Abstract Bozhidar Ivanov

**Shrinking Smart**: Comparative European perspectives and applicability

The research project focuses on urban shrinkage in the European Union and the various alternatives for planning and policy making to deal with the consequences of shrinkage. As a possible direction, the research attempts to define and outline a new planning concept of “Shrinking Smart” as a way to address urban shrinkage in a context-sensitive way.

The research establishes a theoretical framework based on fundamental definitions of planning and urban shrinkage/shrinking cities in the context of the European Union. The research formulates theoretical hypotheses for a planning concept with different features, defined through epistemological reflection and through comparative analysis of reference terms. The proposed planning concept features are traced in responses to urban shrinkage in three distinctively different contexts in the European Union: Bilbao in Spain, Leipzig in Germany and the province of Zeeland in the Netherlands.

The research attempts to explore the context-dependent approaches to addressing urban shrinkage on policy level, planning level and implementation level in the three cases and to build an analytical and practice-oriented benchmarking framework to handling urban shrinkage in a “smart” way.

*This research is part of the RE-CITY ITN project which has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 813803 and aims at training a new generation of practitioners in the multidisciplinary field of urban shrinkage. The RE-CITY consortium consists of scholars and practitioners from a network of 16 academic and private institutions across Europe, USA and Japan.*