



No 13 | March 2017



IRSAKTUELL

Newsletter for Research on Society and Space

Innovation in Spatial Planning

Actors, Places and Conflicts – Innovations as Social Processes

New Ideas for Planning – International Perspectives

From Temporary Uses to Neighbourhood Management – Innovation Case Studies

What Produces Innovation in Spatial Planning?

What do licence agreements for the temporary uses of property in Leipzig, neighbourhood management projects, the International Architecture Exhibition Emscher Park and the newly planned Aspern Seestadt district in Vienna have in common? They illustrate new pathways of innovative spatial planning that break with established routines like criminalising squatters or the strict functional division typical for modern cities, thereby further developing spatial planning. Together, researchers from the Leibniz Institute for Research on Society and Space (IRS), the TU Berlin and the University of Stuttgart have studied these instances of innovative spatial planning in the "Innovation in Planning: How do new approaches emerge in spatial planning?" (Innoplan) research project, which was financed by the German Research Foundation (DFG) and concluded in the spring of 2016. They examined four different fields in which new approaches to spatial planning were observed and conceptualised them as planning innovations. This issue of IRS aktuell presents the results of this research project and situates them in the context of on-going academic debates.

Innovation research has a long history in economics and the study of organisations. Researchers in spatial planning, however, have paid little attention to processes of innovation so far. This applies particularly to the study of conditions conducive to the emergence and spread of new modes of action and to the way such procedures become established in planning praxis. The DFG "Innoplan" project seeks to help close this research gap. Scholars have traced innovative planning processes and classified them according to commonalities and differences in four distinct fields: in the area of reflexive regional policy, regarding spatial pioneers and temporary uses, concerning neighbourhood management projects, and with respect to the planning and construction of new urban districts. From page 8 of this issue, articles will present the analytical insights of this research project and detail how these four novel planning processes originated, spread and all became successfully institutionalised in spatial plan-

ning praxis. The main theoretical and conceptual insights are presented in an article by Prof. Dr. Oliver Ibert entitled "Ideas, actors, places and conflicts – innovations in planning as social processes". Prof. Dr. Ibert is one of the four "Innoplan" project leaders and heads the IRS research department "Dynamics of Economic Spaces".

The "Innoplan" project culminated in an international conference on February 25th and 26th held at the IRS in Erkner. The conference was entitled "Innovations in Spatial Planning – Towards the Emergence and Mobility of Novel Approaches in Urban and Regional Planning" and was co-financed by the DFG. Participants from seven different nations presented their research findings in five thematic sessions and debated the notion of innovative planning from an international perspective. A report and pictures from the concluding conference of the project can be found starting on page 9. ■

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Innoplan in the Context of Innovation Research at the IRS

Studying innovations in spatial planning is an important element of research on society, space and innovation at the IRS. Innovations in spatial planning can be considered social innovations in that they are evaluated less on the basis of technological novelty than by professional benchmarks and values established through political debate. Moreover, planning innovations can be regarded as pull-innovations. They are not the result of social systems systematically seeking out and implementing innovations, through lab experiments and the like. Instead, planning innovations result in large part when those affected by problems organise and take action.

Few programmes exist that promote such experiments and protect against risks. Instead, resources must be mobilised that are earmarked for other purposes, while planning experiments are conducted on real-life social situations. Overall, research on planning innovations is situated in the wider research tradition on process research at the IRS. Unlike technological or economic innovations, planning innovations belong to the field of politics and administration, and thus are characterised as long-term social processes.



Ideas, Actors, Places and Conflicts – Innovations in Planning as Social Processes

Fundamental transformations in spatial planning leading to novel outcomes (like pedestrian zones or car-free residential neighbourhoods) or to novel processes (like project-related development plans) have thus far been predominantly conceptualised as changes in planning. Hitherto, such transformations were explained as adjustments to altered framework conditions. Scholars from the IRS, the TU Berlin and the University of Stuttgart, meanwhile, have analysed such novelties as cases of innovation. Their joint research project "Innovation in Planning: How do new approaches emerge in spatial planning?" (Innoplan) was financed by the German Research Foundation (DFG) and focused on the capacity of urban planners to both act and learn. The project gained empirical insights on four different fields in which planning innovations occurred (see the respective articles in this issue of IRS aktuell), as well as crucial theoretical and conceptual insights. Below, Prof. Dr. Oliver Ibert, who is one of four "Innoplan" project leaders and heads the IRS research department "Dynamics of Economic Spaces", presents these insights from four different perspectives.

Innovation in planning as an assemblage

Planning innovations are best understood as reconfigurations of existing elements, rather than as inventions. The constituent elements themselves, like informal practices of spatial appropriation, regional development agencies, neighbourhood offices, or perimeter block constructions, remain unchanged. Instead, innovation is

defined by the novel way in which these elements are combined. From this perspective, novel reconfigurations occur in a kind of "primordial soup" comprised of already existing elements that have never before been combined to address a given problem. If this reconfiguration proves successful, then measures are taken to stabilise and later consolidate this innovation by establishing robust practical routines, while also making repeated adjust-

ments and modifications in response to criticisms.

Actors, networks and communities

Conspicuous was that impulses for innovations in spatial planning were always initiated by outsiders: whether by economists criticising a catch-up development approach to regional politics, or by urbanists criticising

modern-day urban development and architecture, or by social workers criticising neighbourhood rejuvenation programmes based on new construction only, or by civil society groups critical of vacant residential buildings, who consequently decided to occupy them. Particularly young spatial planners, who consider themselves progressives, are often inclined to take these criticisms to heart and develop new solutions using instruments from spatial planning. Often, powerful, like-minded local actors are identified who are conscious of the same problem and supportive of the new planning solution. In many cases, a kind of “patron” with institutional clout working in the background is also crucial to removing obstacles and implementing the solution. In successful instances, pioneers manage to inspire other early adopters to apply the same innovative planning procedure in different contexts. In later phases, the more conservative late adopters are also won over. Overall, innovations are sparked at the fringes of epistemic communities. Over time, a new group of experts (planners, scientific advisers, civil society actors) emerges around the core of the novel practise.

Institutions, institutionalisation and conflicts

Innovations always come up against institutions, that is to say, against established rules, laws or general habits of thinking. In light of these institutions, innovations may first seem merely unusual, or more commonly may appear unrealistic or even illegal. New ideas must thus develop in confrontation with established habits. Initially, successfully implementing innovations generally requires a patron and the granting of numerous exceptions in a delimited region for a certain time period only. If, however, these innovations gain support, then institutional change commences: institutions are modified so that they no longer obstruct the innovations (for example by amending laws). New insti-

tutions emerge that seek to normalise, standardise and codify the novel planning solution. At first, there is debate over soft institutions; terminologies are established, strategies created and good practise guidelines are identified. Later, efforts are made to enshrine these new practises by establishing strong institutions like official programmes, drafting and passing laws, and by revising academic curricula. Initial conflicts between spatial pioneers propagating new ideas and established actors defending existing procedures are later superseded by conflicts between different constellations of pioneers.

Spatial diffusion and upscaling

At first, the core elements of an innovation are widely dispersed across an area. There are few places in which all elements are available and utilisable. Areas in which innovations occurred are typically characterised by several factors: a problem and its effects are particularly pronounced and locally felt, traditional solutions have been applied many times unsuccessfully, thereby gradually losing legitimacy. “Local allies” are keen to try an alternative approach, and supportive patrons are in place who work to remove obstacles behind the scenes. The curiosity of other practitioners is awakened if, in this context, alternative problem-solv-



ing approaches prove successful. Ideas are disseminated through mutual visits and regional conferences. Initially, areas with similar problems benefit from these innovations. Over time,

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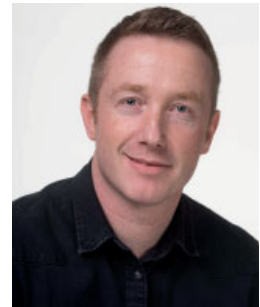
Oliver Ibert is head of the IRS research department “Dynamics of Economic Spaces” and holds a professorship for Economic Geography at the FU Berlin. In recent years, his research has focused on the spatiality of innovation processes. Together with his department, he has conducted several model projects on the origins and pathways of innovations and hence on the spatiality of knowledge generation.

regions with other problems profit as well. The process whereby an innovation is institutionalised, as described above, entails an “upscaling” meaning that innovative solutions gain support from and are modified by higher and higher levels of political administration, for instance in the context of EU programmes. In this way, regional innovations are modified and adapted to suit other areas, thereby sharing lessons learnt elsewhere. ■

International Perspectives on Innovations in Spatial Planning

"The conference has made several conceptual tensions apparent when it comes to analysing innovative planning and the mobility of such innovations. For instance, between planning and praxis, between agency and structure, and between perceived problems and planning solutions."

Prof. Eugene McCann, Simon Fraser University Vancouver



It is common to analyse technological progress and economic developments by taking into consideration the role of innovations. But can innovations also help explain fundamental changes in urban and spatial planning that belong to the realm of politics and administration? Looking back at the history of spatial planning reveals that planning processes and outcomes have always been in flux, along with the identities of spatial planners. Does this mean that the introduction of a pedestrian zone is best understood as an innovation, or simply as the reaction of planners to societal changes? On February 25th and 26th 2016 researchers presented their latest findings on questions like these at a DFG-funded international conference at the IRS in Erkner entitled "Innovations in Spatial Planning – Towards the Emergence and Mobility of Novel Approaches in Urban and Regional Planning". The researchers also debated the suitability of the notion of innovation for planning from an international perspective.

Prof. em. Dr. Patsy Healey (Newcastle University) and Prof. Dr. Eugene McCann (Simon Fraser University, Vancouver) each delivered a keynote speech. Organised into five thematic panels, participants from seven different nations discussed core conceptual issues in innovation research and the mobility of policy models. Researchers also debated empirical case studies from different national contexts focusing on social policy schemes tailored to specific neighbourhoods, on the development of new urban districts, on temporary uses of property in

urban planning, as well as on regional development. With support from the German Research Foundation (DFG), researchers from the IRS, the TU Berlin and the University of Stuttgart conducted case studies in the four fields of action in spatial planning in the context of the "Innoplan" research project and concluded that changes in planning ought to be understood as "social innovations". Such changes are closely tied to the initiative and creativity of planners. Discussions among conference attendees centred on causes of and conducive conditions for innova-

tive planning, how innovations become institutionalised in policy models, and how these spread nationally and internationally.

Prof. Dr. Gabriela Christmann, who co-organised the conference, concludes that innovation, understood as an analytical social scientific concept, is barely taken into consideration in international discourse on novelties in spatial planning. She heads the IRS research department on "Dynamics of Communication, Knowledge and Spatial Development" and leads an "Innoplan" research project. National institutional constellations strongly influence whether innovations in spatial planning prove suitable and applicable, says Prof. Dr. Christmann. Relatively stable planning systems, like German multilevel federalism, are better suited to implementing innovations than centralised planning systems, like the British polity, which react more turbulently to political change. Beyond the four case studies, dialogue amongst scholars has made it clear that lessons learnt in spatial planning are shared



"The notion of innovation and the concepts entailed are very complex and may be misleading if applied to spatial planning. It might be more helpful to analyse changes in everyday behaviours as gradual transitions rather than as innovations."

Prof. em. Patsy Healey, Newcastle University



across national borders. In particular, spatial planners look to other countries for inspiration. Yet new approaches to spatial planning are operationalised very differently, depending on the respective problem, institutional constellation and available resources in the region. This explains why innovative processes may have similar starting points but then develop in entirely

only to distinguish new from supposedly old approaches. New approaches are also debated and assessed from the perspective of professional benchmarks, which reveals the inherently political nature of spatial planning and indicates what practitioners consider “good” and “successful” planning. Usually, there is tacit agreement over these benchmarks, meaning that changes to planning rou-



"Social scientific perspectives on innovative spatial planning have proven to be very important. We as researchers must now critically reflect on our role within processes of innovation, and on the methods we use."

Dr. Claire Colomb, Bartlett School of Planning (UCL)

different directions. Moreover, conference attendees were wary that the notion of innovation has a normative connotation, says Thomas Honeck, who is a research associate in the “Dynamics of Communication, Knowledge and Spatial Development” department and works on the “InnoPlan” project. When innovations are debated in the context of spatial planning, this is done not

times also require a painstaking renegotiation of said benchmarks. Researchers face tough methodological challenges when studying planning innovations. Research strategies range from tracing the genesis and development of innovations, to applying methods of discourse analysis, to conducting in-depth case studies in different areas. ■



"Particularly when it comes spatial planning, it is crucial to consider the timing of innovation processes."

Prof. Stephen Ward, Oxford Brookes University

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The improbability of innovations in spatial planning

On the emergence and spread of the strategy of "regional learning"

When new political approaches become popular and spread elsewhere, this is usually portrayed as a success story. Yet against the backdrop of German regional planning, Franz Füg wonders about the obstacles that may hinder such innovations from spreading, and why the strategy of re-inventing German regions has nevertheless become a success.

Since the 1980s, a variety of elements have shaped German regional planning and have been fused into a reliable set of planning tools over the past years. Overall, it can be observed that development politics has been afforded greater importance than regulatory politics. This change resulted from a new perspective on the state as a cooperative actor, from demands for greater innovation in regional economic policy, and from an increasing role played by regional politics and culture in development processes. Ultimately, this has produced an approach in which financial incentives and economic competi-

tion shape inter-municipal cooperation. This occasionally grants private market actors and civil society a say in formulating planning objectives. This strategy of "regional learning" aims to help regions re-invent themselves and capitalise on regional identity, in order to attract business.

The "Innovation in Planning: How do new approaches emerge in spatial planning?" research project traces the emergence and spread of this new approach by conceptualising the biography of this innovation. It dates back to an unusual concept from the early 1980s that was

realised by combining existing planning tools. In the 1990s, the policy model was first applied in the industrial northern Ruhr region. It became popular amongst spatial planners and soon found application in a variety of contexts, including rural Saxony. In hindsight, the popularisation and spread of this approach seems like a inherently path-dependent process. Yet the involved actors perceived this process quite differently. From their perspective, uncertainties and coincidences dominated the course of events.

The emergence of new approaches to urban and regional planning greatly

depends on the traits of involved actors and on complex actor constellations. With regard to regional politics, academics played a crucial role by criticising traditional regional development models for emphasising catch-up development above all else. Yet academic insights fall on deaf ears unless they are compellingly communicated and provided spatial planners are sufficiently ambitious and open-minded to heed them. With regard to the “regional

learning” strategy, some spatial planners were able (and willing) to move back and forth between the world of academia and that of regional development politics, like “amphibians” (Woody Powell) switching habitats. Thereby, they helped bring together and benefit from academic insights and lessons learnt in spatial planning (“innovative milieus” are a good example for this).

Support from high-ranking political actors is highly advantageous to the implementation of new policy models.

quently, regional actors found themselves with their “backs to the wall” and were willing to try an entirely different approach given their desperation. This highlights that innovative policy models are more likely to gain support when regions are afflicted by complex problems affecting many. Which could be said for the northern Rhine region in the late 1980s where the detrimental effects of structural change were apparent. Support from high-ranking political

actors is also highly advantageous to the implementation of new policy models. Johannes Rau, the governor of North Rhine-Westphalia at the time and Christoph Zöpel, the then minister for urban planning, played such a role in the context of the IBA Emscher Park. Together, they shielded the new policy approach from criticisms and thereby helped it become a success.

Several important conditions must be met for innovative policy models to spread and find application in and be modification to different local contexts. Opportunities to apply new policy models must present themselves and must be made use of at the appropriate time. The case study on “regional learning” also suggests that new approaches are

It is a challenge to implement innovative planning models for the first time. The International Architecture Exhibition (IBA) Emscher Park (held from 1989-1999 in the northern Ruhr region), meanwhile, is considered an important prototype for the implementation of novel planning models. The reason this innovative approach succeeded here was because several conducive factors were in place. Among these: local and regional actors open to new approaches and hence willing to back progressive spatial planners.

Prior to IBA Emscher Park, talks with local planners had already prepared them for the new policy model. Also, local resistance to the new approach had been weakened, which is always advantageous to implementing new planning models.

Observers described the mood in late 1980s Ruhr region as one of “dispair”. Conventional development approaches had been tried, yet to no avail. Conse-

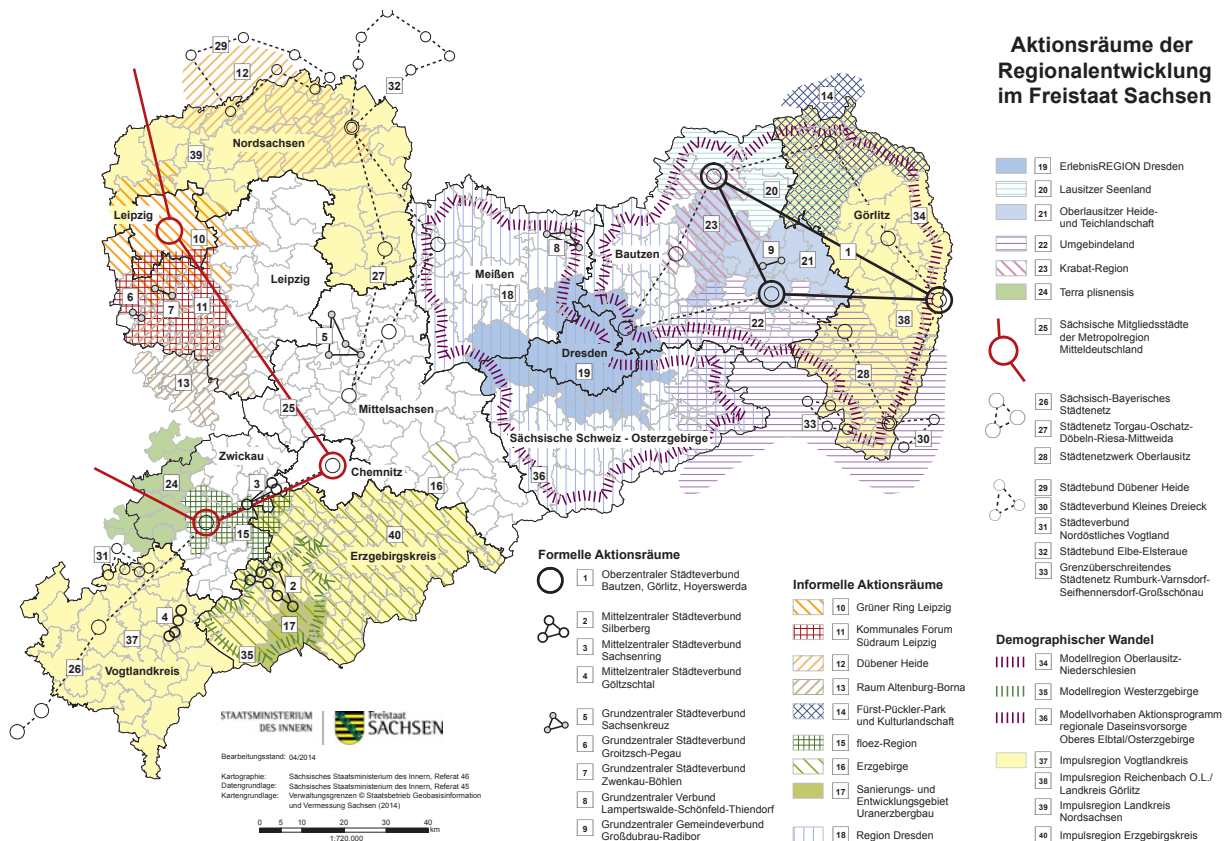
While innovative concepts can spread and find application in far-flung regions (where they are modified to suit local contexts), there are also limits to this process. The spreading of the “regional learning” strategy, for instance, entailed the dissemination of principles on how to innovate spatial planning. Specifically, these principles recommended cooperating closely with other munic-

is why the “regional learning” strategy soon spread from the industrial northern Ruhr region to the equally industrial Saarland region.

During the late 1990s, regions of the former German Democratic Republic (GDR) that had been integrated into reunified Germany were busy restructuring their economies and rebuilding political institutions. This period of upheaval made it difficult for them to adopt and apply strategies of “regional learning”. After some delay, however, spatial planners in these regions began engaging with their counterparts in the former West Germany. In this way, planners in these regions gradually developed an interest in and became “receptive” to the strategy of “regional learning”. The IBA Urban Redevelopment Saxony-Anhalt and IBA Fürst-Pückler-Land are manifestations of this. Geographically remote and institutionally disparate regions like Saxony, meanwhile, were cautious and applied only few elements of the “regional learning” strategy, as evidenced by Saxony’s “funding directive for regional action frameworks and pilot projects of spatial planning” (FR Regio). This new kind of regional planning varied considerably depending on local contexts and created unique legal and financial conditions in each. This made it impossible for a standard set of planning instruments and procedures, let alone a universal label, to develop.

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While innovative concepts can spread and find application in far-flung regions (where they are modified to suit local contexts), there are also limits to this process. The spreading of the “regional learning” strategy, for instance, entailed the dissemination of principles on how to innovate spatial planning. Specifically, these principles recommended cooperating closely with other munic-



Impulsregionen (gelb) in Sachsen sind Lernende Regionen auf Grundlage der FR Regio und so in ein System verschiedener Förderinstrumente eingebunden.

ipalities, and conceptualising long-term development paths. Actual policies, however, which are devised by planners, national as well as municipal administrations, remain subject to heated debate in political commissions. Even so and against all odds, spatial planners often succeed in convincing political leaders of novel approaches, thereby contributing to their success. Meanwhile, IBA Emscher Park has been superseded by the REGIONALE programme which facilitates regional development in different regions of

North Rhine-Westphalia. Currently, the programme is being applied in western Münsterland for a duration of three years. It is characterised by the involvement of pro-active citizens and their willingness to learn. In Saxony, by contrast, the “regional learning” strategy is characterised by the more top-down, administrative nature of FR Regio. Here, rural districts compete for the status of “impulse regions” in order to be awarded funds to implement regional plans to address the challenges of demographic change. ■

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Current Temporary Use Projects Reveal that Facebook Plays a Part in Shaping our Cities

Jan Zwilling spoke to Thomas Honeck about the wild, early days of temporary uses of property, the influence of social media on such projects and the current opportunities to temporarily house refugees. Together with Prof. Dr. Gabriela Christman, Thomas Honeck works on the Innoplan sub-project entitled "Spatial pioneers and temporary uses of property".

What makes temporary uses unique in the context of innovations in spatial planning?

Temporary uses of property can be understood as particular patterns of planning innovations. These practices, which can be partially traced to the squatter movement and artistic milieus, have been re-interpreted and modified by spatial planners to suit different challenges. In a nutshell: yesterday's criminals are today's creative people. Our research examines the last 25 years of temporary uses. It has revealed that spatial planners initially deemed temporary uses useful only in a limited number of locations. Later, plan-

ners became willing to experiment with diverse temporary use projects (which often had a cultural agenda) in different contexts. Nowadays, temporary uses have partially become accepted tools of spatial planning in Germany. This is also manifested in an amendment of the federal building code.

What do you mean by different contexts?

Nowadays, political geographers assume that spatial planners develop a common understanding of planning instruments only once these are applied to different problems in different locations. We wanted to know whether this

assumption also holds true regarding temporary uses in Germany. In this effort, we examined the temporary use of property in two cities that in many respects are polar opposites, namely Berlin and Stuttgart. After reunification, Berlin had many vacant plots of land and disused buildings, presenting ideal conditions for temporary uses thereof. Stuttgart, in contrast, has a tense housing market and is defined by a different regional context. Despite this difference, Stuttgart's municipal agency for economic development organises temporary uses of property.

Does this mean temporary use projects developed differently in Berlin and Stuttgart?

Exactly. Stuttgart's "Fluxus" project, for example, is a shopping mall that has changing temporary uses. As in a shopping centre, these temporary uses are coordinated by a kind of manager. Early temporary uses in reunified Berlin, by contrast, were organised in a much more informal manner. As Berlin's housing market has become more tense in recent years, spatial planners have changed their perspective on temporary uses projects. Unlike Stuttgart and other German cities, Berlin provides very little institutional support for temporary use projects. Despite these obstacles, Berlin remains at the forefront when it comes to innovative temporary uses.

What makes Berlin unique with regard to temporary uses?

Other cities often look to Berlin for inspiration in devising tools for supporting temporary uses of property. At times, Berlin and its politics are idealised. We have several explanations for this. On the one hand, post-reunification Berlin presented fertile ground for a young generation of urbanists to fuse the fields of urban planning, culture, academia and activism. Through their academic research and publications, these actors had a strong impact on debates over and the perception of temporary uses in Germany. On the other hand, Berlin has always had highly visible temporary use projects. Good examples are the much discussed temporary use projects on the premises of former Tempelhof airport.

Are there other ways by which temporary uses as tools of spatial planning have spread throughout Germany?

Our research has shown that social media has a great impact on the dissemination of these ideas. Current temporary use projects show that Facebook

plays a part in shaping our cities. We have also observed that many urban gardening projects are connected to and in dialogue with other national and international projects using social media. Cities and municipalities, in turn, often look to local projects when it comes to refining funding schemes and planning instruments. We are currently studying these indirect trans-local influences on spatial planning more closely.

What role do temporary uses of property play in an international context?

Ali Madanipour, who holds a professorship for Urban Design at Newcastle University, held a highly insightful lecture on this question at the IRS "InnoPlan" conference in late February. In Britain, much more so than in Germany, temporary uses must be understood as strategies of raising real estate value. When it comes to temporary uses

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of space in a global context, this also includes informal settlements in megacities. This illustrates the importance of precisely defining what is meant by temporary use. Also, research on innovative planning needs a clearly defined geographical focus. The subject of temporary uses has acquired a whole new meaning now that many refugees are applying for asylum in Germany. Properties must now be transformed into temporary living quarters. Similar to urban restructuring, spatial planners

now face entirely new challenges that require creative solutions that will impact the innovation processes that we are studying.

Thank you for the interview, Mr Honeck! ■



Balancing the Local and the Universal: Area-based Approaches and Neighbourhood Management in Spatial Planning Practice

The InnoPlan project also examines the genesis, spread and institutionalisation of the area-based planning approach of neighbourhood management (NM) in Germany. The research has a small-scale spatial focus. NM applies integrated concepts tailored to regenerating cities and urban neighbourhoods and combines conventional instruments of urban regeneration like investments in construction with social, cultural, economic and ecological measures to form integrated action plans. It integrates different levels and departments of administration (vertical), as well as actors from politics and civil society (horizontal).

Today, NM is considered an essential instrument of the German urban development promotion programme “Städtebauförderung”. It has become a widespread planning procedure since 1999, when the so-called “Social City approach” (Soziale Stadt) was initiated by the German government and the federal states to stabilise deprived urban neighbourhoods. The scheme

gave rise to formal and informal norms at the federal level (which, for example, were enshrined in the federal building code, in eligibility criteria for funding, in guidelines and guiding concepts) and established NM as an instrument in German spatial planning. Despite this institutionalisation, “InnoPlan” researcher Oliver Koczy has shown with two case studies on Duisburg

and Hamburg that, among other things, no universal blueprint for implementing NM and area-based approaches exists. With regard to implementing NM, municipalities and even urban districts have taken entirely divergent paths. This highlights the role of specific local factors and path-dependencies in planning processes.

This raises the question of the extent to which the local and universal are in tension when it comes to the emergence of innovations in spatial planning. Differences aside, which commonalities can be identified in urban development policies across different cities and towns? And is it possible to identify a core set of characteristics that define innovations in contemporary practice in fundamental distinction to the old mode of urban planning?

The variety of terms used in this context allude to the above questions. While “neighbourhood management” is the term most commonly used by municipalities, other terms are in use also, for instance “district management”, “district coordination”, “area supervision”, “neighbourhood agency” or “neighbourhood curation”. Yet, the terms on this seemingly broad list all have two central elements in common:

A spatial reference: The terms “neighbourhood”, “district” and “area” all refer to a concrete space and thereby indicate where a scheme will take effect. Moreover, these spatial references define the area covered and emphasise the local, small-scale focus of a scheme. The designated areas do not necessarily coincide with political or correspond to statistical boundaries. Instead, they are derived from the way neighbourhoods are subjectively perceived in everyday life. Neighbourhoods are a residential population's immediate environment and provide a frame of reference and sense of identity. A neighbourhood's specific social and architectural traits constitute its unique character. Consequently, area-based approaches devise plans and development goals specifically tailored to each district. Neighbourhoods and their residents are regarded not as problems but as endogenous resources and potential part of the solution.

Reference to an intermediary organisation: All notions make reference to the way in which such schemes are organised, be this by way of “management”, “coordination”, “curation” or “supervision”. Neighbourhood man-

agement schemes are not directly devised and instituted by municipal administrations. Rather, they are situated at the centre of complex development processes and connect involved actors, spheres of activity and financial means. Integrated action plans are implemented incrementally through individual tasks. Neighbourhood management schemes coordinate and oversee these incremental tasks and ensure that long-term goals are attained. In this way, these schemes function like intermediaries between all involved actors. In particular, they mediate between top-down levels of politics and administration, and grass-roots civil society actors active in the respective neighbourhoods. In this constellation, neighbourhood management schemes adopt a neutral position.

Neighbourhood management approaches are utilised, for instance, to develop new housing estates, to improve high streets, or for the energetic refurbishment of entire urban areas.

Local differences aside, all neighbourhood management approaches have in common a small-scale spatial focus and that they operate as intermediaries. These commonalities are typical for this kind of innovative spatial planning and radically distinguish it from urban refurbishment schemes of previous times. Nowadays, neighbourhood management schemes are no longer exclusively applied in the context of social urban development policy programmes tailored to specific neighbourhoods, but are also used by

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spatial planners in entirely different situations for a variety of purposes. For instance, neighbourhood management approaches are also utilised to develop new housing estates, to improve high streets, or for the energetic refurbishment of entire urban areas. The popularisation and further development of neighbourhood management schemes illustrates that innovations emerge continuously and are not finished with the establishment and institutionalisation of novelties. ■





Housing estates in German and Austrian and the intricacies of language

Urban planners and developers have always drawn inspiration from their peers in other countries. This is why the IRS conference on "Innovations in Spatial Planning – Towards the Emergence and Mobility of Novel Approaches in Urban and Regional Planning" in late February 2016 dedicated great attention to processes whereby political concepts and innovations spread to other linguistic and cultural realms. In her dissertation, Daniela Zupan examines the "language barriers" that can emerge when concepts and innovations are transferred to different linguistic and cultural contexts. She currently works as a research fellow at the University of Stuttgart and on the Innoplan project. Her dissertation is tied to the Innoplan project and builds on a comparative study of planning and constructing urban quarters in Germany and Austria.

The paradigm of large housing estates that was characteristic for late modernity has been superseded by one championing compact mixed-use urban quarters. Daniela Zupan conceptualises this transition as an innovation in urban planning. Large housing estates were predominately built during the 1950s and 1970s (examples include Neue Vahr estate in Bremen, Nordweststadt estate in Frankfurt, as well as Per Albin Hansson and Großfeldsiedlung estates in Vienna). Since the 1990s, it has become more common to establish compact mixed-use urban quarters (for instance Riem district in Munich,

Rieselfeld district in Freiburg, as well as Vienna's Sonnwendviertel and Seestadt Aspern districts). This article illustrates major differences between both approaches to urban development by pinpointing terms and connotations typical for each. They were identified by using discourse analytical methods to examine German and Austrian journals published between 1960 and 2010

"Emmental cheese" and "Neapolitan wafers"

The tradition of constructing large housing estates catalysed the transi-

tion towards a new paradigm of urban development. By the late 1950s, critics began attacking the most common types of housing estates built in West Germany (FRG) and Austria. In the FRG, a pamphlet was published condemning the "inhospitality of cities" and in Austria Hundertwasser released the so-called "mould manifesto". Increasingly, post-war housing estates were being dismissed as faceless and inhumane. Yet despite such criticism, Austria's perforated facade estates were being referred to almost lovingly as "Emmental cheese housing", while the later window-band estates were

dubbed “Neapolitan wafers”. Unlike their West German peers, Austrian critics were unable to dominate the discourse. There are ideological explanations for this. While West German journals were increasingly distancing themselves from East German (GDR) housing development, Austrian journals were more open to publishing alternative perspectives. For instance, urban development professor Joachim Bach from Weimar was given a platform to speak out against the wholesale rejection of large housing estates.

“Large housing estate” versus “large housing complex”

By the late 1970s, West Germany's critical discourse gradually subsided. From the mid-1980s onwards, however, the so-called “refurbishment discourse” emerged and brought with it a resurgence of critical voices. Now, it was being widely debated whether housing estates should be refurbished or demolished. Ultimately, these discussions thoroughly discredited the urban development paradigm of the time. The scandal surrounding the “Neue Heimat” building company added to this. And so did abandoning the principle of public interest in West German housing development. Moreover, in 1994 German parliament published a “housing estate report” in which it declared large housing estates typical for post-war housing development (in the FRG and GDR), thereby essentially labelling them anachronistic.

In contrast to Germany, Austria's critical discourse became much tamer by 1970s and subsided almost entirely a decade later. Municipalities and non-profit housing development companies continued their social housing programmes and were keen to maintain the good reputation of their housing stock, even though refurbishment work was being undertaken. The terms and “frames” used in Austrian discourse also differed greatly from those used in Germany. Of the 1,000 articles published in Austrian journals and examined for this study, only one had the term “large housing estate” in

its title (whereas the term was used in 30 titles of 1,430 articles from West German journals examined for this study). The respective Austrian article refers to a study from 1991 that investigated large Austrian housing estates in light of “worrying developments in large housing estates in other European countries”. The authors paid close attention to linguistic nuances and revealed that large housing estates had been built in Austria not just in the post-war period but throughout the entire 20th century. In this way, they were able to link Red Vienna's municipal tenement complexes and housing estates from the 1970s and 1980s, thereby highlighting the long history of “large housing complexes” in Austria. By doing so, the authors contributed to a more favourable “framing” of post-war housing estates.



Residuals of modernity and “trouble hotspots”

Since the 1990s, Germany and Austria have largely followed the new paradigm of urban development championing compact mixed-use urban quarters. But despite many commonalities, significant differences remain between the two countries regarding the way in which urban districts are built and how discourses have unfolded. In establishing new urban districts, Germans took their cue from Historicism, while Austrians drew on a variety of inspirations and approaches. This made possible the construction of modernist housing estates that would not have been possible in Germany at the time. Examples include Ennsfeld estate (1992-1997) in the Ebelsberg district of Linz by archi-

tect Franz Riepl and Wohnpark Neue Donau (1996-1999), a housing estate in Vienna designed by architect Harry Seidler.

Linguistic differences are also apparent in the German and Austrian discourses. Germans are keen to avoid newly built housing estates being labelled “trouble hotspots”, whereas the official masterplan for Vienna's Seestadt Aspern district (under construction since 2010) explicitly refers to the area as an “urban hotspot”. In the Austrian context, “hotspot” has a neutral connotation (referring to a lively area) and takes its cue from old urban centres nearby. In German discourse, the term “hotspot” has an entirely different and much more negative connotation. ■

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8th IRS International Lecture on Society and Space

Expulsions: brutality and complexity in the global economy

Guest lecture by
Saskia Sassen at the IRS
in February 2016

Saskia Sassen's guest lecture on February 16th 2016 at the Leibniz-Institute for Research on Society and Space (IRS) was well-attended. Some 80 guests flocked to the conference hall to listen to the internationally renowned sociologists and urban researcher. Her talk was held as part of the „IRS International Lectures on Society and Space“ and focused on her latest book „Expulsions: Brutality and Complexity in the Global Economy“. The book has been translated into German (titled „Ausgrenzungen: Brutalität und Komplexität in der globalen Wirtschaft“) and was published by Fischer Wissenschaft in autumn 2015.

Saskia Sassen is the Robert S. Lynd professor of sociology at Columbia University, where she also chairs the committee on global thought. Currently, Sassen is a visiting professor at the London School of Economics. She has become famous and won acclaim for her research on globalisation and migration. Over the past years, Sassen has published several books that have received international

praise. Among them "The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo" (1991), "Territory, Authority, Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages" (2006), as well as "A Sociology of Globalization" (2007).

In her lecture, Sassen drew on arguments made in her latest book "Expulsions: Brutality and Complexity in the Global Economy". She talked about the rise in global inequality, extreme income disparities, the refugee crisis, and grave environmental problems. Sassen conceptualises these issues as expulsions that, in part, result from accelerated financial flows. To her, concepts like poverty or inequality no longer adequately capture the problems of our globalised world. Sassen regards the problems of our times as systemic in that they affect all aspects of human life with an unprecedented degree of brutality. She identifies potentials for urban renewal on the local level, meanwhile. Prof. Dr. Margit Mayer (Center for Metropolitan Studies, TU Berlin) served as a discussant after the talk and Prof. Dr. Felicitas Hillmann (IRS) moderated the event. ■

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New research project
Fostering creative processes
by reducing, tolerating or
amplifying the concomitant
"uncertainty"?



As of summer of 2016, economists from the Freie Universität Berlin (FU Berlin) will coordinate a DFG research unit entitled "Organized Creativity: Practices for Inducing and Coping with Uncertainty".

It will investigate whether and to what degree creative processes can be organised in an arts-based and a science-based field. The research unit brings together scholars from universities in Berlin, Hamburg, Duisburg-Essen, Frankfurt (Oder), Innsbruck and Linz. IRS research Prof. Dr. Oliver Ibert will work on the research unit as well.

"Creativity" has emerged as the mantra of our times. Nowadays, individuals, companies, entire cities, regions and countries are expected to be creative. In the early 2000s, the cultural and creative sectors were championed as drivers of economic growth in resource-poor industrial nations. Today, creativity is propagated for all aspects of life as a means of coping with an increasingly complex and unpredictable world. Rather than hope for occasional strokes of genius, creativity is now regarded as something ordinary that can be organised. And yet, much of what we know today about the genesis of creative processes stems from psychological research on individual and group behaviour. This is why the German Research Foundation (DFG) is supporting this new, interdisciplinary research unit with almost 2 million euros to develop a "theory of organized creativity". Prof. Dr. Jörg Sydow from the FU Berlin will act as the unit's spokesperson.

The research unit is comprised of scholars from the fields of management and organisation research, sociology and economic geography. They share a common theoretical framework and an empirical research agenda that is harmonised across and connects the unit's sub-projects. On a theoretical level, the unit seeks to discern

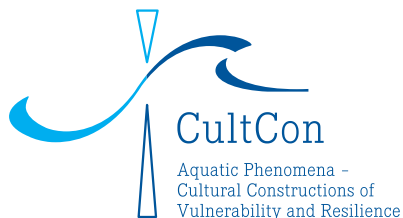
whether it is possible to cope with and control the uncertainty that inevitably arises in creative processes. This entails studying how and when different degrees of uncertainty foster creative processes. This focus on uncertainty stems from the researchers' shared background in organisational theory. They share the belief that the existence of organisations and inter-organisational networks, like all efforts of self-organisation, should be understood first and foremost as means of coping with uncertainty. Nevertheless, so far little is known about specific strategies of dealing with uncertainty in the context of creative processes. Tolerating or deliberately fostering uncertainty are crucial yet hitherto hardly understood mechanisms of dealing with uncertainty. The unit's sub-projects analyse and compare creative processes in the music and pharma industry in different German regions.

Each sub-project is headed by an interdisciplinary team of researchers. Prof. Dr. Oliver Ibert, who heads the IRS research department on the "Dynamics of Economic Spaces" and holds a professorship for economic geography at the FU Berlin, will contribute his expertise on the effects of spatial factors on creative processes to the research unit. As a precursor to the constitution of the research unit, Ibert organised an international conference entitled "Creativity in Arts and Sciences: Collective processes from a spatial perspective" in May 2015. During the first funding phase, Ibert will co-direct the "Governance of Creativity: Distributing Uncertainty in Collaboration Practices" sub-project together with Prof. Dr. Gregory Jackson (FU Berlin, Management). Over the course of three years, two doctoral students (one of whom will be working at the IRS) will study creative processes in the music industry and in the development of drugs in the pharmaceutical industry. "It will be interesting to see how different organisations balance certainty and uncertainty in creative processes," says Ibert. "While uncertainty implies freedom to experiment, surprises and spontaneity this may mean making workflows less predictable and thereby undermine cooperation with others." Two further sub-projects (including IRS researchers) on this subject are planned, provided the research unit is awarded an additional three years of funding. ■

www.wiwiss.fu-berlin.de/
forschung/organized-creativity/
index.html

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**New research project
German and Polish
perceptions of threatening
aquatic phenomena in
the Odra river region: the
significance of culture-
specific knowledge systems**



The Odra river and the potential threat it represents to neighbouring regions became widely discussed topics following the Great Odra Flood of 1997 and the so-called Flood of the Century in 2002. Floods entered the socio-cultural discourses on either sides of the river and thereby affected the subjective perception of vulnerability in the German cities of Eisenhüttenstadt and Frankfurt (Oder), and in the Polish cities of Słubice and Wrocław. In May 2016, a new research project was initiated by scholars from the IRS and the Institute of Literary Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences (PAN) to study how socio-cultural factors influence perceptions of vulnerability. Moreover, the researchers also seek to examine how these factors impact the social construction of resilience, and to study the effects of discourses on natural phenomena.

The project addresses a research gap in the field of vulnerability and resilience research. “We know little about how different cultural contexts affect the social construction of vulnerability and resilience,” explains Prof. Dr. Gabriela Christmann who heads the project. “Our PROGRESS project has already shown that local communities develop specific perceptions of vulnerabilities and of potential resilience measures. Analyses of newspapers from coastal regions and their coverage of climate change phenomena provided evidence for this.” Now, the new research project seeks to analyse how literary and mass media discourses in Germany and Po-

land contributed to establishing unique, culture-specific knowledge systems regarding the Odra region. In a second step, elaborate surveys and expert interviews will be conducted to assess if these culture-specific knowledge systems actually impact citizen's and expert's perceptions of vulnerability and resilience, and if these have an influence on flood control measures on either side of the river. “The project will conduct basic research in the sense that it will use empirical evidence to test hitherto largely unchallenged hypotheses from discourse analysis,” says Christmann. “This will also allows us to gain insights on the way in which culture-specific knowledge systems impact societal behaviours and long-term strategies.”

The CultCon project is supported by the DFG “Beethoven” Funding Initiative in the Humanities and Social Sciences for Polish-German research, and by the Polish National Science Centre (NCN). It will run for two years. Aside from Prof. Dr. Christmann, IRS researchers Thorsten Heimann and Kamil Bembnista will also work on the project, as well as Dr. Anna Orzechowska-Barcz and two further researchers from the Institute of Literary Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences (PAN). The CultCon project is collaborative research endeavour between Polish and German scholars and brings together the disciplines of social science and humanities. Germany's Leibniz Association and the Polish Academy of Sciences (PAN) already have an existing partnership which helps foster this collaborative endeavour. ■

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Recently published
Resilient cities and
the role of infrastructure
and civil society



Societies have always been forced to assess and deal with risk. In modern societies, meanwhile, awareness of potential risks has increased because many man-made systems have proven harder to control than anticipated, and because awareness of potentially risky causal relationships is on the rise. Elaborate debates on risk and sustainability since the 1980s are manifestations of these developments. "These debates seem to focus on cities because they are dense urban centres with complex infrastructural links that are dependent on technological, social, economic and political structures and processes," explains IRS director Prof. Dr. Heiderose Kilper. Together with department heads Prof. Dr. Gabriela Christmann and Prof. Dr. Oliver Ibert, she has recently pub-

communicate about and then assess potential risks. We regard resilience as a social construct, too. It describes the way in which societies act to protect the functionality of elements perceived to be vulnerable." In cities, measures to increase resilience aim to ensure "stability" when multiple risks can lead to crisis. Such efforts seek to ensure that systems deemed essential keep functioning or quickly resume functioning in times of crisis. Measures like these depend on careful analyses of vulnerabilities and the inter-dependence of vulnerable systems.

The authors conclude their report with summaries of what typically defines resilient systems and with concrete recommendations in order to allow urban planners and politicians to benefit from their research. "It became apparent that systems with varied, redundant, flexi-

„It became apparent that systems with varied, redundant, flexible and potentially innovative structures have a high potential for being resilient.“

lished a detailed report analysing whether the concepts of vulnerability and resilience are suitable for studying risks and appropriate counter-measures. The report was published in the context of the research forum on public safety (Forschungsforum Öffentliche Sicherheit). It presents the latest research findings on the resilience and vulnerability of cities, suggests ways of enhancing both concepts by adding constructivist insights, and examines in detail factors that may enhance urban resilience. With regard to enhancing resilience in modern cities, special attention is given to critical infrastructures (like energy grids, water networks and traffic links) and the potentials civil society.

"We were able to further develop the notions of vulnerability and resilience on a conceptual level," says Christmann. "We regard vulnerability as a social construct in the sense that societies select,

ble and potentially innovative structures have a high potential for being resilient," summarises Ibert. So the more resilient technological systems will quickly return to their status-quo, whereas more resilient social systems are characterised by constant innovation and flexibility. The authors therefore recommend strengthening local networks of self-organising citizens and including citizens in collaborative planning.

CHRISTMANN, Gabriela B.; KILPER, Heiderose; IBERT, Oliver: Die resiliente Stadt in den Bereichen Infrastrukturen und Bürgergesellschaft. Schriftenreihe Forschungsforum Öffentliche Sicherheit Nr. 19, 2016. Berlin: Freie Universität Berlin ■

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Recently published
From clusters to open
regions: a new paradigm for
promoting regional innovation



Regional innovations are considered drivers of economic growth and means of securing competitive advantages. For over two decades, the cluster model has served as a paradigm for policies promoting such innovations, albeit with mixed results. IRS scholars have reviewed several research projects on this subject and distilled lessons on how to improve policies promoting regional innovation from them. A recently published working paper identifies core problems associated with the cluster approach and in turn suggests a new paradigm for promoting innovation through regional development. The researchers refer to this new paradigm as the “open region” approach.

The “open region” paradigm breaks with assumptions held by the cluster model and instead builds on three new premises. Firstly, the “open region” paradigm no longer deems geographical proximity crucial to processes of innovation given the possibilities provided by the internet to interact and communicate regardless of geographical location. Secondly, it builds on recent research that has shown processes of innovation to be mobile, multi-local, and organised over great distances. Consequently, innovations are not bound to regions. Thus, regions are better understood as areas where innovations originate, pass through or as “local anchors” for innovations. Thirdly and lastly, the open region paradigm rejects focusing on companies and technological product innovations, as the cluster approach does. Instead, the open region paradigm

now also considers users, communities of practitioners and individuals engaged in the cultural sector crucial to processes of regional innovation. As such, it also focuses on innovations in services and processes.

“We have formulated an updated paradigm for pro-active political measures seeking to reshape the dialectic between territorial and institutional openness and isolation. The aim of this new paradigm is to create and utilise opportunities for regional innovation,” says Prof. Dr. Oliver Ibert who heads the IRS research department “Dynamics of Economic Spaces”. The recommended measures can potentially strengthen the capacity of regional actors to undertake innovations. They can also support regional innovation-driven processes and may find application throughout all tiers of multi-level governance. This means that on the municipal and inter-municipal level regions may be targeted as realms where innovations may be promoted. By the same token, incentives for regional innovation may also originate from the state or international level.

MÜLLER, Felix; BRINKS, Verena; IBERT, Oliver; SCHMIDT, Sunitje: *Open Region: Leitbild für eine regionale Innovationspolitik. Working Paper Nr. 53, Erkner: Leibniz-Institut für Regionalentwicklung und Strukturplanung, 2015, 35 Seiten*

✚ The working paper is available for download from the IRS website

IMPRINT

IRS AKTUELL No 13, March 2017
ISSN 0944 7377

Publisher:



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The contributions in this newsletter are a
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