

Introductory Report Track 5: Forum on Planning Education: Are we doing it right?

Co-Chairs:

Griet Geerinck, Belgium

Saskia Spijkerman, The Netherlands

Today a spatial planner needs to address a complex society. Planning involves climate change, urbanization, globalization, migration and social and technical changes. In recent years the traditional role of planners has changed dramatically and the contemporary challenges and global events have instigated a shift in the planning profession.

The papers and the discussions are focusing on the future directions for planning education that attempts to combine new and key skills, attitudes, experiences and critical fields of knowledge that future planning demands.

Which principles can guide the organization of a new educational pedagogical planning?

- Theory and practice are inseparable for a qualitative academic curriculum. How can this “learning by doing” be embedded in the education?
- The education has to be based on an interdisciplinary approach. Is it feasible to study the social, physical and economic challenges of cities and regions jointly?
- Urban design and urban development need to be linked. Is urban design a task for each stakeholder, participating in the planning process? Is spatial planning a process or a project?

A lot of high schools and universities all over the world are modifying their curriculum and are looking for an answer on the question what do spatial planners need to learn? How can we integrate this knowledge in the academic curriculum and in the accreditation of a planner?

What is a good spatial planner, what kind of skills does he need? What role can or should he play in an urban development process? Is he a manager or a team player? Is he a decision-maker or a communicator? Is he an engineer or an architect or a visionary person?

Track 5 has two sessions with paper presentations and two interactive sessions with discussions according to these topics or themes: 1. Various approaches to planning education; 2. Case studies on planning in Europe; 3. Is there a “global” planning education system? and 4. “Learning by doing” and “lifelong learning”.

Session 5.1: Various Approaches to Planning Education

This session presents four papers from three countries: Australia, South Africa and Nigeria/Canada. These papers provide various approaches to planning education. The first is a research on defining the discipline of planners and is done by using a framework in the consultation of stakeholders. The second is a multi university project of which the outcomes are of benefit to planning schools and

practitioners around the globe which endeavor to facilitate student's continuous learning and adaptation to a rapidly changing world. The third paper is an exploration of international and local integrated planning and design approaches. The fourth paper presents ISOP (Ibadan school of Planning) as an example for a curriculum for integrated planning, understanding the content and the context.

Session 5.2: Case Studies on Planning in Europe

This session presents three papers from two European countries: Poland and Portugal. The first paper provides a set of recommendations to other institutions in need of curriculum reform and/or development, as many universities are nowadays introducing planning programs. The examples discussed will include the Polish and Russian cases. The second paper is about a new spatial management program with a multidisciplinary approach. The third is an article which will address a systematized outlook from previous experiences in (1) urban design and planning studios within the general layout of teaching programs, (2) frontier and applied research as ways of reasoning reality and look for alternative answers and (3) integration of education activities with present-day topics both in theory and practice.

Session 5.3: Is there a “Global” Planning Education System? (Introduction by Vanessa Watson)

This is an interactive session on a comparative discussion of academic education in the different continents: Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, Latin America and North America. The goal is to compare and contrast the planning education in the different continents.

Questions to discuss are:

- Are there similarities or differences in planning philosophies and planning pedagogies across the globe?
- What are the advantages/disadvantages of such philosophies/pedagogical perspectives?
- Is there an overarching philosophy of planning in the continents?
- Is there a substantive focus / methodological focus of planning education programs in the different continents?
- Is there a possibility of a universal model of planning?

The participants will be congress participants from Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, Latin America and North America. These six individuals will each provide an introductory comment of about 5 minutes each, on the questions above, and then the moderator can open it up to a more general discussion.

Session 5.4: “Learning by Doing” and “Lifelong Learning”

This is an interactive session on the ‘Bridging Theory and Practice’ initiative by Piotr Lorens. The session will start with a review of the workshop on Planning and education in Portugal by Sofia Morgado. We explore the conditions to change a planning education curriculum and how to embed theoretical and practical training. The focus of this interactive session is to get input for the ‘Bridging Theory and Practice’ initiative, both for students and professionals.