European Standards for Vocational Training in Urban Regeneration

Report
based on the manuals of

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1. Define clearly what you will be teaching about! – Urban regeneration is complicated enough in itself, even defined (SGH)

A regeneration process has to counteract the degradation of deprived urban space and other phenomena of crisis. It is an important component of development policy, but should not only stimulate economic growth, but also ought to activate local society and improve the quality of life in the deprived area and its neighbourhood. The regeneration process should be provided by local authorities, local society and other stakeholders in union. As a process it is complicated and involves strong local leadership.

2. Be “glocal” – even the most well-known solution should be applicable locally (CEIT, SGH)

Even among the SATURN project partners countries there is an example of the comparable solution on quite similar deteriorated areas. The arches of the brick-built railway viaduct of Vienna’s West Gürtel1 area were largely used as warehouses or stood empty and then were turned into an attractive, youthful and discerning cultural infrastructure for the business premises located under the viaduct and become a place for people to meet. Music events, new fashionable bars, galleries and shops in more than 30 railway arches along with new architecture formed a lighter and a better designed environment resulting in this area being populated particularly by young people.

On the other hand the same solution is presented by Nadwarciański Boulevard in Gorzow Wielkopolski (Poland). The idea of the regeneration plans was to locate new functions in the technical infrastructure, including viaduct arches through the development of the promenade boulevard as a public place of activity, leisure and social events, fully adapted to the needs of disabled citizens. The regeneration of the Boulevard created opportunities for potential entrepreneurs to develop services related to tourism as well as cultural activities, art and water sports. Currently, the Boulevard is the centre of the town - a place of citizens’ meetings and tourist attractions.
3. **Use different techniques of teaching – lectures and workshops are of a minimum (SGH)**

At the Warsaw School of Economics we try to combine different methods of teaching into one complex approach. Traditional lectures are the main method, but they are complemented by seminars, workshops, case studies, technical visits, classes as well as e-learning solutions. All these complementary methods are particularly important in teaching management, which has to include a lot of practical knowledge in its curriculum. The scope of these methods depends on the subject being taught and the student profile.

4. **Your students have different experiences and different expectations. Gain advantages and profit from this fact! (SGH)**

At postgraduate studies, usually we have students who are highly educated, often with many years’ experience, working as managers or in other prestigious positions. It is obvious then that they expect to spend their time effectively; they require encountering and learning something new to be able to finally use it in their jobs. But, as professionals responsible for regeneration processes in towns they are usually educated in one or two of the many aspects of regeneration processes. Regeneration as a multidisciplinary subject of study will be studied by people of completely different educational backgrounds. It suggests that the methods of teaching must be very precisely selected and tailored to the study tasks.

5. **Prepare your student to be flexible and open-minded defining the problem they have to tackle. Social diagnosis as the first step, therein after: Conservation, Investors, Promotion etc. (SGH)**

The most important element in each regeneration project is the acceptance by local community actions initiated by the City.

The principle thought is simple: urban regeneration is created for people but furthermore by people.

The first step of the regeneration project, in the case of Nadodrze (Wrocław District), was the preparation of the social diagnosis of Wrocław. This deprived urban area has become an option to interesting initiatives such as craftsmen, so called ‘vanishing professions’, who organized themselves with a sense of identity in this place. A measure of the acceptance of the regeneration project was also that senior citizens reported that they needed to start a literary cafe where they could meet someone interesting or just talk with each other. We can allow the artist to run his jewellery
business but the answer to the question about his approval was decided by the residents, visiting him or passing by.

6. Even social and economic, urban regeneration is first of all spatially limited – show the full spectrum of instruments - GIS (CEIT)

Urban regeneration has to be considered as a dynamic process, structured through different and progressive phases rather than a single event. These are for instance analysis of the current situation, development of plans and strategies, stakeholder involvement, implementation and monitoring. Due to the different phases it is possible to specifically identify when and how GIS might contribute to the goals of the regeneration process.

GIS is commonly used to conduct baseline studies, to identify issues such as an area to be regenerated, inventory conditions, and an analysis of the current situation. Visualising large amounts of information interactively is one of the most attractive and useful capabilities of GIS. All processes in urban regeneration can profit from impressive visualisation. In the phase when strategies and plans are developed different scenarios can be visualised to present to decision makers and also the public in the phase of stakeholder engagement. Visualisations are helpful to select the different strategies and options. GIS can also be used in the development phase of a regeneration project for the design and (re-)development of strategies and plans. GIS may be used in all types of public consultation by the provided data and information about the current situation and their requirements. In the implementation phase of urban regeneration projects GIS can be used to monitor the implementation and the regeneration process of an area. Monitoring can lead to better decisions and more effective actions by simplifying, clarifying and making aggregated information available to policy makers. Furthermore, they can provide an early warning to prevent economic, social and environmental setbacks.

7. No action without community involvement! – Prepare your students to make use of different tools enhancing participation (CEIT, SGH)

GIS-based tools can be used in all types of public consultation e.g. online maps used for public consultation, citizens point out problems on maps, citizens develop suggestions for improvement of areas and crowd sourcing. The citizen provides data and information about the current situation and their requirements.
Do not forget the dedicated websites and social media, such as Facebook, Twitter and Linked In, used as platforms for sharing and gathering ideas, and enabling contact between project participants and other groups of interest. You can also use a more sophisticated tool like the Future City Game which allows the discussion of innovative and achievable ideas for improving the quality and enhancing the liveability of the specific neighbourhood, district or the entire city.

8. Show how the diagnosis of the problem enhances managerial solutions! – How the diagnosis of the problem entails managerial solutions (EWH)

One of the examples could be the Well Court in Edinburgh. The building was not in the best condition and the local authority issued several statutory notices resulting from the bad technical condition. The owners did not know how to approach the problems and meet the potentially high costs of repairs. At the same time the building was already prioritised by EWH’s Conservation Funding Programme and some of its 55 owners were aware of potential help, which could be sought from EWH. It was preceded by long preparations, planning and engagement with the owners.

Two main issues of this project were: bringing the owners together and the development of a complex funding arrangement.

9. Finance at the end – show how to finance what is finally needed, not at the beginning

Urban regeneration, as a comprehensive and long-term process, involves financial resources from various sources, at various stages of the project performance. The task of communes is to initiate an urban regeneration project, not to take the weight of its financing. Public funds should be involved in specific tasks and stimulate the investments of private entities. The goal of urban regeneration is to stimulate the activity of non-public entities, mainly private investors, whose investments might lead to economic growth and to the complete restructuring of the economic base of a city. The first task during the planning of the urban regeneration process is the diagnosis of the serious problems causing the deterioration of the blighted area. The second one is the identification of possible drivers of change and programming social, economic, spatial and environmental changes in the conditions of the area – creation of the vision.

The next one – analysis of the possibilities of running new urban regeneration activities with the stress on mechanisms, which do not need budget financing.
The mechanisms of non-budget stimulation of urban regeneration activities should be introduced in the city together with the beginning of the planning of the urban regeneration process (e.g. demands and prohibitions resulting from the decisions in spatial development plans).

Budget mechanisms are usually connected with financing projects and activities. The significance of the instruments, that application has an effect on budget income (taxes and local fees, reliefs, incentives etc.) is growing, especially at the beginning of the process. One of the main incentives to undertake renovation activities are the exemptions of real estate tax or tax reliefs. The last but not least is the acquisition of funds for the realisation of the public projects for urban regeneration which is a long-term process, in which the first steps should be taken by the public authorities, and after that the involvement of private investors in the regeneration of defined areas should gradually grow.
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