The regeneration of large-scale Social Housing estates

Spatial, territorial, institutional and planning dimensions

SoHoLab

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The regeneration of large-scale Social Housing estates

Spatial, territorial, institutional and planning dimensions

Nele Aernouts, Elena Maranghi and Michael Ryckewaert (Editors)

This report is dedicated to the memory of Andrei Feraru
whose invaluable contribution to this project ended too soon.

About

Already since the 1970s, internationally, the regeneration of large-scale modernist social housing estates has been on the research and policy agenda. What more can we say about this theme, after almost 50 years of regeneration practices?

Although social and spatial problems in large-scale social estates are inextricably linked, in the past decades, they have often been tackled independently from one another. Throughout Europe, various spatial policies have been deployed to regenerate estates. The demolition of high-rise buildings, the introduction of new typologies as part of a social mix rationale, spatial connections of public spaces with surroundings and the inclusion of social and commercial facilities are well-known examples of spatial policies. Participation programs associated to these interventions have been mainly based on mere information or consultation processes, putting local actors and habitants in a passive role instead of considering them as active agents. Recently, the social innovation and collective empowerment perspective is gaining ground in community work in Europe. Social organizations, self-organized collectives and grassroots movements increasingly deploy collective strategies to overcome socially exclusive conditions, as a complement to state-organized forms of governance. As a result participatory forms of governance in urban policy involving third sector-organizations are on the rise. In the UK, France and regions such as Brussels, associations and social housing organizations are encouraged to support social cohesion projects, social entrepreneurship and tenant boards. Such local organizations promote social mobility from within and more positive representations of the neighborhood. However, they often lack the spatial knowledge and means to impact top-down planning processes that shape the social estates.

The SoHoLab project therefore aims to develop an integrated approach towards the regeneration of large-scale social housing estates in Europe. Through a Living Lab approach, the project wants to address (1) the socially innovative potential of involving social housing residents in the regeneration of their housing environment, (2) embedded and/or ethnographic research as a tool to gather in-depth knowledge of local living conditions and to contribute to the construction of a counterhegemonic image of the neighbourhoods considered and (3) the capacity of collaborative research and planning, bonding and bridging efforts to unite residents, neighbourhood inhabitants, public housing organizations, spatial practitioners and cultural, educational and social organizations around the subject of regeneration.

This approach is developed, tested and refined on the basis of a

retrospective evaluation of existing projects in Paris; of action research in an ongoing LivingLab experience in Milan; and new LivingLabs in Brussels and Paris. The regeneration of large-scale social housing estates has been an important policy topic in Paris, which deals with a long history of conflicts in and on housing estates. The 3 cases selected for a retrospective analysis (Saint Martin in Longjumeau; La Fosse in Fresnes; Jean Bouin in Taverny) have high policy relevance, as they are rare past examples of collaborative approaches in Paris focusing on the sustainable redesign of public space in social estates. The Milan case builds on the experiences of a local observatory established by PoliMi in 2013 in the San Siro neighbourhood. By opening up a space in the neighbourhood, PoliMi has put in place an action-research project focused on the construction of alternative representations of the neighbourhood and on the promotion of local actions aimed at fostering local change. The focal area of the Brussels case is Peterbos, a large social estate at the fringes of the region, equally characterized by important social-spatial challenges. The diversity of cases results in a comparative and mutually beneficial approach: the retrospective analysis of the Paris cases offers important input to guide the consolidation path of the ongoing Italian experience and both give fruitful elements for developing and valorising such practices in Brussels.

This first SoHolab investigation on the spatial, territorial, institutional and planning dimensions of the regeneration of large-scale social estates in Paris, Milan and Brussels highlights the rise of 'extraordinary' and 'integrated' programs through temporal and territorially determined planning instruments, such as city and neighbourhood contracts. These contracts between different policy levels couple spatial improvements with social-political and -economic aims such as improving social cohesion and professional insertion. However, the short-term injections as part of these programs often fail to make up for structural deficits, including a lack of civil participation, public disinvestment and serious shortcomings in the management and maintenance in these areas. In addition, these 'extraordinary' measures are not enough attuned to 'ordinary' regeneration measures. We conclude it is this lacuna, which should be addressed within the ongoing and new LivingLabs within this research project.

Index

The regeneration of large-sale Social Housing estates: spatial, territorial, institutional and planning dimensions

Nele Aernouts, Elena Maranghi and Michael Ryckewaert

About this report

The purpose of this report is to investigate the contexts of large-scale social estates in Brussels, Milan and Paris. It does this by providing an overview of the architecture and planning history of social housing within the 3 city regions and by positioning the production of large-scale social estates within this framework. Special attention is given to the last 15 years and the different measures developed for tenant participation and housing regeneration, be it informed by institutional policies, inhabitants initiatives or third sector promoted interventions. Indeed, we try to consider all types of social and spatial interventions that impact on these sites and its inhabitants. By zooming in on several sites within the three cities, these regeneration practices are discussed and critically evaluated in terms of social-spatial quality. Being an ongoing LivingLab experience, in the case of Milan, the main focus is on the site under study, while the analyses of the city regions of Brussels and Paris, in which new LivingLabs are set up, are informed by regeneration practices in similar estates.

This report is the result of the first investigation (T2.1) of the SoHoLab research. It is written by the university partners and based on desktop research; interviews with administrators and community workers; architecture, design and planning theory; journal extracts; and local, regional and national housing policy documents. Although potentially of interest for the academic community studying one of the 3 contexts, it is especially meant to inform practitioners and policy makers working in the field of (social) housing (regeneration).

Social housing regeneration contexts of Paris, Milan and Brussels

The three city regions that are the scope of this research represent three different housing systems (Van der Heijden, 2013), including a strong (Greater Paris, FR101, FR105-FR107), average (Greater Milan Metropolitan Region, ITC4C) and low (Brussels Capital Region, BE10) interventionist housing system. They operate in three distinct policy contexts, with their own social housing landscape and urban regeneration policies.

General characteristics

In Greater Paris, 163 social landlords can be identified, including public housing companies (OPH), social housing enterprises (ESH), HLM cooperative companies and 56 companies for access to property (SACICAP). In Milan, the public housing stock is owned by two main public entities: the Municipality of Milan, whose stock is currently managed by the public company *Metropolitana Milanese*, and *Aler Milano*, the public company that owns and manages the regional public housing stock located in the chief town. Due to the progressive transformation of public bodies in business entities and a certain centralization of the governance, public housing management in Milan partially lost its territorial link. In Brussels, social housing companies still have a territorial link, mostly operating on a communal level, but have been reduced from 32 to 16 in 4 years-time, reducing their local embeddedness and bond with inhabitants. An umbrella organization for social housing, operating at a regional level, is responsible for monitoring these social housing companies at different levels; technically, socially, energetically and legally.

While social housing within each city region is marked by similar processes of precariousness and governance changes, the extent of it strongly differs. The amount of housing in Paris is relatively large. As such, it is inhabited by both very low and modest-income households. In comparison to modest-income households, low-income households receive an additional fee ('*aide à la personne*'), in order to pay their rent. Although this additional fee allows these households to access social housing, some areas in Greater Paris are still characterized by a great demand. Comparing to the national increase of 9%, the increase in Paris has been relatively low since 2002. In zones with high land prices and production costs, the offer remains insufficient. In addition, as rental fees are fixed according to the mode of financing and the date of construction/renovation, social housing in these zones is less accessible to households with a very low income. This implies that tenants with a higher income live in social housing situated in better-off neighbourhoods.

Despite few recent programs to increase public housing (such as the

Housing Alliance in Brussels), Milan and Brussels deal with a relatively small amount of social housing. The low percentage (8%) of social housing in the Brussels Capital Region is due to a historical debt of social housing companies, a strong policy focus on homeownership and the organisational difficulty of enlarging the stock despite various financial impetuses from the region. In combination with relatively high numbers of households in poverty in certain municipalities, this has led to a waiting list that exceeds double the offer. In Milan, the percentage is slightly higher,13,2%, but neither sufficient considering the 20.000 people on the waiting list. This percentage also goes along with a retreatment in social support and a gradual disinvestment in social housing, at the benefice of public-private partnerships. The shift from public to social housing 'as a last resort' in both contexts, has led to a general low social mix in terms of income. Social housing in Milan and Brussels has a substantial percentage of residents with social benefits as the primary source of income. This entails a large amount of people that are elderly, unemployed, and/or suffer physical and mental diseases. In addition, both contexts, deal with a strongly degraded social stock with a relatively high vacancy. In the case of Milan, this vacancy has led to a substantial amount of squatted housing. As a result, in addition to formal fragility, the stock includes 'informal' dwellers with multidimensional problems. Whereas in the Brussels case, a policy has been developed by the umbrella organization to deal with these social realities and needs in public housing through individual and collective social support, due to the lack of financial resources and a holistic policy approach, a decent social management is lacking in Milan.

Spatial and territorial disparities

The social housing landscape of Greater Paris is dominated by the so-called *Grand Ensembles*, a belt of post-war large-scale social housing estates unequally divided across the territory. The French areas under study, Fresnes, Taverny and Longjumeau, are a-typical *Grands Ensembles*. They include a large number of smaller estates with middle-rise blocks, that have been partly fenced off and closed for the public. Although not representative Grands Ensembles, Serge Wachter argues in this report that social housing in Fresnes (34% social housing, 3190 units) is in line with the majority of French social housing, where small sectors of social housing coexist morphologically with other types of housing in a mixed and diversified urban fabric.

Greater Milan Metropolitan Region has a more scattered social housing landscape. With its 6000 dwellings, the San Siro neighbourhood is one of the largest social housing neighbourhoods of the city. It is mainly composed of slabs organized around semi-private courtyards, largely

constructed before World War II and completed with some post-war developments. Even if organized around a unitary plan, it shows diverse types of housing developments: from traditional good quality-housing over modernist models with innovative construction techniques to rationalist lots characterized by low-cost materials and mono-functional housing units.

The Brussels Capital Region is marked by a rather finely grained dispersal of relatively small projects, with only a few post-war high-rise estates at the edge of the urban agglomeration. The Brussels neighbourhood under study, Peterbos, is such estate. It contains 1400 dwellings and was built in a publicly accessible park landscape. Over the course of the construction, ambitious modernist principles such as a combination of typologies and a strong presence of services were downscaled substantially in order to answer to the cost-efficiency of the project.

Ad-hoc and integrated approaches towards neighbourhood regeneration. Social cohesion projects and the instrument of the neighbourhood contract as recurring practices

The regeneration of large-scale social estates in the three contexts is marked by a combination of both 'ordinary' renovations by housing agencies and territorial and 'integrated' urban regeneration measures applied in specific territories. The latter, involving cities, municipalities and non-traditional actors such as the third sector, has been part of the policy framework of the European Union, supporting equal rights of access to the city, but also promoting more competitive territories on an international level.

As Dominique Lefrançois points out in this report, the regeneration of large-scale social estates is a very important theme of the Politique de la ville (the City Policy) in France. The City Policy gives a geographic priority to the so-called social housing areas in difficulty. It is devised as a collaboration between the state, the city and public and private actors; and covers a wide range of interventions, such as housing rehabilitation, urban planning, social and cultural action, education, employment and professional integration, crime prevention and security. Its origins go back to the 1970s, shortly after the construction of large-scale estates, but it has a strong relationship with upheavals of violence during several periods of time. These upheavals led to the redesign of the eligible territories – Zones Urbaines Sensibles (ZUS, 1996), Zones de Redynamisation Urbaine (ZRU), Zones Franches Urbaines (ZFU, 2006) - and devices - City contracts (Grands projets de ville (GPV), Opérations de renouvellement urbain (ORU), Grand projet de renouvellement urbain (GPRU), 1989), the National

urban renovation program by the national agency ANRU (PNRU, 2003), Urban social cohesion contracts (CUCS, 2007) - put in place as part of the Policy. Due to the redesign of the eligible territories, since 2014, the neighbourhood under study, Fresnes, is no longer eligible for the policy.

Whereas in some moments of time, attention was put on increasing social mix, through demolition and reconstruction, or on changing the typology of the Grands Ensembles into smaller semi-private entities, throughout time, the social component of the program has been intensified. For instance, by transforming the city contracts into Urban social cohesion contracts, a bottom-up regeneration and participation of inhabitants became more important. However, participation has been hampered by the central role of the mayor in the Policy. As Lefrançois states, 'in a context marked by logics such as clientelism, an entire administrative system was put in place with tendering procedures'. As such, only associations that are on good terms with the municipality are eligible partners for guiding the participatory process. Another difficulty is the attendance of institutional arrangements such as public meetings: such meetings are mostly attended by a handful representatives mostly consisting of elderly. Younger and more precarious groups often remain absent.

The City Policy has been constantly studied and criticized, offering a valuable work of evaluation. As described in the report by Nadya Labied, the PNRU operation in Montfermeil, for instance was marked by a symbolic participation of inhabitants. The Pile district in Roubaix on the other hand, the second case discussed in the report, was part of the City and Urban Cohesion Programming Act. In this case, the power of the mayor and municipality, strongly hindered the participatory process. However, under the impetus of the associations and architect on the site, exchanges with inhabitants were held throughout the entire process, showing the importance of agents steering participatory processes.

Next to external scientific critiques, also internal reports have been made in order to improve the City Policy. The last report feeding the city and social cohesion policy for instance, gives a set of recommendations for improving participation, amongst others by embracing social conflict and encouraging civil autonomy. It remains to be seen whether such recommendations will be taken into account.

While France is marked by a rather holistic approach towards neighbourhood regeneration or large-scale estates, in Brussels, the umbrella organization for social housing is responsible for supporting social housing companies to execute renovation works. The umbrella organization also supports associations to develop social cohesion projects in social estates dealing with specific problems or conflicts. However, in this report, Jeanne Mosseray, Nele Aernouts and Michael Ryckewaert show that the renovation of the social stock continues to be

a major challenge, especially in large-scale social estates. The cheap construction methods used at the time and a general lack of maintenance makes them particularly vulnerable for defects. Public space regeneration in Brussels' social housing is the matter of municipalities. Public spaces in deprived neighbourhoods in and around the first belt are sometimes subject to the Sustainable Neighbourhood Contracts, but those around the second belt are seldom included. The development of a neighbourhood contract in Peterbos, located in the second belt, is therefore unique. As the City Contracts in France, the Sustainable Neighbourhood Contracts in Brussels have been developed in 1993 in order to revitalize underprivileged areas, starting from an integrated development approach. In contrast, they operate at a neighbourhood level rather than an intermunicipal level.

The case of Querelle, presented in the report, shows that such contract does not guarantee a strong involvement of citizens. In the case of Querelle, which was subject to 3 neighbourhood contracts, the involvement and recommendations of the inhabitants and associations did not have any impact on the final interventions. More generally, the lack of a long-term vision and substantial means hinders a sustainable approach towards neighbourhood regeneration. This is especially the case in Peterbos, which has been subject to several ad-hoc interventions, uncompleted and unapproved masterplans. The case of Cité Modèle therefore offers an interesting counter example, as in this case, a consistent long-term vision was developed as a progressive guideline to regenerate the site.

Since the years 2000s, also deprived social neighbourhoods in Milan, such as San Siro, have been subject to neighbourhood contracts. In terms of goal and territorial delineation, the neighbourhood contracts in Milan are similar to the ones in Brussels. They have been implemented in Italy starting from the end of the 90s (Neighbourhood Contracts I) to redevelop neighbourhoods marked by 'poor social cohesion and housing discomfort'. In its second version (Neighborhood Contracts II), the programs have been co-financed by the Regional bodies. Lombardy Region chose to especially focus on enhancing and increasing public housing assets, involving its social housing agency Aler. However, the neighbourhood contracts encountered multiple difficulties in promoting an integrated urban regeneration. As Maranghi and Cognetti highlight in this report, the neighbourhood of San Siro is a good example in this sense.

First, due to financial difficulties, the housing renovation has been carried out very partially (in San Siro, for instance, it involved just a part of the neighbourhood) and very slowly. Second, the collaboration between the housing agency (Aler Milano) and the Municipality, in charge of the support of inhabitants during these operations, was also very difficult. The participation of underprivileged populations, as aim of this collaboration, was mostly to increase consensus on some policy choices rather than a real

involvement in decision-making processes. Finally and most importantly, the dominance of short-term extraordinary financial injections above long-term strategies and structural funding have been hindering an effective regeneration process. It is interesting to note, however, that in public housing neighbourhoods such as San Siro, the neighbourhood labs set up as accompanying services of the neighbourhood contracts, have remained in place. Supervised by the Municipality of Milan, they have been carried out by the third sector and non-profit organizations as a device to enhance social and territorial animation and cohesion.

More recently, new strategies of territorial revitalization focused on peripheries have been set up by the Municipality of Milan (in some cases also including the Region). However, the fragmentation of these interventions makes it difficult to consider them as structural policies. Moreover, public housing neighbourhoods are not considered as the main target of these policies. This tendency reflects a structural lack of a national strategy on housing accessibility, which is the case already in Italy since decades.

Towards a LivingLab approach

Critically moving from the difficulties encountered by participation policies within the complex framework of social housing regeneration, the SoHoLab approach offers a good opportunity to showcase new modalities of participation, intertwining with regeneration instruments such as the neighbourhood contracts and the regular renovation instruments of the national agency for urban regeneration ANRU and regional housing companies like SLRB and ALER in the perspective cities and municipalities. More specifically, we observe that in the three contexts, neighbourhood and city contracts have started to become recurrent regeneration tools within large-scale estates. This example of a 'contractualisation' between the state or regions and municipalities, has been introduced during the 1980s and 1990s as a way to adjust their projects and policies and to give geographic priority to 'areas in need'. In France, social housing areas in difficulty have been inherently part of this policy, while in Milan, the integration of social housing estates has not been a 'key' aspect of the policy, until the financial contribution of the Lombardy Region to the national policy from the 2000s onwards. In the Brussels Capital Region, in the past several social estates have been regenerated as part of inner-city contracts. The development of a neighbourhood contract in Peterbos, a more peripheral neighbourhood only comprised of social housing, is very new in this respect.

Although the 'success' of such contracts proves to be strongly dependent on the contexts and circumstances in which they have been

applied, in the examples of Brussels and Milan they failed to provide integrated and structural tools of regeneration. Due to the short time span and limited means it appears to be difficult to attune such 'extraordinary measures' to 'ordinary' renovation instruments. In addition, participation has been an unfulfilled promise in the examples of Brussels and Paris, where interventions were largely based on political decisions. However, the local approach of neighbourhood contracts, largely building on existing actors and networks, paves the way for more customized forms of regeneration, and the development of LivingLabs as part of that. As such, we can identify the following points of interest, which could be addressed by further research:

- the different impacts of extra-ordinary vs ordinary regeneration strategies and programs;
- the different meanings of short-term interventions vs long-term visions;
- the role assumed by municipalities, social housing agencies and the third sector in promoting or obstructing the participation of inhabitants;
- the effects of stigma related to large-scale social housing;
- the processes of precarisation and the difficulty of representation as obstacles which has not been sufficiently considered or dealt with within participation programs involving inhabitants;
- the importance of adjusting different participatory devices and defining the role of inhabitants in developing them;
- the consideration of new views on local power and autonomy in decision-making processes.

Paris

Nadya Labied, Andrei Feraru, Dominique Lefrançois, Serge Wachter
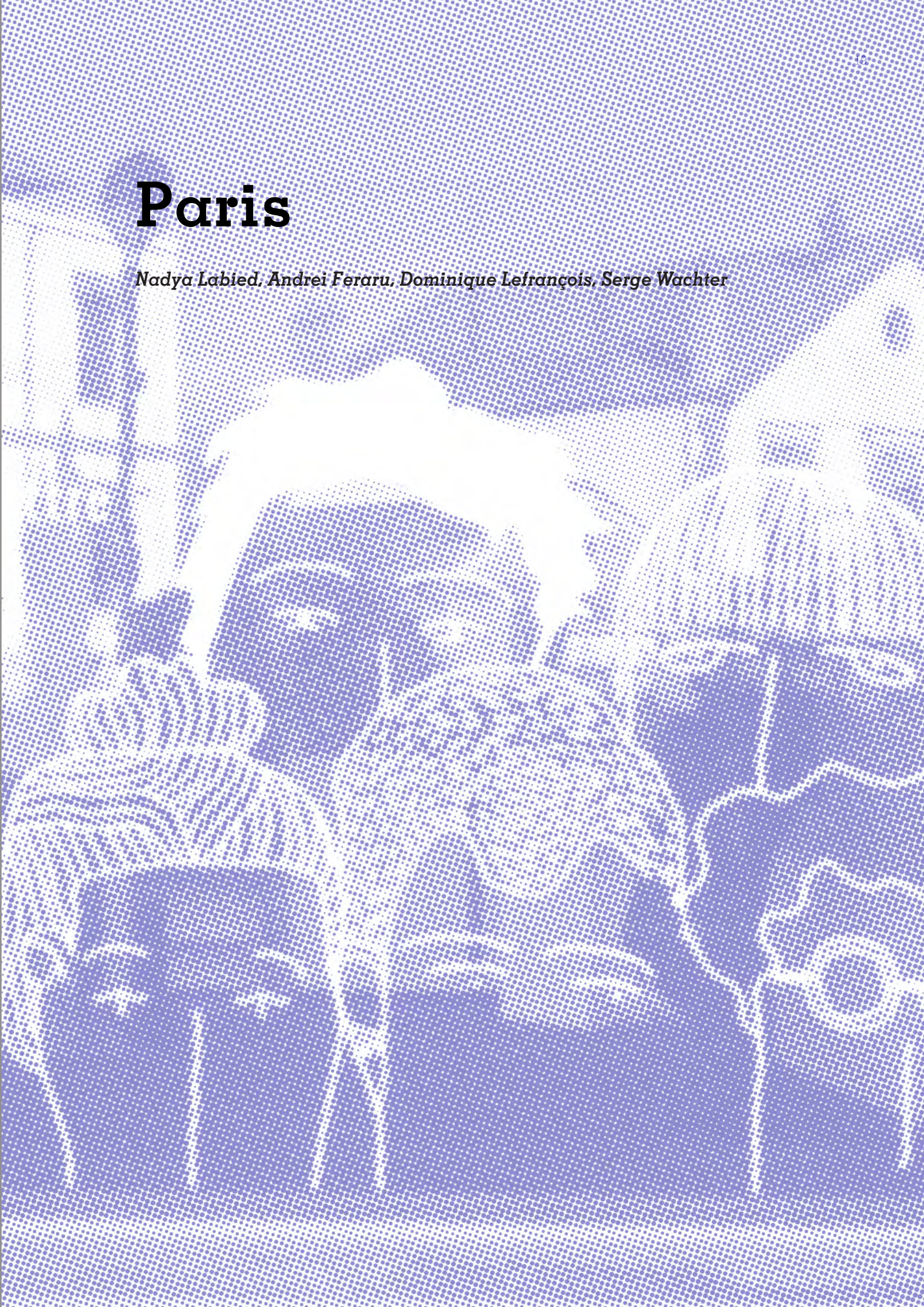
Social housing in France: from the origins to current inequalities

Nadya Labied and Andrei Feraru

More than 10 million French people today live in one of the 4.7 million social housing units of the social housing stock in France. However, there are 1.8 million recorded requests for social housing, in spite of an increase in construction figures. In 5 years, the number of social housing units increased by 25% to reach 35,883 units in 2016, and 50% of the dwellings produced in 2016 in the Île-de-France region are social housing.

The production and the financing of the social housing in France are regarded as very interesting by several economists, some even describe them as a "French model". But the access terms and the settlement of these dwellings, particularly in the Ile de France region, are object of many debates. Town planners and sociologists point out the territorial inequalities, and the difficulty of access to the social housing, in particular in Ile-de-France.

A definition of social housing

In France when one speaks about social housing, one means the HLM (*Habitation à Loyer Modéré*), the rental residences built with support to be able to place people with modest incomes. A social housing is thus a housing whose financial backer is an organization, and whose rent and conditions of attributions were fixed by the State. To obtain housing, the tenant must pass a commission, made up of the board of directors of the HLM organization, a representative of the tenants, the mayor of the town and advisory members. The incomes of the candidate should not exceed a certain upper limit, fixed according to the geographical zone and of the financing obtained by the financial backer.

The rent is also fixed by geographical zone according to the loan which financed the construction or the restoration of housing.

These loans are the following, from lowest to highest:
– The PLAI, *Prêt locatif aidé d'intégration*, is granted to people of great precariousness;

– The PLUS, *Prêt Locatif à usage social*, corresponds to 80% of the social housing:

– The PLS, *Prêt Locatif social*, is intended for the households with a little higher income, especially in the areas where the demand is higher than the offer. This loan is accessible to private financial backers.

Social housing construction mainly developed after the 2nd world war, to meet the needs for reconstruction, rural migration and the return of repatriates from North Africa.

Thus the majority of the current social housing is made up of the *"Grands Ensembles"*, with a higher density in the North and the Rhône-Alpes region, which one can explain by the industrialization and the metropolisation, as well as a tradition of possibility of home-ownership more developed in the south.
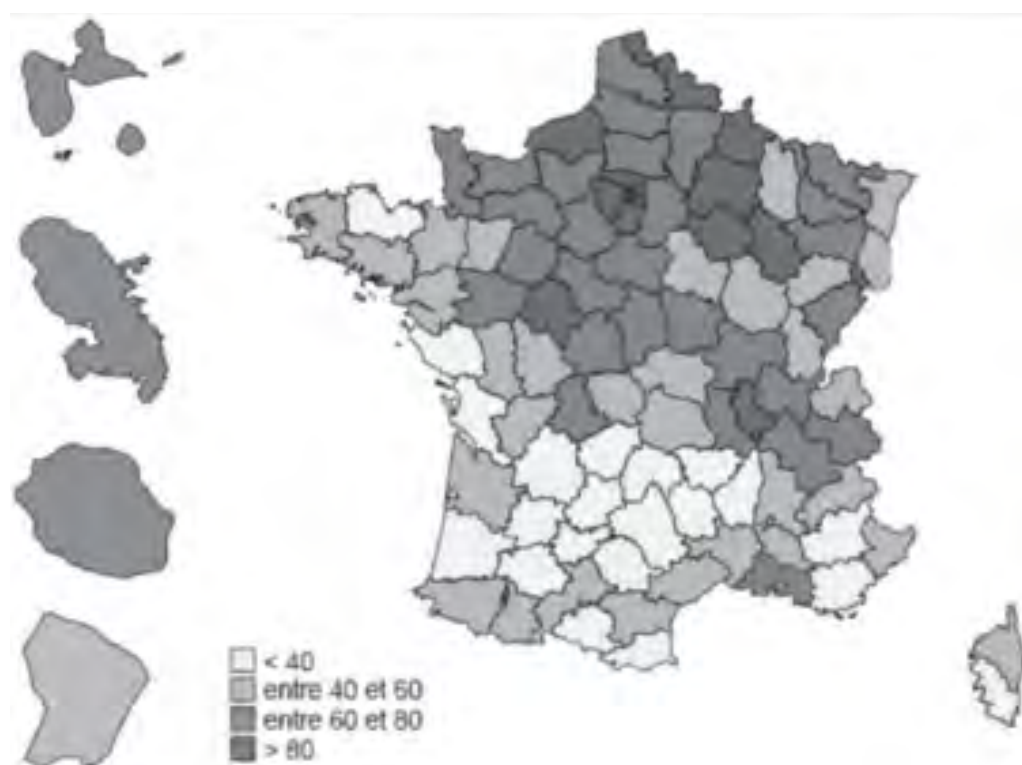
Figure 1   Density of the social housing in France (number of residences for 1,000 inhabitants, 01-01-2007) (Source : MEEDDAT/SEPS, EPLS)

Evolution of social housing policy in France

France has a long tradition of social housing, with powerful actors and national specificities. According to historians, housing policy in France started in 1850 with the laws on the sanitation of unsanitary housings after epidemics, but the first real estate companies with social vocation were created in 1885: HBM, *Habitation Bon Marché*. In 1894 the

first law on social housing was passed, giving a legal framework to HBM. At that time, these initiatives were made by a class of employers for the construction of workmen housing, State aid starts only at the beginning of the 20th century.

In 1905, the *Caisse des Dépôts* granted the first loans to social housing. Created by the law of April 28th, in 1916, to restore the financial credit of the State after the 1st empire, the CDC is placed under the surveillance of deputies.

At the beginning of the 1950s, a series of laws contributed to centralise the financing of social housing. The HLM were created in 1950, when the government set up a system of construction bonuses and special loans of the *Crédit Foncier de France*, to support the possibility of home-ownership. The law of July 10th, 1953, instituted the participation of employers in the effort of housing construction: companies had to invest the equivalent of 1% of the amount of the wages for the financing of social housing. In 1954 the SCIC, *Société Centrale Immobilière de la Caisse des dépôts* was created, which devotes the entry of the CDC in the construction of housing. The SCIC quickly becomes one of the first French estate developers.

By 1957, sector HLM ensured 30% of new buildings, to solve the housing shortage of the post-war period. It is the birth of the "*Grands ensembles*" in the periphery of the big cities, accelerated by the industrialization of the constructions, and the increased needs due to the return of the repatriates from North Africa. These residences were occupied by employees, with low or average incomes.

Then in 1977, the government of Raymond Barre would modify the situation of social housing: the State changes housing policy and supports the "assistance to the person" (*aide à la personne*) compared to "assistance to the stone" (*aide à la pierre*) by the introduction of the APL (Aide Personnalisée au logement). The "assistance to the stone" and the "assistance to the person" are the two types of state housing assistance. The first one is intended for the owners to support the construction and rehabilitation of residences, while the second one is granted by the State through an organization, the *Caisse d'Allocations Familiales*, to lower income households. For the tenants of HLM, the APL is directly transferred to the social landlord, and is added to "the assistance to the stone" subsidies for the production of social housing. But the "assistance to the person" applies to the households with the most modest incomes, so 50% of the tenants of HLM do not profit from it. This modification of the financing destabilizes the occupation of the social stock, supporting the departure of the middle class, and the access of the immigrant population.

The degradation of social housing is accentuated in the 1980s following the increase in unemployment and the insufficient maintenance

of the properties.

From 1984 onwards, to encourage the private rental investment, the State proposed tax reductions through several pieces of legislation: the last being the Pinel law in 2014. The support of the access has also been part of the policies of the State since 1977, through the PAP, *Prêt d'Accession à la Propriété*, replaced in 1995 by zero percent financing, or PTZ. Initially reserved for the purchase of new housings, the PTZ was extended in 2004 to old residences. Other recent laws regulate the levels of the rents, and tax vacant housings.

Actors and financing of social housing

Social housing is thus produced according to an economic "model" specific to France. This model relates to not only the financing of the production, but also to the management of the stock, composed of more than 4 million residences. It is the role of the 550 organizations of social housing which exist in France: OPH, *Offices Publics d'Habitat*, and ESH, *Entreprises Sociales pour l'Habitat*.

The *Code de l'Urbanisme* thus defines the vocation of HLM organizations: "The construction, development, allocation and management of social housing is intended to improve the housing conditions of people with modest or disadvantaged resources. These operations contribute to the implementation of the right to housing and contribute to the necessary social mix of cities and neighbourhoods". HLM organizations have the technical capabilities and financial solidity to build, manage and maintain the social rental stock in the long run, while guaranteeing the rent ceiling.

They do not distribute the benefits, which are reinvested in the construction or restoration of the residences. The financing of social housing is made by loans: organizations of HLM borrow mainly from the *Caisse des Dépôts et Consignations*. This one has 65% of the funds of saving accounts in France, transferred by the banks against a remuneration.

The *Caisse des Dépôts* borrows these savings to social housing organisations for the long term, at rates limited by the remuneration of the savers and the collecting bank.

Thus the CDC plays a very important role: the funds of savings represent the main part of the loans for the financing of social housing, and the policy of the city. The CGLLS, *Caisse de garantie du logement locative social*, guarantees these loans to the local authorities. Various subsidies and assistances are brought by other actors: the State, the local authorities, and the private organizations, through the "1% employers". The State and the local authorities also take part by contributing land at

a reduced price, or by tax exemptions. On the other hand, these actors can book residences in priority.
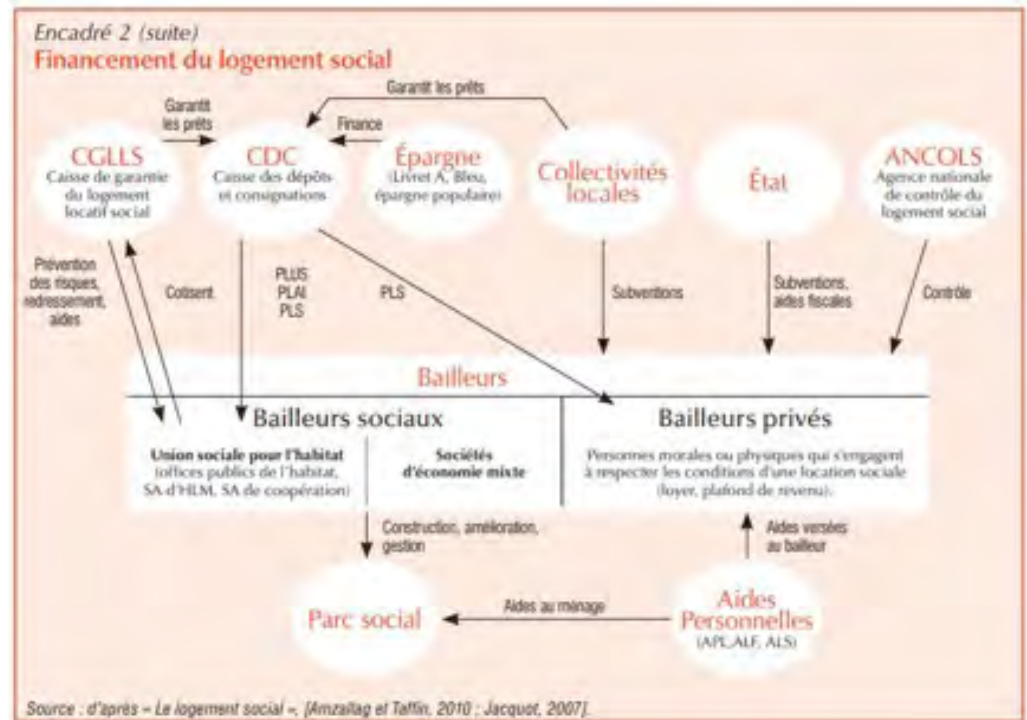
Figure 2   Financing of the social housing: Nathalie Donzeau et Raphaël Lardeux, Insee Références, édition 2017.

The specificities of this model are a part of the tradition of French social intervention, and allow (in theory) to guarantee the housing of households with low incomes. However, the demand becomes more and more important compared to the offer, and in certain geographical zones the rents are too high because of the price of the land and the production costs. So the new social housings are inaccessible to the households with the most modest income, who remain in the former social park. On the other hand, the policies of the State do not target the geographical zones where the demand is the strongest, implying an increase of inequalities.

The inequalities

According to the Abbé Pierre foundation, 4 million people are inadequately housed today in France: households living in unsanitary or too small housings, or people not having their own housing. In addition, the statistical surveys of INSEE (National Institute for statistics and economic studies) show an increase in the social inequalities in housing in France since the 1970s, and the casualization of the tenants of the social housing.

Territorial disparities

Compared to Europe, France is located at the centre with regard to the percentage of social housing as main home, with a rate of 20%: the Netherlands have a higher rate with 34%, and the countries of the south have less than 5%, with 0% for Greece. These rates are explained by many factors, among which the social history of the country.

But one notes very important inequalities between the cities in France: for example in the same department, the Hauts de Seine, the rate of social housing in Neuilly-sur-Seine is 1.2%, while the rate is 70% in Gennevilliers.

In addition, in spite of a national increase of social housing stock of almost 9% since 2002, that is to say a contribution of more than 374,000 units; we see a low recent increase of the social housing stock in Paris and a reduction in the number of new arrivals with regard to the other regions. Thus, in the zones where the demand is keenest, the offer remains insufficient and unsuited to the population with the most modest incomes.

So in the current housing crisis, the question arises not only in terms of quantitative deficit, but also territorial disparities.

Socio-spatial disparities

We can also observe, thanks to the inquiries of the INSEE, that the spatial distribution of the tenants in the social park depends on their income, on their level of diploma, and their nationality. So the most modest tenants are the ones who live in districts that are the most disadvantaged of the social sector, while the tenants with higher incomes live in social housing situated in the better-off neighbourhoods.

On the other hand, the number of immigrated household tenants in the social sector are twice as high as than the non-immigrants. This number increased by 6% between 1996 and 2013, while it remained stable for the other households. Besides, 70% of the immigrant tenants of the social park live in housing built before 1974.

These inequalities are more visible in Paris urban districts, where the sought quality of a low-cost housing is its localization, more than any other characteristic (Fack, 2005)

The spatial disparities are highlighted by the fact that the rent of social housing is fixed not according to the capacity of payment of the tenant, or the reference to market rent, but because it's fixed according to the mode of financing and the date of the construction or the renovation of the building. Thus the new social housing remains less accessible to the population with the most modest income.

Disparities of access to property

In Europe, in 2014, 70% of the households are owners of their housing. This rate oscillates between 50% in Austria and 96% in Romania.

The French rate is lower than the European average: 58% of households are owned, according to the housing investigations of the INSEE, and the access to property is decreasing since the crisis of 2008. In addition, in spite of a progression from 45% to 58% since 1973, the inequalities of access to property between modest and higher income households have not ceased increasing for 40 years: "The discriminating character of income in the access to the property was thus accentuated" (Arnold, Boussard).

The low mobility of the tenants of the social sector involves an ageing of the population of this group, and difficulties of access for new tenants.

Social housing: a very important place in the policy of the city:

Social housing is central to the policy of the habitat. Until the 1970's its role was to meet the important requirements in housing, but today the State can use it to restart the activity of building, as for example when in the first decade of the new millennium social lessors were authorized to buy new housings from the promoters. Social housing is also an engine of urban development in the great operations like the ZAC, *Zones d'Action Concertée*, and the new towns.

But many debates raise the question of the incapacity of the various public policies to decrease the social inequalities in housing, and within that social housing. The degradation and the casualization of the *Grands Ensembles* thus occupy a very important place in the policy of the city.

A retrospective and critical approach of urban politics conducted in France since the 1980s

Dominiqiue Lefrançois

Preambule

The general terms of Urban Policy in France refer to social and urban policy to fight against exclusion and segregation. It is targeted at so-called Social Housing Areas in difficulty, suburbs and housing estates, although not all districts are located in the outskirts of cities, some areas affected by the city's policy (like Marseille for example) are within city centers. Already old, constantly criticized from one government to another, supposedly temporary, this policy has been continuously extended for 40 years by the same governments who were critical of it. The devices have changed, stacking them could give an impression of complexity, but the principles have remained the same, the philosophy has lasted, even if the emphasis has been in different times and governments, sometimes on the social, sometimes the economic, the security or the buildings.

The latest reform of urban policy initiated in 2014 presented as a novelty was content with resuming the main principles of previous policies (Epstein, 2015). Its real novelty lies in the fact that it is the first not to aim for the end of the problem of the suburbs. Will the Urban Policy become sustainable, such as Youth Policy, since the social question in urban space or the spatial crystallization of exclusion are permanent issues? (Estèbe, 2015). It may also be considered as another novelty in so far that it puts the participation of the inhabitants back on the agenda. Though a constituent part of the City's Policy which promoted it from its origins and tended to make it an innovative policy, the participation has been little implemented. For some authors, one would say there has even been a retreat on this point. Also if there is a reform, would it happen through real involvement of the inhabitants or new forms of collaboration?

An exceptional public policy; transversal partnership derogating from the sacred French principle of equivalence of public aid policies

City Policy is an exceptional policy in the context of French public policies. It makes geographic priority one of its founding principles: as such, it derogates from the sacrosanct Republican principle of equal treatment between men and territories. Based on the principle of the territorialisation of public action and territorial positive discrimination, it aims at helping the most disadvantaged, not by virtue of the rightful beneficiaries of the usual social protection policies in France, but of disadvantaged neighbourhoods or areas in order to put them back on the level of other neighbourhoods. The focus is on the territory: it is not, unlike the American method for example, to remove racial and social barriers to the mobility of people having trouble leaving stigmatized places, but rather to repair the defects of some territories. A specific effort is made to compensate for inequalities between territories, because not all the neighbourhoods have the same services and amenities. It is therefore the goal to make them equivalent in all parts of the city. City Policy covers a wide variety of interventions, covering both housing rehabilitation and urban planning, as well as social and cultural action, schooling, employment and professional integration, crime prevention and security. It is defined both as a social policy and an urban policy. It treats people and territories simultaneously. (Avenel, 2013)

First of all, there are priority neighbourhoods or areas with a combination of social, economic and urban handicaps, where the plan is to intervene in a comprehensive way in all aspects of daily life, in associating, by way of partnership, all stakeholders in the context of a local contract project. The Urban Policy tends to put the notion of neighbourhood, which was beginning to lose its importance with the increase of the city and the increase of the speeds and the mobilities within it, back on the agenda, after the implantation of services and businesses in other parts of the city. This territorially positive discrimination is accompanied in the second place by a policy of social diversity of housing which is still going on. It is a question of reducing the concentration of disadvantaged populations in these districts: this term, which is a little general, hides another concentration, those of the immigrant populations. The City's Policy, thirdly, is not (as its name might suggest) a municipal policy but a co-production between the City, the State and many public and private actors.

Owing to the policy of decentralization carried out in France in the 80s, when one was anxious to rethink the traditional distributions between the state and the communes, it is also motivated by a concern for modernization

of public services. It is about moving towards more proximity, optimally coordinating public action, acting locally and transversally. (Avenel 2013, White, 2007, Lelevrier, 2015). The mayors quickly took hold of the social devices of the first city policy and it remained theirs (Kirszbaum, 2015). What constitutes progress, the elected officials (with the exception of the communist town halls) of the previously deserted neighbourhoods, which were considered to be places of extraterritoriality, in the hands of the housing providers?

A first experimentation period: the setting up in the 80s and 90s of mission organisms

Criticism of the deviation from the social and urban norm of large neighbourhoods that seem to belong to another world, cumulating social dysfunctions, together with a form considered already pathogenic, was already carried out in the 70s by a movement of protest against social housing projects. These neighbourhoods have a lack of public services, fewer job opportunities than other neighbourhoods and segregation phenomena, a high concentration not only of poor but also of immigrants. In short, the City's Policy was born shortly after the end of their construction, signified by the Guichard circular (1973), with a program to rehabilitate some fifty sites, the "Habitat and Social Life (HVS)".

This program between 1977 and 1981 sought to restore the image of neighbourhoods to a population of the middle classes leaving the neighbourhoods to access prefabricated and cheap individual properties, even far from the centre. The City's Policy also feeds on the media coverage of so-called urban violence, during the so-called hot summers in the Lyons area in September 1979 in Vaulx en Velin in the district of La Grappinière, then in 1981 in the city of Minguettes in Venissieux, following altercations between young people and the police, only a few months after riots in Brixton in the suburbs of London.

This violence led the socialist government that had just come to power to put in place a set of measures to promote Neighbourhood Social Development (DSQ), initiated around National Commission for Neighbourhood Development (CNDSQ) chaired by the Mayor of Grenoble, H. Dubedout. The phenomenon of youth gangs observed then was not new. New was the media coverage of urban violence regularly inflaming the suburbs, which would incite each time the redesign of the devices put in place as part of the Policy of the City to renovate neighbourhoods. Following the closure of factories, this violence is explained by the disintegration of workers' culture. The feeling of belonging to a social group affiliated to the neighbourhood, as sociologists might have observed in the working-class

neighbourhoods of the 1970s (Chamboredon, Lemaire, 1970), no longer exists. Neighbourhoods are seen now as concentrating a sum of excluded, feeling abandoned by public policies, and who, by the voice of young people, exclaim their exclusion.

But the term urban violence that appeared in the 80s is increasingly interpreted as a reflection of the anomie and disorganization of young people in the suburbs, even if for a number of sociologists (Mauger 2013, Macé and Peralva, 2000, Peralva, 1995) this violence has always had a political connotation. They testify a displacement of the conflicts and struggles which yesterday took place in the places of production proper to the industrial society (the work). At the time of the least jobs, conflicts and struggles are seen in the public space of neighbourhoods concentrating impoverished middle classes and immigrant populations.

In any case, the City's Policy is part of a new social policy in which the notion of the fight against segregation takes precedence over the prevailing one, which had to be tackled, namely poverty and impoverishment (Castel, 2009). The first days of the City's Policy are those of experimentation; in the 80s and 90s. Several mission bodies were set up. Placed at the government level, they were given the task of establishing contractual relations at the local level.

Priority Education Zones (ZEP created in 1981) were set up, in which suburban schools and colleges benefited from additional resources and greater autonomy. Teachers choosing to work there received bonuses. Such measures appeared in total opposition to the principle and traditional egalitarianism of the French educational system. The Suburb 89 mission, created in 1981 by the architects Roland Castro and Michel Cantal Dupart, envisaged a real urban revolution, centred around the deconstruction and opening up of the suburbs by 1989. Local Missions for the social and professional integration of young people in difficulty as well as the National Commission for the Prevention of Crime (cnpd) took the fight against insecurities by the integration of young people.

While the Habitat and Social Life Program focused on the rehabilitation of buildings, the Social Development of Neighbourhoods procedure envisaged complementary social and urban aspects, even if, in terms of the amount of money spent, the urban sector won out widely. A partnership-type approach was established with a certain number of territories (considered problematic), the number of which would vary according to the years and the government (as an example, 400 sites in 1989). The urban component takes into account housing problems, neighbourhood links with the city and transportation, social, sanitary, educational, sports and other facilities. The social aspect must also be understood in two ways: the treatment of social problems (poverty,

precariousness, delinquency, etc.) and the problems of society, in the first place the position of the poor and foreigners in the city and in society.

A policy that becomes institutionalized in the 1990s

New riots in Vaulx en Velin encouraged the consolidation, in the 90s, of the devices put in place until then. Mission agencies were gradually giving way to institutions. In 1988, the Interministerial Delegation to the City was set up to ensure the mobilization of the various actors of the city's policy. In 1991, a ministry of the city was instituted to coordinate the action of the fourteen ministries concerned, in whichever capacity, by the city. Michel Delebarre was the first minister.

At the local level, municipalities had a "City Policy" service sometimes called "urban social development service". These municipal services managed the rehabilitation of the cities, sought to remedy certain defects of the urban environment (such as signage or aged pavement). They sought by means of subsidies, to develop the associative sector, to encourage the inhabitants to get together to mount punctual projects of small scale (travels, sports activities, cultural, etc.) or simply to meet through festivals and neighbourhood councils. Participation was thus conceived for the purpose of sociability and the fight against the social disintegration of inhabitants who did not necessarily want to meet each other, unlike the working-class neighbourhoods of the past who were marked by a sense of belonging to the same community.

Specific actors and professions (sub-prefect for the city, project manager) were responsible for locally adapting the city's policy. They had to negotiate with the elected officials, the inhabitants, the civil servants, the companies, the associations, or with agents of integration, the persons in charge of various missions, the agents of local development. They had the task of initiating consultations in order to implement the contractual aspect of the relations between the State, the city and the inhabitants.

To ensure a principle of social diversity and to help insert a sense of neighbourhood in the city, the actions were intended to be more focused on territories. The number of neighbourhoods was then reduced. The actions would be undertaken as a priority on problem areas in certain territories. The term zone then replaced the neighbourhood. It was supposed to correspond more to the division of disadvantaged territories (such as City Contract, Sensitive urban areas, areas with bigger problems (GPU, 1993) based on indicators allowing the implementation of territorial positive discrimination.

Then, the promulgation of laws aimed to get the problem out of the suburbs by seeking a more equitable distribution of social housing in the

city and a redistribution of financial resources between municipalities that manage these situations and others. It was a matter of consolidating a policy weakened by its contractual nature, and refers to the application of measures that were not very popular with elected representatives and in the form of the law.

The City Orientation Act of 1991 required each city in an agglomeration of more than 200,000 inhabitants and having less than 18% of recipients of personal assistance, to have on its territory 20% of social housing. Then, the Solidarity and Urban Renewal Act (SRU) of 2000 required municipalities to have at least 20% of social housing. Yet, many municipalities, fearing a degradation of their image with the arrival of low-income populations, preferred to pay a fine rather than build social housing.

The focus on economics and security

The emergence of increased impoverishment of neighbourhoods in spite of these mechanisms led to the implementation of a "Recovery Plan for the City" in 1996. It was structured around sensitive urban areas - administrative entities defined by the public authorities to be the priority target of the Town's policy, chosen according to the situation in the agglomeration, economic and commercial characteristics, and a poverty index taking into account the unemployment rate, the proportion of young people under 25, the amount of people leaving the school system without a diploma and the fiscal potential of municipalities.

The zoning was more complex, tightening the intervention on a smaller number of neighbourhoods (at that time, 700, or half of city contracts). It signalled a refocus on economic factors and then established a hierarchy between neighbourhoods. In the most distressed sensitive urban areas, there were 416 Urban Revitalization Zones: companies within them were exempt from corporate tax and business tax for five years, and from employer contributions on new hires for a year. Within them, Zones Franches (ZFU, 44) sought to develop and diversify economic activity, to strengthen the functional mix of neighbourhoods and to create jobs for the inhabitants. The support offered to businesses was more generous, more sustainable and more incentive for job creation. Although they will not have the desired effects, these ZFUs, which were set to disappear in 2002, are extended with the Borloo law of December 2002, creating the urban renewal program (PNRU).

The years 1998-2000 announced a redefinition of the orientations and tools: on the one hand the emphasis was placed on the security and the concern to appreciate the social risks, on the other hand, a change in the scale of the intervention: the city's policy deviated from the neighbourhood

to think about solidarity at the scale of agglomerations. The global actions were planned to lie at the intercommunal level with tax incentives, the development of inter-municipal cooperation. The Chevènement law of July 12, 1999 mad the city's policy a competence of the communities of agglomerations.

The 2000s: The built under fire. Changing of the form failing to change people. A radical change of physiognomy

The law of orientation and programming for the city and the urban renewal, the so-called Borloo law passed in August 2003, could both be presented as new, or as a break from previous policies. It was neither. The difference would come from the importance attached to the building and especially from the extent of the destruction. The credits allocated to the physical environment were major: 45 million euros, of which 12 million euros of national subsidies were put towards demolition-reconstruction operations. The goal is to trivialize the architectural and urban form of neighbourhoods to promote social diversity. This is more about eradicating the ghetto than restructuring it. The word ghetto appeared at this time whereas it was little used until then, since it was considered not adapted to districts sheltering a composite population, not at all immobile and recluse. The ANRU or National Agency for Urban Renewal established in 2004 by the law, under the tutelage of the interministerial delegation to the city, had the task of sustaining funding in the form of an "Urban Renewal Program (PNRU)" lasting 10 years (2004-2013). Created to support the urban renewal effort, it was also designed to simplify and accelerate the policies that had been implemented until then. ANRU acts as a one-stop shop by pooling funds of various origins. The projects sponsored by the social landlords, the communes, which before then were to be submitted to several financial organizations were now concentrated at a single instance. ANRU had to cooperate with another national agency, the National Agency for Social Cohesion and Equal Opportunities, with the aim of ensuring complementarity between urban and social actions.

The urban renewal agreements then created concern nearly 600 neighbourhoods of urban renewal (QRU) of which more than 400 in ZUS. The re-opening of vacant housing and the construction of new housing (140,000 dwellings planned for 2017), new social housing or private housing, was intended to attract other layers of more money-rich populations in the future. The diversification of housing with the construction of housing in homeownership also serves to diversify social groups. This intervention is based on the questioning of the city's previous policies deemed ineffective.

The state financed the cost of the demolitions of the donors, who could rebuild social housing by means of reduced loans. Promoters have the opportunity to build assisted housing, local communities included. They could benefit from a reduced VAT up to a zone of 500m around the perimeter of the district. The housing association (from the 1% form the employer) can build private rental housing, always with the aim of diversifying the offer.

The action thus undertaken has had the effect of having contributed to radically changing the physiognomy of large social housing projects. The rehabilitation principle called residentialization is a tool for urban reconquest; the architecture of the large social housing complex is totally remodelled. The earlier rehabilitations, critical of the model of urbanism inherited from the modern city, had already exposed the suburbs to profound changes; by drawing streets within them, seeking to establish a border between the private and the public, considered as labile, and as such hostile to appropriation, to recreate the plot, and by doing so, to instil the historic city instead of the modern urbanism of the 50s-70s. By architecture, social landlords and architects also seek to involve and promote the responsibility of people (living as municipality or lessor) on their environment.

A true ritornello of interventions in the suburbs, the residentialization carried as a model in the years 90-2000 played its part in splitting up the large social housing estate into autonomous residential units. This architectural process wanted to bring it back to a human scale. It sought to bring it in line with the middleclass housing model. The large housing complex carved into a myriad of residences is modelled on the image of residences of the middle classes, with digital codes, public space reserved for the inhabitants and closed on itself; it is a question of encouraging the investment of a public space considered too big to allow its appropriation but also its surveillance by the inhabitants themselves.

The residential unit, materialized by the creation of new frontiers, broadens the sphere of private, (previously limited to housing), to the collective and external parts. The Anglo-Saxon theory of the defensible space that emphasizes the principle of informal control and the monitoring of the inhabitants on their environment, an architecture designed to generate surveillance of the inhabitants is not far; this although the French are very reluctant to the notion of communitarianism, invokes to counter the approach, the specificity of the republican French model firmly attached to the notion of individual freedom. The situational prevention borrowed from the countries of Northern Europe and Anglo-Saxon hopes to achieve the prevention of insecurities by architecture seeking to counter the conditions of turning to delinquency. It is added to the model of social prevention of delinquency as promoted by the French city policy, wanting

to emphasize the prevention of delinquency by social actions.

"Residentialization" has also been thought of as a tool for social diversity: the improvement of the quality of services, the construction of smaller housing for the middle classes seeks to retain people wishing to leave, while at the same time attracting other social groups that originally did not necessarily want to come. By selecting newcomers, it also intends to limit the number of large families, foreigners and low-income households.

But the destruction is not new. 40 years of city policy have led to the demolition of a tool at the service of the development of neighbourhoods, the architectural form being long considered pathogen. The urban renewal program launched by the previous Prime Minister Lionel Jospin already provided for the destruction of 30,000 log per year, but in fact, the number of demolition did not exceed one thousand.

Many families in social housing estates have paid the price for their successive urban renewal policies, and as such have been confronted several times with the demolition of their building. Sociologist David Lepoutre (2007) mentions the frequent occurrence of families from the area of La Courneuve who have moved several times because of the destruction of their buildings. He gives the example of families who lived in a HLM apartment building on rue Claude Debussy destroyed in 1986, to be rehoused in the building Auguste Renoir Street which would be destroyed in 1999; families having already previously been affected by destructions, such as the demolition of shanty towns in the 1960s, and demolition in the 1980s of transit cities where they were relocated to afterwards. This corroborates investigations that we made in other neighbourhoods (Orly, Bagneux, Garges-les Gonnesses, dir. Lelevrier, 2011), with families whose building was destroyed as part of this great wave of renovation done under the Borloo law : several respondents had previously undergone the demolition of a previous home, just like their parents in law.

The policy of destruction and construction of housing has helped to change the appearance of neighbourhoods, to trivialize the modern form of large social housing complexes: but it has not succeeded in renewing the inhabitants of neighbourhoods that this policy expected. It seems to give more hope to the elected officials and local actors than to the inhabitants. It finally confronted two public policies in the 2000's and 2010's; that of the Ministry of Equipment brandishing the weapon of the destruction of buildings to make restorations more in line with the taste of the historic and banal city, a building considered pathogenic; that of the Ministry of Culture anxious to preserve a major part of the built production of the second twentieth century, and reproving a too caricatured vision of a reality much more complex, to the point of denying any cultural dimension to this building and social housing estate form the sixties.

The Ministry of Culture, already worried in the 90s about the rehabilitations and destructions, deny any quality to these buildings; it had already launched research programs to encourage thinking about their heritage (Vayssière, 1986, Vayssière, 1994, Lefrançois, 1994). Inheritance is seen as basically a rehabilitation tool. It opposes the operations of rehabilitation for social, historical or cultural reasons and of residentialization making little case of a modern style wanted purified. This heritage policy thinks of the rehabilitation of the framework in a symbolic way. It is less a matter of rehabilitating the architecture than the negative image with which it is burdened, not so much by the inhabitants but more by those outside the neighbourhoods, those who do not live there, the townspeople, or the French population in general. The Ministry of Culture tried to counter this renovation policy by creating in 1999 the label "Heritage of the twentieth century". It highlights the architectural, cultural and historical values of a number of buildings inherited from modernity.

Today, there are a hundred buildings labelled in France (twenty buildings in PACA in 2006, forty in Île-de-France at the end of 2008). Its ambition is more symbolic and pedagogical than regulatory. If it does not strictly speak of legal and financial consequences for the owner, the label may allow to derogate from the isolation from the outside encouraged in the framework of the sustainable development when it risks transforming the building too radically, but only in agreement with the owner. These policies for preserving built heritage in the 1950s and 1970s also include landscape and urban planning, interior plans for housing and progress in terms of comfort (Pouvreau, 2011).

A reform to simplify a policy marked by the accumulation of devices and zonings

The Law of Programming for the City and the Urban Cohesion of 21 February 2014, known as Lamy Law, name of the Minister delegated to the City, first important legislative text since the Borloo law also has the ambition of a deep renewal. By engaging a new urban renewal step in connection with the social component; the new city contract will mix the social and spatial approaches with creating a unique and comprehensive intervention approach to intercommunal level. The priority of geography is rationalized: in particular, it aims to avoid the scattering of aid and to reduce the multiple categories of neighbourhoods inherited from the past to a single category (750 ZUS, 416ZRU, 100ZFU), 594 ANRU districts and 2492 CUCS divided into 3 priority levels. But this ambition will be met with resistance of local elected officials not wanting to lose the subsidies of the City's Policy. The zonings on which dozens of fiscal and budgetary

measures are indexed are maintained in the form of 1514 priority neighbourhoods (QPV) including 1296 in metropolitan France identified on the basis of a single criterion, the income. The selected territories are those where the per capita income is less than 60% of the national median income (which amounts to 11,250 euros per year), which corresponds to nearly the double compared to the ZUS. This new geography refocuses the city's policy towards the poorest territories. 300 municipalities are coming out of the system, 100 new ones are coming in, including many cities hit by de-industrialization. In fact, the objective of simplification is not achieved since two categories of neighbourhoods targeted by the city's policy, priority neighbourhoods and watch districts are instituted. In addition, these neighbourhoods coincide only partially with the map of the priority networks of the national education and the priority security zones of the police. The identification of problem areas based on the sole poverty criterion is intended to facilitate the monitoring of problem neighbourhoods, to allow regular updating of zoning and to identify areas drop-out. But the use of a public indicator is very quickly criticized.

The need for social cohesion in a territory cannot be reduced to the approach of the standard of living or poverty. At the level of equivalent income, depending on the age structure or the share of the immigrant population, the level of unemployment or education, the state of housing, the social situation of a neighbourhood can be very different. A non-dynamic indicator (the indicator as it is built today is static) hides the dynamics at work. In some territories, unemployment has risen sharply since 2008. In others, this increase has been lower

The reform plan of completion of the urban renewal program as well as launch generation operations from 2014, continues efforts towards the opening up of neighbourhoods and social diversity. The new National Renovation Program (NPNRU) focuses on 450 QRUs, 200 of which are said to be of national interest due to their extreme poverty, poor housing, and poor access to public services and transportation. The endowment of the ANRU is limited to 6 billion euros of subsidies (Lafourcade, Mayneris, 2017).

This reform is a method of reform, not means (a budget of 500 million euros). One of the main purposes is to reform the governance of the City Policy; that means mobilizing a bottom-up approach of public action, participatory, cross and ground-based, meaning that promoters wish to return to the principles of involvement of people wanted from the beginning of urban policy. The purpose was to involve citizens in the production of city contracts. The reform has itself been powered by a national consultation called "*Quartiers : engageons le changement!*" between the 11th of October 2012, conducted by François Lamy, Minister for the city, and the 31st of January 2013 at the National Assembly. It has

involved associations with various partners, public and private, local and national. Inhabitants of a few cities like Bobigny, Rennes, La Seyne-sur-Mer and Strasbourg, have been invited to the debate and talk about their expectations in a public meeting called "*Rencontres avis citoyens*".

The sociologist Marie-Hélène Bacqué and Mohamed Mechmache, President of the association AC Le Feu (created after the riots in 2005 with the aim of establishing a dialogue between inhabitants and institutions) received the mission to work on operational proposals on the participation and the role of associations.

Relegated neighbourhoods? Or stepping stones to regulate poverty in society? The social mix in question.

Today there are 751 sensitive urban areas in France, containing 4.46 million people, or 7.6% of the population (INSEE 2012). The National Observatory of Sensitive Urban Zones (Onzus) has been created in 2003 to measure the evolution of these zones, it offers a picture of the evolution of developmental gaps between regions in all areas affecting the lives of people: employment, health, education, housing, and security. The latest report of the National Observatory of Sensitive Urban Zones (2014) highlights the magnitude of these inequalities. The poverty rate in these neighbourhoods is nearly three times higher than in other territories; the unemployment rate is almost two and a half times higher. Unemployment, particularly among young people distinguish these areas from other territories. The employment crisis since 2008 is hitting these troubled areas hardest. Between 2008 and 2012, the unemployment rate increased from 16.7% to 24.2%, while it increased from 7.6% to 9.1% in the other neighbourhoods of cities with a ZUS.

Their inhabitants have more health problems, they say they experience difficulties of access to care, the inhabitants do not attach easily to the labour market and lack of training and qualification; unemployment of the 15-24 years old reaches 45%, it is stronger among young men (43% of the 3% of assets, against 29.6% for women). 39 % of people in sensitive urban areas have no diploma at the end of the training (the rate is 21.2% of people of other districts. Only 3.9% graduate from university (Brunner, Maurin, 2017).

The report of the Court of Auditors « *La politique de la ville, une décennie de réformes* » published the 17th of July 2012, does not hesitate to talk about failure of the inefficiency and inadequacy of the urban policy and dispersion of mobilized resources. However, this observation should be seen in relative terms, taking into account that the situation differs from one area to another. Some areas seem to have taken advantage of this,

others conversely suffered from degradation. The local situation, with the state aid, show differences. Neighbourhoods are, like people living there, not homogeneous. They do not accumulate disability in the same way. For example, in 2009, when 10% of the poorest Sensitive Urban Zones had a median standard of living less than 8200 euros per person, 10% of the wealthiest Sensitive Urban Zones had a median standard of living 14 000 per person, almost the double.

Also, the City Policy pursues major goals, but its financial resources are nonetheless very modest (0.36% of the state budget). Neighbourhoods were able to take advantage of new equipment. So much that some public housing estates would be better equipped than others located in other parts of the city not included in the City's Policy. In the city of Rouen, for example, the social mix thought of at the scale of the agglomeration came up against inhabitants refusing to move to new but more central districts, arguing that their neighbourhoods are well endowed with equipment and that they had been able to establish a sociability.

The failure diagnosis faces a problem of representation of these neighbourhoods. The city's policy has logics of assessments that tend to be simplified, becoming less relevant than those adopted in the recent period. This goes beyond the fact that it is difficult to evaluate broad or general objectives such as those of "social diversification" to improve "socio-economic indicators". Researchers have long criticized the spatial determinism of social activity, strongly rooted in the actors of these urban policies: the caricatural links that are made between a supposedly pathological form and social behaviours perfectly illustrated by the words of Gérard Collomb, the Minister of Interior at the beginning of the year 2018 imputing the altercations between young people and police officers to the disgraced urban form of social housing projects. These representations would contribute to reproducing the inequalities and social hierarchies against which public policies wish to fight. Borloo's radical urban renewal policy has been the subject of much criticism. Would not it generate the perverse effects observed at other times or in other countries (Coing, 1966)? Newly rehabilitated or built housing could be for the benefit of one population and at the expense of another. It has been able to lead to the removal of the poorer populations from the cities, those are then found to live in an even more distant periphery where the housing is affordable (Goetz). It was able to generate a process of gentrification, ie gentrification of neighbourhoods. For Agnès Deboulet (2012) the objective hides badly the desire of reconquest of suburbs (the peripherals of yesterday) but rendered central due to the process of metropolisation. In addition, the renovation of working-class neighbourhoods started in the 1960s dismantled social networks, sociability and solidarity, and therefore the resources to get by

(Coing, 1966). Putting people together in different environments, in other words social mix contributes to creating distance between people and even conflicts (Chamboderon Lemaire Madeleine, 1970, Althabe, 2000). This even though some consider that, like some American authors, the concentration of populations of the same environment would reinforce the reproduction of inequalities (Wilson 1987), more truly in the USA. The lack of contact with other social groups has the effect of limiting access to employment and maintaining the existence of a group on the margins. The introduction of the middle-class population is supposed to participate in the change of image of the places and the diffusion of its capital and its social behaviour. Which has not been proven at all and may even have produced the opposite.

Is the objective to improve the neighbourhood for the benefit of current residents or to encourage the return of the middle classes, main beneficiaries of the "social mix" (Leblanc, 2007)? How could the "participation" of the inhabitants produce a consensus when relations are structured by the opposition between "good" and "bad" neighbours (Elias and Scotson, 1997)? In fact, the change of image desired by the ANRU as well as the displacement of populations towards territories ever further from the cities, in the periurban and the phenomenon of massive gentrification feared by the researchers did not occur (Lelevrier, Nelly 2012). First of all, there were fewer demolitions than expected: around 140000 households were moved in 2014 (USH2011). Urban renewal has rather generated a process of fragmentation within neighbourhoods; in fact the poorest have not been dispersed, demolitions and relocation have not helped to change their neighbourhoods. 89% of the relocated households remained in their commune, half remained in their commune. 2/3 of these households were relocated to a sensitive area, which means that they had no access to more mixed social environments. The demolition inspired the spontaneous departure of 15% of households with a little more income, that is to say those who already participated in a social mix in the neighbourhood. The relocation of people has given rise - contrary to the objectives of desired diversity - to the concentration of populations of the same social status at the level of neighbourhoods and buildings thus making legible the existing social differentiations without destroying social networks.

Older populations have generally stayed in their neighbourhood, while those under 30 have found 60% new housing in the new housing stock rebuilt as part of urban renewal. Large families (four or more children) as well as the poorest families are housed in the towers and blocks that have not been demolished in the neighbourhood or another neighbourhood close by, where large, low-cost housing remains. Private developers were more numerous than expected. Buyers are more often first-time buyers at the

beginning of the new residential area, often professionals with families, savings and incomes well above the average ZUS. This may pose the longer-term question of replacing these young households who may in the longer term want to benefit from larger housing or a home in other wealthier neighbourhoods. Private provision and homeownership have generally attracted the people of the commune and its surroundings. Surveys led by Christine Lelevrier highlight the fact that these new populations have some familiarity with social housing projects; because they lived there before or because they resided in another social housing complex. On the whole, they tend to live in new housing built on the fringes rather than in the heart of the neighbourhoods unless the heart of the neighbourhoods where they can be found, have been totally transformed.

The end result is a juxtaposition of social groups in smaller residential units corresponding to different status of occupation and financing, with a reconcentration of the poorest in existing dwellings, a reunion of the wealthiest in the most expensive housing built: the latter inhabited by more external populations do not maintain any relationship with others. At the same time, the majority wish of people to stay in the neighbourhood showed how neighbourhoods are far from being repulsive; many families want to stay there, benefiting from networks of high sociability. These moves within neighbourhoods for new or high-quality housing have particularly benefited the most established immigrant populations, for whom public policies sought to reduce their presence but for whom these renovations could be experienced as real internal promotions.

Which can be seen as a positive effect. The children and relatives of the city are those who contribute to social relations; by the family ties that they maintain the services between inhabitants that they authorize (child care), especially the role of social pacifier and mediator between new and old comers. But this demolition / reconstruction policy will have had a rather symbolic effect if we compare it to the ordinary mobility of people participating more in the restructuring of the settlement, in that it renews only 5 to 10% the supply of housing. The renovation has instead highlighted a social diversity of neighbourhoods. Also allowing small middle classes to buy, it confirms that the neighbourhood far from being a ghetto is also a function of steppingstone for these populations mostly located on the outskirts of cities and blocks and also disapproving to mingle with others (Lelevrier, 2012, 2011,2007).

Participation of inhabitants, desired as much as unwanted

The involvement of inhabitants is one of the key elements of the city's

policy, which, since the 1980s, under the instigation of Hubert Dubedout (1983), intended to make inhabitants the actors of change. Hubert Dubebout, president of the very first instance, the National Commission of Social Development of the Quarters, had made the spearhead of the first devices *"Habitat et vie sociale"*. He himself comes from the participationist or self-managing movement that had its heyday in the 60s and 70s in France and the United States. The desire to involve city dwellers then appears in a political context in turmoil which had also seen in the 1970s and 1980s self-managed housing operations emerge where the future inhabitants, at the origin of the project, invited themselves to the design process. It fed, beyond public estate building, a number of organizations mounted at the local level, such as municipal action groups (Gam), a citizen structure mounted by activists considering that political parties did not respond to social problems of the moment; the first municipal action group was created under the instigation of Dubedout, also mayor of Grenoble and very involved in the urban conflicts of the time. Participation has been continually renewed as an objective of the renovation of the cities. But in reality, one may wonder if it is really desired by the institutions promoting it. Because in fact the inhabitants have rarely been able to give their opinion. The focus in the 1990s - 2000 on building and security even led researchers to talk about a step back (Bacqué, Gauthier, 2011).

And even if for ten years or so, legal texts gave existence to participatory democracy, including the law Vaillant of 2004 on the city, called "democracy of proximity", which establishes neighbourhood councils in all cities of more than 80000 inhabitants; the law SRU of 2000 which imposes the dialogue with the inhabitants; more recently, the 2014 City Planning and Urban Cohesion Act, which establishes Citizen Councils. Recommended in the Bacqué Mechmache report (2013), citizen councils are set up in priority neighbourhoods to participate in drawing up City Contracts and foster shared expertise with residents. These Citizen Councils include representatives of local associations and actors and inhabitants drawn by lot, with respect for parity from electoral lists, files of donors, localized directory used by the National Institute of Statistics (INSEE) as part of the census and volunteering. Unlike District Councils, these are not directed or led by an elected representative.

Beyond the institutional framework, more and more associations are trying to take into account the place of life. Participation is presented to the elect as one instrument for the legitimation of a power of which they know it is in loss of legitimacy; hence, in France, in the second half of the 1990s, local political discourses on the idea of involving citizens. The participation suffered in fact to be very framed by professionals and local elected officials. The bureaucratic and top-down character of the

city's policy has only grown stronger over the years. Power is a public monopoly exercised jointly by the state and the municipalities, and by them alone. The central role attached to the mayors in the conduct of the City's Policy and the allocation of its subsidies led to a "control" of the associative fabric of the neighbourhoods that wanted to be promoted; the municipalization of the City's Policy would have even been contrary to attempts and participative projects. Today, associations have a hard time getting recognized when they exist. An entire administrative system was put in place with calls for tenders, in a context marked by logics as instances of patronage, benefiting large associations. Popular education structures have withdrawn from neighbourhoods, while small, little-recognized structures scare institutions (Kirszbaum, 2015).

In general, institutional arrangements such as public meetings, neighbourhood councils set up are little invested, and generally attended by a handful of representatives of the middle classes, in this case the closest social actors and elected representatives; the elderly. Young, precarious people are notoriously absent, so much that the decisions resulting from these participation meetings could be taken against them. In addition, the inhabitants come out not as associates, but as critical of the participation. They consider that decisions are made elsewhere.

Participatory approaches also suffer from being too focused on proximity; to focus only on marginal aspects of urban projects and policies. There is a distortion between sociability and an experience less and less confined to the neighbourhood and public policies that favour geographical proximity and traditional references to neighbourhood and neighbourhood with multiplication of political actions favouring the urban management of proximity, the police of proximity, the democracy of proximity.

The inhabitants must also demonstrate their own expertise but in the context of what professionals and institutions consider legitimate; in predefined participatory schemes, on issues already formulated. And with the words, the references imposed by the technicians and that the inhabitants often do not understand (Faburel, 2013). In the heterogeneous milieu of social landlords, the mere fact of consulting the inhabitants is seen as an additional constraint in a complex context where production is very normative, framed by important principles of economic rationalization (Demoulin, 2016). Most donors do not believe in the benefits of participation; they see it as a waste of time and worry about the loss of legitimacy. In addition, the perception of involvement may differ among donors and be perceived differently depending on the services. On the side of local management professions, the challenge is to maintain a good relationship with tenants, a strategy that requires dialogue and communication but

whose purpose is not the involvement of residents. Participation also comes up against the development of the commercial relationship and the imperative of quality of service towards a tenant considered primarily as a customer.

On the architects' side, we observe the creation of collectives or project management teams engaging in multidisciplinary collaborations (artists, landscape architects, sociologists, philosophers) in order to work with the population. These collectives come from both younger generations and late-career architects; do they claim a return of politics in the field of architecture and urban planning, considering this dimension as lost in the field of the city? The habitat made with and by the inhabitants allows according to some to give strength to the civic commitment of the townspeople.

Opening

Architects and participation? Towards other ways of doing or not doing the project

Research work on participation actions exists. However, specialists lack a global vision of how actors and professional groups have adapted to incorporate these new requirements and approaches. In addition, the scientific production is more prolix on the social dynamics, the implementation of policies and devices: - public assemblies, decisional referendums, neighbourhood councils, participatory budgets, public hearings, advisory committees, etc. It rarely deals with the urban and architectural issues of the projects themselves.

There is often little mention from the specifically urban and architectural dimension in studies of participation. Everything happens as if the architecture, or more generally the form produced, did not matter. The quality project is reflected in the evaluations made by the researchers as being that of the social demand, satisfying the desiderata and uses of the inhabitants. Most researches ignore architecture and questions of form or aesthetics. The subject of participation omits the fact that the inhabitants do not express themselves much on the questions of architecture, which does not mean however that they do not attach importance to it. But does not participation go against a loss of know-how? This, if we consider that the form and aesthetics seem less important than the exchange and the social bond produced not with the architect, but between the inhabitants, for the purpose of social cohesion and good neighbourhood? Are not architects reduced to a role of mediator, trainer, communicator, even

social animator? The popular taste differs from that said scholar of the professional architect. Thus against the culture of compromise promoted at the time of the supporters of the urban project in the years 90-2000, and considered impoverishing the project, some architects such as Paul Chemetov (Eleb, Violeau, 2004) or Rem Koolhas (Bela, Lemoine, 2013) evoke the need to preserve a dialectic: architecture, according to them, is an assumed conflict. How are we considering this question today?

On the other hand, the emergence of collectives does not testify to a desire among architects to reconnect with the construction site, and to do so, if we also stop on ephemeral productions (furniture, installations) that they propose to carry out with the inhabitants in the districts? Do these ways of working with residents create new jobs and skills? Should teaching take into account these new practices, at a time when the question of the diversification of architectural professions is being raised?

The Living lab, a new concept to reinvigorate recipes and practices already old

Today, the time would be more than yesterday to the co-construction of the city's policy with the inhabitants. Would the notion of living lab fit into France in a context that favors it? The Law of Programming for the City and Social Cohesion is timidly fed by the report submitted in 2013 by Marie Hélène Bacque and the association AC le feu, to the minister delegated to the city that had commissioned it, after having auditioned more than 300 people, then organized a citizens' conference with some 100 people to discuss their proposals.

This ambitious report proposes to initiate a genuine policy of empowerment in France, in a project of emancipation and social transformation and a more inclusive construction of the general interest. The two authors have written a set of recommendations aiming to include participation in the history of social struggles, in short to take into account the social conflict of society and to encourage civil autonomy in its different forms, which presupposes to change the way people look at inhabitants, not to think of them as a problem, but as thinking and acting actors. The report thus proposes to develop the inhabitants' power to act, favouring the existence of counter-powers, the construction of critical spaces, the representation of inhabitants at the local and national levels, by ensuring their presence in discussion of city contracts. They still suggest the transformation of the professional, administrative and political cultures of the actors in place, judged by their resistance to the word of the citizen and their ignorance of individuals in their diversity as obstacles to the participation of people. What could be done, according to the two authors,

by the training of professionals and elected representatives, the promotion of new profiles, the opening of spaces of dialogues and confrontation in the neighbourhoods, or the help with the diffusion of local media and cultural expressions from working-class neighbourhoods to change the vision of the national media and promote the expression of the inhabitants.

The debates on the veil, the Islam badly relayed by the media, have contributed to simplify and radicalize the speeches. Bacqué and the association AC le feu still propose to reinforce the role of the intermediate structures (social centres, district management, parental nursery), while promoting participation in the production, management and evaluation of public services. Taking into account the points of view of the agents in the same way as those of the users should make them leave the logic of the figure and the bureaucracy. At the end of this report, a national experimentation grant was set up: this one financially supports the initiatives in favour of the inhabitants (93 projects selected to date, a total endowment of 1 100 000 euros, as well as houses of the project specifically dedicated to this cobuild with the locals. The method of women's marches is also thought of as a tool of participation as well as of appropriation and security of the public space, which would like to make women actresses (empowerment) (Ministère de la cohésion des territoires. Politique de la ville, 2014).

But we are far from the ambition of the report, which often refers to exogenous measures, considering that we must move beyond the restrictive field of the city's policy to rethink participatory democracy, to bring about the emergence of new political leaders. Especially since the power of elected officials is preserved. François Lamy, the minister delegated to the city, does not intend to bring the political dimension of empowerment as it is advocated in this report. "It will be necessary to be pragmatic," says he, "be attentive to the major role of local elected representatives in what we are going to put implemented ".

The living lab "method" seems to present itself as a new tool to reinvigorate already old public policies which are regularly in search of a new breath, new practice or model. Knowing that every time the different devices of the city's politics have been playing this role. And every time, what can be considered new is not all new. Just the time is new and the newly deployed tool is a bit different. Does the notion of living lab offer the means to rethink old participation policies?

Two examples of the inhabitants' participation in renovation projects

Nadya Labied

Since the creation of ANRU, several associations and groups of inhabitants have opposed urban renewal projects, particularly those that include demolitions, and have requested their participation in these projects. On the other hand, since its creation in 2004, ANRU has demanded that mayors consult residents in the demolition and reconstruction of social housing. On the other hand, for the past ten years or so, the ANRU evaluation committee has shown that the participation of the inhabitants in the projects would allow greater efficiency, a more adapted response to the expectations of the inhabitants and a rebalancing of powers. To encourage elected representatives to involve the inhabitants, this committee proposed making ANRU funds conditional on effective participation in decision-making processes. According to the committee, this effective participation includes access to information, multi-stage consultation, allocation of financial resources, representation of concerted audiences at the city level, an assessment of this participation.

Jacques Donzelot, sociologist and specialist in urban issues, carried out research in 2006 describing these schemes in 4 urban communes (Donzelot, Epstein 2006) including Montfermeil, and shows that the participation of the inhabitants was symbolic in these projects. Based on the participation scale developed by Sherry Arnstein in 1969, following the riots of the 1960s in the north of the United States, it distinguishes the different registers of participatory practices. This survey showed that participation was limited to informing residents or consulting them, without necessarily taking their opinions into account.

ANRU operation in Montfermeil: a symbolic participation of the inhabitants

Montfermeil is a city of 26100 inhabitants (INSEE estimate on July 1st 2005), in the north suburbs of Paris, it is composed mainly of an area of low-rise housing dating from the 1920s, and 3% of collective housing, the Bosquets district. This large complex, built by the architects Zherffus and

Ottin in 1965, is a highly degraded co-ownership, in a site isolated from the road network and public transport. It comprises 1534 dwellings divided into 20 buildings, of 4 or 10 levels.

The lack of maintenance and unpaid taxes weaken the inhabitants who continue to get into debt, which accentuates the degradation of the district. This situation alerted the public authorities, and in the 1980s an HLM organization, ODHLM 93, bought 43% of the lots, and many steps followed one another, without achieving any visible improvement. Thus in 1990 a restructuring plan provided for the demolition of 5 buildings, but in 1994 only one of the blocks is demolished.

In 2004 the city of Bosquets is inhabited by a particularly disadvantaged population, composed of 39% foreigners with a majority of young people (41% are under 20 years old). Montfermeil is located on the edge of Clichy-sous-bois, where riots began in the suburbs in 2005 and the district of Bosquets is one of the first areas to which riots spread. Clichy-Montfermeil is thus considered as the epicenter of the rebellion of the suburbs, and it will be the subject of several art works dedicated to these events. The photographer JR made a series of portraits, some of which will be displayed clandestinely on the buildings up for demolishment. In 2007 the artist Ladj Ly, resident of the city of Bosquets, produced the documentary "365 days in Clichy-Montfermeil", in 2016 JR, who became famous, produced a monumental fresco with the inhabitants of Clichy-Montfermeil, inaugurated by President Hollande and exposed in the

Palais de Tokyo in Paris. In 2017 the two artists collaborated to produce a documentary series "Chronicles of Clichy-Montfermeil". Following these works of art and media coverage, the Bosquet district has become a symbol of the crisis of the suburbs.

Figure 4   B11, Destruction #2, Les Bosquets, Montfermeil, 2013 by JR, as reproduced in JR: Can Art Change The World?, JR, Nato Thompson, Joseph Remnant and Marc Azoulay, Phaidon Editions, 2015.

The events of 2005 accelerated renovation projects and the agglomeration of Clichy-Montfermeil is the object from 2005 of the largest Urban Renovation Project in France, which continues until 2015: the planned demolitions concern 650 housing units, and the construction of 520 social housing mainly by I3F. This operation is emblematic for the State, which wishes to demonstrate the effectiveness of the new measures. Minister Jean Louis Borloo, who initiated the 2004 law on urban renewal, took a personal interest in the project and, during his visit to the site, expressed his position in favor of massive demolition. As for the mayor, he is not much in favor of consultation, this district having a very weak electoral power in the commune because of the strong presence of immigrants and minors. The public inquiry required by law was conducted in the form of administrative communication when it was supposed to allow citizens to express themselves. Moreover, GUP, local urban management, which is the contact with the inhabitants for problem subjects, did not take place.

Thus in this project the participation of the inhabitants was

symbolic, being reduced to late information, because for the decision-makers the project was already decided and should not be modified, and the population did not have enough electoral weight. This study by Donzelot shows that public decision-makers in France present themselves as defenders of the general public interest, and consider participation as an obstacle to decision-making. Another more recent example to illustrate this conclusion is the pile district in Roubaix.

Pile district in Roubaix: the role of the architect

Since 2014, the law has involved residents in city policy through citizen councils, composed of local residents, associations and local actors. The City and Urban Cohesion Programming Act of 21 February 2014 established the principle of citizen participation, and the circular of 2 February 2017 specifies the framework for the functioning of these citizen councils. Yet in some cases it is elected municipal officials who limit citizen participation. In the Pile district of Roubaix, two researchers, sociologist Julien Talpin (Talpin, 2016) and architect Pierre Chabard (Chabard 2017) each devote an article to this district.

It is one of the poorest neighbourhoods in Roubaix, with a very dense individual habitat, now degraded. The population, often in a precarious situation, is composed for half of tenants (private stock and social housing) and precarious owners. The PMRQAD project (*Programme métropolitain de requalification des quartiers anciens dégradés*), started in 2012, but only became visible to the inhabitants when the work started in 2014. The project involves the demolition of substandard housing to create public spaces, the construction of 92 new housing units and the rehabilitation of 220 buildings.
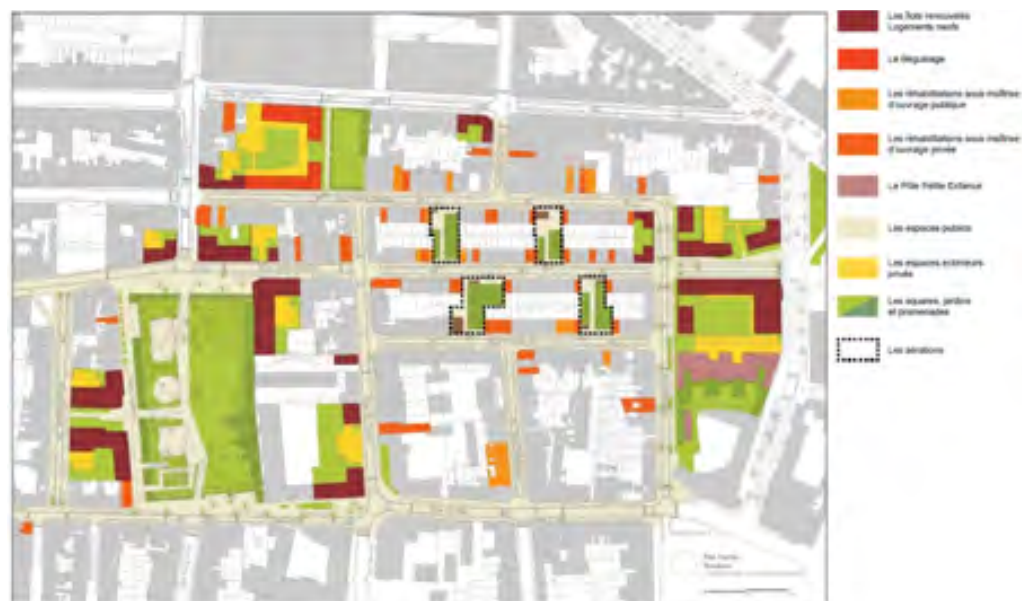
Figure 5   (Source: http://www.lafabriquedesquartiers.fr/les-autres-projets/le-pile-roubaix)

Residents began to express concern about the lack of information: demolitions, expropriations, and relocation sites. A neighbourhood table was created as part of a national experiment by the Fédération nationale des centres sociaux and the association "*Pas sans nous*". Neighbourhood tables are autonomous mechanisms of the public authorities, which do not participate in meetings. The Roubaix neighbourhood table is supported by a youth association - *Association nouveau regard sur la jeunesse* (ANRJ) - and initially brings together about ten neighbourhood associations. The neighbourhood table had a relative success, some requests were listened to, but the municipality tried then to weaken the mobilization of the inhabitants by several actions. It forbade them access to the meeting place, the Project House, a public space located in the neighbourhood, blocked funding from the City Ministry, and discredited some associations by politicizing the conflict, especially when the municipality elected a right-wing administration in March 2014.

In addition, the project management team (architect and landscape designer) proposed methods involving the inhabitants of the district, through public workshops set up from summer 2013, which focused on two themes: the design of a park co-managed by the inhabitants on the wasteland of a former factory in the heart of the district, and the methods of rehabilitation of houses. But these methods imply derogations from ANRU procedures. To reduce the cost of rehabilitating housing, the architects proposed building elements that could be reproduced to reduce their cost, and to have certain services provided by the inhabitants, but this proposal wasn't followed up.

Figure 6   Park of the Pile district (Source: http://www.lafabriquedesquartiers.fr/les-autres-projets/le-pile-roubaix)

As Pierre Chabard points out, the project management team has tried to change practices and procedures, but by engaging in alternative ways they take the risk of opposing the sponsors, the elected representatives "who, in France, often see in citizen participation the risk of an erosion of their power" (Chabard 2017). The project management team also runs up against the technical and administrative services, distrustful of the population's participation. Although the sponsors have been blocking the organization of participatory workshops since November 2015, the project management team continues exchanges with the inhabitants through surveys conducted by the team's sociologist and daily contacts.

This example also shows the importance of the political dimension in the processes of involvement of the inhabitants in urban renewal: the ANRU which advocates participation, the power of the municipalities, the dependence of the associative environment, and the role of the architect.

An inventory of the major urban characteristics and the strengths and weaknesses of the Fresnes communal area:

The choice of the city of Fresnes and of the social residences located north of the municipality (Charcot / Zola district) was proposed because of the operation of requalification of the public space of the residence of the Fosse aux Loups commissioned by the social landlord 3F and carried out by the agency A. Ferraru (competition won in 2007 and operation delivered in 2015)

The residence of La Fosse aux Loups includes about 250 dwellings. It is a part of a mixed urban fabric where there are quite diverse typologies of habitat that are described in the urban analysis which forms the central part of this document. Given this particular socio-geographical context, it seemed appropriate to broaden the scope of our reflection on a larger scale of the northern districts of Fresnes, which group together other social residences (Vallée aux Renards, Les Groues) to form a total of approximately 750 housings. We have to underline that this choice, therefore, does not refer to certain specific urban situations that can be observed in the Paris metropolis, characterized by large sectors grouping several thousand social housing units in a single continuous entity. These places, or some of them, are often those where the problems specific to sensitive neighbourhoods are polarized: unemployment, poverty, delinquency, insecurity, communitarianism... They represent, symbolize the major disorders of the « *problème des banlieues* ». In a large number of cases these places are associated with the significant presence of populations of immigrant background. We have to say that these situations are otherwise exceptional, at least far from being the majority. They don't offer a correct picture of the reality of the 5 million social housing units in France and the neighbourhoods they are included in. In fact, they do not represent the most common case of social housing in France in its social and geographical expression. This diverse reality of social housing explains, in many ways, the waltz-hesitation of the « politique de la ville » in defining a « *geographie prioritaire* » and an associated zoning for the most vulnerable neighbourhoods. The problem of the « *banlieues difficiles* » is also - and may be primarily - a matter of scale. Nevertheless, some of these large sectors of social housing units convey the typical

image of the disruptions that are concentrated in the « *banlieues sensibles ou difficiles* » according to the most commonly accepted representations.

On the contrary, the case of Fresnes is representative of the majority - the normality? - of Ile-de-France urban situations where small sectors of social housing "coexist" morphologically - and we could say "without serious dysfunction" - with other types of housing in a mixed and diversified urban fabric. That does not mean, of course, that urban requalification actions are not necessary in these particular contexts. On the contrary, various programs have been implemented and are actually in progress to improve the living and housing conditions in these types of urban tissues. But this underlines the plurality of urban and social contexts in which urban renewal actions must be carried out.
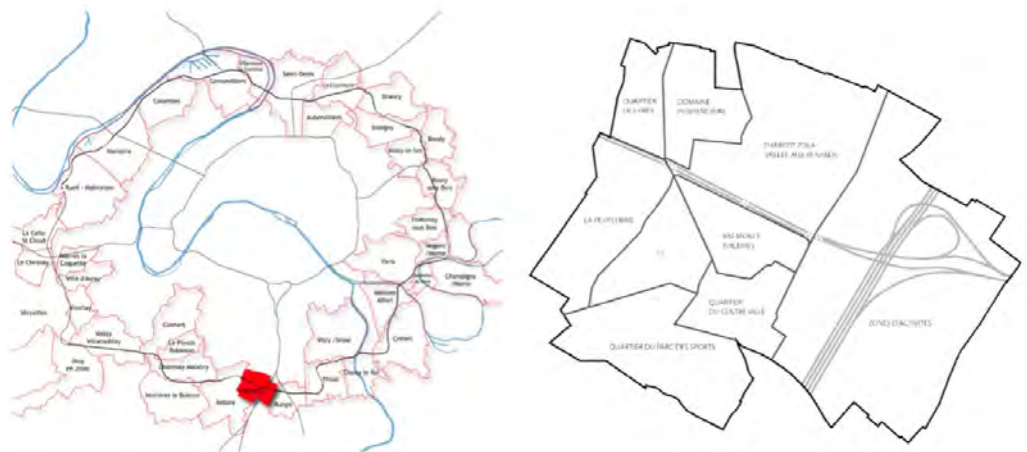
Figure 7   Fresnes and the first parisian suburban circle - Districts of Fresnes (source : city of Fresnes)

Some historical landmarks:

Fresnes is experiencing a push of urbanization around the 1950s, the old rural town is being gradually transformed into a suburban city, satellite of Paris. The city gradually sees its traditional craft activities and its agricultural vocation disappearing. Development in the suburban form is abandoned and the urban fabric is structured around many private residences built according to the principles of modernism in the form of blocks and plots with significant dimensions. It was at this time that the residence of La Peupleraie (1960) was born, the only collective residence built by Les Castors (associative and popular movement), the residence of the Clos de la Garenne (1960), the Vallée aux Renards (1963) or even the residence of Val-de-Bièvre (1957). This wave of large-scale urbanization led to a fourfold increase in the population between 1954 and 1975.

The residences are located on large agricultural land properties

(nearly 12 hectares for the Peupleraie, more than 3% of the city's footprint), without public control and without reflection on a large-scale urban network. Almost no roads were created at that time, the private land's occupations of the residences were inserted between the two axes north-south. These territories, are for the most part open today and traversable but they still constitute locks that fragment the communal territory.

It should be noted that these residences were built in high-quality landscaping and nowadays take on a rather qualitative "city park" image.

In 1962, the A6 motorway was built on the eastern edge of the municipal territory. Trenched in the middle of fields, it is quickly doubled and becomes a limit of the city that values this new service by developing the business area of La Cerisaie, showcase along the highway. The construction of the nearby Rungis international market in 1969 reinforces the economic vocation of this eastern part of the city.

Another motorway is built on an East-West axis, the A86. It was completed in the mid-1990s. Although it is largely trench-shaped, it generates a major urban North-South cut in the urban fabric. The junction of the two highways gives rise to the construction of an interchange that occupies a vast hold and constitutes another major lock at the eastern limit of the communal territory. Two motorway axes cross the territory of Fresnes and this has the effect of bringing the issue of relations between the urban morphology, the public spaces and the road network to the forefront of the political and urban agenda.

Figure 8   1956 - 1977 - 1995 (Source: Prospective study for the city of Fresnes 2030, April 2014)

Figure 9   Construction of the peupleraie 1960

Figure 10   Clos de la Garenne and the Versailles road to Choisy, in the background, the newly
inaugurated A6, 1962 (Source : city of Fresnes)

The rapid urban growth of Fresnes, the occupation of vast areas of land by private and social housing residences, and the development of motorway infrastructures have generated a significant land deficit and made it necessary to modernize the fabric via urban renewal operations. In recent years, three sub-sectors have experienced a significant renewal of their fabric : the downtown area, totally rebuilt in the late 1980s, the South cherry orchard sector where an eco-district was created and the Charcot-Zola and « Fosse aux loups » sectors, north of the A86, where the social housing projects in our study are located.

Figure 11 A mosaic and fragmented urban morphology (Source: city of Fresnes)

Overrepresentation of social housing:

As part of the SOHOLAB research, the choice of Fresnes and the social housing sectors present on the municipal territory is justified by several criteria.

First, this town has a significant social housing stock, well above the average of the southern municipalities of the Paris region. Indeed, this share represented 35% in 2015 of the total of the principal residences. The individual houses constituted 15% of the park and covered 26% of the communal territory.

Let's say right away that the city of Fresnes no longer includes areas of social housing that are eligible for the national policy of the city. Indeed, a new priority geography was redesigned in February 2014 by the Urban and Urban Cohesion Planning Act which excluded Fresnes from the list of priority neighbourhoods for the implementation of a new generation of city contracts covering the period 2014-2020. This priority geography intends to concentrate the means of the city's policy from a zoning targeting the most troubled territories. It also complies with a concern for simplification after a superposition of complicated zonings, established according to often questionable criteria, blurring the legibility and tainting legitimacy of the policy of the city.

The urban fabric of the North neighbourhood where our study areas

are located includes social residences (Fosse aux loups, Vallée aux renards, Les groues) totalling about 750 dwellings. Note that the rate of social housing in Fresnes has increased since 2005 from 25% to 34% in 2014. As of January 1, 2015, the municipality counts 3190 social housing units in its territory concentrated mainly on the north of the municipality. It should be noted, moreover, that the park of Frésnois is largely derived from the glorious Thirties with 81% of the principal residences built in 1946 and 1990. This implies various family and social situations of inequalities in front of the imperatives and needs of thermal rehabilitation of the houses.

	Maison	Appartement
Avant 1919	23	120
De 1919 à 1945	216	87
De 1946 à 1970	727	5 198
De 1971 à 1990	216	1 770
De 1991 à 2005	184	636
De 2006 à 2011	23	647
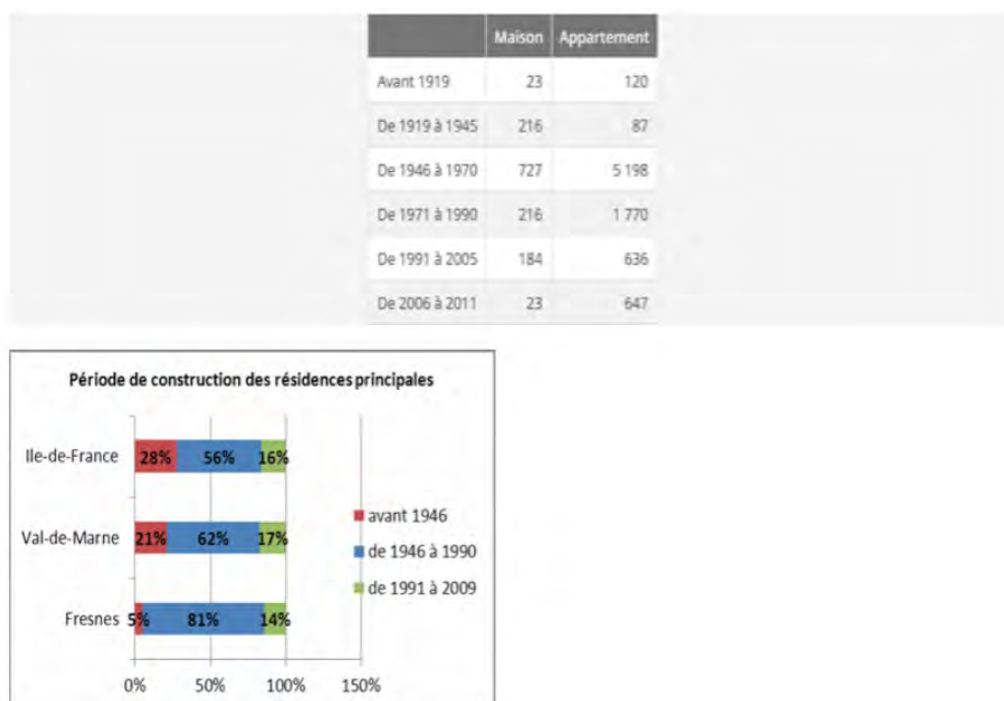
Figure 12   (Source : Preparatory documents for the revision of the PLU, Fresnes)

By stepping back from the issues of the revitalization of the social housing districts of a large part of the communes of the southern suburbs of Paris, it appears that this fabric is representative of a large number of urban situations with geographically small social housing projects, suburban areas and private multi-family housing projects. The sub-districts of social housing are distributed throughout the municipality. In these contexts, we are not dealing with enclaves with several thousands of social housing units isolated or cut socially and morphologically from the rest of the city. Nevertheless, it is obvious that these neighbourhoods are experiencing dysfunctions and factors of decline that fully justify policies to rehabilitate the built park and the public space.

Figure 13 Habitat typologies (Source : city of Fresnes)

Figure 14 Social residences (Source : Prospective study for the city of Fresnes 2030, April 2014)

Figure 18 Typologies of individual houses

Figure 19 Collective housing (Source : city of Fresnes)

The Fresnois suburban fabric represents the entire history of the detached house in the suburbs: millstone pavilions at the beginning of the 20th century, modest 1950s house and self-construction houses,

"modern" pavilions from the 60s and 70s, architectural unity band houses in residences, … This diversity is a force for valorising the urban fabric and can encourage future densification through fragmented land property divisions. Note that the tissue's evolution of these detached houses is framed by a communal regulation that aims to preserve the architectural, landscape and heritage qualities of these neighbourhoods or parts of neighbourhood.

In this respect, the situation in Fresnes reflects a majority image of the socio-urban issue of social housing districts in Ile-de-France. Indeed, when we observe the distribution of social housing stock in the Paris region and more widely in French cities Fresnes is one of the most representative or most common situation. Conversely, that of the polarization of several thousand social housing units in neighbourhoods is certainly not exceptional, but it corresponds only to the case of the largest urban units and whose construction goes back most often to the first urban renewal policies conducted in the years 1950-1970. The case of Fresnes and its social housing sectors is therefore a sample that illustrates an urban morphology widespread in Ile-de-France and more generally on French territory. A mental habit and dominant representations of the urban question and the suburban crisis tend to direct the gaze on the neighbourhoods where a very large mass of social housing is concentrated. This quantitative criterion is one of the first parameters of the priority geography that makes districts eligible for city policy credits. In truth, the predominant share of the social housing stock in France - and in Ile-de-France - is spread over a very wide range of urban units where small or very small units of social housing are integrated in mixed fabrics individual housing and small private collectives.

Figure 15 A landscape shaped by private spaces, a city park (Source: Prospective study for the city of Fresnes 2030, April 2014)

In recent years, the housing market in Fresnes has been active. In all, a 34% increase in the housing stock was recorded between 1968 and 2012, ie 3,736 dwellings built during this period. In the context of recent development operations, the City is developing an offer of free dwellings in association with an offer of social housing (with a 60% free distribution, 40% social rental). In spite of this renewed offer of social housing, the number of applicants for HLM housing remains high and does not vary (about 800 applications registered).

The intermediate and individual dense housing is very little present in Fresnes where typologies of individual and collective dwellings are predominant. An interesting path for the future could be explored to diversify future housing supply by integrating high-density, strip-house, terraced or stacked individual housing programs. It should be noted that for Fresnes, the distribution of the fabric of single-family homes is an asset in terms of functional and social diversity in a configuration where social housing residences are close to the sub-sectors of single-family homes.

In 2012, the municipality had 10,711 housing units. The housing stock increased by 8.4% for the period 2007-2012 against + 0.9% between 1999 and 2007. This trend has been accentuated more recently: during the period of the local housing program (2010- 2015), the pace of deliveries accelerated, and 1118 housing units were delivered, 54% of which were social housing units. The future commissioning of the Greater Paris metro line should further boost this growth, with Fresnes benefiting - as it is already the case in 2016 and 2017 - from the positive effects of future stations created near the municipal area.

The fabric of social residences in the Charcot / Zola / Vallée au Renards neighbourhood is composed of collective landscape housing areas built on former farmland in the 1950s and 1970s. Implanted behind the dividing lines, the buildings form "mini-cities" that are organized into self-centred subassemblies and take the form of blocks and buildings of medium to high height (Max R + 10/11). Residences are generally located on large parcels of land in the heart of large protean islands, which create urban ruptures in the municipality. The density felt is high (volume of blocks) but the actual density rather low.

A typology has been drawn up which gives an account of the privileged landscape and topographical situation of the social housing districts of North Fresnes.

Figure 16 Park residences, hillside residences (Source: Prospective study for the city of Fresnes 2030, April 2014)

– "Park residences" which benefit from a close relationship between the built dwellings and very generously landscaped areas. The buildings interact with a now mature heritage creating high quality environments in some residences. Thus, some of these landscaped areas are classified in the PLU as "classified wooded area" or "landscaped area to protect" which testifies to their environmental quality.

– "Hillside residences" located on the slope benefit from views and belvedere effects

Thus, some residences combine a remarkable landscape with a situation on the slope giving beautiful views over the valley of the Bievre from the floors.

This immersion of social residences in a remarkable natural and landscaped setting is a decisive element in the morphology and external image of the northern districts of Fresnes : buildings or low-rise plots scattered in "gardens or parks". A typological variety where a few turns emerge. A "generosity" of interior spaces. A quality of the constructions in the form, in the materials and in the architectural writing of the buildings. This landscape is peculiar to certain subsectors, particularly the Vallée aux renards. It marks a specific identity of this mixed fabric where islands of single-family houses and small social residences are embedded in vast natural spaces most often fenced.

Such a residential fabric is a richness formed by an exceptional plant and environmental inheritance linked to the habitat and an architectural diversity which contrasts with the uniformity of very large neighbourhoods of social housing.

Figure 17 Views of the residential complexes of the northern districts of Fresnes (Source : city of Fresnes)
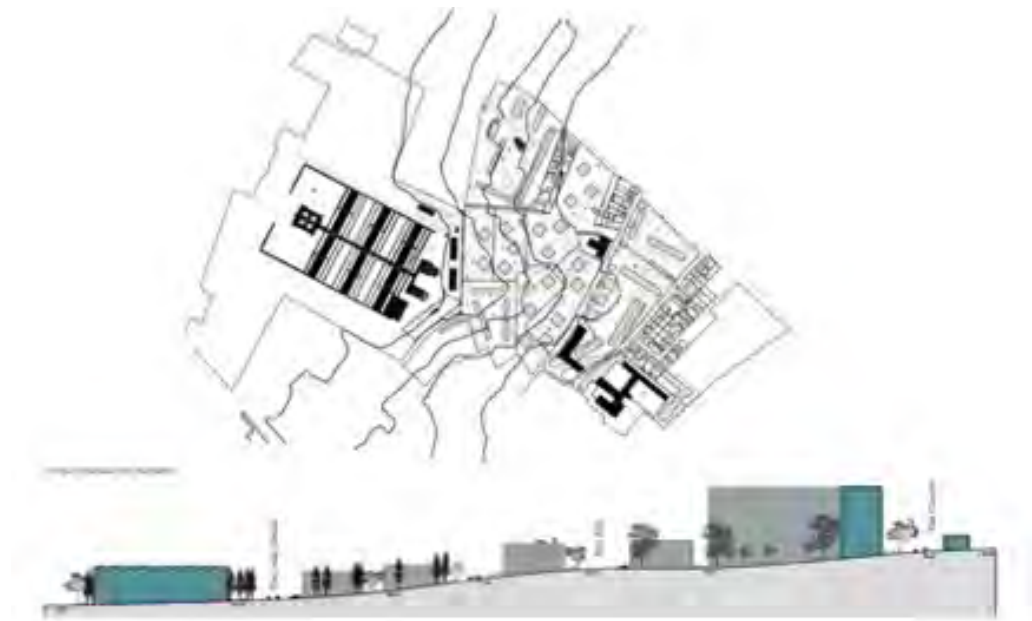
Figure 18   Charcot-Zola/Vallée aux Renards : the fabric is wide and permeable, it offers perspectives and views (Source : Prospective study for the city of Fresnes 2030, April 2014)

Unemployment, labor market and activity zones

Secondly, the Fresnes job market was marked in 2015 by an 8.5% unemployment rate close to the average of regional and national values. However, an overrepresentation of the unemployed in the 15-24 age group (23.6%) is observed and this one is constantly increasing since 2007. As in other communes of the south of Ile-de-France this rate of unemployment levels are significantly higher in social housing neighbourhoods, where it is around 37% (for a national average of 45%). This is a second characteristic of social housing neighbourhoods which singles out these as privileged targets of regional and local urban revitalization policies. Note, however, that unlike other sensitive areas in the south of Paris near Fresnes (Villejuif, L'Hay-les-Roses, Vitry), those present on the municipal territory are not eligible for city policy credits distributed by the ANRU according to the priority geography defined in 2014.

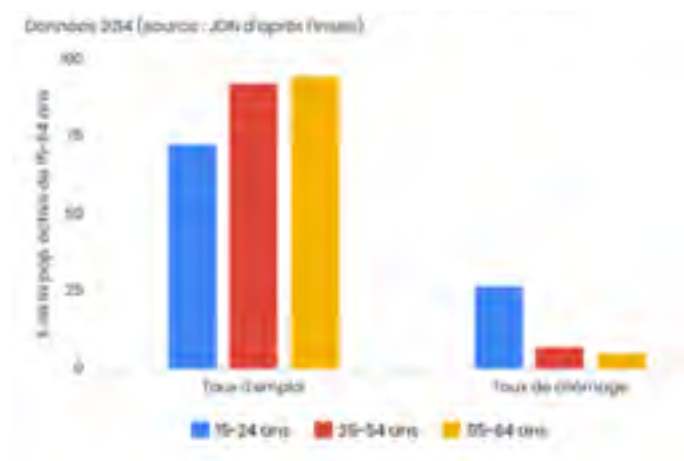**Figure 19** Unemployment in Fresnes (2014, Source : city of Fresnes)

The level of youth unemployment should not mask a certain dynamism of the labor market. Indeed, the socio-professional profile of the population of Fresnes is changing. There was a strong increase in the number of professionals and professionals from 15.8% in 2007 to 18.4% in 2012. Over the same period, the share of craftsmen, traders and entrepreneurs also saw a slight increase from 3.3% to 3.8%. On the other hand, the commune is experiencing a general decline in the intermediate professions, employees and workers. This phenomenon is linked to the socio-economic changes observed in the Paris region ; it results in the arrival of a new qualification of jobs, for the benefit of managers and higher intellectual professions.

Geographically, the business parks of the town are located mainly on the east side of the city, in contact with structuring road infrastructure (A86 and A6). They are historically linked to the activities of Orly airport and the Rungis national interest market.

It is certain that the future of Fresnes is linked to the evolutions and synergies that will be created by the projects of both transport and economic development of Greater Paris. Likewise, its membership of the Val-de-Bièvre community and the Bièvre science valley should have positive effects on the establishment of businesses and synergies with nearby high-tech business parks.

Figure 20 Zones of activities in Fresnes (Source : city of Fresnes)

Infrastructures and mobility

The future of transport and mobility in the Ile-de-France Region is largely conditioned by the coming into operation of the Grand Paris Express whose future stations are considered as new poles of support for a better balanced urban growth at the metropolitan scale. Expected impacts in terms of planning and transport will be significant. Fresnes does not appear on the GPE route but should take advantage of this by adapting its bus network to create drawdown lines to the nearest newly created stations.

The current and expected changes concern the major restructuring that will affect - and already affect - the flows and new territorial polarities on the Southern Paris scale, but also the institutional changes that redistribute skills and resources to new territorial entities. Thus, Fresnes belongs to an intercommunal entity - the community of Val de Bièvre - whose weight, areas of intervention and financial capabilities are constantly growing. To a large extent, the socio-territorial dynamics of Fresnes will depend even more, in the coming years, on factors outside the communal area.

Figure 21   Grand paris express (Source : Société du Grand Paris)

That said, it is obvious that local conditions – partly inherited - specific to mobility and transport print a strong mark on the geographical and urban landscape of Fresnes. Thus, the municipality benefits from the presence of a structuring road network, at the origin of intense traffic flows. Indeed, the communal territory is marked by two massive cuts East-West and North-South formed by two major highways that cross right through: the A86 and the A6. Thus, the city offers a fragmented image, a space cut in four parts. The very wide grip of the prison added to the cuts produced by the highways generates strong urban discontinuities and weak links between the different neighbourhoods. The space occupied by the prison and the two motorways represents approximately 20% of the municipal area. Moreover, the establishment of large residences and their private and collective landscaped and quality spaces generally contrast with a public space that often appears as residual: access roads and streets treated to a minimum, low quality amenities, lack of alignments trees, predominance of parked cars along the road.

The A6 and the A86 introduce major breaks in the landscape and the urban fabric. They also generate nuisances of all kinds: air and noise pollution and congestion at the level of access ramps. But let's not forget that roads have a dual function. Of course, they physically separate but also represent a major asset in terms of service and attractiveness. Fresnes exploits this advantageous situation via a strategy of welcoming companies in its areas of activity. That said, the northern districts of Fresnes where our study areas are located are distinguished by the presence of the barrier of the A86 which otherwise isolates them, or at the very least introduces a significant physical break with the rest of the city.

Figure 22   Breaks of the A86 and A6 motorways (Source : City of Fresnes)

Figure 23   Construction of the A86 (Source: City of Fresnes)

In fact, the A86 causes a fracture between the North and South of the territory. This is amplified by the lack of crossings that make North-South traffic difficult. This phenomenon concerns both vehicles and pedestrians. Paths run up against the barrier of the A86. These cuts are reinforced by large impervious urban encroachments (large complexes, penitentiary centre ...) which also constrain and limit East-West flows.

Figure 24 Landscapes of the A86

    The municipality has no station of the heavy network of public transport on its territory. Fresnes has no RER station on its territory.

    The bus network is the only public transport offer. The town is served

by 6 RATP bus lines that connect Fresnes to Paris and neighbouring municipalities. The "Trans-Val-de-Marne" (TVM) was created in 1993. It is a bus line in the east-west direction, which crosses the town along the A86 route. Following its extension to Croix de Berny in 2007, the TVM now connects the town to the RER B networks in the West and the RER C, D and A in the East.

Studies are underway to evaluate the desirability and feasibility of connections to future stations of the Grand Paris Express. The projects planned for transport infrastructure (Grand Paris Express, Tramway T10) at the metropolitan scale are all located on the outskirts of the municipality. An adaptation of the bus lines and the TVM should, in the long term, be carried out in order to connect the city's network to the stations and services located on the outskirts of the municipality.

Figure 25   Source: city of Fresnes

Finally, the bicycle network is now insignificant and very constrained on Fresnes because of a lack of facilities dedicated to the practice of cycling. The few sections developed are located on the main axes but there is a lack of continuity of the tracks with the rest of the communal and intercommunal network. Departmental projects are planned for 2020 and will improve connections. More generally, the soft modes are hindered by the omnipresence of the car and the residentialization of several sectors of housing. Indeed, the overall real estate operations have unstructured the network of traffic by forming large islands difficult to cross from East to

West. The major infrastructures (A86-A6) are added to these obstacles and make the traffic difficult, the network being fragmented in many places. The network of pathways to pedestrians is also non-existent, especially in the North district. There is no special right of way for pedestrian routes on the road network, and lanes reserved exclusively or primarily for pedestrians (except those included in closed residences) are very rare.

Considering the transport networks and the conditions of mobility, the social residences of the northern districts of Fresnes do not undergo an isolation or a radical isolation which separates them from the rest of the communal territory. However, the physical geography, the implantation of the building and the structure of the road network constrain East-West and North-South circulation. The accessibility of the TVM stations for the northern district as a whole is far from satisfactory. The public transport offer is not really under-sized, but the car is omnipresent in the urban landscape and the image of Fresnes is very mobile. In social and single-family neighbourhoods, the car occupies a very large part of the public space. It goes without saying that one of the big questions for the future is to envisage scenarios of transfer from motorized modes to soft modes while guaranteeing a good connectivity of the neighbourhoods between them and a correct accessibility of Fresnes to the south scale of the Paris region.

Figure 26 Pedestrian paths (Source : city of Fresnes)

Figure 27 Bike paths (Source: city of Fresnes)

Commercial polarities and unevenly distributed utilities: a North-South imbalance:

The town of Fresnes has a diversified equipment offering with a good level of school equipment in the districts. In terms of culture, the offer is varied and its scope of influence intermunicipal or even regional: the Val de Bièvre has installed on the territory its Ecomuseum "The word of the inhabitants of the suburbs" in the Farm Cottinville. The city also has a Departmental Radiation Conservatory (CDR) and a regional library with a wealth of funds and entertainment. That said, the supply of public facilities is unevenly distributed and shows a clear imbalance to the detriment of the northern part of the municipality.

The development of large residences has often been accompanied by the creation of small neighbourhood shopping malls. There are therefore micro-centralities but these are less present and less attractive in the northern neighbourhoods, those where our areas of study are located.

Figure 28 Commercial Centralities (Source: preparatory study for the revision of the PLU, city of Fresnes)

Figure 29 Small commercial centers (Source : city of Fresnes)

The commercial network and the corresponding animation within the districts are weakened by the proximity of major commercial equipment located outside the communal territory but easily accessible by car such as Belle-Epine, Thiais Village, Croix Blanche ...

In order to remedy such a dispersion of centralities and to organize

commercial polarities along structuring axes, recommendations have been proposed as part of studies prior to the revision of the local urban plan. These studies highlight the serious deficit of commercial animation in the northern neighbourhood and their negative effects on local life. The aim is to strengthen the residential and neighbourhood economy within neighbourhoods and to provide commercial services and community-based services.

Figure 30 Shops and services: a North-South imbalance (Source : Prospective study for the city of Fresnes, habitat diagnosis and economic issues, April 2014)

Of course, this involves qualitative improvements to the public space that should gradually spread in the residential tissues. Three North-South axes should thus eventually be set up each with a particular vocation:

– An inhabited axis promoting green continuities formed by major green spaces in the West of the city and the parks of the residences and allowing to create a series of public spaces of quality;

– An equipped axis linking neighbourhood facilities - particularly those in the Charcot-Zola district - to connect the micro-central points along a line that should also strengthen the amenities and attractiveness of the city centre;

Finally an active axis that should be the opportunity to program an innovative mix between housing, shops, services and other activities while rethinking the organization of flows born from the junction between the two motorways and the city entrance, major space interface and connector between different neighbourho

Figure 31 Three structuring axes

Figure 32 Equipped axis (Source : Prospective study for the city of Fresnes, habitat diagnosis and economic issues, April 2014)

These three North-South structuring axes should offer the opportunity to program suitable adaptations of the A86 crossings, in particular in its covered part, to mitigate the North-South cut-off effect and create unifying public spaces at the local level and throughout the municipality. With regard to our areas of study, it goes without saying that the constitution of these 3 axes, in particular the axis equipped and the active axis should lead to beneficial effects of economic development, new operations of development and of construction and requalification of the existing.

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Milan

Elena Maranghi and Francesca Cognetti

Historical overview on public housing construction and management

Public housing stock in Milan: an historical perspective

With its 9.750.000 square metres destined to social housing, Milan is one of the Italian metropolitan areas with the most consistent affordable housing stock. This quantity represents around the 8,4% of the urbanized surface of the city (not only referred to build fabric but also standards and services associated to public housing).

Unlike other metropolitan areas, the localization of public housing in Milan is widespread through the urban fabric, following the radial and concentric structure of the city as a whole. The distribution of this stock followed, during the different decades, the natural expansion of the city and, even if with some concentration, is mostly diffused through the different zones1.

According to Bruzzese (2011)[2] three principal configurations could be identified: consistent ensembles, linear concentration and punctual settlements. The first one is the result of several juxtapositions of incremental projects of public housing settlements, developed through the years, that led to the existence of consistent ensembles of affordable stock. The second one was developed following the principal radial infrastructure of the city: closer to the city centre we could observe more ancient settlements, in more peripheral areas more recent ones. Punctual settlements are smaller and more pulviscular interventions, widespread trough the city.

The overall image of the public city shows the relationship of different settlements with the urban fabric: some interventions were absorbed in the consolidated urban fabric; others are still in a quite marginal position.

Here we will mainly deal with large public housing complexes and therefore, in the case of Milan, especially those neighbourhoods built – since the beginning of the 20th century – on peripheral agricultural soils.

These large empty areas, often already public or affordable on the private market – since not interesting for private investors – became the pioneer fields for the development of large public housing complexes.

In contrast to other large Italian metropolitan areas (i.e.: Rome, Naples), due to the structure, development and dimension of the city

itself, Milan public housing complexes were mostly reached – through the decades – by the expansion of the urban fabric and are currently – even when peripheral and except very few exceptions – part of the city fabric. The separation between public and private city is rather linked, in the Milanese case, to the perception of public housing districts and their public image. The stigma related to public housing – increasingly relevant with the growth of poverty and social exclusion – gradually turned working class neighbourhood into "spatial enclosures", identified with marginality and fear.

Number of public dwellings	Number of dwellers in public housing	Percentage of public dwellings on total amount of housing
76.817	176.679	13,2%

Figure 1   Public dwellings in Milan, general data (Source: Metropolitana Milanese, 2015)

Affordable housing demand and related policies: an overall view on the last 10 years

Compared to the European average Italy is characterized by very low percentages of public housing: as in other Mediterranean countries – with relatively weak welfare systems – the percentage of Italian housing stock, destined to affordable social rent, remains under the 5%, while the European average is around the 25% (Ferdcasa, 2015)[3]. In this context, Milan represents – among the main Italian cities – the one with the highest percentage of public housing (not in absolute terms, but compared to the total amount of housing of the city): about 13.2% against, for example, 5.6% of Rome (data published by Metropolitana Milanese, 2015).

However, in the last decades Milan has been struggling, like other Italian cities, to respond to a consistent increase in the demand of affordable housing. Today, more than 20.000 people are on the public housing waiting list in Milan, all considered eligible for the assignment of a public dwelling[4].

On one hand, it is certainly true that in recent decades, especially since the economic crisis of 2008 and in relation with the increasing precariousness of life and work paths, affordable housing demand has undergone a considerable increase. An increase to which housing welfare polices didn't succeed to respond adequately. On the other hand, it should be noted that the progressive alienation of public residential assets contributed to exacerbate the situation. In Italy, in particular, this phenomenon is connected with the strong relevance of home-ownership: in 2015 home-owners represented the 72.9% of the population compared to

69.4% of the European average. The typically Italian answer of property as the easiest way to reach housing safety is evident both in public policies of disposal of public stock (also connected to the growing difficulties of financial management) and in the posture – both institutional and social – towards the public dwelling itself: never conceived as a service, the housing stock is generally characterized by a long permanence of families and – in some case – even by processes of "inheritance" of the right to stay[5].

In this regard, it is possible to identify a process of progressive impoverishment of public action in housing as well as of the material and immaterial outcomes deposited in the past. Since the early 90s, due to the effect of the crisis of welfare systems (already quite weak in Italy) and to the progressive change of labour, housing issues gradually disappeared from the national public agenda and the public debate. This absence has generated strong disparities between the regional contexts, to which the legislative competence was transferred in the 90s, with the revision of Title V of the Italian Constitution.

The policy of decentralization of housing policies together with the national disinvestment, contributed to determine the existence of very different "regional models" in terms of housing. In the case of Lombardy Region – to which Milan belongs to –, the most significant aspect concerns governance models (public-private partnership; the role of social organizations) and the consequent redefinition of the concept of public housing in favour of the one of "social housing.

Looking at the Lombardy Region, as some authors noticed affordable rent seems to have once again become – over the last decade – a strategic sector in which public and private actors are likely to invest. Even if not so significant under a quantitative point of view, this trend is interesting for the strategic push towards possible innovations in the sector. The issue of social housing and affordable renting is mainly related today to a significant change in housing demand, linked both to the definition of new social profiles and to the emergence of new economic and financial needs related to the precariousness of the labour market. In terms of new social profiles some important factors should be underlined: the contraction and fragmentation of households (new social bonds; new families; new forms of cohabitation); the aging of the population and the growth of immigration; the relevance of a new internal mobility linked to a flexible labour market.

In terms of increasing precariousness, the issue of widespread insecurity and the effects of the economic crisis on the country are relevant in shaping the housing demand as fragile and temporary, constantly subjected to change. A demand which no longer finds the privileged answer in accessing housing property.

However, if we look at the policy aspect, we immediately realize that

the institutional framework is far behind the treatment and - in some cases - the understanding of a new housing demand.

How public housing management has changed through time: from *Istituto Autonomo Case Popolari* to *Aler Milano* and *Metropoliana Milanese*

Considering the national framework, the most significant change that affected public housing in the last decades is related to a general policy of disinvestment of financial resources dedicated to the sector. Since the 1990s, the public housing stock in Italy began to shrink: from 1991 to 2007 it fell by more than 20%, considering the policy of privatization and the limited construction of new stock. In addition, in 1993 the law that ended the system of Gescal (*Gestione Case Lavoratori*) funds was promulgated. Gescal was a public fund, established in 1963 and destined to the construction of public housing: it was constituted by workers' duties, private enterprises' taxes and public investments. It was officially abolished in 1973 but it effectively ended by the end of the 90s. This law led to a policy of dismantling of the public housing stock (in order to obtain other resources): between 1993 and 2006 around 155.000 public housing units were sold. In the same years, a reform of the sector led to the establishment of a different management structure[6]. First of all, the competence related to housing – as already mentioned in the previous paragraph – was delivered to the Regional level; as a result, local Iacp branches (*Istituto autonomo case popolari*, the public body in charge of public housing building and management at a city level) were converted into Regional Agencies.

In Lombardy region, Aler (*Azienda Lombarda Edilizia Residenziale*) was funded in 1996, assuming Iacp functions: in the general framework of welfare reform and shrinking, Aler was conceived to function more as a private company, but still with a social aim. As several authors notice, the privatistic and managerial structure of Aler led to serious issues related to financial stability of the Agency istelf and had severe consequences on the quality (and regularity) of housing stock management. In the city of Milan, until the end of 2014, the whole public housing stock, composed by around 71.000 units – 29.000 owned by the Municipality itself, the rest owned by Aler – was managed by Aler Milano (the local branch of Aler). With the change of political administration (in 2013), the Municipality decided to create its own management structure, within *Metropolitana Milanese* (MM) – the public company which already managed the underground system and the integrated water service. This process leads to a sort of "competition" between the two agencies which – if not controlled – could induce a sort of

further stigmatization and abandoning of Aler neighbourhoods, in general terms characterized by worse condition of maintenance.

Even if characterized by slightly different approaches and quantities/qualities of the managed stock, both Aler and MM are facing quite similar issues related to public housing management, which could be summarized as follows.

First of all, management is characterized by a sort of inertia-immobilism which leads, on the one hand, to very low mobility within and in and out of the public housing stock. As already mentioned in the previous paragraph, public housing in Italy was never conceived as a temporary service. On the contrary, a general tendency to keep the public housing and even to inherit it by other family members, could be recognized. On the other hand, inertia could be defined as a "politics of voids" (Cognetti and Padovani, 2018), as to say the consolidate presence of a consistent portion of empty units, which especially characterizes the city of Milan. This presence is related to the lack of financial resources to invest in the adaptation to standards and maintenance of the stock – necessary to reallocate the units to new dwellers when they remain empty.

The existence of this consistent stock and, at the same time, the worsening of housing emergency related to increasing poverty (as already described above), led to the spreading of squatting practices in public housing. These practices – as we will further explore in San Siro's case – are both related to organized activities – grassroots and activists' strategies to protest in favour of housing rights or organizations related to criminal groups – or to individual initiatives (Mapping San Siro, 2014) and are one of the main problems related to public housing, both in terms of management but also of cohabitation at a micro-level. Many squatting families are indeed in a situation of housing need and poverty and their condition should be taken into consideration by appointed institutions. The treatment of squatting practices requires a strong collaboration between different institutions (Aler/MM – Municipality, in terms of social services, Police and so on…) which is not always happening.

The lack of financial resources – in the case of Aler both related to previous mismanagement and to the general disinvestment in public housing – was not tackled by the progressive privatization of public stock. On the contrary, selling plans (promoted in Italy by the law 560/1993) led to a sale in which prices were far below the market ones, very convenient for the buyers but not for the public agencies.

Moreover, during the last decades – especially in metropolitan areas – disinvestment was also related to the knowledge gap that characterizes the relationship between public housing agencies and their stock: if in the past agencies were characterized by a direct relationship with

neighbourhoods, little by little the administration became more centralized and lost its territorial approach.

In general terms, during the last decades, the public housing stock became "very social" in terms of characteristic of dwellers: this means that from being mostly destined to the working class, public housing neighbourhoods both formally (due to the worsening of housing poverty) and informally (trough squatting practices) became places characterized by an increasing and multidimensional fragility of dwellers (economic, social, cultural and so on). Within this framework, social management issues assumed an increasingly central role for public agencies that, at the same time, are not equipped to tackle these necessities. A general lack of dwelling policies could be identified: once entered in public housing, dwellers are not followed by a set of related policy (both tackling their individual needs and the dynamics of living together) and by a sensitive management that takes into account the specificity of these dwellers.

To conclude, if the framework of social housing – promoted by the new Regional Law 16/2016 – seems to embrace these challenges (temporality, social management, …), especially in relation to the role of new – private and social – actors, it still seems very difficult for existing public housing agencies to tackle these issues within the inhabited stock and the public housing stock, activating effective policies of regeneration. This is of course related to the lack of financial resources allocated for this purpose but also to the lack of innovative pilot projects insisting on existing stock. Projects that should take into account a general policy and a planning strategy, avoiding acting in terms of constant emergencies.

While it is possible to state that both Aler Milano and MM are currently trying to tackle management issues in terms of efficiency and avoiding resource waste, trying in particular to regain their relationship with single territories and neighbourhoods, at the same time it can be noticed how these institutions are not fulfilling the necessity to imagine integrated policies of regeneration.
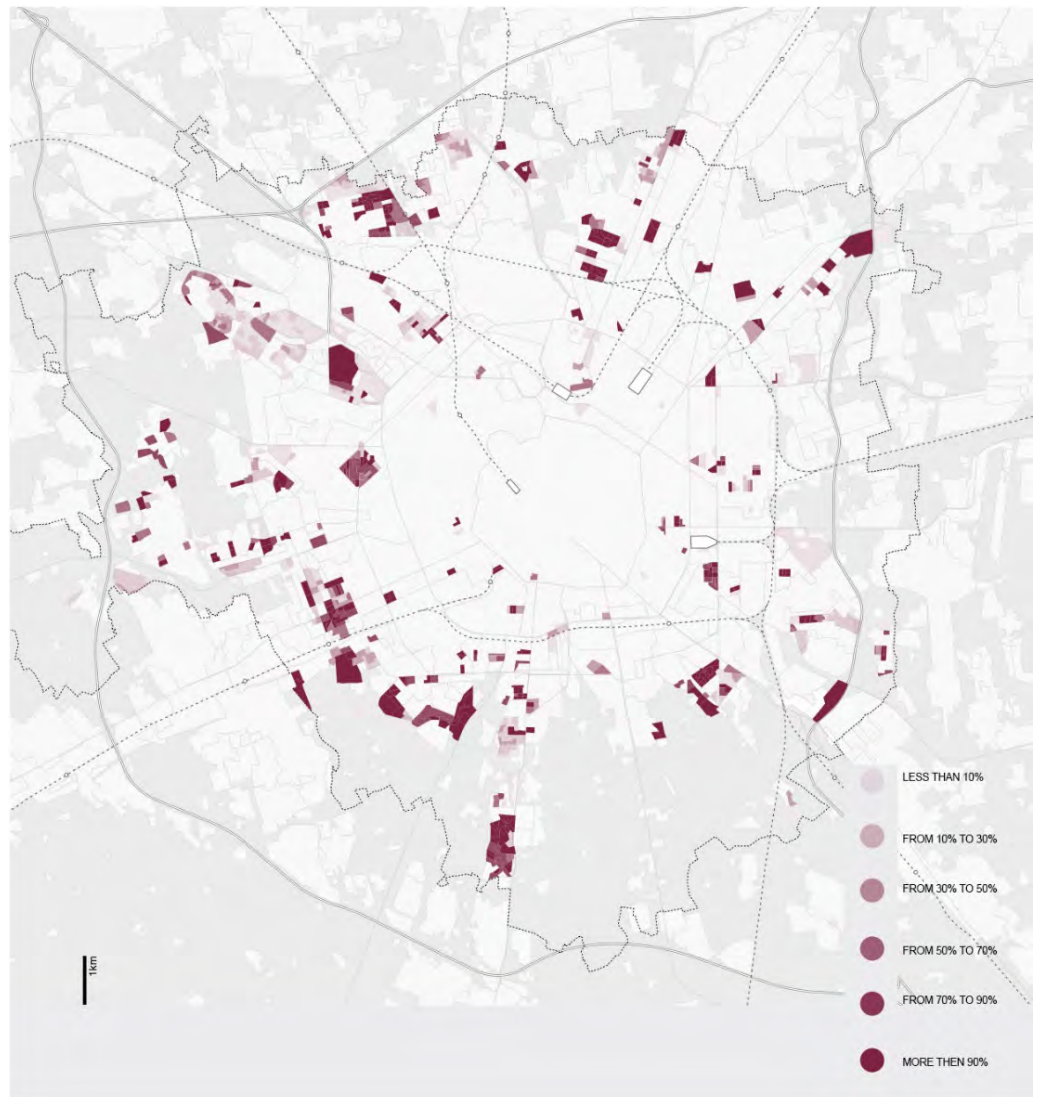
Figure 2   Map of the "public city" in Milan – percentages of public dwellings in public housing
neighbourhoods (Source: published on Infussi (Eds.), 2011)

Public Housing - Aler Milano properties

Public Housing - Milan Municipality properties

Mixed properites condominiums (Private owners + Municipality)

Figure 3   Map of the "public city" in Milan: current public housing stock (2014) – data: Municipality of Milan (2013) (Source: "Vuoti a rendere" Report (Polisocial, 2014))

The regeneration of large scale social estate: recent evolutions

The main challenges and strategies for public housing in the 2000s: the National framework

As already mentioned before, accessible housing issues disappeared from the national public agenda during the 90s and re-emerged in the first decades of 2000s: however, at least at a national level, innovative policies struggled to emerge in a clear way.

Generally speaking, at the beginning of the 90s, according to Padovani (2011), housing policies that until that period were – at least 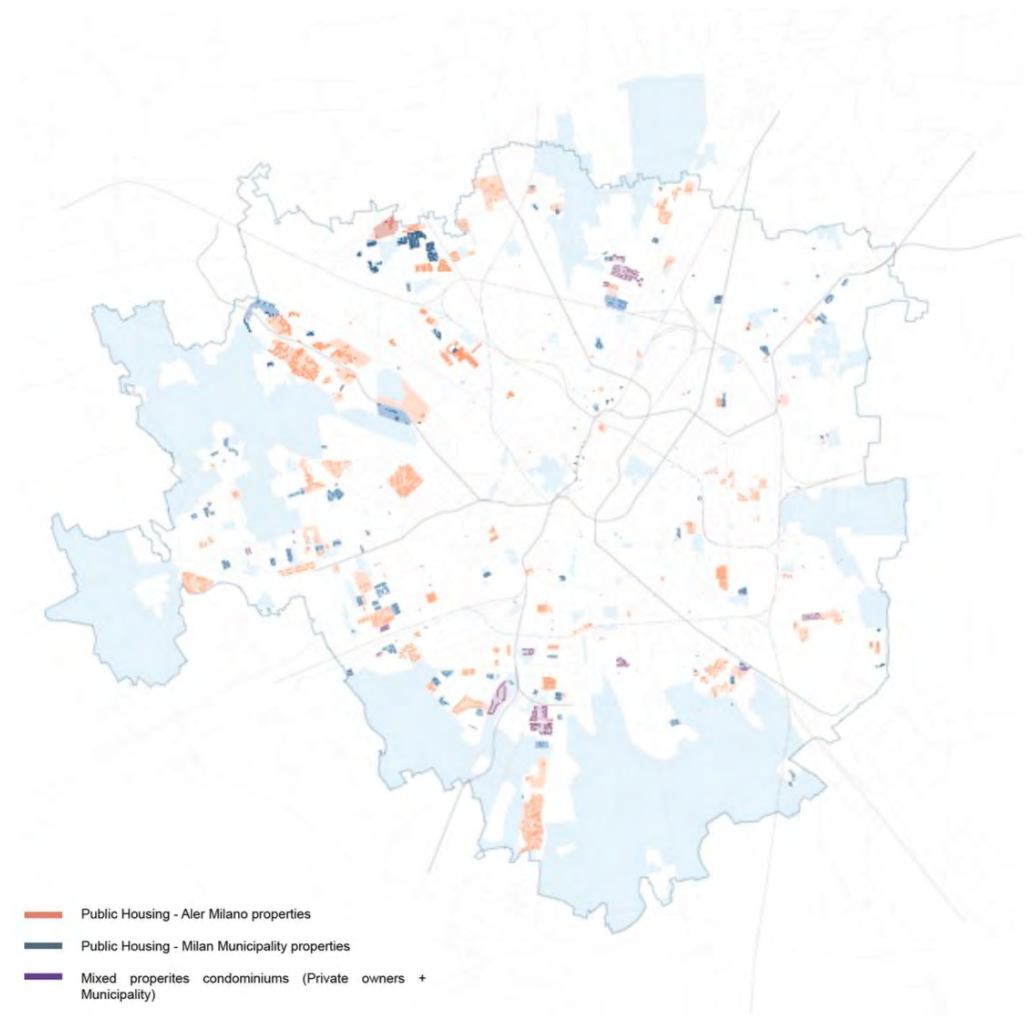informally – related to access to property, shifted from more traditional approaches to the issue of urban renewal. The low quality of urban peripheries and – among them especially public housing neighbourhoods – began to be recognized as a serious issue, also because of the solicitations coming from European Union. Since then, a first series of integrated (in terms of approach and competences) policies was developed (i.e.: Integrated Programs, Integrated Programs of Urban Renewal and Urban Re-use; Urban Rehabilitation and Territorial Sustainable Development Programs; Neighbourhood Contracts[7]…) with the objective to tackle the condition of these areas, first of all in terms of the improvement of their physical conditions.

By the end of the 90s, more and more attention is payed to the spazialization of urban poverty and disadvantages in certain areas of the cities, worsened by general economic and social conditions. The problem of lack of access to citizenship rights in these areas was addressed – at least in the intention of the policy framework – as a global issue and issue of social inclusion, delineating a shift from housing policies to welfare (dwelling) policies. The attention paid to the more marginal and marginalized areas of the cities was related to the European Union policy framework, which was promoting strategies and programs in this sense (i.e.: Pic Urban). It was both dealing with the necessity of promoting equal rights of access to the city but at the same time was related to the growing theme of promoting more competitive territories and cities, able to play a relevant role at an international level.

Until then, the "implicit" strategy of National Government had been the one of promoting the access to private property in housing: new public intervention strongly diminished (in the 2000s only 2.000 new housing

units were built, against 30.000 to 45.000 per year in the 1980s) and public stock was interested by selling plans (more than 11.000 apartments sold per year from 1993 to 2006)[8]. As we have already mentioned in the first part, in more recent years, from the second decade of 2000s, the issue of access to affordable housing became more and more pressing as it had expanded to different social categories, mainly due to the general impoverishment and precariousness of work paths but also to the contraction of public spending, related to the economic crisis. Given that – the contraction of public affordable housing and expansion of low-cost housing demand – from 2006 the centre-left Government was forced to implement a series of measures, adopted at a national level, aimed at reducing the pressing emergency in terms of housing demand: the laws named Interventions for the reduction of housing problems for particular social categories and Extraordinary program of public housing for Municipalities with pressing housing demand[9]. Among these measures it should be mentioned the introduction of special actions aimed at contrasting evictions, grown from around 27.000 in 2001 to 60.244 in 2012, the great majority of which caused by the impossibility to pay their rents. Other measures were directed to restore existing stock – considering aspects related to energy efficiency and sustainability – and promoting project aimed at tackling special and differentiated housing needs.

After 2008, with the assignment of the new national government (centre-right) the orientation of these policies changed towards a general reduction of public intervention in housing. The new National Plan for Housing (Piano nazionale di edilizia abitativa) and the Housing Plan (Piano Casa) were the main tools developed to tackle housing issues, especially focusing on: accelerating alienation processes, develop private intervention in housing (fostering mechanism such as project financing), re-launching the building activity as well as proposing the possibility to expand private homes through special plans. One of the main introduction of the National Plan for Housing is the introduction of the concept of "social housing" instead of public housing. This shift intervened in housing policy in particular in three directions: - promoting the idea of housing as a device to promote broader dwelling policies and social cohesion among a wide range of users; - the idea of housing as a service, promoting it as a public good; - the emergence of a new relationship between public and private actors, which stimulate innovation in terms of economic and financial sustainability of these interventions.

As could be noticed, the general strategy of these years is mostly aimed at defining new approaches and implementing the relationship between private and public interventions in economically sustainable housing, while is still more difficult to structure interventions in regeneration of

existing contexts.

In more recent years (from 2014 – 2015), following a European tendency, Italian Urban Agendas became more attentive to urban issues, integrating the approach to urban regeneration with the one of social innovation (Urbanit, 2017)[10]. Several initiatives were promoted at a national level, focused on fostering interventions related to the so called "urban peripheries" or "urban deprived areas", characterized by a certain degree of social discomfort (the coincidence of several factors such as unemployment rate, schooling rate...) and building degradation. At a national level this approach was promoted with several programs and initiatives directed to peripheral urban areas: National Plan for Cities (2012), Recovery Program for Public Housing Stock (2014), Program for Social and Cultural Redevelopment of Degraded Urban Areas (2015), Extraordinary Program for Urban Regeneration and Security (2016)[11], among which only the second was specifically directed to public housing, while the others are more related to the general concept of urban periphery. Additional policies that could be associated to this framework are the Operative National Plan for Metropolitan Areas[12] and the Por Fesr – at least as declined in some Regions (for instance in Lombardy it is really connected with the metropolitan level). Pon Metro is the result of Cohesion Policy 2014 – 2020 partnership agreement (between national and regional operative programs, European Commission and Italian Government) and in Italy is especially focused on the following Thematic Objectives: Enhancing access to, and use and quality of information and communication technologies (ICT) (2), Supporting the shift towards a low-carbon economy in all sectors (4), Promoting Social Inclusion and Combating Poverty (9). Both Pon Metro and Por Fesr are fostering the idea of a shared governance and inclusion of several social actors in the process of city-making, intending urban regeneration as a social process that should act at a local (community) level, trying to become "a tool to change opportunities for marginal populations (immigrants, refugees, people dealing with new forms of poverty)". However, as recently noticed by some authors, these policies show evident limits in their implementation, related to: on the one hand, their dependency from the European framework (smart city and social innovation) and the difficulty to really integrate this concepts with local needs and local ordinary policies; on the other hand, the orientation towards systematization of existing and feasible projects, which if on the one hand positive, has effects on the quality of territorial integration and impact.

First of all, it could be noticed that these policies are not directly addressed to public housing complexes and neighbourhoods and it is demanded to local authorities (municipalities) to decide which area/

areas should be candidate to certain programs, weather it is mostly public housing or not. Secondly, these policies are part of an enabling perspective towards the involvement of non-traditional actors in city-making and urban regeneration (local actors, third sector, social private and so on…). A process that on the one hand is positive because of the territorial perspective these actors could add to such processes and their capacity of innovating but at the same time is problematic if seen in a wider perspective of delegation and public welfare contraction.

To conclude this paragraph, it can be noticed that Italy had never been characterized by a clear and explicit strategy dedicated to urban areas and especially to public housing neighbourhoods, as happened in other urban contexts in Europe. In the last years, some traces of an emerging interest towards urban strategies has emerged, which involved a certain relevance of the national level and some local effects, as pointed out in the Urbanit Report 2017[13]: a new period of relevance of the role of cities and city mayors, after the one of the 90s; secondly a new wave of experimenting the role and autonomy of local authorities, dealing with new competences, but still politically fragile; finally, the emergence of complex issues, especially social and economic, both coming from unsolved problems inherited by the past and the worsening of the global situation (especially in terms of economic and humanitarian crisis.

Lombardy Region and Milan: traces of innovation without a strategy

After a period of substantial disappearance of any consistent intervention on public housing existing stock (1980s and 1990s), by the late 1990s – with the transference of housing competence to the regional level, as mentioned before – Lombardy Region and the city of Milan start to program new plans which involved the public city (existing and to be planned). From the 2000s it can be observed how both new interventions in public housing (and, in social housing as we will see) and regeneration policies in public housing neighbourhoods were implemented.

The general issue of public housing stock has been addressed in different ways, but without any background strategy.

A first form of treatment is the one related to urban redevelopment which more directly concerns the issue of articulated regeneration of existing large public housing neighbourhoods. Tools implied were various (Pru, Neighborhood Contract I and II, Urban Program) united by place-based and integrated approaches, concerning the restructuring of housing and buildings, but also the theme of public space and infrastructure, social participation and personal support.

A second front is related to the improvement of the quality of dwelling

and the forms of coexistence in neighbourhoods. In this direction, policies of different kinds have been activated, both at a micro-scale and the scale of the urban sector, with a certain emphasis on urban safety at first and then on social cohesion (Local Safety Pacts, social cohesion projects, etc.).

A third modality, concerns the increase of the existing assets. On this front, the Municipality of Milan has started an important policy of new construction of public housing complexes, through innovative design procedures and financing tools (*Abitare Milano* I and II program). Among these interventions, there are more minimal forms of intervention that can be defined as a better use of existing housing units, bringing them back to habitability; these interventions were implemented both within the urban regeneration program and through specific programs (program to contrast housing emergency I and II, Regional Operative Plan – Por Fesr, …). Spaces related to attics, unused concierges, units under standard dimensions, condemned units etc. are redesigned and returned to traditional uses through an optimization of the existing heritage. Even partial demolitions and reconstructions are part of this tendency.

A fourth mode of action concerns the opening of neighbourhoods to new populations and new uses, to counteract their single-use and the absence of social differentiation. On the one hand, introducing new inhabitants and experimenting with different forms of housing assignments (temporary housing, etc.); on the other, integrating the housing dimension with the one of social services.

With respect to this first experimentation period, it is possible to identify a series of critical issues primarily to the lack of a unitary and strategic vision on the broad theme of urban peripheries and of the public city in particular. This theme is linked to a second critical issue that sees the definition of precise territorial boundaries of policies as a strong limit to the inclusion of public housing districts within broader processes at the city level, considering them as important resources for its development. The risk related to strictly place-based policies is to consider public housing neighbourhoods as target territories (Cognetti, 2001), reinforcing their boundaries and paradoxically producing an unwilled effect of new marginalization and exclusion.

On the other hand, the period of experimentation in integrated policy could be seen as a resource in increasing governance capacity of public actors and their ability to coordinate among different sectors of the same institution.

Neighbourhood Contracts II: the case of Milan

The most significant place-based integrated policy applied to the

Milanese public housing neighbourhoods is the Program Neighbourhood Contracts II (*Contratti di quartiere* II), implemented in 2003.

Neighborhood Contracts are urban redevelopment programs, promoted for the first time in Italy in the 1997 by the *Ministero dei Lavori Pubblici* (Ministery of Public Works). The purpose of the program is to redevelop neighborhoods characterized by "poor social cohesion and marked housing discomfort" (Ministerial Decree October 22, 1997). The interventions were finalized mainly to the physical and structural requalification of the neighborhood, both in terms of housing and of infrastructural equipment and services, but including innovative approaches in terms of participation of local actors and inhabitants in processes of decision making and sharing implementation phases. With regard to financing, a total of 700 billion (362 million) was partly available for the former Gescal funds. The procedure implied that local municipalities should present their proposal to Regions, which would make a first evaluation of admissibility and send them to the Ministry. 77 proposals among 84 were judged admissible by the ministerial commission. The first 46 were financed with the 700 billion available; another 8 projects were financed with an additional 100 billion. Lombardy Region participated to the program with two neighborhoods located in Milan (Spaventa and Stadera) for a total investment of around 39 million euros.

Between 2001 and 2002, the Ministry of Public Works decided to propose a second edition of the program in continuity with the previous experience but less experimental and less focused on replicability at a national context and more focused, instead, on the role of Regions which, at that time, became co-financer of the interventions (since the financial competence in housing was demanded to them). Lombardy Region published its announcement in 2003: it was particularly focused on enhancement and increase of public housing assets, improvement of built environment energy efficiency and of quality of living. Solutions requested – proposed by Municipalities and eventually local branches of Aler – should tackle these issues, ensuring feasibility and fast realization of the interventions, as well as promoting partnerships between public and private sector. 23 contracts were admitted to financing in 2004, among which 5 were located in the Municipality of Milan: Mazzini, Ponte Lambro, Molise Calvairate, San Siro, Gratosoglio.

Projects were started after the agreement between Ministry, Region and Municipality, in 2005 after which, in 2006, Municipality instituted *Laboratori di quartiere* (Neighborhood Labs), conceived as a municipal service implied in the implementation of the Social Plan.

Total Amount of Funding	Ministerial Funding	Regional Funding	Amount Supplied	% of Amount Supplied
299.230.303,20	119.900.219,00	179.330.084,20	236.889.612,72	79

Planned Works	Completed Works	% of Completed Works	Social Actions	Planned Housing Units (to intervene on)	Completed Housing Units	% Completed Housing Units	Additional Housing Units	Completed Additional Housing Units
313	258	82	134	10583	8787	83	1478	712

Figure 4 Neighbourhood contracts II National Program – Lombardy Region (22 projects) – Implementation Status (Source: Lombardy Region – updated in June 2016)

The main problem of the program, if we refer to the Milanese case, is primarily related to the choice of contexts included in the program, determined, above all an issue of time and schedule, by the preferences and sensibilities of politicians and local officials (Cognetti, 2011) and poorly focused on a real participation of local contexts in the definition of planning strategies. During the implementation, in the Milanese case, there is above all a difficulty in integrating physical redevelopment interventions and issues related to social support of the program. Being neighborhoods owned by Aler (except for a small part of the Ponte Lambro district), the relationship between the Municipality and Aler Milan proved to be complex and hard to manage, especially due to financial difficulties (and related episodes of mismanagement) that characterized Aler Milano in the period of implementation of the neighborhood contracts. In fact, Aler was responsible for the implementation of housing renovation and building redevelopment projects, while in the majority of cases the Municipality of Milan was responsible for the implementation of some infrastructural interventions as well as the implementation of the Social Accompaniment Plan (*Piano di Accompagnamento Sociale*), which had the task of carrying out territorial animation interventions, strengthening social cohesion and assisting the local population in the relationship with the owner and manager (Aler), as well as accompanying residential mobility where planned. Today, intervention on the built environment are not completed in almost every neighborhood included in the program, within the city of Milan (the case of other municipalities in the regional contexts is very different).

Another issue related to the program concerns more generally the failure of the wave of participation policies in Italy, critically seen by some authors as functional to increase the consensus on some policy choices and not to really enlarge the decision-making process. This was also caused by the lack of coincidence of the design process with that of social participation as well as, in the context of public housing, the

difficulty related to participation for some particularly fragile populations. In other words, the expectations regarding participation were too high in the case of the Neighborhood Contracts and this caused a considerable disillusionment with respect to the real possibilities of inclusion of inhabitants and local networks in these processes.

Undoubtedly interesting is the experience of *Laboratori di quartiere* (Neighborhood Labs), designed above all as an accompanying service, which had to reinvent their role, especially within contexts in which the building works have undergone a sudden arrests and/or cuts. The Municipality of Milan has in fact maintained a role of supervision within this service which - although it has assumed different characteristics in the five districts, depending also on the approach of the (private) company entrusted with the task of implementing the service - was prolonged with two successive renewals (2012 and 2015), until it ended its mandate in May 2016 (but to be renovated with other characteristics, as we will see in Part 3).

We will see later on the issues related to the implementation of this program in the case of San Siro.

More recent tendencies: social housing and social innovation as tools to intervene on dwelling and peripheries

After a long period of securitarian policies carried out by right-wing administrations, in 2011 Milan experienced a period of significant political change with the election of Mayor Giuliano Pisapia, exponent of the left but coming from the civil society. The election of the Mayor was strongly supported by a huge citizens' participation: regardless of their political position, many residents identify him with the possibility of change. Despite the considerable expectations generated, Pisapia administration worked rather "quietly", generating a sort of frustration in his own voters. However, it must be said that only at the end of the mandate it has been possible to start to notice some significant changes that had occurred within the administration itself, whose legacy has been widely "exploited" by his successor. During the Pisapia administration (2011 - 2016), the main interventions concerning the issue of urban regeneration and peripheral areas focused mainly on non-physical and soft interventions and mostly related to the promotion of policies of social cohesion.

Only with the election of the new Mayor Giuseppe Sala (2016) the theme of regeneration of urban suburbs, understood not only and not so much as public housing neighbourhoods, has raised again in the public agenda of the city, also in relation to the national trend of recent years. The centre-left administration – in charge since 2016 – has built a strategy

relating to the territorial revitalization of the city of Milan starting from the theme of the suburbs. The merit of the administration in this sense, rather than building a coherent strategic framework, was to put together a unitary vision of a series of interventions - partly previously foreseen - that insist on peripheral territories and to concentrate certain interventions in so-called strategic areas of intervention (Niguarda Bovisa, Adriano Padova Rizzoli, Corvetto Chiaravalle Porto di Mare, Giambellino Lorenteggio, QT8 Gallaratese) for a total of 365 million euros of public spending (divided between 258 million dedicated to public works and 38 million to services). The project - called Fare Milano (Making Milan) and presented in December 2016 - works on the systematization of a series of interventions that not only concern urban suburbs and strategic areas, but a series of wider interventions, both ordinary and not, that, for the first time, are presented - and perhaps partly implemented - in a coordinated form. An aspect of interest of this program is undoubtedly related to the governance of the interventions and to the coordination with other territorial actors (local actors/private and social actors) and existing projects that insist on the same areas. As will be further explored later, the role of non-institutional territorial actors is becoming more and more important in terms of their active involvement into regeneration processes, not only as actors of processes of participation, but as promoters and implementers of programs and policies.

The risk, however, is to produce effects of great disparity between the territorial areas interested by a wide variety of projects and other territorial areas, excluded from this round of urban policies. Such as, for example, the public housing neighbourhoods interested by the Neighbourhood Contracts, automatically excluded from these projects; as well as the possible exclusion of housing contexts owned by the regional agency (Aler Milano) on which, due to a significant political distance between the Region and the City, except for the context of Giambellino Lorenteggio, the municipality decided not to intervene.

San Siro neighbourhood: from Rationalist icon to internal periphery

Located in the North-Western part of the city, San Siro is one of the largest public housing neighbourhoods in Milan. It was built between the 30s and 40s of the 20th century and it is composed of 6.133 apartments, the majority of which currently held and managed by Aler Milano (see previous paragraphs).

From an aerial point of view, the neighbourhood is shaped as a big, compact quadrilateral area of around 24.000 square metres, highly distinguishable from its surroundings, apparently more chaotic, opened and irregular. The axis of *via Mar Jonio – viale Aretusa* divides San Siro into two sectors, called Milite Ignoto and Baracca, and organizes a very regular and well-designed road system which structures and determine the shape of all the other spaces. Despite this image, the neighbourhood was actually built through several years and without any general project, except for the road system and the distribution of the parcels, established by the two urban plans of Milan (1912 and 1934).

Figure 5   Image by Giacomo Silvestri

A general portrait: the built environment and its development[14]

The neighbourhood rose up in a large rural area which at that time (1930s) was located in the periphery of the city. San Siro's development was part of a period of lively growth of Milan as a whole, characterized by a strong social and political change. Before the Second World War, the Albertini Plan (1932) imagined a strong expansion and growth of the city, considering the demolition and reconstruction of a large part of the city centre, in order to move the poorest segment of the population to the periphery. Considering this framework, San Siro – as other similar neighbourhoods – was conceived to host Milanese working-class, expulsed from other parts of the city.

Two relevant characteristics – related to the expansion of low cost housing – could be highlighted: the development of a differentiated yet economic offer – that led to a differentiation in architectonical typologies – and the centrality of Rationalism in architecture. The production of new dwellings was promoted by the *Institute Case Popolari* (ICPM – Institute for Public Housing in Milan) which, at that time, tent to differentiate its housing offer: rent-to-buy houses, mostly well-finished and designed; working class apartments; minimal houses, destined to the poorest population, generally constituted by one-roomed apartments with shared services. During the 1930s the Institute promoted a great expansion of its patrimony: in five years – from 1925 to 1930 – it tripled the number of its properties, owning around 18.000 apartments that hosted around 70.000 inhabitants. As already mentioned, the housing stock was pretty differentiated in terms of quality and prices, in order to respond to the different needs expressed by the different segments of the working class that was expanding at that time.

The growth of public housing sector promoted by IACP and its local branches, was characterized by a strong architectonical experimentation, mostly related to the Rationalist movement which aim was to maximise the efficiency of the housing stock. As other public housing neighbourhoods built during that period, San Siro was conceived to respond to the principles of modernity, such as experimentation of new materials and typologies based on very basic standards in terms of spaces and comfort. At the same time, it was also characterized by heterogeneous housing typologies, destined to different classes. Housing typologies and dwelling conditions result to be very different in the different sectors of the neighbourhood, showing an internal polarization between antithetic situations in terms of quality of living and sharing spaces. San Siro is the result of a strong fragmentation of typologies and building techniques that led, through the years, to a similar fragmentation in terms of uses and social practices and,

then, in terms of dwelling quality. Parcels and courtyards' structures, the level of maintenance of the different buildings, the mono-functionality of certain lots and other factors – such as regenerations plans and social practices – affected the quality of living conditions in the different parts of the neighbourhood.

Nowadays, from an internal and accurate point of view, the neighbourhood appears as very fragmented even if these differences are often hidden by the perception of a strong boundary that divides San Siro from its surroundings.

The original plan of San Siro (1932), outcome of an architectonic competition, was more traditional and more sensitive towards the original conditions of living of the future dwellers. Soon, due to the pressing housing demand (not only caused by the internal migration from the countryside, but also to the consistent demolition of the historical centre of the city) the plan left room for an idea of a modern neighbourhood. Modern and rationalist architecture was seen as more likely to respond to an increasing housing demand with solutions that combine the standards of comfort and hygiene already achieved with new typological and constructive characteristics. The perspective was to propose projects able to interpret the new social phenomena through technical and economic innovation; these were the reasons that favoured the adhesion of architects and institutions to rationalist theories. However, this research for modernity had to deal with the financial restrictions and autarkic limitations that characterized the Fascist regime. Due to the scarcity of the materials used and a chronic lack of maintenance, a great part of the neighbourhood seemed to be destined to a rapid decline. In the case of San Siro, the very architectural experimentation, even if inserted into European-style strands, has not always succeeded in fully tackling its social and disciplinary challenges.

The period between 1932 and 1952 sees the overlapping of the construction of distinct parts, expressing, with their diversities, the change over time of the conception and rationale of public intervention in housing. From the reformist approach of the beginning of the century, evident in the spacious and tree-lined inner courts of the first settlements characterized by a good quality in building and architecture, to the "modern" rationalist approach, characterized by the slats aligned along the heliothermic axis and the green corridors.

The different quarters of San Siro are the mirror of the transformation of the approach to public housing, from the more traditional one (est quarter), still characterized by a good quality of materials and decent dimensions of apartments to a more hybrid one (north-west quarter), defined by the presence of public services and the compromise between common/private spaces, to a typical rationalist lot (south west quarter), characterized by

lower dimension of housing, low cost materials and mono-functional lots.
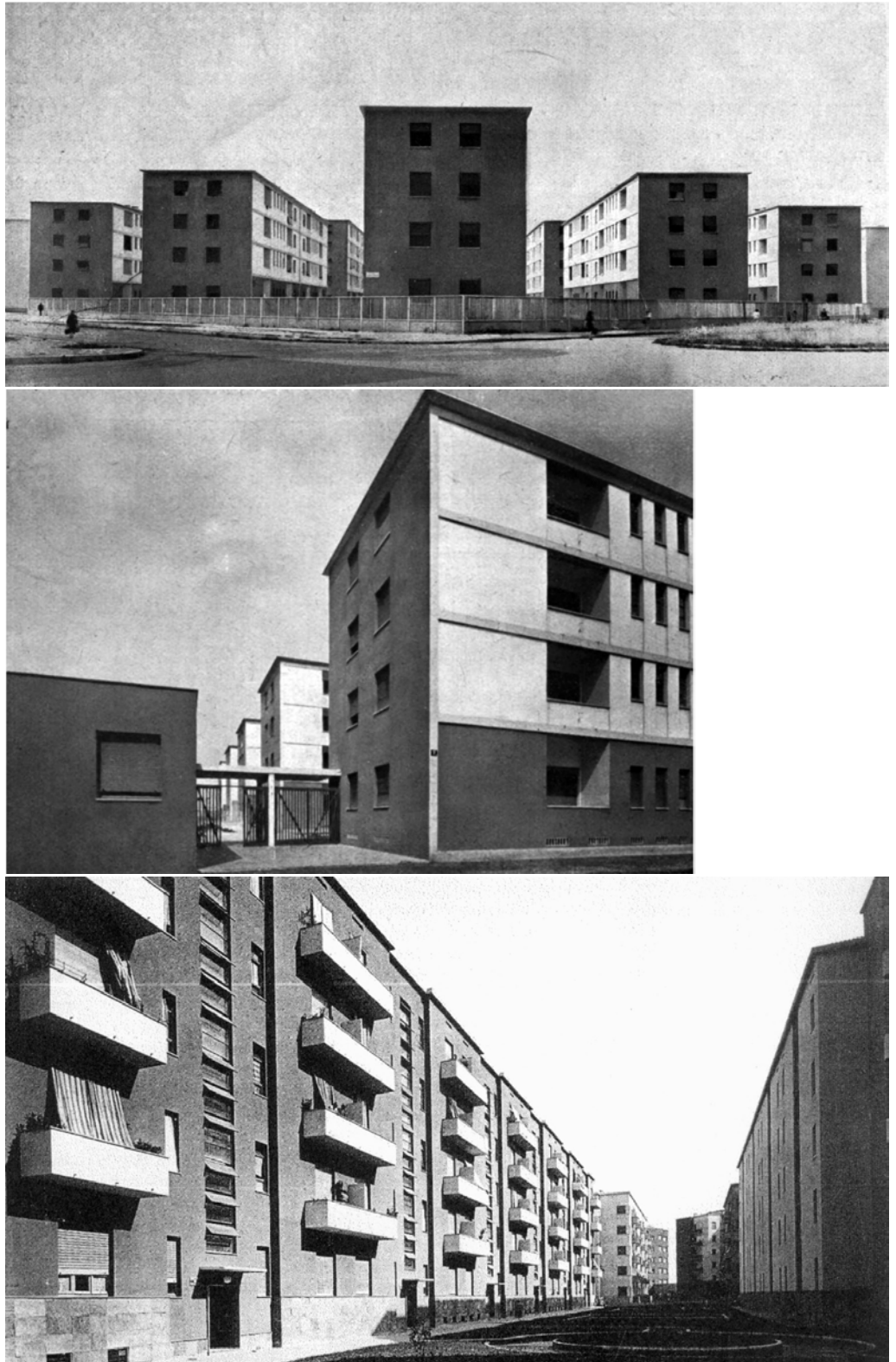

Figure 6   Historical images of the neighbourhood (in Casabella-Costruzioni, 1942, n.148, October) - Part of the neighbourhood projected by Franco Albini

Figure 7 Aerial view of the neighbourhood; on top left the famous Stadium of San Siro. (Source: Google Maps)

Figure 8   Images of the neighbourhood (Source: Mapping San Siro)

educational facilities
health facilities
sport facilities
hippodromes
military areas
other urban facilities
public parks
areas under trasformations
big urban projects
public housing neighborhoods
cultural facilities
underground stops
public transport
main infrastructural roads
local administrative boundaries

Figure 9   Functions in San Siro (Elaboration by Alice Ranzini - please do not release (in course of publication))

San Siro today: an internal periphery

There are two main characteristics of the city development that radically affected the conditions of San Siro neighbourhood.

The first condition concerns the context in which San Siro is located. Born as an innovative "urban phenomenon" rooted in a rural and peripheral are, so far outside from the logic of the city, San Siro was conceived as a bridgehead of transformation "bringing the modern city to the countryside". Today, instead, the neighbourhood is paradoxically the most inert and passive part of a territory – the West of Milan – which is highly developing.

The conditions of "separation and anomaly" (Cognetti, 2011) have reversed the trend of a growth path: San Siro is not currently in a peripheral position as when it was built, but today, more than a time, its relationship with the surrounding area shows a separation from the rest of the city, typical of the contemporary metropolis suburbs (Petrillo, 2013). The urban sector to which San Siro belongs is today a semi-central area, very well served in terms of public transportation (for instance: a new metro line has recently opened a station located in one of the neighbourhood borders'), with the presence of a good supply in terms of green spaces and commercial services. Apparently permeable, the boundaries of the neighbourhood are very dense in terms of exclusion from certain dynamics and perception of separation and difference. Today San Siro is an internal periphery, contiguous but yet separated from its surroundings. Many different factors – that will be addressed in next paragraphs – concurred to thicken this immaterial boundary between inside and outside the neighbourhood: a poor and marginalized population; the scarce maintenance of both the built environment and the common/public spaces; the introverted character of the neighbourhood, with few commercial businesses and a lack of attractive places; the dynamics of school segregation related with the massive presence of immigrants etc. The spatialization and concentration of social and economic inequalities contribute to increase the separation and stigmatization of this part of the city. Conditions that have radically changed the meaning of public housing neighbourhoods in general: from places planned to guarantee fundamental rights for all and the access to a just city, to the most problematic, stigmatized and excluded parts of the city. On the other hand, while other neighbourhoods, built in the same period, are today mostly privatized, a great percentage of the housing stock in San Siro is still public. This aspect represents a challenge for a public housing neighbourhood which is located within the city – unlike more recent ones that are still located in peripheral areas – but at the same time appears to be separated from it.

The second condition that radically changed San Siro through time is more "internal" than the one described so far and it concerns the possibility of the built environment to respond to contemporary dwelling needs and challenges. If in the original project the system of courtyards seemed to support and structure the whole urban settlement, as a homogenous ground, actually it "crumbles" into pieces, taking different and heterogeneous forms, shaped by inhabitants uses and practices. The actual significant form of the neighbourhood is not the one that may seem to be if seen on a map: quadrilateral and well recognizable. It is fragmented, instead, in many different "islands", disconnected from each other, characterized by unexpected geographies of soil uses. Processes of care and re-appropriation, micro-colonization, construction of fences, different management dynamics and affirmation of self-produced rules of use and reuse of spaces: these phenomena trace new trajectories and new internal polarities, areas of light and shadow, physical and immaterial nodes of the dynamics of coexistence and conflict between the fragile populations that inhabit the neighbourhood.

It could be observed, then, how built space resulted to be unable to adapt itself and respond to the uses promoted from the grassroots. The structure of enclosed courtyards and the enormous length of the blocks (at least doubling the one of private fabric) emphasize the separation and fragmentation of the different units, making it hard for inhabitants to fully live and experience the common/public space. Often, the common space of the courtyard becomes the physical symbolic condensation of broader dynamics, a "concentration" of meanings and forms of belonging that, in variable proportions, combine two elements: the individual and the collective. In such fragmentation, minor social facts such as the presence of the gate-keeper or other figures of control and supervision, the growth or disappearance of self-management committees of inhabitants, the rules of use of the courtyard adopted, the forms of care and appropriation of the green space and so on: these all become discriminating factors of strong differentiation of the conditions of cohabitation. In a neighbourhood where a strong contraction of the private dimension, represented by very small apartments, could be observed, the dynamics that lead to the existence of "dwelling bubbles" with very different conditions express the need to extend the dimension of exchange in space. A need that today often leads alternatively to precarious equilibrium of coexistence or explicit conflict.

This characteristic of internal fragmentation is emphasized by the differentiation of housing titles (public rent, property, private rent, squatting and so on...) and the variety of people that live in the neighbourhood (superdiversity), as we will see in the following paragraphs.

Housing management: immobility and dynamism

San Siro is quite exemplificative of the several problematics related to public housing management in Italy and their effects on people's lives. As already mentioned in the first paragraphs of this report, Aler Milano is currently facing a financial crisis caused by different factors among which a season of mismanagement of its resources that recently led to a legal procedure and the restoration of the Agency's structure as a whole. The lack of financial resources that the Agency was undergoing in the last decades, led to a progressive neglecting of its properties: on one hand, when possible, Aler tried to encourage the right to buy, especially in a quite well served and central neighbourhood as San Siro, consequently producing the shrinking of public housing stock. In 2013, around the 23% of the housing stock in San Siro had been privatized, following different selling programs promoted through years. Due to this policy and to the preference of selling units in condominiums that were already partially privatized (that are more difficult to manage because of the presence of fragmented property), some parts of the neighbourhood are "detaching" from it (see map below) On the other hand, the shrinking is not only due to the change in terms of property regime. Due to the scarce resources, available to rehabilitate the stock – as already mentioned – Aler often left s its dwellings empty, generating various issues among which building decay. According to the available data (2013), around the 16% of the dwellings in San Siro are currently empty (the 84% of them needing some kind of maintenance). The data is even more impressive if compared with its value in 1991, which was around 1,3%. Other minor but still significant factors that compromise the effective use of the patrimony as public housing are on one hand the presence of *"Fuori erp"* (400 dwellings), dwellings that – for reasons related to their dimension[15] or other factors – can not be assigned though public housing and are destined to other social programs, often managed by Third Sector agencies; on the other hand, in line with the national framework mentioned in the first paragraphs, there is also a percentage of dwellings inhabited by people who no longer have the right to stay due to the increase of their income (190 dwellings in 2013), but who still inhabit public housing.

It could be noticed how complex and articulated this framework is, despite a public image of the neighbourhood as a big block, characterized by decay and marginality.

Finally, it could be noticed how the public housing stock is characterized by a certain immobility: as a matter of fact, as already mentioned, in Italy public housing is related with long permanence of dwellers in the housing stock, often for a lifetime. In San Siro 1/3 of the

whole contracts stipulated is more than 25 years long; the 23%, more than 35 years long.

This whole picture shows a general difficulty to guarantee the rights of access and permanence in the heritage and a disinvestment in public housing in terms of policies related to social dwelling.

However, on the other hand, precisely for its porous and non-homogeneous characteristics, the housing stock is interested by various dynamics more related to informal, non-managed and spontaneous processes.

Property and housing regimes in San Siro	%
Privatized stock (private rent/household)	23%
Public stock dedicated to public housing	54.5%
Public stock dedicated to social housing	6.5%
Empty stock	16%
Tot	100%

Figure 10 Property and housing regimes in San Siro (Source: Aler Milano, 2013)
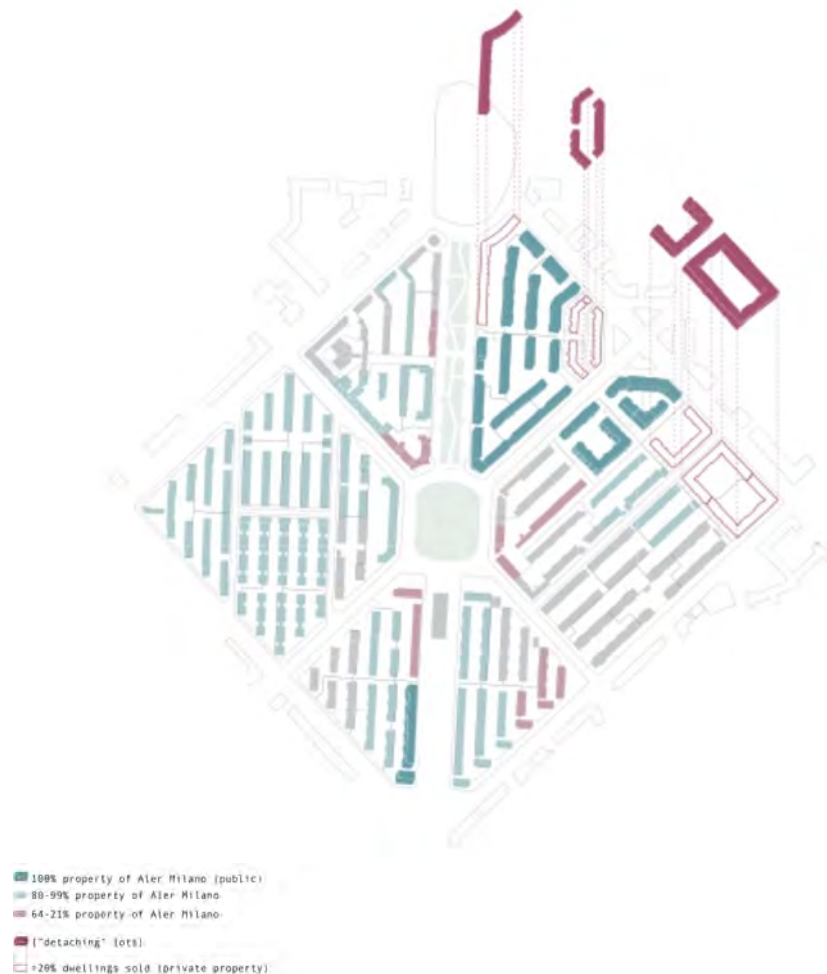

Figure 11 Elaboration by Alice Ranzini – please do not release (in course of publication)

Resident population: the coexistence between different social actors seeking for low cost housing solutions

Given the sort of inertia that concerns the built space, San Siro has changed a lot during the last decades in terms of resident population. Due to its characteristic in terms of housing offer, the neighbourhood is a significant example of the trends with which public housing and affordable housing demand have changed in recent years. This is true both for formal population, related to public housing stock and informal/irregular ones, related to the significant presence of vacant apartments. Above all it should be mentioned that San Siro differs from its surroundings especially for a series of average values – worsen in more recent years – that denounce the serious social and economic fragility of its inhabitants. However, especially if we consider the privatized stock and the informal stock related to vacancies, it should be said that the neighbourhood is interested by various dynamics and changes in terms of resident population. First of all, the private market of rents and sells in San Siro is characterized by average values that are far under the average market values of its surroundings: a characteristic that determined the access to housing for new social actors, especially young people and families – both Italian and foreign – belonging to a lower middle class. Secondly, another kind of mobility and dynamic is related to the access to using of people through squatting practices: this is a very heterogeneous population, very difficult to access, mostly composed by foreign people with very low cultural - economic backgrounds and very tiny intercultural bonds. Thirdly, in the last years the traditional access to social housing was mostly related in San Siro to elderly people evicted from other parts of the city: a potentially fragile population, sometimes still active but often at risk of isolation. Finally, there are also some interesting new tendencies related to social housing project (for instance Abitagiovani project)[16] that introduced a young and active component, still very little but interesting in terms of new energies and social investments in the neighbourhood.

A social mix de facto: superdiversity in San Siro

First of all, nowadays San Siro is inhabited by around 11.000 people (Anagrafe Comunale 2012), the 48% of which is constituted by people with foreign origins. This percentage is quite significant per se but even more since it doubles the city's average (which is around 18 – 20%). The neighbourhood is historically a district represented by a great cultural

diversity. According to the data of the municipal registry, there are 85 different nationalities in the neighbourhood, including the Italian one. Conversely to what is often represented by traditional media, the national blocks – both foreign and Italian ones – are not homogenous and diversity can not be reduced to the pure criteria of national origin, showing what Vertovec has called superdiversity (Vertovec, 2007; 2015).

The wide variety of national backgrounds, the different social and cultural origins as well as the different degrees of integration into Italian society, make San Siro a symbol par excellence of the "trend scenario" of our cities: a potential laboratory of experimentation and learning of intercultural citizenship. At the same time, however, mainly due to the socio-economic difficulties of family units, dwelling problems and the lack of investment in structured integration programs, the image of the "stranger" in San Siro remains strongly flattened on dynamics of conflict, fear, stigma, hostility.

Two main trends could be distinguished. The first one is the one of families/people who have a consolidated presence within the neighbourhood either because they are historical public housing tenants or because they are private owners. In fact, many foreign families have bought a home in San Siro, incentivized by low prices and the centrality of the neighbourhood, in the years of greater ease in accessing loans (before 2008). In both cases, this part of the population is an important resource for the neighbourhood, representing its most dynamic and young component. On the other hand, in recent years, these residents are facing a structural fragility related to the expulsion from the labour market and the precarization of migratory paths that resulted to be less stable than expected. This component also suffers the label of "foreigner", that often causes isolation and conflict among immigrants and national communities.

The second trend that could be analysed is the one of new arrivals and mobility: for many foreigners who came to Italy in recent years, San Siro represents the "first landing place" or a "temporary landing place" in situations of emergency or fragility (arrival in Italy, loss of work, etc.). The porousness due to the dynamics of abandonment that have gradually affected the housing stock, has encouraged squatting practices (in some cases managed by local networks of racket housing, belonging to different national groups) which act as a "buffer" for situations emergency and social fragility, often, in the case of foreigners, of a temporary nature. This of course accentuates in some cases the sense of "strangeness" and distrust by the more stable residents (be they Italian or foreign) and sharpens some difficulties of the families as, for example, those connected to the school dispersion generated by process of transnational mobility.

The Arabic-speaking population (mainly coming from Egypt and

Morocco) is undoubtedly the most visible and recognizable, also due to the opening, within the neighbourhood, of ethnic shops the majority of which owned by citizens with Egyptian origins. Certainly, the presence of these national communities is numerically more substantial than the others: about 47% of foreign residents come from the geographical area of Egypt and Morocco. However, it is impossible to classify it as a homogeneous community. Arabic speakers in San Siro do not recognize themselves as a community: they do not have any common representation organism and they do have strong cultural and social diversities within the same national communities (inhabitants coming from the cities/from the countryside, recently arrived/with a consolidated migration path, Muslim/Coptic/not-practicing any religion, etc.). Being represented from the outside as a unitary whole and often stigmatized and referred to as a "problem", the different national groups prefer to try to "camouflage" themselves and be invisible rather than organize themselves to claim for rights and representation (Sansheroes, 2017).

The concept of hard cohabitation between Italians and immigrants, through which San Siro is often described in traditional media, is inadequate to describe the neighbourhood: San Siro is rather a place of a complex cohabitation between foreigners and foreigners, between Italians and Italians. More than a "problem of integration between Italians and foreigners", San Siro seems to challenge the contemporary city with the issue of intercultural coexistence. Often, the cohabitation conflict, even if described and interpreted in an inter-ethnic key, is produced by inter-generational distance between inhabitants, polarized between older Italians and foreign young families, with frequently numerous living in very small spaces.

	Italian citizens	Other nationalities	Tot
number	6.018	5.709	11.727
%	51,3%	48,7%	100%

Figure 12 Resident population – nationalities (Source: Anagrafe Comunale, 2012)
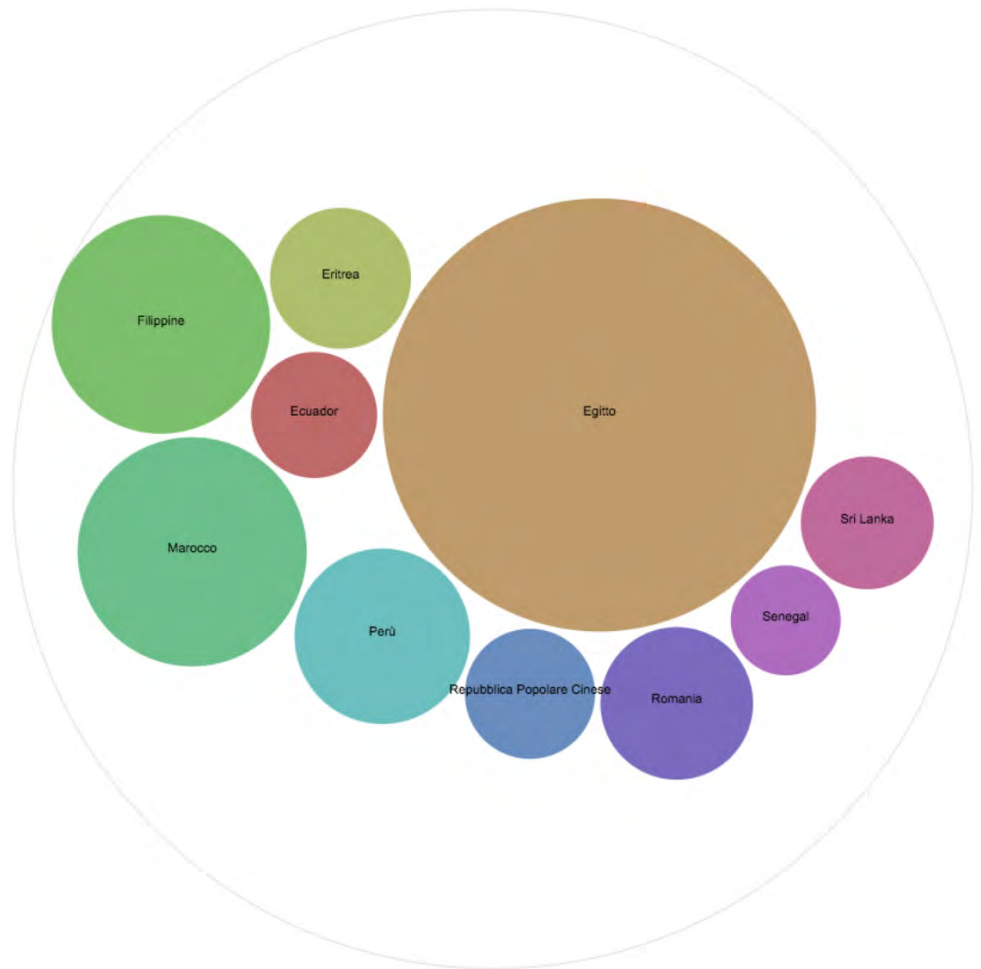
Figure 13 Principal Foreign Nationalities (Source: Anagrafe Comunale, 2012)

Another significant component of the population is indeed represented by elderly inhabitants, mainly – but not only – with an Italian nationality. Some of them are historical inhabitants, active and organized (manly around a Resident Committee). This component expresses a discomfort related to a difficult relationship between different groups: the distance caused by language and different habits and uses of spaces, the sense of insecurity perceived in the public space, the fear generated by some dynamics connected to racket associated to some squatters, the presence of small crime (drug dealing, theft) … these are the main problems perceived and experienced by elderly people.

A certain mobility is present also within this component of the population: some historical inhabitants, who have the possibility, leave the neighbourhood; others – often evicted from private market – arrived recently. These people, often with a high socio-cultural potential, could represent a resource for the district but at the same time are at risk of isolation since they have to re-built their social networks and bounds.

A significant segment of the elderly Italian dwellers as a whole, is represented by single people over the age of 75, a category that constitutes around the 20% of the residents, a percentage which is higher than the average of the Municipality of Milan (14%) and the one of the surrounding area (12% in the Administrative Zone 7, to which San Siro belongs). This population is at risk of fragility both for the condition linked to socio-economic difficulty and some difficulties related to dwelling, such as, for example, the lack of lifts in the buildings that causes isolation when associated to mobility and health problems. Last but not least, in relation to the characteristics of the population, it is important to underline that a substantial percentage of the residents suffer of mental and psychiatric diseases (officially, about 600/900 people). These residents show problems of various kinds and gravity, a lot not formally recognized and so not treated. Over the decades the process of assigning housing to people taken in charge by the CPS (Centre for Mental Health) was consolidated in some districts of Milan (Molise Calvairate and San Siro) which were located close to the Cps offices. In addition to that, there are also many cases of various discomfort caused for example by loneliness (depression is common among elderly people) or by social problems that mainly affect people who have lost their jobs or former drug addicted people. Most of people with psychiatric disorders are of Italian nationality, but in reality, the social workers report that many foreigners – especially women who sometimes barely leave their home due to the barrier of language – have problems of nervous breakdown or depression; problems that they tend to hide for shame or difficulty to externalize these problems in another language.

Figure 14 Image by Fabrizio Bruno

To summarize, the general challenges that comes out from San Siro are related – as could be noticed connecting the introduction of this first part to the part describing our case study – to more general challenges for public housing in Italy and in Milan. San Siro shows a concentration of the main issues related to public housing in our contemporary cities, such as:

– Problems related to social management (social and economic fragility of the residents);

– Problems related to management of the built environment (lack of maintenance, mainly due to scarce resources involved; vacant stock and consequent practices of squatting which sometimes lead to conflictual cohabitation, especially when summed up with intercultural barriers, social and economic fragilities,…);

– Problems related to administrative management (permanent public housing right; difficulty in guarantee access to people in need; increasing delays in paying rents due to poverty; inability to deal with squatting of people in need…).

Moreover, San Siro shows severe issues related to the problem of cohabitation between very different people (superdiversity) associated with the concentration of several fragilities (social, economic, cultural, psychological and so on…).

San Siro as a case study: policy context, lively or static?

Regarding the local policy framework, it is important to distinguish between the framework of the so-called extraordinary policies (outlined

in Part 2) and the dimension of ordinary policies, both relative to building maintenance and social issues. A second relevant distinction in San Siro case is the one between self-produced and bottom-up services which, in some cases, assume the dimension of ordinary services, and institutional policies, both promoted by public actors or actors of the social private sphere.

Despite its public image of a deprived context, San Siro is indeed a neighborhood characterized by the presence of a wide, differentiated and articulated network of social actors – mainly NGOs, Social Cooperatives, informal local groups – very active in their purpose of improving the living condition for the different categories to whom they address their activities. The presence and the characteristics of the local network are really relevant when we come to talk about the production of social policies.

This characteristic, particularly relevant in San Siro is, actually, a distinctive feature of the context of the city of Milan, whose framework of production and implementation of public policies is populated by a multiplicity of social actors, at different levels (active on a local level, in the design process, in the definition of the framework etc.). Some authors have defined Milan as the city that "self-regulates" itself, through a system of government consisting of widespread powers and relations of horizontal subsidiarity. According to several authors (see Tognetti Bordogna and Sironi, 2013) this is a traditional feature of the city of Milan, historically characterized by the theme of solidarity, which in recent years has been structured through the development of welfare mix. A system of welfare that sees, alongside the Public actors, the Third Sector, in its different dimensions: profit market, family, NGOs, … subjects that are seen as fundamental in terms of implementing social innovation. In particular, in this sense, the role of the banking Foundations – in particular in Milan Cariplo Foundation – should be pointed out (we will examine it later) as not only relevant from the point of view of planning, financing, implementation of social policies, but also as a real actor that contributes to the definition of the city policy framework.

San Siro is, in this sense, a good example of the role of Third Sector in its wide dimensions.

If we look at the map below a first element that catches the eye is the presence of several polarities, represented by the presence of different "social devices", a series of places – mainly headquarters of the organizations/project working in the neighborhood – where different projects "pile-up" and become embedded. Among them is interesting to notice the presence of the two elementary schools (the two large orange blocks) that represent in the case of San Siro the real "outposts" of public institutions within the district and play the role of social laboratories.

Not only on the traditional activities of the school complexes, but also in relation to the role assumed as (open) points of reference for the territory.

The physical presence, in other words, is a device through which rooted social actors "insert" a variety of projects in the neighborhood, attracting financial and external resources.

A local overview of policy framework

Within the local policy framework, it is possible to distinguish among policies in terms of issues addressed:
– Policies related to the built environment;
– Social policies;
– Educational – cultural policies;

These categories could be classified then in terms of their duration/recurring:
– Ordinary policies – ordinary public services characterized by continuity and/or their recurring in time;
– Extra – ordinary policies – promoted in the framework of a specific project, with a limited and defined duration in time.

A relevant additional category, as mentioned above, is the one of grassroots promoted policies, which are mainly services, lasting over time, fostered by several local actors, especially NGOs with a voluntarist/religious nature but also local activists.

Figure 15 Services and associations in San Siro (Elaboration by Alice Ranzini – please do not release in course of publication)

	ORDINARY	EXTRAORDINARY	GRASSROOTS PROMOTED
BUILT ENVIRONMENT (MANTAINANCE AND MANAGEMENT)	Ordinary manteinance[1] (Aler)	Programma Recupero Urbano (Urban Renewal Program) Contratto di quartiere (Neighborhood Contract) Ferp – social housing projects destined to specific categories (Aler and Third Sector) Selling plans (Aler)	
SOCIAL	Custodia sociale (social keeping) (Municipality of Milan + Third Sector)	Laboratorio di quartiere (Municipality + Third Sector) Porto Project (social cohesion) (Third Sector) Various projects related to the issue of mental illness (Third Sector)	Centro di ascolto (counseling center) (religious NGO) Sportello Casa (helpdesk on housing issues) (activist NGO)
EDUCATIONAL/CULTURAL	Centro Diurno Adolescenti (teenagers' day time center) (Municipality + Third Sector) Services dedicated to childhood (kindergarten… etc) (Municipality)	Educativa di strada (street educational service) (Third Sector) Projects dedicated the activation of foreign women (University+Municipality + Third Sector) Projects related to schools' innovative activities (Schools+ Third Sector + NGOs)	Italian language schools for foreigners (voluntary NGOs) Afterschool services (voluntary NGOs)

Figure 16   Main policies developed in San Siro in the last 10 years

From the table above – which summarizes the main actions carried out in the last 10 years within the district – it possible to raise a series of issues.

The relevance of extraordinary and temporary projects, activated through the public call mechanism, promoted either by public administration or social-private foundations, locally carried out by the Third Sector;

The residual dimension assumed by ordinary policies that either focus on "very problematic" targets or on "light" policies with a broad spectrum;

Vice versa, the relevance of the experimental dimension of the extraordinary and bottom-up policies that, even in partial and non-exhaustive form, experience the involvement of other relevant targets, not intercepted by traditional policies (migrants, women, …);

The lack of a territorial dimension related to some policies (integration of migrants, ordinary policies of support for psychiatric disorders, policies of support for the elderly, employment policies, etc.) that, at local level, could increase their effectiveness in relation to the concentration of certain populations within the district;

The widespread presence in the building heritage of projects not included in public housing - which could generate positive effects - but

which, at the moment, are very fragmented.

The Neighborhood Contract in San Siro: missed opportunity?

The theme relating to the Neighborhood Contract deserves a separate mention.

San Siro district is one of the five neighborhoods included in the Neighborhood Contracts II Program in Milan, which started in 2005. Interventions planned by the program concerned public housing (extraordinary maintenance and renovation of housing for a total cost of about 45.400 million euros), infrastructural works and intervention in public space, and social actions (as shown in the table below).

The program was anticipated by a Document – produced by the Municipality in collaboration with the Department of Architecture and Planning (Diap) of Politecnico di Milano – which had the aim to identify critical issues and outline strategic objectives and guidelines for the intervention (this process was developed for all the five contexts involved; see: Territorio, 33, 2005). Considering the fact that – with resources available – it was not possible to include the whole neighborhood in the Contract (in terms of interventions on housing and buildings), the project concentrated these interventions in a sub-area (approximately including 30 buildings) which was considered to be the one with the worst state of maintenance in term of built stock but also the most problematic in terms of social issues, cohabitation, and mono-functionality of the lots. As the Program had the precise aim to integrate social and physical dimensions of interventions, this quadrant of the neighborhood was considered to be the most adequate to start this experimentation. Interventions were declined as follows:

Works on public housing stock:
– Extraordinary Maintenance on 30 buildings (streets and house number: Selinunte 3, Mar Ionio 3, Zamagna 4, Tracia 1,2,3,4,5,7, Preneste 8, Civitali 2,4, Aretusa 6, Civitali 30), mainly including works on facades and common areas, securing balconies, accommodation of external areas in the courtyards;
– Building renovation (including demolition and reconstruction) on one block of one lot (Civitali 30);
– Recovery of 49 vacant and condemned apartments.

Infrastructural works:
– Senior center set-up;
– Requalification of Piazza Selinunte (main public space);
– New heating network (including the demolition of the old thermal power plant);
– Requalification of the kindergarten.

– Recovery of the municipal market and connected public space (parking, street).

Social Actions:
– Social Accompaniment Plan and participatory planning (Laboratorio di quartiere)
– Local Pact for Urban Security
– Social housekeeper
– Special housing for the elderly
– Interventions in favor of employment and entrepreneurship
– Integrated project for the treatment of mental illness

Interventions should have been carried out by mainly by Aler (profiting of Regional, Ministerial and of its own funding) and Municipality of Milan (involved in some infrastructural interventions and in the Social Accompaniment Plan through the *Laboratorio di quartiere service*).

The main issue related to a certain unsuccessful outcome of the Neighborhood Contract is due to two main factors. On one hand, the significant delays related to works and the failure in completing some interventions on public housing stock. Works, indeed, should had been completed by 2010, while, actually, some of them are still in process and others (such as the demolition and reconstruction) have been blocked. This is mainly due to problems related to resource mismanagement: several construction sites were confiscated for a certain period by the judiciary to verify some irregular procedures; in other cases, Aler Milano was not able to pay the private construction companies that were carrying out the works. But also relevant were the management problems related to Aler: for instance, the building that should have been demolished was left empty for a certain period of time, after moving out the dwellers, and was then squatted by a group of local activist, denouncing the mismanagement of the stock and the emergency related to housing need.

On the other hand, the certain degree of failure is also related to the failure in carrying out the majority of social interventions, especially the ones that should have had a higher impact, such as the ones related to promotion of employment and local entrepreneurship. As was noticed, since financial coverage provided by National and Regional funds were exclusively devoted to structural interventions and only residual resources were dedicated to support social actions, everything that has to do with occupational, social and development economic was left to the capacity and intention of local administrations to implement initiatives trough special programs and funding provided by other policy fields/projects.

Total Cost of interventions on built stock	Cost of Aler intervention	Regional co-funding on Aler intervention	Co-funding provided by Aler	Other fundings
45.421.284,00	35.557.518,19	24.687.252,45	8.773.043,77	2.097.222,02

Figure 17 Neighbourhood Contracts II National Program – San Siro neighbourhood – Costs on built environment update at 2015 (Source: Aller Milano, 2015)

Total Amount of Funding provided by Lombardy Region	(of which) Ministerial Funding	(of which) Regional Funding	Amount Supplied	% of Amount Supplied
28.082.710,00	14.466.808,00	13.615.902,00	23.316.863,10	83

Planned Works	Completed Works	% of Completed Works	Social Actions	Planned Housing Units (to intervene on)	Completed Housing Units	% Completed Housing Units	Additional Housing Units	Completed Additional Housing Units
19	15	79	6	1122	827	74	40	16

Figure 18 Neighbourhood Contracts II National Program – San Siro neighbourhood – Implementation Status (Source : Lombardy Region, June 2016)

The lack of coordination and the tension that has characterized the relationship between the Municipality of Milan and Aler Milano during the development of the Contract certainly represented a major obstacle to a better implementation of the program. The Municipality, for its part, completed the infrastructural works and has continued to finance and coordinate the *Laboratorio di quartiere* (Neighborhood Lab), at first conceived as a tool to accompany the program, then as a device to enhance social and territorial animation and cohesion. Locally, the Lab was coordinated and implemented by the consulting company Metodi SRL, characterized by an approach particularly focused on community development and community psychology (especially related to the targets of psychiatric patients and elderly people). An activity carried out though the opening of a physical space (twice a week) that lasted for 10 years, going through two renewals (one, in 2012, with the activation of a new public call, the second through the extension of the assignment from 2015 to 2016). The role of the Lab, squeezed between social accompaniment, territorial animation, participatory planning, has undergone a sharp change due to the blocking of the work on housing stock, having to partly redefine its mandate and its activities, surely becoming an important reference over time especially for some populations like elderly people.

To conclude this paragraph, it is possible to argue that in San Siro the Neighborhood Contract, even if conceived as a great opportunity for the district's development and even if it indeed produced positive effects

such as the territorial presence of the Municipality of Milan through the Lab service, at the same time it constituted itself as a "local limit" and an obstacle to the investment of additional public resources on the neighborhood. This issue was of course caused on one hand by fact that actually the program was not completed; on the other hand, the Contract already insisted on a small part of the entire neighborhood. These issues together increased the feeling of frustration and mistrust in the institutions both in the tenants of buildings interested by the Contract, as in those who were not.

In this sense – with respect to the entire Neighborhood Contracts Program, at least for its application to the Milan city context – an evaluation process was missing, that would allow systematic identification of the limits but also the concrete opportunities and real impacts produced by this experience.

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Endnotes

1   The municipality of Milan is organized in 9 local administrative districts (Municipi), elected together with the Mayor but with very little financial autonomy.

2   Bruzzese, 2011.

3   Federcasa, 2015.

4   To access public housing people should apply to specific "calls", opened each year. Contracts are not limited in time. Renting depends on income conditions: four different range of rents are established: Protezione (protection, up to 9000,00 euros/year), Accesso (access, from 9001,00 to 14.000,00 euros/year), Permanenza (permanence, from 14.001,00 to 35.000), Decadenza (above 35.001,00 euros/year). In Decadenza people are not automatically evicted and in fact the majority of people in this range remain in public housing, also because the threshold is not so high.

5   Many people usually get their right to stay with elderly family members and – when they die – they ask for regularization which is given if the income requirements are satisfied by the applicant, so without the need to follow the whole procedure to access public housing.

6   In Italy, the property of public housing is divided between Municipalities and Regional Agencies. In the case of Milan, Aler Milano – the local branch of the Regional Agency, Aler, instituted in 1996 – did also manage, for several years, the Municipal stock. In the year 2015, the Municipality did not renovate the agreement because unsatisfied with the management provided.

7   Programmi Integrati; Programmi Integrati di riqualificazione e riuso Urbano; Prusst; Contratti di Quartiere.

8   Data source: Lodi Rizzini, 2016.

9   Legge Interventi per la riduzione del disagio abitativo per particolari categorie sociali and Programma straordinario di edilizia residenziale piubblica per comuni ad alta tensione abitativa.

10   Urbanit annual report 2017, available online at: www.urbanit.it/

11   Piano nazionale per le città, Programma di recupero di immobili e alloggi di edilizia residenziale pubblica, Piano nazionale per la riqualificazione sociale e culturale delle aree urbane degradate, Programma straordinario di intervento per la riqualificazione urbana e la sicurezza delle periferie.

12   Programma Operativo Nazionale "Città Metropolitane" - PON Metro http://www.ponmetro.it/

13   See note 10.

14   The main reference of this part is Cognetti, 2014 and 2018.

15   The current law in Lombardy Region established that housing units with a dimension of less that 28,80 square metres could not be assigned within the public housing list.

16   Abitagiovani is a project of social housing (with rent to buy agreement) directed to young people that implies the reuse of public stock in mixed property condominiums.

Brussels

Jeanne Mosseray, Nele Aernouts and Michael Ryckewaert

What are we talking about?

In comparison to other Western-European countries such as France, the Netherlands and the UK, the regeneration of large scale social estates hasn't been a key concern in Brussels urban and housing policies. The main reason for this is the small share of such estates in the housing stock, which is related to historical and contemporary policy choices.

Since its very inception, social housing has occupied a very modest position in the Belgian housing policy. The stimulation of homeownership has been the primary policy goal. Until the present day, this did not change fundamentally. To illustrate, in the Brussels Capital Region, there are 39.399 social housing (out of which 36.248 are rented), which represents less than 8% of the total housing stock. This while the number of households on the waiting list for social housing is more than the double of this number (39.153 households after various eliminations1), and the access to qualitative owner-occupied and rental dwelling becomes increasingly difficult for an important share of the population2.

The promotion of homeownership in Belgium and subsequently in Brussels created the proverbial 'brick in the stomach' among Belgian households. The stimulation of homeownership through various fiscal grants went along with the attractiveness of suburban living through the availability of affordable land and the provision of cheap railway tickets that provided a good connection with the city. Within this suburban living, inhabitants were often strongly involved in the construction process of their own house, especially when it comes to various extensions in the back of the house.

The dominance of private ownership in which individuals contribute to the design of their own house and garden over compact housing developments by externals did however lead to an image problem of large-scale social estates. It lured away the more well-off renters from social housing and led to important social-demographic transformations within social housing. Although in comparison to the above-mentioned countries, relatively few large-scale social estates were developed, the liveability of these estates has been subject to debates in media and regional parliaments. Similar to international debates, starting from the 1990s the 'endangered social mix' of high-rise estates were central in these debates3, despite its small amount. The stigma on high-rise building, in turn, has led to an aversion to high-rise estates in the social housing sector. Big gestures have made place for notions such as small-scale production and the integration within the existing urban patrimony4.

Nowadays, the limited patrimony of high-rise estates that was built in the post-war period until the end of the 70s is in need of renovation.

Various regeneration processes in estates across the Belgian territory, such as Krakeel (Brussels centre, 1955-1978), Rabot (Ghent, 1970), Modelwijk (Laeken, 1958-1979), Europark (Antwerp, Linkeroever, 1967-1979), Droixhe (Liège, 1959-1976) and our case study Peterbos (Anderlecht, 1968-1981) are evidences of this. In some cases, like Rabot and Droixhe, high-rise towers have been demolished to make place for apartment blocks, while in others, such as Europark, new functions and typologies have been developed on empty areas. An overall vision on the position of inhabitants within this process seems to be lacking, and perhaps rightly so. It is therefore worthwhile to focus on the institutional conditions in which these projects on the one hand and their renovation on the other hand took shape. This in order to understand whether this stigma on large-scale social estates continues to linger in the minds of policy makers, and if and how attempts are made to give a privileged position to inhabitants in regeneration processes.

In this report we present a brief historical overview of social housing and large-scale social estates in particular; the institutions responsible for social housing; the different regeneration programs and the position of inhabitants within renovation works. Then we will go to three experiences and our case study Peterbos. This will enable a greater understanding on how these different topics relate. The report is based on desktop literature; interviews with social housing administrators and community workers (14 recent and 4 older interviews); architecture, design and planning data; journal extracts of the last decades (1980-2018); and historic and contemporary literature and policy documents on Belgian and Brussels housing (policies).

Large scale social estates: a historical perspective

The social housing patrimony in the Brussels Capital Region is mainly composed by housing built during three periods: the 1920s, 1950s and 1970s. The development of large-scale social estates can be situated within the two last periods.

Social housing for urban and social innovation

The 1920s were marked by the birth of the 'Société Nationale des Habitations et Logements à Bon Marché' (SNHLBM/National Company for Cheap Housing). The National Company provided credits for 'cheap housing companies' to develop affordable housing. The companies were both municipal and cooperative initiatives and regrouped some 19th century predecessors of social housing developed by municipalities or enlightened industrials. Specific to the spirit of the times, the National Company mostly promoted the garden city model. The garden city model was conceived by Ebenezer Howard as a reaction to the unhealthy living conditions for workmen that marked the capitalist city at the end of the 19th century. It offered a vision of towns free of urban poverty, poorly ventilated houses, contaminated air, diseases and lack of interaction with nature. The vision combined the advantages of the countryside, such as fresh air and cheap lands with the employment opportunities and cultural activities of the city. Although the social and urban reform propagated by Howard had a major impact on public housing construction across Europe, it was rarely applied as originally conceived. In the Brussels Capital Region, garden suburbs were developed; residential neighbourhoods that were linked to the workplace through public transport. Social housing in the first crown was built as well, but the garden neighbourhood was the main model for urban and social innovation at the time[5]. Some of them received international recognition, such as Le Logis-Floréal (Watermaal-Bosvoorde), Kapelleveld (St. Lambrechts Woluwe) and La Cité Moderne (St. Agatha Berchem). In total, around 14 neighbourhoods were installed in the peripheries of Brussels. Still today, the models work as an 'image guide'[6] for the way suburban Belgian development should ideally be organized.

Fulfilling the (economic) demands of modern life

The strong devastation after the war, the poor living conditions in the cities and limitations to public housing spending led to the search for new urban models for social housing construction. This led to the implementation of large-scale social estates. The support for the urban model in Belgian architect circles already originated in the 1930s. The support was strongly intertwined with the economic crisis of the 1930s and the restriction of the financing cost of a social dwelling to 625 euros (25.000 BEF) in Belgium. This restriction ruled out the possibility to develop garden neighbourhoods of a certain size[7]. The 2nd and 3d CIAM Congress were yardsticks in this respect. During the latter, Le Corbusier outlined its concept of 'La Ville Radieuse', a formula of freestanding high-rise towers and blocks and free circulation in a green environment. In order to develop a good habitability despite the financial constraints the model would be combined with a housing scheme presented during the 2nd CIAM Congress. The housing scheme was a radical rationalization of settlement site plans. It included 'Zeilenbau', elongated apartment blocks or houses in a row. The interior of the dwellings were reduced to 'the Existenzminimum', which stands for the most minimal dwelling size that still ensures a comfortable and healthy lifestyle. The housing scheme was widely applied during a Frankfurt housing program called after the architecture journal 'Das Neue Frankfurt' (1925-1930).

The model would not be built in the outskirts, like the garden neighbourhoods, but ideally contributed to the embellishment of the city centre. It contributed to a new city concept, in which each individual had the right of access to a minimum of sun, air and beauty. As Victor Bourgeois, a pioneer of the Belgian modern movement, expressed 'the modern human demands the city in itself, both the centre and the border of the city, fulfils the demands of modern life'. The vision was marked by a strong sense of progress; modern life had to be accessible to all. The imposition of it however was not welcomed everywhere by great acclaim. It led critics to say that, rather than questioning the causes of the Existenzminimum, modernists only developed it as comfortable and practical as possible[8].

In the Brussels Capital Region too, the early examples of modernist housing were built in the central municipalities. After WWII in contrast, modernist housing estates were mostly developed as an extension of or as independent neighbourhoods. The urban model of some was still based on the garden neighbourhood, while others were built in combination with or in the shape of high-rise estates. A great share of the single-family units or mixed-typology neighbourhoods were developed by rental cooperatives. Indeed, the immediate post-war period knew a very short resurgence of rental cooperatives. Between 1949 and 1950, 5 rental cooperatives were

established.

Some years after this short peak, the National Housing Corporation replaced the NMGW. From then on, all municipal and cooperative housing initiatives fell under the denominator of 'social housing' and their management was coordinated by the National Corporation. With the establishment of the National Corporation, municipal high-rise estates would become the preferred model for social rented housing. The independence of many cooperative neighbourhoods was a thorn in the side of municipal governments. One of these high-rise estates, the Modelwijk, is still an exceptional example of large-scale modernist estates in Belgium. It was the second social estate developed by Renaat Braem, among others, a leading Belgian architect and urban planner. The plan and model for the neighbourhood with 12 apartment blocks, a library, a supermarket, a cultural centre and an abundance of green spaces, sports fields and playfields were a showpiece of the Brussels Expo 58. The execution of the project would take up 18 years.

While estates such as the Modelwijk and the apartment block of Willy van der Meeren in Evere were ambitious projects of urban development, financial constraints would soon downturn high-rise estates to increasingly mono-functional and isolated areas. Standardization would gain priority over originality[9]. The execution of Peterbos (1968-1981) can be situated within this logic. The idea of the municipality was to develop an independent modernist residential neighbourhood, which would form a link within a continuous green network. Despite these ambitious ideas, financial constraints would soon weaken the patch-within-a-patchwork-idea. The low-rise buildings and public functions such as a school, a church and a community centre that were to connect Peterbos to the row-housing of the adjacent neighbourhoods were removed from the plan. Also, the colourful plinths and accentuated entry halls were not realized, complicating the relationship between the buildings and the public outdoor spaces.

Building away the economic crisis

The economic crisis in the early 70s marked a new era for the welfare state. From then on, the welfare state project was increasingly put under pressure. According to Dedecker, the associated modernist optimism and inextricable bond between architecture and social housing also went lost, 'throwing out the baby with the bathwater'[10].

In the Brussels Capital Region, this period did not immediately lead to a standstill of social housing construction. In contrast, the beginning of this period was marked by the highest social housing construction, mostly in or in vicinity of the city centre, as an attempt of 'building away' the economic crisis of 1973 via public investments. Several buildings in the

centre were demolished and replaced by high-rise estates, which were badly implemented in the urban landscape11. Meanwhile, the drastic slum clearances and replacements by standardized office neighbourhoods and tower blocks, led to the origination of protest movements striving for the right to the city and decent housing. The protest movements were especially launched by intellectual associations12 but succeeded mobilizing engaged sociologists, architects, community workers, mobility activists, neighbourhood committees, tenant unions and local inhabitants. Among the demands expressed were the respect for the existing residential neighbourhoods, the access to decent and adequate housing; the need for urban renovation works; and a participation of social tenants and local residents in decision-making processes13. Politicians were put under pressure to start taking into account urban citizen concerns. In this context, the zoning plan was approved, in which municipalities protect the urban patrimony and encourage specific renovation works. As part of this policy, several social housing companies started to undertake renovation projects in the city centre in this period.

The budgetary restrictions in the aftermath of the economic crisis, which also involved a communitarian discussion in the case of Belgium, led to a strong stagnation of social housing production from 1983 onwards. This is part of the explanation, as housing policy choices and an architectural despair in the social housing sector also played a role15. The ongoing support for homeownership in Belgium was not questioned by policy makers, while raising the point of developing large-scale social housing estates was (and still remains) off limits. The discourse of the state secretary for housing at the time is exemplary for this. In a speech during a study day on urbanism in 1982, Neyts-Uyttebroeck expresses her interest in encouraging municipalities to develop owner-occupied social housing in order to improve housing conditions in the Brussels region16. In another speech for the Union of professionals of the real estate sector, in which the urban flight and the large number of unoccupied and inadequate buildings in Brussels were addressed, she adds that the development of large-scale social estates is out of question, not only because of a lack of money and a huge debt in the Brussels social sector, but also as the population does not accept the 'bulldozer urbanism' anymore17. Indeed, from then on, social housing would follow the path of small-scale interventions, preferably integrated within existing building blocks or mixed with middle income housing.

Brussels large scale social estates: recent evolutions

We will now go into some more recent institutional evolutions, which had an impact on the current functioning of larger-scale estates and more specifically on the case of Peterbos. In 1985, Belgium was divided in three regions (Flemish, Brussels, Walloon) with 3 housing policies. As part of the regionalization of the housing policy, which took 8 years, in the Brussels Capital Region, an umbrella organization for social housing (Société du Logement de la Région Bruxelles-Capitale - SLRB) and a Brussels Housing Code was developed. The development of the BCR and the umbrella organization for social housing brought about some important social and technical changes:

– the abolishment of the development of owner-occupied social housing (1989);
– the imposition of stricter rules of access and attribution (1993);
– community support through social cohesion projects (1999);
– the development of a technical register, an inventory for social housing complexes and their technical characteristics, such as the presence of double glass, central heating and a bathroom (2002);
– the support of the development of tenant boards in social housing companies (2003);
– the support of social work in social housing companies (2004);
– the rationalization of the housing sector through mergers of social housing companies (2011);
– the introduction of 9-year-rent contracts instead of contracts of indefinite duration (2013);
– the possibility for social housing companies to allocate 20% of the social patrimony (and up to 40% in case of renovations) to middle incomes (2014).

Furthermore, in the context of great need of affordable housing in the Brussels Capital Region, the SLRB was given the task to act as a building developer for the construction of;

– 5000 social and middleclass housing in 5 years (2004, Le Plan Régional du Logement) ;
– 4000 social and middleclass housing (2014, Alliance Habitat).

Since the establishment of the SLRB, social housing management in Brussels is organized on 3 levels. The regional government defines the main priorities each legislature; the regional company controls and supports social housing companies; and the social housing companies manage the patrimony on a local level. These 3 levels are interconnected

by duties and commitments which are defined in the Brussels Housing Code, schematized in the following diagrams:
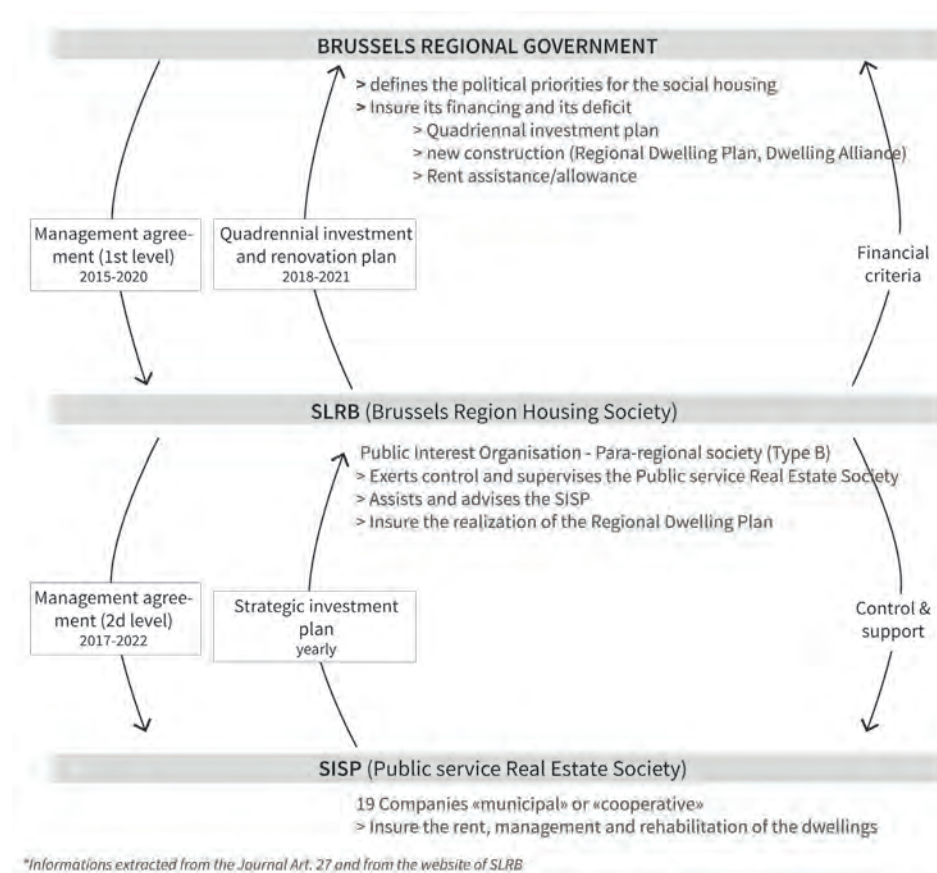

Figure 1 Relationship between 3 management levels[18]

We will now discuss three main topics that touch upon the duties and commitments of social housing companies vis-à-vis the region and the Brussels umbrella organization for social housing; and the recent social housing legislations. We will discuss the management of social housing companies in light of the recent merger processes (institutional context), the social policy that has been emphasized since the development of the SLRB (social action context) and the regeneration instruments (planning context).

The social housing governance culture

In order to understand the position of inhabitants within social housing, it's important to shed light on the governance culture of social housing companies. Two measures are worth to mention when considering the governance culture of social housing companies. The first is the imposition of stricter entrance rules that came along with the regionalization of the housing policy, which had an impact on the attribution of housing by the companies. The second is the sixth state reform of 2011, which led to the

'rationalization' of the Brussels' housing sector in order to 'increase the efficiency' of social housing companies[19]. Social housing companies with less than 2500 housing units were financially encouraged to merge in order to half the amount of social housing companies. By doing so, the Brussels government hopes to strengthen the capacity of social housing companies to increase the Brussels social stock, while downsizing administrations. As a result of the mergers, nowadays 12 municipal companies and 4 rental cooperatives of the 32 companies remain. In our case Peterbos, there are two social housing companies at work. As part of the mergers, in 2015, one of them transformed into a cooperative company with a patrimony spread across the Brussels Capital Region. It is worth taking a look at the legal structure of the social housing companies in order to understand the impact of these measures.

Social housing companies in Brussels are officially called 'real estate companies of public service'. This implies two things. The social housing companies (SISP) take the shape of independent companies. Their legal status is a limited liability cooperative company (CVBA) or a limited liability company (NV). They are thus submitted to the rules presiding over a commercial society. But, the capital of these companies is mainly held by public authorities – in case of municipal companies - or tenant-co-operators – in case of rental cooperatives. Before the mergers, most rental cooperatives had an administration within the neighbourhood. The mergers implied that this administration had had to relocate, diminishing the local ties.

Then, the municipal and cooperative social housing companies are nowadays subject to the Brussels Housing Code, government agreements and signed an agreement with the regional housing company. The capital of social housing companies is strongly intertwined with the governance model of social housing companies. In rental cooperatives, the share of tenants in the cooperative enables them to participate in the management. More than half of the board of directors is composed of inhabitants. They are elected by inhabitants during yearly general meetings. The board of directors of municipal housing companies are composed of elected representatives from the municipal majority, observers of the political opposition[20] and a director. In addition to these board members, each board of director has a representative of the regional company and two representatives of the tenant board (in case there is one). The composition of the board of directors shows that political elections and the associated political strategies and power relationships have an impact on the management of municipal companies[21].

As one administrator of a rental cooperative bluntly put, 'a politician will search for his own interest. He wants to do his politics, his interest, his project, what he sold during the elections…[22]' Before the imposition of stricter

entrance rules, this link between the political party and the municipal social housing company was even stronger. Another administrator stated; 'at the time it was hyper-politicized, before 1994, the attribution of social housing was done in the cabinets of political parties, or I'd rather say the offices… the mayors etc… it was known. [23]' Rental cooperatives from their part also had priority rules; children of tenant-co-operators for instance were entitled to get access to a house within the neighbourhood. Especially for several older inhabitants and employees, these origins and the different transformations within the management and neighbourhood are still a cause of discomfort. This discomfort is often intertwined with prejudices and stereotypes about newcomers, being 'maladapted' to the 'general' behaviour in the neighbourhood[24]. The following statement of an inhabitant is emblematic in this respect; 'Before it was better, it was a little village, the elderly here, they are all here since after the war. The children had the right to enter the housing of the cooperatives. It was well maintained; the gardens were mowed… Afterwards it became social housing. Today it is anything.'[25]

Such prejudices are not only expressed by inhabitants, but by administrators as well. One tenant board even stated that social housing companies allocated people with Belgian origins in better quality housing than those with other origins[26]. It's hard to confirm whether such discrimination actually took place but it's clear that a lack of transparent allocation criteria increases the risk of discriminatory and favouritism practices[27].
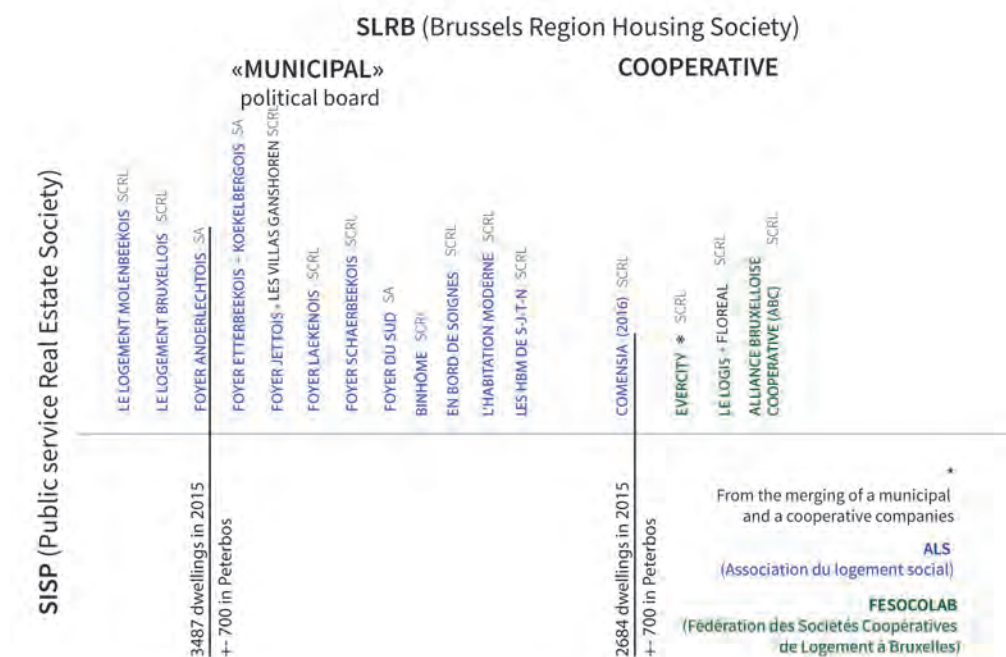

Figure 2   Social housing companies in the BCR (Source: website BGHM)

Social policy: The support of social and participatory devices

From 1989 onwards, the social housing patrimony was dedicated to the poorest part of the population[28] increasing diversity and precariousness among the inhabitants. The imposition of stricter acces rules went along with the creation of a social policy, aimed at enhancing cohabitation, social well-being and the participation of tenants in the life of the neighbourhood, termed as a policy shift from 'a policy for social housing' to 'a social policy for housing'. Several actions were developed across three axes; an individual, collective and communal one.

First, with the attribution of new income criteria, a need was expressed for individual support for social renters. The social staff support is organized either by the social housing company or by a non-profit organization SASL. The SASL provides 45 social assistants for all social housing companies. Their tasks range over permanencies, psychosocial conversations, home visits and a research on the social rights of tenants. They often act as mediators between social tenants and the social housing company, for instance in case of technical problems in dwellings.

Second, the collective social work is an initiative of social housing companies. They are in line with the individual accompaniment and aim at solving collective issues and conflicts by developing cultural and convivial activities.

The third axis, the communal social work, encompasses the social cohesion projects. Social cohesion projects are developed within social estates by associations, with the support of the SLRB, a social housing company and, in some cases, the municipality. A diagnosis, priorities and objectives are at the basis of the 5-year contract that formalizes such collaboration. The social cohesion projects (PCS) aim to enhance meeting intercultural and intergenerational opportunities between tenants and between tenants and their social housing company, such as coffee moments, cultural activities, homework classes...

Lately, in several social cohesion projects this target has moved to the focus on active citizenship and participation. Several associations want to move to a model in which tenants take the lead in developing activities and increase their grip on their living situation, strengthening solidarity across different cultural and age divides. This potentially makes them an interesting partner within regeneration processes of social estates. Currently there are 32 social cohesion projects within 14 social housing companies. A high number of projects is taking place in large-scale (high-rise) estates. According to the umbrella organization coordinator of the PCS this is not a coincidence for the simple reason that 'when 200 housing units are constructed a support and additional activities are necessary.'[29]

Next to these social devices, the umbrella organization prescribes the support of tenant boards by social housing companies. The measure was called into action to improve the communication between the companies and tenants. The tenant unions played an important role in putting this point on the policy agenda, as they were the ones that lobbied for a better dialogue between the social housing companies and the 'users'; and the representation of social tenants in the board of directors[30].

Social housing companies are obliged to consult the tenant board for maintenance, renovation and refurbishment programs of a certain amount of money; deciding the methods to calculate the rents; approving changing the internal rules; collective equipment programs; each social or cultural animation for tenants. The tenant boards count 5 to 15 representatives, which are elected by the inhabitants every 3 years. The non-profit organization Fébul is responsible for specialized training sessions for the representatives in order to fulfil their role. At first, two delegates of the tenant boards only had a consultative voice in the government board of the company. In 2014 this has been changed into a deliberative voice.

Although agreement exists on the importance of the tenant boards, their impact is limited. In 2014, before the mergers, only 12 to 13 companies of the 32 had a tenant board. The elections have been dealing with a declining interest with an average of 18% of the population voting in 2004 over 11% in 2007 to around 5% in 2013. Next to that, in some cases, the minimum of 5 candidates is not even reached and unequally spread across different social housing companies. According to an insider of the umbrella organization, the success of the tenant boards is very dependent on the willingness of the social housing company direction to effectively increase the participation of residents. New staff with a more socially oriented background contribute to this willingness. The pre-existence of tenant boards also plays a role in the success. In the Foyer Laekenois for instance, different former neighbourhood committees nowadays collaborate in one tenant board that encompasses the entire patrimony of the social housing company. Within certain rental cooperatives on the other hand, the development of tenant boards is perceived as redundant, as the government board is already (fully or partly) composed of inhabitants.

Even if the measure might not fulfil its initial aims, its minimal contribution should be acknowledged according to the insider of the umbrella organization, in order to improve their functioning. As he argues, 'the tenant boards need a kind of professionalism as they have to give advice on certain legal issues, that are often technical and even difficult for professionals of the sector. (…) In fact, the legislator created an organ that was quite heavy and did not spend sufficient means on it. (…) But we should recognize the positive points… in order to see what is possible in

the future. People invested in these boards… so let's look at the procedures that facilitate and improve their participation.'[31]

Housing regeneration and construction policy

With the regionalization of Belgium, the Brussels Capital Region was left with a social housing stock of minor quality, containing a large number of unhealthy and outdated housing[32]. The quality of the social housing stock has not improved fundamentally since then. At the end of 2014, there were 2186 empty social housing units, or 5,5% of the social housing patrimony. In some social housing companies, this number of empty housing amounts to 20%. On top of this, there is a considerable number of obsolete apartments, with outdated techniques, moisture problems and/or without comfort, which are still inhabited[33].

The renovation of the social patrimony continues to be a major challenge, especially in the case of large-scale estates. A lack of maintenance makes them particularly vulnerable for malfunctions, while many of them are already outdated due to the cheap construction methods used at the time. A second challenge in such estates is the presence of a large number of inhabitants. In case of intensive renovation works of large-scale multifamily units they should be relocated or remain within the building under very difficult conditions.

According to a study on the renovation of the Brussels housing patrimony, carried out by the BBRoW[34], the slow renovation of the housing patrimony is related to the slow inauguration of the different policies that have been created.

First, in order to get hold of the state of the Brussels patrimony, the management contract between the BCR and the SLRB in 1994 included the development of a technical register. The technical register (Antilope) is a detailed inventory of social housing complexes and their technical characteristics, such as the general health and safety of housing, the minimal comfort indicated by the presence of a bathroom and central heating, the energy performance and the age of its different elements. This would enable to give an objective knowledge about the current and future urgency of renovation works. The development of the register would however take almost 8 years. The social housing companies were reluctant to provide their cooperation to a stricter control and evaluation by the umbrella organization (BBRoW, 2016). As Doulkeridis, the state secretary for housing stated in 2014, 'we had to fight for such register. In 2010 I decided to unblock an amount of 56 million euros and to freeze the rest of the available 206 million euros until the companies insisted to communicate the data for the register' (in BBRoW, 2016, p. 8).

Second, in addition to this technical register, every 5 years social

housing companies now have to execute a maintenance plan. Before, there was no specific regional program for the maintenance of the social housing patrimony. The current maintenance plan has to be integrated and updated yearly in the technical register of all social housing companies. The maintenance works are carried out and financed by the social housing companies and controlled by the umbrella organization.

Third, the renovation of the Brussels patrimony only became a policy priority in the investment period of 1999-2001 (including 75% of the budget for refurbishment renovation works). In the former investment plans, only 30% was dedicated to renovation. From 2006 onwards, the entire budget was dedicated to renovation, while new constructions were developed through the Regional Housing plan (or better known as the 'Alliance Habitat'). In 2006, the budget for social housing thus drastically increased. It should be noted that so far, this ambitious Reginal Housing plan, has had a very limited impact. In this report, we will not go into this issue, but it's worth to mention that out of the planned 5000 housing units every 5 years, only 110 social housing units a year were built. This can be partly explained by the notable role of the Brussels umbrella organization in this operation, which suddenly got the role of building supervisor for this ambitious plan, while it has never been one of their key responsibilities.

We will now go into the different programs and instruments that can possibly be used for renovation works. Then we will present 3 case studies that illustrate how these instruments and programs have been implemented and used. The programs and instruments mentioned mainly include two types of interventions, and cover a wide range of scale-levels:
> – The renovation of social housing constructions, interiors and techniques, which are owned by the social housing companies;
> – The renovation or rehabilitation of the public spaces that surround the buildings, which are mostly owned by the municipalities.

Due to the different nature of the works and actors involved, these two are mostly executed separately. The construction or development of additional equipment is floating between these two types of interventions and is dependent of additional budgets.

The renovation of the buildings and their public space contours

For renovation and maintenance works, subsidies and support can be retrieved at three levels: the regional, national and European level. The funding at a European level is not frequently used but nevertheless shows the potential channels that might be addressed in case the regional or

national level doesn't provide a sufficient amount of money.

At this European level, there is the European investment bank and the European local energy assistance that can possibly contribute to renovation works in social housing. In the past, the European investment bank (*Banque Européenne d'Investissement - BEI*), has participated in financing a renovation project in Flanders (175 millions between 2003-2004) and Wallonia (250 millions between 2004-2007). The Brussels Capital Region has never solicited this possibility. The regional agency did receive a punctual subsidy of 1.350.000 euros for the realization of the '*VAMOS cell*'. The 'Vamos cell' is composed of two energy experts that support social housing companies to optimize their renovation project in terms of energy efficiency. The cell submitted a subsidy demand at the European Regional Development Fund to ensure the development of renewable energy-based systems for social housing companies.

At the regional level, the *quadrennial investment plan* defines an envelope for each company according to a strategic plan they present to the regional agency. 1% of this budget goes to an art project integrated within the renovation projects. For the social housing companies, 50% of the entire budget is granted as a subsidy, while 50% is seen as a loan granted at a preferential rate of 0,15%. The selection of the projects by the regional housing agency is based on the following priorities;
- curbing the social housing vacancy;
- guaranteeing the safety;
- corresponding to the Brussels Housing Code,
- improving the energy performance.

The technical register plays an important role in defining the priority areas. Before starting the selection procedure, the Brussels regional agency investigates this technical register to get an overview of the state of the social housing patrimony of the different social housing companies. In the investment plan of 2014-2017, 15.000 housing were renovated, covering a complete renovation, the improvement of the energy performance, the adaptation to the energy and safety norms.

Since 2001, the federal state can contribute to renovation works in the field of social housing, through the collaboration agreement, '*Beliris*'. The selected projects and budgets are defined as additional clauses in the original agreement made in 1993, and always cover three years. Since the agreement with the Brussels Capital Region, different fields have been supported, such as mobility, neighbourhood contract, greenery and culture, sports and heritage. In the additional clause of 2016, 53 million euro was allocated in order to continue 7 projects that had started in former additional clauses.

When the funding of a renovation project is approved, social housing

companies have to execute the works. In case of a large-scale renovation, specific procedures have to be followed.
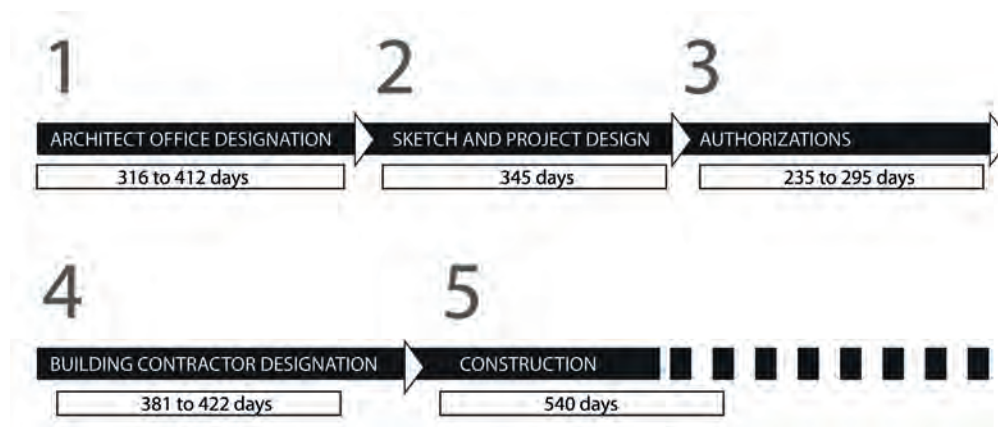

Figure 3   Public tendering procedure for renovation works[35]

A public tender has to be organized to choose the architecture office and additional coordinators (for instance safety, health and EPB coordinators) that will design the renovation project. In the Brussels Capital Region, very complex models of public tendering are used, which has a great impact on the duration of the renovation. Out of the solicitations, the social housing company selects 5 candidates. Only these candidates can receive the project specifications and can submit a tender. In total, at least 300 days are necessary to select a study office. The public tender is followed by the development of a sketch, a project design and the project specification to designate a building contractor. After approving the sketch, the study office transforms the sketch into a design, which needs an additional approval. This second part of the procedure can take 345 days. Before the start of the work the authorized official has to deliver the planning permission. The maximum allowed term for granting the planning permission is 165 days. During this term, the procedure for approving the building contractor can be started. In total, this fourth part can take up to 422 days. Finally, the construction of the project can start. The regional housing company estimates an intermediate term of 18 months for executing the works.

In total, the entire procedure thus takes about 3,5 years. Complications and delays often extend the procedure duration, in some cases going up to 5 to even 10 years. Delays in granting the planning permission, which also includes the advice by the service for fire prevention and by the Royal Commission of Monuments and Landscapes (in case of heritage) are well-known. On top of that, the administration of social housing companies and regional company are still adapting to the quadrennial plans and technical register, which didn't even exist before.

In order to curb such delays, the regional government has come up with several measures. In 2012, a pool of expertise was established in

the regional company, including engineers, architects and legal experts. The pool can support social housing companies defining the 4-year plan and developing the design and execution procedure of the renovation works. This includes helping to prepare the public tender, the project specifications and the analysis of the tenders. The project can also be delegated to the pool of expertise, at the initiative of the social housing companies or of the regional company in case of delays. In the latter case, this is imposed as a precondition in order to have the right to receive credits for the quadrennial plan. Furthermore, social housing companies with more than 2500 housing are entitled for granting a full-time employee in order to execute the quadrennial plans, while the regional company provides a unique technical reference person for each social housing company. In addition, all social housing companies have to execute the initial planning for the financed renovation projects. A maximum of 2 year is determined between the allocation of the credits and the development of the project proposal, and a maximum of 4 years for starting the project. When they cross this term, the social housing company risks losing the granted subsidy, or has to delegate the work to the pool of expertise. The most important aim of the initial planning is its central role during exchanges between the social housing companies and regional company, for instance during meetings of the progress committee. These meetings between the social housing companies and the technical reference person and concerned services of the regional company take place three times a year, and are generally welcomed by the different partners involved. This in contrast to other measures, that have been received by social housing companies with suspicion. As one administrator argues 'You have to be aware that the SLRB has habits that… with the renovations and all, feasibility studies… all these things they have very little time and… the energy developed in companies like ours, there are 2, 3 companies like ours that are really the motors…'

The expenditures of the available budgets give an idea of the potential impact of the different measures. In the table we can see that the amount rise steadily. A peak moment was reached in 2010, but the expenditures of 2015 go in the same direction. In comparison to 2003, more than the double is used.

	Expenditures (€)	%
2003	22.861.668	100,00
2004	10.694.718	46,78
2005	25.091.709	109,75
2006	36.173.310	158,23
2007	37.554.844	164,27
2008	33.323.583	145,76
2009	45.784.815	200,27
2010	60.289.011	263,75
2011	56.363.126	246,54
2012	41.231.636	180,35
2013	41.720.000	182,49
2014	45.481.044	198,94
2015	56.912.563	248,94
TOTAL	**513.491.028**	

Figure 4   Social housing expenditures: evolution between 1989 and 2015[36]

Another issue that has not been tackled in these measures but that can contribute to delays is the lowest bidding rule. Within the tendering procedure of the building contractor, the lowest bidder is selected for executing the works. This procedure is increasingly under pressure, being detrimental for the quality of the works[37]. There are several cases, in which works had to be stopped for a considerable amount of time as a consequence of lawsuits or building companies going bankrupt.

A primary concern within renovation operations of large-scale social estates is the place of the inhabitants within this process. A first point of concern are the relocations. In case of solid interventions, for instance when the number of bedrooms or the size of the dwellings changes in order to meet the surface norms defined by the Housing Code (Bernard & Van Mieghem, 2005), the social housing company has to develop a relocation plan. In this relocation plan the practical aspects - such as the location of the dwelling, the amount and composition of the households - of the move and the relocation has to be detailed. The plan can include a definitive and temporary relocation but should make sure that relocated inhabitants have priority when a new dwelling is available for rent.

Several relocation approaches have been applied by social housing companies. In some cases, social housing companies leave the inhabitants within the building even during profound renovation works. Such approach is not self-evident. Inhabiting a dwelling during renovations can have a serious impact on physical and mental well-being, while building operators should be prepared to make such experience as

agreeable as possible. The advantage of this approach, is that inhabitants don't have to worry about relocations and the social fabric developed over the years can remain. They can also remain in their dwelling, which they appropriated and in which they sometimes strongly invested over the years. The architecture office Lacaton and Vasal succeeded in refining such approach by creating an intelligent system of prefabricated outer shells, improving the energy performance of the building, while increasing the size of the apartments. According to an administrator of the social housing company of the neighbourhood Destrier this option had a varying degree of success in their case. 'We redid everything, we changed the chassis, we changed radiator per radiator. We dismantled and redid the bathrooms. We broke the walls, and the inhabitants stayed inside. And this with people between 86 and 30 years old. It was madness, right. Because the people, they suffered. But, we discussed in advance with the inhabitants, we stay or not? We took a risk by leaving the people in the building, to preserve the social cohesion. But it's hard, sometimes they were really fed up with it.'

A second option, which has been used in the Modelwijk in Laken, is a transfer system. In this system, the renovation of different towers was done in different phases. The inhabitants moved to a renovated tower as soon as the renovation works of their tower started.

In the worst case, a social housing company empties outdated dwellings before even drawing up the quadrennial plan. This option has been used in a garden neighbourhood in the south-east of Brussels after a fatal accident in an apartment. The community organization Samenlevingsopbouw has developed the project 'Leeggoed' in order to prevent vacancy, by setting up a collective temporary occupation in such housing units. In this temporary occupation, the dwellings were refurbished temporarily, in order to make them inhabitable for some years.

A newer approach that arouses interest of the regional company is the development of temporary units at the construction site. This enables inhabitants to live within their neighbourhood during the works, while they can return to their old apartment once the works are finished. Even if conceived temporarily, the local urban impact of such approach needs to be reflected upon.

A second point of concern, and of primary importance for the SoHoLab project, is the participation of inhabitants within this regeneration process of their housing. At the moment, a participation, nor a consultation of inhabitants is formally required in the public tender procedure of social housing renovation. Some social housing companies integrate the assignment for developing a participatory trajectory in the project specifications of the public tender. This can be the case for the design of communal spaces within the housing project. But generally, a real

participation, consisting of support, information and discussion between all partners involved from the very start of the project, until the finalization of the works is not foreseen. Some associations involved in the social cohesion projects have been advocates for integrating this within the procedure. In the case of the Brunfaut tower in Molenbeek for instance, the association La Rue and the inhabitants have been developing collective actions for suing the social housing company for the lack of intervention in the unhealthy and unsafe living conditions in the tower. After years of actions, they succeeded to raise awareness about these living conditions and to bring the theme of renovation on the agenda of the social housing company. The project ended up as a very disappointing but informative experience. After more than 10 years of actions and meetings by the inhabitants and La Rue, they were not involved in the renovation procedure and had to be relocated. We will go into this issue when discussing the case 'Brunfaut'.

The renovation of public spaces and functions other than housing owned by the municipality or others

In high-rise social estates, the design of the public spaces and collective facilities were part of an ambitious vision on how contemporary society should be ideally organized. As mentioned before, many of the facilities originally planned were not built. This is related to financial issues, but also to the difficulty for social housing companies to incorporate and manage functions other than housing. Over the years, many of the surrounding public spaces of high-rise estates have been transferred to the municipality. The agreements about such transfer differ, but a widely applied rule is that social housing companies kept a public space perimeter of 1 meter around the buildings in order to facilitate the management of the building. In any case, the management of public spaces is not explicitly defined in the agreement between the regional company and the social housing companies. Some social housing companies do have a maintenance service but make use of other measures in order to reduce the cost of such service[38]. As one administrator states 'Yes, we have a maintenance team, I can rely on 20 workers, but in reality, it is because we work with 'article 60' workers'[39]. The division between the management of the buildings and the public space creates difficulties and tensions about the task of each owner. In the case of a public parking and rubbish containers for instance, it is not always clear who is in charge. It's important to notice that the municipality is legally bound to the region. It needs the approval of the different regional planning agencies (environment, patrimony, mobility, development, PRDD) in charge for developing projects on its land.

Different instruments can be used that are organized on a municipal, regional, federal and European level for the renovation of public spaces and equipment.

At a European level, **ERDF** is a call for projects financed by both the European Union and the BCR, and managed and implemented by the BCR. The operational program ERDR for 2014-2020 invests 200 million euros in improving the living environment in fragile neighbourhoods within the 'Urban Revitalization Zone' (ZRU) through investing in a wide range of fields such as nurseries, increasing participation of underprivileged groups, renewable energy, economic valorization, health services, tourism...

Figure 5   Renovation of high-rise social estates by Beliris (Fontainas – Ieder zijn huis – Villas)

Nationally, as mentioned before, the program of **Beliris** invests in several sectors with the main aim to promote the international role and capital function of the Brussels Capital Region. This program is sometimes applied in the context of a neighbourhood contract. Before also focusing on social housing, the program has been investing in mobility, the acquisition of land, strategic zoning, neighbourhood revitalization, investments in culture, science and heritage. Between 2015 and 2017, the total budget exceeded 720 million euros.

At the regional level, the most widely applied program for a relatively short-term regeneration of public space in social estates, might be the **sustainable neighbourhood contract**. The neighbourhood contracts have been applied since 1993 for the revitalization of underprivileged areas. The neighbourhood contracts tackle different types of revitalization:
– building operations (including cleaning, rehabilitating, improving, buying):
  – functional mixity
  – social housing
  – proximity commercial or social facilities
– public space operations: requalification of public spaces, urban networks and mobility
– environmental operations; improving the energy performance of buildings
– social and economic revitalization operations
  – through socio-professional insertion

– by citizen participation
– coordination and communication

The eligible area in which the neighbourhood contract can be launched is the Urban Revitalization Zone mentioned above. Each year, the regional government selects more or less 3 neighbourhoods in which the four-year program (two additional years are foreseen for spatial interventions) will take place. Until this year, the Urban Revitalization Zones were only situated in vicinity of the poor crescent, an area covering several underprivileged neighbourhoods along the Brussels canal. However, this year, Peterbos has been included in this area and has been selected for the program of 2018-2023. This means that for the first time, a large-scale estate in the second crown of the Brussels Capital Region has been selected. The case study Querelle, which we will present further, is an example of a high-rise estate in which a neighbourhood contract has been applied.
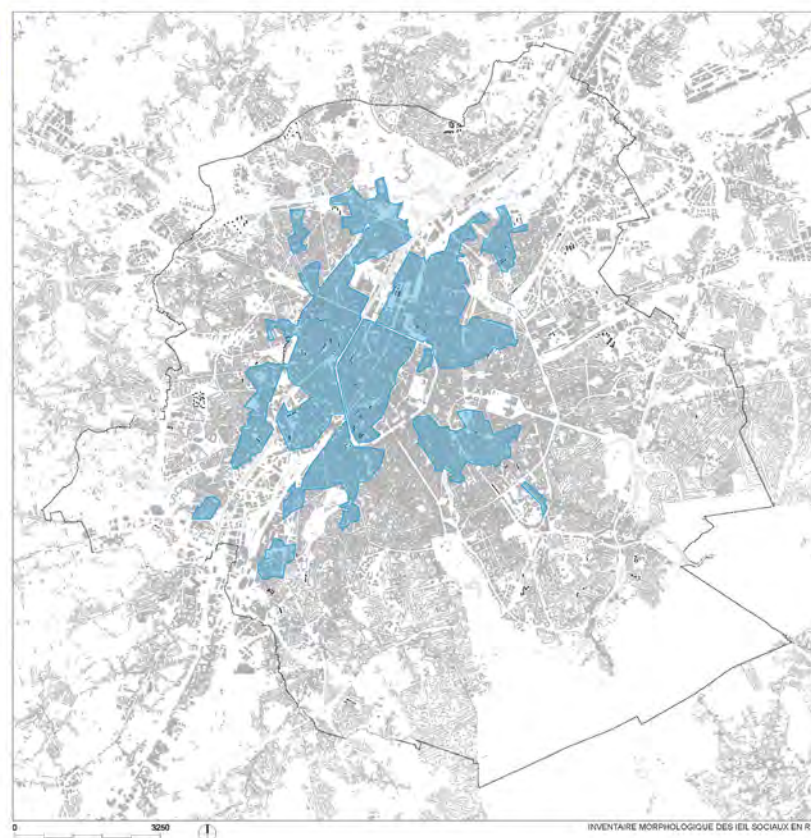

Figure 6   Left: Perimeter ZRU before 2017; Right: Perimeter ZRU since 2017, which now includes new social estates (including Peterbos)

Then , the *urban revitalization contract* is a new program developed in 2016, that applies the characteristics of the neighbourhood contract in areas that are not statistical, such as crossing points of municipalities. At the moment three projects have been defined, that tackle diverse fields: public space, urban networks, social housing, equipment, environmental

quality, economic revitalization, social cohesion.

Politique de la ville (urban policy) is a program for revitalizing an urban perimeter. It is focused on two key issues: spatial planning and neighbourhood development. The first key issue is the result of a fusion of old regional regulations on empty and abandoned buildings. Its primary aim is to fight feelings on insecurity in any place in the Brussels Capital Region, which is believed to be reached through real estate operations, fast interventions against the degradation of public space. The goals of the second key issue are as diverse. It deals with the quality of life in urban neighbourhoods through the redesign of public space and neighbourhood infrastructure, culture and sports. At the same time, the support of vulnerable groups, for instance through housing projects or the socio-professional integration in economic sectors such as spatial planning is also mentioned as a target. It is not clear whether the renovation or rehabilitation of social housing estates can be possibly tackled within this program. The actions of the neighbourhood development pillar are developed in municipalities that are part of the 'Urban Revitalization Zone' (ZRU). Such zone is selected through the criteria median income, density and unemployment rate. The municipalities of this zone are Anderlecht, Brussels, Etterbeek, Evere, Vorst, Elsene, Jette, Koekelberg, Molenbeek, Sint-Gillis, Sint-Joost, Schaarbeek, Ukkel.

Another program that might be interesting for the regeneration of social estates or underprivileged areas in general, but which has not yet been applied as such is the *Programme Triennal d'Investissement* (Triennial Investment Plan). The plan encourages municipalities, social welfare centers (CPAS), church wardens and other recognized administrative bodies or real estate managers of worship services to do investments of 'public interest'.

Programs for smaller interventions

Apart from the abovementioned program, there are a number of smaller subsidies that can be applied for acupuncture interventions within social estates. Four of them are worth to mention.

First, the **quartier durable citoyen** (sustainable participatory neighbourhood) is an initiative of the environmental regional agency 'Bruxelles Environnement.' The objective of the program is to collectively build a sustainable city thanks to local and convivial actions. Citizens can apply for the funding by developing a collective survey analysing the needs of the neighbourhood and by formulating different projects and the necessary funding to come up to these needs. The program doesn't set a limit, but the total number of subsidies cannot cross 15.000 euros. When obtaining the subsidy, the neighbourhood committee can direct

themselves to a coach and a technical expert for helping them with specific needs and support. Several citizen committees of social housing estates have applied for such funding and developed projects such as a collective compost area, mobility projects, a collective vegetable garden, a beehive, … Social associations of the social cohesion projects often provide them the necessary assistance for developing an application.

The Flemish Community Commission (VGC) provides subsidies to several projects in Brussels that improve the viability of cities and neighbourhoods, fight polarization, improve the quality of administrations, projects related to integration and initiatives that improve cohabitation.

The Cocof, a similar institution as the VGC, is a competence of the French Government in the Brussels Capital Region that focuses on sports clubs, innovative actions related to the cleanness of neighbourhoods and the development of actions for seniors, disabled people and youngsters. Under guidance of the secretary of the Cocof, since 2015, calls for projects have been launched that focus on *sports infrastructure in proximity*. As part of this, the municipality of Anderlecht has been able to obtain subsidies for installing outdoor fitness infrastructure at Peterbos.

Learning from past experiences

In this part of the study, we will not give an exhaustive overview of collaborative approaches that have been applied in the regeneration of large-scale estates in the Brussels Capital Region. We will rather go into some experiences – negative and positive – that show how certain instruments and programs have been used and the role (or lack) of participation within these experiences. In the map below, you can see all high-rise social estates in the Brussels Capital Region. We will go into three experiences, before presenting our case study Peterbos. For describing these experiences we based ourselves on (desktop) literature review; videos; architectural, urban design and planning data; and conversations with key informants[40].
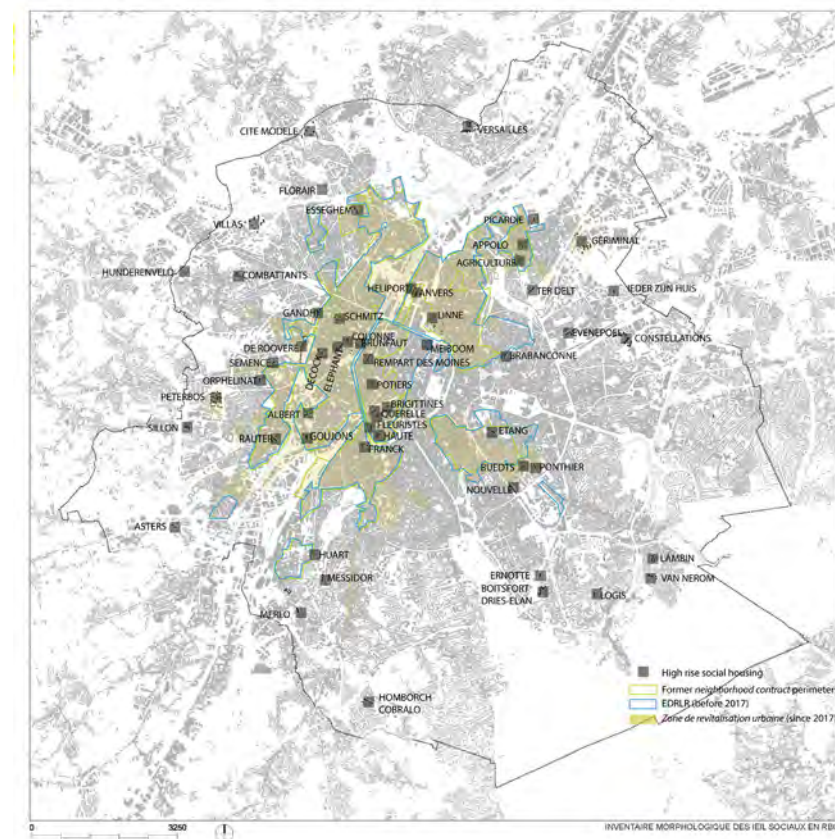

Figure 7   High-rise estates in the Brussels Capital Region[41] (Source data: Gerald Ledent)
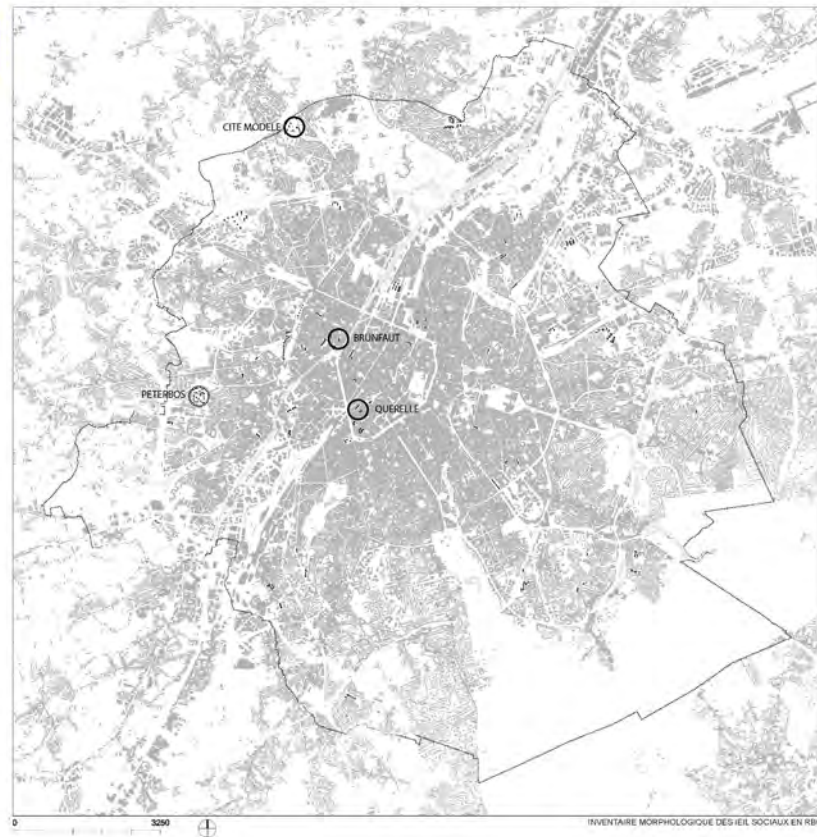
Figure 8   3 regeneration experiences in the Brussels Capital Region

A large-scale renovation: Cité Modèle

Built between
1958-1979

1104 dwellings -
initial project

159 dwellings –
new constructions

Renovation process
(public space and
buildings) started in
2004

Owned by Le Foyer
Laekenois

Figure 9   Cité Modèle

Without doubt, the most well-known sample of modernist estates in Belgium is the Cité Modèle in Laken, Brussels. In the context of the organization of the Expo 58, the social housing company Laekense Haard (and especially its president Fernand Brunfaut), conceived the plan to

develop a new social estate according to the newest modernist ideals. The plan would take into account the technical evolutions and social progression of the time. 'The city of the future' had to give an answer to the demographic expansion and housing need in Brussels after the world war, by creating a universal dwelling for the 'new universal man' through the newest applications in the building industry. The initial idea was to have an independent piece of city that provided all the advantages of the city, but in a healthy environment. As part of this aim, additional services, such as a cultural centre, a library, a fuel station, a supermarket and the offices of the social housing company were implemented on the site.

Once a symbol for a universal belief in progress, as in many estates, during the last decades, the site was mostly associated with crime and urban decay[42]. Today, however, the estate seems to have rediscovered its pride. An ambitious masterplan, combining several subsidies and programs in one coherent vision, is at the base of this.

In 2004, the Laekense Haard launched a public tender for developing a complete reflection on the renovation of the neighbourhood. Teams of architects were asked to develop a long-term vision for the site, by engaging themselves for 12 years in the project. This would enable the architects to develop a realistic planning. The combination of different types of offices with different working experiences had to guarantee a reflective and iterative process during the design conception phase.

The winning team, Philémon Wachter (Archi+I, Brussels), Ludo Bekker (a33, Leuven), Steven van den Bergh (Maenhout/Van den Bergh, Brussel) and Wessel de Jonge (Rotterdam) developed three main aims for the site: the increase of the quality of life of inhabitants, the expansion of the patrimony and the consolidation of the modernist ideas at the base of the plan. In order to do this, during the study, they retraced the aims and conceptions of the initial architects during the development of the neighbourhood. They used a social enquiry developed by an urbanist/art historian as part of a thesis on Cité Modèle and had two thematic encounters with the inhabitants.

The masterplan is conceived as a progressive guideline, leaving space for specific opportunities. It foresees a reinforcement of the green character and modernist style of the site. The open plan and transparency, created by elevating the buildings from the ground floor through pilotis, therefore remains intact. A stronger connection to the surrounding, a better circulation and the development of more convivial spaces are mainly created through the design of the public space. The masterplan increases the number of dwellings (from 1029 to 1200 dwellings) through apartment buildings in line with some modernist principles, such as sober lines and a compact ground floor, in line with the Existenzminimum. Furthermore,

as originally conceived, the new masterplan welcomes the integration of non-housing functions, such as a children and youth centre, a crèche, an information point and a social restaurant. The latter is realized through a partnership with a private partner and foresees a training school for unemployed. The development of a sports hall is still under study.

The masterplan consists of four main components: (1) the development of the landscape park; (2) the implementation of collective equipment; (3) the renovation and extension of the younger buildings; (4) and the renovation of the oldest buildings. Today no program exists to execute an entire masterplan, or to guide a social housing company in doing so. The social housing company therefore has been applying available budgets and different types of funding sources for specific works:

– the development of the masterplan (Lakense Haard);
– the first part of the landscape project (city of Brussels + 101% program, SLRB);
– the extension of the cultural centre (city of Brussels + Lakense Haard);
– the addition of new buildings (The housing alliance, SLRB);
– the renovation of the buildings (The quadrennial regional plan, SLRB).
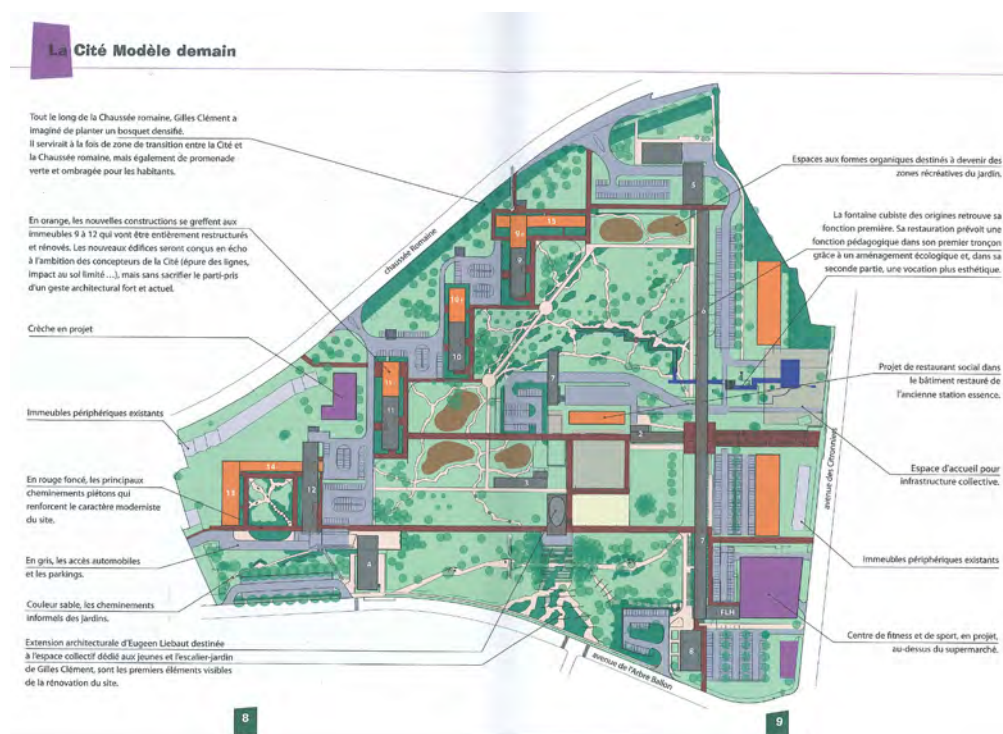

Figure 10 Masterplan Cité Modèle presented in Toc-Toc magazine (N° Hors Série)

The renovation of Cité Modèle is not exemplary for an exhaustive participatory planning process, but nevertheless some synergies with inhabitant committees have been brought about throughout the planning process.

First, the social housing company regularly informed inhabitants

during public sessions and a three-monthly newspaper and set up a committee of 30 people to follow the entire process. As such, preoccupations of this committee, such as the draught created through the open plan of the site, the security, mobility, the lack of equipment and poor isolation, were discussed and taken into account.

Second, in order to give a clear sign to the inhabitants in the neighbourhood, the execution of the masterplan started with the renovation of the public space. As the director clarifies 'We wanted to say to the inhabitants "we are going to renovate it well". So we started with the entrance garden, which is not typically 'social', but envied by neighbouring private estates… and the cultural centre, in order to show that we are going to do something really nice.[43]' The serpentine paths around ecologically diversified green areas, 'l'escalier jardin', offer an elegant antipode to the modernist style of the buildings. The designer, Gilles Clément, has received wide recognition for its moving landscapes; green spaces with a differentiated management and a strong ecological diversity. During his fieldwork on the site, he met several parents with children. This was at the base of a reflection on the maintenance and educational use of the new garden.

Figure 11 "L'Escalier Jardin"

Third, also the implementation of equipment was part of this first phase of investment. Although the extension of the cultural centre to the central plaza and implementation of a social restaurant did not emerge from a demand of inhabitants, they do support the associative network in the neighbourhood. Since the very beginning, the cultural centre, Cité Culture, has been an important place for socialization and meeting. Several associations organize their meetings there. The tenant association, the community centre and senior club use the flexible space of the cultural centre, while the relatively recent associations the '8th March women' and the 'Cité Modèle Durable[44]' share a room on the ground floor of a recently

constructed building. The main activity of the latter takes place outdoors. The association recently acquired a space in the landscape park in order to develop a vegetable garden. The tenant association, which took shape in 1967, gathers around 25 people, organizing activities for inhabitants and acting as go-between inhabitants and the social housing company. They are also very active in the cultural centre, among others by running the bar. Their commitment is quite exceptional. Their main target group consists of people in isolation, but they try to establish links with young people as well, by asking them to support specific activities or to lend them a hand. As one members states; 'For me one of the most important aims is to break the isolation. (…) We are volunteers, but the last 5 days I took holidays for the first time since August 2016. During the entire summer, I worked for free, I was here for 2 months.' The tenant board and social housing company has always had a good relationship: the company supports them for developing their activities but doesn't dictate what they should do. The tenant board is therefore not afraid to criticise the company and to complain when necessary. They for instance emphasise the need for a better communication towards the tenants. As one tenant board member states; 'The decision makers are not in the field, they do not know the reality of the site, they stay in their office, and being there is totally different. (…) I already explained in a meeting with the Foyer Laekenois, they have to find another way of communicating because the majority doesn't read; doesn't read at all or doesn't read French. So according to me, this way of communicating doesn't suffice. (…)' The board has developed a very concise method to ensure a communication to inhabitants of the neighbourhood, by doing door-to-door visits. As she argues; 'More than 1000 housing (…) Doing the door-to-door visits is tedious, but by doing this, we reach everyone.'

Figure 12   Citizen Initiatives in the neighbourhood: Community and cultural centre, the vegetable garden, "Festival des Blocs"

Fourth, this tenant board played a particular role in improving the communication between the social housing company and inhabitants during the 'drawer operation' of the renovation and construction of the dwellings at the Cité. This drawer operation implies that once a building was emptied, if possible, the households are relocated into the newly built

or renovated dwellings. The tenant board improved understanding by explaining to several inhabitants how this is translated into practice. For instance, among inhabitants, there were some questions about why the company invested in new buildings while the existing apartments needed so much investment. 'You have to know that the budget for renovation and construction is different, because even for me it was hard to understand why they built while others were not yet renovated.' Next to that they also welcomed new inhabitants through door-by-door visits in addition to the welcome word of the social service. Then, they also severed as a go-between during difficulties with the building contractor. In one of the new apartment blocks, at a certain moment there were several malfunctions, that inhabitants started to complain and to threaten to not pay the rent anymore. The tenant board started to support meetings that happened among residents in the entrance hall. 'During weeks, we had meetings on Sunday in the entrance hall, clandestine meetings, they showed me, I took notes and said "if you don't pay you are wrong, always"! In contrast, there is a possibility to do it. And during weeks, I was the link between them and the social housing company. (…) And so I did the telephone call, to the technical staff and mailed about the defects and this during weeks (…) and finally they came.' As such the tenant board also strengthens inhabitants in organizing themselves vis-à-vis the social housing company.

This shows that the associative network does not only offer initiatives to escape isolation but can take an important role in strengthening inhabitants in organizing themselves vis-à-vis the social housing company. The attitude of the social housing company towards such self-organization might be successful, as they do not interfere, but offer the space, equipment and financial contribution for the associative network to do their activities. They also dedicated certain spaces within the masterplan to these different associations. It shows the potentials of such associative network for improving the terms of participation, not only during the renovation process but especially in the daily life of the estate.

Then, the renovation is a showcase for its combination of different types of programs for executing a masterplan. It should be kept in mind that the financial capacity of the city of Brussels actually highly contributed to this.

Finally, and more importantly, the social housing company has had a convincing discourse towards the regeneration of the site. Instead of underlining the importance of social mix, highlighting the difficulties on the site and addressing the problem of high-rise buildings, which is done all too often, the social housing company has chosen the path of reinforcing the grandeur and progressive style of the post-war estates, increasing the amount of social housing rather than opting to add middle

income or private housing as happens in other cases (abroad and local), while giving again splendour to this unique piece of post-war modernism in Belgium.

Querelle

Built in 1966

431 dwellings

Buildings renovation started in 2017

Neighbourhood Contract from 2000 to today

Social cohesion project in 1998

Owned by Logement Bruxellois

Figure 13 Querelle

The social estate 'Querelle' is located within the southern urban tissue of the city centre of Brussels. The construction of several modernist high- and medium-rise estates in the context of a series of slum clearance actions, has created fractures in this tissue. Next to 'La Querelle', the social estates 'Les Brigittines', 'Fleuristes' and 'Haute' bear witness of this interbellum and post-war approach to city renovation. The more recent implementation of 'an array of programs'[45], such as neighbourhood contract operations, a dense network of associations, and municipal, Public Welfare Centre (CPAS)[46] and CityDev housing add to the strong presence of public authorities within the area. As such, the neighbourhood has always occupied a somewhat in-between position; a disadvantaged but 'friendly'[47] neighbourhood, subject to rehabilitation and gentrification programs. These specificities have a strong impact on the position of inhabitants in decision-making processes: inhabitants are often consulted by the dense associative network, while the actual decisions are made by the City of Brussels, for whom the attractiveness of the centre is an important policy agenda. In this perspective, the different 'neighbourhood contracts' implemented in the estate of Querelle might be representative.

As detailed above, the neighbourhood contracts focus on the regeneration of the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods of the region (mainly the poor crescent along the canal of Brussels). Municipalities that incorporate such neighbourhoods can apply for such funding, which mainly focuses on 5 themes - dwellings, collective equipment, public space, socio-economic actions, productive/economic spaces. Citizen

participation forms an inherent part of the program.

Since 2000, Querelle has been subject to several contracts. For each of the programs, the perimeter was not reduced to the social estate. Nevertheless, Querelle has been given special attention due its specific urban typology, involving a high density, a large share of inhabitants and a presence of several squares and (semi)-public spaces. The two contracts 'Tanneur' (2000-2004) and 'Rouppe' (2008-2012) directly included Querelle, while 'Jonction' (2014-2018) focused on an adjacent perimeter. But, as the main mission of the latter was to bridge two neighbourhoods separated by a railway line, Querelle automatically became part of the reflection. Two specific aspects within these three neighbourhood contracts provide an interesting base to reflect on the participation of inhabitants in the regeneration of public space within social estates: the maintenance of the football field and the implementation of the childcare centre.

The dense network of associations operating in the neighbourhood, among others Habitat et Renovation, have been able to follow these experiences closely. Habitat et Renovation is in charge of a social cohesion project in the estate. It has been operating in the neighbourhood since 1998, but officially affiliated with the SLRB as a social cohesion project since 2000. Part of the strategy of Habitat et Renovation is to gather inhabitants around small-scale actions and investments in the public space, for instance through an 'embellishment committee' and a 'pause-café'. As such the first neighbourhood contract, **'Tanneurs' (2000-2004)** was received with great enthusiasm, not only by the association, but also by the other community workers working in the area. It was a first occasion for these workers to invest themselves and to defend the position of their target groups, the 'users' of the space.

However, the investments and recommendations made by the inhabitants and community workers did not lead to the desired interventions in the public space. Initially, the plan was to have two buildings delineating the central square. However, before the implementation of the neighbourhood contract (and construction of the community centre), the city of Brussels came up with its own plan to redevelop the adjacent public space and to replace the semi-buried parking at the foot of the high-rise building in the middle of the estate. The new public space would accommodate a sports field and would enable to open up the square. Although the neighbourhood could have profited from such double investment, the two programs were not well-adjusted, leading to frustration and confusion among inhabitants and community workers. The implementation of the central square by the municipality for instance prevented the construction of two separate buildings as conceived in the neighbourhood contract. As a compromise, one building was, somehow

clumsily, pasted against one of the high-rise buildings of the social estate (Figure 18, 19). The prominent position of the community centre was moved to the basement of this building, leading to great discontent among the inhabitants involved in it. The design of the public space was initially better received, but soon led to waste and noise nuisances. The sheds that surrounded the agora soon became a hotspot for homeless people associated with the Homeless Agency located nearby the site.

Figure 14   Neighbourhood contracts in or in vicinity of Querelle

The second neighbourhood contract **'Rouppe' (2008-2012)** was seen as an opportunity to make up for the presumably weak coordination of the first contract. During this contract, Habitat et Renovation engaged in the process by organizing several small meetings with inhabitants to reflect on several themes and projects proposed by the renovation program.

In the beginning, the program of the neighbourhood contract defined the renovation of the space created by the demolition of the semi-buried parking lot in the former neighbourhood contract, which 'created feelings of insecurity'. The plan was to do this in close collaboration with inhabitants. The latter were surprised when this focus finally moved to 2 main interventions: the 'Querelle Plaza' (a smaller semi-public space covered with parking lots between the high-rise building in the middle and the lower buildings in the east of the site[48]) and the construction of a crèche. The crèche was built on the site initially preserved for a new co-created public space. As one community organizer states 'people asked for the regeneration of a public space but instead they got a crèche (…) The users are not the inhabitants. We can immediately see who comes from the crèche, we recognize them immediately.'[49] Then, no attempt seems

to have been made to develop a qualitative interaction between the two buildings. The crèche is implemented nearby the high-rise apartment building, hindering the view and light in the dwellings on the first three floors. Epitomized by various acts of vandalism, the construction of the crèche was not welcomed by the youngsters either. After demolishing the parking lot, the youngsters had started to occupy the space for playing football. Furthermore, as a result of the depletion of the neighbourhood contract budget, the promised new soil for the sports field of the first neighbourhood contract was not provided.

Figure: The football field in 2018 - District contrat Tanneurs: Housing and community center -
The left-over public space after the construction of the community center - District Contract Rouppe: The creche
Source: District contract website and district contract report

Figure 15   Planned and built interventions since 2000, from left to right : the football field in 2018 – the new housing and community center built during district contract Tanneurs – the area before building the creche – the area after building the creche during neighbourhood contract Rouppe (Source : District contract website and report)

As a result, the second neighbourhood contract left inhabitants with feelings of abandonment and disillusion. Rather than imagining another ambitious participatory revitalization project, the disillusion led Habitat et Renovation to focus on the development of very humble initiatives. One of them is an embellishment committee, which develops concrete small projects, such as flower displays and handmade benches[50].

The association Habitat et Renovation thus did not participate in the third neighbourhood contract **'Jonction' (2014-2018)**. It was an association in charge of the development of sports initiatives – Buurtsport – that developed an interest in Querelle. Buurtsport heard about the unfulfilled promise of the municipality to provide a new surface for the sports field. A community worker of Buurtsport[51], who sympathized with their cause, therefore started to engage with the group of youngsters in order to raise their voice. She helped the youth to write a letter to the municipal government and to record a video. They recently obtained a positive answer; the surface should be provided soon…

Figure 16   Youngster renovating the sports field with Buursport (Source: Buursport Facebook page)

It is hard to make a complete evaluation of the different contracts within the scope of this case description. Even if the neighbourhood contract intrinsically tries to avoid this, from a planning perspective, the case of Querelle seemed to suffer from a lack of a long-term vision for the site. The interviews with community organizations and discussions with inhabitants learn that people feel disillusioned and abandoned by the entire process. Those in charge of citizen participation consider the experience with the sports field and the foot of the high-rise buildings as a failure.

Over the years, many different stakeholders were involved in the different contracts, which does not simplify the context: the social housing company that owns the buildings and a part of the public space, the municipality and several politicians formulating specific promises of reinvestment. On top of this, the neighbourhood contract added additional stakeholders and policy agendas, creating mismatching viewpoints and perspectives on the site. Furthermore, the neighbourhood contract brings a strong attention to one site during a short term, without including an evaluation process, contributing to the conclusion that 'it seems that no lessons have been taken from previous experiences'[52].

In this particular case, the succession of neighbourhood contracts has led to an invasion of several short-term projects, actions and associations, which has marked the inhabitants' perspective on citizen participation. Notwithstanding, the contracts also brought some good things to the site, such as some necessary investments in the public space and the help of the community worker of Buurtsport, who became an important advocate for the cause of the youngsters living on the site.

Tour Brunfaut

Built in 1961

97 dwellings

Buildings renovation process started in 2013

Neighbourhood Contract 2009-2013

Social cohesion project in 2004

Owned by Logement Molenbeekois

Figure 17   Tour Brunfaut

Awarded as 'exemplary' (through the Brussels program 'Be Exemplary'), the renovation of the Tour Brunfaut seems to answer all items of the durability checklist: renovation instead of demolition, an increase of the size of the dwellings without a reduction of the offer in the context of a progressive housing crisis, a diversity of typologies, sustainable building materials, a complete renewal of technical installations, zero-energy standards, a participation of inhabitants during the development of the plan, a publicly accessible vegetable garden on the roof, the integration of collective spaces. The road towards this renovation has however been bumpy and long, notably for the inhabitants of the building.

Since 2004, the community organization La Rue has been accompanying tenants of the building in the framework of a social cohesion project. The organization soon found out that problems of cohabitation were part of a larger mental and physical malaise, intertwined with the dwelling conditions within the tower. Among the problems detected were an over-occupation of dwellings; a lack of acoustic and thermic isolation (leading to temperatures of 40 degrees in summer); regular elevator fallouts; a non-conformity with the fire requirements; a lack of social control epitomized by the presence of drug addicts in the stairwells and regular burglaries; and the presence of cockroaches and mice in the apartments. The difficult, almost lacking dialogue with the social housing company and the municipality did not add to this. Therefore, the organization turned its focus to a collective interpellation of the authorities in charge. Several letters, reports and detailed diagnostics were sent in order to question and address the substandard living conditions, insulation problems and fire insecurity. Without any real success.

The neighbourhood contract 2009-2013 was a turning point in this

respect. In the context of this neighbourhood plan, the municipality of Molenbeek and the Molenbeekse Haard, the owner of the building, ordered a viability study researching both the options of demolition and renovation. This viability study would enable to provide insight in the nature of the works and to develop a public tender specification. The task was assigned to Lacaton & Vassal, the architecture office that received wide recognition for giving a second life to post-war high-rise estates in the Parisian periphery. They have prevented the demolition of several estates, by developing ingenious façade systems that enlarge the dwelling spaces while insulating the building. In numerous cases, the advanced form of prefabrication applied in the façade systems allowed social tenants to stay within the building during the renovation works, without placing a major burden on them during the works. Strangely, while La Rue and the inhabitants of Tour Brunfaut persistently asked for more transparency and dialogue, the development of a viability study was not communicated to them.

When they found out about the viability study and the option chosen to renovate the tower, La Rue proposed to organize a support committee, with a notable role for inhabitants. Such support committee would enable a continuous discussion and exchange of information during the development of the renovation plan. La Rue would provide the necessary support and formation in order to enable inhabitants to participate in this committee. This was initially sustained by the municipality and social housing company. However, when the winning team of the public tender proposed a design in which the inhabitants would be relocated, in order to reduce the renovation period and to save an important amount of money, their support for the committee declined. Indeed, relocation often entails that inhabitants do not return to their original dwelling.

The story exposes a painful truth of an administrative culture, which is still at work in certain social housing companies today, a culture in which inhabitants and associations are kept in the dark, even after a decade of collective action. In 2014, La Rue and the inhabitants consolidated their experience in a documentary[53]. Zooming in on the collective meetings, interviews, and images within and outside the tower, the documentary shows the inhabitants' feelings, views and constraints about the renovation. The documentary, named 'Ça ira mieux demain', was publicly shown in the presence of several associations, umbrella organizations, local and regional authorities. Perhaps owing to this documentary, in 2015 the local authorities expressed an intention to inform inhabitants as much as possible about the renovation works and enable them to give remarks about the design of the project. This resulted in a meeting with the architect, which took place before the application of the

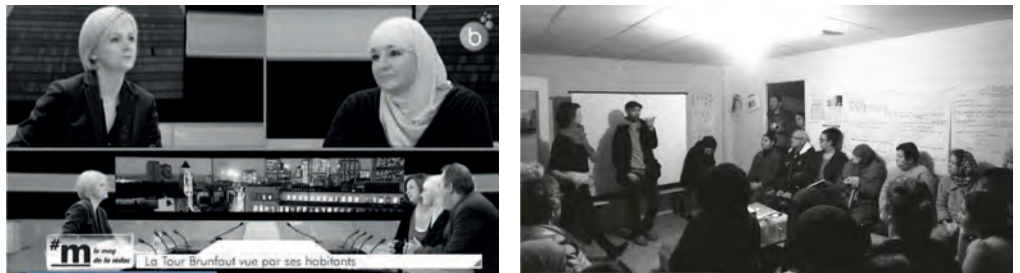planning permission, a first modest success.

Figure 18 Left: Inhabitant in local media - Right: Meeting with inhabitants (Image extracts from the toolbox)

The success of the documentary and the consensus about the need for inhabitant participation encouraged La Rue to develop a manual about how to involve social tenants in renovation processes. In this manual, a four-fold relationship between user control, construction supervision, architect and building contractor is propagated.

Figure 19 Ideal relationship between stakeholders in renovation process according to La Rue

In such relationship, the building supervisor would first inform users of its intention to realize an architectural project. This would be followed by a consultation of the users. The building supervisor would judge the ideas proposed on their relevance, give his feedback and integrate the relevant ideas in the project specifications of the public tender. During the design process, the winning architect of the public tender would continue seeing the user group for enriching the process.

The manual shows the importance of different types and methods of user consultation, and the need to facilitate the relationships between the different actors through the organization of meetings, working groups and support committees. A representative from the regional housing company, the association in charge of the social cohesion project or the tenant board could take up such a facilitating role. A charter then would specify the roles, rights and objectives of each partner.

Furthermore, the document proposes some communication tools - such as a flexible timeline shown in the collective spaces - and potential workshops, like a walking diagnostic[54], a workshop that follows inhabitants' rhythm of the day according to their use of the apartment, the production of a collective model, a temporary exhibition showing the individual units after the renovation etc.

The manual has very modest ambitions. Within the fourfold relationship proposed, the building supervisor remains the final decision-maker in the renovation process. Nevertheless, it has an undeniable value, as it is the first proposal in the Brussels Capital Region to legally and organizationally fix the role of inhabitants within renovation processes of social estates. Hopefully, it can contribute to a renovation procedure that turns into reality the credo of the documentary 'ça ira mieux demain'.

Peterbos

Built in
1968-1981
1412 dwellings

Buildings renovation started in 2012
Neighbourhood Contract 2018-2021
Social cohesion project in 1988

Owned by Le Foy Anderlechtois a Comensia

Figure 20   Peterbos

Our case study Peterbos Park is an estate of 18 high-rise slab housing and towers. The area covers 17,1 ha in the South-West of the Brussels Region, in the so-called second crown. It was built between 1968 and 1981. The density of the estate (187 hab/ha, 82,6 dwellings/ha) is quite high compared to neighbouring estates, but similar to neighbourhoods in the centre of Brussels.
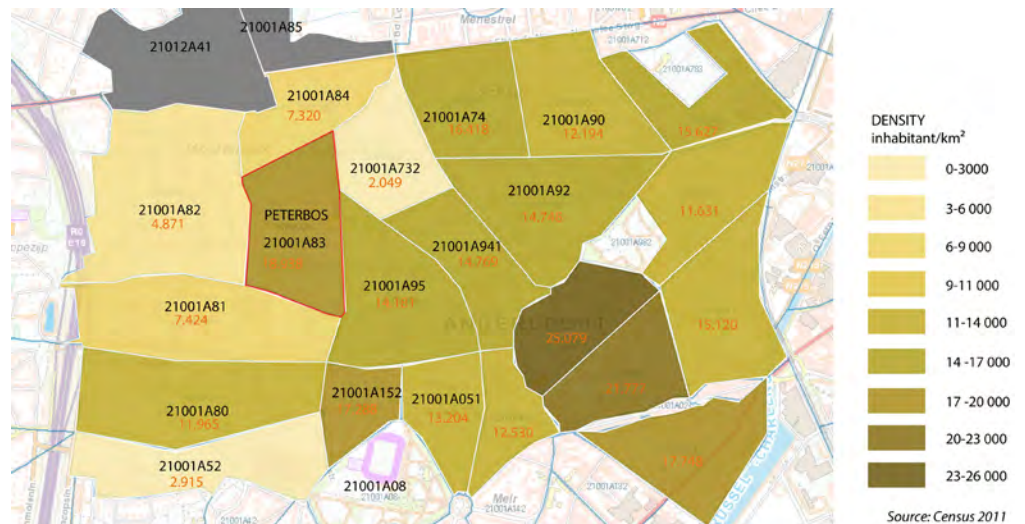

Figure 21   Density of neighbourhoods in vicinity of Peterbos

After WWII, the municipality in which it is located, Anderlecht, developed a concise planning policy, organizing different types of residential neighbourhoods along green boulevards, parks and inner courtyards. Anderlecht was also a forerunner in terms of public land policy, working with a 'rolling fund' to urbanize part of its territory. According to

the urban planning book of the municipality at the time; the basic idea [was] to implement a very modern residential neighbourhood on this area of 12ha with a strong slope towards the south. A very open architectural composition, a social and commercial centre, a street exclusively preserved for the residential quarter, an underground parking space, but especially an important amount of green spaces [would] lead to this. These green spaces [had to] extend the already existing green continuity that the municipality is developing across its territory. (...) [T]wo social housing companies (...) developed the execution plan, in close collaboration with [the municipal] services[55].

Figure 22 Historical Master Plan of Peterbos that illustrates the intentions and realisations of the municipality in 1962[56]

Figure 23 Aerial picture Peterbos

The involvement of two social housing companies was the result of a political compromise between the municipality and the parish. The terrain belonged to the parish, so it was decided to construct an amount of municipal and an amount of parochial housing[57]. At the time the first social housing company in charge, 'Foyer Anderlechtois', was clearly socialist, while the second company, 'Assam' (the name of the company before the mergers), had links with the Christian-Democrats.
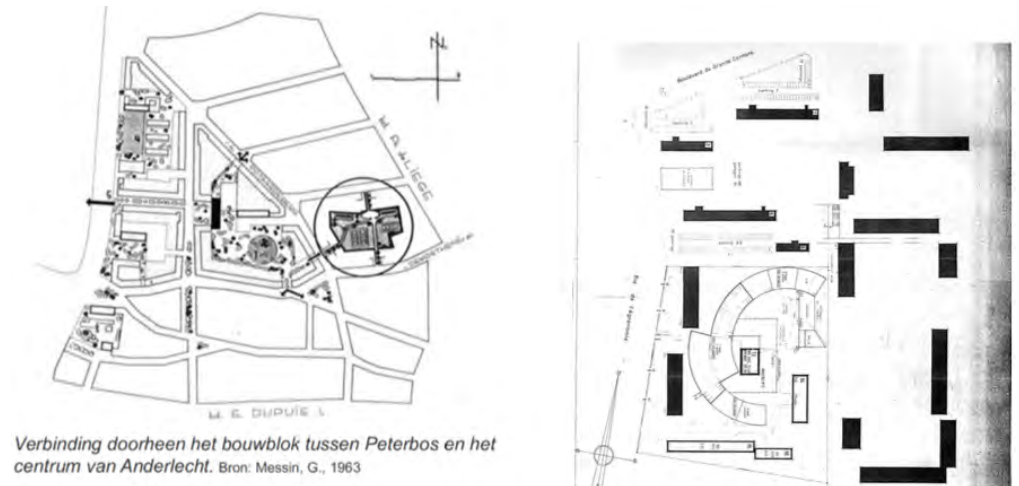

Verbinding doorheen het bouwblok tussen Peterbos en het centrum van Anderlecht. Bron: Messin, G., 1963

Figure 24   Initial implemention plan De Maet, relationship between Peterbos and the centre of Anderlecht, an adapted plan including commercial equipment in the south-west of the site (which was never built)
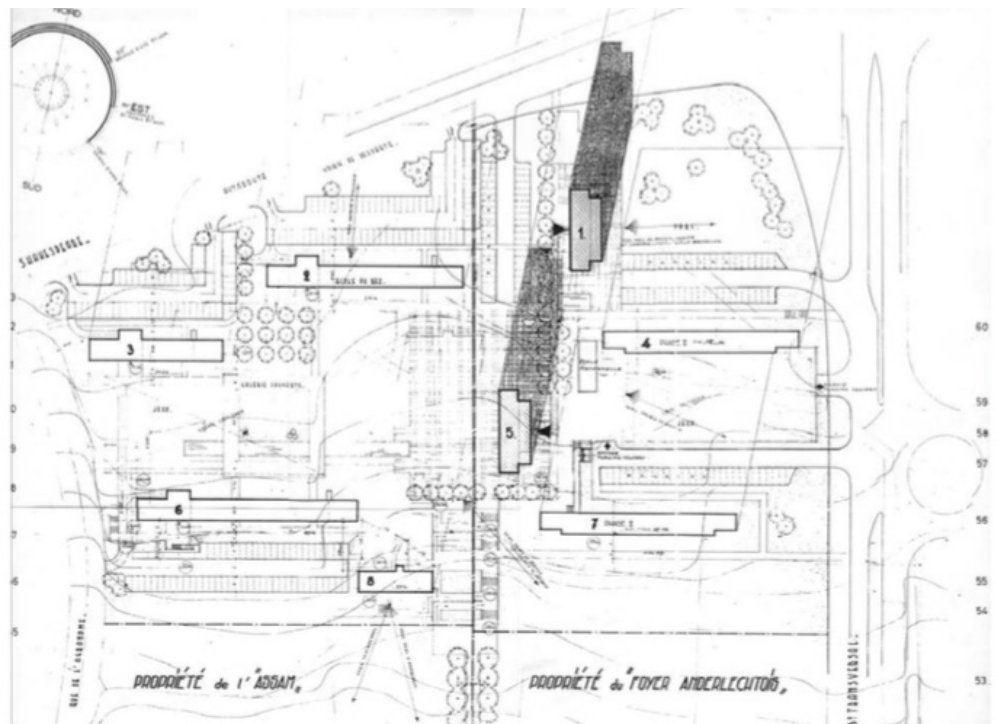

Figure 25   Border between the property of Assam (west) and the property of Foyer Anderlechtois (east)

On the masterplan by De Maet you can see a sequence of high-, medium- and low-rise buildings. The low-rise buildings with individual gardens provide a link with the adjacent old road and row housing. Also public functions, such as a school, a church and a community centre are located along this road. In the north, on the hill along the planned artery road, the masterplan foresees high-rise housing. Furthermore, a series of perpendicular roads seem to connect the garden neighbourhood Moortebeek and the centre of Anderlecht.

The construction works started in the north of the site and expanded systematically to the south.

Only in the first construction phase, the masterplan of De Maet was followed. The site was divided into two pieces. On the eastern part, developed by the social housing company Foyer Anderlechtois, De Maet developed two towers with 15 layers. In the western part, the architecture company Groupe Structures realized a first high-rise building for the company Assam[58].

For the following phases, the architects Boelens Wasterlain designed a sequence of north-south and east-west apartment blocks delineating some relatively undefined public spaces in the east of the site. These public spaces were taken by a parking lot, a roof of a parking garage, a play garden and a parking lot. For Assam, the architects Vander Elst and Kell designed different apartment blocks on several terraces. Centrally they implemented a tower of 16 layers. The most important pedestrian circulation is perpendicular to this slope and follows the border between the ownership of Assam and Foyer Anderlechtois. On the ground floor of this pedestrian circulation, several shops and a laundry store are located. In the south the pathway continues between a café, community gardens and low-rise housing along the former rural road[59].

2 social housing companies

The difference between the governance culture of the social housing companies operating in Peterbos can still be noticed today. Foyer Anderlechtois is a very large municipal social housing company, with a hierarchical organization. There is very few exchange between the different services and operational levels. On the site of Peterbos, the social housing company is however present through the presence of 2 detached social workers and the strong link between the company and the ruling party in Anderlecht. The elected president of the company closely follows important activities and festivities. The social housing company Assam on the other hand, has recently turned into the rental cooperative Comansia as a result of mergers between the independent social housing company and two rental cooperatives. As it takes some time to adapt to

these mergers, it is not yet clear whether such transformation into a rental cooperative will have strong implications in terms of citizen participation on a site like Peterbos. It is nevertheless clear that the company has a more horizontal structure, regularly organising meetings between the directors, administrators and community workers operating in the neighbourhood.

Périmètre d'étude
Propriétaires fonciers
Commune d'Anderlecht
Comensia
Foyer anderlechtois
Association des oeuvres paroissiales
Particuliers

Figure 26 Ownership Peterbos[60]

The public space in Peterbos mainly belongs to the municipality. Although the ownership limits are fixed, in reality they seem to be less clear, leading to tensions and confusion among inhabitants. In case of dysfunctions, they should either address the concierge or social housing company (who are in charge of the dwellings and collective spaces within the apartment blocks), the social housing company or municipal cleaning team (depending on the public space within the estate), the supra-municipal police (in case of conflicts among inhabitants), the regional authorities (in case of problems with the garbage service in charge of the containers).

Social action

There are several associations at work in Peterbos. There are the individual social workers provided by the two social housing companies and municipality[61]; the community organization Samenlevingsopbouw developing a social cohesion project (A); a youth organization called D'Broej (B) [62]; a social aid department (Centrum voor Algemeen Welzijn, CAW, C); the women's organizations 'Infor Femme' (F) and 'Femma' (H); two tenant boards ('Cocolo', one for each company, J); peace officers and a policeman of the municipal prevention service[63] (M); and a social restaurant[64] (N).
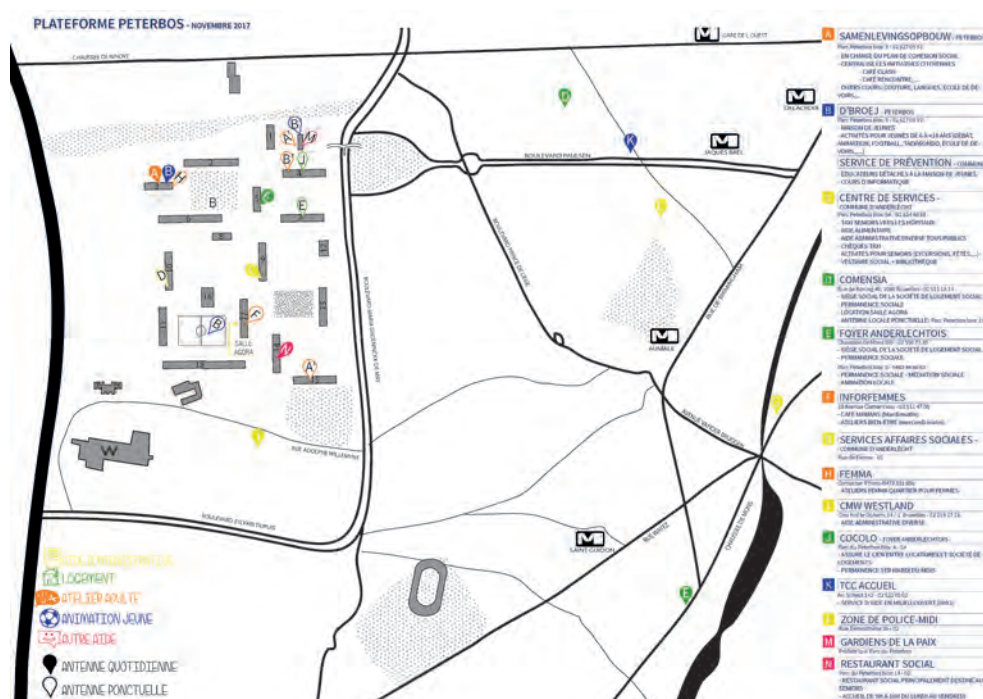

Figure 27 Location associations and social housing companies at work in Peterbos (Made by the authors)

The association Samenlevingsopbouw Brussels has a relatively important position within these organisations. It has been present on the site since 1988, and has created the Peterbos Platform, gathering all actors working on the site. The two social workers of Samenlevingsopbouw share a festivities room and work intensively together with the organization D'Broej. The main coordinator of D'Broej (-Peterbos) has spent his youth in the social estate. Together with Samenlevingsopbouw, he has been working in the area for the longest period. While D'Broej is in charge of children and youth animation in afterschool activities, sports activities, reflection groups with teenagers, trips and computer classes, Samenlevingsopbouw coordinates homework classes, stitching courses, French and Dutch courses, citizen concertation moments, yearly events

(such as neighbourhood party and Saint Nicolas), cultural and convivial events. Nowadays, both organizations are keen to 'spatialize' some of their actions, emphasizing their presence in Peterbos. For instance, Café Rencontre, an initiative of Samenlevingsopbouw exists of weekly coffee moments in the entrance hall of certain blocks. The initiative gave rise to a reflection on the appropriation of collective and public space and the need for a proper community centre. D'Broej on the other hand, has been enhancing some initiatives in Peterbos Park to call the attention of authorities. For instance, some years ago they did several workshops with children of the estate in order to develop a model for an 'ideal' playground. As an answer to the workshops and the model, the municipality installed a real playground on the site. D'Broej also obtained funding to redevelop the football field, after negotiation with the municipality. Furthermore, they appropriated an underused ground floor of an apartment block to accommodate a sports centre. These separate, seemingly 'unconscious' actions express the need of associations and their target public to increase their impact on the little invested collective and public realm.

Figure 28 "Café Rencontre" in the entrance of block 16 – A model for the playground – Informal activities in the public space – Sport room in a former technical space

Planning and renovation

Last years, several investments have been done for regenerating specific outdoor spaces, infrastructures and buildings of Peterbos. The different programs and investments are not part of a larger future plan for the site, leading to ad hoc interventions and few improvements in the interfaces between the different spaces (between buildings and public spaces or between different public spaces).

Ad-hoc building renovations

The lack of a clear overview of the works is illustrated in the apartment blocks 2 and 3. Together with 4 other buildings (block 1, 5, 6 and 8), the two blocks have been subject to different types of renovation works. In 2002, the

open space on the ground floor of building 3 was closed in order to integrate the offices of the associations D'Broej and Samenlevingsopbouw and a room for festivities. In 2012, the envelope of block 2 and 3 was renovated. As part of these works, asbestos was removed, an energy insulation in the envelope was added, the overall airtightness was increased, interventions in the heating systems were done, the terraces of the individual dwelling units of block 3 were removed and a ground floor terrace was created. Benefitting from the program 101%, two artists did an intervention together with inhabitants on the corridors of the blocks. A few years later, it became clear that the technical installations of blocks 2 and 3 were in very bad condition, exemplified by a cut-down of the sewage system, electricity and water pipes for several days. Apparently, despite the technical register Antilope, the social housing company was not aware about these serious malfunctions. In order to do an additional renovation of these building techniques, in 2017 the social housing company decided to empty half of the buildings. Until today the works didn't start due to difficulties with the building contractor.
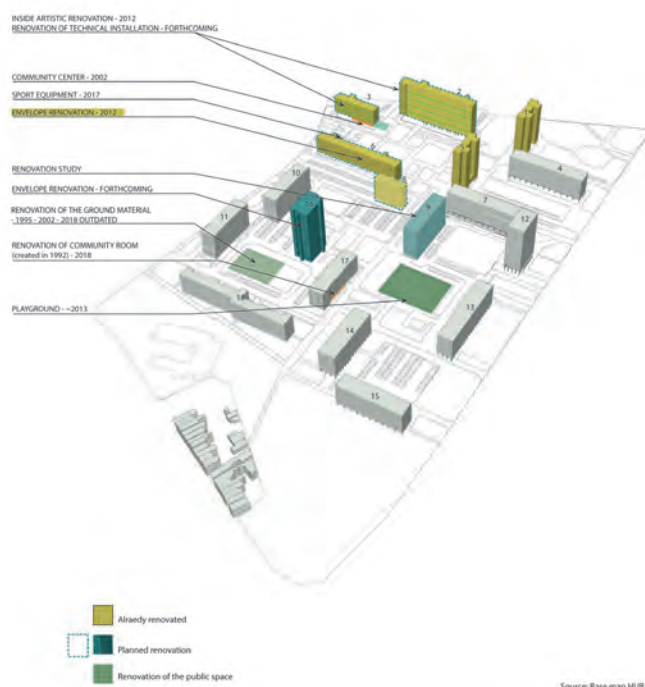

Figure 29   Renovated buildings and planned renovations for Peterbos[65]

For the future, the social housing companies mostly follow the rhythm of the *Quadrennial plan* in order to perform a one-by-one renovation. Block 9 and block 16 are currently under consideration for renovation. The renovation of block 9 is particular, as it will be managed by the Beliris agency. The offices Lacaton and Vassal and 51N4E will be in charge of this.

The renovation is still in design-phase, but so far, some questions are raised by the architects. Would the inhabitants like to stay in their apartment during the works? The development of a participatory trajectory is not part of their mission, so the architecture office mostly relies on the information of the social housing company for answering this question. Or, can they convince the social housing company to work with a façade that will be rented instead of bought? Such system of rent might be interesting, as it makes the building agency responsible for the end product, and especially for the quality of it.

Within the renovation works of the dwellings, even in case of funding from Beliris , there is no formal procedure or system set up to inform, consult or enable a participation of tenants.

Public space: some punctual interventions

The public space of Peterbos has known a long period of neglect and underinvestment. This is epitomized by a degraded basketball field, overgrown and informal pathways, a surfaced slope leading to a wall , an abundance of bald spots in the grass fields and outdated and oversized parking lots. Nevertheless, recently, some ad-hoc interventions have been done by the municipality. A first intervention was the playground mentioned above, built on a flat terrain between block 13 and 17. In 2017 they built fitness equipment between block 3 and 6. The latter did not originate from a specific question from the inhabitants, and was built through *Cocof* funding.

Larger-scale plans: 2 studies with an unclear status, 1 neighbourhood contract

In parallel to the ad-hoc interventions, efforts have been made to develop a more coherent future plan for Peterbos. In the last years, two studies have been made with this purpose: a 'toolbox' and a masterplan. In addition, the neighbourhood has been selected for a 'neighbourhood contract'.

First, in 2011, a *toolbox* was made by the 'facilitating' team of the environmental agency Bruxelles Environnement that sustains the 'Quartier durable citoyen' (participatory sustainable neighbourhoods). The goal of the study was to develop and test how a toolbox could be applied at the level of a neighbourhood. The study was not exhaustive; a two-day workshop with stakeholders and students led to the proposal. Among others, the plan proposes systems for the reuse of rainwater and a new pedestrian network, along which new functions such as a crèche

and a social launderette. The public spaces are divided into pockets with a precise function, such as pockets of orchards, agriculture plots, green playgrounds, private gardens and landscape parking lots.
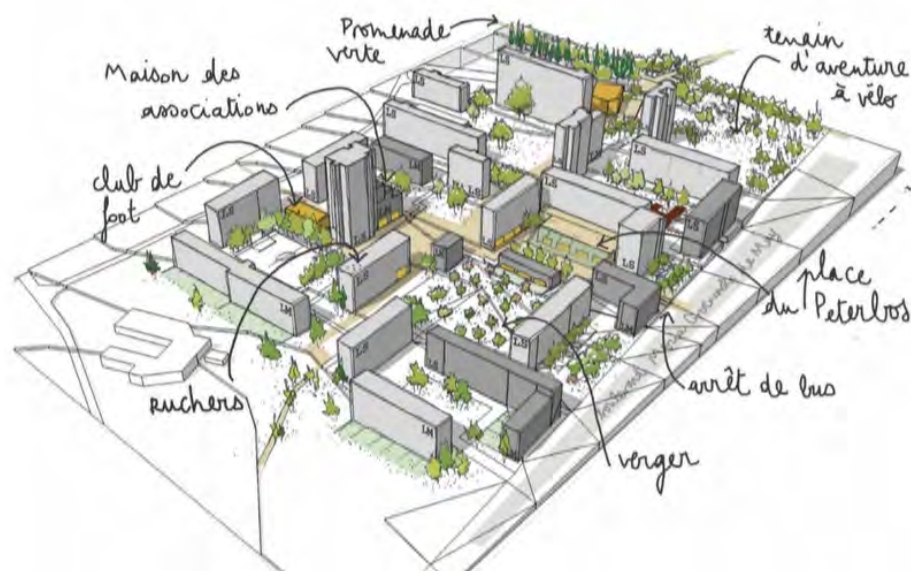

Figure 30   Vision for Peterbos presented in the "Toolbox"

Second, in 2014, an elaborate *masterplan* was developed by the team of HUB, West 8, Radar, Daidalos and Topos, at the initiative of the Foyer Anderlechtois. The public tender was organized by Anderlechtse Haard and dedicated a part of the budget to participation. From the beginning Assam (the social housing company before the fusion) had a different position: it sustained and paid for the development of a sketch plan but was only 'conditionally' participating for the next phases.

At the moment, there is little differentiation within the design of the buildings and the public spaces of Peterbos. The transition between public and private, open and closed spaces is rather abrupt. The masterplan of the team foresees to add such differentiation, in order to stimulate an appropriation of the ground floor. This idea is refined by developing clusters of buildings and public spaces, adding new low-rise typologies and privatizing or collectivising part of the public spaces. The delineation of such spatially connected and easily recognizable 'ensembles' should create a hierarchy in the public spaces of Peterbos. These clusters are linked to a public north-south axis that connects the northern and southern residential neighbourhoods. This north-south axis would be intensified by implementing new social and cultural equipment on the ground floor of the tower blocks. The validity of such axis could be questioned, as currently, the informal walking lines in Peterbos are shaped by functions and mobility perpendicular to this north-south axis. Another important

guideline of the plan is the increase of the dwelling size of the apartments. Currently, there are 79% 'small' dwellings (1-2 bedroom apartments) and 21% 'large' dwellings (>3 bedroom apartments) at Peterbos, which is not in line with the profile of social housing tenants. In the masterplan, the architecture office changes this proportion to 70/30. This proportion could be reached by merging dwelling units.
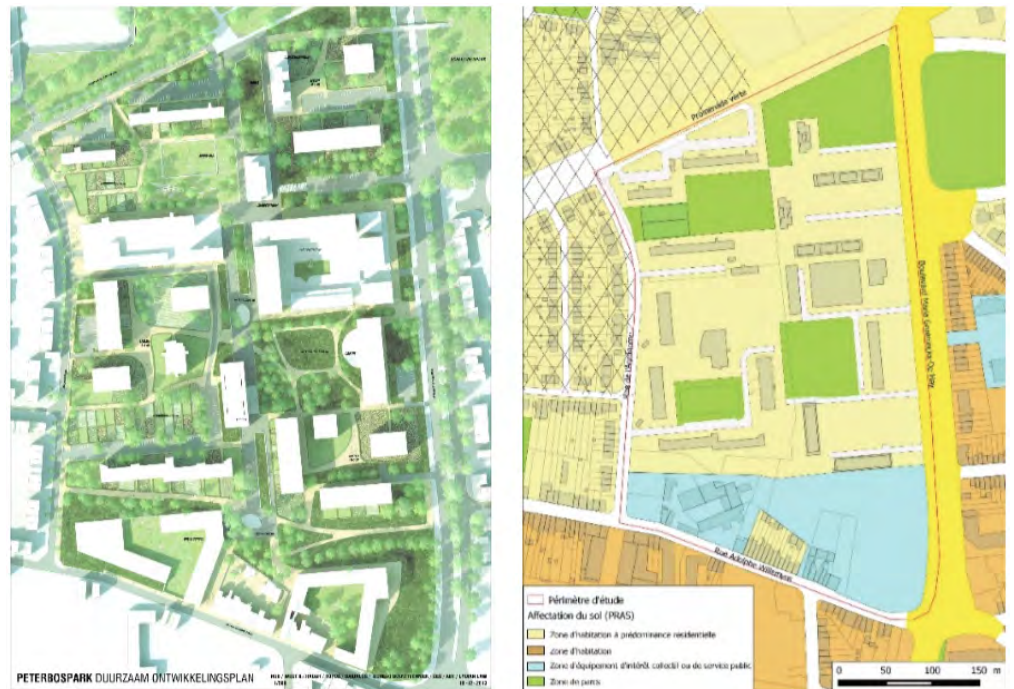

Figure 31   Left: Peterbos Master Plan by HUB – Right: Regional zoning plan Peterbos

Remarkably, both plans propose to densify the estate with middle-class housing. Both plans assume that the current social composition of the site is 'unhealthy'. Adding middle-class households on the site would restore this imbalance.

The status of the masterplan is currently unclear. The masterplan was in the first place seen as a guideline. However, in the first phase, the development of a parcel plan and an allotment permit was foreseen in order to ensure a consolidation of the plan. As the masterplan is quite ambitious, the zoning plans ('Gewestplan' and 'Bijzonder Bestemmingsplan') had to be changed in order to get such allotment permit. This was a significant obstacle for the regional and municipal planning authorities in charge; the densification of areas zoned as 'green areas' was not well-received by the housing cabinet and 'Maître Architecte' (Chief Architect)66. It is quite likely that the development of a parcel plan for the entire site was too ambitious. A wider support might have been reached by starting with an allotment permit for one particular ensemble.

Finally, in December 2017, the neighbourhood of Peterbos was selected for a ***neighbourhood contract***. This is quite unique, as it is the first time a peripheral neighbourhood has been selected for such neighbourhood contract. The coming year of the four-year program will be dedicated to developing an analysis for the area, in close collaboration with the inhabitants. This will be an important opportunity for the Brussels SoHoLab team's conduct of action and living lab research in collaboration with the municipality, social organizations and designers of the neighbourhood contract program, to contribute to and study the feasibility and veracity of the program's mission to give a real place to inhabitants in planning processes.

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Endnotes

1   The amount of eliminations was very high in 2016. In the end of 2016 there were 48.804 households on the social housing waiting list. Among these households, 9651 were eliminated. 8506 of this number were eliminated as they did not renew their candidature.

2   Englert et al., 2017.

3   Association des locataires de Molenbeek et Koekelberg (1994). Segregation spatiale et exclusion au sein du patrimoine du logement Molenbeekois et du Foyer Koekelbergeois, Janvier 1994;

DH, Un cadastre du logement social à Bruxelles, August, 14, 2000;

LS, Les tours ne sont pas taboues, March, 8, 2007;

Dedecker, 1998.

4   Vervloesem et al., 2008.

5   Zimmer, 2009.

6   Schonbrodt, 1979, p.73

7   Smets, 1977.

8   Ibid.

9   Zimmer, 2009.

10   Dedecker, 1998.

11   Zimmer, 2009..

12   The organizations Atelier de Recherche et d'Action Urbaines (ARAU), Archieves d'Architecture Moderne (AAM) were especially important in steering community resistance against the post-war functional city development.

13   LC, Le logement social bruxellois: l'etat d'urgence, January 1, 1984;

Le Vlan, Où va le logement social?, February 4, 1987;

DH, Comment nouer les deux bouts et éviter la creation de ghettos… February 2, 1987;

DH, Pour une participation des habitants aux operations de renovation, February 3, 1980;

Le Soir, La renovation urbaine: un bilan en clair-obscur, December 21, 1984;

Dessouroux, 2015.

14   Dessouroux, 2015.

15   Aernouts & Ryckewaert, 2015.

Vervloesem et al., 2008.

16   La Cité, La "nouvelle" politique du logement à Bruxelles: vendre le social et encourager la propriété privée?, May 6, 1982

17   L.S., La renovation et l'acquisition d'une habitation, priorités de la politique régionale du logement, December 22, 1982

18   Source information: BBRoW (2016).

19   Osselaer, 2015.

20   Before the mergers, in companies in which the capital was largely held by

a municipality or Social welfare institution (CPAS), the Housing Code foresaw the appointment of 2 observers of the opposition in the board of directors in order to guarantee transparency over the organisation. In the multi-municipal companies, that came into being as a result of to the merger processes, the capital is spread in equivalent parts. This risked the disappearance of this opposition in the government board. The Housing Code has therefore been changed in 2014 in order to allow the political minority to continue to play a role in the board of directors.

21   In the Brussels Capital Region, this issue is worth to mention, as it has been subject to public scandals and political debate lately. In 2017, it was revealed that several politicians of the municipality of Brussels earned up to 50.000 euros a year due to their managerial posts in several non-profit organisations and companies of public interest. In one notorious case, the non-profit organization Samu Social, it was revealed that they were not physically present during meetings. The commotion led to the removal of 326 redundant mandates, a reduction of 40% (https://www.demorgen.be/politiek/stad-brussel-schrapt-40-procent-van-de-mandaten-en-20-procent-van-de-structuren-b28cdcb6/).

22   Interview P. Hargot (R1), Director former Home Familial Bruxellois, Evere, 21 August 2014.

23   Interview J. Pirrotin (R2), Director Comensia, Molenbeek, 12 January 2018

24   Between 2013 and 2017, one of the authors did several interviews with social housing inhabitants that verify this statement.

25   Interview social housing tenant, Anderlecht, 26 February 2015.

26   Association des locataires de Molenbeek et Koekelberg (1994), Segregation spatiale et exclusion au sein du patrimoine du logement Molenbeekois et du Foyer Koekelbergeois, Janvier 1994

27   Comhaire et al., 2014.

28   This is the general policy, but exceptions are allowed in case of renovation and construction works. Despite the great lack of social housing, nowadays social housing companies are also allowed to dedicate a part of their patrimony to middle income households in the case of renovation projects and new constructions. This percentage cannot exceed 20%, but in specific cases a share of 40% is allowed.

29   Interview Naima Ghanmi (R3), Coordinator 'Social Action', SLRB. Sint-Gillis, 4 June 2014

30   LC, Le logement social bruxellois: l'etat d'urgence, January 1, 1984; DH, Comment nouer les deux bouts et eviter la creation de ghettos, February 17, 1987

31   Interview Xavier Leroy (R4), Architect, Direction Patrimony, Coordinator 'Cocolo', Department Guardianship and Inspection, SLRB. Sint-Gillis, 4 June 2014

32   LC, Le logement social bruxellois: l'etat d'urgence, January 1, 1984; Zimmer (2009)

33   BBRoW (2016).

34   Ibid.

35   Ibid.

36   Ibid.

37   In Flanders, recently, there has been a resurgence of such critique, after a newspaper revealed that many new social housing are already dealing with deficits. See for instance https://www.hln.be/de-krant/het-systeem-is-even-lek-als-de-gebouwen-en-dat-kost-vlaanderen-miljoenen~a94f6f18/ https://www.hln.be/nieuws/binnenland/fiasco-in-sociale-woningbouw-scheurend-beton-lekkende-daken-en-miljoenen-euro-kosten~af60d425/

38   'Article 60' workmen are long-term unemployed people employed by the social welfare center (OCMW) in order to increase their chances in the regular job market. Generally, contracts with 'Article 60' workmen do not exceed 1 to 2 years. Companies working with Article 60 workmen can benefit from reduced wage costs.

39   Interview Christophe Verbiest (R4), Works Department, Foyer Anderlechtois, Anderlecht, 29 September 2017.

40   For the 3 cases, we spoke with 11 key informants (Cité Modèle (4), Querelle (6), Tour Brunfaut (1)). The data from our case study Peterbos was derived during an ethnographic research between July 2017 and February 2018.

41   Ledent, 2014.

42   Moutury, S., 2005;
RTBF, Drogue, vols et violence à la Cité Modèle... 2014 n'a pas été de tout repos, March 10, 2015.

43   Interview member tenant board, Brussels, 17 January 2018

44   The association applied for funding through the program 'contrat de quartier citoyen'. Since 2012, they have been developing several projects; a compost, an orchard, a flower meadow, birdhouses, a beehive, a garbage recycling project, a fauna and flora survey, a garbage recycling project. They are also attentive to everything that concerns mobility, sustainable management and collective equipment. The association recently acquired a space in the landscape park in order to develop a vegetable garden.

45   Dessouroux et al., 2016.

46   The Public Welfare Centre is a centre of social security. Its most important duty is to ensure a guaranteed minimum income. Next to that, the CPAS intervenes in housing, socio-professional insertion, psychosocial accompaniment, debt mediation, aid to homeless, handicapped...

47   Chatelan, 2016.

48   (according to the office in charge of the contrat de quartier Jonction)

49   Interview social worker social cohesion project Querelle, Habitat et Renovation, 16 January 2018

50   They develop these small projects on spaces that are not jet occupied by artefacts of the renovation works of the dwellings of the social estates. Indeed,

nowadays, the social housing are subject to renovations works which include the renovation and ventilation of 270 social housing (2021, 10.491.363 by ATA arch) and the renovation of block 2&3 consisting of 131 housing (2021, 4.089.270 by dewil Architecten).

51   The community worker was recruited as a full-time project employee and sports animator within the Jonction neighbourhood contract.

52   Interview social worker Buurtsport, 16 January 2018

53   They did this with the help of Centre Vidéo de Bruxelles. Centre Vidéo supports inhabitants and associations in popular neighbourhoods in creating documentaries and films. They do this by offering technical support and developing collaborative workshops. As such they want to give them a voice in public debates and media.

54   A 'walking diagnostic' is a method in which inhabitants, architects, technicians and the building supervisor move through the building and neighborhood, while discussing several weak and strong points of the different spaces.

55   Municipality of Anderlecht (1963). Anderlecht Commune Verte. Urbanisme en action. Brussels: Anderlecht, p.40 (translated quote)

56   Ibid.

57   Interview Jean Louis Pirottin, former director of Comensia 12 January 2018, Molenbeek

58   The description of the masterplan is largely based on the following report; Kesteloot et al. 1999.

59   Ibid.

60   Source: municipality of Anderlecht

61   There is a new local antenna by the Foyer Anderlechtois called 'social mediation' composed by two people working full-time on site; a "flying" team provided by Comensia composed of an 'individual' social assistant and a 'collective' assistant. They work for different estates; a municipal social service center antenna composed of two social assistants working 4/5 and 3 drivers.

62   Samenlevingsopbouw has two full-time social workers and several volunteers, while D'Broej has three full-time animators and around 5 volunteers.

63   The peace officers include five people working in a larger territory..

64   The social restaurant is run by two full-time employees.

65   Base map: masterplan HUB, West 8, Radar, Daidalos and Topos

66   The mission of the team of the Brussels Chief Architect is to guarantee the quality of urban space, both in terms of architecture, public space and planning. They sustain competitions, research by design and the quality chamber. Within the quality chamber, a dialogue between architects, clients and planning authorities is set up in order to evaluate an urban project in the preparatory phase of the planning permission.

SoHoLab