Housing for Migrants and Refugees in the UNECE Region
Challenges and practices

UNECE

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Geneva, 2021

Preface

Major global phenomena, including international migration, have had a critical impact on the capacity of the housing sector to deliver adequate and affordable housing for all. With governments working to meet the housing need of the local population, migration is often seen as adding further pressure on public budgets.

The *Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing*, endorsed by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) in 2015, is one of the key policy documents that guide the work of the UNECE Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management. In line with the main goal of the Charter to support member States in ensuring universal access to decent, adequate, affordable and healthy housing, especially for vulnerable groups like migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced persons and stateless persons, the Committee adopted a decision in 2016 to prepare a study on how countries are addressing the migration crisis through the provision of affordable housing.

The development of the study *Housing for Migrants and Refugees in the UNECE Region: Challenges and practices* began in 2016 and after a series of consultations and revisions, it was finalized in 2020. The Committee approved the study and its contents at its eighty-first session in October 2020 (ECE/HBP/206, para 41).

The study is a compendium of best practices and illustrates that housing for migrants and refugees can positively support local communities and economies, and facilitate their integration. Furthermore, the study highlights the key role of cities and local administrations in housing provision.

Acknowledgements

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Definitions

There is no universally agreed upon legal definition of "migrant". The United Nations International Organization for Migration provides the following definition[1]:

Migrant - An umbrella term, not defined under international law, reflecting the common lay understanding of a person who moves away from his or her place of usual residence, whether within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently, and for a variety of reasons. The term includes a number of well-defined legal categories of people, such as migrant workers; persons whose particular types of movements are legally defined, such as smuggled migrants; as well as those whose status or means of movement are not specifically defined under international law, such as international students.

States may distinguish between regular and irregular migrants[2]. It should be noted that the term "migrant" in this publication refers to the migrants holding the legal right to stay on the territory of another State, unless otherwise noted. This report focuses on the migrants in positions of vulnerability, for example, due to low income levels. This is not necessarily the case for all migrants.

Refugees are defined and protected under international law. The Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (1951)[3], as modified by the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees[4], provides the following definition:

Refugee – Subject to certain exceptions, a person who, owing to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinions, is outside of the country of his or her nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.[5]

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[1] International Organization for Migration (IOM), *International Migration Law: Glossary of Migration, No. 34* (Geneva, IOM, 2019). Available at https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/iml_34_glossary.pdf (last accessed 6 November 2020).

[2] There is no universally agreed way of defining these differences in types of migration.

[3] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), *Convention and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees*. Available at https://www.unhcr.org/3b66c2aa10 (last accessed (last accessed 6 November 2020).

[4] Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), *Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees*. Available at https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/ProtocolStatusOfRefugees.aspx (last accessed 6 November 2020).

[5] Convention relating to the Status of Refugees Art. 1A (2). as modified by the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees. Sections C, D, E and F of the Convention Article 1 provide information on the exceptions to the definition.

Executive Summary

Adequate housing was recognized as part of the right to an adequate standard of living in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Adequate housing may include characteristics related to, but not limited to, security of tenure, affordability, habitability, accessibility, location, cultural adequacy, and availability of services, materials, facilities and infrastructure.[6] Global challenges, such as urbanization, migration, climate change, as well as the 2008 global financial crisis, have had a critical impact upon the capacity of the housing sector to deliver adequate housing for all.

The case studies presented in this publication were selected based on interviews with experts, literature reviews and contributions by governments of the member States of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). In selecting the case studies, authors attempted to ensure that the case studies present diverse housing solutions covering the whole housing continuum[7], going beyond emergency shelters. These case studies therefore demonstrate a wide range of good practices for providing affordable and adequate housing for migrants and refugees, which include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Revitalizing depopulated decaying urban neighbourhoods by renovating vacant houses and using them as housing for migrants and refugees (see case studies 1 and 2)

- Addressing the depopulation of rural areas through providing housing for migrants and refugees in rural communities (see case studies 3-6)

- Promoting diverse and sustainable communities through facilitating interaction between local communities and migrants and refugees, including through developing shared public spaces and activities to support integration of the migrants and refugees (see case studies 7-9)

- Developing long-term, sustainable and cost-efficient housing solutions through housing construction and maintenance (see case studies 10-16)

- Building affordable adequate housing through applying innovative architectural design for cheaper but high-quality, modular prefabricated housing (see case studies 17-22)

- Generating additional resources for housing projects for migrants and refugees through partnerships between governments, non-governmental organizations and the private sector (see case studies 23-28).

The case studies demonstrate that access to housing plays a major role in the process of integration of migrants and refugees into a society, as housing location, accessibility, affordability and habitability,

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[6] Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and United Nations Human Settlement Programme (UN-Habitat), *Fact Sheet No. 21/Rev.1, The Right to Adequate Housing,* (Geneva, OHCHR, November 2009). Available at https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/FS21_rev_1_Housing_en.pdf.

[7] "Housing continuum" is a concept used by policy makers to consider the broad range of responses available to help a range of households in different tenures to access affordable and appropriate housing. The concept enables policy makers to move away from a one-size-fits-all strategy of providing public housing, towards 'the range of housing options available to different households on a continuum'. For more information, see https://www.ahuri.edu.au/policy/ahuri-briefs/understanding-the-housing-continuum.

among other factors, have direct impact on the ability of inhabitants to seek employment and access education and healthcare.

The study concludes that most of the existing policies aiming to improve societal integration through housing solutions are often short/medium-term in focus. However, policies supporting housing provision can and should support the medium- and long-term integration of migrants and refugees.

The research conducted suggests that increased coordination between national and local governments through coherent housing policies and programmes can play a key role in addressing access to housing and integration challenges in differing local contexts.

The study demonstrates that while both integration and housing policies are primarily managed at the national level in the UNECE region, arrangements concerning social and economic accommodation of regular migrants frequently take place at the local level; they are planned and managed by local governments. Therefore, strengthening the capacity of local governments to manage housing provision for migrants and refugees is of utmost importance.

The study underlines the critical role of cities in housing migrants and refugees. Attracted by the labour markets, public services and the social capital cities offer, regular migrants and refugees are increasingly drawn towards urban areas, either as a transit hub or an actual destination.

Housing and immigration policies of UNECE member States are varied; experiences of migrants and refugees on reception, integration and access to housing may differ greatly between the countries as well as within the countries, depending on the capacity of each city, neighbourhood or even household. In addition, cultural and historical conditions should also be considered when designing strategies and programmes for housing migrants and refugees.

This study emphasizes the great extent to which the commitment and creativity of governments, cities, housing providers and civil society at large can have an impact in designing and delivering housing solutions. In this context, facilitating the exchange of knowledge and best practices on innovative housing initiatives can help in the successful social and economic integration of migrants and refugees in the UNECE region.

In line with this approach, the study advises that strategies should be designed to encourage the active participation of migrants and refugees in the planning and implementation of related housing projects as well as in housing management. This can take place, for example, through the creation of panels or advisory groups for housing construction or renovation projects, training and employment of migrants and refugees in local housing services, direct involvement of migrants and refugees in the provision or revitalization of buildings and awareness raising of the services they might be entitled to.

Through a range of innovative practices for the provision of housing for migrants and refugees adopted by public, private and non-profit organizations, including homeowner associations and housing cooperatives, this study calls for cooperation. Cooperation should engage all key stakeholders at the national, regional and local levels across different sectors and on different housing tenures and disciplines, to support integration and contribute to improved social cohesion and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Introduction

According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 and the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights of 1966, all individuals have the right to an adequate standard of living. The Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing[8], a non-legally binding document endorsed by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) on 16 April 2015, underlines the importance for the governments to "ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services".

Adequate housing should take into account the principles and related rationales outlined in the Charter: environmental protection, economic effectiveness, social inclusion and participation, and cultural adequacy; including characteristics related to security of tenure, affordability, habitability, accessibility, location, cultural adequacy, and availability of services, materials, facilities and infrastructure. Despite the centrality of the right to an adequate standard of living, including adequate housing, in multiple international instruments, over a billion people around the world are either homeless or live in conditions which are not consistent with their human rights and dignity.[9] In this regard, a major challenge for sustainable urban development, including the provision of housing, is to understand how to respond to major global events, such as mass influx of irregular migrants and economic downturns.

The challenges of providing housing for migrants and refugees are enormous due to the large and increasing number of migrants and refugees globally. In 2015 alone, one million people, refugees and asylum seekers fleeing regional conflicts, civil wars, countries with autocratic regimes, and economic and environmental challenges, crossed Europe through the Mediterranean and the Balkans.[10] A total of 4.5 million people sought asylum from the 27 member countries of the European Union (EU-27) between 2015 and 2019.[11]

The financial crisis of 2008 and the economic recession that followed had a critical negative impact on the housing sector and the ability of governments to address affordable adequate housing needs. By 2015, over 100 million people were cost overburdened, meaning that they spent more than 40 per cent of their disposable incomes on housing. Against this background, the major movement of migrants and refugees in countries in the UNECE region put further pressure on the housing sector of the region, requiring countries to identify innovative solutions at different levels of governance from public, private and non-profit organizations to support the provision of adequate housing for all.

Housing is thus at the forefront of relevant debate. Ensuring that people have access to a place to live is essential to ensure that children, women, men, older persons and youth alike can live in security,

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[8] United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), *The Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing* (Geneva, United Nations, 2014). Available at https://unece.org/housing/charter.

[9] OHCHR and UN-Habitat, *Fact Sheet No. 21/Rev.1, The Right to Adequate Housing.*

[10] Jonathan Clayton and Hereward Holland, Tim Gaynor, ed., "Over one million sea arrivals reach Europe in 2015", UNHCR, 30 December 2015. Available at https://www.unhcr.org/news/latest/2015/12/5683d0b56/million-sea-arrivals-reach-europe-2015.html.

[11] EUROSTAT, "Number of asylum applicants (non-EU-27 citizens), EU-27, 2008–2019", Asylum Statistics. Available at https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Asylum_statistics (accessed on 6 November 2020).

safety and dignity, as well as to ensure that no one is left behind, consistent with the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11[12] of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development[13]. Moreover, housing plays a major role in the integration process as housing location, accessibility and habitability have a direct impact on ability of inhabitants to seek employment and access education and healthcare. The provision of adequate and affordable housing is the primary means through which an integrative process can be supported, alongside opportunities to access employment and education.

When arriving in countries in the UNECE region, migrants and refugees often do not qualify for social housing benefits and must turn to more expensive market-based solutions and they are likely then to suffer from cost overburden in overcrowded and substandard housing. In the context of the ongoing migration movement in the UNECE region, new and pressing challenges have further arisen due to the different profiles of migrants and refugees of today, who are more diverse in terms of their countries of origin, skills, and educational backgrounds compared to previous migration waves.[14]

Most newly arrived migrants and refugees settle in cities. Due to the decentralization process in many countries in the UNECE region, it is usually the local governments who assume social and economic responsibility for integrating regular migrants and refugees in the country; while national governments decide and implement overall migration policies, in general. Cities around the world are facing a persistent challenge to meet an ever-growing demand for housing, spurred by the natural population growth, rural-to-urban migration and increasingly, the urbanization process.

Background to the study

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and its 17 SDGs, particularly SDG 11: "Sustainable Cities and Communities", the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing and the New Urban Agenda[15] are key frameworks that promote the right to an adequate standard of living, including adequate housing. Importantly, these agendas encourage Governments to implement holistic responses to the challenges and opportunities for sustainable urban development presented by migration.

A key input from the UNECE Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management (CUDHLM) in this area is the implementation of the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing Under the principles of environmental protection, economic effectiveness, social inclusion, participation and cultural adequacy, the Charter encourages international cooperation at all levels. One of the main messages of the Charter is the support to universal access to safe, inclusive, accessible and affordable

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[12] United Nations, "Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable", Sustainable Development Goals Knowledge Platform. Available at https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg11.

[13] United Nations, "Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development". Available at: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld.

[14] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), "Is this humanitarian migration crisis different?", Migration Policy Debate, No. 7 (September 2015). Available at www.oecd.org/migration/Is-this-refugee-crisis-different.pdf.

[15] United Nations, document A/RES/71/256. Available at: http://habitat3.org/wp-content/uploads/NUA-English.pdf.

housing, especially for groups such as migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and stateless persons. The CUDHLM at its seventy-seventh session in 2016, discussed the issue of housing for migrants and refugees in view of the lack of adequate, affordable housing in the UNECE region, especially in cities.

The housing dimension of the integration of regular migrants and refugees has been surprisingly under-investigated compared to other integration strategies. Research and policies related to integration of migrants and refugees usually focus on issues such as employment, language and citizenship. Improving migration governance at the city level, including through the provision of housing, was at the heart of the Mediterranean City-to-City Migration (MC2CM) project, funded by the European Commission and the Swiss Development Agency and implemented by the United Nations Human Settlement Programme (UN-Habitat), United Cities and Local Governments and the International Centre for Migration Policy Development. One of the main conclusions of the MC2CM project was the need for cities to focus on the provision of affordable housing for migrants as part of their migrant integration strategies.[16]

The preparation of the UNECE study "Housing for Migrants and Refugees in the UNECE Region: Challenges and practices" started in 2016 with the organization of a joint workshop by UNECE, UN-Habitat and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). The workshop, "Addressing housing affordability issues in the UNECE region", was held as part of the Habitat III Europe Regional Meeting (Prague, 16 and 17 March 2016). At the workshop, representatives of public and private organizations presented and discussed their experiences and practices in providing housing to migrants and refugees, aiming to identify innovative practices at national and local levels among the ones presented at the workshop. Experiences and lessons learned of the MC2CM project of UN-Habitat were presented at the workshop.

Based on the outcomes of the Prague workshop, the UNECE CUDHLM decided to prepare, with the support of its partner organizations, a study on how countries are addressing the migration crisis caused by the mass influx of irregular migrants and asylum seekers, through the provision of affordable housing (ECE/HBP/184)[17]. The study was then carried out during 2016-2017 and a draft report was prepared. The draft report was further revised throughout 2018-2020.

Objectives, methodology and structure of the study

This study aims to provide representatives of local and national governments and stakeholders with examples of good practices for addressing the housing needs of migrants and refugees; and aims to formulate recommendations for improving their access to adequate and affordable housing.

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[16] International Centre for Migration Policy Development, United Cities and Local Governments, UN-Habitat, *Mediterranean City-to-City Migration: Dialogue, Knowledge and Action*. Available at https://www.icmpd.org/fileadmin/1_2018/MC2CM/Policy_Recommendation_EN_Online.pdf.
[17] Available at http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/2015/ECE_HBP_184.en.pdf

The study was prepared based on an extensive literature review and interviews with representatives of local and central governments, international financial institutions, housing providers and third-sector organizations.

The study is organized in the following six sections:

- Part 1 presents case studies on upgrading existing vacant housing stock to house regular migrants and refugees

- Part 2 provides examples on upgrading or refurbishing collective housing

- Part 3 examines mechanisms for improving access to social and affordable housing for migrants and refugees

- Part 4 highlights the key role of housing cooperatives in providing housing

- Part 5 showcases examples of modular housing specifically designed to house migrants and refugees

- Part 6 discusses various mechanisms that can improve access to adequate and affordable housing for migrants and refugees.

Housing and its link to migrants and refugees in the UNECE region

Migration is an important source of prosperity, innovation and sustainable development in the globalized world, including in the UNECE region. Accompanied by societal integration, migration can lead to wide-ranging benefits, both economic and societal, for regular migrants and refugees themselves, and for their host countries.[18] However, migratory movements can often create social, cultural and economic challenges to the receiving communities. From a social and economic standpoint, refugees and migrants often place additional strain on host communities, where access to resources, such as health, education, other social services and employment opportunities, may already be scarce even for members of the host community. In this context, refugees and migrants may become excluded from those resources. Effective policy interventions and strategies can help to overcome these challenges and ensure access of migrants and refugees to adequate housing, health services, education and language courses, and employment.

In 2017, it was estimated that there were approximately 258 million migrants around the world, representing 3.4 per cent of the global population. The total number increased by 85 million (49 per cent) from the 173 million total in 2000.[19]

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[18] International Organization for Migration, *World Migration Report 2018* (Geneva, IOM, 2017). Available at: http://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/wmr_2018_en.pdf.
[19] "The world counted 258 million international migrants in 2017, representing 3.4 per cent of global population," *Population Facts*, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, No. 2017/5 (December 2017). Available at http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/popfacts/PopFacts_2017-5.pdf.

In 2017, the Asian continent was the destination of the largest number of migrants (80 million), followed by Europe (78 million) and Northern America (58 million). Africa (25 million), Latin America and the Caribbean (10 million) and Oceania (8 million) combined hosted around 43 million, or 17 per cent of the global total. Between 2000 and 2017, the global share of international migrants residing in Asia increased from 29 to 31 per cent, while the share of Europe declined from 33 to 30 per cent.[20]

When it comes to forcibly displaced persons, an unprecedented 68.5 million people around the world have been forced from their home due to persecution, conflict, or generalized violence. Among them, nearly 25.4 million people are refugees. Around 85 per cent of displaced persons globally are in developing countries.[21]

In 2019, the number of asylum applications received by the member States of the EU was 676,250.[22] While this number represents a substantial decrease compared to the peak years of 2015 and 2016 when asylum applications totalled over 2.5 million, irregular migration[23] continues to exert pressure on European borders.

This study places the housing challenges faced by migrants and refugees into the wider context of housing trends and challenges in the UNECE region. The United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) has stated that the right to adequate housing should not be interpreted narrowly. Rather, CESCR has stated that the right to adequate housing should be seen as the right for citizens to live somewhere in security, peace and dignity. The CESCR clarified its views on the characteristics of the right to adequate housing in its general comments No. 4 (1991) on the right to adequate housing and No. 7 (1997) on forced evictions.[24]

According to "The Right to Adequate Housing Toolkit",[25] there are several conditions that should be met before particular forms of shelter can constitute "adequate housing". These elements are just as fundamental as the basic supply and availability of housing. For housing to be adequate, it should, at a minimum, meet the following criteria:

- *Security of tenure:* housing is not adequate if its occupants do not have a degree of tenure security which guarantees legal protection against forced evictions, harassment and other threats
- *Availability of services, materials, facilities and infrastructure:* housing is not adequate if its occupants do not have safe drinking water, adequate sanitation, and energy for cooking, heating, lighting, food storage or refuse disposal
- *Affordability:* housing is not adequate if its cost threatens or compromises the occupants' enjoyment of other human rights

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[20] IOM, *World Migration Report 2018*.
[21] UNHCR, "Forced Displacement in 2017", Global Trends (Geneva, UNHCR, June 2018). Available at http://www.unhcr.org/5b27be547.pdf.
[22] EUROSTAT, "Number of asylum applicants (non-EU-27 citizens), EU-27, 2008–2019".
[23] Defined as "Movement of persons that takes place outside the laws, regulations, or international agreements governing the entry into or exit from the State of origin, transit or destination". (IOM, Glossary on Migration).
[24] OHCHR and UN-Habitat (2009), *The Right to Adequate Housing*.
[25] OHCHR, *The Right to Adequate Housing Toolkit*. Available at https://www.ohchr.org/en/issues/housing/toolkit/pages/righttoadequatehousingtoolkit.aspx

- *Habitability:* housing is not adequate if it does not guarantee physical safety or provide adequate space, as well as protection against the cold, damp, heat, rain, wind, other threats to health and structural hazards
- *Accessibility:* housing is not adequate if the specific needs of disadvantaged and marginalized groups are not taken into account
- *Location:* housing is not adequate if it is cut off from employment opportunities, health-care services, schools, childcare centres and other social facilities, or if located in polluted or dangerous areas
- *Cultural adequacy:* housing is not adequate if it does not respect and consider the expression of cultural identity.

Additionally, the United Nations promoted the "Housing at the Centre" approach[26], which positions housing at the centre of national and local urban policies. The "Housing at the Centre" approach is based on the UN-Habitat "Global Housing Strategy"[27], which is grounded on the principles of inclusive cities as the sound foundations for achieving adequate housing for all. Inclusive cities are achieved by mainstreaming human rights in urban development, including housing, in the hopes of producing new and more sustainable housing solutions, especially for groups such as migrants and refugees.

Furthermore, these documents also include the protection against forced evictions, which is a key element of realizing the right to an adequate standard of living, including adequate housing, and is closely linked to security of tenure. The CESCR defines forced evictions as the "permanent or temporary removal against their will of individuals, families and/or communities from the homes and/or land which they occupy, without the provision of, and access to, appropriate forms of legal or other protection."[28]

The Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing stresses that the development of sustainable housing in the UNECE region faces multiple challenges, resulting from a complex interplay of trends related to globalization, demographic changes, climate change and the economic crisis. Due to the 2008 global financial crisis, these trends culminated in increased attention from governments on the lack of housing affordability and on the decline in access to adequate and healthy housing, which exacerbates social inequality and segregation in the urban space. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

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[26] In its resolution HSP/GC/25/L.6, the 25th Session of the Governing Council of UN-Habitat "Takes note of the 'Housing at the Centre approach', which positions housing at the centre of national urban policies and of cities, and encourages the United Nations Human Settlements Programme and member States to consider the implementation of the Global Housing Strategy, as appropriate, including through the design of tools and mechanisms to promote inclusive housing finance at the national and local levels to bridge the housing gap and to contribute to the progressive realisation of the right to adequate housing for all."

[27] UN-Habitat, "Global Housing Strategy: making housing affordable for all". Available at: http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/SHS/pdf/Workshop-Social-Inclusion_UN-Habitat.pdf.

[28] International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights General comment 7, para. 4, which notes that "the prohibition on forced evictions does not, however, apply to evictions carried out by force in accordance with the law and in conformity with the provisions of the International Covenants on Human Rights" (para. 4).

adopted in 2015 seeks to position housing at the centre of urban policies[29], a central focus of the New Urban Agenda.[30]

Key housing challenges in the UNECE region

Lack of housing affordability

Lack of affordable housing has been widely recognised as one of the most challenging consequences of the global financial crisis. In 2015, the UNECE "Social Housing in the UNECE Region: Models, Trends and Challenges" study highlighted that the aftershocks of the 2008 global financial crisis resulted in an unprecedented housing need. At least 100 million low- and middle-income earners in the UNECE region were estimated to be overburdened by housing cost. Moreover, rough sleeping[31] numbers and homelessness numbers notably increased in the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis. Lack of housing affordability leads those on lower incomes to seek housing that is cheaper and often of lower quality. This can, in turn, lead to and perpetuate segregation in cities. Declining living conditions due to lack of housing maintenance and energy inefficiency can also cause additional housing-related hardships. Migrants and refugees are also likely to be greatly affected by these issues, requiring pro-active measures.

Housing tenure – high share of homeownership in the UNECE region

Prior to the financial crisis, economic growth and almost unanimous support by governments to housing policies incentivising home ownership made this the most dominant tenure within the UNECE region. In the western parts of the region[32], the increased share of homeownership was achieved by making access to mortgages relatively easy. On the eastern frontiers[33], the high rates of home ownership were achieved through the privatization of public housing.[34] In countries with a mature social housing sector, there was a tendency to decrease the social housing stock through limited construction, selling off to sitting tenants, and demolition[35]. Once the available tenure options are reduced so drastically, not only does the local population lack the options to meet their own housing

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[29] UN-Habitat, *World Cities Report 2016: Urbanization and Development*. Available at https://unhabitat.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/WCR_Housing-at-the-Center-of-Urban-Policies-1.pdf.
[30] Habitat III, *The New Urban Agenda* (2016). Available at https://habitat3.org/the-new-urban-agenda/.
[31] The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government of the United Kingdom defines people who sleep rough as: "1. People sleeping, about to bed down (sitting on/in or standing next to their bedding) or actually bedded down in the open air (such as, on the streets, in tents, doorways, parks, bus shelters or encampments); 2. People in buildings or other places not designed for habitation (such as stairwells, barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats, stations, or 'bashes'). The definition does not include people in hostels or shelters, sofa surfers, people in campsites or other sites used for recreational purposes or organized protest, squatters and travellers". Available at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-matters-rough-sleeping/health-matters-rough-sleeping (accessed on 6 November 2020).
[32] "Western part" of the region typically relates to Northern America, and Northern, Western and Southern Europe. However, it must be stressed that some successful transition economies as well as those successful in the Middle East may share characteristics typical to those in the above listed regions.
[33] Central, Eastern and South Eastern Europe, and countries in Central Asia.
[34] In this context the term "public housing" refers to housing provided in countries with economies in transition during the socialist period.
[35] UNECE, *Social Housing in the UNECE region: models, trends and challenges* (Geneva, United Nations, 2015). Available at: https://unece.org/DAM/hlm/documents/Publications/Social_Housing_in_UNECE_region.pdf.

needs but also tend to become less prepared to accept accommodation of additional housing needs, including those presented by migrants and refugees. In countries with emerging social housing sectors, new state-supported housing initiatives are of the early stages of implementation and are in limited scale. As such, a high share of homeownership leaves few opportunities for members of vulnerable groups to obtain access to more affordable rental or social housing.

Housing stock availability

Where housing shortage and decreased affordability are already a major concern in countries in the UNECE region, accommodating large numbers of migrants and refugees is a major issue for which innovative solutions are needed. As they are usually not entitled to subsidised housing and usually face discrimination and numerous obstacles in accessing private and public housing, migrants workers (irregular migrant workers with low-income especially) often live in small private rented rooms or flats, properties arranged or provided by employers, slum dwellings, and overcrowded houses of relatives and friends. Employers often oblige migrant domestic workers or factory workers to live at their place of work, frequently contravening national labour laws. Many end up living in overcrowded dormitories, sleeping in shifts and without access to adequate sanitation.

Challenges of housing provision for migrants and refugees

Lack of information about housing alternatives and schemes, bureaucratic procedures and regulations in the housing sphere and rights of tenants often combine to make it difficult to pursue adequate housing even when national and local legislation does not prevent them from doing so. Furthermore, insufficient information and inadequate advice, discrimination in the allocation of dwellings or financial assistance, laws restricting the access of non-citizens to public housing, cumbersome bureaucracy and lack of access to grievance mechanisms restrict access to public housing in the public sphere. Often, language constraints make the task of gaining housing harder or even impossible. All of the above are but an overview of the challenges that migrants and refugees can face when attempting to access adequate housing.

These issues are compounded for migrants in an irregular situation. Renting accommodation to irregular migrants may be a criminal offence, with landlords therefore obliged to report their presence to authorities. Tenants may need to register with the local population office or tax authorities; to complete a lease, tenants may be required to submit documents that, as irregular migrants, they do not possess or cannot obtain (e.g. residence permit, social security number, proof of income, labour contract).[36] As such, it becomes incredibly difficult for irregular migrants to access adequate housing, an effect which could be lessened through the establishment of firewalls between service providers and immigration authorities.

The segregation within the urban structure of the receiving country is another important dimension of migrant housing condition: stereotyping, xenophobia and suspicion against irregular migrants and refugees and the erection of barriers to keep them away from the local community lead to their

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[36] *The Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of Migrants in an Irregular Situation. United Nations* (United Nations publication, 2014). Available at https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/HR-PUB-14-1_en.pdf.

exclusion from the urban space. Violence and forced evictions targeted towards irregular migrants and refugees also raise serious concerns in this regard.

Irregular migrants and refugees often find themselves in a disadvantaged situation to access housing compared to the native-born populations. The following are some of the constraints faced by irregular migrants and refugees in accessing adequate housing.

Inadequate planning, combined with influxes of irregular migrants and refugees, contributes directly to long-term social and spatial segregation within urban areas. When faced with no other choice irregular migrants and refugees will ultimately use available land to settle, namely areas that lack proper tenure and ownership. Often, such places are in areas prone to natural hazards, or on unsuitable land for housing, adjacent to roads, railways, riverbeds, slopes, etc.[37]

Irregular migrants and refugees can be excluded from already limited local services. The population flow towards urban areas can result in added constraints towards the access to land, housing and basic services. Growing demand for these limited services can cause social tension. The United Nations also points to rural-urban migration adding challenges relative to the urban management of infrastructures such as electricity, solid-waste and wastewater management, as well as the provision of potable water, thus posing increased ecological and public health challenges within local administrations. Additionally, irregular migrants and refugees are faced with more difficulties when trying to access subsidies and social benefits. All these are fundamental for adequate housing.[38]

Irregular migrants and refugees are often not considered in the decision-making and are not included in participatory processes. Local and national authorities generally lack financial resources and technical skills to facilitate irregular migrant inclusion in planning processes. Inclusion may be achieved through the cultivation and management of local communities that support equitability and inclusion in order to protect the rights of migrants and refugees, as well as supporting adequate participatory processes specific to target groups. In certain countries where decentralisation is strong, for instance Germany or Austria, integration is above all a local and provincial issue.

Irregular migrants and refugees have more difficulties affording adequate housing. Housing markets are related to social issues, particularly in the context of migration. Several studies have exposed the fact that different indicators related to housing can show the extent to which cities are successful at managing the integration of migrants and refugees: for instance, property ownership is an indicator of long-term settlement of migrants and refugees in the country; and rental tenure is an indicator of protection from discrimination on the rental market.

A study commissioned by the EU[39] found that the housing cost overburden rate for non-EU citizens saw a significant increase from 2013 to 2014, when 30 per cent of non-EU citizens of working age

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[37] UN-Habitat, "Access to Adequate Housing: The Pathway to Migrants' Inclusion in Cities", policy brief, Fifth Global Mayoral Forum on Human Mobility, Migration and Development, Marrakech, 8 December 2018. Available at http://www.migration4development.org/sites/default/files/en_un-habitat_policy_brief.pdf.
[38] Ibid.
[39] European Commission, *Migration Integration*, 2017 ed. (Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union, 2017). Available at https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/3217494/8787947/KS-05-17-100-EN-N.pdf/f6c45af2-6c4f-4ca0-b547-d25e6ef9c359

belonged to this group, compared to 11 per cent among nationals. The housing cost overburden rate allows policymakers to assess how housing costs affect levels of poverty among migrants and refugees, as well as their quality of life.

Irregular migrants and refugees are often forced to live in overcrowded spaces. Nearly one in four people in deprived or overcrowded homes in Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries are from an immigrant household. It is common to find migrants and refugees living in poor conditions due to a lack of habitable space and sanitation. In the EU, overcrowding is understood as the ratio between household rooms and number of household members. According to UN-Habitat, a dwelling unit provides sufficient living area for the household members if the number of persons sharing a habitable room is not more than three persons.[40]

Moreover, the temporary shelters that are provided by cities, namely for refugees and homeless persons, are often overcrowded and do not cater to the specific needs of groups such as women and girls. Overcrowded spaces in shelters or dormitories particularly affect dignity, privacy and/or personal security of women and girls. For undocumented or irregular migrants, moreover, access to homeless shelters is, in some countries, restricted to nationals or documented migrants. In some cases, rules oblige shelters to report any undocumented migrants using their services, which in practice excludes this group from drawing on their right to gain access to these services.[41]

Irregular migrants and refugees are prone to forced evictions and homelessness. They are often more vulnerable to being unable to access housing or shelter as they are faced with great challenges linked to employment opportunities. Even if they can secure accommodation, having an uncertain income will always put them at risk of being evicted.

For instance, a survey in Spain[42] conducted in 2016 revealed that when renting an apartment, the response of real estate agents and homeowners differs when the tenant-to-be is a migrant compared to when they are not. The study showed that 69.8 per cent of people who were told by phone that there was no apartment available were foreign-born applicants. Even higher is the share of people with a migrant background who received such feedback during in-person visits: 86.7 per cent. It is common to find housing markets that are not regulated by policies to combat discriminatory practices against migrants and refugees, and that increase risks of payment defaults and therefore lead to conflicts.

This research recognises and highlights the variation in housing systems in the UNECE region. Hence, the study covers a range of housing tenures and emerging solutions and analyses the various affordable housing options for migrants and refugees.

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[40] Available at https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/metadata/files/Metadata-11-01-01.pdf
[41] *The Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of Migrants in an Irregular Situation. United Nations,* 14.
[42] Mediterranean City-to-City Migration (M2CM), "Social housing and urban planning: inclusive cities for migrants", background paper, MC2M 5th Thematic Peer-to-Peer Meeting, 25-26 April 2017. Available at https://www.uclg.org/sites/default/files/mc2cm_p2p_amman_thematic_paper_en.pdf

Housing solutions for migrants and refugees – case studies

This chapter presents case studies covering different approaches and best practices to providing housing for migrants and refugees. The case studies are organized thematically in five sections.

Under each thematic section, specific policy recommendations are formulated with references to the case studies.

Part 1. Utilizing existing and vacant housing stock

Best practice/policy recommendation:

1.1. Revitalize decaying neighbourhoods by renovating vacant houses and using them to house migrants and refugees.

    <u>Relevant case studies</u>

    Case study 1: The Dream Neighbourhood project – city of Cleveland

    Case study 2: Canopy Housing project – Leeds, West Yorkshire, United Kingdom

Best practice/policy recommendation:

1.2 Promote economic revival of depopulated rural communities through attracting migrants and refugees to live in the rural areas.

    <u>Relevant case studies</u>

    Case study 3: Countryside renewal - Satriano, Italy

    Case study 4: Grandhotel Cosmopolis – Augsburg, Germany

    Case study 5: HOOST – Amsterdam, Netherlands

    Case study 6: The Housing Opportunities and Marketplace Exchange (H.O.M.E.) - Toronto, Canada

Part 2: Turning temporary and emergency shelter into lasting solutions for migrants and refugees

Best practice/policy recommendation:

Use existing housing stock and other buildings (camps, hotels, mobile homes, etc.) to house incoming migrants and refugees. Ensure interaction of migrants and refugees with inhabitants of local communities to promote social cohesion and their integration.

    <u>Relevant case studies</u>

    Case study 7: Kilis Öncüpinar Accommodation Facility – Öncüpinar, Turkey

    Case study 8: Logement des Migrants (Adoma, Caisse des Depots) –France

Case study 9: Shelters and transit houses – Ghent, Belgium.

Part 3: Improving access of migrants and refugees to social housing

Best practice/policy recommendation:

Improve access to social housing for migrants and refugees to create inclusive, supportive and solid environment.

Relevant case studies

Case study 10: Globaler Hof – Vienna, Austria

Case study 11: Rent Discount for Social Housing Residents – The Netherlands

Case study 12: Startblok Housing project– The Netherlands

Case study 13: Social Housing in a Supportive Environment (SHSE) – Serbia

Part 4: The role of housing cooperatives in providing housing to migrants and refugees

Best practice/policy recommendation:

Broaden the role of housing cooperatives to allow them to secure accommodation for vulnerable groups, including migrants and refugees and to promote longer-term accommodation and integration of the migrants and refugees.

Relevant case studies

Case study 14: Mika - Karlsruhe, Germany

Case study 15: 400 Riel - Gatineau, Canada

Case study 16: Stitching New Home Rotterdam – Rotterdam, the Netherlands

Part 5: Modular housing units for migrants and refugees

Best practice/policy recommendation:

Promote innovative architectural practices to enrich affordable housing solutions in support of social and spatial cohesion in urban areas.

Relevant case studies

Case study 17: City of Ostfildern, Germany

Case study 18: City of Bad Soden, Germany

Case study 19: City of Tübingen, Germany

Case study 20: City of Königsbrunn Germany

Case study 21: City of Kriftel, Germany

Case study 22: City of Geneva, Switzerland.

Part 6: Improving mechanisms for access to adequate housing

Best practice/policy recommendation:

Develop new financial mechanisms to support housing provision for migrants and refugees and support partnerships of governments with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the private sector to widen resource base for affordable housing provision for migrants and refugees.

Relevant case studies

Case study 23: Conditional rental subsidy – Romania

Case study 24: Rehousing allowance – Belgium

Case study 25: HSB (Swedish Cooperative Housing Association) – Sweden

Case study 26: Welcome Fund for Syrian Refugees – Canada

Case study 27: Provivienda - Spain

Case study 28: Welcommon – Greece

Part 1: Utilizing existing and vacant housing stock

The introduction of this study brought to light the relevance and magnitude of the housing crisis affecting the UNECE region as well as the issues faced by migrants and refugees in gaining access to housing. The present section outlines a paradox: this scarcity occurs while more than eleven million dwellings stand empty on the continent. For instance, the last census of Spain revealed that 13.65 per cent of housing units across the country are empty. Research shows that having large amounts of vacant properties is detrimental to municipalities in many ways: they affect property and rental values, as well as investment and redevelopment. Vacant properties represent a loss of tax revenues for local governments, and at the same time, the cost of maintaining them is a drain on resources. For instance, Philadelphia spends over USD 20 million yearly on maintaining 40,000 vacant properties and loses at least USD 2 million in tax revenues.[43]

In view of these issues, a number of innovative initiatives have emerged in the past years, aiming to make use of vacant dwellings to accommodate migrants or refugees who often struggle to find housing solution on their own. This section will consider some examples.

Case study 1: The Dream Neighbourhood project – city of Cleveland, United States

As the economic and financial crisis hit the United States in 2007-2008, housing vacancy rates increased from 9.5 per cent in 2005 to 11.2 per cent in 2009.[44] Cleveland was severely affected by the economic slowdown as the city relies on industrial activity. It is now the seventh American city with the highest stock of vacant properties (11.4 per cent in 2013).

The Dream Neighbourhood project aims to revitalize three decaying neighbourhoods in Cleveland city centre by renovating vacant houses and letting them to refugees and immigrant families as rental properties. Other houses are expected to be sold to migrant families. The project focuses on the Stockyard, Clark Fulton and Brooklyn Centre neighbourhoods where 162 properties are vacant. The Thomas Jefferson International Newcomers Academy, a municipal school unique of its kind in Cleveland, serves as an English Immersion programme for students with limited knowledge of the English language and who have been in the United States for less than two years. Currently, 25 nationalities speaking 22 different languages are represented in this programme.

The idea of the project is the outcome of the following converging interests:

- Refugee service agencies have to find accommodation for the refugee families referred to them by the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration. Refugees resettled in the United States are dispatched across 190 municipalities and assigned to a non-governmental

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[43] Penn Institute for Urban Research. (2010) 'Vacant Land Management in Philadelphia: The Costs of the Current System and the Benefits of Reform'. Available at https://penniur.upenn.edu/uploads/media/vacant-land-full-report.pdf

[44] Jones, Roderick W, Pridemore, William Alex. (2014). 'The increasing numbers of vacant houses, fueled by the housing crisis, are associated with higher burglary rates'. LSE Blogs. Available at: http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/60332/1/__lse.ac.uk_storage_LIBRARY_SECOND~1_libfile_shared_REPOSI~1_Content_LSEUSA~1_LSEUSA~2_blogs.lse.ac.uk-The_increasing_numbers_of_vacant_houses_fuelled_by_the_housing_crisis_are_associated_with_higher_burg.pdf

organization which assists them from the moment they arrive on American soil. Some of those organizations are faith-based organizations, such as the St. Rocco and St. Boniface churches in Cleveland.

- The City Council deals with the issue of vacant properties while considering refugees as a worthy population to invest in since a study[45] carried out in 2013 for the Refugee Services Collaborative of Greater Cleveland concluded that:

  – Total annual economic impact (direct, indirect, and induced) of refugee household spending is estimated to have been USD 33.3 million in 2012 and 386 jobs in the Cleveland area.

  – Refugee-owned businesses, such as restaurants, retails and others, spent USD 12 million in the Cleveland area in 2012 and generated 175 jobs.

- The Detroit-Shoreway Community Development Organization, a non-for-profit organization dedicated to neighbourhood renewal, had started rehabilitating some houses in the area envisioned for the Dream Neighbourhood since 2011 and had already formed partnerships with non-profit and for-profit developers. Based on its experience, the rehabilitation scheme of the Dream Neighbourhood could be expanded to rehabilitate the rest of the neighbourhood.

The scheme entails the transfer of each property to developers for rehabilitation through a competitive bidding process. Each developer is then expected to rehabilitate the house in 270 days before marketing the unit exclusively to service agencies of Cleveland in charge of accommodating refugees. A restrictive covenant on the deed prevents the developer from using the property for any other purpose. Some developers, such as the non-profit government-purposed Cuyahoga Land Bank, chose to hire refugees to renovate the houses with the aim to teach them valuable skills that would allow finding permanent employment afterwards.

Lastly, the choice of geographical area of the project was inspired by the presence of 850 manufacturing jobs; availability of affordable commercial space for migrant entrepreneurs; availability of good transportation to the rest of the city; and the presence of various community and social support organizations to assist in refugee integration.

Additional sources:

Cities of Migration, "Dream Neighbourhoods: City Innovation in Refugee Housing", 7 June 2016. Available at http://citiesofmigration.ca/good_idea/dream-neighbourhoods-city-innovation-in-refugee-housing/

Cleveland.com, "Dream Neighbourhood project offers parts of Cleveland -- and refugees -- a second chance: editorial", 11 January 2019. Available at:
http://www.cleveland.com/opinion/index.ssf/2015/07/dream_neighborhood_offers_aama.html

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[45] CHMura Economics & Analytics, "Economic Impact of Refugees in the Cleveland Area: Calendar Year 2012", report prepared for the Refugee Services Collaborative of Greater Cleveland, October 2013. Available at http://rsccleveland.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/ClevelandRefugeeEconomic-Impact.pdf

Brian Cummins, "Dream Neighbourhood initiative presented to City Planning Commission", blog, 17 July 2015. Available at http://brian-cummins.blogspot.fr/2015/07/dream-neighborhood-initiative-presented.html

U.S. Department of State. The Reception and Placement Program. Available at https://www.state.gov/refugee-admissions/reception-and-placement/

Case study 2: Canopy Housing project – Leeds, West Yorkshire, United Kingdom

The housing situation in Leeds is critical, especially in what concerns social housing. As 25,000 people are waiting to be allocated a social housing unit (2015)[46], only 4,500 of such dwellings are let each year. However, 5,500 housing units are vacant in the city. Thus, the City Council has been supporting a variety of innovative initiatives, such as that of Canopy, aiming at solving the housing issue by making use of these empty properties.

The goal of the Canopy Housing project is to renovate empty and derelict dwellings to accommodate homeless people, asylum seekers and refugees. The process begins with employees of the association identifying empty dwellings within the Hyde Park and Beeston neighbourhoods in Leeds. They then negotiate with the owner so that the association can get ownership of the dwelling.

After a successful negotiation, the renovation process starts. Refurbishing is carried out by a team of volunteers except for heavy works, such as plumbing and installation of electrical networks to which the association pays professional workers to do. The volunteers consist of locals and/or migrants, among them is the future tenant.

New tenants are provided with the basic furniture, kitchen/bathroom essentials and bedding to start a home. Rent is kept low and no deposit nor rent in advance is required. Additionally, the association supports tenants in their application for housing benefit. The tenant can also access the facilities of the Canopy office; that is, laundry, computers and workshops.

Financial resources from collected rents is reused to fund renovations. Collected rents represent 45 per cent of the resources of the association. Canopy is also financially supported by the City Council and some housing associations (53 per cent of total resources). The remaining 2 per cent comes from various donations.

Additional sources:

Canopy Housing Project. Available at http://www.canopyhousingproject.org/

Christophe Andreo and others, "Panorama des initiatives sur l'accès au logement des réfugiés dans 15 pays européens" (Paris, France Terre d'Asile, December 2008). Available at http://www.france-terre-asile.org/images/etude-logement-dec2008.pdf

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[46] Leeds City Council, "Council data and information", Open Data. Available at https://www.leeds.gov.uk/opendata (last accessed 2019).

The Yorkshire Evening Post, "Leeds housing crisis exclusive: 5,500 homes empty as waiting lists soar", 26 October 2015.

Case study 3: Countryside renewal: Satriano - Italy

The 2008 economic and financial crisis exacerbated the trend of workers of Southern Italy (Mezzogiorno) migrating to the North of the country or abroad in search of employment. It has been estimated that 116,000 people left the *Mezzogiorno* in 2013 alone. The depopulation of the South has been further accentuated by a negative population balance: the number of births dropped to its 1861 level while the recorded deaths have increased. Depopulation is thus a major issue for Southern Italy. As underlined by a recent OECD report, many rural areas are now seeking new residents, including migrants, in order to revive their local economies.[47]

Located in Calabria, the village of Satriano has not escaped depopulation. Satriano has seen its population shrunk from 3,800 in the 1950s to 1,000 today. The shores of Calabria are a traditional place of arrival for migrants and in recent decades, the city government of Satriano perceived migration as an opportunity to revitalize their towns and economies and avoid their complete desertification.

To be able to welcome refugees, the villages availed of the support of the Sistema di protezione per richiedenti asilo e rifugiati (SPRAR) or the Protection System for Refugees and Asylum Seekers, a national network created by the Italian Ministry of Interior that is funded both by the national government and the EU.

The SPRAR aims to provide financial support to municipalities developing initiatives to host refugees, as well as to foster connections between those municipalities and a variety of organizations responsible for running integration activities for newcomers. A good example of this type of organization is the *Mediazione Globale* cooperative in Satriano.

SPRAR-funded projects can be dedicated to specific types of refugees; for instance, individual adults and two-parent families ("ordinary category"), and single-parent families, unaccompanied minors, victims of torture and disabled persons ("vulnerable categories").

According to the Asylum Information Database, managed by the European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE), 430 reception initiatives have started, "out of which 57 reception projects are dedicated to unaccompanied children, while 32 reception projects are for people with mental disorders and disabilities." Overall, SPAR-funded projects were providing a total of 21,449 accommodation places as of 31 May 2015.

The Central Service in Rome decides the placement of asylum seekers in one of the 430 reception projects run by municipalities with the support of the SPRAR. Asylum seekers may also be sent to temporary accommodation centres located in Sicily, Puglia and Calabria, where Satriano is located.

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[47] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, *Working together for local integration of migrants and refugees* (Paris, OECD Publishing, 2018). Available at https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/social-issues-migration-health/working-together-for-local-integration-of-migrants-and-refugees_9789264085350-en#page5.

However, most places in the SPRAR system are allocated to recognised refugees to start integrating them into the Italian society.

In Satriano, the social cooperative *Mediazione Globale* administers the programme for hosting and integrating refugees on behalf of the municipality. Predominantly staffed with migrants and refugees who gained Italian citizenship, *Mediazone Globale* supports refugees in their daily lives (learning Italian, buying food, finding accommodation, etc) as well as in their asylum application process.

The process of granting asylum can take up to one year, so the cooperative helps applicants to secure a job while waiting for the results of their asylum applications. Refugees can secure placements within the municipal services and take up jobs such as gardening, street cleaning and maintenance, or in private companies with which an agreement is signed. Employers hiring refugees benefit from breaks on social charges and on the monthly salary of a refugee, amounting to an average of EUR 400. The municipality is able to offer this charge break because of the resources granted by the SPRAR, which allocates EUR 35 per day per refugee.

With this arrangement with the municipality, five refugees have worked with local companies. Two Malian refugees subsequently secured regular close-ended contracts.

The project has had a physical impact on the town as an historic building, the Palazzo Condò, was converted into an accommodation centre for refugees offering 20 beds. The municipality also aims to open a daytime centre for the elderly population of Satriano soon. Through these activities, the municipality aims to ensure the better integration of refugees with the local population through the activities offered by the centre.

The municipality envisions expanding the programme, which currently benefits 18 refugees, by renovating empty houses to either turn them into further shelters for temporary migrants or to rent them out to refugees willing to settle in the town. Twenty refugees are currently living in Satriano, but the municipality is hoping to welcome more.

Additional sources :

L'Humanité, " Italie en pleine crise economique le mezzogiorno se depeuple", 30 October 2014. Available at http://www.humanite.fr/italie-en-pleine-crise-economique-le-mezzogiorno-se-depeuple-556174

Urbact, "In Italy, a struggling town looks to refugees for revival", 23 March 2016. Available at http://urbact.eu/italy-struggling-town-looks-refugees-revival

Observatoire Européen de l'Economie Sociale, "Association Città Futura Giuseppe Puglisi", 1999. Available at http://www.ess-europe.eu/fr/bonnepratique/association-citta-futura-giuseppe-puglisi

Lorenzo Totaro and Flavia Rotondi, "Italian Villages Welcome Refugees to Avoid Oblivion", *Bloomberg*, 1 March 2016. Available at http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-03-01/italian-villages-reach-out-to-refugees-as-oblivion-fear-mounts

Case study 4: Grandhotel Cosmopolis – Augsburg, Germany

The Grandhotel Cosmopolis in Augsburg, Germany was conceived to answer three needs: accommodation for migrants and refugees; accommodation for tourists; and spaces for artists. The Bavarian city of Augsburg, in Southern Germany, is characterized by a migration rate of over 40 per cent, which places great pressure on the housing stock. Further, while Augsburg is traditionally a city of art, there was a widespread lack of studios for artists. In addition, while the city promoted tourism, there was an evident lack of affordable accommodation for tourists. However, several buildings in the city centre of Augsburg stood empty.

One of these buildings, a former nursing home owned by Diakoniewerk, a charity organization of the Protestant Church, was turned into an accommodation catering to different needs. One floor is occupied by a hostel, three floors by house asylum seekers while the top floor is a hotel. A total of 60 individuals can be hosted, including 9 refugee families waiting for their asylum application to be processed. Additionally, there is a seminar room for events, several artist studios and a kitchen where all residents share meals prepared by volunteers. The building also has a kiosk-café, a restaurant, and an inter-cultural garden with a playground. These spaces are meant to attract the residents of the neighbourhood as well as generate incomes.

Asylum seekers are involved in the operation and cultural activities of the hotel according to their personal abilities. They are additionally supported by the Wilde 13, a group of volunteers which helps them with official administration work, translation and research to facilitate their arrival and integration into the city.

Artists are offered rent-free studios as long as they contribute to the hotel; for instance, by organizing (for profit) artistic events. Travellers are invited to pay as much as they can for the accommodation offered. The minimum amount asked is EUR 40 for a single room, EUR 60 for a double room and EUR 20 for a hostel bed.

The hotel has now become an official collective accommodation facility used by the German government to host asylum seekers.

Additional sources:

Grandhotel Cosmopolis. Website: https://grandhotel-cosmopolis.org/de/?close-splash=true

Stefan Mayr, "Wenn Gäste und Flüchtlinge sich die Dusche teilen", Süddeutsche Zeitung. Available at https://www.sueddeutsche.de/bayern/grandhotel-cosmopolis-wenn-gaeste-und-fluechtlinge-sich-die-dusche-teilen-1.1787763

Case study 5: HOOST – Amsterdam, Netherlands

The HOOST project was founded by a group of Dutch citizens who had been involved as volunteers in the Heumensoord emergency shelter for refugees in Amsterdam. Bad living conditions in the shelter had eventually led authorities to close the camp in May 2016. Having witnessed the conditions faced by refugees at Heumensoord, Lian Premius, a former volunteer at the shelter, formed a group of volunteers - the Gastvrij Oost (Hospitable East) - to show that refugee temporary accommodation can

be different. The group thus adopted a different approach from other refugee shelters in the Netherlands. For instance, instead of locating their facilities outside of the city, the HOOST project found that effective integration could be better achieved if refugees were accommodated in the middle of Amsterdam. Through the provision of housing in the heart of the city, refugees could start integrating with the local population upon arrival.

In order to set up their refugee shelter, Gastvrij Oost identified an empty office building belonging to the Ymere housing corporation. The corporation aimed to turn the building into 20 small dwellings for first-time buyers, including recognised refugees. However, such a transformation implied turning the building use from commercial to residential. Therefore, Ymere agreed to lease the property to the Eastern District Council of Amsterdam while securing the different permits. In turn, the Council allowed Gastvrij Oost to temporarily make use of the building to house asylum seekers from February to July 2016, which explains why the HOOST project is now over. A total of 30 refugees were housed in the shelter during the 6 months.

Gastvrij Oost benefited from the financial support of Ymere and of the District Council, which provided the resources needed to turn the building into a shelter. The furniture was donated by Facebook followers of the project and daily expenses were met through crowdfunding: from January to April 2016, EUR 10,000 was raised from 187 inhabitants of Amsterdam East. The allocation of refugees was possible owing to the cooperation between the municipality and the Central Department for Sheltering Refugees. In terms of living space, each family was assigned to one private room in the building. In terms of services, volunteers provided refugees with Dutch language classes, job seeking support and medical visits.

Finally, the collective life and self-management of the refugees was improved as they scheduled tasks such as cleaning, buying groceries and cooking for all residents. Furthermore, refugees were supported by four volunteers who helped them manage the finances and fix technical problems.

From the experience gained during the HOOST project, the network BOOST Ringdijk was launched in July 2016. BOOST aims to share with stakeholders the lessons learnt during the HOOST project and to provide recommendations for municipalities, government agencies and private businesses on the set up of small-scale temporary accommodation facilities. It also manages a new project called Let's Make Room, bringing together refugees, craftsmen, designers and developers to explore the possibilities of reusing vacant properties in Amsterdam for semi-permanent housing of refugees.

Additional Sources:

Renate van der Zee, "Part of the neighbourhood: Syrian refugees in Amsterdam", *Al Jazeera*, 17 June 2016. Available at http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2016/06/part-neighbourhood-syrian-refugees-amsterdam-160606075150971.html

UNHCR, "The world in numbers", UNHCR Population Statistics Database. Available at https://data2.unhcr.org/en/dataviz/6?sv=0&geo=0

Case study 6: The Housing Opportunities and Marketplace Exchange (H.O.M.E.) - Toronto, Canada

An innovative portal for adequate and affordable housing for Syrian refugees

Toronto has the highest rental prices in Canada and the fourth lowest vacancy rates. This makes finding accommodation very difficult, even more so for resettled refugees and refugee claimants who have little financial and social capital. Between 2012 and 2015, the number of permanent resident arrivals to Toronto increased from 42,710 to 59,770 (about 35 per cent). In late 2015, the federal government announced plans to resettle 25,000 Syrian refugees across Canada by the end of February 2016, with further arrivals continuing throughout the year. By January 2017, Canada had received 40,081 Syrian refugees, with more than 6,000 destined for Toronto – more than double the average annual rate of the previous 10 years. Toronto recognised the need to create a system to help connect the arriving refugees to housing and other types of assistance needed for their adjustment to life in Canada. To make this happen, the city entered into a contract with Wood Green Community Services, a local non-profit organization already involved in housing programmes of Toronto, to develop a housing registry as part of the Refugee Resettlement Programme of the city. Wood Green then reached out to Deloitte, Salesforce and Vlocity for help in deploying a solution as rapidly as possible to support the arriving refugees.

The Housing Opportunities and Marketplace Exchange (H.O.M.E.) is an online portal that matches Syrian refugees in need with offers of housing, goods and services. Refugees, sponsorship groups, landlords and donors can register with H.O.M.E online and are granted access through a two-step verification process (the dynamic registration form captures information about the person.) Once they have access to the portal, donors can easily create and publish listings, while refugees and their sponsors can see all the assistance available and connect directly with donors. The project kicked off in early December 2015, with the goal of developing something as quickly as possible (bulk arrivals of refugees began at the end of December).

The H.O.M.E. portal was launched on 31 December, within four weeks of its conception. It represents a collaborative development between municipal, non-profit and private-sector partners. Toronto provided funding to Wood Green Community Services, a non-profit agency, to implement the project, and teams from Deloitte, Salesforce and Vlocity, all private-sector corporations, provided pro-bono services to help develop and deliver the technological solution. This public-private partnership allowed Wood Green to leverage Toronto's financial investment for maximum output. As of December 2016, the portal had over 750 active users, including donors, sponsors, service agencies and refugees. To date, the portal has successfully engaged 99 landlords offering 423 housing units. By March 2017, 86 units have been rented out to Syrian refugees, and 14 refugees connected with employers for sustainable employment. In April 2017, in response to increased pressure on the shelter system of Toronto, the city negotiated with Wood Green to continue operating the H.O.M.E. portal for another two years, and to expand its client base, currently restricted to Syrian refugees, to include refugees and refugee claimants in city shelters.

Additional Sources:

Housing Opportunities and Marketplace Exchange (H.O.M.E). Website: https://mycanadianhome.org/

CBC News, "Online exchange hopes to connect Syrian refugees with housing, jobs", 17 January 2016. Available at https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/syria-refugees-website-services-1.3407332

Part 2: Turning temporary and emergency shelter into lasting solutions for migrants and refugees

Currently, governments across the UNECE region have been widely using collective centres, camps, hotels, mobile homes, etc. to house migrants and asylum seekers. There are several reasons for this and the most important is container villages or camps enable the rapid generation of first reception centres to house incoming refugees and irregular migrants immediately. Furthermore, many believe that container villages are more cost-effective than permanent housing. This, however, is a misconception; collective accommodation facilities hold significant drawbacks in the long-term.

According to the Robert Bosch Foundation, a German organization aiming at encouraging participation and acceptance of refugees into society, collective accommodation is distressing for newcomers and represents a strong impediment to their successful integration within the host society. Indeed, collective facilities are often overcrowded and unhygienic places where families live "in a single room", without the possibility of being "able to cook for themselves, where adults are not allowed to work, and where children are unable to play with any meaningful sense of freedom". Other testimonies describe the overcrowding and outbreaks of violence which come along with camp/centre life. Collective accommodation facilities therefore present several "physical" (concrete living conditions) and social issues.[48] Moreover, collective accommodation facilities are costly to maintain. According to OECD, "costs for temporary accommodation, costs in reception centres and administrative costs together made up a third of total costs" of welcoming refugees.[49]

Case study 7: Kilis Öncüpinar Accommodation Facility – Öncüpınar, Turkey

Turkey adopted an open-door policy towards Syrian refugees in October 2011, which means that any Syrian citizen crossing the Turkish border were granted temporary protection. Located next to the Öncüpinar village in the Kilis province in Turkey, the Kilis Öncüpinar Accommodation Facility (Kilis Öncüpinar) was set up specifically to accommodate refugees. Located on the edge of the area affected by the conflict in Syria, Kilis underwent a dramatic social, economic, cultural and spatial change after

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[48] Matthias Meisner (Der Tagesspiegel), "Study: Shared housing for refugees limits integration", EURACTIV, 20 November 2015. Available at http://www.euractiv.com/section/justice-home-affairs/news/study-shared-housing-for-refugees-limits-integration/.; Irish times, "Lives in Limbo: Life inside Ireland's direct provision system for asylum seekers".

[49] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2016) "ODA reporting of in-donor country refugee costs", QWIDS, 2016. Available at http://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/refugee-costs-oda.htm.

receiving more than 120,000 Syrian refugees over the past five years.[50] By the end of this period the number of refugees in the Facility exceeded the number of local population living in Kilis Province.[51]

The Kilis Öncüpinar is made of 2,053 containers housing 13,570 Syrian refugees as of 2018. Even though Kilis Öncüpinar is a camp, it is included as a good practice in this study because of the following: (a) Good infrastructure and amenities; (b) Innovative management methods; and (c) Fostering "life normalization".

Infrastructure and amenities

Kilis Öncüpinar is equipped with power lines and water pipes enabling the whole settlement to benefit from street lighting and the housing containers offer significant comfort to residents. Each container offers a 21 m² living area made up of three rooms. One of these rooms is the bathroom, equipped with its own hot water tank. In addition, the kitchen has a stove and a refrigerator, and there is a television in the living room. Many of the containers have satellite dishes.

On amenities, 56 classrooms in various schools have offered education to 4,241 Syrian children and vocational classes to adults, both men and women. The camp is also equipped with playgrounds occupying 1,125 m², computer rooms and laundries. Daily food needs are met through the three grocery stores of Kilis Öncüpinar. As for healthcare, the camp has its own clinic, staffed with 5 doctors, translators and 13 healthcare personnel. Seventy-seven policemen and 110 private security guards oversee the camp and provide security. The area is also equipped with 104 security cameras.

Innovative management methods

The Kilis Öncüpinar is run by the Turkish Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency or AFAD. The employees of the camp are appointed by the Turkish government who report to a camp administrator. NGOs are given only supporting roles instead of being responsible for the entire service provision. Refugees are provided with a debit card and each family is given approximately USD 50 per family member a month. The system has proven particularly effective, especially in terms of food supply. In most camps, the World Food Programme is responsible for catering for refugees, leading to refugees having to queue for hours to get their ration. With the debit card system, refugees are free to shop whenever convenient in one of the stores in the camp. The stores are all run by different private companies so that competition keeps prices reasonable. The debit card system has had several positive consequences: refugee families are able to retain their personal food habits; providing groceries and food supplies instead of three hot meals a day has enabled money savings for the government; the local economy is stimulated as products are supplied by stores; and some testimonies suggest it has prevented the appearance of a black market in the camp.

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[50] Muhammed Ziya Pakoz, "Turkey's Kilis: A rare example of refugee integration", *Al Jazeera*, 18 May 2016. Available at https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2016/05/turkey-kilis-rare-refugee-integration-160511102644814.html.
[51] Ahval News, "Kilis police take Arabic lessons as migrants exceed local population", 8 January 2019. Available at https://ahvalnews.com/refugees/kilis-police-take-arabic-lessons-migrants-exceed-local-population.

Fostering "life normalization"

The Kilis Öncüpinar fosters community life. Each of the sections of the camp has an elected leader who is in charge of relations with the management group of the camp. This allows for refugees to have a voice in the daily management of the camp. Furthermore, refugees are allowed to open home businesses within the camp, which enables the creation of a small local economy.

Additional sources:

Kemal Kirişci, *Syrian Refugees and Turkey's Challenges: Going Beyond Hospitality* (Washington D.C., Brookings, 2014). Available at http://www.brookings.edu/~/media/research/files/reports/2014/05/12-turkey-syrian-refugees-kirisci/syrian-refugees-and-turkeys-challenges-may-14-2014.pdf

AFAD. Website: https://www.afad.gov.tr/

Mac McClelland, "How to build a perfect refugee camp", *The New York Times*, 13 February 2014. Available at http://www.nytimes.com/2014/02/16/magazine/how-to-build-a-perfect-refugee-camp.html

Jessica Mairs, "Refugee tents are a waste of money, says Alejandro Aravena", Dezeen, 30 November 2015. Available at http://www.dezeen.com/2015/11/30/alejandro-aravena-humanitarian-architecture-refugee-tents-waste-money-emergency-shelter-disaster-relief/

Case study 8: Logement des Migrants by the company "Adoma" - France

Founded as National Construction Company for the Algerian workers in 1956, Sonacotral was created with the aim of building homes for Algerian migrant-workers who lived in slums in the suburbs of France. The buildings were planned to be temporary; it was taken for granted that these workers would return to their country. However, in the following sixty years, the mission of the company evolved. Renamed into "Adoma" in 2007, it now manages 167 homes of migrant workers, 369 social residences and 174 reception centres for asylum seekers.

The project in France was initially funded by the State and local investors. In addition, the European Investment Bank decided in 2016 to lend EUR 50 million to Adoma to rehabilitate buildings and help provide housing for asylum seekers and refugees. As the first national operator for the accommodation and support of asylum seekers, Adoma manages 192 reception structures throughout the country, which are responsible for more than 16,794 people.

As part of the work to improve over a quarter of the housing stock, energy efficiency measures will be implemented for most dwellings. The addition of amenities such as bathrooms, showers, or kitchenettes will make large rooms in the existing housing stock self-contained. Lastly, preventive measures relating to safety, particularly fire safety, are an important part of the maintenance programme.[52]

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[52] Council of Europe Development Bank, "France: housing solutions for migrants". Available at https://coebank.org/en/news-and-publications/projects-focus/france-housing-solutions-migrants/.

Additional sources :

Jean-Baptiste François, "Foyers de migrants : plus de 6 000 logements en cours de renovation", La Croix, 17 September 2014. Available at www.la-croix.com/Actualite/France/Foyers-de-migrants-plus-de-6-000-logements-en-cours-de-renovation-2014-09-17-1207667

Liberation, "Soixante ans d'immigration française dans les foyers Adoma", September 2016. Available at www.liberation.fr/apps/2016/09/residence-provisoire/

CDC Habitat : Adoma. Website: www.adoma.fr.

European Investmentr Bank, "Official visit of Prime Minister Manuel Valls to the EIB's headquarters in Luxembourg: EUR 2.1 billion of new EIB Group loans in France in support of growth and employment", press release, 11 April 2016. Available at www.eib.org/infocentre/press/releases/all/2016/2016-087-visite-officielle-de-manuel-valls-premier-ministre-au-siege-de-la-bei-a-luxembourg.htm

Case study 9: Shelters and transit houses - Ghent, Belgium

In 2015 the city of Ghent, like other European cities, was facing a growing number of refugee arrivals. In Belgium, the number of asylum applications doubled within one year. The Federal Government responded to the crisis by providing more accommodation. In Ghent, a cooperation between three reception centres was set up, which allowed exchange of information, experiences and good practices.[53] In September 2015 the city of Ghent established a Task Force on Refugees. This is a cooperation not only between administration (city services and the Public Service for Social Welfare) and policy; citizens, NGOs and civil society are involved also in this structure.[54] From the beginning, the city administration invested in a good information exchange with the neighbourhood; for example, information sessions were organized to address the concerns of residents about the new arrivals of refugees and give them the opportunity to write down their ideas on how to link the new asylum centre with the neighbourhood and the city.

Through the Task Force on Refugees, Ghent has set clear roles and responsibilities. Three working groups were created on:

- Shelter and reception
- Integration
- Volunteers and public awareness.

Once asylum seekers have been granted international protection, they must leave the reception centre within 2 months. This is a very short time to find a house in a very tight housing market. Volunteers (housing buddies) and, in case of urgency, professionals, help them look for appropriate

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[53] Daniël Termont, "How the city of Ghent copes with increased numbers of refugees", EuroNews, 28 March 2017. Available at https://www.euronews.com/2017/03/28/view-refugee-solidarity-the-view-from-ghent.
[54] URBACT, "Good Practice Summary", 2015. Available at https://urbact.eu/sites/default/files/202_Ghent_GPsummary.pdf.

accommodation. For those who do not find a suitable house within the 2 months access to a transit house is offered, ten of which were made available by the city of Ghent.[55] Transit houses give more time to ensure refugees find appropriate accommodation and that they get the necessary guidance to achieve this. Also, to help recognized refugees in their search for a house, the "Housing Guide for refugees" was published in several languages. In providing access to right to stay in the country, including those related to housing, Ghent has tried to work as inclusively as possible. For example, many asylum seekers manage to quickly access volunteer work because of the Refu Interim support.[56]

Part 3: Improving access of migrants and refugees to social housing

There is no single definition of social housing across Europe.[57] At two ends of the spectrum, social housing can either be reserved for most vulnerable households (as in England), or it can house a wide range of income groups. In Denmark, any individual can apply to social housing.[58] However, among social housing beneficiaries, a large share is generally made of single parent families, older persons and the poor. The following cases provide examples of the use of social housing to ensure that migrants can successfully integrate into their new living environment.

Case study 10: Globaler Hof – Vienna, Austria

The social housing stock is very significant in Vienna as 60 per cent of population lives in subsidized apartments. More than 220,000 apartments are owned by the Viennese government which spends EUR 600 million a year on housing. A quarter of those funds is municipal funds, the rest is from the federal government. Through this financial commitment, 80 per cent of new housing units in Vienna are subsidised (via a subsidy on bricks and mortar). Another 136,000 limited profit housing units (out of about 650,000 in Austria) are owned and managed by one of the 180 (approximately) limited profit housing associations (LPHAs).

Builders compete through a competitive bidding process. A jury composed of representatives of the architects of the city, builders and specialists in housing law chooses designs based on economy, quality and ecological impact. This competition encourages creativity in social housing design.

The strong role played by the municipal government both as a financing institution and a regulator has led to the creation of not only a number of mixed incomes but also multicultural social housing developments. Indeed, this social housing policy has been an integral part of the policy of Vienna for achieving social equality objectives and reducing segregation.

The Globaler Hof ("global courtyard") residential complex in Vienna is one example of a limited profit housing. This was chosen as the case study because it was set up 16 years ago, thus enabling to see

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[55] GentInfo, "Refugee Taskforce", 2018. Available at https://stad.gent/en/city-policy-structure/asylum-and-refugees/refugee-taskforce.

[56] More information on Refu-interim project: https://www.refuinterim.be/.

[57] UNECE, Social housing in the UNECE region, 13.

[58] Kathleen Scanlon and others, "Social housing in Europe", European Policy Analysis (17). pp. 1-12 (Swedish Institute for European Policy Studies, 5 August 2015). Available at http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/62938/.

how the limited profit housing development evolved in the long term. The success of Globaler Hof has inspired several other projects of a similar kind in Vienna.

Globaler Hof was created under the lead of Sozialbau AD, one of the largest LPHAs in Austria. It is located in 23rd district of Vienna, in the Wiesen Nord neighbourhood. The location was chosen specifically because the 23rd district originally had only a small percentage of migrants. The project offers 141 dwellings, spread across four housing blocks which accommodate about 300 people from 18 countries. Sixty per cent of its residents are migrants – promoting the notion of diversity and multiculturalism.

A structural precondition for the successful integration of migrants in the premises of Globaler Hof was the adoption of "good planning" practices. For instance, the design of the several spacious communal facilities, together with wide corridors, facilitate exchange between residents and improve the overall sense of neighbourliness. Communal rooms include not only laundries and children playrooms but also rooms for parties of residents. Open spaces are also often used as meeting areas. A further element of success of the Globaler Hof project lies in the presence of a caretaker (concierge) who lives in the building. Nowadays, the role that concierges used to have has been passed to service companies. Addressing concerns of residents through mediation and mutual understanding has enabled residents to resolve issues.[59]

Additional sources:

Elisabeth Mittendorfer, "Ein Multikulti-Dorf in Wien, Der Standard", *DerStandard*, 26 February 2014. Available at http://derstandard.at/1392686305374/Ein-Multikulti-Dorf-in-Wien

Heinz Fassmann and Josef Kohlbacher, *Housing and Segregation of Migrants: Case study – Vienna, Austria* (Strasbourg, Council of Europe, 2009). Available at http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/sites/default/files/ef_publication/field_ef_document/ef0949en6.pdf

European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working conditions, *CLIP Network: Housing and integration of migrants in Europe* (Strasbourg, Council of Europe, 2007). Available at https://www.coe.int/t/democracy/migration/Source/migration/congress_public_2.pdf

Case study 11: Rent discount for social housing residents – The Netherlands

In the Netherlands, three-quarters of the rental housing market are regulated social housing units. These housing units are rented out by housing corporations and non-profit commercial organizations which make use of their profits for the provision of quality affordable housing. As housing corporations are financially autonomous, they are able to implement independent projects. In June 2016, the Trudo Housing Corporation launched a scheme aimed at encouraging diversity within neighbourhoods, specifically targeted at providing housing for refugees. As part of a five-year EUR 430 million investment programme for the construction of 1,756 social housing sites, the housing corporation

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[59] Joachim Brech, Heidrun Feigelfeld and Walter Weiland, *Integration in Housing: Models for Social Cohesion,* Herbert Ludl, ed., (Vienna, Sozialbau AG, n.d.). Available at http://www.ciriec.uliege.be/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/eBook_IntegrationInHousing.pdf

offered tenants EUR 100 rent discount if they helped refugees integrate into the Dutch society. Currently, Trudo Housing Corporation is housing 85 refugees.

Volunteer social housing residents are expected to spend 10 hours a week helping newly arrived refugees navigate Dutch bureaucracy and familiarise them with the Dutch rules and customs. The Trudo Housing Corporation expects that the initiative will help refugees settle more easily in their new neighbourhood and ease their contacts with the relevant administration for employment, education and welfare services.

The Housing Corporation considers the EUR 100 discount a sufficient incentive in an area where the average rent is EUR 435.

Additional Sources:

Gordon Darroch, "Netherlands landlord offers tenants €100 rent cut for helping refugees", *The Guardian*, 16 June 2016. Available at https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jun/16/netherlands-landlord-offers-tenants-100-rent-cut-for-helping-refugees

Eindhoven News, "Trudo to invest €430 million in new housing", 13 June 2016. Available at https://eindhovennews.com/news/2016/06/trudo-to-invest-e430-million-in-new-housing/

Case study 12: Startblok housing project – The Netherlands

Startblok is a modular social housing project for young refugees living in the Netherlands. In order to qualify for housing, residents must be between 18 and 28 years old. The project consists of 565 units for rent: 463 studios and 102 rooms in multi-person apartments, to be leased for five years each. *Startblok* was developed in Riekerhaven, a former sportsground located in Amsterdam New West.

Monthly rent for a studio is EUR 510 but tenants can get a monthly allowance of EUR 177 approximately. For a room in a shared apartment, monthly rent ranges from EUR 387 to EUR 461 and in this case, no allowance is provided. The stakeholders involved in the project are:

(a)   The municipality of Amsterdam, which is responsible for providing social housing to refugees and provided the land for the development of the project;

(b)   The housing corporation *De Key*, which built rental housing units and owns about 37,000 of them in Amsterdam, Diemen and Zandvoort, *and* oversaw the construction of Startblok;

(c)   *Socius*, a housing provider for Dutch youngsters interested in developing projects with a social impact which won the bid for developing, setting up and executing the self-management of *Startblok*, and is also in charge of the recruitment and selection of future young tenants living in the Netherlands;

(d)   The Central Department for Sheltering Refugees, which has the overall responsibility for refugees in the Netherlands and in selecting refugees who can live in *Startblok* facilities;

(e)   *Vluchtelingenwerk*, an NGO which offers personal support, information and counselling to refugees and asylum seekers in the Netherlands and to the *Startblok* residents.

Self-management

Tenants are encouraged to help manage their living environment by participating in social and general management. "Social management" refers to creating a cohesive community and a liveable environment; it further entails coordinating social initiatives, activities and events. General management refers to daily tasks such as taking care of social media, participating in the selection of future tenants and maintenance works.

The self-management team is coordinated and supported by *Socius*. In total, about 10 per cent of tenants are involved in management activities, for which they receive a small wage.

All tenants, even those who are not formally part of the management team can suggest activities such as sports, cooking, games, film showings or musical events and can organize them with the help of the management team.

Solidarity

The underlying idea of the *Startblok* project is that tenants help each other have a good start in the society. To achieve this, solidarity is enhanced in various ways.

Firstly, the "buddy" project couples a foreigner to a Dutch youngster with similar interests. Buddies are matched before moving to *Startblok* so that they can start getting to know each other prior to moving into the premises. They are expected to exchange skills, knowledge and support each other. Secondly, 102 tenants live in shared apartments, sharing their kitchen, bathroom and living room with one to three other persons. Attention is paid to always have refugees living with Dutch youngsters to foster communication and sharing. Thirdly, all tenants are organized in "living groups", meaning that they will be offered to participate in activities together. Each living group has two self-appointed managers and is provided with a common space to carry out social activities.

Additional sources:

Startblok. Website: http://www.startblok.amsterdam/en/

Socius. Website: http://www.socius-wonen.nl/index.html

Case study 13: Social Housing in a Supportive Environment (SHSE) - Serbia

Serbia has a very limited number of social housing units for two reasons. Firstly, the socialist public housing stock has been privatized. Secondly, the new social housing policy is in its early stages of design and implementation. The lack of public housing and the closure of collective centres has resulted in refugees having to look for accommodation on the private rental market. In the early 2000s, many were found to be living in very poor conditions, leading the Serbian government to consider inadequate housing as an impediment to successful integration into society. As a

consequence, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy launched the SHSE programme in 2002 with the support of UNHCR and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.

The SHSE programme aims to house the most vulnerable refugee families. It has two interrelated components:

The construction of social housing units owned by local authorities

Special attention is paid to the quality of design, the location, and access to services and infrastructure. In order to provide the highest possible standards, all buildings are newly constructed rather than refurbished. The average cost per unit is USD 553 per m².

Newly constructed social housing units are part of two-storey buildings, which are similar to other local buildings in terms of quality and aesthetics. Buildings usually include six to eight apartments per block and are integrated in the urban tissue, among other residential buildings. The aesthetics and location of the blocks aim to avoid stigmatisation and discrimination.

Community spaces are central to design as they enable contact between residents. The communal rooms, laundries, terraces and outdoor space of the units are barrier-free and both accessible to the social housing and neighbourhood residents.

The programme stakeholders are:

(a)   The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy of Serbia provides guidance to the project development.

(b)   Donor organizations provide most of the financing. Together with the Serbian national government, donor organizations bring in 70 per cent of the financial resources. When the project started, the Swiss Agency for Cooperation and Development was the main donor, a role which the EU has now taken over.

(c)   Municipalities are expected to provide the land for construction, which corresponds approximately to the remaining 30 per cent of the cost of the programme. They are also responsible for the maintenance of social housing buildings. Municipalities participating in the programme are selected according to the number and vulnerability of refugees and IDPs they receive, as well as their ability to provide land and infrastructure.

The creation of a supportive environment for social housing residents

Fostered by the Centre for Social Work and host families, the SHSE programme has been envisaged to cater to the needs of residents.

Host families are selected by the local centre for social work and trained in communication, conflict management skills and supervision of mentally and physically ill persons. Host families can also be refugees or IDPs with children, who have the capacity to work. There is one host family per residential building. The host family lives alongside the other families and is tasked with supporting them with what is necessary in their daily lives. In this way, the host family acts as a point of contact with external bodies and can help all other refugees integrate in the neighbourhood. Additionally, the host family is

responsible for maintaining common areas and helping other residents with their own maintenance. Each municipality compensates the host family for their services. Compensation ranges from rent-free living to a proper salary with attached pension and health insurance.

Every year, municipal authorities meet to determine which families can be considered independent enough to secure their own dwelling in the private market. However, the goal of the project is not to lead beneficiaries towards self-reliance but to offer protection to a particularly vulnerable population.

Achievements

By January 2016, there were 1,229 social housing units built in 43 municipalities across Serbia under the programme, housing a total of 3,301 people.

Additionally, a 2009 study jointly conducted by the NGO "Housing Centre" and the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy highlighted the impact achieved by the project:

(a)   Eighty-one per cent of beneficiaries eventually obtained Serbian citizenship. However, at least one of the family members was ethnically Serb in most of these cases.

(b)   One hundred per cent of the children of beneficiary families were attending school, which starkly contrasts with the rates for refugee children living in collective centres, where the drop-out rate is 67 per cent for elementary school and 70 per cent for secondary education. Indeed, even though education is free of charge in Serbia, many refugee children in collective centres have dropped out of school to help their parents earn money for their basic necessities. Providing them with tenure security and social support has thus had an impact on education.

(c)   Thirty-two per cent of beneficiaries secured employment while being accommodated in SHSE units and of these, 50 per cent was due to the help of the centres of social work. It should be noted that the absence of language barrier was crucial to achieve these results.

SHSE was one of the finalists for the World Habitat Awards in 2009 and 2014.

Additional sources:

Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), *Home Sweet Home: Housing Practices and Tools That Support Durable Solutions for Urban IDPs* (Geneva, IDMC, Norwegian Refugee Council, 2015). Available at http://www.internal-displacement.org/assets/publications/2015/20150325-global-home-sweet-home/20150325-global-home-sweet-home-en-full-report.pdf

Housing Centre, "Social housing in supportive environment", 22 August 2014. Available at https://issuu.com/housingcenter/docs/wha_2014_2015_booklet?e=13250810/9031465

Building and Social Housing Foundation. World Habitat, 2009. Available at https://www.world-habitat.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/BSHF-information-leaflet-2013-WEB.pdf

UNHCR, "Housing solutions for twenty-six displaced families in Kragujevac thanks to a donation from the European Union", 15 April 2016. Available at http://www.unhcr.rs/en/dokumenti/saopstenja-za-medije/stambena-resenja-dvadeset-sest-raseljenih.html

Part 4: The role of housing cooperatives in providing housing to migrants and refugees

Housing cooperatives (Coops) are a typology of private companies formed by individuals with the aim of facilitating access to housing for their members. Residents are the collective managers of the company and collectively establish rules and decisions relating to their living environment. The primary aim of housing cooperatives is to provide quality and affordable housing. However, some carry out additional purposes such as the promotion of ecological practices or the provision of housing to specific groups such as the older persons, single mothers and migrants and refugees.

Case study 14: Mika - Karlsruhe, Germany

In Germany, housing cooperatives have been in existence since the 19th century and are a widely spread form of housing for the national population. The country currently reports around 1,800 housing cooperatives across its territory, offering a total of 2.1 million rental housing units to nationals or foreigners.

The *MiKa* cooperative was founded with the idea of offering 30 per cent of its 86 apartments to migrant families. *MiKa* offers long term rental contracts and residents are able to remain for several generations.

The project was born through the financial support of both the German government and the GLS Bank, which provided loans to the cooperative in order to meet the amount (EUR 7.67 million) necessary to buy, rebuild and renovate the buildings of a former military barracks for housing.

The apartment buildings, offering between one to seven room apartments, were designed by the members of the cooperative. The buildings lie around an open interior courtyard which provides space for community events. According to Mika, the courtyard is used as a playground, garden and a meeting space. Furthermore, residents benefit from mutual support through, for instance, baby-sitting and car sharing.

All these common activities and services foster peaceful coexistence between residents of different cultural backgrounds. This is further facilitated through the Mediation and Exchange Forum, set up in 2003, which allows residents from different social and ethnic backgrounds to interact and get to know each other. For instance, non-violence seminars are organized to teach residents how to manage conflicts.

Additionally, affordability is core to the cooperative and basic rent was EUR 5.27/m² as of January 2007 and is increased by EUR 0.31/m² every two years. Since its creation the cooperative has received numerous awards.[60]

Additional sources:

Mika, „Gemeinschaftsorientiertes Wohnen". Available at http://www.mika-eg.de/wohn_gemeinsam.html

Co-operative Housing International, "Co-operative housing Germany". Available at
http://www.housinginternational.coop/co-ops/germany

Case study 15: 400 Riel - Gatineau, Canada

In Canada, housing cooperatives have been providing housing to migrants since the mid-1980s. Most of these coops were developed by ethnic community groups to create a link between housing and other programmes aiming to integrate newcomers in the country. Examples are the Chilean Housing Coop in Vancouver and the Tamil Cooperative in Toronto. The latter was awarded the Cooperative Housing Foundation by the Award for Co-operative Achievement of Canada in June 2015, recognising its dedication to "supporting newcomers adjusting to their new homes and the larger community".

Created in 1984, the *400 Riel* coop consists of 34 individual houses. In 2015, members decided to allocate one of the empty houses for a large refugee family. The house has four bedrooms, which is considered valuable to large refugee families who often struggle to find accommodation matching their family composition given their limited resources.

The refugee family (currently composed of eight members) was offered the house at a low rent (USD 250 a month) for a limited period of one year. The idea was to give the family a secured accommodation for a year to allow its members to focus on developing their skills and finding employment.

Even though the 400 Riel coop is housing only one refugee family at a time, the concept and financing mechanisms behind the initiative remain interesting. Financial support provided by the Canadian government to refugees stops one year after their arrival. Refugees in Quebec are eligible for housing allowances only one year after settling into a housing cooperative.

To deal with this issue, members of the coop started crowd-funding through the platform mécènESS.[61] In addition, some members of the coop willingly decided they would fund the difference between the affordable rent and real rent from their own pocket, unless a partnership is formed with the Housing Society of Quebec to provide the family with some form of housing allowance to fund the amount of the rent.

Additional sources:

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[60] A full list is available at http://www.mika-eg.de/stand_preise.html (in German).
[61] Please see: https://meceness.ca/projects/refugies-bien-loges/.

Rebecca Harvey, "Canada's Co-operators commit to helping refugees", *Co-operative news*, 5 February 2016. Available at http://www.thenews.coop/101954/news/co-operatives/canadas-co-operators-commit-helping-refugees/

Case study 16: Stitching New Home Rotterdam – Rotterdam, The Netherlands

The Stichting New Home Rotterdam (SNTR) is a housing programme managed by the De Verre Bergen Foundation. This foundation, founded in 2011, is actively involved in many social projects promoting integration of migrants and refugees into the Dutch society.

The SNTR initiative aims to increase the supply of housing for refugees by means of purchasing private homes that have been for sale on more than six months. The idea behind this approach is that this way houses aren't taken away from local people who may be interested in moving to those areas. The cost for one apartment is on average 100,000€ and refugees are asked to pay rent for their property. This fee goes to the foundation, which uses the money to pay for language courses and guidance on education and work opportunities for the refugees.

Beneficiaries have the chance to participate in a 16-week programme to learn Dutch, reaching a level at which participants can work or pursue further education. The foundation also offers programmes for refugees to get familiar with their new home: the city, district, healthcare and education systems, as well as assistance in finding employment.

Additional sources:

Andrew Milner, "Migration and refugee crisis: Is venture philanthropy reactive enough?", *Alliance magazine*, 8 November 2016. Available at http://www.alliancemagazine.org/blog/migration-refugee-crisis-venture-philanthropy-reactive-enough/

Stichting Nieuw Thuis Rotterdam. "Programma". Available at https://www.sntr.nl/over-ons/programma/

Stichting De Verre Bergen, "Stichting Nieuw Thuis Rotterdam: Een nieuw thuis in Rotterdam". Available at www.deverrebergen.nl/plannen-voor-rotterdam/stichting-nieuw-thuis-rotterdam/

Part 5: Modular housing units for migrants and refugees

Several challenges faced by the construction industry such as high construction costs, slow construction pace, and scarcity or high cost of land, hinder the delivery of housing in the UNECE region - affordable housing in particular,[62] could lead to a significant housing shortage in the UNECE region.[63] In many cases, the manner in which houses are constructed is the same as it was half a century ago. Thus, selected studies claim that the use of industrial approaches, that is, prefabrication or modular

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[62] UNECE, Social Housing in the UNECE region, 13.
[63] McKinsey Global Institute. (2014) A blueprint for addressing the global affordable housing challenge. McKinsey & Company 2014. Available at
https://www.mckinsey.com/~/media/McKinsey/Featured%20Insights/Urbanization/Tackling%20the%20world s%20affordable%20housing%20challenge/MGI_Affordable_housing_Executive%20summary_October%202014 .ashx

methods, could offer a potential solution to the challenges of the construction industry. Industrial approaches to construction refer to any kind of off-site production followed by on-site assembling.

This section provides several examples of prefabricated accommodation for refugees, mostly in Germany. In recent years Germany has seen a surge in the use of these building methods to construct hundreds of thousands of prefabricated dwellings under government contracts.

However, cases where prefabrication methods have been used to accommodate migrants and refugees for a longer term illustrate that modular methods should not only be seen as an emergency solution but also as a means to provide good quality and lasting dwellings.

Case study 17: City of Ostfildern, Germany

Link: http://www.u3ba.de/projekte/sozialwohnungsbau-ostfildern		
Year of completion	**Composition**	**Residents**
February 2015	39 residents in 3 buildings One-bedroom apartments	Formerly homeless people and refugees
Method used: Timber frame		
Construction cost: EUR 29,400/dwelling or EUR 1,400/m²		
Living space per person: 21 m²		**Life span:** 40 years
Pictures 		

35

Case study 18: City of Bad Soden, Germany

Link: http://www.rigollarchitekten.de/index.php/projekt/wohnanlage.html		
Year of completion	**Composition**	**Residents**
May 2015	40 two-bedroom self-contained units	Families of asylum seekers
Method used: Timber frame		
Construction cost: EUR 47,500/dwelling or EUR 1,750/m²		
Living space per person: 9.71 m²		**Life span:** not mentioned

Pictures

Back side / Photo: © Olaf Rigoll

Back side / Photo: © Olaf Rigoll

Back side / Photo: © Olaf Rigoll
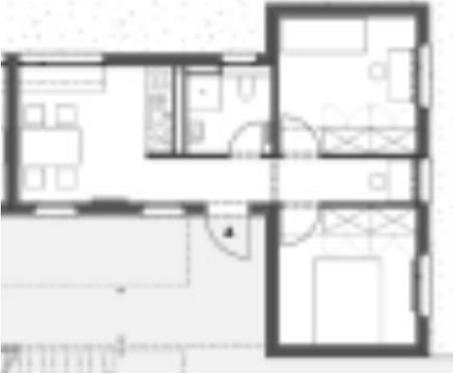
Case study 19: City of Tübingen, Germany

Link: http://www.haefele-architekten.de/referenzen.html#collapseOne		
Year of completion	**Composition**	**Residents**
April 2015	Two-bedroom self-contained apartments	96 asylum seekers
Method used: Room modules in steel		
Construction cost: EUR 1,762/m²		
Living space per person: 14.50 m²		**Life span:** 5-10 years

Pictures

Playground / Photo: © Heiner Holme
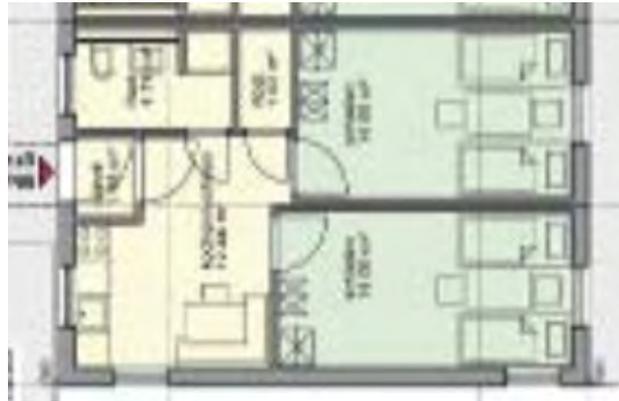
Playground / Photo: © Heiner Holme
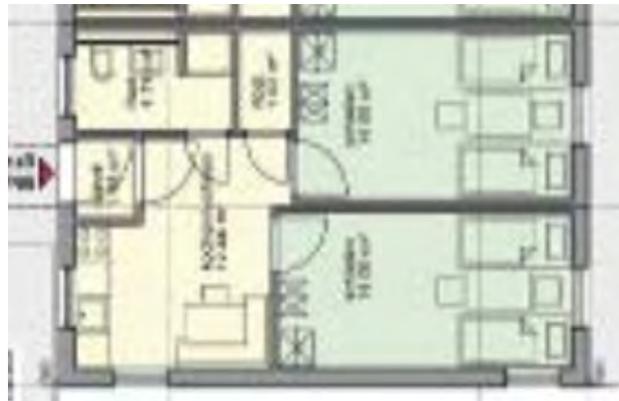
Playground / Photo: © Heiner Holme
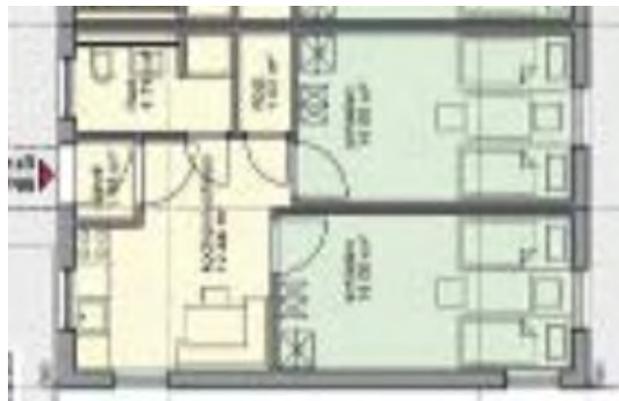
Case study 20: City of Königsbrunn, Germany

Link: http://www.variahome.de/home/		
Year of completion	**Composition**	**Residents**
July 2015	20 two-bedroom self-contained apartments	Asylum seekers
Method used: Prefabricated wooden room modules		
Construction cost: EUR 1,700/m²		
Living space per person: 7.6 m²		**Life span:** Not mentioned
Pictures: Königsbrunn: residential building and interior courtyard / Photo: © VARIAHOME		
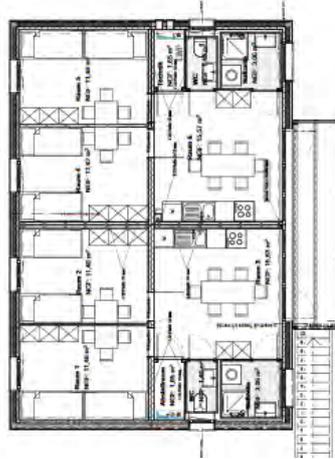
Case study 21: City of Kriftel, Germany

Link: http://www.rigollarchitekten.de/index.php/projekt/Wohnanlage-Kriftel.html		
Year of completion	**Composition**	**Residents**
August 2014	22 two- and three-bedroom self-contained apartments	40 asylum seekers
Method used: Container, steel frame		
Construction cost: EUR 48,545/dwelling or EUR 1,443/m²		
Living space per person: 9.79 m²		**Life span:** 5 years

Pictures:

Kriftel: Back side / Photo: © Olaf Rigoll

Kriftel: Back side / Photo: © Olaf Rigoll

Kriftel: Back side / Photo: © Olaf Rigoll

Case study 22: City of Geneva, Switzerland
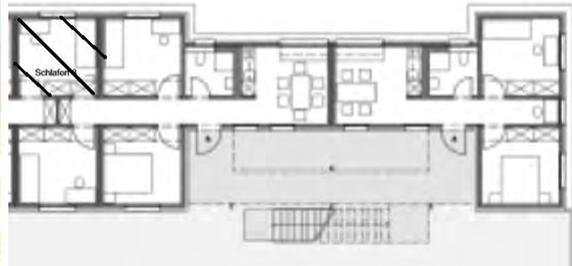
Link: http://www.acau.ch/projets/amig-rigot		
Year of completion	**Composition**	**Residents**
February 2019	Not mentioned	370 migrants, mostly families
Method used: Prefabricated, wood		
Construction cost: EUR 26 million		
Living space per person: not mentioned		**Life span:** minimum 10 years
Pictures		
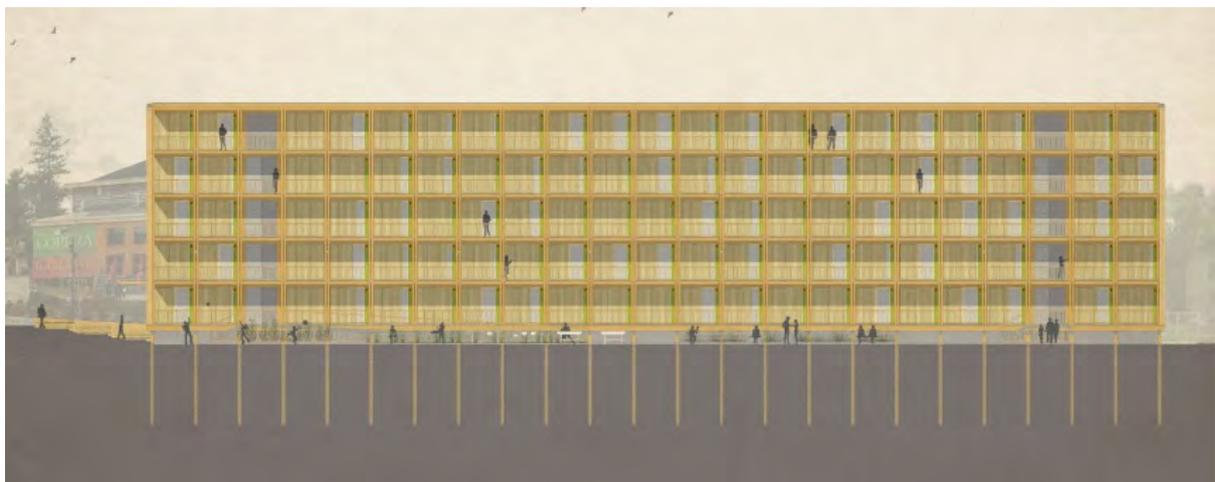
The selected prefabricated housing projects show how such construction methods can be used both to house migrants and refugees while their application is processed (cases of Bad Soben, Tübingen, Königsbrunn and Kriftel) or as a lasting housing solution (case of Ostfildern and Geneva).

These housing projects were selected as best practices for providing housing for migrants and refugees because of the quality of life they offer to newcomers. Contrary to most reception facilities where refugees must share their living space and which do not pay much attention to design, the prefabricated housing buildings presented above offer each family some privacy and the possibility to have a family life that is as normal as possible. For instance, families are able to cook their own food and children are offered space to play.

The *Königsbrunn* complex was designed as a "social project" aiming to start the integration process of asylum seekers into German society while their application is processed. Thus, offices for volunteers and social workers were integrated into the complex. The other projects lack this social dimension even though they are dedicated to housing the same population.

These housing projects had the main advantage to have been built quickly (taking less than 9 months from design to set up). However, the costs of construction are similar to classical building methods. Ordering those dwellings from German firms presents the advantage of boosting the prefabricated construction sector (11.5 per cent of growth in 2015) but buying them from third countries might be a way to reduce costs.

For instance, various Turkish companies, such as *Villa Prefabrik*, have developed expertise in producing prefabricated dwellings following the Marmara Earthquake in 1999. They appear to be able to produce a prefabricated dwelling for $1,300, including shipping costs to Europe. Currently, *Villa Prefabrik* receives orders from Germany, the Netherlands and Switzerland.

Local authorities are planning to use these complexes to house refugees for between 5 and 40 years (see the "Lifespan" boxes). Depending on the length of the refugee crisis, those lifespans might be extended. However, the dwellings could then be reconverted for other purposes like housing students, the elderly, homeless people etc. It could thus be seen as a long-term investment for municipalities.

The case of *Ostfildern* shows that, when building prefabricated housing complexes, authorities could consider including both locals and refugees in need of accommodation. Thus, if prefabricated housing is intended to accommodate refugees in the long term, ensuring social mix could allow the integration of refugees into society.

Part 6: Improving mechanisms for access to adequate housing

Once asylum seekers are granted refugee status or subsidiary protection, they are required to leave their temporary accommodation/reception centres and this within a short time frame: two months in Belgium, 28 days in the United Kingdom, 15 days in Slovenia, and 14 days in Bulgaria. In Western European countries such as the United Kingdom, France or Germany, refugees are not given any priority. In some other countries, mostly in Eastern European countries such as Bulgaria and Slovenia, refugees are expected to find their accommodation in the private housing market on their own.

Case study 23: Conditional rental subsidy – Romania

In Romania, refugees are required to leave their accommodation centre soon after being granted asylum, except those who decide to participate in the integration programme or are vulnerable persons. However, if only a few of those can sustain an independent life; , refugees will face a significant risk of homelessness. A conditional in-cash housing support is aimed to support refugees.[64] While staying in the centre, refugees have to follow an integration programme which includes cultural orientation, language courses, and social counselling. Each refugee receives financial assistance of RON 480 (approximately EUR 100) each month for up to three months and after this they get a non-reimbursable monthly grant of RON 540 (approximately EUR 112.5) up to a period of one year.[65] If the reception centres are full, the beneficiaries of international protection participating in the integration programme could rent a private house where the General Inspectorate for Immigration reimburses the monthly expenses[66].

After the one-year period, a rental subsidy may be provided for one year maximum. It covers 50 per cent of the rent and is granted only to refugees who have completed the integration programme and who were denied access to social housing. This happens frequently as the social housing stock is small: according to Housing Europe, the stock of social housing represents 2.3 per cent of the national housing stock.

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[64] UNHCR, ''Refugee Integration and the Use of Indicators: Evidence from Central Europe", December 2013. Available at http://www.refworld.org/docid/532164584.html

[65] See Law No. 122/2006 on Asylum in Romania, art. 20 and 55. Available at https://www.unhcr.org/4e2d64679.pdf

[66] See Ordinance no. 44 on the Social Integration of Aliens Who Were Granted a Form of Protection in Romania of January 2004, art. 6 and 21. Available at https://www.legislationline.org/download/id/7281/file/Romania_ordinnance_on_social_integration_of_aliens_2004_am2006_en.pdf

Starting 2016, there are projects planned, financed by the AMIF, aiming to identify houses and cover rental expenses for the beneficiaries of international protection who participate in the integration programme or are vulnerable persons.

Case study 24: Rehousing allowance – Belgium

Upon arrival in Belgium, asylum seekers are housed in reception centres for up to two months. The centres belong to the Federal Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers (FEDASIL), the Red Cross or another partner organization. After the two-month period, the refugees are moved to a local reception initiative (reception network of Fedasil at the local level) where they can stay up to a maximum of six months after which they need to move to a private housing outside of the reception network.

Social assistance that a refugee receives depends on the policies of each municipality. However, refugees face many barriers to securing accommodation on the private rental market, which puts them at risk of homelessness. Among these is the lack of financial resources which the rehousing allowance aims to address.

The rehousing allowance benefit applies to a variety of vulnerable people, among them recognised refugees, after leaving a reception centre. It consists of a:

- Move allowance, which assists people in moving in and out, amounting to EUR 808.03, plus 10 per cent for each additional household member but not exceeding 3 additional persons. Thus, the maximum move allowance that a household could receive is EUR 1050.44. This allowance is a one-time benefit for each household,

- Rent allowance of EUR 156.56 per month, plus 10 per cent for each additional household member (not exceeding 5 additional persons. Therefore, the maximum monthly rent allowance that a household could get is EUR 234.83. The rent allowance is allocated for five years and is renewable once for another five years. The amount of the renewed rent allowance is decreased by 50 per cent.

Additional sources:

Logement Brussels, Allocation de relogement - sans abri. Available at
http://logement.brussels/primes-et-aides/allocation-de-relogement-sans-abri

SLRB-BGHM Brussels, « Publications". Available at https://slrb-
bghm.brussels/fr/professionnel/publications/nos-publications

Case study 25: HSB (Swedish Cooperative Housing Association) – Sweden

The HSB - Swedish Cooperative Housing Association- consists of 33 regional cooperative associations with 3,903 cooperative local housing companies as members. The HSB housing stock consists of 317,000 units, out of which 27,000 are rental dwellings. Mostly located in urban areas, each coop has approximately 20 to 100 apartment buildings, and each building has 80 units on the average.

Tenants must be members of the coop; membership is approved by the Board. Members pay a monthly fee that covers the loan interest and amortization expenses of the coop, as well as its operating expenses and scheduled future maintenance. The size of the monthly fee is decided based on the size of the units the member occupies.

There is no financial assistance from the government. Depending on the project, member tenants/owners finance between 75–80 per cent of the development cost and the rest of the funding is raised by the coops through loans from banks and other private financial institutions. Tenant owners can normally get a loan from the banks equivalent to 85 per cent of the down payment required.

Both the HSB and Riksbyggen have set up saving mechanisms wherein individuals save to buy their future cooperative housing shares. Individuals who use these mechanisms have priority on new developments.

Additional sources:

Co-operative Housing International, "Co-operative housing Sweden". Available at http://www.housinginternational.coop/co-ops/sweden

Power House Europe, "HSB - The Swedish Cooperative Housing Association". Available at http://www.powerhouseeurope.eu/national_platforms/sweden/hsb_the_swedish_cooperative_housing_association/overview/

HSB – Housing Cooperative Sweden, Stockholm. Website: https://www.hsb.se/stockholm/

Case study 26: Welcome Fund for Syrian Refugees – Canada

The Community Foundations of Canada (CFC) is a national network gathering the 191 community foundations of Canada. The foundations are non-profit organizations which finance community-impact initiatives in a variety of fields from shelter and education to arts and recreation. On 10 December 2015, CFC announced the creation of the Welcome Fund for Syrian Refugees.

The CFC launched this Fund to fundraise from the private sector. The Fund has managed to gather significant resources. In particular, the company Manulife donated USD 6 million. The CFC distributes the resources to the various community foundations according to local needs and the number of refugees welcomed and in turn, those foundations direct the funds to charitable organizations. These financial resources are intended to fund accommodation, job training and skills development for refugees. Calgary was the first city to receive funds from CFC (about USD 600,000) which have since been used to supplement the monthly housing allowances given by the city to the 700 government-assisted refugees.

Additional sources:

Government of Canada, "Refugees and Asylum", 14 December 2020. Available at https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/refugees.html

Manulife Financial Corporation, "Manulife and Community Foundations of Canada establish Welcome Fund for Syrian Refugees", *CISION News*, 10 December 2015. Available at https://www.newswire.ca/news-releases/manulife-and-community-foundations-of-canada-establish-welcome-fund-for-syrian-refugees-561463231.html

Carla Turner, "Refugee agencies making headway in housing Syrians, but thousands still need homes", *CBC News*, 8 March 2016. Available at http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/refugees-housing-moving-in-1.3476893

Case study 727: Provivienda - Spain

Provivienda is active in several Spanish cities with the aim to facilitate "access to privately-rented housing for people with limited financial means". Its activities include the:

- Provision of updated information and advice to find accommodation on the rental market

- Provision of mortgages

- Provision of multi-risk insurance guarantees through insurance companies or directly acting as a guarantor

- Management of a fund, mainly through public resources, to compensate landlords in case of inability of tenant to pay rent

- Creation of partnerships with landlords. Provivienda either forge an agreement with flat owners to a rent 20 per cent below market rate or it refurbishes a property with an agreement with the owner to reserve it for beneficiaries of Provivienda over a contractually agreed time period.

Guarantees provided by Provivienda normally apply for a year only. They can be extended to five years in exceptional cases. Provivienda has housed 87,000 people since its creation. However, no information is provided on the share of refugees among these beneficiaries.

Additional sources:

Comunidad de Madrid, "Inmigración". Available at https://www.comunidad.madrid/servicios/asuntos-sociales/inmigracion

World Habitat, "Rental Mediation Programme". Available at https://www.bshf.org/world-habitat-awards/winners-and-finalists/rental-mediation-programme/

Christophe Andreo and others, "Panorama des initiatives sur l'accès au logement des réfugiés dans 15 pays européens" (Paris, France Terre d'Asile, December 2008). Available at http://www.france-terre-asile.org/images/etude-logement-dec2008.pdf

Provivienda. Website: https://www.provivienda.org/

Case study 28: Welcommon – Greece

The Wind of Renewal (WoR), Anemos Ananeosis, is a social enterprise founded in 2014. The cooperative is working to advance a number of social and economic objectives, including the integration of refugees into host communities and the promotion of sustainable and green social enterprises. To advance these goals, WoR has been collaborating with local governments, EU institutions, cooperative movements and other civil society organizations, as well as universities and researchers, on a wide range of projects and activities.

In September 2016, WoR launched "Welcommon", an innovative community centre for hosting and promoting integration of refugees. Its scheme is implemented by WoR in cooperation with the Athens Development and Destination Management Agency (EATA), in the framework of the relocation programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The refugee housing facility of Welcommon is located in Exarhia, Athens, a former clinic that was rented for nine years. Its central location and easy accessibility by public transport contributes to preventing the marginalization of the refugees and facilitates the participation of local people in its activities.

Welcommon accommodates up to 200 people with a separate room designated for each family. Beneficiaries are identified by the UNHCR within the framework of its relocation programme, with priority given to vulnerable groups including pregnant women, families with children, and the elderly, among others. Currently the majority of the 160 guests are Syrian children, who are usually accompanied by only one parent.

All guests undergo a medical check-up, and all children are vaccinated before they can enter the formal education system. In cooperation with the community of Syrians already living in Greece, Welcommon is in the process of setting up a network of Arabic-speaking volunteer doctors of various specializations.

The community centre covers the costs of settlement and all the basic needs of the refugees besides provision of housing facilities. The community centre also organizes training for refugees and facilitates their active participation in, and cooperation with the local community. It aims to provide adequate infrastructure and quality services, while applying good practices that ensure the dignity of the refugees.

Additional sources:

International Labour Organization, "Cooperative housing for refugees in Greece", *Spotlight Interviews with Cooperators*, 9 December 2016. Available at
http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/cooperatives/news/WCMS_537883/lang--en/index.htm

Anemos Ananeosis (Wind of Renewal). Website: http://anemosananeosis.gr/en/what-we-do/

Conclusions and recommendations

The analysis in this study has shown **that housing is one of the key directions for the integration of regular migrants and refugees** alongside the provision of access to rights such as employment, education, health activities. This study demonstrates that employment alone does not represent the main avenue of integration in contemporary mixed migratory flows. For this reason, providing access to affordable and adequate housing is of paramount importance in the UNECE region.

The 28 case studies presented in this publication demonstrate a wide range of good practices of providing affordable and adequate housing for migrants and refugees, which include but are not restricted to the following:

(a) Revitalizing depopulated decaying urban neighbourhoods by renovating vacant houses and using them as housing for migrants and refugees (Case studies 1 and 2);

(b) Addressing the depopulation of rural areas through providing housing for migrants and refugees in rural communities (Case studies 3-7);

(c) Promoting diverse and sustainable communities through facilitating interaction between local communities and migrants and refugees, developing shared public spaces and conducting activities to support integration (Case studies 8-10):

(d) Developing long-term, sustainable and cost-efficient housing solutions through involving migrants and refugees in planning and implementation processes on housing construction and maintenance (Case studies 11-17);

(e) Building affordable adequate housing through applying innovative architectural design for cheap, but still high-quality, modular prefabricated housing (Case studies 18-23);

(f) Generating additional resources on housing projects for migrants and refugees through partnerships between governments, NGOs and the private sector (Case studies 24-29).

The following conclusions and recommendations could be drawn based on the study:

1. While both housing and immigration policies in the UNECE region are generally set at the national level, the effects of both are primarily visible at the regional and local level and require local action at municipal level. As shown in case studies 10, 11 and 13, local authorities of Ghent, Vienna and Amsterdam played a significant role in the successful integration of migrants and refugees. Cities often have key solutions to challenges, such as the informal sector and the overall growth of substandard housing, and the provision of basic services for all, which are presented by migratory patterns. Integration in cities is an important element that can shape their economic, social, and cultural vibrancy.

   Policy recommendation: Efforts to provide adequate and affordable accommodation for newcomers in cities require national governments to establish closer cooperation with local governments and delegate them more powers and resources to develop and implement projects with the meaningful participation of all relevant stakeholders and beneficiaries.

2. Competences over housing and integration are divided between different tiers of government, both vertically and horizontally. However, as most of the presented case studies demonstrated,

integrated efforts of different sectors and disciplines, as well as close cooperation of different authorities is required. If the issue is addressed through a sectoral approach, solutions are unlikely to generate impactful results.

Policy recommendation: An integrated approach to the planning and implementation of housing projects and other integration activities (jobs, education, services) for regular migrants and refugees can achieve positive results. It is important that roles and responsibilities between different organizations are clearly distributed while ensuring collaboration between different tiers of government, other organizations and disciplines.

3. The case studies presented demonstrate that housing projects developed with active involvement of future tenants are much more cost-effective and sustainable economically, socially and environmentally in the long run.

   Policy recommendation: Strategies should be designed to include the active participation of migrants and refugees in decision-making for the planning and construction of their housing, as well as in the implementation processes for construction and maintenance. This can take several forms as shown in case studies 6 and 7: for example, panels or advisory groups, training and employment of migrants and refugees in local housing services, or direct involvement of migrants and refugees in the provision or revitalization of housing.

4. The mapping of practices for housing migrants and refugees also revealed that the success of the housing projects depends to a considerable extent on the engagement of housing associations and other civil society organizations how develop innovative solution to housing projects. Experiences on areas relating to receiving migrants and refugees and their integration and access to housing may differ between countries and also within cities as absorbing newcomers depends on the capacity (and willingness) of each city and its neighbourhood (or even households). Case studies in Belgium, France and Turkey (case studies 8-10) showed effective examples of local innovative practices implemented by municipalities in cooperation with housing associations and other NGOs, resulting in sustainable housing solutions.

   Policy recommendation: It is important to promote the involvement of, housing associations and other civil society organizations and relevant stakeholders to ensure long-term sustainable housing solutions which consider local cultural and socio-economic contexts.

5. The housing systems in UNECE member States are characterized by their great diversity. The mapping of innovative practices for this study (case studies 11-17 from Austria, Canada, Germany, Serbia and The Netherlands) showed that this variety and richness is also present in housing solutions for migrants and refugees. Housing solutions can address the housing continuum beyond emergency shelters to cover transitional housing, social housing, and both affordable and private rental housing and home ownership. In localities where a wide variety of affordable housing options are available along with comprehensive long-term integration strategies, the "housing continuum" approach, that is, the provision of a broad range of types of tenure ensuring the fulfilment of all housing needs, as well as leaving room for progression, enables migrants and refugees to improve their living conditions, support their social mobility and long-term integration process. As demonstrated in case studies 18-23, prefabricated and ecological methods can address the long-term housing issues for vulnerable groups in society, rather than merely acting

as an emergency solution. The challenge for local and national governments alike, is to use the examples presented and implement them at the scale needed for each context. There is a continuing need for housing policy to support tenure-balanced housing provision, as well as a wide range of affordable housing options, to enable the social mobility of the most vulnerable groups including the migrants and refugees, without prioritizing over home ownership as a single model.

Policy recommendation: It is recommended to support social mobility of all, including migrants, refugees, asylum seekers and IDPs, through the housing continuum approach to ensure the migrants and refugees are provided not just with temporary housing solutions but also access to long-term affordable and social housing. The role of homeowner associations and housing cooperatives is crucial in this respect.

6. A comprehensive examination of the cutting-edge literature in human geography, psychology and sociology suggests that integration is an increasingly dynamic and multi-level process. This process, among other things, rests on the interaction between the host community and the newcomers. There are increasing calls for migrants and refugees and service providers to collaborate in the design and set-up of necessary services and learn together. In the context of housing and integration, the study found that the following two points are of crucial importance:

-   *Engagement of beneficiaries in housing policy and project design*

The engagement and participation of beneficiaries in housing policy and project design is of key importance to secure relevant information on experiences and needs at both national and city levels.

-   *Engagement of the host communities in the process of new migrant integration*

Integration is a multi-dimensional process[67] which by its very nature requires interaction between the newcomers and the host community. The research shows that such interaction may be challenging.[68] It is even more challenging in the context of economic crises when also local population does not have access to affordable housing and adding migrants to communities may bring additional tensions in the communities. In this context, it is important to balance the housing needs of the local population with that of migrants and refugees.

Policy recommendation: Promote interaction between the host community and the newcomers and facilitate cooperation and collaboration in the design and set-up of necessary services related to housing and life of migrants and refugees. Additionally, all housing related strategies should be accompanied by an evidence-based communication strategy.

7. This study has illustrated that initiatives and programmes providing access to medium and long-term housing solutions immediately following the arrival of migrants and refugees in the host country is a critical element in their long-term integration prospects. In this context, the provision of affordable and adequate housing has a direct impact on the ability of migrants and refugees to

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[67] Maria Psoinos. and Orna Rosenfeld, "Developing the understanding of migrant and refugee integration in the EU: implications for housing policies", paper presented at The Migration Conference, Harokopio University, Athens, 23–26 August 2017.

[68] Irene Ponzo, "Immigrant integration policies and housing policies: the hidden links", *fieri Research Reports*, December 2010. Available at http://fieri.it/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Rapporto-social-housing-ethnic-minorities_def_125013-16032011_ita.pdf

seek social services that cities offer such as employment, education and health. Case studies 24-29 showed that generating additional resources and creating new financial means for migrants and refugees jointly with NGOs and the private sector can have a significant impact on providing access to medium and long-term housing solutions.

Policy recommendation: Housing programmes for migrants and refugees should be designed with a view to medium- or long-term needs, instead of considering only immediate housing needs.

8. The need to adjust national policies for the provision of adequate and affordable housing as a response to the economic, financial and migration crises has been discussed in different forums by governments, not least during annual sessions of the intergovernmental UNECE Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management. These annual sessions gather high-level officials responsible for housing and land management in 56 countries in the UNECE region. The Committee is the important platform for the exchange of experiences and best practices in promoting affordable decent housing.

Policy recommendation: International organizations should support efforts of national and local authorities to improve access to medium- and long-term housing solutions for migrants and refugees. International organizations are seen as the hubs of knowledge exchange; therefore, they should establish long-term commitments to housing data collection, best practice mapping and exchange, as well as capacity-building.

Housing for Migrants and Refugees in the UNECE Region
Challenges and practices