



Hochschule
Zittau/Görlitz
UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

***Outlines of a communitarian housing
and urban development policy***

Speaker: Prof. Dr. Stefan Kofner, MCIH

***Recent trends in the real estate market and its
analysis – 2019 edition***

Narodowy Bank Polski

Warsaw, 5 December 2019

Adorno on housing

"Eigentlich kann man überhaupt nicht mehr wohnen."

„Es gibt kein richtiges Leben im falschen.“



"Socially substantial and individually appropriate housing does not go together."

Ambivalence of ownership: frees from dependency and need, saves resources, but also provides for a guilty conscience

Ownership for all in new forms in new cities



1. **What is Communitarianism?**
2. Market failure, merit and communitarian goods
3. Place of residence and its social living environment
4. Community and housing tenure
5. Community and urban development



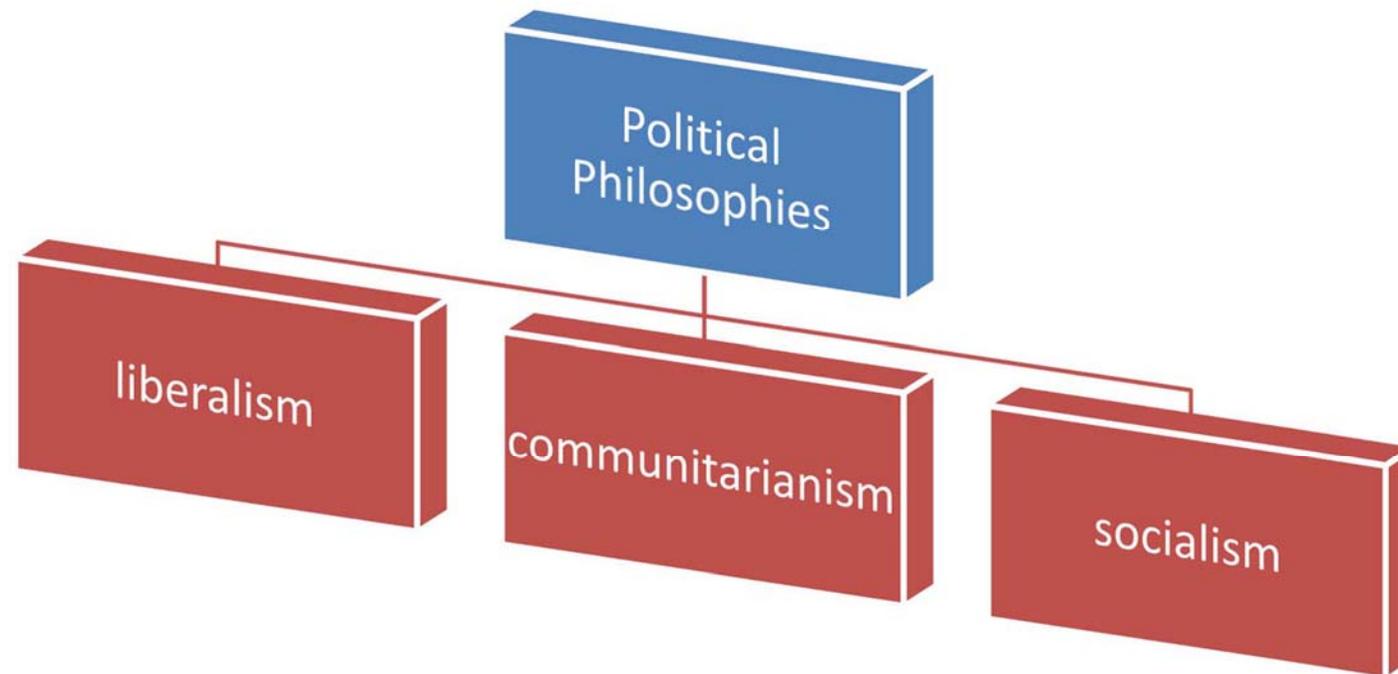
Kennedy in his inauguration speech in 1961

**„And so, my fellow Americans:
Don't ask what your country can do for you;
Ask what you can do for your country.“**





Communitarianism



Communitarianism

- a social and political philosophy
→ Importance of communities for political life and the understanding of identity
- Origin: Critique of Rawl's Theory of Justice
- vs. the overemphasis of personal autonomy, individual rights and opportunities for development.
- Communitarists: common good, active co-responsibility and social obligations, self-realization in the community
- Revival of old and emergence of new forms of community to (re-)create a "*good society*" as a counterweight to individualism.

- All types of human communities
 - Family
 - Sports, music, cultural, leisure or social club
 - Citizens' initiatives and building communities
 - neighbourhood, quarter, village community, home village, hometown, homeland region
 - "Heimatland" (Saxony, Bavaria, Westphalia, Germany)
- create meaning and identity and stabilize liberal-democratic societies (the "social cement")

1. What is Communitarianism?
2. Market failure, merit and communitarian goods
3. Place of residence and its social living environment
4. Community and housing tenure
5. Community and urban development

Free housing market

- Liberal market housing policy
 - elementary confidence in the self-regulatory capacity of housing and land markets
 - Critical attitude towards interventions, in particular vs. interventions in free price formation
 - Impairment of price functions → allocative friction losses
→ no balancing of supply and demand
 - Housing benefits instead of object-related subsidies

- Reasons for state intervention in the housing and land markets:
 - External Effects on housing and land markets:
Neighbourhood, macroeconomic and environmental externalities
 - Restrictions on competition
 - Asymmetric information
 - Stability deficits
 - The basic need and public service character of housing
 - The merit good character of housing



Communitarianism

Communitarian housing and
urban development policy

Puts an emphasis on stable and resilient local social
networks and local human communities as well as on
strong spatial collective identities

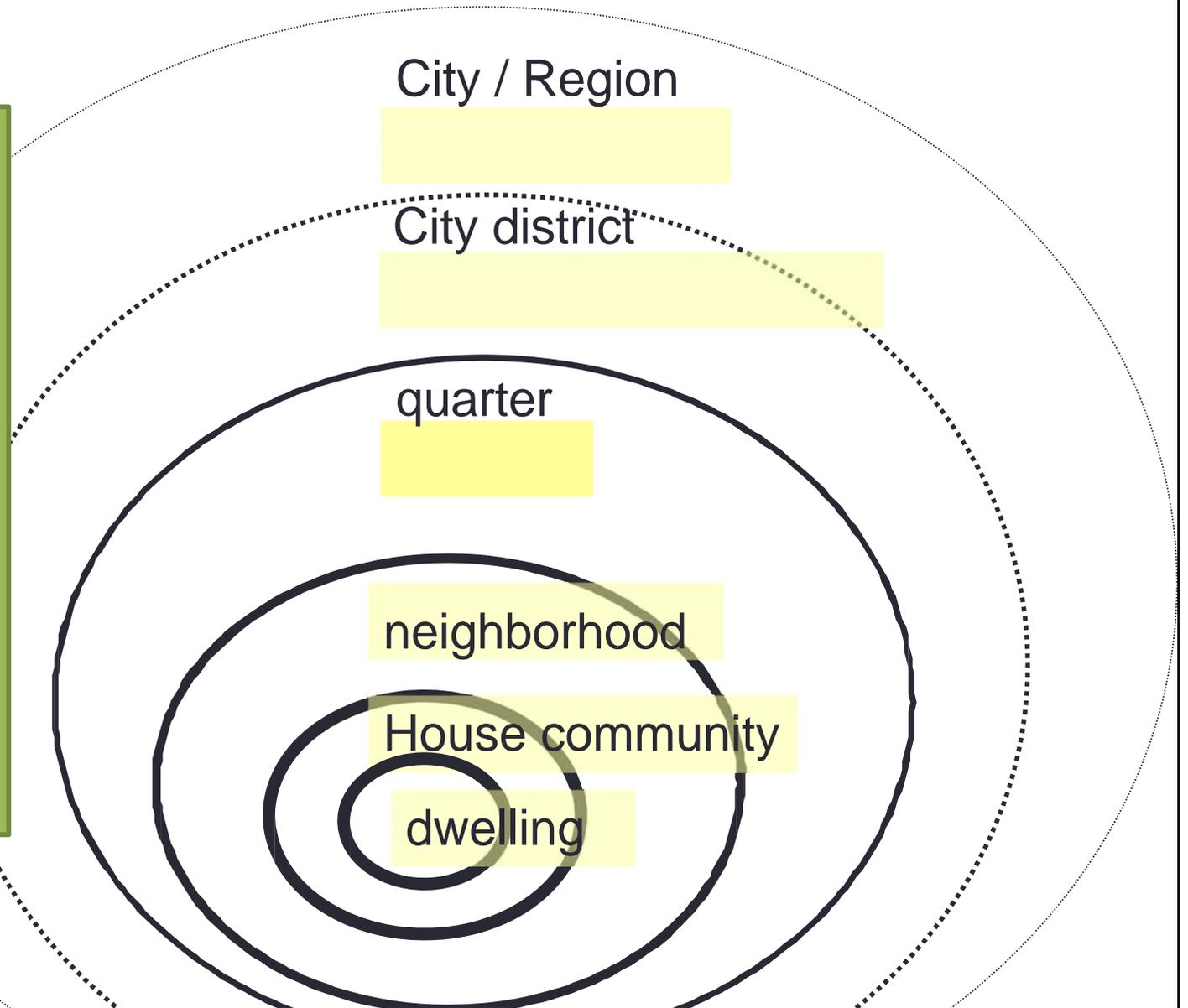
Communitarian Goods

- Additional deficits of the housing and land market from the communitarian point of view:
 - The free housing market does not protect longstanding milieus / neighbourhoods.
 - Excessive demands on people's spatial mobility due to alleged economic benefits or territorial inequality
- "Communitarian goods": e.g. longstanding neighborhoods or the fulfilling community experience of building and living together (Bailey 1997, 107)



1. What is Communitarianism?
2. Market failure, merit and communitarian goods
- 3. Place of residence and its social living environment**
4. Community and housing tenure
5. Community and urban development

- The term "social living environment":
 - Residentially and spatially bound social network
→ Communication, knowledge and non-pecuniary mutual service relationships





- Social capital
 - a bundle of actual or potential resources
 - arising from attachment to a permanent social network
 - consisting of more or less institutionalised relationships
 - based on mutual acquaintance, recognition, credibility and trust between individuals and groups and
 - benefiting all group members via direct interaction in the form of knowledge or help

What is a "community"?

- The term "community":
 - Space-bound social network with a large stock of social capital
 - A manageable social group, clearly separated from other groups,
 - whose members are connected by a certain homogeneity and a "sense of community",
 - often also by common goals over longer periods of time.
 - e.g. family, local community, clan or clique



What makes a good social living environment?

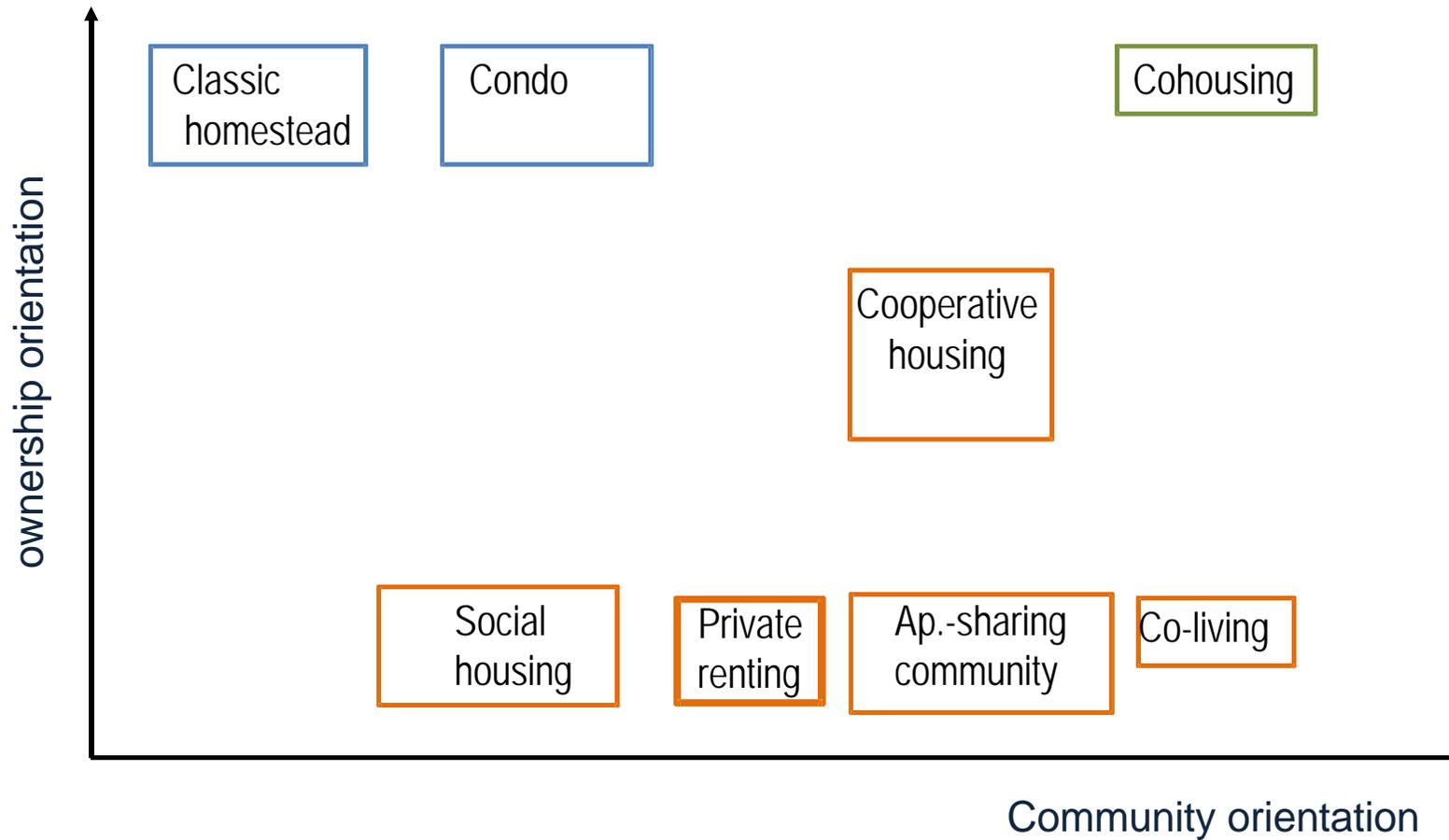
- Quality of a social living environment:
 - Tenure mix
 - Mix of residents
 - Opportunities for social engagement: availability of associations, initiatives and groups which, in connection with their specific purposes, also offer community experiences or whose main purpose is even the community experience, in the vicinity of the home.
 - Architectural design of apartment buildings
 - Urban planning quality, built environment
 - Historical path dependencies, narratives, mentality



1. What is Communitarianism?
2. Market failure, merit and communitarian goods
3. Place of residence and its social living environment
- 4. Community and housing tenure**
5. Community and urban development



Ownership and community orientation of different tenures



Private renting

- Endangering the spatial and economic position of tenants by economically motivated dismissals, rising rents and splits into condominium ownership
- Tenant protection in Germany
 - Protection against arbitrary, motiveless dismissals and surprising rent increases (local reference rent, rent brake, rent caps)
 - 8 % Mod apportionment with caps
 - Splitting into condos: right of first refusal, "purchase does not break rent", legal notice lock periods
 - Social milieu protection statutes: Approval of dismantling, alteration or change of use of buildings requires a permit

Private renting

- Limitation of gentrification depending on commitment of affected communities and state governments
- Private renting from a communitarian perspective
 - Lack of binding force and resilience
 - Tenant involvement
 - Community-promoting structural designs by Multi-family houses and their living environment

Classic homestead

- Classic homestead
 - High degree of spatial cohesion and economic resilience, esp. with limited tenant protection
 - Prospect of a long time of residence prerequisite for people investing in social networks
 - Positive influence of the tenure on local social capital (school board, parents' council, kindergarten and participation in local elections), Bloze / Skak (2015)
 - Often increased need for privacy, for spatial and social separation
 - Tenure with limited community orientation
 - May be enhanced by community-promoting architecture and built environment

- Condominium ownership
 - Tenure that enforces cooperation within a legal framework (network of formalised relations with a democratic element)
 - Possibility of fulfilling social relationships
 - Limited group size of the condominium owners' association
 - Community-promoting design of architecture and built environment
 - Joint planning and development of the housing project

Condominium ownership

- Residential project Casa Nostra with 12 condominiums in central location of Schwerte:
- "We want to expand our current way of life in a joint housing project. We find different characters, talents, attitudes and lifestyles exciting. We have fun in lively community, without wanting to limit the right to individuality of others."
(from the exposé of the assembly)
- Architecture of the object with space for community life: Common room as well as various recreation and meeting possibilities in the entrance area and in the gallery developments arranged around the central residential courtyard.

Social housing

- Social housing
 - Promotion of individual architectural elements of community-oriented living
(Rheinland-Pfalz: shared use of one of the subsidised dwellings)
 - Inclusion of future social tenants in the planning of social housing projects
- Promotion of property measures via social housing:
 - Shifting the funding focus to manageable, community-based condominiums - if possible in conjunction with joint planning and development by the future residents according to the model of cohousing

Cooperative housing

- Cooperative housing:
 - The cooperative idea unites the idea of self-help with that of solidarity in the group.
 - Housing cooperatives promote a sense of community, neighbourhood cohesion, cooperation and the stability of milieus on a small scale because they are designed for long periods of residence and participatory co-determination.
 - A number of studies support this thesis (Crabtree / Grimstad / McNeill / Perry / Power 2019)
 - Small, manageable cooperatives in which the members live together as neighbours are best.
 - Projects planned, developed and built together are ideal.

- Cohousing (Baugemeinschaft)
 - A group of people willing to plan, develop and build their housing together for individual and at the same time community-oriented self-use.
 - Communal, self-managed and participatory tenure with the aim of promoting interaction among the members of the community on a permanent basis and developing a strong sense of community.
 - Architecture: designed to promote social relations, individually used private housing units and communal facilities (e.g. communal kitchen, laundry room, day-care centre, library, workshop, fitness room).

Cohousing

- Cohousing
 - With these decentralized small communities, initiative and cooperation among the members are promoted at the same time. The community experience refers to joint planning, building and living together in a manageable community of like-minded people.
 - **People create their own homes together.**
 - Ideal communitarian form of housing and living
 - Model against which the other tenures should be measured



- Apartment-sharing community
 - Cost-efficient form of housing with relatively little privacy and seclusion
 - Purpose WGs and non-purpose WGs
 - predominantly still transitional form of living
 - particularly important for younger people, e.g. students, trainees and young people in employment
 - But also WGs of single parents, multi-generation WGs, senior WGs and "Plus-WGs".

- "Co-Living"
 - Special form of Apartment-sharing community with furnished apartments and individual tenancy agreements for each resident
 - designed for flexibility and convenience
 - as a rule significantly more members than a classic WG
 - usually equipped with various communal facilities such as fitness areas, gardens, pools, roof terraces, laundry rooms, yoga rooms, libraries and often also work spaces.
 - Partially hybrid living and working communities
 - Target group: younger, mobile urban people such as exchange students, interns, students, start-up employees or freelancers

"Residents of a co-living house ... are open-minded and interested in meeting and working with other creative people and their visions. It is important for residents of co-living communities to support and motivate each other. At best, they share common interests. Another advantage of co-living is that the creative young residents, although they like to work a lot, are never alone. Co-Living is a modern and successful way of living together. The goal of co-living is to develop a worldwide network so that young people who want to work creatively can feel at home everywhere."

Source: <https://www.wg-gesucht.de/artikel/co-living-die-zeitgemaesse-wohngemeinschaft>



1. What is Communitarianism?
2. Market failure, merit and communitarian goods
3. Place of residence and its social living environment
4. Community and housing tenure
5. **Community and urban development**

New Urbanism

- New urbanism (NU): Neo-traditionalist urban development movement
- supporting the development of sustainable and livable neighbourhoods
- by reactivating or preserving the urban (i.e. densely built) form of the city with the advantages of short distances and intensive neighbourhood.
- European historic old town, American small town (e.g. Montpelier, Vermont) vs. Suburbia



- Essential design principles of NU (in contrast to the Athens Charter):
functional mix and block edge construction with semi-public interior areas
- No large, “inanimate” free spaces between the buildings
- Urban diversity, i.e. variety instead of monotony
- Small-scale mixing of trade, crafts and art with a wide range of housing alternatives according to location, quality and price.
- See for example medium-sized Dutch cities like Groningen, Maastricht or Delft



New Urbanism: slow down and meet with your city

- Opportunities for encounters in urban space
→ city as “meeting space”
- Meeting places such as pubs, cafés, bookshops, restaurants, bakeries, snack bars, cultural institutions, sports facilities or public places that invite people to linger
- Decentralisation and functional mixing within a city of short distances
- Pedestrian-friendly design of streets and squares (“walkability”)
- Slowing down, authentic city, no more “alienation” between the city and its inhabitants



New Urbanism: architecture

- orientation towards regional building traditions and materials
- interaction-promoting design elements such as front porches and well-defined streets

- Communitarianism demands from urban planning
 - not tear apart longstanding social networks and collective identity constructions
 - decentralised, incremental development of the city “from below” in the sense of an evolutionary urban development (Marshall 2008).
 - Critical stance against areal redevelopments, investor architecture and large-scale projects
 - Preservation of “Identity anchors”
- Compatibility of NU with communitarian philosophy

- Communitarianism as an overarching housing paradigm: necessary at all?
- Need for interdisciplinary research with regard to the connections between different tenures, architecture, urban development quality and social capital

- I advocate a productive role for residents in the housing market:
"People create their own homes together."