

Politics and Justice dimensions of climate adaptation in housing development: Who carries the risks of climate change when building new housing?

Department: Human geography and spatial planning

Research group: Planning

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Project description

The Netherlands faces two major challenges at the same time: a severe housing shortage and increasing climate risks, such as flooding and soil subsidence. These are sometimes at odds with each other, for example when new residential areas are planned in low-lying or climate-sensitive locations. This raises an important question: who carries the risks (and the rewards) of these development choices, and how are these distributed across society?

Planning decisions about housing development are often presented as purely technical or economic decisions. Tools such as cost-benefit analyses (CBA) and risk assessments are used to evaluate whether projects are feasible. However, these tools also shape how risks and benefits are understood and distributed across society. For example, they may determine whether climate risks are considered manageable or who pays for protective infrastructure.

This project examines how planning decisions about housing development in climate-sensitive areas are justified and evaluated. It explores how planning tools influence the way risks, responsibilities, and benefits are distributed between governments, developers, and future residents. By studying these processes, the project aims to better understand **the politics and justice dimensions of climate adaptation in housing development** and the role of planning tools like CBA in shaping what is considered just, feasible, or desirable in future urban development.

The student assistant will support several research activities, which may include:

- Identify and compile a list of Dutch housing development projects located in climate-sensitive areas (e.g., flood-prone or subsidence-prone areas). Help gather planning documents, policy reports, and CBA related to these projects.
- Assist with organizing and coding planning documents, CBA reports, and council documents. Extract key information on how climate risks and housing needs are evaluated.
- Conduct literature searches on topics such as climate adaptation in planning, housing development in flood-prone areas, CBA in infrastructure and planning decisions.
- Assist in preparing materials for a workshop with planning professionals on climate risk and housing development. Support documentation of workshop discussions.

Job requirements

You recognize yourself as having or willing to develop the following skill set:

- Conducting policy analysis and scientific literature research, including using software (e.g., Atlas.ti or Nvivo);
- Basic organizational and research skills;
- Good written English (Dutch reading ability is helpful for policy documents)