



Focus: Bucharest |

Field trip visit of the MA program in Urban and Regional Development of the London School of Economics

Context

Urban INC hosted alongside the London School of Economics, a workshop centered on the experience of Bucharest as a laboratory for the experience of the states of Central and Eastern Europe, based on their experience of transition from a system of centralized planning, promoting major urban development projects to a liberal approach, permissive to the private sector.

The event brought together students of the masters program in Urban and Regional Development of the London School of Economics and local actors, using a variety of methods such as guided tours, panel discussion, urban explorations and working groups.

Team:

Coordinator: Irina Paraschivoiu
Team: Anamaria Vrabie, Alexandru Gotcă, Cătălina Ioniță, Marina Neagu, Mihai Alexandru, Mihai Șercăianu
Volunteers: Alexandra Popa, Manuela Negrilă, Anca Ștefănescu, Irina Constantinescu, Mihai Mardale, Marwan Fatta, Loredana Micu, Nicolae Negrea, Pietro Dorissa, Serin Geambazu, Ana Maria Toni, Radu Vlad, Lorena Pitulicu, Monica Ciovică, Doina Dumitrescu, Dan Mihai Nicorescu
Supported by: London School of Economics, Geography Department
Partners: Romanian Chamber of Architects, British Council
Media partners: Igloo, Modernism
Organizer: Urban INC - Urban Insights Center (Creative Room Association)

The conclusions of the workshop indicated that Bucharest is a good example to post-socialist urban development experience, a changing city, where there are challenges in pursuing a common agenda, but also an opportunity for change at the strategic level in areas such as administration and governance, economic efficiency, community development, heritage. Meanwhile, the city should pursue an open urban planning, that manages to balance the tensions between divergent forces and projects.

Guided tours: Gert Widu (Raiffeisen Evolution) - Sky Tower and Promenade Mall - development projects aimed at new business areas in the northern part of the capital.

PechaKucha presentations with 8 local organizations: PRISPA, Arhipera, Faculty of Architecture of the University Spiru Haret, Metrucub, Urban 2020 Rhabillage, ATU, Glade Ciocan.

5 working groups in which participants reflected on the experience and proposed recommendations for Bucharest

An interdisciplinary workshop which brought together 30 students from LSE, 16 volunteers – University of Architecture and Urbanism Ion Mincu students, 8 local organizations, academics and experts.

Panel discussions and presentations around relevant themes to the development of Bucharest:

Gabriel Pascariu (UAUIM Prof.), Alexandru Gotcă, Anamaria Vrabie, Marina Neagu (MKBT): "Perspectives on urban metropolitan area." The discussion focused on the challenges of a coherent metropolitan development in the absence of effective governance tools to support resolving problems such as mobility, excessive urbanization, etc.

Marcel Ionescu Heroiu (Banca Mondială România): "Competitiveness and economic restructuring." The session focused on a better understanding of World Bank reports on Competitive Cities and Spatial Planning, respectively World Bank recommendations for a balanced development of cities and regions of Romania: Investments in infrastructure, institutions, quality of life in disadvantaged regions.

Nicoleta Chiriță (CERE) and Favorite Initiative Group: "Participation in urban and neighborhood development." The discussion covered the steps of the initiative group to revitalize the former Favorite Cinema and barriers in developing a culture of participation in urban development projects.

Augustin Ioan (UAUIM Prof.): "Aspects of central urban development". It was raised structure and history of the "reinvention" of Bucharest through projects that have changed the configuration of the city, and tensions between the pressure of development and heritage preservation existing initiatives.