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Editorial: Planning is About Change – Different Perspectives on Societal Challenges

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It was with pleasure that I accepted the invitation to be guest editor of volume 9 of plaNext. This publishing initiative of AESOP Young Academics Network, almost reaching a dozen, has an already remarkable amount of knowledge produced and shared, fulfilling the aim based on the strategic vectors referred by Francesco Lo Piccolo in the editorial of the first volume of plaNext: to make Young Academics' research products more visible; to bring together young academics from Europe and beyond, sharing new research perspectives, intersecting planning with other academic fields; and to combine open access environment with high quality materials (Lo Piccolo, 2015). This could not be truer when looking to contents of past and present volumes of plaNext, by giving visibility to more peripheral planning and research contexts, crossing perspectives from various disciplines while looking at European planning issues and not only.

This is not an exception with the present issue, as it is dedicated to contributions from participants in the 12th AESOP Young Academics Conference. The conference was hosted by the Faculty of Spatial Sciences at the University of Groningen and was held from the 26th until the 29th of March 2018. The chosen theme was "Navigating Change: Planning for societal and spatial transformations", with the aim to look for insights into how various disciplines within planning, and related to planning, are dealing with change. The conference asked how it was possible to diversify planning approaches that deal with various forms of (positive or negative) change, questioned how these impacted society and affected people's every-day lives, and contributed to interdisciplinary exchange within planning related research and practice on navigating change.

The aim of this conference was therefore to bring together different perspectives to the discussion of societal and spatial changes by critically examining the knowledge upon which transformation is or can be planned. The conference organisers proposed an approach which allowed researchers to go in-depth into navigating (processes) of change in urban areas. The 'wish to examine both the analytical and normative dimensions across various disciplines within and closely related to planning' was an additional task. A challenge, since societal and spatial transformations reflect many times the existence of complex settings, requiring tailor made responses, which planning tries to interpret, and *must* in practice translate into readable,

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easy to understand, stable, transparent, and yet flexible and adaptable norms and rules. And by challenging planning this way, inevitably the role of planners is also matter for debate,

In this framework, researchers and practitioners were invited to discuss the broader topic of navigating change, organized in the following five tracks: environmental change, technological change, population change, political change, and planning approaches for change. These tracks are closely connected to societal changes, therefore they concern planning and invite planners to question and reinvent methodologies, while analysing processes and interpreting discourses. What does it mean navigating change? Bringing together in this discussion a diversity of perspectives becomes additionally challenging, when it is recognizable how non-linearly societies, territories and cities in particular evolve (Hartman & de Roo, 2016), how demanding this is for the development of new conceptual frameworks and how simplistic dichotomist approaches are harmful for planning (Davy, 2014), contributing to spatial and social segregation, instead of integration (as it occurs for instance with the dichotomy between the formal and the informal city). Through this 9th volume of plaNext we can witness this move made by contributors: methodologies are explored in order to formulate policies to deal with complex contexts, as a result of change of technologic paradigms; cultural policies are evaluated in their contributions to the design of urban planning strategies; art projects are developed and explored as planning participation mediators; adaptive housing is integrated as permanent solutions for temporary needs, through flexibility and reversibility; local economic development is discussed as a challenger for sustainable outcomes; and the design of games rules' premises are questioned by the way they can affect civic engagement (when they are used to discuss urban design proposals).

The 12th AESOP Young Academics conference – and this volume of plaNext as a follow-up of it - brought the topic of navigating change back to Europe. Not being a matter for total surprise, it is still relevant that this occurs. In fact, in the last decades the rapid growth of the developing world has transferred the attention on pace, urgency and challenges associated to change to other parts of the planet addressing for instance the accelerated growth and impact of slums in the urban fabric. The topics addressed in this volume, although directly concerning European contexts make also part of a globalized world, such as migratory and refugee's movements, technological shifts or the impact of tourism. They are good examples of how, despite being addressed in European contexts, they concern broader and globalized contexts. Papers address very specific cases, distributed by different parts of Europe, from Tallinn and Riga to Bozcaada in Turkey. The peripheral condition of some of the researches here presented contributes to explore new responses for planning problems. The experimental contexts in this paper are interesting as they allow to experiment and eventually generate new mainstream outcomes; they all reveal relevant conclusions which one can anticipate being replicable to other contexts.

Six authors, young academics, out of the number of participants in the major annual event of AESOP Young Academics Network, kindly responded positively to the call for participation in this issue of plaNext. Researchers affiliated to European planning academic institutions and looking at European contexts and beyond, since much of their topics are transnational. Opening this kind of debates the authors prove how planners can and how PhD researchers and planning students in general are getting prepared for a global profession however needing to immerse in local contexts (Alterman, 2017). The six papers presented below are representative signs in this direction.

In the paper from Eriketti Servou with the name "A methodological approach on studying policy-making of autonomous driving in cities – technology (related with autonomous driving)

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as a trigger for (possible) policy change” - the author proposes the reader, a new approach for policy-making for a particular technologic transition – from human to autonomous driving - based on the combination of Argumentative Discourse Analysis (ADA) and Actor-Network Theory (ANT). The reliance on the complementarity of the two methodologies is the starting point of Eriketti Servou’s research. In the paper, Servou highlights the benefits of combining the two methodologies (ADA and ANT), as they together allow policymakers to understand from different perspectives, the contexts generated by the introduction of the technology of autonomous vehicles into urban mobility (and the necessary changes on mobility policy). Extrapolating to other contexts, it allows other researchers anticipating the use of these two methodologies combined in other contexts in which non-linearity is present. The case provided by this paper clearly illustrates the non-linear path of autonomous driving and implications for spatial planning, since the first remote controlled vehicle, invented less than one century ago until the recent developments of autonomous driving already in the present century.

Astrid Krisch’s paper “Examining Cultural Planning in Vienna: On the Discursive Institutionalization of Social Infrastructure in Strategic Planning” sheds light on culture as a form of social infrastructure towards strategic cultural planning in Vienna. The paper starts by making an interesting summary of the role of culture in the planning process setting its emergence in the 1940’s with the coining of the concept of cultural industry, while it points the 1980’s as the period when it became part of strategic urban planning, until the revival of strategic planning in the early 2000’s and more recently the integration in the smart city concept, more focused on technologic aspects of art. The differentiation of the roles that culture played in these last four decades in Vienna is crucial for the discussion developed in the paper. When it comes to the analysis of the case study of Vienna, it focuses on comparing planning documents – taking the framework of discursive institutionalism – from the last two decades, and placing it under three dimensions: market, state and civil society. Two main ideas emerge from this research. The first relates to the apparently renovated generation of planning-driven culture policies, contradicting a path-dependency for over the last four decades; the second, when it comes to integrate culture into urban planning, the need to centre cultural policies on its social function and on the civil society, instead of the current economic-driven and market tendency.

The paper from Tiina Hotakainen and Essi Oikarinen “Balloons to talk about: Exploring conversational potential of an art intervention” addresses art as a mediator between stakeholders in urban development, through conversation, while it shows more expected potential for place-making. In order to achieve this, in the paper, the authors set three types of conversation: conversation in relation with temporal disruption (this occurring in close relation with performative planning as a disruptive practice); in relation with material and situated conversation to explore architectural spaces in their boundaries, distant from the architecture’s problem-solving core; and technological mediated conversation as underexplored means of communication within the urban setting. Hotakainen and Oikarinen’s paper underlines the role of materiality associated with the art piece as an attractor and as a place maker, temporariness as simultaneously stimulating curiosity but also generating some kind of frustration in those witnessing the art intervention; and social impact measured through on site conversations and through social media (with expected different results in these two contexts). While the authors recognize the value of this art installation experiment as a pilot project, they conclude by raising issues such as the contribution of art intervention in terms of conversational potential for planning debates. The paper concludes by suggesting that “even tentative information without specific objectives, when presented in a public data installation, could prove valuable for urban development discourse”, in an exploratory way, of going beyond traditional public debates on urban planning, usually more concentrated on the

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municipal planning activities and on the most visible building features of cities' development.

The paper from Beatrice Jlenia Pesce and Annamaria Bagaini with the title "Urban and Architectural adaptive strategies for Inclusive Cities: a review of international innovation experiments" raises the question of how to answer with permanent flexible solutions to the uncertain occurrence of migratory flows into cities – as the authors start by referring, cities are, for the vast majority of migrants, their final destination, considering the examples mentioned, all corresponding to Global North countries. The paper collects and reflects on series of best practices, underlying the role migrants might play as key actors to regenerate derelict parts of cities, first at the economic level, starting from establishing small businesses oriented to their own communities, until they enlarge their scope by creating other businesses towards the wider urban context. Two crucial qualities are pointed here, in addition to the citizens' involvement and to the governance mechanisms: flexibility and reversibility. The eight cases analysed are all located in Europe and mostly targeting a specific and far from consensually considered group of migrants (see UNHCR) – refugees seeking for asylum – in different kinds of build contexts, from infill existing buildings to the use of vacant land, and with different landownership status, from the intervention in private land to the use public soil, in order to avoid the most common modernist alternative of "planned ghettos". Pesce and Bagaini propose three types of architectural adaptive strategies as responses to new housing needs: temporary flexible replies for emergency accommodation; "opportunistic" occupations of buildings and public spaces – taking the inspiration from the word «parasite», one of the initiatives' acronyms analysed by the authors; and the mixture of fixed structures and flexible spatial subdivisions as a so-called open building approach. An additional feature presented in this paper, is the fact that international experiences are, at the end, locally influenced, with each society taking stock of their experiences in other contexts (such as co-housing in the Netherlands influencing the Dutch examples in this paper), as an inspiration for a flexible habitat, as the base for a more democratic and sustainable city.

The paper from Duygu Okumuş, with the title "Seasonality and out-migration of residents: the case of Bozcaada, Turkey" addresses the transition between economies - from agriculture to tourism-related activities - in a not anymore so remote part of Turkey, the island of Bozcaada. While the improvement of accessibilities during the last decades made the territory more attractive for Turkish middle class, seeking for new residential locations, the coincident tourism attractiveness of the island, contribute together to the change of residential patterns, with related impact in social and cultural life of the few remaining non-seasonal ancient residents. The thorough data collection presented by Okumus, through interviews to the different types of residents, allowed the author to raise a discussion in relation with the impacts of the process on education, health, cost of living and new social trends – these, which are seen by some of the interviewees with resignation. By reflecting on these aspects, the author questions the recurrent dominant narrative of the integration between local economy growth and local development, taking this (un)successful case of change from an agricultural economy to a tourism economy, both relying in local resources with totally different societal outcomes. The case of Bozcaada is eloquent on showing how the rapid transition from the almost extinguished wine culture to the almost omnipresent mass tourism, can erode social-cultural local life. Local tourism, concludes the author, is seen as a threat to local services, by interrupting socio-cultural life, due to its seasonal characteristics.

The paper from Viktorija Prilenska – "Participation Game: Reflections on the iterative design process" explores two cases in different geographic contexts, Tallinn and Riga, in which serious games were applied for the discussion of urban design solutions among university students and high school pupils. The goals of the game were, as the author refers, "twofold,

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on the one hand, to familiarize the audience with public hearings of urban design related projects, and, on the other hand, to find out how the changes in the setup of the game influence the player experience and the outcomes". Apart from providing a very detailed description of the several steps of the game, also highlights and explores the possibility of adapting the game's format, addressing players' profiles, motivations and reactions, and adjusting the game as it is taking place. In the discussion and conclusions, Prilenska sheds light in a less explored aspect of serious games, which is the one of the desirable outcomes for games' authors, influencing and limiting players' participation. At the end, this is an opportunity to focus, discuss and question serious games as a civic engagement tool and its purposefulness. By focusing on this, the author addresses games as a limitation of opportunities for discussion, shedding light on the threats for inclusiveness brought by this method of participation.

These papers reflect from quite different perspectives on how societal and spatial changes imply different planning and planners' approaches. They also reflect new perspectives on how to grasp opportunities to innovate, from policy making to architecture. In some cases, they show the limitations of some methodologies, pointing the need / the benefit to combine them. These are just some of the many reasons that have turned the editor guest work rewarding, and that will hopefully motivate the academic community's' interest by this new plaNext issue.

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