



IP ANKARA Spatial Development Planning  
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## Urban regeneration

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## Outline

- a brief history of the way the concept evolved
- the general features of EU urban regeneration policy
- the link between urban regeneration and sustainable development
- how to analyze an urban regeneration project

## The evolution of urban regeneration

Period Policy type	1950s Recon- struction	1960s Revital- isation	1970s Renewal	1980s Redevelop- ment	1990s Regener- ation
Major strategy and orientation	Reconstruction and extension of older areas of towns and cities often based on a masterplan; suburban growth.	Continuation of 1950s theme; suburban and peripheral growth; some early attempts at rehabilitation.	Focus on in-situ renewal and neighbourhood schemes; still development at periphery.	Many major schemes of development and redevelopment; out of town projects.	Move towards a more comprehensive form of policy and practice; more emphasis on integrated treatments.
Key actors and stakeholders	National and local government; private sector developers and contractors.	Move towards a greater balance between public and private sectors.	Growing role of private sector and decentralisation in local government.	Emphasis on private sector and special agencies; growth of partnerships.	Partnership the dominant approach.
Spatial level of activity	Emphasis on local and site levels.	Regional level of activity emerged.	Regional and local levels; initially, later more local emphasis.	In early 1980s focus on site; later emphasis on local level.	Reintroduction of strategic perspective; growth of regional activity.
Economic focus	Public sector investment with some private sector involvement.	Continuing from 1950s with growing influence of private investment.	Resource constraints in public sector and growth of private investment.	Private sector dominant with selective public funds.	Greater balance between public, private and voluntary funding.
Social content	Improvement of housing and living standards.	Social and welfare improvement.	Community-based action and greater empowerment.	Community self-help with very selective state support.	Emphasis on the role of community.
Physical emphasis	Replacement of inner areas and peripheral development.	Some continuation from 1950s with parallel rehabilitation of existing areas.	More extensive renewal of older urban areas.	Major schemes of replacement and new development; flagship schemes.	More modest than 1980s; heritage and retention.
Environmental approach	Landscaping and some greening.	Selective improvements.	Environmental improvement with some innovations.	Growth of concern for wider environment.	Introduction of broader idea of environmental sustainability.

In English we find different words: urban revitalisation, urban renewal, urban regeneration, and more recently in UK urban renaissance.

This sequence of words can be looked at as a sort of summary of the evolution of the concept of urban regeneration and of urban regeneration policies.

Peter Roberts provides a scheme of this evolution, using 7 key criteria to describe it, such as: strategy, key actors, spatial level, economic focus, social content, physical emphasis, environmental approach.

Roberts P., 2008, "The evolution, Definition and purpose of Urban Regeneration", in Robert P. & Sykes H. (edt.), *Urban Regeneration. A handbook*, London, SAGE Publications, p.14

## The evolution of urban regeneration

- > In the '80s the regeneration policy:
  - a **property-led kind of regeneration** with a strong **emphasis on economic growth**,
  - a **weak attention to the needs of deprived communities**, with the assumption of a “trickle down” effect to the most deprived areas excluded from the interventions
- > In the '90s the regeneration policy: a more **comprehensive and integrated vision** with actions which seeks to bring about an improvement either in the **economic or physical or social or environmental** conditions of the area subject to change

“When we talk of urban regeneration we are talking of something more general than urban renewal: reuse, renovation and reinvestment in the physical structure of existing urban areas. We are talking about investment where it has declined, of increasing employment where it has declined, increasing consumer expenditure and increasing population; in essence we are talking about economic growth” (Couch, 1990, *Urban Renewal. Theory and practice*, Macmillan, London, p. 75)

“As evidenced by these objectives, City Challenge continues a concern with economic development and the creation of commercial opportunities, but unlike the approach in the 1980s there is a recognition that the benefits may not simply 'trickle-down' to deprived local residents unless there are specific programmes to ensure that this happens—especially programmes of education and training.” (Cameron S, Doling J., 1994, “Housing Neighbourhoods and Urban Regeneration”, *Urban Studies*, 31:7, pp. 1211-1223)

## URBAN Initiative approach: the assumptions

- > the **Interpretation** of the problem to deal with:
  - population lives mostly in urban areas
  - in urban areas a fracture is taking place in the social cohesion
  - this brings to new poverty, social exclusion within a cumulative process
- > the **local action model**:  
an integrated model whose aim is breaking the cumulative process by valorising local resources and individuals through their context

Starting in the '90s an important role in the change of urban regeneration paradigm has been played by EU, especially by means of the URBAN initiative. These policies and tools changed through time, but the constant and still present focus on social cohesion and the results of more than ten years of URBAN experiences across European countries have grounded a common approach to urban regeneration, even if declined in different ways according to the different local situations. In the background of European urban regeneration policy two starting points can be found: an interpretation of the problem to deal with and an action model.

## EU URBAN approach key concepts

- > Social exclusion areas
- > Area based policy
- > Multidimensional , intersectoral actions
- > Integration
- > Participation
- > Partnership

**Urban regeneration**: local innovative actions which are multidimensional (including physical, social and economic actions), intersectorial, interinstitutional, aiming at forming partnerships and at involving inhabitants, with a special attention to social exclusion situations

## New challenges for urban regeneration

- A new challenge for urban regeneration policy: to combine **competitiveness and social cohesion**.
- A new challenge for urban regeneration policy: **environmental themes**

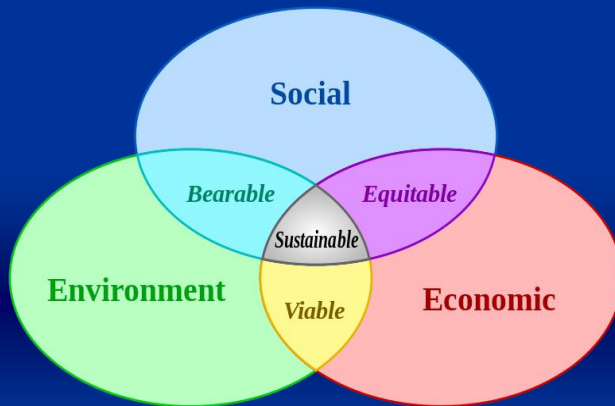


Sustainable development is the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Bruntland Report)

Two new challenges for urban regeneration policies:

- Competitiveness. The word stresses the concept that cities are indeed engines of regional, national and European growth. The challenge for urban regeneration policy is to combine competitiveness and social cohesion; the policy should encompass two key agendas: a 'neighbourhood renewal' priority focusing on tackling social exclusion in the poorest areas, an agenda fostering the physical, aesthetic and economic regeneration of parts of the city, focused on a sort of a design-led renewal and on building new forms of attractiveness in different fields;
- environmental themes refer to a very broad set of factors and conditions that interact with each other: natural factors, but also socio-cultural and economic factors. There are mutual influences among them and this led to define the concept of sustainable development (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987, *Our Common Future*, Chapter 2: *Towards Sustainable Development* (Bruntland Report)

## Sustainable development dimensions



These three dimensions must be integrated: there is no sustainable development without an integration among these three dimensions. We need to achieve a balance among them, that balance cannot be static in time, because it will be constantly challenged by the pressures due to the changing needs, constantly putting into question the priorities between the three fundamental objectives. The search for this balance requires participation by the various parties involved in the choices: choices for sustainability cannot be dictated from above, but must be developed at a local level. Therefore, a necessary fourth dimension is often added: the institutional sustainability (which recalls the principles of democracy and justice): ability to ensure stability, democracy, participation, training, information, justice.

## Urban sustainability

objectives, actions and policy instruments which are strongly integrated, covering a variety of sectors that characterize life in the city

### Examples:

- energy saving objectives at all levels (from the building to the urban form that can promote these savings),
- changes in mobility patterns (from encouraging "sweet mobility", some forms of traffic control, a different organization of the functions in the city and in the area),
- changes in social organization and lifestyles (struggling against social marginalization and exclusion, providing new facilities, providing employment opportunities)

## Urban regeneration and urban sustainability

A single red wire connects the concepts of sustainable development, urban sustainability and urban regeneration

### Critical assessment of a case of urban regeneration: the scheme

	criteria	inputs examples	outputs
❖ regeneration area problems and potentials			
❖ decision and implementation process characteristics			
❖ existing urban regeneration project			

The scheme proposes a tentative list of the issues which need to be tackled when critically assessing a case of redevelopment process that could be looked at as an urban regeneration process.

The same issues can easily become guiding criteria for a different proposal for the regeneration area, criteria which can help to identify new strategies and measures for improving the existing project.

The scheme:

- three steps of critical assessment: the regeneration area problems and potentialities, the regeneration process characteristics, the existing urban regeneration project
- the assessment criteria for each step
- a tentative list of the inputs to be looked for and taken into account
- the possible outputs of the critical assessment

### Critical assessment: regeneration area problems and potentialities (1)

	criteria	inputs examples
internal/external problems /drivers of change	economic	- local economic features and dynamic (retail, industry, services activities), - local employment opportunities, - local real estate market - land and building prices - position of the area within the city - existing historic resources (possible assets for economic development)
	environmental	- green space deficit, - pollution, waste disposal, - water system and protection - natural risks, - landscape quality, - positive or negative role of the local environmental feature within the whole city

This first step of the assessment deals with an analysis of the case study area, that is with the internal /external problems/drivers of change.

The problem areas cannot be treated as isolated units: regeneration policy must aim at rebuilding a balance within a wider territory, at establishing a local development dynamic that will enable the whole city to organically assimilate the "problem" area and to further growth.

In this contest local development is intended as the exploitation and the enhancement of endogenous resources of a territory through the action of local networks of individuals who cooperate.

So, the analysis is double faceted:

- it has to deal with the internal problems of the area, but also with the potentialities for regeneration and local development that can be identified in it, that is the endogenous resources;
- it has to deal with the external forces which can result either drivers for the area development or risks for it.

Four criteria can be used for this assessment, related to the different dimension of urban regeneration: economic, social, environmental, functional

## Critical assessment: regeneration area problems and potentialities (2)

	criteria	inputs examples
internal/external problems /drivers of change	social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- inhabitants social composition</li> <li>- existing social exclusion and marginalisation,</li> <li>- unemployment rate, mismatch between people skills and existing jobs,</li> <li>- ethnic or minority issues</li> <li>- public facilities and social housing deficit</li> <li>- local skills and capabilities,</li> <li>- existing cultural and training resources</li> <li>- community experiences</li> <li>- inside vs outside perception of the social features of the area</li> </ul>

Social criteria refers not only to the problems (the first 6 criteria), but also to social resources the area can offer for a regeneration project. Perception is an important issue: both the inside perception, because it shows the evaluation of their neighbourhood by the inhabitants (are they proud of it despite the problems or not?), and the outside perception from the rest of the city, which could influence the relationships between the two of them.

## Critical assessment: regeneration area problems and potentialities (3)

	criteria	inputs examples
internal/external problems /drivers of change	physical/functional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-existing land uses</li> <li>- existing brownfields to be redeveloped</li> <li>- existing historic heritage to be protected</li> <li>-material /immaterial connections of the area with the rest of the city (transport facilities, etc.)</li> <li>- existing physical/functional flagship transformation projects</li> </ul>

Physical renewal is usually an important and necessary, but not sufficient condition of a successful urban regeneration policy. But in almost all the cases it is a visible sign of the process. Flagship projects, if existing, can have a different effects on the urban regeneration process: by improving accessibility, enhancing communication, and attracting visitors, sometimes they can even help to integrate the target neighbourhood into the rest of the city life; but, on the contrary, by attracting certain private investments, they can create a new different real estate market, rise conflicts with the social regeneration aims and shift the interest from the sustainable goals.

## Critical assessment of a case of urban regeneration: the outputs

	criteria	inputs examples	outputs
regeneration area problems and potentials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- economic</li> <li>- social,</li> <li>- environmental</li> <li>-physical/functional</li> </ul>	-.....	SWOT analysis

## Critical assessment: regeneration process characteristics

	criteria	inputs examples	outputs
decision and implementation process characteristics	strategic approach vs top down approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- role of the institutional authorities in charge of the area development: <b>conflicts vs cooperation</b></li> <li>- role of economic stakeholders: <b>conflicts vs cooperation</b></li> <li>- existing community and NGO organisations: <b>partecipation, when and how</b></li> <li>-existing plans and policies for the area: <b>resources and times</b></li> <li>- special planning procedures: <b>negotiation objects and goals</b></li> </ul>	Process and actors description

Analysing the decision and implementation process of the regeneration project is a demanding task that involves the knowledge of the existing institutional and planning system, of the private and public actors involved in the process, of the available economic resources, etc..

Of course it is not easy and probably too time consuming, to collect all the needed information, but what should be useful is, at least:

- to have the basic information about the institutional and planning system,
- to have a list of the institutional, social and economic partners involved.

## Critical assessment: proposed urban regeneration project

	questions	criteria (examples)	outputs
Proposed urban regeneration project	Is the project an integrated one?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social mix:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- housing target</li> <li>- developers market target</li> <li>- foreseen employment opportunities</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Mixed land uses:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- diversity of foreseen activities</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	new proposals
	Is the project physically sustainable?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• urban containment</li> <li>• compactness</li> <li>• density</li> <li>• green spaces</li> <li>• passive solar design (orientation)</li> </ul>	

The criteria used for the assessment of the regeneration area can be the key words in evaluating the proposed development project too, and in proposing changes to it, alternative proposals and enhancements.

The urban regeneration approach suggests some questions to be answered through an accurate description of the project itself.

The first question has to do with the project being multidimensional and multisectoral in the way both urban regeneration and sustainable development suggest.

The second question is strongly related to the morphological features of the project, the spatial pattern that will be the result of it.



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Thank you for your attention



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