

Preface

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The development of resilient cities is the key factor for sustainable development. Resilient cities are cities that are prepared to absorb and recover from any shock or stress (natural hazards, human-made shocks such as the financial crisis, etc.) while maintaining its essential functions, structures, and identity as well as adapting and thriving in the face of continual change. ‘Building resilience requires identifying and assessing hazard risks, reducing vulnerability and exposure, and lastly, increasing resistance, adaptive capacity, and emergency preparedness’ (ICLEI 2017). To contribute to building resilient cities, we are very happy that the German Academic Exchange Service (Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst) and the German Federal Foreign Office (Auswärtiges Amt) grant our joint research project or exchange „Resilience as Challenge for European Cities (HeKris): Developing urban planning strategies and concrete projects” from 2017 to 2019. The project is based on a partnership between the National Technical University of Athens – NTUA (Faculty of Architecture) and the Leibniz Universität Hannover – LUH (Faculty of Architecture and Landscape). The main objective of HeKriS is to train Greek and German students as well as young researchers to develop integrative strategies and creative approaches for resilient cities, including new and robust governance arrangements between public, private and civil stakeholders (governance structures). This book is the result of the Athens Summer School 2017 on resilient European cities that took place from 22nd to 26th May 2017. The summer school focused on ‘Urban Resilience, Climate Change and Adaptation’ and asked the participating interdisciplinary student groups to develop strategies and approaches to cope with heat islands in densely populated area in Athens. This volume thus presents (1) contributions from scientists that were involved in the summer school, explaining the phenomena of climate change and considering various concepts and approaches enhancing resilience; and (2) the ideas, concepts and strategies that the students developed to adapt to climate change in urban areas. With this book we hope to contribute to the discussion on building more resilient and more sustainable cities – a discussion we will continue with the following summer schools and exchanges.

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