

Public Action and Metropolitan Project through the Prism of Spatial Planning Policy in Morocco.

Auteur 1 : AKDIM Tariq
Auteur 2 : ZABADI Adil
Auteur 3 : ADIDI Abdelaziz

AKDIM Tariq, Économiste, Doctorant chercheur
Institut National de l'Aménagement et de l'Urbanisme, Rabat Maroc

ZABADI Adil, Directeur et Professeur de l'Enseignement Supérieur
Institut National de l'Aménagement et de l'Urbanisme, Rabat Maroc

ADIDI Abdelaziz, Professeur de l'Enseignement Supérieur
Institut National de l'Aménagement et de l'Urbanisme, Rabat Maroc

Déclaration de divulgation : L'auteur n'a pas connaissance de quelconque financement qui pourrait affecter l'objectivité de cette étude.

Conflit d'intérêts : L'auteur ne signale aucun conflit d'intérêts.

Pour citer cet article : AKDIM .T, ZABADI .A & ADIDI .A (2025) « Public Action and Metropolitan Project through the Prism of Spatial Planning Policy in Morocco », African Scientific Journal « Volume 03, Numéro 29 » pp: 0948 – 0979.



DOI : 10.5281/zenodo.15394238
Copyright © 2025 – ASJ



Abstract

Morocco has experienced significant urban transformations over the past three decades, with major cities evolving toward metropolitan configurations despite the absence of a formal metropolitan governance framework. This research investigates how territorial dynamics driven by the Moroccan state reflect an emerging metropolitan project, with particular focus on Rabat as a case study. Through analysis of planning documents, institutional arrangements, and urban projects, this study examines the gap between de facto metropolization processes and their institutional recognition. Findings reveal that while economic and spatial metropolization dynamics are evident in Morocco's major urban centers, the lack of adapted governance structures and legal frameworks hinders coordinated metropolitan development. The research proposes governance mechanisms and planning paradigms that could support sustainable metropolitan development in Morocco. Our analysis ultimately demonstrates that Morocco's experience represents a distinctive case of "metropolization without metropolitan governance", reflecting tensions between global economic integration, centralized state planning, and fragmented local governance. The implementation of incremental governance reforms, beginning with sector-specific coordination mechanisms before potentially evolving toward comprehensive metropolitan authorities, offers pragmatic pathways toward addressing these governance gaps while respecting Morocco's specific institutional context. This work contributes to understanding metropolization processes in North African contexts where centralized governance models interact with global economic forces and local territorial specificities.

Keywords : Public actions, Metropolitan projects, governance models, territorial dynamics

Introduction

The phenomenon of metropolization has profoundly transformed urban landscapes worldwide, marking a significant shift in urban development patterns and governance approaches. In the Moroccan context, major cities have undergone considerable transformations over recent decades, evolving from traditional urban centers to emerging metropolitan areas that increasingly participate in global economic networks. This evolution reflects both endogenous development processes and the influence of globalization forces that have reshaped urban hierarchies and functions across North Africa. This research is anchored in a critical realist epistemological perspective, acknowledging the existence of an objective urban reality while recognizing that our understanding of metropolitan processes is necessarily mediated through conceptual frameworks and contextual interpretations. This position allows us to examine both material transformations in Moroccan urban territories and the social constructions that shape metropolitan governance. The research adopts an abductive reasoning approach, iterating between theoretical frameworks and empirical observations to develop contextually grounded understanding of metropolitan dynamics in Morocco.

This methodological choice enables us to avoid both the limitations of purely deductive approaches that might impose external conceptual frameworks unsuited to Moroccan realities and purely inductive approaches that might fail to recognize structural patterns across different metropolitan contexts. The mixed-methods research design consequently integrates document analysis, spatial data examination, and institutional interviews to triangulate findings and capture the multidimensional nature of metropolization processes in the Moroccan context.

The urbanization trajectory in Morocco presents distinctive characteristics that differentiate it from other contexts. Since independence, Morocco has experienced rapid urban growth, with the urban population increasing from 29% in 1960 to approximately 63% in 2022 (Haut Commissariat au Plan, 2023). This demographic transition has been accompanied by spatial expansion of urban areas, economic diversification, and increasing functional complexity of major urban agglomerations. Cities like Casablanca, Rabat, Tangier, and Marrakech have gradually developed metropolitan features through economic concentration, spatial reorganization, and new functional interconnections with surrounding territories (Berriane & Signoles, 2015).

This urban transformation occurs within a specific institutional context characterized by various reforms of territorial governance. The 2011 Constitution and subsequent advanced regionalization process have reshaped the institutional landscape, redistributing responsibilities

between central government and local authorities. However, these institutional developments have not explicitly addressed the metropolitan question, creating a gap between de facto metropolization processes and their institutional recognition (Planel et al., 2019). The absence of a metropolitan governance framework raises questions about coordination mechanisms, resource allocation, and implementation of coherent development strategies across fragmented administrative territories. Within this context, state intervention remains central to understanding urban transformations in Morocco. Through various planning documents, sectoral strategies, and major urban projects, public authorities have significantly influenced territorial dynamics. However, these interventions often result from vertical and sectoral approaches rather than integrated metropolitan vision (Mouloudi, 2020). This raises fundamental questions about the articulation between public action and metropolitan projects in Morocco. How do territorial dynamics driven by the state in Moroccan cities, particularly Rabat, reflect an emerging metropolitan project? What are the implications for public action and spatial planning policies in Morocco?

The primary objective of this research is to analyze the relationship between state-driven territorial dynamics and emerging metropolitan projects in Morocco, with particular emphasis on understanding governance challenges and spatial planning implications. The study examines how metropolization processes manifest in Moroccan cities despite the absence of formal metropolitan frameworks, investigating both the opportunities created by urban transformations and the governance gaps limiting sustainable metropolitan development. By focusing on Rabat as a principal case study, this research aims to identify governance mechanisms and planning paradigms that could better align institutional frameworks with metropolitan realities in the Moroccan context.

This article examines these questions through analysis of institutional documents, planning instruments, and case studies, with particular focus on Rabat as an emblematic example of emerging metropolitan dynamics. The research adopts a multidisciplinary approach combining urban geography, planning theory, and policy analysis to understand the complex interactions between state intervention, territorial dynamics, and metropolitan development. The methodological framework integrates qualitative analysis of planning documents, semi-structured interviews with key institutional actors, and spatial analysis of metropolitan development patterns. This mixed-methods approach allows for triangulation of findings while capturing both formal institutional dimensions and informal governance practices that shape metropolitan dynamics in practice. The article is structured in four parts. First, we examine

theoretical and conceptual frameworks of metropolization, highlighting their relevance and limitations for understanding the Moroccan context. Second, we analyze how planning documents at different scales consider metropolitan dynamics. Third, we present case studies of metropolitan development in Morocco, focusing on Rabat and we discuss the challenges and perspectives for establishing metropolitan governance in Morocco. Finally, we explore planning paradigms that could support sustainable metropolization in the Moroccan context.

1. Theoretical and Conceptual Framework of Metropolization

1.1. Theories of Metropolization

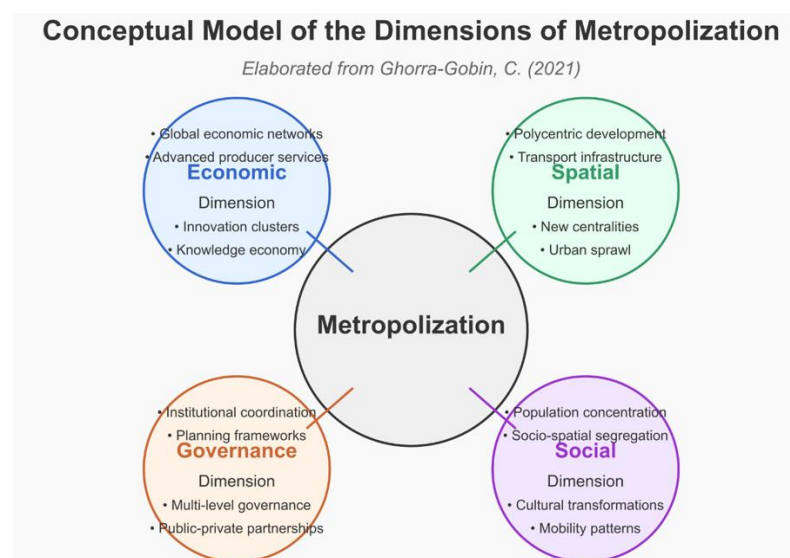
The concept of metropolization represents a complex urban phenomenon that has generated extensive theoretical literature across multiple disciplines. Fundamentally, it describes the concentration of people, activities, and wealth in major urban centers and their surrounding areas, coupled with the reorganization of urban space and governance structures. Metropolization transcends mere urban growth to encompass qualitative transformations in urban functions, spatial organization, and connections to global networks. The theoretical understanding of metropolization draws significantly from approaches to global cities and centrality. Friedmann's world city hypothesis (1986) provided an early framework for understanding the emergence of command centers in the global economy. This approach was further developed by Sassen (1991, 2001), whose global city theory emphasized the concentration of advanced producer services, financial institutions, and decision-making functions in strategic urban nodes of the global economy. Sassen's work highlighted how economic globalization produces new urban hierarchies and spatial configurations, with certain cities becoming privileged sites for the management and coordination of global economic flows.

Beyond economic dimensions, theorists have conceptualized metropolization as a multidimensional spatial process. Ascher (1995) described metropolization as the continuation of urbanization under new technological, economic, and social conditions, generating polycentric urban regions characterized by functional specialization and complex mobility patterns. This spatial reorganization manifests through the emergence of new centralities beyond traditional urban cores, the development of transportation infrastructure to facilitate flows between specialized nodes, and changing relations between urban centers and peripheries. As Halbert (2010) argues, metropolitan spaces are increasingly organized as networks rather than concentric zones, challenging traditional models of urban structure and governance. Ghorra-Gobin's (2010, 2021) work on metropolitan processes has particularly emphasized the

dialectical relationship between globalization and local territorial dynamics. Her research highlights how global economic forces interact with local institutional contexts, cultural factors, and historical legacies to produce distinctive metropolitan configurations.

Ghorra-Gobin contends that metropolization represents more than an economic process it constitutes a profound reorganization of social and political relations within urban space. Metropolitan areas thus become sites of tension between global connectivity and local identity, between economic competitiveness and social cohesion, and between functional integration and institutional fragmentation (Ghorra-Gobin, 2015). The multidimensional character of metropolization emerges clearly from synthesis of these theoretical approaches. As illustrated in Figure 1, metropolization encompasses interrelated economic, spatial, social, and governance dimensions that mutually reinforce each other. Economic metropolization involves concentration of strategic economic functions, integration into global networks, and development of knowledge economies. Spatial metropolization manifests through polycentric development, new mobility patterns, and changing urban forms. Social metropolization includes population concentration, socio-spatial reconfigurations, and cultural transformations.

Figure 1. Conceptual model of the dimensions of metropolization



Source: *Elaborated from Ghorra-Gobin, C. (2021). "Metropolis and globalization: New urban configurations"*

These theoretical perspectives have primarily emerged from analysis of metropolization processes in advanced economies. Their application to contexts like Morocco requires careful consideration of different historical trajectories, institutional arrangements, and development challenges. While global economic forces certainly influence Moroccan urban development,

their articulation with local contexts produces distinctive metropolitan configurations that cannot be reduced to simple replication of Northern models (Vermeren, 2016). The specificity of metropolization in Morocco thus demands theoretical approaches sensitive to post-colonial urban conditions, state-led development processes, and hybrid governance arrangements characteristic of North African contexts.

1.2. Particularities of the Moroccan Context

The application of metropolization theories to the Moroccan context reveals significant particularities that distinguish metropolitan development in Morocco from processes observed in other geographical contexts. Perhaps most notably, Moroccan urban policy and planning frameworks operate without a formal legal definition of what constitutes a metropolis. Unlike countries where metropolitan areas have specific institutional recognition and governance frameworks, the Moroccan legal system does not provide explicit criteria or governance structures for metropolitan territories (Zaireg, 2019). This legal gap has significant implications for planning, resource allocation, and institutional coordination in emerging metropolitan areas. The absence of legal definition contributes to persistent ambiguity between the concepts of urban pole and metropolis in Moroccan planning discourse. Planning documents frequently employ terms like "urban pole," "urban agglomeration," or "metropolitan area" without clear differentiation of their meaning or implications (Chouiki, 2017).

This terminological ambiguity reflects broader conceptual tensions regarding the status and governance of large urban concentrations. While economic and demographic indicators might suggest metropolitan characteristics for cities like Casablanca or Rabat, these are not matched by corresponding institutional arrangements or planning approaches that would acknowledge their metropolitan function. The administrative organization of Moroccan territory further complicates metropolitan development. The current territorial division, organized around communes, provinces/prefectures, and regions, does not provide intermediate governance structures adapted to metropolitan realities that typically extend across multiple administrative boundaries. Bergh (2016) notes that despite recent regionalization reforms, Moroccan territorial governance remains characterized by vertical relationships between central and local authorities rather than horizontal coordination between adjacent territories. This administrative fragmentation poses significant challenges for coherent planning and service provision across functional metropolitan areas.

Beyond institutional arrangements, Moroccan metropolitan dynamics exhibit distinctive features related to their historical development and insertion in global networks. Unlike

European or North American metropolises that emerged through long industrialization processes, Moroccan metropolitan areas have developed through compressed modernization trajectories influenced by colonial legacies, post-independence development policies, and more recent economic liberalization (Bogaert, 2018). This compressed development has created distinctive spatial configurations where traditional urban forms coexist with modern infrastructure and globally connected economic enclaves. The role of the state in shaping metropolitan dynamics constitutes another specificity of the Moroccan context. Despite economic liberalization and decentralization reforms, the central state remains a dominant actor in urban development through direct interventions, resource allocation, and approval of major planning decisions. As Zaki (2011) demonstrates, metropolitan projects in Morocco often result from top-down initiatives rather than locally articulated development strategies. This centralized approach to metropolitan development contrasts with governance models based on strong local autonomy or public-private partnerships characteristic of many Western metropolises.

Finally, Moroccan metropolitan areas face distinctive development challenges related to informality, socio-spatial inequalities, and infrastructure deficits. Despite significant improvements in urban services and housing conditions in recent decades, metropolitan expansion continues to generate informal settlements, inadequate service provision in peripheral areas, and mobility challenges (Lourimi & Elharrak, 2022). These challenges require context-specific approaches to metropolitan planning and governance that address the particular social and environmental conditions of Moroccan cities. Understanding these specificities is essential for developing metropolitan governance approaches and planning frameworks adapted to Moroccan realities. Rather than simply importing concepts or institutional models from other contexts, addressing metropolitan challenges in Morocco requires careful consideration of historical legacies, institutional constraints, and local development priorities. The following sections explore how these particularities manifest in planning documents and metropolitan projects in major Moroccan cities.

2. Planning Documents and Their Consideration of Metropolization

2.1. Analysis of National Documents

The evolution of planning approaches in Morocco reveals a gradual, albeit incomplete, integration of metropolitan concerns into national spatial planning frameworks. Analysis of major national planning documents demonstrates this progressive recognition of metropolitan dynamics while highlighting persistent gaps in addressing governance and coordination issues

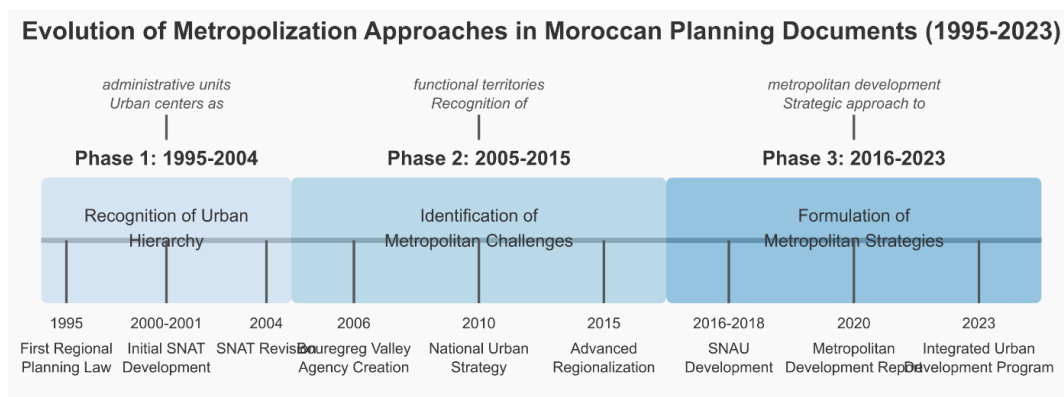
specific to metropolitan areas. The National Spatial Planning Scheme (Schéma National d'Aménagement du Territoire - SNAT), first elaborated in the early 2000s, represents Morocco's most comprehensive attempt to articulate a coherent vision for territorial development. The SNAT introduced important conceptual innovations, moving beyond sectoral approaches to propose an integrated vision of territorial development (Troin, 2002). However, as Naciri (2017) demonstrates in his critical analysis of the document, the SNAT initially conceptualized urban development primarily through the lens of urban hierarchy rather than metropolitan processes. The document acknowledged major urban agglomerations as economic drivers but failed to adequately address the functional integration of urban peripheries, inter-territorial coordination, or metropolitan governance mechanisms. This reflected the dominant planning paradigm of the period, focused on administrative divisions rather than functional territories.

The evolution toward metropolitan thinking became more evident in the 2004 revision of the SNAT, which explicitly identified emerging metropolitan configurations around Casablanca, Rabat, and Tangier. This document represented a significant shift in recognizing these urban concentrations not merely as large cities but as complex territories requiring specific governance approaches. According to El Merghadi (2016), this evolution reflected both internal recognition of changing territorial dynamics and external influences from international organizations promoting metropolitan governance models. Despite this conceptual advance, the SNAT remained limited in proposing concrete governance mechanisms adapted to metropolitan realities, continuing to work within established administrative frameworks. The National Urban Framework Scheme (Schéma National d'Armature Urbaine - SNAU), elaborated in 2016-2018, marked a further evolution in the conceptualization of metropolitan territories. This document explicitly addressed metropolitan dynamics, identifying "metropolitan poles" as strategic anchors for national development and competitiveness. The SNAU proposed a more sophisticated understanding of urban systems, recognizing functional relationships between central cities and their peripheries, and acknowledging the need for coordinated development strategies across administrative boundaries (Ministère de l'Aménagement du Territoire, 2018). This document reflected growing awareness of the inadequacy of traditional planning tools for addressing metropolitan challenges.

The analysis of metropolization approaches in these national documents reveals a gradual conceptual evolution, moving from administrative conceptions of cities toward recognition of functional metropolitan territories. As illustrated in Figure 2, this evolution has occurred through distinct phases, from the initial recognition of urban hierarchy (1995-2004) to the

identification of metropolitan challenges (2005-2015) and finally toward attempts to formulate specific metropolitan strategies (2016-2023). This progression reflects broader shifts in planning paradigms, increasingly influenced by globalization processes and international planning models. The Orientation Schemes for Planning (Schémas d'Orientation pour l'Aménagement - SOFA), developed for specific regions or territories, have similarly evolved in their treatment of metropolitan dynamics. Early orientation schemes from the 1990s and early 2000s typically focused on infrastructure development and land use regulations within administrative boundaries. More recent orientation schemes, particularly those developed for regions containing major urban agglomerations, have increasingly addressed inter-territorial dynamics, mobility patterns, and economic complementarities characteristic of metropolitan development.

Figure 2. Evolution of metropolization approaches in Moroccan planning documents (1995-2023)



Source: Adapted from the Spatial Planning Department (2019), "Evolution of territorial planning documents in Morocco"

Despite this conceptual evolution, national planning documents continue to exhibit important limitations in addressing metropolitan governance. As Idrissi Janati (2019) argues, these documents have primarily focused on spatial and economic dimensions of metropolization while giving insufficient attention to institutional mechanisms for metropolitan coordination. The persistence of a centralized planning approach, where strategic orientations flow from national to local levels, has limited the emergence of bottom-up metropolitan governance initiatives. Furthermore, these documents have typically emphasized infrastructure and economic development while giving less attention to social dimensions of metropolitan development, including questions of socio-spatial segregation, affordable housing, or environmental justice. The gradual integration of metropolitan concerns into national planning

documents reflects the influence of changing territorial realities and international planning paradigms. However, this evolution remains incomplete, particularly in translating conceptual recognition of metropolitan dynamics into operational governance frameworks. This gap between conceptual recognition and institutional innovation represents a significant challenge for metropolitan development in Morocco.

2.2. Regional and Local Scale

At regional and local scales, planning instruments demonstrate even more varied approaches to metropolitan dynamics, reflecting the tension between administrative frameworks and functional territories. Analysis of these instruments reveals both innovative attempts to address metropolitan challenges and persistent fragmentation in planning approaches. Urban Development Master Plans (Schémas Directeurs d'Aménagement Urbain - SDAU) constitute the primary strategic planning instruments for major urban agglomerations in Morocco. These documents establish medium to long-term development orientations, define land use patterns, and identify major infrastructure projects. The evolution of SDAUs for major urban agglomerations reveals significant shifts in conceptual approaches to metropolitan territories. Early SDAUs, such as those developed for Casablanca in the 1980s and 1990s, primarily focused on the central city with limited consideration of functional relationships with peripheral municipalities. By contrast, more recent SDAUs have progressively adopted wider territorial perspectives. The 2015 SDAU for the Rabat-Salé-Témara agglomeration, for instance, explicitly acknowledged the functional integration of these territories and proposed development strategies addressing mobility patterns, economic complementarities, and environmental systems across municipal boundaries (Agence Urbaine de Rabat-Salé, 2016).

Despite this territorial widening, SDAUs continue to face significant limitations in addressing metropolitan governance. Senhaji (2017) identifies several persistent challenges in her critical analysis of planning instruments in Casablanca. First, the administrative perimeter covered by SDAUs often fails to correspond to functional metropolitan territories, excluding peripheral areas experiencing rapid development dynamics. Second, these documents typically lack effective mechanisms for implementation across municipal boundaries, with each municipality retaining primary authority over land use decisions within its territory. Third, the lengthy elaboration process for SDAUs (often exceeding five years) frequently results in documents that fail to adapt to rapidly evolving metropolitan realities. Development Plans (Plans d'Aménagement - PA) represent the more detailed, legally binding land use planning documents at the municipal scale. These plans translate strategic orientations into specific land use

regulations and infrastructure provisions. In metropolitan contexts, Development Plans face particular challenges due to fragmentation of planning authority across multiple municipalities. Berriane and Janati (2016) document how this fragmentation produces inconsistent development patterns in metropolitan peripheries, with adjacent municipalities adopting contradictory land use strategies or failing to coordinate infrastructure provision.

The articulation between planning scales represents another critical challenge for metropolitan governance. While national documents establish broad orientations and local plans regulate specific land uses, effective metropolitan planning requires intermediate coordination mechanisms. Various institutional innovations have been attempted to address this coordination gap. Inter-municipal cooperation frameworks, established under the 2015 laws on local authorities, provide legal mechanisms for voluntary cooperation between adjacent municipalities. However, Taoufik (2018) demonstrates that these mechanisms have been implemented unevenly, with particular difficulties in metropolitan areas where political, fiscal, and developmental disparities between municipalities create obstacles to voluntary cooperation. Sectoral planning agencies have sometimes played de facto metropolitan coordination roles. For instance, the Bouregreg Valley Development Agency, established in 2006 to coordinate development along the river separating Rabat and Salé, effectively functions as a metropolitan development agency for a strategic portion of the Rabat metropolitan area.

The gap between administrative territories and functional metropolitan areas constitutes a fundamental challenge for planning at regional and local scales. While planning documents increasingly recognize metropolitan dynamics conceptually, governance frameworks and implementation mechanisms remain primarily anchored in administrative divisions that fragment metropolitan territories. This institutional mismatch creates particular challenges for addressing metropolitan issues that intrinsically cross administrative boundaries, including transportation systems, economic development, environmental management, and socio-spatial equity.

3. Case Studies of Moroccan Metropolitan Dynamics

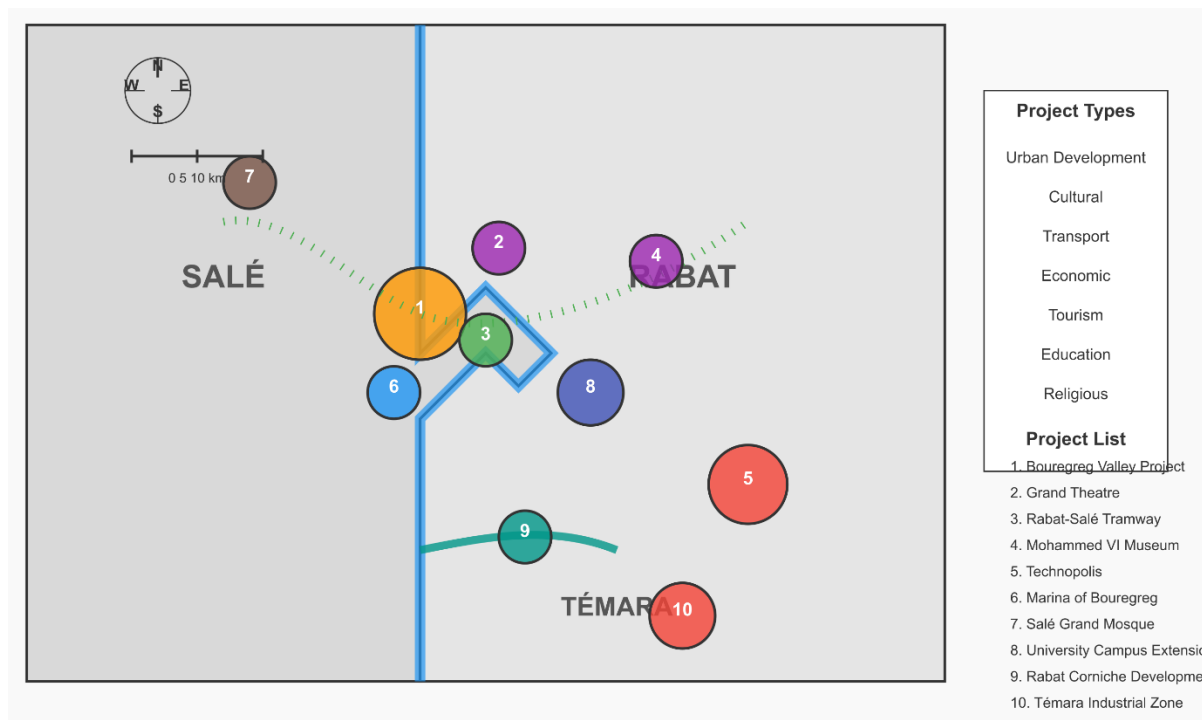
3.1. Rabat: From Administrative Capital to Influential Metropolis

The metropolitan development of Rabat presents a distinctive trajectory shaped by its dual identity as national capital and emerging economic center. This case illustrates how state-led urban projects interact with broader metropolitan dynamics to produce specific spatial configurations and governance challenges. The evolution of Rabat's status within the national urban system reflects significant transformations in recent decades. Historically defined

primarily by its administrative and political functions, Rabat has progressively developed more diversified urban characteristics through strategic investments and changing economic dynamics. While the city's primacy continues to derive substantially from its role as administrative capital, hosting government institutions, diplomatic representations, and major cultural facilities, recent decades have witnessed deliberate attempts to diversify its functional base.

According to Tozy and Hibou (2020), this diversification strategy reflects broader national objectives of positioning Morocco within global economic networks while maintaining strong state control over strategic urban transformations. The implementation of major structuring projects has played a central role in this metropolitan evolution. Since the early 2000s, Rabat has witnessed unprecedented investment in flagship urban projects that have significantly transformed its urban landscape and functional organization. These projects, generally resulting from national initiatives rather than local planning processes, have sought to enhance the capital's international visibility, modernize its infrastructure, and create new economic opportunities. The most emblematic among these interventions is the development of the Bouregreg Valley, a massive urban project spanning the river between Rabat and Salé. This project, managed by a dedicated development agency with exceptional planning powers, has transformed former industrial and informal areas into mixed-use developments including luxury housing, cultural facilities, marinas, and commercial spaces. As Mouloudi (2015) demonstrates in his detailed analysis of the project, this intervention exemplifies state-led metropolization through exceptional governance arrangements that bypass normal planning procedures and local authority competencies.

Figure 3. Major structuring projects of the Rabat-Salé metropolis (2010-2024)



Source: Adapted from the Bouregreg Valley Development Agency (2022). "Bouregreg Valley development projects"

Beyond the Bouregreg project, Rabat's metropolitan transformation encompasses multiple large-scale interventions illustrated in Figure 4. These include the development of Technopolis as a specialized economic zone for technology companies, the creation of major cultural facilities including the Grand Theatre and Mohammed VI Museum of Modern Art, the expansion of university and research facilities, and significant investments in transportation infrastructure including the tramway system connecting Rabat and Salé. Collectively, these projects reflect an ambitious state vision for metropolitan development focused on enhancing international visibility, creating economic opportunities, and modernizing urban infrastructure. The Rabat-Salé metropolis now extends well beyond the historical cities to encompass a complex urban region including the satellite city of Témara to the south, new developments along the Atlantic coast, and expanding residential areas on Salé's periphery. This metropolitan expansion has produced significant demographic growth, with the functional urban area now exceeding 2 million inhabitants according to recent estimates (Haut-Commissariat au Plan, 2022). This metropolitan growth is reflected in evolving socioeconomic indicators presented in Table 1, which demonstrates significant transformations in demographic composition, economic structure, and living conditions across the metropolitan area.

The development of the Bouregreg Valley merits particular attention as a case study of metropolitan project implementation. This project represents more than physical transformation—it constitutes an innovative governance arrangement with significant implications for metropolitan development. The Bouregreg Valley Development Agency, established by special legislation in 2006, received unprecedented planning powers within its perimeter, effectively bypassing normal planning procedures and local authority competencies. This exceptional governance arrangement enabled integrated planning and implementation across municipal boundaries, effectively creating a metropolitan development agency for a strategic portion of the urban region. While this model has proven effective for implementing coordinated development within its perimeter, it raises significant questions about democratic accountability, integration with surrounding territories, and replicability in other contexts (Bogaert, 2018).

Table 1. Evolution of socio-economic indicators of Rabat-Salé-Témara (2010-2023)

Indicator	2010	2014	2018	2023	Trend
Demographic Indicators					
Total population (thousands)	1,745	1,883	2,022	2,176	+24.7%
Population density (inhab/km ²)	1,203	1,298	1,394	1,500	+24.7%
Urbanization rate (%)	87.5	88.9	90.4	91.8	+4.3pts
Annual population growth rate (%)	1.92	1.78	1.65	1.48	-0.44pts
Economic Indicators					
Regional GDP (billion MAD)	85.4	98.7	115.3	132.1	+54.7%
GDP per capita (thousand MAD)	48.9	52.4	57.0	60.7	+24.1%
Contribution to national GDP (%)	10.8	11.2	11.8	12.3	+1.5pts
Unemployment rate (%)	13.3	16.2	14.8	12.5	-0.8pts
Sectoral Composition (% of regional GDP)					
Agriculture	3.2	2.9	2.5	2.1	-1.1pts

Industry	15.4	14.8	14.2	13.6	-1.8pts
Services	69.5	71.2	73.4	76.8	+7.3pts
Administration	11.9	11.1	9.9	7.5	-4.4pts
Infrastructure and Housing					
Housing units (thousands)	412	468	538	620	+50.5%
Average real estate price (MAD/m²)					
- Rabat center	15,300	19,800	24,600	29,300	+91.5%
- Salé	8,400	10,200	13,600	16,900	+101.2%
- Témara	7,200	9,400	12,100	15,400	+113.9%
Access to drinking water (% of households)	92.5	95.6	97.8	99.4	+6.9pts
Access to sewerage (% of households)	86.3	89.7	92.8	95.6	+9.3pts
Education and Health					
Literacy rate (%)	72.4	76.8	81.2	86.5	+14.1pts
Higher education attendance (% of 18-23)	26.8	29.5	32.4	36.8	+10.0pts
Doctors per 10,000 inhabitants	6.8	8.2	9.7	11.5	+69.1%
Hospital beds per 10,000 inhabitants	15.3	16.8	18.5	20.2	+32.0%
Mobility and Connectivity					
Daily trips (millions)	2.1	2.5	3.0	3.6	+71.4%
Tramway ridership (thousands/day)	-	110	138	165	+50.0%*

Internet access (% of households)	38.5	58.2	74.3	88.6	+50.1pts
Mobile phone penetration (%)	89.2	94.7	97.5	99.3	+10.1pts

Source: Elaborated from data from the High Commission for Planning (2023). "Regional monograph of Rabat-Salé-Kénitra"

The issues of institutional metropolization in Rabat reveal the paradoxes of Moroccan urban governance. Despite its status as national capital and the presence of numerous planning institutions, the Rabat metropolitan area lacks comprehensive governance structures adapted to its functional reality. The metropolitan territory remains administratively fragmented across multiple municipalities, with limited formal coordination mechanisms between them. The 2015 regionalization reform theoretically provided new opportunities for metropolitan coordination through the creation of the Rabat-Salé-Kénitra region. However, this administrative entity encompasses a territory significantly larger than the functional metropolitan area, including rural provinces with different development challenges. Furthermore, the regional authority lacks specific competencies or resources dedicated to metropolitan coordination, focusing instead on broader regional development issues. This mismatch between functional metropolitan territories and administrative frameworks creates persistent challenges for coordinated planning and service provision. The case of Rabat illustrates a distinctive model of metropolization heavily shaped by state intervention through exceptional projects and agencies rather than comprehensive institutional reforms. While this approach has successfully transformed the urban landscape and enhanced the capital's international visibility, it has not resolved fundamental challenges of metropolitan governance and coordination.

The comparison between economic indicators across different parts of the metropolitan area reveals persistent disparities that reflect both historical development patterns and more recent metropolitan dynamics. Central districts of Rabat continue to concentrate high-income households, premium real estate developments, and advanced service activities, particularly those related to government functions. Salé, despite recent investments including the tramway connection and Bouregreg development, continues to function partly as a residential periphery with lower property values and limited economic opportunities. Témara has experienced rapid population growth, largely absorbing middle and lower-income households seeking affordable housing, but faces significant challenges in service provision and economic development (Navez-Bouchanine, 2019). These socio-spatial disparities reflect broader challenges of metropolitan integration in the absence of comprehensive governance frameworks. While

physical connectivity between different parts of the metropolitan area has improved through transportation investments, institutional fragmentation continues to hinder coordinated approaches to social and economic development. Municipal authorities, facing significant resource constraints and limited planning capacities, struggle to address metropolitan-scale issues that cross administrative boundaries. This governance fragmentation is particularly problematic for peripheral municipalities experiencing rapid growth without corresponding increases in fiscal resources or service capacities.

Despite these challenges, Rabat's metropolitan development has produced significant innovations in project implementation and territorial governance. The Bouregreg project, despite legitimate criticisms regarding its exceptional governance arrangements and social impacts, demonstrates the potential for integrated approaches to complex urban transformations across municipal boundaries. Similarly, the development of the tramway system connecting Rabat and Salé represents a successful example of metropolitan infrastructure coordinated across municipal boundaries, significantly improving mobility between historically separate urban areas. These experiences provide potential lessons for metropolitan coordination in other Moroccan contexts, particularly regarding the balance between exceptional project arrangements and normal planning procedures. The transformation of Rabat from administrative capital to influential metropolis remains an ongoing process shaped by the intersection of state vision, economic dynamics, and institutional constraints. This case illustrates both the potential and limitations of state-led metropolitan development in the absence of comprehensive governance reforms. The success of flagship projects in transforming the urban landscape contrasts with persistent challenges in addressing metropolitan-scale issues including socio-spatial disparities, coordinated economic development, and integrated service provision.

3.2. For a Metropolitan governance model

Developing appropriate metropolitan governance models for Morocco requires careful consideration of international experiences while maintaining sensitivity to specific national contexts and constraints. This section explores potential governance approaches adapted to Moroccan metropolitan realities, drawing on comparative international analysis while considering the political, administrative, and cultural specificities of the Moroccan context. International experiences offer diverse models of metropolitan governance that could inform Moroccan approaches. Comparative analysis reveals a spectrum of institutional arrangements,

from highly integrated metropolitan governments to more flexible cooperation frameworks between existing local authorities.

Lefèvre (2020) identifies several governance models that have emerged internationally: metropolitan governments with extensive competencies and resources, metropolitan agencies focused on specific functions or sectors, inter-municipal cooperation arrangements, and informal coordination mechanisms. Each model presents distinctive advantages and limitations regarding democratic legitimacy, implementation capacity, and adaptability to local contexts. The metropolitan government model, exemplified by the Greater London Authority or Metropolitan Barcelona, establishes a directly elected metropolitan authority with significant competencies and resources. This approach provides strong political legitimacy and implementation capacity but represents a significant institutional transformation that may face political resistance from existing authorities. By contrast, the metropolitan agency model, illustrated by transport authorities in many European cities, focuses on coordinating specific functions across municipal boundaries without creating comprehensive metropolitan governments. This approach offers pragmatic solutions to coordination problems in specific sectors while avoiding more controversial institutional reforms.

Inter-municipal cooperation frameworks, particularly developed in France through various forms of inter-municipal institutions, represent intermediate arrangements where municipalities voluntarily delegate certain competencies to joint authorities while maintaining their basic autonomy. This model allows for incremental approaches to metropolitan coordination, with cooperation potentially evolving toward more integrated governance over time. Deffner and Hoerning (2021) demonstrate how these flexible arrangements have enabled metropolitan coordination in diverse contexts while accommodating local political sensitivities. Analyzing these international experiences through the lens of Moroccan realities suggests that an adapted governance model would likely combine elements from different approaches rather than directly importing any single model. The political and administrative context of Morocco, characterized by strong central state presence, recent decentralization reforms, and emerging local democracy, creates both constraints and opportunities for metropolitan governance innovations. Any viable governance model must navigate this complex institutional landscape while addressing the specific challenges of Moroccan metropolitan areas.

A progressive approach to metropolitan governance appears most appropriate for the Moroccan context, beginning with sector-specific coordination mechanisms before potentially evolving toward more comprehensive governance arrangements. Establishing metropolitan coordination

initially in strategic sectors like transportation, water management, or economic development could demonstrate the benefits of coordination while building institutional capacity and political support for broader metropolitan governance. The recent experience of transport authorities in Casablanca and Rabat illustrates the potential for sector-specific metropolitan agencies to address coordination challenges across municipal boundaries.

The legal framework for such progressive metropolitan governance could build upon existing provisions for inter-municipal cooperation while introducing specific adaptations for metropolitan contexts. Current legal provisions in the Organic Law on Communes provide basic frameworks for voluntary cooperation but lack sufficient incentives or mandates for metropolitan coordination. Strengthening these frameworks would require several innovations: establishing clearer criteria for defining metropolitan territories based on functional rather than purely administrative considerations; creating appropriate fiscal mechanisms to support metropolitan coordination, potentially including dedicated funding streams for metropolitan investments; and ensuring adequate technical capacity for metropolitan planning and implementation.

Metropolitan planning instruments constitute another essential component of effective governance. Beyond institutional arrangements, metropolitan areas require planning frameworks adapted to their specific characteristics and challenges. Such instruments should bridge the gap between strategic regional planning and detailed local plans, providing coherent frameworks for guiding development across municipal boundaries. International experience suggests that such plans are most effective when combining strategic vision with specific implementation mechanisms, including infrastructure investment programs, land use frameworks, and environmental protection measures. Stakeholder participation represents a critical dimension of legitimate metropolitan governance. Effective metropolitan arrangements must balance technical expertise and coordination efficiency with adequate representation of diverse interests, including municipalities, civil society organizations, economic actors, and citizens. Various participation mechanisms could enhance the legitimacy and effectiveness of metropolitan governance, from formal representation of municipalities in metropolitan decision-making bodies to consultative forums engaging broader stakeholders in metropolitan planning processes.

The political economy of metropolitan governance reforms deserves particular attention in the Moroccan context. Establishing metropolitan governance involves redistribution of power, resources, and responsibilities among existing institutions, potentially generating resistance

from actors perceiving threats to their authority or interests. Addressing these political dimensions requires careful attention to incentive structures, demonstrating benefits for various stakeholders while ensuring adequate compensation or guarantees for potential "losers" in governance reforms. Zemni and Bogaert (2020) emphasize the importance of such political considerations in institutional reforms, noting how administrative reorganizations that ignore political dimensions often face implementation failures. The relationship between metropolitan governance and broader decentralization processes represents another crucial consideration. Metropolitan governance reforms should align with Morocco's ongoing decentralization and regionalization, strengthening rather than contradicting these broader institutional transformations. This alignment requires careful articulation between metropolitan arrangements and regional frameworks, potentially positioning metropolitan governance as a specific component of regional development strategies for territories experiencing metropolitan dynamics. The implementation strategy for metropolitan governance reforms should adopt pragmatic approaches that acknowledge institutional constraints while pursuing meaningful improvements in coordination. A phased strategy might begin with metropolitan observatories to develop shared knowledge and diagnostics of metropolitan challenges, followed by voluntary coordination mechanisms in priority sectors, potentially evolving toward more formal metropolitan authorities with expanded competencies as experience and trust develop among stakeholders. Such incremental approaches allow for learning and adaptation while building necessary political support for more ambitious institutional reforms.

4. Results and discussions: Towards a Metropolitan Status in Morocco

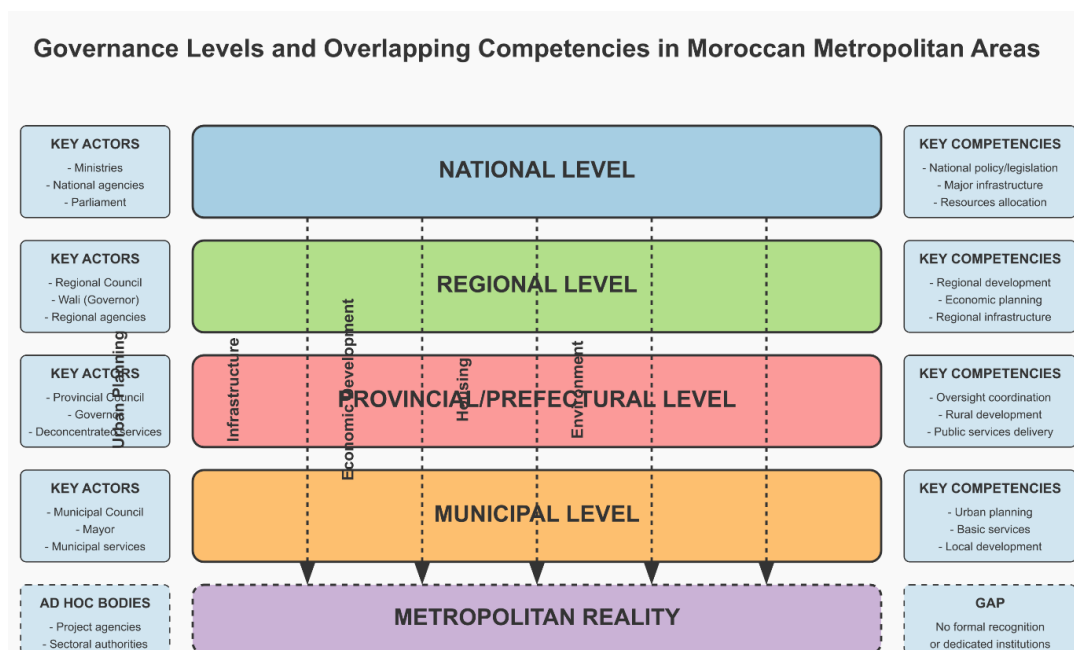
4.1. Limitations of the Current Institutional Framework

The current institutional architecture governing Moroccan urban territories exhibits significant limitations in addressing metropolitan realities. These limitations manifest through administrative fragmentation, insufficient coordination mechanisms, and inadequate legal recognition of metropolitan areas as functional territories requiring specific governance approaches. Administrative fragmentation constitutes perhaps the most visible obstacle to effective metropolitan governance in Morocco. Major urban agglomerations typically span multiple communes, each with its own elected council, development priorities, and resource constraints. The case of Casablanca exemplifies this fragmentation, with the functional metropolitan area encompassing more than 18 communes spread across multiple provinces, each operating under separate administrative authorities with limited incentives for coordination. El Kadiri and Kadiri (2016) demonstrate how this administrative fragmentation

produces significant coordination failures in service provision, infrastructure development, and environmental management. For instance, waste management in the Casablanca metropolitan area involves multiple service providers operating under different contractual arrangements with individual communes, creating inefficiencies in collection systems and inconsistent service quality across the metropolitan territory. Similarly, mobility planning faces coordination challenges when transportation networks cross administrative boundaries, with fare systems, route planning, and infrastructure investments requiring complex negotiations between autonomous local authorities.

This administrative fragmentation reflects historical evolution of territorial governance in Morocco, where communes were established as the basic units of local democracy without corresponding mechanisms for managing functional territories that transcend these administrative boundaries. While urban agencies were created in the 1980s to provide technical expertise in urban planning across multiple communes, they lack decision-making authority and primarily focus on regulatory planning rather than strategic metropolitan development. As Iraki (2018) observes, this institutional configuration prioritizes vertical relationships between central government and individual communes over horizontal coordination between adjacent territories, creating significant obstacles for addressing metropolitan-scale issues. The overlapping and sometimes competing competencies between different levels of government further complicate metropolitan governance. Despite recent decentralization reforms, Morocco's territorial governance remains characterized by significant involvement of central government institutions in local development decisions. The prefectural authority, representing the Ministry of Interior at the local level, maintains significant oversight over municipal decisions. Simultaneously, various sectoral ministries implement programs and infrastructure investments with limited coordination between them or with local authorities. This complex institutional landscape creates governance challenges at metropolitan scales, where issues typically cross both administrative boundaries and sectoral competencies.

Figure 4. Governance levels and overlapping competencies in Moroccan metropolitan areas



Source: Adapted from Bencherifa, A. (2021). "Technopoles and competitiveness hubs in Morocco"

The 2015 advanced regionalization reform theoretically provided new opportunities for metropolitan governance through the creation of regions with expanded competencies in economic development, territorial planning, and infrastructure provision. However, as Figure 5 illustrates, the resulting institutional architecture continues to exhibit significant overlaps and coordination gaps in metropolitan governance. Regional boundaries rarely align with functional metropolitan territories, either encompassing significantly larger areas (as in the case of Rabat-Salé-Kénitra region) or fragmenting metropolitan territories across multiple regions. Furthermore, regions lack specific competencies or resources dedicated to metropolitan coordination, focusing instead on broader regional development frameworks that may not address the particular challenges of metropolitan areas. The absence of a clear legal status for metropolises represents another significant limitation. Unlike many countries where metropolitan areas receive specific legal recognition with corresponding governance arrangements, Moroccan law provides no formal definition or institutional framework for metropolitan territories. Various planning documents utilize terms like "metropolitan area" or "urban agglomeration" without precise legal definitions or governance implications. This legal gap creates ambiguity regarding institutional responsibilities at metropolitan scales and limits the emergence of dedicated governance frameworks for metropolitan territories.

The recent attempts to enhance inter-municipal cooperation through legislative provisions in the 2015 Organic Law on Communes represent a step toward recognizing the need for supra-municipal coordination. This framework provides legal mechanisms for establishing inter-municipal cooperation institutions (Établissements de Coopération Intercommunale) with specific competencies delegated by member communes. However, these mechanisms maintain the voluntary character of cooperation, requiring unanimous agreement among participating communes for establishing joint authorities.

As documented by Haoues-Jouve et al. (2020), this voluntary approach faces significant implementation challenges in metropolitan contexts marked by political, fiscal, and developmental disparities between municipalities. For instance, wealthier central municipalities often see limited incentives for engaging in resource-sharing arrangements with less affluent peripheral communities, despite functional interdependencies between these territories. These institutional limitations are increasingly recognized by various stakeholders as obstacles to sustainable metropolitan development. Business leaders emphasize governance fragmentation as a constraint on economic competitiveness and investor confidence. Civil society organizations highlight coordination failures as factors contributing to environmental degradation, inadequate affordable housing, and mobility challenges in metropolitan areas. Academic research consistently identifies institutional fragmentation as a key obstacle to addressing metropolitan challenges, with numerous studies recommending governance reforms to create frameworks better aligned with metropolitan realities (Zemni & Bogaert, 2020).

The need for a legal status for metropolises emerges from this analysis as a fundamental prerequisite for establishing effective metropolitan governance. Such legal recognition would provide the foundation for developing institutional frameworks, resource allocation mechanisms, and planning approaches adapted to metropolitan realities. International experience suggests various models for metropolitan governance, ranging from consolidated metropolitan governments to more flexible cooperation arrangements between existing local authorities. Adapting these models to Moroccan realities requires careful consideration of the country's political, administrative, and cultural context, as discussed in the following section.

4.2. Results and discussion

Developing appropriate metropolitan governance models for Morocco requires careful consideration of international experiences while maintaining sensitivity to specific national contexts and constraints. This section explores potential governance approaches adapted to Moroccan metropolitan realities, drawing on comparative international analysis while

considering the political, administrative, and cultural specificities of the Moroccan context. International experiences offer diverse models of metropolitan governance that could inform Moroccan approaches. Comparative analysis reveals a spectrum of institutional arrangements, from highly integrated metropolitan governments to more flexible cooperation frameworks between existing local authorities.

Lefèvre (2020) identifies several governance models that have emerged internationally: metropolitan governments with extensive competencies and resources, metropolitan agencies focused on specific functions or sectors, inter-municipal cooperation arrangements, and informal coordination mechanisms. Each model presents distinctive advantages and limitations regarding democratic legitimacy, implementation capacity, and adaptability to local contexts. The metropolitan government model, exemplified by the Greater London Authority or Metropolitan Barcelona, establishes a directly elected metropolitan authority with significant competencies and resources. This approach provides strong political legitimacy and implementation capacity but represents a significant institutional transformation that may face political resistance from existing authorities. By contrast, the metropolitan agency model, illustrated by transport authorities in many European cities, focuses on coordinating specific functions across municipal boundaries without creating comprehensive metropolitan governments. This approach offers pragmatic solutions to coordination problems in specific sectors while avoiding more controversial institutional reforms.

Inter-municipal cooperation frameworks, particularly developed in France through various forms of inter-municipal institutions, represent intermediate arrangements where municipalities voluntarily delegate certain competencies to joint authorities while maintaining their basic autonomy. This model allows for incremental approaches to metropolitan coordination, with cooperation potentially evolving toward more integrated governance over time. Deffner and Hoerning (2021) demonstrate how these flexible arrangements have enabled metropolitan coordination in diverse contexts while accommodating local political sensitivities. Analyzing these international experiences through the lens of Moroccan realities suggests that an adapted governance model would likely combine elements from different approaches rather than directly importing any single model.

The political and administrative context of Morocco, characterized by strong central state presence, recent decentralization reforms, and emerging local democracy, creates both constraints and opportunities for metropolitan governance innovations. Any viable governance model must navigate this complex institutional landscape while addressing the specific

challenges of Moroccan metropolitan areas. A progressive approach to metropolitan governance appears most appropriate for the Moroccan context, beginning with sector-specific coordination mechanisms before potentially evolving toward more comprehensive governance arrangements. Establishing metropolitan coordination initially in strategic sectors like transportation, water management, or economic development could demonstrate the benefits of coordination while building institutional capacity and political support for broader metropolitan governance. The recent experience of transport authorities in Rabat illustrates the potential for sector-specific metropolitan agencies to address coordination challenges across municipal boundaries.

The legal framework for such progressive metropolitan governance could build upon existing provisions for inter-municipal cooperation while introducing specific adaptations for metropolitan contexts. Current legal provisions in the Organic Law on Communes provide basic frameworks for voluntary cooperation but lack sufficient incentives or mandates for metropolitan coordination. Strengthening these frameworks would require several innovations: establishing clearer criteria for defining metropolitan territories based on functional rather than purely administrative considerations; creating appropriate fiscal mechanisms to support metropolitan coordination, potentially including dedicated funding streams for metropolitan investments; and ensuring adequate technical capacity for metropolitan planning and implementation.

Metropolitan planning instruments constitute another essential component of effective governance. Beyond institutional arrangements, metropolitan areas require planning frameworks adapted to their specific characteristics and challenges. Such instruments should bridge the gap between strategic regional planning and detailed local plans, providing coherent frameworks for guiding development across municipal boundaries. International experience suggests that such plans are most effective when combining strategic vision with specific implementation mechanisms, including infrastructure investment programs, land use frameworks, and environmental protection measures. Stakeholder participation represents a critical dimension of legitimate metropolitan governance. Effective metropolitan arrangements must balance technical expertise and coordination efficiency with adequate representation of diverse interests, including municipalities, civil society organizations, economic actors, and citizens. Various participation mechanisms could enhance the legitimacy and effectiveness of metropolitan governance, from formal representation of municipalities in metropolitan

decision-making bodies to consultative forums engaging broader stakeholders in metropolitan planning processes.

The political economy of metropolitan governance reforms deserves particular attention in the Moroccan context. Establishing metropolitan governance involves redistribution of power, resources, and responsibilities among existing institutions, potentially generating resistance from actors perceiving threats to their authority or interests. Addressing these political dimensions requires careful attention to incentive structures, demonstrating benefits for various stakeholders while ensuring adequate compensation or guarantees for potential "losers" in governance reforms. Zemni and Bogaert (2020) emphasize the importance of such political considerations in institutional reforms, noting how administrative reorganizations that ignore political dimensions often face implementation failures.

The relationship between metropolitan governance and broader decentralization processes represents another crucial consideration. Metropolitan governance reforms should align with Morocco's ongoing decentralization and regionalization, strengthening rather than contradicting these broader institutional transformations. This alignment requires careful articulation between metropolitan arrangements and regional frameworks, potentially positioning metropolitan governance as a specific component of regional development strategies for territories experiencing metropolitan dynamics. The implementation strategy for metropolitan governance reforms should adopt pragmatic approaches that acknowledge institutional constraints while pursuing meaningful improvements in coordination. A phased strategy might begin with metropolitan observatories to develop shared knowledge and diagnostics of metropolitan challenges, followed by voluntary coordination mechanisms in priority sectors, potentially evolving toward more formal metropolitan authorities with expanded competencies as experience and trust develop among stakeholders. Such incremental approaches allow for learning and adaptation while building necessary political support for more ambitious institutional reforms.

Conclusion

This research has examined how state-driven territorial dynamics in Moroccan cities reflect emerging metropolitan projects and their implications for spatial planning policies. Our analysis reveals significant urban transformations exhibiting metropolitan characteristics despite the absence of corresponding governance frameworks. Major urban agglomerations like Casablanca and Rabat have developed economic, spatial, and functional features comparable to established global metropolises, including economic concentration, polycentric development, and complex mobility patterns. However, these *de facto* metropolization processes lack appropriate institutional recognition, creating challenges for sustainable urban development. Planning documents show a gradual evolution in conceptualizing metropolitan territories, moving from administrative hierarchies toward functional territorial recognition, though significant gaps remain in translating this recognition into operational governance mechanisms. The case studies of Casablanca and Rabat illustrate diverse metropolitan trajectories – economic metropolization driven by market forces in Casablanca versus state-led development focused on flagship projects in Rabat – yet both demonstrate similar governance challenges related to administrative fragmentation and sectoral coordination.

The institutional analysis highlights substantial limitations in current governance frameworks, with administrative fragmentation, overlapping competencies, and absence of legal status for metropolises creating obstacles for coordinated metropolitan planning. Recent regionalization reforms provide opportunities for strengthening territorial governance but don't directly address the specific requirements of metropolitan areas. Addressing these challenges requires governance innovations adapted to Moroccan realities, with progressive approaches beginning with sector-specific coordination before potentially evolving toward comprehensive arrangements. Legal frameworks could build upon existing inter-municipal cooperation provisions while introducing specific metropolitan adaptations, including clearer definitional criteria and appropriate fiscal mechanisms.

Beyond governance reforms, sustainable metropolitan development requires planning paradigms addressing Morocco's specific urban challenges – adapting compact city principles to rapid growth contexts, developing integrated resource management approaches in water-stressed environments, and addressing socio-spatial inequalities through inclusive planning. The policy implications emphasize the need for institutional recognition of metropolitan realities through appropriate governance frameworks and planning instruments. While comprehensive reforms may face constraints, incremental approaches focused on specific

coordination challenges could provide pragmatic pathways toward improved metropolitan governance, accompanied by planning approaches addressing sustainability and spatial justice dimensions. Morocco's experience of metropolization without corresponding governance represents both challenges and opportunities for urban policy innovation, with implications beyond Morocco for other emerging urban regions navigating similar tensions between global economic integration, state-led development, and local territorial specificities.

Bibliography

- Abouhani, A. (2017), Gouvernance urbaine et conflits territoriaux au Maroc: Le cas de Casablanca· *Revue Marocaine de Science Politique et Sociale*, 8(14), 11-34.
- Agence Urbaine de Rabat-Salé, (2016), Schéma Directeur d'Aménagement Urbain de Rabat-Salé-Témara: Rapport de diagnostic· AURS Publications.
- Ascher, F. (1995), Métapolis ou l'avenir des villes· Odile Jacob.
- Barthel, P. A., & Planel, S. (2021)· Transformations métropolitaines et renouvellement des pratiques urbanistiques à Casablanca, *Géocarrefour*, 95(1), 1-19.
- Bencherifa, A. (2021), Technopoles and competitiveness hubs in Morocco: From national strategies to territorial realities, *Regional Studies*, 55(8), 1382-1396.
- Bergh, S. I. (2016), The Politics of Development in Morocco: Local Governance and Participation in North Africa, I.B. Tauris.
- Berriane, M., & Janati, M. I. (2016), Les nouvelles fractures socio-spatiales dans les grandes agglomérations marocaines, *Méditerranée: Revue Géographique des Pays Méditerranéens*, 127, 75-86.
- Berriane, M., & Signoles, P. (2015), Les espaces périphériques au Maroc et au Maghreb à l'heure de la mondialisation, Université Mohammed V.
- Bogaert, K. (2018), Globalized Authoritarianism: Megaprojects, Slums, and Class Relations in Urban Morocco· University of Minnesota Press.
- Bouregreg Valley Development Agency, (2022), Bouregreg Valley development projects: Implementation report 2010-2022, BVDA Publications.
- Chouiki, M. (2017), Le fait métropolitain au Maroc : enjeux et défis d'une transition territoriale, *Les Cahiers d'EMAM*, 29, 33-46.
- Chouiki, M. (2017), Métropolisation et dysfonctionnements de la planification urbaine au Maroc: cas de la région métropolitaine de Casablanca· *L'Espace Géographique*, 46(4), 359-373.
- Deboulet, A., & Florin, B. (2021), Rénovation urbaine et relogement au Maroc: les contradictions des politiques de réduction de la pauvreté urbaine, *L'Année du Maghreb*, 24, 229-246.
- Deffner, V., & Hoerning, J. (2021), Fragmentation as a threat to social cohesion? A conceptual review and an empirical approach to Brazilian urban fragmentation· *Habitat International*, 114, 102382.

- El Kadiri, N., & Kadiri, S. E. (2016), Genèse et pratiques de la gouvernance territoriale au Maroc· *Revue d'Économie Régionale & Urbaine*, 2016(2), 443-469.
- El Merghadi, M· (2016), La régionalisation avancée et le développement territorial au Maroc: quels enjeux et quelle articulation? *Revue Marocaine d'Administration Locale et de Développement*, 132, 107-124.
- El Moussaoui, H·, & Dakhlaoui, M· (2019), Eco-innovation and water management in Morocco: An application to the urban water sector· *International Journal of Water Resources Development*, 35(6), 948-971.
- Friedmann, J. (1986), The World City Hypothesis· *Development and Change*, 17(1), 69-83.
- Ghorra-Gobin, C· (2010), De la métropolisation : un nouveau paradigme? *Quaderni*, 73(3), 25-33.
- Ghorra-Gobin, C. (2015), *La métropolisation en question*· Presses Universitaires de France.
- Ghorra-Gobin, C. (2021), Metropolis and globalization: New urban configurations· *Urban Studies*, 58(3), 513-529.
- Hajji, N. (2022), Fiscal decentralization and local governance in Morocco: Challenges of territorial equity and administrative efficiency· *Mediterranean Politics*, 27(3), 352-374.
- Halbert, L. (2010), *L'avantage métropolitain*, Presses Universitaires de France·
- Haoues-Jouve, S., Belkebir, L., & Montagne, C· (2020)· Gouvernance et planification collaborative à Rabat: Quelles perspectives pour une ville durable? *Géographie, économie, société*, 22(1), 5-33.
- Haut-Commissariat au Plan· (2022), *Monographie régionale de Rabat-Salé-Kénitra*, HCP Publications.
- Haut-Commissariat au Plan· (2023), *Indicateurs sociaux du Maroc*, HCP Publications.
- Idrissi Janati M· (2019), Politiques urbaines et production des inégalités spatiales dans les villes marocaines, *Espace Populations Sociétés*, 2019(1), 1-23.
- Iraki, A· (2018), Les recompositions territoriales à l'épreuve de la gouvernamentalité locale· *Revue Marocaine des Sciences Politiques et Sociales*, 15(9), 37-58.
- Kaïoua, A· (2017), Casablanca: Métropolisation incomplète d'une ville millionnaire· *Les Cahiers d'EMAM*, 29, 17-32.
- Lefèvre, C· (2020), Gouverner les métropoles : modèles et tendances· *Revue française d'administration publique*, 176(4), 917-932.

- Lehzam, A. (2020), Dynamiques foncières et fabrication de la ville: modes de régulation et inégalités. *Revue de Géographie du Maroc*, 35(2), 179-196.
- Lourimi, S., & Elharrak, K. (2022), The challenges of urban mobility in Moroccan metropolises: The case of Casablanca. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 13(2), 76-89.
- Ministère de l'Aménagement du Territoire. (2018), Schéma National d'Armature Urbaine: Rapport de synthèse, Direction de l'Aménagement du Territoire.
- Mouloudi, H. (2015), Opacité et régulation des jeux d'acteurs dans les grands projets d'aménagement: Le cas du projet Bouregreg. *Les Cahiers de Recherche du GRACQ*, 2, 229-241.
- Mouloudi, H. (2020), Urbanisme et action publique au Maroc : entre rationalité technique et rationalité politique. *Revue Marocaine des Sciences Politiques et Sociales*, 14(2), 121-137.
- Naciri, M. (2017), Aménagement du territoire et dynamiques urbaines au Maroc. *Maghreb-Machrek*, 231(1), 27-52.
- Navez-Bouchanine, F. (2019), Fragmentation spatiale et urbanité dans les villes maghrébines. *L'Année du Maghreb*, 21, 51-74.
- Planel, S., Jaglin, S., & Buire, C. (2019), Étalement urbain et politiques métropolitaines au Maroc. *Territoire en mouvement*, 44, 13-25.
- Sassen, S. (1991), *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo*. Princeton University Press.
- Sassen, S. (2001), *Global Networks, Linked Cities*. Routledge.
- Senhaji, M. (2017). Ville compacte - ville diffuse: Tendances et enjeux des formes urbaines dans l'agglomération de Casablanca. *Revue Marocaine des Sciences Politiques et Sociales*, 8(14), 63-84.
- Taoufik, A. (2018), La coopération intercommunale au Maroc à l'épreuve de la métropolisation. *Revue Juridique, Politique et Économique du Maroc*, 49, 179-196.
- Tozy, M., & Hibou, B. (2020), La fabrication de la modernité au Maroc: entre idéologie du développement et instrument de pouvoir. *Politique Africaine*, 159, 5-20.
- Troin, J. F. (2002), *Maroc: les multiples visages d'un Etat contrasté*. Éditions du Temps.
- Vermeren, P. (2016), *Histoire du Maroc depuis l'indépendance*, La Découverte.
- Zaireg, R. (2019), Les défis de la gouvernance urbaine au Maroc : vers un modèle métropolitain? *Confluences Méditerranée*, 108, 97-110.
- Zaki, L. (2011), L'action publique au bidonville : l'État entre gestion par le manque et manque de gestion? *L'Année du Maghreb*, 7, 303-320.

Zemni, S., & Bogaert, K. (2020), Urban governance in Morocco: Challenges, tensions and new opportunities. *Middle East Law and Governance*, 12(1), 61-83.