

## 8 CONCLUSION

The starting point of this research was to understand the reasons why the construction of social housing in the Santa Ifigenia neighborhood did not occur despite the great need in central areas. In the course of the investigation, what was found is that there is a complex game of power where the municipality takes the side of the large construction groups, disrespecting the rights of the landowners or tenants of commercial or residential units. Once again, an urban area is treated as merchandise that generates high profit for small but powerful groups while the concept of "social function of the city", recently introduced by the Statute of the City remains ignored.

## BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

PESSOA, Denise Falcão. Estudo da Produção de HIS (Habitação de Interesse Social) e HMP (Habitação de Mercado Popular) nas ZEIS (Zonas Especiais de Interesse Social) na subprefeitura da Lapa, Município de São Paulo a partir do PDE (Plano Diretor Estratégico) de 2002. São Paulo, Pós v. 16, n.26-Revista do Programa de Pós-Graduação em Arquitetura e Urbanismo da FAUUSP, 2009.

PREFEITURA MUNICIPAL DE SÃO PAULO, Plano Diretor Estratégico do Município de São Paulo -Lei nº 13.430/2002.

SOUZA, Felipe Francisco. Um olhar Crítico Sobre a Concessão Urbanística em São Paulo: Formulação pelo Executivo, Audiências Públicas e Regulamentação pelo Legislativo. Dissertação de Mestrado na Escola de Administração de Empresas da Fundação Getúlio Vargas, 2010.

TOLEDO, Benedito Lima de. São Paulo: Três Cidades em um Século. São Paulo, Duas Cidades, 1983.

<http://www.arcoweb.com.br/arquitetura/consorcio-nova-luz-urbanismo>

<http://www.estadao.com.br/noticias/cidades,prefeitura-de-sao-paulo-anuncia-consorcio-que-fara-projeto-da-nova-luz,550293,0.htm>

HARADA, Kiyoshi. <http://jusvi.com/artigos/38583> -Concessão Urbanística: Uma grande confusão conceitual

# ID 1405 | IMAGE AND QUALITY OF LIFE IN NEIGHBORHOODS WITH RENEWAL DEMAND – CHALLENGES IN THE COOPERATION BETWEEN URBAN PLANNERS AND HOUSING PROVIDERS: THE CASE STUDY WÜRZBURG

Sinning, Heidi<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>ISP - Institute of Urban Research, Planning and Communication, Erfurt University of Applied Sciences  
[sinning@fh-erfurt.de](mailto:sinning@fh-erfurt.de)

This paper focuses on residential neighborhoods that are located in or near the city center and characterized by a negative (external) image as a result of demographic, social and economic transitions. Using the case study of Würzburg-Zellerau as an example, it will explore approaches to improving a neighborhood's image with a view to enhancing quality of life and to identifying potentials as well as limiting and success factors.

## 1 BACKGROUND

This paper is based on the research project "ImiWo – Images of Inner-City Residential Quarters." Using two neighborhoods, one in Berlin and one in Würzburg, as case studies, the project identified framework conditions, influencing factors and relevant stakeholders along with their specific impact on the development of neighborhood image. In addition, the role of public-sector housing providers and

municipalities within this process, as well as their scopes of action in regard to enhancing quality of life, were explored in cooperation with municipal housing associations.

Economically weak and socially vulnerable neighborhoods with urgent demand for renewal can be found in many cities in Germany and elsewhere. The German federal government set up the funding program Soziale Stadt ("Social City") with the specific goal of promoting integrated approaches to developing such urban neighborhoods that encourage extensive citizen participation. By upgrading the quality of housing and public spaces and taking the improvement of safety and ecological considerations into account, they aim to create a more attractive residential environment in order to increase quality of life for residents of these neighborhoods – and thus ultimately increase the educational and economic opportunities open to them, as well. The program seeks to improve infrastructure and provide good living conditions for children, families and elderly residents in order to contribute to a diverse social structure and promote a sense of community among the neighborhoods' residents. (cf. BMUB, 2014; Eltge and Kocks, 2015; Häußermann, 2006)

The paper provides an overview of the various approaches to improving quality of life in urban neighborhoods and takes a closer look at the strategies implemented by the City of Würzburg (125,000 inhabitants) to increase quality of life in the inner-city neighborhood of Zellerau (12,000 inhabitants) and improve its image. A media analysis showed that this neighborhood was stigmatized for years by the use of disparaging terms such as "Little Moscow," "Broken-Glass District" and "social hotspot," and the paper will demonstrate how Zellerau's image has evolved up to the present day.

## 1.1 METHODOLOGY

Würzburg-Zellerau was selected based on the fact that it is an inner-city neighborhood in which structures were in place for cooperation between housing providers, the municipality, urban planners and various other institutions and stakeholders, such as citizens' groups and NGOs, in the field of urban renewal.

Research conducted on Zellerau included an analysis of reports in the media and of available literature and documents, interviews with urban development and housing experts, and an extensive survey of inhabitants of Würzburg in general, and Zellerau residents, in particular. (cf. Berndt and Sinning, 2016: 5ff)

## 2 NEIGHBORHOOD IMAGE AND QUALITY OF LIFE – A DEFINITION OF TERMS

**NEIGHBORHOOD** When it comes to defining the term "neighborhood," I refer to the definition proposed by Schnur, which emphasizes everyday life: "A neighborhood is an area embedded in a specific context that lacks clearly defined boundaries, but is rather socially constructed through various actions taking place inside and outside it and serves as a focal point for residents' daily lives and individual social spheres, which intersect and overlap within a relatively small-scale residential environment providing the spatial framework for identification" (Schnur, 2013: 31).

The significance and development of neighborhoods include structural, physical, social, economic, political, symbolic and historical dimensions that imbue them with specific characteristics as a "complex spatial and social setting" (ibid.: 30).

In summary, a neighborhood as understood in this paper can thus be characterized as a socially constructed (rather than administratively defined) area that is small enough to offer the potential for partial social identification and interaction (cf. ibid.: 31).

**IMAGE** An image is a mental concept formed by individuals based on the sum of their objective knowledge, subjective feelings, experiences, notions, assessments and prejudices relating to the object or entity in question. (cf. Johannsen, 1971: 35; Leser et al., 1989: 264). In other words, an image is not merely a reflection of reality and objective conditions, but is rather always colored by personal judgment, attitudes and experience (cf. Berth, 1959: 124f). Thus an image "incorporates both objective und emotional components into a dynamic overall impression of objects, spaces, people etc., which is formed based on first-hand information and the personal perceptions of the respective individual as well as information and perceptions conveyed by others" (Wiest and Wörmer, 2012: 3).

## 2.1 NEIGHBORHOOD IMAGE

Based on these definitions of the individual terms, "neighborhood image" can be described as "a concept created collectively by individuals and their social practices (the image) regarding a multi-faceted part of a city without clearly defined boundaries (the neighborhood)." (Berndt and Sinning, 2016: 11)

## 2.2 IMAGE AS A FACTOR IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEIGHBORHOODS

The question of neighborhoods' image is of more than merely academic significance. It impinges directly on how neighborhoods form and change over time and on their potential for development. A neighborhood's image is decisive for those who live there. Whereas an address in a "good" neighborhood can open many doors and be a source of positive identification, living in a "bad" part of town" can negatively affect how its residents are perceived by others, the opportunities available to them and their quality of life, which can ultimately propel the entire neighborhood into a downward spiral.

Thus it is vital to improve the image of negatively perceived neighborhoods. However, in order to avoid economic and social segregation and the displacement of residents in the process of gentrification, it is crucial to strengthen residents' connections to their neighborhood and to ensure stable development and attractive residential environments in all parts of the city.

Changing the image of a neighborhood affects its development and vice versa. As can be seen in Figure 1, it is possible to distinguish between different types of neighborhoods based on how they are perceived by residents and by outsiders, but such perceptions can change over time depending on the specific dynamics of a particular neighborhood's development.

## 2.3 QUALITY OF LIFE

As used in this paper, the term "quality of life" refers to a multi-dimensional concept of wellbeing that "includes both material and immaterial and both objective and subjective aspects of individual as well as collective welfare and emphasizes quality over quantity (Noll, 1999: 3). In the context of collective welfare, it is used to describe conditions allowing a good life for everyone (cf. Berger-Schmitt and Noll, 2000: 33f) based on economic growth, security, order, justice, freedom and high quality of life as primary principles of a modern society (cf. Jochmann, 2010: 92f). Quality of life, social cohesion (i.e. decreasing disparity within society and strengthening social bonds among its members) and sustainability are the three pillars of collective welfare (cf. *ibid.*).

Image Types	External Image positive +	External Image negative -	Trend
Internal Image positive +	<p><b>Type A: Gentrified Neighborhoods</b></p> <p>Established neighborhoods consisting largely of buildings dating to the decades prior to WW I that have been modernized according to the highest standards.</p> <p>Characterized by a high share of owner-occupied apartments, socio-economically privileged residents, upscale restaurants and shops, etc.</p>	<p><b>Type B: Emerging Neighborhoods</b></p> <p>"Hip" neighborhoods on the brink of gentrification, usually located near the city center, with a building stock dating largely from the pre-WW I period and rents that are still fairly moderate.</p> <p>While these neighborhoods are often characterized by a high percentage of residents with working-class and/or immigrant backgrounds, an influx of artists and other pioneers attracted by low rents and the central location typically ushers in a period of rapid change in social and household structures, increasing investment pressure, and rising rents due to the neighborhood's growing popularity.</p>	<p>↑↑ <i>Upgrading</i></p> <p>Increasing attractiveness &gt;&gt;&gt; Danger of displacement of long-standing residents</p>

	<b>Type C: "Ordinary" Neighborhoods</b>		→ No specific developmental-dynamic
	<p>Mostly middle- and upper-middle-class residential neighborhoods consisting of single-family houses, townhouses, or apartment buildings from the pre-WW I period</p> <p>Characterized by fairly stable demographics and development over several decades</p>	<p>Generally residential developments dating to the post-WW II era</p> <p>Characterized by stable demographic and social structures, with largely (lower-) middle-class residents</p>	
<b>Internal Image negative</b>	<p><b>Type D: Forgotten Neighborhoods</b></p> <p>Primarily mixed-use neighborhoods near the city center</p> <p>Characterized by a downward trend in the local retail base (i.e. a large number of vacant stores etc.)</p>	<p><b>Type E: Neglected Neighborhoods</b></p> <p>Mostly large-scale housing projects built from the 1960s through the 1980s, although some of these neighborhoods are made up of older buildings</p> <p>Characterized by increasingly weak socio-economic structures/residents</p>	<p>⇓ Downgrading</p> <p>Stigmatization</p> <p>&gt;&gt; Danger of a downward spiral</p>

Fig. 1: Different types of neighborhoods based on image and developmental dynamic (Berndt and Sinning, 2016: 31; translated from the German)

In this understanding, quality of life is regarded as arising from an interaction of objective and subjective factors (cf. Greiffenhagen, 2003: 362), i.e. favorable conditions and subjective welfare across various domains of life (cf. Zapf, 1984: 25). As such, it is a multi-dimensional concept based on a constellation of objective and subjective perceptions of wellbeing. Individuals' objective circumstances are determined by factors such as income, living and working conditions, family relationships, social contacts, health, social and political participation, and the natural environment (cf. Jochmann, 2010: 93), while their subjective sense of wellbeing results from their personal, emotional assessment of their particular circumstances and attitude towards life in general. (cf. Noll, 1999: 10). Quality of life is a decisive factor in terms of how neighborhoods are perceived. Thus improving subjective and objective quality of life is key to boosting a neighborhood's image and attractiveness.

### 3 IMAGE AND QUALITY OF LIFE AS ELEMENTS OF AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION

An integrated approach to urban development – i.e. a comprehensive strategy aiming to ensure a livable, affordable, and socio-economically diverse neighborhood – can contribute significantly to enhancing quality of life and revitalizing urban neighborhoods. More specifically, providing better quality housing, upgrading public spaces and creating an environment that is safer, more ecologically friendly and more attractive overall can have a major impact by improving quality of life for a neighborhood's residents, which in turn ultimately leads to better educational and economic opportunities. In addition, providing an infrastructure that meets the needs of children, families and senior citizens can contribute to promoting a diversity of uses and social cohesion in the neighborhood. (cf. Drilling and Schnur, 2012; Jochmann, 2010; Kaltenbrunner and Schnur, 2014)

#### 3.1 COURSES OF ACTION AVAILABLE TO URBAN PLANNERS AND PUBLIC-SECTOR HOUSING PROVIDERS TO ENSURE LIVABLE NEIGHBORHOODS

Figure 2 shows the basic approaches that can be taken within an integrated strategy aiming to revitalize neighborhoods by enhancing their image and attractiveness and how public-sector housing providers and urban planners can contribute to changing the way neighborhoods are publicly perceived. Which approaches are the most suitable in a given case depends largely on the type of neighborhood (see Fig. 1) – i.e. the current state and public perceptions of the respective neighborhood – but other factors may also play a role, such as framework conditions in the municipality as a whole that affect the scope of action



available to planners and others involved in the image enhancement process. However, although the point of departure may be different for the various types of neighborhoods distinguished in Figure 1, the overall aim is always to foster diversity and create a livable, mixed-use neighborhood. This means providing conditions conducive to local businesses, creating public spaces offering scope for experimentation and social interaction, and encouraging community involvement, citizen participation, and individual responsibility. (cf. Bürgin, 2013: 137).

Mix of Approaches in Integrated Neighborhood Development					
Communicative Approaches	Social Approaches	Approaches Based on Planning Legislation and Housing Policy			
		Construction Measures	Financial Instruments	Planning Legislation	Housing Policy Instruments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Marketing the neighborhood as an attractive location for businesses and tourist destination</li> <li>Campaigns to redefine the neighborhood's image and appeal, e.g. by creating new attractions/landmarks</li> <li>Neighborhood branding</li> <li>Public relations campaigns involving the local media (press, local TV stations etc.)</li> <li>Encouraging citizen involvement and participation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outreach work to promote a sense of community and social capital</li> <li>Fostering involvement and empowerment</li> <li>Promoting self-organization and political representation through community organizing and participation committees</li> <li>Intermediary neighborhood management</li> <li>Close monitoring of sociodemographic developments within the neighborhood</li> <li>Provision of professional counseling and arbitration for neighborhood residents on tenants' rights, social problems and other relevant issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Construction of new housing</li> <li>Modernization and refurbishment of existing housing</li> <li>Redesign and upgrading of public spaces</li> <li>Measures to improve infrastructure and the residential environment for specific target groups</li> <li>Creating communal/public spaces for social encounters and interaction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demand-side subsidies, i.e. the provision of housing allowances for low-income groups</li> <li>Purchase of residential properties by public-sector housing providers</li> <li>Funding of modernization measures</li> <li>Supply-side subsidies, i.e. funding for the construction of new housing</li> <li>PPP investments in infrastructure (BIDs, HIDs, NIDs)</li> <li>Public funding (i.e. funding provided according to Article 164 of the German Federal Building Code, by the EU, and by the German development bank KfW) to promote urban development measures</li> <li>Subsidies/Funding for housing cooperatives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Zoning by-laws governing the residential use of properties and the number of stories allowed</li> <li>Regulations prohibiting the use of residential properties for other purposes and the conversion of rental housing into condominiums</li> <li>By-laws on rent caps and the share of modernization costs that can be allocated to tenants to control increases in housing costs</li> <li>Statutes governing the percentage of subsidized housing for low-income groups and the preservation of the social environment</li> <li>Bilateral agreements between municipalities and investors on the socially responsible and just use of land</li> <li>Modernization and redevelopment statutes</li> <li>Modification of zoning regulations and local development plans</li> <li>Preemptive right-to-buy for public entities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategic municipal concepts to ensure an adequate supply of affordable housing</li> <li>Measures to reduce tenant turnover</li> <li>Fines to prevent the use of residential properties for other purposes</li> <li>Sale of publicly-owned properties to the investor with the best concept rather than the highest bidder</li> <li>Measures to control rising rents (i.e. rent caps, restrictions on admissible rent increases for existing leases, and hardship provisions to protect tenants from steep raises in rent once subsidies cease)</li> <li>Stipulations committing investors to include a given percentage of subsidized housing in new construction</li> <li>Strategic alliances for social housing policy</li> <li>Occupancy management</li> </ul>

Fig. 2: Overview of Instruments and Measures of an Integrated Approach to Urban Development (Source: ISP 2016 based on Berndt and Sinning, 2016: 111)

Thus the mix of instruments and measures urban planners choose to effect the desired change in a neighborhood's image will depend on the specific situation and goals in the particular case. A good example of what such a mix can look like is provided by the case study of Würzburg-Zellerau, which is presented in more detail in the following.

#### 4 WÜRZBURG-ZELLERAU – A CASE STUDY

Located near the city center of Würzburg, the Zellerau neighborhood is delimited by the river Main to the north and a belt of green spaces to the east, south, and west. A printing-machine factory, a steam laundry and a large brewery were the main providers of employment to the local residents up until 1945, and Zellerau is perceived as a working-class neighborhood to this day. The fact that it was the site of military barracks for decades additionally contributed to its negative image. Currently Zellerau is home to approximately 12,000 inhabitants and includes a higher than average percentage of low-income households and residents with immigrant backgrounds.

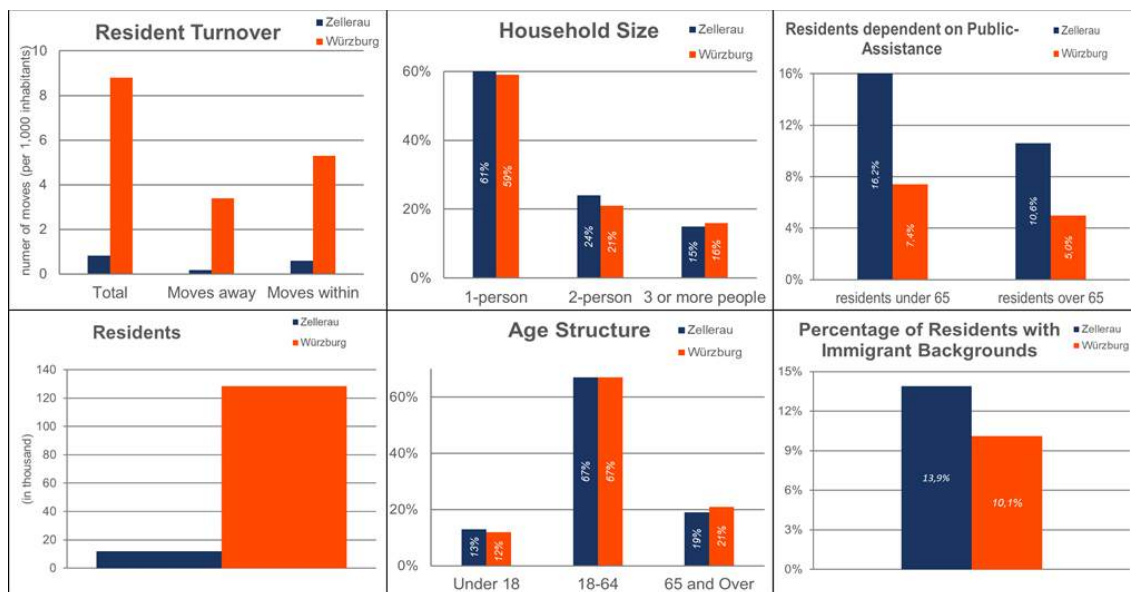


Fig. 3: Sociodemographic data for Zellerau compared to the city of Würzburg overall in 2013 (Source: City of Würzburg, 2013)

For many years, derogatory terms such as "Little Moscow," "Broken Glass District," "social hotspot," and "slum kids" were used to refer to Zellerau and its inhabitants. The program Zukunft – Leben in der Zellerau ("Living in Zellerau in the Future") was launched in 2007 as part of the German federal government's Soziale Stadt funding scheme in order to develop Zellerau with a view to providing better quality of life and healthier living conditions as a key to boosting the neighborhood's image. An analysis of media reports on the neighborhood show that these efforts have succeeded in improving Zellerau's image (cf. Berndt and Sinning, 2016).

#### 4.1 QUALITY OF LIFE IN ZELLERAU

A recent survey of Zellerau residents showed that their perceptions and assessments of the quality of life in their neighborhood are rather varied. Zellerau's green infrastructure, local supply, close-knit community and cultural diversity are regarded favorably. Moreover, it appears that especially older residents identify strongly with their neighborhood and take a predominantly positive view of it, although many in this age group, in particular, are concerned about safety and cleanliness.

Positive opinions regarding the local infrastructure are especially evident in regard to the excellent quality of medical care and facilities for senior citizens and those requiring care. On the other hand, due to the high percentage of residents with low incomes, demand for food banks and similar organizations offering aid to the poor is high, both among the general population and among senior citizens. This indicates that the number of elderly residents living below the poverty line is likely to increase in the future and is a trend that planners need to take into consideration.

#### 4.2 INSTRUMENTS AND MEASURES AIMING TO BOOST ZELLERAU'S APPEAL AS A LIVABLE NEIGHBORHOOD

Figure 4 illustrates the different instruments and measures implemented in developing Zellerau with the aim of creating better social conditions and the relative weight given to the various approaches.

As can be seen in Figure 4, refurbishment and construction measures were the predominantly employed approaches, while instruments provided by planning legislation and housing policy played a minor role. Strategies designed to foster empowerment and community involvement were also of particular significance. The emphasis given to these approaches partly had to do with the fact that funding was

provided by the program Soziale Stadt, which stipulates that efforts during the first phase focus on eliminating substandard housing and tackling social problems.

The mix of instruments and measures described above proved effective in the first phase and succeeded in promoting Zellerau's transition from a "Type E" to a "Type B" neighborhood over the past decade or so. Future efforts will focus on stabilizing this positive trend and continuing to develop Zellerau into an affordable, attractive neighborhood with a healthy demographic and social mix. It will be necessary to evaluate whether the instruments in place are suitable to achieving this aim and determine if they need to be modified or supplemented with additional ones.

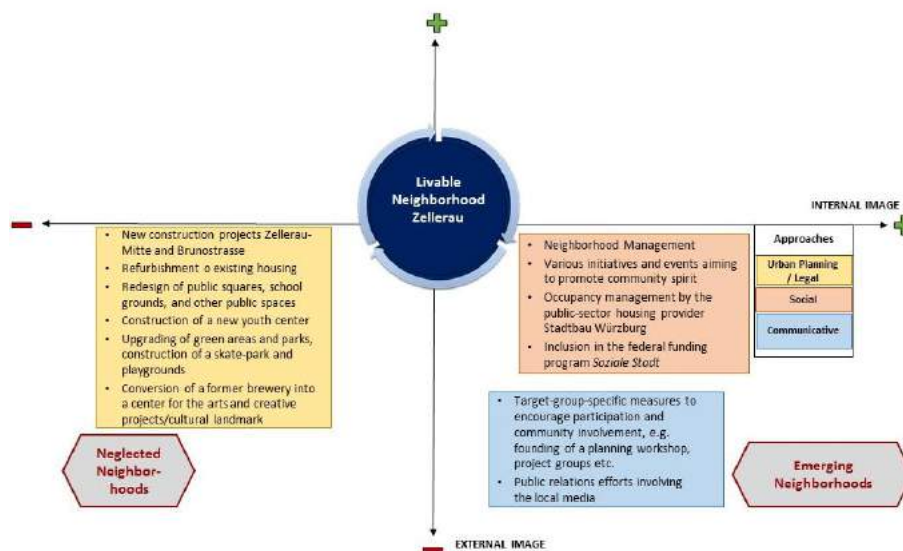


Fig. 4: Measures implemented in the development of Zellerau from a Type E to a Type B neighborhood (Source: ISP 2016)

## 5 CONCLUSION

Although its residents confirm a high quality of life and have a positive opinion of their neighborhood, the image and perceptions of Zellerau among outsiders are still predominantly negative. However, the results of a recent survey of residents provides a more differentiated view, with the neighborhood's green infrastructure, local supply, close-knit community and cultural diversity being regarded favorably. Older residents, in particular, identified strongly with their neighborhood. Zellerau's negative image, technical infrastructure and safety concerns were seen as the neighborhood's main drawbacks.

In order to improve the neighborhood's image and quality of life over the long term, the city of Würzburg launched a wide-reaching plan for cooperation among multiple stakeholders, including urban planners, city administrators, public-sector housing providers, and neighborhood management, as well as NGOs, social institutions and citizens.

This collaborative approach appears to be particularly relevant because it has the power to produce the broad, profound impact required to effect real change and truly boost a neighborhood's image and quality of life.

In addition to extensive cooperation, using a mix of instruments as shown in the example in Figure 2 proved to be an effective strategy. The city of Würzburg and the municipal housing association Stadtbau GmbH, in particular, played a central role in upgrading the Zellerau neighborhood by building housing and strategically selecting tenants to ensure a healthy mix in terms of age, household size and income. Stadtbau's strategy of

"Creating, Maintaining and Allowing for Diversity" is key to counteracting unhealthy social structures and making the neighborhood more attractive overall, while at the same time ensuring that rents remain at moderate levels (cf. Berndt and Sinning, 2016: 169 f).

Continuous monitoring of social, economic and demographic data with a view to the neighborhood as a system, its demographic structure and residents' needs could be helpful in identifying potential problems early on in order to adapt strategies accordingly and thus ensure the quality of neighborhood development over the long term.

Although some urban development concepts take the aspect of improving image into account, relevant approaches and measures are hardly ever integrated in a strategic manner, or even at all. This may be due to a lack of knowledge on how to deal with the issue of negative neighborhood image.

The case study of Würzburg-Zellerau can contribute to a better understanding of the complexity of interrelationships between quality of life, integrated development strategies and neighborhood image. However, the results also show that there are still a number of issues to be addressed in further research, e.g. a more differentiated analysis of goals, strategies and instruments relating to image building and the specific roles of the various stakeholders within this process, and the connection between boosting neighborhood image and gentrification, as well as possible measures to prevent or at least limit the displacement of residents due to rising rents.

In any case, rather than rejecting efforts to improve neighborhood image out of hand as paving the way for gentrification, they should be regarded with an unbiased eye, and the chances and risks inherent in developing a certain neighborhood should be analyzed and weighed against each other objectively.

## BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

Berger-Schmitt, Regina; Noll, Heinz-Herbert 2000: Zur Konzeption eines Europäischen Systems Sozialer Indikatoren, in: Mohler, Peter Ph.; Lüttinger, Paul (ed.): Querschnitt. Festschrift für Max Kaase, Mannheim, S. 29 – 45.

Berndt, Patricia; Sinning, Heidi 2016: Images innenstadtnaher Wohnquartiere. Strategien zur Steuerung von Images als kooperative Aufgabe der Wohnungswirtschaft und Stadtentwicklung, ISP-Schriftenreihe, Bd. 6, Erfurt, online verfügbar unter: [www.fh-erfurt.de/isp](http://www.fh-erfurt.de/isp).

Berth, Rolf 1959: Marktforschung zwischen Zahl und Psyche, Stuttgart.

BMUB – Bundesministerium für Umwelt und Bau (ed.) 2014: Statusbericht Soziale Stadt 2014. Berichtszeitraum 2009-2014, Berlin.

Bürgin, Matthias 2013: Feine Schritte statt große Würfe. Ein Plädoyer für urbane Vielfalt und Raumgeborgenheit, in: Lange, B. et al. (ed.): Ortsentwürfe. Urbanität im 21. Jahrhundert, Berlin, S. 136-139.

Drilling, Matthias; Schnur, Olaf (ed.) 2012: Nachhaltige Quartiersentwicklung. Positionen, Praxisbeispiele und Perspektiven, Wiesbaden.

Eltges, Markus; Kocks, Martina 2015: Integrierte Ansätze in der räumlichen Planung - Das Programm Soziale Stadt. Ein Blick zurück und nach vorne, in: Information zur Raumentwicklung, no. 3, pp. 287- 300.

Greiffenhagen, Sylvia 2003: Lebensqualität im Stadtteil. Zur Bedeutung des subjektiven Faktors im Bundesländer-Programm „Soziale Stadt“, in: Dornheim, Andreas; Greiffenhagen, Sylvia (ed.): Identität und politische Kultur, Stuttgart, S. 361 – 367.

Häußermann, Hartmut 2006: Stadtteile mit besonderem Entwicklungsbedarf – Die soziale Stadt, in: Selle, Klaus (ed.): Planung neu denken. Praxis in der Stadt- und Regionalentwicklung, vol. 2, pp. 285-301.

Hopfner, Karin; Zakrzewski, Philipp 2012: Nachhaltige Quartiersentwicklung im Bestand: Zur Übertragbarkeit von Konzepten nachhaltiger Stadtentwicklung auf Bestandsquartiere, in: Drilling, Matthias; Schnur, Olaf (ed.): Nachhaltige Quartiersentwicklung. Positionen, Praxisbeispiele und Perspektiven, Wiesbaden, S. 45-67.

Jochmann, Judith 2010: Standortfaktor Lebensqualität. Die subjektive Wahrnehmung Hochqualifizierter in der Region Ingolstadt, in: Pechlaner, Harald; Bachinger, Monika (ed.): Lebensqualität und Standortattraktivität. Kultur, Mobilität und regionale Marken als Erfolgsfaktoren, Berlin, S. 89 – 116.

Johannsen, Uwe 1971: Das Marken- und Firmen Image, Betriebswirtschaftliche Schriften, H. 46, Berlin.

Kaltenbrunner, Robert; Schnur, Olaf 2014: Kommodifizierung der Quartiersentwicklung. Zur Vermarktung neuer Wohnquartiere als Lifestyle-Produkte, in: BBSR – Bundesinstitut für Bau-, Stadt- und Raumplanung im BBR – Bundesamt für Bauwesen und Raumordnung (ed.): Zwischen Erhalt, Aufwertung und



Gentrifizierung. Quartiere und Wohnungsbestände im Wandel, in: Informationen zur Raumentwicklung, Stuttgart, S. 373-382.

Kavaratzis, Mihalis 2009: Cities and their brands: Lessons from corporate branding, in: Place Branding and Public Diplomacy, vol. 5, no. 1, pp. 26-37.

Leser, Hartmut; Haas, Hans D.; Moismann, Thomas; Paesler, Reinhard 1989: Diercke Wörterbuch der Allgemeinen Geographie, München.

Lynch, Kevin 1960: The Image of the City, Cambridge.

Noll, Heinz-Herbert 1999: Konzepte der Wohlfahrtsentwicklung: Lebensqualität und ‚neue‘ Wohlfahrtskonzepte, EuReporting Working Paper, Nr. 3, Mannheim.

Romice, Ombretta 2005: Neighbourhood Quality of Life – global and Local Trends, Attitudes and Skills for Development, in: Garcia Mira, Ricardo; Uzzell, David L., Eulogio Real, J.; Romay, José (ed.): Housing, Space and Quality of Life, Burlington, pp. 71-79.

Schnur, Olaf 2013: Quartiersforschung revisited. Konzepte und Perspektiven eines stadtgeographischen Forschungsfeldes, in: Deffner, Veronika; Meisel, Uli (ed.): StadtQuartiere. Sozialwissenschaftliche, ökonomische und städtebaulich-architektonische Perspektiven, Hamm, S. 17 – 40.

Wiest, Karin; Wörmer, Sven (2012): „Von der Wissenschaft in die Praxis: Die Bedeutung von Raumwahrnehmung und Quartiersimages für den Wohnungsmarkt.“ Gemeinsamer Vortrag im Rahmen der Tagung „Kommune. Standort. Wettbewerb.“ Kaiserslautern, 14.11.2012.

Zapf, Wolfgang, 1984: Individuelle Wohlfahrt: Lebensbedingungen und wahrgenommene Lebensqualität, in: Glatzer, Wolfgang, Zapf, Wolfgang (ed.): Lebensqualität in der Bundesrepublik: Objektive Lebensbedingungen und subjektives Wohlbefinden, Frankfurt am Main, S. 13 – 26.

## ID 1414 | EMPTY HOUSING: CRITICAL REVIEW ON THEORETICAL EXPLANATIONS OF HOUSING VACANCY

Ifigeneia Dimitrakou<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Politecnico di Milano

[ifigeneia.dimitrakou@polimi.it](mailto:ifigeneia.dimitrakou@polimi.it)

**ABSTRACT:** The issue of housing vacancy as a spatial phenomenon, as an outcome of urban restructuring or as part of a rhetoric developed around urban generation, has been considerably debated in the fields of housing and urban studies and policy-making. However, the definitions and the conceptualizations of empty, underused, vacant or abandoned housing in urban agglomerations as topics to look into, as well as the theoretical frameworks developed to understand the procedures and the reasons behind their emergence, are diverse and sometimes controversial, depending on the disciplinary origins and epistemological paradigms adopted. The essay attempts to provide a better understanding of the various types of urban housing vacancy through a critical review on key theoretical frameworks in the fields of housing economics, housing studies, geography and spatial planning to identify key points and assumptions between various disciplinary perspectives; as well as to reflect on whether more or less multi-dimensional explanations are able to grasp the complexity of the phenomena, which as it is argued, occur in many different contexts for many different reasons. For the purposes of this paper, the most prevailing concepts and theories used and translated by planners and researchers in urban studies to explain housing vacancy phenomena, are explored. The review focuses on literature dating back to the 1960's and attempts to cover the debate on housing vacancy, with a reference mainly to North-American and European cases, through the following three conceptual frameworks: i. housing vacancy as mobility "opportunity" ii. vacancy as demand variation and iii. vacancy as a "shrinkage". Four key concerns are discussed in detail regarding each of the conceptual frameworks: the extent of attention paid to spatial aspects and to cross-scalar relationships, to actors' role and impacts, as well as the understanding of vacancy as part of context-dependant historical processes. The paper concludes with a more general reflection on whether these commonly used theoretical frameworks are able to touch upon the complex social, economic, political and cultural relationships embodied in housing and conceptualize housing not only as a "composite commodity".