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**RESIDENSE – GOVERNANCE OF DENSIFICATION FOR THE SOCIALLY
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE HOUSING RESOURCE IN URBAN
NEIGHBOURHOODS**

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This research project aims to contribute to the debate on socio-political challenges of inner-city densification (deutsch: «Innenverdichtung») initiatives in times of neoliberal urbanism in western liberal democracies. More specifically, its goal is to politicize inner-city densification by analysing its socio-political and –economic consequences on different categories of stakeholders: First, the institutional rules involved will be identified (at the public-policy and property-titles levels); Second, actors' positions and strategies will be analysed, and Third, the potential of different governance mechanisms of inner-city densification initiatives either promoting or preventing socially-sustainable neighbourhood development in cities will be assessed. Through comparative case study analysis in the metropolitan regions of Zurich and Stockholm, the mechanisms that led to different governance structures regulating housing in densified areas socially sustainable will be assessed and discussed.

Short description

From a public policy perspective (land use planning law, environmental law, housing law, monument conservation) the contribution of inner-city densification to sustainable land management is widely recognized: As already acknowledged in 1996 by the Swiss Federal Council (FOSD 1996; FOSD 2014), on the one hand, inner-city densification assumes a decisive role in the fight against urban sprawl and the overuse of non-renewable resources (Reactive Approach to Environment Protection and Sustainability) (Larsson & Malmsten 2013). In this perspective, densification – acknowledged as a consequence of stricter planning measures against urban sprawl - can result in ecological, architectonic and functional benefits such as improved eco-efficiency standards or higher profitability of service and transportation infrastructure (Delbiaggio & Wanzenried 2016; FOE 2017; FOSD 2013; FOSD & FOE 2012; Schneider et al. 2017; Scholl 2014).

On the other hand, since the 2000s, European cities have been undergoing deep-rooted processes of reurbanization, individualization, and socio-demographic change (EU 2016; OECD 2015; Rérat 2016; Thalmann 2016). According to the United Nations Habitat III Conference 2016 in Quito, “for the first time in history, more than half of humanity lives in urban areas. By 2050, this proportion will reach nearly 70% [...]. Cities are places in which we, the people, aim to achieve gender equality, empower

women and girls, reduce poverty, and create jobs and generate equitable prosperity (...)"(United Nations 2016:1). In other words, due to socio-demographic changes, urban neighbourhoods are becoming more and more important as centres for every day's provision of basic human needs such as housing or access to social infrastructure and security. Therefore, some scholars recognize the rise of the total number of densification initiatives in growing cities e.g. Zurich (COSD Zurich 2014) as a structural result of these trends of urban population growth combined with macro-economic trends on the financial markets (Theurillat et al. 2014) and the increasingly missing urban green- and brownfield reserves in cities since the 2000s (Proactive Approach to Post Growth Tendencies and Development) (Larsson & Malmsten 2013; FSO 2016; Matter et al. 2008; Stutz et al. 2010; Eisinger & Bodammer 2015; Eisinger & Loepfe 2014).

Even though public authorities (on the national, cantonal, regional or local level) control the urban development, they are strongly dependent on the private property owner realising their plans (Larsson & Malmsten 2013). For instance, in the end, property owners decide the profit margin to be targeted by resources management within a given socio-economic and political condition (Marcuse 1998). Thus, strong property rights can reinforce the financial value of urban resources at the expense of its use value (Harvey 2012).

Consequently, social polarization, exclusion, homogenization and gentrification processes in cities increase due to the lack of resources such as housing, land or real-estate (among other reasons as a result from increasing privatization) for more and more people (Andersson & Turner 2014; Debrunner 2015; Hackworth & Smith 2001; Häussermann & Siebel 2004, 2013; Hermann 2013; Holm & Gebhardt 2011; Lees et al. 2008; Rérat & Lees 2011). Those with lower incomes are most affected, but in growing cities also the middle class (OECD 2015).

Therefore, the question remains how social interests can be developed and protected in a socially sustainable way, especially regarding the growing economic-driven interests of private actors? So far, the specific role played by non-profit oriented property owners (e.g. cooperatives and public ownership) has extensively been discussed as potential solutions for maintaining social sustainability in densifying urban settlements (see chapter 3.3.1). However, this challenge needs to be examined in a way that includes profit-oriented property owners as well, because the non-profit sector only holds a small share of the total resources amount in cities.

Research objectives

Inner-city densification processes impact the micro practices of individual daily life and collective action, they take place at the interface between the economic and the social/political/ecological spheres. The present project aims to fill four research objectives:

First, ResiDENSE expands and goes beyond current researches on housing cooperatives because it specifically focuses on the governance of housing stocks at different scales (internal decision-making, neighbourhood constraints, municipal political-legal framework, national regulations) in different property structures (public, collective and private) in the non-profit as well in the for-profit housing property sector. Housing cooperatives are one among several modes of governance that can contribute to more social sustainability of the housing resource in times of inner-city densification. It is therefore essential to appraise the contribution of cooperatives to social sustainability in comparison to other forms of governance.

Second, ResiDENSE aims to contribute to the societal and political discussion on inner-city densification and socially sustainable neighbourhood development. Rather than focusing on the architectonic, design or technical aspects, this project explores the socio-political determinants of social sustainability of urban neighbourhoods in the context of a dense urban environment and aims to discuss them in a more solution- and practical planning-oriented manner.

Third, ResiDENSE is dedicated to the problem of controversial public and private interests in a changing policy context towards inner-city densification. More specifically, it aims to describe, analyse and explain these conflicts and corresponding mechanisms between public and private actors regarding the ongoing challenge of inner-city densification and its consequences for socially-sustainable urban neighbourhood development, policy-making and planning. Finally, policy advises on which mechanisms leading to socially-sustainable urban neighbourhood development - focusing on housing as a resource – can be made.

Research questions

The overall research question is:

1) How can the housing resource in cities develop socially sustainable in times of inner-city densification?

Following the theoretical and analytical approach of this study (§ 7.1), this question will be answered in several steps:

1. Institutional context of inner-city densification initiatives (at the public-policy and property-titles levels)

- What kind of challenges is inner-city densification currently facing? Which economic, ecological, social or political objectives are pursued? (see §2)
- What kind of conflicts and contradictions regarding economic, ecological and social objectives of inner-city densification can be acknowledged? (see §2)
- Which institutional rules (public policies) at which level of organization (on the national / cantonal / regional or local level) are regulating inner-city densification initiatives?
- What kind of public intention, interests and objectives do these public policies defend regarding inner-city densification initiatives (e.g. land use planning policy, housing policy, environmental policy, monument conservation)? For the protection of whom and why?
- How do these public policies intend to reach and to implement their objectives connected to inner-city densification? (e.g. Where and how do public policy goals intend to densify urban neighbourhoods?)
- How are inner-city densification initiatives regulated through housing property structures (HPS) (e.g., private, common or public property)? What characteristics do these HPS have? What is the HPS attitude towards the municipal regulation regarding inner-city densification initiatives?
- What kind of strategy and objectives do these HPS follow to solve challenges connected to the inner-city densification project?
- From a historical perspective, how did these institutional rules regulating inner-city densification initiatives evolve over time and in a changing socio-political context?

2. Actors' strategies: toward socially sustainable management of the housing resource?

- What kind of private and public actors are involved in inner-city densification procedures? What kind of strategies and interests do these involved actors follow and defend? How are these actors organized?
- What kind of conflicts between involved public and private actors' interests can be determined? How are these conflicts intended to be solved by the involved actors? How and to what extent do these parties cooperate and communicate with each other?

3. Governance of inner-city densification initiatives for the socially-sustainable development of the housing resource in urban neighbourhoods

- How is the governance of inner-city densification initiatives organized? Which stakeholders (policy actors) are involved in decision-making concerning the impacts of inner-city densification initiatives on social sustainability of the housing resource in urban neighbourhoods?
- Which governance mechanisms make it possible to overcome the contradictions between economic, ecological and social challenges of inner-city densification, and to provide socially sustainable development of the housing resource in urban neighbourhoods?

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