

RETERURALE NAZIONALE 20142020

Biodistricts: a governance model for an agroecological transition

The agroecological paradigm: values, principles and actions for the transition to sustainable agri-food systems



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Biodistricts, a growing reality

Eco-Regions/ Biodistrict

Spontaneous bottom-up forms of aggregation that promote the sustainable development of the territory. They are based on the values traceable to the IFOAM (2005) principles of organic farming (Health, Ecology, Fairness and Care).

Different models for:

- governance;
- economic structure;
- promoting actors;
- role of **organic farming**.

Eco-Regions in Europe 2022 (www.BIODISTRETTO.NET)



● Eco-Regions already established ● Eco-Regions in development





Biodistricts: the centrality of organic farming

Centrality of the value attributed to **organic farming, which is the distinguishing element** compared to other approaches linking agriculture to territorial development, social cohesion and inclusion, and the preservation of the territory and rural landscape.

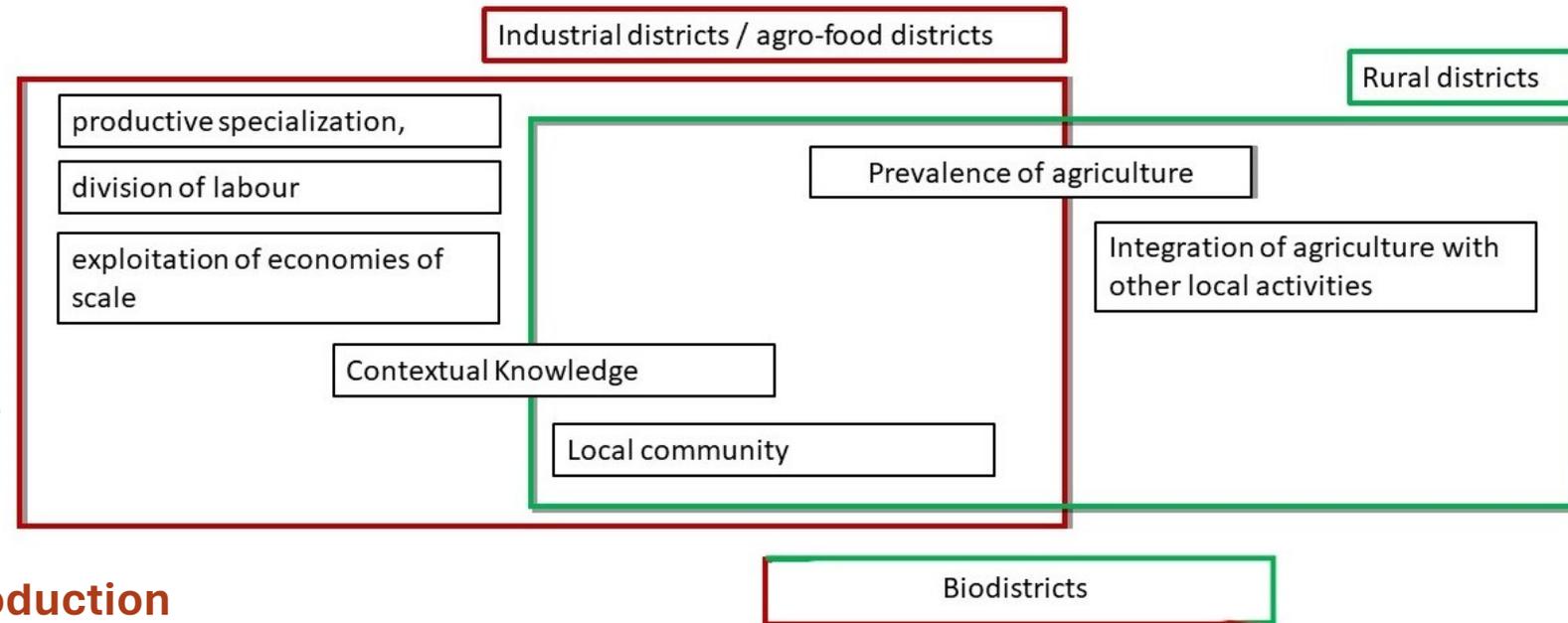
Public-private partnership

Specific agreement between producers, consumers, local communities and public decision-makers

Production but also environmental objectives, innovation and consumer education

Specific aspects of agricultural production

Empowers and involves local actors in the management of agri-food systems



Source: A. Sturla, 2023

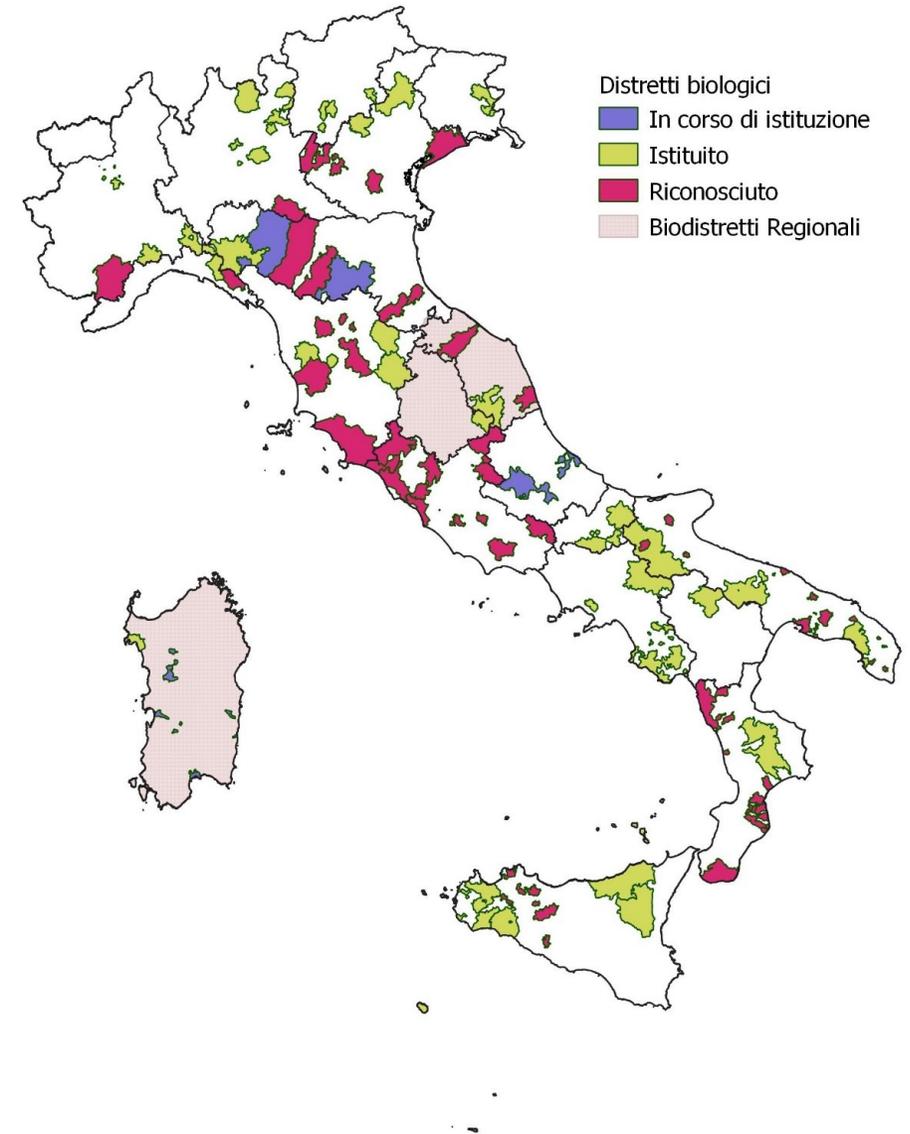




Biodistricts in Italy

Starting with the Cilento Biodistrict (2009), this form of aggregation has established itself at a national level as an **innovative model of participatory territorial governance** that, starting from the development of organic farming, extends its principles of **health, ecology, equity and care to the entire local system.**

Today there are more than 80 Biodistricts, both established and in the process of being established, some of which are recognised as Food Districts or by regional laws.

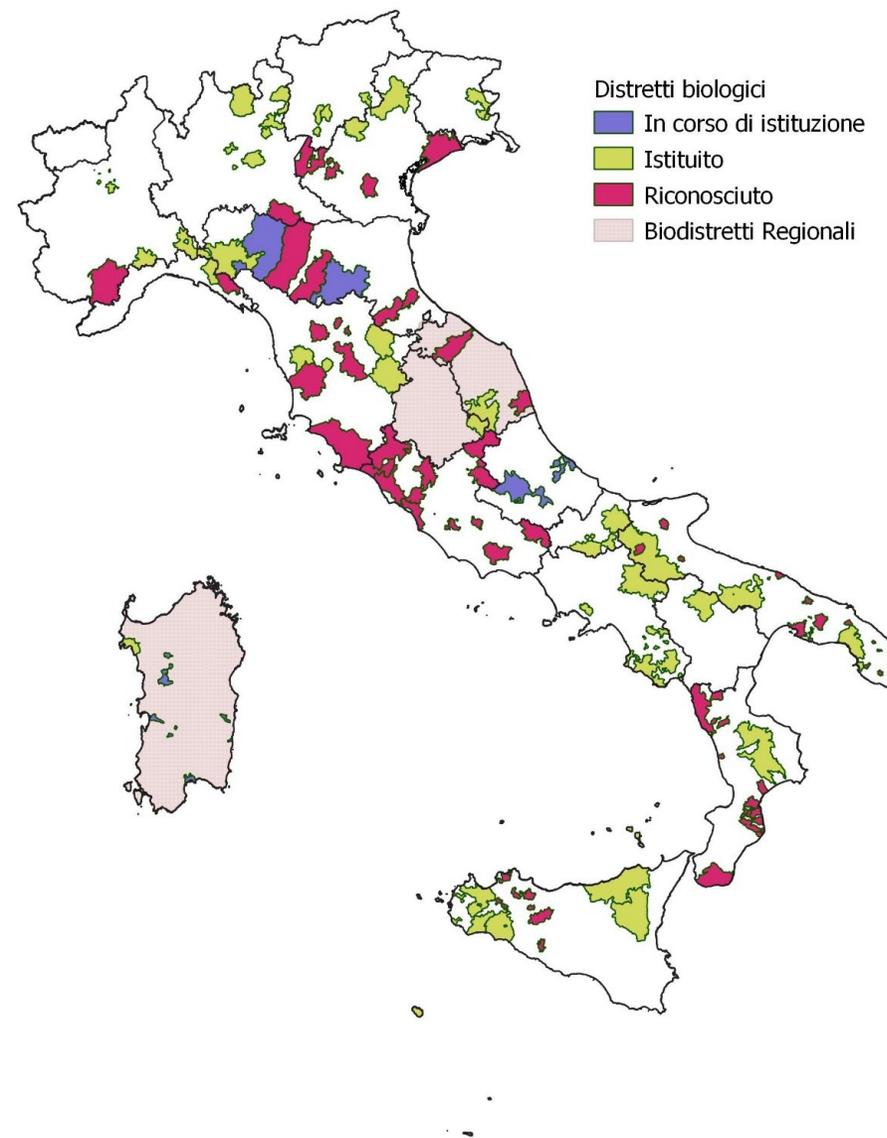




Biodistricts in Italy

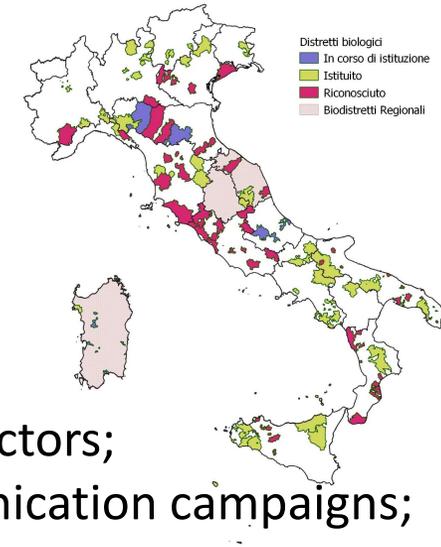
Distinguished by a high degree of diversity in terms of needs, structures, targets as well as institutional and operational maturity, and therefore by a different **capacity to influence** territorial dynamics.

Sharing the complexity of action inherent in a sustainable development path that embraces the **environmental, social and economic** spheres of **the local system**.





Biodistricts in Italy



Model actions implemented by the Biodistrict

- animation for the creation of networks between organic operators and local actors;
- involvement of civil society up to the organisation of educational and communication campaigns;
- coordination of activities aimed at structuring local organic supply chains;
- creating conditions to improve the sustainability of all economic and social activities;
- activating training, technical assistance and advisory services;
- promoting Green Public Procurement (GPP) policies;
- reporting of situations that pose a health risk to the environment and people;
-and much more.

Central issues:

time and financial resources needed to make the Biodistrict effective



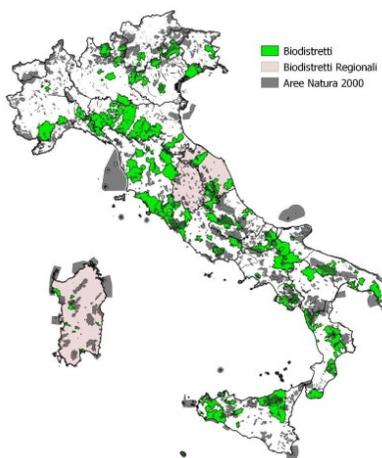


Biodistricts: the economic resources

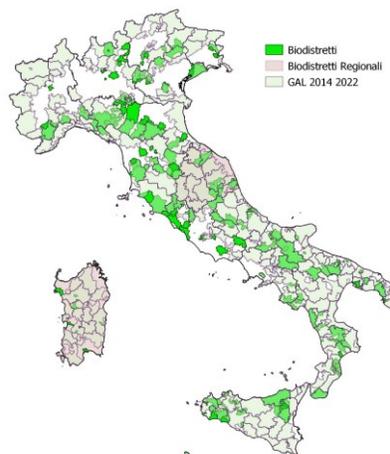
Biodistricts direct beneficiaries of the 2014-2022 RDP resources (EAFRD)

Biodistricts and the European Funds for Cohesion Policy 2014 - 2020 (ERDF and ESF+)

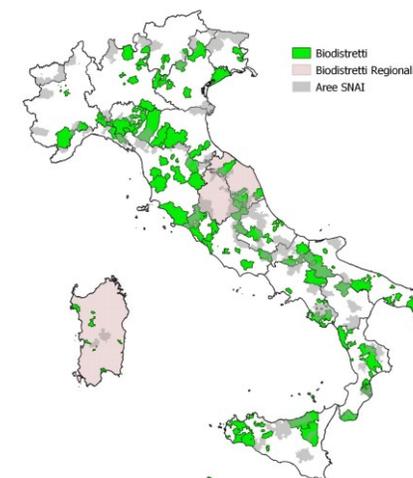
**Biodistricts and Natura
2000 Areas**



**Biodistricts and Local Action
Groups (LAGs)**



**Biodistricts and the National
Strategy for Inner Areas (SNAI)**



<https://www.reterurale.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/25558>

Biodistricts have demonstrated their ability to propose innovative approaches to the problems of rural areas, based on the values of organic farming and agroecology





Juridical Recognition

Regional Laws on biodistricts

Liguria (2009), Sardinia (2014),
Tuscany (2017), Lazio (2019)

Food Districts - Law 205/2017

Apulia (2007), Sicily (2017), Lombardy (2020),
Marche (2021), Abruzzo (2022), ...

Law 23/2022 Organic Farming
Decree 663273/2022 Criteria, procedures and
requirements

Art. 13 Law 23/2022 - Biodistricts

Captured the **global vision** of the role of
this district form as it emerges from the
observation of various Italian experiences

Biodistricts, with their own identity, obtain
juridical recognition at national level

National Register of Organic Districts

40 Biodistricts
already registered
(4th April 2022)





The strategic framework of European policies

...in favour of Biodistricts

Bidistricts have assumed such geographical, political and economic proportions that European and national policy attention has been drawn to its potential, not only economic.

Biodistricts

Green Deal
“from farm to fork”
“biodiversity”



sustainable
and inclusive
growth



- ✓ revitalisation of rural areas and improvement of the tourist attractiveness of territories,
- ✓ protection and restoration of biodiversity,
- ✓ development of organic farming and its integration with other local activities.

EU Action Plan for the development of organic production
(COM(2021) 141 final)



- diffusion of organic produce in public canteens;
- development of short supply chains;
- group organic certification.

...also:

strengthening consumer confidence and replacing synthetic inputs with sustainable agricultural practices in the framework of agroecology





National CAP Strategic Plan (PSP) 2023-2027

Organic Farming/Agroecology

- increased resilience,
- adaptation to climate change
- enhancement of ecosystem services in agriculture and forestry

Adoption of integrated organisational models for:

- strengthening supply chains;
- stronger, fairer and more stable territorial agri-food systems.

multifunctionality and encourage the creation of **new marketing opportunities** on a local basis

Biodistricts



dissemination of organic farming as a single **enterprise/agro-environmental agreements**



organisation of the offer and activation of collective sales channels



dispersion of producers in the territory

fair price for producers



growth in consumption of organic products





National CAP Strategic Plan (PSP) 2023-2027

Cooperation Interventions

Cooperation for rural, local and smart villages development;
Support for operational groups EIP AGRI;
Promotion of quality products.



Biodistricts

- **Facilitator actor** with coordination, organizational, animation and promotion functions;
- **Implementing actor** of specific projects, jointly with other actors in the area.

LEADER Projects

- ecosystem services, biodiversity, natural resources and landscape;
- services, goods, collective and inclusive spaces;
- energy, bioeconomy and circular economy communities;
- local sociocultural and tourism-recreational supply systems;
- local artisanal and manufacturing production systems;
- local food systems, districts, agricultural and agri-food supply chains.



Adoption of innovative solutions to local development from the perspective of sustainability in different thematic areas





The role of Biodistrict in promoting agroecological approach and agroecological transition

Organic farming: one of the production models to which agroecology can be referred

Targets

Ecological-agronomic aspect

Ensure food production that respects the environment, health, and the rights of farmers and consumers

Socioeconomic, cultural and political dimension

Develop organic farming by fostering the establishment of networks among local actors that are gradually expanded so as to transfer its principles to all activities in the area

Governance

Organizing the participation of actors and stakeholders, including those engaged in sectors distant from agriculture, around shared values

From «practice» to «movement»

Starting with sustainable practices, agroecosystem redesign, and the reconnection of local consumers with producers to the reconstruction of an agri-food system based on participation, locality, equity and justice

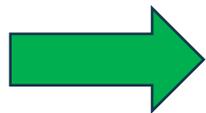




Conclusion

The observation of experiences organic districts/Biodistricts (and or ecoregions):

Multi-actor nature
and holistic approach
to local development



It can influence different
aspects of the
socioeconomic environment



Eligible player to
facilitate the
agroecological transition

The presence of
agroecological
production units



It can initiate the transfer of
sustainability elements to the
external context with lower
sustainability content



«Sustainable islands»
...contagious

Measuring the progress of agroecological transition!

Dissemination of
innovative
agroecological practices



Success factors and barriers
of their implementation at
the local level



chosen place to study
these phenomena





Grazie per l'attenzione

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