Live-work mix in Brussels in the context of urban commodification

[TU Delft] 13.05.2022 / CONSTANCE UYTTEBROUCK

HOUSING PROVISION

TARGET GROUPS

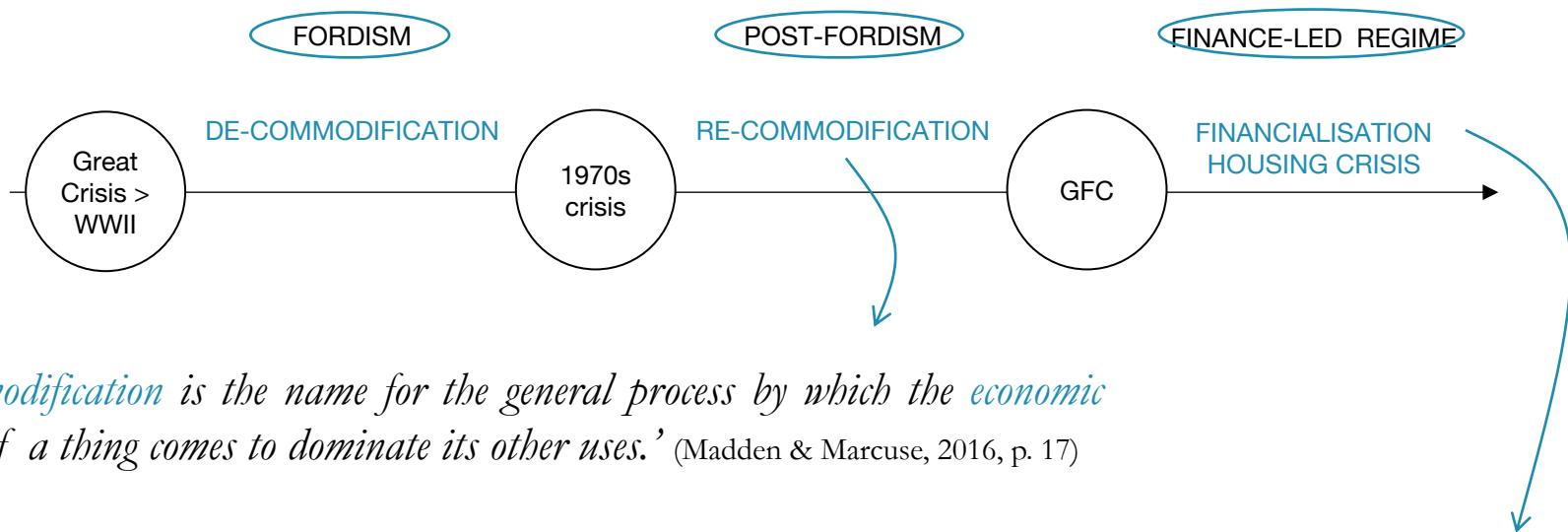LIVE-WORK MIX

URBAN DEVELOPMENT

FLEXIBILISATION KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY
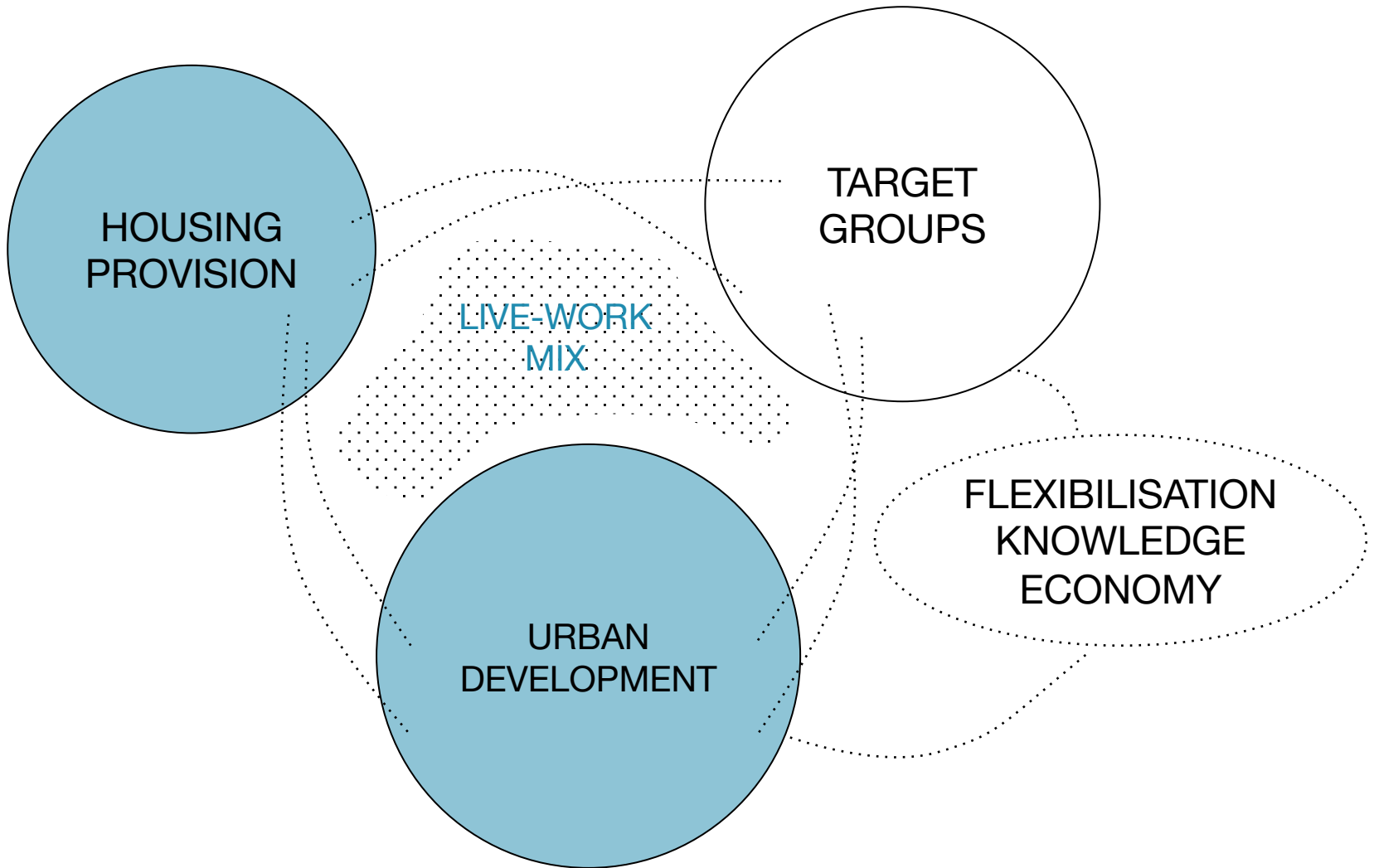
COMMODIFICATION OF HOUSING AND URBAN SPACE

3

- Housing affordability (capital) and accessibility (service)

- Housing regimes:

FORDISM   POST-FORDISM   FINANCE-LED REGIME

DE-COMMODIFICATION   RE-COMMODIFICATION   FINANCIALISATION
                                                    HOUSING CRISIS

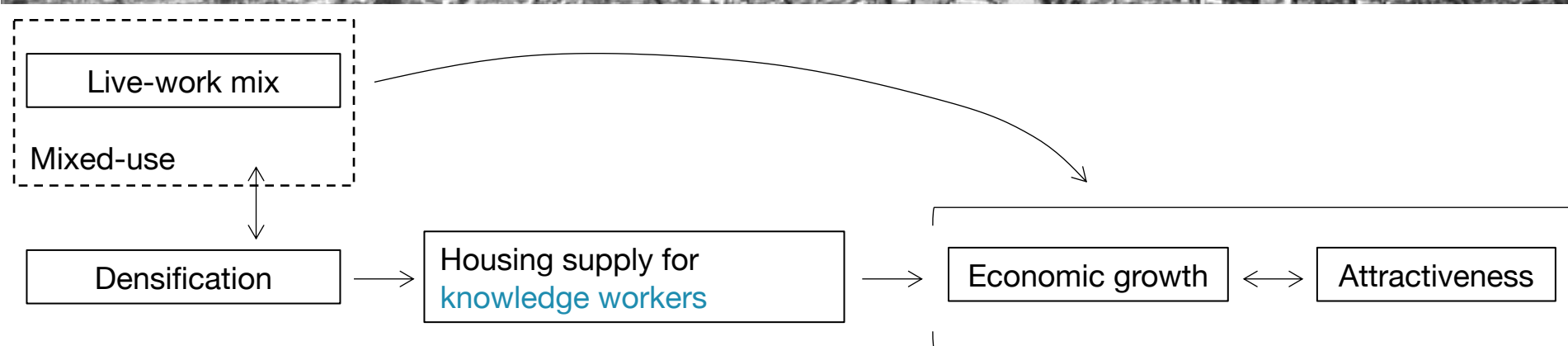Great Crisis > WWII ———— 1970s crisis ———— GFC ————▶

'*Commodification is the name for the general process by which the economic value of a thing comes to dominate its other uses.*' (Madden & Marcuse, 2016, p. 17)
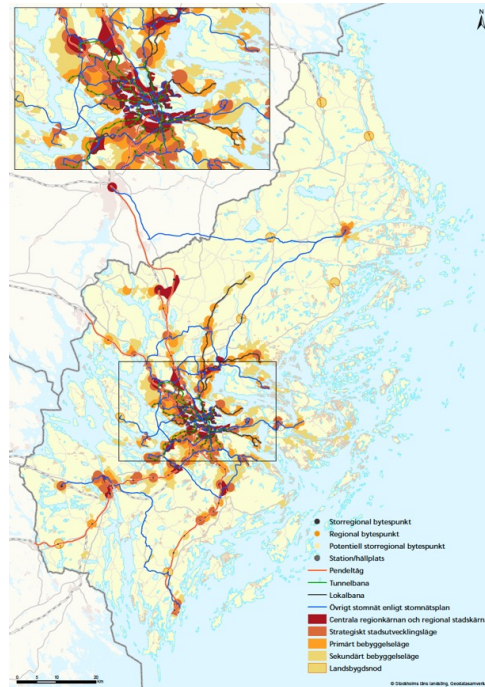
'*…the increasing dominance of financial actors, markets, practices, measurements and narratives, at various scales*' (Aalbers, van Loon, & Fernandez, 2017, p. 573)

Live-work mix

Mixed-use

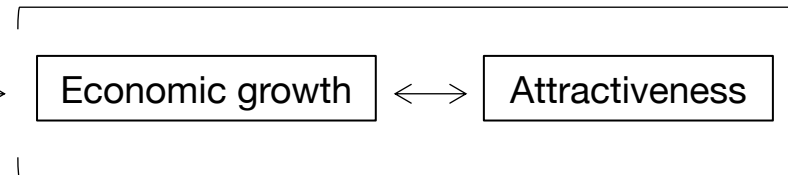Densification → Housing supply for knowledge workers → Economic growth ↔ Attractiveness

Competitiveness

@www.citydox.be

(Stockholm County Council, 2018)
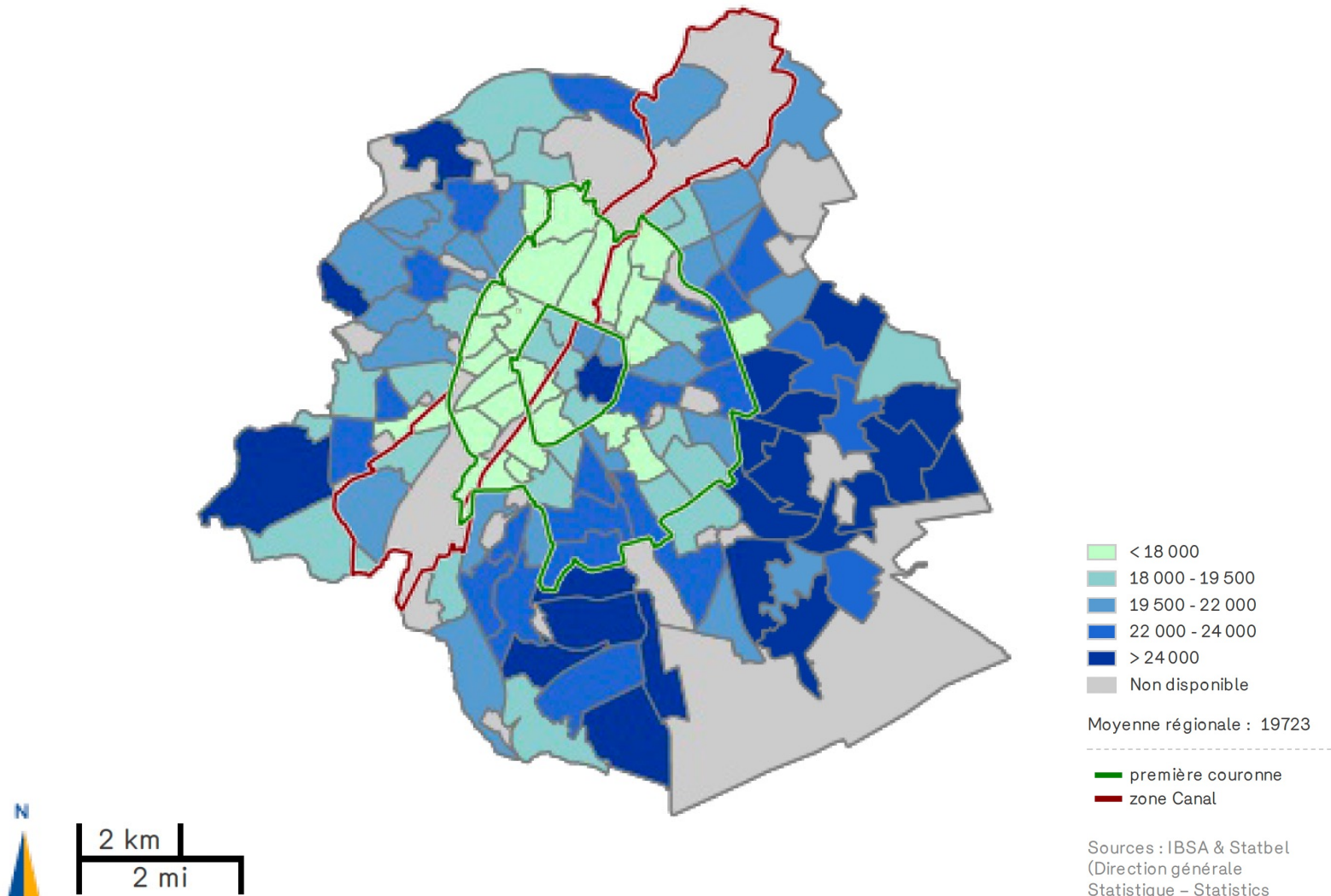
Spatial-economic discourse

Global Cities
Polycentric urban regions

Taxable median incomes based on 2018 declarations (€) (IBSA & Statbel, 2022)

Legend:
- < 18 000
- 18 000 - 19 500
- 19 500 - 22 000
- 22 000 - 24 000
- > 24 000
- Non disponible

Moyenne régionale : 19723

- première couronne
- zone Canal

Sources : IBSA & Statbel (Direction générale Statistique – Statistics Belgium) (Statistique fiscale des revenus)

Monitoring des Quartiers - IBSA © Brussels UrbIS ®©

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1889: Homeownership

1919: National social housing agency

1948: Massive homeownership

Urban sprawl > BXL depopulation

BCR > urban revitalisation, subsidised homeownership

| 1880 | 1890 | 1900 | 1910 | 1920 | 1930 | 1940 | 1950 | 1960 | 1970 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | 2010 |

Industrialisation > fragmentation

Expansion frozen, Sprawl

1962: Spatial Planning Act

Regional plans, urban renewal, mixed zones

Infrastructure (1958, EU institutions)

Office districts

© www.civa.brussels
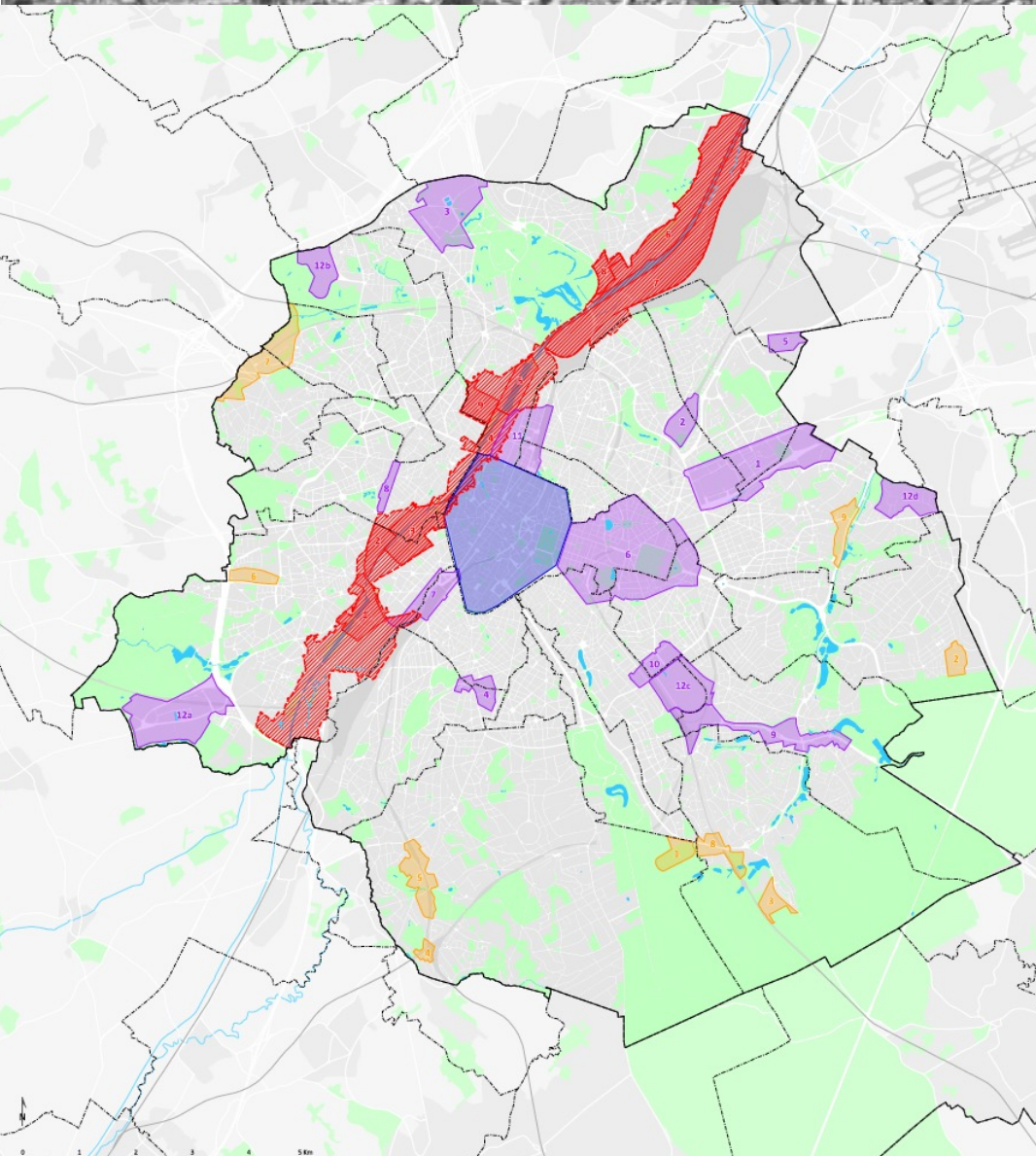
- Homeownership tradition > 45% Homeownership, 45% Private rental housing, 10% Public housing (including 7% social)

- Postwar period: Market involvement, Poor spatial planning, Suburbanisation

- After creating the BCR (1989): New institutions (including *Citydev*) > Governance capacity, Incremental planning, Productive city discourse

BRUSSELS PRODUCTIVE CITY

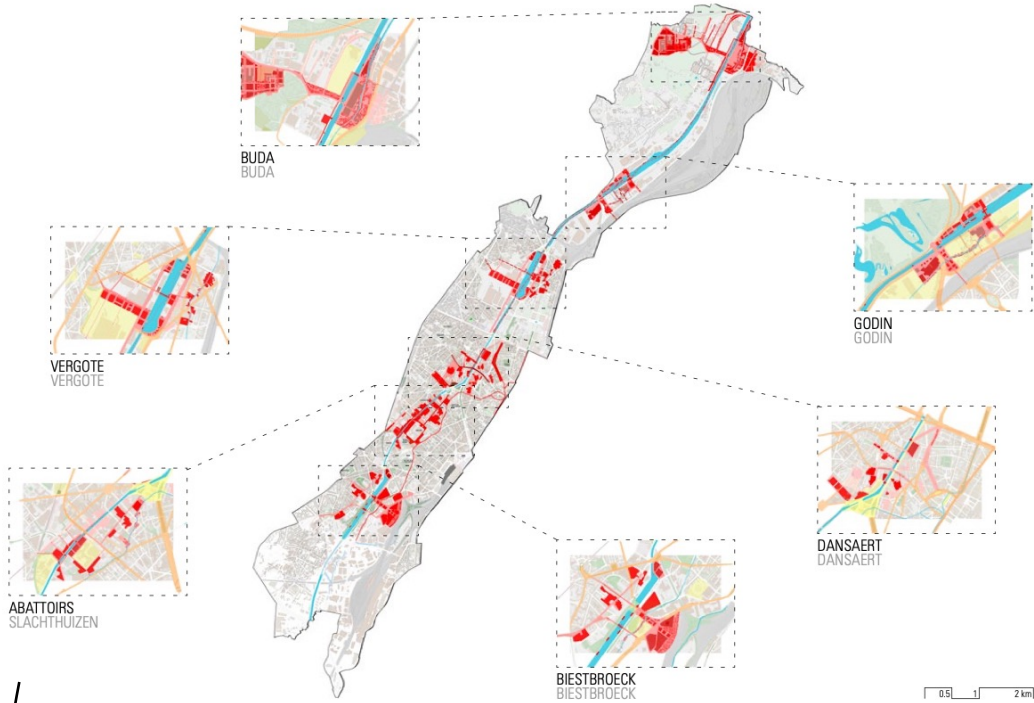| Légende		Legende
Territoire du Canal		Kanaalgebied
Sites prioritaires de développement		Prioritaire ontwikkelingssites
Pôles de développement prioritaires		Prioritaire ontwikkelingspolen
Pôles d'échelle intercommunale et locale		Lokale polen

(Brussels Capital Region, 2018)
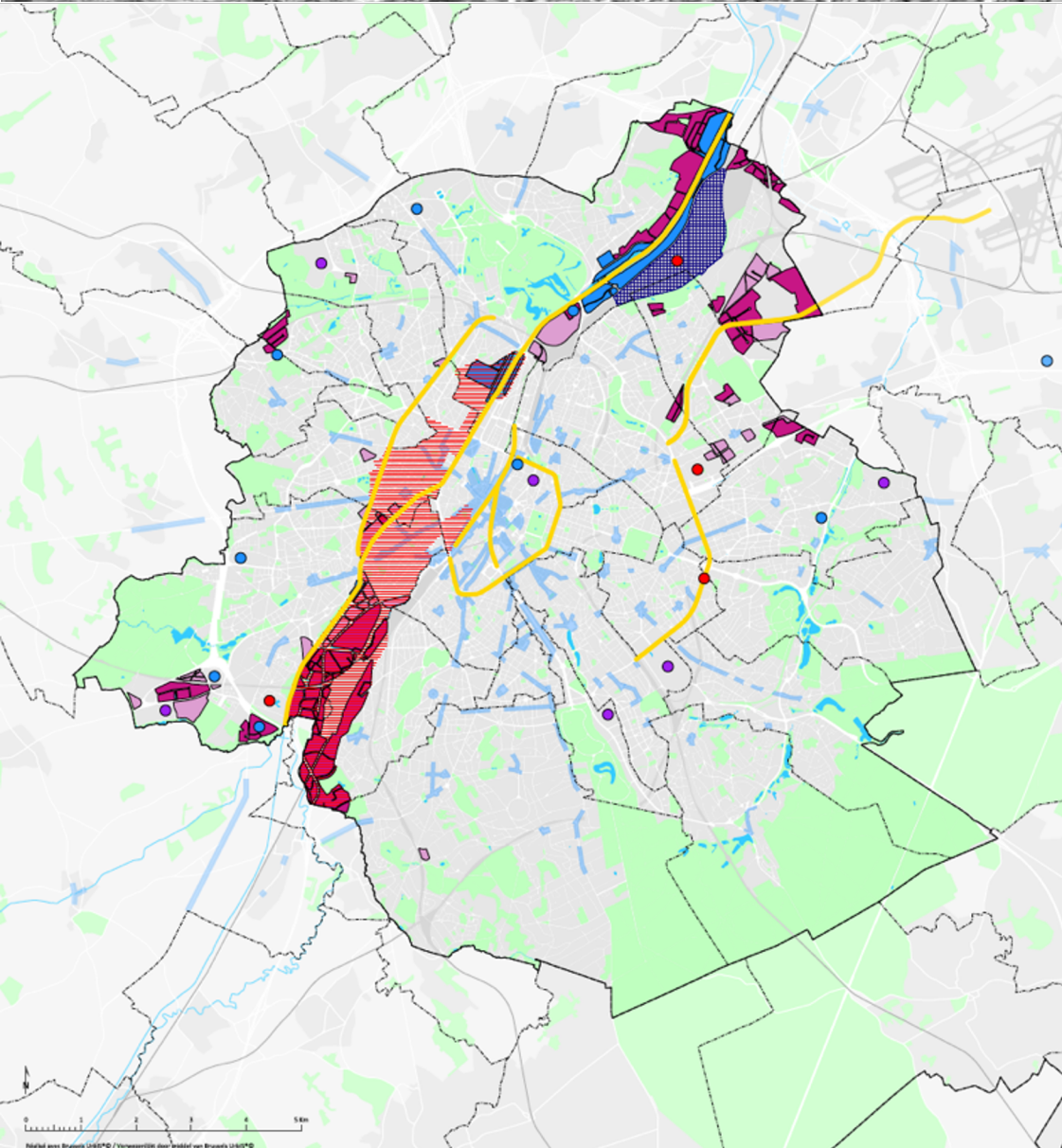
Economie   **Economie**

Axe de développement économique — Economische ontwikkelingsas

ZEMU - Zone d'entreprises en milieu urbain (PRAS) — OGSO - Ondernemingsgebied in een stedelijke omgeving (GBP)

Zone d'industries urbaines (PRAS) — Stedelijk industriegebied (GBP)

Projet de Zone d'économie urbaine stimulée — Ontwerpzone van economische uitbouw in de stad

Pôle de compétitivité — Competitiviteitspool

(Brussels Capital Region, 2018)

BUDA
BUDA

VERGOTE
VERGOTE

ABATTOIRS
SLACHTHUIZEN

BIESTBROECK
BIESTBROECK

GODIN
GODIN

DANSAERT
DANSAERT

0.5 1 2 km

Canal Plan – Diagnosis (above) – Pilot site Biestebroek (below) - © https://canal.brussels

Specific Land-use plan Biestebroek

MIXED-USE PROJECTS IN THE CANAL AREA

Citydox (Credit: Serge Brison – www.dds.plus)

Citydox (Credit: Serge Brison – www.dds.plus)

Citydox – first phase in 2019 (Credit: author)

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COMMERCE · CARRE · EQUIPEMENT · ACTIVITES PRODUCTIVES · PARKINGS

BOUCLE VERTE · AXE DE DÉVELOPPEMENT · MONUMENT CLASSE OU/ET SAUVEGARDE
CONTINUITÉ PAYSAGÈRE, PHYSIQUE ET BIOLOGIQUE · AXE DE DÉVELOPPEMENT EN LIEN AVEC LE PARC MÉTROPOLITAIN RELIANT · CARACTÈRE MONUMENTAL RENFORCÉ
ALIGNEMENT D'ARBRES (BPK) · CARREFOUR PACIFIÉ · PERCÉE VISUELLE
FAÇADE PARC · LIEN RENFORCÉ PAR LA PACIFICATION DU CARREFOUR
BOUCLE DE PETITE LOGISTIQUE

BOUWMEESTER MAITRE ARCHITECTE

u.

urban.brussels
be.exemplary

Appartments +

Hotel +

Offices +
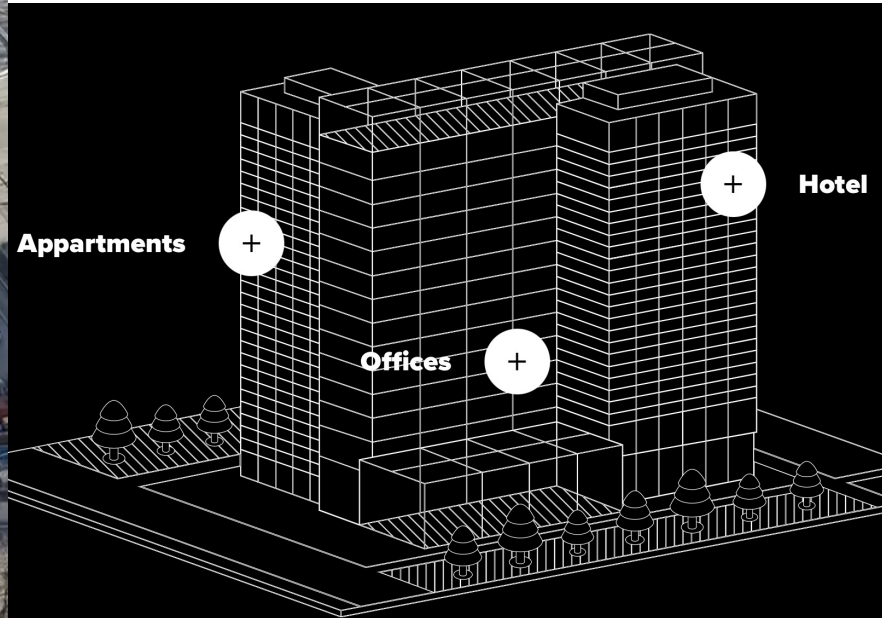
- Institutional fragmentation > state support through new actors

- Citydev: entrepreneurial role

- Canal team: improved governance capacity

- Government architect: design-oriented planning

Brussels, 2019(Credit: author)

- Market focus on the 'live' component and 'easy' target groups (opportunistic behaviour)

- > Subsidised housing/offices de-risking productive activities

- No social housing providers involved

Brussels, 2019(Credit: A2M)

- Revision of the regional land-use plan

- New instrument (canal plan) > incremental planning

- Strategic uses : local land-use plan, subdivision permit

- Conflicts with planning permissions, building regulations

- Shared interests (location, residential attractiveness) > interdependencies between actors

- Early-stage collaboration > consensus

- But discrepancies on the nature of live-work mix

- > Difficulties to achieve effective spatial planning

Excerpt of the regional land-use plan (2013)

Subdivision permit - (Anderlecht City, 2016)

Brussels, 2019 (Credit: author)

- Office conversion into housing with shared spaces

- State support v. market-led

- Planning permission reflecting negotiations with the political level

- Shared spaces: enhance live-work mix, balance small units v. residual spaces unsuitable for housing

We are not in favour of having plenty of studios and such things, but…As I said, having common spaces and the possibility to benefit from a guestroom when the family is visiting (…) made the project acceptable.' [Councillor BXL-T1]

- Little regulated rental housing, de facto exclusive

Brussels, 2019 (Credit: author)

LIVE-WORK MIX AND SHARED HOUSING

- Community-led housing in a former industrial building

- Commitment of a third body with an entrepreneurial role

- Community looking for affordable/large dwellings

- Instruments: collective purchase, but no anti-speculative agreement

- Shared spaces almost absent but economic/live-work units

- Speculation risk > community jeopardised

Brussels, 2019 (Credit: author)

Shared courtyard – Brussels, 2019 (Credit: author)

Live-work mix

- (Commodified) housing forms for specific target groups

- De-risking role of housing in mixed-use projects developed in strategic locations

Brussels context

- Market involvement in housing provision and urban development

- Productive city discourse

- Canal area, Northern district: redevelopment with live-work goals

- Implementation: actors' governance capacity, shared interests v. conflicting instruments

- + Shared housing forms integrating live-work mix

Thank you…questions?