



CONSULTING

NEWSLETTER 2020/2

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Berlin, Germany

Rent Freezing successful



The “Mietendeckel” (literally “rent lid”) decided by the Berlin Senate in 2019 establishes that rents in Berlin must not be increased till 2021. Landlords risk penalties up to € 500,000 in case of illegal rent increases. Berliner Mieterverein (Tenants Association) welcomed the new law but criticizes that implementation is only based on tenants ‘complaints to the courts without a special arbitration process at the Senate. At the same time, although seen as a success

to limitate rent increases the biggest obstacle to affordable housing is the increase in land prices, and the state of Berlin is expected to introduce new instruments to activate building land faster.

For more info see:

<https://www.berliner-mieterverein.de/>

Vorarlberg, Austria

Timber Building versus Concrete

The Austrian region of Vorarlberg has a long-standing tradition of timber building. Now, for the first time, a comparative housing project has been built. Rhomberg, a well-established timber constructor erected two identical three-level buildings with rental housing and some home ownership units in the small town of Wolfurt, one as a timber building, the other as a massive concrete building. While construction costs were nearly the same the timber building took only half of the time to build- 6 months versus 12

months. Evaluation by an independent research institute will continue including topics like energy performance, maintenance costs, and residents' satisfaction.

For more info see:

<https://www.holzbauaustria.at/technik/2020/02/rhomberg-stahl-beton-holz-vergleich.html>



Confronting the urban Housing Affordability Crisis: 5 Cities / 6 Policies / 3 Recommendations

Erfurt University based researcher Dr. Steffen Wetzstein confronts one of the biggest contemporary public policy conundrums: the challenge of decreasing housing affordability for urban residents. Comparing recent policy approaches across five cities from advanced economy countries – Berlin/ Germany, Vienna/ Austria, Singapore, Sydney (Australia, Auckland/ New Zealand – he singles out six approaches as especially prominent: market-based housing supply; direct price/rent control; construction cost reduction; non-market-based housing supply; demand-side interventions; urban land market interventions. Importantly, while all strategies face serious tensions, contradictions, and implementation barriers, the latter three interventions are more likely to have a positive and lasting impact. A lasting and fair solution to the urban housing affordability crisis will both depend on seriously tackling the urban land question

– thus strategically cooling global demand (as in Singapore)- and re-investing in subsidized housing (as in Vienna) urban housing, as Wetzstein concludes, “currently experiences one of the largest waves of repoliticisation”. Or:” Affordable urban housing as new and ethical project is just beginning to rise”. For more information please write directly to: steffen.wetzstein@uwa.edu.au

Los Angeles, USA

Container Architecture

Long Beach based Studio One Eleven has contributed to the affordable housing discussion with its Watts Work project at East 95th Street / Compton Avenue. The community consists of 58 modular shipping containers dedicated to homeless plus a manager's unit, laundry room, service provider offices, and bicycle parking. Overlooking the street corner, the community room opens onto a landscape's patio. This compact building was designed with a focus on exterior stairways connecting a variety of open spaces at various levels. The open stairs at each

end of the building, in conjunction with open corridors provide cross ventilation and encourage tenants to engage in a healthy lifestyle. This development took on an innovative approach to financing cost-effective housing, through use of modular design and various funding's sources, such as Proposition HHH funds. The development has received recognition from Mayor Garcetti's Housing Innovation Challenge with a \$23.8 million grant.

For more information see: <https://studio-111.com/>



Vienna, Austria

IBA_Vienna Intermediary Presentation

IBA_Vienna (International building Exhibition “New Social Housing”), scheduled till 2022, will present its main findings and well over 100 new housing projects at its Intermediary Presentation “Wie wohnen wir morgen?” (“How are we going to live tomorrow?”) from April 28 to June 18. The exhibition at West (former Sophien-Hospital), at Stollgasse17/ Neubaugürtel, 1070 Vienna, will be open Tuesday-Saturday 10am-7 pm, admis-

sion is free. The exhibition will be accompanied by a series of lectures and presentations

Latest news: Due to the Covid19 restrictions the Intermediary Presentation will be postponed to fall 2020! We shall keep you informed. You can always follow the development at: www.iba-wien.at



Recommended Reading

Wolfgang Förster: 2000 Jahre Wohnen in Wien/ 2000 Years of Housing in Vienna

This is, admittedly, PR for ourselves. In his new book, Wolfgang Förster investigates into the development of housing in Vienna over 2 millennia – from the Celtic-Roman town of Vindobona over the cramped housing situation of the medieval residence city, the 17th century baroque city with its great number of street kids, the 19th century metropolis with its pompous patrician houses and at the same time housing misery, the revolutionary social housing policies of 1920s Red Vienna, the decline of housing during Austrian fascism, Nazi period, and WWII, the reconstruction era with its pre-fabricated housing areas till today's subsidized housing bases on the renowned developers+ competitions and "4 pillar system" As Vienna has been (almost) continuously inhabited over these 2000 years, Förster argues, housing may well be used as an alternative way of history writing capturing the city's socio-economic development better than the usual list of rulers and battles.

Wolfgang Förster: 2000 Jahre Wohnen in Wien/ 2,000 years of Housing in Vienna, 200 pages, German/ english, 100 images, Jovis publishers. Berlin 2020, € 30,- available from May 2020

