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Minority groups in space and social exclusion: Comparison of municipal units of the Regional Unit of Xanthi - Greece

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ABSTRACT

This paper concerns social inequalities, spatial exclusion resulting to social exclusion. Research has indicated that space and society are mutually affected and spatial differentiation is a characteristic defining social inequalities and forming social identities. More concretely, our research, through a comparison, focuses on two groups of inhabitants in the regional unit of Xanthi - Greece, namely inhabitants in the area of Myki, who are Pomaks and pertain to minority and inhabitants of Avdira Municipality. It attempts to examine whether there are social inequalities and social exclusion of this minority group. In our case, we insist, as a working hypothesis, that the Pomak inhabitants in the mountain range of Rodopi, in “Pomakochoria” (villages of Pomaks), do not enjoy equal participation in spatial control and are at the verge of social exclusion, which has a direct spatial expression. Looking at the possible causes of inequalities and ultimately social exclusion, it is searched whether the main cause, which led the Pomak group to social exclusion, in addition to religious and cultural diversity, was their spatial exclusion. In this research paper the given definition “Pomaks” is adopted, but without its political implications and uses.

Keywords: inequalities; Pomaks; society; spatial exclusion