

Abstract of the Doctoral Thesis

Title of Doctoral Thesis : *Building Community: Deck-Access Housing as a Component in Shaping a Sustainable Residential Environment. The Case of Collaborative Housing*

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Date: September, 2025

The dissertation explores the role of deck-access in multi-family residential buildings. The aim of the research was to determine how deck-access housing can contribute to shaping a sustainable housing environment. The study is based on European examples of collaborative initiatives.

Until recently, deck-access housing was perceived mainly through the lens of the failures of large-scale late modernist estates. Today, however, it is regaining significance in the context of contemporary challenges: the deepening housing affordability crisis, ongoing social and demographic transformations, and the negative impacts of climate change. Within the field of housing, particular expectations are linked to collaborative initiatives, described as spaces of experimentation and innovation where architecture provides the spatial framework for communal living practices rooted in resource sharing and respect for the natural environment.

The main part of the dissertation consists of the author's field research carried out in 2024–2025 in Austria, Belgium, Spain, and Sweden. A multiple case study method was adopted. Sixteen deck-access buildings were selected for analysis, all developed during the current wave of raised interest in collaborative housing, marked by a strong interrelation between meeting housing needs and pursuing environmental and social objectives.

The findings indicate that deck-access housing can serve as a valuable tool for shaping a sustainable housing environment across its three dimensions: social, environmental, and spatial. The access deck emerges as a key element, functioning as a space that fosters neighborhood interaction while at the same time supporting broader ecological strategies and enhancing housing affordability. This potential is most fully realized when architectural solutions are accompanied by pro-social and pro-environmental practices of everyday use.

Keywords

deck-access, deck-access housing, collaborative housing, sustainable residential environment


29.09.25