

# Land management and mobilization in Europe

Regimes, policies and processes: A comparison  
framework applied to Gland, Switzerland

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## Introduction

The following paper summarizes the Junior Researcher Network (JRN) work from a Scientific Training Workshop (STW) held in Lausanne on September 2009. It is possible to read the extended results of this STW in the book produced by the JRN in 2011. [1] The JRN is part of the COST Action TU0602 “Land management for urban dynamics” (Action). Placed in the Transport and Urban Development (TUD) domain, it involves 21 Countries and gathers more than 40 delegates, a very promising group of 16 early stage researchers (the JRN) and five experts. The role of a JRN is to introduce into the action a group of younger research workers from across Europe, defined by COST as “normally less than PhD + 8 years”. The main objectives are (a) to encourage the involvement of younger people into COST and, more generally, the field of pan European research, (b) to incorporate a source of fresh and potentially innovatory ideas into the action, (c) to use the collective, and individual experiences of the Management Committee (MC) to provide a learning resource for the young researchers and (d) to introduce COST to a new range of researchers who, hopefully would be the next generation of MC's members. [2]

The main goal of this Action is to assess the policies and tools to manage land use transformations in different legal and geographical contexts. European cities largely differ from each other in their land ownership situation, building industry and real estate configurations, mortgage system, planning culture, policies, and management tools. [3] Cities differ from each other depending on their local and national contexts, but at the same time there is a call for the European level where a governance issue might eventually arise. Relevant research has been led since many years in different countries: land management is not a new issue per se, but it has lost its momentum during the 1990s. It seems to be treated like a poor relation especially in the European research context. There is also an obvious interest in

better linking land management to the overall aims of the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) such as:

- Enhancing competitiveness by creating and strengthening zones of global economic integration;
- Promoting sustainable development;
- Developing compact cities and limiting urban sprawl.

Pursuing these goals calls for Europe-wide studies dedicated to land management strategies focusing on both containing urban development and promoting urban dynamics. Examining such strategies has involved cases where land management is dealing with:

- Urban containment at the urban fringe (land policies linked to land use planning, transport infrastructure planning);
- Urban regeneration (land policies linked to inner city redevelopment programs and/or brownfields recycling programs).

This paper presents the results of the STW, a project-based program with the researchers addressing series of problems centering on Gland area between Lausanne and Geneva (Switzerland). The main objectives in terms of the action, are (a) to explore how different countries in the Europe would approach the problems of this area given their differing regimes for urban development, (b) to create a forum within which the JRN could increase their awareness of such different practices and (c) to experience the complexity of problem-orientated decision making in multi-professional and multi-national, teams.

The researchers divided into five groups of three people sharing different backgrounds (economics, architecture, engineering, geography), elaborated five different proposals. Each group used a different but complementary approach that draw an approach scheme to the complex issue of the case. Creative views are given on the need for a strategic vision for Gland-Vich, a need for overhaul of the present development patterns and principles of planning and design. Challenging suggestions for the local authorities to enter into negotiations and public-private partnership to achieve necessary land reallocation, adjustments and exchange are presented. Ideas for urban renewal, provision of infrastructure and the protection of green structures are given. An illustrative analysis of major costs and benefits of various options and development strategies is made on data collected during the very short time available. [4]

This paper is divided in three parts. First, a general introduction to the Gland case study is presented. Second, the results and proposals from the five research groups are discussed. Third, concluding remarks are proposed around the key issue of land mobilization for planning and urban development.

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