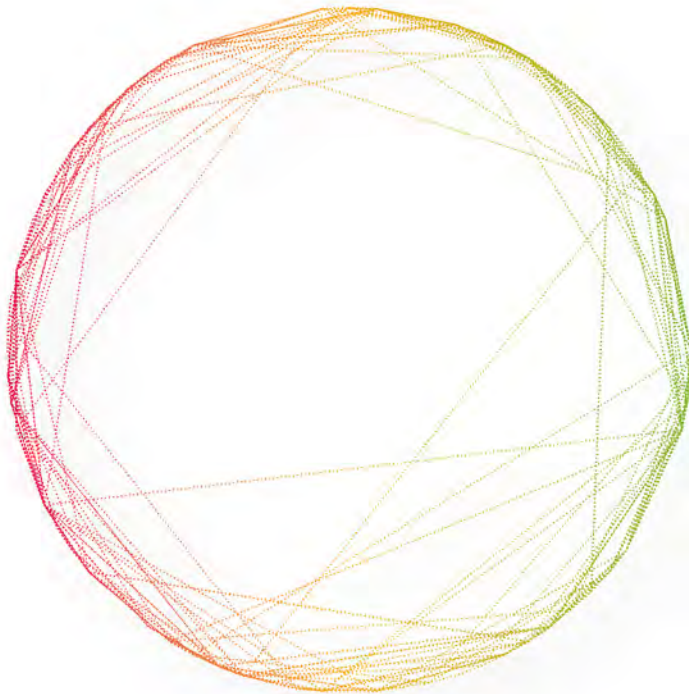


# **Global Dwelling**

Intertwining Research,  
Community Participation  
and Pedagogy



**Edited by  
Leandro Madrazo**

This book summarizes the work carried out by OIKONET, an Erasmus Network project dedicated to promoting pedagogic innovation in the field of housing studies which was carried out from 2013 to 2016 with the support of the Lifelong Learning Programme of the European Union.

The network was structured into three sub-networks which became interwoven through the project activities:

#### HOUSING RESEARCH

was dedicated to identifying relevant research topics in the current debate about housing in a globalized world.

#### COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

aimed at engaging local stakeholders in community action projects to address the planning and renovation of the built environment at various scales, from residential to public.

#### PEDAGOGICAL ACTIVITIES

was devoted to the collaborative design and implementation of learning activities to study contemporary housing issues.

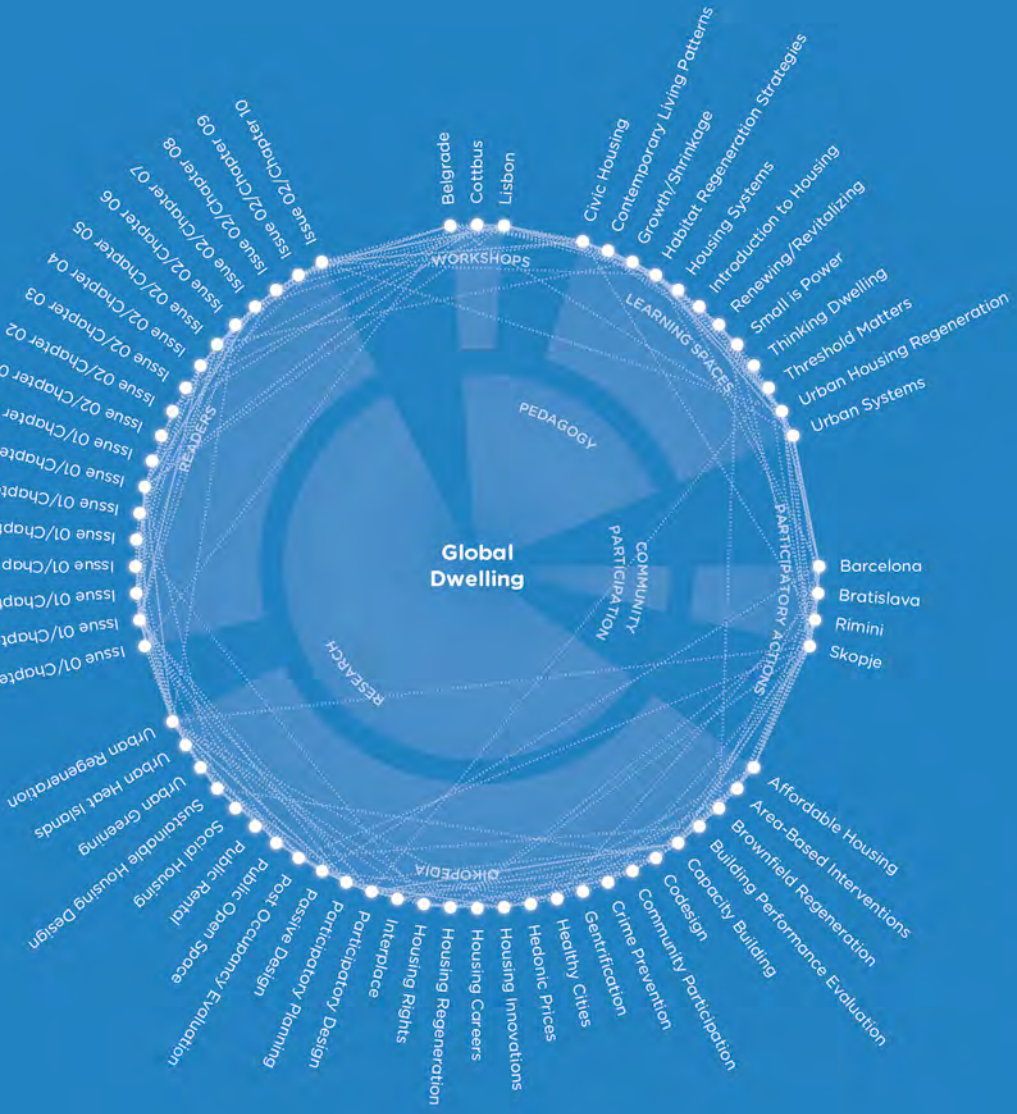
The book contents have been organized to reproduce the structure of the network and its construction process:

**MAPPINGS** reflects the stage of identifying and visualizing the network nodes (people, courses, research topics, case studies). Key issues concerning contemporary housing which have been identified by partners are summarized in this section.

**INTERACTIONS** corresponds to the process of finding affinities among partners, subjects and areas of interest, in order to foster a collaborative and interdisciplinary study of housing, in its global dimension. Interrelationships between Housing Research, Community Participation and Pedagogical Activities have been explored in order to delineate potential transactions across the three realms.

**CONFLUENCES** refers to the novel territories that have emerged as a result of the interactions across the network. This section includes examples of learning spaces and community-based participatory actions which were the result of overcoming institutional and disciplinary boundaries, physical distances and cultural differences.

# Global Dwelling





To Johan Verbeke  
in memoriam

## **Global Dwelling**

Intertwining Research,  
Community Participation  
and Pedagogy

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# **Global Dwelling**

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L. Madrazo

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# Introduction

Leandro Madrazo

OIKONET—*A Global Multidisciplinary Network on Housing Research and Learning*, is an Erasmus Network project dedicated to promoting pedagogic innovation in the field of housing studies which was carried out from 2013 to 2016 with the support of the Lifelong Learning Programme of the European Union. Thirty-four organizations representing twenty-five European countries, and a further four outside the EU, formed part of this network.

The purpose of OIKONET is to build a flexible, comprehensive and cross-cutting framework to examine contemporary dwelling from a global perspective, by acknowledging that:

- There are common driving forces influencing the contemporary habitat in different cultures, societies and places, among others: gentrification, mobility, sustainability, digitalization, and economic and social restructuring.
- Dwelling as a subject-matter inevitably brings together various scales, disciplines, and areas of expertise, including: architecture and urban planning, sociology and community psychology, economics and finance.
- It is necessary to adopt inclusive approaches to identify housing needs and to find appropriate solutions with the joint participation of citizens and experts, community and local representatives, and political and financial institutions.

Nowadays, the study of housing in higher education institutions is mostly undertaken from a disciplinary perspective, for instance, from an architectural, urban, sociological or economic point of view. However, there is a need for multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary frameworks to address housing in today's academic programmes from a global perspective which properly reflects the conditions of our time. Those frameworks cannot be circumscribed to academia; rather they should involve other institutions and stakeholders such as local administrations and civic organizations, citizens and professionals, researchers and experts in a debate on contemporary housing.

The aim of OIKONET is to foster the exchange of knowledge, methodologies and good practices among research groups, higher education institutions and community stakeholders involved in the processes that shape contemporary dwelling in our global societies. The activities carried out in the project enabled partners to interlink research activities with the collaborative design of learning processes, and to embed these in the social and cultural local milieus. Collaborative learning activities and community outreach actions were designed and implemented in various locations with the participation of academics, professionals, researchers, citizens, social activists and local authorities to address some of the pressing issues which determine today's living environments, among them: citizen participation in housing design and urban development, energy efficiency, digital fabrication, housing affordability, social and environmental sustainability, urban regeneration and liveability in contemporary cities. These activities have contributed to fostering interactions and exchanges between students and teachers, researchers and community members, thus cutting across cultural, institutional and territorial boundaries.

## NETWORK STRUCTURE

OIKONET partners include higher education institutions, research groups, local authorities, community groups and international organizations. The expertise covered by the consortium embraces a wide range of subjects: architecture and urban planning, engineering, housing studies, urban policies, sociology, social studies, and pedagogy. The challenge of the project was to bring together this variety of actors and fields of study, to foster the exchange among research groups and academia, to interlink research activities with the collaborative design of learning activities, and to embed learning processes in the social and cultural environments. To achieve these goals, the network is structured into three sub-networks which became interwoven through the project activities (Figure 1):

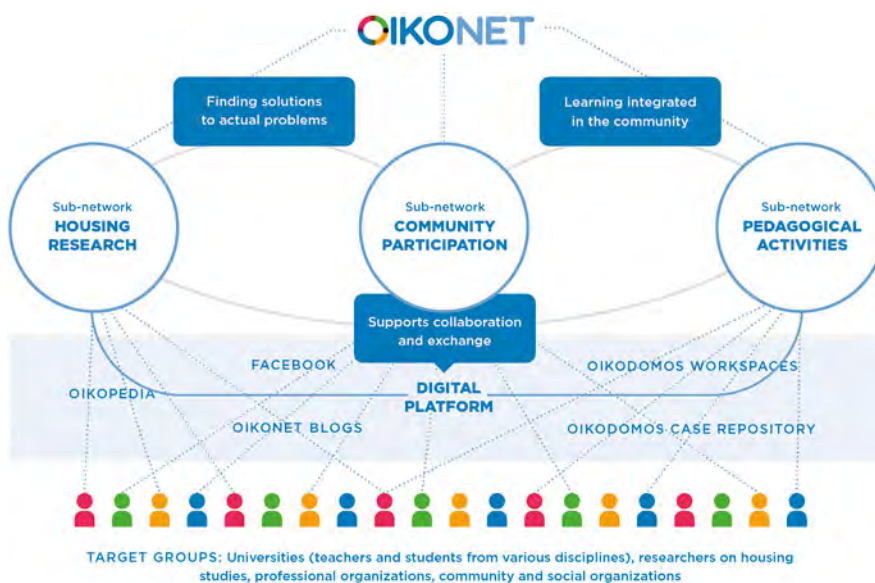


FIGURE 1.  
Network  
Structure

- HOUSING RESEARCH was dedicated to identifying relevant research topics in contemporary debate about contemporary housing issues in a globalized world.
- COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION aimed at engaging local stakeholders in community actions to address the planning and renovation of the built housing environment at various scales, from residential to public.
- PEDAGOGICAL ACTIVITIES was devoted to the collaborative design and implementation of learning activities—carried out on-site and on-line within blended-learning environments integrating courses and learners from the participating schools of architecture and planning—to study contemporary housing issues.

The process to build the network spanned over the three years of the project and went through the following phases:

- IDENTIFYING AND VISUALIZING THE NETWORK NODES (people, courses, themes, case studies). This was achieved through the joint preparation of learning spaces and workshops, identifying and discussing themes of research and proposing cases of study in local contexts.
- STARTING OUT INTERACTIONS WITHIN EACH SUB-NETWORK (Housing Research, Community Participation, Pedagogical Activities). Finding affinities among partners and areas of interest and designing learning activities which involved members of various sub-networks: Researchers, academics, and local community representatives.
- FOSTERING CONNECTIONS BETWEEN SUB-NETWORKS. Carrying out joint collaborations, such as engaging researchers in the design of learning activities or involving citizens in community outreach actions.
- CONSOLIDATING THE TIES BETWEEN NODES. This involved the joint preparation of contents for this book as well as the creation of a compendium of learning outcomes and competences for a learning programme about “Global Dwelling”.

## DIGITAL PLATFORM

The activities of the OIKONET network are supported by a digital platform specifically created for the project. The OIKONET web portal ([www.oikonet.org](http://www.oikonet.org)) provides information about the network activities and facilitates the public access to the outcomes produced during the project (Figure 2). Specific project outputs and resources available in the portal can also be accessed through the links included in the digital version of this book ([www.oikonet.org/global\\_dwelling](http://www.oikonet.org/global_dwelling)).

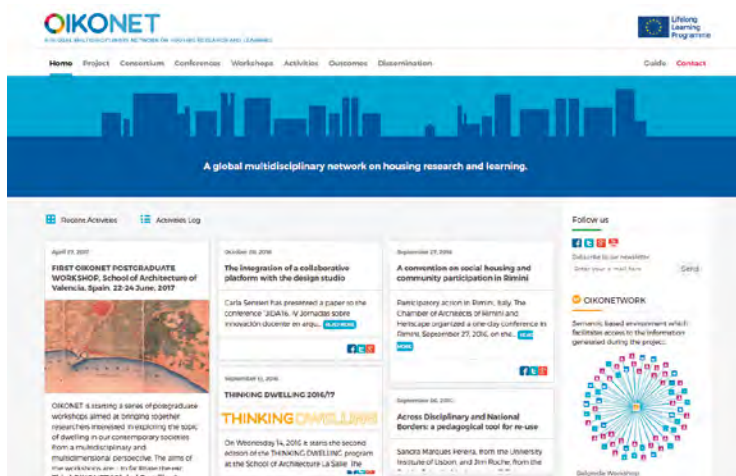


FIGURE 2.  
Home page  
of the OIKONET  
web portal

The web portal incorporates OIKONETWORK, an interactive visual map to display the network activities and their interrelationships (Figure 3):



FIGURE 3.  
OIKONETWORK

## BOOK STRUCTURE AND CONTENTS

The book is structured in three sections:

- **MAPPINGS.** This section provides a representative overview of current housing research. Key issues concerning contemporary housing which were proposed by members of the Housing Research sub-network are summarized. Some of the identified issues were addressed as well in the learning activities and community actions carried out in the project.
- **INTERACTIONS.** Interrelationships between the work carried out in the three sub-networks—Housing Research, Community Participation and Pedagogical Activities—have been explored in order to delineate potential transactions across the three realms. With this purpose, some the chapters have been co-authored by members from different sub-networks to foster cross-fertilization of ideas and disciplines. In other chapters, issues concerning the three sub-networks are interwoven in the work of a single author.
- **CONFLUENCES.** The interactions across some of the network components—people, organizations, subjects, and disciplines—have given rise to novel territories that cut across pre-established divisions between academia and community, researching and learning. This section includes examples of learning spaces and community actions which emerge as a result of overcoming institutional and disciplinary boundaries, physical distances and cultural differences.

## Mappings

This section begins with an overview of the research topics discussed within the network, collated by Karim Hadjri, coordinator of the sub-network Housing Research. Research topics concerning contemporary housing put forward by project partners have been grouped in four broad areas: Sustainability, Participation, Affordability, and Regeneration. Within each area, specific research issues are introduced and discussed with reference to relevant literature. Likewise, mentions of research works by OIKONET partners appear in the discussion. The conclusions highlight the interconnections between the four research areas and their global nature.

This introduction is followed by a compendium of 11 concepts selected from the entries that OIKONET partners added to the Oikopedia on-line knowledge-base about contemporary housing: Affordable Housing, Building Performance Evaluation, Community Participation, Gentrification, Participatory Design, Passive Design, Social Housing, Sustainable Housing Design, Urban Greening, Urban Heat Islands and Urban Regeneration. Each of these terms is introduced in a concise manner resorting to the basic literature and to representative cases.

## Interactions

In “Moving Targets: Practice, Architecture and Urban Shrinkage”, Adam Evans draws the attention to the lack of correspondence between the phenomena of the shrinking cities—which affects urban areas worldwide—and the established teaching and learning practices in architecture and planning schools. Typically, academic programmes are very much focused on forming professionals for making cities grow. Future architects and planners are trained in design studios to create buildings and plans for the expanding city. They are not trained, however, to concoct strategies for the shrinking urban areas. Evans turns to Henri Lefebvre’s *The Production of Space* to propose a framework which would enable learners and practitioners to deal with the creation of new spaces and the resignification of existing ones. Thus, Lefebvre’s triad of *conceived-perceived-lived space* would be valid both to explain the production of space in a growing and in a shrinking context, that means, for the production and the “unproduction” of space. Evans appeals to “the beauty of the shrinking city”, a city which can be seen “as a laboratory, a contextual test bed for new ideas and methods of spatial engagement which also affords time for reflective practice, which is rarely possible under the constraints of working in a growing city where the emphasis is on product rather than process”. Accepting the reality of the declining urban areas leads to the rethinking of design studio pedagogy, to transform the studio into a space to investigate existing local traditions, cultural contents and the role that inhabitants play in creating a sense of place. The tasks of designers operating within the framework of the shrinking city would be to reimagine, to reinvigorate and to reestablish the values of the lived places thus helping to overcome the negative



connotations that declining urban areas still carry nowadays. Ultimately, Evans invites us to confront the incongruity between the reality of the built environment and the prevalent teaching and learning models.

The gap between the reality of a changing world and the established teaching and learning models is also addressed by Nadia Charalambous in “The Challenge of Change in Living Environments: Implications and Opportunities for Architectural Education”. Charalambous argues that changes in architectural education, in particular in housing design studios, are necessary to face the ongoing transformations in living environments in cities around the world which are driven by multiple forces: Globalization, increased mobility, massive movements of labour forces, migration flows, technological developments, economic fluctuations and terrorism. Some of their consequences are lack of affordable housing, homelessness and overcrowding, and social integration problems. However, in spite of these ubiquitous and tangible transformations, architectural education—in particular design studio pedagogy—seems to be “an isolated island in the middle of a complex reality”. To overcome this insularity, it would be necessary to adopt “multidisciplinary approaches in studio pedagogy, going beyond disciplinary and academic boundaries, and cancelling out the tensions between global dynamics, cultural diversity and local realities”. In the same way as living environments change, so does the architectural profession. Furthermore, there is a lack of correspondence between what architects are expected to do in a changing and global society and what they learn at schools: “Architectural educators continue designing and teaching the studio on the basis of what an architect currently is or was”, rather than what they will do as professionals. Solving the incongruity between the fast-moving world and conventional academic education is an opportunity to reflect about the profession and contribute to its renewal. To undertake such transformation in architectural education and practice, the housing design studio needs to be reconstituted. It is necessary to overcome disciplinary and academic boundaries and deal with global forces and local socio-spatial realities in design studio work. In a reformed housing design studio questions posed by society would not be taken as fixed and well-defined problems but as opportunities “to investigate how social and life patterns evolve” through research-based design. Therefore, such a design studio would not be an island detached from the complexity of the world but interwoven within it, and design would be seen not as a formal solution to a well-defined problem but as an instrument to investigate the nature of the problems in their own real context. Thus, pedagogical models based on “project-based learning”, “research as design”, “designerly research”, and “action research” would suit to the goals of this reformulated design studio.

In “The Challenges of Social and Demographic Change for Urban Planning and Housing Design”, Adriana Diaconu, Jim Roche, Paulette Duarte and Sandra Marques Pereira examine some of the policies adopted in three European countries—Portugal, Ireland and France—to address the discrepancy between the characteristics of the existing housing stock and the ongoing

demographic changes. They have undertaken a comparative study of the plans implemented in four urban areas in Europe: Lisbon, Dublin, Paris Region and Saint-Étienne. The four areas are facing similar demographic changes due to shrinking and growing populations, ageing residents and household restructuring. On the other hand, the available housing stock does not satisfy the needs of the changing population: Lack of affordable housing, need of smaller units for smaller households, derelict structures which need to be renovated, among others. However, the strategies adopted in each area to find solutions to these problems differ. In declining areas, there are private initiatives to renew dwellings to make them attractive to younger residents (Portela housing estate, in Lisbon), and public interventions in strategic areas to upgrade housing buildings and improve adjacent public spaces while enhancing existing services (Saint-Étienne). In expanding areas (Dublin), the public sector needs to create the conditions for private investors to build new housing units and renew existing ones, with the aim of providing housing that satisfy current demands (single occupancy units, flexible housing systems and varied tenure possibilities), especially of the most vulnerable segments of the population; and it needs to prevent urban sprawl (Paris) by densifying existing urban areas which implies upgrading the public transport systems and public spaces. Carrying out these strategies with the involvement of the affected communities requires professionals able to work as mediators, to manage building and urban transformation processes, to steer and monitor densification and land use with the participation of residents, skills which are not acquired in the planning and architecture schools. Therefore, the authors conclude that it is necessary that demographic and social changes, strategic planning and policy making, are part of the training of architects and planners.

The participation of citizens and communities in the processes to shape the living environment has become a goal shared by schools around the world. In Latin American countries, in particular, there is a long-standing tradition of collaboration between community and academia. In “Community Participation in the Design and Construction of the Built Environment in Puerto Rico and Chile: Intertwining Community and Academia”, Omayra Rivera and Viviana Fernández describe their pedagogical work which bring together academia, communities and local administrations in activities aimed at transforming the living environment. Their learning and teaching practice is based on the assumption that cities belong to people and, therefore, they are a product of their actions: “Residents of communities know the space they inhabit, their needs and aspirations, but they need experts to help them find design solutions”. Therefore, a role for architects is to help citizens give form to their living environments, acting as experts, mediators and facilitators in participative design processes. In the School of Architecture of the University of Puerto Rico, the *Community Design Studio* taught in the late 1960s by architect Edwin Quiles is the direct precedent of the ongoing *Collaborative Design Studio and Evolutionary Habitat*. A difference with the previous studio is that “students are expected to outline a plan

to communicate with the residents to help them to describe their needs and aspirations before starting to design a project". All participants—students, residents and experts—are expected to collaborate on equal basis. Four examples of the work carried out in the studio are described: Improving the living conditions of residents of eight neighbourhoods around Caño Martin Peña in San Juan; proposing new usages for deprived spaces in Alto del Cabro; renewing an abandoned bridge in Tras Talleres and helping the association Machuchal Revive to convert an abandoned house into a civic centre. The work of students in these projects helped residents to rediscover the value of their living places and contributed to forge links between the university and the local communities. Also, an account is given of the experience with participatory budgeting in San Juan, a project which counted with the participation of students of the three schools of architecture in the country. In Chile, participatory design is part of the curriculum of the Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism. It is assumed in the academic programme that "the participation of citizens in the interventions aimed at transforming the territory at its various scales is considered a basic condition of a democratic society" and, therefore, "teachers need to make students aware of the importance of shared responsibility in the design and construction of the city". The work done with two community-based projects within the course "Multi-Scale Participatory Processes: Housing, Neighbourhood and City" is described: The reconstruction of El Cerro neighbourhood in Valparaíso, and the revitalization of the Matta neighbourhood in Santiago. The authors conclude with a joint reflection about the experiences of rooting learning practices in these communities: Practical difficulties to plan and implement the activities, abilities that the students have acquired and benefits for the participating community members. What the experience with these courses shows is that by embedding learning activities in the social and physical milieu, it became possible to bridge the gap between the culture of the place and academic training.

Dorina Papa, Joana Dhiamandi and Divna Pencic analyse the involvement of the community in the design and planning of public spaces in Albania and Macedonia in the chapter "Integrating the Community in the Planning and Design of Public Space in the Balkan Region". After the advent of democracy following the end of the communist regimes, a process was started to build a civil society in which individuals and groups could work autonomously from the state, as in western countries. Today, people in Albania and in the Republic of Macedonia have become more aware of their "right to the city" which includes the right to have quality public spaces. In Albania, public space—especially in neighbourhoods—has been either neglected by public authorities or embellished for political purposes, as in the artists' interventions in some representative public spaces in city centres. In any case, there was no involvement of the community in these transformations. In Macedonia, the involvement of citizens and communities in urban planning and design has a long tradition that goes back to the communist period. In that

time, community representatives took part in the planning of public spaces in the neighbourhoods, and the state took care of their maintenance. The situation changed after the advent of the market economy. Nowadays, citizens are only consulted to answer surveys during the early stages of a design, or in consultations made for political image-making purposes. Both in Albania and Macedonia “a process of illegal occupation, degradation and shrinking of the public space is taking place” with the connivance of the public administrations. To change this situation, and to stop with the ongoing privatisation and political instrumentation of public space, the involvement of the community is necessary. For this purpose, non-governmental organisations and universities, in collaboration with local governments, have started to undertake a series of initiatives. In this context, universities can play an important role in bringing together multiple actors, fields and interests to create more inclusive and socially sustainable public spaces. Ultimately, what the situation of public space in both countries reveals is that its meaning and value cannot be but the result of the multiple and conflicting interests between all stakeholders which claim a stand on it: citizens and administrations, private investors and local governments.

“Can Top-Down Policy Meet Local Diversity in Urban Transformation Processes?” is a joint reflection by Jenny Stenberg, Maria Zwanenburg and Lasse Fryk on the power shifting between governments and citizens as a result of the empowerment of the latter through participatory processes. The aim of a transformative participation is to empower people so that they can make their own decisions, to set up action plans and carry them out. At the outset, this can be achieved through two opposite approaches: Top-down *Community-Driven Development* (CDD) led by governments, as in a case in Indonesia, and bottom-up experimental approaches, as the one carried out in the area of Hammarkullen, in Gothenburg, Sweden. The first method tends to become a *black box*, which means that “modes of thoughts, habits, forces and objects” are embedded in the structures that mediate between institutions and citizens, mechanisms which are invisible to them and, therefore, cannot be a matter of debate and even less changed. Even though a CDD participatory process aims at transferring resources and decision-making power to citizens, it remains unclear whether a real power transmission takes place. By assuming that communities are homogeneous and egalitarian entities, CDD overlooks the conflicts of interest between community groups, for example, between the elites and the most disfavoured segments of the society. For CDD to have a true transformative power, it would be necessary to open up the black box, that is, to question the established power structures and roles. In turn, this would reveal the need for an interface between institutions and citizens, and between community groups. Such an interface is what a community plan in Hammarkullen aimed at providing. Initially, the goal of this participatory experience was to change the practices to renovate the housing stock built in Sweden in the 1960s and 70s with the objective to prevent gentrification and social exclusion. With this aim, a centre was

created to help inhabitants of this suburb becoming knowledge producers “by intertwining research, education and civil society through community outreach”. It is a way to open up the black box, by enabling residents to discuss the laws that regulate the relationships between owners and tenants, and the public procurement procedures to renovate buildings, so that they can propose measures not just to renew the buildings but to transform the social and political structures.

In “Public Participation in the Regeneration of Large-Scale Housing Estates”, Sandra Treija, Uģis Bratuškins and Edgars Bondars highlight the importance of engaging citizens in the regeneration of residential areas, to intensify their sense of belonging to a place and to assure a sustainable development. Nowadays, many housing estates built in Europe after the Second World War, especially in former communist countries, are perceived as degraded and dangerous areas inhabited by deprived social groups. To change this negative view and to make these areas attractive to new residents, it is necessary to upgrade the buildings and to improve the surrounding spaces. This offers an opportunity to engage residents in the renovation process. Their participation does not have to be limited to the planning and design stages; rather it can also occur in the design execution and in the maintenance of the built spaces, especially the public places. Urban gardens, as those carried out in Malmö, Sweden, enable residents to participate in the upgrading of public spaces through small-scale interventions that help them to forge a sense of belonging to the places they live in. On the other hand, the renovation of the dwellings in the formerly state-owned housing estates has become more difficult after their privatisation. Individual ownership hinders the adoption of measures to protect the communal interest, for example, the renewal of the building envelope to improve energy performance. To overcome these difficulties, local authorities need to find ways to encourage owners to invest in the renovation of their apartments, by changing the existing legal frameworks and ownership schemes, and by carrying out awareness campaigns to make people understand the importance of their participation in the renovation processes. The renovation of the former state-owned housing estates makes it necessary to reformulate the limits between domestic and public spaces, to come to grips with the diverging private and collective interests, and to redistribute responsibilities which were previously the domain of a single authority, among individuals.

### **Confluences**

Filippo Boschi presents the work done in a participatory action carried out in a middle-sized city to find out feasible strategies to solve the social housing problems with the collaboration of the private and public sectors. As in many other cities and countries in the world, public authorities in Rimini, and in Italy, have steadily given up their responsibility to provide social housing. The situation has been aggravated with the latest financial crisis which has

contributed to increase the demands of social housing after some segments of the middle class, which before the crisis had no difficulties to get a house in the free market, could no longer afford it. In front of this social problem, some public and private organizations have tried to offer solutions although in an uncoordinated manner. The lack of collaboration between these organizations hinders the effectiveness of the possible solutions. In light of this problem, the municipality of Rimini, with the collaboration of Heriscape and the Chamber of Architects, carried out a plan to bring together the private and public local stakeholders to collaborate in the solution of the social housing problem. The plan encompassed three stages: Analysis of the housing shortage in the city, selection of stakeholders which are committed to help in finding solutions and implementation of round tables to coordinate the actions to be taken. Four ongoing projects led by housing associations, financial institutions and non-profit social welfare organizations were presented and discussed in the round tables. The discussions revealed the need for more financial resources, better communication between public institutions and non-profit organisations, and greater collaboration to execute the projects. As a conclusion, participants agreed that it was necessary to create a committee on social housing to steer collaboratively the actions. This committee would provide a comprehensive picture of the situation of social housing in the city, something that the municipality has not been able to deliver, and to seek financial resources to undertake larger projects, beyond current small-scale initiatives. This community action in Rimini reveals the need to rebuild the public realm to counteract the undesired effects of an urban development led only by private economic interests, locally and globally; a new public realm in which a multiplicity of actors, groups and interests must negotiate and agree on the priorities and needs of the community and to assure the means and resources to fulfil them.

In “Civic Housing: Designing Participatory Processes for a Cohousing Project”, Leandro Madrazo and Ángel Martín Cojo summarize a learning experience aimed at engaging undergraduate architecture students and members of a housing cooperative in a codesign process to refurbish a multi-story housing building in the historical centre of Barcelona. The task for students was to design ad-hoc tools and methods to enable dwellers to communicate their experiences about the spaces they inhabit. In this process, students played the role of facilitators—providing dwellers with the tools they needed to express their knowledge—and of mediators—engaging in a dialogue with future residents to understand their needs. At the end of the process, students proposed a range of architectural responses to the issues identified in the dialogue with dwellers. The activities planned in the seminar were of pedagogic value for both the members of the housing cooperative and the architecture students. On the one hand, dwellers could learn to express and communicate their experiences about the spaces they live in, to reflect on the value these spaces have for them and to envision their future homes. On the other hand, students played the role of designers of a participatory process rather than

designers of artefacts; they learned from the experience dwellers have about the spaces they lived in and brought this knowledge in their design proposals. The experience showed that every participatory process is unique and, therefore, needs to be addressed much like any other design task: Understanding its specific context and objectives, using the resources at hand and recognizing the existing constraints.

In “Living/Dwelling: A Participatory Action in the Neighbourhood of Ilinden, Skopje”, Mihajlo Zinoski and Ognen Marina describe a community outreach project carried out with the participation of schools of architecture from three universities: University Ss. Cyril and Methodius, Skopje; Polis University, Tirana, and University of Belgrade. The Ilinden neighbourhood, located at the margins of the city of Skopje, has an increasing potential for urban development due to the benefits of its proximity to the urban centre and to the stimulating investment policies which make the area attractive for business. The current state of urban development in Ilinden was analysed by students and teachers, residents and local administrators. Nowadays, the area is undergoing a transformation from rural to urban which makes Ilinden in this transition period an example of a “rurban” (rural and urban) environment. The combination of the rural and urban components and practices is reflected in the housing typologies and in the usages of semi-private spaces such as the yards. Hence, the main research issue was to figure out the social processes by which the limits between public and semi-private spaces are negotiated in the permeable boundaries of the yards. The methodology applied in this research was based on the RSVP cycle (Resources, Scores, Valuation and Performance). In the Resources phase, students analysed the living patterns and usages of the semi-private spaces and the emerging spatial patterns. The information was obtained by surveying the site and interviewing residents. In the Scoring stage, there was a brainstorming session to elicit from the interviews the social and physical elements which were relevant to the residents (e.g. identity, fence, sharing, community garden, social zoning, common elements, spatial compromise, patterns, and provocation). This session contributed to gaining a better understanding of how the area could develop in the future by respecting the existing social and economic structure. In the Valuation stage, the data obtained in the surveys was structured and then visualized in sociograms which revealed some patterns in the relationships between community members and groups. Finally, in the Performance phase a workshop was organized to build a sense of accomplishment among the participants by reviewing the results. Participants were invited to discuss three scenarios for future spatial development of the local community which were found in the third phase. Through this community action it was possible to bring to the fore the multiple perceptions about the semi-private spaces and their potential to create a socially sustainable community. Students learned to analyse the social and physical structure of neighbourhood using a variety of tools (questionnaires, sociograms), to create bridges between residents and authorities and to devise

planning strategies that respond both to the top-down visions of the power structures (municipality, business) and to the bottom-up construction of the sociophysical space by residents.

The development of the collaborative learning space “Introduction to Housing” during three academic years is recapitulated by Carla Sentieri, Nadia Charalambous, and Yasemin Alkışer Bregger. The purpose of this learning space has been to initiate students in the basic principles of designing (and understanding) what a house might represent in our contemporary culture (or cultures). A learning programme was jointly created by teachers from five schools of architecture, led by the School of Architecture of Valencia. Following the methodology developed in the previous OIKODOMOS Virtual Campus project, a learning structure made up of learning activities and tasks, aligned with the courses at their respective institutions, was created. The process of creating a joint programme went through different phases and forms of collaboration between the participating institutions. A first learning structure was built upon the curriculum of the first year housing design studio in Valencia, the second year housing design studio at the University of Cyprus and with some contributions from a communication course in the University of Belgrade. In a second edition of the learning space, the initial structure was refined and simplified to facilitate the integration of the various courses involved and to enhance the collaboration between learners from various institutions and cultures. This flexible structure made possible that three more schools joined the third edition of the learning space: Istanbul Technical University, Gebze Technical University, and University Institute of Lisbon. Altogether, the experience of designing this learning space has given tutors the opportunity to collaborate with other universities, to get to know diverse teaching methods as well as the work done by students from other schools, to attend and also deliver on-line lectures and to share learning resources using a combination of web-based platforms and communication tools (including OIKODOMOS Workspaces, blogs, Skype, and Google+). Students who participated in the learning space learned to interact with peers and teachers from another schools in the rather unfamiliar context of a blended-learning environment, in which they had the opportunity to share comments about their work both in classroom and on-line and to be exposed to different types of teaching and learning. The process followed to build this joint learning structure can be useful for teachers from other schools who are interested in creating spaces of collaboration following the philosophy of blended-learning.

In “Teaching Site Design across Scales and Borders: On-Site and On-line” Nicolai Steinø describes a collaboration between students and teachers of two programmes, one focused on urban design at Aalborg University (AAU) in Denmark, and a second one dedicated to urban design at the Brandenburg Technical University (BTU) in Germany. The purpose of the collaboration was to carry out some joint learning activities which would enable students from each programme “to expand their respective understandings of site design



across scales, locations and theoretical approaches”, by approaching building from the perspective of urban planning and moving from the urban scale to the building scale. Besides overcoming disciplinary barriers, this convergence of two study programmes from two countries had to face other difficulties: The differences in the professional cultures in the two countries regarding the role of architects and planners, the distinctive skills that architects and planners are expected to acquire in their education, the particular timetables of each programme, and the physical distance between the schools. To overcome these difficulties while creating at the same time a shared learning space (both digital and physical, following a blended-learning philosophy), a joint reader was prepared for students of both courses, synchronous activities were planned on-line (in the format of teleconference) and on-site (through joint site visits and a workshop in Berlin). All of these activities contributed to create a sense of social presence among learners, a sense of being together regardless physical and cultural differences. Altogether, the most valuable aspect of the collaboration between the two programmes was “the possibility for students to interact and exchange views and understandings which are likely to differ across cultural, disciplinary and institutional borders”. What this learning experience exemplifies is a strategy to create a blended-learning space by connecting learning resources facilitated by various courses (readings, lectures) in different settings (on-line conferences, on-site workshops), and doing so overcoming practical constraints with the available resources (on-line communication tools, field trips).

The work done in the “Lisbon Workshop: Contemporary Living Patterns in Mass Housing in Europe” is abridged by Alexandra Paio, Sandra Marques Pereira, António Brito Guterres, and Vasco Moreira Rato. The objective of this workshop was to examine the coexistence of “formal” and “informal” housing patterns, a global phenomenon manifested in many cities around the world. In Lisbon, these two patterns can be exemplified by two neighbourhoods, “Portela de Sacavém” and “Bairro da Liberdade”, respectively. Before meeting in Lisbon, students carried out some preparatory activities working distantly on the OIKODOMOS Workspaces learning environment and using as well some social media (blogs, Facebook). The work done at each school during the preparatory phase was presented in a public session on the first day of the workshop. The workshop programme encompassed four themes which became intertwined in the learning activities: Participatory Processes, Home and Social Change, Energy Efficiency and Construction Materials, and Computational Design (CAD/CAM tools). The knowledge they acquired in the lectures and exercises on each of these four themes was incorporated in the design studio work. Students working in teams analysed the two neighbourhoods and identified the issues to be addressed in order to improve the existing living conditions, respecting the character of each settlement. By the end of the workshop, each team was able to build a full-scale module of a representative part of their design proposal using digital fabrication techniques and to present their proposal in a poster for public review.

The integration of various subject-matters (participation, sociology, energy efficiency, digital fabrication) with design studio work to address contemporary housing both in its global (the coexistence of formal and informal living patterns) and local dimensions (the need to renovate and upgrade two quarters in Lisbon) makes the Lisbon Workshop a reference pedagogic model.



