



Cities in Transition: The Emergence of Urban Regeneration in Istanbul, with Comparative Analysis of London and Budapest

Burak ÇETİNDAG, Graduate Student
London South Bank University, United Kingdom
cetindbs@lsbu.ac.uk

Munir MORAD, Prof.
London South Bank University, United Kingdom
moradm@lsbu.ac.uk

Ali PARSA, Prof.
University of Ulster, United Kingdom

The growing importance of urban regeneration policies, in response to urban decline contrasted by rapidly the emergence of 'global cities' is gaining prominence in the sustainable urban planning and urban regeneration debates. Confused institutional settings characterise these cities in transitions. This situation has arisen because of

- lack of integrated national, regional and local policies, comprehensive long term strategy and action plans,
- disputes about policy and implementation priorities,
- speculative slum clearance operations, and lack of participatory regeneration legislation coupled with uncoordinated foreign direct investment, gentrification, and urban segregation

This paper assesses the transitional experience of a new EU city, in order to evaluate the challenges and responses of urban regeneration as part of a sustainable urban development towards the EU harmonisation process in Istanbul. A re-examination of relationships between urban regeneration and development forces may help to militate against unsustainable urban development, and help create appropriate economic, social and environmental balance in cities. This balance (based on human needs and contemporary regeneration policies) should be part of a wider process of planning for sustainable urban development.

In this context, this paper focuses on urban regeneration policies in Istanbul, which is informed in turn by an analysis of UK and EU experiences at city level, with particular reference to the context of Turkey's EU harmonization drive. The paper examines current planning policy frameworks of urban regeneration, and developing these for a more pro-active, participatory policy formulation and implementation in cities in transition. The analyses are informed by a comparison with London and Budapest at city level, and focusing on a case study of Zeytinburnu (Istanbul) at district level. The research question derived from the analysis is; Can urban regeneration in Istanbul be strengthened by placing it in the wider context of sustainable urban development policies, through drawing on the experience of London and Budapest, especially in view of Turkey's prospective membership of the EU The paper goes wider than policy analyses, by examining the interrelations between driving forces, key stakeholders and the issues of implementation in chosen cities since early 2000s. This will explore the applicability of sophisticated sustainable urban regeneration policies, partnership and implementation models to emerging European cities like Istanbul. Finally, the paper will employ collaborative planning theory, which seeks to apply institutional perspectives (to cities in transition) in order to analyse the role of different institutions, and their capacity in policy development, implementation and coordination of urban regeneration processes. This theoretical context will highlight the shift in planning system from physical planning / urban design paradigm to consensus building, and implementation using stakeholder and public involvement.

KEY WORDS: Istanbul, London, Budapest, regeneration, EU harmonisation, public participation.