

Review

The Reader „Smart Cities on the Silk Road : International experience of sustainable development of cities“ is the result of large-scale studies of phenomena and processes of the spatial organization of the life of the population , territorial production, socio-economic and social systems. It is started as a Silk Road project as part of the Road and Belt initiative in Almaty at the Ban Ki-moon Institute for Sustainable Development of the Al-Farabi KazNU, but it has to be seen as a global catalyst for thoughts for smart cities.

The monograph discusses theoretical and methodological research issues to maximize the use of international practice in the development of smart cities. But it is also a source for Applied Sciences : for example there are data of 143 cities from 17 countries among them Moscow, San Francisco, Seoul, Shanghai, Singapore, Stockholm etc. For Kazakhstan among others the migration process from urban areas towards agglomeration was studied and proposals developed to suspend this unfavourable socio-economic trend by promoting information technology . The Internet, computers and gadget programs should be accessible equally in cities as also in the rural territories. For example for the small city of Akkol – 14.000 people population -- the company Kazakhtelecom JSC designs the necessary digital and interlectual infrastructure.

The authors of the monograph show their special approach also in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals, covering climatic, technological, environmental , social aspects of the concept of smart cities. Extensively the goal „Sustainable Cities and Communities“ (SDG 11) is reviewed. It is important to note that in an unique research the scientists of Al-Farabi KazNU created a model plan for sustainable development by Green Universities – giving also a Green Metrics.

The Reader shows that „smart cities“ is not limited to cities, but cities and their developments in every aspect are part of the future of human living. The future-orientation is very well described by one word within a chart of the contribution from Mongolia : „Cloud University“. Insofar this monograph - especially in its digital version – is a documentation of this changing world towards a digital future and the sharing of its content is an ethical approach in the sense of G-Global for a world of dialogue without any borders.

Due to the broad field of different aspects the monograph will be useful not only for geographers , but also for economists, political scientists, all specialists related to SDGs as well as to managers who will transform the ideas and results to practical tools for the further development of society as a whole.

Prof.Dr.Bernd Hallier
President
European Retail Academy