

## Executive Summary

### **Living in Vienna: Satisfaction with and quality of housing**

An extra report on “living and livability in Vienna II“ by *SORA Institute for Social Research and Analysis* for *MA 50 – Referat Wohnbauförderung*

Due to the results of the survey on “living and livability in Vienna II” (LLIW II), the Viennese have experienced an increase in both subjective satisfaction with habitation and housing as well as in objective quality thereof. A comparison of the results with those of the 1995 study on “living in Vienna” (LIW I) shows that the objective quality in housing supply has indeed risen. This comparison also indicates an increased satisfaction in many aspects of habitation and housing, for instance with the location of one’s dwellings. This observation has led to new questions, namely what had caused this increase and which social groups had benefited from the improvement in objective housing quality.

Therefore the *MA 50 – Referat Wohnbauforschung* (The City Council of Vienna’s housing department) commissioned *SORA Institute for Social Research and Analysis* to conduct an extra evaluation of both data sets (LIW I and LLIW II), which considers these new questions in two modules and furthermore offers conclusions for the city’s housing policy.

The first part of the study “Wohnzufriedenheit und Wohnqualität in Wien” (Living in Vienna: Satisfaction with and quality of housing) deals with the structure of housing satisfaction and the changes in situations from 1995 to 2003. It includes a path model of housing satisfaction on the basis of the LLIW II. This model was developed from the measuring instrument for housing satisfaction adopted in “Wohnzufriedenheit in Wien” (Housing Satisfaction in Vienna)<sup>1</sup>, a survey carried out by SORA for the MA 50 in 1999. In the following, a model is presented which was set up to explain the inhabitants’ attachment to their living area considering factors like noise exposure, need for security etc. (modul 1).

The second part of this study, “Wohnqualität, soziale Gerechtigkeit und Integration” (housing quality, social justice and integration) asks which social groups have benefited from the improvements achieved since 1995 and who has not experienced an improvement in their housing quality. The focus of this part is with the objective housing quality and therefore lies on facilities and conditions of dwellings, premises and their surroundings

Key importance is placed on the issue of social justice in housing and in fair distribution of the improvements achieved in the last years. A comparison is made here between the housing situation of different household types (poverty endangered single mothers, single women over the age of 60, families with many children, DINKs – “double income, no kids”) as well as different population groups.

The housing situation of migrants enjoys special emphasis in this study, whereas we have tried to meet the migrants’ heterogeneity by not only considering non-Austrian citizens but also naturalized migrants (modul 2).

## Results

### Satisfaction with habitation and housing

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<sup>1</sup> SORA (Edith Enzenhofer, Günther Ogris, Christoph Hofinger), 1999: Wohnzufriedenheit in Wien. Studie im Auftrag der MA 50. Unveröffentlichter Projektbericht. Wien, Jänner 1999. (unpublished project report)

Vienna's inhabitants had already shown a high level of satisfaction with their habitation and housing in 1995, but in some aspects, their contentedness has even grown until 2003. Among those aspects which have experienced an improvement, it is especially the size of the living space, the location of the housing and the reputation of the living area which were considered more satisfactory in 2003 than in 1995. A stagnating aspect, however, was the Viennese's satisfaction with their dwellings' prices, compared to the 1995 results. However there is to consider that during this period, the cost-performance ratio has increased in importance for the Viennese and therefore changes in prices had a stronger effect on the overall satisfaction in 2003 than they did in 1995.

#### Attachment to one's living area

The satisfaction with habitation and housing is crucial to the inhabitants' attachment to the living area. Among the many aspects which contribute to an overall satisfaction, it is the cleanliness (air quality, street cleaning and waste management) and the noise exposure (noise level day and night) which are of key importance.

Both the measuring and the structure model give clear evidence that the living area's location in the city has more effect on the attachment to the area itself than the contentedness with price and size of the dwellings.

The better the area's reputation and location and its relaxation potential, the greater is the inhabitants' satisfaction with living in it. Price and size are of secondary importance here.

#### Who is benefiting from the increase in quality?

All analysed groups show an increase in satisfaction with their housing and habitation situation from 1995 to 2003. Both poverty endangered households as well as those of the better off have profited from the increase in housing quality, although to a different extent. The results show that the poverty endangered with non-Austrian citizenship have experienced the biggest increase in "objective habitation and housing quality", though always departing from the lowest standard. Despite this above-average improvement, this group is still worse off concerning furniture and equipment of dwellings and premises as well as the facilities in the surrounding area than non-poverty endangered native Austrians or poverty-endangered naturalized citizens.