

Supertitle

Alternative housing delivery: Housing associations and municipal enterprises

In many European countries, housing is a core part of the municipal role. Most European cities meet their statutory obligations to provide social housing through independent, not for profit organisations (housing associations or municipal housing companies/enterprises).. These organisations do not necessarily get direct capital funding grants, although they benefit from housing support, and rental income covers building maintenance.

Germany

Housing for Low-Income Families is mainly a task taken on by municipalities and municipal enterprises. Municipal enterprises provide 2.4 million social housing units (around 10%) alongside these approaches to provide housing for Low-Income Groups:

- Social Assistance: includes a housing allowance for around 9% of the population
- Housing Benefit: subsidisation of rents paid to the tenants: in 2010 for around 850,000 households, i.e. around 1% of the population

The role of municipal enterprises covers

- Management and maintenance of the municipal housing stock
- Modernisation of the housing stock, mainly with regard to energy efficiency
- Social and community programmes: social work, implementation of public programmes like "Inclusive City" (Social City)
- Development of new housing projects (construction usually done by private contractors)
- Management of private condominiums
- Sale and privatisation of housing units

<http://www.lse.ac.uk/geographyAndEnvironment/research/london/pdf/Social-Housing-Germany.pptx>

Sweden

Housing policy is implemented through the authority and activities of the Municipal Housing Companies. These not-for-profit municipally-owned associations are responsible for finding houses of a reasonable standard for all residents and for their welfare. Generally, a single association operates in each town. The association's income comes solely from the rents it collects from tenants, which cover building maintenance costs.

<http://sites.idc.ac.il/en/files/GG52013.pdf>

England

Councils and not-for-profit organisations (such as housing associations) are the ones to provide social housing. Social housing is let at low rents on a secure basis to those who are most in need or struggling with their housing costs.

http://england.shelter.org.uk/campaigns/why_we_campaign/Improving_social_housing

Northern Ireland

Housing associations are the only providers of new social and shared ownership homes in Northern Ireland. They act independently and have control over financial decision-making.

<http://www.nifha.org/nifhaneews/housing-association-sector-grows-and-delivers-for-northern-ireland/>

Netherlands

Housing associations are private organisations with a public task. They rent below market and are regulated by government. Housing associations own 31% of housing stock, all of which is social rental. Income from letting and selling covers investment in new affordable homes.

Originally municipal housing companies, these are now all financially independent housing associations (debts were written off against future subsidies). Housing associations also invest in neighbourhood regenerations, public purpose buildings and social programmes.

http://www.iut.nu/FindOutMore/Europe/NL/DutchSocialHousingIn_Nutshell2013.pdf

http://www.claudioacioly.com/downloads/keynotes/Acioly%202007_Housing%20in%20Holland%20ALL.pdf