

Editorial

Prof. Dr George A. Giannopoulos

*Transport Planner, Professor Emeritus, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece
Cor. Member Academy of Athens*

Email: ggian@academyofathens.gr

This issue is the second part of a two-part ensemble of special issues of the *Ekistics and the New Habitat* journal on the general subject of ‘Cities and Transport in the Mediterranean Region’. As in part one, belatedly published in late 2021 due to the global pandemic, it presents a collection of analyses and future engagement papers on key topics and transport-related issues faced by countries in the Mediterranean region. The majority of the papers address primarily transport planning and organizational aspects, and refer to the wider Balkan Peninsula, Egypt, Spain, and Greece.

Planning and sound organizational structures are fundamental tools for achieving urban transportation systems that are climate-friendly and environmentally sustainable. Unfortunately, such systems are yet to be achieved in most Mediterranean countries. New and more environmentally friendly transport technologies are also needed especially as the ongoing fourth industrial revolution is fostering new clusters of urban economic activities. The most imminent of such technologies is integrated electric and connected mobility applied within broader intelligent transportation systems. Increasingly, these systems are part of the day-to-day transport operation in so-called ‘smart cities’ within urban areas of many European Union countries, so there exists a valuable body of experience nearby.

When selecting the papers for this (and the previous) part of the special issue on ‘Cities and Transport in the Mediterranean Region’ we were faced with several problems. Firstly, we had to cover many countries with diverse systems of governance and cities at various stages in the implementation of their urban transport systems and planning practices. Secondly, as the Mediterranean region consists of more than twenty countries, any systematic or uniform discussion of the problems and challenges facing such a diverse region remains a challenge. Blanket, one-size-fits-all, solutions are often inappropriate in local contexts, just as identifying best practice from contextualized case studies remains a complex exercise in translation and adaptation. In response to such complexity, *Ekistics and the New Habitat* provides a site where case studies and research from a range of scales and scopes can be gathered and discussed. These reports can be classified and situated using the ekistics grid developed by C.A Doxiadis. The grid ranging from the individual person (Anthropos) to the global population (ecumenopolis) and encompasses developments of human settlements overtime. The result is a searchable collection of diverse yet comparable studies dating back to the *Ekistics* journal’s first issues in the 1950s. Keeping this boarder research context in mind, and with the goal of disseminating good practices and success stories clearly in our sights, we opted to use the limited space of the present special issue to introduce characteristic examples of sustainability in urban mobility that we hope will be of interest to a diverse readership.

The papers in this Part II of the special issue provide a glimpse of the various ways in which Mediterranean region countries are facing the challenge of improving the environmental quality and livability of urban habitats; they also demonstrate that our region is and should continue to be at the forefront of the struggle to build a sustainable future.