

Executive Summary

Quality of Housing and Social Justice in Vienna

Quality of housing and resident structure, 1995 – 2013

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The subjective satisfaction with housing as well as the objective quality of housing is rising in Vienna. This study analyses the quality of housing among various population groups and identifies current challenges and further potential for improvement. The results are based on a statistical analysis of the datasets „Living in Vienna“ (1995, 2003) and „Social-Scientific Basic Study for Vienna“ (2008, 2013).

Improvements in the quality of housing 2003-2013

The most important improvements of the past ten years are:

- On average, the living space has increased from 39 to 41 square meters per person.
- Also, the share of the population living in apartments with more occupants than rooms has dropped from 20% in 2003 to 15% in 2013.
- The equipment of residential compounds has improved (elevators, balconies, space for strollers or bikes, playgrounds, park areas).

Social differences: elderly and persons with high-income benefitted more

Looking at different population groups, especially those households profited from increases which already had more living space at their disposal in 2003, among others older persons and those with a high income (top quintile):

- In the lowest income quintile, the living space and number of rooms per person have not changed between 2003 and 2013 (31 square meters on average).
- Also, single parents and households with many children did not make substantial improvements over this ten-year period.

Resident structure: low degree of segregation

The various socio-demographic population groups are rather evenly distributed among Vienna's different types of urban regions.

- A moderate degree of segregation can be found among the affluent who live more often in the city centre, in Belle Epoque areas with high quality of housing and in the Cottage (43% vs. 34% on average)
- First generation migrants, the poor as well as households with many children live more often in Belle Epoque areas with basic quality of housing and in new development areas.
- Looking at the spatial distribution of second generation migrants, no significant differences as compared to the general population can be found.

Public housing: share of persons at risk of poverty has increased

The share of public housing tenants living in households at risk of poverty has increased from 27% in 2003 to 37% in 2013. This increase is significantly above average. At the same time, the increase of rental cost per square meter is significantly lower in public housing as compared to the private sector.

The satisfaction with housing has increased in the public housing sector in the past ten years and equalled the level of satisfaction in the private rental sector in 2013.

Challenges**Short-term leases**

Short-term leases have sharply increased in the period 2003-2013:

- The share of short-term leases among all rental contracts has almost doubled in the past ten years and equalled 14% in 2013.
- Young tenants and DINKs are most affected by this increase: Among these groups, one out of four tenants had a short-term contract in 2013.
- Among the lowest income quintile, the share of short-term leases remained at ca. 14%; among the middle and upper quintiles on the other hand it doubled.

Differences between persons with and without migrant background

Almost half (49%) of the Viennese without migrant background have been „very satisfied“ with their housing in 2013, four out of ten second generation

migrants and a third (34%) among first generation migrants. These differences in housing satisfaction are most pronounced when it comes to housing cost, condition and size of the flat.

Over the past ten years, differences among persons with and without migrant background have subsided when it comes to internet access in the apartment, equipment of the residential compound and balconies/gardens.

On other aspects, these differences have persisted: Especially first generation migrants still have less living space at their disposal and are more often living on short-term leases.

- In 2013, first generation migrants had on average 15 square meters per person less living space than persons without migrant background (2003: 13 square meters per person).

Among second generation migrants, these differences are far less pronounced:

- Second generation migrants had on average 5 square meters per person less living space than persons without migration background.

Lower satisfaction with housing among the young

The general satisfaction with housing as well as the residential area is lower among younger than older Viennese in all datasets analysed:

- 58% of the older population were „very satisfied“ with housing in 2013; among young Viennese it were 38%.

Looking at rental cost, the young are far more affected by increases than older population groups. Therefore, the biggest differences between young and old can be found in their satisfaction with the cost and size of the apartment.