

Counter-Urbanisation and Digital Nomads: Connections of the Two Phenomena and Infrastructure in Greece

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Abstract : The overconcentration of people in big cities (namely Athens and Thessaloniki) and the tendency to increase their density in the upcoming years cause various problems on a personal, environmental, and social level. During the COVID-19 pandemic, a reversal in urbanism was observed. The counter-urbanization that took place, along with the steady growth of the digital nomad lifestyle, opens up new paths for policies that rejuvenate the non-urban regions in Greece and elsewhere. Promoting actions, either through incentives or through creating organized structures, can transform the Greek rural regions into attractive destinations for those who want to avoid life in big cities permanently or for a short period of time. Subsequently, the gain of the regions that will apply such policies will have a multiplier effect. Greece, being a country with great touristic interest from foreigners, can use the infusion of long-stay visitors as a boost to give way to the Greek urban population that works remotely to move permanently to more rural regions and create the conditions for growth in those regions. The paper studies several cases of such policies, in combination with different options to be explored as to the methods that can be used to take better advantage of these policies. Examples from European and worldwide use cases are presented, noting the parts that can be applied in a country like Greece. An example of an abandoned village is also presented that can be revived through the methods described in the paper. The next possible step in research could be a case study in one of the various locations to determine the level of maturity of the market to pursue such actions.

Keywords : counter-urbanization, digital nomads, rural growth, village revival

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