

10.1 EU und Wohnbauförderung – Aktivitäten der Stadt Wien

Die Bereitstellung leistbarer Wohnungen zählt zu den Hauptaufgaben lokaler Verwaltungen. Bereits im April 2008 wurde daher im Rahmen des Social Affairs Forum von EUROCITIES die Arbeitsgruppe „Housing“ eingerichtet, deren Vorsitz von Wien übernommen wurde. Seither hat die MA 50 – Wohnbauförderung und Schlichtungsstelle für wohnrechtliche Angelegenheiten u.a. das EUROCITIES Position Paper on Affordable Housing koordiniert, aus dem hier auszugsweise zitiert werden soll.

**EUROCITIES Position Paper on Affordable Housing
Cities approaches and recommendations**
Contents

Executive Summary	3
1. Introduction	4
2. Affordable Housing – a Challenge for Europe's Cities	5
3. Definition of Affordable Housing	6
4. Target Groups for Affordable Housing	7
5. Planning Tools	8
6. Quality Tools	10
7. Financial Tools	14

Executive Summary

Affordability in housing represents one of the main challenges that European cities share today in order to achieve social cohesion. Affordable housing may have different forms, depending on national and local conditions; it is, however, generally understood as “permanent accommodation for individuals and families who cannot otherwise access or afford free-market housing”. This includes specific target groups as well as wider defined target groups, as described in this paper. In general, a well-defined policy on affordable housing contributes to achieving social cohesion objectives, by helping to prevent segregation and the emergence of social or ethnic ghettos.

This paper describes the planning, quality standards and financial tools currently used in different European cities to address their housing situations.

Planning powers differ significantly from city to city but are in general characterised by a national framework and local responsibility (either via physical planning or by control of both the physical and the social infrastructure). This paper also investigates regional and strategic partnerships, especially in urban regeneration programmes and experiences with public participation. Recommendations made in the final section include increasing public control over building land, introducing the principle of subsidiarity into national planning systems, and promoting citizen participation.

Quality standards tools can be enhanced through legislation, subsidies and by stimulating owner and resident initiatives. This is especially important in the field of energy efficiency of buildings, which supports climate protection and addresses the growing issues of fuel poverty and health protection. Building quality must also be understood in relation to value retention and its contribution to the sustainability of urban neighbourhoods.

The current economic crisis reinforces the case for public sector intervention in the housing sector. Financial tools may be focused or collective, and they may be directed at the construction industry (supply-side subsidies) or at residents (demand-side subsidies). While in general a mix of tools works best, long-term financing and revolving funds³ should be strengthened. Further privatisation of public housing stock should be assessed carefully. As an overall goal, housing financing systems should aim at contributing to social cohesion by promoting a social mix in housing areas.

Given the central role that the adequate provision of quality affordable housing can play in achieving the objectives of social cohesion, improving energy efficiency, contributing to high quality living space and improved quality of life, health and well-being, new sources of finance and innovative financing mechanisms are required. National governments and the European Union should consider a range of options for this, which could include the development of European Investment Bank (EIB) facilities for loans or loan guarantees.

1. Introduction

Cities in Europe are places for economic, cultural and social exchanges, sharing a common aim to improve living conditions, create employment and integrate all members of the community.

Affordability of housing represents one of the main challenges that European cities share today in achieving social cohesion. Each case differs, depending on the country's national political system, the function of the city in the national/ European governance system and on the historical housing perspective.

At the same time, the different dimensions of affordability are often unclear and are frequently connected to other policy areas, such as environment, health and employment.

Whilst the path to affordable housing itself requires clear definitions, what is actually meant by "affordability" under different socio-economic conditions? Who are the target groups for affordable housing? Which financial, planning and quality tools exist to achieve these goals?

These are the issues addressed by this policy paper, which concludes with a series of recommendations to improve the understanding of the role of affordable housing and the tools that are available to facilitate adequate provision of affordable housing in our cities.⁴

(...)

Kontakt und wichtige Links:

MA 50 – Wohnbauförderung und Schlichtungsstelle für wohnrechtliche Angelegenheiten

Mag. Dr. Wolfgang Förster
wolfgang.foerster@wien.gv.at
Tel: +431 4000 74813

³ A revolving fund is a fund or account whose income remains available to finance its continuing operations without any fiscal year limitation.

⁴ This paper has been prepared by the EURO CITIES Working Group on Housing and includes contributions from experts from seven European cities. It draws on the following sources: EURO CITIES Working Group on Housing: 'Affordable Housing Case Studies', carried out in the cities of Berlin, Brno, Copenhagen, Leeds, Ljubljana, Munich, Rotterdam, Vienna, Warsaw, Wrocław, Zurich, 2008 – 2009; EURO CITIES, 'The EU Social Protection and Social Inclusion Process: What's in it for local practitioners', Brussels 2009 (all available at www.eurocities.eu) and UNECE, Committee on Housing and Land Management, 'Guidelines on Social Housing', Geneva, 2006



