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PHYSICAL PLANNING AND TOWN PLANNING

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General features of town planning: need for a thorough analysis of the many forces which are the cause of urban growth; definition of a strategy specific to each town, adaptation of town planning policies to the original features of the town etc... The place of urban infrastructure among the community facilities investment sectors of the Plan: the planning of urban infrastructure involves an assessment of the needs and the extent to which they are satisfied at the level of every agglomeration. Application of the theory of thresholds to urban growth; the "threshold effects" appear when urban growth can no longer be satisfied by "stretching" the existing constructions and demands the building of new public works constructions at high cost (new network of communications, water supply, sanitation etc...) Hence a distinction between structural equipment and auxiliary facilities.

Land policy in the towns

The two divergent ways in which the public authorities can act:

- in the case where the market mechanism is repudiated, a system has to be adopted which replaces selection through prices by another criterion of preference between users. The nationalization of the land is the solution which has been adopted to varying degrees by countries which profess a socialist doctrine. It eliminates the speculative factors, but does confront certain difficulties (cf. conference of the UN Economic Commission for Europe in 1965), the chief one being the need to establish the value of the land which has to be taken into consideration in economic calculations (avoiding misallocation, wastage, bureaucratic red tape etc...);

- in the case where the market mechanisms are maintained, it is essential to take measures to ensure a healthy market - not with a view to eliminating price rises systematically, but to keep them within reasonable bounds for the benefit of the community. The tax on landed property can also be established in such a way as to combat speculation and at the same time prevent the freezing of land use.