

**Lifestyles, choice of housing location and daily mobility**  
**The lifestyle approach in the context of spatial mobility and planning**

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**Abstract**

Today, spatial research and planning is confronted with complex frame conditions that have substantially changed in the past decades. Thus, a comprehensive social change is initiated, giving new room for individual development, but on the other hand making new decisions necessary (cue: individualisation). At the same time, settlement structures and time-regimes – essential conditions for spatial mobility – have developed dynamically (cues: decentralisation, flexibilisation). Hitherto however, research and planning show serious methodological problems in the consideration of the stated changes. The explanation patterns of existing approaches for spatial mobility are mainly based upon spatial and individual restrictions. Neither the increasing degrees of freedom nor the subjective rationales behind mobility decisions are adequately considered. The paper presents the conceptual framework, methods and preliminary results of the interdisciplinary research project “StadtLeben”. The central research question focuses on the interrelation between social structures (lifestyles, milieus), space-time-structures, housing and choice of housing location, and daily mobility. The proposed research approach shall help to develop target group-oriented and efficient planning and design strategies, which are tested in a workshop in an exemplary study area in Cologne. Together with planning practitioners, action-oriented knowledge as well as suggestions for planning methods (participation, processes, competence) shall be derived.

## **Lifestyles, choice of housing location and daily mobility**

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#### **Introduction**

Today, spatial research and planning are confronted with complex frame conditions that have changed substantially in the past decades. Two phenomena need to be taken into account in this respect:

- an increasing socio-cultural differentiation or even fragmentation of the society (individualisation, differentiation and pluralisation of lifestyles);
- a dynamic development of spatial structures and time-regimes, including increasingly complex forms of mobility on different levels (e.g. choice of housing location and mobility behaviour as basic forms of spatial mobility).

The main idea of this contribution is to find both observations in a research context. For spatial and mobility research, this involves a different understanding of social and spatial structures. At the same time, new conclusions have to be drawn for current planning strategies in the context of the development of urban neighbourhoods.

The contribution is based upon the research concept of the interdisciplinary project “StadtLeben”. In this project, transport researchers, urban planners, geographers and psychologists from the following institutions are working together: RWTH Aachen, Institut für Stadtbauwesen und Stadtverkehr (coordination); Freie Universität Berlin, Institut für Geographische Wissenschaften, Abteilung Stadtforschung; Ruhr-Uni-Bochum, Arbeitseinheit Kognitions- und Umweltpsychologie; Universität Dortmund, Fachgebiet Verkehrswesen und Verkehrsplanung; Wohnbund Frankfurt Entwicklungsgesellschaft mbH. The project is supported by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research in the research program “Building and Housing”.

## **Basic principles**

### *Lifestyles*

In German sociology, lifestyle research has developed considerably since the late 1980s. The starting point was Beck's claims about increasing individualisation: traditional structures of social inequality are losing their relevance because "old" vertical inequality is being supplemented by new horizontal inequalities "beyond classes and strata" (Beck 1986: 121). The clear pattern of social strata is, it is claimed, being scattered into a mosaic of bits and pieces, which remain dynamically connected by social mobility. "The brief dream of never-ending prosperity" (Lutz 1984) made possible by economic prosperity in the post-war decades facilitated an unexpected liberation from traditional patterns, including the disappearance of linear, predictable courses of life, better chances for education for all parts of the population, longer duration of adolescence, changes in the gender relations (including growing female labour market participation), smaller households, diversification and flexibilisation of employment and the dissolution of traditional time-regimes. Concerning mobility, motorisation in the 1960s and 70s increased at rates that consistently defied forecasts (Scheiner 2002).

Quite recently, some of these developments have reached new dimensions as regards the deregulation of labour in relation with globalisation of the economy and the spatial results of the decline of fixed time-regimes (Wolf & Scholz 1999).

For lifestyle-research, these structural developments are rather the background than the research subject itself. Lifestyle research works primarily with the life-designs of individuals. Lifestyle is defined as "regular patterns of behaviour, which represent structural situations as well as habitual behaviour and social affinities" (Lüdtke 1996: 140). Leisure time is an extensive and intensively explored field for research on self-stylisation. On the theoretical level, it is important to distinguish "voluntaristic" from "structuralist" concepts. In German sociology, voluntaristic concepts of lifestyle tend to disconnect it from social stratification (Schulze 1992; Lüdtke 1995). However, the interdependence between lifestyle and social status cannot be neglected. Empirical results show that classical stratum variables (income, professional status) have become less important than age and education, and partly gender (Schulze 1992; Spellerberg 1996; Schneider and Spellerberg 1999; Klee 2001: 131ff). The results indicate the persistence of the connection between educational perspectives and

prospects of promotion to the economic elite, on the one hand, and parents' education and profession, on the other (Schimpl-Neimanns 2000). This concept points to a structural perception of lifestyles (Bourdieu 1979).

### *Mobility*

The main thesis is that certain lifestyle groups have specific forms of mobility. But mobility is a two-sided term. On the one hand, it identifies social and spatial mobility; on the other side it indicates short-term (travel) and long-term mobility (housing mobility, choice of location). Moreover it is used for actual movement (relocation, travel behaviour, moving up or down socially) as well as for potential and opportunity. The latter shape motion, but also themselves derive from the accessibility of destinations as a "supply" (Topp 1994). Finally, spatial mobility is often used as a synonym for physical motion, but it includes the use of media as well ("virtual mobility"), through both individualised use (internet, e-mail, interactive CD-ROM, fax, BTX, phone...) and classical mass media (TV, radio, newspaper, journals). These differentiations are of great relevance for analysis of lifestyles and mobility.

The concept of the (partial) dissolving of lifestyles from socio-structural frameworks implies increased spatial opportunities. The analogy seems to be true for the spatial level: because of the loosening of structural conditions, spatial descent is hardly a restriction for the design of the individual life. Furthermore, spatial affiliation to the neighbourhood could decline (motorisation and increasing use of cars, virtual mobility...).

Secondly, individualisation and pluralisation of lifestyles will imply a changing dynamic in social and spatial mobility. For example, mobility considerations will be modified after a change of job. The decision between long-distance commuting and moving closer to the place of work after a professional change increasingly favours commuting, which is facilitated by the availability of a car and promoted by home ownership, which increases the connection to the location of the home (Kalter 1994). In any case, modern forms of professional development (two-income households) and frequent changes of job restrict the "proximity" choice of location anyway.

Thirdly, the increasing "mediatisation" of society and the partial replacement of face-to-face-interaction by virtual communication increase the extension of spatial opportunities. Subsequently, physical interrelations change (Scheiner 2001). Hitherto, it is unclear how this

change will evolve. Especially in the context of tele-working, different perspectives are discussed. The central question is whether physical mobility will be replaced by telecommunication or whether both forms reinforce themselves mutually (see Vogt 2000).

In conclusion, processes of mobility are interrelated on different levels (housing and daily mobility, physical and virtual mobility) and in a social and economical context.

## **Connections**

### *Lifestyles and daily mobility*

In the 1990s, mobility research started to translate the concept of lifestyles into “mobility styles”. A differentiated understanding of travel demand was created, connecting lifestyles with daily mobility in a subject-oriented scheme (Götz, Jahn & Schultz 1997; Scheiner 1997; Wulfhorst, Beckmann, Hunecke & Heinze 2000). So far, it is normally limited to modal choice (Götz, Jahn & Schultz 1997).

Scheiner (1997) typifies the population of different research areas in Stuttgart, Germany concerning the spatial orientation of activity space. He distinguishes groups with a concentration on few destinations and groups with disperse orientations. Significant differences between distances and modal choice were found, which resulted in the characterisation of mobility styles.

In recent studies, the concept of mobility styles found application. Partly, the aim is the thorough description of typical forms of mobility behaviour (Lanzendorf 2001); partly, the focus lies on theoretical models to explain mobility behaviour (Hunecke 1999).

However, some central questions remain unanswered: the relevance of lifestyles for mobility research is still unclear. Do lifestyles lead to explanations that extend the results of conventional socio-demography? Generally, typologies of lifestyle are treated as independent variables and therefore as autonomously emerging styles. The question remains how they are influenced structurally by non-lifestyle-specific resources or restrictions. It remains unclear what is “behind” lifestyles. The question is well-grounded by the strong correlation between

lifestyles and socio-demographic issues (e.g. age) as well as by theoretical considerations about the resource dependence of lifestyles.

Secondly, mobility research still focuses mainly on modal choice. Further aspects, such as realised distances, activity participation, or time structure of activities, are neglected. Nevertheless, these aspects remain important from an analytical as well as from an applied point of view with respect to sustainable transport planning: For instance, realised distances are connected to the consumption of resources and to the emissions of transport. Opportunities to participate in activities are highly relevant for older or mobility-restricted people (Kasper & Scheiner 2002).

### *Lifestyles and choice of housing location*

Realising a lifestyle puts individuals in a context with respect to their spatial environment. The contextual relation may be direct, when activities rely on “scenes”, like discos, pubs, sports facilities or other meeting points (Schulze 1992: 459ff). However, domestic as well as “non-spatial” lifestyles (e.g. media-oriented, netsurfing) also imply a “statement” about space. It may indicate “just” a concentration on the private sphere or a focus on global contacts where individuals “don’t just dissolve in the Internet and live on in cyberspace” because of their material existence (Rhode-Jüchtern 1998: 7).

Concerning the internal infrastructure of the home, the neighbourhood and the housing location, these differentiated designs of daily life are a challenge (e.g. Klee 2001: 162ff): While some need shopping malls, sport facilities and an entertainment district close to home, for others, internet access and delivery services are suitable. Most recently, these phenomena have been discussed in connection with lifestyles and choice of housing location.

Within sociology, this discussion emerged from segregation research. The pluralisation of lifestyles is associated with young urban elites (Yuppies, Dinks etc.) with economically and culturally dominating lifestyles, who cover urban space symbolically and functionally and who displace other population groups by invading new neighbourhoods (“gentrification”). In contrast, other groups like older people are excluded from lifestyle research (e.g. Spellerberg 1996; Klee 2001). Dangschat (1996: 113) concludes that the idea of social de-structuration and pluralisation of lifestyles describes just one part of society – “the sunny side of

modernisation winners”( 127) –, because freedom from structural constraints is not available to all (see Friedrichs & Blasius 2000).

Housing location as a spatial distribution of social groups has to be distinguished from housing mobility as an indicator for the development of housing biographies. The housing unit (type, size, standard) is the linking variable, since the unequal spatial distribution of housing types influences the choice of housing location. Schneider and Spellerberg (1999) state that the lifestyles still differ significantly between urban and rural environments – though urban lifestyles have been established since the 1960s in rural environments, along with economic and structural change (the decline of the agricultural sector), with sub- and exurbanisation, mass-motorisation and mass media. Spatial differentiation is also “visible” within cities (see Klee 2001 for Nuremberg; Wulfhorst, Beckmann, Hunecke & Heinze 2000 for Cologne). Beside the locations, the extent of housing mobility differs significantly across lifestyles (Schneider & Spellerberg 1999: 229ff).

After a critical view of space-related lifestyle research, two points have to be kept in mind. First, the general focus lies on high-density centres of urban areas. Extremely differentiated lifestyles are expected to concentrate there because of socio-cultural heterogeneity and economic polarisation (Blasius & Dangschat 1994). This narrow perspective conflicts with claims for the universal validity of lifestyle research (e.g. Schulze 1992). Moreover, lifestyles are normally regarded as independent. Their relative explanatory value in comparison to social structures remains unanswered.

#### *Choice of housing location and daily mobility*

Choice of housing location and daily mobility are not only two dependent variables for the investigation of lifestyles, they are connected to each other. This connection has not yet adequately been analysed, although it was already being discussed in the 1970s in Anglo-American urban research (Chapin 1974), and sporadically in German social geography (Troxler 1986). Only recently has the connection between choice of housing location and daily mobility been recognised and put to use in applied urban planning. Geier, Holz-Rau and Krafft-Neuhäuser (2000) compare the spatial orientation of the old-established population and newcomers in suburban Berlin. They find that the “neo-suburbanites” maintain their orientation towards the central city in the medium-term, resulting in relatively high daily

distances. This is valid for commuting as well as for supply and leisure trips. Scheiner (2002) analyses notable differences in Berlin regarding spatial orientation in relation to spatial origin. While people from West Berlin in a particular same residential area have their destinations mainly in the western part of the city, the opposite applies to people from East Berlin. Changes in travel behaviour as a consequence of residential relocation to suburban areas – such as the increase of realised distances or the purchase of a second car in a household – are reported by several authors. On the other hand, however, the first car in a household is already the *precondition* for moving to the suburbs, where nearly all households are motorised (Herfert 1997). From this point of view, there is no clear causality between choice of housing location and travel behaviour. Instead, extensive mutual influences have to be expected between short- and long-term mobility. Households without a car might choose their housing location much more in terms of the availability of public transport and supply of infrastructure on a small-scale level than households with a car – which are able to choose their housing location in a broader range.

Not only relocation of housing, but also maintenance of housing locations, have an impact on travel behaviour, depending on the change of activity space. Kalter (1994) analyses the context of migration and commuting. His results show an increasing percentage of long-distance commuting (from 2.6% of commuting in 1985 to 6.6% in 1997 – Vogt *et al.* 2001: 560) and a tendency to maintain housing location. He concludes that commuting increasingly replaces moving. For some commuters, commuting is the “precursor” to moving or a short-term solution until a change of job occurs, but for 46% of long-distance commuters the housing-job-combination remains stable for at least 10 years (Kalter 1994: 465).

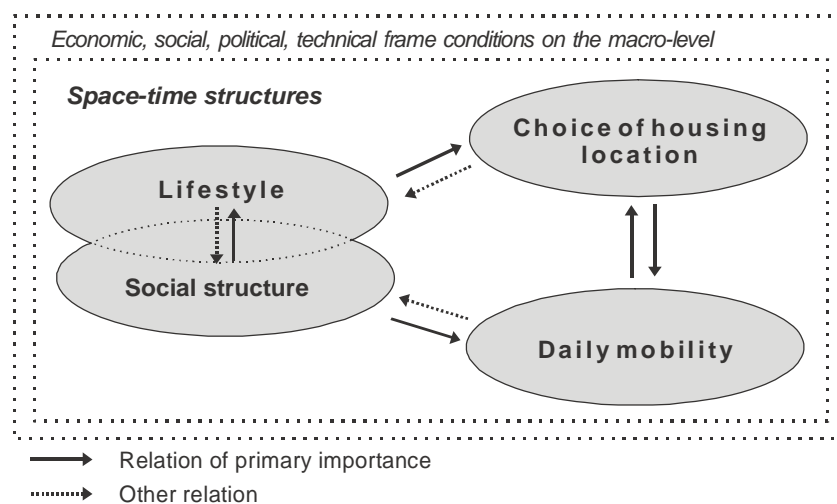
## **Integration**

Figure 1 tries to integrate the interdependencies discussed above into a research concept. The focus lies on the choice of housing location and daily mobility as well as the mutual context and the relation to social structures. Decisions on mobility behaviour are reached within the context of certain space-time structures. These do not determine human activities (particularly with respect to opportunities for spatial mobility). Rather they have to be understood as dynamic and permeable resources. Space-time-structures are macrostructures that consist of global and national spatial and time regulations (e.g. spatial division of labour, EU regional planning policy, high-speed transport infrastructure) as well as settlement structures and time-



regimes on the scale of cities and neighbourhoods such as land use, quality of life in local communities, small-scale time-regimes (e.g. opening hours, time agreements), situation in the urban context and so forth. Interpretations have to be made with regard to economic, social, political and technical frame conditions (e.g. real estate market, fiscal housing grants, mobility-related taxes). Neither lifestyles nor mobility can be separated from macro-structural frameworks.

**Figure 1** Structure of the research concept

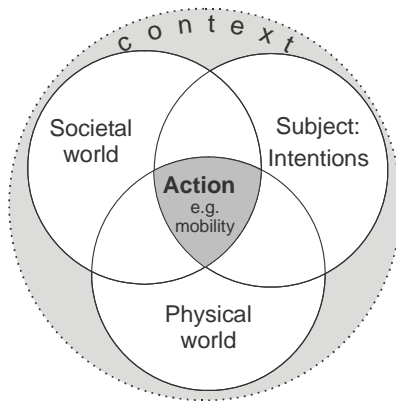


Design: Scheiner. See also Hesse/Trostorff (2002).

Social structures and social positions on the one hand, and lifestyles on the other side, must be seen in connection with each other, though lifestyles have a stronger dependence on social status than vice versa. In this context, the term “lifestyle” has a slightly different meaning than in sociology. In addition to aesthetic schemes and consumption patterns, mobility depends on household types with their specific time-management and professional biographies and access to transport as well as information and communication technologies. Thus, “chosen” lifestyles are affected by structural frame conditions that might restrict or open further options.

If lifestyles partly depend on social positions, they are not adequate as *exclusive* explanation patterns for mobility research. The value of the concept of lifestyles for mobility research lies primarily in the differentiation of social structures by consideration of subjective patterns of explanation, aims of activity, value orientation, preferences and (sub)cultural affiliation. Because neither spatial nor social structures are able to steer (mobility) behaviour, lifestyle research can establish differentiated explanations for target groups in contrast to current more uniform explanation patterns on the basis of socio-economic and demographic factors.

**Figure 2**      **The action context**



Design: Scheiner.

On the one hand, realised mobility is the expression of social behaviour and results from aims and individual values. On the other hand, realised mobility is embedded in a social and spatial context (picture 2). It is precisely in confrontation with this context that the margins emerge within which mobility is possible. However, these margins are not structurally fixed, but may be changed at the individual level – for instance, by mobility itself. Therefore it is important to note that the contexts, while not chosen by the individual, are *conditions*, not *causes*, of behaviour.

As already stated, the basic thesis is that different lifestyle groups are characterised by specific forms of mobility. Thus, in methodological terms, choice of housing location as well as daily mobility are seen as dependent variables. Housing mobility could be analysed in terms of the extent of mobility or of persistency (occupancy, number of relocations in a specific time, distances), and of choice of location. The reasons for housing mobility are relevant as well, since they correspond to spatial patterns. Whereas local and regional mobility relates to dissatisfaction with one's housing situation or to personal reasons (birth of a child, marriage), long-distance mobility is dominated by job change (for the case of Frankfurt am Main, see Dobroschke 1999).

Central aspects of daily mobility are type, quantity and timing of activities, choice of destinations and spatial orientation (activity spaces), realised distances and modal choice.

An analysis of these aspects exceeds current studies concerning lifestyle-specific travel behaviour, which focus on modal choice. Choice of housing location and daily mobility are regarded as interwoven, with a priority of the impact of housing mobility on daily mobility: housing mobility is a long-term decision that dominates daily mobility and, in effect, intervenes between lifestyle and daily mobility. Conversely, there is no doubt about the influence of certain forms of daily mobility on the choice of housing location. Finally, both the choice of transport modes and daily spatial orientations (working place, social network, leisure time) remain relatively stable.

As thus summarised, this approach may seem abstract. In the following sections, we give an example of the benefits that can be derived from its application to qualitative empirical investigation at the neighbourhood level, and show how the results could be transferred to sustainable mobility and urban planning.

### **Empirical study: the planning context**

A central question in applied research is how built environments will meet the new demands resulting from less predictable ways of life, pluralisation of lifestyles and the differentiation of socio-spatial concentrations. Increasing resistance against the development of major projects or area-wide rehabilitation of urban neighbourhoods in the 1980s resulted in comprehensive or participatory planning methods. Despite the tendencies of globalisation and large-scale development, these approaches remain valid, especially on the neighbourhood level where most of the lifestyles are localised and where they find their surface of projection. Moreover, neighbourhoods are the spatial context in which specific lifestyles might create communities (“milieus”). Therefore, the spatial point of reference in the research project “StadtLeben” is the neighbourhood. Its position is crucial with regard to sustainable daily mobility, because strengthening the spatial bonds of residents to their respective neighbourhood would imply shorter distances, reduced traffic and enhanced use of non-motorised modes.

#### *Spatial reference*

As the spatial context for the research project, three neighbourhoods in the City of Cologne, Germany, were chosen with certain criteria in mind. The types had to differ clearly from each

other, but at the same time each had to be a typical example of one kind of neighbourhood.

The differences lie in:

- the spatial distance to the centre of the city and the availability of public transport (accessibility),
- the social and demographic structure (age, size of household, income),
- the dynamic of development (concerning urban development as well as housing mobility), and
- the deficits (built environment, social and spatial mobility).

The chosen neighbourhoods are:

- Ehrenfeld, an inner-city sub centre (“Wilhelminian Style”), built at the end of the 19th century,
- Stammheim, a settlement in the first peripheral ring (“modern functionalism”) with flats in three- or four-storey row houses, built in the 1960s, and
- Esch, a suburb with its origin as a rural village (“suburbia”), which has steadily expanded since the 1950s with single-family row houses or (semi-)detached single-occupancy houses.

### *Methods of empirical research*

To examine and define the lifestyles in these three neighbourhoods, several empirical methods were used. First, a standardised survey with 180 face-to-face interviews in each neighbourhood examined topics such as choice of housing location, housing satisfaction, travel behaviour, lifestyles, social networks, information and communication technology, behaviour settings in the neighbourhood, availability of means of travel, and socio-demographic information. A second focus was qualitative with 20 face-to-face interviews with residents and experts in each neighbourhood. These interviews gave us a thorough understanding of the investigated neighbourhoods as the spatial and social “micro-cosmos”. Compared to a standardised survey, they provided deeper knowledge about mobility problems, the relevance of accessibility as a locational factor, and the mutual relation between different lifestyle-groups within a neighbourhood.

“Experts” are individuals who work in the neighbourhood with or for specific groups of residents and who know the community, the problems and the dynamic very well because of

their professional responsibility (e.g. pastor, local mayor (alderman), owner of the grocery, school director, police officer, principal of a youth club, executive of the housing corporation). The experts were interviewed about the same topics (choice of housing location and so forth) and in addition they were asked about their professional relationship to the neighbourhood and professional networks. In general, the aim of these interviews was to understand the common and the subjective signification of attitudes and settings in the neighbourhood. Since these experts are counsellors for people who do not participate in regular planning processes, their judgement and point of view needs to be interpreted to understand the perspectives dominating daily mobility and lifestyles. Concerning potentials for the neighbourhoods, the interviews focused on the different lifestyles or communities that exist side by side in the neighbourhood or conflict with each other. There are diverse interests in the neighbourhood, which result in social and spatial potentials, in the desire for changes or in strategies of arrangement with the given structure.

In the following analysis, results from qualitative, semi-structured interviews with experts and residents are briefly summarised. First, a comparison of the three study areas is given, and secondly, the Stammheim neighbourhood is highlighted as an example.

#### *Comparing the neighbourhoods: results from the expert interviews*

Ehrenfeld is a neighbourhood that follows the rule “live and let live”. Different ethnic and social groups live in a functional and structural diverse setting. Concerning choice of working location, the motivations of the experts differ widely, but all of them claim that the variety of different population groups makes life and work in Ehrenfeld appealing and creates a connectedness. In fact, the social and ethnic variety is no idyllic multi-lifestyle community, but rather they exist side by side. The high percentage of relocation is part of the reason: the migration of population (in and out) was 14.2% in the year 2000, whereas in Stammheim it was 8.6% and in Esch only 5.5% (Stadt Köln 2001). As a result, in Ehrenfeld people with very different biographic background and schemes of life accumulate. However, for many, the neighbourhood serves as a station on their ways of life and a dominance of an out-of-home-socialising lifestyle can be identified. The vibrant urbanity constitutes the neighbourhood and affects everyday mobility (e.g. the good infrastructure provides an adequate local supply). At the same time, it weakens social cohesion and the long-term connectedness to the neighbourhood.

In Esch, all the experts explain that the neighbourhood is still close to “the ideal world”, even if some disturbances occur. It is an atmosphere of exclusivity and distance from urbanity, without total deprivation from the amenities of the city. The commitment is a result of a strong feeling to contribute at least to some extent to the community and to benefit from mutual support. Compared to the other two neighbourhoods, there is in Esch a strong orientation towards uniformity of lifestyles (family oriented, domestic, middle class) and the motivation to “arrive” in a community.

The biggest problem in Esch from a transport planning perspective is the massive use of the private car, especially as the negative impact (noise, pollution) affects the inhabitants of the city centre more than the Esch population itself because of the radial, centre-oriented structure of commuting. However, from the individual perspective of the Esch residents, this is not really seen as a problem, since increased supply of infrastructure and other urbanising elements would affect the “nearly ideal world” and might lead to further flight to more remote areas. The first issue for planning may therefore be to point out that there is an objective problem beyond the individual, subjective justification of car use.

In contrast, Stammheim is seen as a “different” place to work by the local experts, for whom work in or for the neighbourhood is as a “challenge”. Stammheim has to deal with stigmatisation and a lack of positive identity, the struggle against which is precisely the motivation for the experts’ commitment.

Stammheim is characterised by a significant degree of separation between different groups of population. Built up in 1963-4, next to the former village of Stammheim, the neighbourhood has sharply different lifestyles: “native” people from Old Stammheim, the first inhabitants of New Stammheim – who in the mean time have evolved from families to senior households –, and the various waves of immigrants, who were placed in the public housing units. For all groups, there were limited housing choices. One expert interpretation is that, because of lack of choice, it was difficult for people to approach each other, which created (besides social and economic problems) internal conflicts and explicit stigmatisation. However, the experts generally downplay the conflicts, precisely because they are predictable. The experts describe them as exaggeration and try to support the image that Stammheim is still “a pretty normal

neighbourhood” that symbolises “home” for the long-established residents – just as in Ehrenfeld and in Esch.

“Allowed for dogs, but not for kids” – results from the interviews with Stammheim residents

Because of lack of space, only three topics are selected here from the manifold subjects of the interviews: (1) the relevance of daily mobility and accessibility for locational decisions, (2) green space as an indicator for the spatial leisure quality of the area, and (3) social control vs. anonymity in the neighbourhood as an indicator for the mutual relation between different social/lifestyle groups. The first topic relates to earlier comments where we pointed out the relations between housing mobility and daily mobility. The other two are crucial factors of life quality and contentment, which could possibly provide a chance to strengthen neighbourhood bonds and save (leisure) traffic by reducing distances and shifting traffic to non-motorised modes.

(1) Arriving at Stammheim: daily mobility and accessibility are irrelevant criteria.

Moving to Stammheim usually does not mean taking an explicit decision for Stammheim. It rather means that an opportunity is grasped. Typically, people say “by chance” when they are asked to explain how they came to Stammheim. The dominating factors are relatives and acquaintances living in Stammheim who report about their own positive experiences when a flat is offered to someone. In this way, neighbourhoods are “bequeathed” in rather the same way as houses by home-owners. Thus, a locational decision is not only a decision determined by supply and demand, but also a decision under the precondition of where a person grew up. The heterogeneous flat sizes are an advantage if someone wants to move house when life circumstances change. The public housing development company has – in principle – an overview of all flats in Stammheim, which guarantees, theoretically, total market transparency. This makes it easy for people to stay and maintain personal relationships.

Accessibility to the workplace, to shopping facilities, to public transport – mobility as a whole – do not play a major role in locational decisions. Access to public transport, in particular, is judged positively, but is not a decisive location factor. This does not mean, of course, that there is not a strong connection between housing mobility and daily mobility. Rather it means that this connection does not play a role in the subjective calculation of the residents – under the frame condition that the *regional* decision in favour of Cologne has already been made.

Residents do not mind whether their workplace is, say, two or ten kilometres from home, as long as it lies within an acceptable time-distance.

(2) Social control vs. anonymity: does city air make humans really free?

In Stammheim, the relationships between the groups of inhabitants, their different interests and ways of living are dominated by the fact that the whole rental housing stock is owned by a housing development corporation. Since the 1960s, a clear and strict code of behaviour has been imposed (including “house rules”). These rules were institutionalised by the long-established tenants and, hitherto, have not been challenged. These tenants now see it as their duty to compensate for the lack of the enforcement provided by the janitors in the 1960s and 70s. They feel responsible for the maintenance of social control and order, whereas the “younger” tenants see the surveillance as excessive: “The older people are lurking behind the curtain (...). They don’t work any more, but they control everything. On the balcony, you can hear them talk about everybody” (Mrs. L). The “new ones” vitiate the peaceful pleasure of the achieved retirement and domestic lifestyles.

A gap also exists as well between the (real or supposed) unfair treatment of renters when it comes to the refurbishment of apartments on departure. As well as a lack of justice, this issue is judged to affect dwelling quality, and leads to dissatisfaction with the housing development corporation. Moreover, opportunities to adapt dwellings to personal tastes are limited, because on departure they have to be restored to the initial condition and built-in furniture has to be removed (e.g. fitted kitchens). Again, domestic lifestyles and long-term tenants are disadvantaged since the extension of home-centred lifestyles is restricted.

Besides the question of “equality”, proximity to neighbours in a context of poor noise protection, plays an important role in social control between tenants. Any form of activity in the apartments or the surroundings that involve communication or enjoyment signifies disturbance for the other residents. The result is a mutual nuisance because of noise and it cumulates in the problem that every argument turns to a semi-public event. The perception of aggressive disputes is especially vivid and attributions are easy. For example adolescents of Turkish and Russian descent were involved in a brawl: “We were afraid because of our kids and we thought about moving, but in the meantime, everything is back to normal” (Mrs. J). In comparison with the other neighbourhoods examined, these aspects result in a desire for



social changes, especially in the social composition of the inhabitants, as well as a very high desire for crime protection.

### (3) Green space and public space – buffers and the forgotten centre

Stammheim is dominated by the green space, which functions as a buffer between the blocks of flats. In former times, they a field for conflicts between janitors, children and mothers: “allowed for dogs, but not for kids” (Mrs. P). Because of a lack of alternatives, the prohibition was ignored regularly, even when the consequences were predictable. “The people from the housing development corporation ran after the kids with a camera, took pictures and complained about them.” (Mrs. P)

In the neighbourhood, no site can be identified that matches attributes like “beautiful” or “lovely”. The inhabitants miss a place in the neighbourhood where one could go, meet, stay or rest. The space in front of the church as well as the community centre are very much related to their functional intention and cannot perform as a marketplace or a parvis. “The parking place at the community centre is an awkward space. At night, I don’t dare to walk by” (Mrs. J). For walking, the inhabitants prefer to leave the settlement to go to the Rhine or the palace grounds in the north. Most of the residents retreat to the private areas – like barricading themselves from public live. Others call Stammheim a “dormitory suburb” and desire more public life with clubs, associations, neighbourhood parties and street life. The spatial structure of Stammheim was an adequate solution for the time when it was built. But over the years, lifestyles in Stammheim have diversified. Since the built environment is not able to provide adequate room for diverse needs, the scenarios have to include the spatial differentiations.

To summarise, the perception of settlements like Stammheim as anonymous or transit neighbourhoods has to be reconsidered. Strong neighbourhood networks are formed by acquaintances, friendships or familiar connections. Their spatial expression is manifested in the lifestyles. Furthermore, they serve as a demarcation against unwanted groups. In particular, borderlines are drawn between long-established residents with their families and new residents. The older residents’ social control is facilitated by the clarity of the public space: no opportunities to retreat into semi-public space, unfavourable alignment of the residential buildings and inevitable mutual disruption. Finally, unclear implementation of rules of conduct, which are formally strict but poorly applied, heightens ambiguity. As for the green area, it is a dysfunctional buffer zone that cannot be appropriated; and the missing

centre contributes to the abandonment of the neighbourhood for everyday activities. The result is incompatibility of different lifestyles as well as a lack of adaptability of the socio-spatial environment to emerging lifestyles.

Altogether, we can derive the hypothesis that the buildings, the public spaces and the organisational structures no longer meet the unequal needs and lifestyles of the residents. This is particularly obvious in view of the disturbance emanating from out-of-home life styles with their specific leisure preferences and interaction patterns. The built environment has become incompatible with the heterogeneous lifestyles.

### **Transfer to the planning context – the socio-spatial design**

One aim of the project is the transfer of the knowledge developed about the mutual relations of housing, lifestyles and spatial mobility into practical use in urban planning. The approach to work on this interrelation is to connect research and planning to achieve results that come closer to what we could call “reality”. Economic and social sustainability relies on compatibility of spatial and organisational structures on the one hand and actual and optional resident lifestyles on the other. If the hypothesis developed in the preceding section is true, then we need an adequate means to bridge the gap between the lifestyle-specific needs of the Stammheim residents and the environmental structures.

With respect to the diverse type of problems and the heterogeneous interests of the residents, this should be a bridge that (1) goes beyond classical planning (building, infrastructure etc.), and (2) does not neglect the residents’ ability to defend their interest by themselves. The tool for this approach – with a view to planning that is closer to the requirements of “reality” – is called socio-spatial design. This is not merely what one usually calls a plan. Rather it consists potentially of measures and strategies on different levels:

- planning concepts for the built environment (e.g. public transport connection);
- organisational designs or scenarios (e.g. use and control of green spaces, distribution of dwellings);
- models of participation (e.g. with the housing company, new responsibilities).

At the time of writing, we were preparing a workshop in Stammheim with local experts, residents and non-local experts with external perspectives, to serve as a design session for

short- and medium-term aims, orientations and concepts. On the basis of the empirical results, the urban planners of the research project “StadtLeben” elaborated scenarios for the Stammheim neighbourhood for debate in the workshop. The function of the scenarios is to show accentuated contrasts for possible socio-spatial development in the future. They have no normative function, but with the empirical information in the background, the planners will evaluate the consequences of each scenario. The seven scenarios cover a broad range of possible developments for this type of neighbourhood.

- a. “Status quo” – means a prevention of the worsening of the situation. The starting point is the perception, that Stammheim is not (yet) a focal point of dramatic social difficulties. Only the typical tools to repair future defects will be used.
- b. “Ad hoc intervention”: means social activism – like organising or installing solutions for urgent, upcoming deficits for different social groups with a variety of constructive or organisational measures. The chances for this scenario are good because the City of Cologne, the housing corporations and various social organisations work in a comparable way on the deficits. The disadvantage is that it is unlikely that the compatibility of lifestyles and spatial context will improve.
- c. “(Social) gentrification” – steering of specific groups of inhabitants to or from the neighbourhood. High quality new housing units for well-off inhabitants will be added by raising the housing blocks by one storey or more or by additional buildings in between the housing blocks. The spatial and organisational structure will be maintained.
- d. “Housing condominiums on the Rhine”: The spatial structure will stay the same but the organisational structure will be adapted to modern lifestyles (e.g. household services). One opportunity would be a luxurious community at the Rhine for financially strong groups of owners or tenants. Currently, there is demand for high-quality housing in Cologne. The current inhabitants would be displaced.
- e. “Demolition and redevelopment”: Support for ownership by “young families” – this means a displacement of the current inhabitants and a development based on single-family homes for the middle class.
- f. “Demolition and redevelopment”: New homes for founders on the basis of an urban concept: a variegated structure of owners, different densities, uses and functions. A self-dependent community could be the result.
- g. “Parcelling and privatisation directed by the inhabitants” – if it turns out that the built environment can be modified adequately, that but the organisational structure is the main problem, the area could be divided in allotments that will provide space for current

residents as well as new housing projects. Additional lots could be created so that this scenario would be profitable, and the flexibility would be beneficial for different ways of living.

All the scenarios include designs to connect the housing development with the old part of the village of Stammheim, to integrate the neighbourhood in the urban context, to improve public transportation and to enhance the quality of public space. The single scenarios can be combined as well. The extremism or “radicalism” of some of the scenarios is not chosen to narrow down the range at the very start. The participants of the workshop should have the opportunity to discuss structural questions and not only details of the given situation.

The scenarios will be discussed, tested and proposed for realisation in the workshop with the participants: which scenario has what kind of impact? Concerning spatial, social and economic consequences, the scenarios will be prepared to support the evaluations of the participants. Regarding mobility, an assessment of the consequences will be included for each scenario as well: what are the results of the scenarios with respect to migration of old and new inhabitants and development of spatial mobility? It will depend on the responsibility of the neighbourhood whether new patterns of community or accessibility will be developed.

## **Outlook**

The development of spatial mobility in connection with individualisation and pluralisation of lifestyles is increasingly resistant to regulation by planning. We can see this in growing dispersion in the spatial development, which opposes land-use policy and regional planning programs, and in the limited success of supply-oriented transport planning. There is a particular deficit as regards the perception of spatial mobility as a long-term process, consisting of choices of housing location and daily activities. The research concept sketched here is designed precisely to address this deficit by connecting (mobility-) behaviour, social structure and spatial structure. With a view to more sustainable development of mobility and spatial structures, such an approach is indispensable: mobility research and transport planning cannot persist with an assumption that space and mobility enjoy a straightforwardly causal relation.

For urban planning, the challenge is to combine the differentiation of lifestyles with traditional assignments. Despite extensive forecasts of increasing use of information and communication services, the neighbourhood remains a focus of human life and the background for lifestyles. As needs become more diverse, the design and organisation of the local environment as well as choice of housing location have major impacts on daily mobility.

Stammheim is no unique case. In Germany, many neighbourhoods like Stammheim exist and find themselves in a phase of fundamental change. Since the general development of these neighbourhoods and the structural alternatives are not discussed thoroughly, a patchwork of ad hoc solutions emerges that does not produce sustainable solutions. The neighbourhoods are not adapted to the new needs and demands that come along with the differentiation of the lifestyles.

Comparable interpretations of lifestyles, neighbourhoods, communities and spatial mobility may be integrated in planning designs concerning housing and mobility. These designs will serve as a bridge between basic research and applied urban planning. On the assumption that spatial behaviour is increasingly disconnected from (infra)structural frame conditions, planning also has to disengage from such conditions. "Design" does not fit neatly within two-dimensional blueprints: a broader concept of planning is required that includes a more individualised, demand-oriented scheme with a broad array of organisational, infrastructural, constructive and political measures. Then, the phrase "integrated planning" would be truly justified.

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