



Public-Private Partnerships, Urban Regeneration Projects and Asymmetries: contributions from a systematic literature review

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Abstract. Urban regeneration practices are increasingly used in urban development in different contexts. The regeneration of urban areas, especially when these represent strategic areas of cities, is inserted in a scenario of increasing competition between cities, globalization, and neoliberalism. Neoliberalism is associated with the idea of neoliberal urbanism and with the concept of urban entrepreneurship, the role of the private sector being of great relevance. In this sense, many urban regeneration practices are implemented through Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs). Despite the different urban contexts in which they are carried out, most of the Urban Regeneration Projects carried out through Public-Private Partnerships can be classified through some specific typologies, with specific characteristics. Thus, this study seeks to identify specific typologies of urban regeneration projects carried out through Public-Private Partnerships. In addition to the identification of typologies, the aim is to understand the main characteristics of the projects and, above all, understand the consequences and asymmetries resulting from their implementations. To this end, the study starts from a broader literature review on Public-Private Partnerships in Urban Regeneration Projects. The results point to some well-defined typologies: mega-events projects, business improvement district (BID), brownfields redevelopment and industrial areas, sustainable cities and low carbon cities, creative cities and smart cities, waterfront projects, entertainment and shopping center, projects related to heritage and historic areas. Regarding the asymmetries, it is observed that many of these projects, while providing urban and economic regeneration that benefits specific groups, present evidence of processes of exclusion and gentrification.

Keywords: urban regeneration projects, public-private partnerships, asymmetries.

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G. Canto Moniz et al. (eds.), *Proceedings of the International Conference on Nature for an Inclusive and Innovative Urban Regeneration (NATiURB 2022)*, Atlantis Highlights in Social Sciences, Education and Humanities 24,
https://doi.org/10.2991/978-94-6463-469-3_29

1 Introduction

Urban regeneration practices are increasingly used in urban development in different contexts, to reclaim degraded urban areas of the city. The regeneration of urban areas, especially when these represent strategic areas of cities, is inserted in a scenario of increasing competition between cities. This competition is intensified by globalization and the context of neoliberalism. Neoliberalism is associated, in turn, with an idea of neoliberal urbanism and, also, with the concept of urban entrepreneurship, the role of the private sector being of great relevance. In this sense, many urban regeneration practices are implemented through public-private partnerships.

Regarding the projects, despite the different urban contexts, some specific typologies of projects can be observed, thus identifying common characteristics of projects in different contexts. Thus, the current work seeks to identify, within the existing literature, specific typologies of urban regeneration projects carried out through public-private partnerships. Beyond the identification of typologies, the objective is to understand the main characteristics of the projects and to understand the consequences and the asymmetries resulting from their implementations.

Attending to the proposed objective, the study aims to answer some research questions:

- What are the main typologies of projects identified in Urban Regeneration practices carried out through Public-Private Partnerships?
- What are the characteristics of the typologies identified?
- What asymmetries can be observed in the identified typologies?

To this end, the study is organized into four parts, namely: the first part consists of this brief introduction to the topic, the second part refers to the research methodology; the third part presents the results obtained; and the fourth part presents the conclusions of the study carried out.

2 Research Methodology

The study started from a broader literature review on Public-Private Partnerships in Urban Regeneration Projects [1]. The review considered three distinct phases: the search for papers, conducted through six searches on Scopus; the exclusion and selection of papers, carried out by excluding duplicate papers, non-relevant papers, and papers not available online; and the analysis of papers, conducted through a systematic quantitative review, semantic analysis, and narrative analysis.

The literature review on PPPs in Urban Regeneration Projects identified five relevant topics within the theme: policies, projects, governance, economic and financial issues, management and contract issues. Starting from the identified topics, the present study focused only on the topic of projects, present in 69 papers of the main sample (Table 01). The 69 selected papers were analyzed, identifying the main typologies of projects, their characteristics, and the asymmetries observed. The results will be presented in the following session.

Table 1. Research Methodology.

Literature Review on PPPs in Urban Regeneration Projects	Phase 1 – Search for Papers	Papers Search: Title / Abstract / Keywords Approach: Scopus - six distinct searches PPPs + urban rehabilitation (4 papers) PPPs + urban regeneration (100 papers) PPPs + urban requalification (1 paper) PPPs + urban recycling (16 papers) PPPs + urban renewal (84 papers) PPPs + urban redevelopment (81 papers) (Result: 286 papers)
	Phase 2 – Exclusion and Selection of Papers	Elimination Process: Duplicated hits (82 papers duplicate) Approach: Visual Examination (Result: 204 papers) Elimination Process: Non-relevant papers (41 papers irrelevant) Approach: Visual Examination (Result: 163 papers) Elimination Process: Non-available papers (41 papers non-available) Approach: Visual Examination (Result: 122 papers)

Phase 3 – Analysis of Papers	<p>Systematic quantitative review: Elaboration of results regarding the distribution of publications by time; the geographical distribution of the studies; the numbers of publications by journals, authors, and institutions; and the distribution by methodologies used.</p> <p>Semantic analysis: Elaboration of a word cloud based on the keywords; and elaboration of a concept map from the analysis of the titles and abstracts.</p> <p>Narrative analysis: Narrative analysis developed considered the main topics identified in the previous analyses: Policy, Projects, Governance, Financial and Economic issues, Management and Contractual issues.</p>
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Analysis of Projects Topic	Starting from the main topics analyzed, only the projects topic will be analyzed (present in 69 papers).
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3 Typologies of Urban Regeneration Projects in Public-Private Partnerships

The analysis of the selected literature allowed the identification of eight typologies of urban regeneration projects carried out through Public-Private Partnerships. For each typology, the main characteristics and the asymmetries resulting from its implementation are observed. The different typologies found will be presented below.

The first typology identified refers to mega-event projects. Mega event projects are often associated with a legacy narrative [2] and used for large-scale urban regeneration processes [3]. In many cases, the development of mega-event projects leads to the creation of new agencies and new plans, with implications for governance and urban planning [2]. Mega events are usually of two natures: sporting events or cultural events. Sporting events include World Cups and Olympic Games, such as regeneration projects dedicated to Olympic villages and sports structures. Cultural events, on the other hand, include World Exhibitions, with regeneration projects dedicated to exhibition pavilions. In many cases, urban regeneration projects for mega-events reclaim waterfront areas [4]. Despite large-scale urban regeneration, some authors are questioning the ability of these projects to generate city-wide benefits [5]. Beyond this, these projects often

present relevant social consequences and asymmetries, including gentrification processes and the expulsion of the local population [6].

The second typology identified refers to the called Business Improvement Districts. Business Improvement Districts are a specific typology of project that emerged in North America and has been implemented in different contexts [7], including Europe and Africa. Framed within the entrepreneurial logic of urban management [7] and urban entrepreneurship [8], this specific project typology aims to improve, regenerate, and enhance services in well-delimited districts [9]. They are a form of formalized and contractualized partnership [9] that allows for new models of intervention in central urban areas [7]. However, negative consequences can be observed in the uncritical transfer of this mode to urban contexts with characteristics quite different from the original ones and without considering local specificities [10]. In addition to this, asymmetries are observed between the beneficiaries of the Business Improvement Districts, who consider the project a success, and the local population, in many cases expelled and marginalized, through gentrification processes [7] [11]. In this sense, these projects can be used as a "neoliberal solution" that, instead of solving social problems, transfers them elsewhere and creates new spaces of exclusion [11].

The third typology identified refers to Industrial Areas and Brownfields. The urban regeneration of industrial areas responds to urban decline and the large amount of abandoned land and buildings that result from this phenomenon [12]. These obsolete post-industrial areas generate a negative image of abandonment for the cities, besides all the problems involving soil contamination. The regeneration of brownfields and industrial areas has a strong environmental character [13], as it restores and decontaminates contaminated areas. In addition to this, it is considered a sustainable urban land tool [14], as it enables an alternative to new land consumption and excessive urban expansion. However, brownfield regeneration is complex as it confronts issues of soil decontamination, constraints in terms of legislation, and limitations in terms of spatial integration [13] [14].

The fourth typology identified refers to Sustainable City projects. This project typology falls within the logic of sustainable urban development and sustainable urban regeneration, aiming, in many cases, at promoting low-carbon and greenhouse gas reduction [15] [16]. Sustainable City projects include not only green spaces but also buildings and especially housing [17]. An important concept related to this typology of projects, especially when focusing on housing, is the sustainable community, including the population as a key element of the project [16]. Another important concept in this typology of projects is that of urban sustainability, which considers compact and concentrated urban centers from a physical, social, and economic perspective [18]. The idea of urban sustainability aims for controlled urban growth. This project typology, however, faces several historical, political, cultural, social, land use, and energy efficiency issues [18]. Besides this, it highlights that these projects are environmentally sustainable, but that social sustainability issues are often ignored or neglected [19].

The fifth typology identified refers to Creative and Smart City projects. The concept of creative city is associated with culture, art, and iconic architectural projects [20] [21] [22] [23], while the concept of smart city also associates technocentric dimensions [24]. Creative and smart city projects are developed in areas with high regenerative potential [25], inserted in the logic of global competition between cities. As a result of these projects, different cities have created new cultural identities, redefining their images [23]. Based on this high regenerative potential and the adoption of new cultural identities, creative and smart city projects tend to create specific "atmospheres", attracting middle and upper-middle-class residents and visitors [25] and promoting gentrification of the local population.

The sixth typology identified refers to Waterfront projects. Waterfront regeneration projects were first undertaken in the United States, but European examples have also come to be explored [26]. Waterfront development and regeneration involve high-profile projects that combine local development and global economics [4]. In many cases, waterfront regeneration projects relate to other project typologies. Urban regeneration of waterfronts can be realized through mega-events [5], for example. In some cases, it may be associated with the concept of a creative or smart city [24]. They may also coincide with industrial areas and brownfields [27][28][5]. Thus, waterfront projects may also present asymmetries related to gentrification processes.

The seventh typology identified refers to Entertainment and Shopping Centers. This project typology aims at creating a postmodern environment of production, service and consumption [29]. These projects can be developed in closed buildings or open centers [30], combining shopping, entertainment and recreation spaces with public spaces [12]. In some cases, this design typology can be related to creative cities. In other cases, it can also be related to the regeneration of industrial areas by reclaiming the old industrial building for a new function [12]. At the level of asymmetries, these are projects that present a strong character of social exclusion.

Finally, the eighth and last typology identified refers to Historic and Heritage Areas. This project typology can be observed, especially, in the European context and is related to the phenomenon of decline of historic centers, resulting from the vacancy of residential and commercial buildings [31]. This project typology favors the urban heritage while proposing the rehabilitation of buildings. Heritage recovery can be accomplished by combining them with new cultural equipment [32]. However, from a social point of view, this project typology is not inclusive concerning the local and peripheral urban population, targeting mainly investors, young professionals, and tourists [29].

4 Conclusions

This study aimed to analyze the different typologies observed in urban regeneration projects carried out through public-private partnerships. To this end, the work started from a broader literature review on Public-Private Partnerships in Urban Regeneration Projects, identifying and analyzing the studies related to different projects.

The results point to some well-defined typologies: mega-events projects, business improvement district (BID), brownfields redevelopment and industrial areas, sustainable cities and low carbon cities, creative cities and smart cities, waterfront projects, entertainment and shopping center, projects related to heritage and historic areas.

Regarding the asymmetries, it is observed that many of these projects, while providing urban and economic regeneration that benefits specific groups, present evidence of processes of exclusion and gentrification. Processes of exclusion and gentrification affect the local population, who lose spaces to new residents with different lifestyles, tourists and visitors, and companies. The asymmetries observed intensify as these projects are increasingly inserted into the logic of neoliberal urbanism and the strong action of the private sector to the detriment of the public sector.

Despite attending to the proposed objective, the study presents some limitations. Regarding the utilized methodology, the study started from a literature review conducted in only one search engine and specific documents - scientific articles and in English. Thus, the analyzed sample is a limitation.

Another limitation refers to the fact that the classification of the analyzed typologies is based on an understanding of the authors, i.e., it is a subjective classification. In this sense, other typologies of projects may not have been identified and other authors could have identified different typologies.

Finally, despite the limitations found, it is expected that the study can support public and private managers in the implementation of these projects, with special attention to the negative consequences that can generate and mitigate these consequences.

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