

Christiane Feuerstein

Living Together

The Integration of Living Arrangements Adapted to Aging into Subsidized Residential Buildings in Vienna

This research project focuses on living arrangements that are suited to aging, such as shared buildings and apartments that – to various degrees – stimulate active communication between residents and provide age-appropriate support for their everyday needs. Integrated into small spaces in the existing urban structure as well as new apartment complexes, these types of dwellings can be a contribution to neighborly, multi-generational living. In recent years, Vienna has seen an increase of different collaborative projects between residential contractors and care providers in response to the rising demand for affordable care and nursing services for the elderly.

For the research project, various approaches to the issue have been divided into three different socio-spatial categories: community living within a neighborhood, within an apartment building, and shared apartments. Each of these categories enables various degrees of social interaction that are supported by corresponding spatial parameters and building structure.

The realization of new ways of living is not always easy, especially since there is very little experience available for research on the topic: many of the people active in the field are new, existing financial models must be modified, and familiar architectural typologies adapted and developed. This research project, titled "Living Together", will not only analyze specific case examples, it also aims to establish a means of implementing experiential knowledge in future planning processes.

In order to maintain a broad perspective that includes the viewpoints of the different actors, building contractors, apartment managers, care providers, sociologists, and residents were all invited to join a series of workshops organized by Franziska Leeb. Together with participants, questions about the possibilities and limits of different living models, the demands of new spatial layout plans, and dealing with mediation processes and necessary changes to building and subsidy requirements were discussed, and everyday experiences were related.