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Les défis de développement pour les villes et les régions dans une Europe en mutation

CREATIVITY AND HISTORIC CITIES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA BASIN. ATTEMPTING URBAN DEVELOPMENT BY SUPPORTING TRADITION AND THE ART PROFESSIONS

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D6. Development of the Mediterranean area ή C8 Urban regeneration : Plans & Policies

Résumé / Summary

“Urban” and “regional development”: issues which have not stopped engaging, troubling and dividing the international scientific community as well as national and regional policy-making bodies. The wide range of consequences brought on by the current multifaceted downturn on all geographical scales, requires we search for planning practices and designate innovative mechanisms to formulate new developmental axes for action, able to respond to contemporary requirements and challenges. Research interest over the past years, therefore, has focused and sought out strategies for productive reconfiguration in order to transition the economy to a new age. Recognising that economic development does not constitute a “spatial neutral” endeavour, we cannot and should attempt not to deal with production and employment consequences in sector-based restructuring without taking into account locus and local societies. Particularly in an age, such as the one we are currently experiencing of “network organisation of infrastructures / operations”, dominated by the “knowledge economy”, in other words, under conditions where human resources and the landscape gain crucial importance in regulating space. A finding that is confirmed further by the direction of E.U. policies.

Within this framework and also taking into account contemporary perceptions on spatial development and data on the changes that the Greek economic system has undergone, we estimate that the response to an attempt to restructure production in the country and increase support for its cities and regions, could be sought by setting up “collaboration networks” with “intangible cultural heritage” and support for “creative entrepreneurship” as “key developmental components”, focusing on strategies for recovery, modernization and return to historical city centres and historical regional settlements. Specifically, using input of the experience gained from collaborations with seven historical cities around the Mediterranean, with different cultures, sector specialization, socio-political conditions and quality of urban environment, we maintain that the goal of restoring local societies could be sought through initiatives / actions to preserve and diffuse local traditions and know-how, support art professions and encourage young creators, but within an overall policy

for urban development, able to ensure ongoing collaboration and networking between the components in all territorial levels and categories of space.

Key words: “urban - regional development”, “historic cities / settlements”, “cultural heritage”, “territorial planning”, “creativity”, “traditional professions / know-how”, “collaboration networks”.

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