Institute: Urban management techniques

University of Oum El Bouaghi

Module: Initiation to town planning 2

Course N **01**: **Urban Policy** and **Urban Social Movements**

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**1/ Urban Policy** **and** **Urban Social Movements**: **Definition**

**1/ Urban Policy**

refers to the set of principles, strategies, and actions that a government or governing body adopts to address various issues and challenges in urban areas. This can encompass a wide range of topics, including housing, transportation, infrastructure, environmental sustainability, economic development, and social equity within the context of urban spaces.

**2/ Urban Social Movements**

refer to collective actions, protests, or organized efforts by groups of individuals within urban areas to advocate for social, political, or economic change. These movements often emerge in response to perceived injustices, inequalities, or issues related to urban living. Urban social movements can focus on a variety of issues, such as affordable housing, civil rights, environmental justice, and community development.

"Urban Policy and Urban Social Movements" involve the interplay between governmental approaches to managing and shaping urban spaces and the actions of public movements seeking to influence or challenge these policies for the betterment of urban communities.

**2/ factors determining urban policy.**

Urban policy is shaped by a variety of factors that reflect the nature of urban environments. The specific factors influencing urban policy may vary across different regions and contexts, but some common elements include:

**Demographics and Population Growth**: The size, composition, and growth of the urban population can influence policies related to housing, transportation, environment, economy, employment, and social services.

**Economic Considerations**: Economic considerations play a pivotal role in shaping urban policies, as they directly impact the prosperity, well-being, and overall quality of life for residents in urban areas. The economic structure, employment opportunities, infrastructure investment, Innovation and Technology, and overall economic health of an urban area play a significant role in shaping policies related to job creation, business development, and poverty alleviation.

**Infrastructure Needs**: The condition and capacity of urban infrastructure, including transportation systems, utilities, and public facilities, can drive policies aimed at improving or expanding these vital components.

**Housing and Real Estate**: Urban policy often addresses issues related to housing affordability, availability, and quality. Policies may be formulated to address housing shortages, promote sustainable development, and combat homelessness.

**Environmental Sustainability**: Concerns about environmental degradation, climate change, and resource conservation can influence policies related to urban planning, green spaces, waste management, and sustainable transportation.

**Social Equity and Inclusion**: Urban policy may aim to address social inequalities and promote inclusivity. This includes considerations of race, ethnicity, gender, income, and other factors that contribute to disparities within the urban population.

**Governance and Political Dynamics**: The political landscape, governance structures, and decision-making processes within a city or region can impact the formulation and implementation of urban policies.

**Technological Innovation:** Advancements in technology, such as smart city solutions, can influence policies related to data management, urban connectivity, and the integration of technology into urban planning.

**Cultural and Historical Context**: The unique cultural and historical characteristics of a city can shape policies to preserve cultural heritage, promote arts and culture, and celebrate diversity.

**Public Input and Participation**: Public opinion, community engagement, and feedback from residents can influence urban policy decisions. Governments may consider input from citizens, community organizations, and stakeholders in the policy-making process.

**Global and National Trends**: Urban policies are often influenced by broader national and global trends, including economic shifts, geopolitical considerations, and international agreements.

Understanding these factors requires a comprehensive and interdisciplinary approach to urban planning and policy development. Successful urban policies are often the result of collaboration between government bodies, urban planners, community organizations, and the residents themselves.

**3/ Forms of Urban Social Movements**

Urban social movements take various forms and arise in response to diverse issues. Here are some common forms of urban social movements:

**Housing Movements:** Activists and communities may organize to address housing issues, advocating for affordable housing, tenant rights, and policies to combat homelessness.

**Environmental Justice Movements**: Urban environmental movements focus on issues such as pollution, waste management, green spaces, and sustainable urban development to ensure fair and equitable environmental conditions for all residents.

**Transportation Activism**: Movements advocating for better public transportation, pedestrian-friendly urban planning, and cycling infrastructure to promote sustainable and accessible mobility options.

**Gentrification Protests**: Activists may resist gentrification (urban renewal), advocating for policies that prevent the displacement of long-term residents due to rising property values and development.

**Community Development Movements**: These movements seek to empower local communities through public initiatives, participatory planning, and the improvement of neighborhood resources and services.

**Civil Rights Movements**: Urban social movements often address issues of racial and social justice, fighting against discrimination, police brutality, and systemic inequalities within urban areas.

**Education Activism**: Movements focusing on educational reform, equal access to quality education, and addressing issues such as school funding disparities.

**Anti-Poverty Campaigns**: Activists may mobilize against poverty, advocating for social welfare programs, affordable healthcare, and job opportunities to lift urban residents out of poverty.

**Public Space Advocacy**: Movements working to reclaim and preserve public spaces, such as parks and community centers, ensuring they remain accessible and beneficial for all residents.

**Art and Culture Movements**: Activists may use art and cultural expressions to advocate for social change, challenging norms and promoting inclusivity within urban spaces.

**Digital Activism:** Urban social movements also leverage digital platforms and social media to organize, raise awareness, and mobilize support for various causes.

Urban social movements take many forms, and they often address multiple interconnected issues. The complexity of urban challenges is such that these movements play an important role in shaping the social, political, and economic landscape of cities.

**Conclusion**

The interplay between urban policy and social urban movements is a continuous and reciprocal process. Social movements serve as methods for change, pushing policymakers to be responsive to the evolving needs and demands of urban communities. Policymakers, in turn, may use social movements as a source of feedback and innovation to develop more effective and equitable urban policies.