
“Housing is a Human Right, Not a Business”

An interview with Dr. Kurt Puchinger, **Senior Housing Expert, and former Director of Urban Planning for the City of Vienna, at Vienna’s Rathaus.**

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“Housing is a Human Right, Not a Business”

An interview with Dr. Kurt Puchinger,¹ Senior Housing Expert, and former Director of Urban Planning for the City of Vienna, at Vienna’s Rathaus.

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- ¹ In 2020, Berlin’s regional parliament adopted a law to freeze rent prices in the capital for five years,³ Brussels set up an emergency plan for affordable housing after failing to reach its capacity objectives in 2020,⁴ and Paris reintroduced rent control after a significant increase in rental costs in 2019.⁵ But what about Vienna, the city long considered a European model for its housing system? The Austrian capital is often praised for playing a ‘pioneering role on an international scale’ when it comes to housing policies, and has led international events on this issue.⁶ Contrarily to many of its European neighbors, Vienna has not privatized its massive stock of municipally-owned dwellings. Now more than ever, this strategy appears as a major asset in ensuring the affordable quality of housing, rendering many envious of Vienna.
- ² This observation inevitably raises the question of what made – and arguably still makes – the success of this strategy. As part of a Master’s research project on the European models of social housing, and under the supervision of Dr. Yankel Fijalkow, I decided to explore the subject in more depth. Before reflecting upon the persistence of the ‘Viennese model’ with Kurt Puchinger, a familiar figure and key actor in Vienna’s social housing since the 1970s, it appeared necessary to first examine how and when it historically emerged. This interview, conducted at the splendid Gothic Vienna City Hall (Wiener Rathaus) on March 6, 2020, and supplemented on September 4, 2020, sheds light on the contemporary features of Vienna’s urban development, as well as its ability to persist or adapt in rapidly changing times. It is no coincidence that it took place following the screening of Fedrik Gertten’s impactful documentary, “Push”,⁷ in Vienna last February, which discusses the financial takeover of housing in big cities.

The Emergence of a “Viennese Model” for Social Housing

- 3 The emergence of social housing in Vienna is inseparable from one of the most defining times of the city, known as “Red Vienna”. This period, which corresponds roughly to the period between the two World Wars (1914-1934), played an important part in the improvement of workers’ living standards and democratization processes. It is worth emphasizing that the municipal project of Red Vienna was not a housing program, but an urban program. It was driven by the desire to create a more equal environment for modern urban living⁸. Towards the end of the first global conflict of the 20th century, housing arose as one of the main issues. In 1917, the share of household income spent on housing represented 15 to 25 % of the working-class salary⁹ and most of the housing was very small and in poor condition. Occupancy of these accommodations was extremely dense and amenities were very scarce, with only one water tap for every floor and shared toilets for large groups of tenants. With this in light, improvement of living standards went hand in hand with the protection of tenants.
- 4 May 1919 marked a turning point for Vienna, with the victory of the Social Democratic Party (SPÖ) at Vienna’s first “free”¹⁰ municipal election. Vienna thus became the laboratory of the socialists’ building capacities. Austria’s federal structure provided great autonomy to Vienna’s *Land*,¹¹ which allowed them to experiment policies with greater flexibility than at the state level. The party was driven by the ideal that housing was a public service to be provided to all without charge, as is the case with education, policing or medical care. Yet, only capital costs were taken into consideration, thus omitting operating expenses. Charles O. Hardy (1884-1948), assisted by Robert R. Kuczynski (1876-1947), wrote the first study of the Social Democratic Party’s legacy in the City of Vienna¹². It portrays the political and economic landscape of “Red Vienna” (*Das Rote Wien*, 1919-1934) and its housing program, which involved the construction of 400 community buildings known as *Gemeindebauten*, composed of housing, social services and cultural institutions. Distributed throughout the city, community buildings were the primary instrument of this large-scale project¹³.
- 5 The acute housing shortage affected both the lower and middle classes – even more after the war, when Vienna faced an increase in population. The years 1919 to 1925 saw the achievement of three significant extension steps, the first of which took the form of a decree on the requisition of housing (1919), which granted the municipality with control over 44,838 dwellings. A tenant protection reform (1922) was then adopted, setting the rent cost based on four elements: a base rent, a maintenance rent (150 times that of the rent cost in 1914), management and equipment expenditures, as well as taxes. This decreased the owner’s profit and provided funds for the building capacity program. The reform, however, was not easily accepted by the Viennese. The SPÖ had to convince landlords that housing maintenance was for the benefit of all. Moreover, the municipality was committed to the construction of 5,000 dwellings per year. The construction was funded by a revolutionary fiscal policy based on a luxury tax, a rent tax and a tax on new construction. By 1934, 60,000¹⁴ new apartments were constructed, along with numerous social, leisure and cultural facilities.
- 6 “Light, air, and sun” was the motto of the time, used to create not only accommodations but also equipment, transportation and public spaces for inhabitants. Built between 1927 and 1930 by Austrian architect Karl Ehn (1884-1959), the Karl-Marx-

Hof¹⁵ immediately became an urban landmark, and still remains a symbol of this period today. In Frankfurt at that time, German architect Ernst May (1886-1970) was launching a city-scale architectural project to respond to housing shortages¹⁶. These two European cities thus developed different architectural models – the *Hof* (courtyard) in Austria, and the *Siedlung* (social housing estate in rows) in Germany. Both, however, have played a leading, yet unique set of roles in their influence on social housing and urban policies¹⁷. Red Vienna is a milestone for the city’s social housing. Exploring the various architectural projects achieved by the city between 1919 and 1933 showed us how political and ideological intentions shaped the characteristics of the Hof.¹⁸ The Julius Popp-Hof¹⁹ (1925-1926) and the geometric Karl-Seitz-Hof²⁰ (1926-1931) are good illustrations, offering a new architectural structure to provide housing for the most disadvantaged social classes.

Current Situation and Challenges Ahead

- 7 Today, Vienna’s social housing is funded by income taxes, corporate taxes and housing-specific contributions made by all employed residents. Vienna’s annual housing budget amounts to USD 700 million, with 530 million coming from the federal government²¹. Housing remains the main political focus for guaranteeing housing democracy in Vienna. No other city in Europe enjoys such continuity in terms of social housing policies and their fight for welfare for all. Following the *momentum* of the inter-war period, Vienna had the courage to continue developing, maintaining and promoting social housing up until now. The current situation sees the persistence of a great supply of dwellings and a self-adjusting housing market. Housing subsidies remain one of the most important instruments to ensure a sufficient supply of affordable housing in Vienna, making it one of the most popular cities in the world to live²².
- 8 Yet, Vienna’s housing system is also facing significant challenges. Over the past years, a high influx of refugees and the increase of precarious work has disturbed the balance between supply and demand. As in other European metropolises, the Austrian capital witnessed a boom in real-estate investment, the proportion of privately financed apartments having risen sharply since 2010. The relationship between budget growth and new subsidized housing has deteriorated significantly with the rise in land prices. Some solutions have already been established, such as the creation of new land zoning categories to address part of this phenomenon²³. Vienna is also facing large-scale migration, which has greatly increased in the last few years²⁴. The city is offering solutions for the integration of migrants and refugees within the social fabric. Since 2001, a total of 2,000 emergency housing units can be assigned to migrants without EU citizenship per year,²⁵ 600 of which are social housing.

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Léa Pelleteret: You became Vienna’s Executive Director of Urban Planning in 2006. At the time, what was the situation of housing in Vienna? What were the main challenges?

Kurt Puchinger: When I took over this position, the situation was that of near stagnation in terms of population development. We restructured housing as well as the role of the city and provinces under the European Union’s values and principles. We had to move a little bit away from the previous traditional mindset to a more

functional approach to the city. My main issue was about functional relations in a city and in a region. Before my time, urban development plans focused on one center for development, but I said, “this is not helpful anymore.” We wanted to allocate separate functions to several areas (historic center, Vienna International Center, etc.). We tried to restructure the way we thought best. Eventually, the European Union started this ‘macro-regional strategy’ for the Danube region (EUSDR). I pushed the City Executive Committee to act: “We have to take part; this project cannot be carried out without Vienna.” Then, we managed to participate in the launching of the project at a conference in Ulm, Bavaria. From then on, I had two parallel jobs: I was both planning director and co-organizer of the Danube strategy.

LP: What is your definition of social housing?

KP: In Vienna, housing goes beyond providing affordable dwellings. Housing is also about developing new neighborhoods. This means that we have to include open spaces, kindergarten centers, schools and so on. The possibility of land development starts with this social infrastructure. If it is not included in the city’s budget, one cannot start housing processes. [In Vienna] you do not have this situation where you have flats in the middle of nowhere. We are attentive to this ‘*Siedlung development*’ (neighborhood development).

LP: What is the particularity of the Viennese social housing system?

KP: The city has introduced a system called “Vienna ticket for housing” (*Wiener Wohn-Ticket*). It works like an identity card, but for subsidized flats. The main eligibility criteria is income. If you look at the income limit set, it is clear that a large part of the middle class is included. Housing policies are always oriented towards the final user, this is the point. Besides, housing is a human right and not a business. This is a basic principle. This means that, in general, leases do not specify a duration in [Vienna’s housing] system, which is very important for people. It is a solid basis for personal security. You don’t have to worry about, “Oh God, in two months they are going to kick me out!”, or “No! They raised my rent by 20 %!”. I am often asked: But what happens if peoples’ incomes double thanks to their successful career? We congratulate them! They seized their chance. I don’t dig into the income development of people. What matters is the moment when they sign their contract, and from then they have an unlimited lease.

LP: Built-up spaces represent 35.9 % of land use in Vienna, with 18 % for housing. To face population increase, 14,000 subsidized dwellings will be created by the end of 2020. How does your urban planning development strategy address this issue?

KP: In the 1980s, we created a special fund for the city of Vienna, owned and controlled by the city, with two objectives. On the one hand, it manages housing land and on the other hand, it organizes subsidies for housing renewal and maintenance. Sixty-two percent of Vienna’s inhabitants live in subsidized dwellings. In total, 220,000 flats are owned by the municipality and around 200,000 subsidized flats are located all over Vienna. We are, of course, also building and developing new areas.

This fund is responsible for land management. I always say that urban development is the easiest thing to do if you have two things: land and money. Money is not the problem, land is. The fund is still buying lands, it is a permanent activity. If you look at the framed conditions, it’s like machinery, a routine. People accept the way it works. We have 500 million euros for subsidies per year, 55 % for new developments, less than 40 % for urban renewal, and the rest is for individual subsidies. Urban

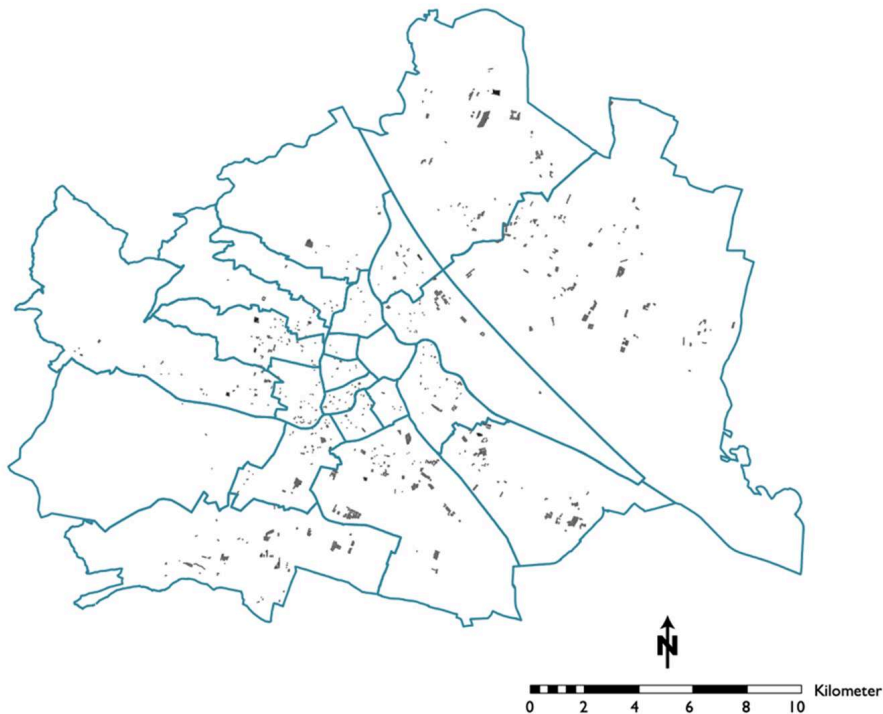
renewal subsidies are open to all housing owners. No difference is made between social or private landlords, because it is important that the capital be in a good state and also to invest in new infrastructure.

LP: Is the spatial distribution of social housing homogenous in Vienna? Is it impacted by the rise in land prices?

KP: We simply cannot build new houses in built-up areas, but at the same time we have to build new buildings. The current situation is not really comparable to Red Vienna. At that time, social housing was built all over the city, but most of the housing was very small and in poor condition. However, our intention today is to develop available land near the center of Vienna. The good cooperation between the municipality and the Austrian railway company (ÖBB) offers a great opportunity, because this public company controls/possesses a lot of brownfield sites (former train stations or train parking lots). Contrarily to the situation in Germany, ÖBB still belongs to the Federal State, which makes land in good locations available to the municipality. During the monarchy [1867-1918, *editor's note*], Vienna was an important transport hub with many train lines. Today, ÖBB does not need that much space and the sites are very close to the city center ☞ only three or four metro stations away, the equivalent of six minutes.

The city of Vienna and ÖBB are developing projects together on these brownfield sites. The legal framework applicable specifies the distribution of costs and land uses (social housing, open spaces, green areas, services, private investments). It takes between ten and fifteen years to implement such an important and large-scale project. Today, the new neighborhood *Favoriten* (10th district) around the main train station *Hauptbahnhof* is almost finished. The reason why we are not building in the city center anymore is not land prices, but building capacity.

Spatial Distribution of Vienna's social housing schemes 1981-2014



Source : S. Juraszovich, "Spatial distribution Vienna 1981-2014", in *Location of Social Housing: Analysing spatial patterns of social housing schemes in Vienna and Copenhagen*, University of Vienna, Faculty of Geo-sciences, Geography and Astronomy, 2015, p. 40.

LP: Will Vienna have to face a privatization of its housing stock, despite its large number of dwellings?

KP: The short answer is no, not at all. As I said before, 220,000 flats called "Gemeindewohnungen" are owned by the municipality (*Stadt Wien-Wiener Wohnen*²⁶) and around 200,000 cooperative flats (*Genossenschaftswohnungen*) are owned and managed by the cooperative housing association (*Wohnbaugenossenschaft*). These cooperative flats are built thanks to subsidies from the Federal Province of Vienna but are owned neither by the City of Vienna nor by a private actor. The law forbids the privatization of the cooperative association, under a regulation which forbids to sell flats at market price. However, it is possible that renters, after 10 years of rental and under certain conditions, acquire ownership of the apartment. On an individual basis, the Federal law authorizes this kind of 'privatization'. Of course, we are not so much interested in it, as we would rather preserve the current system in order to guarantee affordable housing ²⁵ which is the aim of the cooperative housing association. As a matter of fact, Vienna is not facing a privatization of its housing stock.

LP: Does Vienna have legislative or regulatory tools to offset the effects of privatization and rising land prices, if need be?

KP: Specific tools do not exist at the moment. The reason is that land prices are not an issue in Vienna, especially for social housing. Nevertheless, a new zoning category for "subsidized housing" has been in force since March, 2019. It has also been passed into building law at the provincial level. According to it, wherever spaces are converted into residential areas, two thirds of the total housing must now be allocated for social housing. The land has to be sold under the regulation respecting

the system of subsidies. For example, at the moment, the price limit reaches 188 euros per square meter. The main purpose is to generate available land for social housing with a price which respects the current subsidies regulation.

LP: During the time of "Red Vienna", the Social Democratic Party was driven by the ideal that housing is a public service to be provided to all without charge. Would it be possible to say the same today?

KP: In fact, this was really just an ideal. During "Red Vienna", rent was not free of charge. People still had to pay, but at a very low rate. It represented around 10 to 12 % of the share of income spent on housing, which is lower than the current average. Today, we try to fight against the increase in the share of household income spent on housing, but the inflation rate – which is calculated based on multiple factors – is beyond our reach. At least, inflation is not significant regarding building construction and material costs. I always say that there are only two ways to fight high shares of income spent on housing: one is to increase families' income levels, and the other one is to reduce housing expenses. The Austrian Trade Union Federation (ÖGB) has to think about it – this is a common battle. At the moment, shares of income spent on social housing represent 7 to 10 % of the total income.

"In Germany and France, social housing is often related to the idea of "housing for the poor". In Vienna, the middle class also benefits from subsidies.

It creates a social mix and balance in our new developed areas."

LP: The inhabitants of Vienna benefit from generous subsidies and are very well protected. However, State intervention to ensure affordable housing has substantially declined in the last decade, whereas demand steadily grows in many European cities. How can you explain this situation?

KP: The problem is not a financial one, it is a *philosophical one*. If you see housing as a human right, you act in quite a different way compared to the philosophy of "let's make as much money as possible"! We never privatized anything. In Germany and France, social housing is often related to the idea of "housing for the poor". In Vienna, the middle class also benefits from subsidies. It creates a social mix and balance in our newly developed areas. The major problem is the increase in the price of land. We try to curb it but we cannot stop it. It is impossible for Vienna to stop this huge trend.

LP: Vienna has been witnessing a large immigration for several years, many of which are refugees. Which solutions does the city of Vienna offer for refugees seeking social housing?

KP: First of all, the main body responsible for refugees is positioned at the federal level, even if it is a mutual concern. Funds are provided by both the federal government (50 %) and the City of Vienna (50 %). Refugees' social integration is really a different issue from that of social housing. In fact, these topics are handled according to two different procedures. You have to keep in mind that only people living in Vienna for at least 2 years can apply for social housing. This is how it works for both refugees or non-refugees. Actually, the way it works is not an issue, even when Vienna had to deal with a large migration.²⁷ Many people were staying temporarily in Vienna – for 2 or 3 weeks before moving to another country. So, social housing doesn't necessarily fit for these kinds of needs.²⁸

LP: How would you describe the role of the EU in social housing?

KP: In EU agreements, there is no possibility for the European Commission to act directly. The housing crisis is not an issue which has to be solved locally. It is a

European challenge: it popped up at the European level and measures recently undertaken by the European Central Bank apply a reduced rate to *Länder*, provinces and territorial communities to invest in social housing.

But this is not only a European issue, it is an international one of course. Within the European Committee of the Regions (CoR), one working group focuses on housing, for which Vienna held the Presidency several times. There is a dynamic going on. The confrontation between social landlords and private groups is a little bit harder at the European level than locally. In the last century, housing has become an important issue at the European level.

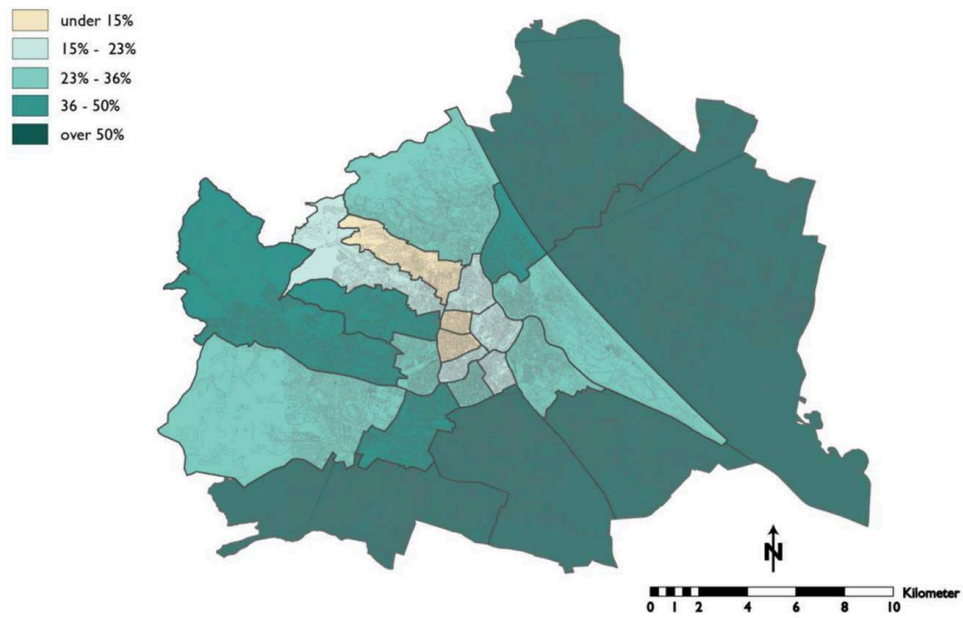
LP: How do you picture the social housing of tomorrow?

KP: Like many European cities, Vienna has to face the significant increase in the share of household income spent on housing. The European Union estimated it at 30 %, which is crazy. In Vienna, thanks to the subsidies system, it is lower than 20 %. As far as Vienna is concerned, I think that the situation should remain relatively stable in the future. In 20 years, we will have to find a solution at the regional level: Vienna currently has 1.9 million inhabitants and 2.6 million inhabitants in the agglomeration. The cooperation between Vienna and Lower Austria is not sufficient, which is a problem. With a functional analysis of the city, we could set up technical and pragmatic processes, but nothing is implemented because of the political situation between Lower Austria and Vienna.

Thinking ahead for the next 30 years, this cooperation needs to be intensified and brought together at a technical level. The cost of housing, and the fact that more people work under “atypical” contracts or working arrangements, require it. We will have more and more situations where you have to spend more than 40 % of your income on housing, which is inhumane. This perspective does not make me feel optimistic. This is a case where people will have to go out on the street and protest! I am convinced of that.

APPENDIX

Share of social housin in the districts in relation to total housing stock of the districts



Source: S. Jurasszovich, "Spatial distribution Vienna 1981-2014", in *Location of Social Housing: Analysing spatial patterns of social housing schemes in Vienna and Copenhagen*, University of Vienna, Faculty of Geo-sciences, Geography and Astronomy, 2015, p. 38.

Karl-Marx Hof, aerial view, 1930.



Bildarchiv Austria, Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek (ÖNB).

NOTES

1. Kurt Puchinger (1946) studied architecture and regional development planning at the Technische Universität (TU) of Vienna from 1965 to 1977. Politically active since his early studies, he became the Federal President of the Association of Socialist Students (*Verbandes Sozialistischer Studentinnen und Studenten*) in 1971. From 1973 to 1985, he worked at the TU as an Assistant Professor in regional planning. Puchinger received a civil engineer degree for urban planning from the Austrian Federal Chamber of Architects and Consulting Engineers in 1979. He then launched his own agency in urban and regional development. In 2006, he became the Director of Urban Planning for the City of Vienna, a position he held for six years before contributing to the EU macro-regional “Strategy for the Danube Region” (EUSDR). He is now the Senior Housing Expert of the Real Estate Advisory Committee of ‘Wiener Wohnen’ and a Political Adviser for Housing and Urban Planning in the Administrative group Housing, Housing Construction, Urban Renewal and Women’s Issues for the City of Vienna.
3. J.-M. Hauteville, « Berlin gèle les loyers pour stopper leur explosion », *Le Monde*, Économie, 7 mars 2020, [on line] https://www.lemonde.fr/economie/article/2020/03/07/berlin-gele-les-loyers-pour-stopper-leur-explosion_6032172_3234.html, visited on October 24, 2020.
4. V. Lamquin, « Bruxelles : un plan d’urgence pour le logement abordable », *Le soir*, 9 mars 2020, [on line] www.lesoir.be/285485/article/2020-03-09/bruxelles-un-plan-durgence-pour-le-logement-abordable, visited on October 24, 2020.
5. Since July 2019, rent control came back into force in Paris. “L’encadrement des loyers, en vigueur à Paris”, [on line] <https://www.paris.fr> visited on October 24, 2020.
6. For example, Vienna hosted the international conference “Housing for all – An Affordable Housing in Growing Cities in Europe” on December 4th and 5th of 2018, which attracted the participation of cities from 36 different countries.
7. *Push* (2019) was screened on February 17, 2020, at Topkino in Vienna by the United Nations Information Service (UNIS). In this documentary, Danish director Fedrik Gertten addresses the global housing crisis through the eyes of Leilani Farha, UN Special Rapporteur on adequate housing. The film follows Farha in her travels throughout the world to understand how big investor predation impacts cities and jeopardizes the effective respect of the human right to adequate housing. Backed by the commentaries of the sociologist Dr. Saskia Sassen and Dr. Joseph Stiglitz, Nobel Prize laureate in Economics, Leilani Farha’s journey uncovers how the financial industry is taking control of cities with the support of governments. This documentary raises awareness on this growing trend, responsible for the expulsion of many modest city dwellers from large urban centers.
8. E. Blau, *Rotes Wien: Architektur 1919-1934: Stadt-Raum-Politik*, Ambra, Vienna, 2014. Originally published in the English language as *The Architecture of Red Vienna 1919-1934* (1999), Cambridge, MA, The Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press.
9. M. Tafuri, *Vienne la rouge, la politique immobilière de la Vienne socialiste, 1919-1933*, Pierre Mardaga, Bruxelles, 1995. Previously published in 1980 under the title *Vienna Rossa: La politica residenziale nella vienna socialista, 1919-1933*, Electa, Milan.
10. The 1919 elections were general, direct and secret. It was the first time that women were allowed to vote.
11. Vienna became a Federal State with the “Statue of Separation” (*Trennungsgesetz*) on January 1st, 1922, which separated it from Lower Austria. The borders between the two federal states, dating back to the last Viennese incorporations until 1910, were changed in 1938 by the National Socialist regional reform. With 97 Lower Austrian local parishes, Vienna became Great Vienna (*Groß-Wien*). In 1946, Vienna, Lower Austria and the federal government decided to reintegrate 80

of these communities into Lower Austria. Due to the objection of the Soviet occupying powers, these constitutional acts could only enter into force as of 1954. Seventeen towns incorporated in 1938 (including Stammersdorf, Süßenbrunn, Eßling, Albern, Unterlaa, Oberlaa, Rothneusiedl, the places of today's 23rd district, the Lainzer Tiergarten and Hadersdorf-Weidlingau) remained in Vienna. "Vienna a federal province in Austria", available at: <www.wien.gv.at>

12. Charles O. Hardy, Robert R. Kuczynski, *The Housing Program of the City of Vienna*, The Brookings Institution, Institute of Economics, Washington, D.C., 1934.

13. E. Blau, *op. cit.*

14. Stadt Wien – Wiener Wohnen (2016), *Gemeinde baut. Wiener Wohnbau 1920-2020*, Verlag Holzhausen GmbH, Vienna.

15. Karl-Marx-Hof is a symbol of Viennese Socialism of the inter-war period and probably the most famous of the Viennese municipal buildings. Today, there are still 1,272 apartments and many common spaces (laundromats, kindergartens, a library, etc.).

16. A. Porotto, « Ernst May à Francfort, "Cinq ans de construction de logements à Francfort-sur-le-Main" », trad., *Les Cahiers de la recherche architecturale urbaine et paysagère*, 2020, [on line] <https://journals.openedition.org/craup/3906>

17. Alessandro Porotto, *L'intelligence des formes*, 2019.

18. M. Tafuri, *op.cit.*

19. The Julius Popp-Hof was designed by Heinrich Schmid (1885-1949) and Hermann Aichinger (1885-1962) in the 5th district of Vienna.

20. The Karl-Seitz-Hof was designed by Hubert Gessner (1871-1943) in the 21st district of Vienna under the original name *Gartenstadt Jedlesee*.

21. A. Forrest, « Vienna's Affordable Housing Paradise », *Huffington Post*, 25 Feb. 2019, [on line] https://www.huffpost.com/entry/vienna-affordable-housing-paradise_n_5b4e0b12e4b0b15aba88c7b0?; visited on October 24, 2020.

22. Vienna was named the most livable city for the tenth time by Mercer's international comparative study, [online] <https://mobilityexchange.mercer.com>, visited on October 24, 2020.

23. A provision was introduced in late 2018 in the Vienna Building Code (Bauordnung für Wien) in order to provide for simpler, faster and less expensive procedures, as well as to allow land for subsidized apartments to be used faster. Eventually, a new zoning category called "subsidized housing" was put in place in March, 2019. According to this, wherever spaces are converted into residential areas, two thirds must now be allocated for social housing.

"Neue Flächenwidmung für geförderten Wohnbau" at <<http://www.wien.gv.at>, visited on October 24, 2020.

24. About 427,103 foreigners were living in Vienna in 2002 (27,2 %), compared to over 773,000 (40,7 %) in 2019. In early 2019, 101,813 residents were of Serbian origin, 76,355 of Turkish origin, 59,695 of German origin, and 54,619 of Polish origin. "Migrantinnen und Migranten in Wien 2019 Daten und Fakten », 2019, Stadt Wien-Integration und Diversität, [on line] <https://www.wien.gv.at/english/social/integration/facts-figures/population-migration.html>, visited on 24 October, 2020.

25. "Ein Jahr warten auf Gemeindewohnung", *Der Standard* [online], Vienna; 23 March 2001, [on line] <https://www.derstandard.at/story/517747/ein-jahr-warten-auf-gemeindewohnung>, visited on October 24, 2020.

26. *Wiener Wohnen*, founded in January 2000, is Europe's largest social property management company. It manages over 220,000 apartments for around 500,000 Viennese, 5,129 restaurants, over 47,000 garage and parking spaces and 610 hectares of green space and playgrounds. Its task is preserving municipal buildings for future generations and expanding the supply through attic developments, for example. *Wiener Wohnen* also improves the standard of living for people and families with lower incomes. The average living area in square meters per capita expanded from 22 m² to 38 m² between 1961 and 2001. Sixty-seven percent of municipal dwellings were

considered category A in 2017 (min. 30 m² floor space, kitchen(ette), toilet, modern bathroom; central or single-story heating system or equivalent fixed heating installation). “Municipal Housing in Vienna. History, facts and figures”, a report from the City of Vienna, Wiener Wohnen, 2018

27. After Austria's accession to the EU in 1995, Vienna had to deal with a large migration. Especially in 2004 and 2007 because of EU expansion, and in 2015 with a new wave of migrants from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan.

28. The city is offering solutions for the integration of migrants and refugees within the social fabric. Since 2001, a total of 2,000 emergency housing units can be assigned to migrants without EU citizenship per year, 600 of which are social housing.

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Léa Pelleteret is a Master's student at the École nationale supérieure d'architecture Paris Val de Seine. Her Master's thesis, prepared under the supervision of Dr. Yankel Fijalkow, questions the future of the small and medium-sized cities within urban development policies. She has recently co-authored an op-ed piece, with Dr. Philippe Simon in the financial daily *Les Échos* on the impact of the Covid-19 crisis on the traditional divide between the city and the countryside. L. Pelleteret, P. Simon, « Covid-19 : la fin du clivage ville-campagne? », *Les Échos*, 4 juin 2020, [on line] <https://www.lesechos.fr/idees-debats/cercle/opinion-covid-19-la-fin-du-clivage-ville-campagne-1208294>, visited on October 24, 2020.

She is currently working with the Austrian branch of Architecture Without Borders and enrolled as a United Nations Volunteer to undertake projects on internal displacement issues.