

EUROPAN I 8 ITALIA

Re-Sourcing

POLIGNANO a Mare

Living between urban connections and natural landscapes

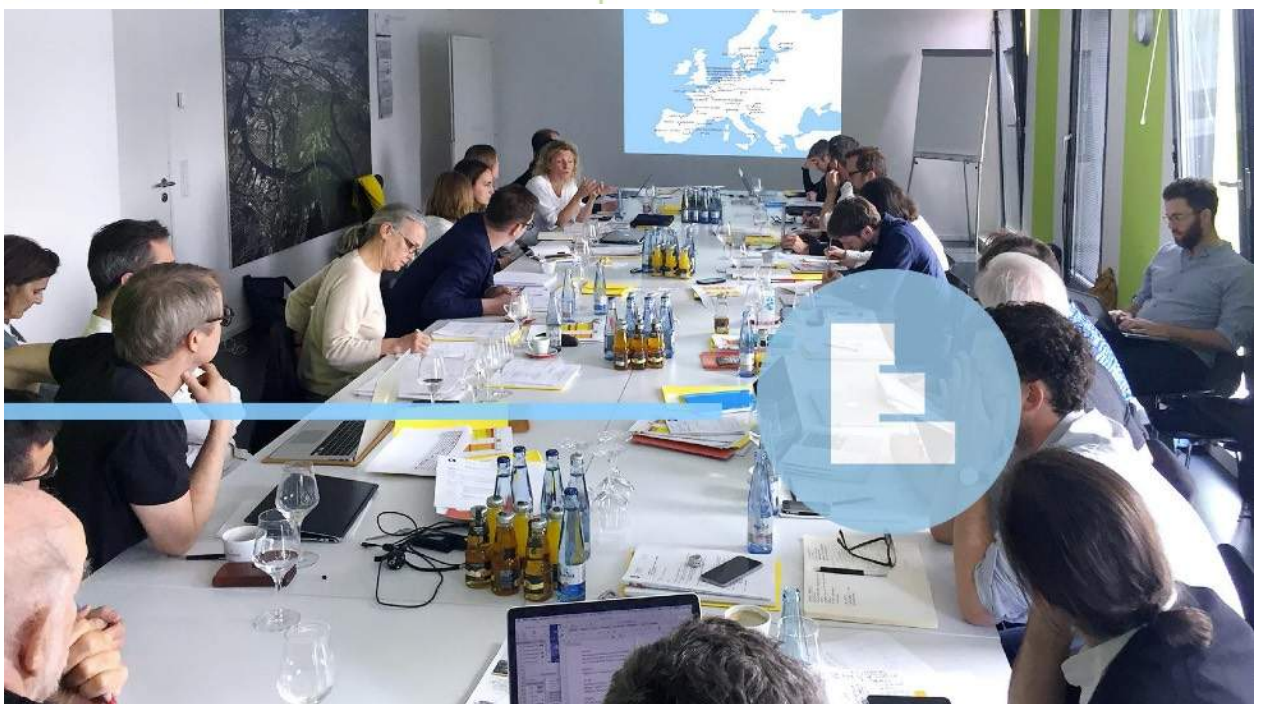
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ORGANIZATION OF THE COMPETITION

Site representatives	City of Polignano a Mare (BA)
Actors involved	City of Polignano a Mare (BA), FS Sistemi Urbani
Team representative	Architect mandatory
Expected skills regarding the site's issues and characteristics	Architects, landscape architects, planners urban designers, with expert knowledge in the digital world, social scientists, innovators, artists, economists
National communication of projects	Communication after the results of the competition with an exhibition of all projects, awards ceremony and publication of results (February-march 2026)
Jury - first session	The representatives of the sites meet the Jury before the start of works to clarify any questions about the program and goals.
Post-Competition Intermediate Procedure	On the occasion of the national event showcasing the results, a workshop will be organized with the awarded designers to define the project/process guidelines for the development and urban transformation of the areas under examination. The ideas, typologies, and/or approaches developed by the awarded designers may be included in a subsequent project phase, in accordance with the current procurement code.



RE-SOURCING POLIGNANOSHORTLY

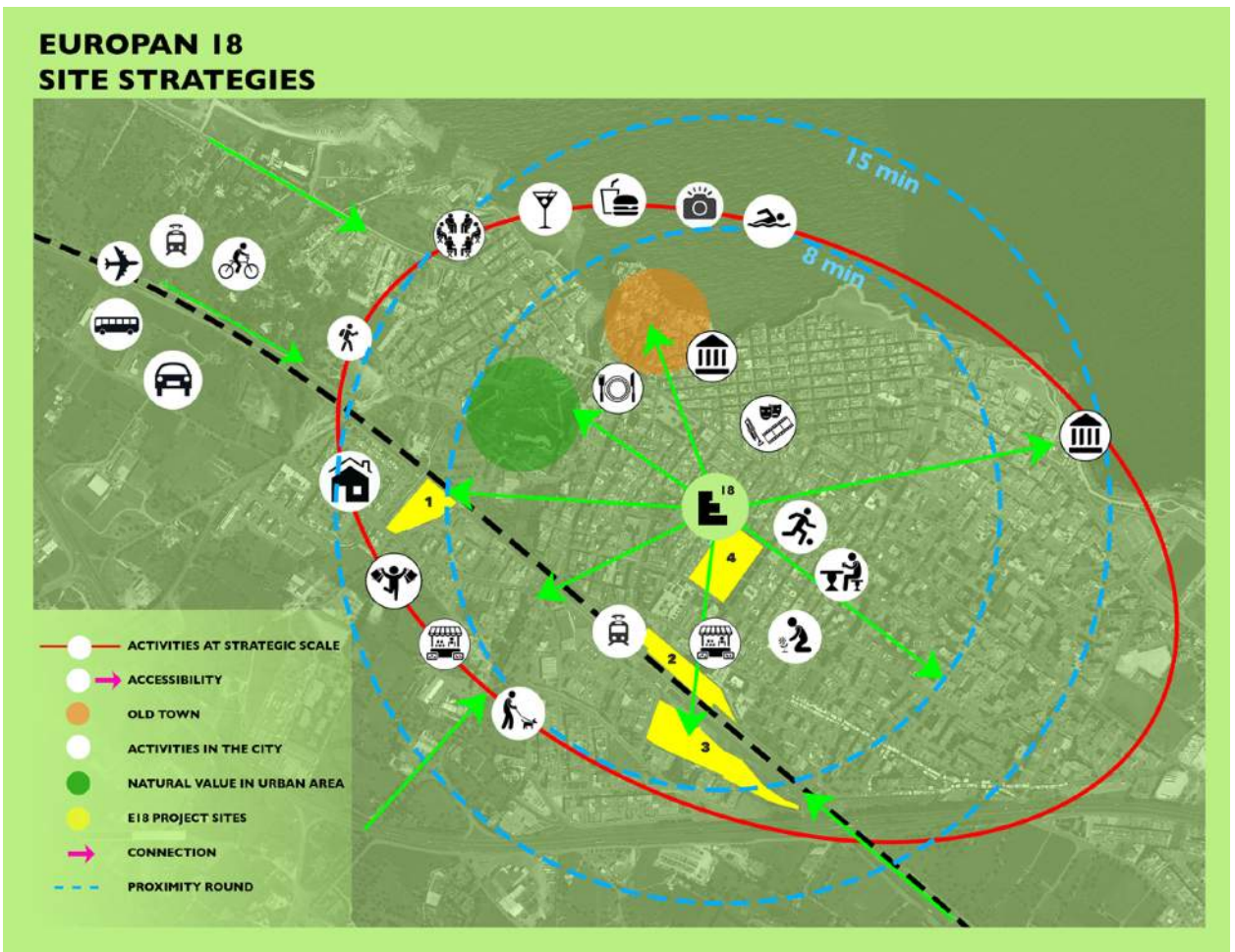
Relations with the RE-SOURCING theme

The city is promoting the regeneration of the urban system through the Preliminary Programmatic Document (D.P.R.U.), aimed at improving the urban, housing, socio-economic, environmental, and cultural conditions of human settlements.

This process also involves implementing intervention tools with the participation of residents, as well as public and private stakeholders. Today, the city must address new

community needs while adapting to tourism activities by developing new social, housing, and service dynamics based on the principles of ecological transition, energy efficiency, and inclusivity.

The challenge for designers is to conceive a system of residences, community services, and infrastructure capable of creating new urban dynamics for both residents and tourists.



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TERRITORIAL AND URBAN CONTEXT

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C1 TERRITORIAL URBAN CONTEXT





The City

Polignano a Mare is a town of the "Metropolitan City of Bari" with 17,612 inhabitants, located on the Adriatic coast of Puglia.

The municipal territory of Polignano a Mare is located on the Adriatic side of the Murcian plateau in an intermediate position between the Plain of Bari (to the NW) and that of Fasano (to the SE).

It is 33 km from Bari, about 72 km from Taranto, 80 km from Brindisi and 116 km from Lecce.

The municipal territory covers an area of just over 65 square kilometres and includes the districts of San Vito, Casello Cavuzzi and Chiesa Nuova-Triggianello.

The oldest part of the town stands on a rocky cliff overlooking the sea.

The area is of significant natural interest and is characterised by a high and sometimes jagged

coastline, on which numerous lame, deep inlets in the rock, have their outlets.

One of these, "Lama Monachile", is the deep incision of fluvial origin immediately west of the town centre, whose mouth is currently occupied by beach deposits.

Another important one is the "Lama Santa Caterina".

The altitude of the area varies considerably: from 8 metres in the district of San Vito it rises to 220 metres in the district of Chiesa Nuova, on the border with the territory of Monopoli.

This stretch of coastline, with its numerous sea caves and crystal-clear waters, attracts many tourists from all over the world every year.



Historical Framework

The territory of Polignano a Mare has been inhabited since the Paleolithic era by prehistoric populations who found refuge in some natural caves. The most significant signs of human presence date back to the Neolithic period, in the Santa Barbara area (6th-5th millennium BC), and in the Hypogeum Manfredi (4th millennium BC), one of the most significant settlements in central Puglia.

It has been hypothesized that the name derives from Neapolis, of Greek origin, but there are no significant evidences regarding this historical phase or the subsequent Roman era. According to some historians, ancient Neapolis may have been one of the two colonies that, in the 6th century BC, Dionysius II of Syracuse founded on the Adriatic coast to make navigation to the Ionian Sea safe.

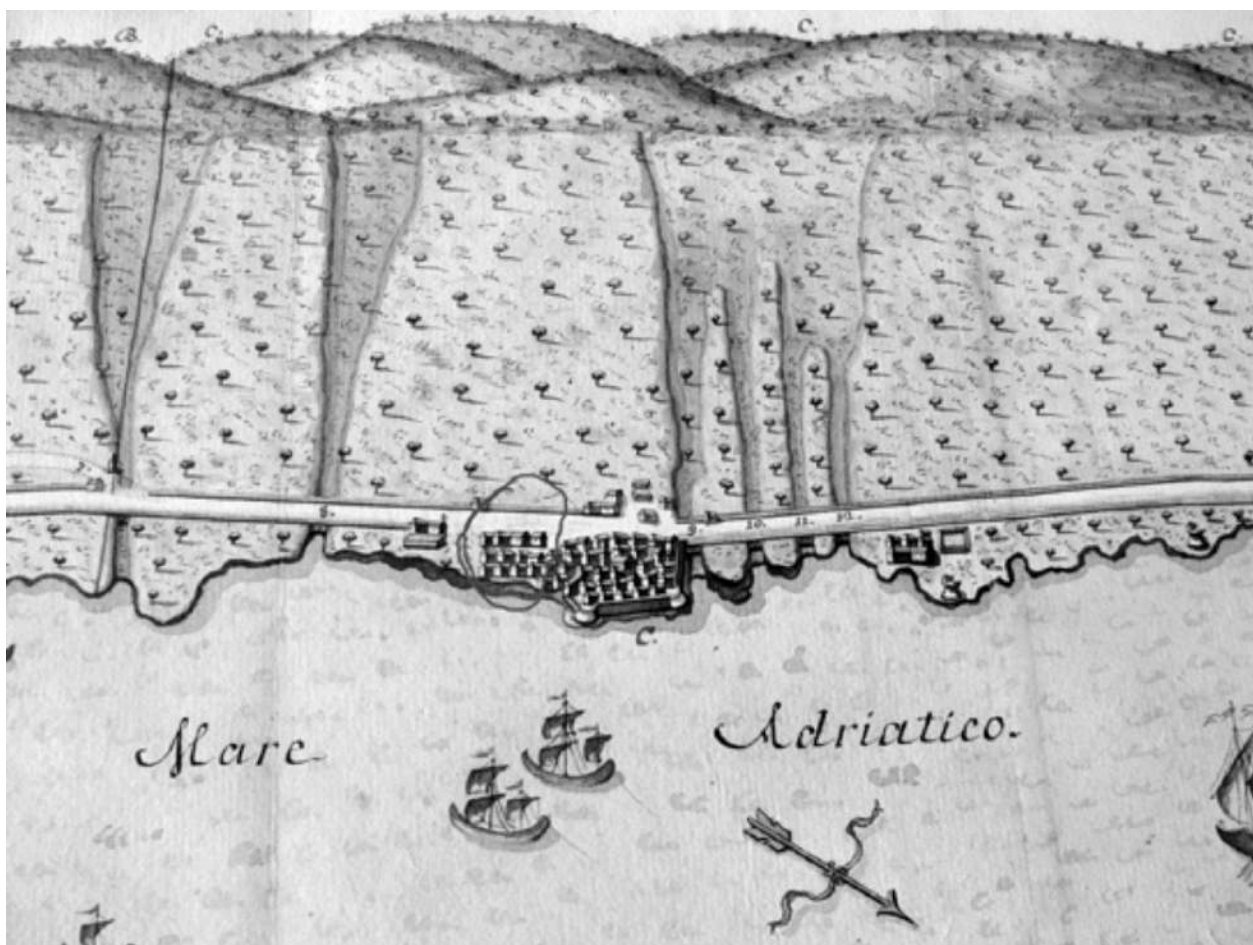
In the 2nd millennium BC, the strategic position and its important port led the inhabitants of the villages to move to the area of the current historic center.

The presence of Corinthian and Attic merchants in these places is also attested, especially in the Iron Age when the land of Bari assumed the name of Peucezia.

At the beginning of the 3rd century BC, the Polignano area became an important strategic point for Taranto, and it had established important trade relations with it. In the 3rd century BC, the entire region came under the domination of Rome, which made it a place of reserve and circulation of goods, starting with wheat. In this way, the old Neapolis soon became an active center, as a "statio" along the road Via Traiana, which connected Rome to Brindisi, at that time a bridge to the East.

Among the traces of Roman times is the bridge of the Via Traiana, which can still be walked, and which crosses Lama Monachile.

During the medieval period, the town underwent several dominations, including those of the Normans, the Swabians and the Aragonese.



Stretch of road pertaining to the territory of Polignano. Drawing from 1782 by Giuseppe Gimma from Polignano.

During this period, the city was fortified with walls to strengthen its defences. In the 6th century, Polignano was under the jurisdiction of the Byzantine Empire, whose orthodox religion was introduced.

With the advent of the Normans, who governed until 1194, the prestige of the town grew, thanks also to the work of the Benedictines, who were present with two monasteries. Angevin domination intensified trade relations with other coastal centres and many businessmen and merchants, including Venetians, chose Polignano as their home. In the 16th century, following the siege of Monopoli, Polignano too came under Venetian control for twenty years (the Doge's palace, where the Venetian governor resided, still stands in the historic centre). In 1530 Polignano was given by Venice to Charles V, Emperor of Spain. During the Aragonese domination, commercial activities developed under the control of experienced Venetian merchants and defence works were erected in the town, starting from the coast.

In the course of the 20th century, Polignano a Mare has become an increasingly appreciated destination also internationally. After the Second World War, the city saw significant economic and cultural development, with the opening of numerous restaurants, bars, and hotels, in addition to the growth of the population and urbanization.

In recent decades, Polignano a Mare has become a high-level tourist destination, famous for its natural beauties, and its splendid cliffs overlooking the sea. The city has also seen the birth of a vibrant artistic and cultural scene, with the organization of cultural events such as art exhibitions, concerts, and festivals.



Topographical map of Polignano, 1820 eng. Francesco Sorino



"In 1887, a specific request to the city administration and the Finance Ministry by Mr. Tommaso Ventura for the use of the site for bathing purposes was based on the project. A photo of the establishment and the long wooden staircase that descended from the top of the Bourbon bridge to the beach ... this "historical" photo was given to me for the book "Passaggio di Paesano" (ed. 1996) by Mr. Franco L'Abbate, an authentic expert in precious documentary rarities on Polignano". (cit. Diorama 18 - Paginaria Edizioni - Carlo De Luca

Historical sites and building

Of great natural interest and historically important are its sea caves, the historic centre and the remains of Roman times. In the district of San Vito, on the coast to the north of the town, the majestic complex of the Benedictine abbey stands out right next to the small port.

Furthermore, within the territory of Polignano there are several "Masserie": typical buildings dating back to the 17th and 18th centuries, used as farms by large landowners.

San Vito Abbey

The Abbey of San Vito, founded by the Benedictines, was built in the 10th century. From the 16th century, the abbey was the home of the Friars Minor of the Holy Apostles and in 1785 it became part of the Royal State Property. In 1866, the State sold the abbey to the marquises "La Greca", who still fully own it today, while the church is owned by the "Fondo di Edifici di Culto del Ministero degli Interni" and is given in concession to the Church "Matrice Santa Maria Assunta", where mass is celebrated on Sundays.

Mother Church "Santa Maria Assunta"

The mother church dedicated to Santa Maria Assunta overlooks the small square "Piazza Vittorio Emanuele", the heart of the historic centre. It was the cathedral until 1818, when the small diocese of Polignano was aggregated with the diocese of Monopoli. Inside are several works attributed to sculptor "Stefano da Putignano", active between the 16th and 17th centuries, and the important 15th-century polyptych of the "Madonna con bambino e i Santi", on gilded panel by Bartolomeo Vivarini.

Sant'Antonio Church

Dedicated to Sant'Antonio, the church was built at the end of the 16th century in the square with the same name, which was also dedicated to Santa Maria di Costantinopoli. Once home to the friars' convent, it now houses the First Aid service and is also home to the headquarters of the radio station "Radio Incontro".

Purgatory Church

On the same site where the Purgatory Church was built in Via Mulini, there was a chapel dedicated to San Martino, later incorporated into the new building to be used as a sacristy, the entrance to which is located to the right of the facade of the new church. Adjacent to the small place of worship was a cemetery where young boys from poor families were buried. On the right side of the chapel it bordered the Hospital of Annunziata. In consideration of the high infant mortality rate, the brethren of the Congregation of Purgatory had the new church built on the old open-air cemetery which continued to receive the defunct in the sepulchres placed inside.

Lama Monachile

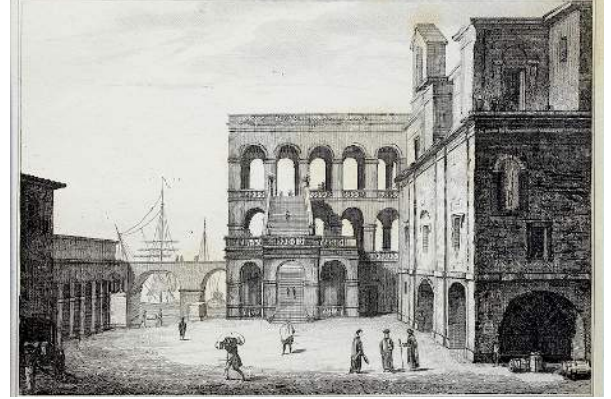
The Lama Monachile is the town's most striking panorama. In the 15th century, it was a commercial port during the Venetian domination. Rainwater from the higher areas of the town flows into the Lama and it has often happened to see the Lama flooded and deeply eroded, as in the flood of 26 September 2006. From 2008 to 2010 and again from 2015, the Lama has been the site of the only Italian venue for the Red Bull Cliff Diving.



The remains of Trajan's Bridge



Abbey of San Vito today and in the nineteenth century



Marchesale Arch

The Marchesale Arch, also known as “Porta Grande”, is a city wall built in 1530 and then in 1780 became the only access into the old town. The Marchesale Arch is surmounted by a small church, built in the mid-16th century and dedicated to the Madonna. After its modernisation in the 18th century, the church took the name of the Confraternity of St Joseph. Today, the Marchesale Arch divides the new village from the old one, offering visitors an open door to the heart of the medieval centre.

House of the Clock

The House of the Clock, of medieval origin, once housed the university headquarters. Located in the old town, in Piazza Vittorio Emanuele, before the current clock, there was a simple sundial. Even today, the clock is manually wound by the owner of the house.

Santa Barbara Archaeological Site

The Neolithic settlement in Contrada Santa Barbara is located about 2 km from the town center, at an altitude of about 60 meters. The archaeological site, discovered in the 1970s, features a karstic cave known as the Sancta Barbara Cave. The cave has a planimetric length of 420 meters and a depth of 15 meters. The current entrance (a well of about 3 meters) was formed suddenly due to the collapse of some limestone layers. Research has established human occupation around the 4th millennium BC.

Madonna di Grottole Site

The Madonna di Grottole archaeological site is located about 3 km from the town center and, due to its morphological features, is one of the oldest and most historically significant archaeological sites in Puglia. It is a limestone ridge characterized by 62 caves of varying sizes that have been inhabited by humans since prehistory. The area is covered with spontaneous vegetation, olive trees, almond trees, and fruit trees. There is also a small church dedicated to Santa Maria della Consolazione, which is part of an ancient Augustinian monastery.



Mother Church of Santa Maria Assunta

Connections

Polignano a Mare is one of the municipalities within the Metropolitan City of Bari. The town is located along the Bari-Lecce axis. One of the main access routes to the town is the Strada Statale 16 Adriatica, which crosses the entire municipal territory parallel to the coastline. Additionally, Polignano a Mare is connected to the inland towns of Castellana Grotte and Conversano via the provincial roads SP 120 and SP 121.

The town is also served by the FS railway line, which runs along the Adriatic corridor, linking the municipality to Bari, the regional capital, and Lecce, the provincial capital.

Regarding mobility flows, the primary municipalities that attract commuters from Polignano a Mare are Monopoli (with over 450 trips during the morning peak hour), followed by Bari (with over 300 trips during the morning peak hour).

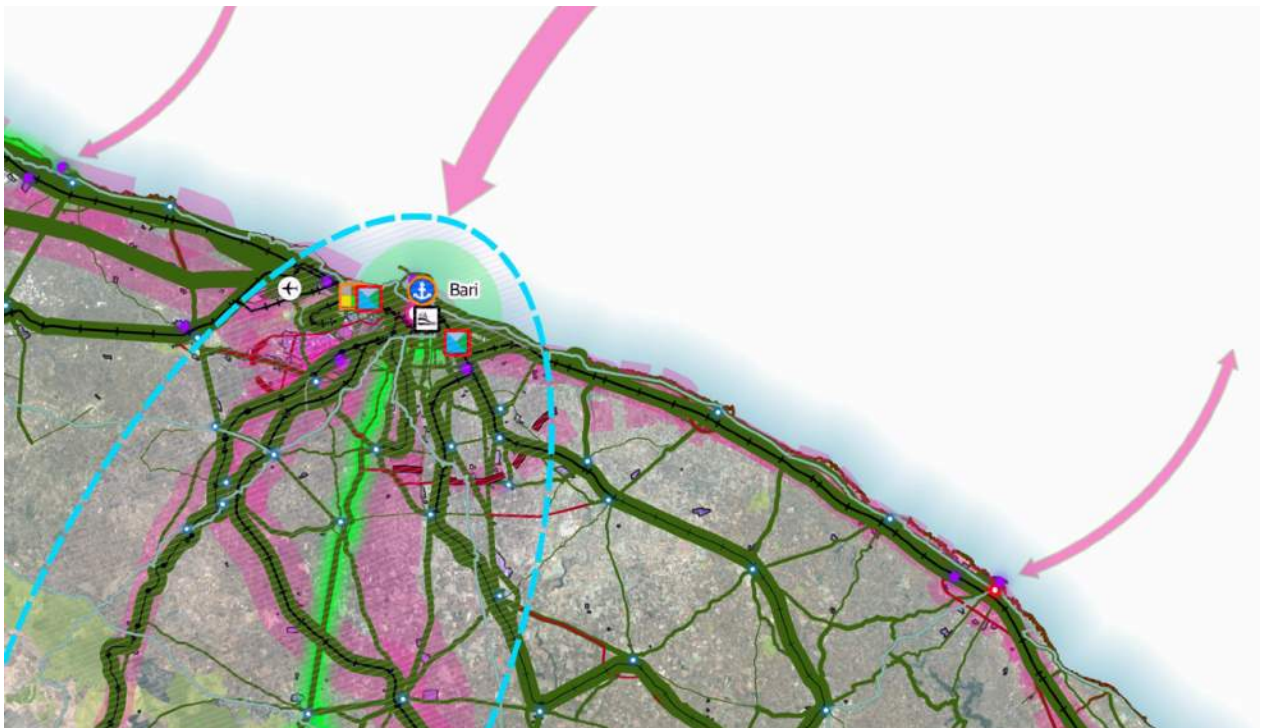
The modal share (sources: Private car transport – data processed by the Metropolitan City of Bari; Railway and public road transport – data reprocessed by the Metropolitan City of Bari based on the Regional Implementation Plan Matrices) for mobility generated by the Municipality of Polignano a Mare is distributed as follows:

- 66% private car trips
- 15% bus trips
- 19% train trips

Polignano's mobility system is predominantly characterized by private car use, alongside a growing reliance on rail transport, both by local residents and by tourists primarily arriving from neighboring towns and within the region. However, it is important to highlight the absence of a structured local public transport system integrated with the FS railway station and the new tourist port. Furthermore, there is no maritime transport system serving tourist flows.

The presence of the FS railway station within the municipality is a key factor in evaluating alternative mobility scenarios to reduce dependence on private cars. Based on these considerations, pedestrian isochrones have been analyzed for the reference station within a 10-minute walking time.

The isochrones illustrate the actual pedestrian accessibility of the station. Depending on their reach, the station's proximity to the urban center, and the municipality's residential density, different measures can be assessed to rebalance the local modal share.



Regional Transport Plan 2021-2030 - the three levels of the plan (source <https://regione.puglia.it>)

The Polignano a Mare railway station is located on the Bari-Lecce railway line, part of the Italian State Railways network (Ferrovie dello Stato Italiane).

It is served by regional trains operating on routes from Foggia to Lecce, with increased frequency on the Bari-Fasano section, as well as by selected long-distance trains.

The existing public transport system primarily provides connections at the regional, national, and international levels, ensuring efficient links mainly to Bari, followed by Lecce and Foggia, as well as the coastal municipalities across the three provinces.

Polignano a Mare also features a tourist port, located in the San Vito area and inaugurated in June 2015. The port offers 316 berths for boats ranging from 5 to 40 meters in length.

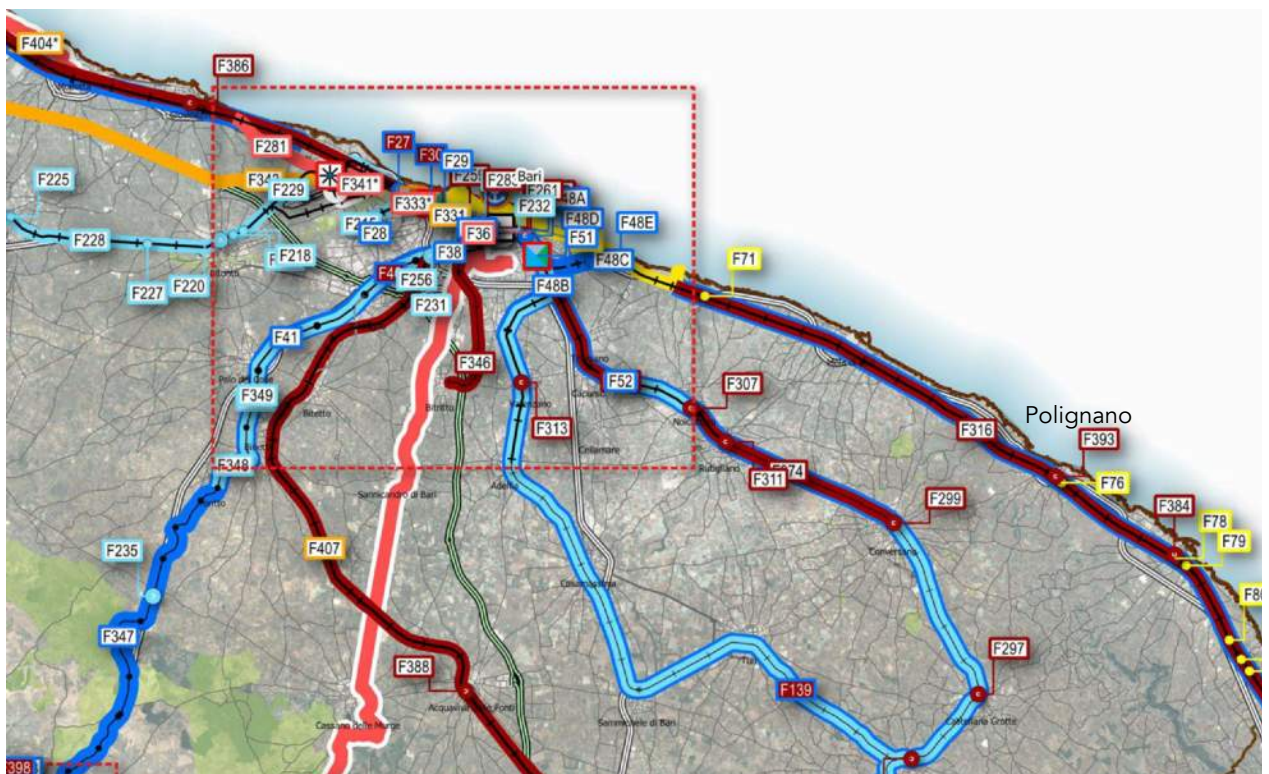
The Infrastructure System for Sustainable Mobility

The city has implemented the PUM (Urban Mobility Plan), PUS (Urban Parking Plan), and PMC (Cycling Mobility Plan), which prioritize the enhancement of traffic safety, particularly for vulnerable road users such as pedestrians and cyclists. The goal is to develop a comprehensive strategy for pedestrian and cycling circulation across the entire municipal area, structured at different levels and fully integrated with broader urban and strategic planning initiatives.

The territorial project for the regional landscape, outlined in the PPTR (Regional Landscape Territorial Plan) and referred to as "The Infrastructure System for Sustainable Mobility", aims to enhance access to regional landscapes through an integrated mobility network. This initiative seeks to revitalize scenic roads, trails, minor railway lines, and stations, creating interconnection points with the broader road and rail network.

At the regional level, the plan envisions a cohesive sustainable mobility system, designed to promote a more eco-friendly transport model for both residents and tourists while improving territorial accessibility and highlighting local features.

Within this framework, Polignano a Mare is designated as a second-level intermodal hub, characterized by: the presence of the regional railway network, a planned tram route connecting the town to Bari and the northern coastal centers of the province, a coastal road for landscape preservation and enhancement, the national Adriatic cycle route, the Metrò Mare, which will link all the coastal municipalities, the road and maritime network of the Valle d'Itria, a multimodal corridor for regional development. This positioning underscores the strategic role of Polignano a Mare within recent regional mobility and tourism planning.



Regional Transport Plan 2021-2030 - table 2 collective transport (source <https://regione.puglia.it>)

Demographic data

The city of Polignano has 17,463 inhabitants as of January 1, 2025. The demographic trend from 2001 to 2017 recorded, after an important growth in 2002, a slight and steady increase that saw the population reach 18,022 in 2017. After that year, there was a slight decrease, but since 2020 the resident population has increased significantly.

There is also an increase in the average age, from 39.2 in 2002 to 45.5 in 2022.

The population is distributed according to the following age percentages: 16.3% population over 70; 61.4% productive population, 22.2% youth population under 24.

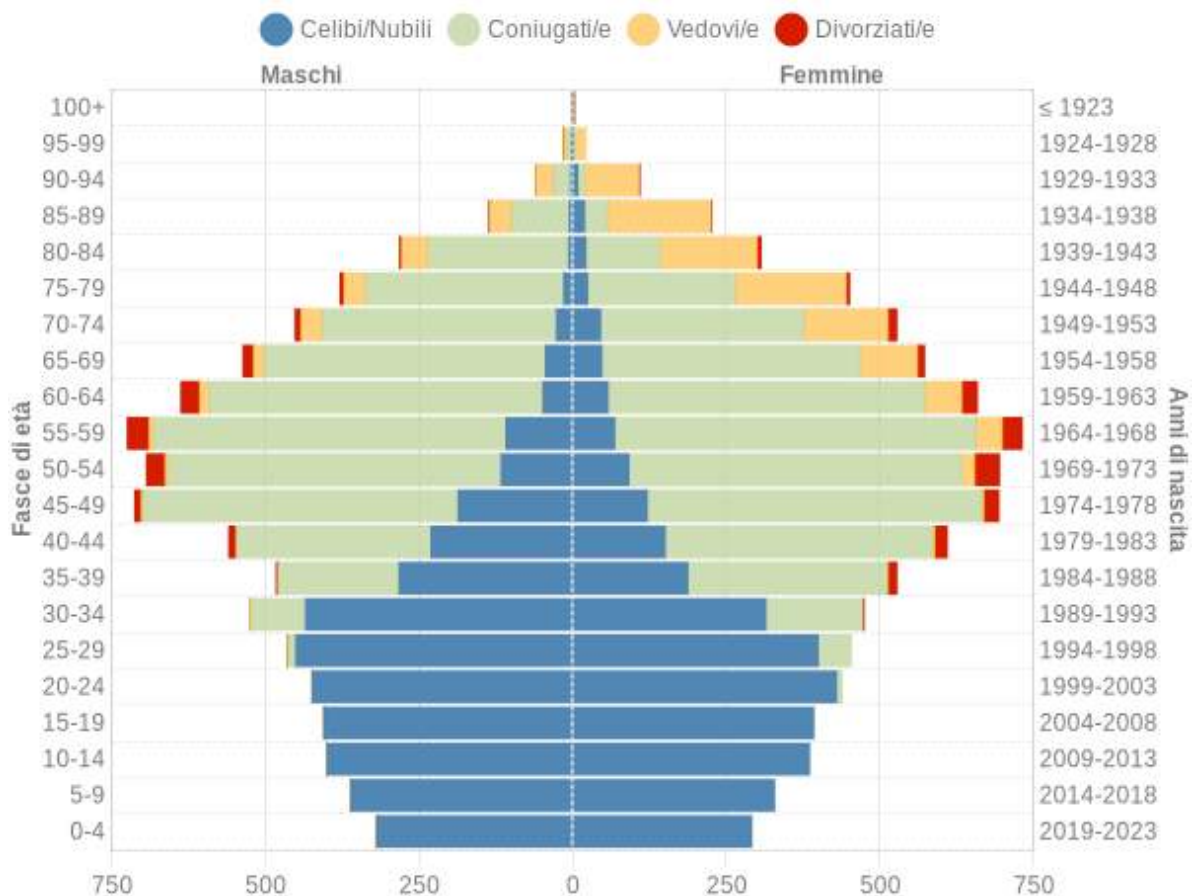
Foreigners resident in Polignano on 1 January 2022 were 609 and represent 3.4% of the resident population.

The largest foreign community is from Georgia with 22.5% of all foreigners present in the territory, followed by Albania (13.8%) and Tunisia (13.3%).

The average population density for the urban centre of Polignano is 280.25 inhabitants per square meter.

The demographic trend has recorded a slight but steady increase in recent decades, and this decrease accords to the general trend of decentralization of urban centers, which has occurred throughout Italy: metropolises are losing population in favor of smaller centers, creating a more complex metropolitan system. Moreover, the available data show a steady increase in the number of households but a profound change in their structure: the average family size has been decreasing more and more, the number of households composed of one, two and three persons has increased and the number of those with more than four members has decreased.

Another relevant phenomenon is the increase in the elderly population, as in the rest of the country, a change that calls for a radical change in traditional care strategies in order to design social welfare services adapted to the new family needs.



Popolazione per età, sesso e stato civile - 2024

COMUNE DI POLIGNANO A MARE (BA) - Dati ISTAT 1° gennaio 2024 - Elaborazione TUTTITALIA.IT



San Vito's Bastinaca - Famous Carrot of Polignano - slow food presidium

Socioeconomic and Cultural Context

The town's economy is essentially based on tourism and horticulture.

Despite overlooking the sea, the absence until recent years of a safe harbor for mooring boats has not allowed Polignano a Mare to develop the fishing tradition that distinguishes other coastal towns in Puglia, although in June 2015 a marina with 316 berths between 5 and 40 meters was opened in San Vito. The port also includes a hotel facility with wellness centers, tennis courts, and swimming pools.

Agriculture is based on the production of cereals, wheat, fodder, vegetables, grapes, olives, citrus and other fruits; part of the population is also engaged in animal husbandry, especially cattle and sheep breeding.

Of particular note is the production of vegetables - mainly salad and potatoes - and that of olives. Also very renowned is the production of the typical Carrot of Polignano, also known as "Bastinaca di San Vito," a traditional ecotype of carrot, mainly produced in the rural area of the hamlet of San Vito and also recognized by Slow Food.

Industry consists of companies operating in the food (including dairy), construction, metallurgy, clothing, printing, and the manufacture of furniture and measuring and control instruments. The tertiary sector consists of a good commercial network and the service sector as a whole, which includes banking.

Today, the local economy is mainly connected with tourist-accommodation activities. Beyond doubt Polignano a Mare is one of the most desirable tourist destinations in Apulia and the whole country:

Such is the success of the entire high-level tourist accommodation sector offered by Polignano a Mare that it was awarded the title of the most welcoming city in the world in the 11th edition of the Traveller Review Awards 2023 by Booking.com for the commitment of the accommodation facilities to guarantee excellent service and hospitality consistently throughout the year.

In addition, since 2008 Polignano a Mare has consistently received the Blue Flag, an award given by the Foundation for Environmental Education to European coastal resorts that meet quality criteria related to bathing water parameters and the service offered in relation to parameters such as beach cleanliness and tourist landings.

An additional tourist inducement is undoubtedly the Red Bull Cliff Diving World Series event, which was held in Polignano a Mare every year since 2009. It is an international competition of diving from great heights, organized by the Red Bull. Divers launch from platforms at heights ranging from 20 to 30 meters.

The Red Bull Cliff Diving generates an important and positive economic impact on the territory and on the whole region, as well as offering an exceptional 'showcase' of world importance. Thanks to live television broadcasting in Italy and around the world, and the visibility guaranteed by Red Bull channels, during the 2022 World Series the Italian leg was followed by about 200 million people and is estimated to have generated a total economic impact of more than 5 million euros in favor of Polignano a Mare, and more than 6.6 million for the Puglia Region.



Its geographical location and history have influenced the city, leaving a lasting imprint on the culture and tradition of the Polignano a Mare community. Polignano's socio-cultural context is characterized by its folk traditions, steeped in the sacred and profane, and retains its appeal unchanged over time. The city's cultural activities include events, exhibitions and festivals celebrating Apulian music, art, literature and gastronomy. Among the most important events is the "Premio Letterario Polignano a Mare" (Polignano a Mare Literary Prize) a competition that celebrates the art of writing and literature each year. The prize has become a landmark event for Italian and European culture, and has seen the participation of prominent authors.

Places of artistic and cultural interest

- **Fondazione Museo Pino Pascali (Pino Pascali Foundation)**, is a nonprofit institution established in Polignano a Mare in 2010 on the initiative of the Municipality of Polignano and the Region of Puglia for the purpose of

exhibiting and enhancing the works of Pino Pascali, an influential exponent of arte povera, preserved in the museum dedicated to him, inaugurated in 1998 and moved since 2010 to a former 19th-century slaughterhouse;

- **Galleria d'Arte Nicole Scarpelli (Nicole Scarpelli Art Gallery)**, The Art Gallery exhibits the works of numerous artists from all over the world, welcoming emerging talents and established national and international names. It aims to offer the Polignano a Mare area multiple forms of artistic expression: works of art, sculptures but also books, photographs, music, poetry and more.
- **Biblioteca Comunale Raffaele Chanter (Raffaele Chiantera Municipal Library)**, established in 1968 and housed inside the City Hall. Due to a growing need for new space and new services, the library left its historic location, on the ground floor of the Palazzo San Giuseppe in the old town, and moved to an expansion area and became the Community Library.



Pino Pascali Foundation - former Slaughterhouse - Polignano a Mare



Events

The city's socio-cultural activities include events, exhibitions and festivals that celebrate Apulian music, art, literature and gastronomy. Among the most important events those worth mentioning are:

- the "Polignano a Mare Literary Prize," a competition that celebrates the art of writing and literature each year. The prize has become an important event for Italian and European culture, and has seen the participation of prominent authors over the years
- the "festa del riccio di mare" (sea urchin festival), which is celebrated in April and pays tribute to an ingredient of the local cuisine, whose fishing in the area is most prolific between February and May.
- the "kite festival" is an historic event that takes place in spring and draws children and families to the waterfront in a colorful setting.

Religious events

- "Festa patronale di San Vito": June 14-15-16, the most important in the country. On the eve of the feast, the statue of San Vito is carried by sea from the town of the same name all along the Polignano coast and landed on a cove, where sailors pick it up to carry it to the historic center and place it on a monumental altar.
- "Festa di San Giuseppe": March 19, with holy masses and lighting of bonfires throughout the town.
- Lunedì in Albis: procession of the relic of San Vito from the mother church to the abbey and vice versa.
- April 26: procession and fireworks in honor of the coming of the relic of San Vito.
- "Festa della Madonna del Carmine": July 15-16-17, the effigy of the Madonna is carried in procession on the 15th and then placed on an

altar set up on via Roma. On the 17th, the figure is placed down from the altar, carried in a short procession and then placed back in the Chiesa della natività. A band concert, fireworks and illuminations animate the celebration.

- "Festa dei Santi Cosma e Damiano": on the second Sunday in August, images of Saints Cosma and Damiano and Sant Espedito are carried in procession through the streets of the city and at the end are displayed in the church. A band concert, fireworks and illuminations animate the festival.
- Festa del SS.Crocifisso, the most important country festival held in the Foggia Notarnicola district. On the third Sunday in September, Mass is held at the Masseria del Crocifisso, followed by a procession. A band concert, fireworks, illuminations and numerous local festivals animate the festival.

Sports events

- Cycling - "Targa Crocifisso" : Since 1949, in the months of September or October, there has been an annual bicycle race with start and finish in the Adriatic town. It consists of riding a circuit between the towns of Polignano, Castellana Grotte and Monopoli several times; mileage about 170 km.
- Diving - "Red Bull Cliff Diving World Series" : an international diving competition from great heights, established in 2009 and organized by the Red Bull company. Divers launch themselves from platforms at heights varying between 20 and 30 meters.
- Football - "Polimnia Calcio": is the main football team of Polignano a Mare. Founded in 1981, in the 2022-2023 season it plays in the A round of the Apulian Eccellenza championship. It plays its home matches at the "Madonna D'Altomare" Stadium on synthetic grass.

Planning at the territorial scale



Territorial Strategic Programs

- **Puglia Regional Program FESR-FSE+ 2021-2027**, the main planning tool of Puglia Region to have access to European funds in the 2021-2027 period. This program aims to promote the sustainable development of the territory through interventions that integrate economic, social, and environmental aspects.
- **PSR 2023-2027**, which has replaced previous programs and includes new support measures for the agricultural sector and rural development.

The territorial planning tools are:

- **Piano Strategico della Città Metropolitana di Bari** (Strategic Plan of the Metropolitan City of Bari) Law 56/2014 identifies the primary objective of Metropolitan Cities as ensuring the strategic development of the metropolitan area. The Metropolitan City of Bari has signed an agreement with the Presidency of the Council of Ministers called the "Pact for the Development of the Metropolitan City of Bari – Implementation of Priority Interventions and Identification of Strategic Intervention Areas" to quickly launch and implement strategic interventions through various funding sources.
- **Piano di Assetto Idrogeologico** (Hydrogeological Planning Plan (PAI), developed under Law 183/1989 (currently incorporated into the new Environmental Code, Legislative Decree 152/2006 of April 14, 2006).
- **Piano Paesaggistico Territoriale Regionale Puglia (PPTR)** (Regional Landscape Territorial Plan of Puglia), aimed at protecting and preserving environmental values, social and cultural identity, and promoting sustainable territorial development. The territory of Polignano falls within area no. 7 – La Murgia dei Trulli.

The Murgia dei Trulli area is characterized by rural stone architecture, a symbol of the intelligence of local farmers in making arid areas productive by utilizing the natural underground water flow. The area between Polignano and Brindisi is crossed by a system of ravines and canals designed for water management, which have influenced historical settlements such as Polignano and Monopoli. The latter, with its port, served as a key hub for maritime trade in agricultural products, while Polignano, perched on a promontory, maintains a more productive and tourism-oriented identity, with limited accommodation facilities but a significant expansion in the restaurant sector.

Coastal tourism has brought economic benefits but also challenges, such as the temporary abandonment of historic centers due to short-term rentals and excessive seasonality, leading to overcrowding in summer and long periods of inactivity. Coastal erosion, particularly between Polignano and Monopoli, is a major issue, causing cliff collapses and instability in caves. Additionally, the lack of public transportation limits mobility, making tourism heavily dependent on private vehicles. The absence of alternative mobility systems to cars threatens the balance between tourism development and territorial preservation.

Strategic Planning Documents

- **Puglia365 Tourism Strategic Plan (2016-2025)** – This plan guides tourism policies across the entire region, also influencing local strategies in Polignano a Mare.
- **Regional Cycling Mobility Plan** – The plan identifies 16 cycling routes, including variants to the main paths, some of which connect to European and national itineraries such as EuroVelo and Bicaltaia.

C2 STRATEGIC AREA



Strategic Area Planning

- **Piano Regolatore Generale (PRG - General Regulatory Plan)** – The General Variant, adapted to Regional Law 56/1980, is the current urban planning tool at the municipal level, approved on June 21, 2005. This plan incorporates regional and cultural heritage guidelines, adapting construction regulations (especially near the coast) and urban planning standards.
- **Adaptation of the Current PRG to the PUTT/P** – Approved in 2016, this adaptation aligns the municipal urban planning tool with the Territorial Urban Planning Plan for the Landscape (PUTT/P). The update involved identifying the protected areas designated by the PUTT, defining them as "Territorial Areas", which, due to their specific characteristics, stand out as structuring elements of the overall territory.
- **PRG Variants**
Parco dei Trulli – Approved with prescriptions in 2013, this plan protects an area between Ripagnola coast and Lama Incina, including the adjacent marine stretch known as the "Coastal Park of Polignano a Mare."

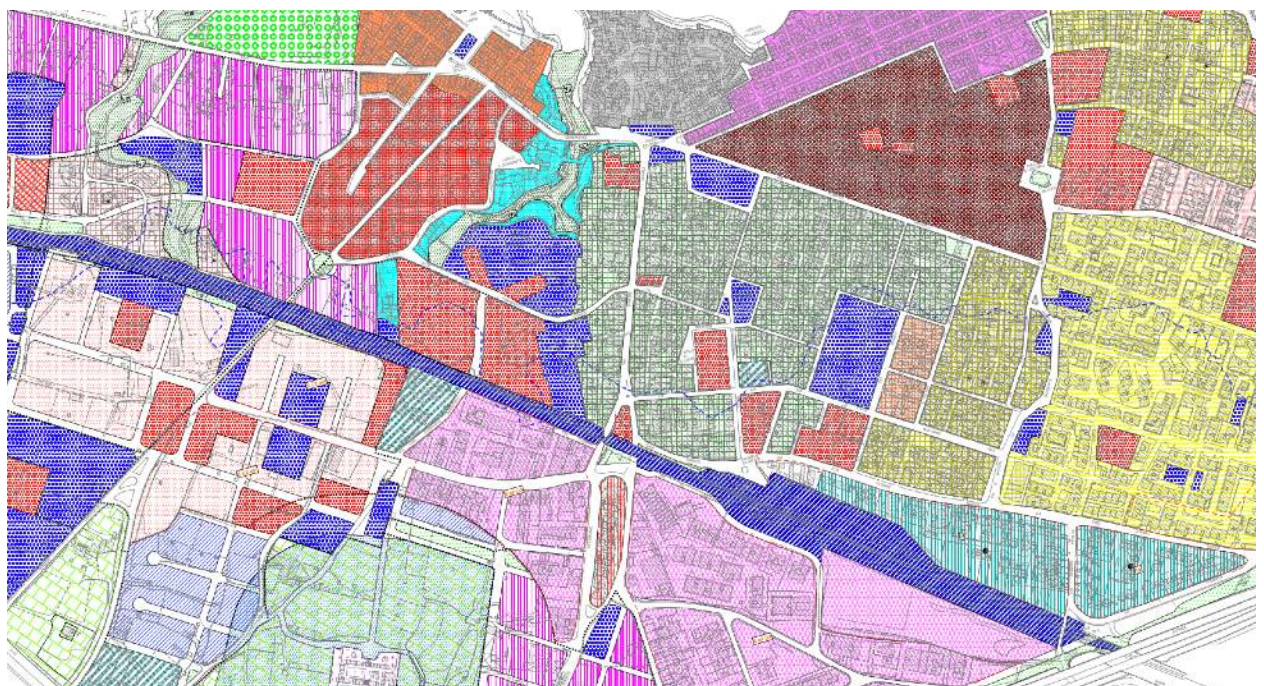
- **Implementation Plans of the PRG** (in progress): **Piano Particolareggiato** (Detailed Plan) C2 West (approved in 2008)

Sectoral Planning

- **Municipal Acoustic Plan** (effective since 2013)
- **Urban Mobility Plan (PUM) & Cycling Mobility Plan (PMC)** – This plan envisions a network of urban and suburban cycling routes, integrating with regional, national, and European sustainable mobility strategies. It identifies eight feasible cycling routes (approved in 2016).
- **Municipal Coastal Plan** (adopted in 2016)
- **Electromagnetic Zoning Plan** (acknowledged in 2016)

Territorial Recovery Intervention Plans (PIRT)

- PIRT Club Adriatico (approved with conditions in 2014)
- PIRT Capri (under review)
- PIRT Ripagnola (under review)



Strategic Area Description

The designation of the strategic area of Polignano, which includes the urbanized sector facing the sea, is closely linked to the project sites.

The interventions in the four areas have the potential to significantly transform social, residential, economic, and ecological dynamics. Due to its accessibility and the short distances within its urban grid, Polignano a Mare has the potential to develop a proximity-based urban model, offering a high quality of living.

The urban development of Polignano a Mare has been influenced by its geographical location and territorial morphology. Its evolution can be clearly observed through its structural patterns:

- The historic center, perched on a cliff overlooking the sea, has ancient origins and preserves a medieval urban fabric, characterized by narrow alleys, stone architecture, and a dense network of natural caves historically used for various purposes, including shelters and storage.
- During the Middle Ages, the city developed as a fortified settlement, with defensive walls protecting it from Saracen incursions.
- In the early 19th century, demographic growth led to expansion beyond the medieval walls, resulting in the emergence of new districts. These expansions are visible in the regular urban grid extending towards Monopoli and inland, incorporating rural areas.

Starting from the Polignano a Mare FS railway station and moving through the urban fabric within a 15-minute walking distance, one can reach the sea to enjoy its natural beauty, explore and experience the historic center and its cultural activities, and access local services.

Near the station, key urban amenities include a covered market, a five-a-side football field, and a medical center.

Continuing along Via Basile, one reaches the weekly open-air market. Along this route, urban voids, already subject to redevelopment by the Municipal Administration, are encountered. The path also leads to Villa Pinocchio Park, one of the few green spaces within the city.

Villa Pinocchio is strategically connected to Via San Vito, leading towards the historic center and Lama Monachile, as well as towards the 19th-century district, which extends to Largo Ardito, where an urban regeneration program is planned. This initiative aligns with previous public space redevelopment projects undertaken by the City of Polignano in recent years.

The railway line, a structural axis of the project sites and a key connectivity system for the city, represents an urban discontinuity but includes strategically positioned pedestrian and vehicular underpasses that facilitate connectivity.

From the perspective of the local community, the strong presence of tourism presents several challenges that require analysis: increased cost of living; gentrification and loss of residential spaces; deterioration of the urban environment; traffic congestion and pollution; transformation of local identity and loss of community cohesion. Polignano a Mare is increasingly becoming a city "for tourists" rather than for its own residents, who may feel increasingly alienated from their own territory.



Indirizzi progettuali per l'area strategica

The strategic-scale perimeter is defined in such a way as to provide designers with the freedom to relate their proposals to the project sites, depending on the themes they choose to address.

In any case, the project areas must necessarily integrate with the city's dynamics, both from a natural and cultural perspective and from a social and economic standpoint, by enhancing existing connection systems or planning new ones.

The possible design scenarios must take into account:

- The mobility, accessibility, and safety system, with improvements and upgrades to intermodal parking facilities and exchange solutions to reduce vehicular traffic, encouraging a modal shift through more sustainable mobility

solutions, particularly in relation to railway infrastructure.

- The enhancement of green connections and pedestrian-cycling networks within the urban fabric, to be utilized for climate impact mitigation and highly sustainable solutions.
- The impact of tourism development on residents' daily lives and the possibility of creating an urban layer that preserves the local heritage and the cultural and social identity of the community.
- The definition of relationships between the surrounding areas and the former railway project sites (Lepore, Trieste, Marconi), leveraging the underpasses connecting them to the urban system to improve accessibility and integration.



Viale delle Rimembranze



New pneumatic waste collection system - under testing



Multiplex cinema Vignola

C3 SITODIPROGETTO



Site Description and Design Guidelines

The project sites have been identified within the framework of the collaboration between the Municipality of Polignano a Mare and FS Sistemi Urbani (the Asset Management company responsible for non-operational railway real estate within the Ferrovie dello Stato Italiane Group) for the urban regeneration of these areas, which play a key role in the city's urban fabric.

The selected areas are located in positions that, due to urban expansion, have become central within the city's fabric. Their regeneration, therefore, not only impacts urban quality and the activation of new functions within the city but also offers significant potential for rethinking land use and urban characteristics in alignment with sustainability principles, landscape enhancement, and climate change mitigation strategies.

It is essential to regenerate and enhance the former railway areas included in the project (Lepore, Trieste, Marconi), which are strategically located within the urban fabric, adjacent to the FS railway station and its underpasses, which provide connections to the rest of the city. These project areas should become new points of attraction through the establishment and development of public-private functions and services for residents and visitors.

Therefore, innovative design proposals are required for new uses and interventions, both material and immaterial, aimed at maximizing the potential of these sites within their urban and environmental context.

The designated project areas are as follows:

Area 1 - Lepore

The site is located at the end of Via Lepore, at the beginning of Viale dell'Unità d'Italia, and is bordered to the southeast by Via Domenico Maringelli, from which there is access to the underpass leading to the large parking area and the entrance to the Lama Monachile nature trail.

To the northwest, it is adjacent to a public space, currently consisting of an undeveloped green strip and a hydraulic structure for water regulation within the Lama. Also to the northwest, Via Paolo Corona features residential buildings with a maximum height of two above-ground floors.

The Via Lepore - Viale Unità d'Italia area presents a mixed-use fabric, comprising residential, artisanal, and commercial functions, and serves as a key traffic corridor, as it also connects to the provincial road leading to Conversano.

The site spans a total area of 6,800 square meters, with a Gross Floor Area (GFA) of 1,200 square meters, and is characterized by the presence of disused buildings formerly used as offices and storage facilities.

These buildings do not possess characteristics warranting preservation and are therefore planned for demolition. The area is bordered and directly adjacent to the operational railway line. For design and development purposes, specific reference must be made to the regulations set forth in Presidential Decree (DPR) 753/80, particularly concerning minimum distance requirements from the railway infrastructure.

The site offers an opportunity to design a functional mix that may include new public-private functions aimed at regenerating both the area and the surrounding urban context.

Additionally, it is necessary to rethink the area's connections to the broader urban fabric, making use of the public green space located between the canal and the plot.



Area 2 - Trieste

The area, covering 8,200 sqm, is strategically located within the city, adjacent to a key transport hub as it is directly connected to and bordering the operational railway line near the FS Station. A portion of the area, which includes a small former railway warehouse currently under renovation, has been subject to redevelopment. This includes the construction (now nearing completion) of the municipal Velostation, an initiative led by the Municipality of Polignano a Mare. The Velostation, adjacent to the railway station, has been developed under the P.O.R. Puglia FESR 2014-2020 – Axis IV – Action 4.4, aimed at increasing sustainable mobility in urban and suburban areas. This intervention must be preserved within the overall project configuration. The site allows for the design of mixed-use functions, integrating new public-private facilities to support the urban regeneration of the area and its surroundings.

The Municipality is considering a new road connection to Via Antonio Ardito, which could reduce traffic congestion on Viale Trieste, the main access point to the FS Station and a key route for pedestrian and tourist flows.

Project development must comply with the provisions of DPR 753/80, particularly regarding minimum distance requirements.

Area 3 - Marconi

The area, covering 14,300 sqm, is accessible from Via Guglielmo Marconi. It is bordered to the northwest and southwest by residential, commercial, and industrial zones, and is also adjacent to the operational railway line. Strategically positioned within the urban fabric, the site benefits from excellent public road connections and proximity to the railway station, accessible through the secondary station entrance on Via Marconi.

The site's topography slopes from northwest to southeast, creating a level difference in relation to the surrounding streets.

The area is suitable for mixed-use development, introducing new public-private functions to foster urban regeneration.

Project development must comply with the provisions of DPR 753/80, particularly regarding minimum distance requirements.



Velostation project nearing completion

Area 4 - Villa Pinocchio

The city park consists exclusively of outdoor spaces, equipped for sports activities (a skating rink and a small soccer field), a play area with children's games, inclusive rides, and public restrooms.

The fenced area covers 11,500 sqm, located in the heart of the urban center. Within the park, there is a smaller fenced-off section housing a small building currently occupied by Legambiente.

Strategically positioned between the historic center and the southern expansion areas, the park is just 300 meters from the city's main square, Piazza Aldo Moro. As the only green lung in Polignano a Mare, it is surrounded by key public

and private facilities, including the Town Hall, the San Giovanni Bosco Elementary School, the Vignola Cinema-Theater, the railway station, the Post Office, the SS. Cosma e Damiano Parish, and the Urban Laboratory in Piazza Caduti di Via Fani. Its central location enhances its role as a key venue for various public and private initiatives. The park is fully serviced with public restrooms and all necessary urban infrastructure. The redevelopment of the park should focus on redefining its use for social and cultural activities, while also transforming the existing fixed structures, such as the skating rink and small soccer field, to better align with contemporary urban and community needs.



This system of areas represents an opportunity to initiate a dialogue between two key aspects of urban dynamics: the **Tourist City**, with its various trajectories of economic, social, and cultural development, and the **Inhabited City**, which needs to define its own social, residential, and cultural system—particularly in relation to environmental factors, accessibility, inclusivity, and support for vulnerable groups.

These two urban landscapes share a common potential: Polignano's ability to be a **city of proximity**, capable of sustaining itself through a **short-supply-chain service system**.

PROJECT KEYWORDS

Connections with urban and landscape systems Sustainability and the 4Rs (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Recover) **Proximity** **New economies** **Quality of public spaces** **Nature and morphology of the landscape** **New forms of living for the community** **History and Culture** **Soil permeability** **Local resources** **Local productivity** **Modal transport in relation to railway infrastructure** **New functions for the community** **Tourism activity**

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Documents

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Città di Polignano a Mare

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Maps, CTR, graphs and aerial photos

- Google corporation (aerial and semi-aerial photos)
- Sit (Territorial Information System) Puglia Region
- Semi-aerial photos from drones on Agostino Brienza sites
- Semi-aerial panoramic photos Getty images Italia srl under license

Contributi testuali

- City of Polignano a Mare, PRG General Report
- City of Polignano a Mare, DPRU Urban regeneration

Links

Links

[Città di Polignano a Mare](#)

[Territorial Information System](#)

[Paytourist.com](#)

[National Repertory of Territorial Data](#)

[Geoportal of the Agenzia delle Entrate](#)

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