

3rd OPEN-AIR CITIES INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE “LOCAL AND REGIONAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND URBAN RECONSTRUCTION”

Book of Abstracts



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**3rd OPEN-AIR CITIES
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE**

**Local and Regional
Sustainable Development
& Urban Reconstruction**

**5 - 7 December 2025
Harokopio University of Athens**

Organised by:


HAROKOPIO UNIVERSITY OF ATHENS
Postgraduate Programme
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT


SYROS INSTITUTE


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Athens, 5-7 December 2025

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WELCOME INTRODUCTION

Dear Invited guests, Colleagues and Students,

On behalf of the Scientific and Organizing Committee, we welcome you to the 3rd OPEN-AIR CITIES International Conference, organized by Open-Air Cities, HAROKOPIO UNIVERSITY of Athens - Postgraduate Programme "Sustainable Development" and SYROS INSTITUTE.

The conference aims to present and disseminate research results related to the Sustainable Development of cities and regions at a global level.

The main subject is the presentation of relevant research in the field of Sustainable Development.

The conference is organized and structured on the four main pillars of Sustainable Development, which in fact are also the main pillars of Urban and Regional Development: Environment, Economy, Society and Culture. Each of these pillars includes its subcategories, which are detailed through the thematic sections related to the 17 Global Goals of Sustainable Development.

The conference brings together many distinguished researchers of Local and Regional Sustainable Development and Urban Reconstruction from many countries all over the world. Participants have the opportunity to present new research, exchange information, and discuss current issues.

The papers that will be presented at the conference have the possibility to be included in the conference proceedings and to be published in the international journal *Sustainable Development, Culture, Traditions Journal* (www.sdct-journal.com) (ISSN: 2241-4010), after their final submission to the journal.

I would like to extend particular thanks to the conference Keynote speakers: Moraitis Konstantinos, Salvati Luca, Plotnic Olesea, Kremlis George, GiacomoDi Foggia, KaldiStavroula, DimelliDespina, AngelidisMinas, RodiAlcestis, GospodiniAspa.

Also, I would like to thank all the participants, as well as all the colleagues who have prepared the very interesting sessions you will attend at the conference.

I wholeheartedly hope that all participants gain valuable scientific knowledge and find the 3rd OPEN-AIR CITIES International Conference an enjoyable and fulfilling experience.



Chair of the Organizing & Scientific Committees

Roido Mitoula

*Dean, School of Environment, Geography and Applied Economics,
HAROKOPIO UNIVERSITY OF ATHENS*

*Professor, "Local and Regional Development - Urban
Reconstruction"*

Head of Postgraduate Programme "Sustainable Development"

Department of Economics and Sustainable Development

Member of Syros Institute

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HAROKOPIO UNIVERSITY OF ATHENS
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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT


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Petroutsatou Kleopatra, Assis Professor, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
Plotnic Olesea, Professor, Moldova State University
Psycharis Yannis, Professor, Panteion University

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

3rd Open-Air Cities International Conference "Local & Regional Sustainable Development and Urban Reconstruction", Harokopio University of Athens, December 5-7, 2025

Radoglou Kalliopi, Professor, Democritus University of Thrace
Salvati Luca, Professor, Sapienza University of Rome
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Touliatos Panagiotis, Professor, Frederick University
Tsagarakis Konstantinos, Professor, Technical University of Crete
Vardopoulos Ioannis, Phd Harokopio University of Athens
Vasilara Archontoula, PhD, National Technical University of Athens
Velevski Slobodan, Professor, Faculty of Architecture, Skopje, N. Macedonia
Voukkali Irene, Lecturer, Open University of Cyprus
Vlachadi Maria, *Lecturer, University of Crete*
Zorpas Antonis, Associate Professor, Open University of Cyprus
Zaggelgis Alexandros, Professor, University of Aberdeen

OFFICER OF PUBLICATIONS



Economou Agisilaos

PhD, National Technical University of Athens

COMMUNICATION OFFICER



KarametouPanagiota

*PhD, Member of the Laboratory Teaching Staff
Department of Economics and Sustainable Development
School of Environment, Geography and Applied Economics
Harokopio University of Athens*

ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

Papavasileiou Angelos

*Civil Engineer BEng, MSc, PhD
Department of Economics and Sustainable Development
School of Environment, Geography and Applied Economics
Harokopio University of Athens*



Chalioris Konstantinos

*MSc Sustainable Development, PhD Candidate
Department of Economics and Sustainable Development,
School of Environment, Geography and Applied Economics
Harokopio University of Athens*

Nastos Georgios

*MSc Sustainable Development, PhD
Department of Economics and Sustainable Development,
School of Environment, Geography and Applied Economics
Harokopio University of Athens*



Drosis Sotiris

*MSc Sustainable Development, PhD Candidate
Department of Economics and Sustainable Development,
School of Environment, Geography and Applied Economics
Harokopio University of Athens
email: sdrosis@hua.gr*

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

3rd Open-Air Cities International Conference "Local & Regional Sustainable Development and Urban Reconstruction", Harokopio University of Athens, December 5-7, 2025

DerventiMaria

*PhD Candidate, Department of Economics and Sustainable
Development,
School of Environment, Geography and Applied Economics
Harokopio University of Athens*



PetridisDimitris

*PhD Candidate, Department of Economics and Sustainable
Development,
School of Environment, Geography and Applied Economics
Harokopio University of Athens*

Dologlou Maria

*Post Doc Researcher, Department of Economics and Sustainable
Development,
School of Environment, Geography and Applied Economics
Harokopio University of Athens*



Papadopoulou Vasiliki

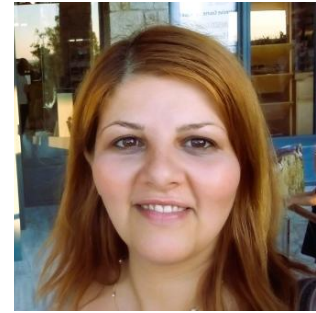
*PhD Candidate, Department of Economics and Sustainable
Development,
School of Environment, Geography and Applied Economics
Harokopio University of Athens*

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

3rd Open-Air Cities International Conference “Local & Regional Sustainable Development and Urban Reconstruction”, Harokopio University of Athens, December 5-7, 2025

Maniou Foteini

*MSc Sustainable Development, PhD Candidate
Department of Economics and Sustainable Development,
School of Environment, Geography and Applied Economics
Harokopio University of Athens*



Karagiannis Georgios

*PhD Candidate, Department of Economics and Sustainable
Development,
School of Environment, Geography and Applied Economics
Harokopio University of Athens*

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3rd Open-Air Cities International Conference "Local & Regional Sustainable Development and Urban Reconstruction", Harokopio University of Athens, December 5-7, 2025

CONCISE CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

1st DAY- Friday 5 December 202

09:00-10:00	Registration (Harokopio University) (main building)
10.00-10.30	OPENING CEREMONY (Amphitheater: Georgios Karabatzos)(main building)
10.30-13.30	Keynote Speeches (Amphitheater: Georgios Karabatzos)(main building)
13.30-14.30	Conference Lunch - Finger Food
17.30-20.00	Session 3: "Local and Regional Development - Economy - Entrepreneurship" Chaired by Prof Olesea Plotnic and Angelos Papavasileiou (Amphitheater: Georgios Karabatzos)(main building)
17.30-20.00	Session 4: "Culture - Museums - Religious and Cities" Chaired by Assoc Prof Astara Olga-Eleni and Prof Papaioannou Georgios (Room A1) (main building)
17.30-20.00	Session 5: "Promoting Sustainable cities" Chaired by Prof Angelidis Minas and Dr Prof Koutsoumpos Leonidas (Room A2) (main building)
17.30-18.45	Session 6: "Tackling socio-economic inequalities and in-work poverty" Chaired by Prof Papadakis Nikos and Lect Vlachadi Maria (Room A4) (main building)
18.45-20.00	Session 7: "'Social' Architecture - Environment and Health" Chaired by Prof Dimelli Despina and Asst Prof Poli Maria (Room A4) (main building)

2nd DAY-Saturday 6 December 2025

09.00-11.30	Session 12: "Urban and Regional Sustainable Development" Chaired by Prof Lalenis Konstantinos and Dr Econoou Agisilaos (Room A1) (main building)
09.00-11.30	Session 13: "Tourism and Sustainable Development" Chaired by Asst Em Panagiotis Patargias and Asst Prof Skoultzos Sofoklis (Room A2) (main building)
09.00-10.30	Session 14: "Environmental Sustainability- Waste Management- Circular Economy" Chaired by Prof Brzezińska-Rawa Anna and Prof Theodoropoulou Eleni (Room A4) (main building)
10.30-11.30	Session 15: "Consumers and Sustainability" Chaired by Prof Sardianou Eleni and Kostakis Ioannis (Room A4) (main building)

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09.00-11.30	<u>Pre-organised Special Session 18: “Virtual cities” and social sustainability in EU framework- Cultural, sociological and communication perspectives”</u> Organised and chaired by Dr Bokolas Vassilis, Prof Vassilakou Tonia, Prof Colantoni Andrea, Assoc Prof Ferrigni Nicola, Prof Kaperonis Stavros, Assoc Prof Nosova Bogdana and Ntrouva Efi (Ceremony Hall) (New Library Building)
11.30-12.00	Coffee Break
12.00-15.00	<u>Session 20: “Education and Sustainable Development”</u> Chaired by Prof Kaldi Stavroula and Dr Dologlou Maria (Room A1) (main building)
13.45-15.00	<u>Session 21: “Local and Regional Cultural Development”</u> Chaired by Prof Maria Manola and Asst Prof Poli Maria (Room A1) (main building)
12.00-15.00	<u>Session 22: “Digital transformation and sustainable development”</u> Chaired by Assoc Prof Menshikova Maria and Assoc Prof Zamfir Natalia (Room A2) (main building)
13.45-15.00	<u>Session 23: “Energy and Sustainable Development”</u> Chaired by Prof KabassiKaterina and Kremlis George (Room A2) (main building)
12.00-15.00	<u>Session 24: “Climate Change and Sustainable Development”</u> Chaired by Prof Ntalos Georgios and KarytsasSpyridon (Room A4) (main building)
13.45-15.00	<u>Session 25: “Urban Resilience and Quality of Life”</u> Chaired by Prof Salvati Luca and Assoc Prof PapadasDimitrios (Room A4) (main building)
12.00-15.00	<u>Pre-organised Special Session 26: “Islands in Transition: Innovation, Sustainability, Tourism and Climate Resilience”</u> Organised and chaired by Assoc Prof Maria P. Doumi, Assist Prof Ioanna Pagoni, Assist Prof Iason-Nikolaos Koufodontis and Em Prof Angelis Vasilis (Room A5) (main building)
15.00-16.00	Conference Lunch - Finger Food
Closing of the Conference	

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3rd Open-Air Cities International Conference “Local & Regional Sustainable Development and Urban Reconstruction”, Harokopio University of Athens, December 5-7, 2025

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



Moraitis Konstantinos

Professor, National Technical University of Athens

“URBAN SUSTAINABILITY: NOTES AND PARADIGMES ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL, CULTURAL AND POLITICAL IMPROVEMENT OF PLACE”



Salvati Luca

Professor, Sapienza University of Rome

“MULTIDISCIPLINARY PARADIGMS BETWEEN SCIENCE AND POLICY. POSITIVE AND NORMATIVE APPROACHES FOR THE ANALYSIS OF COMPLEX ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS”



Plotnic Olesea

Professor, Moldova State University

“INNOVATIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP AS A CATALYST FOR SUSTAINABLE PROSPERITY AND COMPETITIVENESS IN EUROPEAN CITIES AND REGIONS”

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

3rd Open-Air Cities International Conference “Local & Regional Sustainable Development and Urban Reconstruction”, Harokopio University of Athens, December 5-7, 2025



Kremlis George

Honorary Director of the European Commission

*Member of the Board of Directors of the European Public Law Organisation and Director of its Circular economy and Climate Institute, as well as Ambassador of the EPLO to Bulgaria
Chair of the Bureau of the Espoo Convention & the SEA Protocol and of their MOPs*

“ACHIEVING CLIMATE NEUTRALITY: STRATEGIES AND CHALLENGES IN THE ENERGY TRANSITION”



Giacomo Di Foggia

Asst Professor, Università Degli Studi di Milano-Bicocca

“SCALING UP THROUGH COOPERATION: HOW VOLUNTARY AGGREGATION IN LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES SUPPORTS CIRCULAR ECONOMY GOALS”



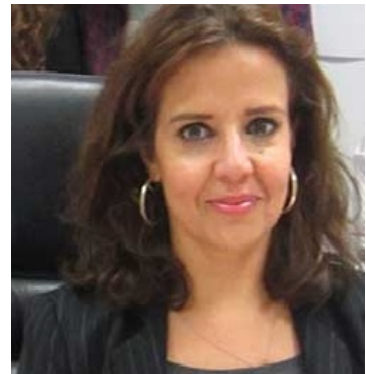
Kaldi Stavroula

Professor, University of Thessaly

“EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: THE EXAMPLE OF THE “GREENCOMP SCHOOL” CURRICULA AND LEARNING”

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

3rd Open-Air Cities International Conference “Local & Regional Sustainable Development and Urban Reconstruction”, Harokopio University of Athens, December 5-7, 2025



Dimelli Despina

Professor, Technical University of Crete

HISTORIC URBAN LANDSCAPES AND URBAN RESILIENCE: RETHINKING CULTURAL HERITAGE IN GREEK CITIES



Angelidis Minas

Professor, National Technical University of Athens

“OVERTOURISM AND BEYOND: TOURISM AND SUSTAINABILITY IN CITIES AND TERRITORIES”



Rodi Alcestis

Professor, University of Patras

“FROM FORMA URBIS TO FORMA HORTO: BLUE-GREEN ROOFS AS THE NEW URBAN GROUND”

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

3rd Open-Air Cities International Conference "Local & Regional Sustainable Development and Urban Reconstruction", Harokopio University of Athens, December 5-7, 2025



Gospodini Anastasia-Aspasia

Professor, University of Thessaly

"HOUSING CRISIS IN POST-CRISIS ATHENS; INEFFECTIVE STATE POLICIES & THE POTENTIAL OF URBAN RENEWAL SCHEMES OF ABANDONED INDUSTRIAL SITES"

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

1st DAY - Friday 5 December 2025

- 09:00-09:30 **Registration** (Harokopio University) (main building)
- 09.30-10.00 Welcome introduction by **Prof. Roido Mitoula**, Dean, School of Environment, Geography and Applied Economics, Harokopio University of Athens, Head of Postgraduate Program “Sustainable Development”, Chair of the Organising & Scientific Committee
- Prof George Dedoussis**, Rector of Harokopio University of Athens
- H.E. Mrs Marcela Hanusova**, Ambassador of the Slovak Republic
- Giannis Androulakis**, President of the Green Fund
- Prof Konstantinos Moraitis**, Syros Institute

	Keynote Speeches
1. 10.00-13.30	Chaired by Em Prof Moraitis Konstantinos & Malindretos Georgios (Amphitheater: Georgios Karabatzos)(main building)
	URBAN SUSTAINABILITY: NOTES AND PARADIGMES ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL, CULTURAL AND POLITICAL IMPROVEMENT OF PLACE (L02144) Moraitis Konstantinos , <i>Professor Emeritus, National Technical University of Athens</i>
	MULTIDISCIPLINARY PARADIGMS BETWEEN SCIENCE AND POLICY. POSITIVE AND NORMATIVE APPROACHES FOR THE ANALYSIS OF COMPLEX ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS (L02136) Salvati Luca , <i>Professor, Sapienza University of Rome</i>
	INNOVATIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP AS A CATALYST FOR SUSTAINABLE PROSPERITY AND COMPETITIVENESS IN EUROPEAN CITIES AND REGIONS (L02241) Plotnic Olesea , <i>Professor, Moldova State University</i>
	ACHIEVING CLIMATE NEUTRALITY: STRATEGIES AND CHALLENGES IN THE ENERGY TRANSITION (L02230) Kremlis George , <i>European Public Law Organisation and Director of its Circular economy and Climate Institute</i>
	SCALING UP THROUGH COOPERATION: HOW VOLUNTARY AGGREGATION IN LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES SUPPORTS CIRCULAR ECONOMY GOALS (L02248) Giacomo Di Foggia , <i>Asst Professor, Universita Degli Study di Milano-Bicocca</i>
	EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: THE EXAMPLE OF THE “GREENCOMP SCHOOL” CURRICULA AND LEARNING (L02132) Kaldi Stavroula , <i>Professor, University of Thessaly</i>
	HISTORIC URBAN LANDSCAPES AND URBAN RESILIENCE: RETHINKING CULTURAL HERITAGE IN GREEK CITIES (L02129) Dimelli Despina , <i>Professor, Technical University of Crete</i>

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3rd Open-Air Cities International Conference “Local & Regional Sustainable Development and Urban Reconstruction”, Harokopio University of Athens, December 5-7, 2025

	OVERTOURISM AND BEYOND: TOURISM AND SUSTAINABILITY IN CITIES AND TERRITORIES (L02161) Angelidis Minas, <i>Professor Emeritus, National Technical University of Athens</i>
	FROM FORMA URBIS TO FORMA HORTO: BLUE-GREEN ROOFS AS THE NEW URBAN GROUND (L02249) Rodi Alcestis, <i>Professor, University of Patras</i>
	HOUSING CRISIS IN POST-CRISIS ATHENS; INEFFECTIVE STATE POLICIES & THE POTENTIAL OF URBAN RENEWAL SCHEMES OF ABANDONED INDUSTRIAL SITES (L02243) Gospodini Aspa, <i>Professor, University of Thessaly</i>
13.30-14.30	Conference Lunch - Finger Food
3. 17.30-20.00	Session: “Local and Regional Development - Economy - Entrepreneurship” Chaired by Prof Olesea Plotnic and Angelos Papavasileiou (Amphitheater: Georgios Karabatzos) (main building)
17.30-17.45	THE ADAPTATION INVESTMENT CYCLE: THE MISSING LINK FOR BRIDGING THE REGIONAL ADAPTATION GAP IN EUROPE (L02135) Dellis Konstantinos, Chourdaki Maria
17.45-18.00	THE ROLE OF INTRAPRENEURSHIP IN THE ENTREPRENEURIAL ORIENTATION OF UNIVERSITIES (L02149) Troshani Ines, Nuka Dardane, Cabiri Mijo Ketrina
18.00-18.15	THE ROLE OF COACHING IN SHAPING LEADERS FOR A SUSTAINABLE WORLD(L02150) Dologlou Maria, Mitoula Roido
18-15-18.30	COSMETOLOGY PRODUCTS AND SUSTAINABILITY: GREEK CONSUMER’S SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS (L02166) Lezou Vasiliki, Karametou Panagiota, Economou Agisilaos, Mitoula Roido
18.30-18.45	THE GIG ECONOMY AND EMPLOYMENT CREATION IN THE DIGITAL ERA: EXPLORING THE OPPORTUNITIES AND FACILITATING CONDITIONS FOR POLICY CONSIDERATIONS (L02192) Sannegadu Rajesh, Erceg Aleksandar, Pudaruth Sharmila, Thanika Devi Juwaheer, Jovanka Damoska Sekuloska
18.45-19.00	BEYOND THE GREEN LABEL: ENTREPRENEURSHIP, GOVERNANCE, AND THE SUSTAINABILITY PARADOX - THE CASE OF BENGUERIR’S GREEN CITY (L02214) Najlaa Rachidi, Mouhcine Benaicha, Hicham Mouloudi
19.00-19.15	ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND EUROPEAN VALUES AS DRIVERS OF SUSTAINABLE INNOVATION AND DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION (L02171) Plotnic Olesea, Hămuraru Maria, Buzdugan Adriana
19.15-19.30	EVALUATING THE ROLE OF AGRICULTURAL SUBSIDIES IN AGRITOURISM DEVELOPMENT: A CASE STUDY FROM ALBANIA (L02130) Gecaj Merita, Grepcka Alketa, Malaj Mentor, Gjermizi Mirgjana
19.30-19.45	LEVEL OF DISASTER PREPAREDNESS OF LINDAWAN NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL (L02256) Almeqbali Muhammad Abdula F., We-eng Zynlee M., Abelao Ernilyn R., Cayapa Kyla Andrea K., Tariagao, Abigeil T., Wagacon, Reshel D.
19.45-20.00	COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND CITIZEN CONTRIBUTIONS TO SUSTAINABLE WASTE MANAGEMENT (SDG 12) IN GREECE, ITALY, SERBIA AND MOLDOVA (L02244) Mitoula Roido, Angelos Papavasileiou, Economou Agisilaos, Plotnic Olesea, Milosevic Isidora, Menshikova Maria

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4. 17.30-20.00	Session: “ Culture - Museums - Religious and Cities ” Chaired by Assoc Prof Astara Olga-Eleni and Prof Papaioannou Georgios (Room A1) (main building)
17.30-17.45	EVALUATING THE ROLE OF MUSEUMS ON CITIES’ SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: A COMBINED ANALYSIS OF ATHENS AND SINGAPORE (L02025) Metaxas Theodore, Koutsoumpela Alexandra
17.45-18.00	KmVert “URBAN RELIGIOUS ARCHAEOLOGY”: A SUSTAINABLE SOCIO-CULTURAL VISION FOR URBAN REGENERATION (L02027) Marcuccetti Andrea
18.00-18.15	WHICH FUTURE EXACTLY? JUSTICE AND SUSTAINABILITY IN AFROFUTURIST LITERATURE AND MODERN GREEK SPECULATIVE FICTION (L02131) Mousouli Rania
18.15-18.30	MARINE PARKS & CULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY: THE ROLE OF IONIAN AND SOUTH AEGEAN NATIONAL MARINE PARKS IN PROMOTING MARITIME CULTURAL HERITAGE AND ISLAND RESILIENCE (L02138) Rachiotis Theodoros, Poulaki Panoraia
18.30-18.45	MUSEUMS AND SUSTAINABLE GREEN DEVELOPMENT: THE CASE OF GREECE (L02159) Astara Olga-Eleni, Papaioannou Georgios
18.45-19.00	SUSTAINABLE CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH AN INTERPRETATIVE APPROACH WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE CLIMATE CRISIS - A MATHEMATICAL MODEL AND FIELD RESEARCH: THE CASE OF DELPHI (L02189) Karagiannis Georgios, Mitoula Roido
19.00-19.15	VALUING UNDERWATER CULTURAL HERITAGE AS A RESOURCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: A CASE STUDY OF BANTRY BAY HARBOUR (L02240) Valasiadi Eva
19.15-19.30	URBAN EXPANSION AND THE “OTHER” CITY IN CINEMA. THE URGENT NEED FOR A SUSTAINABLE CITY. (L02190) Chatzifragkios Makrydakis Konstantinos
19.30-19.45	PROPOSAL FOR A CULTURAL ROUTE IN THE RUSSIAN MONASTERIES OF MOUNT ATHOS (L02246) Tsogkas Konstantinos
19.45-20.00	Discussion

5. 17.30-20.00	Session: “ Promoting Sustainable cities ” Chaired by Prof Angelidis Minas and Dr Prof Koutsoumpas Leonidas (Room A2) (main building)
17.30-17.45	RETHINKING THE ECOLOGICAL NETWORK PROJECT CONSIDERING - NEW QUESTIONS RAISED BY URBAN COMPLEXITY (L02172) Carmen Angelillo, Martina Borini, Peraboni Carlo
17.45-18.00	THE CITY AS STAGE: SOCIALLY ENGAGED PERFORMANCES IN THE PUBLIC SPACES OF ATHENS (L02133) Linaki Eleni
18.00-18.15	THE CONTRIBUTION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT TO THE PROMOTION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT – THE CASE STUDY OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF AMAROUSSION AND OF THE SYGGROU FOREST (L02137) Sereti Evangelia - Paraskevi

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18-15-18.30	INTEGRATED URBAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGIES FOR CLIMATE RESILIENCE IN THE ATHENS METROPOLITAN AREA (L02139) Kampolis Dimitrios
18.30-18.45	WIDENING OF THE INTERMEDIATE BETWEEN THE HILL AND THE CITY: AS A CASE STUDY, THE CORRELATION BETWEEN PHILOPAPPOU HILL AND ANO PETRALONA (L02206) Ydraios Nikiforos, Koutsoumpos Leonidas
18.45-19.00	THE SPATIOTEMPORAL EVOLUTION OF URBAN PLANNING IN THE HISTORIC CENTER OF KAVALA: CONTEMPORARY REFLECTIONS (L02220) Samourkasidou Elena, Nastou Marina
19.00-19.15	ASPFALT-ART AS AN INNOVATIVE WAY FOR SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY (L02219) Samourkasidou Elena
19.15-19.30	THE PHYSIOGNOMY AND SUSTAINABILITY OF RAFINA CITY THROUGH STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVE (L02237) Samara Anna
19.30-19.45	ENVIRONMENTAL LIVING CONDITIONS IN URBAN CENTERS AND THEIR IMPACTS ON HEALTH: CASE STUDY OF THE ATTICA REGION (L02196) Derventi Maria, Mitoula Roido, Theodoropoulou Eleni, Karagianni Vilelmini
19.45-20.00	SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT CONDITIONS IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF MOSCHATOTAVROS, ATTICA, GREECE: SWOT ANALYSIS OF GEOGRAPHICAL, ENVIRONMENTAL, ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DIMENSIONS (L02247) Kochetkova Aleksandra

6. 17.30-18.45	Session: “ Tackling socio-economic inequalities and in-work poverty ” Chaired by Prof Papadakis Nikos and Lect Vlachadi Maria (Room A4) (main building)
17.30-17.45	LABOUR MARKET, SOCIO-ECONOMIC INEQUALITIES AND IN-WORK-POVERTY, IN MOMENTOUS TIMES: THE ROLE OF THE WELFARE STATE AND THE POLICY CHALLENGES FOR SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY(L02140) Papadakis Nikos, Tzagkarakis Stylianos-Ioannis
17.45-18.00	NEW TRENDS-TYPES OF MIGRANTS TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE CITES (L02151) Vlachadi Maria, Plougarlis Dimitrios
18.00-18.15	RETHINKING RESEARCH PARTICIPANT COMPENSATION IN URBAN SETTINGS: A SOCIAL EXCHANGE PERSPECTIVE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (L02160) Ahimbisibwe Osborn, AyebaleDan
18-15-18.30	THE ENVIRONMENTAL PHILLIPS CURVE: A CROSS-COUNTRY ANALYSIS OF UNEMPLOYMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION (L02164) Karsiotis Panagiotis, Adamopoulos Antonios, Maniatis Antonios, Irakleous Alexia
18.30-18.45	Discussion

7. 18.45-20.00	Session: “ ‘Social’ Architecture - Environment and Health ” Chaired by Prof Dimelli Despina and Asst Prof Poli Maria (Room A4) (main building)
18.45-19.00	DOES GENDER MATTER IN CONSPIRACY BELIEFS VACCINATION HESITANCY? EVIDENCE FROM COVID-19 VACCINATION IN UGANDA (L02159) Bacwayo Kukunda Elizabeth, Sebaggala Richard, Maractho Emily, Amaniyo Mercy, Mwije Solomon, Kemigisha Evas, Kobusingye Jacqueline, Cheremoi Clare

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19.00-19.15	NEIGHBOURHOOD PHARMACIES OF THE FUTURE: LOCAL NETWORKS FOR PERSONALIZED, 3D-PRINTED MEDICINES (L02197) Achillas Charisios, Vlachokostas Christos, Tsolakis Naoum, Koumpakis Dimitrios Aristotelis, Aidonis Dimitrios, Michailidou Alexia
19.15-19.30	ACCESSIBLE HOUSES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN GREECE: A CRITICAL VIEW (L02154) Poli Maria, Malagas Konstantinos
19.30-19.45	BIOMIMETIC, SUSTAINABLE, AND ACCESSIBLE ARCHITECTURE: A HOLISTIC DESIGN PARADIGM (L02155) Poli Maria, Malagas Konstantinos
19.45-20.00	Discussion

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12. 09.00-11.30	Session: “ Urban and Regional Sustainable Development ” Chaired by Prof Lalenis Konstantinos and Dr Econoou Agisilaos (Room A1) (main building)
09.00-09.15	OPEN-AIR CITIES OF DEAD (L02148) Polymenidis Yannis
09.15-09.30	RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS: AN ANALYSIS OF THE LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK GOVERNING ZONING, CONSTRUCTION, AND BUILDING REGULATIONS AND THEIR INTEGRATION INTO SPATIAL PLANNING IN GREECE -A COMPARATIVE OVERVIEW WITH OTHER EU COUNTRIES (L02153) Lalenis Konstantinos, Zygouri Foteini
09.30-09.45	ONTOLOGICAL TRANSFORMATIONS THROUGH THE WORK OF GIOVANNI BATTISTA PIRANESI (L02184) Katsanevakis Evangelos
09.45-10.00	PARTICIPATORY MAPPING AND ASSESSMENT OF LANDSCAPES THROUGH CROWDSOURCING: FROM UNIVERSITY EDUCATION TO CROSSCULTURAL CITIZEN SCIENCE (L02194) Ioannidis Romanos
10.00-10.15	BEYOND SHELTER: DISPLACEMENT AT THE THRESHOLD OF ECOLOGICAL CHANGE (L02200) Xirogiannis Maria, Kyriakidis Charalampos, Moraitis Konstantinos
10.15-10.30	MAIN WOOD SPECIES USED IN GREEK WOODCRAFT: A HISTORICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL STUDY (L02225) Ntalos George, Mitani Andromachi, Alexaki Pinelopi, Ntalos Paulos, Koutsianitis Dimitrios, Ninikas Konstantinos
10.30-10.45	TOURISM, CULTURE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE REGION OF BOEOTIA (L02146) Christou Dimitris
10.45-11.00	URBAN BUZZWORDS IN PRACTICE: RHETORIC, METHOD, AND THE POLITICS OF DIFFUSION (L02146) Vartholomaïos Aristotelis

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11.00-11.15	THE CONTRIBUTION OF CULTURAL ASSOCIATIONS AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES TO THE PRESERVATION AND PROMOTION OF THE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF A REGION. AS A CASE STUDY: THE MUNICIPALITY OF DORIDA (L02250) Chalioris Konstantinos, Roido Mitoula, Anastasia-Aspasia Gospodini, Maria Manola
11.15-11.30	NAVIGATING INTEGRATED PLANNING IN SMALL MUNICIPALITIES: LIMITATIONS, PATHWAYS FORWARD EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES. THE CASE OF DIDYMOTICHO. (L02255) Zountsa Stergiani, Skiadas V. Dimitrios

13. 09.00-11.30	Session: “ Tourism and Sustainable Development ” Chaired by Asst Em Panagiotis Patargias and Asst Prof Skoultzos Sofoklis (Room A2) (main building)
09.00-09.15	TOWARDS TO A NEW TOURISM MODEL ADJUSTMENT IN GREECE: SOME EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE FROM HOTEL EXECUTIVES (L02026) Metaxas Theodore, Andrios Meletios, Avlogiaris Konstantinos
09.15-09.30	CULTURAL TOURISM AS A CATALYST FOR SUSTAINABLE URBAN AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN GREECE (L02141) Kriga Mimika (Dimitra)
09.30-09.45	TOURISM MUNICIPALITIES IN SPAIN (L02142) Maniatis Antonios, Adamopoulos Antonios
09.45-10.00	TOURISM POTENTIAL OF INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE: A STUDY OF TOBACCO WAREHOUSES IN KAVALA, GREECE (L02176) Grigoriadou Maria– Alexandra, Kouveli Aikaterini
10.00-10.15	TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN CRETE: DELPHI EVALUATION OF PRIMARY SECTOR SYNERGIES AND REGIONAL PATHWAYS (L02185) Kritikos Antonis, Magoutas Anastasios, Chountalas T. Panos, Livieratos Antonis
10.15-10.30	CREATIVE TOURISM AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN MOUNTAINOUS GREECE: THE VOVOUSA FESTIVAL, THE NOWSTALGISM PROJECT, THE LAKE STEFANIADA FESTIVAL (L02202) Pelagidou Maria Argyro
10.30-10.45	FROM ATTACHMENT TO INDIFFERENCE: RETHINKING TOURIST–DESTINATION RELATIONSHIPS (L02223) Briana Maria
10.45-11.00	URBAN SPACE “ON THE MOVE”: EXPERIENTIAL AND DIGITAL ROUTES FOR THE 21th CENTURY TRAVELER (L02169) Moira Maria, Makris Dimitrios
11.00-11.15	SMILES AMONG THE RUINS AND CROWDS? RETHINKING TOURIST WELL-BEING AND HAPPINESS FOR SUSTAINABLE URBAN TOURISM IN ATHENS (L02203) Koliotasi Aigli, Karampela Sofia, Malesios Chrisovalantis, KizosThanasis
11.15-11.30	GEOTOURISM AS A TOOL FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT: THE CASE OF LAVREOTIKI’S GEOPARK (L02236) Mezantonakis Georgios, Skoultzos Sofoklis

14. 09.00-10.30	Session: “ Environmental Sustainability- Waste Management- Circular Economy ” Chaired by Prof Brzezińska-Rawa Anna and Prof Theodoropoulou Eleni (Room A4) (main building)
09.00-09.15	THE BOTTLE-NECK OF SUSTAINABLE GOVERNANCE: LEGAL AMBIGUITIES IN POLAND’S MUNICIPAL WASTE MANAGEMENT AND THE EPR-BASED DEPOSIT SYSTEM (L02134) Karpus Karolina

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09.15-09.30	BALANCING SUSTAINABILITY AND PERFORMANCE: COMPARING RECYCLED, BIO-BASED AND LOW-CARBON MATERIALS USING AHP (L02147) Zambujal-Oliveira João
09.30-09.45	CIRCULAR ECONOMY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT – EXAMPLES OF THE POLISH EXPERIENCE (L02165) Brzezińska-Rawa Anna
09.45-10.00	CIRCULAR BIOECONOMY TO SUPPORT THE GREEN TRANSITION IN INSULAR AREAS (L02201) Klontza Eleftheria, Lekkas Demetris-Francis
10.00-10.15	EXAMINING CIRCULAR ECONOMY BARRIERS, DRIVERS AND SPECIFICATIONS IN THE CONSTRUCTION SECTOR: KEY STAKEHOLDERS’ SURVEY (L02218) Oikonomou I. Theoni, Karytsas Spyridon, Karytsas Constantine, Theodoropoulou Eleni
10.15-10.30	EXAMINING THE “RETHINK” AND “REFUSE” CIRCULAR ECONOMY PRACTICES IN THE CONSTRUCTION SECTOR: RESULTS FROM A SURVEY FOCUSED ON YOUTH ACROSS SEVEN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES (L02222) Karytsas Spyridon, Oikonomou I.Theoni, Lima Ana Teresa, Mao Ruichang, Aloini Davide, Zerbino Pierluigi, Sánchez María Nuria, Moreno Helena López, Calvo Oscar Seco, Kostakis Ioannis, Dürr H. Hans, Sameer Husam, SimoesG. Sofia, Barbosa Juliana, Genovese Andrea, Guru Ram Venkataraman, Karytsas Constantine

15. 10.30-11.30	Session: “ Consumers and Sustainability ” Chaired by Prof Sardianou Eleni and Kostakis Ioannis (Room A4) (main building)
10.30-10.45	PERSUASIVE TECHNOLOGIES AND SUSTAINABLE CONSUMER BEHAVIOR: A BIBLIOMETRIC MAPPING OF RESEARCH TRENDS (2015–2025) (L02168) Achamnou G Panagiota, Sardianou Eleni, Kalantonis Petros, Kostakis Ioannis
10.45-11.00	LAST-MILE DELIVERY WITH DRONES IN AN URBAN ENVIRONMENT. EMPIRICAL STUDY ON CONSUMER PERCEPTIONS. (L02228) Darras George, Malindretos George, Kostakis Ioannis, Karametou Panagiota
11.00-11.15	MEASURING THE EFFECTS ON WELL-BEING, SELF EFFICIENCY AND EMPLOYABILITY OF VULNERABLE POPULATION GROUP AFTER IMPLEMENTING A PLATFORM FOR MENTORING (L02239) Spyridaki Aikaterini, Papadakaki Maria, Vassilakis Kostas, Markakis George
11.15-11.30	Discussion

18. 09.00-11.30	Pre-organised Special Session: “ Virtual cities ” and social sustainability in EU framework- Cultural, sociological and communication perspectives” Organised and chaired by Dr Bokolas Vassilis, Prof Vassilakou Tonia, Prof Colantoni Andrea, Assoc Prof Ferrigni Nicola, Prof Kaperonis Stavros, Assoc Prof Nosova Bogdana and Ntrouva Efi (Ceremony Hall) (New Library Building)
09.00-09.15	USER EXPERIENCE AND DIGITAL SKILLS IN VIRTUAL GAMIFIED ENVIRONMENTS: BETWEEN SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND EUROPEAN POLICY GUIDELINES (L02233) Kaperonis Stavros, Bokolas Vassilis
09.15-09.30	PRECARIOUS EMPLOYMENT IN THE GIG ECONOMY: UNVEILING THE EFFECTS OF WORK CONDITIONS ON THE HEALTH AND QUALITY OF LIFE OF MIGRANT FOOD DELIVERY WORKERS (L02229)

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	Theodoros Fouskas, Tonia Vasilakou, George Koulterakis, Charalambos Economou, Despoina Papadopoulou, Manos Spyridakis, Petros Galanis, Maria-Teresa Terron Caro, Zoran Lapov, Anastasia Papachristou, Maria Petraki, Athanasios Raptis, Anastasios Chondrogiannis, Panagiotis Zikas, Panagiotis Spiliopoulos, Sintorela Chamiti, Athanasios Stefanos, Alexandros Tziolas
09.30-09.45	VIRTUAL VULNERABILITIES AND REAL OBLIGATIONS: RETHINKING COMPENSATION PRACTICES IN DIGITALLY MEDIATED RESEARCH (L02224) Ahimbisibwe Osborn, Rozynska Joanna, Napakol Angella
09.45-10.00	VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENTS AND THE ELDERLY: RESEARCH, GOOD PRACTICES, AND TRAINING IN DIGITAL SKILLS IN THE EUROPEAN CONTEXT (L02232) Dimitrakopoulos Chris, Tsintari Elena
10.00-10.15	DIGITAL RELIGIOUS RHETORIC AND MEDIA LITERACY IN EUROPEAN CONTEXT: RESEARCH, GUIDELINES AND POLICY IMPLEMENTATION (L02238) MandrapiliasTasos, Zotou Danaï
10.15-10.30	DEVELOPING GREEN ENTERPRISE THROUGH INTEGRATED PCI-PGI GOVERNANCE AND DDCI EVIDENCE IN BAC NINH, VIETNAM (L02226) Trung-Luan Nguyen, Anh-Tai Do
10.30-10.45	THE INCLUSION OF INDIVIDUALS WITH NEURODEVELOPMENTAL DISORDERS IN THE CONTEXT OF SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT: EDUCATION, INFRASTRUCTURE, AND SOCIAL COHESION (L02231) Koundourou Christiana, Zerva Irini, Bonti Eleni
10.45-11.00	GREEN AND SMART CITY APPROACHES: INSIGHTS FROM SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA (L02235) Judith Irene Nagasha, Simon Peter Musinguzi, Anne Nakagiri, Bosco Bwambale
11.00-11.15	ROLE OF INTRAPRENEURSHIP IN THE ENTREPRENEURIAL ORIENTATION OF UNIVERSITIES (L02251) Ines Troshani, Dardane Nuka, Ketrina Mijo, Kebjana Haka
11.15-11.30	ERASMUS+ GREENO2 AND GAME4CHANGE PROJECTS: SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY, COMMUNICATION, AND A SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE (L02252) Andrea Colantoni, Bogdana Nosova, Nicola Ferrigni, Simona Fallocco, Giorgia Di Domenico, Leonardo Bianchini, Valerio Di Stefano
11.30-11.45	DIGITAL SERIOUS GAMES FOR CLIMATE CHANGE EDUCATION: RESEARCH DATA AND FINDINGS (L02253) Bokolas Vassilis, Hordecki Bartosz, Karametou Panagiota, Katerynych Petro, Kornieiev Vitalii, Lorek Artur, Marto Anabela, Mitoula Roido, Bogdana Nosova, Ribeiro Roberto, Rodrigues Nuno, Sakson-Boulet Anna, Silva Fernando, Tsimpoulis Giorgos, Katerina Tzika, Volobueva Anastasiia

11.30-12.00	Coffee Break
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20. 12.00-15.00	Session: “Education and Sustainable Development” Chaired by Prof Kaldi Stavroula and Dr Dologlou Maria (Room A1) (main building)
12.00-12.15	PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: EDUCATING ACTIVE CITIZENS FOR SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION (L02170) Tassi Alexandra, Rachiotis Theodoros, Adamakis Manolis
12.15-12.30	THE ROLE OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP IN FOSTERING INCLUSIVITY WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (L02174) Anargyrou Aikaterini

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12.30-12.45	TEACHER WELL-BEING AS A PILLAR OF EDUCATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY (L02181) Anargyrou Aikaterini
12.45-13.00	EDUCATION POLICY FOR SUSTAINABLE TRANSITION: STRATEGIES AT LOCAL AND REGIONAL LEVEL (L02180) Drakaki Maria, Papadakis Nikos
13.00-13.15	THE TEACHER AS AN AGENT OF CHANGE: EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY (L02188) Dologlou Maria, Mitoula Roido
13.15-13.30	PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH PRIMARY EDUCATION TEXTBOOKS. CASE STUDY: GREECE (L02191) Papadopoulou Kl. Vasiliki, Mitoula Roido, Kaldi Stavroula, Sardianou Eleni
13.30-13.45	PLAY & GAMES AS METHODS OF REGENERATIVE ARCHITECTURAL “EDUTAINMENT” (L02216) Mouzakitis Stavros

21. 13.45-15.00	Session: “ Local and Regional Cultural Development ” Chaired by Prof Maria Manola and Asst Prof Poli Maria (Room A1) (main building)
13.45-14.00	CULTURAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN THE HEROIC ISLAND OF PSARA (L02158) Manola Maria, Maniou Fotini, Poli Maria
14.00-14.15	IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF TRAVELLERS: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH TRAVEL TEXTS IN THE REGION OF LASITHI (L02175) Tsatalmpasoglou Anna-Irini, Koltsikoglou Georgios, Manola Maria, Mitoula Roido, Maniou Fotini
14.15-14.30	THE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF TENEDOS AS A DRIVING FORCE FOR LOCAL DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATIVE BUSINESS ACTIVITIES (L02182) Maniou Fotini
14.30-14.45	FROM STRATEGIC NAVAL BASE TO CULTURAL ASSET - THE MILITARY HERITAGE OF LEROS (L02182) Koltsikoglou Georgios, Tsatalbassoglou Anna Eirini, Manola Maria
14.45-15.00	SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ANCIENT GREEK THEATRE, THE CASE STUDY OF PHILIPPI (L02128) Nastou P. Marina Panagiota, Zerefos C. Stelios

22. 12.00-15.00	Session: “ Digital transformation and sustainable development ” Chaired by Assoc Prof Menshikova Maria and Assoc Prof Zamfir Natalia (Room A2) (main building)
12.00-12.15	SUSTAINABLE URBAN REGENERATION IN MEDITERRANEAN CITIES: URBAN PLANNING PERSPECTIVES ON DIGITALIZATION AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (L02167) Tsirigoti Dimitra, Kalemis Alexandros
12.15-12.30	TOWARD ETHICAL AND SOCIALLY GROUNDED DIGITAL SUSTAINABILITY: HUMAN-CENTERED TECHNOLOGY AND THE METAVERSE IN INDUSTRY 5.0 (L02179) Kalemis Alexandros
12.30-12.45	HR SPECIALIST PROFILE IN THE DIGITAL ECONOMY: EVOLUTION OF SKILLS AND ATTITUDES THROUGH A GENDER PERSPECTIVE (L02183) Menshikova Maria

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12.45-13.00	DIGITALIZATION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT PROCESS AS A TOOL FOR INTEGRATING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (L02177) Zamfir Natalia, Zamfir Pavel
13.00-13.15	TRANSFORMING TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS(TDR) INTO DIGITAL ASSETS: BLOCKCHAIN, SMART CONTRACTS, PROPERTY TITLES, AND THE REIMAGINED DIGITAL LAND BANK (DLB) (L02178) Christodoulou Dimitrios
13.15-13.30	AI AND THE DYNAMICS OF CREATIVE DESTRUCTION IN THE GREEN TRANSITION. AS A CASE STUDY THE MUNICIPALITY OF NEA FILADELFIA-NEA CHALKIDONA, ATTICA, GREECE. (L02234) Chronopoulou Georgia
13.30-13.45	ESPORTS AND SOCIAL STABILITY: MORAL VALUES AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES IN VIRTUAL CITIES (L02227) Choustoulakis Emmanouil, Maragos Fotios

23. 13.45-15.00	Session: “ Energy and Sustainable Development ” Chaired by Prof Kabassi Katerina and Kremlis George (Room A2) (main building)
13.45-14.00	UNIVERSITY-LED SOLAR ENERGY INITIATIVES IN SUPPORT OF SDG 7 AND SDG 13: A LITERATURE REVIEW (2015–2025) (L02173) Kaloutsia Maria, Kabassi Katerina, Martinis Aristotelis, Kaldellis K. John
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14.15-14.30	ENERGY TRANSITION, ENERGY MIX AND MARKET-BASED COMPLIANCE MECHANISMS FOR GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS MITIGATION: A COMPARATIVE REVIEW (L02215) Thomaidou Foteini
14.30-14.45	STUDENTS’ PERCEPTIONS OF GLOBAL WARMING CAUSES AND THEIR ENERGY FOOTPRINT TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY (L02221) Kougias Konstantinos, Sardanou Eleni, Tsagarakis Konstantinos
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24. 12.00-15.00	Session: “ Climate Change and Sustainable Development ” Chaired by Prof Ntalos Georgios and Karytsas Spyridon (Room A4) (main building)
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3rd Open-Air Cities International Conference “Local & Regional Sustainable Development and Urban Reconstruction”, Harokopio University of Athens, December 5-7, 2025

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15.00-16.00	Conference Lunch - Finger Food
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Delegates will soon receive an email regarding a special visit for Saturday, December 6th, from 16:00 to 20:00, to ‘The Ellinikon Exhibition Centre’ and ‘The Ellinikon Experience Park’. Your participation would be appreciated and confirmation for this visit is required. Please note that this visit is contingent on there being a minimum number of participants.

Closing of the Conference



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ABSTRACTS

Keynote Abstracts

URBAN SUSTAINABILITY: NOTES AND PARADIGMES ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL, CULTURAL AND POLITICAL IMPROVEMENT OF PLACE

Dr. Moraitis Konstantinos

Professor Emeritus, School of Architecture, National Technical University of Athens (N.T.U.A.)

mor@arsisarc.gr

Abstract

The proposals to be presented originate in a principally environmental prospect concerning the organization and the enforcement of the 'emerald necklace' of the Athenian metropolitan territory. They refer to the description of possible 'green porosity' of the Hellenic capital, to the way that an extended network of green urban corridors and parks could be organized. Nevertheless, this first organizational proposal may be invigorated by two additional ideas concerning a second project, a second proposal.

This second design effort referred to the need for active participation of the inhabitants of the Hellenic capital in a bottom-up approach to a dreamed environmental regeneration. An analogous approach was introduced in a diploma thesis in the School of Architecture N.T.U.A., a thesis under the irritating title 'Plato's Gardens,' concerning the organization of a collective urban agricultural area in the territory of Plato's Academy in Athens. This second paradigm clearly stated, besides its natural environmental accomplishment, that no landscape intervention in the Athenian territory could be historically and culturally neutral. This was a first additional crucial idea for our concept of the green Athenian porosity. On the contrary, analogous interventions could be culturally important and could present, moreover, nowadays, the possibility of multicultural references; this could be a second additional significant idea concerning the socio-cultural porosity of the Athenian territory. Plato's collective gardening area could thus be offered not solely to native Greek inhabitants but also to immigrants or refugees installed in the vicinity of the historical territory of Plato's Academy.

Throughout post-Renaissance and neoteric Western history, landscape proposals in urban or peri-urban contexts were scarcely restricted to limited environmental and 'functional' denotational value. They were also empowered by symbolic references concerning the cultural and political identity of the corresponding societies. Could we offer our present interventions analogous connotational meanings?

Key words: Green Athenian porosity, Plato's Academy, Plato's Gardens, collective urban agriculture, urban multi-cultural co-existence and collaboration, socio-cultural porosity.

MULTIDISCIPLINARY PARADIGMS BETWEEN SCIENCE AND POLICY. POSITIVE AND NORMATIVE APPROACHES FOR THE ANALYSIS OF COMPLEX ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS

Salvati Luca

Sapienza University of Rome, Italy

luca.salvati@uniroma1.it

Abstract

Cognitive systems in socioeconomic networks have strongly influenced the representation of complex system dynamics, highlighting the emergence of new structures centered on adaptive actors, local interactions, the development of poles of attraction, and increased innovation capacity. In a context of urban fragmentation, economic uncertainty, and changing social attitudes and political rules, regional systems have increasingly been viewed as open systems shaped by nonlinear dynamics involving anticipatory agents and emerging types of spatial units. Relatively low-level interactions between agents produce these new spaces at two main levels of observation: the morphological and functional levels, which emerge from citizen decisions and feedback interactions, and the spatial organization of economic activities, which reflects adaptive and competitive strategies and relationships between districts, municipalities, and individual areas. Relational issues complicate the evaluation of any regional system. Isolating the interactions between different levels of organization for measurement purposes appears to be a daunting task. However, the evolutionary trajectory of regional systems reveals, in many cases, some common patterns, including selection, cooperation, imitation, and adaptation to change. These models typically reflect self-organized development rather than behavior controlled by a central institution, even in the face of exogenous stresses (e.g., climate change), which impact their sustainability characteristics and resilience potential. This seminar discusses complex systems from a multidisciplinary perspective, providing concrete environmental and economic examples, and revealing—from an operational and planning perspective—how "complex thinking and acting" is useful not only for science but also for policy implications.

Keywords: Science and Policy, Complex Economic and Environmental Systems

INNOVATIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP AS A CATALYST FOR SUSTAINABLE PROSPERITY AND COMPETITIVENESS IN EUROPEAN CITIES AND REGIONS

Plotnic Olesea

Full law professor, Moldova State University

plotnicolesea.aum@gmail.com

Abstract

Innovative entrepreneurship represents more than a growth driver; it constitutes a key mechanism within the complex architecture of socio-economic and territorial transformation in the European Union. As urban and regional systems confront multidimensional challenges—including climate crisis, digital transition, demographic pressures, and deepening socio-economic inequalities—entrepreneurial ecosystems emerge as dynamic platforms for fostering sustainability, resilience, and inclusive prosperity. Anchored in the EU’s strategic frameworks such as the Green Deal, the Digital Strategy, and the Industrial Strategy, innovative entrepreneurship enables the co-creation of adaptive solutions through open innovation processes, multi-level governance, and cross-sectoral collaboration.

A critical analysis is offered on the role of innovative entrepreneurship as a transformative force shaping territorial competitiveness, sustainable prosperity, and systemic resilience. The discussion highlights how entrepreneurship interacts with regulatory frameworks, technological infrastructures, and cultural-educational systems to generate socio-technical transitions at the urban and regional level. Emphasis is placed on the interplay between innovation policies, sustainable development objectives, and the integration of EU values in local governance. By linking theory with policy practice, the analysis contributes to understanding how entrepreneurial ecosystems can accelerate green and digital transitions, support territorial cohesion, and advance the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, positioning European cities and regions as active agents of systemic change.

Key-words: Innovative Entrepreneurship; Socio-technical Transitions; Territorial Competitiveness; Resilience; Multi-level Governance; Entrepreneurial Ecosystems; Open Innovation; EU Policy; Green and Digital Transition; Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

ACHIEVING CLIMATE NEUTRALITY: STRATEGIES AND CHALLENGES IN THE ENERGY TRANSITION

Kremlis George

Honorary Director of the European Commission

Member of the Board of Directors of the European Public Law Organisation and Director of its Circular economy and Climate Institute, as well as Ambassador of the EPLO to Bulgaria.

Chair of the Bureau of the Espoo Convention & the SEA Protocol and of their MOPs

gkremlis@eplo.int

Abstract

The path to climate neutrality, requires an ambitious energy and green transition and a holistic circular economy strategy to reach net zero.

Achieving climate neutrality represents a profound systemic transformation that necessitates the decarbonization of energy production, industrial processes, and consumption patterns within an integrated socio-economic framework. The transition towards a net-zero economy entails both technological innovation and structural policy reform, aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions, while fostering sustainable growth. Within this context, the European Union (EU) has emerged as a global leader, embedding the objective of climate neutrality by 2050 into binding legislation through the European Climate Law and operationalizing it via the European Green Deal.

The EU's strategy emphasizes the acceleration of renewable energy deployment, enhancement of energy efficiency, and diversification of energy sources under the REPowerEU plan, designed to reduce reliance on fossil fuel imports and enhance energy security. Complementary initiatives, such as the Fit for 55 package, seek to align sectoral policies with intermediate emission reduction targets by 2030 and 2040. Investments in green hydrogen, battery storage technologies, and carbon capture and utilization (CCU/CCS) are central to addressing emissions in hard-to-abate sectors.

Moreover, the EU's Circular Economy Action Plan underpins the energy transition by promoting resource efficiency, waste minimisation, and sustainable product design, thereby reinforcing the decoupling of economic growth from environmental degradation. Nonetheless, the transition entails significant challenges, including uneven regional capacities, high capital requirements, and potential socio-economic disparities. To mitigate these, the Just Transition Mechanism and the Innovation Fund provide financial and technical support to vulnerable regions and emerging clean technologies.

Collectively, these measures illustrate the EU's comprehensive and multi-level governance approach to achieving climate neutrality, demonstrating how policy coherence, innovation, and solidarity can jointly drive the transformation toward a sustainable, low-carbon future.

Key words: Climate Neutrality, Energy Transition, EU's Circular Economy Action Plan

SCALING UP THROUGH COOPERATION: HOW VOLUNTARY AGGREGATION IN LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES SUPPORTS CIRCULAR ECONOMY GOALS

Giacomo Di Foggia

Asst. Professor, University of Milano-Bicocca, Department of Business and Law. Secretary general of CESISP Research Centre

Giacomo.difoggia@unimib.it

Ugo Arrigo

Professor, University of Milano-Bicocca, Department of Business and Law.

Ugo.arrigo@unimib.it

Massimo Beccarello

Professor, University of Milano-Bicocca, Department of Business and Law.

Masimo.beccarello@unimib.it

Abstract

One key challenge in the provision of local services is balancing efficiency and public governance. This paper explores how different organisational models can combine these two objectives in achieving sustainability goals. Focusing on municipal solid waste and water management, the study discusses the expected welfare gains from business integration and introduces a model of voluntary municipal aggregation centred on a public industrial operator. Such an approach enables scale-up processes, allowing small municipalities to enhance service quality, investment capacity, and coordination efficiency through collective organisation. The proposed framework clarifies the interplay between scale, control, and social welfare. Results confirm the benefits of scale and scope and highlight how innovative institutional solutions can align efficiency objectives with circular economy principles. This work contributes to the debate on local public service governance by linking industrial organisation, public control, and sustainability within an integrated analytical perspective, highlighting how aggregations can unlock investments otherwise unattainable in fragmented contexts, which are essential to achieving circular economy goals requiring adequate infrastructure and plant capacity.

Key words: Public governance, waste management, water management in-house providing, public economics, Circular economy.

EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: THE EXAMPLE OF THE “GREENCOMP SCHOOL” CURRICULA AND LEARNING MATERIALS

Kaldi Stavroula

Professor, University of Thessaly, Department of Primary Education

kaldi@uth.gr

Abstract

Education for sustainable development (ESD) empowers learners with knowledge, skills, values, and behaviors that support environmental, economic, and social dimensions of sustainability. Bibliometric reviews highlight a surge in ESD research since the 1990s, with notable growth after 2018, and call for greater attention to social sustainability themes. Recent studies advocate reconceptualizing sustainability education by embracing “degrowth” principles—focusing on ecological responsibility and equity—and emphasize critical, interdisciplinary pedagogies. ESD also fosters transformative learning through teacher development, digital inclusion, and community partnerships, reinforcing its role in policy integration and global citizenship education. To fully realize sustainable futures, ESD must continue evolving with empirical research, curriculum innovation, and inclusive, value-based approaches.

In line with the above the GreenComp School ERASMUS-EDU-2022-PI-FORWARD project was developed in response to the European Council's "GreenComp Framework," an initiative under the European Green Deal aimed at fostering sustainability competences among European citizens. Specifically targeting primary education, the project seeks to identify and promote sustainability competences tailored to the needs of primary school stakeholders. It introduces twelve competences grouped into four key areas, aiming to instill a sustainability mindset in schools. The project emphasizes the transferability of its outcomes across various educational contexts to enhance the sustainability performance of primary schools and other learning institutions. In support of the European Green Deal, GreenComp School offers a revised, field-tested model for primary education, along with flexible, interdisciplinary training programs for educators across sectors, including schools, higher education institutions, and vocational education and training (VET). It also provides micro-certification courses for teachers and encourages curriculum reforms to support the long-term implementation of sustainability education.

Key words: education, sustainable development, GreenComp school project

HISTORIC URBAN LANDSCAPES AND URBAN RESILIENCE: RETHINKING CULTURAL HERITAGE IN GREEK CITIES

Dimelli Despina

Professor, Technical University of Crete

ddimelli@tuc.gr

Abstract

The intersection of cultural heritage preservation and urban resilience is gaining renewed significance amid escalating environmental, social, and economic challenges. This paper explores how the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) approach can inform more integrated and adaptive strategies for managing cultural heritage in Greek cities. With their layered histories, dense built environments, and ongoing pressures from tourism, urbanization, and climate change, historic urban areas in Greece offer a compelling context for rethinking conventional heritage practices. The study critically examines the application of the HUL approach in Chania focusing on how it can enhance resilience through cross-sectoral governance, inclusive stakeholder participation, and the embedding of heritage values in urban planning.

Methodologically, the research combines spatial analysis, policy review, and qualitative data stakeholders. Findings suggest that despite a growing awareness of the importance of urban heritage in sustainable development, implementation remains fragmented due to institutional silos, limited community engagement, and the prioritization of short-term economic goals, particularly in tourist-driven locales. However, innovative practices are emerging, including participatory planning processes, adaptive reuse of historic buildings, and integration of heritage in resilience and sustainability agendas.

By aligning cultural heritage with the goals of urban resilience, the paper advocates for a paradigm shift in how historic urban areas are valued and managed. It concludes with recommendations for policy and practice that support the operationalization of the HUL approach in the Greek context, reinforcing the role of cultural heritage as a driver of inclusive, sustainable, and climate-resilient urban futures. The study contributes to broader debates on heritage-led urban transformation, particularly in Southern European and Mediterranean cities facing compound pressures.

Key words: Historic Urban Landscape (HUL), urban resilience, cultural heritage, Chania, participatory planning, sustainable urban development

OVERTOURISM AND BEYOND: TOURISM AND SUSTAINABILITY IN CITIES AND TERRITORIES

Angelidis Minas

*Professor Emeritus, National Technical University of Athens, School of Architecture,
Department of Urban and Regional Planning
angelimi763@gmail.com*

Abstract

Tourism has undoubtedly contributed significantly to the economic development and cultural prominence of many cities and territories. In recent decades, world tourism has grown at an accelerating rate, which has had considerable impacts on the economy, the society and the environment of the expanding tourist areas.

The increase in tourist flows (more pronounced during the last two years, that followed the covid period), created pressures that exceed any “capacity limits” of the reception areas. This has been explained at first in terms of city «overtourism» - characteristically intense in Venice but also intense mainly in cultural heritage zones of several cities of Southern Europe, including Athens. However, overtourism has also appeared in other, non-urban, areas - especially in coastal zones.

More severe tensions due to overtourism -expressed through the impressive rise of the Airbnb sector- concern housing; in particular, increase in rents for natives. Other important tensions include infrastructure (transportation, parking, health facilities) and changes in land use - at the expense of green spaces and areas with traditional building ensembles.

All this requires a broader, new approach for tourism - culture and cities / territories, aligned with the respective UN SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals).

It is more necessary to integrate the strategic priorities for tourism - culture and cities / territories into the overall planning of the latter, which should include objectives and measures to address the housing problem (primarily in cities, but not only in these), protect and promote cultural heritage and regulate other critical sectors.

The presentation will discuss in more depth both general proposals for the sustainable spatial planning of tourist zones as well as more specific proposals for the tourist zones of Athens.

Key words: Tourism, sustainable development, cities, Athens, European Union

FROM FORMA URBIS TO FORMA HORTO: BLUE-GREEN ROOFS AS THE NEW URBAN GROUND

Rodi Alcestitis

Professor, University of Patras, Department of Architecture
aprodi@upatras.gr

Abstract

In city centers—often urban palimpsests shaped by centuries of transformation—the pursuit of sustainable development and urban reconstruction must balance the ambition to maximise environmental and economic performance with the imperative to minimise social and cultural disruption, all while preserving built heritage. Central to this challenge is the reclaiming of nature-based systems through blue-green infrastructure within the urban fabric, marking a shift from *Forma Urbis*—a ‘stone-and-mortar’ conception of the city—to *Forma Horti*, an urban form emerging from nature and is interwoven with living ecological systems.

Achieving this transformation requires navigating spatial and aesthetic constraints, competing land uses, preservation mandates, and fragmented governance. Yet these same limits reveal opportunities for climate resilience. The presentation will demonstrate how overlooked urban surfaces—especially rooftops, the building’s “*fifth façade*”—can be repurposed as blue-green infrastructure to mitigate heat stress, manage stormwater, capture pollutants, support biodiversity, improve public health and create much-needed green spaces for citizens, while preserving architectural integrity and cultural identity.

Alongside technological and governance innovations, the presentation will draw on vernacular traditions that integrated blue-green aspects into the urban fabric. Building on this traditional wisdom, and combining contemporary design and governance, the presentation will explore culturally rooted, climate-responsive urban interventions, with Citizen Science as a key participatory tool for co-designing and evaluating their impact.

Key words: Blue-green roofs, nature based-solutions, citizen science, urban regeneration

HOUSING CRISIS IN POST-CRISIS ATHENS; INEFFECTIVE STATE POLICIES & THE POTENTIAL OF URBAN RENEWAL SCHEMES OF ABANDONED INDUSTRIAL SITES

Gospodini Aspa

*Professor of Urban Planning & Design, Department of Planning & Regional Development,
University of Thessaly, Volos, Greece.*

gospod@uth.gr

Abstract

Housing crisis emerged more intensively in Greek public debates during the last few years, concerning mainly Athens and the large Greek cities. Housing crisis is framed mostly as

- (a) an affordability problem in articulation to the broader cost of living and high energy prices, as opposed to low income of middle classes;
- (b) and more recently as a supply problem of the housing market – grounded in the reality that one out of four housing apartments are kept ‘closed’ by the owners for various reasons (high taxation, deceitful tenants, expensive renovation) .

The recent housing crisis has been fueled by other conditions, such as

- (c) Institutional investments in the housing market aiming at high rates of interest by means of short-leasing for tourists, given that the housing market in Greece is still considerably discounted in comparison with other EU countries;
- (d) foreign investments in housing by individuals outside EU looking for Greek ‘*Golden Visa*’;
- (e) foreign investments in housing by retired individuals of welfare countries searching for quality of life under the Mediterranean climate conditions;
- (f) foreign investments in housing by remote-working Nomads willing to establish in Greece for a short time-period.

Under all the above conditions, house prices in Greece have since 2017 recorded an annual increase of about 10% and registered a cumulative rise of 66.4% from 2017 to 2024.8 According to indexes provided by online real-estate advertisement platforms, rent prices also increased by more than 75% between 2015 and 2024. In 2023, housing prices in Greece have reached the level of the previous historical peak of 2007, when cheap mortgaged lending had contributed to their rapid escalation.

This presentation first criticizes the recent state policies to facilitate the problem, such as ‘*Sptiti mou 1*’, ‘*Sptiti mou 2*’, “*Public Sponsoring of Housing Renovation and Rent*”, et al. It then, evaluates the potential of urban renewal schemes of abandoned old industrial sites in central Athens and Piraeus, aiming at affordable housing mainly for young people. It presents successful examples of urban renewal schemes of abandoned old industrial sites in European cities, where redevelopment is supervised and controlled by the state. As opposed to this, there are emerging examples of urban renewal schemes of abandoned old industrial sites in central Athens and Piraeus, but they remain uncontrolled by state policies and exclusively motivated by international private investments and interests.

Keywords: Housing crisis, Athens, ineffective state policies, the potential of urban renewal schemes of abandoned old industrial sites.

SESSION

“Local and Regional Development – Economy - Entrepreneurship”

Chaired by Prof Olesea Plotnic and Angelos Papavasileiou

THE ADAPTATION INVESTMENT CYCLE: THE MISSING LINK FOR BRIDGING THE REGIONAL ADAPTATION GAP IN EUROPE

Dellis Konstantinos

Post-doctoral Researcher, Research Laboratory on Socio-Economic and Environmental Sustainability Athens University of Economics and Business; Sustainable Development Unit, ATHENA RC

kdellis@aueb.gr

Chourdaki Maria

Researcher, Sustainable Development Unit, ATHENA RC

m.chourdaki@athenarc.gr

Abstract

Europe, as the fastest warming continent, faces major climate risks with an annual adaptation finance gap of €15-64 billion (EEA, 2024; World Bank, 2024). Current funding relies heavily on public sources, highlighting the important and urgent need for private sector involvement (CPI, 2023). Regions and cities in the Eu and beyond face significant barriers in their effort to muster financial resources to translate high-level adaptation strategies into tangible projects to promote climate and socioeconomic resilience. The Adaptation Investment Cycle (AIC) developed in the HEU Pathways2Resilience project is a flexible six-step process designed to help cities and regions overcome the key barriers to financing climate adaptation by offering a structured, step-by-step approach that builds local capacity and bridges gaps between planning and implementation. The AIC works in parallel with the formation of the action plan, ensuring the choice of adaptation pathways reflects economic and financial viability, on top of urgency for cities and regions. This paper maps the steps and processes included in the AIC to the common adaptation finance barriers, namely economic, financial, awareness, behavioral, institutional and technological barriers. Furthermore, it highlights the distinct impact on both raising and leveraging financial capital to galvanize regional resilience and assesses a suite of innovative financial sources and instruments to cater to specific regional needs. We underline the importance of succinct frameworks for sub-national adaptation finance and contribute to the growing literature on levers of regional resilience.

Keywords: Adaptation Finance, Regional Resilience, Pathways2Resilience, Mission Adaptation

THE ROLE OF INTRAPRENEURSHIP IN THE ENTREPRENEURIAL ORIENTATION OF UNIVERSITIES

Troshani Ines

European University of Tirana
ines.troshani@uet.edu.al

Nuka Dardane

European University of Tirana
dardane.nuka@uet.edu.al

Cabiri Mijo Ketrina

European University of Tirana
ketrina.cabiri@uet.edu.al

Abstract

This study explores how intrapreneurship among academic staff contributes to the development of entrepreneurial orientation (EO) in higher education institutions (HEIs), with a focus on Albanian universities. Drawing on a mixed-methods approach that combines the HEInnovate self-assessment tool with in-depth qualitative interviews across six universities, the study provides a grounded, integrative perspective linking micro-level agency with macro-level institutional change. The findings reveal that intrapreneurship—defined as proactive, innovative actions by university members aimed at creating academic, social, or economic value—plays a central role in driving innovation in universities. Individuals who engage in intrapreneurial activities often navigate multiple institutional logics, balancing academic identities with entrepreneurial ambitions. These behaviors lead to the emergence of new programs, centers, partnerships, and funding mechanisms, which over time contribute to the structural evolution of universities into more entrepreneurial entities.

The study extends existing theories by showing that EO in HEIs is not uniform but dimension-specific, often shaped by contextual factors such as governance structures, incentive systems, and institutional culture. Public and private universities display different pathways to entrepreneurship, but across all cases, individual agencies remain a key driver of change. The research also contributes to identity theory by illustrating how intrapreneurial identities form gradually within academic settings, supported by leadership, peer recognition, and institutional support.

Managerial implications include the need for leadership to foster enabling environments, provide targeted incentives, and institutionalize bottom-up initiatives. At the policy level, the findings suggest that promoting entrepreneurial universities requires mechanisms that empower individual actors, not just structural reform. Overall, the study highlights that intrapreneurship is both a manifestation and a catalyst of entrepreneurial orientation in universities, particularly in resource-constrained and transitional contexts. By centering on individual agency within institutional change, the research offers new insights into how universities can adapt and innovate from within.

Key words: intrapreneurship, entrepreneurial orientation, entrepreneurial university

THE ROLE OF COACHING IN SHAPING LEADERS FOR A SUSTAINABLE WORLD

Dologlou Maria

Post -Doc Researcher, Harokopio University of Athens, School of Environment Geography and Applied Economics.

PhD in Leadership and Organizational Behavior - Psychology, Athens University of Economics and Business

mdologlou@hua.gr

Mitoula Roido

Professor, Dean, Harokopio University of Athens, School of Environment Geography and Applied Economics,

mitoula@hua.gr

Abstract

In an era marked by unprecedented environmental, social, and economic challenges, the demand for sustainable leadership has never been greater. Organizations across sectors are expected not only to deliver financial performance but also to integrate sustainability into their strategies and daily operations. This presentation explores how coaching can serve as a transformative process in shaping leaders who are equipped to address the complexities of a sustainable world.

Drawing upon the principles of coaching, such as active listening, powerful questioning, and reflective practice, leaders are guided to cultivate greater self-awareness, systemic thinking, and values-driven decision-making. These competencies are essential for aligning organizational priorities with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Through coaching, leaders learn to bridge the gap between personal purpose and organizational responsibility, creating strategies that balance profit, people, and planet.

The session will highlight practical approaches where coaching has supported executives and teams in embedding sustainability into corporate culture and leadership behaviors. Case insights and frameworks will illustrate how coaching can accelerate the adoption of sustainable practices, foster innovation, and enhance resilience in times of uncertainty.

Ultimately, coaching is positioned not merely as a tool for individual development but as a catalyst for systemic change. By empowering leaders to act with responsibility, inclusivity, and long-term vision, coaching contributes to shaping organizations that thrive in harmony with society and the environment. This presentation invites participants to reimagine coaching as a key enabler of sustainable leadership for the challenges and opportunities of the future.

Key words: Coaching, Sustainable Leadership, Sustainable Development Goals

COSMETOLOGY PRODUCTS AND SUSTAINABILITY: GREEK CONSUMER’S SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS

LezouVasiliki

MSc, Harokopio University of Athens, School of Environment, Geography and Applied Economics
silialezou@gmail.com

Karametou Panagiota

Ph.D. Member of the Laboratory Teaching Staff (E.D.I.P.) at Harokopio University of Athens, School of Environment, Geography and Applied Economics
karametou@hua.gr

Economou Agisilaos

Ph.D. National Technical University of Athens, Environmentalist
aghs@mail.ntua.gr

Mitoula Roido

Professor, Department of Economics and Sustainable Development, Harokopio University of Athens
mitoula@hua.gr

Abstract

Growing environmental degradation and social challenges have prompted both businesses and consumers to prioritize sustainability, encouraging environmentally and socially responsible practices across various industries. As a result, sustainability and ethical consumption have emerged as central areas in contemporary consumer research, attracting scholarly attention to the relationship between environmental awareness, social responsibility, and purchasing behavior. The cosmetics sector, as a dynamic segment of the global marketplace, exemplifies these challenges due to its ecological impact, ethical sourcing practices, and reliance on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives.

This paper examines the environmental and social attitudes and perceptions of Greek consumers in relation to cosmetology products, addressing an underexplored national context.

The study is based on a quantitative survey completed by 375 respondents aged 15–63, mostly living in the Attica region. Data were analyzed using Excel spreadsheets, with pivot tables, charts, and chi-square (χ^2) tests of independence applied to identify significant relationships.

The results demonstrate that while respondents recognize the importance of environmental and social issues, their purchasing choices are mainly shaped by practical factors such as product quality, effectiveness, and affordable prices. An important finding of the study is the clear gap between ethical attitudes and consumer behavior. Despite perceiving sustainable cosmetics as beneficial for both health and the environment, a substantial proportion of participants expressed reluctance to pay higher prices. Furthermore, the frequent uncertainty in responses points to limited consumer knowledge and insufficient corporate communication strategies. These findings highlight the need for cosmetic companies to enhance transparency, improve consumer education, and maintain affordable pricing, thereby fostering closer alignment between consumer values and market practices.

Keywords: cosmetology products, sustainability, environmental attitudes, social attitudes, consumers, Attica, Greece

THE GIG ECONOMY AND EMPLOYMENT CREATION IN THE DIGITAL ERA: EXPLORING THE OPPORTUNITIES AND FACILITATING CONDITIONS FOR POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Sannegadu Rajesh

Ph.D., Senior Lecturer, University of Mauritius, Faculty of Law and Management, Moka Mauritius
r.sannegadu@uom.ac.mu

Erceg Aleksandar

Ph.D., Full professor, Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek, Faculty of Economics and Business in Osijek, Osijek, Croatia
aleksandar.erceg@efos.hr

Pudaruth Sharmila

Ph.D., Senior Lecturer, University of Mauritius, Faculty of Law and Management, Moka Mauritius
sh.pudaruth@uom.ac.mu

Thanika Devi Juwaheer

Ph.D., Professor, University of Mauritius, Faculty of Law and Management, Moka Mauritius
roubina@uom.ac.mu

Jovanka Damoska Sekuloska

Ph.D., Associate professor, University of Information Science and Technology "St. Paul the Apostle" Faculty of Computer Science & Engineering Ohrid, North Macedonia
jovanka.damoska@uist.edu.mk

Abstract

Digitalization, supported by improved Information and Communication Technology (ICT), has drastically disrupted the nature of employment, shifting from the traditional long-term employment to stable employment and more recently towards short-term work arrangements, commonly known as the gig economy.

The gig economy has affected different sectors such as transport, hospitality, health care and education. In simple terms, the gig economy is characterized by short-term, flexible and digital platform mediated works. On the one hand, the gig economy creates job opportunities and the other hand it raises certain concerns about the job security, income level and employment rights. It is apparent that both the individual and the organization should be well prepared for the gig economy to operate effectively. The potential benefits of the gig economy will be undermined without mutual preparedness. While the individual should cultivate his mind set regarding the terms and conditions of the flexible work arrangements, organizations should develop short term work practices, different reward strategies and robust digitalization platforms to support the gig economy. With the rise of the gig economy (expected to reach USD2178.4 billion by 2034, Business Researchinsights, 2025), both the individual and organization are faced with a dilemma. The individual needs to reconcile stability and job security with job flexibility and autonomy while the organization, on the other hand, needs to find the right balance between a stable work arrangement and the need to reduce costs and promote innovation. While the gig economy is likely to grow, there is a pressing need to prepare both individual and the organization for its opportunities and challenges.

Therefore, the objective of the paper is to explore the policy implications of the gig economy by analyzing the opportunities and facilitating conditions. The conceptual paper contributes to a deeper understanding of how stakeholders can harness the potential of the gig economy for driving sustainable innovation and employment creation.

Key words: Digitalization, the gig economy, organizational factors, employment creation

BEYOND THE GREEN LABEL: ENTREPRENEURSHIP, GOVERNANCE, AND THE SUSTAINABILITY PARADOX - THE CASE OF BENGUERIR'S GREEN CITY

Najlaa Rachidi

PhD Candidate, National School of Architecture of Rabat, Morocco

najlaa.rachidi@e.enarabat.ac.ma

Mouhcine Benaïcha

Professor, National School of Architecture of Rabat, Morocco

m.benaïcha@enarabat.ac.ma

Hicham Mouloudi

Professor, National School of Architecture of Rabat, Morocco

h.mouloudi@enarabat.ac.ma

Abstract

Entrepreneurship is increasingly presented as a pillar of sustainable urban and regional development, promising innovation, socio-environmental alignment, and resilience. The Green City of Benguerir in Morocco attempts to embody this ambition through a variety of flagship initiatives. As a result, the city has gained visibility on national and international stages as a knowledge-based sustainability model.

This paper investigates how entrepreneurship is mobilized in urban sustainability agendas, how it operates across scales of governance, and the way it shapes the sustainability trajectory of an emerging city. We seek to extend current debates by adopting analytical induction as our methodological stance. Beginning with the hypothesis that entrepreneurship acts as a catalyst for sustainable urban transformation, the claim is tested and refined through two complementary tools: (i) critical discourse analysis of institutional documents, planning policies, and media outputs; and (ii) the design of an Entrepreneurial Governance Matrix, assessing alignment (or misalignment) of entrepreneurial narratives and practices across local, national, and global scales.

The findings reveal a multi-scalar paradox. At higher scales, the Green City of Benguerir is promoted as a flagship model of sustainable urbanism, drawing strength from certifications, strategic branding, and institutional entrepreneurship enhancing its territorial attractiveness and international visibility. At the local scale, however, this narrative faces significant limitations, raising questions about the actual social and environmental impacts of sustainability initiatives. Such asymmetries invite a more critical reading in which institutional and entrepreneurial strategies can strengthen or constrain urban sustainability depending on how they are governed and articulated across scales. For readers and practitioners, the intended benefit is twofold : a novel methodological framework focused on analyzing entrepreneurship in sustainable urban governance, and practical insights into how bridging global branding with local empowerment can help sustainable cities transcend performative models and advance resilient, equitable, context-sensitive transformations.

Key words: Sustainable City, Entrepreneurship, Urban Governance, Urban Sustainability, Territorial Development, Multi-Scalar Governance, Green City of Benguerir.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND EUROPEAN VALUES AS DRIVERS OF SUSTAINABLE INNOVATION AND DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Plotnic Olesea

Professor, PhDHabil, Moldova State University, Faculty of Law
plotnicolesea.aum@gmail.com

Hămuraru Maria

Associate Professor, PhD, Moldova State University, Faculty of Economic Sciences
maria.hamuraru@usm.md

Buzdugan Adriana

Associate Professor, PhD, Moldova State University, Faculty of Economic Sciences
adriana.buzdugan@usm.md

Abstract

Today, entrepreneurship can no longer be defined solely through financial metrics but must be framed within the context of the European Union's values, which establish its priorities and developmental directions. The EU's core values—democracy, rule of law, solidarity, inclusion, and sustainability—constitute essential pillars for shaping innovative and resilient entrepreneurial ecosystems. This paper examines entrepreneurship in practice through the perspective of these values, with particular focus on three strategic dimensions: sustainability, digitalization, and social impact.

Digitalization is analyzed in relation to EU policies that foster the transition toward a technology-driven, innovation-oriented, and highly connected economy. Sustainability is addressed within the framework of the European Green Deal, circular economy principles, and the obligation for companies to integrate ESG criteria into their business models. Social impact is examined in the context of advancing equal opportunities, diversity, and corporate social responsibility, which increasingly serve as criteria for competitiveness and legitimacy in the European marketplace.

The study is grounded in an evaluation of EU policies, recent reports (such as the European Innovation Scoreboard and the Global Innovation Index), and case studies from Member States that have successfully embedded EU values into their entrepreneurial strategies. The findings emphasize that EU values function as strategic instruments that stimulate innovation, foster sustainable value creation, and enhance economic resilience in the face of global challenges, rather than serving merely as normative principles. At the same time, the Republic of Moldova and other Eastern Partnership countries have the opportunity to harness these directions to recalibrate their entrepreneurial ecosystems in line with European standards and to strengthen their global competitiveness.

Key words: innovative entrepreneurship; European values; digitalization; sustainability; social impact; circular economy; economic resilience

EVALUATING THE ROLE OF AGRICULTURAL SUBSIDIES IN AGRITOURISM DEVELOPMENT: A CASE STUDY FROM ALBANIA

Gecaj Merita

PhD, Agriculture University of Tirana
mgecaj@ubt.edu.al

Grepcka Alketa

Associated Professor, Agriculture University of Tirana
agrepcka@ubt.edu.al

Malaj Mentor

Msc, Agriculture University of Tirana
mentor.malaj@yahoo.com

Gjermizi Mirgjana

Msc, Agriculture University of Tirana (PhD candidate)
mirgjana.gjermizi@gmail.com

This study explores the impact of Albania’s national agricultural funding schemes on the development of the agritourism sector, using a qualitative, exploratory case study approach. The research focuses on up to 40 representative agritourism farms, employing semi-structured interviews with owners and managers, complemented by document analysis of funding applications and related materials. Thematic coding and cross-case synthesis are used to assess the effects of subsidies on farm expansion, productivity, sustainability practices, and overall business performance. Findings indicate that financial support has contributed to improvements in infrastructure, service quality, and operational resilience. However, systemic barriers—such as bureaucratic inefficiencies, limited access to information, and inconsistent funding flows—hinder the full realization of these benefits. The study highlights the importance of streamlining administrative processes and implementing targeted policy interventions to enhance the effectiveness of public investment in agritourism and supporting broader rural development goals.

Key words: role of subsidies, agriculture, rural tourism, rural development

LEVEL OF DISASTER PREPAREDNESS OF LINDAWAN NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL

Almeqbali, Muhammad Abdula F.

Lindawan National High School
matamisnatalong@gmail.com

We-eng, Zynlee M.

Lindawan National High School
zynleeweengg@gmail.com

Abelao, Ernilyn R.

Lindawan National High School
ernilynabelao50@gmail.com

Cayapa, Kyla Andrea K.

Lindawan National High School
andreakyla553@gmail.com

Tariagao, Abigeil T.

Lindawan National High School
abvyang3@gmail.com

Wagacon, Reshel D.

Lindawan National High School
reshelwagacon9@gmail.com

Abstract

Disaster preparedness is the active process of planning, organizing and preparing people, families, community and institutions to respond to and recover. The main purpose of this research is to determine the students' level of preparedness, the benefits they gain, and their knowledge about disaster readiness. This study used a quantitative descriptive research design with 130 respondents selected through stratified random sampling at Lindawan National High School. The findings show that the overall weighted mean for the level of disaster preparedness is 3.10, indicating that students are well-prepared. The benefits of disaster preparedness obtained an average weighted mean of 3.17, which suggests that it is often beneficial for the students. Meanwhile, the knowledge on disaster preparedness has an average weighted mean of 3.0, meaning the students are often knowledgeable. In conclusion, Lindawan National High School provides proper evacuation procedures, first aid kits, and seminars to ensure student safety. The researchers recommend that barangay officials continue organizing seminars and awareness activities to further strengthen students' preparedness.

Keywords: Disaster preparedness, knowledge on disaster preparedness, awareness

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND CITIZEN CONTRIBUTIONS TO SUSTAINABLE WASTE MANAGEMENT (SDG 12) IN GREECE, ITALY, SERBIA AND MOLDOVA

Mitoula Roido

Professor, Department of Economics and Sustainable Development, Harokopio University of Athens, Greece

mitoula@hua.gr

Angelos Papavasileiou

Ph.D Harokopio University of Athens, Civil Engineer, Greece

aggelos.papavassiliou@gmail.com

Economou Agisilaos

Ph.D NTUA, Environmentalist, National Technical University of Athens, Greece

aghs@mail.ntua.gr

Plotnic Olesea

Full Professor of Moldova State University, Republic of Moldova

plotnicolesea.aum@gmail.com

Milosevic Isidora

Full Professor, University of Belgrade, Serbia

imilosevic@tfbor.bg.ac.rs

Menshikova Maria

Associate Professor, Universitas Mercatorum, Italy

maria.menshikova@unimercatorum.it

Abstract

The present paper coordinates a four-country comparative study on SDG 12 (waste management) that deliberately privileges flexible, qualitative, and practice-based evidence, complemented where available by secondary statistics. The paper pursues two fully independent, parallel outputs:

1. Institutional/Policy paper comparing legal frameworks, multi-level governance, implementation capacity, EU alignment, and funding mechanisms in Greece, Italy, Serbia, and Moldova.

2. Citizen/Practices paper comparing public engagement, NGO initiatives, municipal programs, and local case studies that enable (or hinder) waste prevention, separate collection, and recycling.

The paper will harmonize country profiles via a common template, ensure comparability through shared definitions and inclusion criteria, and run a light quality-assurance loop (triangulating policy documents, municipal reports, NGO outputs, and academic literature).

Keywords: cosmetology products, sustainability, environmental attitudes, social attitudes, consumers, Attica, Greece

SESSION

“Culture – Museums – Religious and Cities”

**Chaired by Assoc Prof Astara Olga-Eleni and
Prof Papaioannou Georgios**

EVALUATING THE ROLE OF MUSEUMS ON CITIES' SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: A COMBINED ANALYSIS OF ATHENS AND SINGAPORE

Metaxas Theodore

Professor, Department of Economics, University of Thessaly, Greece
metaxas@uth.gr

Koutsoumpela Alexandra

Researcher, Department of Economics, University of Thessaly, Greece
akoutsoumpela@uth.gr

Abstract

The role of culture in the sustainable development of cities is undisputed, which is why Europe is oriented towards cultural tourism as a means of fostering tourism development and differentiating it as a competitive global product. Culture has a profound impact on the formation of individual identity and "culture uniqueness" of a given society. The evaluation of "cultural-economic" goods takes place in a multidimensional socioeconomic framework. In social terms, the main benefits are the social inclusion of diverse groups, the promotion of social unity, the development of diversity, the encouragement of productivity and originality, and finally, the enhancement of national cultural identity. From an economic perspective, cultural industries have a significant impact on the national GDP, gross added value, and the reduction of unemployment. At the same time, they contribute to improving the balance of payments, fostering competitiveness, and attracting businesses and investors. To this effort of cities to foster their regeneration or reconstruction, museums were an important component of culture to the development of places.

Based on our main hypothesis, regarding the major importance of culture on cities multidimensional development and in particular to role of museums, this paper, aims to examine, the dynamic connection between the role of museums and the viable development of cities as well as the salience of this interdependence. Using qualitative approach, through a combined analysis (case study, content and comparative) we examine social, economic, cultural, technological, and environmental criteria as a framework, aiming to elucidate and highlight the significance of implementing cultural policies for the sustainable development of cities in contemporary globalized societies. The correlation under investigation is revealed by evaluating and comparing the Acropolis Museum, in Athens and the Art Science Museum, in Singapore.

Keywords: museums; cultural policy; sustainable development; museum contribution; creative cities, combined analysis

KmVert “URBAN RELIGIOUS ARCHAEOLOGY”: A SUSTAINABLE SOCIO-CULTURAL VISION FOR URBAN REGENERATION

Marcuccetti Andrea

Architect Phd, Adjunct professor School of Architecture Planning e Design – SAP+D Mohammed VI Polytechnic University Rabat, Maroc

andreamarcuccetti@hotmail.com

As part of the urban development project “Km Vert”, an intriguing area of investigation is Urban Religious Archaeology, which examines the transformation of sacred spaces in contemporary cities within broader socio-cultural change and urban regeneration processes. The focus lies on disused religious sites—primarily churches no longer active in liturgical functions—which have become symbols of a transition from traditional religiosity toward new forms of collective identity and spatial belonging.

While industrial ruins are often effectively reused and integrated into the urban fabric, sacred spaces present more complex challenges. Their symbolic and emotional significance, rooted in historical and community identity, can generate tensions—intensified by the acceleration of digital communication and the fragmentation of urban experiences.

The phenomenon of religious archaeology includes both abandoned churches still under the traditional ecclesiastical administration and newly built sacred spaces that often lack vitality or cultural relevance in today’s society. A critical reinterpretation of these places is proposed, one that moves beyond conventional spatial logic and promotes their integration into unusual urban contexts—such as shopping centers, green infrastructures, or hybrid community spaces—capable of fostering new forms of social interaction.

This approach calls for a paradigm shift in architectural design and urban planning, where the reuse or transformation of religious spaces becomes part of a broader strategy for inclusive and sustainable urban regeneration. Demolition or repurposing must be approached with care, balancing preservation, innovation, and social cohesion.

Finally, the concept of a “biological standstill” is introduced—a deliberate pause in the design process aimed at redefining the relationships between clients, architects, and communities. This reflective interval can foster new cultural production models, reactivating religious heritage as a living resource within the evolving identity of the contemporary city.

Keywords: Urban, archaeology, urban regeneration, sacred, cultural place, religion, Km Vert

WHICH FUTURE EXACTLY? JUSTICE AND SUSTAINABILITY IN AFROFUTURIST LITERATURE AND MODERN GREEK SPECULATIVE FICTION

Mousouli Rania

*Dr. of Comparative Literature, Scientific Collaborator, Systems Security and Data Science
Institute, University of Thessaly*
raniamoussouli@yahoo.fr

Abstract

In the words of Professor John Robinson: "when we talk about sustainability we are talking about the future, how things could be. This is the landscape of imagination. If we can't imagine a better world we won't get it." Literature and especially Speculative Fiction gives form to the landscape of imagination. As such, investigating works of speculative fiction can provide new ideas, help identify potential challenges and expand the boundaries of what is possible.

This paper will examine how justice in relation to sustainable development is portrayed in Afrofuturist literature and Modern Greek Speculative Fiction. Recent Greek literature, including Speculative Fiction, often engages with themes shaped by Western experience and contemporary national issues like economic instability and immigration. Afrofuturism, conversely, regularly imagines technologically advanced societies that confront racial equality, and the legacies of colonialism. However, despite their different cultural and historical contexts, both genres demonstrate concerns on social issues, the dynamics of political power as well as the search for a fairer and more sustainable world.

By using a comparative approach the paper examines selected representative examples of both dystopian and utopian futures, to reveal the universality of these issues as well as the need to reform and rehabilitate existing structures through a more sustainable lens. The analysis unveils the beneficial role of literature as a cultural and educational product that can inspire social change. The study of such works can thus contribute meaningfully to the collective movement toward a more just and equitable future.

Key words: justice, Speculative Fiction, Afrofuturism, future

MARINE PARKS & CULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY: THE ROLE OF IONIAN AND SOUTH AEGEAN NATIONAL MARINE PARKS IN PROMOTING MARITIME CULTURAL HERITAGE AND ISLAND RESILIENCE

Rachiotis Theodoros

PhD Candidate

Department of Physical Education and Sport Science

National and Kapodistrian University of Athens

theorax@phed.uoa.gr

Poulaki Panoraia

PhD, Lecturer

Department of Economics and Management of Tourism

University of the Aegean

panoraia@aegean.gr

Abstract

This study investigates the contribution of the Ionian and South Aegean National Marine Parks to the promotion of maritime cultural heritage and the sustainable development of island regions. Traditionally perceived as environmental protection zones, marine parks are increasingly recognized as strategic spaces for the integrated preservation of both natural and cultural capital, especially in island ecosystems vulnerable to climate change. The research is grounded in a multidisciplinary theoretical framework that combines cultural ecology, sustainable cultural tourism, and resilience studies. It draws on critical analysis of official management plans, legislative frameworks, and interpretative strategies that frame marine parks as hybrid infrastructures, simultaneously ecological, educational, and cultural.

The literature review highlights successful international cases where protected marine areas contribute not only to biodiversity conservation but also to the transmission of intangible heritage, such as traditional navigation, mythologies, local coastal rituals, and vernacular seascapes. Particular emphasis is given to the role of marine parks in supporting place-based narratives and fostering eco-cultural tourism as a vehicle for economic revitalization and intergenerational learning. Expected outcomes of the study include the identification of best practices for embedding cultural dimensions into marine spatial planning and the proposal of policy recommendations that position marine parks as drivers of green, inclusive, and culturally informed island development. In the context of the climate crisis, this approach underlines the importance of integrating cultural sustainability into regional resilience strategies.

Keywords: marine parks, cultural heritage, island sustainability, climate resilience, maritime identity.

MUSEUMS AND SUSTAINABLE GREEN DEVELOPMENT: THE CASE OF GREECE

Astara Olga-Eleni

Associate Professor, University of West Attica, School of Administrative, Economics and Social Sciences, Department of Tourism Management
oaastara@uniwa.gr

Papaioannou Georgios

Professor, Ionian University, School of Information Science and Informatics, Department of Archives, Library Science and Museology
gpapaioa@ionio.gr

Abstract

The relationship between museums, sustainable development, and green development is complex and multidimensional, underscoring the role of museums as institutions with distinct social, cultural, and educational responsibilities. Within the broader framework of sustainable development, museums are increasingly aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly those addressing social inclusion, economic viability, and environmental responsibility. In parallel, the concept of green development emphasizes the need for museums to actively reduce their ecological footprint by adopting practices such as energy efficiency, renewable energy integration, sustainable construction methods, and waste reduction strategies. Climate change further intensifies the urgency of these commitments. On the one hand, museums face direct risks from extreme weather events, rising global temperatures, and the gradual deterioration of cultural heritage assets. On the other hand, museums possess a unique capacity to contribute to climate change awareness by interpreting scientific knowledge, translating it into culturally resonant narratives, and engaging diverse audiences in dialogue and collective action.

This paper presents the preliminary results of an ongoing research project that investigates current realities and prospects of the relationship between museums and sustainable green development in Greece. Methodologically, the study relies primarily on semistructured interviews with key stakeholders, including individuals and institutional representatives. It is conducted as a collaborative initiative between the University of West Attica and the Ionian University. Early findings suggest that the Greek case demonstrates an intersection of environmental, social, economic, and cultural dimensions, all of which influence how museums address sustainability and green development. The research further highlights the need for institutional reform and open, inclusive dialogue aimed at developing coherent strategies and policies. Ultimately, the study argues that museums can act as mediators between science, policy, the economy, and society, adopting a future-oriented stance that promotes resilience and fosters environmentally conscious communities.

Keywords: Museums, Sustainable Development, Green Development, Climate Change, Cultural Heritage, Environmental Responsibility, Social Awareness

SUSTAINABLE CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH AN INTERPRETATIVE APPROACH WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE CLIMATE CRISIS - A MATHEMATICAL MODEL AND FIELD RESEARCH: THE CASE OF DELPHI

Karagiannis Georgios

PhD Candidate, Harokopio University of Athens, School of Environment, Geography and Applied Economics

georgkar87@yahoo.com

Mitoula Roido

Professor, Harokopio University of Athens, School of Environment, Geography and Applied Economics

mitoula@hua.gr

Abstract

Sustainable cultural development is not merely a “goal” for a city or a region; it constitutes a fundamental element of mediation between memory, history, the economy, and the environment. The theoretical approach, together with the empirical cultural orientations of this study, takes into account the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as the “Faro Convention,” through which states commit to safeguarding cultural heritage and citizens’ rights of access and participation, while UNESCO’s policies on the sustainable management of World Heritage monuments are also imposed.

Delphi is one of the World Cultural Heritage Monuments recognized for its high aesthetic value, universal historical significance, and outstanding artistic importance, as the center of the ancient world where the Temple of Apollo and the sanctuary of oracles were located. It is noteworthy that for nearly a thousand years Delphi hosted rulers, emperors, and ordinary people who flocked to the site seeking guidance and the power of the god’s priestess.

From our investigation of the Delphic landscape, it is acknowledged as both a common and contested good, requiring further interdisciplinary methods of protection and participatory management. In this context, Delphi offers an exceptional opportunity to link culture with environmental protection and sustainable cultural regional development.

In brief, the Delphic landscape is not limited to the archaeological site but extends to the broader cultural ecosystem, stretching from the steep foothills of Mount Parnassus to the Pleistos valley and the historic olive grove of Amfissa, reaching the maritime gateway of Itea and the naval past of Galaxidi. The interaction of these elements shapes a unified cultural geography in which cultural heritage may serve as a catalyst for inclusive, green, and sustainable cultural development.

Therefore, in this study, the promotion of Delphi constitutes a comprehensive paradigm of sustainable regional development policy, in which culture interweaves with nature, the knowledge economy, social cohesion, and respect for the ecological limits of local communities. At the same time, Delphi is among the most emblematic cultural landscapes of the planet, where history, ancient memory, the natural environment, and contemporary socio-economic dynamics interact within a complex web of spatial, cultural, and environmental relations. In this regard, an attempt is made to develop a holistic model in which culture could function as a driver of sustainable cultural development, a “living laboratory of cultural heritage.”

Furthermore, the analysis encompasses historical, geophysical, and climatological elements, as well as current challenges (climate change, seismicity, carrying capacity,

seasonality of demand, and infrastructure pressures). Critical questions are raised as to whether Delphi, through strategic interventions and dynamic management practices, could overcome the climate crisis.

Simultaneously, this research outlines a set of fundamental principles governing sustainable cultural development, aiming to enable green transition management toward sustainable growth, social cohesion, and the well-being of local residents within a diachronic model shaped by the climate crisis. To this end, both a mathematical model and field research were employed.

Keywords: Delphi, UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Site, climate change – crisis, mathematical model, field research, sustainable cultural development

VALUING UNDERWATER CULTURAL HERITAGE AS A RESOURCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: A CASE STUDY OF BANTRY BAY HARBOUR

Valasiadi Eva

Master’s student at Harokopio University of Athens

evavalasiadi1994@gmail.com

Abstract

Beneath the waters of Bantry Bay lies a rich and largely unexplored maritime landscape where history, culture, and nature intersect. This study foregrounds the significance of maritime cultural heritage—particularly underwater cultural heritage (UCH)—as a vital resource for sustainable development and community well-being. Under the UNESCO 2001 *Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage*, UCH encompasses traces of human existence with cultural, historical, or archaeological value that have remained underwater for at least 100 years, including shipwrecks, submerged settlements, and maritime landscapes.

Focusing on Bantry Bay Harbour, this research examines the cultural and ecological importance of local UCH sites such as the *La Surveillante* shipwreck, exploring their potential integration within a Marine Protected Area (MPA) framework. The study investigates how such protection could simultaneously promote marine biodiversity, heritage conservation, and sustainable tourism, while fostering community participation and the intentional creation of new heritage sites by contemporary actors.

Grounded in international frameworks such as UNESCO’s 2001 Convention and the ICOMOS Principles, and informed by successful models from southern Europe (Pérez-Reverte Mañas et al., 2021; Koutsi & Stratigea, 2019), the research situates Irish UCH within the broader Blue Economy and socio-ecological systems (Kyvelou & Chiotinis, 2022). While prior Irish studies have emphasized shipwrecks as vessels of cultural memory (Delaney, 2018) or focused on legal mapping and protection (Kelleher et al., 2025), little attention has been given to their socio-economic, ecological, and tourism potential. This study addresses that gap by proposing an integrated evaluation of Bantry Bay’s underwater cultural heritage as both a heritage asset and a driver for sustainable local development, environmental stewardship, and community engagement.

Keywords: sustainable development, underwater cultural heritage, sustainable tourism, marine protected areas, Blue Economy

URBAN EXPANSION AND THE “OTHER” CITY IN CINEMA. THE URGENT NEED FOR A SUSTAINABLE CITY.

Chatzifragkios Makrydakis Konstantinos

Ph.D NTUA, Urban and Spatial Planning Engineer, National Technical University of Athens, Greece

conhatzi@gmail.com

Abstract

Since 2008, the global urban population has exceeded the rural population for the first time in human history. Urban sprawl and the population movements it entails, are gradually eliminating any meaning of dipoles such as city-countryside or center-periphery, which were developed in an effort to understand space. Urbanized space extends to infinity and disappears on the horizon, while slums have become a reality that is fully integrated into ever-expanding megacities.

The reality of the “other” city as a social symptom, as well as, an urban experience, was captured on film. The choice was primarily spatial, as a shot of the slums can raise our awareness much more than any political declaration. Starting from the neorealism of harsh everyday life, it focuses on recording poverty, on protest, and social analysis, combining fiction with documentation and social recording in aesthetic terms. Ultimately, connecting emotion with reflection, energy with consciousness. After all, cinema does not have the right to ignore life; it must see, hear, and question...

Camera records, in a process of re-sensitization, the relationship between residents and the urban environment of the slum. The urban image interacts with the city passerby, developing a dialectical relationship between image and movement, where each sequence of images becomes an object of reflection. This is a reflective cinema, marking the transition from the aesthetic of poverty to the aesthetic of dream, the only right that cannot be denied. Nowadays, migration, economic and humanitarian crises, as well as the recent pandemic, constitute the social dynamic of the city, which determines cinematic writing. Cinema, as an art in motion, captures urban life in its dynamic unfolding, highlighting the social phenomena that constitute this dynamic for a sustainable city.

Keywords: urban expansion, “other” city, sustainable, cinema, reflection

PROPOSAL FOR A CULTURAL ROUTE IN THE RUSSIAN MONASTERIES OF MOUNT ATHOS

Tsogkas Konstantinos

MSc "Sustainable Development"

ktsongas@msn.com

Abstract

Cultural routes are one of the most popular categories of the tourism industry and are enjoying rapid growth. The role of cultural routes is very important, on the one hand for the management of the cultural heritage of a place and on the other hand for their connection with the tourism sector. They seem to guarantee specific results and promise successful tourism development while seeing them as complex cultural products, they can add value to each local culture by transforming local historical-cultural elements into a set of networks of economic resources.

Cultural Routes are emerging today as an important management and useful tool for the promotion of cultural resources and the further promotion of cultural tourism in a region. Through a marked route, the visitor could experience the history and culture of the area and get to know its special physiognomy.

The present paper refers to the Russian monasteries of Mount Athos and comes up with a specific proposal for a cultural route, which is depicted on a map. The approach to the cultural points of the area is based on the criterion of the concentration of the specific monuments in a geographically limited area and the peculiarity of the Russian influence both in the architecture of the buildings and in the liturgical, religious and daily life of the monastic brotherhoods that live today in these monuments.

Keywords: Cultural routes, cultural characteristics, cultural heritage, Mount Athos, Monasteries, Russia, religious tourism

SESSION

“Promoting Sustainable Cities”

Chaired by **Prof Angelidis Minas** and
Dr Prof Koutsoumpas Leonidas

RETHINKING THE ECOLOGICAL NETWORK PROJECT CONSIDERING - NEW QUESTIONS RAISED BY URBAN COMPLEXITY

Carmen Angelillo

Research Fellow, Politecnico di Milano, Department of Architecture and Urban Studies (DASStU), Italy

carmen.angelillo@polimi.it

Martina Borini

Research Fellow, Politecnico di Milano, Department of Architecture and Urban Studies (DASStU), Italy

martina.borini@polimi.it

Peraboni Carlo

Professor, Politecnico di Milano, Department of Architecture and urban studies (DASStU), Italy

carlo.peraboni@polimi.it

Abstract

Discussing environmental integrity and continuity in a constantly evolving and transforming territorial context is now essential for promoting sustainable territorial development oriented towards ecological transition.

While countering the fragmentation of natural spaces and ecosystems, reducing diffuse naturalness and preserving biodiversity levels remain essential conditions, today a further step forward is required in territorial planning and ecological network design to promote ecosystem services, limit or mitigate the effects of climate change and respond to the new needs of the community.

The opportunity to experiment with an integrated and complex approach brought to light the need, felt by our research group, to re-read and re-interpret the constituent elements of the ecological network project in an innovative way.

This need has also become evident considering the interest shown by the municipal administration of Mantua in revising the territorial governance instrument (PGT) and the ecological network plan, currently in force since 2012.

The research is proposed as an exploratory and experimental activity aimed at verifying, fifteen years after the first experience, how the complexity of the territory, new environmental challenges and renewed awareness can provide an opportunity to give new substance and renewed visibility to the ecological network project. This critical analysis highlights five questions that are relevant to the ecological network project, including the need to:

- Orient the project towards defining strategic guidelines for sustainable and resilient development, understood as a possible response to the need to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change.
- Strengthen the identity of landscape and local characteristics, promoting community involvement in the design, development and management of a network of infrastructure and places capable of responding to the diverse needs of the territory.
- Stratify heterogeneous elements within the territory, promoting the rooting and coexistence of different elements in the ecological project.
- Interfacing diverse elements to build green infrastructures capable of connecting, through multifunctional connections, ecological values to community activities.

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

3rd Open-Air Cities International Conference "Local & Regional Sustainable Development and Urban Reconstruction", Harokopio University of Athens, December 5-7, 2025

- Crossing territorial fragmentation through the integration of contrasting elements to strengthen ecosystems, promote the conservation and improvement of biodiversity, valorise the landscape perception.

Key words: ecological network, ecological transition, continuity, multifunctional connections, renewed challenges, landscape, identity

THE CITY AS STAGE: SOCIALLY ENGAGED PERFORMANCES IN THE PUBLIC SPACES OF ATHENS

Linaki Eleni

Ph.D NTUA, Urban and Regional Planner, National Technical University of Athens, Greece
eleni.linaki@gmail.com

Abstract

The proposed paper explores how performative art can introduce and engage with the concept of space through the analysis of six socially impactful performances presented in the public spaces of Athens. It establishes a theoretical framework encompassing the concepts of space, the body in the city, and performativity, which serves as a foundation for the case studies.

The research focuses on site-specific performances from recent years, with a detailed examination of three selected examples. Interviews with key participants involved in these performances provide insights into their creative processes and artistic intentions.

The study concludes with an open-ended questionnaire designed to foster dialogue among stakeholders engaged in such productions. This aims to identify the benefits, challenges, and unique characteristics of performing in public urban spaces. Finally, the research presents its conclusions based on the findings and analysis.

Key words: public spaces, city, theatre, site-specific performances

THE CONTRIBUTION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT TO THE PROMOTION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT – THE CASE STUDY OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF AMAROUSSION AND OF THE SYGGROU FOREST

Sereti Evangelia - Paraskevi

Geographer, M.Sc. in "Strategic Management of Tourist Destinations and Hospitality Businesses" with a specialization in Hospitality Management, University of the Aegean, Greece, M.Sc. in Public Administration - Public Management, University of West Attica, Greece.

evisereti995@gmail.com

Abstract

The role of local government in promoting sustainable development, based on local characteristics, comparative advantages and opportunities for innovative actions, is central, as the size, shape, geographical, developmental and cultural particularities of each city and community fall within the cognitive, institutional and operational framework of its operation and constitute a privileged field of Local Government Organizations.

The UN Agenda 2030 recognizes the potential of Local Governments to transform, through bottom-up planning, the urban and rural environment and contribute to improving sustainability conditions globally. Sustainability as an ongoing commitment should be an integral part of the functioning of local government and the basis for social, environmental and economic sustainability.

The purpose of the research is to capture the current situation in terms of strengthening innovation, strategy, implementation and prioritization of sustainable urban development actions of the Municipality of Maroussi and protection of the Syggrou Forest, as well as the fields in which further initiatives could be developed with an emphasis on the environmental and then the social, economic and intergovernmental dimensions of sustainability.

Key words: Sustainable urban development, innovation, local government, Municipality of Maroussi, Syggrou Forest

INTEGRATED URBAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGIES FOR CLIMATE RESILIENCE IN THE ATHENS METROPOLITAN AREA

Kampolis Dimitrios

PhD candidate, University of Athens, Department of Geology and Geoenvironment, University Campus, 15784, Athens, Greece

dkapolis@geol.uoa.gr

Abstract

The Athens Metropolitan Area constitutes the largest urban region in Greece and ranks among the most extensive metropolitan regions in Europe. Despite its significance, the region is currently burdened by severe urban and environmental challenges, including chronic traffic congestion, inadequate transportation infrastructure, elevated levels of air and noise pollution, and heightened vulnerability to climate-related hazards such as heatwaves, wildfires and flooding. Moreover, pressures from overtourism and an increasingly unaffordable housing market further exacerbate the degradation of urban living conditions. Although ongoing initiatives—such as the expansion of public transit networks, implementation of smart city technologies, development of green and cooling infrastructure, and climate resilience planning—are in place, these efforts remain insufficient in addressing the growing complexity of urban stressors.

This study proposes an integrated urban and environmental design strategy for the Athens Metropolitan Area, aimed at enhancing mobility systems, mitigating climate impacts, and improving bioclimatic conditions, with a strong emphasis on ecological sustainability and human well-being. The proposed interventions concentrate on strategic zones, particularly the Eleonas district and the Egaleo mountain range, while promoting new intermodal connections and upgrades to existing arterial routes, including their transformation into higher-capacity motorways or highways. The design framework seeks to achieve multiple outcomes: improved air quality, urban heat island mitigation through temperature reduction, decreased greenhouse gas emissions, enhanced stormwater drainage capacity, minimized flood risk, and overall urban sustainability enhancement.

Key words: urban planning, environmental design, Athens Metropolitan Area, climate resilience

WIDENING OF THE INTERMEDIATE BETWEEN THE HILL AND THE CITY: AS A CASE STUDY, THE CORRELATION BETWEEN PHILOPAPPOU HILL AND ANO PETRALONA

Ydraios Nikiforos

MSc, School of Architecture, National Technical University of Athens, Greece

ydraios.nikiforos@gmail.com

KoutsoumposLeonidas

Professor, School of Architecture, National Technical University of Athens, Greece

lkoutsoumpos@mail.ntua.gr

Abstract

The city of Athens presents significant interest in terms of its topography: its numerous hills, prominent features of its relief, hold pivotal and multifaceted importance. They function as fragmented remnants of the historical background, as “Cultural Landscapes.” They stand out as reference points for their surrounding urban areas, as landmarks, as environmentally significant natural enclaves, and simultaneously as spaces for recreation. However, the expansion of the urban fabric seems to have created a problematic relationship with the hills and the natural topography. Urban development “besieges” the hills, which now resemble islands in an “urban archipelago.” Consequently, it becomes evident that the relationship between the city and the hills is driven towards polarization, generating a dichotomy. This dichotomy is paradoxical when considering that the hills are vital and integral elements of the capital city. This study seeks to explore possible ways to renegotiate the rigid boundaries between the city and the hills, focusing on the intermediary space between them. Expanding this intermediary zone potentially achieves an organic osmosis that could enhance the interdependence of the natural and the artificial, the historical and the contemporary. Specifically, the study examines the case of Philopappou Hill and its problematic relationship with the Ano Petralona neighborhood. It aims to dissolve the rigidity of this dichotomy and introduce their fertile interpenetration. The goal is to design a common ground for coexistence, which will serve as a “threshold” to Philopappou and the diverse human activities that can take place there.

Key words: City, Interweave, Intermediate, Spectrum, Hill, Philopappou, Athens

THE SPATIOTEMPORAL EVOLUTION OF URBAN PLANNING IN THE HISTORIC CENTER OF KAVALA: CONTEMPORARY REFLECTIONS

Samourkasidou Elena

Postdoctoral researcher, Democritus University of Thrace, School of Engineering
esamourk@arch.duth.gr

Nastou Marina

PhD Candidate, Hellenic Open University, School of Applied Arts and Sustainable Design
nastou.marina@ac.eap.gr

Abstract

Historic city centres often embody the cultural, architectural, and social identity of urban areas, serving as tangible links to the past while shaping trajectories of contemporary development. Their preservation and integration into modern urban life are critical for local and regional development dynamics, offering opportunities for tourism, investment, and creative industries, while simultaneously facing challenges such as overcrowding, gentrification, and pressures from modern infrastructure demands.

The Panagia district (Old Town) in Kavala exemplifies these dynamics. As the city's original historic core, it occupies a central position within the contemporary urban fabric and functions as a key organizing element of the city's spatial structure. The morphology of the walled city began to undergo significant transformations from the mid-19th century, coinciding with the onset of commercial expansion. An influx of new residents placed increasing demographic pressure on the peninsula, which until 1864 had developed within the fortification boundaries. By the time urban growth extended beyond the walls, the area had reached a high degree of densification: plots were fully built, neighbourhoods had lost distinctiveness, houses abutted fortifications, and dead-end streets proliferated.

This paper examines the evolution of urban transformations in historic cores, with a focus on the Panagia district in Kavala, analysing how urban morphology and spatial organization influence the developmental trajectory and identity of the region. It further investigates strategies to enhance resilience while safeguarding historical and cultural character, emphasizing adaptive reuse, heritage conservation, and sustainable development. By integrating these approaches, the research highlights how historic city centres can simultaneously preserve their intrinsic identity and accommodate contemporary functional, social, and economic needs, offering insights for balancing growth with conservation in urban planning.

Key words: Urban morphology, cultural heritage, urban resilience, historic core revitalization, urban planning

ASPFALT-ART AS AN INNOVATIVE WAY FOR SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY

Samourkasidou Elena

Adjunct Lecturer, Democritus University of Thrace, School of Engineering
esamourk@arch.duth.gr

Abstract

In recent years, sustainable mobility has emerged as a central pillar in urban development strategies, aiming not only to reduce environmental impacts but also to enhance the quality of life in cities. Within this context, innovative approaches that combine functionality, aesthetics, and community engagement have gained increasing attention. One such approach is Asphalt-Art, an urban intervention that utilizes creative design and artistic expression on road surfaces to influence mobility patterns and promote safer, more inclusive public spaces.

Asphalt-Art goes beyond mere decoration; it acts as a tool for traffic calming, pedestrian prioritization, and the redefinition of underused urban areas. By introducing visually striking and context-specific artworks, streets can be transformed into dynamic environments that encourage walking, cycling, and other sustainable forms of mobility. Furthermore, these interventions often emerge from participatory processes, where local communities, artists, and city authorities collaborate to co-create meaningful urban experiences. This strengthens civic identity while simultaneously fostering environmental awareness and social inclusion. Asphalt-Art can also serve as a low-cost and flexible alternative to traditional infrastructural solutions, providing immediate and measurable benefits in terms of safety and accessibility. The integration of art into mobility planning highlights the potential of multidisciplinary strategies that merge urban design, culture, and sustainability.

Ultimately, Asphalt-Art demonstrates that innovation in sustainable mobility does not solely rely on technological advances, but also on creative, human-centered interventions that reshape the way people interact with public space.

Key words: Sustainable urban mobility, inclusion, accessibility, traffic safety, visual art intervention.

THE PHYSIOGNOMY AND SUSTAINABILITY OF RAFINA CITY THROUGH STUDENTS’ PERSPECTIVE

Samara Anna

Vice Principal, 1st Gymnasio Rafinas, Greece

Biologist & Dietitian – Teacher of Economics

M.Sc. in Environmental Education and Management

Postgraduate Programme “Sustainable Development”, Harokopio University of Athens

annagsamara@gmail.com

Abstract

The present study explores the physiognomy and sustainability of the city of Rafina, a coastal urban area in Eastern Attica, through the eyes of its young citizens. The research was conducted within the framework of the postgraduate course “*Sustainability and Smart Cities*” and aimed to investigate how students perceive their city’s identity, natural and cultural characteristics, and its transition toward a more sustainable and “smart” future.

A structured questionnaire was distributed to 250 students of the 2nd and 3rd grades of the **1st Gymnasio Rafinas**. The questions were based on the official guidelines of the Harokopio University course and focused on aspects such as local landscape, monuments, traditional events, environmental actions, and the sustainable projects implemented by the **1st Gymnasio Rafinas**, including Erasmus+ “Protect Your Nature, Protect Your Future”, “E.A.R.T.H.”, and “Create Project”, as well as its participation in the Blue Schools network and the municipal CLIMAAX climate resilience initiative.

Preliminary results indicate that students associate Rafina’s identity primarily with its coastal ecosystem, pine forests, and maritime life, while they recognize the importance of local environmental initiatives and civic participation. Positive perceptions include the city’s natural beauty and strong community spirit, while challenges relate to waste management, traffic, and the need for greener infrastructure.

The research highlights the role of environmental education in shaping citizens’ awareness and fostering local engagement for sustainable urban development. Integrating students’ perspectives into municipal planning can strengthen the sense of belonging and contribute to the formation of a resilient, inclusive, and environmentally conscious smart city.

Key words: Rafina, city physiognomy, sustainable development, smart cities, environmental education, civic engagement.

ENVIRONMENTAL LIVING CONDITIONS IN URBAN CENTERS AND THEIR IMPACTS ON HEALTH: CASE STUDY OF THE ATTICA REGION

Derventi Maria

*Pharmacist, PhD candidate, Harokopio University of Athens,
mderventi@hua.gr*

Mitoula Roido

*Professor, Harokopio University of Athens
mitoula@hua.gr*

Theodoropoulou Eleni

*Professor, Harokopio University of Athens
etheodo@hua.gr*

Karagianni Vilelmini

*Professor, University of West Attica
vkaragian@uniwa.gr*

Abstract

This study examines how urban environmental conditions shape health in the Attica Region, with emphasis on the highly urbanized Central Sector of Athens compared with other regional units. The contribution clarifies pathways linking air and noise pollution, traffic congestion, limited green space, and barriers to physical activity with risks for cardio-respiratory and mental health, and translates evidence into actionable guidance for regional and municipal decision makers. A cross-sectional, online survey (April–June 2022) captured 1,881 residents’ responses across the seven units of Attica using a structured 29-item instrument on demographics, neighborhood density, mobility, access to green and recreational spaces, noise and air quality perceptions, water quality concerns, social cohesion, safety, extreme weather impacts, work conditions, and access to public health services. Comparative analyses by unit, urbanization level (population density), age, and sex were conducted.

Findings indicate that residents of the Central Sector reported more frequent traffic congestion, higher exposure to environmental noise, and greater perceived air pollution, alongside lower access to green space, cycling infrastructure, and opportunities for everyday physical activity, compared with less dense units. Car dependence and commuting difficulties co-occurred with noise and pollution complaints. A substantial subset across units reported recent disruptions from extreme weather. When asked about solutions, respondents prioritized expanding and maintaining green spaces, building continuous cycling networks, improving and making public transport more accessible, strengthening waste management, implementing noise-abatement measures, enhancing public safety, and increasing equitable access to low-cost recreational and health services. Overall, higher urbanization intensity was associated with more adverse environmental exposures. Implementing residents’ preferred interventions could plausibly reduce preventable cardio-respiratory and stress-related morbidity while supporting healthier behaviors and, indirectly, moderating public pharmaceutical expenditure.

Keywords: Urbanization; Environmental health; Attica Region; Air pollution; Noise; Physical activity; Public health policy

**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT CONDITIONS IN THE
MUNICIPALITY OF MOSCHATO-TAVROS, ATTICA, GREECE:
SWOT ANALYSIS OF GEOGRAPHICAL, ENVIRONMENTAL,
ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DIMENSIONS**

Kochetkova Aleksandra

Student, Harokopio University of Athens, School of Environment, Geography and Applied Economics

aleksandra.kochetkova1998@gmail.com

hs222092@hua.gr

Abstract

This paper examines the conditions for sustainable development in the Municipality of Moschato–Tavros, an urban coastal district located between the metropolitan poles of Athens and Piraeus. Positioned within the South Athens Regional Unit, the municipality represents a densely built and socio-economically diverse urban area shaped by industrial legacies, limited green space, strategic transportation links, and emerging redevelopment initiatives. The aim of this paper is to examine the key conditions that shape sustainable development prospects in Moschato–Tavros and to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats across geographical, environmental, economic, social and cultural dimensions.

The study is based on secondary data analysis and official public sources, including national statistical databases, municipal planning documents and academic literature. The methodological framework follows the SWOT approach to investigate internal characteristics and external contextual factors influencing sustainable development trajectories and prospects. The study examines key aspects such as built environment and land use, green infrastructure and public space provision, transport and mobility networks, demographic and economic profile, cultural assets and social dynamics.

Preliminary findings indicate that Moschato–Tavros benefits from strategic spatial positioning, strong transport interconnectivity, mixed-use urban structure supportive of sustainable mobility, and active cultural institutions. However, environmental constraints, including high urban density, limited green infrastructure, traffic-related air and noise pollution, and vulnerability to climate-related pressures, pose substantive challenges. The findings indicate the importance of implementing targeted interventions, including further expansion of green infrastructure, stricter noise-control and air-quality management, and promotion of circular-economy practices such as recycling, waste-separation and resource recovery - supported by structured environmental education initiatives aimed at residents and local businesses.

Keywords: Sustainable development; Urban sustainability; Moschato–Tavros

SESSION

“Tackling socio-economic inequalities and in-work poverty”

**Chaired by Prof Papadakis Nikos and
Lect Vlachadi Maria**

LABOUR MARKET, SOCIO-ECONOMIC INEQUALITIES AND IN-WORK-POVERTY, IN MOMENTOUS TIMES: THE ROLE OF THE WELFARE STATE AND THE POLICY CHALLENGES FOR SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Papadakis Nikos

*Professor and Director of the [Centre for Political Research and Documentation \(KEPET\)](#),
Department of Political Science, University of Crete, Greece*

Member of the Scientific Council of the [National Centre of Public Administration & Local Government](#)

*Distinguished Visiting Professor at the Faculty of Liberal Arts of the Parul University (PU),
India*

papadakn@uoc.gr

Tzagkarakis Stylianos-Ioannis

Adjunct Lecturer at the School of Social Sciences of the Hellenic Open University

Policy Analyst at the National Documentation Centre

sttvaz@yahoo.gr

Abstract

The debate on sustainable development and its content, since the ‘70s, has gradually led to the creation of several different definitions, but the common element was (and remains) the effort to deepen both the environmental issues and the socio-economic ones. The issues raised in the UN relevant conference in Johannesburg include (among others): the link between green growth and the struggle against unemployment, inequalities and poverty. Undoubtedly, in our momentous times, the Labour Market is, globally, under transition and its turn affects substantially the Society at Large.

The paper deals with the key trends and transformations in the Labour Market, their impact on socio-economic inequalities, the association between precarious work and in-work-poverty and the rising challenges for the both the Welfare State and the Social Sustainability. Rapid transformations and trends such as intensification, are due on the one hand to the impact of the “permacrisis” (i.e. the 2008 Economic Crisis and Recession, the Pandemic, the ongoing Refugee-Migrant Crisis and the current energy- inflation crisis) on employment and labour market, and on the other hand due to Mega-Trends (i.e. new forms of globalization, lego- flexibility, digital transformation and gradual dominance of the digital economy, demographic and social changes, etc). These Mega-Trends seem to have a clear impact on the structure of economy and labour market, including work relations, forms of employment and contracts types and, consequently, on social welfare systems in Europe and subsequently on Social Sustainability. Both the permacrisis and the Mega-Trends, due to their impact on the labour market, seem to substantially affect the state-of-play regarding socio-economic inequalities, as well as the risk of poverty and social exclusion and consequently undermine the well-being and life chances of the socially vulnerable groups, such as unemployed, under-employed, NEETS, migrants etc.

Given the abovementioned, the paper, initially, provides an overview of the prevailing transformations and trends in the Labour Market (including the rising of the various forms of precarious work and its association with the social vulnerability), while addressing issues concerning job-polarization, labor market slack, as well as the impact of the aforementioned in socio-economic inequalities. Emphasis is laid, among others, in the association between active employment policies and training policy, within the framework of the rising “lego-

flexibility” in Economy and Markets (in Sennett’s terms), while it attempts to cast the light on the association between the active employment policies and social policy. There is no doubt that, at the international level, the socio-economic context is becoming more complex, creating new challenges for tackling social vulnerability, which is clearly associated with the changing Labour Market and the multi-level impact of the above-mentioned trends and transformations. Thus, the paper further examines the role and the critical challenges for both the Welfare State & Social Policy, as well as Social Sustainability, which is of vital importance for safeguarding social justice and subsequently social inclusion & cohesion.

Key Words: Labour Market, Mega-Trends, Crises, Socio-economic Inequalities, Poverty, Social Vulnerability, Welfare State, Social Sustainability & Policy

NEW TRENDS-TYPES OF MIGRANTS TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE CITIES

Vlachadi Maria

Post PhD, Lecturer, Department of Political Science, Univ. of Crete

mvlahadi@yahoo.gr, blachadim@uoc.gr

Plougarlis Dimitrios

MSc, Analysis & Management of Man-Made & Natural Disasters, Democritus Univ. of Thrace

d.plouga@gmail.com

Abstract

This specific study focuses on the evolution of the migration-refugee phenomenon in the light of the crisis that Europe has faced from 2020 to the present, with an emphasis on the situation in Greece. In particular, special categories of refugees and migrants were investigated, such as the case of unaccompanied minors, new forms and trends-types of migration such as environmental migrants and digital nomads.

Regarding the methodology, the method followed included the critical analysis of international and Greek bibliography and articles and the utilization of all available information from studies by research organizations, EU statistics and reports by international organizations and publications in scientific journals.

The survey conducted among Greek citizens aims to review their opinions and perceptions regarding the evolution of the phenomenon towards sustainable cities.

Key words: Migration-Refugee Issue, Unaccompanied Minors, Environmental Migrants, Digital Nomads, Sustainable Cities

RETHINKING RESEARCH PARTICIPANT COMPENSATION IN URBAN SETTINGS: A SOCIAL EXCHANGE PERSPECTIVE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Ahimbisibwe Osborn

Research Ethics Manager, PhD Business Management Candidate, Uganda Christian University, School of Business
oahimbisibwe@ucu.ac.ug

Ayebale Dan

Ph.D academic advisor, Senior Lecturer at Uganda Christian University and Kyambogo University
dayebale@ucu.ac.ug

Abstract

Urban and peri-urban communities are increasingly central to global research agendas due to their dense populations, diverse demographic composition, and proximity, which make them accessible and resource-rich sites for health, social, and development studies. These communities often host multiple studies, making them “over-researched,” which can lead to participant fatigue, distrust, and disengagement. This paper addresses the ethical and sustainability challenges associated with research participant compensation in urban settings, emphasizing that fair and equitable recognition of participants’ contributions is essential for sustaining urban research ecosystems.

Drawing on Social Exchange Theory, participation is conceptualized as a reciprocal process, where fairness, respect, and dignity are critical for sustaining trust and long-term engagement. Research exceptionalism—expecting participants to contribute without appropriate recognition—creates structural exploitation that threatens both ethical legitimacy and community willingness to participate.

The paper offers insights into how ethical, inclusive, and compensatory practices contribute to urban sustainability by strengthening social trust, reciprocity, and resilience. The intended benefits for readers include understanding the intersection between ethical research practices and sustainable urban development, recognizing over-researched communities as a critical consideration for planners and researchers, and providing practical recommendations for compensating participants in ways that enhance fairness and community engagement.

Key words: Research participant compensation; Social Exchange Theory; Urban sustainability; Ethical research practices; Over-researched communities; Community resilience

THE ENVIRONMENTAL PHILLIPS CURVE: A CROSS-COUNTRY ANALYSIS OF UNEMPLOYMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION

Karsiotis Panagiotis

PhD Candidate, University of Western Macedonia, Department of Business Administration
pkarsiotis@gmail.com

Adamopoulos Antonios

Assistant Professor, University of Western Macedonia, Department of Business Administration
aadamopoulos@uowm.gr

Maniatis Antonios

Assistant Professor, Merchant Navy Academy, Captains' School, Greece
maniatis@dikaio.gr

Irakleous Alexia

PhD, University of the Aegean, Department of Shipping and Trade
aleirak@gmail.com

Abstract

The concern about climate change and its impact on human life and economic activity has been steadily increasing in recent years and one big question that keeps coming up in policy discussions is how we can balance a robust economy with protecting our environment. A new idea called the Environmental Phillips Curve (EPC), mainly based on an older economic concept, the Phillips Curve is trying to tackle this challenge. In traditional economic theory, when unemployment goes down, inflation tends to go up, and vice versa. The EPC revises the original interpretation to address environmental concerns. The main idea is that when more people are unemployed, there's less economic activity, which means fewer emissions and less pollution, on the other hand when we try to create more jobs and boost the economy, we might end up hurting the environment in the process. It's like being caught between a rock and a hard place, do we prioritize jobs or the planet? This study attempts to test whether this Environmental Phillips Curve holds true across different European Union countries. To do this, we're using a sophisticated statistical method called cross-sectionally augmented autoregressive distributed lags (CS-ARDL), a tool that helps us analyze complex economic and environmental data patterns across multiple countries over time.

Keywords: Environmental Phillips Curve, climate change, unemployment, economic growth, ARDL

SESSION

“Social Architecture – Environment and Health”

Chaired by **Prof Dimelli Despina** and
Asst Prof Poli Maria

DOES GENDER MATTER IN CONSPIRACY BELIEFS VACCINATION HESITANCY? EVIDENCE FROM COVID-19 VACCINATION IN UGANDA

Bacwayo Kukunda Elizabeth

Associate Professor, Governance and Development, Uganda Christian University, School of Social Sciences

kukunda.bacwayo@fulbrightmail.org

Sebaggala Richard

Lecturer, Economist, Uganda Christian University School of Business

rsebaggala@ucu.ac.ug

Maractho Emilly

Associate Professor, School of Journalism, Uganda Christian University, Media and Communication

emaractho@ucu.ac.ug

Amaniyo Mercy

Lecturer, Uganda Christian University, School of Social Sciences

amaniyom@ucu.ac.ug

Mwije Solomon

Lecturer, PhD Candidate, Uganda Christian University, School of Social Sciences

smwije@ucu.ac.ug

Kemigisha Evas

Lecturer, Uganda Christian University, School of Social Sciences

evaskemie@gmail.com

Kobusingye Jacqueline

Lecturer, Uganda Christian University, Faculty of Public Health, Nursing and Midwifery

jkobusingye@ucu.ac.ug

Cheremoi Clare

Lecturer, Uganda Christian University, School of Social Sciences

256cheche@gmail.com

Abstract

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the government of Uganda made various efforts to promote COVID-19 vaccination. In spite of these efforts, Uganda experienced vaccine hesitancy, influenced in part by conspiracy beliefs. While studies have explored the role of gender in COVID-19 conspiracy beliefs, few have examined how these beliefs interact with gender to impact vaccination hesitancy.

This paper attempts to fill this gap by showing how gender moderated the relationship between conspiracy beliefs and vaccination hesitancy in Uganda. The findings presented form part of a larger study on conspiracy theory and covid-19 vaccination hesitancy conducted in Uganda. The study adopted a mixed method approach, whereby a cross-sectional survey

gathered data using online and physically administered questionnaires and qualitative data gathered through interviews.

The results showed that there are some differences between men and women with regard to conspiracy and COVID 19 vaccination. Overall, the findings highlight the detrimental effect of conspiracy beliefs, particularly on females, and underscore the need to have measures that mitigate women's exposure to such misinformation and proactive measures to mitigate the adverse influence of conspiracy beliefs, especially among women, to promote vaccine acceptance and public health outcomes. The paper provides useful insight on issues of vaccine hesitancy, which affect not only COVID-19 vaccination, but other vaccination campaigns. We argue that health educators need to take into account issues of conspiracy beliefs in their attempts to promote vaccination.

Key Words: Vaccine Hesitancy, Gender, Conspiracy beliefs, COVID-19

NEIGHBOURHOOD PHARMACIES OF THE FUTURE: LOCAL NETWORKS FOR PERSONALIZED, 3D-PRINTED MEDICINES

Achillas Charisios

Professor, International Hellenic University, Dept. of Supply Chain Management, Greece
c.achillas@ihu.edu.gr

Vlachokostas Christos

Assoc. Professor, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Dept. of Mechanical Engineering, Greece
vlahoco@auth.gr

Tsolakis Naoum

Assoc. Professor, International Hellenic University, Dept. of Supply Chain Management, Greece
ntsolakis@ihu.gr

Koumpakis Dimitrios Aristotelis

PhD candidate, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Dept. of Mechanical Engineering, Greece
dkoumpak@meng.auth.gr

Aidonis Dimitrios

Professor, International Hellenic University, Dept. of Supply Chain Management, Greece
daidonis@ihu.gr

Michailidou Alexia

Special Teaching Staff, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Dept. of Mechanical Engineering, Greece
amicha@meng.auth.gr

Abstract

Cities are where pharmaceutical demand, environmental externalities, and health inequities intersect. The 3D-SustainDrugs project explores how sustainable three-dimensional printing can localize and personalize medicine production to better serve citizens while advancing circular-economy goals. Building on our project’s bibliometric mapping of the 3D-printing-in-pharma landscape, we identify a maturing toolbox that directly supports urban deployment. We translate these technical themes into an urban implementation model; distributed micro-manufacturing hubs across hospital pharmacies, community health centres, and accredited university labs, coordinated by municipal health authorities. The model shortens supply chains, reduces overproduction and transport emissions, and enables individualised dosing for diverse populations, improving adherence and tolerability. To guide decision-making, we propose an impact dashboard for cities that tracks energy and material intensity per dose, lead time, wastage, access and equity indices, and patient-reported outcomes. The contribution is twofold: (a) an evidence-based synthesis of where the science is heading, and (n) a practical, citizen-centred blueprint for piloting circular, on-demand personalized medicines within urban health systems. The work is funded within the framework of the “SUB1.1: Clusters of Research Excellence (CREs)” Programme of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan ‘Greece 2.0’, and co-financed by the Greek State and the European Union (project code: YII3TA-0560854).

Key words: Personalized medicine, 3D printing, urban health networks, sustainable pharmaceuticals.

ACCESSIBLE HOUSES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN GREECE: A CRITICAL VIEW

Poli Maria

Assistant Professor, University of West Attica, Greece, Department of Interior Architecture
mpoli@uniwa.gr

Malagas Konstantinos

Independent Researcher
konmalagas@gmail.com

Abstract

Accessible housing for individuals with disabilities poses a significant challenge within a complex building system that involves both social and economic aspects. Despite the existence of accessibility standards and legal frameworks, practical implementation is limited, and many homes fail to meet the requirements for mobility and independence. Factors such as insufficient regulations, lack of social orientation and economic incentives, and design limitations contribute to the scarcity of fully accessible housing. Recent initiatives, including government programs and renovation subsidies, aim to increase the availability and quality of accessible homes, yet significant gaps remain. This study highlights the ongoing challenges and emphasises the need for comprehensive planning, inclusive design, and policy enforcement to ensure equitable housing opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

These issues were discussed in a focus group meeting with twelve experts (n=12). The detailed discussion, facilitated by the study's primary author, yielded valuable insights. Participants identified the profound challenges faced by people with disabilities (PwD), particularly individuals with low income who are largely excluded from opportunities. They highlighted the housing and rental difficulties in the existing building stock and the restrictive construction conditions. Additionally, the lack of accessible pathways connecting private spaces to public outdoor areas is a pressing concern for independent mobility and access to services in both Attica and provincial Greece. Enhancing inclusive housing and infrastructure in Greek cities could also boost accessible tourism, thereby strengthening the country's strong tourism industry.

This study provides essential insights to improve accommodations for individuals with disabilities, benefiting both practitioners and policymakers.

Keywords: Accessible Houses; People with Disabilities (PwD); Accessible Tourism; Inclusion; Accessible Infrastructure.

BIOMIMETIC, SUSTAINABLE, AND ACCESSIBLE ARCHITECTURE: A HOLISTIC DESIGN PARADIGM

Poli Maria

Assistant Professor, University of West Attica, Greece, Department of Interior Architecture
mpoli@uniwa.gr

Malagas Konstantinos

Independent Researcher
konmalagas@gmail.com

Abstract

Architecture in the 21st century is shaped by the convergence of three fundamental approaches: biomimetic design, sustainable design, and accessible design. Biomimetic architecture draws inspiration from natural systems, sustainable architecture focuses on reducing ecological footprints, and accessible architecture ensures inclusivity for all citizens, including persons with disabilities (PwD). This paper explores the interrelationship between these paradigms, examining international case studies such as the Eastgate Centre in Harare, BedZED in London, and urban accessibility initiatives in Barcelona, Illinois, and New York. The study also emphasises the significance of Inclusive and Universal Design within architectural practice, focusing on the creation of spaces that promote social integration, sustainability, and sensory accessibility.

Eight professionals with extensive knowledge of the subject discussed all these issues. As a result, a new holistic model of architectural design emerges, one that promotes resilience, equity, and long-term urban sustainability. This model identifies the diverse needs of vulnerable social groups—such as the elderly, persons with disabilities, and neurodiverse individuals—while exploring how architecture can address these needs through ergonomics, environmental psychology, and neuroarchitecture. In addition to the social aspect, notable economic benefits are expected as these communities continue to grow rapidly. By investing in these groups, we can address their needs and unlock new opportunities for collective prosperity.

This study, based on several interviews, offers valuable insights for enhancing architectural design to be inclusive for all citizens.

Keywords: Persons with Disabilities; Inclusive Design; Universal Design; Ergonomics; Neuroarchitecture.

SESSION

“Urban and Regional Sustainable Development”

**Chaired by Prof Lalenis Konstantinos and
Dr Economou Agisilaos**

OPEN-AIR CITIES OF DEAD

Polymenidis Yannis

Ph.D University of Thessaly, Department of Planning & Regional Development, Volos, Greece
polym60@gmail.com

Abstract

Spaces of the dead have historically been referred to as graveyard, churchyard, burial ground, God's acre, or cemetery. However, the dead have not only their own streets, but also mansions (mausoleums), poor neighborhoods, single-family houses or apartment buildings (columbarium), public buildings (gates, chapels, offices), as well as communal spaces and parks. All of these form their own urban plan. For this reason, perhaps the most appropriate term is *necropolis*, which literally means "the city of the dead."

The intimate relationship between the city and the necropolis becomes particularly evident in the conceptualization of "garden cities" and "garden cemeteries." The emphasis placed on public spaces and their parks reflected their usefulness, not only for improving sanitary conditions but also for fostering the sustainable development of an urban civilization.

In the contemporary context, processes of urbanization and population growth intensify the demand for accessible and expanded public green spaces. Cemeteries have all the characteristics of public space and can meet a significant part of a city's demand for green, public areas. When cemeteries are regarded as green, urban, public spaces, this can lead to cultural encounters, give them new functions and meanings, and allow them to evolve into different environments from what they were when they first appeared as places of mourning.

Although conventionally regarded as landscapes of grief, memory, and deeply personal affect, cemeteries may also be reimagined as landscapes of social interaction and reconciliation with mortality. They do not solely commemorate death; rather, they can serve as parks of life.

The main obstacle is to overcome the 19th-century "taboo" that institutionally exiled cemeteries from cities. This paper will analyze the relationship between the city and the necropolis and propose solutions for their renewed integration, with the aim of ensuring the sustainable development of the urban system: city and cemetery.

Key words: cemeteries, cities, sustainable environment - development.

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

3rd Open-Air Cities International Conference “Local & Regional Sustainable Development and Urban Reconstruction”, Harokopio University of Athens, December 5-7, 2025



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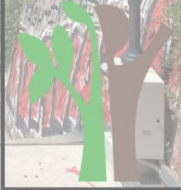
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ΠΡΑΣΙΝΟ ΤΑΜΕΙΟ

RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS: AN ANALYSIS OF THE LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK GOVERNING ZONING, CONSTRUCTION, AND BUILDING REGULATIONS AND THEIR INTEGRATION INTO SPATIAL PLANNING IN GREECE - A COMPARATIVE OVERVIEW WITH OTHER EU COUNTRIES

Lalenis Konstantinos

Professor, University of Thessaly, Pedion Areos, Volos, Greece, Department of Planning and Regional Development

klalenis@uth.gr

Zygouri Foteini

Attorney at Law, Dr. Urban Planning and Regional Development, University of Thessaly, Pedion Areos, Volos, Greece, Department of Planning and Regional Development

fzigouri@gmail.com

Abstract

This paper explores the relationship between religious institutions and spatial planning in Greece, with a particular focus on the legal and institutional framework governing zoning, construction, and building regulations for places of worship. While the Greek Constitution guarantees freedom of religion for all recognized faiths (Art. 13), the prominent role of the Greek Orthodox Church as the constitutionally established religion (Art. 3) significantly shapes public policies and influences spatial planning in relation to other recognized religious communities. A striking example of this imbalance is the decades-long delay in establishing an Islamic mosque in Athens.

The central issue addressed is the construction of religious buildings under a special licensing system ("temple construction"), which for decades operated with considerable autonomy from public urban planning authorities. This practice often led to arbitrary constructions, environmental pressures, and a lack of transparency.

Particular attention is given to unauthorized constructions by religious institutions, frequently located in forests or protected areas, which rarely face sanctions, thereby fostering a perception of privileged treatment. At the same time, the paper examines the bureaucratic and socio-political barriers that non-Orthodox communities encounter.

Finally, a comparative analysis of the legal and institutional frameworks in other EU countries is undertaken to identify common standards and divergences. The findings underscore the need for a neutral and transparent institutional framework that reconciles freedom of worship with the requirements of sustainable urban planning.

Keywords: religious institutions, institutional framework, unauthorized constructions, urban planning regulations, Orthodox Church, spatial planning, comparative overview.

ONTOLOGICAL TRANSFORMATIONS THROUGH THE WORK OF GIOVANNI BATTISTA PIRANESI

Katsanevakis Evangelos

Post-Graduate Researcher and Architect, Technical University of Crete, School of Architecture, MSc National Technical University of Athens, School of Architecture
evkatsanevakis@gmail.com

Abstract

The context of the twenty-first century is characterized by constant redefinitions of fundamental social structures. The development of multidimensional ecological and territorial changes, as a result of habitation practices, composes a landscape of renegotiation of human primacy, highlighting the need to include non-human entities in philosophical and architectural considerations. This research paper examines contemporary ontological approaches that distance themselves from rational definitions of existence, nature, and social issues. The fundamental objective is to explore the qualities that highlight architecture as an inexhaustible meaning-producing process.

The first section analyzes the key characteristics of philosopher Graham Harman's approach to the metaphysical substance of objects. Exploring these qualities reveals methods of coexistence with the entities that surround us, while at the same time reestablishing the ontological substance of human nature. Subsequently, Timothy Morton's ecological thinking is introduced in an attempt to interpret the forces that shape geological formations and aesthetics beyond one-dimensional anthropogenic explanations. Finally, the current context of architecture is defined, along with the expressive means it incorporates.

The second section explores the work of Giovanni Battista Piranesi as a multidimensional architectural perspective that represents a turning point in 18th-century Western thought. After exploring the Carceri and Campo de Marzio collections through architectural history analysts such as Manfredo Taffuri, an attempt is made to re-narrate the ontological approach expressed in Piranesi's work in contemporary terms, as a form of extensive metaphor that tends to interpret its hidden aspects.

Key words: Object-Oriented Ontology; Non-Human Agency; Coexistence; Cityscape Shaping; Spatial Narrative; Giovanni Battista Piranesi;

PARTICIPATORY MAPPING AND ASSESSMENT OF LANDSCAPES THROUGH CROWDSOURCING: FROM UNIVERSITY EDUCATION TO CROSSCULTURAL CITIZEN SCIENCE

Ioannidis Romanos

Assistant Professor, Department of Architecture, Built Environment and Construction Engineering, Politecnico di Milano, Piazza Leonardo da Vinci, 32, 20133 Milan, Italy
romanos.ioannidis@polimi.it

Abstract

Modern digital technologies offer powerful tools to bridge the gap between academia and society in landscape assessment and mapping. This research details the development and application of a new scheme for quantifying public perceptions of landscapes and architecture, utilizing crowdsourcing through a dedicated mobile application.

Initiated as an educational tool in the field of architecture and landscape design educations, university students across Italy, Greece and France, participated in active crowdsourcing for mapping and assessing landscape and architecture. Following this foundational phase of testing the methodology and digital infrastructure we proceed to investigating how to evolve the utilized scheme to a broader, multicultural citizen science initiative. The presented research investigates the inferences from the use of this methodology with both student and citizen participants in two distinct areas.

First, scientifically, it yields valuable quantitative data for analyzing architectural styles, urban typologies, and public perceptions thereof. By connecting crowdsourcing, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), and mobile development, the groundwork is set for improved research in culture and humanities, with initial results showing strong correlation with established landscape assessment methods. Second, socially, the project evaluates the integration of interactive digital tools to foster democratic citizen science and participation. It demonstrates a significant impact on engaging participants in meaningful discussions and critical thinking about urban landscape quality.

Overall, the findings highlight the potential of these technologies to enhance research and practice in areas associated with landscape perception. The project provides a scalable model for participatory mapping, creating new conditions for communication and interaction between universities and the broader public.

Keywords: Crowdsourcing, Participatory Mapping, Landscape Perception, Citizen Science, GIS (Geographic Information Systems), Mobile Application and University Education

BEYOND SHELTER: DISPLACEMENT AT THE THRESHOLD OF ECOLOGICAL CHANGE

Xirogiannis Maria

c.Ph.D., Specialized Technical and Laboratory Personnel, National Technical University of Athens, Greece

mxirogianni@arch.ntua.gr

Kyriakidis Charalampos

Ph.D, Laboratory Teaching Staff, National Technical University of Athens, Greece

kyriakidisharry@gmail.com

Moraitis Konstantinos

Professor Emeritus, National Technical University of Athens, Greece

kmoraitis@arch.ntua.gr

Abstract

Mass displacement and the establishment of large-scale refugee settlements generate consequences that extend well beyond humanitarian concerns, profoundly reshaping local environments. This occurs as the concentration of populations often exceeds the ecological carrying capacity of the surroundings, generating acute pressures on land, water and biodiversity. This paper does not seek to criticize the establishment of refugee settlements, which provide vital support to vulnerable populations that may be at risk. Instead, its primary objective is to highlight the challenges that emerge from the often ad hoc development of these settlements, which frequently lack of proper planning and inadequate infrastructure for waste management, sanitation and energy provision; such factors contribute both to ecological degradation and to increased risks to public health.

To address the research objectives, two case studies, one in Asia and one in Africa, were selected to examine how refugee settlements of varying dynamics impact local environments in differing ecological and socio-political contexts. The first case study examines the Kutupalong Camp in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, that now accommodates over one million Rohingya refugees in approximately 30,000 hectares, one fourth of which derived from deforestation, leading to the disruption of local flora and fauna, and increased vulnerability to floods and wildfires. Comparable challenges are evident in the Mayo Tsanaga Camp in Minawao, Cameroon, which hosts roughly 76,000 refugees displaced from Nigeria; in this case, land degradation and overexploitation of natural resources has also been observed.

The results highlight the urgent need to integrate sustainable management strategies into humanitarian assistance. Only in that way displaced populations as well as the urban and environmental systems entwined with their survival may be safeguarded and sustained in resilience. To conclude, the contribution of this paper lies in highlighting the compatibility between refugee settlements and environmental protection, emphasizing the imperative of implementing integrated strategies.

Key words: refugee settlements, environmental impacts, sustainable management, socio-ecological systems, humanitarian assistance, ecological resilience.

MAIN WOOD SPECIES USED IN GREEK WOODCRAFT: A HISTORICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL STUDY

Ntalos George

Professor, University of Thessaly,

Department of Forestry, Wood Science and Design, University of Thessaly, GR-431 00 Karditsa, Greece

gntalos@uth.gr

Mitani Andromachi

Assistant Professor, University of Thessaly,

Department of Forestry, Wood Science and Design, University of Thessaly, GR-431 00 Karditsa, Greece

amitani@uth.gr

Alexaki Pinelopi

Assistant Researcher, University of Thessaly,

Department of Forestry, Wood Science and Design, University of Thessaly, GR-431 00 Karditsa, Greece

palexaki@uth.gr

Ntalos Paulos

Assistant, University of Thessaly,

Department of Forestry, Wood Science and Design, University of Thessaly, GR-431 00 Karditsa, Greece

gntalos@uth.gr

Koutsianitis Dimitrios

Assistant Professor, University of Thessaly,

Department of Forestry and Natural Environment Management, Agricultural University of Athens, 36100, Karpenisi, Greece

dkoutsianitis@uth.gr

Ninikas Konstantinos

Researcher, University of Thessaly,

Department of Forestry, Wood Science and Design, University of Thessaly, GR-431 00 Karditsa, Greece

kninikas@uth.gr

Abstract

This study investigates the main types of wood used in Greek woodcraft through a historical and technological perspective. Specifically, it analyzes the physical, mechanical, and hygrometric properties of the most important native and imported wood species, as well as the factors influencing their workability and long-term durability. The research is based on bibliographic sources and technical data from the field of wood technology, aiming to document the suitability of each species for specific applications in traditional and modern woodcraft. Furthermore, it examines the evolution of wood processing technologies, the impact of environmental policies on the management of timber resources, and the contribution of new materials and techniques to the sustainable development of the sector. The findings highlight the importance of scientific understanding of wood properties as a critical factor determining the quality, durability, and aesthetic value of wooden constructions in the Greek context.

Key words: Woodcraft, Wood species, Wood technology, Greek craftsmanship, Durability, Historical approach, Technological development.

TOURISM, CULTURE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE REGION OF BOEOTIA

Christou Dimitris

*Student, University of Peloponnese, Department of History, Archaeology and Cultural
Resources Management, Kalamata, Greece*
dimitrioschristou2004@gmail.com

Abstract

The cultural heritage of our country is the reason for regional and local sustainable development. Greece is a country with characteristic customs and of course culture. To be more specific, an Orthodox feast that in its core contains historical elements from the Revolution of 1821, is an important tradition for Boeotia, and at the same time these elements include a mythological core from antiquity. This feast is called the "Panigiraki", which takes place every year on the celebration day of St. George in Arachova, the important township of Boeotia.

Due to the large turnout of the congregants, it is natural to mobilize the Regional Unit of Boeotia, the Municipality of Distomo in Arachova and the various local cultural-folklore clubs, on the one hand in order to give the celebrated Saint proper honor and on the other hand to have decency and safety as much as possible in the event. At the same time, local businessmen those days try to cover every possible need of the visitors, since Arachova is the most famous winter tourist resort in Greece.

In conclusion, the cultural dimension of the holiday is realized mostly in its finest form, which coincides with the protection of the environment, the development and the circular economy.

Keywords: cultural heritage, development, safety, protection

URBAN BUZZWORDS IN PRACTICE: RHETORIC, METHOD, AND THE POLITICS OF DIFFUSION

Vartholomaïos Aristotelis

Assistant Professor, University of Thessaly, Department of Planning and Regional Development

avartholomaïos@uth.gr

Abstract

Urban planning discourse is increasingly saturated with labels that promise transformation while often rebranding long-standing practices. This paper investigates how such buzzwords emerge, circulate, and shape agendas across academia, policy, and markets. Drawing on terms such as smart city, resilient city, circular city, sponge city, digital twin, 15-minute city, creative city, and innovation district, it asks three interlinked questions: What is the pace of term introduction since 2000? Which actors drive diffusion? And how closely do these linguistic innovations align with substantive methodological or policy change?

Using a focused review of academic literature from 2000 to 2025 following PRISMA guidelines, the study traces the evolution and overlap of major city labels. It identifies recurring cycles of adoption, adaptation, and decline, reflecting broader shifts in funding priorities, technological optimism, and governance trends. Preliminary patterns suggest that certain concepts are propelled primarily by market and industry actors, while others gain traction through policy frameworks or academic discourse.

The analysis highlights how the rapid proliferation of labels produces both creative cross-pollination and conceptual fatigue, as terms are recycled faster than their underlying methods evolve. Through mapping these trajectories, the paper situates urban buzzwords as instruments of soft power that organize attention, resources, and legitimacy across competing visions of the city. The discussion exposes the fault line between novelty and rebranding, showing how shifting vocabularies quietly reorganize what cities pursue and how they define progress.

Key words: Urban planning, urban governance, buzzwords, terminology, innovation, communication in planning

THE CONTRIBUTION OF CULTURAL ASSOCIATIONS AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES TO THE PRESERVATION AND PROMOTION OF THE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF A REGION. AS A CASE STUDY: THE MUNICIPALITY OF DORIDA

Chalioris Konstantinos

PhD Candidate, Harokopio University of Athens, School of Environment, Geography and Applied Economics

konstantinoschalioris@gmail.com

Mitoula Roido

Professor, Dean, Harokopio University of Athens, School of Environment, Geography and Applied Economics,

mitoula@hua.gr

Gospodini Aspa

Professor of Urban Planning & Design, Department of Planning & Regional Development, University of Thessaly, Volos, Greece.

gospod@uth.gr

Manola Maria

Professor, Department of Tourism Management, University of West Attica, Greece

mmanola@uniwa.gr

Abstract

The present paper explores the contribution of cultural and sports clubs, as well as local bodies, to the preservation and promotion of the cultural heritage of a region, with a case study of the Municipality of Dorida. Its aim is to highlight the role of culture in sustainable development, examining how cultural participation, values and needs of citizens can enhance cohesion, social well-being and local development.

The methodology was based on a combination of theoretical and empirical approaches. Initially, the theories of regional economic development and the integration of culture as the fourth pillar of sustainable development are presented. This is followed by the creation and implementation of a questionnaire that aims to capture the cultural participation, needs and values of the population of Dorida. The questionnaire included questions on the frequency of participation in cultural activities, the importance of the family environment, the relationship between culture and entrepreneurship, as well as citizens' perception of their own cultural involvement.

The data analysis was carried out using Ordered Probit statistical models (McCullagh, 1980; Green, 2003), as the responses were ordered categorical variables. These models allowed the assessment of the factors that influence citizens' attitudes towards cultural participation, with an emphasis on variables such as age and educational level.

The results show that the age groups 55-64 years old express the strongest interest in more cultural activities, which indicates high awareness and active cultural participation in this social category. Furthermore, it is found that educational level is positively related to the intention to participate, while cultural associations and local bodies are crucial mechanisms for strengthening cultural life and preserving local identity.

The paper concludes that culture functions as a social bond and a catalyst for sustainable development, broadening the horizons of the community, strengthening dialogue and promoting diversity. The need for systematic evaluation of cultural policies is also emphasized, as well as the strengthening of local cultural initiatives through institutional support and participatory planning.

Keywords: Cultural participation, cultural associations, sustainable development, Ordered Probit, Municipality of Dorida.

NAVIGATING INTEGRATED PLANNING IN SMALL MUNICIPALITIES: LIMITATIONS, PATHWAYS FORWARD EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES. THE CASE OF DIDYMOTICHO.

Zountsa Stergiani

Ph.D Candidate in University of Macedonia, Department of International and European Studies, Greece

szountsa@uom.edu.gr

Co-Author: Skiadas V. Dimitrios

Professor, MJur, PhD, CFE, Jean Monnet Chair - <http://jeanmonnetchair.eubga.uom.gr/>
University of Macedonia, Dept. of International and European Studies

dskiadas@uom.edu.gr

Abstract

Over the years, the European Cohesion Policy has undergone significant transformation, with its targeting mechanisms and programming strategies being continuously adapted and refined to respond effectively to the changing needs and development challenges of regions.

During the 2014-2020 programming period a "place-based approach" had appeared while in the current programming period the policy seems to be in its "mature" era that meets integrated approaches and relevant financial mechanisms (such as Integrated Territorial Investment (ITI)). We are no longer talking about regional inequalities' recovery, we are able to emphasize on comparative advantages of areas to boost their growth potentials and build on its unique characteristics. The "core-periphery" approach builds our argumentation that small municipalities should change their development path with synergies and interconnection that do not work competitively but collaboratively. The conducted research shows that not only disadvantaged and remote areas face severe development problems with understaffed services without specialized staff and with lacks on basic infrastructures, but also some urban centers face some challenges as well. However, the networking of remote areas creates added value and multiplicative benefits rescaling growth potentials. Such approaches refer to the empowerment of small municipalities to follow integrated planning, find technical competence, political commitment to the partnership, and ability to implement projects on time. The reforms in Greek legislation assist further these efforts.

The case study of Didymoticho explains the theoretical assumptions that remote and /or disadvantaged areas are able to benefit from integrated development plans and collaborative structures that create opportunities and promote holistic intervention and funding.

Key words: European regional policy, territorial development, disparities, growth, "core-periphery", Integrated Territorial Investments, Municipality of Didymoticho,

SESSION

“Tourism and Sustainable Development”

**Chaired by Asst Em Panagiotis Patargias and
Asst Prof Skoultzos Sofoklis**

TOWARDS TO A NEW TOURISM MODEL ADJUSTMENT IN GREECE: SOME EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE FROM HOTEL EXECUTIVES

Metaxas Theodore

Professor, University of Thessaly, Department of Economics, Volos, Greece,
metaxas@uth.gr

Andrinos Meletios

PhD Researcher, University of Thessaly, Department of Economics, Volos, Greece,
mandrinos@uth.gr

Avlogiaris Konstantinos

Researcher, University of Thessaly, Department of Economics, Volos, Greece,
kavrogiaris@uth.gr

Abstract

Tourism is commonly accepted as one of the most important economic sectors of Greece's development. Tourism is multidimensional, considering the psychology of the market and tourists is also multidimensional. Over the past years, the study of tourism and its dimensions from both the supply and demand sides has become more demanding, deeper, and even more specialized. At present, alternative forms of tourism (alternative tourism) arise, arguing that tourism is linked not only with the multidimensional psychology of tourists, but also with the uniqueness and distinctiveness of the destinations. Consequently, alternative forms are designed and developed to highlight the special dynamics of each destination and to satisfy the psychology of the potential tourism markets to which they are addressed.

As for the Mediterranean zone, the so-called Sun Belt, conditions have certainly changed for several years. New tourist destinations have come to the forefront of the global market, providing competitive and quality tourist goods. As a result, they provide the maximum possible satisfaction through the tourist experience (total satisfaction of the tourist experience). This research aims to investigate and statistically analyze the estimates of 478 managers and professionals of hotel tourism market through the use of electronic questionnaires on a Likert scale (1-7), regarding the necessity of readjusting the tourism development of Greece to a new, differentiated and sustainable model of tourism development, examining the degree of implementation (degree of performance) and the degree of significance in 27 different factors at the local and regional level.

The main objective of this research is to highlight the necessity of changing the tourism model in Greece and the importance of primary data in the field.

Keywords: Tourism Model, Sustainable Tourism Development, Particularity and Uniqueness, empirical investigation, CFA methods, SEM

CULTURAL TOURISM AS A CATALYST FOR SUSTAINABLE URBAN AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN GREECE

Kriga Mimika (Dimitra)

Archaeologist, Dr of Prehistoric Archaeology

MA in Arts, Cultural Heritage, Development Policies

from the Open University of Greece

Archaeologist with contract in the Greek Ministry of Culture

mimikriga@gmail.com

Abstract

Cultural tourism represents one of the most dynamic and sustainable segments of the tourism industry, offering significant opportunities for economic growth, social cohesion, and heritage preservation. In Greece, a country with an unparalleled wealth of tangible and intangible cultural assets — from UNESCO World Heritage sites and archaeological landmarks to living traditions, festivals, and gastronomy — cultural tourism can serve as a catalyst for sustainable urban and regional development.

This paper examines how cultural tourism initiatives can balance visitor growth with the protection of cultural integrity, environmental stewardship, and community well-being. Drawing on case studies from historic cities, island settlements, and rural heritage areas, the research explores integrated approaches that combine heritage conservation, sustainable infrastructure, and participatory governance.

Special attention is given to the role of digital innovation in enhancing cultural experiences, extending tourism seasons, and dispersing visitor flows beyond overburdened destinations. By aligning cultural tourism strategies with the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals, the study proposes a framework for Greek cities and regions to leverage their cultural capital as a transformation force for resilience, and long-term sustainability.

Public institutions — from municipalities to the Ministry of Culture — are investing in digital modernization, developing tools that have information on monuments, festivals, museums, etc. By connecting cultural heritage with innovation and open access, these initiatives enhance the visitor experience, promote local identity, and support the transformation toward vibrant, open-air urban environments.

Keywords: Cultural Heritage, Intangible Cultural Heritage, Digital Technology, Cultural To

TOURISM MUNICIPALITIES IN SPAIN

Maniatis Antonios

Assistant Professor, Merchant Navy Academy, Captains' School, Greece

maniatis@dikaio.gr

Adamopoulos Antonios

Assistant Professor, University of Western Macedonia, and Adjunct Consulting Professor, Hellenic Open University

aadamopoulos@uowm.gr

Abstract

Tourism municipalities represent a relatively recent institution in Spain, which is optional rather than compulsory, depending on the political will of each Autonomous Community. National Law No. 7/1985 on the Bases of the Local Regime does not explicitly establish the figure of the tourism municipality, but leaves open the possibility of creating special municipal regimes for municipalities 'that gather other characteristics that make it advisable, such as their historical-artistic character or the predominance of tourism activities within their territory'.

This paper approaches this model as a potential brand for Spanish cities. From the limited number of Autonomous Communities that have adopted this mechanism, the Autonomous Community of Andalusia has been selected as a case study. A legislative and bibliographical survey has been carried out for the purposes of this research.

The findings reveal that there is no direct link between the right to the city and tourism municipalities, although the obligations imposed on the Tourism Municipality of Andalusia highlight the need to develop responsible tourism compatible with the rights of the city's inhabitants, in particular their right to their own city. It is also notable that there is no tendency to employ the expression 'right to a Tourism Municipality', although a new right has informally emerged for those municipalities awarded this status. Finally, the model of tourism municipalities has been subject to criticism, notably regarding the financing of such urban entities, yet it constitutes a pioneering city-centred value which should be institutionalised more widely, not only in other Autonomous Communities but also in other tourism-oriented countries of Southern Europe, including Greece, and elsewhere.

Key words: city-centred values, right to the City, Spain, Tourism Law, tourism municipalities

TOURISM POTENTIAL OF INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE: A STUDY OF TOBACCO WAREHOUSES IN KAVALA, GREECE

Grigoriadou Maria– Alexandra

Associate Professor, Democritus University of Thrace, Faculty of Engineering, Department of Architectural Engineering, Greece

magrigor@arch.duth.gr

Kouveli Aikaterini

Architect Engineer & Urban Planner, Ph.D Student DUTH - Scholarship from the Institute of Social Movements and Tobacco History (ISMTH), Democritus University of Thrace, Faculty of Engineering, Department of Architectural Engineering, Greece

akouveli@arch.duth.gr

Abstract

The present paper investigates the tourism potential of industrial heritage, with a specific focus on the tobacco warehouses of Kavala, Greece. Historically, Kavala was one of the foremost tobacco centers at the beginning of the 20th century, attracting visitors from both the surrounding region and internationally. Tobacco significantly shaped the city's identity during this period, with the warehouses serving as iconic landmarks. However, these structures have experienced a decline from the mid-20th century to the present.

The primary objective of the article is to assess the capacity of the tobacco warehouses to contribute to sustainable tourism development through a multidisciplinary approach that integrates heritage tourism theory and spatial analysis within the urban and regional context. Utilizing a qualitative research methodology, the paper focuses on the spatial, cultural and economic dimensions influencing the creation of touristic value associated with the warehouses. The results highlight a substantial gap between the evident potential of these sites and their current state, largely attributed to the absence of strategic planning, fragmented institutional frameworks and limited community involvement.

The paper contends that integrating industrial heritage within the broader tourism strategy of Kavala can, not only reinforce the city's historical identity, but also promote sustainable urban and regional development. To this end, targeted planning interventions are proposed to reshape these historic sites into lively cultural and tourism destinations, thereby simultaneously supporting urban regeneration and enhancing the touristic appeal of Kavala, while preserving its historical legacy.

Key words: Tobacco warehouses, Kavala, Tourism potential, Cultural heritage, Sustainable and urban development.

TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN CRETE: DELPHI EVALUATION OF PRIMARY SECTOR SYNERGIES AND REGIONAL PATHWAYS

Kritikos Antonis

PhD Candidate, Department of Business Administration, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens
antonkrit@ba.uoa.gr

Magoutas Anastasios

Associate Professor, Department of Business Administration, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens
amagoutas@ba.uoa.gr

Chountalas T. Panos

Assistant Professor, Department of Business Administration, University of Piraeus
pchountalas@unipi.gr

Livieratos Antonis

Assistant Professor, Department of Business Administration, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens
alivieratos@ba.uoa.gr

Abstract

In this paper, we examine how the integration of tourism into the primary sector can generate opportunities for sustainable tourism development and seasonality management in the island of Crete. With a three-round Delphi with an eight-relay panel of experts, we also present and prioritize sustainability indicators and success factors in economic, social, environmental, cultural and governance terms. The study explores the following four research questions: (i) the key areas of sustainability focus that are driving synergies and tensions in relation to the confluence of tourism and primary sectors; (ii) whether an expert-based consensus methodology can succeed in prioritising these; (iii) the policy implications for Crete 2030 and strategies for collaboration, innovation and regional differentiation; and (iv) How can the integration of tourism and the primary sector serve as a means to build resilience against climate risks such as drought and extreme weather. Methodological transferability is based on international Delphi research focused on agritourism and ecotourism. It finds that intersectoral synergies—namely, agritourism, PDO-based value chain upgrading, producer–hospitality networks, and digital co-governance—emerge as crucial drivers of resilience, diversification and territorial cohesion. Results from Delphi offer consensus approaches based on expert perception over several sustainability lines on addressing Mediterranean island vulnerabilities. The role of institutional frameworks, local participation and innovation systems are also highlighted on the shaping of sustainability strategies in the paper. Climate resilience appears to be a common issue where water scarcity and extreme events demand adaptations both in agriculture and tourism. The conclusions are brought together in the Crete 2030 Roadmap, which connects forward-looking policies to EU and national strategies. Finally, the research adds to the conceptual and empirical development of the online Delphi for Mediterranean islands and provides a reusable prototype for the development of consensus-based sustainable tourism policy.

Keywords: Crete; sustainable tourism; primary sector integration; Delphi method; sustainability indicators; regional development.

CREATIVE TOURISM AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN MOUNTAINOUS GREECE: THE VOVOUSA FESTIVAL, THE NOWSTALGISM PROJECT, THE LAKE STEFANIADA FESTIVAL

Pelagidou Maria Argyro

Postgraduate Student, Department of Planning and Urban Development, University of Thessaly

mariaapelagidou@gmail.com

Abstract

Numerous communities in mountainous Greece are depopulating and facing challenges related to their survival. Greek bibliography and policies focus mostly on planning and environmental issues, rather than heritage and creativity as resources for sustainable growth and prosperity of mountainous communities. The aim of this paper is to fill this gap, directing the attention to the creative possibilities for the development of these villages. The author examines under what conditions can creative tourism be developed in mountainous communities and if it can contribute to their sustainable development. The Vovoussa Festival in Ioannina region, the Nowstalgism project in the village of Fanari in Karditsa region and the Lake Stefaniada Festival in Karditsa region were chosen as case studies. Semi-constructed interviews were conducted with the organizers of the events, members of the local cultural associations and representatives of the municipalities. The analysis of the case studies shows that creativity and intangible heritage can constitute resources for the development of mountainous Greece. The role of creative persons is particularly emphasized, for their insight and innovative approach to design creative products and services based on the intangible cultural heritage assets of the village. Creative tourism can act as a means for the sustainable development of mountainous regions in the sphere of culture, community, environment and economy, as it attracts visitors to the area, promotes environmental awareness, the preservation of heritage, the revival of cultural practices, strengthens collective memory and the collaboration between various stakeholders in the area, encourages creativity and investments.

Key-words: creative tourism, mountainous communities, sustainable development, festivals, cultural heritage

FROM ATTACHMENT TO INDIFFERENCE: RETHINKING TOURIST–DESTINATION RELATIONSHIPS

Briana Maria

*Department of Economics and Sustainable Development,
Harokopio University of Athens, Greece
mbriana@hua.gr*

Abstract

Attachment, loyalty, engagement and love rank amongst the most critical concepts in destination branding and tourist–destination relationships. Recent studies indicate that tourists may exhibit both low brand love and brand loyalty, being indifferent to places as destinations, approaching them simply as settings for leisure and consumption. This study aims to conceptually explore the shift from attachment to indifference in tourism and to analyze how shades of disengagement shape destination branding and marketing strategies. Drawing on literature on consumer–brand relationships, destination branding, and authenticity, the paper proposes a framework that contrasts emotionally engaged tourists with detached or indifferent ones, highlighting the key drivers of such a behavioral state like the standardization of tourism products while raising concerns for the pursuit of sustainable tourism. The conceptual framework outlines the implications of tourist detachment for place branding strategies, including challenges to loyalty-building and sustainable tourism development, opportunities for authenticity-driven differentiation, and the potential role of co-created experiences in establishing strong bonds between places and their stakeholders.

Keywords: tourist preferences, destination branding, digital marketing, loyalty, detachment

URBAN SPACE "ON THE MOVE": EXPERIENTIAL AND DIGITAL ROUTES FOR THE 21st CENTURY TRAVELER

Moira Maria

Associate Professor, University of West Attica, School of Applied Arts and Culture
mmoira@uniwa.gr

Makris Dimitrios

Associate Professor, University of West Attica, School of Applied Arts and Culture
demak@uniwa.gr

Abstract

Urban areas present a fascinating realm for the modern traveler in search of experiences, challenges, and knowledge. In the essay urban thinker Georges Perec sarcastically remarks, of going to London, it is better to stay at home, near the fireplace, and read the inimitable information provided by the Baedeker guide (1907). the superficial way visitors attempt to familiarize themselves with a city, often failing to truly know it or, better yet, to inhabit it. Today's travelers visiting modern historical cities of the 21st century—such as Constantinople, Alexandria, or Heraklion on the island of Crete—face their complex and multifaceted character, which makes it challenging to uncover and embrace the "spirit of the place" within the limited days of their trip.

The combination of literature and the innovative possibilities of digital technologies—specifically fictional texts about the city and the use of Augmented Reality—contributes to the art of experiencing the city. It offers the modern traveler the opportunity to create a personal experience through the mediation of storytelling and to engage in both real and digital navigation of the urban space based on individual choices and interests. This approach draws emotion from selective experiential reception and personal interpretation, allowing for a unique understanding of the place's identity rather than the consumption of a standardized tourist product.

This proposal outlines a specialized, personalized interactive cultural tour of the living city, designed to avoid a mass-market, homogenizing approach. It promotes a meaningful engagement with the city, where a fictional narrative enriches the range of personal choices and emotions. Additionally, digital technology is employed to extract cultural elements and manage diverse, fragmented impressions alongside the dynamic modern urban scenes encountered throughout the metropolitan routes.

Within this digital experiential framework, travelers are provided with an easy-to-use, unique, multi-collective mapping tool that combines urban exploration walks with history, myth, and memory.

Keywords: city, urban navigation, literature, augmented reality, cultural navigation.

SMILES AMONG THE RUINS AND CROWDS? RETHINKING TOURIST WELL-BEING AND HAPPINESS FOR SUSTAINABLE URBAN TOURISM IN ATHENS

Koliotasi Aigli

PhD Student, Ionian University, Department of Tourism

aspkoliotasi@ionio.gr

Karampela Sofia

Assistant Professor, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, School of Economics

skarampela@econ.auth.gr

Malesios Chrisovalantis

Associate Professor, Agricultural University of Athens, Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Development

malesios@aua.gr

Kizos Thanasis

Professor, University of Aegean, Department of Geography

akizos@aegean.gr

Abstract

Tourism is a powerful driver of urban and regional development, yet its sustainability increasingly depends on the balance between economic benefits, cultural heritage preservation, and the well-being of visitors and residents. In this context, happiness has emerged as a key dimension of sustainable tourism, reflecting the extent to which destinations provide not only memorable experiences but also contribute to quality of life. This study explores the relationship between happiness and tourism in the urban environment of Athens, focusing on international visitors participating in guided tours of the Acropolis. Drawing on primary research conducted over the past two years, the study investigates how overtourism—characterized by crowding, congestion, and extended waiting times—affects tourists’ emotional responses, satisfaction, and overall perception of the destination.

Findings reveal that, while the Acropolis continues to inspire admiration due to its cultural and historical significance, excessive visitor numbers during peak months negatively impact tourists’ sense of happiness, reducing both personal fulfillment and the perceived quality of the experience. Nevertheless, the research highlights the role of guiding and storytelling in mitigating these challenges, with many respondents noting that interpretive engagement enhanced their connection to the site despite adverse conditions.

These insights contribute to the broader debate on sustainable urban and regional tourism development. Specifically, they emphasize the need for destination management strategies that regulate visitor flows, protect cultural assets, and ensure positive visitor experiences. Such approaches align with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly those related to sustainable cities and communities, responsible consumption and production, and the protection of cultural heritage. By integrating tourist happiness into urban planning and heritage management, destinations like Athens can enhance resilience, safeguard authenticity, and promote sustainable development that benefits both visitors and local communities.

Keywords: happiness, overtourism, urban tourism, sustainability, Athens, Acropolis

GEOTOURISM AS A TOOL FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT: THE CASE OF LAVREOTIKI'S GEOPARK

Mezantonakis Georgios

MSc, Harokopio University of Athens, School of Environment Geography and Applied Economics

hp12235108@hua.gr

Skoultos Sofoklis

Assistant Professor, Harokopio University of Athens, School of Environment Geography and Applied Economics

skoultos@hua.gr

Abstract

Tourism development is one of the most important sources of economic and social progress for Greece, but in some cases it creates environmental degradation, mainly in popular tourist destinations. In this context, alternative forms of tourism emerge as the most appropriate strategies to promote a balanced and sustainable tourism model. In particular, Geotourism focuses on highlighting the geological heritage, the natural landscape, the cultural identity, while combining recreation, education and the sustainable management of the natural resources of each region.

This paper examines the area of Lavreotiki where "UNESCO World Geopark of Lavreotiki" is located. Lavreotiki is an area with rich geological and cultural heritage, as well as a long mining history and combines rare mining monuments, geological formations, archaeological sites and traditional rural settlements, offering a unique tourist product. Primary data has been collected through quantitative research to examine the perspective of residents and visitors. Useful recommendations and implications derived from the data analysis for local authorities and professionals. Through the development of Georoutes, the highlighting of mining and cultural heritage, the Geopark can contribute to the strengthening of the local economy, the environmental education of residents and visitors and lay the foundations for sustainable tourism development.

Key words: Alternative tourism, Geotourism, Sustainable Tourism Development, Geoparks

SESSION

“Environmental Sustainability- Waste Management-Circular Economy”

Chaired by **Prof Brzezińska-Rawa Anna** and
Prof Theodoropoulou Eleni

THE BOTTLE-NECK OF SUSTAINABLE GOVERNANCE: LEGAL AMBIGUITIES IN POLAND'S MUNICIPAL WASTE MANAGEMENT AND THE EPR-BASED DEPOSIT SYSTEM

Karpus Karolina

Assistant Professor, Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń (Poland), Faculty of Law and Administration, Department of Environmental Law and PEL

kkarpus@umk.pl

Abstract

The need for transparency, efficiency, and legitimacy in environmental governance, particularly in municipal waste management, is underscored by Sustainable Development Goal 16 (targets 16.6 and 16.7). Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), as an instrument aligned with this Goal and the Circular Economy paradigm, continues to generate challenges across all levels of contemporary legal system. Particular difficulties have been observed in the allocation of competences between central and local authorities, as well as between public institutions and private producers. These governance and regulatory gaps are evident in Poland, an EU Member State currently developing a national deposit-refund system for beverage containers.

The Polish legal and institutional framework governing municipal waste management has been analysed to identify structural weaknesses affecting EPR implementation. Special attention has been given to the legal ambiguity surrounding the distribution of duties between municipalities and producers, and the implications this has for the effectiveness of the deposit system. As a result, regulatory fragmentation, implementation delays, and insufficient coordination have been observed, undermining the achievement of sustainability targets required by EU law, particularly the Waste Framework Directive and the Single-Use Plastics Directive.

A legal doctrinal approach has been combined with analysis of national policy acts. Through this method, tensions have been identified between environmental protection as a constitutional obligation and the practical functioning of a decentralised governance system. It is concluded that the effective realisation of the EPR requires a redefinition of institutional roles and the introduction of clearer legal obligations concerning producer responsibility and municipal capacity.

Key words: Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), municipal waste management, deposit-refund system, environmental governance, legal fragmentation

BALANCING SUSTAINABILITY AND PERFORMANCE: COMPARING RECYCLED, BIO-BASED AND LOW-CARBON MATERIALS USING AHP

Zambujal-Oliveira João

NOVA LINES (FCT), University of Madeira (FCS)

[*joliveira@staff.uma.pt*](mailto:joliveira@staff.uma.pt)

Abstract

Choosing sustainable materials involves balancing environmental impact, cost, performance, and supply risks. This study presents a practical framework to compare three alternatives—recycled, bio-based, and low-carbon virgin materials—using the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP). Each material is characterized with clear definitions, technical properties, and measurable indicators tied to key criteria such as carbon footprint, availability, cost, performance, and circularity.

Quantitative data are normalized and converted into pairwise comparisons, while qualitative aspects are captured through expert judgment. A worked example on lifecycle emissions illustrates how raw data can be transformed into actionable AHP weights. The framework also provides guidance for data collection, stakeholder engagement, and sensitivity analysis.

By combining measurable metrics with expert insights, this approach helps practitioners make transparent, evidence-based decisions to select materials that balance sustainability objectives with practical operational requirements.

Keywords: Sustainability, recycled, bio-based, and low-carbon virgin materials, Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP)

CIRCULAR ECONOMY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT – EXAMPLES OF THE POLISH EXPERIENCE

Brzezińska-Rawa Anna

Professor, Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń (Poland), Faculty of Law and Administration, Department of Environmental Law and Public Economic Law
rawa@umk.pl

Abstract

This paper explores the intersection of circular economy (CE) practices and sustainable development (SD) in Poland, highlighting national strategies and local initiatives that support long-term environmental and economic resilience. The analysis focuses on key Polish policies aligned with the European Green Deal and the Circular Economy Action Plan, with particular emphasis on waste management and urban sustainability.

Methodologically, the study adopts a mixed-methods approach, combining policy document analysis, national statistical data from the Supreme Audit Office, and a case study from the city of Łódź. The Łódź example illustrates innovative municipal approaches to circularity, such as reuse parks, zero-waste programs, and circular construction models.

Although Poland faces systemic challenges - including uneven regional capacity, low recycling rates, and a declining material circularity rate (7.5% in 2023 vs. the EU average of 11.8%) - emerging practices reveal the potential for scalable, locally adapted solutions. Cities are increasingly leveraging EU funding, public-private partnerships, and grassroots innovation to support measurable progress in CE implementation.

Intended for an international audience of researchers, policymakers, and practitioners, this paper provides practical insights into how a post-transition European economy is applying circular principles under real-world constraints.

The final findings indicate that recycling and the preparation of materials for reuse have declined, and material circularity has worsened in recent years. Nevertheless, new circular initiatives are gaining public attention and gradually generating both environmental and socio-economic benefits. The paper concludes with recommendations for scaling these practices and aligning them with Poland's sustainable development goals, including the UN Agenda 2030.

Keywords: Circular economy, sustainable development, Poland, waste management, urban sustainability, EU Green Deal, post-transition economies

CIRCULAR BIOECONOMY TO SUPPORT THE GREEN TRANSITION IN INSULAR AREAS

Klontza Eleftheria

Research Associate, University of the Aegean, Department of Environment, University Hill, GR-81100 Mytilene, Greece

eleftheria.klontza@aegean.gr

Lekkas Demetris-Francis

Professor, University of the Aegean, Department of Environment, University Hill, GR-81100 Mytilene, Greece

dlekkas@aegean.gr

Abstract

Insular regions face challenges such as energy deficit, a declining agricultural sector, deteriorating water and soil quality, a rise in the risk of natural disasters brought on by climate change, coastal pollution, ineffective biowaste management, deteriorating ecosystems, a loss of biodiversity, etc. Circular and resource-efficient economic models, which consider the entire material cycle to promote reuse as well as waste reduction and efficient resource utilization, are increasingly replacing linear economic models based on production-consumption-disposal systems. Bioeconomy covers a wide range of sectors and systems which are based on biological resources (animals, plants, microorganisms, and biomass, including organic waste), their functions and principles. The transition to circular bioeconomy will be further reinforced through the development and uptake of innovative technologies as well as the training of scientists and researchers through the collaborative ecosystem at national and international level. This work aims to present a holistic approach which combines the recovery and valorization of biological resources, promotes sustainability and protects the natural environment. The approach is organized into four pillars as follows: (a) sustainable production and management of biomass, (b) sustainable water resources and soil management using nature-based solutions, (c) recycling of materials and production of new products, (d) reduction of the environmental footprint in the tourism industry.

The overall objective of the study is the adoption of the EU Bioeconomy Strategy making sure it reflects the specific conditions of the island regions. This can lead to new jobs, contribution to achieve carbon neutrality, shift to the circular economy model, harnessing of healthy natural ecosystem as well as modernisation and strengthening industry.

Key words: circular economy, bioeconomy, resource recovery, insular regions, environmental footprint

EXAMINING CIRCULAR ECONOMY BARRIERS, DRIVERS AND SPECIFICATIONS IN THE CONSTRUCTION SECTOR: KEY STAKEHOLDERS' SURVEY

Oikonomou I. Theoni

PhD Candidate, Harokopio University of Athens, School of Environment, Geography and Applied Economics, Department of Economics and Sustainable Development

thoikonomou@hua.gr

Researcher, Centre for Renewable Energy Sources and Saving, Renewable Energy Sources Division, Geothermal Energy Department, Greece

thoikonomou@cres.gr

Karytsas Spyridon

Researcher, Centre for Renewable Energy Sources and Saving, Renewable Energy Sources Division, Geothermal Energy Department, Greece

spkary@cres.gr

Karytsas Constantine

Director, Centre for Renewable Energy Sources and Saving, Renewable Energy Sources Division, Greece

kkari@cres.gr

Theodoropoulou Eleni

Professor, Harokopio University of Athens, School of Environment Geography and Applied Economics, Department of Economics and Sustainable Development

etheodo@hua.gr

Abstract

The construction sector significantly impacts energy consumption, raw materials usage, and waste production, making the adoption of Circular Economy (CE) essential for sustainability and carbon neutrality. To this end, it is important to develop a strategy that engages key stakeholders in identifying the necessary actions to integrate CE into climate mitigation efforts.

To achieve this objective, a survey was designed, organised, and conducted to examine key stakeholders' perceptions of the circular economy in the construction sector, focusing on the identification of specifications/ requirements, barriers, and drivers that could enhance the implementation of CE practices. The target audience of the survey was stakeholders from the research, academic, industrial, policy, and construction sectors.

The survey was initiated with a literature analysis, the findings of which, combined with additional feedback from key stakeholders in the field of CE and sustainable development, led to the development of the survey questionnaire. The questionnaire was created on the Google Forms platform. The QR code and link to the survey were distributed to key stakeholders via email, as well as during workshops and conferences on related to the survey topics.

The collection of interviews was conducted between June 2024 and April 2025, resulting in a sample of 114 questionnaires from nearly 30 European countries. A dataset was created that incorporated all selected responses. Statistical analysis of the dataset was performed using the SPSS 20 statistical package and Microsoft Excel 2021.

The results of the statistical analysis showed that perceptions of certain CE specifications/requirements - particularly safety, contribution to climate mitigation, and

environmental impact - are prioritised over aesthetic and implementation-related factors. Notably, barriers such as cost-related aspects, lack of government support and regulatory framework are perceived as the most significant obstacles, while drivers like established markets for circular materials and innovation funding are considered key enablers.

Keywords: Circular economy, construction sector, barriers, drivers, specifications, stakeholders, perceptions

Acknowledgments

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This output reflects only the authors' view and the European Union cannot be held responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.

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EXAMINING THE “RETHINK” AND “REFUSE” CIRCULAR ECONOMY PRACTICES IN THE CONSTRUCTION SECTOR: RESULTS FROM A SURVEY FOCUSED ON YOUTH ACROSS SEVEN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

Karytsas Spyridon

Researcher, Centre for Renewable Energy Sources and Saving, Division of RES Technologies, Geothermal Energy and CO₂ Capture Department, Greece

spkary@cres.gr

Oikonomou I. Theoni

Researcher, Centre for Renewable Energy Sources and Saving, Division of RES Technologies, Geothermal Energy and CO₂ Capture Department, Greece

thoikonomou@cres.gr

Lima Ana Teresa

Senior Researcher, DTU Sustain, Section for Materials and Durability

atmli@dtu.dk

Mao Ruichang

Post-Doctoral, DTU Sustain, Section for Materials and Durability

rmao@dtu.dk

Aloini Davide

Professor, University of Pisa, DESTEC

Davide.aloini@unipi.it

Zerbino Pierluigi

Senior Researcher, University of Pisa, DESTEC

Pierluigi.zerbino@unipi.it

SánchezMaría Nuria

Senior Researcher, CIEMAT, Energy Department

nuria.sanchez@ciemat.es

Moreno Helena López

Senior Researcher, CIEMAT, Energy Department

Helena.Lopez@ciemat.es

Calvo Oscar Seco

Senior Researcher, CIEMAT, Energy Department

oscar.seco@ciemat.es

Kostakis Ioannis

Assistant Professor, Harokopio University of Athens, School of Environment Geography and Applied Economics, Department of Economics and Sustainable Development

ikostakis@hua.gr

Dürr H. Hans

Ph.D., Senior Researcher, Engineering Hydrology and Water Resources Management, Ruhr University Bochum, Germany

hans.duerr@rub.de

Sameer Husam

Ph.D., Post-Doctoral, Engineering Hydrology and Water Resources Management, Ruhr University Bochum, Germany

Husam.Sameer@hydrology.ruhr-uni-bochum.de

Simoes G. Sofia

Principal Researcher, LNEG - Laboratório Nacional de Energia e Geologia, Portugal

Sofia.simoes@lneg.pt

Barbosa Juliana

Researcher, LNEG - Laboratório Nacional de Energia e Geologia, Portugal

Juliana.barbosa@lneg.pt

Genovese Andrea

Professor, Sheffield University Management School, Sheffield (UK)

a.genovese@sheffield.ac.uk

Guru Ram Venkataraman

Post-Doctoral Research Associate, Sheffield University Management School, Sheffield (UK)

r.vg@sheffield.ac.uk

Karytsas Constantine

Director, Centre for Renewable Energy Sources and Saving, Division of RES Technologies, Greece

kkari@cres.gr

Abstract

The CO2NSTRUCT project aims to develop strategies for quantifying citizen behaviour and stakeholder opinions regarding circular economy (CE) practices in the construction sector, to enhance climate change mitigation models. In this regard, a survey on young citizens' attitudes towards high-level CE practices like “Rethink” and “Refuse” was planned and carried out.

The survey explored young citizens' attitudes toward the adoption of CE practices in construction, such as sharing residences, living in smaller or bio-based buildings, and engaging in shared study spaces or workspaces. The factors that may affect this decision were also evaluated, including economic, environmental, and social reasons, as well as living/ studying/ working conditions (depending on the case).

The survey was conducted between May and August 2025 across seven European countries (Denmark, Germany, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain, the UK), including 285 participants under 36 years old. The survey unveiled interesting attitudes, with a general openness to adopting certain CE practices such as living in smaller or bio-based constructed homes, and sharing study and workspaces. Economic reasons emerge as the primary motivator influencing willingness in the case of sharing a residence or living in a smaller one, while environmental considerations are particularly influential in decisions related to bio-

based materials. In the case of sharing studying or working spaces, the provided conditions are perceived as the leading factor.

Attitudes vary on a country level, influenced by factors like income, age, and residence characteristics, but show no gender differences. The findings highlight the importance of tailored strategies to promote CE adoption, emphasizing awareness of environmental benefits and addressing economic barriers to foster a more sustainable and circular construction sector.

Keywords: Circular economy, construction sector, rethink, refuse, sharing, motivators, survey

Acknowledgments

This research has been supported by the European Union's Horizon Europe research and innovation program, under grant agreement No. 101056862, CO2NSTRUCT project.

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SESSION

“Consumers and Sustainability”

Chaired by **Prof Sardianou Eleni** and
Kostakis Ioannis

PERSUASIVE TECHNOLOGIES AND SUSTAINABLE CONSUMER BEHAVIOR: A BIBLIOMETRIC MAPPING OF RESEARCH TRENDS (2015–2025)

Achamnou G Panagiota

PhD Candidate, Department of Economics and Sustainable Development, Harokopio University of Athens, Greece
pachamnou@hua.gr

Sardianou Eleni

Professor, Department of Economics and Sustainable Development, Harokopio University of Athens, Greece
esardianou@hua.gr

Kalantonis Petros

Professor, Department of Tourism Management, University of West Attica, Greece
pkalant@uniwa.gr

Kostakis Ioannis

Assistant Professor, Department of Economics and Sustainable Development, Harokopio University of Athens, Greece
ikostakis@hua.gr

Abstract

This study explores the evolution of academic research linking persuasive technologies with sustainable consumer behavior over the period 2015–2025. A bibliometric analysis is conducted using data retrieved from the Scopus database, with VOSviewer employed to visualize keyword co-occurrence and thematic clusters. The analysis maps prevailing research directions, influential publications and emerging interdisciplinary connections, reflecting the growing interest in how digital interventions may influence sustainable consumption patterns. The findings provide a structured overview of the intellectual landscape in this field, offering valuable insights into the trajectory of research and contributing to the understanding of how persuasive technologies can be positioned as tools to foster environmental and social responsibility.

Keywords: Persuasive technologies, consumer behavior, sustainability, sustainable consumption, bibliometric analysis, VOSviewer.

LAST-MILE DELIVERY WITH DRONES IN AN URBAN ENVIRONMENT. EMPIRICAL STUDY ON CONSUMER PERCEPTIONS.

Darras George

Department of Economics and Sustainable Development, Harokopio University of Athens, Greece

hs216014@hua.gr

Malindretos George

Professor, Department of Economics and Sustainable Development, Harokopio University of Athens, Greece

gmal@hua.gr

Kostakis Ioannis

Assistant Professor, Department of Economics and Sustainable Development, Harokopio University of Athens, Greece

ikostakis@hua.gr

Karametou Panagiota

PhD, Member of the Laboratory Teaching Staff, Department of Economics and Sustainable Development, Harokopio University of Athens

karametou@hua.gr

Abstract

This study explores the prospects and challenges of using drones as an alternative means of transport for last-mile delivery within modern logistics networks. It investigates the technological, environmental, and economic aspects of drone delivery, focusing on how these systems can enhance efficiency and sustainability in the supply chain. The research combines a theoretical analysis of global and Greek case studies with an empirical survey conducted among 261 participants from the general public. The findings reveal a generally positive perception of drone deliveries, emphasizing speed, reduced environmental impact, and improved accessibility as key benefits, while highlighting concerns related to safety, regulation, and privacy. The results suggest that drones can play a crucial role in reshaping last-mile logistics, provided that policy frameworks and technological infrastructures evolve accordingly. Finally, the study proposes practical recommendations for integrating drone technology into sustainable logistics models and urban delivery systems.

Keywords: Logistics, last-mile deliveries, drones, city Logistics

MEASURING THE EFFECTS ON WELL-BEING, SELF EFFICIENCY AND EMPLOYABILITY OF VULNERABLE POPULATION GROUP AFTER IMPLEMENTING A PLATFORM FOR MENTORING

Spyridaki Aikaterini

PhD Candidate of Hellenic Mediterranean University, Department of Social Work

kspiridaki@hmu.gr

Papadakaki Maria

Associate Professor of the Hellenic Mediterranean University Department of Social Work

mpapadakaki@hmu.gr

Vassilakis Kostas

Professor of the Hellenic Mediterranean University, Department of Electrical Engineering

kostas@hmu.gr

Markakis George

Professor of the Hellenic Mediterranean University, Department of Social Work

gmark@hmu.gr

Abstract

Background. Mentoring is a modern method for a job expert to be communicated with person that they need a personalized direction for seeking or addressing for a job. E-mentoring is the evolution of mentoring applying through electronic communication technologies. E-mentoring advantages were many including flexibility and broader reach. The study aimed to explore thementees' views and perceptions regarding their skills, competences and employability after the usage of an e-mentoring program offered by the Hellenic Mediterranean University at regional level during 2021-2022 to individuals belonging to vulnerable groups (e.g. long-term unemployed, single parents, immigrants, individuals with ADHD / ASD disorders and other disabilities) who were beneficiaries of material support and received social benefits via the municipality social services under the FAED program in Crete region.

Methods: Eligible to participate in the study were all the individuals, who fulfilled the criteria (a. beneficiaries of social/material benefits, b. residents of Crete region, c. participants in the e-mentoring program). Eligible individuals were asked to define the degree of agreement with 34 statements concerning: the evaluation of the e-mentoring platform as well as skills acquisition, job inquiry outcomes and emotional changes experienced after the program. Twenty-three of the statements were responded on a 6-point likert scale anchoring from "1=disagree" to "6=agree" and eleven statements had a "no-maybe-yes" response.

Results. A total of 105 individuals responded to the inquiry. All statements showed a mean level of agreement to partly agree with the statements. Sex of participants showed to affect only a specific statement related to the affection of professional growth. Educational levels are shown to affect professional growth, improvement of skills, emotional distress, improvement of self-efficacy and improvement of well-being.

Conclusion. The usage of an e-mentoring platform on vulnerable populations groups showed a lot of benefits not only on their occupation status, growth or skills improvements but there is also a clear effect on self-esteem, optimism and well-being. w

Key words: vulnerable population, e-mentoring, self-efficiency, employability

PRE – ORGANISED SPECIAL SESSION

“Virtual cities” and social sustainability in EU framework- Cultural, sociological and communication perspectives”

Organised and Chaired by **Dr Bokolas Vassilis, Prof
Vassilakou Tonia, Prof Colantoni Andrea, Assoc Prof
Ferrigni Nicola, Prof Kaperonis Stavros, Assoc Prof
Nosova Bogdana and Ntrouva Efi**

USER EXPERIENCE AND DIGITAL SKILLS IN VIRTUAL GAMIFIED ENVIRONMENTS: BETWEEN SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND EUROPEAN POLICY GUIDELINES

Kaperonis Stavros

Assistant Professor, University of Social and Political Sciences, Department of Communication, Media and Culture, Greece

skap@panteion.gr

Bokolas Vassilis

PhD, Coordinator, Scientific director, XENIOS POLIS, Greece, Neapolis University, Pafos-Cyprus

vbokolas@xeniospolis.gr

Abstract

Digital evolution and the consequent digital transformation that is taking place in all dimensions of economic, social and cultural life is strongly linked to the need for education and training of the population in modern digital skills. At the same time, current research shows that digital games [a pioneering industry with a global economic impact, which is the first to develop/integrate digital innovations, e.g. AI] are being used in all areas of human activity (particularly in the fields of medicine, vocational training, etc.).

User experience (UX) in gamified environments constitutes a critical factor for the effectiveness of the learning process and the development of digital skills. According to research findings, the quality of user experience directly influences the level of engagement, intrinsic motivation, and user satisfaction. Design elements such as interface intuitiveness, immediate feedback, system adaptability (adaptive learning paths), and the balance between challenge and competence (flow theory) contribute decisively to the learning experience. Furthermore, positive user experience is associated with enhanced knowledge retention and transfer of skills to real-world contexts.

In parallel, digital games and gamification strategies are first-class tools for the self-directed training of people in the new skills required. In this context, the EU welcomes and at the same time invests in digital games by establishing the appropriate legal framework but, above all, by funding innovative projects.

Key words: digital skills, gamification, user experience, training

PRECARIOUS EMPLOYMENT IN THE GIG ECONOMY: UNVEILING THE EFFECTS OF WORK CONDITIONS ON THE HEALTH AND QUALITY OF LIFE OF MIGRANT FOOD DELIVERY WORKERS

Theodoros Fouskas

University of West Attica, Greece

tfouskas@uniwa.gr

Tonia Vasilakou

University of West Attica, Greece

tvasilakou@uniwa.gr

George Koulierakis

University of West Attica, Greece

tvasilakou@uniwa.gr

Charalambos Economou

Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences, Greece

economou@panteion.gr

Despoina Papadopoulou

Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences, Greece

dpapado@panteion.gr

Manos Spyridakis

National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece

maspy@soc.uoa.gr

Petros Galanis

National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece

pegalan@nurs.uoa.gr

Maria-Teresa Terron Caro

Pablo de Olavide University, Spain

mttercar@upo.es

Zoran Lapov

University of Florence, Italy

zoran.lapov@unifi.it

Anastasia Papachristou

Ministry of Health, Greece

apapachristou@moh.gov.gr

Maria Petraki

University of the Peloponnese, Greece

m.petraki@uop.gr

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

3rd Open-Air Cities International Conference “Local & Regional Sustainable Development and Urban Reconstruction”, Harokopio University of Athens, December 5-7, 2025

Athanasios Raptis

National School of Public Administration and Local Government, Greece

araptis@ekdd.gr

Anastasios Chondrogiannis

National School of Public Administration and Local Government, Greece

achondrogiannis@ekdd.gr

Panagiotis Zikas

University of West Attica, Greece

pzikas@uniwa.gr

Panagiotis Spiliopoulos

University of West Attica, Greece

pspiliopoulos@uniwa.gr

Sintorela Chamiti

University of West Attica, Greece

schamiti@uniwa.gr

Athanasίου Stefanos

University of West Attica, Greece

mdy22090@uniwa.gr

Alexandros Tziolas

University of West Attica, Greece

mdy22121@uniwa.gr

Abstract

Migrant food delivery workers are essential participants in the worldwide gig economy. Migrant workers form the essential workforce for businesses yet they face recurring changes in their employment conditions. Working in this field requires great effort because it involves dangerous physical conditions. The paper followed PRISMA methodology to perform a systematic literature review. Research shows that people who work at minimum wage experience multiple negative health effects and unstable work schedules and economic instability and dangerous workplace environments. The need to meet customer needs causes employees to rush their work which produces increased workplace tension. Customer demands for fast delivery cause employers to push workers into prolonged work hours by making them work overtime and night shifts with insufficient time for rest. Workers face dangerous working conditions when severe weather strikes and their daily commute becomes dangerous because of accidents which negatively affect their life quality.

Key words: migrant workers; food delivery; couriers; precarious employment; low-status work, health; quality of life; gig economy; working conditions

VIRTUAL VULNERABILITIES AND REAL OBLIGATIONS: RETHINKING COMPENSATION PRACTICES IN DIGITALLY MEDIATED RESEARCH

Ahimbisibwe Osborn

Principal Investigator: PhD Candidate, Uganda Christian University, Research Ethics manager, Uganda Christian University

oahimbisibwe@ucu.ac.ug

Rozynska Joanna

Academic Supervisor: Professor, University of Warsaw, Poland, Research Ethics, Bioethics, and Research participants Compensation expert

j.rozynska@uw.edu.pl

Napakol Angella

Co-investigator: Associate Professor, Risk and Health Communication expert, Director Academic Affairs, Uganda Christian University

anapakol@ucu.ac.ug

Abstract

The growing use of online platforms and digital tools in research has redefined the relationship between investigators and participants. While digitally mediated participation reduces physical risks associated with in-person engagement, it generates new forms of virtual vulnerability, including privacy breaches, algorithmic exploitation, digital exclusion, and inequitable access. These risks complicate how participants' rights and welfare are protected, and how compensation practices are ethically justified.

This study investigates stakeholder perspectives on compensating online research participants in Uganda, focusing on Research Ethics Committees, regulatory bodies, institutional managers, and funders. Guided by Social Exchange Theory and Rawls' Theory of Justice, the research explores how reciprocity and fairness are understood when participation occurs in digital environments.

Adopting a qualitative case study design, the study employs semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and key informant interviews, analyzed thematically with NVivo. Preliminary findings suggest that stakeholders perceive digital participation as lowering traditional inconveniences (e.g., travel) while raising new ethical obligations around privacy, inclusivity, and protection of vulnerable populations.

The paper contributes both conceptually and practically by proposing context-sensitive guidelines for compensating participants in digital research within low- and middle-income settings. These insights inform global debates on research ethics, responsible conduct, and integrity in an increasingly digitalized research landscape.

Key words: Research ethics; Participant compensation; Online participation; Virtual vulnerabilities; Reciprocity; Research integrity

VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENTS AND THE ELDERLY: RESEARCH, GOOD PRACTICES, AND TRAINING IN DIGITAL SKILLS IN THE EUROPEAN CONTEXT

Dimitrakopoulos Chris

Coordinator, Aenaios Zoi – Antonis Balis
development@balisproperties.gr

Tsintari Elena

Researcher, GRIPENEUROPE
elenatsintari@gripeneurope.eu

Abstract

The European Union considers digital environments and their development as key factors directly connected to social cohesion and citizens' well-being. The rapid expansion of virtual environments presents both opportunities and challenges; the latter mainly concern accessibility, education, security, and the alignment of all age groups with digital developments. Addressing these issues requires coordinated action by member states, institutions, and organizations focused on education and innovation. In response to this dynamic, the EU has developed a series of initiatives that promote the development of digital skills and the active participation of citizens in the digital transformation.

In this context, the digital education of the elderly and the enhancement of their presence in virtual environments are gaining increasing importance, as they are linked to social participation and the improvement of quality of life. This approach is also aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goals 4 (quality education), 10 (reduced inequalities), and 3 (good health and well-being), which promote equal access to knowledge, lifelong learning, and the well-being of all age groups in the digital era.

The objective of the present study unfolds in two directions. On the first level, it aims to map and analyze both European organizations and initiatives, as well as distinguished best practices that promote digital inclusion, virtual learning environments, and the development of digital skills among the elderly. On the second level, the study draws data from EU-funded program databases in order to identify, systematize, and present innovative projects that have been implemented in the field of digital skills development for older adults—particularly in relation to their social inclusion and overall care. The combination of these two levels of research is expected to provide a comprehensive picture of the European landscape, highlighting examples of policies, institutions, and practices that support digital transformation, inclusion, and the participation of the elderly in the emerging digital reality.

Key words: virtual environments, elderly, digital skills, social inclusion

DIGITAL RELIGIOUS RHETORIC AND MEDIA LITERACY IN EUROPEAN CONTEXT: RESEARCH, GUIDELINES AND POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Mandrapilias Tasos

Phd, renaissance philosophy and rhetoric

mandrapilias242@gmail.com

Zotou Danai

Primary General and Special Education Teacher, MSc in Educational Psychology

danaizwtou@gmail.com

Abstract

In the contemporary digital era, religious rhetoric emerges as a multidimensional and continuously evolving field of discourse, developing and transforming within online media, social networks, and cross-platform forms of social engagement. Digital platforms, with their capacity to combine multimodal content and direct interaction, significantly influence the ways in which citizens perceive, process, and reproduce religious narratives. At the same time, the increasing phenomena of misinformation, ideological polarization, and the diffusion of unverified religious or cultural content render digital literacy and media education central priorities within the European Union (EU) policy agenda, particularly regarding the protection of democracy, social cohesion, and intercultural dialogue.

The aim of the present study is twofold. First, it investigates the role of digital religious rhetoric in shaping attitudes, perceptions, and social behaviors through an extensive review and analysis of the international literature. It highlights the function of digital media as multipliers of religious discourse, enhancing citizens' access to and participation in it, while simultaneously amplifying the risk of disseminating false or extreme narratives. Secondly, the study provides an initial examination of the relevant EU policy frameworks that seek to foster digital critical thinking skills, promote the recognition of reliable sources, and strengthen citizens' resilience against misinformation in matters of religion. In parallel, data drawn from EU-funded programme databases are analysed in order to identify innovative initiatives implemented in this field and to systematize their findings.

The EU appears to invest in the enhancement of digital literacy and responsible communication, aiming to shape a safe, inclusive, and culturally sensitive digital public sphere. The present study—aligned with European policy orientations—seeks to contribute to the academic discourse on managing religious rhetoric in the digital environment by mapping the field and proposing the development of interdisciplinary approaches and international collaborations with a strong social orientation.

Keywords: digital religious rhetoric, European policies, digital literacy, communication, misinformation, social cohesion

DEVELOPING GREEN ENTERPRISE THROUGH INTEGRATED PCI-PGI GOVERNANCE AND DDCI EVIDENCE IN BAC NINH, VIETNAM

Trung-Luan Nguyen

MSc, Lecturer, Hanoi University of Civil Engineering, Hanoi, Vietnam

<https://orcid.org/0009-0004-3543-739X>

luannt1@huce.edu.vn

Anh-Tai Do

Assoc. Prof., Phenikaa University, Hanoi, Vietnam

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6976-0150>

tai.doanh@phenikaa-uni.edu.vn

Abstract

Green enterprise development is increasingly central to provincial governance in Viet Nam, where local authorities must pursue competitiveness while aligning with national sustainability goals. Provinces are assessed through the Provincial Competitiveness Index (PCI) and the Provincial Green Index (PGI). In practice, these agendas are often implemented separately, creating coordination gaps in policy design and delivery. The present paper examines how green enterprise development can be advanced when PCI and PGI are integrated and informed by officially published DDCI evidence on enterprise perceptions.

Bac Ninh is selected as the case study. The analysis focuses on what the 2025 DDCI program reports about the business environment—transparency, time costs, informal costs—and about expectations related to green transition. The initial objective is to present a coherent design for developing green enterprises at the provincial level based on existing, publicly available findings. A parallel objective is to specify a practical policy bundle that is compatible with routine PCI/PGI monitoring and sub-national implementation capacity.

Methods consist of secondary analysis of published DDCI materials, a restatement of survey scope, and a structured mapping of reported insights to policy levers commonly used in PCI/PGI practice (digitalized procedures, ESG disclosure, human-capital programs, green finance, green public procurement, and public recognition schemes). Findings are synthesized by firm scale (SMEs, medium firms, large/FDI) and by location (urban and non-urban).

Results indicate that public spaces of policy—administrative procedures, advisory services, finance, and recognition—are widely “used” by enterprises for economic and organizational reasons, while green transition instruments are perceived as important across the board. During periods of heightened administrative constraints or external shocks, these instruments are used primarily for basic compliance and business continuity; under more normal conditions, they are used for capability upgrading and market positioning. Overall, differentiated access and readiness suggest targeted, tiered support rather than a single, uniform scheme.

Key words: Green enterprise development; PCI; PGI; DDCI; sub-national governance

THE INCLUSION OF INDIVIDUALS WITH NEURODEVELOPMENTAL DISORDERS IN THE CONTEXT OF SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT: EDUCATION, INFRASTRUCTURE, AND SOCIAL COHESION

Zerva Irini

Post Doctoral Researcher, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, School of Medicine

zervaeirini@auth.gr

Adjunct Lecturer, Neapolis Pafos University, Health Sciences School, Psychology Department

e.zerva@nup.ac.cy

zervaeir@gmail.com

Koundourou Christiana

Lecturer, Neapolis Pafos University, Health Sciences School, Psychology Department

c.koundourou@nup.ac.cy

Bonti Eleni

Assoc. Professor, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, School of Medicine

bonti@auth.gr

elina.bonti@gmail.com

Abstract

Contemporary discourse on sustainable urban development must not overlook the imperative of genuine social inclusion for individuals with neurodevelopmental disorders, such as autism and dyslexia. While special education has made significant strides within the educational sphere, substantial gaps remain in the creation of urban environments that support the functional independence and full social participation of these individuals, particularly in adulthood.

This presentation explores through a literature review how cities can become more welcoming and accessible for autistic individuals—who often face challenges related to sensory processing, social navigation, and access to services—as well as for dyslexic citizens, who encounter obstacles in reading public information, completing official forms, or orienting themselves through written signage. Drawing on international best practices, it is proposed a comprehensive urban policy framework that includes accessible public information, frontline staff training, neurodiversity-friendly urban design (e.g., quiet zones, dyslexia-friendly fonts, use of symbols), and enhanced cross-sector collaboration. The argument is made that social sustainability goes beyond ecological or economic considerations.

It is fundamentally defined by the extent to which cities ensure equal participation, autonomy, and dignity for all citizens, regardless of neurotypicality. Special education, when integrated with the principles of universal design, can act as a catalyst for a more inclusive and equitable urban future.

Keywords: neurodevelopmental disorders, autism, dyslexia, sustainable urban development, social inclusion, accessibility, urban policy, neurodiversity

GREEN AND SMART CITY APPROACHES: INSIGHTS FROM SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Judith Irene Nagasha*

PhD, Kyambogo University, Uganda, Faculty of Social Sciences
jnagasha@kyu.ac.ug

Simon Peter Musinguzi

PhD, Kyambogo University, Uganda, Faculty of Agriculture
msinguzisimonpeter@gmail.com

Anne Nakagiri,

PhD, Kyambogo University, Uganda, school of Engineering
anakagiri@kyu.ac.ug

Bosco Bwambale

PhD, Kyambogo University, Uganda, Faculty of Agriculture
bwmbwbosco@gmail.com

Abstract

In view of achieving sustainability and sustainable development in urban areas, approach of smart and green cities continues to emerge strongly. The simultaneous nature of both smartness and green elements allows for the synergies in limiting the carbon footprint.

In this study the aim is to review the progress, with lessons from sub-Saharan Africa. Based a systematic analysis of case studies, we expose the strengths and weaknesses to highlight on the way forward. This is still work in progress. So far, we notice a gradual adoption of digital technologies and infrastructure as well as the enhancement of green infrastructure and citizen well-being to manage rapid urbanization. Yet, however, a variety of gaps still characterise and outweigh the ongoing steps. These are categorised into ecological, socio-cultural, and economic gaps. Ecologically, the unreliable electricity grid coupled with the limited affordability comminute to push for the use of wood fuel in cities; socio-culturally, cities remain gender and culturally insensitive; and the economic activities remain largely untouched as there are scarce green jobs in addition to the increasing unemployment.

Our findings tentatively point to the need for a Green and Smart City package that is centred around a circular economy strategy that is not only socio-culturally sensitive. But also incorporates agroecological technique of production biogas that is convertible to electricity as green entrepreneurship venture for city citizens.

Key words: Urban Clean Energy, Urban Green Smartt, Green Jobs, Green Urbanism

ROLE OF INTRAPRENEURSHIP IN THE ENTREPRENEURIAL ORIENTATION OF UNIVERSITIES

Ines Troshani

PhD.C. European University of Tirana, Albania

ines.troshani@uet.edu.al

Dardane Nuka

PhD.C. European University of Tirana, Albania

dardane.nuka@uet.edu.al

Ketrina Mijo

Prof.Assoc. Dr. European University of Tirana, Albania

ketrina.cabiri@uet.edu.al

Kebjana Haka

European University of Tirana, Albania

kebjana.haka@uet.edu.al

Abstract

This study investigates how academic intrapreneurship shapes the entrepreneurial orientation (EO) of higher education institutions (HEIs) in Albania. Using a mixed-methods design that triangulates HEInnovate self-assessments with semi-structured interviews across six universities (public and private), we connect micro-level agency to meso-level routines and institutional change. We show that EO in universities is dimension-specific: opportunity seeking, innovativeness, risk management, and proactiveness evolve unevenly, contingent on governance arrangements, incentive systems, and organizational culture. Intrapreneurial actors navigate multiple institutional logics and perform identity work to reconcile academic norms with entrepreneurial aims. Private HEIs generally score higher on leadership and governance, entrepreneurial teaching and learning, and support for entrepreneurs, reflecting agile decision-making and stronger curricular integration; public HEIs display relative strengths in internationalization and knowledge exchange through EU-funded collaborations. Across all cases, measuring impact is the weakest dimension, indicating a systemic absence of tools to track and scale outcomes. Intrapreneurship operates as a bottom-up change mechanism—problem framing, coalition building, pilot legitimation, and routinization—through which internal services, programs, and partnerships become installed capabilities that gradually reconfigure structures. This study contributes by linking the micro-to-meso levels that turn intrapreneurial initiatives into organizational capabilities (advancing intrapreneurship research) and reframe EO in HE as a configurational, dimension-specific profile with identifiable boundary conditions and reconfiguration pathways (advancing EO scholarship).

Keywords: academic intrapreneurship, entrepreneurial orientation

ERASMUS+ GREENO2 AND GAME4CHANGE PROJECTS: SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY, COMMUNICATION, AND A SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Andrea Colantoni

Associate Professor, University of Tuscia

colantoni@unitus.it

Bogdana Nosova

Associate Professor, Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv

b.nosova@knu.ua

Nicola Ferrigni

Associate Professor, University of Tuscia

nicola.ferrigni@unitus.it

Simona Fallocco,

Assistant Professor, University of Tuscia

sfallocco@unitus.it

Giorgia Di Domenico

Ph.D. Candidate, University of Tuscia

giorgia.didomenico@unitus.it

Leonardo Bianchini

Assistant Professor, University of Tuscia

l.bianchini@unitus.it

Valerio Di Stefano

Ph.D. and Honorary Fellow, University of Tuscia

v.distefano@unitus.it

Abstract

In recent years, European policymakers and legislators have increasingly focused on environmental sustainability and sustainable development. This growing attention stems from the sharp rise in pollution levels, the overexploitation of natural resources, and, more broadly, the degradation of natural ecosystems. Against this backdrop, European research seeks to define new lines of action aimed at promoting the sustainable use of resources and fostering the ecological transition across all productive sectors.

In this context, communication and sociology provide essential theoretical frameworks for interpreting these issues, as they enable a deeper understanding of how individuals, institutions, and societies perceive, communicate, and act upon environmental challenges. They also help to connect technological and ecological innovation with social awareness, behavioural change, and participatory engagement.

Within this framework, Erasmus+ projects such as: GREENO2 – “Green Roofs in higher education institutions as sustainable cEnters for research, participation, ENvironmental consciousness and O2 generation” and GAME4CHANGE – “Digital Serious Games for Climate Change Education” aim to encourage and test innovative green solutions, particularly

through the application of nature-based solutions and the active involvement of citizens and the scientific community.

Educational and participatory tools, such as the serious games developed in the Game4Change project, have proven essential in raising awareness of environmental issues and in advancing the concept of social sustainability, understood as the shared commitment of citizens and communities to contribute to the objectives set by European environmental strategies. At the same time, the adoption of green infrastructures – such as green roofs – plays a strategic role in ensuring ecological transition in urban areas, helping to mitigate climate change and reduce land consumption. Furthermore, the possibility of implementing these structures in obsolete and aging buildings facilitates urban regeneration and increases social acceptance of sustainable innovation.

The aim of this paper is to present the preliminary results of the Erasmus+ GREENO2 and GAME4CHANGE projects, highlighting the crucial role of communication, sociology, gamification, and the educational process as key drivers for achieving environmental sustainability goals at the European level.

Key words: Social sustainability, Communication, Sociology, Green Transition, Environment Erasmus+.

DIGITAL SERIOUS GAMES FOR CLIMATE CHANGE EDUCATION: RESEARCH DATA AND FINDINGS

Bokolas Vassilis

PhD, Coordinator, Scientific director, XENIOS POLIS, Greece, Neapolis University, Pafos-Cyprus

vbokolas@xeniospolis.gr

Hordecki Bartosz

Ph.D., Associate Professor, Faculty of Political Science and Journalism

bartosz.hordecki@amu.edu.pl

Karametou Panagiota

Ph.D., Harokopio University of Athens

karametou@hua.gr

Katerynych Petro

Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv

petro.katerynych@knu.ua

Kornieiev Vitalii

D.Sc., Professor, Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv

vmkorn@knu.ua

Lorek Artur

MA, Faculty of Political Science and Journalism

artur.lorek@amu.edu.pl

Marto Anabela

Polytechnic University of Leiria

anabela.marto@ipleiria.pt

Mitoula Roido

Professor, Harokopio University of Athens

mitoula@hua.gr

Bogdana Nosova

Ph.D., Associate Professor, Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv

b.nosova@knu.ua

Ribeiro Roberto

Polytechnic University of Leiria

roberto.ribeiro@ipleiria.pt

Rodrigues Nuno

Polytechnic University of Leiria

nunorod@ipleiria.pt

Sakson-Boulet Anna

Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Faculty of Political Science and Journalism

anna.sakson@amu.edu.pl

Silva Fernando

Polytechnic University of Leiria

fernando.silva@ipleiria.pt

Tsimpoulis Giorgos

Researcher, Harokopio University of Athens

george.tsimpl@hotmail.gr

Katerina Tzika

Assistant researcher, XENIOS POLIS

ass.researcher@xeniospolis.gr

Volobuieva Anastasiia

Ph.D., Associate Professor, Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv

nastya_v@knu.ua

Abstract

In the current context of accelerating digital transformation, universities are attempting to modernize their teaching methods and educational approaches, especially in scientific fields such as the humanities and environmental studies.

Digital games, especially "serious games," have significant potential as educational tools, connecting higher education with real-world issues such as climate change and environmental protection. Studies have shown that digital games can enhance student motivation, engagement, and learning outcomes by using interactive and engaging methods to teach critical topics. However, despite their proven benefits, many academics lack the guidance and tools needed to integrate digital games into their teaching.

This study presents the research results of the transnational European project GAME4CHANGE. As part of the program, a mixed research approach was developed using questionnaires and focus groups in the six countries participating in the program (Portugal, Greece, Italy, Ukraine, Poland, and the Netherlands). The aim was to highlight the views and attitudes of students, teachers, and researchers on the role of serious games in higher education and their potential for teaching about key environmental issues (climate change). The data were analyzed using thematic analysis, focusing on pedagogical approaches, good practices in the use of games, and the development of university cooperation strategies.

Key words: digital games, serious games, environment, higher education

SESSION

“Education and Sustainable Development”

Chaired by **Prof Kaldi Stavroula** and
Dr Dologlou Maria

PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: EDUCATING ACTIVE CITIZENS FOR SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

Tassi Alexandra

Ph.D. Candidate, School of Physical Education and Sport Science, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece
alexatassi@phed.uoa.gr

Rachiotis Theodoros

Ph.D. Candidate, School of Physical Education and Sport Science, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece
theorax@phed.uoa.gr

Adamakis Manolis

Assistant Professor, School of Physical Education and Sport Science, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece
manosadam@phed.uoa.gr

Abstract

This study examines the role of Physical Education in advancing Education for Sustainable Development and its potential to empower students as future active citizens. The contribution builds on international frameworks such as the 2030 Agenda and UNESCO's Education for Sustainable Development roadmap, highlighting the transformative power of Physical Education in fostering sustainability-related competencies. The scope of this work is twofold: first, to demonstrate how Physical Education can serve as a vehicle for cultivating values such as empathy, cooperation, and responsibility; and second, to illustrate how these competencies can support broader social and political change.

The methodology combines a narrative synthesis of recent empirical and theoretical studies with practical examples drawn from primary school contexts. Special attention is given to experiential and cooperative learning approaches, outdoor education initiatives, and whole-school projects that integrate sustainability principles into Physical Education. Furthermore, the study reflects on the professional development of Physical Education teachers and the importance of equipping them with pedagogical strategies to embed Education for Sustainable Development in their teaching practices.

Findings indicate that Physical Education, when intentionally designed with sustainability objectives, can significantly enhance students' environmental awareness, social responsibility, and commitment to collective action. These outcomes align with core Sustainable Development Goals, particularly those related to health, quality education, equality, and climate action.

This study provides educators, researchers, and policymakers with insights into how Physical Education can contribute not only to educational reform but also to societal transformation. By reframing Physical Education as a medium for sustainability and citizenship, schools can become active agents of change in building more inclusive, resilient, and sustainable communities.

Key words: Physical Education, Sustainable Development Goals, Education for Sustainable Development, Active Citizenship, Transformative Learning, School Communities, Teacher Training

THE ROLE OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP IN FOSTERING INCLUSIVITY WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Anargyrou Aikaterini

Phd Candidate, University of Peloponnese, Department of Social and Education Policy, Greece

katerina.anargyrou@gmail.com

Abstract

Inclusivity constitutes a fundamental pillar of contemporary educational practice and is closely linked to the principles of sustainable development. Promoting equal opportunities, recognizing diversity, and empowering all members of a school community contribute significantly to the creation of resilient and fair societies. In the school context, inclusivity acquires particular importance, as the school functions as a space for socialization, value formation, and the preparation of students for their active role in future society. The school principal plays a central role in this process, since his or her leadership stance and decisions largely determine whether and how a climate of acceptance, cooperation, and solidarity will be cultivated.

The purpose of this study is to highlight leadership strategies that can strengthen inclusivity and to examine the challenges that principals face in implementing them. By formulating a shared vision, encouraging dialogue, and promoting participatory practices, the principal mobilizes human resources, empowers teachers, and reinforces the cohesion of the school community. The development of emotional intelligence, effective conflict management, systematic professional development, and close collaboration with parents and local stakeholders are critical prerequisites for the success of this effort. Furthermore, the identification of good practices, continuous evaluation, and adaptation to new social conditions contribute to the sustainability of such initiatives.

The connection between inclusivity and sustainable development is crucial, as strengthening equality and justice leads to the responsible use of resources, promotes cooperation among diverse social groups, and creates solid foundations for long-term progress. In conclusion, the principal's contribution to the acceptance of inclusivity is essential and constitutes a necessary condition for advancing sustainable development through a school environment that fosters values of equality, respect, social justice, and active participation.

Key words: Inclusivity, school leadership, sustainable development, educational equity

TEACHER WELL-BEING AS A PILLAR OF EDUCATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY

Anargyrou Aikaterini

Phd Candidate, University of Peloponnese, Department of Social and Education Policy, Greece

katerina.anargyrou@gmail.com

Abstract

This paper explores the central role of education in promoting sustainable development, emphasizing the importance of safeguarding teacher well-being as a decisive factor in this process. Quality education is widely acknowledged as a cornerstone for achieving the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), offering solutions to interconnected environmental, social, and economic challenges. Yet, the extent to which education systems can contribute effectively to these goals depends greatly on the condition and empowerment of the teaching workforce.

Teachers are the backbone of every educational system, shaping both the content and the quality of learning experiences. Their well-being—encompassing professional satisfaction, access to continuous training, mental health support, and fair remuneration—is indispensable for strengthening their capacity to inspire and innovate in the classroom. Educators who feel valued and supported are more capable of implementing creative pedagogical practices, fostering meaningful student engagement, and preparing learners to address pressing global concerns such as climate change, poverty, and inequality.

The paper argues that enhancing teacher well-being not only benefits the educators themselves but also generates wider societal advantages. A supportive school culture and positive working conditions create a multiplier effect that advances sustainability, equity, and social cohesion. Furthermore, it examines the role of governments, school leaders, and communities in designing and implementing policies that place teacher well-being at the center, while remaining aligned with long-term sustainability strategies.

In conclusion, the study highlights that constructing a sustainable future requires a comprehensive approach that acknowledges teachers as critical agents of change. By coupling quality education with the protection and promotion of teacher well-being, societies can establish a strong foundation for nurturing inclusive, equitable, and sustainable communities capable of responding effectively to the challenges of the twenty-first century.

Key words: Teacher well-being, sustainable development, quality education, educational policy

EDUCATION POLICY FOR SUSTAINABLE TRANSITION: STRATEGIES AT LOCAL AND REGIONAL LEVEL

Drakaki Maria

Adjunct Lecturer, School of Humanities, Hellenic Open University
drakakim@gmail.com

Papadakis Nikos

Professor and Director of the Centre for Political Research & Documentation (KEPET/UCRC), Department of Political Science, University of Crete, Member of the Scientific Board of the National Centre of Public Administration and Local Government (EKDDA)
papadakn@uoc.gr

Abstract

Education policy is widely recognized as a cornerstone of sustainable transition, since it sets the conditions under which education systems, infrastructures, and learning practices evolve. The purpose of this paper is to examine the contribution of education policy to sustainable urban and regional development, focusing on strategies that are implemented at local and regional levels of governance. The paper emphasizes the added value of aligning education policy with international sustainability agendas and demonstrates its potential to promote social inclusion, skills development, and community resilience.

The study is grounded in a literature review and secondary quantitative analysis of existing reports and policy indicators. This methodological approach allows for a synthesis of knowledge from international and European frameworks, highlighting policy orientations and identifying the challenges that arise in practice. Building on this, the paper aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how education policy functions as a lever for sustainable transition.

The literature review and secondary analysis indicate that education policy supports sustainable transition in three main ways: by integrating sustainability-oriented curricula across different levels of education, by promoting the development of green and digital skills required for future economies, and by supporting inclusive measures that reduce social inequalities and address the digital divide. At the same time, the literature highlights persistent challenges—such as fragmented governance structures, unequal allocation of resources, and limited inter-sectoral cooperation—that continue to hinder the effective implementation of such policies.

The overall contribution of the paper is to argue that the design and implementation of coherent, multi-level, and evidence-based education policy strategies are essential for achieving resilient and sustainable cities and regions in the 21st century.

Key words: education policy, sustainable development, sustainable transition, local and regional level, strategies, resilience

THE TEACHER AS AN AGENT OF CHANGE: EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Dologlou Maria

Post -Doc Researcher, Harokopio University of Athens, School of Environment Geography and Applied Economics.

PhD in Leadership and Organizational Behavior - Psychology, Athens University of Economics and Business

mdologlou@hua.gr

Mitoula Roido

Professor, Dean, Harokopio University of Athens, School of Environment Geography and Applied Economics,

mitoula@hua.gr

Abstract

Education for Sustainable Development has emerged as a critical framework for preparing learners to address complex global challenges, including climate change, social inequalities, and sustainable resource management. Within this context, teachers play a pivotal role as agents of change, shaping values, attitudes, and practices that promote sustainability within the school community and beyond. This paper explores the ways in which teacher education, both initial training and continuous professional development, can integrate the principles of Educational for Sustainable Development to empower educators to become catalysts for transformation.

The study emphasizes the importance of equipping teachers not only with theoretical knowledge of sustainability but also with practical pedagogical strategies such as project-based learning, experiential education, and interdisciplinary approaches. By analyzing examples of innovative practices, the paper highlights how Educational for Sustainable Development can be embedded into diverse subject areas, encouraging critical thinking, problem-solving, and active citizenship among students. Furthermore, it addresses the challenges that educators face, including limited institutional support, lack of training resources, and resistance to change.

The presentation argues that sustainable change in education requires a systemic approach, where teacher professional development is aligned with national educational policies, local community needs, and global sustainability goals. Ultimately, empowering teachers as leaders of Educational for Sustainable Development fosters school environments that cultivate ecological awareness, social responsibility, and collaborative problem-solving as key elements for building more sustainable societies.

Key words: Teacher education,Sustainable Development,Professional development.

PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH PRIMARY EDUCATION TEXTBOOKS. CASE STUDY: GREECE

Papadopoulou Kl. Vasiliki

PhD Candidate, Department of Economics and Sustainable Development School of Environment, Geography and Applied Economics Harokopio University of Athens
vpapadopoulou@hua.gr

Mitoula Roido

Professor, Harokopio University of Athens
mitoula@hua.gr

Kaldi Stavroula

Associate Professor, Department of Pedagogical of Primary Education, University of Thessaly, Volos, Greece
kaldi@uth.gr

Sardianou Eleni

Associate Professor, Harokopio University of Athens
esardianou@hua.gr

Abstract

Sustainable Development constitutes the main determining factor for human well-being, as explicitly stated in the 17 United Nations Global Goals to be implemented from 2015 to 2030, since it concerns future international development. Human intellectual advancement and the rapid growth of technology lead to continuous progress, with the fundamental prerequisite being the interaction and interconnection of the pillars of Sustainable Development—Economy, Environment, and Society—for the good quality of life of people worldwide.

Given that environmental issues are constantly increasing at both local and global levels, educating children as the future active citizens of society is deemed necessary. Therefore, a fundamental basis of the 17 Global Goals is the proper teaching of the principles of Sustainable Development through school textbooks and Skills Laboratories, which are taught from the very beginning of children’s school life. Finally, within the Greek education system, Primary Education holds the most significant role, and it is there that attention is focused.

Keywords: School Textbooks, Skills Laboratories, Primary Education, Sustainable Development

PLAY & GAMES AS METHODS OF REGENERATIVE ARCHITECTURAL “EDUTAINMENT”

Dr MouzakitisStavros

Ph.D NTUA, Architect, National Technical University of Athens, Greece
stavrosmouzakitis@gmail.com

Abstract

The relationship between architectural education and play is revealed historically through multiple paths, simultaneously at theoretical, design and practical-construction level. This paper proposes a methodological reading of this relationship, structured as a progression from enclosed spaces of early childhood learning to the open fields of social and urban experience.

At its foundation lies Friedrich Froebel’s radical kindergarten program, based on purposefully designed play activities that cultivated spatial perception, imagination, and creative skills. Similar principles were later reformulated in Johannes Itten’s preliminary courses (*Vorkurs*) at the Bauhaus.

The discussion then moves to outdoor (self-)education environments: from Aldo van Eyck’s playgrounds and Isamu Noguchi’s *playscapes*, to David Rockwell’s portable “Imagination Playground” and the examples of eco-productive, sustainability-oriented playscapes. From there, attention expands to amusement parks and to the diffusion of ludic activities across the public urban realm (e.g., skateboarding, parkour) and the natural landscape (e.g., orienteering).

At the urban scale, play is associated with the Situationists’ utopian vision of the “Ludic City” (Constant’s *New Babylon*), later extended to a global dimension in Buckminster Fuller’s *World Game*, which anticipated current visions of “hybrid-space ludic cities”, shaped by video games and internet technologies. This trajectory reaches a peak in the digital environments of City/World-Building (or “God”) Games, which act as simulations of complex ecosystems and tools of ecological design.

In contemporary contexts, emerges the figure of the “*Homo Ludens Digitalis*”, inhabiting a hybrid urbanity of *pervasive games*, through augmented reality technologies and gamification applications. These practices articulate new spatial and social dynamics, while simultaneously exposing the dual nature of play: as a liberating mode of creativity and as an instrument of normative regulation.

This ambivalence underscores the centrality of play - and its multiple sites (“*playces*”) - as a critical domain for rethinking architectural education in the 21st century. In particular, it positions the subject of “*regenerative playgrounds*” as a most crucial field of experiential, ecosophical learning process, responsive to the multiple environmental, social and psychological challenges of our times, contributing to the vision of “*regenerative cultures*” [Wahl, 2016].

Key words: Play, Games, Game-design, Gamification, Architecture, Educational Entertainment (“Edutainment”)

SESSION

“Local and Regional Cultural Development”

Chaired by **Prof Maria Manola** and
Asst Prof Poli Maria

CULTURAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN THE HEROIC ISLAND OF PSARA

Manola Maria

Professor, Department of Tourism Management, University of West Attica, Greece
mmanola@uniwa.gr

Maniou Fotini

Ph.D. C. Harokopio University of Athens, Greece
fmaniou@hua.gr

Poli Maria

Assistant Professor, Department of Interior Architecture, University of West Attica, Greece
mpoli@uniwa.gr

Abstract

This paper aims to investigate cultural entrepreneurship on the island of Psara and examine its contribution to the region's tourism development. Although small in size, Psara possesses a rich historical heritage and natural beauty. Its cultural identity is deeply intertwined with the destruction it suffered in 1824 during the Greek Revolution against the Ottoman Empire. The devastation of Psara is recorded as one of the most tragic historical events and inspired the famous poem by Dionysios Solomos. This research focuses, on one hand, on analyzing the ways the island utilizes its natural and cultural resources to enhance tourism, and on the other hand, on exploring the potential for cultural development based on the opinions of residents, collected through a quantitative survey of 130 questionnaires.

Keywords: Cultural Tourism, Coastal Islands, Cultural Entrepreneurship, Sustainable Development

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF TRAVELLERS: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH TRAVEL TEXTS IN THE REGION OF LASITHI

Tsatalmpasoglou Anna-Irini

Phd Candidate, University of West Attica, Dept. of Tourism Management

atsatalpasoglou@uniwa.gr

Koltsikoglou Georgios

Phd Candidate, University of West Attica, Dept. of Tourism Management

gkoltsikoglou@uniwa.gr

Manola Maria

Professor, University of West Attica, Dept. of Tourism Management

mmanola@uniwa.gr

Mitoula Roido

Professor, Harokopio University of Athens, School of Environment Geography and Applied Economics

mitoula@hua.gr

Maniou Fotini

Ph.D Candidate, Department of Economics and Sustainable Development, Harokopio University of Athens

fmaniou@hua.gr

Abstract

Travel texts constitute a significant source of cultural memory and identity, as they capture the image of a place through the narratives of foreign travellers. In the case of Lasithi, these texts provide not only historical and geographical references but also opportunities for their integration into strategies of sustainable tourism development.

This paper focuses on the wider areas of Ierapetra and Sitia, places with a rich natural and cultural heritage but also particular challenges related to sustainable development. The aim is to explore how travel texts can be incorporated into local development strategies, strengthening cultural resilience and promoting forms of tourism based on authenticity and locality.

As a case study, two thematic routes were designed on the basis of references in travel texts, highlighting landscapes, monuments and cultural practices of the area. The research component is based on a quantitative survey (N=108), which examined visitors' willingness to combine their holidays with visits to sites included in these routes. The results were encouraging, as the majority of participants expressed positive attitudes, underscoring the potential of travel literature as a driver of local development.

The findings demonstrate that the integration of travel texts into cultural and tourism policies can contribute to cultural interpretation, the reinforcement of local identity and the sustainable tourism development of Lasithi, offering an innovative perspective for the region's strategic promotion.

Key words: travel texts, sustainable development, cultural resilience, Lasithi, thematic routes

THE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF TENEDOS AS A DRIVING FORCE FOR LOCAL DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATIVE BUSINESS ACTIVITIES

Maniou Fotini

Ph.D. C. Harokopio University of Athens

fmaniou@hua.gr

Abstract

Tenedos possesses a rich cultural heritage that serves as a strong element of local identity and an attractive factor for both residents and visitors. Leveraging this heritage through innovative business activities can act as a catalyst for sustainable local development while promoting the preservation and dissemination of traditional customs, historical monuments, and local products. The combined use of cultural initiatives and modern technologies creates opportunities to strengthen the local economy, attract high-quality tourism, and maintain social cohesion. Promoting traditions—such as festivals, viticulture, traditional gastronomy, and historical monuments—through organized cultural entrepreneurship programs contributes to regional revitalization, reinforces local identity, and fosters a sustainable development model that respects the past while looking toward the future.

Keywords: Cultural Heritage, Tenedos, Local Development, Cultural Entrepreneurship

FROM STRATEGIC NAVAL BASE TO CULTURAL ASSET - THE MILITARY HERITAGE OF LEROS

Koltsikoglou Georgios

Phd Candidate, University of West Attica, Dept. of Tourism Management
gkoltsikoglou@uniwa.gr

Tsatalbassoglou Anna Eirini

Phd Candidate, University of West Attica, Dept. of Tourism Management
atsatalpasoglou@uniwa.gr

Manola Maria

Professor, University of West Attica, Dept. of Tourism Management
mmanola@uniwa.gr

Abstract

Leros, a picturesque island of the Dodecanese, combines striking natural beauty with a distinctive and multifaceted historical heritage. Its history is deeply marked by the period of Italian occupation (1912–1943), when the island was strategically chosen by the Italian authorities as a central naval base in the southeastern Aegean. During this period, Leros was transformed into one of the most heavily fortified sites in the Mediterranean, with an extensive network of military infrastructures such as coastal batteries, tunnels, barracks, naval facilities, and command centers. These constructions, built in harmony with the natural relief yet imposing in scale and design, continue to shape the built environment of the island today.

The legacy of this fortification program is particularly significant, as it not only altered the urban and rural landscape but also created a cultural layer that reflects the geopolitical ambitions of the early twentieth century. Following the end of the Second World War and the incorporation of the Dodecanese into Greece, many of these structures were abandoned or repurposed, yet their presence remains tangible, contributing to the island's unique character.

In contemporary times, Leros has been developing as a tourist destination that balances traditional island culture with alternative forms of tourism. The coexistence of military heritage and natural landscapes offers new opportunities for cultural, educational, and experiential tourism. By reinterpreting the Italian fortifications not merely as remnants of conflict but as cultural resources, they can serve as focal points for thematic routes, open-air museums, and heritage trails that narrate broader Mediterranean histories of occupation, resistance, and adaptation.

This article explores how the Italian fortification works have shaped the identity and spatial organization of Leros and how they can be reimaged within the framework of sustainable tourism planning. It argues that integrating military heritage into the tourism profile of the island fosters both preservation and innovation, creating immersive experiences that connect visitors with the natural beauty of Leros, its architectural legacy, and its layered historical narratives. Ultimately, the study emphasizes the potential of Leros to emerge as a paradigm of cultural tourism development, where memory, history, and landscape are interwoven into a coherent and sustainable strategy for the future.

Key words: Leros, Dodecanese, Italian occupation, Military fortifications, Naval base, Cultural heritage, Historical, Sustainable tourism

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ANCIENT GREEK THEATRE, THE CASE STUDY OF PHILIPPI

Nastou P. Marina Panagiota

Architect Engineer, Ma in Heritage Management, PhD Student, School of Applied Arts and Sustainable Design, Hellenic Open University, 26335, Patra, Greece
nastou.marina@ac.eap.gr

Zerefos C. Stelios

Professor, School of Applied Arts and Sustainable Design, Hellenic Open University, 26335, Patra, Greece
zerefos@eap.gr

Abstract

Culture is a fundamental pillar of human history, especially in times of multifaceted crises. Today's society faces the effects of ongoing climate change, which poses a significant threat to cultural heritage. The primary objective is the protection of human culture through a dynamic framework of sustainable design, tailor-made for each type of heritage.

This paper investigates the protection and management of heritage that combines both cultural and natural elements. Sustainability and contemporary development - guided by technological progress, are key components of the proposed management plan, which must be adapted to each specific heritage case. The case study presented in this research is the ancient Greek Theatre of Philippi, located in northern Greece, within the archaeological site of Philippi, which is situated in the Kavala region of Eastern Macedonia in Greece. This theatre is integrated into the natural environment, forming a cultural landscape, and represents a recognizable historical structure including the cavea, the orchestra and stage (*skene*).

To assess the risks and vulnerabilities of the theatre related to climate change, the methodology involves a combination of risk assessment and vulnerability analysis, along with the collection of climatic data of the location of heritage, retrieved from the meteorological station of Kavala. Based on this analysis, the aim is to develop a sustainable management plan that respects the heritage values, reflects the identity of the theatre, and preserves the spirit of the place of Philippi.

Key words: cultural heritage, climate change, management plan, spirit of the place

SESSION

“Digital transformation and sustainable development”

**Chaired by Assoc Prof Menshikova Maria and
Assoc Prof Zamfir Natalia**

SUSTAINABLE URBAN REGENERATION IN MEDITERRANEAN CITIES: URBAN PLANNING PERSPECTIVES ON DIGITALIZATION AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Tsirigoti Dimitra

Assistant Professor, Laboratory of Building Construction, Structural Engineering Science Division, Department of Civil Engineering, Democritus University of Thrace, Xanthi, Greece
dtsirigo@civil.duth.gr

Kalemis Alexandros

PhD(c) Urban & Regional Planning, National Technical University of Athens School of Architecture, Greece
akalemis@mail.ntua.gr

Abstract

Sustainable urban regeneration is a critical challenge for Mediterranean cities, where historic layers, compact built environments, and social complexity intersect with climate change pressures. In this context, digital transformation is reshaping urban planning and regeneration practices. Artificial Intelligence (AI), digital twins, Building Information Modelling (BIM), and Virtual Reality (VR) are increasingly employed in urban interventions, promising more resilient and adaptive futures while also raising questions of governance, ethics, and inclusiveness.

This paper explores the role of digital tools in advancing sustainable regeneration in Mediterranean cities. The methodology combines a critical review of emerging digital applications with case studies of innovative projects. Emphasis is placed on the contribution of digital tools to environmental assessment, quality-of-life indicators, and integrated planning, as well as on the risks of technological determinism and social inequality.

Findings indicate that digital technologies can optimize resource efficiency, support climate adaptation, and enhance participatory planning. For example, digital twins simulate the impact of adaptation strategies at neighborhood scale, while AI-driven models improve energy and mobility management. VR and AR tools enable citizens to visualize and co-design regeneration projects, strengthening public engagement. However, challenges persist: financial and technical demands often exceed municipal capacities, particularly in smaller Mediterranean cities, and ethical issues such as privacy and algorithmic bias threaten democratic governance. Importantly, digital divides risk excluding vulnerable populations from digitally driven regeneration processes.

The study concludes that sustainable urban regeneration requires balancing digital innovation with the cultural and environmental specificities of Mediterranean urbanism. Compact urban forms, historic centers, and strong community ties must guide the adaptation of digital tools. Interdisciplinary approaches that link urban design, digital technology, and social sciences are essential to ensure that the digital transition enhances, rather than undermines, sustainability, resilience, and equity.

Key words: Urban regeneration, mediterranean cities, sustainable development, artificial intelligence, digital twins, virtual reality, smart cities

TOWARD ETHICAL AND SOCIALLY GROUNDED DIGITAL SUSTAINABILITY: HUMAN-CENTERED TECHNOLOGY AND THE METAVERSE IN INDUSTRY 5.0

Kalemis Alexandros

PhD(c) Urban & Regional Planning, National Technical University of Athens School of Architecture, Greece

akalemis@mail.ntua.gr

Abstract

This paper explores the role of Industry 5.0 as a paradigm shift that transcends the boundaries of Industry 4.0, proposing a human-centered and ethically oriented approach to technological design. At the core of this study lies the metaverse, which emerges not only as an innovative technological environment but also as a cultural and social framework with the potential to foster digital citizenship, experiential education, and participatory design. The analysis is grounded in a critical review of international literature and a systematic thematic synthesis that draws on insights from the fields of the ethics of technology, science-society studies, and digital sustainability.

Specifically, the paper examines the philosophical and political foundations of Industry 5.0, emphasizing resilience, collaborative intelligence, and fairness in access to digital infrastructures. It further analyzes metaverse applications in areas such as education, environmental management, healthcare, and social inclusion, while also identifying risks related to digital exclusion, algorithmic control, and environmental burdens. Special attention is given to the importance of transparency and accountability in digital design, as well as to the need for shaping frameworks of technological citizenship that advance democratic participation and ethical responsibility.

The study argues that digital sustainability cannot be reduced to technical approaches of energy efficiency, but requires a holistic perspective that integrates social, cultural, and ethical dimensions. The proposed theoretical and practical framework demonstrates how the metaverse can serve as a field for practicing new forms of technological humanism, strengthening collective resilience and institutional transparency. From this standpoint, Industry 5.0 is revealed not merely as a technological evolution but as a profound cultural and social shift that redefines the human-technology relationship toward a more just, inclusive, and sustainable future.

Key words: Industry 5.0, metaverse, digital sustainability, technology ethics, social justice, digital citizenship, technological humanism

HR SPECIALIST PROFILE IN THE DIGITAL ECONOMY: EVOLUTION OF SKILLS AND ATTITUDES THROUGH A GENDER PERSPECTIVE

Menshikova Maria

Associate Professor, Universitas Mercatorum, Department of Statistics, Economics, and Business

maria.menshikova@unimercatorum.it

Abstract

The role of Human Resources (HR) professionals is being reshaped by digitalisation, hybrid work, and sustainability imperatives, yet evidence on whether women and men bring distinct competency profiles to HR remains limited. This study examines gender-based differences in companies' expectations regarding the skills and attitudes of new entrants to HR departments in Italy in 2024, drawing on data from the Excelsior Information System (EIS). We compare mean scores (five-point Likert) across eight skills - communication skills in the Italian language; communication skills in foreign languages; mathematical and IT skills; digital competencies; problem-solving abilities; teamwork skills; ability to work independently; and capacity to apply Industry 4.0 technologies - and three attitudinal dimensions (flexibility/adaptability, energy-conservation orientation, intercultural competence). The scores were assigned by Italian employers recruiting new HR specialists.

Findings indicate broad convergence in demand for foundational soft skills to be possessed by both women and men: high levels of teamwork, problem-solving, and independent working ($>3.5/5$) are required in 2024. However, some differences emerge. Employers more often associate the "male" profile with higher digital competencies, mathematical/IT skills, and application of Industry 4.0 technologies, whereas "female" candidates are more frequently expected to excel in foreign-language communication. In attitudinal terms, the projected male profile of the future HR specialist is associated with greater flexibility/adaptability and a stronger energy-saving orientation, while women are expected to show higher intercultural sensitivity. These patterns suggest complementary strengths that, when combined, can enhance the HR function's ability.

The study extends knowledge, skills, and attitudes (KSA) research through a gender-sensitive lens and offers managerial implications for recruiting, role design, and targeted HR development. The analysis provides useful insights for HR leaders and educators seeking to design gender-balanced teams and curricula aligned with the digital economy. Limitations include the Italian, single-year scope and the absence of direct 'knowledge' indicators in the EIS. Future research should incorporate longitudinal and cross-country comparisons and examine whether mixed-gender HR teams translate complementarity into superior organisational outcomes.

Key words: HR skills; HR attitudes, Gender Differences; KSA Framework; Digital Economy; Industry 4.0; Italy

DIGITALIZATION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT PROCESS AS A TOOL FOR INTEGRATING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Zamfir Natalia

Associate professor, Moldova State University, Department of International and European Law

natalia.zamfir@usm.md

Zamfir Pavel

Associate professor, Moldova State University, Department of Public Law

pavel.zamfir@yahoo.com

Abstract

Even today, deficiencies in access to public services provided by environmental institutions, as well as issues related to integrity and transparency, persist despite alignment with a significant number of European Union standards. The digitalisation of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process is therefore necessary to respond to the growing demand for transparency and efficiency, and to integrate sustainability principles into decision-making processes.

Traditional EIA procedures based on paper documentation, fragmented communication among stakeholders and limited public access to information constitute major obstacles to sustainable development at local and national levels. These shortcomings delay decision-making, reduce public participation and limit the accountability of the relevant authorities. This leads to frequent criticism of projects for neglecting environmental and social dimensions, thereby undermining alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Digital transformation provides practical solutions to these challenges in the form of online platforms for submitting, reviewing, and monitoring EIA documentation. Such systems can ensure real-time data access, enhanced transparency and more efficient workflows between the relevant authorities, developers, and the public. Integrating digital tools with geospatial databases, big data analytics and environmental indicators that align with SDG monitoring frameworks establishes a foundation for aligning project-level assessments with national and international sustainability objectives. By enabling open access to information and interoperability, these platforms can strengthen public engagement and trust in decision-making processes, as well as regional cooperation, while ensuring compliance with EU directives and global sustainability agendas. Thus, digitalisation is not just a technical upgrade, but also a governance innovation that establishes EIA as a vital tool for achieving sustainable development.

The article also offers proposals to guide policymakers and practitioners in adopting digital solutions to strengthen the effectiveness of the EIA process and its contribution to the SDGs.

Key words: environment, digitalisation, sustainable, development goals, impact assessment

TRANSFORMING TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS(TDR) INTO DIGITAL ASSETS: BLOCKCHAIN, SMART CONTRACTS, PROPERTY TITLES, AND THE REIMAGINED DIGITAL LAND BANK (DLB)

Christodoulou Dimitrios

*Ph.D candidate, Department of Planning and Regional Development, School of Engineering,
University of Thessaly, Greece*

dimischris@gmail.com

Abstract

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) is a complex institutional mechanism relying on trust and transparency to generate demand for building coefficients. Within this framework, the Digital Land Bank (DLB) emerges as a mechanism for recording and managing development rights, functioning as a specialized cadastre for TDR titles and related property rights. This research explores the transformation of TDR titles into digital, tradeable assets through blockchain technology and Smart Contracts.

The central research question investigates whether blockchain can act as a property institution comparable to legal mechanisms. Through a systematic review of literature and international practices, we propose a lifecycle model for TDR titles encompassing creation, transfer, and utilization within a blockchain-based DLB. Tokenization of TDR titles enhances market liquidity, while Smart Contracts automate and secure critical transactions such as property transfers and the issuance of building permits.

The study aims to demonstrate how blockchain applications can overcome limitations of traditional approaches, offering a transparent, secure, and efficient framework for managing both TDRs and, potentially, broader property rights. In doing so, it contributes to the theoretical discourse on the evolving relationship between technology, institutions, and law in the digital era.

Key words: Transfer of Development Rights (TDR), Blockchain, Smart Contracts, Digital Land Bank (DLB), Tokenization, Property Rights, Urban Development

AI AND THE DYNAMICS OF CREATIVE DESTRUCTION IN THE GREEN TRANSITION. AS A CASE STUDY THE MUNICIPALITY OF NEA FILADELFIA-NEA CHALKIDONA, ATTICA, GREECE.

Chronopoulou Georgia

Dr, Post Doc Researcher of Aegean University, Greece

Georgiaxonopoulos6@gmail.com

Abstract

Joseph Schumpeter’s concept of creative destruction (Schumpeter, 1942) provides a theoretical framework to analyze the disruptive processes driving economic and social transformation. Traditionally associated with industrial innovation and market renewal, creative destruction can now be understood in the context of sustainable green development and digitalization. The transition from linear to circular economic models involves dismantling outdated production and consumption systems, creating opportunities for innovative approaches that integrate technological advancement with environmental stewardship. Artificial Intelligence (AI) emerges as a key enabler in this transition, optimizing resource flows, enhancing predictive management, and supporting data-driven governance practices that strengthen transparency, efficiency, and accountability.

This paper examines how local governance can implement circular economy principles and promote sustainable green growth through AI-driven initiatives. The Municipality of Nea Filadelfeia–Nea Chalkidona is used as a case study, illustrating the integration of digital tools in waste management, bio-waste collection, and citizen engagement. Recent studies indicate that AI applications in waste management can increase recycling rates by 20–30% and reduce operational costs by 10–15% (ResearchGate, 2023). Furthermore, AI-enabled real-time data analysis improves collection route efficiency and enhances citizen participation through digital platforms, supporting both environmental sustainability and social inclusion.

Ultimately, the convergence of AI, circular economy practices, and participatory governance demonstrates that the dynamics of creative destruction are not solely disruptive but can serve as a catalyst for a smart green transition. This transformation reinforces sustainable green development, aligns economic modernization with the objectives of the European Green Deal, and emphasizes inclusivity and democratic engagement. The study highlights both opportunities and challenges of implementing AI-assisted circular economy measures at the local level, offering valuable insights for policymakers, practitioners, and researchers seeking to reconcile technological innovation with environmental and social sustainability across Europe.

Keywords: AI · Creative Destruction · Circular Economy · Sustainable Green Development · Smart Green Transition · Governance · European Green Deal

ESPORTS AND SOCIAL STABILITY: MORAL VALUES AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES IN VIRTUAL CITIES

Choustoulakis Emmanouil

Assistant Professor, University of Peloponnese, Sports Management Department
exoustou@gmail.com

Maragkos Fotios

PhD Candidate, University of the Peloponnese
maragkos2004@yahoo.com

Abstract

eSports, a rapidly growing cultural phenomenon, extend beyond mere entertainment to foster vibrant "virtual communities" and promote social values. This study explores the integration of eSports in educational environments and their potential contribution to social sustainability through the cultivation of moral values and innovative pedagogical approaches. The research underscores that eSports can instill virtues critical for life beyond the digital space. Participation in eSports enhances teamwork and cooperation, enabling players/students to communicate effectively, build trust, and leverage their teammates' strengths toward achieving common objectives. It also nurtures critical thinking and problem-solving abilities, as participants analyze strategies and make swift decisions while navigating complex challenges.

Furthermore, eSports serve as a significant tool in developing digital identity and responsibility. Engaging within online communities that prioritize sportsmanship, respect, and inclusion, players can address vital issues such as diversity and mental health. The educational application of eSports creates interactive learning experiences that enhance student engagement. By leveraging data analytics, educators can assess student performance and engagement levels, facilitating the design of personalized learning paths that enhance collaboration.

Aligned with the goals of the IEP (Institute of Educational Policy), which emphasizes the cultivation of 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity, this research highlights the theoretical and practical significance of eSports. Ultimately, it posits that eSports are an influential medium for fostering social cooperation, active participation, and the emergence of new community forms, preparing citizens for the challenges of the modern digital landscape.

Keywords: eSports, social sustainability, educational environments, teamwork, digital identity, 21st-century skills.

SESSION

“Energy and Sustainable Development”

Chaired by **Prof Kabassi Katerina** and
Kremlis George

UNIVERSITY-LED SOLAR ENERGY INITIATIVES IN SUPPORT OF SDG7 AND SDG13: A LITERATURE REVIEW (2015–2025)

Maria Kaloutsas

PhD in Environmental Science, Ionian University

Former Doctoral Researcher, Department of Environment, Ionian University,

29100 Zakynthos, Greece

mkal@uniwa.gr

Katerina Kabassi

Professor, Department of Environment, Ionian University, 29100 Zakynthos, Greece

kkabassi@ionio.gr

Aristotelis Martinis

Professor, Department of Environment, Ionian University, 29100 Zakynthos, Greece

amartinis@ionio.gr

John K. Kaldellis

Professor, Department of Mechanical Engineering, 12241 Aigaleo, Greece

University of West Attica

jkald@uniwa.gr

Abstract

This paper presents a thematic and descriptive literature review examining how universities contribute to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy) and Sustainable Development Goal 13 (Climate Action) through solar energy initiatives. A structured search using the Scopus database was conducted for the period 2015–2025, filtered by open-access journal papers in English, specifically targeting the keyword "Solar Energy" in the context of higher education institutions. A total of 25 relevant articles were identified and analyzed. The review combines both descriptive and thematic approaches. Descriptive analysis revealed a growing academic interest in solar-related sustainability actions across European universities, particularly in operational and technological domains. Thematic synthesis highlighted four dominant areas: (1) solar photovoltaic system implementation on campuses, (2) energy efficiency strategies linked to institutional sustainability plans, (3) integration of solar energy topics into research and curricula, and (4) use of monitoring and assessment frameworks for carbon and energy performance.

In addition to thematic grouping, the 25 articles were further categorized according to five analytical lenses: (1) level of engagement, (2) SDG specificity, (3) methodological approach, (4) geographic and institutional profile, and (5) outcome orientation. These categorizations aim to enhance the interpretative depth of the review and identify gaps in current research practices, such as the limited explicit alignment with SDG 13 and the lack of robust evaluation of long-term outcomes.

The findings underline the emerging role of higher education institutions not only as consumers but also as laboratories and advocates of clean energy transitions, encouraging the dissemination of clean energy technologies implementation via their example. Future research should explore more integrated institutional strategies that address both energy and climate objectives, supported by measurable impact assessments and broader stakeholder engagement.

Keywords: Energy Efficiency in Higher Education, Climate Action, Institutional Sustainability Strategies, Carbon Performance Monitoring, Clean Energy Dissemination, SDG Integration in Academia

TOWARD SUSTAINABLE AND SOCIALLY EQUITABLE CITIES: A LOCAL CLIMATE ZONE APPROACH FOR PHOTOVOLTAIC DEPLOYMENT IN EUROPEAN CITIES

Dimitriou Tsampika

RES & Cool Urban Environment Group, University of Patras, Greece
tsambikadim@gmail.com

Skandalos Nikolaos

RES & Cool Urban Environment Group, University of Patras, Greece
nskandalos@upatras.gr

Karamanis Dimitrios

RES & Cool Urban Environment Group, University of Patras, Greece
dkaraman@upatras.gr

Abstract

Accelerating climate change represents an urgent and complex challenge with elevating global and local temperatures, extreme weather events, and unsustainable patterns of energy generation and consumption, calling for immediate action. Renewable energy sources, particularly solar energy and photovoltaic (PV) systems, constitute a viable pathway to mitigate greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and enable cities' transitions toward a more sustainable energy future.

However, the local microclimate of urban landscapes strongly influences the suitability, efficiency, and applicability of large-scale PV deployments. In view of the above, the Local Climate Zone (LCZ) classification offers a systematic methodological framework to classify and evaluate the microclimate of urban and peri-urban regions. As cities struggle to develop climate-resilient urban planning and sustainable infrastructure, the integration of the LCZ classification with solar energy strategies becomes increasingly important. Using Ioannina in Greece and Brussels in Belgium as case studies, this work investigates how LCZ-based urban climate analyses can guide the deployment of PV technologies, demonstrating their valuable contribution in the development of evidence-based strategies for urban energy transitions and cities' decarbonization. By coupling LCZ-driven insights with thoughtful renewable energy management, both scientists and urban policymakers can assess solar PV potential and optimal PV installation sites in full alignment with performance variation attributed to urban morphology, land cover type, building density, and thermal patterns. This approach reveals the complex interplay between energy systems, climatic conditions, and urban morphology, while laying the foundation for climate-sensitive urban design.

Furthermore, an additional dimension of the LCZ approach is associated with social equity since the LCZ morphology often reveals underlying social and economic patterns. As communities worldwide are searching for appropriate mechanisms to undertake urban initiatives without external support, the need for targeted supportive actions, tailored to the socio-economic profile of the residents, is prioritized. Combining the LCZ classification with the spatial distribution of socio-economic key performance indicators provides a holistic approach in which renewable energy solutions and climate resilience are inclusive, equitable, and practically feasible.

Key words: Urban environments, Energy transition, Photovoltaics, Local Climate Zones (LCZs), Solar PV potential, Socio-economic equity

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ENERGY TRANSITION, ENERGY MIX AND MARKET-BASED COMPLIANCE MECHANISMS FOR GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS MITIGATION: A COMPARATIVE REVIEW

Thomaidou Foteini

Economist

Ph.D., National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece

Currently: Post-doc, University of Thessaly, Department of Environmental Sciences. Greece

ftomaidou@uth.gr

Abstract

Fossil fuel combustion has profound and far-reaching impacts on the environment. Among fossil fuels, burning coal can have severe environmental impacts. Coal-fired power plants and coal mining can cause extensive local environmental degradation. In response to the global challenges, countries must urgently adopt changes in fossil fuel use to limit global warming.

This study examines the current state of coal in the global energy landscape, emphasising the energy transition challenges from the shift of lignite towards cleaner energy sources, and carbon reduction regulations in Greece, including the National Energy and Climate Plan. It offers insights into Greece's long-term sustainability strategy and the phase-out of lignite-dependent energy system, which is aligned with the national decarbonization objectives.

The paper also contributes to the dialogue of applied strategies for transitioning from fossil fuels to sustainable energy systems. It provides a rigorous examination of market-based compliance mechanisms for greenhouse gas emissions mitigation worldwide, and their effectiveness in reducing carbon emissions, focusing on carbon pricing such as carbon taxation and cap-and-trade schemes. It provides insights on the share of total emissions covered by ETS and carbon taxation globally, the level of carbon taxation and ETS price formation over time, as well as the height of the revenues generated from compliance mechanisms and the corresponding revenues from carbon taxation and ETS carbon pricing.

The paper also analyses the composition and structure of the energy mix in Greece and the EU27, in terms of fuels, demand, and supply, placing emphasis on the way the current electricity generation mix is formed, and conducts a comparative analysis of the transition dynamics in both regions.

Key words: energy transition, lignite phase-out, sustainable energy systems, carbon taxation, cap-and-trade, ETS, energy mix.

STUDENTS’ PERCEPTIONS OF GLOBAL WARMING CAUSES AND THEIR ENERGY FOOTPRINT TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY

Kougias Konstantinos

Phd Candidate, Harokopio, University of Athens, Department of Economics and Sustainable Development

kkougias@hua.gr

Sardianou Eleni

Professor, Harokopio, University of Athens, Department of Economics and Sustainable Development

esardianou@hua.gr

Tsagarakis Konstantinos

Professor, Technical University of Crete, School of Production Engineering and Management

ktsagarakis@tuc.gr

Abstract

Global warming has intensified in the last fifty years with a significant impact on the environmental balance, causing negative consequences for life on the planet and consequently affecting the human species in a series of factors related to security, well-being and economy (Amicarelli et al., 2021; Scheffran & Battaglini, 2021; Tang, 2021; Zgheib et al., 2023; Zhang, 2023). Energy and its consumption play a key role in this evolutionary climate change process, especially since per capita energy consumption is an indicator of a nation's well-being (Bose, 2010). Carbon dioxide emissions from energy consumption are a key factor in global warming and the creation of urban microclimates (Cadeira & Kasting, 1993; Luqman et al., 2023; Vasenev et al., 2023; Yamasaki, 2003). As a consequence, in recent decades there has been a focus on environmental education with an emphasis on issues such as global warming, carbon dioxide emissions and “clean” forms of energy (Çavdar, 2023; Handayani & Trivanto, 2022; Yazdanparast et al., 2013). This research examines the views of more than 6000 lower secondary school students attending schools in Attica, an area particularly affected by air pollution and greenhouse gases. Statistical results confirm that less than half of students know that carbon dioxide is responsible for rising atmospheric temperatures, while a significant percentage chooses rising sea levels as the cause of global warming. This fact can lead to new, targeted educational practices that will lead students to internalize knowledge and adopting sustainable behaviors. At the same time, it will shed light on the energy topic, which is not a classic body of knowledge in content but a complex field of learning, giving educational designers the necessary elements to structure appropriate educational practices.

Key words: Sustainability, global warming, carbon dioxide, education.

SESSION

“Climate Change and Sustainable Development”

**Chaired by Prof Ntalos Georgios and
Karytsas Spyridon**

ANIMALS' LEGAL PERSONHOOD IN MUNICIPAL (CLIMATE) ADAPTATION PLANS IN POLAND

Haladyj Anna

Ph.D, Ass. Professor

Chair for Public Commercial Law

Faculty of Law, Canon Law and Administration

John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8827-3657>

anna.haladyj@kul.pl

Abstract

Climate change adaptation in urban environments may be conceptualized as a complex of policy measures and regulatory instruments directed towards urban inhabitants and users of the city. Its dual objective consists, on the one hand, in enhancing socio-ecological resilience, and on the other, in fostering civic awareness concerning the phenomenon of climate change and the risks associated with the absence of adequate adaptive responses. These risks encompass not only anthropocentric vulnerabilities but also extend to the preservation of urban biodiversity and ecological resources, including green infrastructure, stormwater, and meltwater retention systems. Climate change causes not only natural catastrophes or changes in the structure of crops but also impacts other aspects of human life, such as health¹, especially that of children² and the elderly³. However, it is not just human health that is affected – animal wellbeing⁴ is also threatened by climate change: both wildlife, including urban wild animals found in cities, and pets, from cats and dogs to rabbits, birds, turtles and all the other domesticated animals we share our lives with. Heat stress caused by high temperatures, depending on its intensity and duration, may negatively affect pets' health by causing metabolic alterations, oxidative stress, immune suppression and even death⁵. Current literature clearly demonstrates that climate change is expected to exert the same overwhelming negative effect on livestock health and the welfare of pets⁶ as it will do on human beings. Humans, however, can avoid at least some of the negative effects of Urban Heat Islands (UHI), while pets have no choice in accompanying people outside in all weather conditions, and, like their human carers, have special needs (e.g. walking) that are impossible to satisfy inside.

¹ J. A. Patz, Di. Campbell-Lendrum, T. Holloway, J. A. Foley, *Impact of regional climate change on human health*, Nature 2005, Vol 438, DOI:10.1038/nature04188; A.J McMichael, R. E Woodruff, S. Hales, *Climate change and human health: present and future risks*, Lancet 2006, vol. 367, p. 859, DOI:10.1016/S0140-6736(06); B. Dufour B., F. Moutou, A.M. Hattenberger, F. Rodhain, *Global change: impact, management, risk approach and health measures – the case of Europe*. *Revue Scientifique et Technique – Office International des Epizooties* 2008, vol. 27, p.542.

² S. Bunyavanich, C. P. Landrigan, A. J. McMichael, P.R. Epstein, *MPH The Impact of Climate Change on Child Health*, *Ambulatory Pediatrics* 2003 vol, 3, p. 45.

³ A. B. Carnes, D. Staats, and B. J. Willcox, *Impact of Climate Change on Elder Health*, *Journals of Gerontology: Biological Sciences* 2014 vol. 69(9), p. 1088. DOI:10.1093/gerona/glt159. In context of Poland see more: B. Degórska, *Wrażliwość i adaptacja dużych miast do zmian klimatu w kontekście wzrostu temperatury powietrza*, *Biuletyn KPZK* 2014, vol. 254, p. 32.

⁴ Commission of the European Communities, *White paper - Adapting to climate change: Towards a European framework for action* Brussels, 1.4.2009, COM(2009) 147 final.

⁵ N. Lacetera, *Impact of climate change on animal health and welfare*, *Animal Frontiers* 2019, Vol. 9(1), p. 27, <https://doi.org/10.1093/af/vfy030>

⁶ N. Lacetera, *Impact of climate change...*, p. 28.

Thus scholarly attention ought to be directed towards the necessity of undertaking adaptive measures on behalf of *pets* that cohabit with humans in urban contexts. Contemporary socio-demographic transformations, exemplified by the shift from the nuclear family model towards childless households in which companion animals frequently assume quasi-filial roles, amplify the relevance of this issue⁷. Parallel cultural discourses increasingly advocate for the recognition of legal subjectivity beyond the human species, with corresponding entitlements related to the protection of their ontological status and integrity⁸.

Within this analytical framework, animals' legal personhood may be understood as a conceptual category encompassing domesticated animals regarded as recipients of human emotions, care, and affection.⁹ The growing prevalence of "pet-friendly" urban spaces exemplifies the informal recognition of pets as quasi-subjects of rights requiring protection, and increasingly considered in urban governance practices. In this respect, climate change adaptation may legitimately be extended to encompass the specific needs of companion animals, such as shaded recreational areas and access to drinking fountains or mitigation of hazards arising from overheated pavements during summer heatwaves.

This raises the question of the extent to which formal legal regulation—thus far only marginally responsive to societal demands for the juridical recognition of animals as subjects of law—intersects with the practical, policy-oriented approaches to ensuring the well-being of pets within urban adaptation strategies.

The proposed study will examine Polish regulatory frameworks and policy instruments in this domain. In Poland, in the years 2019-2020, forty-five climate change adaptation plans were prepared for the largest cities, yet only one of these incorporated measures explicitly directed towards the protection of *pets*¹⁰. Since January 2025, the process of preparing adaptation plans has been extended to cities with populations exceeding 20,000 inhabitants.

The objective of this research is to assess whether, and to what extent, these new adaptation plans incorporate the needs of non-personal entities (*pets*) as addressees of adaptive measures, and to formulate normative and policy-oriented conclusions in this regard. The envisaged substantial inclusion of local regulations dedicated to the protection of non-personal entities within adaptation plans may also serve as an indicator for the legislator, pointing towards the consideration of introducing appropriate legal provisions of animals' legal personhood in the future.

Key-words:Animals' legal personhood, Municipal Adaptation Plan

⁷ A. Laurent-Simpson, Considering Alternate Sources of Role Identity: Childless Parents and Their Animal Kids, 2017 Sociological Forum 32(2)/2017, DOI: 10.1111/socf.12351

⁸ T. Pietrzykowski, The Idea of Non-personal Subjects of Law, [in:] Legal Personhood: Animals, Artificial Intelligence and the Unborn, eds. Visa A.J. Kurki, T. Pietrzykowski, Springer 2017, [10.1007/978-3-319-53462-6_4](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-53462-6_4)

⁹ Pardo MC. Legal Personhood for Animals: Has Science Made Its Case? Animals (Basel). 2023 Jul 18;13(14):2339. doi: 10.3390/ani13142339.

¹⁰ A. Haladyj, K. Kulak-Krzysiak, Pet Welfare in Municipal Adaptation Plans: Case of Poland, Studia Iuridica Lublinensia Vol 30, No 3 (2021), DOI: [http://dx.doi.org/10.17951/sil.2021.30.3.95-107](https://doi.org/10.17951/sil.2021.30.3.95-107)

ENHANCING THE SUSTAINABILITY OF THE SHIPPING INDUSTRY THROUGH THE REDUCTION OF GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS: A LITERATURE REVIEW

Kourouklis Antonios

Phd Candidate, University of Western Macedonia, Department of Management Science and Technology, Kozani, Greece
dmst00036@uowm.gr

Chatzitheodoridis Fotios

Professor, University of Western Macedonia, Department of Management Science and Technology, Kozani, Greece
fxtheodoridis@uowm.gr

Boulouta Konstantina

Phd Political Scientist, Faculty of Food Sciences, University of West Attica, Campus Egaleo Parc, Athens, Greece
boulouta@uniwa.gr

Abstract

The intention and causes of adopting clean propulsion technologies in maritime transport concern the shift towards environmentally friendly solutions. Technologies include using renewable energy sources, such as liquefied natural gas, biofuels, electrification, and implementing innovative systems. The adoption of these forms of energy complies with international regulation requirements, the increase in the competitiveness of shipping companies, and the need to reduce operating costs. The paper's main aim is to present a literature review of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and enhancing the sustainability of the Greek shipping industry. In Greek shipping, investments in «green ships», seem to be led by following compliance with international regulations of the International Maritime Organization for maintaining national shipping at competitive levels and due to increasing pressure for continuous environmental awareness to ensure a sustainable future.

Keywords: Investments, Greek shipping, Greenhouse gas emissions, Literature review, Sustainability.

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CLIMATE-RELATED HAZARDS, URBANIZATION AND THE FATE OF AFRICA’S CHILD:CHILD SENSITIVE POLICY REFLECTION FROM UGANDA

Dr. Tumwebaze Jonathan

*PhD, Teaching and Research Faculty/Head Research, Grants and Innovations
School of Social Sciences/ Directorate of Research Partnership and Innovation
Uganda Christian University-Mukon
jtumwebaze@ucu.ac.ug*

Abstract

Climate change and rapid urbanization are no longer distant threats; they are immediate forces reshaping childhood in Africa’s cities. Uganda offers a striking case: while its urban population is growing at one of the fastest rates globally of 5.7 percent per year (UBOS, 2024); it is simultaneously facing accelerating climate extremes. Rising temperatures, recurring dry spells, degraded water sources, and increasingly erratic rainfall are already fueling floods, landslides, and widespread contamination (KCCA, 2025). For children, the 57 percent majority of Uganda’s population, these shocks converge to amplify vulnerabilities that are too often overlooked in urban policy debates.

Urbanization is transforming Uganda’s demographic landscape: by 2035, nearly one in three Ugandans will be an urban resident (UBOS, 2024), many of them children and youth. Yet the city is not always a place of safety or opportunity. Instead, it can be a site of risk. Kampala alone sees an estimated 16 new children arriving on its streets daily, adding to a population of over 10,000 street children; a 70 percent rise since the early 1990s (Africhild, 2024). These numbers signal more than poverty; they reflect a systemic failure to prepare sustainable policy responses to such growing climate and social disruption.

This study fills a critical gap by analyzing child-sensitive policy documents from 2015–2025 to uncover how Uganda’s policies are responding or otherwise to the compounded risks of climate shocks and rapid urbanization. Using thematic analysis, striking gaps between rhetoric and reality are revealed, showing how current policy frameworks inadequately address the everyday risks faced by children in Kampala’s metropolitan district. Findings argue for urgent, child-centered policy innovation: programming that sees children not only as passive victims of urbanization and climate change, but as central actors in shaping more resilient and inclusive urban futures.

Key words: Climate-Related Hazards, Urbanization Africa’s Child, Uganda

AICoSME: A HYBRID AI-POWERED TOOL FOR STRATEGIC CARBON FOOTPRINT MANAGEMENT IN SMEs

Karageorgos Anthony

Professor, University of Thessaly, Department of Forestry, Wood Sciences & Design
karageorgos@uth.gr

Trigkas Marios

Professor, University of Thessaly, Department of Forestry, Wood Sciences & Design
mtrigkas@uth.gr

Papageorgiou Elpiniki

Professor, University of Thessaly, Department of Energy Systems
elpinikipapageorgiou@uth.gr

Lallas Eftymios

Assistant Professor, University of Thessaly, Department of Forestry, Wood Sciences & Design
elallas@uth.gr

Ntalos Georgios

Professor, University of Thessaly, Department of Forestry, Wood Sciences & Design
gntalos@uth.gr

Ntounas Theodoros

Researcher, University of Thessaly
dounasth@gmail.com

Chrysikou Vasiliki

Researcher, University of Thessaly
vahrysik@uth.gr

Stavridou Styliani

Researcher, University of Thessaly
stystavridou@uth.gr

Sdroulias Georgios

Researcher, University of Thessaly
gsdroulias@uth.gr

Abstract

Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) face significant challenges in accurately measuring and managing their carbon footprint. The lack of in-house expertise, resource constraints, and the complexity of diverse carbon accounting methodologies often lead to suboptimal and inconsistent results. This paper introduces AICoSME, an AI-powered software tool designed to address these challenges by providing a comprehensive, user-friendly solution for carbon footprint estimation and management.

At its core, AICoSME leverages a hybrid approach combining an ontological model with a knowledge graph to semantically organize heterogeneous data from an SME's operations,

such as energy consumption, raw material sourcing, and transportation. This structured data foundation allows the tool to seamlessly apply and compare results from multiple, alternative estimation methodologies, including established standards like the GHG Protocol and sector-specific approaches such as Life Cycle Assessment (LCA).

The key advantage of AICoSME lies in its ability to transcend simple calculation by offering intelligent recommendations. Based on the comparative analysis of different methodologies, the tool provides clear, actionable insights for SMEs. For example, it might advise a furniture manufacturer to use the LCA method to highlight the carbon sequestration benefits of using certified wood, while simultaneously recommending the GHG Protocol for official corporate reporting.

Furthermore, AICoSME translates data analysis into strategic advice for carbon reduction. By identifying the largest sources of emissions across different scopes, the platform recommends targeted actions, such as shifting from diesel to electric vehicles or sourcing materials locally. This functionality not only streamlines the reporting process but also empowers SMEs to make informed, impactful business decisions that contribute to climate action and enhance their market position. AICoSME thus represents a significant step towards democratizing sustainable practices and enabling smaller enterprises to become active participants in the transition to a low-carbon economy.

Key words: Sustainable development, SME carbon footprint management, Intelligent recommendations, Ontologies

SOCIETAL PERCEPTION OF CARBON CAPTURE, TRANSPORT AND STORAGE: OPPORTUNITIES AND RISKS, INSIGHTS FROM FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS

Oikonomou I. Theoni

Researcher, Centre for Renewable Energy Sources and Saving, Greece

thoikonomou@cres.gr

Karytsas Spyridon

PhD, Researcher, Centre for Renewable Energy Sources and Saving, Greece

spkary@cres.gr

Sprenkeling Marit

Researcher, Netherlands Organisation for Applied Scientific Research, The Netherlands

Marit.Sprenkeling@tno.nl

Terpstra Eva

Strategy & Innovation Advisor, Netherlands Organisation for Applied Scientific Research, The Netherlands

eva.terpstra@tno.nl

Rambharos Shanita

Medior Consultant, ICT, Strategy & Policy, Netherlands Organisation for Applied Scientific Research, The Netherlands

shanita.rambharos@tno.nl

Bannister Andrew

Principal Consultant, Risktec Solutions, The Netherlands

Andrew.Bannister@risktec.tuv.com

Wilkerson Brooke

PhD, Senior Researcher, Norwegian Research Centre, Norway

brwi@norceresearch.no

Ljones Marie Louise

Researcher, Norwegian Research Centre, Norway

malj@norceresearch.no

Bentsen Henrik Litlere

PhD, Senior Researcher, Norwegian Research Centre, Norway

heli@norceresearch.no

Otto Danny

PhD, Researcher, Department of Urban and Environmental Sociology, Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research, Germany

danny.otto@ufz.de

Mendrinou Dimitrios

Senior expert, Head of department for geothermal energy and CO₂ storage, Centre for Renewable Energy Sources and Saving, Greece dmendrin@cres.gr

Abstract

Carbon Capture, Transport, and Storage (CCS) is a key technology for mitigating climate change and achieving climate neutrality. To accelerate the implementation of CCS projects, it is important to integrate technical, economic, societal, and environmental disciplines to support the decision-making process related to permitting and ensure containment and conformance of CO₂ during geological storage.

This is the scope of the RamonCO “Risk-based framework for assessing CO₂ storage monitoring” project, supported by the Clean Energy Transition (CET) Partnership initiative (<https://cetpartnership.eu/calls/funded-project/ramonco>). It involves thirteen organisations from six countries: Norway, Germany, Greece, Romania, the Netherlands, and the USA, and is coordinated by the Norwegian Research Center AS (NORCE).

As part of RamonCO project, focus group meetings were held with key stakeholders in all participating countries to assess the societal perception of CCS technology. This study presents the results of the two Greek focus group meetings. The meetings, entitled “Social Acceptance of Carbon Capture, Transport, and Storage: Opportunities and Risks,” were held in Athens in May 2025, bringing together key stakeholders from the academic and research community, environmental Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), industry, municipalities, and the marine sector.

During the focus group meetings, participants identified opportunities and risks associated with CCS technology in terms of social acceptance and were then asked to select the four most important ones from each list of opportunities and risks.

Our findings indicate that stakeholders prioritize opportunities including economic development, job creation, energy transition, and advancements in know-how and CCS technology. Conversely, the primary risks identified were public concerns over environmental pollution, an unclear regulatory framework, and the credibility of control mechanisms.

Key words: Carbon Capture, Transport, and Storage (CCS); social acceptance; opportunities; risks; stakeholders

THE CONTRIBUTION OF SMART AGRICULTURE AND SMALLHOLDERS TO SUSTAINABLE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF CLIMATE CHANGE: THE CASE OF GREECE

Petridis Dimitris

PhD candidate, Harokopio University of Athens

dipetrid@gmail.com

Kalantonis Petros

Professor, University of West Attica

pkalant@uniwa.gr

Astara Olga-Eleni

Associate Professor, Ionian University

oastara@ionio.gr

Mitoula Roido

Professor, Harokopio University of Athens

mitoula@hua.gr

Abstract

The transition towards a more sustainable model of agricultural production, constitutes a central challenge for the primary sector in Greece, particularly under the pressures of climate change. This study explores the role of smart agriculture and innovative technologies—such as the Internet of Things (IoT), automation, and artificial intelligence—in supporting smallholders. It examines the potential of these technologies to increase productivity, reduce environmental impact, and enhance resilience against climate pressures. At the same time, it analyzes the contribution of smart agriculture to sustainable local development through the strengthening of rural community economies and the support of traditional, high value-added products. The findings highlight that, despite barriers related to cost, training, and infrastructure, smallholders recognize the importance of technological innovation both for the sustainability of their farms and for the preservation of social cohesion at the local level.

Key words: smart agriculture, small-scale farmers, sustainable development, climate change, local development, Western Macedonia, traditional products, Internet of Things (IoT), artificial intelligence

SESSION

“Urban Resilience and Quality of Life”

**Chaired by Prof Salvati Luca and
Assoc Prof Papadas Dimitrios**

NATURAL DISASTERS, URBAN TRADE DISRUPTIONS, AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN MENA CITIES: ENERGY AND FOOD SECURITY PERSPECTIVES

Papadas Dimitrios

*Associate Professor (Reader), Harper Adams Business School, Harper Adams University,
dpaparas@harper-adams.ac.uk*

Abstract

The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, marked by escalating climate-driven natural disasters such as droughts, heatwaves, and floods, faces significant challenges to sustainable urban development, particularly in its rapidly growing cities reliant on energy exports and food imports. This study investigates how disaster frequency and intensity disrupt trade flows and economic stability in urban centers across 18 MENA countries (1995–2024), with a focus on Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) cities (e.g., Dubai, Riyadh) versus North African urban hubs (e.g., Cairo, Casablanca). Employing gravity models with fixed-effects regressions and instrumental variable approaches (inspired by Felbermayr and Gröschl, 2013; El Hadri et al., 2018), the analysis uses EM-DAT and GeoMet data to assess impacts on urban trade networks. Preliminary findings reveal that droughts and floods severely disrupt food imports in North African cities, exacerbating trade deficits and food insecurity (up to 6% urban GDP declines in disaster years), while GCC cities’ energy trade shows resilience but faces risks from events like the 2024 Dubai floods. Institutional quality, urban governance, and regional trade agreements (e.g., GAFTA) mitigate impacts unevenly, with conflict-affected cities (e.g., Sana’a) showing heightened social and economic vulnerabilities. Quantile regressions highlight stronger effects in lower-growth urban economies, underscoring the need for climate-adaptive urban trade policies. This study fills a gap in MENA-specific urban sustainability research by linking disaster-driven trade disruptions to food and energy security, offering policy recommendations for resilient urban infrastructure, disaster risk financing, and regional cooperation to support sustainable development in climate-vulnerable MENA cities.

Key words: Natural Disasters ; Sustainable Development ; Trade ; Urban; MENA

SUSTAINABLE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT IN URBAN AREAS OF HIGH FLOOD RISK: DESIGN, SIMULATION AND EVALUATION OF THE APPLICATION OF NATURE – BASED SOLUTIONS IN THE CITY OF THESSALONIKI

Zafeirakou Antigoni

Associate professor, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, School of Civil Engineering
azafir@civil.auth.gr

Samaras Evangelos

MEng A.U.Th., Civil Engineer, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece
samarasevang@gmail.com

Abstract

The present paper explores sustainable stormwater management in urban areas with high flood risk, using Thessaloniki, Greece, as a case study. The primary objective is to assess the effectiveness of Nature-based Solutions (NbS) - specifically rain gardens, permeable pavements, and bioretention tree pits - in mitigating surface runoff and improving urban climate resilience. The study aims to provide urban planners and engineers with actionable insights for integrating green infrastructure into Mediterranean cities.

The methodology combines meteorological data analysis, spatial identification of potential intervention sites along Aristotelous Square, and the development of a hydrological model using EPA SWMM software. Multiple design scenarios were simulated, reproducing the intense rainfall events of 2022 and 2023, both with and without NbS interventions. Key performance indicators such as runoff volume, peak discharge, and runoff coefficient were compared across scenarios.

Results reveal a substantial reduction in surface runoff and peak flow, with the combined application of NbS achieving up to 35-45% runoff reduction in critical subcatchments. Beyond flood mitigation, NbS demonstrated co-benefits including improved water quality, enhanced urban biodiversity, and increased thermal comfort through evapotranspiration.

The findings underline the potential of NbS as cost-effective and multifunctional tools for climate adaptation. The paper concludes by recommending their systematic integration into urban planning policies, emphasizing the need for pilot implementations, long-term monitoring, and public engagement to maximize their environmental, social, and economic benefits.

Key words: Sustainable Stormwater Management, Nature-based Solutions, Thessaloniki, Aristotelous Square, EPA SWMM,

LISTENING TO CHILDREN: PARTICIPATORY PRACTICES IN THE DESIGN OF OPEN SPACES FOR PLAY

Tafidou Kyriaki

Architect, MSc Spatial Planning for Sustainable and Resilient Development, PhD Candidate, School of Spatial Planning and Development (AUTH)

ktafidou@yahoo.gr

Katsavounidou Garyfallia

Associate Professor, School of Spatial Planning and Development, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

gkatsavou@plandevl.auth.gr

Abstract

In the current urban reality, many factors affect the quality of daily life for children in cities. Increasing traffic, long distances, lack of safety, and poorly designed play areas create an unfriendly environment for living and playing. These problems are exacerbated when public spaces do not meet the needs and desires of both children and parents. In this context, participatory design emerges as an effective tool, allowing children themselves to express their opinions and actively contribute to the shaping of their space.

This presentation focuses on participatory design with children and highlights the importance on both theoretical and practical perspective. It poses critical questions about the ways design can respond to the contemporary challenges of urban childhood and whether child-friendly spaces enhance urban resilience.

The area chosen for the study was the urban planning unit of Byzantio and part of the urban planning unit Limenergaton in the municipality of Kalamaria in the regional unit of Thessaloniki. This area is densely populated urban fabric crossed by two major road with heavy traffic, lack of green spaces and a few abandoned ones. One of these is Rodon Square. The analysis focused on playgrounds and included data collection through questionnaires for children and parents, using digital media, as well as participatory workshop for children that focused on gathering their desires for the square's design. The results from all sources led to the generation of specific proposals for upgrading the area, revitalizing Rodon Square, and enhancing resilience. The presentation will focus on the methodology of the participatory practices that were applied, with the ultimate goal of extracting models of participatory practices for the design of open spaces for play.

Key words: Participatory design, children, playgrounds, resilience

CARTOGRAPHIES OF URBAN METABOLISM TOWARDS SELF-SUSTAINING TERRITORIAL SYSTEMS

Apostolou Malvina

Associated researcher, URM MAP MAACC, École nationale supérieure d'architecture de Paris-La Villette

malvina.apostolou@gmail.com

Abstract

This paper addresses the question of a transition of cities from energy-dependent entities to self-sustaining systems. It investigates the concepts of urban metabolism and bioregionalism, interrogating how urban territories might reorganize themselves to optimize energy production and consumption. Applying these metaphors to cities, it examines how territories might evolve from heterotrophic, dependency-based systems towards more autotrophic urban ecosystems. As urban regions are traditionally structured by administrative boundaries disregarding energy balance questions, the research aims to challenge the spatial paradigms to a cartography redefining them.

To frame the context, the research first examines and interprets case studies and urban planning paradigms applying methods and tools linked to urban metabolism as well as research on bioregionalism.

This is followed by a case-specific exploration that uses spatial data to evaluate energy production and consumption patterns to a selected territory.

Methodologically, the study combines spatial data with GIS tools to map and analyze a specific case's land use data, translating spatial patterns into energy balances. More specifically, potential energy -producing and energy-consuming spaces are mapped, revealing sub-spaces with potentialities for energy autonomy.

By removing administrative borders from the mapping process, a new cartography emerges, redefining potential territories based on energy potential by identifying zones with potential for energy self-sufficiency, but also reading spatial inequalities.

This exploration suggests a reinterpretation of urban spatial models challenging centralized energy networks towards decentralized and polycentric or micro-systems. A reorganization of urban space based on energy metabolism could provide a framework addressing systemically ecological autonomies and socio-spatial equities.

The paper aims to be an empirical basis for rethinking energy governance and infrastructure planning particularly in light of climate and energy crises.

Key words: urban metabolism, territorial metabolism, bioregionalism, sustainable cities, land use, energy autonomy

ADAPTIVE ROAD MANAGEMENT FOR WILDFIRE RESILIENCE. A CASE STUDY FROM THESSALY, GREECE

Stamatiou Christos

PhD candidate, University of Thessaly, Department of Forestry, Wood Sciences & Design, Lab of Forest Road Engineering and Forestry Works, Karditsa, Greece
chstamatiou@uth.gr

Matsouka Maria

PhD candidate, University of Thessaly, Department of Forestry, Wood Sciences & Design, Lab of Forest Road Engineering and Forestry Works, Karditsa, Greece
mmatsouka@uth.gr

Papageorgiou Grigorios

Associate Professor, University of Thessaly, Department of Forestry, Wood Sciences & Design, Lab of Forest Road Engineering and Forestry Works, Karditsa, Greece
gpapageor@uth.gr

Abstract

The frequency and intensity of wildfires have exposed the limitations of traditional, suppression-centric management models. An adequate change is required, moving from a reactive to a proactive stance with an adaptive framework that acknowledges fire as a dynamic ecological process. A key factor for this evolution is the road networks transformation from static into dynamic infrastructure, resilient systems, capable of supporting both prevention and fast response. The road networks play a multifaceted and critical role in this change. Roads are no longer just transportation corridors but are integrated, multifunctional components of a resilient landscape. This study synthesizes the findings from wildfire risk and road networks characteristics to outline an adaptive road management framework in the Region of Thessaly, Greece. This current work is based in thorough assessment of wildfire risk, leading to the designation of the road networks in risk zones for targeted management actions. These actions should not be static or one-time, but they should be continuously adjustable based on new scientific information and monitoring. This iterative procedure ensures that management remains effective and aligned with evolving environmental conditions, building resilience in the frame of wildfire events.

Key words: Road management, Thessaly region, wildfire risk, public policy, GIS

PRE ORGANISED SPECIAL SESSION

“Islands in Transition: Innovation, Sustainability, Tourism and Climate Resilience”

**Organised and Chaired by Assoc Prof Maria P. Doumi,
Assist Prof Ioanna Pagoni, Assist Prof Iason-Nikolais
Koufodontis and Em Prof Angelis Vasilis**

THE VOLUNTARY LOCAL REVIEWS (VLRs) AS A TOOL FOR SUSTAINABLE GOVERNANCE IN CITIES: THE CASE OF SKIATHOS

Bithas George

Strategy Consultant, PlanBe PC

george@planbe.com.gr

Kyriakopoulou Sotiria

General Manager, Anavathmisi SA

skyriakopoulou@anavathmisi.gr

Angelis Vasilis

Emeritus Professor, University of the Aegean

v.angelis@aegean.gr

Abstract

In 2015, the UN adopted a new agenda entitled *Transforming our world for 2030. Agenda for sustainable development*, which sets 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). One of them, Goal 11 refers to the cities and the actions which should be taken to make them safe, resilient, sustainable and inclusive. Moreover, this goal interacts with almost all the others thus confirming the decisive contribution of the cities to the attainment of all the SDGs. Hence the next step was the *Localization of 2030 Agenda*, or in other words its adaptation to the local conditions, which focuses on the process of setting, implementing and monitoring goals and strategies at a local level compatible with the national ones. Moreover, a special innovative tool, known as Voluntary Local Review (VLR), has been developed for monitoring the local actions. Islands as vulnerable ecosystems with particular social, economic and environmental conditions are asked to draw up strategies combining resilience to climate crisis, sustainable tourism development and social cohesion. In this context the VLRs can play a key role. The present paper introduces the VLRs and presents their application to Skiathos, the first Greek Municipality which has used this tool.

Keywords: Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Sustainable Governance, Voluntary Local Review (VLR), Skiathos.

CULTURAL LANDSCAPE AND TOURISM. THE CASE OF THE STONE-BUILT ROADS IN CHIOS.

Doumi P. Maria

*Associate Professor, Department of Tourism Economics and Management,
University of the Aegean*
mdoumi@aegean.gr

Angelis-Dimakis Dimitris

*Postdoctoral Researcher, Department of Tourism Economics and Management, University of
the Aegean*
dim.angelis@gmail.com

Koufodontis Iason-Nikolaos

*Assistant Professor, Department of Tourism Economics and Management, University of the
Aegean*
mdoumi@aegean.gr

Fili Vasiliki

Department of Tourism Economics and Management, University of the Aegean
vasiafili37@gmail.com

Tsompanis Konstantinos

Department of Tourism Economics and Management, University of the Aegean

Abstract

One of the main characteristics of most of the Greek Islands, which indeed differentiates them from other tourist destinations worldwide, is that their main attraction is the landscape. Moreover, following the pandemic there seems to be a shift to the global tourism trends, placing a particular emphasis on the landscape of the destinations. In this context, the landscape may have a key role as planning and management tool regarding the development of tourism in Greek islands. Furthermore, as all landscapes are in effect cultural, culture is central to landscape and inextricably linked with it. The present paper looks firstly into the concept of cultural landscape, its origins, development and delicate balance with tourism. At the second level it focuses on Chios and examines the case of its stone-built roads. After a brief introduction to these traditional roads, it presents the main findings of a relevant research which has been carried out. The research collects and analyzes the views of professional bodies related to tourism regarding their knowledge about these roads, the current state of their development, their future prospects as well as their potential contribution to the enhancement of the island's tourism product.

Keywords: Cultural Landscape, Tourism, Stone-Built Roads, Chios.

CIRCULAR ECONOMY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT. THE CASE OF GREEK ISLAND MUNICIPALITIES.

Kontas Ioannis

Researcher, University of West Attica

pep22048@uniwa.gr

Alexopoulos Andreas

Associate Professor, University of West Attica

a.alexopoulos@uniwa.gr

Angelis Vasilis

Emeritus Professor, University of the Aegean

v.angelis@aegean.gr

Abstract

The environmental degradation, the excessive use of natural resources, the climate crisis as well as the social and economic inequalities are among the major threats facing the planet and ask for immediate action. The prevailing linear production and consumption model seems unable to provide the required solutions to these problems and hence the use of an alternative model, that of circular economy may offer a better way of addressing those issues. The present paper presents new trends in circular economy models, outlines their basic principles and highlights the potential benefits but also the possible pitfalls stemming from their application. At the second level it focuses on the Greek island Municipalities and presents the main findings of a relevant research which has been carried out. The research collects and analyzes the views of sixteen Greek island municipalities regarding the application of circular policies in them, the stakeholders involved, the main problems faced, the current state of development and the future prospects.

Keywords: Circular Economy, Sustainable Development, Greek Island Municipalities.

THE SECURITY OF DIGITAL PLATFORMS AS A SUSTAINABILITY FACTOR IN THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT OF CHIOS

Anagnostou Kostas

M.Sc. Student, Department of Business Administration, University of the Aegean, Chios, Greece

mba23002@ba.aegean.gr

Mennis Vangelis

Lab. Teaching Staff, Department of Business Administration, University of the Aegean, Chios, Greece

v.mennis@aegean.gr

Doumi P. Maria

Associate Professor, Department of Tourism Economics and Management, University of the Aegean, Chios, Greece

mdoumi@aegean.gr

Abstract

The rapid growth of social media platforms has transformed communication, information exchange, and entertainment, but it has also generated critical concerns regarding user safety and wellbeing. Issues such as privacy breaches, online gambling, exposure to harmful or violent content, and incitement to hostility have been widely reported, with potential psychological, social, and behavioral consequences for users of all ages. These problems may be more acute in small towns in island regions, due to the restrictions and specificities that apply.

This study aims to examine the underlying dimensions of these risks and their collective influence on social media users. Using survey data and statistical analysis, factor analysis in SPSS was employed to identify latent constructs that explain the co-occurrence of problematic experiences on social platforms. The results highlight key factors that cluster around security vulnerabilities, addictive behaviors, and exposure to harmful content, demonstrating how these risks interact and amplify one another. The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of the structural relationships between diverse social media problems and provide valuable insights for policymakers, educators, and platform developers seeking to mitigate adverse impacts while promoting safer digital environments.

Keywords: digital platforms, social media, digital addiction, social problems, island regions

ISLAND SUSTAINABLE STRATEGY: FROM VULNERABILITY TO RESILIENCE

Spilanis Ioannis

Professor Emeritus, Laboratory of Local and Island Development, University of the Aegean
ispil@aegean.gr

Abstract

Demographic and productive shrinkage were the main impacts caused by the unique characteristics of insularity (small size, peripherality and isolation, uniqueness but high fragility of natural and cultural resources) under the pressure of the dominant economic model of mass production in the 20th century, placing them in a vulnerable position.

Tourism development in recent decades has changed the trend, as islands are considered worldwide as very attractive places to visit and tour. New incomes, often very high, have been created, as well as new jobs. This development has created new challenges and another type of vulnerability.

The most important goal on islands, as in every place in the world, is (a) to be attractive for both people and businesses and (b) to remain within the limits of sustainability. These goals can only be achieved in the different types of areas in the specific terms of each area (e.g. urban, mountainous, rural, island) respecting its specificities. The regeneration and diversification of the economy from tourism mono-culture is an even more difficult task.

Keywords: Insularity, tourism, sustainability, resilience

SUSTAINABLE ISLAND MOBILITY PLANS: PLANNING FOR PEOPLE, TOURISM, AND CLIMATE

Anagnostopoulos Kosmas

Founder and Coordinator of CIVINET Greece-Cyprus
ka@civinet.gr

Pagoni Ioanna

Assistant Professor, Department of Tourism Economics and Management, University of the Aegean
ipagoni@aegean.gr

Gioldasis Christos

Post-doctoral researcher, Department of Civil Engineering, University of Patras
chgioldasis@upatras.gr

Polydoropoulou Amalia

Professor, Department of Shipping, Trade and Transport, University of the Aegean
polydor@aegean.gr

Spilanis Ioannis

Professor Emeritus, University of the Aegean, Laboratory of Local and Island Development
ispil@aegean.gr

Nikolopoulou Katerina

Director of Operations & Proposal Manager, CIVINET Greece-Cyprus
kn@civinet.gr

Stroumpas Savvas

Architect - Urban Planner & Project Manager, CIVINET Greece-Cyprus
sa@civinet.gr

Abstract

This paper presents the Sustainable Island Mobility Plan (SIMP), an innovative framework in transport planning, specifically tailored to the environmental, economic, and social particularities of small and medium-sized Greek islands. These territories experience extreme seasonal fluctuations due to high tourism inflows, which significantly increase mobility demand, strain infrastructure capacity, and amplify environmental pressures. These challenges are further compounded by the islands' inherent characteristics, i.e. geographical isolation, limited space for transport infrastructure, sensitive ecosystems, and the co-existence of permanent and seasonal populations.

Such conditions necessitate a specialized, flexible approach to mobility planning, which addresses the above challenges while also integrating sustainable, climate-resilient and flexible mobility solutions. The SIMP framework, unlike traditional Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMP), is designed to balance the year-round mobility needs of residents with the seasonal surges driven by tourism. The methodology is grounded in participatory planning, engaging local stakeholders—including public authorities, transport operators, and tourism actors—to co-develop mobility strategies that respond to both off-peak and high-demand conditions. The analysis is supported by relevant data on tourism arrivals, population patterns, and transport use. Finally, the paper highlights emerging practices in sustainable island mobility, such as electromobility, on-demand public transport, and active travel modes.

Keywords: Sustainable Island Mobility Plan, Greek islands, Sustainable Transport, Mobility planning

DIGITAL ECOSYSTEMS AND BUSINESS INNOVATION AS ACCELERATORS OF SUSTAINABLE TRANSITION IN ISLAND SMART CITIES

Ntoumi Anastasia

PhD Candidate, Department of Business Administration, University of the Aegean

antoumi@aegean.gr

Kutsikos Konstadinos

Associate Professor, Department of Business Administration, University of the Aegean

kutsikos@aegean.gr

Doumi P. Maria

Associate Professor, Department of Tourism Economics and Management,, University of the Aegean, Chios, Greece

mdoumi@aegean.gr

Angelis Vasilis

Emeritus Professor, University of the Aegean

v.angelis@aegean.gr

Abstract

Smart cities are emerging as key models of sustainable urban development, particularly in island regions undergoing complex transitions due to socioeconomic pressures and climate challenges. This paper explores the role of digital ecosystems and business innovation as dual and complementary drivers in shaping resilient, participatory, and innovation-driven urban environments. Digital ecosystems—comprising interconnected platforms, data infrastructures, and collaborative networks—enhance interoperability between public and private actors, enabling more efficient resource management and citizen-centered service delivery. At the same time, business innovation facilitates the development of new value models, such as smart mobility and sustainable energy solutions, which strengthen economic diversification and quality of life in insular contexts. Special emphasis is placed on open innovation and cross-sector collaboration as catalysts for enhancing climate resilience and managing tourism-related pressures in vulnerable island territories. The study argues that the integration of technology, participatory governance, and entrepreneurial activity provides a functional model for sustainable transformation in island smart cities. It highlights the importance of ecosystem thinking in transitioning from traditional urban management to adaptive systems capable of addressing environmental, social, and economic challenges. Ultimately, this framework offers new pathways for reimagining islands as laboratories for inclusive and future-ready development.

Keywords: Smart Cities, Digital Ecosystems, Business Innovation, Island Resilience, Sustainable Transition

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

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The 3rd OPEN-AIR CITIES International Conference, organized by Open-Air Cities, HAROKOPIO UNIVERSITY of Athens - Postgraduate Programme "Sustainable Development" and SYROS INSTITUTE.

The conference aims to present and disseminate research results related to the Sustainable Development of cities and regions at a global level.

The main subject is the presentation of relevant research in the field of Sustainable Development.

The conference is organized and structured on the four main pillars of Sustainable Development, which in fact are also the main pillars of Urban and Regional Development: Environment, Economy, Society and Culture. Each of these pillars includes its subcategories, which are detailed through the thematic sections related to the 17 Global Goals of Sustainable Development.

The conference brings together many distinguished researchers of Local and Regional Sustainable Development and Urban Reconstruction from many countries all over the world. Participants have the opportunity to present new research, exchange information, and discuss current issues.

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