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of the

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

on

CHANGING CITIES III

Spatial, Design, Landscape & Socio-economic Dimensions

Under the aegis of

The Department of Planning and Regional Development, University of Thessaly

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Professor Aspa Gospodini

University of Thessaly

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The conference is organised by the **Lab of Urban Morphology and Design**, Directed by Dr. Aspa Gospodini, Professor of Urban Planning & Design, Department of Planning & Regional Development, **University of Thessaly**, **Volos**, **Greece**.

In collaboration with:

- The Department of Product & System Design Engineering, University of the Aegean, Syros Island, Greece;
- Syros Institute- Research Institute for sustainable development, cultures and traditions, Syros Island, Greece;
- The Association of Greek Planners (SEMPXPA);
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FORWARD

The 1st international conference on 'Changing Cities', which was hosted on Skiathos island, 18-22 June 2013, had started as an idea in 2012. The initial concept was to organise an academic event creative, inspiring, stimulating, and above all, international. There had been a belief that such an academic event may contribute in revitalizing academia and promoting tourism in Greece - hit by the economic crisis of public debt in the Eurozone. Given that during the last years, both societies and cities in Greece have been dramatically changing, shrinking in economic, spatial and demographic terms, we have chosen Changing Cities as the main theme of this series of conferences. Our aspiration had been to provide an international forum for transaction of ideas on cities and bring together architects, urban designers, landscape designers, urban planners, urban geographers, urban economists, urban sociologists and demographers, to investigate new challenges. This goal became a reality since the 1st Changing Cities conference gained strong interest of academics and researchers from many countries and regions around the world; Greece and the Balkans, south Europe and Mediterranean countries, northwest Europe, Middle East and Asia, Far East, North America, Latin America and Africa. A total of about 460 abstracts and 320 papers had been submitted in the conference – most of them, about 60% from abroad.

The 2nd Changing Cities conference, Porto Heli, Peloponnese, Greece, 22-26 June 2015, was also fruitful academically since it attracted the attention of scholars, not only from Greece, the Balkans and Europe, but also from far-away countries like USA and Canada, Brazil, Chile, Colombia in Latin America, and China, Japan and Australia in the far-east. We received about 500 abstracts and more than 350 papers. Among the scholars participating, there were about 185 Greek academics and researchers. This indicated that despite shortage of research funds, salary cuts, and broken morale, university teachers and researchers in Greek state universities were trying hard to keep a high-level academic status. Besides, the number of contributions by scholars from abroad (63%) emphatically pointed the international character of the conference.

The results of the 3rd Changing Cities conference, Syros Island, Greece, 26-30 June 2017, points that the series of conferences on Changing Cities is getting established in the international academia as a significant bi-annual international forum. We have received 485 abstracts and 200 papers from many countries around the globe – honouring our efforts as Organising Committee. The contribution by Greek researchers and scholars is 27.42% while that of foreign academics reaches 72.58%; this indicates the international character of the conference. Regarding foreign academics, many of them are from neighbouring countries such as Italy (69), Turkey (37), Cyprus (11), and

Serbia (6); but also many are from distant countries such as Brazil (27), USA (16), UK (16), Poland (11), and Netherlands (10).

The strong interest for this conference by academic communities allows us to have thoughts about organising the 4th Changing Cities conferences in two years' time, spatially hosted in a different Greek sea resort – probably Santorini Island, or Crete.

I would like first to thank the Organising Committee, the keynote speakers, and the members of the international scientific board who supported enthusiastically the academic organization of this conference. I would especially like to thank those colleagues of the Scientific Committee who have also pre-organized special sessions in this conference. I would like to thank all the academic, political and scientific organisations which supported this conference in many different ways: University of Thessaly; The Municipal Authority of Syros Island; the Greek Ministry of Tourism; The Greek National Tourism Organisation (GNTO); Finally, I would like to thank the shipping companies 'Blue Star Ferries' and 'SuperFast Ferries' which sponsored sea travel to and from Syros Island.

Aspa Gospodini, PhD

Professor of Urban Planning & Design, University of Thessaly, Department of Planning & Regional Development Chair of the Organising Committee & the International Scientific Board

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THEMATIC SESSIONS



Urban Design in Planning



Assessment of social and spatial effects of urban design in Athens: insights for a methodological approach

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Abstract

This paper aims to briefly present and elaborate a methodological approach addressing the social impact of urban design and planning on the sustainable development of cities with emphasis to the city of Athens. This methodological approach was part of a research project conducted by the National Centre for Social Research (EKKE)- attempting to assess the emergent social and spatial issues of urban design though the empirical study of selected urban interventions realized within Athens area during the last three decades.

Therefore; a set of interrelated tools was developed in order to formulate the basis of a methodological approach with reference to the evaluation of the impact of urban design on urban sustainability. These tools are: a) The socio-demographic identification of the surrounding areas of the urban interventions in order to assess their degree of integration in the local social tissue. b) The recording of land use changes before and after the urban interventions; that aims to show the effect of urban design on the functional and spatial organization of the study area. c) A detailed analysis of business activities and their modifications so that the adaptability of economic activities be within the context of the new urban interventions. d) The analysis of the political and scientific discourse through the recording of the views and considerations of planners; researchers and public agents about the necessity; the social acceptance and the perspectives of urban interventions. e) The analysis of qualitative findings of a questionnaire addressed to a target group of users regarding their opinions and experiences about the social activities taking place in selected redesigned public spaces in order to reveal social and spatial implications of urban design.

The paper briefly describes the above methodological tools and presents their main strengths and weaknesses. Given the lack of an established framework regarding the study of urban design social and spatial effects; the main finding of the paper is the proposal of an integrated methodological approach to monitor the impact of urban design on urban sustainability.

Keywords: urban design; social and spatial effects; urban design assessment tools; urban sustainability; Greater Athens

1. INTRODUCTION: BASIC CONSIDERATIONS OF URBAN DESIGN

For the most part, urban design deals with the design and structuring of public space, delimited by the scale and boundaries of the quarters and neighborhoods of a city or of a smaller settlement [1]. Indeed, in recent decades, the interest of urban designers has been highly orientated to urban public spaces (squares, streets, parks, leisure areas, and the like). Urban designers' interest for public open space can be seen as an attempt to better understanding aesthetics and their public [2]. As Appleyard states, with reference to urban

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design, "it is important that all major and minor groups be *represented* at all stages of the planning and design process. All needs and values should be understood" [2, p.8]. The urban design is related to architecture and landscape architectural views of the city space, but remains distinct as a multifaceted concept -relating to a large theoretical discussion- that reflects modern urban space and contemporary urban society. However, the key feature that converge towards its clarification is related to its distinction from the architectural design concerned mainly with buildings design at the micro scale of the urban space and from urban planning concerned mainly with the spatial organization of resources, functions and land uses at city scale.

Below, basic dimensions of the operational framework of urban design are presented, which also highlight aspects of the current framework of urban design within the Greek context.

Firstly, the view of Washburn [3], according to whom there are three basic dimensions of urban design (the target, the tools or products and the conditions for success), reveals the operational context of urban design. As the ultimate goal of urban design is to improve urban life, it has to be simultaneously able to respond to current challenges, either they are common, such as budget cuts, or less frequent, such as extreme weather conditions. As well as urban design aims to change the "status quo", to transform the city by doing it better than it was before, but without planning the entire city, but its parts, therefore three tools are in use: the rule, the plan and the pilot project. The tools are simultaneously the products of urban planning that guide urban change. The rule (often called and code) is the simplest product. A typical example is the building regulations code and city plan, since setting the patterns of urban space and buildings may determine the nature and the quality of the public space between them. The plan is the most common product of urban design. It aims to translate the general (strategic) goals of city planning in two-dimensional or three-dimensional drawings that visualize the future urban change. Finally, the project in terms of 'implemented plan' is the rarest item of urban design. If an implemented project can transform a greater area surrounding the project site and serve a wider community, the involved stakeholders as well as urban representations of globalisation, is considered within the mainstream aspect as an urban design project. According to Washburn [3], the example of the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao argues for these dimensions of urban design. The ways for the integration of emblematic and innovative architectural buildings, as having been framed in a number of last urban design projects in Athens, are both a challenge and a realm in the discussion on urban regeneration.

Secondly, concerning the Greek operational context of urban design, the rule of the planning legislation is of decisive importance. The objectives of urban design remain for many years ambiguous in the Greek planning system. For example, the relevant institutionalized reference in the planning legislation appears only the last years with the Law 4067/2012 regarding the New Building Code. An important point has to be considered: Within this Law (article 2, paragraph 9) urban design is identified with the product or result of the combination of the implementation of layout design and the adoption of volumetric and morphological rules that are regulated by the building code. Furthermore, since the built environment in Greek cities has been produced over the past six decades by the private initiative (mainly on the basis of the housing system known as "anti-parochi") the improvement of public open space (squares, streets and underused spaces inside the city) has gradually identified with the main concern of small-scale urban design projects.

This context has been partly changed during the period of preparation of Athens Olympic Games, when the implementation of large-scale urban projects reached its peak, including

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metropolitan transport infrastructure, 'flagship' projects [5], as the Olympic Stadium, large sports equipment, the Olympic Village, the program of the Unification of the Archaeological Sites of Athens and the redevelopment of a number of central squares. In parallel, after the institution of Law 2508/1997, urban design became identified with the urban consolidation tools, namely the 'urban renewal' institution. Finally, the shift of urban development management needs through the guiding framework of sustainability (or sustainable) led to the establishment of projects concerning integrated urban interventions (Law. 2742/99, No. 12), in other words urban projects that addressed also social, economic and environmental problems. However, in quantitative terms, the majority of integrated urban interventions projects were strongly orientated to physical design [6].

To sum up, since the 1990s, there are two main trends that frame the operational urban design consideration. Urban design is viewed as a tool that either may contribute to the increase of competitiveness between the cities via the creation of an attractive urban environment, either the sustainable development via green city planning [6]. The upgrading and the promotion of the city's image consist in new elements that define urban development, along with the emphasis given in issues of cultural infrastructure and urban design as mechanisms that promote the attractiveness of the city through the creation of business, tourism and leisure places [8] (see also [4]).

In particular, in the case of Athens, the upgrading of city's image was set off through projects such as the Unification of the Archaeological Sites, the construction of emblematic architectural buildings (such as the Concert Hall and the New Acropolis Museum), the promotion of mainly International Competitions of urban design, as well as the attraction of international cultural events accompanied by large scale urban design projects (e.g. Olympic Games) [6]. In parallel, integrated urban intervention programs (such as URBAN Community Initiative) that focused on the treatment of social and economic problems in the urban areas have been implemented. However, the majority of urban interventions were oriented to the physical design, whereas the urban intervention programs that have not focused on urban (physical) design have gradually weakened due to the lack of 'culture' regarding strategic urban development plans [6] Just recently, the "promotion of integrated urban planning strategies in areas that have crucial and complex problems of under-development, social and economic cohesion, environmental degradation and quality of life" (FEK 1341/B/2012) was implemented by the approval of the Plan of Integrated Urban Intervention (SOAP) for the centre of Athens (Government Gazette 64 / B / 16.1.2015). It is not a spatial plan, but a multisectoral action development plan, a toolbox of good practices and policies that combine physical projects and activities related to social reform and economic regeneration [(see also [4]).

Taking into account the aforementioned considerations of urban design, it is deduced that in the Greek planning system there is a need of methodological and interdisciplinary inquiries concerning the enhancement of the role of the urban design. The process and projects of urban design are usually depleted within the physical nature of design and do not include the social consideration of urban design.

The current integrated methodological framework is part of the research project *Social impact of urban design for the sustainable development of cities* -that provides an attempt to assess the emergent social and spatial issues of urban design through the empirical study of selected urban design projects implemented within Athens area during the last three decades. This project was conducted by the National Centre for Social Research (EKKE) in the framework of the wider research program *Social impact and public policies in the fields of energy, industry, urban planning and design and internet infrastructure*. The proposed methodological framework is based on the development of a set of interrelated

methodological approaches and tools that may be used in order to evaluate the effects of urban design on urban sustainability. This set of approaches and tools includes the investigation of: the socio-demographic identification of the surrounding areas of urban interventions, the land uses changes before and after the urban interventions, the business adaptations in the redesigned open spaces, the necessity, social acceptance and perspectives of urban interventions through the discourse of planners, researchers and public agents, as well as the social, economic and spatial changes of redesigned public open spaces as they have been observed and experienced by the people working close to the spaces.

2. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES AND TOOLS CONCERNING THE ASSESSMENT OF URBAN DESIGN PROJECTS ON URBAN SUSTAINABILITY

The empirical study of the research project was based on five case studies in which urban design projects have been implemented. The selected case studies comprise various public open spaces and two new emblematic modern buildings in which cultural institutions are established. These case studies are located in central or peripheral places within the city area in diversified social and urban context. They result from different urban project types, such as projects concerning the upgrading of public of open spaces or "flagship" projects, and have local, metropolitan, national or even international reach. The selected case studies are:

- A. The four squares complex in the central Athens: Omonoia-Kotzia-Varvakeios-Monastiraki.
- B. The New Acropolis Museum and the pedestrian street Dionysiou Areopagitou in the central Athens.
- C. The Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Centre located in the waterfront area of Athens.
- D. The green space along the railway in Moschato.
- E. A set of open spaces dispersed in the district Agioi Elefterioi- Social housing Units.

 The methodological approaches and tools concerning the assessment of urban design projects on urban sustainability are thoroughly described below:

(1) Socio-demographic identification of the surrounding areas of the urban projects [10]

This methodological approach aims to explore the social cohesion and consequently the content and the degree of social mix of the areas in which urban projects have been implemented, in order to assess the integration of urban projects in the local social tissue. Further elaboration of the methodological approach presented here, attempts to develop an application tool for the evaluation of the social impact of interventions of urban design with regard to the socio-demographic structuring of the surrounding areas in the case of a given set of interventions. Such a set could be defined on social and spatial criteria within the framework of public urban policy programs. As an insight of this methodological approach may be referred here that the K-means algorithm has been used, in parallel with descriptive statistics, for the clustering of different socio-demographic data. The socio-demographic similarities found, detail the set of the surrounding areas of urban projects under study (the five case studies in the project) and provide them, as a whole, with an actual sociodemographic structure rather than territorial one. Clustering or cluster analysis is the task of grouping a set of objects in such a way that objects in the same group (cluster) are the most similar to each other, and differ to those in other groups. Thirty eight spatial units with equal population size have been selected to comprise the surrounding areas of the above mentioned

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case study sites (areas of urban design projects implementation). These spatial units with equal population size coincide with the Spatial Analysis Units defined by the application Mapping Panorama of Greek Census Data 1991-2011developed by the National Centre for Social Research and Hellenic Statistical Authority (panorama.statistics.gr), according to which each unit corresponds to 1000 inhabitants. By the K-means clustering, a second-order of spatial units has been defined that group the first-order units (the spatial units of equal population size) in function of the maximum similarity of their socio-demographic characteristics basing on a broad set of categories (see Table 1).

Table 1. Socio-demographic characteristics of the second-order spatial units arisen from the application of K-mean clustering and grouping the (first-order) spatial units of equal population size. The percentages correspond to the centres of those groups (second-order spatial units). In bold, the highest and lowest percentages for all groups, and shading marks the deviations from the average value for each group per category [10].

	GROUPS OF SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Men	72.00	47.00	48.00	48.00	58.00	49.00	47.00	47.00	46.00	47.00
0-14	6.00	13.00	16.00	13.00	9.00	11.00	13.00	11.00	8.00	14.00
15-24	16.00	10.00	10.00	12.00	7.00	12.00	10.00	6.00	8.00	10.00
25-34	30.00	16.00	17.00	16.00	23.00	15.00	14.00	12.00	16.00	16.00
35-44	21.00	15.00	19.00	14.00	22.00	15.00	16.00	16.00	16.00	15.00
45-54	11.00	14.00	14.00	17.00	15.00	15.00	15.00	15.00	14.00	15.00
55-64	8.00	12.00	11.00	13.00	10.00	13.00	14.00	15.00	13.00	12.00
65-74	4.00	9.00	7.00	8.00	6.00	9.00	9.00	12.00	11.00	10.00
75+	4.00	11.00	6.00	10.00	7.00	10.00	9.00	13.00	13.00	10.00
master	1.00	2.00	3.00	1.00	6.00	1.00	3.00	16.00	8.00	2.00
bachelor	11.00	20.00	22.00	11.00	20.00	13.00	20.00	36.00	33.00	18.00
degree of upper secondary education	31.00	33.00	34.00	26.00	30.00	31.00	35.00	28.00	33.00	33.00
Technical school	4.00	6.00	7.00	9.00	4.00	6.00	6.00	1.00	2.00	5.00
degree of Gymnasium	15.00	11.00	10.00	12.00	14.00	13.00	12.00	5.00	8.00	12.00
degree of elementary school	23.00	19.00	13.00	30.00	15.00	25.00	17.00	9.00	10.00	21.00
partial elementary education	12.00	4.00	1.00	7.00	8.00	7.00	3.00	1.00	2.00	6.00
preschool education	2.00	5.00	7.00	5.00	3.00	5.00	6.00	4.00	3.00	6.00
single	48.00	40.00	41.00	41.00	47.00	40.00	40.00	44.00	46.00	40.00
widow/ divorced	9.67	12.86	8.33	13.00	12.00	12.00	52.20	18.00	18.00	51.50
married	42.00	47.00	51.00	47.00	41.00	48.00	47.00	39.00	36.00	47.00
economically active	48.67	40.14	47.67	35.50	48.00	37.60	41.20	50.00	45.33	38.00
economically inactive	51.67	59.29	53.67	64.00	53.00	62.10	59.60	51.00	56.00	62.00
white collar	47.33	71.43	74.67	60.50	64.00	61.60	75.00	86.00	82.67	67.50
blue collar	53.00	28.71	24.33	39.50	35.00	38.70	25.80	15.00	17.00	32.00
other than Greek nationality	77.00	9.00	5.00	9.00	47.00	9.00	8.00	14.00	14.00	12.00
1 member	10.00	12.00	10.00	11.00	24.00	10.00	12.00	24.00	26.00	13.00
2 members	17.00	26.00	22.00	25.00	23.00	23.00	23.00	29.00	31.00	25.00
3-4 members	32.00	54.71	59.33	52.50	44.00	55.90	54.80	39.00	35.00	49.50
5+ members	41.00	7.86	9.00	11.50	10.00	9.90	11.40	14.00	12.00	15.00
detached or semi detached house	2.67	24.57	14.00	15.50	9.00	47.70	18.80	39.00	12.33	30.50
block	97.00	75.00	86.00	84.00	89.00	52.00	81.00	60.00	85.00	69.00
before1946	4.00	3.00	1.00	0.00	8.00	4.00	1.00	35.00	14.00	18.00
1961-1980	75.00	50.00	20.00	82.00	71.00	52.00	35.00	20.00	52.00	19.00
after1991	0.33	24.00	62.67	8.50	7.00	13.60	33.60	18.00	3.33	31.00

(2) Land uses changes before and after the implementation of urban design projects [4]

The recording of land use change in the adjacent area of the urban design project before and after its implementation is a fundamental tool for the assessment of the impact of urban design project on urban development. Specifically, this tool investigates the spatial and functional organization of land uses concerning the urban project's adjacent area and its transformation after the urban project implementation. It may give indications about the mix

of land uses, the economic and social regeneration of the study area, and in general, the urban sustainability of the area.

The methodology of land use analysis is based on two axes: (1) the mapping of existing land uses and (2) the comparison of land uses over time. A basic methodological option is the distinction of land uses in two levels of the city's space: a) the level of the ground floor of the buildings and b) the level of the set of the rest floors of buildings. At least, two time data series are needed for the investigation of the land uses changes. Therefore, the data are based on a) an on-site research and b) data extracted by the on-site research made by Attiko Metro S.A. in Athens on 1995. Land uses have been classified on the basis of FEK 142/28.6.2014 (N. 4269/2014 - Chapter B'). Apart from the classification that uses the legislation, a new category named "empty/without use" has been added since the last years empty spaces in buildings or even entirely abandoned buildings have been increased as a result of the recession. In short, land uses (existing in urban areas) are classified in two categories: general land uses and specific land uses (Table 2). They are statistically edited and the results are presented in maps. The statistical editing gives information about the prevalence and the shrinkage trends of certain land uses. This, in combination with the spatial pattern of land uses, indicates the formulation of the new identity of the study area.

Table 2. Specific and General categories of land uses [4]

Specific categories of land uses	General categories of land uses		
Plain Residence	Residence		
General Residence			
Retail, Services (local level)	Local Services		
Medical care, welfare, culture (local level)			
Primary education			
Secondary education			
Green spaces, open spaces, sports, leisure, religious			
services (local level)			
Retail (hyper-local level)	Central (city level) Services		
Offices			
Administration			
Mixed land uses			
Tertiary Education	Institutions-Social Infrastructure		
Medical care			
Welfare			
Sports (hyper-local level)	Cultural Services		
Green/ open spaces (hyper-local level)			
Religious services (hyper-local level)			
Leisure services (hyper-local level)			
Warehouses outside statutory industrial areas	Freight services		
Wholesale			
Small Industry	Small Industry		
Parking - car services	Transport		
Mass urban transport facilities			
Long-distance mass transport facilities			
Void buildings/spaces	Special land uses		
Under construction buildings/spaces			
Vacant plots	<u> </u>		

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(3) Adaptability of business activities in regenerated open spaces [11]

The analysis of current business activities in selected open public spaces aims to examine the trade character of regenerated open spaces as well as its modifications. The study based on a detailed field recording of the existing business activities in the regenerated four central squares of Athens (Omonoia-Kotzia-Varvaki-Monastiraki). The recording refers to all activities that are located on the ground floor of buildings bordering the open space of the examined square, including also light or ephemeral constructions and facilities (such as light kiosks, booths etc.) inside the open space. The entries on an Excel Worksheet of the collected data are categorized according to the land use definitions of the urban planning legislation and the results are presented in graphs. Besides, these results are combined with the findings of the questionnaire described in the methodological approach (5) in order to estimate the degree of business adaptability in the squares after their urban regeneration

(4) Political and scientific discourse analysis [12]

The qualitative method of political and scientific discourse analysis is used to estimate the necessity, social acceptance, possibilities and perspectives of urban design projects implementation, giving emphasis to the social dimensions of urban design. From the set of various groups of actorswho are usually involved in the process of urban projects design and implementation, the discourse analysis focused on the views and perceptions of two groups of actors: a) public agents participating in the decision-making process as well as in the design and implementation of urban projects and b) specialists: creators (such as architects, urban planners etc.) and/or researchers.

The discourse analysis is based on two complementary investigations. The first investigation refers to the analysis of secondary sources concerning articles and published interviews of the creators (architects, urban planners), researchers and authorized actors of the design and implementation of urban projects. It also includes the analysis of primary sources that is material originated from the administrative archives of the relevant urban design and implementation authorities, such as tender notices for architectural competitions issues, jury reviews, contracts, other documents, etc. The second one focuses on semi-structured interviews addressed to people that have a responsible position in the relevant public agents of urban projects design and implementation. Therefore, an Interview Guide has been formulated with four thematic axes. These four axes focus on the investigation of: (a) The conditions that indicate the necessity and objectives of the urban project, its character and the problems that intends to solve, its integration in broader urban sustainability strategies and the degree that international experience influences urban design. (b) The pros and cons of cooperation between different agents involved in the urban planning process including the research institutions. (c) The potential assessment of social, environmental and economic effects of urban design as well as the degree that social dimension is incorporated into urban design. Besides, it explores the social acceptance of the citizens and the ways that it is expressed. (d) The perception of public agents concerning the possibilities for urban projects implementation, the basic priorities of urban design and the funding tools that could contribute to its implementation in the era of crisis.

(5) Studying the relationship of a target group of users of public open spaces with their regeneration. A questionnaire -having the form of face to face interview- is used for the investigation of the social, economic and spatial effects of urban design projects. This questionnaire is designed to be addressed to the target group of people working in businesses situated in the study area, so that have an everyday experience with the regenerated open

Table 3. General and specific thematic issues for compiling findings arisen from the two complementary investigations on the published discourse and the semi-guided interviews. The systematic analysis of the findings argues for the interpretative dimension in their description and comment [12].

General thematic axes of analysis	Specific thematic axes of analysis				
1. Necessity and objectives of urban	(a) Character, key objectives and expected results				
design projects (axis A of the	(b) Incorporation of the social dimension of the necessity of				
Interview Guide)	urban projects in the public agents' texts				
	(c) Integration into wider urban strategies				
	(d) Urban "models" and/or examples of best practices				
	promoted/implemented by both public agents and creators				
2. Results and social acceptance of	(a) Study of the urban projects impact (social, economic,				
urban projects (axis C of the Interview	environmental) using quantitative and/or qualitative methods				
Guide)	(b) Social impact of the urban projects and benefiting				
	population groups				
	(c) Acceptance of urban projects as expressed by the attitude				
	of the local community and the users in general				
	(d) Issues of use and maintenance				
3. Possibilities and perspectives of	(a) Collaboration with other public agents and stakeholders,				
urban projects(axes B+D of the	consultation processes and possibilities to co-produce urban				
Interview Guide)	intervention programs				
	(b) Possibilities for urban projects implementation				
	(c) Key priorities of the public agents and proposals for				
	strengthening the social consideration of urban projects				
	(d) Available funding tools, particularly in the current				
	context of the economic crisis				

spaces. It aims to extract information with reference to the knowledge, perceptions and experiences of respondents about the public open spaces and their empirical assessment of social, economic and spatial effects of urban projects. Apart from the section that refers to the socio-demographic profile of the respondent (gender, age, educational level, professional status, nationality), the questionnaire is divided in five sections concerning: (a) Description of the basic characteristics of the businesses in which respondents are employed (type of business, location, main activity, number of employees, rent or owned space, first year of business establishment etc.) and development of businesses in relation to the previous urban projects implementation as well as the economic and refugee crisis in order to weigh up the different effects and their causes. (b) Respondents' perception about the integration of the square's surrounding area in the local social tissue. (c) Evaluation of the today use of the square area based on the empirical observation of the everyday activities that take place, their frequency and the type of users and visitors (nationality, gender, age etc.) as well as their mutation over time. (d) Assessment of quality of the open space and its evolution highlighting the advantages and drawbacks of open space that have been provoked by the implementation of various urban design projects. (e) Respondents' opinion about their participation in urban design processes concerning open public spaces [13].

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3. EVALUATION AND DISCUSSION

The above presented interdisciplinary methodological approaches and tools may provide an integrated methodological framework for evaluating the impact of urban design on urban sustainability, giving emphasis to its social dimension. The innovation of the proposed integrated methodological framework arises from the compiled quantitative and qualitative findings of the complementary investigations. These may shed light on social, economic and spatial effects of urban design, in particular highlighting aspects of social cohesion and social mix, economic restructuring, every day activities in open public spaces, social acceptance, necessity and possibilities of urban design projects.

However, not all of the proposed approaches and tools have the same feasibility. In fact, the socio-demographic identification is the most accessible tool, since it is based on the use of statistical data. The other approaches and tools are based on information collected through field surveys (concerning semi-structured interviews, questionnaires land uses and activities recording). However, field surveys may be time-consuming and costly, since there is the need of experts who will be able to collect the necessary information. Another important difference among the suggested approaches and tools is that some of them are based on quantitative measurements or data and other on qualitative data. This is of high importance as the quantitative and qualitative findings have a complementary role and, therefore, may contribute to a better interpretation and a more integrated assessment of the social impact of urban design. In particular, in the long-term, quantitative data may comprise a useful database for the monitoring of urban design over time. In addition, this database makes feasible the application of meta-analysis method that can conclude in a more objective way on issues related to the social effects of urban design.

The bottom line is that the suggested integrated methodological framework may compare the actual results of the projects against the expected results. Therefore, it may establish the role of urban design project-taking into account its type, its location and its objectives- in the urban sustainability of the city through the evaluation of its social impact. In short, the institutionalization of a framework evaluating the social impact of urban design is necessary in order to maximise its social benefits. Its implementation should be done from high-qualified staff in the public agents (municipal or metropolitan authorities) that are responsible for the design and implementation of urban projects.

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