

Emerging themes across Europe: A revival in social housing?

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The one-minute expert

- Size: from 4% in Hungary to 35% in the Netherlands (London 26%)
- Eligibility: <20% to universal
- Demographics: young, old, single parents

well, maybe two minutes

- Incomes: low – but doesn't always house the very poorest
- Ethnicity: often high concentrations of ethnic minorities

Pressures

- immigration
- demographic trends
- European regulation
- financial constraints
- increased aspirations
- rise of owner-occupation

What lies behind our assumptions

History

housing for all (Scandinavia) or for the deserving working class (most other countries)

Economics

to address market failure or to 'lead' the private rented sector

Law

duties vs rights
command vs negotiation
solidarity vs efficiency

Urban regeneration...

Providers involved in all countries

- social housing as target of regeneration (everywhere)
- providers as stakeholders and decision-makers (everywhere)
- providers as funders (Netherlands)

...and social mix

- *Within* social housing, or
- *Using* social housing:
 - Privatisation
 - Replacement with mixed-tenure buildings and estates
 - Insertion of social housing into areas that had none
- Mix on what scale?

...and social control

Social housing providers addressing problems such as

- Unemployment
- Insufficient language skills
- Loneliness
- Lack of social cohesion

Location (location, location)

- Concentration in certain cities and areas—not necessarily where demand is
- Large single-tenure areas make social mix hard to achieve

Municipal housing cultures

Should we study differences between nations or between cities?

- Vienna
- Glasgow
- Paris
- Helsingborg
- Birmingham

Creeping influence of the EU

2005: 'housing for disadvantaged citizens or socially less advantaged groups' who for financial reasons could not get market housing

...and its effects

- › Governments can subsidise housing for the poor and elderly (e.g.)
- › ...but not housing open to all.

The end of the universalist tradition?

And now what?

- › Will the number of poor and vulnerable households increase?
- › Will house price falls lead to changes in tenure preference?
- › Will it be easier or harder to create social mix?
- › How will impacts vary by country and city?