

The integrated programmes in urban regeneration policies. A comparison between England and Italy

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The aim of the Dissertation is to carry out a comparative analysis between Italy and the U.K. with reference to urban regeneration policies and their implementation.



Quartiere di Via Arquata, Torino. *Degrado edilizio e qualita' architettonica delle facciate.*

The comprehensive approach to regeneration strategies is promoted in both Italy and the U.K., and it is supported by the European Urban policy at a higher governmental level. The comprehensive approach is intended to integrate the work of different programmes and agencies; to lever alternative financial resources other than the public funding; to be more closely linked to local identity and communities.

The analysis of the planning systems in Italy and in the U.K. shows that urban policies have developed within different contexts: one of the features of British planning system from the 1960s onwards has been the strategic approach. The Conservative ideology in the 1980s replaced the strategic approach with a more

market-oriented one, and the high degree of centralisation of planning since the early 1980s is distinctive of the British model, still in the 1990s, when the support of new Partnerships between private and public sector became one of the main objectives of the British government.

The lack of flexibility characterises the Italian planning system since the Planning Law of 1942, and local plans produced within the planning framework tend to give excessively detailed regulation.

Also the evolution of urban regeneration policies is different in Italy and in the U.K.: in the latter, in the 1960s, housing policies developed into urban policies, within which the government funded regeneration schemes through the Urban Programme.

The inner-city is considered as the area which more than others needs regeneration, since the concentration of social and economic problems result in severe urban dereliction.

The Conservative government in the 1980s led to a review of the inner-city policy, and concluded that a much greater emphasis needed to be placed on the potential contribution of the private sector, rather than on the Urban Programme. Changes in the regeneration policies resulted from two strands of Conservative ideology: the strengthening of central government and the economic liberalism. New implementation agencies were designated from the central government, which gave priority to the interest of private developers and property-led developments. During the 1990s strategic approach is proposed again from the central government, in the form of integrated programmes, centrally controlled initiatives.



Area di Grainger Town, Newcastle upon Tyne. *Assonometria.*

Concerns about regeneration policies and their implementation raised in Italy during the 1970s; in the 1980s integrated approach is experimented at a regional level, and in the 1990s central government introduced and defined at a national level comprehensive programmes for urban regeneration, though these still make part of the funding policy of central government oriented toward social housing policy.



Area Grainger Town, Newcastle upon Tyne. *Grey's Monument.*

In spite of integrated approach and competitiveness characterise both comprehensive programmes in Italy and in the U.K., many key features differ within the regeneration strategy, like the form and the extent of the private sector and community participation, the objectives, the delivery mechanism and the management framework.

The «Contratto di Quartiere» of Via Arquata, Torino, is a case of study that suits a comparison with British regeneration strategy, since a multi-disciplinary team worked closely linked to the local community; this process has been intended to seek local people participation from the initial stage of design layout. The same public involvement has been achieved in the Regeneration Strategy in Grainger Town, Newcastle Upon Tyne, even considering that public participation is strongly recommended from the SRB Challenge Fund competitive process.

The two cases of study are compared for the regeneration areas, the objectives, the subjects involved in the programmes.

Some conclusions can be drawn from the general comparison and from the analysis of the cases of study: the first considerations concern of the limits of the competitive process of the funding mechanism in the British experience: in spite of its strategic

approach, its flexibility and efficiency, the process seems to neglect deprived areas that more than other would need regeneration, disadvantaged social groups, social housing policies, having as main objective the economic growth.

The limit of the Italian experience is the lack of strategic approach in the planning system: the question of introduction strategic elements is currently under debate, well known as the Planning Law reform.

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