



# Planning Regional Futures Panel Session

**DR. LAUREN ANDRES**

SENIOR LECTURER IN SPATIAL PLANNING

SCHOOL OF GEOGRAPHY, EARTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES,

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

# 1. Strengths of current approaches?

- ▶ Ways of questioning the different forms of rescaling in spatial planning.
- ▶ Critical insights as per the effectiveness of spatial planning.
- ▶ Critical assessment of the different levels of governance and implications for planning at different scales.
- ▶ Understanding of spatial dynamics within metropolitan regions.
- ▶ Provided a comparative framework for policy and research across range of countries, contexts, administrative boundaries.

## 2 - Weaknesses of current approaches?

- ▶ Scales, boundaries and definition issues.
- ▶ Siloed approach
- ▶ Not very context-specific
- ▶ Doesn't capture dynamic processes well, incl. temporalities and informality.
- ▶ Tension between local versus global.
- ▶ South/South learning?
- ▶ Limited focus on localised / citizens' approaches.
- ▶ Limited acknowledgement of planning as an under-resourced activity in the Global South.

# 3. Opportunities to move things forward?

- ▶ Embeddedness within a more complex and systemic framework of regional understanding of city-region functions and transformations.
- ▶ Linking both local and regional levels.
- ▶ Incorporate informal and temporary dynamics.
- ▶ Recognition of the need for capacity and capability building.
- ▶ Better connection to education and skills.
- ▶ Acknowledgement of further citizens' roles.

## 4. Major challenges to overcome?

- ▶ Disciplinary knowledge.
- ▶ Training and skills.
- ▶ Power relationships and political agenda.
- ▶ Importance given to planning in contrast to other fields.
- ▶ Uncertainties/disturbances.
- ▶ Data availability.

# 5- Vision for planning regional futures?

- ▶ "Reading " cities as systems of systems (Bryson et al.).
- ▶ New ways to think about planning, with key attention given to citizens-led approaches.
- ▶ Need to cut across traditional boundaries and policy silos approaches.
- ▶ Development of integrated and inclusive place-based approaches.
- ▶ Re-interpreting the role of urban planners and giving more importance to the 'profession' as a key activator of change.
- ▶ Positioning temporary and adaptability as key drivers.
- ▶ Need for a new form of planning, both responsible and able to drive inclusive prosperity. It should be more inclusive of people and of the environment, resting upon a new relationship with citizens and moving away from a primary focus on land (use) management.