

Symposium: City / Energy Relations in Transformation

The Symposium "City / Energy Relations in Transformation" will look at the responses of actors from various fields, such as the nation-state, municipal, civil society, business, community, and cultural sector to the accelerated risks for multi-species habitats in Europe due to the intersection of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, environmental crisis, and ongoing energy transition. It will focus on the visions and emerging infrastructural politics for energy generation, transmission, storage, and consumption, conceived and put into practice to tackle this triple-faceted fragility related to energy/society relations. It shares the idea about the profoundly political nature of energy infrastructures (Boyer 2018) in terms of their role as enablers for socio-political processes and in terms of their potential to disrupt established modes of power and coercion. Thus, the Symposium examines the impact of socio-political values and institutions on ongoing and anticipated transformations in the energy sector. And at the same time, it reflects on and discusses the role of energy infrastructures and the interdependencies they create in the socio-political reality. The city in its connection to other spatial units is the central arena of this reciprocal process. The Symposium welcomes spatial scholars and practitioners of various conceptual and applied orientations and of all career stages, dealing with the topics of energy infrastructures and their socio-political dimensions. The Baltic Sea region is the primary focus, but presentations from other contexts are very welcome in order to build comparative perspectives. The Symposium highlights, but is not limited to the following themes:

- Fossil modernities
- Energy in the industrial city
- Emergent energy politics
- Energy, landscapes and cultural values
- Crises of energy interdependencies
- Energy populisms
- Solarpunk
- Planetary lens and visions of urbanity

Paper abstracts (up to 250 words, including presenters' affiliation and contact details), as well as registrations without a paper (with an expression of interest) are accepted at urbanism@ehu.lt by **December 14, 2023**.

Letters of acceptance are to be sent by December 19, 2023.

Symposium organizers have a limited budget to cover participation expenses (travel, accommodation, and meals) of Symposium speakers. Applicants are encouraged to use their institutional funds, if available. Selected participants are to pay a NSU membership fee – 25 euros for participants with affiliation and 10 euros for self-employed participants.

The Symposium includes roundtable discussions to interrogate:

- How visions and imaginaries of fossil-free energy futures and urban communities are articulated in political and economic scenarios as well as in public discourses and how these visions are negotiated among different actors. This roundtable places the emphasis on the political promises of just and inclusive energy transition and on the divergent conceptions of inclusion and justice which become relevant in the course of such negotiations. It raises the question, what socio-material conditions might enable a broad process of public participation and political controversy regarding urban energy future-making.
- How hegemonic imaginations and ideas related to the transition to a post-carbon future and the European Green Deal travel from the European center and are translated, negotiated, and implemented in local and transregional contexts. We focus on policies, policy goals, and guidelines that are translated and travel across policy levels. The European Green Deal is such a process of adaptation, adjustment, and translation of ideas and interests that needs to be negotiated at different levels and scales, and its importance has increased with the COVID-19 crisis. We seek to explore how institutional legacies exert an impact on present practices, actions, and discourses, how policymaking in the present shapes and is shaped by imaginations and future scenarios and orientations that travel across policy levels from the center to the periphery, and how policymaking prioritizes, negotiates, and legitimizes competing urgencies across policy levels.
- Whether and how we can transform the energy transition discourse from technical into cultural. The old energy system not only gave birth to industrialization but also to the Anthropocene. Today this energy system makes climate change not only an ecological urgency but also a political and cultural struggle of how we will land on this Earth. In these conditions landscapes and their communities are once again expected to play a key role in defining European futures in view of CO₂ emissions. As energy transition requires space, while landscapes and their local communities are to provide that space, it means that the transition also needs to be about negotiated cultural and ecological values. Viewed together, it becomes a question of negotiations between actors with different power resources and their perspectives on the meaning of landscape.
- How the notion of security (in military, economic, socio-cultural, etc. sense) is articulated in the fields of energy policy, energy design, and related public communication strategies. The emphasis is placed here on the configurations of actors referring to the notion of security in order to institutionalize meanings and inform decision-making. It is thus a context to make sense of securities' driven changes in relations between energy infrastructures, society, culture, and politics in the context of the current triple-faceted fragility created by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, environmental crisis, and energy transitions.

The Symposium is organized in cooperation with:

Nordic Summer University

Laboratory of Critical Urbanism at European Humanities University

CityIndustries International Research Network

Centre for Interdisciplinary Regional Studies, ZIRS, at University Halle-Wittenberg

Department of Cultural Analysis at the University of Klagenfurt

LABLAB research and design think tank

Experimental Humanities Collaborative Network at OSUN