

# Paradoxes in the Chinese Housing Market



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## Abstract

Through privatization and marketization, the housing system in China has been transformed from a socialist housing system with public rental housing to a market-oriented system with predominantly private homeowners in less than three decades. This profound transformation on a massive scale in a short period of time has made it challenging to understand housing in China, where a dazzling housing boom shields many problems. This presentation aims to facilitate the understanding of the Chinese housing system by examining two housing paradoxes: 1) despite the lack of affordability, China is a country of homeowners with homeownership rate higher than most developed countries; 2) the newly established public rental housing program has an impressive provision target but suffers both long waiting lists and high vacancy rates. Based on empirical analysis on homeownership and public rental housing, this presentation aims to identify institutional roots underlying these housing paradoxes. I argue that housing policies and institutions often have unintended consequences that have contributed to these paradoxes.

## Biography

Prof. Youqin Huang is a Professor and Chair of Geography and Planning at University at Albany, State University of New York. Her research aims to understand the impact of socioeconomic transformation and government policies, focusing on housing, migration, and health and wellbeing. Her research appears in top-tier journals like PNAS, the China Quarterly, Annals of American Association of Geographers, Urban Studies, Cities, Housing Studies, Environment and Planning A and B. As a dedicated promoter of urban China studies and mentor to emerging China scholars, she holds leadership roles such as the Co-Director of Urban China Research Network (UCRN), Vice-President of the Research Committee on Housing and Built Environment (RC 43) of International Sociological Association, and a Standing Board member of Research Grants Council of University Grants Committee of Hong Kong. Her excellence in service and research has been recognized with multiple awards, including “President’s Award for Exemplary Public Engagement” in 2020 and the “President’s Excellence Award in Research and Creative Activities” in 2023 from UAlbany.