

# **Land management in Slovenian context**

## **Urban redevelopment projects**

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### **Introduction**

In Slovenia, the economic and societal changes launched by the market economy have had a strong influence on urban development. In the 80s and the 90s, the crucial changes of the national economy caused significant structural transformation, characterised by the re-orientation to the EU-markets. The most important factor was the shift from social to private ownership that reflected in the new Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia [1]. In this view, in 2006, the Act on the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) set the new guidelines for spatial planning and land management by introducing the financial instruments as central element of the procedures of project developments [2]. However, the public benefit still dominates in the field of large-scale urban projects development. Predominantly allocated in abandoned and degraded areas of central or suburban allocation with good accessibility and infrastructure the comprehensive planning and construction policies as the precondition for a successful implementation is needed. However, in order to prevent them from spontaneous market interests certain measures to control the building land consumption in terms of more rational and sustainable land management seem to be of crucial importance.

### **Legal and policy framework**

Regarding land- and redevelopment policy, the legal framework is based on two important documents that introduced the instruments for acquiring land in the public interest, that share the competence into the jurisdiction of the state and of the municipality, (i) in 1997, the Construction Land Act [3], and (ii) in 2002, the Spatial Management Act [4]. According to them, the municipality has the responsibility of managing, as well as the right to take into account the measures for an active land policy. Real estate owners have the right to participate in the procedures of spatial planning concerning the land use and urban planning concepts. Parallel, the Spatial Development Strategy of Slovenia (2004) exposed the building land provision in

order to ensure the most rational land use by controlling urban extension on the base of s. c. “inward” development [5].

PPP objectives strongly influence the regulation of land management depending on the coordination of the interests of the participating stakeholders - the real estate owners, investors, planners, local politicians. The role of the public partner generally concentrated on the responsibility for urban plans, and for the public participation in the early stage of the project [2].

The dynamics of urban redevelopment is most evident in the process of the construction of large-scale urban projects that are considered as the strategic base for sound and sustainable urban development. Ljubljana, the capitol city of Slovenia, is the centre of metropolitan region with 500,000 inhabitants dominated by the simultaneous tartarisation. Regarding to the changes in the population mobility, the peripheral areas of previous industrial sites offer proper conditions for entrepreneurial activities than the traditional central locations in the built-up or degraded areas [6]. In this view, the range of long-term spatial documents was adopted, such as in 2007 adopted Vision of the City of Ljubljana by 2025 [7], and the comprehensive Spatial Development Plan of Ljubljana in 2010 [8].

## **Case Studies**

As case studies the development of two projects, the Šmartinska Partnership and the Stožice Sports Park will be presented in view of the specific approach of (i) the background of the rehabilitation of the existing urban area, and (ii) the role and intervention of the main PPP public and private stakeholders.

*Šartinska Partnership Project* is allocated between the planned new central public transport terminal and the motorway ring. As a modern vibrant urban and public axis interlinking the existing City Centre with the New Centre it represents the new future centrality of Ljubljana next to the largest Slovenian retail centre BTC. In the 80s, the land-use was dedicated to the development of manufacturing and transport logistics terminals. Later, 75 percent of former manufacturing and warehousing zones comprising 116 hectares has been restructured into commercial and entertainment centre, and into business and service zones. The rest remained as abandoned and less used areas where the new projects followed individual investment interests, resulting in traffic congestion, poor public traffic connections, and less public areas for pedestrians accompanied by fragmented ownership structure of building plots [6]. The preparations started in 2006, by variety of development plans of architectural workshops for the individual sites [9]. The master plan of the area is based on the first-prize-winner project of the international competition held in 2008 by the interdisciplinary and international team. Subsequently, in collaboration with all the stakeholders and the team of consultants, the master plan was the basis for the new Municipality Spatial Plan and the Detailed Municipal Spatial Plans where a special attention was paid to the integrated traffic development with emphasis on public transportation system. The PPP established by the Municipality of Ljubljana and partners from the existing area, has foreseen the 1.5 million sq. miles to be built over the next 25 years. The role of the public partner is to interconnect, to direct the development the planning procedure, and to invest in

the public infrastructure. In order to set a focal point for the implementation and the supervising of the planning process the establishment of the project management office was proposed [10].

*Stožice Sports Park Project* is an urban project of specific function that was adopted a long time ago in the frame of the city development programme. The main purpose was the construction of the complementary facilities of commercial, sports, and recreational activities. Located in the outskirts of Ljubljana on the last piece of green area in the inner part of the city's motorway ring the project is the result of the international competition offering urban planning and architectural design in combination with the most favourable financial structure in the collaboration with the potential investor. It also integrates a multi-purpose sports hall and a huge shopping centre, covered by an artificial landscape of a recreational park.

The PPP model applied was developed in two stages. In the first one, the Municipality of Ljubljana as the only public partner had the responsibility for the construction of the football stadium and the shopping centre. The second stage was the construction of several sports facilities of national significance, incorporating also the co-financing by the state. However, the city administration was responsible for the organizing and conducting the dialogue among all the stakeholders, providing public support and promoting the project development [11]. There is a strong belief that the realisation was successful due to the strict political will of the public partner.

## **Discussion**

Large-scale redevelopment projects are considered key players of property-led urban development. In view of land management and urban policy, there are significant differences regarding the implemented PPPs. However, the common characteristics observed are positive impacts on urban development, rising interest in the private equity, and active participation of the public partner concerning the land provision. In regard to the ownership structure as landlord, the local community acts as the integrator and conductor of the activities proceeded by private partners. Recently, the global economic crisis has frozen the realisation of ambitious urban redevelopment projects. For long term structural changes of PPP investments the mobilising of new, more effective ways, bringing together the advantages of both sectors private calls for a new framework adaptable to the future economic prosperity [12].

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