

## Revising housing governance for Beijing's floating population

Feng Xiaoying

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**Abstract:** Recently, in Beijing's outer neighbourhoods and villages, 82 new settlements of more than 10,000 immigrants have emerged, resulting in a total immigrant population of almost two million. This floating population has chosen natural and administrative villages in rural areas bordering the city as its principal place of residence. Certain areas are occupied by 50,000 people and the government's priority is to demolish unfit housing and to reduce this population in its drive to regulate "urban villages". However, can this expulsion of the floating population by demolishing buildings and displacing individuals, solve the chronic problems of immigrant neighbourhoods? Given China's particular situation, could these neighbourhoods ultimately be beneficial to the host cities and surrounding rural areas?

This paper draws from the current situation in Beijing to analyse the advantages immigrant neighbourhoods have for local and rural authorities and to study the conditions that would encourage the proper integration of the floating population into local society. It suggests new possibilities for governing immigrant neighbourhoods. According to the author, in order to address the problem of immigrant neighbourhoods, the current separation into two groups — urban and rural dwellers on one side, residence permit-holders and immigrants on the other — must be reformed. Instead, immigrant neighbourhoods must be integrated into urban planning so that rural dwellers and immigrants have the same benefits as the urban population. The environmental planning of immigrant neighbourhoods should incorporate rural characteristics, and a social support network must be set up so that members of this community can better support themselves and improve their social situation.

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