

Session Geography from Portugal

Unworthy housing in Portugal

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Unworthy housing is one of the main factors that contribute to worsening the living and health conditions of people living in this situation. The concept of the right to decent housing, developed by the UN (2002), includes several dimensions: habitability; guaranteeing access to basic infrastructure and emergency services; legal protection of occupation; housing costs must not jeopardise the satisfaction of other essential family needs; location must guarantee accessibility to employment and essential services; building materials and underlying policies must allow for the expression of identity and cultural diversity. These different dimensions go far beyond the concept of shelter, as they also include the dimension of habitat. In 2007, FEANTSA published ETHOS Light, which aims to be a harmonised definition of homelessness for statistical purposes, considering the following categories: homeless (without shelter of any kind, sleeping on the street); without accommodation (with a place to sleep, but only temporary, in institutions or shelters); living in insecure housing (due to precarious tenancies, evictions, domestic violence) and living in unsuitable housing (in caravans, on camping sites, in squat or unsuitable housing, in extreme overcrowding).

In Portugal, the survey carried out by the IHRU in 2018 considered the following situations to be housing shortages: shanties or precarious constructions; clandestine encampments; campsites; social housing estates run-down; 'urban areas of illegal genesis'; run-down urban neighbourhoods and housing in risk areas. However, it does not include other situations of housing shortage, such as overcrowding, the accommodation inadequacy in relation to the occupant's characteristics (namely people with reduced mobility), and situations of domestic violence, homelessness, among others, included in the aforementioned studies. The documents cited show the persistence and centrality of the issue of decent housing, but also the complex, contextual and evolving nature of the concept. The debate associated with it therefore has a number of challenges. It is against a backdrop of a structural housing crisis, in confluence with new contours emerging from the aftermath of the 2008 crisis and the Covid pandemic, that unworthy housing must be analysed from a relational perspective that crosses the various dimensions of change.

The aim of this communication is to present and discuss a project under development. It analyses a set of indicators (housing and socio-economic) that shape unworthy housing situations and explores a methodology that aims to cross-reference problems associated with unworthy housing with social profiles and social vulnerabilities. The project aims to contribute to public policy models in order to support housing policies anchored in the territory, capable of responding effectively to the challenges faced in different geographical contexts.

References:

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The concept of equity and theories of justice applied to issues related to inequalities in transport and mobility

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Muitos países em todo o mundo comprometeram-se com o Objetivo de Desenvolvimento Sustentável (10) das Nações Unidas que visa alcançar a redução das desigualdades (Randal et al., 2020). Sendo o sistema de transportes um fator importante, pois influencia o bem-estar de todos (Verlinghieriy & Schwanen, 2020) e gera grandes desigualdades (Randal et al., 2020), nos últimos anos aumentaram os estudos e a investigação sobre as questões da justiça e equidade nos transportes e na mobilidade (Pereira et al., 2017; Verlinghieriy & Schwanen, 2020). No entanto, apesar da centralidade destas questões e os avanços conseguidos no planeamento dos transportes, há pouca clareza conceptual sobre o que significa justiça em matéria de transportes (Pereira et al., 2017).

Se por um lado Pereira et al., (2017) afirmam que não existe uma definição única e abrangente de justiça, e inclusive usam os termos equidade e justiça indistintamente, por outro lado, Verlinghieri & Schwanen (2020) defendem que investigadores de diferentes áreas e comunidades têm utilizado os mesmos recursos conceptuais nas tentativas de examinar questões de justiça nos transportes ou na mobilidade.

Através de um estudo teórico de carácter bibliográfico, focado nas publicações científicas dos últimos anos, pretende-se trazer para o debate e reflexão a conceptualização da equidade e das teorias da justiça distributiva, aplicadas às questões das desigualdades nos transportes e na mobilidade.

Referências:

Pereira, R. H. M., Schwanen, T., & Banister, D. (2017). Distributive justice and equity in transportation. *Transport Reviews*, 37(2), 170-191. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/01441647.2016.1257660>