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Title

Self-regulating (planning in) Kosovo: a third way

Kosovo is in many ways an interesting 'case', also for planning. Our thesis is that Kosovo is at the cross-road of non-regulation, deregulation and re-regulation. Even more, it seems to be a conflict or contact zone of the North-European, North-American...and particularly Balkan 'discourses' and practices in planning and societal organisation in general. We will not deal too much with the complicated institutional framework in and around Kosovo, but we will have to sketch the contours of the current 'confusion' and fragmentation of powers to understand the 'urban chaos' and 'urban explosion/implosion' since the (civil) war ended in 1999 and UNMIK (United Nations Mission in Kosovo) established a 'provisional self government' based on UNSC resolution 1244. Visiting Pristina and other cities in Kosovo is a quite 'shocking' experience; especially for 'western planners' coming from well planned, managed and maintained cities. Often the first reaction is that Kosovo needs to copy and adopt similar policies and methods, but we question whether this is feasible and desirable. Although it's obvious that Kosovo needs 'more and better' urban/spatial planning and 'regulation', we should maybe enable the new Kosovo institutions to find 'a third way' in between Over-regulation and Non-regulation, if possible in a 'Balkan perspective'.

The municipal approach to develop a former Serbian / American military area (100 ha), called "Camp Monteigh" at the outskirts of the city of Gjilan/Gnjilane in the south-east of Kosovo is an interesting case that clarifies the urgent need for a third way.