

Rethinking Global Urban Justice

September 11-13 2017 | Leeds

Conference Programme



Conference Plenary: “New Municipalism: Hopes and Limits of Progressive Urban Policies. Critical Dialogue between Berlin and Barcelona”

Monday 16:30 - 18:00, Conference Auditorium

A plenary discussion with:

Andrej Holm, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin

Jaime Palomera, Universitat de Barcelona

Chaired by **Michael Janoschka**, School of Geography, University of Leeds

Our conference plenary focuses on the challenges that progressive municipal coalitions face when confronted with the structural constraints enforcing neoliberalism in our cities. Drawing on recent experiences from Berlin and Barcelona, the discussion will focus on how local governments may tackle housing policies under the limits imposed by financial accumulation and dispossession. This inevitably relates to processes of gentrification, touristification and displacement, but will also critically analyse the role of municipal governments and their conflictive relations with counter-hegemonic housing struggles, which are particularly relevant in both cities. Although chiefly focusing on Berlin and Barcelona, the discussion will provide fresh input for reflecting upon the role that local governments as well as social movements may have in the contemporary neoliberal restructuring of cities worldwide.

Andrej Holm is a social scientist and working as researcher and lecturer at the Humboldt University in Berlin. His fields of research are gentrification, housing politics, forced eviction and squatting. Beyond his academic work he has been active in Berlin's neighbourhood and tenant organisations since the beginning of the 1990s. As an expert on housing political instruments he was asked for advice from both political parties and social movements during the last decade. From December 2016 to January 2017, he was State Secretary for Housing in Berlin's administration under the social-democrat-left-green government.

Jaime Palomera is an anthropologist, ethnographer and political economist, working on real estate and finance, urban inequality and new forms of political mobilisation. Currently an ERC researcher at the University of Barcelona, he is co-founder of La Hidra Cooperativa (a progressive think tank in Barcelona) and one of the spokespeople of the newly-created Sindicat de Llogaters (Tenants Union). He has been visiting fellow at the Graduate Center in New York and at the Centre d'Analyse et d'Intervention Sociologiques (EHESS) in Paris.