

new stadium in a specific architectural form to blend in with the surroundings will have a dynamic effect on the general aesthetic of the urban environment adding to the general urban picture. A stadium usually, acts as a catalyst for the upgrading and financial improvement of urban areas. Research on the financial benefits of stadiums shows that for every Euro invested in a stadium, five more or 10 more is invested in the surrounding area.

Naming Rights of the new stadium of Panathinaikos F.C. constitutes an innovative approach for Greek standards, can you tell us the workings of this?

Naming Rights are in essence a package deal comprised of a variety of benefits and opportunities for the sponsor of a sports stadium or any other property. Corporate Naming Rights agreements have become multi-level marketing tools that involve a myriad of issues and revenue-generation items. We look forward to our cooperation with MARFIN Investment Group and MARFIN Egnatia Bank, who are the sponsors of the naming rights of the new Panathinaikos F.C. Stadium, which will place a unique precedent, as well as a reference for future projects in Greece and South East Europe.

Christos Kiskas is the Managing Director of Double Regeneration S.A

located at the centre of the urban structure of the capital aiming to upgrade the quality of life in a large part of Athens. The project is the largest urban development and social intervention ever attempted by any organisation or local authority in Greece.

What is the aim and raison d'être of Double Regeneration S.A.?

Double Regeneration S.A. is a special purpose vehicle (SPV) established in order to materialize a long existing vision of the revival of the Votanikos area, which is located in the heart of the larger area of Eleonas. The company's aim is to transform Votanikos from a deprived and abandoned area to a modern and functional urban and business centre. The company's shareholders are the Municipality of Athens and the National Bank of Greece. We aim to attract both, public and private capital for a maximum effort in the area of urban planning, as well as solving the chronic problems of transport, lack of green belts and absence of infrastructure.

How much will the relocation of the Panathinaikos F.C. stadium affect the improvement and regeneration of the Votanikos area?

The relocation of Panathinaikos F.C. Stadium in Eleonas sends a signal about the regeneration of the

Subsidiarity Man "spreads the word" at Open Days

By Richard Medic

Among the thousands of participants at this year's Open Days in Brussels, the European Week of Regions and Cities features a real life superhero. Seriously.

His name is Subsidiarity Man, and the last time he tried to "spread the word" in Brussels was back in May, when the Belgian police arrested him for his efforts. The extreme climber had attempted to "free-climb" the Residence Palace to hang a giant promotional banner facing the European Commission's Berlaymont building. The police, who'd mistakenly been tipped off that the suite-and-tie superhero was a security threat to the Commission, locked him up for most of the day before releasing him without charge.

"That was a fitting twist," he recalls over coffee in the Open Days' Investors' Cafe, "being arrested in the centre of Europe while promoting a word based upon the principle of greater decentralisation in European decision-making."

Alas, within a few weeks of his arrest, Subsidiarity Man began spreading the word outside the European capital. Targeting the local communities and regions of Europe, his first stop was the Herzegovina-Neretva region (Bosnia and Herzegovina), home of the famous Mostar Old Bridge and its annual high-diving competition. During this year's event, he offered to jump from the bridge if the crowd of several thousand onlookers agreed to "chant the unchantable": the local language word "subsidijarnost".

"The crowd thought that I'd break my neck hitting the water, so of course they agreed to chant the word," he opines, adding proudly: "But at least the citizens of Mostar now know what the word means and why it's so important." This time around, rather than being



Richard Medic

A "Subsidiarity is a word" Facebook group has since been set up to encourage members to "shame" other dictionaries that don't include the word

taken by a police car, Subsidiarity Man was whisked away by an ambulance with suspected spinal injuries after hitting the water "arse first, which really hurt" from the 25 metre-high bridge.

Why would someone – even a superhero – risk life and limb for a word? The answer lies with the Assembly of European Regions (AER), the largest independent network of regions in wider Europe and relentless advocate of the subsidiarity principle in European decision-making.

Last May, AER launched the "Subsidiarity is a word" movement to secure recognition of the word in Microsoft Word's spell-checker and in dictionaries across the world. The organisation sent open let-

ters of demand to Microsoft and to over 70 dictionaries covering 23 European languages. A "Subsidiarity is a word" Facebook group has since been set up to encourage members to "shame" other dictionaries that don't include the word, and AER staff continues to distribute the movement's postcard at events across Europe.

And then there's Subsidiarity Man, AER's linguistic crusader whose identity remains a mystery.

"The subsidiarity principle is mentioned in the Lisbon Treaty no less than 30 times," he says, "but even if the Treaty is ratified, how can the EU respect a principle based upon a word most citizens don't even know? Ensuring the word is recognised by Microsoft Word and Europe's major dictionaries is a good start."

Dictionaries covering languages including French, Danish, Turkish, Spanish, and Greek have already responded to AER's open letters of demand. While some dictionaries have already included the word, others have promised to do so in upcoming editions. The Microsoft Corporation, however, has thus far ignored AER's letter and follow-up calls from media.

"I'm looking forward to asking Bill Gates about that," Subsidiarity Man whispers, a twinkle emerging in his eye. "But I have more important business to attend to now."

Subsidiarity Man gulps down the last of his coffee, takes a deep breath and begins his latest performance. The European Week of Cities and Regions will never be the same.

Richard Medic is spokesman and director of press and communications for the Assembly of European Regions (AER).