

Introducing RTG 2725 Urban future-making



Alessandro Arlati

Alessandro Arlati holds a Bachelor in environmental architecture conducted in Politecnico di Milano and obtained a double degree in Urban Planning between Politecnico di Milano and HafenCity University Hamburg. From 2018 to 2022 he worked as a research associate at the Department of Urban Planning and Regional Development of the HafenCity University Hamburg on two Horizon 2020 funded projects. REPAiR addressed strategies for the management of resources in urban contexts, analysing the effects of the circular economy driven strategies on the spatial dimension. Questions related to the stakeholders network and the consequent governance arrangements were part of the work of HCU during the project. In CLEVER Cities, the HCU analysed the set of stakeholders engaged in the co-creative process for Nature-based Solutions (NbS) development in the deprived neighbourhood of Neugraben-Fischbek, Hamburg.

Alessandro is currently working on his PhD project “The role of intermediaries in upscaling co-created Nature-based Solutions to reach urban sustainability transition”. Urban sustainability transitions are widely recognised as a guiding paradigm to drive systemic change in cities towards a more sustainable and resilient urban development. To accomplish such systemic changes, the cooperation of a broader set of stakeholders and agencies for experimenting and testing innovative pathways is deemed crucial in the scientific discourse. Among others, Urban ULLs (ULLs) are considered by the European Union as promising methods that promote experimentation and innovation with an enhanced participatory approach based on co-creation. In this context, the research proposes to critically analyse and therefore deepen the scientific and practical knowledge on the relation between experimentation conducted through a ULL method in urban areas and its ability to generate impacts beyond the special local boundaries of ULL, namely at the city governance structures and modes level. Moreover, actors and their agency are argued to play different roles along with these processes to form a network based on diverse types of interrelation. In recent research, the role of intermediaries has gained particular attention and is positioned at the intersection between locally tailored solutions and higher scale interventions, e.g. at the city level. In particular, the PhD research will consider Nature-based Solutions (NbS) as a tool that has high potential in bridging the gap toward urban sustainability transitions in cities when a co-creative approach is conducted. Case studies - mainly in the European context but not exclusively - will be analysed to understand the roles of actors and their agency in the process of upscaling co-created NbS and thereby contributing to the debate on the role of intermediaries and further stakeholders roles in the urban sustainability transitions.