

DECOMMODYING THE HOUSING STOCK

*Current practice and consolidation potential of Preventive
Purchases in Germany*

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presented in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Urban Studies (VUB) and Master of Science in Geography, general orientation, track 'Urban Studies' (ULB), Academic year 2021-2022

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Date of submission: 15th August 2022



ABSTRACT

A new yet simple policy of housing decommodification is gaining momentum. This work sheds light on the Preventive Purchase mechanism practiced in the three case cities Leipzig, Frankfurt, and Berlin. Here, municipal and intermediary actors approach individual owners of residential buildings to mediate a sale below market value into the hands of affordable housing providers. With this, the housing stock gets extracted from the market perpetually. While the Preventive Purchase investigated resembles existing policies, the specificity about this policy approach is, that it is not tied to a federal legal framework and can theoretically be used on the spot, anywhere. The housing cooperative surfaced as a strong partner in this practice, and experiences special attention throughout the research. Conceptualizations on housing decommodification, 'entrepreneurial municipalism', and comparative urbanism informed the analytical framework. The analysis and discussion explore the current practice of the instrument, its compatibility with existing policies and funding schemes, and a diverse set of incentives to amplify its impact. As a result, pathways for the policy's consolidation in Germany are proposed, and one of the first theorizing attempts on this mechanism delivered. Among others, the findings suggest a critical reflection on the cooperative's institutional tradition and formulate actor-specific recommendations for action to consolidate the practice.

Keywords: #PreventivePurchase #decommodification #entrepreneurial municipalism #affordable housing #housing policy #individual owners #cooperatives in transition

ACKNOWLEDGE MENTS

Thank you to

all my friends, new and old, who have been an inspiration for this investigation; especially Ruben Döhler for critical inputs and foreign reporting, Laura Parker-Tong for relentless walking and new perspectives, Lisa Desager for relentless talking and the perfect eye, Max Oxenaar for fish and tips.

A special thank you to Yan Tanesvksi who has encouraged me to take a closer look at this topic (that confuses many and makes so much sense to me) in the first place.

And lastly, a great thank you to my supervisors for their longanimity and idea-sparking input; and to the people who I have interviewed: for their time, work, and much needed vision.

TABLE OF CONTENT

Introduction & contextual framing	16
Germany: where the individual owner resides, still	16
Market integration of public housing in Germany	18
Outlook on the dis-integration of public housing support schemes	19
Housing cooperatives: standard and deviation	20
Preventive Purchase: From national research to local action movement (Literature review)	
Methods & theoretical framework	32
Research objectives	32
Theoretical considerations	33
Measuring Potential?	33
Degrees and indicators of decommodification	33
Preventive Purchases as a case for 'entrepreneurial municipalism'?	35
Tools	36
Case selection rationale, Case boundaries	36
Interviews	36
Interview guide	37
Integrated and comparative urbanism	37
Data-analysis	39
Analysis	42
Problem-oriented introduction of the case cities (LE, FR, BE, Synthesis)	42
Taking the house out of the market: Current practice of Preventive Purchase (LE, FR, BE, Synthesis)	50
Barriers to Implementation (LE, FR, BE, Synthesis)	61
Goals and potential to implementation (LE, FR, BE, Synthesis)	67
Discussion & conclusion	
Integrating incentive structures into the Preventative Purchase mechanism	76
Unlock the potential of cooperatives for Preventive Purchase	79
The role of local authorities: Housing unaffordability, whose problem?	83
The role of intermediary actors:	
Preventive Purchase practitioners as a case for "entrepreneurial municipalism"?	84
Conclusion	85
Bibliography	89
Annexes	90
Annex 1: Interview guide	102
Annex 2: Interview quotes (German/English)	114
Annex 3: Short description of interviewees	119

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BauGB – Baugesetzbuch (Federal Building Code)

BE – Berlin

FR – Frankfurt am Main

GIMA – Gemeinwohlorientierte Immobilienagentur or ` Real Estate Agency
for the common good ´

GenG – Genossenschaftsgesetz (Federal Cooperative Code)

LE – Leipzig

NFL – Netzwerk Leipziger Freiheit (Network Leipziger Freiheit)

SoWo Leipzig – Solidarische Wohnungsgenossenschaft (Solidary Housing
Cooperative)

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 0 – Simplified Preventive Purchase use-case

Figure 1 – Share of rented units in Germany

Figure 2 – Numbers of social housing stock created in Germany 1950–2010

Figure 3 – Typical ownership models conceptualized

AND TABLES

Table 1 – Existing Preventive Purchases mechanism in Germany; defining the research focus (highlighted)

Table 2 – Barriers to implementation of the Preventive Purchase

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

Despite growing pressure on the urban housing market and financialization dynamics accelerating, in 2020 two-thirds of tenant-occupied houses in Germany and beyond were still held by private owners¹, not international corporations. In Berlin, a city with a vastly changing housing market, individual owners still present the largest share of owners (Senatsverwaltung für Stadtentwicklung, Bauen und Wohnen [SenStadt], 2021). Several initiatives and local governments have identified this as an opportunity – by trying to withdraw this share of the housing stock from the private market for good and facilitating a transfer of it into cooperative ownership. The district of Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg has named this transaction Preventive Purchase. As this enablement could be seen as an interference by the local state in the market, most services linked to facilitating the purchase have been externalized, mostly in the form of intermediary network and coordination points. In recent years, several of these intermediary institutions (e.g., cooperative real estate agencies) have emerged throughout Germany and Switzerland. Their aim is to facilitate sales of privately owned tenant-occupied houses to housing cooperatives or other anti-speculative housing providers.

A typical use-case could play out as follows:

An individual owner no longer feels able to cope with the tasks of landlord management. They might have a personal connection with the house or live in it themselves and have an interest in maintaining the social fabric of the building. Through advertisement and hearsay, they found out about the opportunity to sell their house to a cooperative and coordination point (e.g., the cooperative real estate agency GIMA). The GIMA advises the owner on sales modalities. Then, they go into price negotiations with one of the cooperatives the GIMA lists as a member.

These transactions bear massive potential for a new wave of decommodifying the housing stock (Die Linke, 2019; ExWoSt, 2007) and are experiencing new momentum, but still little attention from local governments and media. Research on this policy remains scarce too, though its applicability is not restricted to the German or European context. A definition of the subject matter for this thesis will show that in Germany alone several Preventive Purchase mechanisms exist. The specificity about this policy approach is, that it is not tied to a federal legal framework and can theoretically be used on the spot, anywhere.

¹ A natural person, not a legal entity. (SenStadt, 2021)

Under the advice and in close cooperation with implementing city governments, intermediary coordination points, and cooperatives, a close investigation of the policy and its potential is the objective of this work. The aim is to gain an overview on current practice and enabling factors for the establishment of Preventive Purchases in Leipzig, Frankfurt and Berlin. Based on the cities' and experts' inputs, an integrated analysis is conducted, and pathways for further consolidation of this practice proposed.



Fig. 0
Simplified Preventive Purchase use-case

INTRO & CONTEXTUAL FRAMING

The following introduction will set the scene for the investigation of the Preventive Purchase mechanism.

For this, a delimitation and definition of the subject matter will be executed and put into context with incisive developments in the German housing sector. **Firstly**, we take a brief look at the small-scale landlord, the primary actors, or targets for the purchase practice for the common good and the extent they are embedded in the German housing market. **Secondly**, important national housing policy developments are introduced to provide a deeper understanding of the Preventive Purchase's trajectory towards affordable housing efforts. **Next**, the ownership form of greatest interest in this work, the housing cooperative, is introduced by highlighting its particularities and its acclaimed ability to provide long-term affordable housing. **Finally**, the mechanism of the preventive purchase is defined, and delineated from mechanisms akin to it; and lastly tied to a literature review.

3 points favoring the emergence of Preventive Purchase:

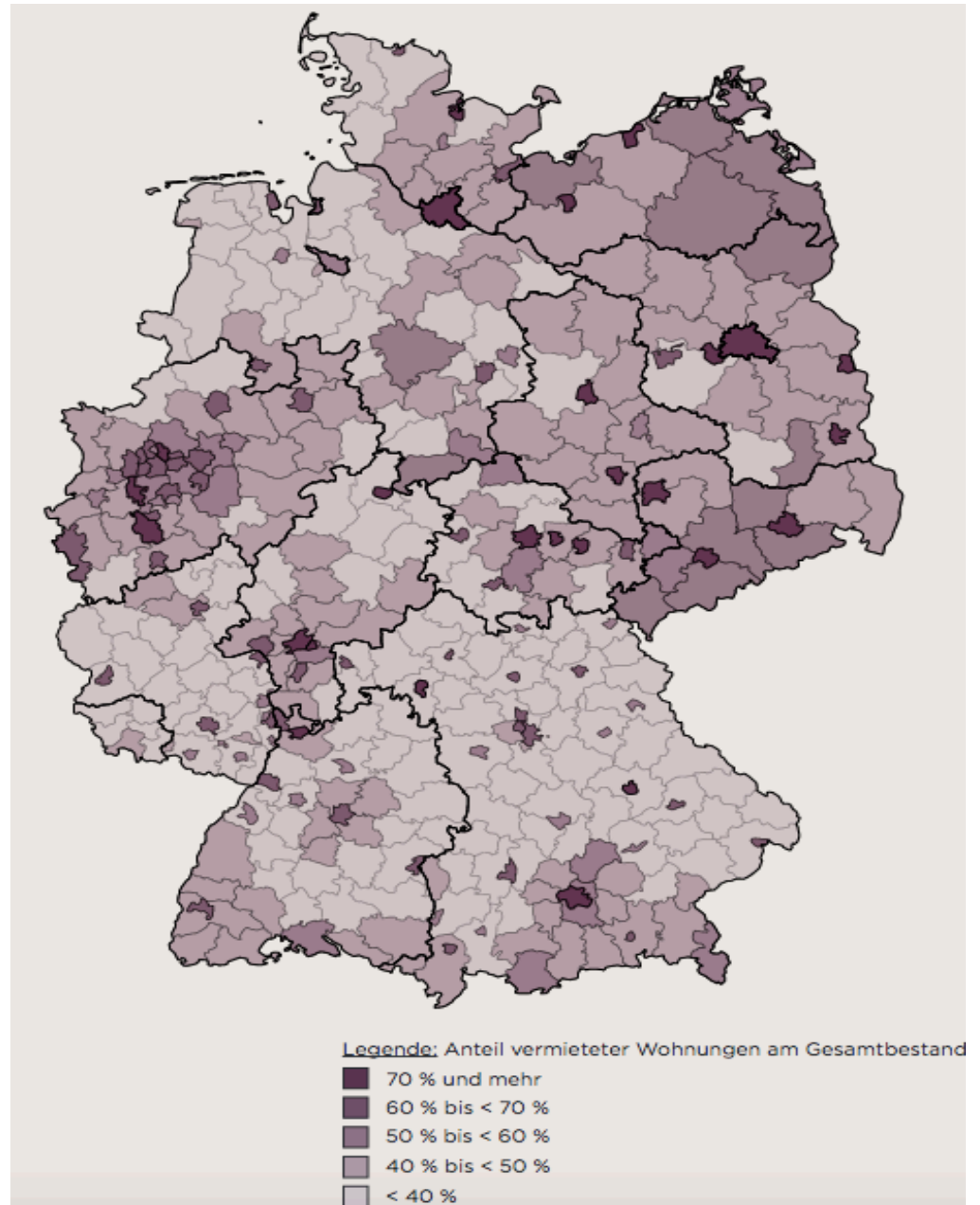
- (1) large share of individual owners**
- (2) a shift in housing policy**
- (3) a strong German cooperative sector**

Germany: where the individual owner resides, still

In Germany and beyond, much of the discussion around the changing housing market revolves around global and corporate players and their impact on housing affordability. (Rolnik, 2019; Savills, 2019) . Little attention is paid to the striking share of individual owners and their potential for contributing to housing affordability. For this paper, individual owners are defined as a natural person, not a legal entity, that own and rent inhabited property and sometimes also live in it themselves (Savills, 2019; BBSR, 2022) . The last state-wide census in 2011 in Germany found the share of private owners on the rental market to be around two thirds (made up of homeowners' associations and joint inheritance with 22,3% and private individual owners of 43,6%,

individual owners make up the largest ownership group in the German housing market

Fig. 1
Share of rental units in Germany (Savills Research, 2020),
Legend explication: share of
rental units in Germany



Bundesministerium für Wohnen, Stadtentwicklung und Bauwesen [BMWBS], 2019)², making them by far the biggest ownership group. It should also be emphasised that Germany is one of the strongest renting nations in Europe. The census from 2011 found that more than half of the 40,6 million apartments in the country are rented out, with 81% of that share making up tenement housing with 3+ units (Savillis, 2019). Individual owners are the only category of owners that reaches a share of over 50% of tenement building ownership in all of Germany. A look on the map (Fig 1) reveals a slope between the region of the former German Democratic Republic (GDR) with an overall stronger rental, public and non-profit housing market than the rest of the country, but overall a less strong presence of small-scale landlordship. Another characteristic of this market points to the size of the city as a denominator: the smaller the city, the higher is the share of rented out units by individual owners. Still, in municipalities of 200.000 and more, they hold an

² The data collection for the next census is scheduled for 2022.

average share of 65% of rental units, making them the biggest category still. When looking at the potential for this large share of privately-owned building stock for a more long-term affordable housing market, it is critical to look at how this market has emerged and changed in the three case cities.

The new federal census with data from 2022 will shed light on how the ownership structures have changed in 10 years' time. In the meantime, local authorities, research, and decision makers were relying on assumptions on ownership structures, as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) forbid a comprehensive inventory or collection of personal data.

Market integration of public housing in Germany

So why are the small-scale owners of interest for this research? Like countless other places in this world, Germany and mostly its bigger agglomerations are experiencing a growing pressure on their housing markets. The reasons for that are complex and bound to political and societal transformations. On a federal scale, 1989 is often coined as a turning point of "housing policy to housing market policy" (Holm et al. 2015, as cited in Heinelt, 2004, p.38, translated by the author) , when the last main pillar of affordable housing, the *Wohnungsgemeinnützigkeit* or *Wohngemeinnützigkeit*³, was abolished.(Holm et al., 2015) The *Wohngemeinnützigkeit* was mostly a very generous fiscal incentive that enabled non-profit and other housing corporations to build housing, in return being exempt from corporation, trade and property tax, even from real estate transfer tax in certain federal states (Länder) . For that, they had to agree on renting out their apartments at low prices, perpetually. The annual yield that could be allocated to the shareholders had to be limited to 4 percent. Additionally, any assets of the corporation had to be reinvested into building and maintaining apartments. (Berliner Mieterverein, 2022)

At that time, affordable housing was not proclaimed as a necessity to house the hardship cases, but a service that the state was expected to provide to many social ranks up to upper middle class. From post-war reconstruction on, this instrument was supported by another extensive public subsidy program, the Housing Promotion Act (Gesetz zur Wohnraumförderung⁴) , that also applied to private housing providers, given they rent out the apartments to social conditions. Although the *Wohngemeinnützigkeit* and the subsidies

³ This term will be used in its original. It can be translated as ' Law for the habitation for the common-good '.

⁴ Second Housing Act (Wohnungsbau- und Familienheimgesetz - II. WoBauG) In the version promulgated on August 19, 1994 (BGBl. I p. 2137) Out of force on January 1, 2002 by Article 2 of the Act of September 13, 2001 (BGBl. I p. 2376)



Fig. 2
Numbers of social housing stock created in Germany 1950–2010 (Holm, 2016)

for social housing managed to expand the affordable housing stock for some time, its impact is not lasting. Starting out as support for the broader society, the target group of the Housing Promotion Act grew smaller and more precarious, with investments shrinking until support was practically non-existent. (Holm, 2016) Once the federal loans granted for construction to private organizations were amortized after 15–20 years (Berliner Mieterverein, 2016), the commitment to rent out the apartments to socially affordable conditions fell through. (Hamann & Kaltenborn, 2016) As there has not been a continuous investment influx over the years, and the public investment volume significantly decreased, we slowly see the social housing stock diminish over time (Fig 2, Holm, 2016).

What lasts, is the stock of public housing associations and cooperatives. However, their constructions in the 50s to the 80s do not meet today's demand, as some cities experience a greater influx than others while lifestyles and household sizes have changed. (OECD, 2018)

Outlook on the dis-integration of public housing support schemes

The apartments that have been built by private developers as temporary social housing as part of the Housing Promotion Act, experience full market integration after the public grants have been paid off. (Balmer & Gerber, 2017). With this mechanism and disappointment in mind, new instruments, or new funding schemes with the objective of adding to the social or non-profit housing stock, will oftentimes be measured against their longevity. (Holm,

2016; Housing Europe, 2021) The same applies for land policies (Weissmüller, 2018) with leasehold arrangements, revolving land funds and community land trust models as examples of recurring best practice. (Bunzel et al, 2017; Mironova, 2018) .

The overarching demand of leading advocacy, research and advisory groups is to adjust or create federal policies to expand the capacity of local authorities to govern their own housing market (Bunzel et al, 2017; Housing Europe, 2021) . From 2015 onwards, both the German Left (Linke) and the Green Party started advocating for the introduction of a *Neue Wohngenossenschaft*⁵, by preparing two Feasibility Studies (Kuhnert & Leps, 2017; Holm et al, 2017) . One of the many changes in these proposals included a greater tax beneficiary treatment and greater tax relief for non-profit actors than for corporate actors, rather than treating them the same. (Kuhnert & Leps, 2017) In 2019, there was also an attempt to revive the Housing Promotion Act at a federal level. Despite this, a recent study by Housing Europe estimates a dramatic shortfall for Social and Affordable Housing in Germany if funding is not drastically increased (Housing Europe, 2021) . It must be noted that in big cities like Berlin more than half the population is eligible for affordable housing.

Housing cooperatives: standard and deviation

STANDARD

Like housing cooperatives differ according to national legal frameworks, their tradition and perception also differs between state-contexts or even regional contexts. (Balmer & Bernet, 2017; International Co-operative Alliance, 2016) In some European contexts they are considered as innovative, new players on the non-profit market. In other countries, they emerged with a close link to the labor movement from around 1920 onwards, and have remained a pillar for reliable, affordable housing in public opinion ever since. Since then, they have also been joined by new generations of cooperatives. (Beetz, 2007; Beuerle, 2014; FR city, 2022) Balmer and Gerber (2018) provide a definition that captures the shared elements of cooperatives across borders: "A housing cooperative is a membership-based legal association, which is regulated differently between countries, but refers to commonly shared principles (Lehmann, 2014, p. 51; International Co-operative Alliance, 2016) ." In the following text I will illustrate the particularities of the German cooperative housing sector to establish an understanding of the housing co-

⁵ This term will be used in its original. It can be translated as 'new (Law for the) habitation for the common-good'.

9,1% of the housing stock in Germany is cooperative housing (last available data from 2011)

operative of relevance for this work.

According to the latest data, in 2011 9,1% of the housing stock in Germany was held by housing cooperatives (BMWBS 2019). The basic principles for all kinds of cooperatives are regulated in the federal cooperative law (Genossenschaftsgesetz GenG), and should be detailed in the individual statute of the coop. All members of a cooperative relate to each other in a threefold manner: by receiving benefit (in form of housing), giving capital (in form of a cooperative share) and partaking in the organization's decision making. As opposed to a yield-seeking corporation, a member's right of co-determination is independent from the size of the share invested into the organization. The basic principle equates *1 share = 1 vote*. A lot of cooperatives offer both living memberships and investing memberships. While individuals holding a living membership always get a voting right, it is not always the case for an investing membership. (LE coop) Still, most housing cooperatives have set a limit regarding the amounts of shares a member can buy (Genossenschaft von unten, 2022). In practice, once a person gets the approval to move into the cooperative, they pay the shares (usually comparable to the amount of a deposit) prior to moving in. It is against the rules to sell the share for more than acquired, to ensure the affordability and accessibility of the organization is sustained.

The literature most commonly identifies three generations of cooperatives in West-Germany:

1. the 'traditional cooperative' (*Traditionsgenossenschaft*). These housing cooperatives were found usually shortly after 1900 up till the early post World War II. Often, they were linked to labor organizations that provided affordable housing to their employees.
2. The second generation of cooperatives, sometimes called 'stock cooperatives' (*Bestandsgenossenschaften*).
3. And the "young cooperatives" which have been found only recently and not always, but often, the result of housing activism, broader societal motivations and the initiative of a few individuals. (Gemeinschaftlich Wohnen, 2020)

While most cooperatives of the first and second generation are bigger, holding a few hundred to a few thousand apartments, the newer ones and some of the second-generation count way fewer apartments.

DEVIATION

While the initial idea of the housing cooperative implies co-determination and stems from reformist intentions, these ideals are not always part of their

governance practice anymore: “While not profit-oriented, [they] are one-sidedly entrepreneurial and often democratic only in form.”⁶. (Balmer & Bernet, 2017, as cited in Klemisch & Vogt, 2012) Despite the cooperatives having to adhere to and operate under the same law (GenG) , which legally limits the annual revenue and the payout of profits to shareholders (Schipper & Latocha, 2018) , the cooperatives greatly differ in their politics and governance. Any additional proceeds must be reinvested to finance organizational tasks.

Still, as Ivo Balmer and & Jean-David Gerber point out, all housing cooperatives represent a counterstrategy towards commodification of housing. Even more noteworthy, they identify a paradox:

The role of the state in ensuring adequate housing supply is politically controversial, as housing regulation usually generates much political activity. Paradoxically, the role of housing cooperatives – a typical housing policy instrument of the so-called third sector – to provide affordable housing remains largely unquestioned. (Balmer & Gerber, 2018, p.1)

Though not questioned, it remains unclear, why they are not sufficiently incorporated in policy frameworks and funding schemes (Blome-Drees et al., 2015) in Germany. Their set-up can be seen as a deterring bureaucratic burden to individuals (Balmer & Gerber, 2018) . As other legal forms are much easier and faster to set-up and require less financial reporting, in particular smaller housing projects have often refrained from the cooperative as their running model.

Despite this, the housing cooperative as a legal model has become the go-to-model for self-governed initiatives (Patti & Polyak, 2017) and innovative affordable housing models aiming for longevity (Community Land Trust: CLTB 2020) . They are also the preferred legal form for some local governments pushing for city-wide housing affordability (City of Amsterdam, 2020; City of Barcelona, 2016) . Although long established, the cooperative sector is innovating and adapting to the requirements of the market: by incorporating new instruments, municipal founding of foundation, possibilities municipal public support become apparent.

⁶ Translation from German: „ zwar nicht profitorientiert, aber einseitig unternehmerisch und dabei oft nur der Form nach demokratisch.“

Preventive Purchase: From national research to local action movement

TERM AND CONCEPTUAL DELIMITATION

For this work, the term Preventive Purchase is obtained from the district of Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg in Berlin, and more specifically their councilman and leader of the department for Building, Planning and Facility Management⁷, Florian Schmidt. The term was chosen for this work, as it succeeds in referring to different strategies: tenant occupied housing is transferred to tenant ownership associations and cooperatives, or even public housing associations, flanked by public support.

We invented the word “preventive” at some point to distinguish it a bit from preemption. A little bit with the note that preemption is prevented. You know what I mean... it has a connotation, because preventive basically means that you prevent it from being sold for valorization. In this respect, the word for me is now to be understood in such a way that we mediate acquisition processes. Whether this is for the right of pre-emption or for something else or without the right of pre-emption doesn't really play such a big role, because specializing in this as a district office is something new and you can also do it without the right of pre-emption, as we can see now. (BE district, 3:56)

The term Preventive Purchase is also able to integrate different instruments that can be used to do this, like the right of pre-emption as it is also used in Belgium or France (Laconte, 1992) . This work is not focusing on sales-mechanisms where a particular legal framework or instrument takes effect, but a negotiation on the free market takes place. In Table 1 I have conceptualised an overview of existing Preventive Purchase mechanisms in Germany. The right of pre-emption, for example, equips the municipality with the legal lever to obtain a building in favor of third parties such as cooperatives, foundations, a Mietshäusersyndikat or ownership associations.

For a certain house to be eligible for that process, it needs to fall within a Social Preservation Statute (Soziale Erhaltungsgebiete, according to Federal Building Code BauGb Para 172, further detailed in BauGB Para 24) . The statute is demarcated by a spatial boundary and social indicators applying to the area, that have been elicited in a preceding study. The purpose of the social preservation area is to protect the composition of the residential pop-

⁷ District Councilor and Head of the Department for Building, Planning and Facility Management, Friedrichshain Kreuzberg District Office, Berlin; representing the Green Party (Die Grünen) . For more details see annex (interviewees) .

Table 1. Existing preventive purchase mechanisms in Germany; defining the research focus (highlighted)

	OWNERSHIP TRANSITION	COOPERATIVE REAL ESTATE AGENCY (GIMA) / DISTRICT-INITIATIVE	COMMUNIZATION: PREVENTIVE PURCHASES	RIGHT OF PRE-EMPTION / FORESTALLING AGREEMENT	COMMUNIZATION: EXPROPRIATION
<i>INITIAL OWNER</i>	Individual owners	Individual owners	listed housing corporations	any private owner (Individual included)	Quoted housing corporations
<i>INITIATIVE</i>	Citizens (originally)	City / Citizen-Initiatives	City/District/Citizen-Initiatives	City/District/Citizen-Initiatives	Citizen-Initiative
<i>PRACTISED WHEN?</i>	1980s: practice is established	2006-(<i>paused</i>) , 2021	e.g., 2019	2015	-
	Unregulated (free-market)	Unregulated (free-market)	Unregulated	Regulated (Currently abolished by a federal court ruling)	Regulated (Currently audited)
<i>LEGAL BASE</i>	-	-	-	Building Code; Social Preservation Statutes (BauGB § 172.2 in connection with § 24, 27)	German constitution (Art. 14, 15) , Referendum
<i>INSTRUMENTS ATTACHABLE TO PURCHASE</i>	Landlease Life-annuity	Landlease Life-annuity	Landlease Life-annuity	tbd	tbd
<i>PRICE RATIONALITY FOR A BUILDING</i>	Fair price below market value or what can be mobilized	Fair price below market value or what can be mobilized	Fair price below market value or what can be mobilized	Market price	Compensation payment (In process: price is based on considerations that weigh up the companies' interests against the general interest)
<i>NEW OWNERSHIP</i>	Private / collective: Onwership associations Cooperatives (SoWo) , Foundations Miethäusersyndikat	Collective: Cooperatives (others possible)	Collective / rent-based: Public Housing Associations	Collective / rent-based: Cooperatives, Miethäusersyndikat, Public Housing Associations, Foundations	Collective / rent-based: Cooperatives Public Housing Associations
<i>EXAMPLE</i>	Leipzig	Frankfurt, Berlin / Berlin Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg, München	Karl-Marx-Allee, Berlin	„Diese e.G.“	“Deutsche Wohnen enteignen”

RESEARCH SCOPE

ulation there; associated with this are certain instruments and specifications for housing stock preservation. Although backed by law, the process is by no means without challenges: certain procedural pre-requirements must be met⁸, a buyer and capital be found in a very limited timeframe of usually 2 months (Asum GmbH, 2020) .

8 The Right of Pre-Emption only applies to areas where the statute of a Social Preservation Areas within the meaning of Section 172 (1) sentence 1 no. 2 BauGB has been issued. Baugesetzbuch in der Fassung der Bekanntmachung vom 3. November 2017 (BGBl. I S. 3634) , das durch Artikel 6 des Gesetzes vom 27. März 2020 (BGBl. I S. 587) geändert worden ist (BauGB) (n.d.) .

Table 1. Author's own elaboration, including information from Deutsche Wohnen Enteignen, n.d.; Mohr, 2020.

The right of pre-emption has gained momentum and scope in the last 7 years and is considered one of the most powerful tools of municipal housing de-commodification (Asum GmbH, 2020). Despite this, a ruling by the federal administrative court (Berlin 2021a, BVerwG 4 C 1.20, federal court ruling from 9.11.2021) has practically abolished the instrument, by limiting its application to tumbledown houses. Attempts to reintroduce the instruments have happened with little success, although the reintroduction of the right of pre-emption is expected soon (estimation BE district).

LITERATURE REVIEW - DEVELOPMENT OF PREVENTIVE PURCHASES/ GIMA

The institutionalization of the preventive purchase measure and embeddedness in pre-existing legal frameworks is still at early stages, as is corresponding research. The evolution and development of Preventive Purchases and GIMAs in Germany resembles to some extent the evolution of the broader housing affordability discourse over the last 20 years, a startling observation made throughout the first research steps. While in the early 2000s in Germany, predating the global financial crisis, neoliberal forces and austerity measures, and a reactive local governance dominated the rationalities of housing development (BMUB, 2004; BBSR, 2021; Janoschka & Mota, 2021), we see some discernment and change of heart towards more extensive funding or symbolic housing policy commitments, such as the decision to no longer sell properties suitable for housing to private actors and if so, not to the highest bidder (Berlin, 2022a).

Generally, the literature on the practice of the GIMA-model, or more broadly, the mediated sale between private landlords and cooperatives, is not extensive, or often treated as single cases. There are only two studies that cover the GIMA as a standalone topic (Wagner, 2006; Mohr 2020 [unpublished]). For most, it appears as a subchapter or is used as an example:

- » in **support of a broader policy push to identify the potential of growth for cooperatives to relieve pressure on the public housing supply** ("Co-operative privatization", see Mändle & Wagner 2007; and similar in Wagner, 2006). This period is mostly flanked by reports commissioned and published by federal ministries (BMI 2004; BBR 2006; BMVBS & BBR, 2007) and affiliated institutions (Klemisch & Vogt, 2012).
- » And starting in the late 2010s, the mechanism of Preventive Purchase and the GIMA-model and the mediated sale between private landlords

and cooperative has been picked up by professionalized housing activism and a few local governments as best practice, and re-enters into the debate on housing stock affordability. The **coverage shifts from the federal to the initiative-driven and local scale**, reflected in position papers from local politics (Die Linksfraktion Hamburg 2009) , deliberations in city council meetings (ParlamentsInformationsSystem der Stadt Frankfurt am Main [PARLIS] , 2021) , coalition agreements (Berlin 2021b) , housing strategies (Leipzig, 2015) , municipal reporting (Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg, 2022, GIMA Frankfurt 2022) , feasibility studies (coop.disco) and conferences (Wohnbund, 2019) . As the topic is currently gaining momentum, we are slowly starting to find reflection in academia, too (Mohr, 2020; Bernet, 2020; Arrigoitia & Tummers, 2019) . It must be stressed, that in some of the sources mentioned, the topic is only covered on the sidelines.

» **Central anchors to investigate and feed into the scarce literature** come from the theory and learnings on the practice around the Right of Pre-emption (Asum GmbH, 2017; Berlin 2022b) ; the practice and organization of Preventive Purchases in Switzerland (Stiftung PWG, 2020; Wohnbaugenossenschaften Schweiz Nordwestschweiz, n.d.) and the possibilities of cooperative finance as practiced there (Les Amis Biel, n.d.) .

As for now, we observe a **mismatch between practice and research**. While some municipalities and activists have recognized and are exploring the potentials of a GIMA and Preventive Purchase, research fails to catch up. A few very recent publications spark hope for a reintroduction of this mechanism on the federally funded agenda, but centers the Preventive Purchase practiced by municipalities (BBSR 2021) , not third-sector actors. The outlook of this work will tie together what the findings of this work could mean for future a research agenda.

AUSTERITY-DRIVEN DECOMMODIFICATION: THE CLIMATE OF THE FIRST GIMA

The first creation and establishment of a GIMA – Gemeinwohlorientierte Immobilienagentur or ‘ Real Estate Agency for the common good ‘ took place in 2005 in Munich as part of the federally funded project “Models of cooperative living” within the framework of the still existing “Experimental housing and urban development”. It presented one of many pilot projects with the aim to explore and solidify cooperative living in Germany. (BMVBS 2006) Munich has been at the time and remains the city with the highest land prices in the country, a severe and growing rent burden to all levels off income, while having a well-established housing cooperative tradition (Kayser, 2020) . As

a result, the city has provided the most fertile ground for the establishment of a GIMA:

The agency concept represents a further housing policy instrument for the city of Munich. The socio-political relevance of the agency for Munich is highly valued by politicians and city authorities, especially since the concept is a “modern” instrument that is not based on funding but on personal initiative. (BMVBS 2006, p. 7)

The belief that a structural budgetary deficit could be solved by an instrument that cannot mobilize additional subsidies and relies solely on private (non-profit) engagement, seems unlikely to succeed from today’s budgetary know-how. (Nachtwey, 2018) Just around one year before, the federal government announced the need to reestablish the cooperative as one of the three pillars of housing next to rent and ownership:

To prevent the social situation in Germany from deteriorating, new ways must be found that build on more private involvement while significantly reducing state aid (BMUB, 2004, 1) .

Promoting cooperative housing on a federal level at this time was motivated by the outlook of a declining welfare state not able or willing to prioritize housing as one of its tasks. In an attempt to not fully hand this market over to the corporate-private market, the third cooperative sector was incorporated and introduced as a hopeful facilitator.

The federally funded and applied research project was flanked by numerous reports and studies which provide a first access to current Preventive Purchases and intermediary actors as “Real Estate Agencies for the common good” or GIMA. In particular, the report “Genossenschaftliche Lösungen beim Verkauf von Wohnungsbeständen” (BMVBS, 2006, transl. Cooperative solutions in the sale of housing stock) provides a good understanding of the climate during the birth hour of the GIMA, how it has been evaluated and used. As opposed to today’s objective, **the report’s aim was to investigate cooperatives’ potential to buy up public housing stock held by associations.** With this, it was hoped to fill up the municipal budget. (Similar to BMUB, 2004; BMVBS, 2006; BMVBS, 2007; Wagner & Mändle; 2007) Nowadays, this perspective strikes as an ineffective financial circle and attempt to combat the corporate housing capital with combined forces of the public and non-profit-sector. Housing that is already scarce and removed from the speculative circuit, was simply moved into another unspeculative setting, the cooperative, but by investing additional funds and using up limited resources of housing cooperatives.

Another paradoxical Zeitgeist-element is added to this approach, as it is said to be acting in the interest of the vulnerable tenant and with the overarching goal of preventing segregation and displacement in neighborhoods. (BMVBS, 2006) What confuses the reader of today is the framing of the efforts of Preventive Purchases as privatization (Wagner & Mändle, 2007) , without this creating negative connotations, as it would do today (Barcelona en Comú, 2019) . We can observe that this term, in relation to housing governance, has experienced a re-interpretation over time. In their research, Wagner & Mändle (2007) are looking at three different models of housing privatization through cooperatives, and as a novelty identify make-or-break conditions for Cooperative Real Estate Agency-purchases.

As is illustrated above, the Preventive Purchase is one of many measures to tackle housing affordability. As such, its evolution is embedded in a wide range of instruments, and discourses. Hence, the following part will delve into the topics of interest in a cursory rather than extensive way.

LITERATURE SIDELINES

Research on ownership structures in German housing, and consequently literature that puts the private owners into the foreground, is scarce. Although the potential of this large share of privately-owned building stock has not been fully acknowledged by housing research and practice, a look at literature on urban climate transition can prove as useful. In this, they have been acknowledged as key actors to involve for successful energy transition. (März, 2022; Stiens et al. 2013; BBSR, 2022) The fact that the owners are individuals with very different resources and motivations, has been identified as one of the main challenges. For the purpose of this research, the insights about outreach (Stiens & Dunkelberg, 2013) to these groups despite data privacy restrictions, development of this market, and renovation incentives and obstacles (Baginski, 2020; Galvin, 2014) will be of interest. For contextual knowledge on the case cities, we find several accounts that study the case cities in a comparative or related manner (Silomon-Pflug 2018; Rink & Egner 2017; Schönig et al 2017) . Important from a city budgeting and governance perspective, covering the neoliberal reorientation from the end of the 1980s onwards is Silomon-Pflug` s (2018) *Verwaltung der unternehmerischen Stadt* ("Administration of the entrepreneurial city") .



***METHODS &
THEORETICAL
FRAMEWORK***

METHODS & THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Research objectives

The previous sections provided contextual framing for housing de commodification, housing affordability, ownership structures and Preventive Purchase as an emergent strategy in tackling these issues. This section will introduce the research question tied together with a theoretical, operational and value mindset to operationalize my research agenda. The methodological decisions and consequences are informed by research on housing de commodification, comparative urbanism theory and anti-austerity governance.

The scope of this thesis is to look at the potential for the share of individual private owners to mitigate the increasing corporate privatization of the rental market. This is done by looking at the mechanism of Preventive Purchase in three German case cities.

My objective for this work is to

- » gain an overview on **current practice** of Preventive Purchases in Germany (3 case cities) ;
- » identify **barriers and enabling factors** for the establishment of the policy based on expert inputs and process the data in a synthesized manner;
- » abstract the findings and **propose pathways for the policy's consolidation** in Germany, hereby providing **one of the first theorizing attempts** on this mechanism and, though focusing on Germany, point to the policy's ability to be implemented elsewhere

Theoretical considerations

The following considerations and concepts have informed my research questions and sub-questions.

MEASURING POTENTIAL?

We have seen that the first attempts to establish intermediary actors to practice Preventive Purchases emerged in an austerity-driven urban governance climate. The rationality of the decommodification was to bring relief to the city's budgets, by using actors like cooperatives. In today's housing governance climate in Germany such austerity-driven measures would meet great disapproval, as housing activism has gotten louder and more professionalized; and the ramifications for dissolving the public housing stock have become apparent. Anti-austerity driven governance relates to the notion of fearlessness: to stand fearless and with confidence against the forces of global capital and its promises for a relief of urban issues (Barcelona en Comú, 2019).

When determining the potential of the Preventive Purchases policy, it is therefore important to look both at the quantitative potential of each case, but moreover, the sensibilities of the actors in establishing the policy. Is the Preventive Purchases policy seen as a niche or as having disruptive potential? Does Preventative Purchase offer a partial solution for securing part of the housing stock from speculation, in perpetuity?

DEGREES AND INDICATORS OF DECOMMODIFICATION

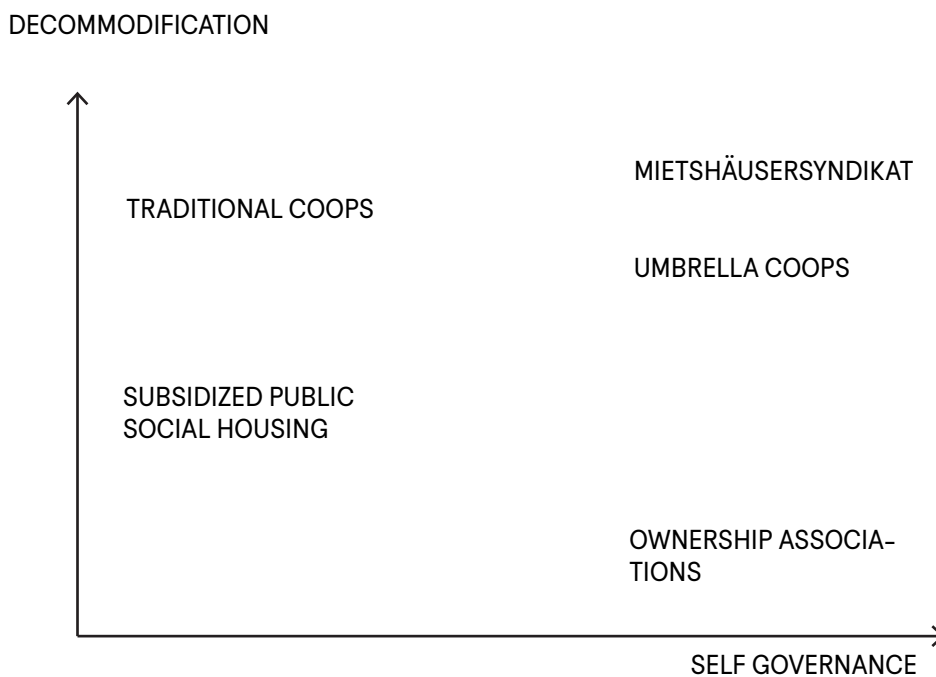
Housing policies and activism that operate with a use-value-driven, rather than a cost-value driven rationale, are an attempt to decommodify: "Every regulatory measure that limits the right to generate profit can be seen as a step towards decommodification."⁹ (Balmer & Gerber, 2017, p. 365) Within the housing affordability market, we find countless variations of how this use-driven regulation can be achieved and see different arrangements

⁹ And I think it is necessary to add here, that regulatory measures are certainly the most effective way of ensuring a limitation long-term. But it is often times non-regulatory, informal events, discussions, demonstrations, understandings, that path the way to changes in regulation.

dealing with affordability objectives and market reality colliding. Affordability projects are often scrutinized against their commitment and altruism as non-profit housing (Stiftung PWG, 2020; FR city; LE city) .

For that, it seems productive to not only look at cases, where a full market-extraction can be assumed, but also include ones which are somewhere on the spectrum between full market-integration and zero market traces: “[...] Decommodification is not all-or-nothing, and it is not produced just by macro forces. We also suppose that embeddedness in the market, and by implication re-embeddedness, are matters of degree.” (Peredo & McLean, 2020, p. 6, alterations italicized by me) By employing a perspective that looks for traces of decommodification by ‘incomplete’, ‘imperfect’ or ‘in-the-making’ cases, a lot can be learned about struggles, dealing with the limitations and possible merits of having a diverse set of decommodification-strategies. An aspect to keep in mind: the higher the decommodification potential of the actor, and its claim to be a realm of self-management, self-actualization, and bastion against privatization, the higher is the associated effort for the members to be put into each project. (Fig 3) Thus, the less accessible it is for people not ready to put in this effort, the more slowly is the implementation and expansion of it. The Preventive Purchases presented focus on ownership-transitions benefiting in most cases cooperatives and in some ownership

Fig. 3
Typical ownership models conceptualized according to degree of decommodification and self-governance involved in the residency, translated and modified by me, as in Balmer & Bernet, 2017



associations or foundations. Both the cooperative and the foundations already find corresponding regulations either in their federal state legislation or their own statutes, like the profit limitation or the earmarking of funds.¹⁰ At times,

¹⁰ Cooperative law is regulated on national state level (GenG – Genossenschafts-

there still are loopholes for rent-seeking, which should be watched narrowly.

PREVENTIVE PURCHASES AS A CASE FOR 'ENTREPRENEURIAL MUNICIPALISM'?

And lastly, the **first findings** of the literature research will guide further observations: first research and attempts on federally promoting intermediary cooperative real estate agencies were reflective of the pre-GFC, austerity-driven governance climate; the motivation to set up real estate agencies and expand cooperative housing was not to produce affordable housing, but to fill up the debt-ridden local budgets (with little federal commitment) .

Can the locally implemented Preventive Practice today be a case for the entrepreneurial (local) state (Mazzucato, 2013) , or ' entrepreneurial municipalism ' (Thompson et al., 2020) ?

According to Thompson et al. this local state is

- » willing to **"take risks for social gain"** (Thompson et al., 2020, p. 188) ;
- » works **closely with social actors** on extracting wrongly commodified goods like land from market forces;
- » **"invests directly in self-sustaining projects**, which harness the value of (de-commodified) land". (Thompson et al., 2020, p. 1188, altered and shortened by me)

Research question

What is the current practice and potential of the Preventive Purchase in Germany?

Sub-questions:

What are the (dis)-embedding forces and strategies within the Preventive Purchase that contribute to a housing market that follows societal values more than market values?

>>> Analysis part 1,2,3: Context, practice, barriers

And what are trajectories to consolidate the practice?

>>> Analysis part 4, deepened in discussion: potentials, trajectories

gesetz) , while foundation law is regulated by the federal states of their registration (Stiftungsrecht der Länder)

Tools

CASE SELECTION RATIONALE

Within this work I will investigate the current practice and potential of Preventive Purchase mechanisms within Germany. Overall, we find a limited number of suitable cases. Though it is true that a few other local governments and actors globally practice Preventive Purchase through pre-emptive rights and buying up housing stocks, it does not appear to be conceptualized or theorized so far. Within Germany we find a small number of possible cases that share a legal, and to some extent, a cultural and political background, but are otherwise rather different (in terms of size, wages, political power) .

For the thesis Leipzig, Frankfurt and Berlin were picked as case cities. In each of these cases: (1) attempts to push Preventive Purchases have been happening for a few years, with varying outcomes, (2) the attempts have found recognition in local legislation and (3) at least one sale has been successful. To that extent, they display a similar case maturity, especially in comparison to the federally initiated GIMA München, that has existed since 2005.

CASE BOUNDARIES

Leipzig and Frankfurt are the capitals of their federal states, while Berlin is a city state and the nation's capital. The phenomenon of Preventive Purchase will not define the case boundary, but the occurrence of Preventive Purchase instances within the administrative border of the cities of Leipzig, Frankfurt and Berlin. In Berlin we find a special case, as its city border is congruent with its city state border (Stadtstaat- or Ländergenze)¹¹. Within the boundary, we will sometimes find not one but more initiatives, that classify as Preventive Purchase-mechanisms according to this research.

INTERVIEWS

In each city, the same set of actors were interviewed, consisting of

- » A civil servant responsible for planning and the development and

¹¹ In Germany federal states that consist of only one city are called Stadtstaat (Berlin, Bremen, Hamburg) . They are simultaneously municipality and federal state. No distinction is made between state and municipal budgets; the respective budgets contain revenues and expenditures that are partly attributable to the state and partly to the municipality, making it a special and barely comparable case. In the special case of Berlin, the districts are equipped with some executive powers of cities, making them eligible to e.g. exercise and coordinate municipal responsibilities, such as the right of pre-emption. They are also equipped with their own budget and council, but still it is not a real municipality, as tasks and powers can be withdrawn by the Senate/ Federal State level at any time. KommunalWiki (2021) : search request: Stadtstaat)

**for details on the interviewees
see Annex 3**

- establishment of Preventive Purchase practice
- » A cooperative board member that serves as a partner in the Preventive Purchase practice
- » A person representing the institution mediating the purchase between small-scale owners (intermediary agent)

In the case of Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg, the practicing politician and civil servant is also advocating and working on implementing Preventive Purchases in his district, having coined the term as well.

As there is very little research on the cases investigated or the Preventive Purchases so far, the interviews provide the most important data base for this research. In total, 8 interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner. Since literature on the topic is scarce, I had to widely rely on the limited desktop research possibilities, forming my own assumptions based on related fields and dated research reports, and tentative conversations leading up to the interview.

In undertaking the empirical research to prepare for the interview, every interviewee was beforehand asked to have a tentative telephone call. This usually took 10–30 minutes. In this call, we briefly introduced ourselves and their roles. Furthermore, a status quo of the investigated measure was given and links to relevant resources and actors were inquired. Lastly, the time and place of the interview was agreed upon. Looking back, these phone calls have proven to be of significant value, because they gave me a first-hand impression of the recent developments for preventive purchases, which are not publicly accessible. These tentative phone calls enabled me to undertake effective preparation for the interview.

INTERVIEW GUIDE

The interview guideline is non-standardized (Gläder & Laudel 2004). The questions for the experts were prepared, but the order and formulation adjusted throughout the conversation. This was intended to ensure less predetermined answers. This approach makes it harder to compare cases, but the interest lies more in extracting the particular. For each category of actor (City representative/Civil Servant, Preventive Purchase expert, cooperative) a similar set of questions was prepared, which were made-case-specific beforehand. (Annex) In some cases, insights from the previous interviewees were used, to feed the questionnaire. This not only helped me gather information but also – in the spirit of Robinsons’ s credo (“Seeing cities through cities elsewhere”) – offered a productive moment and bringing together of cities.

In practice this means, that I would present to the interviewee the experience of a certain actor, innovative policy practices from other case cities or elsewhere up for discussion. We reflected on how these practices could inform their practice towards a strategy to accelerate preventive purchases.

The Principles of the *Neue Wohngemeinnützigkeit* were considered in the interview-guide to the extent, that elements of decommodification (rent regulation, profit limitation) , mechanisms to enforce them (resale-restrictions, governance structures) and the underlying decision apparatus were discussed.

INTEGRATED AND COMPARATIVE URBANISM

The merit of the threefold analysis is not to 'control for difference' in the cases. A set of practices in different types of cities provides a more diverse perspective of the implementation of the policy and opportunities to improve it. While I had some presuppositions on what shared variables and topics could be of interest for both the analysis and discussion of the cases, it manifested throughout the interview and coding process itself. By engaging with perspectives of civil servants, cooperative's employees and board members, and intermediary actors specialized on facilitating purchases, recurring themes surfaced.

Rather than controlling for difference, the case selection rationale and structure of my analysis is inspired by Jennifer Robinsons considerations of an innovative comparative urbanism (2016) . She admits that, though variation seeking in urban comparison has brought to light some innovative conceptualizations, the outcomes have room for improvement. A comparative practice that checks for shared experiences among cities, potentially opens up a wider scope for theorization and relevancy for cities all over the world. What I investigate is the result of very local evolution of the housing market as a reaction to very global dynamics of financialization. As the problem is not only local one, the solutions found could inform cities with similar challenges elsewhere. Consequently, the potential avenues that can be taken to tackle some of the challenges for the expansion of Preventive Purchases stem from a diverse set of international and German actors.

Some remaining difficulties with making theory light and revisable rather than saturated with weighty and ambitious authorizing voices are embedded deep in the ontology of comparative methods. How we understand 'cases' and 'theories' and their relationship raises some longstanding philosophical puzzles, such as the relation between the concrete and the abstract, or the particular and the universal, which bear on the potential

of the case (in fact perhaps better considered as a singularity) to inform and transform, and not simply reproduce, existing conceptualizations.” (Robinson, 2016, p.9)

The integrated structure of the analysis part, presented as themes is intended to reflect that instead of treating the cases as separate, I want to put an emphasis on shared features, concluding every topic with a synthesis.

DATA-ANALYSIS

Deciding on an adequate way to analyze the data, has proven to be a challenge. Since theory on the subject is scarce to non-existent, and the few practicing and leading experts were interviewed, the theory-building qualities of grounded theory could have been obvious.

Still, I decided to adapt a less-intuitive, theory- and category-led analyzing rationale with qualitative content analysis. The approach is well-suited for the study of practice and potential of an emerging policy. It also proved fruitful in considering the different positions of actors interviewed, the different set of questions and the input they bring for different topics. (Mayring & Fenzl, 2019, p. 636) . The categories that informed my analysis were: cities' exposure to market forces, practice of strategies akin to preventive purchase, practice of Preventive Purchase, strategies of decommodification, barriers and potential of Preventive Purchase. For each category, I defined gradients of relevance (sometimes subcategories) and assigned excerpts of the transcripts, based on that defined category. The categories serve as a base for the integrated analysis. Overarching topics, or obscurities that kept resurfacing were further conceptualized and fed into the discussion and its objectives.

Four vertical lines of varying thicknesses in a dark brown color are positioned on the left side of the page. The lines are parallel and extend from the top to the bottom of the page.

ANALYSIS

ANALYSIS

Problem-oriented introduction of the case cities (LE, FR, BE)

The first part of the analysis provides a contextual framing of the case cities. In line with the theoretical background of the thesis, insights into local ownership structures are given. It investigates the positioning of the current local housing market between society and the market. To do so, it points to events and policy shifts that have led to the current climate for Preventive Purchase practice to arise and flourish.

LEIPZIG: HOUSING MARKET BETWEEN MARKET AND SOCIETY

Re-integrating the socialist housing stock into a capitalized market

As a leading university, commerce and industrial city, Leipzig thrived in pre-war times, counting 700.000 inhabitants. Since then, it has experienced incisive disruptions in those fields, with the episode of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) remaining one of the most striking. (Rink, 2020) Suburbanization, shrinking, and outflux following the fall of the wall, the population dropped down to its lowest in 1998 (437.000) . The city was at a time termed the 'poverty capital' of Germany (Spiegel, 2010) . A capitalist housing supply system instead of an entirely state-owned had to be introduced. Since then, Leipzig's path hasn't been a steady nor an easy to predict one from a policy perspective (Rink, 2015) , as parallel developments occurred: Are we planning towards a shrinking, low-income and high, vacant city or are we anticipating a hopeful, slow and steady growth flanked by an influx of creatives, politicized academics and young families in our planning decisions?

'poverty capital' Leipzig

In the 1990s, the main efforts went into renovating a GDR-dilapidated housing stock by using depreciation incentives. (Rink, 2020) By then, many buildings were bought up by "the doctor from Dusseldorf or the Lawyer from Stuttgart" (LE city 5:40) and other private investments. The value created

by these investments still flows out of the city. Another caesura for Leipzig's public and affordable housing stock was the restitution and privatization of almost half of the stock of the public Leipzig Housing and Building Association (Leipziger Wohnungs- und Baugesellschaft, short: LWB) during the 1990s and 2000s. Another means to consolidate the market was to demolish mostly vacant stock of cooperatives and public housing associations.

Leipzig has a modern, tense one housing market now

The most recent numbers still account to 10.6% (35,300 apartments) of the entire housing stock to the LWB, making it one of the biggest housing providers in Germany, while cooperatives make up a share of 17% (equal to 54,000 apartments). (Savills, 2019; Rink, 2017) The rest is primarily held by owner associations, private companies, and private owners. For the share of the latter, only estimations can be made at this point, but it is assumed to be lower than the other two case cities. Comprehensive data about small-scale or private owners are also rare in Leipzig. Still, observations can be made: the actors interviewed observed an ongoing generational change in this ownership-sector. (LE city) . There are a few bigger, quoted real-estate companies who have established one of their regional focus areas in Leipzig (Grand City, Vonovia, TAG, Adler Real Estate, TAG, Covivio) , which indicates an interest of the financialized housing market in Leipzig. (Savillis, 2019)

The last housing monitor has seen a doubling of property prices from 2014 to 2019 and an increase of 28 % between 2018 and 2019. (Leipzig 2021) . In 2017 for the first time, monitoring officially assessed a tense housing market for Leipzig after critics had pointed to a decreasing disparity for years (Rink, 2017) . This and strong public and activist pressure supposedly led to a relatively fast-tracked introduction of rent control measures, the expansion of rent subsidies by the federal state to Leipzig (Rink, 2017) , and the municipality issuing Social Preservation Statutes (Soziale Erhaltungsgebiete according to BauGb Para 172) for ten areas, as they are typical for tense urban housing markets in Germany. (Rink, 2017) .

A robust cooperative and collective housing scene

During the GDR, cooperatives (Arbeiterwohnungsbaugenossenschaften, short: AWG) practically took over the role of public housing, benefitting on the one hand from interest-free credits but also lacking the lived democratic principles inherent in the cooperative. (Wiest et al., 2017) Following the wall's fall, these structures had to be introduced to a capitalized market system. Today, the cooperatives still make up a remarkably high share of Leipzig's general housing market and the collaborative living sector. The four biggest traditional cooperatives (WOGETRA, Baugenossenschaft Leipzig eG, VLW eG, UNITAS eG) holding the biggest stock mostly dating from the 1950s

to the 1970s, evolved out of the former GDR-housing cooperatives. With balance sheets consolidated, Leipzig's population and rents rising, their agency to actively shape the housing market is reactivated and emphasized by politics (Wiest et al 2017; Leipzig 2015)

From around 2000 onwards, several other cooperative, one-house-cooperatives, and collective living forms have emerged¹². They saw the potential in the vacancy and the low cost of living, making Leipzig today one of the most diverse and renowned collective housing markets in Germany. (Wiest et al., 2017) In their orbit, the counter movements and critiques on Leipzig's housing policy can also be found. The hesitant urban policy that has sold public properties largely undervalue up till 2015 (Julke, 2022; LE city) is broadly criticized. Only in 2018, the city council ruled not to sell any more properties suitable for living.

Preventive Purchase efforts so far

The city started the procedure to establish pre-emptive purchases to counter housing affordability issues just months before its legislative basis was abolished. Back then, as a first step, they asked housing providers in Leipzig to express their general interest in stepping in as a buyer as part of the right of pre-emption procedure. The council agreed to restrict the list to the local housing association LWB, cooperatives, associations, and GmbHs¹³ (Julke, 2021). Notably, a small cooperative that recently has shown little interest in stepping in as a buyer in Preventive Purchase (so: unregulated) cases, has demonstrated interest in stepping in as a third-party buyer for the municipal right of pre-emption. (LE city)

FRANKFURT AM MAIN: PERMANENT CRISIS

Just after Berlin, Frankfurt takes fourth place in the nation's cities with the highest share of renters (78,1%; Berlin: 81,5%; Leipzig: 76,8%) and is by far the strongest renter-city of the former "West Germany". (Savillis, 2019) In Frankfurt, half of the renters are eligible for a rent-controlled public apartment (Schipper & Latocha, 2018). With its status as a Global City and financial hub of the nation, Schipper and Heeg (2017) derive three particularities concerning its housing supply sector: (1) rent and land prices are second highest in the country (after Munich), targeting a highly-paid financial service labor force; (2) simultaneously to the high-end spectrum of labor and living, we find another spectrum of the population burdened by displacement and

Frankfurt's housing sector: 3 particularities

¹² E.g. Mietshäusersyndikat, WagenRat e.V.

¹³ Limited Liability Companies, a special legal form. Even in this potentially rent-seeking legal form, you can regulate social conditions for rent, long-term affordability, restrictions for resale of the building or single units.

precariousness in labor and living; (3) they recognize Frankfurt's privileged status and potential asset of local resources and business tax revenues for municipal action and development.

The last detailed accounts on ownership shares in Frankfurt found that 124.523, equal to 35% of apartments in Frankfurt are owned by individuals, while only 3,9% are owned by cooperatives. (City of Frankfurt, 2013) Still, according to the technical board of the WBG (Wohnungsbaugenossenschaft) Frankfurt, everyone there is familiar with housing cooperatives and considers them reliable landlords (FR city) .

Designating Frankfurt's housing situation a 'crisis', would not do it just, as it implies temporariness. Backtracking an unaffordable and inaccessible housing market like Frankfurt's is unheard of, where ground rents have risen in some parts of town by almost 70% in only two years (between 2016 and 2018; see Schipper & Latocha, 2018, p. 53) . The housing policy from the end of the 1980s onwards has left Frankfurt with property prices by average three times as high as Leipzig and double as high as Berlin (Grundstückspreise online, n.d.) and has been described as investor-friendly and neoliberal. Till the mid-1990s, urban development was practiced through private investors, by continuously selling city-owned and federal-state-owned (Hessen) properties to fix budget deficits. (Silomon-Pflug, 2018)

Preventive Purchase efforts so far

Antagonizing social-democrat and conservative-liberal forces within the local parliament have been identified as one of the main barriers to containing the financializing housing sector in Frankfurt. (Schipper & Heeg, 2017; Frankfurter Rundschau, 2018) After having a conservative government (CDU) for the last 20 years, the previous local elections in 2021 have brought forward a remarkably left and mixed coalition of social democrats (SPD) , green party (Die Grünen) , liberals (FDP) and the uprising pro-Europe party Volt (City of Frankfurt, n.d.) . Only in 2011, civic and activist voices protesting the neoliberal housing climate became louder and said to steer for a slow re-orientation in policy. (Schipper & Heeg, 2017) Still, in the field of Preventive Purchases, not much has happened before the founding of the GIMA: the right of pre-emption, one of the most powerful tools available to a wealthy local government aiming to reverse the financialization of the housing stock, has not been used to its full potential (FR city) . Mainly, it was used as a leverage to reach forestalling agreements – (Frankfurter Rundschau, 2021) , obligating the new corporate buyer to social management and rent conditions for the house, determined by the city.

BERLIN: FOR SALE - 2100 SOCCER FIELDS

A city government under pressure

In a recent report on ownership statistics in Germany, real-estate advisor Savills (2019) dedicated a whole chapter to Berlin, as it is the „hot spot“ of the German housing market. According to a google search, a hot spot is defined by

- » “a small area with a relatively high temperature in comparison to its surroundings” or
- » “a place of significant activity, danger, or violence” (Google, 2022)

According to Holm, this `hot spot` for investors or – translated to the housing sector – `housing affordability and accessibility crises` of Berlin today is the result of a unique and complex configuration of “reunification-related restructuring of the East German housing industry, the austerity pressure in the 2000s and the accelerated liquidation of social housing construction” (2017, p. 48) . Like Leipzig, Berlin `s years following the fall of the wall were marked by restitution and privatization efforts of the formerly state-owned housing stock. The difference to Leipzig is, that it happened on the brink of the already capitalized market of West Germany, letting the struggles of both worlds collide. After federal support following the reunification had ended, the city government found itself left with seemingly unresolvable challenges (Holm, 2017; Silomon-Pflug, 2018) . During the 1990s, Berlin experienced tremendous debt, which they attempted to consolidate by discontinuing subsidies for modernization or construction, further privatizing the public housing stock (in total 320.000 units, see Holm, 2019) , and systematically selling city-owned property fit to develop, which found its peak between 2000 and 2009. A recent analysis has shown that between 1989 and 2017, half of Berlin `s area legally fit to develop (equal to 2100 soccer fields) has been sold. (Schüsckke, 2020) The unprecedented scale of Berlin `s privatization has been widely researched and scandalized, leading to an almost binding declaration of intent by the city senate to “move away from the primacy of sales” (SenFin, n.d., translated by me) .

The roots of Berlin’s housing affordability and accessibility crisis

But even with the city not actively handing out properties to developers, international and rent-seeking investments find their way into the housing market. According to the report above, over the last ten years, 23 % of the traded apartments nationwide were in Berlin, while only 7% of rented apartments are located here. Today, only 24% of apartments are owned by individual owners, 12% by cooperatives, and 17 % are public. (Savills, 2019)

Fig. 4
Representation of 7800 public plots in Berlin that were privatized between 1989 and 2017. The area equals 2100 ha / soccer fields. The map divides between privatized plots of public housing associations (Landeseigene Wohnungsbaugesellschaften, in turquoise) and privatized city-owned properties (black), by Schüsckke, 2020

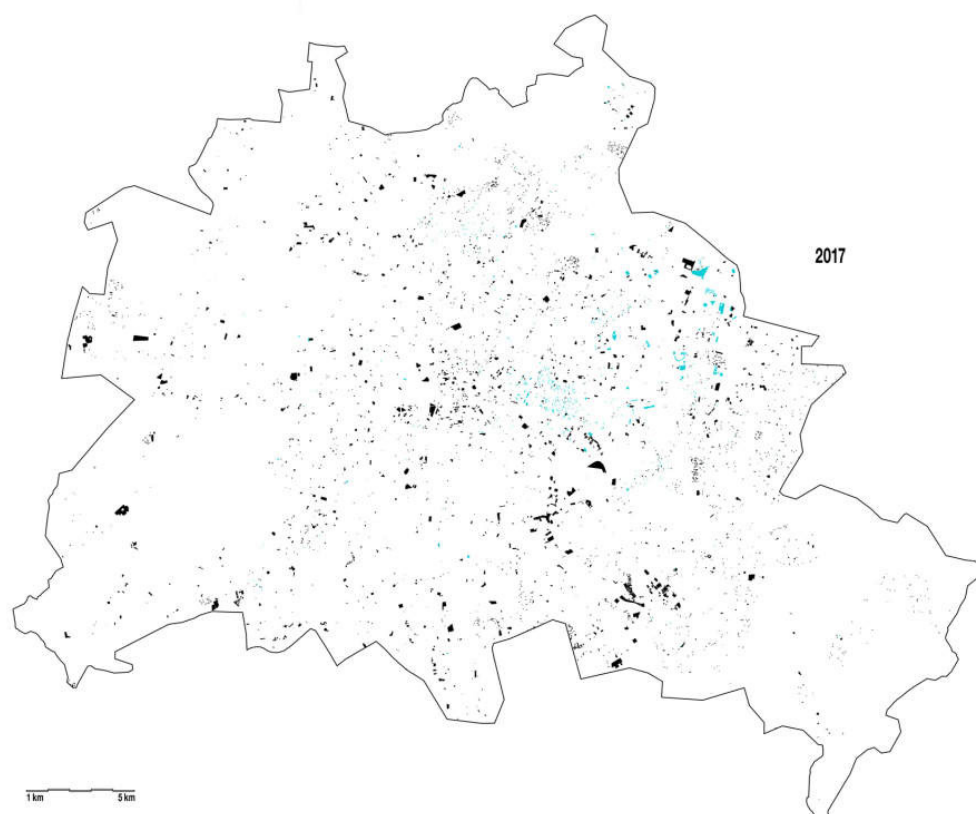
Preventive Purchase efforts so far

The increasing pressure on affordability and accessibility of housing has led to different countermeasures and innovations in the housing sector, often pushed forward by activist movements, among those practices similar to the Preventive Purchase. With Berlin's status as a city-state, the districts are equipped with powers and agency usually reserved for municipalities. Till 2021, 72 Social Preservation Areas (Soziale Erhaltungsgebiete) have been issued by the districts in Berlin, practically covering the whole city within the circular railway around the city center (Ringbahn). Suppose a house lies within such an area and is about to be sold. In that case, the district can use its right to buy first, in favor of a third party (to anti-speculative actors like cooperation, one of the six public housing associations 'Landeseigene', a foundation, etc.) Since 2015, the instrument has been more frequently used and explored, with the district of Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg taking on the role of a pioneer. (BE GIMA) Among the city's districts, it is applied with different rigor, highly dependent on the available budget, political agenda and house

VON 1989-2017
PRIVATISIERTE
GRUNDSTÜCKE
LANDESEIGENER
WOHNUNGSBAU-
GESELLSCHAFTEN

VON 1989-2017
PRIVATISIERTE
LANDESEIGENE
GRUNDSTÜCKE

QUELLEN:
KAUFFALLSAMMLUNG
DES GUTACHTERAUSSCHUSSES
FÜR GRUNDSTÜCKSWERTE
IN BERLIN, GEOPORTAL BERLIN,
ALKIS BERLIN FLURSTÜCKE



prices, or public demand. The right of pre-emption has been flanked by and gained momentum through the formation of different initiatives, like tenant groups unifying to gather resources and public attention about the sale of their house, or citizen-led umbrella initiatives coordinating and bundling the affected tenant 's struggles. (BE district)

SYNTHESIS

The preceding chapter attempted a concise overview of the main events and policy reactions that led to the housing situation and housing policy governance of the case cities today.

It also gave an insight into ownership structures and review of the practice of the right to pre-empt, a municipal sub-strategy of Preventive Purchases, bound to a regulatory framework (which is currently suspended following a federal court ruling) . Although this work puts the Preventive Purchases into focus, which happens detached from this regulation, it is understood that **knowledge about the right to pre-empt could still inform this work**. If co-operatives agree to support the right to pre-empt, how come they hesitate to support the less regulated (and cheaper) but also less prominent Preventive Purchase strategy?

All three case cities' affordable housing strategies were affected by the **cuts and discontinuation of the federal housing subsidy programs**; Berlin also by cuts at the state level. Following the wall 's fall, both Berlin and Leipzig experienced additional pressure on the affordable housing stock due to reconstitution payments and the selling of cooperative housing stock. Leipzig, Berlin and Frankfurt **reacted to the budgetary deficits by privatizing their properties**. In Leipzig, this took place perpetually; in Berlin it reached its peak between 2000-2009, while in Frankfurt, the biggest share of properties were privatized early on till the mid-1990s. (Silomon-Pflug, 2018) At least for Berlin and Frankfurt Silomon-Pflug concluded, that **“no comparable assets are created, or investments made with the proceeds of the privatization”** (2018, p. 267, translated by the author) .

While the sale of properties and buildings only sufficed to fix the budgetary deficit once (if even) , the value creation of the investors is ongoing or recurring in a case of a resale. From the perspective of a new, emancipated “entrepreneurial state” (Mazzucato, 2013) or “entrepreneurial municipalism” (Thompson et al. 2020) , **the cities have missed out on collecting their revenues**. The austerity and privatization course of that time is not only spe-

cific to the case cities, but emblematic of any entrepreneurial government (Harvey 1989; Thompson et al. 2020) . In all the cities, it led to a diminishment of the public housing sector and **paved the way for ongoing displacement and disintegration of established neighborhood dynamics**. Besides that, it profoundly impacted the city ' s institutional and relational dynamics. How do citizens perceive the ongoing change; how have actors of the third housing sector experienced the diminishment of their stocks or the selling of potential plots for now missing schools and playgrounds?

In all three cities, it was a citizen or activism-led protests; and along with that, a professionalization and institutionalization of counter movements such as housing projects and their networks that have **nudged an agenda change of political priorities that is making housing a priority and responsibility of municipal social welfare**.

We find **similar data availability** among the cities on the ownership group primarily of interest in promoting Preventive Purchases, the individual owners. For now, the latest numbers date from 2011. Unlike corporate or financialized owners, it is hard to make general conclusions regarding their philanthropist or exploitative mindedness. Despite federal rent-limiting tools in place, in cities like Hamburg, München, or Frankfurt, 67-95 % of new rentals prices exceed the lawfully eligible rent (RegioKontext, 2016, in Leps 2017) , making use of renter ' s needs or unknowingness.

Taking the house out of the market: Current practice of Preventive Purchase (LE, FR, BE)

Building on the local contextual background of the previous chapter, this part aims to give insight into the origin and practice of Preventive Purchase strategies in the case cities. As the policy maturity differs in each city, either single cases are presented (Frankfurt am Main; Berlin) or general reflections on the implementation given (Berlin; Leipzig), always putting forward individual aspects that bear potential to learn about the practice and potential of Preventive Purchases. The synthesis again will tie the cases and their shared experiences together.

LEIPZIG: DECOMMODIFICATION, INTERRUPTED

A lot of funding has also gone into the SoWo. The statute was written in accordance, and we have already done a model project with the SoWo, where it was about professionalization, so: ... how can a professionalization of an umbrella cooperative look like? The results were not quite as we had hoped, but we are of course very open to the topic. At the same time, the SoWo should also be independent. This is not a municipal instrument, we are happy to support them, and we are also happy when they buy houses, and we have already done housing development with them, where they got subsidies. (LE city, 28:29, changes in italics)

Currently, several approaches to establish and consolidate measures of Preventive Purchase exist in Leipzig. In brief, it can be described as a task that city, a coordination office commissioned by the city (GIMA-akin, called Netzwerk Leipziger Freiheit, short NFL) , the emerging cooperative SoWo and the owners association have all committed to, with some overlaps of action, but with the efforts not fully concerted. (LE coop, LE city) Ultimately, this case is interesting because we consider the possible merit for long-term housing decommodification through another form of ownership than the cooperative, the ownership association (GbR) . Secondly, we observe the practice and potential of a young and innovative housing cooperative in practicing Preventive Purchases, while locally established cooperatives refrain from cooperation on this matter. For this case city, two strands of action were identified as relevant preventive purchase practices:

- » The municipal efforts to steer Preventive Purchases from individual

owners to a group of tenants, organized in ownership associations or the like. The inclusion and support of cooperatives for this strategy are asked for but have remained unsuccessful thus far.

» The efforts of the cooperative SoWo (Solidarische Wohngensenschaft) , who embody strong social commitments and a will to expand, to buy houses from individual owners. Here, the process is also usually initiated by tenants. The SoWo has been a city ' s partner in their strategy to foster cooperative living, serving as a pilot project and an expert advisor.

The start and the network

The Housing policy concept from 2015 (Wohnungspolitisches Konzept) , which is currently being revised, has defined different measures to tackle housing scarcity and rent increases and promote self-organized and cooperative housing projects (LE NFL; Leipzig, 2015) . The Netzwerk Leipziger Freiheit (short: NFL) was commissioned to facilitate this process by setting up a coordination office that advises and connects different actors. Both the city and NFL stress, that the coordination office was not inventing a new structure or idea. Instead, the initiative was to identify pre-existing initiatives and expertise, to coordinate and bundle their efforts "under this umbrella of Netzwerk Leipziger Freiheit and in the interest of municipal housing policy vision." (LE city 12:04) Civic and activist Initiatives like the cooperative SoWo, that formerly worked voluntarily, were now subsidized the first time or more extensively by the city as part of the alternative housing scheme. (LE NFL MIN)

With the support of the initiatives, the city could set up a support and advise structure, consult about the suitable legal form for their project ' s housing endeavor and establish it (e.g., write the statute) . Mediated through the city, the also provides properties in public land tender. The advising structure also included the homeowners-association Haus & Grund. A collaboratively published leaflet (NFL 2020) is directed at tenant communities and primarily promotes the idea of "tenant privatization" (Mieter/-innenprivatisierung) in the form of owners associations (GbR, a foundation or a GmbH – limited liability company) . According to the leaflet, 56 housing projects have been advised by the NFL this far, with none having gone bankrupt. (NFL 2020) Several instruments through which a sale can be realized are explained, and promoted by the network, such as

Life-annuity (Leibrente): the property changes the owner to the former tenants (represented in a legal form of their choice) . The property price won ' t be paid at once, but the former owner receives a life-long pension. In combination with that, a lifelong habitation in the building right can be tied to the agreement. This arrangement potentially takes the financing burden of

the tenants, as the price can be paid off step-by-step.

Private leasehold arrangements (Erbbaurecht): the property owner lets the building and the building rights to the former tenants who become the leaseholders (represented in a legal form of their choice) for a long term of 66 to 99 years. The potential perk here is that the heirs won't be affected by this arrangement, as the family remains the owner. Additionally, the owner receives an annual ground rent, which is indexed according to the inflation rate.¹⁴

(Selection of strategies, taken and shortened by the author from NFL leaflet for tenant communities 2020, p. 3)

Professionalizing the third housing sector, gently

One of the main pillars for housing activism and affordable housing projects today is the self-organized housing project scene ("Wohnprojekte-Szene") from the 1990s and especially the 2000s. When Leipzig still had an outstanding vacant housing stock and extremely low house prices, people would organize in a legal form of their liking, often ownership associations or small cooperatives, and take over whole buildings usually in need of renovation. (Holm & Laimer, 2021; LE_city) With Leipzig's housing market having caught track with comparatively sized cities, this is not as easy anymore.

The advising structure is an attempt to facilitate these projects nonetheless and contribute to the diverse housing scene of the city. To some extent, it's also a strategy to take the burden of the existing activist advising structures, as requests are high, and solutions become more complex. (LE NFL)

According to the planning policy official responsible for the development and implementation of the program, efforts to incorporate larger cooperatives in the strategy, were without success. (LE city) The SoWo, one cooperative interviewed for this paper, also has received initial financing from the NFL; as part of their advising activities to tenant communities; and as part of a pilot project to professionalize a cooperative into an umbrella cooperative. (LE city) Today, tenants a) would approach either the network's advising structure or b) seek advice from the housing providers open to cooperate and preventively purchase, like the SoWo. Depending on their expertise on housing matters or relationship with the owners, they would have already initiated contact with the owner or asked the advisors to do so. (LE coop)

From the experience of the advisors, the owners might be willing to sell be-

¹⁴ Which is a greyzone in terms of decommodified housing, as rising ground prices reflect the financialized housing market. The case of Frankfurt will illustrate this in greater detail.

cause renovations are due, and they don't want to be bothered with it. Some do it out of a social and moral conviction or because they have a personal connection to the tenants. (LE NFL) Oftentimes, the burden to organize themselves, raise capital or stay engaged and persistent throughout the weary process, becomes too big, and house communities give up their efforts. With the involvement and funding of the SoWo as part of a pilot project the ambition was to establish an umbrella cooperative ("Dachgenossenschaft") : By joining them, Individual projects could minimize the administrative burdens and processes immensely, hopefully increasing the overall success rate and unionizing the project's efforts. (LE NFL 24:13)

FRANKFURT: GIMA 2.0

But we are an association that started with the goal of saving affordable housing. And it's not just politically motivated housing project residents who live in these houses, but normal people who are neighbors. They are lucky to have a good landlord. But they are suddenly faced with the problem that someone will buy the house, and they may no longer live there soon. And that's what we want to prevent, this concrete displacement house by house. And that's why our approach is primarily a political one. We don't have to have all people living in self-organized housing projects. If they have a cooperative, a traditional cooperative as a landlord, then a lot is already accomplished. (FR GIMA 55:53)

The start

The case of Frankfurt seems to be the most straightforward one of the three in terms of how a housing instrument starts from an idea, gets all actors on board, is then officialized by the city council, successfully wraps up its first case, and is now working on its consolidation.

In 2018, a recently employed planning official of Frankfurt, the executive board of the Netzwerk Frankfurt für Gemeinschaftliches Wohnen¹⁵ and others invited Christian Stupka, the founder of the GIMA Munich, to their annual Info-Fair for Co-Living (Infobörse für gemeinschaftliches Wohnen) . They had heard of the model and were interested in establishing a similar one in Frankfurt. Together with the organizing network, a local housing advocacy office, some cooperatives and the city, they sat together and envisioned the steps to establish

a player on the market, where owners can give their house into good hands. Where they are allowed to do something different, other than selling to

make maximum profit and afterward for the tenant the displacement is pending because one must refinance that. (FR CITY 6:30)

The city commissioned the network to draft a feasibility study for a cooperative real estate agency in Frankfurt. A more detailed version of the operating of such an agency was presented to the city council assembly in 2021. Here, they formerly agreed to

- » the founding of a GIMA Frankfurt („Genossenschaftlichen Immobilienagentur Frankfurt am Main eG¹⁶“), and to actively support its set-up and development
- » to acquire two cooperative shares of the GIMA worth 2000€, granting them membership and under the condition that the city holds a permanent seat in the board of the GIMA (translated and adjusted by the author, corresponding PARLIS, 2021)

The GIMA is meant to be a self-financing organism in the long run, by asking for a 1% commission per case's sales price. (Parlis, 2021; FR GIMA) The city and the participating cooperatives also granted initial funding. With the founding of the cooperative GIMA, also formal and informal committees emerged, like the founder's circle (city of Frankfurt, two traditional cooperatives, Netzwerk Frankfurt für Gemeinschaftliches Wohnen, the municipal property development agency KEG) and a working group (the founders circle added by some planning officials). (FR city 8:34) The city official emphasized that the GIMA is a concerted effort, a Gemeinschaftsprojekt.

With their membership, the cooperative signaled their readiness to purchase houses mediated through the GIMA and to pass on the 1% commission of the sales price to the GIMA. Both cooperatives are well-established, open to innovative approaches and known to the city and the other founders to manage their finances well. Younger cooperatives should be incorporated in the future to expand the "portfolio". They could present an extra incentive for a sale to socially minded sellers. (FR GIMA 33:59) But they also are more challenging collaborators, as they have less equity and are not as routinized or likely to get loans. (FR coop)

Mini Case-Study: How does a fair price for a house in a highly financialized market come about?

In the first successful and most recent case, two sisters who had grown up in the tenement house they owned no longer felt equal to the tasks of landlords. (Hessenschau, 2022) They had read about the GIMA in the newspaper, felt

¹⁶ The GIMA Frankfurt is a cooperative in itself. Not a housing cooperative, but a service cooperative.

an obligation to their tenants, and wanted to keep the rents affordable, despite selling it. (FR GIMA 15:48) The cooperative Beamten-Wohnungs-Verein Frankfurt am Main (BWG) already had their headquarters and other properties near the sister's house and therefore agreed on a sale for a price that seemed fair to both parties. The GIMA estimates that the sisters could have made 200.000 € if they had sold their house to the highest, not the fairest bidder. 4921 (FR GIMA) . The calculation of the purchase price on the cooperative side follows rather clear rationality that considers

How to negotiate when your landlord is the city?

In this case, the building stood on a public leasehold, too. The leasehold grants the owner of the property an annual rent, paid by the land user (leaseholder) . The ground rent is a percentage of 2,5% of the land price, in this case, determined by the landlord, the city of Frankfurt. Since ground prices in Frankfurt have risen immensely since the last owner changed, the ground rent alone would have made up 90% of the annual rent income, to be paid by the cooperative. From a budgetary and fiscal perspective, the city is required to generate profits; that could be reinvested in public infrastructure. Other policies and agendas and their tense housing market would require bolstering the cooperative housing sector. The GIMA stepped in as a negotiator with the local real estate office, and eventually, they agreed not to base the ground rent on the land price but the rent income. How much of the rent income does the city want to take in its role as the landlord? How to regulate the public leasehold is a hot topic in Frankfurt now. One of the GIMA's ambitions is to advocate for reliefs for socially minded leaseholders such as cooperatives. (FR CITY; FR GIMA)

- » how much money needs to be invested in the renovation,
- » whether the building will still fit into the rent-portfolio after purchase and the required investments are done,
- » and whether the apportionment of the costs to their other properties is just and reasonable. (FR CITY, FR COOP, FR GIMA)

The democratic principle and principle of equal treatment inherent to the cooperative model require the latter. Different mechanisms aim to ensure the long-term affordability and decommodification of the new ownership. Both are oriented on the principles of the (Neue) Wohngemeinnützigkeit. First, there is a self-commitment of the GIMA founders and its statute, which goes into detail on points as rent and rent increases, waiving modernization levy or modernization levy only at a certain percentage, granting participation rights. These values

are enclosed in the sales contract, where they are potentially adjusted to the case.¹⁷ Secondly, it is fixed on the buyer's side, as the principles are either already inherent to the cooperative form or regulated in their statutes.

This two-folded security should have a reassuring effect for interested socially minded sellers, who might be suspicious of sales offers in the city. The process started with a phone call from the sisters at the GIMA. 1,5 years later, the contract could be signed. The case shows that the responsibility of the GIMA goes beyond public relations and informing about the possibilities of a socially responsible sale. It also stepped in as a mediator of interests (FR GIMA).

BERLIN: CONCERTED EFFORTS

There used to be a citywide consensus in Berlin, both in the West Berlin period and in the post-reunification period, that the topic was important, the promotion of initiatives, groups, etc., etc., and then this wholly collapsed with this phase of austerity in the 2000s, when Berlin discontinued all the support programs in the area of housing and sold municipal housing association's stocks on a big scale. Now, one tries to go there again slowly, by going through the district level and support by individual people. It's completely different than it used to be. (BE GIMA, 6:49)

This critical observation by one of the three GIMA board members, and longtime the city's cooperatives-responsible, is also true and helpful for understanding the Preventive Purchase attempts in Berlin – which are complex yet typical for the town. This case study will cover two interconnected initiatives: the GIMA Berlin and the district of Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg¹⁸'s strategy for Preventive Purchases will be investigated.

GIMA Berlin

The GIMA Berlin emerged from the civic initiative Häuser bewegen e.V. (transl: moving houses), already founded in 2018 and inspired by the GIMA model in Munich. Since then, they have professionalized by adding the "GIMA Berlin-Brandenburg" to their name, changing their legal form to a service cooperative (e.G.), and building up a network of 13 members. The members are a pool of potential buyers, all socially-minded real-estate businesses (cooperatives, foundations, Mietshäusersyndikat), some already familiar with the GIMA through other initiatives and professional city activism. (Netzwerk GI,

¹⁷ If a lot of renovation needs to be done, the costs might have to be allocated to the rent, causing an increase compared to the pre-sale-rent.

¹⁸ As of 2021, the district had 289.014 registered inhabitants, covering an area of 20,4 km², Berlin Amt für Statistik Berlin-Brandenburg, Stichtag: 31.12.2021,

Gemeinwohl Immobilienwirtschaftswirtschaft) Although none of the traditional or big cooperatives are part of their members, they are cooperating with two cooperatives that arose from a wave of new establishments in the 1990s that “have developed beyond the status of single-property cooperatives, so that they are the best fit imaginable for this topic. Both in terms of their tradition and in terms of their equity base, there would have been no others for this.” (Berlin GIMA 01.11.00)

The GIMA board currently consists of three people who have been professionally and privately connected to housing politics for ages. Their initiative is carried by a broad network of social and collaborative housing experts. Still, the institutionalization and public support (city responsibility) to promote their efforts despite an accelerating housing affordability crisis is only moving forwards slowly. In cities such as Leipzig and Frankfurt, it was municipal or, in Munich’s case, federal foresight to see potential in the existing initiatives and their decommodification efforts. In Berlin, this hasn’t happened yet on the city level. Now, they are attending to roundabout ten cases with very different maturity. One is about to be closed, but “you can never be sure until the signature is with the notary”. (BE GIMA) Two of the cases have been in the works for a year now.

GIMA: Financial set-up

Throughout the years, they have mostly worked on a voluntary basis, with occasional funding from the districts Mitte and Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg (GIMA Berlin) . They were recently appointed with a consulting engagement by the district of Berlin-Neukölln. Here they are supposed to mediate between owners and tenant groups about the feasibility of a sale to social conditions. Meanwhile, their activities have caught the attention of mostly tenant groups looking to buy, and some owners. (BE GIMA)

So far, they have acted independently from the city (which needs to be thought of as an actor separate from the district governments) , financially, and in their institutional structures. Including the town in their board or member circle, as in Frankfurt, is not desired. They are not considered the most reliable partner in the long run. Both the legal form of a cooperative (e.g., unlikely to go bankrupt, resistant to political jolts) and their financing plan express the aim for self-sufficiency and resilience. To finance the structure, they are charging a fee from their members for every successfully mediated house. Still, initial funding would be helpful and was announced in the latest coalition agreement, hence would be followed by a three-year budgetary title (Anschlussförderung) . Although they were mentioned in the agreement, they had to go through political representatives to remind the city-state govern-

ment to include it in the budget.

Preventive Purchase Practice Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg

The district of Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg, with 300.000 inhabitants, comparable to the size of Gent (BE) , has recognized and established the potential of the pre-emptive Purchase already in 2015. Since then, they managed to establish a routine in it, built a network of collaborators and initiatives, and were designated both role model (BE GIMA) and a scapegoat (Tagesspiegel 2020) for their efforts. The person responsible for this course is primarily the Baustadtrat Florian Schmidt (Die Grünen) . He and his district can be counted as one of the doors through which an initiative like the GIMA now has to make its way up to city politics and support.

Over the years, they have come across cases and were reached by requests where no right of pre-emption had taken effect, as no intention to purchase the building was made (Kauferklärungen,, Absicht) . Instead, the attempt was to withdraw buildings prematurely and preventively:

Then we have found that this is sometimes possible without a right of pre-emption. In addition, there is the practice of the state of Berlin to buy large complexes or smaller things with housing associations. That also happened with my support in several cases. Without the right of pre-emption, however, we probably wouldn't have come up with it. It's also a kind of windfall effect from this right of pre-emption, even if it would never come back now, which I don't think it would. But even if it never came back, we would have established this practice now. (BE district 9:59)

Overall, they have managed to withdraw around 6000 apartments, from which a roughly estimated number of 300 units account for Preventive Purchases – sales of privately owned apartments to either cooperatives or public housing associations “with no occasion” or legal lever taking effect (see table 1) ; and where the district of Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg has played a mediating or facilitating role. Currently, around 15 cases are processed, totaling about 300 apartments.

The most recent successful case, the Lausitzer Strasse, was facilitated by the district and the AKS Gemeinwohl (Arbeits- und Koordinierungsstruktur Gemeinwohlorientierte Stadtentwicklung) , which is a district-initiated work- and coordination structure. It represents an effort of a municipal actor to open themselves up to innovation and initiatives from “below” . At the AKS, also one of the board members of the GIMA Berlin is employed. With his expertise, he was able to negotiate a fair price for a tenant community. Once a house

becomes available for sale, it is presented to the pool of potential socially minded buyers who express their interest or disinterest in buying it and communicate their asking price or limit. (Berlin district) In this case, the owner had recently died, and the heir was located, a craftsman from a small town in northwest Germany:

The tenants wrote to me and asked me to keep the house. I would have liked to do that, but it was impossible due to financial constraints. From the beginning, I said that the price should not be the highest, but a fair one. [...] The tenants wanted a cooperative purchase, which I was happy to support, since I live in modest conditions and, as a small craftsman, I understand the need for safe housing at fair conditions. (Press release Hauskauf mal anders, 2022)

Still, also this process took 12 months. The district gave its support punctually on a symbolic and technical level; by Florian Schmidt showing his presence at one of the initial negotiation meetings, and then negotiating a gradual repayment of taxes due instead of a one-time payment.

For both initiatives, a special subsidy is available from the city-state of Berlin (12.8 million € for 2022, 15.3 million € for 2023) . It gets issued by the Investment Bank Berlin-Brandenburg for both the purchase of housing stock and construction of cooperative housing. (SenFin, 2021) .

SYNTHESIS

The Practices of Preventive Purchase vary significantly from city to city; still, some elements and practices are alike or have been communicated upon in exchanges.

Leipzig has had a rich housing project scene for ages, whose potential was seen and picked up by local authorities; for that, a network and coordinating office was founded. In this and the overall ownership-transition strategy, already existing initiatives were incorporated and remunerated for their advising services. In Frankfurt, the GIMA was initiated as an intermediary sales agency by committed local planning and housing activists. Overall, the initiative from Frankfurt seems like the most balanced member circle, showing a robust institutional linkage at the member level and a seemingly friction-free establishment. Berlin 's two Preventive Purchase mechanisms reveal the greatest detachments from city politics, and reluctance to expect support from the city level.

While the municipal budget finances the advising structure in Leipzig, the GIMA Frankfurt and GIMA Berlin **aim for a perpetually self-financing system**, by asking for a service fee of 1% of the sales price of the respective sale. With this choice, they follow models akin to the GIMA in Munich or Basel (LE coop) . All three cities see the **main tasks** of the Preventive Purchase organization, be it GIMA or a coordination office, as **providing a point of contact** for owners looking to sell or tenants looking to buy their house. Furthermore, **mediation of the different needs of the stakeholders** during a sales process, **balancing interests and public relations**. Indeed, these tasks are better executed by experts in the local housing and context. They also lie level with the time needed per case, at the moment taking up about 1-1,5 years.

Barriers to Implementation (LE, FR, BE)

The GIMA Frankfurt and Berlin, purchases by the SoWo and ownership associations mediated through the Netzwerk Leipziger Freiheit in Leipzig, and Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg's purchase ambitions in Berlin were presented in the last part. What are the challenges in implementing the practices in the case cities? Both challenges that emerged from the local and historical background and are specific to the cities, will play a role, as well as more structural and technical barriers in establishing or consolidating the instruments.

LEIPZIG

Pretty expensive for a poor city

All of the actors interviewed named rising property prices as an obstacle to the establishment of Preventive Purchase-strategies in favor of cooperatives or ownership associations. (LE NFL, LE coop, LE city) The case of Leipzig is a particular one in that it just recently and with accelerating tempo became interesting for the listed and rent-seeking housing segment. Within six months (31/12/2020 and 30/06/2021) , the prices for condominiums rose by 12% (rating committee Leipzig 2022) , with the wage level not keeping pace: "The margin between affordable rents and purchase prices and what is queried at the market, might be more divergent than in other big cities." (LE NFL, 12:24) In a lot of cases, negotiations don 't even start, because the demanded price goes way beyond what the tenants could mobilize, or the coop SoWo could make available. (LE coop)

No sales „below value.“

Moreover, it appears that not only investors push for rising prices; also the municipal bookkeeping regulations and practices prevent a sale or lease of public properties through, e.g., leasehold rights „below (market) value“, as emphasized by the interviewees (LE_NFL) and other scholars (Lichtenberg, 2021) . The municipal code, regulated by the federal state, rules the cities ' budgeting to "be carried out in a thrifty and economical manner" (Para 72 Section 2) . Sales below market value can exceptionally be made if they serve the public interest, foster low-income housing, or create private property from a social point of view and do not violate European state aid regulations.¹⁹ (Para 90, Section 1) . The legal base to practice a sale below value seems to

¹⁹ Sächsische Gemeindeordnung § 90 Veräußerung von Vermögen.

be available, but the administrative practice lags.

Owner associations, a partial decommodification?

Promoting ownership associations is intended to serve a tradition of self-organized housing projects in Leipzig, as they bear a great cultural value. (LE coop) Furthermore, it is a tool to promote housing beyond the market, aims to strengthen the diversity and participatory elements of the local housing market, and ensuring long-term housing affordability. (LE city; LE NFL) Still, in Germany, ownership associations most commonly take on a legal forms like WEG, GbR, or GmbH, that imply individual ownership of an apartment in the building and are technically a form of privatization. Potentially, the owner of a unit of the owners association could decide to resell their unit and reintroduce it to the capital market. (Helfrich et al., 2021) With apartment prices rising, this option could become more and more attractive to even the socially minded owners. Some legal forms like the GmbH allow restricting sales like these by including it in the statute. Some cities like Tübingen have passed regulations forbidding resales of units for at least ten years. The planning official in charge of implementing the housing strategy and the advising structure admits, that it is a risky and potentially yield-seeking form of living; and that this is not his favored form to work with. (LE city)

The favored legal form to promote Preventive Purchases would be cooperatives. But efforts to establish an umbrella organization have been without success ("maybe coordination problems or structural shortcomings", LE coop 39:06) . To convince more established cooperatives to get involved, half a position would need to be appointed, in the eyes of the cooperative SoWo, and more resources mobilized. Another struggle in this are the board members leading the cooperatives, whose experience goes back to the GDR and reunification-times, which seemingly left deep marks: they are at a certain age, they are GDR-socialized and [...] embody these top-down structures through and through" (LE city, 34:51) ; "they don't want to be regulated" (LE coop, 4:57) . According to the interviewees, the older cooperative boards haven't overcome that they were forced to demolish large shares of their stock as part of the debt reduction plan.

FRANKFURT

Neoliberal politics, deeply embedded in the administration

The investor-friendly city politics that a reigning CDU (United Christian Democrats) held up for 25 years has left its traces in the administrative

structures, and the possibilities to e.g., structurally tackle Preventive Purchases potentials in Frankfurt: Although the city's land and rent prices count to the highest, and are therefore valuable assets, they have never set up a land management system (Flächenmanagement- und bevorratung) , analog or digital. Today this still causes confusion about ownership structures and development potentials. Back in the day, it made it supposedly easier to manorially hand out properties to beneficiaries, without being able to trace these developments (FR city) . A classification could help identify potential individual owners and trace privatization dynamics in the cities.

A city trying to keep pace

On a more fundamental note, the experts stress how their effort with the GIMA is to counter international investors and those with little to no moral obligation to the city and its residents. The investors looking to buy houses will distribute leaflets with offers in people's post boxes on a regular basis. As a city, it is impossible to match up with financial promises made by corporate investors or provide additional incentives to owners: "It's like a triad maybe; it needs the willingness to sell and the own attitude to be part of society and to be responsible for it." (FR city 18:44) Instruments that the federal level could issue are needed, but not sufficient at this point. Hope lies in a revision of the municipal right to pre-empt. Here, success is not dependent on the goodwill of the sellers.

On the other hand, the challenge will be to find an actor willing to pay market prices. Unlike in Berlin, there are no available funds for buying housing stocks as a cooperative (IBB) . The cooperative (technical) board member interviewed, who is responsible for development and renovation, also added that the application and management of public loan programs imply a high workload barely standing in relation to the amounts made available (FR coop) . The recent cut-back program on energy-efficient renovation is an additional burden for the cooperative. (FR coop) .

Traditional

From the beginning, the GIMA Frankfurt included two of the oldest and biggest cooperatives of the city ²⁰ as members. The cooperation with them has been successful so far, but still, potential hurdles have become apparent. One cooperative points to the cooperative's legal form and its principles, which puts barriers to potential purchases; also, objects must be in proximity to their stocks, which has logistical reasons:

It must be quite well connected in terms of transport ... Just because.. driv-

20 WBG had 646 apartments in 2021; BWV had 1411 apartments in 2020 (Business Reports of 2020 / 2021)

ing so far out then just for the janitor to take care of one property? That 's really inconvenient. It must also be a certain size. We would not buy two or three apartments; it would have to be at least six apartments, so that it 's also profitable and adds up with our portfolio. (FR coop, 16:05)

While they are considered a progressive cooperative (FR city; FR GIMA) , open to innovation, expansion and committed politics, they point to the general governance model of the cooperative, not allowing to entirely change tack away from the cooperative 's origin: "After all, we have an obligation to our members to our tenants and not necessarily to the city or the other tenants who are not our members at all." (FR coop, 19:27) The cooperation is not automatically successful, just because they theoretically would like to engage. The board members of the traditional cooperatives are the ones who would usually want to maintain things as they are, including the rents. And this can be voted upon in meetings, and can dampen attempts to evolve as a cooperative and actor in the city. The planning official interviewed showed understanding of this conflict (FR city) . She explained the general readiness of local cooperatives to work with the GIMA at first with coincident, then added: "But also because we 've been in dialogue with them again and again for ten years now, about the fact that we want their participation. And now? It bears the fruit, but only conditionally, and only in certain fields." (FR city, 47:42) .

BERLIN

The prices are completely disconnected from the condition and somehow from the reality around the house. (BE GIMA 35:04)

Unreasonably high market prices are the main challenge for a successful Preventive Purchases practice for the GIMA Berlin. Suppose a house is still to make a profit. In that case, the market prices can only be refinanced by converting the units into condominiums (for which legal barriers have been established recently on a federal level) or by aiming to resell the building for much more a few years later. An energy-efficient or basic renovation cannot be refinanced with the demanded prices if the aim is to keep the rents affordable. The possible bonanza from the sale also makes it more challenging to keep the owners or their heirs committed to the idea of a socially viable sale. The more heirs involved, the more complex the negotiations turned out to be. With a community of heirs, not only one but several people must be convinced of the social mandate connected to ownership. Additionally, they have to agree on the conditions of the sale. If owners are ready to sell for more, the process faces the further legal challenges, as the tax office requires buildings to be sold for market prices, similar to Frankfurt. Here, the problem was not that it

was public property, given out over a leasehold arrangement ' below value '. The tax office suspected the parties of avoiding paying real estate transfer taxes.

With the district of Neukölln recently commissioning the GIMA with a consulting assignment and the districts Mitte and Kreuzberg supporting the initiative in other ways, the district level seems to have recognized the strategy 's potential. Still, the support from the federal level is missing, as noted by the interviewees. (BE GIMA; BE district) The GIMA initiative in Berlin more generally shows the greatest tentativeness and mistrust to cooperate with the city, on the one hand, fearing an imbalance in the member circle, on the other, making themselves dependent and less resilient to governmental jolts.

Cooperatives won't cooperate

In Berlin, the old cooperatives also have a big potential for consolidating Preventive Purchases, but little cooperation has happened to date. While the diversity of the cooperative sector can be seen as an asset for the city, fragmentations within it dampen its forcefulness. Especially between the Junge Genossenschaften and the traditional ones, there is little cooperation or exchange. Both parties have created their own alliances. While the young cooperatives are highly eager to cooperate and change the housing market, they lack the equity or creditworthiness to participate in purchases actively. (BE GIMA) With the older cooperatives, there is the recurring issue of the cooperative 's obligation to serve the interest of the members. Their interest is to have a well-maintained home, and their last concern is the innovation of its housing provider: "It is also not right or feasible for the board to develop a life of its own" (BE GIMA 16:05) .

SYNTHESIS

For the sake of comprehensiveness and emphasizing similarities, the barriers are listed in a table. In slightly different variants, these topics keep coming up in the actor 's descriptions as barriers to establishing the Preventive Purchase.

	LEIPZIG	BERLIN	FRANKFURT
Public Sector			
Insufficient support city state/federal state, or national state: symbolic, legislative, instrumental	x	x	x
barriers to selling below market value due to municipal codes calling for the economic viability of transactions, following state aid regulations, and fiscal concerns about tax avoidance (endowments real unattainable market prices	x	x	x
	x	x	x
Preventive Purchase Initiatives:			
missing resources to pursue the strategy (human resources, financial, for marketing) (BE, human resources, capital; FR- human resources, capital)		x (human resources, capital)	x (human resources, capital)
depending solely on the goodwill of heirs to sell below market price while lacking incentives	x	x	x
during the negotiations: acting swiftly while respecting the delicateness of an owner's selling decision	x	x	x
need to safeguard the initiative in fear of membership imbalances / political jolts		x	
(Traditional) cooperative sector			
a traditional cooperative sector unwilling to cooperate (LE & BE) ; reasons are assumed in a disappointment a top-down treatment and obligation to sell stocks following the reunification; longevity and high age of board members	x	x	
a traditional institution: Purchases must be in proximity to existing stock; in line with cooperative principles and cooperative member's interests	x	x	x
while founded with a social mandate and a will to disrupt the private housing sector, younger cooperatives usually lack credit worthiness or equity	x	x	x
public subsidies: high bureaucratic effort compared to low subsidy amount	x		x

Table 2. Barriers to implementation, assigned to the three sectors investigated in this thesis: the public sector, the Preventive Purchase initiative and the cooperative sector (with an emphasis on the traditional cooperative).

* the SoWo managed to build up a strong financial in light of their short existence

Goals and potential to implementation (LE, FR, BE)

This part of the analysis investigates the ambitions tied to the practice of Preventive Purchases in the case cities. It, therefore, gives insights into the self-image of the initiative's Preventive Purchases; it also looks at the fitness of the policy itself to nudge change in the housing market. All three case cities reveal a large share of individual owners (potential sellers), a historically and quantitatively strong cooperative sector (potential buyers), districts or city governments signaling openness towards the approach, a broad civic support structure on housing issues, and lastly a societal and legislative transition towards the common good in housing (Gemeinwohlorientierung). With these ingredients in mind, an upscaling of the practice can theoretically be imagined.

Thus, the initiatives were asked the same question: Do you consider your practice a niche or potentially a partial solution for affordable housing to a structural problem?

LEIPZIG

Preventive Purchase: niche instrument or part of a structural solution?

When looking at the ambitions or potentials for a Preventive Purchases in Leipzig, we look at housing projects efforts, which are pursued as part of the city's housing policy concept (Wohnpolitisches Konzept). Here, the planning official in charge must follow an annual reporting obligation. The objectives are not linked to any quantitative goals, though:

You can only achieve quantitative goals to a limited extent with individual housing projects (Wohnprojekte), because that's a niche. But it's a critical niche. Because it is exactly these projects that cover the part of the housing market that the private sector and also the cooperatives cannot reach. (LE city, 14:19)

The advising structure serves a certain target group willing to dedicate work and time to organize the purchase and legal set-up of their apartment building. Still, the desire to change the course and incorporate more financially strong partners into their strategy, remains. "We haven't given up on the [big] cooperatives." ; "it remains to be seen what potential lies within the SoWo as an umbrella organization" (LE NFL). Initiating and setting up a new umbrella organization for cooperatives would take a few years. Here lies a

potential mismatch in the expectations. The cooperative SoWo doesn't seem to see itself in the role of an umbrella cooperative, responsible for coordinating all the cases that arise. They are now reaching their capacity by purchasing three to four houses a year. Still, they welcome the idea of having one in Leipzig (LE coop)

The bigger cooperatives, on the other hand, seem to be a better partner for new construction, and to work on very concrete projects, but not conceptually. The network also sees the potential of their efforts in identifying the right timing to approach owners (LE NFL) : before a new wave of renovations is due for the building, has proven to be a good moment, but more learning needs to be done.

All the interviewees acknowledge a rising housing unaffordability and threat by institutional investors. Yet, they don't see their efforts as having disruptive potential. Instead, they see the structural solutions in public housing programs, cooperatives, or even the practice of pre-emption. (LE city)

FRANKFURT

We are fully aware, and that is perhaps the criticism of the approach, that this is not going to save the housing market. It will not lead to a systemic change in the housing market, and soon everyone will only live with cooperatives. We're saving individual houses and individual people from being displaced in the future. And I think every house counts, in terms of that. (FR GIMA 58:38)

Preventive Purchase: niche instrument or part of a structural solution?

While the quote of the GIMA in Frankfurt suggests a relatively sober and modest take on the potential impact of their ambition, the planning official's vision is a bit more visionary. She admits that with every house, you must find "individual solutions for individual cases". (FR city 24:39) . The sale of a house is a very delicate and meaningful affair in a person's life; hence the priority should lie in carefully advising about the possibilities of a socially responsible sale. Currently, the tasks of the GIMA are split by two employees, sharing 28 hours weekly. With the set-up of the structure, processing ongoing cases, incoming requests, and public relations activities, the capacities are reached. (FR GIMA) Still, the potential for the GIMA to be more than a niche instrument is theoretically there, and potential pathways for the GIMA in Frankfurt and elsewhere can be envisioned.

According to the planning official, one strand could be that the range of advisory services the GIMA provides is expanded, e.g., advising on energy-efficiency renovations. As the GIMA is a cooperative, it is possible that eventually, they will start purchasing buildings themselves. Further on, the ambition of the GIMA is not only to take away the risk of speculation of a building. With the sale to a social actor, they also want to foster the participatory aspect of the tenant's life. (FR GIMA) Lastly, the GIMA emerged when the city council was held by a conservative party, which meant that the political majorities were missing to push for helpful resolutions. Now that the majorities have changed, local decision-making is still a tedious but not hopeless.

Expanding local support network one actor who is not yet a GIMA member is the ownership association Haus & Grund²¹. In Leipzig, the association has long been part of the efforts for Preventive Purchases. Collaboratively, the NFL, Haus & Grund, and the city published a leaflet about the different options to "give your house into good hands" (Das Haus in gute Hände geben", NFL 2020). The GIMA Frankfurt sees this as a good practice and wishes to expand their support network by "getting the associations blessings" [= the Frankfurt owner association's blessing].

Advocacy Work Although the GIMA is still at a starting point of its practice, they consider their field of action beyond merely facilitating the purchases between individual owners and cooperatives. They also see their responsibility in advocating for the local policy framework and conditions favoring the implementation of Preventive Purchases in Frankfurt. The current leasehold arrangements make it very expensive to buy plots with a public leasehold right (see >> Practice chapter >> FR), as the ground rent due wouldn't be feasible.²² Hence, the GIMA and other initiatives are advocating for benefits on the ground rent depending on the legal form of the leaseholder: cooperatives or foundations or the like with evidently long-term affordability will be exempt from the extremely high ground rent, but charged by other criteria. (FR GIMA 24:03) In this local policy change also lies a potential for more Preventive Purchases. The city could reach out to the owners of properties where a public leasehold is active and inquire about possible sales. (FR city 24:39)

BERLIN

Preventive Purchase: niche instrument or part of a structural solution?

The district of Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg is currently working on institutionalizing the Preventive Purchases by setting up a new sub-department within

21 Engl.: House & Land

22 Due to Frankfurt having one of the highest ground prices in the country.

the Urban Planning Department. To the existing subdivisions Heritage Preservation, Land Surveying, Building Inspection and Urban Planning the 'Co-operative urban development' division (Kooperative Stadtentwicklung) will be added, again including the fields Preventive Purchases, property development and participation & networks (BE district) :

All tasks, with no legal procedures for them. But it's things that need to be done and have been done for a long time, are now actually being cast more in a form, so that it's also anchored in the administration and is not just some special political project. (BE district 6:35)

Within the last years, the district raised their cooperative and decommodified housing stock²³ by 6000 apartments, which makes a gain of 4%, from 24% to 29% of the entire housing stock. This number includes the exercise of pre-emptive rights (800) , takeovers of apartment blocks by state-owned associations (4000) , Preventive Purchases (300) ²⁴, and forestalling-agreements following the exercise of a pre-emptive right (1200) ²⁵. In this sense, it is not really a niche strategy, "because if you have just arrived at 30%, it's no longer illusionary to think: 50% can be reached within the next 15 years." (BE district) Rather than just focusing on one instrument, it is a catalog of instruments and flexibility that sees Gemeinwohlorientierung or decommodified housing as a spectrum. (BE district) To reach this goal, it needs great efforts and a set of things: human resources, financial resources, the cooperative subsidy from the city-state, an effective communication strategy. Furthermore, analyses about potentials and procedural knowledge could be helpful: At which point can the Preventive Purchase intervene? Most importantly, the idea that a preventive purchase is possible needs to be spread. (BE district) The big cooperatives are considered an unexhausted potential. When asked, who should be part of the strategy, there is little gatekeeping to be detected: "I would say... Everybody's in." (BE district, 27:57)

Diverging visions

The institutionalization within the district of Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg, whose efforts are flanked by great attention (BE GIMA) , might also benefit to boost the GIMA Berlin's efforts on a city-scale. For their further expansion,

23 This includes apartments of housing associations of Berlin, cooperatives, foundations, and rent-controlled apartments.

24 As defined and investigated in this research.

25 In this case, the right of pre-emption is not being exercised in favor of a third party like a cooperative, but the initial, yield-seeking buyer buys the house. Part of the agreement is an obligation to manage and rent the building according to social criteria determined by the districts. The validity of the agreement is limited to a timespan of e.g., 20 years, and therefore is technically not a long-term solution for decommodification of housing. Deutscher Bundestag 2022, Die Abwendungsvereinbarung im Rahmen des gemeindlichen Vorkaufsrechts, WD 7 - 3000 - 023/22.

they can't imagine the city as an ally or a member, as in Frankfurt. Instead, they want to deepen the cooperation on the district level; this is also where renters turn to when seeking help; therefore, it serves as a node, different than the city. The district also has a different standing when it comes to approaching owners, as happened with Neukölln.

According to the GIMA board, complete independence from city support would only be feasible if big cooperatives decide to join as members, too: "that is where the money is that" (BE GIMA 15:43). Still, the GIMA Berlin seems to be more safeguarding about their memberships than the district initiative. Concerns are rooted in possible power imbalances or the initiative's integrity. The aim is to be financially independent, rather than relying on public subsidies: because that's always the question [with subsidies], for how long, under what conditions?". (BE GIMA, 9:52) In an ideal scenario, they would successfully facilitate the purchase of four to five houses, "and that would be quite a lot already, it remains a niche what we're doing" (BE GIMA, 1:16:24)

Another singularity is that in Berlin there are some cooperatives that have formed throughout the squatter movements in the 80s in West Berlin, or in the reunification face, that have grown ever since. Still, they have kept their political motivations to nudge a lasting change in the housing sector, while building up some equity. (BE district)

SYNTHESIS

The **visions for the Preventive Purchase strategies differ greatly** among the actors and even within the cities. While all of them **wish for their efforts have a lasting impact**, or the GIMA to be a relevant player in producing long-term affordable housing, the **confidence varies**. The common sentiment for the GIMA Berlin and Frankfurt, but also for the housing projects in Leipzig, is to look at their practice as a niche, that doesn't have any disruptive potential.

The public actors from Berlin and Frankfurt offer a counterbalance to that notion: seeing both an expansion of the set of tasks; a **desire to think about the mechanism more strategically**, and Preventive Purchases being a partial solution to a structural problem.

In Munich, the GIMA started in 2005 as a similar structure to the GIMA Berlin or GIMA Frankfurt. Since then, rent and ground prices have risen even more, and the field of action for the Munich initiative lies mainly in lobbying tasks. Frankfurt, the 2nd most expensive city in terms of land prices, is aware of this risk and eager to circumvent it. (FR CITY)

Several actors and other sources (FR GIMA, BE GIMA) have put forward, that **homeowner associations are key partners to be activated**, but not the

most apparent collaborators, as their public image is rather conservative and private-ownership-endorsing. The case of Leipzig shows a possible path for collaboration when the goal is to promote ownership associations or “renter-privatizations” (Mieter/-innenprivatisierung). It remains to be seen, if homeowner associations are a suitable partner, when the aim is to promote shared ownership, with a cooperative or foundation.

Despite all the hurdles to incorporate cooperatives in the Preventive Purchase strategies; either due to their limited equity or limited will to grow or innovate; the three cities have a solid and diverse cooperative sector. **The cooperatives present an asset to the consolidation of Preventive Purchases that is currently locked in.** The discussion will look at potential paths to unlock it.

Great potential is seen in cooperatives’ ability to be economically viable and crisis-resilient organizations (BE GIMA; Klemisch & Vogt, 2012), while promoting collective ownership and, in some cases, self-organized living. (Wiest et al., 2017) The discontinuation of housing programs and austerity imperatives has had a lasting impact on housing affordability in the case cities and the success of housing affordability initiatives like the GIMA or municipal efforts. The responsibility for housing is said to be shifted to the individual, rather than a public task. (Balmer & Gerber, 2017) Can Preventive Purchases, if practiced more routinely and with subsidy support like in Berlin, be a strategy to reverse this dynamic, or at least reconcile this conflict?

Procedural knowledge Another potential lies in learning more about owner motivations to sell their house, and identifying the right timing to approach owners; as different notions on this exist. While Leipzig’s experience shows that pre-renovation is a common time for small-scale owners to consider a sale, others don’t see a certain moment as important. Instead, the first step needs to be the resolution to sell. Ideally, they’ve heard of the possibility of selling under social conditions through media or networks:

You can’t sway someone from not wanting to sell their house, to selling their house, with a flyer or whatever... that decision needs to be made first, at least this point where the GIMA is right now. (FR GIMA 21:14)

DISCUSSION

DISCUSSION

The discussion should provide a deeper, more integrated reflection on certain topics that have emerged throughout the analysis. The aim is to provide a deeper understanding of the obscurities, and offer answers and proposals to the research objective: what is the potential of Preventive Purchase and what are trajectories for its consolidation?

Most of the actors agreed, that – theoretically – the preventive purchase is an effective strategy to withdraw housing from the market in the long term. Still, the initiatives face significant hurdles in the establishment and consolidation of the instrument, ranging from a lack of public support to slow processes, and unsuccessful collaborations. The following section will discuss the Preventive Purchase mechanism not as a niche instrument, but one that can serve as one of many strategies to decommodify the housing market. I will draw on the sentiment of the city officials from Frankfurt and Berlin, as well as existing initiatives in Switzerland.

Integrating incentive structures into the Preventative Purchase mechanism

PRETTY PLEASE!?

One of the strengths of the Preventive Purchase is at the same time its weakness. Other than the pre-emptive right, it can be used any time, irrespective of the regulatory setting, or timing within a sale-procedure. All it needs is an owner willing to sell their property to a socially oriented housing provider, for a price they can both agree on. Yet the simplicity of the policy is simultaneously the problem: the actors in charge of implementing it have emphasized that there is little they can offer the owners, or cooperatives to go along with their agenda, be it incentives or obligations. They largely rely on the firm goodwill of the owners and must hope for no heirs getting another appealing amidst negotiations. Good examples and possible incentives were researched, asked of interviewees beforehand and then discussed with the actors throughout the interviews, in some cases they proposed ideas on the spot.

EXPANDING THE PORTFOLIO: INSTRUMENTS

The initiatives like the GIMAs or the advising structure set up by the Network Leipziger Freiheit have already realized this potential power imbalance and reacted by offering to connect instruments like leaseholds (Erbschaftsrecht) and life annuity (Leibrente) to the Preventive Purchase.

Owners' age and fitness to manage a building often influences a decision to sell, as well as pending renovation works (energy efficiency, modernization). A potential incentive for owners to consider a sale could be that the burden of landlordship is taken from them. The principle could work similar to the life-annuity: in return for selling the house (upon death or decision), the owner would benefit from a set of reliefs for (energy efficient) renovation. While there are some incentive schemes for energy transition, they still require a significant financial commitment from the owners. Combining energy renovation benefits and a commitment to sell for an affordable price was proposed of by Florian Schmidt (Berlin district). Similarly, in Brussels, the Community Land Trust Brussels (CLTB, personal communication, 2022) had thought of a similar scheme, that is aimed specifically at low-income owner-occupiers. Just years before, the CLTB has run a trial to establish a model that also aimed at ownership transition. Elderly owners would receive adapted housing with services, while in return offering their building to the organization with interesting conditions attached (CLTB, personal communication 2022). While the tentative research done by the CLTB has identified a large demand and target group for the idea, it was often the heirs who advocated against the sale.

EXPANDING THE PORTFOLIO: POTENTIAL BUYERS

Another way is to expand the portfolio of actors who might buy the houses, and therefore appeal to the political or ethical mind-set of the owners. Frankfurt's GIMA is the only initiative that has managed to establish a cooperation with the traditional cooperatives. Still, they plan on expanding the sector by incorporating a young cooperative into their portfolio. They acknowledge a purchase with a young cooperative is potentially more time-consuming, as resources cannot be mobilized as quickly, and decision processes are less top-down.

It might not be the most effective strategy in terms of quantity to divert to young cooperatives, but it is an extra incentive for owners or tenant communities looking for an ethically sound deal (young coops more often use sustainable finance sources, contractors) and resources to participate in the making of their home.

EXPANDING THE PORTFOLIO: CAPITAL SOURCES

In Switzerland, similar Preventive Purchase intermediaries to the GIMA are financed by cooperative associations or umbrella organizations. (LE coop) For that to be a possibility, the relationship between coops and city authorities and intermediary would have to be strengthened, and the possible merit of cooperative takeovers for the cooperatives analyzed and promoted.

NARRATIVE CHANGE: RESPONSIBLE HOMEOWNERSHIP

Especially in large cities with tense housing markets, landlords do not always have the best reputation. They easily get put into a box with all the other anonymous and detached corporate landlords in the city. (FR GIMA, BE GIMA) This pattern resurfaces in the cases investigated. Besides Leipzig, no real effort has been made to get in touch with homeowner associations, although they are a key actor when trying to reach owners and advocate for Preventive Purchases.

Another reason for local authorities to get in touch with individual owners is energy efficient renovations. Scattered ownership poses a challenge for urban energy transition and has lately been researched more intensely. (BBSR, 2022) From a practical and administrative perspective, some of the challenges of network-building and outreach could be streamlined. The department responsible for the energy efficient renovation most likely sits door to door with the department potentially in charge of Preventive Purchases. Here, synergies can be made in purpose and resources, for example by combining the sustainable renovation and Preventive Purchase potential.

An incentive for owners to cooperate, is to nudge a narrative shift of private landlordship and strengthen the idea of socially responsible ownership, including the sale of the building tied to social criteria. (BE GIMA)

Challenge: *missing incentives or obligations to nudge individual owners to sell below market price; bad reputation of landlords creating*

Recommendation for action: *tie available instruments like leaseholds (Erb-schaftsrecht) and life annuity (Leibrente) to the Preventive Purchase; include energy efficient renovation benefits to the sales-agreement; ease the burdens of landlordship; broaden the portfolio of buyers to meet owners' preferences towards e.g., ethical soundness and finance*

Unlock the potential of cooperatives for Preventive Purchase

I believe that cooperatives must be designed in such a way that they are subject to constant growth and change. Because the cooperative, as you can see in the traditional cooperatives, very quickly reaches its limits when those who want to maintain the status quo, because they live there and live well – that’s okay for now – if they also decide that and no one else can play a role in it, but it’s a totally closed.... then it is just a pity, if it could be an instrument, which can achieve much more. (FR city 54:19)

A lot of the frustrations of the planning officials and Preventive Purchase agencies interviewed, were rooted in the high prices for properties and in the unsuccessful collaboration with cooperatives. In all cities, cooperatives they have been holding a consistent share of the affordable housing stock for decades, and all initiatives agree about them as key actors for fostering Preventive Purchases.

In Leipzig, Frankfurt, and Berlin some of the traditional cooperatives have been involved in the municipal practice of pre-emptive purchase. Still, for many reasons, they remain a complicated and reluctant collaborator.

To push the consolidation of Preventive Purchase forwards, a more nuanced and critical inspection of the cooperative is required.

A **practical and financial concern** was put forward all interviewees: cooperatives want to ‘scattered ownership’ (“Streubesitz”). For logistical reasons, they would refrain from purchasing buildings not in immediate proximity to their stocks. If one house lies outside that agglomeration, then management and maintenance have to go out of their way to put up announcements in hallways or clean the backyard, creating extra costs. This concern appears to be a small one, but manifests as a very high purchase threshold, determined by chance rather than strategy. With a little more will for innovation and flexibility on the cooperative’s side, an external service could be assigned to take care of maintenance, the tenant community organizes to take care of it themselves, or they pay an extra fee due to “scattered ownership-residency” that pays for the extra fuel costs. Many tenants, when given the choice between potentially life-long housing security including an extra charges fee and the insecurity that comes with corporate ownership, would choose the former.

Challenge: Overcoming the selective nature of the cooperatives to only buy stock in proximity to the existing stock

Recommendation for action: charge tenants an additional fee to compensate for "scattered ownership-residency"; commission an external service-provider; self-organize the tasks such as cleaning and dispersing information

An **organizational and institutional hurdle** concerned the cooperative board, its inherent resistance to change and its decision-making apparatus. These make it hard for cooperatives to take the first step towards a purchase strategy and a general growth perspective beyond "inventory management" (FR city) .

The cooperative board consists of at least two natural persons and is elected by the general assembly²⁶. Next to organic functions they are usually employed and fulfill other tasks as part of their position of a board member of a housing cooperative, e.g. the administrative or technical/development lead. The board legally represents the cooperative and is, according to their statute, in charge of leading and deciding over its business (GenoHeld, n.d.) .

Some criticize the structures as hierarchical, as the board is not bound by instructions. Some boards are even said to be acting in their own interests, completely detached from the members, while the model foresees the opposite: the board is meant to be an executor of the member's interests and a service provider to them.(Genossenschaft von unten, 2022) Besides that, board members often stay in their positions for a very long time, are very old and stuck in their ways (FR coop; LE NFL) .

If a cooperative wants to expand through new construction or purchase of housing stock, their rent model offers, roughly speaking, into two scenarios. In scenario A, the additional expenditure would cause a minor re-allocation of rents. The costs would be apportioned to the tenants of the cooperative according to a solidarity principle: in the end all renters pay approximately the same. In scenario B, cross-subsidization is not an option. This means that one house paying 4€ per sqm and the newcomers to the cooperative pay 10-15€ per sqm (exemplary only, but using realistic prices This seems like an unsatisfying and inconsistent price strategy, not in line with the cooperative's principle of equal treatment.

To advocate for an **expansive strategy** will over the long-term cost all members a minor rent increase, calling for "strong and charismatic board members [...], who can engage the community". The planning official of Frankfurt proposes again a flexible solution: "Or we find an exceptional solu-

²⁶ Or a representative assembly, in cases of very big cooperatives with more than 1500 members.

tion for you who cannot pay the 50 cents. All others pay 1€, that 's fine." (FR city 55:25)

To accelerate the **renewal of cooperative structures**, the position of the boards members should be discussed more broadly, their importance and potential to nudge a social urban policy emphasized, so that a diverse set of candidates finds interest in filling them. Like board members can be appointed, they can also be deselected, although this rarely happens. (BE GIMA) The toolbox of democratic participation that the cooperative law provides should be taken more seriously and used, if the board members resist the general assembly 's interests.²⁷

The Alternativer Genossenschaftskongress in 2022 (Alternative conference of cooperatives) worked on and proposed a reform of the cooperative law towards stronger democratic principles, ensuring less hierarchies and limiting the independence of the board. Based on the findings of the research, if you want to win cooperatives over as collaborators for Preventive Purchase, it will also require big communicative efforts. Many of the actors interviewed stressed the time, the effort and hence human resource it would take, to convince coops to participate. Communicative tasks are sometimes trivialized as something to be done on the side, assigning them little budget and no staff. The relationship towards cooperatives should be centered and treated as a task by either the planning department in charge or the intermediary Preventive Purchase office.

Challenge: *Hierarchical, ever-lasting boards that act detached from member's interests and therefore hinder innovation; members unwilling to support expansion, as they object to a slight rent increase*

Recommendation for action: *appoint strong and visionary board members willing to engage members; deselect board members; rent re-allocation on a solidary principle to finance Preventive Purchases (with flexible solutions for low-income members); Preventive Purchase practitioners/city: prioritize the relationship with cooperatives and budget human resource for it*

²⁷ In 2022, the first Alternativer Genossenschaftskongress (Alternative conference of cooperatives) took place, an event of members and advocates for cooperatives in Germany, discussion needed reforms and pitfalls of cooperatives in Germany, under the input and participation of leading housing experts like Andrej Holm. In the documents handed out at the conference, the board 's undemocratic behavior and them appearing to be given carte blanche, was a main concern.

The (citizen-) foundation, the better cooperative for Preventive Purchases?

How come, that those foundations are usually Swiss foundations? How about having citizen foundations in Germany that accumulate equity detached from federal institutions? (Berlin GIMA 1:05:00)

During the interview, the GIMA Berlin shared how they don't understand, why foundations are not more incorporated into the efforts around Preventive Purchases. During this work, cooperatives and ownership associations were centered as typical use case buyers for Preventive Purchases. The GIMA Berlin also has foundations among their members / pool of buyers. Especially in Germany, coops are the most obvious and most established among the third sector housing providers (Beuerle, 2014) . They have established long term-relationships to local authorities, banks and subsidiaries and they are locally anchored housing providers (legally) . While you can find 5 traditional cooperatives in a mid-sized German town, you will find a handful of bigger foundations specialized in social real estate, that are active all over Germany: Edith Maryon (Swiss) , Trias, Nord-Süd Brücken. Next to those, the GIMA Berlin also has locally anchored foundations in their portfolio (Stadtbodenstiftung, Elsbach Stiftung) . Citizen foundations ("Bürgerstiftungen") can work just perpetually decommodified as cooperatives and can be locally anchored. So far, it lacks a bigger structure or successful pilot in Germany, or one that is publicly supported comparable to Switzerland.

With the Stiftung PWG in Switzerland / Zurich we find a best practice on Preventive Purchases using a foundation. The PWG is a municipal foundation with the credo "Buy as many houses as you can!" (Translated by the author, Stiftung PWG, 2020) . Their cause is the preservation of affordable residential and commercial space of the city of Zurich, by buying houses, commercial spaces, and land. Zurich initially equipped them with 50 million CHF as starting capital, which needs to be kept as the foundations capital. Their work doesn't stop with purchases, but they will renovate, and if possible, also expand the buildings they have bought with additional units. (Stiftung PWG, 2020) .

Challenge: *Are foundations overlooked as potential partners or tools to be implemented by economically viable municipalities?*

Recommendation for action: *Research the possibility of activating or bundling existing ones (foundation funds); launch pilot projects*

The role of local authorities: Housing unaffordability, whose problem?

Imagine a world in which the *city region's devolved government* – not the private sector per se – is the economy's indispensable entrepreneur, innovating and able and willing to take risks and to persevere through uncertainty. (Mazzucato; 2013, as cited in Thompson et al 2020, p. 1172, changes in italics)

The local governments that played the main role in this thesis, have had a lot to tackle and to withstand in the last 40 + years. Like other cities worldwide, they have not always handled the bullies of financialized real estate courageously, sometimes they have been straight up cowards. This lack of confidence has far-reaching implications for an adequate housing supply today, and the leeway cities have in providing housing.

Big responsibilities and low agency don't mix well

While the cities have great responsibilities, they are not always equipped with the right powers to take on the challenges ahead. More concretely, they do not always have the powers they need to use the Preventive Purchase as a weapon against the financialized housing market.

The tasks that the municipality is "inescapably" (Hamm & Neumann 1996, as cited in Lenz, 2022, p. 89) obligated to take over, were not defined by them. Rather, it is sometimes a handing down of tasks that are partially funded by the federal states, but overall, with little scope for municipalities to influence.

In public debate, though, financial, or social unrest will be logged as municipal maladministration. (Lenz, 2022, p. 89) The case-study has brought to light different ways that could be publicly tackled to facilitate Preventive Purchases both locally, and ultimately, across Germany (or elsewhere) . The municipal code, written by the federal states, stipulates local governments to act with economical viability. In their attempts to provide long-term decommodified housing through Preventive Purchases, interviewees met opposition, as the low sales prices negotiated could violate fiscal regulations. Again, you can understand departments enforcing these rules: besides human resources municipalities most important way to manage their budget is through property taxes and costs (Silomon-Pflug, 2018) .

Having to negotiate with other departments (FR GIMA) or find additional political support (BE district) , slows down the sales process potentially for months. Swift action was mentioned as critical by the Preventive Purchase

practitioners. The previous chapter has shown, that most municipal codes grant exceptions to sell property on public land “below value” for common-good housing providers. And reproaches about real estate transfer tax avoidance can be ironed out by clarifying the specific situation. Federal or state level could be of great support by acknowledging Private Purchase and similar practices and providing help guides for administrative practice, making a sale “below value” on the one hand, and by making its procedure a routine.

Challenge: *local governments are obligated to act with economic viability, which causes procedural difficulties to sale buildings below market value (e.g., tax office claims property transfer tax for market value)*

Recommendation for action: *making Preventive Purchases below market value a routine procedure by providing help guides for administrative practice*

The role of intermediary actors: Preventive Purchase practitioners as a case for ‘entrepreneurial municipalism’?

The goal of self-governance within the cooperative, I don’t have that... there are really some [...] , houses, that have such a living culture, let’s call it that... But there [...] most of houses, for them it’s not about that at all, they just want that they can live safely. It’s like an existential pyramid, so to speak. At the bottom is the food and at the top is the culture, [...]. (BE district 28:45)

Some of the Preventive Purchase practitioners showed a good comprehension of the sales process and strategic clear-sightedness; still, they had little confidence in the disruptive potential of the Preventive Purchase tool. Leipzig and its focus on takeovers in ownership associations was included as a case showing the nuances of decommodification. In these sales processes, where tenants approach an intermediary Preventive Purchase actor, and are willing to mobilize, a politicized, engaged community looking for self-actualization in their housing arrangement can already be found (BE district) . I would like to formulate the careful warning, that energies of Preventive Purchases should not be targeted at housing communities, who probably could realize their Purchase on their own or by approaching existing networks specialized on these sales (e.g. Miethäusersyndikat) . The energy of Preventive Purchases should be put in engaging larger cooperatives or foundations as buyers, who don’t require as much commitment in realizing a purchase, so that ultimately all residents can potentially benefit.

Consequently, I would like to add another element to the entrepreneur in the 'entrepreneurial municipalism': an affordable housing policy objective that aims for quantity. An objective often hushed away as corporate and unfeasible ("It remains a niche.") or against the values of an alternative housing sector. But the aim should not be to work towards an "alternative" housing sector, but one where decommodification is the norm. In a market-led society, the market also provides for the social needs, and simultaneously degrades and shuts out alternative forms of producing and sustaining one's existence. A counteraction to this would place "the economy under the direction of societal values and priorities" (Peredo & McLean, 2020, p. 6). It is a simple shift in perspective that Karl Polanyi (1957 [1944]) and later on, Peredo & McLean (2019) imagine, but nonetheless a fundamentally political one (Somers & Block, 2014; Sandbrook, 2018), as it challenges the state-market relation, and the discourse about whose rationality is the dominant one.

In all of the case-cities, (district-) authorities worked closely with social actors to decommodify housing for good. The previous sections were an attempt to show trajectories for adopting a confident mindset, that takes more risks for social gain. It also pointed to responsibilities for that endeavor.

Challenge: *Effectively and confidently defining the target population and scope for Preventive Purchase*

Recommendation for action: *pursuing an affordable housing policy that reconciles quantity and quality objectives*

Conclusion

This work scrutinized the emerging, but little researched housing policy Preventive Purchase. It focused on its current practice and pathways for expansion and consolidation. What is the potential for the share of individual private owners to mitigate the increasing corporate privatization of the rental market?

The first research and attempts on federally promoting cooperative real estate agencies were reflective of the pre-GFC, austerity-driven governance climate. The motivation to set up a real estate agency was not to produce affordable housing, but to fill up the debt-ridden local budgets (with little federal commitment). The analytical framework for the case studies was built by drawing from a set of closely related concepts of decommodification, entre-

preneurial municipalism and the tools they are prompting; Leipzig, Frankfurt, and Berlin and the instances of Preventive Purchase in them served as case studies. Preventive Purchases are not a standardized procedure and they do not have a set governance structure. Instead, their emergence is bound to the local context and individuals pushing for them. Sometimes they arise from civic initiative, sometimes from the public or the third sector, and sometimes it is a hybrid. Is the emerging Preventive Purchase a confident approach, fit to structurally tackle decommodification of housing by social means rather than legal levers?

During the analysis, this question was tackled by looking at the local housing policy context and the ownership structure of the housing market of each city, in accordance with part one of the thesis. Then barriers and enabling factors for the establishment of the policy were identified and processed by looking for shared experiences.

Lastly, the findings were synthesized, and pathways for the policy's consolidation in Germany proposed. Among others, the findings suggest a critical reflection on the cooperative's institutional tradition and formulate actor-specific recommendations for action to consolidate the practice. In theory, and from an instrumental perspective, Preventive Purchase have the potential to structurally change and decommodify the housing market over the long-term. Strong examples can be seen in Zurich, though they lack transferability. Germany also offers potential. In Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg we find several instances of successful Preventive Purchases, like currently establishing a Preventive Purchase department within the administration, a step towards institutionalization.

Courageous local governments and visionary initiatives were identified as critical to accelerate the practice. Still, many open ends and obscurities remain. Some of them only require a fresh set of eyes on administrative and communicative routines. As a consequence of this work, I think its indispensable for research or practice to

>>> look into the potentials of (traditional) cooperatives and foundations as partners for a decommodification of the housing stock

>>> activate owner's associations as a key partner for Preventive Purchase

>>> employ a more nuanced set of objectives for housing affordability efforts: next to the ones aiming for self-governance, other approaches that aim for decommodification and quantity, can co-exist

The case work remained at a theoretical level, engaging little with the spa-

tial anchoring of the cases in the cities, or the realities of the people involved in the process. Both a close monitoring and research on this should be concluded with the practice gaining momentum. This work was one of the first theorizing attempts for Preventive Purchases.

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ANNEX

(FOR REASONS OF CONFIDENTIALITY, THE INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS CANNOT BE ATTACHED. HOWEVER, THEY CAN BE MADE AVAILABLE AFTER CONSULTATION.)

ANNEX 1

Interview Guide

JAN SCHAAF (31.05.2022)

NETZWERK LEIPZIGER FREIHEIT (NFL), MANAGING DIRECTOR OF THE PLANNING OFFICE UMS STADTSTRATEGIEN

Allgemein

Können Sie sich kurz vorstellen und ihren Aufgabenbereich im Netzwerk Leipziger Freiheit beschreiben.

Können Sie erklären was die Initiative um das Netzwerk Leipziger Freiheit, und v.a. die Eigentumsübertragung, und wie sie entstanden ist?

Konkreter Aufgabenbereich der Eigentumsübertragung

Personelle Ausstattung, Finanzielle Ressourcen

Aktuelle Entwicklungen

Anders als etwa das Vorkaufsrecht kann der Präventive Erwerb unabhängig von rechtlichen Rahmenbedingungen stattfinden. Inwieweit ist die Massnahme institutionalisiert, in Haushaltsplänen verankert oder Vereinbarungen?

Konkreten Bedarf des Service für Leipzig

Practice

Wie viele Verkaufsprozesse haben Sie bereits begleitet, mit welchen Ergebnissen: Prozess erfolgreich, gestoppt, an Genossenschaft oder GbR vermittelt?

Beschreiben Sie den Ablauf eines Verkaufsprozesses.

Wie ist die Kontaktaufnahme zu den EigentümerInnen gestaltet?

Wie ist die Spanne zwischen Verkaufspreis und Verkehrswert?

Schwierigkeiten in den Verhandlungen? (Zeit..)

Verknüpfung mit anderen Instrumenten / Förderungen – wenig

Finanzierung

Wonach regelt sich die Selbstverpflichtung / Auflagen der Bezahlbarkeit

Welche Argumente für einen gemeinwohlorientierten Verkauf während der Verhandlungen können Sie anbringen?

Typische Eigentümerinnen, Entwicklung?

Akteure

Mit welchen Genossenschaften arbeiten Sie zusammen? Wie ist der Kontakt zustande gekommen?

Wonach richtet sich die Kooperationsbereitschaft der Genossenschaften?

Dachgenossenschaft

Wie sieht die Zusammenarbeit mit der Stadt aus in ihrer Arbeit?

Unterstützung / Widerstand

Können Sie sich vorstellen, wie der Verkaufsprozess aus der Sicht der Mieterinnen abläuft? Was für Veränderungen kommen auf diese zu?

Genossenschaftsanteile

Mitbestimmung, Hausgemeinschaft und Gemeinschaftsgefühl vorher / nachher

Arbeitsaufwand der Mieterinnen im Prozess

Entwicklung/Perspektive

Sehen Sie Ihre Arbeit eher als routiniert an oder in Entwicklung begriffen?

Ist es Teil ihrer Arbeit, innovativ tätig zu sein, in welchen Feldern?

Wie geschieht von Ihrer Seite die Wissensgenerierung zum Thema?

Können Sie Ihren Eindruck der anderen GIMA-ähnlichen Initiativen beschreiben?

Sehen Sie Potential in einer landesweiten Bewegung oder einem Zusammenschluss dieser?

Wie hat sich Kritik oder Widerstand gegen die Initiative geäußert?

Wenn ja, wie entgegnen Sie der Kritik?

Mit welchen Herausforderungen in der Umsetzung gehen Sie um?

Täglicher Arbeitsalltag

Finanzierung

Outreach / Flächenpotenziale

Was halten sie für eine erfolgreiche Ausweitung der Massnahme für notwendig?

Nehmen Sie ruhig Bezug auf verschiedene Akteure wie die Bezirke, die Stadt, die Eigentümerverbände, Bankinstitute.

Haben sie noch Anmerkungen, Zusätze?

OLIVER KOCZY (1.06.2022)

**CITY OF LEIPZIG, OFFICE FOR HOUSING AND URBAN RENEWAL
HOUSING DEPARTEMENT**

Allgemein

Können Sie sich kurz vorstellen und ihren Aufgabenbereich im Amt für Wohnungsbau und Stadterneuerung beschreiben?

Für die Eigentumsübernahmen sind Kleineigentümer von Interesse. In Deutschland liegt der Anteil der Privat- oder KleineigentümerInnen bei etwa 2/3, können Sie aktuelle Einschätzungen zur Anteil dieser Eigentümerinnen in Leipzig machen?

Wie verändert sich dieser Markt der Kleineigentümerinnen, und was sind Gründe dafür in Leipzig - Demographie, Finanzialisierung?

Klima der gemeinwohlorientierten Wohnpolitik in der Stadt – andere Services auch. Inwiefern steht der Prozess in einem sinnvollen Zusammenhang einer lokalen gemeinwohlorientierten Stadtentwicklung?
z.B. Personelle Ausstattung, Finanzielle Ressourcen

Über das NLF, die Stadt und den Eigentümerverband Haus & Grund wurden vor einiger Zeit eine Beratungsstruktur für Wohnprojekte und Eigentümerübernahmen gegründet, darunter auch Eigentümerübernahmen, zumeist in Hauseigentümergeinschaften, also GbRs begleitet.

Können Sie erklären was die Initiative ist, wie die Stadt sie unterstützt?

Potential dieser Massnahmen?

Was wären Zielsetzungen und wie gliedern sich diese Herausforderungen der Stadt ein?

Welche Aufgaben/Verpflichtungen ergeben sich dabei für die Stadt?

Personelle Ausstattung, Finanzielle Ressourcen

Bekommen Sie die Verhandlungen mit?

Werden die dokumentiert?

Praxis

Beschreiben Sie den Ablauf eines Verkaufs aus der Sicht der Stadt, an welchem Punkt werden Sie mit einbezogen?

Kontaktaufnahme / Datenschutz

Schwierigkeiten in den Verhandlungen

Kondition Verkaufspreis – Schere zwischen Verkaufspreis und Potential in diesem Fall?

Selbstverpflichtung / Auflagen (der Genossenschaft oder GIMA?)

Verknüpfung mit anderen Instrumenten / Förderungen

Entgegenkommen mit Herabsetzung des Erbschaftszins, ein Einzelfall oder Wiederholung denkbar?

Netzwerk

Auch von der SOWO Leipzig gibt es eine Beratungsstruktur, die jedoch dezidiert auf genossenschaftliche Modelle der Übernahme gerichtet ist.

Wie stehen diese Initiativen in Ihrer Ansicht in Verbindung?

Ich möchte nochmal auf das Netzwerk oder allgemeiner einer Beratungsstruktur zu sprechen kommen, die handlungsfähiger und routinierter agieren kann ist – in München gibt es ja so etwas, in Frankfurt wird es auch in Mitarbeit mit 2 alten Genoss. Aufgebaut. So eine Struktur auch in Leipzig wünschenswert?

Traditionsgenossenschaften haben höhere Liquidität, in die Verantwortung nehmen?

Dachgenossenschaft?

Bisher handelt es sich um Einzelmassnahmen und Fall für Fall-Bearbeitung, wäre eine Etablierung wünschenswert?

Welche Instrumente stehen Ihnen zur Verfügung, theoretisch?

Was steht dem im Wege?

Welche Herausforderungen sehen Sie zur Ausweitung des Bestandserwerbs über die Stadt oder andere Genossenschaften?

- Finanzierung der Massnahme

zu Verfügung stehende Finanzierungsinstrumente zum Hauskauf
 Outreach
 Flächenpotenziale (Anzahl Eigentümer* innen)

TOBIAS BERNET & MAXIMILIAN HELLRIEGEL (01.06.2022)
COOPERATIVE SOLIDARISCHE WOHNUNGSGENOSSENSCHAFT / SOWO
LEIPZIG EG

Allgemein

Können Ihr euch, die SOWO kurz vorstellen und ihren Aufgabenbereich in der SOWO Leipzig beschreiben.

Kontext

Welche Rolle nimmt die SOWO Leipzig in der Genossenschaftslandschaft der Stadt ein?
 Wie ist die Zusammensetzung der BewohnerInnenenschaft im genossenschaftlichen Bestand?
 Über das Netzwerk Leipziger Freiheit, die Stadt und den Eigentümerverband Haus & Grund wurden vor einiger Zeit eine Bertungsstruktur für Wohnprojekte und Eigentümerübernahmen gegründet, darunter auch Eigentümerübernahmen, zumeist in Hausgemeinschaften, also GbRs begleitet. Ihr selbst bietet auch eine Beratungsstruktur an. Wie stehen diese Angebote zueinander?

Netzwerk

Seid Ihr mit der Initiative bzw. der Beratungsstruktur vertraut?
 Kooperiert ihr?
 Ergeben sich aus der Kooperation irgendwelche Vorteile?
 Vereinbarung zur Kooperation ist formell, mündlich?
 Welche Aufgaben sind damit verbunden? Arbeitsaufwand?
 Kooperiert ihr auch mit Eigentümerverbänden?

Praxis

Gibt es Fälle, in denen EigentümerInnen auf euch zugehen?
 Gab es bereits Verhandlungen mit Eigentümerinnen?
 Sozial orientiert 1 Sache, Welche Argumente für einen gemeinwohlorientierten Verkauf während der Verhandlungen könnt ihr anbringen?
 Typische Eigentümerinnen, Entwicklung?
 (Können Sie ihren Eindruck von den Abwägungen der Eigentümerinnen wiedergeben.)
 Schere zwischen Verkaufspreis und Potential in diesem Fall?

Überlegungen

Was würde einen Kauf von Wohnbestand begünstigen, was nicht?
 Schere zwischen Verkaufspreis und Potential in diesem Fall?

Räumliche Lage, Bewohnerschaft, Grundstücksbesitz
 Streubesitz – nicht praktikabel für die grösseren, wie handhabt ihr das, und könnt ihr euch eine Lösung dafür vorstellen?

Finanzierung

Wie planen Sie die Finanzierung eines Ankaufs eines Wohngebäudes?

Welche Förderungen stehen Ihnen zur Verfügung? (Kredite?)

Förderungen für Genossenschaften im Speziellen, Instrumente wie Erbpachtvertrag

Welche finanziellen Grenzen ziehen Sie beim Erwerb?

Selbstverpflichtung / Auflagen der Bezahlbarkeit?

Wie baut ihr Eigenkapital auf? Was für Zielsetzungen oder Werte fließen da mit ein?

Ich möchte nochmal auf das Netzwerk oder allgemeiner einer Beratungsstruktur zu sprechen kommen, die handlungsfähiger und routinierter agieren kann.

Würdet ihr gerne von diesem Netzwerk nutzen machen, was hindert das Netzwerk auch Verkäufe an Genossenschaften zu tätigen?

Instrumente

Welche Instrumente oder Mechanismen stehen euch zur Verfügung?

Stichwort Inter-genossenschaftlichen Finanzierungsinstrumente, kannst du ausführen, wie so eine Sache in Leipzig zur Anwendung kommen könnte?

Kommunikationsstruktur

Verpflichtung

Spanne zwischen leistbarem Preis und Verkehrswert wird subventioniert

Entwicklung

Gibt es Bereiche eurer Arbeit, in denen ihr Input, habt, Leerzeichen bestehen, Wissen oder Innovation hilfreich wären?

Wie würden Sie Ihre Entwicklungsperspektive beschreiben?

Im Vergleich zu anderen (Traditions-) Genossenschaften

Innovation, Neubau und Wohnprojekte: Was unterscheidet die SOWO von anderen (Traditions-) Genossenschaften

Was halten sie für eine erfolgreiche Ausweitung des Bestandserwerbs über die SOWO oder andere Genossenschaften für notwendig?

Nehmen Sie ruhig Bezug auf verschiedene Akteure wie die Bezirke, die Stadt, die Eigentümerverbände, Bankinstitute.

ROBIN MOHR (22.06.2022)

GENOSSENSCHAFTLICHE IMMOBILIENAGENTUR FRANKFURT AM MAIN EG IG (GIMA FRANKFURT)

Allgemein

Können Sie sich kurz vorstellen und ihren Aufgabenbereich im Netzwerk Frankfurt für gemeinschaftliches Wohnen e.V. bzw. der GIMA [Institution] beschreiben.

Können Sie erklären was die Initiative um die GIMA Frankfurt ist und wie und durch wen Sie in entstanden ist?

Konkrete Aufgabenbereich der GIMA
Personelle Ausstattung, Finanzielle Ressourcen

Anders als etwa das Vorkaufsrecht kann der Präventive Erwerb unabhängig von rechtlichen Rahmenbedingungen stattfinden. Eine Verbindlichkeit hin zur Institutionalisierung oder in Form von Vereinbarungen kann jedoch hilfreich sein. An welchem Punkt steht man da und in welche Richtung soll es gehen?

Praxis

Beschreiben Sie den Ablauf eines Verkaufs, idealerweise des letzten.

Wie ist die Kontaktaufnahme zu den EigentümerInnen gestaltet, aufsuchend / Datenschutz

Schwierigkeiten in den Verhandlungen

(Entgegenkommen der Stadt mit Herabsetzung des Erbbauzins, ein Einzelfall oder Wiederholung denkbar?)

Verknüpfung mit anderen Instrumenten / Förderungen

Warum gerade die Genossenschaft (BWV)

Kondition Verkaufspreis - Schere zwischen Verkaufspreis und Potential in diesem Fall?

Druck auf Bestandsgebäude - Welche Rolle spielt der Faktor Zeit in den Verkaufsgesprächen?

Selbstverpflichtung / Auflagen (der Genossenschaft oder GIMA?)

Können Sie sich vorstellen, wie der Verkauf aus der Sicht der MieterInnen abläuft? Was für Veränderungen kommen auf die zu?

Genossenschaftsanteile

Mitbestimmung

Arbeitsaufwand

Welche Argumente für einen gemeinwohlorientierten Verkauf während der Verhandlungen bringen Sie an, können Sie anbringen?

Können Sie ihren Eindruck von den Abwägungen der EigentümerInnen oder interessierter VerkäuferInnen wiedergeben

Was ist der Verlust für die EigentümerInnen, was der Mehrwert (nicht nur persönlich)

Typische Eigentümerinnen, Entwicklung?

Entwicklung

Mit welchen Genossenschaften arbeiten sie zusammen? Und wie ist der Kontakt zustande gekommen?

Wonach richtet sich die Kooperationsbereitschaft der Genossenschaften

Geplant, dies auszuweiten?

Wie sieht die Zusammenarbeit mit der Stadt aus in diesem Prozess? Unterstützung städtischer Seite oder Widerstand

Haben Sie Kritik an dem Ansatz gehört oder Widerstand in der Etablierung erfahren?

Wenn ja, wie entgegenen Sie der Kritik?

Herausforderungen in der Umsetzung

zu Verfügung stehende Finanzierungsinstrumente zum Hauskauf

Outreach
Flächenpotenziale
HauseigentümerInnen - finden

Perspektive

Was halten sie für eine erfolgreiche Ausweitung der Massnahme für notwendig?

Problem besteht in der Bereitschaft der EigentümerInnen, die Verluste durch einen gemeinwohlorientierten Verkaufspreis anstelle eines nach Marktpreis -

Wie schätzen Sie die Offenheit ein, innovative Ansätze auszuprobieren? Oder die Möglichkeit, die Spanne zu subventionieren?

Wie geschieht von ihrer Seite die Wissensgenerierung zum Thema?

Kooperation mit anderen GIMA - Initiativen? Beschreiben Sie Ihren Eindruck der Bewegung.

Die Anwendung des VK-rechts war eine zentrale Säule der Forderungen des wohnpol. Aktivismus in Frankfurt doch wurde durch ein kürzliches Urteil des Bundesverfassungsgerichts praktisch aufgehoben, Verschiebung zur GIMA?

Haben sie noch Anmerkungen, Zusätze?

BEATE STEINBACH (21.06.2022) CITY OF FRANKFURT AM MAIN, OFFICE FOR HOUSING, HOUSING MARKET, TENANCY LAW AND INNOVATIVE HOUSING PROJECTS

Vorstellung

Können Sie sich kurz vorstellen und ihren Aufgabenbereich bei der Stadt Frankfurt beschreiben?

Initiative

Können Sie was über die städtische Initiative teilen, die GIMA zu etablieren?

Welche Rollen und Aufgaben übernehmen sie da aktuell in der Organisation, beim Anbahnung eines Verkaufs, wie viel ihrer Kapazitäten kann das in Anspruch nehmen

Sind das auch oder nur Fälle in denen der Verkauf schon im Raum steht?

Finden / Kontaktaufnahme zu EigentümerInnen als Herausforderung, noch nirgendwo systematisch angegangen - welche Möglichkeiten hat der Bezirk?

Wie ist ihre Einschätzung zum Potential der EigentümerInnen in Frankfurt, gibt es viele bereitwillige?

In Berlin-Kreuzberg ist geplant, die Praxis der Präventiven Erwerbe auch in einem Fachbereich der Verwaltung zu verankern, um es in eine Form zu giessen, nicht als politisches Spezialprojekt gelten zu lassen.

Perspektive

Was ist so die Stossrichtung dieser GIMA-Initiative, auch aus städtischer Seite - weil mit 1 Stelle so wie jetzt wird da wahrscheinlich nicht so schnell so viel passieren

Initiativen – Wahrnehmung der Massnahme als Nische – in Leipzig, Berlin, Frankfurt, nur Florian Schmidt im Grunde dabei ist es ein Mechanismus, der sich leicht ins grosse Denken lässt, da es viele Eigentümerinnen gibt und Genossenschaften potentiell, ist das illusorisch?

Wie ist ihr persönliche Zielsetzung dazu, als Einzelfallmassnahme oder eher eine strukturell, Teillösung für bezahlbaren Wohnraum?

Welche instrumentelle oder auch andere Spielräume haben Städte da?

Welche Herausforderungen sehen Sie vor allem, bei der Etablierung?

Ist das eine Massnahme die an eine Anreizstruktur gebunden werden sollte?

Eigentümerseite, städtische Seite, Financier-Seite

Genossenschaften

Die Einbindung Traditions-Genossenschaften für die Massnahme ist von Stadt zu Stadt unterschiedlich. In Leipzig möchte man gerne grosse Genossenschaften einbinden gerne gibt es eine Beratungsstruktur, die derzeit vor allem auf GbR-Modelle der Übernahme gerichtet ist, da es keine liquiden Bestandsgenossenschaften gibt die kooperationswillig sind. Die Sowo hat sich gewissermassen eine selbstständiges Standbein aufgestellt.

Besonders , weil es in Frankfurt kooperationswillige Genossenschaften gibt

Und nicht ganz klar, woran das liegt, darum möchte ich gerne mal so ihre Wahrnehmung dazu hören..

Wie ist die Wahrnehmung der FrankfurterInnen von Genossenschaften? In der DDR hatten die n ganz besonderen haben jetzt auch noch so einen sentimental Stellenwert

Können sie vlt nochmal so in Klein klein darstellen wie es zur Kooperation mit den Genossenschaften kam, welche Argumente, welche Runden, wie haben die davon mitbekommen

Welche Herausforderungen sehen Sie zur Ausweitung des Bestandserwerbs über den Bezirk oder andere Genossenschaften?

CORA LEHNERT (23.05.2022)

WOHNBAUGENOSSENSCHAFT IN FRANKFURT AM MAIN EG / WBG

Allgemein

Können Sie sich kurz vorstellen und ihren Aufgabenbereich in der Wohnungsbaugenossenschaft Frankfurt beschreiben.

Welche Rolle nimmt die WBG in der Genossenschaftslandschaft der Stadt ein?

Zusammensetzung der BewohnerInnenschaft im genossenschaftlichen Bestand

Wie würden Sie Ihre Entwicklungsperspektive beschreiben?

Im Vergleich zu anderen (Traditions-) Genossenschaften

Innovation, Neubau und Wohnprojekte: Was unterscheidet die WBG von anderen (Traditions-) Genossenschaften

Wie viel Nachfrage gibt es aktuell an Ihrem Wohnungsbestand?

Kooperation

Wie ist die Kooperation mit der GIMA zustande gekommen und die WBD zum Gründungsmitglied geworden?

Warum haben Sie sich dazu entschieden, Ergeben sich aus der Kooperation irgendwelche Vorteile? Welche Aufgaben sind damit verbunden? Arbeitsaufwand? Die Genossenschaft als Multiplikator / Werbung

Andere Erfahrungen mit Bestandserwerb?

Vereinbarung zur Kooperation, formell, mündlich?

Gab es bereits Verhandlungen mit Eigentümerinnen?

Was würde einen Kauf begünstigen, was nicht?

Lage, Bewohnerschaft, Grundstücksbesitz

Finanzierung

Wie planen Sie die Finanzierung eines Ankaufs eines Wohngebäudes über die Vermittlung der GIMA?

Normalerweise Finanzierung von Neubau, Bestandserwerb über

Welche Förderungen stehen Ihnen zur Verfügung? (Kredite?)

Förderungen für Genossenschaften im Speziellen

Welche finanziellen Grenzen ziehen Sie beim Erwerb

Erwirtschaftung von Eigenkapital? Einschätzung, hoch?

Verwendung von Überschüssen?

Entwicklung

Welche Bedarfe / Hürden sehen Sie zur Ausweitung des Bestandserwerbs über die WBG oder andere Genossenschaften?

Welche Akteure könnten stärker aktiviert?

Welche Instrumente genutzt werden?

für die ggf. von der Stadt oder Landesbanken gedeckt werden könnten?

RENÉE SOMNITZ, JOCHEN HUCKE (02.06.2022)
HÄUSER BEWEGEN GIMA BERLIN-BRANDENBURG EG I.G.

Allgemein

Können Sie sich kurz vorstellen und ihren Aufgabenbereich im GIMA B-B/Häuser bewegen beschreiben, wie

Initiative

Können Sie erklären was die Initiative um die GIMA B-B/Häuser bewegen ist und wie und durch wen Sie in entstanden ist?

Konkreter Aufgabenbereich von Häuser bewegen

Personelle Ausstattung, Finanzielle Ressourcen

Aktuelle Entwicklungen

Anders als etwa das Vorkaufsrecht kann der Präventive Erwerb unabhängig von rechtlichen Rahmenbedingungen stattfinden. Eine Verbindlichkeit hin zur Institutionalisierung oder in Form von Vereinbarungen kann jedoch hilfreich sein. An welchem Punkt steht man da und in welche Richtung soll es gehen?

Praxis

Wie viele Verkaufsprozesse haben Sie bereits begleitet, mit welchen Ergebnissen: Prozess erfolgreich, gestoppt, an Genossenschaft oder GbR vermittelt...

Beschreiben Sie den Ablauf eines Verkaufsprozesses.

Wie ist die Kontaktaufnahme zu den Eigentümerinnen gestaltet?

Wie ist die Spanne zwischen Verkaufspreis und Verkehrswert?

Schwierigkeiten in den Verhandlungen? (Zeit..)

Verknüpfung mit anderen Instrumenten / Förderungen

Finanzierung

Wonach regelt sich die Selbstverpflichtung / Auflagen der Bezahlbarkeit

Welche **Argumente** für einen gemeinwohlorientierten Verkauf während der Verhandlungen können Sie anbringen?

Typische Eigentümerinnen, Entwicklung?

(Können Sie ihren Eindruck von den Abwägungen der Eigentümerinnen wiedergeben.)

Sollte es mehr Anreize geben?

Netzwerk

Mit welchen Genossenschaften arbeiten sie zusammen? Wie ist der Kontakt zustande gekommen?

Wonach richtet sich die Kooperationsbereitschaft der Genossenschaften?

Wie sieht die Zusammenarbeit mit den Bezirken und der gesamtstädtischen Ebene aus in ihrer Arbeit?

Unterstützung / Widerstand

Können Sie sich vorstellen, wie der Verkaufsprozess aus der Sicht der Mieterinnen abläuft? Was für Veränderungen kommen auf diese zu?

Genossenschaftsanteile

Mitbestimmung, Hausgemeinschaft und Gemeinschaftsgefühl vorher / nachher

Arbeitsaufwand der Mieterinnen im Prozess

Entwicklung/ Perspektive

Können Sie Ihren Eindruck der anderen GIMA-ähnlichen Initiativen beschreiben?

auch innerhalb Berlins

Sehen Sie Potential in einer landesweiten Bewegung oder einem Zusammenschluss dieser?

Wie hat sich Kritik oder Widerstand gegen die Initiative geäußert?

Wenn ja, wie entgegenen Sie der Kritik?

Sehen Sie Ihre Arbeit eher als routiniert an oder in Entwicklung begriffen?
Ist es Teil ihrer Arbeit, innovativ tätig zu sein, in welchen Feldern?
Wie geschieht von Ihrer Seite die Wissensgenerierung zum Thema?

Haben sie noch Anmerkungen, Zusätze?

FLORIAN SCHMIDT (08.06.2022)
**ALDERMAN (BAUSTADTRAT) FOR THE DISTRICT OF FRIEDRICHSHAIN-KREUZ-
BERG, BERLIN; BÜNDNIS 90/DIE GRÜNEN**

Allgemein

Können Sie sich kurz vorstellen und ihre wohnungspolitischen Zuständigkeiten und Rollen umreißen?
Initiative

Initiative

Können Sie was über die bezirkliche Initiative teilen, Präventive Erwerbe zu etablieren?
Ursprung
Sind das auch oder nur Fälle in denen der Verkauf schon im Raum steht?
Finden / Kontaktaufnahme zu EigentümerInnen als Herausforderung – welche Möglichkeiten hat der
Bezirk?
Wie ist ihre Einschätzung zum Potential der EigentümerInnen in Berlin, gibt es viele
bereitwillige?
Ohlauer Strasse/ Luisenstadt eG:: Zusammenarbeit mit AKS – wonach richtet sich das?
In welcher Art hat der Bezirk hier gewirkt?
Inwieweit hat die Förderung der IBB beitragen einen , Fairen` Preis zu erzielen?

Anbindung an bestehende Initiative Häuser bewegen, oder eigene Struktur?
Förderung der Initiative Häuser bewegen durch den Bezirk? Wie genau?
Häuser bewegen seit etwa 2018 und ist in Gründung begriffen, nach wie vor kein erfolgreicher Ver-
kaufsfall – woran könnte das ihrer Ansicht nach liegen, und was könnte die Initiative gebrauchen?

Scope

Initiativen - Wahrnehmung der Massnahme als Nische – in Leipzig, Berlin, dabei ist es ein Mechanismus,
der sich leicht ins grosse Denken lässt, da es viele EigentümerInnen gibt und Genossenschaften poten-
tiell, ist das illusorisch?

Wie ist ihr persönliche Zielsetzung dazu, als Einzelfallmassnahme oder eher eine strukturell, Teillösung
für bezahlbaren Wohnraum?

Instrumente

Welche instrumentelle oder auch andere Spielräume haben Bezirke aus Ihrer Sicht da, welche hätte
die Stadt?

Garantien ausgeben, oder gar Genossenschaften mit genügend Eigenkapital (Barcelona) : capital-
ize cooperatives – Genossenschaften mit Geld ausstatten damit sie den Weg der Garantien umgehen
können und schnell handeln, Kredite bekommen

Mitte, Neukölln, Kreuzberg sind dabei - Einbeziehen anderer Bezirke? Beim VK-recht war das ja auch so ein Stück für Stück, vielleicht hier das Ganze nicht nochmal wiederholen, sondern eben ruckzuck. Das Prinzip ist ähnlich - würde das helfen der Bewegung?

Einmischung des Bezirks in den Markt, wie sehen sie das und wie kann man solche Argumente entwerfen?

Ist das eine Massnahme die an eine Anreizstruktur gebunden werden sollte?

Eigentümerseite:

Nachvollziehbarkeit eines fairen Preises berechnen, der
Finanzielle Anreizstruktur, indem die Spanne etwa zwischen Verkehrswert durch Subventionen aufgefangen wird?

Argumentativ - durch eine geschickte Vorrechnung könnte man klar machen, das durch den Weg des präventiven Erwerbs die Erstellung von langfristig bezahlbarem Wohnen u. Umständen günstiger ist, als wenn von Land und Bund gebaut würde

Genossenschaften

Genossenschaften, klein oder gross, oder doch was anderes?

Die Einbindung Traditions-Genossenschaften für die Massnahme ist von Stadt zu Stadt unterschiedlich.

In Leipzig möchte man gerne grosse Genossenschaften einbinden gerne gibt es eine Beratungsstruktur, die derzeit vor allem auf GbR-Modelle der Übernahme gerichtet ist, da es keine liquiden Bestandgenossenschaften gibt die kooperationswillig sind. Die Sowo hat sich gewissermassen eine selbstständiges Standbein aufgestellt.

Frankfurt - wenig Arbeitsaufwand der Mietenden - weil Genossenschaften breit und kooperationswillig, anhängig von Einzelpersonen und Generationenwechsel:

Ist es von ihrer Seite wünschenswert, weiterhin diese grösseren Genossenschaften einzubinden? Oder einfach auf die Vielzahl kleiner und mittlerer Genossenschaften bauen?

Hindernis, die Anwendung solcher Massnahmen in alle Bevölkerungsgruppen/Gemeinschaften sickern zu lassen?

Wie sehen Sie diesen Kompromiss ?

Welche Herausforderungen sehen Sie zur Ausweitung des Bestandserwerbs über den Bezirk oder andere Genossenschaften?

ANNEX 2

Interview Quotes

Q1: BE district, Florian Schmidt, 3:56

Original:

Das Wort präventiv haben wir dann irgendwann mal erfunden, um es ein bisschen abzusetzen vom Vorkauf. Ein bisschen auch mit der Note, dass man ja das Vorkauf eben verhindert. Sie wissen schon was ich meine ... so ein Beigeschmack, weil im Grunde ist präventiv ja deshalb, weil man verhindert, dass es zur Verwertung verkauft wird. Insofern ist das Wort für mich jetzt so zu verstehen, dass wir Erwerbs-Prozesse organisieren ... vermitteln. Ob das jetzt fürs Vorkaufsrecht ist, oder für was anderes oder ohne Vorkaufsrecht spielt eigentlich gar nicht so eine grosse Rolle, weil das man überhaupt als Bezirksamt sich darauf spezialisiert, ist ja was Neues und das kann man auch, wie wir jetzt sehen, ohne Vorkaufsrecht machen.

Translation (own) :

We invented the word "preventive" at some point to distinguish it a bit from preemption. A little bit with the note that preemption is prevented. You know what I mean... it has a connotation, because preventive basically means that you prevent it from being sold for valorization. In this respect, the word for me is now to be understood in such a way that we mediate acquisition processes. Whether this is for the right of pre-emption or for something else or without the right of pre-emption doesn't really play such a big role, because specializing in this as a district office is something new and you can also do it without the right of pre-emption, as we can see now.

Q2: LE CITY, Oliver Koczy, 28:29

Original

Da ist viel auch in die SOWO rein geflossen. Die Satzung wurde in Abstimmung geschrieben und wir haben auch schon mal Modellprojekt mit der Sowo gemacht, wo es darum ging Professionalisierung, also... wie kann `ne Professionalisierung einer Dach-Genossenschaft aussehen? OK (28.29) ; Die Ergebnisse waren nicht ganz so, wie wir uns das erhofft haben, aber im grossen und Ganzen stehen wir dem Thema natürlich sehr offen gegenüber. Gleichzeitig soll die SOWO auch unabhängig sein. Also das ist kein städtisches Instrument, wir unterstützen die gerne, und wir freuen uns auch, wenn die Häuser kaufen, und wir haben auch schon Wohnungsbauförderung mit denen gemacht, also dass die quasi Fördermittel bekommen haben.

Translation (own)

A lot of funding has also gone into the SoWo. The statute was written in accordance, and we have already done a model project with the Sowo, where it was about professionalization, so: ... how can a

professionalization of an umbrella cooperative look like? The results were not quite as we had hoped, but we are of course very open to the topic.

At the same time, the SoWo should also be independent. This is not a municipal instrument, we are happy to support them, and we are also happy when they buy houses, and we have already done housing development with them, where they got subsidies.

Q3: FR GIMA, Robin Mohr, MO 55:53

Original:

Aber wir sind ja als Verein mit dem Ziel gestartet, bezahlbaren Wohnraum zu retten. Und es sind nicht nur politisch motivierte WohnprojektbewohnerInnen in so Häusern, sondern da wohnen ganz normale Leute, die sind halt Nachbarn. Die haben das Glück, einen guten Vermieter zu haben. Aber die stehen auf einmal vor dem Problem, dass da irgendjemand das Haus kauft und sie da vielleicht nicht mehr bald wohnen. Und das wollen wir verhindern diese ganz konkrete Verdrängung Haus für Haus. Und deswegen ist das bei uns vor allem auch ein wohnungspolitischer Ansatz. Wir müssen nicht alle Leute in Wohnprojekte bringen. Wenn die `ne Genossenschaft, `ne Traditions-Genossenschaft als Vermieter haben, dann ist damit schon viel gewonnen.

Translation (own) :

But we are an association that started with the goal of saving affordable housing. And it's not just politically motivated housing project residents who live in these houses, but normal people who are neighbors. They are lucky to have a good landlord. But they are suddenly faced with the problem that someone will buy the house and they may no longer live there soon. And that's what we want to prevent, this concrete displacement house by house. And that's why our approach is primarily political one. We don't have to have all people living in self-organized housing projects. If they have a cooperative, a traditional cooperative as a landlord, then a lot is already accomplished.

Q4: FR CITY, Beate Steinbach, 6:30

Original:

, n Player am Wohnungsmarkt Häuser in gute Hände gibt, wo Eigentümerin die Möglichkeit haben, was anderes zu machen und nicht immer. so verkaufen müssen, dass sie den maximalen Gewinn haben und danach für die Mieterin die Verdrängung ansteht, weil man das refinanzieren muss.

Translation (own) :

a player on the market, where owners can give their house into good hands. Where they are allowed to do something different, other than selling to make maximum profit and afterward for the tenant the displacement is pending because one must refinance that.

Q5: Jochen Hucke, BE GIMA, 6:49

Original:

Es gab früher in Berlin, also sowohl in der West Berliner Zeit als auch in der Nachwendezeit einen gesamtstädtischen Konsens darüber, dass das Thema wichtig ist, die Förderung von Initiativen, Gruppen

und so weiter und so fort und das ist dann mit dieser Sparphase der 2000 er Jahre, wo Berlin also die ganzen Förderprogramme im Bereich des Wohnens eingestellt hat und auch im grossen Stil städtische Wohnungsgesellschaften verkauft hat, total weggebrochen, das ist jetzt eigentlich das bezeichnende, dass man jetzt Versucht quasi sich über die Bezirksebene und über Unterstützung durch einzelne Personen da wieder ranzurobber, das ist ganz anders als zu den damaligen Zeitpunkt gewesen.

Translation (own) :

There used to be a citywide consensus in Berlin, both in the West Berlin period and in the post-reunification period, that the topic was important, the promotion of initiatives, groups, etc., etc., and then this wholly collapsed with this phase of austerity in the 2000s, when Berlin discontinued all the support programs in the area of housing and sold municipal housing association 's stocks on a big scale. Now, one tries to go there again slowly, by going through the district level and support by individual people. It 's completely different than it used to be.

Q6: BE district, Florian Schmidt, 19:59

Original:

Da haben wir festgestellt, dass das auch manchmal ohne Vorkaufsrecht geht. Hinzu kommt noch Praxis des Landes Berlin, mit Wohnungsbaugesellschaften grosse Komplexe oder kleinere Sachen anzukaufen. Das ist hier auch mit Unterstützung von mir passiert. In mehreren Fällen muss man dazu sagen. FS Ohne das Vorkaufsrecht wären wir aber wahrscheinlich nicht drauf gekommen, muss man sagen. Ist auch so eine Art Mitnahmeeffekt von diesem Vorkaufsrecht, selbst wenn es jetzt nie wieder kommen würde, was ich nicht glaube. Aber selbst wenn es nie wiederkommen würde, hätten wir jetzt diese Praxis etabliert.

Translation (own) :

Then we have found that this is sometimes possible without a right of pre-emption. In addition, there is the practice of the state of Berlin to buy large complexes or smaller things with housing associations. That also happened with the support of me in several cases. Without the right of pre-emption, however, we probably wouldn 't have come up with it. It 's also a kind of windfall effect from this right of pre-emption, even if it would never come back now, which I don 't think it would. But even if it never came back, we would have established this practice now.

Q7: FR coop, Cora Lehnert, 16:05

Original:

Es muss schon so verkehrstechnisch ganz gut angebunden sein und es muss irgendwie mit unseren Liegenschaften bisschen zusammenpassen, sonst ist es so sehr umständlich. Wegen einer Liegenschaft dann immer irgendwie so weit rauszufahren oder so und auch weil dann genau der Hausmeister vielleicht gerade noch das mitmachen kann oder? Das ist schon ein Grund, es muss auch eine gewisse Grösse sein. Also jetzt so zwei oder drei Wohnungen würden wir nicht kaufen, müsste schon mindestens sechs Wohnungen sein, damit das auch sich lohnt. Würd ich mal sagen damit es auch in unserem Portfolio passt einfach.

Translation (own) :

It must be quite well connected in terms of transport ... Just because.. driving so far out then just for the janitor to take care of one property? That 's really inconvenient. It must also be a certain size. We would not buy two or three apartments; it would have to be at least six apartments, so that it 's also profitable and adds up with our portfolio." (FR coop, 16:05, slightly shortened for better comprehension)

Q8: LE city, Oliver Koczy, 14:19

Original:

Quantitative Ziele können Sie auch nur bedingt mit Wohnprojekten erreichen, weil das ist `ne Nische, aber es ist eine sehr wichtige Nische. Weil genau diese Projekte, den den Teil des Wohnungsmarktes abdecken, den die Privatwirtschaft und auch die Genossenschaften nicht erreichen können.

Translation (own) :

You can only achieve quantitative goals to a limited extent with individual housing projects (Wohnprojekte) , because that 's a niche. But it 's a critical niche. Because it is exactly these projects that cover the part of the housing market that the private sector and also the cooperatives cannot reach.

Q9: FR GIMA, Robin Mohr, 58:38

Original:

Wir sind uns darüber völlig im Klaren, und das ist vielleicht auch die Kritik an dem Ansatz, dass das nicht den Wohnungsmarkt rettet. Das wird nicht zu einer systemischen Änderung auf dem Wohnungsmarkt führen, und es werden bald alle nur noch bei Genossenschaften leben. Wir retten einzelne Häuser und einzelne Menschen davor, in Zukunft verdrängt zu werden. Und ich finde, jedes Haus zählt, was das angeht, absolut.

Translation (own) :

We are fully aware, and that is perhaps the criticism of the approach, that this is not going to save the housing market. It will not lead to a systemic change in the housing market, and soon everyone will only live with cooperatives. We 're saving individual houses and individual people from being displaced in the future. And I think every house counts, in terms of that.

Q10: BE district, Florian Schmidt, 6:35

Original:

All tasks, with no legal procedures for them. But it 's things that need to be done and have been done for a long time, are now actually being cast more in a form, so that it 's also anchored in the administration and is not just some special political project.

Translation (own) :

All tasks, with no legal procedures for them. But it 's things that need to be done and have been done for a long time, are now actually being cast more in a form, so that it 's also anchored in the administration and is not just some special political project.

Q11: FR city, Beate Steinbach, 54:19

Original:

Ich glaube, dass man Genossenschaften so konzipieren muss, dass sie einem stetigem Wachstum und Wandel unterlegen sind. Weil die Genossenschaft kommt, das sieht man an den Traditions-Genossenschaften, sehr schnell an ihre Grenzen, wenn diejenigen, die den Status erhalten wollen, weil sie da wohnen und gut wohnen – das ja auch erst mal okay – wenn diejenigen das auch noch entscheiden und niemand anderes darin eine Rolle spielen kann, sondern es ist ne total geschlossene... dann ist es halt schade, wenn es ein Instrument wäre, was viel mehr bringen könnte.

Translation (own) :

I believe that cooperatives must be designed in such a way that they are subject to constant growth and change. Because the cooperative, as you can see in the traditional cooperatives, very quickly reaches its limits when those who want to maintain the status quo, because they live there and live well – that 's okay for now – if they also decide that and no one else can play a role in it, but it 's a totally closed.... then it is just a pity, if it could be an instrument, which can achieve much more.

Q12: BE district, Florian Schmidt, 28:45

Original:

Das Ziel der Selbstverwaltung innerhalb der Genossenschaft, das habe ich nicht.. es gibt wirklich einige davon, das sind dann, das hat so eine Wohnkultur, nennen wir es mal... Aber es gibt eben auch ganz viele Hausgemeinschaften, denen geht es darum überhaupt nicht, die wollen einfach, dass sie sicher wohnen können. Das ist sozusagen wie so eine existenzielle Pyramide. Unten ist das Essen und oben ist die Kultur, und wenn oben wird 's halt dünner, also weniger. und teilweise auch Speerspitze der Bewegung auf jeden Fall. (BE district 28:45)

Translation (own) :

The goal of self-governance within the cooperative, I don 't have that... there are really some [...], houses, that have such a living culture, let 's call it that... But there [...] most of houses, for them it 's not about that at all, they just want that they can live safely. It 's like an existential pyramid, so to speak. At the bottom is the food and at the top is the culture, [...].

ANNEX 3

Interviewees short description

Oliver Koczy (1.06.2022)

**City of Leipzig, Office for Housing and Urban Renewal
Housing Departement**

Primarily responsible for housing policy instruments. The office has no formal planning law tasks but is mainly responsible for the implementation of subsidies (social housing subsidies, urban development subsidies) and other municipal guidelines developed and the implementation of the housing policy concept. It is from 2015 and they are currently in the process of updating it.

Jan Schaaf (31.05.2022)

Netzwerk Leipziger Freiheit (NFL)

Managing director of the planning office UMS Stadtstrategien. This office was commissioned by the city of Leipzig to coordinate the Network Leipziger Freiheit, is therefore the coordination office, in charge of supporting cooperative housing projects in any form through consulting services, public relations, lobbying work.

Tobias Bernet & Maximilian Hellriegel (01.06.2022)

Cooperative Solidarische Wohnungsgenossenschaft / SoWo Leipzig eG, founded 2017

Tobias Bernet: Founding member and board members of the SoWo, Urban researcher, Managing Director Wohnbund e.V. – Association for the Promotion of Housing Policy Initiatives, Freelance housing project consultant in the network of Haus- und WagenRat e.V. – Association for self-organized spaces in Leipzig

Beate Steinbach (21.06.2022)

City of Frankfurt am Main, Housing Department, Housing market, tenancy law and innovative housing projects

Deputy head of the housing department

Robin Mohr (22.06.2022)

Genossenschaftliche Immobilienagentur Frankfurt am Main eG iG (GIMA Frankfurt)

Works primarily for the Frankfurt Network for Community, he is entrusted in the network with the Frankfurt project, and with the preparation of an expert opinion for the city of Frankfurt. This is to clarify if and in what way a GIMA is necessary in Frankfurt and can contribute precisely and proportionally to the solution of the housing problem.

Cora Lehnert (23.05.2022)**Wohnbaugenossenschaft in Frankfurt am Main eG / WBG**

Started working for the WBG four years ago, since she has been on the board of directors, on the technical board of directors, responsible for new construction projects and renovation measures. Trained architect and has worked for a long time for the state of Hesse as a building owner's representative. Has privately founded a small cooperative and in this context, got to know the WBG.

Häuser bewegen GIMA Berlin-Brandenburg eG i.G. (02.06.2022)**Renée Somnitz (board member)**

Board member of the GIMA Häuser bewegen in Berlin. In addition to GIMA, also advises the Mietshäusersyndikat for the Berlin-Brandenburg region.

Jochen Hucke (board member)

Board member of the GIMA Häuser bewegen in Berlin. Before that, for two years, cooperative representative of the Berlin Senate's Department for Urban Development and Housing in Berlin, member of the board of a cooperative focused on new construction, employed for Berlin Senate's Department for Building and Housing (selection) .

Florian Schmidt (08.06.2022)**Alderman (Baustadtrat) for the district of Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg, Berlin; Bündnis 90/Die Grünen**

Florian Schmidt studied sociology, art history and economics in Hamburg, Barcelona and Berlin. He has been a member of Bündnis 90/Die Grünen since 2006 and a district councilor for Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg, Berlin, since 2016. From 2011-2016 he was spokesman of the initiative "Haus der Statistik" .

(Translated description, taken from Schmidt's publishing house author profile, Last retrieved 08.08.2022, from <https://www.ullstein-buchverlage.de/nc/autoren/autor-detailansicht/name/florian-schmidt.html>)

