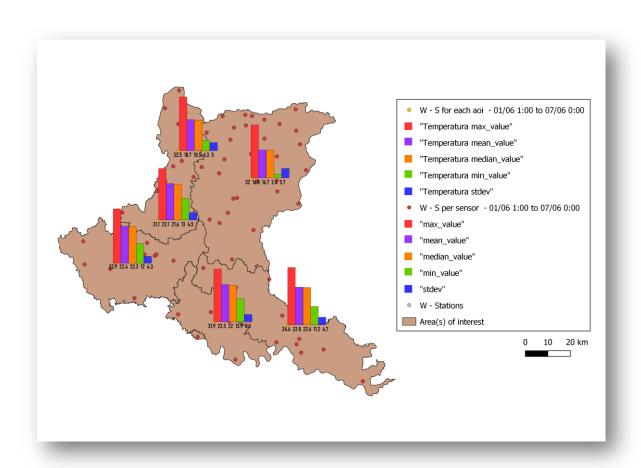


GEOINFORMATICS PROJECT

QGIS ARPA Lombardia Data Extractor



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GitHub repository: https://github.com/MatPuche/arpa_data

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I. Description of the project

The ARPA ground sensors network collects data regarding weather, air and water quality, as well as waste management in Lombardy, Italy. The aim of the project was to develop a QGIS Processing Toolbox module enabling to extract these data using the API of ARPA Lombardia and Python scripting.

As a first step, the possible data to extract and their properties (amount of information, measurement frequency, attributes...) were identified and analysed. Then, the plugin has been developed to allow the insertion of these data into QGIS. According to the previously identified properties, some filters have been added to enable the user to insert some parameters (as time period or sensor location) before requesting the data. Such a plugin is made to produce understandable maps from ARPA Lombardia data and to enable one user to manipulate them into QGIS.

II. Data analysis

The first step of the project was to analyse the data available through the ARPA API. Starting from the list of published datasets found on the <u>Lombardy Open Data Portal</u>, we had to inspect the 21 API links in order to determine the content of each dataset and its usability.

This first inspection led us to several observations. First, there are datasets of five different topics regarding Lombardy region: weather, air quality, flow data, water quality and waste collection. However, we noticed that only the weather and air quality datasets are providing data of a periodical monitoring. For this reason, we decided to focus on these two.

A deeper exploration brought a second discovery: the API for these two datasets provides only a subset of the data collected. Indeed, it provides:

- for the weather: the monitoring data of the current month, with a frequency of 10min.
- for the air quality: the monitoring data of the current year, with a frequency of 1hour.

The rest of the data is divided into CSV files per year and can only be downloaded manually. As we wanted to request our data directly from the plugin and not download it to the PC, we decided here again to focus only on the data available via the API.

Also, the dataset for weather monitoring and the one for air quality only provide the collected values, the date of measurement and the id of each sensor and don't contain any information on the location of the station and the type of sensor. Therefore, two other datasets had to be considered: the ones containing all the information of the monitoring stations for weather and air quality.

So, finally, the datasets we chose to focus on are as follows:

- Weather stations information (called "Stazioni Meteorologiche")
- Weather sensors monitoring data (called "<u>Dati sensori meteo</u>")
- Air quality stations information (called "Stazioni qualità dell'aria")
- Air quality sensors monitoring data (called "Dati sensori aria")

III. The plugin

After this initial analysis of the data, the implementation of the plugin could begin. In the following, a presentation of its general functioning is made, followed by the different stages of its implementation.

a. Installation

The plugin is called "ARPA data" and needs to be installed manually. Plugins in QGIS are stored in a special folder. We must copy our plugin directory to that folder before it can be used. In QGIS, locate your current profile folder by going to *Settings * User Profiles * Open Active Profile Folder*. Then, copy the plugin folder (called "arpa data") to *python * plugins* subfolder.

Then, the "sodapy" library must be installed to make the plugin work. To do so, the following command has to be run: pip install sodapy (pip must be installed).

Finally, the plugin should appear in the Plugins management box of QGIS, in installed plugins and only needs to be activated as a usual plugin.

b. General functioning of the plugin

Once installed, the plugin is present in the menu "Plugin" of QGIS. When the user launches it, a dialog window opens (Fig.1), and a set of parameters must be provided.

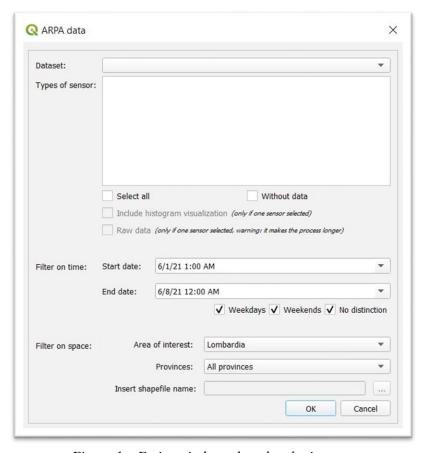


Figure 1 – Entire window when the plugin starts

In the following, all the parameters and their meaning are detailed.

1. DATA FILTERS

- i. The user chooses the dataset: Weather or Air quality (1)
- ii. The user chooses the type of sensors: (multiple selection) (2)
 - a. For Weather data:

Altezza Neve, Direzione Vento, Livello Idrometrico, Precipitazione, Radiazione Globale, Temperatura, Umidità Relativa, Velocità Vento.

b. For Air quality data:

Ammoniaca, Arsenico, Benzene, Benzo(a)pirene, Biossido di Azoto, Biossido di Zolfo, BlackCarbon, Cadmio, Monossido di Azoto, Monossido di Carbonio, Nikel, Ossidi di Azoto, zono, Particelle sospese PM2.5, Particolato Totale Sospeso, Piombo, PM10, PM10 (SM2005).

Note: If the user selects "No data", the result is only the stations locations without any monitoring data. (3)

If only one type of sensor is selected the user has 2 more choices:

- <u>Include the visualization</u>: to have the final map with a visualization of the statistics per area of interest by means of histograms (4)
- Raw data: to get, as an additional layer, the raw data from the datasets. This option can greatly increase the data processing time, so it is only allowed when only one sensor type is selected. (5)

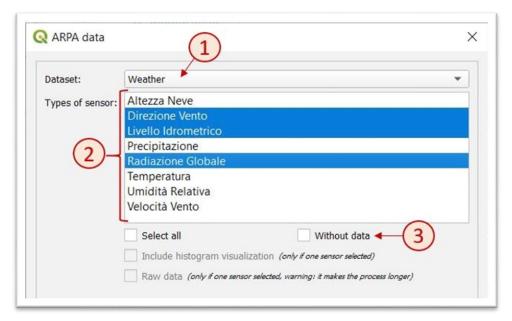


Figure 2 – Data filters (several types of sensors selected)

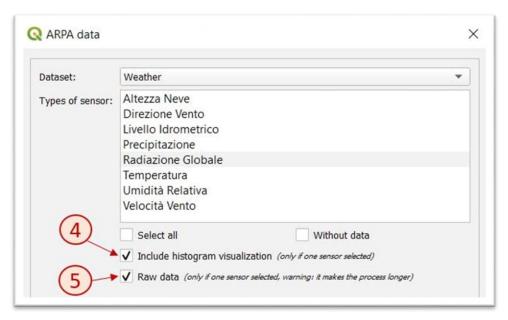


Figure 3 – Data filters (one type of sensors selected)

2. TIME FILTERS

- i. The user chooses the dates (start date and end date of the data collection) (6)
- ii. The user chooses the day type:
 - a. Weekdays, (7)
 - b. Weekends, (8)
 - c. Both weekdays and weekends:
 - Without distinction: the statistics are computed on all selected days without distinction. In case, the raw data are asked, they are provided without distinction as well (Fig. 4, (9)).
 - With distinction: the statistics are computed for weekdays and for weekends with distinction. One result for each is provided. In case, the raw data are asked, they are provided with a distinction as well (Fig. 5, (9)).

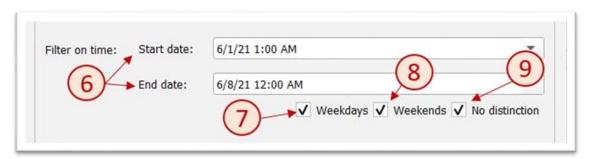


Figure 4 – Time filters (without distinction between weekdays and weekends)

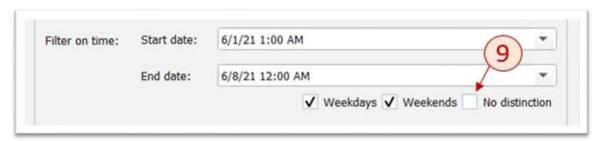


Figure 5 – Time filters (with distinction between weekdays and weekends)

3. SPACE FILTERS

i. The user selects the area(s) of interest:

- a. Lombardia (all provinces or select one in particular) (10 and 11)
- b. Insert an area: browse a shapefile on his/her local device. (12 and 13)

 /!\ The shapefile must contain polygons! These polygons will be the areas of interest and the statistics are computed for each of the polygons.

 /!\ The CRS of the inserted shapefile must be WGS84!

The selected areas of interest will be added to the resulted layers.

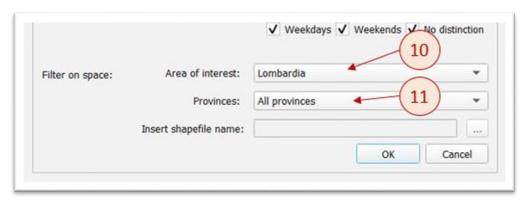


Figure 6 – Space filters (Lombardy with all provinces)

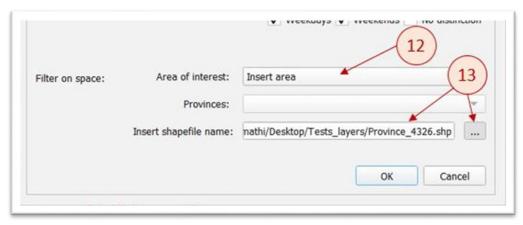


Figure 7 – Space filters (Inserted shapefile)

c. Results

The user presses OK and, after the processing, the maps are generated and added to the QGIS project.

1. Resulted maps

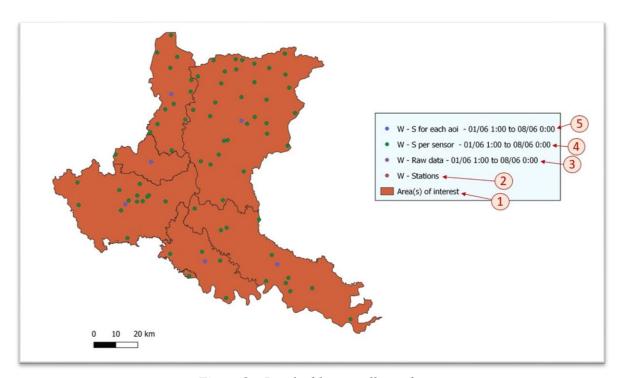


Figure 8 – Resulted layers, all together

i. One map of polygons representing the areas of interest. (Fig. 8 (1)) If the user has entered his own file, it is the same layer. If the user has selected Lombardia or a particular province, the corresponding vector layer is added from a shapefile contained in the plugin directory. Each area of interest contains an identifier in the attribute named "aoi" which is found in all following layers. Named "Area(s) of interest"

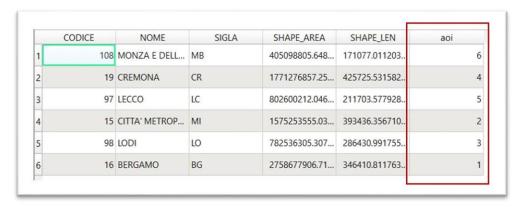


Figure 9 – Attribute table of Area(s) of interest layer

ii. One map of points representing the stations concerned by the filters (Fig. 8 (2)) and containing some metadata (name and id of the station, location, type of sensor, commune, province, start time of the station...)

Named "W - Stations" or "AQ - Stations"

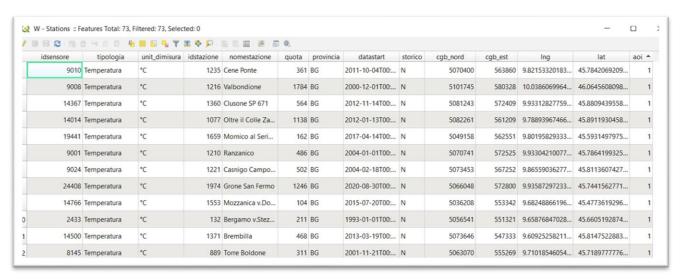


Figure 10 – Attribute table of "Stations" layer

iii. One map of points representing the sensors concerned by the filters (Fig. 8 (4)) and containing the computed statistics for each sensor (count, mean, min, max, median and standard deviation of the measurements). Here, if the user chose previously to have weekdays and weekends with a distinction, there are two different maps: one for weekdays and one for weekends (cf. Fig. 12).

Named "W - S per sensor - Dates" or "AQ - S per sensor - Dates"

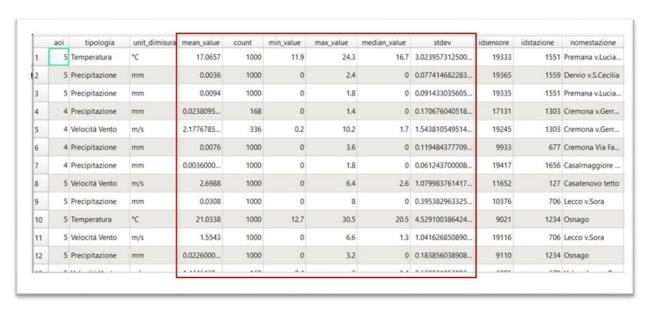


Figure 11 – Attribute table of "Statistics per sensor" layer

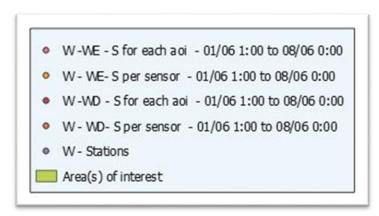


Figure 12 – Layers if distinction between Weekdays and Weekends

iv. One map of points representing one point in the centre of each of the areas of interest (Fig. 8 (5)). Each point contains the statistics of the selected sensor types for the concerned area (cf. Fig. 13 and 14 (1)). Moreover, the Fisher test result is present for each type of sensor (cf. Fig. 13 and 14 (2)). Here again, if the user chose to have weekdays and weekends with a distinction, there are two different maps. Named "W - S for each aoi - Dates" or "AQ - S per each aoi - Dates"

Note: If the areas of interest are a unique area, the final map is a unique point with the statistics of each sensor type for the whole area.

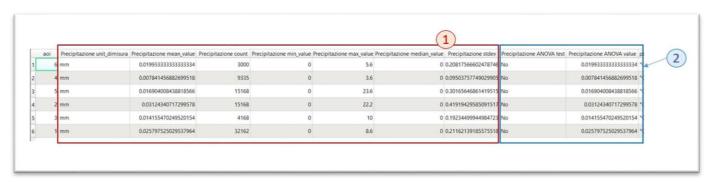


Figure 13 – Attribute table of "Statistics per aoi" layer (part 1)

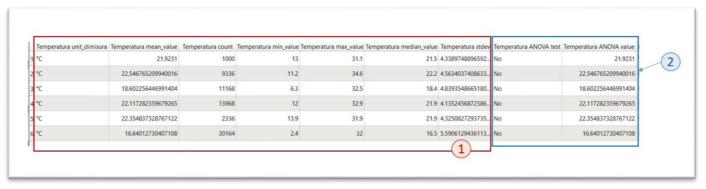


Figure 14 – Attribute table of "Statistics per aoi" layer (part 2)

v. If the raw data have been asked:

One map of points representing the sensors concerned by the filters and containing all their measurements in the period selected. (Fig. 8 (3)) Each row of the layer contains one measurement. Each measure is associated to the point on the map corresponding to the location of the sensor. Named "W - Raw data - Dates" or "AQ - Raw data - Dates"

	aoı	tipologia	unit_dimisura	valore	data	idsensore	nomestazione	provincia	Ing	lat
0161	1	Temperatura	°C	19.6	2021-06-06T12:	9003	Castione della P	BG	10.0633167660	45.9284455165.
0162	1	Temperatura	°C	10.2	2021-06-05T23:	9003	Castione della P	BG	10.0633167660	45.9284455165.
0163	1	Temperatura	°C	20	2021-06-05T12:	9003	Castione della P	BG	10.0633167660	45.9284455165.
0164	1	Temperatura	°C	10.9	2021-06-06T21:	9003	Castione della P	BG	10.0633167660	45.9284455165.
0165	2	Temperatura	°C	14.8	2021-06-01T03:	5910	Lacchiarella v.M	MI	9.13451726419	45.3245174128.
0166	2	Temperatura	°C	15	2021-06-01T03:	5910	Lacchiarella v.M	MI	9.13451726419	45.3245174128.
0167	2	Temperatura	°C	15.8	2021-06-01T02:	5910	Lacchiarella v.M	MI	9.13451726419	45.3245174128
0168	2	Temperatura	°C	15.9	2021-06-01T04:	5910	Lacchiarella v.M	MI	9.13451726419	45.3245174128.
0169	2	Temperatura	°C	16.1	2021-06-01T01:	5910	Lacchiarella v.M	MI	9.13451726419	45.3245174128.

Figure 16 – Attribute table of "Raw data" layer

All these layers are temporary layers and need to be saved if the user wants to use them in future sessions. They must be saved as Geopackage in order to keep the attribute names as they are in the layers. If saved as shapefile, the layer will contain shortened attribute names and it prevents from knowing what they correspond to.

2. Visualization

If the user selected only one type of sensor and decided to ask the visualization of the results, histograms are automatically built for two layers:

- Layer of statistics per sensor (iii)
- Layer of statistics per area of interest (iv)

The histograms are placed on the points of the layer and represent, in order from left to right, the max value, the mean value, the median value, the min value and the standard deviation of the measurements.

For the layer of statistics per area of interest, the diagrams appear in a "small scale" ranging from 1:1300000 to 1:350000.

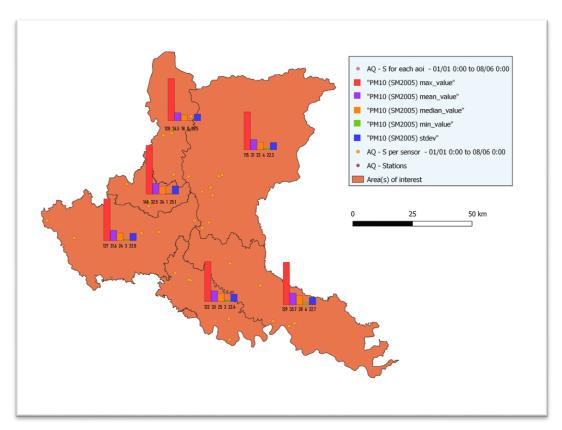


Figure 17 – Visualization of statistics per aoi (small scale)

In contrast, for the layer of statistics per sensor, the diagram appears in a "large scale" starting from 1:350000.

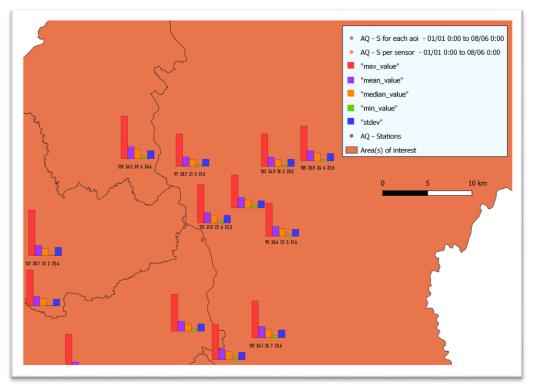


Figure 18 – Visualization of statistics per sensor (large scale)

Specific case: If the user chose to have weekdays and weekends with a distinction and also asked for the visualization, the resulted maps will contain the histograms for each of them. As the histogram for weekdays and the one for weekends are placed at the same position, they are overlapping. Therefore, they must be visualized one by one. One of the two layers (WE or WD) has to be hidden by the user to have a correct visualisation of the histograms.

d. Plugin Implementation

This plugin has been implemented in Python, using the python scripting in QGIS (PyQGIS) to interact with QGIS and QT Creator to design the interface. To set-up all the necessary files and the standard code for the plugin at the beginning, the QGIS Plugin Builder was firstly used.

1. Get the data from ARPA API

The open datasets of ARPA Lombardia are hosted by Socrata (<u>Socrata Open Data API</u>) that provides the built-in API. To use it with Python, the library "sodapy" has to be installed.

Each available dataset can be retrieved by sending a request to this API and the response is received in JSON format. Therefore, a first request is made to get the information related to the stations of the selected dataset (weather or air quality). Then, for each of the sensors returned, a second request is made to get its monitoring data. This means that, for N stations in the area of interest, the number of requests is N+1:

- 1 for station information
- N for the monitoring data (1 per sensor)

The responses are stored in a python dictionary to be added to a new layer into QGIS.

2. Create and add a layer into QGIS

In our case, the layers to add are all vector layers. Using PyQGIS, the creation of a vector layer only requires setting the geometry type (point, linestring, polygon, multipolygon...), the coordinate reference system (CRS), the name of the layer and the name of the data provider. For all the layers created in this project, we used the World Geodetic System 84 (EPSG:4326) because the data from ARPA is provided in this CRS.

Then, the fields for the created vector layer have to be set and the features to be added. This is done item by item, setting the attributes and the geometries one by one.

Finally, the vector layer is added to the current QGIS project (if none is opened, a new one is created). The resulted layer is added as temporary layer and has to be saved by the user manually if he/she wants to keep it in the long term.

This process is followed for all layers created by the plugin.

3. Add filters

The data was up till now requested without any filter: all the monitored data of all the types of sensors were requested for the selected dataset. Some filters had to be added to give more flexibility to the user and to prevent him/her from making a useless big request that takes more time to be served.

Filter on data type

Firstly, a filter on the type of sensor has been added. The user could choose to get data for all types of sensors or only for a subset of them. Depending on this choice the query to the API is modified and a condition is added on the type of sensor.

Then, we decided to give the possibility to the user to request only the information about stations without the monitoring data. This is especially useful to get only stations location. In that case, only one request is made, and the response time is very short.

Filter on time

Another important filter to be implemented was the one on time. The user could want to have the monitoring data for the all period of monitoring or only on a restricted period. Therefore, a start date and end date have been added. The query for each sensor is taking this range of time into consideration and only returns monitoring done during this period.

In addition, a comparison between weekday and weekend measures could be useful. For example, considering the air quality data, this would allow an analysis of the difference in C02 between working days and weekends. Therefore, we decided to add the possibility to distinguish the monitoring data of weekdays from the weekends ones through three checkboxes called 'weekdays', 'weekends' and 'no distinction'. By default, they are all checked, which means that all the data from weekends and weekdays are requested without making any distinction. In contrast, if the "no distinction" box is not checked, weekday data will be provided to the user separately from weekend data. Here, the distinction is made after the request on the received JSON.

Filter on space

The data provided by the API concerns the whole region. However, the user could want to have only data from a specific part of Lombardy.

Thus, a first filter on space has been added: the filter on provinces. Indeed, the dataset containing information about stations provides the name of the province to which each of them belongs. Therefore, a condition is added to the query on stations in order to request only the information in the desired province. Nevertheless, the user has still the possibility to ask for data in the whole region by selecting "All provinces".

In addition, the user could want to focus on a certain area that is not necessarily a province. In that case, he/she has the possibility to insert a shapefile that contains multi-polygons and has the WGS84 CRS. The different polygons contained in the file are extracted and define the list of areas of interest. For each of them, the N+1 requests on station information and monitoring data are made (1 for station information, and 1 per sensor for measurements).

In the end, the result provided to the user contains a distinction by zone. A layer called "Area(s) of interest" is added to the QGIS project and corresponds either to the file previously inserted by the

user, or to a shapefile contained in the plugin directory. Each point of the produced maps has an attribute called "aoi" containing an id that matches one of the polygons of the "Area(s) of interest" layer.

4. Provide statistics

The data requested are monitoring data from sensors that are periodically measuring. As explained in the Data Analysis section, the weather sensors are measuring every 10 minutes and the air quality ones every hour. Therefore, the amount of data available is huge and adding all the measurements of all sensors in all the areas of interest could take a lot of time. For this reason, it has been decided to provide statistics rather than raw data.

Firstly, for each sensor, a list containing all measurements over the selected period of time is built. Then, from this list, the following statistics are computed: maximum, minimum and median value, mean, count and standard deviation. They are rendered in one layer representing each of the sensors. One point (i.e one row) corresponds to one sensor with its statistics.

Secondly, for each area of interest, several types of sensors can be present, but the statistics must be computed type by type. Therefore, for each area, one list per sensor type is built and the same parameters are computed: maximum, minimum and median value, mean, count and standard deviation. They are rendered in one layer representing each area of interest. One point (i.e one row) corresponds to one area of interest and contains all the statistics for each type of sensor.

However, the user could want to have the raw data and not the statistics. For this reason, the possibility to ask for the raw data has been added. This functionality is limited to the case when the user selects only one type of sensor in order to prevent the process from being too long. The measurements are directly added to a new layer without any processing. In that layer, one point (i.e one row) corresponds to one measure of one sensor. Depending on the selected period of time, this layer can contain a huge number of rows.

5. Implement the Fisher test

The results provided by the plugin could be used to build models of weather or air quality in Lombardy. For example, one could want to build a model of the temperature in the region. The idea is to determine whether a relationship exists between the means of temperature in the areas. If so, a unique general mean value could be used to model the temperature in the areas. This is the Analysis of variance (ANOVA) method and can be used for each type of sensors.

Therefore, at the end of the collection of data and the computation of statistics, the ANOVA test is made. The within areas source of variation is computed as well as the between areas source of variation. Using the Fisher F-Test, a comparison with the theoretical value corresponding to 5 % probability is made and determines if the test passes or not.

The result is stored in the layer containing the statistics of each area of interest ($layer \, n^{\circ} \, iv$). For each area and each type of sensor, two attributes are set:

- ANOVA test: YES if the test passed; NO if it didn't pass.
- ANOVA values: Mean value of the mean of each area if it passed; Mean value of the area if it didn't pass.

6. Provide an understandable symbology

The final step was to provide a visualization of the statistics to the user. As several types of sensors can be selected, having a visualization mixing them would not make sense (the mean temperature cannot be compared to the mean velocity of wind). Therefore, visualizing the resulted statistics is possible only when the user selected one single type of sensor.

The representation of the statistics is made by means of histograms with five bars (maximum value, mean, median, minimum value and standard deviation). They are built for the map of statistics per area and for the one of statistics per sensor. To prevent the diagrams from overlapping each other, a scale dependent visibility is set. In a small scale, the histograms of areas are visible while in a large scale, the visibility is for histograms of each sensor.

Moreover, the values are displayed below the graphs as labels to have an idea of the quantity represented by each bar. We can notice that some labels are not appearing when the diagrams are too close from one another to prevent any overlapping. Also, some labels seem to be misaligned with the diagrams. This is because, when diagrams are too close from one another, they are automatically displaced while labels keep the original position. In any case, when zooming in, the diagram takes its original placement, and the alignment is good again.

IV. Tools used in the project

- QGIS (https://qgis.org)
- ARPA Lombardia API (https://tinyurl.com/yyw6rgoq)
- Pandas (https://pandas.pydata.org)
- QGIS Processing Script (https://tinyurl.com/yxe7ww69)
- QT Creator (https://www.qt.io/offline-installers)
- PyQGIS (https://docs.qgis.org/3.16/en/docs/pyqgis_developer_cookbook/index.html)