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## *Housing and Settlement. Research Conducted by Professor Jolanta Supińska (1944–2022)*

### *Abstract*

The article attempts to analyse and synthesise the achievements of Professor Jolanta Supińska related to housing and settlement. They are related to her multifaceted research on social policy aspiring to improve the existing reality. This attempt is based on the method of research procedure consisting of a review of relevant publications authored or co-authored by Jolanta Supińska. The article aims to prove that these housing and settlement achievements belonging to the humanistic approach to housing research developed after 1989 at the Institute of Social Policy at the University of Warsaw also place Jolanta Supińska in the trend of the Polish School of housing and settlement issues. They form a logical sequence convergent with the development of the thought of this school, going far beyond the Polish issues. The subjects of Jolanta Supińska's works range from housing and social issues to housing and settlement problems to dealing with the flawed paradigm of market economic growth and, consequently, the entire development of civilisation. Thus, these subjects reflect universal values. The analysis and synthesis also indicate that Jolanta Supińska's works devoted to housing and settlement issues enrich the subject of social policy with a comprehensive spatial approach related to demographic issues. They help to better describe the relationships between social policy and housing and settlement issues as well as

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their significance in the development of civilisation. They reveal the potential and related social policy challenges resulting from the desired process of balancing the space of human habitation on Earth based on the concept of sustainable development.

**Keywords:** Professor Jolanta Supińska (1944–2022), social policy, housing and settlement achievements

## *Introduction*

This study does not really aspire to discuss the multifaceted research works of Professor Jolanta Supińska in the field of social policy, and more broadly, the science of social policy, the work whose determinant is the synthesis of the issues of this policy theory (Supińska, 2014) as well as its contemporary dilemmas (Supińska, 2013a). Her work reveals the knowledge as well as the spirit of Professor Supińska – a vegetarian, defender of animals, not only people. The work is so enriching – it is worth quoting these words here – “[...] humanistic traditions of the *Polish School of social policy*, considering working out social transformations to be the subject of this academic discipline” (Supińska, 2013a, p. 9). Thus, the work assuming the active approach of a researcher trying to improve the existing reality. Jolanta Supińska defined social policy very broadly: “[...]social policy is a *point of view, a way of viewing and axiological evaluation* of the whole world, not only the human world” (Supińska, 2013a, p. 9), adding, “This chosen point of view, inherent in social policy – scientifically and morally justified – makes it possible to distinguish *between antisocial and prosocial* states and actions” (Supińska, 2013a, p. 16.). Writing about the axiological dimension of social policy, Jolanta Supińska stated:

*The indication of values to be pursued does not mean that utopian hopes are spreading, that these values will be realised immediately and fully. By expressing the intention to pursue policies that enable people to live healthier and longer lives, we are not promising immortality; it may be regarded good as it cannot be any better. And by pursuing policies that alleviate the most blatant inequalities disorganising the society, we are not going to come to a mechanical uravnilovka. The goal is the direction of movement, not the finish line, the vanishing point* (Supińska, 2013a, p. 19).

Leaving the responsibility to appraise and to due celebrate the outstanding achievements of Jolanta Supińska to others, the author of this article attempts to synthesise housing and settlement achievements so characteristic of the comprehensive reasoning of the Professor. These accomplishments, which place Jolanta Supińska in the trend of the Polish School related to this issue, begun to form in the first years of the interwar period (Cesarski, 2013). They exemplify a disappearing art of capturing and interpreting scientific views in the language of humanities referring to universal values.

Jolanta Supińska’s close cooperation with Witold Nieciński, one of the leading representatives of this Polish School, which bore fruit in the years of transformation, marks the beginnings of the Professor’s housing studies, which then entered the area

of settlement. Witold Nieciński, working from 1954 at the Institute of Housing Construction, in 1968 renamed into the Institute of Housing Management (Pol. Instytut Gospodarki Mieszkaniowej, IGM), in 1977, began his activity at Jolanta Supińska's home Institute of Social Policy at the University of Warsaw (IPS UW). In the years of transformation, IPS UW developed a humanistic approach to housing research, with Jolanta Supińska's work having a significant impact on it (Zubrzycka-Czarnecka, 2017, p. 40–45). However, Jolanta Supińska's interest in the housing issues began much earlier than her first publications on them. It is reflected in the words: "My fascination with housing began in the 1970s when I read expert opinions vividly written by Witold Nieciński and Tadeusz Żarski (researchers at the IGM then) for the Committee 'Poland 2000'" (Supińska, 2005, p. 9). Adam Andrzejewski was first a formal, then informal steersman of the IBM and IGM for half a century till his death in 1998. He was the most prominent post-war representative of the Polish School of housing and settlement issues (Stasiak & Cesarski, 2001), whose works Jolanta Supińska refers to, marking her belonging to the environment of this school, also on other occasions (Supińska, 2013b).

The aim of the present retrospective and analytical study is to outline the housing and settlement dimension of Professor Jolanta Supińska's work with its phases, evolution as well as the message and universal values. The applied method of research consists in a review of relevant publications authored and co-authored by Jolanta Supińska. The article is also to prove the author's belief that the housing and settlement interests of Professor Jolanta Supińska are arranged in a logical sequence convergent with the development of the thought of the Polish School of research on these issues as well as practice in this field.

### *Housing and social issues*

In Poland, in the first years of the systemic transformation, there was a growing social, frequently tragic, problem of repayment of housing loans taken out by cooperatives, burdening cooperative members in the period of hyperinflation and then double-digit inflation. A critical reaction to this is presented in the article by Jolanta Supińska in "Sprawy Mieszkaniowe", a quarterly published by the IBM and IGM in the period 1963–2002. In the article, Jolanta Supińska emphasises the socio-economic diversity of households occupying cooperative apartments in the years 1990–1992. She pointed to wealthy and very affluent households supported by publicly funded bank discounts, taking over cooperative premises at market rates from those resigning from the settlement for financial reasons. However, she focused on the largest group of households, for which an extreme financial effort was, as a rule, the only chance for an independent flat, i.e., its acquisition and maintenance excessively overloaded with loan repayment. The information about a possible amount of this repayment was not given – as she indicated – in a reliable manner to those deciding to settle in cooperative premises. Jolanta Supińska emphasised no connection between the amount of housing loans granted by the banks in the years 1990–1992 for specific construction tasks with the level of income of future residents as well as the instability

of repayment rules, including the so-called double indexation of unpaid interest. She considered the attempts of the state to protect the current income of this group of cooperative members to be decisively insufficient. Jolanta Supińska did not stop at criticism. She proposed to improve the way housing construction was credited, which did not arouse any interest of decision-makers, in the form of three groups of different solutions concerning: the existing debt, the growth of the “credit loop” in the future and the regulation of the current burden on household budgets due to loan servicing (Supińska, 1992).

The general housing crisis in Poland did not stop. The countermeasures proposed by the housing research community, including Jolanta Supińska, in the early 1990s were not understood by the government. The state did not create economic, systemic and technical or material conditions to facilitate building or renting a place to live by its citizens. It does not intervene sufficiently when housing remains inaccessible or hardly accessible for medium- and less affluent groups of the population. It does not counteract housing pathologies born in the People’s Republic of Poland and at the beginning of the transformation. Jolanta Supińska and other housing researchers emphasised that there were gaps and inconsistencies in the New Housing Deal (Pol. Nowy ład mieszkaniowy, NŁM) of 1993. Referring to the social doctrine of the market economy, the NŁM did not consider that such an economy is based on a conscious creation of social consumption funds. It ignored the need for the inclusion of non-market social issues in the housing policy, correcting the operation of market mechanisms in this area (Grudziński et al., 1992; Supińska, 1993; Nieciński et al., 1993). These issues determined the way Jolanta Supińska perceived the entire housing problem in Poland, consistent with the position of the Polish School of research in this area, already expressed in the interwar period (Supińska, 1996; Supińska, 1998).

The liberalisation of market forces resulted in far-reaching changes in the forms of ownership, including the housing resources. The privatisation of housing in the public sector was expanding and accelerating significantly. The mistakes in the housing policy were described in a cautionary article written by Jolanta Supińska and Witold Nieciński at the beginning of the second decade of transformation. In particular, it was advisable to reject the extreme doctrine of liberalism, which absolutises the role of the market mechanism in satisfying housing needs, “silencing” the housing aspirations of the majority of society and creating greater social dangers in the future than a unilateral sense of entitlement in this area (Nieciński & Supińska, 2000).

Jolanta Supińska participated in a discussion initiated in this period by the editors of the monthly “Domy Spółdzielcze”, which has been published since 1957. She stressed there the need for the public authorities to support housing initiatives of a different kind. She gave priority to cooperatives, especially tenancy cooperatives, as worthy of the most consistent support due to the construction and maintenance of a moderate standard housing resources, the mobilisation of resources of the middle-income population and the ability to create a social bond that goes beyond the borders of residential areas. She indicated a characteristic predisposition of cooperative property to give the inhabited space a community character taking into account the privacy of the accommodation microspace. She outlined a broad vision of intergenerational transfer of cooperative property – tenancy and other property, which, contrary to

popular opinion, is conducive to permanent inhabitation, also through the consolidation of the entire cooperative movement. However, she warned against the tolerance for legal and administrative pathologies within housing cooperatives before and after 1989, and external regulations limiting the possibilities of its development (Supińska, 2001, p. 3).

In 2002, Jolanta Supińska took part in a discussion on the problems of housing in Poland published in the scientific journal “Problemy Polityki Społecznej. Studia i Dyskusje”, of which she was the editor-in-chief between 2006 and 2012. She brought out issues that were increasingly neglected in the years of transformation. She pointed to the unclear status of a flat having some features of public and private goods. In this connection, she stated: “This is a physical character of housing – spatial community [...]. Even if individual people have property titles to certain bricks of this structure, it is considered a public good as a whole, requiring the care and responsibility of public entities” (Supińska, 2002, p. 222). Jolanta Supińska then returned to obvious advantages of group ownership in this context, focusing on cooperative ownership, mentioning here also the communal property understood, one can add, in the traditional sense derived from the interwar period postulated by prominent representatives of the “Polish Housing School” at that time. With regard to group property, she said:

*It is, therefore, necessary to laboriously organise the law and to practice such a “social pedagogy” in order to make people aware that the community, firstly, results from the physical nature of habitat that cannot be shredded and, secondly, such an arrangement can be socially and economically beneficial for them. In this way, perhaps it would be possible to gradually restore this positive bottom-up attitude towards cooperatives (Supińska, 2002, p. 222).*

It is Jolanta Supińska, in her collective work for the 90<sup>th</sup> birthday anniversary of Witold Nieciński, who was the first in Poland to warn against the shortcomings of social policy that treats housing policy perfunctorily, disregarding the housing conditions of the population. She put forward and proved the thesis that the evolution of housing policy, considered today an independent scientific discipline, justified talking about the place of housing policy in the social policy and about the place of social policy in the housing policy. She said, “[...] where there is a beginning of investment in walls and transformation of physical space, the social policy appears powerless and incompetent. Conversely, the housing policy can be desocialised and conducted in an excessively technocratic way” (Supińska, 2005, p. 13). She supported an in-depth, multifaceted analysis of the relationship between unmet housing needs and a variety of socio-economic perturbations and irregularities. Jolanta Supińska recalled the beginning of the 1990s when central authorities stated that the lack of housing policy was the best policy, housing was a market commodity, etc. In Poland, the transformation of housing, subordinated in practice to the principles of neoliberalism, gave – as she aptly observed – an impression of abundance. As part of this abundance, despite the introduction – along with attempts to make rents more realistic on the market – of housing allowances which, to a substantial extent, did not reach those in the worst need, the implementation of evictions became increasingly frequent.

Giving examples of expensive “investments in man” increasing the chances of commercial participation in the labour, cultural and other markets, Jolanta Supińska pointed to even more expensive housing, not recognised as a public good in contrast to many commercial expenses. This led Jolanta Supińska to the conclusion that the housing policy is an important, but a significantly different area of research and practical activities from the “rest of social policies”. Therefore, the housing policy should combine the elements of the administrative-subvention model with the challenges of the accumulation-intervention model, both, as she remarked, were proposed by Adam Andrzejewski in the 1970s (Supińska, 2005).

At the beginning of the 2010s, in a text summarising housing paradoxes in Poland, Jolanta Supińska began, together with Łukasz Szewczyk (Supińska & Szewczyk, 2009), with the thesis put forward by Adam Andrzejewski that housing was the most expensive good of common use. She mentioned the features of a flat indicated by Adam Andrzejewski which hinder its spread in the social dimension: immobility, i.e., attachment to the place where it was built, the longevity of use reaching 80–120 years in the Polish conditions, low degree of adaptation to the changing needs of residents, susceptibility to moral wear and tear processes and an excessive cost of construction and maintenance. Against this background, Jolanta Supińska and Łukasz Szewczyk formulated the first paradox saying that the housing issue in Poland, which had not been solved for decades, was “permanent evil”. They indicated the second paradox, because the features like durability, low degree of adaptability to changing needs, immobility as well as the excessive costs of housing interfere with the rapidly growing mobility of the Polish society in the post-war period and the related changes in the size and structure of households, lifestyle and cultural conditions, etc. The third paradox consists in the transformation of the needs and possibilities of saving for the acquisition and maintenance of a flat becoming a science-intensive and import-intensive good, in view of difficulties of systematic earning associated with unemployment and what is called the flexible forms of employment. This is in favour – despite the market focus on individual ownership and commercial rental – of the growing importance of social renting. The fourth paradox connected with this arises from the need for a multiplicity of ways of obtaining a flat, forms of its ownership and types of flats with increasing financial, property and social inequalities of the population. The fifth paradox is marked by the aforementioned double role of a flat as an intimate oasis of privacy and, at the same time, a public good. The housing misery, neighbourhood of slums, aggression and mutual misunderstanding caused by overcrowded premises and isolation of various communities, and suppression of creativity have a clearly supra-individual dimension.

Jolanta Supińska and Łukasz Szewczyk considered the question: “How much politics is there in the housing policy?” rhetorical. They claimed that the true policy is substituted by detached and superficial actions subordinated to the minimisation of budget deficits, without any bolder attempts to counteract, with the policy, a narrow demographic reproduction giving rise to many other socio-economic problems. A detailed inquiry, according to them, was: “How much social policy is there in the housing policy?”. Jolanta Supińska and Łukasz Szewczyk also answered the query of how much housing policy there is in the social policy. They argued that

social politicians focused mainly on providing benefits to the poor, offering educational and medical services, etc. However, it is difficult, as they pointed out, to develop a basket of basic goods and services and a minimum income without any knowledge of the diverse, generally relatively high costs of broadly understood housing investments (Supińska & Szewczyk, 2009).

### *Housing and settlement issues*

Jolanta Supińska shows her comprehensive housing and settlement approach in another question she formulated together with Łukasz Szewczyk. She extended the list of housing paradoxes in Poland asking how much spatial policy there is in the housing and social policy (Supińska & Szewczyk, 2009). Jolanta Supińska and Łukasz Szewczyk referred there to the idea of environment developed by the “Polish Housing School” stating that flats should be built to create harmonious and functional human settlements that constitute a basic determinant of spatial order. The extended function of flats with micro-local, local and supra-local communal and social infrastructure facilities is primarily intended to enrich a wider settlement standard. The authors considered it highly insufficient to identify spatial order with the aesthetic approach of architects, which has little to do with housing policy. They referred to historical examples of the perception of close relationships between spatial and housing policy in the 15<sup>th</sup> century through the concept of the city-garden created by Ebenezer Howard, a specifically understood deurbanisation by Le Corbusier, the Bauhaus times – admittedly, discovered again today by the EU Athens Charter, for the contemporary search for the urban cohesion. Jolanta Supińska and Łukasz Szewczyk underlined the connection, common for this and other concepts, of housing thinking with the spatial dimension, going beyond the provision of flats understood in the purely constructional sense as only a “roof over one’s head”. They deplored the current simple devaluation resulting from “colloquial knowledge” of many creative postulates of such thinking, mistakenly reduced in Poland to the principles of the post-war system. They also deplored the heritage of modernism in this respect, so easily rejected in Poland, “probably as nowhere else in the world”.

In Jolanta Supińska’s reasoning, space is the area in which the life of communities takes place. Permanent spatial development, and especially buildings, is “a foundry form modelling the majority of human behaviours” (Supińska, 2013a, p. 139). Habitat, i.e., the territory occupied by people, is also a socio-geographical space created over generations. Jolanta Supińska stated in this regard: “It is impossible to conduct a rational housing policy with reference to one research discipline” (Supińska, 2013a, p. 139). She pointed to urban planning as proposing the development of a settlement network on the national, regional and city scale; the spatial development policy and regional policy, which are particularly important areas defining the scope of habitat; architecture filling the structure of the habitat with projects of settlements, buildings, etc. She perceived the sociology of town, countryside and housing as dealing with the functioning of human centres in space of various scales, and, on the other hand, she saw the importance of the branches of law regulating the processes of creating

and using a habitat, including the protection and revalorisation of the natural environment transformed by human civilisation. Jolanta Supińska went even further to the ecological determinants of the settlement and inhabitation of man on Earth, pointing – as a defender of equality of animals in this aspect – to the importance of ethology and proxemics determining the biological and cultural aspects of the human sense of territoriality (Supińska, 2013a).

In the conditions of the intensifying structural crisis of capitalism of the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Jolanta Supińska indicated the exhaustion of the neoliberal model of economic sciences and management, which began to intensify a general anthropopressure in the 1980s. She stated:

*Economists are increasingly talking about the collapse of a certain model of economic science and real management revealed on this occasion; a model called neoliberal, which for about 20 years supplanted the impact of Keynesianism (not to mention Marxism) from the “popular economic wisdom”. The paradigms of these trends of thought reach their apogee, wear out, go away, and then come back “as new ones” (Supińska, 2013a, p. 67).*

In this context, she brought together the discussions on the greenhouse effect of “dirty production and consumption” and the multi-culture of postmodern society reinforced by excessive settlement migrations born of global socio-economic inequalities throughout the living space. In a masterly, concise way, she defined migration dilemmas by saying [...] *a surge of global prosperity lifts some boats faster, while others quickly soak up water and can go to the bottom*”. (Supińska, 2013a, p. 84). Jolanta Supińska also stated: “[...] considerable discrepancies in countries with a low level of development are particularly prone to conflicts. The local social order can hardly be *sustainable*, and emigration from it serves as a safety valve” (Supińska, 2013a, p. 85). Thus, she supported the need for broader approaches to the relationship between man, economy and nature in favour of sustainable development, i.e., sustainable human habitation on Earth. Jolanta Supińska saw opportunities to make this development real in the supranational policy in this area.

Jolanta Supińska was convinced that “sustainable development is difficult to implement in the conditions of a population boom” (Supińska, 2013a, p. 109), and that “[...] the ecological objectives are not achieved through population growth, *but through population stabilisation and even decline*” (Supińska, 2013a, p. 109). She did not expect “[...] a quick and decisive departure from the current philosophy of development [...]” (Supińska, 2013a, p. 109); the philosophy of development, it can be inferred, generating global and other socio-economic inequalities so conducive to a population boom, including a migration crisis undermining the desired root taking of living. The philosophy responsible for this global anthropopressure in a situation when: “Modern civilisation is slowly [insufficiently M.C.] moving away from the axiom that man is the unpunished master of the Earth and nature” (Supińska, 2013a, p. 106).

Of the ideas cited by Jolanta Supińska, which treat population development from the perspective of common values: autotelic, religious, political-military, economic, cultural and ecological, today, the ecological challenges seem to be reaching furthest into

the future, determining the sustainable human habitation on Earth the most strongly. The threats to the ecological values were interpreted by Jolanta Supińska in the aspect of three ecological goals of increasing complexity. She moved from the immediate, pragmatic goal, i.e., the preservation of human security and survival, to the goal enriched with positive human aesthetic and emotional experiences, to the aim of treating nature as a superior value, leading to the recognition that man is only a part of nature. But the only part capable of self-limiting in the name of the survival of the whole, i.e., the Earth. Perhaps, then, the duration of human habitation on Earth depends on their ability to limit themselves quantitatively?

Jolanta Supińska formulated and considered a “counter-quantitative” approach the most accurate for social policy trying to repair the existing reality, accepting as a general goal an increase in the broadly understood freedom to develop one’s own household, including the human right to produce offspring or not, which should not be subject to moral assessments. Eventually, the effect and resultant of such a law may change the population numbers on a macrosocial scale, analysed without axiological assumptions and forecast on the basis of retrospective data so as to strive in the future for “good conditions for births, reproduction, life and death” (Supińska, 2013a, p. 134). Therefore, the present needs and standards of life of a free man come first and may be modified, “[...] when such a necessity arises from the prediction of the future needs of children and future generations” (Supińska, 2013a, p. 134). Jolanta Supińska also refers to the fact-verified theory of demographic transformation – a centuries-long process of transition from a large number of births and deaths, rapid generational renewal, etc. to a type of reproduction with opposite features typical of the countries with the highest level of GDP today. According to today’s state of knowledge, the inevitability of this process leading to “economical and rational” reproduction of the native population, strengthened by the empirically recorded, fading amplitude of baby declines and booms, speaks in favour of a self-driven secular mechanism of reaching the balance, equivalent to achieving the state of social well-being (Supińska, 2013a, pp. 134–135).

Jolanta Supińska’s reasoning as a social policy researcher resulting from the present population arguments turns out to be critically important and inspiring in the housing and settlement dimension. And perhaps the “economical and rational” reproduction of population is synonymous with “economical and rational” inhabitation? Can the search for a synthesis of ecological self-limitation of man, a “counter-quantitative” approach to demographic objectives and a self-driven mechanism of demographic balance recovery serve a broadly understood root taking of inhabitation, which is a prerequisite for a pro-settlement oriented sustainable development? These questions, no matter how scientifically tempting, potentially elevating the profile of supranational, global housing and settlement policy, remain without a generally accepted answer today.

A broader housing and settlement significance is due to a study by Jolanta Supińska and Aleksandra Zubrzycka-Czarnecka created after 10 years of Polish membership in the European Union (Supińska & Zubrzycka-Czarnecka, 2015). Considering flats and the surrounding habitat, Jolanta Supińska and Aleksandra Zubrzycka-Czarnecka made an innovative presentation of five – as they call them – paths of development of housing in Poland. These paths are marked by the impact exerted by international

institutions, the achievements of the Polish School of housing research, ownership policy, changes in the state of the housing resources and the impact of institutions and funds related to the housing policy. The theoretical perspective of the study is determined – as the Authors point out – by the tradition of the Polish School of housing research. According to this tradition, spatial arrangements and buildings that survived the passage of time and different events are carriers of ancient cultures and social relations, so they need to be analysed in the long-term dating back to the end of World War II in this case.

Jolanta Supińska and Aleksandra Zubrzycka-Czarnecka considered the assumptions of the Polish School of theory and practice of the housing policy consistent. In these assumptions, they emphasised the intervention of public institutions in housing in order to support the satisfaction of the needs of low-income populations. They mentioned the idea of a social housing estate, related mainly to the pre-war achievements of this school, combining architectural, urban and political-social postulates with the need for functional modernist housing architecture. This idea was implemented on an experimental micro-scale of settlement by Warsaw Housing Cooperative (Pol. *Warszawska Spółdzielnia Mieszkaniowa*) building housing estates conceived in the future as basic residential units of the functional and spatial structure of the city. Housing estates in which basic social and municipal infrastructure is a prerequisite for the integration of residents.

Jolanta Supińska and Aleksandra Zubrzycka-Czarnecka claimed that after 1989 there was some reluctance of the political authorities in Poland not only towards housing cooperatives, but also communal and company housing as part of the withdrawal from interventionism in satisfying housing needs. They pointed to the wasted opportunities of the European Union's influence on the development of housing in Poland by including housing policy as part of the urban policy as well as the overall strategy of social inclusion. In the area of changes in the ownership structure, the authors noted some worrying phenomena accompanying the purchase of flats in Poland; e.g., household debts due to housing loans and limited mobility in the labour market. They criticised the growing importance of private housing property as a result of the reprivatisation of urban real estate existing so far as communal flats in old tenement houses with tenants persecuted by new owners later or the reprivatisation of public spaces developed as parks, school playgrounds, etc. They underlined that documentation confirming the title to property can be unreliable and unverified. They treated ownership transformations as a determinant of the transformation of inhabited space. With regard to the path of changes in the housing resources, Jolanta Supińska and Aleksandra Zubrzycka-Czarnecka noted that in the field of housing, the unreliability of the shortage economy manifested by the long waiting time for accommodation in the public sector was not overcome in Poland by the market economy. In addition, the shortage of decent housing is accompanied by vacant property, and the increase in population mobility and inherited housing distribution emphasise this paradox. Vacant property exists both in depopulated villages as well as in metropolises. It is to a substantial extent related to the migration movements of the population in search of work, including periodic emigration to the EU countries. In addition, the law does not limit citizens in terms of the number of flats owned, which before

1989 effectively counteracted multi-flat ownership in Poland contrasted with homelessness in the years of transformation.

The European integration did not stop the destabilisation of the institutional infrastructure of housing policy. Jolanta Supińska and Aleksandra Zubrzycka-Czarnecka gave an example of eight changes in the structure of ministries and central offices responsible for the housing policy after 1989 and an example of the liquidation of many public housing institutions, including the IGM in 2002 and the National Housing Fund operating only in the period 1995–2009. Jolanta Supińska and Aleksandra Zubrzycka-Czarnecka pointed out that letting the housing policies remain within the competence of the EU member states results in a number of unrelated, often inconsistent areas of impact of EU institutions on housing. In the field of housing and settlement issues, this impact primarily concerns the spatial relations of migration and the distribution of housing resources. Polish migrants to the EU countries looking for jobs are exposed, e.g., to living in substandard conditions, which should be regulated in the field of international housing and settlement policy.

It is worth quoting here some statements of Jolanta Supińska from a slightly earlier work:

*The location of real estate, i.e., flats, is easy to determine, the condition is also easy to diagnose and substandard housing, e.g., slums, easy to distinguish. But even migrants themselves may be unsure where they really are: here or there. And where they will eventually settle down. The European labour market is a shock absorber that allows us to camouflage Polish unemployment, but also Polish homelessness (Supińska, 2013a, p. 139).*

In this context, a question arises – how to count the shortage of housing and its standard in relation to the number and structure of households and their distribution? The answer is not simple. Jolanta Supińska argued that only non-substandard and non-decapitalised flats should be included in this calculation, which is subject to change, though. In addition, non-residential premises are sometimes inhabited, and the existence of vacant property indicates a mismatch between the spatial structure of the housing resources and the labour market. The law allows wealthy people to buy flats solely for the purpose of hoarding. Jolanta Supińska noted the disappearance of mechanisms adjusting the usable area of flats to the size of households, as a result of which the smallest flats are often occupied by poor large households with many children. It raises a reasonable doubt that even if about two million missing flats, according to various changing estimates, were to be built in Poland, their defective distribution through market mechanisms may not cause a significant effect on the social dimension. These and other factors mean that, “Culture and society determine the human team (from single/multi-person, single/multi-generational household to the neighbourly community) and the cultural or spatial environment in which we want these needs to be met. The economy and politics exaggerate the possibilities of spreading rational standards and realising desires” (Supińska, 2013a, p. 138).

In Poland, however, the intensification of migration in search of employment has not triggered the need to create sufficient instruments to support the construction

of flats for rent, making the labour market more flexible than the ownership of houses and flats, which is far less susceptible to cyclical fluctuations in the labour and housing markets. Negative phenomena and housing as well as settlement processes, which come as a consequence of the liberal market economy suddenly introduced in Poland, according to Jolanta Supińska and Aleksandra Zubrzycka-Czarnecka consist in the appropriation of public space together with the immediate surroundings of flats for private purposes. They manifest themselves in a chaotic and often illegal placement of large-format advertisements in cities, the occupation of housing estate greenery by diverse types of proprietary housing construction, and suburban greenery, including forest greenery, by private gated estates for the rich (Supińska & Zubrzycka-Czarnecka, 2015).

In conclusion, Jolanta Supińska and Aleksandra Zubrzycka-Czarnecka emphasise that the accession of Poland to the EU did not initiate the revival of housing for sustainable living. The authorities rejected the idea of the Polish housing school, including the traditions of housing cooperatives together with the concept of a social housing estate. With regard to the institutional infrastructure of housing policy, the undeniable achievements of many interwar and post-war institutions were lost. At the same time, no new concepts of housing policy have been developed, not only concerning housing, but also the surrounding habitat. Jolanta Supińska and Aleksandra Zubrzycka-Czarnecka concluded that the condition of Polish housing will constitute a significant obstacle to the participation of Poland in the process of European integration.

## *Conclusion*

The analysis and synthesis of Professor Jolanta Supińska's housing and settlement achievements, the phases and evolution of this *acquis*, reflect explicit universal values that go beyond the Polish issues. They reflect the values guiding the thought of the Polish School of research on these issues since the 1920s. The achievements of housing cooperatives in the development of this school cannot be overestimated. Jolanta Supińska stated, "the Polish achievements of housing cooperatives are among our best traditions, the recall of which should be the task of the historical policy currently being discussed" (Supińska, 2013a, p. 141). The subject matter of Jolanta Supińska's works expanded in a manner characteristic of the Polish School – from housing and social issues to housing and settlement issues to dealing with the flawed market paradigm, especially neoliberal as well as the economic growth and, consequently, the entire civilisational development. Jolanta Supińska confirmed with all her research work on housing and settlement that contemporary civilisational challenges are increasingly divergent from the individual market-based needs, which really turned to desires. The growing discrepancy of this kind relates to a departure from linking a broadly understood existential security of humanity with the content and forms of social housing, settlement and habitation. Housing and settlement satisfying the needs of poor and moderately well-off populations should be one of the basic instruments of urban planning and urbanisation policy leading to the balanced development of cities and other inhabited spaces. Social housing and settlement provide an opportunity to

influence the proper functional-spatial relations of housing, social and other infrastructure, workplaces, recreation areas, etc. Opportunities in this area have not been used so far, not only in Poland.

Jolanta Supińska's research works on housing and settlement enriched the subject of social policy with an extensive spatial approach related to demographic issues. They revealed the potential and related social policy challenges resulting from the desired process of balancing the space of human habitation on Earth based on the concept of sustainable development. Jolanta Supińska justified that greater consideration of the spatial and population dimension allows for a better emphasis on relations between social policy and housing and settlement issues and their importance in the development of civilisation. The message of her housing and settlement achievements shows theoretical and practical possibilities of giving social policy new, logically acceptable, systemic and universally understandable mega social contents related to habitation. This message gives Professor Supińska a permanent place in the history of Polish housing and settlement thought. Her comprehensive reasoning, which made such an important contribution to the cause of housing and settlement, reveals her unique understanding of social policy and an outstanding, hardly replaceable contribution to the Polish School of social policy, to which she remained faithful to the end.

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