

NEWSLETTER

November 2021

MICOLL addresses the difficulties migrants, and especially refugees, face in accessing affordable and quality housing. Through test beds – or pilot implementations and collaborations – in Austria, Sweden and the UK, MICOLL identifies potential and barriers for developing collaborative housing solutions involving migrants/refugees, leading to enhanced knowledge and increased capacity among stakeholders. The project is action-oriented with close involvement of local residents and other actors. It is also committed to learning across the three countries to better identify relevant actors, processes and institutional systems for support and upscaling of collaborative housing solutions with migrants, and especially refugees, and to provide recommendations for cities, municipalities, local public bodies, middle agents and third sector organisations.

URBAN MIGRATION CALL – KICKOFF EVENT AT JPI URBAN EUROPE

The official launch of the JPI Urban Europe's Urban Migration programme took place September 14, 2021. Due to the enduring pandemic, the kickoff was held via Zoom. After introductions by JPI Urban Europe, the eight projects funded by the call provided brief project pitches. This was followed by two thematic breakout sessions on 'Urban governance of housing issues' and 'Socio-spatial integration and involvement of citizens and city administrations' which allowed project participants to brainstorm together.

For more information on the call and the Urban Migration projects, see [here](#).

WHAT DOES THE LITERATURE SAY?

MICOLL partners initially engaged in a systematic literature review to deliver a concise state of the art on research, policies and programmes regarding collaborative housing with marginalised groups. We found while there are now a substantial and increasing number of studies on collaborative housing, much less has been published on the specific context of or implications for migration and refugees. Our review highlights some of the key enablers and challenges of developing collaborative housing with migrants and refugees, a summary of which can be seen in the table below:

Enablers	Barriers
Municipalities and cities introducing favourable zoning and developer competitions for collaborative housing.	Ethnic discrimination of migrants and refugees on the job market and by housing market agents.
Supportive role of resettlement resources for refugee tenants, for example language training, social capital, NGO contacts.	Negative (community) housing experiences during refugee resettlement process and background-related traumas.
Mixed tenure and residential 'social mix' can enhance resource redistribution and mutual support.	Transitional and short-term housing focus among recent migrants and refugees, but also lack of affordable long-term tenancies.
'Slow housing' processes can cultivate collaboration, inclusion, deliberation and innovation.	Cultural differences, for example reflected in language barriers, housing aspirations, and family and gender values.

The findings of the literature review provided important input for our workshops with key civil society, public, business and academic stakeholders in Austria, Sweden and the UK (see below). The detailed review results are currently being prepared for publication.

MICOLL – MIGRATION AND HOUSING

Meeting refugees' housing needs through collaborative housing programmes

AUSTRIA

Our test bed in Vienna is the collaborative housing project *Oase.inklusiv*, which promotes inclusiveness of residents regardless of their origin and social background. Finalised in April 2021, *Oase.inklusiv* has 84 rental units of various size and a range of communal facilities open to different usages. The inclusive housing project offers 15 affordable residential units specifically for refugee families who already participated in the planning process, which started in 2017. This process was facilitated by the consulting and planning office *wohnbund:consult* and the NGO *neunerimmo* experienced in arranging affordable housing for homeless people, including refugees. Both organisations are also partners in MICOLL.

Oase.inklusiv is the result of a partnership between a resident association and a non-profit housing developer that won the developer competition for a building plot within a larger urban development area in Vienna's 22nd district. In contrast to the classic bottom-up Baugruppen model, *Oase.inklusiv* ensures more heterogeneity among residents through a given architectural and legal framework. This project's set-up enables a low-threshold form of self-organization and resident participation in the design of communal and individual areas, which is especially beneficial for vulnerable target groups with limited time and financial resources. Affordability is ensured through rentals instead of ownership apartments, as well as through the framework of subsidised housing in Vienna and the cooperation with the non-profit developer *Neues Leben* who owns the land and building. There is also a degree of standardisation in the design and cheap access to spaces for experimentation, for example to set up a social enterprise on the ground floor.

NATIONAL WORKSHOP AUSTRIA

The Austrian stakeholder workshop took place on September 8, 2021. It was a 3-hours online event via Zoom and using the Miro board software to facilitate stakeholder interaction. The workshop brought together 16 stakeholders who represented a range of sectors and institutions that are active in the fields of social and collaborative housing. Focusing on the local context of Vienna, participants discussed and commented on key results from the MICOLL literature review, i.e. key barriers and opportunities for the development and mainstreaming of collaborative housing with migrants and refugees. For this purpose, discussions in breakout rooms covered the topics 'institutional context', 'cooperation and community', 'independent and self-determined residents' and 'innovation and sustainability'. Workshop participants agreed that it will be essential to establish a positive narrative of collaborative housing with refugees in the public discourse. Another crucial aspect would be the transition of residents with refugee background from collaborative housing as a niche into mainstream social housing sectors that, in principle, have more capacity to cater to the needs of vulnerable groups. Participants also questioned the view that there are 'them' (i.e. residents with migrant and refugee background) versus 'us' (i.e. the 'native' residents), as both represent rather heterogeneous groups.

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MICOLL – MIGRATION AND HOUSING

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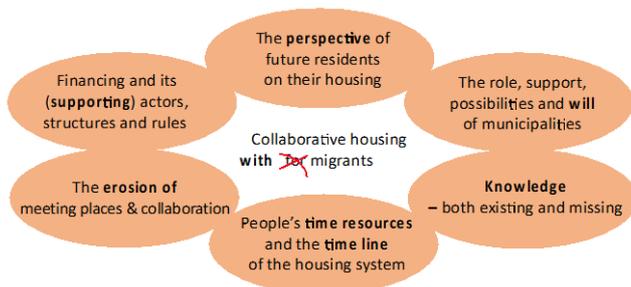
SWEDEN

Bergsjön is a city district in Gothenburg with around 17,000 inhabitants. It is an example of a so called million programme area, characterized by a large migrant population, social and economic inequalities, and different types of housing challenges. MICOLL has engaged with local stakeholders and actors to explore opportunities and barriers for migrant collaborative housing, and what role a 'test bed', or pilot, may play in this context. The objective is to develop a test bed that may promote and support collaborative housing in the long term, beyond the time frame of the MICOLL project. Three master students from Chalmers Architecture are also investigating what a test bed might look like by engaging with residents and through experiments. A video describing the test bed context can be found [here](#).



NATIONAL WORKSHOP SWEDEN

MICOLL organized a national multi-level Zoom/Miro workshop in Sweden September 2, 2021, with participation of 12 stakeholders from national, municipal and neighbourhood levels, represented by public, commercial and civil society organisations and agencies. The focus of the workshop was to pinpoint possibilities and barriers linked to collaborative housing with migrants in Sweden, to rank these, and to propose paths to transition towards such collaborative housing in the near future. The figure illustrates some findings of main barriers based on a first analysis of the



workshop discussions, where both the target group 'migrants' and an emphasis of housing collaboration *with* migrants seem to exacerbate already existing systemic barriers for collaborative housing in Sweden.

THE SWEDISH CONFERENCE ON SOCIALLY ORIENTED CONSTRUCTION

November 18-19, MICOLL took part in the *Swedish Conference on Socially Oriented Construction*, within the session entitled 'Integrating and Inclusive Living Environments'. This conference is a key event in Sweden for those engaged in collaborative housing, with ample opportunities to interact and exchange insights.

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MICOLL – MIGRATION AND HOUSING

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UK

The UK has a growing and dynamic collaborative housing sector, but its focus on migrants and refugees is nascent and knowledge about existing examples is scattered and disconnected. Still, Dr Fernández Arrigoitia's draws on a decade of research into collaborative housing to develop a set of targeted conversations, collaborative housing-oriented ideas and recommendations about how collaborative housing with migrants can be proactively conceptualized, tackled and supported into the future.

NATIONAL WORKSHOP UK

On 30 September, a first national forum was held online for 35 members, residents, practitioners, stakeholders or allies in the UK collaborative housing sector interested in collectively exploring the potential of such solutions for the long-term integration of refugees and recent migrants. The event first involved presentations from Dr Yael Arbell, Leeds, Research Associate at the Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research, Sheffield Hallam University, and by Tom Heller, Lisa Heller and Rachel Dunfield, members of a Yorkshire co-housing group. Breakout groups then exchanged knowledge and experience about existing examples, followed by a charting of the range of challenges involved in moving forward, including: the varied and vast definitions associated of both collaborative housing and migrants; cultural attitudes towards migrants and refugees; housing shortages and policies; lack of awareness, information or knowledge; and – within the collaborative housing sector – a general lack of diversity as well as a set of financial and institutional constraints. Ideas for change included (amongst others): hybrid projects; intra and inter-sector links and support; and land allocation priorities and training.

COMMUNITY LED HOUSING LOCAL AUTHORITY GROUP

On 11 November, MICOLL was presented to the Community Led Housing Local Authority Group, hosted by the Confederation of Co-Operative Housing ([CCH](#)), a national membership organization that campaigns for quality co-operative solutions to meet the housing needs of communities across the UK. The group is made up of 69 Local Authority representatives that work on housing strategy and delivery, with an interest on community led housing as an affordability option. The presentation focused on whether and how community led housing could play a role to provide housing for refugees, and local authorities' role in this regard. It opened up new connections with local and regional enabling collaborative housing hubs interested in exploring this topic further, while the CCH will also explore the topic of refugees in their future working agenda.

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PROJECT FUNDING AND MORE INFORMATION

MICOLL is funded through the call Urban Migration by JPI Urban Europe.

For more information, see <http://micoll.org>