



**InPla  
Labs**

# APPLIED PERSPECTIVES

## **Fairville: Participatory Mapping and Co-Production in West Attica: A Case of Environmental Justice**

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Partnership: Université Paris-Est Créteil (UPEC) – Project coordinator | University of Florence (UNIFI) | University of Sheffield | University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) – South Africa | University of Lagos (UNILAG) – Nigeria | École d'urbanisme de Paris (EUP) | Metropolitan Research Institute (MRI) – Hungary | UrbaMonde – Switzerland | commonspace Co-op – Greece | Municipality of Bobigny – France | Interdisciplinary Center for Urban Culture and Public Space (SKuOR), TU Wien – Austria | Open University of Catalonia (UOC) – Spain.

### **The Real-World Challenge**

West Attica, often called Athens' "backyard," is a peripheral area marked by environmental degradation, economic decline, and social exclusion. Hosting landfills, heavy industry, and informal settlements, it is home to marginalized communities—Roma, immigrants, low-income workers—who remain largely excluded from planning processes. Limited data, opaque governance, and lack of participation have deepened local injustices. The Fairville project responds by promoting democratic knowledge production and more equitable urban futures.

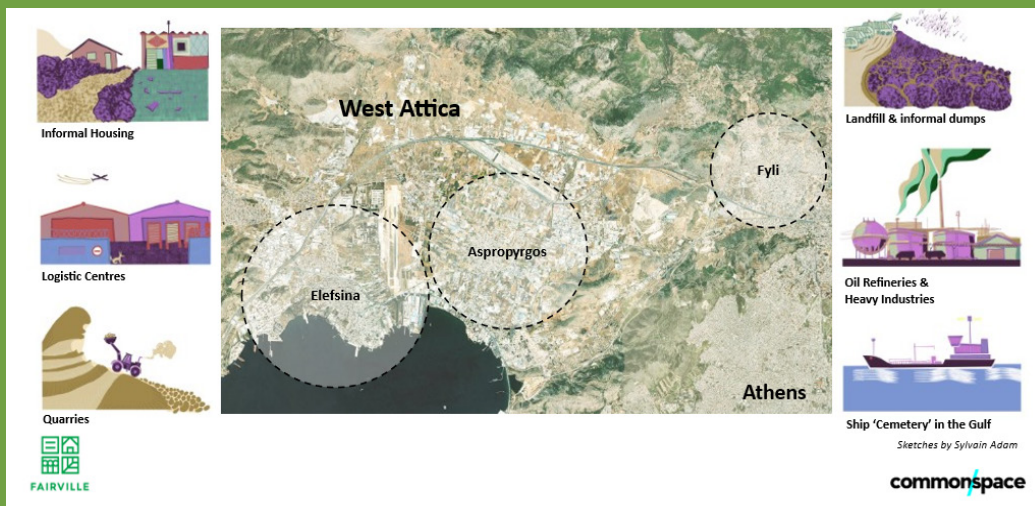


Figure 1. The West Attica Region: The "backyard of Athens"

### **How the Mini-Course Relates/Applies**

The InPlaLabs mini-course provides conceptual and methodological tools that directly align with the challenges faced in West Attica. The course's emphasis on participatory design, co-production of knowledge, and spatial justice resonates with the core philosophy of the Fairville Lab. Learners are encouraged to engage with real-world planning struggles through frameworks that prioritize local knowledge, collective storytelling, and inclusive mapping. In the case of Fairville, these approaches are not abstract—they shape how the project operates on the ground.

### **Illustrative Case Example**

The West Attica Fairville Lab is a live experiment in participatory planning and co-production. Coordinated by commonspace co-op in collaboration with local activists, residents, school communities, and researchers, the Lab brings together a wide network of stakeholders to collaboratively map and analyze the region's hidden injustices. One key activity has been the "Time Machine" workshop, a collective storytelling and visual mapping process focused on the Fyli landfill located in West Attica.

This site, emblematic of environmental injustice in Greece, served as a focal point for recording historical trajectories, personal narratives, institutional developments, and grassroots activism. Residents, some of whom had decades of experience living next to the landfill, participated in creating a timeline that blended personal memory with spatial transformation and policy shifts. These narratives revealed not only the environmental degradation of the area but also the emotional and physical toll it has taken on communities. The process of co-producing the Atlas—through tools like mental mapping, participatory workshops, and oral history collection—has helped reconstruct both the tangible and intangible dimensions of inequality. It also provided space for participants to articulate future aspirations and needs, such as the need for transparent epidemiological studies and inclusive compensation mechanisms.

## Potential Outcomes

The participatory Atlas emerging from the West Attica Fairville Lab is envisioned as more than just a repository of data. It is designed as a tool for advocacy, education, and policy-making. By combining maps, testimonies, photographs, and studies, it serves as a shared platform for documenting and confronting environmental injustices in the region. Its digital format enhances accessibility and allows for integration of interactive content that continues to evolve with community input. Through this process, the Lab contributes to building capacity among local actors, fostering alliances across communities, and laying the groundwork for more participatory regional strategies. The Atlas becomes a springboard for concrete policy proposals and future collaborations between civil society, academia, and public authorities.

## Relevant Fields/Stakeholders (urban planners, municipalities, academics)

The Fairville case in West Attica speaks directly to planners, researchers, environmental activists, municipal authorities, local associations, vulnerable groups and citizens of the area seeking to bridge the gap between policy and practice. It also offers a compelling framework for students and educators interested in participatory methods and community-driven planning. More broadly, it serves as a replicable model for co-production in other areas marked by spatial injustice demonstrating that critical knowledge emerges not only from experts, but from the everyday experiences of people navigating systemic inequality.

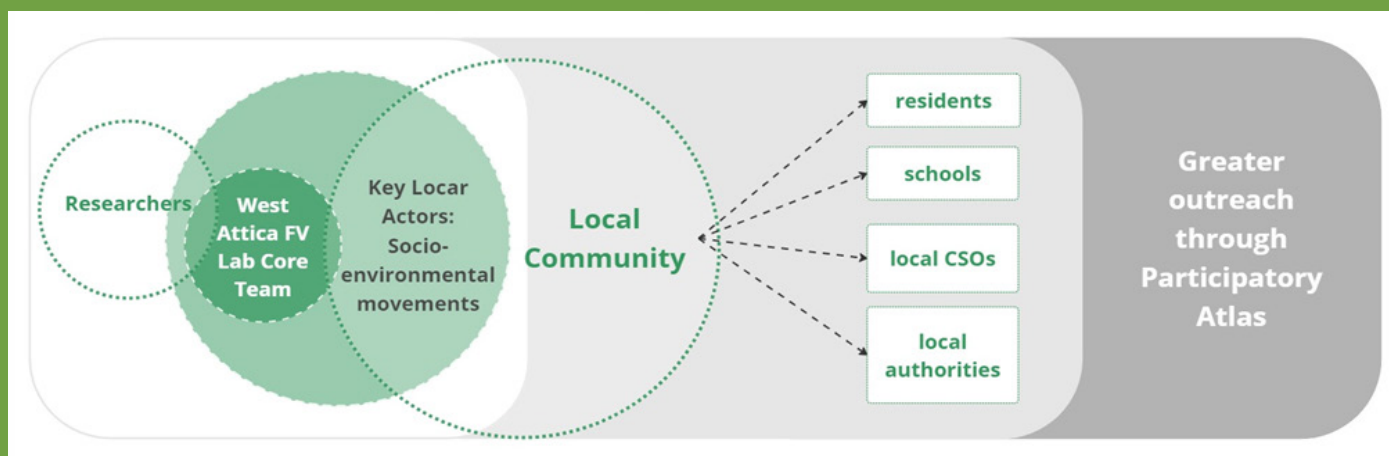


Figure 2. Stakeholders and groups engaged in the co-production of the Participatory Atlas

Link: Fairville project official website: <https://www.fairville-eu.org/>

InPlaLabs is a KA2 Cooperation Partnership Erasmus+ project in the field of Higher Education, and its full title is "Transnational Network of Integrated Planning Labs: Co-creating knowledge on forward-looking transdisciplinary planning perspectives addressing climate change and urban life in the post-pandemic city" (GA No. 2023-1-EL01-KA220-HED-000160477 Erasmus+).