

SEMINAR AND PROJECTS

Seminar: Urban Renewal – Strategic approaches in Germany and abroad

The content of this seminar is dedicated to current strategies of urban renewal in Germany and in an international context. In Germany urban renewal is operated in specific legal and operational programmes since the 1970s with considerable financial input. The overall aim is to adapt the city to changing conditions and therefore to provide financial and legal instruments for the local authorities to react to their specific needs in urban development. Over the years the funding landscape in Germany has differentiated a lot in different funding programmes for special targets of urban regeneration. For Example the initiation of the „Stadtumbau“-Programmes goes back to the tremendous challenges of housing and economic development in the East of Germany after the reunification in 1990; Followed by Programmes focussing more the legacies of structural change and decline in physical and social approaches. Within the programmes, different spatial, political and social emphases are placed, representing the current governance approaches in planning and the political attitude.

The first part of the seminar addresses important principles of urban development in Germany to give an overview about the topic. Besides the current funding landscape by the federal government and the EU we will also focus on social and political developments, the different stakeholders in this processes as well as the role of the particular understanding of planning in changing times.

A second part deals with various national and international examples of urban renewal, which students will investigate and present in short team work phases. We'll have a look at the processes of urban transformation in cities such as Barcelona, Bilbao, London, Manchester, Hamburg, Detroit or Istanbul. The aim is to identify and compare current trends and patterns of action as well as strategic approaches and policies in the field of urban renewal.

Further key-words of contents:

Gentrification, tabula rasa renewal, right to the city initiatives, socio-spatial divergences, privatisation of public assets and spaces, flagship & iconic architecture, big events, ...

“Processes of urban transformation. An empirical study of effect dependencies of projects and policies in long-term processes of urban renewal”. PhD-Project (2013 - ongoing).

+

“Urban Renaissance in Manchester – Strategies of urban development in the post-industrial city” Diploma-Thesis Project (2011/2012)

Subject of this research project is the strategic planning of the urban restructuring process of Manchester in the context of the British Urban Renaissance. The aim of the research was a profound analysis of Manchester's strategy of urban renewal and its approach of transforming Manchester into a “successful” post-industrial city.

After extensive de-industrialisation processes during the last century the city was forced to break new ground and “reinvent itself”. Previous industrial policies to change the structure of the economic base

and to defend jobs had reached its limits with lacking support by central government in the Thatcher years and existing urban renewal programs were operating only on a small scale. Since the end of the 1980s Manchester has initiated many strategic redevelopment projects with a strong involvement of the private sector. It has created an optimistic vision for the future of the city to reinvent itself as a modern, strong and post-industrial service metropolis in Europe. The City initiated a wide restructuring of the city centre and realised achievements both in repopulating the centre and in strengthening the local economy. The smart use of big events such as the Commonwealth Games allowed to expand the development to one of the most deprived areas in Manchester and even whole England, East Manchester. Along with the physical remodeling went a drastic change in urban policy proceeding as an "entrepreneurial city".

Manchester now faces the huge challenge to expand this development beyond the city centre and to make sure its inhabitants are able to profit from the renewal investments. Between the new city centre and the rest of the city there are spatial and social disparities, which are extremely harsh in some extent. Furthermore the aftermath of the financial crisis especially in the finance sector and the development industry alongside the political changes on the national level in 2010 including the following cuts on public spending are fundamental challenges to the development of the city.

My PhD project continues with the examination of long-term urban transformation processes. The project's main focus lies on the analysis of interdependencies between the projects and policies in these processes and their influence on the urban development. This will be embedded in a theoretical framework dealing with the state of research in four thematic priorities: a) project orientated planning approaches, b) actor, network and governance aspects, c) urban policies such as the entrepreneurial city and c) path dependencies.

"Urban development funds – a new supporting instrument for sustainable urban development?"

This project is operated by an interdisciplinary working group within the Academy for Spatial Research and Planning in Germany. The Project started in 2014 and is due to finish in the end of 2016.

In a team of 12 stakeholders from science and practice, mainly representatives of local development authorities and state departments of the northern federal states of Germany, we are examining possible application fields for urban development funds in the part taking communities.

Thematic framework:

The central task and challenge of urban development policy is the improvement of development conditions in urban areas, particularly in disadvantaged and deprived neighborhoods. In terms of sustainable and inclusive urban development, this challenge can only be faced by the public sector, the local economy and the citizens together.

Despite numerous interventions and investments (EU and federal subsidies) past policies and subsidies reach their limits especially in the structurally weak areas. Therefore for some time now, new instruments are being discussed in politics, administration and science are being tested in pilot projects (i.e. JESSICA EU, ExWoSt Germany). The instrument of the Urban Development Funds (UDF) should contribute to securing public capacity to guide and enhance urban development by supporting finance and implementation structures for a sustainable urban development. In contrast to traditional financial instruments UDF work with a revolving financial support for projects in terms of loans, guarantees and equity capital participation. The advantage of the expected financial returns therefore

lies in the renewed use of the financial means in other urban development projects. The aim is to initiate and keep up a sustainable and stable urban development with a constant amount of capital.

“Implementing strategic visions for urban development: The case of Bremen West.”

2013/2014.

In this research we (Prof. Mossig and I) analysed the “Leitbild“-Process in Bremen and the Role of strategic visions in urban development processes. Using the construct of the policy cycle, common in the field of political sciences, as theoretical background, the aim was to review the Bremer Process of giving itself a “Leitbild“ / a strategic vision for the future of urban development (briefly summarised in the slogan: “Bremen – liveable, urban, networked”) and the difficulties of implementing such a Leitbild in the structures of urban government and administration.

“Bremen-Nord - Seizing the opportunities for repositioning! Interim Review - Perspectives - Overall strategy” Starting 2015.

Research with the Institute for Labour and Economy at the University of Bremen on behalf of the Chamber of Labour Bremen.

This project will examine the influences and effects of the various development strategies, interventions, subsidies and funding programmes in the Area of Bremen North.