



The building stock as a social resource

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Effects of a longstanding recession

- Almost **10 years of stagnation** in the construction sector and real estate market (new building permits: 195.207 in 2005, 36.075 in 2011, 13.785 in 2017)
- A continuous drop of prices (more than 50%) and transactions (more than 80%)
- **Greece amongst the lowest housing market prices in Europe**

- **Rising social needs!**



Ageing stock and high rate of vacancies

- Census 2011: 6.371.901 in total
- Only 15% constructed after 2001, 55% constructed between 1961-1990
- 35% of vacant housing (2.249.813), 21% secondary (621.881) or vacation (729.964), 14% empty housing (897.968), out of which 7,11% for rent (453.901) and 1,39% for sale (88.996).
- 132.000 vacant in Central Athens, 27.500 in Piraeus



A fragmented ownership structure in housing

- Small- landlords: high fragmentation of property, small- scale, socially dispersed ownership
- Fragmented/small-scale real estate market activity
- No social housing owners (public, municipal, third sector)
- No concentration of housing
- No professionalised investment in rented housing



Very few tools

- **European funds for energy upgrading on individual property** (apartments, housing etc)
- **Facade renovation** (2002-2004 not currently running)
- Impact: small, dispersend, depending on small owners and private initiative > hard to intervene on building level
- Municipalities can only invest own funds on public property or for public use. They cannot develop an integrated programme for renovation.



Renovation through touristic investment

- Touristic investment (hotels, airbnb, leisure) has generated **market-led activity in renovation** providing important air to breath to small homeowners in areas of touristic attraction
- Already central low-middle income neighbourhoods are starting to see the effects of this model (high prices, exclusion of low income, students, migrants) - also in very touristic islands (no place for students, doctors, teachers)
- Given long term recession it is difficult to discuss the negative effects



What role for the public?

- How to control the -aggressive and fast- investment processes taking advantage of low prices and impoverished small landowners in need for income?
- **No tradition and no mechanisms for public intervention** > market-led mechanisms have always been the motor for upgrade, state role to trigger through regulatory changes and incentives
- Difficult to generate renovation and neighbourhood upgrade with important impact



Three directions for a new approach

1. Unused buildings of public bodies
2. Legal framework for vacant and abandoned buildings
3. Develop cooperatives/third sector in housing



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1. Public property for social benefit

- Call of the Ministry of Labour offering Social Security Fund properties (~100 buildings) in the Centre of Athens for Public-Public and Public-Social partnerships
 - > How to reuse with positive social impact /generate social benefit
 - > Very often such attempts lead towards gentrification effects
 - > How to integrate into a broader intervention plan



2. Tools for vacant and abandoned buildings

- Legal framework to help municipalities for vacant and abandoned buildings > especially in central Athens
 - Different cases: i. Listed buildings, ii. multiple ownership, unknown owners, iii. Poor owners
 - Objective: tool for neighbourhood intervention and upgrading, reuse of available stock to cover social needs
- > How to bind the social use for long term
- > Create an area-based pool of social rented housing (i.e. BCN)



3. Third sector and cooperatives in housing

- Starting from zero, inspiration from existing examples abroad
- An ongoing research-activist project (Cohab-Athens)
- S.S.E. is developing > take advantage of new tools and legal framework
- Energy communities in urban environment





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