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Dokuma Park, a culture, nature and art park for society

Antalya Kepez Municipality



The foundations of the Antalya Cotton Weaving and Spinning Mill were laid in the 1950s, becoming the first industrial facility in Antalya, with an area of 250,000 m². Many people worked there for long hours and, until its closure in 2003, the factory became a place of memory for the stories of the workers, their families and friends. In 2005, the owners of the factory handed over the rights to the administration of that time, which then handed over the use rights to a foreign company to build a shopping centre. In 2009, the new administration of the municipality of Kepez recognised the importance of this space for the collective memory of the city and spent several years fighting in court to recover the legal rights to the land and return it to its rightful owners, the citizens. This position was of great importance as the recovery of the land would allow the preservation of a natural and cultural landscape.

Focusing on the common interest, in collaboration with a management that defends its values, the city council convened a diverse working group. The resulting report served as a master plan for the creation of this centrally located park, a plan that protects the interests of society as a space accessible to all. There is now a common platform for raising awareness and engaging local citizens as active participants and owners of the park. This represents an essential guarantee for a sustainable future in terms of maintaining the ecosystem qualities and socio-cultural characteristics of the park.

By deciding to create a park dedicated to linking nature and culture on the site of a disused spinning mill complex, the municipality of Kepez has put at the disposal of the inhabitants a vast cultural and leisure space that can be appreciated by all. The different components of the park – a botanical garden, museums, a library, social spaces – have been restored and converted, thus preserving the memory of the place. The project was carried out with respect for civic and ethical values, and a participatory approach was followed from the beginning of the process. An interactive governance platform allows citizens to become actively involved in the future of this living landscape. The mayoral decision to prefer a park to a shopping centre has been fully vindicated.

Recognised for its great value, the Project is part of the Landscape Award Alliance of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, as a source of inspiration.