The key objective of PARCOUR

PARCOUR studies how governance forms associated with the use of contracts affect public accountability and the public interest in urban regeneration projects. The project seeks to understand whether the public can benefit from public-private contractual arrangements.
Contracts are increasingly used as planning tools to regulate the actions of public, private, and civil actors involved in urban regeneration. The contractual relationships between these actors instigate a specific form of governance. PARCOUR argues that there are important implications of contractual planning for sustainable urban development, and for the public interest at large.

PARCOUR studies urban regeneration projects in Brazil, the United Kingdom, and the Netherlands, and provides an international comparison to evaluate public accountability and the public interest in relation to residents. We analyse the impact of urban contractualism in several cities by looking at the influence of dynamics created by planning tools (e.g. contracts, deeds, regulations) in terms of the democratic legitimacy of public organisations’ decisions and the opportunities that these create for civil society (i.e. residents).

### Research Questions

To what extent does private sector involvement in urban regeneration serve and support sustainable urban development?

To what extent can the public interest be incorporated in contractual arrangements?

How is the public interest defined and embodied in planning tools dealing with regeneration projects?

To what extent do the perceptions of contractual arrangements differ among the different actors involved in regeneration projects?

**Objectives**

- Analyse the contractual relationships in urban regeneration projects;
- Understand the impact of governance arrangements on the redevelopment of urban areas;
- Explain the regulatory roles played by various actors and instruments involved in urban redevelopment;
- Identify the benefits residents can reap from urban regeneration projects;
- Define planning tools that serve public accountability and the public interest.

**Project Phases**

PARCOUR is divided into three phases:

1. Desk research aimed at understanding the different ways in which the public interest is defined in different contexts;
2. Field work and analysis in order to find out how and to what extent the public interest is served by the contractual arrangements in urban regeneration projects;
3. Dissemination of research findings to networks of academics (publications and conference) and practitioners (policy learning).