



URBS 362 Sustainable Social Housing: International Experience and the case of Greece

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Course Description

The history of social housing dates back to the early 20th century. Strongly connected with industrialization, it first started as a voluntary, philanthropic activity in USA and Europe. Since then, a variety of policies has emerged in order to ameliorate the living conditions of the working class. From this point of view, vulnerable households, slums or insufficient dwellings have been in the center of interest, since the first half of the 20th century. Affordable housing is now more than ever a necessity due to the severe economic crisis that affects numerous countries.

Social housing in Greece started after the Asia Minor Catastrophe of 1922 and the subsequent vast demographic flow of 1.500.000 refugees. Only after 1954, the establishment of Workers Housing Organization provided affordable housing to other segments of the working class. This organization provided also other forms of housing assistance as grants in settlements, loans for purchase and rent subsidies. Unfortunately, during the contemporary financial crisis, the memorandum of the 12th February 2012, determined that the “Workers Housing Organization” has to discontinue. This decision put an end to the social housing sector in Greece.

This course explores the socio-economic and the environmental impact of social housing in USA and EU, focusing on Greece. One major issue is the low level of preservation and the large number of abandoned buildings. This situation contributes to urban blight and socio-spatial inequalities. The aim of the course is to help students elaborate critical thinking on social housing policies. The course is interdisciplinary based on empirical research, suitable for architects, urban planners and designers, environmentalists, sociologists and social anthropologists. Students are going to work together as an interdisciplinary team in order to evaluate the socio-spatial footprint of social housing in Greece, making the appropriate connections with international literature. This course provides also the opportunity to familiarize with the basic principles of thematic cartography. Students are going to create thematic maps according to the following categories:

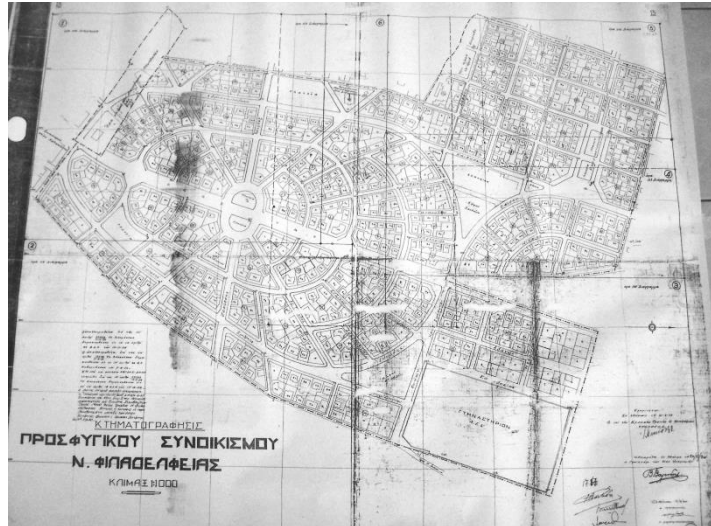
- Quality of social housing facilities
- Architectural type and period of construction
- Integration in the local urban environment
- Balance between open spaces and built environment

The material for the above mentioned maps will be collected during the scheduled field trips:

1. **Refugee blocks of flats in Alexandras Avenue, center of Athens:** This social housing complex built during the 30s, is a typical example of the architectural movement of Bauhaus in Germany. Influenced by Walter's Gropius "Zeilenbau" and "Heliotropic Houses", this complex represents Modernism in Greece.
2. **Refugee garden-suburb and Social Housing in New Philadelphia:** This Refugee suburb designed as a garden city is a unique example of such a type of social housing in Greece. Influenced by the theory of Howard Ebenizer (1898) and the garden city movement, it represents a self-contained community surrounded by "greenbelts" and pedestrian areas. Near this enclave, there are blocks of flats constructed by the Workers Housing Organization, designed by the famous Greek architect Aris Konstantinidis, a representative of Modernism in Greece.
3. **Refugee houses in Kaisariani:** Large social housing complexes similar to those met in Vienna in Austria and two-storey blocks of flats synthesize the physiognomy of this historic area. Apart from architecture, this area is a landmark of Second World War and Resistance.
4. **Refugee houses in Petralona (neighborhood in Athens):** Stone-made refugee houses and a large Modernistic Building mark the identity of this area.
5. **Sustainable design in a renovated social housing complex, Tavros and the area of Dourgouti (near the center of Athens):** Renovation of an old social housing complex according to the principles of sustainable design. It is a unique example of sustainable design implemented on social housing in Greece.
6. **Modernist Social Housing in New Smyrni, Agios Sostis neighborhood:** students are going to visit a modernistic housing complex in Nea Smyrni, a post-refugee urban area near Athens.



Social housing in Kaisariani, Refugee blocks of Flats influenced by Vienna's Karl Marx Hof



Urban refugees' settlement of New Philadelpia, a refugee garden-suburb



Social housing for the refugee population in Petralona

Class Schedule

1. **Introductory session:** The aim of this class session is to set the theoretical framework for sustainable social housing. Making the appropriate connections with international literature students are going to understand that sustainability could be described as a perfect balance among social, environmental and economic factors, yet difficult to achieve. Students will also comprehend that social housing is an issue of worldwide significance strongly associated with social conflicts and environmental challenges. With the help of different media, students are going to familiarize with the problems of the urban environment analyzing selected case studies from around the globe. The lesson includes lecture and activities as text reading, discussion and video presentation.

Required Reading

[Murray C., Barkham R. \(2012\) Sustainable Social Housing: An examination of Global Best Practice, p.1-11, p. 33-37, p.45-49 and p.56-64 available at https://www.academia.edu/11510081/Sustainable_Social_Housing_An_Examination_of_Global_Best_Practice](https://www.academia.edu/11510081/Sustainable_Social_Housing_An_Examination_of_Global_Best_Practice)

2. The focal point of this class session is the case of the USA. Students are going to look in depth and evaluate different policies implemented there since the dawn of the 20th century, elaborating critical thinking on issues as segregation and neighborhood effects. During this lesson, their 1st assignment will be announced. The subject of this assignment is to find an example of social housing that is considered to be sustainable. The objective of this assignment is to analyze and interpret the interaction between socio-economic and environmental factors in a specific case study. Students are going to work together as interdisciplinary groups for the fulfillment of this assignment. The assignment is **due on XXX**.

Required Reading

Bristol K. (1991) The Pruitt-Igoe Myth, available at <https://rasmusbroenum.files.wordpress.com/2011/11/1991-bristol-pruitt-igoemyth.pdf>

Murray C., Barkham R. (2012) Sustainable Social Housing: An examination of Global Best Practice, **p. 53-56** available at https://www.academia.edu/11510081/Sustainable_Social_Housing_An_Examination_of_Global_Best_Practice

Peppercorn I., Taffin C. (2009) Social housing in the USA and France: Lessons from convergences and divergences, available at http://siteresources.worldbank.org/FINANCIALSECTOR/Resources/Affordable_rental_housing_schemes_USA_France.pdf

3. This class session emphasizes social housing as implemented in Europe. The central point is to analyze and interpret the differences among the member states of the European Union, especially during the ongoing financial crisis. Moreover, examples from post-communist countries are described so as to stress the differences on social housing policies that are associated with discrepancies in various socio-political systems (e.g. welfare capitalism, post-industrial communities, communism etc.). The case studies that are going to be presented during this lesson are from the following countries:
 - UK and Netherlands
 - Scandinavia (co-operative housing)
 - Germany and Austria
 - Former USSR (Kommunalka housing complexes)
 - Southern Europe and Greece

Required Reading

Poggio T., Whitehead C. (2017) *Social Housing in Europe: legacies, new trends and the crisis*, Critical Housing Analysis, Volume 4 | Issue 1 | 2017 | 1-10, available at <http://www.housing-critical.com/viewfile.asp?file=2452>

Murray C., Barkham R. (2012) *Sustainable Social Housing: An examination of Global Best Practice*, p.11-20 and available at https://www.academia.edu/11510081/Sustainable_Social_Housing_An_Examination_of_Global_Best_Practice

Housing Europe (2018) *The financing of renovation in the social housing sector, A comparative study in 6 European countries*, available at <http://www.housingeurope.eu/resource-1124/the-financing-of-renovation-in-the-social-housing-sector>

4. (1st virtual field trip) The class focuses on Greece, analyzing the role of refugee integration after the Asia Minor Catastrophe in 1922 and the post-war policies as implemented by the Workers Housing Organization. The first half of the class session will be conducted in classroom, from 9.30 to 10.30. During the second half, from 10.30 to 12.30 students are going to visit the social housing complex of Alexandras Avenue, in the center of Athens, designed under the principles of the famous German "Zeilenbau" made by Walter Gropius. Students working in field as interdisciplinary groups are going to evaluate the environmental condition of this urban complex as well as the socio-spatial discrepancies met in the area, creating a cartographic depiction of the visited site.

Required reading

Samet Y.A. (2016) *Formalism and Monumentality in the 1930s*, available at https://www.researchgate.net/publication/313876583_Formalism_and_Monumentality_in_the_1930s/download

Tousi E. (2016) *A Retrospective on social housing in Greece. The case of the refugee dwellings*. Common Ground Publishing, University of Illinois Research Park, Design Principles and Practices: An International Journal — Annual Review, Volume 10, 2016, pp.1-11. Article: Print (Spiral Bound). Published Online: October 25, 2016 (Article: Electronic (PDF File; 1.297MB)
<http://ijgar.cgpublisher.com/product/pub.282/prod.35>

5. **(2nd field trip)**. The first half of the class, is dedicated to students' work, as they are going to present their 1st assignment. The aim of the presentation is to open up discussion on sustainability issues. After the presentation, the **2nd assignment** will be announced which is **due on XXX**. The topic of this assignment is to find a social housing complex that is considered as unsuccessful, evaluated with environmental and social criteria. With the help of these two assignments students will understand the good practices, making comparisons with inefficient policies implemented in the sector of social housing. This knowledge will be used as a tool to evaluate the Greek example, making the appropriate connection with the international experience on the field.

During the second half of the lesson, students are going to visit the area of Kaisariani, near the center of Athens. This area includes various architectural types of social housing constructed in different periods of time. Students are going to create a map of the area describing the condition of the urban environment, working as interdisciplinary groups. The aim of the cartographic depiction is to discover crucial enclaves that suffer from urban blight with the view to propose urban regeneration practices.

Required Reading

Artopoulos G., Pignatta G., Santamouris M. (2018) *From the Sum of Near-Zero Energy Buildings to the Whole of a Near-Zero Energy Housing Settlement: The Role of Communal Spaces in Performance-Driven Design*, Architecture_MPS, available at

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/328672766> *From the Sum of Near-Zero Energy Buildings to the Whole of a Near-Zero Energy Housing Settlement The Role of Communal Spaces in Performance-Driven Design/download*

6. MIDTERMS

Midterm evaluation includes a short written exam based on selected papers from international literature.

7. **(3rd field trip)**. This session focuses on the garden city movement as described in the international literature. From the theory of Howard Ebenizer to contemporary urban design, students are going to familiarize with this type of planning visiting a Greek refugee garden-suburb (New Philadelphia, northern of Athens) during the second half of the lesson (10.30-12.30). The first part of the lesson, from 9.30 to 10.30 includes lecture and activities.

Required Reading

Ashadi A., Putra H. (2013) *Garden cities - past, present & future*, available at [https://www.academia.edu/11298881/Garden_Cities - Past Present and Future](https://www.academia.edu/11298881/Garden_Cities_-_Past_Present_and_Future)

Vernet N. Coste A. (2017) *Garden Cities of the 21st Century: A Sustainable Path to Suburban Reform, Urban Planning (ISSN: 2183-7635), 2017, Volume 2, Issue 4, Pages 45-60*

DOI: 10.17645/up.v2i4.1104, available at

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/322140094_Garden_Cities_of_the_21st_Century_A_Sustainable_Path_to_Suburban_Reform/download

8. **(4th field trip)** The first part of the class will be conducted outdoors, since students are going to visit a unique example of sustainable design as applied in Social Housing in Greece. This 4th field trip includes a visit to the area of Tavros where a bioclimatic social housing complex was renovated a few years ago. Moreover, students are going to visit social housing settlements in the nearby area of Dourgouti. The second part of the lesson will be conducted indoors. Students are going to create digital maps with the help of the instructor, gathering the material collected during these first four field trips.

Required Reading

Myofa N., Papadias E. (2016) *The development in the neighborhood of Dourgouti since 1922*, available at <https://www.athenssocialatlas.gr/en/article/dourgouti/>

9. **(4th field trip)** The first part is dedicated to the presentation of students' work. They are going to present their 2nd assignment. The second part of the class session, from 11.00 to 12.30 includes a visit to the refugee social housing in Nea Smyrni, Agios Sostis neighborhood. Students are going to complete a map with the evaluation of the preservation of the housing reserve and the architectural types met in the area.

Required Reading

Moatsou O. (2012) *Polykatoikia: the Popularization of a Status Symbol*, 2nd International Conference of the European Architectural History Network (EAHN) available at

[https://www.academia.edu/3428437/Polykatoikia the Popularization of a Status Symbol](https://www.academia.edu/3428437/Polykatoikia_the_Popularization_of_a_Status_Symbol)

10. **(6th field trip)** Visit the neighborhood of Petralona and Kallirois Av., to see the stone made-refugee houses and the Modernistic housing complex of Asyrmatos. Will work as interdisciplinary groups to create a map of the area, evaluating the built and natural environment.

Required Reading

Ricoy S.F. (2017) *Extra-long residential infrastructures. the outdated programme in the collective housing on the large-scale*, AMPS, Architecture_MPS; London South Bank University, 09—10 February, 2017, available at [http://oa.upm.es/50124/1/INVE MEM 2017 271945.pdf](http://oa.upm.es/50124/1/INVE_MEM_2017_271945.pdf)

11. During this class students are going to complete their digital maps, working in interdisciplinary groups, evaluating the areas visited during the field trips. With the help of the instructor, they are going to create an A0 poster, mentioning the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in the areas visited. They are also going to propose general planning directions for the urban renewal of those areas based on the problems they recognized during field work.

Required Reading

Gurel E., Tat M. (2017) SWOT ANALYSIS: A THEORETICAL REVIEW, The Journal of International Social Research, Volume: 10 Issue: 51, August 2017, www.sosyalarastirmalar.com Issn: 1307-9581
Doi Number: <http://dx.doi.org/10.17719/jisr.2017.1832> , available at https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Emet_Guerel/publication/319367788_SWOT_ANALYSIS_A_THEORETICAL_REVIEW/links/5a09f172a6fdcc2736de9e82/SWOT-ANALYSIS-A-THEORETICAL-REVIEW.pdf?origin=publication_detail

12. Students are going to present their poster and write their final examination. The examination consists of two parts the one is based on international literature and the other on fieldwork material.

Workshop on Urban Regeneration

After the end of this course, a one-week workshop on urban regeneration is going to be held. The area of focus is located in a post-refugee urban neighborhood. The area is named Nikea and is near Piraeus the main Port of Athens. The instructor is going to provide all the necessary digital maps and drawings to be used as backgrounds so as to assure that students are able to elaborate their ideas for the renewal of the area, taking into consideration environmental and socio-economic parameters.