

The Changing Rationale for the Governance of Urban Regeneration

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ABSTRACTS

The rationale for the governance of urban regeneration is changing. Urban regeneration has often been addressed through specific economic, social and environmental interventions targeted at small areas, such as neighbourhoods, often out of context to the situation of the surrounding economy. However, if the potential of ‘places’ and their communities are to be realised, it is important that localised interventions are planned within the context of the wider economy in which they are located.

However, to do this requires agencies at different levels of governance to have an improved understanding of physical, community and economic ‘place’. This implies developing a shared analysis of how people, firms and investment assets interact across ‘place’, which takes into account the different spatial levels in which we live our lives and in which the spatial economy works:

- ‘Where we live’ – a neighbourhood
- ‘How we are governed’ – the municipal town or city
- ‘How we live’ and how the functional economy works - ‘city-region’, ‘urban region’ or ‘sub-region’

Once sorting mechanisms between assets are taken into account (for example, between people and ‘place’, people and housing, and firms and economic structure) the consequence is a dynamic ‘place-shaping’ process with different outcomes likely in different places.

The policy implications explored from this approach are that:

- There should be greater recognition of significant structural differences both within and between economies of different towns, cities and regions
- A one size fit all approach towards the regeneration of local economies is inappropriate, since ‘places’ are different and may have different routes to realising their potential
- Developing a shared evidence base across different levels of governance with responsibilities for local, city and regional economies is important
- There is a need to improve the vertical and horizontal integration of policy across levels of governance and sectors around a shared understanding of the key challenges facing local, city and regional economies and the key policy outcome objectives

Key Words: urban, governance, place-shaping