



**Politecnico
di Torino**

ScuDo

Scuola di Dottorato ~ Doctoral School

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Doctoral Dissertation
Doctoral Program in Architecture. History and projects. (35th Cycle)

Community-led housing development. A key ingredient for a new housing architecture and policy.

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Politecnico di Torino
2023

Declaration

I hereby declare that, the contents and organization of this dissertation constitute my own original work and does not compromise in any way the rights of third parties, including those relating to the security of personal data.

Silvia Cafora, 10th February 2023

* This dissertation is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for **Ph.D. degree** in the Graduate School of Politecnico di Torino (ScuDo).

I would like to dedicate this thesis to GennyZu, my beloved mum.

Acknowledgment

I would like to acknowledge the doctoral school DASP for welcoming me and allowing me to pursue this research. I thank Professor Marco Trisciuglio for opening my eyes and my tutor Professor Matteo Robiglio for showing me new ways. I thank my co-tutor Professor Gaia Caramellino for her lucid vision and reading. I thank all the professors of the doctoral school for their dedicated attention and willingness to trigger thought.

In these years of extraordinary supernovae for my life, I thank and take with me GennyZu, my beloved mother, Laura Cionci, friend and sister, and dear uncle Peppo.

I thank all the friends and family who have supported me and been close to me, especially Marco Cafora, my very dear brother.

I thank all the communities that have welcomed me in Europe and the many scattered 'dialogue-makers' that share this passion with me.

Abstract

The cities of the future require resilient, inclusive, and accessible housing solutions, but currently, the housing system in Europe, as in Italy, is in crisis. Housing is an issue that has never found a -definitive- solution. The challenges of mature societies, from the demographic shift to the fragmentation of nuclei, are today aggravated by the financialization of real estate and the inability to scale innovative solutions.

In the last fifteen years, housing has gone through a new phase that creates unprecedented socio-economic inequalities and exacerbates exclusionary dynamics. It returns the result of a long and paradoxical process of deconstructing its nature as a common good.

Increasingly, residential real estate is treated as a commodity, given the interference in the real estate sector by finance that turns houses and homes into financial and liquid assets (Rolnik, 2019).

From the point of view of the right to housing, according to the European Committee for Social Rights, the shortage of affordable housing in Europe is a severe and growing problem. The difficulties related to housing access are no longer characteristic of the most fragile segments of the population but also of the so-called middle class and young people. Thus emerges the need for a new and radical approach to the issue of 'Inhabiting' in order to respond to the new housing needs and capable of addressing two substantial issues: the expansion of the right of access to housing and the creation of an urban and human ecology through the deployment of renewed economic, social, political, architectural and sensitive strategies to the new family contexts.

In Europe, alternative housing models triggered and self-managed by local communities that put into practice new imaginaries from emerging local needs are increasingly gaining a voice. Active communities have been working since the early 1990s towards transforming real estate from a commodity to a common good, thus restoring its original nature (Horlitz, 2012). They activate social market circuits within residual welfare regimes, creatively use existing economic and legal instruments, and activate the public actor in the process of mutual exchange and support to sustain collaborative forms of housing.

Several community-led housing projects recognized internationally as exemplary practices for their national rootedness and diffusion, their consolidated models of housing affordability and social inclusion, and their potential to be replicable on different territories seem to set new vectors for a Housing Transition (Cafora, 2020).

Among them, the German Mietshauser Syndikat, the Community Land Trusts in Europe, the Catalan Housing Cooperatives in Transfer of Use, and the Swiss New Cooperatives, activate the production of a renewed lexicon of housing.

There is also growing consideration by public actors in cities, the scientific community in the sector developing various European research networks such as ENHR, Urbact, and Co-Lab, and housing actors.

What answers do these projects provide to the growing and changing demand for housing? Do they trigger or produce an effective alternative within non-universalistic welfare regimes?

What role does and could civic activism play? What is the contribution of architecture?

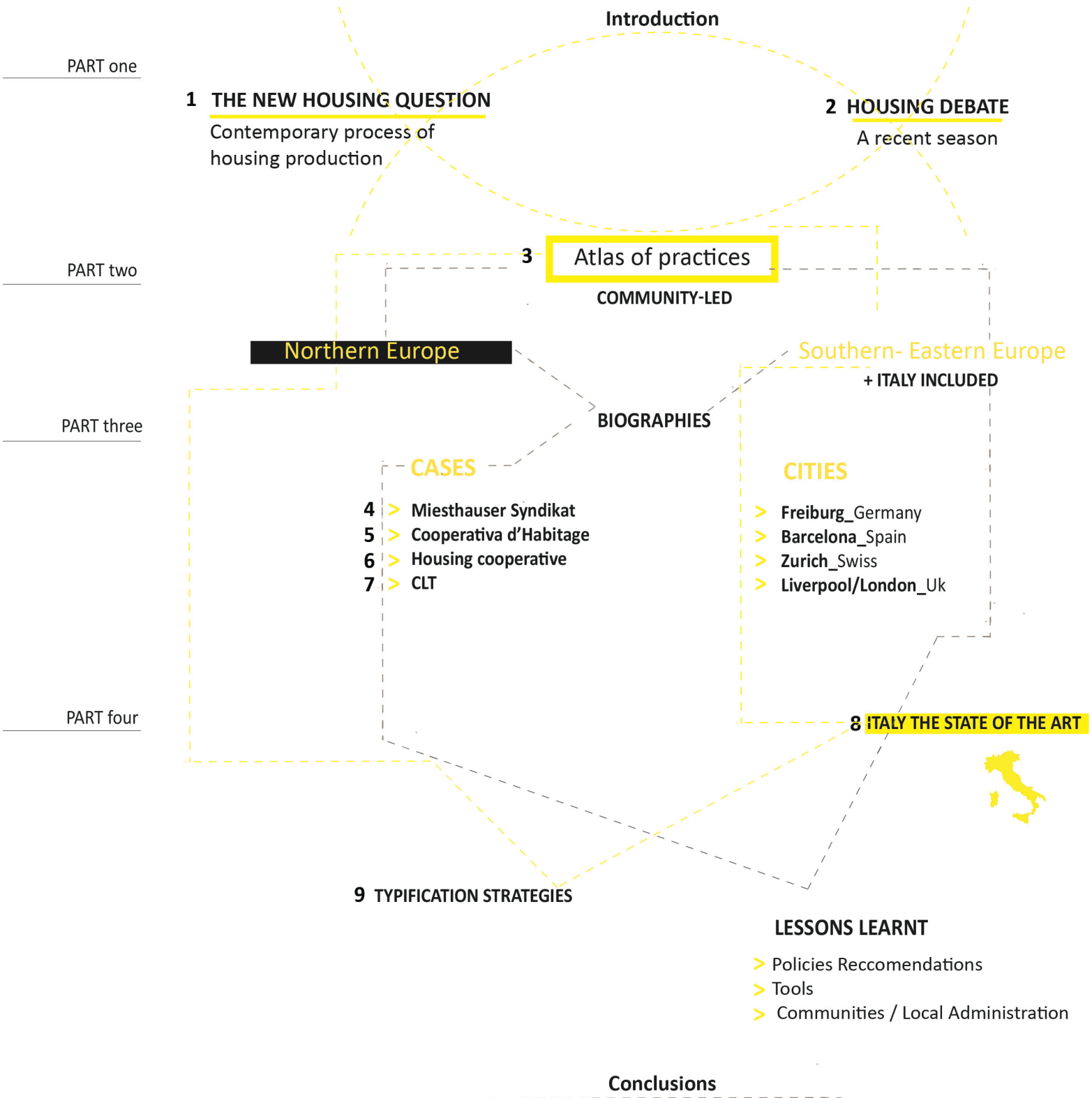


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Introduction

Housing is a Messy Subject.

This is the insight of Professor Michael Atiyah, the greatest mathematician after Isaac Newton, that opened the international symposium *A Global strategy for Housing in the third millennium* in the UK¹. Another speaker, John P. Eberhard, professor of Architecture and Planning², said that “it is time to add swiftly to design codes and concrete testing procedures a call for a new paradigm of housing research, based on housing rights”³.

The *housing question* shapes itself in every historical moment, confronting the present needs and criticalities. Today, on the one hand, it is a challenging moment in housing history due to the acute housing crisis that culminated in 2008, which generated exclusionary socio-economic dynamics and a shrinking of housing access and right (Rolnik 2019). According to the European Committee for Social Rights, the scarcity of affordable Housing in Europe is a serious and growing problem that drives more and more people into housing insecurity, and that involves not only the most vulnerable groups but also more and more of the middle class (Parker 2013) (Iaione, Bernardi and De Nictolis 2019). The radicalization of a deregulated housing market has expanded the difficulties of access to Housing and has primed a segregation process that pushes people toward the peripheries of the urban areas (Arbaci 2017).

On the other hand, our mature societies are experiencing a change in life paradigms with the need to hinder relational poverty and social fragmentation, support new households that go beyond the traditional family, and demographic shifts for more communal life. Moreover, the search for new sustainable ecosystems using the territories, building stocks, and natural resources is very much integrated into housing developments. Besides these last two points, the obsolescence of the building stock is always more tangible, and it needs to find new strategies for production and renewal.

Over the last ten years, a new awareness has emerged of the fundamental role that research in architecture can play in orienting the definition of new housing policies and programs and guiding major building production processes. The occasions and

¹ Professor Michael Atiyah was the president of the Royal Society Edinburgh, where the symposium was hosted in 1998.

² John P. Eberhard, professor of Architecture and Planning at Carnegie Mellon University

³ Davis, J.E., Algoed L., Hernandez-Torrales, M.E., (2020), *On Common Ground. International Perspective on the Community Land Trust*, Tierra Nostra Press, Wisconsin, USA. Cit. pag.115

places for research and debate on housing issues have multiplied, generating an acceleration of the debate and the affirmation of new lines of inquiry. There is in fact, an escalation of projects, research, and international conferences that are looking for alternative models for the housing systems, with an essential commitment from the EU that support Housing as a trigger point for the regeneration and post-pandemic recovery (Iaione, Bernardi and De Nictolis 2019).

For example, in 2016, the British Pavilion at the International Venice Biennale of Architecture proposed the exhibition *Home Economics*. It brought to light five new models of domestic life and some characteristics of contemporary alternative housing production: *Own nothing-share everything*, *Space for living, not speculation*, and *A room without a function*. Another indication of this new focus on housing production is the European Union Prize for Contemporary Architecture – Mies van der Rohe Award 2022, which nominated nine collaborative housing projects, and the Right to Use Cooperative Housing LaBorda in Barcelona is the winner.

This dissertation begins by asking what housing projects and productions are responding to emerging needs today. With particular interest, the research looks at projects that trigger new forms of affordability and access to housing; new modes of social inclusion, care-based shared and community living; and architectural models capable of providing spatial responses to new lifestyle needs.

For different decades, the search for innovative and effective answers brought out housing models produced by non-conventional actors, such as active communities, that have been, till today, a niche phenomenon full of sense (Ferreri and Vidal 2021). Today alternative housing models are knocking on institutional doors and are looking, at a European level, for networks and ways to scale up the rooted models tested for thirty years (Lafond e Tsvetkova 2017). In fact, recently, many European countries have experienced a (re)emergence of collaborative housing in the form of co-housing, housing cooperatives, and other forms of self-organized collective housing (Lang and Stoeger 2018). After 40 years of relative decline, civil society activism and participation in housing and urban development has ostensibly been resurgent since the Global Financial Crisis (GFC), receiving growing attention in many countries from activists, academics, and public actors alike over the past ten years (D. U. Vestbro 2010) (Lafond e Tsvetkova 2017) (Fromm 2012) (Mullins and Moore 2018, Tummers 2016).

Embracing this state of the art, the research proposes to problematize and to evaluate:

- a.** the role and effectiveness of community activism and self-production of housing as an emerging phenomenon;
- b.** the production of cohabitation models and innovative living and domestic spaces.

The **study aims** to develop theoretical, empirical, and applied research on the models of community-led housing's sustainability in the European contest. For this reason, the research follows the emergence in Europe of what John Turner called *Housing by People*, an intuitive anglicism helpful in describing the numerous forms of community-led practices and projects, which produce concrete answers to the problems related to access to housing and the shrinking of citizenship rights.

Can these models be a possibility also for the *Italian Housing Question*? Is there any production of housing alternatives in Italy?

An essential purpose of the research is to answer the latter question by producing possible recommendations and lessons, mainly addressed to the *Italian housing makers* – communities, public and private institutions, and professionals-.

Colin Ward in *Tenants Take Over* (1974), talks about self-production of one's own habitat of life in a collaborative and community form where every person is responsible to create, manage and maintain the spaces, and activating the production of unprecedented forms of housing (De Carlo 1968).

Today, even the 17 Global Goals show how the idea and urgency have taken hold that society, communities, and the interception of bottom-up phenomena can offer local solutions capable of outlining alternative trajectories of development and innovation. It is no coincidence that Goal 11 - Sustainable Cities and Communities - places community as the driving force behind the strategy for inclusive societal development.

How do public and private institutions fit into this process?

What are they producing in Europe, in Italy, what could they produce to facilitate and support these models?

The research is aimed to produce contents and perspectives to be addressed to three different categories of actors: communities, politics, professionals.

Research methodology and epistemology

The research perimeter. Community-Led Housing

Housing as a verb

J. Turner

After considering a wide angle of cases of alternative housing projects produced in Europe in the last 25 years, such as those that mobilize *collaborative housing* as an umbrella term (Czischke 2018) (Lang, Carriou and Czischke 2018) with very different characteristics from the point of view of the architecture, of tenures (private ownership to rent) and market positioning (traditional and not-for-profit), of innovation produced and communities' involvement. This study focuses on Community-Led Housing (CLH).

This choice aims to understand the role and effectiveness of the community's activism and self-production of housing as an emerging phenomenon. As mentioned above, CLH, even if it is still a marginal production, has been receiving growing attention in many European countries alike over the past fifteen years (Lafond e Tsvetkova 2017) (Fromm 1991) (Mullins e Moore 2018, Tummers 2016, D. U. Vestbro 2010). CLH is not understood as the way to solve the housing crisis, as the latter is a structural and macro-level problem. However, CLH, as the

professor Darinka Czischke⁴ underlines, has a considerable potential to be more widespread if the populations and public actors could be more informed about these living forms and if the production is more available (Chiszke 2023). This is already happening in cities such as Barcelona, Zurich, and Geneva, but this is not the case for most of the European countries especially in Southern Europe. As said by professor Darinka Czischke, **there is a need for reliable data that allows one to compare developments across countries** and to learn from what works in other contexts and perhaps take some lessons and inspirations to transfer in other countries.

Are communities a key ingredient in producing new living concepts in the housing system?

The decision to take **Community-Led Housing models as the subject of this thesis** starts from some preliminary remarks.

Firstly it has been an emerging phenomenon since 2008, with a particular peak in 2011. It is not a new phenomenon, but it is a return of civic activism in housing (self-)production with new characteristics and responding to current criticalities, compared to past actions, which need to be investigated.

Secondly, there needs to be more relevant scientific literature. Since it is a relatively new and marginal phenomenon, it is analyzed in parts and mainly by urban studies scholars. While a systematization that considers the phenomenon as a whole, an analysis of the housing models produced still needs to be provided. Considering modeling means a shift towards a quantitative analysis, a collection of data, which may pave the way for the scalability of such models.

Thirdly, observing numerous alternative housing projects in the first year of the research, attention was repeatedly drawn toward CLH projects. These have developed in current and not at-all universalistic welfare regimes and housing systems (Germany, Switzerland, Spain, UK, Italy, Serbia) and insist on creating dynamics proper to the social market, not-for-profit, and for a redistribution of goods .

In order to define the perimeter of CLH⁵ and thus the perimeter within which this research moves, selection criteria were sought for the inclusion of case studies to be placed under analysis. The literature was first consulted, particularly the work of Lang, Carriou, Czischke, and Co-Lab of TU Delft. They define in TAB A. the inclusion criteria 1. the Community Characteristics, 2. Building Characteristics 3. the Development process and tenures for their research. In TAB B., on the other hand, they establish the spatial, social, tenure, and legal organization characteristics the cases must fulfill to be accepted for analysis.

⁴ Darinka Chiszke, she is full professor at TU Delft University and founder of the Co-Lab research about collaborative housing. Chiszke, D., (2022), *Abitare collaborativo in Europa, verso una categorizzazione sistematica*, in Cafora, S. (a cura di) *Modelli Alternativi di Housing in Azione*, F. Feltrinelli, Milano.

⁵ see chapter 3, A Frame on Lexicon, for a wide excursus.

Based on these considerations, the same characteristics have been assumed for the choice of the cases in this research. This is with the aim of producing material and data that can be compared and added to ongoing research at European level.

	INCLUSION CRITERIA	REASONS FOR EXCLUSION
Community characteristics	1. INTENTIONALITY 2. SOCIAL DIMENSION	1. Community of residents lacking intentionality or social dimension 2. Community with no explicit housing dimension
Building characteristics	3. SPECTRUM HOUSING TYPES & TENURES 4. SHARED SPACES	3. Project where separate individual, private rooms do not exist 4. Housing without communal spaces
Development process & tenures	5. INITIATION BY RESIDENTS 6. SPECTRUM OF NEW OWNERSHIP / RENTAL MODEL / THIRD WAYS	5. Mainstream, non-resident-led housing 6. Individual housing self-provision

TAB A: defining community-led housing. Inclusion and exclusion criteria. (Elaboration from Lang, Carriou, Czischke, 2020).

This research, therefore, aims to fill the knowledge gap concerning CLH models, i.e., to analyze the following characteristics

1. Legal, economic, and tenure organization types.
2. Spatial, typological, and architectural models.
3. Social and governance models.
4. Relations and contributions of the public actor.

The aim is thus to understand the *Process* of defining a housing model immersed in a given national socio-economic and political context. Besides the *Process*, this dissertation also pays attention to the architectural *Project* and the possible innovations introduced.

characteristics	DEFINITION
Drivers	Reasons why people get involved in collaborative housing
Spatial Organization	How private and common areas are organized under a housing layout
Social Organization	How Households organise and manage the domestic task and social activities Social inclusion
Tenure	Financial arrangement under which someone has the right to live in a dwelling
Legal Form	How applicable law describes an individual, company or organization that has legal rights and obligations with regards to the house

TAB : main distinguishing characteristics. (Elaboration from Lang, Carriou, Czischke, 2020)

Given the lack of studies concerning the Architectural Design and its role, this research aims to analyse this aspect from different perspectives:

1. Architecture as a tool for affordability, social inclusion, that foster care dynamics and the reproduction of community-led housing models.
2. Innovation in the design system for housing: new dwelling typologies and distributions, a new relationship between private, communal, and public spaces for living,
3. How architecture observes and answer to societal dynamics, the new households, the new needs of fluid life and mixed use of space.
4. Consider the future of living and city making: densification, flexibility, low impact.

As said by Turner in Housing as a verb “The word housing can be a noun or a verb. In the first case it refers to a commodity, the house, in the second it describes the process or the activity of housing”. This research is aimed to show the possibilities of housing as a verb, the concrete actions that the active communities and the many actors involved produce to widen the possibilities of a fairer approach to the housing question.

Comparative Housing research and case studies research

This study began by clashing with the nature of the subject analyzed. Housing is an interdisciplinary sphere of study (J. M. Montaner 2011) (Czischke 2018) because its production involves the design, architectural skills, and economic, social, legal, and political aspects. Research must be confronted with these disciplines to build a clear picture of the problems/possibilities in the field and their potential for a scalability process.

This approach aims to counter the widely held assumption in schools of architecture that the topics of architecture, finance, and regulation are not, and should not be, part of the same field (Kockelkorn and Schindler 2022). Often these arguments stem from a fear of diminished disciplinary standing as if economic literacy undermines a designer's credibility. Here, the multidisciplinary approach is not intended as a service to design in terms of *what* or *how*, but why other disciplines should enable designers to ask *why* (Kockelkorn and Schindler 2022).

The focus on community-led housing opened another challenge for the research: the scarcity of scientific literature that analyzes its etiology and its possibilities to become a model to be reproduced. As mentioned this is the knowledge gap that this research tries to approach. The theme is very contemporary, and scholars have been interested in it in the last few years, especially with an urban studies approach.

Because of this, the search for data had to develop a strategy using different sources, such as participation in international symposia and conferences, field trips, and collecting oral sources.

In particular semi-structured interviews have been a fundamental tool, thought to have different perspectives on the issues such as the inhabitants, the architects and professionals, the scholars, the politicians-administrators, and other actors. (see Annexes)

In addition, during the field trips, participatory observation and ethnological research approach (Sclavi 2003) were put into practice by living for a little time⁶ in the chosen case studies and following the daily routines of the resident communities, which often includes the designers and other actors in the building production process.

The research follows a *comparative housing method* (Hurol, Vestbro e Wilkinson 2005) between international case studies. It is an approach with many criticalities mainly due to the different characterizations of each Country (Yin 2008) (Flyvbjerg 2006). Notwithstanding, using the knowledge acquired from different countries is a helpful tool to let the good practices, the possibilities, and the criticalities of the cases emerge.

The rise in comparative housing studies was one of the major trends in housing research from the 1990s (Doling 1999). A comparison structured within a more theoretical framework has been developed from an initial descriptive approach.

⁶ (due to pandemic, just 1-2 weeks)

Kemeny and Lowe (1998)⁷ reviewed the studies and identified three “schools”:

- a particularistic, empiricist approach, which they called “juxtapositional”,
- a universalist and global approach defined as a “convergence” perspective,
- and, between these two extremes, approaches that integrate theories and empirical research referred to as “divergence” perspectives.

Convergence studies have the highest level of generalisation. They point to highlight similarities between all countries; differences are “variations,” “historical contingencies” or “exceptions.” A convergence perspective commonly assumed that all modern societies are developing in a certain direction. Scholars promoting this approach recognise a significant degree of convergence in housing systems in advanced industrial countries, driven by economic forces (globalisation and post-industrial economic re-structuring), and, on the other hand, by the impact of the hegemony of neo-liberal welfare policies on housing.

Divergence, proposes typologies of housing systems derived from cultural, ideological, political dominance or other theories as the basis for understanding differences between groups of societies. Divergence perspectives are concerned with understanding the differences between housing systems in different countries and with the classification of housing systems.

This dissertation, as for the divergence approach, wants to understand the housing systems of the countries involved. This is useful to frame the political situation about housing and the relationship among the CLH projects and the local government. It is also useful to understand the level of effort of each project contextualized in its welfare regime and housing system.

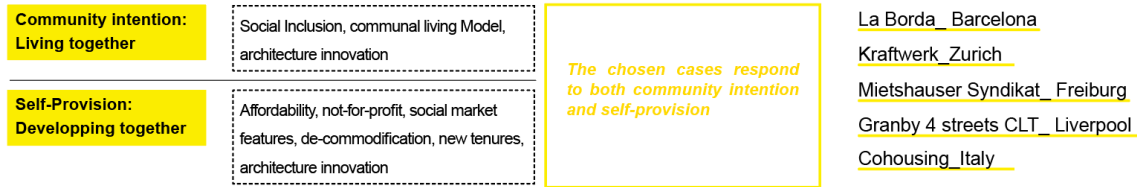
Moreover in order to compare data of the different cases this dissertation also embrace a level of generalization as the convergence approach.

The study can also be defined as *a case studies research* (Yin 2008) as it collects 60 European cases, compares 20 of them through the completion of detailed fact sheets, and produce four micro stories or biographies with in-depth analysis of meaningful cases. All the cases included are produced by community intention and different levels of self-provisions. Each micro story has the role of explaining one of the main characteristics of the CLH and helps to unpack the phenomenon: The architectural innovation, alternative legal models and tenures, the implication of the public actor and new public communities’ relations, new forms of social inclusion, community network and democratic governance.

⁷ Kemeny J (1995) From public housing to the social market: rental policy strategies in comparative perspective. London: Routledge.

Kemeny J. (2001) Comparative housing and welfare: theorising the relationship. *J Housing Built Environ* 16(1):53–70

CLH characteristics



TAB C: Choosing Community-led housing case studies, community intention and self-provision.⁸

The cases have been identified in Europe and Italy, starting from a selection based on the scarce existing literature and choosing a wide angle to explore a variety of the CLH models available rather than following a simple best practice approach. The idea was to produce a ‘body of knowledge’ rather than a fragmented collection of case studies.

Therefore, alongside mainstream and well-established community-led projects and housing systems, such as those in Barcelona or Zurich, the study has also included relatively marginal, experimental, or short-lived programs, whose impact on both housing provision and policymaking are challenging to assess but which nonetheless present interesting and relevant. The selection of cases has also been based on a combination of prior knowledge and expertise, and interviews with housing producers and advanced research labs (Tu Delft, Co-Lab research⁹; Universitat Politecnica de Barcelona, Catedra Estudis Habitatge¹⁰; Urbact¹¹).

Conducting a comparative analysis of housing sectors entails the possibility of facing complex aspects of translatability.

Looking at literature on community-led housing, precedents to date, appear comparative studies on a small number of cases (Lang e Mullins 2015), binational comparisons (Balmer e Bernet 2015), international reviews of academic and collaborative literature on the housing sector, and nonacademic publications (Moreau e Pittini 2012) (Crabtree, et al. 2019).

Comparative housing research is a field characterized by unique local institutional configurations and strong historical dependencies (Bengtsson e Ruonavaara 2011), often hampered by the limited availability of comparative data and differing definitions of ownership, including traditional categories such as social housing (Scanlon, et al. 2015). In order to collect and compare data this research produces a series of tools such as an Atlas of case studies, graphic diagrams and tables.

⁸ this table reports the reasoning and summarizes the criteria used in selecting the cases that makeup Atlas, Chapter 3, and Part three of the research, the Biographies, Chapters 4-7.

⁹ Tu Delft, Co-Lab research <https://co-lab-research.net/>

¹⁰ Universitat Politecnica de Barcelona, Catedra Estudis Habitatge, <https://cbeh.cat/>

¹¹ Urbact, Cities engaging in the right to housing, <https://urbact.eu/news/cities-engaging-right-housing>

The Atlas, as mentioned, is a research tool that wants to order, georeference, and systematise the 60 cases. These are divided in geographical sectors such as: Northern&Central Europe and Southern-Eastern Europe.

Therefore, the significant effort of this research is to collect data, which the literature does not contain, to systematize and compare them to indicate possible trends, functional practices for producing CLH models, and possible pathway crashes.

This dissertation opens the gaze to southern Europe. Most of the literature analyzed, studies the criticalities and alternatives of housing focusing on northern or central Europe.

This research, having as its objective the understanding of possible strategies or models transfer to Italy, looks at the dynamics present in southern European cities and countries, such as Spain and Mediterranean France. It also frames the situation in Italy of alternative housing and draws future lines of research in this direction. No part of this dissertation is devoted to a critical reading of the cases, but rather through the processing of the data, critical points emerge. The conclusion is devoted to all the issues that come out of the research work, including the critical points.

The dissertation is divided into four parts. The first, *The new housing question*, contains the general introduction, a description of the method used, and the theoretical framework. The second part, *The Atlas of practices*, and the third part *The Biographies*, are the core part of the research where the original contents are exposed and elaborated. The fourth part open to the *Transitions possibilities*.

The *first chapter*, Part one, analyzes the current housing production process by considering Economic, Political, Social, Architectural, and Environmental domains. It gives a frame of the interference by finance in the housing sector that transforms houses and land into financial and liquid assets (Rolnik 2019) (M. Aalbers 2016); the weakening of the figure of public administrations as guarantors of access to housing; the social fragmentation, a crumbling of the system of relations typical of contemporary society from which seems to arise a search for new communities; the search of new living spaces.

In the *second chapter*, the research frames a 'Recent Season of the Housing Debate'. The aim of this chapter is to create a Frame on Lexicon to hinder the vagueness of knowledge on community-led housing and new housing tenures and to clarify concepts and names that could be easily misunderstood. A cultural matrix of communities' involvement in housing production and public policies that let emerge some touchstones tied to the housing question of the last 40-50 years to the present. Residential is here explored as a political fact and as an architectural product through a genealogy of projects and practices.

In order to investigate the strategies, models, and tools produced by different forms of self-determinate and community-led housing, the research creates in its Part Two, an 'Atlas of practices,' divided into two sections. The first one, in *Chapter three*, collects, analyzes, and compares European – and Italian- case studies of community-led housing, highlighting their characteristics.

The research aims to collect qualitative and quantitative data to compare developments across countries and to learn from the good practices and criticalities, producing a 'theory of the project' to understand possible transfer models. To have an in-depth analysis of the phenomenon, in the *Chapter four, five, six, seven*, chooses 4 cases and produces their Biographies that combine their *Process tools* and *Project tools* to create a modelization.

Part four aims to bring the research attention toward Italy and its housing situation in *Chapter Eight*. *Chapter Nine uses* a comparative data analysis of the case studies to trace possible lessons for alternative housing model transfer. The conclusions give a critical elaboration of the research and trace further research developments.

PART ONE
The New Housing Question

Chapter 1

The housing question today. Contemporary process of housing production

To understand what is at stake in the housing provision, it is important to consider the qualities that make housing an incomparable asset. Housing is, firstly, an essential resource. Not having a home is a severe impediment to a dignified human existence. Consequently, according to Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, housing is considered a fundamental human right. Secondly, in the vast majority of cases, housing is the most immobile and, thirdly, the most durable asset of modern capitalist economies (Balmer e Bernet 2015). And, mainly because this durability makes it expensive to produce, it is, fourthly, also the most economically significant good in the life of most people, in that they spend more on it than on any other class of goods, be it via rent or mortgages (Arnott 2001)¹². According to the European Committee on Social Rights, the shortage of affordable housing in Europe is a severe and growing problem driving more and more people into housing insecurity.¹³ Globally there is a constant contraction of the housing right, which involves not only the most vulnerable groups but also the middle class, which is facing a decline in their standard of living and undergoing a process of housing exclusion (Parker 2013).

¹² Arnott, 2001, 69.

¹³ In the introduction to her 2019 report, Leilani Farha, Special Rapporteur on adequate housing for the UN, notes, "Globally, housing conditions are critical. There is a contraction of the right to access housing in many cities, affecting even the middle class."



Figure 1: Demonstration for housing right, Genève, Swiss 1990s. Photo by La Cooperative Codha 25 ans d'utopie, 2021.



Giornata di
**MOBILITAZIONE
E LOTTA**
PER IL DIRITTO ALL'ABITARE



Figure 2: Demonstration for housing right. From the top left, Barcelona 2013 (Can Batlò Archive); Right side top and bottom, Berlin 2022 (The Guardian web site, 03/27/2022); Bottom left, Milan (Abitare in Viale Padova Archive).

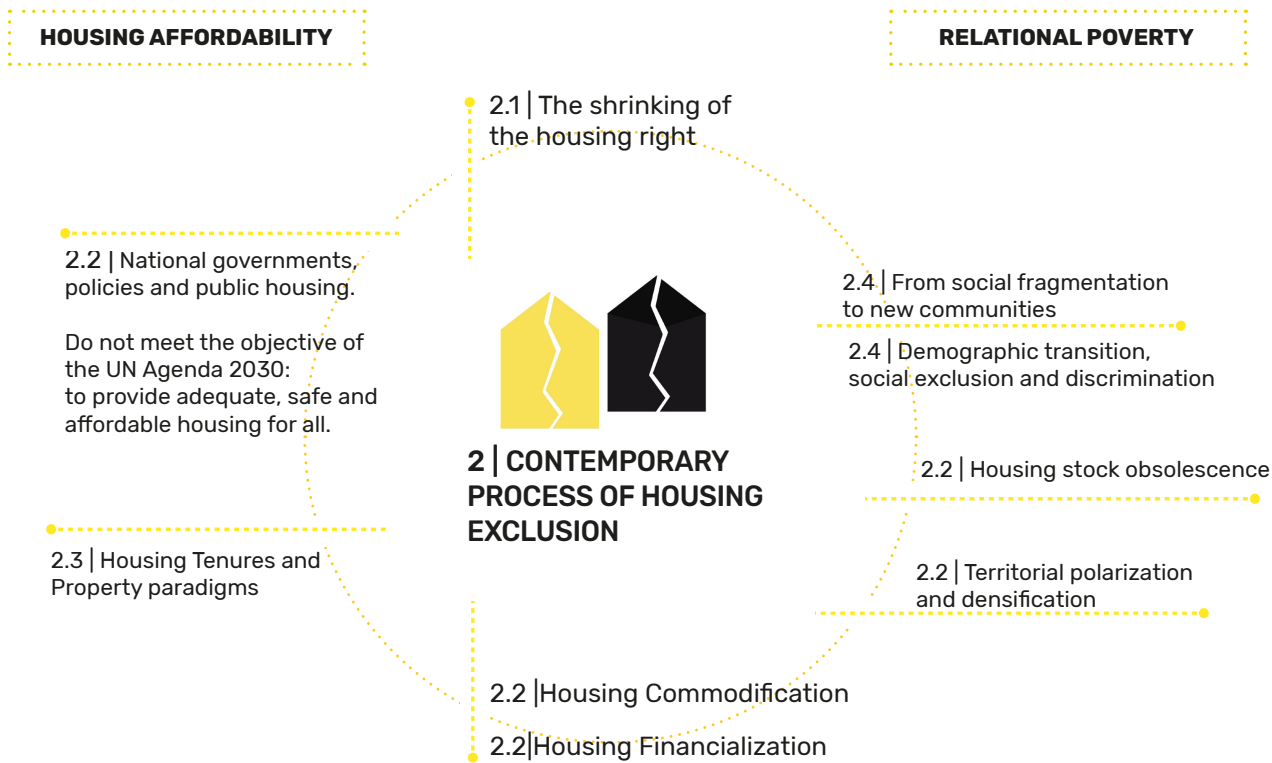


Figure 3: Diagram showing the contemporary process of housing exclusion. Elaboration by the author.

This dissertation starts precisely from a sensitivity towards the growing housing exclusion of the last fifteen years, understanding its characteristics compared to the past phenomenon. It observes the peculiarities and criticalities that define the housing production process today.

It analyses the process of *Housing commodification, from the use value to the financialization and back!* in the first part of this chapter. Within this framework, it wants to focus on the role of national governments and neo-liberal economics and analyze ownership forms. It intends to bring to light the factors that trigger the dynamics of spatial injustice, social exclusion, and segregation.

It observes the New family architectures and the search for renovated living spaces in the second part to bring to light social dynamics, demographic shifts, and emerging needs for community building. It also relates to the obsolescence of the living spaces in cities and territories and the need for reformulation.

For this dissertation, it is also important the understanding of ecological phenomena and their correlation with forms of territorial polarisation and the obsolescence of the built heritage. The latter set of analyses will be carried out later in the research. From these analyses, the aim is to set a base for understanding the emergent need for housing affordability and social inclusion.

Chapter 2

Housing debate. A recent season of community led housing

R. Muroli writes: « thousands of people imagine and create from below new models of welfare, care of the territory, production of goods and services, use of common goods».¹⁴

'Co' housing initiatives constitute a sometimes pragmatic, at other times idealist, response to the challenges of living in contemporary Europe. In its realization, contemporary 'Co'housing is wider than the community-oriented model designed by the 'Co' housing movement in the 1970s. (Tummers 2016)

Today interest in the potential of the communities is emerging in Europe. The scale of this interest is more significant than at any time in the last forty years. 1960 to 1980 saw a wave of informal forms of participation in Europe. The squatting movement (Vasudevan 2017) or more formalized activities such as cooperative housing, received significant state support at that time in several countries (Moreau and Pittini 2012) (Lang, Carriou and Czischke 2018). However, this wave dissipated mainly between 1980 and 2010. Self-organized action had thrived being squeezed by several factors: the financialization of housing (Fields and Uffer 2016) stronger legal sanctions against informal projects, the reduction or abolition of state funding mechanisms, and the cooperatives in Spain, Austria, Switzerland, Italy and the housing associations in the Netherlands and England to take on more corporate and less self-organized identities.¹⁵

The recent resurgence, therefore, provides an exciting and still little-researched phenomenon. Its coincidence with the Global Financial Crisis presents an intriguing

14 De Rossi A., Mascino, L. (2018), *Riabitare l'Italia. Le aree interne tra abbandoni e riconquiste*, Donzelli, Roma. p.519.

15 About the cooperatives in Spain, Austria, Switzerland, Italy and the housing associations in the Netherlands and England several scholars wrote about the loose of self-organization identities. Lang,R.and Stoeger,H.(2018)The role of the local institutional context in understanding collaborative housing models: empirical evidence from Austria, *International Journal of Housing Policy*, 18(1): 35–54. doi: 10.1080/19491247.2016.1265265
Mullins, D., Moore, T.,(2018) Self-organised and civil society participation in housing provision, *International Journal of Housing Policy*, 18:1, 1-14, DOI: 10.1080/19491247.2018.1422320
Lang, R., Mullins, D. (2015). 'Bringing real localism into practice through co-operative housing governance: The prospects for community-led housing in England' University of Birmingham, pp. 1–74.
<<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/Documents/college-social-sciences/social-policy/IASS/housing/2015/working-paper-series/HCR-WP-1-2015.pdf>>

set of hypotheses relating a surge of civic action to market failure, state failure, and growing affordable housing problems, with effects on quality of life and social inclusion.

Czischke (2018) argues that some community housing solutions have been triggered by the Global Financial Crisis and financial austerity, which gave rise to new and innovative solutions. Other authors, such as Lang and Stoeger (2018) and Moore (2018), relate the growth of community-managed housing to the devolution of state responsibilities to more local levels and the rising management costs of non-state actors. It is clear that longer-term social origins of self-organization have also influenced growth.

This research studies the resurgence of community-led movements by looking at a mosaic of factors that can stay under two umbrella concepts: the need for affordable housing and the search for new communal forms of living to foster social inclusion.

This chapter aims to produce a *cultural matrix* to facilitate understanding of this dissertation's concepts.

This matrix is composed of an analysis of the contemporary housing lexicon and a recent history of housing evolution.

The first part wants to sort out the extensive production of terms about 'co' housing to produce a communal and shared lexicon for this dissertation. The changing meaning of housing terms through history, geographical or disciplinary transfer produces misunderstanding that this dissertation wants to clarify.

The second part is about the recent history of housing evolution. On a timeline, the discourse starts especially with the turning point of the '80 (Iaione, Bernardi and De Nictolis 2019) (Ferreri and Vidal 2021) (Coricelli 2019), maintaining some structural connections with the '50-'70 and then continues with the results of the 2008 crisis (Rolnik 2019) till nowadays. These historical moments where shifts in the housing sector happened, political and social-economical ones that produced different approaches to housing policies and housing access in various European Countries.

The last part of this chapter introduces and depth the characteristics of the community-led housing projects that will be presented in the following two chapters.

A lexical framework.

Categorization and definition to hinder the vagueness of knowledge on community led housing and new housing tenures.

Numerous changes in the housing sector today influence the related vocabulary, from the global housing crisis and related processes of market deregulation and reduction of the public sphere of living to the emergence of new housing needs, new lifestyles, and family forms, and new housing models.

It is precisely within this complex framework of changes that scholars and researchers let emerge the need to reflect on terminology, adopting lexical analysis as a possible observation point of the vocabulary used today to frame methods and approaches in the housing debate.

Issues emerge related to the transfer of housing terms over time, across geographical and linguistic boundaries, cultural contexts, and disciplines.

So many notions, categories, and standards that were crystallized and fixed in some way over the 20th century became empty containers without meanings, incapable of responding to the new aspirations and demands of new questions rising from the ground¹⁶.

Moreover, the same terms are used in different languages. Can we compare different models that are active in different countries? Terms are mobile in that they possess a changing meaning, migrating from one cultural sphere to another, from one language to another, and from one discipline to another. Each term can be interpreted relatively differently, depending on the users and the narrative constructed through these terms.

Understanding housing as a multidisciplinary field of study, the terms related to it move from one discipline to another and change in this transition from, for example, a bureaucratic and normative language, to one of architectural design, to a political one.

Within the framework of these trends, there is also a season of historical studies on housing, strongly influenced during the 1980s and 1990s by other disciplinary

¹⁶ Gaia Caramellino, AMHA conference May 2022, Politecnico of Turin. The text is reported in *Alternative housing models in action*, curated by Silvia Cafora, for Fondazione GG Feltrinelli, Milan.

orientations from the social sciences and economic studies that still characterize the discourses on living today.

In the history and theory of architecture, urban planning, and urban studies, numerous recent researches have attempted to investigate, with different aims, the genealogies, forms of use, fortune, and evolution of certain systems of terms.

An example is the glossary of habitat that Monique Eleb published with the sponsorship of Ikea, entitled *The Hundred One Words of Habitat*¹⁷ or the *Mapa de Habitação/Mapping Public Housing. Guide to specific terminology*, edited by Gisela Lameira and Luciana Rocha¹⁸ as part of the research project that, starting with the analysis of the Portuguese experience, inaugurated a new reflection on the specific terminology used in the definition of affordable housing¹⁹. Another example was the international conference entitled *The Terms of Habitation, Rethorising the Architecture of Housing*, curated by Gaia Caramellino and Yael Allweil²⁰, during which a complex cartography of terms used to indicate typologies, practices, pedagogical projects, policies and regulatory frameworks, design themes and cultures, and forms of use of housing space was initiated²¹.

The trajectories and evolutions of the forms of use of certain terms in the housing debate are discussed (e.g. censoring today the term *building* and speaking, for example, of *dwelling*: the shift from *house to home* emphasizes the relational dimension of being in a house²²), or terms that have gained positions of new priority are raised, such as, for example, *community* and all its residential declinations.

This dissertation aims in this paragraph to bring attention precisely to the vast production of housing models that place the community at the center as the proponent of new living concepts, as the emerging need for *community-making*, as the receiving subject, *the local community*.

¹⁷ Monique Eleb, *Les 101 mots de l'habitat à l'usage de tous*, Archibooks, 2014.

¹⁸ Gisela Lameira, Luciana Rocha (a cura di), *Mapa da Habitacao. Guia para uma terminologia especifica em arquitectura habitacional apoiada pelo Estado em Portugal (1910-1974)/Mapping Public Housing. Guide to specific terminology in State-subsidized residential architecture in Portugal*, UP, FAUP, 2019.

¹⁹ Quoted in Gaia Caramellino, AMHA conference May 2022, Politecnico of Turin. The text is reported in the undergoing publication *Alternative housing models in action*, curated by Silvia Cafora, for Fondazione GG Feltrinelli, Milan.

²⁰ Convegno *The Terms of Habitation*, organizzato in collaborazione con l'IAS di Gerusalemme, Technion e il Politecnico di Milano-DASU, 9-12 novembre 2020.

²¹ Quoted in Gaia Caramellino, 2022. "The selection of terms highlights the multiplicity of perspectives and points of observation and the different sessions contribute through a spectrum of key words to initiate and structure a theoretical reflection intersecting the different planes through which housing research is constructed: "Agency", "Conflict", Social and Design Typology, "Neighborhood", "Policy" "Co-" "Language of Market", "Reform", "Parameters", "Representation", "Knowledge Transfer", "Design Theory", "Edges".

²² Olagnero M., 2018, *Discorsi sull'abitare. Come e a chi parlano le nuove politiche abitative*, Italian Journal of Social Policy, 4, Turin, p.34

It is firstly provided a background on the evolution of the term *community* before delving into the clarification of the many terms that indicate community housing. Analyzing the literature that has questioned community since the Second World War, two strands of meaning emerge:

1. From the atrophy of communities in industrialized cities to the planning of new urban communities
2. Self-organised communities that respond to emerging needs

Starting with the first, the political philosopher Sebastian de Grazia asked in the early 1950s, "What is it that makes a group of people a community?"²³. This question sought to understand social bonds and alliances in the modern era with particular reference to the context in which communities had supposedly broken down: the industrialized cities of the western world.

Planning interventions and a series of institutionalized urban governance practices from after World War II until the 1970s were geared towards processes leading to the promotion and active formation of urban *Gemeinschaft* (community)²⁴ in which the concept of community was formulated in terms of the local community.

L.E.White in *Community or Chaos* states that "Neighbourhood planning attempts to recover the importance of place and locality and the strength and cohesion of the small 'primary' group"²⁵.

In planning, in addition to the emergence of the concept of community as a group of citizens living in the same urban area, the community as a group of citizens belonging to the same social class is also taken into consideration, as in the case of INA-casa planning and projects in Italy that produces new concepts of social housing neighborhoods for low-income communities²⁶. As Stefan Couperus²⁷ highlighted how state-led planning and its 'social' planning discourse, which was aimed at achieving distributive justice, clashed with the rising call for popular participation in urban planning. Also, White said, "Community is a living and vital

²³ L. E. White, *Community or Chaos: Housing Estates and Their Social Problems* (London: National Council of Social Service, 1950).

²⁴ Lutz Raphael, "Embedding the Human and Social Sciences in Western Societies, 1880–1980: Reflections on Trends and Methods of Current Research," in *Engineering Society. The Role of the Human and Social Sciences in Modern Societies, 1880–1980*, ed., Kerstin Brückweh, Dirk Schumann, Richard F. Wetzell, and Benjamin Ziemann (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2012), 51.

²⁵ White, *Community or Chaos*, 42

²⁶ In 1949 in Italy has been approved the Law 43 *Piano Fanfani* which initiated a plan for post-war reconstruction of low-cost housing and neighborhoods, managed by INA-Casa .

²⁷ Couperus, S., & Kaal, H. (2016). In Search of the Social: Neighborhood and Community in Urban Planning in Europe and Beyond, 1920-1960. *Journal of Urban History*, 42(6), 987–991. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0096144216675046>

reality, but because it is of the spirit, free and intangible, it cannot be planned, just as freedom cannot be planned"²⁸.

With regard to the second strand of meaning, Colin Ward, in *Tenants Take Over* (1974), speaks of self-production of one's own living habitat in a collaborative and communitarian form in which individuals take responsibility for creating, managing, and maintaining spaces, activating the production of new forms of living²⁹.

Community relates to autonomy and self-organization, i.e., empowerment of the individual and a sharing of needs and intentions with other fellow citizens.

As John Turner says in *Housing by people* (1978), "who provides and who decides?" in which he contrasts the heteronomy of centralized planning with the autonomy of communities in the production of their own habitats and all personal services of a local nature. Colin Ward also speaks of *community architecture* that is embodied in a network of concrete and changing relationships with contexts, places, climates, biographies, bureaucracies, energy, and environmental issues of active practices. Paul and Percival Goodman wrote *Communitas*, ways of livelihood and means of life³⁰, a cult in the 1970s in which "*The New Communes* are self-sufficient communities, expert workers collectively drive industry and redesign both work and domestic life with psychological, moral, and technical considerations". The communities co-exist in decentralized federalism and propose a neo-functionalism.

It is necessary to inhabit the community to know what binds from what simply assembles, states Paolo Venturi in *Urban Regeneration* (2022). Community flourishes on intentionality capable of founding collaborative action.

Many dilemmas also come out about communities as housing and commons producers. Why are they working on volunteer basis in the production of welfare while there are public administrations that should deal with it? Have they the right knowledge and tools? For what kind of citizens and social class are communities working? (Chiodelli and Baglione 2013).

To move on to Housing and in order to give a perimeter to the research here follows a frame that aims to define Community-Led Housing within which the cases analyzed are contained.

The definition's construction begins with a study of the literature given the wide range of residential building forms promoted and managed by communities.

²⁸ L. E. White, *Community or Chaos: Housing Estates and Their Social Problems* (London: National Council of Social Service, 1950), 42

²⁹ As taken up and explored by De Carlo in *La piramide rovesciata*, De Donato, Bari, 1968

³⁰ Paul and Percival Goodman. *Communitas: Means of Livelihood and Ways of Life*, (Columbia University Press, 1960), 153

There is a plethora of terms and definitions with different nuances, which include self-organization, the building of communities as well as housing, and the different weight accorded to principles of cooperation, community organizing, partnership, and citizen participation (Tummers 2016) (D.-U. Vestbro 2010) (Fromm 2012)). The varied definitions also highlight the differences in purpose and function that exist between different models of self-organized housing provision, of which there is a limited comprehensive or comparative study.

In particular, the locution of community-led housing found a recent definition proposed jointly by *UK National Community Land Trust Network* and by *the UK Cohousing Network*. It centered on three key principles: 1. Meaningful community engagement and consent occur throughout the process 2. The local community group or organization owns, manages and stewards the homes in a manner of their choosing 3. The benefits to the local area and community has to be clearly defined and legally protected in perpetuity³¹.

This research defines the term *community-led housing (CLH)* as **‘housing shaped by an active community, from below, and managed by the same community - at least for the pilot/pioneer project of a model - and then structured (economic, legal, social form, professionalization) and replicated.’**

Communities are understood as *sense-makers* in the production of not-for-profit, rooted alternative housing models, creating innovative and functional projects and tools, able to generate ways of living that are better adapted to progressive agendas around gender equality, environmental sustainability, and demographic transition, meeting the complex socio-economic, health and environmental needs of individuals, communities, and cities in the 21st Century.

Looking at the international literature, some authors give their definition of community-led. By following the studies of Mullins (2018), he refers to the wide use of the term *community-led housing* in England, defined in a policy-oriented study as ‘housing shaped and controlled by a group that represents the residents and the wider community’³². This broader label has been deployed in attempts at field integration between cooperatives, community land trusts, collaborative housing, and self-help groups.

³¹ For the definition see the <http://www.community-landtrusts.org.uk/newa-and-events/community-led-housing-conference/what-is-community-led-housing>. In November 2017 took place the first National community-led Housing conference organized by UK National Community Land Trust Network and by the UK Cohousing Network.

Or Davis, J.E., Algoed L., Hernandez-Torrales, M.E., (2020), *On Common Ground. International Perspective on the community Land trust*, Tierra Nostra Press, Wisconsin, Usa, p130

³² (Heywood, 2016, p. 8)

Lang and Stoeger (2018) and Czischke (2018) both refer to the growing use of an alternative term in mainland Europe: *collaborative housing*. This is increasingly displacing the umbrella use of co-housing³³ to describe a similar range of self-organized, community-oriented initiatives to the English term community-led housing.

Community-led is also tied to the concept of social innovation, and Murray et al. define social innovation as “the many ways in which people are creating new and more effective answers to the biggest challenges of our times”³⁴. Moulaert et al. define the process of social innovation in territorial or regional development as the combination of “creative ideas (...) combined with innovative actions, organizational changes with individual initiative”³⁵.

Professor Lidevij Tummers highlight how most examples of community-led housing are non-market-oriented housing project and are considered a valuable response to the chronic housing crisis³⁶. They provide new solutions for improving access to adequate, sustainable homes and can enable residents to put their own housing needs before private profits.

Lang and Stoeger (2018) argue that community-led may be too strong a term to cover all project types, while *collaborative housing* is more appropriate in contexts like Austria, where “organizations cannot primarily be defined by the traditional principles of the cooperative or co-housing movement nor by their purely community-led nature”³⁷.

However, there are organizations (as the cases analyzed by this research) to which that label would fit well, such as the ‘Mietschauser Syndikat’ movement (‘self-organized living for a solidarity base economy’) from Germany and now operating in Austria, Netherland, France, involving ‘direct action and prefigurative politics’³⁸ the Residential is Political as said by Madden and Marcuse³⁹ as Semi stresses about the return of the housing question (Semi, 2017) and the bottom up answers.

While there is a multiplication of CLH cases, there is also a multiplication of meanings of the practices produced. Projects actually aiming to create affordability and social inclusion, projects that become urban oases with ambivalent effects of gentrification, and the increased commodification of CLH housing versus the idealist, wished-for environments. According to Chiodelli, most authors

³³ for example by id22 (2012), in their pan-European promotional handbook ‘Co-housing cultures’.

³⁴ Murray, Caulier-Grice, and Mulgan 2010

³⁵ Moulaert et al. 2005, 8.

³⁶ Tummers 2016, 2023

³⁷ Lang and Stoeger, 2018

³⁸ Vey, 2016, 68

³⁹ Madden and Marcuse, 2016

overestimate the positive side of co-housing. His paper defines an overlap with ‘gated communities’, which may have negative neighbourhood effects (Chiodelli and Baglione 2013). However, Chiodelli mainly compared the value systems on paper and formal organisations of different housing initiatives, whereas crucial differences lie in the everyday practices and design features, such as opening the common gardens or services to outsiders or not. Ruiu’s comparative study identifies such crucial differences and concludes that a grassroots model is typical of cohousing whereas gated communities are the product of top-down speculative schemes (Ruiu 2014).

As mentioned above, besides community-led housing, there is a multitude of terms that, in different countries and different historical moments, define housing models produced, managed, and claimed by communities with different degrees of autonomy, participation, and activism.

Since the 2000s, a number of scholars, academic and non-academic research groups, have been trying to order and estimate the quantities of these 'co' housing projects, not without difficulty.

As Tummers points out, 'co' housing models rarely exceed 5%, or even 1% of the housing stock in the Northern European countries⁴⁰ and as the research carried out by Homers lab in Turin shows, in Italy the percentage drops to 0.0003%.⁴¹. Moreover Tummers says “The lack of verifiable quantitative data does not help much the 'believers' who claim that ‘co’ housing is the 'third way of living' of the (near) future. On the other hand, the case of the 'cynics' who tend to dismiss the ‘co’ housing trend as a trend for a privileged minority is even less articulate at present”⁴². Infact one of the main criticalities to which scholars and research groups are working on is the lack of quantitative data that is partly due to the wide and fuzzy boundaries of ‘co’ housing. The review found that publications concern different forms of ‘co’ housing and that this variety, the uniqueness of each project, is often emphasised, leading to the question of what holds them together? Bressons and Tummers elaborated a first classification (see TAB D) based on the glossary of terms used internationally that let stand out three key concepts: CO, Auto and ECO.

40 Tummers, 2016, 2028

41 Here is possible to consult the map of the Italian distribution of the co-housing: <https://www.housinglab.it/mappa>. The authors are Silvia Cafora, Ludovica Rolando, Chiara Gambarana, Liat Rogel.

42 Tummers, 2016, 2024,

	French	English	German	Dutch	Spanish
CO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitat groupé • Habitat partagé • Cohabitat • Cooperatives d'habitants • Habitat communautaire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cohousing • Housing co-op • Intentional communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wohngemeinschaft • Genossenschaften • Wohngruppe (für Senioren) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Samenhuizen • Woongroepen (voor ouderen) • Collectief Particulier opdrachgeverschap • Central wonen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Viviendas cooperativas
AUTO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitat participatif • Habitat autogéré • Auto-promotion • Auto-construcción • Squat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-help housing • Self-managed housing • Squat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baugruppe • Hausbesetzer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zelfbeheer • Bouwen in eigen beheer • Kraken 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autogestionada • Okupa
ECO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecohabitat • Ecovillages • Ecoquartier 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecohabitat • Eco-villages • Eco-district 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Okodorf 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eco-dorp 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecobarrio

TAB D: International terminology for collaborative housing (Bresson, 2013; Tummers, 2015)

Vestbro proposes a reading of the ‘co’ as *collaborative*, *communal* and *collective*, thus including the wide variety of practices (Table E). He explicitly excludes *cooperative* as referring only to the tenure structure. For example, in the UK *cooperative housing* is indeed a distinct, formally defined model. Nevertheless, many projects show renewed interest traditional cooperative models, such as Genossenschaften, or Italian, Spanish or Polish housing cooperatives⁴³.

Cohousing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing with common space and shared facilities
Collaborative housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing oriented towards collaboration by residents
Collective housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasising the collective organization of services in housing
Communal housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing for togetherness and sense of community
Commune	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Living without individual apartments
Cooperative housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperative ownership without common spaces or shared facilities, therefore not co-housing

TAB E: Proposal for definition of different types of co-housing by Vesbro, 2010, 29.

⁴³ Coudroy de Lille L (2015) Housing cooperatives in Poland. The origins of a deadlock. *Journal of Urban Research and Practice* 8(1): 17–31.

Several research teams are constructing more systematic databases collecting data on size, profile, tenure, and so on; for example, Fedrowitz for the German ‘Wohnbund’⁴⁴ or the French database Alter-Prop⁴⁵ Vestbro mentions a Swedish database created in the 1990s, though it has not been published⁴⁶.

Another important contribution is given by the Co-Lab, TU Delft, directed by the professor Darinka Czischke. The researchers are aware that existing research on ‘co’ housing has been so far mainly based on qualitative case studies. So their aim is to produce a shift by introducing a strong set of quantitative data also provided by national umbrella organisations, according to a set of pre-established filters. The project focuses at the moment on nine countries where collaborative housing forms are well established and represented by national umbrella organisations; namely: Belgium, Denmark, England and Wales, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland.

They have produced a map and a taxonomy (see TAB F) of the several European ‘co’ housing models from the most generalist terms, as collaborative housing, to the specific national ones, as Cooperativa en cession de uso. They are elaborating a set of definitions based on general or national meaning of the different housing models while they are tiring to create a common alphabet about ‘Co’ housing.

Here follows few definitions that are largely used now among the housing research and production.

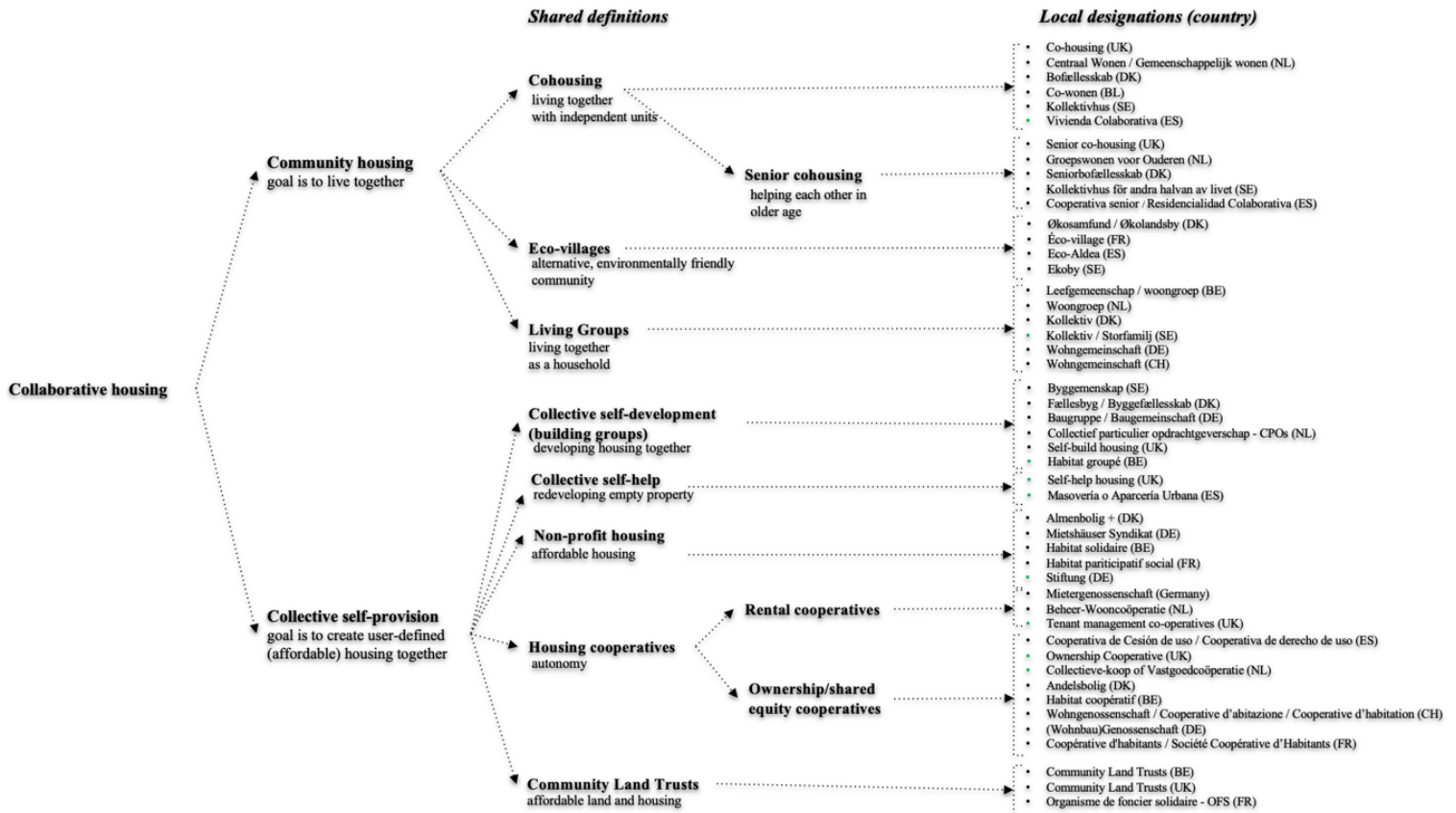
Collaborative Housing can be understood as an umbrella term that encompasses a variety of housing forms with different degrees of collective self-organization. Central to this type of housing is the presence of a significant level of collaboration amongst (future) residents, and between them and external actors and/or stakeholders, with a view to realizing the housing project. In this sense, the term collaboration stands for coordinated action towards a common purpose. This collaboration can take place at different stages of the project – sometimes from the conception, design and development – and may extend to the daily maintenance and management of the housing. Collaborative housing forms can vary in terms of tenure, legal and organizational characteristics. Common attributes include a high degree of social contact between the residents and the presence, to different extents, of shared goals and motives in relation to the housing project, such as ecological sustainability and social inclusion. In many cases, these values also extend to the project’s external environment.⁴⁷

44 available at: www.gemeinsha-flicheswohnen.de, accessed June 2021.

45 available at: <http://alter-prop.crevilles-dev.org>, accessed June 2021.

46 Vestbro D (2000) From collective housing to cohousing – A summary of research. *Journal of Architectural and Planning Research* 17(2): 164–177

47 Collaborative housing definition is provided by Co-Lab, TU Delft, <https://mapping.co-lab-research.net/taxonomy>



TAB F: taxonomy of the recent emergence of community-led housing models. Co-Lab, Mapping project. (Darinka Czchischke)

Eco-villages are intentional communities that are primarily driven by the desire to maintain a natural, ecological, sustainable lifestyle and to produce the least possible negative impact on the natural environment. The social organisation of residents varies. The residents share ideological values, collective self-organisation and a high degree of cooperation, including an exchange of services in daily life while maintaining autonomy for each home. In some cases, it includes the organisation of working groups, focused on working the land or the forest. In terms of spatial organisation, the projects are mostly private and autonomous single-family houses (existing village houses) often organised around a common space, or shared rooms with a separate building for common use (e.g. collective kitchen, meetings). In some cases, these projects are self-build, located in low-density rural areas or, as in the Spanish case, the projects are located in abandoned country houses or villages, which often creates land ownership problems. These forms vary greatly in terms of tenure and legal form.⁴⁸

Metcalf describes the history of eco-villages as that of ‘intentional communities where environmental sustainability is sought alongside with social justice, peace, etc. and hopes his “rules of thumb” help ‘intentional communities to become a model for sustainable living’⁴⁹.

Community Land Trusts can be broadly defined as non-profit, locally based, democratically run organization that make possible and preserve access to land as a common good for different kinds of needs and rights, from productive activities to housing. Practically, CLTs withdraw and permanently retain land from speculative markets through an affordability mechanism. Beyond a great variety of forms and functions, the fundamental principle at the base of the CLT model is the division of land ownership from the construction property (Davis, 2010). The land belongs - held in trust - to the CLT and is never sold, while the buildings belong to subjects of various kinds - associations, cooperatives, and individuals.⁵⁰

*Housing Cooperative*⁵¹ is a ‘container’ term to describe a particular legal form with historical and political roots. Old cooperatives are more conventional and with a lower degree of self-organisation, and ‘new cooperatives’, which belong to a new generation of cooperatives, are usually smaller and often resident-led or at least with a high degree of collective self-organisation from the conception to the management of the building. Both types have affordability as one of the main drivers, while the new ones are also based on innovation, solidarity, and diversity. According to their baseline definition, old housing cooperatives without self-organisation do not fall under the umbrella of collaborative housing. Sub-forms of

⁴⁸ Eco-villages definition is provided by Co-Lab, TU Delft, <https://mapping.co-lab-research.net/taxonomy>

⁴⁹ Metcalf W (2004) *The Findhorn Book of Community Living*. Forres: Findhorn Press, 88. Available at: http://www.findhornpress.com/index.php?main_page=product_info&products_id=87.

⁵⁰ Definition by the author

⁵¹ Housing Cooperatives definition is provided by Co-Lab, TU Delft, <https://mapping.co-lab-research.net/taxonomy>.

housing cooperatives are defined by tenure types and their profit/non-for-profit condition.

Rental Cooperative: Subform where households pay a rent to the cooperative of renters, while the housing can be either owned by the same cooperative, a municipal company or private provider.

Eg. UK Tenant management co-operative

Shared equity cooperative: Subform where households purchase a 'share' of the cooperative. Each member of the cooperative receives the right to live in a housing unit, as well as a vote on matters of common interest. Cooperative members share responsibility in the management and administration of the building.

Eg. Catalan cooperative en cession de uso, Italian cooperative a proprietà indivisa

Cohousing. While, for the term *co-housing*, the suffix "co" may indicate collaborative, cooperative, collective, or communal, the word *Cohousing* has a specific meaning relating to the house's production, design, management, and use. Cohousing is a housing model that combines the autonomy of self-contained private dwellings with the advantages of extensive common facilities and services, shared resources and community living. Residents, who form an intentional community, have a decisive participation role in the design and the development process, the complete management of their community, and, typically, share periodical activities. Primary common characteristics are multifunctionality; resident's self-organisation and management; a non-hierarchical structure regulated by constitutional and operational rules of a private nature; design for social contact; values characterisation (Chiodelli & Baglione, 2014; Falkenstjerne Beck, 2019; Fromm, 1991; Giorgi, 2020; McCamant & Durrett, 1988; Meltzer, 2005).⁵²

This research, dealing with community-led housing, started from Bresson and Tummers' schematisation and expanded the terminology by country (TAB D-G).

⁵² This definition comes from a study for the ENHR annual conference 2022 contained in the paper and presentation In Search of Fair And Collaborative Housing Models For The Italian Context by Silvia Cafora and Ludovica Rolando.

English	Spanish	Belgium	French	German	Dutch	Italian	Danish	Swiss
Community-led housing				• Gemeinschaftlich Wohnen				
Cohousing	• Covivienda (cohabitatge)	• Habitat groupé	• Habitat groupé	• Cohousing siedlung Wohngemeinschaft	• Centraal wonen Gemeenschappelijk wonen	• Coabitazione Cohousing	• Bofaellesskab	• Cohousing
Cooperative housing	• Cooperativa de viviendas	• Habitat Coopératif	• Habitat groupé/ coopératif Coopérative d'habitations	• (Wohnbau) Genossenschaft Mietergenossenschaft	• Collectieve-koop of Vastgoedcoöperatie	• Cooperativa d'abitanti	• Andelsbolig	• Wohngensschaften / Cooperative d'abitazione / Cooperative d'habitation
Collective housing	• Vivienda dotacional	• Collectieve huisvesting	• Logements collectifs		• Collectief wonen	• Abitare collettivo	• Kollektivehuse	
Community land trust	• CLT	• CLT	• Organisme de foncier solidaire	• CLT	• CLT	• CLT	• CLT	• CLT
Radical Routes			• Le Clip	• Mietshäuser Syndikat	• Vrijcop		• Almenbolig +	
Self-help housing	• Masovería Aparcería Urbana	• Habitat solidaire	• Auto-promotion Habitat autogéré		• Zelfbeheer	• Autorganizzazione		• Habitat autogéré
Self-build Housing	• Vivienda Autogestionada	• Habitat groupé	• Habitat participatif	• Baugruppe / Baugemeinschaft	• Kraken/Collectief particulier opdrachtgeverschap/Bouwen in eigen beheer	• Autorecupero	• Fællesbyg / Byggefællesskab	
Condominium	• Vivienda colectiva	• Auto-construcción		• Wohnhouse		• Condominio solidale	• Ejjerlejlighed	
Squat	• Ocupa - Squat	• Squat	• Squat	• Hausbesetzer -Squat	• Squat	• Occupazione-Squat	• Squat	• Squat
Eco-habitat	• Eco-barrio	• Ecohabitat	• Ecohabitat	• Okodorf	• Eco-dorp	• Ecovillaggio • Ecoquartiere	• Økosamfund / Økolandsby	
Eco-village		• Ecovillages	• Ecovillages					

TAB G: housing terminology and transfer from one nation to the other from one language to the other. Elaboration by the author.

PART TWO
The Atlas of Practices

Chapter 3

Why an Atlas?

APPENDIX Index_PART 2_chapter 3

A. Geographical Based

B. Comparison through a set of characteristics

As introduced in the research methodology, this Atlas is understood as a research tool to collect and classify the selected cases according to the enunciated criteria. The geographic classification helps the comparison and clarifies each project's criticalities and possibilities. This dissertation gives importance to the cultural and context-specific factors in the analysis of the cases. Each country has its welfare regime and has developed a peculiar housing system to be understood, composed of the socio-economic, legal, and political peculiarities mentioned above, besides its historical context and a specific timeline for producing alternatives.

The Atlas groups the cases into subcategories in Northern and Central-southern European areas. The field research has demonstrated similarities between these two areas' countries regarding: the housing system and, in particular, the composition and ownership division of real estate and the historical and emerging social, political, economic, and architectural patterns.

It is divided into European cases and Italian ones with a comparative perspective. This chapter is divided into Step 1, *An immersive understanding*, the case-by-case analysis sheets, and Step 2, *Comparisons*, the final elaboration of data.



FIG 12: Atlas of practices. The 60 mapped cases.* The exhaustive collection of the Italian cases will be treated in chapter 4. Map by the author.

Comparative descriptions

STEP 2

Comparisons

TIPIFICATION / LESSONS LEARNT / RECCOMENDATIONS

A. THE VARIETY OF MODELS

B. QUANTITATIVE DATA

The data processing of the case studies just described is presented here.

The cases are analyzed and dissected into their parts - legal, economic, architectural, social, and political - and then the emerging models are highlighted. These are the legal models, the tenure models that sought accessibility solutions, the models of inclusive and democratic governance, and the innovative intervention of architectural design.

In the second part, data are extracted and quantitatively compared. They cover relevant aspects such as, a. building typology and location in the territories, b. the size of residential settlements, c. the production of CLH over time from the 1980s to the present, d. the European networks that trace the connections between the projects, e. the intervention and the tools of the public actor, f. the main criticalities that have emerged observed or collected through oral sources.

This first set of analyses serves as a quantitative framework and provides a broad view of the phenomenon on a European scale, using the 60 mapped cases. The next chapter, on the other hand, proceeds with the formulation of insights that provide a more detailed understanding of how projects work from which to extract some lessons for the research targets: public actors, community, and practitioners.

PART THREE
The Biographies

Case studies as biographies. An introduction

This chapter proposes an in-depth analysis of **four chosen cases** and the production of their respective biographies.

A biography is considered here as a *A story, narrative of events* that led to the composition of such a project and *The making of a Model*, an analysis of the chosen project in all its parts: economic, legal, inner governance, architectural, political, and public relations.

The research decided to study each project and its urban reality to understand better the local dynamics and the new possible relationships and roles among public actors and communities' stakeholders.

The four biographies are set in Freiburg- the Mietshauser Syndikat 3houserprojekte-, in Zurich - Kraftwerk Housing Cooperatives-, in Liverpool- Granby 4 streets CLT-, in Barcelona-the right to use Housing Cooperative La Borda-.

The chosen cases respond to common characteristics⁵³, whose main focus are A. to produce undivided ownership and housing affordability⁵⁴ through a variety of legal and economic tools; B. to safeguard their real estate assets and territories from long-term speculative logic; C. to promote social inclusive living environment⁵⁵ and co-governance models.

Moreover, each of the four biographies highlights peculiar features of community-led housing production, that have been developed with different processes and timelines. They are very different cases, so the four biographies have a common frame of analysis but use different angles of insight.

For Barcelona right to use cooperative model, the most important features are the public-cooperative relation to produce political and administrative tools for the housing cooperative implementation; the new architectural approach to community housing and the innovation of housing typologies

In Freiburg, the Mietshauser Syndikat with its matrix of not-for-profit Ltds makes a creative use of traditional market tools to produce decommodified, redistributive housing goods and affordability in the long run. Moreover it implement a national

⁵³ The Characteristics are already mentioned in the Introduction and are the ones used to select all the cases of this dissertation.

⁵⁴ Colini Laura, Poliak Levente, "Community-led housing, a key ingredient of urban housing policy". Urbact- UIA. 2020. Accessed: Ottobre 5, 2020. <https://urbact.eu/community-led-housing-key-ingredient>.

⁵⁵ Horlitz 2012

community network for the self-capacitation and self-organization for the production and re-production of not-for-profit housing buildings.

In Liverpool the Granby 4 streets CLT works as a community tool for a shared governance and the alliances with local community, public actor and stakeholders. It trigger an innovative design process with community involvement in the building construction.

The Zurich's undivided co-ownership cooperatives, re-use abandoned buildings, activate their regeneration and the transformation of peripheral urban areas to new microcenter.

The four chosen cases allow the identification of some alternative produced by CLH.

With many difficulties, typical of civic engagement and activism, and contradictions, due to the multifaceted and multi-actor nature of housing (Hurol, Vestbro e Wilkinson 2005), communities in chorus with public actors and other necessary stakeholders succeed in producing alternatives to the traditional housing market, unaffordable and unable to respond to the new social needs for care, inclusion, and community.

These are alternatives to the process of housing production and development, introducing housing within a social and supportive market of actors;

It is also about architectural alternatives, which stimulate new spatial typologies for private and community housing, shared and collective structures, introducing flexible, gender-friendly cluster types of apartments;

Finally, alternatives to social fragmentation produce new forms of community, elective family, intergenerational social mixité, and new forms of shared living.

For each biography, data and information were collected through written sources, existing literature mainly with an economic-political slant, pamphlets and local newspapers about the project, project websites; through oral sources, i.e., semi-structured interviews; and through field observation of social dynamics, economic pattern, and architectural typology.

The four biographies contribute to the *immersive understanding STEP* of the Atlas and help to comprehend the functioning of the chosen cases.

STEP 1

Immersive Understanding

How does it works?

PART FOUR

Transfer possibilities

As already stated in the opening, one of the main objectives of this research is to understand whether the European practices analyzed can be transferred to Italy, to innovate the local landscape of community-led housing projects.

Aware that each national, regional, and city reality has its own political, social, and economic dynamics, this analysis of transfer possibilities produces a first framing of the Italian situation with current projects and emerging critical issues to try to investigate how to transfer these practices.

Chapter 8 takes an in-depth look at community-led housing in Italy, including practices and projects produced by social and third-sector organizations, not only

those produced directly by communities. In particular, intending this overview as a first step of the analysis to be deepened later, the production of cohousing at the national level is analyzed in depth. Other projects are analyzed quantitatively, with an initial lunge on housing cooperatives. This chapter fills a knowledge gap, as no scholarly literature produces a picture of the reality of CLH in Italy.

Chapter 9 focuses on comparing data collected from the European cases analyzed in the Atlas and biographies to systematize knowledge and compare forms and models in an attempt to extrapolate possible lessons or recommendations for the production of alternative housing models in Italy.

Chapter 8

Community-led housing in Italy.

APPENDIX Index_PART 4_chapter 8



Fig 99: Cohousing diffusion in Italy. Map by the author.

Chapter 9

Typification of strategies and Lessons Learnt

APPENDIX Index *PART 4 chapter 9*

This chapter focuses on systematizing the data collected and comparing the projects studied in depth in Part Three of this dissertation. Below are the lessons learned divided by theme.

Public actor. The key role of public administration in supporting the production of non-profit alternative housing

In times and places where community-led housing has expanded beyond a 'niche' solution, the state's role, through national, regional, and municipal policy-making, stands out as an essential enabling factor (Ferreri e Vidal 2021)⁵⁶.

Today it is possible to observe a new importance given by the public actor to housing. This decreased until the 2008 crisis, while today, efforts are being made toward more inclusive and affordable housing in many cities. Some drifts deal with affordability for the grey sections of the population and neglect the weaker sections, such as some public-private social housing interventions in Italy.

Looking at the TAB H, which is an elaboration of the Biographies' data (Chapters 4-7), it emerges that the cities examined have been confronted with the theme of new community-led and not-for-profit housing models in the last 15 years. Many cities, on the one hand, trigger a profound change in internal organization and vision of the housing divisions at municipal, regional, and national levels in order to ensure better effectiveness of housing management: equipping themselves with new professional figures (architects, lecturers), new working groups also multidisciplinary, new working tools and confront. This reorganization is at the base of a key change of vision and action in the process of valorization of the real estate heritage, not as maximization of its economic value but as a pivotal node for the construction of a more inclusive, accessible, welcoming city, which does not expel its inhabitants in favor of the large financial groups (ex. Blackstone), but which supports them in processes of social, civic valorization for the liberation of the heritage in the long term from the dynamics of the speculative market.

⁵⁶ Ferreri, Vidal, 2021, p.2

As an example, the city of Barcelona, with the administration of Mayor Ada Colau, created three new departments of the housing division; the city of Zurich included in its regulatory body a rezoning in favor of the new cooperatives models; in Freiburg, the housing division asked to the Mietschauser Syndikat to become social housing developer for the city.

The explored cities have also built a dialogue with the promoting realities and, in different times and ways, have constructed a set of tools and actions to support and promote the proposed models. In particular:

- Public land assignment or lease and commitment to the acquisition of new public land. It is a fundamental tool to make a non-profit housing project sustainable. Public land is a scarce resource today, several cities are studying ways to re-appropriate it in a public-community formula.
- Public building transfer or leasehold. The possibility of re-using an empty, abandoned building or area.
- Urban incentives and Indirect subsidies. Depending on the Country, urban incentives are developed at a city, regional, federation, canton, or national level, and it is a matter of collaboration and compromises among political levels. It comprises the implementation of policies that produce tax relief and reduced charges for community-based projects. But not all municipalities can produce a new direct policy to support new no-profit housing.
- Direct subsidies and funding.
- Municipal Guarantee and Advocate process. Many cities behave as a guarantee in front of credit institutions or in front of other cities or political levels. This comprises validation of community-led and non-profit housing but also the production of tools that support it directly, such as a Zurich law that obliges federal banks to give credit to cooperatives and reduce the equity for the mortgage to the 6%.
- Interest in architectural innovation. In this sense, many cities make the production of architectural competitions mandatory to have access to public land or to develop Community-led housing. The will is to trigger a regenerative process of urban areas with a new distinctive style and to push the rapprochement of architecture to housing in the production of housing typologies more suited to new lifestyles and households.

These tools and actions have an important role in securing the economic sustainability of the development of non-profit housing projects, guaranteeing the affordability of living, and fostering social inclusion and architectural innovation. In particular:

- Reduce construction and development costs by transferring-leasing public properties (land and buildings). This allows having affordable rent and entrance fee-shares in case of cooperatives or other models that use a membership fee or share buy.
- Builds credibility in the model also for credit attainment
- Foster's new architecture for living spaces at the scale of the building and in the neighborhood.
- Public housing production that incorporates alternative housing models.
- Social Inclusion production. For several cities, promoting new collaborative housing as social housing, including such projects, the waiting list of most fragile citizens, and giving direct subsidies for young/old people and families in need.

The interest of the public actor in supporting this emergent phenomenon depends on different factors, mainly on two: the level of development of the CLH projects in a city and the consequent acquisition of knowledge by the local administration about its functioning and potential, the shared values and intentions of the incumbent administration concerning the CLH proposals.

The public administration develops lines of interest in specific characteristics that these projects put into practice that have repercussions on city planning, crossing different matters.

- The regeneration of part of the city, usually the marginal ones, in transformation or abandoned that need a new idea of use.
- CLH gives new value to the public land or building stock bringing social innovation and innovative architecture. CLH turns the attention to the specific building or area of intervention.
- Civic activism and the citizen co-production of public value support the public actor in its role and work (by solving-helping social problems such the access to housing)
- Diminishing social, housing, and inclusion problems

Both communities and the public actor in producing urban tools to support or produce housing alternatives have found it optimal to compare practices.

(Arrondo and Gallardo 2021)⁵⁷

⁵⁷ 21/10/13 _ Ivan Gallardo -Gerència d'Habitatge, Ajuntament de Barcelona- and Maite Arrondo- Innovation in Housing Policies Redes y Proyectos Europeos-, Housing división, Barcelona Municipality: Housing policies in Barcelona

PUBLIC ACTOR TOOLS AND ACTIONS

	BARCELONA	ZURICH	FREIBURG	LIVERPOOL	ITALY
housing division organization	1.Barcelona Housing and Rehabilitation Council 2. IMHAB 3.Barcelona Housing Consortium	1.Federal Office for Housing BWO 2.Housing division with non profit housing department	1Planning Department	Liverpool City Council	1.Planning department 2.Heritage department 3.Social policies department TURIN-MILAN-BOLOGNA
Land transfer / leasehold	>competitions for public land surface right 75/90 years: 2014-2022 Built 4 generation of Cooperative	>leases granted for 62/90 years	>leases and assignement >lottery > new building area 500 new apartments	-	>MILAN: leases and assignement
buildings transfer / leasehold	70mln€ to buy land/building	-	-	> leases and assignement: 14 buildings to the CLT	> BOLOGNA: Porto15 co-housing in a public building
urban incentives	>Parking derogation Art. 300.8 NU PGM	>Special Area Plan (Gestaltungsplan) to plan the re-zoning of large areas to allocate public land to cooperatives.	-	-	> BOLOGNA:Regulatory definition of Cohousing.
indirect subsidies	> Reductions 50% land value tax (IBI)/ Reductions 90% construction tax (ICIO) > 55-60% less than market construction cost	> the Canton of Zurich obliged the Zurich Cantonal Bank (ZKB) to lend to cooperatives > 6% equities needed to access to mortgage	> advantageous building regulations	-	ART 32 RUE Parking derogation. +20% permissible floor area >MILAN: Cohousing regulated as Social Housing
direct subsidies / funding	>Cooperative= social housing- reduced price for lease/transfer use > Possibly subsidy, refundable after 20 years. > Institut Català de Finances	-	>Syndikat= social housing- > Social Housing subsidies federal state Baden Württemberg	>Syndikat= social housing- > Social Housing subsidies	> BOLOGNA: exemption from municipal waste tax > BOLOGNA: first home tax relief. Saving Funds for Cooperatives
guarantee	>Guarantee for Fundings (Banks, or others) > Technical support > Municipal guarantee for mortgage	-	>Advocate for Fundings	-	-
new households/ house typologies	-	>new typological models for living, and of new family models accepted into the regulation	>Mietshauser Syndikat as a city flagship	>Accepted the production of the first urban CLT in UK	> TRENTO: law for intentional communities
architecture	>mandatory architecture competitions for coop.	>mandatory architecture competitions for coop.	> Freiburg Climate Protection Strategy 2030 : low-energy consumption standard	-	-
networks	Netco CLT Network -	Netco	-	Netco National CLT Network	Netco -

TAB H

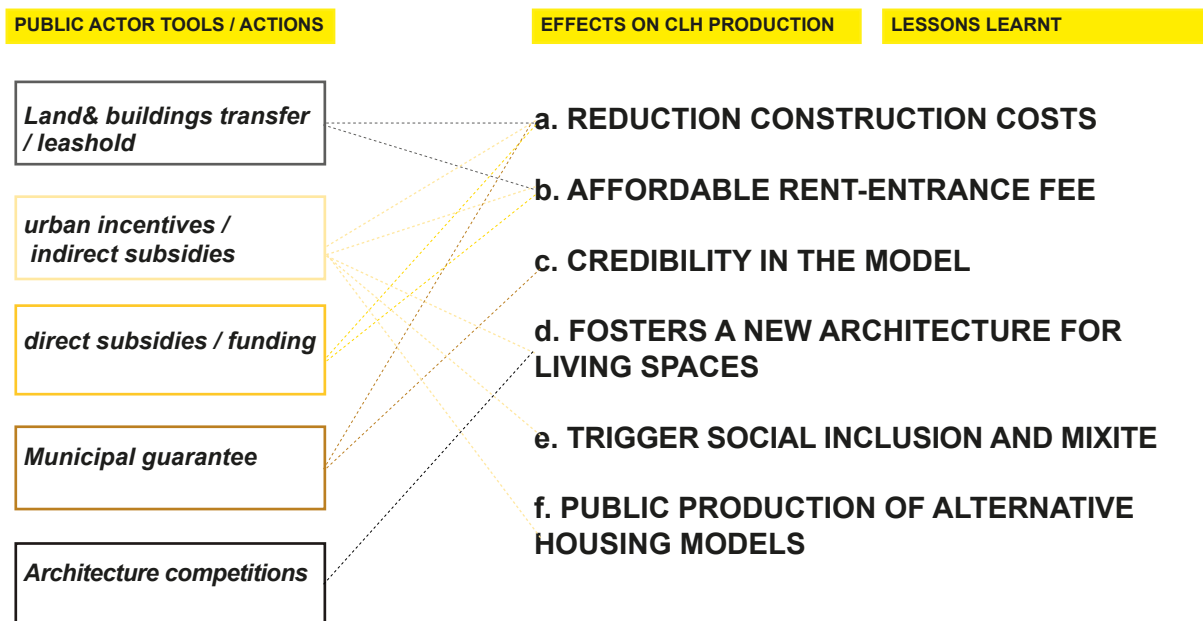


Fig.104: Public actor's tools and the lessons learnt. Diagram by the author.

Conclusions

“Building more homes without rethinking the way we live together will not solve the fundamental issues with the housing crisis. Besides more quality homes for lower and middle incomes, we also need housing solutions that are sustainable, foster strong social connections and are affordable. Collaborative housing has the potential to tick all of these boxes – so why don’t we know more about this concept?” D. Czischke⁵⁸

These conclusions are intended to bring back the epistemic value of the research by reflecting on A.the structure of the research: objectives achieved and critical issues; B.the functionality and shortcomings of the research method used; C. the analysis and processing of the collected data regarding lessons and recommendations for communities, public actors, and professionals.

STEP 1

Immersive Understanding

How does it work?

a. The choice of a research perimeter focused on the production of community-led housing projects served to define an exact field of investigation and to be able to analyze it in depth while also being able to proceed with the comparison of the cases given their similar nature. Therefore, this is a very specialized thesis that, on the one hand, makes it possible to produce a dataset and elaborate the models of the chosen cases, filling a gap in the literature and constructing a technical reference framework. On the other hand, the specialization and boundaries dictated by this do not include the description and comparison of other types of alternative housing production, such as models produced by the market and for-profit and private or public-private social housing projects. Furthermore, these are undoubtedly partial results due to the impossibility of considering, analyzing, and comparing a more significant number of cases. Despite this, as reported in chapter 1, the number of cases chosen makes it possible to describe a broad panorama of case histories and define current trends (Yin 2008).

⁵⁸ Czischke, 2020. p.8

Including Italy in the Atlas has the precise purpose of starting a mapping of state of the art to understand the community-led housing practices and the alternatives produced, as well as to collect data for possible transfers of European models. This research maps Italian cohousing, some of which were included in the Atlas. Therefore, these two investigations running in parallel, the European and the Italian, intertwine throughout the research to meet in chapter 9.

Having said this, the research has achieved several objectives:

- The identification of 60 European cases, a deeper analysis of 20 cases, the ones contained in the Atlas, and the production of in-depth Biographies of 4 cases located in different areas of the continent, North, Centre, and South. The research identifies 27 Italian cases and analyzes 4 cases contained in the Atlas.
- The understanding of their functioning from a legal, economic, social, architectural, and political point of view and modeling (Immersive Understanding)
- The comparison between projects or models and extraction of data showing 1. Current trends in community-led housing in Europe 2. The tools produced by the various actors involved 3. The innovation produced that responds to growing demands 4. The criticalities for their production and the criticalities for their transfer. (Comparative)
- The production of Lessons for three target groups: communities, public actors, professionals
- The production of an Italian mapping of cohousing, tools, and actions produced by selected cities.

STEP 2

Comparisons

b.The method. The choice and use of oral sources, with the method of semi-structured interviews, led to a taxonomic collection of data helpful in drafting and describing the chosen cases and developing models. This research involved numerous efforts due to the lack of already cataloged and processed data.

The possibility of conducting digital interviews supported the continuity of research and data collection during the two-year pandemic. There is a gap in the literature, namely the lack of a catalog of in-depth models of community-managed housing projects. There are only websites, small local publications, and untranslated mother-tongue publications for selected cases, while there are many partial and never-complete publications for better-known cases.

Field trips and some opportunities for participant observation allowed for a better understanding of the dynamics of networking, management, participation, governance, and architectural design procedures.

The comparative method is helpful because it brings out differences, potentials, and possibilities for comparison.

This comparative housing research produces several outputs: 1. It considers the different Northern-Southern housing systems and produces a systematization in the atlas; 2. It analyses each case's political and socio-economic conditions to understand its goodness, the efforts made for its functioning, and the behavior of the public actor; 3. It produces qualitative research by describing the cases in the atlas and biographies; 4. As stated by Professor Chiszcke, there is a need to produce a dataset able to describe the phenomenon of co-housing. This research compares and enhances the data collected to produce a quantitative analysis.⁵⁹

At this research stage, the need for better visualization of the collected data emerges, and the idea of developing a digital map arises.

c. What emerges from the data collected and their processing: the elaboration of the research questions.

1. CLH models seek solutions to overcome current limitations.

Bets and the creation of transformative imaginaries emerge for: Access to the landed housing stock; the recognition of non-profit legal forms (intentional

⁵⁹ Chiszcke, 2023, p. 37

communities and LLCs used to produce inclusion and not profit); the proposal of innovative ownership paradigms in which the very concept of property is dematerialized and used as a tool to produce individual surplus value (Acosta and De Tullio 2020); access to financing and new lines of credit; the production of tools for affordability and architectural, social, economic innovation.

2. There is a compelling production of non-profit housing.
 - a. What scale? What does it solve? The scale of intervention can today still be considered minor or niche, which does not want to solve the housing issue in toto but proposes alternatives (Chiszcke 2023). Today there are growing trends. Many projects and models have become rooted in their realities, and the transfer of models around Europe is underway.
 - b. Not-for-profit and Innovation, an exciting combination! What does it mean? It means the development of housing buildings without the desire to make a speculative profit on its production. On the contrary, it seeks affordability strategies. Moreover, in this process, Innovation is sought and produced in various forms—architectural, use of legal models, housing for new households, and environmentally friendly.

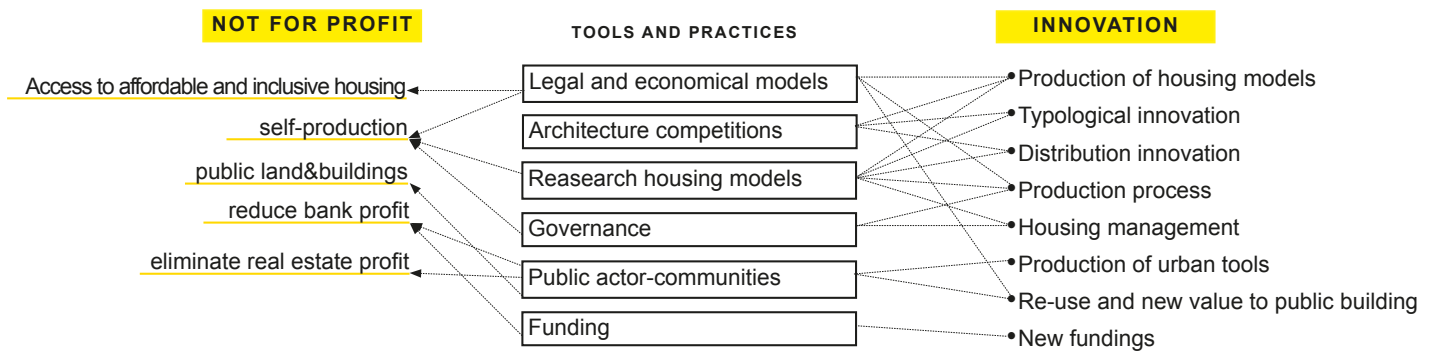


Fig.108: Not-for-profit and Innovation, an exciting combination! Diagram by the author

3. The production of models from pioneering cases that follow a unique path to open up new possibilities. Some then manage to take root, while others remain isolated examples.
 - a. Replicability of models for growing demand. The search for alternative, more shared, and communal ways of living is a growing trend (Lafond e Tsvetkova 2017) due to the spread of models and emerging housing needs. Even the traditional, for-profit housing market is adopting some characteristics of community-led models, especially in sharing new spaces and producing more community living. As described in Chapter 4-7 and explored further below, the role of the public actor is crucial to replicating a model and consolidating it. In some European countries, where community-type housing models have not yet been produced, including Italy, there are actors such as housing cooperatives and the public actor. They seek alternatives to the status quo to propose new solutions adapted to current housing problems.
4. Finally, several critical issues emerge linked to the community-led nature of civic activism, the dematerialization of public welfare, and a deep-rooted neoliberal market:
 - a. Very long project initiation and modeling that takes place over time;
 - b. Scarcity of public resources;
 - c. The proposal of social market values, such as solidarity and not-for-profit approach in a neoliberal society;
 - d. Community and voluntary work. The weight of civic activism on everyday life economy. Does it implement the public welfare's work? Should it be more recognized by local municipalities, and how? Emerse a need for modeling innovative and more supportive public-community relationships;
 - e. The challenges co-housing creates for spatial planning. Co-housing integration in urban development processes raises questions beyond the initiatives' struggle for realization. Co-housing can indeed be relevant for present-day European cities struggling with social cohesion and the necessity for community organizing. Co-housing practices can also show how planning practices and paradigms need to change.⁶⁰

⁶⁰ Tummers, L. (2016). The re-emergence of self-managed co-housing in Europe: A critical review of co-housing research. *Urban Studies*, 53(10), 2023–2040. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098015586696>

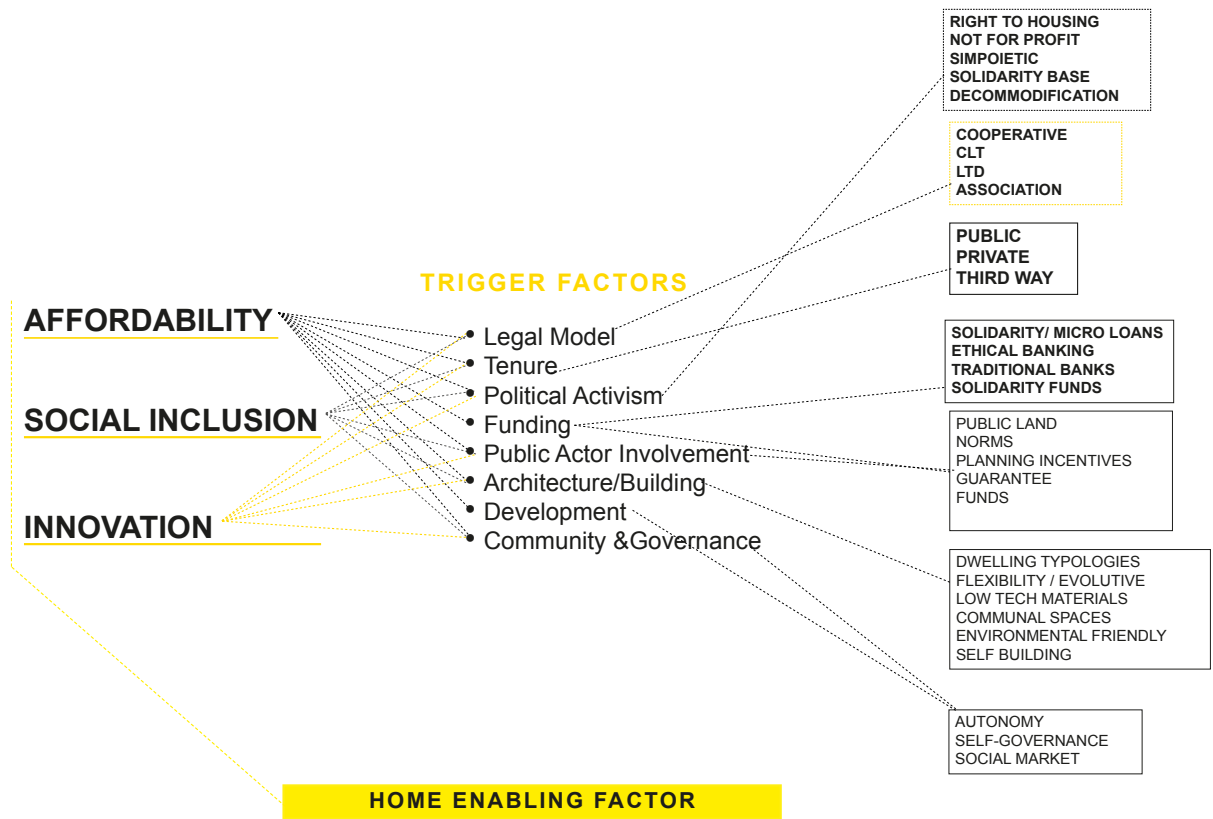


Fig.109: How to produce housing as an enabling factor? Diagram by the author.

Further steps of the research

With one glance at Europe and one at Italy, the research needs to go deeper to answer the numerous questions concerning the possibilities of producing alternative housing models.

In particular, this research intends to pursue two lines.

The first one wants to refine the study began by expanding the available data and the Atlas of cases and deepening specific knowledge. In particular processing of collected data about the CLH cost of building development and monthly fee for residents (rent, mortgage); and the Community composition: who produce the CLH projects and who lives in.

Of particular interest is to analyze further and monitor what is happening in Southern East Europe.

To include the ongoing mapping of Italian alternative housing models in the European mapping project led by the TU Delft Co-Lab to bring state of art in Italy to international knowledge.

The second trajectory wants to deepening the study of the state-of-the-art in Italy. How to generate access to the housing stock in high-density Italian cities, and how to stimulate the reuse of housing stock in 'marginal areas'? Can community activism stimulate a different and fairer distribution of housing on the Italian territory?

A look at several dynamics inherent to the production of housing is necessary and, in particular, the policies and instruments of the public actor; the emerging housing demand; the state of the housing stock and architectural production; the emergence of community-led groups seeking alternative housing models; the new pathways for Cooperatives and social housing projects.

There is a desire to produce a georeferenced digital map containing the qualitative and quantitative research carried out, particularly with a focus on Italian production. This can be useful to include Italy in European discourses and research.

What is the situation considering the emerging demand from communities, public actors, cooperatives, and the third sector? What is the willingness to accept alternatives? What is the knowledge and involvement in international networks? How to activate a process of mutual learning and international networking to exchange practices? The research also wants to work on the development of a model for the production of affordable, innovative, and community-led housing suitable for the national context. To do so, it intends to analyze in depth some Italian legal, economic, and political forms to assess their viability. Firstly, the situation of housing cooperatives, understanding their state of health, possible development goals, and evolutions. As emerged during the interview with MOBA members, "in

Italy there are cooperatives, a model so deeply rooted that it would be worth renewing it and adapting it to new housing needs" (Ramzak 2022).⁶¹

In addition to cooperatives, there is the will to explore the possibility of transferring CLT to Southern Europe as an already occurring trend.

The research also intends to examine the possibility of developing this model in different territories in the national context: access to the housing stock in urban centers or, as a possibility, reuse of housing stock in marginal areas.

Can collaborative housing models be triggered to regenerate depopulated territories in the latter?

⁶¹ Interview W, 22/03/09 _ Rok Ramsak, Anja Lazar, Zadrugator, Ljubljana: Zadrugator project, Moba Network, Slovenia situation

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Annexes

SEE APPENDIX folders

Interviews

- A. 21/07/08 _ Carles Baiges, Lacol Architects, Barcelona: La Borda Cooperative Housing.
- B. 21/10/14 _ Carles Baiges, Lacol Architects, Barcelona: Cooperative model in Barcelona.
- C. 21/10/13 _ Ivan Gallardo -Gerència d'Habitatge, Ajuntament de Barcelona- and Maite Arrondo- Innovation in Housing Policies Redes y Proyectos Europeos-, Housing división, Barcelona Municipality: Housing policies in Barcelona.
- D. 21/10/14 _ La Dinamo Fundacion, Daniela, Gloria, Mara Ferreri, Barcelona: La Dinamo supports the cooperative housing production, La Borda pioneer process.
- E. 21/10/15 _ José Maria Montaner, ETSAB professor, ex member of the Barcelona municipality housing division, housing activist, Barcelona: Housing policies in Barcelona, housing architecture.
- F. 22/05/31 _ José Maria Montaner, ETSAB professor, ex member of the Barcelona municipality housing division, housing activist, Barcelona:
- G. 21/06/24 _ Geert De Pauw, CLTB, Bruxelles: CLTB history, model of functioning and future steps.
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- I. 20/09/7 _ Giacomo Borella, Albori architects, Milano: contemporary communal living.
- J. 21/10/23 _ Michael Lafond, idd22, Berlin: Collaborative housing production in Berlin and European Trend
- K. 20/07/22 _ Joe Halligan, Assemble Studio, London: Granby 4 streets CLT.
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- M. Anurag Verma and Eleonore Margolies, RUSS, Rural Urban synthesis society, London: RUSS model and the Lewisham legacy. 22/01/04
- N. 20/08/01 _ Marina Noussan, Mitshauser Syndikat, 3houserprojecte, Freiburg: Syndikat model.
- O. 21/10/23 _ Marina Noussan, Sascha Klemz, Helma Architect, Noemi Kuck Mitshauser Syndikat, Freiburg: Syndikat model and architectural/spatial approach.
- P. 20/07/17 _ Rolf Novy Huy, Stiftung Trias, Hattingen, Germany: Stiftung Trias model of functioning, legacy and projects
- Q. 22/05/31 _ Susanne Kilian Schindler, ETH Zurich, Philipp Klaus, Kraftwerk Housing Cooperative, Zurich: Cooperative Housing in Zurich, the case of Kraftwerk.
- R. 21/12/15 _ Paolo Sanna, Coabitare, Cohousing Numero Zero, Torino: Cohousing Numero 0.

- S. 21/12/21 _ Aida Nepa, Cohousing San Giorgio, Ferrara: Cohousing San Giorgio.
- T. 21/12/21 _ Emanuela Bana, Base Gaia, Milano: Cohousing Base Gaia.
- U. 21/12/16 _ Marco Tabbia, H4A, Torino: the project of Homes For All.
- V. 22/04/11 _ Csaba Jelinek, Pósfai zsuzsi Zuglo, Budapest: Zuglo cooperative housing project and the Hungarian situation on housing
- W. 22/03/09 _ Rok Ramsak, Anja Lazar, Zadrugator, Liublijana: Zadrugator project, Moba Network, Slovenia situation.
- X. 22/05/06 _ Ana Dzokic, Pametnija Zgrada, Ko Gradi Grad, Belgrade: Pametnija Zgrada, a new housing cooperative established in Serbia and the civic association Ko Gradi Grad, the Serbian situation on housing.
- Y. 22/06/04 _ Constantina Theodorou, Co-Lab Athens: the housing situation in Athens
- Z. 22/06/19 _ Emily Marion Clancy. Bologna municipality: housing division.
- AA. 15/12/22 _ Davide Ostoni. President Abitare cooperative, Niguarda, Milan
- BB. 28/12/22 _ Pierpaolo Forello. President Uniabita Cooperative, Cinisello Balsamo, Milan
- CC. 20/12/22 _ Rossana Zaccaria, President Legacoop Abitanti, National association, Rome.