

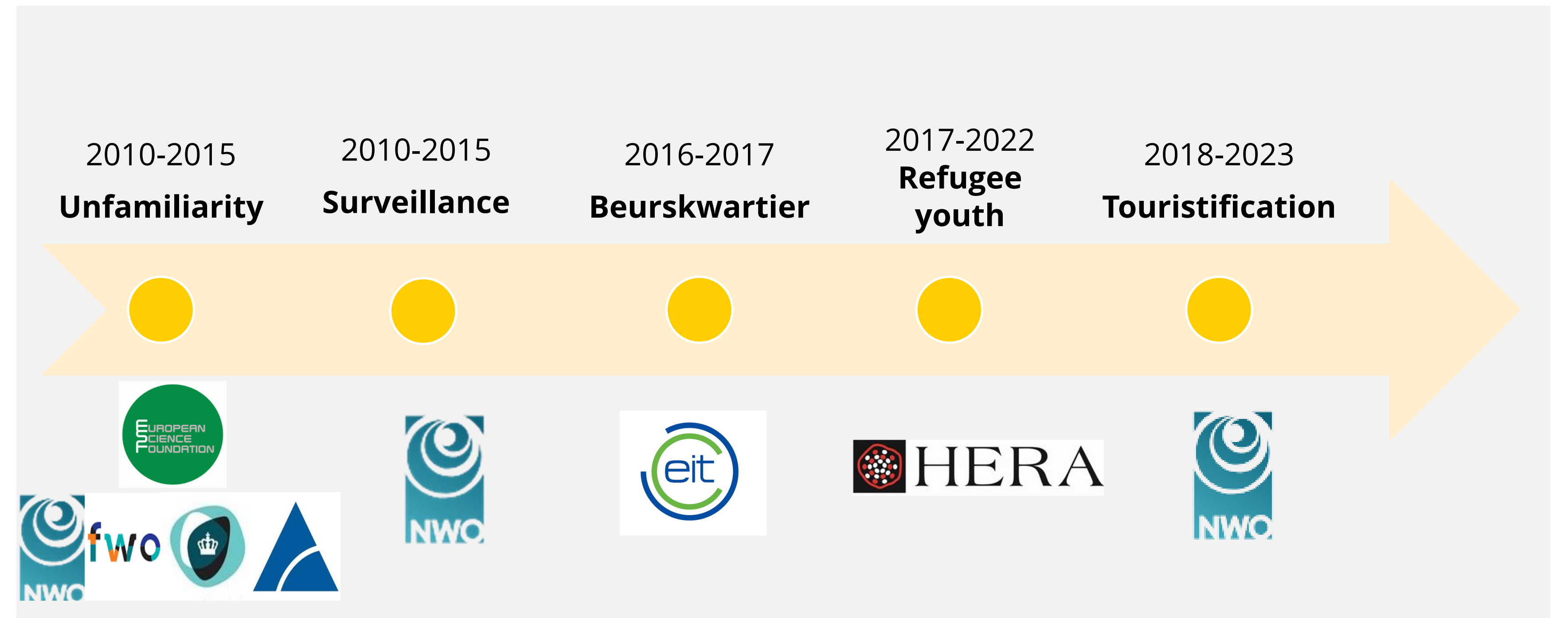
Urban Public Space

Variegated Geographies of Publicness, Belonging and In/Exclusion

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Research history

- Everyday Experiences of (Un)familiarity in European Borderlands (ESF, NWO, FWO, DASTI & AKA)
- Surveillance in Urban Nightscapes (NWO)
- Walking and Cycling in the Utrecht Beurskwartier (EIT)
- Everyday Experiences of Refugee Youth in Public Space (HERA)
- Touristification of the Urban Consumption Landscape (NWO)



Main research questions

- What are the implications of the commercialisation and aestheticization of cities for public social interaction and what strategies and tactics of resistance do diverse citizens implement to reclaim urban public space and perform bottom-up place-making?
- How do diverse citizens perceive, practice and experience public spaces in cities and how are these intertwined with various embodied (im)mobilities and processes of (non-) belonging, differentiation, (in)accessibility, in/exclusion, and inequality?

To answer these questions, various public spaces – including, but not limited to, multifunctional streets, city center plazas, children's playgrounds, neighbourhood parks, community gardens, and marginal wastelands – are analysed and compared with a critical perspective and relational approach.

Contribution to urban geography

Through a critical and relational investigation of variegated geographies of publicness, belonging and in/exclusion, the Urban Public Space team targets and contributes to SDG 11.7 – i.e. to “provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities.”

To make this contribution, both quantitative and qualitative methods are being applied in an often-mixed manner – ranging from systematic observations and on-street questionnaires to in-depth interviews and critical discourse analysis. These methods are combined and enriched with participatory and visual methods – such as mental mapping, photovoice, various types of go-alongs, Google street view image segmentation, and digital mapping.

