



Housing in Vienna

Annual Report 2018/2019

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Vienna shows the way: housing and living in an attractive city

The Administrative Group charged with housing and women's issues combines two key concerns of Vienna's municipal policy: providing a social net that safeguards a self-determined life, safety and security – especially for women and girls – as well as creating affordable housing for all. This is Vienna today – and this is what Vienna wants to be in the future!

Making women's voices be heard is a prime concern of Municipal Department 57 (MA 57) – Vienna Women's Affairs. Counselling, special assistance to girls, the promotion of small-scale projects and – still a relevant issue – the protection of women from violence are focal tasks of MA 57. The 24-Hours Women's Emergency Helpline and the Women's Helpline are free-of-charge contact points widely used by women in Vienna. They contribute to public security as well as to the subjective sense of safety in the city. After all, it is reassuring to know that every woman will find help and support if she needs them. "Rettungsanker" ("Sheet Anchor") is such an initiative that has met with very positive reactions and is broadly supported.

Affordable housing

The City of Vienna is creating more affordable housing units: the Municipal Housing NEW campaign continues a successful tradition and at the same time ushers in a new era. By 2020, a total of 4,000 new municipal flats will be built – and this is only one example of many undertaken by an active municipal policy on behalf of people and the future. For "affordable housing is a human right", as emphasised by Leilani Farha, UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Housing, at the conference "Housing for All" held in Vienna and attended by delegates from 36 countries.

Affordable housing is in short supply in many European cities. Conversely, Vienna is considered an example to follow as well as living proof of the fact that global challenges can also be understood as an opportunity for cities. Vienna's social and subsidised housing contributes to an inclusive society and a good social mix, but also to the attractiveness of the city as a business location, to its economic clout and even to the global climate goals – and all this forms part of a dialogue with citizens. This is why Vienna is widely ac-

claimed and viewed as a beacon of hope by many looking for potential solutions to deal with their own challenges.

In this context, the City of Vienna is implementing numerous forward-looking measures. The "Housing Campaign 2" will lead to the construction of approx. 14,000 dwellings by 2020, since housing must not be left to the free market alone. This is also of benefit for business, since housing construction is an important driver of the economy.

"Subsidised Housing" zoning category

An internationally widely followed novelty was the amendment to the Building Code for Vienna adopted in November 2018 and effective as of March 2019: the "Subsidised Housing" zoning category. Just as the state is responsible for funding educational and healthcare facilities or providing traffic areas, it is also essential to create frame conditions for affordable housing. A functioning government must intervene in order to regulate. The global environmental goals, too, cannot be attained without such interventions.

To be able to actually construct a significant number of affordable dwellings, the percentage of units subsidised under this zoning category should as a rule equal two thirds of the usable housing floorspace of a given project. The new regulation becomes effective in case of plots designated as building land and of former industrial or commercial areas reclassified as such, or when increasing density in residential or mixed-purpose development zones, or in connection with the construction of high-rises. The designation of plots as Class 1 building land – e.g. single-family homes, smaller in-fills or the addition of (few) storeys in densely built-up zones – is exempted from this regulation. Housing subsidy law limits land cost at approx. Euro 220 per square metre of



Conference “Housing for All” (left to right): Michael Ludwig, Mayor of Vienna, Kathrin Gaál, City Councillor for Housing, Housing Construction, Urban Renewal and Women’s Issues of the City of Vienna, Laia Ortiz, Deputy Mayor of Barcelona, Leilani Farha, UN Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing, Rui Neves Bochmann Franco, Deputy City Councillor for Housing of Lisbon and Housing Partnership member.

usable housing floorspace (= Euro 188 per square metre of aboveground gross floor area).

This is to ensure that affordable housing can be created across the city to safeguard a continued good social mix in all districts of Vienna. It is not planned to limit the size of building lots when applying the new zoning category, although it is mainly aimed at lots that will accommodate more than 5,000 square metres of housing space. This Building Code amendment also simplifies project implementation procedures.

Impressive figures

45 percent of Vienna’s housing stock is subject to social rents without time limits. 60 percent of the population live in subsidised or municipal flats. In 2018, subsidies paid by the City of Vienna to individual projects amounted to approx. Euro 422.9 million. Over the past decade, an average of about 7,030 dwellings were constructed and completed every year. Due to the number of building permits, which has risen in recent years, it is expected that completed projects will likewise increase in coming years. In 2018, a total of 10,018 new flats were constructed (as compared to 8,929

in 2017). This exceeds the average annual net construction volume of the previous ten years and amounts to a near 30-percent increase.

The rehabilitation of existing buildings was subsidised to the tune of approx. Euro 151.6 million in 2018. The funds were almost entirely disbursed for the rehabilitation of residential buildings (Euro 147.0 million). These figures represent political priorities and are complemented by manifold activities of several institutions, including Vienna’s Urban Renewal Offices (Gebietsbetreuung Stadterneuerung, GB*; e.g. through the relaunch of neighbourhood management in newly developing quarters) or wohnpartner, as well as by innovative projects, such as the EU-subsidised urban renewal initiative “Smarter Together” in the 11th municipal district Simmering and the International Building Exhibition IBA_Vienna 2022, with its motto “New Social Housing”.

In-person assistance and counselling of citizens are in particular provided by the Wohnservice Wien agency and the MieterHilfe tenancy helpdesk. The present Annual Report provides useful, in-depth information about these services as well.

Smarter Together: shaping the city of the future together

Locally embedded, yet with a global perspective: this is the smart city-inspired urban renewal initiative “Smarter Together”. Innovative ideas help to shape the city of the future in co-operation with the people of Vienna’s 11th municipal district Simmering by implementing solutions that set an example for Europe.

“Smarter Together – gemeinsam g’scheiter” is a smart city project subsidised by the EU under the Horizon 2020 programme. 2018 marked the third year of this project. Numerous measures have been implemented, and the project has become Vienna’s international smart city lighthouse activity.

More than 109 workshops and neighbourhood walks, multiple local and international conferences as well as far in excess of 10,000 directly contacted citizens bear witness to the dynamism of this project.

A myriad of great solutions

“Smarter Together has evolved into Vienna’s top smart city-inspired urban renewal initiative by offering a myriad of great solutions and innovations for a liveable, eco-friendly and socially sustainable city of the future. I think that Smarter Together is so forward-looking because it connects people, involves the economy, emphasises partnership-based co-operation of all actors and even enhances the attractiveness of Vienna as an international location”, in the words of the patron of the initiative, City Councillor Kathrin Gaál.



Smart: e-bikes help to cover long distances easily at Vienna’s Central Cemetery.

Innovations for the future

The e-car sharing system for the Hauffgasse estate of the BWSG housing association has met with international interest. In addition to reducing CO2 emissions, it also contributes to good-neighbourly communication.

In September 2018, the “WienMobil” station, which bundles several mobility options, was inaugurated in Simmeringer Platz in co-operation with the public transport provider Wiener Linien. It offers a full range from e-bike or car sharing to bike boxes, a charging station, an e-cargo bike and an information screen.

A network of excellence

Many international partners were inspired by Vienna’s ideas, while other innovative solutions implemented here were the outcome of European exchange – all in keeping with the motto “Smarter Together in Europe”. This has resulted in numerous additional activities.

Following a dialogue process with employees, the six electric forklifts at the Siemens Leberstrasse plant were complemented by e-charging stations for small appliances, a “bulk store” for small components and even two electric lifting trucks for semi-finished carriages, which all contribute significantly to improving both competitiveness and energy balance.

“Beat the Street”, a mobility game that motivates participants to collectively walk thousands of kilometres in the neighbourhood, was a favourite of kids already in 2017. In 2018, thousands of youngsters and their parents again walked and jogged for shared success. This year, the 22nd municipal district Donaustadt joined in as well: after all, a smart city also means healthy and happy kids!



It's always lots of fun when kids try their hand at research: Science Pool workshops with Viennese schoolchildren.

Venice was inspired by Vienna's "SIMmobil", a mobile information and participation vehicle, which stopped at numerous neighbourhood events and was used by many local institutions including Science Pool, the Vienna Employment Promotion Fund (waff) or the youth workers of Balu&Du. In Venice-Mestre, an old bus was repainted and repurposed for a similar activity. Sofia (BG) showed interest in integrated mobility solutions, and Santiago de Compostela (E) inquired about energy solutions and efforts to involve tenants.

Joint research activities for kids

Science Pool in Hauffgasse is one of the most important mediators of scientific knowledge in the district. With the support of Smarter Together, the association organised workshops at numerous primary schools. These workshops are designed to stimulate the understanding of future-related issues as well as eco-active behaviour patterns among young children. The idea is to influence behaviour patterns regarding the environment today, not just later, when kids are older. In September, Smarter Together provided the library of VHS Simmering (a community education centre) with a high-quality touch screen computer that can be freely used during opening hours.

Smart housing refurbishment

Drawing on subsidies, the BWSG housing estate and two municipal housing complexes are being refurbished in exemplary fashion using the latest technologies. The double middle school in Enkplatz 4 will be given four zero-energy

gyms heated by geothermal and solar energy. All construction work had already progressed visibly in 2018. On this basis, Smarter Together joined forces with the eco-counselling organisation DIE UMWELTBERATUNG to organise "energy-saving cafés". These events help tenants to improve their behaviour regarding energy use.

smartdata.wien

To measure outcomes, an open-source data platform was set up and connected to the web. This FIWARE data platform compiles all data measured; the findings will be evaluated by the Austrian Institute of Technology (AIT) until 2021. Principally, the data platform can be used free of charge by all units of the City of Vienna.

Research co-operation with students

For the second academic year in a row, Smarter Together co-operated with "Sustainability Challenge", a lecture series involving students of all four big universities of Vienna. 2017/2018 saw the implementation of a study on façade greening.

Approx. 6,000 participants were recorded at the "ICT Challenge" in December 2018. At this hackathon, ICT talent from all of Europe developed new apps over a 48-hour period on the basis of the smartdata.wien database – a resounding success.

For more information, consult www.smartertogether.at, our newsletter and the social media.