

Regenerative City Regions: Exploring the Connections between Regenerative Development, Collaborative Governance and Progressive Regionalism

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Abstract : Territorial rescaling is a universal practice in the UK, following a logic of agglomeration and competition as the only chance for cities to thrive. Cardiff Capital Region is one of the latest examples, and its governance structures and developmental narratives are currently being shaped. Its evolution must be compatible with the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act, a Welsh legislation that requires public bodies to put sustainability at the core of all actions. Departing from this case study, the project follows the evolution of Cardiff Capital Region and assesses it based on a new a conceptual framework that connects the notions of regenerative development, collaborative governance, and progressive regionalism. The hypothetical synergies between these different theoretical perspectives are demonstrated, inferring that if regenerative development is aimed at, it must necessarily start with collaborative modes of governance. The objective is to explore (a) whether expanding the network of active stakeholders who get to intervene in the governance structure can contribute to a more progressive definition and development of the city region and (b) whether this can be considered a pathway towards regenerative development. The exploratory fieldwork conducted during the initial phase of the project used qualitative methods, which will be complemented next by different participatory research approaches, as well as a quantitative analysis. Despite being in its early days, the study is showing that a wider range of voices can indeed change priorities, reconcile and balance between the economic drivers and the wider social, economic, cultural and environmental aspects.

Keywords : Cardiff Capital Region, collaborative governance, progressive regionalism, regenerative development

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