



Establishing new housing commons in Vienna in the context of translocal networks

Corinna Hölzl & Dominik Hölzl

To cite this article: Corinna Hölzl & Dominik Hölzl (2022): Establishing new housing commons in Vienna in the context of translocal networks, *Housing Studies*, DOI: [10.1080/02673037.2022.2104820](https://doi.org/10.1080/02673037.2022.2104820)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/02673037.2022.2104820>



© 2022 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group



Published online: 01 Aug 2022.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 514



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)

Establishing new housing commons in Vienna in the context of translocal networks

Corinna Hölzl^a  and Dominik Hölzl^b

^aApplied Geography and Spatial Planning Working Group, Geography Department, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Berlin, Germany; ^bCentre of Sociology, Institute of Spatial Planning, Vienna University of Technology, Vienna, Austria

ABSTRACT

We are currently observing an international trend towards the establishment of nonprofit-oriented, collaborative and self-managed housing models. In this respect, ideas have been circulating globally and initiatives mutually interacting. The *SchloR* and *Bikes and Rails* syndicate projects in Vienna, the focus of this paper, bear witness to this development. They belong to the Austrian umbrella association *habiTAT*, founded in 2014 along the lines of the German *Mietshäuser Syndikat*. Against this background, the present paper explores the ways in which mobilized housing commons are implemented in new locations and the role that translocal networks play in this context. The results of our analysis, which is based on 30, partly network-graph assisted, problem-centered interviews, reveal that the housing projects have made explicit use of translocal networks at national and international scale and that vertical linking is a key condition for those projects today. Moreover, way beyond their own needs, they contribute to set up a translocal European knowledge and expert network.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 23 November 2020

Accepted 17 July 2022

KEYWORDS

Urban commons; housing policy; affordable housing; *habiTAT*; translocal networks; transnational scale; multiscalarity; decommodification; collaborative housing; policy mobility; Vienna

1. Introduction

As a reaction to the return of the housing question (Hodkinson, 2012; Rowe *et al.*, 2016), we are observing an international trend towards nonprofit-oriented models of housing and land utilization. As a rule, these forms of housing are associated with communal use and a high level of self-management. These models have recently been increasingly discussed under the heading of housing commons (Aernouts & Ryckewaert, 2017, 2018; Angotti, 2008; Bunce, 2016). Housing commons can be understood as long-term affordable, participatory and collective housing goods. Land and real estate are decommodified, and (ideally) heterogeneous communities create, use, organize and reproduce these goods in solidarity. In addition to housing, social, cultural and commercial uses are often part of housing commons. The practices of commoning, which are particularly emphasized in the commons literature, include

CONTACT Corinna Hölzl  corinna.hoelzl@hu-berlin.de  Applied Geography and Spatial Planning Working Group, Geography Department, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Unter den Linden 6, 10099 Berlin, Germany

© 2022 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>), which permits non-commercial re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, and is not altered, transformed, or built upon in any way.

institutional aspects, such as specific rights of use and property rights, decision-making structures and policies (Sohn *et al.*, 2015; Stavrides, 2015). These social interactions can trigger emancipatory transformations; co-productions such as the creation of new social capital (Ostrom & Ahn, 2008) and subjectivities, i.e. the perception perspective of individuals shifts and they become collectively acting subjects, thus commoners (DeFilippis *et al.*, 2019; Helfrich & Bollier, 2015).

These principles are included in various community-based forms of housing (Heywood, 2016) and institutionalized forms of collective appropriation that have by now been seen to expand dynamically and internationally and to show mutual connections (Moore & McKee, 2012; Moore & Mullins, 2013), e.g., community land trusts (CLTs), limited equity cooperatives and so-called syndicates. Besides cooperatives the CLT model has experienced the strongest international expansion (Interreg NWE, 2021). According to common-wealth.org there are currently 277 CLTs with around 15,000 homes in the US, while the National CLT network reports 548 CLTs and 1,100 completed homes for England and Wales on its website. Furthermore, the model has been adopted in Canada, Australia, some African and Latin American countries and further countries in Europe (e.g. Bunce, 2020; Thompson, 2020). The syndicate model is a solidarity network of self-managed socialized housing projects. Today, according to its website, 174 housing projects with more than 4,500 tenants belong to the *Mietshäuser Syndikat* in Germany. And recently founded international partner associations in Austria, the Netherlands, France and the Czech Republic each consist of a handful of first projects and interested initiatives (Hölzl, 2022).

Against the background of emerging from a niche existence and establishing an affordable alternative for many, studies on housing commons – and more generally on collaborative housing – now no longer attend only to the specifics and challenges of individual housing models (Ferreri & Vidal, 2021). Rather, they increasingly focus on collaborations with political decision makers, public institutions, builders and promotional instruments (Mullins, 2018; Mullins & Moore, 2018). However, with the exception of McFarlane (2009), who analyzed the translocal assemblages of housing movements, the number of empirical studies on the translocal mobilization of alternative housing forms, particularly relating to associated networks at different scales, is small (Lang *et al.*, 2018, p. 20; Thompson, 2018, p. 85).¹

Here, a research gap presents itself with regard to the role and development of not only local but particularly translocal learning and networking processes in cities. With a view on this research gap, our paper addresses the following issue: What role do translocal networks, particularly at the transnational level, play in the context of establishing new forms of housing commons? This article attends to this aspect by taking the example of the establishment of *SchloR* and *Bikes and Rails*, the initial housing projects of the Austrian syndicate organization *habiTAT* in the city of Vienna.

With the concept of translocal networks, we refer to the multiscalarity of networks beyond local place-related relations of cities. The term follows McFarlane's notion of 'translocal assemblages', which refers to the 'blurring of scalar distinction' in the production of assemblages in an attempt to avoid the artificial separation of spatialities (McFarlane, 2011, p. 30). Our study is intended to make a contribution to research into the strategies of mobilization and the establishment of housing commons in Europe. This focus is embedded in the context of the debate surrounding

the expansion of housing commons, the role of policy mobility and translocal networks as well as of collaborations with external stakeholders.

2. Analytical framework: Housing commons and the role of translocal networks

Existing studies on urban commons only occasionally address the importance of translocal network structures in the course of creating, maintaining and expanding commons. Therefore, we draw on spatiality-related conceptualizations of social movements for the empirical analysis (Featherstone, 2003; Cumbers *et al.*, 2008; Nicholls, 2009). We combine these with aspects of the social capital approach, which is based on the assumption that social interactions can mobilize resources embedded in networks (Caniëls & Romijn, 2008; Lang *et al.*, 2020). Here, we assume that networking is a condition for the demanding establishment of commons, and new social capital can be generated in the course of commoning practices, as, for instance, Aernouts and Ryckewaert (2017) show in their investigation of the first CLT in Belgium. Sociospatial network relations thus play a central role for the long-term preservation and open-border expansion of commons (Kip, 2015).

Network strategies are an important, broadly discussed social-movement repertoire (Della Porta and Diani, 2006). Networks allow social movements to assert spatiality-related added value, as they act across spaces and possibly pass hierarchical orders (Mayer, 2013). Nicholls (2009) highlighted the different functions of networks and 'one of the strategic values of place' (p. 83) for social movements by interlinking them to Granovetter's (1973) strong and weak ties: While geographical places may support strong ties that are necessary for the creation of social capital such as trust, common norms, etc., 'multiple contacts' (Amin & Thrift, 2002) foster weak ties, which are useful for the creation of common frames and information circulation. 'While "place" does not possess a monopoly on social capital, it facilitates strong, social capital generating ties.' (Nicholls 2009, p. 83).

Urban social movements like housing movements that tend to be bounded to and negotiated in specific locations also have expanded their spatial actions with respect to scales, territory and networks and similar applications of network functions have become apparent (McFarlane 2011; Mayer 2013). In her research on urban social movement, Mayer speaks of a 'multiscalar architecture of urban protest' (*ibid.*, p. 166). However, she also emphasizes the need for more systematic empirical research on interactions of social movements on different scales in order to identify the potentials enabled by multiscalar action. At this point, we would like to address the extent – e.g., under the condition of a moderate transnational institutionalization – to which supra-local network functions of housing commons exceed weak ties and enable actions that assume deep trust.

The additional consideration of different forms of social capital, i.e. of homogeneous (bonding capital) and heterogeneous (bridging capital) social networks at the horizontal and vertical levels (linking capital), allows for a further differentiation of networks. 1) Bonding capital refers to capitals that can be activated within the framework of homogeneous, often local networks. Anchored trust and shared norms and memories, for example, hold a mobilization potential that is

crucial for collective action (cf. Nicholls, 2009). 2) Bridging capital follows the assumption that bridging communities – often beyond the local level into other contexts, milieus, networks – enables access to new and crucial resources, such as knowledge and contacts. Exploring the squatters movement in Amsterdam, for example, Pruijt (2014) stated that besides the establishment of an advisory infrastructure and political lobbying, city-wide networking activities and the use of communication media have contributed to the maintenance of the commons system (cf. Wendt, 2018). However, transition between bonding and bridging is partly smooth (Pinto, 2006). Similar social groups can have various belongings and heterogeneous groups dispose of decisive similarities (Edwards, 2004). In addition, the dynamics of network relationships must be taken into account. We assigned the network relations thus dependent on the extent common backgrounds or differences were explicitly addressed in the interviews and which resources were mobilized on this basis. 3) Linking capital refers to vertical networking 'across power differentials' (Szreter & Woolcock, 2004, p. 655), whereby access to and the mobilization of resources, such as advisory services and funding from public influential institutions, occurs. Thus, the emergence and international proliferation of housing commons in recent years should be read particularly against this backdrop, given the current land scarcity and high prices of land/real estate (Aernouts & Ryckewaert, 2018; Gillespie, 2018; Moore & McKee, 2012). Across Europe, initiatives benefit from (subsidized) access to land and real estate, financial support (loans, grants, etc.) or leasehold contracts (Ferreri & Vidal, 2021). Besides predominantly economic conditions, Bunce (2016) confirmed the importance of civil society or political-administrative advisory networks for the emergence of a community land trust in London (cf. Ortiz, 2017). And for Vienna, Czischke (2018) illustrated the importance of close collaborations with communal housing actors and limited-profit housing companies in the context of analyzing bottom-up housing projects (cf. Lang & Stoeger, 2018).

3. Materials and methods

3.1. Case selection

Since we aimed at analyzing the establishment of projects that reflect the international mobilization of housing commons and related networks, in a first step, we chose to study the syndicate network. The model can be regarded as housing commons and it has been circulating transnationally for some time with *habiTAT* as a counterpart to the *Mietshäuser Syndikat*, among others, to Austria. Vienna was chosen as a case in the second step, since two *habiTAT* housing projects were built up here at the same time (the very first ones in Vienna). Following a broad qualitative representation, both house projects were selected as cases, and in the sense of a contrasting case selection, the differences enriched the analysis (peripheral vs. central location, new-construction vs. rehabilitation, with/without state subsidies, different uses, differing social capital). Thus, the case of Vienna served to study the strategies of establishing and anchoring housing commons and the role that trans-local networks play in that regard.

3.2. Methods

In order to reveal the functions and dynamics related to the commoners' networks, the study presented in this paper is based on a qualitative procedure. For the network-related analysis of commoning practices, we conducted some 30 partly network graph-assisted problem-centered interviews (12/2017-1/2020) (cf. Appendix). First of all, we interviewed members representing *habiTAT* and the *Mietshäuser Syndikat* as well as *SchloR* and *Bikes and Rails*.² Moreover, we talked to nonprofit housing projects and network organizations in Vienna. In the framework of the interviews with all *habiTAT* members, the interview partners designed open network graphs with reference to contacts or materialities and principles, such as the contents, direction and strength of social relationships (Haythornthwaite, 1996; Herz *et al.*, 2015). Moreover, we carried out approx. 20 participant observations on the occasion of *habiTAT* general assemblies and workshops. These events can be understood as relational situations in which strategic knowledge is mobilized (McCann & Ward, 2012). This helped us to understand the groups' interactions and the backgrounds of their actions from within (Schöne, 2003). Interviews with political and administrative representatives and other housing market actors (public housing associations, housing cooperatives, etc.) attempted to take account of vertical interactions and enriched describing the Viennese housing policy context. Two expert interviews completed the interview survey (Meuser & Nagel, 2005). This sample which we generated on the basis of a snowball system was supplemented with an analysis of key documents issued by the *Mietshäuser Syndikat*, especially toolkits like financing plans and other key documents. The transcribed interviews and field notes of the observations were evaluated with a thematic coding process that focused on mobilized resources in the context of bonding, bridging and linking (Froschauer & Lueger, 2003).

3.3. Vienna: trends of housing policies

The City of Vienna is widely known for its social housing policies. Approximately 60 percent of the Viennese population live in fixed-rent apartments provided by limited-profit housing associations (200,000) or in the 220,000 community housing apartments set up between 1923 and 2004 (Reinprecht, 2017). The Austrian social housing system builds on two closely interrelated laws: the Vienna Housing Promotion and Rehabilitation Act and the Austrian Non-Profit Housing Act. On this basis, limited-profit housing associations receive tax benefits as a result of their nonprofit status, and they are privileged recipients of housing subsidies. In return, they are obliged to offer long-term fixed rents and to continuously construct new housing. These social achievements date back to Red Vienna (1919-1934) when fiscal policy made it possible to acquire substantial land for communal housing. Quite strongly regulated housing activities also unfolded in the interwar and postwar periods. This development was supported by a highly institutionalized limited-profit sector, which was closely linked to the Austrian corporatist welfare state model and a web of diverse parties and associations (Hejda *et al.*, 2014; Reinprecht, 2017).

However, various economic, political and social trends have increasingly aggravated the implementation of social housing policies in Vienna. Land prices and construction costs are escalating, while population growth in Vienna is strongly advancing the demand for affordable housing space (Kadi, 2015; Riederer *et al.*, 2019). Moreover, Viennese housing policies are increasingly oppressed by liberalizations of Austrian federal politics, e.g. by creating a binding option to buy in the limited-profit housing sector, i.e. apartments have to be offered for sale to the tenants after a five-year period. In addition, the EU competition commission has accused Vienna of distortion of competition on the free housing and property market (Melzer, 2013).

In spite of these developments, and due to the large share of communal and limited-profit housing and comparatively large land reserves, the City of Vienna holds high-level steering competencies. This fact yields a large potential for continued, though replaced, public housing policies.³ The urban zoning competency can be applied, vis-à-vis private investors, as an efficient leverage in terms of participating in infrastructure costs and selling property shares for subsidized housing.⁴ The most recent developments in urban conversion areas – the *Nordbahnhof* (10,000 apartments), the *Sonnwendviertel* (5,000 apartments), and the *aspersn Seestadt* development (20,000 inhabitants) – attest to the municipal capacity to act. In these cases, the City had either already been the owner or was faced with a public proprietor. It has thus been possible to acquire the properties at good conditions and to influence planning and sociospatial developments.

Although social housing policy in Vienna focuses on a top-down provision of housing for broad levels of the population, in the 1990s, the City of Vienna reacted to differentiated housing requirements, calls for more participation and the vitalization of quarters with new funding programs for building groups and nonprofit providers. In the framework of tendering procedures, this has enabled initiatives to access financial promotional instruments and properties far below market prices, with new incentives being provided for collaboration between large developers and building groups (e.g., the *Pegasus*, *Frauenprojekt [ro*sa]* and *So.vie.so* projects (Gruber & Lang, 2018, p. 44f). In 2009, the pillar of social sustainability was added to the assessment standards of architecture, ecology and competition economics so that such aspects as participatory approaches and community building gained importance (Reven-Holzmann, 2019).

3.4. *habiTAT and the SchloR and Bikes and Rails housing and cultural projects*

Founded in 2014, *habiTAT* is a solidary association of initiatives that purchase houses with the objectives of self-management and joint occupancy. *habiTAT* is the Austrian equivalent of the German *Mietshäuser Syndikat* founded in the 1992, which comprised some 174 houses in 2021. Besides Austria, the syndicate model is now found in France, the Netherlands, and the Czech Republic. Together with the *Mietshäuser Syndikat*, the Willy*Fred group from Linz has reassembled the model to the Austrian legal situation (Ertl & Humer, 2016). Its major premises include collective ownership of real estate, self-management and solidarity between established and new projects. A specially developed legal construct prevents purchased houses in the syndicate from being recommodified: Instead of the residents of the house project, a limited

liability company (LLC; *GmbH*) holds title to the property. This LLC has two partners, the tenant association of the individual house project with 51% and the whole *habiTAT* network with 49%. The shared partnership structure warrants a right of veto to the syndicate against selling off the properties. Furthermore, the financing model relies on direct credits – mostly from the personal environments of the initiatives – in order to cover the required equity capital shares and take out loans at reduced rates of interest with banks. Annually increasing solidarity surcharges as rental components serve to safeguard the housing stock and support the implementation of new projects – currently, some ten new projects per year in Germany – and thus the expansion of housing commons. At once, this objective is based on the second key component of solidarity: the voluntary advisory system for new initiatives. The *habiTAT* network currently comprises six projects – *Willy*Fred* and *Jelka* in Linz, the *Autonome Wohnfabrik* in Salzburg, and *Bikes and Rails*, *SchloR* and (since 2021) *Living for Future* in Vienna – in addition to other initiatives. The members include the *Mietshäuser Syndikat*, interested individuals and two rural organic farm collectives (cf. field notes 2).

The *SchloR* housing and cultural project currently consists of 18 persons. In 2019, after three years of preparations and negotiations, the group purchased a 3,000 m² property, including a 500 m² training hall. The property is located in the Viennese working-class district of Simmering (population: approx. 103,000). Developed together with Gabu Heindl Architecture, the spatial concept for a housing and cultural center is to be realized by 2021 – including studios, rehearsal rooms, conference rooms as well as a food cooperative. Since the lot is located in a commercial zone, commercial projects are an integral component allowing *SchloR* to construct company apartments. Besides a four-room apartment (80 m²), there will be three big apartments (150-170 m²) for living communities. Coordinated by volunteers, the TRAP training center for circus, combat sports, events etc. and the CRAP creative space running ateliers, seminar and rehearsal rooms etc. are already in operation. The overall costs of the project are estimated at approx. €3.8 million. By the end of 2019, the project raised approx. €1.5 million of direct loans (of the target €1.7 million) and received a loan commitment from the German *Umverteilen* (Reallocation) Foundation in the amount of €2.1 million, such that no further bank credits are necessary for construction. The calculated rents (excluding operating costs and heating costs) are €9.0/m² for the apartments and the commercial units (Penninger, 2020, p. 382).

Located in the Sonnwendviertel urban development area close to Vienna's Central Station, *Bikes and Rails* is the first new-building project within *habiTAT*.⁵ The group comprises 18 apartments for 31 adults and 12 children and two commercial units. Founded in 2015, the *Bikes and Rails* association participated in a building group competition, awarded by the Austrian Federal Railways, and was one of four building groups to receive a property below the market price (cf. Section 2). The environmentally sustainable wood construction was completed in 2020 and accommodates 18 apartments, communal rooms and nonprofit commercial premises (Kerbler, 2017). As the project was initiated by the United in Cycling initiative, *Bikes and Rails* is committed to supporting bicycle traffic. *Bikes and Rails* was able to purchase the property from the developer in charge, *Familienwohnbau gemeinnützige Bau- und Siedlungsgesellschaft*, with the assistance of a low-interest loan from the City of

Vienna totaling €1.17 million,⁶ almost €1.5 million of raised direct credits (208 supporters) and €2.8 million of bank credits. The project then incorporated the property in the *habiTAT* network. The average rents including operating costs and heating costs are €9.6/m² for the apartments and €5.80/m² for the commercial units (Holm *et al.*, 2021).

4. Multiscalar networks as a key strategy in the foundation phase

The inquiry of the present study confirmed that comprehensive skills in divergent fields is required to initiate a housing project in the *habiTAT* network (cf. Lang & Stoeger, 2018). Access to land and project implementation are only feasible with advanced knowledge of the property market, promotional instruments, financial facilities, self-managed communal housing, etc. (Moore & Mullins, 2013). The members of the two *habiTAT* projects acquired the necessary expertise on their own, drawing on other social groups at different scales.

4.1. Horizontal bridging and bonding – building up a translocal network

4.1.1. Laying the local foundations for a new housing project – local bonding

Our study revealed that the *habiTAT* projects make use of their local support networks with which they share visions and positions (Cumbers *et al.*, 2008) – in the case of *SchloR*, institutions of Vienna's leftist alternative subcultural scene; in the case of *Bikes and Rails*, ecological, cultural, (urban) political (grassroots) organizations (cf. Table 1). Correspondingly, a *SchloR* member emphasized: 'The Ernst Kirchweger Haus social center, the Tüwi association and the Wagenburg movement, which frequently offer us the structures we need for meetups (...) At the outset, solidarity events were precisely the important things in somehow being able to get better known in Vienna' (interview 10, 44ff.)⁷ That is, by means of trustful networks, financial resources and premises are mobilized in order to cope with everyday problems and create the conditions for establishing the housing projects (see also Lang & Stoeger, 2018, p. 50). This is also true for the issue of financing, since a substantial proportion of direct credits frequently comes from networks of families and close friends (interview 6).

The process also illustrates that proved collective action, which goes hand in hand with specific organizational skills and with being anchored in self-organized, civil society structures, is the prerequisite for initiating a *habiTAT* (or generally a syndicate) project. For this reason, the groups partly incorporated skilled people. In line with this, a member described the *Bikes and Rails* group: 'They really all are people (...) who are used to organizing themselves, who are active in the refugee movement, who founded food corps, who have their own cultural societies or work in such fields'. (interview 20, 112)

4.1.2. Becoming part of a translocal 'knowledge and financial network' – translocal bridging and partly bonding

Crucial for both projects was the voluntary knowledge transfer of counseling project members from the *habiTAT* network and beyond - the central commoning and

Table 1. Mobilized Resources through multiscalar horizontal and vertical networks.

	Horizontal networks		Vertical networks	
	Bonding	Bridging	Linking: politics/administration	Linking: professionals
Local	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social/emotional backing • Provision of premises for solidarity events • Financing: provision of direct credits by families, friends • Concentration of organizational skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information and exchange with similar (tendering based) projects • Generative spacing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Differentiated offers for the neighborhoods ○ Creation of social arenas beyond own projects, e.g. cultural spaces ○ Creation of spaces for exchange on cohousing, sustainable mobility, solidarity-based economies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of land below market price or leaseholds through tendering procedures (achieved by Initiative Bauen & Wohnen in the past) • Low-interest loan, Viennese housing subsidies (achieved by Bikes and Rails) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support mostly in the framework of contracts • Special buying conditions granted by the private owner (Schlor) • Higher public visibility of habitAT projects
National	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exchange and support within habitAT network • Financing: Association's capital invested in new house LLC 			
Trans-national	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receipt of information + personal counselling (initial stage of projects) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared social belongings • Transfer of knowledge to new initiatives • Financing: Provision of direct credits by other (inter-)national syndicate projects, the Mietshäuser Syndikat association and environments of habitAT and Mietshäuser Syndikat • Exchange between individuals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mutual knowledge exchange • Door opening • Backing of transnational network in negotiations with administrations, credit institutions etc. 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foreign banks, foundations etc.

Source: Authors' own.

solidarity principle of access to the syndicate model (cf. Barthel, 2020) (cf. Table 1): 'how realistic is this financing, (...) how are the rents calculated; all these questions'. (member, *Bikes and Rails*, 8, 4)⁸ Especially for the first *habiTAT* project, Willy*Fred in Linz, and the related foundation of the *habiTAT* association, members of the *Mietshäuser Syndikat* (particularly from southern Germany) with decades of know-how acquired in self-managed housing project development were a crucial reference, as the following statement shows: 'This transfer of knowledge and also the feeling that you've got such an enormous organization to back you up, that was definitely very important' (interview 6, 12) (for knowledge transfer, see also Moore & McKee, 2012; Pruijt, 2014). The analysis further revealed certain key mechanisms for the transfer of knowledge and other resources (cf. McFarlane, 2009; Routledge *et al.*, 2013; Nicholls, 2009): Besides using virtual meeting points (email lists, internal communication platforms, etc.), it is particularly important for the projects to travel to the open assemblies of the *Mietshäuser Syndikat*, to participate in international meetings and to visit syndicate projects in Germany. Moreover, they benefit from inviting imagineers (counsellors of the *Mietshäuser Syndikat*) and sharing toolkits.

Beyond learning processes, the statement above expresses the mutual politics of solidarity on the basis of collective visions (Cumbers *et al.*, 2008). In a similar way, a member of the recently founded Czech syndicate association *Sdílené domy* (Shared Houses), which in turn benefits from knowledge exchange with *habiTAT*, confirmed the relevance of existing 'models' as an aid to orientation and thus a comparative learning tool (McFarlane, 2011) and as proof 'that, theoretically, it can work'. (interview 21, 75) To that effect, the interviewed *habiTAT* member also outlined that 'the motor is actually this expert factory, the syndicate. Every group (...) starts out from scratch and works on the steps you need for such a project, with support, with documents, with handbooks. (...) And every group thus trains their own experts who then can continue counseling [other initiatives]'. (interview 6, 96) The commoning practices thus imply an exponentialization of syndicate knowledge that can be transferred to new initiatives and circulated beyond.

As a consequence, the findings reveal an increasing decentralization of knowledge flows. By way of example, the *Mietshäuser Syndikat* by now also profits from the expertise generated within *habiTAT* in terms of specific issues, such as digital infrastructure and sociocracy. And at the time of the inquiry, besides other European representatives, *habiTAT* members were substantially involved in setting up the 'commoning spaces network', an international support network founded in 2018 to foster the expansion of decommodified, self-managed and solidary house projects in Europe (field notes 1). The network can be traced back to international exchange and meetings organized by the AG International (Task Force on International Affairs) of the *Mietshäuser Syndikat* over the last couple of years. In addition, the mentioned physical points of interactions (at national and transnational scale) led to establishing shared social belongings of the translocal community.

Financing appears similarly important as expertise provision: Apart from the *habiTAT* association's capital invested in the foundation of new house LLCs financed with the solidarity surcharge, the housing projects under investigation also benefit from the direct credit approvals in the translocal assemblages. Calls for direct credits are circulated by the *habiTAT* and *Mietshäuser Syndikat* newsletters and thus also

reach projects with ensured funding and private individuals abroad (field notes 3, 17). If the *Mietshäuser Syndikat* as an association grants a direct credit, this is also a sign for syndicate projects to follow without hesitation.⁹ Particularly, associations in regions with low wage levels and savings like *Sdílené domy* invest hope in the politics of solidarity in the assemblages (interview 21, 80). A member of *Bikes and Rails* thus referred to the associations as 'a knowledge network, a financing network'. (interview 20, 136)

Moreover, the *habiTAT*, and even more so the *Mietshäuser Syndikat*, facilitated access to partly crucial contacts, e.g., cooperative banks, foundations and other credit institutions. With direct contacts and credit of trust – the *Mietshäuser Syndikat* has proven to be a reliable financial partner in Germany – the *SchloR* group could comparatively easily raise a credit note with the German Umverteilen foundation. Likewise, syndicate projects outside of Germany are also cooperating with the GLS bank by now, e.g., from Vrijcoop, with which German syndicate members have established contacts. Furthermore, the networks facilitate contacts with specific services, such as specialized notaries and lawyers. Thus, the translocal networks, including the national *habiTAT* structures, have facilitated access to expertise in different fields and elaborated materials and structures.

4.1.3. *Becoming local housing commons – local bridging*

Beyond the translocal mobilizations of resources, the interviews and network graphs confirm that in the further course of arranging their projects, the groups focused on building up local networks (cf. Table 1). This includes using existing contacts with different local initiatives and NGOs (*Bikes and Rails*, e.g., 'refugees welcome' and the self-help bicycle workshop 'Lenkerbande') in order to integrate nonprofit commercial uses in the projects (cf. Fig. 1). Particularly *SchloR* generates non-profit commercial spaces for social integrative and sustainable activities in the 'underserved' (interview 3, 49) Simmering district (cf. Figs. 2 and 3). For pragmatic reasons, the use of the multipurpose hall is 'multiplied' as Bresnihan and Byrne (2015, p. 45) describe such commoning practices, for example, supplemented by martial arts or



Figure 1. The *Bikes and Rails* building. Source: authors' own.



Figure 2. The SchloR site. Source: SchloR, 2019.

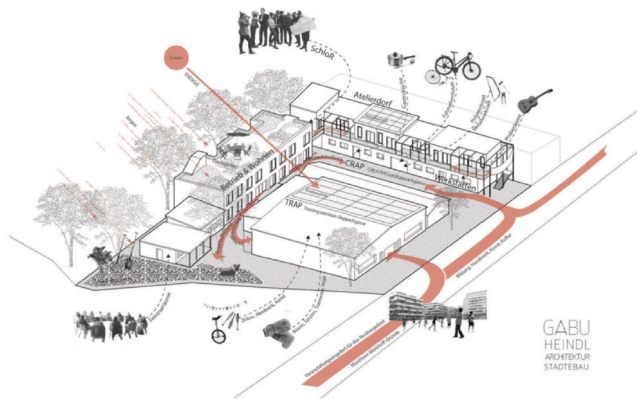


Figure 3. The SchloR utilization concept. Source: SchloR, 2018.



Figure 4. “Solidarity creates Space” - habiTAT information desk at the Volksstimme Festival in Vienna. Source: Hanke, 2019.

roller skating offers, and thus opened to a 'differentiated public' that urban commons strive for (Sohn *et al.*, 2015). *Bikes and Rails* also tries to increase public accessibility, while one member pointing out that the city administration also requires so-called 'Grätzelarbeit' (neighborhood work) for subsidized building groups. In the sense of *generative spacing*, these practices of commoning contribute to socio-spatial productions beyond the function of housing and the rather homogenous project residents (Jeffrey *et al.*, 2012).

Furthermore, it is striking how *Bikes and Rails* and *SchloR* cooperate with these and other civil society groups to position ideas on urban commons in the city. (We classify this as bridging since syndicate groups tend to cooperate with similar but more diversified interest groups in this case.) For this purpose, *Bikes and Rails* and *SchloR* make use of various formats of public debates (conference contributions, regulars' tables, exchange with scientists), social media channels, press work and solidarity events (cf. Fig. 4). Besides housing, the central topics are solidarity-based economy, sustainable mobility and precarious spaces. Accordingly, *SchloR* initiated 'ARGE Räume', a solidary action platform with the objective of preserving and creating independent cultural spaces in Vienna. The bridging described above is an attempt to spread the 'political idea' of *habiTAT* (founding member, *habiTAT* umbrella organization, 6, 60) and to create a general public (including the attention on the part of nonprofit real estate owners) by creating a common arena with other organizations. It also supports the public relations needed for the acquisition of direct credits.

Moreover, the interviews illustrate the use of weak ties to similar housing projects for mutual support, including legal and financial expertise: 'We're in a lively exchange with other Viennese housing projects, such as LiSA or the Sargfabrik or Wohnprojekt Wien or Gleis 21 (...) the extent to which you simply ask those concerned how they've done it, in a solidary way and through short official channels'. (interview 8, 51)¹⁰ Thus, these contact points in geographical proximity allow for necessary place-based translations of the translocal input and help to provide affordable infrastructures (cf. Nicholls, 2009).

4.2. Local vertical linking

4.2.1. Sensitizing urban administration

Sensitizing political decision makers is another crucial practice in the founding phase, in which the projects initially encounter three key challenges, as the interviews with a representative of Vienna's urban administration illustrated: First, the bottom-up structures of *habiTAT* are not really in line with the city's image, nor with that of the ruling Social Democratic Party (SPÖ) (see also Winterer, 2019). A senior official explained that 'this is simply our fatal genetic code (...) So, [Austrian Emperor] Joseph II formulated it brilliantly 200 years ago (...) 'everything for the people, but nothing through the people'. By the end of the day, that's not only a latent attitude in politics and administration, that's also an expectation if you've learned it that way'. (interview 13, 47)¹¹ A similar statement came from a former Green councilman: 'Whoever wants to understand Vienna has to understand the

Habsburgs. And I don't mean it as a joke, ours is a courtly, top-down structure and our social life is organized in Habsburgian terms'. (interview 12, 14) Second, although they admit that building groups provide incentives for subsidized housing, the municipal representatives are aware that 'we're possibly not paying enough attention [to new housing initiatives]'. (interview 13, 40) However, there is consensus that housing policy has to focus on holding the share of long-term fixed-rent apartments and establishing scalable solutions 'instead of bringing in new systems'. (interview 15, 23; interview 2, 100) Third, opposed to the *Mietshäuser Syndikat*, with which many German cities now cooperate, the young *habiTAT* is still plainly unknown in Austrian cities and politics and administration is skeptical (e.g., interview 16, 62). Skepticism can be traced back to the fact that until now only a small part of Austrian building groups, whose legal form, degree of participation and financing vary strongly, aim at long-term affordability and strong participation (Gruber & Lang, 2018). A member of *habiTAT* explained, 'So, as a start, we in Austria have to prove it first. You really get to feel it from the political side. This building group project (*Bikes and Rails*) in Vienna is actually a kidnapped building group that (...) simply has become a *habiTAT* project'. (interview 6, 64)

The realization of *Bikes and Rails* in the course of urban tendering processes can be seen as the result of already established vertical linking (cf. Table 1). As Lang & Stoeger (2018) point out, the current conditions for building groups in Vienna are largely due to the intervention of the *Initiative Bauen und Wohnen* (on the role of such intermediaries, see Lang & Novy, 2014). Furthermore, the interest-free loan in the framework of Viennese residential home subsidies, from which future *habiTAT* projects could also profit, can be seen as the outcome of a challenging exchange with Municipal Department 50, which is responsible for the promotion of residential construction and acts as an arbitration board, as such promotion is actually only accessible to limited-profit legal structures: 'This *habiTAT* construction as a company with limited liability and so on isn't an attempt to siphon off subsidies'. (interview 9/B, 59) Nevertheless, a certain concession on the part of administration can be confirmed.¹² Thus unsurprisingly, with *Bikes and Rails* as a 'prototype' (interview 9/A, 50) and related vertical interactions, *habiTAT* has recognized – as has the *Mietshäuser Syndikat* (Hözl, 2022) – the promotional instrument of tendering procedures to be a chance for future projects within the network (cf. Aernouts & Ryckewaert, 2017).¹³

The *SchloR* group aroused interest in its exchange with urban administration, especially within the frame of the International Building Exhibition Vienna 2022, even though it was unable to obtain housing or economic subsidies due to the project specifics. However, by way of example, retweeting the *SchloR* direct credit campaign, a Green politician commented, 'Got to know project @SchloRrr: Living & housing beneath the same roof in a planned housing and cultural project. In Simmering. They're currently looking for direct credits following the example set by the German *Mietshäuser Syndikat*. A great thing!' (Dec. 18, 2018). Tweets such as this one illustrate the new commoners' potential impact on the discourse surrounding housing politics. With regard to taking up know-how on the part of politics/administration, a senior official of the Directorate of Urban Development correspondingly supposed 'that in any case, people make themselves heard and that it ultimately takes place'. (interview 13, 45)

In spite of skepticism on the part of politics and administration, the projects have served to establish new contacts and interest among local decision-makers. At least lobbying on the part of *Bikes and Rails* can be considered to have been successful, which confirms the local decision-makers' key role in setting up new housing models (cf. Lang & Stoeger, 2018). Due to the unassertive administration's willingness to cooperate, however, the accomplishments are perceived in a slightly clouded manner. In his interview, an academic expert emphasized that Vienna would have the capacities to support new civil-society actors in the housing market over their own properties and areas, and/or their buying and providing them to initiatives at special conditions. However, the City was unwilling to do so (interview 19). However, studies have shown that such partnerships to some extent result in increased regulations or co-optation, which experts would also fear in the case of Vienna (interview 19; interview 3, 99), while at once preventing nepotism, as Aernouts & Ryckewaert (2018) showed with the example of a cooperative in Brussels (see also Szeleter & Woolcock, 2004).

4.2.2. Incorporating local professional actors in housing

In the case of *Bikes and Rails*, the larger key partners are *wohnbund:consult eG*, an urban development office commissioned to elaborate the concept and interface to the intermediary *Initiative Bauen und Wohnen*, along with the architecture office *Rheinberg* and the limited-profit developer *Familienwohnbau*. Sharing interest with *SchloR* in the struggle for cultural space in Vienna, Gabu Heindl Architecture has been an inspiring partner for that group. As in the case of *wohnbund:consult eG*, Gabu Heindl has proven to be a strategically relevant partner and intermediary, even beyond her assignments, on account of her networks (International Building Exhibition Vienna, critical urban research, etc.) and activities in the media (publications, social media) (cf. Lang *et al.*, 2020 on the role of intermediaries) (cf. Table 1). It can be assumed that these professional collaborations increased the visibility of the *habiTAT* projects. In addition, for the case of *SchloR*, a special and perhaps crucial buyer-seller relationship could be stated: Quite like the vanguards of the cooperative movement (König, 2004, p. 28), the owner granted the initiative special conditions, such as extended periods until finance commitments were on hand, in order to facilitate the purchase (interview 10, 38; 45).

Compared with other countries, the support network for community-led housing in Vienna and Austria has so far been of no great importance. Relatively few institutions operate at the interface between administration and citizens. But the trend towards 'common good-oriented acting' is noticeable, as a member of *WoGen*, a recently founded umbrella cooperative in Vienna, pointed out (interview 5, para. 21). For example, the *Initiative Bauen und Wohnen* Housing paved the way for building groups in the aspern Seestadt through knowledge transfer, mobilization, lobbying and networking practices (Lang & Stoeger, 2018). In addition, there is a new auditing association for cooperatives in Austria, and in 2019, the land foundation MUNUS (formerly Rasenna) was founded following the model of the *Trias* foundation (Germany) or the *Edith-Maryon Foundation* (Switzerland).

5. Summary and concluding considerations

The present investigation explored the role and characteristics of translocal networks for implementing housing commons, using the example of the Viennese *habiTAT* projects *SchloR* and *Bikes and Rails*. First of all, our study disclosed the particular relevance of national and transnational bonding and bridging in the first stage of the housing projects. In concrete terms, trustful contacts with *habiTAT* and the *Mietshäuser Syndikat* allowed for mobilizing knowledge via information and individual counselling. Just as important as knowledge transfer might have been the issue of financing, first considering the capital invested by *habiTAT* in the foundation of new project LLCs, and second (and more importantly) the activation of direct credits in the close environments of other national and international syndicate projects. In addition, members of the *Mietshäuser Syndikat* also proved to be door openers to financial institutions. And meanwhile, the generated expertise of the new housing projects enabled the commoners to transfer their knowledge to new initiatives. In this respect, the model differs significantly from the predominant cohousing scene in Vienna that tends to act place based. It further became apparent that the identified bonding capital extends to supra-regional networks. Among others, this can be traced back to the institutionalized network links, particularly, moderate upscaling at national level and mutual memberships in national umbrella associations (Levkoe, 2015, p. 179; Nicholls, 2009).

Secondly, in the long run, the resources permanently mobilized via bonding and bridging, predominantly at the local scale, seem to be crucial. Spatial proximity facilitated the Viennese *habiTAT* projects to benefit from relationships with trusted groups of actors in order to receive financial and emotional support. The commoners further established networks with comparable interest groups (cohousing etc.) whereas exchange and concrete project support are in the focus, as much as loose local and regional links in an effort to gain publicness, acceptance and sympathizers – not least in terms of financial supporters. Thereby, they benefited from being part of a wider commons network. As a result, however, besides place-making for different publics in the immediate environment (Blomley, 2008), city-wide spatial co-productions in different thematic fields appears to be a significant outcome of both housing projects' network practices (cf. Aernouts & Ryckewaert, 2018).

Thirdly, considering the ballooning land and real-estate prices, the existing subsidy arrangements can partly be considered decisive for the establishment of the *habiTAT* projects (Czischke, 2018; Lang *et al.*, 2020). At least, the *Bikes and Rails* building group benefited from a comparatively attractive Viennese subsidy program (see also Ferreri & Vidal, 2021). And the endeavour to build up networks with local decision-makers functioning as 'generative and productive spaces for forging and sustaining commons against private appropriation' (Cumbers, 2015, p. 71) is striking; not only in Vienna. In Germany, the *Mietshäuser Syndikat* has been able to significantly improve its framework conditions in many municipalities by means of linking. However, new models are also confronted with difficulties since they break with the established Viennese housing model (cf. Kazepov & Verwiebe, 2022). Furthermore, coalitions with professional housing market actors – predominantly in the framework of contract relations – opened access to further resources and exchange based on mutual interest (see also Czischke, 2018).

With respect to theoretical key arguments, we can draw the following conclusions: In order to succeed in removing housing from the logic of exploitation, the initiatives unfolded networking activities that go far beyond the needful for the housing projects. This can be particularly explained by the prefigurative intentions of many members, i.e. the intrinsic will to create perspectives for a different model of society. Certain subjectivation processes can therefore be regarded as a prerequisite for the establishment of new housing commons. This is a central difference to other studies, which can largely explain the actions of the users by the fact that they want to secure access to housing (DeFilippis *et al.*, 2019; Noterman, 2016). At the same time, the findings reveal that the initiators' transformative motivation is usually paired with pragmatic constraints on action, since none of the projects establishes outside of state or market-based logics (cf. Bresnihan/Byrne 2015). Overall, the *habiTAT* (and the *Mietshäuser Syndikat*) cannot fully live up to the theoretical ideal of creating open and heterogeneous commons institutions (Stavrvides, 2015). The demanding individual capital (e.g. organizational knowledge) and time resources required for the establishment of a self-organized housing project reduce access, e.g., for non-German-speaking groups (see also Lang & Stoeger, 2018: 50). However, this is also due to the design of municipal funding programs. The origin of direct loans likewise demonstrates the advantages of financially strong social environments. Thus, our analysis also points to the limits of creating non-excluding commons institutions.

Furthermore, our analysis confirms what housing scholars pronounced for transnational housing networks, predominantly in countries of the Global South; namely that housing and related negotiation processes are far from being bounded and linked to specific places (McFarlane, 2011, p. 668; Herrle and colleagues 2016). As compared to previous studies on housing commons (mainly in the Global North), our analysis elucidates the ways in which horizontally organized support networks in solidarity extend local places and potentially form translocal assemblages that resist being fixed on one scale. Certain conditions seem to be crucial for the transnational networks to exceed functions of weak ties and add to the strategic values of places (cf. Nicholls, 2009): the moderately upscaled and institutionalized transnational syndicate network, horizontal decision-making structures, regular physical meetings and prefigurative intentions of the housing groups. This multiscalar potential is to be seen as a central research contribution to the field of housing commons. In Europe, it appears to be most likely comparable to the European Action Coalition on Housing which Bonfert (2021) describes as 'collective intellectual' created by horizontally organized solidarity networks at different scales. The translocal networks at national and international scale allow for crucial mobilization of resources for the housing projects. At the same time, the direction of knowledge flows between national associations is gradually changing. And while the city of Vienna proved to be particularly relevant for project implementation with respect to local social networks and infrastructures, we also observed a horizontal generation of translocal knowledge, confirming that the social groups are 'place-based, but not necessarily place-bound' (Cumbers *et al.*, 2008, p. 192). Furthermore, multiple contact points and activities at different scales are increasing (cf. McFarlane, 2009), including local housing projects, related citywide and national lobby networks and regional networks

such as the Eastern European MOBA Housing SCE which combines young housing initiatives in Central and Southeast Europe. Consequently, the starting conditions are presently being reconstituted for coming groups, respectively, the translocal scaling out of the syndicate model is facilitated.

Notes

1. Analysis of CLTs account for a certain exception, although the spatial focus remains on the local or national scale. For example, Moore and Mullins (2013) compared the different scalar forms of support to facilitate the diffusion of CLTs and self-help housing in the UK; however, the focus is only on the national scale of the UK. Thompson (2018) went further to explore the historical development of CLTs in Liverpool through mobile urbanism, amongst others. And Raynor (2018) investigated the process of assembling an innovative social housing project, and how such innovations may be scaled up or scaled out.
2. The differences between the two cases regarding location (peripheral industrial versus central conversion area), housing type (predominantly rehabilitation versus new construction), financing (no public funds versus publicly funded building group) and use (mixed versus housing only) were considered as enrichment to the analyses.
3. For example, the new *Smart Wohnen* initiative intends to have a positive influence on costs with small, efficient floor plans. As rents are not to exceed €7.50/m² (warm water and heating not included), Vienna is “subverting” the purchase option introduced by the federal government (interview 15, 19). And for the first time since 2004, the City is to initiate 4,000 community housing apartments without self-funding requirements (*Gemeindebauwohnungen-NEU* program) (Reinprecht, 2017).
4. The revision of the zoning category of subsidizable housing, with which city politics have reacted to increasing land prices in 2018, is to be emphasized. This amendment facilitates price caps in rezoning grassland to building land. With regard to its factual application, the City of Vienna stated that two thirds of the areas in any rezoning effort are earmarked for public housing (wien.at-Redaktion, n.d.).
5. For sustainability reasons, habiTAT and the Mietshäuser Syndikat originally shared the norm to select (and rehabilitate) existing buildings; this has changed, as the number of offered affordable buildings has strongly decreased over the last decade.
6. In the framework of the Wohnheim (residential home) grant category, which is exclusive for Vienna, the communal areas of housing projects are funded with 25% of the construction costs and interest-free loans for nonprofit building can be granted. Created in the 1980s, the cooperative-like Wohnheim originally applied to student hostels and care facilities. In this housing form, a house association consisting of the residents allocates use and occupation contracts to the residents. The most noted examples include the Sargfabrik housing and cultural project and its follow-up projects – three residential homes of Gemeinschaft B.R.O.T (Gruber, 2015). However, there is a relevant limitation in that the residents of these houses are not entitled to benefit from payments for individuals.
7. In the further process, a professionalized representation on websites and dissemination of regular newsletters are equally noticeable, as much as a periodical presence on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.
8. At this point, the sometimes difficult distinction between bonding and bridging becomes obvious (Pinto, 2006). The present classification was chosen because crucial new resources could be mobilized through the involvement in translocal networks, although common norms exist and there is homogeneity with regard to diverse sociocultural characteristics.
9. In all conscience, the projects can refer to the Mietshäuser Syndikat as a safe investment, as merely one out of currently 165 projects has failed in its history.

10. The recently implemented building groups LiSA (aspern Seestadt) and Gleis 21 (Sonnwendviertel) also rely on the premises of affordability, solidarity and common property. As part of the WoGen housing project cooperative, the Wohnprojekt Wien is also a common-property project which, however, has restrictions to access due to high deposits. The key reference point is the Sargfabrik, completed in 1996. This project accommodates 112 housing units, hosts concerts and seminars, and has a swimming pool.
11. In his interview, an academic expert also emphasized the “special situation” in Vienna: Unlike the other Austrian states, this city was said to barely have experience with bottom-up strategies, even historically (interview 19). The housing shortage following World War I gave rise to one single example: the Viennese settlers' movement which was quickly smashed thereafter (see also Blau *et al.*, 2019, p. 158).
12. This illustrates a frequent practical problem encountered with so-called “hacked” legal forms, i.e., diverted from its true purpose (Bollier, 2017), for practices of commoning, namely, falling through the cracks of housing promotion (Barthel, 2020).
13. In fact, with *Living for Future* only recently a new Viennese building group joined habiTAT.

Acknowledgements

We owe great thanks to the interviewed housing activists, particularly from Austria, Germany, the Netherlands and the Czech Republic for their time and insights. We would also like to thank to David Amacher for supporting the data analysis and to the two anonymous reviewers for their detailed and constructive comments on earlier drafts of this article.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

Funding

This research was funded by the German Research Foundation DFG. Additional funding by Vienna University of Technology's helped to realize this research paper. We acknowledge support by the Open Access Publication Fund of Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin.

Notes on contributors

Corinna Hölzl is a PostDoc researcher at the Geography Department of Humboldt-University of Berlin. Her research focusses on the impact of civil society activities in urban space; research topics include citizen participation and social movements, housing policy and housing commons, urban development and urban policy. Since 2017 she has been studying the translocal mobilization of housing commons as part of the research project 'Housing as global urban commons. Strategies and networks for the translocal mobilization of nonprofit housing models' funded by the German Research Foundation DFG.

Dominik Hölzl holds a Master of Science degree from the Spatial Planning Department at the Vienna University of Technology. He is currently working as a project assistant with the urban renewal project 'Pocket Mannerhatten' at his university's Center for Sociology. His main research topics are urban renewal, participation processes, appropriation of space, housing and decommodification.

ORCID

Corinna Hölzl  <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-5448-5881>

References

- Aernouts, N. & Ryckewaert, M. (2017) Beyond housing: on the role of *commoning* in the establishment of a Community Land Trust project, *International Journal of Housing Policy*, 18, pp. 1–19.
- Aernouts, N. & Ryckewaert, M. (2018) Reproducing housing commons. Government involvement and differential commoning in a housing cooperative, *Housing Studies*, 34, pp. 1–19.
- Amin, A. & Thrift, N. (2002) *Cities: Reimagining the Urban* (Cambridge: Polity Press).
- Angotti, T. (2008) *New York for Sale. Community Planning Confronts Global Real Estate* (Cambridge: MIT Press).
- Barthel, B. (2020) Legal hacking und seine praktischen dimensionen. Miethäuser syndikat (und HabiTAT) als housing commons, *Zeitschrift für kritik - recht - gesellschaft*, pp. 366–375.
- Blau, E., Heindl, G. & Platzer, M. (2019) Architektur und Politik – Lernen vom Roten Wien – Debatte, in: W. M. Schwarz, G. Spitaler, E. Wikidal, & Wien Museum (Eds), *Das Rote Wien, 1919-1934: Ideen, Debatten, Praxis*, pp. 158–165 (Basel: Birkhäuser Verlag).
- Blomley, N. (2008) Enclosure, common right and the property of the poor, *Social & Legal Studies*, 17, pp. 311–331.
- Bollier, D. (2017) Reinventing law for the commons, in: M. Scanlan (Ed), *Law and Policy for a New Economy*, pp. 137–164 (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing).
- Bonfert, B. (2021) 'The real power must be in the base'—Decentralised collective intellectual leadership in the European action coalition for the right to housing and to the city, *Capital & Class*, 45, pp. 523–542.
- Bresnihan, P. & Byrne, M. (2015) Escape into the city: Everyday practices of commoning and the production of urban space in Dublin, *Antipode*, 47, pp. 36–54.
- Bunce, S. (2016) Pursuing urban commons: Politics and alliances in community land trust activism in East London, *Antipode*, 48, pp. 134–150.
- Bunce, S. (2020) Engagement and activism in community land ownership: The emergence of community land trusts in London and Toronto, in: S. Bunce, N. Livingstone, L. March, S. Moore, & A. Walks (Eds), *Critical Dialogues of Urban Governance, Development and Activism London and Toronto.*, pp. 274–288 (London: UCL Press).
- Caniëls, M. C. J. & Romijn, H. A. (2008) Actor networks in strategic niche management: Insights from social network theory, *Futures*, 40, pp. 613–629.
- Cumbers, A. (2015) Constructing a global commons in, against and beyond the state, *Space and Polity*, 19, pp. 62–75.
- Cumbers, A., Routledge, P. & Nativel, C. (2008) The entangled geographies of global justice networks, *Progress in Human Geography*, 32, pp. 183–201.
- Czischke, D. (2018) Collaborative housing and housing providers: towards an analytical framework of multi-stakeholder collaboration in housing co-production, *International Journal of Housing Policy*, 18, pp. 55–81.
- DeFilippis, J., Williams, O. R., Pierce, J., Martin, D. G., Kruger, R. & Esfahani, A. H. (2019) On the transformative potential of community land trusts in the United States, *Antipode*, 51, pp. 795–817.
- Della Porta, D. & Diani, M. (2006) Individuals, networks, and participation, in: *Social Movements: An Introduction*, 2nd ed., pp. 115–134 (Oxford: Blackwell).
- Edwards, R. W. (2004) *Measuring Social Capital: An Australian Framework and Indicators* (Canberra).
- Ertl, E. & Humer, F. (2016) Machs dir doch selbst! Das miethäuser syndikat in österreich, *Dérive - Zeitschrift Für Stadtforschung*, 63, pp. 42–44.

- Featherstone, D. (2003) Spatialities of transnational resistance to globalization: the maps of grievance of the inter-continental caravan, *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 28, pp. 404–421.
- Ferreri, M. & Vidal, L. (2021) Public-cooperative policy mechanisms for housing commons, *International Journal of Housing Policy*, 22, pp. 1–19.
- Froschauer, U. & Lueger, M. (2003) *Das Qualitative Interview* (Wien u.a.: UTB).
- Gillespie, T. (2018) Collective Self-Help, *Financial Inclusion, and the Commons: Searching for Solutions to Accra's Housing Crisis*, *Housing Policy Debate*, 28, pp. 64–78.
- Granovetter, M. (1973) The strength of weak ties, *American Journal of Sociology*, 78, pp. 1360–1380.
- Gruber, E. (2015) Nutzen statt besitzen, *RaumPlanung*, 179, pp. 40–46.
- Gruber, E. & Lang, R. (2018) Collaborative Housing models in Vienna through the lens of social innovation, in: G. van Bortel, V. Gruis, J. Nieuwenhuijzen, & B. Pluijmers (Eds), *Affordable Housing Governance and Finance: Innovations, Partnerships and Comparative Perspectives*, pp. 41–58 (New York: Routledge).
- Hanke, M. (2019) *Photograph of Bikes and Rails*. (unpublished).
- Haythornthwaite, C. (1996) Social network analysis: An approach and technique for the study of information exchange, *Library & Information Science Research*, 18, pp. 323–342.
- Hejda, W., Hirschmann, A., Kiczka, R., & Verlič, M. (Eds) (2014) *Wer Geht Leer Aus? Plädoyer Für Eine Andere Leerstandspolitik* (Wien: edition mono/monochrom).
- Helfrich, S. & Bollier, D. (2015) INTERMEZZO II die innenwelt der außenwelt: Über commons und commoning, in: *Die Welt Der Commons*, pp. 262–264 (Bielefeld: Transcript).
- Herz, A., Peters, L. & Truschkat, I. (2015) How to do qualitative structural analysis: the qualitative interpretation of network maps and narrative interviews, *Forum Qualitative Social Research*, 16, pp. 9.
- Heywood, A. (2016) *Local Housing, Community Living: Prospects for Scaling up and Scaling out Community-Led Housing* (London: Smith-Institute).
- Hodkinson, S. (2012) The return of the housing question, *Ephemera*, 12, pp. 423–444.
- Holm, A., Kravets, A., Laimer, C. & Steinfeld, J. (2021) Bausteine für ein Neues soziales Wohnen, in: *Gemeinschaftliches Wohnen Und Selbstorganisiertes Bauen*, pp. 229–244 (Wien: TU Wien Academic Press).
- Hözl, C. (2022) Translocal mobilization of housing commons. The example of the german miethäuser syndikat, *Frontiers in Sustainable Cities*, 4, pp. 759332.
- Interreg NWE (Ed) (2021) *Case Studies Community Land Trusts in Europe*.
- Jeffrey, A., McFarlane, C. & Vasudevan, A. (2012) Rethinking enclosure: Space, subjectivity and the commons, *Antipode*, 44, pp. 1247–1267.
- Kadi, J. (2015) Recommodifying housing in formerly “red” Vienna?, *Housing, Theory and Society*, 32, pp. 247–265.
- Kazepov, Y. & Verwiebe, R. (2022) (Eds) *Vienna: Still a Just City?* (New York, NY: Routledge).
- Kerbler, M. (2017, May 27) Bikes & Rails: Wohnbau nicht von der Stange, Available at <https://der-standard.at/2000058228977/Bikes-Rails-Wohnbau-nicht-von-der-Stange> (accessed 16 May 2018)
- Kip, M. (2015) Moving beyond the City: Conceptualizing Urban Commons from a Critical Urban Studies Perspective, in: M. Dellenbaugh, M. Kip, M. Bieniok, A. K. Müller, & M. Schwegmann (Eds), *Urban Commons: Moving Beyond Market and State*, pp. 42–59 (Berlin u.a.: Birkhäuser Verlag).
- König, B. (2004) *Stadtgemeinschaften: Das Potenzial Der Wohnungsgenossenschaften Für Die Soziale Stadtentwicklung* (Berlin: edition sigma).
- Lang, R., Carriou, C. & Czischke, D. (2018) Collaborative Housing Research (1990–2017): A systematic review and thematic analysis of the field, *Housing, Theory and Society*, 37, pp. 1–30.
- Lang, R., Chatterton, P. & Mullins, D. (2020) Grassroots innovations in community-led housing in England: the role and evolution of intermediaries, *International Journal of Urban Sustainable Development*, 12, pp. 52–72.

- Lang, R. & Novy, A. (2014) Cooperative housing and social cohesion: the role of linking social Capital, *European Planning Studies*, 22, pp. 1744–1764.
- Lang, R. & Stoeger, H. (2018) The role of the local institutional context in understanding collaborative housing models: empirical evidence from Austria, *International Journal of Housing Policy*, 18, pp. 35–54.
- Levkoe, C. Z. (2015) Strategies for forging and sustaining social movement networks: a case study of provincial food networking organizations in Canada, *Geoforum*, 58, pp. 174–183.
- Mayer, M. (2013) Multiscalar mobilization for a just city: New Spatial Politics of Urban Movements, in: W. Nicholls, B. Miller, & J. Beaumont (Eds), *Spaces of Contention. Spatialities and Social Movements*, pp. 163–196 (Farnham: Ashgate).
- McCann, E. & Ward, K. (2012) Assembling urbanism: following policies and 'studying through' the sites and situations of policy making, *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*, 44, pp. 42–51.
- McFarlane, C. (2009) Translocal assemblages: space, power and social movements, *Geoforum*, 40, pp. 561–567.
- McFarlane, C. (2011) *Learning the City: Knowledge and Translocal Assemblage* (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell).
- Melzer, H. (2013, October 18) Sozialer Wohnbau EU: Was heißt hier günstig wohnen?, Available at <https://www.wohnnet.at/business/branchen-news/sozialer-wohnbau-10409> (accessed 19 May 2020)
- Meuser, M. & Nagel, U. (2005) ExpertInneninterviews - vielfach erprobt, wenig bedacht, in: Bogner, Littig, & Menz (Eds), *Das Experteninterview. Theorie, Methode, Anwendung*, 2nd ed., pp. 71–93 (Wiesbaden: Leske + Budrich).
- Moore, T. & McKee, K. (2012) Empowering local communities? An international review of community land trusts, *Housing Studies*, 27, pp. 280–290.
- Moore, T. & Mullins, D. (2013) Scaling-up or going viral? Comparing self-help housing and community land trust facilitation, *Voluntary Sector Review*, 4, pp. 333–353.
- Mullins, D. (2018) Achieving policy recognition for community-based housing solutions: the case of self-help housing in England, *International Journal of Housing Policy*, 18, pp. 143–155.
- Mullins, D. & Moore, T. (2018) Self-organised and civil society participation in housing provision, *International Journal of Housing Policy*, 18, pp. 1–14.
- Nicholls, W. (2009) Place, networks, space: Theorising the geographies of social movements, *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 34, pp. 78–93.
- Noterman, E. (2016) Beyond Tragedy: Differential Commoning in a Manufactured Housing Cooperative, *Antipode*, 48(2), pp. 433–452.
- Ortiz, L. M. (2017) Will Limited-Equity Cooperatives Make a Comeback?., Available at <https://shelterforce.org/2017/04/25/will-limited-equity-co-ops-make-comeback/> (accessed 16 March 2019)
- Ostrom, E. & Ahn, T. K. (2008) The Meaning of Social Capital and Its Link to Collective Action, in: G. T. Svendsen & Svendsen (Eds), *Handbook on Social Capital* (Bloomington: Edward Elgar Publishing).
- Penninger, D. (2020) Schöner leben ohne reihenhaus!, *zeitschrift für kritik | recht | gesellschaft*, 2020, pp. 376–384.
- Pinto, P. R. (2006) Social capital as a capacity for collective action, in: *Assessing Social Capital: Concept, Policy, Practice*, pp. 53–69 (Cambridge: CUP).
- Pruijt, H. D. (2014) The Power of the Magic Key. Scalability of squatting in the Netherlands and the US, in: M. Cattaneo & M. A. Martínez (Eds), *The Squatters' Movement in Euope. Commons and Autonomy as Alternatives to Capitalism*, pp. 110–135 (London: Pluto Press).
- Raynor, K. (2018) Assembling an innovative social housing project in Melbourne: mapping the potential for social innovation, *Housing Studies*, 34, pp. 1263–1285.
- Reinprecht, C. (2017) Kommunale Strategien für bezahlbaren Wohnraum: Das Wiener Modell oder die Entzauberung einer Legende, in: B. Schöning, J. Kadi, & S. Schipper (Eds), *Wohnraum Für Alle?! Perspektiven Auf Planung, Politik Und Architektur*, pp. 213–230 (Bielefeld: Transcript).

- Reven-Holzmann, A. (2019) *10 Jahre „Soziale Nachhaltigkeit“ Bestandsaufnahme Und Ausblick* (Wien: Wohnfonds Wien).
- Riederer, B., Verwiebe, R. & Seewann, L. (2019) Changing social stratification in Vienna: Why are migrants declining from the Middle of society?, *Population, Space and Place*, 25, pp. e2215.
- Routledge, P., Cumbers, A. & Nativel, C. (2013) Global Justice Networks: Operational Logics, Imaginationers and Grassrooting Vectors, in: W. Nicholls, B. Miller, & J. Beaumont (Eds), *Spaces of Contention. Spatialities and Social Movements*, pp. 261–284 (Farnham: Ashgate).
- Rowe, M., Engelsman, U. & Southern, A. (2016) Community land trusts - A radical or reformist response to The Housing Question today?, *ACME: An International Journal for Critical Geographies*, 15, pp. 590–615.
- Schöne, H. (2003) Die teilnehmende beobachtung als datenerhebungsmethode in der politikwissenschaft. Methodologische reflexion und werkstattbericht, *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung*, 30, pp. 168–199.
- Schlo, R. (2018) *The SchloR utilization concept developed and provided by Gabu Heindl* Architektur & Städtebau.
- Schlo, R. (2019) Photograph of the project site.
- Sohn, H., Kousoulas, S. & Bruyns, G. (2015) Commoning as differentiated publicness, *Footprint*, 9, pp. 1–8.
- Stavrides, S. (2015) Common space as threshold space: Urban commoning in struggles to Re-Appropriate public space, *Footprint*, 9, pp. 9–19.
- Szreter, S. & Woolcock, M. (2004) Health by association? Social Capital, social theory, and the political economy of public health, *International Journal of Epidemiology*, 33, pp. 650–667.
- Thompson, M. (2018) From Co-Ops to community land trusts: Tracing the historical evolution and policy mobilities of collaborative housing movements, *housing, Theory and Society*, 37, pp. 1–19.
- Thompson, M. (2020) *Reconstructing Public Housing: Liverpool's Hidden History of Collective Alternatives* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press).
- Wendt, M. (2018) *'Weil Es Nur Zusammen Geht': Commons-Basierte Selbstorganisation in Der Leipziger Hausprojekteszene* (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag).
- wien.at-Redaktion (n.d.) Neue Flächenwidmung für geförderten Wohnbau, Available at <https://www.wien.gv.at/bauen-wohnen/bauordnungsnovelle-gefoerderter-wohnbau.html> (accessed 17 February 2020)
- Winterer, M. (2019, October 6) Wie die Stadt Wien ihre Bürger mit Liebe erdrückt, *Wiener Zeitung*.

Appendix: Sample of interviews and participant observations

- Field notes 1, *Mietshäuser Syndikat*, International Meeting Berlin, 12/8/2017
- Field notes 2, *habiTAT* General assembly, Linz, 4/7/2018
- Field notes 3, Welfare-oriented housing projects, Urbanize!, Vienna, 10/24/2018
- Interview 2, Spokesperson, Forum Wohnbaupolitik, 11/14/2018
- Interview 3, Chief executive, architecture office, 11/12/2018
- Interview 4, Board member, Initiative für gemeinschaftliches Bauen, 11/8/2018
- Interview 5, Board member, Wohnprojekte-Genossenschaft e.Gen., 5/17/2018
- Interview 6 (network graph-assisted), member, *habiTAT*, 5/6/2018
- Interview 8 (network graph-assisted), member, *Bikes and Rails*, 11/16/2018
- Interview 9, members A and B, *Bikes and Rails*, 4/30/2018
- Interview 10 (network graph-assisted), member, *SchloR*, 10/11/2018
- Interview 12, Former municipal councilman, Die Grünen, 11/13/2018
- Interview 13, Senior official, Directorate of Urban Development, 12/14/2018
- Interview 15, Planner, International Building Exhibition Vienna, 5/18/2018

Interview 16, Planner, Magistrat 50, 5/8/2018

Interview 17, Director, EBG Genossenschaft, 11/12/2018

Interview 18, Project manager, Familienwohnbau gemeinnützige Bau- und Siedlungsgesellschaft, 11/12/2018

Interview 19, Sociologist, University of Vienna, 12/15/2016

Interview 20, member, *Bikes and Rails*, 10/25/2017

Interview 21, member, *Sdílené domy*, 4/30/2018