

Forschungswerkstatt *Krise und Transformation des Eigenheims*

Sub-project *Krise als Chance oder Weiterentwerfen des Eigenheims: Von der Empirie zu
baulich-räumlichen Transformation*

[10/2023]

Half Measures

An empirical research-based teaching format

Julia von Mende, Hanna Maria Schlösser



Exhibition *Das Einfamilienhaus zur Disposition* as part of summaery 23. Photography (Florian Marenbach)

In the summer semester of 2023, at the Faculty of Architecture and Urban Studies, Bauhaus-Universität Weimar we conducted the seminar *Half Measures - Das Einfamilienhaus zur Disposition* as part of the sub-project *Weiterentwerfen*. This seminar focused on investigating housing practices in single-family houses. The objective was to gather insights for potential reallocations, transformations, and densifications of the existing stock, in light of the increasingly underused space within these houses. An empirical case study, undertaken in collaboration with students through a research-based teaching format, provided an exploratory foray into this new research field. The students showcased their case studies at the summaery, the annual exhibition of the Bauhaus-Universität, in July 2023.

With 16 million residential buildings, each comprising one or two residential units across Germany (Destatis), 2022, p. 16), the field of study is vast. Our primary focus in the Forschungswerkstatt *Krise und Transformation des Eigenheims* lies with owner-occupied properties. Our goal was to encompass as broad a range as possible. The selected houses were to be situated in diverse locations, including rural areas, villages, and both small and large cities. Furthermore, these locations were chosen based on varying future prospects, encompassing regions anticipating vacancies as well as those where demand is expected to continue rising.

The seminar engaged 16 upper-semester students from the Bachelor's and Master's degree programs in architecture and urban studies. These students took on dual roles as researchers and key facilitators in exploring the selected research field. Their involvement was particularly valuable given the private and intimate nature of the subject matter: residential living spaces. An initial screening of case studies by the students highlighted a prevalence of 'empty-nests', homes where children had recently moved out or were about to do so. This trend, often linked to their own personal or family contexts, indicated generational influences. These 'empty-nest' scenarios, particularly prevalent among senior citizens occupying large spaces on a per capita basis in single-family homes, represent significant potential for change. These residents are in a position to be sensitized to this issue (Kenkmann et al., 2019, p. 70 ff.). Consequently, the 'empty-nest' became the focal point of our study. Inspired by the Federal Environment Agency's suggestion to divide single-family houses into multiple units (ibid.), we named the seminar *Half Measures*.

Each of the eight case studies was investigated by two students. These students conducted open-ended, guided interviews with the residents, lasting approximately 1-2 hours. During the interviews, residents were asked to describe their experiences living in their homes, focusing on the rooms, furnishings, fittings, and surroundings.

The discussions also covered the significance of living in a single-family house and the residents' (future) desires for change. The structural details of each house were documented in plan drawings. Prominent processes, such as the residents' patterns of use, were illustrated through diagrams and/or sketches. Model construction was employed to further illuminate a specific area within the home that was highlighted during the interviews. Through these replicas, we aimed to transfer and tangibly represent the appreciation for these spaces and their atmospheric qualities.



Exhibition *Das Einfamilienhaus zur Disposition* as part of summaery 23. Photography (Florian Marenbach)

In the seminar, the individual case analyses were collectively compared and discussed with the study participants. The gathered material was then analyzed by the two authors. These joint discussions during the seminar not only contributed significantly to this process but also served as a corrective to the subjective perspectives of all researchers involved. A research report detailing the evaluation results is currently in preparation.



Exhibition *Das Einfamilienhaus zur Disposition* as part of summaery 23. Photography (Florian Marenbach)

Building on the insights gleaned from the case studies, we are now developing questions for a design study of existing single-family houses. This study will be part of a thesis group within the Bachelor of Architecture program.

Participants: Hilde Braunschweig, Marie Düsberg, Paulina Foht, Luisa Fürst, Lara Grefer, Anne-Fleur Ising, Daniel Kleine-Kraneburg, Johanna Knigge, Mascha Leykauf, Sophie Pütz, Johanna Roth, Nico Schmitt, Eva Schütze, Felix Tepel, Martha Elisabeth Willée, Leonhard von Zumbusch

Guests: Verena von Beckerath, Johanna Günzel, Cassandra Löffler, Elodie Vittu

Layout: Enno Pötschke

Bibliography

Destatis (2022). Gebäude und Wohnungen. Bestand an Wohnungen und Wohngebäuden. Bauabgang von Wohnungen und Wohngebäuden. Lange Reihen ab 1969–2021. https://www.destatis.de/DE/Themen/Gesellschaft-Umwelt/Wohnen/Publikationen/-Downloads-Wohnen/fortschreibung-wohnungsbestand-pdf-5312301.pdf?__blob=publicationFile [Retrieved 08 November, 2023]

Kenkmann, T., Cludius, J., Fischer, C., Fries, T., Keimeyer, F., Schumacher, K., Brischek, L. & Leuser, L. (2019). Flächensparend Wohnen Energieeinsparung durch Suffizienzpolitiken im Handlungsfeld „Wohnfläche“. Umweltbundesamt Texte 104/2019, Dessau-Rosslau. https://www.umweltbundesamt.de/sites/default/files/medien/-1410/publikationen/2019-09-05_texte_104-2019_energieverbrauchsreduktion_ap1_wohnen_final.pdf [Retrieved 08 June, 2023]

List of Figures

Figure 1: Exhibition *Das Einfamilienhaus zur Disposition* as part of summaery 23. p.1

Figure 2: Exhibition *Das Einfamilienhaus zur Disposition* as part of summaery 23. p.3

Figure 3: Exhibition *Das Einfamilienhaus zur Disposition* as part of summaery 23. p.4