



Housing Sociology and Societal Change New Challenges and New Directions

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The Papers in this Publication arise from the 13th Meeting of W69 held in Warsaw, Poland in September 1995

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Since the Second World War, European housing policy has been dominated by a great optimism, a general faith in the belief that it was possible to ensure good quality housing for the majority of the population. Buried within this objective was also some sense of greater equality in the housing situations of individuals. The societal mechanisms for achieving this objective varied, reflecting larger differences dividing Europe, but the objective was shared.

The year 1989 is often taken to symbolise Eastern Europe's return to the market, the beginning of a process of self conscious societal transformation. But it can also be taken as a moment in western Europe's own "return to the market", perhaps a quieter and less self conscious process. Thus, the main theme in this collection of papers is how the processes of societal change which are characterised as "marketisation" affect the social processes of housing production and distribution in a variety of countries.

These papers also reflect, and reflect on, the role of sociology and sociologists in these processes of change. What characterises all the papers is an assumption that uncovering the specific connections between societal change, specific social processes and the life situations of individuals generates a number of dilemmas for housing sociologists.

This Publication is the result of the 1995 Meeting of W69 in Warsaw. It is fitting, therefore, that the second section of this collection represents the most significant collection of articles on Polish housing available in a single volume in English.

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