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**City marketing in local governance:  
a comparison between two Italian places\*.**

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# **City marketing in local governance: a comparison between two Italian places.**

## **Summary**

The paper examines the role of city marketing in local governance, verifying how it is widespread. Particularly, it compares two different Italian areas characterized, traditionally, by north-south traditional dualism, and at regional level (Lombardy/Calabria) and at cities level (Bergamo/Catanzaro). The attention is focused on strategic choices of three different local bodies (Commune, Region, Chamber of Commerce). The study is exploratory and it is based on a holistic approach through specific drivers (objectives, stakeholders involvement, communications, performance control). The results of work highlight that the role of city marketing isn't widespread, and often it refers to isolated programs with low coordination among the actors that don't make "network".

**Key words: city marketing, local governance, place benchmarking.**

## **1. Topics and objective**

The transition from the random addition of some promotional activities to the existing tool box of planning instruments, to a more far reaching application of marketing as a means of viewing and treating places as a whole, was neither smooth nor complete<sup>1</sup>. However by the beginning of the 1990s there was a serious attempt to create a distinctive city marketing approach<sup>2</sup>.

Actually, city marketing plays an important role in decision taken by local authorities regarding socio-economic development strategies, seen that the need to attract different kinds of stakeholders is even greater.

City marketing has been facilitated by theoretical developments within the marketing discipline that paved the way for the comprehension of implications for urban planning and management (Ward, 1998). Today it has become a necessity with regard to the processes of global competition of cities (tourist attraction, place branding, urban governance)<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> The idea to distinguish a place from another one is not recent. Places have long felt a need to differentiate themselves from each other, to assert their individuality in pursuit of various economic, political or socio-psychological objectives. The attempt of governments to shape a specifically-designed place identity and promote it to identified markets, external or internal, is almost as old as civic government itself (AMA, 2007).

<sup>2</sup> Until 30 years ago there was a general acceptance that promotion (largely treated as a synonym for advertising) was a valid activity for public sector management agencies, and that the systematic application of marketing was relevant to collective goals and practices and thus an essential component of the study of places and management (Burgess, 1982, pp. 11–17).

<sup>3</sup> City marketing has been employed in most cases as a response to certain economic, political and social changes in cities and their operational environment. Particularly, it constitutes one of the most interesting areas of research in the last twenty years, since many cities, especially in Europe (Glasgow, Barcelona, Lyon, etc.), use promotion policies in order to support their image and become competitive among other cities (Boisen, 2007; Jensen-Butler, 1997).

In Italy it has been facilitated by the fact that there has been a strong and significant shift of the decisional and economic power from the central government to the local bodies. Its use has been accelerated in an attempt by cities to position themselves strongly in the competitive arena for finite and increasingly mobile distinctive resources, investments capital, relocation of companies, visitors and residents<sup>4</sup>.

Anyway, the different planning instruments have to follow at least two governance levels (see figure 1):

- at the first level, among the economic/financial planning tools adopted by different public bodies, the Developing Regional Plan that individualises the general objectives and the strategies to pursue according to inter-sector planning logic, and the Strategic Provincial Plan that specifies the regional strategies and establishes the coherences among the regional model of development and the policies of the single provinces;
- at the second level, among the territorial planning tools in strictly way intended (City Marketing Plan), that have the aim to organise, at regional and provincial level, the territory, and the spatial position of different systems (such as the environmental one, the mobility system one, etc.), in a efficient way<sup>5</sup>.

So, city marketing represents an innovative philosophy for the promotion and enhancement of the peculiar resources within a given geographic and socio-cultural context with the objective of producing an exponential increase in the capacity of attractiveness of such territory (Metaxas, 2006, pp. 399-418).

To this end new actors have emerged, be they public or private, in local development. In fact, there are several examples of agencies, companies and offices of various nature, which all ensued with the same goals set: to re-launch the territory of reference by deploying all the financial opportunities offered by the respective institutions (Regions, State, E.U.).

Therefore, the objective of this paper is to verify how is widespread the city marketing in local governance and, in particular, to analyze and compare the situation between different regional areas (Lombardy/Calabria) and cities (Bergamo/Catanzaro), traditional expression of North-South Italian dualism.

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<sup>4</sup> As pointed out by Kavaratzis, the concept and methods of branding are also employed as an instrument of city marketing in order to associate the place with wider desirable qualities in the perceptions held by relevant target audiences (Kavaratzis, 2004)

<sup>5</sup> In other words, the “functional utility” of the City Marketing Plan (PMK) means that the action develops itself starting from the common assumption it has to share with the programming local system in a formal way (Moore, 1995). In this sense, the plan can help to clarify, integrate and valorise the structures (territorial,

## 2. Literature analyses

As pointed out in table 1, the predominant concept of city marketing refers to different definitions shifted from the business contexts to the geographical ones (Lever, Turok, 1999, pp. 719-793). The aims are to reach the local development thanks to the attraction of investments and/or tourists, and the maximization of welfare by the satisfaction of users. Moreover, it is possible to find reference to the concept of market, often explicitly indicated. Mainly, the authors support that city marketing refers to a place planning procedure related to two fundamental parameters concerning the purchase of goods/services that the place provides: a) the satisfaction of the expectations of the effective market targets (enterprises and residents); b) the satisfaction of the expectations of the potential market targets (enterprises and visitors).

**Table 1: Main topics of City Marketing**

<b>Authors</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Ashworth, Voodg (1990)	<i>City marketing describes various ways in which cities can improve their competitive position in a market (...) City marketing can be described as a process whereby urban activities are possible related to the demands of targeted customers so as to maximize the efficient social and economic functioning of the area concerned in accordance with whatever goals have been established. This idea can be applied at many spatial scales and thus city marketing can be viewed as a part of broader geographical marketing alongside regional or even national marketing.</i>
Van der Meer (1990)	<i>City marketing can be described as the set of activities intended to optimize the tuning between the supply of urban functions and the demand from inhabitants, companies, tourists and other visitors.</i>
Kotler, et al. (1999)	<i>Strategic marketing calls for designing a community to satisfy the needs of its key constituencies. Place marketing succeed when stakeholders, such as citizens, workers, and business firm derive satisfaction from their community, and when visitors new businesses and investors find expectations met. [...] Place marketing means designing a place to satisfy the needs of its target markets.</i>
Ward (1998)	<i>Place promotion is the conscious use of publicity and marketing to communicate selective images of specific geographical localities or areas to a target audience.</i>
Caroli (2006)	<i>City marketing is a function that contributes to sustainable development of an area, interpreting the features as offer that satisfies identified target of present</i>

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sectorial, transversal) that have in the marketing a concrete occasion to build a comparative/competitive (global) advantage (Stampacchia, 2007).

	<i>or potential demand. This satisfaction is reached by the creation of positive net value...</i>
Valdani, Ancarani (2001)	<i>Stakeholders' needs and clients/markets analysis with the aim to build, keep and strengthen advantageous relationships among stakeholders (internal city marketing), and with the external public (external city marketing). The final aim is to increase the territory and enterprises value and the attractiveness of them, activating the virtuous circle "satisfaction – attractiveness – value".</i>

Summarizing, city marketing consists of two parts which are known as place assets and place promotion. Place asset is the process of identifying place-specific advantage or attractiveness, and place promotion is the process which makes use of attractiveness (Gold, Ward, 1994).

The debates often configure city marketing as a tactical method of place promotion, while only in few cases it is considered a discipline based on a strategic procedure of development planning. It requires knowledge, target market segmentation, strategic analysis, co-operation between local authorities, the citizens' direct contribution, so that it will not result into a waste of strategy (Van den Berg, Braun, 1999).

Besides, the most significant issue is that the vision, objectives and strategies depend on the local distinctive characteristics of each place, and the City Marketing Plan (CMP) must be focused on these particularities<sup>6</sup>.

### **3. Framework and methodology**

Starting by above-mentioned topics present in literature review, the framework of reference (van Limburg, 1998, pp. 475-477) selected contents four drivers to analyse: objectives; stakeholders involvement; communication; performance control.

1) *Objectives.* City marketing has different objectives such as raising the city's competitive position, attracting inward investment, improving its images, and establishing city identity. These objectives are very useful as place marketing tools. Additionally, they are interrelated and integrated in doing both place promotion and place market.

2) *Stakeholders involvement.* Public-private partnership is key to a city's success, and all stakeholders, including local inhabitants, must play a part in providing the value. Whatever is the context, the full range of stakeholders who define the community must be identified and

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<sup>6</sup> Far from depending only on managerial initiatives, a successful city marketing plan relies on a variety of different factors, such as the presence of upstream bodies managing the territory, specific areas of intervention, and widespread capabilities (Kotler et al., 1993).

selected because of the roles they play in the community, and invited to participate in an open, inclusive brown-field/revitalisation process. Among all the policy-makers involved, Commune, Region and Chamber of Commerce play a crucial role due to their focus on long-run objectives which go beyond economic issues.

3) *Communication*. City marketing system needs an appropriate communication process regarding the territory itself and the external stakeholders. The development of internal communication mechanisms among its actors concerns two levels. The first level regards the institutions that operates at local sphere. The main tools of this type of communication are direct and simplify (personalized informative, summary reports, personal interviews, visits and open meeting). The second level refers to the public opinion. The better tools are the ones of the mass communication (local radio/television, bill-posting, new media). The external communication needs a deep knowledge of the target market in order to modify the communication according to the characteristics of different segments (flagship projects, events, web site, etc.).

4) *Performance control*. The implementation of a city marketing plan has to be supported by instruments that allow the policy makers, or the persons in charged of the task, to control the process and the results achieved. In this way it is possible to obtain an valid assessment of the performance for possible changes.

Regarding methodology of paper, the descriptive nature of the work has been induced from level of the topic knowledge got through the exploratory study. The methodology is divided in two steps: a) web-site overview; b) “in depth” interviews. The choice of the investigation “on field” by a qualitative method (benchmarking multiple cases) finds justification with the nature of the phenomenon analyzed (Yin, 1989).

Because of the difference in the tasks of bodies involved (Commune, Region, Chamber of Commerce) of two different Italian realities (Bergamo in Lombardy region and Catanzaro in Calabria region), we prepared three different semi-structured questionnaires in order to have a more comprehensive knowledge of the orientation of the organizations interviewed<sup>7</sup>. The first aim of doing this was to find out the main strategic choices undertaken, or the potential ones, by the bodies. The second one was to collect information allowing us to compare their strategies.

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<sup>7</sup> Particularly, for evaluating the coherence of their policy, there are 8 questions in common to all the three questionnaires and 27 in common between the one addressed to the municipality and the one of the Region. The

#### **4. Overview of the area selected**

Relatively to Italian reality, we conducted a web-site research aiming to identify city marketing approaches from projects adopted in Italian cities/regions<sup>8</sup> and verify the use of it.

Particularly, by some definitions of city marketing given by communes, provinces, regions and Italian chambers of commerce<sup>9</sup> it is possible to recognise a fundamental gap with the literature, with much more attention to the promotional and communication aspects<sup>10</sup>.

In order to have a more clear picture of the situation existing in Lombardy and Calabria, we extended the research looking at the policies adopted by above-mentioned bodies. We found that the concepts and tools own of territorial marketing are adopted in:

- all the three bodies (Chamber, Commune and Province) in 3 cities in Lombardy (Como, Mantova, Varese) and 1 in Calabria (Catanzaro);
  - in 2 out of the 3 bodies in 3 cities in Lombardy (Bergamo, Sondrio, Milano) and 2 in Calabria (Reggio Calabria, Cosenza) ;
  - in 1 out of the 3 bodies in 1 city in Lombardy (Brescia) and no one in Calabria;
- nobody in 3 cities in Lombardy (Lecco, Lodi, Pavia) and 1 in Calabria (Vibo Valentia).

#### **4.1 Short profile of Lombardy/Bergamo**

Lombardy is situated in the heart of Europe and is at the crossroads between the major East-West communications routes (between the Iberian peninsular and the Balkans) and the North-South routes (between continental Europe and the Mediterranean).

The territory extends over a total surface area of 23,861 sq. km. Lombardy is the fourth largest region in Italy by extension, after Sicily, Piedmont and Sardinia, with a territory that is 47% flat plains, 40% mountainous and the remaining 13% are hills.

The following major towns, are provincial capitals: Bergamo, Brescia, Como, Cremona, Lecco, Lodi, Mantova, Milan, Pavia, Sondrio and Varese. The regional capital is Milan.

Lombardy is the Italian region that has the highest concentration of people, businesses and wealth<sup>11</sup>.

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questionnaire given to the municipality was structured in 35 questions, the one of the Region and the one of the Chamber of Commerce, respectively, in 36 and in 16 demands.

<sup>8</sup> The most interesting web-site consulted at communal, provincial and regional level are those of Varese, Milan (Lombardy), Ancona (Marche), Massa Carrara, Grosseto (Tuscany), Cosenza (Calabria).

<sup>6</sup> The results are quite different because most of the Chambers of Commerce don't have their multi-annual plan published on line. For instance, we found that only 27 (on 107) Chambers of Commerce report the use of territorial marketing actions/plans on their web-site.

<sup>10</sup> Looking at the number of bodies adopting marketing practices, from a research conducted by the Observatory of Italian Chamber of Commerce with reference to year 2006, it results that 63% of them (58% for the north, 63% for the centre and 45% for the south) named the territorial marketing as one of the priority assets of their multi-annual plan.

The road network in Lombardy extends for more than 28,000 kilometres, while the railway system has an extension of 1,875 kilometres. Lombardy has three main airports: the hub at Malpensa, for international flights; Linate, near the Milan city centre for domestic flights; Orio al Serio, near Bergamo for charter and cargo flights.

Three major rating agencies in the world (Moody's, Standard & Poor's and Fitch), agree in assigning the Lombardy Region ratings that are higher than the ratings awarded to the Italian Republic, thereby indicating the Region enjoys excellent financial trustworthiness<sup>12</sup>.

Bergamo, located on a hill near the base of the Alps, was founded by the Celts who called it, Bergheim, meaning "hill town". In terms of land extension, it is the fourth largest cities of the Lombardia Region, and it rises at the feet of the Prealps Orobiche, at the northern border of the Padana Plain, where leads Vallies Seriana and Brembana (crossed by the rivers Serio and Brembo)<sup>13</sup>.

This modern metropolis and industrial centre contains the bus and rail stations, most of the hotels, and the town's commercial and administrative centre. In the last years, Bergamo's airport (Orio al Serio airport) has become the Italian headquarter of the low-cost airline company Ryanair. This means a lot of people running through the city. The final destination of most of them is not Bergamo, but the cities nearby, Milan above all, and the mountains. City marketing could help the city to attract and to persuade these people to spend part of their time in the discover of the place<sup>14</sup>.

The city's position have dropped in the ranking of the most liveable Italian cities, but Bergamo remains a significant player in the working and business context<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> The region represents 15.6% of the overall national population with approximately 9 million inhabitants, with a demographic profile that has 24% of the population under the age of 25 and 17.4% over 65.

<sup>12</sup> By certifying the ratings on credit merits, the international agencies have rewarded the following: the Region's marked political stability, the quality of management and auditing systems, the accuracy of the regional budgets, the coverage achieved of all health-care debts, the limited level of indebtedness associated with high levels of cash liquidity. The ratings achieved, in absolute terms, are among the highest in Europe not only in the public sector, but also when compared to the corporate and banking system.

<sup>13</sup> As a tourism destination, the image of the city is based on two major themes. The first is dominated by the particular urban design. The city of Bergamo is recognisable in the distance thanks to the profile of the "high" city, perched on the summit of a hill chosen for settlements since pre-historic times. Palaces, churches, and huge, stone fortifications used to defend Venice from the Milanese, Spanish and finally Austrian, describe the high/upper city as do narrow, cobblestones streets lined with little houses. Below the lower city is a more modern cityscape that began in the 16th century, home to most of the city's 120.000 residents.

<sup>14</sup> Concerning the population, the city shows the highest growth rate within the Region, explained in great part by the positive migratory ratio. Most of the population is in the "active range" (between 15 and 64 years old), above the national average, third Italian city after Cagliari and Milan. The rate of unemployment is lower than 3%. The pro-capite income and savings are continually the highest in Italy.

<sup>15</sup> In the City's Life Quality Ranking of 2007 (see [www.ilsole24ore.com](http://www.ilsole24ore.com)), Bergamo is ranked 20<sup>th</sup> best city for money-making, 11<sup>th</sup> best city for bank deposits and 6<sup>th</sup> best city to find a job, but takes only 44<sup>th</sup> place in the general ranking (18 position less than 2005).



Widespread in the public opinion is the conviction that Bergamo has one of the most important economic industrial systems at national level. In fact, the economy of the province is very dynamic and competitive at a national, european and international level, seen that a great number of small and medium enterprises operates in several different fields<sup>16</sup>.

#### **4.2 Short profile of Calabria/Catanzaro**

Calabria is a region situated in southern Italy, located at the "toe" of the Italian peninsula. It is bounded to the north by the region of Basilicata, to the south-west by the region of Sicily, to the west by the Tyrrhenian Sea, and to the east by the Ionian Sea and it covers 15,080 km<sup>2</sup>.

The following major towns, are provincial capitals: Catanzaro, Cosenza, Crotona, Reggio Calabria and Vibo Valentia. The regional capital is Catanzaro.

The Isthmus of Catanzaro was and still is the narrowest point of Italy, where the two Bays of S. Eufemia and Squillace are only about 30 km away from each other. Hence, the area was a fundamental place of transit along the East-West route<sup>17</sup>.

Calabria was always a land of emigration, due to the scarcity of good arable lands, and the population is concentrated in the plains and along the coast<sup>18</sup>. Industry development is low and agriculture is not very productive, because of the rugged terrain, but tourism has been steadily on the rise in the last few decades.

Nowadays Catanzaro (about 100.000 inhabitants in 2007) is an important directional and commercial centre, headquarter of some administrative functions concerning the Region: the Government of Region Calabria, the 1<sup>st</sup> Court of Appeal, the Regional School Office, the Regional Military Commando, and most of the agencies operating on the whole territory of Calabria.

The city is endowed with important and modern cultural structures, such as the new Theatre Politeama, the museum of the monumental area of San Giovanni, the open Arena Magna

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<sup>16</sup> Main sectors are business (27%), building trade (20%), manufacturing industries (19%). The G.D.P. of the province of Bergamo is the same amount as the G.D.P. of some European nations. Another feature of Bergamo is the high number of profit and non-profit organizations (sport, cultural and leisure associations).

<sup>17</sup> Catanzaro has a legendary story linked with the foundation of the Greek colony of Skilleion, just few hundred metres away from today's sea area of Catanzaro, by Ulysses according to the legend (others think that it was Menesteos escaping from the Trojan war). Many scholars agree that this was the Homeric land where Ulysses stopped. Right in the middle of the isthmus, in the area of old Teura and today's Tiriolo, the mythical palace of Alcinoos had to be placed. The town of Skilleion (translated into Latin as Scolacium) had a function of control on the Ionian side of the isthmus, while the Tyrrhenian side was controlled by Terina. Therefore, the centre originally had the features of a military district, established at the beginning of the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC. The town was re-founded by Caius Gracchus, and successively it became a renowned centre of silk production and craftsmanship, organised in corporations of artists who enriched the city's cultural life and engaged in trade with Italy and Europe.

Graecia, and Auditorium Casalinuovo. The bridge of Catanzaro is a masterpiece of engineering and architecture for its amazing size and features. Made in 1962, it is the second in the world for light breadth of the arch. The bridge has become the symbol of the city and one of the most famous distinguishing images of Calabria in the world.

According to national data<sup>19</sup>, Catanzaro is the first among the provinces of Calabria which are positioned in the lowest part of the Italian rank (along with many other Southern provinces, confirming the North-South dualism). Particularly dramatic is the employment-business indicator, which places the province at the 101<sup>st</sup> position, witnessing the modest economic dynamism of the province and of the whole region. At the provincial level, the trade sector amounts to 38.9% of the total of the activities, the primary sector to 15.5%, house-building to 13.2%, manufacturing to 10.2%, advanced tertiary to 6.1%, receptive industry to 5.3%, and transportation to 3%.

## **5. Main results of place benchmarking**

The results of place comparison, realized through “in depth” interviews, is presented in their respective drivers (objectives, stakeholders involvement, communication, performance control) of city marketing framework identified. This section reports the way in which the three bodies analysed (Commune, Region, Chamber of Commerce of the area/cities investigated) envisage to achieve their aims and to which of these features they give more importance.

*1) Objectives.* The Commune of Bergamo intends to pursue as its main goals, on the one hand, local economic development and, on the other hand, the improvement of life quality. The factors to focus on these objectives are, in this order, attractiveness (landscaping, natural, historic, cultural, humanistic, architectural and artistic attractiveness), infrastructure, potential life quality, territorial synergies, public services, social equilibrium, and safety.

Particularly, in contrast, the Chamber of Commerce of Bergamo identifies the re-decoration and re-launching of brown-field areas, the improvement of life quality and the attraction of new foreign enterprises as the issues which demand most attention. Further, it lays emphasis on the value of infrastructure, public services and the promotion/attraction of new enterprises

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<sup>18</sup> The region represents 3% of the overall national population with about 2 million inhabitants. Calabria is one of the less densely populated regions in Italy.

<sup>19</sup> In the City's Life Quality Ranking of 2007 (see [www.ilsole24ore.com](http://www.ilsole24ore.com)), Catanzaro is the 99<sup>th</sup> Italian province where is pleasant to live. With reference to the life quality, including GPL per person, bank deposits, and expense per inhabitant, the province of Catanzaro features at the 83<sup>rd</sup> position.

as the Commune's priorities. Moreover, it regards the promotion and the support in the establishment of new enterprises as its goal. It wants to focus its attention on these factors list: internationalisation, training and education, typical products and tourism.

For the Lombardy Region, the strategic actions concern the local economic development, the attraction of new foreign enterprises and the development of the appeal from a tourist point of view. It wants to reach these objectives by enhancing attractiveness, local propensity, territorial synergies (public/private partnerships), infrastructures to sustain local development, and living standards.

The main goals set out by the Commune of Catanzaro for the sustainable economic development of the territory are: local economy development, new jobs creation, new entrepreneurial initiatives promotion, life quality improvement. The strategic priority of the Commune will be to reinforce the infrastructural heritage, for which the drawing of a specific plan is "in embryo". Then, the definition of the strategic lines of the city marketing policy of the Commune is still being elaborated<sup>20</sup>.

The main objectives that the Chamber of Commerce of Catanzaro should set out for the sustainable economic development of the territory, by putting on top the promotion of new entrepreneurial initiatives, followed by the development of local economy, aid to employment and the creation of new jobs, and, finally, the attraction of foreign enterprises. About the Chamber's priorities in territorial marketing are by listing in this order: aid to enterprises, training and updating for entrepreneurs, promotion and support of new activities, and the development of programmes for the environmental quality and sustainability of tourist entrepreneurial activities. The indispensable activities concerning the Chamber's geographic context are put forward in the following way: promotion activities for internationalisation, activities of study and economic information, and promotion for the internal market<sup>21</sup>.

Finally, the main goals pursued by Region Calabria for the territory's sustainable economic development are: the development of local economy, the support of employment and the creation of new jobs, the promotion of new entrepreneurial initiatives, the attraction of foreign enterprises, and the overall improvement of life quality<sup>22</sup>.

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<sup>20</sup> Particularly, the Communal Authority expects that the Chamber of Commerce of Catanzaro favour, in order of importance, the following initiatives: a) the quality of product/services and systems quality; b) firms' internationalisation; c) products/services innovation; d) firms' certification; e) environment protection.

<sup>21</sup> The Chamber aims to favour with its own initiatives the thematic areas of internationalisation, quality of products, services and systems, innovation of product and process, and environmental certification.

<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, the unified draft of the projects of law concerning the "re-order of local tourist organisation" sets out that the region recognises: a) the strategic role of tourism as a system for the integrated development of all vocations and resources available to regional level; b) the role of local agencies and communities in their diversified cultural, ethnic, and associative expressions; c) the promotion of all forms of sustainable tourism

In order to improve the area's competitiveness, the region focuses on: the natural space, social balance and security, education, infrastructure, attraction (landscape, history, culture, architecture, and arts), the vocation of the territory, and territorial synergies.

2) *Stakeholders involvement.* The Commune of Bergamo believes in the largest possible involvement of the community<sup>23</sup>.

As regards Lombardy Region, the public actors that are called to play an active role are Chambers of Commerce and, in the future, the Province and the Commune, too. The aim is to build synergic partnerships in order to carry out common projects on local development and the consequent financial sharing.

Conversely, the Chamber of Commerce of Bergamo identifies its key stakeholders in the entrepreneurial organisations, the Commune, the Province and the labour unions.

Regarding the need of a meta-management organisation that coordinates both the different local initiatives and the actors involved, the only body that recognises the use of such a type of organisation is the Chamber of Commerce, while for the Commune and for the Region there is no need in this sense (the Region considers itself as a legally found body with coordination functions)<sup>24</sup>.

According to the Commune of Catanzaro, other stakeholders that might be involved in the activities are the Association of the Industrials and the Mountains Communities. Up to the moment there had been no involvement, yet, of local stakeholders in the definition of city marketing strategies. In it emerges that within a context in which the local strategies are still in embryo, regional strategies have a greater influence on the decisions than national ones do; likewise, the Agency answered that also local strategic needs have a bigger impact on

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development; d) the promotion of initiatives to favour tourism also on part of citizens with minimal wage, the youth, the old, the disabled; e) the promotion of initiatives aimed to favour, through tourism, the centrality of the region in the Mediterranean area; f) the promotion of research on the systems of information, documentation, and study of the tourist phenomenon; g) tourist protection; h) the promotion of the image of Calabria on national, european, and international scale.

<sup>23</sup> For example, in order to prepare the service plan, different focus groups activated to thematic areas/stakeholders as well as Education–culture area (University of Bergamo, the Carrara Academia, the GAMEC, a foundation and the diocese of Bergamo); Culture–sport and leisure area (Theatre of Bergamo, urban library system, National Olympic Committee, tourism office and new Bergamo's fair); Institutions–associations area (Region Lombardy, Province of Bergamo, Chamber of Commerce, and other economic organisations); Environment–infrastructure area (public utilities companies, environmental organisations, and Società Autostrade; Social–health area (Hospital of Bergamo, a foundation, the CARITAS and other charitable organisations).

<sup>24</sup> Other questions were about how much the national and regional strategies influence the local ones and converse. The Commune points at the regional policies regarding the infrastructure as the only ones which affect in a significant way the local strategy. From its point of view, the Region point out the fact that it carries out government functions of local policies. For this reason it is really important to understand and to know the needs of the territory and its potentiality, in order to support the local bodies and, more generally, all the actors implementing the development activities.

decisions at the regional level than on those at the national one. The Department gave a positive answer about the need to create an agency with meta-management functions in order to co-ordinate the disparate local initiatives and the actors involved; the juridical form of this agency should be the public one.

The President of the Chamber of Commerce of Catanzaro thinks that the actors involved in the politics of Territorial Marketing should be Region Calabria, the provincial departments, the category associations system, and the universities. It would also be necessary to create a Public Agency with the role of meta-management for co-ordinating the initiatives and actors involved.

The managers of Region Calabria interviewed stated that the actors to be involved should be: all local agencies, the Chambers of Commerce, the sector operators through their category representatives, and universities. Actually, local stakeholders are involved little and badly in the decisions related to territorial politics for lack of coordination. In that view, a meta-management agency would be necessary to co-ordinate local initiatives and the actors involved, either in the juridical form of a private company or as a public body.

3) *Communication*. Until now, Lombardy Region has limited its communication activity to the public relations and conferences, but it is planning to develop its internal communication, too. The communication-mix will be based upon advertising, public relations and big events.

The Commune of Bergamo expressed the will to build an important informative system able to guarantee a dynamic and continued data and information flow among the actors involved, in order to assure a shared exchange of reasoning and common values, upon which urban choices can be made. However, it identifies in the urban centre its only communication tool. Rather than explicate the competitive positioning, it prefers to strengthen the “trust” resource, in contrast to the object of the Region<sup>25</sup>.

Region Calabria, on the other hand, promises that there will be an internal communication of the main objectives of territorial policy based on meetings with category representatives, seminars, and conferences. The “communicational mix” of the territory will be made up of publicity, propaganda, and big events, and will focus, from the strategic point of view, on competitive positioning and, from the operative point of view, on information, generating positive feelings, and promoting the resources of the territory.

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<sup>25</sup> The fact that the Commune gives to the communication sector less attention than the Region is confirmed by the answer to the question concerning the main operative objectives: while the Region ticked both the information and the promotion of local resources options, the Commune opted only for the latter.

Finally, with regards to the communication of city marketing strategies in the Commune of Catanzaro, a process of internal communication is adopted, with the goal to inform local stakeholders on the Commune's objectives and strategies through a number of seminars. Instead, the territory's communicational mix will be principally based on advertisement and the organisation of big events<sup>26</sup>.

4) *Performance Control*. Both the Commune of Bergamo and Catanzaro don't have planned, until now, neither any type of control nor any performance indicators. Instead, the two Regions, for all the projects in which they are involved, have established surveys and half-yearly inspections.

These situations derive from who, and in what way, undertakes the city marketing strategies. Until now the city of Bergamo has neither a strategic plan nor a local authority expressly dedicated to city marketing. Nonetheless, these tasks are carried out by the Urban Planning Office. On the other hand, the Department of Urban Marketing of the Commune of Catanzaro received a specific proxy for those activities (since July 2006). It achieved a multi-annual organisation of the Territorial Marketing programme, in spite of not having had the chance, yet, to create its own specific instruments for programming.

Like the Commune of Bergamo, Region Lombardy prefers to use its own human resources rather than consultants of the town (councillor, scientific committee, study centre, public administration, etc.). However, the two bodies work in different ways. While the Commune has not a formal planning process, the Region plans the strategies each year. All the way down to the south, although the Department of Tourism already delegated territorial marketing to Vice-President Office of Region Calabria, no specific office or facility has been created<sup>27</sup>. Finally, as far as the two Chambers of Commerce are concerned, the points of reference are the Internal Promotion Office of Bergamo and President Delegate Office in Catanzaro.

## **6. Final observations**

Concluding, we have seen that the city marketing is a melting-pot of disciplines. In literature and in most experiences of Italian but also European cities (Jentsen-Butler et al., 1997), the

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<sup>26</sup> The main strategic objective of the Commune's communication will be to "make explicit the competitive positioning"; while, operatively, the goal will be "to engender positive emotions" and "to value the territory's resources".

<sup>27</sup> Particularly, the Department's instruments are: two advisors (one for tourism and one for culture) and a Tourism Observatory, located in Cosenza, which is in charge of a yearly report.

concepts are re-interpreted according to the particularity of a territorial context, usually analyzed from other perspectives (Pechlaner, 2000).

Widespread is the notion that increasing competition among cities, has required ever more emphasis to be placed on each city's strengths in order to attract desiderated visitors, enterprises and residents. The general belief is that a more efficient use of city marketing will lead to an increase of the number of visitors and the use of products/services, that have own historical, cultural and economic distinctive image (Porter, 1995).

From the empirical part of this study, the strategic priorities of the two cities are closely connected to their economic and social conditions. Hence, Lombardy and Bergamo, characterized by high economic development, give importance to the rationalisation of all existing localisation opportunities, the improvement of road system in order to dispose of the traffic and the recovery of dismissed areas. Moreover, in order to guarantee and improve the already elevated standard of living, they point out as important actions to undertake the re-qualification and improvement of park system and the heritage preservation.

Very different is the economic and social condition in Calabria and Catanzaro. In fact, their strategic actions aim to achieve public and private societies' operational efficiency, together with the management control. Moreover, particular attention is dedicated to the youths and the female work conditions.

Particularly, final observations can be divided in the same thematic area saw in the precedent paragraph.

- *Objectives.* The different economic and social conditions of the two cities and regions influence the relatives objectives. Lombardy is a region extraordinarily industrialized with high standard of living. Hence, the territorial marketing strategies aim to improve the life quality, guarantying more services to the citizens, and the infrastructure systems.

On the contrary, Calabria has to face a situation completely different, with problems of industrialization and underemployment. For this reason, its strategy aims to develop the economic system and to favour the employment of active people, in particular of youths.

From above-mentioned results, we found out that Region Lombardy wants to develop the existence excellencies and fulfil the potential of the its territory. From an operative point of view, the reinforcement of regional proposal is based upon interventions aiming to:

a) the rationalisation of all existing localisation opportunities, developing the ones with the biggest potential and down-sizing the ones showing structural disadvantages and impossibility to recover;

b) the configuration specialisation of the localisation opportunities with respect to the demand target's needs;

c) the conversion of the localisation opportunities that are not currently competitive but that show a good potential for other uses.

Conversely, the Commune of Bergamo's strategy aims to enhance the peculiarities of the territory in 3 different areas:

- infrastructural system (improve the transportation system: public transport, promotion of the interchange junctions, improvement of the road system in order to settle the usual traffic jams);

- environmental system (environmental and hydro-graphic system protection and conservation; re-qualification and improvement of big urban park system);

- land settled system (preservation and conservation of the historic city and heritage, better and easier access to public services, and dismissed area recovery).

On the other hand, the strategic priorities for the development of Region Calabria are:

a) to ensure the efficiency of subjects, facilities, and behaviours, before and contemporary to politic intervention. The task is to affect society and its operative mechanisms by means of: the redefinition and broadening of the subjects involved, the innovation of economic behaviours of individuals and firms, the restructuring of the public sector and of the institutions, and of expenditure, monitoring, and control logics<sup>28</sup>.

b) to use increasingly more effective and efficient methods of selection in favour of those projects that are most likely to reach the Programme's goals, to widen the repertoire of subjects and projects, to reward projects for quality, competences, and capacities, and to improve controls focusing on results.

c) to satisfy the need for private and public economic subjects to build up and/or participate in local, national, and European networks.

- *Stakeholders involvement.* About the involvement of the stakeholders, both the cities assert that it is a really important aspect of city marketing. Despite this all, until now they don't have undertaken any fixed initiative in order to involve them. Bergamo, usually, organises focus groups and consultations but only on an occasional basis.

Concerning what they think about the need to create a meta-management organization, the positioning of the two cities and Region are different. For the Commune of Bergamo and

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<sup>28</sup> The priority target of this focus strategy is Calabrese youth (with special attention to female employment), as their education and their work possibilities in the sign of professionalism will be benefited by investments in education, research, and innovation.



Lombardy Region there isn't a need in this sense (in particular, the Region consider itself as the organization in charged of this task). Contrary opinion is the one expressed by the Chamber of Commerce of the city. Instead, Catanzaro and Calabria Region maintain the same opinion: the creation of a meta-management organization (public, according to the Chamber of Commerce and to the Commune) will be useful in order to coordinate the actions of the several bodies involved in territorial marketing actions.

- *Communication*. Bergamo seems to give not too much attention, and less attention respect to the Region, to the communication of its initiatives. Catanzaro asserts to adopt the principles of internal communication organizing seminars. Both the Communes base their communication strategy on advertising and organization of big events.

- *Performance control*. Bergamo doesn't have a specific agency or office in charged to city marketing strategies. Moreover, the decisions on this sector doesn't follow, contrary to what happens at regional level, a formal process of planning. Even if the Commune of Catanzaro signals the delegation of these activities to a specific department, in reality this decision seems don't have any percussion on a concrete point of view, or just little results concerning tourist and cultural sectors.

Summarizing, we can assert that in analyzed places of Bergamo and Catanzaro, the use of city marketing strategies is not widespread, but, above all, that whereas is adopted, often it refers to isolated programs with low coordination among the actors involved. This is the biggest issue of weakness because the city marketing policy aren't based on the importance and ability to do "system".

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