

Peri-urban space and urban agriculture: a new challenge for metro-regions

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Peri-urban space: exploring potential

The near future of marginal peri-urban areas is becoming the dominant challenge for regional and city planning and design in global North cities and particularly in Europe.

The majority of the EU's citizens live today in and around cities and they are involved to do with the 'peri-urbanization'. Europe is a continent of towns and cities that means build-up areas but also peri-urban space. In fact, this condition drives beyond the historic dichotomy between urban and rural areas, seeing that today in the Old Continent peri-urban areas are more or less the same as urban areas, and the expected trend is for a dramatic increasing.

Peri-urban is not a new subject in planning or in economic and geographic discourses; what is new is the approach and the way to consider the role and potential of these territories, particularly in the metropolitan regions of the mature economies. These areas are not considered simply places of transition from rural to urban functions but places with their own character with important potential in term of multifunctionality.

The present issue of Territorio should help to improve the knowledge of the state of art on this topic, according to different points of view.

In his article, Gian Paolo Torricelli analyzes character, peculiarity and evolution of the urbanization trend and land use of a large cross-border region including North-West Italy and South Switzerland, being this an important part of the European metropolitan regions.

Moreover, relevant current experiences on the role of urban agriculture and the need of a sustainable food planning as a main topic of the global North cities are developed in the paper of Rositsa Ilieva. She explores three major phenomena, denoting the re-conceptualization of the relationship between food and urban planning, taking shape in the global North in recent times. They are: the recognition of food as an urban and territorial system, the reframing of cities' position as players of the system, and the emergence of new actors and institutional spaces to sustain the process of urban food system.

Roland Vidal and Chiara Santini investigate the issue of the food system long-term efficiency. The authors considered three major issues: security of supply, food product quality and ecological footprint of transport system, with attempting to show the right criteria to build a sustainable food governorship for a large city as Paris.

Il futuro delle aree marginali periurbane è la sfida più urgente per la pianificazione e la progettazione delle aree metropolitane mature. In molte regioni europee la maggior parte degli abitanti hanno a che fare giornalmente con un ambiente perturbano, che quantitativamente corrisponde più o meno a quello delle aree urbane dense. Oggi a questi territori, tradizionalmente ritenuti residuali e identificati come non più campagna e non ancora città, si riconosce una propria caratterizzazione e un potenziale di multifunzionalità. Il dossier comprende i contributi dei partecipanti all'incontro internazionale tenutosi al Politecnico di Milano nel giugno 2013, realizzato nell'ambito del Workshop «Spatial and Landscape Planning and Design in EU and Lombardy». Sono presentate esperienze sviluppate nell'UE, nell'Île de France, in Lombardia e negli Usa che mettono in evidenza le peculiarità dello spazio e del paesaggio periurbani e le potenzialità dell'agricoltura periurbana

Parole chiave: aree periurbane; regione metropolitana; multifunzionalità