallmark of planning remains even though nowadays its role is no longer fit for purpose. While the longue durée reveals how metropolitan planning stereotypically relied on representative democracy, a public service ethic in pursuit of the greater good, and a strategic 'place-with-plan' approach, the more recent decades of neoliberal influence exhibit a mix of government, governance and govern-less forms, where the primacy of the global market causes that several metropolitan regions become more prevalent than nation states.

The rise of unprecedented external driving forces such as globalisation and financialisation, alongside their powerful influence to shape metropolitan futures tend to out-trump planning. Consequently, in contexts of metropolitan governance accretion, the planning domain only seems to cope with such driving forces through procedural styles that are characteristically short-termed, siloed and which respond to a spatial fixity in time focused on individual projects. In doing so, planning increasingly relies more on the adoption of informal tools, instruments and policies, which altogether seek to align different actors in highly volatile global and national contexts. These emerging conditions of planning are not exempt from internal dilemmas: should planning continue to have long-term, bounded and legitimate plans under the pressure for short-term agility? How should planning cope with the issue of borrowing policies and ideas from different territorial and sociopolitical realities? Contrasting with its original condition of permanence as a state institution, the present requirement for planning to be a mechanism of convenience to align and coordinate between agencies often means that planning fails to endure. Under these circumstances, there is an imminent need to revisit basic yet fundamental questions: What should be the purpose of planning in the metropolitan century? Who is planning for and whose interests should planning defend?

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Chapter 12
In What Sense an Evolution of Metropolitan Planning Actors?

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Abstract This chapter addresses the changing roles of actors in metropolitan planning considering generations of metropolitan reforms where planning strategies and policies are shaped by agents with oftentimes conflicting conceptions and agendas about metropolitan planning. We identify and examine the transformation of key metropolitan planning actors in relation to fluctuating planning styles and assess the unintended consequences associated with changing power relations. We use illustrative examples from the West and Global South where ad hoc actors and constellations of actors shape metropolitan planning in different ways. The overall contribution is to provide a trajectory of the changing nature of influential actors and the interests that lie behind the redefinition and reinterpretation of metropolitan planning.

Keywords Metropolitan planning · Metropolitan actors · Agenda setting · Planners · Agency

> It is at this point that we can identify an albeit subterranean but nonetheless vital connection between the rise of urban entrepreneurialism and the postmodern penchant for design of urban fragments rather than comprehensive urban planning for ephemerality and eclecticism of fashion and style rather than the search for enduring values for quotation and fiction rather than invention and function and finally for medium over message and image over substance (Harvey 1989, p. 13).

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12.1 Why Does Agency Matter in Metropolitan Regions?

The role of different actors with a stake in metropolitan planning has significantly changed over the course of the past few decades. Resulting from various geopolitical, national and local imperatives, the capacity of actors to influence the setting of metropolitan agendas has gradually shifted to a more complex interplay of power between emerging actor networks at various scales. This transition has considerably weakened the former 'steering' role of actors with a formal mandate in metropolitan planning and led to new contractual practices that oftentimes circumvent orthodox metropolitan planning processes. In contexts of constant metropolitan reforms and metropolitan governance accretion, the increasing involvement of new actor constellations holding the latent capacity to shape the 'planning' of metropolitan regions underscores the relevance of addressing agency.

Agency is significant in metropolitan planning as the possibility of effective metropolitan planning is highly dependent on 'building metropolitan governance capacity' (Lafortune and Collin 2011). However, local democracy in metropolitan planning demands that decision-making at the metropolitan level be legitimised by planning processes and decisions validated in line with representative democracy and participatory mechanisms (Heinelt and Kübler 2005). Moreover, the structure of the formal institutions which facilitate planning processes is also linked to the characteristics of other agencies with a stake in planning. The sheer volume, scale and variety of the actors determine the ethical boundaries (Campbell and Marshall 1998), under which planning decisions are made in relation to sociospatial development issues.

On the other hand, the relevance of agency in metropolitan planning is embedded in 'multiple organisations, plans, issues and actions' that interact in complex ways (Abbott 2009). Either in the form of strategic spatial planning or metropolitan planning as a framework for local statutory planning, the capacity of different actors to divert agglomeration of capital, labour, information and other resources, backed up by data science and information technologies, might provide a replenished power base to determine the fate of metropolitan regions in favour of certain interest groups. Powerful agents hold the capacity to direct resources to either determine important public investments in favour of megaprojects, or bringing about socially just distributive approaches to metropolitan development. These decisions can either turn metropolitan regions into conflict zones or more into thriving human settlements in. It is also crucial to keep in mind that these possible future alternatives are not only confined to western countries but the fate of all metropolitan regions in the world is somehow weaved together by a globalised interaction of all the actors involved in the planning process from various scales of operations.

The interactions and relations established among influential actors and constellations of actors aim at a diverse set of economic priorities and political ends. From a historical perspective, the chapter focuses on key drivers that influence the evolution of metropolitan planning, e.g. through perspectives that interconnect land use and strategic spatial planning to debates related to politics of scale or strategic selectivity. The overall contribution of this chapter is thus to develop an understanding of the

interests lies behind the redefinition and reinterpretation of metropolitan planning and the means through which this is accomplished. To achieve this, our aim is to periodise the changing interplay between planning actors in the context of metropolitan complexity since the era of spatial Keynesianism until today's multi-city regionalism. Illustrative examples are then presented to show how these different actors are not necessarily only 'institutional' in the traditional sense, but actors and constellations of actors holding the capacity to define and shape metropolitan development.

12.2 The Changing Roles and Influence of Metropolitan Planning Agents

Going back to the golden age of urban and regional planning, it is possible to trace the first steps of metropolitan planning in the era of spatial Keynesianism, some of which survives in our present understandings of planning (Davoudi 2009). Spatial Keynesianism emerged as the dominant approach for nation states to begin planning for metropolitan regions (Brenner 2004). The basic planning framework behind spatial Keynesianism was founded on principles of rational planning, such that when presented with several regional development alternatives, the one which is rationally better than the others is chosen as the best alternative (Levin 1967). This was also the era of comprehensive regional planning, envisaging a planning alternative that uses interdisciplinary forecasting techniques to predict possible alternative futures for cities and regions (Breathnach 2010).

Although the instrumentalist mentality behind spatial Keynesianism was heavily criticised later by planning circles for being heavily reliant on top-down and interventionist prescriptions, the welfare state's attitude for redistributive policies to handle uneven spatial development via spatial Keynesianism or comprehensive rational regional planning brought a holistic and integrated approach to metropolitan planning. In practice, planners were the primary orchestrators of the planning process—something which appears at first to be a truism, but it cannot be taken for granted as we can observe today. This said spatial Keynesianism also saw the advent of an enlarged set of corporate actors who were becoming involved in metropolitan planning, whether as representatives of an institution or as experts. This laid the ground for further involvement and influence of new actors in the metropolitan planning process.

During spatial Keynesianism, the legitimacy of the planner and other actors involved in the metropolitan planning process was established and supported by the existence of a strong central government. Yet, it is very hard to tell that spatial Keynesianism was successful, apart from achievements in regional infrastructure development and channelling public funds to some underdeveloped regions. This planning approach was backed by welfarist central government policies to redistribute economic functions, with the *West German Urban Development Assistance Act*, *French Plan of Action for Employment and Industrial Reorganization*, *Dutch Big*

Cities Bottleneck Program and the *British Inner Urban Areas Act* major examples of such policies (Przeworski 1986). Nonetheless, traces of the very idea behind spatial Keynesianism can still be found in regional planning frameworks and legislation.

With the decline of Atlantic Fordism and the Keynesian Welfare State, the principles of spatial Keynesianism were increasingly challenged since the late 1970s. Simply put, the claim was that the institutional compromise and post-war consensus of spatial Keynesianism had done little to prevent the economic crises of the 1970s, meaning a new approach was required. That approach was to be neoliberalism. Together with the emergence of neoliberal policies, metropolitan regions witnessed the rise of 'localism' as a policy alternative to comprehensive planning. It is generally argued in those years that attaining certain holistic and integrated goals through a comprehensive rational planning approach is not only futile, since there is no such power to control all aspects of social and economic reality, but also, undemocratic and authoritarian, by avoiding hearing voices of the capital holders and landowners and 'planning in spite of stakeholders'. The new role of metropolitan and local governments was to provide quick gains to real estate and local capital, in order to close budget deficits and accelerate the economic development process. This process was well depicted in the 'growth machine' or 'growth coalition' thesis and 'urban regime' theories (MacLeod 2002).

Alongside planners, there was now a new group of actors eager to be taken advantage of the relaxed metropolitan planning process in order to divert spatial development for their own interests. The first of these groups can be categorised as the ones who directly benefit from continuous urban development in the form of urban sprawl realised by the construction sector, including real estate developers, investors, construction firms and credit giving financial institutions. The second of these groups involves supporting actors like local media and the firms operating in the service sector, which indirectly benefit from urban development. Third auxiliary groups of actors are universities, sports clubs, unions and other cultural organisations can be counted as the actors which do not directly get any gains but nonetheless support urban expansion. Under the influence and involvement of these new set of players in the metropolitan planning practice, the role of the planner became diminished from 'planning' development to 'enabling' development (Brindley et al. 2005). This localist understanding was associated with a 'growth-at-all-costs' mentality, quickly becoming criticised for becoming too narrowly focused.

Throughout the 1980s, the failures of localism caused a revival of regional policies worldwide. It is also at this time that the conflicting attributes of metropolitan fragmentation and metropolitan consolidation became subjects of debate (Savitch and Vogel 2000). In this refreshed regional understanding, new and hybrid scales of operation for the metropolitan level were instrumentalised through Regional Development Agencies, Chambers of Commerce and other institutional groupings. Mobilising in this way, metropolitan regions were motivated by incentives derived from incorporating their region into global networks of capital accumulation which were seen as essential to embed increasingly transnational flows of capital, knowledge and people. In this era of New Regionalism, metropolitan regions were forced to open-up and be much more internationally orchestrated.

Growth coalitions of the 1980s were either scaled up to the regional level or they were incorporated into a new kind of regional corporatism. Terms such as strategic spatial planning denoted a new planning process. With strategic spatial planning, planning was linked to issues of regional competition and planning decisions became symbolic attributes for defining appropriate business strategies for the development of metropolitan regions. This transformation caused a homogenisation of regions in terms of planning approaches and strategies. Since the planners' role became wording of politically and economically desirable outcomes for the metropolitan regions, the metropolitan planning became a series of activities for mediation, brokerage or facilitation of regionally organised business interests, the fate and the result of metropolitan planning became blurred (Ng et al. 2014). What cannot be overlooked, however, is that for all this, national governments remained heavily involved in centrally orchestrating these planning activities (Harrison 2008).

More recently, new concepts for metropolitan planning have become increasingly influential for actors involved in the planning process (Wachsmuth 2017; Waite and Bristow 2018). These have emerged from the 2000s and the increased focus on city regions, such that planning authorities are extended beyond traditional city limits and/or stretched into 'fuzzy' regions—so-called soft spaces of planning. Today, there is more attention being paid to so-called multi-city regionalism, or megaregionalism, which envisages coalitions of cities and metropolitan regions working together to plan and govern across a much larger transmetropolitan landscapes. Infrastructure and supply chain expansion is commonly seen as the necessary requirement for a group of metropolitan regions to work together in order to gain a perceived competitive advantage.

Taken together, the literature on urban and regional planning and transformation of metropolitan regions tells a story in which the self-autonomy and authority of planner in metropolitan planning are being diminished. This decrease in importance and significance is not only a result of the increase in other actors involved in the planning process but also changes in planning style and the goals of metropolitan planning. Alongside rescaling of metropolitan regions and other settlement jurisdictions, goals and instruments of metropolitan planning became confined to a set of politically and economically correct wording of strategies that facilitate the ultimate achievement of metropolitan planning that is a consolidation of infrastructure for creating further investments to public sector and gaining competitive advantages under economic stagnation. Under these conditions, the answer to the question 'Who is planning metropolitan regions?' becomes more pertinently another interesting question, namely 'Does someone really do the planning among all these actors involved in metropolitan planning?'

12.3 The Changing Roles of Actors in Metropolitan Planning

In a world of where metropolitan planning is perpetually reforming, legitimised by a discourse that promises to invent new ways of governing and planning, the fate of 'real' planning practices—and those involved—becomes a puzzling curiosity. Looking at 'old paradigms' of planning, certain aspects might come to fore: conflicting conceptions and agendas about metropolitan planning, the role of key metropolitan planning actors in agenda setting, their influence in shaping metropolitan strategies, their power relations and conflicting interests and so on. Various types of actors including but not limited to central government agents, local politicians, bureaucrats, business leaders, grass roots movements, civic initiatives and their conflictual or synergistic relationships can always be identified. Yet, it should be noted that old conceptions of the problem of agency involved in planning practice might have been long changed to something else since it is very hard to define a systematic and a solely planner-led metropolitan planning process under current circumstances. The new interplay denotes reflective practice in which certain spatial forms and planning styles come to the fore that are favourable for the very forces and agglomeration of actors that defined the metropolitan region in the past. As it has been repeatedly narrated since the early 1980s, the 'communicative turn' in planning started a new configuration process for planning at all levels, including the metropolitan level (Forester 1980), in which the term 'planner' and 'planning practice' went out of the classical boundaries of the 'planning profession' and became a multiactor process in which influence is contingent upon the nature of the metropolitan in concern.

In the twentieth century, one of the major spatial challenges for nation states has always been controlling and managing large metropolitan regions for different purposes. Through time, governments tried their best to find ways to shape the future of metropolitan regions, especially through planning instruments. Yet, this difficult task brought some very important issues to fore. First, the metropolitan regions were very different from that of classical closed city concepts of existing cities, to which urban and regional planning traditions used to tackle. Although at the time it would never appear as such, today it would appear that during the halcyon days of metropolitan planning, presenting a singular vision for metropolitan development was far less complex than today (Dyckman 1983). Spatially, the metropolitan region is now more contested than ever before. Practically, there are more actors involved, with an apparently ever greater stake in the outcome.

Through time, the very meaning ascribed to metropolitan regions and their expected functions in the national spatial, economic and social order transformed a great deal, changing the actors involved in planning metropolises and the methods used for planning to achieve certain results. Some of the questions related to metropolitan planning were not so distant from the general discussions of planning theory such as planning top-down or providing conditions for bottom-up approaches via getting the consent of stakeholders. In all these debates, the role of the planner in metropolitan planning is perceived as somehow a vague concern amidst admin-

istrative and developmental goals. It can be said that the role of the planner in the metropolitan planning process changed and regressed down together with the diminishing importance and perception of the systematic and certainty of the planning practice itself. Under current conditions, planners are expected to bear many duties and responsibilities amidst a growing number of other actors, openly or covertly, implicitly or explicitly steer planning (Wilkinson et al. 2010).

In this new world of metropolitan regions, planning became an instrument for three major categories of global actors and agencies. First off are major capital holders, be they firms or financial institutions, closely aligned or otherwise to powerful nation states. These actors are heavily involved in foster (and financing) mega infrastructure and transportation projects, especially in the Global South. The behaviours of such interest groups and corporate structures are entangled with the international policies of global powers such as the USA and China (Schindler 2017). Recent infrastructure investments by the USA and China in sub-Saharan Africa and via China's 'Road and Belt' initiative can be taken as exemplars of this planning practice in action (Ferdinand 2016). This geopolitical policy alternative provides a new transnational transfer of funds for metropolitan infrastructure investments abroad to create a new economy political standing point for international power games played in and through the Global South (Horner et al. 2018).

Secondly, after the first round of rescaling, a mixture of emerging national and international capital holders and related investment actors became influential in shaping planning decisions of large metropolitan regions in a centralising state structure (Park 2008). In this case, actors related to metropolitan planning are both politically active and economically influential closely knitted in an informal network.

Thirdly, emerging resilience, informatics, climate change and energy sector discourses promote the establishment of model towns and exemplary settlements as an answer to the age-old problems of metropolitan regions. Emerging technologies allow the diffusion of a new group of actors into the planning process, involving middle- or high-level administrators and professionals from mathematics to software engineering, aiming at completely altering the development patterns of metropolitan regions all over the world (Cugurullo 2013; Downs 2005).

However, it is hardly possible that these three strands of change in metropolitan planning are three separate dimensions of emerging actors in planning. Usually, international development policies of global powers, conventional capitalist development tendencies in the form of infrastructure and transportation investments and new models of settlements supported by the changes in production modes and technologies emerge all together in a complex—indeed perplexing—metropolitan development pattern such that the weight of influence that actors play in this process is mostly contextual rather than envisioned.

Regarding the transformation of planning actors in metropolitan regions, a differentiation among and within various contexts can be observed. Various actors as well as actor constellations are at work at different scales. In shaping metropolitan planning decisions and processes, capital holders, bureaucrats, entrepreneurs and other groups instrumentalise different means under the neoliberal paradigm. In the western context, this instrumentalisation might trigger a liquidation of land in the form of cap-

ital investments in metropolitan regions, and capital derived in this venture might be used to establish alliances and networks with national and local interests—especially in the Global South. In this section, as examples of changing actors in planning, four different country examples are taken to show how changing endeavours to shape the local economy, state structure and federal restructuring might influence the context under which actors of metropolitan planning change using adaptive strategies. In selection of these cases, representations of geographical, scale and socio-economic development level are taken into consideration so that each example might provide insights into evaluation of a different facet of the role of actors in metropolitan planning.

12.3.1 Firm-Led Planning in North West England

The first example illustrates the transformation of actors in metropolitan planning, focusing on an example from the UK whereby a single firm—the property developer and private investment group, Peel—has become de facto planners of metropolitan regionalisation in North West England. Following decades of attempts to establish the Liverpool-Manchester metropolitan corridor as a space for planning in public sector thinking (Hincks et al. 2017), what marks Peel out for special attention is how they stepped into the institutional vacuum that resulted from the abolition of regional planning frameworks in 2010. Prior to this, metropolitan regional planning was the domain of the Northwest Regional Assembly, who had statutory responsibility for producing the regional planning guidance (Regional Spatial Strategy), and the Northwest Development Agency, who was responsible for the overall Regional Economic Strategy. Without these public institutions, Peel sought to capitalise on this vacuum with the stated aim of creating a special purpose planning vehicle for the metropolitan regional corridor in which they controlled much of the land and many of the key metropolitan assets. In the words of Peel's Chairman, John Whittaker, they sought to establish the Liverpool-Manchester metropolitan corridor as a private sector-led planning space that would allow for their 'own planning regime … so we can overcome individual local authority objections' (quoted in Harrison 2014). In simple terms, their motivation was to create a depoliticised space for consensual planning (on their corporate terms) in the belief they were more likely to secure the planning permissions they needed with a development corporation-type vehicle than via local authorities. These permissions are key because for companies such as Peel because they produce the certainty they crave at a time where government-led planning systems in countries such as the UK perpetuate uncertainty.

12.3.2 State Centralisation and Authoritarian Neoliberalism in Turkey

The example of Turkey illustrates how state centralisation and authoritarian neoliberalism might create an alternative national capital conglomerate that leads to major infrastructure and transportation investments. After 2002, the single-party rule of the Justice and Development Party (AKP)—an Islamic right-wing political movement—retained adherence to decentralisation. To a certain extent, AKP put some effort into convincing opposing stakeholders about its commitment to realise participatory and systematic metropolitan planning, especially in the largest metropolitan region, Istanbul. Yet, by the end of the 2000s, the priorities of the AKP shifted to isolated developmental policies, mostly defined in economic terms. This tendency created a duality between the transfer of policies and practices in urban areas involving ambitions to diversify pragmatism of the AKP Governments (Bayirbağ 2013; Baysal 2017; Özveren 2012; Tatoglu et al. 2015; Yıldırım et al. 2013). The culmination of this change has become visible in the metropolitan planning process of Istanbul.

In the mid-2000s, the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality—ruled by the AKP—started a curious metropolitan planning experiment (Lovering and Türkmen 2011). An ad hoc planning agency was established under the name, 'Istanbul Metropolitan Planning Centre', which was the largest planning agency ever founded throughout the Republican history of Turkey. There were over 400 urban planners, architects and other professionals working on metropolitan planning of Istanbul, together with academics working under contracts to offer their expertise in various subjects. The Istanbul Metropolitan Planning Centre recommended an alternative, sustainable metropolitan development plan for Istanbul, radically limiting the growth of the metropolitan region by not addressing pressing concerns over a new bridge over Bosporus and other development pressures in the fringe of the metropolitan region. However, immediately after the enactment of the plan in the Metropolitan Council, Prime Minister Erdoğan declared a new development scenario for Istanbul, including a third bridge, a new airport and a second channel that will link the Black Sea and the Marmara Sea, officially, paralysing the plan's implementation.

Later, two of these major infrastructure investments, the airport and the bridge were realised by a business conglomerate in the form of public–private partnerships financially backed up by the government itself. These investments were formerly promoted under the 'World City Istanbul' strategy by these business actors, but the real driving force behind metropolitan decisions was political in nature. Various authors regarded the AKPs attitude as a 'spatialised neoliberalism' in which the main political strategy of the AKP is defined as finding unique ways to intervene in urban space to shape all sections of the society and different scales of the state (Cavuşoğlu and Strutz 2014; Elicin 2014; Lelandais 2014; Tansel 2019). The case of Istanbul illustrates how centralisation of the state and political actors might also play significant roles in identifying new actors in metropolitan planning.

12.3.3 Planning Cyberabad: Hyderabad, India

Another example of changing actors in metropolitan planning can be observed in India, where regional governments are increasingly drafting metropolitan development policies with the aim of making cities more global, networked and competitive. In the process, poor citizens are getting pushed to the margins, evicted from their land and relocated to city fringes against their wishes. The Hyderabad region provides an interesting illustration of development trends in which poor local farmers are forced out of their agricultural land to realise the envision of a 'world-class' information enclave, popularly branded as 'Cyberabad' (Das 2015).

The regional government wants to transform Hyderabad into an information technology hub via restructuring the city to become one of the most 'globally interconnected cities' in the world. This is, in fact, no coincidence since Indian regions such as Bangalore, Delhi National Capital Region, Mumbai Metropolitan Region and Chennai emerged as software development centres resulting in a rapid increase in employment and investment opportunities for the educated section of society. The flourishing middle class included a large proportion of highly skilled IT professionals working in high-tech spaces in and around major urban centres which are rapidly expanding. The example of Cyberabad illustrates a mixture of housing boom for the middle classes and business expansion based on information technologies. In this expansion, international capital has a strong share since Microsoft, Facebook and now Apple set up their first offices outside the USA in Hyderabad.

The so-called Cyberabad has experienced a boom in gated communities, convention centres, institutes—such as the International Institute of Information Technology, National Institute of Fashion Technology, University of Hyderabad, Indian School of Business—in recent years. Yet, there is a downside to these developments. The metropolitan expansion brought about gentrification in former slum areas of the region, driving poor farmers out of the region from their agricultural land and significant issues of racial segregation and religious extremism have followed. Today, Cyberabad's spatial extent is even larger than the official Hyderabad jurisdiction, and the regional government had to establish a new police boundary for the security of the region. The end result led to a fragmented metropolitan structure in which islands of premium enclaves of middle classes have all the world-class facilities but the general population of the larger metropolitan region suffers from a lack of basic amenities and inequality issues (Nastar 2014). The Cyberabad case is interesting since the vision of the metropolitan region is promoted by a mixture of visionary regional politicians, local businesspersons, international information capital, real estate property developers, etc. These different actors and groups of actors are officially represented in special planning zones identified in the Hyderabad region. It began life as an 'offensive' plan to put Hyderabad on the global map, but of late it has become more a 'defensive' plan to offset the negative consequences of economic expansion.

12.3.4 Megaregional Planners in China

Last but not least, ambitious megacity or megaregional projects in China can be taken as an example of how metropolitan level planning and visioning are instrumentalised to consolidate both transnational and national level actors and resources. Metropolitan governance in China is described as a state-led, 'dirigiste model' to enforce state objectives, in which actors from vertical to horizontal dimensions contribute to the state-led governance, and the non-state actors have bounded capacity to formulate metropolitan development policies (Ye 2013). Socialist Chinese governments forces significant policies to foster city region development and governance. The Pearl River Delta is a good example of this policy preference, in which from 1990s onwards, a settlement pattern development experiment is going on hand in hand with mega infrastructure investments and a unique mix of industrial development supported by global capital and change of metropolitan scale and scope.

The Pearl River Delta experiment is an interesting polycentric metropolitan development and planning endeavour in which 'accelerated economic growth, increased population mobility and massive land-use transformation' (Ye 2013, p. 294) have been in the intermediate zones surrounding and between metropolitan centres. At first, the expansion of the extended metropolitan regions has been led primarily by forces of industrialisation at the grass roots level rather than a result of urban sprawl for land speculation and land rent. This process of 'urban–rural integration' in Chinese extended metropolitan regions represents the complexity of the relationship between middle- and high-tech industrialisation and urbanisation that calls for a questioning of the urban–rural dichotomy conception. Global capital holders plan and adapt to the general metropolitan development framework developed by the Chinese Governments to settle in the socialist surrounding. Metropolitan planning is realised as a top-down strategic planning process by the influential National Development and Reform Commission, in which a large-scale zoning activity and legislative differentiation are at work. The decision-making process involves the bureaucratic and technocratic apparatus of the Chinese state as well as lobbying efforts of global scale firms going hand in hand with diplomatic efforts with the USA, the UK, Germany, Russia and so on (Wu 2015). In the planning and development process of the Pearl River Delta, instead of a complex interaction of various actors and the constellation of actors, an adaptation and integration of these actors to the state decision-making are prevalent, which might remind a large-scale reframing of spatial Keynesianism in the Chinese context.

Yet, the Chinese statist experience with the Pearl River Delta comes with bitter repercussions. Transformation of the rural landscape via extensive industrialisation radically changed the settlement structure, causing emergence of hundreds of small- and middle-sized cities and expansion of metropolitan hinterland that eventually incurred environmental problems and national level migration at massive scale. Destruction of rural lifestyle and weakening of city level governance capacities, because of top-down metropolitan planning brought about decreasing urban life quality in general, despite some cosmopolitan high income new urban development areas

emerge throughout the Pearl River Delta. Consequently, the Chinese Government is in the process of questioning such grandiose city region development perspectives while the wheels of the global economy are slowing down.

12.4 Contemporary and Prospective Positions of Actors in Metropolitan Planning

Throughout the twentieth century, the roles, influencing power, aspirations and composition of the actors in the metropolitan planning process transformed to a significant extent. In the end, the role of the professional planner in metropolitan planning became significantly restricted—oftentimes to provide a toolbox necessary to facilitate strategy making in a given context. The role of other actors including politicians and capitalists was accentuated in the planning process either by loosely defining the spatio-strategic vision or carefully engineering the microlevel planning steps related to creating assets from the land through financialisation or politicisation of metropolitan regions and their development. These various actors in some cases involve an amalgamation of global, national and local interests in foreseeing a development pattern in the form of an effort to realise emerging new sectors. Geopolitical stance and political inclinations, tendencies in capitalist production styles and emerging technologies and capital accumulation models associated with them instrumentalise different spatial imaginaries and policy preferences to shape and divert metropolitan planning agendas, objectives and visions.

Yet, apparently, all these renewed roles for the planners and flourishing new actor constellations in metropolitan planning come with a price. There are significant environmental and social repercussions as well as discontent with the inequalities brought about by the branded, promoted ways of metropolitan planning and metropolitan development patterns. The losers from new metropolitan planning processes mean that problems such as the lack of affordable housing and basic infrastructure, diminishing public space and dispossession are also found alongside rising inequalities as the focal point for anger. These problems are also associated with the disappearance of local identities and receding governing and planning capacity at the city and neighbourhood level.

The real capacity of metropolitan planning and the possibility of creating change in metropolitan life are in question. All of this might call for a debate on bringing clearly and openly defined accountable roles for all the actors involved in the planning process back into the planning debates based on well-addressed ethical dilemmas of metropolitan development and planning. It is detrimental to find alternative ways of defining agendas and visions in metropolitan planning that are not solely defined by influential actors and actor constellations, but emerge out of open and visible public debate that can lead to a flexible, elementary and learning process in which, the main aim of metropolitan development is defined in terms of establishing first a multidimensional methodology of metropolitan planning prioritisation.

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Chapter 13
Planning Metropolitan Futures, the Future of Metropolitan Planning: In What Sense Planning Agile?

Mark Tewdwr-Jones and Daniel Galland

Abstract This chapter focuses on the drivers of change affecting metropolitan cities and analyses the current agencies and mechanisms to achieve future planning of places. It constructs a typology of the changing role and context of planning affected by wider political and global forces and sets out the differences between formalised metropolitan planning processes set within institutional settings and government, and more incremental and agile planning processes set within more fluid governance structures. In achieving this, we examine the implications and what is at stake for the future of metropolitan regions and styles of metropolitan governance by identifying the enduring hallmarks of metropolitan planning. The final section puts forward a series of provocations on what a future style of metropolitan planning could be.

Keywords Metropolitan futures · Planning legacy · Planning hallmarks · Metropolitan planning · Metropolitan regions

13.1 Metropolitan Regions, Temporality and the Need to 'Spatially Fix' Planning

Who constructs 'the metropolitan'? For geographers and planners, the attention has been focused much more on the metropolitan as a spatial organising unit. This has involved analysis of the ebbs and flows of the city region over time, while different drivers of change impact on the form, shape and extent of the physical urban realm, associated with an attempt to fix spatial governance and planning to address those trends as they affect different places. Among the aspects of strategic spatial planning utilised by planners over the decades are: addressing unevenness in growth; housing development need and delivery; and a mismatch between development pressures and

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infrastructure needs. This occurs taking into account the flows in, out and across the wider city caused by migration, demographic change, commuting, logistics, trade, as well as changing demands within specific sectors such as employment, education and health. And within that process of managing demands, being aware of flows, analysing trends and preparing options, there is usually a tension between the administrative boundaries of planning determined by the legal and statutory boundaries of national and subnational government, and the spaces of flows where, essentially, 'stuff happens'.

For most of the twentieth century, the elected subnational government was charged with the task of undertaking a process of strategic planning that could be characterised, after Patrick Geddes, as 'survey-analysis-plan' in a long-winded and fairly never-ending cycle. This sought to understand the changing world, find a politically acceptable programme of action, and then appropriate routes to implement it. It made sense, particularly where there was a desire for a master plan to be prepared and an elected politician had a mandate to improve his or her city while calling upon a skilled bureaucracy at their disposal. In the 1940s, Sir Patrick Abercrombie and J. H. Forshaw's Greater London Plan was the prime example of this style of planning; it took years to prepare by an army of architect planners, and had the political backing of not only the London County Council but also the UK Government, eager to reconstruct the war-torn city and rebuild a regional economy that would improve the country as a whole. As other major cities embarked on those ambitious comprehensive metropolitan plans, it was recognised that the scale of effort required was immense. Nations and cities in the first three-quarters of the twentieth century continued to promote the idea of grand plans, but there was an acknowledgement as we approached the turn of the century that certain conspiracies were acted against the good intentions and undermine the comprehensiveness intentions.

First, both population change and economic boom-and-bust cycles changed the assumptions upon which plans were based, meaning that plans were either too ambitious or not ambitious enough by the time they were adopted. Secondly, fixing the geographical boundaries of the government as the parameters of plans ignored the actual spatial flows that were occurring, between the city and its nearest neighbours, and between the urban and its hinterland. Thirdly, as the decades have passed, it is no longer metropolitan government alone that can manage the city in toto, meaning that plans become more repositories of intelligence and data, stuffed with the desirable courses of action, but little in the way of implementation powers and the funding necessary to achieve action on the ground that is increasingly in the hands of businesses or other arms of the state. Fourthly, in some countries, metropolitan planning has been at the mercy of metropolitan or subnational government's fate, and subjected to a never-ending process of state governmental restructuring, refinancing, and institutional churn that has relegated political commitment to a plan.

The fifth force is probably the most damning of all. The full cycle of metropolitan plan-making has usually taken too long for comfort. This has not necessarily been the fault of professional planners and urbanists—the sheer scale of ambition to produce an all-encompassing geographically fixed plan that recognises change and commits to a course of action can be daunting. But when seen within a much broader context,

metropolitan flows are increasingly global rather than local and where the importance of market primacy has largely outranked government efficiency. It is also the case that funding for economic investment, new development and new infrastructure can occur in a much more instant timescale, pursued by international real estate or national governments, than the time taken to undertake the planning cycle, thus rendering a plan almost obsolete before it is even officially adopted. In some nations, the question of speed, timeliness and relevance has justifiably become the reasons for those plans (that have gone through a full survey analysis action cycle with public consultation) to be downgraded at best, ignored at worse.

What we are witnessing is a change whereby the speed of global flows and even interregional change has become so short term that it becomes difficult to spatially fix the problem in a geographically bounded and detailed way. Identifying all the implications of specific drivers of change for other sectors and policies, undertaking courses for mitigating action, and then preparing to address unevenness across the entire metropolitan area becomes even more of a challenge. For countries that have rigid planning processes and a defined political and constitutional framework with set powers, responsibilities and funding for subnational government, these hurdles are not so problematic as to derail metropolitan planning. But for other nations-with looser inter-governmental relationships, with fast-paced economies, and significant flows in and across their territories metropolitan planning is increasingly seen as a long-term luxury that is no longer relevant to shaping the future of globally agile cities or at least cities that aspire to be globally agile. For let us not pretend that these effects on the form and fate of long-term metropolitan planning have been enacted by multinational companies and global economic forces alone: in many cases, it is metropolitan government itself, often aided and abetted by nation states, that have sought to downplay their own metropolitan plans so as to create an agile, pragmatic and adaptive form of strategic policy context that can adjust to rapidly changing circumstances and new investment opportunities.

13.2 The Adaptive Character of Planning and Its Enduring Appeal

13.2.1 Formal and Informal Planning Across Metropolitan Regions

There is an increasing focus by economic development consultants on another aspect of metropolitan regions that seems in contrast to formal processes of planning and government. It affects cities globally in respect of the need not only to measure growth, liveability, affordability, air quality and so on but also to be seen to be leading world city rankings of measurements as metropolitan badges of honour. Big is not always better in these cases although there is jostling for attention on some metrics, particularly if a metropolitan region is vying to host an international event

such as the Olympic Games or football World Cup. This is seen as much as an inward investment economic growth issue as it is a sporting or cultural event since the value to the city and region in jobs, spending and urban vitality can be an opportunity not to be missed. The way the city region is often packaged up and marketed in this respect is often in contrast to the boundaried form of metropolitan planning that is almost too static to mobile and act. In fact, it probably exacerbates the differences; this either then subverts the formal or otherwise creates a parallel shadow world of ad hoc governance processes with different forms of delivery mechanisms, sometimes resourced separately to the formal nodes of government. This not only isolates the plan as a separate formalised activity of the state, but it may lead to the view that formal planning in contrast is less relevant and more reactive, perhaps even archaic.

But taking time for the moment to reflect on the implications of the ad hoc process, the proactive or ad hoc informal planning activities—agile, instant, resourced, legitimised—can develop a life of their own when they are set up. They enjoy attention that the more traditional metropolitan planning processes can but dream about, with development-oriented partnerships across multiple agencies with vested interests, privileged political support and even significant resource-targeted allocation. Do these ad hoc processes occur because formal planning is too boundaried, too slow, too cumbersome, too transparent and too state-led? Or is it because the ad hoc project approach is simply too convenient and overtly agile to accommodate sudden political and market decisions? This might sometimes be viewed as the market outtrumping the state (speed and relevance over democratic and analytical), but in reality, it is often the state itself that initiates the informal and pragmatic approaches, promoting a form of what Harvey (1989) referred to us as 'urban entrepreneurialism'. But, in so doing, of course, the state withdraws elements of transparency and participatory involvement of citizens and communities in the planning process at the local level and treats the project as a secretive exclusionary endeavour.

There are similarities here to recent academic contributions promoting the differentiation of 'hard spaces' and 'soft spaces' in planning (Haughton et al. 2010). Hard spaces are viewed as the formal, visible and processes of planning, statutory in form and subject to open democratic processes and political influence. They are also characterised by diverse agencies, complex policy and delivery requirements, traditional consultation processes and, of course, delay. Soft spaces, by contrast, are seen as much more fluid areas that occur between the formal processes, and where delivery and implementation are paramount, subjugating the formal through heightened bargaining, flexibility, and discretionary judgment. They may or may not relate to traditional administrative boundaries, but above all, they can be instigated with speed.

As cities and nations are competing for more investment, and are eager to boost economic growth, such soft models could become more mainstream as time goes on. Although they are often presented as alternatives to harder models of metropolitan planning, we may enter a period where both soft and hard spaces of planning are complimentary to each another. The point here is that metropolitan planning is growing out of its twentieth century fixed grand plan format into something that is more plural, diverse, both formalised and pragmatic, and responsive to twenty-first

century needs. Those cities that have the ability to adapt both formalised and ad hoc planning processes, and find ways for them to coexist, are likely to be the ones with the competitive upper hand. But what remains of concern is the extent to which both forms of planning merely play to market forces at the expense of democratic scrutinyand public involvement. Promoting speedier forms of metropolitan planning to suit developer interests is hardly going to enamour planning in cities to communities and citizens on their terms.

Across some European nation states, there is a tendency to enhance the powers of individual cities through the establishment of new institutional forms of governance and planning. This is being achieved either through new constitutional settlements between nation states and mayoral authorities or else through formal devolution or decentralisation powers. The geography of these new powers and institutions varies from place to place. But they are notable for the way they are often detached from other trends going on in subnational government, including greater privatisation and outsourcing, austerity measures and public service cuts, alongside low electorate morale for and belief in elected political processes. The impact of the latter issues within metropolitan regions can be acute, but the reasons vary from place to place. This may range from concern with cities recording greater levels of poverty and enhanced social polarisation between poorer and richer communities, to government support for migrants, or where a belief that citizen needs are not being addressed by state governments. This has sometimes led to rivalry between areas or even outright public hostility through street protests (as we saw across Europe, for example, in the Athens anti-austerity riots in 2011, the London riots in 2011, the Barcelona protests in 2017, the *Mouvement des gilets jaunes* in French cities in 2018, and ongoing urban protests against support for European in-migration).

All these issues tend to disrupt metropolitan governments but could also reshape and dictate future interventions and investment decisions. Even with the determined efforts on the part of benign political leadership to do something about polarisation and poverty, rhetorically, what tools are actually available to metropolitan authorities to make a real difference? In a world where having less and paying more is fast becoming the norm, the gap between different parts of the same metropolitan region is not only getting wider, but may be seen with resentful eyes and could lead to more social unrest for people who already feel politically and economically detached from the governing elite and formal decision-making processes.

A final note needs to be discussed concerning fixing metropolitan regions and their planning processes. We are also noticing an increasing trend for a core city, possibly the largest metropolitan area within a nation, to pull away economically from the rest of the country and the wider region within which it is situated. So-called second and third-tier cities are not performing as strongly as first-tier cities and can have higher levels of deprivation indices. Social polarisation may, therefore, occur within the same region. That, in turn, could also prompt a heated political debate on urban investment unevenness and sociopolitical conflict that nation states are facilitating directly or indirectly. In this context, determining a future between hard and soft planning spaces is incidental if they both serve to underlie and exacerbate existing inter- and intra-urban disparities. In what sense do these trends signify a tendency for

greater metropolitan identity coherence within core cities or greater fragmentation and differences across metropolitan regions?

13.2.2 The Strange Enduring Appeal of Planning

If metropolitan regions are changing markedly, together with the political and institutional processes that give them shape, what can we say of the planning processes that are utilised to manage and drive urban development? We have already seen that planning is becoming much more plural in its form and reach, and is adapting to changing circumstances and demands. Given the move towards more agile forms of planning activity, we could be forgiven for wondering why planning still exists in any shape or form at all. Having been subject to neoliberal forces for more than 40 years, and ongoing political criticisms that planning is an inhibitor of market forces, it is somewhat curious that planning has been retained as a state activity. It could have been removed altogether and the market allowed 'to rip', a prospect that Peter Hall and colleagues presented *très amusement* in 1969 in their 'non-plan' contribution (Tewdwr-Jones et al. 2014). We have witnessed examples of planning deregulation in the decades since then, including attempts to implement Enterprise Zones and Simplified Planning Zones (Hall 1977), urban development corporations (Brindley et al. 1996), higher thresholds for development without requiring state approval, the abandonment of master plans for individual places and even the starving of funds to municipal government planning departments—causing a diminution in their role to manage urban change.

Various European political leaders over the decades, from Margaret Thatcher in the UK to Vaclav Klaus in the Czech Republic, have championed anti-planning measures, but planning still survives in one shape or form. The reasons for this are, as yet, unchartered and could include a whole host of direct and indirect contributory measures. These might include: a desire on the part of the market for some state certainty for investment decisions, including infrastructure provision; a recognition that planning creates scarcity and thereby contributes to property prices by selectively releasing opportunities for development; as a useful means to balance competing vested interests in contentions over the most desired options for specific sites; or because, in essence, it is a politically useful mechanism to address short- and long-term trends in government in a contested space between both economic, social and environmental issues and business and community forces. The bottom line is that planning is far more malleable than it is often given credit for. So, what are planning's enduring forms that contribute towards its longevity?

Historically, planning has rested on elected representative government. As noted in Galland and Harrison (2020), it has sought to deliver development and change with a wider remit of delivering for the public common good. It has achieved this by taking a unified strategic and synoptic perspective of places through desired courses of action promoted in long-term plans. It has to date been a somewhat regimented affair, of statutory concern, and boundaried by governmental administrative spaces and

legitimised by the elected politicians of government. But many of these components have broken down over the last thirty years, not because planning is defunct but rather because the features upon which planning operated have started to crumble as social, economic, political and technological changes have created new societal and governmental forms.

At the start of the twenty-first century, the parameters of planning have changed markedly compared to even the middle of the last century. Governmentally, state and politics can be defined more by institutions not possessing the same degree of power or status, or perhaps even legitimacy, as they once had to act on behalf of wider interests. The activities of governments have been fragmented across a range of organisations, some state, some private, and it is rarely a political leader alone that has the power and resources to be able to control a metropolitan city completely.

Governments today can be characterised as significant facilitators and mediators of services and implementation, and require significant collaboration and partnership across sectors to enact change. It is much more network-based. Party politics also plays a less deterministic role, with mayoral parties taking office and being replaced, but the form of strategic metropolitan policies does not change significantly since the nature of metropolitan problems remains extant from one four-year term of office to another. Political opportunities arise from positioning the city on a global stage, but mayors have to adopt all the trappings of international urban competition and urban entrepreneurialism to land significant deals. If there is a form of planning at work, it is agile and broad ranging, focusing less on land use intervention and more on spatial alignment of delivery and funding organisations, with additional privileged support and financial intervention from national governments and multinational companies. Planning has become plural, short term and piecemeal, drawing on a range of planning and other tools incrementally.

Metropolitan planning's prospects, therefore, appear to rest on several loose forms. As a context, metropolitan administration is a mix of government, governance and partnership styles, operating in parallel with each other, and designed in that way intentionally. Larger cities have given primacy to the global market and strive to position or retain their high places in world rankings. Interactions tend to occur between large metropolitan cities globally, sometimes to the detriment of relationships between metropolitan cities and provincial cities in the same nation; the world cities have formed their own club and are detaching themselves from their own countries. In some cities, the metropolitan region has to rely on a wider geography than the city alone to support its position. This may not occur through formalised legal apparatus but rather through

- infrastructure investment between the city and the wider hinterland
- extended travel-to-work commuting of key workers
- the wider natural resources required to enable the city to function properly
- access to affordable housing some distance away from the central urban core.

These trends occur as lived experiences but from a planning and resource perspective, those are difficult to resolve, particularly where planning responsibility

rests on neighbouring subnational and local governments with not only different spatial visions but also taxation bases.

13.3 The Hallmarks of Planning: Past, Present and Future Assembled

Attempting to carve out a future trajectory for metropolitan planning and government is no easy task. As we have seen throughout this account, many of the key issues that will shape both planning and governance in cities are outwith the direct control of political leaders, or even cities themselves. But we can begin to identify pathways to possibilities that at least create a more proactive set of principles for enactment by different places. These principles of planning can be considered by a commitment to attempt to overcome a series of crises with metropolitan planning that we have, inter alia, discussed earlier in the chapter. These are: relevance; usability; focused on time and space; legitimacy; accountability; funding and scope for agile innovation. These are not fatal blows to planning, but rather constitute the conditions that planning needs to adapt to. What, then, does 'planning', governmentally and beyond, still bring to the table in this diverse and incremental context? There are five possible elements.

The idea of a *vision* for a place is still relevant, and that vision is set beyond short election cycles; yes, this can be attached to the style and agenda of a political leader, but it seems to be much more about having a sense of direction, a roadmap, that is just as relevant as a form of certainty for business interests as it is to give a clear message to citizens that a place has a purpose and a mission.

The need for *alignment* across sectors, agencies, time and space remains a necessity, irrespective of the political context within which decisions are being made. Alignment is a more preferable word here for what, for a while, was referred to academically as integration; integration implies different elements coming together, perhaps against their will, or else having to secede roles for a common good. We might, instead, have to face the fact that those elements will not change their own positions fundamentally even if we expect them to join forces with others; the alignment that occurs between actors and agencies that have their own *raison d'etre* is one of temporality, occurring for a specific project or place-based need, but it does not mean to say that the alignment will endure beyond the lifetime of a project. Instead, it will be important to capture the experience of alignment and consider the learning that could accrue in places between agencies to take forward for the future. This takes us into another hallmark of planning.

The requirement for *synoptic* perspectives and cross-cutting ideas, that are able to identify differently originated and owned issues and ideas, but can further the case for the advantages of bringing together difference for a common or innovative advantage. This is one of the most challenging requirements as it relates to places and all the different issues, needs and opportunities that may exist indecorous to those places. It suggests that the skills and knowledge will be apparent in one or

more individuals in performing boundary-spanning roles across agencies, able to utilise diplomacy to keep oft-sceptical individuals at the same table while providing constant reassurance of the benefits of the bigger picture. One of the arguments here could be to identify the costs of not taking synoptic perspectives in the medium term.

A desire to identify the *assets* of individual places in that all places are unique and have a unique set of circumstances to hand that need to be addressed. Some of these assets will be economic, others will be social, environmental or cultural; others still will be knowledge-based or legacy-driven. How these individual assets exist in places, and how they interact with each other occur, give rise to a unique suite of issues that could be built upon. The mapping of place assets would identify the challenges and opportunities that are already inherent within particular locations, the uneven economic landscape, the skill sets available or lacking, the long shadows cast by previous place incarnation (e.g. deindustrialisation), or the physical constraints and benefits that give rise to place chances.

Finally, the fifth hallmark of planning could be a constant search for *pluralism*. That no one agency is seen to be benefitting at the expense of or crowding out others, and a desire for collaborations and co-produced place ideas. Planning used to be seen as a function of the state and lately has been seen as a function (or at the mercy) or the market, while the appetite for more citizen and community involvement or a desire for various non-governmental and non-business agencies has become much more vocal in recent years. A place-based approach has to find ways to encompass divergent views but also give confidence to a range of actors that it is able to absorb disparate voices, even if critical choices will need to be made that affect the life chances of people and place.

13.4 Towards Planning Metropolitan Futures

Moving forward, metropolitan planning and government are likely to be characterised by a plurality of styles rather than a twentieth-century one-size-fits-all approach. These styles will be apparent between metropolitan and provincial cities, but they may also be evident within individual places too. The notion of using a single plan or strategy to address all of the challenges facing metropolitan areas will be deemed to be not only archaic but also infeasible. The fragmented array of various strategy, funding and delivery agencies to enact both policy and development change in cities will require a new form of urban entrepreneurialism on the part of political leaders and urban professionals, necessitating partnership and alignment between relevant actors. Finding a legitimate space for communities and citizens in this new brokerage network will be one of the biggest challenges for metropolitan cities. Peaceful shaping of tomorrow requires the will of the electorate, many of whom feel alienated by the representative governmental process and ambivalent to political and business leaders. A new dynamic has to be forged that allows governments, business and communities a shared voice in debating and innovating the future of city-wide metropolitan regions, including both physical and virtual opportunities.

Long-term planning through fixed plans that take an eternity to prepare and adopt is likely to be a relic of older forms of planning, not relevant to today's needs. In its place, a series of short-term, project-focused and highly agile planning processes will exist, that is legitimised for specific needs and contexts, but which are capable of being disbanded just as easily. Planning may come to be seen as much as a temporary fix of time and space of relevant actors and delivery partners, as it is of regulation and intervention. This agility allows for metropolitan cities to respond to volatile global and national contexts that create ripples affecting places in different ways.

The bigger challenges require a necessity to find place uniqueness to garner multi-agency collaborative urban and regional innovations. The state will not be able to go it alone. But equally, a fragmented institutional landscape requires more joined-up working to achieve delivery; a critical question could be posed as to which agency is best suited to perform that facilitation role. It may not be mayors or city leaders directly, but agencies that enjoy political support. Boundaried forms of subnational government will not help matters in thinking and acting more strategically and they are notoriously difficult to amend. Softer measures, and ad hoc intermediate organisations, that reach across political geographical and institutional boundaries, may be necessary to turn innovative ideas into legitimate programmes of activities.

It has become increasingly recognised that achieving good qualities of life in nations depends in large part on a good future for cities. Challenges can be identified for the here and now, but to meet these, investment is needed that will have impacts in the long run. We are all conscious of the pace of technological change and so, we not only need to seek to meet our future aspirations but to future-proof to the best of our current abilities. Most thinking about future cities is concerned with the relatively short run. The task of looking decades ahead is seriously challenging. And yet, with some creativity and a refreshed thinking for a proactive role for planning, we can find the right suite of approaches and methods to seize the moment. Only then we can begin to set a new role for metropolitan planning.

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Part V
Metropolitan Futures

Chapter 14
What Is Metropolitan Planning and Governance for?

Daniel Galland, John Harrison and Mark Tewdwr-Jones

Abstract This concluding chapter argues for a new role of planning in shaping metropolitan futures and reflects on the value of the book's thematic-temporal-phronetic (TTP) framework—a *meso-level* approach to better understand the dynamics of contemporary metropolitan change. We begin by revealing the extent to which institutions, policies, spatial imaginaries and planning are influencing metropolitan development through a synthesis of the key outcomes emanating from the totality of the book contributions. The chapter then returns to the TTP framework to reflect on its tripartite rationale as well as its significance to international comparative research. Set against this context, the chapter then identifies four sets of issues that seem highly relevant to both shape future styles of governance and planning, and provide metropolitan regions with modes of working that could make a difference. We finally conclude with three open propositions relating to thematic, temporal and phronetic priorities for future research targeting the planning and governance of metropolitan regions.

Keywords TTP framework · City futures · Regional futures · Agile planning · Metropolitan regions

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14.1 How Institutions, Policies, Spatial Imaginaries and Planning Are Influencing Metropolitan Development

Metropolitan regions are widely considered to be an ideal scale for policy intervention in the twenty-first century. Yet, what is also clear is that metropolitan regions are increasingly reliant on inadequate urban-economic infrastructures, as well as fragmented governance and planning arrangements. These mismatches and coordination issues are intrinsically at the heart of the metropolitan question because they represent the starting point for cooperation in many contexts and yet they remain unsolved issues. Alongside this, the emergence of new spatial concepts means the metropolitan region cannot be regarded as the a priori spatial scale but must be considered increasingly as one among many spatial concepts. These factors pose fundamental questions about what is metropolitan planning and governance actually good for.

Our aim with this book has been to move the debate forward in two ways. Firstly, the contributions reveal the extent to which institutions, policies, spatial imaginaries and planning are influencing metropolitan development. From here, authors have offered a more critical take on 'how can' and 'how should' institutions, policies, spatial imaginaries and planning affect metropolitan change in a more progressive way. Secondly, the book offers a new way of approaching how we research metropolitan regions through the TTP (thematic-temporal-phronetic) framework. In what follows, we reflect on the value of these two approaches and show how they can extend much further than the immediate focus of this book. In the final part, we explore the role of planning in metropolitan futures.

14.1.1 Institutions

There is no denying that institutions—both formal and informal—matter for affecting metropolitan change but their capacity is inherently uneven across time and space (Rodríguez-Pose 2018). Temporally, our periodising of metropolitan regional development identifies three key periods of institutional change:

- *Government* (1950s–70s): this was the dominant approach in the era of spatial Keynesianism. A top-down model rooted in state-territoriality where the key actors were state institutions (central government, local government, metropolitan government).
- *Governance* (1970s–2000s): commonly divided into two phases (1970s–80s New Localism; 1990–2000s New Regionalism) this emerged to become the dominant approach in the era of neoliberal restructuring. It saw evolution from the governmental approach of spatial Keynesianism to include other actors—most notably business and private sector. Institutions became more entrepreneurial, symbolised in the rise of public–private partnerships.

- *Circumventing government and governance* (2010–): we now see other actors attempting to disrupt or circumvent traditional modes of government and governance institutions and institutional frameworks to influence metropolitan policy and affect metropolitan change. Examples include major philanthropic organisations, consultancy firms and celebrated experts which work to complement and/or compete with existing institutional forms, making the metropolitan landscape increasingly complex.

It is in this latest phase of institutional thinking that metropolitan spaces are increasingly viewed as depoliticised spaces of consensual, post-political policy-making following the erosion of urban-governmental capacities and the exposure of cities and regions to market-oriented forms of late-neoliberal planning and governance. This is critical for our understanding of institutions and their capacity to affect metropolitan change because, on the one hand, institutional change is trumpeted as doing exactly this (Barber 2013; Katz and Bradley 2013; Oosterlynck et al. 2019) and yet, on the other hand, the political-economic conditions run counter to this (Davidson and Ward 2018; Etherington and Jones 2016; Gross et al. 2019; Jones 2019; Peck 2017a, b).

The latest round of institutional reforms includes the promotion of (metropolitan) mayors, which in several European—as well as some non-European—countries are intimately tied to other institutional arrangements such as urban contractual policies. These new forms of institutional governance reinforce the emphasis placed in this book of going beyond questions that ask 'what' these arrangements are and 'where' they are emerging, to dig deeper into understanding 'who' is enabling this, 'how' and 'why' they are doing it, and ultimately, 'what is at stake'? There are prominent examples emerging where the institutionalisation of metropolitan regions through processes of devolution are becoming vehicles for implementing cuts to social welfare, public services and delivering austerity (Etherington and Jones 2018). More pertinently, at the heart of many metropolitan region initiatives is an underlying tension between the triumphal rhetoric of a devolution-fuelled growth-agenda running counter to the murky reality of a wider state project of austerity and fiscal constraint. How this plays out on the ground is that metropolitan regions are left with a larger slice of a smaller cake. All of which means that this, as well as other recent developments, urgently requires consideration as to whether metropolitan institutional reforms are actually smokescreens for other agendas (e.g. devolving austerity).

What thinking like this requires is further analysis of the type identified in this book, which pinpoints a series of critical questions. To get to these more fundamental and deep-rooted questions, we must look beyond the metropolitan institution itself to ask: if this institution is the answer then what is the question? This is key because institutions are not the endpoint, they are the means to another end. Institutions are only the mechanism, a process of change but one which happens in order to change and impact something, someone or somewhere else. Moreover, in present-day conditions, do we really need/want metropolitan institutions? If so, what do these institutions look like? Are there institutional solutions to the fundamental challenges facing metropolitan regions going forward? Realistically, can we balance institutional agility with issues of legitimacy and accountability in a neoliberal political-economy?

14.1.2 Policies and Ideas

Policies and policy ideas hold an intrinsic potential to influence metropolitan change. However, both policy implementation and its impact on metropolitan change are largely contingent on metropolitan institutions, i.e. the more the latter are prone to shift over time the less likely policies are able to influence change in metropolitan regions. The periodisation of contemporary processes of metropolitan change pertaining to policies depicts a tendency for institutional reforms to remain constant irrespective of national contexts. Institutional reforms are widely justified on the basis of decision-makers' discourses (e.g. the pursuit of economies of scale) concerning the need to continuously subject institutions to changing conditions. This situation has become the common denominator of (metropolitan) institutions since the crisis of Keynesian welfarist national states and their subsequent transition towards governance regimes in times of neoliberal readjustments. The same reformist tendency associated with institutions has prevailed over the course of the twenty-first century. Endorsed by rationales of administrative efficiency, decentralisation and economies of scale, the promotion of (local, metropolitan and regional) structural reforms has long been politically justified in diverse national contexts through the widely generic and accepted discourse of promoting competitiveness in today's increasingly globalised and financialised world.

The disjunctural dynamics emerging from constant institutional reforms and unrealised metropolitan policies and ideas generate a phenomenon of 'arrhythmia'. Characterised by differential temporal patterns, this arrhythmic state oftentimes translates into a lack of policy implementation unless ad hoc metropolitan policy streams, alongside an unusual condition of institutional steadiness at the metropolitan scale, can generate a conjuncture that unleashes the intrinsic capacity of policies to shape metropolitan regions.

An overarching 'policy void' is arguably generated by the above disjuncture of and resulting arrhythmia between institutions and policies. This void generates a metropolitan policy window which has been increasingly filled in by universalised, one-size-fits-all metropolitan policies (e.g. OECD 2015a, b). This filling-in process has been increasingly steered by international organisations (e.g. World Bank, OECD, UN Habitat and Cities Alliance), non-profit public policy organisations (e.g. Brookings), universities offering executive masters programmes and transnational municipal networks (TMNs), all of which act as 'certifying agencies' imposing templates comprised of 'good practices' and recommendations founded on economic growth and competitiveness logics. This seemingly one-size-fits-all approach to metropolitan policy is eloquently facilitated, mobilised and fostered by travelling policy gurus who play a key role as policy champions.

Exhibiting only limited guidance to real, localised metropolitan issues, these universalised, supranational and international policy ideas are actively used by metropolitan elites as windows of opportunity to promote their own models and concepts. Simultaneously, the same ideas arrive to the ears of thousands of urban and regional planners who act as their recipients within their own national planning

contexts and cultures. However, the reality is that both international organisations as well as policy gurus frequently impose largely unreflective frames that focus on what they regard as competitiveness-oriented metropolitan successes (i.e. which they portray based on comparing metropolitan regions attaining economic growth goals versus those failing to do so). The issue of accessibility to such latest metropolitan successes is normally done via membership and payment, which leads to issues of exclusion. For instance, in the case of 'Metropolis', an international association of major metropolises that acts as a connecting hub to share expertise on metropolitan governance, the implication is that only a selective group of 'member' metropolitan regions gets to 'upload' ad hoc metropolitan policies and ideas. The same dynamics apply for policy downloading, which is only available to member metropolitan regions but not others. The spread of certain policies and ideas is therefore to some metropolitan regions but not others.

The key implication is that the above disjunctural processes alongside the fact that policies and policy ideas remain largely controlled by a few corporate entities and policy communities (i.e. gurus, philanthropies, city networks, consultants) create a stranglehold (Stone 2008; Peck 2016). The question of who has control over which policy ideas get promoted and which do not become more critical than ever before. With 'travelling best practices' prioritising economic development, marketing strategies and infrastructure investments, how is the real localised problematique associated with any metropolitan region to be accounted for? Are best practices concerning public services, public transportation infrastructure and land-use planning travelling at the same pace? Who deals with situated and, in most world contexts, exacerbating sociospatial issues of intra-urban and inter-urban inequality and differentiation? In times where urbanisation stands out as the key global driving force shaping metropolitan regions, stakes are only meant to get higher. In an urbanising world characterised by metropolitan governance accretion, this begs the question of how metropolitan policy is to be imagined and designed and whether, how and where policy does hold potential to shape metropolitan futures, particularly in Global South contexts.

The challenge then becomes how to avoid defaulting off-the-shelf international organisation policies and ideas, particularly in the current climate of increasing discussions aboutSouth-North and South-South learning (Ammann and Förster 2019; Fiddian-Qasmiyeh and Daley 2019; Tomlinson and Harrison 2018). This calls for 'learning to unlearn'—whereby the 'situatedness' of policy ideas should acknowledge the limitations of universalised metropolitan policy assumptions (Lawhon et al. 2016). In policy research, it similarly leads to thinking about alternative conceptualisations that consider difference of new policy epistemologies to better understand the diversity of metropolitan contexts (Galland and Elinbaum 2018; Kovacic 2019; Watson 2016).

14.1.3 Spatial Imaginaries

Spatial imaginaries are important for metropolitan change and development, but their direct impact is minimal. The role of spatial imaginaries lays in discursively framing metropolitan development, oftentimes being used to convince and justify certain actions. Whereas traditionally spatial imaginaries—in the form of maps—effectively were 'the plan', they are now increasingly part of the plan or in many cases, there is not even a plan to speak of. Put simply, spatial imaginaries have assumed the role of being a way of imaging space, designed to convey a particular message—be it to promote a certain form of metropolitan development, to make a case for institutionalising a particular idea of what the metropolitan region is, to attract and prioritise capital investment towards certain locations and so on. Just as with institutions, spatial imaginaries are not an endpoint. They are part of a process designed to affect metropolitan change. In the case of spatial imaginaries, they are often the starting point for those conversations to take place, a way of capturing attention and provoking discussion.

Key to understanding the impact of imaginaries on metropolitan regions is to recognise how they are mobilised to defend or advance certain essential interests. Most important is that as the metropolitan paradigm has developed apace, more and more actors having a stake the planning and governance of metropolitan regions has resulted in more complex, that is, overlapping and competing visions for the metropolitan region and metropolitan regional development. Add to this the increasingly multiscalar (i.e. the conceptual stretching of the metropolitan region concept to refer to the very local scale through to the mega-urban scale in different space-times), multispatial (be it underpinned by networked, territorial, place-based, scalar conceptions of sociospatial relations) and multidimensional (emerging from a geoeconomic, geopolitical or geohistorical logic) approaches to considering the metropolitan region, and one starts to seeing the difficulty in mobilising a singular approach to imagining metropolitan regions and how they are mobilised to affect metropolitan change.

This hyper-complexity of contemporary metropolitan regions, reflected in their simplified yet still complex spatial imaginaries, is arguably the symptom that points to a series of more fundamental challenges when observing emergent trends in processes of large-scale metropolitan expansion. Arguably most significant is how weakly institutionalised many new metropolitan imaginaries are. While a space might be recognised as a metropolitan region and have this label, this does not mean it is meaningful in any significant way. Weakly institutionalised metropolitan regions create detachment from the actual planning and governance of metropolitan regions, and this in turn can lead to even less citizen engagement. Allied to, and irrespective of this, the trend towards a smaller number of increasingly large metropolitan regions has led critics to argue: 'We can hardly plan at the regional scale, let alone for megaregions' (Wheeler 2015, p. 99, cf. Friedmann and Sorensen 2019). And where to go next when the spatial imaginary becomes transnational corridors or planetary urbanisation? Or, as the example of Germany illustrates (Harrison et al. 2020), we can

already see a 'planetary metropolitanisation' in many representations of metropolitan regions because nowhere can now be considered as not being metropolitan (see also OECD 2015a).

Looking ahead, two emergent trends appear particularly important in this regard. The first relates to the advent of live stream data and real-time modelling. As this becomes more integrated into all parts of society, this offers a new way of imagining metropolitan regions. Perhaps more significant, looking back at how the emergence of depoliticised spaces of consensual, post-political policy-making has seen citizens increasingly detached from metropolitan place-making, theoretically they can now access this information and the resultant imaginaries anytime, anywhere, so long as they have a broadband connection. The second is more conceptual and requires us to ask: are we looking in the right places? Urbanisation over the next generation is going to take place predominantly in the Global South, yet we still obsess about Western European and North American metropolitan spatial imaginaries. And even within this focus, academic research and policy elites have been selectively channelling their attention disproportionately towards major urban regions. In both cases, we are witnessing the emergence of a strong counter-narrative calling our attention to those places which have always mattered, but it has been decided do not matter because most of the focus has been on the perceived growth of major agglomerations.

14.1.4 Planning Approaches

From inception, a series of historical features have characterised planning in its role to cater to metropolitan development. Among these attributes stand out the endeavour of planning to achieve place-based distinctiveness resting upon local needs, its efforts to embed metropolitan change within democratic mandates and its attempt to consolidate a future vision of place. In the era of Spatial Keynesianism, planning for metropolitan change strove to advance the means to deal with spatial interrelationships in the long term while adopting rational comprehensive and systems' styles to harness data and flows of information. At the same time, planning sought to become an advocacy domain giving others a voice under politically complex processes of change.

These hallmarks, however, have certainly proven to exert varying degrees of influence on metropolitan development and, lately, it appears that the role of planning has neither been significant nor fit for purpose within most national contexts. While the longue durée shows us how metropolitan planning typically relied on elected government representatives, a public service ethic in pursuit of the greater good and a strategic place-with-plan approach, the more recent decades of neoliberal influence exhibit a mix of government, governance and govern-less forms, where the primacy of the global market causes that city regions become more prevalent than nation states (Borraz and Le Gales 2010). Under this reality, the planning domain has witnessed the rise of unprecedented external driving forces that supersede it—forces which directly or indirectly play a more prominent role in shaping metropolitan change.

Indeed, external forces such as globalisation and financialisation out-trump planning, making it only possible for the latter to cope with them through an increasing use of ad hoc incremental and project-led styles that are characteristically short-termed and siloed.

Struggling to subsist under the ever-increasing influence and pressure of these forces on metropolitan growth and development, the planning domain partly seeks nowadays to rely more on the adoption of informal tools, instruments and policies. The issue of formal versus informal planning has become more widespread, thus setting a dichotomy between orthodox and incrementally agile forms of planning. In so doing, the domain has adopted an oftentimes confusing range of styles characterised by the continual alignment between actors, a temporal fixity in space linked to highly volatile global and national contexts, and a spatial fixity in time focused on individual projects. These emerging conditions of planning are not exempt from internal dilemmas: should planning continue to have long term, bounded and legitimate plans under the pressure for short-term agility? How should planning cope with the issue of 'copy-pasting' policies and ideas, habitually unreflectively, from different territorial and socio-political realities.

The above emergent trends and dilemmas beg the question of how planning should reinvent itself to exert more influence on metropolitan growth and development in a reality where the domain is clearly losing to other drivers of metropolitanisation as well as other policy sectors. Planning has largely failed to comply with its original hallmarks, partly as a consequence of the domain's split into particular activities and partly due to the states' lack of ability to innovate, which is coupled with the fragmentation of institutions of change by sector, space, policy and intervention. Contrary to its indigenous condition of permanence as a state institution, the present requirement for planning to be a mechanism of convenience to align and coordinate between agencies often means that planning fails to endure. These series of implications call back to re-focus on basic yet fundamental questions: What should be the role of planning in the metropolitan century? Who is planning for and whose interests should it defend in contexts where there is a loss of the institutional memory that shaped spatial change? Should planning adopt an advocacy role in pursuit of more democratic values? Does planning still need the plan?

14.2 Rethinking Metropolitan Regions: Do Institutions, Policies, Spatial Imaginaries and Planning Really Matter for Metropolitan Development?

The central argument of this book is that there is an important middle-ground between macro-level, abstract-conceptual analysis of metropolitan regions which seeks simplicity through theoretical generality across time and space, and micro-level, systematic comparative analysis which identifies difference across diverse empirical cases. Moreover, we propose a new way of analysing metropolitan regions through what

we refer to as the thematic-temporal-phronetic (TTP) framework (Galland and Harrison 2020). In this section, we return to the TTP framework, exploring its potential as an analytical approach for better understanding of the dynamics of metropolitan change.

The rationale for the three dimensions of the TTP framework is as follows:

- *Thematic*: focusing on any single theme only provides a partial, one-dimensional, reading of metropolitan regions. A thematic approach emphasises plurality and reveals the interconnections between the multiple drivers of metropolitan change.
- *Temporal*: focusing on present-day episodes of contemporary metropolitan change often overlooks striking similarities from different historical contexts. A temporal approach recognises how we have arrived here to better understand what is currently happening and plan for the future.
- *Phronetic*: focusing on thematic and temporal approaches alone often lack an explicitly critical perspective on metropolitan change. A phronetic approach is essential for developing a rigorous understanding of what should be done, and how relations of power and values must be challenged to achieve alternative metropolitan futures.

Assembled together, the three-dimensional TTP framework offers a new approach to comparative research. Our approach starts from a position where the emphasis on comparison is not on differentiation, diversity and divergence but integration, inclusivity and interconnection. Whereas the former renders our understanding of the metropolitan reality more complex, we start with a recognition that understandings of metropolitan regions today are already so hyper-complex that rather than adding more complexity we must attend to more urgent and fundamental agendas. For our part, these fundamental questions require a meso-level approach where the emphasis is on generalised aspects of concrete empirical realities. The meso-level is where the TTP framework is positioned within the broader contours of intellectual academic debates but also the practice of influencing the planning and governance of metropolitan regions towards more progressive metropolitan futures. We illustrate this in Fig. 14.1.

Figure 14.1 does not deny the importance or come at the expense of macro-level theoretical generality or micro-level empirical specificity, rather it shifts attention away from making metropolitan realities seem ever more complex but without oversimplification (cf. Paasi 2008). By placing the TTP framework at the meso-level, our aim is to create a new space for engagement, one which can forge new ground in the debate over metropolitan regions, and more important, metropolitan regional futures. Occupying this space is not only planning and governance, but other domains too. We are only too aware, in the first instance, that our focus on planning and governance is arguably part of a larger political domain. The four dimensions we identify and mobilise in this book are not exhaustive, nor are they prescriptive or descriptive of the 'metropolitan reality' and political will of metropolitan regions. Others may identify other key drivers of metropolitan change from a political, planning, governance perspective. And secondly, the political domain planning and governance sit is not the only domain influencing metropolitan regional development. The TTP framework mobilised here in relation to planning and governance could be easily reproduced

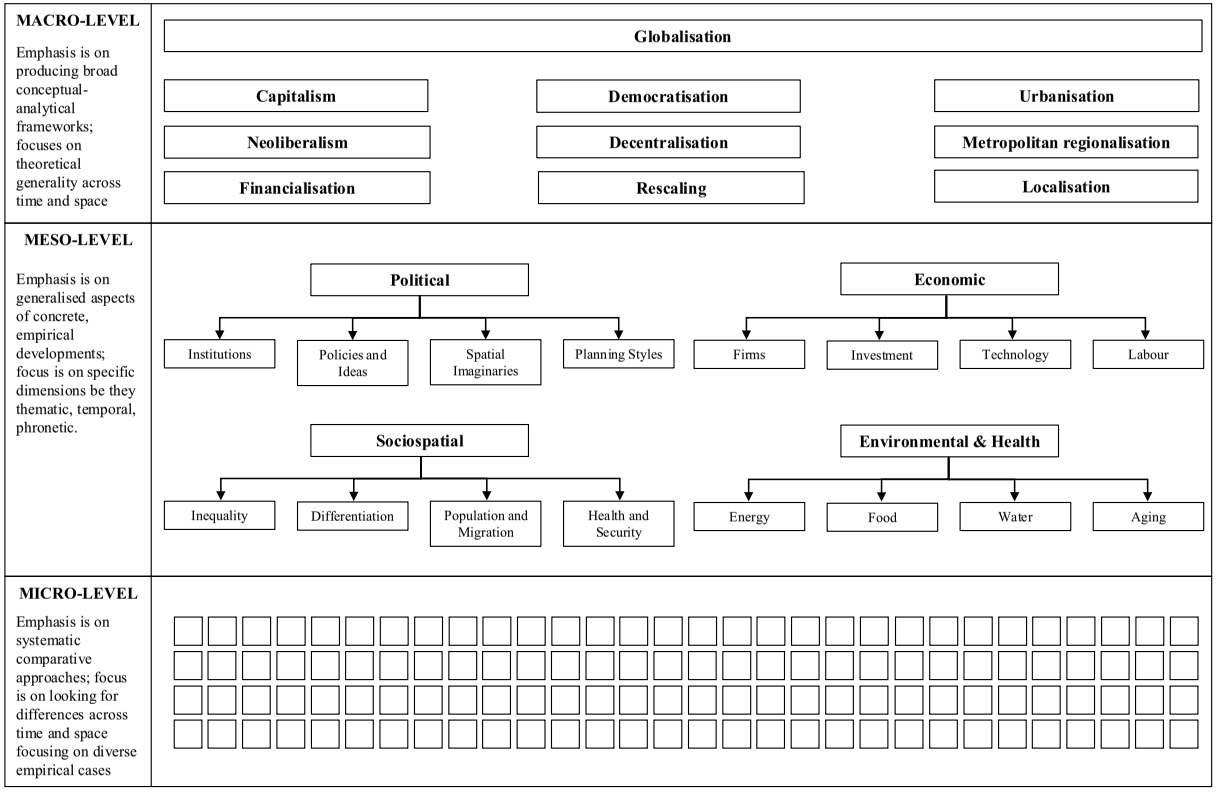

Fig. 14.1 Approaching metropolitan regions

in other domains. Here, we identify three other domains—economic, sociospatial, environmental and health—and associated themes for which the TTP framework could be applied. Again, this is illustrative, highlighting the potential to extend the approach adopted in this book.

14.3 Metropolitan Futures: What Role for Planning?

Set against this context, what can we identify as positive and proactive ways forward for metropolitan futures and a role for planning in metropolitan regions? Following the framework of the book, we focus on unpacking the four sets of issues that seem highly relevant to both shape future styles of governance and planning, and also provide metropolitan regions with modes of working that could make a difference. These are: (1) institutional make-up; (2) policy ideas; (3) spatial imaginaries; and (4) planning pathways.

14.3.1 Institutional Make-Up

As we have seen in the examples discussed in this volume, institutions are finding that it is becoming more difficult to unilaterally shape the future of their cities and regions. This inability to respond relates to the need to understand and come to terms with the complex global forces and supranational drivers of change that are too fast paced to be dealt with through traditional and formal modes of government and governance. The clunky and sectored policy processes, that previously could be relied upon to coordinate some semblance of change, are fragmented and unwieldy. Alongside formal elected forms of representative government, we have seen the development of shadow governance processes comprised of other types of institutions forging partnerships with and between elected government and other agencies.

More recently, the twin-track processes of government and governance have been accompanied by a growing tendency to forge and utilise intermediate organisations that are sufficiently ad hoc and agile for agencies to be able to respond to issues at a proactive pace. Such intermediate organisations circumvent traditional modes of representative government and even governance partnerships but rely on the latter's legitimacy to function. Notwithstanding concerns over the transparency and constitutional status of such intermediate arrangements, there does appear to be some benefit of utilising a mixed mode of governance in individual cities for specific purposes. Our first requirement, therefore, is to recognise that metropolitan regions can display at least three different types of institutional processes and that these types can co-exist with each other in individual places. Adopting a diffuse institutional arrangement offers a more flexible form of governance responsiveness to address unique sets of issues prevalent within a metropolitan region. But it also means that the lines of democratic accountability and the formalised process of urban planning

become much more diverse. We may lament about the degree to which past or existing forms of metropolitan planning are being compromised or replaced in this context, but we should also recognise that it is possible to adapt and renew to changing and more challenging sets of circumstances.

Metropolitan cities need to adapt and innovate to succeed globally but also address the needs of their own cities and localities, and the citizens and businesses within them. This innovation, by its very nature, will require different forms of working to those that have existed up until recently. Among the new forms would be establishing:

(1) new *modes* of operating
(2) different *types* of partnerships
(3) new *testing beds* to trial projects, services and ideas
(4) new *legitimacy* for initiators that might be outside traditional institutions of power.

All of these new metropolitan institutional forms have their own challenges in formulation, legitimation, implementation and resourcing when compared to how we traditional govern and plan, and for some cities, these challenges will make or sometimes break elected government. Transition will not be easy and there may well be resistance from those who have benefited from existing modes of government and the power structures that have been established. But equally, there will be a wealth of opportunity to 'others' in the metropolitan arena to be freed up to think and act creatively and become part of a new landscape of adaptive and agile governance.

Shrewder political leaders are likely to see this adaptive and agile mode as a set of initiatives that can be seen to be revitalising metropolitan institutions. They can contribute to reawakening democratic and political involvement, reforming and updating government institutions, while celebrating and of course protecting their established sets of power. For less enlightened political leaders or at least those compromised by a system of power structures that are intended to inhibit strong leadership, a new reforming set of adaptive and agile arrangements are likely to be seen as a threat. This would be seen as a challenge to not only their own hold on power but also to the very institutions by which they and their interests were elected in the first place and are able to retain control over the various aspects of metropolitan politics.

The key determinants in shaping metropolitan governance and the institutions of power are likely to revolve around who shapes the innovation agenda in future. Where is the ability and who has the authority to initiate urban innovation projects led or championed by consortia of interests in order to address fundamental issues of concern and relevance to that city? Where are the flexible spaces within the institutions of metropolitan government and metropolitan planning that creates the ability for others, the non-governing elite, to initiate change on their terms and develop innovative responses that are not constrained or at least held back by formal tiers of government and formal planning arrangements? To what extent can metropolitan regions permit or even create a co-existing multitude of government, governance and intermediate institutional forms? Will such institutional flexibility allow the availability of ad hoc

flexible governance processes that draws state, business and community together to shape or places in the interests of the city as a whole?

14.3.2 Policy Ideas

Alongside a much more adaptive and agile form of governance and institutional arrangements, there will be a need to find new routes to shape and deliver policy through projects relevant to individual metropolitan regions. The twentieth-century planning mode tended to fixate on a conventional survey-analysis-plan-implementation loop within elected forms of government. This has been accompanied with opportunities to initiate public engagement at set times within the loop and to invite the business and development communities into the process when the market has the ability to respond and give meaning and action to planning intent.

A fault of this conventional approach has been treating the elected government as an all-encompassing entity that decides upon the required trajectory of the place, determines the timing of intervention and controls development opportunities. In other words, the hallmark has been that the state takes on the appearance of the proactive agent and reduces the market to reactivity. In older forms of planning across Western Europe, the state did indeed possess both the democratic mandate to select and initiate options for change, advertise intent to act within a plan and then resource that intervention through a series of public projects. But this approach is no longer a model that fits with how twenty-first-century European cities are witnessing physical change, even if the model remains relevant to more state-centric nations such as cities in China, Singapore and Arab states. Even those nations with defined constitutional and federal structures of government, and therefore greater discretion at their disposal, the ability of the state alone to initiate and deliver planning responses is no longer a linear path.

Where the state is no longer an all-pervasive force coordinating and controlling cities through total government and total planning, and increasingly relies on the market to initiate and deliver physical change, the conventional planning cycle is somewhat archaic. Developers no longer wait for the full cycle of plan preparation to be finished before seeking out land opportunities. Communities and members of the public resent having to wait set times for public consultation to express a voice in processes of urban and regional change. If the market identifies a business opportunity for intervention, they will want to press on ahead irrespective of the need to wait for the full circle of planning to be completed. This undermines the legitimacy of having a plan in the first place, of course. It has also led some politicians to criticise planning for its delaying tendency and for the time it takes planners to complete and adopt a plan for a city.

But there are also merits in retaining a plan as an intelligence and synoptic force with political will, as a sum of the parts combining trends, analysis, foresight, public input and a long-term perspective. So, the key determinants in forging a future form of metropolitan planning are one where policy reflects political intent, but where the

responses for particular parts of the city reflect the divergent interests who may want to develop or build or enact them.

Such a dilemma suggests ensuring a distinction between broad strategic spatial planning intent through policy statements and then a suite of different pathways for outcomes and delivery that reflect a diverse range of implementation agencies. There would still be a need for an overarching strategy for the entire city that takes time to prepare and takes on the form of a strategy of strategies. This strategy would need to reflect global and national intent as well as subnational drivers of change. This might be associated with a four-year political term of office (the strategy changes as city leaders change) and it may not be a physical plan but rather a suite of intelligence and data that sit alongside the political objectives. This may even be a publicly accessible online resource that is updated automatically from urban observation and intelligence sources. The broad policy intent and the updated intelligence reflecting ongoing metropolitan trends would keep the strategy relevant to changing circumstances. But instead of relying on a single all-encompassing plan that gradually becomes more out of date and irrelevant as time passes, the translation into action and intervention could be achieved through various policy mechanisms that are more short term, customised in design and collaborative in ownership within the four-year cycle.

For such a transition to occur, political leaders would need to develop a candidate future metropolitan strategy for action as part of their political election campaigns that reflected broader national agendas in addition to their manifesto commitments. Translating these into actionable policy tools, from site-specific project briefs to infrastructure plans, would be a task for the institutions of government working with business, community and other delivery partners. The benefit would be holding politicians to a four-year strategy where they become the metropolitan animateurs while recognising that a broader spectrum of other actors, working together, will be required to implement policy ideas into delivery form.

14.3.3 Spatial Imaginaries

As we discussed earlier in the chapter, one hallmark of planning for well over a century has been its reliance on the visual. The plan, a schematic or land-use map or development zone illustration, has been a feature of planning since its modern development in the early twentieth century. For many nations and regions, the illustrative plan remains an important statutory means to communicate urban change and proposed futures. But the form that visualisation takes, a two-dimensional (2D) perspective, has not changed much over that time. And yet we are in the midst of a digital revolution where imagery in the form of photography, motion picture, animation, video and meme are being used increasingly day-to-day to record places, mobility and change. This technology extends the art of the possible in terms of capturing urban and regional change, projecting places to broader audiences and providing the tools to recreate the past and hypothesise the future. It also democratises urban and regional visualisation since everyone armed with a smartphone (about half the

world at present)—professional novice alike—is now able to make their own images, upload them to online platforms and social media instantly, and provide powerful messages about change in visual form. Everyone is now able to create a spatial imaginary of a place.

The 2D plans of cities remain of relevance and of interest to professionals, geographers and historians among others. But they seem somewhat archaic in the context of video, 3D videos, digital animation and hyperlapse photography used by designers and architects. Given the immense interest in visualisation, could metropolitan planning adopt new methods that embrace a broader spectrum of illustrative devices, partly to communicate the possibility of urban change but also to reawaken an interest in the public in engaging with ideas about the future of cities?

We often forget that before the introduction of city plans more regularly and formally in the middle of the twentieth century, cities across Europe embarked on much more innovative means of engaging citizens with grand plans for urban change. As Freestone and Amati (2014) have shown, these include the use of city museums and city exhibitions, first promoted by Patrick Geddes in the early 1900s, and the high use of documentary film between the 1930s and 1960s.

Somewhere in the latter quarter of the twentieth century, planners forgot how to engage audiences in more exciting visual ways as film, exhibition and photography died away in favour of 2D representations. Developers have made an effort of course, glamorising new developments through artistic renderings of attractive lifestyle choice new homes and happy sunny retail spaces for urban centres; the imagery has changed here, moving from hand-drawn images of prospective futures to digitally altered photographs of real places, photoshopped with new buildings and even people. Some cities have gone further (Helsinki, Canberra, Edinburgh, Singapore for example), embarking on city vision exercises that positively embrace more creative methods, while other cities (Hong Kong, Shanghai, London, Chicago, for example, but with varying motives) have blown the dust off the idea of city exhibitions and devised pop-up urban room exhibitions and city models as devices to get citizens and investors talking about metropolitan change. And yet, many of these innovations are just that because they remain the exception to the rule in more metropolitan planning processes.

We would argue that it is increasingly important to be seen to adopt new technologically advanced forms of spatial imaginaries to accompany all forms of present and future planning activities on a city-wide basis in metropolitan regions. Not only would this reflect the overwhelmingly positive appetite on the part of citizens and travellers to record the urban though digital imagery, it would also provide a much needed more open style of participatory engagement about city futures.

The key determinants in adopting enhanced forms of city visualisation are allowing anyone with an interest in a place to share their perspectives of cities in ways they can control and communicate with broader audiences. But it would be necessary for this visualisation to become part of the broader metropolitan planning process, where professionals listen and view a citizen's perspective of the urban together with their likes and dislikes, represented in visual form. Pilot exercises run in Newcastle upon Tyne indicate a positive take-up of new digital photographic, video and draw-

ing media in addressing the long-term future of the city, often led by children and young people that, in turn, attract the attention of parents, grandparents and other family members and friends (Tewdwr-Jones et al. 2019). The challenge would be to convince professional planners to see the knowledge-gathering, idea-generating merits of more visual means that could inform their hitherto closed and predominantly written communication devices. Translating imagery into a planning and institutional context would require some skilled treatments (visual ideas do not have to be nested within any plan but rather inform and shape it in multiple ways). But the use of places where there was an open multimedia dialogue would at least be the first step at revising a spatial imagination of the metropolitan while generating more open forms of engagement.

14.3.4 Planning Pathways

There is a real danger that planning will increasingly be seen as an archaic twentieth-century top-down state activity, detached from the complex drivers of change affecting cities, remote from the requirements of the digital and global age, and irrelevant to modern processes of citizen engagement. If planning is going to serve a purpose in the twenty-first century, it must adapt to survive. Metropolitan planning could become a more adaptive and agile suite of methods and processes that addresses some of our more challenging conditions, celebrates diverse urban voices, embraces creative and digital techniques that engage and inspire, and responds to social need, environmental change and economic growth. The status quo is not an option. But the task of transforming metropolitan planning is no easy task, when so many conservative forces and vested interests are apparent, not least among those who were responsible for promoting current and increasingly historic forms of planning.

A one-size fits-all approach to planning even within a single nation across an array of metropolitan regions appears to be an obsolete perspective. The implications of adopting a multiple perspective of planning, essentially *planning plural*, are obvious; not only does metropolitan planning become more aligned to the changing interests of individual cities and potentially more responsive to citizens and businesses within the city, but it also challenges the state's grip over planning. The enduring form of planning rests not with particular types of plans that have been extant for decades or even with those who historically control urban agendas. The enduring form of planning rests on the *components* of planning, its ability to be agile and responsive, its attempt to encompass diverse views and mediate between competing agendas, and its ministry to secure legitimacy and commitment for a long-term view of a city's future. As Forester (2009) has noted, planning's position in managing change is, and should be, a story of hope.

While metropolitan planning requires a synoptic and strategic perspective, we should not think that the problems of the urban as a whole can be resolved by automated systems thinking. McLoughlin's (1969) contribution to the changing condition of cities in the 1960s by advocating a systems view of planning was important in

addressing both the challenges and opportunities of the modelling age. But we have learned a great deal in the last 50 years of not to see systems thinking through computing techniques as the only means by which we try and resolve urban problems. As we enter another period of cities as dynamic digital platforms hosting novels forms of smart data, we should not believe that digitisation is the only way to plan and police the metropolitan, and politicians should not be hoodwinked into thinking that they can truly address problems by handing over city assets to large digital corporations divorced from the place. There is a place for digital and data in future metropolitan cities, but only where it can be harnessed to achieve citizen and community advantage, and where it helps overcome deep-seated urban problems.

Planning outlives a legislatively fixed view of planning and, in so doing, creates pathways for change that can absorb new demands and new sets of urban actors. It is, and must be viewed as, a long-term game. And when allied to particular places, with all their unique histories, geographies, place memories, identity and past forms of political and planning interventions, they can take on an inherent power. The infrastructure of cities acts as sunk costs. Airport, port, highways, rail and metro lines and stations, energy sources, power plants, even universities and hospitals, already exist and therefore as hubs can shape and dictate the future urban canvas. This includes temporal moves to radically respond to urban challenges by designating out-of- or edge-of-centre urban employment zones, science parks and retail centre.

Sometimes infrastructure assets do not meet the changing needs of cities; on other times, they create economic and social externalities. In all cases, there is a role for strategic spatial planning not necessarily in institutionally and politically capturing infrastructure decisions and funding, but rather in addressing issues of wider metropolitan embeddedness to address economic unevenness, real estate price bubbles and mobility congestion. Planning can also consider the knock-on effects of infrastructure investment to wider social needs and service provision, including schools, health centres, telecoms and waste management, before stresses and strains happen. There is a case for seeing planning's relationship to infrastructure as an opportunity means to avoid significant costs for cities over time if the impacts are assessed early enough.

Of course, some new ideas for how to manage metropolitan regions are, in point of fact, hardly new at all. As both Watson (2016) and Hall (2014) have remarked, old ideas tend to resurface occasionally because, in essence, they remain relevant for the specific planning needs of those places. The likelihood of those ideas being adopted and implemented, however, is largely dependent on contextual forces, stemming from political commitment, public appetite, investor perspectives and—perhaps above all—time.

For every form of planning intervention, there will be a need to address the resultant externalities and intervene again at some point in the future, and that cycle is not an excuse *not* to enact forms of metropolitan planning at all. But with changing societal expectations, a global economy, a search for place distinctiveness, coupled with older and dated forms of existing planning techniques, there is a case for challenging the forms of metropolitan government and planning we have become all too used to. Future metropolitan planning might not be seen solely through a single plan, it

might not be the responsibility of metropolitan government, and it might not be there only to serve development interests. It might become a repository of public-facing second-by-second urban intelligence, it might comprise a diverse set of tools and digital platforms, and it might act as a facilitation platform for new ideas and innovations that citizens, communities and businesses can contribute to. Twentieth-century metropolitan planning is defunct; we should get used to it.

14.4 Metropolitan Regions, Planning and Governance: What Next, Where Next?

Besides the general agreement that metropolitan regions are of relevance, the debate remains somehow inconclusive as regards what form metropolitan planning and governance should take going forward. At one level, we continue to appear surprised (though by now we surely cannot be?) by the emergence of new 'in vogue' ideas and mantras on the form metropolitan planning and governance must take—smart, networked, resilient, creative, sustainable, competitive, city-regional, megaregional—that quickly take on a globalised form and seemingly self-perpetuate towards and during a period of political-economic orthodoxy. The problem here is we cannot negate that there is a polemic undertone (in the sense of stylised controversies) and it is often difficult to equate this with the national and region specific-forms each takes on in practice. At another level, there is the piecemeal landscape of metropolitan activities and region-building which emerge in a specific place, at a specific time, often as a side-effect, unintended coincidence or entirely by accident. In each scenario, issues of comparability emerge.

In this book, we have argued for a more open, broader perspective on metropolitan regions. We have advanced the TTP framework as providing one analytical tool through which this might be enabled. In this final section, we conclude with three more open propositions relating to thematic, temporal and phronetic priorities:

- *What questions should we be asking?* For us, it is less important to be asking: What the (next) institution, policy idea, imaginary or planning style is or should be? These are important questions but they are only a first step. Far more important are the questions: Who are institutions, policy ideas, imaginaries or planning styles for? How and why are they originating? What is at stake for those included and excluded? What are the implications for different places and parts of society?
- *Where should we be looking?* Much of the work on metropolitan regions has been dominated by research in and of Western Europe and North America, and written for a predominantly Western European and North American audience. It is clear that a 'Southern' turn is taking place currently, but this should not be at the expense of, but rather complementary to, Northern perspectives. Writing from a European perspective, our aim in this book has been to develop and operationalise a framework which could be applied as a heuristic device to engender dialogue across contexts and cultures. In short, our meso-level approach aims to develop a

shared set of thematic and phronetic priorities around which we can look to engage in more interdisciplinary and cross-contextual conversations. We have also been keen to stress the need to adopt and pursue more historical, periodised approaches such that we contextualise current developments and activities within the broader contours of metropolitanisation processes.

- *What is the bigger picture?* Our final aim has been to situate metropolitan regions, change and development within a broader political-economy. It goes without saying that we have been necessarily selective in what we can set out to achieve in the pages of the book, but the emphasis throughout has been outward rather than inward-looking. On the one hand, we have been keen to emphasise the need to be outward-looking *within* accounts of metropolitan regionalism, acknowledging internal diversity in disciplinary approaches, tools and cases. On the other hand, we have endeavoured to show examples of how we need to be outward-looking *beyond* accounts of metropolitan regionalism per se, recognising that metropolitan regions are one among many spatial concepts. Moreover, what happens in relation to metropolitan regions is one thing, while it is entirely another to see how that complements, contradicts, overlaps, competes with other processes that act in, through or on these spaces.

When all this has been said and done, we aim to have convinced you, the reader, never to assume that metropolitan regions are the (only) answer. Often it can be easy to assume they are. But if planning and governing metropolitan regions are to continue providing answers to twenty-first-century problems, perhaps the starting point should be to ask: if metropolitan regions *are* the answer, what question is being asked?

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