

Contemporary Pathways of European Local and Regional Development

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Abstract The concept of local (in a broader sense also regional) development should be deliberately conceived in a rather flexible interpretation that allows for a wide scope of overlap with other related disciplines. Local development generally refers to the transformation and change of a locality, usually with a view to improving one or all of the following areas: material and social prosperity, economic performance, well-being and opportunities for residents, knowledge and circulation of ideas, availability of technologies, resilience to shocks and adverse events, external relations, internal stability and co-operation, or social and environmental sustainability. Local development is therefore not only directly related to the way societies, economies and institutions interact with each other at the local level, but also with the rest of the world, i.e. with other localities and countries. This book is the result of the joint effort of researchers who are united in this project by their interest in local development, although they work in their own scientific field. Therefore, the book contains ten chapters on social, institutional and political as well as economic factors focussing on diverse aspects of local development. The book is organised according to the selected major social science disciplines of the contributions as follows.

- Sociological framework. The added value of the chapters lies predominantly in their contribution to the understanding of local development through the changes emerging in society.
- Institutional and political framework. The chapters describe innovative combinations of policy areas, mechanisms and instruments that have been implemented in real local development.

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- Economic framework. The contributions highlight the instruments and tools for processes and development patterns from an economic perspective.

The multi-author book was written as part of the Jean Monnet Chair entitled Leadership for European Local Development 2040 (LELD2040), which puts an emphasis on the European Commission's sixth priority, a new push for European democracy that focuses on the development of European Union Long-Term Vision for Rural Areas 2040, addressing pressing challenges and identifying new opportunities for localities across Europe.

Keywords: • local development • localities • regions • mechanisms and instruments • sustainability • changes in society • policy areas • economic development patterns