Metropolitan Governance in Spain: The case of Madrid

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My idea is to pose interactive questions during the presentation!

1. Background & Spain in Figures
2. Overview of metropolitan governance in Spain
3. The metropolitan area of Madrid
4. Demand of metropolitan institutionalization
5. Enabling and hindering factors
6. Final question (open debate)
Background

• The Institute of Local Law and Government (IDGL-UAM)

• Local Government and the Changing Urban-Rural Interplay (LOGOV Project)

• **My specific interest in the Canadian case?**: to know more about your dynamics and institutional arrangements at metropolitan level.

• My starting point: the Spanish case, which is very anomalous in the European context.
Spain in figures: 48.692.804 inhabitants in 506.030 km²

Do you think that Spain is a rural or an urban country?

• A quasi-federal country with 17 Comunidades Autónomas + 2 autonomous cities (Ceuta and Melilla), 8.131 municipalities (85% =<5000 pop. / 4%>20.000=100.000 pop. / 0,07% >500.000 pop.)

• “Spain has an urban society in a predominantly rural territory” (territorial cleavage: the ‘Empty Spain’-). The 80% of population is settled in the 20% of the territory, mainly in urban areas and along the coast (Spanish Urban Agenda, 2019).

• In 2016, Spain identified statistically 70* Functional Urban Areas (Eurostat/OECD), 45 of them are considered “big FUA”: population centre >100.000 pop. (approximately 70% of the whole Spanish population).
Is it possible to create metropolitan governments in Spain?

• The 1978 Constitution establishes that the municipalities and provinces are the basic entities of local government.

• The Law 7/1985, that regulates the Local Regime, defines metropolitan areas as "local entities constituted by municipalities of large urban agglomerations between whose population centers exist economic and social links that make joint planning and coordination of certain services and works necessary" (art. 43).

• The approval, regulation and suppression of metropolitan areas, prior audience to the affected councils and municipalities, is attributed to the Autonomous Communities (= Canadian provinces).
Functional Urban Areas in Spain

Fuente: Elaboración propia a partir de INE (2021).
How many metropolitan areas have been formally constituted in Spain?

- In practice, there is only 1*: the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona (Catalonia, 2011) *(The Metropolitan Area of Vigo (Galicia, 2012) is blocked).

- In 1980s, the existing metropolitan institutions in Barcelona, Madrid, Bilbao and Valencia were abolished by the regional parliaments (the new regional governments did not want to cede power to large agglomerations and the municipalities neither. In addition, the national government has been absent in the institutional management of a metropolitan system).

- Nowadays, there is a variety of formulas (hard and soft) to deal with metropolitan challenges through cooperation instruments (intermunicipal multi-purpose/single-purpose authorities, multilevel partnerships, and public-private agreements).

However, is this metropolitan governance or rather modes of governance within metropolitan areas?
Metropolitan awareness in Spain

Google Trends (July 23, 2024)
Metropolitan awareness in Spain

Interest over time

Interest by subregion:

1. Catalonia: 100
2. Galicia: 68
3. Andalusia: 47
4. Valencian Community: 42
5. Navarre: 36

Google Trends (July 23, 2024)
• It is unique case in that it began as a formal metropolitan authority (1963). This preexisting institution was one of the reasons that justified the formal creation of the region of Madrid (1983).

• The FUA of Madrid has 7.005.286 inhabitants, an extension of 7.882 km², and integrates 166 municipalities (INE, 2020), while the region of Madrid comprises 179 municipalities.

• The Madrid Regional Transport Consortium (CRTM, 1985) covers 181 municipalities from other 2 Autonomous Communities.
The metropolitan area of Madrid (II)

Historically, what was the “metropolitan issue” in Madrid?

• The **increasing migrant pression** on Madrid (from rural areas) entered the national political agenda in the 1950s.

• The *Ley sobre el Área Metropolitana de Madrid* (1963) was approved in response to the need to review the **urban and territorial planning** competences in the metropolitan area.

• The **region of Madrid** was formally constituted in 1983 and assumed competences over **territorial planning**. Its uniprovincial character favored identification of the metropolitan area with the Madrid region in terms of government action and policy implementation.

• In the 1980s, the “coordination issue” increasingly lost relevance on the agenda, in favor of the **promotion of economic development** (the spatial planning issue remained as a secondary topic).
In 1995, under the political leadership of the Popular Party (liberal-conservative party) started the emergence of a ‘successful’ pro-growth metropolitan regime (Pierre, 1999).
Currently, is there any “metropolitan demand/awareness” in Madrid?

Carmena propone crear 'Madrid Área Metropolitana' para planificar la movilidad entre Ayuntamiento y Comunidad
And what about the political parties?

Analysis of metropolitan demand in regional/municipal electoral programs of political parties regarding Madrid during the period 2011-2023.

(i=mentions to the metropolitan issue)
Demand of metropolitan institutionalization (III)

• The topic was **introduced recently** and widespread during the 2019 regional and municipal elections. In this moment, the PSM (socialist party), Ciudadanos (liberal-moderate), Más Madrid (left-wing) and the Madrid en Pie (left-wing) formation expressly incorporated the issue in their electoral programs, but not the PP (liberal-moderate/right wing).

• The parties more committed to greater **institutionalization spread the metropolitan approach to all territorial** policies (housing, social cohesion, territorial planning, etc.) which require greater coordination.

• This generates **tensions between the pro-growth metropolitan regime** that has dominated the **region and the rationalization of territorial policies to address social cohesion and environmental issues**. In addition, ‘metropolitan’ municipalities prefer to keep their competences in urban planning without coordination at metropolitan level.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Madrid</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Laws/regulations that allow (or promote) global agreements</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>Supra-level governmental support (e.g. providing incentives)</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Political support from all local governments in the metropolitan area (or a critical number of them), including the central city</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>A clear division of functions between levels of government/local bodies</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>Availability of reasonable institutional, administrative or financial capacity</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Success experiences in the territory about coordination of service/infrastructure management</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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Source: Own elaboration, adapted from Andersson (2015)
Hindering factors

<table>
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<tr>
<td>Laws/regulations that limit or prohibit governance initiatives/metropolitan mechanisms</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Discourage higher-level government (for example, due to different agendas)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Parochialism and fragmentation of governance (lack of local support)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Opposition by wealthier local governments and their constituents to participating and sharing decisions/powers sub-delegated to metropolitan agreements</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>Uncertainty about “who is responsible for what”; overlapping expense responsibilities</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Limited institutional, administrative or financial capacity at the local level</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>Lack of success stories in the concrete coordination of service/infrastructure management</td>
<td>No</td>
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Source: Own elaboration, adapted from Andersson (2015)
Final question

Compared to the Canadian context, which similarities/differences do you find?
Thank you!
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Merci!