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Can Cities Fix the Political Trilemma of the World Economy?
Evidence from the pandemics

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Introduction

In 2011 Economist Dani Rodrik described the 'Globalisation Paradox' by outlining a fundamental political Trilemma of the World Economy aimed to balance state power with economic integration and democracy. The Trilemma is formulated as follows: how do we manage the tension between national democracy and global markets, given that we cannot pursue *hyperglobalisation*, *democracy* and *national self-determination* all at once? According to Rodrik, we have three options at our disposal. First, we can *restrict democracy* in the interest of minimising international transaction costs, disregarding the economic and social whiplash that global economy occasionally produces. Second, we can *limit globalisation*, in the hope of building democratic legitimacy at home. Or third, we can *globalise democracy* at the cost of national sovereignty.

However, Rodrik's analysis is lacking another important dimension: the many levels of governance that exist in the world today that, from below and above, exert pressure on the international order. In particular, below the nation-state there are cities and regions which may have their own governance structures and networks. How are these various levels of governance going to fit into the Trilemma?

After analysing the unfolding relationship between globalisation and the nation state, that through the reconfiguration of the crucial concepts of territory and sovereignty – which in turn lead us to the passage from a Westphalian paradigm to the network one, this essay will focus on the role of cities in this evolving, multi-level and multi-actor global governance. Based on urban literature and data as well as on the most recent evidence from the emergency management of Covid-19 pandemics, it will be argued that cities capture in their essence the three building block of the Rodrik's Trilemma. Being defined as globally integrated economic actors, new sovereign actors, and fully democratic actors, cities therefore represent the *locus* where the Trilemma could be resolved.

Leaving the Trilemma in the background, the last two chapters will focus on the role of cities in an evolving global governance. In particular, building on literature developed in the early months and based on evidence and available data from the first period after the outbreak, as well as on original interviews carried out with local authorities, the essay will try to underline the role of cities in the context of the most recent Covid-19 pandemics. Starting from a more general overview of emergency management and governance situations, cities' key role in the management of the health emergency will appear as a further proof of their growing influence and centrality in an international and more and more networked system. As we are rapidly moving away from what was called the Westphalian inter-state system, nation states are slowly but firmly leaving space to non-state actors, which, in turn are filling the holes of a broken politics (Katz, 2013). The pandemics offered a new pair of lenses through which we can look at those phenomena.

Part I

Chapter I

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The bigger picture: economic globalisation and its political challenges

I.iSovereignty and territoriality: from Westphalia to globalisation

> From the seventeenth-century treaties of Westphalia into the 1960s, capitalism unfolded through a system of nation-states that generated concomitant national structures, institutions, and agents. Globalization has increasingly eroded these national boundaries, and made it structurally impossible for individual nations to sustain independent, or even autonomous, economies, polities, and social structures. A single headquarters for world capitalism had become untenable as the process of transnational market, financial, and productive integration proceeded in recent decades. (Robinson, 2001; p. 160)

Going back in the year 1648, two treaties signed in the cities of Osnabruck and Munster, better and collectively known as the Treaty of Westphalia, brought into creation a notion of statehood that would go on to shape and define the formation of nation-states across the world for the centuries to come (Bobbit, 2002). The so-called Westphalian state is widely believed to be characterised by two distinctive features that will be key to understanding the development of the current essay: namely territoriality and sovereignty. But as globalization unfolds, these quintessentials of the Westphalian state are being fundamentally challenged by major changes in the evolution of modes of production and by new-born dynamics in the global economy, capable of undoing the forms of sovereignty and territoriality embedded in that state system (Sassen, 1996). In this new context, the traditional political geography of borders and gold standards leaves the stage to a new geography of networks and global value chains.

Historically, the Westphalian model of nation states links the sovereignty of a state to its territorial borders. Within these borders a state is supreme with respect to its law, and beyond its borders a state earns the right of recognition and intercourse to the extent that it can defend its borders (Bobbit, 2002; p. 19).

It follows that sovereignty is understood as a ruler's rightful entitlement to exclusive, unqualified, and supreme rule within a delimited territory (McGrew, 2014), definition on which the most widely accepted explanation of statehood by Max Weber builds on:

> "The state is the local community that has legitimate monopoly of violence over a given territory, which consists principally in the bureaucratic apparatus that conducts its various administrative, legislative and juridical functions" (Anter, 2014).

Complementarily, territorialisation denotes division of land in clearly demarcated territories that correspond to the physical, or geographical, representation of the state. Control over territory defines the "...enclosure of social [production] relations into bounded demarcated units..." (Jessop, 2016; p. 125), that means – on the political side – the exercise of sovereignty and power over the population living within that area (Delaney, 2005, cited in Jessop, 2016) and – on the economic side – it is identified with a pre-capitalist and early-capitalist mode of production, that is based on the division of land under which are established social and economic relations. According the historical materialistic tradition, which is the lens through which it is possible to read the relationship between the market *vs* state dichotomy, the stateinevitablyassumes and controls the economic functions that ground it on the economy, otherwise it would be, in Marx's terms, "suspended in mid-air" (Robinson, 2001).

Specifically, it is in the evolution of the modes of production that the influence of the economic forces shaping the so-called international system emerges. Historically, each economic system contained within itself a contradiction that eventually led to its demise and replacement by another, more advanced stage of economic and social life. The contradictions inherent to feudalism, for instance, such as the need for states ruled by monarchs to trade with other states, and thus

giving rise to a merchant class, eventually led to another phase in the advance of capitalism – until its current globalised stage.

Comprehensively, according to scholars like Murray (2015) and Robinson (2004), four distinct epochs through which capitalism evolved can be identified. The first one, identified with Columbus's arrival in the Americas, represents the very emergence and first expansion of capitalism, identified with 'mercantilism' and 'primitive accumulation'. The second one, identified with the rise of modern nation-states, industrialisation and French Revolution, goes under the name of 'classical (or competitive) capitalism'. The third epoch, identified with the organisation of the nation-state system into a single world market, goes under the name of 'corporate capitalism' (Robinson, 2004, pp. 4-5). Then, the passage from the third to the fourth epoch in the history of world capitalism, is said to be quite turbulent. Robinson (*ivi*; p. 5) argues of "[...] a transition from the nation-state phase of world capitalism [...] to a transnational [one]" in the 1970s after the capitalist crises, where production, capital and labour began to anywhere is more convenient for the supply to match the demand (Khanna, 2016).

These evolutionary changes in the modes of production that led to globalisation, slowly transformed the Westphalian concepts of sovereignty and territoriality. As a matter of fact, the nation state has lost control or, better said, sovereignty over its territory in terms of control and management of the modes of production, which have been transferred outside its borders which, in turn, have become more permeable. If national territorialisation is a defining feature of pre-capitalist and early capitalist modes of production, then global deteritorrialiasation and transnationalisation of world market is what defines their global capitalist successor.

Following the aforementioned historical changes and dynamics of the capitalist economic system offers the key to understanding globalisation. We understand then that globalisation[1] is not an entirely brand-new concept, but rather the

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[1]As clearly expressed in Murray (2015) there are several interpretations and views of globalisation (i.e. hyperglobalist, sceptical, transformationalist), that can draw different definition of this concept. Certainly, it is a process that redesigned the spatio-temporal dimension of social life. For instance, as a matter of

evolution of a century-long process of capitalist modes of production (and therefore relation) around the world that brought the displacement of all pre-capitalist forms of production (and therefore relation). In other words, globalisation aims at unifying the world under a single common mode of production. That is to say: decentralisation of production and centralisation of transnational capital control, integrating national circuits of accumulation of capital into global value chains (Robinson, 2001; pp. 158- 159).

Therefore, what happens to the rigid notion of Westphalian nation state under globalisation? If it can hold in a so-called Westphalian system of states – in which the coexistence of sovereign, independent and centre-controlled nation states was pivotal for balance of power – it definitely fails under the less rigid and more fluid globalisation that is rescaling the state system, as powers are transferred upwards, downwards and sideways from the national territorial level (Jessop, 2016; p. 189).

Today this model is inevitably confronting several deep challenges, as growing complexity in its two foundational elements, namely sovereignty and territoriality, has put it into question (Bobbit, 2002). As a consequence of the evolution of the modes of production, the rise of new sub-national as well as supranational bodies multiplied the levels of government even further, reflecting more market transactions and supply chains rather than established national authorities (Zielonka, 2013).

The collapse of "[...] national economic regulation and capital controls allowed the liberation of transnational capital from the institutional constraints of the nationstate system" (Robinson, 2001; p. 176). Here arises what Harvey (cited in

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time and space, globalisation represents the 'shrinking of space' (*ivi*; pp. 44, 69) linked to the phenomenon of deterritorialisation, and the 'reduction of time' connected to the acceleration of social interactions). Hence, as a consequence of acceleration and deterritorialisation, meaning that social actions and processes are no longer bound to specific territories and do not longer follow a particular *iter*, globalisation inevitably moves towards a 'post-Westphalia system'. As mentioned above, the Westphalian state system represents a previous model of international relations, based on sovereign nation states that had the control over their territory and population. Together with social relations, globalisation also challenges the balance of economic and political forces (i.e. relations between fractions of capital and capital-labour relations) as much as the balance between market and state (Jessop, 2016; p. 193).

Robinson, 2001; p. 177) defined as "the tension between the fixity that the state regulation imposes and the fluidity of capital flow", thus underlining the emergence of a new international order. Capital has become the dominant economic and therefore political force, reshaping the institutional and social life of countries.

I.ii A new paradigm: elements in an emerging conceptual architecture

As the rigid Westphalian paradigm turns to be inadequate – if not obsolete (Zielonka, 2013) – to explain economic and political forces reconfiguring the many new facets of territorial sovereignty, a new emerging paradigm, what Castells (1996) defines as the network paradigm, gains relevance and centrality in the international system.

Castells (1996) maintains that networks constitute the new social morphology of our society in the era of information. The emergence of new enabling communication and information technologies, and new scales, scopes and intensities of networking, is 'reshaping the material basis of society' (Taylor & Derudder, 2017). However, the basic feature of networks is mutuality, which runs counter to the usual hierarchical character of urban systems when viewed from central place theoretical-perspectives. Hierarchies, unlike the mutuality of urban networks, imply competitive intercity relations. Because of this contradiction, Taylor and Derudder (2015) proposed to analyse the world city network as a 'network with a hierarchical tendency'. Compared to Sassen's (1991) 'specific places' of New York, London and Tokyo, Castells (1996) argues that the global city phenomenon cannot be limited to a few urban cores at the top of the hierarchy. He also suggests that a 'global network' connects cities with different intensities and at different geographical scales, whereby regional and local centres within countries become integrated at the global level. For Castells (1996), global cities should be defined as a networked process: the really significant character is the network itself. Based on the idea of Sassen (1991), Castells thus provides a new context to view world cities: cities are part of a space of flows that in turn express the new network society. This results in the conversion of global cities as advanced service centres into a global network of cities (Taylor & Derudder, 2017).

According to Castells (1996), Khanna (2016), Sassen (1996), and others, the network is the new paradigm reflecting the economic system, its political organisation, and the consequential societal change. The network is a 'spatial structure' that connects nodes – as localized geographical entities –through relations of different nature: ranging from financial transactions and commodities, mobility and communications, to international cooperation initiatives and cultural exchanges. The growth of networked cross-border dynamics, reflecting the new modes of production and economic system, as well as the new social and cultural habits, can be explained in terms of links between the 'global' and the 'local', also defined as processes of *glocalisation* (Murray, 2015).

In this context, globalisation has compromised national sovereignty from both above and below as national regulations have been superseded by global ones, and phenomena of devolution[2] and connectivity strengthened the role and influence of local actors that – exactly like corporations – act in accordance to their interests across increasingly porous state boundaries (Khanna, 2016; p.21). Therefore, globalization seemingly opens the stage to a new ensemble of governance actors, which are the structures that shape and influence the architecture of 'post Westphalian' nation states. For instance, the growing complex global financial markets require an almost equally complex process of regulation and harmonisation. Policy harmonisation in the financial sector cannot be understood within the traditional boundaries of territorial sovereignty – the pillar of the Westphalian inter-state system – which also determined the dichotomy between the international and the domestic.

Almost inevitably, the system of political geography, highly influenced by a Westphalian type of international organisation, fades into – or overlaps with – a system shaped by the new-born global forces, better identified with functional geography. The functional integration of economic activities and relations diverges significantly from the global *vs* national dichotomy, yet central to many analyses of the global economy. In fact, in the network paradigm each connection point (or

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[2] Devolution is a process of "perpetual fragmentation of territory into even more (and smaller) units of authority, from empires to nations, nations to provinces, provinces to cities". See Khanna, P. (2016), *Connectography, Mapping the Global Network Revolution,* Ch. 3.

node) has a different, very specialised function whether in manufacturing, finance, transport, marketing, and so on that builds on other nodes to create and sustain larger global supply chains, resulting in the so-called functional integration (Khanna, 2016).

Recalling the centrality of the Westphalian quintessential concepts of sovereignty and territoriality, that opened this chapter and turned to be key to the understanding of the context in which different modes of production evolved (from feudal organisation and mercantilism to globalisation), it is evident that these old concepts remain critical and constitutive of the new paradigm (or order), but that does not mean that their valence is the same. In fact, their organising logic follows a radically different kind of narrative. Territorial sovereignty is, then, better identified with control of borders, characterised by overlaps between the geographical and functional borders of authority, which makes them porous due to the pressures of interdependence and globalisation. According to Khanna (2016), borders are the object of political geography whereas infrastructures are the object of functional geography. Nowadays, in such an interconnected world, geopolitics is profoundly influenced by functional geography – namely: transport routes, energy networks, the Internet cables, etc – which are the vehicles through which power is projected and influence is exerted. In this scenario, nation states find themselves to cooperate with a plethora of new global actors (ranging from international organisations, and NGOs to regions and cities) through more or less visible infrastructures across the 'old' borders, in the same manner as corporations do with their supply chains and trading patterns.

Chapter II

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The political Trilemma of the World Economy:
Rodrik's view

The issue of the changing role of the nation state and its relationship with globalisation has long been the focus of academics and scholars operating in International Political Economy. How do nation states face the challenge of new international non-state actors? Can the Westphalian inter-state system, based on the balance of power in which power was detained only by nation states, still hold today? What is the relationship between the inter-state system and global capitalism? To what extent is the current economic paradigm – that is to say capitalism in its stage of globalisation – reshaping the so-called 'political'?

In the previous chapter, we began to address these questions introducing the relationship between the nation state and globalisation in terms of the two key evolving concepts of sovereignty and territoriality, which highlighted the interconnectedness of the political and the economic dimension of the international system.

The international system once based on sovereignty of independent nation states is now grounded on the economic interdependence brought about by globalisation. The main manifestations of this kind of economic interdependence can be found in the increased flow of factors of production — from capital to commodities, technology, and labour — across frontiers as well as in the growing engagement in international trade. As an ineluctable consequence of these globalised forces – rather than as a result of entirely free choices – in the past century, trade liberalisation has been widely adopted to turn away from central planning, in the case of former soviet and socialist countries, to shift from an import-substitution kind of industrialisation to export orientation, in the case of developing countries,

or, as it was the case for most of the so-called developed world, in the hope of reaping the benefits of such an interlinked economy. Inevitably, economic forces sought regulation in international and intergovernmental institutions and organisations, represented by first of all the United Nations with its various organs, such as the World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which exerted pressures on nation states from above to adapt to the new global standards. The dissolution of the additional borders constructed during the Cold War allowed the definitive shift towards a capitalisation of the world market, controlled by geoeconomics rather that geopolitics (Khanna, 2017; pp. 20-21).

However, economic interdependence managed to integrate national economies but did not result in an integrated political body, rather undermining states as autonomous units. By destabilising the Westphalian paradigm, globalisation took over some of the exclusive territorial authority from nation states and transferred it to new global institutions (Sassen, 2006, p. 6). Is a form of political integration possible at this stage?

In this context, the aforementioned increasing cross-border flows of capital and growing global value chains, characterising what Rodrik calls '*hyperglobalisation*', deeply challenged the nation state's capacity to exert sovereignty within its territorial borders. On the one hand, economic interdependence integrated national economies, while, on the other hand undermined states as autonomous units, leaving the void of political integration.

Put differently, we are experiencing a fracture between the political and the economic world as geopolitics and geoeconomics no longer coincide, due to a long-lasting process of transnationalisation of economic functions (from financial activities, to manufacturing and value chains) which was not completely reflected on the political side. In fact, as Robinson (2004) reasonably claims, the political form of organisation of global capitalism lagged behind its economic form of organisation.

It is widely argued that this upward transfer of power does not correspond to the emergence of a new unitary sovereign body, a figure that embodies the prerogatives that the states now grant to the new actors. As a result of this

'leadership vacuum', it follows that global governance shows a significant *democratic deficit*, with respect to national governments. Then, how can this democratic loss be resolved? This is the question that Dani Rodrik, Professor of International Political Economy at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, addressed introducing the so-called "Political Trilemma of the World Economy".

In his book "The Globalization Paradox: Democracy and The Future of The World Economy" first published in 2011, Rodrik posed the following question: how do we manage the tension between national democracy and global markets, given that we cannot pursue *hyperglobalisation*, *democracy* and *national sovereignty* all at once? According to Rodrik we have three options at our disposal. First, we can *restrict democracy* in the interest of minimising international transaction costs, disregarding the economic and social whiplash that global economy occasionally produces. Second, we can *limit globalisation*, in the hope of building democratic legitimacy at home. Or third, we can *globalise democracy* at the cost of national sovereignty.

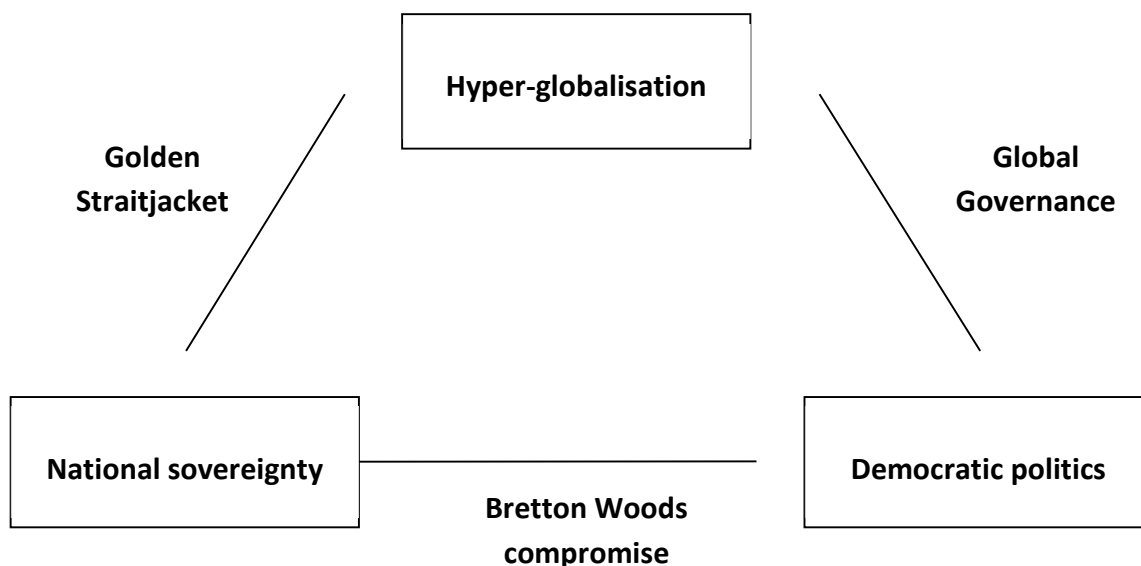The Trilemma can be pictured as a 'triangle' as illustrated in Figure 1 below:

Figure 1: Pick two, any two – Rodrik, 2011; p. 201

Besides each of the three angles of the triangle delineates a potentially desirable goal – namely democracy, globalisation, and national sovereignty – only two of these policy goals or forms of governance can be achieved to the full extent at the same time, but not all of the three. Therefore, a nation can choose integration and the nation state, thus sacrificing democratic control for technocratic, autocratic institutions (Golden Straightjacket). Alternatively, it can choose integration and democratic politics, giving up on the nation state and transferring or surrendering control of traditional government tasks to supranational institutions (Global Governance). Or it can choose the nation state and democracy by embracing impoverished autarky (Bretton Woods compromise). To back up and explain this theoretical framework, Rodrik (2011) provided evidence for each of the possible alternative outcomes.

II.i Global Governance

According to Rodrik, the Global Governance's scenario is the product of the combination of democracy and hyperglobalisation, which can exist only if all countries adopt the same set of rules that are overseen by an accountable global government. Represented by a proliferation of institutions, which are various in nature and claim both economic and political powers, this global government has the primary role to preserve and promote worldwide the global capitalist system through "strategies aiming to build multilateral and transnational networks and circuits of state power" (Jessop, 2016; p. 86). For instance, the European Union, a political, economic and social project that combines democracy and globalisation at the cost of national sovereignties, results in a good regional example of Global Governance (Figure 1, right-hand side of the triangle). EU Member States, each one having democratic institutions of governance and being open to the globalised markets, however cannot pursue their own national interest or fully assert their sovereignty which is severely circumscribed by supranational rulemaking powers exert by the set of European Institutions, in particular when it comes to the Euro Zone which implies a common monetary regime, a common monetary policy and a single central bank (Rodrik, 2012). Despite the political claim of such an emergent

global state project no longer constrained within nation-states, vexed questions about the nature of these supra-national and transnational sovereign bodies arise. In which manner are the traditional state functions ascribed to those new state-building projects? Jessop (2016, p. 86) claims that global governance "... should be seen as the complex resultant of what competing social forces are doing in a multi-layered system".

II.ii Bretton Woods compromise

Conversely, it is also possible for a fully democratic nation to strengthen its national statehood and prioritise its national interest. Reclaiming sovereignty in order to pursue its own national interest is exactly what the United Kingdom has accomplished by withdrawing from the European Union. According to Rodrik's Trilemma, the UK could have gone further toward fuller sovereignty either by restricting democratic policymaking or by limiting openness to the global economy (thus resulting either in the so-called Golden Straitjacket, illustrated in the left-hand side of the triangle, or in what Rodrik classifies as the Bretton Woods compromise, representing the base of the triangle). The Bretton Woods system[3], which existed from 1944 to 1971, is recalled by the author as it allowed member states to impose capital controls and barriers to international trade. From the perspective of the Trilemma, it represents a policy mix of full democracy and national sovereignty. Considering Boris Johnson's administration acting in strict accord with the democratic process, sacrificing part of globalisation turned out to be the only way the UK could withdraw from the EU. In that case, the greater pursuit of the nation's national interest requires scaling down its access to the international EU market.

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[3]The Bretton Woods compromise derives its name from the post-World War II era during which the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) gave structure to the world economic system. This system accounts for national differences and distinct interests and is therefore rightly called Bretton Woods 'compromise'. See Rodrik, D. (2012), "Globalization Dilemmas and the Way Out". The Indian Journal of Industrial Relations 47 (3), pp. 393-404.

Expanding the political landscape outside of Europe, in the US, similar actions have been undertaken by Donald Trump's administration pushing for the 'America-first' agenda and prioritising national interests above all since coming to power in 2017. Regardless of existing trade agreements, the administration has threatened to increase tariffs for trading partners or walk away from negotiations in case the conclusions were not favourable to the country. The administration's anti-globalist and protectionist stance has been observed in the resignation from the Paris Agreement, in the country's departure from the World Health Organization (WHO) during the first wave of the Covid-19 pandemics, as well as in the introduction of tariffs on international trade, especially in trade war with China[4].

II.iii Golden Straitjacket

In order to illustrate the remaining solution to the Trilemma, Rodrik demands us to imagine a world that achieved perfect economic integration. In such perfectly integrated markets, national policies and interests must be in harmony with the internationally-accepted standards. If not, national economies risk to be excluded from the world economy (i.e. multinational corporations could move to the jurisdiction which offers them the most favourable tax conditions – a process that leads to an "insulation of economic policymaking bodies (central banks, fiscal authorities, and so on) from political participation.Their domestic standards and rules are not based on democratically determined policies, but rather on those of multinational corporations and international organisations, or on treaties and

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[4] From 2018, the US has accused China of unfair trading practices, including intellectual property theft, forced technology transfer, lack of market access for American companies in China and creating an unlevel playing field through state subsidies of Chinese companies. China, meanwhile, believes the US is trying to restrict its rise as a global economic. The Trump Administration slapped tariffs of up to 25% on tens of billions of dollars' worth of Chinese goods in launching the biggest global trade war in decades. See Mullen, A. (2021) "US-China trade war timeline: key dates and events since July 2018", *South China Morning Post,* 29 August. Available at:https://www.scmp.com/economy/china-economy/article/3146489/us-china-trade-war-timeline-key-dates-and-events-july-2018

agreements concluded by administrative bodies (i.e. bureaucrats who were not necessarily democratically elected).

A state of affairs that Tom Friedman (2000) defined as 'the Golden Straitjacket' (Fig. 1, left-hand side of the triangle):

> "[The] Golden Straitjacket narrows the political and economic policy choices of those in power to relatively tight parameters. That is why it is increasingly difficult these days to find any real differences between ruling and opposition parties in those countries that have put on the Golden Straitjacket. Once your country puts on the Golden Straitjacket, its political choices get reduced to Pepsi or Coke – to slight nuances of tastes, slight nuances of policy, slight alterations in design to account for local traditions, some loosening here or there, but never any major deviation from the core golden rules."

In other words, the national economy grows as its democratic politics declines. A country metaphorically wearing the Golden Straitjacket can free itself by either turning more democratic or by becoming less globalised. Differently from what has so far been displayed, in this scenario nation states try to reap the benefits of globalisation while maintaining their national sovereignty in a juridical sense. These countries align themselves with international rules and standards focused on minimising transaction costs and seeking market access at the lowest price, but they do not necessarily follow a fully democratic process for policymaking (Rodrik, 2011, p. 202). A case as such is China.

As we have seen, empirical evidence for Rodrik's political Trilemma of the world economy can be found in America's retreat to protectionism and renewed trade wars – in particular under the Trump administration, in China's young relationship with globalisation, as well as in the latest developments in European politics, from Brexit to migrant crisis, to the most recent Covid-19 pandemics as well as the Russian aggression to Ukraine. In fact, the several crises that Europe faced are readable through the impossibility – or, perhaps, we could better say the difficulty – to harmonise the democratic systems of traditional nation states within a globalised economy, thus combining all the three factors in a stable manner. The

arrest of the integration process, combined with the difficulty in providing effective community responses to the challenges relating to the safety and well-being of European citizens, seems to be a clear example of the validity of Rodrik's Trilemma. Furthermore, the continuous rise of populist parties, opposed to the current European order, seems to provide the ultimate test of the difficulty of peaceful coexistence of democratic national states and economic globalisation. In short, what is being questioned by the current crisis is the possibility of a virtuous balance between the state sovereignty, democracy and the market that is the balance between the main guaranteeing elements of citizens' well-being and freedoms.

To sum up, if we want democracy to succeed, for it is a condition that can no longer be sacrificed, apparently we must choose between preserving either the nation state or deep global economic integration. What Rodrik (2011, p. 205) foresees as the unique desirable solution to the Trilemma is, then, to sacrifice hyperglobalisation – the underpinning idea is that there is a natural limit to how far markets can extend and that limit is defined by the scope of the regulations and governance that markets need (*i.e.* the Bretton Woods regime allowing national democracies and the world economy to develop side by side) – and "… to reinvent the Bretton Woods compromise for a different era", as nation states remain the main *loci* of legitimate governance (Rodrik, 2012).

> "By legitimate *locus* I mean the answer to the following question: at what level does democratic deliberation rest for the most part? It is mostly at the level of the nation state and therefore, any notion of global governance or trans-national governance or any kind of mechanism of international governance or multi-lateralism that has significant institutions of democratic accountability and representativeness is still far off" (*ivi*, pp. 393-394).

But, to be more precise, following Rodrik's argument and hoping to take it a step further, we could more correctly say that the level where the democratic deliberation functions at its best goes even beyond the nation state. It is within smaller units of government, which may be apparently less relevant in world affairs than nation states, that democratic processes are accountable to citizens and voters, more than what occurs at national and supranational levels.

II.iv The 'squaring of the Triangle'

Rodrik identifies the solution to the Trilemma in one of the possible combinations along the sides of the triangle (Fig. 1), namely a Bretton Woods compromise fine-tuned to current economic and political challenges. However, his position represents itself a limiting compromise to the Trilemma, as he lays on his propositions rather than offering an actual solution... therefore, is there a way to square the circle (or in this case *triangle*) and fix the political Trilemma of the world economy?

Within the globalised world, democratic governance is *local* in character, forces of economic globalisation are *transnational* in character, and sovereignty is not uniquely nor necessarily *national* in character. In Rodrik, the different combination of those three elements is conflicting as he keeps moving along the *silos* he has built. Therefore, his analysis lacks of another important dimension that, transcending these *silos*, could pave the way to the ultimate resolution of the Trilemma: namely the many levels of governance that exist in the world today that, from above but especially from below, exert pressure on the international order he takes as given, and reconfigure concepts of democracy and sovereignty. In other words, Rodrik acknowledges the existence of forces reconfiguring the international system (what in *Chapter I* was described the passage from a Westphalian paradigm to a network one), but does not embed them into the international system he takes as reference when formulating the Trilemma. Therefore, the Trilemma, and his reasoning as a whole, seem to be still confined into a Westphalian type of international order. The network paradigm – offering a more comprehensive conceptual architecture for the growing cross-border processes, of flows of capital, labour, commodities, and so on, which bypassed the once insurmountable borders of nation states (Sassen, 2005) – would also include the new plethora of global actors, which are the structures that shape and influence the architecture of 'post Westphalian' era.

On the one hand, as Rodrik claims, globalisation occurs within the context of a sovereign state system but, on the other hand, its individual subnational units are

increasingly ruled democratically and transnationally in new political outposts: cities.

The nation state, managed by national government, remains a fundamental building block of the international order, but below the nation state there are cities, provinces and regions, which may have their own governance structures. How are these various levels of governance going to fit into the Trilemma?

Governments' sovereignty, and thus authority, changed in nature as borders became permeable to economic influences which swung their citizens' interests. In principle, national governments are accountable to their citizens, therefore, the more global citizens' interests become, the more globally responsible national governments have to be in turn. If this 'global responsibility' cannot be found within a global governance kind of political arrangement, which would provide a sounding yet weak institutional framework for the global economy (think of EU institutions, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank (WB), and other inter-governmental bodies which *de facto* remain "[…] a collection of member states rather than agents of global citizens"[5], then the attention needs to be turned elsewhere. It is precisely at the local level, in cities, that direct and certain accountability to the electorate and, therefore, democratic legitimacy are granted.

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[5] See Project Syndicate 'National Governments, Global Citizens', Mar 12, 2013 **DANI RODRIK**

Part II

<center>*Chapter III*</center>

Going beyond the Trilemma: can cities fix the political Trilemma of the world economy?

Building on the explanation and analysis of the Trilemma advanced in the previous section, this chapter describes in detail how the interplay among all its three constitutive dimensions, namely hyperglobalisation, democracy, and national sovereignty, could actually coexist, as anticipated, within cities – namely global cities.

Conversely to what Rodrik posited, that it is to say that only two out of the three outcomes can be achieved to the full extent and at the same time, it is here argued that cities represent the *locus* where the three dimensions are satisfied and thus the Trilemma is resolved, for them being simultaneously globalised, sovereign, and democratic entities.

Before delving, from a urban perspective, into each one of these three dimensions, it would be beneficial to recall the initial concepts of sovereignty and territoriality (outlined in *Chapter I*), pivotal to understanding how global economic forces came to be embedded in the so-called functional geography, reflecting a network rather than a Westphalian architecture of the world order. It is precisely in this context, and therefore within the network paradigm, that the backbone of these growing cross-border flows of capital, labour, and commodities, together with the new ensemble of global political actors – among which global cities and cities' networks – becomes more visible. In fact, the concentration of production together with the creation of interdependencies and the growing share of investment in human capital rather than in territorial expansion, signals once again the influence of the

economic over the political, best exemplified in Philip Bobbit's (2002) *market state*[6], in which it is the maximisation of economic and commercial opportunities to define power. The inclusion of cities into this new cross-border functional geography gives also rise, on the other hand, to a new parallel political geography. As major cities have emerged as key strategic sites for the high concentration of global capital, transnationalisation of labour and, more in general, financial operations, they have also created the space for the formation of equally transnational communities and identities, making up for the corresponding transnational political and cultural operations. In this sense, cities eventually become fertile terrain for a new form of citizenship, deeply cosmopolitan in character (Sassen, 2005; p. 28). In other words, the new world centres of political and economic power will more and more look like urban agglomerations, just as the old city-states that formed the Hanseatic League[7] during the Middle Ages (Ohmae, citied in Khanna, 2017; p. 21).

The way in which global cities represent such a unique reality can be captured by three fundamental attributes, which, in turn, reflect the three dimensions of the Rodirk's Trilemma claimed in this chapter. Firstly, cities are deeply embedded in **global economic networks** of different nature, including financial transactions and operations, labour mobility, foreign direct investments (FDI), innovation, and so on, which make them the new economic hubs and thus represent their 'hyperglobalised' – to say it in Rodrik's own terms – dimension, whose significance will be addressed in more detail in the next section. Secondly, cities hold a highly remarkable level of **global strategic influence** which, for their capacity to be

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[6]According to Bobbit, the market state represents the basis for a new form of the State, appealing to a new standard that improves and maximises the policies and opportunities offered to the public. "[…] The corporation was a nation state vehicle to improve the welfare of its citizens. Such a state depends on the international capital markets and, toa lesser degree, on the modern multinational business network to create stability in the world economy, in preference to management by national or transnational political bodies." Governance and political institutions within the market state cede away part of their roles, turning out as less representative than those in the nation state. See Bobbit, P. (2002), *"The Shield of Achilles: War, Peace, and the Course of History"*. New York: Anchor Books, pp. 165, 169.

[7] The origin of the concept of the Hanseatic League comes from the word *Hansa* (which literally means 'grouping' in old Germanic language), representing an association with a definite purpose. In the Middle Ages it came to denote the guild, which in this case was aimed at protecting merchants' interests *vis-à-vis* noble class. The northern European grouping of cities evolved in terms of local self-government and sovereignty, forming political and military alliances and to gain hegemony over the Baltic area. The local merchant guild represented the strongest bargaining grouping cities under feudal rule. See Cramer, F. H. (1949), *"The Hanseatic League"*. Current History. Vol. 17, No. 96 (AUGUST, 1949), pp. 84-89.

financially autonomous neuralgic nodes of global value chains, enables them to expand their authority beyond the city itself and exert their leadership over the new functional-political geography of the network (paradigm). This aspect inevitably links them to the second dimension of sovereignty. Lastly, as a matter of fact cities are some independent democratic microcosms in themselves in terms of legitimacy, representation and **direct accountability to the electorate**, which links them to the democratic dimension of the Trilemma.

A further explanation of the aforementioned attributes of cities, which accordingly aims at a 'resolution' of Rodirk's Trilemma, will be explored in the following order: namely cities as globally integrated economic actors (**III.i**), cities as the new sovereign actors (**III.ii**), and cities as fully democratic actors (**III.iii**).

Global cities index

To measure cities' influence over the three spheres of the Trilemma we consider also the Global Cities Index (GCI). First realised in 2008[8], this index provides a comprehensive ranking of leading global cities from around the world. It examines cities along five dimensions: business activity, human capital, information exchange, cultural experience, and political engagement. Each of the five dimension contributes to a definition and understanding of cities that is functional to the resolution of the Trilemma claimed in this chapter. Starting from the economic dimension, and then moving to the sovereignty and democracy related domains, evidence from literature and data will show how global cities can be included in the Trilemma.

As we can notice from leading cities across the GCI metrics, no single city dominates the top spot in the metrics used in the Index developed by Kearney. A total of twenty-one cities rank first across different metrics, demonstrating that there is no 'perfect global city'. In fact, as Table 1 shows, each city has a comparative advantage, sectoral specialisation, as well as areas of improvement in which they can learn from each other.

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[8] By the A.T. Kearney, The Chicago Council on Global Affairs, and Foreign Policy Magazine.

Table 1 – Leading cities across Kearney's GCI metrics

Leading cities across the GCI metrics

2021 Global City Index leaders by dimensions				
Business activity **New York**	Human capital **New York**	Information exchange **Paris**	Cultural experience **London**	Political engagement **Brussels**

2021 Global City Index leaders by metric				
- Fortune 500 **Beijing**	- Foreign-born population **New York**	- Access to TV news **Doha** *	- Museums **Moscow**	- Embassies and consulates **Brussels**
- Top global services firms **London**	- Top universities **Boston**	- News agency bureaus **New York**	- Visual and performing arts **New York** *	- Think tanks **Washington, D.C.**
- Capital markets **New York**	- Population with tertiary degree **Tokyo**	- Freedom of expression **Oslo**	- Sporting events **Los Angeles**	- International organitations **Geneve**
- Air freight **Honk Kong**	- International student population **Melbourne***	- Broadband subscribers **Zurich, Geneva**	- International travelers **Dubai** *	- Political conferences **Brussels**
- Sea freight **Shanghai**			- Culinary offerings **London** *	- Local institutions with global reach **Paris**
- ICCA conferences **Paris**	- Number of Internatinal Schools **Hong Kong**	- Online presence **Singapore**	- Sister cities **Saint Petersburg**	
- Unicorn Companies **San Francisco**	- Medical Universities **London**			

* Indicates new leaders in 2021.

Source: Kearney Global Cities Report (2021)

These five dimensions contribute to the definition of 'global city', even if – as evidence shows and will further show in the next section – there is no global city as such encompassing and dominating all the sectors. In terms of business activity, cities at the top of the ranking are typically financial hubs, innovation districts, headquarters of the world's major corporation and banks. Not surprisingly, we see cities as New York, London, Tokyo, but also San Francisco, steadily occupying the top positions. Despite this trend, the formation of leading centres has recently expanded, in particular following the creation of the single European market and financial system, where both financial functions and capital were centralised in few other major European cities. As a consequence, new forms of collaboration among EU financial centres as well as consolidation of established ones has developed as a trend (Sassen, 2018; p. 208).

For what concerns human capital, cities thrive and prosper through investment in what could be easily defined as 'brain power'. The human capital dimension looks at how educated and diverse a population that resides in a city is. In particular, it is worth noticing (Sassen, 2018, p. 200) that of the five metrics measured (foreign born population, inhabitants with university degrees, international students at the tertiary level, international schools at primary and secondary level, top global universities) the most important is represented by the presence of foreign-born population, and therefore immigration. Which further reflects the city capacity to attract foreign talent.

As for the information exchange, the availability of a free and easily accessible flow of information may be the most critical force driving global development and innovation, as well as an indicator of a globally interconnected city. The same reasoning goes for the cultural experience factor, which mainly derives from the human capital and, more generally, the heterogeneity of the population living in the city. For instance, culture may well differ between an industrial urban enclave and a top ranked global city.

Finally, the fifth metrics concerning political engagement evaluates the reach and connection of each of the cities with the rest of the world in the political arena. The variable analyses the degree of global policy exchange occurring in the city, in terms of presence of formal embassies and consulates, international organisations, think-tanks, political conferences and local institutions with global trends. Not surprisingly, Brussels maintains its position as leader in political engagement as consequence, also, of the presence of European Institutions.

To call a city a 'global city', it must be somehow embedded in the multiple links of the global network. Cities that host the biggest capital markets, the most renowned elite universities, the most diverse and well-educated populations, the wealthiest multinational corporation and most powerful international organisations are inevitably connected to the rest of the world. Cities that rise to the top of the list are those that continue to forge global links despite intensely complex economic environments.

III.i Cities as globally integrated economic actors

In the context of the evolution of the modes of production and the consequent adaptation of the world economic system as a whole, it does not come as a surprise that cities have established themselves as the central nodes of the new world order. Places were the so-called hyperglobalised processes occur and encompass all economic activities.

According to the most renowned definition coined by sociologist Saskia Sassen[9], the concept of the Global City:

> "[...] brings a strong emphasis on the networked economy because of the nature of the industries that tend to be located there: finance and specialized services, the new multimedia sectors, and telecommunications services. These industries are characterized by cross-border networks and specialized divisions of functions among cities rather than inter-national competition per se. In the case of global finance and the leading specialized services catering to global firms and markets – law, accounting, credit rating, telecommunications – it is clear that we are dealing with a cross-border system, one that is embedded in a series of cities, each possibly part of a different country. It is a de-facto global system.

> Global cities around the world are the terrain where a multiplicity of globalization processes assume concrete, localized forms. These localized forms are, in good part, what globalization is about. Recovering place means recovering the multiplicity of presences in this landscape. The large city of today has emerged as a strategic site for a whole range of new types of operations—political, economic, 'cultural', subjective. It is one of the nexi where the formation of new claims, by both the powerful and the disadvantaged, materializes and assumes concrete forms"[10].

Major cities have emerged as key strategic sites for the high concentration of global capital, the amount of economic transactions, of transnationalisation of labour, and for the number of international economic partnerships. This is the result of a

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[9] The term global city was first advanced and theorised by Saskia Sassen, who is Robert S. Lynd Professor of Sociology at Columbia University and Centennial visiting Professor at the London School of Economics, in her work *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo (1991).*

[10] See Sassen, S. (1991), *"The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo"*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, p. 40.

process of profound changes in the composition, geography and institutional framework of the world economy. As Sassen (2018) points out, the world economy has changed significantly during the past centuries, moving from the extraction of natural resources and trade in the 19th century to manufacturing and agribusiness, in the last one. Whilst still consisting of all those activities, since 1980s the world economy has been mainly concentrating in the development of global financial markets and highly specialised corporate services (i.e. consulting, electronic financial markets, banking, foreign direct investment (FDI), etc.) – which swiftly became the protagonists of international cross-border transactions. In the same manner, cities gained centrality and importance over more traditional production sites – such as mines, factories, plantations – as the new strategic sites for the (disproportionate) concentration of financial services transactions, advanced corporate service firms, banks, and headquarters of main transnational corporations (TNC). This is what has been conceptualised by Sassen (2018, pp. 13 – 14) as the "global city production function".

Economically speaking, we could say that the "global city production function" highlights three essential aspects: the one ofgeography, the one of institutional arrangement, and the one of strategic sites (or functionality). The role of geography, which draws from the extensively discussed concept of territoriality, is to be understood as the evolution of the spatial correlations among transactions that are increasingly less and less bounded to physical places. In fact, the territorial dispersal of economic activity at the national and world scale, due to the process of globalisation, has simultaneously created territorial dispersal, on the one hand, and new forms of territorial centralisation, on the other hand (Sassen, 2018; p. 35). Meaning that, the combination of these two aspects – namely the territorial dispersal of economic activities together with their concomitant integration within a new networked system – turned cities into functional strategic sites where concentration of finance, specialised corporate services, banking activities and FDI, and so on, are located. For instance, the author shows that the cities of London, New York and Tokyo have been home of thirty-nine out the one hundred largest banks, and similarly have been hosting twenty-three out of the twenty-five largest security houses. This trend has being confirmed throughout period of time that

goes from 1991 to 2012 (*ivi*, p. 36). The ongoing process of globalisation, symbolising movement of capital, commodities, people, jobs and ideas, has been increasingly integrating economies and reconfiguring concepts of time and space. Put another way, the 'denationalisation' and 'transnationalisation' of economic processes has come to a point in which proximity is no longer required, although, as data show, it still helps and proximity occurs in cities. "Nonetheless, this geographic dispersal of a corporation's activities is organised centrally and hence creates a need for expanded central control and management work, much of which is produced in cities" (*ivi*, p. 37).

In terms of institutional arrangements, today's global economic activities have certainly influenced – if not reconfigured – the regimes governing the world economy. As previously argued, financial industries dominated over non-financial ones (i.e. manufacturing, agribusiness, etc) thanks, also, to a set of new regulations that ensured profitability of those sectors. Key protagonists in providing this new set of institutional framings were markets, as the arena of massive financial flows; transnational corporations (TNCs) as key mechanisms organising and governing global production and services; and trade – with a growing number of trade agreements being established in the last decades of the past century, both within and outside the World Trade Organisation (WTO). These new circumstances provided and granted ease of free cross-border mobility of capital and financial services, which resulted in a growing incidence of FDI from 1990s onwards (*ivi*, p. 25). Inevitably, in last century shifts in economic geography – from spatial to functional – and in the institutional framework in which international transaction occurred contributed to the concentration of economic activities around new strategic poles, that represent major cities.

On a global scale, this trend can be starkly represented by the following map (Figure 2), which effectively displays the growing share of urban economies with respect to their national ones. Alongside London, New York, and Tokyo, also some emerging markets in Latin America and South East Asia, are seeing their cities (in this case, mega-cities) establishing themselves as leading commercial hubs and financial centres of the national economy.

Figure 2 – Megacities as the new economic geography
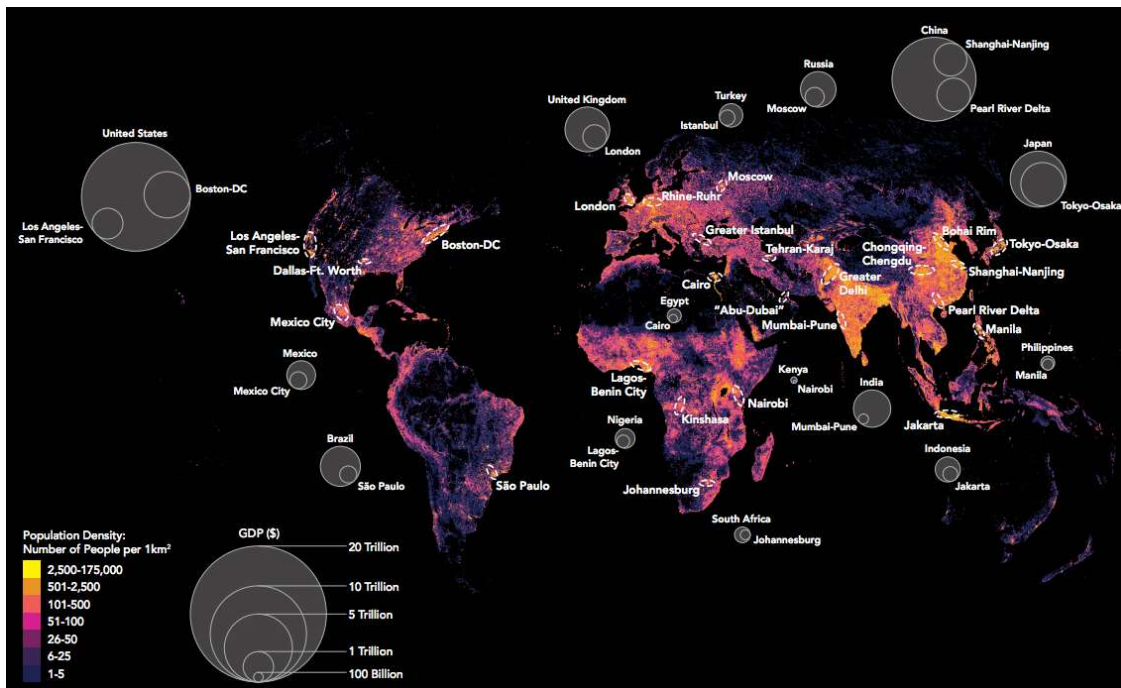
Source: Khanna, P. (2016), Connectography, Figure 13, p. 166.

Mega-cities in emerging markets like Brazil, Turkey, Russia and Indonesia are growing in their economic power, accounting for at least one-third or more of national GDP. The same trend can be seen in more developed and established financial centres. For example, from the map above we can see that the city of London contributes to a great share of UK's GDP. Similarly, the United States' GDP depends on the economic power generated by the Boston-New York-Washington corridor and greater Los Angeles area, which together account for up to one-third the country's GDP (Khanna, 2016).

Additionally, cities have long developed city-to-city partnerships that go beyond the traditional ways of generating economic value. In the same way as the established traditional sister city relationships (also known as city twinning), which are based on political or cultural ties, partnerships between cities can be based on economic issues. As claimed in the Kearney report[11], such economic partnerships can help cities develop new specialisations, discover market opportunities, attract foreign investment, support collaboration within and across industries, as well as gaining international visibility. For instance, the cities of Atlanta and Amsterdam

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[11] Kearney Global Cities Report (2021).

established a trade and logistics corridor for cargo shipments (Kearney, 2021) which facilitated commercial exchanges between the two cities supported local industries, while imporving overall supply chains as well as both cities' comparative advantage.

To better quantify the above, the following table (Table 2) shows the economic weight in terms of share of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and population, of a series of major European cities analysed below (namely London, Paris, Madrid, Milan, Berlin, Barcelona, Amsterdam, Frankfurt, Brussels, Rotterdam) compared to their respective countries. For example, according to data both London and Paris, which host about the 20 per cent of their respective national population, account for around the 30 per cent of their national GDP. The same trend can be said for all the major cities below.

Table 2 – Cities' share of national GDP

2018							
City	Country	City Population	Country Population	City % of tot. population	City GDP [mln$]	Country GDP [mln$]	City % of tot. GDP
London	UK	12.320.148	66.273.600	**18,6 %**	818.922	2.904.620	**28,2 %**
Paris	France	12.924.097	67.026.200	**19,3 %**	901.376	2.861.650	**31,5 %**
Madrid	Spain	6.791.667	46.658.400	**14,6 %**	342.770	1.761.670	**19,5 %**
Milan	Italy	4.331.571	60.484.000	**7,2 %**	304.484	2.328.840	**13,1 %**
Berlin	Germany	5.259.440	82.792.400	**6,4 %**	237.965	4.130.980	**5,7 %**
Barcelona	Spain	4.985.549	46.658.400	**10,7 %**	222.167	1.761.670	**12,6 %**
Amsterdam	Netherlands	2.838.598	17.181.100	**16,5 %**	202.933	917.048	**22,1 %**
Frankfurt	Germany	2.693.488	82.792.400	**3,3 %**	187.375	4.130.980	**4,5 %**
Dublin	Ireland	1.935.118	4.830.390	**40,1 %**	183.831	392.110	**46,9 %**
Brussels	Belgium	3.260.987	11.398.600	**28,6 %**	198.036	545.671	**36,3 %**
Rotterdam	Netherlands	1.848.449	17.181.100	**10,8 %**	101.015	917.048	**11,0 %**

Source: Student's re-elaboration of OECD data.

To gain some perspective and see how the showcased data has evolved in the past twenty years, Table 3 displays the Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of the two indicators (namely population and GDP) for cities and their respective countries. It is easy to see that growth of population and GDP in cities increases at

a faster pace than in their respective countries, for cities continue to attract human and financial capital, as well as concentrate the main economic activities. A stark example is the city of Milan, whose GDP annual growth rate alone equals nine times the Italian one.

The Compound Annual Growth Rate implied in the calculation below is defined as:

$$CAGR(t_n, t_0) = \left(\frac{V_{t_n}}{V_{t_0}}\right)^{\frac{1}{t_n - t_0}} - 1$$

Where V_{t_0} is the initial value, V_{t_n} is the end value, and $t_n - t_0$ is the time difference in years.

**Table 3– Cities' Compound Annual Growth Ratein terms of GDP and population**

		2002-2018			
City	Country	City Population CAGR %	State Population CAGR %	City GDP CAGR %	State GDP CAGR %
London	UK	1,06	0,68	1,65	1,08
Paris	France	0,36	0,37	1,68	1,21
Madrid	Spain	0,97	0,69	1,89	1,42
Milan	Italy	0,86	0,36	0,82	0,09
Berlin	Germany	0,38	0,03	2,03	1,35
Barcelona	Spain	0,63	0,69	1,50	1,42
Amsterdam	Netherlands	0,64	0,37	1,85	1,39
Frankfurt	Germany	0,47	0,03	0,84	1,35
Dublin	Ireland	1,32	1,24	4,38	4,39
Brussels	Belgium	0,90	0,60	1,70	1,59
Rotterdam	Netherlands	0,30	0,37	1,43	1,39

Source: Student's re-elaboration of OECD data.

However, what drives growth in cities differs from city to city and from country to country, and this logic lays at the basis of cities' different sectoral predominance and, as highlighted by the GCI, on cities' comparative advantage. In order to understand what drives this trend, attention must be drawn to the economic

sectors contributing to job creation, employment and consequentially GDP. In a selection of major European cities analysed, the distribution of the workforce operating in the main economic sectors can be represented in the pie chart below (Figure 3). The chart shows that the concentration of jobs in those major European cities involved – according to Eurostat categories – "Trade, Transports, Hospitality" and "Public Administration, Defence, Education, Health and social work activities" sectors for 24 % each, and "Professional, Scientific and Technical activities & Administrative and support service activities" for the 22%.

Figure 3 – Distribution of workforce operating in cities' main economic sectors
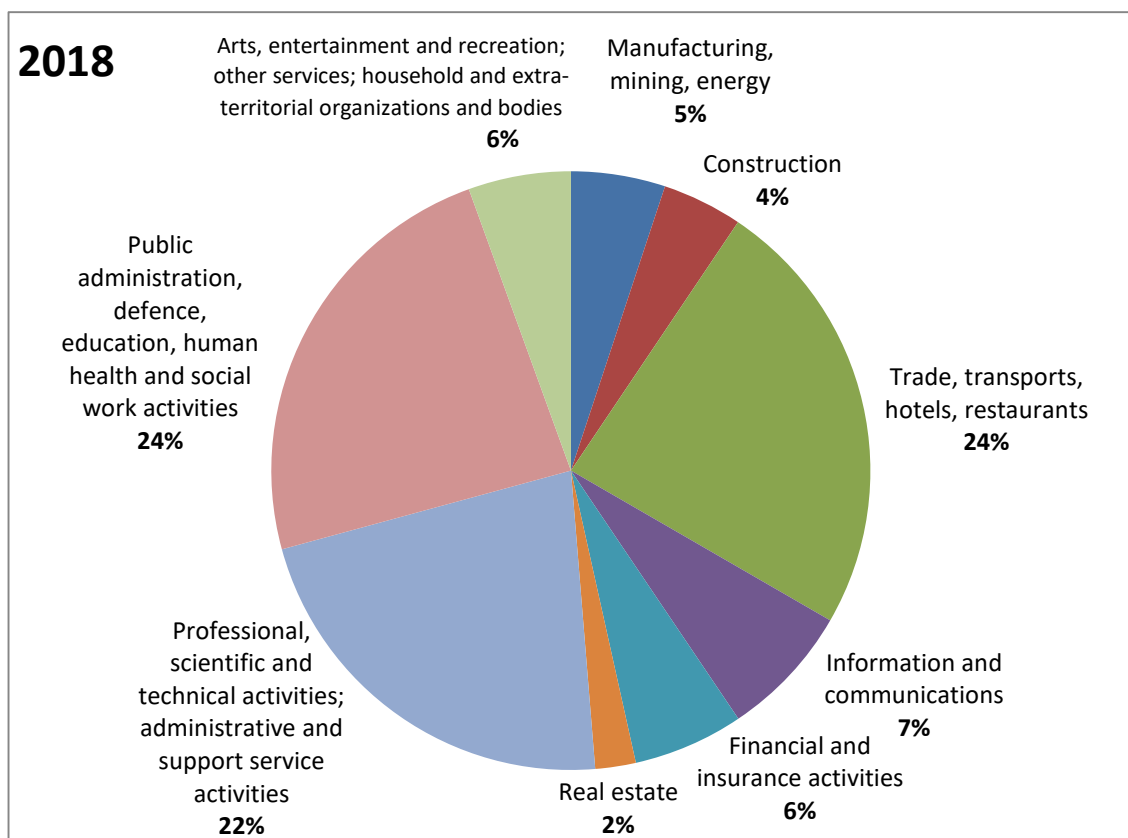
Source: Student's re-elaboration of Eurostat data.

When comparing data from 2001 and 2018[12], as showcased in Table 4, we notice that during the seven-year period of time the total number of employed people in those cities grew by 13,19%, confirming cities' capacity to attract human and

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[12] Most recent data available at urban level before the pandemic.

financial capital. If, overall, growth of the workforce interested almost every sector, breaking down the value we notice that its distribution involved some sectors more than others.

Table 4 – Trend in the distribution of workforce in cities across sectors from 2011 to 2018

Years	2011 Number jobs	2018 Number jobs	2011-2018 Delta %
Manufacturing, mining, energy	970.734	968.642	-0,22
Construction	780.494	828.569	6,16
Trade, transports, hotels, restaurants	4.037.331	4.551.878	12,74
Information and communications	1.133.759	1.373.856	21,18
Financial and insurance activities	1.135.215	1.135.036	-0,02
Real estate	356.904	416.562	16,72
Professional, scientific and technical activities; administrative and support service activities	3.401.055	4.201.398	23,53
Public administration, defence, education, human health and social work activities	3.963.845	4.515.019	13,91
Arts, entertainment and recreation; other services; household and extra-territorial organizations and bodies	1.036.026	1.052.963	1,63
Total	**16.820.377**	**19.038.229**	**13,19**

Source: Student's re-elaboration of Eurostat data.

From a better visualisation of the data, from Figure 4 below it emerges which are the sectors in which delta is positive and relevant, signalling a more substantial contribution to job creation in cities.

Figure 4– Trend in the distribution of workforce in cities across sectors from 2011 to 2018
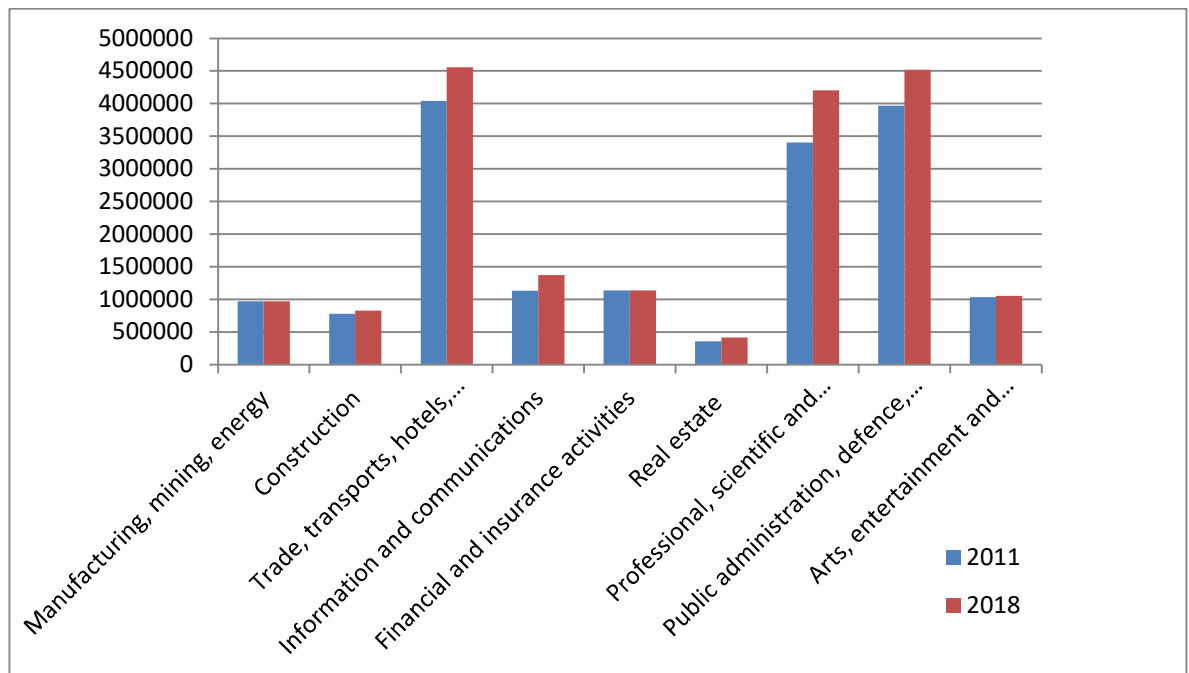
Source: Student's re-elaboration of Eurostat data.

However, when disaggregating by sector, every city experiences its own sectoral predominance (Table 5). Cities in fact, assume different positions in global networks depending on the factor taken into consideration. Brussels, for example, appears to be very well connected in the field of public administration due to the presence of European Union's institutions (Sassen, 2018; p. 80).

It is cities' diverse power to shape a major global trend, their capacity to develop and invent new instruments based on their territories and economic histories. According to Sassen (2019; p. 14) "[...] mayors they should never forget the fact that the deep economic history of place is what makes them different, special, and leaders in one or another domain [...] and it is often those older specific, often highly specialised knowledge domains, that give them strength today. In other words, sectorial specialisation is to be understood in the economic roots of cities, that forged them across years, decades, centuries or even millennials and tell the domains where they stand out as the strongest.

Table 5 – Distribution of workforce per sector in each city

City	Finance insurance	Scientific, Technical	Transport, Trade, Hotels	Information, Communication	Social, Public adm, Defense, Health, Education	Real estate	Construction	Mining, Manufacturing Energy	Art, Enternitainment	Total
London	7 %	25 %	25 %	8 %	22 %	3 %	4 %	3 %	5 %	100 %
Paris	7 %	17 %	22 %	7 %	27 %	2 %	5 %	7 %	6 %	100 %
Madrid	4 %	27 %	27 %	1 %	22 %	2 %	7 %	4 %	6 %	100 %
Milan	7 %	28 %	30 %	9 %	9 %	2 %	4 %	8 %	3 %	100 %
Berlin	2 %	20 %	21 %	7 %	28 %	2 %	5 %	7 %	8 %	100 %
Barcelona	3 %	19 %	23 %	5 %	17 %	21 %	4 %	3 %	5 %	100 %
Amsterdam	8 %	26 %	23 %	9 %	23 %	1 %	1 %	4 %	4 %	100 %
Frankfurt	12 %	23 %	26 %	6 %	18 %	2 %	3 %	7 %	5 %	100 %
Brussels	8 %	18 %	19 %	5 %	35 %	2 %	3 %	4 %	6 %	100 %
Rotterdam	3 %	21 %	28 %	3 %	29 %	1 %	4 %	8 %	3 %	100 %

Source: Student's re-elaboration of Eurostat data.

In conclusion, rapidly growing and specialising cities have began to forge and numerous economic linkages across national borders, many of which go beyond strictly economic relations, forming an interconnected and interdependent network system on a global scale. As the promise of globalisation, cities create the ecosystem for agglomeration, economies of scale, and positive spillovers attract high-performing firms and talent (Katz, 2013).

III.ii Cities as the new sovereign actors

As we have seen in the previous section, the propensity of cities to form a highly interconnected and interdependent system on a world scale is a distinctive feature of the contemporary urbanisation processes – be them economic, social, cultural, or even political. This phenomenon, which has intensified in the recent decades, spurs from urban governments' willingness to cooperate cross border without having to pass through their respective national governments. In a certain way, it accounts for an own kind of "foreign policy for and by cities" (Sassen, 2018; p. 76). Despite a seeming novelty in character, the centrality of cities in the international

scenario finds its roots long back in history, suffice it to think about the Hanseatic League[13] or ancient city-states and alliances among *poleis*.

Cities are the places where new political models are elaborated and innovative strategies are. Despite the ongoing process of recentralisation towards nation states that we are experiencing in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemics[14], cities are increasingly acting as fundamental actors in the redefinition of the concept of sovereignty. In fact, traditional powers once exclusively held by nation states are progressively being challenged from 'above' – by global finance, climate change, international organisations and trans-national networks of different sorts – as well as from 'below' – through the growing strength and influence of sub-national forms of government like cities, social movements, and dynamics of participatory democracy (active citizenship). As a consequence, in the context of the evolving contemporary international system, which is by definition multi-level and multi-actor – suffice it to think of the role of public-private partnerships, banking foundations, cultural foundations and development agencies in producing change and urban regeneration, the role and influence of cities are progressively increasing.

Alongside being the main hubs of financial activities and the among the most strategic nodes of global supply chains, in other words being true globally integrated economic actors, cities are at the same time increasingly establishing themselves as new sovereign actors. In this regard, cites can offer an alternative definition of sovereignty, which is less bounded to national borders (Westphalian dimension) and more linked to interconnectedness and functionality (network dimension) – reflecting the evolution in the modes of production and in the underlying economic forces. Therefore, the incorporation of cities into a functional – or as Rodrik would say 'hyperglobalised' – economic geography signals also the emergence of a parallel, more political geography. In fact, major cities around the globe have emerged as strategic sites not only for the presence of global capital, FDI, banking activities, financial services, and transnationalisationof labour – but

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[13] See note 2.
[14] More evidence and in-depth analysis will be provided in the following chapters.

also for the formation of translocal communities and identities. According to Sassen (2005):

> "[…] cities are a site for new types of political operations and for a whole range of new 'cultural' and subjective operations. The centrality of place in a context of global processes makes possible a transnational economic and political opening for the formation of new claims and hence for the constitution of entitlements, notably rights to place. At the limit, this could be an opening for new forms of 'citizenship'. The emphasis on the transnational and hypermobile character of capital has contributed to a sense of powerlessness among local actors, a sense of the futility of resistance. But an analysis that emphasizes place suggests that the new global grid of strategic sites in a terrain for politics engagements. The loss of power at the national level produces the possibility for new forms of power and politics at the sub-national level.Further, insofar as the national as container of social process and power is cracked, it opens up possibilities for a geography of politics that links sub-national spaces across borders. Cities are foremost in this new geography. This engenders questions of how and whether we are seeing the formation of a new type of transnational politics that localizes in these cities."[15]

According to Katz (2013) and Khanna (2016), we are experiencing a devolution of power towards places – and thus people – that are closest to the ground and aimed at collaborative, bottom-up and outcome-oriented actions. This process of devolution leads to the affirmation of new centres of power and authority - territorially more fragmented than nation states - that are able to localise global trends from an economic, social, cultural, and political standpoint, and therefore are no longer reflected into nation states.

Evidence for this, for instance, comes from the European Union's relatively recent introduction of the so-called Urban Agenda for the EU[16] – that explicitly draws from

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[15] Sassen, S., (2005) "The Global City: Introducing a concept", *The Brown Journal of World Affairs*, Volume XI, Issue 2, p. 28.

[16] The Urban Agenda for the EU is an integrated and coordinated approach to deal with the urban dimension of EU and national policies and legislation. It is structured according to fourteen (plus four new additional ones) partnerships that cover concrete themes in line with EU priorities, and it is based on the three pillars of EU policy making and implementation: namely, Better regulation, Better funding and Better knowledge. In this context, cities work together with Member states, Directorate-Generals of the Commission and other European stakeholders. The EU Urban Agenda is coordinated and regulated by the Pact of Amsterdam (2016), The New Leipzig Charter (2020), and the Ljubljana

the United Nations Urban Agenda – which represents a truly new working method for the European Union politics. Officially adopted with the pact of Amsterdam on 30 May 2016, this new policy framework acknowledges the growing involvement and role of local authorities and cities within EU regulations and policies, and gives cities a formal position in the EU decision making process. Notwithstanding the widespread recognition and acceptance of urban literature narrated by eminent scholars, sociologists, and historians from – amongst others – Saskia Sassen and Jane Jacobs to Parag Khanna and Michele Acuto, the formal inclusion of cities in the governance framework happens at a time in which cities are increasingly becoming inherent part of the solution to the many contemporary social, political, economic and environmental problems the both nation states and the EU seem unable to tackle alone – think of, amongst others, climate change, energy transition, migration, integration, housing, the most recent Covid-19 pandemic, and so on. In this respect, the Urban Agenda for the EU represents an innovative tool to put multi-level governance into practice while empowering cities, which could potentially lead to a new 'urban sovereignty' (Barber, 2013) stressing the importance of cities and connectivity over states and territoriality.

In this sense, the Urban Agenda for the EU could signal a first step towards important implications for urban political geographies in Europe. In fact, cities represent an enabling environment for new forms of 'global politics of place' (Sassen, 2018; p. 87). "The space of the city is a far more concrete space for politics than the one of the nation state" (*ibidem*), for it represents a place where communities of practice can develop horizontal and vertical linkages and enable political as well as non-political actors to enter into cross-border politics (*ibidem*).

A further example of thing ongoing devolution and fragmentation of power, is offered by Khanna (2016). Speaking of geographically small entities such a Switzerland and Singapore, he argues that besides their limited physical dimensionsthey aregravitational centres of innovation and progress, attracting a growing share of a capital, skilled labour, and innovative technologies. Their

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Agreement and its Multiannual Working Programme (2021). See more on the European Commission website: Urban Agenda for the EU | Futurium (europa.eu)

economic (functional) geography is as important as their political one. "[…]in fact, they define their geography on the basis of connectivity rather than on physical territory and, on a geographical map, their supply chains are as important as their position" (pp. 21-22).

III.iii Cities as fully democratic actors

"If democracy is to survive globalisation, imagining a global democratic order with the city at its core may be crucial. Envision not states but cities as building blocks for global governance, and global governance has some chance to become democratic" (Barber, 2013; p. 54).

These Benjamin Barber's words are not a plea but an actual representation of cities long-standing experience in the field of participatory democracy.

Historically, it all draws back to the ancient Greek polis which is universally known to be the birthplace of democracy and the cradle of civilisation and politics. It represented the place where space, people, and power coined the original formula of *Demokratia* (literally *demos + cratos*, power of the people), representing a form of power (or sovereignty) coming from the land (territory), that stemmed a sense of belonging, equally for everybody, eventually leading to the right to citizenship(Palumbo, 2021).

Central to about the everyday civic experience of much of the world's population and – by definition – examples of democratic practices, cities have long been reinforcing the idea of citizenship, emphasising the need for more participatory, local-based forms of democratic governance, and as a means to 'make democracy work'. It is not within nation states, but in cities that the concept of democracy assumes its best manifestation.

In a recent study conducted by Eurocities[17] that highlights participatory practices across its membership, evidence from what is happening at the local level starkly

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[17]Eurocities – Study on citizen participation"City administrations paving the way to participatory democracy" (2021). Eurocites is an organisation founded in 1986 by the mayors of six major European cities, now counting over 200

shows that almost all cities that participated in the study have established some form of active citizen participation. The levels, and forms, of participatory activity can be divided into four categories: information, consultation, co-design and co-decision. All of the 173 cities surveyed provide their citizens with some formal or informal information and consultation: eighty-five cities also offer co-design activities to their constituents, thirty-nine cities make use of co-deciding mechanisms, and more than half of them established advanced practices and offer co-design activities to their constituents, which range from practising participatory budgeting in cities like Munich, The Hague or Paris, to initiatives of co-management of public spaces in Rotterdam (Eurocities, 2021). The study underlines the ability of cities to steer and coordinate participation as the main enabler for local participatory democracy, translating citizens inputs into concrete democratic actions.

Figure 5– Forms of citizens' participation
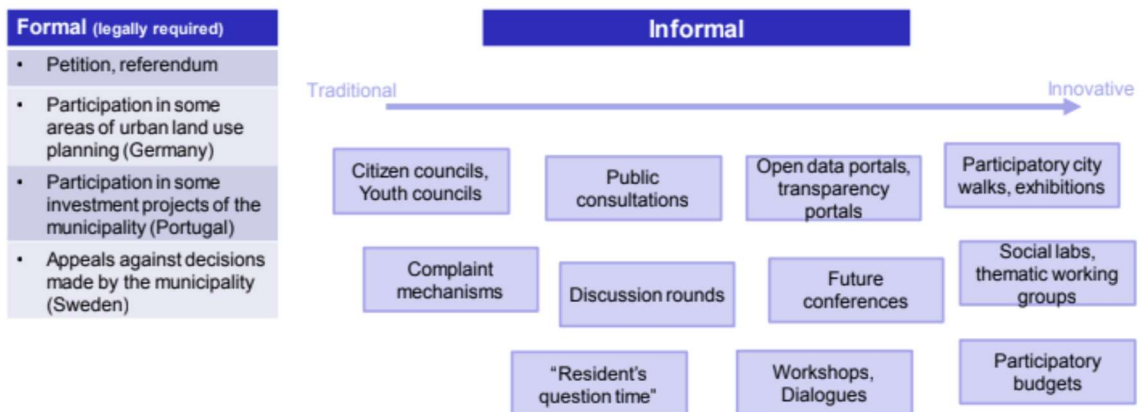
Source: Eurocities (2021).

On a different, yet similar note, participatory practices help to build genuine trust between citizens and legislators, which are seen to be directly accountable for their actions and decisions. Not by chance, in fact, in the Unites States local authorities

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cities across 38 European countries. It is responsible for bringing to the attention of the European Union the needs of cities in the economic, political, social and cultural spheres.

and mayors of major urban centres register a higher confidence and trust rates than the President, the Congress and even the Supreme Court (Khanna, 2017; p. 144).

By bringing their citizens onboard, with direct involvement of civil society, cities are embodying the essence of the democratic process, and demonstrating in practice why they are considered the level of government closest to citizens. These concrete examples portray cities as true laboratories for new strategies 'from below'. In fact, cities are the place where bottom-up solutions are designed in an outcome-directed rather than process-oriented manner, conversely to national top-down approaches.

We can assert that cities, and Global Cities in particular, are leading the way for a different kind of governance, truly multinational but local-based. A political community in which, in a circular way, native roots and universalism, cultural diversity and international links can coexist and support each other.

III.iv Conclusion

Coming back to the Trilemma, that was temporarily left in the background of the analysis of its three core dimensions from the point of view of cities, it is now possible to provide an answer to the opening question: Can cities fix the political trilemma of the world economy?

The reconfiguration of the world system in a network-like architecture, and the consequent *ouverture* of new strategic spatial units, namely global cities, offered a newlensesthrough which we looked at the Rodrik's political Trilemma of the world economy. According to the prominent scholars that have been cited in this work as well as on the basis of evidence and data, cities seems to be the *locus* where the building blocks of the Trilemma can coexist at the very same time.

For outreach and number of partnerships, for concentration of financial and human capital as well as for the presence of innovation hubs and main transnational corporations' headquarters, for the influence and leadership they are capable of exercising in a context of devolution and fragmentation of powers, cities represent

a truly new democratic, globally integrated, economic, sovereign actor. Building on Katz (2013, p. 87), "[…] we live in an era where power is diffuse and value is created through networks built on trust not hierarchy". Therefore, as the nation state devolves part of its powerdownwards to cities and local governments, thus recognising their authortiy and therefore sovereignty, the Trilemma weakens. In fact, democracy, with its proper sense of community and participation, and globalisation, fuelled by the widely interconnected urban engines, would redefine national sovereignty without deleting it.

In the context of a broader multi-level governance, however, the role of the so-called 'networked urban governance' is yet to find official recognition and formal space within the international institutional framework, except of a few mentioned cases. However, evidence suggests that it is emerging as a major feature of metropolitan strategy and activity (Davidson, Coenen, Acuto, Gleeson et al., 2018).

Another leading example, is offered by the two important climate city networks C40 and ICLEI, are working extensively to establish legitimate urban participation within global environmental governance frameworks like the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) (Acuto, 2013 b). Further proofing that globalisation redefines international structures into network governance and political geographies into functional ones, in other words "strategic planning networks are able to move beyond the hierarchies of nation-states" (Acuto, 2013 a; p. 97).

In the next Chapter, the role of cities and local governments in the context of a multi-level and multi-actor governance will be further explored, with particular attention to the emergency situation represented by the Covid-19 pandemics, with offered an interesting case to (re)assess urban roles.

 As the place where global major challenges meet territorial specificities "[…] the modern metropolis retrieves the capacity to empower neighbourhoods and nurture civic engagement, but at the same time holds out the prospect of networked global integration: that is the promise of glocality." (Barber, 2013; p. 154).

Chapter IV

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Cities in an evolving governance: evidence from emergency management

Leaving the Trilemma in the background, this chapter focuses on the role of cities in an evolving global governance. In particular, it aims to understand their role in the context of the most recent Covid-19 pandemics, building on literature developed during the past months and based on evidence and available data from the first period after the outbreak. Starting from a more general overview of emergency management and governance situations, this chapter highlights the fundamental role that cities played in the management of the health emergency, as a further proof of their growing influence and role in an international and more and more networked system.

At a time when national administrations lacked of responsiveness and preparedness, cities were left at the frontline of what would have become one of the major crises of the last century. Being the most affected by the virus and its initial hotspots[18], urban areas entered a 'counter globalisation' kind of narrative according to which they have been said to represent "the ground zero of the Corona crisis" (LeVine, 2020, cited in McGuirk et al., 2020), allowing the virus to spread on the basis of global human settlements, and ultimately a threat to citizens' health. On the contrary, cities appeared to be better equipped to manage the side-effects of the pandemics and provide prompt interventions, in terms of social and political policies. Cities developed and delivered instructive examples of cross-border

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[18] See BBC "Wuhan: The London-sized city where the virus began". 23 January 2020. At: Wuhan: The London-sized city where the virus began - BBC News

cooperation and solidarity in a moment when the international community needed a cohesive response across all levels of government[19].

Not surprisingly, at that time the activity of city networks proliferated to offer a platform where cities could exchange their first experience and build on their best practices. Established networks such as, among others, C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group, Eurocities, United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) served as means towards this end developing ad hoc initiatives to promote city-to-city communication, share solutions and prove common responses and coordinated actions *vis-à-vis* the major threat, not only concerning the short and medium-term response, but above all in the search for long-term solutions to restore growth. For instance, "Cities 4 Global Health" is an example of one of the newborn collaborative platforms where ideas, policy models and action plans could be directly uploaded by cities. One hundred and five cities from thirty-four countries shared a total of seven hundred and nineteen recovery initiatives. A similar initiative is represented by the Eurocities' Covid News platform[20] which, on the one hand, provided live updates from EU institutions concerning new measures adopted to contrast the pandemics and, on the other hand, offered cities a place where they clould share their actions. Similarly, the C40's Global Mayors Covid-19 Recovery Task Force established to assess different global approaches to public health, economic equity, and climate change response amidst recovery.

As part of the structured research programme called Emergency Governance Initiative[21] and led by UCLG, the World Association of the Major Metropolises (Metropolis) and LSE Cities, cities were also able to share their experiences for what concerns governance innovations in response to the Covid-19 crisis. In the context of a complex emergency such as the recent sanitary one, the study analysed how the coordination and management of the emergency situation affected – and was

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[19] See ISPI Dossier "Global Cities in the age of Covid-19: Agenda 2030 and Sustainable Development". 19 April 2020. At: ispi_dossier_globalcities_aprile2020.pdf (ispionline.it)

[20] EurocitiesCovidNews Platform: Live updates COVID-19European cities respond to the coronavirus crisisEUROCITIES

[21] The 'Emergency Governance for Cities and Regions' initiative led by LSE Cities, UCLG, and Metropolis provides effective urban and territorial solutions on how to build institutional capacities to face today' major challenges (emergencies), from the pandemics to climate change. More on their activity can be found here: Emergency Governance for Cities and Regions (lse.ac.uk)

affected by – the governance functioning across different levels. Clearly, the breakout of Covid-19 has exposed the limits of the well-known international integration process and multi-level governance, on the one hand with regards to the *impasse* in the management of the economic consequences of the crisis (such as the paralysation of global supply chains) and, on the other hand, for the inability of governments to efficiently act across different levels, share sensitive information and mimic successful policies and practices, already implemented around the world. These circumstances opened up space for new governance experimentation, as fixed rules and hierarchical settings suddenly became inadequate to promptly face the emergency. Therefore, to bridge the gap between rules and practices, partial governance innovations and experimentations entered into play (Sabel and Zeitlin, 2012).

In such context, the study[22] highlighted both governance dynamics and emergency initiatives that might have been experimented by cities and local governments during the initial phase of the Covid-19 crisis. Emergencies in general, whether concerning migration, climate change, or pandemics, normally tend to exacerbate existing dynamics and criticalities such as the complex architecture represented by multi-level governance. What clearly emerges as one of the biggest challenges from the Live Learning Experiences was dealing with and coordinating across different tiers of government, as well as receiving adequate financial support and emergency resources – for which local governments traditionally rely on higher levels of government, which have greater access to resources, for adequate support (centralised and vertical process).For this reason, the pandemics represented also a chance to revamp the longstanding dichotomy between centralisation and decentralisation, as both frameworks provided valuable support policies. On the one hand, centralised policies allowed a univocal, coherent and immediate response, and wider share of skills, knowledge and expertise across territories in a one-size-fit-all manner. On the other hand, decentralisation enabled greater exchange of good practices, capacity building, and bottom-up strategies which took into consideration territorial needs. However, what turned out to be the most

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[22] See footnote n. 3.

effective strategy was a combination of the two dimensions, which allowed cities at the frontline to experiment effective responses while at the same time seeking vertical coordination with the other levels of government – mainly in charge of emergency financial support schemes, lockdown measures, and health equipments provisions. In fact, if on the one hand Covid-19 has led to a return to state intervention, on the other hand, it has created a plurality of new opportunities for urban actions whose governance could expand to areas of pubic space, mobility, urban planning, and health services (McGuirk et al., 2020). In other words, it represented a rather 'porous' trend towards centralisation, which left space for – or even accelerated – urban innovative mechanisms to further develop experimental, data driven, and citizens oriented strategies (*ibidem*).

On the basis of the data collected from the surveyed cities [23], the principal emergency governance domains that experienced innovation in at least half of the respondent cities include: **cooperation and collaboration across stakeholders** (*i.e.* partnering up with public and private sectors as well as with civil society), **information technology and data management** (*i.e.* innovative use of data to track the spread of the virus, effective communication channels with the citizenship), **responsiveness and effectiveness** (*i.e.* flexibility in reprioritisation, allocation of resources, suspension of some services and provision of essential ones), **administrative capacity and organisational resilience** (*i.e.* redesignation of some of the city's responsibilities, tasks, and functions, and introduction of well-being and support services). However, several other domains concerning, for instance, financing options, legal frameworks and constitutional arrangements have not reported significant innovative actions from cities and local authorities, as previously mentioned. The lack of involvement of some specific sectors, in particular of the aforementioned ones, in these innovation-oriented actions might well be explained by different political positions and priorities of urban governments as well as by the nature (or hierarchy) of the multi-level governance according to which cities might not always have the power to take decisions and

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[23] The survey was conducted across 57 territories from 35 countries in all continents, with stronger representation of cities and regions from Europe (40%), Asia (25%), and Latin America and the Caribbean (21%). See LSE Cities, UCLG, Metropolis Policy Brief #01 'Emergency Governance Initiative for Cities and Regions' (July 2020).

prioritise issues that are in the 'legal' hands of other tiers of government. As a further proof of this, cities and more in general sub-national governments in federal countries or within federal and decentralised jurisdictions could exert more influence over the emergency strategy approach and act in autonomy (in terms of restrictive measures such as lockdowns and so on). In fact, more formal responses happened within the established jurisdictions mainly following pre-existing patterns of decentralisation.

The divergence in priorities and political contexts has often created tensions across levels of government, making some good practices and effective strategies that could have been replicated fall on deaf ears. In this sense, cities became vocal in their dialogue with regional and national levels as well as on the international stage, calling for coordinated actions during and after lockdowns, and for an holistic and integrated approach to long-term urban recovery and resilience. In particular, citizens' trust in national governments that failed to organise a strong emergency response decreased, making them turn to much closer authorities at a regional and metropolitan level. This, somehow, pressured municipal infrastructures and resources, which experimented integrated and coordinated strategies, involving citizens participation as part of the emergency responses.

IV.i Urban governance and the Pandemic Case

Cities have been – and sill are – at the heart of the Covid-19 emergency, in terms of impact, management, and responses.

The pandemics highlighted the growing centrality of urban governance dynamics in a multi-level and multi-actor context.City governments, faced with the suffocating pressures of their constrained powers, had, on the one hand, to bear the consequences of the closure of borders that followed a sort of 'nationalist separation', while, on the other hand, coping with global connectivity challenges, strengthening a urban networked environment.In fact, Kearney (2020) identified the deepening cities engagement in global networks among key priorities for post-Covid-19 city leaders.

The pandemic experience required urban municipalities to manage complex challenges, in an innovative and to some extent unprecedented way. Literature from the early stage of the outbreak, confirms that among the main responses, cities developed multi-stakeholder cooperation across different sectors: with civic groups, the third sector, private sectors (with companies and philanthropies), as well as across different governance levels and borders (McGuirk et al., 2020).

Among the "diverse new ecosystems of innovative urban governance"(McGuirk et al., 2020; p. 1) that have emerged, some have "[…]the potential to reshape the politics and parameters of urban decision making, produce new institutional settings, reconstitute cities' multiscalar relations, and invoke new forms of power" (*ibidem*). In other words, experimental solutions elaborated during the emergency can be translated into some long-term permanent and structural changes within the urban governance architecture.

This discourse on urban governance innovation has much to do with the different domains in which urban governance could traditionally operate in autonomy, before the pandemics. A different study (Sharifi and Khavarian-Garmsir, 2020) conducted through desk research, shows that the relationship between Covid-19 and cities concerned four major themes, namely, environmental quality, socio-economic impacts, management and governance, and transport and urban design. In fact, critical hotspots (suffice it to think of Wuhan, in China, or Milan and more in general the Northern Italy in Europe) present high levels of air pollution combined with rather humid meteorological conditions – which have been to confirmed as factors that facilitate the spread of the virus. In the same way, a sustainable approach to urban mobility – such as the promotion of cycling lane and pedestrian areas – would have reduced overcrowding on public transports, as well as reduced emissions. Each of the above-mentioned factors played an important role in the diffusion of the virus in urban areas and there are lessons to be learnt from cities to be better equipped in facing such challenges. On a different note, developing relief programmes to provide social and economic support to vulnerable groups and turning to a local supply chain to increase "self-sufficiency"

were among the top challenges that cities had to address in their responses (*ivi*, p. 7).

Digitalisation has played a crucial role in cities' response to the pandemics. On the one hand it allowed the monitoring of contagion risk and perfom tracing functions via ad hoc apps; and, on the other hand, it guaranteed the continuity of essential services and and functions (*i.e.* home schooling and teaching, economic activities, etc) remotely. These 'innovations' then became a permanent component of cities' recovery and governance (OECD, 2020).

To conclude, it is worth highlighting that an additional sector – or dimension – has turned out to be particularly central in the international discourse on urban governance following the recent crisis: health. Long before the outbreak of the pandemics, major cities started to develop the so-called 'urban dimension of health'.

As part of the World Health Organisation (WHO), for the past thirty plus years the European Healthy Cities Network[24] has gathered 100 flagship cities, about 1400 municipalities and approximately 30 national networks, with the aim of providing political, strategic and technical support as well as capacity-building towards a holistic approach to health. Notwithstanding health, and more technically the healthcare sector, being chiefly managed at higher tiers of government than at city level (national and regional), by being the closest to their citizens, local governments have a significant role to play in improving stakeholders' awareness of the factors affecting public health in the cities. In fact, the pandemics has shown that cities can also represent a source of health risks – which indeed became a major concerns for national and international health authorities (Capolongo, Rebecchi, Buffoli, et al., 2020).

So, how could the concept of health become part of cities' contemporary built environment and challenges?

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[24] As a WHO-born initiative, the European Healthy Cities was then included into different networks activities. For more, see https://www.who.int/europe/groups/who-european-healthy-cities-network.

In terms of both short and long term actions, there are several domains in which cities can intervene in safeguarding public health within their urban governance sphere of competence. For example, as the "Decalogue of Public Health opportunities" (Capolongo, Rebecchi, Buffoli, et al., 2020) represented in Figure 6 suggests, city can implement ten sets of actions, some more immediate and other more structural, to improve the well-being of citizens as well as their health conditions – in particular related to the social determinants of health[25].

Figure 6 – Decalouge of Public Health Opportunities
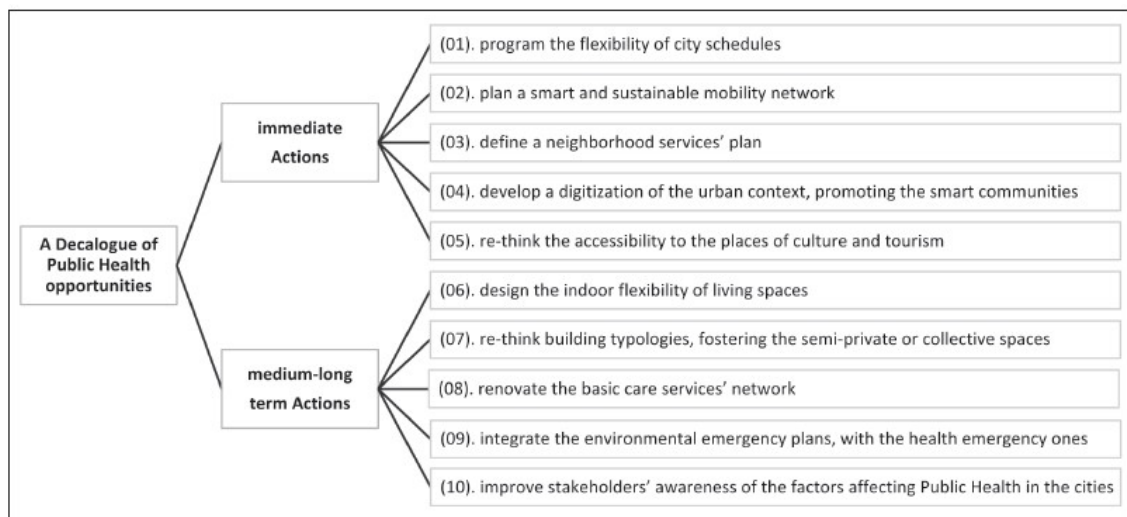
Source: Capolongo, Rebecchi, Buffoli, et al., 2020; p. 15.

For example, Action 2 'Plan a smart and sustainable mobility network' refers to designing alternative (potentially temporary) routes to decrease traffic and introduce sustainable routes such as cycling lanes, pavements, and extended pedestrian areas. An example, among others, comes from the city of Milan[26] which with the Milan Adaptation Plan 2020 reconfigured the whole city plan in the wake

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[25] The social determinants of health (SDH) are the non-medical factors that influence health outcomes, and normally refer to people's origins, age, education, work, living place, and other aspects determining or influencing their way of living. To address the SDH, governments can develop economic, social, and political policies and systems, development agendas, and so on, to reduce health inequalities. Examples of the social determinants of health, which can have both positive or negative influence on 'health equality' are: income and social protection, education, unemployment and job insecurity, working conditions, food insecurity, housing, basic amenities and the environment, social inclusion, and so on. For more, see Social determinants of health (who.int).
[26] Comune di Milano (2020), Strategia di adattamento "Strade Aperte". Strategie, azioni e strumenti per la ciclabilità e la pedonalità, a garanzia delle misure di distanziamento negli spostamenti urbani e per una mobilità sostenibile.

of the pandemics, ensuring accessibility of services, flexibility in the use of existing infrastructure, improving the quality of green areas, requalifing pedestrian areas and squares, as well as imporving sustainable mobility.

Moreover, Milan together with Barcelona and Paris implemented the concept of 'The 15-minutes city'[27] developed by Professor Carlos Moreno, Scientific Director of ETI Chair at Paris1 Panthéon Sorbonne University. This strategy aims at making essential urban social functions and services (*i.e.* living, working, studying, going for shopping, enjoying leisure activities, etc) reachable within a walkable distance – conventionally within 15 minutes.

On a longer term horizon, in terms of urban management and governance cities could, on the one hand, capitalise on the Covid-19 experience and build expertise in emergency management, to be ready to face the next crises (Action 9). And, on the other hand, further experiment new forms of urban governance innovation – for example, introducing new professional figures such as the Health City Manager (Capolongo, Rebecchi, Buffoli, et al., 2020; p. 19). However, even before the pandemics, cities were active actors in health policies in the fields of food systems and education (*i.e.* educating about healthy life-styles from an early age, including the provision of healthy and addordable food in public establishments and school canteens)[28]. Now, in the context of recovery, cities are paying increased attention to proximity services and urban planning for healthy cities.

Quite interestingly, in the context of the Conference on the Future of Europe – an unprecedented pan-European experiment of participatory democracy that aims at bringing Europe closer to citizens and, therefore, cities – one of the thematic areas is entirely dedicated to the topic of health.

Before taking the final leap to Chapter V, which will bring on board first hand evidence collected during the past year on the effects of the Covid-19 crisis on cities

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[27] The concept behind the 15 minutes-city,is the return to a local urban life made up of proximity public services and activitites, which are at the basis of a new sustainable urban life-style. More here:The 15 minutes-city: for a new chrono-urbanism! - Pr Carlos Moreno - Carlos Moreno (moreno-web.net)

[28] For more see: Food systems - Eurocities

to further check it against the literature, it is crucial to draw some conclusions on the main aspects involved in urban governance in emergency contexts.

Major modern threats including the pandemics, climate change, migration and so on, have a global reach, for which they are subject to transnational global governance rather than tasks for national governments alone, but those major threats have also different territorial impacts and consequences, which make them the object of innovative urban governance actions. For this reason, cities have a crucial mission in maintaining global dialogue and influence alive, for place-based and bottom-up solutions that work for all.

In the end, as global problems are being dealt with at a local level, the Covid-19 crisis represents a chance for urban planners and city leaders to take transformative actions in the urban governance landscape.

Chapter V

Checking against reality:
Analysis of local case studies

The goal behind Chapter V is to add a last yet important piece to the puzzle and, eventually, confirm the trends highlighted in the previous chapter with firsthand evidence from three cities (Treviso, Venice, and Milan) following formal interviews and informal exchanges carried out with local civil servants – the Mayor in the case of the city of Treviso, the vice Mayor in charge also of European Affairs for the city of Venice, and a Regional Councillor, a Deputy mayor and policy officer on international relations for the city of Milan.

The rationale is to show that cities, in general terms, experienced very similar challenges – even if the result of their performances often proved to be uneven (Zielonka, 2020) – and that they designed as well as implemented both short-term and long-term responses mainly in fields related to transports and environment, digitalisation and communication, and solidarity (through social support actions on the ground and international networks). All of this feeds into what was defined in *Chapter IV* as evidence of 'urban governance innovation', emerging from emergency management situations. Furthermore, strategies developed at city level represented, in terms of accountability and responsiveness, a rather efficient democratic tool that local governments should capitalise on. For instance, by building on the grassroots and voluntary initiatives born out of the pandemics that managed to bring individual citizens closer to the local community, cities could strengthen their participatory democratic dimension (*ibidem*).

The evidence reported below does not claim to be fully exhaustive but, rather, wants to gain concrete insights from the ground in the aftermath of the first waves of the virus and check them against the discourse developed in the previous chapters. It aims, therefore, to understand which key lessons can be drawn from urban resilience in order to better equipped for future crises in terms of preparation, prevention and response. Even if the discourse tends to focus chiefly on responses, preparation and prevention are equally crucial to build resilience for the future. Acting proactively and evaluating holistically major potential risks for the community, represent the first steps towards long-term responses aimed at a resilient urban infrastructure. For example, designing flexible city features like, stadiums, and even roadways up front, would accelerate cities' capacity to promptly react and respond to unforeseen threats (Keaney, 2020). Moreover, it shows how the green, digital (and inclusive!) transition is inherent part of cities' recovery efforts (OECD, 2020).

Note on methodology:

The analysis and collection ofthe following case studies has been initiated in the context of the VERA (Venice centre in Economic and Risk Analytics for public policies) Academy research project 'Cities in the evolution of European Governance: the Pandemic Case'. The project, affiliated to the Economics Department of Ca' Foscari University of Venice, was conducted under the supervision of Prof. Stefano Soriani and Prof. Jan Andrzej Zielonka over a period of time that goes from March to September 2021.

The aim of the project was to give an initial contribution on the examination of the role of cities in performing key public functions in the domain of health, democracy and global networking, within the context of an evolving global governance and in the specific case of Covid-19 pandemics. In fact, Covid-19 has affected densely populated cities in a special way. Some of the cities have even become symbols of the fight against the pandemics, promoting a specific response to the emergency based both on existing global governance city networks (OECD Champion Mayors for Inclusive Growth Initiative, UN 2030 New Urban Agenda, C40, World

Organisation of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), Eurocities, to name a few) and on new ones.

The research project has been divided in two parts. First, I conducted a more general research based on relevant academic and policy literature aimed at identifying to what extent the pandemics affected cities differently than states and regions, and if there has been a distinct urban way of combating Covid-19. The research provided evidence and analysis on issues related to the economic, social and environmental impacts of Covid-19 on cities. In the second part of the project, we focused on the evolution of urban governance in emergency situations and on specific studies devoted to the urban dimensions of health, making use of press content, official communications, and original interviews to see if there has been a city-specific response to the pandemics. Based on data collected, we looked for evidence on the evolution of the interplay between various levels of governance to understand whether existing laws and regulations (Ordinanze, Decreti del Presidente del Consiglio dei Ministri (DPCM), etc), as well as political decisions and behaviours of public authorities helped or hampered cities' work.

V.i Case Studies

V.i.i Evidence from the City of Treviso

During the hardest times of the pandemics, the city of Treviso emerged as 'winner' *vis-à-vis* the national and regional governments. "At municipal level there is no room for political conflicts, as all the resources have to be invested into solutions and in that sense, probably, Mayors would have better handled the emergency", the Mayor says[29]. In fact, the city proved to be ready and capable of delivering on time answers to citizens in need, thanks to its proximity and direct knowledge of the problems, despite the difficulties that emerged from a bad, last-minute communication of the new regulations (DPCM), where Mayors found themselves on the side of citizens rather than one the one of other political authorities. As recorded in many other cases mentioned before, one of the biggest challenges for the city was the lack of communication and shared management across different

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[29] Mayor of Treviso and President of ANCI Veneto Mario Conte, interviewed on 14 June 2020. See Annex.

tiers of government, for which Treviso had to interpret, adapt and implement regulations coming from 'above' (the central government)while exploiting existingalternative resources to find more inclusive and exhaustive responses to people's needs.

The city confirmed also the trend towards establishing more or less formal partnerships with different actors coming from the public, private, and third sectors. In particular, a major partner in dealing with the emergency was represented by the third sector and civil society, which played the right-hand-man of the municipality in reaching out to citizens' needs.

Moreover, the city managed to create a microcredit programme (TREVISO FUND) by putting together the major credit institutes of the city which supplied € 6 million to give an immediate aid to professionals with Partita IVA (VAT number), that received the needed support, within better timing and a simplified bureaucratic procedure than it would have been if they had to go throw national centralised procedures. This successful initiative was then integrated into a more structural and less contingent programme aimed at young start-ups and women-led entrepreneurship, turning a short-term emergency initiative into a longer term programme for the city.

Once again, in terms of digital tools, Treviso experienced an acceleration towards a more structural digital transition. The municipality, in fact, activated several processes of digitalisation, from public buildings (*i.e.*facilities in schools) to bureaucratic procedures that could be more easily performed online.

As for mobility and urban planning, Treviso plans bigger investments for the expansion of cycling areas, at a time when the bicycle besides being most sustainable, becomes also the safest means of transport.

Alongside Treviso's activity as a single municipality, during the pandemic the city strengthened the already established relationships with local city networks, first of all with Associazione Nazionale Comuni Italiani (ANCI). ANCI gained enormous centrality, as it served as a stage for successful practices implemented locally, and enhanced collective action whenever possible. In this time of crisis, the association

saw its role being renewed, which, according to Conte, could also lead to a potential general reform of local authorities. The Mayor, in fact, wishes to expand ANCI's competences creating, within the association, Service Agencies and Project Centres to support small municipalities to channel the funds coming from Recovery Plan into well-designed, tailored, trans municipal works. For instance, Treviso recently introduced a "Next Generation Department", where people are working for a good implementation of the EU funds that will land on the municipality itself. Therefore, the idea is to offer the same service and support to more municipalities, with special attention for smaller ones that would not have sufficient competences.

Treviso's city-to-city collaboration involves also international networks, as they offer the platform dynamic projects that favour the share of competences and solutions, as well as offering funds for innovation. European cities are moving at a much faster pace than the Italian government, and the city must be able to build relations with both taking advantage of what they have to offer. (*i.e.* TEN – Treviso Europa Network, Eurocities). Openness to change, contamination of ideas, and acquisition of talent and competences are what cities need to be oriented to.

In that sense, the pandemic accelerated a process that was already on the way towards a more green, digital, inclusive, and interconnected city life. According to Conte, bottom-up solutions shared via networks of different nature, process rather than outcome oriented, favoured a more efficient management of resources.

V.i.iiEvidence from the City of Venice

According to the Vice Mayor[30], the city played a central role during the emergency as citizens inevitably turned to the closest authority for support.

In terms of communication, Venice offered to its citizenship an actual "First aid" service for what concerned the prompt dissemination of information and updates related to the most recently adopted regulation through the different media and social channels of the city. Moreover, the city reinforced an already existing call centre service called "DIME" (hotline 041014), that offered citizens – especially the

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[30] Vice Mayor of Venice in charge of European Affairs, Sports, and Youth Andrea Tomaello. Interviewed on 21 September 2020. SeeAnnex.

eldest and less acquainted to technology – a direct contact with the municipality for any emergency update. Next to this, similarly to the case of Treviso and of many other cities 'on the ground', a major task was to translate the new centralised regulations to provide citizens with adequate support and information.

Again, in line with the observed trends, in Venice, the pandemic has triggered a resurgence of civic action in form of mutual aid and altruistic engagement. Such civic actors have also created innovative forms of governance capacity while both collaborating with and operating without reference to formal government (*i.e.* ProtezioneCivile*v* other forms of associationism). The city should definitely capitalise on and mainstream these voluntary initiatives that emerged during the crisis to create a more solid participatory architecture (Zielonka, 2020). This "pandemic solidarity boom" ranged from food delivery systems (mainly by volunteers and non-profit associations), to personal protective equipment provision and fabrication (by private sectors), to free food supply to the ones in need (by Coop and Alì supermarkets). In this sense, like in the case of Treviso, a major partner in dealing with the emergency has been definitely found in the third sector, as well as private donations.

On another note, the pandemic has also accelerated trends in innovative urban governance, including aspects related to digital and green transitions. For what concerns the former, together with more digitalised services the city of Venice accelerated the use and implementation of the so-called Smart Control Room. Initially deployed as a meeting room where the Mayor together with few other members of the Municipal Council met (and still meet) twice a week to decide on the actions to take, during the recovery phase, the meeting has been moved "from online to offline", and extended also to other city actors and stakeholders: such as Veritas (waste company), retirement homes, voluntary networks and Protezione Civile. The technology (thanks also to use of CCTVs) provides live information about, among other things, the number and origin of people present in the city as well as information regarding traffic and mobility-related issues. The Smart Control Room offers a great example of how the pandemics represented an opportunity to rethink urban governance (allowing other stakeholders to participate in some

consultations) and at the time accelerate digital transition, going beyond the sake of the sanitary emergency.

In terms of environment and urban planning, in the Metropolitan Area of Venice urban spaces are being reorganised through the revitalisation of public outdoor spaces. For example, programmes of new outdoor gyms, cycle lines, and traffic free areas are proliferating. However, in the specific and unique case of Venice, actions concerning different sectors such as the overall logistics and coordination, transports, and regulation of commercial activities, did not follow any concrete collaboration. The Vice Mayor confirmed that during the pandemics the city did not build significant cooperation through local city networks, nor with nearby municipalities. This was mainly due to the exceptional nature of the city, that had to elaborate an autonomous response to its own problems. For example, top-down regulations on transport means affected the city disproportionally. In fact, for Venice a reduced capacity on public transports was not as sustainable as it was for other cities, because there was no alternative transport to the boat (especially for what concerned links with the islands).

Finally, in Venice local and international cooperation seemed to be limited to city branding and territorial attractiveness. For example, via the emulation of "glamorous" public events that could attire citizens' attention and demonstrate that the city, hardly hit by the lockdowns, was alive and back into activity. In Venice, events such as *La Biennale*, *La Mostra Internazionale del Cinema*, the international fashion show staged in St. Mark's Square, or the G20 forums that were hosted in July 2021, served to showcase a positive image of the city. Neighbouring municipalities put in place, on different scales and budgets, fairs, fireworks and other events serving the same purpose. Nevertheless, a good example of collaboration can be found in the so-called 'Decalogo per la Ripartenza delle Città d'arte'[31]. This set of guidelines that Mayor of Venice Luigi Brugnaro and Mayor of Florence Dario Nardella signed in March 2021 was aimed at relaunching cities of art and tourism, that were heavily and similarly affected by the pandemics.

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[31] Un Decalogo di proposte per il rilancio da Firenze e Venezia, availablehere: Decalogo_Firenze_Venezia_ok.pdf (comune.venezia.it)

Next to this, in 2019 Venice joined the newly launched URBACT Tourism-Friendly Cities Network [32] which gathered medium-sized cities across Europe facing sometimes even opposite issues with tourism, to share their experiences and build a brand new concept and strategy around sustainability. The pandemic has highlighted, among other things, the fragility of cities that live on tourism or that tend to rely economically on one sector only (monoculture, mono-function) and the importance to diversify the urban economy. A shared reality of many European cities. It is necessary to preserve a balance between visiting and actually living the city.

V.i.iii Evidence from the City of Milan

Coming out as one of the most affected cities worldwide, Milan has clearly a lot to learn from the Covid-19 experience. However, as confirmed also by the Regional Councillor [33] the city gained centrality with respect to regional or national governments in the management of the emergency, as the main reference point as well as an accountable voice for citizens.

Major actions concerned efficient communication with the citizenship as well as across levels of government. In particular, the city developed an ad hoc adaptation plan to regulate life in the city after the outbreak of the virus. In order to finally come out of the lockdown phase and gradually resume daily activity. Actions covered almost every vital sector of the urban machine: mobility, reducingcapacity movements and diversify mobility supply; public space and wellbeing, allowing people to take possession of open spaces for sports or leisure activities; boosting digital services; improving proximity, in terms of public services (15-minute city model) and in terms of territorial healthcare in cooperation with Lombardy Region; and so on.

The involvement of different stakeholders together with the creation of new partnerships with the third sector and civic associations, proved to be central also

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[32] More on the network here: Tourism Friendly Cities | URBACT
[33] Councillor of Lombardy Region Pietro Bussolati. Interviewed on 14 September 2021. See Annex.

in the case of Milan that benefitted also from donations from private foundations (*i.e.* Fondazione Cariplo).

Quite interestingly and differently from the experience of Treviso and Venice, in Milan local cooperation did not represent a strong asset in the response to the pandemics (*i.e.* ANCI). Rather, it was international cooperation with other similar cities that favoured the exchange of good practices and experiences. For example, in the context of the C40 network, Milan chaired the Global Mayors COVID-19 Recovery Task Force. The initiative's goal was to develop a plan to help cities build their economies back better while improving public health, fighting climate change, and decreasing inequalities. The result was then included into the Mayors' Agenda for a Green and Just Recovery[34].

Rather than sharing Brescia's and Bergamo's experience, Milan follows the example of Paris and Barcelona (for instance with the experimentation of the 15-minute city).

V.ii Conclusion

In conclusion, based on evidence from the Municipalities of Treviso, Venice and Milan we can assert that – as most recent literature claims – the distinct urban response to the pandemics has been mainly addressed to interpreting, adapting and implementing emergency regulations coming from above, and exploiting existent (alternative) resources to find immediate responses for citizens, innovating 'the normal way of doing things' and experimenting new forms of collaboration at the local as well as at the global level. Although health issues are and remain chiefly a matter of national and regional government, the pandemics highlighted that both local municipal level and European level are also important. The former for bottom-up solutions, process rather than outcome oriented, related to the so-called urban dimension of heath, which encompasses sector that can be directly governed and managed by local authorities. The latter for serving as a platform where to share

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[34]More on this: Green & Just Recovery Agenda - C40 Cities

good practices and where cities could become more vocal about their position and relevance in such an interconnected and networked world.

This research does not claim to be exhaustive and lays the foundation for further analysis. By providing a first answer, we shed light on both the growing importance of urban municipalities in managing complex challenges and on the nature of urban governance, allocated across national government, private sector, third sector (civic groups), philanthropies, and city networks. Surely, Covid-19 posed a major challenge to cities but, equally, provided them with the potential for a progressive urban governance innovation, as the effectiveness of locally-based management came to the fore.

V.iii Annex

Transcpription of the interviews carried out in the context of the VERA (Venice center in Economic and Risk Analytics for public policies) research project "CITIES IN THE EVOLUTION OF EUROPEAN GOVERNANCE: THE PANDEMIC CASE" with Prof. Stefano Soriani and Prof. Jan Andrzej Zielonka

TREVISO

Trascrizione Intervista a Mario Conte, Sindaco di Treviso e Presidente ANCI Veneto. Treviso, 14 Giugno 2021.

Premessa del Sindaco: aprendo l'intervista il Sindaco riporta le parole di Paolo Mieli "non ci sono più i politici di una volta, ragionamento che vale per tutti i politici fuorché per i Sindaci". Infatti, in questo ultimo periodo i Sindaci hanno fatto un salto di qualità (rispetto a quelli di una volta) sulla base di responsabilità, operatività sui territori, e ruolo politico stesso.

1. **In base alla sua esperienza come Presidente ANCI Veneto, quale pensa sia stato il ruolo principale delle città e degli enti locali nella gestione della pandemia da Covid-19?**
   Ruolo interpretativo: capire, interpretare e tradurre le regole dell'emergenza (i DPCM), nottetempo. Il Sindaco ci ha sempre messo la faccia facendo applicare quelli che erano gli ordini che arrivavano dagli enti superiori, talvolta in contraddizione con quelle che erano le regole regionali.

   Equilibrismo: i Sindaci sono stati al pari degli equilibristi nell'emergenza che ci ha investito su più fronti - sanitario, economico e sociale. I Sindaci hanno cercato di far fronte a più difficoltà, in quanto primo punto di riferimento dei cittadini. Infatti, il municipio si è adoperato per dare risposte ai cittadini e soddisfarne i bisogni (es. rimborso abbonamento autobus, teatro, etc), nonostante la preoccupazione per la tenuta dei bilanci.

   Dal punto di vista amministrativo, la pandemia ha dettato nuove priorità per l'agenda del Sindaco, incentrata più che mai sul green, sulla sostenibilità e sulla digitalizzazione. Erano progetti già in cantiere che hanno subito un'accelerata notevole, obbligando i sindaci a rivederne quindi la priorità.

   Il Sindaco si mostra comunque soddisfatto del lavoro svolto.

2. **Ripensando a questo ultimo anno, potrebbe fornirci degli esempi concreti di cosa secondo lei ha funzionato (le cosiddette "*goodpratices*") e cosa no nella risposta all'emergenza sanitaria – sia a livello Comunale, come sindaco di Treviso, sia a livello regionale, quindi in base alla sua esperienza come Presidente ANCI – e perché.**

C'è tanto dibattito (soprattutto politico) a riguardo, ad ogni modo il sistema sanitario si è mostrato efficiente, ma questa è una questione gestita a livello regionale. A livello municipale, si può affermare che i Comuni si siano sempre messi a disposizione, disponendo gli spazi per centri di vaccinazione e tamponi, supportati dal volontariato e la Protezione Civile (sinergia).

Cosa non ha funzionato? La comunicazione (elemento fondamentale). E' mancato uno speaker ufficiale della pandemia, al di sopra delle opinioni dei singoli, che unito al potere dei social media ha contribuito alla confusione totale, che a sua volta ha generato panico, paure (no vax, no mask, etc).

Comunque il Sindaco Conte non si sentiva di criticare altro, dato il carattere emergenziale della situazione. Un altro aspetto che non ha funzionato: le tempistiche. Le decisioni non avevano tempo di essere programmate, dovevano essere innanzitutto prese. Difficile perché le decisioni politiche devono tenere conto delle differenze (potenzialità e limiti) territoriali. Più le iniziative partono dal basso (e questa pandemia ce lo ha insegnato), più riescono ad essere efficaci e attente alle esigenze dei territori. Più in basso prendi la decisione più è sartoriale. Da questo punto di vista, il Sindaco vive e tocca le realtà diversamente da altri politici. Il Sindaco va al sodo della situazione, mettendo in campo delle soluzioni concrete (illustrate in seguito), non ha tempo di perdersi in dibattiti politici.

Cosa pensa a riguardo del dibattito sulla rinazionalizzazione della sanità? Noi, come veneti, abbiamo qualcosa da perdere, probabilmente i calabresi hanno invece qualcosa da guadagnare.

3. **In qualità di Presidente dell'ANCI Veneto, ritiene che ci siano state soluzioni attuate a livello comunale particolarmente efficaci, che si possono considerare applicabili a più realtà comunali?**

Un esempio è l'iniziativa partita proprio dalla città di Treviso chiamata TREVISO FUND, un microcredito a favore delle Partite IVA, dove i maggiori Istituti di Credito della città hanno deciso di aiutare il municipio nel sostenere la categoria in questione. Diversamente da quanto offriva lo Stato, il Comune è riuscito a mettere in piedi questo programma con delle tempistiche ridotte (15 giorni, contro circa 6 mesi per l'erogazione) e con un iter sburocratizzato. In totale sono state aiutate 182 Partite IVA del Comune di Treviso. Questo modello poi è stato esportato in circa 100 altri comuni veneti. Da questo punto di vista, le amministrazioni locali riescono ad essere più efficaci e reattive rispetto al governo centrale. I sindaci arrivano laddove i politici non riescono.

L'iniziativa ha funzionato talmente bene che è stato deciso di estenderla, nel post-pandemia, ai settori dell'imprenditorialità femminile e start-up.

4. **Inoltre, ritiene che i Comuni veneti abbiano sviluppato risposte coordinate alla pandemia? O azioni frutto di strategie/iniziative di cooperazione? Se no, perché? Se sì, può fare qualche esempio? Si tratta di iniziative che si svolgono "dentro" al contesto regionale, oppure anche fuori (a livello nazionale o transfrontaliero)? Nel caso si siano attivate strategie di coordinamento/cooperazione, chi è stato l'attivatore del processo (ANCI, sindaci leader, ecc.)? Con che risultati? Crede che queste esperienze di coordinamento/cooperazione possano funzionare anche in futuro? Cioè costituire una buona pratica che viene acquisita anche per il futuro e per diverse finalità?**

La Città deve coinvolgere i comuni circostanti per un'uniformità di trattamento all'interno del territorio. In questo è stato fondamentale il ruolo di ANCI che, fungendo da megafono delle iniziative locali efficaci, ha fornito delle linee guida per una risposta più coesa da parte dei Sindaci, che hanno mostrato forte spirito collaborativo al di là del colore politico. Si può quindi parlare di risposte coordinate sia a livello orizzontale (Comune - Comune) che a livello verticale (Comune - ANCI).

La pandemia ha quindi riaperto la discussione sulla condivisione delle pratiche, tuttavia risulta difficile pensare che possa portare, ad oggi, al complesso processo di unione di Comuni: quale Sindaco se ne prenderebbe la responsabilità? Secondo Conte, però, una città come Treviso potrebbe includere diversi Municipi corrispondenti alle località limitrofe (es. Villorba, Silea, etc), il che non solo aumenterebbe l'efficacia delle pratiche di condivisione, ma darebbe un maggior peso alla città anche sul piano internazionale.

5. **A questo proposito, cosa si aspetta in termini pratici dalla recente entrata della città di Treviso nel network europeo Eurocities? Quale sarà il ruolo della città su questo piano internazionale? Dal suo punto di vista, la pandemia ha favorito questo genere di esperienze associative transfrontaliere?**

Prima della pandemia Treviso guardava già più a Bruxelles che a Roma, perché ci sono più opportunità e risorse a disposizione di natura totalmente differente rispetto a quello che potrebbe offrire il governo italiano. Infatti, il Comune ha sin da subito messo in piedi TEN (Treviso Europa Network), con un ufficio dedicato alla progettazione che ha unito le realtà di servizio cittadino (trasporto pubblico, case di riposo, Camera di Commercio, Comune) al fine di accedere, con progetti vincenti, ai fondi europei messi a disposizione.

Inoltre, sempre all'interno del Comune il Sindaco Conte ha istituito l'Assessorato Next Generation, che tiene monitorato il tema del Recovery Fund. I Sindaci, infatti, saranno protagonisti dell'atterraggio dei fondi e della loro implementazione e anche se finora i Municipi non sono mai stati interpellati devono essere pronti ad impiegarli.

L' adesione a Eurocities è sicuramente un fattore positivo per una progettazione europea di maggior respiro, in particolare rispetto alla transizione digitale, l'ambente e il sociale.

6. **Crede che la pandemia abbia cambiato, stia cambiando, il ruolo dell'ANCI?**

La pandemia ha esaltato il ruolo dell'ANCI, che prima è stato sottovalutato. E' uno strumento che si poteva utilizzare maggiormente anche prima al fine di una più immediata e capillare comunicazione e una maggiore condivisione di buone pratiche / iniziative a tutti i livelli.

7. **Quali sono stati i conflitti più importanti che hanno caratterizzato la risposta alla pandemia: quelli tra governo nazionale e regioni? Quelli tra governo regionale e singole realtà comunali? Può fare qualche esempio?**

I Sindaci recepivano al pari dei loro cittadini le decisioni prese dall'alto. Le maggiori tensioni si sono quindi generate tra Governo e Regioni, laddove il primo voleva mettere in campo iniziative uniformi su tutto il territorio nazionale, di fronte a realtà, potenzialità e necessità differenti. Sono emerse delle lievi tensioni fra anche fra ANCI e Governo quando si parlava Ristori.

8. **Quali sono stati i principali problemi che lei, in qualità di Sindaco, ha dovuto fronteggiare durante la pandemia? Rispetto a questi problemi, eventuali conflitti di competenze hanno giocato un ruolo importante? Può fare qualche esempio?**

I problemi più grandi sono stati quelli legati alle tempistiche. I Sindaci e le amministrazioni locali si sono sostituite al Governo (es. sospensione delle tasse comunali, anche se rappresentava una misura pur sempre marginale). Il confronto si è quasi sempre fermato a livello regionale, un maggiore coinvolgimento dei Sindaci avrebbe sicuramente dato un contributo notevole basato sulle esperienze e le esigenze dirette dei cittadini.
I Sindaci non avevano strumenti per controllare implementazione di eventuali misure restrittive per cui lo Stato decideva sul lockdown e il relativo controllo ("lo Stato chiude, lo Stato controlla").

9. **Oltre che di conflitti, ritiene si possa parlare anche di coordinamento fra i diversi livelli di governo (es. interventi generali da parte del governo centrale e adattamenti alle specifiche esigenze territoriali da parte di Regioni ed enti locali)? In particolare, nel caso della Regione Veneto, ritiene che la promulgazione di ordinanze e DPCM abbia favorito o danneggiato città ed enti locali? Può fornirci qualche esempio?**

Il fatto che lo Stato intervenisse in modo uniforme a livello nazionale non ha aiutato: quando sono stati stanziati dei fondi pari 480.000 euro vincolati a buoni spesa, il Conte ha chiesto venisse rimosso il vincolo perché le caratteristiche di destinazione

dei fondi sarebbero state sicuramente utili / efficaci in certe zone del paese (es. Sicilia) e non in altre. Infatti, a Treviso, grazie anche all'azione della Protezione Civile, c'è stato maggiore bisogno di aiuti alle famiglie in termini di affitto / bollette che di buoni spesa.

A livello regionale, invece, c'è stato maggiore confronto con i Sindaci, ma a questo livello le esigenze territoriali sono più uniformi.

10. Come Sindaco si è sentito più sostenuto dall'azione degli altri livelli di governo? O più "lasciato solo in prima linea" ad affrontare i problemi? Può fare qualche esempio?

I Sindaci non sono stati molto coinvolti nella fase decisionale, che si fermava sempre a livello regionale, una maggiore partecipazione avrebbe giovato per elementi di sensibilità e praticità che possono mettere sul tavolo grazie alla loro esperienza, ma d'altro canto a volte c'era necessità di decidere nell'immediato senza quindi poter sentire tutte le parti.

11. A dicembre 2020 la Regione Veneto e la provincia di Treviso risultavano fra le più colpite dalla pandemia. Entrambe sono intervenute con misure parziali volte ad arginare gli assembramenti (chiusura dei centri commerciali nei weekend; controllo dei flussi nelle principali vie cittadine, i.e. Calmaggiore). Con il senno di poi ritiene che si sarebbe potuto intervenire più efficacemente? Se sì, in che modo?

Il Sindaco Conte si ritiene tutto sommato soddisfatto di quanto è stato deciso e fatto. Si tratta comunque di decisioni impopolari, che si contendono fra i diversi livelli di governo e che nessuno vuole prendere. Resta comunque convinto che sia stato fatto il massimo da parti di tutti, con le tempistiche giuste.

12. L'ANCI da subito sottolineò la centralità della rete dei Comuni affinché venisse coinvolta per cogliere il duplice obiettivo della tempestività e della capillarità nella campagna vaccinale. A qualche mese dal suo inizio, quale crede sia stato il contributo e il limite dell'azione dei Comuni?

Nessun limite da parte dei Comuni, ma molti contributi. Proprio in occasione della campagna vaccinale, quando la Regione ha chiesto la disponibilità di spazi c'è stata una risposta "di squadra" importante. Nel giro di poco tempo sono stati messi a disposizione volontari, spazi, sanificazioni. Il Presidente di Regione Luca Zaia ha sin da subito riconosciuto il contributo delle singole amministrazioni locali.

13. **Treviso è stato uno dei primi Comuni in Italia ad attivare un servizio gratuito di taxi, mettendo in sicurezza gli spostamenti dei soggetti fragili e sostenendo la categoria dei tassisti. Per quale motivo non è stato applicato un modello simile per quanto**

riguarda i trasporti pubblici più in generale? In particolare, si era parlato, a ridosso della riapertura delle scuole, del coinvolgimento di mezzi non di linea, fermi in rimessa, al fine di aumentare il numero di corse negli orari di punta e diminuire l'affollamento a bordo.

Dal Governo sono arrivati 186.000 euro di fondi da destinare alla categoria dei tassisti, e il Comune di Treviso ha attivato un prezioso servizio che permettesse, da una parte, agli anziani di recarsi alle visite mediche o raggiungere il centro vaccini in sicurezza e, dall'altra parte, di sostenere una fra le categorie maggiormente colpite dalla pandemia. Il Sindaco non sa bene perché questa "buona pratica" non sia stata simulata anche dagli altri comuni veneti.
Tuttavia sarebbe stato difficile mettere in piedi un servizio simile per gli studenti, per una questione di numeri e risorse.

14. **Crede che una diversa gestione dei trasporti avrebbe permesso di decidere diversamente sulla chiusura delle scuole, in particolare degli Istituti Superiori di Secondo grado, che ad oggi mantengono comunque una percentuale di studenti in DAD?**

Per quanto riguarda la Scuola le linee guida dal Governo non arrivavano mai. Inoltre, la Scuola è stata forse il mondo il più rigido rispetto alla riorganizzazione (es. non si sono scostati dagli orari e dalle giornate che avevano – niente ingressi scaglionati, etc), complice anche il ruolo dei Sindacati.

15. **La scorsa estate si è discusso del focolaio scoppiato presso il centro di accoglienza dell'Ex Caserma Serena, dove si sono verificati numerosi casi positività. Come vengono garantite le norme di sicurezza anti Covid in un contesto di vita comunitaria e assidua promiscuità di spazi? Come sono distribuite le competenze sulla questione? Ritiene che vi siano sovrapposizioni o conflitti di competenza in merito a situazioni che evidenziano profili di emergenza?**

La competenza all'interno dei centri di accoglienza è ministeriale, il Comune non può nemmeno accedervi. Comunque in una situazione di promiscuità del genere la prima responsabilità ricade sul singolo individuo. In seguito a quell'episodio, il Sindaco è venuto a sapere che i ragazzi all'interno della caserma non rispettavano le norme anti Covid.

16. **Lei ritiene che le città abbiano risposto alla pandemia innovando il proprio modo di funzionare, cioè facendo cose nuove oppure facendo le stesse cose in modo diverso? Se sì, può fare qualche esempio? Ritiene che queste forme di innovazione nell'erogazione di servizi costituiscano qualcosa che resterà nel modo in cui i Comuni operano?**

In primis, c'è stata un'accelerazione rispetto alla transizione digitale, dove il Covid ha aperto la strada a un sacco di opportunità che non si esauriscono necessariamente nel breve termine ma sono volte piuttosto al futuro. Inoltre, sono cambiate le progettualità (es. plessi scolastici ed edifici pubblici digitalizzati).

I soldi che arrivano in questo momento vanno investiti su progetti a lungo termine, andando oltre alla contingenza del momento per un più efficiente utilizzo delle risorse. In poche parole, non sprecare i fondi e avere sempre una prospettiva a lungo termine.

17. **Secondo lei, a livello di Comuni veneti, le risposte date alla pandemia – in termini sanitari, socio-economici e di gestione dell'ordine pubblico – hanno risentito del colore politico delle diverse amministrazioni? Oppure, dato che tutti i sindaci erano in prima linea nell'affrontare i problemi dei cittadini, ha vinto il pragmatismo?**

Zero. Da Sindaco di Treviso Presidente ANCI, Conte ha sempre detto che la politica sarebbe restata fuori dal tavolo delle discussioni, luogo in cui si deve parlare dei problemi della comunità; solo così si riesce a dare risposte alla cittadinanza. Per cui ha sicuramente vinto il pragmatismo. Il messaggio importante che i sindaci stanno cercando di passare in questo momento è il seguente: laddove si mette al centro dell'agenda politica la comunità (i cittadini), non c'è divisione politica. In altre parole, i Sindaci avrebbero gestito meglio l'emergenza, perché non hanno tempo per i teatrini della politica (scaricare le responsabilità, etc).

18. **Ritiene che le competenze e le risorse a disposizione delle città fossero sufficienti ad affrontare l'emergenza sanitaria in prima linea? Qual è stato il principale partner (non necessariamente istituzionale) a sostegno dei Comuni?**

La Stato ha grosse difficoltà finanziarie (non ha soldi per ristorare, e lo si è visto con la strategia delle "aperture tattiche"), per cui bisogna trovare alternative: se lo Stato non ha risorse bisogna trovare chi le può fornire.

Per quanto riguarda il sociale, il Sindaco, all'interno del Comune, ha cercato di trovare soluzioni maggiormente sartoriali rifacendosi al Fattore Famiglia (uscendo dalle fasce ISEE), in modo da tenere in considerazione ulteriori fattori (più dettagliati), per una più efficiente gestione delle risorse e un più efficace aiuto ai cittadini. Maggiore flessibilità e sartorialità significa maggiore efficacia.

Il principale partner quando non ci sono risorse è sempre il Terzo Settore.

19. **Nel rispondere ai problemi posti dalla pandemia, che ruolo hanno giocato associazioni di categoria o imprese sociali e del terzo settore?**

I Sindaci portano avanti proposte attuabili e sostenibili, ponderate grazie agli studi fatti dall'organico dell'amministrazione (a differenza di altre categorie che guardano solo ai propri interessi, sottoponendo problemi piuttosto che soluzioni).

Per quanto riguarda il Recovery Plan, al momento i Comuni, soprattutto i più piccoli, non hanno le competenze per far atterrare i fondi attesi. Per questo, il Sindaco proponeva di creare tramite l'ANCI uno strumento a disposizione dei Comuni, una sorta canale di Agenzia di servizio – supporto alla progettazione e canale di recezione dei fondi – per la realizzazione di grandi opere trans comunali.

20. **In conclusione, come Sindaco, potendo indicare solo alcune priorità (le cose più importanti, non potendo chiedere tutto), cosa chiederebbe al governo regionale, a quello nazionale e all'Europa, in base all'esperienza fatta? E come presidente ANCI?**

Al governo: Andiamo verso le *smartcities* ma i dipendenti del Municipio e dei Ministeri sono *smart*? C'è bisogno di investire su processi di digitalizzazione di edifici e procedure il possibile, perché solo snellendo la burocrazia si riescono a cogliere le opportunità del momento. Lavorare e investire sulle competenze, adeguare strutture alle esigenze del presente e del futuro (più in generale sarebbe necessaria una riforma degli enti locali).

Alla regione: Cambiare l'agenda, ponendosi nuovi obiettivi politici. Ad esempio, conformarsi alle linee guida green e digitali per una progettazione più sostenibile. Per il resto continuare a sostenere l'alleanza (Comuni - Regione) che è stata rafforzata durante la pandemia.

All'Europa: in questo caso più che chiedere bisogna dare. L'Italia deve essere in grado di essere al passo, partecipando ai bandi e investendo le risorse nel modo giusto, assimilando per quanto possibile quelle che sono le *best practices* in Europa, che in molti settori è più avanti rispetto a noi. Per cui risulta necessario mostrare apertura e flessibilità, e puntare sui giovani.

VENEZIA

Trascrizione intervista ad Andrea Tomaello, Vicesindaco di Venezia, responsabile per le politiche europee e lo sport. Mestre, 21 Settembre 2021.

1. **In base alla sua esperienza, quale pensa sia stato il ruolo principale delle città e degli enti locali nella gestione della pandemia da Covid-19?**

Dal punto di vista del vicesindaco, le città hanno avuto un ruolo centrale nel corso dell'emergenza perché il cittadino tendeva a fidarsi ed affidarsi maggiormente all'amministratore locale, l'autorità a lui più vicina, soprattutto per quanto riguardava la logistica e i trasporti, le attività commerciali lavorative etc.

Ruolo importante anche dal punto di vista comunicativo: informare i cittadini, trasmettere le informazioni tempestivamente, in altre parole essere il portavoce principale per i cittadini di quello che decideva il governo (in questo senso hanno assunto anche un ruolo assicurativo).

Servizio di call center del comune "DIME" (numero verde 041041) servizio già esistente che però è stato potenziato durante la pandemia, soprattutto per la fascia d'età avanzata – residente nelle isole - che non essendo particolarmente tecnologica o 'social' si rivolgeva al servizio telefonico. In questo senso si può dire che il Comune che abbia svolto a tutti gli effetti un servizio di primo soccorso alla cittadinanza. Funzione / ruolo rappresentato anche dall'azione della Protezione Civile.

2. **Ripensando a questo ultimo anno e mezzo, potrebbe fornirci degli esempi concreti di cosa secondo lei ha funzionato (le cosiddette "*goodpratices*") e cosa no nella risposta all'emergenza sanitaria a livello comunale – e perché.**

   Fra le cose che hanno funzionato bene sicuramente c'e' l'accordo con i tassisti, l'allargamento plateatici, le agevolazioni alla cittadinanza attraverso supporto della Protezione Civile (distribuzione capillare delle mascherine, consegna della spesa a domicilio).

   Abbiamo cercato di creare e sostenere una forte rete di volontariato tra volontari e associazioni, dove il Comune ha assunto principalmente un ruolo logistico e di aggregatore. Inoltre, durante l'emergenza è stata istituita una cabina di regia, che si incontrava (e si incontra tutt'ora) due volte a settimana, tra sindaco vicesindaco e un altro assessore si decideva come gestire l'emergenza. Ora, nella fase della ripartenza si discute insieme ad altri attori della città: Veritas (rifiuti), case di riposo, rete di volontariato/ assistenza/ Protezione Civile che hanno aiutato il comune molto soprattutto nel far rispettare le limitazioni (es. accessi contingentati ai mercati). Senza il comune tutte queste funzioni non sarebbero state coordinate ed efficaci come sono state.

   Riscoperto senso di volontariato, di voler aiutare gli altri in modo trasversale, in molte città e fra molte categorie.

   Rispetto a quello che non ha funzionato, si può dire che poteva essere migliore la programmazione. Eccessiva incertezza, non si sapeva non si sanno ancora le tempistiche. Nel caso di Venezia, si può dire che anche il sistema di trasporti non abbia funzionato bene. Infatti il limite di capienza nei mezzi pubblici ha pesato molto per la città in quanto, diversamente dalle altre, a Venezia non ci sono mezzi alternativi al vaporetto e la frequenza non è la stessa dei servizi autobus. Ma situazione difficile per tutti difficile puntare il dito contro qualcuno.

   Differenza centro storico – isole nella risposta alla pandemia: poco rilevante.

3. **Ritiene che ci siano state soluzioni attuate a livello comunale particolarmente efficaci, che si possano considerare applicabili a più realtà comunali?**

Condivisione di 'buone pratiche' ha riguardato principalmente la fase della ripartenza, più che quella dell'emergenza. In questa fase, i sindaci hanno cercato di 'copiare' ciò che funzionava per rilanciare la loro città. Nel caso di Venezia, eventi come La Biennale, il G20, la sfilata di moda, la mostra del cinema… puntavano, come avvenuto in altre grandi città, a rilanciarne l'immagine e passare il messaggio che la città era viva. Tutti i comuni hanno agito in questo senso secondo le loro possibilità(es. ricorrenti fuochi d'artificio).

4. **Inoltre, ritiene che i Comuni veneti abbiano sviluppato risposte coordinate alla pandemia? O azioni frutto di strategie/iniziative di cooperazione? Se no, perché? Se sì, può fare qualche esempio? Si tratta di iniziative che si svolgono "dentro" al contesto regionale, oppure anche fuori (a livello nazionale o transfrontaliero)? Nel caso si siano attivate strategie di coordinamento/cooperazione, chi è stato l'attivatore del processo (ANCI, sindaci leader, ecc.)? Con che risultati? Crede che queste esperienze di coordinamento/cooperazione possano funzionare anche in futuro? Cioè costituire una buona pratica che viene acquisita anche per il futuro e per diverse finalità?**

In tema di cooperazione, in particolare tra città d'arte che hanno maggiormente sofferto il colpo del turismo, Brugnaro e Nardella hanno proposto al governo un **Decalogo per ripartenza del turismo**, che tuttavia si è fermato a livello di proposta. Dialogo fra sindaci e amministratori di diverse città è sempre stato presente, anche in epoca pre-pandemica. Tuttavia l'unicità di Venezia ha reso una stretta coordinazione più difficile.

5. **Sul piano internazionale, vede nuove opportunità per Venezia in questa fase di ripresa? Ci sono già dei progetti a cui la città ha deciso di partecipare? Quale sarà il ruolo della città su questo piano internazionale**

Ospitando parte degli incontri e delle attività del G20, Venezia vuole essere al centro dei dialoghi internazionali per la sua peculiarità. In particolare vuole essere capofila nei progetti di *overtourism* e sostenibilità.

6. **Quali sono stati i conflitti più importanti che hanno caratterizzato la risposta alla pandemia: quelli tra governo nazionale e regioni? Quelli tra governo regionale e singole realtà comunali? Può fare qualche esempio?**

Il governo ha trattato tutti allo stesso modo, nonostante ci siano dappertutto - ma in particolare in Italia - realtà profondamente diverse. Venezia e le isole non sono equiparabili a Milano e la circostante area metropolitana. Questo è quindi stato fonte

di conflitti fra città e governo, più in invece armonia con governo regionale. Si è creato una sorta di 'fronte comune' fra regione e comuni contro governo centrale. Lo stesso Bonaccini, PD, dello stesso colore del governo si è talvolta schierato contro in rappresentanza degli interessi delle regioni.

7. **Quali sono stati i principali problemi che lei, insieme al Sindaco, ha dovuto fronteggiare durante la pandemia? Rispetto a questi problemi, eventuali conflitti di competenze hanno giocato un ruolo importante? Può fare qualche esempio?**

Competenza: in certi casi era sufficiente, ad esempio quando lo stato aveva vietato gli assembramenti il comune di Venezia, al fine di implementare regolamentazione, ha chiuso determinate zone della città per non fare entrare la gente.

Il vicesindaco poi ha spinto per vietare la vendita di alcolici anche nei supermercati (non solo nei bar) dal venerdì alle 16 alla domenica sera (in linea con la chiusura dei bar alle 18, sempre al fine di evitare assembramenti).

Le competenze in questione tuttavia hanno avuto una funzione solo restrittiva, sono mancate invece quelle per allentare le misure del governo. Ad esempio, la voga che non è considerata come sport a tutti gli effetti - ma invece come attività storico tradizionale– è stata sospesa e quindi paradossalmente i veneziani potevano praticare altri sport individuali ma non la voga.

8. **Oltre che di conflitti, ritiene si possa parlare anche di coordinamento fra i diversi livelli di governo (es. interventi generali da parte del governo centrale e adattamenti alle specifiche esigenze territoriali da parte di Regioni ed enti locali)? In particolare, nel caso della Regione Veneto, ritiene che la promulgazione di ordinanze e DPCM abbia favorito o danneggiato città ed enti locali? Può fornirci qualche esempio?**

Il trasporto pubblico è stato danneggiato dai DPCM che trattavano città con conformazioni radicalmente diverse allo stesso modo. Venezia presenta tante realtà insulari e ridurre del 50% la capienza dei mezzi pubblici non era sostenibile, non avendo un'alternativa alla barca. Fondi stanziati dal governo, cospicui ma non sufficienti. Venezia guadagnava molto con tariffa turisti (biglietto 7.5£, contro 1.5£ dei residenti) e quindi il sistema è andato in tilt.

9. **In base alla sua esperienza, crede che la figura del Sindaco sia stata sostenuta dall'azione degli altri livelli di governo? O piuttosto "lasciata sola in prima linea" ad affrontare i problemi? Può fare qualche esempio?**

La sensazione e immagine percepita era quella dei 'sindaci in trincea'. La figura del sindaco è stata abbandonata a gestire l'emergenza. Ancor più che da soli, sono forse rimasti inascoltati dal governo centrale che ha preso poco in considerazione i territori. Lo stesso ANCI non è stato molto coinvolto, nonostante il suo importante ruolo di interlocutore col governo.

10. **Lei ritiene che le città abbiano risposto alla pandemia innovando il proprio modo di funzionare, cioè facendo cose nuove oppure facendo le stesse cose in modo diverso? Se sì, può fare qualche esempio? Ritiene che queste forme di innovazione nell'erogazione di servizi costituiscano qualcosa che resterà nel modo in cui i Comuni operano?**

Le città si stanno innovando, in particolare per quanto riguarda gli aspetti green e la mobilità sostenibile. Gli stessi spazi urbani si stanno riorganizzando attraverso una rivalorizzazione degli spazi all'aperto, come parchi, ciclabili e palestre. Cosi come per la transizione digitale, notevolmente accelerata dal covid, anche se ci vorranno ancora diversi anni prima che la macchina pubblica si snellisca.

11. **Secondo lei, a livello di Comuni veneti, le risposte date alla pandemia – in termini sanitari, socio-economici e di gestione dell'ordine pubblico – hanno risentito del colore politico delle diverse amministrazioni? Oppure, dato che tutti i Sindaci erano in prima linea nell'affrontare i problemi dei cittadini, ha vinto il pragmatismo?**

Alla fine, al di là dei colori politici, ha vinto la voglia di fare. Nel corso dell'emergenza non c'è stato un vero conflitto politico all' interno della amministrazione, forse soltanto per delle questioni secondarie (es. come organizzare il mercato) che hanno visto 'la gara' a chi voleva fare meglio. In generale si può dire che con la pandemia si è rafforzata molto la figura dell'amministratore locale/ sindaco.

12. **Ritiene che le competenze e le risorse a disposizione delle città fossero sufficienti ad affrontare l'emergenza sanitaria in prima linea? Qual è stato il principale partner (no necessariamente istituzionale) a sostegno dei Comuni?**

Per quanto riguarda i finanziamenti, sono state fondamentali le grosse donazioni da parte di attori privati (es. pacchi alimentari dei supermercati Coop e Alì). Le risorse messe a disposizione dal governo invece, tramite Ristori e cassa integrazione, hanno interessato maggiormente e direttamente il cittadino/lavoratore più che l'amministrazione, che non ha potuto anticipare risorse a determinate categorie. In modo indiretto tuttavia si è cercato di venire incontro a diverse realtà (es. associazioni sportive) non facendo pagare canoni e consumi. Inoltre, il comune di Venezia ha deciso di erogare un contributo per il pagamento della TARI alle aziende. Aumentato il debito del bilancio comunale, ma ancor di più quello nazionale.

13. **Nel rispondere ai problemi posti dalla pandemia, che ruolo hanno giocato associazioni di categoria o imprese sociali e del terzo settore?**

Il terzo settore, come detto in apertura e più volte ripreso nel discorso, ha avuto un ruolo centrale. La Protezione Civile è stata il braccio destro dell'amministrazione nel mettere in pratica le direttive del governo.

14. **In conclusione, potendo indicare solo alcune priorità (le cose più importanti, non potendo chiedere tutto), cosa chiederebbe al governo regionale, a quello nazionale e all'Europa, in base all'esperienza fatta?**

<u>Al governo nazionale</u>: migliore match fra domanda-offerta nel mercato del lavoro: chiederebbe al governo misure certe per quanto riguarda la specializzazione della formazione dei giovani, la pandemia ha portato la gente a cambiare lavoro o addirittura inventarsene di nuovi.

<u>Al governo regionale</u>: attenzione particolare verso Venezia, che è diversa dalle altre province, e la sua area metropolitana in particolare per quanto riguarda il sistema di trasporti.

<u>All'Europa</u>: attenzione e regolamentazione del turismo sostenibile e della mobilità. La pandemia ha messo in luce, fra le altre cose, la fragilità delle città che vivono di turismo (vedi decalogo Firenze-Venezia), problemi condivisi anche da altre città europee come Amsterdam. È necessario preservare un equilibrio fra quello che è il visitare e quello che è il vivere la città.

MILANO

Trascrizione intervista telefonica a Pietro Bussolati, Consigliere Regione Lombardia, 14 settembre 2021.

1. **In base alla sua esperienza e dal suo punto di vista, quale pensa sia stato il ruolo principale delle città e degli enti locali nella gestione della pandemia da Covid-19? Soprattutto rispetto agli altri livelli di governo.**

Il ruolo principale della città è stato quello di fornire un aiuto di prima necessità, come reperire materiale di protezione (*i.e.* mascherine) prima ancora della Regione, dispiegare forze dell' ordine (polizia locale), ed investire in breve tempo risorse comunali in comunicazione. Un'efficiente comunicazione è stata soprattutto cruciale per spiegare ai cittadini cosa stesse accedendo in termini di evoluzione della

pandemia e di misure prese (i.e. camionette con alto parlanti, canali social, sito del comune).

Il ruolo centrale dei Sindaci è stato inevitabile, avendo un diretto contatto con la cittadinanza, molto più della regione, ed essendo sottoposti al 'controllo civico'.

2. **Ripensando a questo ultimo anno e mezzo, potrebbe fornirci degli esempi concreti di cosa secondo lei ha funzionato (le cosiddette "*goodpractices*") e cosa no nella risposta all'emergenza sanitaria a livello comunale e regionale – e perché.**

A livello globale, fra le 'good practices' ci sono stati innanzitutto gli strumenti di diagnostica e assistenza domiciliare / presidi territoriali, quando presenti. Rispetto all'organizzazione della Sanità, gli aspetti che hanno funzionato sono quelli legati all'assistenza domiciliare e più in generale alla medicina territoriale, oltre che alla disponibilità di strumenti di diagnostica.

Quello che invece non ha funzionato riguarda la struttura della sanità stessa (troppo ospedalocentrica, e troppo poco territoriale – pochi ambulatori, case della salute – e poche strutture pubbliche, rispetto alle tante private (75% dovrebbe essere soglia minima dell'offerta pubblica, che garantisce servizi di emergenza più facilmente attivabili da parte di un unico decisore pubblico). Infatti, in Lombardia dove è presente un' alta concentrazione di strutture private si è incappati in lunghe procedure d'accordo fra privati, rispetto a quanto avvenuto in Veneto ed Emilia Romagna. Inoltre, non ha funzionato l'azione diagnostica che è stata quasi del tutto assente in Lombardia cosi come mancata attivazione dei servizi di emergenza tempestiva (pubblici- non privati).

La pandemia ha messo in evidenza che le regioni fanno fatica a comunicare ed integrarsi. In un discorso più ampio questo porterebbe il contesto giusto per rivedere il titolo V della Costituzione.

Ad esempio, l' 80% del bilancio della regione Lombardia (e in generale per tutte le regioni) è destinato alla sanità, tuttavia i malati di Brescia sono stati più facilmente spostati in Austria piuttosto che in Veneto. E' da rivedere rapporto Stato – Regioni in termini tecnici, senza abbandonare la divisione regionale/impianto federalista per la loro efficienza, che garantisce di avvicinare le risorse al territorio.

3. **Ritiene che ci siano state soluzioni attuate a livello comunale particolarmente efficaci, che si possono considerare applicabili a più realtà comunali?**

Le riposte messe in piedi dai comuni sono state organizzate in modo sparso. Per esempio, a Milano c'è stato una cooperazione fra il comune e la micro impresa territoriale, che insieme hanno sviluppato un' iniziativa per sanificare le strade, che però non è stata emulata perché magari non è stato ritenuto importante e utile da altri sindaci. Spesa inutile. Diversamene è andata invece con la questione dell' apertura dei dehors di bar e ristoranti, pratica replicata in più città.

Il Sindaco Sala ci tiene molto alla relazione con altre città internazionali, c'è addirittura un ufficio specifico. Ospiterà la pre-Cop 26 a Milano prima delle elezioni. Milano: ruolo crescente all'interno dei network internazionali, nell'ottica di sviluppo delle città, già da prima della pandemia. Ora quelle reti di città hanno assunto funzione di canale dove condividere le 'best practices'.

4. **Inoltre, ritiene che i Comuni lombardi abbiano sviluppato risposte coordinate alla pandemia? O azioni frutto di strategie/iniziative di cooperazione? Se no, perché? Se sì, può fare qualche esempio? Si tratta di iniziative che si svolgono "dentro" al contesto regionale, oppure anche fuori (a livello nazionale o transfrontaliero)? Nel caso si siano attivate strategie di coordinamento/cooperazione, chi è stato l'attivatore del processo (ANCI, sindaci leader, ecc.)? Con che risultati? Crede che queste esperienze di coordinamento/cooperazione possano funzionare anche in futuro? Cioè costituire una buona pratica che viene acquisita anche per il futuro e per diverse finalità?**

Non credo si possa parlare di grandi forme di coordinamento, se sì, in modo molto parziale. Il dibattito fra i sindaci è stato più che altro di difesa territoriale. Infatti, dopo la prima ondata che ha paralizzato tutti, con l'inizio delle prime riaperture, i sindaci dei comuni meno colpiti hanno sempre fatto polemica sull'esigenza di lasciare più liberi i cittadini rispetto a quelli delle città più colpite. Ad esempio le città di Bergamo e Brescia verso Milano che, mostrando situazione migliore nelle successive ondate, rivendicavano maggiore libertà nonostante la prossimità delle località prive peraltro di confini naturali. Forse perche non esiste il "popolo lombardo" e si sentono forti divisioni. L'ANCI non ha avuto un grande ruolo in tutto ciò…

5. **Sul piano internazionale, vede nuove opportunità per Milano in questa fase di ripresa? Ci sono già dei progetti a cui la città ha deciso di partecipare? Quale sarà il ruolo della città su questo piano internazionale?**

La città di Milano tiene molto alla relazione con altre città internazionali, ed ha istituito addirittura un ufficio specifico. A breve, prima delle elezioni dal 30 settembre al 2 ottobre, Milano ospiterà la pre-COP 26, un segnale del ruolo crescentedella città all'internodei network internazionali nell'ottica di sviluppo delle città, già da prima della pandemia. Ora quelle reti di città hanno assunto funzione di canale dove condividere le cosiddette ' best practices'. Inoltre, molto di questo ruolo dipende dal campionato in cui la città vuole giocare: se Milano vuole entrare a far parte del campionato di Londra e Parigi, non può giocare anche con Brescia e Bergamo, etc (per Sala la partita è chiara).

6. **Quali sono stati i conflitti più importanti che hanno caratterizzato la risposta alla pandemia: quelli tra governo nazionale e regioni? Quelli tra governo regionale e singole realtà comunali? Può fare qualche esempio?**

    Sul tema della pandemia c'è stato un maggiore conflitto fra Regione – Governo (ad esempio, anche sulla procura e diffusione di dispositivi di protezione, tamponi, etc – attività organizzate dalla regione, anche se era competenza dello Stato). Per quanto riguarda gli aspetti piu' concreti di gestione della pandemiac'è stata forte tensione con la Regione da parte delle città lombarde, in termini di disponibilità di strumenti diagnostica, presidi territoriali diffusi, etc. I Sindaci, però, sapendo di non avere competenze in materia, puntavano ad ottenere una cabina di regia ad hoc, che coinvolgesse anche loro nelle decisioni regionali. Restarono inascoltati.
    Più che rivendicare le loro competenze, i Sindaci ammonivano che se in Regione non li avessero ascoltati e non avessero tenuto di conto la 'prospettiva urbana', avrebbero continuato a 'sbagliare'. Certamente in ambito mediatico è stato molto più presente il conflitto tra Regioni-Governo.
    L'unica forma di coordinamento è stata rappresentata dalle varie Cabine di regia, che però lasciarono spazio limitato alla voce dei sindaci (in riferimento alla Regione).

7. **Lei ritiene che le città abbiano risposto alla pandemia innovando il proprio modo di funzionare, cioè facendo cose nuove oppure facendo le stesse cose in modo diverso? Se sì, può fare qualche esempio? Ritiene che queste forme di innovazione nell'erogazione di servizi costituiscano qualcosa che resterà nel modo in cui i Comuni operano?**

    Le città hanno dato maggiore rilevanza alle tempistiche, ovviamente dettate da necessità, percio' hanno accelerato il modo in cui facevano le cose. Inoltre, l'innovazione ha riguardato anche il ruolo del Sindaco, solo che in questo momento comunque non ha risorse né competenze per fare quello che è stato fatto durante la pandemia.
    C'e tuttavia un problema sottostante: le grosse differenze in termini di confini, territorio, densità abitativa etc, che differiscono da città a città e non rendono i sindaci tutti uguali. (i.e. Sindaci di una città metropolitana vs Sindaci di un piccolo comune).
    I Sindaci dovrebbero gestire a livello municipale la medicina territoriale (presidi sanitari, poliambulatori, case della salute, etc) a partire dalle nomine. Non si tratta solo di scelte politiche, infatti i sindaci appartengono a colori diversi, spesso divergendo dalla Regione.

8. **Secondo lei, a livello di Comuni lombardi, le risposte date alla pandemia – in termini sanitari, socio-economici e di gestione dell'ordine pubblico – hanno risentito del**

colore politico delle diverse amministrazioni? Oppure, dato che tutti i Sindaci erano in prima linea nell'affrontare i problemi dei cittadini, ha vinto il pragmatismo?

Ha vinto il pragmatismo.

9. **Ritiene che le competenze e le risorse a disposizione delle città fossero sufficienti ad affrontare l'emergenza sanitaria in prima linea? Qual è stato il principale partner (non necessariamente istituzionale) a sostegno dei Comuni?**

In realtà, paradossalmente, la città si è trovata con un'improvvisa maggiore disponibilità di risorse: fondi, aiuti, donazioni da parte di privati. Invece, sul piano delle competenze si sono verificati più problemi.
Il partner principale per la città di Milano è stata la Fondazione Cariplo, che ha fornito grande sostegno a comuni e regione – in modo trasversale.

10. **Nel rispondere ai problemi posti dalla pandemia, che ruolo hanno giocato associazioni di categoria o imprese sociali e del terzo settore?**

Associazioni e terzo settore, fortemente presente in Lombardia.

11. **In conclusione, potendo indicare solo alcune priorità (le cose più importanti, non potendo chiedere tutto), cosa chiederebbe al governo regionale, a quello nazionale e all'Europa, in base all'esperienza fatta?**

In ordine:
Al governo: Revisione del Titolo V della Costituzione, ovvero determinare il dominio di competenze fra Stato - Regioni, insieme alla revisione (e riforma) completa dell' organizzazione degli enti locali in generale. In particolare, urge una definizione di città metropolitane più definita e categorizzata, dando loro una vera e propria investitura politica in favore ad altri livelli (i.e. province, comuni). Cos'è un sindaco? Il Sindaco lo è di un'area vasta, più che di un comune di 5000 abitanti. Bisognerebbe fare un distinguo (a governo nazionale).
Alla regione: Riforma della sanità in termini di maggiore sviluppo della medicina territoriale, come detto prima, etc. (a governo nazionale e regionale).
All'Europa:Sperimentare maggiori competenze dei cosiddetti 'parlamentini di città' (ndr networks), per far sì che diventino qualcosa di maggior rilievo a livello istituzionale europeo.

Commenti conclusivi:

Esiste un tangibile rischio che la città esca indebolita dalla pandemia, complice anche il cosiddetto smartworking, che non rende più necessario vivere vicino all' ufficio, la presenza

di spazi affollati, etc, insomma una minore attrattiva. In parte vero, ma dall'altra parte gli indicatori dicono che tutti gli investimenti previsti dai grandi fondi su Milano sono mantenuti da qui ai prossimi 10 anni. In altre parole, gli analisti non vedono una minore attrattiva verso le città nei prossimi anni. Anche perché, in fondo, la competitività tra le città si basa sui progetti di vita che ti può offrire e che uno può pianificare. Insomma si tratta di opportunità di vita più che di prossimità col luogo di lavoro, etc.

Smart city: rappresenta sempre più la città del futuro, oltre che ad una svolta più sostenibile, e ovviamente digitale. Tuttavia non è l'unico metro per misurre il successo città. Fra i fattori maggiormente determinanti ci sono l'inclusione sociale, le infrastrutture (offerta di scuole di ogni ordine e grado accessibili e sostenibili), trasporti, vivibilità e spazi verdi.

Conclusion

New major worldwide threats, such as the looming consequences of climate change, mass migration and food crises triggered by the Russian invasion of Ukraine represent, just as the case of the Covid-19 pandemics that we have analysed in this essay, a stress test to the ever increasing interconnectedness of the current international architecture, which, as largely claimed, finds its fundamental actors in cities. In fact, notwithstanding more or less timid trends towards a recentralisation of power experienced during emergency situations, cities are yet increasingly acting as fundamental actors on the ground. Traditional powers once exclusively held by nation states are progressively being pressured from above and, most interestingly, from below. At a time when "power is devolving to the places and people who are closest to the ground and oriented towards collaborative action" (Katz, 2013; p. 5), cities take control of their destinies which, as Parag Khanna would probably put it, are inevitably interconnected. International linkages are the lifeblood of global cities and the backbone of growing cross-border flows of capital, labour, and commodities.

The disruption brought about by the pandemics enabled us to zoom more into urban dynamics to understand their functioning and main peculiarities. If we had to share some 'lessons learnt' during this 90-something-page-long journey, we could definitely underline four points characterising cities and the urban dimension of this multi-level and multi-actor governance.

First, cities are strong economic engines. They are able to position themselves internationally as gravity centres in terms of financial capital, attraction of talents, labour mobility, innovation spill-overs, through which they are embedded into global economic networks.

Second, cities can innovate locally. In terms of urban governance, as shown for instance from the pandemic experience, cities have the capacity, the power and the strategy to implement new innovative bottom-up actions. Since evidence confirmed that global problems are being dealt with at a local level, the Covid-19 crisis represents a chance for urban planners and city leaders to take transformative actions in the urban governance landscape.

Third, cities can develop and nurture global networks. Aware of their needs and global strategic influence which, cities can engage in different networked systems, which enable them to expand their authority beyond the city itself and exert their leadership over the new functional-political geography of the network.

And finally, cities represent some independent democratic microcosms in themselves. Engaging the citizenship in participatory practices, they gain trust in terms of legitimacy, representation and direct accountability to the electorate.

So, to conclude, the question is now back to you: have cities fixed the Political Trilemma of the World Economy?

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