

# Submission form to the XVII Conference of SIET, Milano 29 June -1 July

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## Title of the presentation

**Measuring the long distance accessibility of Italian cities**

## Abstract (400-500 words)

The issue of long-distance accessibility is seen as a crucial element for economic development and for territorial cohesion. The paper aims at answering at the question whether, and where, there is a problem of long distance accessibility to Italian regions, not only in terms of distance or infrastructure extension, but of access costs, including the supply level and the prices of the services. In particular, we will measure the population-weighted accessibility of the entire Italian territory, finding from which areas it is easier to reach the rest of population and from which other it is more expensive.

More specifically, we calculate transport supply and generalised costs from all Italian cities (the country is divided into 371 zones) to all possible destinations, distinguishing among business and economy users. Using these data, we propose three different definitions of accessibility, of increasing completeness and significance: infrastructure supply, services supply, and generalised cost of access weighted it in function of the reached population.

The analysis will show i) that too simple accessibility indicators, for example ignoring all dimensions of accessibility (Geurs and van Wee, 2004) are biased and provide wrong indications to the planners; ii) which areas of the country are more or less accessible taking into account both the distribution of population and the transport supply.

The analysis will also allow us to draw some policy conclusions. Firstly, the presence of an infrastructure is not, per se, guarantee of higher accessibility. Secondly, rail accessibility plays a role only for middle distances, despite the general belief that a city is "far" if its rail services are scant. Thirdly, that the geography of inaccessibility is more complex than the expected one and that the vision of Italy as divided in two-parts is oversimplified, with the North well accessible because more densely infrastructured and the South, far and with fewer services. To the contrary, the country is split in areas and corridors well connected, not only in the North, and other areas, actually more far also because with far less population, typically mountainous areas.