From Fragile Resilience to Regenerative Economies:

RESILNAT 2026

A Civil Society Model for Rural Regeneration, Economic Diversification, and Cost-of-Living Resilience in Mediterranean Island Communities

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The Mediterranean Island Paradox

Mediterranean Islands appear successful:

1. Tourism revenues increasing
2. Real estate investment expanding
3. Luxury hospitality growing

Yet many rural communities face:

1. Agricultural decline / Land abandonment
2. Youth outmigration
3. Seasonal precarity
4. Cost-of-living pressures

The Dual Economy

Economic growth indicators conceal a structural divide within island economies.

Coastal Economy	Rural Hinterland Economy
Tourism Growth	Agricultural Decline
Investment	Underinvestent
Rising Revenues	Income Insecurity
Real Estate Development	Population Loss

The Seasonality-Precarity-Exodus Cycle

A self-reinforcing cycle of:

Seasonal Employment → Income Instability → Off-Season Precarity → Youth Outmigration → Land Abandonment → Further Rural Decline

Why Resilience Is Not Enough

Traditional resilience focuses on:

> Absorbing shocks and returning to equilibrium.

But what if the equilibrium itself is failing?

The paper proposes Regenerative Development, enhancing over time:

1. Productive Capacity
2. Cultural Vitality
3. Ecological Health
4. Social Cohesion

The CorfuGen Model

Three Integrated Pillars:

Culture	Sustainability	Innovation
Local Heritage Creative economy Cultural programming	Regenerative agriculture Land restoration Eco-tourism	Entrepreneurship Digital tools Skills development Access to Funding

Together → Regenerative Local Economy with Rural and Coastal Economies strengthening each other rather than competing

Distributed Hub Architecture

Instead of one development centre, multiple complementary nodes:

1. One Cultural Hub
2. Three Agricultural/Permaculture Sites
3. One Administrative Hub

Benefits:

1. Broader community reach
2. Diversified activities
3. Multiple revenue streams
4. Greater institutional resilience

Economic Value Creation

The CorfuGen model seeks to:

Build local value chains Reducing dependence on imports	**Generate year-round activity** Reducing seasonal vulnerability
Reactivate abandoned land Transforming latent assets into productive resources	**The result** Greater cost-of-living resilience and economic diversification, rather than sole dependence on tourism

Financing Regeneration

Primary capital:

-Philanthropy
-Impact Investment & Diaspora Investment
-Development of dedicated financial instruments (impact bonds, regenerative development funds, cultural heritage endowments)

Complimentary capital:

-EU and National Funding such as:
Erasmus+, Creative Europe, Horizon Europe, LEADER

Beyond Corfu: A Euro-Med Rural Regen Network

Long-term vision:

1. Shared methodologies
2. Joint projects
3. Access to funding
4. Knowledge exchange
5. Greater collective resilience

Large scaling potential for this model

Conclusions

The paper argues that:

1. Mediterranean economies face a structural dual-economy challenge.
2. Resilience alone is insufficient.
3. Regenerative developmnet offers an alternative pathway.
4. Culture, sustainability and innovation can become engines of rural renewal.
5. CorfuGen provides a potentially transferable model for Mediterranean communities.

CorfuGen is a CulturePolis CSO initiative,
aiming to create physical spaces to continue CulturePolis' 20 year legacy in cultural, sustainability and innovation projects.

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Thank you!