

ICTPW

22nd-23rd April 2024

**International Conference
of Tirana Planning Week**

by POLIS University

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

ISBN(e) 978-9928-347-18-3

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Tirana planning Week

TPW24 will be an International scholarly event dedicated to the urgent theme of “Urban Sustainability and Resilience in the context of the 21st century challenges”. We extend a warm invitation for you to contribute to this intellectual discourse by proposing to organize an event within the **TPW24**.

TPW24 is a distinguished event hosted by the Faculty of Planning, Environment and Urban Management (FPMMU) at POLIS University in Tirana and it is set to be a dynamic amalgamation of thought-stimulating activities, including conferences, keynote speeches, round tables, workshops, and exhibitions.

Tirana Planning Week event is organized by POLIS University (Albania), Department of Architecture of Ferrara University (Italy) and the University of Thessaly (Greece). Our university partners are UNECE, UNDP Albania, AUA, IHS- Rotterdam, while memberships extend to AESOP, ISO-CARP and ENHR.

The central research theme of Tirana Planning Week 2024 is urban sustainability and resilience. This interdisciplinary theme surpasses the confines of planning and urban management, intersecting with a multitude of other disciplines. Consequently, we extend our invitation to experts, researchers, and academics from diverse fields whose research intersects with urban space, to enrich this event with their invaluable insights.

Urban Sustainability and Resilience in the context of the 21st century challenges

Conference Theme and Rationale

The International Conference of Tirana Planning Week 2024 (ICTPW24) is centered around the pivotal theme of urban sustainability and resilience. This multifaceted theme invites exploration across a spectrum of dimensions, encompassing formal, functional, social, economic, and environmental aspects. Recognizing the interdisciplinary nature of this theme, we warmly invite participation from experts, researchers, and academics across diverse disciplines whose work intersects with urban sustainability and resilience. This conference presents a unique opportunity to engage in a rich, multidimensional dialogue on the pressing challenges and innovative solutions in the realm of urban sustainability and resilience. We invite you to submit your abstracts that contribute to our theme. The topics of interest include, but are not limited to:

- Formal Sustainability

This subtheme explores the physical and spatial aspects of urban sustainability. It delves into the design, planning, and architectural practices that contribute to the creation of sustainable and resilient urban forms.

- Resilience and Economic Sustainability

This subtheme focuses on the economic factors and functional programs that drive urban sustainability. It examines the role of economic policies, market mechanisms, and functional programs in promoting sustainable urban development.

- Social Sustainability

This subtheme addresses the social dimensions of urban sustainability. It investigates how social equity, inclusivity, and community engagement can be fostered in urban settings to ensure a sustainable and resilient future.

- Environmental Sustainability and Green Transition

This subtheme centers on the environmental aspects of urban sustainability and the transition towards greener urban environments. It looks at strategies for mitigating environmental impacts, promoting biodiversity, and transitioning to low-carbon and resource-efficient urban systems.

- Sustainability of Urban Policy and Governance

This subtheme discusses the role of policy and governance in urban sustainability. It considers how effective policy-making, governance structures, and institutional practices can support the implementation of sustainability and resilience strategies in urban areas.

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01 - Formal Sustainability

This subtheme explores the physical and spatial aspects of urban sustainability. It delves into the design, planning, and architectural practices that contribute to the creation of sustainable and resilient urban forms.

Emerging Ecologies and the Nascent Paradigm: Reconceptualizing Architectural Design in the Current Interregnum. The new that cannot be born

Dr. Valerio Perna
Polis University, Albania

Abstract

Since the mid-1960s, global discussions in philosophy, epistemology, science, and technology have engaged in a critical examination of the concepts and applications of anthropocentrism (Smith, 1978; Jones, 1995; Brown, 2003). This scrutiny has subsequently stimulated new discussions on how various fields of knowledge, spanning from science to humanism, should grapple with the inclusion of external agents that were previously excluded or overlooked. In the last decades, philosophical circles, as represented by thinkers such as Braidotti (2013) and Delanda (2021), have raised inquiries into the operational value of the concept of “progress.” This concept, central to the ideologies and practices of Modernity, has been scrutinized for its role in perpetuating a worldview founded on binary oppositions and polarities—the typical “black or white” litany. This approach has led to the neglect of real and essential connections that are intricately intertwined in the world we inhabit. The scope of challenging anthropocentric thought extends beyond considerations of species other than humans; it encompasses, perhaps above all, the sustainability of our planet intricately interwoven with its political and economic dimensions. Concepts like assemblage, emergence, difference, agency, affect, immanence, sympathy, ecology, and symbiosis, among others, have undergone a gradual migration into various subject areas and realms of contemplation. These terms are now intricately interlinked, establishing new ecologies, connections, and continuities across diverse academic domains. Indeed, the human is presently situated within both the natural and artificial environments it has generated, no longer recognized as the exclusive entity capable of safely shaping and altering them (Voyatzaki, 2018, p.12). In light of this, architecture is undergoing a profound period of crisis, navigating a landscape where our world grapples with discerning elements that are in the process of fading away and those that are not yet ready to emerge. We find ourselves immersed in what can be described as a Gramscian interregnum, characterized by the simultaneous decline of established paradigms and the hesitant emergence of new ones. This transitional phase is marked by the poignant sentiment that “the old is dying and the new cannot be born.” The challenge lies in determining the nature of novelty we should advocate for creation and identifying the specific forms, materials, styles, substances, and other attributes that should be given to the emerging paradigm to distinguish it from the outgoing one. Designing for Gaia (Planet Earth) necessitates a profound shift in the coordinates of the design process, moving away from an approach initially centered on glorifying human intellect and refocusing toward a broader perspective beyond the exclusive interests of humanity. This transformation implies a fundamental reconsideration of the design act, which traditionally has been conceived as a celebration of human achievements, towards a more inclusive and ecologically conscious framework that encompasses the well-being of the entire planetary system. The primary aim of this paper is to scrutinize the burgeoning ecologies, meta-languages, and interconnections that aspire to reshape architectural design and its foundational ontology.

This investigation includes a critical examination of the integration of novel technologies and tools, disrupting the traditional perception of 'design' as an exclusive realm of human intellect. By undertaking this exploration, the paper seeks to elucidate our present position within the ongoing interregnum and to anticipate the potential trajectory of the emergent paradigm, with a specific focus on fostering novelty of sustainability and resilience in architectural production.

Keywords:

In alphabetical order, architectural design, interregnum, new ecologies, ontology, Gaia.

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Non-Places of Hyper-Verticalization: “A Holistic Exploration of Supermodernity’s Emergence in Post-Socialist Urban Contexts, beyond Scraping Skies.

Fulvio Papadhopulli, Julian Beqiri
Polis University, Albania

Abstract

In the dynamic context of Tirana’s urban evolution, skyscrapers challenge conventional planning regulations, ushering in a paradigmatic shift and reshaping the city’s identity. This “urban renaissance”, predominately reflective of global trends in transitional countries, introduces unprecedented challenges and consequences; opening up the debate about the appearance of anthropological spaces of transience. In response, this paper sheds light on the imminent phenomena of non-places, where the accumulation of financial surplus is preparing the conditions for a new city of supermodernity. Drawn on a synthesis of case studies and literature, the investigation advocates for a re-evaluation of planning policies. Computational tools, highlighting Grasshopper iterative capabilities as well as traditional mapping techniques, are harnessed to build-up a design-space exploration and analyse non-places through a comprehensive digital-twin representation of Tirana’s urban fabric. This approach aims to provide a nuanced understanding of urban parameters and socio-visual impacts, enabling the prediction and evaluation of diverse planning scenarios within specific site boundaries. At the core of this exploration lies the transformative potential of Generative Design as a catalyst for change. Insights from successful urban planning precedents in cities like Toronto, Berlin, and London are drawn upon to enrich Tirana’s planning processes. The integration of computational prowess and established planning methodologies underscores the paper’s commitment to contributing to the contemporary discourse on sustainable urban development in rapidly evolving post-socialist cities. The abstract nature of “non-place” finds interpreted rationalization in computational iterations, offering insights into adaptive urban transformation. The translation of contextual values into algorithmic constructs positions generative design as customizable and ever-evolving game-changing tool. This paper advocates a holistic approach to the quantized nature of urban conditions, unravelling the dynamic interplay between theoretical constructs and computational interventions. The confluence of “non-place” interpretation and generative design emerges as a guiding light amid the uncertainties of urban transformations, sparking questions about the future urban fabric and the role of non-places in shaping it.

Keywords:

Affordable Housing, Housing Policy, Tirana, Albania, Developing Countries, Housing Affordability, Policy Effectiveness.

Antipoles and Slates: The shape of the city of the 21st century. The role of Contemporary Housing in the formal identity of Tirana.

Dr. Llazar Kumaraku, Mira Idrizi
Polis University, Albania

Abstract

This article explores the form of the Contemporary City and the methodology of how settlements are created. For years, the city form has been in transition and it seems difficult and challenging to give a formal definition for the city of the third millennium. The concept of the city itself is in crisis due to its scale. The following paper aims to shed light on the state of the city's form in the current period by determining the methodology of how the form of the settlement is related with the housing. The research is guided by the question of what is the formal relationship that exists between the housing and how this affects the definition of the morphology of the habitation forms. From the methodological perspective, this research will be based on the formal study of the city of Tirana as a case study. Based on this case, the form of new residential neighborhoods will be studied in relation to the entire organism of the city. The study will focus on the urban triangle boarded by Kavaje Street, Durres Street and the New Orbital of Tirana. By focusing on this specific part of Tirana, we will have the opportunity to research in detail the formal relationship that exists between the new residential neighborhoods and the shape of this part of the city. The conclusions of this localized study will be verified in relation to the shape of the whole city and at the end a possible formal scenario for the city of the future will be proposed. The expected result are a series of analyzes on the form of new residential neighborhoods in Tirana, which will be placed in relation to the overall form of the city. From this relationship, is expected that a new image will emerge of the general shape of the city of Tirana, specifically, but also of all the settlements that have a morphological history similar to the city of Tirana, which are mainly the Eastern European cities that have gone through a dictatorial era and which are currently experiencing a phase of rapid urban development.

Keywords:

Architecture / City / Form / Morphology / Postmodern

Gordon Matta-Clark's Urban Interventions and Their Implications for Formal Sustainability in Tirana.

Remijon Pronja, Dr. Keti Hoxha
Polis University, Albania

Abstract

This study examines the interaction of art works and architectural interventions by Gordon Matta-Clark in the context of Tirana, analysing through his practice the destruction of areas of the city for requalification, relatively recent phenomenon known as gentrification in Tirana. The main question of this research is how the interplay of Matta-Clark's creativity can serve as a fruitful resource for understanding urban change and advances in formal sustainability. Matta-Clark's use of a multidisciplinary approach between architecture and art, as well as his own academic training, allows us to understand his works as a way of urban perception, focusing on the artistic elements of civic spaces and their potential impact on citizen awareness. Combining the artist's work with urban studies and sustainability offers a different perspective for analysing the interaction between art and urban environment. Gordon Matta-Clark's theory is based on buildings and infrastructure «should be in perpetual metamorphosis by virtue of people continually acting on the space that surrounds them». (Pobric, 2017) This statement, as well as the artistic understanding of his work, reveal the fundamental linkages between Matta-Clark's works; meanings and their fit for Tirana's sustainable aspirations. The artist's works help to comprehend the evolution of urban development by emphasizing the use of abandoned spaces and community participation in the formation of the urban environment. The study offers an additional perspective on Tirana by utilizing Gordon Matta-Clark's works to comprehend the breadth and complexities of civic development. Through this artistic reading, the research helps to promote urban awareness and citizens' active connection with the place in which they live. Finally, this study emphasizes the necessity of using art as a resource to better understand urban developments and encourage more inclusive and sustainable living. Gordon Matta-Clark's works, taken as a reading tool for Tirana, can lead to new and enhanced advancements in the fields of urban planning and formal sustainability.

Keywords:

Art, Social Structure, Space.

Vision and Imagination in Urban Planning.

Eno Kotmilo, Prof. Gjergj Kotmilo
Polytechnic University of Tirana, Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning

Abstract

“Life is very complex. Don’t try to find the answers, because when you find them, life changes the questions.” (Unknown)

“I am enough of an artist to draw freely upon my imagination. Imagination is more important than knowledge. For knowledge is limited, whereas imagination embraces the entire world, stimulating progress, giving birth to evolution.” (Albert Einstein, 1924)

Within the realms of sustainable and resilient territorial and spatial (urban) planning, the pivotal role of Vision and Imagination emerges as a decisive factor for genuine and effective outcomes. Urban planning, inherently a technical tool, unfolds within a multidisciplinary framework that converges into a comprehensive synthesis of plans and explanatory materials. This complexity extends beyond a mere enumeration of stages or degrees of final approval, as the resultant framework is submitted to central or local governments. Their role encompasses not only adherence but also the oversight and control of the document’s execution, a document that serves as a guiding force for necessary transformations and investments in the planned territory. The objectives of planning primarily center around extensive terrains, necessitating prolonged periods of study and design. The implementation itself unfolds over a relatively extended timeline, commencing with the examination of local plans, urban development plans, city plans, and progressing to regional plans. Acknowledging the inherent dynamics and potential alterations in final indicators and goals during the sustainable and resilient planning processes, it becomes imperative to establish a vision early on. It is in this context of necessitated vision and imagination that we present our perspective in this paper.

Keywords: Imagination Planning Resilient Sustainable Urban Vision
Architecture / City / Form / Morphology / Postmodern

Designing with memory, instruments for architectural composition.

Dr. Llazar Kumaraku, Dejvi Dauti
Polis University, Albania

Abstract

One of the main instruments of the sustainability of the urban and architectural form, according to the theories developed during the last hundred years is the design inquiry into what is the memory of a site. This research is focused on the topic of sustainability through memory as a design instrument, that is based on carrying out the layering of the history and identity of an urban and architectural form. This paper belongs to research on the theory of architecture and urban design, the article aims to investigate how the projects of architects who use memory as the main design instrument can represent a methodology tool to be applied in different sites and research. Based on this, the paper tries to investigate how in built projects, this methodology has been applied to make traces from the hidden palimpsest of a specific site to maintain, define or bring back an identity. This approach will be investigated through some examples that use the memory of places and the design process as the main tools for the final design. We will analyze three different projects by Peter Eisenman – Cannareggio, IBA 84 and Il Giardino dei passi perduti -, who represents one of the most living exponents of this approach with his architecture, buildings and installations that aim to enhance the memory of a place. Starting from diagrams and sketches Peter Eisenman managed to build a system that works as an instrument capable of rehabilitating a memory of what the site still hides even after a complete reconfiguration. Each project shows how different layers can be packed and unpacked during the design process relating to the site and the information hidden within it, portraying memory as a fundamental tool capable of answering the design problem. The importance of this research consists in the definition of practical tools based on theoretical frameworks and building projects, this combination provides a spatial reference, in terms of settlements, capable of synthesizing a methodology in what we can understand as a contemporary phase of memory in the architecture and what tools we have to maintain, understand and potentially bring back the identity of a site.

Keywords:

Architecture, Memory, Palimpsest.

Changing context in urban regeneration: How the post-socialist city of Tirana failed to affirm the legacy of Social Realism.

Julian Beqiri
Polis University, Albania

Abstract

After World War II, no other Eastern European countries succeeded in controlling urbanization to the same extent as the communist Albania did. As a largely non-industrialized country its capital city was perceived as the focal point for the implementation of the aspired modernisation. While the process was inspired by the Soviets “five-year plans of encompassing targets for construction and services”, the architecture of Social Realism was used to convey the regime’s clear political agenda and its monumentality endeavored to impose a clear sense of hierarchy. Transitioning from communism, Tirana as the capital city became westernized in appearance and its cultural-political core continued to be developed around the center. By architects and planners alike it once again was perceived as a “sublime space” that this time would represent the democratization of the Albanian nation, state and society. Furthermore, with the introduction of capitalism and market economy the city experienced a rapid and dramatic population growth. But, as housing became increasingly commodified and regarded as an asset, rather than a social good, the new buildings began to replace the socialist ones, and while expanding and occupying the remaining vacant spaces a compact yet unplanned city started to emerge. This paper argues that the contemporary Tirana is silently erasing its socialist legacy. Soviet-era Socialist Realism architecture added the last layer on the history of authoritarian design before capitalism taking it over and doing probably more harm than all previous regimes taken together. Rather than increasing the city’s liveability, the 21st century urban densification process is transforming Tirana to a vivid monument to capitalism.

Keywords:

Socialist Realism, urban densification, post-socialist city, compact city

Unveiling the interplay of Stereotomy and Persistence in urban planning: The formal evolution of the empty space in The Durres Street.

Kejsi Veselagu
Polis University, Albania

Abstract

Stereotomy, as defined by Semper to be the architectural approach of emptiness and taking away mass as opposed to joining elements, is traditionally confined within the discourse of architectural and geometric perceptions, while a leap in scale can potentially transform it into an instrument of city planning. This study delves into the intricate tapestry of urban evolution through the lens of Stereotomy as a compelling avenue for examining the enduring dynamics of architectural form within the city beyond the conventional boundaries. Methodologically it adopts a multifaceted approach encompassing historical analyses, urban planning paradigms and empirical fieldwork. By synthesizing these diverse methodologies through the meticulous examination of the Durres Street across different time periods, the study seeks to unravel the narrative of how empty spaces influence the steadfast forms and spatial choreography of the urban milieu, thereby contributing to a more holistic understanding of the urban morphology and its evolution over time. Preliminary findings indicate that Stereotomy indeed plays a pivotal role in sculpting the urban fabric of the city, transcending its traditional definitions to assume the role of a conceptual axis that shapes the urban landscape. In this paper Sustainability is reframed outside the common understanding of the environmental impact, but rather in the context of Persistence: the endurance of form in the midst of constant urban change and transformation. Through the stereotomical approach this study tackles empty space and public space as the very thing that appear to be more prone to change, to reveal their role is the preservation of form. Beyond the theoretical discourse, these findings offer practical implications for urban planning practices. By elucidating the dialectic between architectural form and enduring spatial configurations, this research provides valuable insights for urban planners seeking to create sustainable and vibrant urban environments. Further exploration of these implications of Stereotomy and Persistence in shaping cities establishes a focus on refining the conceptual framework and the integration of these notions into the contemporary urban planning paradigms.

Keywords:

Empty space, Form, Persistence, Stereotomy

Textile as metaphor in the work of “Christo and Jeanne-Claude.

Armela Lamaj
Polis University, Albania

Abstract

This research explores the metaphorical concepts between architectural, wall as body and textile as skin, inspired by the conceptual depth found in the artistic work of Christo and Jeanne Claude. This is an exploration of the textile significance of architecture and their implication for the relationship between people and the environment. The research uses a high quality artistic analysis of Christo and Jeanne-Claude, other features of the textile wrapped monuments and landscapes. Speaking in the architectural theory of artistic interpretation, this analysis aims to reveal the metaphorical implications of the text as a means of using the themes of protection, transformation and interconnection. If we look at the body as a building and the textile as clothing, we can reflect in parallel on the work of Roland Barths, who analyzes clothing as a means to attract attention, wrapping to reveal. Preliminary findings reveal the deep metaphorical resonance of textiles within architecture, as exemplified by the practice of Christo and Jeanne-Claude. The fabric is a symbol of care, respect and environmental stewardship, prompting viewers to reconsider their impact on the environment and the natural world. Furthermore, textiles demonstrate a particular technique to transform perceptions of all the different elements within the discourse of architecture, emphasizing their versatile and integral role in shaping the object for architecture and sale. These findings suggest a key role for text in mediating between people and the environment within architectural environments. By completing the architectural text, we not only retain the appeal of changing environments, but also imbue them with meaning that resonates with our collective human experience. Moving forward, this study aims to further explore the text’s potential as a tool for promoting environmental awareness and fostering design practices.

Keywords:
environment , textile, wall.

Façade s definitions through architectural transitions.

Bianka Madhi
Polis University, Albania

Abstract

The definition of the architectural term “façade” will be addressed in this article, as a relatively new term and not very much explored in the vocabulary of architecture definitions. With globalization, homogenization of the environment, all places seem to look alike. We are losing to a great extent the beauty and richness of this of cultural expression through the architectural façade. Within the sections that follow, the architectural façade will be examined and defined as a term, as an architectural concept, and as an architectural element. The alterations of the facade as an architectural element will be described in this article. The methodology applied to describe these concepts is based on the description and analysis of some emblematic architectural objects in the international architectural field. The transition moments regarding the architectural concept of the façade will be illustrated with two examples: “The EasFaçade of the Louvre” and the “Crystal Palace”. Both these examples demonstrate the evolution of the notion of the architectural façade, through transition architectural moments. Also, the key element that has altered how a façade appears is the explanation of the detail and ornament in the architectural façade. The “ornament” was not only lost in the early 19th-century modernist architectural movement, but it was also removed, altered, and assumed other shapes by different architectural language developments. The ornaments that were put to the exterior facades in limitless numbers and sizes are now thought of as things that may be placed in any home, similar to the furnishings in an apartment. The two contemporary architecture icons, Adolf Loos and Le Corbusier, provided the architectural interpretation of this modernist movement through their renowned creations, Villa Müller by Adolf Loos and Ville Savoye by Le Corbusier. These façade alterations are outcomes of a blending, processing, or interchange between several disciplines and the instruments employed to discern the definition of the architectural term “Façade”. There are two sides to the façade, it’s not just the outward face but the inside surface. At the meeting point there are these internal pressures of program of space of circulation of structure, external pressures of site, context, orientation, approach. The façade has a relationship with the populace, the context, but also to the cycle of decay and rebirth that one finds in the natural environment.

Keywords:

Architecture, Definition, Façade, Interchange, Processing, Transition.

Revisiting Durrës, A Critical analysis on the existence of Durrës Historic Centre.

Iden Buka, Marsela Plyku Demaj
Polis University, Albania

Abstract

Durrës, a seacoast city with an uninterrupted urban life since 7th cent. b.C and a history spanning several millennia, has seen the influence of numerous civilizations, from the Illyrians, Greeks and Romans to the Byzantines, Venetians and Ottomans, embodying and displaying a rich inventory of archaeological, cultural and architectural heritage.

Its consistent strategic importance has continuously attracted urban development often negatively impacting layers of history and unfortunately erasing in many cases significant tangible archaeological and architectural testimonies from different periods. It is worth noting that the historic layers of 20th century including neoclassical, premodern and communist architecture is actually one of the layers that is mostly unstudied and generally underrated. Triggered by the fact that the underground of Durrës was one of the three first albanian urban ensembles designated as “Museum City” since 1961 and that there was a specific regulation drawn for the protection of the historic centre since 1986, the question remains: what constitutes now the historic centre of Durrës?

In attempting to respond to this question, this paper examines the city’s morphological evolution in both urban and architectural scale, aiming to define what can now be defined as the historic core of the city. The study adopts the Historic Urban Landscape approach, promoting a holistic understanding of the heritage urban layers and their significance.

Keywords:

Archaeological Heritage, Durrës Historic Centre, Historic Urban Landscape, Urban Morphology

02- Social Sustainability

This subtheme addresses the social dimensions of urban sustainability. It investigates how social equity, inclusivity, and community engagement can be fostered in urban settings to ensure a sustainable and resilient future.

Innovation in illegality. Representative cases, taxonomy, cultural and social dimensions of “extraordinary” illegal planning implementations.

Prof. Konstantinos Lalenis, Assoc. Prof. Balkiz Yapicioglu
University of Thessaly, Greece
Arkin University of Creative Arts and Design, Cyprus

Abstract

The phenomenon of illegal construction has attracted a considerable volume of research, in the fields of theory, policy making, practice and implementations. The dysfunctionality of laws, corruption and clientelism of the administration, the impunity of the law breakers, and the inability of the planning system to provide adequate housing and land uses suitable for development, were considered as the main reasons for illegal construction. Consequently, there was a general assumption that illegal construction was mainly met in developing countries. This was proved inaccurate in recent years, where research has shown that developed (or Global North) countries were also experiencing this phenomenon -and in fact, they always had. An interesting approach to this, was the investigation of cases where legal and constitutional frameworks were also imperfect, and enforcement mechanisms were not serving social justice. This was a diversion of the axiomatic rule that laws should always be obeyed, while, at the same time, there was an assertion that in some cases noncompliance should be regarded as justifiable. The proposed presentation will refer to cases of noncompliance, as described above, but will focus on another dimension of the phenomenon, frequently met in real life situations, but seldom considered as an issue worth scientific research. This aspect deals with the innovation element frequently employed by actors trying to circumvent the existing laws and rules in planning implementations. The degree of innovation invested in the illegal operations, usually transforms the particular action from “breaking the law” to “bending the law”. Researching the innovation element in cases of illegal construction is particularly useful for lawmakers, law enforcers and theoreticians. By analysing these innovative actions, lawmakers can identify the loopholes and deadlocks of legislation which appear in specific cases and under specific conditions and correct them before they provoke generalized judicial complications. Law enforcers can detect weak points in grossly under-researched enforcement functions and improve the related organization processes. Finally, innovation in illegality in the sector of planning implementations can enlighten the researchers in exploring the weak points of planning systems, identify cultural elements in social behaviours -for which the type of innovations described above has encapsulated a high exploratory value- and inject a very much needed sense of humour in the scientific research.

Keywords:

Illegal constructions, illegal housing, informal planning, innovation, planning legislation

Readdressing Urbanization and Migration in Albania circa 1990: a novel approach.

Assis. Prof. Ifigeneia Kokkali, Assoc. Prof. Godiva Rembeci
University of Thessaly, Greece
Polis University, Albania

Abstract

The phenomenon of illegal construction has attracted a considerable volume of research, in the fields of theory, policy making, practice and implementations. The dysfunctionality of laws, corruption and clientelism of the administration, the impunity of the law breakers, and the inability of the planning system to provide adequate housing and land uses suitable for development, were considered as the main reasons for illegal construction. Consequently, there was a general assumption that illegal construction was mainly met in developing countries. This was proved inaccurate in recent years, where research has shown that developed (or Global North) countries were also experiencing this phenomenon -and in fact, they always had. An interesting approach to this, was the investigation of cases where legal and constitutional frameworks were also imperfect, and enforcement mechanisms were not serving social justice. This was a diversion of the axiomatic rule that laws should always be obeyed, while, at the same time, there was an assertion that in some cases noncompliance should be regarded as justifiable. The proposed presentation will refer to cases of noncompliance, as described above, but will focus on another dimension of the phenomenon, frequently met in real life situations, but seldom considered as an issue worth scientific research. This aspect deals with the innovation element frequently employed by actors trying to circumvent the existing laws and rules in planning implementations. The degree of innovation invested in the illegal operations, usually transforms the particular action from “breaking the law” to “bending the law”. Researching the innovation element in cases of illegal construction is particularly useful for lawmakers, law enforcers and theoreticians. By analysing these innovative actions, lawmakers can identify the loopholes and deadlocks of legislation which appear in specific cases and under specific conditions and correct them before they provoke generalized judicial complications. Law enforcers can detect weak points in grossly under-researched enforcement functions and improve the related organization processes. Finally, innovation in illegality in the sector of planning implementations can enlighten the researchers in exploring the weak points of planning systems, identify cultural elements in social behaviours -for which the type of innovations described above has encapsulated a high exploratory value- and inject a very much needed sense of humour in the scientific research.

Keywords:

Migration, urbanization, demographic indicators, population census

A review on citizen motivation analyses for participating on urban planning process.

Dhurata Shehu, Dr. Tamara Luarasi
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Abstract

The rapid development of urban areas and the rising complexity of urban concerns have caused considerable problems for urban planners. Standard methods of evaluation, including statistics, geographical information systems (GIS), and studies of literature, are no longer enough for understanding the enormous number of data and reports available. Such tremendous amount of data is calling for new, data-intensive methods to conduct research in science, urban planning, engineering etc. But it remains up to urban planners and decision-making institutions to take advantage of this potential and use urban and society informatics to gather useful information. Through an in-depth examination of current research, this review highlights crucial elements that mediate the interaction between residents and the urban planning process. Numerous studies have examined at survey design and administration, but we must also consider how to convey the request for information from residents in an appealing way for them. In comparison to survey polls, social media can provide a more scientifically accurate representation of popular attitudes of certain topics. But, despite this advantage, there seem to be limited investigations into the challenges in social media-based public opinion analysis. Furthermore, the introduction of AI and deep learning models, paired with greater processing capacity, tools, and algorithms, creates new options for addressing difficult urban issues. How could AI facilitate planners in the planning process? What methodology could be followed in order to reach a high response rate from citizens? Do the institutions possess these data? Which factors indicate the motivation and intentions of people on involving in this entire process? This study serves as a starting point for future researchers, with the goal of answering these concerns by providing a complete review of existing and potential AI applications in urban and regional planning processes. Most of the findings reveal that the level of community participation in the urban planning process in developing countries is low. As a result, this study recommends the development of a single national strategy for social media platforms used by municipal institutions, which will encourage the use of government tools such as discussion and incentives, therefore improving social networks and the effectiveness of organizers.

Keywords:

AI, citizens, urban planning

The Impact of Urban Bus Systems on Demographic and Economic Development: A Case Study of Tirana City

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Abstract

As cities evolve, it becomes increasingly imperative to address the social aspects of sustainability to ensure a resilient and inclusive future. This abstract focuses on one of the many dimensions falling under the umbrella of this phenomenon, specifically the urban context. The subtheme explores the interconnected concepts of social equity, inclusivity, and community engagement, emphasizing their pivotal roles in offering sustainable urban environments. By examining strategies and initiatives aimed at promoting social cohesion and addressing disparities, we approach the significance of integrating social considerations into urban planning and development processes. Advocating for a holistic approach that prioritizes the well-being and participation of all urban residents ultimately contributes to the creation of resilient, thriving communities. The main focus is on urban bus systems which plays a pivotal role in shaping the demographic and economic landscape of cities worldwide. This abstract explores the multifaceted impacts of urban bus systems on the demographic and economic development of Tirana City, Albania. Through a comprehensive review of literature, statistical data, and case studies, this study elucidates the intricate connections between urban transportation infrastructure and urban development. In Tirana, the urban bus system serves as a lifeline for the city's residents, facilitating mobility and access to employment, education, healthcare, and recreational opportunities. By providing affordable and accessible transportation options, the bus system contributes to enhancing social equity and inclusivity, particularly for marginalized communities. However, challenges such as insufficient funding, outdated infrastructure, and operational inefficiencies pose significant barriers to maximizing the benefits of the urban bus system in Tirana. Addressing these challenges requires concerted efforts from government authorities, urban planners, and transportation agencies to prioritize investments in public transportation, improve service quality, and promote sustainable urban development strategies. In conclusion, the urban bus system in Tirana exerts a profound influence on the city's demographic composition and economic dynamics. By enhancing mobility, accessibility, and connectivity, the bus system contributes to fostering a more vibrant, equitable, and economically resilient urban environment. Nevertheless, ongoing efforts are needed to overcome existing challenges and harness the full potential of public transportation to drive inclusive and sustainable urban development in Tirana and beyond.

Keywords:

Urban, Sustainability, Diversity, Community, Resilient, Bus System.

Spatial justice between urban planning and market economy.

Blerina Fani

Centre Science and Innovation for Development (SciDEV)

Abstract

The divide between social and economic interest is a perpetual one. People need social guarantees, economies need new markets. Moreover, current global dynamics of migration add another layer to this issue, putting cities under strain when it comes to reconciling social and economic interests in order to preserve justice and human dignity. Therefore, this research engages with the question on the extent to which economic impetus for growth, as a result of internal and external factors, reconciles with the premise of spatial justice and state obligations to abide by international legal instruments on individual and human rights. The importance of this question emerges in light of cities undergoing fast urban transformation, such as the case of Tirana, experiencing a booming construction market and dynamics of migration. In this light the paper analysis the implications that these transformations have on the quality of life, coined under the notion of spatial justice, for the inhabitants of such cities, considerations which are fundamental when planning urban interventions for the future. In carrying out this analysis will take the housing and transportation sector as the guiding context. Overall, the paper aims to investigate the significant role of the state as a regulator and a balancing factor between social and economic interests in the said context. The methods used in carrying out this research are a mix of socio-legal ones, consulting and working with primary sources of national and international legislation, policy documents, urban development plans as well as field work and participatory observations. The paper will shed light on policy considerations of urban development in light of existing standards and principles of spatial justice, that ensure certain rights, as is the case for housing. It will also explore the consequences that follow when such standards and principles are disregarded leading to ghettoization, urban ruptures, remote realities and above all lack of a just space, vouching for a citizen-based urban planning.

Keywords:

citizen-based urban planning, housing, spatial justice

Assessing Integrated Waste Management Efficiency Across Urban Areas: A Case Study of Tirana, Albania.

Irisa Kalo, Megi Dajko, Dr. Artan Kacani
Polis University, Albania

Abstract

Integrated Waste Management (IWM) is a multifaceted process aimed at achieving a clean environment while minimizing the adverse impacts of waste on both the surroundings and human health. Continuous analysis of the current waste management situation is essential to develop mechanisms that enhance efficiency, reduce costs, and mitigate pollution. This study is grounded in specific case analyses, focusing on the city centre, two nearby radius areas, and a peripheral area to understand how waste management is conducted in various contexts and assess operational efficiency. The methodology focuses on evaluating and comparing waste management services across areas with varying distances from the city centre, this analysis targets the central area, two nearby regions, and a peripheral area. The inclusion of the peripheral area serves to investigate whether management efficiency is sustained as one moves away from the gravitational centre of the city. An effective approach to derive meaningful insights from this study involves evaluating and weighing indicators while aligning progress with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The adoption of the Multi-Criteria Analysis (MCA) methodology facilitates a comprehensive assessment of current waste management levels and identifies areas for improvement. The operational methods employed by municipalities in waste management reflect the current state and structure of the sector, indicating the progress towards sustainable and equitable management practices across different city areas, regardless of their centrality. Utilizing the MCA methodology, this research not only aims to enhance current management efficiency but also advocates for a progressive educational approach to promote the principles of 3R (reuse, recycling, reduction). Furthermore, comparisons with waste management cases from Europe provide valuable insights for benchmarking and improving waste management practices in Tirana.

Keywords:

Integrated Waste Management, Efficiency, Urban Areas

Assessment of Drainage System Functionality and Impact in Durres, Albania: A Multi-Faceted Analysis.

Doris Saje, Adea Kulla, Dr. Artan Kacani
Polis University, Albania

Abstract

The divide between social and economic interest is a perpetual one. People need social guarantees, economies need new markets. Moreover, current global dynamics of migration add another layer to this issue, putting cities under strain when it comes to reconciling social and economic interests in order to preserve justice and human dignity. Therefore, this research engages with the question on the extent to which economic impetus for growth, as a result of internal and external factors, reconciles with the premise of spatial justice and state obligations to abide by international legal instruments on individual and human rights. The importance of this question emerges in light of cities undergoing fast urban transformation, such as the case of Tirana, experiencing a booming construction market and dynamics of migration. In this light the paper analysis the implications that these transformations have on the quality of life, coined under the notion of spatial justice, for the inhabitants of such cities, considerations which are fundamental when planning urban interventions for the future. In carrying out this analysis will take the housing and transportation sector as the guiding context. Overall, the paper aims to investigate the significant role of the state as a regulator and a balancing factor between social and economic interests in the said context. The methods used in carrying out this research are a mix of socio-legal ones, consulting and working with primary sources of national and international legislation, policy documents, urban development plans as well as field work and participatory observations. The paper will shed light on policy considerations of urban development in light of existing standards and principles of spatial justice, that ensure certain rights, as is the case for housing. It will also explore the consequences that follow when such standards and principles are disregarded leading to ghettoization, urban ruptures, remote realities and above all lack of a just space, vouching for a citizen-based urban planning.

Keywords:

citizen-based urban planning, housing, spatial justice

Vehicle Speed and Acceleration Control in VANET Traffic Simulation and the Relation to Vehicle Network Features.

Albina Toçilla
Polis University, Albania

Abstract

This article aims to adapt the traffic simulation to the reality as close as possible and specifically to find how can we adapt the simulation speed to real vehicle speed. An important element in this effort is to make possible the control on the speed and acceleration of the vehicles. Beside this, we could see the influence of the speed on the communication between vehicles, considering specifically the BSM messages, when we establish a VANET network between them and between vehicles and a unit on the street. The material has a tutorial character regarding the steps of the work done. The vehicle speed and acceleration control are managed from two sides: From SUMO side and Omnet++ & Veins side. In Sumo there are a wide range of influences on vehicle speed. Each of these influences sets an upper bound on the vehicle speed.

The methodology used is firstly using different parameters in the commands that generate the files that generate the traffic by SUMO simulator. And secondly on Omnet++ side, we use programming to test the vehicle network features, and especially, BSM messages in different situation of the speed (using different speed modes). We also combine the speed mode parameter with different channel load in message transmission. And as the result of these tests, we see that there is a relation between the speed and the network features, and a relation between combination of speed and channel load to network properties. The goal of simulations after all are to serve as a pre-environment when this network will be implemented in reality. And the future is in favor of these vehicle networks.

Keywords:

Traffic simulation, SUMO, Omnet++, TraCi, Veins, Speed, Acceleration

Assessing Walkability in Tirana: A Comparison of Three Main Boulevards

Kelvi Peti, Dr. Artan Kacani
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Abstract

This study aims to conduct a comprehensive analysis of walkability within a city and evaluate its potential impacts on the community. The research focuses on assessing the “walkability” level of several key streets, including “Rruga Kavajes”, “Rruga e Durrësit”, and “Dëshmorët e Kombit” Boulevard. The analysis is based on a set of indicators, (MCA), which have been assessed and weighted as outlined in the provided table. Field measurements were primarily conducted to estimate the performance of each indicator. The final evaluation reveals that “Dëshmorët e Kombit” Boulevard scored highest across the criteria associated with a walkable street.

This assessment provides insights into the variation in walkability levels across key areas of the city and their potential impact on the local community. The study serves as a foundation for further discussions on necessary infrastructural enhancements and interventions aimed at improving walkability and aligning with sustainable development goals.

Keywords:

Multi-Criteria Analysis (MCA), Tirana Metropolitan Area, Public Transport Evaluation.

Metropolitan Public Transport Lines in Tirana: Assessment of Public Mobility.

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Abstract

Public transportation systems play a crucial role in providing residents with accessible transportation options in urban areas, and buses serve as the primary mode of public transportation in the Tirana Metropolitan Area due to various factors such as infrastructure limitations and urban planning challenges. This study utilises multi-criteria analysis (MCA) to evaluate 25 bus lines within the Tirana Metropolitan Area, aiming to assess their institutional impact, environmental footprint, and socioeconomic effects. The research seeks to provide insights into how these bus routes contribute to environmental sustainability, community well-being, and institutional compliance while aligning with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). A comparative analysis with Vienna's public transportation system, renowned for its advanced network, highlights the challenges faced by Tirana in achieving a sustainable and efficient mobility system. Geographic mapping of public transportation stations and lines in Tirana reveals discrepancies in coverage, accessibility, and effectiveness across municipalities. Through MCA, the study systematically assesses key indicators to identify the strengths and weaknesses of each bus line. Results indicate that "The Green Line" emerges as the top-performing public transport line with a rating of 9.4, while "Qyteti Studenti" is identified as the least effective line with a rating of 3.2.

Keywords:

Public Transport System, Multi-Criteria Analysis (MCA), Tirana Metropolitan Area, Public Transport Evaluation.

Historical and Cultural Heritage Mapping in Albania Prior to the Communist Era

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Polis University

Abstract

For many years, the rapid transformations that have involved society at the global level and also in the Albanian context, have endangered the historical and cultural heritage of the first period of the urban center's formation.

The early stages of the historical formation of urban centers vary depending on the city and are closely linked to the history of the settlement's founding.

This research seeks to pinpoint the original "moments" in architecture, preserve their legacy, and ensure their continued existence. The preservation and appreciation of the cultural and historical legacy embodied by architectural "monuments" are intimately tied to this objective.

The objective during this research aim to identify and map the architectural "monuments" of the city of Tirana that date from the League of Prizren until the end of World War II. This is based on the previously stated purpose and takes into account the swift changes that are changing the urban image of the city.

The process involves gathering data at the historical and cartographic levels. In order to create a general map that includes their actual locations, it is thought to be crucial to identify as many architectural and urban "monuments" as feasible throughout this procedure, based on the materials in disposal and site visits. This will help to get complete knowledge about the locations of the urban monuments constructed between 1878 and 1944.

The ultimate outcome consists on a thorough mapping of all the historic buildings with architectural significance that are still standing in Tirana, including those that have been destroyed but are still valued enough to be included because of their significance in terms of both architecture and history

Keywords:

urban centers, preservation, cultural heritage, mapping, city image

03 - Resilience and Economic Sustainability

This subtheme addresses the social dimensions of urban sustainability. It investigates how social equity, inclusivity, and community engagement can be fostered in urban settings to ensure a sustainable and resilient future.

The metro of Athens as a wicked-problems mega project: the siting of some stations.

Prof. em. Pantoleon Skayannis
Polis University, Albania

Abstract

This paper investigates the physical planning issues related to the siting of stations on the Athens metro lines. Considering issues of problematic or conflictual siting that had arisen during the planning of the first phase of the metro (base project), it focuses on two current acute issues (of line [4]), those of the location and form of the Exarchia and Evangelismos metro stations. Trying to see the problems under the light of mainly eco-environmental and social sustainability in combination with certain approaches to planning, such as those that utilize the concepts of wicked planning and clumsy solutions, and the discourse on mega projects and the complexity, uncertainty, and risk inherent in them, would be particularly useful. The intertwining of these concepts leads us to understand the deeper essence of the problems. The paper argues that if and whenever a solution is attempted, this never-perfect solution logically follows that it should at least be based on extensive consultation with all stakeholders and that the course of such design events should be recorded in a way to ensure institutional memory. Methodologically, the paper is the product of many years of research on mega projects in Greece and internationally. The research is qualitative, based on discussions and interviews with stakeholders and key figures associated with the projects, as well as on events recorded in the mainstream electronic and print media. The result of this research is derived from the intersection of the conclusions of our previous extensive research on the basic project of the metro and from the research into the current reality of the problems of the design of the new line. One of the research's key conclusions is that there is an inherent negation in the Greek planning system to conduct substantial communication with the stakeholders if it is expected that they are going to pose 'difficult questions' or oppose a project. This is going along an insufficient appraisal of the projects, especially in certain aspects of their eco-environmental and social dimensions. As solutions provided are 'over' clumsy, this leads to a vicious cycle of problems leading (at least) to the delays of projects. From this research, it is highly recommended that future projects in Greece and internationally should utilise strong consultation procedures, and/or suitable forms of participatory planning or decision-making, and comprehensive appraisal so that they save time and resources and be more eco environmentally and socially sustainable and useful.

Keywords:

Athens metro, complexity, social sustainability, mega projects, wicked problems

New Mobility Services and sustainable urban development: The common EU vision and the challenges for transport planning in Greek cities.

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Abstract

The transport sector is one of the sectors that has been greatly influenced by the 4th Industrial Revolution through the development of New Mobility Services (NMS). NMS include innovative transport modes, such as autonomous road vehicles, and new concepts for serving mobility needs, such as Mobility as a Service, which are gradually being implemented in cities of Europe and worldwide. As part of the implementation of the European Union's (EU) Green Deal, the EU strategy for transportation and mobility sets specific ambitions and targets regarding NMS and their contribution to sustainable urban development. The core documents outlining the relevant EU strategy comprise the "Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy – putting European transport on track for the future" (COM(2020) 789 final) and "The New EU Urban Mobility Framework" (COM(2021) 811 final). In this context, the purpose of the current paper is the comprehensive description of the EU policy priorities for the implementation of NMS, deriving from the synthetic analysis of the information presented in the above-mentioned policy documents. The paper also aims at the discussion of challenges from the perspective of planning for urban mobility in Greek cities, such as the attachment to the private car for daily mobility, the necessity for data exchange and cooperation between stakeholders and the need for a long-term vision for sustainable urban development. Taking into account the overall policy objectives at the EU level and the challenges for pursuing these objectives to achieve the digital and green transition of Greek cities, the paper concludes with the suggestion of planning recommendations to integrate NMS into their urban transport system with a positive impact on their ongoing effort for the "sustainable mobility paradigm" shift. These recommendations mainly refer to the application of contemporary planning approaches, such as participatory planning, interdisciplinary cooperation and evidence-based planning, with focus on the issue of NMS implementation at the urban level. The issues discussed in the current paper directly concern planners and policy makers in urban areas of Greece, while they can be appropriately adjusted to the considerations of stakeholders in other cities. They can also provide the background to develop case-specific methodological processes to address the planning needs for the integration of NMS to a particular city.

Keywords:

Autonomous road vehicles, City, Mobility as a Service, New Mobility Services, Sustainability

Urban planning in shrinking cities to ease resilience and rebirth through Distributism.

Dr. Luca Lezzerini
Polis University, Albania

Abstract

All over the world, in both developed and underdeveloped countries, the phenomenon of shrinking cities is becoming increasingly frequent. Many communities are disappearing because of strong urbanism combined with a demographic rate decrease. Average age increases and this generates a negative loop that enhances the problem, pushing young people to emigrate. After a literature review of the Albanian case, some sites have been selected to evaluate the feasibility of the implementation of a double-way strategy. Both directions aim to create a cohesive community and generate a robust and resilient economy that can attract new people, with an inverse flow of urbanism, from other places to the shrinking city. The sites are selected if they match a specific pattern that considers the infrastructure dimension (houses, roads, educational institutions, public services, ...). If the dimension is oversized to the current needs due to the shrinking process or can easily be scaled, the site is selected. Other parameters like local resources have also been evaluated. For these sites, an approach to develop urban planning strategies to ease the application of Distributism, a socio-economic doctrine based on the three principles known as subsidiarity, solidarity, and common good, is analysed and, if feasible, proposed. The paper investigates, starting from similar experiences, whether the Distributism capability to build cohesive, sustainable, efficient, and resilient communities can be enhanced by proper urban planning and, in this case, define a general framework for its application. The results of the research are a decision-making tool to select applicable sites and a development framework to grow them, reversing the shrinking process and creating new solid, sustainable and resilient communities. Although the development framework has been designed for optimal cases (optimal dimension, good local resources and more) it is still valid, with different implementation roadmaps, even in other non-optimal cases, and this will be explored in further research. The framework and the decision-making tool proposed in the paper are to be considered manually managed but they can be also translated to support strong computer support in the case of the availability of a large dataset of information. This last evolution of the tools will be the subject of successive research.

Keywords:

distributism, shrinking cities, urbanism, resilient communities, sustainable communities.

Planning for Resilience – Study of a social housing model for Ras Al Khaimah, UAE

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Ayza Sohail

American University of Ras Al Khaimah

Abstract

Housing, in general, addresses technical, social, political, and economic issues more than any other building type. However, there is a recent emphasis on a bigger picture with more intention placed on implementing sustainable planning aspects of neighborhoods and communities' level as well as on the individual house's level. Considering that from 10 to 20 percent of the total urban area is usually occupied by social housing, urban resiliency is currently in the center of debate about the provision of social housing in order to achieve the long-term sustainable development goals. United Arab Emirates (UAE) government considers housing as one of the most vital sectors of the country's economy that safeguards a successful sustainable urban development. One the main goals of the country is to provide its citizens with quality social housing. Hence, new, more resilient models of neighbourhood planning are introduced in replacement to the conventional models of urban forms. However, these programs address country's citizens only despite the fact that the demographics of the country shows the ratio of Emirati population to Expat 11,48% to 82,52% respectively. Based on this perspective, this study discusses the requirements of resilient social housing that are adaptable to the local environment, by proposing a social housing model for expat population of the country. Through observation of expat social housing conditions and of existing social housing programs for Emiratis population in Ras Al Khaimah, authors design criteria for environmentally/culturally adaptive social housing. The observation phase of the research is followed by an experimental one, during which the authors suggest a social housing model for Expat population that satisfy the set criteria. As a result of the research, model of social housing that considers the environmental, economic, and social aspects of sustainability is suggested to comply with Emirate's strategy to enhance the sector of social housing. By this research, the authors comply with the Emirate's strategy to enhance social housing and inform all decision makers and responsible stakeholders about the importance of better individual housing unit-neighbourhood-city planning that will result in sustainable communities and social equity.

Keywords:

Autonomous road vehicles, City, Mobility as a Service, New Mobility Services, Sustainability

A Prospective of Circular Economy for Concrete Building Facades.

Dr. Ilda Rusi
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Abstract

The transition towards a Circular Economy (CE) in the built environment is vital to reduce environmental impacts, resource consumption and waste generation. The building industry is the world's largest consumer of raw materials. With the increasing awareness of the circular economy and sustainability in all sectors, the concrete industry is also at the forefront of contributing to the circular economy and improving its overall sustainability. In an effort to reduce the rate of consumption there is an urgent need to adopt more efficient recycling and reuse practices in the building industry. Emerging to support this need is the circular economy framework (circularity) – a concept that aims to separate 'economic growth from environmental destruction'. Using the framework of circularity this research critically evaluates the 'reuse' performance of a key area of modern construction; the concrete building frames. The built environment can be made circular by replacing building components with more circular ones. Therefore, in this paper, it is going to discuss on prospective of CE to the outer part of the buildings: facades. The method used is a multi-cycle Life Cycle Assessment (LCA), from which are being derived useful lessons learned on the environmental design of circular building components. The assessment through this methodology shows a potential to climate protection strategy. The suggested approach would improve the applicability of life cycle assessment in a normative context by improving the consistency of assessment in the case of circular economy. This study suggests further research on combining the utilization rate with buildings' life cycle assessment to provide even better applicability of the method in circular economy. Discussions in this paper indicated that the implementation of a circular economy has the potential to yield significant positive performance as it is possible to incorporate various wastes materials into the concrete. Also, the use of building management systems can be utilized to improve the efficiency of the circular economy in the concrete industry. However, the circular economy must be implemented right from the start when concrete materials are being sourced rather than when concrete has already been used for construction.

Keywords:

Circular economy, concrete facades, life cycle assessment.

Circular Tirana – exploring new frameworks of urban resilience in a growing metropolis.

Martin Alite
Polis University

Abstract

This research explores the relationship between urban resilience and circular economies in Tirana, Albania, aiming to uncover synergies that can bolster the city's adaptive capacity. As urban areas confront escalating challenges from climate change, resource depletion, and socio-economic disruptions, the adoption of circular economy strategies emerges as one promising avenue for sustainable development. Tirana in particular has been faced with a boom, both in buildings and territorial expansion that has created an uninterrupted urbanization process over the past 30 or so years. This transformation has emphasized speed, rather than efficiency or "optimal" procedures. The study assesses Tirana's how the potentials for circularity (or effective utilization of resources) can impact the current and future resilience of the city. Concretely the study seeks to evaluate three aspects: how effective current urban development trends and policies are in addressing present and future challenges; the status of circular economy potentials and initiatives, pinpointing key sectors fostering resource efficiency and waste reduction; and finally the intersections between the potentials of circular economy and the output in an improved urban resilience for the city. Through a review of existing theoretical literature, policy, and a consideration of available data, the study seeks to provide a well-rounded understanding of the subject and to highlight potentials for circularity within the context of Tirana. Several trends are identified including the resounding potential for circular practices found and the poor institutional and practical frameworks for implementing it currently. At the same time processes of densification and growth can both stifle and encourage urban resilience in the city. The study concludes with an analysis and discussion of these intersections. The research findings offer insights for polic makers, urban planners, and stakeholders in Tirana, presenting some new approaches to address the city's complex challenges. Additionally, the study serves as a model for similar cities globally, providing practical insights and a methodological approach for the assessment and implementation of circular economy practices to fortify urban resilience in the face of unpredictable events and the longer trajectories of climate change.

Keywords:

urban resilience, circular economy, waste management, sustainable urban development

Food sustainability of gigantic cities.

Dr. Luca Lezzerini
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Abstract

Due to strong urbanism flow, many cities are continuously growing trending to become gigantic cities. Gigantic means that either the city has a huge number of inhabitants and commuters, or it contains a large part of the whole population of the country and the rest of the territory is moving towards a low-density population. In both cases, food sustainability is one of the most concerning challenges that must be addressed. After a deep literature review, the paper analyzes the main elements in food supply to gigantic cities. Then, possible risks are identified and quantified in a general case, ranking them according to a priority metric (also defined in the research). Risks are approached with solutions based on urban and territorial planning, including the selection of a socio-economical model to be used as a reference and tools to ensure food supply. In the paper, different possible planning strategies derived from African case studies are proposed and evaluated in their application to Tiranë (a city containing a large portion of the whole population) and to other gigantic (in the sense of a very large number of inhabitants and commuters) cities in the world. Results demonstrate that specific planning strategies should be activated at both urban and regional levels to provide local food autonomy, including production, processing, storage and transportation. The research is a portion of wider research about smart cities' urban planning strategies and although it is limited to regions with good climate and fertile neighbouring, its principles can be also extended to more challenging cases from both climate and land quality. The research is also a starting point to define a resilient planning strategy to support, in the long period, the management of the impact of climate change on the food provisioning for very big cities. The paper also proposes a form of cooperative bond (the rural socio-economic model) in the countryside to increase productivity and avoid excessive urbanism, easing the presence of workers in the farms that are supposed to supply the city. The paper considers only normal operational conditions and does not keep into account special conditions like famine, flooding, war and similar. Although these conditions are not considered, the proposed methodology is still applicable to these cases and will be developed in further research.

Keywords:

Circular economy, concrete facades, life cycle assessment.

04 - Environmental Sustainability and Green Transition & Sustainability of Urban Policy and Governance

This subtheme centers on the environmental aspects of urban sustainability and the transition towards greener urban environments. It looks at strategies for mitigating environmental impacts, promoting biodiversity, and transitioning to low-carbon and resource-efficient urban systems.

This subtheme discusses the role of policy and governance in urban sustainability. It considers how effective policy-making, governance structures, and institutional practices can support the implementation of sustainability and resilience strategies in urban areas.

Urban Microclimate in relation to urbanization and urban greening of Tirana city.

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Abstract

Urban microclimates include indicators that modify local climate and environmental conditions, affecting the lives and health of the population. Consequently, questions arise regarding the connections between microclimates, urban green spaces, and forms of urbanization. Are microclimate indicators and influencing factors considered in the urban planning process? This question is raised due to the expansion of cities, population growth, diverse building typologies, informal urbanization, increased transportation, reduction of green spaces, and the impacts such as greenhouse gas emissions, temperature rise, decreased air humidity, low urban greening capacity and etc. The primary challenge we aim to address in the methodological framework is to identify the mutual connections between urban greening, urbanization, and microclimate indicators. Through a GIS based methodology and field observation, we aim to clarify these connections and address the challenge of understanding the mutual influences between urban greening, urbanization, and microclimate indicators. The methodology involves evaluating urban greenery in Tirana's administrative units, measuring microclimate indicators, and assessing pollutant discharge at various land cover points, while considering building typologies and green spaces. Partial current results show significant variations in microclimate indicators between measurements at different land cover points in the city of Tirana, such as maximum temperature differences of up to 6/8 degrees Celsius during the summer period, differences in air humidity of 25-30%, solar radiation, greenhouse gas emissions, etc. Optimal microclimate indicators are found in green spaces territories. Expected results will be presented subsequently in the full material, urban green maps, land use, and their relationships with urban green indicators. Preliminary study results also indicate the necessity of including urban microclimate indicators in the urban planning process, action plans, and short-term and long-term strategies, to ensure balanced sustainability and an increase in green areas in accordance with EU standards. In future plans, this topic will be expanded with other indicators, drawing on the experiences of many European cities in installing green structures to reduce atmospheric pollutants and improvement of urban microclimate indicators. Through the analysis of indicators, the main findings of the connections and influences of urban greenery and urbanization typology on urban microclimate indicators, as well as alternatives to mitigate impacts on the environment and public health, will be highlighted.

Keywords:

microclimate, green surface, urbanization, urban heat islands, urban sustainability, GIS.

Tourism Perceptions of the Albanian Riviera - Coastal Economies through the Lens of Sustainable Development.

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Abstract

The paper evaluates tourism's existing development and trajectory in Albanian Riviera, a critical region in Albania's tourism economy, using tourist perceptions to complement more conventional empirical evidence. As one of the most prominent sectors of the Albanian economy, tourism has been crucial in the country's economic development post-Communism. However, the country's tourism development has been hindered by various issues, including an over-reliance on Sun-sand-sea (3S) Tourism and the absence of an integrated approach to developing tourism economies that are economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable. While several studies and reports have sought to understand the region's development through conventional tourism indicators, few have utilized attitudes as a mechanism for evaluating sustainable tourism development. This study fills the gap by examining the perceptions of tourists in the region to identify obstacles, patterns, and gaps in current development. Respondents were asked to answer attitudinal questions through 5- point Likert scales on infrastructure, accessibility, service quality, healthcare, IT quality, and the diversity of tourism offers. The results are then localized to particular regions in the Albanian Riviera where the respondents vacationed or to specific market segments based on respondent persona. Trends are compared to the current planning and development policy to assess potentials for improvement. The study made evaluations and recommendations using sustainable tourism development and the Triple Bottom Line as theoretical frameworks. The results suggest a disconnect between 3S tourism and other forms of tourism, with most respondents reporting higher levels of satisfaction and engagement with 3S over other forms of tourism. Respondents also expressed concern with the levels of service as well as the accessibility and road infrastructure of the Albanian Riviera as a tourist destination. Dissatisfaction with these aspects grew in proportion to the distance from the larger urban centers of Vlora and Saranda. The degree of satisfaction with other forms of tourism received a substantial number of undecided responses, especially for cultural and sports tourism, suggesting a low degree of individual engagement on the demand side and possibly ineffective marketing and promotion on the supply side. Implications for future scholarship point to the need to more proactively assess and monitor the tourist experience in the Albanian Riviera, particularly to ensure the creation of a sustainable brand that keeps visitors coming back. This can be implemented at various scales but must be something that requires a closer and more harmonized collaboration from relevant stakeholders, at various levels of governance and across the private sector and civil society.

Keywords:

sustainable tourism management, urban-rural interface, place management, sustainable development

Urban Heat Islands in Albanian Cities and the Correlation with Urban Green Spaces.

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Abstract

The Urban Heat Island (UHI) effect is a widely recognized phenomenon with profound impacts on urban environments, and its significance is expected to escalate in the face of global climate change. This effect is essentially an anthropogenic microclimate resulting from unbridled urbanization and a series of decisions favouring urban growth. As global temperatures rise, the UHI impact is expected to worsen, posing serious risks to human health. The conversion of natural surfaces into impermeable concrete surfaces in urban settings greatly reduces soil permeability, increasing the UHI impact. As a result, knowing the relationship between the availability of urban green areas and the UHI impact is critical for getting deeper insights into this issue. The study of the UHI effect in Albanian cities remains mostly neglected. Albania, being a developing nation, has seen fast and unplanned urbanisation over the last four decades, a trend that continues in major cities. This paper delves into the levels of UHI in selected Albanian cities and examines their correlation with urban green spaces over the years. The study utilizes open-access data to establish comparable cases with other regions globally. Two primary factors, namely temperature data to assess UHI and land use data to evaluate urban green spaces, are analyzed using available satellite images and historical datasets. By evaluating historical patterns and integrating them with projected temperature rise scenarios described by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in the context of climate change, this study sheds light on Albania future cities. The study emphasises the significance of developing mitigating strategies to solve the UHI issue. The findings provide useful information for policymakers and urban planners to establish policies that combine green infrastructure and sustainable urban development, therefore lessening the negative consequences of UHI in Albanian cities. This study adds to a better knowledge of the UHI phenomena and its consequences for urban regions in the context of climate change, particularly in the specific setting of Albanian cities experiencing rapid urbanisation.

Keywords:

Open access data; Urban Green Spaces; Urban Heat Island (UHI); Urban Liveability

Analysis of the dynamics of land use in urban systems and the evolution of climate elements in Lezha by GIS and RS (1991-2020).

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Abstract

Land use methods, mainly in urban areas, have become a problematic phenomenon in developing countries. The possible contribution of land cover change as a result of the global warming phenomenon is being studied by scientists around the world. The method to simulate the dynamics of land use changes and the forms of modeling this phenomenon is of considerable interest to urban planners and city planners. The purpose of this study is to recognize and analyze the progress of land cover and land use in the area of Lezha. The objective of this paper is to analyze the correlation between the values of climatic elements with the change of land use in the area of Lezha. Temperature and precipitation parameters on the land surface are considered the most important indicators of the environmental consequences of land use/land cover change. The methodology used in this paper is based on quantitative and qualitative methods for the classification of land use. Satellite images, RS and GIS, were used to simulate the development of land use in the Lezha urban area during the time period 1991-2020. Remote sensing (RS) and Geographic Information System (GIS) techniques have been used effectively in several environmental and hydro meteorological applications. These techniques have been used to study changes in land use and land cover patterns and their impact on both temperature and hydrological changes. However, the complexity of urban growth is considered a factor that hinders the usefulness of such simulation methods. Among the available methods, what are considered "agent-based models" have found popularity in simulating land-use development and modeling urban sprawl.

Keywords:

climate, Geographic Information Systems, Remote Sensing, urban space, urban systems

Nile as Laboratory. Exploring River Dynamics through Eighteen Projects.

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Abstract

Inspired by Brandi's (1963) assertion that "Egypt is not a country; it is a river," the Nile becomes the central character, driving both imagination and collaboration in architectural solutions. The NiLab research and design laboratory has been developed for the Egypt Pavilion at the 18th International Architecture Exhibition, the Venice Biennale. As the primary driver of imagination and working together in architecture, water represents the basic choices accompanying the entire journey presented in this volume through six Nile landscapes – Natura, Agro, Urbe, Infrastructure, Industry, and Archaeology. Along them, eighteen project intervention areas have been selected as the scene of an international encounter between Egypt, African populations, and the planet. Together with the Faculty of Engineering of the Ain-Shams University of Cairo (Egypt) and the dArTe Department of the Mediterranean University of Reggio Calabria (Italy), 24 international Universities have been invited to build the NiLab, where students, teachers, and young researchers have engaged in concrete design practice to discuss the possible scenarios of a macro-theme: the Nile, an emblematic opportunity to reflect on the theme of water, representative of the planet Earth's rivers, in the wider context of climate change. NiLab's six landscapes are proposed as "mixture" spaces (Coccia, 2016) where to find overlapping and/or disappeared local cultures and interrupted or deconstructed identities. These places produce theoretical and practical questions and doubts, thus becoming fields of experimentation on the project's ontology. It is a critical tool for the current state and, simultaneously, a territory of ideas for the future. Project is therefore engaged as research rather than as a solution to a practical question, aimed at understanding the meaning of the knowledge of the places, even at a theoretical level, the more philosophical boundaries of the topics covered, the relationship between disciplinarity, and the synthesis of knowledge. The NiLab eighteen projects represent research, but also experimentation with a different approach to the dynamics of rivers in different contexts. Thus, sustainability is declined with respect to an architectural and urban design imagination. Ultimately, NiLab offers a unique perspective, treating the Nile not just as a geographical entity but as a living force shaping landscapes, cultures, and the future of our planet.

Keywords:

Nile, research, rivers, urban design

Unveiling the Environmental Implications of Compact Cities: Critiques, Resilience, and Case Studies.

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Abstract

The relationship between compact cities and environmental sustainability is a critical aspect of urban planning, particularly in addressing the challenges posed by urban sprawl and its associated environmental problems. This study delves into the implications of the compact city model on environmental aspects. The examination encompasses critiques of compact city policies, the impact of urban sprawl on air and water quality, as well as the potential of inclination toward resilience in terms of disaster risk management issues. Additionally, case studies from Barcelona, the Netherlands, Vancouver, and Shenzhen offer insights into the implementation and effectiveness of compact city strategies in diverse urban contexts. The concept analysis of compact cities will employ a structured and systematic approach to uncover and define the key elements associated with compact urban development. This method will primarily rely on a comprehensive review of existing literature, scholarly articles, and relevant documents related to urban planning, design, and sustainability. The paper tries to explore the multifaceted relationship between compact cities and environmental sustainability. The theoretical framework draws upon principles of sustainable urbanism, mixed-use development, centrality, accessibility, and transportation planning to analyse the environmental impact of compact cities. Boolean operators (AND/OR) will be strategically used to refine search results and identify literature that encompasses the core aspects of compact urban development. The search will be conducted in prominent academic databases to ensure a broad and exhaustive exploration of the concept. The databases include ScienceDirect, Scopus, JSTOR, and Google Scholar. This selection aims to capture insights from various disciplines such as urban planning, architecture, environmental science, and sociology. Preliminary findings suggest that while compact cities offer significant environmental benefits, including reduced carbon emissions, improved air quality, and enhanced resource utilization, they also face challenges such as diminished liveability, potential disregard for green spaces, and uncertainties regarding their collective impact on social welfare. These findings underscore the importance of considering diverse perspectives, integrating citizen input into urban planning processes, and implementing sustainable strategies to optimize land use and enhance environmental quality in compact cities.

Keywords:

Compact, cities, sustainability, urban sprawl, disaster risk.

Migration movement as a driving force to the growth of city's urbanization in ALBANIA Case Study, TIRANA City.

Assoc. Prof. Godiva Rembeci, Armela Reka, Leonora Haxhiu

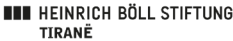
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Abstract

Migration means the movement of people from one place to another, but mostly migration is considered the demographic process that links rural to urban areas, contributing to the growth of urbanization. From a demographic point of view, internal migration shows the rate of change in the territorial distribution of the population during a certain period and is an important factor in determining the size of the regional population's stock at the end of the period. Furthermore, migration, as part of the demographic evolution of the prefectures, is a decisive indicator of social changes, including urbanization. Migration and urbanization have a strong effect on the economy, such as changes in labor market opportunities, education, health, environment management, governance, etc. So, to better manage the migration phenomenon, data on migration and urbanization are needed, but these data are not always available, especially in a systematic way. Since the 39;90s, ALBANIA has experienced huge external migration as well as massive internal migration flows. Compared to 1990, the current size of the resident population stock at the national level has decreased by about 12% due to emigration, accompanied by a decrease in the birth rate of about 65% and an increase in the death rate of 20%. Internal migration is identified as a major factor in the demographic changes of the ALBANIAN population at the regional level, bringing in extensive urbanization in a few areas and a drastic reduction of population in the majority of the others. Based on the official statistics, it is estimated that about 26% of the resident population has changed its place of birth during the last three decades in ALBANIA. The most dominant migration trend in ALBANIA after the 1990s has been rural to urban, or more accurately, the suburban areas close to Tirana city. The rapid growth of urban migration makes it necessary to carry out studies that will help government authorities understand the impacts of migration on the population and cities. This paper contributes to the studies that explore the demographic changes of the Albanian population during the last decades, focusing on internal migration movements and their impact on the urbanization of the cities. Data from the population's censuses of 2001 and 2011 and vital statistics published by INSTAT will be used as a source of information to measure and analyze the size and direction of the inflow and outflow of internal migration among prefectures, as well as its impact on the growth rate of a city's urbanization. Analyses show that the trend of demographic indicators at the regional level follows a similar path as the indicators at the national level, raising the awareness of policymakers on the necessity of using demographic and migration data in policymaking to guarantee sustainable development both at the national and regional levels.

Keywords:

Demographic Indicators, Migration, Population Census, Urbanization, Vital Statistics





Tirana Planning Week