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Neo-liberal urban planning policies: A literature survey 1990–2010

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Abstract

The academic literature on urban policy and planning which explicitly links to neo-liberalism is huge. The paper systematises much of this literature from the period 1990 to 2010, with an emphasis on journals of urban planning, urban geography, and urban studies. Neo-liberal urban policies are engendered by the nexus between mobile investment capital, inter-city competition, and public entrepreneurialism. Fourteen planning-related policies are described, and their neo-liberal rationales are explained. Typical planning concerns are outlined for each policy. The paper ends by spelling out the challenges that the neo-liberal urban policies pose to public planning.

Highlights

• Fourteen planning-related, neo-liberal urban policies are outlined. • Around 750 references to neo-liberalism and urban planning are provided. • The challenges to

planning from urban neo-liberalism are described.



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Keywords

Neo-liberalism; Neo-liberal urban policy; Urban planning policy; Entrepreneurialism; Literature survey

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Tore Sager is a professor in the Department of Civil and Transport Engineering at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim, Norway. His research is mostly directed at the interfaces between institutional economics, decision processes in transport, and planning theory (CPT). Sager has published on communicative planning theory in a dozen of international academic journals. Main publications in English are *Communicative Planning Theory* (Ashgate 1994) and *Democratic Planning and Social Choice Dilemmas* (Ashgate 2002). Sager is currently researching the moral responsibilities of planning theorists, the tensions between CPT and neo-liberalism, and the consequences for CPT of experiments in economics and psychology about the effects of communication in public goods provision.

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