METREX Autumn Conference 2026

Metropolitan Labs 1, 2 and 3

Rome, 12 November 2026

About the host

Metropolitan City of Rome Capital

Three Labs, three anchor projects



Palazzo Valentini, via IV Novembre: headquarters of the Metropolitan City

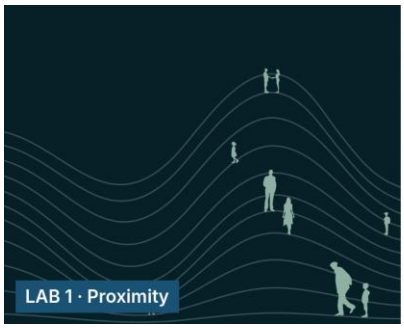


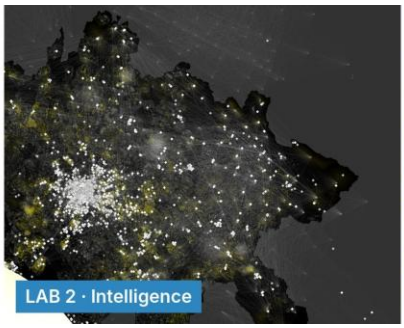
Torre Metropolitana, viale Giorgio Ribotta: single seat of the administration

121
municipalities, Rome included

≈ 5,350 km²
of territory

≈ 4.2 million
inhabitants



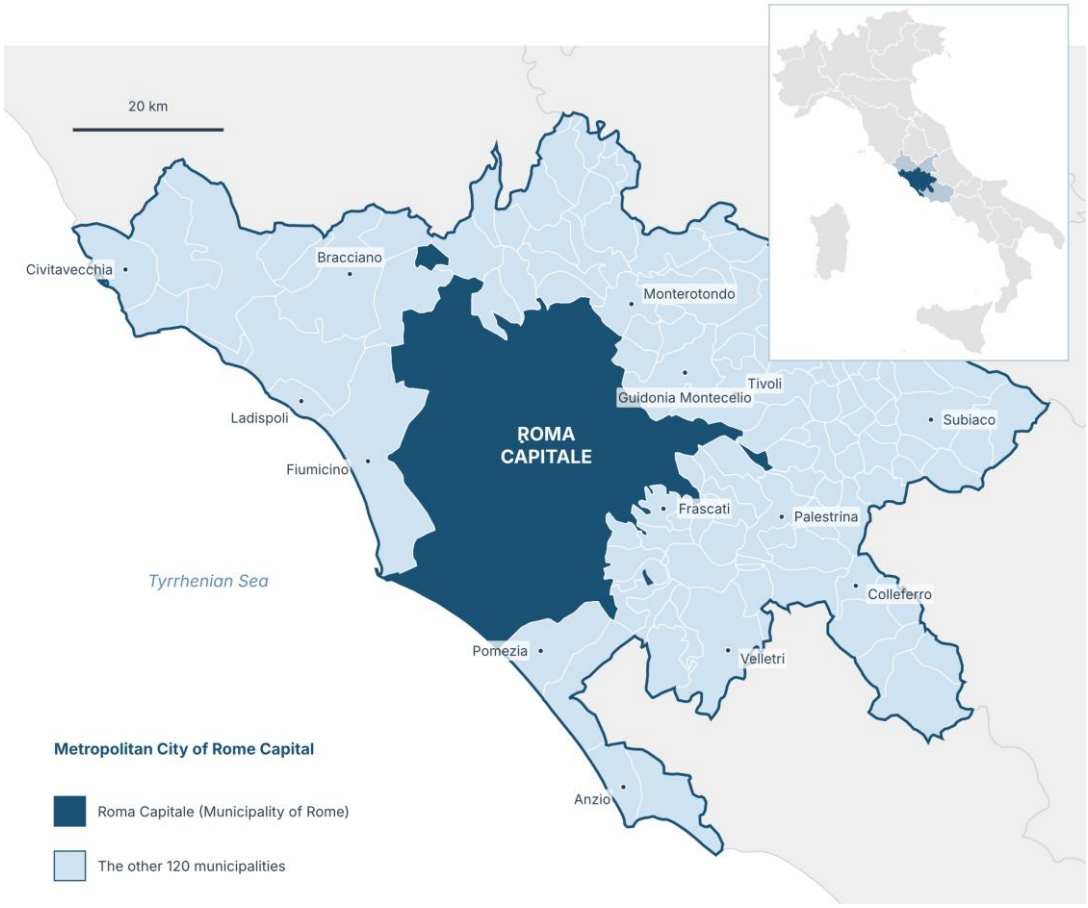




The three Labs: proximity and everyday life (PROWD project), territorial intelligence(BIO-INTE-MOB project) and Food governance al local level (FOODGaP project)

1. The Metropolitan City of Rome Capital

The Metropolitan City of Rome Capital (Città metropolitana di Roma Capitale, CMRC) hosts the METREX Autumn Conference 2026 and its three Metropolitan Labs. It governs the metropolitan area of Rome: 121 municipalities, Rome included, covering about 5,350 km² and home to about 4.2 million people.



The 121 municipalities of the Metropolitan City of Rome Capital

A new name for an old institution

The Metropolitan City took over from the Province of Rome on 1 January 2015, under national Law 56/2014. The Province had been set up in 1870, when Rome became part of the Kingdom of Italy, and has had its seat at Palazzo Valentini since 1873. Its territory was redrawn when the provinces of Frosinone, Rieti and Viterbo (1927) and Latina (1934) were created. The Metropolitan City inherited the boundaries, the staff and many of the functions of the Province.



Palazzo Valentini in a historical map of Rome



The courtyard of Palazzo Valentini



The entrance of Palazzo Valentini

What the reform added

The Metropolitan City kept the Province's duties on territorial planning, environment, roads and school buildings. Law 56/2014 gave it new ones: strategic planning for the whole area, mobility, the promotion of economic and social development, and support to municipalities. By law, the Mayor of Rome is also the Metropolitan Mayor.



The Torre Metropolitana in viale Giorgio Ribotta, where the offices of the Metropolitan City are brought together



CMRC combines its Metropolitan Strategic Plan with key sectoral strategies and plans addressing sustainable mobility, climate and energy, and food systems.

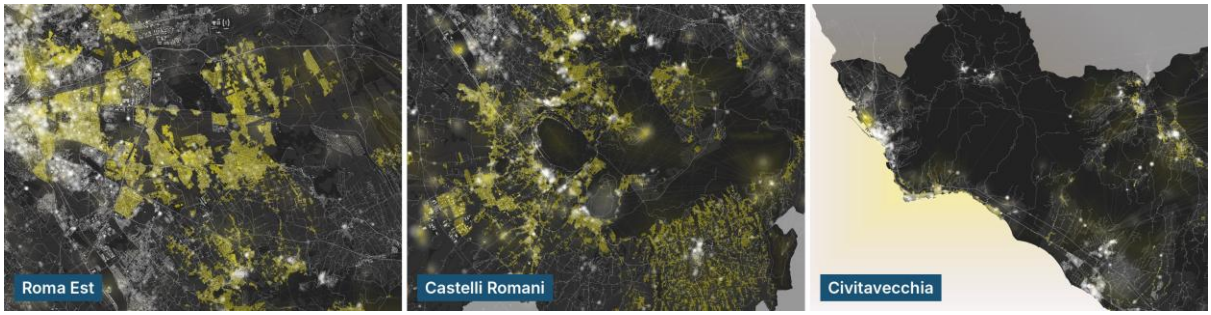
2. Roma Capitale and the Metropolitan City: two authorities, two scales

The names are easy to confuse. Roma Capitale is the Municipality of Rome, which has carried the title "Rome Capital" since 2010. The Metropolitan City of Rome Capital is the wider authority that covers Rome and the other 120 municipalities. The two share a Mayor, but they are separate bodies, with their own councils, budgets and responsibilities. In the fields of the three Labs, their plans and policies work at different scales and complement each other:

	Roma Capitale Municipality of Rome	**Metropolitan City** of Rome Capital
Territory	The City of Rome, organised in 15 Municipi	121 municipalities, Rome included
Mobility	Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (PUMS) of Roma Capitale	Metropolitan PUMS, approved in December 2024, which integrates and harmonises the PUMS of Roma Capitale across the whole metropolitan area

	Roma Capitale Municipality of Rome	**Metropolitan City** of Rome Capital
Food	Rome Food Policy (2021) and Rome Food Council; the first Food Plan of Roma Capitale is being finalised	Metropolitan Strategic Plan for Agri-Food Systems (PSMSA), being finalised with the Metropolitan Food Committee
Strategic planning	Sector-specific strategic plans and programmes	Metropolitan Strategic Plan: the strategic plan for the whole area, a core task assigned by Law 56/2014

The two authorities work together in many ways. They cooperate under a framework agreement signed in 2022; the Metropolitan City takes part in drafting the Food Plan of Roma Capitale, and Roma Capitale sits on the Metropolitan Food Committee; both are partners, with Roma Servizi per la Mobilità, in the Rome pilot of BIO-INTEL-MOB.



Metropolitan Strategic Plan: three "ready territories" and their priority areas of intervention. Source: Metropolitan City of Rome Capital

3. Three Labs, three anchor projects

Each Metropolitan Lab is anchored in a European project in which the Metropolitan City is a partner. The projects bring real cases, partners and questions from the Rome metropolitan area into the discussion with the METREX network.

Lab 1
Proximity, accessibility and everyday life · PROWD

Lab 2
Metropolitan governance: institutions, citizens and intelligence · BIO-INTEL-MOB

Lab 3
Reconnecting territories through food · FOODGaP

All three Labs report to the harvest plenary on the afternoon of 12 November and contribute to the Rome Declaration of the conference.

METROPOLITAN LAB 1

Proximity, accessibility and everyday life: beyond the 15-minute city

The Lab

The 15-minute city was designed for dense urban centres and does not work as well in suburban and periurban areas. PROWD proposes a different approach: not to make these areas more like a city centre, but to understand and strengthen what already works there, such as associations that manage public spaces, schools open to other initiatives and open spaces used by young people.

The Lab starts from a concrete local case of unconventional responses to everyday needs, which today sit outside both the Metropolitan Strategic Plan and the metropolitan PUMS. The question for peers: How can metropolitan institutions develop flexible and stable policy frameworks that enable locally rooted initiatives to respond to different territorial needs, while ensuring continuity and coordination across levels of governance?

The anchor project: PROWD

Full title	PROximity Without Density
Programme	Driving Urban Transitions (DUT) Partnership, Call 2023, under Horizon Europe
Duration	2024–2027
Coordinator	Roma Tre University
Partners	Nine partners from Italy, Hungary, Portugal, Romania and Lithuania, including the Metropolitan City of Rome Capital
Pilot areas	Low-density edges of Rome, Lisbon, Bucharest and Vilnius; in Rome, the northern Tiber Valley
Main results	Co-designed territorial scenarios, Collaborative Pacts between administrations and local actors, a Proximity-Oriented Web Tool for residents

The role of the Metropolitan City

Through the Strategic Planning Unit of Department IV, the Metropolitan City leads stakeholder engagement in the Rome pilot: it coordinates workshops, organises the Urban Talks and leads the local Collaborative Pact. The results can feed the Metropolitan Strategic Plan.

Where the results go

- Three or four recommendations for the Metropolitan City, referring to its planning instruments
- One message for the Rome Declaration
- The PROWD pilot in the Tiber Valley and the project partners in Lisbon, Bucharest and Vilnius

METROPOLITAN LAB 2

Metropolitan Governance Lab: connecting institutions, citizens and intelligence

The Lab

Mobility, logistics, infrastructure and public services rarely match administrative boundaries, while responsibilities remain split among institutions. Metropolitan governance needs ways to connect public authorities, citizens, territorial knowledge and decisions. The Lab works on three connections:

Institutions and territories
Overcoming fragmentation and cooperating across boundaries

Citizens and decisions
Citizens as real participants, not occasional consultees

Intelligence and action
Monitoring, digital infrastructure and shared knowledge for better decisions

The anchor project: BIO-INTEL-MOB

Programme	Horizon Europe, grant agreement no. 101239638
Duration	2026–2029
Coordinator	Sapienza University of Rome
Partners	32 organisations in 13 countries
Pilots	Mega pilots in Rome, Cascais and Riga–Vilnius; satellite pilots including Ciampino, in the metropolitan area
Rome mega pilot	Urban and periurban logistics and mobility. Partners: Sapienza University of Rome, CTLup, ILP, Isfort, LDL, Roma Capitale, Roma Servizi per la Mobilità, the Metropolitan City of Rome Capital and the Municipality of Ciampino

In Rome, the pilot is developing a mobility data space, a digital twin of logistics corridors, green and safe freight routing, circular logistics and Smart City Governance tools (SCGo), and is verifying five possible locations for Peri-Urban Mobility Hubs near metro lines A, B and C.

The role of the Metropolitan City

The Metropolitan City is one of the public partners of the Rome mega pilot, with Roma Capitale and Roma Servizi per la Mobilità, and brings the metropolitan scale into it. The project's first analysis shows why this matters: in periurban areas "what is missing is not technology, but integration", with responsibilities spread across municipal, regional and national authorities.

Where the results go

- Three or four Metropolitan Governance Propositions for the Rome Declaration
- A map of the connections between institutions, citizens and intelligence, built during the session
- Shared capacity-building needs and opportunities for cooperation

METROPOLITAN LAB 3

Reconnecting territories: food systems, climate resilience and the right to food

Interreg Co-funded by the European Union
NEXT MED
FOODGaP

The Lab

Food systems link land, water, energy, markets, public services and people, across areas much larger than a single municipality. Climate change makes these links visible, and shocks do not hit everyone in the same way: a food system can keep working and still leave some people, or some territories, without adequate, healthy and affordable food. The Lab uses food as a practical field to test how metropolitan governance can reconnect territories, actors and policies.

In the Rome area, this approach is being pursued through the Metropolitan Strategic Plan for Agri-Food Systems (PSMSA), developed with the Metropolitan Food Committee across 121 municipalities.

Two food policies, two scales

Roma Capitale and the Metropolitan City have separate food policies, which work at different scales and complement each other:

	Roma Capitale Municipality of Rome	**Metropolitan City** of Rome Capital
Food policy	Rome Food Policy, adopted unanimously by the Capitoline Assembly (Resolution no. 38 of 27 April 2021); the first Food Plan of Roma Capitale is being finalised	Metropolitan Strategic Plan for Agri-Food Systems (PSMSA), being finalised
Participatory body	Rome Food Council (Consiglio del Cibo di Roma), set up by the 2021 resolution; it grew out of a bottom-up process and gathers over 200 organisations	Metropolitan Food Committee (Tavolo Metropolitano del Cibo), with the Metropolitan City, Roma Capitale, the Rome Chamber of Commerce and the main farming, cooperative, trade, craft and industry organisations

	Roma Capitale Municipality of Rome	**Metropolitan City** of Rome Capital
Main focus	Food in the city: the right to food, school canteens, neighbourhood markets, food waste	The link between the city and its agricultural territory: supply chains, quality products, rural areas and territorial cohesion across the 121 municipalities

The two plans are being built together. The Metropolitan City is part of the working group that is drafting the Food Plan of Roma Capitale, where CIHEAM Bari, Lead Partner of FOODGaP, acts as technical partner. Roma Capitale sits on the Metropolitan Food Committee, and FOODGaP will invite the Rome Food Council into the PSMSA consultation.

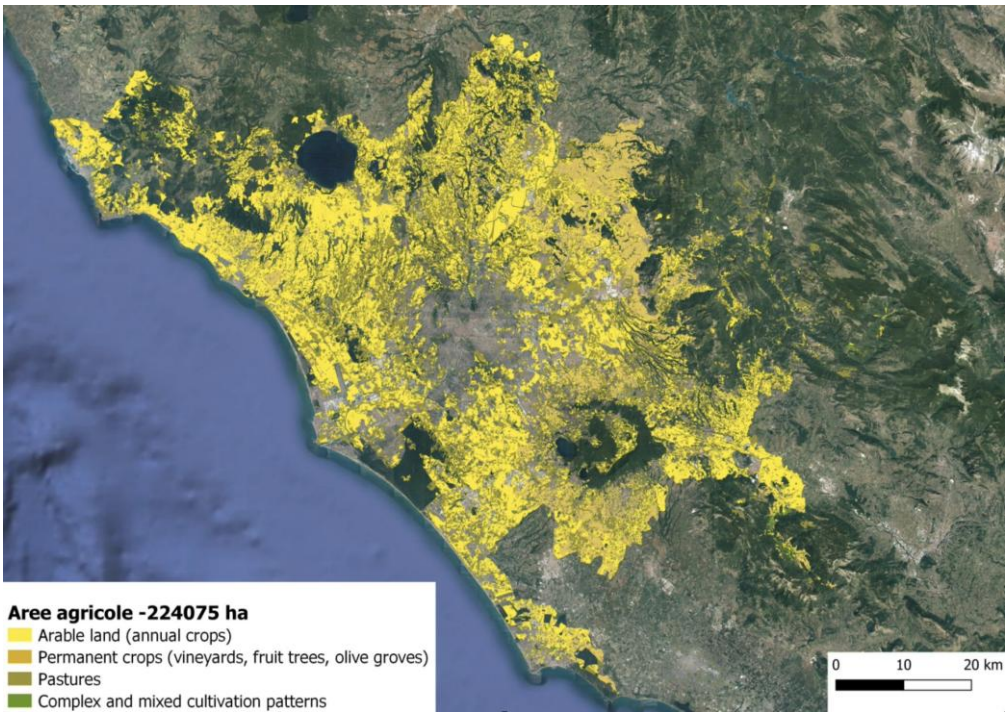


Mapping, markets and participation: the metropolitan food system of Rome

The PSMSA and its governance model

The PSMSA is the food plan of the metropolitan area. It rests on a multi-level co-governance model, presented to the FOODGaP partners at the Rome Living Lab on 6 May 2026, which follows a quintuple-helix approach: public institutions, at metropolitan and municipal level; universities and research centres; producers and private operators; civil society organisations and community initiatives; the natural environment, treated as an active component to protect and regenerate.

The model treats the food system as a socio-ecological system. It aims to bridge sectors and levels of government, and to value the quality products of the metropolitan countryside, such as Olio di Roma PGI and the historic cheeses of the Roman countryside, along with social and multifunctional agriculture.



Agricultural areas of the metropolitan territory: about 224,075 ha. Source: Metropolitan City of Rome Capital, Strategic Plan

The next steps

Committee review
The Metropolitan Food Committee completes its work on the Plan

▶

Formal adoption
The Plan is formally adopted by the Metropolitan City

▶

Public consultation
In line with national guidelines on participation and the quintuple-helix approach

The Plan is complete but not yet adopted: it can still take on new ideas, and the people who will carry it out are already known. The core of the consultation is a series of three FOODGaP focus groups, the first at the METROPOLITANO Urban Center Roma.

The anchor project: FOODGaP

FOODGaP (Food Governance and Policies at Local Level) is an Interreg NEXT MED 2021–2027 project (2025–2028) that strengthens the capacity of Mediterranean cities and local authorities to design and govern participatory, integrated and sustainable food policies, and will launch a Mediterranean Coalition on food policies. METREX is one of its associated partners.

Partner	Role in FOODGaP
CIHEAM Bari	Lead Partner; coordinates the Mediterranean Food Policy Coalition
Metropolitan City of Rome Capital	Partner, through the Strategic Planning Unit of Department IV; coordinates capacity building (peer learning, webinars, city-to-city exchange) and runs the Rome Living Lab
CURSA-OIPA	Scientific partner of the Metropolitan City; supports participatory governance, the Living Lab and the Coalition

Partner	Role in FOODGaP
Municipality of Tyre (Lebanon), Mersin Metropolitan Municipality (Türkiye), EPLO (Greece), Municipality of Djerba Houmt Souk (Tunisia)	Partners

In Rome, FOODGaP is the vehicle for consulting on the PSMSA and testing its first actions.

Where the results go

Rome Declaration
Metropolitan Food and Resilience Propositions feed the Rome Declaration of the METREX Autumn Conference.

PSMSA consultation
They enter the public consultation on the Plan, starting with the first FOODGaP focus group.

Local Action Plan
They inform the Local Action Plan that the Rome Living Lab will co-design, and the pilot action it will test.

Mediterranean partners
They reach the FOODGaP partners and the Mediterranean Food Policy Coalition that the project will launch.

"Lab 3 is the first step of the consultation, as well as a conference session."

Contacts

The METREX Autumn Conference is hosted by the Metropolitan City of Rome Capital as a whole.

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