

The Lisbon Early-Career Workshop in Urban Studies:

“Social Mobilisations and Planning through Crises”

2nd edition – in-presence event – 23rd – 25th November 2022

Instituto de Ciências Sociais da Universidade de Lisboa (ICS-ULisboa), Lisbon

[Website](#)

Organisation:

- [Urban Transitions Hub of ICS-ULisboa](#)
- [AESOP Young Academics Network](#)

Keynote speakers:

- Margit Mayer – Center for Metropolitan Studies, Berlin
- Miguel Angel Martinez – Uppsala University

Local mentors:

- Marco Allegra – ICS-ULisboa
- Olivia Bina – ICS-ULisboa
- Pedro Neto – ICS-ULisboa
- Andrea Pavoni – Dinâmia’CET- IUL
- Lavínia Pereira – ICS-ULisboa
- Simone Tulumello – ICS ULisboa

The Urban Transitions Hub will host the second edition of the Lisbon Early-Career Workshop in Urban Studies in presence from the 23rd to the 25th of November 2022 with support of the AESOP Young Academics Network.¹ Circa 40 PhD students and early-career scholars will have the opportunity to present and discuss their research projects and/or findings during a 3-days event organised as a space of exchange, debate and learning.

The conference fees: Regular: 150 EUR; PhD-student: 120 EUR.²

- Submission of the Abstract: 15th of May
- Selection of Abstracts: 10th of July 2022
- Submission of long Abstract / Articles: 10th of October 2022

¹ In case the COVID restrictions we reserve the option to change the workshop to an online event. In this case the event will last 4 days instead of 3 days and the fees will be reduced.

² In the case of additional funding, they could be reduced.

The main topic for the second edition is **“Social Mobilisations and Planning through Crises”**

This umpteenth crisis brought by the Covid 19, has made more visible the many contradictions of the neoliberal system³ as well as the bidirectional relationship between urban planning and the crisis.⁴

Many of the justifications used and actions developed by decision-makers have confirmed the neoliberal restructuring as the underlying logic of the urban agenda and planning culture. Pressure on local policies has often been reduced to the call for more economic growth based on the attraction of national and international investors, economic elites and tourism, as city budgets have been contracting and cities have made themselves increasingly dependent on financial markets. Neoliberal urbanism and austerity have contributed to the presence of multiple ongoing crises that are deeply interlocked with global processes of financial accumulation, dispossession and extraction of collective and natural resources, spatial transformation and social reproduction. At the same time, the articulation of multiple crises has been used as a justification to maintain the status quo. For instance, strategies aimed at reducing budget deficits and spending cuts (Donald et al. 2014) imposed by international authorities over national and local governments, mainly after the 2007 global crisis, have never been substantially reversed. The dramatic shrinking of public assets and the privatisation and dismantling of welfare programmes are today one of the major causes of the spread incapacity to provide public alternatives in several policy domains. Likewise, social polarization has been radicalized during the pandemic due to the side-effects of the lock downs and associated restrictions. Socio-spatial inequalities further indicate that the supply-side of the economy is not independent of the demand-side, and rather show the downturn in the dismantling of aggregate demand imposed by the neoliberal doctrines (e.g. assaults on organized labour, the shrinking and/or privatization of public services, the dismantling of welfare programmes, the criminalization of the urban poor and more).

Recurring cycles of systemic crisis have hit societies and economies of many countries, thus, increasing social polarization and impoverishment of territories at the back of increasing conflicts in multiple and interconnected fields (e.g. extractivism and climate change, flows of migrants and refugees and policies of borders and social control and criminalization of poor, etc.). In this context, «(t)he neoliberal city, with its growth-first axiom, its entrepreneurial modes of governance, its strategies of privatization and enclosure, and its two-pronged policy (benign and repressive) for dealing with the social fall-out of these central features (Kunkel & Mayer, 2012; Mayer, 2013a), was met – in each of these dimensions – by challenging movements».⁵ Urban social movements (or mobilised groups) are organized in many different forms and use a mix of state-driven mechanisms and more radical practices to advance their causes in protest against specific policies, projects, and regulatory measures, that are considered detrimental to the “right to the city”.

³ Hall, S. and Massey, D. (2010) *Interpreting the Crisis*. Soundings 44, pp. 57–71.

⁴ Ponzini, D. (2016) “Introduction: Crisis and Renewal of Contemporary Urban Planning.” *European Planning Studies* 24 (7), pp. 1237–1245.

⁵ Mayer, M. (2016) “Urban Social Movements in Times of Austerity Politics,” in B. Schöning & S. Schipper (eds) *Urban Austerity Impacts of the Global Financial Crisis on Cities in Europe*. Berlin: Theatre der Zeit, pp. 219-241.

From tenants' organizations activists and movements of housing struggle, who oppose gentrification, evictions and displacement in former working-class neighbourhoods or in illegal settlements and squatted spaces, to citizens' groups reclaiming spaces in opposition to «the conversion of common, collective, and state forms of property rights into exclusive private property rights and the suppression of rights to the commons».⁶ Among others, the struggle on “commons” resisting the conversion to the private sector of «common property rights that have been won in the course of the Fordist class struggle (such as access to education, health care, welfare, and state pensions)»⁷ is the today major battleground for the confrontation of capital owners and deprived people.

Emerging claims bring a corrosive criticism against the rules imposed by global neoliberal and austerity development patterns, while giving force to the democratic debate from a bottom-up perspective. However, movements are often hijacked both in «benign programs seeking to incorporate precarious or impoverished groups as well as areas into upgrading schemes and “creative city” policies for local marketing», and for «upwardly mobile cities to compete for top places in the global competition by branding themselves as diverse, sustainable, and green».⁸ In this framework, the creative mobilization of ideas from citizens and new market actors can be seen as a ‘urban renaissance’ both under the rhetoric of the Big Society, in which voluntary, non-profit and business actors are hijacked through the state withdrawal as potential alternatives for local administrations to provide local services both are mobilized for alternative strategies of urban regeneration. The increasingly pervasive “governmentalization” of urban experience, however, tends to put the citizen into a specific governmental rationality based on rights, responsibilities and duties. When Michel Foucault identified the “population” as the target of the rising governmental rationality in the modern age, this meant to increase awareness of rights and entitlements, as well as duties and responsibilities, eventually leading to a self-governmental society.⁹ The emphasis placed on the link between rights and responsibilities holds a wide range of consequences, which can be viewed either as complementary or contradictory to each other.

In the neoliberal era, policies devoted to imitate development patterns imposed by global agents, have sought economic growth and opportunities for urban development, which has intensified social polarization at the back of social mobilizations. Likewise, spreading inequalities have also nurtured claims for social, civil and political rights. «These phenomena shed light on the increasingly moral connotation of urban government in advanced liberal societies. The idea of citizen participation in the public sphere and the related ideal of the “active citizen” are pursued through the mobilization of a variegated repertoire of policies and regulations orientating the moral conduct of the urban

⁶ Mayer, M. (2013), “Preface,” in *Squatting in Europe: radical spaces, urban struggle* (ed. by) Squatting European Kollektive. Minor Compositions, Autonomedia.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Mayer, M. (2016) “Urban Social Movements in Times of Austerity Politics,” in B. Schöning & S. Schipper (eds) *Urban Austerity Impacts of the Global Financial Crisis on Cities in Europe*. Berlin: Theatre der Zeit, pp. 219-241.

⁹ Imrie, R. and Raco, M. (2000) “Governmentality and Rights and Responsibilities in Urban Policy.” In *Environment and Planning A*, volume 32, pp. 2187-2204.

Marinetti, M. (2003) “Who Wants to be an Active Citizen? The Politics and Practice of Community Involvement.” In *Sociology*, Volume 37(1), pp. 103–120

community (understood as a collective entity and as a complex of individuals), while classic goals of socio-economic emancipation and justice appear to be marginalized from the urban policy agenda despite persistent struggles making reference to them». ¹⁰ In this special context, the present conjuncture, and the social pressure generated by an extraordinary event like this pandemic and the other parallel crisis, is triggering the emergence of new mobilized groups and strategic claims (e.g. concerning housing see Martinez 2019¹¹ on strategic vs tactic claim-making)?

New forward-looking perspectives are necessary if we are to muddle through these volatile times, and contribute visions, charts and plans for a more sustainable planetary future. This workshop will be dedicated to discussing critical approaches to urban planning and social mobilizations through the ongoing multiple crises, with a focus on four interlocked lines of inquiry:

- Urban impacts from multiple crisis through extractivism and dispossession of natural and collective resources
- Urban experimentations in the face of the systemic capitalism crisis and the attempts to restructuring developmental models
- Urban social movements, mobilisations, and practices of resistance to competing hegemonic visions
- Citizens' participation and the post-politicization of the public debate

As the main goal of the workshop is to offer a space for discussion and improvement of ongoing research, papers will above all consider theoretical questions and development, preliminary analyses of empirical findings and reflections on epistemological/methodological dimensions – or a mix of two or more of these approaches.

The workshop will be composed of:

- Plenary keynote sessions with following interactive debate;
- Breakout parallel sessions – divided in groups, participants will present their paper (~20 min) and 'defend' it from comments by a mentor and other participants (~40 min.);
- Q&A on strategies and tips for academic publishing, and post-PhD challenges;
- Wrap-up session with discussion on lessons learned.

Organising and scientific committee

Luisa Rossini (ICS-ULisboa)
Roberto Falanga (ICS-ULisboa)
Mafalda Pereira (ICS-ULisboa)

¹⁰ Rossi, U. and Vanolo, R. (2011). *Urban Political Geographies: A Global Perspective*. SAGE Publications Ltd.

¹¹ Martinez, M.A. (2019) "Bitter wins or a long-distance race? Social and political outcomes of the Spanish housing movement", *Housing studies*, Vol. 34-10, pp. 1588-1611.

Keynote speakers' short bio

Margit Mayer is a political scientist. She is Senior Researcher at the Center for Metropolitan Studies, CMS (Technical University Berlin, TUB) and Professor Emerita at the Free University of Berlin. She has been a visiting professor at the University of California, Berkeley, University of California, Santa Cruz and at the New School for Social Research, New York. Since 1987, she has been a Professor in the Department of Political Science at the Free University of Berlin, and since 1990 also at the JF-Kennedy Institute for North American Studies. Mayer is considered today one of the most important scholars in the field of Comparative Neoliberal Urban Politics; the Role of Local Movements and Resistance and Solidarity City. Moreover, her contribution has touched on US parliamentary and extra-parliamentary politics, new social movements in the USA and Germany, urban development and urban development policy, the restructuring of the welfare state and homelessness in the USA and Germany from a comparative perspective. Her publications are a key reference for the analysis of urban social movements and neoliberal politics in urban development dynamics. We mention some of the most cited: *Cities for people, not for profit: Critical urban theory and the right to the city* (Brenner, Marcuse, Mayer, 2012, Routledge); "The 'Right to the City' in the context of shifting mottos of urban social movements" (Mayer, 2009 - *City. Analysis of Urban Trends* 13/2-3, 362-374); "The onward sweep of social capital: causes and consequences for understanding cities, communities and urban movements" (Mayer, 2003 - *International journal of urban and regional research* 27/1, 110-132); "First world urban activism: Beyond austerity urbanism and creative city politics" (Mayer, 2013 - *City: Analysis of Urban Trends, Culture, Theory, Policy, Action*, 17/1, 5-19); "Contesting the neoliberalization of urban governance" (Mayer, 2007 - in: H. Leitner, J. Peck, E. Sheppard, eds., *Contesting neoliberalism; The Urban Frontier*. New York: Guilford Press, 90-115).

Many of her publications are freely available here:

<https://thestacks.libaac.de/browse?type=author&value=Mayer%2C+Margit>

Miguel A. Martínez is a Professor of Housing and Urban Sociology at IBF (Institute for Housing and Urban Research), Uppsala University (Sweden). His research focus has been mostly related to urban sociology and social movements. He held teaching positions in different universities of Spain, Portugal and Hong Kong. In addition, he participated in various social movements and was one of the founders of the activist-research network Squatting Everywhere Kollektive. From 2011 he widened his critical approach with the study of anti-neoliberal, pro-democracy and pro-commons movements such as the 15M / Indignados in Spain and the Umbrella Movement in Hong Kong. In his present research projects, he is studying intersectional outcomes of the housing movement in Spain and urban struggles across Brazil and Europe. He is the author of *Squatters in the Capitalist City* (Routledge, 2020), editor of *The Urban Politics of Squatters' Movements* (Palgrave, 2018), and co-editor of *Contested Cities and Urban Activism* (Palgrave, 2019).

Most of his publications are freely available at: www.miguelangelmartinez.net

General schedule¹² – all times in Lisbon time (WET)

23rd of November

10.30-10.45	Institutional greetings
10.45-11.30	Keynote speech: Miguel Martinez (Uppsala University) “Housing movements contesting the politics of dispossession”
11.30-12.00	Debate on the keynote
12.00-13.30	Lunch Break
13.30-14.30	Break-out sessions 1
14.30-15.00	Coffee Break
14.30-15.30	Break-out sessions 2

24th of November

10.30-10.45	Conversation and coffee
10.45-11.30	Keynote speech: Margit Mayer (Center for Metropolitan Studies, CMS – TU Berlin) "Can urban mobilizations keep up with the neoliberal city's crises management?"
11.30-12.00	Debate on the keynote
12.00-13.30	Lunch Break
13.30-14.30	Break-out session 3
14.45-15.15	Coffee Break
15.15-16.15	Break-out sessions 4

25th of November

10.30-10.45	Conversation and coffee
10.45-12.00	Q&A on academic writing, publishing and post PhD challenges
12.00-13.30	Lunch Break
13.30-14.30	Break-out sessions 5
14.30-15.00	Coffee Break
15.00-16.00	Break-out sessions 6
16.00-16.45	Summaries from the break-out sessions and wrap-up discussion

Please submit your **ABSTRACTS** by **15th of May**:

luisa.rossini@ics.ulisboa.pt

In case you have any questions, feel free to reach out to us at:

luisa.rossini@ics.ulisboa.pt

¹² This is an approximate indication of time.