

HOUSE-IN Policy Information #1

Forced migrants' access to housing

Challenges, responses, and recommendations to enable arrival through supporting the right to adequate housing



Why do we need to look at access to housing for forced migrants?

There is a need to address access to housing for forced migrants under different conditions. In the first case, individuals or smaller groups of people in low numbers migrate, for example for personal or political reasons. This is business as usual for most organisations and departments of a hosting city. There are also extraordinary situations, like in case of a war or a natural disaster, when larger groups of people migrate and arrive in a short period of time. These events showcase challenges in the hosting procedures. Forced migrants are especially affected from limited or difficult access to housing upon their arrival in Europe.

The aim of the HOUSE-IN project was to look at the capacities to provide forced migrant newcomers with adequate housing and learn from good examples. This policy brief is therefore directed to various decision makers as well as local organisations who either provide housing or support newcomers in their endeavours. It will discuss core challenges of forced migrants' access to housing and related arrival governance, but also present examples for responses and further recommendations based on the trans-European exchange within the project HOUSE-IN.

Knowledge elicitation process and components

NOTE 01

Project duration:
June 2021–December 2022

This policy brief is based on research and exchanges within the project HOUSE-IN, a JPI Urban Europe-funded research project¹ that focused on the challenges of the housing-integration nexus at the local level with a focus on forced migrants. It brought together the expertise of researchers and practitioners of different countries and cities. **The aim was to shape cross-European exchange and innovation for migrants' access to housing and social inclusion.** The HOUSE-IN case studies were Leipzig (Germany), Lund and Helsingborg (Sweden), Riga (Latvia), and Vienna (Austria).

For whom is this policy brief?

The here described challenges and learning examples shall support all kinds of decision makers, whether they are working for public bodies, civil initiatives, or housing corporations. This document includes sections focusing on “challenges”, “responses”, and “promising practices or ideas” to make it easier to navigate through.



Why do we look at the access forced migrants have to the housing market?

NOTE 02
Lunds Kom-
muns Fastighets
(Lund Municipal
Housing Com-
pany)

Adequate housing is a basic right, ² but newcomers, especially forced migrants, do not have adequate access to housing and to developing social connections. This lack of access is also due to a lack of system knowledge. Refugees in particular find themselves in vulnerable and often precarious situations. To grant newly arrived people the basic right to housing, local experiences and the potential to learn from these need our specific attention. In most of our case cities, forced migrants have limitations in accessing the housing market, although all our cities share some – more or less elaborate – level of welfare service provision. In the case of Vienna or Leipzig, social housing opportunities provided by the municipality or different kinds of housing companies, such as cooperatives, cater to the affordable housing

segment. **Though newcomers, no matter where they are from, can access Vienna’s social housing, various criteria have to be fulfilled first before eligibility applies. In other cities, like Riga, housing is provided by individual owners or corporations only. In Lund and Helsingborg, affordable rental housing is provided by municipal housing companies** (LKF² and Helsingborgshem respectively). Hence, access to housing is very particular in each city. Therefore, there is a great potential to learn from each other’s practice to enhance the social integration capacity that different forms of housing can enable from the beginning. In this policy brief, we identify the common challenges for our five case-study cities and then address these challenges with examples and recommendations.

Key challenges

The five HOUSE-IN cities, like many others in Europe, are challenged in different ways with the arrival of forced migrants. The key challenges portrayed here are seen in most of our study cities no matter if their population is shrinking or growing, or if they have affordable housing offers or only a private housing market with little or no regulations.

01 | Dealing with limited resources

The cities under investigation have limited resources in terms of housing units, budget, and human resources. Dealing with new arrivals is a fluctuating task and not the primary expertise of municipalities or municipal housing companies. **There is no adequate funding at city, national, or EU levels, nor are there sufficient housing units available that can be activated to accommodate newcomers.** Especially in times of high migration numbers, services quickly reach their limits. This puts a strain on the already limited housing supply, especially in the midst of a global housing-affordability crisis.

Case examples:

In Vienna, public services are facing criticism due to their inadequate management and lengthy procedures for migrants’ and asylum applications.³ In Leipzig, the competitive housing market and the struggle for affordable housing among low-income households are the major challenges to the right to adequate housing. In Riga, a dominantly homeowner market, affordable rental housing is scarce or of low quality and with expensive utilities. In Lund and Helsingborg, although most of the rental housing market is managed by municipal housing companies, there is an increasing shortage of affordable housing units.

NOTE 03 ²
In 2019 – a relatively regular year for migration dynamics – around 20% of all cases for the Volksanwalt (public prosecutor) were dealing with National Security topics; most of them were related to “Fremden- und Asylrecht” (foreigners and asylum law) as well as police.

02 | Limited experience and knowledge

City administrations are serving many in the cities, but the experience and knowledge of employees, for example, are limited often to routinary tasks. Public authorities who are responsible for admissions for newcomers are not sensitised or trained for the handling of newcomers’ issues – the procedures can be conflicting and are not in-line or coordinated. This can cause frustration on the newcomers’ side, but also on the employees’ side, as they cannot change established management systems easily.

Case examples:

In Riga, the practice of delivering social services essentially does not differentiate between different kinds of social risk. Social workers offer a more or less universal help, which is often ineffective due to the specific needs of the newcomers. In our other case cities, we found responses to this kind of challenge, which are listed in the responses section.

03 | Gaps in eligibility for affordable housing

The free housing market can be complex to navigate and also more expensive, depending on the demand, which increases with higher migration rates. Even though there are affordable housing options in some cities, the procedures and the eligibility criteria are excluding newcomers from this kind of housing.

🏠 Case examples:

In Vienna, the municipality has 100 years of history in providing affordable social housing for the residents, but it is only since 2006 that the services have been extended to non-Austrian citizens due to the EU Equal Treatment Directive. Newcomers, however, no matter where they are from, can only access Vienna's social housing after two years (EU citizens) and five years (non-EU citizens). Additionally, the applicant has to have lived for two years with one single residence address in Vienna before application. In Leipzig, social housing is, theoretically, accessible without a waiting time, but the availability of sufficient flats and also of needed flat size is a core issue. In Riga, social housing is available only to citizens with low income, and even then, the queue lasts many years. Affordable housing – which in theory might also be an option for middle-income social groups – is not yet developed as a viable alternative either for newcomers or the domestic population. In Lund, accessing an affordable rental apartment from the municipal housing company LKF requires queuing for about five to ten years for anybody living, working, or studying at a university in this academic city. After getting a residence permit and being allocated to a municipality, refugees are eligible to access rental units and are placed in another queue to increase their possibilities of accessing housing.

04 | Gaps in legal framework

Newcomers do not often have residency permission, and they often receive permission long after arrival and after many delays. This is a further obstacle to getting legal rights. Their status can, for instance, act as a barrier for rental contracts. The lengthy asylum procedures delay the start of regular life in the hosting city as well as funding, which itself is a lengthy process. These interlinked long procedures push newcomers into precarious situations, which make them vulnerable to abuse and creates barriers for social participation and other spheres of life.

🏠 Case examples:

In most rental housing areas, tenants are asked to provide references and prove that they can afford the housing unit in question. Very often this is provided through the income or savings of the person, which is in many cases non-existent for forced migrants. Especially long procedures in obtaining legal residency, financial support, or access to the job market take time and leave the newcomer vulnerable.

In the Swedish context, the legal framework regarding housing provision is organised according to the legal status of the migrant or refugee. The Swedish Migration Agency has the responsibility of housing asylum seekers. Providing housing for a newcomer who has been granted a residence permit as a refugee, employee, or other is the task of the respective municipality where the newcomer is settled.

In Riga, it is common practice for landlords to request an advance payment consisting of the first and final month of the contract in addition to the deposit, which makes accessing housing very expensive. Refugees may encounter additional barriers such as opening a bank account, which is necessary for most housing contracts.

05 | Understanding the housing market and the prices

The urban housing market is very complex, and the pricing for a unit is different from location to location or neighbourhood to neighbourhood, and in particular, from owner to owner. These variations in housing price and quality, within and between locations/owners, are difficult to understand, especially for newcomers unfamiliar with local markets.

🏠 Case examples:

The Vienna housing market is characterised by a strong segmentation between private and social housing with each segment displaying different rules of access and different tenant rights in regards to rent caps or unlimited rent contracts.

In Riga, the price of utilities can be higher than the actual rent, due to high heating expenses in winter for buildings with low energy-efficient performance. These costs may be omitted from rental advertisements and are often asked for informally. Additionally, claiming benefits for housing expenses is a bureaucratically intensive process.

In Lund and Helsingborg, the price of municipal rental housing varies between existing apartment buildings and newly built housing. Rents of new apartments are higher due to current regulations and standards as well as high construction costs in Sweden.

06 | Gaps in collaboration between institutions

There is a gap in transferring knowledge between the NGOs and research institutions that have contemporary knowledge about the needs of migrants regarding housing, and the public actors that actually facilitate access to housing. The local experience very often remains with the NGOs and others in the field of academia, and the policy sector cannot benefit from these local experiences, which often leads to unrealistic measures.

🏠 Case examples:

With what was learned after the long summer of migration in 2015, the collaboration between NGOs and public administration improved in Vienna and Leipzig. A challenge remains in terms of the precarious resources that most NGOs have for their difficult work; lack of long-term funding opportunities are an ongoing problem and mismatch with the long-term nature of the problems that have to be resolved. In Riga, the lack of a comprehensive national system of housing integration renders such collaboration rather fragile and unsystematic, hence putting even more responsibility on the involved people working in the administration and their intrinsic motivation. The crisis moments – such as in 2015 and now with Ukraine – do intensify collaboration but not necessarily in a structured, sustainable way. The city of Lund has developed new housing projects for refugees in collaboration with the private and housing-cooperative sectors, while supporting integration of newly arrived refugees through collaboration with civil society organisations. However, Living Concept (a successful project implemented in Linero by the municipal housing company LKF, the municipality's housing department, and Save the Children) had to stop operating when the funding finished.

07 | High level of social competence needed from newcomers

If information about adequate and affordable housing is hard to find, it can become something that only those who have good social and language skills and are extroverted are able to access. Those who are not so communicative and competent are thus left behind or receive housing solutions that do not fit their needs. This problem becomes even larger in relation to private housing, where homeowners can filter potential tenants according to subjective criteria, thus determining who receives the housing unit or apartment.

🏠 Case examples:

Without an elaborated structure, newcomers are dependent on their contacts and their skills to network in order to find housing, jobs, or education opportunities. Our study visit in Riga showed how difficult the integration process is for people who cannot rely on broader contacts and social skills. In the Swedish context, one of the reasons underlying structural homelessness is that people such as refugees lack anchoring in the housing market; this means that they both lack knowledge about different housing forms and do not have enough points in the municipal queuing system. Some refugees also lack knowledge regarding the implications of provisional rental contracts that they signed when settling down – municipalities can decide to renovate these flats after two years, and so they would have to leave again.

08 | Distant shelters and temporary housing offers

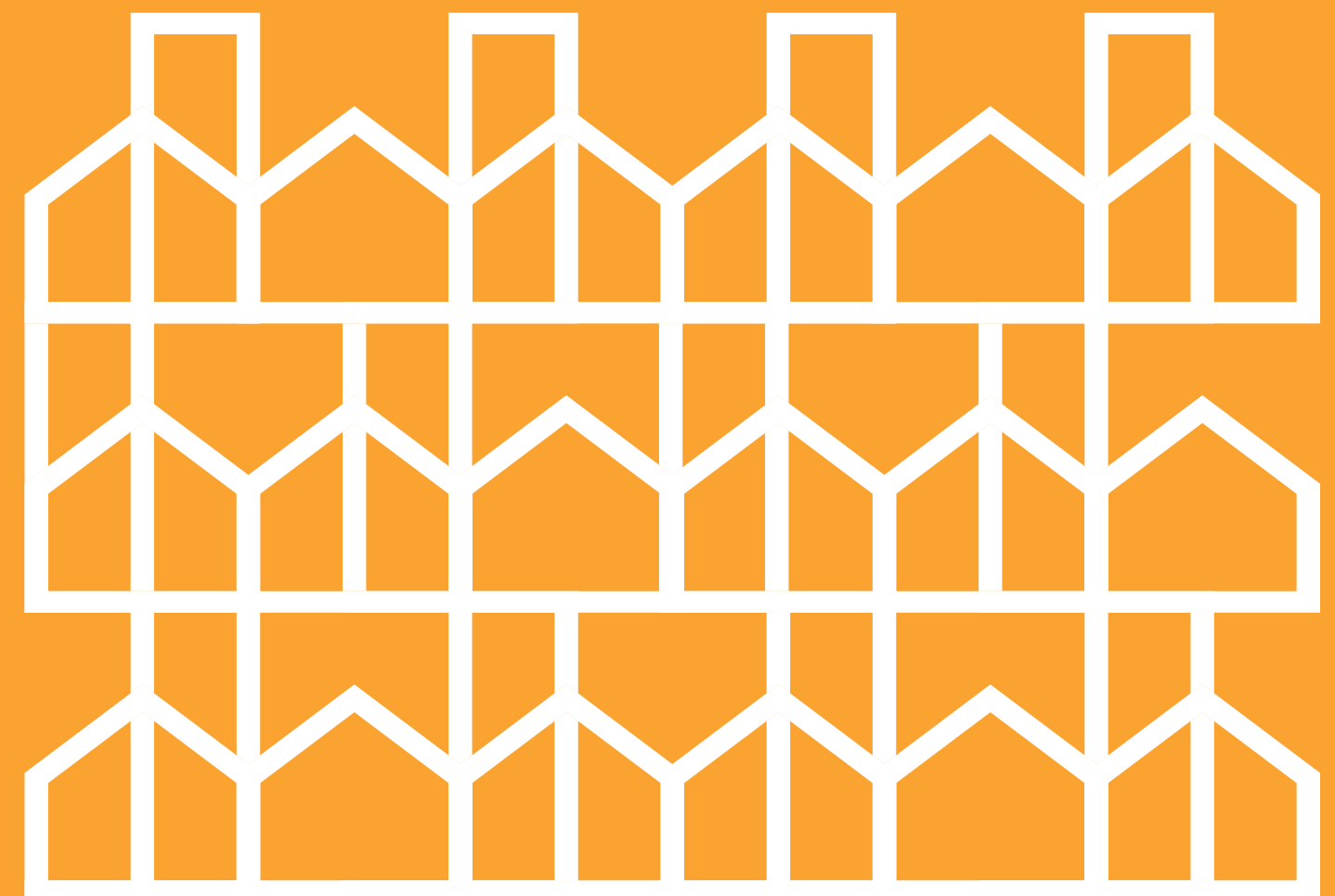
Collective shelters or temporary housing units, most of all for asylum seekers, are often created in neighbourhoods which are distant from the central areas of the cities, even outside of the city borders. This affects the newcomers' access to social life, work, and education.

🏠 Case examples:

The asylum centre near Riga and the new temporary housing project in Dalby, a village near Lund, highlighted how difficult and limited the exchange opportunities are for newcomers when housing options are located far away from the social hubs. The city of Leipzig follows a mixed concept for the accommodation of asylum seeking persons. It is a combination of so-called “decentralised housing” – housing in rental apartments (by the municipality, homeowners or subletters) anywhere they are available on the housing market – and refugee shelters with rooms and flat units. While those community accommodations for refugees in Leipzig have very different sizes and are spread over all districts of the city, the largest shelters and a high share of available apartments are located quite far from the city centre. Participating in education offers and finding housing or job opportunities become much more difficult if there is less exchange with locals and long distances to language courses, offices, childcare opportunities, etc.

Examples of responses

In HOUSE-IN, we identified a wide spectrum of responses and housing strategies to the aforementioned challenges. Each approach has a different constellation of actors and types of users. One of the main factors that affects and shapes collaborations is the flexibility in response and the capacity to fill gaps. In the following section, we introduce selected projects, organisations, and approaches which address the challenges in an effective manner. These could inspire others and offer opportunities to learn, even though these responses need to be reinterpreted and embedded in the local context because they cannot be just replicated.



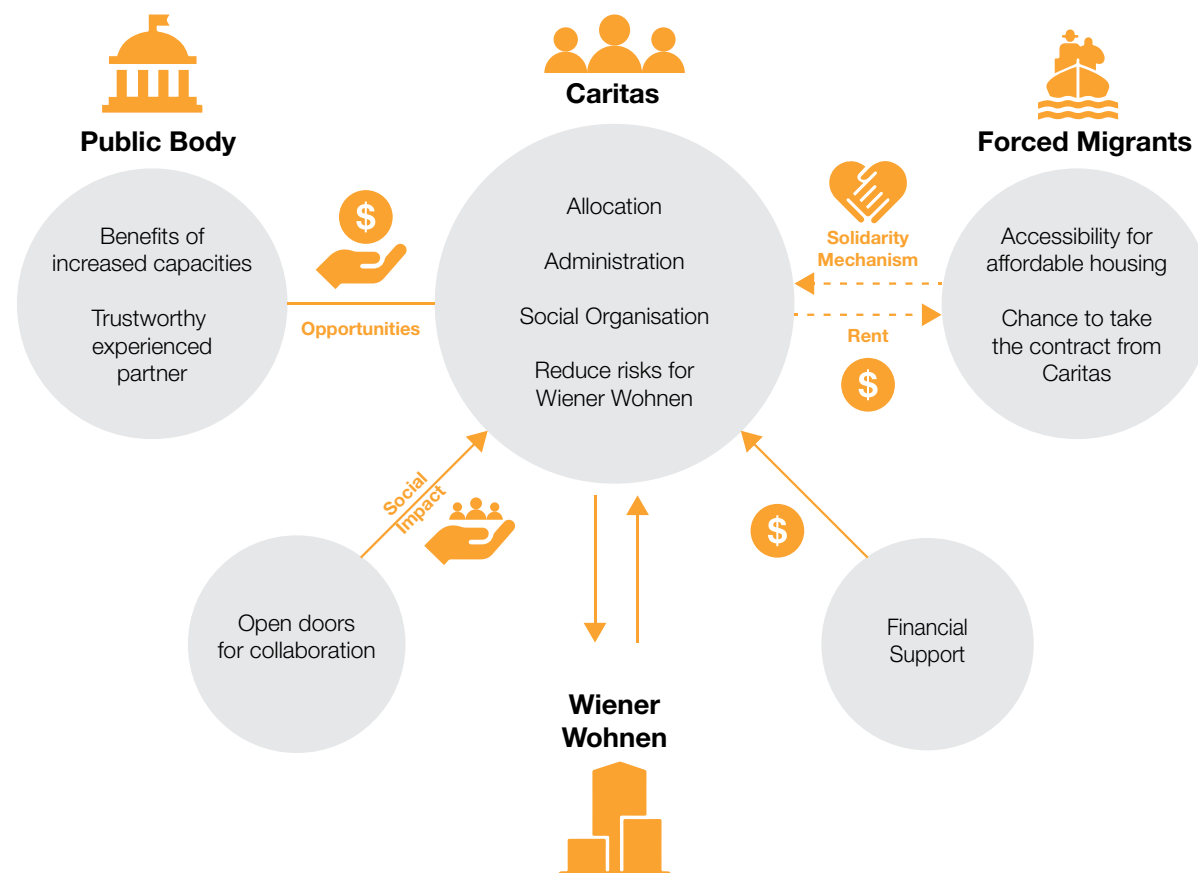
01 | Dealing with limited resources and rigid structures

NOTE 04 
Caroline Niknafs from
Dachverband

The experiences of the long summer of migration in 2015 lead to further specialisation among civic society. Thus, recent refugee arrivals, for example from the war in Ukraine, benefit from better collaborations among public and civic organisations. In Vienna, social organisations became more visible and took on the role of creating new capacities to host and welcome refugees.  Intermediary NGOs, like Caritas Wien, took over the hosting of newcomers in social housing units to which they normally would not have access. With the collaborative programme “Startwohnungen für MigrantInnen” (Starter Apartments for Migrants),⁵ Caritas Wien rents flats specifically for newcomers for their first year, directly from the municipality’s body Wiener Wohnen. In this way, collaboration leads to process innovation and, henceforth, new capacities are created, while the programme bypasses the

rigid eligibility criteria in place and opens the affordable housing market to newcomers. This intermediary approach overcomes the hurdle of legal-contract partners and has been used effectively for many years in Vienna, mainly by NGOs, to provide access to affordable housing for target groups, such as people with special needs, houseless people (“Housing First” by Neunerhaus) or for single parents (JUNO – Zentrum für Getrennt- und Alleinerziehende). Since refugees with limited financial capacities and pending permission to stay or work have difficulties securing contracts, this kind of bridging support can overcome gaps in the legal framework. Collaboration builds on trust which the social organisation provides, and newcomers benefit from closer engagement with the organisation, which has many other social services and activities to offer. The exchange between the social organisation and newcomers can be much more empathic than with public authorities. Similarly, Wiener Wohnen, as the owner and property management of the apartments, incurs very limited risks, for example with getting rents paid and similar.


Wiener Wohnen
Collaboration scheme © Eutropian/Bana Saadeh



02 | Specialisation in working with newcomers

Example: Kontaktstelle Wohnen (Contact Point Housing), Leipzig.

Kontaktstelle Wohnen (KW) consults with and supports refugees in Leipzig and parts of the surrounding region in finding a living space. The team offers weekly consultation hours in order to register the housing demand and to inform about self-organised housing-seeking processes. Additionally, they scan the housing offers daily in order to directly search for housing units, and also support communication with landlords and housing companies, join housing-seeking refugees for apartment inspections, and offer support with moving in. For those who have moved to their own living space, they offer consultation on all issues of renting and housing as well as neighbourhood issues. In 2022 they successfully supported around 430 persons with moving into their own living space. The housing market development in Leipzig makes it harder to find flats within the limits of social welfare provided to recipients within the asylum system or who are acknowledged refugees without an income. There were still more than 1800 households waiting for housing at the end of 2022. Thus, KW is not only offering direct support to housing-seeking persons, but is also trying to build cooperation with housing associations and companies – so far with limited results. It is a project by Zusammen e.V. (“Together”, a registered association) which has the aim to fight for adequate housing and solidary neighbourhoods and, besides running KW, is also in charge of neighbourhood management in Leipzig-Grünau.

The city of Vienna pursues an encompassing strategy of promoting diversity, also in relation to its own staff. Since 2007, the Integration and Diversity Monitoring department has provided detailed information on these issues. In the period from 2016 to 2019, more than 24,200 employees of the participating institutions of the city of Vienna participated in diversity-oriented training courses. There was particularly strong demand for communication training, language courses, and coaching to raise the intercultural awareness of employees.  The staff of Wiener Wohnen are particularly active in this field.


In Lund, the municipality created a housing department with the purpose of adding capacity for developing new housing units for refugees due to the so-called refugee crisis of 2015.

03 | Speedy permissions and funding




Ukrainian refugees were granted speedy permission processes and social benefits. This approach is promising from the integration point of view, as it allows newcomers to access housing, education, and the labour market from the beginning. The downside of this example is that, as it is a Temporary Protection Directive (TPD) with a deadline, the granted rights will be terminated. These issues have already been illustrated in the case of Riga: the national government initially extended the funding for support until the end of May 2022, then for another month, then until the end of 2022, then for another six months, and this will likely be extended again. These continuous extensions produce frustration on the part of municipalities, NGOs, and the refugees themselves, as there is a lack of certainty regarding their status.

But as an approach and an experience, the societies and administration can learn from the practice to improve the permission processes and funding schemes.

04 | Advocacy for renters


In Vienna, Mietervereinigung  supports all renters in the private housing market through the evaluation of their apartments, and provides advice to the renters with regard to rent caps, if applicable. This legal and professional help can advocate for the renters' rights, at the beginning, during, and after the end of a rental contract, which is helping thousands of people in Vienna to claim back overpaid balances. The procedure is proficient and supports renters in the most fast and effective way, since the organisation is financed through membership, and the people in charge are very well versed in their subject. Unfortunately, the service is only in German, so people with migrant backgrounds have to organise translations for themselves. Even though this is not a service solely for migrants but for all residents in Vienna, it is a crucial service to overcome the power imbalance in the housing market between owners and tenants, which is a very important topic for newcomers and their rights to housing. Also, handling juristic procedures are quite a burden for many individuals. Its general availability should not be overestimated.

05 | Coaching and counselling for forced migrants

The integration assistance programme “StartWien”, run by the Vienna municipality, includes detailed “start coaching” for new migrants available in 25 languages, an education booklet with vouchers for language lessons valid in Vienna, and information modules on topics such as labour market, education, housing, healthcare, and living together. The modules also focus on human rights (women's rights, children's rights) as the basis of legislation and society. Some modules are specifically for immigrants, such as language assistance, but others are open to all. The modules include different detailed projects and programmes. Especially within the context of the ongoing Ukraine war, the city provides information about different services and counselling activities (from various actors) for refugees, including finding hosts for refugees.  As a complement to this service, the Diakonie Flüchtlingsdienst GmbH  gives consultations to forced migrants with housing needs in their WIVA (Wohnen in Wien für Asylwerber*innen und Flüchtlinge) programme (support in the search for housing, but not placement; advice on housing, tenancy law, tenancy representation). On a weekly basis at the counselling centre, refugees can learn how to search for housing. The service is provided by the volunteers (“Wohnbuddies”), who explain different portals and how to interpret the advertisements, and offer support in making contact. The offered languages include Arabic, Farsi, German, and Somali. 


In Riga, the Society Integration Foundation has been offering mentoring services to refugees since 2015. Each refugee is assigned a mentor who helps them navigate the initial challenges of finding housing and employment, learning the language, sorting out education for kids, etc. This programme has been praised as one of the most effective and useful ones, and is especially helpful in relation to housing where newcomers face a tight rental market and many discriminatory practices.

06 | Policies directed to the housing challenge

NOTE 05
This brochure  gives orientation in different languages

Policy documents on housing can address the housing needs of a diverse urban society and income-poor households, and also give a directive for further initiatives. In Leipzig, the municipal housing concept includes a bundle of measures to secure affordable housing. After its adoption, housing stakeholder networks were created, and instruments have been established to support affordable housing, for example through implementing conservation areas in certain neighbourhoods with a rapid rent increase so that luxury modernisation is restricted. Though it can only to a limited extent intervene in the overall private housing market, it is a starting point for urban governance to develop an integrated perspective on housing that involves a multitude of private, municipal, and civic society actors related to housing issues in the city.

07 | Creating new accessible housing capacities

The NGO Refugees Welcome Austria (Flüchtlinge Willkommen Österreich/FlüWi⁵ ) finds refugees a new home in private accommodation. People can offer a room in their private accommodation to refugees on the platform, and refugees can search for private offers. Additionally, volunteers can register and offer their support to the project as well as support and/or counsel to the refugees in their search for a home.

In Riga, NGO Shelter Safe House, which also supports newcomers in finding housing in the private market, offers an apartment to be rented for a smaller price to newcomers experiencing challenges in finding housing, especially families. In the case of Ukrainian war refugee migration, the state offers compensation to private owners who accommodate Ukrainians.

In Vienna, the platform “where2help”  brings various aid offers for refugees online. The platform is offered in German and English, and is operated with the funding scheme “Fonds für Soziales Wien”. In Lund, the municipal housing company LKF and the service management department of Lund's municipality has developed both temporary and permanent housing projects for refugees in collaboration with the private sector and the cooperative housing association Riksbyggen since 2016. The 228 newly built apartments accommodate only refugees.

Promising practices

01 | Cooperation

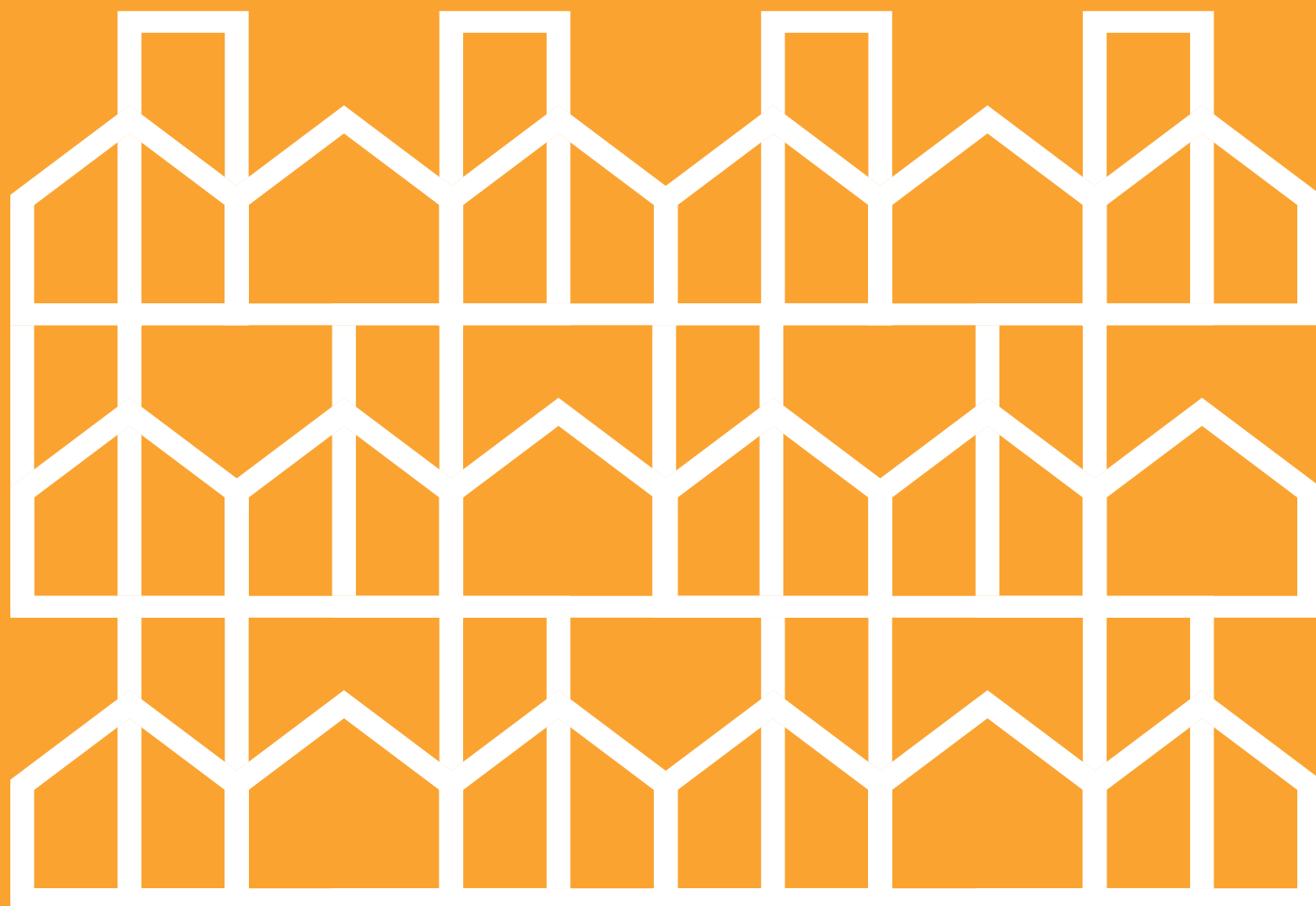
NGOs have been playing an increasingly important role in supporting and meeting the needs of newcomers in an efficient and timely manner. Public authorities should take advantage of the resources provided by NGOs and give them more power in accessing housing. NGOs have extensive experience in handling discrimination, migration, and social inclusion, and can make the process easier for newcomers by providing them with information and counselling. The help of NGOs, such as the Red Cross, Caritas Wien, Volkshilfe, Diakonie, and Kolping, especially in challenging crisis situations of mass migration, is enormously important to accommodate refugees and support them in daily life adjustments. [↗](#)

In social-housing-dominated cities like Vienna, NGOs can link migrants to social housing, for which they would not be eligible yet. In private-homeowner-dominated housing markets like Riga, municipal actors can use NGOs as mediators between private homeowners and newcomers.

02 | Collaborative housing: enabling affordability and social integration

SällBo (Companion Housing) is an innovative housing strategy that combines two types of housing: the first, secure apartments for older adults over 70 years old; the second, secure municipal rental housing for young people (migrants and locals between 18 and 25 years old). [↗](#) Helsingborgshem initiated the project with the purpose of tackling local societal challenges such as loneliness of older adults and young people, as well as offering affordable housing for these groups in Helsingborg. Hence, SällBo is an example of collaborative housing. It was initiated by a municipal housing

company after renovating a former eldercare facility. Here older adults, young refugees, and young Swedes can afford to rent apartment units (36 and 49 m²) and share several common spaces (580 m²) distributed throughout the building which are aimed at enabling social integration through socialisation in everyday life. This housing offer for refugees is precious, since contact with settled and experienced residents of the city is established. Older adults can support the newcomers with issues of arriving (e.g. getting a drivers licence) and, at the same time, contact with young Swedes is established, facilitating social interaction and exchange on topics relevant for that age group. This neighbourly collaboration and exchange supports the newcomers' adaptation to the social life of Sweden.



03 | Bridging eligibility requirements

Immigrants often face difficult bureaucratic measures to be eligible for social housing or for mortgages. It is important to make sure that their access to housing is not limited by measures such as waiting for specific documents or other eligibility criteria. Measures in place to support (instead of limiting) access to housing are crucial.

04 | Easing legal frameworks

The eased permission process and funding, as well as access to the labour market, granted to Ukrainian refugees had a positive impact on the arrival procedures of newcomers in this context. This approach could be extended to other refugees. The association Ute Bock in Vienna provides asylum seekers without an official place of residence with a postal address so that they can be served with official documents. [↗](#)

05 | Improved dialogue between different actors

Interdisciplinary dialogue can improve the collaboration between civic society actors and public institutions. NGOs and other civic society actors are often faced with legal, administrative, or financial issues and challenges to be resolved within their support work. In order to address these, they need constant provision of information, knowledge transfer, and training in these issues. An institutionalised exchange between municipal and civic society actors (and external experts if applicable) can support mutual understanding, consolidate interpersonal relations, and build reliable communication networks.

06 | Good opportunities for all types of newcomers

A general problem is that differences in residential and legal status bring about different opportunities and constraints for different groups of forced migrant newcomers. This often makes it disproportionately complicated for them to cope with the situation and settle. Therefore, easier processes, structural opportunities, and support must have differentiated approaches to the particularities of the newcomers.

The different legal conditions and subsequent treatment of Ukrainian war refugees in all cities under research in HOUSE-IN showed how problematic the selective provision of opportunities, facilities, and support is. In fact, it has led to disappointment and frustration among other groups of migrants and supporting actors. In Leipzig, a debate has started on the provision of equal support and offers for all types of forced migrant newcomers, which draws on a discussion in society and local politics, including the migrant and city council.

Promising ideas

07 | Mandatory pricing limits for housing

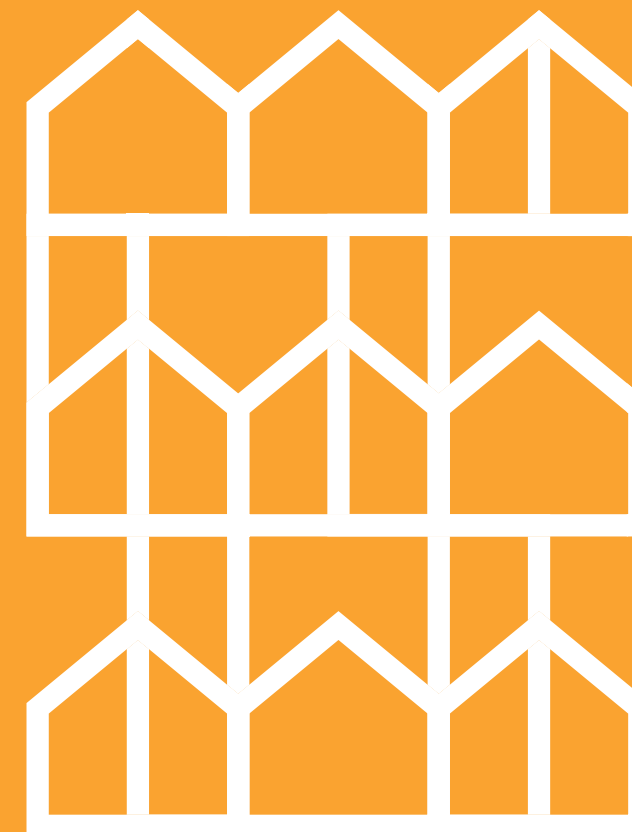
Housing is a basic right, but in all our case cities and for all housing markets, it does not yet have a conclusive pricing that is transparent enough for the tenants. Fixing the prices – depending on quality, accessibility, and quantity – would be very helpful for tenants of all walks of life as well as newcomers. In this regard, speculation in the housing market can be limited with active limitation of the rent profits. Rent indices in Germany and fixed rental prices for private rentals in older buildings or social housing in Vienna are already good steps in this direction. But fixed rent-maximums are only available in those countries for limited housing segments, which leaves the other segments unregulated and open for profit maximisation or speculation.

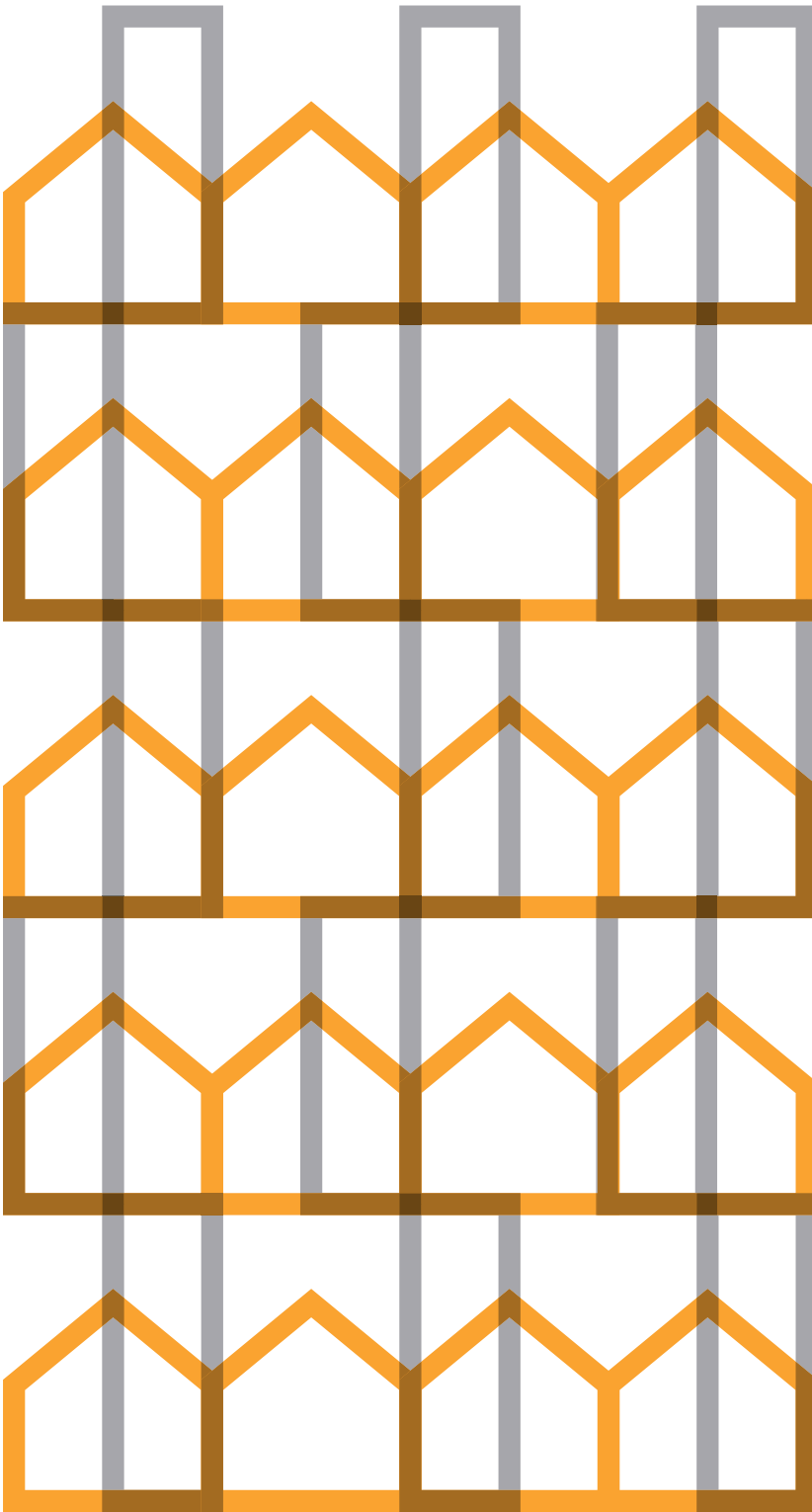
08 | Learning about the specific needs of the newcomers

Mandatory training and capacity building events carried out by experienced experts in the field can counteract the lack of knowledge of housing managers, such as municipal actors and landlords. Training topics can include, but are not limited to, strategies to enable interactions within the same building and neighbourhood; challenges regarding opportunities for inclusive housing options for migrants; discrimination, how it occurs, why it has to be tackled, and how it can be tackled. This will help to get to the root of discrimination in housing. Such events can resolve many misunderstandings and contribute to systemic change. Moreover, surveying the opinion of migrants, as it is being done in Leipzig for example, [↗](#) may help to reach a larger audience and offer deeper insights into specific needs.

09 | Affordable housing quotas

New constructions and readapted buildings could especially benefit the city's diversity. With a close cooperation of developers and urban authorities, as well as NGOs representing vulnerable groups in society, new models could be developed, for example by having fixed quotas of affordable housing which is open to everyone, especially newcomers. This way, from the very beginning, segments of new housing can be allocated to marginalised groups in society and bring along diversification of tenants.





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HOUSE-IN consortium

Layout: Ottavia Pasta (UCL)

What is this policy information about?

This policy information presents a collection of challenges in the field of housing integration of forced migrants and responses to these challenges that were identified during a cross-country exchange among different scientific and practice partners in various European cities. Based on a series of international and local transdisciplinary exchanges, a set of promising practices (in place) and ideas (for the future) was identified that is presented here to fuel knowledge and discussion on the organisation of appropriate housing integration for forced migrants. The information provided here seeks to be useful for both scientific and practitioner audiences and to fuel the scholarly debate and local decision-making practices.