

Urban & Regional Innovation



URENIO Research Unit



[www.urenio.org](http://www.urenio.org)

URBAN AND REGIONAL INNOVATION RESEARCH UNIT  
ARISTOTLE UNIVERSITY  
FACULTY OF ENGINEERING  
P.O. BOX 491  
54124 THESSALONIKI, GREECE

Director: Prof. Dr. Nicos Komninos

TEL: + 30 2310 995 581  
+ 30 2310 489 304  
FAX: + 30 2310 995 583  
+ 30 2310 472 240

# URENIO – THE RESEARCH UNIT



The URBAN AND REGIONAL INNOVATION Research Unit (URENIO) is a university laboratory for the promotion of research and supply of scientific and technological services. URENIO is affiliated to the Department of Urban and Regional Planning and Development in the Faculty of Engineering, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki.

URENIO's research focuses on territories that base their development on R&D, technological innovation, technology-intensive companies, technology infrastructure, and knowledge and information networks. Central research theme is the cities and regions of innovation including knowledge clusters, technopoles and science parks; regional innovation systems and strategies; digital innovation spaces and intelligent cities. A principal feature of these innovative regions is their capacity to create environments which facilitate innovative behaviour by the organisations which are members of this milieu, turning knowledge into new products, disseminating information, building organisational learning, integrating skills, and in the end generating innovations.

An intense development of innovative territories, under diverse conditions, is occurring all over the world: in the US technology districts, from Silicon Valley to Florida high-tech corridor, and media valley in New York; in western Europe, from Uusimaa in Finland, Stockholm and Kista in Sweden, Noord-Brabant in the Netherlands, to Sophia-Antipolis and Rhone-Alpes in south France, Bayern and Baden-Wurtemberg in southern Germany; in the technopoles of Japan; in Asia, from Malaysia and Singapore to Bangalore in India. Such trajectories have rapidly gained ground, constituting the prevailing model of urban and regional development at the beginning of the 21st century, which more and more regions are trying to copy and implement.

URENIO's research on the territories of technological innovation is both theoretical and applied. At the theoretical level we are working on models of innovative regions (technology districts, technopoles, RIS-regions), on models of innovation processes (spin-offs, producer-supplier relations, technology co-operation, new product development), and on digital spaces facilitating innovation practices and policies. In particular, we are working in "intelligent cities and regions", which illustrate the most recent developments in innovative environments integrating knowledge clusters, regional systems of innovation, and digital innovation spaces.



Applied research is about the creation of innovative environments in EU regions, through the design and implementation of technopoles, science parks, innovation centres and incubators, regional innovation strategies, and virtual innovation environments including regional intelligence applications, online innovation tools, e-communities, and digital cities.

## APPLIED PROJECTS

### Planning innovative clusters

- " High tech districts
- " Technopoles
- " Science and technology parks
- " Innovation centres
- " Incubators

### Strategies for innovating regions

- " Regional innovation strategies (RTP, RIS, RITTS)
- " Regional innovation and technology transfer support actions
- " Dissemination of innovation technologies: benchmarking, IPR management, new product development, BPR, quality
- " Evaluation of regional innovative programmes
- " Regional innovation observatories

### Creation of digital innovation spaces; Intelligent cities

- " Online regional intelligence
- " Online innovation management (audit, benchmarking, NPD, spin-off)
- " New product development virtual roadmaps
- " Digital clusters, technology parks, incubators and innovation centres
- " Digital research centres
- " Digital cities

URENIO is mainly involved in competitive projects from the European R&D framework programmes and the Innovative Actions of the European Regional Development Fund. Members and research associates of URENIO have participated in numerous projects funded by national and international research institutions and the European Commission. These projects deal with the role of innovation in regional development, the typology and evolution of innovation-led cities and regions, the design of regional innovation strategies, regional knowledge management, and the creation of physical, institutional and digital environments supporting technological innovation.

# RESEARCH COLLABORATION

## UNIVERSITIES & RESEARCH INSTITUTES

CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF LOUVAIN  
DEMOCRITUS UNIVERSITY  
FOUNDATION FOR RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY  
PANTEION UNIVERSITY  
RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY INSTITUTE OF MAASTRICHT  
TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF CRETE  
TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF MILAN  
UNIVERSITY OF MONTPELLIER  
UNIVERSITY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES OF TOULOUSE  
UNIVERSITY OF THESSALY  
UNIVERSITY OF WALES, CARDIFF

## TECHNOLOGY ORGANISATIONS

ANDALUSIA TECHNOLOGY PARK  
ARCHIMIDES, ESTONIA  
CENTRO SVILUPO, AOSTA  
FUNDACION LABEIN  
FUNDECYT, EXTREMADURA  
JOSEF STEFAN INSTITUTE, SLOVENIA  
INFYDE, BILBAO  
INSTITUT JULES DESTREE, WALLONIA  
KENT TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER CENTRE  
LEIA TECHNOLOGY CENTRE, ALAVA  
PRONOVUM, HUNGARY  
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY PARK, CRETE  
STEINBEIS FOUNDATION, STUTTGART  
TAGUS TECHNOLOGY PARK  
TALOS, CYPRUS  
TECH TIROL, LOWER AUSTRIA  
TECHNOLOGY PARK OULU  
TEKES, FINLAND  
TECHNOLOGY PARK, THESSALONIKI  
ZENIT, MULHEIM

## REGIONAL AUTHORITIES

BASQUE COUNTRY  
CENTRAL MACEDONIA  
EASTERN MACEDONIA AND THRACE  
EPIRUS  
IONIAN ISLANDS  
NORDRHEIN-WESTFALEN  
LORRAINE  
MANTOVA  
PELOPONNESUS  
SOUTHERN AEGEAN  
SW OLTENIA  
THESSALY  
WALES  
WESTERN MACEDONIA

URENIO co-ordinates the European innovation network VERITE. The acronym stands for Virtual Environment for Regional Innovation Technologies, and the activities of the network are supported by the 5<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme of the European Commission (DG Enterprise).

**VERITE** is a discussion and dissemination forum. It is organised along the concept of 'smart communities', which are communities of people/organisations sharing common interests, while a virtual environment supports the community's activities, facilitating communication and interaction among members. The network is composed of academic and technology organisations from 18 European regions; it is open to new members and looks forward to enlarge the participation to discussions and sharing of practices on innovation, knowledge-creating companies, innovative regions, and innovation management techniques and technologies.



[www.e-innovation.org](http://www.e-innovation.org)

VERITE focuses on innovation techniques and technologies, which are more compatible with regional networks and clusters and may be implemented online with the use of information technology applications. In particular:

*Benchmarking & Economic Intelligence:* The advantages offered to companies and regional authorities by the implementation of benchmarking as well as the perspectives of inter-regional co-operation in business intelligence.

*New Product Development:* The role of new technologies as a catalyst for product innovation; the role of industrial districts, incubators and technopoles in NPD; and the contribution of funding and policy schemes in support of NPD.

*Technology Transfer & Technology Clinics:* The concept of 'Technology Clinics' is relatively unknown in Europe; however it is a very important tool for technology transfer. VERITE has updated existing information on TCs and discussed the perspectives of inter-regional applications of TCs.

*Supply Chain management:* The focus of VERITE is on how supply chains can help to achieve the objectives of regional innovation, the changing role of Supplier Development Strategies, and what activities regional organisations should be concerned with, to help firms improve their supply chain performance.