



experimentcity europe

a new european platform for co-housing:
cooperative, collaborative, collective and sustainable housing cultures

stiftung
trias

t22:
Institut für kreative Nachhaltigkeit

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foreword

by Michael LaFond, id22: experimentcity

The experimentcity europe platform for co-housing cultures is initiated and coordinated by id22: Institute for Creative Sustainability in Berlin, in cooperation with many outstanding European partners. The initiative is funded by the European Commission's "Europe for Citizens Programme," as well as Berlin's Senate Department for Urban Development. The Stiftung trias is also providing financing and has made it possible for this brochure to be designed and printed.

Co-housing refers to innovative housing forms which are self-organized, inclusive and non-speculative, representing the diverse European landscape of cooperative, collaborative, collective and community-oriented housing cultures.

This publication introduces the experimentcity europe network and its partners, including model projects and strategies regarding co-housing. The following pages document the launching of experimentcity europe in the context of the EXPERIMENTDAYS 10 housing fair in Berlin, October 27 - 31, 2010. This included visits to projects, discussions and a conference, complemented by an interactive website as well as a follow-up meeting in Milan in March 2011.

experimentcity europe was launched in the context of the 2010 European Year against Poverty and Social Exclusion.

It is maintained that co-housing cultures, as they are emerging specific to each city and region, offer significant contributions to local social housing practices and to sustainable urban development. At the same time, the diversity and affordability of such participatory housing projects is often threatened by processes of gentrification and

segregation, i.e. rising property values and rents, as well as exclusionary housing.

experimentcity europe finds its roots in Berlin in a co-operation among civil society and local government. Berlin has both a long tradition and an exceptional diversity of cooperative housing projects. Here, as in so many European cities, there is a growing interest in collaborative housing as a response to various changes including demographic trends as well as economic, environmental and ecological challenges. More and more people are rediscovering the value in community, cooperation and neighbors, and in being able to cooperatively design and manage their own housing. The economic securities and ecological benefits of co-housing are attracting many to these housing forms.

Still, many questions face this emerging European co-housing movement.

How is the diversity of housing cultures to be regionally and internationally compared and evaluated?

What housing and urban development policies are needed to help develop and maintain co-housing?

What are the potential contributions of co-housing projects toward current and future urban challenges?

This includes:

- > social integration and regulation of gentrification
- > the production of new affordable housing
- > barrier-free housing for families and elderly
- > energy efficient housing
- > sustainable urban development



[mission statement]

berlin manifest

for the emerging european co-housing-cultures movement,
diversity and democracy

March 2011

In sustainability-oriented European cities, civil society can expect to enjoy “rights to the city” and “rights to housing.” Urban populations are increasingly understanding this to mean further democratizations, including the right to personally develop and maintain desired housing forms. This is leading to a movement of “co-housing cultures”: innovative housing which is self-organized, inclusive and non-speculative, including cooperative, collaborative, collective and community-oriented housing projects.

experimentcity europe has been initiated to:

1. study, network, support and publicize the great diversity of European co-housing cultures, especially in the context of communicative, process-oriented sustainable urban developments.
2. support initiatives increasing social inclusion and gender equality, especially concerning lower-income groups in collaborative housing projects.
3. encourage housing and ground ownership strategies such as land trusts and long-term lease agreements working for affordability and against gentrification and speculation.
4. assist experimental housing demonstrating environmental technologies and energy efficiency.
5. offer new housing options for increasingly diverse and engaged urban populations, working against trends towards societal isolation and individualization.
6. assist innovative co-housing projects demonstrating successful strategies for the self-design and management of housing, contributing to further democratizations of urban planning and development.
7. work for political and social policies necessary to enable and maintain collaborative housing projects, including a range of cooperative, ownership and rental models.
8. support new forms of cooperation among civil society, government and business, in order to more effectively support collaborative housing.
9. improve communication and networking at the European level by developing a common language and tools for ongoing exchange. Transfer experiences and best practices among European partners.
10. develop and exchange housing communications strategies, including online databases, publications, fairs and other events.

[Introduction]

Being the change we wish to see ...

by Rolf Novy-Huy, Stiftung trias

What are my visions of housing and home? Do co-housing, co-operative and multi-generation housing projects reflect on personal or perhaps also socio-political questions? Note that Germany's population for example will decrease from 82 million people in 2010 to 65 million in 2060, and at the same time this population will dramatically age. In 2008 there were 4 million people 80 years or older, and in 2050 this group will be 10 million people!

Acknowledging this background and the disintegration of family structures, the Stiftung trias definitely considers the question "How are we going to live in the future?" to be political. Demographic changes will influence all parts of society and the topic of care for elderly people is only one of many issues. This is not only a German problem as shrinking and aging populations are being observed from Portugal to Russia. Economic questions (future income cuts for elderly) and environmental problems will give us additional future challenges.

Although collaborative housing in Germany is still a relatively small movement, it is attracting significant public attention because of its innovative potential and self-help attitude. In this sense it is critical to encourage people to take their futures into their own hands, instead of supporting consumerism and governmental dependencies. And so each cooperative project represents another building block in a foundation serving sustainable solutions. trias thus sees an important role in working on the larger, long-term questions of development, and not just in organizing support for individual model projects.

Important challenges facing us include non-speculative land uses, the conservation of fertile land resources and preventing land-grabbing in third world countries. Small organizations and foundations like trias are not able to sufficiently deal with all of these questions locally, not to mention internationally. Working in networks helps to exchange knowledge, share inspiring ideas and new points of view but also build solidarity among those working for change. Working across Germany, trias' function is not only to raise money, but also to develop and communicate information. Working at the European level is expectedly even more challenging - and enriching. And so this new European co-housing culture platform represents a fantastic opportunity for the further exploration and development of crucial social questions important to our common future. This is a great step towards international understanding – also one of our objectives.

**You must be the change
you wish to see in the world.**

Mahatma Gandhi



experimentcity europe :: partners

trias, Germany :: id22, Berlin :: Politecnico di Milano, DIS, Italy ::
Kollektivhus NU, Stockholm :: IgBW, Vienna :: Stroud Common
Wealth, UK :: Quatorze, Paris :: National Taiwan Uni, Taipei ::
Koti kaupungissa - Hem i stan, Helsinki :: City of Gdynia, Poland



[European partners]

Stiftung trias

Working in networks for changes in land ownership, encouraging ecological behavior and new forms of community-oriented housing.



The Stiftung trias promotes initiatives working on changing land ownership, encouraging ecological behavior and new forms of community-oriented housing. The foundation realizes its goals together with its partners within the framework of its charitable objectives.

The Stiftung trias is a non-profit foundation focusing on self-organized co-housing projects. The promotion of new forms of housing against the background of a shrinking and aging society is emphasized. trias also works against further land consumption and supports projects which do not build on land already used for agricultural or horticultural purposes. Other goals include encouraging ecological building practices and energy-saving technologies.

The foundation has been working closely since 2002 with organizations like id22 and experimentcity locally and nationally to not only gain attention for cooperative housing, but also to organize educational activities to support housing projects. This includes a wide range of events and seminars, relevant publications and an online database documenting German housing projects. (www.wohnprojekte-portal.de)

trias supports the alternative housing movement but does not often have the capacity to support the development of individual projects. The foundation is allowed to give direct support to collaborative housing projects only if they are non-profit. Over the years, trias has emerged as a welcome address for donations, including those wanting to promote a specific objective, gifts made within the context of a project or as wills are written.

The foundation does not only work with the income of its assets. Its statutes note that received long term funds should primarily be invested in building sites for collaborative housing projects. Investing money in this way can financially support housing groups, take land out of speculation and secure a steady income for the foundation. The often-used land-lease-contract (*Erbpacht*) also secures project aims.

Germany's co-housing movement is developing in all areas of the country. So called *Baugemeinschaften* (building communities) are typically oriented towards new, energy-efficient and often expensive buildings, while *Wohnprojekte* (housing projects) tend to deal with more affordable building re-uses. Investors, large housing cooperatives and housing authorities are also starting to develop co-housing groups, mainly organized as top-down-projects. Legal forms and structures for establishing such housing projects are as colorful and mixed as the groups themselves. This could be considered negatively by those wanting an easy standard-solution, or positively by those wishing to highlight the variety of the movement.

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[European partners]

id22: Institute for Creative Sustainability

Supporting self-organized, community-oriented housing cultures as research and development centers in democratically, sustainably developing cities.

id22: ideas + initiatives

id22: is a non-profit, civil society-based organization studying, supporting, networking and publicizing innovative “co-housing cultures” in the context of sustainable urban development, working for the last decade from local to international levels. id22 coordinates the experimentcity initiative, with the associated annual EXPERIMENTDAYS collaborative housing fair, as well as exhibitions, excursions, salons and workshops. id22 maintains an interactive website, WOHNPORTAL Berlin, on which hundreds of new and established housing projects publicize themselves and exchange information.

Berlin: context + strategy

After years of enjoying a housing surplus and relatively low rents, recent years have seen rapid increases in real estate values along with increases in rents. Vacant lots and buildings are still to be found, and the city is still relatively affordable, but Berlin’s downtown is gentrifying, diversifying and aging. While a growing majority of the residents are living alone, more people are searching for identity, community and neighbors.

The Berlin Senate supported hundreds of self-help projects through the 1980s and 1990s, but recently innovative collaborative housing has generally had to be privately financed. While Berlin’s practice of participatory housing cultures continues to develop, it is virtually impossible for new affordable housing projects to be developed in the inner-city neighborhoods, and a trend toward *Baugemeinschaften* (building communities) has taken shape. These projects usually combine private ownership of individual apartments with cooperative ownership of common spaces and gardens.

Where rent-based, affordable housing projects are facing difficulties in raising sufficient capital and acquiring suitable property, they are occasionally assisted by alternative banks and foundations. Successful strategies in Berlin include the occasional use of long-term lease contracts (*Erbpacht*), which can be organized either by the government



or by private foundations acting as land owners. Berlin also supports informational and networking initiatives and makes land available for *Baugemeinschaften*.

In order to support more diverse and affordable forms of collaborative housing in Berlin, alternative finance models must be further developed, especially regarding rental models. Primary challenges include publicizing participatory housing forms and making them available for low-income families and an ageing population. The further development of affordable housing is necessary to continue to socially integrate the city’s populations and slow gentrification.

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DIS: Design and Innovation for Sustainability

Strategic and service design, scenario building and life cycle planning, for sustainable housing and cities.

Design and Innovation for Sustainability (DIS) is a research unit in the department of Industrial Design and Multimedia Communication at Politecnico di Milano. DIS is actively involved in teaching, as well as basic and applied research. Its research deals with a variety of issues related to sustainability, including housing.



DIS has been working closely with organizations such as Cohousing Ventures and the Social Housing Foundation, providing them with strategic design, scenario building and innovation management. Research includes collecting, organizing and visualizing best practices on an online platform (www.sustainable-everyday.net), in exhibitions and in publications.

General situation:

It is very difficult to create bottom-up housing initiatives in Milan, but there are some associations and private initiatives which assist groups of people in creating their own solutions, respecting their social and environmental wishes.

One well-known housing form in Milan is the “construction co-op,” of which there are about 280. CCL for example is a consortium bringing together more than 50 housing cooperatives with approximately 5,000 members, responsible for one of the first eco-houses in Milan, an accessible house in Rogoredo, as well as low-rent buildings in other locations.

Social housing is organized by *Fondazione Cariplo* and the Social Housing Foundation. The program especially aims to create rental dwellings, services, actions and instruments addressed to those who are unable to meet their housing needs on the open market for economic reasons or due to a lack of appropriate options on the supply side. Given the lack of public funding, the Social Housing Program focuses on serving the economically disadvantaged.

The *Comunità in famiglia* are strong communities united by religion through which people live communally. For example *Comunità villapizzone* has been living together since 1978. They offer their services to the neighborhood and larger community, and provide places for children to play or for groups to meet.

co-housing.it was recently created and together with INDACO organized Milan’s first co-housing project. Young people planned private apartments with a common swimming pool where they can meet and socialize. There are many other projects being planned in Milan, including eco-houses, rental projects and housing for seniors.

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[European partners]

Kollektivhus NU

Developing cohousing projects in Sweden and abroad: advising, researching, publicizing and networking.

aims and activities

The Swedish association Kollektivhus NU works for housing with shared facilities and neighborly cooperation. Originally formed in 1981, it serves to inform the public about cohousing as an alternative, and to influence authorities to facilitate the creation and running of such residential buildings. Kollektivhus NU has 50 local projects as members, 41 of them with existing buildings and 9 groups working to build or to promote cohousing. The association assists its members, runs a webpage, publishes books, pamphlets and an electronic news bulletin, arranges seminars and conferences and promotes international collaboration.

Sweden and Stockholm: context

When Swedish cohousing was launched in the 1930s, the main idea was to reduce housework so that women could combine having a family with keeping their jobs. The prevalent model until the 1970s was one based on providing services through employed staff and policies supported the production of individual family units. The state and municipal housing companies had an important role in meeting housing demands. When the new cohousing model, based on resident participation, appeared around 1980, the municipal housing companies played a leading role. This meant that cohousing became available to those who could not previously afford it. More than 50 projects were built from 1979 to 1995. Almost half of the Swedish cohousing projects are located in Stockholm.

After pressure from several organizations, the Stockholm City administration initiated a program for the development of new cohousing. Public housing companies were given directives to build half a dozen cohousing projects each and agreements were worked out for self-managed groups of renters. However, neo-liberal urban policies of



deregulation eventually replaced the social housing model and much rental housing has been converted into condominiums for people with higher incomes.

In the 1990s cohousing development stagnated, but the idea has once again gained momentum. This is especially true for the housing concept for people over 40 without children at home. Today Stockholm has 18 functioning cohousing projects with altogether 1,400 apartments, where a focus is on having dinners together and sharing common spaces. Cohousing has mainly attracted well educated people and those that turn their backs on consumer society in favor of qualities such as time with children, as well as cultural and leisure activities.

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[European partners]

Initiative für gemeinschaftliches Bauen und Wohnen (IgBW)

Establishing a “co-housing culture” as part of Austria’s housing policy.



Objectives

The Initiative for Collaborative Building and Housing (Initiative für gemeinschaftliches Bauen und Wohnen / IgBW) works to improve the legal, organizational and economic conditions to allow more people to create their own community-oriented housing projects. This means improving the general situation so that it becomes easier to initiate and successfully realize projects. IgBW successfully began in 2009 and has grown to include about 40 members.

Services

- › represent the interests of co-housing projects
- › publicize co-housing in the media and in public discussions
- › collect relevant information and communicate it in workshops and discussions
- › bring together experts and laymen and provide orientation on the housing market for people seeking co-housing
- › work on new approaches for project realization

Austrian co-housing

Many collaborative housing projects were realized in Austria between the 1960s and 1990s, but this development came to a complete halt around 2000. Although during the last ten years almost no new projects were built, currently a new movement is emerging.

For 2011, IgBW is focusing on Vienna but also has members in other cities and provinces. Austrian housing policy is regulated by the provinces, which means that for legal changes in housing matters, this local political level has to be addressed. The IgBW finds it is often easier to start co-housing projects in rural areas where the property market is much more relaxed; however, it is more difficult to find members.

The City of Vienna has recently put a focus on co-housing and proclaimed that they will be offering land to collaborative housing projects not only in the development area of Aspern, begun in 2010, but also in other more centrally located areas.

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[European partners]

Stroud Common Wealth Co Ltd

Community Land Trusts for housing, social enterprises, and community benefit.

Objectives

Stroud Common Wealth Company Ltd (SCW) is a non-profit operating in the UK since 1999, achieving prominence by contributing towards the success of a wide range of innovative projects. SCW helped to set up Gloucestershire Land For People (a pioneering community land trust), Land for People (Wales), Stroud Woodland Co-op and has enabled land trust and community asset development projects across the country, such as the Fordhall Farm community buy out.

Community Land Trusts

SCW helped the Community Land Trust (CLT) movement in Britain get going, which is now pioneering a range of pilot CLT projects across the country (www.communitylandtrust.org). This is now being hosted by the National Housing Federation, which provides funding, capacity building and advice for new CLTs.

Larger urban projects include LILAC in Leeds, St Clements in London (London Citizens) and Cashes Green in Stroud (www.gloucestershirelandforpeople.org). Many CLTs are in rural areas where affordable housing is in short supply, like Chedworth CLT in Gloucestershire or High Bickington in Devon.

Cohousing and other models

Stroud CoHousing at Springhill is the first new build cohousing scheme in Britain, with 34 homes. It is much visited, as it is so hard to get such projects developed. Unlike CLTs though, Springhill is limited to those who can get mortgages.

One goal is to develop mixed tenure developments for social rental housing, part ownership using mutual home ownership, and a range of neighborhood common facilities such as workspaces, district heating, community gardens, etc.



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[European partners]

Quatorze

Working for social and ecological urban development, environmental design, housing and “third places”.



Quatorze aims at integrating a social and ecological vision of human development in the field of environmental design.

Quatorze acts in three complementary levels :

1. **Awareness**, through projects to design and build in partnership with public authorities, companies, organizations or individuals.
2. **Transmission** and sharing of knowledge and good practice through interdisciplinary teaching-learning experiences focused on social and environmental issues. These moments of conception and reflection act as pedagogical meeting points for users, professionals, teachers and students.
3. **Research** in various fields: construction techniques, materials, design pedagogy, co-design and eco-design procedures. This research is carried out in cooperation with specialized laboratories and think tanks.

From the very beginning, Quatorze has been an international initiative. The organization's first publication was a study based on interviews made at 17 architecture schools in Europe, focused on one question: how to co-design our constructed future, sharing the energies of students, professors and design professionals with users. A response was found: promoting the idea of “third places” – in between universities and “real life” where people build what they need together.

Since this publication, Quatorze has experienced the idea of “third places” in a very unique context: Paris and its incredible lack of places to live. Paris needs 300,000 more housing units for people to live well with affordable rents, and more than 10% of the buildings in Paris are not occupied. And so Quatorze promotes a certain idea of co-housing culture: not just living together, but building together and rehabilitating abandoned places together and experimenting with convivial ways of constructing our future.

Finally we are convinced we can meet needs by networking people and supporting them in designing places together. To use energy from students and teachers towards creating, not only to learn but to act on real life, and not only to learn theory but to deal with practice. We hope this will help people to think about their housing environments differently: as something you can act on!

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[European partners]

National Taiwan University, Graduate Institute of Building and Planning

Combining theory and practice with community-based planning and participatory design and housing projects.

Bridging theory and action

The Graduate Institute of Building and Planning (GIBP) is an academic platform which bridges theories and actions through advocacy discourse and required practicum courses. Emphasizing social justice, urban conservation, housing, sustainability and community empowerment, GIBP staff and students organize conferences and policy-making events to instill social and environmental values into the capitalist-oriented public sector. GIBP collaborates with autonomous or disadvantaged communities and NGOs to support progressive planning actions as well as support and protect collaborative housing.

TAIPEI

Critical issues of Taipei's housing situation:

1. Nearly 85% of Taiwan's land and housing is privately owned and public housing makes up less than 9% of total housing.
2. Taipei's existing public housing suffers from poor management and is low quality. While the city's housing shortage is acute, the high vacancy rate of existing housing (due largely to investment-oriented absentee ownership) poses a problem for those that want more public housing built.
3. Social housing is not on the city's agenda. Disempowered social minorities are often excluded from the housing market even with a rent subsidy. While public lands are available, social housing and experimental housing forms are disadvantaged in competing for these lands.
4. An appropriate administrative housing authority is lacking which could organize the necessary housing policy, acquire and allocate an annual budget for housing, and help establish a resource network.



The impending challenges:

1. Legislation of housing law and founding of a housing authority to plan and implement policies of social and affordable housing.
2. Reserving public lands for public uses including social housing of sustainable and cultural quality.
3. Building community networks for social housing development and encouraging collaborative housing.
4. Linking the planning of social housing or the revitalization of existing public housing with cultural infrastructure, social services and necessary urban amenities.
5. Lessening bureaucratic control of public housing by creating innovative programs to sustain neighborhood vitality.

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[European partners]

Koti kaupungissa ry – Hem i stan rf (Home in the City)

Realizing cohousing and urban re-developments for a new, sustainable quality of life.

co-house as a “group building”

Home in the City is a non-profit association established in Helsinki in 2007. The aim is to promote urban living as a social and ecological lifestyle, and offer alternatives for finding a sustainable quality of life with singles, families and senior citizens living under the same roof. One of the practical objectives is to build a co-house as a “group building” activity in downtown Helsinki for which inhabitants are expected to move in during 2013.

In the Home in the City concept, members are included in the planning in the conceptual and design stages. While families express different needs for their individual flats, the common spaces offer a wide range of amenities for members such as dining, social and cultural events, as well as exercise, gardening, child and senior care.

New residential areas for urban living

The traditional Finnish dream is to live in one's own house in the countryside. Pursuit of this dream has resulted in a scattered environment with long commuting distances. Other similar problems for Finnish cities are the ever-growing number of elderly people, gentrification and segregation phenomena. Half of all Helsinki households are formed by a single person.

Finnish homes are usually privately owned by the inhabitants. Rental flats are hard to find, and due to high demand the prices for apartments and rents are steadily rising. At the same time, construction of new apartment buildings is dominated by large development companies, which primarily offer standardized dwellings, not acknowledging individual housing wishes.



Concerning available land, Helsinki is facing a good situation. The city's cargo ports have recently been transferred to the outer metropolitan area, thus freeing large areas in central Helsinki for residential use. These districts are currently being redesigned, and the Home in the City pilot project will be located in one of these new areas, Jätkäsaari. Helsinki is drafting a well-being concept for the area, and the goal is to encourage community spirit and sustainability.

Home in the City hopes the pilot will serve as an example for succeeding projects. The association thus aims to promote the idea of people shaping their own environments, and also to support new actors, businesses, service providers and financing models in the field of housing.

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[European partners]

City of Gdynia, Poland

Department of Architecture

Improving conditions for sustainable housing in the port city with modernist architecture.

Modernist architecture in the Port City

Gdynia is one of the youngest Polish cities. The city developed in the 1920s and 1930s and its architecture and planning reflect modernist European trends of the time. Prior to the outbreak of WWII, many outstanding modernist buildings were erected including tenements and settlements, as well as public buildings and port facilities.

Today, Gdynia has more than 250,000 inhabitants and is important for the naval economy, international trade, science, academics, culture and tourism. Its port is a gateway to Poland and a Gdynia landmark. The city has modern shipyards and is a major road, rail and sea transport node, providing access to major European cities.

Sustainable development + improving housing conditions

Gdynia's City Board and Development Planning Office along with public partners and experts prepared the "Strategic 2003-2013 Plan for Gdynia," accepted by City Council. The aim of it is to achieve a sustainable, democratic and ecological city development, meeting European standards by optimal use of natural, human and economic resources while taking advantage of the city's location. The significance of improving bad housing conditions is emphasized by the vision.

Poland's current housing shortage is similar to the situation experienced in western European countries after WWII. The problem of housing availability is connected to the society's low income level. An average monthly salary only allows the buying of 0.5 m² of a free market apartment. For this reason, Gdynia's administration supports initiatives aimed at upgrading living conditions by providing subsidies.

In the 1980s and 1990s, self-help housing projects erected on municipal land were important initiatives. A current example of such activities is the cooperation between local authorities and housing cooperatives in putting infrastructure into areas destined for residential uses and the provision of finances to improve environmental quality, such as renovation work and beautification measures.



Another important way of improving housing availability for lower income citizens is through the TBS social housing association (www.czynszowka.com.pl), organized by Gdynia's authorities to build affordable rental housing on municipal land. TBS also builds new non profit houses and manages housing stock rented to lower income groups. Still, the production of non profit housing is not sufficient and new solutions need to be found to solve housing problems.

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European Model Projects >

co-housing cultures

experimentcity europe emphasizes a practical approach. While informed by theory, this begins with a search for European model projects and strategies regarding the wide diversity of co-housing cultures. Initial challenges involve the identification and comparison of best practices, as well as trying to understand what is unique and special about both the various housing forms and their differing local situations.

The following selected models are only a very small sampling of the many different ways in which people are organizing their own living situations. Through this we see that cooperative and collaborative projects can indeed provide excellent centers for research and development of a wide range of topics from affordable, intergenerational and ecological housing, to creative and sustainable urban development. How and why are such housing initiatives being developed – or being frustrated? What can or should be learned from each of these projects and their respective cities? How can co-housing best be supported – by civil society, by financial institutions or by the government?



[Berlin Model Project]

:: Werkpalast Lichtenberg

Address: Alfred-Jung-Str. 6-8, 10367 Berlin, Germany

www.werkpalast.de

Date of Creation: 2010

Legal form: Non-profit civil society organization

Werkpalast Lichtenberg is a self-managed housing project in a previously abandoned day-care center in former East Berlin. The property was bought from Berlin in 2009 by the non-profit Stiftung trias, which has signed a 99 year-lease (*Erbpacht*) with the Mietergenossenschaft SelbstBau e.G. (cooperative housing network). The SelbstBau has rental agreements with the residents, who are in turn members of this cooperative. The 2,100 m² intergenerational project includes 18 separate apartments with generous garden spaces outside.

The 40 residents manage and clean the building themselves, and beyond that are engaged in the neighborhood, for example offering activities for children and seniors. The ecological renovation emphasized self-help, with the residents doing much of the work themselves. The building is now energy efficient, for example with triple-glazed windows and the use of solar energy. The project is financed through private loans and credit. It is also affordable, at about 5.50 EUR per m² and a contribution from each household to the construction of the house of 150 EUR per m².



[Milan Model Project]

:: Comunità Villapizzone

Address: Piazza Villapizzone 3, 20156 Milano, Italy

www.comunitaefamiglia.org

Date of creation: 1968

Legal Form: non-profit

This community of families is located in Milan in a courtyard building. The project began in the 1960s, as the Volpi family got together with a group of Jesuits to create a new way of living based on communal working and mutual help. In the 1970s, they moved to Villapizzone and received a building from its owner in exchange for renovating it. Today there are 6 families, a group of Jesuits and an association dealing with psychiatric patients residing there. The building was given to the City of Milan and now the municipality provides the community with this space. They share a common garden and playground, which are also open to the neighborhood. There is a kitchen with living room for meetings that is also rented for private parties. The families have separate apartments of

their own; however, all households put their earnings in a common account and take what they need from it every month. In 1988, the association *comunità in famiglia* was created by this community to allow and facilitate the organising of new similar projects in Italy, of which there are now 12 around the country.



[UK Model Project]

:: Gloucestershire Land for People

Address: Stroud, UK

www.gloucestershirelandforpeople.coop

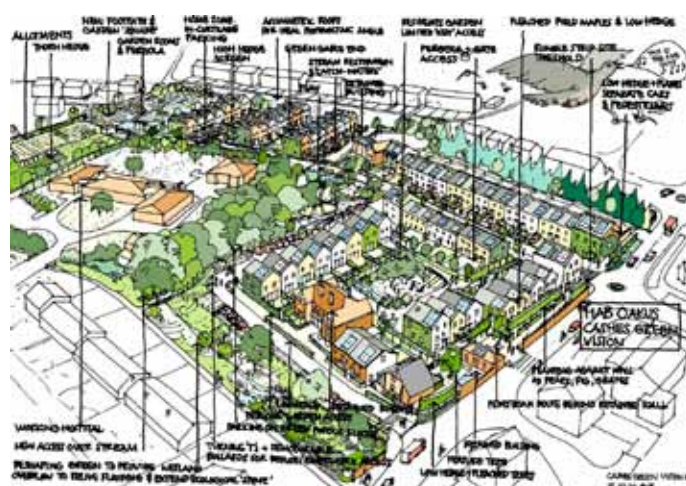
Date of creation: 2006 (not yet constructed)

Legal form: Community Land Trust (CLT)

The beautiful former hospital site at Cashes Green of 24,500 m² will be redeveloped with 78 new homes, plus a variety of outdoor spaces, allotments, paths, wildlife areas, play and meeting spaces as well as a garden building. There will be freehold homes, CLT part equity homes and social rental homes. It will be the largest UK CLT scheme so far.

It is managed by Gloucestershire Land for People, the local CLT, working with the Homes and Communities Agency, the landowner, Stroud District Council, Cainscross Parish Council and the developer HABOAKUS (Happiness, Architecture, Beauty) with housing group Green Square.

Financing comes via government grants, government land and a cross subsidizing scheme from the sale of freehold houses. There are many partnerships and a lot of com-



munity engagement throughout the project. One Planet Living Principles, with a deep commitment to sustainability, e.g. low energy, environmentally friendly and good social design will also collaborate. Up to 19 homes will be social rental, and up to 19 homes will be part equity homes.



[Stockholm Model Project – “Co-housing for the second half of life”]

:: Färdknäppen

Address: Fatbursgatan 29A, 11854 Stockholm, Sweden

www.fardknappen.se

Date of creation: 1993

Legal Form: Public rental housing

Färdknäppen is the first example in Sweden of the ‘second half of life’ model, meaning cooperative housing for people over 40 years of age with no children at home. The project promotes community and mutual support among residents. The building is situated in the inner city area of Södermalm and consists of a multi-family housing block of 6 floors comprising 43 apartments of 1, 2 or 3-room units from 37-75 m². Common spaces include: restaurant-kitchen, dining room,

library, all-purpose room, roof terrace with lounge and fire-place, exercise room, sauna, weaving and sewing room, guest rooms, computer room and a garden. Five dinners are served a week, prepared by resident cooking teams. Being a member of the cohousing association and a cooking team is compulsory for residents. Many work groups exist in the building. A 2-room unit of 63 m² costs 730 EUR/month to rent. This includes a share of the common spaces.



[Vienna Model Project]

:: Wohnprojekt Wien

Address: Krakauer Str./Ernst-Melchior-Gasse, 1020 Wien, Austria

www.wp-wien.at

Date of creation: August 2009-Summer 2013

Legal form: association (verein)

In a collaboration between architects and a housing association, the project group won a public housing tender in April 2010 and will be completing construction in 2013. The project will include 45 flats for 100 inhabitants. The architects and future inhabitants are co-planning the building, which will be built by a professional housing association with public subsidies. The project group will rent the entire building from the owner and rent out the apartments to its members.

The house will have numerous common spaces: sauna, guest rooms, common roof terrace, library, children's room,

big hall with kitchen, workshops and flex rooms, as well as an intercultural garden with private vegetable plots. Sustainability is a core goal of the project which includes a bicycle-friendly environment and car sharing system, waste-reducing measures, eco-friendly building materials and high energy-efficiency.

In addition to public funding, each group member must co-finance the project with approx. 570 EUR/m² and will pay a monthly rent of about 9,50 EUR/m², roughly on the same level as other newly built subsidized housing in Vienna.



[Paris Model Projects – Temporary housing for homeless]

:: Speranza / Plan Grand Froid

Address: Paris

www.quatorze14.org

Date of Creation: 2010

Legal Form: non-profit

The Speranza! projects are a collection of idealistic proposals in which architecture is used responsibly to create affordable structures for those in need. The overarching premise is broad, but the common idea is to act specifically with small scale projects that collectively make a significant impact for people.

Goals for the Speranza design for homeless accommodations include creating living spaces that will not only provide a place to rest, but offer visual, audio and light

privacy, as well as provide secure storage for personal items. Collective spaces for eating and socializing will also be offered.

One of the projects is planned for a Parisian government building.

Because the building's rooms are used during the day, the structures need to be easily collapsible to make space for daytime uses of the meeting and exhibition room. Speranza is planned in cooperation with the Mayor's office.



[Taipei Model Project – Culturally re-developed, legalized squatter settlement]

:: Treasure Hill Co-living Village

Address: Lane 230, Section 3, Ding-zhou Rd. - Taipei, Taiwan

www.artistvillage.org

Date of creation: re-opened (after renovation) October 2010

Legal form: non-profit, historical settlement

Treasure Hill is a former squatter settlement located at the southwest edge of Taipei – home already to about 200 immigrant families and individuals by 1950 – most of them from the economic lowerclass. In 1993, an intended demolition of the informal village led to its defense which gathered enthusiastic support from students, NGOs and local citizens. The city government revised its plan, and the non-profit OURs (the Organization of Urban Re-s) was commissioned to work with the settlement.

Treasure Hill now includes a co-living commune incorporating the original resident units as a mode of social housing, a youth hostel, NGO offices and an *artists* (artist/activist) – in-residency program. Village residents share community spaces and various rooms for arts and culture. Restoration was completed in 2010, and Treasure Hill is now managed by Tsuei-Ma-Ma Housing and Community Services Foundation with the Taipei International Artists Village.

Berlin event

summary of week's activities including project visits
and discussions, October 27-31, 2010

The experimentcity europe platform's first event was held in the context of the EXPERIMENTDAYS 10. The week in Berlin was organized to bring the network partners together, get to know Berlin actors and initiatives, share best practices and investigate what strategies both governmental and grassroots actors in a variety of European cities are using to support participatory housing projects. The week



included an international conference (p. 27) and the Berlin housing project market (*Projektbörse*), as well as an evening of short housing films, discussions and other activities.

The European partners stayed at the **ufafabrik**, a housing/cultural project established in 1979 in Berlin Tempelhof, recognized by the UN Habitat program as an international best practice. The week began at the ufafabrik with introductory partner presentations and short films. A tour was made of the ufafabrik grounds, including green roofs, solar power schemes, an organic bakery and store, children's farm, free school, neighborhood center, several different cultural stages and much more. (www.ufafabrik.de)

Visits during the week included the following model projects:

ExRotaprint (www.exrotaprint.de)

A co-operatively organized, non-profit "social sculpture" including a combination of artists, educational and social initiatives, light industry and housing, organized since 2005 in an architecturally spectacular former industrial grounds. The affordable activities are permanently secured through a long-term lease with non-profit foundations who were able to obtain the property from Berlin.

Regenbogenfabrik (www.regenbogenfabrik.de)

This housing/cultural project was formed in the 1970s, when a group of about 50 young people squatted in an abandoned factory and adjacent block of flats. The project includes affordable housing, a children's playground, cafe, small hotel, workshops and cinema.

Haus Schwarzenberg (www.haus-schwarzenberg.org)

In the middle of the gentrified downtown, this cultural center has maintained affordable spaces since the early 1990s for alternative and collaborative art, including galleries, cafe, cinema, studios, bookstore, etc.

Forum Factory (www.forum-factory.de)

This cultural space is part of a large vocational training center, located in a soon-to-be developed area, expecting more cultural initiatives but also various housing projects.

K9 (www.kinzigg.de)

K9 is a self-managed, politically-oriented housing project, with an open living concept and a lot of public space for community work, education and networking. Needed renovations have been financed through self-help funds from the Berlin government as well as private loans and significant personal contributions. Residents have a long-term lease with a housing cooperative which owns the property.

[October 29, 2010, Forum Factory in Berlin]

International Conference: Collaborative Housing

Collaborative housing: sexy, cheap and available?

The EXPERIMENTDAYS 10 international conference took place on October 29, 2010 at the Forum Factory in Berlin. Around 120 attendees witnessed presentations of model strategies made by housing experts from Berlin as well as other European cities. Moderation was provided by Dan Borden from EXBERLINER magazine and the save berlin initiative. The main question the conference explored was: “What are urban actors – policy makers, researchers, developers and activists – in each of the participating cities doing to support a diversity of sustainable, non-speculative and affordable housing projects?”

Maria Krautzberger, Berlin Permanent Secretary for Transport and Urban Planning

Speaking on behalf of Berlin’s Senate, Ms. Krautzberger welcomed the audience and noted that some of the main urban development goals for the city were to find and build on co-housing best practice examples and strategies, to learn from ‘experiments’ and the creative culture, as well as to support appropriate projects and sustainable development.

Michael LaFond, Director, id22: Institute for Creative Sustainability, Berlin

Mr. LaFond briefly presented the Institute, which also hosted the conference. He argued that many of Berlin’s problems are common around Europe, including gentrification, a slowing economy and weakened social housing, but the diversity of co-housing cultures offer innovative solutions to such urban challenges. Berlin, the city with the greatest variety of sustainable, collaborative housing approaches in Europe, includes building groups, cooperatives and rentals. Ideally these projects should not exist for profit but be self organized.



Anna Meroni, DIS, INDACO, Politecnico di Milano, Italy

DIS focuses on service design as well as strategic design for social innovation and sustainability. Regarding housing, Ms. Meroni said that homes should be used creatively. Ideas include: using common space for a neighborhood restaurant, competency exchange among residents, cooking cooperatives, community gardens, food cooperatives as well as public events. A main challenge is how to support and replicate these ideas. In order to achieve these goals, DIS uses networks to encourage ‘design thinking’, develop toolkits and generate new ideas.

Reiner Nagel, Berlin Senate Department for Urban Development

Mr. Nagel presented Berlin as an exciting city, slowly growing with many creative opportunities. Building cooperatives and co-housing are an important part of the Berlin government’s ‘green’ policy. Such housing projects have a long history in Berlin and interest remains high. The city has set high goals for increasing the numbers of these types of buildings and has focused on selling public land to building cooperatives at fixed prices. In the future, Berlin needs more socially integrated neighborhood management and more urban pioneers.

[October 29, 2010, Forum Factory in Berlin]

... International Conference: Collaborative Housing

Petra Hendrich, Initiative für gemeinschaftliches Bauen und Wohnen (IgBW), Vienna

Ms. Hendrich discussed Vienna's strong reputation for funding community-oriented housing through publically owned apartments, as well as direct and indirect subsidies, with city public housing being reserved for both lower and middle class citizens. Developers have strong political ties and the city tends to give subsidized land and housing to them instead of small housing groups. IgBW was created in 2010 to support collaborative housing through networking and encouraging the local government to support collaborative housing groups instead of developers.

Rolf Novy-Huy, Stiftung trias, Germany

Mr. Novy-Huy explained that the Stiftung trias is a foundation giving support to non-profit collaborative housing projects while protecting the original aims of the projects. The support is given both financially and through knowledge and experience. A good instrument for supporting these projects in Germany is the *Erbpacht* or long-term lease, freezing the land price for up to 99 years. This process is non-speculative and can provide steady income to foundations or cities as land owners. Collaborative housing can also be supported by finding suitable building sites and improving conditions for project planning.



Florian Schmidt, Projektbüro Kreativquartier Südliche Friedrichstadt, Berlin

Mr. Schmidt's organization is working to create a sustainable masterplan for Berlin's southern Friedrichstadt. This area is located in Berlin's center and is segregated and paradoxically developed, with poor residents living next to expensive offices and popular tourist sites. A masterplan is proposed for this area, consisting of working and living zones, including temporary work spaces, as well as collaborative and conventional housing. The quarter would be planned through a participative process, with design competitions.

Dick Urban Vestbro, Chairman, Kollektivhus NU, Stockholm

Mr. Vestbro noted his organization protects existing cohousing units as well as encourages new projects. Most of the cohousing in Sweden is originally planned by housing associations. A significant part of the projects is collective cooking and dining. Cohousing is also a good environment for children, with other kids in the buildings as well as constant adult supervision. The advantages of having neighbors are increasingly apparent for the large numbers of one and two person households in Sweden, including seniors. Sustainable lifestyles are also encouraged, with fewer resources used.



Concluding meeting

October 31, 2010 at the K9 House Project in Berlin

The final meeting including all experimentcity europe partners in the context of the EXPERIMENTDAYS 10 took place in an events space of the Berlin K9 housing project. All participants were invited to express their opinions, both regarding positive and critical feedback concerning the EXPERIMENTDAYS 10 events as well as future plans and ideas for the experimentcity europe platform.

Berlin event feedback:

The week of activities was generally praised for its diversity of projects and participants, and for the significant amount of information exchanged through presentations, tours and discussions. The co-housing examples and perspectives were considered to be stimulating and motivating.

Interest was expressed in learning about more socially sustainable and affordable projects, as well as in allowing more time for discussion.

For the future, participants expressed interest in a well-defined mission statement or 'manifesto' for the platform, and in adding representatives from other cities and countries to the network. Interest was also expressed in identifying funding for common projects, for example for organizing exhibitions and publications and in conducting relevant research.

[follow-up meeting]

Milan meeting

March 24 - 26, 2011

The network's second meeting was organized in Milan, in the Politecnico di Milano, coordinated by DIS, Dipartimento INDACO. Discussions dealt with participation tools such as design and co-design tools, and a productive environment was created in which material and knowledge collected during the Berlin meeting could be creatively developed. Workshops importantly focused on the further building of a European movement supporting co-housing cultures.

Workshops discussed and developed:

- > A common lexicon, comparison and narration tools
- > Communication strategies
- > Networking, internet, databases. A European website and online platform
- > Moderation and co-design tools
- > Implementation strategies and dealing with municipalities
- > Grants and fundraising. Grant applications and common projects

Visits to three Milan collaborative housing projects were made:

- > Casa Ecologica: the first ecological building in Milan, built through a co-op
- > Urban Village Bovisa: the first co-housing in Milan, by cohousing ventures
- > Parco Paolo Pini: an ex-psychiatric hospital transformed into a public-inclusive space

Milan experts joined European partners during the meeting's two days, contributing their knowledge and learning from the network.

Two public discussions dealt with bottom-up and top-down collaborative housing initiatives at the local and the European level, gaining attention for the topic of sustainable housing in Milan and Italy.

Discussion 1

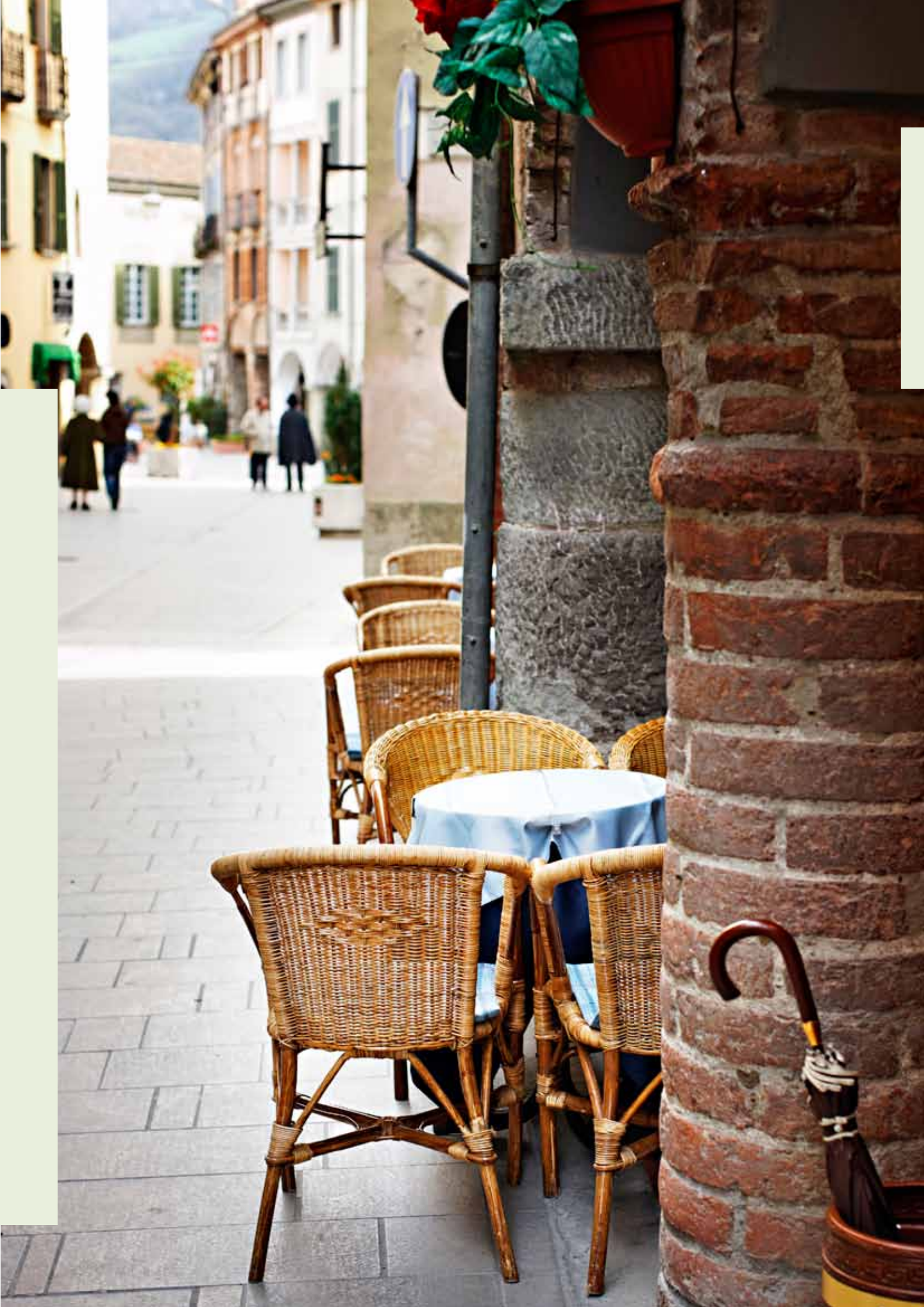
Friday, March 25: hosted by CCL (consorzio di Cooperative di abitazione). European examples served to inspire local co-housing discussions.

Discussion 2

Saturday, March 26: at the fair FALACOSAGIUSTA (DO THE RIGHT THING – Exhibition of Critical Consuming and Sustainable Lifestyle). Dialogue among European and local partners dealt with co-housing, state-of-the-art and future visions.

Milan meeting organized by:

DIS (Design and Innovation for Sustainability) team:
Liat Rogel, Anna Meroni, Ezio Manzini, Marta Corubolo,
Chiara Gambarana



glossary

:: co-housing concepts

In order to assess and compare co-housing cultures from around Europe we first need to compare terms! The most widespread definition of cohousing is “housing with common spaces and shared facilities,” but terms have varied widely with respect to time, language and regional culture.

*In Europe in the 1840s, socialist thinkers launched models called *falanstères*, *familistères* or social palaces, based on communal ownership and far-reaching collective organization of city structure. In the 19th century in the USA, hundreds of ‘communitarian’ and ‘utopian’ settlements were built that inspired later cohousing models. In the German-speaking part of Europe, so-called *Einküchenhäuser* (one-kitchen-houses) were designed at the beginning of the 20th century. Under the influence of modernism, ‘collective houses’ were developed in Sweden in the 1930s. In the 1970s *bofællesskap* (living communities) emerged in Denmark, while *centraal wonen* (central housing) established itself in the Netherlands and *Wohnprojekte* (housing projects) in Germany. In the late 1980s, a version of cohousing was imported to the USA, based on studies of Danish *bofællesskap* with their emphasis on resident participation in planning. Collaborative housing has been widely used internationally in recent decades to describe such participatory housing projects, but increasingly the term cohousing is being adopted, in countries like Australia, the USA and the UK but also in Belgium, Italy, Austria and the Czech Republic. Cohousing is seen here to describe the wider concept, while collaborative housing may be used when focusing on resident participation, and collective housing when emphasizing the collective organization of services.*

Dick Urban Vestbro, Kollektiv NU, Sweden

The following glossary is understood to be just a small beginning in this challenge of finding a common language.

Co-housing

Inclusive, intentional communities with varying degrees of resident participation in planning and managing the apartments or homes, common spaces, gardens, etc. Non-speculative housing ownership forms can be collaborative (self-organized), convivial (i.e. sharing meals), collective (consensus decision-making) or communal (sharing income).

[German: gemeinschaftliche, partizipative und nachbarschaftliche Wohnformen; Wohnprojekte; Baugemeinschaften]

Commune

A community of people living together, sharing common interests, property, possessions, resources and income, often emphasizing consensus decision-making and non-hierarchical structures.

[German: Kommune]

Community Land Trust

A nonprofit corporation which acquires and permanently manages land, for example on behalf of the residents of a place-based community, while preserving affordability and certain uses.

[German: gemeinnützige Stiftung für dauerhafte Absicherung gemeinschaftliche, bezahlbare Projekte]

Cooperative

An association or corporation which owns a group or groups of apartments and the common areas for the use of all the residents. The individual participants own a share in the cooperative and pay rent which entitles them to occupy an apartment as if they were owners and to have equal access to the common areas.

[German: Genossenschaft / kooperative Struktur]

Creative Sustainable Urban Development

Participatory and cooperative, culturally-based urban development emphasizing qualitative improvements in social, environmental and economic areas.

[German: kreative, nachhaltige Stadtentwicklung]

Eco-Villages

Intentional, often rural communities with the goal of becoming more socially, economically and ecologically sustainable.

[German: ökologische, oft ländliche Siedlungen]

Long-Term Lease

An agreement lasting as many as 99 years, for example between a non-profit foundation, a community land trust or even a city, and an organization such as a housing cooperative, through which residents have permanent use-rights which are defined in the lease agreement, providing stability and securing affordability.

[German: Erbpacht, Erbbaurecht]

Non-Profit / non-speculative

Not-for-profit organizations and housing projects do not have private owners, but have controlling members or boards, and residents or members cannot sell their cooperative shares to others or personally benefit in any taxable way. Non-profit housing is not engaged in speculation concerning property and buildings.

[German: Gemeinnützig, nicht spekulativ]

Squat / occupation

Sometimes illegally occupied buildings or pieces of land, for economic, social or political reasons.

[German: Hausbesetzung]

Recommended Publications:

Creating Cohousing: Building Sustainable Communities (2011), Kathryn McCamant, Charles Durrett. Gabriola Island, Canada, New Society Publishers.

Common Wealth. For a free, equal, mutual and sustainable society (2010), Martin Large. Stroud, Hawthorn Press.

Living together – Cohousing Ideas and Realities Around the World. Proceedings from the international collaborative housing conference in Stockholm 5-9 May 2010. (2010)

Dick Urban Vestbro. Stockholm: Division of Urban and Regional Studies, Royal Institute of Technology in collaboration with Kollektivhus NU.

Additional Websites:

www.sustainable-housing.eu

EU initiative to combine energy and climate objectives with housing policies.

The environment as a tool for social cohesion in public housing policies.

www.enhr.ibf.uu.se

The European Network for Housing Research (ENHR) studies European social housing processes and structures.

www.gen-europe.org

The Global Ecovillage Network Europe (GEN), supports intentional communities and ecovillages.

www.wohnprojekte-portal.de

The German-wide co-housing platform with more than 500 projects online. German language.

www.wohnportal-berlin.de

With more than 200 participating projects, this open platform networks co-housing actors in the Berlin region. German language.

www.cohousing.org.uk

The UK Cohousing Network is made up of people from established and forming cohousing groups in England & Wales.

experimentcity europe
collaborative housing | diversity | sustainable cities

founding partners

- > id22: Institute for Creative Sustainability (Berlin, Germany)
www.experimentcity.net
- > Politecnico di Milano (Polimi), department INDACO (Milan, Italy)
www.design-polimi.it
- > Initiative für gemeinschaftliches Bauen und Wohnen (Vienna, Austria)
www.gemeinsam-bauen-wohnen.org
- > Stiftung trias (Germany)
www.stiftung-trias.de
- > Kollektivhus NU (Sweden)
www.kollektivhus.nu
- > laBOMBAsudios (Bucharest, Romania)
www.labombastudios.ro
- > Stroud Common Wealth Co Ltd (UK)
www.strouldcommonwealth.org.uk
- > Quatorze (Paris, France)
www.quatorze14.org

new partners

- > Koti kaupungissa – Hem i stan (Home in the city) (Helsinki, Finland)
www.hemistan.fi
- > Town of Gdynia (Poland)
www.gdynia.pl
- > Buurthuis Bonnevie (Brussels, Belgium)
www.bonnevie40.be
- > Samenhuizen (Belgium)
www.samenhuizen.be
- > Johann Daniel Lawaetz-Stiftung (Hamburg, Germany)
www.lawaetz.de

international guest

- > Graduate Institute of Building and Planning,
National Taiwan University (Taipei, Taiwan)
www.bp.ntu.edu.tw

The existing published brochures concerning legal forms for housing and other topics are available to order at:

www.stiftung-trias.de > Informationen > infomaterial



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