



Special Session Proposal

Historical Centres and Inner Areas: resilient scenarios in the post (post) Covid era

Mario Cerasoli – University “Roma Tre”

Gianluca Mattarocci – University of Rome “Tor Vergata”

Abstract

In the last year we have been experiencing a dramatic global health emergency due to Covid-19. An experience that must change our lifestyle because, quoting the words of Pope Francis, individuals cannot continue to think of “always remaining healthy in a sick world”. World’s main diseases that are called unsustainable development, individualism, social exclusion, uncontrolled exploitation of natural resources, lack of respect for the planet where we live. During the last decades, pursuing the myth of unlimited development - impossible to achieve since we live on a “finite” planet - we have allowed entire populations to concentrate in urban areas with excessive population densities and in immense territories around those cities were consumed due to *urban sprawl*. But, at the same time, we have also allowed entire territories to be abandoned, causing the disappearance of all those activities linked to the “care” of the territory and erasing traditions and economic activities that are centuries old if not millenary. Excessive density and urban sprawl are producing many serious effects on the climate and on the ability of the planet to defend itself.

From the experience of recent months, we are presented with an opportunity that we cannot ignore to change many things in the globalized society in which we live. Starting precisely with the demolition of some cultural stereotypes.

The Pandemic has raised attention on historic centres, especially on small historic centres, and the Inner areas have been rediscovered. A real change of paradigms requires to initiate a complex process of rebalancing the territory in order to discover the real “paths of resilience”. Nowadays the return to the “garrison” of the territory seems to be an opportunity that could be feasible and cannot be postponed to the future. As an antidote to “unsustainable development”, we should then rediscover the cultural, environmental and socio-economic advantages of the “evolutionary and sustainable maintenance” of the territory. The starting point for new paradigm will be the reactivation of the small historic centres, in terms of living conditions and accessibility.

According to the Economic Observatory on the Construction Industry of the National Association of Building Constructors, investments in the requalification of the building stock have been steadily increasing for years, reaching 37% of the total (2020 data).

The regeneration of existing real estate, its “scheduled and constant maintenance” are the opportunities of a real estate market that is currently suffer of a lack of new demand. If we also combine these opportunities with those linked to the various “nuances” of the liberalization of the transport market, starting with the railway market, we can be sure that shifting attention from large urban areas (few, congested, saturated) to “peripheral territories” is a viable and profitable option. Reactivating the “internal territories” means reactivating economic, social and cultural relations, guaranteeing the “right to mobility” and bringing active population back to the Internal Areas, so “maintaining” the territory as a source of life. And this should be the main objective of a true “sustainable and inclusive development”.

The session will consider the perspective of the real estate market after the pandemic showing the role and the key issues and opportunities related to the recovery of urban heritage, starting from improving accessibility. Papers will be focused on the urban planning, transportation and economic issues that could explain the increasing expected interest for the regeneration process in the inner areas.

Who are the convenors of this topic?

Mario Cerasoli – University “Roma Tre”; Gianluca Mattarocci – University of Rome “Tor Vergata”

How many presentations do you foresee for your topic?

8-10 papers

Can you name at least four authors who are interested to present in your topic?

Chiara Amato – “Sapienza” University of Rome

Mario Cerasoli – University Roma Tre

Gianluca Mattarocci – University of Rome Tor Vergata

Simone Roberti – Colliers International

Chiara Ravagnan – “Sapienza” University of Rome