

PREFACE

In a world of growing uncertainties and environmental, social, economic, cultural and political problems, a diversified and dynamic territorial mosaic does nevertheless persist in the European area. Much potential abounds and serves as inspiration for strategies aimed at sustainable and inclusive development, increasingly combining the economic approach with the environmental and sociocultural, placing particular focus on policies to preserve the landscapes and safeguard heritage, as well as revitalising the social structures. This latter parameter has been reinforced by migratory flows resulting from conflicts and contrasts in development, while antagonisms of a political, cultural or even religious nature, are being revived.

It is, therefore, urgent to build opportunities and catalysing dynamics, but with a view to preserving diversity and local values. These opportunities should be bolstered by structural and innovative policies, rooted in a digital society, in education and knowledge, favouring also efficiency in the exploitation of endogenous resources. Only thus can sustainable development be achieved, supported by innovation and scientific and technological research, as well as social and cultural values.

Despite these prospects, a challenging scenario remains which demands continued reflection on this territorial multiplicity, focusing on the European area, but from a perspective which relates with other areas, such as the Portuguese-speaking countries, particularly Brazil, with which joint projects and strategic aggregating analyses have been institutionalised. Several approaches to the myriad of problems should be explored in a multidisciplinary and interuniversity context, involving the participation of universities from different countries, intended to deepen synergies leading to social, cultural, economic and environmental cohesion and revitalisation. This guiding line also encompasses the principals set out in the “Sustainable Development Goals” or the “Global Goals” (UN), by which global development should be structured and increased over the next 15 years, covering areas ranging from climate change, economic and social inequality, innovation and technological development, to sustainable production and consumption, as well as peace and justice.

Reflection on territorial, social and cultural diversity must thus continue, from several perspectives (geographical, historical, environmental, economic, social, cultural and legal), focusing on the European area, but also on other areas, such as the Portuguese-speaking countries, especially Brazil, disseminating experiences and strategies intended to promote holistic, sustainable development. Studies must be continued that can motivate both the scientific community and civil society with the ability to intervene in spatial management and planning.

Publications such as “The Overarching Issues of the European Space / Grandes Problemáticas do Espaço Europeu – Rethinking Socioeconomic and Environmental Problems, Repositioning Territorial Development Policies / Repensar os Problemas Socioeconómicos e Ambientais, Reposicionar as Políticas de Desenvolvimento Territorial” are intended to contribute to this goal. It counts on the collaboration of specialists from several Portuguese universities, as well French, Bulgarian, Romanian, Galician, Croatian and Brazilian institutions. Synergies have

consequently been created with a view to bolstering efficient spatial planning, in which territorial cohesion and social, economic and environmental revitalisation combine harmoniously.

This publication is structured into four parts, covering essential topics related to sustainable and inclusive development. New perspectives on the social and cultural dimensions need to be explored, as the first part of the book exemplifies, “New Perspectives for Social and Cultural Development”. It counts on articles by specialists from Portugal, Bulgaria, Romania and Brazil, focusing on problems of a social nature, such as demographic ageing and inclusion strategies, namely, public health policies (Miriam Delboni), and other strategies to mitigate social segregation (Rogério Silveira). Obstacles persist in these and other spheres, the reason behind the rise in social movements (Célia Silva), associated to political and management changes in urban and rural spaces (Ana Fernandes / M^a Conceição Ramos, and Atanas Dermendzhiev, Milen Penerliev and Slavi Dimitrov). In this scenario, the relevance of the financial dimension remains paramount (Ileana Constantinescu), even though the growing social dimension is undeniable, when talking of inclusive and sustainable development.

There are, however, obstacles to this aspiration, deriving from natural accidents, but above all, anthropic ones. As an antidote, strategies are put forward for their mitigation,. The second part of this publication addresses this topic, “Natural and Anthropic Hazards and Contributions for Improved Spatial Development”. Given territorial dispersion and the diversity of hazards, focus is brought to bear on floods and their effects in the Iberian Peninsula (Alexandre Rodríguez), and on forest fires in Croatia (Borna Fuerst-Bjelis et al), a problem going back centuries but which has been seriously aggravated in the last few decades. Anthropic hazards are also addressed, such as those associated to urban interventions, particularly in Rio de Janeiro, following the building of the Olympic city and its thermal effects (Andrews Lucena and Leonardo Peres), as well as its effects on cultural heritage interlinked to climate change (Carlos Alves et al), and the forced environmental migrations (Ana Moreira and M^a Conceição Ramos).

Fortunately, heritage and its diversity have been increasingly taken as an important component of integrated development, to be preserved but also revitalised as a central goal for the sustainability of territories. The third part of the publication covers this topic, “Cultural Heritage and Territorial Sustainability”. The majority of the contributions come from Portuguese specialists, complemented by articles from Spain and Romania. These studies highlight the connection between heritage and tourism, an activity which can boost the profitability of heritage and territorial development, as well as the importance of diversity. This is the case of Galicia (Manuela Costa-Casais and M^a Isabel Alves), or winegrowing regions (Philippe Baumert), and the wide range of thematic routes, here exemplified by the Windmill Route (Delfina Vilela and Paula Remoaldo). There is also the importance of thermal spas and health tourism in Romania (Ileana Constantinescu and Adriana Motatu), and the impact of the identities and cultures of specific communities, such as the fishing one, focused on by Natália Ramos. An innovative and inclusive approach can be found in the relationship between the blind and their enjoyment of heritage in cultural and touristic terms in Braga (Northern Portugal), as shown by Sandra Anacleto and Paula Remoaldo. And how can

we ignore the role of culture in the European Green Capitals, in the sustainability, conservation and development of the European Union (Ricardo Martins, Flávio Nunes)?

A clearly fundamental aspect to achieve an increasingly more encompassing and holistic approach is related to education and its practices in a society that is increasingly more aware of a multifaceted view, necessary to achieve a high level of development. Thus, the fourth part of the book, "Educational Practices in a Changing Society", bearing this goal in mind, shows how national and regional strategies multiply and diversify, as do differentiated educational practices and methods, exemplified by studies from Bulgaria, Brazil and Portugal. They explore the importance of interactive education and the study of the environment (Stela Dermendzhieva and Martin Doykov), also present in the relationship between environmental education and the problem of residues (M^a Alexandra Macedo and M^a Conceição Ramos), as well as the relevance of conceptual mapping (Pedro Pateira). Furthermore, didactic games are an important part of learning processes, clear from "Volta ao mundo em 10 climas" ("Around the World in 10 Climates") (Licínio Azevedo). The importance of major institutions is also focused on, such as the United Nations (Joana Barroso) and the areas UNESCO has made world heritage, particularly in rural areas (Marisa Cardoso). Thus, methodological and programmatic changes are brought about in the training of new generations, with enduring effects on the conservation of heritage and on territorial development. Fortunately, the importance of creativity, training and innovation has come to the fore, bolstering improvements in the technical and professional training of populations and their attention to endogenous resources. These changes are also clear in the training of teachers, in different regions of the world, confirmed by the example from Brazil of the "Baixada Fluminense" (Leandro Oliveira and André Rocha).

In summary, despite the many problems we face on a daily basis and the excessive importance given to the economic framework, the environmental, social and cultural dimensions are gaining ground and greater relevance, garnering acceptance from decision-makers. To continue on this path, technical and cultural training is indispensable, so as to aspire to effective sustainable development, which is multifaceted but also distinctive, from which territorial cohesion and social inclusion can be strengthened. Indeed, endogenous potentialities persist but they must be strategically framed in an integrated, innovative and harmonious manner, preserving distinct social and cultural settings, the only way in which inclusive development can be effectively achieved.

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