

RT04 | THE PLANNING LEGACY OF MEGA EVENTS DURING/AFTER THE WORLD CRISIS

Chairs

- Stefano Di Vita, Politecnico di Milano.

Speakers

- Alessandro Balducci, Politecnico di Milano;
- Paulo Tormenta Pinto, ISCTE-IUL;
- Mike Racó, University College London;
- Mark Wilson, Michigan State University.

Description

Mega events – such as the Olympics, the Expos, or the World Cup – have the potential to remake urban space and to benefit different urban populations (not only residents, but also city users). However, they also have the potential to distort urban plans, disrupt planning processes, and divert resources from ordinary public services and functions. In a city like Lisbon, with a major mega event legacy, provided by the Expo 1998, it is fitting for an urban planning conference to consider the implications of these events for improving the urban environment and life. At a time when the world crisis has been affecting the globalization process, and when consequently mega events face growing controversies over cost, displacement of residents, and transparency of planning process, it is important for planners to renovate the consolidated reflections on the value of these events. That is, to update the traditional analysis of their benefits and costs (not only in short terms and surrounding spaces, but also in long terms and wider spaces), and to discuss if and how cities can still harness them to improve infrastructures, environmental conditions, and the quality of life overall. Even though, usually, mega events are considered as extraordinary phenomena within urban change processes, their frequency and legacy demand for a deep reflection about their potential role in the development and implementation of ordinary urban agendas and studies.

Among the questions to be discussed at the roundtable are:

- What are the positive and negative legacies of mega events for cities during/after the world crisis?
- Do mega events still have a role in urban development?
- What can planners do to improve the success of mega events in the current uncertain phase of transition?
- Can mega events provide lessons for ordinary urban agendas and studies?