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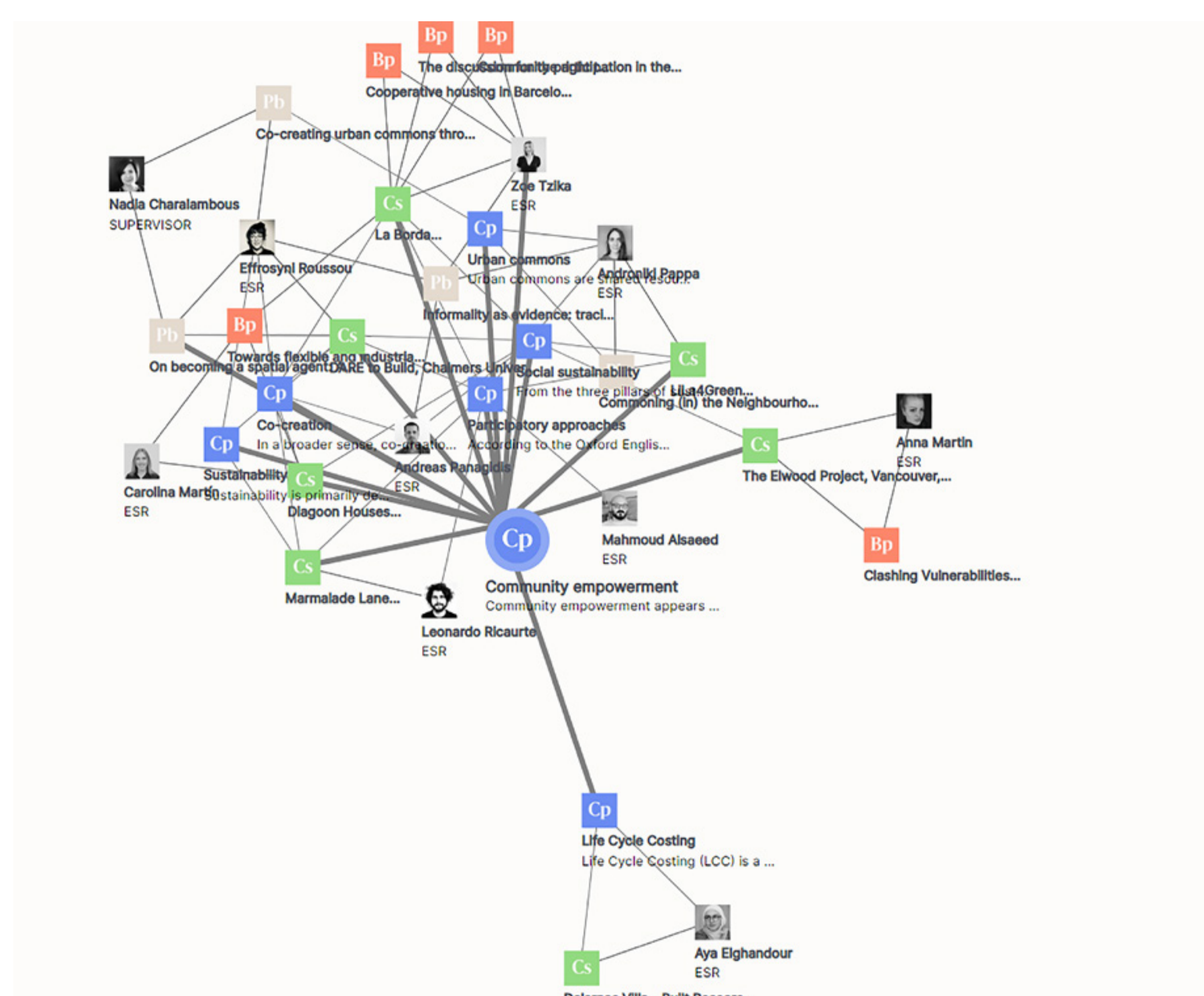
Vocabulary

Community Empowerment



Research area: Community participation

Community empowerment is a crucial aspect of participatory practices in various fields. It refers to a process through which communities gain control over their lives and environments. The term has been used in different ways, including top-down power granted by higher authorities and bottom-up processes where groups develop the capacity to act and acquire power. Neoliberal and social-liberal agendas have appropriated the term, prioritising individual agency and choice. A broader definition sees empowerment as a social process where individuals, communities, and organisations take control of their lives to improve equity and quality of life. It encompasses four types of empowerment: power over, power to, power with, and power within. Community empowerment involves individual self-determination, collective action, and transformative social change. The philosophy of Paulo Freire, an advocate of critical pedagogy, has greatly influenced community empowerment, emphasising dialogue, critical consciousness, and the social analysis of conditions. Empowerment can be both a process and an outcome, leading to increased control, understanding, and involvement. In the housing sector, community empowerment is significant in participatory and community-based approaches such as housing cooperatives and self-developed housing groups. These approaches prioritise co-creation, democratic decision-making, and the development of a collective social identity, contributing to fairer and more sustainable urban development.



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“We are consuming more planets than what we have and this eternal economic growth is incompatible with the limits of the planet. This ecological disaster is too big and complex to be solved by the existing capitalist political and economic structure which are interested in maintaining the current modes of production. Also, the existing ways of making and implementing public policies does not have the capacity to follow and react quickly enough to the rapid ecological deterioration of the planet. Urban commons can provide an alternative to the extractive and exploitative relations of the capitalist economy”.

Doina Petrescu, keynote speech “Commons-based resilience and ecological reparation in social housing states”, RE-DWELL Grenoble conference, 9 December 2022



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“Cooperative, community-led, or collaborative forms of housing appear as collective responses to the way we inhabit. The main values that have been identified as drivers of such initiatives are fostering a communal way of living, seeking affordable solutions through collective action, rethinking the ecological impact of housing, and addressing gender equality and ageing issues.”

Zoe Tzika, blog post on “Cooperative housing in Barcelona”, February 2023

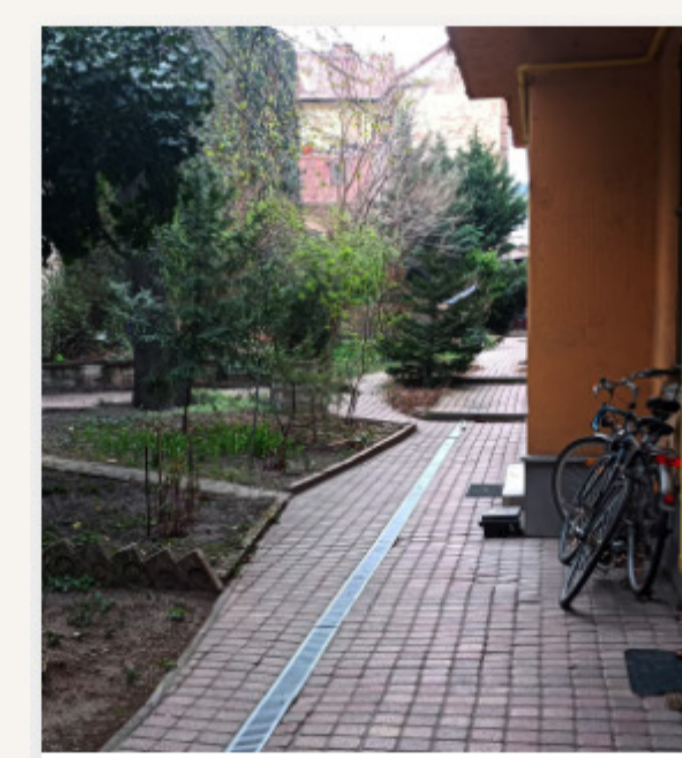


“Cooperative housing initiatives have attracted attention from researchers who investigate their capacity to generate social impact as an alternative housing model. These studies examine various dimensions, such as spatial, social, and neighbourhood aspects. Also, cooperative housing is analysed through the lens of the ethics of care, emphasizing how the collective arrangement of the domestic sphere presents opportunities for diverse forms of social reproduction. Finally, some studies explore its effects on community well-being and its potential to mitigate social fragmentation resulting from the individualization of housing.”

Zoe Tzika, blog post on “The discussion for the right to housing. ENHR, Barcelona 2022”, September 2022

Blog

Network members activities



Community participation in the provision of affordable and sustainable housing | discussing inclusion/exclusion

WORKSHOPS, REFLECTIONS

Posted on 05-04-2022

The third RE-DWELL network-wide activity took place in Budapest, at the Centre for Social Science...

Author: Z.Tzika (ESR10)

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ESR II

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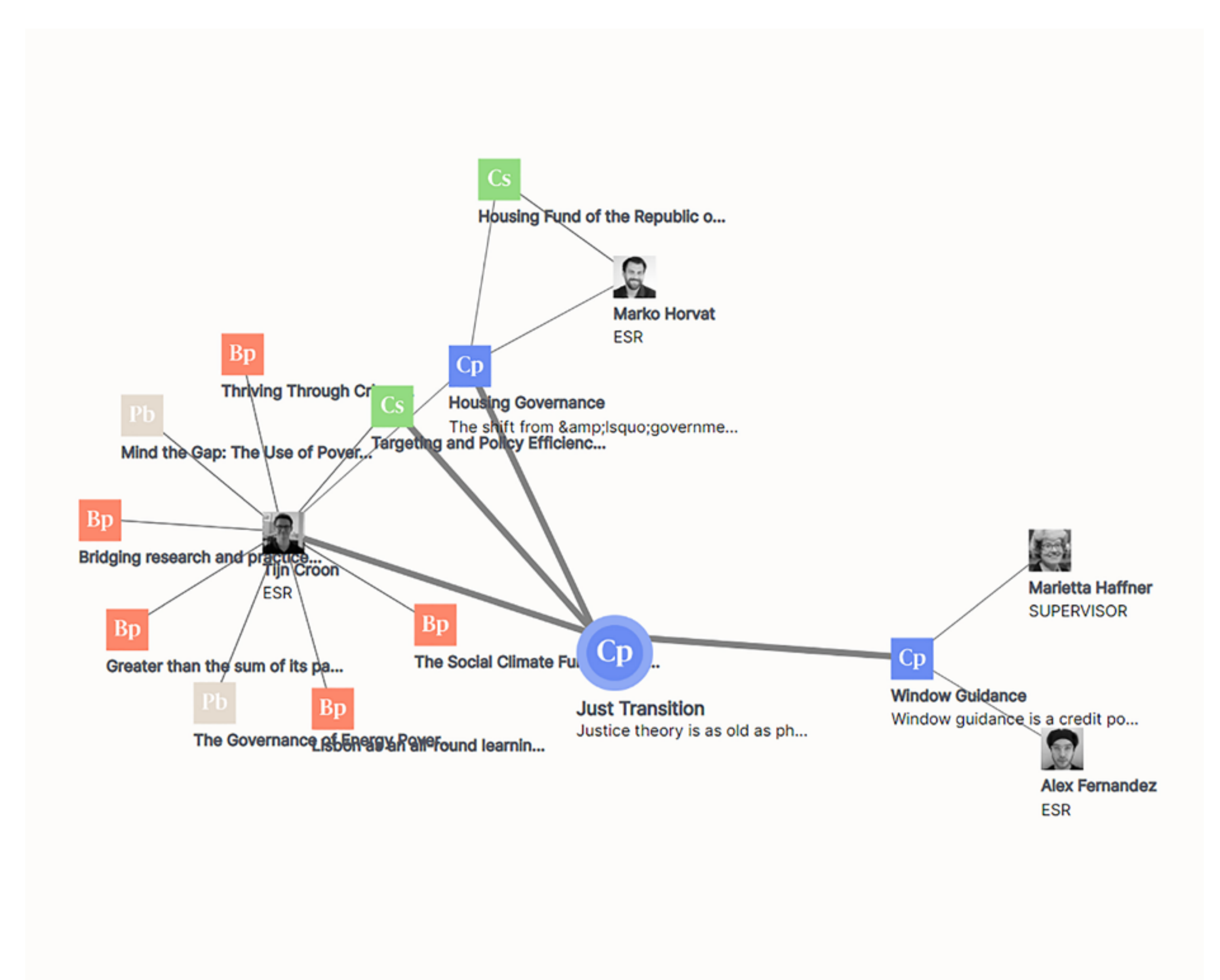
Vocabulary

Just Transition



Research area: Policy and financing

A 'just transition' refers to a fair and equitable shift towards a low-carbon society. It builds on Rawls' principles of justice theory, as he argued that societal harmony relies on people perceiving fairness in their political institutions. It aims to ensure equity for those most affected, considering three key dimensions: distributive, recognitional, and procedural justice. Distributive justice involves fair allocation of burdens and benefits among stakeholders. Recognitional justice addresses cultural and symbolic inequities in representation and communication. Procedural justice emphasises the involvement of diverse stakeholders, especially the least advantaged, in decision-making processes. An 'unjust' transition in our field refers to low-income households facing inadequate resources to improve energy efficiency while bearing greatest cost of rising fossil fuel prices. Shaping a just transition requires a deep understanding of these social implications and overcoming them with effective policies.



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“[According to the latest statistical data at EU level] There has been an increase in housing costs for the poor and the low income households, an increase in housing costs for the middle income groups and the housing costs are higher in the cities. There is an increasing urban affordability crisis and tenants paying market rents are likely to have affordability problems which are leading to a decreased access to housing of people from 25 to 44.”

Marietta Haffner, keynote speech “Trends in housing affordability in Europe”, RE-DWELL Grenoble conference, 9 December 2022



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Blog

Network members activities



Bridging research and practice during secondment at Clarion

SECONDMENTS

Posted on 08-04-2022

One of the main objectives of transdisciplinary research is the collaboration between academics...

Author: T.Croon (ESR11)

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Lisbon as an all-round learning experience

REFLECTIONS

Posted on 29-09-2021

When trying to contemplate the first RE-DWELL workshop in the Portuguese capital, the first thing...

Author: T.Croon (ESR11)

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“Governments will have to play a key enabling and steering role in improving levels of support and access to clean energy and mediating the competing powerful interests at stake in any effort to transition to lower carbon forms of energy production and consumption.”

Newell, P., & Mulvaney, D. (2013). The political economy of the 'just transition'. *The geographical journal*, 179(2), 132-140

“Transition is not a 'future' event, but a current process, and one already having disparate and inequitable effects on nations, regions and communities.”

Garvey, A., Norman, J. B., Büchs, M., & Barrett, J. (2022). A “spatially just” transition? A critical review of regional equity in decarbonisation pathways. *Energy Research & Social Science*, 88, 102630