The informal Mediterranean city: exploring some common policy targets between southern Europe and northern Africa.

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➢ The self-made urban areas is a particular phenomenon in Africa and in southern Europe.
➢ Massimina (Rome) settlement has a population of 9,000 with 14% of foreigners, against 9.5% of foreigners for Rome and 8.7% of foreigners for Italy, with a density of 5,800 inh./km².
Massimina settlement: from lack of basic infrastructure to an attractive area?
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Such self-made settlements can be seen as an attempt to build a spontaneous garden city (i.e. Urban utopias of Ebenezer Howard), because of their potentiality in green spaces, low traffic and noise levels.
Ain-Arnat (Sétif, Algeria), a “city-village” of 32,000 inhabitants: 158 inh./km² (Algeria 16/km², Africa 38/km²).
Before 1830

To Algiers
To Sétif
Farm
Source d'eau

1858

1877-1987

1987-1998

2015

To Algiers
To Sétif

1962-1977
2008, a law allowed the owners to register their properties. The law also aims to promote an aesthetic and harmonious built environment.
Ain Arnat settlement

Massimina settlement
COMMON FEATURES:

1) clear pattern of informal urban development on dismissed agricultural areas

2) low building density, with high percentage of environmental quality and open spaces but at risk of decay

3) insufficient public spaces and services

4) dead-end roads, and absence of a coherent road system

5) neglected green space
Such informal settlements can be converted into “smart communities”

➢ The project would involve the use of low-cost and easily replicable technological solutions with the direct involvement of the citizens (owners and local professionals).
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