

*The Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations (IDDRI) and the Columbia-Paris Alliance Program are pleased to invite you to attend the seminar:*

## **“Confronting the Challenge of Effective Urban Governance: Lessons From New York City”**

**By Ester Fuchs (SIPA, Columbia University)**

**Moderated by Vincent Renard (Programme Director Urban Fabric- IDDRI)**

**Wednesday, April 14th, 2010 – from 5.00 p.m to 7.00 p.m**

*Conference Room Percheron, Cevipof, 98 rue de l’Université, 75007 Paris  
(Metro : Assemblée Nationale or Solférino)*

**Summary** - The economic and political transformations in America’s great cities that began in the 1990’s can be viewed from many different perspectives. But there is a general consensus that these changes have been nothing short of extraordinary! While there is no question that the benefits of urban development and regeneration have not been equally distributed across all income, racial and ethnic groups, responsible individuals would be hard pressed to argue for a return to that period of middle class flight to the suburbs and economic disinvestment in the central cities.

So where has urban political theory been while all of these great changes have been taking place? Could any of the dominant disciplinary theories have predicted the current state of urban America? Could any of the theories even explain what is now going on economically and politically in cities across the United States let along among global cities? The answer is no.

Whether it is pluralism, the power elite, regime theory, relative deprivation, social capital, city limits, city trenches, city as sandbox or city as growth machine -- None of these theories can explain the current economic and political state of urban America or more importantly the challenges cities face in continuing the positive economic developments of the past 15 years.

My research suggests that there are two problems with these theories:

- \* a bias against economic growth and business investment
- \* a general lack of interest in if not disdain for governance issues – formal legal arrangements, federalism and the general politics of policy

Ester Fuchs will argue that the viability of cities in the 21<sup>st</sup> century depends on their ability to compete in the global economy and that in turn depends on effective governance. New York City will provide the case material for this discussion.

**Ester R. Fuchs** is a Professor of Public Affairs and Political Science at Columbia University. She served as Special Advisor to the Mayor for Governance and Strategic Planning under New York City Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg from 2001-2005. While at City Hall, Dr. Fuchs coordinated three significant mayoral initiatives: the restructuring the City's delivery of Out-of-School Time (OST) programs to children, youth, and families; the Integrated Human Services System Project (Access New York) to streamline the screening and eligibility determination processes, case management, and policy development and planning functions within and across the 13 human services agencies through the use of technology; and the merger of the Department of Employment with the Department of Small Business Services to align the City's workforce development programs with the needs of the business community. Dr. Fuchs was also appointed by Mayor Bloomberg to serve as Chair of the 2005 NYC Charter Revision Commission. She was the first woman to serve in this capacity. Before going on a public service leave to join the Bloomberg Administration, Dr. Fuchs was Professor of Political Science at Barnard College, Chair of the Urban Studies Program at Barnard and Columbia Colleges, and founding Director of the Columbia University Center for Urban Research and Policy.

**Conference – debate  
REGISTRATION FORM**

Please fill in the registration form and return by fax 01 45 49 76 85 or email to **Julie Cohen** [julie.cohen@iddri.org](mailto:julie.cohen@iddri.org) **before the 12th of April 2010.**

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the conference of Ester Fuchs, the 14<sup>th</sup> April 2010.

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