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Assembling Ideal Actualization in Viennese Social Housing

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ASSEMBLING IDEAL ACTUALIZATION IN VIENNESE SOCIAL HOUSING

by

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Abstract

The central aims of this paper are to create a potential concept for what an ideal social housing program could look like and then to determine the extent to which the social housing program in Vienna, Austria has brought this ideal to reality. The social housing program in Vienna was chosen due to its popularity as a program and its generally positive reputation. The paper proceeds by first offering potential definitions for social housing, its ideals, and potential indicators for ideal fulfillment. Then, I take influence from the frameworks of assemblage theory and path-dependency theory to analyze the material, temporal, and fluctuating impacts of social housing policy in Vienna, making reference to how these impacts do or do not fulfill the ideals of social housing.

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Introduction

Vienna, Austria's social housing administration is applauded for what many consider to be profound success in the socialization of the municipal housing stock. Some argue that the Viennese social housing model could help solve the affordability crisis, and others go as far as to proclaim Vienna "The Best City in the World for Social Housing" (Crites, 2017; Schweitzer, 2020). With such critical acclaim, a few questions must naturally arise about the program. What makes it so good? Is the housing program genuinely bringing into reality the ideal social housing program? What is an ideal social housing program anyway? These are the types of questions for which this paper sets out to investigate. In researching the Viennese social housing program, it is important to approach the policy analysis in a way that emphasizes the interactions between policy actors and the people/factors affected by a given policy. Thus, this introduction will provide an explanation of the investigative framework utilized in the following chapters, which draws upon elements of ideal theory, assemblage theory, and path-dependency theory.

Ideal theory is a framework used in political philosophy and public policy studies which attempts to detail what an optimal policy outcome would look like. The theory gained particular prominence when John Rawls's defined it for use in the majority of his works. Rawls wrote in *A Theory of Justice* that "the nature and aims of a perfectly just society is the fundamental part of the theory of justice" (Rawls, 1971, p. 8). Thus, according to Rawls, ideal theory allows us to better understand the system in which we attempt to study and solve problems.

Ideal theory is used in throughout the majority of this paper. Although the first chapter does not speak directly of ideals, it does attempt to create a definition for social housing that will allow ideals to be identified in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 outlines indicators for the fulfillment of each identified ideal, and Chapter 4 analyzes Vienna, Austria's fulfillment of these indicators.

While ideal theory can be understood as a central influence of this paper, it has not been utilized in such a way as to suggest that it bears some normative superiority to other theories. In fact, as should be clearly evident by the end of this introduction, ideal theory plays a subordinate role to assemblage theory and path-dependency theory in this paper's overall purpose. In fact, assemblage theory clearly rejects ideal theory's insistence on inquiry into the nature of things (e.g. a social housing policy) and prompts us instead to investigate how things come together and the interactions produced in this transient, ever-occurring process. In the view of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, the progenitors of assemblage theory, "The form of content is reducible not to a thing but to a complex state of things as a formation of power" (1987, p. 66).

To understand the interaction between the two seemingly contradictory theories of ideal theory and assemblage theory, we must first explain what the latter is and how it will be utilized in the methods of this paper. Assemblage theory can best be understood by first examining a similar yet distinct concept: Foucault's *apparatus* (*dispotif* in French). Explaining the methodological function of his neologistic term, Foucault (1980) says that it refers to:

a thoroughly heterogeneous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions,

architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific

statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions… which has as its

major function at a given historical moment that of responding to an urgent need.

The apparatus thus has a dominant strategic function. (pp. 194-195)

In this part of an apparatus's definition, there is great overlap with the fundamental

concept behind assemblage theory: Deleuze and Guattari's (1994) *assemblage*

(*agencement* in French). An assemblage is likewise a 'heterogeneous ensemble' of

elements that were strategically brought together for the realization of a desired impact.

Assemblages must also be understood by their relations to exteriority, their non-static

assembly, the often-fluctuating relations between policy components, and the flow of

power surrounding each component (DeLanda, 2006; Li, 2005; Savage, 2019; Ureta,

2015). The study of assemblages has an undeniable similarity to the study of complexity

theory, which likewise emphasizes a system's emergent properties and asserts the

relationship between a system's parts to be more important than the parts themselves

(Park, 2017).

This paper is heavily influenced by the assemblage approach to policy analysis

which Savage (2019) describes as having "exploded" in popularity for scholars across "a

wide variety of fields" (p. 319). Indeed, public policy scholars are starting to utilize

Deleuze and Guattari's assemblages to study policy from a beneficially unique

perspective that emphasizes the qualities listed above. These studies cover a number of

topics, including education policy (Hartong, 2017), forest management (Li, 2007),

sustainability reporting (Tan, 2021), and social housing in Australia (Baker & McGuirk, 2017).

One of my principal aims here is to offer a continuation to this field of research by applying key aspects of assemblage theory to the study of social housing in Vienna. This project should highlight the heterogeneous components that interact within Viennese social housing, creating a program which often receives praise in the media. The consideration of factors such as municipal context, material conditions, and the flow of power will allow the housing program to be viewed in a non-reductive manner. The results of Chapter 4's study into Vienna's social housing assemblage will allow for a more realistic understanding of how the housing program is carried out, how it is influenced (reterritorialized, in the vocabulary of Deleuze and Guattari), and how it impacts people. Then, the results of this analysis will be used to inform our understanding of the general level of ideal fulfillment in Vienna's social housing program (using the ideals and indicators constructed in 1-3).

While this combination of ideal theory and assemblage theory is certainly unconventional, it is not arbitrary. Assemblage theory provides an empirical way to understand multiplicities which constantly deterritorialize and reterriorialize, yet it lacks an abstract, normative component. This absence of normativism usually can be viewed as beneficial for an empirical process, and one can certainly draw normative conclusions by observing an assemblage. However, such a complex and materially-centered worldview has the potential to obscure whether or not a policy is meeting its full potential. Alongside the analysis of failures and successes in material interactions, there is a

necessary amount of creativity that must also drive the policy creation process. Thus, this paper constructs ideal not to posit their universal merit nor to advocate their existence in the minds of others, but rather to give a frame of reference for what I want to see when analyzing a policy assemblage. This will allow me to investigate to some extent what fundamental and emergent properties allow or disallow my concept of an ideal social housing program to be actualized in the Viennese context.

Since most sources utilized in this paper will be second-hand and retrieved from books or scholarly papers, an ideal assemblage approach is not possible. To best capture the nature of interactions between heterogenous policy actors, one should carry out a more traditional ethnogragraphic study, utilizing first-hand sources like government publications or interviews with particular emphasis being placed on the source's vocabulary and tone towards the policymaking process and the effects a policy has had on them. When possible, this paper does make use of sources that can be analyzed in such a way, but in using other sources that are more narrative or generalized in nature, this paper emphasizes recounted interactions between specific policy actors and utilizes assumptions of path dependency theory to discern how these interactions affected future developments. To clarify, path dependency theory is a framework which "considers institutions as structural variables from which stem arrangements of ideas, interests, and powers" (Trouvé et al., 2010, p. 4). Thus, we can effectively see the broad strokes of historical interactions with institutions and key actors that produces a certain policy permutation.

In this process of ideal creation, I have taken inspiration from Deleuze and Guattari's book *What is Philosophy* (*Qu'est-ce que la philosophie ?* in French). It remarks that science and philosophy are processes of creativity, not of discovery (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994). In this same spirit, the ideal and theoretical chapters of this paper (Chapters 1-3) do not aim to identify definitive characteristics about social housing as a stable concept through time and space. Instead, they explore how social housing policy might be conceived of in materially-oriented terms. Therefore, when philosophizing about vague political terms of art such as social housing, it is imperative that we refrain from asking questions like *what is social housing?* and *what are social housing's ideals?* Instead, it is infinitely more appropriate to ask questions like *what does social housing function with?* and *what ideals might be fulfilled by the functions of social housing?* Removing the assumption that there is one stable concept of social housing thereby liberates us from the difficult task of conceptualizing public policy as static, interiorities. A creative approach to public policy allows me to create a concept of social housing that is evaluatively compatible with the elements of assemblage theory used in Chapter 4 because it is understood to be always in flux and emergent from observable interactions. The definition created in Chapters 1 and 2 must thus be understood as a localized exploration of how social housing might functionally exist under perfect conditions.

While my creativity-based approach to thought is not explicitly Deleuzian or Guattarian in nature, I would be remiss to refrain from noting Deleuze and Guattari's influence on my thought as a student of social science. I regard Deleuze's thought on the ontology of science and philosophy as an illuminating look into a potential vantage point

from which we may approach topics such as public policy. To briefly summarize *What is Philosophy?*, it is a work that concerns itself with the relationship between science, art, and philosophy, all of which the authors see as acts of creation that differ only in what they create and where the result of this creativity is populated. Philosophy is the creation of concepts which populate a plane of immanence, whereas science is the creation of functions which populate a plane of reference. Patton (2006) simplifies Deleuze and Guattari's distinction between philosophy and science quite well, stating:

> science aims at the representation of states of affairs by means of mathematical or propositional functions… Philosophy is different in that it does not seek to represent independently existing objects or states of affairs or to express particular affects and percepts. It produces concepts, where these are a certain kind of representation distinct from those produced by the arts or the sciences. Philosophical concepts are not referential but expressive.

Thus, the influence of science and philosophy are clear on the project set forth by this paper. I seek to employ both philosophical creativity in the process of concept creation (a definition of ideal social housing) as well as scientific creativity with the creation of standardized functions of a social housing program, drawing on functions observed in existing programs via empirical analysis. Creation can also be seen in the interaction of liberal ideal theory and post-structuralist assemblage theory. Thus, my understanding of Deleuze has influenced the creation of this process, although it is important to remember that this analysis is influenced by Deleuzian thought but not explicitly seeking to apply it with rigor.

A materially-focused analysis of public policy is far from new, however. Frichot, Gabrielsson, & Metzger's (2016), *Deleuze and the City* outlines an approach not unlike my own. The authors state in the introduction that they "aim to dispel the old question of what a city *is*, asking instead what it can *do*" (p.1). Likewise, I aim to ask questions that deal more with functionality than identity. This framework is also similar to the assemblage approach, as Savage (2018) explains that policy assemblage

> directs our attention away from theoretical abstractions and ideal types, which are rife in political science and public policy studies, towards more materialist, relational, and bottom-up orientations that seek to understand the tangible stuff of policies. This 'stuff' is wide-ranging, encompassing the meanings individuals make about policy, the networks through which policy influence flows, the technical processes through which policies are put together, plus many other policy aspects. It is only through better understanding this complex matter of policy that we can understand how and why policy matters, and how it might be made better into the future. (p. 310)

This paper takes a tiered approach to the creative process, first asking what social housing might do (Chapter 1). In order to answer this question, I review contemporary research on the topic as well as historical development of what might be considered social housing. This review will prioritize sources that seem to have exerted the most influence over the opinions of both powerful institutions and the masses. Obviously, I do not have the resources or the specialization to offer an extremely detailed history of social housing as an assemblage, but I will still give effort to produce a reasonable

understanding of what strategic functions social housing is generally associated with. Once this question is answered, I will then consider what this social housing concept might hold as its ideals (Chapter 2). By *ideals*, I refer to those conceptual, often normatively-driven goals that are brought into the general consciousness through interactions between governmental actors, public opinion, scholarly opinion, economic realities, and much more. Ideals may be understood as theoretical policy components that represent dominant normative goals in a particular policy. After these ideals have been identified, I thirdly ask how we may determine if they have been actualized (Chapter 3). In answering this question, I propose certain factors that we might consider when asking ourselves what ideals are fully actualized. I call these factors *indicators* because they are tangible phenomena that possess the ability to be observed and, upon being observed, may indicate that an ideal is actualized to some extent. A scale from 1-3 is used to represent the degree to which each indicator suggests the actualization of an ideal. To show the holistic benefit of this method of analysis, I finish this paper by analyzing social housing in Vienna, Austria as an assemblage, influenced by path-dependency. The analysis is organized in line with the *ideal-indicator* method (Chapter 4).

Chapter 1: What Might Social Housing Do?

The term "social housing" is considered by many to refer to a fairly nebulous concept. Upon hearing the term, some may imagine a program which simply aims to implement some state aid into an otherwise private housing market. Others may picture a complex system of interconnected policies that ensure broad rights for tenants and a decommodified housing market. A principal aim of this chapter is to establish a cohesive, informed definition of social housing so that the future chapters may have definitional clarity and the capability to conceptualize ideals for social housing as a general concept. Before offering a stable definition, it is imperative to consider the genealogy of the term's usage. By examining the ways in which "social housing" has been used throughout time by thinkers, activists, and government officials, we may be able to better understand the component parts which underpin the broader concept. Additionally, work by contemporary scholars is helpful in understanding how modern academia generally approaches the topic. Therefore, this chapter will proceed by first reviewing recent academic literature on how one might understand the term "social housing." Then, both notable explicit and implicit references to social housing throughout history will be observed to better understand the theoretical implications of such thought. At the end of the chapter, this information will be considered in aggregate in order to arrive at a working definition for "social housing" and to help inform how to understand the ideals such programs should have.

Contemporary Conceptions

As noted by Hansson and Lundgren (2018), the term social housing is largely considered to be a floating signifier, or a word with no agreed upon definition. As one

might expect, this has led to many programs with very different end goals being labeled

social housing. There are, however, some ideas that are commonly pointed to when

discussing social housing. Hansson and Lundgren's (2018) literature review of the

term's usage between 2010 and 2017 identified five potential defining criteria for what

social housing refers to. These include target group, type of provider, subsidies, public

intervention, and form of tenure. The following paragraphs will briefly explain what

these criteria refer to and why they are important to a definition of social housing. Unless

otherwise stated, these explanations will be derived from the work of Hansson and

Lundgren (2018).

1. Intentional benefit for a target group
2. Provision of housing by a governmental authority, non-profit organization, or private organization
3. Utilization of subsidies to maintain below-market rate rents
4. Level of public intervention to regulate and/or support social housing
5. Tenure-lengths for residents

Table 1.1. Potential defining criteria for social housing. (Hansson and Lundgren, 2018)

First, the target group is the people intended to benefit from the housing policy.

"Social housing aims to be a solution to a specific problem, a problem which affects *some*

specific group of people (i.e. a target group). Thus, a target group is necessary" (p. 157).

The target group that a social housing project aims to help is open to some variation, but

the following historical discussion of the terms usage will indicate that the working class

and those with few financial resources should at least be eligible to receive housing

assistance.

Second, the type of provider for any housing system, socialized or not, may be a

governmental authority, a non-profit organization, or a private organization. Hansson and

Lundgren (2018) take a broad understanding of social housing when deciding if the type

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of provider is important for defining social housing. They decide that the type of provider is ultimately irrelevant for distinguishing social housing from other types of housing provisions. While it is true that "there is room for a wide variety of providers working with different incentives" (p. 160), this paper will not consider housing produced by private, market-oriented providers to be social housing. I choose to exclude this group because their inclusion would muddy the waters on what the modifier "social" means in this context. Privately financed housing is inherently seeking profit, a desire which seems contrary to the common usage of the word social in other policy contexts. For instance, Blakemore and Warwick-Booth (2013) posit that social policy principally aims to improve human welfare and meet human needs. While private housing providers might attempt to fulfill these goals, their ultimate desire must be to create profit since profit-production is an existential concern. Therefore, emphasis will instead be placed on the Oyebanji (2014) definition of providers, which focuses on public agencies and non-profit organizations. Specifically, this definition asserts the importance of non-market considerations on behalf of the housing's provider.

Third, subsidization is a common element in social housing programs. This is utilized in order to ensure that below-market rents can be assured for residents. Whether or not these subsidies come from loans, debt guarantees, or any other form of cost reduction, it is almost certain that any social housing program will utilize some kind of mechanism to make below-market rent viable and fair. Hansson and Lundgren (2018) summarize the concept well in saying, "Social housing fills a gap in the housing supply, that is, it is a segment of the housing sector that will not be provided on market terms.

Provision of such below-market housing is therefore dependent on financial support" (p. 160).

This discussion relates fourthly to a similar criterion: public intervention. The three main forms of public intervention are "regulation and/or linkage to public policies, subsidies and direct provision of social housing through public bodies or publicly owned companies" (p. 161). If housing is provided by a non-state actor, then public intervention is not necessary. However, it is almost certain to play a role in any government-run social housing program.

Fifth and finally, Hansson and Lundgren (2018) see form of tenure as another potential defining criteria for social housing. While they conclude that this criterion is ultimately irrelevant for the definition of social housing since social housing programs often use different types of tenures, I believe it nevertheless requires some attention for the purposes of this paper. Some would argue that social housing programs distinguish themselves from affordable housing in that they provide more than temporary affordability (Mironova & Waters, 2020a). Similarly, Oyebanji (2014) includes in their definition of social housing that it is "provision of secured affordable housing on a long term lease basis" (p. 34). If this is the case, then one could argue that social housing programs should ideally have long-term leases or pathways to tenant-ownership. Not only is long-term housing a potential defining factor of social housing, it is also an integral part of how we should understand the term's essence. The modifier *social* is important because it stresses the extent to which the housing system is socialized. As is discussed in the following paragraph, social housing is often understood to differentiate itself from other types of publicly-produced housing by providing not only physical structures for

tenants to live in, but also conditions for people to settle in and immerse themselves in a local community. While some programs will fall short of these ideals, the ambition to provide housing that strengthens the local fabric and respects people's right to habitation at all times is essential. Therefore, extended form of tenure is important to our definition.

On grounds aside from form of tenure, it is also understood that social housing provides more assistance to tenants than is provided under programs referred to as affordable housing. Affordable housing programs "are designed to combine public and private efforts. They minimize the government's role and rely on large public incentives to stimulate private development. In order to appeal to investors, affordable housing programs generally require only temporary affordability" (Mironova & Waters, 2020a para. 10). In contrast, social housing has been defined as "those that strive to achieve permanent affordability [also referred to as decommodification and housing in the public interest], social equality, and democratic resident control" (Mironova & Waters, 2020a, para. 5).

Mironova and Waters's defining criteria for social housing differs fundamentally from those utilized by Hansson and Lundgren. While the latter defined social housing by the identifiable elements of a program's design, the former looked more so at the ambitions of a program and a committed effort to the achievement of certain ideals (namely, decommodification, social equality, and democratic resident control). On first impression, one might assume the specificity of the Hansson-Lundgren definition makes it more applicable and usable in this paper. Certainly, it does do a good job of identifying important mechanisms within any specific program that may be analyzed. However, the more abstract nature of the Mironova-Waters definition is particularly appealing in a

paper not just about social housing, but also about its *ideals*. Ideals, being the conditions

created by a perfectly designed and implemented program, largely exist in the abstract

since no movement can expect perfect conditions, policies, and public support for their

programs. Thus, ideals are principally concerned with philosophical thought and

normative desires. The clearly identifiable ideals offered in the Mironova-Waters

definition will be utilized in the next chapter and should also influence the working

definition offered towards the conclusion of this chapter. While some might not consider

these broad elements to be useful for a universal definition of social housing, my aim is

to create a localized definition that aids with the development of thought on the specific

subjects discussed in this paper (namely the analysis of Viennese social housing).

Therefore, my definition must be understood in the context of its purpose.

Historical Conceptions

The practice of providing social housing is older than the usage of the term. Many

pre-industrial societies had some method of ensuring access to some form of living space

for most people. Perhaps the earliest examples of what might be considered social

housing existed as seasonal dwellings within seminomadic cultures such as the hogans

and armadas of the Navajo Nation or the similar housing in the Barabaig tribe of Eastern

Africa. As the concept of property came into form for these cultures, it predominantly

took the form of communal property, as opposed to private or personal property (CDC,

2006; Schoenauer, 2003). Certainly, housing that is owned by the public and accessible to

everyone meets at least some of the basic criteria for social housing, such as a public

provider and a target group that encompasses vulnerable people groups within it. While

these cultures differed greatly from our modern, urbanized cultures dominated by

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capitalism and private property, it would be illogical to allow this difference to dissuade us from viewing seminomadic housing schemes as socialized in nature.

Similar to seminomadic cultures, semipermanent (sometimes referred to as semisedentary) cultures often viewed property as something inherently belonging to the public. These groups would cultivate staple crops that they would live in for years at a time before moving to more fertile lands (CDC, 2006; Schoenauer, 2003). A notable example of semipermanent housing can be found within the Iroquois Confederacy. As Zinn (1980) describes, "land was owned in common and worked in common… Houses were considered common property and were shared by several families. The concept of private ownership of land and homes was foreign to the Iroquois" (p. 20) A notable quotation Zinn (1980) provides comes from a French Jesuit priest in the 1650s who wrote "No poorhouses are needed among them, because they are neither mendicants nor paupers" (p. 20). This line highlights an important point: while the Iroquois were benefitting from a communal housing system, certain European countries were already confronting the issue of housing in a totally different way.

It was during this time, the 17th century, that England created the concept of the poorhouse. As municipalities began to slowly urbanize, they bore the responsibility of taking care of the poor. Those that could work were made to live in workhouses, which were facilities that provided food, bedding, and in-house labor. The food was often unpalatable, the beds were often crowded, and the work was often extremely labor intensive (Blakemore, 2018). In the 19th century, the British created a Royal Commission to investigate what were called at the time *poor laws*. The commission found that, due to disorganized administration, the poor spent too much time idle and not working. They

also received a report from a workhouse master who stated that he had heard paupers say that life was better in the workhouses than what they had experienced on the outside. This information led to the creation of the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834, which "aimed to reshape workhouses to make them less comfortable than the homes of the independent poor and deter people from seeking relief" (Harley, 2015, p. 72). Such a reaction to poverty highlights the differences between housing provisions in early urban culture and those in seminomadic and semipermanent cultures.

The rise of urbanization totally transformed the social logic of antiquity. Although cities existed prior to the industrial revolution, it cannot be reasonably argued that these cities were greatly comparable to those that exist in the modern world. Due to society's overwhelming reliance on manual labor in agriculture for most of history, the average person could not simply move to cities. We cannot say that urbanized societies came into existence until the 19th and 20th centuries, when the rural-urban ratio began to tip in favor of urban living. The first country to undergo this process was England. From 1801 to 1901, England and Wales saw a jump from 10 percent of their population living in cities with over 100,000 people to 35% (Davis, 1955). This rapid recomposition shows the general trend which has been in effect since the industrial revolution of people migrating to the cities once doing so becomes economically viable.

As urbanization spread through the West, so too did calls for governments to respond to the needs of the working class. A housing issue was quickly appearing across an 1800s European and American landscape where people flocked to the cities to enjoy the benefits of the urban wage premiums. When they got there, shelter was in short supply. This is precisely the issue Frederick Engels sought to address in his 1872 work

"The Housing Question." Engels's work provides unique insight into the nature of the housing problem in 1870s Germany. Perhaps more importantly for this paper, "The Housing Question" shows the vast difference in opinion on housing issues between the Proudhonists and the Marxists.

The Marxist perspective, or more specifically Engels's perspective, on Germany's housing crisis during the 1870s was entirely informed by his understanding of class struggle. This perspective is an important one to understand when discussing social housing, not because Engels ever speaks of some form of government-provided housing, but because he explains some of the root problems that a truly progressive social housing model should aim to resolve. Understanding these root issues can help us to infer the ideals that social housing should be striving towards.

Engels stated his perceived solution for the housing crisis rather plainly: "In order to make an end of *this* housing shortage there is only one means: to abolish altogether the exploitation and oppression of the working class by the ruling class" (Engels, 1872, p. 14). Engels would go on to explain the flaws with the Proudhonist idea to give tenants partial ownership over their dwellings with each payment they made to their landlords. In the opinion of Engels, the existence of capitalism will prevent any such housing reforms from truly solving the issue. While this paper will not delve into the intricacies of Engels's reasoning on this topic, there are some lessons that can be derived on the topic of social housing from this paper.

Ford and Malott (2020) summarize a key takeaway from Engels's writing particularly well. They state the following:

It's important to emphasize that Engels is intervening in a particular debate in a

particular historical movement. He isn't proposing a comprehensive or dogmatic

program in which reforms are a hindrance to revolution. Instead, he was insisting

that the fundamental contradiction in the housing question is between the

exchange value and its use value of housing. The core issue is that housing is a

commodity rather than a right, and that this struggle must be part of a

revolutionary program. "Each social revolution," he says, "will have to take

things as it finds them and do its best to get rid of the most crying evils with the

means at its disposal. (para. 22)

The important takeaway here is that social housing programs existing under capitalism

may not be able to attain total justice for the working class. However, these programs can

still be considered successful if they more properly allow use value to dictate how supply

meets demand. They can also find success if they rid the housing market of its "most

crying evils." Certainly, ambitions to ameliorate the housing problems generated by

urbanization and capitalism, particularly problems relating to the affordability of rent or

the quality/location of dwellings, should be considered a necessary component of social

housing.

Some government officials argue that housing as a public good is a moral

imperative, regardless of the broader economic system. Former housing director of

Vienna Kurt Puchinger explains "Our policy is based on the basic statement that housing

is a human right… For 100 years this has been the philosophy of the Viennese Social

Democratic Party" (Ball 2019, para. 4). This sentiment is not unique to Vienna. In 1948,

the United Nations brought the concept of housing as a human right into official

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recognition for the first time by an international institution, stating "Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services" (UN, 1948, art. 25.1). This declaration was followed by many other international organizations affirming their agreement on the matter (Leckie, 1989).

Around the same time that the UN was recognizing the right to housing, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) was coming to power and implementing their housing policy, which was ideologically influenced by Marx and Engels. This policy aimed to remove market mechanisms from the housing market with the government stepping in as landlords. Rents were set at cheap prices that offered profit to the government (Zhang, 1997). Similarly, the Soviet Union recognized the right to housing in their 1977 Constitution. Article 44 states:

> Citizens of the USSR have the right to housing. This right is ensured by the development and upkeep of state and socially-owned housing; by assistance for co-operative and individual house building; by fair distribution, under public control, of the housing that becomes available through fulfilment of the programme of building well-appointed dwellings, and by low rents and low charges for utility services. Citizens of the USSR shall take good care of the housing allocated to them. (Soviet Union, 1977, art. 44)

Although historical attempts at what may be considered social housing have considered access to housing a basic right, this recognition is not necessary for a program to be considered social housing. As Leckie (1989) notes, there are various rationales for a government to provide housing to its citizens. First, a government could see housing as a

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human right. Second, a government could see homelessness as a humanitarian problem that they have a moral obligation to end. Third, a functionalist government might believe it to be in their best interest to provide housing so that the workforce is happy and healthy enough to bolster economic growth. Fourth, a government could view social housing as the best means of preventing social and political strife. Although there are numerous viewpoints, the resulting belief should be the same in all scenarios: housing should be available for everyone. This belief should be fundamental to any social housing system.

As we shift our focus closer to the modern day, we can see that urbanization is a process that continues today. It has certainly slowed down in developed countries, but urbanization is rapidly advancing in less developed countries (Davis, 1955). Urban sociologists often analyze the cities in the framework of world-systems theory, where cities occupy a rank in the hierarchy of the world economy. As they develop their economic capacities further, they can move from semi-periphery to periphery, and from periphery to core (Robinson, 2002). Justifiably, Roy (2005) takes issue with this categorization that places "First World command nodes of a global system of informational capitalism" as models for the rest of the world. Indeed, we should refrain from leaving the "big but not powerful" cities of the developing world out of the conversation in this paper. Karaman et al (2020) summarized the duty of the postcolonial urban sociologist well, stating that they would attempt "to disrupt entrenched hierarchical imaginaries within urban theory, and to understand every urban experience as relevant to theory building" (p. 2). Therefore, to stay in accord with this line of thought, social housing should not be approached as something that only exists as it has been approached in the Western world. Notable state-sponsored programs for housing assistance have been

implemented in the Global South. In order to create a definition that does not exclude discussion of these programs as important urban developments, this paper will attempt to avoid definitive components which only permit thought about social housing in a Western context, such as Vienna. While housing programs in the Global South will not be discussed in this paper due to its emphasis on Vienna, the following definition is meant to be applicable to future literature which might aim to assemble social housing in a non-Western city.

A Working Understanding

After briefly reviewing contemporary literature and historical developments in the social housing movements, we may now reach a reasonable understanding of what strategic functions social housing is generally associated with. To make clear all of the preceding factors that affect my interpretation of the term, each major takeaway will be briefly restated. Note that these functions are not included in everyone's definitions of social housing as it would be impossible for me to arrive at an entirely holistic definition of a term used as broadly as social housing. My aim is to create a working definition that encompasses (1) the features that distinguish social housing from other forms of housing provision, (2) the progressive influences associated with the modifier *social*, and (3) the most prominent, recurring elements that appear in social housing literature and practices. The takeaways that inform my definition are as follows:

- At the very least, social housing helps those in economically disadvantaged or vulnerable positions. It may also aim to include housing provisions for higher social classes.

- Social housing aims to minimize or entirely eliminate market elements from at least part of the housing market. This means that we cannot consider solely private developments to be social housing. Some oversight from public or not-for-profit authorities is necessary.

- Subsidization and/or public intervention play a role in almost all social housing programs. However, these factors do not define an integral part of social housing, but rather they are frequently used methods of ensuring that social housing is sustainable. Thus, it is not imperative to explicitly mention these factors in our working definition.

- Long-term tenures are not only important to fulfilling the ideals of social housing, but they are also a key component of social housing at a conceptual level.

- Social housing is progressive in its ideals. It aims for more than temporary solutions to housing insecurity.

- There was no need for the concept of social housing to formally exist until mass urbanization began in capitalist countries. However, rural housing problems may be addressed with social housing programs as well.

- The history of social housing is clearly related to socialist thought. However, abolition of capitalism is not necessary for social housing to achieve its ideals. If capitalism were to fully cease, then social housing would no longer need to exist either. Social housing exists to ameliorate the "most crying evils" of the housing system under capitalism.

- Social housing's key aim should be to ensure that housing is available for everyone. Note that this doesn't mean that it aims for everyone to live in a socialized unit, but that everyone who cannot obtain housing is given assistance.

- Social housing can exist anywhere in the world in which there are people in need of dwellings or any other services associated with social housing (improved access to city centers, for example).

These takeaways all can be condensed into one working definition that may serve as a general guide for understanding the functions social housing might provide. The definition is as follows:

Social housing is a form of housing that includes public or non-profit actors with the generalized intent of solving housing market inefficiencies and inequities. It often provides long-term housing at an affordable price while also taking into consideration social factors that might impact the lives of tenants.

This is obviously a very broad definition that neglects the location-specific factors that may distinguish one social housing program from another, but its conception is important for the purposes of this paper so that future chapters have definitional clarity on a core component of this thesis as a whole. Additionally, even such a broad definition will help in Chapter 2 as we attempt to carry out a similar creative process: creating informed ideals for how social housing should function.

Chapter 2: What Might Be the Ideals of Social Housing?

Now that we have arrived at an understanding of social housing that accounts for some of its more prominent influences, we can now begin to ask ourselves questions about what these programs might seek to accomplish. If a governing body decides that housing must be made universally accessible, what vision should they be trying to actualize? Based on the definition that has already been outlined, some ideals can certainly be inferred with very little legwork. The identification of other ideals might require us to think less about definitional implications and more about the general aims of progressive policy. The identification of these ideals will help to accomplish the first goal of this project: to show what an ideal social housing system might look like from a viewpoint that accounts for historical practices, etymological implications, progressive political orientations, and the relations between each of these factors.

This section does not attempt to offer every possible ideal that could exist for social housing, and I also do not aim to follow a strictly defined method of identifying ideals. It is also worth noting that there are certain ideals that I intentionally have excluded from this paper because they are universal policy ideals. For example, one could argue that measures for sustainability would exist in an ideal social housing policy. While I would concur with this position, I don't feel it is worth noting an ideal such as *governmental support* since that ideal exists for every policy. By nature of being a policy, we can assume that this ideal exists. There is already plenty of literature on the core ideals of public policy, such as sustainability (Patashnik & Weaver, 2020).

Below, I aim to utilize the literature discussed in Chapter 1 alongside any other relevant evidence to identify functions that social housing is intended to carry out. By

doing this, we can avoid creating ideals that are abstract and unable to be observed in any kind of empirical light. To make sure that the ideals identified in this chapter are solidly linked with potentially actualizable functions, I will utilize Chapter 3 and 4 to identify potential standards for measurement of each ideal and exhibit a basic model of how one might use the standards in policy analysis, respectively.

Each section in this chapter names a potential ideal of social housing and explains my reasoning for why I think they might be a useful ideal to be held. The indicators that allow us to observe if an ideal is being fulfilled will be referenced in this section as well. Each indicator will be italicized.

Accessible, Decommodified Housing

It should go without saying that increased accessibility is among the most obvious of goals promoted by social housing programs. The idea of reducing rent to low prices so that more people can afford shelter is predicated on the notion that housing policy should exist at least partly to ameliorate the inequality that might cause a person to be unhoused. Functionally, this can be thought of as reducing inequality by promoting affordability in the rental housing market. *Affordability* is fundamentally important to social housing because it is the most obvious way to ameliorate "the most crying evils" of the housing system under capitalism (Ford & Malott, 2020, para. 22). In a market where exchange value reigns supreme and those without enough money face the real possibility of being unhouse, increased affordability is vitally important because it increases the number of people who can access housing.

Not only is inequality being reduced through the promotion of affordable housing, but some social housing programs may aim to reduce other types of inequality that are

inextricably linked to housing. Most obvious among these would be *location*, since housing structures are often valued relative to their proximity to services and amenities. It is not uncommon for unsuccessful housing programs, socialized or not, to be criticized by the public for being placed in a poor location. Such is the case with Section 8 housing in the United States, which is notorious for placing poor families in poor neighborhoods with no resources. Critics often point out that this failure in finding proper location causes those who are meant to benefit from a housing program to be trapped in a cycle of poverty instead (Semuels, 2015; Thomas, 2020). The evidence of such criticism suggests that there are those who believe that location is an integral factor in social housing programs, and thus an idealized social housing program would be putting residents in neighborhoods with relatively high incomes, low crime rates, and easy access to services and leisure.

Adequate supply is another factor that must be considered under this ideal. A program that does not produce enough housing to meet the demand of the people cannot be said to be ideal. Equality should mean that everyone has access to a home, and such a guarantee cannot be made when social housing is in short supply. Therefore, a totally ideal program would produce enough housing to accommodate all unhoused people in the served community.

Finally, since social housing aims to reconceive housing as a public good, Mironova and Waters (2020a) correctly point out that *decommodification* is necessary in a successful social housing program. Decommodification has long been spoken of by Marxist thinkers and, given the influence Marxism has had on the development of social housing thought, it should be no surprise that I advocate for decommodified social

housing. Market pressures on housing often lead landlords to make decisions about people's access to housing with regard only to those market pressures. A social housing program must exist to at least make up for the inefficiencies produced by these capitalist frameworks.

Since decommodification is a difficult concept to measure empirically, I will look for what might be considered sub-indicators. La Grange & Pretorius (2005) offer useful ideas for figuring out how we might recognize decommodification in a housing market. They created a Decommodification-Commodification continuum to analyze the extent to which Hong Kong's public housing is commodified. They laid out several key indicators that are useful for plotting social housing programs on this same continuum. For instance, use value must be distanced from exchange value. This can be observed in social housing by seeing how much rent differs from market rates for similar apartments in similar neighborhoods. One should expect that two units offering similar use values should be equally accessible for prospective tenants.

La Grange & Pretorius (2005) also mention the fungibility of land as an important indicator of the decommodification of housing. They describe fungibility in this context as "major changes in ownership." The point is that easy trading of socialized homes between families or individuals should be allowed if decommodification is meant to be achieved.

Social Capital

The development of social capital is of the utmost importance for any housing strategy. My concept of social capital is in line with that of Putnam (1993), who sees social capital as "trust, norms, and networks that facilitate cooperation for mutual

benefit" with the purpose of "[securing] effective democracy and economy" (Winter, 2000, p. 5). This definition gets at the elements of community-building necessary for a social housing program to develop proper social capital. Giving people a sense of connection with those around them is not just a nicety, but rather it is fundamental for society's functioning. Loneliness has been found to double a person's chances of facing mental health problems and to significantly increase the chances that they are unemployed (Hoppenbrouwer, 2019; Matthews et al., 2018). On the other hand, an improved sense of community has been found to improve neighborhood attachment, community involvement and participation, and improved community coping skills (French et al., 2013). Thus, a wisely built social housing system would attempt to strengthen the local community as much as it possibly can. Thus, the first indicator of social capital in a social housing program is *community development*, instituted through either policy or less official processes. When evaluating social capital under this indicator, one can look for evidence of cultural sensitivity, a promoted sense of belonging, and actions opposing isolation of any demographic.

Another way to determine if a program has high social capital is being adequately promoted in any given housing program is to see if the program allows residents to exercise control over their living spaces. *Resident control* is an important indicator of social housing's communal success because it directly relates to the power of the community members. Mironova and Waters (2020a) concur with this point of view, pointing to New York's Mitchell-Lama coops as successful examples of this indicator since they allow residents to elect the board of directors that hire the management companies that run their properties. This seems to strongly fit in with the broader socialist

movement which has long stressed the importance of rights to organize. Resident control can look different in different contexts, but it is always recognizable in the power it gives to those benefiting from social housing.

Another important aspect of social capital development is the allowance of *long-term accommodation*. That is to say that residents should not be allowed to stay in social housing for an extended period of time with no penalties or coercion to leave. Long-term accommodation allows for communities to form in ways that would not be possible if social housing only functioned as a temporary outpost for those at a low-point in their lives. It also allows people the comfort of knowing that, no matter what might happen to their personal finances, they have shelter.

Sustainable Design

Sustainability is, like social housing, a frequently used term without a stable definition. In the context of this paper, I am specifically referring to sustainability in two senses. First, social housing must be sustainable in its structure. It is important that residential buildings do not degrade into slums due to poor *architectural quality*. A key part of creating sustainable housing is ensuring that the housing is built to last. Well-built homes are important for ensuring that the state is doing its duty to provide social housing that is no worse than market rate housing in terms of utility for its residents. Additionally, the construction of buildings contributes to CO2 emissions, and poorly built homes necessitate more construction needs down the line (United Nations Environment Programme, 2020).

Second, sustainability must also be understood as an environmental concept that deals with conserving natural resources and maintaining ecosystems. The built

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environment cannot be separated from its effects on the natural environment, and thus *Energy efficiency* must play an important role in new housing projects. Energy conservation is an effective way to lower greenhouse gas emissions and limit water usage while also making housing cheaper due to decreased utility usage. The fossil fuels needed to provide power and heating to homes could be better preserved if new social housing developments were built with proper insulation and existing buildings were retrofitted to be less dependent on traditional energy sources. It is imperative that these energy efficient measures be taken, as electricity and heat make up 31% of global greenhouse gas emissions (Center for Climate and Energy Solutions, n.d.). In total, the energy sector accounts for 60% of greenhouse gas emissions (United Nations, n.d.). Of these, 17-21% come from residential properties (Oakes, 2021).

Sustainability is important to all housing developments, but social housing has a specific obligation to the protection of public resources that might not be found in private markets. Market rate housing development is intended to create profit, whereas social housing is meant to address social problems. While these social problems are generally thought to concern housing insecurity, an ideal social housing program would also ensure that public funds are being used to create housing that is structurally sound and environmentally conscious.

Chapter 3: Standardizing Ideals: Measurement Social Housing's Success

With the ideals of social housing having been laid out, we can now shift our focus towards Vienna, Austria's social housing program to see how these abstract ideals may or may not be being upheld in tangible policy interactions. The policy evaluation itself will take place in Chapter 4, but this short chapter will set the stage for that analysis. The first section, "The Method of Analysis," will explore the question, "how can ideals be measured?" In answering this question, I will outline the method of analysis I have chosen to use in Chapter 4 while also providing a commentary on the assumptions, strengths, and shortcomings of my approach to analyzing abstract merit in concrete systems. Then, the second section "Ideals and their Indicators" will show the specific methods I will use to gauge whether an ideal-indicator has fully or partially been fulfilled.

The Method of Analysis

Chapter 4 will look specifically at Vienna's social housing program to see how the ideals identified in Chapter 2 have been fulfilled. To do this, each ideal will be described in a fashion inspired by assemblage theory and path dependency theory. Assemblage theory, described in the introduction, will be utilized to emphasize the relationality and conditionality of Vienna's social housing assemblage as it has shifted over time as the result of interactions throughout time and space. A particular effort is made to identify specific actors that took concrete action which, in turn, affected the policy's impact. Path dependency theory will also be used to highlight the importance of each major development in the policy assemblage process. As explained in the introduction, path dependency theory is a framework which "considers institutions as

structural variables from which stem arrangements of ideas, interests, and powers"

(Trouvé et al., 2010, p. 4). Each ideal identified in Chapter 2 will be discussed separately,

with the analysis attempting to see what extent the Viennese program is fulfilling them.

At the end of each ideal's section, a quantitative score will be given for each ideal's

indicators of fulfillment. These scores range from 1 to 3 (1 = no ideal fulfillment, 2 =

partial ideal fulfillment, and 3 = total ideal fulfillment)

A key understanding for properly interpreting this paper is that the approach taken

is not universally empirical. While I will be measuring the fulfillment of ideal indicators

with numeric values, these hold no significance beyond being a subjective measure of

fulfillment. That is to say that a score of "1" holds no relational value that can be

compared between different indicators. Therefore, it holds that some indicators may seem

more important than others. This is not a problem since this paper doesn't aim to provide

a tool for interpreting the *overall* success of a program into a single composite number.

Rather, my aim is to see which programs are fulfilling certain qualitative measures and to

interpret this data in a way that allows side-by-side analysis of different programs in any

specific indicator.

Another disclaimer is that the ideals and indicators alike have been chosen

through an admittedly interpretive process. By this I mean that I have chosen indicators

by looking for common themes that arise in literature written on the topic of social

housing. Many of these themes were identified in the process of research for Chapter 1.

However, I do not find it necessary to cite each individual source that inspired an

indicator's selection because, although different sources inspired my selection of

indicators, they are ultimately my own creation in this context. Unless otherwise noted, I

take creative credit for this particular set of indicators, although they represent what I see as a stream of understanding that can be observed in writing about social housing as a concept. Of course, there is room for future research to potentially identify areas that I should or should not have included in my list. Thus, this should not be thought of as an entirely comprehensive list of indicators.

Another similar study was conducted by Mironova and Waters (2020b). They identified three dimensions by which they could evaluate social housing programs, and these dimensions were strikingly similar to the ideals outlined in Chapter 2. While this similarity was not intentional, I think it shows that the ideals identified in this paper are consistent with the ideals recognized in contemporary thought on the subject. Additionally, Mironova and Waters utilize a similar methodology for their analysis of programs along their identified dimensions of social housing. The only significant differences are that they do not specifically identify what tangible indicators of fulfillment they are looking for and they use *low, middle,* and *high* instead of *1, 2,* and *3* to indicate the extent to which an ideal has been achieved. Nevertheless, their study is a valuable resource for those seeking a simpler yet still useful look into how we might measure the success of social housing programs.

Finally, one might note that the ideals measured will not necessarily be unique to social housing. The line of reasoning here is that some ideals are sought after by most well-planned housing schemes, social or not, and thus their fulfillment is certain to be a goal in most social housing programs.

The main goals of this analysis are (1) evaluate the Viennese social housing program's ideal fulfillment, (2) display how ideal fulfillment might occur within a social

housing assemblage, (3) show the factors that allow or disallow ideal fulfillment in Vienna's political environment, and (4) to showcase the kind of comprehensive, value-based analysis that I believe to be useful for approaching public policy.

Ideals and Their Indicators

Ideal	Indicator
Accessible, Decommodified Housing	Affordability
	Location
	Adequate Supply
	Decommodification
Social Capital	Resident Control
	Community Development
	Long-Term Accommodation
Sustainable Design	Ecological Sustainability
	Architectural Quality

Table 3.1. Table of ideal indicators.

This section serves to explain the measurement I use for each indicator. The indicators are bolded and have a brief working definition below them in italics. Underneath this definition is an explanation of why the indicator is important and how it will be measured. Scores on each indicator range from 1-3, with 1 being the worst and 3 being the best. However, a measurement of 1 is not described for any of the indicators because a 1 simply shows that the measurements described have not been fulfilled. One might think of 1, 2, and 3 as numerical stand-ins for low, medium, and high fulfillment.

Accessible, Decommodified Housing

Affordability.

Housing costs take up less than 30% of household incomes.

As explained in chapter 2, affordability is all about increasing access to housing. In a truly ideal world, affordability would be so great that social housing would be entirely free to live in. Free housing seems to be the most progressive state that affordability could reach under social housing. Of course, it would be unfair to consider a program entirely unaffordable just because it isn't providing free housing. Thus, we can look to Blumenthal et al. (2016), who write that "The current standard is that a family should pay no more than 30 percent of its household income on rent. Anything more is no longer affordable." This gives us what I predict to be a more realistic measure of how affordable housing might be under a social housing system in the status quo. Nevertheless, the perfect social housing policy that maximizes all of its ideals to their greatest potential would still provide free housing. Thus, a housing program may receive a 3 on this measure if dwellings are provided to those in need for free. A 2 indicates that all social housing tenants are paying less than 30% of their income on rent.

Location.

Existence of health services (hospitals, parks...) within reasonable distance.

A community living in social housing units should be given the resources to flourish as much as possible. This means that there should be services to keep them healthy, such as hospitals, gyms, recreational centers, and affordable, high-quality food.

A 3 will be given if there are hospitals, food, and recreational facilities within a reasonable distance of developments. If developments are widespread, these facilities must be either abundant or centrally-located. A 2 will indicate the existence of such facilities but the absence of quality. For example, unsafe parks or a lack of healthy food will receive a 2 if other beneficial services are still present.

Adequate Supply.

Social housing supply meets demand.

In an ideal social housing program, there should be enough housing available so that every eligible person may receive a unit. The fulfillment of this indicator may be measured by viewing local homeless populations and, if available, data on how many people are annually turned away from a program due to a supply shortage. This may be available in hard, quantitative data, but there is also value to be found in qualitative data about how applications for housing might be prioritized over one another. Programs receiving a 3 for this indicator will have no shortage of units available for eligible applicants. A 2 may be earned if there is enough supply to accommodate a substantial number of people while still not fully meeting demand.

Decommodification.

Housing access is decoupled from economic forces.

As noted in the first section of Chapter 2, decommodification may be measured by its fulfillment of certain factors such as the transcendence of use value over exchange value and the fungibility of land. Thus, this analysis will consider a 3 (full

decommodification) to be earned when a program offers housing that (1) offers stable rent that only varies unit-to-unit based on utility-related factors such as additional square footage and (2) gives tenants the ability to exchange units without excessive regulation. Fulfillment of only one of these two sub-indicators, or partial fulfillment of both, will result in a 2.

Social Capital

Resident Control.

Residents maintain strong right and resources to organize.

Residents of social housing must have explicitly stated rights to organize, and they must have the resources to express these rights if they desire to do so. Therefore, programs may receive a 3 if they have demonstrated histories of protecting rights to organize (for example, resident management of housing or introduction of unions). If they have rules in place protecting these rights but there is no evidence that the rights are exercised in a tangible way, programs may receive a 2.

Community Development Measures.

Measures exist to promote community involvement.

Community development can look different throughout different cultural contexts, so this indicator is intentionally left broadly-defined. The main goal of this indicator is to assess whether social housing authorities are factoring community into their architecture or building governance models. Communal spaces for neighbors to become acquainted or building-wide events are examples of this measure being

adequately fulfilled. A 3 will be received if dedicated effort is made in all social housing developments to develop communities. If there are certain notable developments that promote community but such action is not enshrined in the overarching social housing agenda, then programs will receive a 2.

Long-Term Accommodation.

Residents have access to long-term rent in social housing.

Social housing cannot be successful if residents are not allowed to stay indefinitely. Life-long leases, for example, allow people to take ownership in their home and thus create a better sense of community. This measure is extremely important in determining the effectiveness of social housing.

A 3 represents the existence of long-term accommodation for all residents regardless of what happens to them or their financial situation. A 2 shows that residents may live in their socialized housing for a long period of time, but there are limitations on such protections. For example, a 2 will be assigned if residents are required to move out of their unit if their income increases.

Sustainable Design

Ecological Sustainability.

Developments utilize renewable energy & effectively conserve energy; environmental concerns are brought into the policymaking process.

Unfortunately, energy efficiency is not measured uniformly by researchers. Since this paper relies on secondary data collection, this indicator must be measured on a case-

by-case basis depending on the available data in each location analyzed. A location may receive a 3 for this indicator if there is evidence of a committed effort to make government-provided housing energy efficient through concrete action. A score of a 2 may be issued if the ambitions for energy efficiency are present but their implementation is inhibited in some way.

Architectural Quality.

Architecture is of at least equivalent quality to market-rate housing; no significant signs of deterioration.

It is important that residential buildings do not degrade into slums due to poor architectural quality. A key part of creating sustainable housing is ensuring that the housing is built to last. The construction of buildings contributes to CO2 emissions, and poorly built homes necessitate more construction needs down the line (United Nations Environment Programme, 2020). Additionally, well-built homes are important for ensuring that the state is doing its duty to provide social housing that is no worse than market rate housing.

For a 3 on this measure, social housing needs to have no signs of major deterioration or poor architectural quality. If the former is met without the latter, a 2 is possible so long as the housing has received similar levels of investment to that given for market rate housing in the area.

Chapter 4: Assembling Viennese Social Housing

A Brief History of Social Housing in Vienna, Austria

As explained in the introduction, social housing in Vienna is widely regarded as successful. Searching the internet for something along the lines of "Social Housing in Vienna, Austria" will return numerous articles proclaiming the program to be one of the most progressive and well-managed in the world. Before analyzing the validity of these claims, it will be helpful to briefly recount the history of Vienna's social housing program.

Social housing in Vienna, Austria originated in what is colloquially known as Red Vienna. Existing between 1918 and 1934, Red Vienna was governed by the Social Democratic Workers' Party of Austria (SDAP). During these years, the SDAP enjoyed an absolute majority in municipal politics that allowed them to have almost total control over public policy.

The SDAP came into existence after over a decade of intense debate between the socially democratic 'Moderates,' led by Heinrich Oberwinder, and the Marxist 'Radicals,' led by Andreas Scheu. Viktor Adler unified these opposing camps in January of 1889, convincing the Radicals to settle for parliamentary representation rather than socialist revolution. This agreement thereby formed the SDAP and set in place a tendency for the party to favor unity over ideological purity. Thus, it is no surprise that the party would go on to utilize Marxist rhetoric while promoting single-issue reforms in line with the policy of the Moderates (Luther, 1999). In this, one observes one of the clearest component interactions within the assemblage of the SDAP and the channeling of power enacted by those at the 1888-1889 Hainfield conference. From here, we can see the two

clearest factions of political thought within Austrian geography that influenced the policies of social housing. Of course, influences on party ideology, some of which will be discussed later in this chapter, came from many different events and individuals. Thus, there is certainly more insight on specific ideology to be gained from research that attempts to assemble the SDAP rather than their social housing policy.

Housing was one of the party's primary concerns upon gaining power. A page on the city of Vienna's municipal website tells of how Red Vienna came into existence alongside "an empty treasury, an army of unemployed people, a tense energy supply situation, hunger, severe health problems and not least a dire need for housing" ("Municipal politics: 'Red Vienna' - a success story", 2009, para. 1). The SDAP had just gained power over Vienna after the conclusion of World War 1 and the resulting collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Since the constitutional statutes recognized Vienna as both a city and a province, the ruling SDAP was given substantial power over public policy at the time. They were allowed to follow an ambitious agenda influenced by center-left and left wing party members which utilized heavy taxation to pay for 'superblock' style housing structures (Blumgart, 2020). Although the housing program lost support from 1933-1945 when Vienna fell under Nazi control, the SDAP regained power after the Second World War and have continued to support the program since.

With this brief overview of the program's history, we can now move on to the social housing program's assemblage as it relates to the ideals of social housing.

Assembling Social Housing and Evaluating Value Fulfillment

Accessible, Decommodified Housing

To evaluate the extent to which social housing reduces inequality in Vienna, it will be beneficial to look first at the policies, actors, ideas, and sociological phenomena that promote or prevent the fulfillment of the *affordability*, *location*, *adequate supply, and housing decommodification* indicators. Following the identification of each relevant component of the social housing assemblage, I will show how that individual component was assembled and how it interacts with other social housing policy components. Note that the present outcome for each indicator is dependent on the precise interaction of each policy component and that, should even one component be changed, the indicator's fulfillment might change. Therefore, this evaluation and all evaluations in this chapter must be understood as entirely dependent on present circumstances.

Viennese social housing has long existed for the purpose of making housing affordable and accessible for municipal inhabitants. The Tenancy Act dictates the maximum height of rent in Austria, and Viennese rents are controlled to be no more than 25% of a household's income, with some being as low as 20% (Koželouhová, 2014; Peacher, 2021; Vienna's Unique Social Housing Program, n.d.). This affordability is provided for by the two types of social housing existing in Vienna: municipal housing and cooperative flats with municipal subsidies, referred to here as *limited-profit housing associations (LPHAs)*. LPHAs are "well-established actors in the Austrian housing system and are required to charge cost-covering rents in exchange for tax exemptions" (Litschauer & Friesenecker, 2022, p. 55). Kathrin Gaál, Vienna's Vice-Mayor and Executive City Councillor for Housing, explains in an interview for the city website that

Vienna offers 220,000 municipal units and 200,000 LPHA flats. In total, about 50% of the city's population lives in social housing (City of Vienna - Social Housing, n.d.). The city is largely able to afford such a wide range of housing due to a progressive housing tax which has been in place since 1923.

Historical accounts shine a light on the intent of Vienna's social housing system to provide tenants with convenient access to services. In the days of Red Vienna (1918-1934), 400 community buildings were built, including social housing alongside social services and cultural institutions (Pelleteret, 2020). Blumgart (2020) furthers that municipal housing structures in Red Vienna often featured commercial storefronts on their street level alongside laundromats, daycare centers, libraries, and medical clinics in their interior courtyards.

Based on the limited available evidence, it seems contemporary Vienna still follows the same aims of Red Vienna. Zoning laws often allow 6-8 stories in residential constructions, which prevents urban sprawl and increases access to local services for those who do not have access to cars. Furthermore, the city of Vienna has the power, which is often realized, to convert industrial land into housing districts with parks, schools, and stores (Cortright, 2017). As recently as 2020, media coverage of Viennese social housing still applauds the program for placing residents near schools, transportation, and other social services (Schweitzers, 2020).

The Viennese housing market has deep roots in decommodification policy as well. The vast amount of social housing, next to a highly regulated private rental market, allowed housing access to be decoupled from market forces. These factors, paired with a relatively stable national context, have allowed Vienna to maintain relatively strong

decommodification in their housing market (Kadi, 2015). Mundt & Amann (2010) make the argument that Austria as a whole is close to the ideal of an *integrated rental market*. The concept of an integrated rental market comes from Jim Kemeny's theory that a given rental market may be either dual, with social and private housing not competing with one another due to state intervention, or unitary, with social and private housing in competition with one another. According to Kemeny et al. (2005), an integrated rental market develops out of a unitary rental market after the non-profit rental sector dominates the market, maintains competition, provides good market coverage, and reaches a significant magnitude. They note that "The advantages of the integrated rental market include tenure diversity, housing choice, low housing costs, and as a buffer against wild and extreme swings in housing prices" (p. 871). If Mundt & Amann are correct in their assertion that Vienna is an ideal integrated rental market, then all of these advantages should be present. Furthermore, if these advantages are present, then we can confidently conclude that Vienna's social housing fulfills most measures under this ideal.

Over time, Vienna has partially followed the broader European trend of liberalizing its social housing market, a trend which appeared in Europe during the 1980s. Lawson (2010) points out that the social housing logic has been conditioned to change due to exogenous factors "emanating from the Finance Ministry, the OECD, EU and other international agencies" and "the need for an increasing role for private finance and tenant equity in affordable housing provision amidst declining public grants and loans" (p. 212-213). Vienna phased out production of new municipal units between the mid-1990s and 2004, and construction was entirely halted between 2004 and 2016. (Kadi, 2015). Since the reintroduction of municipal housing production in 2016, only 4,000

units have been put under construction. The emphasis within the social housing sector is still certainly placed on LPHAs, and this is likely brought about in part by the public debt limits in the European Union's euro convergence criteria and competition law. Some in the field of social housing administration also promoted this shift to LPHAs out of belief that they could offer comparatively low rents (Litschauer & Friesenecker, 2022).

Despite these beliefs, there is a negative impact on accessibility that has resulted from Vienna's emphasis on LPHAs. Lévy-Vroelant & Reinprecht (2014) outline a Viennese peculiarity that greatly impacts this discussion. Tenants of social housing must contribute a one-time payment that helps finance construction costs and, for LPHAs, land costs. While municipal housing production was stopped for 12 years, residents no longer needed to pay this cost (Friesenecker & Kazepov, 2021). At the same time, increases in land scarcity led to increased tenant contributions (Kadi, 2015). Thus, lower-income people did not have access to the newer LPHAs and became overrepresented in municipal housing. This indicates that affordability, specifically in LPHAs, was reducing the decommodification of housing by making LPHAs only accessible to those with greater financial resources. The city of Vienna did address this issue, however, by capping tenant contributions in newly developed SMART apartments and creating loans for tenants who need help paying the contributions (Marquardt & Glaser, 2020).

LPHAs have a long history in Austria. They date back to housing cooperatives in 1850 primarily used for high rank officials and railroad employees (Mundt & Amann, 2010). In the 1880s cooperatives were expanded to include more of the working population. This emerged out of the material conditions produced by laissez-faire liberalism as it interacted with the electoral reforms of the time and the rising municipal

socialist movement (Lawson, 2010). Through the years, the concept has developed and increasingly gained both legal and social backing. After the First World War, the grassroots Vienna Settlement Movement arose to establish cooperative subsistence settlements on the edges of the city, inspired by the garden city movements of Britain and Germany. Out of desire to regulate these illegal settlements and to respond to the large-scale demonstrations emanating from the movement, the SDAP reversed their view of cooperative settlements as the embodiment of petty bourgeois values and created the municipal Settlement Office in 1921 (Stuhlpfarrer, n.d.). After World War II, LPHAs continued to grow in popularity as part of Austria's reconstruction efforts. This popularity growth brought us to the status quo where LPHAs are produced at a greater rate than municipal housing (Mundt & Amann, 2010). This reflects the general trend throughout Austria to mimic Europe's move towards recommodification, although Austrian housing, particularly in Vienna, is still far more socialized and decommodified than most Western countries.

The ability for Vienna to retain control over the social housing market amidst the European move towards recommodification must be understood as the result of contingent conditions. It was only because of the early 20th century collapse in the land market that Red Vienna was able to successfully acquire and dominate the land market in the way it does today. Additionally, strong rent regulation instituted by the federal government, the unitary rental market, and the overwhelming war devastation of the 20th century propped up a system where landlords could not compete in the private market. This not only allowed for a social housing monopoly but it also shaped how property rights were to be understood by the populace and influenced the economic logic of

Vienna. Furthermore, the satisfaction of multiple interest groups has allowed for sustained success in Vienna. Housing programs are run by regional governments, thereby allowing regional differences in opinion regarding social housing to be satisfied. The private banking system is satisfied as well since program funds for LPHAs are channeled through the private banks. Corporate interests and both major political parties share consensus that the program is integral to the welfare of Austria's economy and welfare (Lawson, 2010). All of the factors listed above contribute to the stability of a system that has faced challenging conditions yet still emerged with largely successful policies.

While Vienna's social housing is largely successful, it is important to note that there are some shortcomings in how it provides for accessibility and decommodification. While Vienna does have a large social housing stock, it is short of fully ideal in providing adequate supply. 15,000 people live unhoused in Austria, 70% of which live in Vienna (European Federation of National Organisations working with the Homeless, 2017). At the same time, tens of thousands of apartments sit empty in the private rental market because landlords don't want to pay the tax placed on their profits (The Local, 2014). City Councilor for Housing Kathrin Gaal and City Councilor for Finance Peter Hanke are spearheading an initiative via an official letter to the federal government which requests a tax to be placed on empty apartments, but it is unclear at this time if that will come to fruition (Balgaranov, 2021). Regardless of how the issue is handled, the onus is upon Vienna's government, and perhaps its social housing authorities, to address this issue of homelessness.

Another shortcoming that has emerged during recent years can be seen in affordability. While rents in social housing remain low, Litschauer & Friesenecker (2022)

show a few problems that have appeared in respect to affordability in recent years. First, the difference in unit cost per square meter between social housing and private housing has greatly increased since 2005. In 2005, social housing and private rental housing cost 5.1 and 5.4 €/m^2, respectively. Those prices had jumped to 7 and 9.8 €/m^2 by 2018. This change has likely come partially as a result of inadequate supply in the social housing market, with Tockner (2017) showing that 60% of all new rental agreements are in the private market. This suggests that Mundt & Amann's claim that Vienna maintains a unitary, integrated rental market is diminishing in credibility as social housing becomes increasingly difficult to obtain. Despite this dangerous trend, it is important to remember that housing costs as a percentage of household incomes are still fairly affordable in Vienna, with a relatively low housing-cost-overburden rate compared to other EU cities (Mundt, 2018; Pittini 2012; Eurostat 2021).

Second, Litschauer & Friesenecker (2022) report that, although prices are increasing for all housing due to the slow liberalization of the housing market, free market private units are increasing in cost at a faster rate than rent-controlled private units. This is important because lower-income groups and non-Austrian migrants are overrepresented in the private market, and, within the private market, they are overrepresented in the free market units. However, the income distribution between social and private units is very similar, and the overrepresentation of non-Austrian migrants in the private market does not necessarily indicate a largely problematic inequality since migrants come from different financial backgrounds. The discussion on migrants will be further expanded upon in the following section on social capital.

Affordability - 2

>*Location - 3*
>
>*Adequate Supply - 2*
>
>*Decommodification - 2*

Social Capital

To better understand the development of social capital in Vienna via social housing, we must look at the rights of tenants in relation to the rights of the city/landlords, the disposition of the city towards grassroots movements for representation, and the strategies employed by policy actors to develop a sense of community throughout the city.

One of the main strategies for community development in Vienna's social housing seems to be to encourage different social classes to interact with each other. Vienna's councilor for housing says that social units are not only intended for those in desperate need, but they are rather intended to give affordable housing to both low-income individuals and those within "a broad middle class" (Forrest, 2019). Another representative for the program is quoted saying, "Here we like to say that everyone can live in communal housing, from taxi drivers to university students. This ensures social diversity and helps to promote community spirit" (Lorin, 2020, para. 5). Residents seem to agree with this sentiment, with some noting that the buildings sometimes host community events to promote community development (Peacher, 2021). This sentiment is reflected in formal policy, which allows some 70-80% of the population access to LPHAs (Mundt, 2018). Altogether, it seems that Viennese social housing does a satisfactory job of developing community in this respect.

When speaking of community development, it is crucial to include discussion on the topic of ethnic segregation and the measures taken by a housing program to prevent deleterious enclaves. As discussed in the previous section, over- or underrepresentation of a group does not necessarily indicate more isolation of that certain group from the broader community (Johnston et al., 2014). Thus, it is important to follow the lead of Friesenecker & Kazepov (2021), who not only look at evenness of distribution but also exposure. Exposure refers to "the likelihood that members of one group will encounter residents of a different background in their respective neighbourhoods" (p. 78-79).

Looking at the history of segregation in Vienna's social housing, we can first observe such a trend that occurred in the 1980s. As the city's population decreased due to increased suburbanization, the inner cities still struggled with overcrowding and heavy concentration of immigrants in low-quality, pre-World War I housing. In response, the city invested heavily into qualitative upgrades in this old housing stock as part of its 'soft urban renewal' program, which utilized a 'renewal and land fund.' This fund allowed for renovations in dilapidated private housing stock while also freezing rents for the following 10 years to prevent displacement (Kadi, 2015; Friesenecker & Kazepov, 2021).

Within this context, Friesenecker & Kazepov (2021) recognize a few critical junctures in the development of Vienna's housing provisions in relation to segregation. First, within the climate of the 1980's just described, the Soviet Union collapsed. This led to a heavy increase in immigrants coming towards Vienna, much to the concern of the local political parties. Despite the city's unique power as a state (*Bundesland* in Austria) and a municipality, which was bolstered by the decentralization carried out by the federal government in the late 1980s, it was the federal government that amended the tenant law

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and introduced time-limited contracts in 1991. This was the first political action that diminished Vienna's guarantee of long-term accommodation. The 1991 reform was followed by two additional liberalizations, referenced in the preceding section on accessibility. The first reform was a 1994 amendment to the tenant law which allowed new contracts and old buildings to be regulated by a quasi-market mechanism which allowed premiums to be added to rent based on factors such as location. The second federal policy occurred in 2001 when the right-wing government excluded tenancy in detached and semi-detached houses and attic conversions, leading to "a somewhat paradoxical situation that attic conversions on rent-controlled buildings in inner-city neighbourhoods become free-market rent, while the rest of the buildings are still rent-controlled" (Friesenecker & Kazepov, 2021, p. 81). These market elements diminished the ability of the city to carry out the socially-oriented housing policy it had maintained since Red Vienna (excluding its time under Nazi control).

The second critical juncture identified by Friesenecker & Kazepov (2021) is Austria's accession to the European Union. This moment had broad impacts, as was discussed in the previous section and as will be discussed in the following section as well. The previous section's discussion of how Vienna stopped producing municipal housing in favor of LPHAs and how this led to an overrepresentation of poor families in municipal housing. With the city stepping in to try to ameliorate the problem of inaccessible LPHAs by capping tenant contributions and offering means-tested loans, the SDAP and city officials showed their commitment to increasing access for all residents. Friesenecker & Kazepov (2021) conclude this element of their analysis of socio-

economic segregation by stating that "[t]here is indeed a high probability of encountering groups with a different socio-economic background at the neighbourhood level" (p. 87).

However, there is another emergent property of Viennese social housing that began to appear when Austria joined the EU. Drawing the conversation back to the inclusion of non-Austrian migrants and preventing ethnic segregation, accession to the EU prompted Vienna to end their policy of only offering social housing to Austrian citizens who have lived in Vienna for at least a year. Now, any EU/EEA citizen or third-country citizen of equal status (which was usually gained after 5 years of permanent residency) could live in social housing. In response, the city gave preference to natives by giving long-term Viennese residents a bonus in their eligibility rankings. Nevertheless, specific programs and services for refugees exist for refugees, thereby slightly ameliorating the underrepresentation of migrants in social housing (Friesenecker & Kazepov, 2021).

We can now turn our attention to the rights of tenants, which will inform us on the level of *resident control* in Vienna's housing program. Hegedüs et al. (2012) observe that tenant rights have changed "according to the behavior of the management companies, the strategies of the potential beneficiaries (households), and the policy environment (legal framework, subsidy programs, etc.)." Some of these changes will be recounted as I outline the fulfillment of the resident control indicator.

In line with the influence of assemblage theory, a good starting point for evaluating the disposition of relevant policy actors on the matter of resident control would be to words and methods used in a recent case study. Luckily, there is adequate

literature on two pertinent issues that will highlight the good and the bad in Vienna's treatment of local voices in the urban development process.

First, Local Agenda 21 (LA 21), a local development of the United Nations' sustainable development plan titled 'Agenda 21,' interacted with local citizens, bureaucrats, and private investors in a 2002 conflict over the building of real estate in a green space of 17,500 m^2 used by the general public. LA 21 had just become an entity in the local government 4 years prior as part of a pilot project in Alsergrund, Vienna's 9th district. They were instituted in an attempt to increase the potency of grassroots, bottom-up policy engagement (Kozeluh and Ornetzeder, 2004). When the municipality and District Council tried to authorize the aforementioned real estate development, LA 21 integrated the resident group 'Sensengasse,' which was organized by 12 inhabitants who opposed the development, into their structure. This bolstering of sentiment in opposition to local policy could easily have been punished by the district mayor, who holds the power to offer sanctions in such instances. However, district mayor Benke Johann allowed the program to continue as it were, likely due to his beliefs in line with the SDAP and social democrats who viewed LA 21 as an effective program for bettering local governance (Novy & Hammer, 2007).

Novy & Hammer (2007) further that the Sensengasse movement within LA 21 shifted its motivation away from the initial push to protect the green space and towards the empowerment of local voices that they saw as lacking legitimacy in the political process. Thus, "[p]oliticians, investors and the bureaucracy were forced to start a dialogue with inhabitants and other local stakeholders, and LA 21 began to articulate neighbourhood interests and to organize citizens' discontent, and thereby fostered

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grassroots politics" (p. 214). Lacking the organizational resources to easily exert dominance over LA 21's grassroots movement, the city council attempted to utilize the concept of 'organizational outflanking,' a concept introduced by Mann (1986) and developed by Clegg (1990) to explain how an organization might strategically comply with its opposition. Novy & Hammer (2007) explain that they did this by implementing a mediation process that would prevent open civic protest and re-establish control for the city council by forcing consensus in four months. This resulted in a 2003 settlement that reduced the size of the development by 3 percent and allowed for minor improvements in the design of infrastructure. Overall, despite LA 21's attempts to implement local voices in the process of housing construction, grassroots voices had been defeated through Machiavellian tactics exercised by the district. Since then, Novy & Hammer (2007) conclude the case study of LA 21 by explaining how it has been expanded to more districts in Vienna and found some success in representing public opinion, but has ultimately proven to be ambivalent in the face of private interests.

The second relevant case-study resulted from the implementation of 'Local Area Management' in two relatively degraded districts in Vienna in 2002 (Hamedinger, 2004). The new government program utilized new methods for emphasizing bottom-up, representative politics. For instance, it was run by the Vienna Business Agency and it established a neighborhood advisory council made up of "representatives from the municipal departments, the City Planning Bureau, the district chairman, local area managers and elected citizens (up to 50% of the full members)" (Hamedinger, 2004, p. 10). This structure was intended to allow for urban renewal while preventing gentrification and displacement. However, the program faced issues due to the conditions

it emerged in and uncomfortably interacted with. Most notably, the program had to abide by the business-interested Objective 2 program established by the EU since that is where its funding came from. This is why the Vienna Business Agency was allotted control over the project, and it also explains why local administration was given majority control within the neighborhood advisory council. Novy & Hammer (2007) posit that EU's top-down funding criteria prevented Local Area Management from implementing modernization in residential areas on a bottom-up basis since everything had to be framed in terms of the EU's predefined quantitative evaluative criteria. They further that, while some Local Area Management actions did advance the goal of fostering neighborhood and community communication (such as the creation of a neighborhood magazine, "which fostered a culture of integration and tolerance and respect of diversity" (p. 216).), EU funding prevented the establishment of projects such as a flea market and diverse social/cultural events. Thus, although it is not entirely the fault of Vienna's city government, resident control has been shirked in Vienna's housing in favor of a top-down approach to urban development.

> *Resident Control - 2*
>
> *Community Development - 2*
>
> *Long-Term Accommodation - 2*

Sustainable Design

Many actors, places, and events have contributed to Vienna's modern reputation as a sustainable city. General ecological principles made pathways into Vienna's political landscape in the 70s with the city's establishment of the Vienna Environmental

Protection Department, which was given power over matters such as air quality, nature conservation, and environmental law.

The ecological sustainability of social housing in Vienna has come partly as a result of developing visions on urbanism that take into account the rhetoric on global climate change that has spread heavily since the advent of the 21st century. Ideas of ecological sustainability and social sustainability have been able to merge with one another due to their emphasis on walkable and car free environments, and social sustainability has now come to fundamentally include notions of environmental concern. Academia has recognized the merging of these motifs for quite some time, with policies being analyzed from a social-ecological lens in contexts as disparate as the United States (Trosper, 2002), Indonesia (Alcorn et al., 2002), and southern Brazil (Berkes & Seixas, 2002). The social-ecological view and its effects on social housing can clearly be seen in the city's STEP 2025 plan, which aims to promote urban sustainability as the local population grows. The Municipal Department of Urban Development and Planning (STEP, 2014) states the following in their STEP 2025 Urban Development Plan.

> Another important vehicle for realising land potentials lies in the optimised fine-tuning of public investments in technical, social and "green" (= green space) infrastructure and housing production. The City of Vienna will advance and refine the processes necessary towards this purpose. (p. 52)

Clearly, Vienna's Department of Urban Development and Planning is maintaining an ecological ethos that has affected policy in the social housing sphere. A look at their website, or that of the Municipal Department for Environmental Protection, would reveal many action plans centered around urban renewal and sustainability.

Action plans like that described above epitomize the current methods that constitute environmental policy assembly in contemporary Vienna, including as they are applied to social housing. To understand these methods, it is important to quickly look at the development of environmental policy in Vienna. Mocca et al. (2020) identify a number of major events that have played a key role in this development, and I will briefly summarize them since they highlight some of the actors, labor, and power structures which impact social housing's sustainability. Political events occurring above the municipal level, such as the fall of the Iron Curtain and Austria's accession to the Climate Alliance in 1991, inspired environmental policy that engendered "local action with global objectives" (p. 8). In order to cut down on CO2 emissions, workers for the Environmental Protection Department created the KliP Method, which would predict CO2 trends in Vienna based on the effects of different potential policies. Consequently, the Viennese Climate Program (KliP) was established. KliP worked with two external consultant companies to develop around 300 concrete policy measures. One of the five major focus areas identified within these policy measures was housing.

Mocca et al. (2020) continue that the early 2000s saw important change in Vienna's environmental approach as well, with the government restructuring its top-down silo approach to administrative duties to one that is based on interdepartmental cooperation. This change in administrative leadership created conditions for sustainable policy to emerge from multiple departments and receive broad governmental support, even during the years that the SDAP shared power with the conservative People's Party in a coalition government. Among these developments was the 2000 Strategy Plan for Vienna, which called for inclusion of utility companies, scientific advisors, and the

general public in the formulation of sustainable policy. This concrete engagement of citizens took place in "Wiener Stadtdialog," or Vienna City Dialogue. The public was invited to participate in discussions about the policy's ideas and to share their thoughts on it as members of the community. It is worth noting that Vienna's attempts to engage the public on sustainability issues at this time was not always properly executed. An example of this can clearly be seen in the LA 21 case, discussed in the "Social Capital" section. Politicians, investors, and bureaucrats possessed more power than Viennese organizers with whom they were at odds, and thus the organizers were unable to protect the public green space (Novy & Hammer, 2007). Nevertheless, citizens were engaged on the 2000 Strategy Plan which would inevitably lead to the Climate Protection Program, although it is unclear the extent to which constituent opinion influenced the policy.

It should be unsurprising that European cities like Vienna would get serious about ecologically sustainable policy around the early 2000s since they had been exposed to the potential consequences of a climate crisis. Europeans must hold in fairly recent memory the 2003 heatwave that killed approximately 70,000 people across Europe and, during its peak, raised mortality in Austria by 12.6%. Nearby Germany saw the excess mortality ratio jump by nearly 30% (Robine et al., 2008). Such traumatic experiences must have at least played a minor role in the decision of European cities to begin implementing ecologically-minded policy. Worry about heat-related crises has clearly penetrated Vienna's Municipal Department for Environmental Protection, which states in a 2019 report that countering the effects of climate change in urban areas, especially the "urban heat islands," requires strategic planning and targeted support for cooling measures (Vienna Environmental Protection Department, 2019, p. 3).

As the 2000s progressed into the 2010s, new strategies for promoting sustainability were created. In 2011, three stakeholder fora led to the Climate and Energy Fund supporting the "Smart City Wien" project, which was followed by six additional fora after its completion. In attendance at each forum were representatives of public utility companies, high-tech businesses, and research institutions. The inclusion of these voices in the policy development process shows the multifaceted interests and demographics with which the municipality's departments were attempting to engage (Mocca et al., 2020). This development of the "smart city" approach was built on the back of many preceding milestones in the development of smart city capabilities across the world. 1974 is generally considered to be the year that smart cities entered the consciousness of city planners, with Los Angeles creating the first urban big data project. Almost two decades later, Amsterdam became the first smart city when they created a virtual digital city in 1994. As of 2011, there is an annual Smart City Expo World Congress which allows city planners from around the world to observe the development of smart cities (GlobalData Thematic Research, 2020). Vienna's transition to smart city focus must be understood in part as a result of this worldwide trend mixing with the pre-existing sustainable orientation of the SDAP and Vienna's interdepartmental structure. In fact, the Smart City Wien Agency serves as the central coordination point for not only different municipal departments but also for the public utility companies, tech businesses, and research institutions (Vienna City Administration, 2016).

The 21st century spread of social-ecological urbanism was also predated and bolstered by architectural advancements that permitted greater insulation of homes, thus allowing for lower energy demands. A 1988 project carried out by Wolfgang Feist of

Germany and Bo Adamson of Sweden introduced the Passivhaus ("passive house" in English) standard for ecological sustainability, which aims to reduce energy consumption while providing comfort by post-heating and post-cooling air. The method was developed as a result of multiple influences from around the world. For instance, Swedish super-insulated homes and passive solar architecture allowed insulation and ventilation technologies to advance in complexity (Moreno-Rangel, 2020). Additionally, Adamson recalls receiving inspiration for the Passivhaus from a trip to Southern China where he noted that the unheated houses he was working on were thermally passive (Krämer, 2016). The first Passivhaus was built in Darmstadt, Germany in 1990, and in 1996 the Passive House Institute was established to fund Passivhaus research, offer building certification, and create training programs (Moreno-Rangel, 2020; Passive House Institute, n.d.).

In 1994, Austria adopted the Passivhaus standard, in which "the heat loss that typically takes place in buildings through the walls, roof and windows is drastically reduced due to high quality thermal insulation, windows with triple glazing, an airtight building envelope, and a ventilation system with heat recovery among other things" (Passive House Institute, 2021, p. 4). This standard guides private and public construction throughout Austria, particularly since 2009 when the country introduced new energy efficiency measures (Walker, 2021). Even before then, those in powerful positions relative to the social housing sector have embraced the 21st century push for energy efficiency. Förster of the Department of Housing Research for the city of Vienna wrote in 2008 that "[s]ince 1998 all subsidized new housing developments have been within the low-energy standard threshold (max. 50 kWh per square meter a year)" (p. 121).

Furthermore, due to a city-owned heating system, Vienna saves about 64% of all of its

primary energy. This equals out to a reduction of one million tons of CO2 (Förster,

2013). It is important to note that this heating-system has changed in form over time,

however. When Austria joined the European Union towards the end of the 20th century,

Vienna was soon compelled to privatize their utility companies. The city still owns the

companies, but its authority to make decisions over them has been significantly

diminished. Nevertheless, utilities for social housing still follow sustainable guidelines

under this liberalized management style. Co-generation continued to be expanded as a

power source for social housing even after the change was made (Mocca et al., 2020).

Figure 4.1 shows elements of this.

Vienna's success with climate should also be understood against the backdrop of

Austria's national ecological policy, which has struggled considerably. Austrian leaders

committed to the Kyoto Protocol in 1990, yet low commitment and policy inconsistency

have led to poor integration of holistic climate policy. Niedertscheider et al. (2018) argue

that these struggles have come from the federalist government structure, which faces

opposition from much of the Länder on climate policy, and corporatism, which has been

fundamentally woven into the government's climate response. For example, the 1990

Austrian CO2 Commission was designed so that it would be composed partly of

corporate interest groups which obviously ended up being opposed to bold climate

policy. Thus, Vienna's social housing program has achieved its success both in-spite of

the national government, which offers little national guidance for climate policy, and

thanks to the elements of federalism that have allowed Vienna to have heavy control over

its own policy since it is both a state and a municipality.
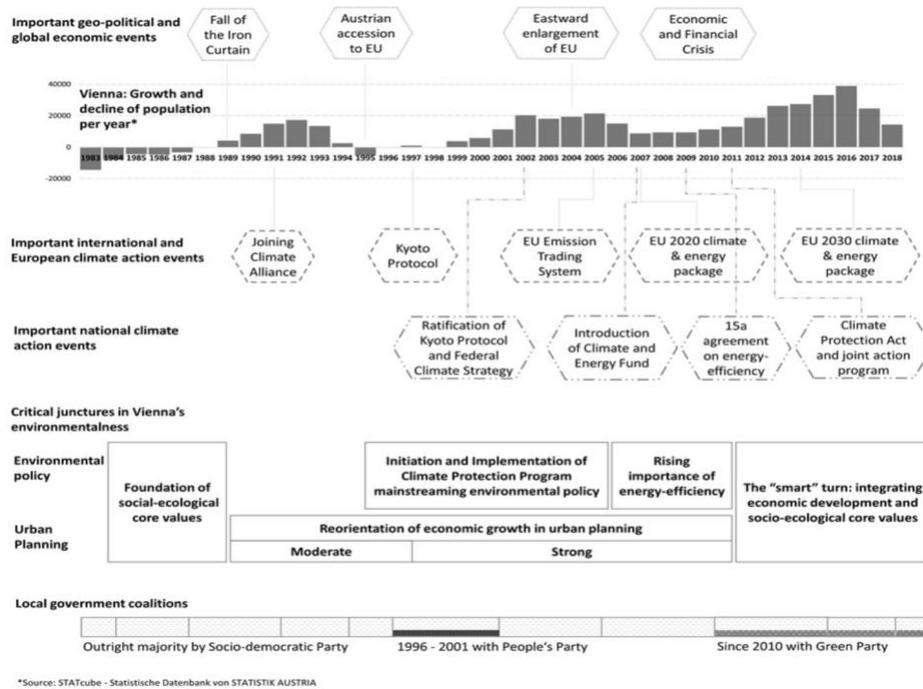
Figure 4.1. Vienna's environmental policy trajectory. (Mocca et al., 2020).

As far as value-based evaluation is concerned, Vienna should receive a 3 on *Ecological Sustainability* and *Architectural Quality*. Although some hiccups may have occurred in the process of assembling sustainable policy (see the LA 21 discussion), overall the city has displayed a committed effort to sustainable design in social housing and the city at large. With the broad legislative and executive power that Vienna maintains as a state and municipality, multiple departments have been able to work in tandem on projects that promote sustainable development in an ecological and architectural sense. The quality of Viennese social housing leaves little to be desired. Before a social housing unit can be built, it must be approved by a jury. Jury approval is predicated on four criteria: architectural quality, environmental performance, social sustainability, and economic parameters (Vienna's Unique Social Housing Program,

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n.d.). These specific considerations show their ambition to provide high quality housing, and there seems to be consensus in the media that this ambition is regularly satisfied. Attractive new neighborhoods are frequently popping up in Vienna while almost two-thirds of existing municipal housing has been renovated to improve livability (Housing in Vienna, 2016).   For these accomplishments that affirm Vienna's commitment to sustainability, the Viennese social housing program receives a 3 for both indicators under the ideal of *Sustainable Design*.

  Ecological Sustainability - 3

  Architectural Quality - 3

Conclusion

This paper has proceeded by offering a definition of social housing, conceptualizing the ideals of social housing, identifying potential indicators of ideal-fulfillment, and finally using these indicators to assess ideal actualization in Vienna, Austria. The research conducted for this analysis of Vienna's social housing focused primarily on data that emphasized the tangible policy actors, the impact of time and metanarratives, and the program's relationship with exteriority. In this, Viennese social housing has been portrayed in a way that to some extent captures the nature of the program as it interacts with its policy environment. The results of Chapter 4's analysis indicate that the program is largely effective at actualizing social housing ideals, particularly in the area of sustainable design. Ecological sustainability and architectural quality both appeared to be high enough to merit the highest possible score as indicators of sustainable design. The other ideals were observed to be slightly less fulfilled, with the social capital ideal receiving a 2 on each indicator and the accessible, decommodified housing ideal receiving three 2's and a 3.

These results indicate relatively high ideal actualization in Vienna. While the program is not perfect, it does at least partially fulfill each ideal-indicator. This gives reason to believe that the social housing administration is likely aware of the ideals it should be working towards. While the city is unlikely to have conceptualized the ideal social housing program as this paper has, it seems that their policy agenda is in line with the obligations this paper assigns to a properly run program. The shortcomings of Viennese social housing often dealt not with poor leadership within the local housing administration but rather with private market involvement.

It is worth noting that the findings of this paper are largely based on secondary research. Future research into this subject could benefit from bringing in more primary sources, especially if social housing is to be thought of as a policy assemblage. Primary sources are of known value to the assemblage process due to their ability to uncover the perspectives and inclinations of legitimate policy actors. Thus, interviews and on-site research could provide more substantial assemblage of social housing.

This paper also has implications for policy actors. Those who influence any type of policy could benefit from thinking of policy implications in an ideal-centered way, reminding oneself to think not only about what a policy is doing but also where it is going. This added dimension to policy analysis could help bring about more coherent policy. Additionally, social housing policy actors may find particular value in Chapter 4 since it illustrates specifically how social housing policy can achieve success within a particular context. It is important to note that there are factors (such as Vienna's interiority and the flux that all policy develops under) which prevent us from taking Vienna's success as direct lessons for how other cities could implement successful social housing. For instance, we cannot conclude that Vienna's success in providing municipal housing throughout the 20th century justifies the same program of municipal housing provision in Berlin. Policy is produced through the interactions of heterogenous actors, many of which will be different in even a slightly different context of time or place. Therefore, policy actors should instead look to the interactions between these heterogenous actors as they occurred in Vienna in order to better understand how similar interactions could potentially occur in a separate context. Broadening the depth of

research that highlights these interactions should help policy actors to make more informed decisions about how to develop policy with one another.

Future research into social housing along the parameters developed in Chapter 2 could benefit from a look into programs that have notable differences in policy approaches. For instance, one might discover an interesting contrast with Vienna's approach by analyzing and assembling social housing in the Netherlands, where the private market appears to have bolstered its influence faster and more strongly than in Vienna. For more study into critically acclaimed social housing programs, Singapore's public housing seems to present an interesting story of general success with a unique approach to urban design that prioritizes the high-rise model. This same high-rise model could be studied in Hong Kong, which is notorious for its tiny units and insufficient supply (La, 2020).

An assemblage approach could be helpful in studying social housing programs that are rapidly evolving, leaving much room to observe the fluctuation of policy approaches. Kenya's Towards 2030 Vision, driven by the Big Four Agenda which seeks to provide food security, affordable housing, universal health care, manufacturing job creation, could produce a number of new policy interactions that deserve attention. Similarly, Thailand's Community Organizations Development Group (CODI) is a relatively young program aimed at providing, among other things, grassroots assistance to both rural and urban Thais. As this program gains maturity and potentially endures more changes in governance, it will be important to keep track of the assembled interactions defining the program and its success or failure.

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