

CONAMA LOCAL 2019

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ITALIAN NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR INNER AREAS (SNAI): A TOOL FOR LOCAL DEVELOPMENT



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National Committee supporting Inner Areas Strategy

Problems of peripheral territories in Italy

Physical: travel distance from 'Service Centers' municipalities (secondary schools, specialized hospital, 2.500-4.000 users p/day railway stations)

Italy: 21 min

Peripheral areas: 37 min

Digital divide: % of population connected to broadband > 20 mbps

Italy: 65%

Peripheral areas: 46%

Demographic: lower increase (pop 2001-2011) and aging of population

Italy: +0,6%, 21% over 65

Peripheral areas : -4.2% , 22% over 65

[specific areas e.g. some part of Apennines: -38%, 33% over 65)]

Economic: loss of cultivated soil (Census 1982-2010)

Italy: -19%

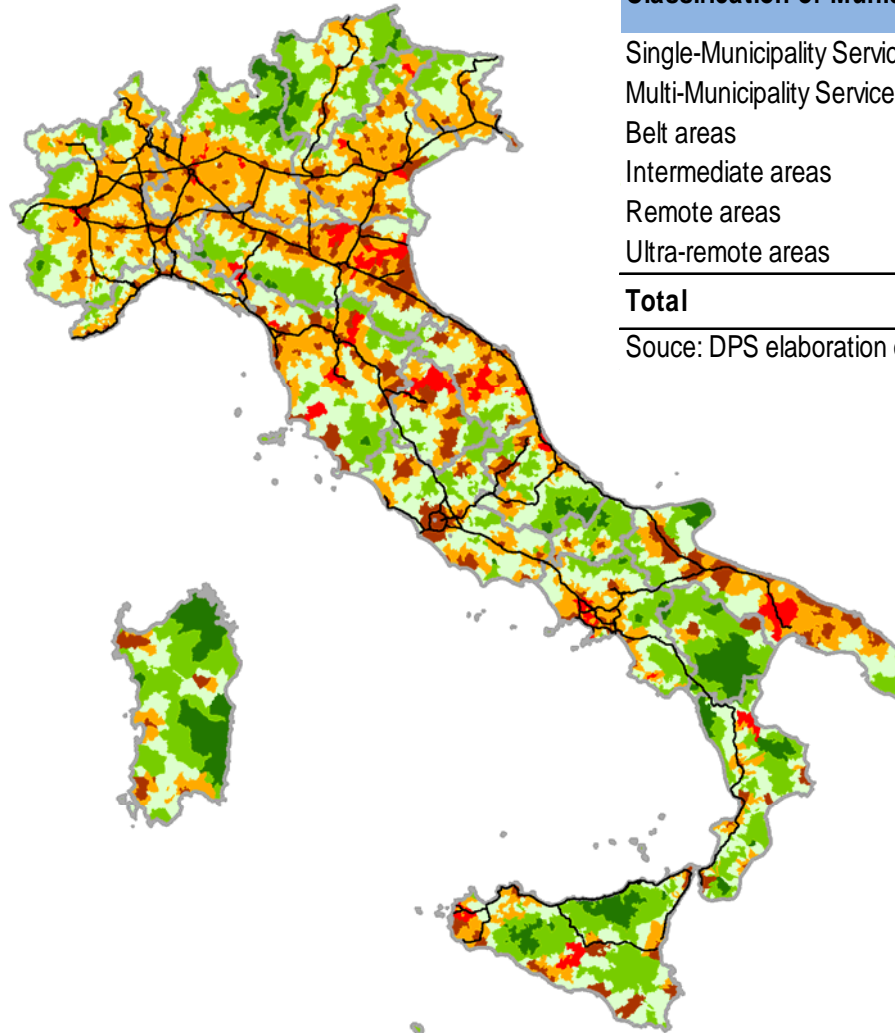
Peripheral areas: -21%

Inner Areas: dealing with the issue

The first steps

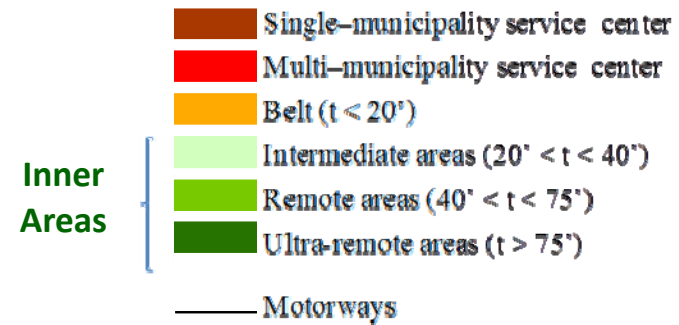
- ❖ December 2012: strong political support to a **new local development strategy**
→ Fabrizio Barca, Minister for Cohesion Policy asks for a special action in favor of many small municipalities and rural areas loosing inhabitants
- ❖ Involvement of five Ministries (Education, Labour, Health, Agriculture, Territorial Cohesion), the European Commission and Italian Regions
- ❖ 2014: Through a desk and a field analysis 72 Pilot Areas elicited to experiment the Strategy (around 1.000 municipalities, 16,7% of the national territory, 2M pop, 85% mountain municipalities with a strong population decrease)

Inner Areas of Italy



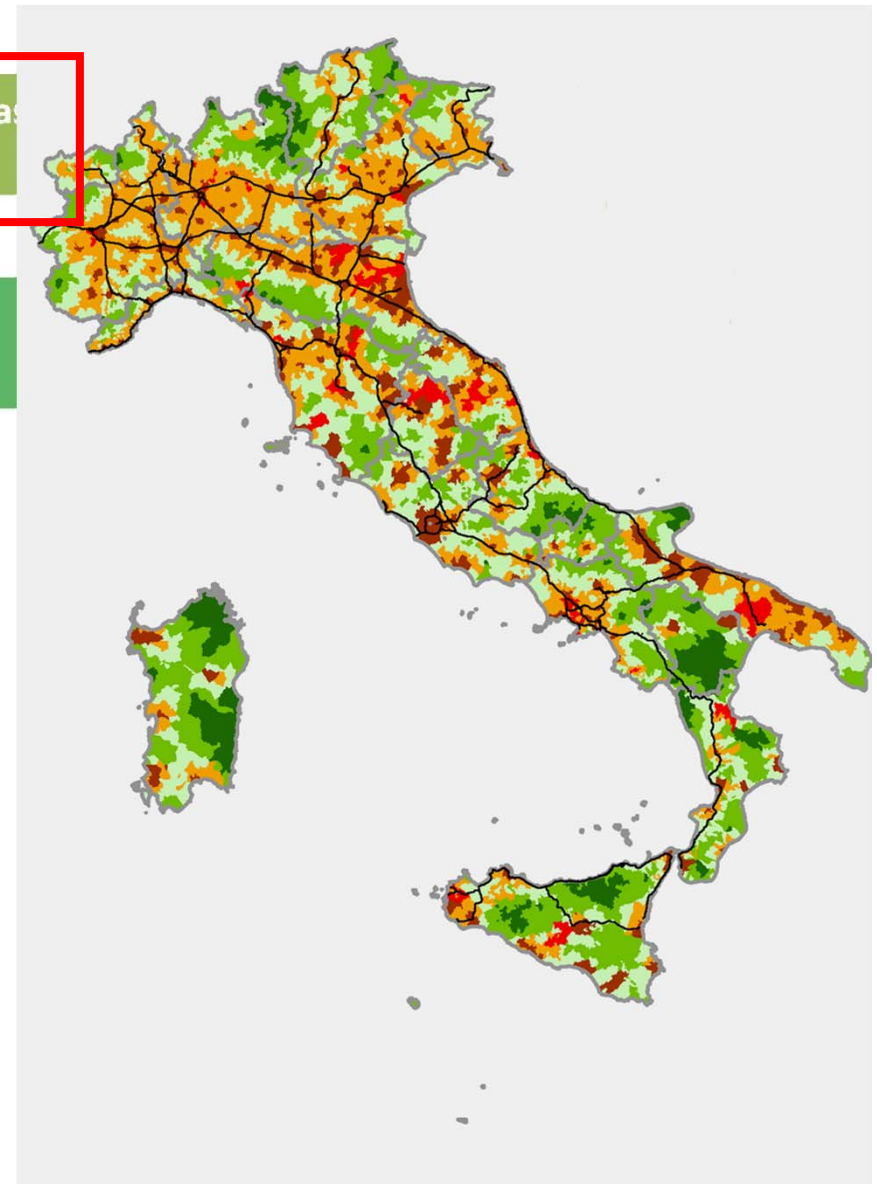
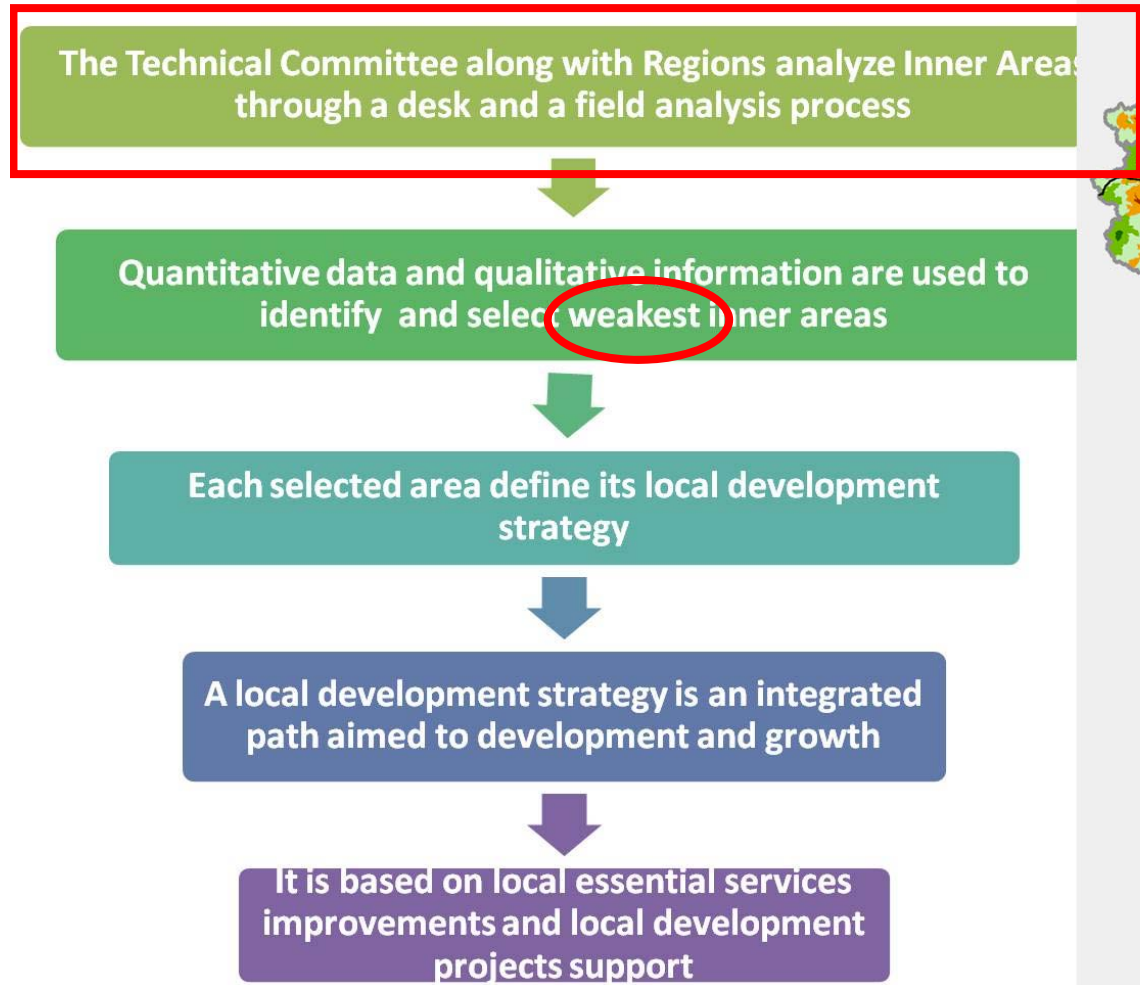
Classification of Municipalities	N.	%	Average elevation	Population	%	KM ²	%
Single-Municipality Service Center	217	2,7	148	20.983.786	35,3	28.948	9,6
Multi-Municipality Service Center	122	1,5	195	2.986.161	5,0	8.606	2,8
Belt areas	3568	44,1	219	22.135.047	37,2	83.982	27,8
Intermediate areas	2360	29,2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

Source: DPS elaboration on Istat - Census 2011



60% of national territory
4.000 municipalities
23% of total population
65% mountain municipalities

Inner Areas National Strategy (SNAI): the process



Inner Areas Strategy (SNAI): features

Five main methodological innovations

1. Multi-level governance → different institutional actors working closely with local stakeholders (local, regional, and national)
2. Local **alliance of municipalities** as driving force of local strategies (**CLLD approach**), with the “**critical**” help of a national task force of experts (**Place-based approach**)
3. **Multi-fund** attitude: services (school, public transports, healthcare) covered by an “Inner Areas National Funds” within National budgetary law, local development projects financed by EU Structural Funds (ESF, ERDF, EARDF)
4. Planning Approach and Territorial Concentration: searching for **innovative** projects and actors to overcome path dependence and lock in
5. Monitoring achievements through **RESULTS (outcome)** indicators: measurable effects of the strategy

Notice: selected areas have a long-run history of public policies and expenditures, with unsatisfactory results → rooted presence of “**extractive**” elites/ institutions, which regulate “a slow and quiet decadence of local systems”

The approach

The place-based approach

- ❖ Assumption 1: most of the knowledge needed for local areas to overcome their underdevelopment trap is **embedded in places**
- ❖ Assumption 2: if the place is an Inner Area, **a change is needed** in local policies!
- ❖ *Bottom up* is **not the best way** to let the knowledge emerge and work. Why?
- ❖ Rooted presence of **local élites** with a rent position → able to address local institutions to their interest (= extractive institutions)
- ❖ Breaking the vicious circle through an **exogenous** intervention
- ❖ Skilled, impartial **external experts** to ensure informed, open and reasonable debate at the place level (where useful knowledge stands). Even a conflicting attitude
- ❖ Role: triggering **endogenous change**

The development strategy

“Each selected area defines its own development strategy”

- starting from local needs and available resources;
- Identifying a long-run development “vision” of the area, defining how to escape from current negative development trends (“imagine your ideal community 20 years from now”);
- operating through **local development** projects and **essential services** improvements
- built on local stakeholders active engagement (active citizens, entrepreneurs, institutions...)

How to do it

- A **first draft** (3-5 pages): the area, the problems, the resources to be activated
- A **Preliminary Strategy** (20-25 pages): the “backbone idea” for future development, the action plan, the resources, a first set of expected results and indicators
- The **Definitive strategy** (40-45 pages) + project sheets (10-25 projects) to be implemented in next three years (phases, agents, financing source, beneficiaries) and to be confirmed in the future

Each step **followed by National team** of experts and **approved by National Technical Committee**, allowing the passage to the next stage

The definitive agreement entails a tripartite deal signed by a local representative, technical leaders of involved Ministries and of Regions

Innovation in SNAI

In 66 out of 72 pilot areas that have started the process

- ❖ **Community car-pooling** initiative to move inhabitants in Val Maira (Piedmont), with a web platform to manage the service and implemented by a cooperative
- ❖ **Remote class-rooms** in secondary schools in Beigua Sol (Liguria) and Piacenza-Parma Apennine (Emilia-Romagna)
- ❖ Equipping local **Pharmacy-shops with smart technologies** to allow remote diagnostics by hospital personnel in Matese (Molise)
- ❖ Smart devices to allow inhabitants to **monitoring landslide** and strengthen civil protection in Madonie (Sicily)
- ❖ **Community cooperatives**: a new kind of cooperatives active in market (tourism, agriculture) and public services (transports, home delivery of food and medicines, ...) in Emilia Apennine and Basso Ferrarese (Emilia-Romagna)
- ❖ **Recovering abandoned houses** in rural boroughs to increase the number of tourism beds in Matera Mountain (Basilicata)
- ❖ **Laser technology (LIDAR)** to get information on forests and renew local forestry industry in Alta Carnia (Friuli)
- ❖ Organizing data bases and new land association to **recover abandoned soils for agriculture** in Lombardy Apennine (Lombardy)

Some Conclusions (in progress...)

What is working

- ❖ a new emphasis of the Policentric character of the Country → rethinking rural-urban divide
- ❖ trying to select new ideas, new agents and new methods: co-operation among local, regional and national level, each one involved in strategy development
- ❖ putting communities' elected representatives at the heart of local development strategy

What is not (or less than expected)

- ❖ lock in and path dependence: working with local agents (mayors, local associations) confirms the force of extractive institutions
- ❖ strategies work better where a technical assistance follows the Area
- ❖ lock in even at the Central level: SNAI is not strong enough to “rewrite” the rules (schools, local taxes, funds utilization...)

