

Call for Papers

Rebuilding societies

Housing policy after 1945 in an interregional comparison

The housing question is once again in the center of public debate in most EU countries due to steadily rising real estate and rent prices; German Interior Minister Horst Seehofer even considers it the "social issue of our time". This is accompanied by an increased research interest in the history of social housing, since the past provides not only answers to the questions about current housing, but also practical examples for their solution.

The four decades between 1945 and 1985 marked a heyday of social housing in many European regions. War damage, refugee movements, population growth and the onset of an economic boom created acute housing shortages that were answered with national, regional, and municipal housing programs of various designs. Commonly these programs provided both legal and financial instruments to promote housing construction, and the programs regulated as well the allocation of rented apartments, or the purchase of low-cost owner-occupied homes.

On an overall societal scale, housing programs were also an experimental field of social innovation. The social renewal of the European nations was mirrored in the architectural reconstruction of their cities and towns. For this purpose, housing planners and architects either promoted through their work new models of cohabitation or adhered to traditional forms. Under the impression of accelerated modernization, political decision-makers considered housing projects as a tool to defuse social differences (between classes, generations, old residents and newcomers, urban and rural population).

Inevitably, the social thrust of housing projects generated new conflicts – for example in the course of expropriation of building land, short sighted planning (social hotspots), unfair allocation criteria or insufficient coverage of demand. From the 1970ies onwards, the failure of social housing initiatives led to an increase in squatting or illegal house building, but also to growing social disintegration.

Based on these considerations, the workshop aims to provide a platform for ongoing research on social housing projects to discuss research methods, source material, theoretical approaches, and specific research results in a comparative manner.

The workshop focuses on communal or regional case studies – for example, on the realization of state housing programs (e.g. INA-Casa in Italy) in selected regions or municipalities; on specific local housing projects; on cooperative or company housing estates studied in micro-historical terms, a.s.o. Research questions about the socio-historical conditions of specific housing projects, the legal and financial conception of the housing projects, their political and constructional implementation as well as the positive and negative consequences that resulted from their realization are of central interest.

Geographically, the workshop aims to compare case studies from Italy and the German-speaking countries (FRG, GDR, Austria, Switzerland), but submissions that refer to other (urban as well as

rural) regions of the world and possibly consider them in a comparative perspective are explicitly welcome. The period of interest focuses on the years between 1945 and 1985/89, be it partially or in an overview.

The workshop will take place on Friday, **27 May 2022** at the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, organized by the Competence Centre for Regional History of the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano and the Fondazione Museo Storico del Trentino.

Hotel (2 nights) and travel expenses (up to a maximum of 250 € per speaker) will be reimbursed. A publication of the workshop proceedings is planned.

Please send proposals of approximately 500 words and a short biography until **23 December 2021** to joachim.gatterer@unibz.it. Questions of any kind can be sent to the same address. Abstracts in Italian, German or English are welcome. Conference languages are German, Italian and English, simultaneous translation into German and Italian is provided.

The results of the selection process and the final program of the workshop will be announced **by the end of January 2022**.

 **Kompetenzzentrum für Regionalgeschichte**
Centro di competenza Storia regionale
Zenter de competenza Storia regionala

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del Trentino**