The Urban sociology
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The course provides a comprehensive description and analysis of urban social structure and change in Western societies, especially in Europe. Stress is laid on social, cultural and environmental problems linked to the structuring of contemporary cities and urban regions. The students are also informed about main approaches and methods used in present urban studies and about the main social and environmental problems that contemporary cities are facing. Some basic information on European town planning traditions will be added. The probable futures of European cities are dealt with as well. The course is based on five analytical approaches studying: 1. socio-spatial structures of cities, 2. urban institutions, 3. urban cultures (semiotics), 4. behavioral aspects of urban societies and 5. images of cities.

1. Concepts, approaches and methods used in contemporary urban studies
In the first part of the course the students will be acquainted with the following issues:
- social, institutional and cultural theories of cities as used in contemporary urban sociology,
- the main differences between European and American approaches to urban sociology, urban sociology as a reflection of social problems emerging in industrial - urban civilizations
- the founders of sociology and the city – Marx, Durkheim, Weber,
- American urban sociology, Chicago school, community studies, contemporary approaches in European urban sociology.

2. Social morphology and human ecology of cities and urban regions
In the second part of the course the students will be acquainted with the interaction among spatial, physical social and cultural factors that structured cities in 19th century, in the first half of 20th century, and in contemporary cities and urban regions. Economic, socio-cultural and ecological models of internal urban structures as well as social segregation, poverty and urban social disorganization phenomena are described. Effects of such new phenomena as information technologies on urban structures are presented as well. The meaning of the term information city is explained. In a condensed version the evolution of the socio-spatial structure of European cities is explained. The last part of this section will be concerned with sub - urbanization processes and the formation of urban regions.

3. Culture of cities and behavioral aspects
In the third part of the course students will be acquainted with the impact of cultures on socio-spatial structure of cities, on institutional patterns as e.g. governance, planning etc. Cities in
differing cultures, as e.g. in Muslim and Western cultures will be compared, as well as in different parts of Europe. A summary of our knowledge of urban social psychology will be presented and authors like G.Simmel, L.Wirth, R.Sennet, H.P.Bahrdt will be analyzed. The students will be introduced also to the semiotic aspects of cities. The meaning of the built environment will be explored on three levels: the high level meaning expressing the worldviews and cosmologies, the middle-level meaning linked to wealth and status and the low-level meaning relating to ways of life, habits, lores. Cities will be explained as texts.

4. Cities as institutions
The fourth part of the course is devoted to cities as institutions, i.e. regulative mechanisms, legal frameworks, town planning, and to interaction between local and national or supranational forces. Students will be informed about the impact of globalization on cities.

5. World urbanization processes
In the fifth part of the course world urbanization processes will be analyzed with stress on specific features of European urban evolution and of European cities. The differences between the developments in Europe, Asia, Latin America and Africa will be stressed. The cities in the three last mentioned continents face the problems linked to rapid urban growth whereas Europe starts to face population stagnation, decline in the population of many cities and new developmental and planning strategies have to be invented. The question of sustainability of cities will be discussed.

6. European urban futures
The final part of the course will be concerned with the probable future developments of cities, mainly European cities. The three possible developmental trajectories, i.e. the one based on growth, the other one based on equity and the one based on improvement of urban environment will be described and analyzed.

The students will be also acquainted with the predicted urban regional developments in Europe, with the probable integration of the overall European urban system and with urban futures in post/communist countries.

Readings
The readings for the course are assembled in a short reader that will be available in the CEU library. It is suggested that before the beginning of the course the students read the following: Paddison, R. ed. (2001), Handbook of Urban Studies, Sage Publications, London, especially Part I Identifying the City, Part III The City as People, Part V The City as Organized Polity and Part VI Power and Policy Discourses in Postmodern Cities

*Grading, examination*

The main criterion used in grading will be the quality of the final essay on a chosen urban issue. Students are recommended to choose a theme linked to their previous studies, to exploit their existing knowledge. Maximum size: 15 typed pages. Secondary criterion used in grading: activity in discussions during the course.