

## Urban morphologies in the territorial context of Leiria

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Territories are particularly complex and numerous. This is related to its 'multiscale nature', and also due to the fact that territory is constituted by traditional forms of growth and by new forms of recent growth, which are under different logics. Traditional forms are based on a continuous and compact model of urban growth and are associated to a hierarchical structure of vertical organization, where prevails an urban area with centripetal and homogeneous characteristics. Instead, the new urban order, based on a fragmented and dispersed model of urban growth, follows a more flexible and reticular organization that gathers centrifugal and heterogeneous characteristics.

The urban transformation developed in recent years reflects a reality that is totally different from the past. Much has changed. What was city or countryside, or what was urban or rural converged to a quite impressive territorial mosaic. The dichotomy presents in 'urban' and 'rural' terminologies no longer make sense. The condition of urbanity of the present society is based in new logics of territorial occupation. The term 'rurbanization', understood as the 'rural diffuse urbanization', already characterizes this contrast, the dual condition between urban and rural. This condition of urbanity is consistent with the inability to characterize and delineate areas of mediation between urban and rural and, therefore, to establish precise boundaries.

The recent urban growth is particularly characterized by a multiplicity of realities that are different from those of yesteryear. The present communication addresses the characterization of urban morphologies present in the territorial context of Leiria, in order to better understand and interpret the phenomenon of the 'explosion of the city' present there. We considered the context of Leiria, which gathers a vast territorial area, characterised by an extensive and diffuse use of the land with activities (by introducing new logic of concentration and location, as well as segmentation of production processes, distribution and consumption) and people (by the emergence of new social behaviours, with new logic of territorial occupation).

It is intended to approach the theme of urban morphologies whose origin and evolution are present in the territory of the diffuse urbanization and industrialization, temporally contextualized from the decade of 60/70 (time when the new dynamics and the extension of the processes of urbanization started) by the beginning of the century XXI. In Leiria, a city characterized by an extensive territory, it is possible to identify urban morphologies as diverse as: 'urban agglomerations' associated to the conventional forms of growth in a vast territory; 'linear agglomerations' with an industrial and residential occupations along major roads; 'diffuse pattern' of territorial occupation in a fragmented way; 'housing developments' dominated by a low-density occupation, tendentially residential; 'isolated and occasional occupations' based on a rural pattern; and 'linear and nodal concentrations' around major interconnection points.

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