

# Progress(es) in planning - theory and practise and the quest for activist modes

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## Abstract

The subject of this article is the concept of progress in relation to urban and territorial planning and how debates in planning theory and practice can illuminate perspectives for creating a more progressive, participative and equalitarian urban society. The article is divided into three sections. The first section elaborates on a concept of progress that is associated with the development and consolidation of a capitalist society geared by the accumulation of wealth. The concept of a model of development from the Regulation School is adopted to provide an understanding of the changing role of the state and civil society that is setting the conditions and practices for planning intervention. The second section focuses on current debates in planning theory, particularly the concept of public interest influencing decisions and processes for planning practice. The final section addresses the quest for an activist planning approach within a scenario dominated by the liberalisation of the economy and argues for reflexive and transdisciplinary approaches in planning research and practice.

**Keywords:** Progress, mode of regulation, planning, urban politics, activist planning