



Case 58 Leipzig, Germany: East Regeneration Area

Problem to resolve

Stigmatization generally leads to exclusion, but can be stronger than just economic exclusion since it adds other, for example cultural or ethnic prejudices to exclusion. Quite frequently, parts of the disadvantaged or poor population, in order not to admit that they are at the losing end of society, look out for minority groups which they can consider of less value. Sometimes the mere fact of living in a certain neighbourhood can lead to stigmatization. In that case, the objective of urban revalorization scheme may include generating a better image of the neighbourhood. →Tool URR 3

APPROACH for resolution: Social engineering

Where an area suffers stigmatization because of the decaying architecture, it may be enough to embark on an uplifting of the facades. If the stigmatization is based on a racial, religious or other personalised argument then physical interventions are not enough. Specific magnets must be found to convince 'respectable' members of society also to move to the area in question as part of the renewal process. →Tool URR 3



Case Study; Leipzig, East Regeneration Area ^{1 2}

Leipzig East encompasses several suburbs to the East of Leipzig's city centre and accommodates a population of 27,000 within an area of 347 ha. This mainly residential area is characterised by dense, late nineteenth-century block structures and large-panel construction development of the 1970s. Historically, the area was known as the 'graphics quarter' due to the dominance of publishing companies and printing works and the residents were mostly 'working class'. During World War II, the area suffered considerable damage, from which the industrial sector never recovered. During the GDR regime only limited resources for reconstruction and maintenance of the built environment were available which led to further physical decay.³



Flea market in Leipzig Oststadt⁴



Renovated property in Leipzig Oststrasse⁵

Economic decline in East Germany after reunification caused a downturn in housing markets and a movement away from certain neighbourhoods (like the large panel prefabricated housing estates) towards the more affluent parts of the city of Leipzig. In the same way, poorer households moved into the historical Eastern part of Leipzig which recently presents a characteristic of an ageing population, but also families with a high proportion of children and adolescents. Among the less well-off new arrivals we observe a larger number of migrant households and ethnic German immigrants from Eastern Europe. Hence the proportion of migrants in East Leipzig is higher than for the city as a whole. Due to segregation and social disintegration the social structure of East Leipzig - especially the borough of Volkmarisdorf - displays serious problems.



East Leipzig⁶



Living variety in Leipzig⁷



Leipzig Waldstrasse

In order to face the evident problems of this area a comprehensive urban regeneration program was started in the 1990s. Soft end land uses were decisive in changing the image of the district. Also the opening of new green spaces (both public and private) as well as cultural events in the district helped considerably and became focal points of community life today.

Credentials

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References

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