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**Macro-regional dynamics in the Mediterranean area(s):  
The case of the Adriatic Ionian Macro-region**

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## Introduction

In the EU macro-regions represent new geopolitical scales, where territories and institutions are linked together to respond to common transnational challenges and opportunities that require collective action (*functional approach*), according to an integrated approach in terms of actors, policies and funding (*added value*). EU macro-regions entail the strengthening and the coordination of political actions, and consequently of cooperation between different actors at different levels.

Macro-regional strategies have been defined as a new multilevel governance instrument (Carsten S., Peer K., 2009), in which diverse visions and interests interact with effects inside the European Union, between Member States, regions and cities belonging to the same spatial scale, and also outside the EU, with accession and neighboring countries.

Since the launch of the first macro-region in the Baltic in 2009, many other cross-border and transnational areas have expressed their interest in establishing a macro-region. The macro-regional vague have invested also the Mediterranean area, where a sub-regional approach has prevailed with the establishment of an Adriatic-Ionian macro-region by 2014, while a debate is still on-going on the possibility to set up a Western Mediterranean macro-region.

The paper will aim to analyse the process behind the establishment of Adriatic-Ionian macro-region identifying, in the first part, the peculiarities in terms of drivers, policy areas and institutional actors involved; while in the second part, the newly established macro-region will be identified and discussed. Finally, conclusion will be drawn.

## **Towards a Macro-regional strategy in the Adriatic-Ionian areas**

The analysis of macro-regional dynamics in the Adriatic-Ionian area should start by taking into consideration the traditional cooperation dynamics in the area.

The Adriatic Ionian represents an area of long-standing cooperation dynamics at transnational level, involving the European and South-eastern countries. Many of these cooperation ties have been bottom-up driven (Ianni V., 2004). In the case of Italy, for example, during the conflicts of the early '90s - and especially the one that led to the disruption of former Yugoslavia - civil society organizations followed by regional and local authorities have been the *initiator* of cooperation dynamics in the area (Coletti R., Cugusi B., Piccarozzi M., 2007). Since then, the initial focus on humanitarian and reconstruction kind of activities have given way to more mature cooperation initiatives that have progressively covered different sectors (ex. in the economic, cultural, institutional cooperation fields). The strengthening of the cooperation with the area has been followed by a proliferation of networks at local and regional level across the Adriatic sea, such as for example: the Association Forum of Adriatic and Ionian Cities and Towns; the Forum of the Adriatic and Ionian Chambers of Commerce<sup>2</sup>; the Uni-Adriatic network of universities<sup>3</sup>; the Adriatic Euro-region<sup>4</sup> set up in 2006 to strengthened cross-border and transnational cooperation in the area. Since the 90s, cooperative dynamics in the area have been increasingly linked to the EU integration process, offering a policy framework and funding opportunities for cooperation. Nowadays, as consequence of the decreasing of public funds, the role of EU funding represents undoubtedly the main window of opportunity for the cooperation in the area at all levels.

All the links and networks existing at local and regional levels across the Adriatic sea have been coupled by the establishment of cooperation fora and initiative involving the governments of the area. Among them the Adriatic and Ionian Initiative (IAI)<sup>5</sup> is a relevant example. Launched, under the Italian initiative, at the Summit on Development and Security on the Adriatic and Ionian Seas (Ancona, 19th/20th May 2000), the IAI is an intergovernmental initiative involving eight Members( Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia) with the aim of strengthening regional cooperation to promote political and economic stability, thus creating a solid base for the process of European integration.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.forumaic.org/home.php?strLang=en>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.uniadriatic.net/>

<sup>4</sup> [http://adriaticeuroregion.info/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=68&Itemid=53&lang=it](http://adriaticeuroregion.info/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=68&Itemid=53&lang=it)

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.aai-ps.org/index.php/about-the-aai>

### *The importance of being multilevel*

In December 2012, the European Council has given the mandate to the European Commission in order to present “a new EU Strategy for the Adriatic Ionian Region before the end of 2014. The main driver behind this important results has been a strong coalition between the Member States bordering the Adriatic sea reinforced by the entrepreneurship and pro-activeness of Italian Adriatic regions.

In the aftermath of the launch of the Baltic macro-region, the Adriatic Ionian Council adopted on May 2010, a first declaration endorsing the proposal for a macro-regional strategy for the Adriatic-Ionian area and called on its members countries in the EU (Italy, Greece and Slovenia) to work for its adoption by the Community institutions. Since then, the Italian central government, in strict collaboration with the Slovenian and Greek ones, has taken the leadership of the process. The role of the Member States bordering the Adriatic sea has been crucial to create a consensus at EU level. Several meetings have been organised during 2010 and 2011 with representatives of the European Commission. This diplomatic effort has had its first success with the declaration of the European Council, which in June 2011 recommended to continue working “in cooperation with the Commission on possible future macro-regional strategies, in particular as regards the Adriatic and Ionian region” (European Council, 2011, p. 14).

The support of the Italian government to the creation of a Macro-region in the Adriatic-Ionian area has been reiterated also after the radical political change occurred in the autumn 2011, following the crisis which invested the Berlusconi government and which led to the setting up of a technical government guided by Mario Monti. As stated by the current Italian Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs Marta Dassù (October 2012)<sup>6</sup>, and confirmed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs (November 2012), “The Italian government is heavily committed to pursuing the goal of creating an Adriatic-Ionian macro-region, and Italy is seeking to obtain a European Council and Commission mandate in December 2012”<sup>7</sup>. The newly established Italian government has begun to be particularly active since the second half of 2012, when the negotiation for the EU budget for the 2014-2020 has entered in a new phase. The moment is crucial and this opportunity was to be seized before the regulations governing the different European funds are approved and before the programming (and the planning) process begins.

Italian regional authorities have been an integral part of the multilevel coalition and key actors in the process of creating a Macro-region in the Adriatic-Ionian area. Among them, the Marche region

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<sup>6</sup>[http://www.esteri.it/MAE/EN/Sala Stampa/ArchivioNotizie/Approfondimenti/2012/10/20121011\\_Macroregione.htm](http://www.esteri.it/MAE/EN/Sala Stampa/ArchivioNotizie/Approfondimenti/2012/10/20121011_Macroregione.htm)

<sup>7</sup><http://www.ansamed.info/ansamed/en/news/nations/italy/2012/11/19/EU-Terzi-macro-Adriatic-Ionian-region-mandate-vital-7820798.html>

- which hosts and supports the secretariat of the Adriatic-Ionian Initiative - has played a leading role in building consensus around the initiative. From the beginning, the Region of Marche has joined the efforts of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs working on several initiatives to spread the idea of the Macro-region using its own channels. At EU level, the President of the Marche Region prepared an opinion on “Territorial cooperation in the Mediterranean Basin through the Ionian Adriatic Macro-region” (Committee of the Regions, 2011), approved by the Committee of the Regions. At regional level, the Region has developed an animated activities towards key local stakeholders (chambers of commerce, local authorities, etc.), while at interregional level, it has involved the other Italian Ionian-Adriatic Regions in spreading the idea and disseminating the knowledge of the macro-region within their territories (Coletti R., 2011). More recently (January 2013), the decision of the Committee of the regions to nominate Mr Spacca, President of the Marche Region, head of the Adriatic-Ionian intergroup, represents an important recognition of the role of leading of this region in the process of establishment of the macro-region in the area<sup>8</sup>.

### ***A macro-region to be built around the Adriatic Sea***

The priority areas of the future Adriatic-Ionian Macro-region have not been officially identified yet, but some indications have already been given in the reports and official declarations of political representatives at different levels. The first reference document, the report of the Committee of the region has specified that the mission of a macro-region in this area will be to connect the territories “to foster its sustainable development while protecting the fragile maritime and coastal environment” (Committee of the Regions, 2011, p. 6).

The macro-region will be created around its “natural axis”: the Sea. This approach has been confirmed by the subsequent declarations of EU representatives. Accordingly with the indications given by the COR report, Maria Damanaki and Janez Potočnik – respectively the EU commissioner for maritime affairs and fisheries and for the Environment – have been the most active in backing their support to the Adriatic-Ionian macro-region. In particular, the Environment Commissioner in a message (May, 2011) to the ministers recognised that "cooperation will be essential for identifying and addressing the specific challenges for the marine environment in the Adriatic and Ionian Seas and implementing successfully the ecosystem-based approach to the management of human activities"<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> Bonucci Marco, 2013, Spacca a Capo Intergruppo Comitato delle Regioni, EURACTIV, 31 January

<sup>9</sup> <http://cor.europa.eu/en/news/highlights/Pages/fb8dc77a-0955-461d-8996-cab4336cf875.aspx>

So, the recently adopted marine strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Seas, launched jointly by Croatia and the Commission on the 6<sup>th</sup> of December 2012, represents a first concrete step towards the definition of the macro-regional strategy for the area.

The Marine strategy for Adriatic and Ionian Seas – the first initiative of this kind in the Mediterranean sea basin – identifies refers, in particular, to the following priority areas: Stimulating the creation of maritime clusters and research networks; Increasing skills and mobility of the workforces; developing an integrated, demand-based, low-carbon maritime transportation network across the region; Supporting the sustainable development of coastal and maritime tourism; Creating new jobs and business opportunities in aquaculture through research and innovation; Reducing marine litter and improving waste management in coastal areas; Modernizing fishing activities (European Commission, 2012).

At regional level, the attention has also been turned towards important infrastructural projects. In particular, Mr Spacca, President of the Marche region, in one of his speech<sup>10</sup> (July 2012) made reference to the Baltic-Adriatic Corridor and in particular to the possible extension of Helsinki-Ravenna corridor till Bari. The strategic relevance of the macro-regional areas relies also on “new infrastructure projects and new energy initiatives” as stressed by the Italian undersecretary of State, who made specific reference to the Trans Adriatic Pipeline<sup>11</sup> (TAP), a natural gas pipeline project to be start in Greece, cross Albania and the Adriatic Sea and come ashore in southern Italy.

As recognized by Stocchiero, the Adriatic Ionian macro-region will be integral part of the Italian foreign policy in the area (Stocchiero, 2011. p.5). “The vision is to develop an area at the centre of strong inter connections between the Mediterranean and Central Europe, the Eastern and Western sides of Europe”. For this reason, the Adriatic Ionian macro-region would not make sense without the Balkan countries. One of the peculiar features of a macro-region in this area will consist in its strong external dimension, involving those south-eastern partners, which are about to become member of the EU (Croatia) or which are part of the pre-accession process (Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Albania). As claimed in the Ancona declaration “the Strategy, thanks to its inclusiveness and comprehensiveness, will be highly beneficial for non-EU member States as it reaffirms that their future lies in the European Union and since it will allow them to advance on the path towards EU accession through a structured framework based on the EU acquis” (Adriatic and Ionian Council, 2011).

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<sup>10</sup> [http://www.adriaeco.eu/adriatic\\_ionian\\_macroregion/20120718/3594\\_macroregione\\_e\\_infrastrutture.html](http://www.adriaeco.eu/adriatic_ionian_macroregion/20120718/3594_macroregione_e_infrastrutture.html)

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.trans-adriatic-pipeline.com/>

## **Towards the Adriatic-Ionian macro-region: *The challenges ahead***

“The Macro-regional Strategy is a new soft political institution for transnational territorial cohesion” (Stocchiero, 2011, p. 12). It implies a strong coordination of different policies and delivery mechanisms of financial instruments that apply in the macro-regional area. “The area also benefits from major European Union schemes funded from territorial cooperation programmes (Interreg IV A and Interreg IV B) and the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA)” (Committee of the Regions, 2011, p.5).

As such, macro-regional strategies face the challenge to find innovative modes to use existing resources, structures and regulations and, even more complex, to mobilize in a synergic and cooperative way all the local, regional, national and transnational stakeholders that operate around the implementation mechanisms of policies and funding. Coordination between different instruments also requires a coordination between different institutions (European, national, regional, etc). All this represents, indeed, a “*governance challenge*” (Bergtsson R., 2009).

In this respect, as stressed by the Ex post evaluation<sup>12</sup> of the Interreg III Initiative as well as by other key documents such as the Barca report<sup>13</sup>, the evidence of the implementation of EU programmes, with particular regard to the territorial cooperation ones, shows that the coordination, as well as complementarity and coherence with other programmes and funding instruments (European as well as national and regional) is a major concern when evaluating the efficacy of the programmes themselves. The fact that EU programmes respond to different, and often conflicting, regulative frameworks represents a concrete obstacle for implementing coordinating activities between community funds. How the macro-regional strategies could solve this old problem remains an open question at the moment.

In the frame of the proposed strategic and legislative package for the new Cohesion Policy 2014-2020, macro-regional strategies have been considered as an important way to deliver territorial cohesion claiming the importance for Community Strategic Framework to establish priority areas taking into account of macro-regional and sea-basin strategies. Moreover, in the draft regulations the support to macro-regional strategies (MRS) has been clearly indicated as one of the possible

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<sup>12</sup> “transnational cooperation programmes covered very large territorial spaces and were thus by nature interacting with many Structural Funds mainstream programmes (Objective 1-3)”, coordination was ensured in a “static” and “passive” way.

<sup>13</sup> “Possibilities of programmes are used inadequately. That can be found back in the fact that territorial cooperation hardly is mentioned in national mainstream programmes” (Barca Fabrizio, 2010, p.5).



funding priorities for transnational cooperation. The scope for synergies between transnational cooperation programmes and MRS has not been identified yet and it is expected to be explored more in detail in the next months, when the regulations are to be approved and the drafting of the different programmes is due to be officially launched. Having obtained the mandate to define the Macro-regional strategy at the end of 2012 has acquired a strategic relevance for the success of the initiative in order to construct “a framework of highly mutually compatible initiatives that can be included in operational programmes for the 2014-2020 period” (Committee of the Regions, 2011, p. 6) As declared by the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, "It's vital that the mandate for the Adriatic-Ionian macro-region makes it to the December EU Council, as well as for the basis of the next EU budget 2013-2020"<sup>14</sup>.

In his recent speech (19 November 2012) to the Foreign Ministers of 8 countries from the Adriatic and Ionian region, the Commissioner for Regional Policy Johannes Hahn<sup>15</sup>, while considering that a macro-region for the Adriatic and Ionian countries could bring great advantages, he stressed also that this “strategy will be demanding and so we would want to be sure that any preparations are taken with a full awareness of the commitment involved. Political will should be matched by the willingness to commit resources."

The words of the Commissioner sounds like a warning to the countries involved. Following the mandate, the multilevel coalition around the Adriatic Ionian macro-region would need to enter in a new phase: every actors would need to participate to contribute to the implementation of the strategy, planning and committing resources in a synergic and coherent way to the Macro-regional priorities action and flagships projects to be identified by the Strategy.

In a time when public resources are scarce and EU funding acquire a strategic importance for an increasing number of actors, including public institutions themselves, dedicating resources for such a strategy could become an hard job. For this reason, as emphasized by Spinaci, member of the Cabinet of the President of the Committee of the Region, “the binding together of the Adriatic regions and negotiation between each other is even more important than before. [...] The partners in the strategy should try to think as a network instead of thinking for themselves as separate regions”.

“[T]he creation of the macro-region is also a national multilevel affair” (Stocchiero, 2011, p.7). The role of the National Ministries (with particular reference to the Ministries of foreign affairs, the environment and those responsible for the cohesion policy) will be extremely important to ensure a synergic activities at national and transnational level, while keeping a

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<sup>14</sup> <http://www.ansa.it/ansamed/en/news/nations/italy/2012/11/19/EU-Terzi-macro-Adriatic-Ionian-region-mandate-vital-7820798.html>

<sup>15</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/commission\\_2010-2014/hahn/headlines/news/2012/11/20/index\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/hahn/headlines/news/2012/11/20/index_en.cfm)

link with the EU and the territorial level. The governance framework that will ensure such a cooperation has not been defined yet, even though the IAI will presumably be candidate to play a leading role in the process<sup>16</sup>.

At the same time, other shortcomings need still to be overcome. Up to now, there has been no consultation with territorial cooperation's key stakeholders, those who have to deal daily with the complicated managing procedures of such programmes, to understand how the coordination problems could be overcome. The weak consultation with territorial cooperation stakeholders has been confirmed and lamented also by the management structures of the programme Adriatic Transnational Programme<sup>17</sup>, which will presumably become one of the main operative instruments to implement the Macro-regional strategy in the next programming period. The experience of this cooperation area would be extremely important for the future macro-region also from a project level point of view. Nonetheless, at the moment no official capitalisation process has been launched to identify best practices of cooperation or to draw lessons for the next programming period, as for example, it has been undergoing in other programme areas, such as in the MED transnational programme<sup>18</sup> or the Central Europe Programme<sup>19</sup>.

Moreover, in the case of the Adriatic-Ionian macro-regional area, the coordination efforts will encompass territorial cooperation to include also EU pre-accession policies and related financial instruments (IPA). As stressed by Stocchiero, "The complexity of the coordination problem is even stronger when it also involves third countries. The success of EU macro-regional strategies depends firstly on the political will of Member States, and secondly on the political interest of third countries to take part in this project" (Stocchiero, 2011 p. 12).

Beyond operational concerns, the success of the macro-region will also depend on political interest of South-East non EU countries. So, for example, the proposal was presented at the EU summit in Sarajevo on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2010, while in 2011 the foreign ministers of the countries involved in the IAI signed the "Declaration of Bruxelles", in which they gave their support to a EU macro-regional strategy and its implementation in the Adriatic-Ionian area.

Notwithstanding, there has not been an official take up of the macro-regional strategy by the pre-accession process yet. So, for example, the Commissioner for enlargement has made any significant

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<sup>16</sup> Interview of the author with the Marco Bellardi, IAI, December 2012

<sup>17</sup> Interview of the author with a representative of the Joint Technical Secretariat of the IPA Adriatic CBC Programme, December 2012

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.programmed.eu/en/the-programme/evolution/programme-capitalisation.html>

<sup>19</sup> Central Europe Programme, 2012, Technical measures for the coordination with neighbouring transnational programmes facilitating the implementation of Macro Regional and "corridor-like" projects, Vienna, May ([http://coopterritoriale.regione.veneto.it/Central-Europe/wp-content/uploads/2008/06/20120511\\_MRS-corridors-CE2014+.pdf](http://coopterritoriale.regione.veneto.it/Central-Europe/wp-content/uploads/2008/06/20120511_MRS-corridors-CE2014+.pdf))

declarations concerning the Adriatic Ionian macro-region. Moreover, the Final declaration of the 4th Civil Society Forum for the Western Balkan<sup>20</sup> held in Zagreb on the 26-27<sup>th</sup> November 2012 made no reference to the Adriatic Ionian Macro Region.

Their involvement has taken place mainly through the participation of national representatives to high level events organised in Brussels or at intergovernmental level, especially through the Ionian-Adriatic Initiative which has represented a privileged space for discussion. But what is surprising, it is the fact that there is no debate at National level in these countries, nor document or declaration have been prepared that express the positions of these countries on the macro-regional process in the area. Just Croatia, that is about to become an EU member states, in its non-paper on “Croatia’s priorities and cooperation in the Danube region” has proposed itself as “bridge” between the Danube area and the Adriatic (Stocchiero, 2011, p.7).

### ***Facing a “Community challenge” in the Mediterranean***

The decision to establish a macro-region in the Adriatic-Ionian areas could created a “*community challenge*” in the Mediterranean, where different requests were put forward to establish a western Mediterranean macro-region, including all the regions bordering to the basin area (Spain, France, Italy, Greece, Malta, Cyprus), inside and outside the EU (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia). In this area, macro-regional dynamics have been mainly bottom-up driven, having been push forward by regional authorities bordering the Mediterranean basin. Unlike the Adriatic Ionian area, the Western Mediterranean area could not count on a strong multilevel coalition. On the contrary, the positions have been quite fragmented since the beginning, with the French regions interested in the idea of creating a macro-region, especially the PACA region, having gone so far as to propose building a bridge between the Mediterranean macro-regional and the trans-national strands of cooperation of the Territorial cooperation objective of structural funds (Chichowlaz P., 2011); Spanish Autonomous Communities (with Catalonia leading the way) and central government critical worrying that a Macro-region could compete with the existing policy framework (Union for the Mediterranean and the Barcelona Process); with the Italian regional authorities opposed to the Italian central government, more interested in concentrating the efforts pushing forward the proposal for a macro-region in the Adriatic area (Tourret J.C., Wallaert V., 2010).

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<sup>20</sup> Final declaration: <http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.events-and-activities-4th-western-balkans-civil-society-forum-fd.25301>

Having opted out for the sub-regional approach has hindered, at least for the moment, the expectations to build a Western Mediterranean region in the short term. Nonetheless, the debate is still going on and new attempts are expected. The consensus developed around the creation of a Adriatic-Ionian macro-region has reinforced the interests of the “excluded regions” and the worry to be put aside from a key policy development process and from the opportunities that it may entails in terms of funding opportunities in the future programming period.

A strong push for the renewal of the debate has also been given by the report presented by the Committee on Regional Development of the European Parliament, which asks for a “roadmap for European macro-regions” and the need for “further consultations [...] before deciding between a single macro-region or two separate macro-regions: one in the western Mediterranean, and the other in the eastern Mediterranean, which is also known as the Adriatic-Ionian macro-region” (Alfonsi Francois, 2011). The Inter-Mediterranean Commission of the Conference of Peripheral and Maritime Regions, supported by the Region of Sicily, is putting forward an “Integrated Strategy for the Mediterranean” that resembles a macro-regional strategy without specifically mentioning it. In particular, this strategy advocates a stronger link to be established between cohesion and external relations, externalising the principles of the cohesion policy in the EU policy framework towards southern Mediterranean countries (neighbourhood policy and UfM).

## Conclusion

On December 2012, the European Council has given the official mandate to the Commission to define the Strategy for the Adriatic Ionian macro-region. A strong multilevel coalition, which has involved the governments of the three European Member states (Italy, Slovenia and Greece) and the Italian Adriatic regions, has been the main driver for achieving this result. The relevance of the multilevel coalition is even more evident when compared with the experience of the Western Mediterranean area, where macro-regional dynamics have been confronted with a fragmented and conflicting positions of the regions; the lack of support of the central level and consequently of the EU level.

The official launch of the Maritime strategy for the Adriatic Ionian area, on the 6<sup>th</sup> of December, is directly linked with the macro-regional process, confirming that maritime cooperation will be at the heart of the Adriatic-Ionian macro-region.

Having obtained the mandate, the newly established macro-region will have to deal with a “governance challenge”, that is every participating country and region will have to contribute to the effective implementation of the strategy, allocating and devoting resources in a synergic and coherent way. The scarcity of resources and the increasing relevance of EU funding; the traditional difficulties to implement EU programmes, although operating in the same geographical area, in a coherent and coordinated way; the fact that a governance mode should still to have defined, make us to affirm that the “governance challenge” will represent the acid test for the multilevel coalition built around the Adriatic-Ionian Macro-region. The crisis which has recently invested the Italian technical government and which has paved the way to the governmental election to be organized at the beginning of 2013 will complicate the framework, changing again the key players at central level in one of the leading country of the process.

The official launch of the Adriatic-Ionian macro-region could risk to generate a feeling of exclusion and revamp the debate in the Western Mediterranean area, to do not lose the opportunities that the macro-regional approach may entails. What could happened in the Mediterranean is not an isolated case. The creation of macro-region has been generating tensions inside the EU. If, on the one hand, the creation of the macro-regions responds to the spatial diversity of the EU, on the other it hand, it can feed into divergent dynamics among the different areas, favouring a multi-speed Europe.

What surprises is that the macro-regional approach is an experiment, which has not given proof to be able to respond to its original mission yet. Moreover, macro-regional dynamics are not expected

to have the same effects in all areas. There has also been cases in which macro-regional discourse was used to support propagandistic claims. In the North of Italy for example, the macro-regional discourse has been instrumental to the "Lega Nord" to support its secessionist visions, by proposing the creation of a Macro-region involving three regions of the North of Italy: Lombardia, Veneto and Piemonte regions.

A capitalisation of what has been achieved so far is necessary in order to allow, on the one hand, already established macro-regions to learn from each other; and on the other, to offer the opportunity to other stakeholders to have a better idea of the opportunities, as well as of the challenges and of the costs of applying such an approach. To clarify what a macro-region is will be beneficial also for a broader audience to avoid an instrumental use of the macro-regional discourse.

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