

Research project

## **„Housing and socio-spatial integration of migrants – allocation policies of housing associations”**

Due to the increasing number of refugees, housing associations and municipalities face enormous challenges regarding the provision of housing. Since the housing market and its distributional mechanisms significantly impact the spatial distribution of residents and, subsequently, their social coexistence, they play a crucial role for a successful socio-spatial integration. At the same time, numerous studies reveal that having a migration background exacerbates the access to the housing market.

So far, there are only few studies analysing the strategies housing associations use to respond to immigration and to the increasing levels of diversity. Thus, this project tries to fill this gap. It examines how housing associations' allocation practices structure immigrants' access to the rental housing market in different urban contexts and to what extent they consequently influence socio-spatial segregation and integration in urban neighbourhoods. Apart from focusing solely on the housing association's allocation practices, the project additionally seeks to reveal their interplay with municipal housing and integration strategies as well governance structures within the neighbourhood. The project's main aim is to identify the challenges that housing associations face with regards to allocation and diversity management and to subsequently deduce recommendations to further develop diversity oriented housing policies.

Apart from a general documentation of institutional changes in housing associations' diversity policy in Germany – as well as in the neighbouring countries Austria, France, and the Netherlands – the project includes a more in-depth analysis of the housing associations' strategic focus, their allocation practices as well as their (de)segregating effects in three selected city regions: Berlin, Düsseldorf, and Hamburg. All case studies are shaped by migration and characterised by a tense housing market. Therefore, they all face particular challenges regarding their housing and integration policies and are thus especially “susceptible” to practices of selection. Based on qualitative interviews with representatives of housing associations and local experts from the housing sector, politics, administration, and civil society, distinct local challenges as well as good practices shall be revealed, which will subsequently be framed and discussed in focus groups.

**Client:** vhw – Bundesverband für Wohnen und Stadtentwicklung e.V.

**Partner:** ILS – Research Institute for Regional and Urban Development (lead partner)  
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