

CALL FOR PAPERS

TRACK 4: Vulnerable and Resilient Cities

Vulnerability of and resilience power for cities and urban agglomerations are related to two different levels, the more general level for entire regions and cities in fields of economy and environment aspects, while social elements become obvious in urban neighbourhoods and/or suburban settlement systems. Competition between regions and cities had increased these imbalances in the past. Old-industrial regions or deprived neighbourhoods however, had learned to cope with these challenges and developed innovative attempts not only to stand these situations but to bring forward innovative strategies of resilience. Other regions like those in Central European countries are under way with a diversity of results and efforts. In particular, social and physical resilience are vital for developing countries.

The question is, how to create conditions in which we are able to adapt, i.e. both reactive capabilities of regions, cities and settlements to adjust to and recover from pressure, decline and disaster and their proactive capacity to anticipate responses to risks and adversities. The current international debate on strategies for the resilience of cities and regions focuses very much on responding to peak oil and climate change. This leads to concepts like the “Sustainable City”, the “Climate-proof City”, the “Post Carbon City” and “Energy efficient Regions”. Some of the main challenges of such concepts are and shall be discussed in the papers: to force and combine innovations in economic and social development to guarantee ecological and spatial resilience and to integrate the contributions from government community and business as a governance system that rewards sustainability, sensitivity and innovation. Urban and regional planning instruments and governance are seen as important tools for the risk-reduction system before, during and after disasters, provided proactively towards risk.

In relation to the concept of ecological or physical resilience, social resilience shall be highlighted, as the ability of groups or communities to cope with external stresses and disturbances caused by social, economic, political and environmental change. This leads to governance concepts including elements of stakeholder inclusion, strategic thinking, accountability and fairness. Elements of strategic approaches shall be discussed and assessed, such as social capital, social learning and learning to live with change and uncertainty, self-organization, potentials of diversity for reorganization and renewal, collaborative planning, participation and regional networks.

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