



The Impacts of Mega Events on Transformation of Hosting Region Land Use Pattern: The Case of Formula 1 Grand Prix-Istanbul

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As the reflections of globalisation, the abandonment of the policies over the social welfare state, consumption-based structure of the urban economics and the increasing competition between cities have brought forward the phenomenon of Mega Event as the new image makers of our age. Mega events require the usage of considerable funds and resources apart from their advantages. The utilization of public funds for mega events is legitimized by emphasizing the long-term advantages of urban reconstruction, world wide recognition of the city, the increased number of tourists and the increased economic activities. Since, mega events create an urban dynamism with their direct and indirect impacts, they have increasingly been considered as the catalysts of the urban transformation. The event must be a component of an urban strategy to maximize the benefits that the event creates. Otherwise, the amount of benefits created by the event decreases along with the degree of public accountability and rather than being a solution of an urban problem, the event becomes the source of the problem itself.

Hosting a mega event is very strategic decision for Istanbul which desires to become a global city, attract the international investors, increase the share of tourism among the other international cities. Hosting Formula 1 Grand Prix since 2005, bidding for Olympics since 2000, and finally becoming the European Capital of Culture proves that Istanbul is willing to receive a share of this promising opportunity. Nevertheless, Istanbul has limited experience to evaluate the impacts of mega events on urban transformation. The aim of this paper is to evaluate the role of "Formula 1 Grand Prix" as a mega event which was organised in Istanbul, on the transformations of the built environment of its host region Akfırat. Its impacts are mostly - via investment in new infrastructure, increasing demand in real estate sector and place marketing. Nevertheless, the process and the impacts of Istanbul Park Grand Prix present controversies as well as challenges for the transformation process of Akfırat Region.

KEY WORDS: Mega-events, transformation, land-use, Formula 1, Istanbul.