The illicit, the informal and the illegal: housing and organised crime in Northern Italy

This seminar presents the preliminary results of ongoing research into housing informality and illegality in Italy and its nexus with illicit and illegal activities and actors in the urban field. In particular, the seminar centres on a thorough analysis of the case of Desio, a town in Northern Italy that lies close to Milan. Here, housing illegality has flourished, in an environment characterised by the rooted presence of a mafia-like organisation known as the ‘Ndrangheta. Through three paradigmatic stories of illegal houses in Desio, the seminar proposes hypotheses about the specificities of informal housing in Italy. On the basis of this analysis, some traditional views of housing informality (both in the Global South and in the Global North) will be questioned.