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PREFACE

The increasing severity of climate change, uncontrolled urbanisation and the reckless exploitation of natural resources are hindering sustainable spatial planning. The combination of sustainability, resilience and spatial management plays a strategic role in promoting balanced development that is capable of meeting current needs without compromising the future of coming generations. These concepts are interdependent, which is why they must be integrated into public policies and planning instruments in order to promote environmental protection, economic development and social cohesion.

It should be borne in mind, however, that sustainability forms the guiding principle of contemporary spatial management. Indeed, it is based on the rational and efficient management of natural resources, the conservation of ecosystems and the promotion of development models that reconcile economic, social and environmental considerations. Thus, sustainability leads to the efficient use of land and a reduction in the artificialisation of landscapes, as well as to the conservation of biodiversity and the enhancement of diverse ecosystems, thereby improving people's quality of life.

In turn, resilience highlights the ability of spatial planners to bolster territorial resistance, as well as to adapt to and recover from natural or man-made calamities, such as forest fires, floods, droughts, earthquakes or economic crises. In resilient territories, not only are perceived risks mitigated or resolved, but their capacity for adaptation and regeneration is also strengthened as a result of past experiences. The integration of resilience into spatial planning is increasingly necessary, given the rise in extreme weather events associated with climate change.

Only by boosting sustainability in its many facets can effective spatial management be achieved, based on policies and instruments capable of planning the occupation and use of space in a balanced and efficient manner. This management involves different levels of governance, ranging from local authorities to national and supranational bodies, ultimately implemented through multi-level governance structures, which also foster the active participation of citizens.

Effective spatial planning must also be grounded in up-to-date scientific data, geographic information systems, environmental assessment models and participatory processes that enable the identification of needs, goals, conflicts and opportunities for development.

The effective combination of these three pillars (sustainability, resilience and spatial planning) requires, furthermore, an integrated and multidisciplinary approach, which is the focus of this volume called "*THE OVERARCHING ISSUES OF THE EUROPEAN AREA – How to Efficiently Combine Sustainability, Resilience and Territorial Management? / GRANDES PROBLEMÁTICAS DO ESPAÇO EUROPEU – Como conjugar eficientemente, sustentabilidade, resiliência e gestão territorial?*". To achieve this goal, sustainability criteria have to be incorporated into all stages of the spatial planning process, prioritising nature-based solutions and urban regeneration over urban sprawl and unplanned development. A commitment to energy efficiency in buildings and sustainable mobility is also required. This will reduce greenhouse gas emissions, preserve ecosystems and enhance the quality of the territories.

Furthermore, the inclusion of risk assessment and adaptation to climate change in spatial planning instruments is essential to strengthen resilience. Indeed, identifying vulnerable areas, restricting development in areas that may be affected by natural hazards, and designing and implementing green infrastructure are initiatives that reduce the populations" exposure to risk and enhance their capacity to respond to extreme events. At the same time, the continuous monitoring of various environmental and spatial indicators means public policies can be adapted to new socio-economic and environmental dynamics.

However, other approaches must be implemented, as we will see in this volume. This is the case with the promotion of collaborative governance. The participation of local communities, as well as scientific institutions, businesses and various civil society organisations, facilitates the development of more inclusive and efficient solutions. Furthermore, the transfer of technical and scientific knowledge facilitates decision-making, whilst also lending legitimacy to territorial development policies. In addition, the active participation of local people strengthens environmental awareness and ensures the continuity of local culture and traditions.

Technological innovation, for its part, plays a key role in linking sustainability, resilience and spatial management. Tools such as Geographic Information Systems (GIS), satellite remote sensing, environmental sensors and artificial intelligence enable the monitoring of changes in land use, in conjunction with risk prevention and a commitment to more effective spatial management planning, including in emergency situations.

However, several obstacles to the implementation of this integrated approach remain. In fact, political and administrative fragmentation persists and is, at times, increasing, in addition to budgetary deficits and differences in the choice of economic and social strategies amongst the various bodies involved. However, planning tools require constant adaptation and updating, which justifies the continuation of scientific and technological research, as well as a commitment to innovation, followed by the dissemination of the results, as is the case in this volume.

In short, sustainability, resilience and spatial management must be effectively combined. This entails the development of integrated, preventive and participatory planning models capable of reconciling economic development, environmental protection and social well-being. The adoption of policies based on scientific knowledge and the use of innovative technologies, whilst not neglecting the active participation of society, is a fundamental factor in building and maintaining safer, more inclusive and environmentally balanced territories – the only way to tackle and manage the challenges of the 21st century.

In light of the above considerations, the publication of the e-book **"Overarching Issues in the European Area"**, whose theme is "*How To Effectively Combine Sustainability, Resilience and Territorial Management?*", intends to address these issues. It comprises four chapters structured as follows: *I – Low-Density Areas: Between Resilience, Tradition and Innovation*, with five articles; *II – The Importance of Environmental Conservation and Revitalisation in Spatial Management and Sustainability*, with five articles; *III – The Multiplicity of Factors Driving Territorial Transformation: Some Fundamentals and Implications*, with six articles; and, finally, *IV – Education and Training: Impact on Spatial Development and Management*, with four articles.

Chapter I brings together a collection of articles focusing on low-density areas and the challenges they face, against a backdrop where resilience, tradition and innovation are all present.

The first article is called “RURAL DISCONTENT, SPATIAL JUSTICE AND DISRUPTIVE POLITICS IN EUROPE”, by Michael Woods. The author analyses the spatial distribution of election results in the Netherlands, France and Portugal, from the perspective of disruptive policies regarding rural discontent. Whilst the importance of results in areas with a more pronounced rural character is highlighted in these three countries, disruptive models and practices lead to significant, and even radical, changes that differ from country to country, demonstrating that there is no single model for political demands and practices in Europe.

The second article, “TERRITÓRIOS DE BAIXA DENSIDADE E ECONOMIA CRIATIVA: UMA CONTRIBUIÇÃO PARA A TEORIA DO ATOR-REDE” (*Low-Density Territories and The Creative Economy: A Contribution to Actor-Network Theory*), authored by Maria das Mercês Cabrita de Mendonça Covas and António Manuel Alhinho Covas, explains and discusses the creative economy in low-density territories, which are regarded as important areas in which to invest through projects and funding. In fact, the creative economy brings together knowledge, creativity, collaboration and communication, thereby converging the four types of intelligence: rational, emotional, natural and artificial. Thus, Actor-Network Theory offers an alternative framework for understanding society, culture and science, by positing that reality is constructed through complex interactions between different actors and their respective networks.

The third article, “ENVOLVER A COMUNIDADE NO FUTURO DO MUNDO RURAL: A CRIAÇÃO DE UMA COMUNIDADE DE LÍDERES RURAIS” (*Engaging the Community in the Future of the Rural World: Creating a Community of Rural Leaders*) is the third article in this chapter, by João Almeida and Andrea Barbosa. The authors highlight the challenges facing rural areas, such as depopulation, an ageing population and a lack of economic opportunities, as these factors undermine the sustainability and resilience of rural areas. They also emphasise the impact of community empowerment projects on territorial development, singling out the Academy of Rural Leaders as a practical example of sustainable entrepreneurship and social inclusion.

Giorgia Bressan and Giorgia Scognamiglio are the authors of the article “THE CONTRIBUTION OF AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS LOCATED IN MOUNTAIN AREAS TO THE ENERGY TRANSITION: REFLECTIONS FROM ITALY”. The study sets out to examine whether topography influences the spatial distribution of investment in renewable energy production, particularly in mountainous areas. The results highlight significant differences between mountain municipalities, as these show lower levels of investment in profitable renewable energy production activities on agricultural holdings than those observed in lowland areas.

Finally, the fifth and final article in this chapter of the e-book, “RECUPERAÇÃO AMBIENTAL DE ÁREAS DEGRADADAS POR MINERAÇÃO, ESTUDO DE CASO: EMPRESA JJG ITABORAÍ LTDA/BRASIL” (*Environmental Restoration of Areas Degraded by Mining, Case Study: JJG ITABORAÍ LTDA/BRAZIL*), is authored by André Luís Pereira Ribeiro, Igor Cristiano Silva, Lucio Carramillo Caetano and Cefas Dutra Farina. These authors examine the environmental restoration of a former sand extraction site, located in the municipality of Itaboraí, in the state of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Extraction operations ceased in 2020; however, by 2024, the area had been restored following the implementation of the environmental controls deemed most appropriate. This restoration was based on the replanting of orange and banana trees and forage fields, combined with the restoration of grassland grazing areas. The study concludes with

a reflection on the possibility of replicating this example in the restoration of other areas degraded by mining, either by utilising the cropping systems that existed prior to the start of mineral extraction, or by complying with the requirements set by environmental agencies.

The second chapter brings together studies highlighting the importance of environmental conservation and revitalisation in the management and sustainability of territories. The first article in this chapter is called “GOVERNANCE IN TIMES OF SUSTAINABLE TRANSFORMATION – BUSINESS AS USUAL?” by Ulrike Grabski-Kieron. The article questions current discourses on socio-ecological transformation in the context of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), under the paradigm of transformation, understood as a critical change to the socio-ecological system and the economy. This research takes governance in Germany as its case study, drawing on the author’s own experience, and also examines the implications for regional development in Germany and France.

The second article in this chapter, “THE MANAGEMENT AND CONSERVATION OF ATLANTIC SALMON AND ITS HABITAT IN THE RIVER MOY, IRELAND”. is authored by Mary Cawley. The article focuses on the depletion of salmon stocks in the River Moy, in western Ireland, one of the country’s most productive rivers for salmon fishing. The author identifies several natural and human factors affecting the quantity of fish caught and their habitat – the environment where salmon spend part of their life cycle. Adopting an actor-centred methodological approach, Cawley seeks to gain insights into these factors, critically analysing the publications and reports dealing with the depletion of this highly prized fish.

The third article, “SUSTENTABILIDADE CORPORATIVA: LIMITES E POSSIBILIDADES À LUZ DA GEOGRAFIA ECONÓMICA AMBIENTAL” (*Corporate Sustainability: Limits and Possibilities from the lens of Environmental Economic Geography*), by Leandro Dias de Oliveira, discusses how corporate sustainability models have been adopted, particularly by large companies currently located in Brazil’s peripheral regions. Indeed, there is a clear trend towards the increasing implementation of a range of measures centred on corporate sustainability. In addition to the author’s goals, the article offers a geopolitical and geo-economic analysis of corporate models of environmental management and their territorial implications for the affected populations.

Lucio Carramillo Caetano, Cefas Dutra Farina, André Luís Pereira Ribeiro and Igor Cristiano Silva are the authors of the fourth article in Chapter II, “A LEGISLAÇÃO BRASILEIRA VOLTADA PARA A RECUPERAÇÃO AMBIENTAL DE ÁREAS MINERADAS” (*Brazilian Legislation on the Environmental Restoration of Mining Areas*). This is a brief overview of the main laws currently in force in Brazil that deal with the obligation of mining companies to rehabilitate the areas they have mined. They present the legal provisions originating from both mining regulatory bodies and environmental regulatory bodies. The authors conclude that Brazilian legislation is stringent with regard to mining areas, with the aim of returning the affected areas to society once they have been properly rehabilitated.

The fifth and final article in Chapter II is called “PERCEÇÃO AMBIENTAL DA NATUREZA: PERSPETIVAS SOBRE AS ÁREAS PROTEGIDAS DA BAIXADA FLUMINENSE ATRAVÉS DA FOTOGRAFIA” (*Environmental Perception of Nature: Perspectives on the Protected Areas of the Baixada Fluminense through Photography*), by Tayane dos Santos Guedes and Karine Bueno

Vargas. The study presents the use of nature photography as a tool for recognising perceptions of the ecosystems of the Baixada Fluminense, a peripheral geographical area of the metropolitan region of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The authors' main conclusion is that the use of photographs in protected areas can help to foster new perspectives on these spaces. Indeed, by combining environmental education and awareness with citizenship, they increase public engagement and strengthen the sense of belonging amongst those involved, whilst also raising society's awareness of the need to protect biodiversity and reframe its perspectives on nature.

António Barros Cardoso opens the third chapter of this work with the essay "TURISMO NO "VALE DOS SOLARES" – CASAS, HISTÓRIAS E ESTÓRIAS" (Tourism in the "Vale Dos Solares" – Homes, Stories and Tales). The article examines the practice and role of tourism in areas classified as tangible and intangible heritage sites located in the Lima Valley. The author selected cultural assets, such as historic houses and manor houses, listed in the inventory of the Directorate-General for Cultural Heritage. The examples are numerous, highlighting an indelible heritage that urgently needs to be preserved and promoted.

The second article, "REFLEXÕES ACERCA DO CONCEITO DE 'PÓS-TURISTA'" (*Reflections on the Concept of the "Post-Tourist*), by José Luís Braga, discusses the concept of the "post-tourist" in the context of post-Fordism, globalisation and postmodernism. Considering various propositions, it is argued that the post-tourist is aware of their status as a tourist, and that tourism is a "game" rather than a singular tourist experience. The author concludes by emphasising that new forms of tourism increasingly prioritise immediate pleasure at the expense of reinforcing collective memories and experiences.

The third article in Chapter III is called "ELEMENTOS SOCIAIS, ECONÓMICOS E POLÍTICOS PARA PENSAR O ACESSO A ÁGUA NA PERIFERIA DA METRÓPOLE DO RIO DE JANEIRO – UM OLHAR A PARTIR DO CENSO IBGE E DO SNIS DE 2022" (*Social, Economic and Political Elements to Rethink Access to Water in the Periphery of the Rio de Janeiro Metropolis – A Perspective Based on the 2022 IBGE Census and the SNIS*). Authored by André Santos da Rocha, Raphael Vianna and Júlio Majerowicz Maneschy, this article provides an "x-ray" of access to water in the Rio de Janeiro metropolitan area, based on information provided by the National Sanitation Information System (SNIS) and the Census of the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE). Data relating to 2022 in both cases aim to shed light on the various social divides and socio-cultural profiles found in the city's outskirts. The authors argue that the social problem of access to water is not solely related to the flow rate provided by water bodies, but, above all, to the general conditions of access, which are sustained and/or manipulated by the social and political structures of power.

Anna Marocco is the author of the fourth article, "QUEERING URBAN PLANNING: FROM GENDER GEOGRAPHIES TO INCLUSIVE URBAN PLANNING". The author examines issues of socio-spatial justice relating to sexual and gender minorities, whilst placing a central focus on advocating for greater inclusion and social representation of these groups in urban planning. The main aim is, in fact, to highlight the importance and potential impact of integrating "queer" perspectives, proposing practical strategies for policy-makers and spatial planners to promote transformative and expansive urbanism, resulting in more inclusive and just cities.

The fifth article in this Chapter III, "ENTRE O GLOBAL E O LOCAL: A GREVE FEMINISTA INTERNACIONAL" (Between the Global and the Local: The International Feminist Strike), by Célia Taborda, explores how digital activism has contributed to the emergence of new forms of interaction, in a symbiosis between digital activism and street protests, forming a kind of relational *continuum*, thereby underpinning the importance of championing gender equality and the struggle against various forms of oppression, such as economic injustice. This study analyses the scope and global forms of action of the international feminist strike, which began on 8th March 2017, on International Women's Day, and its local expression in Portugal, a country where feminist movements had all but disappeared during the dictatorial regime. They have, however, re-emerged.

João Luís J. Fernandes is the author of the final article in Chapter III, "NOTAS DE UMA VIAGEM A CHERNOBYL. LEITURAS ENTRE A GEOGRAFIA POLÍTICA E CULTURAL" (*Notes from a Journey to Chernobyl. Readings Between Political and Cultural Geography*). The author argues that this journey was a performative experience that invites reflection on the multiple dimensions of the tragic event that took place in Chernobyl in 1986. As soon as the necessary conditions were in place, his desire led to a trip to the Chernobyl Exclusion Zone in 2017. This article records the places visited, but in close connection with reflections and associations of ideas arising from notes gathered throughout the journey. These insights offer an experience that bridges Cultural Geography and Political Geography.

The article "MAPAS TÁTEIS PARA A ACESSIBILIDADE DE DEFICIENTES VISUAIS NO JARDIM BOTÂNICO DA UFRRJ, SEROPÉDICA/RIO DE JANEIRO, BRASIL" (*Tactile Accessibility Maps for Visually Impaired People at the UFRRJ Botanical Garden, Seropédica/Rio de Janeiro, Brazil*), by Gustavo Mota de Sousa, Tainá Silva and Yasmin Pinheiro, opens the fourth and final chapter of this e-book. The aim of this study is to demonstrate the importance of how the creation of tactile maps facilitates the identification of areas within the Botanical Garden of the Federal Rural University of Rio de Janeiro (JB-UFRRJ). This initiative sought to raise awareness of and improve accessibility to this Conservation Area, located within the university campus in the municipality of Seropédica, in the state of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Following a brief explanation of tactile language, it is evident that this technique involves processes of generalisation and the use of *hatching* to create raised relief, achieved through printing on micro-capsulated paper (swell paper). This technique has made it possible to increase the number of blind or visually impaired visitors to the world of cartography, which is extremely beneficial and inclusive.

Continuing to develop articles related to education and training and their impacts on territorial development and management, the second article is called METHODOLOGICAL PROJECTIONS OF THE CURRICULA CONTENT FOR THE SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW CURRICULUMS IN GEOGRAPHY AND ECONOMICS IN THE HIGH SCHOOL STAGE IN THE BULGARIAN SCHOOL", by Stella Dermendzhieva and Tamara Draganova. The article focuses on improving teaching practices amongst teachers in Bulgaria, based on the new methodological requirements associated with the teaching of geographical content, teaching tools and teaching methods for geography and economics at secondary level. This aligns with the changes introduced to educational content, curricula, assessment regulations and strategies, using lower secondary education (Years 8 to 10) as an example. It is hoped that

these changes will provide students with the opportunity for professional, social and personal fulfilment.

The third article, "INNOVATIVE STRATEGIES AND METHODS OF TRAINING GEOGRAPHY AND ECONOMICS FOR EUROPE, BALKAN PENINSULA AND BULGARIA IN 7TH GRADE", also authored by Stella Dermendzhieva and Tamara Draganova, explores the previous topic in greater depth, highlighting the modernisation associated with digitalisation, with a view to improving educational quality, refining methodological tools and introducing innovative training strategies, models and methods. With the changes introduced in the new curricula from 2024 onwards, the study of Europe, the Balkan Peninsula and Bulgaria has been retained, but teaching and methodological approaches have been revised. It now includes artificial intelligence, *software* capable of detecting cause-and-effect relationships and generating predictions, recommendations or decisions based on incomplete information. These changes are illustrated in this article using the subject "Geography and Economics" for the 7th Grade. The preliminary results are very positive.

Finally, the last article in Chapter IV in "A FORMAÇÂO PROFISSIONAL NO TERCEIRO SETOR: RESULTADOS DE UM ESTUDO EXPLORATÓRIO NO NORTE DE PORTUGAL" (*Vocational Training in the Third Sector: Results of an Exploratory Study in Northern Portugal*), by José António Oliveira and Maria João Polidoro. The authors confirm that vocational training in the Northern Region is a reality, even though it does not comply with the provisions of the applicable legislation. Nevertheless, most institutions recognise the importance of vocational training in enhancing the knowledge and skills of their staff, enabling them to acquire new knowledge and practices, aligned with increasingly demanding institutional goals.

We hope our readers will enjoy the excellent articles in this e-book, which cover topics that are both thought-provoking and crucial not only for geographical science but also for other academic disciplines such as sociology, law, economics, and even history and psychology, within a multidisciplinary framework, thereby broadening the debate and strengthening science in the contemporary world.

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Andrews LUCENA
Helena PINA
Felisbela MARTINS