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JOHANNA PIRRUS

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UNIVERSITY OF TARTU
Press

Department of Geography, Institute of Ecology and Earth Sciences, Faculty of Science and Technology, University of Tartu, Estonia

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CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS 7

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS 8

1. INTRODUCTION 9

2. THEORETICAL STANDPOINTS 11
   2.1 Postmodernist urban policy in Western Europe 11
      2.1.1 The birth of the neoliberal paradigm 11
      2.1.2 Collaborative governance in urban policy and planning as a means to decrease inequality 12
      2.1.3 Europeanization and urban policy 14
      2.1.4 From privatization to financialization of housing 15
   2.2 Neoliberalisation in the post-socialist context 16
      2.2.1 Urban policy and planning 16
      2.2.2 Urban movements 17
   2.3 Housing estates – from Western to post-socialist cities 18
      2.3.1 The ideology of then and the reality of now in large housing estates 18
      2.3.2 The post-socialist, post-privatized housing estates 20
      2.3.3 Planning the public space in large housing estates 22

3. AIM AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS 24

4. METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK 26
   4.1 Research strategy 26
   4.2 Study area 27
      4.2.1 Tallinn 27
      4.2.2 Tartu 29
      4.2.3 Vilnius 30
   4.3 Fieldwork description – data collection and analysis framework 31
   4.4 Qualitative expert interviews – method justification, possible shortcomings and research ethics 35

5. MAIN FINDINGS 37
   5.1 Emerging urban governance structures in a post-privatized city – the example of Tallinn 37
   5.2 Urban policies and planning measures of the past three decades and their impact on socialist era housing estates on the full privatization track 39
   5.3 Public space as a medium for urban policies and governance related to socialist era housing 40

6. DISCUSSION 43
   6.1 The discrediting of socialist ideals, the welcoming of neoliberal ones and the resulting physical and social manifestations 44

6.2 Just 'roll-with-it' and the housing estates will be alright, right? 45
6.3 Urban professionals and urban movements in pivoting the trajectories of socialist era housing estates 47

7. CONCLUSIONS 50

REFERENCES 53

SUMMARY IN ESTONIAN 60

PUBLICATIONS 65

CURRICULUM VITAE 137

ELULOOKIRJELDUS 138

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LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

This dissertation is built on three publications which will be referred to in the thesis by their respective Roman numbers. Publications included in the dissertation:

I **Holvandus, J.** and Leetmaa, K. (2016). The Views of Neighbourhood Associations on Collaborative Urban Governance in Tallinn, Estonia. *plaNext – next generation planning*, 3, 49–66.

II Leetmaa, K., **Holvandus, J.**, Mägi, K. and Kährik, A. (2018). Population Shifts and Urban Policies in Housing Estates of Tallinn, Estonia. In: *Housing Estates in Europe: Poverty, Ethnic Segregation, and Policy Challenges*, 389–412. Hess, D.B., Tammaru, T., and van Ham, M. (eds.) Springer.

III **Pirrus, J.** and Leetmaa, K. (accepted). Public space as a medium for emerging governance networks in post-privatised large housing estates in Tartu and Vilnius. *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment, Special Issue: Housing Estates in the era of marketization – governance practices and planning*

Author's contribution

I The author is responsible for the idea of the study, formulating the research questions, the study design and data processing and analysis and is primarily responsible for writing the manuscript.

II The author participated in formulating the study design, collecting and analysing of the qualitative data and writing the manuscript.

III The author is responsible for formulating the research questions, the study design and gathering, analysing and interpreting the data and is primarily responsible for writing the manuscript.

1. INTRODUCTION

Since the UK began the paradigm shift to neoliberalism in the 1970s, all western societies have sequentially undergone tremendous changes within the political, economic and social sphere. Through neoliberal ideals, societies have justified the privatization and reduction of welfare provision as well as subsidies for social housing (Jacobs, 2019), resulting in socio-economic segregation and spatial and social inequality. Although European cities become more and more segregated (Tammaru *et al*., 2016), they are also becoming more diverse in terms of lifestyle, attitude and activity (Taşan-Kok *et al*., 2014), requiring well-thought-out, contextually relevant and integrated urban policy. Due to the physical and social manifestations of neoliberalisation processes, housing provision and housing policy in terms of reducing social polarization have been under debate for decades in Western Europe (Allegra *et al*., 2020; Hess *et al*., 2018; Watt and Minton, 2016; Tammaru *et al*., 2016; Rowlands *et al*., 2009; Turkington *et al*., 2004). These debates often focus on social housing and large housing estates, as in western societies, housing estates usually comprise a vast number of social housing. For example, in the UK and the Netherlands, creating mixed communities has been a popular policy.

However, in the post-socialist context, large housing estates still represent a somewhat similar social mix to that of the socialist period. Although post-socialist countries have experienced fast-track marketization processes, and similar outcomes with western societies in terms of neoliberalisation can be identified (e.g. privatization, reduction of social housing subsidies), contextual relevance still becomes a key issue (Murie and van Kempen, 2009). Considering that post-socialist countries had to restructure institutions to better accommodate neoliberalisation as well as adapt the policies approved by the European Commission when becoming part of Europe (and the EU), the issue of successful policy transfer – how and towards who or what it is implemented – in certain contexts is important. Taking into consideration the fact that there may not be comparable legal, organizational or financial arrangements in place, the question of the level and need of Europeanization in post-socialist countries is relevant.

What is interesting is that although there is much concern in research literature for socialist era large housing estates in terms of segregation, stigmatization and the resulting degradation, these debates, and consequently the large housing estates, have not yet found considerable resonance in local urban policy debate. However, recent years have shown a resurgence of debates concerning the liveability, physical appearance and reorganization of the spatial functions in socialist era housing estates. My PhD project maps the urban policies and planning measures targeted at socialist era housing estates for the past three decades and the newly created governance arrangements that have arisen against the backdrop of western neoliberalisation debates in the post-socialist context. The central idea of the study concerns how large housing estates should be managed and spatially planned and how the balance of different stakeholders in newly created governance

arrangements and spatial interventions should be found. Although the study is set in the post-socialist context, the results provide insight into post-marketization debates, thus addressing topics of human geography as well as urban governance and planning.

On the basis of my PhD project, I argue that public spatial interventions which are collaborative by nature are the golden ticket for revitalizing the debates concerning the future development of socialist era housing estates. I also argue that the post-socialist market experiment is unjustifiably left out of the global marketization debate driven only by western examples and experiences, since here, the privatization process and subsequent urban developments have been meticulously tracked and provide an insight into what actually happens following a turn to full ownership. Furthermore, the wider Central and Eastern European context is a good ground from which to observe the extent of marketization (e.g. full marketization), the consequent socio-spatial manifestations in different urban contexts and the new governance arrangements created as a result.

This thesis is divided into five parts. First, I give a brief overview of how neoliberalisation in western countries has evolved and what the main outcomes have been in general as well as in terms of large housing estates. I present the impact of neoliberalisation in the post-socialist context and on large housing estates. I also consider the main debates: Europeanization as the main driver behind policy transfer in terms of urban governance and planning; and financialization as the ultimate manifestation of privatization and the global housing market forces that affects most western countries. Next, I present the research aim and questions and the data and methods used to answer them. After that, I present the key findings of my publications and draw to a close with the discussion and conclusions, where I aim to provide some policy suggestions as well as point out possible consecutive research.

2. THEORETICAL STANDPOINTS

To better understand the peculiarities of the post-socialist post-privatized context, the reason behind certain decisions and how these decisions have affected urban social and spatial structures, we need to place them in the wider and currently prevailing urban policy context. Therefore, a short overview of the neoliberalisation process and the consequent policy and governance practices enforced in Western Europe are presented first. This is then juxtaposed with the post-socialist context by highlighting the main differences of the neoliberalisation track taken here and the resulting urban policies and spatial and social manifestations. In order to place the results of this dissertation in wider western urban policy debates, it is necessary to understand these wider neoliberal discussions because they have affected housing estates in western and post-socialist cities differently. Consequently, the last section of this chapter compares the policy approaches towards housing estates in western cities to those taken in post-socialist cities.

2.1 Postmodernist urban policy in Western Europe

2.1.1 The birth of the neoliberal paradigm

Post-war Western Europe urban policy was driven by the "belief in the governments' right and duty to intervene in and regulate the free markets and use distributive measures to seek efficiency, equity and socio-spatial cohesion" (Davoudi, 2018, 23). However, by the 1970s, Keynesian welfare ideals with a modernist planning agenda began to fall under crisis as western countries were experiencing the combined effects of economic restructuring, recession and restructuring into a post-industrial society (Couch *et al*., 2011). Western governments started the development of the neoliberal constitution with full entrustment of and commitment to the global market forces combined with profound antipathy towards Keynesian and collective strategies (Peck and Tickell, 2002). For example, in the early 1980s, after the oil shocks of the 1970s, the UK's urban policy was dominated by property-led regeneration, privatization and marginalization of the local government as the Thatcher administration used public subsidies, tax breaks and a reduction in planning and other regulatory controls to create a good environment for corporate capital investments (Couch *et al*., 2011; Kus, 2006). In other western countries, such as France or Germany, the economic recession of the 1970s hit less strongly at first and more slowly than in the UK, giving them time to learn from the UK's experience and adjust their economies and urban policy accordingly (Couch *et al*., 2011). In France, the need for industrial restructuring was accompanied by rapid urbanization, shaping a particular feature of major French cities – large high-rise peripheral social housing estates (*ibid*.) – since here, Keynesianism was not seen as the source of economic and social problems as was the case in the UK (Kus, 2006). However, these neoliberal decisions resulted in an abrupt increase in income polarization and socio-economic segregation. In

western societies, roll-back neoliberal policy needed re-evaluation, forcing governments to resurge themselves towards social matters through reregulation and roll-out neoliberal policy (Baeten, 2018; Peck and Tickell, 2002). For example, Sweden has been highlighted as a world champion in liberalization (Mayer, 2016, 62); however, their approach to neoliberal urban planning can be illustrated by the firm belief in economic growth on the one hand, and the possibility to build away the unwanted city of deprivation, much like the Swedish 'Million Programme' of the 1960s, on the other (Baeten, 2012).

For four decades, western governments have fostered competition among cities, yet we cannot identify a neoliberal city, nor pure 'neoliberalism' (Mayer, 2016). Neoliberalisation and its ideals are kept self-inventing through policy-making and remaking with numerous strategies in various degrees. It is as if there is no option for the market system to fail like the socialist system had. However, cities generally follow completely clear patterns of neither roll-back nor roll-out neoliberal policy. Rather, they adopt a third option: *roll-with-it* neoliberal policy (Keil, 2009). This manifests as diverse place- and territory-specific patterns of neoliberalisation as cities search for appropriate urban policy models and governance arrangements (Mayer, 2016), thus accepting the continuous need to come up with innovative and contextually relevant solutions that might only be appropriate for a short period of time and directly in accordance with market impact.

2.1.2 Collaborative governance in urban policy and planning as a means to decrease inequality

Since the beginning of the 2000s, social justice and urban diversity have gradually become key debates in developing innovative approaches to urban governance and planning (Taşan-Kok *et al*., 2014). This can be considered a direct reaction to the neoliberal urban policy agenda, which has brought about the deepening of social and spatial inequalities. As mentioned above, the 1980s saw the introduction of a variety of cost-cutting measures and cutbacks in public services as well as the privatization of social and public housing and infrastructure. This was followed by multiple reforms in welfare, the state and community regeneration with accompanying institutions and modes of delivery, such as civic engagement, urban renewal projects and social welfare in the 1990s (Mayer, 2007). For example, in Scandinavian countries, social distribution is implemented at the local level with generous national policies (García, 2006), and Germany has been embedding the notion of *municipal socialism*, meaning that some sectors are still characterized by strong municipal role and ownership (Becker *et al*., 2015). What is common in many European cities is that welfare redistribution-related citizenship practices in the social sphere have gained relevance as citizen groups help to innovate public service delivery by pointing to the needs of specific population groups or expectations concerning better organization for neighbourhoods (Martínez, 2011; García, 2006).

According to Boland et al. (2017), "contemporary urban governance is about protecting a neoliberalized economy and privileging economic interests and consumerist citizenship over community interests" (p. 118). As an alternative to confrontation, new collaborative ways should be sought for contemporary urban policy systems so that they can be more productive, more adaptive and ultimately more sustainable (Innes and Booher, 2003). Fainstein (2000) has characterized a situation where the inhabitants have the opportunity to contribute to the real outcome of their immediate living environment instead of only formally being included in decision-making processes as inclusive, empowered and just city. However, urban policy-making does not combine sufficiently representative democracy with other supporting participative democratic mechanisms, as civic stakeholders, e.g. neighbourhood representatives, often have to thoroughly defend their inherent democracy and representativeness (Häikiö, 2012). In addition, with spatial planning processes, civic stakeholders are often dismissed due to their inefficient skills or expert knowledge for effectively influencing the physical interventions in the city (Gaventa, 2004). The challenge for collaborative urban governance, therefore, is to include more interests and voices without losing democracy (Connelly, 2011).

Much research has been done on how to better collaborative policy-making from reforming the dualist approach – government vs the citizens – to a more pluralist approach with an array of stakeholders (Innes and Booher, 2004), two-way learning (Burby, 2003), trust building (Ansell and Gash, 2008) and participatory democracy (Gaventa, 2004; Häikiö, 2007; Connelly, 2011; Häikiö, 2012). More recently, da Cruz *et al*. (2019) have pointed out that the main research narratives of governance are more focused on unequal power, democratization, representation and public participation, and less so on "how they impact the pursuit of wider societal goals" (p. 2). As a comparison, in the planning literature, neoliberalism is often discussed in relation to large-scale urban development projects or concerning the roles of planning (Olesen, 2014). According to Olesen (*ibid.*), neoliberalisation in spatial planning manifests as a post-political planning condition, where "progressive strategic spatial planning approaches might be hijacked and misused to promote neoliberal models of spatial development" and "in which conflicting views struggle for recognition and are rarely considered to be meaningful" (p. 294). Consequently, Boland et al. (2017) question the ability of neoliberalism to provide necessary public benefit as it promotes private-individualistic values over public-collective ones and the dissolution of public benefit through the displacement of public interest with customer satisfaction. On the one hand, we have the Nordic countries, which balance traditional welfare state planning ideas and growth-oriented neoliberal strategic planning approaches (Olesen, 2014), and on the other, we have planning systems, like in Northern Ireland, which is "becoming an accessory to neoliberal competitiveness and powerful pro-market interests" (Boland *et al*., 2017, 118).

2.1.3 Europeanization and urban policy

Much literature on Europeanization and the domestic impacts of the European Union in urban policy concerning governance, housing and spatial planning exists (see for example Carpenter *et al*., 2020; Allegra *et al*., 2020; Raagmaa and Stead, 2014; Munteanu and Servillo, 2014; Radaelli, 2008; Radaelli, 2003). The most widespread concept for Europeanization was coined by Claudio M. Radaelli as follows:

> "processes of construction, diffusion, and institutionalisation of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, "ways of doing things" and shared beliefs and norms which are first defined and consolidated in the EU policy process and then incorporated in the logic of domestic (national and sub-national) discourse, political structures and public policies" (Radaelli, 2003, 30; *cif.* Carpenter *et al*., 2020).

According to Radaelli (2008), Europeanization is realized by learning and learning based governance, i.e. the new open method of coordination which was presented at the Lisbon summit in 2005. The aim of the new open method of coordination as an instrument for policy learning is to spread best practices throughout Europe, helping Member States to develop their own policies and thus achieve greater convergence towards the main EU goals (Radaelli, 2008). However, Murie and van Kempen (2009) have stressed the importance of acknowledging the contextual relevance, i.e. where the policy was created and implemented and why it might not yield to the same results in the context the policy is transferred to. For example, where strong urban policy is targeted in the creation of mixed communities in the UK and the Netherlands, this is not possible in the post-socialist context where municipal-owned land and housing is available only in certain areas, usually in large housing estates.

The influence of Europeanization on domestic policy manifests mainly through EU support for transnational cooperation and its expected concurrent learning effects. We can identify three Europeanization mechanisms: *top-down* or *download,* i.e. EU policies affecting national policy goals; *horizontal* or *circular*, i.e. state-to-state cooperation and learning policies; and *round-about* or *upload*, i.e. "processes through which national positions contribute to the shaping of approaches and discourses at the EU level and their subsequent reinterpretation at the national/regional level when presented as EU official positions" (Munteanu and Servillo, 2014; see also Carpenter *et al*., 2020).

Since the varied historical and political settings and path-dependent trajectories of Member States define the convergence through Europeanization, Carpenter *et al*. (2020) suggest the explication of *variegated Europeanization*. Much like the ever-changing character of the neoliberal constitution that constructs the backdrop against which urban policy interacts with inherited institutional and spatial landscapes, variegated Europeanization manifests through and with the peculiarities of certain contexts (*ibid.*).

Allegra et al. (2020) have pointed out that "the EU has developed a set of tactics to steer the European housing market and that we are currently seeing the emergence of housing as a defining topic in the EU social agenda" (p. 2307). They add that "the increase in levels of homeownership and private renting – and therefore the relative decrease in publicly provided social housing – has long been a desirable outcome for the EU", but at the same time, "the EU has – more or less intentionally – played a role in the progressive financialization of housing in Europe" (p. 2310).

2.1.4 From privatization to financialization of housing

Privatization of housing, especially public or social housing, has been one of the key tools in enforcing the neoliberalisation process. The concept of housing as a social good and a means to distribute wealth was abandoned in favour of the belief that the market can regulate the allocation of housing as the most rational method of resource distribution (Rolnik, 2013). Therefore, housing in the marketization process was centred as a measure of wealth, an opportunity to create more value (*ibid*.). This in turn affected the availability of housing for the disadvantaged, instigating segregation of the more affluent from the less affluent and stigmatization of neighbourhoods with a high concentration of social housing.

In western countries, privatization can be identified in various forms. For example, in the UK, rented public housing was sold through right-to-buy policies to sitting tenants (Watt and Minton, 2016); in the Netherlands, property was transferred to not-for-profit actors (Rolnik, 2013). But a rather distinguishable result of housing privatization can be identified in Germany. Here, housing privatization was triggered by private companies, usually large Anglo-American real estate private equity funds, which acquired several thousand residential units through en-bloc sales, bringing about the massive globalization of the German housing market (Kitzmann, 2017).

According to Aalbers (2017), "housing has entered a post-Fordist, neoliberal or financialized regime" (p. 543). He explains that financialization is fundamentally a fragmented process, path-dependent and variegated, much like housing systems across the globe. But against the global economy, financialization of housing increases the connection between housing risks and financial market risks, making them co-dependent (Aalbers, 2017). An example of how one risk has enhanced the other and vice versa from the near past is the real estate boom of 2008. However, there is not much discourse concerning the possible path dependencies of the privatization tracks that are chosen. For example, in the UK, Ireland and Spain, marketization has led to financialization and the growth of the unregulated rental sector (Byrne, 2020); in Belgium, we can differentiate policies targeted at publicly and privately owned large housing estates (Costa and de Valk, 2018). Regardless of the track that has been chosen or the openness of the domestic housing markets for the global economy, Watt and Minton (2016) warn us that the next big crisis will hit the housing market like never before and that decisive and strong approaches concerning the allocation of housing are long overdue (see also Jacobs, 2019).

2.2 Neoliberalisation in the post-socialist context

2.2.1 Urban policy and planning

Compared with western cities, the post-socialist urban context and especially the Baltics can truly be considered a full market experiment (Tammaru *et al*., 2015; Aidukaite, 2014), since neoliberal views were put into practice here in their truest form. The fast-paced course taken towards 'super-homeownership societies' in the early 1990s (Chelcea and Druţă, 2016) happened in parallel with profound changes in the welfare regimes and urban planning systems of their western counterparts (Savini, 2017; Watt and Minton, 2016). When Francis Fukuyama declared in 1992 that the failure of the socialist system was the final proof of the supremacy of liberal democracy, it is no wonder that post-socialist countries chose to see no alternative to rapid housing and land privatization, as they were eager to prove their geopolitical belonging to the 'West' (Kuus, 2002). Two decades later, when the results of privatization have truly become visible in post-socialist cities, we are able to reflect on the liberal reforms of the 1990s. Hirt *et al*. (2013), among other researchers, mostly criticize the rush towards housing privatization, primarily because of the responsibility that was put on private owners overnight without the corresponding resources. How could we expect prudency from single, private owners who have had no experience, resources or knowledge of how to maintain their respective property for the past five decades? In parallel with privatization, physical planning was a low priority and urban development proposals were often met with liberal approaches (Ruoppila, 2007). The State was preoccupied with rebuilding itself and its apparatus and, as a result, for a decade, post-socialist cities were in the turmoil of the State's antiregulation or *laissez-faire* policies on the one hand and on a course to full privatization on the other.

The post-privatized setting can be summed up with three observations. First, after decades of collective ownership, there was no tradition of private owners' obligations and responsibilities. Second, owning did not automatically evoke a sense of duty for upkeep. Third, new owners (municipality, homeowners' associations, private owners) had neither the capacity nor the interest to take up responsibilities outside their designated ownership borders. For example, for decades, private owners only worried about maintenance within the borders of their own apartment. This illustrates the complete governance vacuum in the early transition years in Central and Eastern Europe. It also highlights the important difference between the neoliberal austerity policies in the western cities on the one hand, and the complete collapse of the existing welfare regime and governance system on the other. In post-socialist countries, the ideas of distribution and public sector interventions were completely discredited.

In Western European cities, traditionally, significant public resources are invested to prevent the market from dictating spatial and social development (Ruoppila, 2007). There are significant differences in the role of the welfare state among European countries (Kazepov, 2005), which also applies to planning systems: the welfare-systems of Central and Eastern Europe are typically weak.

Although in the early transition period, planning was stigmatized by ideological stances and opportunistic interests as a communist attitude, thus undermining its legitimacy, "EU spatial planning reforms interfered with these general trends in Eastern countries to such an extent that these reforms may be more profound here than in Western Europe" (Munteanu and Servillo, 2014; p. 2252). These reforms included new regional institutions, administrative boundaries and powers but the created "formal requirements related to EU funds sometimes resulted in new piecemeal instruments established solely for the purpose of EU funding" (*ibid.*). Although the Baltic States have tried to match certain elements of western planning and policy, the restructuring of planning institutions has been slow, resulting in differences from their western counterparts "in terms of rapidly changing economic, organizational and political landscapes, lower levels of trust in the role of government, the position of planning in society and the fact that spatial planning has a longer history in Western Europe" (Raagmaa and Stead, 2014, p. 672). Much like in Scandinavia, for example, Estonia has introduced highly complex and participation-oriented decentralized planning systems that aim to keep up with simultaneously occurring societal dynamics and change in urban governance (Roose and Kull, 2012). More purposeful steps, such as greater integration of physical planning and real-estate regulation, increase of transparency in planning and city management, greater involvement of the general public in the planning process and embedding the concept of sustainability, have been introduced in urban policy in post-socialist cities since the 2000s (Ruoppila, 2007). Nevertheless, the Estonian planning system still represents a comprehensive hierarchical system despite the fact that economic and political changes in the Baltics have been more extensive than in other post-socialist countries. Therefore, Estonia is under the Europeanization process while simultaneously maintaining pragmatic land-use planning by the local authority (Roose and Kull, 2012). In addition, as a consequence of full-ownership reform, urban development is still completely led by private and commercial interests and the active real estate market, which is directly or indirectly encouraged by public policy and less by planning efforts (Roose and Kull, 2012; Cirtautas, 2013).

2.2.2 Urban movements

By the end of the 2000s, it seems that the euphoria of freedom from the socialist era had somewhat faded. It was the first decade of reflection on the decisions made in the 1990s for the public sector as well as for citizens. The market forces had taken over control fully and the results of almost two decades of ad hoc planning had become visible. Jacobsson (2015) has explained that the post-socialist region can be illustrated with often inadequate urban policies in reaction to the liberalization of urban and housing policies. For example, the deterioration of the housing stock, rising rent and utility prices, gentrification and the privatization and commercialization of public spaces. Furthermore, what exemplifies the post-socialist context in regard to urban movements is that besides cultural activities, they are

very often driven by changing the status quo of urban planning and policy, i.e. the present state of affairs (*ibid.*), and their activity is frequently tied to a spatial dimension, for example, community gardening, outdoor cinema, picnics, thus bringing about exploratory measures and new exercises on community building (Kljavin and Kurik, 2016). In this regard in Estonia, but a few years before or after in other Baltic countries, the year 2006 marked the peak of a new and considerable agent on the governance arena – neighbourhood movements – which were usually brought together as a direct reaction to very unbalanced relations between the public sector and private developers and the overheating of the market (Klavin and Kurik, 2016). The main goal of neighbourhood movements is tied to 'liveability' and/or the preservation of the current living environment (usually for areas with heritage value or neighbourhoods with very distinctive characteristics, like garden cities).

There appears to be a duality in regard to post-socialist urban movements. Jacobsson (2015) has listed a few: (1) some are spontaneous and short lived while others better organized and long lasting; (2) some are reactive, others proactive (see also Kljavin *et al*., 2020); (3) some are progressive, others more conservative; and (4) some are disruptive in their actions, others more moderate in their form of protest. One thing is for certain – post-socialist urban movements represent a sphere of *soft urbanism*, which means that their actions are usually tied to a problem at hand and, as their funds are usually very restricted, they rely on innovative ideas and methods for executing their actions or getting their message across. In order to really have a say in reforming urban policy, urban movements need to have a formal body, e.g. NGO, and very active and willing leaders (Kljavin *et al*., 2020; Aidukaite and Jacobsson, 2015). This brings about the question of the NGO-ism and Europeanization of the post-socialist civil society. On the one hand, it has opened possibilities to gain opportunities via EU structural funding, further fostering the scattered field of urban movements. On the other, however, access to funding does not always make a successful movement if the movement is mismanaged or the administrative capacities are low (Aidukaite and Jacobsson, 2015).

2.3 Housing estates – from Western to post-socialist cities

2.3.1 The ideology of then and the reality of now in large housing estates

After the Second World War, Europe had to rebuild itself, and rather quickly. Architects and city planners were given a once in a lifetime opportunity to create vast projects full of modernist ideas bringing about the cities of tomorrow. "[T]he prevailing view was that planners could make and shape society" (Wassenberg, 2013, p. 188). Post-war urban planning was very much influenced by the ideas of the CIAM-movement (*Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne*), but also took inspiration from E. Howard's garden-city movement and N. Perry's

neighbourhood unit (Wassenberg, 2013). Compared with stuffy and run down inner-city areas, large housing estates were the pinnacle of modern planning, providing light, air and space with sections of houses creating their own neighbourhoods within the estates. On the one hand, the idea of neighbourhoods was that all necessary services and points of interest were close by, and on the other, that neighbourhoods should provide protection against the anonymous urban society and defence against totalitarian regimes (*ibid.*). Another consequently developing characteristic was the common area, including public space, whose use was based on the expectations of people's mutual and collective behaviour and which coincided well with the Swedish and Danish welfare model (Wassenberg *et al.*, 2004).

In Western countries, large housing estates were built in a concentrated period starting from the 1960s, with the main motive being to alleviate the housing shortage. For example, in Hungary, one million homes were added according to the Fifteen Year Housing Development Plan, and in Sweden, the famous 'Million Programme' was launched in 1964, whereas in France a whopping nine million dwellings were built between 1960 and 1980 (*ibid.*).

However, the modernist ideals crumbled suddenly. On the one hand, we can pinpoint certain events in history, such as in the UK after the horrifying gas explosion at Ronan Point, or in the United States after the Pruitt–Igoe demolition in St. Louis that spurred the revelation regarding the poor quality of the construction and aesthetics of the estates. On the other hand, modernist planners could not anticipate or take into consideration the preferences or psychology of people, for example, in the Netherlands and Sweden, it became clear that the market demanded something else (*ibid.*).

The reputation and social decline of mass housing was related to a shift in focus in terms of urban planning towards urban renewal programmes in run-down inner-city districts (Couch *et al.*, 2011; Murie and van Kempen, 2009), leaving large housing estates without essential post-construction improvements (Wassenberg, 2018). This has led to the stigmatization and segregation of large housing estates (Brattbakk and Hansen, 2004; Sendi *et al.*, 2009; Glasze *et al.*, 2012). What is most paradoxical concerning stigmatization is that stigmas are posed by residents who do not actually live in large housing estates themselves (Kearns *et al.*, 2013). Stigmatization is often associated with the vulnerability of residents to economic change, for example, when large housing estates are considered a last resort, and is often created via negative public media image (Glasze *et al.*, 2012; Kearns *et al.*, 2013) or even lobbying by committed campaigners (Watt and Minton, 2016). In addition, due to intensified international immigration from third world countries to Western and Northern European cities and because large housing estates provide affordable housing for socio-economically weaker groups, these areas are prone to a higher share of socially vulnerable segments and therefore to a higher risk of social degradation.

As mentioned above, after the completion of large housing estates in western and northern countries, unexpected social realities became evident. As the welfare level in northern and western countries grew faster than anticipated, the initial

target group of middle class families soon had other more favourable alternatives, such as the gentrifying inner city districts or suburban single-family houses, to choose from besides large housing estates. This selective population turnover gradually started to contribute to the social degradation of large housing estates in Western and Northern European cities (Leetmaa *et al*., 2016). In addition, many European cities became coveted new homes for international immigrants from third world countries. Since social housing in many cases all over Europe frequently lies in large housing estates (Hess *et al*., 2018), the arriving immigrants, often with lower socio-economic backgrounds, were accommodated in large housing estates. These trends lead to large housing estates becoming very diverse in respect of ethnicity, lifestyle, culture, values, etc., but also forging the basis for current segregation patterns and marking large housing estates as the most disadvantaged segment of the housing stock (van Beckhoven and van Kempen, 2006).

2.3.2 The post-socialist, post-privatized housing estates

Today, large housing estates pose one of the biggest challenges for urban policies all over Europe. As these estates were targeted towards similar socio-economic groups – young and middle class families and the elderly – in western as well as in Soviet cities, and as they share similar physical appearances, large housing estates often prompt assumptions for universal urban policies (Murie and van Kempen, 2009). In reality, these assumptions must not hold, for the genesis of urban challenges differs accordingly and depends deeply on the specific urban context. Since post-Soviet cities fall somewhat into a category of their own, they often tackle the same challenges as western cities but with certain distinctive features.

In post-socialist cities, the social dimension seems to be more balanced. Socialist era immigration policies were planned with the noble idea of creating equal housing conditions for all households in order to avoid inequalities and segregation in urban space (Leetmaa *et al*., 2015). The reality, of course, was quite different, beginning with the fact that new apartments were given out based on the favourable connections a person had or what their socio-economic merit was. A clear distinction between eastern and western cities was therefore apparent – the immigrant population lived in less disadvantaged neighbourhoods than the host population (Hess *et al*., 2012). In addition, current ethnic and socio-economic segregation patterns in Soviet cities are tied to low mobility rates, as people who had already received an apartment seldom moved away, creating the *generation effect* recognizable today (Leetmaa *et al*., 2016), reflecting the ongoing ageing process in certain places (Temelová and Slezáková, 2014). Thus, Soviet cities follow similar ethnic and socio-economic segregation patterns as other European cities, but they are not yet as intense, still providing affordable housing for the middle class. Nevertheless, Eastern European large housing estates today reflect the socialist-era urban residential landscape, which was less differentiated than in Western Europe. However, due to the way the immigrant population was distributed, i.e. Russian-speaking immigrants needed housing immediately and usually

worked in the priority sector, a clear ethnic divide was created (Gentile and Tammaru, 2006), which unfortunately has only deepened (Mägi, 2018). As a result, stigmatization of large housing estates in former socialist countries can be related to ethnic dimension. For example, a Tartu City Government conducted questionnaire 'Tartu and the residents of Tartu' (*Tartu ja tartlased*) filled in every five years clearly shows that the large housing estate Annelinn, where half of the population is Russian-speaking, is perceived as a less desirable living environment than other neighbourhoods. However, the people living in Annelinn do not perceive their living environment as bad as citizens living in other neighbourhoods do. This result could be considered a clear indicator that, among other reasons, large housing estates in Eastern European cities often carry the burden of being a socialist regime landmark (Leetmaa *et al*., 2015). Furthermore, the continuously discredited reputation of social housing illustrates the notion of 'zombie socialism' (Chelcea and Druţă, 2016), as strategic directions in ultra-liberal ex-socialist societies continue to be indisputable because of the fear that alternative decisions may be associated with the former regime.

The reforms of the 1990s put post-socialist countries onto the internationally approved marketization track. However, unanswered questions arose concerning how large housing estates should be managed and spatially planned. Like in Western European cities, underfunding after the initial construction phase is identified. The planned infrastructure and the design of common open areas was never properly finished to the levels shown in the initial plans (Leetmaa and Hess, 2019). Since public funding was cut, the unfinished infrastructure and public space projects underwent physical ageing without any prudent intervention. Yet, to completely ignore these areas when making improvements in terms of streets, public transport, recreation facilities, kindergartens, etc. is impossible, since large housing estates make up a considerable part of the electorate. Simultaneously, the society itself, its needs and demands and its understanding of a good quality residential environment have changed; therefore, to compete with popular upmarket districts, large housing estates need considerable investments. New, neoliberally charged developments serve as infills to the previously missing infrastructure and help to open up these areas to the rest of the city but at the same time disrupt the former spatial structure of these master-planned areas, for example, by absorbing green spaces or reducing walkability. New, nearby housing projects often emphasize the presence of schools and kindergartens (built in the socialist-era) in their marketing process but at the same time consciously distance themselves from the image of a socialist-era estate.

Market-based arrangements have mainly been criticized from the perspective of the declining access to affordable housing (Jacobs, 2019). The affordable housing model applied in post-socialist post-privatized cities is based, in general, on fully privatized housing stock, with exceptions like the German rental system (Kitzmann, 2017) or late privatizers like Russia (Pachenkov *et al*., 2020; Büdenbender and Zupan, 2017). Large housing estates increasingly become housing career springboards for low-income groups or households without previous assets.

2.3.3 Planning the public space in large housing estates

Recent years have opened Europe-wide discussions on the quality and benefit of public spaces in large housing estates (Hess *et al*., 2018; Sendi *et al*., 2009; see chapters in Turkington *et al*., 2004). Due to the peculiarity of the architecture and in some cases the way the housing blocks have been planned and placed (free plan areas), the space between housing blocks tends to have a vague definition of being public, private or semi-public, creating vast areas of no man's land. This situation in Eastern European cities has evolved mainly because of two reasons. First, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, large housing estates lost their state subsidies and, second, as a result of the first reason, mass privatization was initiated, meaning that all the sitting tenants were given the opportunity to buy their apartments (Sargsyan, 2013; Szafrańska, 2013; Soaita, 2012; Kährik, 2000). However, the privatization of the land surrounding the building blocks was not as clear. For example, some owners privatized huge plots surrounding their building, whereas some privatized only a few metres, thus creating future problems for both. Those with much land did not have the means to maintain these areas, nor were they interested in doing so, and others might not have had the necessary land around their building to even organize the parking.

According to Sendi *et al*. (2009), public space in large housing estates entails the social space, i.e. places which represent points of casual interaction between residents and, through design, create the image of the estate (see also De Chiara *et al*., 1995). Haider and Kaplan (2004) elaborate that the degree to which open space encourages interaction among people reflects its sociability. This coincides well with Fincher and Iveson (2008), according to whom well-planned public spaces in themselves create places for encounters which are physically, visually and symbolically easy for experiencing and negotiating with the surrounding environment, thus motivating interaction through the exploratory use of an open space (Haider and Kaplan, 2004). This in turn leads to place-connection – why and how people feel connected and take pride in their immediate environment – and contributes to the satisfaction and feeling of belonging (*ibid.*). Furthermore, according to De Chiara *et al*. (1995), a sense of neighbourhood and community cohesiveness begins from well-planned, well-organized and well-maintained social spaces.

As mentioned, there is a vast spectre of research concerning the aspects of public space in large housing estates and why the space between blocks does not function as well as it could. For example, debates criticizing the public space were present in the cultural and professional sphere as early as in the 1970s in Estonia (Leetmaa and Hess, 2019). Large housing estates are the somewhat failed pinnacles of top-down modernist planning or, according to Wassenberg et al. (2004), "their uniformity and lack of identity are confusing, you don't know where you are and you realize, 'I could be anywhere in Europe'" (p. 1). Therefore, finding the right action plan for interventions or fostering civic initiatives in these areas can be a challenge because the lack of identity, anonymity and place-attachment discourages its residents from adding to the discussion pertaining to the development

of these estates. Thus, research which contributes to finding practical solutions for how to improve and maintain urban public space is needed. Jan Gehl in his book *Life Between Buildings* (2001, first published in 1971) has proposed many practical urban design solutions for how to promote socializing and community life in urban public space. According to Gehl (2001), one of the most important aspects when designing public space is to consider the human scale and dimensions of space because “building projects with large spaces, wide streets and tall buildings often feel cold and impersonal” (pp. 69). Due to the scale of the surrounding architecture, the design of the space in between large housing blocks should aim to create an array of activities that draw people outside (Gehl, 2001), thus creating possibilities for social encounters (Fincher and Iveson, 2008), which in turn lead to a noticeably livelier and safer urban space (Jacobs, 1961).

3. AIM AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The aim of this thesis is to map urban policies and planning measures and their social and physical manifestations in socialist era housing estates since the collapse of the Soviet Union and against the backdrop of the neoliberalisation process. Although there is comparative literature on large housing estates, the recent studies in Europe tend to focus more on how the position of housing estates has changed on urban segregation landscapes (Hess *et al*., 2018; Tammaru *et al*., 2016; Leetmaa *et al*., 2015). However, less systematic and scarce are studies on urban policies and planning interventions (e.g. Murie and van Kempen, 2009; van Kempen *et al*., 2009), which similarly have not found considerable resonance as a comparison in the global literature tackling the issues of post-marketization housing. I believe that the cases presented in this thesis provide an interesting insight into ***what has actually occurred in terms of urban policies, planning measures and governance practices in fully privatized housing conditions and what societies currently in the marketization process can learn from this***. I have posed the following research questions in order to better reflect on the understanding of the fully privatized conditions and how this impacts urban policies and planning measures in the post-socialist context:

1. What are the main policy and planning interventions and how have they manifested in socialist era large housing estates during the last three decades?

This question is mainly addressed in Publications II and III. Since large housing estates still comprise the majority of housing in many European cities, contemporary governance practices influence the quality of life for a large number of urban residents. The publications provide an overview of the main policy and planning interventions that have had social and physical impact on the appearance of the socialist era housing estates in Estonia and Lithuania today. In addition, we can draw conclusions on how neoliberalisation has impacted the current socio-spatial state of large housing estates.

2. Who are the main actors in the newly formed governance networks concerning urban development?

This research question is addressed in Publications I, II and III. As governance networks are ever evolving, much like the neoliberalisation process, it is necessary to pinpoint certain actors or activities that have modified and have begun to modify the governance structures in post-socialist cities. The publications aim to map the different actors – public, private and non-profit – that shape the structures and arrangements concerning planning and policy in post-socialist urban landscapes.

3. What, if any, are the peculiarities concerning the governance networks in post-privatized urban landscapes in the Baltics compared with their western counterparts and what can we learn from the Baltic case?

This research question is addressed in Publications I, II and III. Murie and van Kempen (2009) have expressed their concerns with policy transfer as the spatial and political context and the ownership, financial and organizational features play a great role in what makes a good policy. Taking this into consideration, I believe that the cases presented in this thesis provide the necessary information to glimpse the path dependencies of fully privatized societies, making it a somewhat cautionary tale or a possible scenario to consider for societies that are still on their marketization track.

The concepts of post-privatization and post-marketization unite the formerly socialist region in Europe with minor exceptions, e.g. Germany (Kabisch and Grossmann, 2013), and in terms of the marketization speed, e.g. in Russia (Pachenkov *et al*., 2019). The Baltic States represent the fast-track privatizers compared with other post-socialist countries and share similarities in urban segregation patterns (Tammaru *et al*., 2015; Tammaru *et al*., 2016). The Baltic case as a whole can be compared and analysed in terms of the transition process from socialist to post-privatized, for example, with Russia, or in terms of human development and welfare growth, for example, with Sweden. Although more thorough research was conducted in Tallinn and Tartu, Estonia, and in Vilnius, Lithuania, additional fieldwork in Riga, Latvia, has provided preliminary findings which corroborate the results and claims made in this dissertation.

4. METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

4.1 Research strategy

The roots for this dissertation stem from the research carried out by the Centre for Migration and Urban Studies team and me for the EU FP7 Programme DIVERCITIES (Leetmaa *et al.*, 2014; Holvandus *et al.*, 2015; Pastak *et al.*, 2016). The extensive qualitative fieldwork and consequent analysis focusing on different public, private and non-profit key actors as well as the locals in Northern Tallinn (Põhja-Tallinn) indicated shortcomings in governance arrangements and practices, with spatial developments often being mediums for public debate. Northern Tallinn showed clear signs of rapid gentrification and the private spatial development pressure was high. Thus, we were able to identify a very visible new stakeholder on the urban governance map, namely neighbourhood associations.

Since I was familiar with certain aspects and debates concerning urban governance in Tallinn, I began my PhD research by mapping the current state of urban governance and planning in Tallinn, focusing on collaboration between the three main stakeholders in the city development process – the local government, private developers and community activists (Publication I). I was interested in the activities and aims of neighbourhood associations and the role they play in modifying urban governance structures via participatory democracy. Although this phase presented one very critical view on the overall collaborative governance situation in Tallinn, namely the one of neighbourhood associations, at the same time, it elicited a far wider concern regarding large housing estates and a desire to dig deeper into the root of the issue – why is neighbourhood activism less visible if not non-existent in large housing estates?

Since the main aim of my thesis is to understand urban policies and planning measures in large housing estates, the next phase of my research was directed at providing insight into the urban policy measures that have influenced the socioeconomic and physical trajectories of Soviet era housing estates in Tallinn and the Tallinn urban region since 1991 (Publication II). Although Estonian planning legislation and policy institutions underwent profound changes after regaining independence, the choices and decisions made in the 1990s only now begin to have physical and social implications in Estonian urban environments. During this phase of my study, our research team's general focus was on housing estates and segregation issues. This enabled me to participate in wider discussions and seminars with urban researchers, both local and international, whose research interests are similar. My role in turn was to provide insight into the Estonian experience concerning policy measures and interventions in housing estates, since it had become apparent that these topics were discussed less than segregation and inequality (Publication II).

As the ownership reform of the 1990s has forged Estonia into an ultra-liberal homeowners' society, it became clear in the previous research phase that largescale planning interventions in housing estates are possible only within the borders of local government-owned land. As a result, I wished to better understand the

process and the drivers behind an example of public space intervention in large housing estates (Publication III). In addition, I wanted to bring a comparative element to my research. I studied Annelinn Vision Competition in Tartu and Žirmūnai Triangle Action Plan in Vilnius to learn about the successes as well as deficiencies that might arise during the implementation of a large-scale public intervention in socialist era housing estates. Additionally, as previously mentioned, I carried out fieldwork in Riga, Latvia, in the hopes of finding a comparable public spatial intervention to include in my research. Despite the fact that no such example could be identified in Riga, the preliminary results of the interviews support the findings concerning the governance arrangements in Tallinn, Tartu and Vilnius.

4.2 Study area

The main focal points of my research are Tallinn (Publications I and II) and Tartu and Vilnius (Publication III). In Tallinn, my analysis for Publication I includes all Tallinn city districts. Analysis for Publication II includes three socialist-era prefabricated housing districts in Tallinn – Mustamäe, Väike-Õismäe and Lasnamäe with Soviet-era infills in Northern Tallinn. I investigated the Annelinn housing estate in Tartu and the Žirmūnai Triangle, part of the larger housing estate Žirmūnai, in Vilnius.

4.2.1 Tallinn

Tallinn is the capital of Estonia with a population of 445,352 people as of 1 March 2021. Tallinn has a mixture of diverse urban districts originating from several historical periods. Half of the city's buildings were demolished in WWII and the remaining historical housing survived relatively unscathed (Ruoppila, 2007), much like in Central and Eastern Europe inner cities where, during the socialist years, the pre-war residential quarters were left to decay (Hess and Hiob, 2014; Kovacs *et al*., 2013). Efforts and investments in housing policies in the Soviet period were directed towards the high-rise panel-housing estates (Kährik and Tammaru, 2010). In the context of severe housing shortages in growing socialist industrial cities, an apartment in a panel-housing district was a sought-after residential solution. Today, approximately two-thirds of the population of Tallinn lives in these housing estates.

The first large-scale housing construction programmes in Estonia were mostly built as single in-fills or small groups of buildings using brick technology (*khrushchovki*) on vacant plots close to the city centre, for example, the Pelguranna district in Tallinn in the 1950s. The prefabricated panel technology was soon adapted and became prevalent in the 1960s. Tallinn notably has three larger master-planned housing estates: Mustamäe (30,500 apartments), designed and built during

the 1960s and 1970s; Väike-Õismäe (14,500), dating back to the 1980s; and Lasnamäe (47,000) whose construction began in the late 1980s (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Top left: refurbished building in Mustamäe; bottom left: a view of the housing placed in a circular fashion in Väike-Õismäe; top right: a view of undeveloped municipal land in Lasnamäe; bottom right: Raasiku housing development in Lasnamäe. *Source: Author's photographs*.

Larger housing estate districts usually consisted of several mikrorayons and were carefully master-planned through prestigious architectural competitions (Metspalu and Hess, 2017). In Mustamäe, we can follow the development of planning ideas from the initial, more haphazard placement principles of residential buildings to the more extensive application of the mikrorayon approach. In Väike-Õismäe, the residential buildings are placed in a circular fashion around the recreation area, whereas schools and kindergartens are located within the circle and shops, services and public transport stops are on the main ring road. In Lasnamäe, the focus was on connections with the city centre, for example, a fast tram line was envisaged but unfortunately never finished, and safe pedestrian roads, e.g. the walkers' bridges that cross the fast-paced motorways.

Correlation between occupational differentiation and ethnic segregation was noticeable at the end of the 1980s, but the clear overlap of ethnic and socio-economic segregation patterns was apparent by the 2000s in the Tallinn urban region (Tammaru *et al*., 2015) and, by 2011, the share of Russian speakers in urban housing estate neighbourhoods reached 59 percent on average. As mentioned earlier, immigrants were prioritized in Soviet housing allocation schemes. However, during the transition years, Estonians started to benefit from social and economic transformations and were probably more able to improve their living conditions. Alongside the socio-economic patterns, the reputation of different urban districts changed as well. People who stayed in the same neighbourhoods

where they received their apartments years ago found themselves living in a low-image neighbourhood. Since the Russian speakers mostly inhabited the housing estates, their residential environments suffered the most from worsened neighbourhood reputations.

4.2.2 Tartu

Tartu is a second tier city in Estonia with a population of 95,038 as of 8 March 2021. Much like Tallinn, Tartu comprises various urban districts with distinct characters – inner city wooden housing, garden city single-family housing from different decades and Soviet era mass housing. During the Soviet period, Tartu, like many other Eastern European cities, experienced fast population growth – from 59,000 to 113,000. The establishment of large industries in Tartu led to an increase of immigration from other socialist countries like Russia, Belarus and Ukraine. Today, more than half of Tartu's Russian-speaking population lives in Annelinn.

The planning project of Annelinn, which is the only compact large housing district in the city, was finalized between 1969 and 1973 and was meant to house 50,000 residents. The area was supposed to consist of four mikrorayons, but only two were finished and the third one was just started before the collapse of the Soviet Union. The project divided Annelinn by a radial system into rayons with streets and pedestrian alleys that would separate them into smaller sections supported by well-planned public spaces and recreation areas as well as the necessary services and social infrastructure. Annelinn consists mainly of five-storey and nine-storey panel houses that create groups with the enclosed space within (Figure 2). Due to pressing housing shortages, the construction emphasis fell on housing blocks and only a fraction of the planned social infrastructure (a few shops, schools and kindergartens) was built, not to mention the development of outdoor areas, which unfortunately mainly remained on paper.

Figure 2. Aerial photos from the turn of 1990. *Source: Architect Toomas Paaver's private collection, used with permission*.

4.2.3 Vilnius

Vilnius is the capital of Lithuania with a population of 588,412 as of 1 January 2021. The post-Soviet structure of Vilnius comprised the medieval core and its surrounding neighbourhood, built mainly during the 19th and early 20th centuries (Burneika, 2008). The surrounding suburban areas are of a different type and quality and were somewhat restructured during the Soviet period. The main developments during the Soviet period, however, took place in the areas which were demolished in WWII. Industrial developments took place on the edges of these areas, whereas Soviet neighbourhoods of block housing were combined with open spaces of the forest-type parks located on the slopes of Neris valley (*ibid.*). The construction regulations were very severe, excluding the needs and preferences of residents and thus forging the specific structure of the city where a huge proportion of the population now lived in large housing estates (*ibid.*). Even during the early transition years, the most stable parts of Vilnius were the mono-functional Soviet neighbourhoods (*ibid.*).

Much like in other Central and Eastern European countries, the Vilnius metropolitan region experienced an increase in social and ethnic segregation due to significant spatial transformations with very clear links between ethnic and socio-economic segregation (Burneika *et al.*, 2019). Although according to the findings in segregation research large housing estates still form the most stable neighbourhoods in the city, they hide the steady downgrading of these estates in the context of the development of the entire city (*ibid.*).

Figure 3. Views in the Žirmūnai triangle. Top left: typical local housing; top right: parking problems in the area; bottom left and right: on both pictures we can see the gating of new infills and how development occurs only within the borders, not taking into account the adjacent public areas. *Source: Author's photographs*.

The Žirmūnai triangle is a mikrorayon in Vilnius city district Žirmūnai. It is called a triangle because it is located between three major streets: Tuskulėnų, Žirmūnų and Minties. Housing blocks in the triangle were built following the award-winning residential construction project from 1965-1968. The triangle was planned as a small functional city within the city following the principles of a micro-district. The triangle had clear residential territories, green areas, shopping areas and public facilities (Matonienė *et al*., 2015). The Žirmūnai triangle lies on 52 hectares and is bordered by three major streets. It consists mainly of five-storey panel houses, altogether 47 socialist-era apartment blocks, with a small number of original single-family houses dating back to the 17th century. The residents are mainly elderly with an average age of 51–65. The ethnic diversity reflects the overall ethnic landscape of Vilnius rather well with Lithuanians comprising the majority (60%) of residents, followed by Russians (19%), Poles (14%) and 9% other ethnicities depending on the city district (Burneika *et al*. 2019; Matonienė *et al*., 2015).

The research began in Tallinn, a capital city, which has previously been a premise for extensive segregation research (see for example Tammaru *et al.*, 2014; Tammaru *et al*., 2015; Mägi, 2018). However, fewer studies are visible for gaining an understanding of the overall governance arrangements and the various actors that direct or modify them in the post-privatized context. The fieldwork in Tallinn laid the groundwork for a better understanding of the governance processes and spatial visions in general as well as socialist era housing estates in particular. Tartu is a second tier city in which I first sought validation for the findings in Tallinn. This in turn led me to seek out whether comparable trends are present in other Baltic cities. I was successful in identifying a comparable case in Vilnius, but unfortunately not in Riga. Based on fieldwork in Vilnius, I was able to support my previous findings. Despite the fact that there was no case in Riga, the fieldwork and the preliminary findings suggest that similar trends concerning governance and urban spatial development are taking place in this Baltic capital as well. Nevertheless, I acknowledge that the generalizations I have drawn based on the data are thus delimited – they support the overall trends in policy and planning but do not enable me to test the outcomes of spatial interventions. Still, the fieldwork in Riga provides the necessary input from which to continue the research on governance arrangements in the Baltic States.

4.3 Fieldwork description – data collection and analysis framework

This research is based on extensive qualitative data. Although the research strategy was of an exploratory nature and the results of each phase indicated the topic and areas of interest for the next one, the overall research layout aimed to clarify the urban governance arrangements and the policy measures targeted towards socialistera housing estates. Therefore, the three sub-research tasks conducted were of a different nature, focusing on several other aspects. With Publication I,

the focus was on neighbourhood associations and analysing their role in the formation of governance arrangements. Publication II focused on more general policy measures targeted towards housing estates and providing an insight into socio-economic and ethnic segregation. Publication III analysed two distinctively delimited public interventions in housing estates.

For each publication, a new set of interview data was collected with a specific aim and research questions for the respective publications in mind. Nevertheless, all three sets complement one another and help to gain the knowledge and comprehension needed to achieve the aim and answer the research questions posed in this thesis. The sample for each publication was adjusted accordingly. Considering the focus and aim of Publication I – a very specific group and fathomable in size (22) – I wanted to use universal sampling, meaning that I aimed to interview the representatives of all neighbourhood associations. For Publications II and III, purposive sampling was used (Etikan *et al*., 2016), meaning that the interviewees were chosen based on the focus and aim of the research. Therefore, it was imperative that the interviewees were able to discuss and explain the different aspects of urban policies and planning measures. In addition to the interview data analysed specifically in the framework of this dissertation, I have conducted research for other projects that tackle issues of diversity, shrinkage and public space. The analysis and results of these projects, I believe, have helped me to better position the results of my PhD research in a wider societal perspective.

The aim of the first publication was to offer the viewpoint of a certain interest group significant in the collaborative governance and planning process in Tallinn. As mentioned earlier, Publication I was a natural continuance of the EU FP7 Programme DIVERCITIES, in which the qualitative research focus was on how to better enforce different groups and use diversity as an asset in urban governance processes. The first set of 15 interviews was carried out with representatives of neighbourhood associations located in several city districts in Tallinn. I designed and conducted 14 interviews between February 2014 and May 2014 with one additional interview taking place in June 2015. The interview questions tackled the *issues of representation aimed at mapping different interest groups* in their respective neighbourhoods, the *level of competence and legitimacy of various stakeholders* and the *overall situation of collaboration in urban governance and planning processes*. I followed a semi-structured interview guide, but throughout the fieldwork I also aimed to be open to relevant issues that might spontaneously come up during these interviews. Since there were a total of 22 neighbourhood associations in Tallinn at the beginning of fieldwork in 2014, I did additional desk research on available data, such as association statutes, Facebook pages and newspaper articles, in order to understand the aims and activity of the eight remaining neighbourhood associations that I was not able to interview in person, gaining a comprehensive perspective on all neighbourhood associations.

As mentioned above, the second publication helped me get a better sense of the different policy measures that have had an impact on the social and physical trajectories of large housing estates. Consequently, the analysis combined quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data consisted of the date of three

consecutive Estonian censuses (1989, 2001, 2011). Qualitative data was gathered via six individual expert interviews and one focus group with planners, past and current local government officials, NGO representatives and private developers and one focus group interview with four city planners from their respective city districts of Tallinn from March to June 2017. Interviews were carried out by Kadri Leetmaa and me. Since we aimed to gather as many different views on the issue at hand as possible and the interviewees were different stakeholders, the interviews began as unstructured conversations with only very general questions in mind. For example, concerning city officials: *What are city-provided subsidies and what have these been in the past; what is the general vision for housing estates?;* concerning developers: *Whether they plan on any major developments in the housing estates and why or why not?*

The most extensive fieldwork was carried out as part of Publication III in three separate instances. Since the third and final publication was to be the core of my thesis, I had considered the possibility of comparative research in the Baltics. The first set of 13 interviews was gathered between December 2015 and March 2016 in Tartu. The aim with the interviews was exploratory in order to reveal a good example of a public policy in the housing estate of Annelinn. The respondents were a mix of experts of different merits – politicians, high-ranking officials, freelance planners, architects, urban researchers, community activists and NGO leaders – as well as informants who themselves have lived in Annelinn and thus have personal experience with the living environment. The interviews followed a semi-structured interview guide which I designed and modified accordingly. I wanted to learn about the perceptions of Annelinn – *how do the interviewees value the environment*, *the amenities*, the *accessibilities; what aspects differentiate Annelinn from other housing estates in Estonia?* I asked them *to describe the policies and interventions directed towards Annelinn they themselves have any experience or knowledge of*. I quickly realized that the main visible intervention had been the Annelinn Vision Competition (2014), which turned the focus of my research onto the nature and implications of a delimited spatial intervention – *who initiated this and why; who were the main actors; how was it carried out; what were the tangible results and how did the results affect the governance arrangements?* Therefore, my first inquiry was followed by desk research, focusing specifically on the Annelinn Vision Competition documentation and results, the media coverage and the follow-up activities. Desk research helped me to prepare for interviews, and the interviews lead me to complementary materials, e.g. research articles or media coverage. This segment of fieldwork and research was followed by my maternity leave from April 2016 to October 2017.

As I had considered the possibility of comparative research comprised of Baltic cities, I searched for a case that would complement the Annelinn Vision Competition and vice versa. I came upon the Žirmūnai Triangle Action Plan under URBACT networking project 'RE-block'. I first did desk research to become better acquainted with the project and its aims, how the project was conducted, who the main stakeholders were and what the outcomes were. After this, I arranged interviews in Vilnius with city planners and officials who coordinated the action

plan from the municipality and the urban professionals who were hired to carry out the entire process. I also requested a meeting with several local NGO leaders to receive input from third sector parties. I conducted three individual interviews and one focus group (three civil servants who actively participated throughout the process) during one week in February 2019. I also had a phone conversation with one NGO leader, which unfortunately lasted for around 17 minutes. The interview questions aimed to map the overall policies targeted at socialist era housing estates on the one hand and were reflective by nature, directed towards opening the background and process of the action plan, on the other. For example: *What kind of urban policies are targeted towards socialist-era housing estates; are socialist-era housing estates on the urban agenda; why was the Žirmūnai Triangle chosen as the hallmark for the action plan; how was the process conducted; who were the participants; what were the shortcomings of the process; what did they learn from the process and how has it changed the governance arrangements?* I also asked about the results and when the proposed end result would undergo construction. In addition, I personally visited the Žirmūnai Triangle multiple times to get a personal sense of the place.

The final planned fieldwork took place over two weeks in February 2020. I first visited Vilnius to get some additional info regarding the action plan and to get a better understanding of the third sector views on the matter, which I felt was not yet sufficient based on my last visit to Vilnius. I was able to meet up with three NGO representatives and two researchers, altogether five people for three interviews. This time, my questions focused on the logic behind the selection of the area – *why the Žirmūnai Triangle*? – and understanding the urban development and planning policies targeted towards housing estates in Vilnius.

Secondly, I travelled to Riga for a week in the hopes of finding a good example for comparison with the data I had acquired in Tartu and Vilnius. In Riga, I conducted five recorded interviews with city planners, landscape architects and NGO activists and three unrecorded conversations with NGO activists and urban researchers. I started with an unstructured interview guide as I wished to get better acquainted with the context; therefore, my questions were open and exploratory. For example: *What are the current policy and planning trends in Riga; who are the main actors in governance arrangements; what policies are targeted at socialist era housing estates?* I also asked the interviewees to describe the overall governance practices in order to be able to draw general comparisons based on the findings in the three Baltic States. As the interviews progressed, I was able to focus my questions on the current planning context, which tackles very fragmented land ownership issues or the private development pressure at the Riga borders. For example: *Who are the main actors in governance arrangements; what is the general spatial vision for Riga; which are the priority areas and why?* I also took part in a seminar where architecture and landscape architecture students were designing municipality-owned areas in Riga and participated in an open forum focused on a specific public space in one of the housing estates in Riga.

In total, 47 interviews were conducted. The length of the interviews varied from 41 minutes to 1 hour and 23 minutes. The interviews were recorded and transcribed.

The basis for the analysis stems from the literature overview and the theories and concepts discussed. The empirical analysis was a combination of directed content analysis (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005) and open coding. The interviews were listened to and transcriptions were read multiple times. In accordance with the directed content analysis principles, I analysed the interviews with certain keywords in mind that I had previously selected based on the theory, for example, participation and democracy, urban policy, sense of place, legitimacy and representation. Through open coding, I tried to keep an open mind for any themes that might arise naturally, for example, mobility, accessibility and spatial equality. Therefore, the analysis combined deductive and inductive analysis principles.

4.4 Qualitative expert interviews – method justification, possible shortcomings and research ethics

This PhD study is based on extensive qualitative data. The qualitative approach was chosen because of the research subject matter – the emergent urban governance structures and arrangements, urban policy and planning measures that have been targeted towards socialist-era housing. As pointed out earlier, European housing estates have been under study almost since they were erected (Wassenberg, 2013), and there is much evidence concerning segregation, inequality, neighbourhood preference or housing careers, which is often based on census data, the European Social Survey or even mobile positioning data. However, governance practices are difficult to define because of their complexity concerning the actors who create and engage in them and are therefore difficult to study with quantitative methods. Since the aim of this dissertation is to map and understand the basis from which the newly created governance structures have emerged, expert interviews were chosen as the most appropriate method for research. Nevertheless, Publication II provides the socio-economic trends of the Tallinn urban area based on the quantitative analysis of the data of the three censuses (1989, 2001 and 2011), providing the necessary backdrop for urban policy and planning measures.

Qualitative interviews are a good way of gaining access to information about opinions and experiences (Dunn, 2000). One of the key strengths of interviewing is that it allows the researcher to be flexible when gathering data, meaning that the researcher has the possibility to regulate data collection according to the situation and the respondent (Laherand, 2010). If informant interviews help uncover personal attitudes and opinions, when using the expert interview approach, the aim is to gather factual data and experience or knowhow concerning the research subject matter (Flick, 2006).

Qualitative research methods have been criticized for being unscientific and unduly subjective (Laherand, 2010). The main drawback lies in the method's reliability, stemming from the consistent categorization of different cases or rather the lack thereof (*ibid.*). In addition, there is the question of validity and trustworthiness, since the conclusions are drawn from small excerpts of the interview

or the interviewer's own values are insufficiently reflected, thus interfering in the drawing of adequate conclusions (*ibid*.).

As a researcher I have aimed throughout the study to make as thorough preparations for the interviews as possible, such as keeping up with current debates concerning the subject matter, being able to distinguish my reactions from the reactions of the interviewees, being able to direct the conversation when needed and being aware of the degree of emotion or personal opinions when discussing certain topics. For example, neighbourhood associations might be overly critical of the municipality or the private developers and vice versa. However, a certain degree of subjectivity in the interpretation of the findings is unfortunately inevitable.

Concerning the ethical aspects of conducting the interviews, all respondents were informed of the nature of the study and my motives for gathering the necessary data, i.e. I explained that the interview data would be used for my publications and consequent PhD study. All illustrative excerpts used in the research articles were cited with the permission of the interviewees. The interviews were recorded only when I had consent to do so.

5. MAIN FINDINGS

5.1 Emerging urban governance structures in a post-privatized city – the example of Tallinn

After regaining independence at the beginning of the 1990s, the Baltics entered an era of neoliberalisation. The pendulum moved from one extreme to the other as governments chose the fast-paced privatization track while simultaneously reorganizing the state apparatus, creating an arena for the notable 'market experiment' (Tammaru *et al*., 2015; Aidukaite, 2014). The 1990s were a time of the private owners and cowboy capitalism as spatial planning was discredited and seen as a rudiment of the Soviet era. The civil society's capacity was somewhat non-existent, as was governments' ability to foster governance arrangements. The aim was certainly to become part of the European Union – the ultimate acknowledgment of truly being part of the 'West' – therefore, the practices and requirements of EU policy and planning became a priority, at least on paper. However, understandably, some areas like spatial planning or civil society took time to reinstate and organize themselves. Only in the late 2000s/early 2010s did we begin to see the emergence of some governance structuring in urban policy and planning, as the legislative framework was introduced two decades before and both the public sector and the third sector had undergone extensive changes.

In Tallinn, a growing number of stakeholders in the form of neighbourhood associations began to emerge as a direct reaction to the real estate boom and fast changes in urban space. Although not the only voice in the civil society landscape, but definitely the most visible, they opened the opportunity for public representatives to adjust their practice of governance to be more comparable to that of western democracies. It might even be considered a step further from the market experiment towards a ***governance experiment*** as these voices aim to find ways to enrich the representative practices in post-privatized conditions through participative democracy (Publication I; Publication II; Publication III).

Based on the fieldwork results (Publication I), activism and neighbourhood activism in particular tend to be a strong characteristic of neighbourhoods where the socio-economic status is higher or rapidly increasing due to selective in- and out-migration. The prevailing ethnicity in these areas is Estonian since Estonians live more frequently in gentrifying inner-city and single-family housing areas. Thus, activism through neighbourhood associations does not cover all of Tallinn geographically and, as a consequence, they do not include Russian speakers to a considerable extent as more Russian speakers tend to live in large housing estates where we were able to identify only one newly founded neighbourhood association (Lasnaidee) at the time of our fieldwork.

The most diverse set of neighbourhood associations was concentrated in Northern Tallinn, a rapidly gentrifying inner-city area, which remains under immense pressure from the real estate sector today. Here, we identified associations that mostly aimed to be included in spatial planning decisions, build a community

and bridge the gap between age groups through various events or aimed to create a "village-like community within the city" (Kährik *et al*., 2015) and preserve the historical buildings. The prevailing notion, however, appeared to be that neighbourhood associations were formed in order to protect or promote the *genius loci* of their respective areas. Therefore, it is no surprise that neighbourhood associations formed in rapidly changing or developing areas primarily tackle issues involving spatial planning (Kljavin *et al*., 2020). Simultaneously, the results of Publication I raised an interesting question about neighbourhood activism in large housing estates, or rather the lack of outstanding activism there as opposed to in inner-city areas. *Are the residents of large housing estates less active? Are urban development and the accompanying real estate pressure just low enough not to incite any reaction from the residents? Do the large housing estates just lack the spirit of a place worth being active for?*

As mentioned earlier, an officially identifiable urban movement – Lasnaidee – can be identified, which is a non-profit organization aiming to bring citizens, local government and civil and business organizations together under the common goal of building a better living environment in the Lasnamäe large housing estate (Publication II). Similar activism, e.g. building community or urban gardening, can be found in Annelinn and Vilnius as well (Publication III). The first goal of the initiative was to change the image of Lasnamäe for both residents and outsiders. The main actions have been to organize a variety of events (picnics, outdoor cinemas), workshops and public forums to bring together locals, both Estonian and Russian, but also to invest in place-making by organizing something inspiring in otherwise grey and dull public spaces, for example urban gardens (*ibid.*).

Concerning the roles of neighbourhood associations in governance structures in Tallinn, we identified three key roles – *mediating, informing and indicating* (Publication I). Neighbourhood associations, whether it is their intention or not, are community builders. As such, the everyday results of their actions are mostly reflected through the networks they have created and the knowhow they have obtained. As *mediums*, neighbourhood associations act as a platform for fostering ideas and activities; they are places for social encounters (Fincher and Iveson, 2008). When neighbourhood associations become more visible in their respective neighbourhood through social networking and appear on the radar of the local government, they are often expected to voluntarily take on the role of *informant*. This means that neighbourhood associations are expected to obtain the necessary information from the local government and present it in an understandable way to the locals and vice versa. With growing competence and knowhow in urban governance-related issues, as well as acquired local expertise, neighbourhood associations are able to *indicate* certain deficiencies or imperfections in local urban development or social issues. Here, their aim is not to shed light on maladministration practice in the public sector and cause disruption, but to provide local input in a constructive discussion (Häikiö, 2012).

The main obstacle for neighbourhood associations in providing local expertise and being invited as equals to decision-making processes stems from the question of their legitimacy (Publication I). Public officials tend to see neighbourhood

associations as annoying and loud individuals – since usually the association bears the face of its most active members – whose opinion public bodies are forced to consider and whose involvement makes the process more complex and time consuming (Plotke, 1997). Despite this assumption, the neighbourhood associations themselves stressed that they are constantly working on building their competence and legitimacy in order to become valuable and equal partners in discussions with public bodies (Publication I). It became clear that the main motive for or hindrance to discussions from either side has been urban developments. Neighbourhood associations expect stronger, transparent and inclusive visions for urban development in a fully privatized urban landscape, in which real estate developers, for the majority of the 1990s and the early 2000s, have had a rather free rein in designing the appearance of Tallinn.

5.2 Urban policies and planning measures of the past three decades and their impact on socialist era housing estates on the full privatization track

Like in many Western European cities, large housing estates make up a remarkable share of the housing segment in post-socialist cities. In Western European cities, large housing estates are usually social housing areas that house third country immigrants, laying the base for socio-economic segregation landscapes and the need for policies that target stigmatization as well as segregation issues (Hess *et al.*, 2018). Although post-socialist cities and the Baltic cities in particular follow similar tracks of stigmatization and segregation, the social mix still remains somewhat the same as during the Soviet period (Publication II). The Russian-speaking residents who received their apartments here after migrating from other Soviet states and their descendants tend to remain in large housing estates, whereas Estonians prefer to move away to other neighbourhoods. In addition, Estonians tend to have better opportunities on the job market; therefore, sociospatial segregation patterns fall in line with ethnic ones (Mägi, 2018; Publication II). Furthermore, as large housing estates are usually areas, where there remains unbuilt municipal land, they are the only available arenas for newly built social housing (Publication II). As a consequence, large housing estates are in need of strong strategic visions and policies, which tackle, on the one hand, issues that pertain to the overall changes in society, for example, growing car dependency, socio-economic diversity, adaptation to smart solutions and the growing individual needs of the residents, and on the other, more global trends such as neoliberalisation and financialization.

Our study (*ibid.*) revealed that within these societal changes and patterns, large housing estates in general are facing gradual ageing and social degradation. Among the housing estate neighbourhoods in Tallinn, some are suffering from serious social decline, whereas others have preserved their status relatively well. Much of this is dependent on when and how these estates were built. For example, the Mustamäe district, which is the oldest in Tallinn, is greener and more finished

than the magnificently planned but unfinished Lasnamäe. Väike-Õismäe still benefits from its carefully planned infrastructure. Some large housing estates house low-skilled industrial workforce who have suffered the most from the economic transition. Therefore, it is quite hard to argue to what extent contemporary interventions can redirect these path-dependent trajectories (*ibid.*). Surprisingly, however, we were able to identify that there is no common conviction among contemporary urban actors on whether the large housing estates are indeed losing their social status (*ibid.*). This also appears to hinder the creation of a common vision regarding how to keep this large segment of housing stock stable in the future when it is clear that more ambitious and better integrated policies are needed.

We have identified two sets of policy interventions since the beginning of the 1990s (*ibid.*). First, during the 1990s, major institutional rearrangements were launched – privatization, new planning principles, the formation of apartment associations – after which a period of neglect began which lasted until the late 2000s. Since then, new policy measures, which are not targeted at large housing estates *per se*, but whose results are very visible here, have been put into practice, e.g. municipal funding to improve facades and yards, national energy policy measures, municipal social housing projects and new private housing construction (*ibid.*; Publication III). Although these measures cannot be considered as targeted urban revitalization policies that benchmark their western counterparts, some caution is needed when marking large housing estates as areas in need of urban revitalization. Since the reputation of large housing estates largely depends on the availability of other residential alternatives in regional housing markets (Kovacs and Herfert, 2012), designating certain neighbourhoods as problem areas may harm the reputation of entire districts and in turn increase the need for more powerful public interventions to change residential satisfaction trajectories (Publication II). Consequently, even the policy measures stated above have the potential to increase the satisfaction of local residents. In addition, new housing construction that densifies large housing estates may both improve and damage the reputation of these areas. The common practice of the developers of the infills seems to be to distance these new developments from the Soviet image but at the same time use socialist residential benefits to their advantage (*ibid.*). As such, these developments still diversify dwelling types in large housing estates and potentially improve the image of the areas.

5.3 Public space as a medium for urban policies and governance related to socialist era housing

Since the 2000s, large housing estates have been the focus of research and public discussion among urban planners and geographers, architects and landscape architects, often with an emphasis on their physical and social landscape (Sendi *et al.*, 2009; van Kempen and Murie, 2009; Leetmaa *et al.*, 2015). The main motive for this has been the notion that the initial grand plans were never completely

realized and the space between housing blocks does not fulfil the intended requirements and potential. While the supply of plentiful free space was originally meant to be highlighted as a key quality of modernist housing areas (Sendi *et al.*, 2009), actual practice showed that this was one of the reasons for their failure (Wassenberg, 2013; 2018) because some of the key roles of public spaces (Fincher and Iveson, 2008; De Chiara *et al.*, 1995) were ignored here: collectively owned open areas did not serve as spaces for social interaction and failed to support place-connectedness.

Although in late 2000s inner-city areas began to receive better advised attention from public bodies (e.g. revisions in planning legislation, somewhat stricter planning procedures for real estate developers and more open-mindedness towards the inclusion of urban movements in the discussions), the municipalities still treated large housing estates as any other urban district that may be in need of infrastructure-related improvement. According to our findings in Publication III, such minimal and short-term interventions have not resolved the planning problems but deepened them – the need for more parking spaces and better connectivity with other neighbourhoods or smaller and more defined spaces for encounters. Only after three decades have we begun to see that public space planning is becoming one of the key topics in post-privatized housing estates, even though residential satisfaction studies have indicated that green areas and public spaces – especially in housing estates – influence place satisfaction (Kilnarová and Wittmann, 2017). Despite this, we have evidence of how market-oriented projects still ignore the need for public space or how architects are hired for marketing purposes to carefully design community elements (*ibid*.).

Much like in other areas in the post-socialist city, large housing estates were continuously overlooked on the policy agenda. Comprehensive governance networks or successful arrangements were only beginning to form during the 2000s, when the state's capacity to provide finance for the retrofitting of buildings had grown with the support of external funding (EU and emissions trading). Based on our analysis (Publication III) of two successful public space interventions – the Annelinn Vision competition and the Žirmūnai Triangle Local Action Plan (*ibid*.) – we argue that architects and other urban professionals were able to stimulate community activism and raise urban planning interest towards post-privatized large housing estates to the urban agenda. Interventions that took place in Tartu were managed for the most part by architects, while in Vilnius it was by the city government. In both cases, however, the professional community of architects brought their knowledge, skills and capacity to the process (*ibid.*).

The interest of contemporary urban professionals in finding new and comprehensive solutions to this modernist challenge seems to be driven by two strains. First, these professionals feel a certain technocratic debt, since these vast areas are the epitomes of modernist planning yet never actually fulfil the ideologies they were based on, e.g. the spaces in particular do not provide or foster what they were meant to. Second, throughout history, there have been points of urban renaissance, for example, Haussmann's Paris or the urban renewal of inner-city

areas, which redefine or rearrange existing urban space. According to the discourses that arose in our analysis (*ibid.*), the time has come for large housing estates to be reconsidered and resurrected, so to speak. Thus, the main focus of contemporary urbanists is on how to bring more human scale to existing spaces. Interestingly, the most remarkable spatial concept that was developed by the experts in both cities was the new proportioning of the outer spaces in large housing estates, better differentiating to whom various zones belong (private – semi-public – public) (*ibid.*). This solution is not new, as purposeful gating and design principles have been applied elsewhere (Lelévrier, 2013). In addition, as some spontaneous gating has occurred in post-privatized Estonian and Lithuanian large housing estates, it seems to be a natural expectation of the residents.

After a period of neglect and single policies, there have been noticeable advancements towards more integrated approaches in large housing estate public policies, for example, the Neighbourhood Programme in Vilnius launched in 2017. At the same time, the much more comprehensively discussed segregation topic (Tammaru *et al*., 2015) has not been able to pivot large housing estates into priority areas in urban planning. Systematic attention to spatial qualities may also serve as a future gateway for policies tackling segregation-related urban challenges that would fill the gap in more systematic people-based approaches in policies (Hess *et al*., 2018). For example, when, in super-homeowner societies, private tenants are 'naturally' excluded from decisions on improving residential buildings, there is no legal basis for excluding tenants from public space discussions (Publication III). Furthermore, unbalanced representation also causes certain neighbourhoods to develop according to the visions of the more active and affluent community members, who have the capacity and knowhow to be included (Davoudi and Cowie, 2013). It appears that the public space and living environment issues engage residents more and more (Kljavin *et al*., 2020), i.e. people care where they live and how the environment they live in is perceived, and neighbourhood activism in large housing estates is less passive now than several years ago (Publication I).

6. DISCUSSION

Depending on the marketization tracks chosen, certain post-socialist cities have acquired a new considerable layer in terms of the urban governance debate: post-privatized cities. In such cases, we can ask what governance arrangements are created in fully privatized and in complete free market conditions. The impacts of the neoliberalisation process are visible in our urban landscape through segregation patterns and inequality (Mägi, 2018; Tammaru *et al.*, 2016), housing and neighbourhood diversity (Kährik *et al.*, 2015; Taşan-Kok *et al.*, 2014) and the welfare policies chosen to tackle social housing issues (Watt and Minton, 2016). Large housing estates are often the centre of these debates. However, less is known about discussions on emergent governance arrangements or planning measures in the context of post-privatization and post-marketization using housing estates as a research premise. Furthermore, Central and Eastern European cities are unjustifiably left on the outskirts of the post-privatization and post-marketization debate in terms of urban policy and governance. These debates are driven by the western experience, where the austerity policies are still not as severe and neither privatization nor marketization have reached the same levels as those in the post-socialist context. In contrast to western cities where housing estates are still one of the key areas of public expenditure despite the prevailing neoliberalisation process, the post-socialist context presents a case where individual owners have been "pushed into water in unknown circumstances" and left to invent their own tools to manage in new conditions. Although the housing estates have been neglected for a considerable period of time, this has still resulted in new governance structures and arrangements and the consequent urban policies and planning measures.

Based on the findings of this dissertation, the public space is one of the key areas that provokes the wider public to engage in policy and planning discourse in regard to housing estates. The findings also attest that it was the urban professionals and civic activists that turned the attention of the municipalities to the housing estates. Taking into consideration the theoretical framework of this dissertation and the post-privatization debates I wish to contribute in, the following chapters provide interesting comparative remarks in terms of urban policy and planning in socialist era housing estates and explain why the evolution of these policies could be food for thought for societies that are currently in the process of marketization.

6.1 The discrediting of socialist ideals, the welcoming of neoliberal ones and the resulting physical and social manifestations

We know from vast literature that, in the late 1970s, western governments began their restructuring, renouncing Keynesian ideals and taking on neoliberal ones. The benchmark for many European countries has been the United Kingdom with their right-to-buy housing policy that gravely affects the current housing situation today with even grimmer possible outcomes (Watt and Minton, 2016). Nevertheless, the privatization processes that were initiated in western countries do not match the ones that have come to pass in the post-socialist countries, even less so in the Baltics (Tammaru *et al*., 2015; Aidukaite, 2014).

The delay in marketization was of course a result of the geopolitical reasons, as it hit post-socialist housing estates only after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The post-socialist discourse of 'back to Europe and back to normality', with normal, at the time, being the neoliberalisation process, which meant marketization at any price. Post-socialist cities, indeed, wished to prove their geopolitical belonging to the West, thus turning completely away from any socialist ideals. In this sense, we can find similarities with the western countries. However, nobody could possibly imagine the full outcomes of the path dependencies that have resulted from becoming a super-homeownership society. Again, proving that all aspects of socialism – be they affordable housing or anything collective – were completely discredited. This in part answers the question of why post-socialist housing estates suffered from the policy and planning vacuum after the loss of state subsidies. But there were other reasons, for example, the newfound unpopularity of socialist era housing estates on the housing market. Since flats were sold to the sitting tenants, many owners now had the possibility to sell their respective property and move to a more desirable neighbourhood (Leetmaa *et al*., 2015). Another reason for this was that there were now new possibilities on the housing market, e.g. suburban developments or people choosing to refurbish their summer houses into year-round living quarters. This means that, since the market demanded something else, planning and policy were more interested in catering to those needs rather than the needs of the housing estates. Besides this, in the 1990s, housing estates were the newest segment of housing in post-socialist cities and did not yet need much intervention. It could be argued that, during the early transition years, housing estates were seen as a socialist landmark since Estonians were usually the ones leaving the housing estates, which initiated the process of ethnic segregation, making housing estates more Russian over time. Today, we see clear and deepening patterns of socio-economic and ethnic segregation overlapping in housing estates (Mägi, 2018).

We can conclude that socialist era housing estates entered an almost two-decade-long period of urban policy neglect, which resulted in (1) socio-economic and ethnic segregation; (2) the physical deterioration of housing and the surrounding public and semi-public spaces; and (3) little or no new developments, mostly through the privatization of some of the existing public service housing, e.g. kindergartens, or private developed service centres, e.g. shopping centres.

6.2 Just ‘roll-with-it’ and the housing estates will be alright, right?

Based on the findings of this thesis, there still is no strong and certain vision implemented by the state or the municipalities concerning socialist era housing estates. Since the Soviet planning system became morally discredited, there was much uncertainty. The main locational principles (where the social infrastructure service centres and transport corridors lie) were not questioned, but there was limited public expenditure so it was often not possible to build something according to the plans in any case (Publication II). New master plans defined the zones of building rights and determined general spatial principles, but since urban land was now mostly in private hands, the municipalities’ main role was to balance private and public interests. This has introduced friction from different sides: public representatives accuse private developers of never keeping their public obligations (to create public spaces or reserve land for public functions); private developers are dissatisfied with the contemporary planning system, which does not give them necessary stability; and of course, civic activists feel that they are overlooked in planning decisions (Publications I and II). As a result, the municipal-driven development of housing estates is often limited to infrastructure and connectivity with other city districts. Since the post-privatization landscape creates legal restrictions for development and the public sector continuously has insufficient funds, vast and strong interventions, such as demolition and replacing existing housing estates with new more market-oriented dwellings, like in the western countries (e.g. France and Germany), are impossible. Furthermore, master plans do not envision fundamental or radical changes, rather they promote the current state and aim to regulate place-based development. At the moment, it seems that the strategic urban policy of municipalities is stable and leaning towards a mixture of maintaining the status quo and employing the short term roll-with-it policy (Keil, 2009). Therefore, housing estates are first and foremost influenced by the market’s highs and lows.

What is interesting is that these gravely needed interventions may be hindered by the fact that the discussions which have dominated research literature regarding housing estates (e.g. segregation and stigmatization, social polarization) have not yet entered public policy discussions. Our findings (Publications II and III) show that municipalities condemned the public discussions that stigmatize living in these neighbourhoods, since ‘no objective arguments’ exist to prove that socialist era housing estates are losing their value. Rather, they defended the living environment in housing estates with the arguments that all necessary services are at hand and the connections to the rest of the city are good, too. Even though the fears of these experts regarding unfair stigmatization are justified, a situation in which the proven signs of social degradation are not acknowledged is also somewhat alarming.

On a more positive note, the challenges invoked by the financialization of housing under similar terms as other western countries, for example the growth of the unregulated rental sector (Byrne, 2020), are somewhat more contained in

the post-socialist context (Publication III). Here, the ownership is much more fragmented than in western societies, meaning that the market is dominated by individual owners, compared with the German case, where private companies have acquired residential units through en-bloc sales (Kitzmann, 2017). The fragmented ownership again illustrates the belief that the market will provide the necessary dwellings, not the state, i.e. if there is a demand for rental dwellings, the private sector will provide. Despite this, recent years have seen a resurgence of discussions concerning the reform of the tenancy relationships to re-evaluate and better organize the rights and responsibilities of the tenants[1]. It seems that, much like in western cities, the support system for tenants is re-evaluated with more rights given to the owners and more responsibilities put on the tenants. Another key difference compared with societies where the financialization of housing is an acute issue is that the housing associations in post-socialist cities are operated less by private companies than in western cities. Housing associations are managed by individual owners who have elected a management board among themselves for decisions which concern the physical wellbeing of the building as well as monthly services like heating (Publications II and III).

Given the uncertainty of the housing market, providing necessary social housing is definitely a priority for municipalities. Even though the volume of social housing has been reduced in stages in western countries since the 1970s (Jacobs, 2019; Watt and Minton, 2016; Couch *et al.*, 2011), it does not compare to the lack of affordable housing already present in post-socialist cities. Furthermore, past decisions reflect a certain negligence towards considering social, material and theoretical aspects. For example, Raadiku social housing block in the Lasnamäe housing estate in Tallinn, which contains 1200 apartments, houses forced tenants (mostly elderly), relocated citizens from downgraded areas (usually with substance use issues) and families with multiple children – citizens with a lower social status overall. That being said, these policy decisions yet again stem from privatization, since municipality-owned land is usually located in large housing estates, making these areas priority locations for new social housing (Publication II). The concentration of the less fortunate is high and fosters more social conflict and misunderstandings in addition to the unnecessary stigmatization to which housing estates are more inclined to. However, since the volume of new housing needed remains in deficit, large housing estates offer vital and affordable housing for the elderly and student renters and a 'springboard' for young families and newcomers (*ibid.*).

Since the end of the 2000s, more systematic national as well as municipal policies have been put in place concerning renovation works in large housing

[1] https://news.err.ee/1210357/riigikogu-passes-law-changing-rent-regulations, 17.12.2020
https://news.err.ee/1146360/committee-sends-bill-regulating-tenancy-relationships-to-riigikogu, 13.10.2020
https://news.err.ee/1107229/justice-minister-sends-bill-regulating-tenancy-relationships-to-government, 29.06.2020

estates. This is in compliance with the EU energy efficiency policies (Publications II and III). For renovation projects, there are special funding agencies which mediate state subsidies as well as municipal programmes such as 'Repair the façade' and 'Tidy up the yard' in Tallinn and Tartu or 'Renovate the Housing, Renovate the City' in Vilnius. However, in order to be eligible for these subsidies, homeowners' associations have to be established, i.e. they need to have a formal body. This again raises the question of uneven manifestations of activism and how the public sector should adjust the support system accordingly to provide more just ground for as many as possible (Kljavin *et al.*, 2020). In addition to applying for funding, the associations usually need to take out mortgages from commercial banks. Consequently, the scheme functions on a competitive basis, meaning that the application process itself demands that the association's elected management have considerable administrative capacities. Therefore, blocks with more capable management, often spatially concentrated in better urban districts, benefit more frequently than those which are not as efficient in bureaucracy or legal matters or are maybe not as capable in the native language (like housing blocks in Eastern Estonia). However, since the technical conditions of the houses are under much debate, successful renovation projects pave the way for more systematic approaches, as several analyses have confirmed that competent renovation could prolong their good condition (Publication II). Therefore, the municipal care of public spaces along with national funding for renovating buildings visibly improve the technical state as well as the aesthetic look of large housing estates.

In conclusion, recognition of the need for more thought-out and complex solutions for the structural problems in large housing estates emerges from two subject areas. First, the EU-level energy efficiency goals and how to reach them with the renovation of housing, which have found some coverage in recent research literature (Kuusk and Kurnitski, 2019). Cities have previously only awarded minor grants for building improvements, but the 2010s marked the period in the Baltics in which the structural need to invest in energy efficiency for socialist-era residential buildings was acknowledged at the national level. Second, the need to improve and modernize the public space between apartment blocks has been increasingly recognized (Kilnarová and Wittmann, 2017; Vasilevska *et al.*, 2014; Sendi *et al.*, 2009).

6.3 Urban professionals and urban movements in pivoting the trajectories of socialist era housing estates

During the 1960s when these large-scale projects were envisioned, architects were more concerned with the accessibility of functions, the infrastructure and the connectivity to other parts of the city. These estates were new and desired living environments that represented progress. Unfortunately, not all of these estates were fully built, often acquiring only the bedroom function. Today, architects have started to work more with the small-scale aspects such as the public areas between

the houses and intra-rayon pathways as well as to assign more functions to the housing estates, seemingly correcting the mistakes made by their predecessors (Publication III). It became apparent that the role of urban practitioners is of utmost importance in two aspects. First, as large housing estates could be regarded as architectural mega experiments, the current, rather unfinished state of these areas is considered the professional responsibility of architects' new generation. Second, with the help of architects, policy-makers are able to extract the hidden potential of these unfinished plans and make better planning decisions. Since large housing estates are an excellent example of mismanaged place-keeping (Dempsey and Burton, 2012), the renovation of social and public space of large housing estates is of vital importance. Furthermore, the results (Publication III) corroborate previous research (Sendi *et al*., 2009; García, 2006; Kazepov, 2005; Forest and Kearns, 1999), which found that collaboration among architects, policy-makers and locals is essential in unearthing problems and finding reasonable solutions.

As regards the question of what exactly needs to be done in large housing estates, the results indicate a conundrum of sorts. If we consider the general picture, large housing estates need a comprehensive vision that ties together modernist views and contemporary needs: thought-out infrastructure, reasoned public and social space as well as the sustainability of the area in terms of housing and function. On the lower scale, it became clear that the residents expect policy-makers to address everyday problems: lack of parking space, issues pertaining to ownership structure and maintenance of greenery (Publications II and III). The first steps have been made: policy-makers have begun discussions with urban professionals and local residents (*ibid.*). Based on the findings of my PhD study, there is the apparent possibility that the full market situation will run over the principles of free planned areas because the socialist ideals hidden in modernist planning have not panned out as planned. The signs are already there – fencing and gated communities – which indicate the notion of possession and deepen the segregation tracks of different socio-economic groups but at the same time create an opportunity for policy-makers to foster a better feeling of belonging among residents (Lelévrier, 2013; Rozen and Rasin, 2009). One way to manage this emerging practice for the public sector is to propose alternative ways for how apartment associations could 'fence' their property so that it would create a sense of unity. For example, provide advised landscaping, aid with bringing together apartment associations operating in vicinity of one another or claiming the same space between the housing blocks, mark out neighbourhoods in the district and help with creating communities (Dempsey and Burton, 2012; Lowndes and Sullivan, 2008; Fincher and Iveson, 2008; Gehl, 2001). Here, we highlight the need for an urban professional who could act as the mediator in every municipality between policy-makers and local residents.

The new found interest of architects and other urban professionals in large housing estates is often tied to local urban movements. Urban movements, namely neighbourhood associations, manifested in the second half of the 2000s as a response to the real estate pressures affecting the inner-city areas (Publication I). Therefore, the inner cities witnessed the mushrooming of neighbourhood activism.

Around a decade later, we can see similar activism in large housing estates, for example, Lasnaidee in Lasnamäe, Annelinna association in Annelinn, among other less visible neighbourhood movements (Publications II and III). They seek to engage themselves with issues of planning and designing public space and are responsible for a range of activities, such as neighbourhood festivals or urban gardens, which are aimed at community building and fighting the stigmatization of these areas. It seems that public space and issues concerning liveability or spaces for encounters are the drivers behind urban activism in large housing estates (Publication II) and in the post-socialist context in general (Jacobsson and Aidukaite, 2015).

7. CONCLUSIONS

Compared with the West, marketization only hit the post-socialist large housing estates in the 1990s. The complete privatization of the housing stock has been an extraordinary experiment in marketization discourse. It is no surprise that the Baltics have been deemed under a 'market experiment' (Tammaru *et al*., 2015; Aidukaite, 2014) because of the radical institutional transition from a full-state system to one of the most liberal market-oriented systems in Europe. Privatization as a policy measure, which aimed to motivate people to invest in their own homes and thus relieve the public sector of overwhelming financial responsibilities, has since backfired. Urban development is led by private and commercial interests and an active real estate market, which is directly or indirectly encouraged by public policy and less by planning efforts (Raagmaa and Stead, 2014).

However, this 'experiment' provides the necessary knowledge for the global marketization debate, highlighting the possible path dependency for societies that are currently under marketization, since the results presented in this thesis show the urban policy and planning measures that were implemented and the governance networks that resulted in fully-privatized housing conditions. When there are more single owners and the tenure composition becomes diverse and fractured like in post-privatized large housing estates, the efforts of coordinating spatial planning and urban revitalization become far more complicated. However, as the findings of this dissertation attest, even in fully privatized and free market conditions, a new balance in urban governance structures is achieved. The aim of this dissertation, therefore, has been to provide a different view of the marketization and post-privatization debate, not led by the experience and critique of Western European countries but by post-socialist, post-privatized countries.

It has become evident that after the initial policy vacuum of the 1990s and the short-term interventions and development of the 2000s and early 2010s, the return of stronger and more integrated public sector policy to socialist era large housing estates is expected. Stabilization of public budgets and external funding sources have brought new levels of confidence to these areas. However, compared with western austerity policies, where full-privatization has never been achieved, nor aimed for, the policy measures implemented in the post-socialist context, or rather not implemented, have been more extreme. Even now, western austerity measures are still more generous than those of post-privatized cities. Nevertheless, it has been acknowledged on a municipal level that socialist era housing estates need a long-term and thought-out vision, where the interventions aim at providing both retrofitting of modernist apartment blocks and neighbourhood-level public space renewal arrangements.

In post-socialist cities, path-dependency is usually conceptualized in terms of continuities from the preceding socialist period, but not much is known concerning the path-dependencies of the privatization tracks. For example, in the UK, Ireland and Spain, marketization has paved the way for financialization and consequently the growth of the unregulated rental sector (Byrne, 2020); in Belgium,

there are different policies targeted at publicly and privately owned large housing estates (Costa and de Valk, 2018). These confusing mosaics of private owners in post-socialist housing districts are difficult to solve and thus the public sector continues to tiptoe around them. Another more interesting dependency of the full privatization decision is related to the global financialization of housing (Kitzmann, 2017). A very fragmented landscape of private owners is a less attractive target for corporate investors compared with institutional property owners (Jacobs, 2019). In this context, post-privatized housing estates may have an advantage today when it comes to the shortcomings of the financialization process in the housing sector in many other countries. First, the effects and challenges of financialization are postponed in a post-privatized context. Second, since LHEs today and for the foreseeable future make up a much larger share of the housing sector in post-socialist cities than in their western counterparts, they are still not as marginalized as in western cities. Third, the newly created governance arrangements in post-socialist cities provide the necessary incentive to objectively improve the living environment in post-privatized large housing estates. Thus, new models for marketbased urban governance serve as a good lesson for other urban environments where (full) marketization is nowadays an unavoidable reality.

Is there actually a need for the public sector to intervene in these areas at all? The signal that the large housing estates need a proper vision and strategic action plan not only comes from the residents but also from the urban professionals. In western literature, we can find similar path-dependencies, often concerning the areas where ethnic and socio-economic segregation indeed demand affirmative action from the public sector (Dekker and van Kempen, 2004; van Beckhoven & van Kempen, 2006; Musterd and van Kempen, 2007; Sendi *et al*., 2009; Dekker *et al*., 2011). However, in the Estonian and Lithuanian cases, large housing estates in reality lead a much simpler trajectory despite similar research results indicating that Western European trends are occurring in Eastern European cities as well. Rather, large housing estates seem to follow the development trajectories of inner-city areas: if inner cities are reborn through gentrification, then it seems that large housing estates are going through an urban renaissance of sorts as well. The most peculiar difference being that gentrification usually starts from within the area, whereas urban renaissance in large housing estates is ignited from outside and by urban professionals. With inner-city areas, it appears that the public sector has to be able to cool off development in order to slow down the displacement of vulnerable groups, whereas in large housing estates, the public sector has to find ways to keep the new-found activism going.

To conclude, I would like to propose some recommendations for future spatial developments for municipalities, private developers as well as third sector parties concerning socialist era housing estates. First and foremost, the spatial development of public spaces should be a priority. We have seen time and again from examples that any development concerning public areas, parks, pathways and recreational areas brings about discussions and expectations among the locals. Therefore, I suggest having diverse ways of engaging the locals or any interested parties in the urban development in these areas. For example, roundtables or

workshops for different development scenarios, inclusive budget is definitely an indicator of what is missing or lacking, questionnaires, public forums, etc. Of course, there are shortcomings with every approach (e.g. Internet surveys exclude people who might not use the Internet); therefore, it is important to employ a variety of approaches for engaging and including a variety of stakeholders. Second, since one of the key issues today in socialist era housing estates concerns parking, municipalities need to have a very clear vision for how they will address this issue. Again, I propose the use of various approaches in order to engage with the locals, neighbourhood activists, urban professionals and private developers with whom the underlying vision should be put into place. The local action plan developed in Vilnius is a good example with different scenarios put into place, not only concerning parking but other issues stemming from societal change (e.g. smart houses, elevators in houses where there are elderly residents). Third, it is clear that any real estate development in a large housing estate uses the existing infrastructure to sell the newly built apartments. The municipality should be more clear and more determined to demand that any new development simultaneously provides value for the area as a whole by investing in the infrastructure, for example, a kindergarten, a school or even a parking garage. Such developments in turn would help to reduce inequalities concerning accessibility and use of space between old and new residents.

Finally, I would like to suggest further areas of research. One of the clear shortcomings of this thesis is its failure to provide a comparable delimited spatial intervention in Latvia. Therefore, to get a more comprehensive understanding, additional research concerning the way public spatial interventions act as a medium for urban governance structuring is needed. Furthermore, the fieldwork data I was able to gather in Riga provided inspiration for comparable research concerning urban movements and their role in urban policy. Since policy transfer and knowledge exchange is one of the underlying aims of Europeanization, and post-socialist cities have taken western practices and adapted them for the post-socialist context, I suggest looking for situations where the transfer process has moved in the opposite direction.

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SUMMARY IN ESTONIAN

Sotsialismiaegsete korterelamupiirkondadega seotud nüüdisaegne linnapoliitika ja planeerimismeetmed

1970-ndatel, pärast ühiskonda raputanud majanduskriisi, alustas Ühendkuningriik üleminekut keinslikult ühiskonnakorralduselt neoliberaalsele. Kui keinsliku majandusteooria järgi on avalikul sektoril õigus ja kohustus sekkuda turuprotsessidesse ning neid reguleerida, et tagada turutõhusus, õiglus ja sotsiaalruumiline sidusus (Davoudi 2018, 23), siis neoliberaalsed vaated põhinevad usul, et vabaturumajanduse olukorras kohaneb turg avaliku sektori sekkumiseta ühiskonna nõudlustega. Ühendkuningriigi eeskujul on lääneriigid järk-järgult läbinud palju sarnaseid poliitilisi, majanduslikke ja sotsiaalseid muutusi. Neoliberaalne majanduspoliitika andis õigustusi massiliseks erastamiseks, aga ka sotsiaalhoolekande rahastuse ja sotsiaalelamute subsideerimise vähendamiseks (Jacobs 2019). Selle tulemusel süvenes sotsiaal-majanduslik segregatsioon ja ruumiline ebavõrdsus. Teaduskirjanduses on aastaid viidatud Euroopa linnade kasvavale segregeeritusele (Tammaru *et al.* 2016), teisalt muutuvad linnad elustiili, hoiakute ja tegevuste poolest üha mitmekesisemaks (Taşan-Kok *et al.* 2014). Seega on aina olulisem rakendada läbimõeldud, kontekstipõhist ja lõimitud linnapoliitikat.

Neoliberaliseerimise tulemusena ilmevad nii füüsilised kui ka sotsiaalsed muutused paljuski just elamusektoris. Seetõttu on elamusektori muutused, näiteks sotsiaalne polariseeritus, sotsiaal-majanduslik segregatsioon ja neid suunavad poliitikameetmed olnud aastaid lääne teaduskirjanduse keskmes (Allegra *et al.* 2020; Mägi 2018; Hess *et al.* 2018; Watt ja Minton 2016; Tammaru *et al.* 2016; Rowlands *et al.* 2009; Turkington *et al.* 2004). Üldjuhul puudutavad mainitud diskussioonid eelkõige sotsiaalelamupiirkondi, mis hõlmavad suuri korterelamuid, sest lääne riikides asuvad sotsiaalelamud tavaliselt naabruskondades, kus valdav elamutüüp on korterelamu. Seepärast on näiteks Ühendkuningriigis ja Hollandis elamusektori linnapoliitika eesmärk olnud arendada mitmekesiseid kogukondi ning säilitada nende mitmekesisust.

Postsotsialistlikus kontekstis kajastab suurte korterelamupiirkondade sotsiaalne mitmekesisus siiani olukorda, mis kujunes nõukogude perioodil sisserände tulemusel. Seega on linnapoliitika eri suundade võrdlemine ja ühest kontekstist teise ülekandmine, näiteks lääne linnadest postsotsialistlikesse või vastupidi, raskendatud (Murie van Kempen 2009). Võtnud tegevuskursi tagasi normaalsusesse ehk Euroopasse, restruktureerisid postsotsialistlikud riigid avalikud institutsioonid, majanduse ja riigiaparaadi, et ühtpidi kohaneda neoliberaliseerimisega ning teisalt tõhusamalt rakendada Euroopa Komisjoni direktiive (Munteanu ja Servillo 2014; Raagmaa ja Stead 2014). Seetõttu on siiani toimuva postsotsialistlike riikide euroopastumise taustal eriti tähtis kontekstitundlikkus poliitika ülekandmisel ühest kontekstist teise, arvestades, et võrdväärne õigus-, korraldus- või finantssüsteem võib olla lünklik või üldse puududa (Murie ja van Kempen 2009).

Nagu juba mainitud, on suured kortermajade piirkonnad olnud aastaid segregatsiooniuuringute keskmes (Tammaru *et al.* 2016), ent uuringute põhjal esitatud tulemused ei ole postsotsialistlikes linnades leidnud laiemat kõlapinda ega märkimisväärselt mõjutanud korterelamupiirkondade arengut suunavat linnapoliitikat (publikatsioon II). Samas on viimastel aastatel elavnenud diskussioon nende alade elamisväärsuse, esteetika ja ruumifunktsioonide ümberkorraldamise teemal (publikatsioon III). Siinse doktoritöö tulemuste põhjal on avaliku, era- ja kolmanda sektori koostöös välja töötatud ruumilised sekkumised kuldvõti, et tuua sotsialismiaegsete korterelamupiirkondade tulevikuarengusuundi käsitlevad diskussioonid teadlikumalt tagasi linnapoliitikasse. Ent põhjalikult dokumenteeritud postsotsialistlik turueksperiment (Tammaru *et al.* 2015), eelkõige peaaegu täielik erastamine ja selle tagajärjel rakendatud poliitika, on saanud õigustamatult vähe tähelepanu üleilmses turustamisdiskussioonis.

Minu doktoritöö eesmärk on teha kindlaks neoliberaliseerimise taustal toimunud sotsialismiaegsete korterelamupiirkondade linnapoliitika ja planeerimismeetmed, mida rakendati pärast Balti riikide taasiseseisvumist. Kuigi tulemused tuginevad peaasjalikult Eesti kogemusele (publikatsioonid I ja II), loon ma võrdlusmomendi piiritletud ruumilise sekkumise näitel Tartus ja Vilniuses (publikatsioon III). Doktoritöös esitatud näidete põhjal saab jälgida linnapoliitilist ja ruumilise planeerimise arengut pärast peaaegu täielikku erastamist ning luua õppematerjal ühiskondadele, kus erastamine ja vabaturumajandusele siirdumine alles toimub. Et doktoritöö eesmärki täita, olen püstitanud kolm uurimisküsimust:

1. Millised on olnud ja kuidas on viimase kolmekümne aasta jooksul linnaruumis avaldunud sotsialismiaegsetele korterelamupiirkondadele suunatud linnapoliitiline sekkumine ja planeerimismeetmed?
2. Kes on linnaarengut juhtivate koostöövõrgustike peamised suunajad?
3. Millised erinevused ilmnevad lääne ja Baltimaade linnapoliitilistes koostöövõrgustikes ning mida on teistel riikidel Baltimaadelt õppida?

Doktoritöö tulemused on saadud eelkõige intervjuuanalüüsi põhjal, kombineerides kvalitatiivsete eksperdiintervjuude suunatud sisuanalüüsi avatud kodeerimisega. Suunatud sisuanalüüsi puhul on analüüsi aluseks teoreetilised lähtepunktid, teemad või koodid. Siinses töös oli aga oluline silmas pidada ka võimalikke teemasid, mis ilmnesid intervjuude ja dokumendianalüüsi käigus. Sellisel juhul rakendasin transkriptsioonianalüüsil avatud kodeerimist. Kvalitatiivintervjuud on tehtud neljas etapis eri ekspertidega Tallinnas, Tartus ja Vilniuses. Intervjueeriti linnaplaneerijaid, ametnikke, kogukonnaaktiviste, korterelamupiirkonna elanikke, arhitekte, maastikuarhitekte ja linnauurijaid. Taustal on käsitletud ka intervjuusid Riia linnaplaneerijate, linnageograafide ja kogukonnaaktivistidega. Intervjuud on olnud nii struktureerimata kui ka poolstruktureeritud ja küsimused varieerusid olenevalt uuringu etapist.

Näiteks esimeses etapis otsiti vastuseid küsimustele, milline on Tallinna linnaplaneerimise kaasamiskultuur; milline on asumiseltside roll linnaplaneerimises ja linnapoliitika kujundamises; millised on Tallinna kaasamiskultuuri

kitsaskohad. Teises etapis keskenduti küsimustele, millised on Tallinna korterelamupiirkonna elukvaliteedi parandamiseks mõeldud toetusmeetmed; milline on Tallinna visioon ja strateegiline plaan sotsialismiaegsete korterelamupiirkondade arendamisel; milline on linna ja riigi koostöö sotsialismiaegsete korterelamupiirkondade arendamisel. Kahel viimasel etapil otsisin vastuseid küsimustele, millised olid Tartu Annelinna visioonikonkursi ja Vilniuse Žirmūnai kolmnurga kohaliku tegevuskava kujunemislugu ning tulemused; mis roll oli arhitektidel ja urbanistidel; millised olid ruumisekkumiste ajendid ja kuidas on kujunenud sekkumiste fookus. Intervjuude pikkus varieerus 41 minutist 1 tunni ja 23 minutini. Dokumendianalüüsis keskenduti peaasjalikult Annelinna visioonikonkursi töödele, seletuskirjadele ja meediakajastusele ning Žirmūnai kolmnurga tegevuskava raportile ja meediakajastusele.

Uuringu tulemustest selgus, et Baltimaades toimunud äärmuslik erastamine on loonud olukorra, kus linnaplaneerimist juhib ja kammitseb tänapäevani pigem era- ja majanduslik huvi kui linnaplaneeringuline strateegia ja arenguvisioon. Seetõttu võib Baltimaades toimunud turueksperimenti käsitleda õppetunnina ühiskondadele, kus turumajandusele üleminek alles toimub, sest doktoritöös esitatud linnapoliitika ja planeerimismeetmed ning kujunenud koostöövõrgustikud kujunesid peaaegu täielikult elamusektori erastamisest sündinud piirangute kontekstis. Pärast 1990-ndatel valitsenud eiramisperioodi keskendusid 2000-ndate ja 2010-ndate algusaja lühiajalised planeeringulised sekkumised peaasjalikult taristuküsimustele või konkreetsetele eraarendustele, nagu kaubakeskused. Alles 2010-ndate teises pooles näeme süstemaatilisemat avaliku sektori sekkumist korterelamupiirkonna arengusse, eelkõige kortermajade rekonstrueerimistööde või näiteks räämas mänguväljakute taastamisena (publikatsioon II). Avaliku sektori eelarve stabiliseerumine on loonud suurte kortermajapiirkondade edasise kujunemise suhtes mõningast kindlust. Kuid võrreldes lääneriikide kasinuspoliitikaga, mille raames ei olnud täiserastamine siiski eraldi eesmärk ja mida pole ka kunagi sellises mahus saavutatud, on postsotsialistlikes linnades rakendatud meetmed olnud ekstreemsemad. Isegi tänapäeval on lääne kasinusmeetmed ikkagi palju leebemad võrreldes nendega, mida rakendatakse postsotsialistlikes riikides (publikatsioon III).

Postsotsialistlikke linnu vaadeldakse lähtuvalt nende sotsialismiaegsest taustast, kuid palju vähem on uuritud eri ulatuses rakendatava erastamise võimalikke tagajärgi. Näiteks Ühendkuningriigis, Iirimaal ja Hispaanias on turustamine viinud elamusektori finantseerimiseni ja sealt edasi reguleerimata rendituru kasvuni (Byrne 2020). Belgias reguleerib ning suunab era- ja avalikus omandis korterelamupiirkondi erinev linnapoliitika (Costa ja de Valk 2018). Kuid postsotsialistlikus kontekstis, kus eraomanditest kujunenud mosaiik on kirju, ei saa avalik sektor paljudel juhtudel sekkuda, mistõttu kujuneb olukord, kus vajalike otsuste tegemist lükatakse edasi või ei tehta neid üldse (publikatsioon II). Elamusektori finantseerimise seisukohalt võib aga (kirjeldatud) killustatus olla isegi eelis, sest sääraselt kujunenud turuolukord on korporatiivsetele investoritele vähem atraktiivne (Jacobs 2019). Esiteks ei kujune seetõttu postsotsialistlikes linnades elamusektori finantseerimisega kaasnevaid negatiivseid tagajärgi, millele lääne

linnad, näiteks Saksamaal, peavad juba praegu süstemaatiliselt lahendusi otsima (Kitzmann 2017).

Teiseks, kuna suured korterelamupiirkonnad moodustavad siiani elamusektorist suure osa, ei ole need alad nii marginaliseeritud kui lääne linnades (Hess *et al.* 2018). Kolmandaks, viimase 10–15 aasta jooksul loodud koostöövõrgustikud loovad vajalikku sisendit, kuidas parendada erastamisjärgse linnamaastiku elukeskkonda (publikatsioon III). Seega on täiserastatud kontekstis kujunenud omalaadne linnapoliitika, planeerimismeetmed ja loodud koostöövõrgustikud hea eeskuju linnakeskkondadele, kus toimunud täiserastamine on vältimatu reaalsus.

Kas avalik sektor peaks siis üldse nende piirkondade arengusse sekkuma? Lühike vastus on „jah". Suured korterelamupiirkonnad on olnud aastakümneid strateegilise visioonita. Väikesemahulised sekkumised on toimunud paratamatult, sest väga suur osa linnaelanikest elab just korterelamupiirkondades. Ent peale elanike on nõudlus ruumisekkumiste järele tekkinud ka ruumiekspertidelt (arhitektid, geograafid, urbanistid, maastikuarhitektid). Lääne kirjanduses on viiteid, kus just ruumieksperdid on osutanud linnapoliitika puudujääkidele piirkondades, kus kasvab sotsiaal-majanduslik segregatsioon, nõudes toetavaid tegevusi ja meetmeid (Dekker ja van Kempen 2004; van Beckhoven ja van Kempen 2006; Musterd ja van Kempen 2007; Sendi *et al.* 2009; Dekker *et al.* 2011). Seega saab doktoritöös esitatud näidete põhjal öelda, et Lääne-Euroopas toimuvad suundumused, nagu linnauuendusprojektid või gentrifikatsioon, ei ole võõrad ka postsotsialistlikele linnadele. Kui siselinnad taassünnivad gentrifikatsiooni kaudu, siis sotsialismiaegsetes korterelamupiirkondades on samuti toimumas renessanss. Erinevus seisneb selles, et gentrifikatsioon ja sellega kaasnev kogukonnaaktivism sünnib piirkonna seest, kuid korterelamupiirkondade renessanss algatatakse väljast, ruumiekspertide poolt (publikatsioon III). Seega on ka avaliku sektori roll siselinnade või korterelamupiirkondade arengut suunates erinev. Linnasiseses arengus peab avalik sektor toimima justkui jahutajana, piirates kinnisvaraarendajate tuhinat ja leevendades seeläbi ehituste tekitatud survet piirkonnas. Kuid korterelamupiirkondades peab avalik sektor pidevalt soodustama ja isegi õhutama ühest küljest kogukonnaaktivismi ning koostööd eri poolte vahel, teisalt aga kinnisvaraarendajate huvi seal ehitada.

Lõpetuseks esitan ettepanekud, kuidas sotsialismiaegsete korterelamupiirkondade arengut edaspidi suunata. Kõige tähtsam on seada prioriteediks avalik ruum ja selle kvaliteet. Me näeme iga päev, näiteks meedia vahendusel, et igasugune avaliku ruumi – olgu see park, terviserada, rekreatsiooniala või väljak – arengu küsimus tõstatab kohalike elanike seas diskussiooni. Nendesse diskussioonidesse tuleb suhtuda austusega ja võimaldada igal huvipoolel oma seisukohta väljendada. Ruumiküsimustes kaasarääkimine on üha päevakajalisem ja seepärast on see leidnud aina laiemat kõlapinda. Igasugust avaliku ruumi arengu küsimust võiks arutada näiteks ümarlaual, arengustsenaariumide seminaril ja mujal. Eri kaasamismeetodeid kombineerides jõuab tõenäolisemalt eri huvirühmade ning mitmekülgsemate ettepanekute ja lahendusteni. Kaasav eelarve on samuti end tõestanud meedium, mille vahendusel osutab kohalik elanik avaliku ruumi puudujääkidele või kitsaskohtadele.

Teiseks, üks põletavamaid probleeme suurtes korterelamupiirkondades on parkimine. On väga tähtis, et linnal oleks selles küsimuses selge ja konkreetne lahendus lauasahtlist võtta. Selles suhtes saab eeskujuks tuua Tartu, kes on hakanud Annelinnas otsima süstemaatiliselt parkimisprobleemile lahendusi. Samuti on hea näide Vilniuse Žirmūnai kolmnurga kohalik tegevuskava, milles loodi küll erinevad piirkonna arengu stsenaariumid, kuid kokku lepiti ühes. Lisaks on igati teretulnud see, et linnades, nt Tallinnas ja Tartus, luuakse ruumiloome kompetentsikeskuseid, mille üldine eesmärk on arendada ruumi teadlikumalt ja läbimõeldumalt.

Kolmandaks on selge, et igasugune uus kinnisvaraarendus korterelamupiirkonnas müüb ennast olemasoleva taristu ja ühenduste taustal. Seetõttu peab avalik sektor olema sihikindel ja selge, nõudma arendajatelt panust piirkonna arengusse laiemalt kui konkreetne ehitatav objekt. See tähendab, et iga uusarendus peaks korrastama mõne tee, rajama uue kooli, lasteaia või isegi parkimismaja. Arvestades, et sotsialismiaegsed kortermajapiirkonnad on jäänud koduks väga suurele osale linna elanikkonnast, tuleb lõpetada ainult magamistoafunktsiooniga eluasemesektori arendus. Mitmekülgsemad arenduslahendused aitavad vähendada ruumilist ebavõrdsust ning maandavad võimalikke pingeid vanade ja uute elanike vahel.

PUBLICATIONS

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