

CALL FOR PAPERS | SPECIAL ISSUE 1/2017

Commons Reloaded

Potentials and Challenges in Urban and Regional Development

In context of the economic and financial crisis, which is profoundly reshaping Europe and its Cities and Regions, alternative forms of social and economic organisation are increasingly discussed in urban and regional research and practice. Particularly commons are (again) hotly debated as an alternative way to organize the production, distribution and consumption of certain resources. Recently, a number of urban, regional as well as planning studies have been devoted to the analysis and evaluation of commons in spatial development, using a range of different theoretical rationales. These include amongst others research inspired by the pioneering work of Elinor Ostrom to theories which deviate from methodological individualism e.g. more political-economic (David Harvey) and sociologically coined strands of thought. Commoning basically means the processes and practices of collectively self-regulating the production and/or distribution and/or consumption of resources, often with the aim of improving social cohesion and solidarity in societies. From a planning perspective commons are often interpreted as a new way of steering and coordinating collective action between state and market, of improving the efficiency of production and consumption of environmental resources, facilitating the accessibility of basic goods and services, empowering of local residents, improving social cohesion through building social capital or strengthening citizens' participation in planning projects. However, they also are described more critically as part of a neoliberal spatial development or as niche product for a small urban elite.

This special issue wants to contribute to this discourse through critically reflecting on the potentials and challenges of commons and commoning practices mainly in the space- and planning-related fields of housing, public space and regional food. It welcomes theoretically and empirically as well as practice-focused/-oriented papers; contributions are welcome from across the social sciences and the application of different scientific angles to explain commons in urban and regional development is encouraged, e.g. economics, sociology, political science, geography, spatial planning, development studies, feminist studies, community studies or law.

The papers should address some of the following questions in the context of commons in housing, public space or local/regional food systems:

- Spatiality of Commons: How is spatiality constructed through commoning and collective action?
- Governance of the Commons: which actors and regulatory systems are characteristic for which action field of commoning?
- Legitimation of Commoning: who benefits from commoning practices? Who is included in/excluded by these practices?
- Contextualisation of Commons: which factors are influencing success or failure of commons?
- Planning and Commoning: how is state-led spatial planning related to commoning in urban and regional development?
- Commons and the city region: how do commoning practices influence economic and social relations between city and region?
- Added value of Commons: how do commons contribute to achieve the goals of social cohesion and environmental protection in spatial development? How can commons contribute to alter local and regional economic and social structures?
- Financing of Commons: Where do monetary and nonmonetary resources in commons come from, how is their internal and external exchange organized, and which provisions are taken to ensure long-term financial sustainability?

'The Public Sector' (<http://oes.tuwien.ac.at>) is an open access e-journal published by the chair of Public Finance and Infrastructure at the Department of Spatial Planning, TU Wien. The journal particularly invites young academics to submit. Abstracts (max. 500 words) should be sent to: urbancommons@oes.ifip.tuwien.ac.at. Abstracts should include research questions, theoretical background, used methods and expected results. The selection of the papers for publication will be done by the editors of this special issue: Alexander Hamedinger (Assistant Professor, Centre of Sociology, Department of Spatial Planning) and Lukas Franta (Assistant, Centre of Sociology, Department of Spatial Planning). Full papers (4.000-8.000 words) will undergo a double-blind peer review process.

The timetable for this special issue is:

Aug 9, 2016	Deadline for the submission of abstracts
Sep 9, 2016	Notification of acceptance, invitation for full papers
Dec 9, 2016	Deadline for submission of full papers → start of review process
Feb 2017	End of review process → information for authors
April 7, 2017	Final deadline for revised papers
June 2017	Publication (open access und print)