AALBORG UNIVERSITY - CAMPUS COPENHAGEN

MASTER THESIS

Governing Social Exclusion
in Urban Greening Projects

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Title

Governing Social Exclusion in Urban Greening Projects

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Abstract

Urban greening, ranging from parks and greenways to climate-adaptation infrastructure, has become a central response to urban heat and flood risk, yet growing evidence indicates that such interventions can intensify housing pressures and social inequities through green gentrification. This thesis examines how green gentrification risk is rendered visible, made actionable, and governed in practice, and how governance breakdowns emerge when risk recognition fails to translate into binding intervention. An abductive qualitative case-study design is applied to Berlin to reconstruct the discursive problematizations through which greening is simultaneously framed as environmentally necessary and potentially exclusionary.

Empirical material is drawn from five semi-structured expert interviews and complementary policy and planning documents. A multi-level analytical scaffold is developed and applied to integrate (i) displacement-relevant mechanism pathways, (ii) actor-positioned responsibilities and constraints, (iii) narrative rationalities that structure legitimacy and causality, and (iv) environmental justice dimensions (distributive, procedural, and recognitional). Across the dataset, green gentrification risk is acknowledged but inconsistently translated into decision-making consequences. Responsibility is frequently displaced across sectors or deferred in time; administrative steering is narrated as limited to sensitization; enforcement is repeatedly identified as the decisive weak point; and participation is often experienced as procedural rather than outcome-shaping.

Building on this diagnosis, governance solutions are specified as interventions into the problematization process rather than as a standalone policy menu. Four meta-governance levers, epistemic authority, accountability, capability, and legitimacy, are derived and operationalized into context-specific measure bundles for public greening projects, existing housing stock, and new development. The thesis contributes a discourse-informed governance approach that links justice-centered diagnosis to implementable institutional design for equitable greening.

Kurzfassung

Die Begrünung städtischer Räume – von Parks und Grünzügen bis hin zu Klimaanpassungsinfrastrukturen – hat sich zu einer zentralen Antwort auf urbane Hitze und Starkregenrisiken entwickelt. Zugleich zeigt die Forschung zunehmend, dass solche Interventionen über Prozesse der „Green Gentrification" Wohnungsdruck und soziale Ungleichheiten verschärfen können. In dieser Arbeit wird untersucht, wie Risiken grüner Gentrifizierung in der Praxis sichtbar gemacht, handlungsrelevant definiert und seitens der Governance bearbeitet werden und an welchen Stellen Übersetzungsbrüche entstehen, wenn Risikowissen nicht in verbindliche Maßnahmen überführt wird. Berlin dient als empirischer Kontext, um diskursive Problematisierungen nachzuzeichnen, in denen Begrünung zugleich als ökologisch notwendig und potenziell verdrängend gerahmt wird.

Methodisch basiert die Studie auf einem abduktiven, qualitativen Fallstudiendesign. Das empirische Material umfasst fünf leitfadengestützte Interviews sowie ergänzende Planungs- und Politikdokumente. Zur Auswertung wurde ein mehrstufiges analytisches Gerüst entwickelt, das verdrängungsrelevante Mechanismuspfade, akteursbezogene Zuständigkeiten, Ressourcen und Restriktionen, narrative Rationalitäten der Legitimation und Kausalitätszuschreibung sowie umweltgerechtigkeitsbezogene Dimensionen im distributiven, prozeduralen und anerkennungsbezogenen Sinne integriert. Über das Datenset hinweg zeigt sich, dass das Risiko grüner Gentrifizierung zwar breit anerkannt ist, jedoch nur inkonsistent in entscheidungswirksame Konsequenzen umgesetzt wird. Verantwortlichkeiten werden häufig sektorübergreifend verschoben oder zeitlich vertagt, die administrative Steuerungsfähigkeit wird als begrenzt und vor allem sensibilisierend beschrieben, Vollzug und Durchsetzung erscheinen als zentraler Engpass, und Beteiligung wird vielfach als prozedural, aber nicht entscheidungsrelevant erlebt.

Aufbauend auf dieser Diagnose werden Governance-Ansätze nicht als isoliertes Maßnahmenmenü, sondern als Interventionen in den Problematisierungsprozess konzipiert. Es werden vier Meta-Governance-Hebel für Planungsentscheidungen abgeleitet: epistemische Autorität, Verbindlichkeit und Verantwortungszuweisung, Handlungskapazität sowie Legitimität. Diese werden in kontextspezifische Maßnahmenbündel für öffentliche Begrünungsprojekte, Bestandsquartiere und Neubauten überführt. Damit leistet die Arbeit einen Beitrag zu einer diskursinformierten Governance-Perspektive, die eine umweltgerechtigkeitsbasierte Diagnose mit umsetzbarer institutioneller Gestaltung für eine sozial gerechte Begrünung verbindet.

Table of Contents

Table of Figures

Table of Tables

Note: In the absence of an explicit indication to the contrary, the figures and tables are regarded as developed by the author to support an argument presented in the text.

1   Introduction

Urban policy in European cities is increasingly structured by a dual imperative: accelerating climate adaptation is required to maintain urban livability, while deepening housing insecurity and socio-spatial inequality are intensifying. Within this conjuncture, urban greening, ranging from parks and greenways to green infrastructure, has been positioned as a central climate-adaptation strategy, expected to reduce heat stress, improve stormwater retention, and enhance everyday well-being (IPCC 2023). However, greening is not socially neutral. Where environmental improvements become entangled with land-value escalation, tenure insecurity, and shifting symbolic geographies, adaptation benefits may be captured unevenly, and exclusionary outcomes may be produced, a tension increasingly discussed under the rubric of green gentrification (Gould and Lewis 2016; Anguelovski et al. 2019). Berlin provides a salient setting for examining this tension because climate-adaptation priorities and housing-market pressures co-occur in a governance landscape characterized by strong but fragmented policy instruments.

1.1   The Dual Crisis of Ecology and Equity

Berlin's climate-adaptation agenda has been shaped by intensifying heat, drought, and heavy rainfall events, alongside the city's distinctive built morphology and high levels of surface sealing. These pressures have been repeatedly highlighted in Berlin's strategic planning, including the *Berliner Energie- Und Klimaschutzprogramm 2030* (Berlin Energy and Climate Development Plan), which frames future urban development as requiring heat-mitigating and water-sensitive structures across both new construction and existing built areas (SenUVK 2019). Urban greening and blue–green infrastructure have therefore been promoted as no-regret measures capable of simultaneously supporting thermal comfort, biodiversity, and stormwater management (SenStadt 2022).

The distribution of climate stressors is not spatially uniform. Heat exposure and environmental burdens tend to concentrate in dense inner-city fabrics, where limited ventilation corridors, scarce tree canopy, and high impervious surface shares amplify urban heat island effects (van Rüth et al. 2020). In Berlin, these concentrations intersect with patterns of social disadvantage in ways that are explicitly documented in the city's environmental justice monitoring, which aggregates thermal burden, noise, air pollution, green space provision, and social disadvantage to identify areas of multiple burden (SenUMVK 2023). The result is a governance setting in which climate adaptation cannot plausibly be treated as a purely technical or ecological agenda, since vulnerability is co-produced through urban form, socio-economic disadvantage, and unequal access to mitigating environmental assets (SenUMVK 2023).

These conditions are partly path dependent. The city's inner urban fabric was substantially shaped by nineteenth-century expansion logics associated with the *Hobrecht Plan*, whose long-term spatial configurations continue to structure density patterns and the distribution of courtyards, blocks, and street grids (Bentlin 2023). In contemporary climate conditions, these morphologies can intensify heat retention and constrain the local cooling effects otherwise provided by vegetation and open space, thereby increasing the policy salience of greening interventions in precisely those neighborhoods where land-use conflicts and socio-spatial vulnerability are pronounced (SenUMVK 2023; SenStadt 2024).

The climate-adaptation imperative has unfolded against a housing context in which affordability pressures and displacement risks have become defining urban political concerns. Berlin's recent gentrification dynamics have been linked to long-term housing-policy restructuring, including privatization of public housing stock and substantial contraction of social housing provision, alongside rising rent levels and intensified investor interest in inner-city neighborhoods (Holm 2013). In this context, interventions that increase neighborhood amenity and symbolic attractiveness, including parks, upgraded public space, and climate-resilience investments, can become implicated in processes that accelerate reinvestment and reshape residential composition (Holm 2013; Gould and Lewis 2016).

The housing question is therefore not external to climate policy but structurally entangled with it. Greening projects may generate environmental benefits while simultaneously functioning as signals within property markets and urban imaginaries, contributing to speculative expectations and to narratives of improvement that reorder who is perceived as belonging in a place (Anguelovski et al. 2019). A substantial body of green gentrification research has documented how sustainability and adaptation interventions can produce distributive gains alongside social costs, particularly where housing protections are weak or where higher-income newcomers capture benefits (Anguelovski et al. 2022). As a result, displacement risk is increasingly interpreted as a governance problem: environmental improvements are publicly justified as collective goods, yet the social conditions under which long-standing residents can remain and benefit are not automatically secured.

The resulting research problem is defined here as a governance gap produced by sectoral fragmentation. Berlin's climate and adaptation strategies have been advanced through integrated programs and spatial planning instruments, including the *StEP Klima 2.0* (urban development plan for climate adaptation) (SenStadt 2022). At the same time, anti-displacement policy has been pursued through instruments such as *sozialen Erhaltungssatzung* (social preservation statutes), which are designed to maintain the social composition of designated areas by regulating modernization and conversion dynamics (Naumann, Lischke, and Nadler 2023). However, these instrument families have tended to operate as adjacent policy logics rather than as a unified governance approach. Anti-displacement instruments are typically activated around modernization pressures and market dynamics, while climate programs emphasize decarbonization, greening, and resilience-building without systematic displacement safeguards or enforceable social-neutrality conditions (SenUVK 2019; Naumann, Lischke, and Nadler 2023). This fragmentation can generate practical trade-offs. Environmentally desirable measures may be slowed, contested, or reconfigured under preservation regimes, while climate investments may proceed without integrated affordability protections, thereby intensifying exclusion risks. The governance challenge is therefore not adequately captured by framing climate adaptation and housing protection as competing goals. Instead, it is more accurately described as the absence of robust mechanisms through which both objectives are jointly pursued, operationalized, and monitored within project implementation and cross-sector coordination (SenStadt 2022; Anguelovski et al. 2022).

Against this background, the guiding research task is directed at how green gentrification risks are produced, problematized, and governed in Berlin's greening context, and how governance arrangements might be adapted such that social exclusion prevention and environmental sustainability are treated as a unified objective rather than as a recurrent policy dilemma (Gould and Lewis 2016; Anguelovski et al. 2022).

1.2 Background and Definitions

This section establishes the conceptual baseline for the thesis by defining gentrification and green gentrification and by specifying environmental justice, social exclusion, and displacement as the key analytical lenses through which greening-related urban change is interpreted.

Gentrification. Since the 1960s, when Glass first coined the term in her study of inner London, gentrification has been used to describe a pattern of urban change in which capital reinvestment and middle-class immigration transform previously disinvested or working-class neighborhoods (Glass 1964). Within critical urban studies, gentrification has thus been conceptualized as a general socio-spatial process of capital-led neighborhood transformation (see Figure 1-1), characterized by the revaluation of land and housing, the replacement or marginalization of long-standing residents, and the consolidation of more affluent and socially advantaged groups (Smith 2005; Lees, Slater, and Wyly 2010).
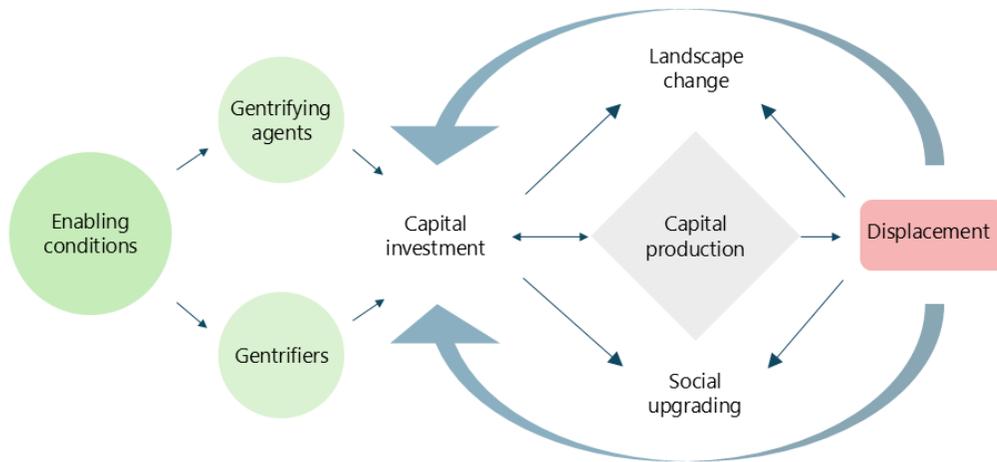
Figure 1-1: Schematic of the gentrification process and its drivers. The diagram illustrates how enabling conditions and actors (gentrifying agents and gentrifiers) drive capital investment, which, in turn, fuels a cycle of capital production manifesting as landscape change, social upgrading, and displacement (Adapted from: Sutherland (2018))

Environmental justice is used in this thesis as a multidimensional framework that links questions about the impact of urban greening, who bears environmental burdens, and who enjoys environmental benefits, whose identities and ways of life are valued, and who has power in environmental decision-making; it is understood to comprise distributive, procedural, and recognitional dimensions (Agyeman, Bullard, and Evans 2003; Schlosberg 2004; Fraser 2009; Walker, G. 2012). While distributive questions about who gains or loses housing security from environmental improvements are central, green gentrification research, as defined further below, has emphasized that procedural and recognitional injustices also shape how harms are produced and contested (Schlosberg 2004; Anguelovski et al. 2022). These dimensions foreground qualitative harms: an intervention may be perceived as unjust because it erases murals or community gardens that carried cultural significance, or because it attracts new user groups in ways that undermine long-standing residents' sense of belonging. Such experiences have been described by Valli (2020) as emotional displacement, involving intangible, yet vividly experienced, forms of gentrification-led loss of place. The symbolic violence of misrecognition may further be experienced as harmful even in the absence of physical displacement (Bourdieu 1979; Valli 2020). This perspective underscores that assessments of greening-related change

must consider not only tenure and rent changes, but also how interventions reorder meanings, identities, and everyday practices in place. When gentrification is viewed through an environmental justice lens, it is treated not only as a housing and class transformation but also as a redistribution of environmental benefits, recognition, and decision-making power, in which urban greening is implicated in these redistributions and their exclusionary effects.

Social exclusion is conceptualized as a multidimensional process in which individuals or groups are denied resources, rights, goods, and services and are thereby prevented from participating fully in the normal relationships and activities of the society in which they live (Walker, R. 1995; Levitas and others 2007). In the context of urban greening and green gentrification, social exclusion is interpreted as a key way in which environmental injustices materialize through market dynamics, institutional arrangements, and symbolic boundaries that differentially shape who can remain in, use, and benefit from improved environments (Lamont and Molnár 2002; Rigolon and Németh 2021; Anguelovski et al. 2022).

Within this broader lens, **displacement** is treated as a specific, housing-related manifestation of social exclusion and environmental injustice. It is understood as an involuntary process in which individuals or households lose, or are effectively unable to maintain, their residence because conditions in the dwelling or its surroundings, beyond their reasonable control, make continued occupancy impossible, hazardous, or unaffordable (Marcuse 1985; Atkinson 2000; Zuk et al. 2018).

Green gentrification refers to cases in which new or improved green spaces and climate-adaptation infrastructures contribute to attracting reinvestment and higher-income residents, thereby intensifying social exclusion and displacement risks for long-standing, often marginalized communities (Gould and Lewis 2016; Anguelovski et al. 2019). An environmental improvement that is ostensibly undertaken in the name of sustainability or climate adaptation, thus paradoxically results in the exclusion, marginalization, or replacement of many of the residents it was meant to benefit (Dooling, Lehman-Frisch, and Morange 2013; Gould and Lewis 2016; Anguelovski et al. 2022). Closely related labels, such as *environmental gentrification* (Curran and Hamilton 2012; Rigolon and Németh 2018) and *ecological gentrification* (Quastel 2009; Dooling, Lehman-Frisch, and Morange 2013) are used more broadly for sustainability-driven redevelopment, and they often share a common political-economic mechanism in which amenity gains are translated into market value and, under certain conditions, into socio-spatial reordering.

Central to this debate is that urban greening is frequently accompanied by an **asymmetric distribution of benefits and burdens**. As summarized in Figure 1-2, environmental improvements that are publicly promoted as universally beneficial tend to generate concentrated gains for those actors positioned to capture the new value, through higher land and property valuations, growth and branding effects, or expanded development opportunities, while vulnerable residents and small local businesses disproportionately bear the risks in the form of rising rents, exclusionary displacement, and cultural or commercial turnover (Dooling 2009; Gould and Lewis 2016). This asymmetry in who benefits and who bears the costs also provides the baseline problem setting for this thesis.
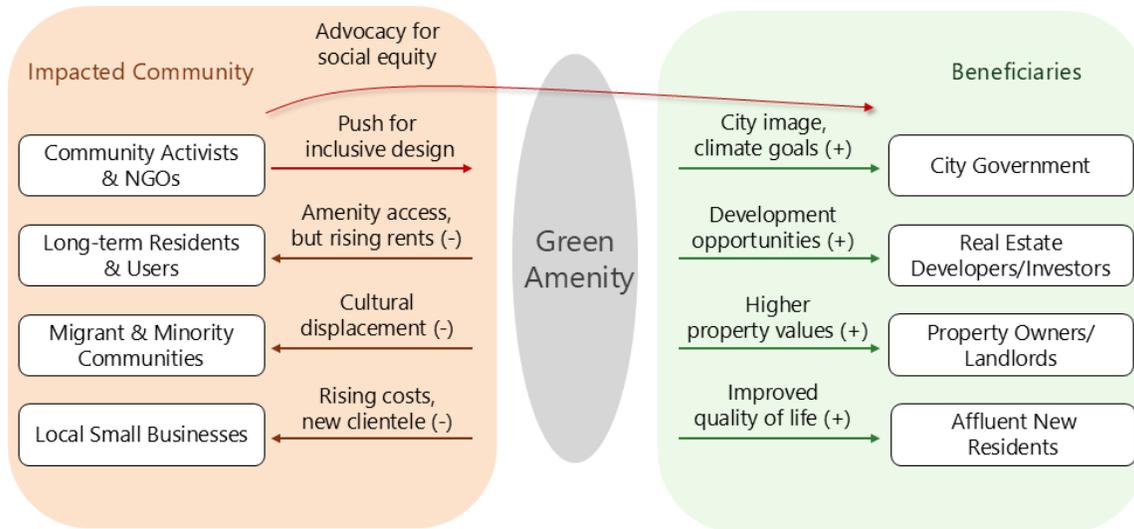
Figure 1-2: Burdens and benefits of green amenities allocated to each relevant stakeholder: Community Activists & NGOs, building a bridge between the impacted and the beneficiaries.

1.3 Existing Literature

The empirical literature on green gentrification has developed along three partly overlapping strands. In **North America**, research has focused on how high-profile greening projects, often implemented in previously disinvested, centrally located neighborhoods, catalyze real estate upscaling and displacement pressures (Checker 2011; Dooling, Lehman-Frisch, and Morange 2013; Rigolon and Németh 2018; Quinton, Nesbitt, and Sax 2022). Work on projects such as New York's High Line has demonstrated how new green amenities can become central to urban growth and branding strategies, with racialized and classed effects as wealthier, often whiter, residents and visitors are drawn to newly "improved" districts (Loughran 2014; Black and Richards 2020). Here, green gentrification is conceptualized as a specific articulation of longer-standing processes of disinvestment and reinvestment, in which environmental amenities and imaginaries are actively mobilized to remake urban space (Gould and Lewis 2016).

European studies report similar patterns, while placing stronger emphasis on institutional context, welfare-state arrangements, and regulatory conditions that mediate how greening-related value gains translate into exclusion and displacement risks (Goossens, Oosterlynck, and Bradt 2020; Anguelovski et al. 2022; Cucca, Friesenecker, and Thaler 2023; Haase and Schmidt 2024). In Barcelona, neighborhood-level analyses suggest that new or upgraded green spaces in formerly disinvested districts can be associated with income shifts, rising rents, and the pricing-out of working-class residents, albeit in context-dependent ways (Anguelovski et al. 2019; Anguelovski et al. 2022). In Berlin, research has highlighted unequal provision and quality of urban green space across districts, while also indicating that greening-related distributive outcomes are contingent on location and broader housing-market pressures rather than mechanically produced by greening alone (Kabisch and Haase 2014). These studies emphasize that similar greening interventions can yield distinct distributive outcomes depending on rent regulation, social housing policies, and urban development strategies.

Emerging work from Latin America and other regions of the **Global South** extends these debates to cities marked by prior waves of displacement, informal urbanization, and heightened environmental risk. In such

settings, climate-adaptation greening can interact with long-standing socio-spatial inequalities and hazard exposures, potentially compounding existing vulnerabilities rather than ameliorating them (Castán Broto and Westman 2019; Torres, Irazábal, and Jacobi 2022). Although this strand remains comparatively smaller and more fragmented than the North American and European literatures, it underscores that the distributive and displacement effects of greening cannot be understood independently of histories of dispossession and uneven urban development (Anguelovski et al. 2019).

Green gentrification literature has repeatedly **identified gaps** that constrain cumulative knowledge and policy uptake. First, conceptual boundaries and terminology remain unsettled, with overlapping labels (green/environmental/eco/ecological/climate/resilience gentrification) being used in partially interchangeable ways, complicating comparison and operational definition (Quinton and Nesbitt 2024). Second, green gentrification has been described as increasingly difficult to identify consistently on the ground, given expanding empirical objects (from flagship parks to broader nature-based solutions) and heterogeneous causal stories, prompting calls for clearer dimensional frameworks that distinguish conceptual foundations, project design/intent, and socio-spatial change (Sax, Nesbitt, and Quinton 2022). Third, systematic reviews have emphasized that mechanisms and displacement are still unevenly evidenced: studies have been geographically concentrated (especially in the United States), have often inferred displacement indirectly, and have devoted limited attention to how greening characteristics and non-greening drivers interact, particularly on the demand side (Quinton, Nesbitt, and Sax 2022). Fourth, governance-oriented scholarship has highlighted that the diagnosis–response pathway remains thin, with a persistent gap between documenting green gentrification and specifying countermeasures that can be activated within planning and policy routines (Cucca, Friesenecker, and Thaler 2023; Creasy and Maxwell 2024). Fifth, evidence has pointed to a research–practice disconnect, as practitioners have reported limited confidence in applying the concept, low levels of use in day-to-day work, and barriers such as limited institutional capacity, restricted mandates, data constraints, and lack of engagement tools (Nesbitt et al. 2023). Finally, comparative work has underlined context sensitivity and cross-city variation, indicating that greening–gentrification relations differ by city and governance context, which complicates one-size-fits-all claims and strengthens the case for context-grounded analytical approaches (Anguelovski et al. 2022; Rigolon and Collins 2022).

Thesis application. On this basis, the present thesis is positioned to engage *selectively* with these gaps in ways that match its empirical and conceptual design. The thesis is oriented primarily toward (a) conceptual clarification and operationalization for governance use by stabilizing a multi-level analytical scaffold, responding directly to calls for clearer frameworks and for greater consistency in "on-the-ground" identification (Sax, Nesbitt, and Quinton 2022; Quinton, Nesbitt, and Sax 2022). It is further oriented toward (b) problematization and practice relevance, by reconstructing how risks, responsibilities, and feasible responses are narrated across actors and by linking these reconstructions to governance levers, thereby addressing the documented diagnosis–response and research–practice gaps (Nesbitt et al. 2023; Cucca, Friesenecker, and Thaler 2023). A Berlin-centered case-study focus also contributes to the need for context-specific explanation highlighted by cross-city comparative work (Anguelovski et al. 2022).

1.4   Problem Formulation

In the context of climate change adaptation, urban greening has emerged as a significant strategy to mitigate the effects of urban heat and flooding. (IPCC 2023). At the same time, evidence from North American and

European contexts indicates that greening interventions can generate governance tensions, as housing pressures and social inequalities may intensify through green gentrification processes (Gould and Lewis 2016; Anguelovski et al. 2022). In Berlin, documented inequalities in access to and quality of green space provide a concrete basis for examining how such pressures are recognized and governed (Kabisch and Haase 2014). Comparative evidence further indicates that adverse outcomes are not automatic but contingent on neighborhood context, pre-existing development dynamics, and siting conditions (Droste and Gianoli 2024).

Despite this evidence base, gaps in operationalization and governance translation persist. Mechanisms are not consistently rendered into decision-relevant categories, and diagnostic insights are only rarely integrated into routine planning tools, mandates, and engagement practices (Quinton, Nesbitt, and Sax 2022; Nesbitt et al. 2023). These limitations are not merely technical but also discursive: green gentrification is problematized through competing narratives and unequal power/knowledge relations that authorize some actors to define what counts as "sustainable" greening, what counts as harm, and which responses are treated as feasible or legitimate (Foucault 1972; Hajer 1997). This thesis addresses that gap by specifying how greening can be made governable in ways that align sustainability objectives with environmental justice commitments, while keeping contested problem definitions, responsibilities, and intervention logics analytically and interpretively traceable.

These dynamics are examined in this thesis through an abductive, qualitative case-study design that reconstructs mechanisms, actor positions, and narratives through which greening becomes both "sustainable" and potentially exclusionary, without attempting causal estimation or direct displacement measurement. Berlin is used as the empirical setting in which these discursive problematizations are traced across planning and governance arenas, allowing the analysis to specify how green gentrification risk is constructed, contested, and translated into, or decoupled from, concrete intervention pathways.

Accordingly, the following **Primary Research Question** is posed:

> *How are green gentrification risks around Berlin's greening interventions framed and contested in planning and governance arenas, and how do these problematizations shape equitable governance responses?*

Sub-questions will address:

> **SQ A:** Conceptual & analytical frame
>
> *How can green gentrification risk be conceptualized as a collective governance problem using environmental justice dimensions, mechanisms, subject positions, and narratives?*
>
> **SQ B:** Empirical Patterns in Berlin Projects
>
> *In selected Berlin projects, how do different stakeholder groups perceive and narrate green gentrification and the environmental justice outcomes it produces?*
>
> **SQ C:** Governance implications
>
> *Which governance levers can reconfigure and align actor problematizations to make green gentrification risk governable and equitable while sustaining environmental benefits?*

1.5   Thesis Structure

This thesis is organized into three parts that move from conceptual framing to empirical reconstruction and, finally, to governance-oriented synthesis. Methodologically, Berlin is examined as a single case with embedded greening arenas; comparison is conducted across stakeholder subject positions and recurring narrative framings, with inference grounded in contextual explanation building and pattern-oriented comparison (Flyvbjerg 2006; Yin 2018). The analysis is guided by an abductive logic in which sensitizing concepts derived from the theoretical frame structure empirical inquiry while remaining open to refinement through encounter with interview and documentary material (Timmermans and Tavory 2012). In line with this approach, the conceptual operationalization developed in Part A is treated as an analytical scaffold that informs instrument design and interpretation.

Part A: Framework develops the thesis's conceptual and analytical basis for examining green gentrification as a contested governance problem. Chapter 2 establishes the theoretical frame by combining a pragmatist orientation to inquiry with a focus on problematization, discourse, and the relationship between power and knowledge. Chapter 3 then translates these commitments into an analytical scaffold that specifies four interrelated levels: mechanism pathways, stakeholder families as discursive subject positions, interpretive narratives as ideal types, and the justice dimensions as evaluative criteria.

Part B: Empirical patterns of problematization applies the created scaffold to Berlin via qualitative, narrative-oriented analysis. Chapter 4 documents the research design, case boundaries, sampling strategy, and the implemented procedures for data collection and analysis. Chapter 5 presents the empirical findings by reconstructing how different actor groups narrate mechanisms and justice outcomes, first through narrative-coded actor portraits and then through cross-case comparison of recurring framings, tensions, overlaps, and blind spots.

Note: All methodological decisions and conducted steps are documented in Chapter 4, immediately before the empirical analysis, as the study's design and analytic procedure are scaffold-driven and must be specified at the point where the theoretical operationalization is translated into data collection and interpretation.

Part C: Governance synthesizes implications for planning and policy. Chapter 6 develops governance-oriented recommendations that address the reinforced dynamics identified in Part B, with attention to how competing narratives and subject positions shape what is deemed feasible and legitimate. Chapter 7 situates the findings within existing debates, discusses methodological and epistemological implications, and reflects on limitations. Chapter 8 concludes by answering the research questions and summarizing the thesis's main contributions and implications.

1.6   Delimitation

The scope of the thesis was delimited to enable a theoretically grounded yet empirically tractable analysis of green gentrification as a contested governance problem. Accordingly, green gentrification is examined as a problematized relation between greening/climate-adaptation interventions and socio-spatial inequality, with attention to how mechanisms, responsibilities, and justice claims are narrated and authorized across actor groups. Berlin is treated as a single case, and discursive subject positions constitute the primary

comparative unit (Flyvbjerg 2006). The three greening arenas serve as contextual reference points rather than as units for project-to-project causal comparison.

Several boundaries were set by design. Geographically, the analysis was confined to Berlin and to the selected project context; claims about other cities or national policy regimes were not advanced beyond transferable implications. Temporally, the focus was on the phases accessible during the fieldwork and document-collection period (planning, implementation, and early contestation, as observed). At the same time, long-term neighborhood change beyond the observation window was not assessed. Substantively, the object of analysis was restricted to the intersection of urban greening/climate adaptation and housing/land-market dynamics; broader urban inequalities not plausibly connected to the studied interventions were treated as contextual background.

Methodologically, the study was delimited to qualitative, interpretive inference grounded in interviews and documentary material. Causal identification strategies (e.g., quasi-experimental estimation), representative population claims, and quantitative displacement measurement were not attempted. An abductive logic was employed in which sensitizing concepts guided inquiry while remaining open to refinement through empirical encounter, rather than being treated as fixed measurement categories (Blumer 1954; Timmermans and Tavory 2012). By contrast, the thesis is not designed to close the displacement-measurement and causal-estimation gaps through longitudinal micro-data or quasi-experimental identification; instead, mechanisms are examined as empirically traceable process claims and governance problematizations rather than as isolated treatment effects (Quinton, Nesbitt, and Sax 2022; Rigolon and Collins 2022).

This design implies three important scope conditions that should be kept in view from the outset. First, the study does not measure displacement outcomes or estimate causal effects; it reconstructs how displacement pressures and justice claims are narrated and rendered governable. Second, the empirical base is limited in breadth (five interviews) and does not cover all stakeholder families evenly, which constrains claims about within-group variation and about the full state-level decision pathway. Third, conclusions are therefore advanced as analytic claims about translation bottlenecks and governability conditions in Berlin, not as representative population claims. Finally, practical and ethical constraints implied that findings were derived from situated perspectives and therefore interpretive limitations are discussed separately in Chapter 7.4.

Part A

Framework

How can green gentrification risk be conceptualized as a collective governance problem using environmental justice dimensions, mechanisms, subject positions, and narratives?

2 Theoretical Frame

Green gentrification is widely treated not as a settled concept but as a contested configuration in which urban greening in historically marginalized neighborhoods can coincide with rent escalation, commercial turnover, and expressed anxieties among long-term residents, as described in Sections 1.2 and 1.3. A definitional difficulty is thereby foregrounded: should new green space be interpreted primarily as an environmental achievement or as a catalyst of social injustice? Because stakeholder framings diverge, the phenomenon must be specified conceptually before it can be observed, compared, or governed.

These divergences in perspective are often patterned across stakeholder roles and institutional positions. In green gentrification debates, economic framings frequently emphasize capitalization effects and rising assessed values, whereas resident-centered framings emphasize social ties, belonging, and cultural identity, and planning framings tend to situate both within wider structural conditions and policy constraints (Anguelovski et al. 2022). Green gentrification, therefore, cannot be treated as self-evident but must be translated across audiences and arenas.

2.1   Green Gentrification as a Problematic Situation

In this thesis, the instability of the construct is treated as a starting point rather than a flaw. Drawing on Dewey's pragmatist philosophy, green gentrification is approached as a *problematic situation*, an indeterminate configuration that triggers inquiry and is rendered determinate through investigative work (Dewey 1936). In a preliminary familiarization with Berlin's greening conflicts, a tension repeatedly emerged between celebrated urban greening projects and distress signals from affected communities. Attempts to pose a narrow causal question (e.g., whether displacement is being produced) tend to open further questions about what should count as displacement (physical, commercial, cultural), what constitutes exclusion, and which time horizons are normatively and empirically salient.

From a Deweyan perspective, such difficulties are not preliminary obstacles to research; they *are* the research problem. Defining the problem is itself part of inquiry and evolves via repeated encounters with empirical material (Dewey 1936; Rabinow 2011). Initial propositions, for instance, that new green infrastructure leads to the displacement of low-income residents, are treated as working tools rather than final truths. As interviews and document analysis accumulate, these propositions are refined: displacement may be immediate or delayed, direct or indirect, material or symbolic; exclusion may occur through rent hikes, changes in the rules of use, policing practices, or the loss of culturally significant spaces.

In this sense, green gentrification can be treated as a *wicked problem*: complex, value-laden, and understood differently by different stakeholders, such that problem definition and solution design remain mutually entangled (Rittel and Webber 1973; Head 2019; Arroyave et al. 2021). A significant part of the methodological work is thereby positioned as epistemological problem framing and continuous refinement of inquiry tools (concepts, questions, narratives). Rather than assuming a single correct definition, the thesis traces how different actors problematize the links among greening, housing, and justice, and uses these contested problem formulations as data in their own right.

2.2   Epistemological Stance: Dewey and Foucault

To render this problematic situation analytically tractable, a combined epistemological stance is adopted that draws on Deweyan pragmatism and Foucauldian problematization. Pragmatism treats theories and concepts as revisable tools for reconstructing indeterminate situations in ways that remain answerable to consequences in practice (Dewey 1936). Foucault's work on discourse, problematization, and governmentality is used to interrogate how the object green gentrification is constituted, which subjects are authorized to speak about it, and which solution spaces are rendered thinkable (Foucault 1991; Rabinow 2011).

Dewey's Instrumentalism and Inquiry in Problematic Situations

Deweyan instrumentalism holds that ideas and propositions are evaluated not as abstractly true or false but for their "relevancy and efficacy … with respect to the problem in hand" (Burke 1994, p. 177). Theories and concepts are adjustable instruments that help orient inquiry; they are warranted only insofar as they clarify a problematic situation and guide action (Dewey 1936; Luntley 2016). Applied to green gentrification, this means that categories such as equitable greening or displacement risk are treated as working constructs. They are refined whenever they fail to capture stakeholders' experiences or empirical patterns.

Methodologically, this stance legitimates an iterative, abductive research design. Early in the project, tentative propositions about how greening affects housing and social space were used to structure interview guides and case selection. As residents, activists, planners, and housing providers articulated their own ways of naming the problem, these propositions were revised: for example, by expanding the focus from rent-induced moves to include commercial turnover, cultural displacement, and the cumulative burdens of vulnerability. Variation in interview framings is therefore interpreted, following Dewey, as a series of small experiments in defining what exactly is at stake in Berlin's greening conflicts, rather than as noise to be averaged out.

Foucault's Concept of Problematization

If Dewey provides a compass for reconstructing problematic situations, Foucault offers tools to interrogate how certain situations come to be constituted as "problems" in the first place. Problematization is treated as the historical and social process through which particular phenomena are rendered intelligible as issues that require thought and intervention, through the interplay of knowledge, norms, and subjectivity (Rabinow 2011; Patton, P. 2013). This orientation is commonly summarized through Foucault's emphasis on "foyers d'expérience" (venues of experience) in which forms of possible knowledge, normative matrices of conduct, and modes of existence for possible subjects are articulated together (Foucault 1982, p. 4).

In this thesis, green gentrification is approached as such a venue of experience: scientific reports on climate risks and housing markets, planning norms about sustainable urban development, and the lived experiences of residents, activists and practitioners jointly configure what is seen as problematic, which questions can be asked, and which solutions appear reasonable. Rather than assuming that green gentrification is a pre-given object waiting to be observed, the analysis asks how it becomes thinkable and nameable as a problem in specific contexts, and how different actors participate in this problematization.

Dewey and Foucault justify treating problem framings themselves as central analytical objects. Table 2-1 summarizes the complementary epistemological commitments drawn from each thinker that structure this

inquiry. From a pragmatic perspective, the narratives developed later in the thesis serve as tools for organizing inquiry into a contested situation and are adjusted as the investigation proceeds. From a Foucauldian perspective, these narratives are historically situated ways of problematizing the links among greening, housing, and justice. The combined stance underpins the thesis's dual move: it takes stakeholders' formulations of "what the problem is" seriously as practical experiments in making sense of green gentrification, while also opening them up to critical analysis in terms of how they have come to be possible and authoritative.

Table 2-1: Complementary epistemological stances: Dewey and Foucault

Analytical Dimension	Deweyan Pragmatism	Foucauldian Problematization
Primary Focus	The **Problematic Situation**: An indeterminate reality triggers inquiry.	The **Process of Problematization**: How a phenomenon is rendered intelligible and visible.
Status of Concepts	**Instruments/Tools**: Concepts are revisable heuristics used to organize inquiry; they are judged by their "relevancy and efficacy.	**Regimes of Truth**: Concepts are products of historical power relations that determine what counts as "true" or "false".
Role of the Researcher	**Inquirer**: Engages in iterative experiments (abduction) to clarify the situation.	**Genealogist/Analyst**: Interrogates the conditions that make specific problems and solutions thinkable.
Application in Thesis	Justifies the **abductive workflow**: refining the definition of "green gentrification" based on interview encounters.	Justifies the **discourse analysis**: examining *who* is authorized to speak and *which* knowledges defines the problem.

2.3 Discourse and Governmentality

While the environmental justice lens specifies *what* is at stake in terms of distribution, procedure, and recognition, a Foucauldian perspective clarifies *how* these stakes are framed and governed in practice. Building on the notion of problematization introduced above, this section focuses on how specific definitions of "green", "sustainable", or "necessary" become authoritative, and how specific actors are enabled or constrained in speaking and acting on that basis (Foucault 1972; Rabinow 2011). Foucault's notion of power/knowledge suggests that what counts as truth in society, here, truths about urban greening and climate adaptation, is shaped by power relations that determine which actors and institutions are authorized to define problems, diagnose risks, and delimit legitimate solutions (Foucault 1980; Dean 2009).

Planning administrations, expert consultants, and real-estate actors are not treated as neutral information carriers but as institutionally positioned actors through whom problems are defined and solutions are rendered governable (Dean 2009; Rose, O'Malley, and Valverde 2006). From this perspective, debates over urban greening in Berlin can be understood as struggles over discursive authority. Scientific reports and technical guidelines establish vocabularies of risk, resilience, and ecosystem services. Strategic plans

articulate visions of a "compact", "green", and "climate-resilient" city; residents and civil-society groups bring experiential knowledge of heat, noise, harassment, or rent pressure. These heterogeneous knowledges do not circulate on equal terms. Expert and institutional voices tend to set the frame within which others must speak, for example, by requiring that justice claims be translated into the language of climate goals, feasibility, or legal competence to be heard at all (Raco and Imrie 2000; While, Jonas, and Gibbs 2004). In this way, power operates less through overt exclusion than through shaping what can plausibly be said, by whom, and with what effect.

Governmentality, understood as the conduct of conduct, further highlights how urban sustainability policies work by inviting or obliging actors to adopt certain roles rather than simply issuing commands (Foucault 1991; Dean 2009). Green and climate-adaptation agendas cast planners as custodians of the city's sustainable future, responsible for diagnosing "under-greened" areas and designing technical solutions. Developers and housing companies are interpellated as partners in delivering climate-adapted, attractive neighborhoods, expected to internalize ecological norms while pursuing profitable projects. Civil-society groups are recognized, at best, as stakeholders whose input can improve acceptance, and vulnerable residents are often constructed as target populations to be protected or activated, rather than as subjects who define the terms of greening. These role expectations shape how actors present themselves ("responsible investor", "pragmatic planner", "constructive initiative") and set the scope of what counts as reasonable critique or demand.

For this thesis, the Foucauldian approach has two main methodological implications. First, it justifies treating discourse itself as empirical material: how actors talk about greening and gentrification, which concepts they mobilize, which causal stories they tell, which responsibilities they assign, is not mere rhetoric but part of how the urban field is governed (Foucault 1972; Dean 2009). Second, it foregrounds actor groups as discursive subject positions. When administrations, developers, housing companies, civil-society organizations, and vulnerable residents appear in the empirical material, they are analyzed not only as organizational entities but as positions produced through specific combinations of knowledge, norms, and power. In combination with the environmental justice framework, this Foucauldian lens enables the analysis (Chapter 5) to ask whose experiences and knowledges are elevated or silenced, which framings of green gentrification become dominant, and how these framings open or close possibilities for more equitable governance.

3 Analytical Scaffold: Mechanisms, Actors, Narratives and Justice Dimensions

Chapter 2 established green gentrification as a contested problematization rather than a settled object, showing how environmental justice concerns and Foucauldian governmentality direct attention to who gets to define sustainable urban change, which harms are rendered visible or negligible, and how responsibilities and solutions are allocated through discourse. This Chapter specifies an analytical scaffold that makes these dynamics empirically traceable in the Berlin study. Rather than introducing new theory, this chapter translates the defining concepts and theories from Chapter 1 and 2 into a practical grammar for analysis. The scaffold for the inquiry is structured through 4 levels: (1) mechanism pathways that link urban greening to exclusion and displacement, (2) a field of stakeholders conceptualized as discursive subject positions, (3) ideal-typical interpretive narratives through which mechanisms are framed and contested, and (0) cross-cutting justice dimensions (distributive, procedural, recognitional) as normative criteria.

The scaffold is designed to structure the empirical work that follows in Part B. Interview guides, coding schemes, and within-case analyses are organized around the mechanism families, the six stakeholder groups, and the three narratives, with justice dimensions informing the evaluation of claims, to enable a systematic reconstruction of how different actors name problems, diagnose causes, and justify solutions. Cross-case matrices then use these levels to compare recurring alignments and tensions. For instance, similar processes may be narrated as injustices, as technical trade-offs, or as systemic constraints depending on the speaker's position. This approach supports pattern-oriented comparison without collapsing discourse into decontextualized counts (Flyvbjerg 2006), maintaining sensitivity to who is speaking and how they frame green gentrification.

3.1 Methodological Note: Constructing the Four-Level Analytical Scaffold

The analytical scaffold presented in this chapter was constructed as an iterative conceptual synthesis designed to translate the thesis's theoretical commitments into empirically traceable units of analysis. Rather than introducing additional theory, the scaffold was built as a methodological bridge between the epistemological stance developed in Chapter 2 and the empirical design and coding strategy implemented in Chapter 4. Conceptually, the procedure followed established principles of conceptual framework analysis and integrative literature review, in which concepts are extracted from multidisciplinary scholarship, compared, clustered, and progressively refined into a network of related analytic categories (Torraco 2005; Jabareen 2009).

Methodologically, the construction process was aligned with the thesis's pragmatist and Foucauldian orientation: inquiry was treated as "working through" an indeterminate situation via progressive specification of concepts and questions. In contrast, definitions of green gentrification were treated as historically contingent problematizations shaped by power/knowledge and governmentality. This stance implied that conceptual categories were not treated as neutral descriptors but as analytical devices for tracing how greening becomes governable through causal stories, authoritative knowledges, and the positioning of actors.

Inputs and Temporal Sequencing

Three inputs were combined. First, core concepts were extracted from the green gentrification and environmental justice literatures, particularly those addressing (a) causal processes linking greening to exclusion and displacement and (b) distributive, procedural, and recognitional justice concerns. Second, Foucauldian concepts (problematization, discourse, governmentality, power/knowledge) were used to specify how actor categories and narratives would be treated not as static "stakeholders" or attitudes, but as discursively produced positions with unequal authority and different epistemic resources. Third, early empirical observations, including reconnaissance field observations in the case settings and an initial reading of policy and planning documents, were used prior to formal coding to test whether the emerging categories corresponded to recognizable empirical traces (recurring causal claims, recurring responsibility attributions, repeated references to instruments, and patterned vocabularies of justice and feasibility).

This sequencing was deliberately iterative but pre-analytic: the scaffold was refined during the empirical familiarization phase and then stabilized before systematic transcript analysis, while remaining open to later adjustment through inductive subcoding where salient meanings did not fit pre-defined categories. This logic is consistent with abductive approaches to qualitative theory construction, in which sensitizing concepts guide attention while being revised in response to empirical surprises rather than treated as fixed measurement instruments (Timmermans and Tavory 2012). The scaffold was therefore used as a structured grammar for inquiry and for instrument design, not as a closed typology.

Procedure: From Sensitizing Concepts to a Four-Level Framework

The scaffold was constructed in four steps: (1) recurring concepts were extracted from the literature and early empirical materials; (2) concepts were clustered into provisional categories; (3) category boundaries were refined iteratively to ensure coherence, differentiation, and empirical traceability; and (4) categories were integrated into a multidimensional scaffold used to structure interview guides, document coding, and cross-case matrices (Jabareen 2009).

Throughout, the scaffold was treated as a set of sensitizing concepts: directions for what to look for rather than definitive prescriptions that exhaustively classify reality (Blumer 1954). This stance also supported analytical openness to overlap, hybridity, and cross-cutting effects, consistent with the thesis's explicit expectation that mechanisms and justice dimensions do not map one-to-one and that mixed configurations are empirically likely.

Analytical Levels

The final scaffold was formalized into four interrelated analytical levels, each grounded in literature and serving a distinct analytic function.

Level 0: Normative baseline: cross-cutting justice dimensions as evaluative criteria
Distributive, procedural (including representational), and recognitional justice are treated as the normative lenses through which allocations of benefits and burdens, voice, and recognition are assessed across actors and spaces. As emphasized in the theoretical chapter, these dimensions are used heuristically rather than as strict classificatory bins, given that many mechanisms span multiple justice dimensions simultaneously and that justice claims are often contested in practice.

Level 1: Mechanism pathways linking greening and exclusion

Mid-range mechanisms were specified to move beyond simple correlations and to render the greening–gentrification linkage traceable as a process (e.g., amenity capitalization, selective greening/under-protection, socio-cultural filters, and cumulative burdens). These mechanism families were grounded in the green gentrification literature and aligned with the exclusion channels and displacement drivers established in Section 1.2.

Level 2: Stakeholder families as discursive subject positions

Actor groupings (civil society, vulnerable residents/users, developers, housing companies, administrations, and state agencies) were specified not as stable interest blocks but as subject positions produced through discourse and governmentality, with different degrees of authority to define problems, legitimate evidence, and delimit feasible solutions.

Level 3: Interpretive narratives as ideal-type rationalities

Recurring framings (justice-based, economic–managerial, systemic–planning) were specified as ideal types that capture patterned storylines about what the problem is, what causes it, and what responses are considered legitimate. These narratives function both as objects of critique (discursive practices) and as sensitizing concepts structuring interview and coding strategies.

The scaffold's primary **methodological role** was to ensure alignment between conceptualization and empirical work. Interview guides and document-coding protocols were organized to elicit (a) mechanism claims, (b) actor positioning and authority claims, (c) narrative framings, and (d) justice evaluations, thereby supporting systematic within-case interpretation and cross-case comparison.

In the remainder of this chapter, the scaffold is introduced in sequence from the Level 0 normative baseline through Levels 1–3, before the levels are recombined in the final operationalization section to specify how coding and cross-narrative comparison were conducted.

3.2 Level 0 – Environmental Justice Dimensions as Normative Baseline

Level 0 establishes the scaffold's normative baseline and its shared analytic grammar. Rather than redefining environmental justice, the purpose of this section is to specify how distributive, procedural/representational, and recognitional justice are used in the thesis: first, as the evaluative criteria through which claims about greening-related change are assessed; and second, as an organizing alignment that stabilizes comparison across heterogeneous empirical framings. In this sense, Level 0 functions as the scaffold's spine. It fixes what counts as the relevant stakes, benefits and burdens, voice and rulemaking, recognition and belonging, so that subsequent levels can be consistently linked to one another.

The justice dimensions operate cross-cuttingly across the scaffold. Mechanism pathways (Level 1) are specified as processes through which greening interventions may redistribute benefits and burdens, reconfigure access to decision-making, or reorder recognition in place. Actor-positioned claims (Level 2) are examined with respect to how responsibilities, evidence, and legitimacy are attributed within and across institutional settings. Narrative rationalities (Level 3) are compared by tracing which justice stakes are foregrounded, backgrounded, or reframed as either unavoidable trade-offs or governable risks. Level 0 thereby supplies a

common evaluative baseline against which the content of different narratives can be rendered commensurable without presuming that actors share a single definition of justice or a single causal model of displacement.

To make this baseline analytically usable, the justice dimensions are aligned with three exclusion channels and corresponding displacement-driver clusters. This alignment does not claim a rigid one-to-one mapping between justice principles and empirical mechanisms. Instead, it functions as a pragmatic organizing device that clarifies (a) which types of exclusion are being discussed when green gentrification risks are invoked, and (b) how different forms of harm may be produced even when physical displacement does not (yet) occur. By formalizing this alignment up front, the scaffold can treat diverse interview accounts, ranging from rent pressures and redevelopment conflicts to perceived loss of belonging, as comparable within a shared analytic grammar, while still allowing ambiguity and overlap to remain visible.

Analytically, three overlapping clusters of displacement drivers, as seen in Table 3-1, are distinguished that parallel the exclusion channels above: (1) economic/market drivers such as rising housing costs, speculative reinvestment, and landlord practices; (2) policy and institutional drivers including renewal, rezoning, and greening investments implemented without adequate affordability protections or displacement safeguards (e.g., limited right-to-return and replacement-housing provisions); and (3) socio-cultural and political drivers, in which long-term residents experience cultural and political displacement, including loss of belonging, control, and access to local institutions and public spaces, even before any physical move occurs (Marcuse 1985; Hyra 2015; Versey et al. 2019; Way, Mueller, and Wegmann 2018; Dooling 2009; Anguelovski et al. 2019).

Table 3-1: Environmental justice dimensions, social-exclusion channels and displacement drivers aligned throughout the scaffold

Environmental justice dimensions	Social-exclusion channels	Cluster of displacement drivers
Distributive justice	Market dynamics	Economic drivers
Procedural justice	Institutional arrangements	Policy and institutional drivers
Recognitional justice	Symbolic boundaries	Socio-cultural and political drivers

In the present study, the three environmental justice dimensions and the corresponding exclusion channels and displacement drivers are used as heuristic lenses, not as perfectly matching or universally comparable categories. The justice dimensions are abstract, normative principles, whereas market, institutional, and symbolic mechanisms, and their economic, policy, and socio-cultural displacement drivers, are context-specific empirical groupings. In practice, many mechanisms cut across several dimensions at once (e.g., policing or park rules are simultaneously distributive, procedural, and recognition-related), and their relative weight varies between cities and cases. The framework, therefore, helps to structure analysis and

comparison, but it does not imply a rigid one-to-one mapping; overlaps, ambiguities, and local specificities are expected and analytically important.

Level 0 is thus designed to accomplish two tasks simultaneously. First, it anchors the thesis in a normative baseline that keeps equity analytically present when greening is discussed primarily through technical or managerial vocabularies. Second, it provides a stable alignment device through which the empirical material can be organized: when an interview account attributes exclusionary risks to market dynamics, institutional arrangements, or symbolic boundaries, the corresponding driver cluster clarifies which displacement-related processes are being invoked and what justice stakes are implied. On this basis, the next section specifies Level 1 mechanism pathways that translate the alignment into traceable process claims linking greening interventions to exclusion risks in practice.

3.3 Level 1 – Mechanism Pathways Linking Greening and Exclusion

Bidirectional Greening–Gentrification Dynamic

Green gentrification has increasingly been conceptualized as a mutually reinforcing, bidirectional dynamic rather than a one-way cause–and–effect sequence (Rigolon and Collins 2022). As captured by the cycle in Figure 3-1, new greening interventions can trigger socio-spatial "upgrading" processes (higher demand, rising property values, an influx of affluent residents). At the same time, ongoing waves of urban upgrading can reshape which greening projects become politically plausible, financially prioritized, and institutionally supported. This feedback loop can stabilize green development as a widely endorsed public good, even as exclusionary effects accumulate (Gould and Lewis 2016; Anguelovski et al. 2019). The bidirectional perspective clarifies why analytical attention must be placed on pathways and configurations of factors rather than on single projects in isolation.

Greening initiatives increase property values:
Gentrification follows greening initiatives

Greening

Gentrification

Greening initiatives are prioritized in already gentrifying low-income communities:
Gentrification precedes greening initiatives
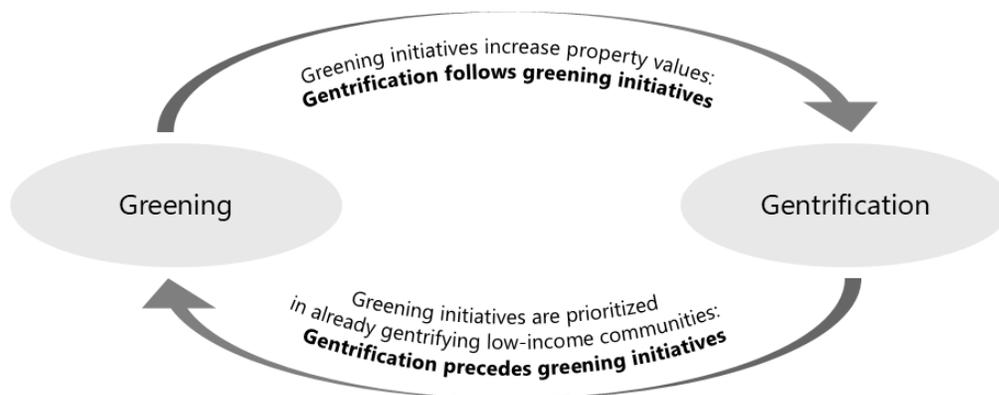
Figure 3-1: Green gentrification cycle (based on Rigolon and Collins 2022)

Green gentrification risks have been reported to intensify under tight housing-market conditions and limited affordability protections, particularly around high-visibility projects. Under such conditions, even well-intended improvements can contribute to displacement pressures. A distinction between "improvement" outcomes (the immediate benefits of greening) and "displacement" trajectories (longer-term exclusionary

impacts) is thereby facilitated, and how one can lead to the other can be traced in specific contexts (Rigolon and Collins 2022; Anguelovski et al. 2022).

To move from the bidirectional dynamic to traceable process claims, the analysis proceeds by specifying mechanism pathways. These pathways are derived and organized using the Level 0 alignment of justice dimensions, exclusion channels, and displacement-driver clusters, which function as the scaffold's grammar for comparing heterogeneous empirical accounts.

Three Pathways

Building on the Level 0 alignment described in Section 3.2 each pathway is aligned primarily with one channel of exclusion and one corresponding environmental justice emphasis, while remaining analytically open to overlap and mixed cases. The three pathways, summarized in Figure 3-2, specify how, under particular housing-markets, governance, and socio-cultural conditions, urban greening projects can contribute to social exclusion and displacement rather than simply delivering environmental benefits (Gould and Lewis 2016; Anguelovski et al. 2019; Droste and Gianoli 2024). These pathways are treated as stylized analytical lenses rather than deterministic laws: in practice, they typically interact, overlap, and vary in salience across time and space. By disaggregating the greening–gentrification dynamic into these mechanisms, the combinations of factors at play in a given case can be analyzed, and potential mitigation points can be identified.
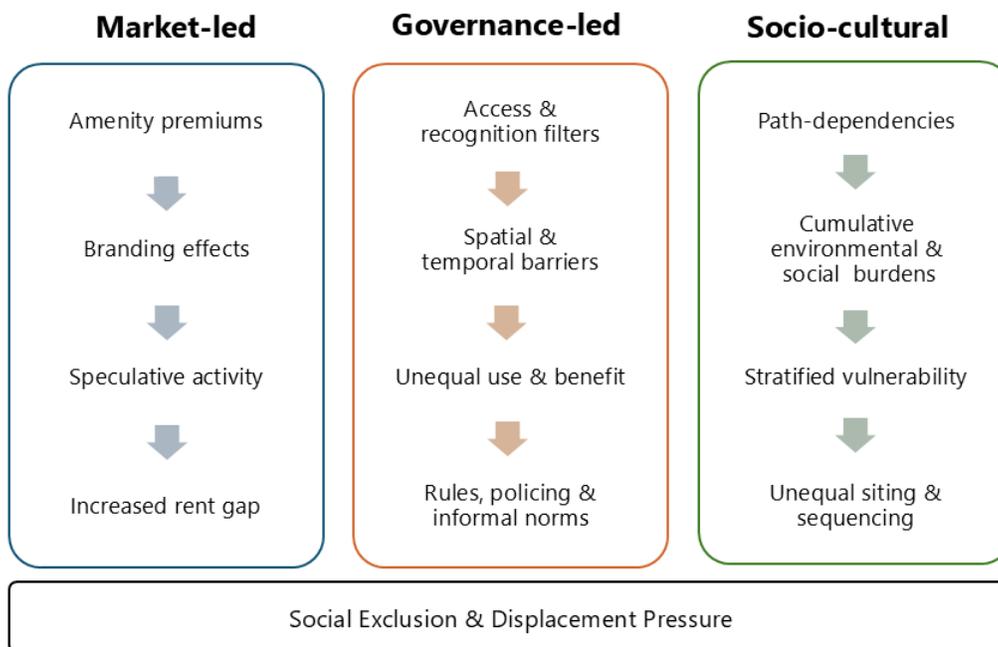
Figure 3-2: Three mechanism pathways: market-led, governance-led and socio-cultural, all leading towards social exclusion and displacement pressure.

Pathway I: Market–Led

The first pathway centers on amenity capitalization and the resulting displacement pressure. Environmental improvements, such as new parks, greenways, or climate-adaptive infrastructure, are translated into expectations of higher land and property values, particularly in tight housing markets with an existing rent gap between current and potential ground rents (Smith 1979; Lees, Slater, and Wyly 2010). The announcement

or creation of a green amenity can generate a premium that capitalizes on higher rents, sales prices, and property tax assessments (Bockarjova et al. 2020; Sohn et al. 2020). Branding and image effects, such as framing a district as a flagship sustainable neighborhood, can further amplify this capitalization by reshaping expectations and demand (Garcia-Lamarca et al. 2021). When combined with limited affordability protections and a constrained supply of affordable housing, amenity-driven value uplift can produce displacement pressures on low-income tenants and small businesses, including indirect displacement and exclusionary displacement over time (Zuk et al. 2018; García-Lamarca, Anguelovski, and Venner 2022). This market-led mechanism primarily manifests distributive injustices, an inequitable distribution of housing stability and commercial opportunities as a side-effect of environmental improvements.

Pathway II: Governance–Led

The second pathway foregrounds the role of planning, policy, and governance choices that determine where, when, and how greening occurs. Greening projects are rarely distributed randomly in the city; they tend to be selected and sequenced through urban development agendas, funding logics, and planning practices that often prioritize neighborhoods already on an "upward" trajectory, areas attracting private investment, higher-income residents, or political attention, over other disadvantaged but less visible areas (Logan and Molotch 2007; Wolch, Byrne, and Newell 2014). At the same time, greening and climate-adaptation projects are frequently implemented without robust anti-displacement safeguards. Standard protective measures such as strong rent controls, just-cause eviction rules, right-to-return provisions for displaced residents, social housing expansion, or community land trusts have often been described as absent, weakly implemented, or institutionally disconnected from greening initiatives (Anguelovski et al. 2018; Zuk et al. 2018; Rigolon and Németh 2019). This selective greening, coupled with regulatory under-protection, reflects procedural and representational injustices: affected residents have little influence over the siting, design, and timing of green projects, and they lack power over the housing and land-use decisions that would allow them to remain in place. Historically rooted patterns of segregation, disinvestment, and environmental inequality further condition which communities are most vulnerable to these governance choices and how strongly a greening project translates into exclusionary outcomes (Kabisch and Haase 2014; Torres, Irazábal, and Jacobi 2022). In sum, this mechanism highlights how institutional decisions and policy gaps, rather than the greening per se, pave the way for gentrification in some neighborhoods but not others.

Pathway III: Socio-Cultural

The third pathway emphasizes symbolic boundaries, access filters, and cumulative socio-cultural burdens. Greened spaces are not just physical infrastructures; they are also cultural and social environments. Their design language, rules of use, and everyday programming can encode particular lifestyles and values that are often aligned with middle-class norms and preferred uses, thereby reshaping who feels welcome and who is treated as an appropriate user (Wolch, Byrne, and Newell 2014; Gould and Lewis 2016). Even where parks and green amenities are formally public, informal access filters shape who can and does actually use them. Spatial and temporal barriers (distance to the park, poor transit connectivity, limited opening hours) disproportionately affect residents with low mobility, inflexible work schedules, or care responsibilities. Rules, policing practices (for example, noise regulations or surveillance) and informal social norms determine who feels safe and welcome in the space (Dooling 2009; Wolch, Byrne, and Newell 2014).

Likewise, design choices and programming (types of sports facilities, playgrounds, event programming, etc.) may implicitly prioritize certain uses and bodies over others (Agyeman 2013; Sax, Nesbitt, and Quinton 2022). In neighborhoods with a history of racialized policing, overcrowded housing, insecure work, and accumulated environmental burdens, such filters contribute to cultural and political displacement: long-term residents may come to feel that their environment is no longer socially or culturally accessible to them, or they may lose informal influence over local spaces and institutions, even before any physical displacement occurs (Hyra 2015; Versey et al. 2019). This socio-cultural mechanism is primarily associated with recognition injustices, failures to respect and include the identities, needs, and practices of certain groups. However, it also mediates who can effectively benefit from new green spaces. In effect, it influences whether the distribution of benefits truly reaches marginalized groups, thereby linking back to distributive justice.

Together, these mechanisms translate the Level 0 alignment into concrete processes through which greening can either reinforce or mitigate social exclusion and displacement. Unequal outcomes emerge through market forces, policy and institutional choices (including under-protection), and socio-cultural dynamics that shape access, belonging, and recognition. Although all three pathways may operate simultaneously in a given case, their relative weight varies by context and over time. Specifying these pathways provides the basis for tracing how different actor-positions (Level 2) recognize, contest, or reframe mechanisms, and how these interpretations are stabilized in narrative rationalities (Level 3), while remaining evaluable through the Level 0 justice baseline.

3.4 Level 2 – Actor Families as Discursive Subject Positions

Level 2 specifies how green gentrification risks are articulated from distinct discursive subject positions within Berlin's governance field. Actor groupings are therefore not treated as stable interest blocks, but as positions with differentiated authority to define problems, authorize evidence, and delimit feasible responses. This level makes it possible to trace how the mechanism pathways specified in Level 1 are recognized, contested, or rendered governable from different positional standpoints, and how responsibilities and legitimate intervention points are attributed.

In Foucauldian terms, contestation over green gentrification is not merely a clash of fixed interests but a struggle over "regimes of truth". Urban greening is rendered governable through truth-claims about climate resilience, livability, and value creation, and these claims distribute discursive authority unequally across actors (Foucault 1980). Rather than treating stakeholders as predefined categories with static interests, this analysis considers stakeholder groups as discursive subject positions. Each position is constituted by particular forms of knowledge, normative rationalities, and techniques of governing. Each stakeholder family is associated with an authorized perspective on the problem, shaping what can be said, what counts as evidence, and which solutions appear feasible or legitimate from that position (Rose 1999; Dean 2009). Some positions render displacement and inequality highly visible (as urgent problems to be addressed), while others render those issues marginal or external to the main agenda.

Mapping Authority and Rationality

To understand how these positions relate to one another, the stakeholder field is mapped along two primary axes in Figure 3-3. Positions are ideal-typical and context-dependent: actors may shift between registers and may hybridize rationalities.

1. **Dominant Discursive Rationality** (Justice vs. Value Creation): This horizontal axis distinguishes actors who primarily speak through vocabularies of rights, fairness, and care from those who speak through vocabularies of investment, efficiency, and portfolio management.

2. **Formal Institutional Authority** (Governing vs. Governed): This vertical axis distinguishes actors with the legal or financial power to implement change from those who are primarily the targets or beneficiaries of those changes.
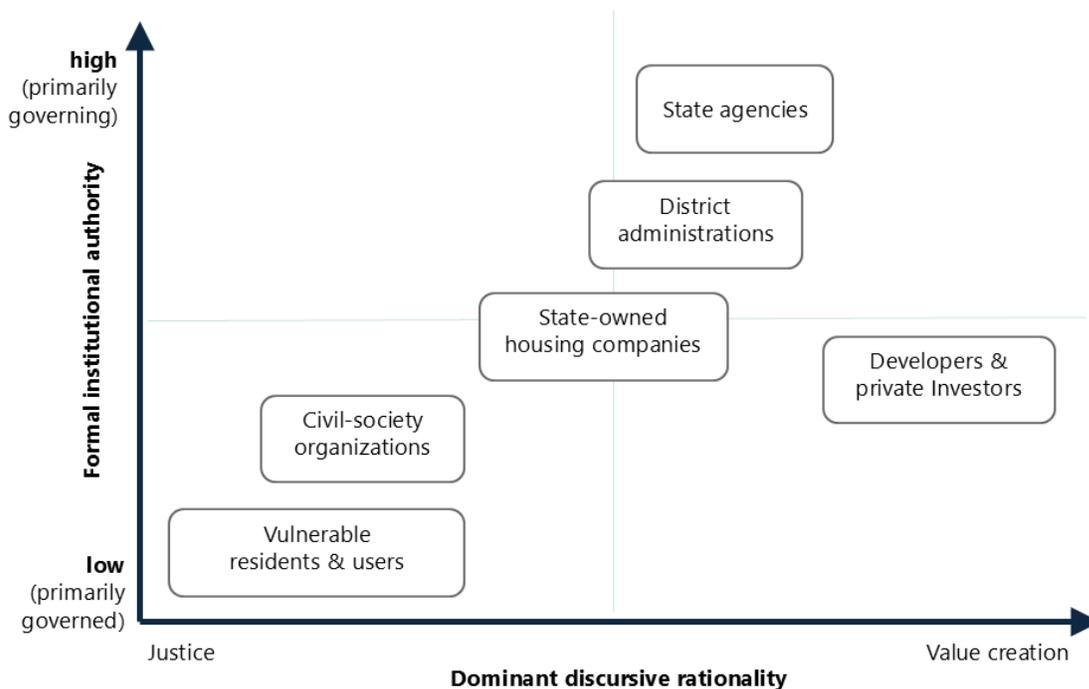
Figure 3-3: Stakeholder positioning on the discursive field within a two-dimensional graph defined by (1) formal institutional authority (vertical axis) and (2) dominant discursive rationality (horizontal axis). Note: Positions indicate relative discursive alignment derived from the documentary and interview material rather than quantitative measurement.

Characteristics of Subject Positions

The six stakeholder families identified in the Berlin case are detailed in Table 3-2. This table synthesizes typical blind spots associated with each perspective, central to a Foucauldian analysis insofar as regimes of truth are understood to produce both visibility and silences (Foucault 1991; Dean 2009). For instance, market feasibility can render social displacement legible as a downstream externality rather than a core project criterion (Gould and Lewis 2016; Zuk et al. 2018), whereas civil-society counter-expertise can render hidden impacts visible while remaining constrained by institutional definitions of what counts as actionable evidence and a realistic demand (Raco and Imrie 2000; Dean 2009).

Table 3-2: Stakeholder families as discursive subject positions; analyzed through a Foucauldian discourse lens

Stakeholder	Discursive Authority	Typical Blind Spots & Limits
Civil-Society Organizations	**Situated counter-expertise:** Draws on experiential knowledge of housing pressures and normative vocabularies of fairness, rights, and recognition.	**Internal homogeneity:** May gloss over internal community differences (who speaks for whom) and is often constrained by institutional limits on what counts as a realistic demand.
Vulnerable Residents & Users	**Lived experience:** Possesses direct knowledge of environmental/housing vulnerabilities (e.g., heat stress, insecurity).	**Legibility:** Accounts are often dismissed as anecdotal or subjective if not translated into dominant policy languages; views on greening are frequently ambivalent rather than purely positive.
Private Developers & Investors	**Market feasibility:** Authorized by expertise in project financing, delivery, and sustainability branding; defines reality through financial viability.	**Externalization:** Displacement is framed as a natural market outcome or downstream issue outside project responsibility; social externalities are invisible in success metrics.
State-Owned/ Cooperative Housing Companies	**Technical-managerial:** Combines public mandate with technical knowledge of property management, retrofits, and legal frameworks.	**Normalization of trade-offs:** Structural alternatives (e.g., deep decommodification) remain unspeakable; rent hikes are normalized as unavoidable side-effects of necessary modernization.
District Administrations	**Procedural guardianship:** Derives legitimacy from formal mandates, legal competencies, and the execution of planning routines.	**Depoliticization:** Substantive value conflicts are often translated into technical questions of compliance; cumulative social impacts are backgrounded if not captured by formal metrics.
Strategic State Agencies	**Systemic oversight:** Authorized by aggregated evidence (e.g., climate models), legislative power, and control over funding streams.	**Aggregation bias:** Localized displacement is viewed as a secondary or transient issue; citywide averages and targets often obscure uneven neighborhood burdens.

Synthesis

Across these six groups, the actor field is best understood not just as a roster of stakeholders, but as a set of positions within a discourse. Each position carries its own authorized knowledge base, normative rationality, and toolkit of governing techniques that delimit what can be said, what counts as evidence, and what solutions seem viable (Dean 2009).

These power/knowledge dynamics help explain how greening initiatives can be stabilized in public discourse as uncontroversially "good" even when they produce exclusion. For instance, from several dominant positions (Developers, Strategic Agencies), displacement is rendered as an externality, a separate policy

problem, or an invisible side effect that does not invalidate the greening project (Dooling 2009; Zuk et al. 2018). At the same time, counter-positions (notably those of civil society and vulnerable residents) seek to disrupt this stabilization by insisting on recognition, redistribution, and "rights to stay" as central criteria for any sustainable urban project (Schlosberg 2004; Gould and Lewis 2016). The foregoing mapping of stakeholder families thus sets the stage for the next section by showing how different actors align with or diverge from particular narratives. These subject positions tend to cluster in three broader interpretive narratives about green gentrification: one centered on justice claims, one on economic growth and management, and one on systemic governance constraints.

The subject positions identified here provide the basis for reconstructing interpretive narratives (Level 3), since patterned rationalities emerge through the recurring ways in which different positions connect causal claims (Level 1) to normative stakes and legitimacy claims anchored in the Level 0 baseline.

3.5 Level 3 – Interpretive Narratives as Ideal–Type Rationalities

Level 3 specifies interpretive narratives as ideal-type rationalities through which green gentrification risks are made intelligible and governable. Narratives are treated as patterned storylines that structure problem definitions, causal attributions, and legitimacy claims about appropriate responses. Although certain narratives tend to be associated with particular subject positions, the same narrative rationality can be mobilized across positions, and hybrid configurations are empirically expected. Within this level, justice dimensions are not redefined; instead, the analysis traces which distributive, procedural/representational, and recognitional stakes (Level 0) are foregrounded, backgrounded, or reframed within each narrative.

Figure 3-4: Venn diagram of the narratives; The overlaps indicate hybrid narratives that combine justice, economic–managerial, and systemic–planning rationalities in defining harms, causes, and responsibilities.

Building on the mechanism pathways outlined in Section 3.3 and the stakeholder positions introduced in Section 3.4 this section defines three ideal-typical narratives that frame green gentrification in distinct ways: a justice-based narrative, an economic–managerial narrative, and a systemic–planning narrative (Figure 3-4). Each narrative highlights certain mechanisms and privileges certain actors and knowledges, effectively

providing a particular lens through which the problem of green gentrification is interpreted, justified, or challenged. In the study, these three narratives serve as recurrent interpretive rationalities – patterned story-lines that make sense of the situation, assign causality and blame, and delimit what counts as a feasible or legitimate response. This approach is inspired by interpretive policy analysis and discourse theory, which suggest that policy conflicts are often structured by underlying storylines that stabilize meaning and rally coalitions (Roe 1994; Fischer and Forester 1993). Within a Foucauldian framing, these narratives can also be treated as discursive formations that participate in governing by producing "truths" about what the problem is and what can (or cannot) be done about it (Hajer 1997; Rose 1999).

It is important to clarify that the empirical strategy does not treat narratives as pre-packaged stories simply waiting to be collected from interviewees. Instead, narrative fragments and clues are elicited through interviews and found in texts, then analytically assembled into the three ideal types. The narrative typology is thus an analytical outcome of the research, reflecting patterns that emerge across many individual accounts rather than any single person's perspective (Riessman 2008; Saldaña 2021). In sum, the narratives represent recurrent ways of problematizing and governing the greening–gentrification nexus, discursive rationalities that stabilize certain meanings and orient action.

Narrative I: Justice-Based

The justice-based narrative frames green gentrification primarily as an act of injustice. Urban greening can improve environmental conditions, but this narrative stresses that it reproduces or deepens social inequalities by burdening or displacing already marginalized communities. Drawing on tenets of environmental justice and critical urban theory, the justice narrative persistently asks: Who benefits, who bears the costs, and whose voices are sidelined or silenced when new parks, greenways, or climate investments are implemented? (Agyeman 2013; Kabisch and Haase 2014). Empirically, this framing shines a spotlight on distributive injustices such as rent increases, loss of affordable housing, and small-business turnover in the vicinity of high-profile green projects, mainly when these occur in historically disinvested or vulnerable neighborhoods (Hyra 2015; Versey et al. 2019). It equally foregrounds procedural and recognitional injustices: for example, tokenistic or last-minute public participation processes that exclude low-income and minority residents, the marginalization of immigrant or working-class perspectives in project design, or the erasure of local cultural practices and informal community spaces in the name of "upgrading" (Dooling 2009; 2013). Without explicit safeguards, well-intended greening initiatives can redistribute environmental benefits in ways that exacerbate racialized and classed inequities through displacement and exclusionary upgrading dynamics (Gould and Lewis 2016).

Within this narrative, green gentrification is not an unfortunate side-effect of progress; it is a symptom of deeper structural injustices in urban development and environmental policy, a violation of the oft-neglected social pillar of sustainability. Thus, justice-oriented actors argue that any truly sustainable urban greening must actively incorporate anti-displacement and equity measures. They call for stronger tenant and small-business protections, binding affordability requirements attached to green development projects, inclusive planning and co-governance (beyond perfunctory consultation), and deliberate recognition of the needs and rights of existing communities. In this view, technical design solutions are not sufficient; the distribution of benefits and burdens and the empowerment of affected communities are the litmus tests of a just greening project. The justice-based framing is particularly associated with civil-society organizations and vulnerable resident groups (as discussed in Section 3.4). However, it can also surface within parts of the public sector,

for instance, a municipal climate officer who insists that climate adaptation must address social vulnerability, yet observes that low-income tenants are still "baking" in overheated flats when greening measures are scaled back due to cost. In short, this narrative explicitly invokes distributive, procedural, and recognitional justice as central criteria and critiques the status quo for failing to meet them. It thereby establishes the normative foundation for this thesis's concern with equitable sustainability and rights to the city across all the mechanisms identified in Section 3.3.

Narrative II: Economic–Managerial

The economic–managerial narrative approaches green gentrification through a utilitarian, technocratic lens. In this framing, urban greening is primarily a tool for economic development, climate risk management, and urban modernization. Distributional conflicts or displacement issues arising from greening projects are not viewed as injustices but rather as technical problems to be managed or secondary effects to be mitigated. New parks, green infrastructure, and eco-friendly developments are generally portrayed as "win-win" investments that enhance urban livability, attract desirable residents and capital, and boost property values, outcomes that are often taken as evidence of successful urban policy or smart growth (Thierfelder and Kabisch 2016). In short, increasing land values and an influx of wealth are interpreted positively, as signs that the city is becoming more sustainable and competitive, rather than as red flags for equity.

Within this frame, key actors such as housing providers, developers, and many public or semi-public officials interpret greening projects in terms of portfolio health, cost-efficiency, and regulatory compliance. For example, climate-related refurbishments, energy-efficient retrofits, or the addition of green amenities to housing estates are seen as technically necessary upgrades that also need to "pay off" financially over time. Rent increases or the relocation of some tenants are often normalized as "natural" market processes in a growing city or as inevitable trade-offs for modernization (Weiß et al. 2021).

From a Foucauldian perspective, this narrative exemplifies a form of governmental rationality that translates political or ethical disputes into calculable management tasks. Claims of injustice, if they appear at all in this narrative, are reframed as issues of "community acceptance," communication challenges, or reputational risks, issues to be handled via public relations campaigns, minor concessions, or compensation measures, rather than through any fundamental change in approach. Green gentrification, in this view, is a secondary or external effect of otherwise legitimate modernization and growth processes. The response, therefore, is not to slow development or forgo greening, but to apply targeted policy tweaks: perhaps a small affordable housing quota here, a compensation fund or value-capture mechanism there, or improved community outreach to smooth implementation. The possibility of more radical interventions (e.g. halting a project due to displacement concerns or imposing stringent rent controls linked to green investments) is generally off the table in this narrative. The economic–managerial narrative is closely associated with private developers and housing companies, as described earlier. However, it also permeates parts of the public administration and state agencies, especially where budgetary constraints, the drive for investment, and the mandate for "efficient land use" dominate the conversation. In those contexts, social equity is often seen as important in principle, but when trade-offs arise, it is typically subordinated to financial and technical priorities.

Narrative III: Systemic–Planning

The systemic–planning narrative treats green gentrification as a complex, context-dependent governance problem rooted in the interaction of broader structural forces, policy choices, and institutional arrangements. Rather than presuming a direct causal link in which greening automatically causes displacement, this perspective emphasizes the contingent factors that determine whether a given greening project leads to exclusionary outcomes. It asks: under what conditions (market, legal, political) does urban greening produce gentrification, and how might different policies or planning decisions alter those conditions? Key to this narrative is the idea that outcomes are shaped by multi-scalar forces, housing market dynamics, welfare and housing regimes, legal frameworks, and historical path dependencies, not just by the greening project itself (Anguelovski et al. 2022).

In this framing, analytical attention shifts to the mechanisms and instruments of governance that could mitigate or exacerbate green gentrification. The conversation turns to tools like zoning plans and development restrictions, and *soziale Erhaltungssatzungen* (preservation statutes) to protect affordable housing, regulations on short-term rentals and condo conversions, social housing quotas in new developments, and the enforcement (or lack thereof) of these instruments In Berlin, the combination of a tight housing market, fragmented affordability protections, and contested regulatory enforcement (including debates over short-term rentals and conversions) is often highlighted as the context in which new parks can become "selling points" for speculative real-estate investment. Under different regulatory conditions, they argue, the same park might not spur such displacement. Thus, the systemic narrative views green gentrification risks as symptoms of governance gaps or failures, for instance, a lack of interdepartmental coordination, insufficient integration of social equity goals into environmental planning, or underpowered legal tools to counter speculative pressures.

This narrative is less concerned with individual intentions ("greedy developers" vs. "virtuous planners") and more with institutional configurations. It recognizes that environmental and social goals often both exist on paper (in plans, strategies, mission statements), yet in practice, the social equity measures may be structurally underpowered when weighed against economic pressures, budget constraints, and entrenched institutional practices. A district planner may note, for example, that while climate adaptation and social equity are both official objectives, in day-to-day decision-making, the pressure to deliver projects and spend funds by deadlines tends to override slower, more inclusive processes. One climate planning officer described their role as largely "*sensibilisieren und stupsen*", (raising awareness and nudging) projects toward greener outcomes, while lacking formal power to impose equity conditions on those projects (R5-05-l.341). This exemplifies a systemic perspective: even well-meaning individuals are embedded in a system where mechanisms (funding rules, legal authority, market trends) limit what they can achieve.

The systemic–planning narrative is commonly voiced by public administrations and state-level agencies (as noted in Section 3.4). However, it is also echoed by some civil-society and expert actors who connect local park disputes to broader housing market forces and policy regimes. These actors might argue, for instance, that green gentrification in Berlin cannot be addressed project-by-project alone; it requires citywide interventions in housing policy, regional planning to reduce development pressure on certain districts, and maybe national reforms (e.g., stronger tenant protections or new financing models for green infrastructure). In sum, the systemic narrative situates green gentrification within a multi-scalar governance puzzle. It tends to view problems and solutions in terms of alignment: ensuring that robust social policy tools match environmental

objectives (such as greening or climate adaptation) and identifying coordination failures or power imbalances that need correction.

Synthesis

The three narratives provide complementary yet often conflicting interpretive lenses on the same underlying phenomena. Each offers a different answer to the question: What is the nature of the problem of green gentrification, and what should be done about it? These narratives guide attention to different mechanism pathways (from Section 3.3) and elevate different stakeholders (from Section 3.4) as key or peripheral. For example, the justice narrative foregrounds the socio-cultural filters and market pressures as injustices to be resisted. In contrast, the economic–managerial narrative might acknowledge those same pressures but frame them as acceptable or manageable side effects, while the systemic narrative might treat them as indicators of missing policy safeguards. In the empirical analysis that follows, the narratives function as top-level coding categories and a comparative framework: they help trace how different actors problematize the links between greening, housing pressures, and social exclusion, and how they justify particular responses. Notably, the narratives are not tied one-to-one to specific mechanisms or stakeholder groups; there is overlap and hybridity. Nevertheless, as ideal types, they sharpen the contrasts. Taken together, these interpretive rationalities will allow us to see, for instance, when the same mechanism (say, rising rents near a new park) is narrated by some as an injustice to be rectified, by others as evidence of success or a trade-off to be managed, or by others as a systemic outcome of policy gaps. They also highlight potential talking past one another: how a justice-oriented community activist and a growth-oriented planner might literally not share the same story about what is happening, even if they face the same facts on the ground.

Together, Levels 2 and 3 specify *who* articulates problematizations and *how* those problematizations are structured, enabling cross-narrative comparison of how Level 1 mechanisms are interpreted and how their implications are evaluated against the Level 0 baseline.

3.6 Integrated Scaffold and Operationalization

Sections 3.2–3.5 specify the building blocks of the analytical scaffold used in the empirical chapters. Level 0 establishes the justice baseline (distributive, procedural/representational, recognitional) and its alignment to exclusion channels and displacement-driver clusters (Section 3.2; Table 3-1). Level 1 specifies the mechanisms that link greening to exclusionary outcomes. Level 2 specifies stakeholder subject positions and their differential authority and constraints. Level 3 specifies interpretive narrative rationalities through which causality and legitimacy are rendered intelligible(Foucault 1980; Schlosberg 2007). For empirical analysis, these elements are treated jointly as a single integrated scaffold: mechanisms (L1), positions (L2), and narratives (L3) define the analytic space, while justice (L0) operates as an evaluative overlay. Because one-to-one correspondence is not assumed, overlaps, hybrids, and empty categories remain analytically meaningful (Saldaña 2021).

Operationally, the unit of synthesis is defined as an actor-positioned narrative claim that simultaneously (a) invokes or contests a Level 1 mechanism pathway, (b) is articulated from a Level 2 subject position with specific authority and constraints, and (c) is structured through a Level 3 narrative rationality framing causality and legitimacy. Each claim is then assessed through Level 0 to specify which justice stakes are implied or asserted. In later chapters, this scaffold is implemented as a linked coding and comparison procedure:

coded segments are tagged for mechanism, position, narrative, and justice stake; actor portraits are reconstructed within-position patterning; and cross-position matrices identify recurring configurations, blind spots, and partial overlaps that structure the subsequent synthesis toward governance levers and intervention points. To clarify the roles of each level and their category boundaries Table 3-3 provides an overview.

Table 3-3: Operationalization of the four analytical levels through its core question, analytical focus, and delimitation.

Level	Core Question	Analytic Focus	What it is *Not*
(1) Mechanism Pathways	How do greening projects become linked to exclusion or displacement?	**Process pathways** (causal sequences linking greening to housing or socio-cultural outcomes).	Not a normative judgment in itself. Not tied to any one actor or motive.
(2) Subject Positions	Who defines the problem/solution, and with what authority or instruments?	**Discursively constituted subject positions** (each with specific knowledge, authority, and tools).	Not fixed demographics or personal traits. Not equivalent to narrative positions (though they might align).
(3) Interpretive Narratives	How is the situation made intelligible and governable in discourse?	**Interpretive storylines or rationalities** that connect mechanisms, positions, and solutions into a coherent framing.	Not locked in a one-to-one correspondence with any single mechanism, justice claim, or actor group. Overlaps and hybrid narratives occur.
(0) Justice Dimensions	What kind of injustice (if any) is being claimed or highlighted?	**Normative criteria** (distributional/procedural/ recognitional justice) *Applied across Levels 1–3.*	Not a mechanism or cause. It does not by itself explain *how* outcomes are produced (only how they are judged).

Part B

Empirical Patterns of Problematization

SQ B

In selected Berlin projects, how do different stakeholder groups perceive and narrate green gentrification and the environmental justice outcomes it produces?

4 Methods and Research Design

This thesis employs a qualitative, abductive research design grounded in a single empirically bound context, namely Berlin (Timmermans and Tavory 2012). The primary case is defined as the discursive and governance landscape through which green gentrification risks are problematized, contested, and rendered governable in relation to urban greening. Rather than treating individual projects as comparative subcases, the study centers on discursive subject positions as the primary units of analysis: interviews are analyzed to reconstruct how distinct actor-positions mobilize justice-based, economic-managerial, and systemic-planning narratives, and how these narratives authorize mechanism claims, responsibilities, and governance responses.

To provide a structured overview of the **research logic**, the following Table 4-1 maps the sequential methodological steps, from theoretical conceptualization and data collection to analysis and governance design, against the corresponding chapters of the thesis.

Table 4-1: Overview of methodological steps and analytical outputs: A set of seven fundamental steps is systematically mapped out to coincide with each practical application and the corresponding outcome in each chapter.

Step	Methodological Action	Produced Outcome	Ch.
1. Concept-ualization	Targeted literature mapping and theory consolidation, and operational definition of scaffold levels.	**Four-Level Analytical Scaffold** *(Table 3-3)*	2 3
2. Data Collection	Selection of participants for semi-structured interviews (N=5), question-aire preparation & contextual anchoring.	**Empirical Dataset** (Transcripts, Policy Documents, Minutes)	4.2 - 4.3
3. Coding	Abductive narrative-discursive coding: combining deductive scaffold codes with inductive refinement.	**Versioned Codebook** & Coded Segments *(See Appendix A1)*	4.4
4. Narrative Analysis	Narrative reconstruction of individual interviewee logics via analytic memos.	**Narrative-Coded Actor Portraits** *(Table 5-1)*	5.2
5. Cross-Case Synthesis	Pattern matching across subject positions using a comparative matrix.	**Observed Patterns & Dynamics** *(based on Appendix A4)* & Comparative Framings	5.3 - 5.5
7. Governance Derivation	Translating identified problematization gaps into institutional design principles.	**Governance Levers & Measure Bundles**	6

4.1 Research Design and Scope of Inquiry

Three high-visibility greening arenas (Gleisdreieck, Tempelhofer Feld, Mauerpark) are used as contextual reference points to ground the empirical material, structure documentary retrieval, and situate interview

accounts within recognizable planning conflicts. These arenas are not treated as embedded analytical units for systematic cross-site comparison; instead, they serve to increase interpretive specificity and to support verification of case histories and institutional constraints referenced by respondents.

The arenas were selected for contextual diversity and documentary accessibility, not to establish a systematic cross-site comparative design. While the arenas differ in management structures and histories, each offers a recognizable reference setting in which interview accounts and documentary traces could be anchored in concrete planning controversies and adjacent housing-market debates:

- **Gleisdreieck Park**: Provides a reference setting in which adjacent new construction and branding debates enable market-led mechanism claims (e.g., amenity capitalization) to be discussed in a concrete planning context.
- **Mauerpark**: Provides a reference setting marked by intensive everyday use and recurring conflicts over programming, noise, and recognition, enabling socio-cultural mechanism claims (e.g., access filters and belonging) to be grounded in a concrete neighborhood arena.
- **Tempelhofer Feld**: Provides a reference setting shaped by a citywide referendum and ongoing governance contestation, enabling policy- and procedure-focused claims to be situated in a well-documented institutional trajectory.

  Sampling Note: Although the sampling frame included actors involved in the Tempelhofer Feld/Schillerkiez conflict, no direct interviews were conducted for this case due to non-response. Tempelhofer Feld remains in the study as a contextual reference point rather than a unit of analysis.

The **temporal frame** is limited to what was observable at the time of research and what respondents could report from prior involvement and lived experience. It covers the planning authorization phases and associated public debates. It extends to early implementation and current operation, insofar as initial use patterns, conflicts, and governance responses were evident in documents or described in interviews. This captures anticipatory expectations (including displacement fears) and early perceived signals of socio-spatial change, while remaining focused on governance processes rather than longitudinal displacement tracking.

4.2   Data Collection and Sources

To address the research questions, the study employed a two-tiered data collection strategy, distinguishing between academic desk research for conceptualization and empirical data collection for the case analysis.

Academic Desk Research as Conceptual Foundation

The first phase involved academic desk research to construct the theoretical framework and analytical scaffold (Chapter 2 & 3). This process focused on:

- **Conceptual Literature:** Reviewing scholarship on green gentrification, environmental justice, and Foucault's governmentality to define core terminology and identify research gaps.
- **Mechanism Identification:** Synthesizing existing studies (e.g., Anguelovski, Gould and Lewis) to distill the three causal pathways (market-led, policy-led, socio-cultural) used in the analytical scaffold.
- **Output:** This literature was not treated as empirical data but as the theoretical lens through which the Berlin case was subsequently examined.

Empirical Data Collection as Case Study Evidence

The second phase focused on gathering situated evidence to reconstruct the narratives and governance dynamics within the Berlin case (Chapter 5 & 6). This empirical dataset comprises two distinct strands:

Berlin-Specific Documentary Evidence: Policy and planning documents were collected and treated as empirical materials to reconstruct institutional problem framings and to triangulate claims made in interviews (Bowen 2009).

- **Strategic Frameworks**: City-wide strategies (e.g., *Berlin Strategie 3.0*, *StEP Klima 2.0*) were used to establish the official administrative rationale and identify the blind spots in high-level planning (used in section 5.1).
- **Project-Level Documents**: Site-specific records (e.g., Bebauungspläne for Urbane Mitte, notes from the advisory user board Mauerpark, and social preservation statutes) were collected to verify specific conflict histories and regulatory constraints mentioned by interviewees.

Semi-Structured Interviews: Further described in Section 0, in-depth interviews with key stakeholders (N=5) served as the primary source for reconstructing the divergent problem-framings and lived experiences of green gentrification. The interview transcripts can be viewed separately.

Note: For transparency, a specific referencing system is applied to the transcripts: direct quotes are primarily presented in the original German to preserve the original semantic context and prevent translation loss, for understanding they are translated and cited with their exact line number (e.g., R1-02-l.15), while indirect quotes and paraphrased themes are translated and referenced by the respondent and transcript section (e.g., R1-02).

4.3   Sampling Strategy

A purposeful maximum variation sampling strategy was employed to identify actors from the most divergent poles of the conflict, thereby ensuring that common narrative patterns could be identified despite the sample's heterogeneity (Patton, M. Q. 2014). The sampling frame targeted the stakeholder families specified in Chapter 3 (state bodies, district administration, developers/investors, housing providers, civil society organizations, and affected residents/users), with recruitment shaped by access constraints and responsiveness. In practice, five interviews were secured, covering five of the six stakeholder families, while strategic state-level agencies could not be interviewed within the fieldwork window.

Recruitment Procedure

Recruitment followed a two-stage chronological process. First, official contact channels were used to solicit participation from formal institutional actors, including Senate departments, district authorities, and established housing companies. Second, snowball sampling procedures were utilized via civil society gatekeepers to identify critical voices and distinct counter-perspectives that are less visible in official discourse. The sampling process yielded five in-depth, semi-structured key informant interviews. Each participant was selected not merely as an individual informant, but as a representative of a specific strategic position within the conflict.

Sample Composition

Table 4-2: Conducted interviews with the stakeholder family and project linkage

Nr	Role	Stakeholder Family	Park/District Linkage	Date
R1	Technical Director	Cooperative/Non-Profit Housing Provider	unspecific	27.10.2025
R2	Citizens' Initiative	Civil-Society Organization, Residents	Mauerpark	31.10.2025
R3	Architect, Activist	Civil-Society Organization, Planner	Gleisdreieck	04.11.2025
R4	Project Developer	Private Developer, Investor	Gleisdreieck, Urbane Mitte	06.11.2025
R5	Climate Officer	District Administration	Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg	04.12.2025

The final sample size (N=5) was determined by the theoretical necessity to capture distinct discursive subject positions rather than to achieve statistical representativeness. Consistent with the study's Foucauldian and pragmatist framework, the objective was not to survey the breadth of public opinion, but to reconstruct the deep narrative structures and 'regimes of truth' that govern greening debates.

Given the study's focus on discursive rationalities rather than population representativeness, the sample size was determined by strategic coverage of distinct subject positions/actor families (Table 4-2) rather than statistical power. Each interviewee was selected as a strategically positioned informant for a specific governance logic. The limitation of a small sample size was addressed through line-by-line coding and systematic triangulation with the documentary corpus described in Section 4.2. These documents are treated here not as background context, but as primary empirical data that corroborates the systemic constraints and logic articulated in the interviews.

Credibility and Ethics

While academic literature was analyzed for conceptual synthesis, in the Berlin study, several strategies were used to enhance the **credibility** of findings. Triangulation was pursued across data types and actor perspectives. An auditable chain of evidence was maintained through contact and document logs, codebook versioning, and analytic memos. Negative-case analysis was used to examine instances that appeared to contradict initial expectations, prompting refinement of codes or mechanisms. Sensitivity checks examined the dependence of interpretations on a single informant, particularly when access to decision-making arenas was uneven.

Regarding **data protection,** all participants received written and oral information about the study's aims, procedures, and data handling, and provided informed consent prior to the interviews. Personal identifiers were removed at transcription, and Initials or role descriptions were used in the thesis; anonymized excerpts may be reproduced for scholarly purposes. No legally protected or high-risk vulnerable populations were

targeted; questions avoided detailed housing status information unless volunteered by the participants. Positionality in relation to interviewees and institutions is addressed through bounded reflexivity, and potential influences on access and interpretation are mitigated through explicit coding rules and the deliberate inclusion of counterevidence.

Use of **Generative AI:** In accordance with the regulations regarding permitted aids, Generative AI tools were used in a bounded and transparent manner, strictly for sparring and text checking, and not for the generation of the thesis's main text. Specifically, these tools supported the research process by facilitating language editing, reviewing structural flow, and serving as a sparring partner to test the clarity of arguments and headings. Furthermore, AI-assisted tools were used to transcribe interview data and translate specific reference materials. No AI system was used to fabricate empirical material or substitute for human interpretive judgment in analysis; all substantive claims and outputs were verified by the author, who retains full responsibility for the accuracy and integrity of the work.

4.4 Analytical Steps: Abductive Narrative–Discursive Analysis

The empirical material was analyzed through an abductive narrative–discursive procedure, shown in Figure 4-1, which combined deductive coding with inductive refinement. The three ideal-typical narratives developed in the theoretical framework were used as an initial deductive template, while remaining open to empirical revision in line with hybrid deductive–inductive qualitative coding approaches (Fereday et al. 2006; Jabbar et al. 2019). Coding was conducted manually (without specialized software), through transcript annotation and the maintenance of a structured codebook with indexed excerpts and code definitions; this approach was considered appropriate given the limited corpus size and the analytic emphasis on interpretive reconstruction (Saldaña 2021).

From Narratives to Coded Material

The three narratives were translated into three deductive code families that structured the first coding cycle of the interview transcripts (N_JUST, N_ECON, N_SYS). Each family was operationalized through subcodes reflecting recurrent elements of problematization (problem definitions, causal stories, responsibility attributions, and governance preferences), alongside scaffold-derived codes capturing mechanism pathways and justice dimensions (Saldaña 2021). The Stakeholder families were treated as classifications (e.g., developer, civil society, administration) rather than as thematic codes, enabling narrative mobilization to be compared across discursive subject positions. The Codebook and the final coding results are documented in the Appendix A1 to A4.

Manual line-by-line coding was then applied across all five transcripts. Segments were coded wherever an interviewee articulated (a) what was treated as the central problem, (b) which causal linkages were asserted between greening and exclusionary outcomes, (c) who was positioned as responsible or capable of acting, and (d) which instruments or procedural safeguards were framed as feasible or legitimate. Multiple coding was permitted to capture hybridity and contestation (e.g., passages simultaneously invoking feasibility constraints and justice claims), rather than forcing each segment into a single narrative register.
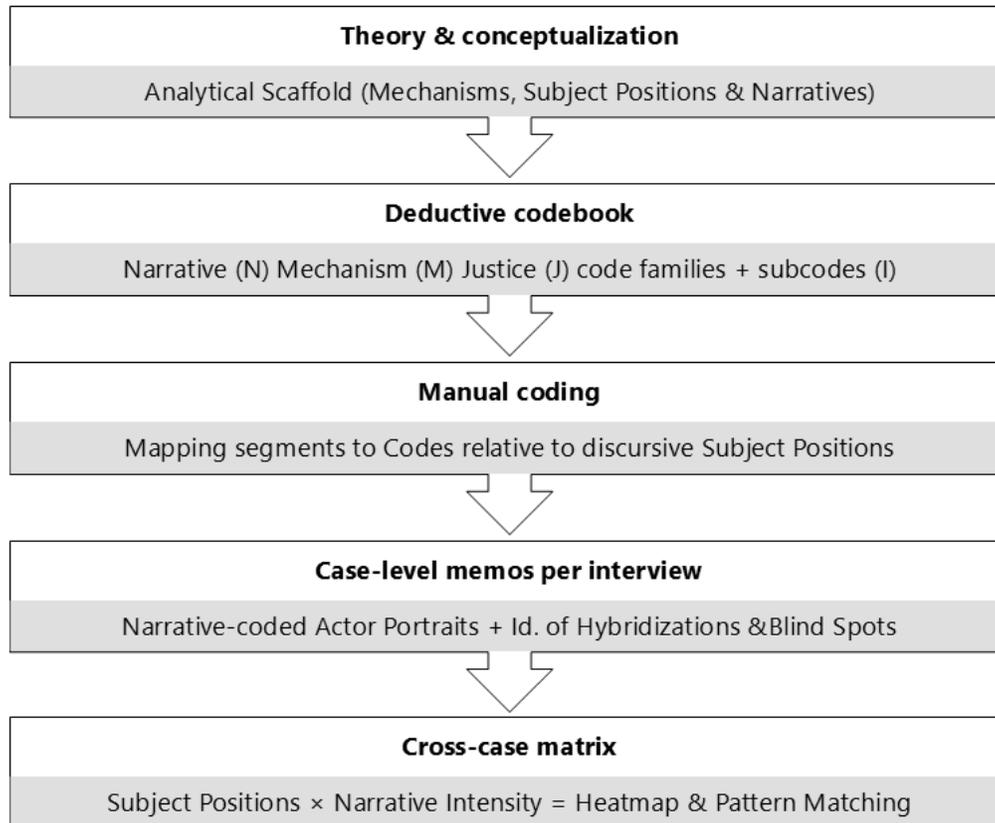
```
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                    Theory & conceptualization                     │
├───────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┤
│        Analytical Scaffold (Mechanisms, Subject Positions &       │
│                            Narratives)                             │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
                                ▼
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                        Deductive codebook                         │
├───────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┤
│     Narrative (N) Mechanism (M) Justice (J) code families +       │
│                          subcodes (I)                             │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
                                ▼
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                          Manual coding                            │
├───────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┤
│    Mapping segments to Codes relative to discursive Subject       │
│                           Positions                               │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
                                ▼
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                   Case-level memos per interview                  │
├───────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┤
│   Narrative-coded Actor Portraits + Id. of Hybridizations &       │
│                          Blind Spots                              │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
                                ▼
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                        Cross-case matrix                          │
├───────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┤
│   Subject Positions × Narrative Intensity = Heatmap & Pattern     │
│                           Matching                                │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
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Figure 4-1: The analytical process, from theoretical narratives to codes, memos, and the resulting cross-case matrix

Inductive codes and subcodes were added whenever salient meanings did not fit the predefined template. For example, when respondents problematized measurement and evidence, expressed ambivalence toward "green" projects, foregrounded specific implementation challenges, or reflected on positionality and the limits of institutional mandates. In this way, narratives functioned as sensitizing concepts rather than rigid categories, and the codebook was treated as revisable in response to empirical surprises (Charmaz 2006; Timmermans and Tavory 2012).

Coding proceeded iteratively. After each transcript, code boundaries and overlaps were reviewed to improve internal coherence and reduce redundancy. Where necessary, codes were split (e.g., separating procedural fairness claims from accounts of tokenistic participation) or merged/renamed when overlapping meanings were identified. A versioned codebook was maintained so that revisions to definitions, inclusion criteria, and exemplar quotes remained traceable across the analytic process. When new inductive codes were introduced, earlier transcripts were revisited to apply the updated codebook consistently across the whole corpus.

Narrative-Oriented Interview Memos

Following first-cycle coding, an **interview memo** was written for each respondent (See Appendix A3) as an intermediate step between transcript-level coding and cross-interview comparison (Charmaz 2025; Saldaña 2021). These memos synthesized how each discursive subject position mobilized, combined, or resisted the three narratives and how mechanisms and justice dimensions were rendered visible or marginal. A typical prompt set was used to standardize memo content and facilitate comparison:

- Which narrative was most prominent in the interviewee's problem framing of greening-related change and green gentrification risks?
- Where did explicit tensions or shifts between narratives occur (e.g., fairness claims versus feasibility arguments; systemic constraints versus local agency)?
- Which inductive themes cut across narratives (e.g., specific instruments, concrete conflict episodes, or reflections on participation and evidence)?
- How did organizational role and positionality appear to shape the narrative mix and the boundaries of what was treated as feasible?

Particular attention was paid to segments where narrative codes overlapped or where codes from different families appeared in proximity, as these passages often indicated translation attempts, strategic ambiguity, or contested problem definitions. Cross-references to similar or conflicting framings in other interviews were recorded in the memos to prepare subsequent comparative steps.

Comparative Pattern Reconstruction

Key memo outputs and selected coded segments were transferred into a cross-case matrix (interviewees × narratives and cross-cutting themes). This matrix served as the primary comparative device for identifying recurring configurations and divergences across subject positions, for example, whether specific mechanism claims (amenity capitalization; selective greening/under-protection; socio-cultural access and recognition filters) clustered with narrative rationalities or whether hybrid combinations and blind spots recurred across interviews. Where appropriate, the matrix was summarized through tabulated pattern displays to support transparent comparison while retaining interpretive anchoring in the underlying coded excerpts.

Vertical Integration with the Analytical Scaffold

In a final vertical integration step, narrative patterns identified in the memos and matrix were linked back to the integrated analytical scaffold developed in Chapter 3 (mechanisms × narratives × justice dimensions). For each interviewee, it was traced which mechanism pathways were mobilized to justify or contest claims (e.g., market-led amenity capitalization versus socio-cultural recognition filters) and which justice dimensions were foregrounded or backgrounded in those accounts. This step ensured that narratives were analyzed not only as rhetorical framings but as structured problematizations that connect causal process claims with evaluative justice criteria and with governance implications (Foucault 1991; Dean 2009).

5 Empirical Analysis

Sub-question B requires an empirical account of how green gentrification risk is *made intelligible and governable* in Berlin, specifically, how actor-positioned narratives define the problem, attribute causal mechanisms, allocate responsibility, and thereby authorize distinct governance responses. Accordingly, the chapter generates three cumulative analytical outputs: (1) a reconstruction of three dominant narrative framings (justice-based, economic-managerial, and systemic-planning), (2) a coding-informed cross-narrative synthesis that identifies dominant patterns, hybrids, and blind spots, and (3) a scaffold-based mechanism synthesis that consolidates these claims into vertically integrated pathways and reinforcement dynamics linking actors, narratives, justice dimensions, and intervention points. These outputs provide the evidentiary basis for Part C, where the identified intervention points are translated into governance levers and feasible policy bundles and where trade-offs across narrative rationalities are made explicit rather than implicitly resolved within any single framing.

5.1   Political and Administrative Context in Berlin

This subchapter provides the political and administrative background necessary to interpret the interview material on Berlin's greening conflicts. While the analysis is informed by the empirical dataset, the section is not primarily based on interview evidence; it synthesizes contextual information from policy documents, administrative reports, planning instruments, and publicly available strategy papers that structure the local fields of climate adaptation, environmental justice, and housing politics. This document-based reconstruction clarifies the institutional logics, mandated responsibilities, and policy trade-offs that respondents referenced, thereby establishing the interpretive frame for the interview findings developed in the subsequent sections.

Over the last two decades, urban greening and climate adaptation have been positioned as pillars of Berlin's integrated development strategy, with green and open spaces framed as enabling infrastructure for a solidaristic and climate-resilient metropolis. *BerlinStrategie 3.0* conceptualizes green and open spaces as critical infrastructure within this broader agenda (SenStadt 2021). Sectoral strategies, including *StEP Klima 2.0* and *StEP Wohnen 2040*, have similarly promoted nature-based solutions, climate adaptation measures, and densification-compatible approaches to open-space protection (SenStadt 2024; SenStadt 2022). In inner-city transformation areas such as Mauerpark and Gleisdreieck, these strategic orientations have been translated into overlapping expectations around climate adaptation, place-making, and housing supply, layered onto already contested park landscapes.

In parallel, an explicit environmental justice agenda has been developed through the Environmental Justice Concept and associated mapping instruments. Environmental burdens have been linked to socio-economic indicators at the scale of *Lebensweltlich orientierte Räume* (neighborhood planning units), enabling spatial diagnostics of cumulative vulnerabilities and unequal access (SenMVKU 2024). Environmental justice maps have been presented as planning aids for prioritizing interventions and monitoring inequalities in exposure and access, potentially providing a framework for steering green investment toward neighborhoods that are simultaneously environmentally burdened and socially disadvantaged (Klimeczek 2014). However,

such targeting logics have been implemented within a policy environment in which greening interventions can also serve as amenity upgrades, intensifying competitive pressures in already-stressed neighborhoods.

At the same time, Berlin's housing market has undergone sharp tightening. Population growth, financialized real-estate investment, and decades of insufficient new construction have been associated with a structural mismatch between demand and supply, contributing to steep rent increases and intensified displacement pressures, particularly in inner-city districts such as Neukölln, Kreuzberg, and Prenzlauer Berg (Bernt and Holm 2009; Steinig 2016). As one response, soziale Erhaltungsgebiete under §172 BauGB have been widely designated to preserve the social composition of residential areas by restricting luxury modernization, conversions, and selected changes of use (BA Reineckendorf 2025). By 2022, 78 such areas had been established in Berlin, covering approximately 1.17 million residents and 628,000 dwellings (SenStadt 2023). In this context, greening is frequently interpreted through a distributive lens: environmental benefits are expected to improve living conditions, yet they are also perceived as capable of amplifying rent gaps and speculative expectations where protections are fragmented or unevenly enforced.

Governance fragmentation and cross-sector trade-offs have further structured these dynamics. Climate adaptation goals, open-space protection, housing provision, and tenant protection are pursued through partly divergent instruments and institutional logics, and tensions have been documented where climate-oriented building renovations and preservation instruments interact. Limits on rent-increasing modernization are intended to protect tenants, yet may also delay or constrain energy retrofits, thereby complicating the simultaneous pursuit of climate and affordability objectives (Weiß et al. 2021). These trade-offs are intensified in a political-economic environment shaped by what has been conceptualized as a "growth coalition" around land and real-estate development, wherein alliances of property owners, developers, city officials, and business organizations seek to increase land values through construction, place marketing, and public-space upgrading (Thierfelder and Kabisch 2016). In Berlin, high-quality public spaces and greening have been repeatedly framed as assets for competitiveness and investment attraction, generating an uneasy coexistence with commitments to environmental justice and tenants' rights (Thierfelder and Kabisch 2016).

Together, these conditions produce a structurally ambivalent context for urban greening. Climate adaptation and environmental justice agendas legitimize new green investment, including in heat-stressed and socioeconomically vulnerable areas (Klimeczek 2014; SenMVKU 2024). Yet housing-market tightening and growth-oriented development dynamics increase the likelihood that greening is interpreted as a driver of exclusionary upgrading unless robust safeguards and coordinated sequencing are institutionalized (Bernt and Holm 2009; Steinig 2016). This conflictual field provides the contextual basis for the subsequent analysis of how green gentrification risks are problematized through distinct narrative framings and attributed responsibilities.

Stakeholder Field

The stakeholder families developed in the analytical framework (see Section 3.4, Table 3-2) are operationalized here as empirically observable actor-position categories in Berlin's greening conflicts. Figure 5-1 visualizes how the abstract stakeholder families defined in the analytical scaffold (left) materialize through specific institutional actors in the Berlin case study (right).
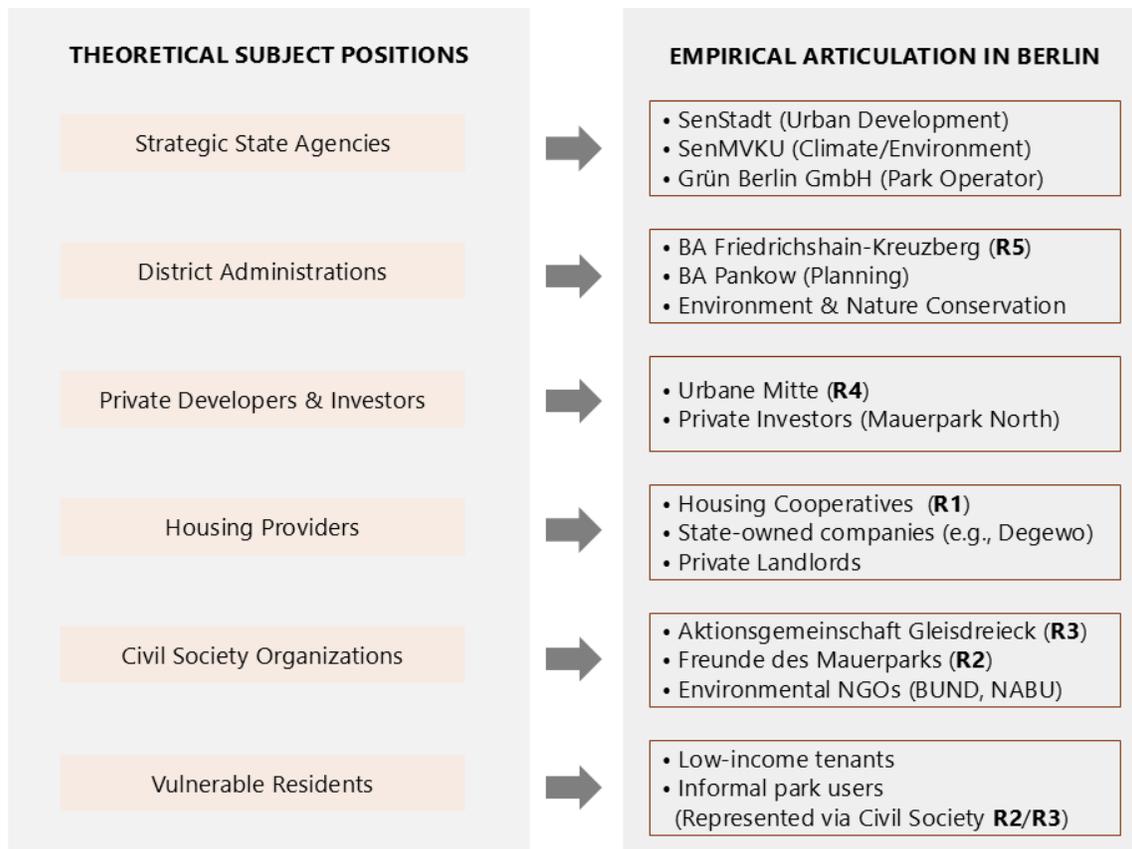
THEORETICAL SUBJECT POSITIONS	EMPIRICAL ARTICULATION IN BERLIN
Strategic State Agencies	• SenStadt (Urban Development) • SenMVKU (Climate/Environment) • Grün Berlin GmbH (Park Operator)
District Administrations	• BA Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg (**R5**) • BA Pankow (Planning) • Environment & Nature Conservation
Private Developers & Investors	• Urbane Mitte (**R4**) • Private Investors (Mauerpark North)
Housing Providers	• Housing Cooperatives (**R1**) • State-owned companies (e.g., Degewo) • Private Landlords
Civil Society Organizations	• Aktionsgemeinschaft Gleisdreieck (**R3**) • Freunde des Mauerparks (**R2**) • Environmental NGOs (BUND, NABU)
Vulnerable Residents	• Low-income tenants • Informal park users (Represented via Civil Society **R2/R3**)

Figure 5-1: Mapping of Berlin stakeholders

The Arenas as Contextual Anchors

The empirical arenas referenced in this chapter serve as contextual anchors for interview prompting and documentary triangulation. While **Tempelhofer Feld** was included in the initial sampling frame as the paradigmatic example of green resistance in Berlin (Hilbrandt 2017). The recruitment phase yielded no direct access to interviews with the primary state actors responsible for its current management. Consequently, Tempelhofer Feld serves as a discursive backdrop and a reference point often cited by interviewees to contrast with the active conflicts in the two selected primary arenas: Mauerpark and Gleisdreieck.

Mauerpark (Prenzlauer Berg/Wedding): Situated on the former death strip of the Berlin Wall, Mauerpark acts as a socio-spatial seam between the gentrified district of Prenzlauer Berg and the working-class neighborhood of Wedding (Sleegers 2022). The conflict here centers on the park's completion (extension to the north) and the intense pressure of tourism and events, particularly the Sunday flea market and street musicians. Residents actively frame the park as a threatened backyard for the vulnerable, contesting the noise and commercialization that accompany its high-profile status (Haid 2017). This tension exemplifies the clash between the park's role as a global tourist destination and its function as a local neighborhood amenity.

Gleisdreieck Park & Urbane Mitte (Kreuzberg/Schöne-berg): Developed on former railway wastelands, the Park am Gleisdreieck is a prize-winning green space designed to integrate "track wilderness" with modern recreational needs (Nowacka-Rejzner 2014). However, the central conflict currently revolves around the adjacent Urbane Mitte project, a development plan envisioning seven high-rise towers (up to 90 meters) for office and commercial use (Mameli 2020). Opponents, organized under the Aktionsgemeinschaft

Gleisdreieck, argue that the park's green quality is being monetized to justify massive commercial densification that offers no housing value to the neighborhood, effectively treating the public park as a front yard for private capital (Mameli 2020).

5.2   Coded Actor Portraits

To synthesize the qualitative material, the five interview transcripts were analyzed alongside the associated coding outputs to reconstruct each stakeholder's discursive subject position. Full narrative actor portraits are documented in Appendix A3 to preserve the evidentiary depth of each case (i.e., extended quote context and within-interview sequencing) without overloading the main chapter. Table 5-1 therefore, provides the corresponding analytic summary: it condenses, for each respondent, the stakeholder role and mandate, the dominant and secondary code clusters (derived from coding frequency patterns), and the characteristic argumentative logic through which mechanisms and responsibilities are framed. For cross-respondent comparison, Appendix A4 supplies a compact dataset-wide overview of how actor-positioned framings cluster across the material; this overview underpins the comparative narrative reconstruction in Section 5.3 and supports the identification of recurrent linkages between narrative rationalities and mechanism claims.

Table 5-1: Narrative-coded actor portraits: Listed with the observed codes, differentiated by primary and secondary salience, as well as absent codes, for each respondent portrait. The observed patterns are synthesized in a role description, accompanied by a direct quote from each respondent as evidence.

Role (ID)	Observed Codes	Discursive Logic & Mechanism Pathway	Evidence
Housing Co-op Director (R1)	**Primary:** N_ECON, T_DISP **Secondary:** M_AMEN, T_INSTR **Absent:** J_RECOG	**The "Pragmatic Manager"** Acknowledges displacement (T_DISP) as a market reality but uses the **Market-led pathway** to argue that modernization requires rent increases to keep the portfolio solvent. Justice is defined as "portfolio stability," not individual entitlement.	*Gentrification is something natural... [we] provide another apartment within the coop, but nothing more.* (R1-01-l.16)
Mauerpark Initiative (R2)	**Primary:** N_JUST, T_ACCESS, I_NOISE **Secondary:** T_PART, J_PROC **Absent:** N_ECON	**The "Guardian of the Kiez"** Mobilizes the **Socio-cultural pathway** to frame the park as a "survival space" for the vulnerable. High frequency of I_NOISE and T_ACCESS codes indicates a struggle against **Recognitional Filters** (e.g., noise complaints) imposed by newcomers.	*It is about who belongs and whose behavior is accepted...* (R2-03-l.458)
Architect & Activist (R3)	**Primary:** N_SYS, T_INSTR, M_PATH **Secondary:** J_DIST, T_DISP **Hybrid:** Uses Systemic logic for Justice ends.	**The "Technical Critic"** Rejects the emotive approach of R2. Instead, uses g**overnance-led and policy-led mechanisms** to critique the failure of state instruments. High M_PATH coding reflects an emphasis on historical planning errors.	*The bottom third [of residents] has almost disappeared... the instrument saved some, but too late.* (R3-02-l.185)

Role (ID)	Observed Codes	Discursive Logic & Mechanism Pathway	Evidence
Project Developer (R4)	**Primary:** N_ECON, M_AMEN, M_CLIM **Secondary:** I_DEVTRUST, N_SYS **Absent:** T_DISP (Denied)	**The "Value Creator"** Frames greening via **amenity capitalization** (M_AMEN). Legitimacy is derived from "efficiency" and "synergy." Strong I_DEVTRUST coding reveals a defensive stance against "ideological" critics; it explicitly denies the displacement mechanism.	*We are not stressing the housing market here... [displacement] is not an issue for this site.* (R4-02-l.246)
District Climate Officer (R5)	**Primary:** N_SYS, M_CLIM, T_INSTR **Secondary:** J_DIST, I_TOKEN **Conflict:** High Justice intent vs. Low Systemic power.	**The "Constrained Mediator"** Illustrates the fracture in the **governance-led pathway**. High M_CLIM scores indicate ecological ambition, but I_TOKEN and N_SYS dominate the discussion of implementation, revealing a lack of legal tools to enforce social safeguards.	*We lack the means to stop it... in weighing interests, [equity] often falls short.* (R5-06-l.478)

5.3 Comparative Narrative Framings

In the following sections, the three narratives are reconstructed from the interview material as patterned framings through which green gentrification is rendered intelligible and governable in Berlin. Each framing is presented as a results unit specifying (a) problem definition, (b) mechanism claims, (c) responsibility attribution, and (d) implied governance responses and blind spots, with claims substantiated through coded interview excerpts.

Justice-Based Framing

Problem definition: Within the Berlin material, actors grounded in environmental and housing justice, especially community activists and long-term residents in Mauerpark and Gleisdreieck, frame greening projects primarily as potential drivers of inequity. Greening is problematized as a coupled process in which environmental upgrading is perceived to intensify (a) rent and displacement pressures, (b) procedural exclusion through weak participation, and (c) recognitional harm through changing norms of legitimate park use.

Distributive mechanisms: Across both arenas, park upgrading is narrated as feeding neighborhood "upgrading" dynamics under housing-market constraint. In the Gleisdreieck context, displacement pressures are presented as empirically visible even where protective zoning exists: "das untere Drittel… ist fast verschwunden" (the bottom-income third… has almost disappeared) (R3-02-l.185). In Mauerpark, displacement and neighborhood turnover are narrated through everyday indicators, including commercial change: "Gastronomen… oder Designbuden" (restaurants… or design boutiques) are described as replacing corner-shop retail and catering to higher-income tastes (R2-04-l.490). Through these examples, greening is constructed as contributing to a negatively redistributive dynamic: environmental improvement is perceived as

increasing area desirability while long-term low-income communities bear disruptions in housing, local businesses, and social networks.

Procedural mechanisms: Participation is repeatedly described as formally present but substantively weak. Planning and management processes are narrated as being conducted for procedural compliance rather than shared decision-making: "Eine Bürgerbeteiligung […] die man halt so machen muss und dann [ist es] abgehakt" (a civil participation process which had to be done and then was checked off) (R2-06-l.784). Whether participation was truly "ergebnisoffen" (open-ended) is directly questioned, suggesting that outcomes may have been predetermined (R2-06-l.807). Late-stage engagement is described as being reduced to information formats with minimal influence, and participation is explicitly characterized as "Bürgerinformation" (citizen information) rather than genuine participation (R2-06-l.782). This procedural critique is reinforced by the claim that binding instruments were missing, particularly requirements that would translate local social goals into enforceable protections (R3-02-l.205).

Recognitional mechanisms: Beyond housing and procedure, recognitional harm is foregrounded as a central pathway through which greening becomes exclusionary. In Mauerpark, a petition is recalled as targeting long-standing informal users through the phrase "die lärmproduzierenden und grillenden Leute" (the noise-producing and grilling people) (R2-01-l.36). The described target group, youth and immigrant families using the space for drumming, music, and communal grilling, is defended as socially integrative rather than disorderly. This defense is articulated through a direct re-framing of the drummers' practice: as they are not bad people trying to molest… they are a community, for rhythm, and they live it (R2-03-l.456). The inclusive function of these practices is emphasized through the claim that they have a "sehr hohe soziale integrative Wirkung… an Punkten, wo andere schon längst aufgegeben haben" (a very high socially integrative effect… in places where others have long since given up) (R2-03-l.474). The conflict is summarized as a struggle over social membership: who belongs and whose behavior is accepted. (R2-03-l.459). In this framing, green gentrification is thus treated not only as a loss of affordability but also as cultural displacement and the narrowing of legitimate presence in public space.

Responsibility attribution and translation into governance: Responsibility is attributed to institutional arrangements that allow greening and upgrading to proceed without robust social safeguards and without participation that is experienced as consequential. Decision-making is narrated as top-down, with community influence treated as superficial rather than binding. At the same time, justice-inflected claims are shown to be articulated from within administration, though under constraints and with emphasis on unequal climatic exposure. The district climate officer asserts that "Klimaanpassung, Klimaschutz ist ja sozialverträglich" (climate adaptation and climate protection are socially compatible) (R5-02-l.146) and argues that heat-exposed, polluted streets in low-income areas "eigentlich umso mehr Begrünung brauchten" (actually need even more greening) (R5-08-l.661). Yet the housing market is described as structurally enabling rent escalation, "man die Mieten ja unendlich erhöhen kann" (rents can be increased endlessly) (R5-06-l.447), with residents potentially left to "bei 50 Grad in der Wohnung schmoren" (swelter at 50 degrees in the apartment) when climate measures are curtailed by short-term cost concerns (R5-06-l.448).

Taken together, the justice-based framing translates into the demand that greening should be governed with enforceable coupling to social protection: (1) distributive safeguards against displacement pressures, (2) participation formats that generate consequential influence rather than symbolic legitimation, and (3)

operational and cultural recognition of diverse informal park uses as legitimate public-space functions rather than nuisances to be filtered out.

Economic-Managerial Framing

Problem definition: In the economic-managerial framing, greening is primarily narrated as a matter of managing costs, risks, and asset values through modernization, investment security, and organizational stability. Rather than being approached as a justice problem, potential displacement or exclusion is generally translated into a bounded management issue: affordability is handled as portfolio-level rent stabilization, acceptability as communication and expectation management, and "fairness" as due diligence toward current users rather than structural redistribution.

Mechanism Claims: A housing-cooperative perspective is articulated in explicitly market-oriented terms. Gentrification is normalized as an urban process not expected to be "strongly prevented," described as *"something natural"* (R1-01-l.16). From this standpoint, greening and energy upgrades are positioned as necessary technical investments that require a predictable planning horizon and cost recovery. "Justice" is consequently narrowed to internal affordability practices and long-term portfolio functionality rather than citywide distributional outcomes.

This portfolio logic is expressed through the emphasis on tenant composition and payment stability (R1-02-l.169). Rent restraint is then presented as a managerial instrument. After modernization, rent increases are described as being moderated internally (e.g., capped at roughly €1/m² even where higher increases might be legally possible) (R1-05-l.271). However, displacement risk is treated as an internal exception managed case-by-case rather than a systemic failure: "Wenn sich jemand die Miete nach einer Sanierung nicht mehr leisten kann, bekommt die Person vielleicht eine andere Wohnung innerhalb der Genossenschaft, aber mehr auch nicht." (If someone can no longer afford the rent after renovation, the person may get another apartment within the cooperative, but nothing beyond that) (R1-01-l.16). The implication is that modernization proceeds as a necessity, while social fallout is absorbed through limited internal reallocation rather than prevented.

Return requirements as feasibility constraints on participation and guarantees: The same interview articulates feasibility as a constraint on deeper participation or stronger guarantees, justified through the need to finance organizational reproduction: "eine gewisse Rendite… erwirtschaftet" (a certain return has to be generated) (R1-01-l.21). In this causal logic, extensive resident involvement, strong anti-displacement commitments, or binding social concessions are constructed as potentially endangering project viability. Regulatory skepticism is similarly justified through an efficiency claim. The rent cap is rejected on the grounds that strict rent control would reduce incentives to invest, as owners would modernize less (R1-04). Here, equity policy is reframed as producing long-run deterioration through underinvestment, while market-aligned modernization is framed as protective of building quality and long-term stability.

Value creation and scope delimitation in project development discourse: A development-oriented version of the economic-managerial framing appears in the Urbane Mitte discourse around Gleisdreieck. The project is framed as rational land-value optimization and infrastructural improvement near a transit hub, with greening and upgrading treated as positive synergies rather than distributive threats. Upgrading is acknowledged, "einen Aufwertungsprozess wird es geben" (there will be an upgrading process) (R4-03-l.256), but severe gentrification impacts are discounted through a scope argument: "wir stressen ja nicht den

Wohnungsmarkt hier" (we are not putting pressure on the housing market here) (R4-02-l.269). The project is positioned as not displacing existing housing, and any residential component is framed as institutionally buffered through municipal delivery.

Commercial displacement concerns are similarly neutralized by pointing to the site's prior land use and the absence of established businesses: "Im Moment ist kein Kleingewerbe da, was verdrängt werden könnte" (at the moment there is no small business that could be displaced) (R4-03-l.274). Even alternative cultural uses are framed as knowingly temporary: "Die Zwischennutzung ist befristet" (interim use… time-limited) (R4-02-l.278). Benefits are foregrounded through expected spillovers: "Synergieeffekte" (synergy effects) for nearby retail and the wider area (R4-02-l.793). Within this logic, any broader rent escalation in surrounding districts is treated as an external trend rather than a project responsibility, and greening-linked upgrading is narrated as a legitimate, even desirable, outcome of city-building.

Responsibility attribution and translation into governance: Responsibility for housing affordability and displacement is frequently displaced outward in this framing. At the cooperative level, affordability is treated as an internal managerial responsibility, bounded by portfolio viability: moderate rent restraint and internal relocation are considered the appropriate limits of action. At the same time, stronger interventions are framed as threatening organizational solvency and investment capacity. At the development level, responsibility is bounded through claims of "no direct displacement" and "no housing-market pressure" for the immediate project area (R4-02-.246). Conflict is thereby translated into a question of managing acceptance and clarifying benefits rather than addressing structural power asymmetries. Where governance implications are suggested, they tend to remain within a managerial repertoire: predictable rules, feasible modernization pathways, bounded rent moderation, and communication practices that prevent backlash. Equity is thus treated primarily as risk management and stability maintenance, keeping projects "on track," maintaining revenue horizons, and avoiding social conflict, rather than as a mandate to redesign the distribution of greening benefits and burdens.

Systemic-Planning Framing

Problem definition: In the systemic-planning framing, green gentrification is problematized less as the outcome of a single project and more as an emergent effect of institutional fragmentation, instrument limits, and path-dependent dynamics in a tight housing market. Attention is directed toward how existing governance tools function "on paper" versus how they function under real fiscal, legal, and administrative constraints. Accordingly, the central question is not who is to blame, but which instruments and intersectoral arrangements are available (or missing) to steer greening outcomes toward social protection, and why those instruments often arrive too late or remain unenforceable.

Mechanism Claims: A recurrent mechanism claim concerns the delayed or weak activation of formal instruments, especially the soziale Erhaltungssatzung. In one inner-city area, it was stated that initial protections lacked "teeth" for years (e.g., delayed restrictions on conversions and circumvention of renovation limits), such that by the time rules were strengthened (R3-02-l.189). This observation is explicitly narrated as path-dependent: once upscale investment and turnover begin, later intervention is framed as structurally incapable of reversal. Policy action arriving "mit Verspätung" (with delay/too late) is described as unable to undo the displacement trajectory (R3-02-l.187).

Instrument deployability under fiscal constraints: The pre-emptive purchase right (Vorkaufsrecht) is described as potentially effective but constrained by market prices and public budgets. A successful case is described as an instance where "ein Instrument… einigen Mietern das Leben gerettet hat" (an instrument… saved the lives of some tenants) by transferring a building to a state-owned housing company (R2-07-l.1072). However, the rarity of such cases is attributed to fiscal limits and inflated market values. It is stated that Berlin rarely exercises the right because "das Land Berlin… gar keine Kohle mehr [hat]" (the state of Berlin… has no money left) to match speculative purchase prices (R2-07-l.1077). In the same narrative, the sale of a neighboring building for roughly €7–8 million is used to illustrate the mismatch between assessed values, speculative pricing, and what public budgets can realistically outbid, with intervention portrayed as possible only under extraordinary political pressure rather than as routine governance capacity (R2-07-l.1079). The implied mechanism is that market dynamics outpace protective instruments when those instruments rely on scarce public funds and discretionary political mobilization.

Fragmentation and mandate gaps: A further mechanism claim concerns governance fragmentation across levels and sectors. Responsibilities for green infrastructure, land-use planning, housing regulation, and enforcement are described as distributed in ways that prevent any single actor from coupling greening investments to tenant protections as a standard operating procedure. Environmental justice mapping is discussed as an example of diagnostic capacity that does not automatically translate into intervention **(**R5-06-l.444). It is described as helpful for identifying areas of combined environmental burdens and social vulnerability, yet it depends on cross-departmental agreement and resource allocation to become actionable. In this account, mapping can "flag" risk, but implementation is narrated as faltering when housing policy instruments, funding decisions, and enforcement powers are controlled elsewhere (R5-03-l.195).

Political trade-offs: Systemic accounts also emphasize that even where justice-oriented measures are proposed, they may be diluted by competing priorities such as investment attraction and housing supply. In this logic, some displacement is implicitly accepted within growth-oriented policy trajectories unless higher-level integration forces a coupling among greening, affordability, and enforcement.

Uneven vulnerability and differentiated impacts: The same greening intervention is narrated as producing divergent outcomes depending on local housing-stock composition and existing protections. In the Mauerpark context, it is stated that on the Prenzlauer Berg side "Bei uns ist die [Gentrifizierung] schon durch" (for us, [gentrification] is already over) (R2-04-l.495). By contrast, on the Wedding side, it is stated that "du hast halt kaum Mieterhöhungen… ganz viele Sozialwohnungen" (you have hardly any rent increases… [because there are] lots of social housing units) (R2-04-l.503). This contrast is used as evidence that resilience to displacement is structurally conditioned: social and cooperative housing stocks are narrated as buffering pressures that private-rental contexts cannot absorb. On this basis, an anticipatory governance logic is proposed: vulnerability identification should precede or accompany green investment so that protections can be deployed in parallel rather than retrospectively (further developed in Section 6.1).

Responsibility Attribution and Translation into Governance: In this framing, responsibility is distributed across governance arrangements rather than pinned on a single project actor. Displacement risk arises from the interaction of market pressures with delayed, underfunded, and fragmented governance tools. Instruments are not portrayed as absent; instead, they are portrayed as structurally constrained by (a) timing intervention, too late (R3-02-l.187), (b) fiscal capacity, no money left, to exercise protective purchase rights

(R2-07-l.1077) and (c) mandate fragmentation, where diagnostic tools such as mapping remain non-binding without cross-sector agreements and budgets (R5-03-l.195).

This constraint perspective is reinforced by the district climate officer's account of limited authority within administrative processes. Although climate concerns are described as formally anchored, they are stated to "in der Abwägung häufig herunterfallen" (often get dropped in the balancing of interests) (R5-03-l.195). Constraints are described as practical and resource-based: "uns fehlen da … eher die Mittel, um das zu stoppen" (the means/resources to stop it are lacking) (R5-06-l.478). As a result, the administrative role is narrated not as steering outcomes decisively but as attempting to influence them indirectly (R5-05-l.341). In this translation, systemic governance is portrayed as underpowered relative to market mechanisms unless mandates, funding, and enforcement capacities are strengthened and coordinated.

Overall, the systemic-planning framing translates the green gentrification problem into a set of governance constraints and requirements: earlier sequencing of protective instruments, reliable fiscal capacity for intervention, enforceable cross-sector coupling between greening and housing safeguards, and strengthened enforcement (e.g., against short-term rental conversion) so that ecological upgrades do not operate as unbuffered signals in speculative housing markets.

Synthesis

Section 5.3 reconstructs three dominant narrative rationalities through which green gentrification risks are rendered intelligible, responsibility is allocated, and governance feasibility is claimed.
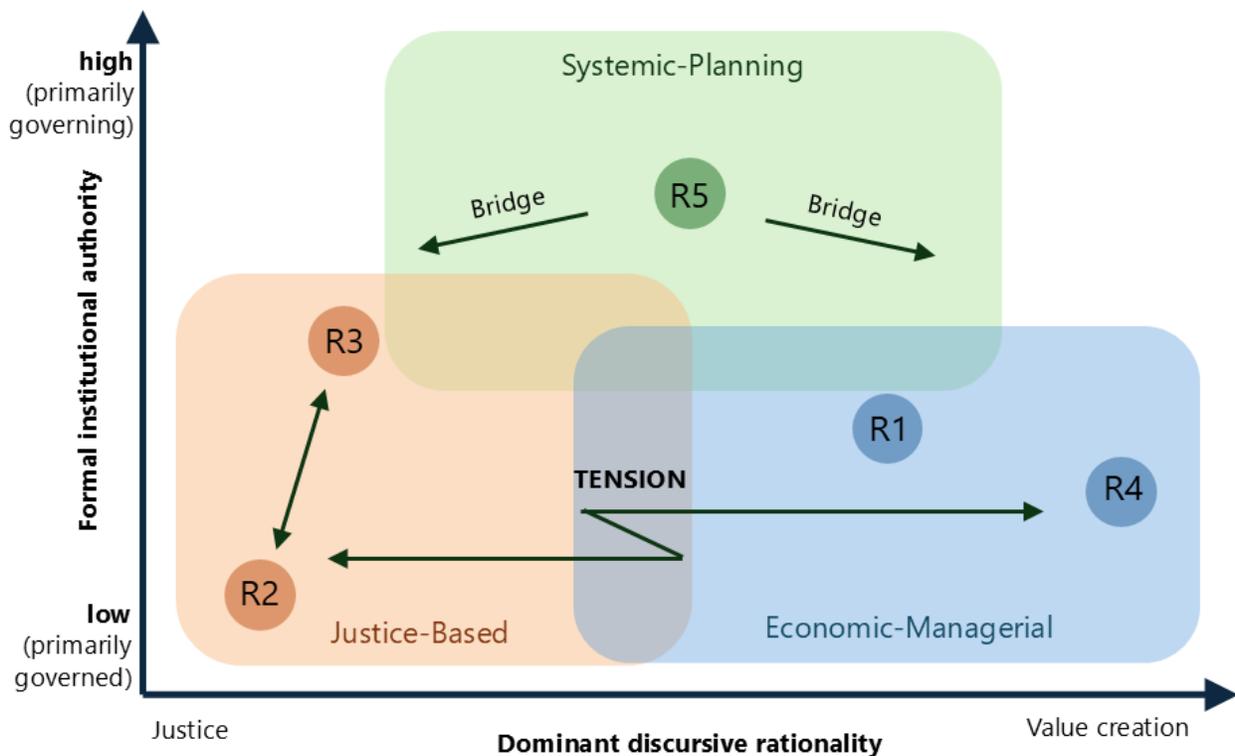
Figure 5-2: Discursive field of contestation in Berlin. Interview respondents (R1–R5) are positioned within a two-dimensional discursive field defined by (1) formal institutional authority (vertical axis) and (2) dominant discursive rationality (horizontal axis). Colored regions indicate the three ideal-typical rationality clusters reconstructed from the coding, with overlaps representing hybrid or intersecting framings. Note: Positions indicate relative discursive alignment derived from the coded interview material rather than quantitative measurement.

Figure 5-2 situates the respondent-specific narrative profiles (R1–R5) along two structuring dimensions: dominant discursive rationality and formal institutional authority. The central tension emerges where economic–managerial framings, positioned toward value creation and higher administrative feasibility, delimit displacement and misrecognition as externalities, while justice-based accounts foreground these harms yet remain located closer to "governed" positions with limited decision authority; systemic–planning rationality occupies a bridging zone that acknowledges structural constraints while partially translating justice concerns into administratively legible problem definitions. The overlap region marked as "tension" therefore indicates not mere disagreement, but a recurrent mismatch between (a) what counts as harm, (b) who is authorized to define the problem, and (c) which claims are treated as actionable within prevailing governance logics.

5.4   Coding-Informed Cross-Case-Narratives

This section synthesizes the three narrative findings from Section 5.3 through the lens of the coding distributions (Appendix A4) and actor portraits (Table 5-1). Rather than restating each framing, the aim is to surface (1) dominant cross-narrative patterns (what repeatedly fits across actors), (2) hybrid configurations (where narrative registers are combined in non-ideal-typical ways), and (3) blind spots and translation failures (where governance-relevant issues are systematically under-articulated or displaced).

Dominant Cross-Narrative Patterns

Instruments and participation function as the shared battlefield, even when definitions diverge. Across actor positions, the most consistently recurring thematic register is not "nature" or "housing" as such, but "governability": which instruments exist, when they can be activated, and whether participation yields influence. This is evident in the prominence of instrument talk (Erhaltungssatzung, B-plans, contracts, park management arrangements) and participation formats (advisory boards, structured rounds), even among actors whose primary narratives are economic-managerial or justice-based. Yet the same governance vocabulary is used to enact different political logics. For the developer, legality and contractual compliance become the central proof of legitimacy, while distributive outcomes are backgrounded; displacement is explicitly denied as project-relevant (R4-02-l.246). In justice-based accounts, by contrast, participation and instruments are treated as procedural safeguards whose absence produces harm, and participation is frequently reconstructed as a legitimacy ritual rather than influence infrastructure.

Displacement is cross-cutting, but it is narratively stabilized in incompatible ways. Displacement and price dynamics appear in all three narrative clusters, but they are not stabilized as the *same* object. In economic-managerial accounts, gentrification is normalized as a market process, "etwas Natürliches" (something natural) (R1-01-l.16) and thus relocated outside the actor's sphere of accountability. The point is that "displacement" operates less as a shared empirical indicator than as a boundary object: it is invoked across narratives but made actionable through different causal stories and responsibility allocations.

Amenity capitalization is affirmed, contested, or denied depending on the actor-position, not the site. The scaffold expectation that market-led actors legitimate greening through amenity capitalization is strongly corroborated in the developer interview, where park adjacency, design quality, and "synergy" are mobilized as value-creating assets. The upgrading effect is conceded, but its distributive consequences are displaced to "general city trends," thereby narrowing project responsibility (R4-03-l.256). In justice-based

and systemic-critical accounts, by contrast, amenity capitalization is treated as a mechanism that must be governed precisely because it is predictable. The market mechanism is not disputed; instead, its institutional containment is presented as missing or activated too late.

The socio-cultural pathway is empirically dense yet narratively segregated. Conflicts around everyday use, recognition, and informal cultures (noise, grilling, "acceptable" park behaviors) appear with high interpretive density in the civil-society interview, where they are treated as recognitional filters that reorder belonging. The recurring formulation that "it is about who belongs and whose behavior is accepted" (R2-03-l.459) encapsulates this mechanism logic. However, this socio-cultural evidence is not equally legible across the field. In economic-managerial talk, such conflicts tend to be absorbed into "acceptance," communication, or operational management; in systemic accounts, they risk being treated as secondary frictions relative to instrument design and administrative capacity. The coding-informed implication is that recognitional harms are not absent from the empirical field, but are unevenly authorized as policy-relevant knowledge across narratives.

Hybrids: Narrative Overlaps

The coding portraits highlight that the Berlin discursive field cannot be reduced to a simple civil-society vs. market dichotomy; two systematic hybrids are especially consequential for governance translation.

Hybrid 1: Systemic-for-justice critique (R3). The architect/activist position combines systemic-planning diagnosis with justice objectives. Displacement is not narrated primarily through moral claims, but through instrument histories, timing, and path dependence. The observation that the bottom low-income third has disappeared (R3-02-l.185) is paired with the claim that instruments were activated "too late," producing irreversible loss. This hybrid matters because it creates a discursive bridge: justice claims are translated into *designable* governance questions (trigger points, sequencing, enforceability) rather than only protest registers.

Hybrid 2: Justice-intent under systemic constraint (R5). A tension between distributive commitment and limited administrative leverage structures the district climate officer's voice. Climate adaptation is framed as socially necessary in vulnerable neighborhoods, yet feasibility and legal hierarchy are narrated as recurrent veto points. This constraint is condensed in the formulation that often drops out in the weighing of interests" (R5-03-l.195), alongside the self-description of being mainly positioned to sensitize and to nudge (R5-05-l.341). This hybrid is analytically central because it reveals how equity can be endorsed at the level of policy ambition while remaining discretionary at the level of implementation, a governance gap that cannot be solved through "better awareness" alone.

Blind Spots and Translation Failures

Recognitional justice is structurally underrepresented in instrument-centered problematizations. Although recognitional conflicts are empirically thick in the civil-society material (R2), they are comparatively thin in the economic-managerial and systemic accounts, where they are easily reframed as management, order, or communication issues rather than as justice-relevant harms. This creates a predictable blind spot: governance discussions are dominated by "hard" levers (plans, contracts, protection zones), while the socio-cultural mechanisms that materially structure exclusion (norm policing, informal use delegitimation) are not translated into enforceable design and operational criteria.

Participation is widely problematized, but responsibility is repeatedly displaced. Tokenism is a recurring diagnosis, but an institutionally located responsibility claim rarely accompanies it. In justice framings, participation is criticized as formally performed yet substantively closed; in systemic framings, participation deficits are often attributed to understaffing, mandate limits, or procedural path dependencies. The recurrent result is a translation failure: "participation" is acknowledged as necessary, but it remains weakly tied to binding decision rules.

The retrofit–rent nexus remains a difficult-to-govern contradiction rather than a designed policy coupling. Climate modernization (energy upgrades, resilience measures) is repeatedly narrated as simultaneously necessary and socially risky. Where affordability instruments constrain modernization, climate goals are slowed; where modernization proceeds, rent burdens and displacement risks intensify. The systemic account frames this as a coordination and legal-design problem rather than an avoidable trade-off, but the empirical material suggests that the contradiction is currently governed by case-by-case balancing rather than standardized coupling rules (e.g., social-neutrality conditions attached to climate funding or modernization approvals).

5.5 Mechanism Configurations and Reinforcement Dynamics

This section operationalizes the four-level analytical scaffold by synthesizing the Berlin material into recurring *configurations* of (Level 1) mechanism pathways, (Level 2) stakeholder subject positions, (Level 3) narrative rationalities, and (Level 0) justice stakes. Individual pathways are rarely narrated as isolated "drivers." Instead, reinforcement is produced through patterned couplings between (a) what is narrated as plausible causality, (b) what is treated as legitimate harm, and (c) what is positioned as feasible responsibility. Across configurations, the decisive issue is less whether risk is acknowledged and more whether that acknowledgement is translated into decision-relevant problem status, assignable duties, executable follow-through, and legitimate conflict-processing. The resulting "governability hinges" are stated as translation failures and are subsequently reformulated as governance levers in Chapter 6.

Dynamic 1: Consolidating Pressure under Descriptive Displacement Risks

Across interviews, value uplift and neighborhood "upgrading" around high-visibility greening are widely treated as plausible, particularly under tight housing conditions and heightened symbolic visibility. Yet the dominant configuration stabilizes greening as an unambiguously legitimate public good while distributive stakes remain weakly coupled to binding responsibility. Where displacement pressure is acknowledged, protective action is frequently narrated as delayed, partial, or located "elsewhere" in the governance system (R3-02-l.187).

Within the scaffold, this configuration combines a market-linked mechanism claim (amenity capitalization and expectation effects) with subject positions that plausibly treat housing impacts as external to project delivery. Narrative rationalities further reinforce the decoupling: economic–managerial framings foreground improvement benefits and feasibility constraints, while justice-based framings highlight distributive harm without reliably altering the decision status of the risk. As a result, the risk object remains discussable but

procedurally light, visible in discourse, yet insufficiently stabilized when trajectories, budgets, and expectations are fixed.

Governability lever (A): Risk definition and decision status. *Problem:* Recognition remains descriptive unless stabilized as decision-relevant knowledge at binding choice points. *Design question:* Under what evidentiary rule, and at which decision moments, can upgrading-related risk be defined in a way that carries procedural consequence?

Dynamic 2: Responsibility Displacement Stabilization via Shared Concern Over Assignable Duty

A second reinforcement pattern arises from the interaction between acknowledged risk and displaceable responsibility. Project-linked actors plausibly bound responsibility for housing outcomes, while administrative accounts foreground limited leverage, narrow instrument reach, unclear hierarchy, and capacity constraints, yielding a "visible-yet-weakly-assigned" risk object (R5-03-l.195). In this configuration, risk is neither denied nor governed; it remains actionable only intermittently, often dependent on discretionary attention rather than routinized obligation.

Within the scaffold, Level 1 claims about governance under-protection are coupled to Level 2 role positions that institutionalize sectoral separation and enable responsibility to be shifted without contradiction. Level 3 systemic–planning narratives frequently render this displacement reasonable by translating equity concerns into feasibility and competence registers, whereas justice-based narratives frame displacement as preventable harm but lack authoritative routes for allocating duties. Consequently, distributive stakes are repeatedly recognized while procedural pathways for obligation assignment remain unstable.

Governability lever (B): Duty assignment and obligation. *Problem:* Equity remains a stated objective but not a duty-bearing commitment attached to identifiable actors and sequences. *Design question:* Once risk is acknowledged, who becomes obligated to do what, and when, so that responsibility cannot be deferred or displaced across domains?

Dynamic 3: Protective Follow-Through Failure via Institutionally Fragile Implementation and Enforcement

A third dynamic concerns the implementation chain itself. Even where responsibilities are nominally acknowledged, follow-through is described as institutionally fragile, particularly where preventability is tied to enforcement, staffing, and routinized implementation capacity (R2-09; R5-01). In this configuration, risk is recognized and may be normatively endorsed as important, yet it remains difficult to govern because activation depends on weak or fragmented operational pathways.

Within the scaffold, governance under-protection mechanisms (Level 1) are reinforced by administrative subject positions (Level 2) marked by constrained mandates and limited resourcing. Systemic narratives (Level 3) translate these constraints into practical inevitabilities, while economic–managerial framings tend to treat implementation capacity as a background condition rather than as a constitutive part of the harm-production pathway. The result is a recurring gap between the formal availability of protective tools and their practical operational reach, resulting in the persistence of "actionability without operability."

Governability lever (C): Capability, mandate, and enforcement reach. *Problem:* Protective intent does not travel through a routinized, resourced, and enforceable operational chain. *Design question:* Which actor possesses the mandate, resources, and enforcement reach to implement safeguards reliably, and where does the operating chain break down?

Dynamic 4: Intensifying Legitimacy Conflicts via Non-Consequential Participation and Re-Coded Harms

Belonging disputes and conflicts over "appropriate use" are narrated as intertwined with upgrading trajectories rather than as separate management issues. As neighborhoods change, informal practices are increasingly less tolerated, while regulated, "orderly" park use can serve as a symbolic desirability signal (R2-05-l.646). In parallel, participation is frequently described as formally required yet weakly outcome-relevant: civil influence is questioned (R2-06-l.807), and participation is framed as uninviting to actual collaboration (R2-06-l.863).

Within the scaffold, socio-cultural filtering mechanisms (Level 1) are coupled to justice stakes that are simultaneously recognitional and procedural (Level 0). However, translation remains unstable because recognitional harm is re-coded as behavioral conflict or park management rather than treated as part of the risk configuration requiring binding attention. Conflicts between justice-based narratives (recognition, rights, legitimacy) and economic/systemic narratives (order, feasibility, procedural closure) further reinforce the perception that decisions are effectively not reopenable. Under these conditions, participation does not operate as a corrective feedback channel; instead, it contributes to legitimacy erosion and hardens narrative conflict.

Governability lever (D): Decision-relevant participation and recognition. *Problem:* Recognition and procedural claims are articulated but lack binding decision consequences and credible cross-narrative translation. *Design question:* Which procedural format renders participation consequential at contestable choice points and stabilizes whose claims count as legitimate in shaping outcomes?

5.6 Conclusion

Sub-question B asked how key actors in Berlin problematize green gentrification and social exclusion in the context of urban greening and climate adaptation. The findings indicate that problem definitions did not converge on a single shared account of harm, causality, or responsibility. Instead, acceptable interpretations and feasible responses were delimited through narrative rationalities and actor-positioned constraints.

Across the material, three cross-cutting empirical claims were supported. First, distributive pressure was repeatedly described as most acute where greening intersected with tight housing markets, and buffering was described as delayed, partial, or external to project responsibility. Second, procedural legitimacy was repeatedly narrated as fragile, with participation perceived as formally present but weakly connected to decision outcomes, producing mistrust and hardened contestation. Third, systemic awareness of risk appeared to be increasing, yet responsibility allocation and follow-through were described as uneven, enabling responsibility displacement and reinforcing the perception that preventable pathways were left weakly governed.

Applied holistically, the scaffold clarified that Berlin's green gentrification risk was reproduced through reinforcement dynamics that persist when cross-level translation fails: risk recognition does not reliably become decision-relevant, responsibility remains displaceable, follow-through capacity is fragile, and legitimacy is destabilized when procedural and recognitional claims lack decision consequence. These empirically indicated choke points provide the diagnostic basis for Chapter 6, where they are reformulated into governance levers aimed at reconfiguring the conditions under which risk becomes governable and equitable while sustaining environmental benefits.

Part C

Governance

Which governance levers can reconfigure and align actor problematizations to make green gentrification risk governable and equitable while sustaining environmental benefits?

6 Reconfiguring the Governance Process

This chapter translates the empirically reconstructed problematizations into governance directions intended to reduce exclusionary and displacement pressures while sustaining environmental benefits. "Solutions" are not treated as a standalone policy menu but as interventions into the problematization process, specifically, into how green gentrification risk is rendered visible, made actionable, assigned to responsible actors, and legitimated under competing rationalities. Within a policy-as-discourse perspective, governance instruments are treated as institutional devices through which particular problem representations are stabilized in routine procedures, thereby shaping durable roles, responsibilities, and standards of admissible evidence (Hajer 1997; Bacchi 2009). The governance endpoint is therefore framed not merely as improved implementation but as a reconfiguration of subject positions: shifts in who is authorized to define risk, who is obligated to respond, who is resourced and empowered to enforce, and who is recognized as a co-governing actor (Davies and Harré 1990; Foucault 1991). In this perspective, the decisive question becomes how planning and governance arrangements can be redesigned so that risk recognition is converted into binding and implementable action under legitimate decision authority.

Integrating The Scaffold as a Diagnostic Logic

The governance levers specified in this chapter are derived from the four-level analytical scaffold developed in Chapter 3, yet the scaffold is used differently here: not primarily to classify empirical statements, but to diagnose where problematizations break down into responsibility displacement and, consequently, non-action. Level 3 specifies how legitimacy and causality are narrated, most prominently through justice-based claims, economic-managerial feasibility framings, and systemic-planning instrument rationalities that are not assumed to converge (Hajer 1997; Creasy and Maxwell 2024). Level 2 specifies which actors are positioned as authorized, obligated, or constrained, and how mandates and resources delimit feasible intervention (Davies and Harré 1990; Cucca, Friesenecker, and Thaler 2023). Level 1 specifies which mechanism pathways are activated or normalized (e.g., amenity capitalization, modernization–rent coupling, conversion pressures, and socio-cultural access filters) (Anguelovski et al. 2022; Nesbitt et al. 2023). Level 0 specifies the distributive, procedural, and recognitional harms at stake and the criteria through which equity" becomes evaluable rather than rhetorical (Agyeman, Bullard, and Evans 2003; Schlosberg 2004). Read together, the scaffold functions here as a governance diagnostic: it clarifies whether breakdowns occur at the level of harm specification (L0), mechanism recognition (L1), role allocation and capacity (L2), or narrative legitimacy and translation (L3), and therefore where interventions must be targeted.

Empirical Anchor and Findings from the Empirical Analysis

The empirical analysis in the preceding chapter indicated that green gentrification risk was broadly acknowledged yet inconsistently translated into binding action. Four cross-narrative findings were especially salient for governance design. First, causal responsibility was frequently bound: upgrading effects were acknowledged, while accountability for distributive impacts was deemed external to the project remit (R4-02-l.246). Second, administrative action was framed as structurally constrained, with steering capacity described as "to sensitize" or "to nudge" (R5-05-l.341) and the available instrument set characterized as narrow (R5-08-l.727). Third, enforcement was repeatedly narrated as a decisive weak point, with preventability explicitly

linked to follow-through (R2-07-l.1104). Fourth, participation was frequently perceived as procedural rather than decision-relevant (R2-06-l.863).

These findings align with accounts that locate green gentrification governance failures in diagnosis–response gaps and in research–practice translation problems (Nesbitt et al. 2023; Creasy and Maxwell 2024). The urgency of resolving these translation failures has been heightened by Berlin's recently strengthened greening obligations through the BäumePlus (additional tree greening) provisions of the Berlin Climate Adaptation Act (Klimaanpassungsgesetz Berlin), adopted by the Berlin state parliament on 3 November 2025 (Baumentscheid e.V. 2025; SenJustV 2025)

From Baseline Observation to Lever Construction

These four empirical findings indicate a single governance deficit: green gentrification risk is widely recognized yet not reliably converted into binding, implementable, and legitimate response. Risk knowledge did not reliably translate into decision consequences, duties were displaced across sectors or deferred in time, implementation capacity was described as insufficient or fragmented, and participation was experienced as weakly coupled to decisions. In policy-as-discourse and governmentality scholarship, such patterns indicate that problems become governable not simply through recognition, but through institutional practices that define what counts as evidence, allocate authority and obligation, enable capacity, and secure legitimacy (Foucault 1991; Hajer 1997; Bacchi 2009).

Four analytic questions were therefore generated from the empirical material and converted into the chapter's governance levers. Each of these levers remains explicitly anchored in the scaffold while being oriented toward subject-position reconfiguration:

A) **Epistemic authority:** Who is authorized to define green gentrification risk in a way that triggers response, and what evidentiary thresholds make risk decision-relevant? (reorganizes Levels 1/0: mechanism legibility and justice-relevant thresholds)

B) **Accountability:** Once risk is defined, who is obligated to act, through which binding decision gates and sequencing rules? (reorganizes Levels 2/3: duty assignment and legitimacy rules)

C) **Capability:** Which actors possess (or lack) the mandate, resources, and enforcement reach required to implement safeguards, and where does the instrument chain break down in practice? (reorganizes Levels 2/1: mandate, resources, and enforcement as mechanism interruption)

D) **Recognition/legitimacy:** Whose claims count in shaping outcomes, and which procedural formats translate across competing rationalities so that trade-offs become institutionally negotiable rather than informally imposed? (reorganizes Levels 0/3 (procedural and recognitional justice, and translation across narratives)

The remainder of this Chapter develops each lever as a discourse–institutional intervention and specifies the corresponding inscription devices (decision gates, trigger rules, enforcement architectures, and co-governance formats) through which subject positions can be reconfigured. Table 6-1 provides an overview of these meta-governance levers. Concrete operationalizations of each lever are specified in Section 6.5 as context-specific measure bundles.

Table 6-1: Overview of the meta-governance levers along their empirical problem foundation, the intended shift in positionality, and the relevant implementation device.

Lever	Problem Diagnosis	Targeted Subject-Position Shift	Signature Device
A - Authority	Risk is recognized descriptively but does not trigger binding decisions; knowledge remains decoupled from action.	From **Commentator** (external observer) to **Authorized Risk-Definer** (whose diagnosis compels procedure).	**Evidence-to-Action Infrastructure:** Early-warning systems linked to pre-agreed trigger thresholds that activate response pathways.
B - Accountability	Equity is treated as a discretionary aspiration that is frequently displaced across sectors or deferred in time.	From **Project Partner** (voluntary alignment) to **Duty-Bearing Steward** (obligated to deliver safeguards).	**Equity-Conditional Authorization:** Approvals and funding are released only when verified equity safeguards are committed and assigned.
C - Capability	Instruments exist on paper but lack the routinized enforcement reach or staffing to be executable in practice.	From **Constrained Implementer** to **Capable Authority** (equipped with routinized protective chains).	**Protective Chain Operating Procedure:** A standardized sequence of activation, routing, escalation authority, and re-sourcing.
D - Legitimacy	Participation is experienced as tokenistic and decoupled from material outcomes, producing conflict and mistrust.	From **Consultee** (audience) to **Co-Governing Actor** (decision-maker on specific choices).	**Decision-Status Participation:** Participation formats organized around binding choice-points rather than non-binding consultation.

6.1 Lever A – Epistemic Authority

Addressees and scope. This lever targets Senate- and district-level actors who generate and authorize evidence in greening and housing governance. It applies across greening projects and housing contexts insofar as all require risk to become *decision-relevant* rather than merely acknowledged.

Problem diagnosis. The interview material suggested that awareness of green gentrification risk has increased. However, preventive action remains inconsistent because risk is rarely stabilized in an institutionally actionable form, through shared indicators, agreed thresholds, and routinized response pathways (R5-03). Mapping and diagnosis were described as insufficient to compel cross-departmental coordination (R5-06), indicating an epistemic–institutional gap between "knowing" and "governing" (Nesbitt et al. 2023).

Subject-position shift targeted. The role of risk-definer is required to shift from an after-the-fact commentator to an authorized institutional actor whose risk definition carries procedural consequences. In policy-as-discourse terms, epistemic authority is redistributed when evidence becomes the basis of obligation rather than an optional input to discretionary balancing (Hajer 1997; Bacchi 2009). Lever A therefore targets the conditions under which green gentrification risk becomes decision-relevant knowledge: legible in the arenas

where budgets, designs, and approvals are decided, and structured so that elevated risk triggers a defined institutional response.

Signature Device A: An Evidence-to-Action Infrastructure

An early-warning approach is indicated, but its governance function must be defined narrowly: it should not merely monitor but activate. Early-warning systems and displacement typologies can support classification and targeting; however, their governance value depends on institutional coupling to decisions rather than descriptive reporting (Chapple and Zuk 2016; Urban Displacement Project 2020). A minimal viable requirement is therefore proposed: monitoring should be linked to pre-agreed triggers such that specified thresholds automatically initiate an agreed response pathway, rather than merely flagging concerns (R5-05). Without such trigger coupling, monitoring risks reproduces the diagnosis–response gap identified in practice-oriented governance research (Nesbitt et al. 2023; Creasy and Maxwell 2024).

For epistemic authority to be meaningful, the evidence-to-action infrastructure must include housing-side and regulatory signals, not just greening project indicators. The empirical material repeatedly located decisive pressures in modernization, conversion, and enforcement gaps (R1-05; R2-07). Where such drivers remain invisible until individualized conflict emerges, risk definition is effectively shifted into complaint-driven governance, through which monitoring and enforcement are activated only after burdens have been assumed by tenants. Such arrangements tend to disadvantage households with limited time, resources, or legal knowledge and can therefore weaken the preventive capacity of risk governance (Derickson, Klein, and Keeler 2021). In Berlin, this matters because preservation instruments (soziale Erhaltungsgebiete under §172 BauGB) provide a baseline framework, for constraining modernization and conversion pressures; however, preventive efficacy remains dependent on timely detectability of risk signals and on enforceable administrative follow-through (SenStadt 2023).

6.2   Lever B – Accountability and Obligation

Addressees and scope. This lever targets actors who control authorization and delivery of greening interventions. The lever primarily applies to public greening projects, but it is designed to reach into housing-relevant safeguards in the event of greening-related displacement risk.

Problem diagnosis. The interviews suggested that equity is often acknowledged yet insufficiently binding in routine planning trade-offs. Cross-sector steering was described as lacking an entity that "steers the ship holistically" (R5-03), while equity concerns were portrayed as vulnerable to being deprioritized in everyday balancing (R5-03). In this configuration, the capacity to recognize risk does not reliably generate a duty to respond, particularly when responsibilities can be displaced across sectors or deferred in time.

Subject-position shift targeted. Actors positioned as coordinators, facilitators, or project partners are required to be repositioned as duty-bearing stewards. Accountability is produced when equity commitments are translated into enforceable rules that specify (i) what must be delivered, (ii) which duty-holders are responsible, (iii) when obligations activate within the decision sequence, and (iv) how compliance is verified and non-compliance addressed (Schlosberg 2007; Bacchi 2009). Where incentives for responsibility displacement and blame avoidance are structurally present, accountability arrangements are further shaped by how sanctioning, auditability, and responsibility attribution are institutionally organized (Hood 2011). Lever

B therefore targets the institutional conditions that prevent responsibility displacement by making equity obligations non-discretionary, assignable, and auditable across both public and private actors.

Signature Device B: Equity-Conditional Authorization

Where intrinsic motivation to secure greening equity is weak, whether among private developers seeking value uplift or administrative actors operating under tight mandates, accountability is most reliably produced through conditionality. The signature device of Lever B is therefore equity-conditional authorization: approvals, funding releases, permits, and project authorizations should be issued only when specified equity safeguards are committed, assigned to duty-holders, and made verifiable. This device functions as an inscription mechanism in the policy-as-discourse sense: it changes the default grammar of action by making equity safeguards a prerequisite of delivery rather than an optional consideration (Hajer 1997; Bacchi 2009).

To produce subject-position change rather than a procedural add-on, conditionality requires three specifications, anchored in the scaffold:

1) **Condition content** (Level 0/1): equity safeguards must be tied to identified harms and mechanism pathways, so that equity is operationalized as interrupting specific displacement risks rather than remaining a general aspiration (Agyeman, Bullard, and Evans 2003; Anguelovski et al. 2022).

2) **Duty-holder and verification** (Level 2): responsible units, timelines, enforcement routes, and verification routines must be assigned, so that responsibility cannot be diffused across departments or displaced to "the market" (Hood 2011; Cucca, Friesenecker, and Thaler 2023).

3) **Decision moment and consequence** (Level 3/2): the authorization point at which conditions become binding must be explicit, and consequences for non-compliance must be specified, so that obligations remain enforceable rather than symbolic (Bacchi 2009).

6.3   Lever C – Capability and Jurisdiction

Addressees and scope. This lever is directed primarily at district administrations and enforcement units, and secondarily at Senate-level bodies that shape staffing, legal competencies, and cross-departmental operating procedures. It applies where green gentrification risk is diagnosed but cannot be addressed due to fragmented mandates, limited enforcement reach, and missing routinized implementation pathways, especially at the greening–housing interface.

Problem diagnosis. The interview material suggested that relevant instruments often exist yet are not assembled into an enforceable chain that reliably converts diagnosis into action (R5-08). Enforcement deficits were narrated as enabling displacement-relevant extraction, including through short-term rental dynamics; the causal implication was stated directly as "the city could help if it would enforce the rules" (R2-07-l.1104). This indicates that governance capacity is not reducible to the presence of instruments on paper. It is constituted through routinized sequences of action, staffing, jurisdictional reach, and escalation rights, i.e., through an institutional ability to *act* across sectoral boundaries when risk thresholds are reached (Cucca, Friesenecker, and Thaler 2023; Nesbitt et al. 2023).

Subject-position shift targeted. District- and Senate-level actors must be repositioned from constrained implementers into capable, boundary-spanning authorities who can legitimately intervene. Capability is

treated here as a governance condition: the ability to move from risk recognition to enforceable response through routinized pathways.

Signature Device C: A Protective Chain Operating Procedure

The institutionalization of a protective chain is a standardized operating procedure that links diagnosis to a routinized response. The protective chain is designed to make existing tools usable by specifying, in advance, the steps through which action proceeds, with assigned responsibility at each step. In governance terms, the chain closes the diagnosis–response gap by translating capacity into an operational sequence (Nesbitt et al. 2023; Creasy and Maxwell 2024).

At a minimum, the protective chain is required to specify:

1) **Activation:** what evidence counts as sufficient to initiate action (linked to the evidence-to-action logic of Lever A).
2) **Routing:** which unit becomes responsible once risk is activated, and which cross-departmental handoffs are mandatory rather than voluntary.
3) **Authority:** what escalation rights exist when responsibilities conflict or when implementation stalls.
4) **Resourcing:** what staffing and enforcement capacity is required for the chain to function as routine practice rather than exceptional intervention.
5) **Feedback:** how monitoring is used to adjust enforcement focus and safeguard intensity, rather than remaining descriptive.

This device responds directly to the empirical diagnosis that instruments are experienced as present but weakly executable when staffing, routinized handoffs, and escalation authority remain unclear (R5-06). It also operationalizes the literature's call for actionable governance architectures that translate knowledge into enforceable responses (Cucca, Friesenecker, and Thaler 2023; Creasy and Maxwell 2024).

Capability in Practice

The interviews indicated that governance failure often occurs at the enforcement stage even where instruments formally exist. Short-term rental dynamics were described as a visible amplifier in high-amenity areas, with enforcement failures framed as enabling rather than accidental (R2-04; R5-06). Enforcement is therefore treated here as a capability problem: staffing levels, inspection reach, data access, case-processing routines, and follow-through constitute the practical conditions under which safeguards can be realized as routine practice rather than as exceptional intervention (Cucca, Friesenecker, and Thaler 2023; Nesbitt et al. 2023). Capability is also jurisdictional: legal competences and the durability of regulatory tools shape whether enforcement can be sustained over time, making institutional maintenance an ongoing governance requirement rather than a one-time reform.

6.4   Lever D – Reconfiguring Recognition and Legitimacy

Addressees and scope. This lever targets participation design and decision legitimation, especially when projects are implemented in socially vulnerable neighborhoods. It is mainly directed at actors who design participation (public or private) and define its decision-making consequences, and only secondarily at civil-society and neighborhood actors who take up the roles made available through these procedures.

Problem diagnosis. Participation was repeatedly described as vulnerable to tokenism and weakly coupled to material outcomes, producing legitimacy deficits that intensified resistance where rent fears were high (R2-06; R3-03). In addition, recognition conflicts over "who belongs" in upgraded green spaces were described as salient outcomes that extend displacement beyond housing to include lived access, everyday norms, and the legitimacy of use claims (R2-05). This indicates that governability depends not only on distributive stabilization but also on recognitional and procedural justice: without decision-relevant influence and credible translation across competing rationalities, greening interventions are likely to reproduce conflict and mistrust (Healey 1997; Schlosberg 2007).

Subject-position shift targeted. Residents and local organizations must be repositioned from consulted stakeholders to co-governing actors, and participation must be repositioned from symbolic legitimation to decision-relevant influence. In deliberative and collaborative planning theory, legitimacy is produced when affected actors are granted meaningful capacity to shape agenda-setting and binding decisions, rather than being positioned as audiences to already-determined outcomes (Healey 1997; Forester 2013). Lever D therefore targets recognition as an institutional condition: who is treated as a legitimate knower and decision actor, and through which procedures cross-narrative conflicts are translated into durable outcomes.

Signature Device D: Decision–Status Participation

A participatory format that is designed around binding decision points rather than consultation moments. This implies that participation is linked to explicit choices that carry procedural consequences, for example, programming rules, commercial offers, maintenance priorities, access arrangements, and the configuration of mitigation packages. In justice terms, this operationalizes procedural and recognitional justice by requiring that participation has demonstrable influence on outcomes rather than merely accompanying them (Schlosberg 2007; Sax, Nesbitt, and Quinton 2022). It also directly addresses the empirical diagnosis that tokenistic participation produces legitimacy deficits that hinder implementation in high-pressure contexts.

Supporting Legitimacy Format: A Negotiated Cross–Narrative Decision Rule

Because the empirical analysis reconstructed competing rationalities, legitimacy cannot be assumed to emerge automatically from participation alone. A standardized cross-narrative decision rule is therefore indicated to structure trade-offs and render justifications auditable. One transferable format is a negotiated triple-test for major greening decisions:

1) **Justice test:** distributive, procedural, and recognitional impacts are specified, with mitigation commitments made explicit,
2) **Feasibility test:** costs, maintenance capacity, and implementation risks are specified transparently,
3) **Systems test:** instrument fit, legal competences, and enforcement pathways are specified.

This format mirrors the empirical observation that equity concerns and climate objectives can be deprioritized in routine balancing without procedural reinforcement and staffing (R5-03). It also aligns with deliberative planning scholarship that treats the institutional structuring of conflict and negotiation as a condition for legitimate and durable outcomes (Healey 1997; Forester 2013).

6.5 Translating Levers into Measure Bundles by Governance Context

The four governance levers are operationalized here as three context-specific bundles. The bundles are created with suggested measures that (a) respond to problems that were *explicitly observed* in the interviews (Chapter 5), and (b) have been advanced in the peer-reviewed governance and planning literature as relevant responses to green gentrification or displacement risk in environmental investment contexts. Table 6-2 provides a systematic overview of these operational bundles, mapping specific diagnostic, safeguard, and enforcement measures to their respective governance contexts.

Table 6-2: Operational measure bundles; Synthesized by each context and listed along the differentiated measures.

Feature	Bundle I: Public Greening Projects	Bundle II: Existing Housing Stock	Bundle III: New Development
Measure 1: **Diagnosis**	**Trigger-Based Risk Protocol:** Project scoping linked to displacement indicators to prevent "lock-in".	**Modernization Monitoring:** Detection of conversion/retrofit pressures in the catchment area.	**Value Uplift Assessment:** Anticipating capitalization effects before permits are issued.
Measure 2: **Safeguard**	**Conditional Amenity Intensification:** Limiting branding or high-end offers if risk is high.	**Tenant-Protective Retrofits:** Public support for eco-upgrades conditioned on rent-stability limits.	**Upfront Affordability:** Binding quotas/requirements written into B-Plans/contracts.
Measure 3: **Action**	**Decision-Status Participation:** Binding community influence on programming and access rules.	**Targeted Enforcement:** Focused inspection of short-term rentals & rapid legal aid.	**Value Capture:** Earmarking land-value gains specifically for local stabilization/housing.

Bundle I: Public Greening and Climate-Adaptation Projects

This bundle is intended for park upgrades, new parks, green corridors, and cooling/tree programs, including design intensification and programming choices. It is primarily addressed to district- and state-led project teams and to contracted planners and operators.

I-1. Trigger-based displacement-risk protocol at scoping and pre–design lock-in
(operationalizes Lever A)

To keep the protocol decision-relevant, risk classification should be tied to pre-agreed trigger thresholds, rather than descriptive monitoring. As implementable templates, displacement typologies and early-warning approaches show how risk can be classified in ways that support targeting, provided that classification is institutionally coupled to action (Chapple and Zuk 2016; Urban Displacement Project 2020). Predictive index approaches provide additional options for constructing a minimal indicator set, though they remain governance-relevant only when triggers are linked to response obligations (Assaad and Jezzini 2024).

I-2. Conditional amenity intensification rule for programming, branding, and commercialization
(primarily applies Lever B, supported by "just green enough" evidence)

Where risk classification is elevated, intensifying features (high-profile programming, prestige branding, or exclusionary commercial offers) should be treated as conditional rather than default. The "just green enough" approach provides an established precedent for pursuing environmental improvements while limiting upscale signaling that can accelerate displacement pressures (Curran and Hamilton 2012; Wolch, Byrne, and Newell 2014; Rigolon and Németh 2019).

I-3. Decision-status participation on binding choices, paired with recognition safeguards
(operationalizes Lever D)

Participation should be organized around a small number of binding choice-points (e.g., use rules, programming mix, maintenance priorities), rather than broad consultation. Planning scholarship has repeatedly shown that legitimacy gains depend less on participation volume than on whether participation is institutionally connected to decision authority (Healey 1997; Fung 2006; Forester 2013). The intent is not more participation, but participation redesigned as a decision device that produces traceable obligations and reduces recurring legitimacy breakdowns.

Bundle II: Existing Housing Stock in Affected Catchments

This bundle is intended for neighborhoods where greening investments coincide with tenant-majority stock and heightened pressure, especially modernization dynamics, conversion incentives, and short-term rental pathways. It is primarily addressed to housing regulatory and enforcement bodies, tenant-support infrastructures, and districts in their coordinating role.

II-1. Short-term rental enforcement as a targeted anti-displacement device
(operationalizes Lever C)

Where short-term rental dynamics were narrated as a visible amplifier and enforcement as the decisive weak point, enforcement should be treated as a targeted stabilization measure in greening-adjacent hotspot areas. Empirical research has documented that short-term rental expansion can increase rents and prices and can contribute to gentrification dynamics, supporting the governance relevance of enforcement capacity rather than treating it as an externality (Wachsmuth and Weisler 2018; Garcia-López et al. 2020; Barron, Kung, and Proserpio 2021). A targeted enforcement package is therefore recommended in hotspot catchments: inspection capacity, data routines, complaint handling, and follow-through should be scaled to the pathways that were narrated as most preventable yet most weakly enforced.

II-2. Tenant-protective retrofit conditionality
(primarily applies Levers B/C)

Because modernization and retrofit dynamics were repeatedly positioned as displacement-relevant amplifiers, public retrofit support should be conditioned on verifiable tenant-protective terms (e.g., rent-impact limits and transparency duties), rather than being delivered as a purely technical climate instrument. Recent housing scholarship has documented how green retrofits can generate rent burdens and displacement risks, while also identifying governance pathways for tenant-protective renovation (Ahlrichs et al. 2022; Busà 2025). A warm-rent stability test is therefore recommended as the organizing principle for retrofit-linked measures in hotspots: climate-relevant upgrades should proceed only with verifiable limits on tenant cost

burdens, transparent communication duties, and clear compliance pathways (Ahlrichs et al. 2022; Busà 2025). This device is intentionally narrower than a full retrofit reform agenda: it treats conditionality as the minimally enforceable point of intervention.

II-3. Rapid-response tenant protection infrastructure in flagged zones
(operationalizes Lever C, with legitimacy spillovers into Lever D)

Rapid-response tenant support should be scaled up in pre-identified risk zones to reduce the disadvantages of complaint-based governance for vulnerable tenants.

Evidence from right-to-counsel evaluation research indicates that legal representation can materially affect tenants' ability to remain housed and can function as a practical eviction-prevention strategy (Keene, Olea Vargas, and Harper 2024). Policy-mapping work further indicates that right-to-counsel models have been rapidly expanded and diversified, underscoring the governance feasibility of triggered legal-support infrastructures when targeted to high-risk zones (Benfer et al. 2025).

Bundle III: New Development and Land Policy Decisions Near Major Greening Investments

This bundle is intended for rezoning, planning permissions, and development adjacent to major green investments where value uplift is anticipated. It is primarily addressed to planning approval authorities and land-policy actors, and to developers through enforceable permit and contract conditions.

Within Berlin's planning system, this logic is most plausibly operationalized through rule-bound affordability obligations attached to planning approvals and through urban development contracts (städtebauliche Verträge) used to condition development rights on specified public-benefit delivery (under the Berliner Modell der kooperativen Baulandentwicklung in § 11 BauGB). Accordingly, the measures below are framed as enforceable approval-linked obligations rather than as post hoc mitigation.

III-1. Upfront affordability requirements in approval conditions, not post hoc mitigation
(operationalizes Lever B)

Affordability requirements are most effective when they are designed with features that reliably produce units (rather than symbolic targets). Empirical work on inclusionary housing design has shown that specific policy features are associated with stronger affordable unit production over time, supporting the move from aspirational commitments to rule-bound production (Wang and Fu 2022). Accordingly, affordability conditions near major greening-related uplift should be written as durable requirements with clear duration, targeting, and compliance routines (Wang and Fu 2022).

III-2. Development agreements & community benefits clauses
(operationalizes Lever B, with structured recognition effects)

Where intrinsic motivation to secure equity is weak, accountability must be produced through enforceable conditions attached to development rights. Community benefits agreements and related development agreements have been analyzed as instruments that can shift obligations onto developers, while also raising design and enforceability questions that require careful public oversight (Sheikh 2008). A constrained version is therefore recommended: obligations should be standardized, transparent, and verification-focused, so that equity becomes auditable rather than rhetorical (Sheikh 2008).

III-3. Land value capture earmarked for affordability and stabilization near green investments
(operationalizes Lever B/C via fiscal capacity)

Because greening investments can drive capitalization dynamics, value-capture approaches provide a direct fiscal logic for funding stabilization, enabling public action to generate private uplift. Land value capture and public value capture instruments have been widely discussed as mechanisms for financing public infrastructure and equity goals from uplift created by planning and investment decisions (Smolka 2013; Karadimitriou et al. 2022). Given the thesis's emphasis on governability, the key point is not the choice of one "best" instrument but the institutionalization of a rule that uplift generated by green investment must feed affordability and stabilization capacity, rather than being treated as an unmanaged externality (Smolka 2013; Karadimitriou et al. 2022).

Hotspot Escalation Rule as a Single Cross-Bundle Intensification Device

Following Dynamic Adaptive Policy Pathways, the trigger-based risk protocol is treated as a monitoring and decision support arrangement that links signposts to action triggers, so that safeguards are activated early enough to avoid lock-in and late discretionary correction (Haasnoot, Warren, and Kwakkel 2019). Where an intervention area is classified as high risk, implementation should therefore switch from the standard pathway to a predefined, higher-protection pathway via an explicit, rule-bound pathway switch, rather than ad hoc mitigation after design and authorization decisions have been settled. The aim is not to measure proliferation, but governability through adaptive sequencing, whereby existing bundles remain unchanged, but their activation conditions are formalized so that elevated vulnerability and risk automatically trigger intensification and convert risk recognition into binding follow through (Haasnoot, Warren, and Kwakkel 2019).

In hotspot mode, three actions should be activated immediately as a coordinated package:

1) **Conditional limits on amenity intensification** and market signaling. Prestige programming, high-end commercialization, or major design intensification should be treated as conditional on parallel stabilization commitments, rather than proceeding as a stand-alone upgrade (Curran and Hamilton 2012; Anguelovski et al. 2022)

2) **Housing-side safeguards.** through rapid-response tenant support (e.g., right-to-counsel-type legal assistance) and targeted monitoring of modernization and conversion pressures. Detection of displacement-relevant events before consolidation (Chapple and Zuk 2016; Benfer et al. 2025)

3) **Enforcement prioritization** on displacement-relevant extraction pathways. Especially for short-term rental dynamics where relevant (Wachsmuth and Weisler 2018; Barron, Kung, and Proserpio 2021)

4) **Decision-status participation** on binding choices to prevent legitimacy collapse. Participation should be linked to a small set of specified decisions where community input has formal influence (Arnstein 1969; Fung 2006).

A final **scope clarification** is warranted. The measure bundles proposed above have been formulated as transferable governance devices rather than as a fully specified Berlin policy package. A detailed translation into Berlin's administrative procedures, legal competences, budget lines, and implementation timelines would require a dedicated policy and institutional analysis (including instrument fit, jurisdictional constraints, and stakeholder feasibility assessment) that exceeds the scope of this thesis. Accordingly, the focus has remained on linking the discourse-analytic reconstruction of problematizations and empirically

observed breakdowns to a small set of meta-level governance levers and their practical correlates. A logical next step would be a Berlin-specific design study that tests these devices against existing Senate and district workflows and evaluates feasible sequencing, resourcing, and legal anchoring options.

6.6 Conclusion: Reconfiguring Subject Positions as the Endpoint of Governance Solutions

The chapter's levers specify the minimal shifts required for such reconfiguration. Epistemic authority is strengthened, so that risk definition becomes decision-relevant rather than merely descriptive. Accountability is made enforceable at authorization points so that equity obligations cannot be displaced across sectors or deferred in time. Capability is treated as a practical and jurisdictional condition, dependent on staffing, routinized routing, and follow-through. Legitimacy is stabilized by shifting participation toward decision status and by addressing recognition conflicts over lived access and belonging in upgraded green spaces.

These shifts are operationalized through the context-specific bundles in Section 6.5. In the Berlin case analyzed here, the central implication is that greening depends on the routinized coupling of knowledge, obligation, capacity, and legitimacy into implementable packages that prevent responsibility displacement and reduce the diagnosis–response gap. In this sense, the endpoint is institutional rather than programmatic: subject positions are reshaped so that residents are recognized as co-governing actors rather than consultees, administrations are positioned as accountable stewards rather than fragmented implementers, and delivery actors operate under verifiable equity conditions rather than voluntary alignment.

7 Discussion

This chapter interprets the empirical findings developed in Chapter 5 and situates them within relevant debates on green gentrification, environmental justice, and planning governance. The discussion clarifies what the findings imply about the institutional conditions under which greening becomes displacement-relevant and politically contested in Berlin. On this basis, the chapter articulates the thesis's scholarly contribution and practical relevance, and it reflects on methodological choices, validity, and limitations, including the fit and constraints of the narrative-analytic approach.

7.1 Interpretation: Discursive Boundary Work and Sectoral Separation

The empirical material did not only differentiate narratives by what was said; it differentiated them by how claims were framed, bounded, and sometimes avoided. Across interviews, green gentrification risk was rarely addressed through direct factual contestation alone. Instead, the problem was repeatedly negotiated through discursive practices that stabilized particular actor positions: selective attention to legitimate aspects of greening, strategic ambiguity where accountability would follow, and vocabulary choices that made certain trade-offs appear natural or unavoidable. In interpretive terms, the interviews suggested that problematizations were enacted as boundary work.

Strategic silences and evasion served as mechanisms for responsibility management. A striking pattern was the uneven willingness to elaborate on negative externalities. In accounts associated with delivery and investment roles, upgrading effects were sometimes conceded, but the distributive implications were treated as outside the relevant responsibility envelope; potential harms were acknowledged in principle yet not developed into actionable obligations (e.g., R4-01; R4-02). Conversely, administrative accounts often referenced constraint, legal competences, procedural narrowness, or political limits, without fully specifying where the stop occurred or which decisions were politically blocked versus administratively burdensome (e.g., R5-05; R5-08). These evasions were not interpreted as mere interview dynamics; they were read as empirical evidence of the governance condition itself: where responsibility is structurally complex to assign, speech tends to shift from causal explanation to remit-defining statements ("what can be done here" versus "what exists as a problem"). The effect is that risk is rendered discussable while the locus of obligation remains elusive.

Vocabulary choices performed narrative membership and legitimized constraint. Narratives were also marked by lexical differentiation, distinct vocabularies that indexed legitimacy and made certain solutions appear reasonable. Justice-oriented accounts tended to mobilize the language of lived insecurity, procedural unfairness, and belonging, thereby constructing harm as immediate and experiential (e.g., R2-06; R3-04). Managerial-administrative accounts were more frequently organized around feasibility, formalization, and instrumental limits, in which legitimacy was achieved through procedural language and rule-following rather than through distributive argument (e.g., R1-05; R5-08). Delivery-oriented accounts often relied on neutralizing descriptors ("improvement," "activation," "quality") that shifted attention toward benefits and away from redistribution, thereby reducing the discursive space in which adverse outcomes could be treated as co-produced by governance choices (e.g., R1-02; R4-01). This linguistic differentiation mattered because

it shaped what could plausibly count as evidence and what could count as a legitimate demand within the interaction.

A recurring discrepancy emerged between normative alignment and operative capacity. A second tension was identified between what respondents appeared to endorse normatively and what they could enact institutionally. Equity concerns were frequently affirmed as desirable, yet responses were simultaneously framed as limited to soft influence, coordination, or incremental adjustment (e.g., R5-05). Similarly, participation was rarely rejected as a principle but was often narrated as disconnected from decision reopening, which made it functionally compatible with agreement without consequence (R2-02; R2-06). This discrepancy was interpreted as more than hypocrisy or individual inconsistency. It appeared to reflect a patterned gap between opinion and position: what was desirable in principle could not be translated into practice without authority, routinized procedures, or enforcement reach. The mismatch itself, therefore, became an empirical signal of where governance failure was likely to occur, namely, at points where mandates, staffing, and enforceable tools did not align with expectations for greening to deliver justice-relevant outcomes (R5-01; R2-09).

Housing and climate action were repeatedly claimed as separate policy objects despite overlap. A further interpretive observation concerned sectoral framing. Even when respondents acknowledged overlap between greening interventions and housing pressure, housing protection and climate adaptation were often treated as adjacent but institutionally separate objects, governed through different tempos, legal logics, and "responsible" actors (e.g., R5-01; R5-08). This separation was consequential because it made coupling appear exceptional rather than routine: housing-side safeguards could be framed as external, slower, or politically contested add-ons to an otherwise legitimate climate agenda, rather than as constitutive conditions of equitable greening. In effect, the governance problem was reproduced through the everyday categorization of policy domains: risks were recognized at the level of overlap, while response remained organized at the level of separation.

Together, these interpretive observations suggest that the challenge in Berlin was not only competing preferences, but the discursive and institutional production of who can be responsible for what. The interviews indicated that green gentrification risk became hardest to govern precisely where actors could acknowledge the issue while simultaneously bounding it, through silence, procedural language, feasibility registers, and sectoral separation. This helps explain why translation failures recurred and why governance reform must focus on devices that make risk-definition consequential, responsibility assignable, and cross-sector coupling routine rather than exceptional.

7.2 Contribution to Green Gentrification and Environmental Justice Debates

The Berlin case contributes to green gentrification scholarship by specifying how known mechanism pathways become politically discussable yet procedurally inert under fragmented authority. International research has established that greening can be leveraged in land and housing markets and align with entrepreneurial urbanism and investment expectations (Gould and Lewis 2016; Anguelovski et al. 2019). The material analyzed here supports these dynamics, but a sharper governance claim is indicated: displacement risk was narrated as most acute where greening proceeds without parallel institutional capacity to constrain

land-value capture and rent escalation through routinized, enforceable coupling across sectors (R5-01; R5-04; R2-09). In this sense, the concept of green gentrification was less persuasively interpreted as an accidental side effect than as a predictable outcome of governability conditions. That is, it was interpreted as a result of whether risks are authorized as decision-relevant and translated into binding obligations with executable follow-through.

A second contribution lies in clarifying the role of narratives as role-positioned rationalities rather than merely competing opinions. Justice claims were advanced through situated evidence and lived experience, while administrative claims were anchored in legality, feasibility, and procedural constraint (R5-05). As a result, interventions that appeared straightforward within one narrative (e.g., more participation, more greening) were frequently rendered inadequate within another because they failed to shift decision status or capacity (R2-06; R5-08). This finding strengthens discourse-oriented accounts of governability in which problems are made actionable through power/knowledge arrangements and institutionalized standards of evidence (Foucault 1980; Hajer 1997; Bacchi 2009). It also helps explain why green gentrification risks can remain persistent even where equitable greening is endorsed as an ideal.

Third, the analysis contributes to environmental justice debates by showing that distributive, procedural, and recognitional dimensions were narrated as empirically bundled, rather than separable policy domains. Recognition conflicts over belonging and "appropriate" use emerged as governance-relevant harms that shape who can access environmental benefits in practice, extending displacement beyond residential relocation into lived exclusion (R2-06). This pattern aligns with multidimensional justice approaches that emphasize the co-production of distribution, procedure, and recognition (Schlosberg 2007; Fraser 2009; Walker, G. 2012) and with gentrification research that highlights socio-cultural displacement preceding or substituting for measurable relocation within limited timeframes (Davidson and Lees 2010).

7.3 Relevance for Planning Practice Beyond Berlin

For planning practice, the results imply that equitable greening is unlikely to be achieved through isolated mitigation measures appended after conflicts emerge. Instead, preventive effectiveness was repeatedly linked to whether planning arrangements convert recognition into consequence: whether risk definitions travel into authorization arenas, whether responsibilities are assignable and enforceable, whether enforcement and monitoring capacity is routinized, and whether participation carries decision status. This interpretation supports an institutional reading of "bringing narratives together": translation is seen as a procedural design task, in which trade-offs are made auditable and buffered through enforceable coupling across sectors.

Intersectoral coupling as a prerequisite rather than an implementation add-on. Coordination problems were not narrated as secondary; they were narrated as constitutive drivers of risk. Where environmental departments deliver greening while housing-side stabilization remains parallel, safeguards were described as delayed, contested, or under-resourced, with climate objectives treated as formally legitimate yet practically underpowered. This dynamic was captured in the description of climate-side steering as limited to sensitizing and nudging rather than to hierarchical authority (R5-05). The transferable implication for European cities is that multi-sector coupling must be institutionalized through shared criteria, routinized

decision points, and enforceable conditionality, rather than relying on informal coordination or individual champions (Anguelovski et al. 2022; Cucca, Friesenecker, and Thaler 2023).

Participation must be redesigned as decision architecture. Participation was widely treated as necessary and rather informative, yet frequently doubted in its capacity to produce decisions. Inequality in who participates, driven by time, language, education, and rhetorical confidence, was explicitly raised (R2-06; R3-04), consistent with critiques that participation can reproduce inequality when access is stratified, and agenda-setting remains controlled (Arnstein 1969; Fung 2006). The practical implication is that participation should be treated as a redistributive governance task: resources that make voice effective (translation, facilitation, childcare, time compensation) should be institutionalized, and feedback obligations should make citizen inputs traceable in decisions (Innes and Booher 2004).

Context differentiation is not optional: existing stock and new development require different packages. A consistent governance implication was that equitable greening requires differentiation by intervention arena. For existing housing stock, modernization and conversion pressures were narrated as central, with detectability problems emphasized. For example, internal upgrades were described as largely invisible "from the outside… unless complained about" (R3-02-l.201). This implies that greening equity cannot be delivered through climate policy alone; it requires housing-side detection, enforcement routing, and tenant-protective constraints so that retrofit and adaptation do not become displacement drivers (Weiß et al. 2021; Aalbers 2016). For new development, leverage was located earlier, plan-making, land policy, and binding approvals, where obligations can be fixed before value uplift is locked in; underuse of such planning leverage was explicitly criticized (R3-04). This supports political-economy accounts that treat land value and regulatory design as central mediators of distributive outcomes (Smith 1979; Aalbers 2016).

7.4   Reflection and Limitations

A combined pragmatist and discourse-analytic interpretive stance guided this thesis. In a pragmatist register, the research problem was treated as a "problematic situation" in Dewey's sense: inquiry was oriented toward reconstructing how a situation becomes unsettled, contested, and in need of collective resolution, and analytical categories were evaluated by their usefulness for clarifying stakes and enabling action (Dewey 1936). This orientation supports abductive qualitative design, in which sensitizing concepts guide attention while being revised in response to empirical surprise and mismatch (Blumer 1954; Timmermans and Tavory 2012). In parallel, a discourse-analytic orientation treats narratives not as neutral descriptions but as practices that define what counts as a problem, authorize forms of evidence, and delimit solution spaces (Foucault 1980; Hajer 1997). This combined stance was considered appropriate for a governance-focused study in which comprehensive displacement monitoring lay outside the empirical scope.

Validity, robustness, and the level of claim. The claims produced are institutional and interpretive rather than causal in an econometric sense. Robust inferences are supported regarding how green gentrification risk is problematized, how responsibility is allocated or displaced, and how particular intervention logics become feasible or infeasible within actor-positioned rationalities. Credibility was strengthened through patterned convergence across interviews, triangulation with documentary traces, and attention to contradiction rather than forced harmonization. Internal validity is further supported by the repeated reappearance of the reconstructed narratives across actor types and their linkage to recognizable constraints (legal

competence, staffing, budgetary feasibility, and moral claims), rather than being treated as idiosyncratic "opinions."

Outcome inference limits and the absence of displacement measurement. Claims about displacement were framed as risk pathways and governance conditions rather than as measured displacement outcomes. This is not only a limitation but a deliberate consequence of the research focus: governability was treated as the dependent phenomenon. In Deweyan terms, inquiry was oriented toward how a public problem is constituted and rendered actionable, rather than toward estimating net effects (Dewey 1953). The results should therefore be read as specifying the conditions under which displacement pressures are expected to intensify and become politically contested, not as quantifying the extent of displacement around specific greening interventions.

Sampling constraints and missing actor coverage. The empirical base remains limited in breadth. With five interviews and one stakeholder family not represented, discursive breadth and within-family variation cannot be assumed. The absence of strategic state-level agencies is especially consequential, given that institutional mandates, agenda-setting power, and veto capacities may be under-reconstructed when access to decision-making centers is uneven. As a result, the reconstruction may more confidently describe how risk is narrated across accessible actor positions than how state-level competencies and constraints structure the full decision pathway.

Access and responsiveness bias. Participation was partly determined by availability and willingness to engage within the fieldwork window. Views of highly exposed, highly constrained, or politically sensitive actors may therefore be systematically underrepresented. This can skew the reconstructed "regimes of truth" toward actors with higher communicative capacity, greater public-facing engagement, or fewer constraints on disclosure. Although documentary triangulation partially counterbalances this risk, uneven access remains a core limitation shaping the empirical window into governance practice.

Key-informant bias and experiential under-coverage. The sample is oriented toward strategically positioned informants, which supports governance-logic reconstruction but may under-capture everyday resident experience, particularly among groups most exposed to displacement pressures yet least connected to formal participation channels. This limitation matters primarily for claims about lived impacts and granular neighborhood experience; it is less damaging for claims about how governance rationalities and legitimacy claims circulate in planning arenas, but it still narrows representational coverage.

Analytic risks in typology building and "offstage" dynamics. The narrative typology functioned as a productive simplification, yet it imposes analytic risks. First, narratives were reconstructed as ideal-typical rationalities tied to role positions, enabling cross-case synthesis; however, hybrid and shifting accounts were also present, especially where actors navigated conflicting mandates. Where hybridity is substantial, typologies can obscure intra-actor ambivalence, temporal change, and strategic switching between frames. Second, the narrative approach foregrounds meaning-making and legitimacy, which can understate material and strategic constraints that do not appear in interview accounts (e.g., informal power, political bargaining, or market responses that remain offstage in discourse).

Potential circularity in scaffold-driven analysis. Because sensitizing concepts from the analytical scaffold structured data collection and coding, there is a risk that empirical material is implicitly "fit" into predefined categories rather than allowed to disrupt them. This circularity risk is most pronounced when the scaffold's

levels function as strong sorting devices. The risk was mitigated by documenting where codes and mechanism pathways were revised, where negative cases forced reclassification, and where categories failed to capture segments of the corpus (Blumer 1954; Timmermans and Tavory 2012). Even with such safeguards, the possibility remains that alternative categorizations could have generated different boundaries between narratives or different emphases in the mechanism synthesis.

Transferability. Berlin's configuration, tenant-majority housing, strong civil-society mobilization, and multi-level governance distribution shape transferability. The findings are most transferable to European cities where climate-adaptation greening is being accelerated under housing scarcity and fragmented administrative competencies, as described in Section 7.3. Transferability is therefore treated as an analytic rather than a statistical concept: the identified coupling problem, translation gap, and governance bottlenecks are expected to recur under similar institutional conditions, even where legal instruments differ (Aalbers 2016; Anguelovski et al. 2022).

Implications of the Limitations. The limitations motivate three research extensions. First, longitudinal mixed-method monitoring around selected adaptation investments could connect narrated displacement pressures to observed housing, commercial, and socio-cultural indicators while accounting for broader market dynamics (Chapple and Zuk 2016; Rigolon and Collins 2022). Second, comparative institutional analysis across European cities could specify how legal regimes mediate the retrofit–rent nexus and the capacity to bind environmental investment to affordability safeguards (Aalbers 2016; Anguelovski et al. 2022). Third, process-tracing of decision pathways in major greening projects could test more precisely where translation fails and which institutional choke points determine whether justice claims become binding. Overall, the methodological implication is aligned with the substantive one: conflict is unlikely to be resolved through consensus on a single definition of green gentrification. Instead, the results suggest that conflict can be made governable through institutions that force trade-offs to be stated, negotiated, and buffered, making the problematization process itself a central object of planning reform.

8 Conclusion

Urban greening and climate-adaptation measures are widely advanced as necessary responses to heat risk, flooding, and environmental inequities, yet they can also intensify housing pressures and exclusionary neighborhood change. This thesis examined tensions in Berlin by treating green gentrification risk as a contested governance problem: risk was approached through how it was framed, disputed, and rendered actionable, or left procedurally inert, within planning and governance arenas. The central conclusion is that green gentrification risk in Berlin is shaped less by greening itself than by the institutional conditions under which greening is delivered in a tight housing market: risks become governable and potentially reducible when problematizations are translated into binding responsibility, executable capacity, and legitimate decision procedures, rather than remaining at the level of recognition.

Significant Findings and Answers to the Research Questions

Primary Research Question. Green gentrification risks around Berlin's greening interventions were found to be framed and contested through patterned problematizations that linked environmental improvement to (1) amenity-led value dynamics in a tight housing market, (2) socio-cultural and recognitional exclusion processes shaping lived access and belonging in upgraded green spaces, and (3) governance under-protection, where monitoring, enforcement, and cross-sector coordination were repeatedly described as insufficient to buffer predictable market and social responses. Contestation did not primarily hinge on whether risks existed, but on how causality, feasibility, and responsibility were narrated and bounded across actor positions. In this sense, the problem was constituted in governance arenas through competing rationalities that made some responses appear actionable and others unrealistic, thereby shaping the space of equitable governance response.

SQ A (Conceptual and analytical frame). Green gentrification risk in urban greening was conceptualized as a collective governance problem through an integrated scaffold linking mechanism pathways, environmental justice dimensions, subject positions, and narratives. The scaffold supported analysis without presuming a settled definition of displacement: mechanism claims specified how greening could connect to exclusion; justice dimensions specified the harms and criteria by which equity became evaluable; subject positions specified who could legitimately define risk and with what authority; and narrative rationalities specified how responsibility and feasibility were justified. This framing stabilized a decision-relevant grammar for tracing how green gentrification becomes governable or remains contested.

SQ B (Empirical patterns in Berlin projects). In the selected Berlin contexts, stakeholder groups were found to narrate risks in structured but non-identical ways. Justice-oriented accounts foregrounded displacement pressure, procedural deficits, and recognitional exclusion, with participation deemed meaningful only when it altered decision pathways. Economic–managerial accounts emphasized deliverability under budgetary and legal constraints and often translated equity concerns into incremental adjustments. Systemic–planning accounts widened the frame to multi-level drivers, institutional fragmentation, and the limits of single-actor control. Across these accounts, a persistent pattern emerged: risk recognition was widespread, yet translation into binding routines, monitoring with consequences, enforceable safeguards, and coordinated implementation was repeatedly described as structurally weak.

SQ C (Governance implications). Governance implications were derived from the problematizations themselves. It was indicated that equitable response requires governance levers that reconfigure and align actor problematizations by making risk decision-relevant, assigning enforceable responsibility, strengthening boundary-spanning capability, and redesigning legitimacy through decision-status participation. These levers were operationalized through context-differentiated measure bundles for public greening projects, existing housing stock in affected catchments, and new development and land-policy decisions near major green investments, with intensified safeguards in elevated-risk settings. The core implication is that equity is most plausibly sustained when greening is governed as a coupled socio-ecological program rather than as an environmental portfolio later supplemented by social considerations.

Outlook and Final Takeaway

Two directions follow for governance and research. From a planning perspective, the findings support shifting the emphasis from project-by-project best practices toward institutional routines that couple greening delivery with verifiable safeguards and executable enforcement capacity in vulnerable areas. From a research perspective, the analysis points toward (1) longitudinal monitoring designs that connect narrated risk pathways to observed housing and socio-cultural indicators, (2) comparative European institutional analysis to specify how legal regimes mediate the retrofit–rent nexus and anti-displacement capacity, and (3) process-tracing of decision choke points where translation from problem recognition to binding action fails. These directions would strengthen knowledge about when preventive governance packages interrupt risk pathways and when they remain symbolic.

The Berlin case suggests that the decisive question is no longer whether green gentrification poses a risk to climate-adaptation greening, but whether governance arrangements are designed to make equity a binding condition of greening rather than a discretionary aspiration. When evidence, responsibility, capacity, and legitimacy remain weakly coupled, green benefits are likely to be capitalized and unevenly enjoyed; when those elements are institutionally aligned, equitable environmental improvement becomes more plausible even under housing scarcity.

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Appendix

A 1 – Codebook

	Code	Name	Brief definition
Narrative framings	N_JUST	**Justice**-based narrative	Frames greening/gentrification as a question of fairness, displacement, vulnerability, and rights (who benefits, who pays, who is silenced).
	N_ECON	**Economic**-managerial narrative	Frames greening mainly as value creation, investment, risk management, and land use; gentrification is seen as a by-product.
	N_SYS	**Systemic**-planning narrative	Frames issues in terms of mechanisms, regulations, and governance architectures (B-Plans, contracts, Milieuschutz, path-dependency).
Substantive Themes	T_DISP	**Displacement** & price dynamics	Mentions of rent increases, loss of low-income residents, pressure on small businesses, or changes in commercial mix.
	T_ACCESS	**Access** & everyday use	Who uses the park/quarter when and how; inclusion/exclusion in terms of rules, atmospheres, and material design.
	T_PART	**Participation** & influence	Experiences with Bürgerbeteiligung, Nutzerbeiräte, Runden Tische; perceptions of tokenism vs real impact.
	T_INSTR	**Instruments** & policy tools	References to Milieuschutz, Erhaltungssatzung, Umwandlungsverbot, Sozialwohnungsquote, Parkmanagement, Rahmenverträge, etc.
Mechanisms & drivers	M_AMEN	**Amenity** capitalization	Green/open space or "cool" atmosphere as driver of rising land values, investor interest, and socio-economic upgrading.
	M_TOUR	**Touristification** & STR	Short-term rentals, party tourism, and destination marketing are drivers of price and use changes around parks.
	M_PATH	**Path dependence** & legacies	Historical decisions (autobahn plans, contracts, and earlier planning choices) that lock in today's options and conflicts.
	M_CLIM	**Climate**/eco-**modernization**	Climate-related modernization (PV concepts, rainwater harvesting, etc.) is part of the project's logic and a potential driver of green gentrification.
Justice dimensions	J_DIST	**Distributive** justice	Distribution of benefits/burdens: rent burdens, access to park quality, availability of affordable housing and commercial space.
	J_PROC	**Procedural** justice	Who is heard, who decides, and how transparent and accessible the planning and management procedures are.
	J_RECOG	**Recognitional** justice	Respect or neglect of existing cultures, informal uses, and marginalized groups (e.g., drumming groups, Kleingärtner, migrant communities).
Inductive codes	I_NOISE	**Noise** & sonic conflict	Recurrent conflicts around music, drumming, night-time partying and their regulation.
	I_BOUND	Socio-spatial **boundaries**	Strong contrasts across administrative or symbolic boundaries (Wedding vs Pankow; Parkrand vs Hinterland).
	I_TOKEN	**Tokenistic** participation	Situations where participation formats are perceived as "already decided", purely informative, or quickly closed.
	I_DEVTRUST	**Developer**–public **mistrust**	Mutual suspicion or communication breakdown between developers, critics, and parts of the administration.
	I_SOLID	Micro-**solidarity** & Inclusivity	Practices like low-price food offers, pay-it-forward schemes, and demands for "fair" pricing in and around the park.

A 2 – Observed Coding Matrix

Interviewee	Justice-based (N_JUST)	Economic-managerial (N_ECON)	Systemic-planning (N_SYS)	Dominant themes & mechanisms (codes)
Housing Co-op. Technical Director	**Weak–moderate.** Justice appears mainly as concern for stable, predictable rents for members; displacement is not central. (J_DIST)	**Strong.** Upgrading, climate modernization, and rent stability are framed as managerial tasks; gentrification is a secondary issue. (M_CLIM, T_INSTR)	**Moderate.** Some attention to institutional roles and cooperative governance, but limited focus on the broader urban regime.	T_INSTR, T_PART, M_CLIM; I_TOKEN (tenants' say largely confined to annual assemblies).
Citizens' Initiative	**Very strong.** Greening and gentrification are consistently linked to displacement risks, the loss of affordable space, and unequal burdens, with a strong emphasis on marginalized users and small businesses. (T_DISP, J_DIST, J_RECOG)	**Moderate (critical).** Economic dynamics (Airbnb, speculative "Heuschrecken") are recognized but mainly as problems. (M_TOUR, M_AMEN)	**Strong.** Intense focus on instruments, participation formats, and governance failures (Milieuschutz, preemption, Nutzerbeirat). (T_INSTR, T_PART, I_TOKEN)	T_DISP, T_ACCESS, T_PART, T_INSTR; mechanisms M_AMEN, M_TOUR, M_PATH; inductive themes I_NOISE, I_BOUND, I_SOLID.
Architect/Activist	**Strong.** Emphasizes the loss of lower-income residents, the importance of protecting vulnerable groups, and the value of community infrastructure (Kleingärten, mosques). (T_DISP, J_DIST, J_RECOG)	**Weak–moderate (critical).** Market actors are discussed mainly as speculative forces; economic logics are problematized rather than endorsed. (M_AMEN)	**Strong.** Detailed analysis of planning history, Erhaltungssatzung, Umwandlungsverbote, and political (mis)use of BauGB tools. (T_INSTR, M_PATH)	T_DISP, T_PART, T_INSTR; mechanisms M_PATH, M_AMEN; inductive themes I_BOUND, I_TOKEN.
Project Developer	**Weak.** Justice is mainly seen as "acceptance" and the avoidance of overt conflict; displacement is framed as a general city issue rather than a project-specific one. (T_DISP, J_DIST)	**Very strong.** Greening, proximity to the park, and climate features are framed as value-creating assets to be managed; focus on contracts, rents, and risk management. (M_AMEN, M_CLIM, T_INSTR)	**Moderate–strong.** Frequent references to Rahmenverträge, B-Plans, and institutional responsibilities; systemic language used to legitimize project path. (M_PATH, T_INSTR)	T_INSTR, M_AMEN, M_CLIM, M_PATH; inductive theme I_DEVTRUST (mutual mistrust between developer and critics).
District Climate and Adaptation Office	**Moderate–strong.** Frames climate adaptation as inherently socially fair and especially needed in vulnerable, already-gentrified districts; gentrification is understood as displacement and the loss of affordable housing. (J_DIST, T_DISP)	**Moderate (critical).** Cost and feasibility arguments (upfront investment, economic efficiency, funding cuts) are often presented as constraints that undermine climate and justice goals rather than as desired objectives. (M_CLIM, T_INSTR)	**Very strong.** Emphasis on instruments, legal bases, path dependencies, and resource limits (Erhaltungsgebiete, PREVAB, climate laws, Abwägung); sees green gentrification risks as mediated by institutional design and enforcement gaps. (T_INSTR,	T_INSTR, T_DISP, T_PART; mechanisms M_CLIM, M_PATH; justice dimensions J_DIST, J_PROC, J_RECOG; inductive tendencies toward I_TOKEN (limited leverage of climate/justice concerns in final decisions).

A 3 – Coded Interview Portraits (Long Version)

Housing Cooperative Technical Director

Coding shows a clear dominance of the economic-managerial narrative (N_ECON) in this interview. Most coded segments fall under N_ECON combined with T_INSTR (instruments and internal rules), T_PART (limited participation), and M_CLIM (climate-related modernization). Greening and energy upgrades are framed as technical–financial optimization tasks: the central concern is long-term rent stability and a predictable investment horizon for the cooperative. Justice appears only indirectly under J_DIST, primarily as a question of maintaining stable, "reasonable" rents for existing members rather than addressing broader patterns of urban inequality.

The systemic-planning narrative (N_SYS) is present in medium intensity, mainly where the interview addresses cooperative governance, decision procedures, and regulatory constraints. However, this framing remains inward-looking and does not extend to a critical view of the wider housing regime. Justice-based coding (N_JUST) is comparatively sparse and typically overlaps with N_ECON when rent levels are discussed. Inductive codes such as I_TOKEN appear where tenant participation is described as confined to formal assemblies with little influence on concrete projects. Overall, the coding pattern characterizes this interview as a technocratic, portfolio-oriented perspective in which greening is necessary and desirable, while green gentrification and displacement are positioned at the margins of the cooperative's perceived responsibility. This interview exemplifies a portfolio-oriented, technocratic vantage point in which greening is necessary and desirable, while green gentrification is positioned at the margins of perceived responsibility.

Residents Civil Society

In this interview, the coding is strongly concentrated in the justice-based narrative (N_JUST), coupled with high frequencies of T_DISP, T_ACCESS, T_PART, and J_DIST/J_RECOG. The interviewees frame green gentrification through concrete experiences of rising rents, loss of small businesses and religious spaces, and the marginalization of informal users in and around the park. Everyday conflicts around music, noise and park rules are coded with I_NOISE and interpreted as symptoms of deeper struggles over recognition and belonging rather than merely as order problems.

At the same time, there is a pronounced systemic-planning narrative (N_SYS): many segments are coded with T_INSTR, M_PATH, and I_TOKEN, reflecting detailed discussions of Milieuschutz, municipal pre-emption, Nutzerbeirat structures and their perceived limits or non-enforcement. The economic-managerial narrative (N_ECON) appears mostly in critical form, in passages coded with M_TOUR (touristification, Airbnb) and critiques of speculative investors. Inductive codes such as I_SOLID capture proposals for socially inclusive pricing and mutual support in the park's commercial offers. Taken together, the coding indicates a perspective that tightly links micro-level conflicts in the park to macro-level injustices in housing and governance, with N_JUST and N_SYS reinforcing each other.

Architect & Long-Term Activist

The coding for this interview shows a nearly balanced prominence of the justice-based (N_JUST) and systemic-planning (N_SYS) narratives, with both clearly outweighing the economic-managerial narrative (N_ECON). Segments under N_JUST cluster around T_DISP, J_DIST, and J_RECOG, in which the interviewee describes the displacement of low-income residents, the disappearance of the "under third," and the vulnerability of community infrastructure such as *Kleingärten* and small mosques. Procedural justice concerns (T_PART, J_PROC) are frequent, particularly in critical reflections on participatory formats that are experienced as formally open but substantively constrained.

N_SYS coding is equally dense. Passages are marked with T_INSTR, M_PATH, and I_BOUND, as the interview traces how historical decisions, B-Plans, and selective use of *Erhaltungssatzung*, *Umwandlungsverbote*, and pre-

emption rights have structured present-day options at Gleisdreieck and nearby areas. The economic-managerial narrative appears mainly as a critical reference to exclusive developments and speculative dynamics; corresponding codes (N_ECON, M_AMEN) occur but rarely dominate a passage. Instances of I_TOKEN highlight moments where participatory bodies are perceived as politically sidelined. Overall, the coding pattern positions this interview as a key bridge: it links grounded justice claims to a sophisticated critique of planning instruments and path dependencies.

Project Developer

For this interview, the coding is dominated by the economic-managerial narrative (N_ECON), with many segments also coded under N_SYS, and comparatively few under N_JUST. N_ECON is strongly associated with T_INSTR (contracts, B-Plans, certification), M_AMEN (park adjacency as asset), and M_CLIM (DGNB, energy concepts). Green proximity is framed as a value-creating feature that must be managed through technical solutions and design quality. Project legitimacy is grounded in legal compliance and efficient use of a transit-adjacent site rather than in distributive outcomes.

The systemic-planning narrative (N_SYS) appears where the interviewee references historical *Rahmenverträge*, institutional responsibilities, and regulatory constraints; these passages are regularly tagged with M_PATH to reflect the emphasis on inherited agreements and plan logic. Justice-based coding (N_JUST, T_DISP, J_DIST) is sparse and often overlaps with N_ECON when discussing "acceptance" or anticipated criticism; displacement is described in general terms as a feature of a growing city rather than as a project-specific effect. The inductive code I_DEVTRUST is prominent in sections where activist critiques are portrayed as misinformed or ideologically fixed, highlighting mutual mistrust between developer and opponents. Overall, the coding depicts a perspective in which greening and densification are primarily economic–technical projects, with justice concerns translated into issues of communication, image, and city-wide policy rather than local redistribution.

District Climate And Adaptation Office

For this interview, the coding is dominated by the systemic-planning narrative (N_SYS), closely intertwined with a justice-based narrative (N_JUST) and a more critical economic-managerial perspective (N_ECON). N_SYS is strongly associated with T_INSTR (instruments like *Milieuschutz*, *PREVA B*, *B-Plans*), M_CLIM (climate adaptation mandates, heavy rain risks), and M_PATH (resource limits, legal hierarchies). Her position is framed as a "cross-sectional" mediator whose legitimacy is grounded in scientific evidence (climate maps) and administrative procedure rather than direct decision-making power. The justice-based narrative (N_JUST) appears consistently alongside systemic codes, where she links climate adaptation directly to social vulnerability (J_DIST), arguing that heat protection is most urgent in dense, lower-income neighborhoods, yet notes that displacement (T_DISP) undermines these goals.

Economic-managerial coding (N_ECON) primarily appears as a constraint or critique; she problematizes "profitability" arguments that block climate measures (e.g., building over courtyards for efficiency), but acknowledges the lack of funds to buy out speculative owners. The inductive code I_TOKEN is implicit in sections describing her role as "nudging" (*stupsen*) rather than enforcing, highlighting the structural powerlessness of justice-oriented planning against market forces. Overall, the coding depicts a perspective in which green gentrification is recognized as a systemic failure where justice goals are theoretically embraced but operationally subordinated to property rights and resource scarcity.

A 4 – Coding Salience Table by Respondent

The coding salience table summarizes how frequently each analytic code appears within each respondent's transcript and renders those counts comparable across interviews of different lengths. Applied codes were first counted per respondent and then normalized by each respondent's total number of coded segments, producing relative shares rather than raw frequencies. The table reports the most salient codes, those with the highest relative proportions, so that dominant and secondary emphases can be compared across respondents. Read horizontally, the table indicates which themes structure a given respondent's account; read vertically, it shows which respondents most strongly mobilize a given code, thereby supporting the identification of patterned narrative alignments and divergences across actor positions.

Code	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	
N_JUST	2,60%	8,30%	7,90%	2,00%	8,20%	29,00%
N_ECON	18,40%	2,10%	3,20%	18,00%	2,00%	43,70%
N_SYS	7,90%	4,20%	7,90%	12,00%	12,20%	44,20%
T_DISP	13,20%	6,30%	12,70%	4,00%	2,00%	38,20%
T_ACCESS	5,30%	9,40%	4,80%	6,00%	4,10%	29,60%
T_PART	10,50%	11,50%	14,30%	8,00%	14,30%	58,60%
T_INSTR	7,90%	1,00%	9,50%	4,00%	14,30%	36,70%
M_AMEN	5,30%	3,10%	3,20%	2,00%	0,00%	13,60%
M_TOUR	0,00%	5,20%	1,60%	0,00%	2,00%	8,80%
M_PATH	2,60%	2,10%	6,30%	6,00%	2,00%	19,00%
M_CLIM	7,90%	1,00%	1,60%	8,00%	16,30%	34,80%
J_DIST	5,30%	4,20%	4,80%	4,00%	6,10%	24,40%
J_PROC	10,50%	8,30%	7,90%	6,00%	8,20%	40,90%
J_RECOG	0,00%	7,30%	3,20%	2,00%	4,10%	16,60%
I_NOISE	0,00%	9,40%	0,00%	2,00%	0,00%	11,40%
I_BOUND	0,00%	3,10%	1,60%	4,00%	0,00%	8,70%
I_TOKEN	2,60%	6,30%	3,20%	2,00%	4,10%	18,20%
I_DEVTRUST	0,00%	4,20%	4,80%	10,00%	0,00%	19,00%
I_SOLID	0,00%	3,10%	1,60%	0,00%	0,00%	4,70%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	

A 5 – Narrative Distribution Among the Respondents

The narrative distribution diagram indicates how the three reconstructed narrative rationalities are represented across respondents. Each interview was coded for narrative markers and assigned a dominant narrative orientation, with secondary narratives recorded where hybrid or shifting accounts were present. The table, therefore, shows both the overall distribution of narrative types in the dataset and the extent to which particular narratives cluster within specific actor positions. Read by respondent, it clarifies which interpretive logic primarily structures an account and where counter-logics appear; read by narrative type, it reveals whether the dataset is balanced or skewed toward a particular rationality, providing a basis for assessing the robustness of cross-narrative synthesis and identifying systematic blind spots.
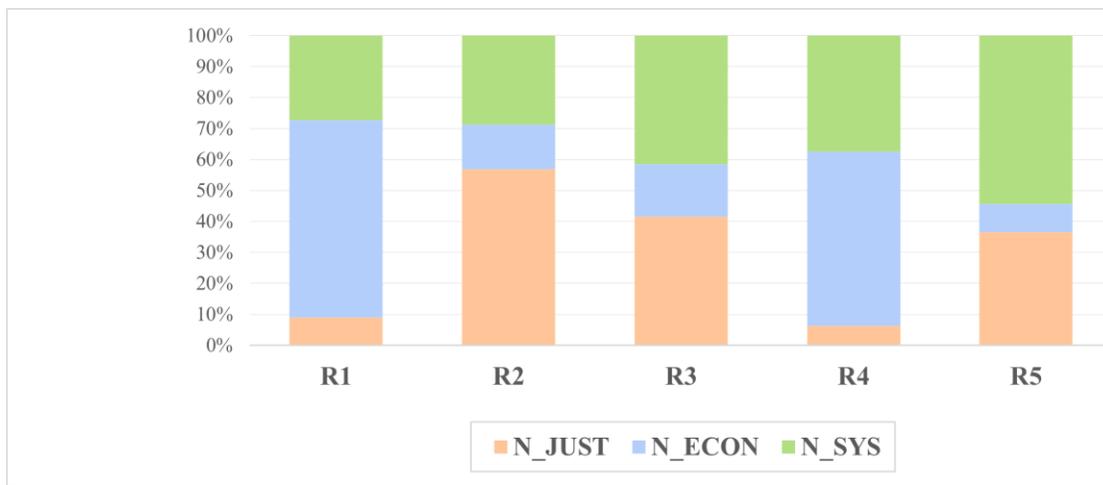
Glossary of German Terms

This glossary defines recurring German-language institutional terms and legal instruments. Proper nouns (e.g., place names) and conversational words are not included.

German term	English gloss/contextual meaning
Bebauungsplan (B-Plan)	Legally binding local development plan specifying permissible land uses and key building parameters; a core instrument of statutory land-use planning.
Bezirk **Bezirksamt**	Berlin administrative district/borough. District office: the executive body of a Berlin district administration responsible for implementing planning and regulatory tasks at the district level.
Klimaanpassungsgesetz Berlin (KAnGBln) **BäumePlus-Gesetz**	Berlin policy/legal framework for climate adaptation. *Note:* The *Klimaanpassungsgesetz* addresses broad adaptation (heat, water), while *BäumePlus* specifically refers to strengthened regulations to protect and expand urban tree cover.
Erhaltungsgebiet	Conservation/preservation area. In the housing context, typically refers to areas designated to preserve residential conditions (often used interchangeably with social preservation areas in Berlin debates).
Mietendeckel	Berlin state-level rent cap/freeze policy (used in the thesis as an emblematic, contested affordability intervention).
Rahmenvertrag	Framework agreement(s): standardized contractual arrangements used to structure longer-term cooperation or procurement relationships.
SenJustV	(Senatsverwaltung für Justiz und Verbraucherschutz) Senate Department for Justice and Consumer Protection
SenMVKU	(Senatsverwaltung für Mobilität, Verkehr, Klimaschutz und Umwelt) Berlin Senate Department for Mobility, Transport, Climate Protection, and Environment; before June 2023 named **SenUVK**
SenStadt	(Senatsverwaltung für Stadtentwicklung, Bauen und Wohnen) Berlin's Senate Department for Urban Development, Building, and Housing
Soziale Erhaltungsgebiete	Social preservation areas: designated under §172 **BauGB** to maintain the social composition of a residential area by restricting certain forms of modernization, conversion, and change of use.
Sozialerhaltungsverordnung	Social preservation statute; *Also known as:* **Milieuschutz** (colloquial/common term).

German term	English gloss/contextual meaning
Stadtentwicklungsplan (StEP)	Urban development plan: sectoral strategic planning framework issued at the Berlin Senate level.
StEP Klima 2.0	Berlin urban development plan for climate.
StEP Wohnen 2040	Berlin urban development plan for housing
Umwandlungsverbot	Conversion ban(s): regulatory restriction(s) on converting rental housing into condominiums (or related tenure conversions), used as an anti-displacement measure.
Vorkaufsrecht	Municipal right of first refusal in property transactions; used by municipalities/districts to purchase property under specified conditions and to pursue public-interest objectives.