



Inclusive Housing Policies: Housing is the beginning

Policy recommendations to improve housing for refugees in European cities and inspiring practice examples from Austria, Germany and Sweden.



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There is empirical evidence that refugees encounter various difficulties in accessing housing in European cities. However, little is known about the strategies that the various actors in the housing sector develop to address the needs of people entitled to asylum. This is where the project “Inclusive Housing” started. It aimed to contribute to the development of strategic and practical solutions at the housing market and to foster forms of inclusive housing in the context of urban migration.

The project partners from Austria, Germany and Sweden exchanged research results about experiences and strategies in the field of housing and integration of refugees. Focusing on three main topics – housing market and access to housing, types of inclusive housing, governance for inclusive housing – the project consortium aimed to present in detail the challenges for refugees regarding housing and to contribute to more inclusive urban housing policies and strategies.

Three transnational workshops formed the core of the project. They involved relevant stakeholders such as municipalities, housing associations, NGOs as well as advocacy groups from civil society and opened spaces for exchange between different actors and cities. Based on the joint discussions and in close cooperation with the participating stakeholders, we elaborated three policy briefs with policy recommendations.

The project allowed us to identify local specifics as well as common challenges that are comparable in a European context and can therefore also be relevant for housing policies across the European Union. The policy briefs reflect this comparative perspective between the three cities – Vienna / Austria, Hamburg / Germany and Umeå / Sweden.

In the course of the project we also collected best practice examples from the three countries Austria, Germany and Sweden. They show different aspects and innovative approaches for housing and the promotion of social inclusion for refugees during their process of arriving and establishing a new home.

This booklet contains the three policy briefs and the collection of best practice examples. It wants to show our project results and inspire further stakeholders throughout Europe to form new alliances and find creative solutions for the challenges put before us.

We hope you enjoy reading!

The Project Team

The project “Inclusive Housing” was realised from April 2021 to September 2022 as part of the call “Urban Migration” of the Programme JPI Urban Europe.

Inclusive Housing Policies:

Recommendations for socially sustainable housing provision for refugees in European cities

The JPI Urban Europe project „Inclusive Housing“ aimed to make an innovative contribution to inclusive housing policies. In close cooperation with relevant stakeholders from municipalities and housing market actors we elaborated recommendations regarding future housing policies and practices in order to improve the housing situation for refugees but also for other disadvantaged groups in the context of urban migration.

These three policy briefs are based on three transnational stakeholder workshops in Vienna, Umeå and Hamburg.



Policy Brief I

Housing Market and Access to Housing

Housing is the beginning

Cities all over Europe are strongly shaped by urban migration and by the influx of refugees, especially since 2015. Finding adequate housing is the base for arriving in a new society and building a new home. Therefore, it represents an important foundation for social inclusion. Today, however, refugees in European cities encounter various difficulties in accessing housing. Affordable housing is scarce and low economic and social capital, information gaps, discriminatory practices and complex access criteria to different housing segments limit the prospects of success on the housing market. As a consequence, refugees, as well as immigrants in general, often end up in precarious

living situations where they struggle with unhealthy and overcrowded housing conditions, legal uncertainties and often high rental costs.

Since housing plays a key role in opening up life opportunities, inclusive housing is not only of interest to refugees and immigrants themselves, but also to the cities they reside in. In urban strategies to combat marginalization and ghettoization, inclusive and affordable housing has an important part. Regarding the housing market, the following aspects should be taken into account.

Providing affordable housing is the base for inclusive housing

The provision of affordable housing is the foundation for an inclusive housing market. In Austria and Germany for example, social housing promotion is a key instrument of housing policies. Subsidised housing is subject to regulations regarding rent levels and occupancy, thus ensuring provision of housing supply for lower-income and disadvantaged households. Especially in urban development areas, land use laws and building regulations can be important instruments for creating subsidised housing and ensuring the housing qualities desired by a city. Urban development contracts between the city and (private) housing providers can regulate the housing industry's participation in the construction of affordable housing, taking into account current needs and developments in the city.

Housing is also about quality. Especially affordable housing often means small flat sizes and the needs of bigger families with a refugee background can often not be met adequately, due to a lack of larger flat sizes. Therefore, not only affordable housing, also a diverse mix of housing types is needed.

The private rental housing sector also plays a role in the housing supply of European cities and therefore can and should contribute to more inclusive housing. Instruments to shape inclusive housing policies are e.g. tenancy laws, which regulate rent increases and protect tenants from being evicted, as well as effective measures against vacancies in the housing stock of a city.

The transitional phase from temporary accommodation of refugees in shelters and initial primary care quarters to long-term accommodation should also be taken into account. Transitional and emergency housing for particularly vulnerable groups should be secured to avoid homelessness or precarious living situations.

Recommendations:

- **Securing a diverse stock of social / affordable housing**
- **Regulations for the private housing market to contribute to inclusive housing**
- **Fixed quotas of subsidised housing in new housing areas**
- **Measures against vacancies such as vacancy tax**
- **Emergency housing for particularly vulnerable people**

Practice:

Land use law as instrument for Social Housing

Zoning category “subsidised housing” in new urban development areas

AT | Vienna



Photo: Amélie Chapalain

In Vienna, since 2019, a reform of the land use law foresees that in new urban development areas, 2/3 of the newly built flats have to be subsidised housing – which forms the base for limited rental prices in these residential areas over a longer period of time.

► More information on page 38

Access conditions & regulations determine processes of inclusion

Formal and informal criteria regulate the access to different segments of the housing market and are hence an important factor for their inclusiveness. Social housing, as far as it exists in a city, is characterized by its greater affordability – in comparison to other housing segments. However, it often goes hand in hand with access criteria that can make it difficult for refugees to access this type of housing. Residence status and length of stay in the new country often define access conditions besides income or nationality.

If social housing wants to meet the goals of fostering social inclusion and providing access to housing for especially vulnerable groups, such as refugees, it has to apply access conditions that allow these groups to enter this segment. Cooperation with NGOs can additionally foster a sustainable inclusion of refugees in existing neighbourhoods. In multicultural cities such as European cities are today, barriers based on nationality or language should also be gradually dismantled.

Some of the biggest hurdles for accessing different types of housing are economic. Financial requirements such as front up payments should be reduced, especially in the segment of public and subsidised housing. Additionally, the private housing sector should be encouraged to contribute to inclusive housing – by setting regulations and/or incentives.

An important factor to set certain standards on the private housing market are tenancy laws. They can provide rental caps and limit disproportionate increase of rents, strengthen long-term or permanent rental contracts in order to make housing more secure for its residents and in general foster the tenants' rights in the area of housing. To avoid unhealthy and precarious living conditions, tenancy laws should also foresee obligations to properly maintain buildings and apartments on the rental market.

Recommendations:

- **Design access criteria for public housing or non-profit housing to foster the inclusion of vulnerable groups such as refugees**
- **Eliminate barriers and exclusionary mechanisms on the basis of nationality or language**
- **Set regulations and/or incentives for the private housing sector to contribute to inclusive housing**
- **Adjust tenancy laws with rent caps and long-term or permanent rental contracts**

Practice:

Locally Welcome

A cooperation between the city and welfare associations

DE | Dortmund



Photo: lokal willkommen

“Locally Welcome” offers counselling for immigrants on housing matters and provides social assistance in new residential areas. This includes needs-oriented care and support for refugees who have found a new home in the city as well as support structures for voluntary engagement.

► www.dortmund.de

Financial resources & support structures open new possibilities

The costs of entering the housing market, both in the social and in the private housing sector, often represent massive obstacles for people with a refugee background. In most cases, existing savings are used up at the point where one obtains asylum, and regular income is – especially in this initial phase after receiving asylum – either not generated yet or too low. Access to the labour market is mostly restricted, especially for people who are still in the legal process of seeking asylum. In many cases this results in years without a professional occupation or a regular income. Given this background, people frequently have to take on debts to be able to pay the equity share, the upfront deposit or the broker's commission. Furthermore, moving into an apartment also includes additional costs, e.g. for furniture. Since a regular loan from a bank is not granted, refugees frequently depend on personal or community net-works. This can lead to relationships of dependency or even exploitation.

Opening financial possibilities and offering support structures is therefore an important factor to ensure decent housing and living situations. On one hand, policies should focus on fostering the legal access and the actual possibilities on the labour market from an early stage on. On the other hand, different support structures should be developed and strengthened such as access to affordable loans and access to subject centred housing subsidies (for households whose income is too low to meet their housing costs).

A Solidarity Fund could also be a tool of great impact, since it focuses not only on financial aid, but can foster awareness and solidarity of different actors in our society. Further support can be flexible transitional housing, cooperation with NGOs, case management by social workers and “Housing First” models, where NGOs initially act as intermediaries and residents subsequently take on the rent.

Recommendations:

- **More legal ways to work and generate income**
- **Solidarity Fund to help pay for upfront housing costs**
- **Access to loans and to subject centred housing subsidies**
- **Flexible transitional housing**
- **Cooperation with NGOs for particularly vulnerable groups**
- **Case Management through social workers to help avoid evictions**
- **„Housing First“ models for access to housing and temporary support**

Practice:

Solidarity Fund

Financial Fund to overcome barriers for people with little economic resources

AT | Styria



Photo: Maria Ziegler

A solidarity fund helps to pay upfront costs such as guarantee deposits, brokerage commissions, equity shares for construction costs or the furniture of the apartment. An example for this approach is the deposit fund of the federal government in Styria, that provides interest-free loans to be repaid in monthly affordable instalments.

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Knowledge is a key factor to navigate the housing market

Housing markets in most European cities are complex and characterized by a diverse mix of subsidised, privately financed and municipal or public housing with different access criteria. Their complexity already proves to be challenging for nationals, and even more so for foreigners.

The search for housing not only requires knowledge about formal regulations and legal rules of tenancy law, but also information on informal norms and practices. This information often differs fundamentally from the experiences in the respective countries of origin. Empirical research shows that personal networks are of central importance in the search for housing of refugees. This can be either personal acquaintances with people already living in the receiving country or migrant networks. The latter, however, often leads to particularly insecure housing conditions. In comparison, support from local people opens up more opportunities in the housing market, but depends heavily on personal contacts and on advanced language skills.

In order to ensure informed access to housing markets in Europe, it is important to strengthen information and knowledge as key factors in the search for housing of refugees. Important measures can be multilingual and simple information, advice on tenancy and housing laws as well as support in orientation on the housing market and in the search for apartments (e.g. through local buddies). Further positive experiences have been made with peer-to-peer-projects where members of different communities are trained and act as multipliers in their own ethnic networks. Information campaigns of municipalities should address relevant communication channels of refugees and migrants such as social media and community media.

Recommendations:

- **Multilingual, simple information**
- **Advice and information on tenancy and housing laws**
- **Support in orientation and search on housing market, e.g. buddies or support through placement in private and private shared flats**
- **Promotion of peer-to-peer projects**
- **Information campaigns in social media and community media**

Practice:

Neighbourhood Parents

Peer-to-peer support in everyday life

AT | Vienna



Photo: Caritas der Erzdiözese Wien

Multipliers from different communities help other new-arriving residents with information and orientation. Based on their own experiences in the context of migration they are able to give practical knowledge, build bridges to existing offers and services in the city and support on the way to know more about formal and informal rules in the new society, about rights and possibilities – as the project “Grätzleltern” (Neighbourhood Parents) initiated by Caritas Vienna shows.

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Working on mindsets & practices fosters alternative actions

In order to make decent and affordable housing accessible for refugees, it is of great importance to cooperate with stakeholders of the social, subsidised as well as the privately financed market. Since it's not only the formal rules, but also the informal practices and mindsets that have impact on the access to housing, these are essential dimensions to work on collectively as an urban society. On the property owners' side, the perceived insecurity of residence status – in particular concerning temporary granted residence permits – often prevents them from renting out apartments. Additionally, discrimination based on language or origin also plays a role, as do prejudices with regard to the long-term willingness and ability of refugees to pay their rent.

Workshops for developers and real estate market actors could be a means to sensitize these stakeholders for the specific challenges faced by refugees in the housing market. In addition, public anti-discrimination initiatives can offer legal information and support for the target group as well as raise the awareness amongst landlords. A dialogue between relevant actors, such as city administrations, housing companies, researchers, NGOs and advocacy groups, creates spaces to reflect on current practices, to form new alliances and foster alternative actions towards more inclusive housing policies in European cities.

Recommendations:

- **Anti-discrimination initiatives like 1) legal information and support for the target group, 2) awareness raising among landlords**
- **Diversity awareness qualification workshops for housing companies**
- **Exchange among relevant local actors in municipalities and creation of common platforms and alliances**
- **Community work in residential complexes with diverse population**

Practice:

Friend in Umeå

*Non-profit network
enhancing social inclusion
and easier access to
housing*

SE | Umeå



Photo: Vän i Umeå

The network matches people with a person or family and organises cafes, sport activities, excursions and parties. Friend in Umeå has also played an important role in arranging housing through their network of volunteers by making people open their homes for homeless refugee youths.

► More information on page 32



Policy Brief II

Special Types of Inclusive Housing

Different types of housing for refugees have emerged

Housing and integration belong together. An own housing space offers possibilities for retreat as well as self-determined meetings and social interactions. Respecting the needs of refugees and fostering adequate living conditions also means improving their chances of integration. Today different types of housing are encountered by refugees. Some of them can be described as „special“ types of housing because they lay outside the regular housing market. Generally, these forms of housing involve certain constraints when it comes to residence duration,

contracts, standards, costs and other aspects. They do not represent a regular housing offer since they are not necessarily created by typical market actors such as housing associations or investors and often include community-oriented forms of housing that are supported by social organisations or initiatives. Especially regarding social issues, creative solutions often emerge in these forms of housing that also activate social capital for building bridges into local networks and neighbourhoods.

Finding ways from accommodation to housing

The accommodation of refugees is a controversial issue in Austria, Germany and Sweden. There is a professional consensus that decentralised housing – directly in local neighbourhoods – improves the conditions for integration. Discussions about improving the standards of accommodation and housing have been very much driven by the NGO sector so far.

However, the sheer number of refugees from 2015 onwards sometimes left no other option than to open temporary shelters for mass accommodation. In many cases, the shelters became also „waiting rooms“ during the asylum procedure. At the same time, the provision of shelters was of importance for national politics to counter the flaring discussions about „unregulated“ migration and, in this context, has also been used as a regulatory instrument. The housing shortage in the cities meant that many refugees could hardly leave the shelters, even after very long procedural periods. This once again revealed the deficits regarding affordable and adequate housing provision in European cities.

The regulations for housing for refugees differ to some extent in Austria, Germany and Sweden. More significant, however, is the gap that repeatedly opens: On one hand, there are high and ambitious goals with regard to integration and housing market policy and on the other hand, there is an implementation practice that often does not live up to these goals and high standards. Especially in times of particularly high immigration and influx of refugees, resources are needed to find pragmatic and appropriate answers and solutions to an already tense situation on the housing market. Here the experiences of community projects can help to implement cooperative and supportive forms of housing also „beyond standards“.

Recommendations:

- **Improve standards of accommodation with expertise of NGOs**
- **Seek cooperation with refugees in the design of the accommodation**
- **Offer support in everyday life (e.g. language courses, orientation, qualification, family help, therapy)**

Practice:

Community House Spinelli

*Refugee accommodation
built by students and
refugees*

DE | Mannheim



Photo: Yannick Wegner, Mannheim

Architecture students from University of Technology Kaiserslautern designed and built a communal house made of wood together with refugees. They aimed to create a space with a high quality of stay. With the construction, the new residents had the opportunity to actively shape parts of the facility.

► www.archdaily.com

Creating different types of housing for refugees

The term „special types of housing“ indicates that they are different from “regular” housing. Distinguishing features can be tenure, type and dedication of housing, access, socio-spatial integration and support services. There is a broad spectrum of possible types of housing which also differ to some extent with reference to the three countries. Generally speaking, the following types of housing can be encountered by refugees, in different stages of their arrival process.

Community accommodation / shared shelter

Initial collective accommodations and designated asylum seekers' shelters are often the first point of contact. A distinction needs to be made between temporary emergency accommodation (often built up in existing, temporary used halls) and regular facilities, which have different standards of equipment. Especially in the case of longer stays, it is necessary to integrate social and educational services or to organise a cooperation with social organisations and NGOs.

Designated newly built accommodation

To avoid a competitive situation between refugees and other groups with low incomes, new modular buildings were constructed in all three countries especially for the target group. Frequently, those buildings were intended to be temporary, with lower building standards, developed via accelerated administrative procedures and the goal to allow rapid construction. However, the types of housing often include an opening perspective to other groups (e.g. students). Their locations can prove problematic if they are located in the urban periphery.

Decentralised accommodation / pool of designated flats

Decentralised accommodation is usually considered the ideal solution in terms of social integration. A pool of designated flats within the existing housing stock – e.g. of municipal, limited-profit or even private housing companies – are made available for refugees. In most cases, social organisations or the municipality rent flats, which are then sublet to the target group. This form of housing can be described as “dedicated flats” in ordinary housing estates. Also some collaborative housing projects offer “solidarity flats” for vulnerable groups such as refugees at a lower rent.

Inclusion in the regular housing market

In general, with the residence permit the regular housing market is open to refugees. In many cities, however, they then often face other difficulties in gaining access to affordable or subsidised housing. In the case of public housing, criteria such as length of stay, waiting time and urgency are relevant for the provision of flats. As a consequence, refugees often – at least for a transitional period – find housing mostly in the private housing market, especially in the „grey“ housing market of expensive short-term rentals.

All four types of housing outlined above are needed. Therefore, it is important to further develop all forms in terms of standards and permeability from one type to another.

Crosscutting these types of housing are the so-called “integrative housing projects” that have emerged in the three participating countries in recent years. These projects pursue intercultural, moderated living together of different social groups and people of different geographical origins. In addition, the architectural and spatial design often attempts to strengthen social interactions and to create connections in the neighbourhood.

Recommendations:

- **Consider the different needs of the target groups and verify the range of offers, e.g. for large families or young people**
- **Enable participation: Living in „in-between situations“ is often of long duration, therefore refugees should be involved in decisions about their housing situation**
- **Build bridges to the neighbourhood and offer shared spaces: Communal shared spaces are crucial for integration and exchange between refugees and other people around them**
- **Collective spaces should be both outdoor and indoor in order to enable refugees to meet and spend time together without the need to consume goods**

Overcoming obstacles in the arrival process

The system of different types of accommodation for refugees leads to problematic transitions between these forms of housing. Accidental transitions and especially the lowering of standards can create ruptures in the arrival process, especially because the changes are not self-determined. Children must change schools, social contacts in the living environment are left behind or not established at all because it seems not worth it.

Ideally, the stay in the initial accommodation should be as short as possible. Then follows – even without recognition as a refugee or as a person with subsidiary protection – the assisted move into a flat of one's own. If there is a change in the residence status, the refugee should be able to take over the tenancy agreement. In this case, the status of the flat changes and the person does not have to move into another flat.

However, the described process too often remains theory. The attitude is maintained that it is possible for refugees to find their own, adequate housing. This is not impossible, but access to affordable housing is in many cases full of hurdles – in all three countries. Alternatives lay in municipal emergency shelters or in living with relatives or friends with the risk of overcrowding or long lasting unsecure housing conditions.

There are initiatives in Hamburg, Vienna and Umeå to improve access to the housing market. Most of them are second-hand contracts for a limited period, often arranged through NGOs. In Hamburg, anyone with a secure residence permit for more than six months can apply for a flat from the municipal housing association SAGA.

In Umeå, refugees with a legal status receive a temporary housing contract through the municipality for a maximum of 4 years. After that, they have to apply for a contract for a primary residence in the same queue as Swedish citizens. The waiting time for a large family can be up to 15 years. There have been modular flats built in recent years exclusively to house newly arrived refugees, but these have all been small one-bedroom flats.

In Vienna the special allocation programme of the municipal housing company Wiener Wohnen works with NGOs who have first-hand contracts, which are sub-rented to refugees for a period of one year. After this, the resident has an opportunity for an own unlimited contract. Similar forms of cooperation are being developed in the limited-profit housing sector.

Recommendations:

- **Set up a more realistic timetable for refugees who have to find accommodation on their own**
- **Ease the requirements (e.g. length of stay) to obtain a lease in subsidised / public housing**
- **Create social housing pools for refugees and expand the approach of “Housing First”**
- **Enforce measures against discrimination, e.g. equality law**
- **Roll out information campaigns and provide peer-workers to support the search for housing and avoid illegal estate agencies**
- **Offer specific programmes which provide accommodation, job qualification and integration measures preferably where housing stock is available (e.g. areas with a higher vacancy rate)**

Practice:

Municipal flats for refugees

*Municipal Housing Company
Bostaden*

SE | Umeå



Photo: Bostaden, Umeå Kommun

The municipal housing company in Umeå offers approximately 300-350 apartments for refugees. Refugees receive a housing contract for a certain period of time and afterwards can apply for a contract for a primary residence like Swedish citizens.

► www.bostaden.umea.se

The most inclusive housing type often is the most invisible one

It sounds like a contradiction – “special” types of housing cannot be invisible, because they are special and therefore distinguishable.

Resolving this contradiction is firstly a question of scale. Accommodation for refugees is often – in view of the large number of people taken care of – planned on a large scale. This means that many flats and thus new social enclaves will be created at the respective locations. Alternatively, the housing and thus the social and integrative task could be distributed over many neighbourhoods. Each individual project would be manageable and become part of the neighbourhoods.

Secondly, it is a question of the actors. It turns out to be rather an „efficiency trap“ to think that access to social support could be better organised from one source (one central location / shared accommodation). Experiences with the opening of communal types of housing for refugees show that this can create lower-threshold access to society.

The lack of affordable housing affects vulnerable groups in all countries, including refugees. Understanding “special” types of housing only as a visible transitional offer, may reinforce vulnerability and also segregation. Examples from the Swedish organisation Vän i Umeå show that contacts with locals from the host country increase the likelihood that refugees will not only get accommodation but also their own tenancy agreement. In Umeå as well as in Vienna and Hamburg, there are projects that aim to improve refugees’ ability to find sustainable and adequate housing through networking and social cohesion projects, but also to become part of the production of inclusive and healthy neighbourhoods.

The policy task is therefore not only to create inclusive housing for refugees, but more generally to establish accessibility, affordability and adequacy as benchmarks for the development of housing.

Furthermore, the creation of affordable housing requires an active urban land policy. As it is predominantly a task of the municipalities to provide for housing, they need access to land to be able to better provide for affordable housing for all – including refugees.

Recommendations:

- **Promote new understanding: Housing for refugees is about more than „just“ providing accommodation, it is about providing possibilities for integration and social inclusion**
- **Improve access to land to better provide for affordable housing for all, including refugees**
- **Distribute housing for refugees across the city area in a decentralised way**
- **Involve community-oriented groups of developers and initiatives in the creation of housing**
- **Build a framework to engage also the private market to contribute to social / affordable housing (e.g. by establishing urban development contracts for new housing areas in a city)**
- **Support a social mixture of tenants in each house, by avoiding a discriminatory rental practice based on ethnic criteria**

Practice:

Que[e]rbau Seestadt

*Collaborative housing
project in Seestadt*

AT | Vienna

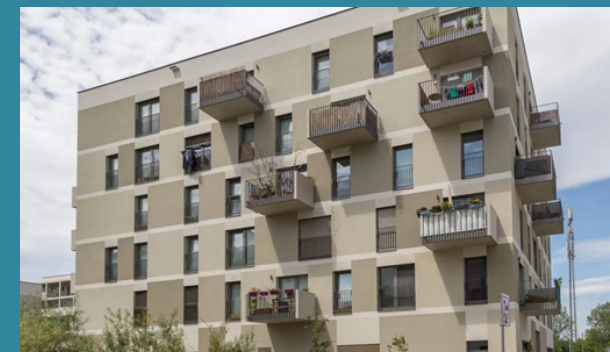


Photo: Que[e]rbau

Que[e]rbau is a housing project located in Seestadt in Vienna, one of the largest urban development areas in Europe. The collaborative housing project offers housing for refugees and shows how civil society initiatives can make a contribution to inclusive housing. 2 apartments are reserved for persons with a refugee background. There is a cooperation with an NGO.

► More information on page 25



Policy Brief III

Governance for Inclusive Housing

Inclusive neighbourhoods are supported by many actors

The guiding principle of the socially mixed city is widely shared, although segregation processes often characterise urban reality. There are also visible and invisible fault lines running through the housing markets of cities and their neighbourhoods. The obvious ones result from location, building age, technical equipment, furnishing and architectural design. The often less obvious ones are based on ownership structures in the private, public or non-profit sector and the resulting letting or occupancy practices. In addition, the existence of support structures

such as neighbourhood meetings, social organisations or educational institutions can promote the inclusion of arriving refugees. The different constellations result in different integration tasks, but also differences in the respective performance of the neighbourhoods and actors. These can hardly be levelled out. However, in order to prevent the social islands of the urban archipelago from drifting further apart, the cooperation of the cities with the housing market actors and a balanced distribution of the challenges and tasks is indispensable.

Anchoring affordable housing in municipal concepts

The three cities of Hamburg, Vienna and Umeå have been experiencing significant demographic growth and are confronted with shortages on the housing market. However, the importance of affordable housing in the context of the existing municipal development strategies of the three cities differs, which reflects the self-image and the municipal tasks in housing provision.

In Vienna's Urban Development Plan (STEP) 2025 from 2014, the tradition of municipal and subsidised housing construction is described as the basis of social mixture, affordability and a high quality of life. With a view to the future, it is formulated that „social housing must be a supporting pillar of the creation of housing and in particular also offer attractive and affordable offers for lower-income house-holds“. In 2021, the preparation of the new STEP 2035 started. It aims to create the basis for the spatial transformation of Vienna towards a climate-friendly, social and robust city, in which affordable housing will once again play a key role.

In 2014, the goals of Hamburg's urban development were formulated under the title „green, just, growing city on the waterfront“. In the area of housing supply, the goal is that people can find adequate and affordable living space in a neighbourhood with a high quality of life and at the same time have access to educational opportunities. The main element of the strategy is Hamburg's housing programme, which has been operationalised through the „Alliance for Housing in Hamburg“ and intends to contribute to the social mix and the provision of housing for various target groups.

The municipal housing company SAGA plays a key role in the provision of housing – as a housing stock holder and neighbour-hood developer as well as creator of new, mainly subsidised housing.

Umeå's vision is to grow to 200,000 inhabitants by 2050. To achieve this goal, a Comprehensive Plan for Umeå Municipality was adopted in 2018, which brings together all strategies that support and stimulate continuous, sustainable growth. With regard to housing, the Comprehensive Plan defines future residential areas and guidelines for redensification.

The Umeå Municipality's Housing supply programme (2020) identifies combating segregation, improving the accessibility of the housing stock and increasing affordable housing as objectives for a functioning housing market. However, the focus of the implementation lies on new construction, for which the municipality is creating the planning conditions, but which is, due to currently rising building costs, also becoming gradually less affordable.

Recommendations:

- **Anchor urban development goals for housing supply strategically and conceptually**
- **Specify and qualify goals for the development of the housing market**
- **New construction alone is not enough - consider also housing supply in the existing stock and define the contribution of new construction to social justice**
- **Understand municipalities and municipal housing companies as pioneers for inclusive housing**

Building municipal alliances for housing

A major goal of housing policy in all three cities is to expand the housing stock through new construction. However, this alone is not enough to ensure affordable housing for disadvantaged target groups. Accessibility and affordability can be ensured on one hand by rules for building – also in combination with subsidies – and on the other hand by the allocation of land to (social, non-profit) developers.

The implementation of housing policy goals is a joint effort of many housing market actors everywhere – including Hamburg, Vienna and Umeå. However, these actors are addressed and involved in different ways. Vienna sees it as a municipal task to cover the basic need for housing. The city has the „largest municipal property management in Europe“ in the form of Wiener Wohnen, the municipal housing company with over 220,000 housing units. In the last decades the municipality also focused on subsidising the construction of new housing, mainly realized by limited-profit housing associations. In Umeå, discussions were held with various property owners and developers in the course of preparing the housing supply programme. The aim was to jointly identify the crucial aspects for managing the housing supply in the municipality and to reach a shared understanding of the target vision.

Hamburg has been implementing a cooperative policy approach since 2011 by forging an alliance between the city, housing companies and large tenants' organisations. Advantages are seen in the continuous exchange, among other things, about requirements and expectations for housing construction and the provision of suitable housing for different resident groups. The companies of the housing industry and their associations speak „with one voice“. In this way, conflicts of interest can be resolved at an early stage. In the case of controversial projects, transparent and consensus-oriented decision-making takes place. In addition, calculable investment conditions have been created – with a view to housing construction goals. Joint steps and time schedules as well as mechanisms for (de)escalation have been agreed upon. The alliance is seen by all actors as a basis for mutual trust.

Recommendations:

- **Perceive, expand and address the landscape of actors (Housing+)**
- **Create a cooperative climate**
- **Public sector drives new alliances and involves private developers**
- **Establish new cultures for discussion and decision-making**

Practice:

Alliance for Housing

Cooperation between city, districts, housing market actors and tenants

DE | Hamburg



Photo: Stadt Hamburg

Actors from the city administration, housing companies and tenants' organisations form a new alliance in order to foster decent and affordable housing, especially for vulnerable groups. Agreements on quantitative and qualitative targets lead to a high level of commitment.

► www.hamburg.de

Cooperating with the public and non-profit housing sector

Non-profit providers play a central role in providing housing for low-income households and others with access difficulties on the housing market. Limited-profit status in the narrower sense only (still) exists in Austria. Nevertheless, the beginnings of non-profit and cooperative housing companies in the mid-19th century can be traced back to the creation of housing alternatives to the existing until that moment mostly private housing market offers. Although a distinction is often made between non-profit and public / municipal enterprises, they share similar characteristics, including cost-based rents, social criteria for renting and the limitation of returns.

Municipalities can set the course for the activities of the public housing sector. This includes price-reduced land allocation and other subsidy programmes.

Above all, however, it is federal and state regulations that extend or limit the scope of action. For example, public housing companies in Sweden have had to operate according to market principles since 2011, which means that they are not allowed to act in a way that „distorts competition“. This changed the framework conditions – similar to the abolition of non-profit status in Germany in 1990.

The example of Austria can be used to see what value a long-term socially rented housing segment can have. The private companies and cooperatives organised in the Austrian Federation of Limited-profit Housing Associations are on the one hand active as a lobby and on the other hand work together with municipalities and other organisations to create affordable long-term housing on a project basis.

Recommendations:

- **Institutionalise the orientation towards the common good in order to standardise the rules for renting and to strengthen the affordability of rents**
- **Define criteria for strategic cooperation between municipalities and public or non-profit housing companies**
- **Support innovative cooperation projects of public or non-profit housing companies**
- **Demonstrate political will and commitment for new cooperative ventures**
- **Encourage housing companies and social organisations to work together**

Practice:

Arriving at home

Initiative of Homeless Aid and Limited-profit Housing Associations

AT



Photo: BAWO / GBV

The project promotes “Housing First” and is aimed specifically at people at risk of poverty or exclusion who have lost their home or are threatened with losing their home as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic. In 12 months, 300 apartments in the limited-profit housing sector have been brokered.

- ▶ www.bawo.at
- ▶ www.gbv.at

Creating impulses for innovative partnerships

A certain degree of intrinsic motivation is necessary for actors to cooperate. Based on this, external reasons can also promote the willingness to cooperate. Suitable framework conditions must be created to attract a broad and heterogeneous spectrum of actors, including the private housing sector. National, state and EU-wide funding programmes in the field of housing and integration can provide impetus by implementing guidelines on the range of actors, on the content of target groups and on cooperation relations.

In Hamburg and Vienna, there is a long-standing practice of awarding municipal properties according to concept quality. Hamburg evaluates the submissions according to the three perspectives „housing and social aspects“, „urban development and climate adaptation“ and „energy and building ecology“. In the housing developers' competitions in Vienna, realisation concepts are expected according to the criteria of the 4-pillar model (architecture, ecology, economy and social sustainability). For selected building sites, joint competitions are mandatory if coordinated projects are to be evaluated together due to the site configuration or special tasks (e.g. intercultural housing).

In this way, the cities provide thematic impulses and create an occasion for new partnerships to come together. Experience shows that the willingness to cooperate increases on the basis of positive experiences. Nevertheless, it is advisable that any expansion of the spectrum of actors – housing associations, planners as well as social or socio-cultural actors – should be flanked by municipal initiatives. Formats and incentives must be created, especially to build bridges to private housing market actors. In addition, the range between public and private use, between voluntariness and political pressure must be explored and the appropriate, commitment-oriented form of participation found.

Cooperation for social, affordable housing must be aware of and take into account the different needs of different disadvantaged groups, weigh them up and avoid competition and exclusion.

Recommendations:

- **Make municipalities fit for initiating and leading new forms of cooperation**
- **Winning over private housing market actors by influencing the design of goals and topics, e.g. in urban development areas**
- **Use targeted funding programmes and calls at national, state and municipal level to give impetus for private actors to engage in cooperative ventures**
- **Promote orientation on goals and the monitoring of cooperation**

Inclusive Housing Policies:

Inspiring practice examples from Austria, Germany and Sweden

In the course of the project we collected best practice examples from the three countries Austria, Germany and Sweden. They show different aspects and innovative approaches for housing and the promotion of social inclusion for refugees during their process of arriving and establishing a new home.

With this collection of innovative projects and initiatives, we intend to inspire municipalities and other stakeholders to develop further inclusive practices for housing and integration.

HAWI (AT | Vienna)

Project duration: 2016-2018

Funding: *public funds and private donations*

Target group: *refugees and locals of 15-25 years*

Location: *Vienna*

Category: *housing project, sharing*

The housing project *HAWI* was opened in 2016 by the non-governmental organization Caritas in the tenth district of Vienna, Austria. It gathered over a hundred young asylum seekers, students and apprentices under one roof, sharing a room in twos, threes or fours. It was intended for young people between the ages of 15 and 25 and was the first project of this kind in Vienna.

Two floors of a former factory were specially refurbished for the project, with students from the University of Technology playing a key role. As part of the university project “Home, not shelter”, they developed a construction that could be individualized and easily constructed. The residents were allowed and expected to help design their rooms and participate in the construction. This process created a sense of community among the diverse residents.

HAWI was financed by public subsidies for the assigned asylum seekers, as well as by the rent (between 240 and 260 euros) and by donations. In 2018, the dormitory was closed due to lack of funding.



Photo: Caritas der Erzdiözese Wien



Photo: Bellevue di Monaco

Bellevue di Monaco (DE | Munich)

Project duration: *since April 2016*

Funding: *City of Munich, BuntStiftung München, BayWa, Sternstunden, Bavarian Ministry of the Interior*

Target group: *asylum seekers, refugees, locals*

Location: *Munich*

Category: *housing project, counselling, cultural events*

Bellevue di Monaco is a residential and cultural centre for refugees and interested residents of Munich in the heart of the city. *Bellevue di Monaco* offers an open information cafe on the ground floor. The cafe is organised and run together with refugees. There are low-threshold information and counselling services for refugees, but also for long-established residents of Munich who offer help or are looking for contact. In the residential buildings there are, on the one hand, places for young refugees who are accompanied into an independent life after being looked after by the youth welfare service. On the other hand, there are six flats for refugees with special needs, especially families.

In addition, a diverse cultural programme including theatre, small concerts, readings, panel discussions, as well as more intensive counselling services, language courses and trainings take place in the rear building.

Website: www.bellevuedimonaco.de

Viva Integration (SE | Umeå)

Project duration: *since November 2018*

Funding: *Vinnova, Swedish Energy Agency, Formas*

Target group: *newly arrived persons*

Location: *Umeå*

Category: *housing project, sharing*

Viva Integration is the integration department in Umeå municipality. *Viva Integration* works to establish a good reception of newly arrived adults and their families who are assigned to Umeå municipality via the Migration Agency after they have received a residence permit. The arriving persons have previously either lived in a facility in a municipality in Sweden or arrived on a quota through the UN refugee agency UNHCR or as a connection to a family member or an unaccompanied child. *Viva Integration's* responsibility also includes those newly arrived persons who have chosen to settle in Umeå on their own, without an instruction.

To achieve these goals, *Viva Integration* has opened a 44-apartment shelter for refugees in Tomtebo in 2019. The apartments have been furnished to a high standard, yet built in a cost-effective manner. Accompanying workshops are organised for the sustainable integration of the newcomers, as well as various workshops and actions to promote the sharing economy.

Website: www.umea.se



Photo: Sharing Cities Sweden



Photo: Verein Que[e]rbau

Que[e]rbau Seestadt (AT | Vienna)

Project duration: 2011-2017 (developm.), 2017 (settlem.)

Funding: *building group*

Target group: *50 adults and 15 children*

Location: *Vienna*

Category: collaborative housing project

Que[e]rbau is a housing project located in Seestadt Aspern in Vienna, which represents one of the largest urban development areas in Europe. The project was founded by the building group *Que[e]rbau Wien*, which promotes and initiates inclusive housing and supports future residents in the construction and operation of socially sustainable housing. The term *Que[e]r* mainly addresses lgbtiq+ people, but the project is open to everybody willing to reflect their roles in partnership and family life.

The housing complex consists of 33 apartments and a co-working space, as well as a fitness room and a teahouse with a seminar room and sauna. The community garden is the connecting element to the neighbouring houses. The common living room Yella Yella! serves as a self-organised neighbourhood center, where people who are not members of the building group can also participate and/or contribute to the programme.

Que[e]rbau Seestadt is renting out two apartments to people with a refugee background. One of them is provided by an intermediate tenant, the Austrian non-governmental organisation Diakonie, the other apartment is administrated by the building group itself.

Website: www.queerbaudotat.wordpress.com

Refugio (DE | Berlin)

Project duration: *since summer 2015*

Funding: *Berliner Stadtmission*

Target group: *new and long-time Berliners*

Location: *Berlin*

Category: *housing project, sharing, cultural events*

On six floors new and long-time Berliners live and work together in *Refugio Berlin*. The first two floors are more for public life; in addition to the *Refugio* cafe, this is where event venues such as the festival and conference hall, the conference floor and the catering kitchen are located. The residents' private living and retreat areas are located on the three upper floors. Everything is crowned by a roof garden with a view on the district of Neukölln. The buffer on the second floor is formed by the studio floor and the dance studio. There are further commercial tenants to enrich the building.

The basic idea of *Refugio Berlin* is to live and work together. A considerate and respectful coexistence is indispensable. This makes it possible for cooperation partners, initiatives, the studio floor and of course the three residential floors to practise an often wild but also very human togetherness with each other on six floors.

Website: www.refugio.berlin



Photo: Refugio Berlin



Photo: Wiener Hilfswerk

House AWAT (AT | Vienna)

Project duration: *since 2017*

Funding: *City of Vienna*

Target group: *asylum seekers, locals*

Location: *Vienna*

Category: *housing project, sharing, job training*

The *Haus AWAT* provides sheltered housing for asylum seekers in the national programme of provision with basic supplies as well as accommodation for recognized refugees. Temporary residents in *Haus AWAT* include single male, female, LGBTQI individuals as well as families. In addition to housing, the ground floor is used as a business zone that opens up to the public. It consists of a coffee bar, a barber shop and a workshop area for tailoring and upcycling. The rooftop, as well as the event room in the upper level, can be used for community events free of charge. *AWAT* combines a holistic approach to refugee integration in a unique manner which includes housing, labour market access and social integration. *AWAT* target group comprises asylum seekers, refugees and members of the neighbourhood and the host society.

AWAT is operated by Wiener Hilfswerk. In regard to the business area at the ground floor (barber shop), *AWAT* collaborates with potential employees and trains apprentices. There is a qualified barista who runs the cafe and trains refugees as baristas, along with tailors for the upcycling shop. The building of *AWAT* is privately owned by a person with a refugee background.

Website: www.hilfswerk.at

Grandhotel Cosmopolis (DE | Augsburg)

Project duration: *since 2011*

Funding: *business enterprises*

Target group: *asylum seekers, hotel guests, public*

Location: *Augsburg*

Category: *housing project, sharing, cultural events*

The *Grandhotel Cosmopolis* is no ordinary hotel and does not intend to be. It is a place that consists of communal accommodation for asylum seekers, studios, offices for NGOs, work rooms and a hotel with gastronomic and cultural offers. It is a social work of art in Augsburg's cathedral district, which aims to set the tone for peaceful coexistence in modern urban society.

The Diakonie is the owner of the building. The different parts of the building are rented by two different parties. The government of Swabia is the tenant for the hotel rooms of the asylum seekers. Mainly families live there, sometimes also single women and men. The non-profit association „Grandhotel Cosmopolis e.V.“ rents the hotel, the public restaurant, the studio and the cafe. In addition to the 8 individually designed double rooms with washing facilities, there is also a large seminar room that can be rented above the roofs of Augsburg.

Website: www.grandhotel-cosmopolis.org



Photo: Grandhotel Cosmopolis Augsburg



Photo: Johan Lilja

A safe start in Sweden (SE)

Project duration: since *February 2022*

Funding: *donations, cooperation with business sector*

Target group: *Ukrainian refugees, volunteers*

Location: *all over Sweden with a focus on Stockholm*

Category: *housing project, sharing*

The project *A safe start in Sweden* started in February 2022, after the military invasion of Ukraine. Four organisations (Save the Children Sweden, The National Association for City Missions in Sweden, Skill Shift Initiative and Airbnb.org) formed the core group and collaborated with several partners in the NGO-sector as well as in the business world. The aim of the project was to be able to quickly arrange safe accommodation options for a shorter period, as a complement to the Swedish Migration Agency's accommodation.

The Airbnb.org platform seeks to help people with accommodation in times of crisis. Another platform for volunteers working as contact persons for the Ukrainian families was also created. All contact persons had to attend several training courses to feel secure in their assignment. Background checks were also carried out on landlords and contact persons, in order to guarantee accommodation solutions that were as safe as possible.

A key component in the project is broad competence and cooperation across sectors, as well as the ability to act quickly and add resources when needed.

Website: www.tryggstartisverige.se

A sustainable life concept (SE | Malmö and Lund)

Project duration: *since 2016*

Funding: *donations, IKEA, IKANO Bank, City of Malmö, Lund municipality, MKB, LKF*

Target group: *newly arrived families*

Location: *Malmö, Lund*

Category: *housing project, sharing, social inclusion*

The project *A sustainable life concept* is based on children's perspectives and newcomer's own needs and preconditions. Save the Children Sweden carried out the project together with IKEA, IKANO Bank, Lund municipality, City of Malmö, MKB Fastighets AB (MKB), Lunds Kommuns Fastighets AB (LKF), as well as the target group of the project. The main focus of the project was to develop a model to enable social inclusion for newly arrived families who have been placed in temporary housing.

The model is based on three main components: indoor environment, outdoor environment and the social kit. Each organisation contributed with its respective area of expertise. The project constitutes of several different actors coming together with the aim of facilitating, for example, club activities for newly arrived children and adults, which in turn leads to increased social inclusion with the residents in the centre. Each organisation's area of expertise contributed to solving a complex societal challenge together with the target group.

Website: www.raddabarnen.se



Photo: Johan Lilja



Grätzeleltern (AT | Vienna)

Project duration: *since 2012*

Funding: *Austrian Climate and Energy Fund, Viennese Health Promotion, Austrian Ministry of Social Affairs, donations*

Target group: *newly arrived persons, volunteers*

Location: *Vienna*

Category: *counselling, peer-to-peer, cultural events*

The project *Grätzeleltern* (Neighbourhood Parents), initiated by the Neighbourhood and Community Work of Caritas Vienna, supports newly arriving residents in improving their housing and living situation. *Grätzeleltern* are voluntary multipliers from different communities and with different backgrounds who visit people from their community or in their neighbourhood on request. Based on their own experiences in the context of migration they are able to give practical knowledge, build bridges to existing offers and services in the city and support on the way to know more about formal and informal rules in the new society, about rights and possibilities.

The multipliers are supported by social workers from Caritas Vienna and receive extensive training at the beginning of their work as well as ongoing coaching and support.

Currently, 35 multipliers from 15 different countries are involved in the project. They support more than 250 households per year and offer their services in more than 20 languages.

Website: www.caritas-stadtteilarbeit.at

Vän i Umeå (SE | Umeå)

Project duration: *since 2011*

Funding: *various, amongst others the city of Umeå*

Target group: *refugees, volunteers*

Location: *Umeå*

Category: *sharing, social inclusion, cultural events*

Vän i Umeå (Friend in Umea) is a non-profit network for social inclusion and access to housing located in the city of Umeå in Sweden. The network matches refugees with local volunteers and organises cafes, sport activities, excursions and parties. *Vän i Umeå* has also played an important role in arranging housing through their network of volunteers by making people open their homes for homeless refugee youths.

The project started as an initiative against loneliness and for societal integration by the Church of Sweden, the Red Cross, Save the Children and the youth association KFUM in September 2011. In 2017, *Vän i Umeå* managed to implement a private-public partnership with the municipality of Umeå, which enabled the organisation to hire three people to work on matchmaking of buddies, activities and leadership.

Website: www.vaniumea.se



Photo: Vän i Umeå



Photo: Fördern & Wohnen

Move-in and Accompany Team (DE | Hamburg)

Project duration: *since 2019*

Funding: *Fördern & Wohnen Hamburg*

Target group: *entitled refugees, homeless people*

Location: *Hamburg*

Type: *counselling and support service*

With the *Einzugs- und Begleiteteam - EBT* (Move-in and Accompany Team) of the municipal company Fördern & Wohnen, Hamburg has provided a support service for households which, for various reasons, find it difficult to find an apartment on their own in the housing market. The users of the service are generally homeless and come from publicly provided accommodation. This also includes households with refugee backgrounds who are entitled to stay.

The tasks of the *EBT* include providing support in the search for housing, accompanying households to viewings of apartments and handing over keys, helping in concluding housing-related contracts and informing households about their rights and obligations in a rental relationship. In case of problems during the tenancy, landlords who have rented out an apartment to a household in need of housing, can consult the *EBT* up to one year after the conclusion of the lease. If necessary, the *EBT* conducts mediation talks with landlords and neighbours or supports the respective tenant in making use of other assistance systems.

Website: www.foerdernundwohnen.de

Sharing Cities (SE | Umeå)

Project duration: 2017-2021

Funding: Swedish strategic innovation programme

Target group: public with a focus on newly arriving persons

Location: Stockholm, Gothenburg, Malmö, Umeå

Category: sharing, networking

Sharing Cities Sweden was a national programme to help establish Sweden as a country that actively and critically works with the sharing economy in cities. Between 2017 and 2021 *Sharing Cities* Sweden established world-leading test-beds for the sharing economy in Stockholm, Gothenburg, Malmö and Umeå. Through the test-beds sharing services and digital solutions were developed, tested and evaluated.

In Umeå, as in many other cities, integration work is one of the main points on the agenda and Umeå also incorporates gender equality aspects. *Sharing Cities* Sweden emphasises that it is important to take into account the social dimension of the sharing economy. Around these issues, the test-bed collaborates with the integration department, Viva integration, in Umeå municipality. Among other things, they run a project on sharing services and integration.

Website: www.sharingcities.se



Photo: Sharing Cities Sweden

Fair Renting - Fair Living (DE | Berlin)

Project duration: *since 2017*

Funding: *City of Berlin*

Target group: *refugees, city administration, politics, housing companies*

Location: *Berlin*

Category: *counselling and support, lobbying, networking*

Fair Mieten – Fair Wohnen (Fair Renting – Fair Living) is a specialised agency against discrimination on the housing market. In cooperation with politics, city administration, self-organised groups frequently affected by discrimination and the housing industry, it promotes through preventive action and dialogue a culture of fair renting in Berlin and supports those affected by unjust treatment on the housing market.

Apart from multilingual and partisan counselling, important strategic instruments of the agency's work are expert dialogues as well as the mission statement „Berlin vermietet fair!“ (Berlin rents fairly!), which was developed in cooperation with the advisory board and civil society actors. Additionally, *Fair Mieten – Fair Wohnen* offers direct support in counteracting discrimination in neighbourhood environments.

The expert agency is being implemented by UP19 Stadtforschung+Beratung GmbH and Türkischer Bund in Berlin-Brandenburg e.V.

Websites: www.fairmieten-fairwohnen.de
www.berlin-vermietet-fair.de



Photo: fairmieten-fairwohnen

Start-up Loan (AT | Styria)

Project duration: *since 2015*

Funding: *Caritas*

Target group: *recently entitled refugees*

Location: *Styria*

Category: *financial support, counselling*

The costs associated with moving are often a difficult hurdle to overcome, especially for people with low incomes who want or need to change their housing situation. When granted asylum – and therefore after months or years of staying in an accommodation for refugees not being allowed to enter the labour market – people need to find affordable housing within very little time (usually up to four months). A solidarity fund helps to pay upfront costs such as guarantee deposits, equity shares for construction costs or the furniture of the apartment. One example of this approach, which is specifically aimed at recently entitled refugees, is *Starthilfedarlehen* (Start-up Loan) of Caritas Styria.

Caritas Styria has set up a fund specifically for refugees with a positive asylum decision who move from state-supported accommodation to private housing. The Caritas start-up loan is designed flexibly which makes it possible to support other areas of integration in the form of an interest-free loan on a case-by-case basis, including language acquisition and education, support in entering the labour market or the promotion of social participation.

Website: www.caritas-steiermark.at



Photo: Maria Ziegler



Photo: Universitätsstadt Tübingen

Tübingen Procedure (DE | Tübingen)

Project duration: *since 2016*

Funding: *City of Tübingen*

Target group: *refugees and locals*

Location: *Tübingen*

Category: *housing projects, social inclusion*

In a pilot project of the National Urban Development Policy, a special procedure was launched in 2016 in Tübingen, Germany - the *Tübinger Verfahren*. The citizenry was asked to develop special forms of housing not only for themselves but also for refugees. The city in return pledged to rent these apartments for 10 years and use them to accommodate refugees. Concepts that offered long-term affordable rents were given special consideration. By now, a total of 12 plots or parcels of land were awarded by the city to innovative project developers as part of this process. Among the winning applicants are private as well as non-profit building companies and initiatives for cooperative housing.

The selected conceptual designs all consider aspects of sustainability. A high degree of neutrality of use and adaptation to changing user needs thus played an important role in the planning process. Flexible common rooms allow for different uses such as language classes, craft workshops, communal childcare and adult learning. The promotion of functioning neighbourhoods in the newly constructed buildings, as well as in the surrounding area, was also considered in the award procedure since it is considered an essential factor for integration.

Zoning category „subsidised housing“ (AT | Vienna)

Project duration: *since 2019*

Funding: -

Target group: *housing developers*

Location: *Vienna*

Category: *legal regulation, urban planning process*

Housing costs are a hot topic in many European cities. Dramatically rising prices are eroding the affordability of housing for more and more people and leading to precarious living conditions. The main cause of this negative dynamic are exploding land prices, which are explained not only by population growth, but also by a land and real estate market that is increasingly seen as an object for private investment. Vienna has therefore decided to strengthen the affordability of housing by implementing the zoning category “subsidised housing” (in German: geförderter Wohnbau), that is applied in urban development areas.

In Vienna, since 2019, a reform of the land use law foresees that in new urban development areas, 2/3 of the newly built flats have to be subsidised housing – which forms the base for limited rental prices in these residential areas over a longer period of time. The new dedication should and will be applied everywhere in the city, even in districts with particularly high average land prices. This is to enable social mixing and a sufficient quantity of affordable housing.



Photo: Amélie Chapalain

Practice and Transfer Partners

We would like to thank all practice and transfer partners who participated in the three workshops and contributed to the discussions as well as the conclusions and recommendations.

Hamburg (Germany)

Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg, Department for Urban Development and Housing

SAGA Group of companies (Municipal Housing Association in Hamburg)

Association of German Cities

Vienna (Austria)

City of Vienna, Municipal Housing Company (Wiener Wohnen), Department of Social Affairs and Service

Austrian Federation of Limited Profit Housing Associations (GBV), Department of Housing, Economics and Research

The Austrian Association of Cities and Towns

Chamber of Labour Vienna (AK Wien)

Umeå (Sweden)

City of Umeå, Urban Planning Department

Housing association Umeå

Swedish tenants association (Hyresgästföreningen)

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