



UPLIFT – Urban PoLicy Innovation to address  
inequality with and for Future generaTions

## Housing policy co-creation in Amsterdam

*“Housing co-creation for tomorrow’s cities”  
conference*

8-9 December 2022, Institute of Urbanism and Alpine Geography of the University Grenoble  
Alpes



This project has received funding from  
the European Union’s Horizon 2020  
research and innovation programme  
under grant agreement No 870898.

## Conference report

On 8-9 December 2022 the international conference “Housing co-creation for tomorrow’s cities” took place at the Institute of Urbanism and Alpine Geography of the University Grenoble Alpes. The conference was organized by the RE-DWELL MSCA Innovative Training Network “Delivering affordable and sustainable housing in Europe” and the Pacte Social Sciences Research Centre of the University Grenoble Alpes. About 40 academics and local policymakers discussed how the different scopes and realms of housing research can be integrated in a holistic approach in order to respond to the challenges of creating housing that is both affordable and sustainable.

The conference included presentations of scientific papers and keynote speeches. Moreover, an open roundtable discussion with local housing stakeholders took place on the last day, in the framework of the agenda of Grenoble European Green Capital 2022 and brought together academics and local policymakers to discuss the role of housing in the transition to a sustainable economy. The discussion touched upon affordability for vulnerable groups, energy poverty, and the role of social housing and local projects.

Researchers from TU Delft presented the housing related results of the UPLIFT life course interviews with young people, and introduced the co-creation process as a potential novel approach to housing policy making. The interviews shed light on the problems faced by young people in the Amsterdam housing market, which are similar to those in many other European cities, and on the strategies that they use to navigate their housing difficulties.

*The housing problem in Amsterdam is so dire, that it also affects the choices that young people make in the field of labour market and education. A particularly concerning pattern emerged, where young people delay the end of their studies in order to be able to remain longer in their student accommodation, thus postponing their full entrance in the labour market for fear of not finding an affordable home. Finding a new dwelling is so challenging that the perspective of moving seems to be scary and stressful even for the highly educated and well employed youngsters in our sample.*

*Despite the cries for stability coming from young people, temporary contracts are now the norm in the private rental market, and are increasingly used also in the social rental sector, while homeownership is an unattainable objective for most. Finally, our results show that there is a fundamental erosion of young people’s trust towards institutions that are perceived as slow, burdensome and not attuned to young people’s needs. This is especially true for people with a migration background. In turn, this mistrust leads to a low level of knowledge of local policies, and the most common strategy to face life difficulties – in housing, in employment and in most other life domains – is to seek the material and immaterial support of their personal networks of friends and family.*

*However, it is important to note that several actors in Amsterdam – chiefly the Municipality and some housing associations – have shown an interest in improving housing affordability and security and have started to recognize the value of seeking input from vulnerable young people who experience housing problems. UPLIFT works exactly in this direction and tries to give young people a bigger voice in the development of housing policies through a process of cooperation. By working with a local NGO, a housing association and the Municipality, UPLIFT set up an advisory board formed by young people that contributed to the discussion on existing housing needs and problems, and on potential solutions and policy approaches. This started a co-creation process of youth housing policy, with a particular focus on temporary contracts and mixed housing concepts.*

The presentation of these findings at the conference led to a fruitful discussion about the housing problems of young people in urban areas across Europe and their relation to the system of housing provision but also to precarious employment, low salaries, tourism and financialization dynamics.

Photos and comments on the conference panels and discussions can be found on Twitter: [https://twitter.com/redwell\\_itn](https://twitter.com/redwell_itn)