"THE IMPORTANCE OF CREATING SUSTAINABLE CITIES"

GLOCAL - innowacyjne kształcenie przyszłych inżynierów odpowiadające na problemy współczesnych miast
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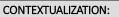
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CONTEXTUALIZATION:

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were formulated and adopted in the new Sustainable Development Agenda issued by United Nations in 2015, adopted by all its Member States. It was designed as a pathway to act as a global partnership to try to put an end to poverty, to protect the planet and to ensure the well-being of all its population (Figure 1). One of the main points is the importance of the commitment that all affected parts must adopt, including governments, cities and local authorities, but also the private sector, the media, the unions, the academia and other stakeholders, as well as the civil communities, with a great importance of its younger members.

Figure 1: Sustainable Development Goals. (Source: United Nations Development Programme))

OBJECTIVES:

The eleventh Sustainable Development Goal, "Sustainable Cities and Communities," is focussed towards the achievement of getting public spaces that contribute to the access for all people to proper, safe, and affordable settlements and basic services [1]. As a rule, the cities offer better opportunities related to basic services (education and healthcare), better communication systems and technologies and more job opportunities, but this does not mean that they do not need improvement on these issues. We must take on account that the planet urban space is increasingly growing; more than 56 percent of the world population is now living in big cities and it is estimated that this number will increase a 10 percent in only 25 years [2]. This fact has caused, in many cases, an urban zone uncontrolled settlement, without considering the basic services and infrastructures needed for a proper development and life quality for their population.

Public spaces in cities are a very important part of our daily life. We use them constantly; they support many activities and social and cultural meetings. That is why it is necessary to reflect upon these places, upon their needs and gaps (Fig. 2), upon the factors that forge their identities, upon the elements that conformed them [3], not forgetting to assure the next generations future. We have examples in the biophilia, the placemaking, and the green and blue infrastructures, increasingly used in the public spaces creation and/or renewal.

Figure 2: Park in Valdemoro (Madrid) with a designed path (on the right) and a used path (on the left) (Source: Alejandra Vidales Barriguete)

CONCLUSIONS:

So, it is essential to rethink the urban management models and their planning to create a framework, more in line with the Sustainable Development Goal #11 "Sustainable Cities and Communities". This means that we must make cities safer, more inclusive and more resilient, based on models where production and consumption are sustainable, where the real and the social-cultural needs of the inhabitants are analysed, etc.

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