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Whose public spaces?

Neighbourhood renewal, conviviality and place making in the Milan urban fringe

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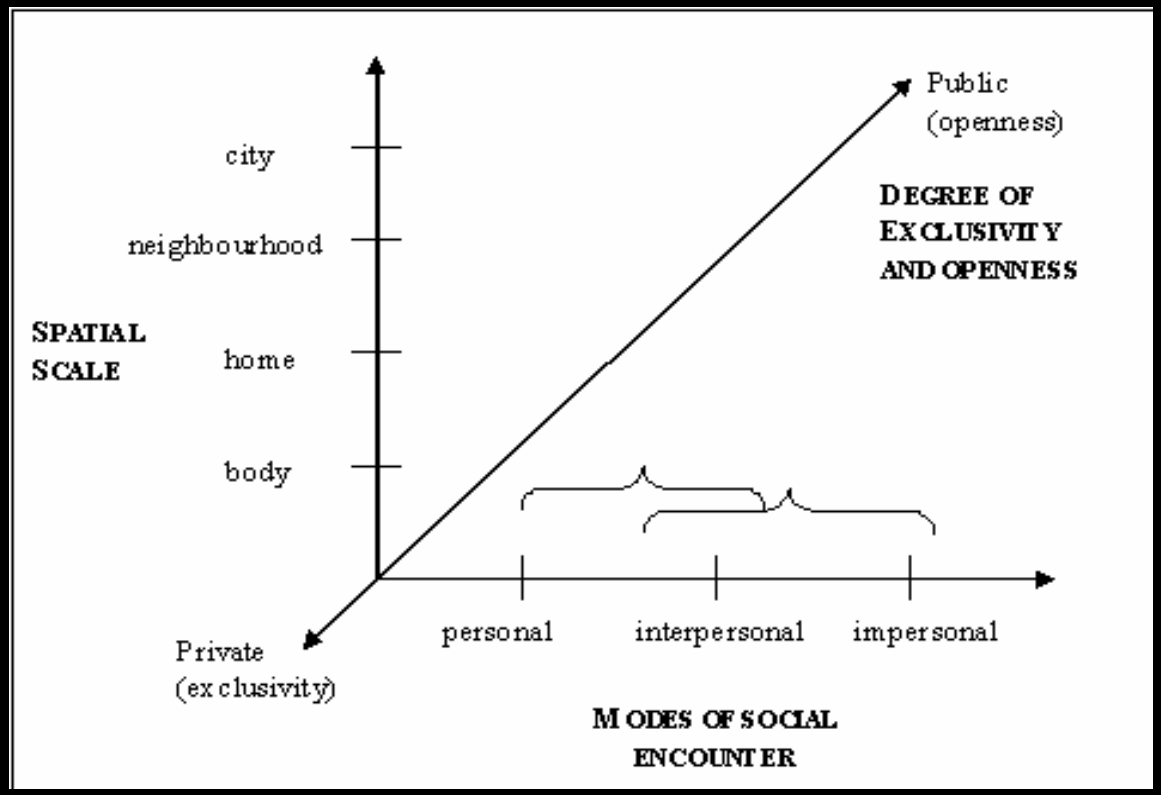
Object:

- Process of place making within a neighbourhood regeneration programme: Urban Italia

Aims:

- How structure and agency dynamics affect success or failure in regeneration programmes?
- Is it possible to deal with path-dependency when implementing EU/national policy model to local contexts?

key definition:



- Indoor-outdoor,
- “negative definition”
- non-reproduction activities, spare time, socialisation
- non-physical: constructivist perspective, social processes and behaviours, conflicts, negotiations, appropriation

Case Study:

- 80.000 inhabitants
50s-70s growths

- Tower blocks: co-op builders

- single family self-builted houses

- Factories within residential areas; mix,

- Envir. Quality and standards

- No isolation

- Dormitory, post-fordist economy re-ranking

Innovation:

The urban programme

Three main areas

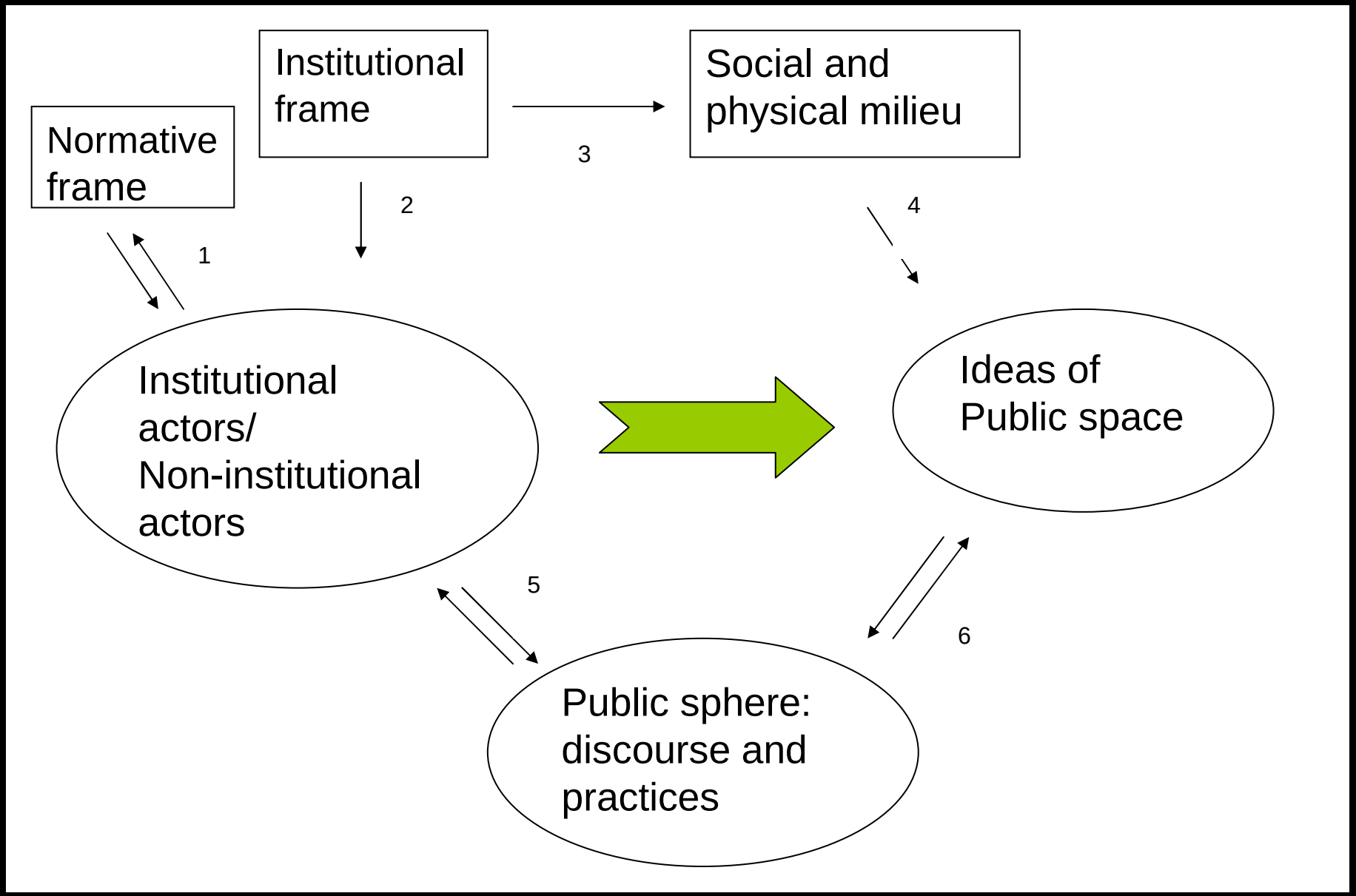
A convivial city for youth

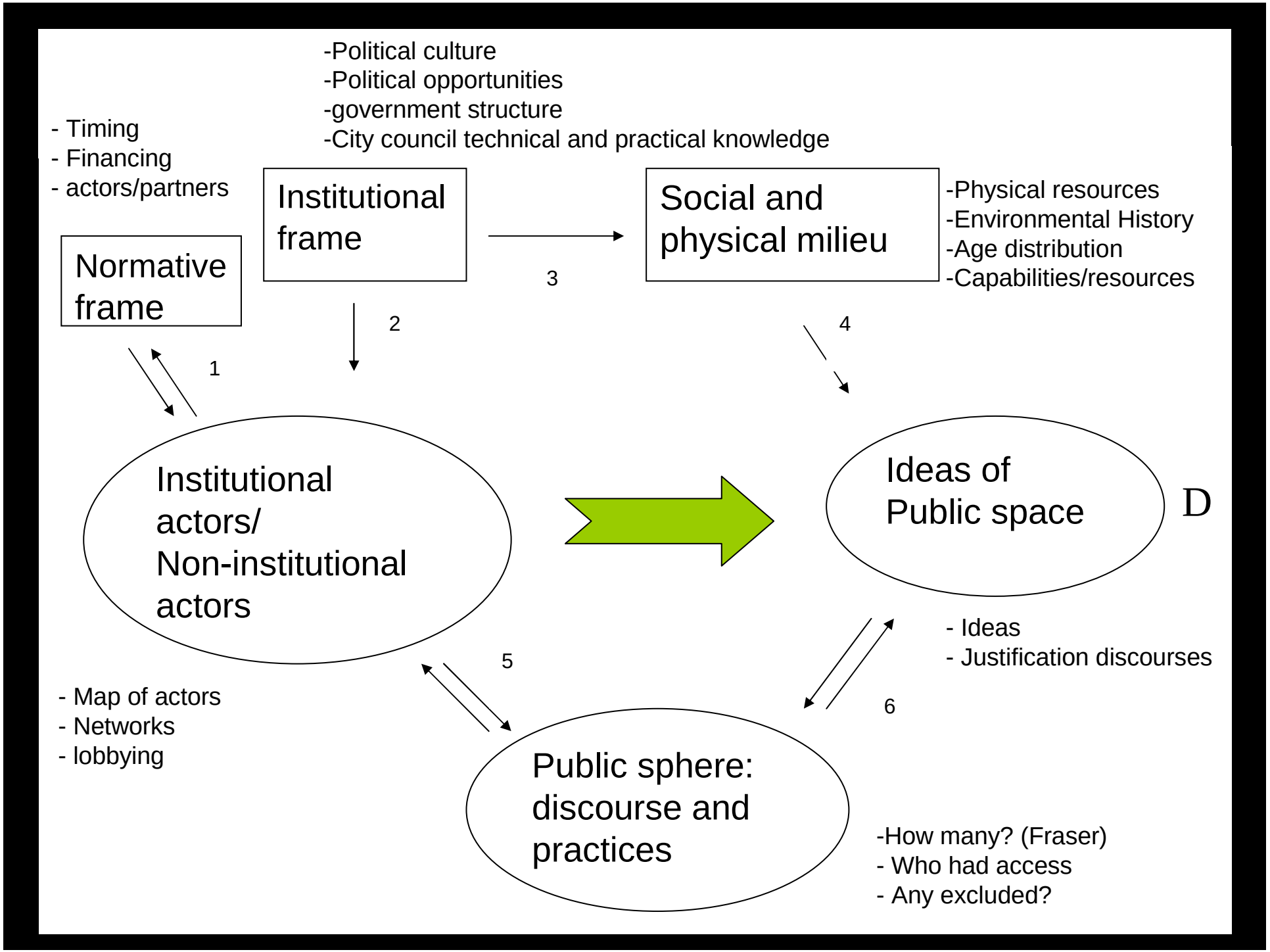
Timing:

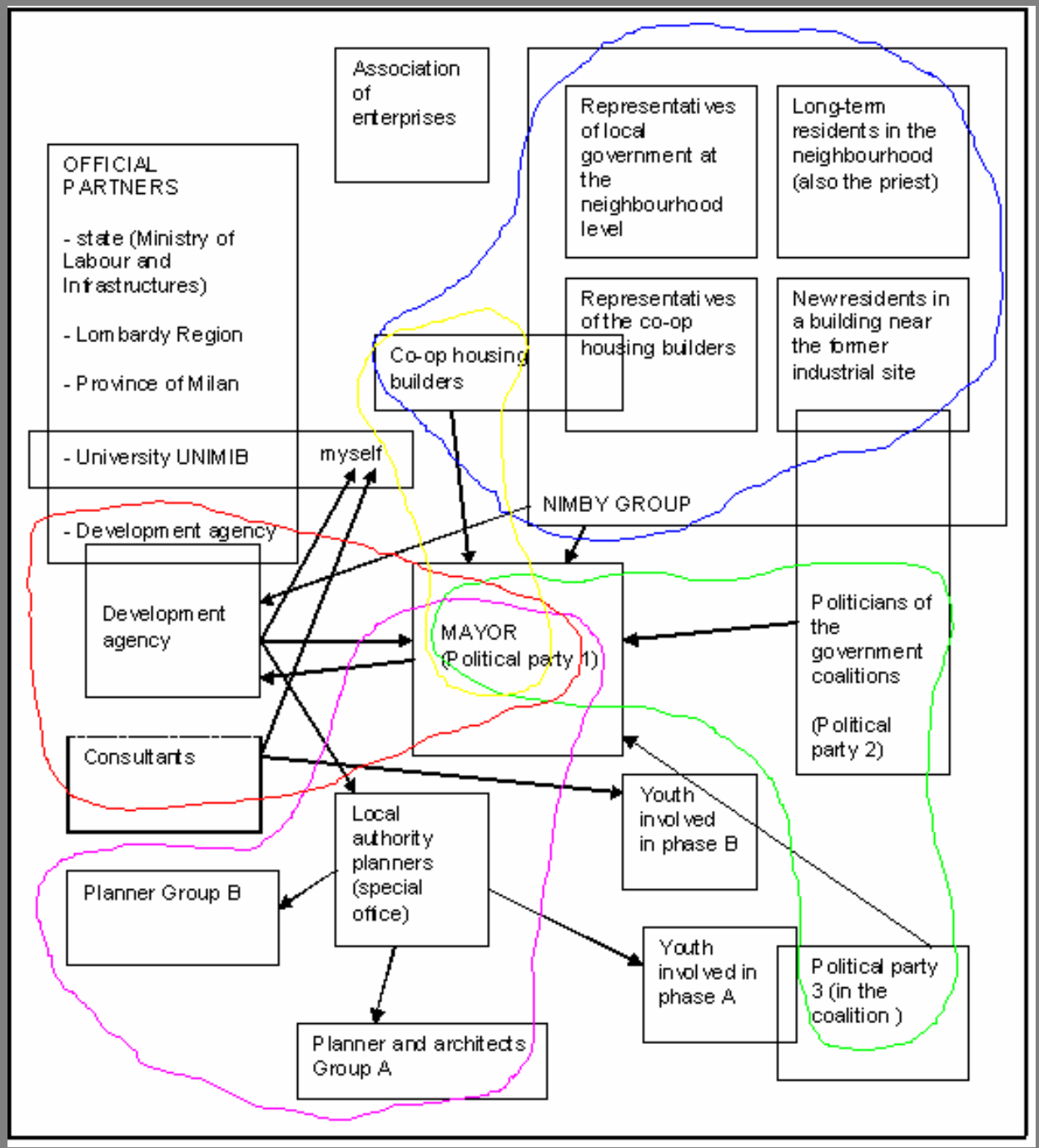
- 2000 EU Urban
- 2003 Italian extension: redefinition of the project (first consultations)
- Sept. 2003: financing and launch of the project (event)
- Oct. 2003: protests and start of NIMBY mobilisation
- Oct. 2003-may2004:
    - public assemblies/ laboratories, project meeting
    - Planning/design
    - Decision
- June 2004: election and end of 1st phase (defining financed actions)
- End 2006: conclusion financed measures
- End 2010: programme conclusion

Methodology:

Contextual and processual variables




-Political culture
-Political opportunities
-government structure
-City council technical and practical knowledge
- Timing
- Financing
- actors/partners
Institutional frame
Social and physical milieu
-Physical resources
-Environmental History
-Age distribution
-Capabilities/resources
Normative frame
1
2
3
4
Institutional actors/ Non-institutional actors
Ideas of Public space
D
- Ideas
- Justification discourses
5
6
- Map of actors
- Networks
- lobbying
Public sphere: discourse and practices
-How many? (Fraser)
- Who had access
- Any excluded?


Association of enterprises
Representatives of local government at the neighbourhood level
Long-term residents in the neighbourhood (also the priest)
OFFICIAL PARTNERS
- state (Ministry of Labour and Infrastructures)
- Lombardy Region
- Province of Milan
Representatives of the co-op housing builders
Newresidents in a building near the former industrial site
Co-op housing builders
- University UNIMIB
myself
NIMBY GROUP
- Development agency
Development agency
MAYOR (Political party 1)
Politicians of the government coalitions
(Political party 2)
Consultants
Youth involved in phase B
Local authority planners (special office)
Planner Group B
Youth involved in phase A
Political party 3 (in the coalition)
Planner and architects Group A

Outcomes:

1) Conviviality and the conceptualisation of public space:

ST: elder, youth issue, social groups empowerment

A: lobbying, networking, accessing public spheres (setting public arena, empowering), expressing ideas of public space, recognising needs

2) Neighbourhood vs. city wide: the scale issue and the definition of public space as public good

ST: history and physical environment, pay-back

A: framing participation (regulating) and targeting collective spaces (representing political issues)

3) Intersectoral collaboration:

ST: technical/practical knowledge, skills;
political opportunities and the connections between political and technical sphere (Mayor)

A: multiple identities/belongings and lobbying

Conclusions: what can we learn from “bad” practices…

Towards a methodology for policy transfer:

1) Integrating policy design:

ST: Evaluate structural elements and constraints (not only requisites to justify policy building)

2) Supporting policy delivery:

A: clarify connections and responsibilities of political, technical and social realms

A: setting boundaries to participation and clarifying the “scale” and the problem.

Summarising "Structural variables"…

Normative frame	• participatory opportunity (EU Urban programme) • time constraints (dead-line to enact the project) • financial constraints (need for additional funds/partnership)
Institutional frame	• Enlightened/experimental administration/team (resource) • Political culture and actor embeddedness (constraint) • political conjuncture (constraint)
Social and physical milieu	• physical resources • socio-demographical composition

Summarising "Agency variables"…

- Conflicts/agreement between coordinators (in the definition of 'public goods')
- skills for intersectoral work and participation
- Relationship between political and technical realm
- Empowerment/mobilising resources in different social group
- Access to public arenas
- Position of key players and lobbying activities
- Ideas of public spaces
- Justification discourses
- Definition of scale

Thank you for listening !

Questions?

Suggestions?

Experiences?