

## REGIONALIZATION MODELS IN MUNICIPAL PLANNING, LIMITS, INTER-CAPITAL COMPARISONS AND PROPOSED CRITERIA FOR MACEIÓ

## MODELOS DE REGIONALIZAÇÃO NO PLANEJAMENTO MUNICIPAL, LIMITES, COMPARAÇÕES INTERCAPITAIS E PROPOSIÇÃO DE CRITÉRIOS PARA MACEIÓ

## MODELOS DE REGIONALIZACIÓN EN LA PLANIFICACIÓN MUNICIPAL, LÍMITES, COMPARACIONES ENTRE CAPITALES Y PROPUESTA DE CRITERIOS PARA MACEIÓ



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### ABSTRACT

The study critically examines the regionalization models adopted in Brazilian municipal planning, with a specific focus on the case of Maceió. It assumes that regionalization is a structuring element of territorial state capacity and of the effectiveness of planning instruments such as the Multi-Year Plan, the Budget Guidelines Law and the Annual Budget Law. This qualitative research employs document analysis, literature review and inter-capital comparison to assess the technical, institutional and functional criteria guiding territorial delimitation in Brazilian capitals. Maceió's model, based on neighborhood subdivision and consolidated since 1988, is contrasted with benchmark experiences and with capitals of similar characteristics. The analysis adopts as methodological reference the Regionalization Model for State Planning of Alagoas, grounded on the principles of polarization and socioeconomic flows. The findings show that Maceió's current regionalization lacks technical criteria, which compromises diagnostics, prioritization and the territorial allocation of public expenditure. The study concludes that it is necessary to advance toward a standardized municipal regionalization model, articulated with indicators, data and participatory processes, capable of supporting more efficient planning oriented toward territorial inequalities.

**Keywords:** Regionalization. Municipal Planning. Territory. Multi-Year Plan. Territorial Governance. Maceió.

### RESUMO

O estudo analisa de forma crítica os modelos de regionalização adotados no planejamento municipal brasileiro, com ênfase no caso de Maceió. Parte-se do pressuposto de que a regionalização constitui elemento estruturante da capacidade estatal territorial e da efetividade dos instrumentos de planejamento, como o Plano Plurianual, a Lei de Diretrizes Orçamentárias e a Lei Orçamentária Anual. A pesquisa, de natureza qualitativa, utiliza análise documental, revisão bibliográfica e comparação intercapitais para avaliar os critérios técnicos, institucionais e funcionais que orientam a delimitação territorial nas capitais brasileiras. O modelo de Maceió, baseado em abairramento e consolidado desde 1988, é

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confrontado com experiências referenciais e com capitais de características semelhantes. Adota-se como parâmetro metodológico o Modelo de Regionalização para o Planejamento Estadual de Alagoas, fundamentado nos princípios de polarização e fluxos socioeconômicos. Os resultados demonstram que a regionalização vigente em Maceió carece de critérios técnicos, comprometendo diagnósticos, priorização e territorialização do gasto público. Conclui-se que é necessário avançar na construção de um modelo normatizado de regionalização municipal, articulado a indicadores, dados e processos participativos, capaz de apoiar um planejamento mais eficiente e orientado às desigualdades territoriais.

**Palavras-chave:** Regionalização. Planejamento Municipal. Território. PPA. Governança Territorial. Maceió.

## RESUMEN

El estudio analiza críticamente los modelos de regionalización adoptados en la planificación municipal brasileña, con énfasis en el caso de Maceió. Se parte del supuesto de que la regionalización constituye un elemento estructurante de la capacidad estatal territorial y de la efectividad de instrumentos de planificación, como el Plan Plurianual, la Ley de Directrices Presupuestarias y la Ley de Presupuesto Anual. La investigación, de naturaleza cualitativa, emplea análisis documental, revisión bibliográfica y comparación entre capitales para evaluar los criterios técnicos, institucionales y funcionales que orientan la delimitación territorial en las capitales brasileñas. El modelo de Maceió, basado en el abairramiento y consolidado desde 1988, se contrasta con experiencias de referencia y con capitales de características similares. Se adopta como parámetro metodológico el Modelo de Regionalización para la Planificación Estatal de Alagoas, fundamentado en los principios de polarización y fluxos socioeconómicos. Los resultados muestran que la regionalización vigente en Maceió carece de criterios técnicos, lo que compromete diagnósticos, priorización y territorialización del gasto público. Se concluye que es necesario avanzar en la construcción de un modelo normativo de regionalización municipal, articulado con indicadores, datos y procesos participativos, capaz de apoyar una planificación más eficiente y orientada a las desigualdades territoriales.

**Palabras clave:** Regionalización. Planificación Municipal. Territorio. Plan Plurianual. Gobernanza Territorial. Maceió.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Regionalization is a structuring element of government planning and contemporary territorial governance. At the municipal level, its function goes beyond the mere administrative division and assumes a strategic role in the production of diagnoses, in the identification of intra-urban inequalities, in the formulation of territorialized policies and in the efficient allocation of public resources. Despite this, the regionalization used by most Brazilian capitals remains anchored in historical, political, and administrative criteria, revealing a low connection with socioeconomic flows, mobility patterns, service networks, and functional dynamics of the territory. As a result, the state's capacity to understand, prioritize and intervene in different areas of the city is reduced, which limits the effectiveness of the Multi-Year Plan, the Budget Guidelines Law and the Annual Budget Law.

This picture is more clearly evident in Maceió. The regionalization originally instituted by Law No. 4,687 of 1988, preserved in subsequent amendments, is based on the aairramento and physical contiguity between neighborhoods. Although it has fulfilled a relevant administrative function, especially in supporting the decentralization of services, the model was not designed with technical criteria of regionalization aimed at planning. It does not incorporate indicators of social vulnerability, does not dialogue with mobility patterns, does not distinguish urban functions, nor does it establish relations of influence or polarization between territorial units. This produces a structural disconnection between territory and planning, with inaccurate diagnoses, low territorialization of public policies, and weaknesses in the prioritization of investments.

The literature indicates that regionalization models based on technical criteria, such as polarization, functionality, service networks, and socio-spatial integration, increase the internal coherence of planning and strengthen territorial state capacity, according to Haesbaert, Contel, and Saldanha. In Brazil, few capitals have advanced in this direction. Curitiba is the main national reference in articulating territorial planning, mobility, land use and socioeconomic indicators. Belo Horizonte, with its nine technical-administrative regions, also presents methodological coherence. Porto Alegre structured a model of participatory regionalization that influenced the budget and the territorial distribution of investments. On the other hand, most Brazilian capitals, such as Aracaju, João Pessoa, Natal and São Luís, use essentially administrative models similar to that of Maceió, with low technical foundations.

In this scenario, the Regionalization Model for the State Planning of Alagoas, prepared by SEPLANDE and IBAM in 2014, emerges as a relevant methodological reference. It

combines two structuring movements: the definition of hub municipalities based on their socioeconomic and functional influence, and the delimitation of planning regions derived from territorial flows and interdependencies. Although conceived for the state scale, its logic offers parameters applicable to the municipal level and makes it possible to critically evaluate the regionalization of Maceió, as well as to propose technically consistent alternatives.

From this perspective, the article seeks to answer the following question: to what extent does the absence of a standardized model of regionalization affect the planning capacity of the Municipality of Maceió and how can the experiences of other Brazilian capitals, articulated with the state model of Alagoas, guide its reformulation? To answer this question, an analysis based on three axes is developed: theoretical review of territory, region and regionalization; comparison between models adopted by Brazilian capitals, with emphasis on cities of similar size and characteristics; and a critical examination of the case of Maceió in the light of the state model of Alagoas.

The research is qualitative, of a documentary and comparative nature, based on municipal and state legislation, technical reports, official data and specialized literature. The analysis articulates theoretical foundations, normative requirements and empirical evidence, with the purpose of sustaining concrete guidelines for a technically oriented regionalization model, capable of strengthening municipal planning, promoting greater territorial equity and qualifying the distribution of public resources.

Next, the theoretical foundation explores the concepts of territory, region, regionality and regionalization, as well as the bases of government planning. Next, the methodology is presented. Subsequently, a comparative analysis is carried out between Maceió, reference capitals and capitals with similar characteristics. Finally, the conclusions are discussed and the guidelines for a standardized model of municipal regionalization are presented.

## 2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Understanding the regionalization models used in municipal planning requires a conceptual basis that articulates government planning, territory, and territorial governance. These three axes structure the state's capacity to formulate diagnoses, define priorities, and distribute resources in a way that is consistent with inequalities and urban dynamics. Thus, before examining the experiences of Brazilian capitals and the case of Maceió, it is necessary to present the theoretical foundations that guide the analysis, with emphasis on government planning as a structuring function of the State and regionalization as an essential instrument

for the territorialization of public policies.

## 2.1 GOVERNMENT PLANNING AS A STRUCTURING FUNCTION OF THE STATE

Planning is the first and most relevant administrative function of the State, guiding the definition of objectives, the coordination of public actions and the rationalization of the allocation of resources, according to Saldanha. In Brazil, its foundation is constitutionalized. The Federal Constitution of 1988 instituted an integrated planning system composed of the Multi-Year Plan, the Budget Guidelines Law and the Annual Budget Law. These instruments express the government project and the strategy of socioeconomic development, organizing priorities, goals and financial commitments, as Andrade observes.

For this author, planning is an indispensable condition for the responsible use of public resources and the prevention of improvised, short-sighted or fragmented practices, traits that are still recurrent in the Brazilian public administration. In the field of public policies, Schmitter has already emphasized that well-planned policies configure institutionalized arrangements capable of reducing distributive conflicts by rationally organizing the allocation of public goods and services.

In this context, regionalization plays a decisive role. Planning only becomes effective to the extent that the territory is properly understood, analyzed and structured. Planning without regionalization corresponds to planning in a vacuum, that is, setting goals without knowing precisely where they should focus.

## 2.2 THE TERRITORY AS AN OPERATIONAL BASIS FOR PLANNING

Territory is not a neutral category. It expresses power relations, inequalities, flows, uses, disputes, and identities, as discussed by Santos, Raffestin, and Haesbaert. For government planning, the territory is simultaneously:

- unit of analysis, where demands and inequalities are identified;
- intervention unit, where policies and investments are applied;
- coordination unit, where actions and actors are articulated.

Without understanding the territory in its characteristics, functions, dynamics and hierarchies, there is no planning capable of producing consistent results.

Territorial planning depends on a regionalization capable of:

- identify intra-urban inequalities;

- capture mobility patterns and flows;
- reveal areas of socioeconomic vulnerability;
- consider polarization and centralities;
- guide the prioritization of investments.

This set of elements sustains the territorialization of public spending, a critical dimension of contemporary planning.

## 2.3 REGIONALIZATION AND TERRITORIALIZATION OF PUBLIC SPENDING

The territorialization of spending refers to the distribution of resources and investments based on territorial diagnoses and the specific demands of each region. It connects four structuring dimensions:

- Planning, which defines priorities;
- Territory, which reveals needs;
- Budget, which allocates resources;
- Public policy, which executes actions in space.

When regionalization is merely administrative or based only on abairramento, as occurs in Maceió, this connection is broken. The result is a set of recurring problems:

- public policies that do not dialogue with territorial inequalities;
- asymmetric distribution of investments;
- sectors acting in a disconnected way, such as education, health and mobility;
- difficulty in establishing territorial priorities in the PPA;
- inability to measure regional impacts of policies.

For this reason, the contemporary literature emphasizes that regionalization must be functional, and not just administrative, as Contel and the OECD argue.

## 2.4 WHY TECHNICAL REGIONALIZATION IS INDISPENSABLE TO THE PPA, LDO AND LOA

### 2.4.1 In the Multiannual Plan

The PPA requires a prior diagnosis of the socioeconomic reality, definition of guidelines and territorialization of medium-term policies. Without data-based regionalization, the

diagnosis becomes inaccurate.

#### **2.4.2 In the Budget Guidelines Law**

The LDO defines annual goals and priorities and, for this, it needs:

- identify priority regions;
- measure inequalities and demands;
- project territorial impacts of fiscal and budgetary targets.

Without technical regionalization, generic priorities are produced, without defined territorial location.

#### **2.4.3 In the Annual Budget Law**

The LOA requires territorial precision to:

- allocate resources;
- distribute investments;
- specify regionalized actions;
- monitor physical and financial execution.

When the regions are not technically structured, the LOA loses its ability to guide public spending in the territory.

Brazilian planning instruments require regionalization, but most municipalities, including Maceió, still operate with inadequate models, generating misalignment between priorities, needs, and execution.

### **2.5 THE CONTEMPORARY AGENDA FOR TERRITORIAL GOVERNANCE (2012–2024)**

Recent research highlights that state capacity depends on the territorial coherence of planning, as Abrucio, Lotta, Pires and Gomide point out. The OECD reinforces that countries with consistent territorial models have:

- greater allocative efficiency;
- stronger intersectoral coordination;
- lower spatial inequality;
- greater transparency in the use of resources.

This agenda incorporates:

- multilevel planning;
- metropolitan governance;
- use of indicators and territorial information systems;
- functional regionalization;
- strengthening of administrative capacities.

Thus, regionalizing well is not only a technical decision, but a condition for the State to operate with true capacity for planning and territorial intervention.

### 3 METHODOLOGY

The research adopts a qualitative approach, based on documentary analysis, literature review and inter-capital comparison. According to Gil, qualitative research is indicated for studies that seek to understand phenomena in depth, exploring meanings, relationships and contexts that cannot be reduced to numerical measurements. Creswell points out that this type of approach mobilizes multiple sources of evidence and allows interpreting social phenomena in an integrated and contextualized way. From this perspective, it is based on the understanding that regionalization for planning purposes involves territorial, political and administrative dimensions whose study demands interpretation, analysis and conceptual reconstruction.

The documentary analysis follows the understanding of Lakatos and Marconi, according to which official and normative documents are indispensable primary sources for identifying institutional structures, public policies and organizational processes. The first set of sources corresponds to the municipal laws of Maceió, especially Law No. 4,687 of 1988, its subsequent amendments, the Master Plan of 2005 and the provisions related to the territorial organization of the municipality. The second set comprises the Regionalization Model for the State Planning of Alagoas, prepared by SEPLANDE with technical support from IBAM, whose methodology based on poles, flows and areas of influence offers analytical parameters particularly useful to the study.

For comparative purposes, Brazilian capitals with urban and structural characteristics similar to those of Maceió were selected, such as Aracaju, João Pessoa, Natal and São Luís. This selection follows the methodological orientation highlighted by Prodanov and Freitas, who indicate that the inter-case comparison allows the identification of patterns, divergences

and convergences relevant to the problem investigated. At the same time, capitals considered national reference in regionalization models were analyzed, such as Curitiba, Belo Horizonte and Porto Alegre, which allowed the construction of contrastive patterns between administrative, hybrid and functional models.

The analytical procedure was developed in three stages. The first consisted of the systematization and analysis of the legal bases, territorial divisions and criteria used in each city. The second stage corresponded to the comparison of the models, classifying them according to categories derived from the literature and the methodology applied in the state model of Alagoas. The third stage focused on the interpretation of the effects of each model on government planning, relating territorial diagnosis, prioritization of policies and territorialization of public spending.

The combination of documentary analysis, theoretical review and intercapital comparison allowed the construction of a comprehensive interpretation of the limits of the regionalization model of Maceió, in addition to supporting the identification of essential elements for its future review. The methodology adopted thus ensures coherence between the research problem, the objectives and the analytical procedures employed.

#### 4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The analysis developed below presents the main findings of the research, organized from the interpretation of the regionalization models adopted by Maceió, the capitals of similar size and the reference capitals in the national scenario. The results allow us to understand how different territorial criteria influence diagnoses, prioritization of public policies and state capacity. The discussion is structured in sub-items that detail characteristics, limits and implications of each model, relating them to the contemporary requirements of government planning.

##### 4.1 THE REGIONALIZATION MODEL OF MACEIÓ, CHARACTERISTICS, LIMITS AND IMPLICATIONS

The regionalization in force in Maceió has its origin in Law No. 4,687 of 1988, which divided the urban area into seven Administrative Regions using as the main criterion the physical contiguity between neighborhoods. This logic was preserved by Laws No. 4,952 of 2000 and No. 5,217 of 2001 and reaffirmed in the Master Plan of 2005, when the eighth

administrative region was established without, however, changing the methodological foundation of the model.

The most recent data from the IBGE and the Socioeconomic Profile of Maceió show that the city has marked territorial heterogeneity, marked by a strong population and economic concentration in the coastal strip and persistent vulnerabilities in the high areas. This reality highlights the central limitation of the current model, which fails to capture contemporary socio-spatial dynamics. Administrative regions do not reflect patterns of mobility, service networks, emerging centralities, or socioeconomic inequalities already documented in official public databases.

The second limitation refers to the fragile integration between regionalization and planning. The diagnoses used in the PPA, LDO and LOA reproduce territorial divisions that have little dialogue with urban complexity, which restricts the ability to identify territorial priorities and guide the balanced distribution of investments.

The third limitation lies in the inability to reveal intra-urban inequalities, since the current model does not incorporate indicators of income, schooling, sanitation, density or accessibility, essential elements for any consistent territorial reading. As a result, the territorialization of public spending becomes uncertain and sectoral policies are implemented without reference to functional planning cuts.

The specialized literature reinforces that administrative regionalizations, when not anchored in technical criteria, tend to reproduce inequalities and reduce the effectiveness of government action. In Maceió, this phenomenon is expressed by the fragmentation of policies, the overlapping of initiatives, the low intersectoral articulation and the weak adherence between territory, budget and strategic programs.

#### 4.2 THE STATE MODEL OF ALAGOAS AS A METHODOLOGICAL REFERENCE

The Regionalization Model for the State Planning of Alagoas, prepared by IBAM and published in 2014, presents a methodological arrangement that contrasts strongly with the municipal model of Maceió. His logic combines two complementary movements. The first consists of the definition of hub municipalities, identified according to their socioeconomic importance, the supply and density of services, and the capacity for polarization. The second movement corresponds to the delimitation of the areas of influence of these poles, resulting in planning regions that incorporate flows, functional interdependencies, equipment networks and mobility patterns.

It is a model anchored in measurable and replicable criteria, structured to translate urban functions and territorial articulations. The use of socioeconomic indicators, associated with the interpretation of commuting and consumption flows, the analysis of the location of public services and the identification of centralities and subcentralities, constitutes its backbone. These elements allow the construction of excerpts that represent the real dynamics of the territory, strengthening diagnoses, increasing the precision in the allocation of resources and guiding programs and actions of a territorial nature.

When used as a reference to evaluate Maceió, the state model shows the distance between an administrative regionalization, based on historical cuts, and a functional regionalization guided by technical criteria. While the state model incorporates territorial articulations and identifies effective centralities, the municipal model remains stuck in divisions that are not very responsive to urban transformations, incapable of consistently guiding the planning and management of the territory.

#### 4.3 COMPARISON WITH SIMILAR CAPITALS: ARACAJU, JOÃO PESSOA, NATAL AND SÃO LUÍS

The comparative analysis with capitals of similar size and characteristics confirms that Maceió is not an isolated case. Aracaju (with about 670 thousand inhabitants), João Pessoa (approximately 830 thousand), Natal (almost 900 thousand) and São Luís (about 1.1 million) structure their administrative regions based on predominantly historical cuts, linked to the division of neighborhoods, physical contiguity and administrative practices consolidated over time. In general, these models do not incorporate socioeconomic indicators, do not represent urban flows, nor do they systematically guide the budget cycle, reflecting the persistence of an essentially administrative regionalization in the northeastern capitals.

Although they share limitations, these cities have particularities that help to contextualize the case of Maceió. Aracaju is organized into 9 administrative regions, articulated with urban planning, still without explicit functional criteria. João Pessoa uses excerpts that partially dialogue with community dynamics, but lack a methodological framework capable of translating socio-spatial inequalities into planning criteria. Natal, divided into four administrative zones since the mid-twentieth century, maintains similar weaknesses due to the lack of integration between regionalization and planning instruments. São Luís, with five major administrative regions, faces similar challenges, mainly due to the absence of analytical criteria and the low incorporation of territorial indicators.

The socioeconomic data from the IBGE and the indices from the Brazil Atlas reinforce this picture, evidencing intense patterns of vulnerability and intra-urban inequalities in these capitals — elements that, as in Maceió, are not incorporated into the administrative cutouts or used to guide the goals of the PPA or the execution of the LOA. The result is a budget cycle that is poorly articulated with the territory, marked by generic diagnoses, low precision in identifying priorities, and less capacity for territorial evaluation of the impacts of public policies.

Thus, the common point between these capitals is the disconnection between territory and budget, which limits the effectiveness of government actions, reinforces patterns of exclusion, and makes it difficult to confront intra-urban inequalities. The comparison shows that Maceió is part of a national pattern of capitals that adopt administrative models of regionalization. However, it is distinguished by having a functional state model already consolidated, which can serve as a technical reference for a consistent territorial reform aligned with the socio-spatial demands of the city.

To qualify the comparative analysis and highlight the territorial characteristics of capitals of similar size, the official maps of Aracaju, João Pessoa, Natal and Maceió are presented below. These representations illustrate the administrative structure adopted by these municipalities, predominantly anchored in historical cuts, physical contiguities and traditional divisions of neighborhoods. The visualization of these maps helps to understand the methodological limitations identified in the regionalization of these capitals, reinforcing the arguments developed in this subsection.

**Figure 1**

## *Administrative Regionalization of Aracaju*



Source: Prefeitura Municipal de Aracaju.

**Figure 2**

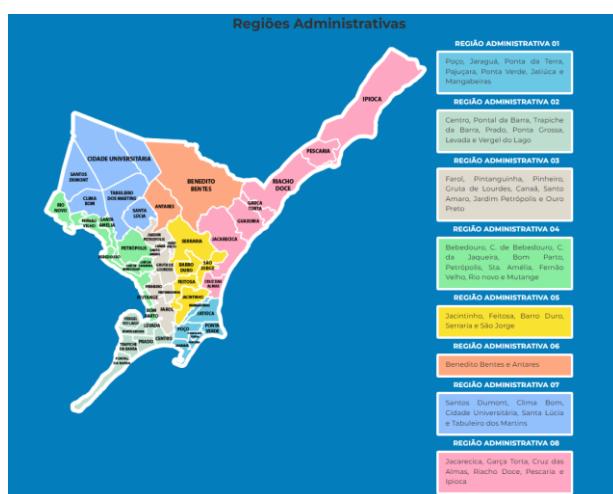
## *Administrative Regionalization of Natal*



Source: Prefeitura Municipal de Natal.

**Figure 3***Administrative Regionalization of João Pessoa*

Source: Prefeitura Municipal de João Pessoa.

**Figure 4***Administrative Regionalization of Maceió*

Source: Prefeitura Municipal de Maceió.

The integrated reading of the maps confirms that Aracaju, João Pessoa and Natal adopt regionalization models of an essentially administrative nature, without functional criteria, without articulation with urban flows and without consistent integration with the budget cycle. Such visual evidence corroborates the findings presented in the textual analysis and empirically substantiates the classification of these capitals as "similar models" in Chart 1.

#### 4.4 COMPARISON WITH REFERENCE CAPITALS: CURITIBA, PORTO ALEGRE AND BELO HORIZONTE

Curitiba, Porto Alegre and Belo Horizonte are national references for adopting more structured and methodologically consistent functional regionalization models. Curitiba integrates its regionalization with land use policies, mobility and urban structuring, articulating transport axes, urban centralities and socioeconomic data. Porto Alegre has developed a territorialized model associated with Participatory Budgeting, allowing the identification of regional inequalities, territorializing investments and strengthening the relationship between planning, budgeting and social participation. Belo Horizonte has structured nine regional offices based on population, socioeconomic and functional criteria, which enables territorialized diagnoses and continuous monitoring of goals.

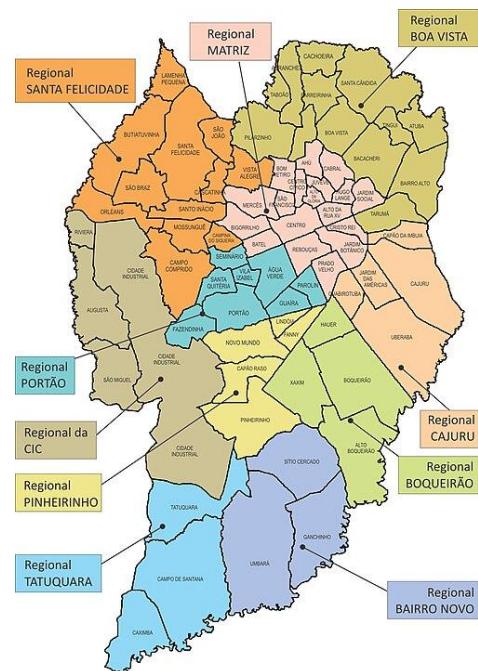
These experiences offer relevant lessons. In Curitiba, regionalization guides structuring decisions on mobility, zoning and service networks. In Porto Alegre, territorialization qualifies the distribution of resources and reinforces democratic legitimacy. In Belo Horizonte, regionalization is the basis for territorial indicators, monitoring of goals and intersectoral coordination.

The contrast with Maceió highlights the importance of functional cuts to strengthen state capacity. Detailed diagnoses, territorial prioritization, articulation between sectors and efficient allocation of resources depend on regions defined by technical criteria that express the socio-spatial dynamics of the city.

Next, the maps of the reference capitals — Belo Horizonte, Curitiba and Porto Alegre — are presented with the objective of illustrating the territorial organization based on functional criteria, urban centralities, mobility networks and intersectoral articulation. These representations show regionalization arrangements aligned with urban and budgetary planning, offering a direct contrast with the administrative models observed in the northeastern capitals previously analyzed.

**Figure 5**

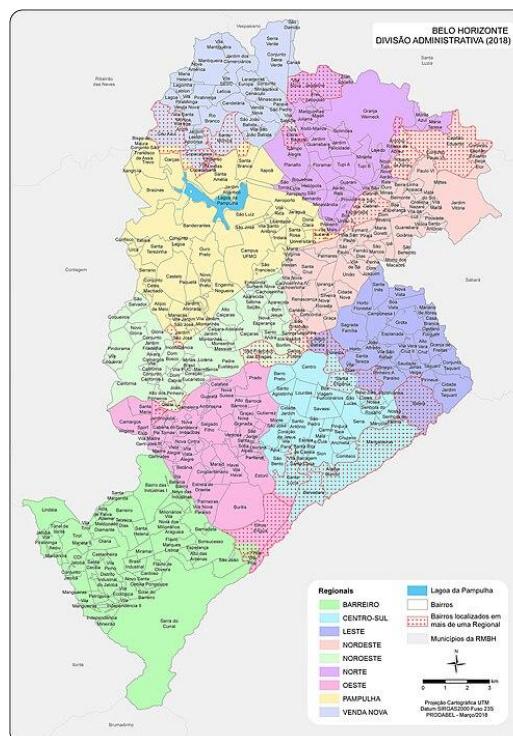
## *Administrative Regionalization of Curitiba*



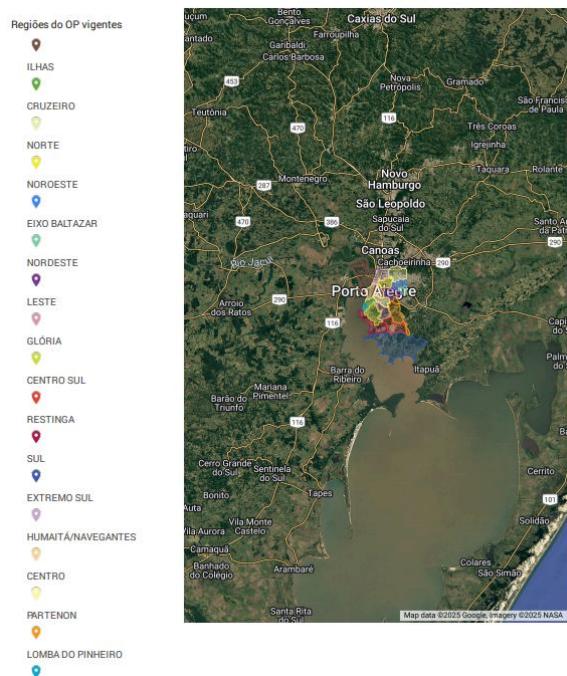
Source: Prefeitura Municipal de Curitiba.

**Figure 6**

## *Administrative Regionalization of Belo Horizonte*



Source: Prefeitura Municipal de Belo Horizonte

**Figure 7***Territorial Regionalization of Porto Alegre (Participatory Budget)*

Source: Prefeitura Municipal de Porto Alegre / ObservaPOA.

The comparative observation of the regional offices of Belo Horizonte, Curitiba and Porto Alegre confirms the presence of functional criteria, delimitations consistent with the urban dynamics and systematic use of indicators for planning purposes. Unlike administrative models, such regionalizations structure territorial diagnoses, guide sectoral policies and facilitate the territorialization of the budget. This visual evidence reinforces the privileged position of these capitals in Chart 1, as well as the importance of technically grounded territorial cutouts for strengthening state capacity.

#### 4.5 COMPARATIVE TABLE OF REGIONALIZATION MODELS

The following is an analytical table that summarizes the main differences between the models:

**Table 1**

Criterion	Maceió	Similar capitals <sup>2</sup> (Aracaju, João Pessoa, Natal, São Luís)	Reference Capitals <sup>3</sup> (Curitiba, Belo Horizonte, Porto Alegre)	State Model of Alagoas <sup>4</sup> (IBAM/SEPLANDE, 2014)
Territorial base	Abairramento; Historic division of neighborhoods	Administrative sections based on neighborhoods or sectors	Functional cutouts structured by centralities and land use	Territorial polarization: poles and areas of influence
Methodological criterion	Not defined; Absence of technical criteria	Partially defined; still predominantly administrative	Methodologically defined; Data-driven and urban functions	Highly defined; Two-step method
Socioeconomic indicators	Unused	Little used; Limited Application	Used systematically	Fully utilized
Consideration of urban flows	Not considered	Considered partially	Considered in full	Considered in full
Centralities and subcentralities	Unidentified	Little explored	Identified and used as a territorial base	Identified from the poles
PPA Integration	Low	Low to moderate	High	High
Integration with LOA	Reduced	Reduced	High	High
Use for territorial diagnosis	Weak	Weak to moderate	Strong	Strong
Territorial coherence	Low	Low to medium	Discharge	Discharge
Intersectoral articulation	Limited	Limited	High	High
Territorial social participation	Unstructured	Partial	Partial to strong (e.g., Porto Alegre)	Partial
Model-derived state capacity	Reduced	Reduced	Strengthened	Strengthened

Source: Prepared by the authors based on the municipal legislation of Maceió (Laws No. 4,687/1988, 4,952/2000, 5,217/2001 and Master Plan 2005), the Regionalization Model for the State Planning of Alagoas (SEPLANDE/IBAM, 2012–2014) and official documents from the capitals Aracaju, João Pessoa, Natal, São Luís, Curitiba, Belo Horizonte and Porto Alegre.

<sup>2</sup> Population, demographic and territorial data for the capitals Aracaju, João Pessoa, Natal and São Luís were consulted on the "Panorama of Municipalities" and "Cities and States" platforms of the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE).

<sup>3</sup> Information related to territorial organization, centralities, urban mobility and functional criteria adopted by Curitiba, Porto Alegre and Belo Horizonte were obtained from official urban planning documents, municipal statistical databases and complementary IBGE panels.

<sup>4</sup> The Regionalization Model for the State Planning of Alagoas was prepared by the Brazilian Institute of Municipal Administration (IBAM) in partnership with SEPLANDE (2012–2014), defining poles, areas of influence and socioeconomic and functional criteria.

<sup>4</sup> Socioeconomic indicators used for comparative purposes — MHDI, income, education and social vulnerability — were obtained from Atlas Brasil (PUND/IPEA/FJP).

<sup>5</sup> The data referring to intra-urban inequalities in Maceió were extracted from the Socioeconomic Profile of Maceió (SEPLAG/AL), complemented by IBGE and Atlas Brasil.

The differences between municipal and metropolitan scales, as well as the demographic and institutional particularities of the capitals analyzed, were considered in the elaboration of the table, ensuring comparative coherence and avoiding interpretative distortions.

The picture shows that Maceió shares weaknesses typical of northeastern capitals, especially the absence of functional criteria and the low integration between regionalization and planning. At the same time, it is noteworthy that the municipality has a relevant comparative advantage: the existence of an already consolidated state model, which incorporates technical guidelines necessary to guide a functional regionalization. This model can serve as a basis for the construction of a new municipal territorial framework, more coherent with contemporary socio-spatial dynamics and with the requirements of government planning.

The analysis confirms that regionalization is a decisive element for the quality of municipal planning. In Maceió, as in several northeastern capitals, the absence of a standardized and technically based model compromises the territorialization of public spending, reduces the accuracy of diagnoses, and limits the state's capacity to address persistent intra-urban inequalities.

The comparison with reference capitals shows that functional models strengthen the integration between policy, territory and budget, allowing detailed diagnoses, intersectoral coordination and better distribution of resources. On the other hand, the comparison with similar capitals shows that administrative models tend to reproduce structural weaknesses and maintain the distance between territory and budgetary decisions.

In this context, the state model of Alagoas emerges as a robust methodological reference and able to guide a new territorial framework for Maceió. Its use would allow for greater territorial coherence, more accurate diagnoses and strengthening of state capacity, indispensable elements to address inequalities and qualify municipal public planning.

## 5 CONCLUSION

The analyses presented demonstrate that Maceió operates with an essentially administrative regionalization, historically defined by the abairramento and the traditional division of neighborhoods, without technical criteria capable of reflecting flows, socio-spatial inequalities, land uses and urban centralities. This configuration compromises central processes of government planning, such as the preparation of the Multi-Year Plan, the

identification of LDO priorities and the territorialization of the expenses provided for in the LOA.

The comparison with similar capitals reveals that Maceió is part of a set of municipalities with fragile territorial cuts, predominantly administrative and poorly articulated with planning. At the same time, the reference capitals, such as Curitiba, Belo Horizonte and Porto Alegre, demonstrate that functional regionalization is capable of expanding state capacity, strengthening territorial diagnoses and guiding investments in a more equitable way.

The Regionalization Model for the State Planning of Alagoas shows that the construction of territorial divisions guided by indicators, centralities, urban flows and areas of influence offers more solid bases for diagnoses and strategic decisions. This methodological reference suggests ways for a broad review of the regionalization of Maceió, including mechanisms of social participation, integration between budget planning and urban planning, and articulation between different scales of governance.

It is concluded that the construction of a standardized model of municipal regionalization is a fundamental step to strengthen the planning of Maceió, support the balanced distribution of public investments and face historical inequalities in the territory. A model that considers centralities, flows, vulnerabilities and functional articulations will allow the city to move towards a more coherent, democratic planning that adheres to the real needs of the population.

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