

Gabriela Debrunner, *Prof. Assist.*

Dr.sc.nat. // CAS Urban Management // Swiss Federal Teachers Diploma

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Keywords (in alphabetical order)

Active Land Policy, Affordability, Commons, Decommodification, Densification, Densification Policy, Gentrification, Green Transition, Housing Studies, Human Geography, Inclusion, Inequality, Justice, Land Use Policy, New Institutionalism, New Institutional Economics, Political Ecology, Political Economy, Post-Growth, Power, Property, Resources, Resources Use, Social Sustainability, Spatial Planning, Spatial Planning Instruments, Squatting, Sustainability, Sustainable Development, Sustainable Resources Use, Urban Geography, Urban Governance, Urban Social Movements, Urban Studies

Education

10/2017 – 02/2021	PhD in Geography (grade: summa cum laude) University of Bern, Institute of Geography, Unit for Political Urbanism and Sustainable Spatial Development Supervision: Prof. Dr. Jean-David Gerber PhD Committee: Prof. Dr. Barbara Schöning, Prof. Dr. Heike Mayer Thesis (16.2.21): « <i>The Business of Densification: Coping with Social Challenges under Scarce Land Use Conditions in Swiss Cities</i> » Winner of the Faculty Award in Geosciences 2021
01/2020 – 03/2020	Research Exchange in Copenhagen International Federation for Housing and Planning (IFHP)
05/2018 – 11/2018	Certificate of Advanced Studies (CAS) Urban Management University of Zurich, Centre for Urban and Real Estate Management (CUREM)
09/2013 – 07/2016	Swiss Federal Teachers Diploma in Geography (Gymnasium) Bern University of Teachers Education (PH Bern)
09/2013 – 09/2015	Master of Science in Geography University of Bern, Institute of Geography
01/2014 – 07/2014	Erasmus Exchange Semester (Master Level) in Stockholm University of Stockholm, Department of Human Geography
09/2010 – 09/2013	Bachelor of Science in Geography University of Bern, Institute of Geography Thesis in Social Geography: Prof. Dr. Doris Wastl-Walter
08/2005 – 07/2009	Gymnasium Frauenfeld (TG)

Employment

From 08/2025	Assistant Professor, tenure-track (100%) Planning and Housing (PLANH) University of Lausanne, Institute of Geography and Sustainability (IGD), Faculty of Geosciences and Environment (FGSE)
04/2024—06/2025	Senior Researcher (80%) ETH Zurich, Institute for Spatial and Landscape Development (IRL) Group for Spatial Development and Urban Policy (SPUR) (Prof. Dr. David Kaufmann)
09/2023—06/2025	Lecturer and Reader (20%) ETH Zurich, Institute for Spatial and Landscape Development (IRL)
10/2022—03/2024	Postdoctoral Researcher (80%) ETH Zurich, IRL, SPUR Projects: SNSF-project « Densifying Switzerland » (2021-2025); Future Cities Laboratory (FCL) project « Dense and Green Cities » (2020-2024); HORIZON-2023 project « ReHousIn » (2024-2027)
11/2021 – 08/2023	Postdoctoral Researcher (20%) ETH Zurich, Institute for Spatial and Landscape Development (IRL) Group for Spatial Transformation Laboratories (STL) (Executive-in-Residence PD Dr. Joris Van Wezemaal) Innosuisse-Project: Temporary Use and Strategic Spatial Planning in the Swiss Urban Densification (« TIMEOUT »)
01/2021 – 08/2022	Project Leader (90%) IVO Innenentwicklung AG, Swiss Spatial Planning Office
10/2017 – 10/2020	Research Associate / Scientific Collaborator (20%) University of Bern, Institute of Geography
01/2017 – 06/2017	Research Associate / Scientific Collaborator (70%) University of Bern, Centre for Regional Economic Development (CRED)
10/2015 – 09/2016	Internship (80%) Regional Planning Association Zurich (« RZU »)
08/2014 – 06/2015	Internship (80%) Swiss Federal Association for Alpine and Rural Regions (« SAB »)
03/2013 – 06/2015	Employee (5-10%) Canton of Thurgau, Migration and Passport Department

Service to the profession

06/2019 – 12/2020

University of Bern, Institute of Geography

Elected Representative of Intermediate Staff Association («Mittelbauvereinigung») within the Institute of Geography's Council

Further mandates

8./9. Oct 2026

Co-organizer of «[Whose Land, Whose Home, Whose Rent – Assembling Property in Switzerland](#)» together with University of Zurich (Prof. Hanna Hilbrandt)

12./13. Feb 2026

Co-organizer of the [Swiss Habitat Conference](#) together with EPFL / LASUR (Prof. Luca Pattaroni)

Since 12/2025

Member of the ARL International Working Group “Land Take in Europe – In Pursuit of Net Zero”

Since 09/2025

Co-editorial board member of [disP – The Planning Review](#)

Languages

German (mother tongue); English (fluent); French (advanced knowledge); Spanish (basic knowledge); Italian (basic knowledge)