‘Mietshäuser Syndikat’ Fosters Self-organized Housing Projects

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Why did we select this case?

The founders of "Mietshäuser Syndikat" (tenements syndicate) connect successful co-housing projects in Germany to support self-organised, social housing projects, suggesting an effective template for dealing with housing in cities.

About the case

The founders of "Mietshäuser Syndikat " (tenements syndicate), a network of co-housing projects in Germany, found that many self-organised co-housing projects were falling due to challenges in the early phases with legal issues, finances, and group dynamics. In addition to this, many co-housing projects did not have the capacity to support each other.

In response to this The Mietshäuser Syndikat was created to support self-organised, social housing projects, by linking successful established projects with emerging ones to give guidance while simultaneously reducing re-commercialization by ensuring all inhabitants co-own all real estate assets of all co-housing projects.

For a co-housing initiative to join The Mietshäuser Syndikat certain requirements need to be met "The co-housing project needs to be self-organized by its residents, and a house and a financing plan must be on hand. Once the co-housing project establishes a secure financial basis, it needs to support new projects that are in the critical, cost-intensive early phases, the same way it received help when it began. The MHS Association represents all inhabitants of all co-housing projects and has a veto right when it comes to reprivatization and commercial exploitation of individual projects. Regarding any other issue concerning the residents, loans, rents, and renovation, the co-residents themselves make decisions on behalf of their own cohousing association" (Sharing Cities, Activating the Urban commons).

Results

Since 1983, the network has grown to consist of 111 cohousing projects with a total of about 3,000 residents.

Twenty-one initiatives throughout the country are in the process of joining the network.

Spin-offs like “habiTat” in Linz, Austria, have been established in other countries.

Resources

https://www.syndikat.org/en/