

Upscaling the Vienna Model of Social Housing to the EU level

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About Vienna and its region



- **Vienna** with 1.9 mio. inhabitants (2020), 51,2 % women, **population growth expected to reach 2 million by 2027**
- **Vienna region** 2,7 mio. Inhabitants (2019), together with Lower Austria and Burgenland goes **beyond borders to Slovakia**
- **High quality of life** with 1st place in „Quality of Living Ranking” since 2009 by Mercer

Housing in Vienna: a city of tenants

- Long-term tradition of social and cooperative housing in Austria
- High level of governance & delivery instruments in Austria & its 9 regions
- Vienna Housing Promotion and Renovation Act
- Gentle Urban Renewal Strategy
- Vienna Land Fund
- Developers' competitions for new construction sites
- Building Code with category „subsidised housing“
- Tenants' protection and legal dispute settlement
- 14.000 units under construction today
- Gender sensitive urban planning



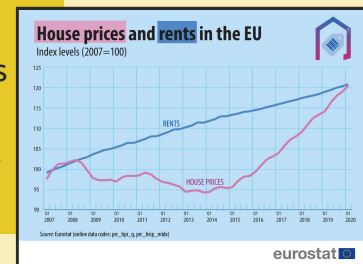
Reasons for the housing crisis in Europe

- Lack of investment in social and affordable housing
- Financialisation of the housing markets, including risk of money laundering
- „Touristification“ and gentrification
- High costs for construction and building ground, scarcity of land
- Low regulation and state intervention
- Taxation reliefs for institutional investors
- Low level of state intervention in housing sector



Effects of the housing crisis in European cities

- Lack in investment leads to overheated and fragmented housing markets
- Social and territorial segregation within the city boundaries
- Middle income families cannot afford a home, rise in homelessness
- High risk of energy poverty, eviction and homelessness
- Rising precarity, unhealthy and overcrowded housing
- Discrimination of vulnerable groups and social housing as a whole



Vienna is different

- ✓ Two in three Viennese live in municipal, cooperative or publicly funded homes
- ✓ 220.000 municipal and 200.000 cooperative flats are homes all over the city for nearly half of our population
- ✓ Active planning and housing policy strategy of the city, clear rules in zoning law
- ✓ Definition and securing of quality criteria in housing construction, including strong gender mainstreaming principles
- ✓ Social policy component, promotion of a socially sustainable city
- ✓ No segregation or "renovictions" with the gentle urban renewal programme
- ✓ Securing of more than 20,000 jobs
- ✓ Circular construction methods, digital planning tools
- ✓ Neighbourhood-based and participatory approaches
- ✓ **Viennese are proud to live in municipal flats**



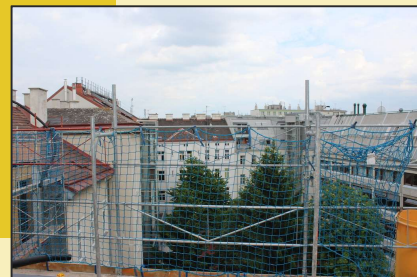
Vienna: A crisis proof model

- ✓ Housing is at the heart of the COVID-19 pandemic and more recently in the focus of energy costs
- ✓ Vienna immediately proclaimed ban on evictions in municipal housing at the beginning of the pandemic
- ✓ Special attention was given to homeless people and women victims of male domestic violence
- ✓ Vienna announced to build 1000 new municipal apartments as relief for both citizens and help for the local economy
- ✓ Existing tools and regulations helped to react fast



Public benefits of affordable housing

- ✓ Active planning and housing policy strategy
- ✓ Definition and securing of quality criteria in housing construction
- ✓ Social policy component, promotion of a socially sustainable city
- ✓ Participatory approach allows for co-design and co-ownership
- ✓ No segregation or "renovictions" due to gentle urban renewal
- ✓ Investment is securing of more than 20,000 jobs
- ✓ Boost for sustainable construction methods
- ✓ Focus on a healthy living environment
- ✓ Neighbourhood-based and participatory approaches
- ✓ **Rights based approach allows for social mix all over the city**



Europe has to deliver on housing now

- **De-blocking investment** in social and affordable housing (change in EU State Aid, better use of investment clause of the European Semester)
- MFF and EU-recovery to **support housing investments** (improvement of EU housing data base to cover all tenures and levels of government)
- Setting the **housing cost overburden rate at 25%** of the income of the household instead of 40% (Social Scoreboard)
- Empower cities to **combine different funding and financing sources** (capacity building) & develop **stable and long-term financing systems** (revolving funds)
- The Green Deal's **renovation wave** has to be **inclusive, participatory, with a strong gender focus** (Affordable Housing Initiative, energy poverty)
- More **control and legal accountability of short term holiday rentals** (platform economy, Digital Services Act, Digital Market Act)
- Measures against **financialisation and money laundering** (transparency registry for real estate)
- **Governance of EU housing initiatives has to take cities & regions, social, public, cooperative and affordable housing providers and tenants' unions on board**



Is there a change in mindset?

- EU Renovation wave strategy
- Affordable Housing Initiative
- Energy Poverty
- New European Bauhaus
- European Pillar of Social Rights – Action Plan
- European Platform to combat homelessness
- Horizon Europe – 100 climate friendly cities

But: Will this solve the problem?



A common approach: good housing for all

- ✓ Put **people at the center**: involve, empower, emancipate
- ✓ Involve **capable stakeholders** to co-design, co-manage, co-own
- ✓ **Protect citizens from speculation, eviction and homelessness**
- ✓ **Protect cities from gentrification, financialisation and touristification**
- ✓ Set **goals and processes** in a **transparent and accountable** way on all levels of management and government
- ✓ Account for **long-term nature of housing** in all aspects of policy
- ✓ Promote **multi-level, multi-stakeholder policy framework**
- ✓ Create **diverse, affordable and protective housing systems**
- **The market does not deliver; we need the return of the state**



Useful links

Social Housing in Vienna

<https://socialhousing.wien/>

IBA Vienna 2022

<https://www.iba-wien.at/en/>

Smarter Together Project

<https://www.smartertogether.at/>

EU Urban Agenda Housing Partnership

<https://ec.europa.eu/futurium/en/housing>

ERHIN – European Responsible Housing Initiative

<https://www.responsiblehousing.eu/>

The State of Housing in the EU 2020

<https://www.stateofhousing.eu>