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ID 1349 | SOCIAL HOUSING POLICY OR SOCIAL POLICY FOR HOUSING? THE ROLE OF THE PROGRAMA ESPECIAL DE REALOJAMENTO (PER) IN THE HOUSING/PLANNING NEXUS IN PORTUGAL

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ABSTRACT: Recent (European) comparative studies in the fields of housing policy and spatial planning have been dominated by taxonomical approaches (attempts at categorising systems and temporal stages of state action) and measures of the 'maturity' of national systems. In this paper, we adopt a genealogical perspective and consider (national and local) cultures central to the shaping of policy (differences and convergence). We set out a long-term, in-depth exploration of the planning-housing nexus in Portugal – a case that helps adding nuances to mainstream theorisation – and focus on the Programa Especial de Relojamento (PER; Special Programme for Rehousing), a programme that has had changing roles (from a financial instrument to a core component of policies of urban regeneration) in connection with political and planning cultures changing in time and space. Our goal is contributing to making sense of the intersection between planning cultures in transition and changing housing policy, namely the generalised shift toward regeneration and concurrent retrenchment of state action – and the relation among housing as welfare ('social housing policy') and housing as urban policy ('social policy for housing').

KEYWORDS: planning cultures; comparative planning studies; policy diffusion; policy generation; Lisbon.

1 INTRODUCTION

In late 2014, while we were preparing the bid for the research project from which this paper stems, most people we talked with – Portuguese scholars with extensive experience in housing, planning and urban research – were quite surprised of our decision to study a programme they considered to be virtually concluded, somehow outdated and indeed not central to the political and academic discussions of the time. The Programa Especial de Realojamento (PER; Special Programme for Rehousing), had been launched in 1993 to provide financial instruments to the municipalities in the metropolitan areas of Lisbon and Oporto to rehouse the thousands of households living in informal settlements, often out-and-out slums. Despite having never been formally concluded, the PER had had its acme during the late 1990s; and much had be written at that time. All in all, most of our contacts seemed almost to suggest that housing, and policies thereof, were not really a central topic in a country undergoing harsh austerity measures – most of which prompted by the memorandum of understanding signed in 2011 when the country was bailed out by the 'Troika' made up of the European Commission, European Central Bank and International Monetary Fund.

The scarce scholarly interest to the PER was surprising in a way. In the wake of the global financial crisis, housing, and its crises, had come back to the centre of international attention (see, e.g., Aalbers, 2016; Madden and Marcuse, 2016; Garcia-Lamarca and Kaika, 2017). In Portugal, it was eventually the recovery, rather than crisis and austerity, to trigger the national debate about housing. While the economic recovery of Lisbon and Oporto, materialised since 2015, has been driven by a boom in tourism and real estate, touristification and gentrification have become central to academic, political and media debate. Habita, a group of activists born in 2005 and constituted as association in 2012, had long been denouncing growing housing problems in the country and evictions of households living in precarious settlements in various municipalities of Lisbon Metropolitan Area (hereafter LMA), made in name of the PER itself. In 2016, Habita succeeded in bringing the UN Special Rapporteur for Adequate Housing to visit Portugal. The report of the visit (Fahra, 2017) highlighted both the risks stemming from gentrification and touristification, and the permanence of situations of precarious housing in informal settlements. In March

2017, the centre-left majority in the national parliament voted a recommendation to the national government, asking a systematic evaluation of housing needs and urgent policy action[1].

We should not be surprised by cycles of scholar and political attention to (issues such as) housing. The recent 'return to housing' has reverted a long-cycle, started sometimes around the 1970s/1980s, during which housing, rather than a central component of welfare, had been considered primarily a commodity to be delivered by the market – see Madden and Marcuse (2016) on the double nature of housing as 'home' and 'commodity'; while the focus of public policy shifted toward promoting the regeneration of the built environment – of which housing would be one, among many, elements. In this paper, we are concerned with the nexus between housing policy, on the one hand, and planning policy, on the other – and the relation among housing as welfare ('social housing policy') and housing as urban policy ('social policy for housing')[2]. All in all, we see, in the sequence of cycles of scholar and political attention, a failure to understand housing holistically, through integrated approaches capable of considering the need for the state to lead both the provision of decent and affordable housing, and the regeneration of the built environment.

As such, this paper is located at the intersection of the (European) fields of comparative studies about housing and planning systems; and uses this intersection to provide a more nuanced framework for their understanding. Both fields have been dominated by 'taxonomic' approaches: housing studies have been dominated by attempts at categorising housing systems and temporal stages of state action; while comparative planning has been especially concerned with measuring the 'maturity' of national systems (see next section)[3]. Our theoretical hypothesis is that such taxonomic approach often fell short from understanding in-depth the dynamics of policy generation and diffusion in a field, housing, which is characterised by complex intersections between policy areas and levels of governmental action.

Indeed, this seems to be the case for Portugal, which we deem a particularly useful field of exploration. Baptista (2013) and Tulumello (2016) consider Portugal a place at the 'borderlands' of, and hence useful to enrich, urban theorisation. With regards to planning system, Campos and Ferrão (forthcoming) have noted that Portugal has an awkward place in comparative studies – possibly a component of the broader difficulty to fruitfully include 'southern perspectives' in the EU debate on planning (Janin Rivolin and Faludi, 2005).

Against this background, we adopt a genealogic approach (cf. Campos and Ferrão, forthcoming) to the issue, in that we consider the long-term perspective, and the production of 'thick narratives' (cf. Flyvbjerg, 2004), fruitful instruments to unravel the relations between multiple levels and scales – e.g. between European pressures in the field of housing and planning, and local planning cultures – in the making of local and urban policies. We shall use the case of the PER, understood within its national context, for our exploration for two main reasons. First, because it is a good example of multi-level policy – the national government provided the funding instruments and general regulations, while local authorities were in charge of planning, design and implementation. And, second, because it allows us to explore the tension between the two dimensions of housing provision and urban regeneration – and between social housing policy, and social (and urban) policy for housing. All in all, the PER can be said to constitute an 'incipient regional plan', in that it is a policy that restructured the regional built environment significantly – in LMA, about 20,000 households were rehoused – but in absence of a proper planning instrument. As such, the extent to which the provision of housing was integrated with larger concerns for urban regeneration was dependent on a set of factors, including the municipalities' approaches and the different phases of governmental action.

The paper is structured as follows. Section 2 reviews existing comparative literature on housing and planning systems in Europe to emphasise the dominance of taxonomic, and static, approaches. In sections 3

and 4, we respectively summarise the recent histories of the Portuguese planning system and housing policy, to provide the backdrop to the study of the PER. Section 5 sets out a genealogical reconstruction of

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[1] We collect news about developments in this area on the blog of the project exPERts, https://expertsproject.org/.

[2] Using a distinction suggested by an interviewee (cf. section 4).

[3] The fact that the ongoing process of comparative analysis of planning systems funded by ESPON is still concerned with the measurement of the maturity of national systems (Nadin et al., 2016, 10) shows how the dominant approach has remained quite stable in time.

the conceptualisation and implementation of the PER, focussing on the legislative framework and on the relations between the national government and local authorities. Concluding remarks are set out in section 6. The paper is based on two main sources of evidence: i) review of the original policy documents (laws, decree-laws, reports, governmental programmes…); and ii) a set of in-depth interviews with key informants (scholars, politicians, and civil servants and officers)[1].

2 HOUSING SYSTEMS VS PLANNING SYSTEMS IN EUROPE

This section briefly reviews the European comparative literature on planning and housing systems, emphasising the coexistence of national differences with processes of convergence amid 'Europeanisation' (cf. Börzel, 2002). It should be preliminarily reminded that the EU has never been granted formal responsibility over spatial planning and housing policy; and that convergence is thus the result of less formal processes (e.g. inter-state cooperation), or stems indirectly from convergence of other policy and regulation areas (e.g. finance and macroeconomics, energy, transportation…).

The Compendium of Spatial Planning Systems (CEC, 1997) marked an interest by the EU in understanding differences among member states' planning policies, fostering the burgeoning of comparative planning studies (e.g. Farinós Dasí, 2007; Stead, 2013). The Compendium divided EU planning systems in four 'traditions' (CEC, 1997, 33-37): the regional economic approach (typical of France), the comprehensive integrated approach (Denmark and Netherlands), the land use management (UK) and the urbanism tradition (Italy and Spain) – with other national systems falling in between two or more traditions. The Compendium and most comparative works were interested in emphasising the 'maturity' of the systems; and fostering convergence toward those considered more mature. Maturity was broadly defined in terms of the 'degree of public acceptance of the need for planning', of the 'provision of up-to-date policy instruments', of the 'degree of vertical integration and cooperation between levels of administration', and of the 'existence of transparent and productive consultation mechanisms' (CEC, 1997, 35).

More recently, some doubts have been cast over the dominance of studies about (static) planning paradigms and traditions (see Getimis, 2012; Tulumello, 2015). The field of planning cultures emerged, in many respects, as a different take on comparative studies. Sanyal (2005) adopted a global perspective with the aim of contributing to the deparochialisation of planning studies – in line with post-colonial approaches to urban studies (see Roy, 2009). In Europe, Knieling and Othengrafen (2015) developed the 'culturised planning model' to explore the trajectories of planning policies and processes among EU member states, by way of looking into 'taken for granted assumptions' and 'unwritten patterns of power' (ibidem, 2135). With respects to processes of harmonisation of planning systems amid Europeanisation, Knieling and Othengrafen conclude that: 'adaptational pressures, for example Europeanization, obviously result in the customization of existing structures, frames and policies ("planning artefacts" and "planning environment") but do not necessarily touch the underlying core cultural traits ("societal environment")' (ibidem, 2144).

In the same way, the field of housing and housing systems presents a variegate number of different situations around Europe. Comparative studies (see, from different perspectives, Lundqwist, 1992; Harloe, 1995; Kemeni, 2001; Allen et al., 2004; Alves, 2016; Di Feliciantonio and Aalbers, 2017) have focused on two main dimensions: first, the overall composition of housing systems (types of tenure, weight of public/private/non-profit sectors, quality of the built environment…) and, second, the (national) policy approaches to housing.

This field is marked, despite the differences originated in the phases during which welfare systems had been built before and after the world wars, by processes of convergence in the last few decades. Comparative studies agree on a set of generalised trends, considered crucial components of the transformation (and retrenchment) of welfare state since 1980s amid neoliberalisation. The shift from state-provided social-rented housing towards stimulus of homeownership, support to private/charity social housing, and privatization of public housing stocks are the main trends emphasised. Doling (2006) exposed the development of a (deficient) EU 'housing policy by stealth', made up of the effects of

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[1] All translations documents, texts and interviews in Portuguese are ours.

statements about desirable housing outcomes – made explicit in the Kok report (EC, 2004). All in all, the increase of levels of homeownership and private renting (hence decrease of social housing) seems to be 'desirable' for EU policies/politics – i.e., there seems to be a role of EU in the promotion of withdrawal of state from housing provision[1].

At the same time, the shift from provision to regulation and support of private/charity developments has been considered consistent with the transition toward a focus on 'regeneration' of the built environment (Cameron, 1992; Gómez, 1998) – as opposed to the new developments (and modernist planning) in the era of public housing provision. We are interested in making sense of the intersection between planning cultures in transition and changing housing policy, namely the shift toward regeneration and concurrent retrenchment of state action, for both external constraints (including European pressures and recurrent crises) and internal political, if often silent, decisions (e.g. that to favour homeownership over other forms of tenure). In this respect, the Portuguese case, which we shall now turn to, offers many insights.

3 THE PORTUGUESE PLANNING SYSTEM

Historically, spatial planning has had a weak status in Portugal – a situation that is reflected in its relative weakness as a discipline[2]. Despite a brief rush of modernization in the 1930s, until the early 1970s the disciplines. For the most part, spatial planning continues to be taught in Portuguese universities as a sub-discipline within larger academic fields (engineering, architecture, geography, landscape design, law, etc.)' (forthcoming).

Portuguese system had maintained three of its key historical features, namely i) a 'urban' perspective through which spatial planning was managed by the governmental branches and was considered the purview of architects and engineers; ii) the lack of a sound reference framework for spatial planning at the regional level; and iii) a centralized nature, in a context where, however, state initiative and leadership were scarce and the impact of regulations remained relatively weak in confronting the interests of the real estate sector.

Between the end of 1960s and the democratic revolution of 1974 things started to change. The Third Development Plan (1968-1973) is a first example of proactive development scheme based on a regional approach – although it hardly challenged the prevailing perspective or offered any meaningful role to the municipalities. The revolution (followed in 1976 by the first election for local authorities) introduced a dialectic between the tradition of centralism represented by the Directorate for Urban Planning (Direção Geral do Planeamento Urbanistico, DGPU) and the more active Portuguese municipalities such as Lisbon and Oporto. The introduction in 1982 of the municipal masterplan (Plano Director Municipal) signalled the adoption of a more integrated approach and a recognition of the role of the municipalities; however, the masterplans were de facto put on hold by the Directorate since a new law, in 1990, made them mandatory.

Against this background, the decade that preceded the enactment of the PER and the years that immediately followed it (from the early 1980s to the late 1990s) was a period of significant steps toward a more integrated planning perspective at the regional level. A number of different factors contributed to this trend. Politically, this was a period of relative stability, which was also reflected in the long tenure (1985-1995) of Valente de Oliveira as ministry of Planning and Administration of the Territory. Despite the delay in their implementation and the still prevalent focus on urban growth, the municipal masterplans 'introduced into public consciousness the idea that urbanisation and construction had to follow rules […] [and] created, for the first time, a market for specialists in urbanism and spatial planning' (Campos and Ferrão, forthcoming). Local planning cultures were also changing: in 1982 the first master's programme in urban and regional planning opened in Lisbon; while a new, interdisciplinary approach, which conceived housing as a key component of urban planning and development, was developing in centres such as the National Laboratory of Civil Engineering (Laboratório Nacional de Engenharia Civil) (interview, former secretary of state for Spatial Planning and Cities). During the 1990s, professionals trained in geography brought for the first time 'an important contribution to affirming spatial planning as a counterweight to the

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[1] For instance, the memoranda of understanding signed with Portugal and Greece by the European Commission and European Central Bank for the recent financial bailouts include provisions for the liberalisation of the housing market.
[2] Campos and Ferrão note that planning's 'multiple affiliations and […] recentness as a technical and scientific domain help explain the absence of any autonomous academic or professional community or associations that represent its various

more "urban" approach traditionally promoted by architects and urban engineers' (Campos and Ferrão, forthcoming). Finally, the influence of Portugal's adhesion to the European Community in 1986 was felt also in the field of planning: among other things, Campos and Ferrão (ibidem) cite the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP, 1999) and Portugal's participation in EU programs such as Urban and Urbact as significant factors in the development of Portuguese planning culture and urban policies.

A set of new planning instruments and bodies were introduced with the goal of consolidating the planning system, and inspired to a more integrated and strategic approach in spatial planning, such as the Regional Spatial Plans (Planos Regionais de Ordenamento do Território, PROT, introduced in the early 1980s), while in 1990 municipal masterplans became a mandatory requirement for municipalities to apply for EU funds and expropriate land – a single act that allowed Portugal to move, in a decade or so, 'from a situation in which the existence of mandatory land-use plans was the exception to one in which the entire country was covered by such plans' (Campos and Ferrão, forthcoming). In 1994, the Programme for Consolidating the National Urban System and Supporting the Implementation of Municipal Master Plans (Programa de Consolidação do Sistema Urbano Nacional e de Apoio à Execução dos PDM - PROSIURB) introduced strategic planning. In 1998-1999, the new ministry of Infrastructure, Planning and Territorial Administration, passed a comprehensive reform of the planning system (Spatial and Urban Planning Policy Act, Law 48/1998) which defined and regulated spatial planning as an autonomous policy area; introduced for the first time a clear-cut distinction between the statutory and developmental arms of the planning system; and harmonized Portuguese planning law with key principle derived from ESDP process.

Finally, some local experiences were important in this general trend toward a more integrated planning perspective. In Lisbon, the new socialist mayor, elected in 1989, created a Strategic Planning Department, which oversaw the preparation of the municipal masterplan (approved in 1994) as well as of Lisbon's Strategic Plan (1992); at the same time, a regional plan for the LMA was approved (PROT-AML, 1991) (Oliveira and Pinho, 2010, 411-414).

Even during the 1990s, however, and despite the progress we have described, the planning system remained marked by serious imbalances. In their review of Portuguese urban policy in that decade, Domingues, Portas and Sá Marques (2007, 312, 318) note that:

> *[a] paradoxical framework thus exists, in which initiatives with greater urban incidence are a result of the central government's sectoral policies or of special programmes and projects, which are limited in scope and articulation […]. If we exclude the exceptional character of EXPO'98 […] everything else can be summed up as sectoral investments commanded by the central government, responding to basic priorities providing infrastructures and expanding the coverage of social policies (new facilities, rehousing programmes, combating poverty and intervention in critical areas).*

This is certainly the case of state intervention in the field of housing, and of the PER specifically, that will be discussed in the next sections. Carmo et al. (2014) point to the difficult relations between housing policy, housing system and spatial planning, emphasising the weakness of statutory instruments, incapable of regulating urban growth but at the same time too rigid to allow for the regularisation and upgrade of the growing number of informal settlements; and pointing to the excessive dependency of municipal authorities on the issuing of building permits as a source of financing.

4 HOUSING POLICY IN PORTUGAL

The Portuguese housing system is consistent with dimensions highlighted for the Southern European context (Allen et al., 2004; Costa Pinto and Guerra, 2013; Di Feliciantonio and Aalbers, 2017): high levels of private ownership and low levels of social rented housing; high proportion of secondary homes; strong role of families in access to home; and significant role of self-promotion in the production of housing.

Allen and colleagues (2004) suggest to go beyond simplistic explanations of such characters, according to which Southern European countries are 'lagging behind' in the implementation of (public) housing when compared with more 'advanced' European countries. Allen and colleagues instead suggest to use a more complex understanding grounded on the concept of 'public action', that is, 'a way of looking at housing issues and housing policies as the outcome of a system of relationships among the different actors

involved' (ibidem, 157). The absence of a large social rented sector in Southern European countries is thus explained on three main factors (ibidem, 166): i) 'a strong political inclination in favour of home ownership', considered to be an effective way to achieve social sustainability; ii) the sale of the public rented housing stock as a result of institutional difficulties to manage it; and iii) an orientation of public administration toward 'implementing rules to control private initiative, rather than developing "entrepreneurial attitudes" within the public sector'. Focusing on the case of Italy and Spain, Difeliciantonio and Aalbers (2017) trace the 'pre-histories' of Southern European housing policies in the fascist era. These approaches are relevant for our purpose in that they focus on the intersection between contextual peculiarities and common trajectories, including those of neoliberalisation and globalisation.

Sketching the historical trajectory of the Portuguese housing policies, and its peculiarities amid the aforementioned Southern European context, will help us make sense of the way the housing system has been shaped at the intersection of policy, planning and wider trends.

Similarly to what we have emphasised with regards to planning policy (cf. previous section), multiple contradictions characterise Portuguese housing policy (Allen et al., 2004, 165). Public housing was introduced in early 20th century and a significant stock has been built in major metropolitan areas during time; however, this has been constantly sold to tenants willing to buy. Housing policy during the dictatorship (1933-1974) was characterised by the primacy of private intervention and paternalistic public interventions to accommodate dramatic situations and prevent potential conflictual situations (Serra, 1997). All in all, public housing and housing market were not capable of accommodating population growth and rural-urban migrations. In early 1970s, the situation was dramatic in Lisbon and Oporto metro, where dozens of thousands of households were living in informal settlements, in conditions of overcrowding or in houses without decent conditions.

With the end of the dictatorship, housing emerged as a major public issue, with the proliferation of protests, occupations and self-organisation practices (Santos, 2014). The 'right to housing' was included in the democratic Constitution (art. 65). Programmes to implement social housing and improve informal settlements were launched, the most famous being the Local Mobile Support Service (Serviço de Apoio Ambulatório Local, SAAL) (Portas, 1986; Bandeirinha, 2007). Though such programmes are the first attempts at making housing policy a core element of urban policy (interview, researcher and former IHRU board member), they were insufficient in scale and time to bring about structural transformations. All in all, public action was not capable of taking the lead in regulating urban growth and housing promotion (Serra, 1997). Since the 1970s, three channels existed to access housing (interview, researcher and former IHRU board member): private construction oriented toward homeownership (by large the most important), public housing to rehouse from illegal settlements, and co-ops.

Toward the end of 1980s, the shortage of housing was still a major problem, for a set of reasons (Ferreira, 1988, 55-56): absence of a comprehensive national housing policy (also because of the 1977 intervention by the International Monetary Fund, which froze the launch of public housing developments); relevance of land property in processes of accumulation – this being quite typical of Southern European countries (cf. Salzano, 1998; Garcia, 2010); a model based on big developments (public and private); weaknesses of the financing system; and scarce technological and organisational development in building industry.

Public action shifted progressively further away from housing provision in the following times. The transition is considered to have been completed during the governments of Cavaco Silva (1985-1995). The building sector was liberalised, paving the way for the boom of investments in real estate and construction after the adhesion to the European Community. Since then, housing policy was primarily shaped through a series of mechanisms for stimulus and subsidising of homeownership (Serra, 1997; Allen et al. 2004, 165; Santos et al., 2014), which were provided by the Department of Finance, rather than that of Housing – a 'concealed' housing policy, according to a former secretary of state for Housing (interview). Overall, between 1987 and 2011, 17.9% of public expenditure in housing was used for provision (basically, the PER), while 73.3% was funnelled to subsidies to homeownership and 8.7% to subsidies to rent (IHRU, 2015, 4). The housing sector and housing policy (including the state) played a crucial role in the financialisation of the Portuguese society and its 'semi-peripheral' economy, characterised by a weak welfare state balanced by a strong 'family welfare' (Santos, 1985; Santos et al., 2014).

Amid retrenchment of state action in housing promotion, a growing emphasis on urban renovation and regeneration is found (see, e.g., Guerra et al., 2005). One of our interviewees, a civil servant responsible

for several projects of renovation in Lisbon, suggested that one should more properly talk of public support to private renovation (see also Tulumello, 2016, 122-124). Indeed, the investment in this area was always a minimal quota of total expenditure (cf. IHRU, 2015).

The most comprehensive attempt at structuring housing policy within urban policy in tight relation with regeneration was made by the socialist government in charge between 2005 and 2009. For the first time no secretary of state for Housing was appointed, and the competence over housing given to the secretary of state for Spatial Planning and Cities. An expert, one of the most known professors of geography and spatial planning in the country, was appointed. The attitude of the government was signalled by the transformation of the National Institute for Housing (Instituto Nacional da Habitação, INH) into the Institute for Housing and Urban Regeneration (Instituto da Habitação e Reabilitação Urbana, IHRU).

The former secretary of state for Spatial Planning and Cities, interviewed, stressed that his goal was transitioning from 'social housing policy' (politica de habitação social) toward 'social policy for housing' (política social de habitação) – i.e. articulating the right to housing within the right to the city and housing provision within urban regeneration. This made particular sense, in his opinion, in relation to the rigid subdivision of responsibility for housing in the country. After 1974, with the creation of local power and processes of decentralization (but in a framework of a centralised state; cf. Seixas and Albet, 2012), housing policy was considered a proximity policy, to be led by municipal authorities. At this level housing policy tends to be considered an urban policy, in close connection with urban planning—'the "land rights statute" passed by parliament in 1976 and other complementary land policy instruments approved in subsequent years, aimed at applying the constitutionally enshrined rights to housing and to an orderly territorial development' (Campos and Ferrão, forthcoming)[1]. At the state level, instead, housing is mainly considered an issue of financing and public works – 'giving people a home' (dar casa às pessoas) in the words of many of our interviewees. Indeed, INH and its predecessors have basically been financial institutions.

The former secretary of state admitted that he found many pushbacks of institutional and political nature, among which: the difficulty to transform the IHRU from a financial institution toward a promoter of housing/regeneration policy (this being confirmed by the president of IHRU appointed by the secretary of state, interviewed); a bipartisan consensus on the importance of homeownership; and processes of alienation of public housing stock already ongoing when he took charge. The former secretary of state also admitted that the failure to pass a national strategy for housing policy made most reform attempts vain.

All in all, it is hard to find a general consensus over the Portuguese housing policy. For one interviewee, professor in sociology and urban studies: there has never been a housing policy in Portugal. There have been packages [pacotes] […]. Why packages? Because one can control goals, and funds allocated to it, better. Now, an integrated housing policy, thinking of housing needs and solutions, this is something… There was the strategic plan[2], but, how you perfectly know, it was praised, but remained in the drawer. It has no influence whatsoever.

This is an idea shared by many of our respondents (former secretary of state for Spatial Planning, professor of urban sociology). However, another interviewee (researcher and former IHRU board member) believes that the Portuguese experience with housing policy shows a 'path', in which some ideas, generated more or less consciously during earlier eras (like with the SAAL) consolidated in later stages (like during 2005-2009).

In the years following the economic crisis, the centre-right government – amid the pressures of external borrowers who bailed out the country in 2011 – enforced a harsh austerity agenda (Pedroso, 2014; Seixas et al., 2016), clearly steering away from the previous reforms: during those years housing policy was marginal to the governmental agenda. As of today, according to an interviewee, professor of urban sociology, housing policy is exclusively 'local', in that virtually no state intervention exist. However, amid political and public pressures following the visit to Portugal of the UN Special Rapporteur for Adequate Housing (see introduction), members of the new centre-left government and parliamentary majority

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[1] On this distinction there are different interpretations. For instance, one interviewee, researcher and former IHRU board member, agreed that 'not much [of housing] falls in the state's competences'. However, two other interviewees, former secretary of state for Housing and a professor of sociology and urban studies, referred that communist municipal governments did not want to cooperate into the PER because they believed that housing policy (or, at the very least, funding thereof) is a state responsibility.

[2] The reference is to the aforementioned attempt made in 2005-2009.

(including a congresswomen we interviewed) have referred to ongoing processes for the promotion of a general housing law.

5 THE PER AND/AS URBAN REGENERATION

In this section, we shall discuss the role of the PER, launched in 1993 and not formally concluded, in the aforementioned framework. The PER has been the main – at least in terms of funding – program of housing provision in the democratic Portuguese history. Its goal, stated in its instituting Decree-Law 163/1993 was that of 'getting rid of shacks' (erradicar as barracas). As we noted before, the incapacity of housing policy and market to accommodate housing needs resulted, among other problems, in the production of following waves of informal settlements – where settled rural-urban immigrants before 1974 and, afterwards, mainly populations (of both Portuguese and African descent) migrating from the liberated colonies. Understanding the extent to which the goal of 'getting rid of shacks' has been a component of wider attempts at urban regeneration – or rather a sectorial housing policy – is the main question we shall try to answer. In order to do so, we adopt a 'genealogic' approach (cf. Campos and Ferrão, forthcoming), reconsidering the history of the PER and of regeneration policies in the light of the context sketched above.

5.1 BEFORE 1993: INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS AND EARLY POLICY RESPONSES

Before 1993, some policies for the regeneration and refurbishment of the built environment had provided some responses to the problem of informal settlements, still falling short of 'solving' it. In 1985 the socialist government launched the Programme of Urban Refurbishment (Programa de Reabilitação Urbana, PRU), expanding to public spaces the interventions on degraded housing stock that had took place under the Programme for the Recovery of Degraded Buildings (Programa de Recuperação de Imóveis Degradados, PRID). The PRU made available additional financial resources and foresaw the creation of local technical committees[1], as well as the 'temporary rehousing of the building to be recovered […] [or] their permanent rehousing whenever needed' (Ruling 4/SEHU/1985, line c, point 4), integrating housing policy in the broader framework of urban policy. The PRU did not identify a specific field of intervention; not being restricted to intervention in the historical centres (Pinho, 2009, 846), the PRU could cover rehabilitation projects in any degraded area, including informal neighbourhoods. However, a few months later, the publication of the Decree-Law 366/1985 established 'the guidelines for investments by municipalities and the state to promote programmes of social housing, in areas of the country that are especially in need of interventions and are destined to rehouse the population living in informal settlements'.

During the decade of centre-right governments led by Cavaco Silva, urban policy developed with the goal of defining 'programs to counterbalance the macrocephaly of the largest urban centres' (Program of X Constitutional Government, p. 29); in this context, the government's program mentioned the 'rehabilitation of the illegal urbanisations through the cooperation with local authorities of the metropolitan belt' (idem). This was the only intervention of urban regeneration defined by the government in this first phase.

Cavaco Silva's electoral campaign of 1991 seemed to mark a turning point in this respect (Ferreira, 1993a, 4). Pressured by the public opinion and the opposition parties[2], the prime minister acknowledged the relative neglect of pressing housing issues in the previous years; and promised a more incisive action in the field of housing policy in his next mandate (idem). This promise, however, remained forgotten until 1993, and public investment in housing policy remained stagnant until that date (idem).

A few months before the enactment of the PER, an experts' committee was formed on the initiative of various organization operating in the field of housing. The committee published the influent White Paper on Housing Policy in Portugal (Livro Branco sobre a Política de Habitação em Portugal; Ferreira, 1993b). The White Paper called for a '500,000 houses plan' (Ferreira, 1993a, 51-52), and the creation of a publicly owned stock of lands to be destined to the plan. Out of the total of 500,000 houses to be built, some

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[1] Local technical committees had been part of the initiatives launched after the democratisation to support decentralisation and improve technical skills in municipalities (Pinho, 2009, 837).

[2] For instance, the socialist administration of Lisbon launched a campaign to advocate more funding and technical support to municipalities with the goal of solving the problem of informal settlements (see CML-DGSPH, 1990).

60,000 (Ferreira, 1993a, 17) were indicated as instrumental to the 'provision of socially rented housing on an appropriate scale, in order to allow for the elimination of the informal settlements and illegal urbanisations existing the metros of Lisbon and Oporto' (ibidem, 45). This social housing stock was supposed to adopt an investment and management model characterized by (ibidem, 45, 52): partnerships between central and local authorities; the 'creation of regional housing companies, especially in the metros of Lisbon and Oporto, collecting financial and other resources from the central administration and the municipalities'; the establishment of residents' associations; the adjustment of the rent levels of the social housing sector to market value; the refurbishment of the public housing stock; and the introduction of the possibility to sell public housing units to tenants.

The White Paper also suggested the integration of the programs for rehabilitation of the existing public housing stock into a wider refurbishment programme including 240,000 housing units (ibidem, 16), which was also expected to contribute to reducing the need for building new social housing developments. In short, the White Paper sought a more systematic integration between the goals of housing provision and urban regeneration; an integration that was however absent in the PER and its surrounding policies launched by the centre-right government – whose discussion we shall now turn to.

5.2 1993-1995: PER AS A FINANCIAL INSTRUMENT

Amid a growing public and political debate about the pressing housing issues, in 1993 the government launched six different measures, announced as a comprehensive 'housing package' (pacote da habitação) – the Decree-Law 163/1993, which established the PER in the metropolitan areas of Lisbon and Oporto, being part of it. The PER followed the suggestions presented in the White Paper in relation to the need to 'getting rid of shacks' and rehouse the families of residents; to the cooperation between central and local authorities; and to the adoption of a system of subsidised rents. However, differences between the Decree-Law and the White Paper were significant, and especially: in relation to the nature of the funds financing the programme, because the White Paper's suggestion for the creation of a national fund for housing with the contribution of workers and private companies was discarded; with regard to the modality of rehousing, insofar, in addition to new developments, the PER envisaged the possibility to purchase on the market, while the White Paper focused on refurbishment; and because the Decree-Law of the PER did not provide any guidelines as to the management model of the new neighbourhoods.

The emphasis on the complementarity between new construction and the purchase of housing units on the market is a significant illustration of Cavaco Silva's housing policy. The PER aimed at stimulating the 'contribution of the market' for the development of the social housing sector – something that was made possible without specific policies supporting private initiatives towards that goal. For this reason, equally important to the PER was a second Decree-Law launched in the context of the 'housing package', designed to reform the legal regime of the contracts for the development of housing (Decree-Law 165/1993) – contracts signed by public institutions and private companies for the construction of affordable housing units. In short, the new regime made easier for private developers to participate in the development of the social housing sector and public facilities.

The land policy, one of the cornerstones of the White Paper (Ferreira, 1993a, 59), was completely forgotten in the PER and in the 'housing package'. Though another Decree-Law (164/1993) acknowledged the 'lack or relative scarcity of land that would allow construction at affordable prices', interventions on this issue remained limited to allocating publicly-owned land for construction – and did not include, for example, an effort to counter speculation in real estate. Similarly, the only dimension of 'urban regeneration' included in the Decree-Law was the obligation to demolish the shacks once the rehousing had been completed.

In the words of an interviewee, former secretary of state for Spatial Planning, In my opinion, the PER was a financing instrument based on an agreement with local authorities. What happened is that some local authorities had a more strategic vision and included the PER in wider [urban] interventions, others [did not] […]. Let us be crystal clear, the PER was a funding instrument. Nothing more than that. The ways it was adopted by each local authority may have been different […]. Virtually no one in [the field of] spatial planning considered the PER a spatial planning instrument.

5.3 1995-2001: STEPS TOWARD AN URBAN POLICY?

The socialist government that take charge in 1995 prioritised speeding up the implementation of the PER. In an interview, the secretary of state for Housing of that government considered that the previous government had virtually not acted to implement the rehousing. Indeed, the rate of expenditure accelerated dramatically after 1995, peaking in 1999 (IHRU, 2015, 8). The PER was amended and further new regulations approved (Law 34/1996; Decree-Law 79/1996; Diploma 420/1996; Decree-Law 30/1997; Diploma 371/1997). On the one hand, the obligation to demolish the settlements was extended to the shacks included in the surveys but abandoned by the households before the rehousing (hence often inhabited by households not eligible for the PER) – a situation that, according to some civil servants we met during the fieldwork, is affecting many households still today. On the other, the so-called PER-Famílias (PER-Households) was introduced to allow individual households to use the financial instruments of PER to enter the private housing market. Two subsequent socialist governments (1995-1999; 1999-2002) operated to make the PER more flexible. During the tenure of the first socialist executive, many significant measures were implemented to that goal; indeed, for the first time in the history of democratic Portugal the housing portfolio was placed in a ministry responsible for urban and regional planning, the ministry of Infrastructure, Planning and Territorial Administration – although the next executive reformulated the organizational chart separating once again the portfolios for planning and housing.

Looking at those years, and especially those of the first socialist government, we can make sense of the relationships between the rehousing process, on the on hand, and urban regeneration goals and spatial planning policies, on the other – in that the overall governmental strategy had to be mediated, and was possibly even contrasted, by local political and planning cultures.

As for the integration of PER with urban regeneration goals, in the first stage, having the PER being designed basically as a financial instrument, the decision whether to make the rehousing a component of a wider policy of urban regeneration was delegated to local authorities. According to the report on the state of the PER released in 1999, only six out of 18 municipalities of LMA had included urban refurbishment and regeneration among their goals (Guerra, 1999, 57). The same report emphasises that 'only a fraction of the municipal authorities involved looked at the PER as part of a broader strategy of territorial regeneration' (ibidem, 60). Importantly, the report highlights a different attitude in Oporto metro, emphasising the importance of local politics and planning cultures in the shaping of the implementation of PER.

In absence of interest of local authorities to act beyond the simple provision of housing, the socialist government signalled a different attitude, starting to work with local governments and deciding to use EU Structural Funds to complement the rehousing process with the provision of public services and businesses (interviews with a former secretary of state for Housing and a civil officer in the national Department of Housing). In 1996, the sub-programme Operational Intervention for Urban Renewal (Intervenção Operacional Renovação Urbana, IORU), originally designed by the previous centre-right government to buy land and build infrastructures, was reformulated to allow for the construction of open spaces and public facilities, and to support the establishment of small private enterprises (Coutinho, 1997). By widening the offer of programmes intended to complement the PER's limitations[1], the socialist government also established a more integrated approach in relation to the goals of the housing policy: the socio-economic integration of the rehoused families was therefore seen also in its territorial dimension and in the context of the urban planning and development.

A 1997 survey, included in the abovementioned report (Guerra, 1999), indicated that the IORU was the complementary programme that municipalities used the most, followed by the sub-programme Integrated Operational Interventions (Intervenção Operacional Integrar, IOI; a component of the Health and Social Integration axist of the second EU Community Support Framework, 1994-1999), and then by the Anti-Poverty Programme (Programa de Luta Contra a Pobreza). This situation illustrates the strong dependency of the PER-related urban regeneration processes to the dynamics of EU funds. Once again, a more systematic use of European funds to integrate urban regeneration actions with the PER was found in Oporto metro (ibidem, 66-68). Among the other programs that complemented the PER, and beyond the

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[1] The Decree-Law establishing the PER only referred to the Anti-Poverty Programme (Programa de Luta contra a Pobreza).

abovementioned examples, we can mention the Urban initiative – following the report, in 1997 only two municipalities had applied for these funds, one in the Lisbon and one in Oporto metro (ibidem, 67).

As for the relation between the PER and spatial planning policy, another dimension highlighted by the report (Guerra, 1999) is a lack of any significant influence of the PER on planning policies in the LMA – and, more broadly, on local policies at municipal level. The authors of the report argued that this situation had two reasons (ibidem, 60): first, the acknowledgement, by local municipalities, of those problems that the PER intended to solve was still not a central policy goal; and, second, the PER was implemented when the municipal masterplans had been already completed. Indeed, for half of the municipalities, the PER arrived in a late phase of elaboration of municipal masterplans, which were mostly approved between 1993 and 1994. For the other half of the municipalities, however, the two processes developed more or less in the same years, with the municipal masterplans approved between 1995 and 1999. Following Guerra (ibidem, 71), in 1997 the municipalities that were developing PER actions of average scale (in relation to the number of rehoused households) presented the highest rate of progress with respect to the established timeline (>25%). This observation led the authors of the report to conclude that the presence of either a relatively large or a relatively small number of households to be rehoused was a factor in delaying the action of municipalities. However, we may wonder – for example in the case of Sintra, a municipality implementing a medium-scale PER action, which had attained in 1997 the highest rate of progress in the northern part of LMA (46.20%, against a national average of 20%) – whether the pace of implementation was not also speeded up by the lack of a valid municipal masterplan.

The Decree-Law 156/1997 introduced more flexible procedures for introducing changes in municipal land use regulations in areas interested by rehousing programs destined to the residents of informal neighbourhoods. Through the provisions of this Decree-Law, the municipalities were allowed to change their land use plans whenever these changes were required for the construction of rehousing sites, even if this implied introducing changes to previous destinations of use, building regulations and development plans. Indeed, the following two years were the two with most budgeted operations (IHRU, 2015, 8). Surprisingly, this provision, which created a 'quasi-emergency' state for the implementation of the PER, has not been noticed by academics and policymakers and none of our interviewees remembered such possibility – the only notable exception we could identify is a brief mention in a 2006 article on urban planning and social cohesion (Fernandes, 2006).

5.4 2002- DEMISE AND REBIRTH OF THE PER

A new phase for the story of the PER opens up in 2002 with a new change of government from centre-left to centre-right. In the structure of the new government, housing and planning are separate again, and for the first time a ministry of cities is created (Ministry of Cities, Spatial Planning and Environment). The program of the new government (Program of XV Constitutional Government) adopts a discourse in line with the 'European' mainstream. The key objective of housing policy became the creation of incentives for the refurbishment of existing buildings and the revitalization of the rental market (vs. the previous emphasis on new constructions and homeownership); as far as social housing was concerned, the main goals became the definition of policy instruments for the renewal of the existing housing stock and ensuring the progress of the PER.

In line with the governmental goal to 'reduce the role of the State in the development and management of housing provision' (Decree-Law 199/2002), the new 'urban policy' (política para as cidades) had urban regeneration at its core – despite the lack of national resources invested in this field, whose development, with the exception of the programme POLIS, remained almost completely dependent on EU funds and private investments (cf. Baptista, 2013). The PER followed this pattern, shifting away from construction and toward regeneration by a new set of amendments (e.g. the Decree-Law 271/2003), which opened up the possibility to sell municipal housing units built with the PER or other municipal programmes. Also, for the first time the municipalities were allowed to use PER funds to build public facilities and services. In 2004, the new PROHABITA programme was launched (Decree-Law 135/2004), providing a broader framework for rehousing interventions outside of the metros of Lisbon and Oporto (previously endowed of limited funding under the provision of Decree-Law 226/1987) and extending the provision of the law to all situations of severe housing stress (while the PER had been limited to interventions in informal settlements).

Despite the introduction of significant conceptual, legal and operational changes in the field of housing policies, however, the national budget approved for 2003 introduced a set of limitations on the municipalities' ability to borrow funds. While it did not affect the projects already budgeted, the new provision rendered virtually impossible the signing of new contracts for PER developments. At the same time, stricter budgetary requirements pushed the municipalities to sell out the council housing stock to fund new developments. Even before the passing of the 2003 state budget, various municipalities had voiced their concerns about the possible demise of the PER (see Morais, 2002; Lusa, 2002); indeed, this proved to be the case after 2003, with the expenditure for rehousing plummeting in the following years (IHRU, 2015, 8) – and a parallel rise of critical voices (see Simão, 2003; Felner, 2003).

After a parenthesis of three years the Socialist Party took back control of the government in 2005. Under the goal to integrate housing policy in the broader framework of urban and regional planning (cf. section 4), the government vowed to conclude the implementation of existing rehousing programs, and to promote a policy of regeneration within and beyond these programs. Two flagship initiatives were launched. First, a pilot programme for the regeneration of 'critical neighbourhoods' (Iniciativa Operações de Qualificação e Reinserção Urbana de Bairros Críticos, IBC). Second, an amendment to the PROHABITA programme (Decree-Law 54/2007) was introduced to address the cases of households not originally included in the PER and subsequently evicted from demolished settlements (a problem which has recently been at the centre of activist mobilization; cf. introduction). This last intervention constituted an emergency measure rather than a long-term solution – a constant in recent Portuguese history, in which a trade-off existed between the urgency of the process of slum clearing and the rights of the residents that were not included in the original PER survey of 1993.

The PER seemed to have reached its final stop after 2010, when the global financial and economic crisis of 2007-2008 started to hit Portugal. A year later, the socialist government was forced to ask for international financial help, and on June 2011 a new, centre-right government took office. Under the new government, marked by a policy of austerity (Seixas et al., 2016), rehousing programmes progressively came to an end, while demolitions and evictions multiplied – in the vast majority of cases, without any housing solution being offered to the evictees – especially in the municipalities of Amadora and Loures. It was only after the return of the Socialist Party to the government (as majority stakeholder of a parliamentary coalition including the Left Bloc and the Portuguese Communist Party), that a new phase for the PER and Portuguese housing policies seems to be opening. Indeed, in the context of the renewed attention to housing, left-wing political parties have asked not just new policies but precisely a 'new PER' to solve, once and for all, the issue of precarious settlements in Portugal (Henriques, 2017).

6 CONCLUSIONS

Twenty-four years after its launch, and a decade or so since it has been considered de facto a dead policy, the PER seems to be reborn from its own ashes. Its history is useful to add some nuances to consolidated ideas about housing and spatial planning in Portugal and, by extension, Europe.

All in all, there is general agreement that the PER, influenced by some longstanding feature of the Portuguese system, ultimately 'failed to establish genuine city policies' in the same way previous programs did (cf. Campos and Ferrão, forthcoming). The main reasons for this failure may be identified among two main lines: first, the lack of top-down coordination and, second, a strong dependence on local planning cultures and changing national governmental goals; in other words, the missing institutionalisation of the programme into a 'plan' with cogent and regulatory power. On the one hand, this confirms to some extent that the Portuguese planning system is not 'mature' according to the mainstream definition of the Compendium (CEC, 1997; cf. section 2). But, on the other, a careful historical reconstruction shows how the static understanding provided by the 'maturity' framework does not help much in casting light over the complex political and multi-scalar dimensions through which a complex policy such as the PER is implemented in a period of time of almost a quarter of century; and confirms the need to integrate taxonomical comparison with in-depth, genealogical analyses.

Indeed, the history of PER casts some shadows over traditional interpretations of the relative underdevelopment of Portuguese (and Southern European) welfare, namely the stress on the temporal 'delay' with respect to European transformations (see, e.g., Giannakorou, 2005; Seixas and Albet, 2012). At a first sight, the PER was a (late?) policy against the mainstream, so to speak, in that it was a massive

programme of housing provision, in a time in which states were abandoning the provision of housing in the first place. However, we saw how the big chunk of funding for housing in Portugal since the 1980s was made up of the subsidies for homeownership – in line with the pressures by global and European institutions – even in the years when the expenditure of PER peaked; perfectly in line with European trends more widely. As such, our case reinforces the idea that the study of policy 'paradigms' only partially helps making sense of processes of policy conceptualisation and diffusion, in that it conceals what is more often characterised by conflict among permanence and changing patterns, and tensions among different levels and scales (cf. Getimis, 2012; Tulumello, 2015).

With regard to the relation between 'social housing policy' and 'social policy for housing', the PER has had an ambiguous, multifaceted nature. Created as a financial instruments for provision of public housing (by a government whose goal was reducing state intervention in housing), the PER became a pivotal element of attempts (by different governments) at shaping and institutionalising a national urban and regeneration policy; and back and forth, following the alternation of governments and their political goals. At the same time, the various phases were mediated by the relation with local authorities and local planning cultures. This story unravels many of the tensions between provision and regeneration; in that the shift to regeneration seems to be, at the same time, a necessary complement to previous policy approaches and a rhetorical instrument in the context of state retrenchment. A perfect example of this are the reforms by the centre-right government in 2002/2003, which made possible using PER funding to provide public services and stimulating urban regeneration, at the same time as they virtually killed (or, better, hibernated) the programme through financial provisions. All in all, the relation between housing policy proper (as conceptualised and implemented in connection with urban and planning policy) and economic and financial policy seems to be a fruitful field for further discussion – e.g. by way of exploring the way housing policies have often been 'concealed' as financial supports to homeownership while housing policy proper was being cut in the name of sound national finances.

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