

Economic crisis, the new window for the community? Perspectives on housing policy in South Korea

Shinwon Kyung

Centre for Urban and Regional Studies, Birmingham Business School

College of Social Sciences, University of Birmingham, UK

Abstract

Housing policy in South Korea has developed in significantly different ways to those which characterize Western countries. However, South Korea has undergone profound changes since the Asian economic crisis in 1997-8. Facing a crisis in all areas, social policy reform, including housing policy, was demanded both from within and outside the country. This transformation in South Korea resulted in not only successful advances towards a welfare state but also great advocacy of involving people in policymaking, which made a new force for 'convergence' with the West. The South Korean government has demonstrated increasing interest in strategies to promote community involvement as a remedy for some of the previous failures of the system. This paper explores how the government in South Korea has evolved the concept of community involvement in their housing policies and in what circumstances they have put it at the centre of their plans to deliver public services more effectively.

Keywords: Economic crisis; Community involvement; Housing policy; South Korea