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341 - **The Commodification of Interim Housing – The Case of Zurich, Switzerland**

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Abstract

Abstract Body

This presentation questions the role of interim housing as an up-coming coping strategy to deal with affordable housing shortages in growing cities. We use the concepts of *institutionalization* and *commodification* to analyze the significance of the increasing societal interest in interim housing. Contrary to housing squats, interim housing is a form of housing that has gone through a process of institutionalization. However, two different models of interim housing need to be distinguished. While non-commodified housing was historically developed to meet the needs of specific categories of tenants, commodified interim housing is managed on the owners' behalf. It is based on loaning contracts that require payment for operation costs but not rent. Consequently, the legal protection of the rights of interim users, namely low-income families, single parents, people with social aid, and students, remains weak. To understand how these different models could emerge, we analyzed the motivations of the different actors involved. Through the analysis of seven subcases in the metropolitan region of Zurich, Switzerland, the mechanisms that led to the diversification of institutionalized interim housing models will be assessed and discussed. We end with a broader discussion on the role of commodification – and decommodification – in Western states.