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# Changes in the political economy of Vietnam and their impacts on the built environment of Hanoi

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## Abstract

The most important changes in the political economy of Vietnam began with the *Doi Moi* (Renovation) reforms of 1986. The changes in the national economic system have been reflected almost immediately in urban development patterns, where the diversification of capital investment (especially the influx of foreign direct investment), the creation of a property market (dealing with land use rights), and the commercialization of the housing sector have created significant changes, while the planning system has not been sufficiently adapted to the new political reality. This article shows how the changes in the national policy framework have transformed the urban development patterns of Hanoi. Industrial development in the rural fringe areas, the new dynamics of the private housing sector, and the commercial redevelopment of the inner city are described and quantified. While the formerly rigid command-and-control system

of urban management has already been simplified to some extent, inappropriate bureaucratic attitudes persist. This has resulted in a lack of authority, communication, and competency, while a thriving informal sector of urban development has emerged. In conclusion, there is an urgent need for building new forms of public involvement to ensure social equity goals and to avoid market distortions. The policy reforms at the national level need to be mirrored by a more capable urban management system.



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## Keywords

economic reform; urban development; housing; land market; urban management

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