

Housing Conditions in Vienna – Changes as Mirrored in the Austrian Mikrozensus

Project management: SRZ urban+regional research ltd, Vienna
(SRZ Stadt+Regionalforschung GmbH, Wien)

Project team: Karl Czasny, Gerhart Bständig

Term of project: April to June 2008

Summary

The project investigates the changes of housing conditions in Vienna during the period of 1996 to 2006 using the statistical data based on the Austrian Mikrozensus. The study describes and analyses the development

- of the structure of the housing stock,
- of the population structure,
- of the rents in different rental sectors, and
- the change of residences.

Vienna is in the focus of investigations; however, analyses are not confined to the city's territory. In order to rate the socio- and housing-economic significance of the developments observed in Vienna the results are compared with the respective findings in the following five areas:

- all the other large Austrian cities with over 100.000 inhabitants,
- all the other medium size Austrian cities with 50.00 up to 100.000 inhabitants,
- the Vienna hinterland (excl. the city),
- the hinterland of all the other larger Austrian cities,
- all the other remaining areas of Austria.

The summary will pick just six singular findings from the multitude of results of the analyses:

(1) The **rental sector** is much larger in Vienna and contains larger portions of private and municipal rental dwellings than in all the other cities. Unlike in the other urban agglomerations the rental sector in Vienna is increasing only slowly; the share of rental dwellings managed by low/non-profit building associations is growing.

(2) At the beginning of the survey period the **inhabitants density** in Vienna and in the other large cities is higher than in the rest of Austria. Due to the low increase of m² living space per capita this difference has been growing even more until 2006. Scarcity of land in the urban agglomerations is mainly responsible for this trend which results in rising land prices and more economical production of floor space per dwelling.

(3) **Price differences between the three segments of the rental sector** (private, low-profit, municipal rental dwellings) are smaller than in the other larger Austrian cities, while at the same time the level of private rents in Vienna is comparatively low. The sufficient housing provision by low-profit associations and the municipality is the main reason for the relatively poor segmentation of rents in Vienna.

(4) In the survey period (1996-2006) **rents and running costs** grew faster in Vienna and even more so in Vienna's hinterland than in the other Austrian cities.

(5) The **price difference between shortly concluded rental contracts and elder contracts** is greater in the private sector than in the municipal and low-profit sector. This difference between the private segment and the two other segments of the rental sector counts for all five comparative regions, but even more so for the larger cities, with Vienna in the leading rank in this respect.

(6) **In Vienna people do not change homes** as frequently as in the other regions of the study's comparison. This is basically due to the fact that private rental dwellings in Vienna are let open-ended which could be an indicator for a lower share of rented out condominium flats in Vienna.