**Interview guide: study on political processes in urban development with a special focus on housing policy**

**Introduction**

Thank participant for agreeing to take part in the interview.

Guide the participant through the informed consent form and gain consent for the recording of the interview. Explain that before we publish anything in connection with their name we will give them the opportunity to view and authorise the passages.

Explain the project: “In our research project, we investigate political processes and actors in the field of housing policy with a particular focus on social housing in the three cities Birmingham, Zurich und Lyon from the period from 2000 to now. The project is run from Zurich and is funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation.

So far, we have collected data on housing, social housing and urban development including secondary literature, newspaper articles, maps, and quantitative data. Now, we would like to complement this data with interviews about housing and urban development for each city.

In this interview about the city of Birmingham we would like to discuss the following topics:

1. Characterisation and description of important city-wide (social) housing and urban renewal policies for Birmingham since around 2000;
2. Governance of city-wide (social) housing policy (actors and their interests);
3. Political processes or processes in general related to city-wide (social) housing policy (e.g. leadership in the city council, or particular policy processes around segregation)

**1. Developments in housing**

We will start by thinking about housing policy in Birmingham over the past 20 years. To begin…

* 1. Question: Over the last twenty years, which housing policies do you think were most important, and why?
* If possible: What are the differences between current housing policies and earlier housing policies?
* Was this a national or local policy?
* [If the participant did not identify a policy affecting social housing – ask if they know of a significant social housing policy too]  
  1. Question: Who do you think has more influence over housing policy – local, regional/ metropolitan or national government? Why do you say that?
* If possible: How much scope does the city have to develop its own distinctive policies rather than follow national ones?

1.3 Question: Who has been the target group of the housing policies you mentioned before?

* What was the effect of these housing policies for different population groups? [Give examples to prompt if interviewee is struggling; e.g. people on low incomes, ethnic backgrounds, or age groups]

**2. Governance of city-wide housing policy**

Opener: how do you assess the situation with housing in Birmingham now? [Prompt: is there enough social housing to meet the demand?]

2.1 Question: Thinking about city-wide policy making and its implementation, which actors have been actively involved in or consulted when drafting new housing policy? This can be legislation, instruments, city-wide plans or strategies.

* What has been the role of [housing officials; elected politicians; housing associations; economic and other actors] at various state levels when developing city-wide housing policies? [depends on who was mentioned before]
* Do you see any changes in their role over the last twenty years?

2.2 Question: What do these actors want to achieve in housing policy? Please describe their interests and strategies.

* And how do you think these objectives have changed over the last twenty years?
* How does the state intervene in the housing market [Prompt if interviewee needs, e.g. via law, ownership or financial subsidies]

2.3 Question: Are there actors in the field of housing policy who are connected to each other? [Such as policy makers, researchers, companies] Do they interact regularly?

* Do you think that these actors depend upon each other? [If yes: How?]
* Have you noticed any changes around how they relate to each other over time?
* [You say there is a group of actors exchanging regularly on housing needs and (social) housing policies. From your point of view, how would you describe the group’s agenda with regard to housing policies?]
* If possible: What is the role of the state/ elected politicians in steering that group? What is the role of economic actors (e.g. real-estate firms, private investors, homeowner associations etc.)?

2.4 Question: Are there interests which were previously not represented among the group? Do you think that there are any interests, which are still not represented?

2.5 Question: What role does citizen involvement play with regards to social housing policies in your city *[e.g. refused stock transfer in 2002]*?

2.6 Question: Housing is a field in which the market usually plays a central role. How important are public actors compared to the market in making housing policy in this city?

**3. Political processes in city-wide housing and urban development**

3.1 Question: Can you recall times where a council leader, executive members, chief housing officers or city planners had a significant impact on Birmingham’s social housing and/or urban renewal policies?

* To what extent are chief housing officers and city planners constrained by the political environment?

3.2 Question: Have social mobilisations, such as protests or riots, successfully challenged housing and planning policies in Brimingham?

* How did the policies change?
* What was the role of community representatives and NGOs?

3.3 Question/Text: Nowadays, many cities are faced with continuing trends of segregation. In some neighbourhoods the people are deprived, while in others there have been massive increases in property values, which has displaced these lower-income people. To what extent can social housing and urban renewal policies realistically help to counteract these trends?

* What do you think can be done to encourage social mixing in deprived areas?
* What do you think can be done to secure affordable housing in gentrifying neighbourhoods?

3.4 Question: Thinking about segregation, can you recall times where (social) housing and planning policies have successfully been challenged by individual councillors or representatives?

* How did the policies change [content of policies]?

3.5 Question: Would you regard the UK government as being strongly engaged in upgrading deprived neighbourhoods and limiting displacement in gentrifying neighbourhoods?

* Do you know if Birmingham City Council has any policies against segregation and displacement of lower-income people?
* What is the role of municipalities in shaping regional or national policies against segregation and displacement?

**4. Conclusion**

4.1 Question: Are there important topics or important aspects in relation to social housing policy and urban development that have not been addressed so far? Do you want to add something?

Thank you very much for this interview!