

Decay of large housing estates revisited

Keynote speech at the RESTATE Conference for
Researchers and Policy-makers:

‘Restructuring large housing estates in Europe.

Policies, practices and perspectives’

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Niels Prak & Hugo Priemus, Model for the analysis of the decline of postwar housing (1984; 1986)

The Netherlands: 1970s vacancies in new rented housing and later: massive vacancies in unpopular parts of the urban housing stock

Problems: technical problems; location (isolated), social problems, safety problems: vandalism, drugs, burglary (cars, dwellings, persons), violence

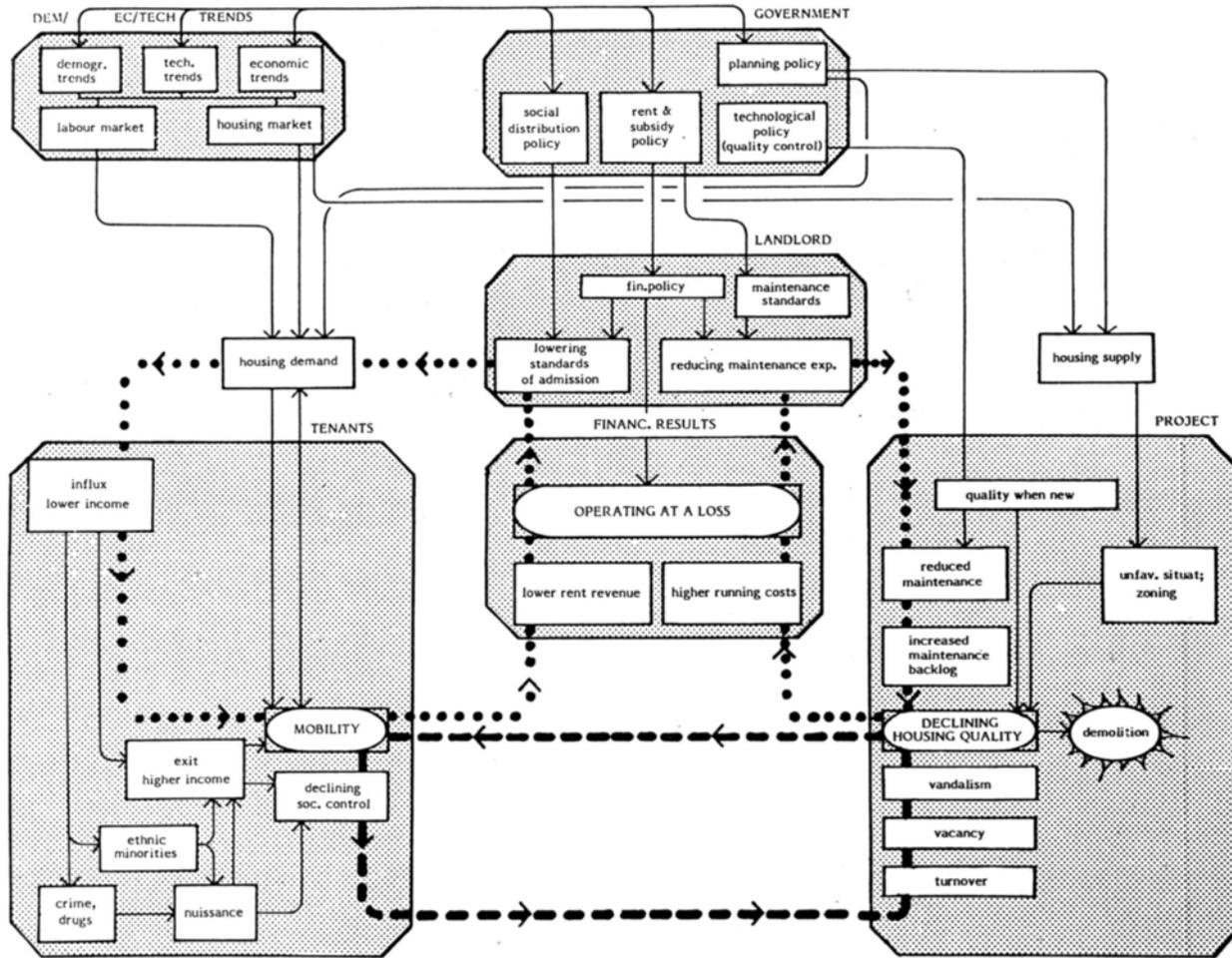
Increasing problems with multi-cultural integration.

Immigrants could easily penetrate in unpopular parts of the housing stock. Concentrations of ethnic groups: Pruitt Igoe, Bijlmer.

- Model for the analysis of the decline of large housing estates;
- Model of iso-rentability lines (Priemus, 1991);
- Decline of housing estates and the transformation of housing in former socialist countries;
- From diagnosis to therapy;
- Conclusions.

Interrelations of problems: model for the analysis of the decline of housing estates:

- Social decline (tenants);
- Financial decline (financial management);
- Technical decline (housing estate).



Housing estate and housing environment: density, uniformity, lack of playground, green, parking lots.

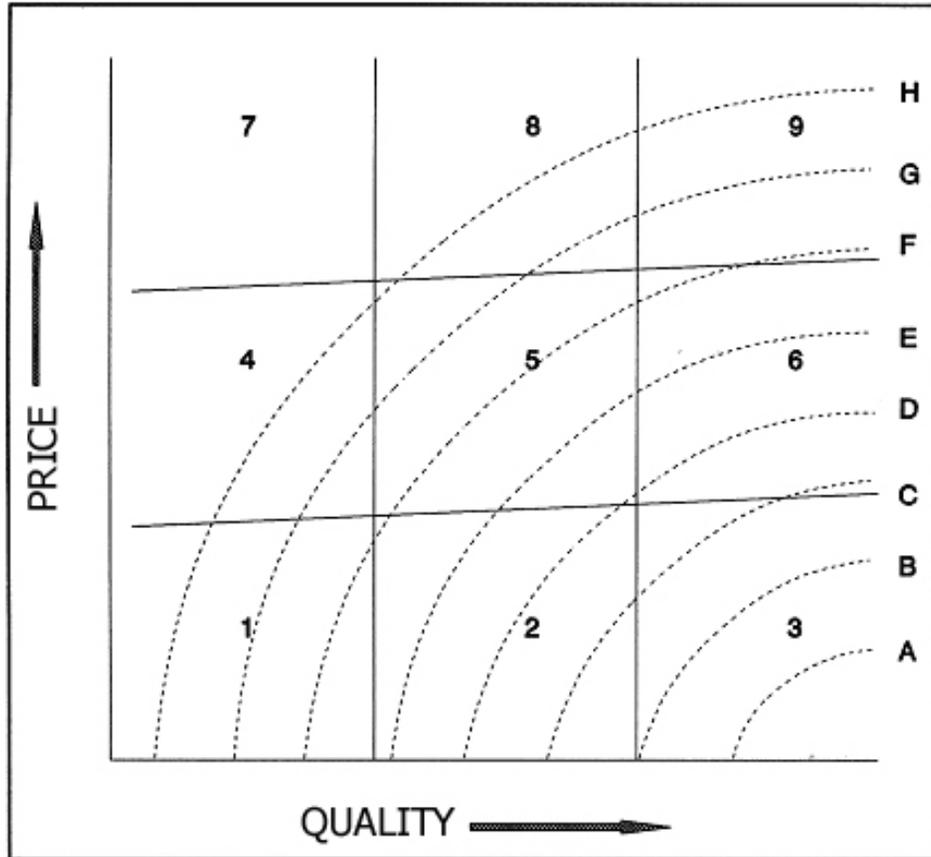
Concentration of social and safety problems.

Competition between housing estates:

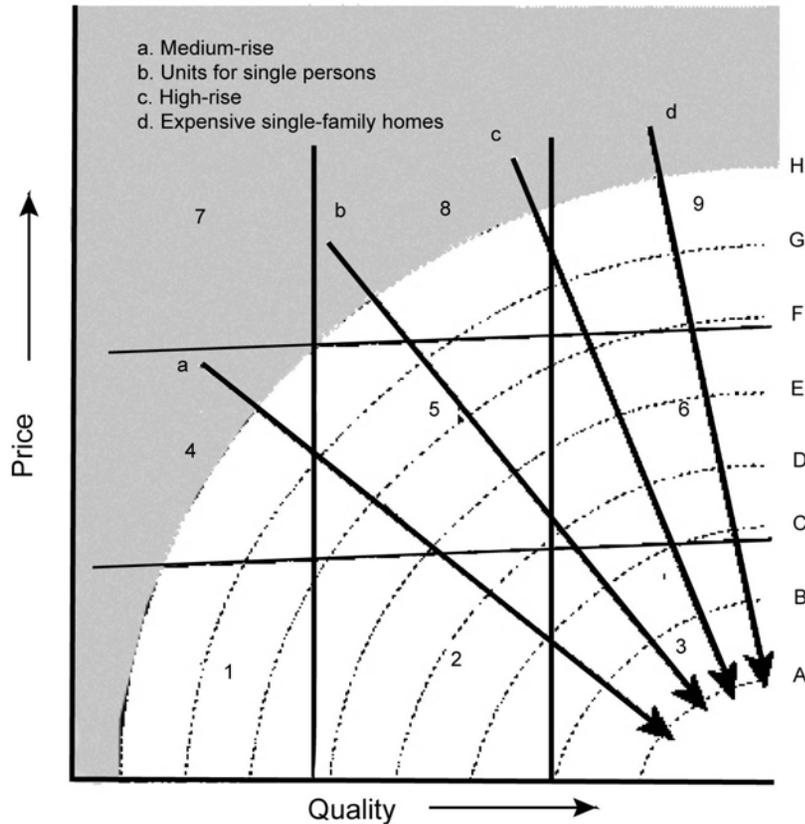
price: quality ratio

Problems with renting out and vacancies:
related to an unfavourable price: quality
ratio

Iso rentability lines and segments in the housing market on the basis of the price/quality ratio of dwellings: the problem complexes are at the foot of the housing hierarchy



Different categories of complex, which are at the foot of the housing hierarchy



Typology of problems which may co-determine an unfavourable price/quality ratio

The housing market	The quality of a complex	
Financial problems:	Structural problems:	Environmental problems:
- high basic rent	- technical problems	- problems in the dwelling
- high service costs	- physical problems	- soil pollution
- high additional costs	- living problems	- air pollution/odour
- high energy costs	Urban planning problems:	- external safety
	- location	Social problems:
	- problems in the living environment	- nuisance
	- problems with facilities	- lack of safety
		- pollution
		- lack of resident involvement
		Reputation/image

Did the Prak & Priemus model survive?

- A revitalisation model is lacking.
- Quantifying impacts is not easy.
- Identical housing estates perform differently in different housing markets.

International research conference
'Post-war public housing in trouble'
(1984)
Experiences in the USA and
Western Europe

1990s: transformation of housing policy in Central and Eastern Europe.

Privatization of large public housing estates,
Hegedüs et al., 1996; Clapham et al., 1996; Struyk,
1996; Priemus & Mandic, 2000.

Transition on a larger scale in the former Soviet Union and China.

From rented housing to condominiums.

Overview in: Turkington, Van Kempen & Wassenberg, 2004, High-rise housing in Europe: current trends and future prospects, Delft (DUP).

The Prak & Priemus model did survive.

From diagnosis to therapy.

No standard solutions.

Sometimes: Demolishing

Technical upgrading

Improvement of urban
environment

Selling rented dwellings

Social management

Improving safety: more
'eyes on the street'

Overestimation of technical interventions:

Physical determinism.

Underestimation of social and safety measures.

Participation of occupants.

Tenure shift from renting to owner-occupation.

Property rights.

Problem estates: mostly highrise and multifamily dwellings. There are also problematic one-family houses with garden.

And there are many highrise estates and multi-family dwellings without any problem.

Transition in Central and East European countries, Rusland and China: new impulse for research into large housing estates.

Hopefully: new empirical information and new theories. Try to beat and to replace the Prak & Priemus model.

For the time being: the Prak & Priemus model stands as a solid house.