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Understanding people-centered planning practice in Europe: an institutionalist comparison between urban development projects in Vienna and Helsingborg

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ABSTRACT

Pursuing people-centered planning practices (PCPs) such as participatory approaches demands a better understanding of how their operationalization relates to contextual structures and conditions in urban governance. By comparing two cases of social sustainability operationalization in Austrian and Swedish urban development projects based on Ostrom's IAD-framework, this article identifies institutions relating to performed people-centered activities. The findings reveal that PCPs do not necessarily benefit from highly formalized rules prescribing specific localized activities. Instead, they are shaped by institutions that (1) position the actors responsible for performing people-centered activities, (2) define strong socially-oriented and innovation-oriented outcomes, and (3) enable funding that upholds long-term public interests within the markets that co-shape the projects.

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1. The situation-dependency impasse of people-centered planning practices

In recent years, the right evaluative direction of urban theory and practice is increasingly being questioned. Dominant economic imperatives are being challenged by scholars arguing to re-envision cities as being places or local economies that should in the first place cater to the equal satisfaction of human needs (see e.g. Cardoso *et al.*, 2021; Franz & Humer, 2021). Subsequently, the local scale is often seen as the proper scale to address people's needs. A growing body of research on local economies, communities, neighborhoods, and grassroots forms of power indicates a 'localist' turn in urban studies (Davoudi & Madanipour, 2015). In European planning, this resonates in localist planning approaches occurring at multiple levels, such as Community-Led Local Development taken up by the EU (Servillo, 2019), neighborhood planning in the UK (Vigar *et al.*, 2017; Wargent & Parker, 2018), and widely-applied participatory approaches by many local governments (Fischer, 2012).

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Urban social sustainability is one of the fields that promote localist planning practices. Often phrased as one of the dimensions of the wider pursuit of ‘sustainable urban development’, social sustainability strives to improve people’s quality of life now and in the future (Chiu, 2003). It encompasses many value-laden and interpretive criteria such as social cohesion, diversity, inclusion, and well-being – making its operationalization in planning practices a complex endeavor. Moreover, while the scholarly focus has evolved from harder themes – such as employment and education – to also softer ones – such as well-being and social cohesion – (Colantonio, 2011; Shirazi & Keivani, 2017), the necessity to include situated conditions that affect human quality of life is increasingly articulated in social sustainability debates (Shirazi & Keivani, 2017; Janssen *et al.*, 2021). Indeed, the extent to which people are able to convert spatial resources such as housing, public spaces, and infrastructure into their personal (urban) capabilities depends on the specific circumstances, preferences, and values belonging to individuals (Janssen & Basta, 2022). Referred to as ‘people-centered planning practices’ (PCPs), this article zooms in on localist planning practices that incorporate those conditions and that perform activities not only focused on improving urban space but particularly on improving human life. Such practices can be recognized in for example placemaking initiatives, social innovations, participatory projects, or neighborhood upgrading programs.

The high dependency of PCPs on specific (individual) situations raises an important methodological question of to what extent they can be steered through urban governance. On the one hand, it is argued that social innovations coming from the ground need to be embedded in wider existing structures in order to sustain them (Bartels, 2020). Particularly under a project-rationale that is currently dominant in European planning, scholars point at wider political-economic and institutional structures that unmistakably influence local projects and practices (Blanco *et al.*, 2014; Parés *et al.*, 2014). On the other hand, it is also argued that ‘globally traveling ideas’ about policies for people-centered practices need to be adapted to contextual conditions (Ahn *et al.*, 2023). Whereas ‘contextual awareness’ is thus called for at both the level of local practices and the level of policy design, studies often remain implicit about what type of contextual conditions exactly need to be taken into account. To avoid ending up in relativist positions that PCPs cannot be planned for because they depend on the situation, further understanding of how they fit in the wider play of public, private, and societal actors prevalent in planning practice is necessary.

Pursuing people-centered planning practices thus demands a better understanding of how structures and conditions in urban governance – i.e. ‘the context’ - relate to their operationalization. This article contributes to this understanding by drawing on Ostrom’s (2009) Institutional Analysis and Design (IAD) framework – thereby connecting to planning scholars who call attention for the invisible structures that underlie the directly observable behavior of actors in governance situations (see Healey, 1998; Moroni, 2010; Sorensen, 2017). These structures can be referred to as institutions, i.e. ‘the prescriptions that humans use to organize all forms of repetitive and structured interactions including those within families, neighborhoods, markets, firms, sports leagues, churches, private associations, and governments at all scales’ (Ostrom, 2005, p. 3). Rooted in an understanding of society in which structures are shaped and reshaped by individual actors and the interactions among them (Giddens, 1984), institutions have a vast potential on explaining relationalist planning practices – going beyond

understanding institutions as merely external conditions that define the contours for planning activities (Salet, 2018).

This article aims to understand from an institutionalist lens how people-centered planning practices take place as social sustainability operationalizations within European urban development projects. Urban development projects (UDPs) are temporarily- and spatially-demarcated situations in which actors collaborate via partnership arrangements for the common goal of urban land transformation through real estate development ventures (Kim, 2022). They are interesting units to observe actor-institution relations because in such projects actors from various planning levels – local, municipal, regional, national – interact. Moreover, in a European context where strategic spatial planning (Albrechts, 2010) is often-adhered in practice, UDPs can be seen as place-based vehicles of governance in which public actors interact, negotiate, and collaborate with market (Gualini & Majoor, 2007; van den Hurk & Tasan-Kok, 2020), and increasingly, societal actors.

The article presents an international case comparison of two people-centered planning practices within European UDPs (i.e. Neighborhood Management in Seestadt in Vienna and a Dialogue Approach in DrottningH in Helsingborg) that aimed to operationalize social sustainability goals. Based on in-depth interviews with involved actors and field visits to the urban areas, the article analyzes how the institutional landscapes of the cases relate to the performed people-centered planning activities. The article is structured as follows. Section 2 provides theoretical background and presents the analytical framework. Section 3 introduces the selected case studies and elaborates on the methods of data collection and analysis. Section 4 presents the empirical findings and Section 5 reflects on them. Last, Section 6 collects the final conclusions.

2. Institutions and people-centered planning practices

Over the recent decades, new institutionalism has increasingly contributed to the explanatory analysis of urban governance and planning practices (Healey, 1998; Sorensen, 2017; Gualini, 2018; Salet, 2018). Healey (1999) refers to Giddens in her definition that institutions are ‘the more enduring features of social life [...] giving “solidity” across time and space’ (Giddens, 1984, p. 24), thereby stressing that institutions are human-made structures that are more or less fixed for a longer period of time. In general, institutional theory aims to understand how specific (individual) behaviors and interactions of actors relate to (social) structures in society (Giddens, 1984; North, 1991; March & Olsen, 2010; Moroni, 2010; Sorensen, 2017; Healey, 2019). While some institutionalists refer to institutions as the structured constraints within which individuals behave as rational actors pursuing their preferences and maximizing their interests (i.e. the game and the rules of the game) (North, 1991), the sociological approach focuses on how institutions are constructed through the social interaction between individuals, and on how institutions accordingly influence individual behavior (Giddens, 1984; Healey, 1999).¹

This article builds on the IAD framework (Ostrom, 1986, 2009; Polski & Ostrom, 1999; Cole & McGinnis, 2017) for the reason that this framework was particularly designed for shedding analytical applications of different institutional scholars under a common language. Ostrom’s work is appreciated for reconstructing institutionalism’s

dominant economic framework in a social and political way in which the individual actor is not only capable of economic rationalization but also driven by values (Salet, 2018). Moreover, Ostrom's understanding of institutions covers a broad range of universal components that structure individual behavior and the outcomes they achieve.

In understanding UDPs as vehicles of governance, the institutionalist lens implies that projects cannot be properly understood if one only focuses on actors and their interaction, i.e. the 'visible game' (Buitelaar, 2019), 'governance episode' (Healey, 2019), or 'action arena' (Ostrom, 2005) – the level that this article will refer to as the 'governance situation'. Planning studies have been applying the IAD framework to explain how these situations are shaped through institutions at place (see e.g. Van den Hurk *et al.*, 2014; van Karnenbeek & Janssen-Jansen, 2018; Wang *et al.*, 2022). While these studies often focus on institutions as *rules*, understood as formal or informal 'physical laws' prescribing what ought to be done or achieved, institutions also manifest themselves as *norms* and *shared strategies* (Ostrom, 2009). These are cultural prescriptions belonging to the community operating in the governance situation. Especially for an ambiguous and value-laden concept such as social sustainability (Janssen *et al.*, 2021), the role of explicit and implicit norms, values, and beliefs in society (March & Olsen, 2010; Salet, 2018; Healey, 2019) should not be underestimated when explaining operational activities. Next to planning rules, it would thus be valuable to understand what other variables condition people-centered practices within urban development projects.

Figure 1 presents an adjusted version of the IAD framework to understand the institutional landscape of PCPs in the empirical context of urban development projects. The figure follows Polski and Ostrom's (1999) analytical understanding of governance situations as consisting of actors, positions, information, control, scope, cost and benefit, and outcomes² (Polski & Ostrom, 1999; Ostrom, 2009). These elements together define the specific situation around an urban development project in which the observed people-centered activities take place. The situations described in Section 4 thus refer to the governance situations around the activities. On the one hand, the governance situation takes shape via individual actor behavior. For example, the scope of the performed activities may result from a decision of a city director in the project. On the other hand, the

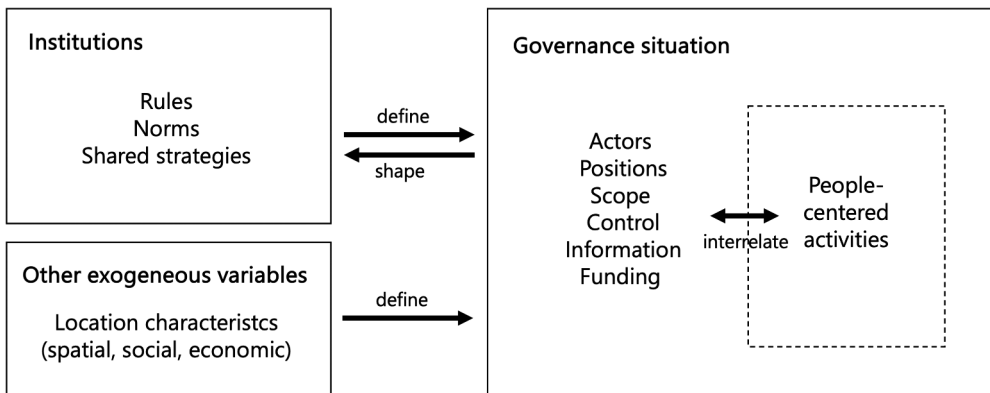


Figure 1. Institutional landscape of people-centered planning practice: analytical framework inspired by the IAD framework (Polski & Ostrom, 1999; Ostrom, 2005).

governance situation is defined through its interrelation with institutions. For example, the scope may also result from legal regulations in the planning context around the specific project.

In the analysis presented in Section 4, institutions are distinguished from non-institutions based on their *repetitive* character – e.g. a rule exclusively designed to steer a specific project is not considered an institution but an individual project decision (Ostrom, 2009). Moreover, the framework includes spatial, social, and economic location characteristics as other non-institutional external ('exogenous' (Ostrom, 2009)) variables that may define governance situations. Although Ostrom acknowledges that governance situations and institutions mutually influence each other, the purpose of this paper's analysis is to 'go backward' (Polski & Ostrom, 1999) and to identify which institutions define governance situations. How the framework is used in the case analysis will be elaborated on in the following.

3. Method

The empirical study aims to identify institutions that explain people-centered activities within urban development projects. Qualitative case-study analysis (Yin, 2009) was considered most suitable to obtain in-depth explanatory knowledge on the complex process of governance. Moreover, as it can be difficult to observe institutions because they are the 'invisible' social constructs embedded in larger systems of society, institutional analysis can be best done through *intertemporal* or *international* comparisons (Buitelaar, 2019). As a result, the study comprehends an international case comparison between the institutional landscapes of two PCPs in two different European countries.

3.1. Case background: two distinct people-centered practices with in European urban development projects

The selected cases are two people-centered practices within the urban development projects Aspern Seestadt in Vienna (Austria) and DrottningH in Helsingborg (Sweden): Neighborhood Management within the former project and a Dialogue Approach in the latter. A first selection criterion was to only include PCPs as local *planning* practices – and not as non-planned practices such as self-organized or grassroots initiatives – to connect to this article's scope as outlined in the introduction. A second criterion was that, although many UDPs might perform people-centered activities to a certain extent (e.g. through participation procedures), the PCPs had to form a substantial part of the UDP. A final criterion was that UDPs were at least partly realized so that the PCPs had been brought into practice.

While these conditions already significantly limited the case options available, it was decided to focus on Northwestern European³ countries with relatively similar governance contexts to increase the likeliness of discovering institutional similarities relating to people-centered practices. Sweden and Austria are both known as having comprehensive-integrated planning systems that 'explicitly seek[s] to provide a measure of horizontal and vertical integration of policies across sectors and jurisdictions' (Nadin & Stead, 2008, p. 39). Moreover, both countries have neo-performative governance systems that adopt binding zoning plans but assign development rights only after project proposals are controlled and approved by public authorities (Berisha *et al.*, 2021). While

Berisha et al. distinguish Austria as ‘development-led’ from Sweden that is ‘state-led’, the particular planning system of Vienna is more state-controlled than Austria in general (Dangschat & Hamedinger, 2009), and Sweden is meanwhile becoming more led through private developers-collaborations (Zakhour & Metzger, 2018). The countries’ welfare systems also show similarities. Although Austria’s corporatist system has different characteristics than Sweden’s socio-democratic system (Nadin & Stead, 2008), the ‘extreme case’ of Vienna’s socio-democratic political stability (Kadi & Suitner, 2019) move the two cases closer to each other. Similar to Sweden’s strong focus on consensus and finding ‘middle-ways’, Pojani and Stead (2018) point out that conflict avoidance and consensus building are important features of Viennese political culture.⁴

After assuring a certain degree of similarity concerning the governance contexts, it was decided to select two people-centered practices that took place within contrasting UDPs (Figure 2). As will be elaborated upon in 3.2, it is particularly this diversity that makes the cases relevant for institutionalist analysis. First, however, the two cases are introduced in more detail.

3.1.1. Neighborhood management in Seestadt

Aspern Seestadt (short: Seestadt) is a brownfield development on the outskirts of Vienna, planned as a new urban district that connects the northeast part to other city districts (Krisch & Suitner, 2020) (Table 1). The City of Vienna allocated the former airfield as an area to facilitate the city’s population growth and to develop a new ‘central business district’ as part of a stronger metropolitan area connected to the nearby city of Bratislava in Slovenia (City of Vienna, 2005, 2014). With the intention to be one of Europe’s largest UDPs, Seestadt is envisioned as an urban neighborhood with a lot of public space that is well-connected to infrastructure and nature (City of Vienna, 2018). As a precondition for the UDP to start in the 2010s, the City of Vienna invested heavily in new infrastructure connecting the area to other parts of the city (Krisch & Suitner, 2020).

Seestadt’s Neighborhood Management (NM), or *Stadtteilmanagement* in German, follows the tradition of ‘gentle urban renewal’– a development approach in Vienna

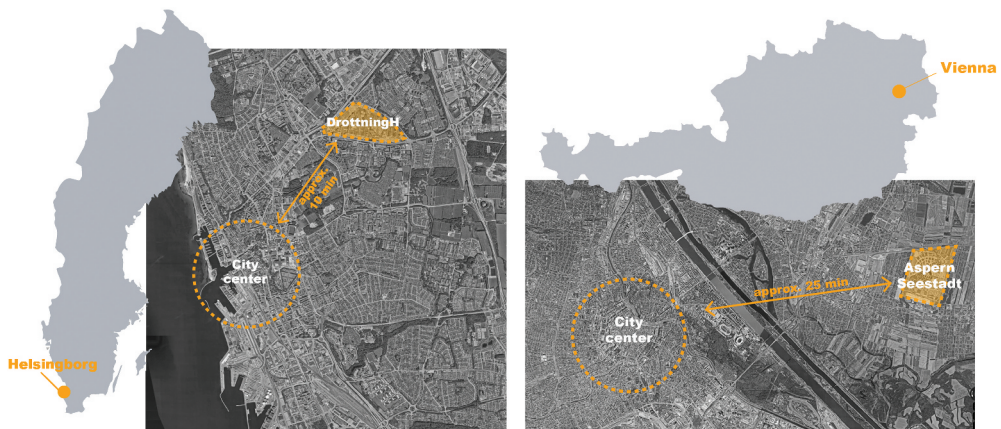


Figure 2. Location of the urban development projects within their cities and countries (images are without scale) [Source: Author].

since the 1970s focused on upgrading neighborhoods through small-scale interventions without replacement of inhabitants, managed through decentralized public administration authorities in local districts (Novy & Hammer, 2007). Also applied as a planning practice of Community-Led Local Development in other countries (Verga, 2017), Neighborhood Management often operates in local offices in neighborhoods (Figure 3). Where professionals intermediate between planning actors at higher public administration levels and residents living in the urban area (Novy & Hammer, 2007; Verga, 2017; Grandel, 2021). In Seestadt, the NM facilitates and initiates various local urban activities and functions as ‘the open ear’ for residents. Examples of the NM’s daily activities are organizing weekly breakfasts, distributing a neighborhood budget of 3,000 euros among projects that residents submit, providing a welcome package to new residents, maintaining a physical meeting space that is available for resident initiatives, coordinating a ‘Regionalforum’ where different UDP stakeholders come together to discuss the project, and supporting small



Figure 3. Office of neighborhood management in Aspern Seestadt [Source: Author].

Table 1. Basic information about the two UDPs in which the people-centered practices took place.

| | Seestadt (Vienna) | DrottningH (Helsingborg) |
|---------------------------|---|--|
| Type | Brownfield; new-built development | Urban regeneration; renovation and densification |
| Size | 240 hectares | 40 hectares |
| Densification | From 0 to 20,000 residents in 2050 | From 1,000 to 2,700 dwellings in 2035 |
| Initiating actor | City of Vienna | Municipal housing company (Helsingborgshem) + City of Helsingborg |
| Main developing actor | Development agency (public-private consortium Wien3420 AG) | DrottningH (project group consisting of City of Helsingborg & Helsingborgshem) |
| Project developing actors | Private developers, housing cooperatives, municipally-owned housing companies | Private developers, municipally-owned housing company |
| Former land owner | City of Vienna | Municipal housing company & City of Helsingborg |
| Duration ^a | 2007–2030 | 2012–2035 |

^aDuration from approval masterplan until intended completion.

companies through a project to motivate residents to buy and consume in Seestadt (Table 2).

3.1.2. Dialogue approach in DrottningH

Opposed to the large-scale tabula rasa in Seestadt, DrottningH is a smaller regeneration project of the neighborhood Drottninghög in Helsingborg (Table 1). As one of the neighborhoods of the Swedish Million Dwellings Program in the 1970s (Hall & Vidén, 2005), Drottninghög today faced issues such as relatively high numbers of criminality, unemployment, and low household incomes. To improve residents' quality of life, the local municipal housing company initiated change and the City of Helsingborg developed a plan to transform the area (City of Helsingborg, 2012). The area's physical transformation consists of renovation of the existing housing stock, densification, and demolition and renewal (City of Helsingborg, 2012, 2018). Private investors were attracted who implemented new housing concepts to diversify the housing stock.

DrottningH's Dialogue Approach refers to two large-scale dialogue projects in which the municipal housing company investigated the needs of their tenants through in-depth interviews. The first was undertaken in 2013 and consisted of approximately 350 interviews (Helsingborgshem, n.d.), where residents were asked about their comfort in their own homes. The second was undertaken in 2020 and 2021 and included 250 interviews, where residents were asked about their wider experiences and preferences in the neighborhood. The Dialogue Approach also refers to multiple subprojects in which residents are involved. These are, among others, a greenhouse that the City of Helsingborg developed and that is maintained by a resident association, a local market venue developed as a career 'stepping stone' for unemployed residents (DoMore Ikea), a Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) project (SafeGrowth) that trains local residents in finding design solutions for the neighborhood, and the citywide H22 exhibition (City of Helsingborg, 2022) where residents were recruited as hosts of the exhibition. DrottningH also included



Figure 4. Activities during H22 exhibition as part of dialogue approach in DrottningH [Source: Author].

Table 2. Main people-centered activities in Seestadt and DrottningH.

| | Neighborhood management in Seestadt | Dialogue approach in DrottningH |
|--|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Observing locally emerging needs of residents and other users | x | x |
| Initiating and facilitating community projects | x | x |
| Facilitating network platforms for project actors | x | x |
| Distributing neighborhood budget among residents | x | |
| Recruiting residents to become part of the urban development project | | x |

a larger employment project (Rekrytera) where the City of Helsingborg opened a recruitment office in Drottninghög to support residents in finding employment (Figure 4 and Table 2).

3.2. Data collection and analysis

Comparing institutional landscapes between different countries comes along with methodological challenges, such as accessing equivalent sorts of information, dealing with different linguistic expressions of similar phenomena, and interpreting practices that are deeply-rooted in the socio-political contexts, language, and models of society (Nadin & Stead, 2013). Nonetheless, it is also argued that wide scopes of analysis are particularly relevant for systemic understandings (Nadin & Stead, 2013), and that – more than merely comparing formal frameworks –, planning cultures and multiple planning scales should explicitly be included in international comparisons (Getimis, 2012). To build a firm informational basis for the international comparison, the following methods were undertaken.

The case-study material comprises planning documents about the two UDPs, 29 semi-structured in-depth interviews with project actors (see interviewee information in Appendix A), and field visits to both project locations between March and July 2022. Since the research was conducted by a single (non-Austrian and non-Swedish) researcher, the field visits took place in sequential order. The first visit to Vienna covered a longer period (six weeks) than the field visit to Helsingborg (two weeks), but the time in Vienna was also spent on specifying the research problem and questions. In Vienna, the researcher resided in Seestadt for two weeks and performed various daily activities such as supermarket visits, informal talks with residents, and a dinner with a collaborative housing group. In Helsingborg, the researcher did not reside in Drottninghög but visited it frequently. As the visit took place during the H22 exhibition and Drottninghög was one of the main exhibition areas, several informal talks could be held on the street with both professionals and residents. Interview participants were selected through a snowballing effect that started from initial contact with the communication department of Wien3420 AG and the University of Vienna for the Aspern Seestadt case, and with the project manager from the City of Helsingborg for the DrottningH case.

Most of the interviews were conducted during the field visits, but some of them were conducted online afterwards. Interviewees were asked about the project's goals for social sustainability, the operational strategies to achieve them, the performance of the people-centered activities, and – most relevant for this paper – their explanations of why it had

succeeded to realize the people-centered activities. In addition, per case three or four residents were interviewed with the purpose to validate the selection of the cases as ‘people-centered practices oriented towards human lives.’ Although some negative or critical perspectives toward the practices came to fore, the development activities being ‘people-centered activities’ was generally confirmed by the interviewed residents (see overview of resident quotes in [Appendix B](#)). All interviews were conducted in English, which was for both the researcher and nearly all interview participants in a non-native language. All interviews were transcribed and analyzed in Atlas.TI.

The analysis first compared the governance situations of the two cases based on information obtained from the planning documents and the interviews. The situations were analyzed following the elements in [Figure 1](#) and led to the findings reported in [Section 4.1](#). The second part of the analysis focused on identifying institutions that affected these governance situations. This was done as follows. First, specific quotes of the interview transcripts were coded (in-vivo) in which interviewees gave explanations of why the people-centered activities had taken place within the projects. These inductively-derived quotes were grouped based on their content and led to a set of 16 explanatory variables in Aspern Seestadt and 18 in DrottningH. The overview of these quotes per variable is published in the 4TU.ResearchData repository that can be accessed via the DOI link provided at the start of this article. Subsequently, it was indicated per variable 1) which element of the governance situation it affected (actors, position, control, information, scope, or funding), and 2) whether the variable could be seen as an institution, i.e. as a rule, norm, or shared strategy,⁵ or whether it was a one-off project decision or a location characteristic. The findings of this analysis are presented and explained in 4.2.

4. Findings: institutionalist analysis of people-centered practices in urban development projects

This section presents the results of the case comparison. [Section 4.1](#) first reports on the similarities and differences between the two governance situations by describing the main actors and their positions, the control over and scope of the people-centered activities, information exchange, and funding arrangements. Subsequently, [Section 4.2](#) identifies a set of institutions that both cases had in common and that played a significant role in defining the people-centered activities.

4.1. Governance situations of people-centered activities

The governance situations of the two cases show a similarity in terms of the positions of the actors who perform the people-centered activities. In both cases, the actors fulfill intermediary positions between residents and their commissioners by channeling information from one to another. They also fulfill central positions in networks of different project actors, for example, NGOs, schools, companies, and other societal partners. In both cases, this network position became more important throughout the project: the Neighborhood Management in Seestadt – initially dominated by team members with spatial planning profiles – diversified with social workers and communication specialists, and actors of the Dialogue Approach in DrottningH increasingly considered it important to collaborate with NGOs and safety- and community development experts.

In many other respects, however, the two governance situations are different. In Seestadt, the Neighborhood Management is a non-profit organization commissioned by the project's development agency and the City of Vienna. It is exclusively dedicated to activities in Seestadt and has been operating since 2014 (Hinterkörner *et al.*, 2014) – the same year that the first residents arrived in the area. Because members of the NM are selected through a public competition and contracted for a temporary period of 3–6 years, the NM's team members are dynamic throughout the duration of the UDP. At the time when this research was conducted, the consortium consisted of a private landscape design office and an aid organization that together employ nine professionals. The contract agreement between this NM with their commissioners enclosed the condition that the team had to consist of at least three team members trained in social work, technical planning, and public relations (City of Vienna MA25, 2019c).

Opposed to the formally contracted organization in Seestadt, the Dialogue Approach of DrottningH resembles a looser collective of professionals operating the PCP. Although the two main dialogue projects in DrottningH were performed by the municipal housing company, the wider set of people-centered activities that form the Dialogue Approach is performed by all members of the project team operating the UDP. This group consists of civil servants representing several municipal departments – among which the planning, culture, employment, and safety department –, and the municipal housing company.

Table 3. Governance situations of the two people-centered activities in the two cases.

| | | Neighborhood management in Seestadt | Dialogue approach in DrottningH |
|-------------|---|---|---|
| Actors | Organization operating the PCP activities | Non-profit consortium consisting of a private landscape consultant and aid organization | Urban development project team |
| | Members operating the PCP activities | Architects, planners, social workers | Civil servants from planning, employment, culture, safety departments; civil servants from municipal housing organization; action-researchers |
| Position | Duration of participation | 3–6 years per phase (multiple phases possible) | As long as the project takes (intended period of 25 years) |
| | Commissioner | Development agency + City of Vienna | City of Helsingborg + Helsingborgshem |
| Information | Collaborating actors | Companies, residents, NGOs, public service organizations, research institutes | Companies, residents, NGOs, public service organizations, research institutes |
| | Resident-developer information exchange | Via daily contact with development agency and an office centrally located in the neighborhood | Via dialogue projects and offices located in the neighborhood |
| Scope | Interdisciplinary information exchange | Via periodic meetings with other UDP actors | Via biweekly meetings with all UDP actors and via thematic subgroups |
| | Control | Defined via task description | Undefined |
| Funding | Appointment of position | External (via public competition) | Internal |
| | Evaluation of performance | Formal (through funding and contract) | Informal |
| Funding | Position towards commissioner | Semi-dependent | Semi-dependent |
| | Funding arrangement | Periodic (annual) | Project-based |
| | Funding provider | Development agency + City of Vienna | City of Helsingborg |

Similar to the UDP's total duration, actors are commissioned to perform the Dialogue Approach for a period of 25 years (Table 3).

The different organizations of actors relate to different forms of control, scope, and funding in the governance situations. In Seestadt, the scope of the people-centered activities is defined through a detailed task description enclosed with the contracting of the Neighbourhood Management (City of Vienna MA 25, 2019a). Accordingly, the NM receives yearly budgets from its commissioners (Hinterkörner *et al.*, 2014), reports about its performance of last year, and submits proposals for next year's activities (City of Vienna MA 25, 2019b). Although the NM is thus formally appointed as an autonomous organization exclusively responsible for performing the people-centered activities, the formal way of appointment evaluation, and funding create a semi-dependency of the NM to its commissioners.

In DrottningH, there is no formal contracting procedure that exercises control over the actors. Because both actors and commissioners belong to the City of Helsingborg, however, a self-evident dependency occurs between them. It was observed, however, that team members were relatively independent in making decisions and that the commissioners did not exercise much control over the people-centered activities performed – e.g. there was no detailed task description issued such as in Seestadt. Instead, the commissioners defined the scope of the intended people-centered outcomes through outspoken principles through a political decision at the beginning of the project (City of Helsingborg, 2011). The decision that Drottninghög's social improvement weights equally important as physical improvement became an important precept for justifying the activities of the Dialogue Approach. Different from Seestadt, the activities are funded through project-based finance composed of different regular budgets of the municipal departments and municipal housing company.

4.2. Institutions of people-centered activities

Although the governance situations in Seestadt and DrottningH are thus organized differently, the wider institutional landscapes of the people-centered activities show some remarkable commonalities. Tables 4 (a–c) present explanatory variables affecting different elements of the governance situations (i.e. actors, position, control, scope, information, and funding). The tables also reveal which of these variables can be identified as institutions (i.e. rules, norms, or shared strategies) and which ones are project decisions or location characteristics. Comparing the institutional landscapes of the two cases leads to the following insights about institutions shaping people-centered planning practices.

4.2.1. Clear positioning of people-centered actors

First, the people-centered activities in both cases were affected by institutions defining the *actors* responsible for these activities and their respective *positions* in the governance situations (Table 4 (a)). In Seestadt, the processes of contracting, evaluating, and funding the NM in Seestadt followed existing processes via the so-called *Gebietsbetreuungen Stadterneuerung* in Vienna. Coordinated via specific support group at the City of

Vienna, appointing NM teams via public tenders and issuing contracts for 3–6 years has been common in Vienna since 1999 (Rechnungshof, 2013). Although this thus shows that neighborhood management is an institutionalized practice in Vienna, it should be noted that Seestadt’s NM was also influenced by individual project decisions. Namely, different from other Neighborhood Managements that are completely publicly-commissioned organizations and operate in already-existing neighborhoods, Seestadt’s NM is specifically dedicated to the urban development project and commissioned by both the City of Vienna and Seestadt’s development agency (City of Vienna MA 25, 2019b).

Although the position of actors in DrottningH’s was not as formally institutionalized as in Seestadt, an underlying norm played an important role in defining actors responsible for people-centered activities. On the first sight, the Dialogue Approach can be explained by the project manager’s decision to establish an intra-departmental project team, and the political decision to extensively involve residents and to have a ‘slow’ duration of 25 years (see Table 4 (a)). Although these decisions had a strong impact on DrottningH’s governance situation, they are not identified as institutions because they lack repetitive characters. Yet, from the side of the municipal housing company, it became clear that the institutions of Helsingborg *did* in fact define roles for people-centered activities: ‘When it comes to those decisions difficult to argue for, like putting money into dialogue or putting money into social developments, there are examples in Sweden where that’s not what you expect of your housing company. . . . [In Helsingborg], we are *expected* to do this, no one else is doing it so, and it’s on us to do it’ (interviewee 16).

Table 4. (a) Variables affecting actors, positions, and control in Seestadt and DrottningH.

| Aspern Seestadt | | |
|--|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| Explanatory variable | Affected governance element | Institution? |
| Vienna has a tradition of already-existing <i>Gebietsbetreuungen Stadterneuerung</i> | Actors, position | Yes, rule |
| The social department (MA25) of the City of Vienna has the capacity to commission, coordinate and evaluate <i>Gebietsbetreuungen Stadterneuerung</i> | Actors, control | Yes, rule |
| Selecting participants of Neighborhood Management through a public competition is common in Vienna | Actors, control | Yes, rule |
| DrottningH | | |
| Explanatory variable | Affected governance element | Institution? |
| In Helsingborg, it is expected from the municipal housing company to do something extra for social development | Position | Yes, norm |
| The project is led by an intra-departmental project team in which members prioritize DrottningH over their regular work | Actors, position | No, project decision |
| The extensive involvement of residents in DrottningH is defined as a political decision | Actors, position | No, project decision |
| The urban development project has a ‘slow’ duration of at least 25 years | Position | No, project decision |

4.2.2. *Strong scope-definition through norms and shared strategies*

Second, norms and shared strategies in both cases strongly defined the *scopes* of people-centered activities (Table 4 (b)). In Seestadt, the NM benefitted from the situation that social sustainability formed a basic concept in Viennese planning. As much described in the literature, local politics and urban development in Vienna are strongly influenced by ‘Red Vienna’ - a period between 1919–1934 with strong social reforms oriented at improving the living conditions of the Viennese working class (Suitner, 2020). To illustrate, social sustainability is one of the four criteria in housing competitions in Vienna (Paidakaki & Lang, 2021). A similar commitment to social values was observed in the planning ideology in Helsingborg. Although Helsingborg was not governed by a sociodemocratic but by a right-conservative party, it became clear from the interviewees that DrottningH’s social principles were politically ‘stable’ and that project actors believed that they would be able to survive changes in Helsingborg’s political leadership – ‘the project is probably purple enough to feed both parties’ (interviewee 16). Moreover, DrottningH also attracted private developers who were driven by social values – as they explained that purely economically spoken, the area was not that interesting for them yet.

Not only did social values serve as ethical principles for the operationalization of local activities, they also formed beliefs among actors about what is needed for well-functioning urban areas. In DrottningH for example, interviewees explained how most actors agreed that the transformation of an area like Drottninghög would simply not succeed without extensively involving citizens. Similarly, interviewees explained the strongly-controlled NM as a form that Vienna *needs* to facilitate resident initiatives – ‘they don’t come bottom-up’ (interviewee 25). Such beliefs about what is needed to achieve the right outcomes may be deeply rooted in local planning cultures. In Vienna for example, some interviewees linked the formally-institutionalized form of Neighborhood Management to Austria’s hierarchical emperor history where it is expected from a state to take good care of its citizens. These tendencies are also reported in planning literature: ‘The Social Democrats [in Vienna] are avoiding more open planning procedures and the unlocking the system to allow participation of more actors, as this could mean that they would partially lose control over the development of the city’ (Dangschat & Hamedinger, 2009, p. 110).

Next to social values defining people-centered outcomes, it was remarkable that the value of ‘innovation’ in both cases played an important role for the people-centered practices to take place. Embedded in Vienna’s Smart City Strategy, Seestadt is seen as a ‘front-running project’ in Vienna’s wider urban discourse (City of Vienna, 2022; Wien 3420 aspern Development AG, n.d.) and interviewees explained how they saw the NM as one of the innovations fitting in this conception. In DrottningH, the City of Helsingborg is known for having a strong drive for innovation and city directors encouraged their administrative staff to experiment and ‘to make mistakes’ (interviewee 8). Altogether, it is plausible that this framing bolstered the belief that ‘we don’t need to measure everything’ (interviewee 8), and thus helped project actors in justifying their unprecedented activities aimed at social improvement.

Table 4. (b) Variables explaining scope, control, and information in Seestadt and DrottningH.

| Aspern Seestadt | | |
|--|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Explanatory variable | Affected governance element | Institution? |
| The Neighborhood Management acts according to a task description that it agreed on with its commissioners | Scope, control | Yes, rule |
| Social sustainability is a basic concept in Viennese urban planning, e.g. it is one of the four criteria of housing competitions | Scope | Yes, norm |
| Vienna's socio-democratic tradition is understood as that 'the state needs to take care of the residents' and not leave it to the market or residents themselves | Scope | Yes, norm |
| Seestadt is seen by its planners and developers as an urban laboratory for innovation and learning | Scope | Yes, shared strategy |
| Vienna has had a stable socio-democratic political climate for almost 100 years ('Red Vienna') | Scope | Yes, shared strategy |
| Seestadt's developers and planners believed that something like the Neighborhood Management was needed for the project to succeed | Scope | Yes, shared strategy |
| The Neighborhood Management is seen as one of the operational strategies for social sustainability in Seestadt | Scope | No, project decision |
| The Neighborhood Management in Seestadt is seen as the communication channel between the developer's agency and residents | Information | No, project decision |
| Seestadt has a large scale and a lot of political commitment | Scope | No, location characteristic |
| Seestadt is located in an isolated area of Vienna | Scope | No, location characteristic |
| DrottningH | | |
| Explanatory variable | Affected governance element | Institution? |
| Politicians in Helsingborg were consensually convinced that it would be the wrong thing not to involve residents | Scope | Yes, norm |
| Some Swedish private investors find it important to invest in socially demanding areas | Scope | Yes, norm |
| DrottningH's planners and developers believed that developing socially challenging areas is not possible without engaging residents | Scope | Yes, shared strategy |
| After some years of development, planners and developers realized that DrottningH's social development should get more attention | Scope | Yes, shared strategy |
| The City of Helsingborg has an 'innovation culture' that encourages project employees to experiment and make mistakes | Scope, control | Yes, shared strategy |
| DrottningH's ambition for 50% social development and 50% physical development is defined in a political decision | Scope | No, project decision |
| The Dialogue Approach is seen as one of DrottningH's operational strategies to improve people's quality of life in the area | Scope | No, project decision |
| The City of Helsingborg wanted to show through DrottningH that it cares about all its citizens | Scope | No, project decision |
| DrottningH's project leader insisted on biweekly meetings between all project team members to encourage integral solutions | Information | No, project decision |
| Drottninghög is developed by the owners of the land | Control | No, location characteristic |
| Drottninghög is considered the socially weakest area in Helsingborg | Scope | No, location characteristic |

4.2.3. Funding for public-interest investments

Third, institutions enabling funding for long-term public interests were observed in both cases (Table 4 (c)). In Seestadt, the NM's funding traces back to a complex arrangement in which public and private ownership and funding intertwine.⁶ This complexity is not uncommon in Vienna: Leixnering *et al.* (2020) describe how the

many privatized publicly-owned companies serving Vienna's public administration act independently, yet still strongly publicly-coordinated through 'hidden' structural mechanisms in the background. Indeed, interviewees explain that the public-private development partnership had the advantage that the yields generated – that were generous because of the pressing housing market⁷ - (partly) stayed with an actor with public interests.

In Drottninghög, the majority of the project location's land was owned by the municipal housing company⁸ which gave them the opportunity to act as a main developing actor. In Sweden, municipal housing companies are non-profit organizations acting under limited liability, yet and that are concerned with public interests. Because they offer housing to everyone and because they are almost entirely owned by municipalities (Hedman, 2008), it is described that throughout history 'Swedish municipal housing has been actively used as a political instrument in a number of varied situations where municipalities and the state have viewed the market as an insufficient supplier' (Hedman, 2008, p. 28). In recent decades, some of them actively started improving the living conditions in deprived housing areas from the Million Dwellings Program – such as Drottninghög – in which continuity, long-term views, and participation of residents are mentioned as basic principles (Hedman, 2008). From the interviews, it became clear that the municipal housing company was able to accept short-term losses that will be compensated with long-term yield: 'You can say in short terms other neighborhoods are paying for Drottninghög... but having loans on Drottninghög that look 10 years ahead we will have made a profit' (interviewee 16).

Table 4. (c) Variables affecting actors, positions, and control in Seestadt and DrottningH.

| Aspern Seestadt | | |
|---|-----------------------------|--|
| Explanatory variable | Affected governance element | Institution? |
| The Neighborhood Management is generously funded (compared to other <i>Gebietsbetreuungen</i> in Vienna) as it receives funding from both the City of Vienna and the development agency | Funding | Partly rule and partly project decision |
| Seestadt is developed on land that is owned by the City of Vienna, for which non-monetary created money can be 'captured' | Funding, control | Partly rule and partly location characteristic |
| Seestadt is located at a brownfield location in a pressing housing market, for which the value potential is high | Funding | No, location characteristic |
| DrottningH | | |
| Explanatory variable | Affected governance element | Institution? |
| The City of Helsingborg's departments prioritize their regular budgets for DrottningH | Funding | Yes, rule |
| The municipal housing company is able to accept short-term losses for long-term benefits | Funding | Yes, rule |
| Drottninghög had low property values for which the potential value creation is high | Funding | No, location characteristic |

4.2.4. Influence of location characteristics

Finally, it should be mentioned how non-institutional location characteristics played a role in the people-centered practices. In Drottninghög, interviewees explained how the economic value potential for the municipal housing company in Drottninghög was higher than in other areas because the area's quality could improve much, making it a 'strategic location' to develop (Table 4 (c)). Similarly, Seestadt's economic value potential was described as 'sky-rocketing' (interviewee 28) because new real estate is developed on a large brownfield site in times of a booming Viennese housing market. In both cases, the UDPs were seen as municipal showcase projects and received a lot of media attention. Combined with the project location's spatial characteristics, these economic and social features of the project locations explained why the people-centered activities were performed *here* and not (yet) elsewhere. For example, the large scale of Seestadt and the location at a distance from the city center explained why the developers were willing to do everything they could to make the project a success – the NM was also seen as a marketing tool to create a positive image of the project (Table 4 (b)). In Drottninghög, the relatively small size of the area explains why this area was selected and not surrounding neighborhoods with similar social issues: 'It's a very powerful thing for the whole city to go forward in a kind of small area of the city' (interviewee 2).

5. Discussion: an institutionalist understanding of people-centered planning

Altogether, the empirical analysis identified three types of institutions that affected people-centered activities within the two urban development projects in Vienna and Helsingborg. These concern institutions that (1) position the actors responsible for performing people-centered activities clearly, (2) define strong socially-oriented and innovation-oriented scopes of these activities, and (3) enable funding that upholds long-term public interests within the markets that co-shape the projects. These findings allow reasoning on the institutionalist understanding of people-centered planning in a more general way.

As articulated in the theoretical section of this article, institutionalist analysis underscores the relational nature of how actors operate in planning practices (Healey, 1999; Salet, 2018). As humans are reflective beings able to learn and able to adapt to new situations (Salet, 2018), individual decisions are often not 'free' but result from social structures existing around them. By empirically pointing out these structures, the findings tell us something about the role that institutions play in people-centered planning. The three identified institutions define the 'who' (i.e. the responsible actors responsible), the 'what' (the scope of the intended outcomes), and the 'through what resources' (i.e. funding for public interest) of the people-centered activities, yet not the concrete 'how' (i.e. a set of concrete operational interventions) – this was decided on more spontaneously by actors operating in the project. These insights help to specify characteristics of the actor-structure relationship in people-centered planning. They emphasize that PCPs, on the one hand, thrive through an extent of operational freedom for project actors to adapt their activities according to the locality of a place. They also suggest that, on the

other hand, PCPs are not likely to take place as long as institutional conditions on responsible actors, strong scope of outcomes, and funding for public interest, fail to exist.

Using Salet's (2018) words, institutions function as 'critical feedback' for individual actors: what actions may be expected from you; which public norms do you adhere to? The empirical findings underscore this function in PCPs as operational strategies of social sustainability policy goals. As social sustainability is a highly value-laden and interpretive concept, operationalizing it in urban development projects implies that its general meaning needs to be specified in specific situations (Shirazi & Keivani, 2017). During the operationalization process, therefore, planning and developing actors are either explicitly or implicitly faced with decisions on what interventions are perceived most valuable to people affected by the project. The findings indicate how project actors justify such decisions by adhering to collective norms and strategies at various levels: such as in planning culture (e.g. Helsingborg's 'innovation-oriented' public administration culture), urban policy (e.g. social sustainability as a one of the four criteria for housing competitions in Vienna) or national political systems (e.g. Austria's perceived tradition that 'the state takes care of its citizens'). In other words, the study implies that people-centered planning involves – next to the search to adapt activities to local situation – a search of project actors for ethically 'the right' - or the 'appropriate' thing (March & Olsen, 2011) – to do for people affected by the urban development projects.

This search (or perhaps: struggle) of project actors to conform localized activities with wider public norms touches upon the transformative nature of institutions. As many institutionalists scholars agree upon, institutions are not 'external forces' but are actively maintained or transformed by the social life and behavior of individual actors (Healey, 1999; Ostrom, 2009; Salet, 2018). Since in UDPs various actors deliberate, collaborate, and negotiate for a long period (often ten to twenty years), UDPs are situations where new norms can emerge or where existing institutions can change. For example, interviewees in Seestadt explained how the project also served as a way to develop new principles for planning practice in Vienna. In DrottningH, it became clear how the distinction between institutions and project decisions can blur in practice. Interview participants for example dissented whether the 'innovation-oriented culture' of the City of Helsingborg was a general characteristic of the local planning culture or whether it was something that had emerged from the project itself. These mutual dynamics between project actors and wider-embedded structures prove that people-centered planning practice is a localist, yet deeply relational practice. As pointed out by Davoudi and Mandanipour (2015), it would be incorrect to see localism as either 'a decentralization process from above' or a 'fight for autonomy from below'. Instead, the findings of this study point out how people-centered planning interweaves regulations, values, norms, traditions, and expectations at various planning and societal levels with the localities of a specific place. The study also proves that institutionalist analysis helps to unravel this complexity.

The aim of this study was to identify institutions of people-centered practices in an inventorying way. Although the findings show the empowering potential of institutions (Lowndes & Roberts, 2013) to voice the needs of residents within urban development projects, this paper is not meant as an evaluation of the inclusive character of the projects. The findings of this paper should neither be seen as complete descriptions of the institutional landscapes in Vienna and Helsingborg, but instead, as a contribution to a better understanding of the governance of social sustainability in planning practice.

6. Conclusion

This paper was motivated by the need for a better understanding of the contextual embeddedness of localist planning practice. Via an institutionalist-comparative analysis based on Ostrom's (2009) IAD-framework, this paper identified a set of institutions that explain why the Neighborhood Management in Aspern Seestadt and Dialogue Approach in DrottningH took place. Theoretically, this article improves our institutional understanding of people-centered planning in two ways. First, the article specifies the type of institutions conditional for people-centered activities to take place in practice: institutions that identify the 'who', 'what' and 'through what funding' of such activities, but that leave open the specific 'how'. Second, the article clarifies the relational nature of people-centered planning within urban development projects. While it can be concluded that the specific actors, activities and interactions within urban development projects depend on locality, it is also true that these activities are shaped by and reshaped by broader conditions deeply embedded in the (planning) cultures, systems and traditions at play at the urban, regional or even national level. The way that daily interactions in a local area come together with various structures connected to that place improves our understanding of why localist planning practice may occur at one place, yet not at the other. In other words, for understanding how people-centered planning takes place in practice it is simply not enough to analyze the 'visible' game that actors play in projects; it is needed to understand how underpinning institutional landscapes - including implicit values, norms and beliefs - shape these practices.

The exploratively identified institutions in this study invite for further research into the institutional design of people-centered planning, for example by deeper analyzing planning cultures, governance capacities, political economies, or property rights in relation to empirically observed people-centered planning practices. Future international comparisons could also include a wider diversity of planning and governance systems, such as countries with conformative planning models or Anglo-Saxon welfare states, to investigate if similar institutions are also relevant in very different planning contexts. After all, a richer base of information on the commonalities and differences between different institutional landscapes will contribute to a better understanding of how localist planning practices can be more generally steered – without omitting their ability to adapt to local situations.

Notes

1. See Sorensen (2017) for an overview of rational-choice institutionalism, historical institutionalism and sociological institutionalism, or Lowndes and Roberts (2013) for an overview of 'first, second, and third phase' institutionalists.
2. Since the cases will be selected based on their outcomes (i.e. performed people-centered activities, see section 3), *outcomes* is left out as a governance element in Figure 1.
3. Although Austria is geographically located in central Europe, its history as the Western part of the Iron Curtain and its orientation to Germanic culture give reason to categorize Austria as Northwestern Europe (following Knieling & Othengrafen, 2009)
4. Although they also note that Austria's strong influence of 'clientelism' remains a barrier in developing real participatory innovations.
5. In Ostrom's (2009) ADICO framework, rules distinguish from other institutions because they include a consequence if the prescription is not followed ('Or else'). Norms distinguish

from shared strategies based on their deontic character – i.e. they typically include a notion of ‘must or ‘must not’.

6. The land of the former airfield was publicly owned by the Vienna Business Agency and BIG (a national real estate company). They founded the public-private development agency Wien3420 AG, where they formed a consortium together with the private organization GELUP (i.e. a subsidiary organization of three companies, of which some of them are publicly owned). Subsequently, the Neighborhood Management was also both publicly and privately (through the public-private development agency) funded.
7. An audit in 2013 reports that GELUP already earned back 74% of its purchase price with selling 56% of the land.
8. Remaining parts were owned by the City of Helsingborg.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Interview participants

| Inter- viewee no. | Case | Organization | Role in urban development project ^a |
|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1 | DrottningH | City of Helsingborg | Project manager |
| 2 | DrottningH | City of Helsingborg | Strategic developer labor market |
| 3 | DrottningH | Helsingborgshem | Area developer performing dialogue projects |
| 4 | DrottningH | City of Helsingborg | Spatial planning architect |
| 5 | DrottningH | | Resident |
| 6 | DrottningH | – | Resident |
| 7 | DrottningH | – | Resident |
| 8 | DrottningH | City of Helsingborg | Former project manager |
| 9 | DrottningH | City of Helsingborg | City director |
| 10 | DrottningH | Ikea Do More | Director Do More |
| 11 | DrottningH | – | Resident |
| 12 | DrottningH | City of Helsingborg | Chairman of the board of urban planning, deputy mayor |
| 13 | DrottningH | City of Helsingborg | Security strategist |
| 14 | DrottningH | Riksbyggen | Area manager |
| 15 | DrottningH | Tornet | Project manager |
| 16 | DrottningH | Helsingborgshem | Assistant project manager |
| 17 | Aspern Seestadt | IBA (formerly Wien 3420 AG) | Lead coordinator IBA, former project manager, resident |
| 18 | Aspern Seestadt | PlanSinn/Stadtteilmanagement | Deputy head |
| 19 | Aspern Seestadt | City of Vienna | Program manager in Seestadt coordination management |
| 20 | Aspern Seestadt | City of Vienna | Coordinator Gebietsbetreuung Stadtneuerung |
| 21 | Aspern Seestadt | – | Resident |
| 22 | Aspern Seestadt | – | Resident |
| 23 | Aspern Seestadt | University of Vienna | PhD researcher on Aspern Seestadt |
| 24 | Aspern Seestadt | Independent researcher and architect | Member of quality board |
| 25 | Aspern Seestadt | Wien 3420 AG | Planner coordinating Neighborhood Management |
| 26 | Aspern Seestadt | Que[e]rbau | Founder baugruppe, manager neighborhood room |
| 27 | Aspern Seestadt | Que[e]rbau | Founder and architect baugruppe, resident |
| 28 | Aspern Seestadt | Wien 3420 AG | Infocenter |
| 29 | Aspern Seestadt | Urban Innovation Vienna | Senior Expert, Smart City Agency Vienna |

^aAt the time when the research was conducted.

Appendix B

Residents evaluation of people-centered planning practices

Residents evaluation of Dialogue Approach in DrottningH (Helsingborg)

| Inter-viewee no. | Evaluating quote |
|------------------|--|
| 5 | 'Some of them [residents] are like, glad, because, you know, our neighbourhood is getting better, la-la-la. And others are feeling like they're not appreciated for how they were before. [. . .]. But most of them are happy. Most of them are happy' |
| 5 | 'I think there are doing a great job, I really do. [. . .] Because I always see them. They're always in the area, they talk to people, they sit with children, they're always here, they're always here. You always see them. You cannot miss them. You see them.' |
| 6 | 'They could have done it and said "OK, we just need people who are educated, people who are fit for this job." But instead, they chose people who live here, who know about the area. And then they said "Well, we have encourage the people who live here, because it's their project." So, for me it was something which I really appreciate, and I really think it's a good thing.' |
| 6 | 'Some people think it's a negative thing, some people think it's a positive thing. But I think that people who take it as a positive is more.' |
| 7 | 'I think they are excellent. I think so. Helsingborgshem have always had a dialogue with the residents. And that's the most important thing, I think. It's the most important thing to do, and have a communication between Helsingborgshem and the residents. So not, it should not be a dialogue from Helsingborgshem to the residents that say "Now we are going to do this." They have done this: "We are thinking about doing this. What are you thinking?" That's the most important, I think. And they have done that excellent.' |
| 7 | 'The working style is more loosen up.[. . .] you see people are more relaxed now than in the beginning.' SP1: 'How was it in the beginning then?' SP2: 'A little nervous, a little uptight and everything should be perfect. But they realised everything cannot be perfect, you have to take it as it is.' SP1: 'And what is better? The planned version or this loosened. . .' SP2: 'This, this loosened up. Because you get more done when you're not so uptight. You have more ideas when you're loosened up.' |
| 11 | 'The idea behind it is great, I think, to base your decisions on what the residents in the area actually want. [. . .] We've already had a lot of visitors during the expo now that are unhappy with some of the newer elements of the area, mostly the buildings, they're worried about the parking. So it kind of seems like they haven't really taken into account 100% of these dialogues. But I haven't been a part of these dialogues on either side, so I'm not really sure what has been asked for and what has been used, so. . .' |
| 11 | 'I would probably not have the expo at all and try to solve. . . Like, xenophobic or racist tendencies in the job market. Because when it comes to areas like this, a lot of it is filled with minorities, and they have. . . As one myself, I find it a lot harder to find a job than most of my Swedish friends that have Swedish names that you see on their CV. And to fix, or try to help people with addictions, because that's also a big thing in the area, both drug and alcohol addictions. And yeah, just try to focus more on those problems rather than kind of drape them over and show like. . .' |

Residents evaluation of Neighbourhood Management Team within Aspern Seestadt (Vienna)

| Inter-viewee no. | Evaluating quote |
|------------------|---|
| 21 | 'Some of the people in our building have been in touch and participated in some of the things, and that's been really good. [. . .] I mean for me it's just been really busy too that I haven't take part in things.' |
| 22 | 'I think that this is something that the Stadteilmanagement does really well here. That they really want to get people involved. That want to hear the voices of the people living here. [. . .] For example, then at the front of the Wangari-Maathai-Platz. Besides the U-Bahn. That was originally, completely just asphalt. And then there was a lot of dissent. And a lot of, hey, what is this? It was named after the woman who planted trees, the Greenbelt movement. And it's, there's no green life here. There's nothing. And now, with people working hard, it's now, there are trees being planted. And it's, I think, partly due to people saying, hey, we want something different.' |

(Continued)

| Inter-viewee no. | Evaluating quote |
|------------------|---|
| 22 | 'I think they have a difficult job. Because they're trying to gather a very diverse group of people. [...] I think, there are many groups of people living in Seestadt. It's a big enough minority that this language group should be represented. The things shouldn't just only be presented in German, and possibly English. But for example, in Turkish, or in one of the, some of the Baltic languages. Or something like this. To feel more open to people.' |
| 22 | 'Only been there a few times in person. And it's been more in relation to social initiatives that have been there, for example. I think, yeah. It was, for example, Christmas time that they had a collection of where you could buy Advent. Or you could bring your Advent calendars that will then be donated to like a mother and child home. Or these kinds of things that you're showing support to other people. So, for that social aspect of being there. But I've not been in and had a conversation with anybody, about aspects of city planning or anything. Because it's also something that's not a super important theme for me, personally.' |
| 27 | 'I think at the beginning, they were at the same level, and to find out and try out what people need. Maybe because there were just a few people who lived there, that made it easier. And now, it is like on another level. [...] It is more from top to down. In the beginning, it was really to find out what do people need, and then to try to make it in that way. Now, it comes more from "up", they have some ideas and bring it to the people. Then the people can react.' SP2: 'Do you have an example of that?' SP1: 'Maybe this . . . were the jury is. The money for the people. This is now. . . it is like a competition. So the people sit at home, and think about what they can do, because there is some money, and they can get it. This. . . I think this is the wrong side. It is better to let people come and tell them what they need, and then to have the money and find a way to. . . to make it possible.' |