

# WG Energy Efficiency and Environmental Sustainability of Housing

Special Session: Housing and the energy crisis, new policies and actors towards net zero urban transformations

Co-convened by:

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Call for papers:

Appalled by the unanticipated energy crisis, the saving capacity of buildings has emerged into key policy across Europe. As housing is held responsible for more than 40% of energy consumption, upgrades, retrofitting and renovation of existing housing stock, alongside new net-zero constructions, are placed at the forefront of policy, financial and technological innovation. However, as housing policy is operated across different state scales, very little is known about how energy efficiency policies enmesh with and influence housing policies, nor how housing provision is reshaped to accommodate energy saving targets. Additionally, little is known about the social and spatial trade-offs from energy upgrades, the beneficiaries and potential losers.

At the same time, climate finance, in the form of green and sustainable bonds, is pushed forward to motivate both the public and private sector towards investments that “de-carbonise” urban infrastructures. Already real-estate investors have identified passive constructions and energy-efficient retrofits as opportunities of higher capital returns as the socio-ecological transformation of housing has the ability to generate yields throughout the -renewed- life cycle of buildings. Additionally, access to state funding incite developers to incorporate climate-change discourse. Additionally, net-zero developments accommodate the environmental worries of those educated middle classes able to pay higher rents that keeps apace investors’ rent maximising behaviour. And as the market is leveraged towards the development of energy efficient housing, there is a lack of awareness over the novel housing, real-estate and financial dynamics.

This Special Session aims at disclosing the new dynamics in housing by exploring:

- (i) how energy policies enmesh with housing policies and social housing provision;
- (ii) what is the role of the different state scales and planning for energy efficient housing;
- (iii) how investors and market actors perceive and enact on energy upgrades and net-zero constructions;
- (iv) which means of climate financing are used to attain retrofits and by whom;
- (v) for whom energy efficient housing production is destined to, and how successfully energy poverty is addressed through retrofits and new net-zero constructions.

To help un-lock the messiness identified in the concurrent situation when housing is under energy crisis, and shed light on novel actors and processes that transform homes into carbon-neutral assets, we welcome in this session proposal paper contributions from different geographical and

socioeconomic that place housing at the intersection of energy, climate-change and financialisation research.

By considering housing as the epicentre of the energy and economic restructuring, this session proposal explores the dynamics produced to succeed the de-carbonisation of the urban. It inspires to develop interdisciplinary dialogues that advance geographical thinking regarding current urban transformations.

#### Submission of abstracts:

Please submit your abstract through the conference main submissions portal as follows:

1. Choose WG Energy Efficiency and Environmental Sustainability of Housing; and
2. At the top of your abstract refer to this special session.