

Foreword and Acknowledgements

The Sustainability of Cultural Diversity is the result of an EU Network of Excellence on 'Sustainable Development in a Diverse World' in which throughout a period of five years more than 30 partners from all around Europe and beyond have exchanged their ideas and insights on cultural diversity and its relationship with sustainability. The network strongly subscribed to article 3 of The Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (UNESCO, 2001) which states that cultural diversity is

one of the roots of development understood not simply in terms of economic growth, but also as a means to achieve a more satisfactory intellectual, emotional, moral and spiritual existence.

As a Network of Excellence, our activities were oriented towards gaining new insights and advancing our knowledge through engaging in a dialogue with partners from different scientific disciplines (anthropology, architecture, arts, economics, history, linguistics, organization studies, public planning, psychology, urban planning) and multiple cultural backgrounds.

This book found its momentum during our second General Assembly in Athens in which all network partners presented their work on what cultural diversity may bring to a nation, city or organization and/or how its governance leads to certain outcomes such as (lack of) social cohesion, conflict, creativity, increased wages or linguistic variety. Through an open call for chapters to all partners, 38 scholars started to work, either independently or collaboratively, expressing their insights on diversity and its relationship with the main notions of sustainability. The result is 16 chapters, all aiming to further increase our understanding of the value (and limitations) of cultural diversity.

The creation of this book would not have been possible without the help of Myriam Bechtoldt, Arie de Ruijter, Dino Pinelli, Giovanni Prarolo and Vanja Stenius, who through their reviews helped the authors to revise their chapters. I further thank Valeria Papponetti who has been invaluable in her role as administrative project coordinator, providing support and guidance to all partners in line with the EU requirements. A special word of appreciation goes to Arie de Ruijter who pushed the network forward through his visionary keynote speech on sustainability at our third General Assembly in Bratislava. His warm support and belief in the value of studying diversity and

sustainability was of great benefit. Finally, I thank all partners who have contributed to sharpening the insights in this book through the open discussions in our workshops and general meetings. Throughout our functioning as a network we have come to a certain consensus, but we have also kept our disagreements, as we strongly believe that similarities and differences are equally important in sharpening our thinking. It is by comparing, contrasting and combining our different perspectives that we have aimed at understanding the relationship between diversity and sustainability.

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