



UPLIFT – Urban PoLicy Innovation to Address  
Inequality with and for Future GeneraTions

## Deliverable 2.2

# Urban report

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## Summary

This document has been prepared following the methodological guiding principle proposed in the UPLIFT Methodological Guidance and Work Plan for WP2. Its purpose is to identify, study, and analyse the different socioeconomic drivers related to the territorial inequality present in the Functional Urban Area (FUA) analysed: the *Municipality of Bologna* (other than the municipality itself)—as the core of the FUA under study-, the *Metropolitan City of Bologna* (as the periphery area of the FUA under study- , and *Emilia Romagna Region* —the regional territorial area for the FUA under study, all located in Italy.

This report is drawn on various primary and secondary sources of information that bring together data and material pertaining to the time period between 2007 and the last available year. Thus, it covers the economic and financial crisis that began in 2008, the subsequent post-crisis years of recovery, and the Covid-19 pandemic, all relevant periods for the purposes of the research.

The most relevant findings identified in the territory were the following:

- Since 2008, major structural changes have been made in the territory of Bologna. The most influential of them has been the change from the old provincial structure of the territory to what we now know as the Metropolitan City of Bologna. Beyond this, the biggest investment made in recent years has been concentrated on increasing and modernising schools, both regular and vocational, as well as training centres and their related methods, reducing school dropouts, adjusting the type of education to young people's personal expectations and interests, promoting technical schools, promoting industrial, artistic, and social careers; and the connection with the business world.
- These initiatives have arisen mainly from the metropolitan level, supported by the various municipalities of the territory, and later they have been transferred to the regional level, their sources of financing being mostly state or regional, while the monitoring of results is carried out by the internal statistics office of the Metropolitan City of Bologna.
- Regarding the three main levels of governance existing in the territory, representatives from the different levels declare being aware of the possibilities of improving this relationship through a more fluid interaction and communication with the national Italian government which should take strongly into account the opinion of regional and local administrations.
- The significant number of public-private organisations, and of those from the third sector — supporting public management and taking part in the institutional network that implements, executes, and provides feedback in the territory – is remarkable.

- Covid-19 seems to have increased labour inequalities in the FUA territory. In this regard, the social group most affected by the pandemic has been women, young people, and foreigners; while the economic sector that has suffered most has been the manufacturing industry, both fundamentally present in the design and fashion business, and the traditional services of the restaurant and bar industry.
- After a five-year period of marked improvement in regional labour market indicators (2015-2019), Covid-19 is affecting substantially in a transversal way all-age groups. Its effects in the medium and long-term, in economic and social terms, are still difficult to predict.
- The asymmetric impact that the economic downturn of 2008 had on FUA's local specific population groups such as young people, young women and single mothers, people over 45, still persists in Bologna.
- Thus, the 2012-2019 period represents years of difficult personal, educational and professional conversion for many of these collectives; conversion that in some way has been even reoriented and accelerated to new arenas as a result of the emergence of Covid-19.
- In this changing context, these groups are currently witnessing how the central government proposes a new pension reform bill for 2022, which will potentially focus on regimes of flexible retirement (e.g. making the pension compatible with a part-time job), complementary pensions, and tackling youth precariousness, taking into account life expectancy in each sector and proposing formulas to face job insecurity in young people, especially women.

Finally, on the methodological subject, nine (9) in-depth interviews were conducted with public servers (policymakers) highly familiar with the territorial process of design and formulation of public policies/strategies for social welfare at the different levels of governance in the territory: three (3) interviews were made to public officials related to policy-making processes at the competence level of the Emilia Romagna region, two (2) at the competence level of the Metropolitan City of Bologna, and four (4) at the competence level of the Municipality of Bologna, one of these being an important local NGO. Regarding the gender of the interviewees, three (3) of them were men and six (6) were women. The interviews were conducted from May to December 2021. During this process, the research team experienced serious difficulties and limitations in arranging and conducting the interviews and local research mainly due to COVID-19.

Additionally, thirty-four (34) reports and documents —prepared by competent and specialised agencies in the territory- on Education, Employment, Housing and Other Dimensions (Social Protection, Youth, and Migration) were compiled, studied, and analysed. The desk research was conducted from April to December of 2021.

# 1 General description of Bologna Functional Urban Area

The subnational territorial organisation in Italy is broken down into a three-tier system comprising of the region, the province, and the municipality. The constitutional reform adopted in April 2016 included the removal of provinces as self-governing entities and the Law 56/2014<sup>1</sup> transformed the provinces into inter-municipal cooperation bodies, taking the form of metropolitan cities in each of the ten metropolitan areas designated by the law, including the Metropolitan City of Bologna<sup>2</sup> (and following the Delrio Act that defines the number of Metropolitan areas) (Erik Longo & Giuseppe Mobilio, 2016).

The main governmental responsibilities changed following the new law: provincial tasks were transferred to regions or to the new-intermunicipal bodies. The Metropolitan City of Bologna has competences in strategic territorial development; organisation of effective services for Municipalities and Unions; economic and social development; spatial planning, mobility, and infrastructure; digitalisation and computerisation systems; school (60 secondary schools) and railway (1,400 km) infrastructure management. The municipal responsibilities of Bologna include town planning, building and commercial permits, social housing, local police, local public transport and roads, water and waste management, education (pre and primary school buildings), social services, local economic development, recreation and culture, etc.

The definition of the FUA of Bologna under study is formed mainly by three differentiated levels of governance and competence structures: the core territorial area of the FUA of study is the "*Comune di Bologna*"—the Municipality of Bologna and hereinafter Bologna. The second layer of governance and political power is what here is considered as the periphery of the FUA's core: the "*Città Metropolitana di Bologna*" —the Metropolitan City of Bologna and hereinafter MCB. Finally, the territory of influence, with its own level of regional competence and governance, which encompasses both the periphery and the core of the FUA of study, is the "*Regione di Emilia Romagna*" —the Region of Emilia Romagna and hereinafter 'region', Emilia Romagna.

In general terms, it could be said that, on paper, the Italian regions are relatively autonomous, but in practice, this is not exactly the case. This competence dichotomy is mainly due to the high dependence of the regions on financial transfers from the central government, which in certain cases are significantly insufficient, together with an irregular and insufficient implementation of regulatory competence devolutions from the central government of the nation to the different regions (Keating, 2009).

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<sup>1</sup> Legge 7 aprile 2014, n. 56 "Disposizioni sulle città metropolitane, sulle province, sulle unioni e fusioni di comuni" (G.U. n. 81 del 7 aprile 2014) [Law 56/2014 "Provisions on metropolitan cities, provinces, unions and mergers of municipalities"].

<sup>2</sup> According to the law, from 1 January 2015, the territories of the provinces of Rome, Milan, Naples, Turin, Genoa, Bologna, Florence, Venice and Bari were transformed into metropolitan cities.

The political level closest to the problems of neighbourhoods and communities is that of city councils. However, without the support of national or regional policies, providing answers to the population becomes certainly complicated both in terms of resources and capacities. According to the specialists interviewed, the collaboration between the regions and municipal entities is currently very good in the social protection area, with favourable evolution in recent years. However, the governance challenge seems to be the interrelation with the central level, in its governance and productive approach for the region.

The influence of the national government over the regions and local level continues to be significant today, which greatly influences the general growth dynamics of a country that has been economically stagnant for almost twenty years, with increasingly tight wages, where job insecurity among young people increased in the shadow of a pension system that is unstable and in the midst of a renovating reform.

These dynamics are briefly mentioned in the sections devoted to the different social dimensions. The analysis of each dimension allows to get to know the national, regional and urban socioeconomic situation. In general terms, the situation of Emilia Romagna, Bologna and its periphery is better than the national average in the majority of indicators analysed.

Likewise, in this document, we try to reflect on the different levels of political decentralisation currently granted to the regions in relation to the socioeconomic dimensions addressed here (Education, Employment, Housing, and Social Protection), explicitly explaining what responsibilities fall on each level of governance for each policy domain addressed.

Emilia Romagna has undergone profound transformations in recent decades that have affected both the social structure and the productive system of the region. The population, after the decline during the eighties and nineties of the 20th century, has grown again at a very pronounced rate, exclusively thanks to the incoming migratory flows, both of Italians from other regions and foreigners: Emilia-Romagna, at the beginning of 2020, had a total of 4,474,292 registered residents (7.5% of the national population). In this region, the native population has long since lost its capacity for natural growth. Between 2008 and 2020, the 4.2% increase in native-born residents contrasts with the 53.2% of foreign origin, both due to births and migration flows from abroad. These inflows have only partially slowed down the gradual but incessant aging process of Emilia Romagna's population.

Regarding the FUA's demographic structure in 2020<sup>3</sup>, 394,463 inhabitants reside in the Municipality of Bologna (9% of the regional population and a 6% increase since 2008), 1,019,539 inhabitants live in the Metropolitan City of Bologna (the seventh most populous municipality in the country and represents the 23% of the regional population

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<sup>3</sup> (2021) Permanent Population Census, Istituto Nazionale di Statistica: <http://dati.istat.it/Index.aspx?QueryId=19101>

and a 4% population increase from 2008), and 4,445,549 citizens inhabiting in the Region of Emilia Romagna (7.5% of the national population and a 2.5% increase from 2008)<sup>4</sup>. Italy registered, in 2020, 59,236,213 people residing in the country<sup>5</sup>. In 2021, those over-65 represented a quarter of the population, foreigners residing in the MCB represented 15.8% of the inhabitants, and the birth rate remained stable in 2021 despite the unfavourable economic situation. On the migratory front, there is a positive migratory balance of almost +3,400 inhabitants.

The share of young population aged between 15-29 years old over the total population has slightly increased across the territories studied in the period 2008-2020: from 11% to 14% in Bologna (56,667 young people in 2008 to 44,856<sup>6</sup> young people in 2020); from 12% to 14% in the Metropolitan City of Bologna; and, it has remained stable in the region (15%)<sup>7</sup>. Italy, for its part, recorded a youth population between 15 and 29 years of age of 8,859,932 in 2020 and 9,494,862 in 2008<sup>8</sup>.

In general, Emilia Romagna shows a better performance of the social and economic indicators in relation with the national and European average (EU28). And in the time series studied. Despite the better relative performance of the region, the 2008 crisis had a negative influence on the indicators that are studied, as they show distortions starting from 2008 to 2014/2015 where many of them start a recovery trend.

Figure 1 summarises the position of the region regarding final outcome indicators of the territory, those which measure social wellbeing targets. This includes economic performance and more social indicators of performance. The region shows a positive trend over the years and continues to rank very well with regards to the GDP per capita indicator when compared to the EU and national averages. The region shows a high capacity for response and resilience as GDP growth rates remain above the national and EU28 averages.

The year 2014 is a turning point in the trend of the GDP per capita as it starts to recover mainly due to two reasons: the high development infrastructure with which the region has traditionally been endowed, its intense commercial exchange with the rest of Italy, and exports to the European Union (particularly to France and Germany), and other countries in the world (period of increase in international demand for goods and services), its important agricultural production destined for the transformation industry, its robust industrial conglomeration and high specialisation (the metalworking industry, the luxury automobile industry, the machinery and mechanical device industry; as well as the ceramic, tourism, fashion and agri-food industries (DEFRA, 2019). Future estimations

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<sup>4</sup> Iperbole: [http://www.comune.bologna.it/iperbole/piancont/dati\\_statistici/Indici/Popolazione/index.htm](http://www.comune.bologna.it/iperbole/piancont/dati_statistici/Indici/Popolazione/index.htm)

<sup>5</sup> ISTAT: [http://dati.istat.it/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=DCIS\\_POPRES1](http://dati.istat.it/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=DCIS_POPRES1)

<sup>6</sup> ISTAT: [http://dati.istat.it/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=DCIS\\_RICPOPRES2011#](http://dati.istat.it/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=DCIS_RICPOPRES2011#);  
<http://dati.istat.it/Index.aspx?QueryId=18460&lang=en#>

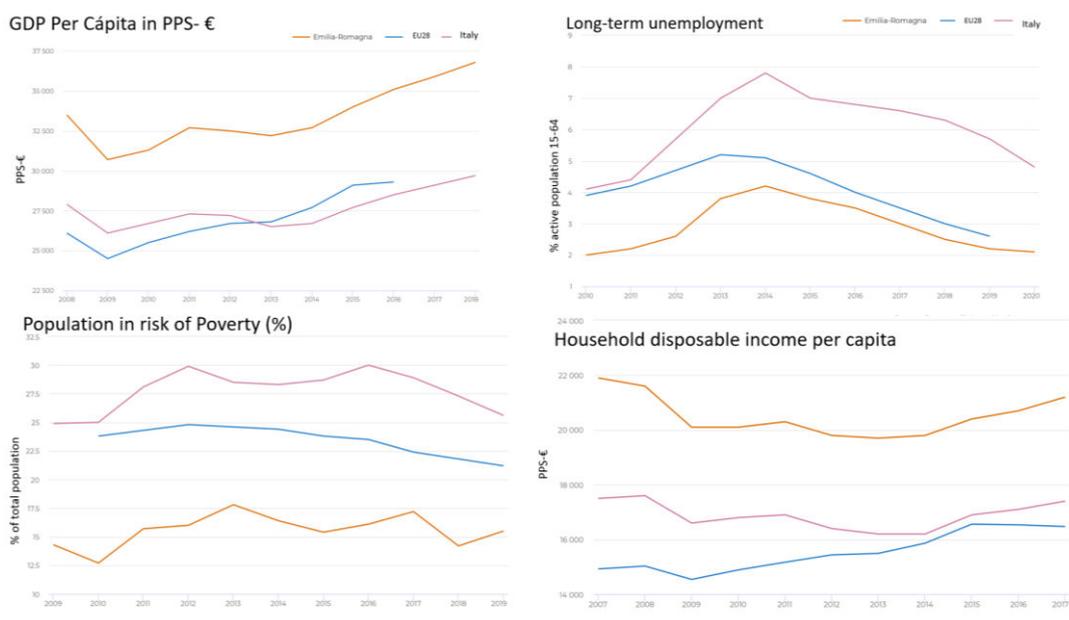
<sup>7</sup> ISTAT: [http://dati.istat.it/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=DCIS\\_RICPOPRES2011#](http://dati.istat.it/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=DCIS_RICPOPRES2011#);  
<http://dati.istat.it/Index.aspx?QueryId=18460&lang=en#>

<sup>8</sup> ISTAT: [http://dati.istat.it/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=DCIS\\_RICPOPRES2011#](http://dati.istat.it/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=DCIS_RICPOPRES2011#)

remain unclear, but it is expected that the drop in regional GDP caused by Covid-19 will be more intense than in 2008, with a negative impact on all components of internal and external demand (Prometeia, 2020).

It also ranks very well in terms of household disposable income, an indicator which both the OECD and Eurostat consider more appropriate for measuring the development of the population’s wellbeing level, as it rectifies some of the reasons why GDP, which measures what is produced within the territory, does not always have a favourable impact on wellbeing (Durand, M., 2015). According to the household disposable income per capita in the region, which represents the income available to households, it varies substantially in different territories as it is higher in Emilia Romagna when compared to the national or European averages.

Figure 1 . Outcome indicators of the region Emilia Romagna (2008-to the year in which most recent data is available)



Source: Orkestra- Deusto Foundation, The regional Competitiveness Observatory.

PPP- Purchasing Power Parity in euros<sup>9</sup>

The MCB is comprised of 55 municipalities, one of which is the city of Bologna (Municipality). Nowadays, the MCB holds the third highest total GDP among Italian metropolitan areas and the second highest in terms of per capita GDP.

Regarding social outcome indicators, the population at risk of poverty or social exclusion rate (% of total population) follows the trends of the economic indicators, showing a better position of the region when compared to the national and EU28 averages. However, last data shows that it is still behind the number reached before the crisis of

<sup>9</sup> Calculations in purchasing power parity terms are considered suitable for making international comparisons because they adjust for the difference in prices between different countries.

2008. In 2019, 55.5% of people at risk were women. The number of children at risk of poverty or social exclusion also decreased, estimated at 121.7 thousand people, 28.4% less than in 2013. Not having reached the levels achieved before 2008 is a worrying aspect in the opinion of a regional expert on labour market and working conditions for young people who thinks that the socio-economic crisis of 2008 has increased the gap between rich and poor in the country.

At the national level, poverty rates broken down into different population groups allow a more detailed analysis of this indicator. As can be seen in Table 1, the groups most at risk are markedly women (20.8% versus 19.3% in 2019), young people between 15 and 19 years old (27.8%, 2019) and young people between 15 and 29 years old (24.4%, 2019).

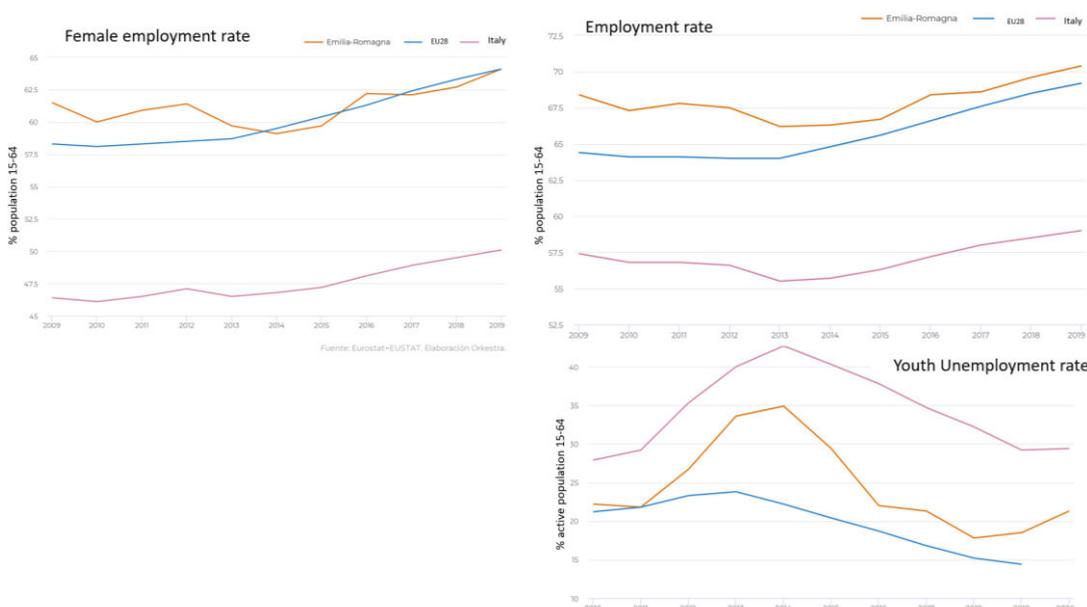
Table 1. At risk of poverty rate for the FUA of Bologna

		TOTAL	Sex		Age					
		Total	Men	Women	Young age group (15-29)	Young age group a) 15-19	Young age group b) 20-29	25-54	55-64	65+
National	2007	19.5	18.1	20.9	21.9	27.4	19.6	17.0	14.5	22.2
	2012	19.5	18.1	20.8	24.5	29.3	22.3	18.8	14.8	16.1
	2017/18/19	20.3/20.3/20.1	19.4/19.4/19.3	21.1/21.2/20.8	24.4/ 25.1/ 24.4	29.4/28.2/27.8	22.1/ 23.6/ 22.8	20.4/20.5/20.2	17.8/17.7/17.8	15.6/15.3/16.2
FUA (Emilia Romagna)	2007	8.4	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	2012	8.8	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	2017/18/19	10.5/10.1/ 10.9	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

Source: Own elaboration from ISTAT's data (Istituto Nazionale di Statistica).

Regional employment indicators have been trending positively in recent years, with a constant rise in both total and female employment rates from 2014 onwards (see Figure 2). The latter is lower than the total, but both are close to the European average and well above the national average.

Figure 2. Employment indicators of the Emilia Romagna region (2008-to the year in which most recent data is available)



Source: Own elaboration based on Eurostat data and the [Regional Competitiveness Observatory](#) of Orkestra

The municipality of Bologna, alongside the metropolitan and regional area, has traditionally been recognised for having a strong manufacturing sector of excellent quality, such is the case of mechanical industries or fashion manufacturing. Likewise, the municipality is considered one of the academic and university centres with the greatest impact in Italy.

Micro and small companies markedly represent the production system of Bologna: 77% of the companies are micro-companies (ISTAT, 2019), 20% are small, and 3% are medium and large. Almost 27% of employees work in micro-companies (29.5% in the case of Italy), 27% work in small companies, and more than 46% work in medium and large companies, a value higher than the national level, which is somewhat more than 44% (ISTAT, 2019).

Employment can be divided into two time periods: the pre-Covid and the post-Covid periods (post-Covid understood as the period just after the most serious 2020 lockdowns are finalised). In the pre-Covid period, in March 2020 just before the pandemic hit this Italian territory, the unemployment rate in Bologna was 3.9% and 4.4% in 2019, the lowest in Italy and one of the lowest in Europe. This data allows us to infer about the levels of inequality -even in times of a flourishing economy- potentially present at that time between Bologna and the other municipalities of the country<sup>10</sup>.

In 2021 (the post-Covid period), employment landscape experienced relatively little change. The unemployment rate has reached 4.4% with a loss of 5,000 jobs in Bologna mainly due to Covid-19. National policy measures implemented during the pandemic have been directed to cope with the immediate negative impact on employment provoked by the mobility limitation: the prohibition of firing workers -with exceptions for those cases of bankrupt companies that have been completely closed, in economic and legal terms-<sup>11</sup> and the obligation of Social Security to protect those who are not officially working (ESPN, 2021). According to the data provided by one of the local policymakers and advisor for the Bologna City Council in employment and economic matters interviewed-, the combination of these two regulations has caused nearly 37,000 jobs in the territory of Bologna to stay in stand-by -not formally going to work every day but preserving their posts thanks to the employment social measures aforementioned-, but with social income.

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<sup>10</sup> (2020) Palermo's Social Report. The labor market <https://www.comune.palermo.it/bilancio-sociale.php?anno=2020&id=2181&lev=2&cap=2195>

<sup>11</sup> Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali; <https://www.lavoro.gov.it/notizie/Pagine/Pubblicato-in-Gazzetta-Ufficiale-il-Decreto-Legge-30-giugno-2021-n-99.aspx>

## 2 Findings

### 2.1 Education

#### 2.1.1 National and regional drivers of inequality, trends and policies

The Italian public administration holds the core competences in education. It has legislative competences on the general organisation of the education system<sup>12</sup> that are carried out through the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of University and Research; while regions and municipalities have more operative competences. Public education, which is a national competence, has gradually reduced its investment budget and therefore deployment of these funds in recent years, limiting the chances for regions and municipalities to increase and advance the programmes they understand that have to be implemented: increasing the number of available teachers by hiring new ones, reducing the maximum number of students per class, improving the quality of education, etc.

The region exerts the legislative power only in areas with shared responsibilities with the national level. The *Direzione Generale Economia della Conoscenza, del Lavoro e dell'Impresa* (General Directorate of Knowledge, Work and Firm) in the region is the administrative and technical reference for the planning, coordination and management of regional education, training, labour and knowledge policies. The distribution of the educational offer is a regional competence, which in practice means that the regions define, through their education departments, the educational network within their territory, set the school calendar and finance non-state schools. The regions also have competences in the so-called "integrated vocational training" (a combination of vocational education and training), as well as in the provision of vocational training courses through accredited entities. The regions always work in collaboration with the state through the "Conferenza unificata Stato/Regioni". In addition, the financing of vocational training (IeFP) is the responsibility of the regions and varies according to the different courses<sup>13</sup>.

The main relationships of the municipalities in education affairs are with the regional governments. Within the framework of the implementation of the Metropolitan Strategic Plan of the MCB it acts as an interlocutor with the central and regional government in policies linked to education and technical training, from secondary school onwards, in integration with the productive system.

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<sup>12</sup> e.g. general organisation of school education, of the levels of education and of the school network; general objectives of the educational process, definition of learning targets in the different levels and types of education; the curricula, the compulsory subjects and the minimum annual instruction times; school staff training, qualifications and conditions of work; definition of measures to guarantee uniform levels of performances and services in the country; general rules and indications for pupils' assessment, etc.)

<sup>13</sup> EURYDICE: [https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/italy\\_en](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/italy_en)

Besides, roundtables are held between local organisations and representatives of the MCB on good practices carried out in the territory. According to one specialist and policymaker in education interviewed from the MCB, the entities at the local level, however, do not have sufficient competencies and resources to be able to handle all the inequalities that arise in the education field. Precisely, this is because most of the resources come from external sources, such as the Central Government, or private entities.

In Italy, the school system is free from kindergarten to secondary education. A parallel system of private schools (often very expensive, often also confessional) exists, receiving state funding in addition to student fees).

The analysis of the early leavers population in the period 2007-2019 (see Table 2), as a measure of inequality in education, shows a positive trend at the national and regional levels, but shows a worse performance of migrant population when compared to native population. At the national level the decrease is more pronounced than regionally (5.8% versus 3.5 % decrease); and show a similar increase for both men and women.

Table 2. The Early Leavers' Population for the FUA of Bologna

		TOTAL	Sex		Country of origin	
		Total (% 18-24 pop.)	Men	Women	Foreign born	Natives
<b>National</b>	2007	19.5	22.6	16.4	44.1 (2010)	16.4 (2010)
	2012	17.3	20.2	14.3	41.4	14.9
	2017/18/19	14/14.5/13.7	16.6/16.5/15.4	11.2/12.3/11.5	33.1/37.6/36.5	12.1/12.3/11.3
<b>FUA (Region) Emilia Romagna</b>	2010	14.8	17.4	12.2	-----	-----
	2012	14.7	15.2	14.2	-----	-----
	2017/18/19	9.9/11/11.3	11.1/12.7/13.9	8.7/9.1/8.5	-----	-----

Source: Own elaboration from ISTAT's data (Istituto Nazionale di Statistica).

Besides, educational inequality can also stem from the type of institute in which young people enrol. A large majority of foreign students enrol in vocational/technical institutes, dropping out of high school, where their attendance is not very high. As stated by the specialist in education interviewed from the MCB, students from professional institutes or vocational colleges<sup>14</sup>, register much higher dropout rates than those of technical institutes -Higher Technical Institutes (ITSs) which are highly specialised technical schools<sup>15</sup> established to meet the demand of new and high-level competences demanded from the labour world.

Likewise, the interviewed specialist understands that it would be relevant to incorporate the gender approach to the problems young people experience; for example, women undergo much more stable academic years than men and are much more likely to enrol

<sup>14</sup> These centres are specifically structured for practical activities, with the aim to facilitate the direct entry of the pupil to the labour market (engineering, agriculture, gastronomy, technical assistance, handicrafts)

<sup>15</sup> These centres particularly address the technical and technological sectors and they generally lead to a bachelor's or university degree

in high schools. For this reason, there are hardly any women enrolled in professional and technical institutes.

At the top of the imbalances described before between the native- and foreign-born population in education, the impacts of Covid-19 have increased educational poverty<sup>16</sup> and inequalities in Emilia Romagna and Bologna (OpenPolis/CONIBAMBINI, 2021). To counteract these inequalities in times of pandemics, in this region, most of the efforts have been oriented to reintegrating the young population (especially migrants) into the educational system: payment exemptions, promotion of new teaching methodologies, socialisation activities, etc. In this sense, as reported by one of the officials and policy makers interviewed in the field of education, the Emilia Romagna administration has proposed a complementary plan to the national strategy (Piano scuola 2021-2022)<sup>17</sup>, with its own resources, to counteract the effects of Covid-19 on young people. It is aimed at those in high school (secondary and upper secondary education), intended to cover, for instance, activities that promote socialisation, after a long period of isolation among the young, such as practical work face-to-face or online sessions of networking and social interactions in which respect, diversity, and inclusion are encouraged to recover at least the group relations' quotas by young people prior to the outbreak of the pandemic. Likewise, the so-called "network of subjects" -which basically is the net of territorial stakeholders/key actors connected to each other- has been activated to understand the circumstances of these young people and seek actions that increase social interaction among them.

### **2.1.2 Local socio-economic processes, trends and policies influencing inequality**

According to the statistical data and the interviews conducted to local experts on education, local inequality in education is improving in the period analysed (2009-2019) as an improvement is observed of early school leavers and the general educational level of the population (see Table 3). However, challenges remain with regards to the most vulnerable young people from low level socioeconomic families, migrants and young people living in remote rural areas and the overburdened education public system that is aimed at responding to the challenges of most of the vulnerable groups.

In the MCB, educational inequalities are strongly influenced by the demographic composition of the territory and its municipalities. Bologna, for example, registers the existence of up to 149 different nationalities living together in its neighbourhoods (12% of the population are non-Italians). This multiculturalism can sometimes generate inequalities in learning. For this reason, Bologna works accompanying young foreigners

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<sup>16</sup> Save the Children Italy defines educational poverty as: "Educational poverty indicates the inability of children to learn, experience, develop and allow skills, talents and aspirations to flourish freely"

<sup>17</sup> Ministero dell'Istruzione (2020). Piano scuola 2021-2022. Documento per la pianificazione delle attività Scolastiche, educative e formative nelle istituzioni del Sistema nazionale di Istruzione: [https://www.miur.gov.it/documents/20182/0/Piano+Scuola+21\\_22.pdf](https://www.miur.gov.it/documents/20182/0/Piano+Scuola+21_22.pdf)

with greater learning difficulties with their personal training plans. That is the case of the “Practices of intercultural reception and pedagogical mediation for groups of adolescent pupils”, welcoming these in the decisive moment of insertion and supportive relationship with their families. This also includes a good and effective informational set of sessions, and embodying training centres as real educational communities with a chief orientation towards pedagogical value based on respecting and promoting inclusion and mutual implication.

Regarding the early school leaver population, no data is available at the MCB nor Bologna but both regional and municipal experts in education interviewed mentioned that the pattern at local level follows the regional and national positive trend and that the drop-out among the foreign community is, as in the national and regional case, higher when compared to the native population.

Educational inequality is also marked by an economic factor of social class: the children of socio-economically vulnerable families tend to register a lower school success rate. In Italy, these children are mainly under the public education system that addresses their specificities from an integrated point of view that includes programmes of social inclusion/education for migrants. Since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, according to a person who has held a position in the MCB and is now an elected person in one of the municipalities of the MCB, adult training centres have registered considerable higher dropout rates, predominately among young people belonging to families at risk of social exclusion.

Other major problems in Italian public education, according to one specialist in education interviewed from the MCB, are the lack of teaching professionals, the high number of students per classroom (25-30 students), and mobility difficulties for certain groups of students -those with limited economic possibilities- residing on the outskirts of large cities. In this sense, it is difficult to provide a true quality education. Some students residing in mountainous or remote areas experience difficulties reaching their study centres. Emilia Romagna is made up of different types of provinces, two of them being of a more rural nature (Ferrara and Piacenza), one being predominantly urban (Rimini) and the rest being intermediate<sup>18</sup>. One of the greatest challenges for the region is the management of the territorial heterogeneity. In this sense, as stated by two specialists and advisors interviewed in the education field, one from the Region of Emilia Romagna and another from the Metropolitan City of Bologna, the response measures are not enough. According to their opinions, these measures lack greater prevention approaches in territorial terms, while the policies are not the same for the municipalities in the centre of the city as for those in the peripheral territories, which are in clear disadvantage: it is necessary to address in the short term the unification of the response actions to the

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<sup>18</sup> See the definitions in the “[Long-term vision of rural areas 2020](#)”: rural (more than 50% of the total population living in rural areas), predominantly urban (less than 20% of the total population living in rural areas); and intermediate (between 20% and 50% of the total population living in rural areas).

different inequalities, without neglecting the particular needs of each territory and population group, while offering more efficient public transport services for the periphery and complete the distribution of broadband throughout the territory.

In relation to the educational level of the population in the studied FUA, we can observe how the percentage of population with middle and high-level education has increased nationally and regionally in the period 2007 to 2019, while the percentage of population with the lowest educational level has decreased. This difference in the longitudinal progression of the data analysis could be indicating an improvement in the general educational level of the population as it moves, in general terms, from a lower to a higher level on the educational scale. Thus, the percentages in middle and higher education increased -in additional percentage points comparing both past data of 2007 and the current one of 2019 for both levels of education- by 1.7% and 6.0%, respectively, during the same period in Emilia Romagna (see Table 3).

Regarding gender, the best evolution is observed among women, both in the population with secondary and higher education, increasing by 2.4% to 7.3%, respectively, with the years 2007 and 2019 always being taken as the reference. Finally, the share of the population of foreign origin in the low and middle levels have decreased slightly in favour of the highest levels of education. Indeed, the highest levels of education reached, for the same period, experienced an increase of 5.2% (see Table 3).

Table 3. Education Level for the FUA's Population of Bologna

		Low education									
		TOTAL	Sex		Country of origin			Age			
		Total	Men	Women	Foreign born	Natives	Young age Group (15-29)	Young age Group (a) 15-19	Young age Group (b) 20-29	30-64	65+
National (From 15-64 Pop.)	2007	48.7	49.7	47.7	49.8	46	44,26	86,19	25,10	47,3	40,0
	2012	44,2	46	42,5	49,9	43,7	43,19	85,02	24,01	45,0	36,4
	2017/18/19	40,9/40,8/39,8	43,1/42,4/42,1	38,6/38,2/37,5	54,1/54,2/54,8	39,4/38,7/38,1	41/41/40	85/85/84	20/20/19	41/40/39	32/31/31
FUA Emilia Romagna	2007	41,4	43,3	39,5	48,7	40,7	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	2012	39,6	42,2	37,1	45	38,4	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	2017/18/19	35,3/34,5/33,8	38,1/37,4/37,6	32,4/31,6/30	45,3/44,8/44,8	33/32,2/31,2	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
		Middle education									
		TOTAL	Sex		Country of origin			Age			
		Total	Men	Women	Foreign born	Natives	Young age Group (15-29)	Young age Group (a) 15-19	Young age Group (b) 20-29	30-64	65+
National (From 15-64 Pop.)	2007	39,3	39,4	39,2	40,2	40,3	46,6	14,5	61,2	39,2	8,0
	2012	41,9	41,8	41,9	40,1	42	47,1	15,4	61,3	40,5	9,2
	2017/18/19	42,6/42,6/42,8	43/43,1/43,1	42,2/42,1/42,4	35,2/34,8/34,4	43,4/43,5/43,7	47/46/46	15/15/15	62/61/61	41/41/41	11/12/13
FUA Emilia Romagna	2007	4,4	4,3	4,7	4,2	4,5	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	2012	44,3	44	44,5	41,7	44,7	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	2017/18/19	45,7/45,7/45,7	45,5/45,7/45,3	45,9/45,6/45,1	41,7/41/39,9	46,6/46,7/47	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
		High education									
		TOTAL	Sex		Country of origin			Age			
		Total	Men	Women	Foreign born	Natives	Young age Group (15-29)	Young age Group (a) 15-19	Young age Group (b) 20-29	30-64	65+
National (From 15-64 Pop.)	2007	12	10,9	13,2	10,1	13,3	9,9	na	14,5	14,1	5,4
	2012	13,9	12,1	15,6	9,9	14,3	10,5	na	15,3	15,1	3,4
	2017/18/19	16,5/17,1/17,4	13,9/14,5/14,7	19,1/19,7/20,1	10,7/11/10,7	17,2/17,8/18,2	12/13/13	na	18/19/19	17/18/18	5/5/5
FUA Emilia Romagna	2007	14,6	12,4	16,7	10,1	15,3	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	2012	16,1	13,6	18,4	12,3	16,8	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	2017/18/19	19/19,9/20,6	16,3/17/17,1	21,6/22,7/24	13/14,2/15,3	20,4/21,1/21,8	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

Source: Own elaboration from ISTAT's data (Istituto Nazionale di Statistica).

Additional support for young migrants is provided by European Funds to those who are enrolled in Bologna in the education system through economic resources (mainly to support commuting) and telematics resources to overcome the pandemic.

Regarding the territorial policies in education with greater influence on inequality, we can mention the following:

At the MCB level, a project called the “Metropolitan Network for Lifelong Learning ReMAP”<sup>19</sup> has been launched to encourage the creation and development of a new territorial network that will involve the participation of local authorities, schools, accredited training bodies, universities and associations, while creating synergies in the field of lifelong learning, helping people to increase knowledge and skills during their entire active life, and expanding people's capacities, civic values and employment growth. The range of potential beneficiaries is certainly wide: young people, migrants, people over 45 years of age, elderly people, etc.

Launched in agreement with the Emilia-Romagna Region, it was officially presented on December 16<sup>th</sup> of 2021, and attempts to identify tools for information and guidance for adults, detecting the needs and stimulate the structuring of training courses on transversal and professional skills, for updating, reconversion and requalification. This project is funded by the European Social Fund of the European Union, the Emilia Romagna region and the Metropolitan City of Bologna.

Another remarkable policy initiative is the National Recovery and Resilience Plan launched by the Government of Italy within the context and sponsored by the New Generation European Fund. This plan outlines the objectives set in order to mitigate the economic impact and social impact of the pandemic, while making the country more equitable, competitive, inclusive, dynamic, innovative, and greener. One of its six (6) missions, represented by thematic areas of intervention, is Education and Research (theme #4). It aims at strengthening the conditions for the development of an economy with a high intensity of knowledge, competitiveness and resilience, starting from the recognition of the criticalities of the education, training and research system. Its main axes are: i) working on the structural deficiencies in the provision of primary education and training services; ii) the gap in basic skills, the high school dropout rate and territorial gaps; iii) the low percentage of adults with a tertiary qualification; iv) the skills mismatch between education and labour demand; v) the low level of R&D spending and the low number of researchers and talent loss; and, vi) the reduced demand for innovation and the limited integration of research results into the productive system<sup>20</sup>.

This initiative represents a revolutionary change throughout the national territory and will demand a strong and coordinated relationship between the different regional, metropolitan, and municipal political actors to be contextualised and implemented according to the needs of each territory. The initiative is open to any kind of citizens.

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<sup>19</sup> [https://www.cittametropolitana.bo.it/scuola/Engine/RAServeFile.php/f/SLIDE\\_16.12.21\\_LV.pdf](https://www.cittametropolitana.bo.it/scuola/Engine/RAServeFile.php/f/SLIDE_16.12.21_LV.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> Governo di Italia: <https://www.governo.it/sites/governo.it/files/PNRR.pdf>

Various resources have also been made available from the MCB to support young people with disabilities in Bologna<sup>21</sup>: home educators, financial aid, telematics means, etc.

The problems derived from Covid-19 have been addressed largely at the local level. The Bologna City Council has provided support to young people and schools with actions and resources<sup>22</sup>, facilitating means for the realisation of distance classes, as is the case in rural areas.

According to one specialist and advisor on education interviewed from the Bologna municipality, one of the best examples of policy initiative addressing education inequality is the project "Protocol for the Comprehension and Prevention of Youth Juvenile Hardship -young people with high chances of dropping out-" (circumscribed to the territory of the Municipality of Bologna and signed in February 2019)<sup>23</sup>. It seeks to prevent situations of early school leaving and risk of social exclusion through a communication network between schools, social services, neighbourhoods, and regional school offices, while examining and assessing the various cases individually - family context, situations of abuse, bullying, etc. - to provide specific solutions for reintegration.

Despite the efforts of the Bologna City Council in education, the heterogeneous characteristic of the territory seems to make it very difficult to address all the social problems present; in other words, education services are most of all mainstreamed and, in several cases, do not take into account the geographical specificities within the territory (e.g. specificity rather than differences between the city centre and the periphery, hampering the possibilities of the Bologna City Council to intervene as it wishes. Given this context, the main priority of the municipality is to bring its services to the entire territory, contextualising the needs and identifying the differences between the city centre and the periphery.

## 2.2 Employment

### 2.2.1 National and regional drivers of inequality, trends and policies

In Italy, state competences in employment and labour market are mainly attributed to the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies, and marginally to the Ministry of the Interior (for immigration issues) and the Minister (without portfolio) for International Cooperation and Integration. The national administrative level, through the National Social Security Institute, manages the passive labour market policies, those policies related to income transfers, namely unemployment benefits and retirement pensions. The Ministry of Labour and Social Policies<sup>24</sup>, bears competences in matters such as labour

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<sup>21</sup> Citta Metropolitana di Bologna: [https://www.cittametropolitana.bo.it/scuola/Accordo\\_di\\_programma\\_L\\_104\\_92](https://www.cittametropolitana.bo.it/scuola/Accordo_di_programma_L_104_92)

<sup>22</sup> Comune di Bologna: <https://www.comune.bologna.it/notizie/coronavirus-risorse-scuola-casa>

<sup>23</sup> Comune di Bologna: [http://www.comune.bologna.it/media/files/201922\\_protocollo\\_con\\_ic\\_con\\_firme.pdf](http://www.comune.bologna.it/media/files/201922_protocollo_con_ic_con_firme.pdf)

<sup>24</sup> It comprises ten (10) general directorates: personnel policies, innovation, budget and logistics; communication and information on labour and social policies; active and passive labour policies; industrial and labour relations; policies of employment services; social security and related policies; inclusion and social policies; third sector and social formations;

policy and employment promotion, job protection and social security system, as well as social policies.

The regions through the Public Employment Service and/or the private job agencies (officially recognised at a national level), manage the active labour market policies, those policies aimed at improving the access of unemployed to the labour market and jobs, job related skills and the functioning of the labour market. In Emilia Romagna, the region has delegated the management of the employment services (*Servizi per l'Impiego*) to its provinces. The region of Emilia Romagna, besides, bears labour competences in terms of programming active employment policies.

The MCB coordinates the area of economic and labour development and municipalities implement training policies to promote employment in new industries and wellbeing<sup>25</sup>. It is worth clarifying that social assistance policies are held by municipalities. The municipalities in the region have no competences on active labour market policies: they cannot supply services that try to meet labour supply with demand unless they have asked for accreditation in this field. The Municipality of Bologna has not asked for this accreditation and its functions related to employment are remarkably focused on employability skills and provision of information<sup>26</sup>.

The proportion of wage earners increased, while the proportion of self-employed decreased in the region from 2008 to 2020. As pointed out by a specialist and advisor interviewed from the region of Emilia Romagna, the proportion of independent workers has progressively decreased during the last decade: from 27.2% in 2008 to 21.8% in 2020.

Another aspect to be highlighted in the employment dimension is the expansion of involuntary part-time work. With the onset of the 2008 crisis, its proportion in Emilia Romagna increased significantly: in 2008, for instance, part-time contracts represented 12.9% (4.4% of the total number of men available to work and 23.8% of the total number of women available to work), whereas in 2020 it was 18.3% (31.2% of the total amount of men available to work and 15.4% of women available to work)<sup>27</sup>.

Both at the regional and metropolitan level, there is an increase in the proportion of fixed-term work in contrast to what is happening at the national level. Regional data suggests a positive trend as employees with a fixed-term contract grew from 11.2% in 2008 to 17.1% in 2019, slightly decreasing to 15.2% in 2020. This contract modality was more widespread in women: from 12.8 % in 2008 to 18.5% in 2019, and from 9.6% to

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immigration and integration policies; and inspection activity. It is also integrated, in the national territory, by regional and provincial work directions.

<sup>25</sup> SPISA-Urban@It: <https://osservatorio.urbanit.it/citta-metropolitana-di-bologna-funzioni/#1465053463944-d85decb0-3932>

<sup>26</sup> Comune di Bologna: <https://www.comune.bologna.it/temi/lavoro-formazione?q=&ct=all&temi=Lavoro%20e%20formazione&page=1&pageSize=10>

<sup>27</sup> Bologna Metropolitana: [http://inumeridibolognametropolitana.it/sites/inumeridibolognametropolitana.it/files/lavoro/mercato\\_del\\_lavoro-2020.pdf](http://inumeridibolognametropolitana.it/sites/inumeridibolognametropolitana.it/files/lavoro/mercato_del_lavoro-2020.pdf)

15.8% among men, respectively. This data contrasts with the opinion of the regional specialist and advisor in this field interviewed, who stated that due to the outsourcing of the economy and recent regulatory changes in hiring -*Legge 10 dicembre 2014, n. 183 - Jobs act*<sup>28</sup>- and a pronounced reduction in dismissal costs (Boeri and Garibaldi 2018), an exorbitant rise of the temporary and part-time contracts exists in the country.

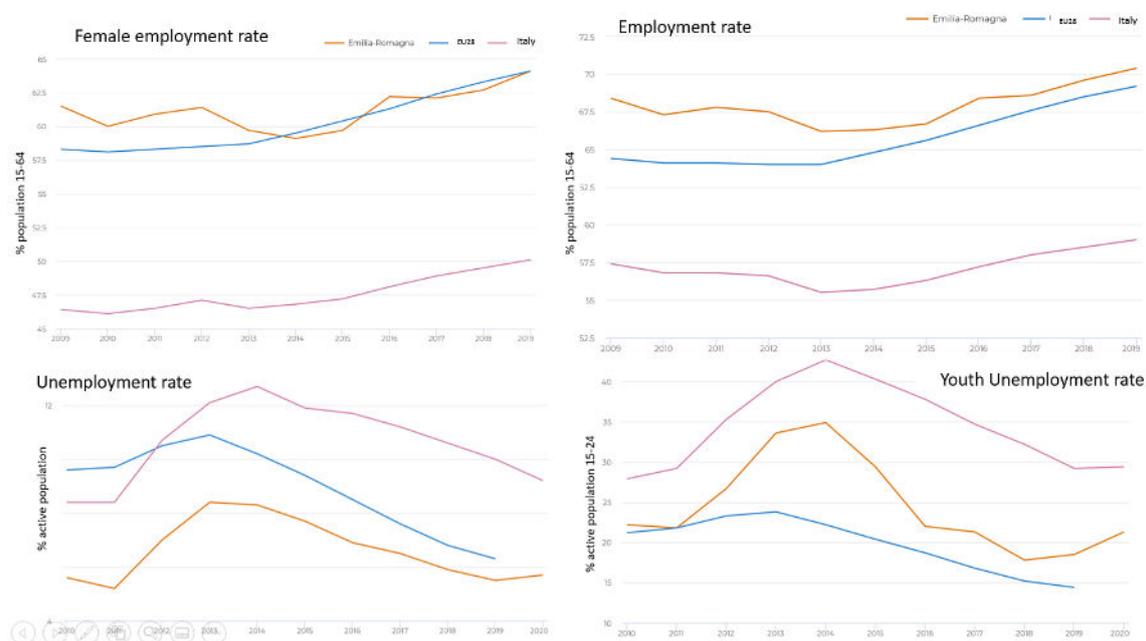
As seen in Figure 3, the employment related indicators are all performing better in the region when compared to the national average which reflects a wealthier labour market of the region in general terms. The figures show a smooth growth in the employment rate, both total and female employment rates with the increase starting in 2014 onwards in both cases. The region shows better employment rates (70.4% of the population aged 15-64) than the EU average (69.2%) and much higher than the national average (59%). The female employment rate decreases in all the territories: the region has a higher female employment rate than the EU average (64.1%), which is very far from the national average (50%). In both cases, there is room for improvement regarding female employment.

Higher employment depends both on increasing the labour force participation rate and on increasing the percentage of the labour force in work. For this reason, it is of interest to analyse what is happening with the unemployment rates. We present both the total unemployment rate and that which affects the youngest group of people, between the ages of 15 and 24. The youth unemployment shows a very worrying situation in the region as it is four times that of the population in 2020 (5.7% compared to 21.3%). Values for the region, although higher than those for the EU average (14.4% in 2019), are lower than those of Italy (29.4% in 2020) and in the case of total employment, Emilia Romagna ranks in the first position (5.7% in 2020) in comparison with the European regions (6.3% in 2019) and the national average (9.2% in 2020).

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<sup>28</sup> Gazzetta Ufficiale: <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2014/12/15/14G00196/sg>

Figure 3. Employment related indicators for Italy, Emilia Romagna and EU28 (2009-2020)



Source: Own elaboration based on Eurostat data and the [Regional Competitiveness Observatory](#) of Orkestra.

The participation of young people in the labour market increases dramatically in the 25 to 34 age group. This results in higher percentages of employed young people (73.7%) compared to the unemployed percentage of young people (9.2%). The 35-54 age group follows this trend, as it shows even higher rates of employed people among the group (90%). For later age groups, the data inversely fall again.

According to the opinion of the specialist in employment and labour advisor of the City of Bologna, the number of poor workers has certainly increased since the start of the pandemic; in other words, the number of jobs may seem to be stable but largely based on temporary and part-time contracts. With the pandemic, the process of territorial transformation that Bologna was undergoing regarding labour equality before the recent reform of the Labour market (Job Act) slowed down (Massagli, 2018), while families were forced to take care of children at home and resign against their will, mainly affecting women, increasing the local gender inequality even more<sup>29,30</sup>.

As seen in Figure 3, Emilia Romagna is the region that presents higher employment and activity rates, with a significantly higher employment rate in manufacturing sectors (the share of industry employment in 2019 was of 27.6% compared to 26.4% in the north area of Italy, 20.4% and 18.6% representing the national and EU averages, respectively)<sup>31</sup>. Within industry the share of employees in medium-high technology industrial sectors is higher than the national and European averages, which has also several implications for

<sup>29</sup> Internazionale: <https://www.internazionale.it/reportage/sarah-gainsforth/2021/03/29/reti-solidali-bologna-vuoto-stato>

<sup>30</sup> Corriere della Sera. Donne e Lavoro; Cosa è Cambiato: <https://www.corriere.it/speciale/cronache/2020/donne-lavoro-covid-occupazione-femminile/>

<sup>31</sup> [https://www.investinemiliariomagna.eu/en/Facts\\_and\\_figures/Labour\\_market.asp](https://www.investinemiliariomagna.eu/en/Facts_and_figures/Labour_market.asp) accessed the 28th of February 2022

the active labour policies that are managed by the regional government. For example, the regional government provides those people seeking work and training support to meet the requirements of the economic and production system<sup>32</sup>. According to the regional government, the crisis is believed to be lengthening the average time it takes for young people to enter the labour market and has also increased the number of adults forced to look for new employment. After five years of gradual but significant contraction, in 2020 the number of NEETs between the ages of 15 and 34 increased. In this regard, ISTAT estimated 141.7 thousand NEETs, a regional increase of 12.7 thousand young people with respect to the previous year (9.9%) compared to 4.9% at the national level.

There has also been a progressive increase of regional employment in the service sector during the period 2014-2017 (Eurostat). Employment regional data broken down into the main economic sectors show an increase in the employment of the service-related economic activities such as Wholesale and retail trade, transport, accommodation, and food service activities (4%), Information and Communication (10%), and Professional, scientific and technical activities (10%). However, employment in industry and manufacturing sectors continues to have no variation in this period.

The percentage of population aged 15-24 not in Education, Employment, or Training (%NEET) increased from 2010 to 2012, from 12.7% to 14.5% and in 2019, recovered the previous rate of 12.1%. In 2019, among NEETs, the rate of women is higher than that of men (13% for women compared to 11.3% for men); and the foreign-born population show rates well above the native NEETs (24.6% and 10%, respectively).

In 2020, the crisis caused by the pandemic emergency asymmetrically affected sectors of Emilia Romagna's economy as well as different groups of workers. During the first confinement, from March to May 2020, the most affected sector was the services sector. Analysing SILER data (Employment Information System of Emilia-Romagna)<sup>33</sup>, among the most affected sectors in the region were accommodation and restaurant services, with losses of approximately 15,000 jobs in the 2019-2020 period and has recovered 5.549 employments in 2021. As of June 2020, according to the regional Agency of Labour<sup>34</sup>, reactivation of new employment contracts could be seen; and after the summer period in commerce, accommodation and restaurants, poorer sanitary conditions in the last part of the year compromised this reactivation.

As it can be seen in Table 4, in the period 2019-2020 all the sectors were affected by the pandemic and except for Agriculture as employment activation<sup>35</sup> (in absolute terms)

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<sup>32</sup> <https://www.regione.emilia-romagna.it/en/education-system/employment-and-skills> accessed the 28th of February 2022

<sup>33</sup>SILER, Sistema informativo Lavoro Emilia-Romagna. Flussi di attivazioni dei rapporti di lavoro: <https://www.agenzialavoro.emr.it/analisi-mercato-lavoro/approfondimenti/statistiche-sul-lavoro/flussi-di-attivazioni-dei-rapporti-di-lavoro>

<sup>34</sup> "Homepage" Agenzia Regionale per Il Lavoro, <https://www.agenzialavoro.emr.it/>. Accessed the 28<sup>th</sup> of February 2022

<sup>35</sup> Activation of employment relationship: start of a new contractual situation, either permanent or temporary, which is subject to compulsory notification by the employer.

decreased in all of them in Bologna. In the period 2020-2021 all of them registered an increase of employment activation but the final values are far behind those of 2019, except for Agriculture, Industry and Other services.

Table 4. Employment activation (in absolute terms) by sector and change in the FUA of Bologna (2019-2021)

Employment by sector	Agriculture	Industry	Construction	Retail, hotels and restaurants	Other services	Total
2019	396	3.390	4.371	26.609	57.396	92.162
2020	411	2.660	3.250	11.142	43.103	60.566
2021	490	4.166	3.856	16.691	57.825	83.028
Employment change (%)						
2019-2020	4%	-22%	-26%	-58%	-25%	-34%
2020-2021	19%	57%	19%	50%	34%	37%

Note: Activation of employment relationship: start of a new contractual situation, either permanent or temporary, which is subject to compulsory notification by the employer.

Source: Own elaboration from *Sistema informativo Lavoro Emilia-Romagna. Flussi di attivazioni dei rapporti di lavoro*

## 2.2.2 Local socio-economic processes, trends and policies influencing inequality

As previously described, the administrative level of competence in labour matters is strongly centralised in the national and regional governments, which means that the local level has low levels of autonomy in labour matters. In the opinion of the specialist and advisor on employment interviewed from the Municipality of Bologna, even though the municipalities are the most appropriate places to deal with labour inequalities due to the proximity those institutions have with the citizens, their limitation of competences slows the provision and focus of the resources towards fighting against labour inequality and demands for greater competences in this matter for local authorities.

On top of that this specialist thinks that coordination between different administrative levels in matters related to labour should be improved and strengthened to overcome the fragmentation of competences that limit the responses needed by citizens, for example through periodic inter-institutional meetings. In this regards he calls for more experience and knowledge exchanges between European urban areas in some of the most pressing urban challenges such as accessibility and sustainable development, urban inequalities, etc.

Following the growth pattern of the employment rate of the national and regional territories, as of 2014, the MCB began a recovery period that characterised the following six years, with regional employment growing by 9.0%. In this case, the increase was perceived with greater intensity among women (7.6%) and in the industrial sectors (11.4%) and in services (9.2%).

Likewise, in the metropolitan area of Bologna, during the last decade, there has been an increase in the proportion of those employed in services, going from 65.5% in 2008 to 69.5% in 2020, while the proportion of those employed in industry decreased from 25.3% in 2008 to 22.0% in 2020 and in construction from 7.8% to 5.8%.

According to the opinion of the specialists interviewed, women in part-time work is due in part —especially in the middle-age groups- to a personal choice linked above all to the gender imbalance in the distribution of home and family care responsibilities. In the case of men, part-time work is imposed by the contractual flexibility typical of the new job offer developed over the last decade. This trend is very likely to continue in the coming years.

The indicators on youth employment in Bologna have been positive and stable over the last two decades, in general terms, contrary to other provinces of Emilia Romagna. This is mainly because Bologna is home to one of the most important universities in Italy, the city's ability to attract professional talent, and the very high quality of its technical schools and institutes of higher education (Nomisma, 2019). The challenge, therefore, is to improve job conditions for young people, especially in terms of job security.

Besides, Bologna faces the challenges of digitisation and of workers with digitally limited skills, who are already at a certain age (over 45-50 years of age) and run the risk of staying permanently out of the labour market.

Labour inequality by gender is another challenge that Bologna must deal with, both in urban and metropolitan areas. From the Municipality of Bologna, the best gender equality practices are being put in practice and projected from this public institution to the local companies or promoting access to different levels of work or facilitating the presence of young women in technical schools or those traditionally linked to men. These initiatives are locally promoted thanks to European and local projects such as "The Goal 2030 Youth and Cities for the 2030 Agenda" (under the umbrella of the European Shaping Fair Cities project ) or the project "*Verso l'Agenda 2030 -Ragazze e donne in forma-azione scientifica*"

According to the specialist and advisor on employment interviewed from the Municipality of Bologna, 15% of the city's population are third-country nationals, whose employment rate is certainly high, but of questionable quality in general terms.

Likewise, the city council, with the support of the Region of Emilia Romagna, has undertaken a joint project to create alliances with companies through virtual commercial platforms aimed at facilitating job opportunities for groups particularly affected by Covid-19, such as the population of unemployed women, the migrant population, and young people in general. Given the current situation of employment which has not yet recovered the values of 2019 in Bologna (see Table 4), approximately 37,000 people are in jobs subsidised with both state and local aids.

## 2.3 Housing

### 2.3.1 National and regional drivers of inequality, trends and policies

In Italy, the competences in housing policies correspond predominantly to the regional governments, which are responsible for the planning, strategy and programming of the various measures or policies for access to housing in their territories. In the case of the FUA of Bologna, these competences correspond to the regional government of Emilia Romagna, which coordinates its actions in housing matters with the managing council of the Metropolitan City of Bologna and with the governing body of its capital, the Municipality of Bologna.

Therefore, local governments are, largely, those responsible for the implementation of policies and actions, sometimes carrying out complementary and/or alternative projects to those proposed at the regional level. This is the case of the FUA of Bologna that conducts complementary local initiatives thanks to its economic and structural capacities.

In the last decade, as described in the section

## General description of Bologna Functional Urban Area

, the whole region of Emilia Romagna has experienced a population increase, but especially in the MCB and in Bologna (2.5% regional increase compared to a 4% and 6% increase, respectively). The increase in the city can be partly explained by the annual number of students interested in the excellent university academic offer —the Metropolitan City registers an annual average of 30,000 students residing permanently in the territory-, and by the different groups of national and foreign migrants attracted by better job opportunities in the powerful industrial, manufacturing and service fabric existing in the municipalities of the MCB.

Housing access is influenced by family wealth. Although the region ranks better than the EU and national average on Household disposable income (see Figure 1), the wealth of families in the Emilia Romagna region decreased from 2008 to 2014. This indicator shows a decrease in the purchasing power of the citizens of the region and, thus, of its housing possibilities, which is reflected in the purchase of real estate (ORSA<sup>36</sup> regional report, 2013).

This can be one of the reasons why, since 2007 a reduction in the purchase of real estate was experienced in the region, reaching its lowest in 2013. In that same year, there was a reduction in the sale of real estate by 59% (ORSA Regional Report, 2017) and of mortgage loans, compared by 67% compared to 2006 (ORSA Regional Report, 2013).

Coinciding with the evolution of the Household Disposable Income per capita indicator, the real estate market started its recovery in 2015, increasing the number of purchases and sales of real estate units for residential use in the metropolitan city of Bologna compared to the decrease experienced in the period 2006-2014 (ORSA Regional Report, 2017)<sup>37</sup>.

From 2015 on, there was a downward trend in the relative price of housing compared to disposable income of households and a reduction in interest rates in Emilia Romagna (ORSA regional report, 2017)<sup>38</sup>.

### **2.3.2 Local socio-economic processes, trends and policies influencing inequality**

The significative increase in tourism (with a peak in 2013) both in the Metropolitan City and the municipality of Bologna, strongly influenced the housing market and the rental prices, since many of the property owners oriented the rental of their properties towards tourism, reducing the supply of rental housing and generating distortions in the demand and supply housing market. It consequently impacted the housing dimension of

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<sup>36</sup> The Regional Observatory on the Housing System of Emilia Romagna Region

<sup>37</sup> <http://www.inumeridibolognametropolitana.it/dati-statistici/compravendite-delle-unita-immobiliari-destinazione-residenziale-serie-storica>, accessed the 21<sup>st</sup> March 2022

<sup>38</sup> <https://territorio.regione.emilia-romagna.it/osservatorio-delle-politiche-abitative/rapporti-e-studi>

inequality reducing manifestly the possibilities for many people and families to have access to a decent home to live in.

According to an elected politician working in the youth area of Bologna, housing inequality is considered a structural problem in Bologna, precisely because it is a prominent university city. Added to this reality is the growing distinction of Bologna as a tourist city, which has caused many proprietors to no longer rent to students, but to offer their apartments for tourist rental on virtual platforms. Likewise, the purchase and rental price in Bologna has been present in the discussion about housing for many years now. The local government of Bologna currently has a strong challenge to counteract the trends on the purchase and rental price.

The evolution of the prices of the real estate market had a different evolution depending on the geographical area. While the prices per square meter in the provincial capitals increased slightly by 0.7% between 2009 and 2011 in the historic centre. This trend is reproduced in the rest of the municipalities, as the price per square meter increases slightly in the historic centre (1.9%), while it decreases in semi-central and peripheral areas (0.2% and 5.6%, respectively) (Regional report ORSA, 2017).

In 2020, the year in which the Covid-19 pandemic began, there was a slowdown: compared to the previous year, the change in property sales in the metropolitan city excluding the capital was -4.3%, in the municipality of Bologna -15%. As for the change in average prices (+0.8% at municipal level), this was positive in all areas of the city, except for the hill area (-13%)<sup>39</sup>. In addition to the decrease of the price in this area, in recent years there has been a phenomenon of depopulation of the rural environment. With the implementation of the new territorial plan, work is being done to try to solve these problems indirectly, addressing factors such as public transport services and the price of rentals. However, this phenomenon is a reality in which there is still work to do: families that lived years ago in mountain territories are now concentrated in specific neighbourhoods of Bologna where they live in more precarious houses than those they previously lived in, in addition to creating new peripheries or concentrations of these groups of people.

Housing tenure structure for the three levels of the FUA of Bologna shows a high tendency to ownership at the expense of renting, which is more noticeable in the Metropolitan City of Bologna when compared to Bologna or the region. Likewise, the percentages of both home ownerships and renting, have tended to remain relatively stable from 2007 to 2019. Unfortunately, it was not possible to obtain data on the percentages of subsidised rentals or purchases in the territory.

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<sup>39</sup> <http://www.inumeridibolognametropolitana.it/>

Table 5. Housing Tenure Structure for the FUA of Bologna, the MCB and Emilia Romagna

		% HOME OWNERSHIP	% RENTING	% SUBSIDIZED
		Total	Total	Total
FUA Emilia Romagna	2007	82.5	17.5	-----
	2012	80.1	19.9	-----
	2017/18/19	79.3/79.5/77.7	20.7/20.5/22.3	-----
FUA Core Municipality of Bologna	2017	86.1	13.9	-----
	2018	85.3	14.7	-----
	2019	84.1	15.9	-----
FUA Periphery Metropolitan Bologna	2017	73.7	26.3	-----
	2018	72.6	27.4	-----
	2019	72.7	27.3	-----

Source: Own elaboration from ISTAT's data (Istituto Nazionale di Statistica).

Housing dimension is addressed from two different angles in the local policymaking: as a competitive factor for talent attraction; and as a social protection dimension of inequality. Regarding talent attraction, the Metropolitan City launched in 2019 the Bologna Metropolitan Strategic Plan 2.0 a new comprehensive urban plan for its municipalities, where one of its development axes is devoted to building a sustainable, responsible and attractive MCB. Young people attraction, ability to offer housing and work opportunities are some of the ambitions that the Metropolitan Bologna aims to develop together with the universities. However, due to the current Covid-19 crisis, this urban plan has been postponed to respond to the most pressing emergencies of the area and of its citizens.

Secondly, different policy initiatives have aimed at addressing housing inequalities by enhancing informed decision making on housing and by providing social housing services. The Regional Observatory of the Housing System (ORSA) has been put into operation to generate and use reliable and updated data on the social situation of housing in strategic decisions.

Besides, different local policy initiatives have addressed housing inequality. First, by providing social housing services to people in housing poverty. According to the housing department of the Municipality of Bologna more than 12,000 families are living in social public houses (ERP, Italian acronym of *Edilizia Residenziale Pubblica* or public housing), what means that around 25,000 people are living in houses owned by the city council (6.5% of the population of Bologna). The concentrations of socially excluded families in more peripheral neighbourhoods and territories is one of the great problems that Bologna faces today, and only through the improvement of public urban environments and social services related to access to homes will it be possible to face this situation.

In addition, the Bologna City Council assists 1,500 families, totally excluded from both the conventional and social purchase market by providing funds for those families that cannot afford the full payment of house rental in the private market (in 2018, 1.5 million euros were allocated for this policy initiative). Recent initiatives have emerged to respond to the 2020 COVID-19 crisis, such as the adoption by the city of Bologna of a territorial regulatory framework that allows to miss monthly rental payments to those who have lost their jobs. Between 2017 and 2018, up to 277 families who had lost their homes due to lack of payment, were financially supported by the city council, which allocated for

that same year a budget of approximately 1.4 million euros in social assistance, while also redoubling efforts to guarantee this service at least until 2022. Due to the Covid-19 crisis, it is expected that this situation will be extended for a few more years.

The city council has designed a social plan for 2021-2022 that aims to increase the availability of social housing by 1,000 units per year thanks to the refurbishment of both public and private buildings.

## **2.4 Social protection and youth**

### **2.4.1 National and regional drivers of inequality, trends and policies**

Two variables of the social protection dimension are significant when analysing the FUA of Bologna: the Population at Risk of Poverty and the Annual Per Capita Amount for Social Protection Benefits.

As was presented in the section “

## General description of Bologna Functional Urban Area

“ the Population at risk of poverty or social exclusion (% of total population) in the region has increased since the 2008 crisis; and, even if it is well below the European and Italian averages for the period, it is still behind the figure before the crisis. Women, young people under 25 years of age, people over 45 years of age, and the migrant population groups are the groups more exposed to poverty.

Regarding the Annual Per Capita Amount for Social Protection Benefits, no data was found at the regional or local level for this variable, obtaining only values at the national level. However, in the opinion of the local specialists interviewed, these national values are an excellent reference for extrapolating data at the territorial level given that the requirements for granting social protection benefits are usually similar for all regions. That said, Italy has gradually increased the total amount of social protection benefits per capita from 2008 to 2019, from €6,927.24 granted to €8,387.49, respectively (see Table 6).

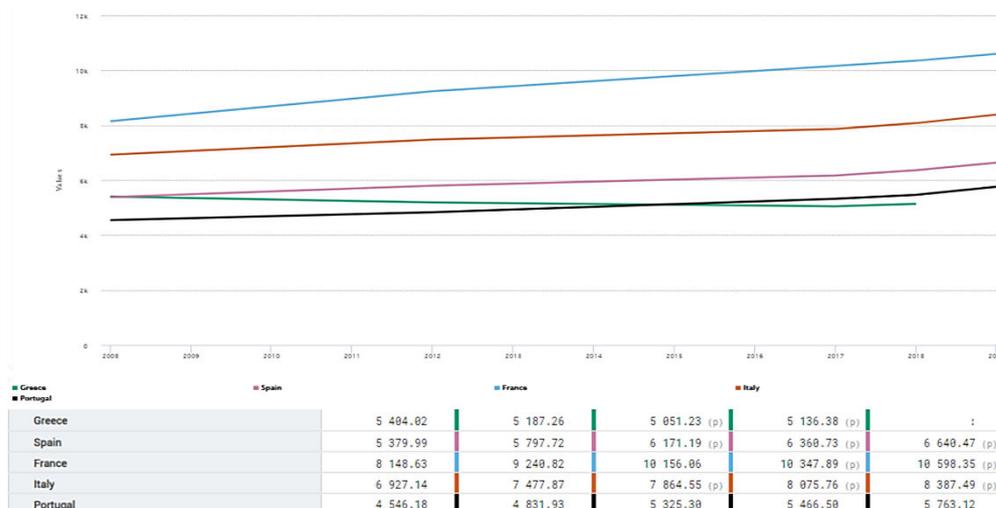
Table 6. Social protection benefits: Annual Purchasing power standard (PPS) per inhabitant in Italy

		TOTAL
		Total
National	2008	6,927.14
	2012	7,477.87
	2017/18/19	7,864.55/8,075.76/8,387.49

Source: Own elaboration from Eurostat's data: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/tps00107/default/line?lang=en>.

Comparatively among Mediterranean nations, the amounts granted in Italy are significantly lower than those granted by France, but well above those provided by Spain, Greece, and Portugal, respectively (see Figure 4); politically hopeful data to date given that Italy, unfortunately, has been one of the countries of the European Union hardest hit by Covid-19.

Figure 4. Social protection benefits: Comparative Annual Purchasing power standard per inhabitant



Source: Created automatically by ESTAT: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/tps00107/default/line?lang=en>.

The national level policies are relevant in the social protection and employment dimension of the FUA, especially the “Citizenship Income” (*Reddito di Cittadinanza*). The Citizen Income is the scheme for minimum income protection that constitutes a turning point for the country’s policy against poverty and unemployment from 2018. The policy rationale for this policy initiative is that the government compensates income absence while searching and offering a job to the citizen. Once it is provided, poverty ends along with the subsidy. Critics of the initiative believe that the formulation of the policy proves a risk to helping those in a more vulnerable situation (Favero, F., 2020). According to one expert, one of the impacts of this policy has been that many people had preferred to turn down low-paid jobs with no security rather than giving up the Citizen Income, which exposed how precarious the job market is in Italy regarding temporality and insecurity, particularly for young people.

The interviewed specialists highlight the need to strengthen the multilevel coordination and interaction as one of the main issues to be tackled in social protection and youth dimensions. In this person’s opinion, the central government should provide the regions with a common policy frame for policy design and implementation, while the regions should work on adapting it to the specificities of the territories which are very heterogeneous. In the same line, a policy official from the municipality state that the new employment and youth policies should be created and implemented with a strong interrelation among the regions and municipalities, and with a strong emphasis on their adaptation to the characteristics of each territory.

In a call for a greater coordination of different administrative levels of government, in the opinion of one expert on social development, discrimination and gender violence of the MCB, both public and private efforts should be joined (e.g. social entities, the Church, active citizenship, etc.) to overcome the competence drawbacks between the different levels of governance of the territory. In this regard, in the opinion of a regional expert, the region needs to work on enhancing their work with civil society organisations so that future initiatives become more context specific. This expert demands more transversality in social protection policies through a public figure that can coordinate and integrate policies that address this field.

Youth has been one of the main target of the urgent public that emerged during the Covid-19 crisis. At the core of these measures has been the capacity for articulating different administrative levels and local key actors (including families and young people) towards the design and implementation of these measures. Youngsters have been hit by the pandemic, in the different life domains, such as health. For example, during the crisis, weaknesses in social protection, not previously observed, have emerged, mainly related to the shortcomings that hospitals of some small and medium-sized municipalities were showing to provide social care services to young people in psychological aspects linked to the social isolation experienced. According to an expert on youth policy of the Bologna City Council, this geographical inequality or service provision was not the result of

territorial organisation, but rather a result of the strategy of resource distribution in force in the territories.

Geographical inequality in the provision of social protection is one of the main challenges that Bologna is facing. For example, the implementation of digital services will require not only the improvement of skills to access to digital resources, but an efficient and good connection that is worse in the periphery.

#### **2.4.2 Local socio-economic processes, trends and policies influencing inequality**

In the MCB, the most pressing problems for young people are diverse and conflicting between small and large municipalities: mobility/public transport problems, inequality in the provision of services, high housing rental prices, the digital and technological gap, connectivity difficulties, limited access to telematics equipment, etc.

The second reality that frames the territory resides in the strong presence in the municipality of young Italians from other regions or of foreign origin, with difficulties and specificities different from those experienced by young natives.

In the territory, a series of projects have been developed in the last decade to combat social inequalities among young people. Several of them have been focused on concepts based on people's competencies, technological innovation, collaborative entrepreneurship, accompanying second generations of migrants in their emancipation processes, and promoting family participation in local associations, all of them moving towards more formal relationships between young people that stimulate their organisational and entrepreneurial capacity, culminating in some cases in work activities.

The actions discussed, with specific interventions, target groups such as young people between the ages of 16 and 34, the eligibility conditions generally being age. The funds used in these actions are proprietary and regional in nature and are monitored through an internal system managed by the government of Emilia Romagna.

At the regional level, one of the projects that stands out is the creation of an accompaniment network for the management of municipalities, where they jointly exchange experiences, good practices and lessons learned that could be contextualised and used by their members.

Due to Covid-19, Bologna has undergone very sensitive changes in its social reality, orienting youth policies in that direction. School dropouts, associated with the impossibility of receiving online classes, poses a greater risk of poverty in different categories of young people who were never attended to by social services. This highlights the existence of new problems that were not considered previously (e.g. psychological care, youth vandalism, etc.), while the strategies focused on encouraging work, talent, innovation, development, and personal opportunities, among others.

Bologna has centres dedicated to the orientation of young people; the Emilia Romagna's government manages these centres, providing its users with psychological, entrepreneurship, legal assistance, etc. The territory has a balanced distribution of social centres across the region although it is more limited in peripheral communities. The Covid-19 pandemic has slowed down the development of the territory, largely affecting young people, especially women. For this reason, the region promotes the financing of projects that bring together labour and collective generation activities, such as co-working spaces and FabLabs (digital manufacturing workshops), or orientation and socialisation services for young people, taking into account small and peripheral territories.

The strong university structure of Emilia Romagna has allowed territorial governments to unite them with the local business fabric, which has facilitated the existence of jobs for young people. Given Covid-19, Metropolitan Bologna has the challenge of keeping this symbiosis alive. Added to this is the strong business reconversion experienced by the region in fields such as biomedicine, pharmaceuticals, and health.

In Bologna, many young families during the Covid-19 crisis have confronted emergency situations and without any family support, including situations of housing exclusion. For this, the city council created a special financial aid fund.

According to an advisor in youth and family policies, the results of policies aimed at young people must contain a transversal perspective of their realities, including training, entrepreneurship, access to housing, and non-precarious employment. In addition, youth emancipation, drug or alcohol consumption, and eating disorders, among others, are part of the new and diverse problems that are manifested in a transversal way, such as cyberbullying or voluntary social isolation.

Nowadays, awareness has grown that, be it for the management or promotion of services, a subsidiary collaboration is required between not only the public and private sectors, but also an active citizenry to conduct and manage social intervention policies.

In the opinion of an elected politician in the municipality with responsibilities in the social protection dimension, when the aid and support interventions end, the social and economic crisis caused by Covid-19 will be felt in all its magnitude. For this reason, this politician recommends that local governments generate prospective work capacities on those factors that are most critical for young people, with special attention to new forms of poverty and social exclusion, rethinking and reorienting policies towards the main factors of injustice. For this, the most important level of governance in youth policies will always be at the local level, since they are the ones who best know the different social realities of this group.

### 3 Innovative post-crisis policies

Policy-making processes need to change if policymakers are to deliver policies that face the challenges of the society. Those changes were identified in the early 2000s in the UK "Modernising Government White Paper"<sup>40</sup>: designing policies around outcomes; making sure policies are inclusive, fair and evidence-based; avoiding unnecessary burdens on businesses; involving others in policymaking; becoming more forward and outward-looking or learning from experience.

The level of innovation can be based on the extent in which the policy under study has already achieved the aspects previously described: To what extent has the policy involved others in policymaking? Has it been designed around outcomes? .... For instance, the level of innovativeness will depend very much on the point of departure of the policies analysed and how far have they gone in these aspects. This makes the concept very subjective, and context based. In this sense, one could speak of a very innovative policy initiative in the Bologna City Council, but the initiative could be considered as non-innovative in another urban context.

Although there is not a clear homogeneous understanding on what an innovative policy is, both for the interviewed experts and researchers, the interviews conducted for the FUA in Bologna allowed us to gather, in the opinion of the interviewees, which are the most innovative policies for reducing urban inequalities in the FUA of Bologna.

#### ***"Insieme per il Lavoro": A project to reduce the most pressing inequality***

Based on the efficacy that the measure is having and based on a series of innovative features that are later described, the measure has been chosen as the innovative policy from the FUA of Bologna.

The English name of the project is "Together for Work"<sup>41</sup> and its main objective is the integration into the labour market of the people with little autonomy in the search for employment.

The measure was implemented in 2017 by the Municipality, the Metropolitan City and the Archdiocese of Bologna to promote employment of people finding it difficult in the search for employment. It addresses the enhancing of personal motivation, supports basic and specialised training and ensures ad hoc mentoring within companies. The "Together for Work" project has been renewed until 2025, reorienting its new stages towards a more balanced approach to gender and to support those who face labour risks due to Covid-19.

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<sup>40</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/263514/4703.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/263514/4703.pdf)

<sup>41</sup> <https://www.insiemeperilavoro.it/>

The service provides personal advice to the beneficiaries structuring accompaniment paths in the labour world centred on specific personal situations, and without overlapping other public and private based activities that address the same issues. The measure is based on an advisory service that the programme provides, which is free of charge for both the people who register and for the hiring companies. The services include job orientation and accompaniment services (including self-employment paths); job offer/demand matching (business directory makes it possible to target job and training applications according to the needs of the company); activation of training courses in response to requests from our companies; possibility of activating internships in the company; and, mentoring during and after job placement.

The companies that join the project are asked to define the needs of labour insertion, co-design training and guidance courses, accompany self-employment and social economy projects, making available the companies most interesting projects (start-up, training courses, etc.), implement the relationship with the school world and participate in the co-planning of public tenders. The eligibility conditions are quite simple, just having the need to find a job and being unemployed. For this, there is a whole team of people prepared to advise and accompany applicants in the reintegration process.

The service is implemented through a network of actors that include associations, trade unions and the non-profit sector (For example, Adecco, *Agenzia per Lavoro* or the Labour Agency, Social Seed, etc.<sup>42</sup>). One of its specificities is that more than 200 local companies collaborate with the project, of which more than 100 have already signed the Together for Work Board of Trustees to commit themselves to promote the wellbeing of the community.

The service is run by a team composed of 21 staff members who support people looking for guidance and provide the services mentioned. The Coordination Board represents the institutional representation of each of the institution represented in the network (municipality, the region, the chamber of commerce, etc.) and defines and monitors the annual work plan and the available resources. The Technical Board supports the Coordination Board and is composed of technical representatives of the network actors. Finally, the operational coordination of the project is assigned to the Economic Development Area of the MCB.

For the period 2017-2021 the project had a 14-million-euro budget (10 from the Municipality of Bologna 4 from the Archdiocese of Bologna)<sup>43</sup>. At the end of 2021, a total of 1,345 employment contracts were achieved through the programme and 1,193 training packages offered.

The innovative aspects of the project are highlighted in the following lines:

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<sup>42</sup> See the network actors in [https://www.insiemeperilavoro.it/it\\_network](https://www.insiemeperilavoro.it/it_network)

<sup>43</sup> [https://www.cittametropolitana.bo.it/portale/Archivio\\_news/Insieme\\_per\\_il\\_lavoro](https://www.cittametropolitana.bo.it/portale/Archivio_news/Insieme_per_il_lavoro)

- It is an outcome-oriented project: it has achieved concrete outcomes in terms of the employment contracts and training packages delivered. Although we have no access to a cost-effect evaluation of the programme that links the outcomes with the investment, we rely on the opinion of a local expert. An advisor of labour policies and the labour market at the municipal level, considers this initiative as the project with the greatest impact on reducing inequality in the territory.
- The programme has achieved the expected outcome in terms of reducing inequality. Following our previous argument, this project can shed light into how it has managed to reduce inequality and some lessons can be of value when thinking about projects addressed to young people. It is worth thinking about what can be learned and applied when addressing youth inequalities.
- The programme is implemented through a public and private partnerships: involving local and regional actors, aimed at reducing inequality at the urban level, which is an innovative approach, both in terms of the funding model and the collaborative implementation. Learning on how this can be co-funded and which is the implementation role of each actor, can be of value for other urban areas that aim at connecting more and better with relevant actors in their territories for addressing inequality.

## 4 Discussion and conclusions

Measuring urban inequality at FUA level is a priority for responding to the changes that the FUA of Bologna has undergone in the last decade in terms of its demographics, economic performance, labour market, housing, and social protection. Some of these changes are the population increase based on incoming migratory flows and the high economic capacity of the FUA (reflected through upwards trend both in terms of income and employment), and the wealthy labour market. Policymakers face the challenge of understanding how these changes affect the most vulnerable groups of people in the FUA such as women, young people or those living in the outskirts of the FUA.

Data around inequalities, that has been analysed in this report, is mainly available at the regional level. One of the main challenges for policymakers in the FUA of Bologna is to have more detailed information on the indicators used to analyse the urban inequality dimensions. Some progress is being made at the MCB level, with statistical studies in different dimensions such as housing through the Observatory of the Living (ORSA).

Delivering efficient policies to improve urban inequality deals with the challenge of the complex multilevel governance of the policies that tackle the inequalities in the FUA of Bologna as they are designed and implemented through a different mix of administrative competences and powers (education, employment, housing, or social protection as well as youth) that involve the national, regional and the metropolitan and municipal levels. This governance complexity can sometimes slow down the deployments of policies targeting inequality and a greater coordination on the policies that are tackling inequality is needed to be more efficient.

Firstly, regarding education inequality, the challenge is to address the educational services' provision that show a geographical unbalance in the way they reach the youth across the entire territory, which is very heterogeneous (some are rural, other urban...). It has also been possible to observe the existence of regional educational inequalities between urban centres and periphery, mainly with regards to the ability of educational centres to react and give more agile responses.

Secondly, regarding employment, despite that the local administrative level is the most appropriate administrative level to deal with labour inequalities, the local limitation of competences slows the provision and focus of the resources to fight against labour inequality in the territory. There is a need to overcome the fragmentation of competencies so that the resources directed at the citizens are more efficient by setting up more stable coordination bodies, such as interinstitutional meetings, for example.

Third, regarding housing, despite housing policies correspond mainly to the regional government, the FUA of Bologna is developing complementary measures that are fundamental to deal with local challenges. These are, among others, an increasing housing demand (from students, foreign population, and tourists); its influence in

increasing purchasing and rental prices; spatial segregation of rural and foreign population; and the need to provide housing to families that cannot afford housing rental or purchase. Some of these complementary measures include the provision of social housing or providing grant to families that cannot afford the rental payments in private market.

Regarding the social protection and youth, there is a need to strengthen the multilevel coordination so to be more efficient in policy delivery by establishing common national policy frameworks that can then be adapted to regional and local specificities by local implementation bodies.

In addition to the reflection on the need to address the multilevel governance challenges for delivering efficient policies in the domains studied, we identify other conclusions by dimensions.

Regarding employment and labour market, the FUA of Bologna, the MCB and the region reflect a wealthier labour market than the national level (in terms of employment and unemployment rates, both total and for female) mainly driven by the manufacturing sector. Job quality is a challenge in Emilia Romagna as from 2008 involuntary part-time work is increasing, female employment rate is decreasing; and youth unemployment rate is four times that of the total unemployment in 2020. Furthermore, the pandemic seems to have increased labour inequalities in the FUA territory. In this regard, the social group most affected by the pandemic has been women, young people, and foreigners. Gender labour inequality exists at both the MCB and Bologna levels, where some actions have been developed to address this. Despite national emergency measures during the pandemic and the national efforts to fight against poverty (the Citizen Income), it is still unclear whether these measures are supporting those most in need. Employment challenges call for special attention to be paid to these groups.

In educational matters, prior to the pandemic, various projects had already been carried out in the municipality of Bologna to combat school dropouts and social exclusion. However, Covid-19 has limited the scope of these projects. Additionally, the absence of technological resources -computers, connectivity, etc.-, essential for distance teaching and teleworking among young people at risk of social exclusion, has also delayed the implementation of these projects.

Housing access is becoming more difficult in some areas of the city like the centre, and purchase and rental prices are affected by the increasing demand of university students and tourists in the city. This affects families that can not afford private market conditions, and around 6% of the population is already living social houses managed by the municipality.

A final conclusion is linked to the need to work very closely with the stakeholders as fighting inequality is not only in the hands of the public institutions, as many other actors in the FUA might act collaboratively in fighting inequality: schools, associations, firms,

universities, etc. For example, in recent years, the involvement of the firm sector in the educational system and the various projects to personalise training courses have sought to reduce the possibility of school dropouts. In line with this topic, the increased participation of citizens, and not only through associations, in political decisions represents a notable change that must be supported so that it moves towards even more concerted and participatory political transformations, in a way that transforms the social reality of the communities involved in the region.

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## Annex

The table below contains data/indicators that display social inequalities in a way that is the most comparable with other urban areas. Each urban report includes this data table, which also intends to show not only the scale and dimensions of inequalities in the functional urban area of Bologna, but also indicates the scale of missing data that makes any comparative research difficult to implement.

Population	Italy (National)	Emilia Romagna (Regional)	Città metropolitana di Bologna (Provincial)	Comune di Bologna (Municipal)
Population in 2007/2008	59,190.143	4,175.075	591,818	372,256
Population in 2011/2012	59,394.207	4,331.343	610,046	380,635
Population in 2018/2019	60,589.445	4,452.629	627,181	390,625
Population aged 15-29 in 2007/2008	9,287.884	--	75,433	46,409
Population aged 15-29 in 2011/2012	9,218.888	--	76,031	46,997
Population aged 15-29 in 2018/2019	9,145.119	--	85,601	53,606

Income/Poverty	Italy (National)	Emilia Romagna (Regional)	Città metropolitana di Bologna (Provincial)	Comune di Bologna (Municipal)
Gini index 2007/2008	31.2	31.3	--	--
Gini index 2011/2012	32.5	28.8	--	--
Gini index 2018/2019	33.4	30.2	--	--
Equalised personal income quintiles (mean for the 1 <sup>st</sup> quintile) 2018/2019	--	--	--	--

Income/Poverty	Italy (National)	Emilia Romagna (Regional)	Città metropolitana di Bologna (Provincial)	Comune di Bologna (Municipal)
Equalised personal income quintiles (mean for the 2 <sup>nd</sup> quintile) 2018/2019	--	--	--	--
Equalised personal income quintiles (mean for the 3 <sup>rd</sup> quintile) 2018/2019	--	--	--	--
Equalised personal income quintiles (mean for the 4 <sup>th</sup> quintile) 2018/2019	--	--	--	--
Equalised personal income quintiles (mean for the 5 <sup>th</sup> quintile) 2018/2019	--	--	--	--
At risk of poverty rate 2007/2008	19.5	8.4	--	--
At risk of poverty rate 2011/2012	19.5	8.8	--	--
At risk of poverty rate 2018/2019	20.3	10.5	--	--
At risk of poverty aged 15-29 in 2007/2008	24.9	--	--	--
At risk of poverty aged 15-29 in 2011/2012	25.4	--	--	--
At risk of poverty aged 15-29 in 2018/2019	24.9	--	--	--

Housing	Italy (National)	Emilia Romagna (Regional)	Città metropolitana di Bologna (Provincial)	Comune di Bologna (Municipal)
Share of housing below market rates (social housing) 2008/2009	4.8	--	--	--
Share of housing below market rates (social housing) 2011/2012	4.9	--	--	--
Share of housing below market rates (social housing) 2018/2019	1.9	--	--	--
Average housing price/average income 2007/2008	118.93	--	--	--
Average housing price/average income 2011/2012	115.80	--	--	--
Average housing price/average income 2018/2019	94.80	--	--	--

Education	Italy (National)	Emilia Romagna (Regional)	Città metropolitana di Bologna (Provincial)	Comune di Bologna (Municipal)
Early leavers from education and training 2007/2008	19.5	14.8	--	--
Early leavers from education and training 2011/2012	17.3	14.7	--	--
Early leavers from education and training 2018/2019	14.5	11.0	--	--
Share of inhabitants aged 15-64 with a maximum ISCED 1 (2) education 2007/2008	--	--	--	--

Education	Italy (National)	Emilia Romagna (Regional)	Città metropolitana di Bologna (Provincial)	Comune di Bologna (Municipal)
Share of inhabitants aged 15-64 with a maximum ISCED 1 (2) education 2011/2012	--	--	--	--
Share of inhabitants aged 15-64 with a maximum ISCED 1 (2) education 2018/2019	--	--	--	--
Enrolment in upper secondary school 2007/2008	82	85	--	--
Enrolment in upper secondary school 2011/2012	83	92	--	--
Enrolment in upper secondary school 2018/2019	83	85	--	--

Employment	Italy (National)	Emilia Romagna (Regional)	Città metropolitana di Bologna (Provincial)	Comune di Bologna (Municipal)
NEET youth aged 15-(24)29 in 2007/2008	19	12.7	--	--
NEET youth aged 15-(24)29 in 2011/2012	21	14.5	--	--
NEET youth aged 15-(24)29 in 2018/2019	19.2 / 18.1	12.3 / 12.1	--	--
Employment rate 2007/2008	56.8	70.2	--	72.9
Employment rate 2011/2012	56.6	67.5	--	68.8
Employment rate 2018/2019	58.5 / 59	69.6 / 70.4	--	74.2

Employment	Italy (National)	Emilia Romagna (Regional)	Città metropolitana di Bologna (Provincial)	Comune di Bologna (Municipal)
Employment rate aged 15-29 in 2007/2008	20.2	31.9	40.6	--
Employment rate aged 15-29 in 2011/2012	18.5	23.75	40.8	--
Employment rate aged 15-29 in 2018/2019	17.7 / 18.5	23.7 / 24.6	39.3	--
Unemployment rate 2007/2008	8.5	2.9	--	2
Unemployment rate 2011/2012	10.8	7.1	--	3.8
Unemployment rate 2018/2019	10.8 / 10.2	6 / 5.7	--	5.4
Unemployment rate aged 15-29 in 2007/2008	27.9	10.7	17	--
Unemployment rate aged 15-29 in 2011/2012	35.3	26.7	17.3	--
Unemployment rate aged 15-29 in 2018/2019	32.2 / 29.2	17.8 / 18.5	14.3	--
Share of precarious employment 2007/2008	2.3	--	--	--
Share of precarious employment 2011/2012	2.4	--	--	--
Share of precarious employment 2018/2019	3.8 / 3.5	--	--	--
Share of precarious employment aged 15-29 in 2007/2008	--	--	--	--

Employment	Italy (National)	Emilia Romagna (Regional)	Città metropolitana di Bologna (Provincial)	Comune di Bologna (Municipal)
Share of precarious employment aged 15-29 in 2011/2012	--	--	--	--
Share of precarious employment aged 15-29 in 2018/2019	--	--	--	--

Health	Italy (National)	Emilia Romagna (Regional)	Città metropolitana di Bologna (Provincial)	Comune di Bologna (Municipal)
Life expectancy 2007/2008	81.6	82.2	80.18	--
Life expectancy 2011/2012	82.4	82.9	80.46	--
Life expectancy 2018/2019	83.4	83.9	81.63	--
Teenage birth rate 2007/2008	--	--	--	--
Teenage birth rate 2011/2012	--	--	--	--
Teenage birth rate 2018/2019	1.1	--	--	--