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## Research reports

### **IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION POLICIES AND HOUSING POLICIES: THE HIDDEN LINKS**

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## **Foreword. Aims, structure and methodology of the research**

Both Cecodhas (2007a) and JCSHR (Edgar, 2004) suggest that in European countries integration strategies tend to ignore housing access. The housing dimension of integration is only weakly developed in most integration strategies compared with other issues such as employment, language training and citizenship. This marginality is also reflected in integration monitoring: indicators used by EU member states for measuring integration usually exclude housing (Zetter, 2002). Currently, at the research level too, links between integration of immigrants and social housing are relatively under-investigated (Cecodhas, 2007b).

Given this situation, the main goal of this study is to explore links between social housing policies and integration policies. With this aim, we have analysed social housing measures and approaches towards ethnic minorities in four European countries: the UK, The Netherlands, France and Germany<sup>1</sup>. We chose these four countries since they traditionally show distinct integration policy models, although differences among them are decreasing and a sort of convergence is taking place. France has been characterised by a strong assimilationism which disregards ethnic identity and aims to transform immigrants into “French citizens”, whereas Germany, The Netherlands and the UK have traditionally recognised cultural differences among the various ethnic groups, although they differ in the degree of state intervention supporting these differences and the will to include or not immigrant minorities as structural parts of the national society (Bertossi, 2007; Zincone, 2009). In this research we have tried to understand whether the development of different integration policies over the last fifty years has been reflected in housing policies approach towards ethnic minorities.

In addition to analysing social housing developments and approaches, we have tried to point out “innovative social housing projects” addressing working and retired persons with an immigrant background. In fact, despite the specific societal dynamics of each country, it is possible to identify common challenges for social housing related both to increased ethnic and cultural diversity and the population aging.

Why does ethnic diversity challenge social housing policies? Actually, most immigrants and ethnic minorities have the same housing needs as other groups in society. However, some of them may face particular problems. For instance, they may not enjoy all the necessary conditions for exercising choice in the housing market because of the nature of the migratory process (i.e. limited access to social rights, temporary permanence, limited knowledge of national language or local rules, etc.) or as consequence of xenophobia and discrimination against them. Moreover, sometimes they have specific housing needs rising from demographic features, such as a higher proportion of young families with children, or religious precepts, like the necessity of more separate living spaces (i.e. living rooms) for men and women.

Further problems in housing integration of ethnic minorities are rising from ethnic segregation that has become worse in the last decades in various metropolitan areas (Ostendorf and Drooglever Fortuijn, 2006; Musterd and Murie, 2006; European Forum for Migration Studies 2006). In order to prevent and fight this phenomenon, many countries are implementing

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<sup>1</sup> We have not included a Southern European country since housing policies there are usually poorly developed and residual, thus the link with integration policies is hardly investigable.

policies of social mix which are not however devoid of controversy. Some scholars have in fact pointed out positive effects of segregation such as the possibility of communicating more easily, keeping culture-specific customs and identities, or enjoying good opportunities for developing ethnic business (Johnston et al., 2002; Alba and Nee, 1997; Özüekrer and Van Kempen, 1997). Moreover, social mix policies might have negative effects, such as discrimination against immigrants reducing their housing choice.

Besides the increasing ethnic diversity and housing segregation of ethnic minorities, another major challenge is the above-mentioned population aging which calls for adjustments in terms of housing physical accessibility, infrastructure and public spaces and care services (Cecodhas, 2007b). Beyond these necessities, the elderly population with an immigrant background might face additional problems, such as lower retirement pensions due to short working length of service or the absence of family networks that could provide care due to the breaking effects of immigration on social networks.

Given that working and retired persons with an immigrant background might pose specific demands to housing policies, we should still explain why we paid special attention to “innovative projects”. This attention has two main goals. First of all, it allows us to look at the social housing policies’ approach towards ethnic minorities from a different perspective, pointing out possible discrepancies between national and local levels, between formal public policies and actual practices and projects adopted by social housing actors. Secondly, it can foster learning processes through the circulation of innovation.

Since “innovative projects” are necessarily shaped by the national housing market and policies and their acknowledgement depends upon national conditions, we have adopted a wide definition: we refer to measures by public, private or non-profit organisations for promoting access to renting or home ownership which show innovative elements compared with the traditional social housing policies. We have decided to look at “innovative practices” instead of at “good practices” since the latter is a notoriously difficult concept to determine especially in comparative analysis, while the first allows us to adopt a relativist rather than normative approach (Edgar, 2004).

As far as methodology is concerned, the research can be divided into three main stages:

- I. National literature reviews and interviews with key players in this field for identifying the main trends and approaches towards ethnic minorities of social housing policies and pointing out innovative projects;
- II. Internet search aimed at identifying further relevant organizations which have developed innovative social housing projects involving working and retired persons with an ethnic background;
- III. Contacts with the organizations identified in the previous stages sending them a survey questionnaire by email (Annex 2) and collecting supporting material about their innovative social housing projects; in case of a missing reply, data collection included phone communication and interviews in order to obtain the needed information for the questionnaire. We collected 47 questionnaires (see Annex 1)<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> We collected 19 questionnaires in The Netherlands, 15 in the UK (this stage focused on England only), 8 in Germany and 5 in France.

The results of the first two stages have been analysed by the national research teams in the following chapters, which describe the main social housing policies and approaches towards ethnic minorities in each of the four selected countries and point out the key actors in this field.

The last chapter carries out a comparative analysis of social housing policies . The aim is identifying convergences between housing and integration policies. As we will see, links are frequent, although they are often implicit, hidden. Finally, the analysis of the questionnaires gathered in the third stage of the research is carried out in order to point out innovative trends in social housing policy addressing ethnic minorities.

Irene Ponzo

**CHAPTER 1.**  
**SOCIAL HOUSING POLICIES AND ETHNIC MINORITIES IN THE UK:**  
**DEVELOPING AN ETHNICALLY SENSITIVE APPROACH**

Judith Allen  
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**Introduction**

The overall aim of the research is to document residence-based initiatives to integrate immigrants into the United Kingdom<sup>3</sup>. This report presents an analysis of the relationships between social housing policy, provision and practices and the integration of immigrants. The analysis is also based on fifteen projects which cover the spectrum of types of initiatives in this area.

Large scale immigration into the United Kingdom, largely from its overseas colonies, started in the late 1940s. Over the years since then, the scale and nature of immigration has changed dramatically. Today, the main flow of "immigrants" are migrants from the European Union. Immigrants from the former colonies were eligible for British citizenship until 1976, when de-colonisation was largely complete and there were increasing issues of racism towards these immigrant-citizens.

Sections 1.1 and 1.2 set out the background within which the initiatives we have documented are set. Section 1.1 points out the changes in social housing policies which have generated the current system of provision. Section 1.2 looks more closely at immigration and integration policy, and how these have been linked with housing. Section 1.3 outlines the actors who are responsible for housing initiatives to integrate immigrants, and section 1.4 concludes the report by identifying critical issues in social housing measures to further integrate immigrants.

**1.1. Main trends and changes in social housing policies.**

The main elements of change in social housing policy over the last 30 years have been stimulated by the need to reduce public sector debt and the need to address the deteriorating physical condition of older social housing stock. These aims have been pursued in the context of the increasing residualisation of social housing, which have concentrated the poorest population groups in the social housing stock.

Two broad policy approaches have been used to achieve these aims: firstly, reorganising the tenure structure of social housing and, secondly, centralising the financial control of local authority housing.

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<sup>3</sup> Because each of the four countries within the United Kingdom has its own housing legislation, the research focuses on England. Immigration policy, however, covers the whole of the United Kingdom.

### **1.1.1 Tenure reform: Reorganising social housing**

The end of the Fordist era meant that a large proportion of the skilled working class had achieved incomes which allowed them to become owner occupiers. Previously, this group had predominantly been local authority tenants. Rising vacancy rates in local authority housing, which constituted 95% of all social housing and 35% of all housing in 1971, led local authorities to seek their tenants among poorer groups who could not afford owner occupation. The reduced potential rental base led to the introduction of a central government financed rental assistance programme (housing benefits) and to an increased tendency among local authorities to reduce the physical maintenance of their stock, a substantial proportion of which was in need of major capital re-investment to prolong its useful life.

In 1964 the Housing Corporation was formed to regulate housing associations, and in 1974 its powers were enlarged in conjunction with a large increase in capital funding for associations. At the time, a group of newly formed associations were purchasing and renovating very poor quality, older inner city privately rented housing. It was this stock which disproportionately housed Britain's new immigrants in the post-war period.

Starting in 1980, an array of new policy instruments were deployed to reorganise the structure of social housing:

- In 1980, individual local authority tenants were given the right to buy the houses or flats they were living in at substantial discounts on the market value. Despite increased discounts in later years, by 2005 there were few tenants left in local authority housing who could afford to purchase.
- In 1986, with additional legislation in 1988, local authorities were given the power to transfer the ownership of all or part of their stock to other landlords. The major mechanism for doing this was for a local authority to set up a new housing association (later called registered social landlord or RSL) which then purchased the stock. Transfer was dependent on a majority of tenants voting for the proposal. The boards of these associations comprised one third local authority representatives, one third independent experts and one third tenants. The local authority itself remained responsible for housing strategy, distribution of diminishing capital subsidy to associations, and for selecting new tenants for the RSL.
- For those local authorities who did not wish to sell their stock, Arms Length Management Organisations (ALMOs) provided an alternative way of organising the management and renovation of the stock. ALMOs are a wholly owned subsidiary of the local authority, but are able to attract capital subsidy.
- A few local authorities were politically unable to transfer their stock to an RSL or to set up an ALMO. Some authorities have transferred part of their stock to an RSL, but retain direct ownership of the remainder. Of these authorities, some are in a financial position to borrow money directly from private financial institutions, while others find themselves unable to borrow and, thus, improve their poor quality stock.

Thus, in 2010 over half the social housing stock is owned by registered social landlords and local authorities own the remainder. As a consequence of the individual Right-to-Buy scheme coupled with almost no new building, social housing now constitutes approximately 17% of the total housing stock in England, whereas in 1981 it was 29% of the stock.

Two smaller initiatives addressed the problems for households who could access neither social housing nor owner occupation. These include shared ownership and buy-to-let mortgages. Shared ownership is an intermediate tenure, in which the resident owns part of the equity of the dwelling and a social landlord owns the remainder. The mortgage for the resident reduces the capital financing required from the social landlord. A new mortgage product, Buy to Let, was introduced in the mid-2000s. These were designed to increase the supply of privately rented housing and their main use has been by small private landlords purchasing flats in new large scale private sector residential developments. Neither of these initiatives has had a large-scale impact nationally although both have had significant local impacts.

The newly elected government intends to continue linking tenure reform with provision of social housing by extending legislation supporting community land trusts and introducing local housing trusts. Both these initiatives are based on the collective ownership of land by non-local authority bodies, but their impact is likely to remain limited. The major effect of tenure reform has been to make partnership working between local authorities, RSLs and private developers essential to the provision of new social housing as well as the renovation of the substandard stock<sup>4</sup>.

### **1.1.2 Reorganising social housing finance**

Tenure reform has been driven by public sector financial objectives. The overriding central government objective was to get social housing out of the public sector in order to reduce the government's debt requirements associated with its historical development. The primary means to achieve this objective was by selling local authority housing to private sector bodies: individual tenants or registered social landlords.

The strategy has two distinct stages. The first was to persuade local authorities to sell their stock and the second was to stretch direct capital subsidies through creating cross-subsidy mechanisms within new building and renovation projects. In such projects, the profit from selling some dwellings to owner-occupiers is used to subsidise the capital cost of building new social rented housing.

The process was started by sales to existing tenants which generated an initial capital flow to government. This was combined with direct subsidies to build up rapidly the stock and expertise of existing housing associations. At the same time, local authority capital subsidies were decreasing and an increasing proportion were being used to renovate substandard stock. Meanwhile, the central government took control over local authority current housing accounts, raising rents rapidly and limiting expenditure on current account maintenance. An increasing proportion of rental income was paid by the central government through direct personal subsidies to tenants (housing benefits)<sup>5</sup>.

Almost immediately, a number of smaller local authorities perceived that by transferring (selling) their stock to a specially set up housing association, they could pay off their historic debt, and the association buying the stock could use the capital receipts from sales to existing

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<sup>4</sup> This was accomplished through the Decent Homes Programme under the recent Labour Government; this programme has been ended by the new coalition government.

<sup>5</sup> The increasing proportion of rent accounted for by housing benefits was partly explained by rising rents and partly explained by the increased concentration of poorer tenants in local authority housing, as richer tenants purchased their houses.

tenants to clear the backlog of renovation *and* build more new housing. If the purchaser were registered as a housing association, then it was also eligible for direct capital subsidy to build. Not all local authorities were in such a financial position and not all local authorities were politically willing to sell their stock. In the worst cases, the valuation of the existing stock was negative: the cost of the renovation required was greater than the capitalised value of the rental stream from the stock plus any receipts from sales to existing tenants. Continued increases in rents eased the financial problem for some local authorities. Continued high levels of capital subsidy to RSLs eased the problem for others. Nevertheless, the temporal pattern of large scale stock transfers mirrors the pattern of national elections fairly closely. The major issue was political rather than financial. By 1990, RSLs were building more houses than local authorities.

The continued squeezing of local authority housing finance set the stage for the second part of the strategy, which was to stretch the direct capital subsidies to RSLs. Since RSLs are the only social landlords who are able to build new housing, a nominal direct capital subsidy was set and RSLs were asked to bid for it at less than the nominal level. In order to bid successfully, the RSL had two options: to use its reserves (largely surpluses on rents on previous years), or to develop large projects which incorporated mixed tenures, so that profits from selling to owner occupiers subsidised building social housing for rent. The regulations ensured that rents on newly built or renovated houses were higher than those for older stock. The central government has also implemented a strategy of concentrating available subsidy in the largest RSLs.

The outcome is:

- In 2009, RSLs built 99% of new social housing and own approximately 50% of the total social rented stock. In 1981, RSLs owned 8% of the social rented stock and built 23% of new social housing.
- Between 1981 and 2009, the total stock of social housing has decreased by two million units<sup>6</sup>.
- Social rented housing now accounts for only 17% of the total stock, compared with 29% in 1981.

Overall, the strategy has introduced major new actors into social housing, the RSLs, and set up a subsidy system which requires both using public–private partnerships for most major developments<sup>7</sup>, while enhancing interdepartmental working within local authorities in the exercise of their remaining powers (overall local housing strategy, finding housing for homeless people and responsibility for allocating tenants to social housing). The scale of most new developments also requires significant networking across local, regional and national levels of government. Thus, while the social housing subsidy system has become more horizontal, resting on cross-subsidies, the policy system has become more strongly vertical from the central government downwards.

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<sup>6</sup> A unit would be either a house or a flat used by one household.

<sup>7</sup> In this context, registered social landlords are considered to be "private" since they are "non-state" organisations.

### **1.1.3 Enabling access to housing**

In terms of enabling access to owner occupation, there is a national policy to promote shared ownership, in which the resident owns part of the equity in the property and a housing association owns the remainder. This is a relatively small programme and primarily benefits those who would not otherwise be allocated social housing. Residents rarely purchase more of the equity. In terms of immigrants, it can benefit medium-paid professionals. None of the projects we looked at were directed towards accessing this form social housing.

In terms of economic guarantees for paying the rent, there is a national UK-wide housing allowance system covering both the private and social rented sectors. Social landlords are generally pro-active in ensuring that their tenants receive this benefit. Some private landlords are also pro-active while others actively discriminate against tenants who receive housing allowances. These rent guarantees have been in place since the late 1970s. Recent changes in the system for the privately rented sector have made their impact somewhat haphazard. It is not known what the impact on immigrants is. In the projects we looked at, the Newcastle Asylum Seekers' Service was concerned that refugees leaving the housing directly supplied for asylum seekers would be able to access these benefits. The goal of the Asylum Seekers Service is to ensure that all refugees are settled in permanent housing once their status is determined. Supporting refugees in accessing housing allowances is a taken-for-granted element of meeting this broad settlement goal (see Annex 1).

In terms of enabling good relationships among social tenants, this is a taken-for-granted element of social housing management although some social landlords are better at it than others. In particular, all local authorities and housing associations have responsibilities under the anti-social behaviour legislation to deal with persons who are causing a nuisance. The pattern of activity is variable across the country, but frequently involves standard community development and youth work initiatives. A more important problem in the projects we looked at was preventing racist behaviour and supporting victims of racism. Both Nashayman and Ashiana Housing Associations, who were supporting moves into previously all white or all ethnic neighbourhoods mentioned the necessity of having close relationships with the police to ensure a rapid response. Similarly, projects in East Cheshire were expanded to include working with the police (see Annex 1).

## **1.2. Social housing policies' approach to immigrants and ethnic minorities and the most relevant measures/projects addressing them**

Housing policies and approaches towards immigrants are largely determined by two transversal policy areas: social cohesion policies and immigration policies. There are no immigration specific housing policies in England.

Social housing in England in general is distributed on the basis of proven housing need. Wilson (2009) points out that there is “no general entitlement to social housing for anyone in England, including British citizens. It should also be noted that even those people from abroad who may be eligible for housing assistance still have to qualify for assistance in line with an authority’s housing allocation scheme, or meet the criteria under which a statutory duty arises to households that are homeless”. In short, eligibility for social housing rests on the right to reside in England, rather than on citizenship or belonging to any ethnic minority. *All* those

eligible to apply for social housing need to meet additional, localized criteria in order to access it.

Even though the system seems all inclusive - regardless of race and ethnicity - there are difficulties in accessing housing that are specific to immigrants. The most significant of those difficulties is access to housing information. In other words, because of the language barrier, some immigrants may find it difficult to access information about housing availability and prove their case for housing need. These are issues which some of the projects presented in this report deal with.

The disparity between national all-inclusive and non-discriminatory housing policy and local practices means that immigrants are not in competition for social housing because they do not know they are eligible for it. Projects addressing this problem are highly localized and tailored to the specific immigrant community which has problems in a certain locality. For example, in Sheffield, the New Arrivals Service focuses on producing welcome packs in Polish and Slovakian because recent migrants have come from these countries (see Annex 1).

### **1.2.1 National organisational initiatives**

In England, housing projects serving the the BME population are carried out by both BME and mainstream housing associations, as well as by local authorities and voluntary organisations. However, three general initiatives have had a major impact in shaping the ways that specific practices and projects address the integration of immigrants within the framework of housing policy:

***Positive Action Training in Housing:*** This was an initiative in the early 1980s to address issues of ethnic discrimination in employment in housing. PATH provided work opportunities and training programmes in housing for members of black and minority ethnic communities. Placements for PATH trainees were primarily in local authority housing departments and the larger housing associations at that time. The programme provided an initial route of entry into the general housing workforce for black and minority ethnic people, who are now over-represented in housing work (although there is still a concentration at more junior levels). Its work has now been taken over by a new organisation focused on all sectors of public sector employment.

***Black and Minority Ethnic Housing Associations:*** From the late 1970s onwards, a number of black and minority ethnic-led associations were set up through local initiatives. Although there were three large associations, the majority were small special needs projects run by voluntary groups for whom the provision of housing was ancillary to meeting other pressing needs within the BME community. In the mid-1980s, the Housing Corporation<sup>8</sup> developed a funding strategy to support a large increase in the number of BME-led housing associations. Capital funding cuts, starting in the mid-1990s, meant that most of these associations were unable to

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<sup>8</sup> At the time the Housing Corporation was responsible for regulating and funding housing associations. In 2008, its work was reorganised. The Tenant Services Authority regulates housing associations while funding was transferred to the Homes and Communities Agency. In 2010, the Tenant Services Authority was merged into the Homes and Community Agency. The Homes and Community Agency supports all major public sector capital projects.

gain enough housing stock to become financially viable as independent housing associations. Nevertheless, many still remain in existence, some as independent housing associations and some as members of larger housing association group structures. BME housing associations are subject to the same equalities and race legislation as all social housing providers although the proportion of BME tenants in these associations is higher than in other associations which reflects a more targeted approach to housing need. Many BME associations now target housing and support for refugees. A major achievement of the BME associations has been to provide a route of housing employment opportunity at the executive level for black and minority ethnic groups.

***Housing Associations Charitable Trust:*** HACT has consistently supported initiatives which have a significant impact on the provision of housing for black and minority ethnic people. It was set up in 1960 to channel funding to projects which have an impact on socially marginalised groups. At that time, it provided start-up funding for a number of new housing associations working in areas characterised by black populations living in very poor housing conditions. In 1982, it was the first organisation to research the increasing scale of need in housing provision for black and minority ethnic elders. It provided start-up funding and training for the BME associations in 1990, and, in 2006, funded the first partnership housing and support models for refugees. A second strand in its work supports improved practices in special needs and supported housing. Its board, associates and employees include some of the most respected figures in housing. Its funding (approximately £1m per annum) derives from other charitable organisations and government grants.

The complex evolution of BME associations is reflected in the projects examined for this research (see Annex 1). Karin Housing Association was set up in 1988 by a group of black women who wanted to meet the needs of Somalis and others in east London. It has sustained its independence, providing social services as well as housing to help Somali refugees settle in London. Nashayman Housing Association was set up in 1992 to provide housing and other services to the ethnic minority community in Calderdale. In 2003, it joined the Home Housing Group as a separate entity. Recently, its workers have been dispersed through Home to diffuse their specialist skills. ASRA Midlands was set up in 1979 to provide sheltered housing for Asian elders and retains its focus on care and support. It joined the Sanctuary Group in 2005, but continues to operate as a separate company within the Group. Azuka, a mental health and housing project with seven residents, was started by a small BME association which no longer exists. But the project has now found a supportive home within Places for People.

The most important outcomes from the three general initiatives discussed above are:

- They significantly increased black and ethnic minority employment in housing at all levels and in all types of landlord organisations, through PATH and through the BME associations themselves. One aspect of access to employment was investment in training and capacity-building. The second important aspect was the diffusion across the housing sector of an increased sensitivity to the housing and other needs of the BME population across a wide variety of everyday management and development practices, from having employees with language skills through to tenants finding a friendly face in their landlords' offices.

- Formally setting up BME associations inserted them into the wider institutional structure of housing. Black and minority ethnic views about housing practices and the specific needs of their communities now had a legitimate public voice, which could not be easily ignored. Furthermore, the BME associations' practices ensured that there were 'working examples' of how housing could be provided in culturally sensitive ways.
- They provided a strong basis for networking, both among black and minority ethnic professionals, and between BME professionals and their counterparts in the 'mainstream' associations (discussed below). The initiatives, thus, created significant bonding and bridging social capital within the professional world of housing.

Today, the presence of black and minority ethnic workers within the social housing workforce means that matters of cultural sensitivity (and a cadre of talented black and minority ethnic professionals) are taken for granted in housing work. Yet, all this has grown out of self-help initiatives by large numbers of BME voluntary groups finding ways to address housing and other needs in their communities in the 1970s.

It must be emphasised that most of the BME housing associations have now merged with mainstream housing associations. While this reflects a national tendency to make social housing distribution non-discriminatory, there are tensions around recognising culturally specific needs, particularly for newer migrant groups. The housing associations that specialised in providing housing to specific ethnic minority groups are not able to do so anymore since this implies that they are discriminating against other minorities. For example, Karin HA, which was originally set up to serve a Somali population now has tenants from Chinese, white and other ethnicities. Consequently, these associations now create projects that reach out to specific groups. For example, Karin mainly has programmes for the Somali community, even though it provides housing for all (see Annex 1).

### 1.2.2 Immigration policy

National immigration policy determines who has the right to enter the UK and the terms on which they are allowed to reside. A feature of British decolonisation was that those residing in the former colonies had the right to a British passport and were, thus, able to emigrate easily to Britain. UK labour shortages underpinned large flows starting in 1948. In 1976, this general right was removed and the right to immigrate was largely restricted to family reunification. The progressive tightening of immigration controls was buttressed by a political rhetoric around issues of illegal immigration and asylum seeking. In this context, the rules governing eligibility to apply for social housing were tightened to exclude these two groups. More recent changes in immigration policy have flowed from harmonisation across the European Union and the high political salience of the issue.

Present policy is based on the idea of "managing immigration". It divides immigrants into distinctive groups<sup>9</sup>. Those relevant to this research include:

- ***Asylum seekers and refugees:*** Asylum seekers constitute only 6% of recent immigrants to the UK (Finney and Simpson 2009). Although the numbers are small, the very poor living conditions for most asylum seekers and their general insecurity make them a focus of

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<sup>9</sup> Detailed information can be found in Home Office (2008).

attention. They can apply for accommodation and subsistence<sup>10</sup> until such time as their application is determined<sup>11</sup>. At the point at which they gain permission to remain in UK, they lose their right to accommodation and are dependent, on the whole, on poor quality private rental housing. They have no right to employment while their status is being determined, and so are unable to save money towards achieving better quality housing. Once leave to remain is granted, they are subject to the same “housing rights” as the general population: access to the local authority waiting list for social housing, access to the homelessness service if necessary, and the right to claim housing benefit. When asylum seekers are located in neighbourhoods characterised by diversity, they feel safer and more secure. If asylum seekers are located in all-white neighbourhoods, they feel insecure and are anxious about the safety of their children (Spicer 2008). Three of the projects we found were providing accommodation for asylum seekers (see Annex 1). In Newcastle we looked at the service generally, and in Sheffield we looked at a specific project to support a “new” group of asylum seekers, Slovak Roma. The third project was Karin Housing Association, which focuses strongly on the needs of Somali refugees in London since the trauma of fleeing war and violence is unimaginable to ordinary English citizens.

- **A10 workers:** Migrant workers from the A10 countries are required to work for one year before they can gain access to full UK housing rights. They generally live in either poor quality privately rented housing or in accommodation provided by their employer, especially in rural areas<sup>12</sup>. Three of the projects in this research (two in Cheshire, one in Cornwall) specifically addressed the needs of this group by co-ordinating a cross-departmental approach within the local authority itself.

Thus, the general relationship between policy to “manage immigration” and housing policy is to control and/or restrict housing rights (access to social housing, housing benefits) for asylum seekers and migrant workers<sup>13</sup>. Consequently, since these are the two weakest groups among immigrants, their living conditions are very poor. Despite the restrictions on their eligibility for social housing, there is a widespread popular belief that “immigrants” gain privileged access to social housing which can generate severe tensions in localities characterised by a generally poor autochthonous population (popular belief generally conflates recent immigrants and UK citizens from black and minority ethnic groups). Both the migrant action groups we looked at, in East Cheshire and in Cornwall (see Annex 1), stressed the importance of local authorities strengthening their policies to maintain minimum quality standards in the private rented sector.

Although the wider institutional environment has, at times, been open to supporting BME housing actors, it is clear that the struggle for social inclusion has been led by the groups

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<sup>10</sup> The accommodation of asylum seekers was substantially reorganised in the mid-2000s. Previously, asylum seekers were housed on very large housing estates owned by local authorities. This pattern underpinned significant violence towards asylum seekers, and a substantial number found their own way to London, to join compatriot settled communities. Now, the programme is organised around a more diffused and dispersed pattern of accommodation with substantial supportive involvement by RSLs and third sector support agencies.

<sup>11</sup> Approximately one third of applications for asylum are accepted. If the application is not accepted, immigrants are deported. Although there is a lengthy process of appeal against the decision, few succeed.

<sup>12</sup> Their conditions were the subject of an Audit Commission report in 2007.

<sup>13</sup> In practice, any immigrant *without* indefinite leave to remain has restricted housing rights. This includes virtually all migrants from the European Economic Area.

themselves. Taking a long-term view of the emergence of key actors involved in providing housing for black and minority ethnic groups, it is clear that much of this has been a self-help initiative which has grown and become more organised over time. In the research, the results of this were clear in that the majority of our respondents, especially in the smaller projects, were themselves drawn from black and minority ethnic groups

### **1.2.3 Integration and diversity: transversal policies for equalities, race relations and community cohesion policy**

The experience of immigration does not stop when permission to remain is granted. It continues throughout life and the lives of subsequent generations<sup>14</sup>. The majority of the English black and minority population are British-born full citizens although their parents or grandparents may have been immigrants. These citizens experience racism throughout their daily life, which triggers and/or exacerbates other problems, e.g. unemployment, mental illness, personal safety, etc. (for example, the Azuka project in Nottingham which seeks to help black mentally ill people, see Annex 1). In comparison, white skinned immigrants from English-speaking and European Union countries experience a more mild form of generalised xenophobia. The exception is that recent Polish migrants have been subject to more extremist anti-immigrant actions (the two projects in Crewe and Nantwich and in East Cheshire were a response to problems experienced by Polish migrants, see Annex 1).

Current equalities legislation is based on the idea that Britain is a diverse nation and that it is necessary to promote equal rights for all. The Equalities Act 2010 covers discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, age, disability sexuality and religion/belief. The implementation of the Act is audit process driven. Substantial work is being carried out by local government organisations to ensure that the local authority diversity and equality policies required by the Act are comparable across policy areas, including housing, and partners, including RSLs and ALMOs, and that they reflect the same data sources, analysis and perspectives on the locality<sup>15</sup>.

Consequently, the main approach to the *integration* of immigrants and their progeny has been through race relations legislation, which was first introduced in 1976 at the same time as the borders were closed to people from the former colonies. The Race Relations Act 1976 (amended in 2000) places specific duties on all public bodies (including RSLs and ALMOs) to:

- eliminate unlawful racial discrimination;
- promote equal opportunities;
- promote good relations between people from different racial groups.

In contrast to the generalised “human capacities” model which underlies the Equalities Act and its emphasis on audit processes, the Race Relations Act recognises problems arising from the interaction among racially diverse groups. It provides for direct remedies for unlawful

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<sup>14</sup> See Peach and Gale (2003) for an account of the temporal pattern of immigration by the major ethnic groups now living in Britain.

<sup>15</sup> See [www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core](http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core).

discrimination against individuals<sup>16</sup>, as well as anti-discrimination notices to remedy indirect and institutional discrimination<sup>17</sup>.

Community cohesion policy directly addresses problems arising from inter-racial conflict. It was first developed as a response to race riots in three northern towns in 2001. It is based on the idea that spatial segregation within towns leads to "separate but parallel lives".

The government defines a cohesive community as one in which:

- there is a common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities;
- the diversity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and positively valued;
- those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities;
- strong and positive relationships exist between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and within neighborhoods.

Thus, cohesion policy is concerned with how racial discrimination affects the lives of entire groups of people. It envisages locally tailored initiatives, led by local authorities and involving a wide range of partners, from both the statutory and voluntary sectors. In contrast to the punitive approach embodied in the Race Relations Act, cohesion policy promotes imaginative and pro-active approaches which have generated a more nuanced view of the complexity and specificity of localised situations. In particular, cohesion policy is based on the idea that social divisions based on class, gender and age can be woven into the fabric of inter-ethnic tensions<sup>18</sup>.

In general, housing has not played a significant role in discussions of community cohesion (Roney 2008) despite the concept having its roots in the socio-spatial segregation underlying the notion of separate but parallel lives<sup>19</sup>. It is not unexpected that spatial dispersal, where desired by the minority ethnic group, is one of the tools which can be used in this approach. The Nashayman project in Bradford is an excellent example of a sensitive approach to spatial desegregation (see Annex 1). Overall, there is a comprehensive legislative and policy framework which is transversal, governing how housing is provided and managed by social landlords in England. The framework uses distinctive concepts at each level (equalities and human capacity, discrimination against minority groups, harmonious community relations), but each of the levels reinforces the others. The strong audit process, based on local assessments, ensures that all public bodies must attend to equality and diversity.

However, the main point which emerges from this review is that the Equality Act 2010 has significant potential to undermine the gains that have been made by black and minority ethnic groups, by threatening the ethnic specificity of the leading organizations (the Equalities Act

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<sup>16</sup> [www.equalityhumanrights.com/uploaded\\_files/PSD/3\\_the\\_duty\\_to\\_promote\\_race\\_equality.pdf](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/uploaded_files/PSD/3_the_duty_to_promote_race_equality.pdf) [accessed 29 May 2010].

<sup>17</sup> Early anti-discrimination notices, which are backed up by the power of central government to take over the management of a service, were directed to housing discrimination in the London Boroughs of Hackney and Tower Hamlets. Institutional discrimination is, however, difficult to eradicate. See the Macpherson Report on the London Metropolitan Police (Home Office 1999).

<sup>18</sup> Commission on Integration and Cohesion (June 2007), Ministerial Statement (January 2010) (see Communities and Local Government 2007, 2008 and 2010b)

<sup>19</sup> There is an important critique of this concept. If you are a member of a minority group, it is hard to avoid contact with the majority. However, if you are a member of the majority group, it is easy to evade contact with minority group members. The question is: Who separates themselves?

2010 was passed on the 8<sup>th</sup> of April 2010 and is NOT yet in force, see <http://www.stammeringlaw.org.uk/changes/sea.htm>). The Equalities Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of age, disability, gender, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race and religion or belief. Local authorities still control most allocations to social housing to most social landlords. In turn, a social landlord cannot unreasonably refuse letting to an applicant assigned to it by the local authority, for example on the grounds of ethnicity. Consequently, BME associations fear that over time, their tenants will become more ethnically mixed, and their mission to meet the needs of specific groups will be undermined. To some extent, this has always been the case since the Race Relations Act 1976, but to date there has frequently been an informal understanding between (some) associations and some authorities that "cultural specificity" is an important aspect of the services provided by many BME associations. For example, in our research, the Azuka project was set up specifically to address the interaction between racism and mental health (see Annex 1). Thus, the larger independent BME associations fear a "loss of identity" while there is a more generalised anxiety about projects similar to Azuka being able to find funding sources in the future. In areas where there is little sympathy or understanding by the majority population, it will be all too easy to organise local funding policies to undermine existing gains (see Cherti, 2008 for a description of local policies resting on the view that "If you fund one group, why don't you fund all groups"). Ironically, if these fears are realised, it will be done in the name of "equality". Nevertheless, the Act does allow service providers to take positive action to enable customers to overcome or minimise a disadvantage arising from a protected characteristic. In some places, this will be a compelling political argument. However, it is too early to predict the outcome with any confidence, beyond saying that it will depend on how local politics affect local policies to support immigrants and minority ethnic groups (see Peach and Gale, 2003, who give a systematic account of how planning policies for places of worship vary with local politics).

Sections 1.2.1-1.2.3 have set out the main policy sectors which influence residence-based measures for integrating immigrants. There are strong interactions with other policy sectors for two reasons. Firstly, some of the most important policies (community cohesion and race equality policies) are transversal and affect virtually all areas of social policy. Secondly, specific local problems and projects create active relationships among different policy sectors at the point of implementation. Examples from the projects we looked at include: the deliberate creation of interdepartmental groups in the migrant action groups in East Cheshire and Cornwall; the Azuka project in Nottingham has developed relationships with local health organisations in order to support their residents; the Asylum Seekers Unit in Newcastle interacts with social and youth services in the city to ensure the welfare of their residents; and Karin Housing Association's specific aim of settling refugees means providing knowledge and support in accessing a range of other services for their tenants (see Annex 1).

Thus, at the point of implementation, at the point of the project itself, interaction with other policy areas is the normal picture. Because projects are locally focused and because the black and minority ethnic population are not evenly dispersed across England, it would not be possible to prescribe these interactions in a top down way. Rather the forms of "policy interaction" which have developed at local level reflect a general central government agenda to

promote coordination and cooperation at local authority level. The projects, thus, fit within these more localised governance processes.

#### **1.2.4 Competition and conflict over access to social housing**

Politically, competition between immigrants and autochthones for housing resources has been expressed through the activities of a minority right wing political party, the British National Party. The BNP campaigns vigorously against immigrants and polled 1.9% of the total vote in the 2010 general election. None of its candidates at the central or local government level were elected, and an irony of its position is that, with one or two exceptions<sup>20</sup>, it is strongest in areas which have no recent immigrants nor black and minority ethnic populations. Nevertheless, all the major parties have become wary about issues of immigration. National opinion polls have indicated that immigration was considered to be the major issue among the general population (more recently, the world financial crisis has replaced immigration as the number one issue in general opinion polls).

The main method for managing competition for social housing resources is through the rules which govern access to social housing (known as "allocations"). Since the mid-1960s, social housing has been allocated according to housing need<sup>21</sup>. Priority is always given to homeless households. Overcrowding, exceptionally bad physical standards, and mental and physical health/disability generally give high priority for accessing social housing.

Within this framework, there are specific rules which relate to foreign nationals, which limit access to social housing. The groups with the biggest restrictions on access to housing are workers from the A10 states. Their eligibility depends on having worked (as a registered or authorised employee) without interruption for 12 months. All other European Economic Area nationals must be in work and habitually resident in the UK. Non-European Economic Area nationals must demonstrate habitual residence in the UK and hold unrestricted leave to remain. In other words, the only group of immigrants with direct eligibility for social housing are asylum seekers accepted under the Home Office Schemes<sup>22</sup>.

Nevertheless, it is a long leap from being *eligible* for social housing and being *allocated* a house. Firstly, there must be social houses available to let. The size of the social sector stock is steadily reducing and demand for it is increasing. In 2007, turnover rates in this stock were only 5 per cent. Of this turnover, less than 5% went to foreign nationals, working out at roughly 2.6 per thousand houses in the total stock going to foreign nationals, and half a house per thousand to workers from the accession states. Overall in 2008, less than 2% of social housing was occupied by foreign nationals who had arrived in the previous five years (Robinson 2009). Secondly, aside from giving reasonable preference to those who are in housing need (Housing Act 1996), local authorities, who handle all applications for social housing, are free to design their own rules and procedures. Within this framework, workers

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<sup>20</sup> The BNP primarily focuses on organising against citizens of West Indian and Asian origin. An important exception was in east London, where it organised West Indian and Asian citizens against Polish migrants.

<sup>21</sup> Income is not included in the definition of need used for the allocation of most social housing although "housing need" is generally related to income. The only social housing allocated on the basis of income is shared ownership housing, because the vendor must ensure that the prospective resident can repay the mortgage on the resident's share of the property.

<sup>22</sup> Once an asylum seeker's status is determined as being a refugee, s/he is no longer directly eligible and so enters into competition with the general population for available housing.

coming from the A10 countries cannot access social housing until they have worked for an approved employer continuously for one year, unless they become homeless<sup>23</sup>. Virtually all applicants for social housing are expected to be able to demonstrate a "local connection", usually residence in the area for a fixed period of time or taking responsibility for caring for an elderly or disabled person. These rules discriminate against "new" immigrants, and more generally against those who need to migrate for work related reasons, but early actions by the Commission for Racial Equality in the early 1980s ensure that they do not discriminate on racial/ethnic grounds. A person must also have sufficient knowledge of the local allocation system in order to gain access to social housing. It is extremely difficult to navigate the local systems without either being fluent in English or having access to good advice. Thus, both the complexity of the system and the specific rules themselves hinder access to social housing by "newcomers". For example, in the research, the Move on Team in the Asylum Seekers Unit in Newcastle provided substantial ongoing support to asylum seekers moving out of their properties, including applying for social housing, advising on paying bills and claiming housing benefits in order to avoid homelessness and destitution among its former clients (see Annex 1).

The new Government is committed to all local authorities introducing choice-based lettings systems. These systems can operate in different ways, but the general principle is that applicants apply for available vacancies which are widely advertised. Thus, applicants can see the full range of available properties and can bid for any home to which they are matched in terms of size of household and size of property. The successful bidder is the one with the highest priority under the scheme. Unsuccessful applicants receive feedback which helps them to assess their chances of success in subsequent applications. The system is widely perceived as fair and transparent. Choice based lettings schemes are ICT based. They remove the local authority *official* as a gatekeeper, who can be personally blamed for lack of success. By depersonalising property allocations, one aspect of conflict inherent in the competition for social housing is de-fused (for more details see: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/housing/housingmanagementcare/choicebasedlettings/>).

A number of the organisations we talked to identified two problems with choice-based lettings. Firstly, they felt that the systems discriminate against non-English speakers and, secondly, they feared that the schemes will hinder the ability of black and minority ethnic housing associations to meet their specific objectives (see above). And, of course, such systems cannot compensate for the lack of larger units in the social housing stock, so that larger households still wait longer to access social housing. The evidence we collected suggested that the hidden question is about competition for good housing resources, measured not only in terms of physical quality but also in terms of its ability to accommodate specific family practices.

The biggest problems arise with single migrants living together in privately rented housing and with the general lack of larger social rented properties. One example is the way in which demand from A10 workers in East Cheshire and Cornwall have highlighted the very poor quality of some privately rented housing (see Annex 1). One stimulus for creating these

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<sup>23</sup> Within all local authority systems, people who meet the nationally determined rules as homeless have priority in accessing social housing. However, these rules are applied very stringently in areas of high demand for social housing.

projects was complaints from neighbours about "anti-social behaviour" by migrants, mainly young single men, living in overcrowded conditions. Examples highlighting the importance of design issues for larger, extended families are the Twice the Terrace project in Sheffield which aims to renovate terraced housing to accommodate larger Pakistani families who often own this very cheap and dilapidated housing, and the culturally specific design practices reported by Nashayman Housing Association in Bradford and its environs (see Annex 1).

At the same time, localised situations vary immensely, so that it is not possible to generalise. Much of the attention paid to the socio-spatial segregation of long-standing immigrant-citizens was sparked off by riots by young, second generation Asians in Bradford, Burnley and Oldham in 2001. The effect of these riots was intensified by the Twin Towers attacks later in September that year. Many of the Asians in these towns, predominantly Pakistani, worked in local factories until the industries collapsed after 1975. The interesting housing feature of these northern towns is that many Asian households were owner occupiers of generally poor quality housing and, thus, highly invested in their neighbourhoods. They also felt strongly that resources were not being distributed evenly between poorer white and poorer Asian neighbourhoods. The Government's response was two-fold: to introduce community cohesion policy (see above) and to introduce policies to prevent violent extremism. The overall effect was to enhance a generalised Islamophobia, which is acknowledged by three quarters of the English population<sup>24</sup> (previous riots in Liverpool and London had primarily involved the Afro-Caribbean population, whose housing problems centred around access to social housing).

There were several examples of localised conflicts in our cases (see Annex 1). Firstly, Nashayman Housing Association's Creating Ethnically Mixed Communities and Ashiana Housing Association's Let's Live Together initiatives have helped Asians to move into previously all-white English areas, and Ashiana's has helped movement both ways. These initiatives pay detailed attention to supporting the families who are moving and introducing them to new neighbours. Secondly, the migrants projects in Cornwall and East Cheshire were pro-actively preventative interventions to prevent conflicts between increased numbers of migrant agricultural workers and the autochthonous population. The Slovak Roma project in Sheffield was initiated partly on the basis of complaints of anti-social behaviour by local residents<sup>25</sup> and partly on the basis of recognising the specific problems faced by this group of refugees. A number of other projects, such as Karin Housing Association's work and the work of the Newcastle Asylum Seekers Unit, pay constant attention to inter-cultural mediation, explaining groups to each other and introducing them at wider events.

The overall conclusion is that all the projects were sensitive to constant underlying intercultural tensions. The main response rests on straightforward community development practices.

### **1.3. Housing actors supporting the integration of immigrants**

Social housing measures involving immigrants range from the national scale to the very local scale. For example, accommodation for asylum seekers is a central government function and covers the whole of the United Kingdom. However, this function is carried out through

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<sup>24</sup> Communities and Local Government (2010a)

<sup>25</sup> Anti-social behaviour is notoriously ill-defined in practice. It ranges from criminal acts, such as vandalism, through to minor "incivilities" (speaking loudly on the streets, etc.).

contracts with specific local authorities. Thus, this is a national programme, but its implementation is localised.

In terms of the main *actors* in the projects we looked at, some were very localised in their operation (e.g. Karin Housing and Social Need) while others, mainly the large mainstream housing associations, operate across whole regions or throughout the whole of England. That said, the *projects* we examined (even in the national associations) tended to be very localised, but closely followed the geographical distribution of the black and minority ethnic population.

### 1.3.1 Networks and partnerships

The geographical coverage of the initiatives is mirrored by networks and partnerships. These policy networks and partnerships involve public, private, profit and not-for-profit organisations in different combinations.

Networks and partnerships can be distinguished in terms of the means they use to pursue their aims and objectives. Networks range from quite small and informal groups of friends and associates through to more formalised organisations (voluntary, third sector, community based NGOs), but the general principle is one of voluntary association to negotiate and pursue common objectives as well as to provide mutual support. Partnerships, on the other hand, imply some type of formal agreement between formal organisations in order to pursue a common goal<sup>26</sup>. Partnerships are usually locally focused, whereas networks can be very fluid and operate at local, regional, national and/or international levels. Networks are based in interpersonal relationships and interests. Partnerships are based on inter-organisational relationships.

There have been two major national housing networks centred on BME housing:

- **FBHO**: Alongside the Housing Corporation's BME housing association initiative, funding was made available to set up the Federation of Black Housing Organisations. It had a large membership, mainly drawn from small voluntary self-help projects, generally providing housing as ancillary to meeting other needs of vulnerable members of localised communities (mental health, physical disabilities, homelessness, substance abuse, former prisoners, children leaving care, etc.), as well as the growing number of BME housing associations. It provided an effective independent pressure group presenting the voice of the very wide range of housing projects and organisations within the BME communities. Most importantly, it provided a 'safe forum' for debating many of the issues facing BME housing organisations. FBHO was disbanded in 2009, reflecting debate about the future direction of the organisation.
- **BME National**: This is a network of chief executives of BME associations, supported by the London BME Directors' Group, the National Housing Federation<sup>27</sup> and The Forum, a leadership and policy network for BME housing professionals (Hilditch 2009). It was formed in 2009. An important reason for the emergence of this network is the need to sustain the focus of BME associations in a regulatory environment which no longer fully

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<sup>26</sup> See Cherti (2008) for a discussion of these distinctions in terms of Moroccan organisations operating in London.

<sup>27</sup> The National Housing Federation is a lobby group representing the interests of all registered social landlords.

recognises the specific effects of racism<sup>28</sup>. The first major issue to be raised by BMENational is how tenants are selected. The proposed nationally prescribed, but local-authority operated, choice-based lettings system has the potential to change BME associations into “ordinary” associations. BME associations will no longer be able to use the informal agreements they have with local authorities to focus on meeting the housing needs of specific black and ethnic minority groups.

Both networks shared two aims: one was to meet the housing needs of black and minority ethnic communities and the other was to represent the interests of the organisations meeting those needs. Nevertheless, there has been a subtle shift in balance between the two aims, which can be attributed to both the growth in BME associations and changes in the political environment.

As some BME associations have grown while others have been absorbed into mainstream group structures, the general political environment has changed around them, certainly at the national level and, with more variability, at the local level. Public policy discourse has changed in two important ways over the last ten years. Firstly, combating racism is seen as less important than (or at least indirectly achieved by) “managing immigration”, and, secondly, all types of discrimination are seen as similar so that the specific nature of racism is de-emphasised. Both these changes leave the larger, independent BME associations in an exposed position. They fear that it will be increasingly difficult to serve their original client group, or that continuing to serve it will require increasing ingenuity. Alternatively, they will lose their specific identity as “BME housing associations” and become more like the mainstream associations. It is too early to tell what the outcome will be, but as the policy changes associated with the Equalities Act 2010 cascade into regulatory, local authority and RSL practices, the tone of the debate will change from political into negotiating specific practices.

Throughout the research, the significance of networks was apparent. Networks underpin all snowballing search and sampling procedures, and it was largely through inter-personal, intra-organisational, local and/or regional networks that we reached the projects reported in this research. Many of these were “tacit” networks, based on acquaintanceship and/or long-standing working relationships. However, a few are more formalised and have achieved funding with the aim of providing support to a range of groups in the voluntary and community sector. The Migrant and Refugee Communities Forum and the Black Urban Regeneration Network are specific examples from London, but similar networks can be found in all the regions of England with significant black and minority ethnic populations.

A lot has been said and written about “partnerships”. Indeed, the word is now so deeply embedded in the general public discourse on governance that it can describe almost any situation in which organisations co-operate, formally or informally, to achieve a single objective. Thus, all local authorities are required to have “local strategic partnerships” which

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<sup>28</sup> As opposed to sexism, ageism, disabilism, etc. An important factor in this shift in public perspective was also the increased public awareness of inter-ethnic conflicts, which underpins the view “if you can’t fund all of them, why fund any?” Much of this thinking derives, loosely, from the report of the Commission on Integration and Cohesion and is enshrined in the Equality Act 2010. See Cherti (2008) for an early example of this view, the Government’s response to the Commission (Communities and Local Government (2008), and the beginnings of the debate among BME housing associations.

serve as consultative forums across public, private and voluntary sector organisations<sup>29</sup>. In some cases, these are strong bodies, capable of negotiating and co-ordinating a range of initiatives. Elsewhere, they provide useful networks and forums for discussion. There are also specific multi-local authority partnerships to pursue cross-boundary projects. Examining the membership, structure, functioning and working methods of such bodies provides a useful indicator of the extent to which BME organisations are “integrated” into general governance arrangements within a locality.

In terms of the equality and diversity plans required by the 2020 Equalities Act, the Improvement and Development Agency recommends that local authorities work in partnership with a range of other partners: fire and Rescue Services, Police, the National Health Service and Housing (ALMOs and RSLs)<sup>30</sup>.

The word "partnership" is used with a very wide variety of meanings in England, ranging from highly formalized agreements through to informal networks among workers in different organisations who support each other on a day-to-day basis. Although partnerships are routine in all housing associations, two types of partnership are especially significant for BME associations<sup>31</sup>. The first is where a housing organisation contracts to manage housing owned by another association or by a local authority. These arrangements are commonly used to ensure cultural sensitivity in the day-to-day management of a (usually special needs) project<sup>32</sup>. The second is where a small association contracts with a larger association to develop new housing stock. Although the majority of these partnerships will be between registered social landlords, some will involve local authorities who still retain ownership of their stock. This is because there are economies of scale and expertise in building new housing stock and diseconomies of scale in managing its rental. Both types of partnerships have been important in the development of BME associations by providing specialist resources and financial security, especially to smaller associations. For example, in this research, Home Group did all the new building work for Nashayman Housing Association. It was on the basis of this longstanding partnership that, eventually, Nashayman entered the Home Group as a subsidiary. In Nashayman's case, the national regulation of social housing rents meant that organisations with a large proportion of their stock made up of larger units could not recoup their costs from rents. Another example is the Azuka project, which was originally managed by an independent BME housing association, Kush. When Kush was absorbed into the Places for People housing association group structure (again, for financial reasons), the group board at Places for People recognised its specific skills in managing mental health projects for black

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<sup>29</sup> The vision is top down and derives from central government. It founders on the peculiarity of English local government organisation. These partnerships rest on a regulatory, rather than contractual base.

<sup>30</sup> Improvement and Development Agency, *Partnerships*, at [www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/](http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/) (accessed 29 May 2010). IDeA was abolished by the new Government, but its work has been fully taken on by LG Improvement and Development.

<sup>31</sup> A third type of partnership is also important. Where a large local authority owned housing estate is being redeveloped, a formalised and contractual agreement is made between the local authority and one or more housing associations to carry out the work. In areas of high ethnic diversity, it is common to include a BME association among the contractual partners. No examples of these large and complex partnerships were included among the projects examined in this research.

<sup>32</sup> There are also other reasons for using this kind of arrangement, such as the spatial location of the housing stock. ALMOs are a variant of this arrangement.

and minority ethnic people and has sustained the original management arrangements (see Annex 1).

It was noticeable that only three projects in our research (see Annex 1) had a strong sense of being embedded in formalised contractual partnerships. The Newcastle Asylum Seekers project was a formal contract between the ALMO (Your Homes Newcastle) and the Home Office's Border Agency. They indicate that their main partners were: adult and children's social services, and a vaguely specified "consortium", statutory partners and voluntary organisations. Their annual report for 2008 gives some indication of the range of organisations with whom they work (Newcastle Asylum Seekers Unit 2009). Two other projects, both embedded within local government also listed formal agencies as partners. The Crewe and Nantwich Migrant Workers' initiative extended to the Police, Primary Care Trust<sup>33</sup>, registered social landlords, the Citizens Advice Bureau, the voluntary sector and other local authority departments. Its successor project<sup>34</sup>, across the county of Cheshire, also includes the Fire and Rescue Service among its list of partners.

The remainder of the projects were involved in informal networking types of partnerships. Interestingly, the Sheffield BME Housing Monitoring Group indicated that it was a partnership between the local authority and its ALMO, Sheffield Homes. From the other data, however, it was clear that this project was a 'network embedded in a partnership'. It was a means of involving a wide range of black and minority ethnic voluntary organisations in a housing-focused group. Karin Housing Association said it worked with seven other housing associations and four local authorities, and Nashayman Housing Association's projects to relocate black and minority ethnic families into previously all-white areas involved the police to ensure a rapid response to cases of racial harassment (see Annex 1).

### **1.3.2 The key role of local authorities**

Section 1.2 of this report set out the main changes in social housing policies over the last thirty years. Social housing as a proportion of the total housing stock has fallen from nearly a third, virtually all owned by local authorities, to just seventeen per cent, of which half is owned by registered social landlords. Local authorities, however, are still responsible for making and implementing strategic housing plans for their areas. These plans were designed to address several national objectives. The most important of these objectives was to bring the social stock up to meet the Decent Housing Standard<sup>35</sup>. In order to achieve this objective, local authorities need to work with a variety of partners, primarily registered social landlords, and still hold some power over the distribution of (decreasing amounts of) capital subsidy for registered social landlords. The methods and techniques which local authorities use to fund and organise this work vary with the local situation and local priorities. It is our view that the local authority programmes to achieve the Decent Homes Standard have had the biggest impact on improving the housing conditions of black and minority ethnic households.

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<sup>33</sup> Primary Care Trusts are the lowest level of spatial organisation in the National Health Service, and are organised on local authority boundaries. The new Government has just announced that it is abolishing Primary Care Trusts and devolving their responsibilities to those doctors who are general practitioners.

<sup>34</sup> This is a case of the same basic project continuing through the reorganisation of local authorities in the area. Reorganisation gave the opportunity to expand the spatial scope of the project.

<sup>35</sup> The new Government has abandoned the Decent Homes Standard.

The second national programme, again implemented by local authorities through localised plans, is the housing market renewal programme, which was designed to address problems of low demand across the north of England. Many of the areas which are being addressed under this programme are characterised by high levels of home ownership by Asian families. The Twice the Terrace project in Sheffield is a good example of how the programme can improve housing conditions for this group (see Annex 1).

Local authorities retain responsibility for the allocation of social housing across both the local authority and registered social landlord owned housing stock. Earlier sections of this report have noted that changing allocation methods may or may not have an adverse effect on black and minority ethnic households. Local authorities also have responsibility for regulating physical housing standards in the private rented sector. All three of the Migrant Action projects in this research had a significant component of their work centring on this activity as migrants do not generally have immediate access to social rented housing, nor can they afford owner occupation. In addition, local authorities have specific responsibilities for implementing community cohesion programmes and for promoting good interracial relationships, which affects both longstanding immigrant-citizens as well as newer immigrants and migrants.

Thus, national government sets out a strong legislative framework within which local authorities have considerable scope to design specific programmes addressing the housing needs of immigrants. In addition, the central government is directly responsible for providing accommodation for those asylum seekers who wish to take up the offer. The main central government ministries are organised on a regional basis and the (central) Government Offices for the Regions have been the primary interface between central government and local government. Under the previous Labour Government, there were also Regional Housing Boards bringing key actors together to set priorities and targets for housing provision and renewal in each of the regions. However, the current Government has abolished these boards and its regional offices. The main structure of government in England distinguishes between central and local government. Local government is being reformed, so that all areas for the country will have a single level (or tier) of local government responsible for all local authority functions<sup>36</sup>.

The overall conclusion to this section is that the very rapid reorganisation of central government and aspects of local government mean that it will be unclear for some time precisely *how* government functions will be organised. Nevertheless, immigrant-citizens form a substantial proportion of the population in many local areas and these local authorities will continue to experience demands for improved housing situations and involvement. The new structures will present some new opportunities, while closing off some other possibilities. Local creativity may need to substitute for money and national guidance.

### **1.3.3 Non-profit and for-profit landlords**

Registered social landlords are primarily organised as non-profit organisations although some of the larger groups' structures may contain a profit-making subsidiary, which is used to cross-subsidise the provision of social housing (and other community development activities, which

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<sup>36</sup> Previously, some areas had a county level of government with several districts within it. The present government has announced that it intends to complete the process of creating "unitary" authorities for the whole of the country.

often address issues of interethnic conflict). Registered social landlords now own half the social housing stock and are the only organisations which receive subsidy for building new housing and/or renovating older housing. We have also noted, in section 1.2, the key role played by the Housing Association Charitable Trust in promoting innovations to develop the black and ethnic minority housing association movement.

In England, less than 0.5% of all housing is provided directly by employers. The main employer-providers are churches and pubs. There is no requirement for employers to provide accommodation for migrant workers, although some employers may assist by providing temporary accommodation in more remote rural areas. The problem with this arrangement is that if the worker loses his job, he also loses his housing.

The main for-profit actors who are relevant to the housing situations of immigrant-citizens and more recent immigrants are private landlords. Poorer migrant workers are more or less confined to the private rented sector and, often, to its least competent and most exploitative parts. The Migrant Action projects give priority to the problems of regulating the privately rented housing provided, but the general picture is that new arrivals and temporary migrants will not know their rights in relationship to their landlords and accept conditions which are distinctly substandard.

#### **1.4. Conclusions**

The English experience, and the projects reported in this research, point to two main general lessons, one about the nature of immigration as a life experience and the other about the nature of racism.

The first lesson is that immigration is not a "point in time" experience. Rather, moving to another country, through whatever route, is just the beginning of an experience which is extended in time and over generations. The projects we looked at focused on asylum seekers, at one end of the temporal spectrum, and on long-standing citizen-immigrants at the other end of the time span. Furthermore, many of the projects had been designed and implemented by second and third generation citizen-immigrants, who were able to mediate between the larger society and their elders. The crucial thread running through most of the projects was supporting groups to be able to speak for themselves and to create the types of projects which they needed.

The second lesson is that racism is not a leopard. It is, rather, an animal which changes its appearance over time, but is always present, sometimes overtly and sometimes just under the surface of society. It is important that policies and practices in housing be open to the changing manifestations of racism, which underlie the problems which have given rise to many of the projects reported here.

The English experience of immigration reaches back to the late 1940s. It is, thus, valuable because it teaches both long-run lessons, and because current practices and projects operate in a specific policy and social context. The more specific points which emerge from the projects themselves are:

- Geography is important, because it localises problems and the best solutions address these local problems, but the nature of the problem can vary greatly from locality to locality. The black and minority ethnic population are not evenly dispersed across England, and

different groups of longstanding citizen-immigrants and new immigrants find themselves in very different local contexts.

- The demography of immigrant groups is changing. In particular, these groups are now aging. Family reunification has had its own impact on demography and family size is decreasing with subsequent generations. At the same time, migrant workers tend to be young and single, and the phenomenon of circular or seasonal migration is relatively new. These basic demographic processes shape the types of housing problems faced by different groups of immigrants.
- The group who is most weakly placed in terms of access to decent housing are refugees. Once their status is determined, they are evicted from the accommodation supplied by the Home Office programme and often lack knowledge and support to operate in the wider housing environment. In particular, projects by fellow countrymen are especially important in supporting this group.
- The housing problems and opportunities of different immigrant groups are shaped by national programmes. Thus, the housing market renewal programme has presented some opportunities to renovate older housing to suit larger Asian families in the north, but elsewhere decisions have been made to demolish older, dilapidated housing which presents a serious threat to families who have lived together for a long time within small communities.
- It will be important to address the general rise of Islamophobia, since it is often the case that small groups of racist activists can disproportionately affect the opportunities open to a wide variety of groups<sup>37</sup>.

Another lesson to be drawn from the English experience is the significance of the transversal policies relating to community cohesion and anti-racist equalities legislation. Housing problems can only be effectively addressed when these policies are strong.

The final lesson to be drawn is that successful projects have built upon the networks set up by black and minority ethnic housing organisations. Without these networks and the mutual support and expertise which they provide, much of the good work would not have been done.

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<sup>37</sup> An excellent example, concerned with (not) building a mosque, can be found in Reeves et al. (2009).

## CHAPTER 2. SOCIAL HOUSING AND ETHNIC MINORITIES IN THE NETHERLANDS

Ioannis Tzaninis  
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### Introduction

The history of social housing (*sociale woning*<sup>38</sup>) in the Netherlands dates back to the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (the first housing association was established in 1852) and has undergone certain notable changes. Generally, in the late 1800s the Dutch state was against home ownership for the majority of the population because it would make workers spatially dependent on employers. This mentality allowed the social sector to develop (given that renting allowed more mobility than owning a house) and, in combination with the 1901 Housing Act, the Housing Associations (non-profit institutions which are analysed further on) were connected to the government and began to be officially subsidized (becoming “authorized institutions”, see Ouwehand and Van Daalen, 2002). Such strategy of the authorities led to social and municipal housing being built increasingly during the first decades of the 1900s, and considerably more so after WWII (Table 1). This fact was due to the post-war house shortage which was deemed “public enemy number one” (Kullberg and Kulu-Glasgow, 2009, p. 33) and the housing associations were appointed to manage it. During that period the Dutch state considered that cheap, rent-controlled, rented homes would lead to affordable housing, and therefore the wages could be kept low and the economy would revive. The peak of such large-scale construction was reached in 1973, during the oil crisis.

**Table 1 - Tenure in the Netherlands, 1947-1999 (% of total housing stock)**

Year	Social Housing	Private rental	Owner-occupied
1947	12	60	28
1960	23	47	30
1965	26	41	33
1970	31	34	35
1975	34	27	39
1980	36	22	42
1985	39	18	43
1990	41	14	45
1995	38	14	48
1999	36	12	52

*Note:* Total housing stock excludes old people’s homes, student housing etc.

*Source:* for 1947-1985: Ministerie van VROM (1989); for 1990-1999: cited from Van Kempen and Priemus (2002).

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<sup>38</sup> Van der Veer and Schuilng (2005) explain that the sector is called “social” and not “public” because the houses in question belong to “independent not-for-profit housing associations” (168) and not any kind of public institution.

## 2.1 Main trends and changes in traditional social housing policies

### 2.1.1 The 1990s' liberalization of the housing stock

By the second half of the 1970s the housing shortage was considered sorted and the rents started increasing. Interestingly, even though the post-war housing crisis was deemed solved, another social problem emerged; the rents started becoming unaffordable for many people and consequently the rent subsidy programme (called *huursubsidie* and having commenced right after the peak of 1973) became the main type of social housing support and remains such today<sup>39</sup>. By the beginning of the 1990s the complexity of the new housing provision system (subsidies, allocation and rent level control) and the amount of social houses (42% of the national stock in the 1990s, see Ouwehand and van Daalen, 2002)<sup>40</sup> led to concern; large amounts of the state's money were allocated to sustain this system and corruption was always a danger (Kullberg and Kulu-Glasgow, 2009). Given that, in addition, the Housing Associations had become substantially dependent on the government (Van Bortel and Elsinga, 2007) the result was a major shift in the mid-'90s. Since then social houses have been sold increasingly and home ownership as well as decentralization of decision-making have become the objective of the ministry of housing (Kullberg and Kulu-Glasgow, 2009); the governmental policies are explicitly aimed at reducing the amount of rented dwellings, including those in the social housing sector, while increasing the number of privately-owned houses<sup>41</sup>.

### 2.1.2 Access to social housing: from “needs” to “choice” in housing allocation

Since the aforementioned post-war housing shortage in the Netherlands, and following the Housing Allocation Act of 1947 (*Woonruimtetwet*), the allocation of housing had been performed on a *needs*-based system. Local governments were appointed with the task of distributing dwellings justly to inhabitants with a housing permit. The determination of “need” varied between cities and the provided autonomy allowed different approaches; in certain cases allocation was based on municipal rankings according to waiting time and specific needs<sup>42</sup>, while in other cases the HAs would allocate part of their housing stock to their registered members and the rest to persons on the municipal lists (Kullberg and Kulu-Glasgow, 2009). Although the aim of the *needs*-based model was to provide housing to all in need in a fair manner, certain problems emerged. Being a de-centralised policy, the Housing Allocation Act of 1947 (*Woonruimtetwet*) granted freedom to local authorities to define “need” in their own way and to develop their own regulations and methods of application as described earlier; this often led to the paradox of unfair house distribution (Ouwehand and Van Daalen, 2002). Moreover, claimants overstated their “needs” in order to circumvent long waits or even registered while not in need, just to have the option in the future (leading often to the paradox

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<sup>39</sup> A third of all Dutch tenants are enrolled in the *huursubsidie* programme.

<sup>40</sup> In Amsterdam it grew from 18% during WWII to 55% by 2002 (Van der Veer and Schuiling, 2005).

<sup>41</sup> This process is not evenly distributed. In the peripheral municipalities, more social rented homes are being built and fewer homes are being demolished and sold. In most big cities the opposite is occurring, with Housing Association homes being demolished and more owner-occupied homes being built in the middle price segment.

<sup>42</sup> “Needs could be severe medical or social problems related to the housing situation, a long travelling distance from home to work, lack of space in the house, or divorce” (Ouwehand and Van Daalen, 2002, p. 49).

of high-income households living in social dwellings). The implications of this system (described in Section 2.3.3) led to extensive unfair allocation and consequently the alternative, currently ongoing, *advertisement* model replaced it in the 1990s.

Currently the social housing allocation is performed through a choice-based system. In the Housing Allocation Act of 1993 the instruments of its application were universal (they were available to all municipalities) and partly optional (the governments could select which ones they preferred). Starting as a pilot programme in Delft in 1990, the new allocation strategy (called the *advertisement* or *supply* model, a choice-based system like in the UK, see Chapter 1) was applied through magazine and newspaper publications (or through the internet) to which the beneficiaries would respond given that they meet the accessibility criteria, based on income, household size, etc. After examining their options (through seeing the photographs and reading the details of the dwelling), the applicants would contact the relevant HA regarding the advertised house and wait for a published response in the paper. In fact, every person could determine the qualifications of the successful applicants by these publications and adapt to the competition accordingly in the future. Being concurrent with the Ministry's aspiration of a "liberalized, market-oriented social sector" (Ouwehand and Van Daalen, 2002, p. 50), while promoting transparency, customer empowerment and choice, this method spread quickly through the whole country, and is currently the dominant social housing provision model.

Nowadays the access to a large number of social houses is managed by WoningNet NV ([www.woningnet.nl](http://www.woningnet.nl)), an incorporated IT company of which the stakeholders are the HAs. With a fee of €60 anyone can register and after providing certain necessary personal details, such as income and family size (ethnic background is not required), the applicant can start "house-hunting". Currently the service covers almost half the social housing sector, mainly in the western area of the Netherlands (*Randstad*), while the variety of dwellings in size, price and quality is extremely rich (due to the size of the social sector). All the applications are evaluated via certain accessibility criteria and after a week or two announcements are made in the manner described above. Such a system has the advantages of broad choice by the applicants on the regional level and less labour intensive mediation by the HAs because the procedure is largely automated (Arie De Zeeuw, 2009).

Of course this service is not free of problems. Even though the applicants who are in pressing need of a dwelling are often given immediate priority, long waits for a preferred location are common (lasting sometimes even a decade). Especially for immigrants, the digital, online service of Woningnet can prove difficult to use since the computer skills of non-Western persons tend to be poor. Moreover, the interface is only in the Dutch language, the command of which tends to be poorer in immigrant groups. Lastly, there are additional complications for recent labour immigrants. On the one hand, the choice-based system tends to require the beneficiaries' initiative which is less probable for newcomers given the less adequate information in their ranks. On the other hand, the long waits for finding a social dwelling in the large cities (possibly near their working place) are forbidding and thus they are often forced to turn to the private sector.

### 2.1.3 Access to and condition of the private housing sector

Reality in the Dutch private housing market is far less ideal and idealized than in the social housing market. Numbering a mere 10% approximately of the total housing stock in the Netherlands (Table 2), the private rental segment is highly congested and discrepancies are commonplace<sup>43</sup>. Dwellings which are of low quality (no heating, no floors, broken facilities) or even illegitimate for registered rental (basements, storage rooms) can be rented for an exorbitant amount and often for very limited periods due to high demand (there are cases where an apartment is rented for a month or two as a temporary solution for the tenant until house-hunting recommences). Moreover, reality seems even grimmer if we consider that the private rental market addresses mainly low-income categories who are newcomers (students, labour migrants).

**Table 2 - Dutch housing stock since 1993 by tenure sector.**

Sectors	1993	1997	2001	2006
Home ownership	47%	50%	53%	56%
Private rental	15%	13%	11%	10%
Social housing	35%	37%	35%	34%
Total (x1000)	6.044	6.366	6.649	6.913

Source: Ministry of Housing

As a matter of fact, an attentive and highly detailed legal framework which protects tenants from such unscrupulous methods exists in the Dutch administration. It is an elaborate point-system which determines the maximum rent for each dwelling (based on facilities, size, etc.), which can be investigated by the *huurcommissie*, a body of the Ministry which dispatches experts who examine whether the regulations are upheld (Senior policy advisor in Housing, Neighbourhoods and Integration of the Ministry of Housing, personal interview, 23 December 2009). The terms of an investigation which determines that the landlord has been dishonest are very favourable to the tenants (retrospectively they get a refund by the landlord for the whole extra amount they have paid and from then on the rent is fixed to the law-fitting level). In most cases however, tenants are either uninformed or even afraid of seeking such solutions; in addition, the regulations exist only in the Dutch language, a fact which makes them less accessible to newcomers. The trend seems to be the gradual decrease of private rentals, a phenomenon which, in combination with high housing demand, may lead to two predicaments: the instances of misconduct might become harsher (smaller supply may cause higher prices) and the competition between newcomers, who would not buy a house or rent in the social sector, may become extremely intense.

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<sup>43</sup> As a matter of fact, even in the social housing market there is a similar corrupt exercise by the actual *tenants*. Given the low rent levels of social houses and the high demand for housing, apartments are sublet illegally for profit, while the sub-“tenant” cannot register in the municipality and in certain cases shares the apartment with the actual tenant.

## **2.2 Social housing policies' measures and approaches towards ethnic minorities: Dutch society in flux and the place of non-Western immigrants in it**

### **2.2.1 Integration policies in transition: from multi-culturalism to assimilationism**

Policy-makers in the Netherlands were using definitive statements in relation to the ethnic background of persons until almost thirty years ago. The last instance was the 1983 “White paper on minorities” (Ministeria van Binnenlandse Zaken 1983) where policy-makers addressed the socio-economic deprivation of most non-western ethnic groups in the Netherlands. In this document we find the essence of the former Dutch multi-culturalism. By that time the Dutch politicians had acknowledged that the country had immigrants who were going to stay and the “white paper” was the employed tool to manage this phenomenon. The policy concentrated positively on the education and the employment of immigrants (as well as healthcare and welfare), while it endorsed the freedom of ethnic/cultural identity. In housing, the “performance measures” determining progress towards closing the gap between immigrants and locals became (and still are) “tenancy, dwelling size relative to family size, age and technical condition of the dwelling, dwelling price, affordability, enrolment in the rent subsidy scheme” (Kullberg and Kulu-Glasgow, 2009, p. 41).

The general shift in housing and urban policies and practices in the 1990s as mentioned above (decentralization of decision-making, home-ownership promotion, new allocation strategy) is concurrent with the major change in the State’s immigrant integration policies from multi-cultural towards assimilationist. More emphasis was given to the cultural aspects of the immigrants’ relation to the Dutch society and stricter laws were applied regarding the permission of persons to enter and remain in the country (regarding Dutch language levels and knowledge of the Dutch history and culture). Especially in the 2000s “integration” into Dutch society is increasingly a major theme in the agenda of the authorities (“Integration Policy New Style”), built on the premise that the socio-economic status and the crime levels of the non-Western immigrants will improve if they are culturally closer to the Dutch archetype and social cohesion will advance; overall within the last few years, immigration and integration policies have merged (Bruquetas-Callejo et al., 2007).

The most prominent of such policies is the Civic Integration Act (*Inburgering*) of January 2007. This regulation forces all non-Western immigrants to take a test to prove their knowledge of the Dutch language and society (even the old immigrants who might have come in the 1960s). The “non-Westerness” of the persons to whom the test refers becomes evident by the fact that citizens of the EU, Switzerland, the US, Canada, Japan, South Korea, Lichtenstein, Monaco, Australia and New Zealand are excluded (Carrera and Wiesbrock, 2009)<sup>44</sup>. The Act essentially ‘photographs’ persons mainly with Turkish, Moroccan and Surinamese ethnic background in the Netherlands.

During the last ten years the housing of non-western immigrants has become an implicit target of the Housing Ministry’s integration scheme. The Big Cities Policy (following chapter) is a

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<sup>44</sup> “According to the explanatory memorandum to the Integration Abroad Act, this distinction on grounds of nationality is justified on the basis that countries whose citizens are exempt have a comparable level of economic, social and political development to EU countries. Therefore, the argument goes, with respect to their admission there is no risk of an inflow of migrants that will result in problems for integration or social cohesion.” (Carrera and Wiesbrock, 2009, p. 19)

major tool in this process and we are currently experiencing its possible impact in Rotterdam where non-Western immigrants are in fact de-segregating and de-concentrating the last eight years (Tzaninis, 2009). The BCP's restructuring and renovation plans are expected to improve the conditions which would lead to the socio-economic integration of the non-Westerners, for instance through home ownership and better quality of housing, although such a development remains to be discerned.

### **2.2.2 The objective of housing projects: from “ethnic” to “cultural” needs**

Even though housing policies in the Netherlands are not addressing ethnic groups anymore, we still find projects on a local level which seem to be based on ethnicity (such as the project *Mi Akoma Di Color* described in Annex 1). The seeming inconsistency between these practices and the national housing policies is explained by certain subtle aspects in these projects which, although technicalities in appearance, allow them to be developed unhindered. First, the projects are not addressing immigrants only; everyone is allowed to participate, be it in elderly communities or within innovative renovation plans. Second, they are not addressing immigrants, but cultural needs and characteristics. Built on the multi-cultural legacy of the past, these projects are developed in order to satisfy cultural sensitivities and not an institutionally organized ethnic group. Such groups remain unaddressed explicitly not only in the policies but, in practice, also in the local projects. Both the national and local housing authorities are converging in developing practices which aim to harmonize subtly the accommodation of immigrants. If there are immigrant residents in a neighbourhood which the local government has selected for renewal due to socio-economic degradation, then attention may be given to specific cultural needs and characteristics, which are pointed out by immigrant welfare organizations (e.g. Anand Joti) or tenant organizations. Nevertheless, since in the past two decades the mentality of housing policies at the neighbourhood level is related primarily to liveability, neighbourhood improvement and social mix, although it happens that the areas to be improved are often “ethnic concentrations”, the focus of the practices is based on low-income households and area regeneration is the main method.

### **2.2.3 The absence of immigrants in Dutch Urban Policy since the 1970s**

In the Netherlands there has been substantial policy-making activity regarding urban issues since before the 1970s, although immigrants were not involved in such schemes until long after. Before the 1970s, the main focus of policy-makers was to stimulate business activity in core areas of the cities by building banks and firms, a policy called Central Business District formation (Musterd and Ostendorf, 2008). During the 1970s however, the focus started moving towards achieving residential efficiency for the poor by improving their homes as well as providing funding and subsidies (van Kempen and Premius, 2002). Twice more there were alterations in the urban policies' focus, this time within the 1980s; at first the authorities decided to stimulate the urban economies that had lost ground because of the priority on social justice. The main aim was to attract multi-national companies that would re-invigorate the cities with economic growth. Nevertheless, once again in the end of the decade the government changed its views because it realized that social cohesion was deteriorating, especially in the urban neighbourhoods (Musterd and Ostendorf, 2008). At this point, immigrants started becoming a target group of urban policies, albeit implicitly. This is the last,

and current, phase of urban policies in the Netherlands which started around the beginning of the 1990s. The Ministry of Housing concluded that the housing demand in quantity was met in the Netherlands and that there was need for more quality in housing as well as reallocation of subsidies; this policy was named the Big Cities Policy (van der Veer and Schuiling, 2005).

The Big Cities Policy (BCP) has been active since 1994 and has taken off in a premise different to the previous policies; this time the *neighbourhood* was considered the key element on which integrated interventions must be made<sup>45</sup>. Such a policy is largely based on the interaction between the social cohesion and integration policy sector and the social housing sector. Starting as area-based, it addressed the social and ethnic composition of neighbourhoods, with the assumption that “disadvantaged neighbourhoods are segregated neighbourhoods, which should become desegregated and ‘restructured’, first physically, after which social and ethnic mix is expected to follow” (Musterd and Ostendorf, 2008, p. 81). Initially the physical intervention signified the demolition of social dwellings and the construction of new homes which would be subsequently privately owned by persons with middle and high incomes, generating an income mix. The focus of the policy eventually shifted from being area-based to include individuals (Van Gent, Musterd and Ostendorf, 2009). Overall the BCP’s goals have been to reduce the number of persons with inadequate education levels, integration problems, crime and unsafe environments, tackle high unemployment rates, reduce out-migration of the dwindling middle class and support economic vitality within neighbourhoods (Musterd and Ostendorf, 2008).

Although ethnic groups are not addressed explicitly in the BCP, their socio-economic integration is a major (implicit) objective; the policy’s assumption, concurrently to the public debate, is that employment and income levels will be improved with the development of ethnically desegregated and physically renovated neighbourhoods (Dekker and van Kempen, 2004). All these aspects fall within the *social cohesion* scheme and immigrants are involved on the basis of their income levels. The policy is currently applied in two subsequent, interdependent programmes: the 56-neighbourhood programme since 2003 (*56-wijkenaanpak*) and the 40-neighbourhood programme since 2007 (*De veertig wijken van Vogelaar*), in the framework of which forty urban areas have been selected to be restructured and renovated. It should be noted that these forty areas are not necessarily ethnic enclaves; e.g. in Rotterdam not more than half of the selected neighbourhoods have a substantial non-Western population (Tzaninis, 2009).

In Ouwehand and Van Daalen (2002, p. 57) we find the objectives for restructuring and new construction in the National Housing Agreement 2001–2005 (signed by the Secretary of State, Aedes, the VNG and the Nederlandse Woonbond) and the interventions with renewal activities:

- Demolition of 20,000 dwellings per year;
- Merging of 16,000 small housing units into 8,000 housing units;
- Improvement of 65,000 social rental dwellings per year;

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<sup>45</sup> The BCP is “integrative, area-based, governance oriented, and based on contracts” (Dekker and Van Kempen, 2004, p. 109).

- New construction of 100,000 dwellings per year, 25,000 of which to be social rental dwellings;
- Sale of social rental dwellings (here the parties are not in agreement with respect to the figures; the Secretary of State aims for 50,000 dwellings per year to be sold to sitting tenants, but Aedes and the VNG do not subscribe to these figures);
- Investments in sustainable construction;
- Investments by the housing associations in the quality of the residential environment.

Renewal activities (Ouweland and Van Daalen, 2002, p. 58) include:

- Demolition of the worst parts of the housing stock;
- New construction, in particular semi-detached or single-family dwellings for the middle and higher income groups, but including new construction for the elderly for example;
- Renovation and sometimes amalgamation of existing dwellings;
- Sale of some of the dwellings to meet the demand for owner-occupied housing, but also to obtain the finances to be able to pay for other investments;
- Development and maintenance of a part of the buildings stock with only very limited adaptations;
- Redesign of the public space;
- In the social sphere:
  - Extra education programmes;
  - Better guidance of the long-term unemployed into work;
  - Language lessons for ethnic minority residents in the neighbourhood;
  - Extra activities for young people in terms of sports, safe playing on the street, homework clubs and computer opportunities;
  - Better care services for elderly residents in the neighbourhood.

#### **2.2.4 The accommodation of migrants from the former colonies**

In the 1950s and 1960s, when the Netherlands received persons from former colonies, the Dutch State formulated certain housing schemes to accommodate them. On the one hand, many Dutch-Indonesian repatriates were accommodated in camps and boarding houses; on the other hand, the Moluccans were inhabiting army barracks and monasteries, while the State was searching for ways to provide both groups with more appropriate dwellings. In the following decade, a large number of Surinamese immigrants (after the independence of Suriname), and a smaller population of Antilleans, were provided with new municipal buildings as residence. This preferential housing scheme (*Regeling Rijksvoorkeurswoningen*) took place between 1975 and 1985, and allocated houses to the newly arrived Surinamese and Antillean persons; the scheme's aim was to distribute the ethnic minorities throughout the country (Gisjberts and Dagevos, 2007) and was abandoned formally in 1995.

#### **2.2.5 The guest-workers of the 1960s and 1970s**

Ethnic-specific housing policies were absent in the case of the guest-workers of the 1960s and 1970s. While still being “guest-workers” they were residing in hostels, boarding houses and

private rooms in crowded conditions in order to save money. After deciding to remain in the Netherlands and bring their families, however, they turned to the mainstream housing market. In fact, in 1981 all legally residing aliens were given access to social housing for the first time (Bruquetas-Callejo et al., 2005).

Despite the change in the access regime of the social housing sector, the labour migrants were dealing with certain serious problems. A prominent example is the vicious circle of migrants being obliged to have appropriately large houses in order for their family to be allowed to come and stay in the Netherlands, while large social houses were not provided to single migrants before their family had registered in the municipality. The effect of such a circle was that migrants were forced to buy a house of low quality during an expensive period (1970s) and consequently many ended with negative equity problems after losing their jobs in the early 1980s due to the recession (Kullberg and Kulu-Glasgow, 2009). This phenomenon seemed to be setting the foundations for future housing problems.

During the 1980s, and after the aforementioned 1981 law which allowed them access to social housing, non-Western immigrants in the Netherlands (mainly Turkish and Moroccans) managed to increasingly rent in the social housing sector in the urban centers by acquiring better information. Eventually, they were provided with better access in allocation schemes and, in many cases, the cheap houses they were forced to buy in 1970s (as described above) were bought back by local governments. Even though these purchases were intended to facilitate the improvement of the migrants' housing career, the problem was not solved. Being homeowners no more, they could either turn to renewed, more expensive, social housing or settle for cheaper, older social dwellings. Predominantly they turned to the latter, becoming often "urban renewal nomads", moving from one cheap district to another because of constant restructuring implementation (Kullberg and Kulu-Glasgow, 2009, p. 52).

#### **2.2.6 Accommodation plans for contemporary migration: Eastern European immigrants**

Recently, housing plans have been developed regarding temporary workers from Eastern Europe (mainly Polish persons, but also Bulgarians and Romanians, employed in agriculture and construction). In this case the interaction between housing and immigration policies is manifest in local projects which aim at accommodating the incoming workers; due to initial complaints of the locals caused by the migrants' poor housing conditions, the municipalities decided to intervene and charged the employment agencies with providing the workers with decent accommodation (Senior policy advisor in Housing, Neighbourhoods and Integration of the Ministry of Housing, personal interview, 23 December 2009). Buildings formerly used for instance as monasteries and hotels were restructured in order to accommodate several immigrants. This practice is recent and ongoing and, in combination with a basic course in the Dutch language, aims to allow the workers to stay temporarily in decent housing without any serious conflict with the locals. Overall there is no *national* policy regarding the recruitment and accommodation of temporary labour immigrants but instead small scale initiatives which seek to minimize the potential problems which may emerge with the influx of immigrants from Eastern Europe (we should note that Bulgarian and Romanian immigrants still need to produce a work permit to be able to come to the Netherlands).

Unfortunately, the working and living conditions of temporary migrants in the Netherlands have been far from ideal. There have been incidents when tens of persons were kept in small,

crowded rooms while others have been living in campsites and caravans. In addition, these migrants often work for more than 12 hours a day, while their treatment by the employers can be appalling (very low salaries, no tangible labour rights like the ability to strike). The Dutch State has generally reacted to this predicament, either through harsher immigration (and deportation) laws or stricter controls on employers (more frequent inspections and higher fines). The influx of Eastern European persons is slowly decreasing and, as we discussed, there are efforts to regulate the accommodation of the ones who are already working there.

### **2.2.7 Inter-ethnic competition on social housing resources and reaction to the sparse cases of conflict**

In the Netherlands there is no evidence of severe competition for access to housing between ethnic groups. The Dutch system allows a rather open access to social housing for everyone (especially the prioritized low-income households, which often means non-Western immigrant households) and the State is quick to react to cases in need of intervention (e.g. as stated the Ministry has appointed employers and HAs to provide housing for Eastern European temporary workers during the past years). In addition, the post-war housing shortage has been dealt with and currently most of the policy-making is aimed at improving problematic neighbourhoods and developing a social mix. Although there are occasions of discrimination by landlords and HAs (discussed in Section 2.3.3.1), they are limited and do not reflect a general trend in housing practices.

In addition, the conflict between ethnic groups is rather limited; the usually insignificant contact between neighbours and the Dutch legacy of tolerance render inter-ethnic conflict highly unlikely. The few instances of such conflict are manifest in the tensions between Dutch elder persons and young second-generation immigrants (mainly of Moroccan background).

A form of conflict however is related to everyday irritations and nuisances in (mostly densely populated) neighborhoods. This phenomenon is common in the Dutch cities; in areas where there is minimal contact between neighbours, where households are large and sound insulation is poor, there are tensions between residents, predominantly caused by noise. Every resident however can file complaints with the relevant HA who, as stated above, become mediators in cooperation with the police and welfare organizations. The Housing Associations encourage the residents to resolve the conflicts themselves, mainly by being in direct contact with each other. An interesting example of such a strategy has been by the HA *De Key* in the mid-1990s; the tenants themselves made and signed specific rules concerning the use of the buildings' entrances and galleries. This experiment spread around Amsterdam and generated the project *Prettig Wonen doen wij zo* ("we live nicely like this") which is ongoing today and refers mainly to bicycle parking spaces, noise, cleanliness and tidiness. These rules are signed together with the house contract by future residents (Ouweland and Van Daalen, 2002).

### **2.3. The main actors: an atypical public–private partnership**

The uniqueness of the Dutch social housing system extends also to the organizations which comprise it (and to how numerous they are). While all policies (referring to all social dwellings in the realm) are formulated at the national level and all plans are subsidized by the government (Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment/*VROM*), their

application proceeds to a complicated network of profit/non-profit, public/private organizations.

It should be noted that the scope of social housing measures which relate to immigrants is mainly local (and often regional as well). Although there are national housing policies, combining renovation, renewal and socio-economic integration and cohesion, they do not involve immigrants directly; the local organizations are given substantial autonomy in formulating interventions. Most practices are applied regionally and locally, on a level where the HAs and the municipalities are able to accommodate the beneficiaries efficiently, and react (and *pro-act*) to issues which emerge.

### **2.3.1 The role of the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment**

The Ministry's outspoken objectives are "sustainable development, diversity and social justice". In the field of spatial planning there are certain particular aims: a. spatial diversity between urban and rural areas, b. economic and spatial functionality, namely connecting work and residence and c. cultural diversity, a seeming paradox which has been explained by our earlier discussion concerning the broad definition of "cultural needs" by Dutch policies<sup>46</sup>. These tasks are performed predominantly through renewal and regeneration, projects which are monitored by the Ministry and delegated to the regional and local actors.

Even though no ethnic minority is a target group of housing policy, the Ministry's aim on the neighbourhood level is the social integration of old and young, poor and rich, and natives and immigrants. Its basic method is through contact between people in these categories and a major scheme the Ministry has adopted is the Space for Contact subsidy (*Ruimte voor Contact*) which finances activities on a local level promoting contact between persons of different ethnic background. As described in the beginning of our report, the government's focus has been the problematic neighbourhoods since 1994 and currently there are 40 areas around the Netherlands which are being "renewed". Through this activity, all their residents, including immigrants, are affected.

An additional structural reason why housing schemes are rarely addressed to migrants is due to certain political and institutional characteristics of the Dutch administration which cause bureaucratic complications. On the one hand, the Ministry of Housing (*VROM*) is an advocate of universal policies and not target-specific practices (generally Dutch social policies are *universal*, meaning that they address all the segments of the population<sup>47</sup>); on the other hand it has been mainly a ministry of *construction*, whereas minority issues were assigned to the Ministry of Welfare, as part of the "care" scheme (Kullberg and Kulu-Glasgow, 2009), which might explain the importance placed on the role of the Housing Associations in the application of de-segregation policies. These ramifications caused the immigrants to be left generally to their own house-hunting ability.

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<sup>46</sup> This objective may also refer to the VROM's attempts to make neighbourhoods more functionally mixed and diverse as mentioned in their paper on public space (VROM, 2000).

<sup>47</sup> This often leads to paradoxical phenomena such as finding high-income families living in cheap social housing (25% of the high-income population segment of Amsterdam lives in social housing, see Van der Veer and Schuiling, 2005).

### 2.3.2 The local governments: coordinators of the regeneration projects

For all urban housing projects the first parties which develop the planning are the local governments. Before the 1990s, they were directed in every detail by the national government in applying national policies. In fact, a substantial amount of Housing Associations belonged to the municipalities but the number has been diminishing constantly, especially in the 1990s (Table 3). With the new mentality of the national authorities in housing policies (decentralization and privatization) since the mid-1990s, local governments have retained substantial freedom in applying the Ministry's statutory rules, while they design regional, urban and neighbourhood plans, they manage public space, services and safety and they initiate and direct the neighbourhood renewal. Although the "hands-on" part of the projects is assigned to the Housing Associations, the municipal councils have the role of stimulating and orchestrating urban regeneration in Dutch cities. Nevertheless, local welfare officials, social workers and even the police have important roles in urban renewal, and they are expected to develop assertive initiatives.

Although there are no initiatives by local councils in housing particularly addressed to ethnic groups, there are levels of collaboration with the HAs in executing projects which may include immigrants. Of course there are a few HAs which *belong* to municipalities and may become platforms for relevant initiatives, but they are very limited in number (Table 3). In general, the local councils develop studies and formulate plans (mainly within the framework of urban regeneration) which are then passed to partners and experts for execution; these plans may be related to the general urban regeneration scheme (not addressing immigrants in an outspoken manner) or local initiatives such as appointing the employers to provide housing for the temporary foreign workers (as we have discussed already).

**Table 3 - Number of municipal-owned housing associations and private, non-profit housing associations between 1990 and 2000 in the Netherlands (Priemus, 2003: 332)**

	Housing associations					Municipal companies				
	Number	Housing stock X 1000	New construction X 1000	Acquisitions X 1000	Divestments X 1000	Number	Housing stock X 1000	New construction X 1000	Acquisitions X 1000	Divestments X 1000
1990	824	1854	27.7	11.9	2.1	213	315	2.6	1.1	1.8
1991	812	1909	22.0	7.2	2.8	204	303	2.7	2.4	2.3
1992	805	1950	24.7	5.1	3.0	188	287	1.9	0.9	0.9
1993	795	2046	22.2	10.9	6.4	168	218	2.0	1.0	2.3
1994	793	2167	23.6	7.8	8.6	125	122	1.1	0.3	1.1
1995	774	2265	25.5	10.4	11.4	81	44	0.4	0.4	0.5
1996	805	2333	30.4	7.5	17.1	59	32	0.2	0.0	0.7
1997	786	2348	24.4	2.8	22.4	44	24	0.2	0.0	1.0
1998	762	2353	19.5	2.5	22.6	30	19	0.1	0.0	0.4
1999	724	2362	16.5	3.2	21.5	24	14	0.0	0.0	0.3
2000	701	2464	14.7	4.9	14.4	–	–	–	–	–

Source: CBS/DGVH processing, Ministerie van VROM, 1999b, p.28; Ministerie van VROM, 2002, p. 102.

### **2.3.3 The Dutch Housing Association: the representative and steward of the social housing policies**

The Housing Associations have a rather unique place in the housing regime in the Netherlands. Although in legal terms they still relate to the Housing Act of 1901, they have evolved into rich and extremely active organizations. By the 1960s, their place in Dutch society was established with the Housing Act of 1965 which allowed the HAs to build their own capital and granted them prominence in building social houses (Ouweland and Van Daalen, 2002, p. 12). After contributing to the elimination of the post-war housing shortage, they became active in urban renewal (following Dutch policies) in the 1970s and 1980s. While still mainly managing the social stock, HAs were participating increasingly in urban renewal projects, until the 1990s when they assumed primacy in most aspects. In 1995 there was a mutual cancellation of the State loans which the housing associations still had to repay and the subsidies they still had to receive<sup>48</sup>.

Over the last fifteen years the operation and the status of the HAs have changed considerably (Table 4). Being more independent from the authorities has made them more professional and more market-oriented. In addition, as of late, the pressure on the housing market because of high demand has granted them a strong position in negotiating a response to that pressure. In fact there is concern that HAs have become barely accountable to the government and that they are “disciplined” from the market instead of the authorities (Boelhouwer, 2007). Nevertheless, they remain bound to the rent control of the State and they have to invest in low-profit activities, such as building low-rent dwellings. Moreover, their financial management is evaluated by the Central Housing Fund (CFV), while national consultation and negotiations on policy take place with the trade body AEDS (a branch federation for social housing organisations). If deemed necessary following the evaluation, the government might “give compulsory directives to the associations or appoint a supervisor” (Dieleman, 1999 p. 255).

In Dieleman (1999, p. 255) we find the “five accountability themes that were specified in the Decree of 1993” regarding the duties of HAs:

- provide housing for those unable or insufficiently able to procure suitable housing for themselves;
- monitor dwellings under construction as well as improvements and maintenance of dwellings;
- involve tenants in management;
- adopt a financial policy which will safeguard the continuity of the institution in the long run;
- promote the quality of life in residential neighbourhoods and housing estates.”

By the end of the 1990s the role of the HAs had been altered on core issues (Table 4). Following the current strategy of home-ownership promotion by the VROM (explained in Section 2.1), the HAs have been selling social houses in order also to cover their own expenses, a practice which has decreased the social housing stock (Table 2) and thus reduced the number of HAs, (which have been merging constantly since the new regime).

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<sup>48</sup> The agreements were: the Decree on the Subsidized Rented Sector (BBSH) of 1993, the Dwelling-linked Subsidies Order (BWS) and the “grossing and balancing” agreement of 1995.

**Table 4. The changing role of Housing Associations**

1980	1998
Guardians of national social housing stock	Independent landlords of (social) housing
Moderate rents for good quality housing	Rents near market level
Little competition for middle incomes	Middle incomes leave sector for owner-occupation
Expansion of stock	Dwindling role

Source: Dieleman, 1999, p. 257

Nonetheless HAs remain the most important actors in housing and they are currently undertaking the largest part of the development of urban renewal and restructuring, as well as promoting “social participation” (Aedes, 2007). Although the policies address “special attention groups such as the elderly, physically disabled and asylum-seekers...the primary attention...is given to ‘the target group’—people with a low income” (Aedes, 2007, p. 12). The former “attention” categories are treated with particular strategies according to their special needs; the immigrants, as we have discussed, are addressed through their cultural features and generally fall into the latter category (low income) as targets. As there is no quota on ethnic groups however, the only method left is indirect and positive, namely attracting the middle-class into poorer neighbourhoods (van Heelsum, 2007). As explained above, social mix is the most critical objective of national policy and the HAs are responsible for managing it. In short, the two main tasks of the HAs are: “the primary allocation of regulated rented housing to targeted income groups and investment in housebuilding and restructuring” (Boelhauer, 2007, p. 386).

**2.3.3.1 Initiatives of the Housing Associations: rent discounts, tenant participation, needs of the elderly**

Within the aforementioned tasks the Housing Associations occasionally develop their own initiatives. The traditional methods for facilitating access to housing is by establishing low rent levels and discounts for house purchases for low-income households. Apart from these common strategies, however, there are other activities which are more innovative and original. Often the participation of tenants is encouraged and pursued in the development of projects. Future residents are consulted regarding the building design and the public spaces, and their cultural needs are considered (a prominent example is the aforementioned *Mi Akoma Di Color* project by the HA Rochdale in Bijlmermeer, Amsterdam, see Annex 1). Furthermore, conflicts between neighbours, most commonly caused by sound nuisance, the use of abusive language and threats is often mediated by the HAs<sup>49</sup> and neighbourhood concierges and caretakers who are often employed by the HAs (Ouwehand and Van Daalen, 2002).

Other initiatives of the Housing Associations involve the elderly. Since the population is becoming increasingly aged, considerations regarding the older segments of society have led the HAs to establish “life-cycle” homes, namely modifiable dwellings in which the elder inhabitants are supposed to be able to live with ease (e.g. access with elevators, facilities which allow wheelchair use). There are particular cases where elderly migrants are

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<sup>49</sup> An interesting recent practice by Eigen Haard in Amsterdam-West is teaching slang words to elderly residents (mainly native Dutch) in order to promote contact with youngsters (including a lot of second-generation immigrants).

accommodated according to their current (cultural) needs (such as the *De Tuinen* project, see Annex 1). Due to lower incomes and more health problems than the native Dutch, elderly migrants often need to be accommodated in a care institution; such a scenario is not favoured however because of their poor language levels and, because of their cultural background, their disagreement with such establishments. A solution has been the development of sheltered housing clusters which are socially rented independent dwellings with some shared rooms and facilities, where the residents might help each other if needed (Ouwehand and Van Daalen, 2002). Such projects are spread throughout the country and have been fairly successful in managing the cultural needs of elderly members of ethnic groups (*Wi Makandra* and *Woongroep Andalus* –elderly communities of Turkish- and Moroccan-Dutch respectively, see Annex 1).

### **2.3.3.2 Lack of ethnic Housing Associations**

There has never been a HA which addresses migrants explicitly and exclusively. In certain instances the possibility of creating such an organization was discussed but it never really materialized. In the 1970s, a Dutch foreign workers organization (LSOBA) negotiated with the Ministry such a prospect but then decided against it, and instead exercised pressure on the existing HAs. In 1983, during the formulation of the “White Paper” on minorities (Section 2.2.1), the issue was raised anew; however the official rhetoric regarded separate ethnic HAs as difficult to run in a “cost-effective way” (Kullberg and Kulu-Glasgow, 2009, p. 55). In the 1990s, the new regime of independence in the financial relationship between the State and the HAs, made it even more difficult for such initiatives to be developed *de novo*. While the existing HAs could use their financial reserves to continue their operation, the lack of any governmental subsidy meant that the creation of a new HA would need fresh capital in order to buy and renovate houses. The motivation for investing a considerable amount in order to create a non-profit organization is virtually zero.

It is worth noting that Dutch social life had a tradition until the 1960s of being organized in *pillars* (*verzuiling*), a practice which established the institutionalized segregation of the population. There were four major pillars, the Catholic, the Protestant, the social-democratic and the liberal pillars, all with their own newspapers, parties, unions, broadcasts, schools, hospitals and even Housing Associations. Although such a background seems a suitable setting for the development of an immigrant pillar (e.g. Muslim), by the time the guestworkers were settling in the Netherlands, the pillarisation scheme had been largely abandoned; they had simply arrived “too late” (Rath et al., 1999).

Before the changes in the Housing Associations’ subsidy scheme of the 1990s, there were certain additional structural reasons which obstructed the creation of immigrant housing associations (apart from the lack of a pillarised environment). In order for an organization to receive loans from the government to build/buy houses, and subsidies to manage them, it would have to be approved by the “admission committee” (*Adviescommissie Toelating Woningcorporaties*). The members of this committee were initially one from the Ministry and two from umbrella organizations of HAs (Social-Democrat and Christian), and in the 1990s one was added from the Association of Netherlands Municipalities (*Vereniging van Nederlandse Gemeenten*) and one from tenant groups (Kullberg and Kulu-Glasgow, 2009). Before the 1990s especially, the interest of the admission committee’s members was to

address immigrant housing issues through the existing HAs. The Ministry of Housing had established a smooth cooperation with the two pre-1990 existing pillar/umbrella organizations and the introduction of a third (ethnic) pillar would complicate this cooperation. Similarly, the two organizations were representing all the HAs and had no motivation to allow the creation of a third pillar in social housing, making the creation of an alternative (ethnic) organization highly unlikely.

#### **2.3.4 Tenants and Tenant Associations**

The residents of rented social houses comprise a pressure group which can often influence the plans of the HAs. Primarily, individual tenants are protected by regulations which prevent the (private) landlords from evicting them (except when the rent is not paid or nuisances are caused). When the landlord is an HA, there is a “complaints” department which can be addressed by tenants. In addition, because of the changes in the operation of HAs (see Section 2.3.3), their strategy is currently more market-oriented; this mentality makes them more attentive to their customers’ needs, through better and quicker service (Ouwehand and Van Daalen, 2002). Lastly, the participation of residents in the development of projects has been encouraged in recent years (See Section 2.3.3.1). In such cases they are usually represented by a body of tenants of the specific neighbourhood/complex.

Alternatively, there are several collective tenant associations which were set up mainly in the 1970s. These bodies became a considerable balancing pressure group in cases where wide house demolitions and alterations were being developed or rent increases were materializing. In general these organizations maintain the collective rights of tenants and are a vital part of the housing realm (in fact the annual rent adjustment is negotiated between the national tenants’ association (*Woonbond*) and the Housing Associations, see Priemus, 2003). Every member of the tenant associations contributes a fee and is then entitled to professional help for any relevant issues. The outlines of the relationship between landlords (including HAs) and tenants were established in 1998 with the Consultation Act (*Overlegwet*): a. Recognition of tenants’ organizations, b. Right of information and consultation, c. Right of tenant organizations to advise and consent and d. Financial contribution of the landlord to the tenants’ organizations.

The tenants’ organizations are, unsurprisingly, colour-blind. Ethnic background is not considered relevant and there are no special distinctions for immigrants. Given that, as discussed earlier, the Dutch housing law is generally “tenant-friendly”, especially in the social sector where most non-Western labour migrants are accommodated, the urgency of (collective) action by ethnic groups is rather limited. The legal framework and the practice by the HAs are already attentive enough to protect the individuals who lack information and command poor language skills. Moreover, although one may argue that the non-Western mentality for managing neighbourhood matters is to adhere to informal channels (considering that the Dutch tenants’ associations are formed in an institutionalized and less traditional way see Ouwehand and Van Daalen, 2002), the aforementioned framework is protective enough, while there are efforts by the HAs to hold meetings at the local level in order to motivate the non-Western persons to participate in developing and preserving their interests as tenants.

### **2.3.5 Other non-profit actors**

The majority of Dutch housing projects are developed in cooperation with an extensive array of complementary organizations. Among these there are immigrant welfare organizations which provide information and arrange socio-cultural activities: Anand Joti is an organization founded in 1989, addressing the Hindustani Surinamese Dutch of Amsterdam with a focus on health issues (such as dealing with diabetes, obesity, etc). In addition it organizes cultural activities and even participates in elderly community projects, which are apartments planned by HAs, housing older migrants. Its staff consists only of volunteers and it does not receive any funding. Rukun Budi Utama is another such organization addressing Surinamese Dutch of Indonesian Javanese descent in The Hague. Similar to Anand Joti, this establishment plans socio-cultural activities (dancing, music) and advocates for Surinamese cultural needs when building communal residences for the elderly. Moreover, this organization places an emphasis on young persons and promotes Indonesian cultural traits. These two organizations are cases where the planned urban renewal by local governments is enriched with cultural aspects and the satisfaction of cultural needs; after a neighbourhood with e.g. Hindustani Surinamese is selected in Amsterdam, collaboration between Anand Joti and the authorities can prove invaluable in accommodating them accordingly.

Apart from these foundations, there are research institutes which develop ideas for projects, such as the SEV, an organization funded by the Ministry which performs several initiatives promoting social cohesion; the FGW, an association developing ideas for building communities for the elderly—native and immigrants; the SVN, a financial organization which manages funds and loans with low interest for buying a house; and the Agentschap NL, a government agency which promotes sustainability, innovation, international business and cooperation, and provides subsidies for buying a house<sup>50</sup>.

### **2.3.6 Profit actors: professionals, employment agencies and estate managers**

Several different parties are involved within the framework of urban renewal of the last decades. There are certain experts who are employed by the authorities such as architects, contractors, property developers and planning researchers complementing the projects in development. In addition, as described earlier, regarding the recent temporary migrants from Eastern Europe, the employment agencies (agriculture and construction) are expected to provide housing themselves (in collaboration with the local councils). This recent scheme is based on the Collective Agreement for Temporary Employees 2009–2014 (ABU Collective Agreement), an agreement between the employers' organizations and the trade unions determining the rights and obligations of the parties involved. The agencies are instructed, when providing accommodation, to ensure that the dwellings are large enough (minimum 10 m<sup>2</sup>), at a realistic cost, not profit-based, with sufficient sanitary, cooking and heating facilities, etc. Overall the agreement is fairly protective of the workers' welfare and housing conditions although it is very recent and the success of its application remains to be seen.

Lastly, there are estate agents who manage the remainder of the housing stock (except social houses and privately owned dwellings). Their freedom of operation has always been fairly

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<sup>50</sup> This organization is the result of a merger of Senternovem (the former provider of purchase subsidies) and two other actors in 2010.

limited compared with other European countries considering the characteristics of land use and housing in the Netherlands. As explained in detail earlier, the social housing stock is large and the regulations cover most aspects. Furthermore, due to limited suitable land (an increasing trend in Europe, see Dornette and van Veen, 2005), there is firm control by the State in its utilization; in Amsterdam for example most of the land has belonged to the municipality since 1896, and it is leased to the HAs<sup>51</sup> or other interested parties (Policy advisor of the Social Housing Federation of Amsterdam, personal interview, 13 November 2009).

In general, the role of private actors in Dutch housing has not gone through substantial changes. Actually, cooperation between public and private actors in urban renewal has always been relatively difficult due to “the image and the unclearness about the dedication, operating procedures, and capacity of all the different private parties”<sup>52</sup>. Their market-based priorities hinder the development of socially oriented initiatives which are not necessarily financially beneficial for them.

## 2.4. Conclusions

Even though the Dutch State has made efforts to eliminate injustice in housing, there have been instances of discriminatory practices. Since the abolition of references to ethnic background in any official formulation in housing policy in the 1980s, policies have been universal; after the judicial system deemed ethnic-targeting practices discriminatory, the only basis on which housing policies are generated is socio-economic status<sup>53</sup> (Gisjberts and Dagevos, 2007). In fact the mentality of the housing policy is that everyone *should* have equal rights to housing and the assurance that everyone in fact *does* have equal rights (PhD fellow in the UvA, researching neighbourhoods and social mobility of 2nd generation migrants, personal interview, 11 November 2009). Nevertheless, in practice the housing allocation was often left to the discretion of the Housing Associations which sometimes exhibited a discriminatory attitude<sup>54</sup>. By the end of the 1980s the HAs were categorizing certain tenants based on the potential problems which may be caused in a neighbourhood when they move in. This strategy, essentially “photographing” non-Western immigrants, was justified by the “more even distribution—more stable neighbourhoods” argument, which was becoming gradually more popular (Kullberg and Kulu-Glasgow, 2009). The implication of such a practice has been the danger of discrimination by the HAs when allocating social houses. Despite the recent major shift in the strategy of integration policies, minorities and ethnic background have not been addressed explicitly with regard to housing. There are certain terms which are increasingly used in the public discourse as classifications of ‘ethnic’ origin such as *allochton*, *new-dutch*, and even *first* and *second generation*, but they are never used in the

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<sup>51</sup> The objective of the lease-hold system is to benefit the whole city from land use through the lessee’s ground rent. In addition it allows control of the land use so that planning and renewal can be developed without complications (Dornette and van Veen, 2005).

<sup>52</sup> *Process and Organizations* [http://www.kei-centrum.nl/view.cfm?page\\_id=2357](http://www.kei-centrum.nl/view.cfm?page_id=2357)

<sup>53</sup> The only exception is persons with refugee status who are referred to with their ethnic background (Gisjberts and Dagevos, 2007).

<sup>54</sup> One case reached the court when in 1982 a Turkish migrant accused an HA of discrimination given that in five years it had allocated only one foreign household (Kullberg and Kulu-Glasgow, 2009).

formulation of political decisions. In fact, non-discrimination is established constitutionally and characterization based on ethnicity is avoided explicitly. As we discussed, there have been instances of discrimination in the past caused by discretionary allocation practices. This predicament however was mostly addressed by the universal choice-based practices and nowadays is considered largely resolved; consequently policies are not formulated in order to combat it. In addition, given the size of social housing in the Netherlands, the access to decent housing by immigrants who are not high on the socio-economic ladder has always been relatively easy; after the post-WWII policy against “shortage”, Dutch housing has been adequate in amount.

Of course possible inadequacy in dwellings is not the only potential issue of a housing system. Currently there is a shift of mentality in the urban policies which *implicitly* address immigrants. Given that the prominence of multi-culturalism and social pluralism in the Netherlands is almost gone, the promotion of immigrant integration and social cohesion has been gaining dominance increasingly in the public discourse and policies. The former *pillars* (described above), forms of institutionalized positive segregation several decades ago, and their legacy, an inherent *pillarization* of social life until recently, have been replaced by an emphasis in “Dutchness” and “Dutch” values, and social cohesion.

In particular, over the past two decades the mentality of housing policies has been related primarily to liveability, neighbourhood improvement and social mix. It happens that the areas to be improved are often “ethnic concentrations”, but the focus of the practices is based on low-income households and area regeneration is their main method. Even though immigrants are not targeted, there are frequently initiatives which are attentive to cultural needs and are developed with the participation of the beneficiaries; a distinctive example (the aforementioned *Mi Akoma Di Color*, see Annex 1) is in the area Bijlmermeer, where neighbourhoods were designed according to the (mostly non-native Dutch) future residents’ wishes. Another case are communal houses built for elderly immigrants, this time with attention to aging as well as cultural needs.

The two main aspects occupying Dutch policy-makers in housing of late years are the quality of houses and home-ownership. The former is promoted through urban regeneration and restructuring, extending commonly to areas where immigrants are present. The latter is considered an element of climbing upwards on the social ladder and the aim of the authorities is for immigrants to own dwellings in a relatively distributed fashion across the urban centers, in areas that are renewed and socially and ethnically mixed.

## CHAPTER 3. SOCIAL HOUSING AND ETHNIC MINORITIES IN FRANCE

Ilaria Casillo

### **Introduction**

Since the end of the nineteenth century France has been adopting social housing policies in order to answer housing problems due to the effects of industrialization and urbanisation. Since then, France has been taking increasingly complex and innovative measures compared with other European countries. Nevertheless, France is far from being considered a good example in Europe. The main feature of French social housing policies currently consists of the centrality of the private actor, especially made up of associations, as well as the predominance of the rationale of a solution instead of one based on the acknowledgment of a problem (discrimination in housing access, shortage of housing stock, etc.). In particular, it is a rationale which is confined to the *sic et simpliciter* solution without considering the presence of a problem or of a series of problems. In the French approach the hypothesis is that the prevailing solution to problems can be found by considering them only partially (and this makes the solution itself less effective). For example, the category of immigrant, or the ethnic *mixité*, are words and categories which have never been mentioned or clearly taken into consideration. The immigrant is included in the more general category of weak social class or social class at risk without recognition of any specificity (for example, his/her residential mobility). The problem of the *mixité* is that while it is written social *mixité*, it is read ethnic *mixité*. As a consequence, solutions that are put into practice concern problems which are made explicit only partially. If, on the contrary, there were a prevalence of acknowledging other kinds of issues (like the existence of an immigrant audience before the issue of ethnic discrimination) solutions would be more effective.

In this chapter, we will first analyse the main changes that have occurred in French social housing policies. In the second section, we will focus on immigrant social housing policies and measures, and observe how immigrants gain access only to the more marginal and degraded residential stock, finding more difficulties than the natives, especially in access to public housing.

As we will observe in the third section, the associative actor has an important role in counterbalancing the institutional absence while managing the problem of unequal access to social housing. In the end, we will try to outline the French case within the broader and complex European framework.

### **3.1. Main trends and changes in French social housing policies. An approach based on refuse of (ethnic) communities needs.**

#### **3.1.1 One problem, one solution**

French social housing policies were born in the nineteenth century with the purpose of fighting poor housing health and to make the living conditions inside them more decorous<sup>55</sup>. Once the main hygienic and sanitary difficulties were solved, the State drew back, leaving the *de facto* management in the hands of the market and to the *patrons éclairés* of the big factories. The latter, in particular, had had a major role until the 1930s, in creating or funding houses (or even whole neighbourhoods) for the working class of their factories, even if with more or less ambiguous reasons<sup>56</sup>. This situation remained until the years after the Second World War when the State seemed to concentrate on economic and industrial rebirth rather than on real reconstruction. During these years France attracted a huge number of immigrant workers from other European countries (like Italy and Portugal, for example), and also from the Maghreb, especially Algeria, who increased the number of *mal logés* (badly accommodated) people in the country.

From 1950s on, the State became the main actor in the issue of social housing, building many houses and providing more than 60% of the unhealthy housing stock with minimum comfort. It was a matter of accommodating manpower that worked in the reconstruction and industrialisation of France. These were the years of the *Cités de transit* (1960) intended to help immigrants get used to urban life styles and behaviours and go from a community-based to an individualistic-based organisation (Chiaro, 2009). They are the years of *Sonacotral* (1956, *Société Nationale de Construction pour les Travailleurs originaires d'Algérie—National Building Society for Algerian Workers*) created to eliminate the *bidonvilles* and makeshift camps which grew at the edge of the biggest French cities. These are the years of the 1957 Framework Act which, for the first time and simultaneously to the building of flats, took into consideration the creation of public installations and the associated equipment and which established the building of 300 000 flats per year (mainly for rental purposes). Until the end of the 1960s French housing policies were merely based on the building of flats and on its funding.

#### **3.1.2 No different people, no different problem, no different solution**

In the 1960s a new phase began. On one hand this meant the improvement of housing measures and from the other it represents a standstill of the traditional policies for the building of new flats. In 1997 the APL - *Aide Personnalisée au Logement* (Personalised Help for Housing) was inaugurated. It was based on direct funding to individuals (buyers or renters). Every year the French State set a share of grant funding which represented one line in the national budget (about 1.5% of GDP) and pledged to renovate the existing housing stock. During these years France put forward some of the

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<sup>55</sup> The first law on the healthiness of working class houses dates back to 1850 and assigns town councils the right to decide about house renovation works. The law setting up local committees of HBM - *Habitations à Bon Marché* (low-priced houses) dates from 1894. HBM were changed into the already existing HLM - *Habitations à Loyer Modéré* (low-priced rental houses) through the 1949 law.

<sup>56</sup> Stimulating working class people's attachment to their neighbourhood and to the *patron* who allowed them to have access to a decent house was considered a way to make them less likely to join forces and unionize "against their employer".

most innovative housing policies in Europe. The State realised the need for a link between housing policies and all the sectors of the so-called “*habitat*” (infrastructures, transportation, recreational spaces, representation and imagination of living places) and, above of all, it stopped to think and act in terms of neighbourhoods moving towards the level of the city and sometimes (as in Paris) to the level of agglomeration.

In this context in 1988 the DIV (*Delegation Interministerielle à la Ville*—Interdepartmental Delegation for the City) was created and this contributed to the inauguration of the DSU (*Développement Social Urbain*—Urban Social Development)-based approach, that is based on the integrated development of the city. These new measures had to be linked to the broader changes occurring in the society and politics of that time. At a social level these were the years of French suburban riots, during which special attention was given to ghettos and conflicts with the “second generation” of immigrants. The riots of these years were mainly an input to the creation of new policies that responded not only to the housing needs of immigrants. In this process immigrants had an active role in raising public awareness and in the collective socialisation of integration difficulties (residential and social segregation, economic marginalisation, etc). Their participation took the form of riots, but not only that: the symbol of the riots of the eighties was the 1983 *marche des beurs*. The march, which started in the notorious neighbourhood of Les Minguettes, in the outskirts of Lyons, and went through the whole France, was made up of 100 000 people, who were received, in delegation, at Eliseo. This march was the answer to the increasing acts of violence from the police towards immigrants and to racist episodes which led to murders and reprisals<sup>57</sup>. Initially the protest was born as a hunger strike among some immigrant residents of Les Minguettes, then it led to the creation of an association with mixed claims, such as the end of violence, urban rehabilitation and the renewal of the neighbourhood, etc.

In France, in the years after the Second World War, demonstrations, and especially the *marche des beurs*, represented the first collective stance of the second generation and became a symbol of hope for the so-called Black-Blanc-Beur cohabitation.

These events were taken into consideration by politics and institutions which became aware of the need to re-examine not only urban policies but also, and especially, integration policies. On a political level, an unexpected and almost counterintuitive process, for a strongly centralised country like France, was started. It was the process of decentralization policies (1982–1983) leading to the reinforcement of local authorities. This first reform programme gave life to the first action of decentralisation of the State with the purpose of giving new competences to local authorities and to favour the development of local initiatives. It was then that 22 regions were instituted (which will become 26 in 2007) with the name of territorial communities. They became responsible for the areas of urban planning, transportation, schooling, management of national financing and collection of local taxes. With regard to housing policies, reforms were important because they consolidated the power of municipalities and prefects in managing the allocation of public houses.

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<sup>57</sup> In 1980 a 15-year-old boy, Abdelkhader Lareiche, was killed by the caretaker of a building in Vitry-sur-Seine, and on October of the same year another boy, 17 years old, Lahouari Ben Mohamed, was killed in Marseilles by a CRS (*Compagnies Républicaines de Sécurité*) agent. In 1983 a 9-year-old child was shot by his neighbour who felt disturbed by the noise made by his immigrant neighbours. Crimes became more and more frequent, including riots against the police. The first riot broke out in 1979 in Vaulx-en-Velin, in the Lyons suburbs and rapidly spread into the nearby cities. In 1981 cars were burnt for the first time in Minguettes di Vénissieux, a municipality with a strong presence of immigrants.

After becoming aware of the problem of immigrant ghettos brought to light by the riots of the 1908s, from the 1990s onwards all laws and measures embarked on by the French State about housing were centred mainly on the issue of urban and social marginalisation of the weaker strata, on the matter of discrimination in the allocation of public houses and on the neighbourhoods considered “in difficulty”. In this period, as many authors have emphasised (Ballain, 1997; Simon, 1998), immigrants and their difficulties of housing inclusion were considered within the broader category of poor populations. In this sense we should interpret the 1990 Besson law on housing policy, which, even if without any clear reference to immigrants, has the purpose of opposing discriminations. In this sense we should also interpret the 1991 law called *Loi d’Orientation sur la Ville* which, together with the following one (2000) on SRU (Urban Solidarity and Renewal), introduced the issue of social *mixité* in urban and social policies (and in general debate). These three legislative measures share the idea that the *mixité* of social groups – especially of those who reproduce, more visibly than others, the concentration in urban spaces (i.e. immigrants) must be organised at various urban levels so that the structure of population groups can reflect the diversity of society. This principle appears to be ambiguous and causes adverse and contradictory effects for at least two reasons. The first is linked to the fact that the concept of *mixité* is not defined in a positive way (that is, saying what it is exactly) in any legislative text. Its definition is given negatively as “absence of imbalance” or as “refusal of concentration” in light of the fact that a more correct distribution of social groups in the urban space is the more suitable means to reduce social inequalities (Simon, 2003). Moreover, texts that make reference to social *mixité* are euphemistic; they mean ethnic *mixité* most of the time<sup>58</sup>. Second, in practice the principle of *mixité* reinforces the problem that intends to solve, that is, its application ends up worsening the exclusion of some social groups. For example, the majority of public housing neighbourhoods are populated mainly by immigrants. Nevertheless, the authorities in charge of managing this housing stock find themselves in contradictory situations: from one side, they keep denying the allocation of flats to those population groups that most apply for them and, from the other, population groups that could “diversify” and make these neighbourhoods mixed decline these flats if they are placed in neighbourhoods which are overly stigmatised.

We could state that the *mixité* solves the problem of segregation, through the quota policy, but gives rise to other kinds of problems: discrimination and the exclusion of immigrants from the HLM estate. However, if immigrants are excluded from some parts of the housing stock they end up by being confined in certain neighbourhoods, thus producing segregation. This vicious cycle is made worse, especially in the Parisian agglomeration, by the bad functioning of the quota system. The quota system is often virtual since an *arrondissement* (neighbourhood/district) or a municipality can decide to pay a fine rather than comply with the obligation to promote or build 20% of public housing.

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<sup>58</sup> According to Patrick Simon, one of the most evident examples of the fact that in this euphemism of the social *mixité* as ethnic *mixité* immigrants ends up being confined in a separate social group is the case with the opinion given by the CNIL - *Commission nationale de l’Informatique et des Libertés* (National Commission for IT and freedom) on the variables included in the digital dossiers of HLM organisations. In particular, the CNIL would have justified the request for information about one’s nationality and country of origin of those who apply for a flat “in order to allow the relevant authorities to supervise so that the allocation of these flats guarantees the social *mixité*”. In particular, according to Simon, the will to avoid the residential concentration of immigrants makes it compulsory to consider information about the origin of immigrants as one of the criteria for selecting applicants. This would end up by putting into practice discrimination, although in name of the fight against the exclusion of immigrants from the public housing system (Simon, 2003).

In order to try and reinforce the fight against the exclusion of immigrants from access to housing, in 2007 France approved an innovative and cutting edge law, whose importance, according to some, should be evaluated<sup>59</sup>. It is the DALO (*Droit au logement opposable*) law which establishes the right to the “opposable housing”, that is, it designates the State as guarantor of the right to housing access for some categories of people in extreme housing difficulty, who can file a claim to have their right to housing access defended and applied<sup>60</sup>. The most revolutionary aspect of this law is not only related to the fact that the State is responsible for and guarantor of a respectable flat for everyone, but also and especially to the fact that it guarantees passage from the duty of providing resources (solidarity funds, etc.) to the duty of the result, that is, to house those who are homeless.

As it can be observed from this brief review, French social housing policies have been mainly planned around the HLM (*Habitations à Loyer Modéré*) system as well as around the programmes of urban renewal. But, it is worth specifying that in France there are three types of social housing: the housing HLM system; low quality private housing stock which is also known as “third habitat” or “second market”; and specialised housing (hostels for workers, immigrants, houses for the elderly, etc.). The HLM system is complex and, as can be seen, it has been redefined over the years, going, for example, from supply to demand subsidies. It is organised in HLM offices, that is, public services that are in charge of the public housing stock and of social housing in general. There are currently 289 HLM offices which accommodate more than 4.5 million people with more than 2.5 million of houses. Side-by-side with this public system, private bodies and socio-economic (both profit and non-profit) organisations have been developed to deal with house building and management. They are called SA-HLM (*Société Anonyme HLM* - Anonymous Societies), and are made up of a complex system of actors (local institutions, prefects, mayors, who have some discretion regarding the allocation of an HLM) whose action has to be included in the national legislative context, which is often contradictory (social *mixité*, fight against discrimination in housing access). However, the HLM system is not able to manage a situation which is becoming more and more difficult. The housing crisis, the economic and social changes and their effects on residential mobility, have produced a real housing emergency in France where there are currently 3.5 million of people who are not or are badly accommodated (INSEE 2000). Two thirds of them live in flats which are not equipped with basic comforts (toilet, heating) or they are overcrowded. In such a context, the phenomenon of hospitality through community or solidarity networks has become popular, affecting a third of the *mal logés*.

All these difficulties considerably inhibit the residential and housing mobility<sup>61</sup> of the poorest families and contribute to marginalizing them (unemployed people, immigrants, etc.). In this context, the so-called *third habitat* plays an important role. In most cases, the third habitat is made of degraded and old buildings which have the advantage of being placed in the city centre, instead of

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<sup>59</sup> See chapter 4 of the Annual Report of the Abbé Pierre Foundation, dealing with a critical analysis of the DALO law one year after its implementation.

<sup>60</sup> People who have the right to the “opposable housing” are people of French nationality, citizens of the European Union and under special conditions also foreigners who do not belong to the European Union with at least two years of regular and permanent residence, and the *sans-papiers* (irregular immigrants/with no resident permit). They can gain access to housing solutions (but not to the procedure for house allocation) as written in the DALO law. In all cases, any applicants must be officially the holder of a house application.

<sup>61</sup> If, from the one side, informality does not obstacle residential mobility, from the other it weighs heavily on it. It does not help people to move to a better flat or place of residence since in France people must show their previous lease and a document by the previous owner testifying the punctuality in payments and the reliability of the renter, besides banking or family guarantees.

public houses situated in suburbs which are badly connected by public transportation, or in contexts where the labour market is not rich<sup>62</sup>. Obviously, this solution was made possible thanks to the parallel availability of private housing stock, usually old and cheaper, and the presence of actors interested in this market (also taking advantage of it<sup>63</sup>). This kind of market, actually, “brings together people in difficulty on the one side and the economic interests of investors and intermediaries on the other” (Fondation Abbé Pierre, 2008).

### 3.1.3 Offering solutions more than identifying problems

Presently French social housing policies are at a stalemate. On the one hand, with lots of efforts and just few results, they continue to be centred on public housing and the renovation of the existing housing stock and of neighbourhoods considered “in difficulty” (for example, the governmental programme *Espoir Banlieue*). On the other hand, French social housing policies seem to increase measures and means (the DALO law) but without considering real problems like the taboos concerning the ethnic *mixité* or discrimination in access to public housing. These are issues which, if recognised and addressed explicitly, could be solved starting from solutions and the means which already exist and have often proved to be effective. Nevertheless, the policies seem trapped in a vicious cycle of the fight against discrimination and social segregation/*mixité*, where the first could be the problem and the second its solution. Actually, the social *mixité*, the real ghost of urban, social and housing policies in France, is not a solution or a policy in itself. It is rather an effect of policies which combine various fields and levels and manage to reproduce not only the diversity but also and especially the complexity and the differences of society and cities.

In the end, another important feature of French social housing policies is that they are unable to relate to other equally important policies for the stabilization of the population at risk, such as employment or educational policies.

## 3.2. The approach of social housing policies towards immigrants and the most relevant measures towards them. Immigrants : the gost-target of social housing policies

### 3.2.1 Emergency policies

Social housing policies were based on recognition of a specific treatment towards immigrants, initially excluded from the HLM system<sup>64</sup>. The Sonacotral (*Société nationale de Construction pour les Travailleurs originaires d'Algerie - National Building Society for Algerian*<sup>65</sup> Workers), for example, was born in 1956 with the purpose of accommodating Algerian workers who came to France, especially to work at the country's reconstruction. Accommodations included retirement homes and residences (*foyers*) for lone workers, which were equipped with minimum comforts, but which excluded immigrant families who were not considered in the French policies, still based on the image of immigrants as workers who send money to their families in their country of origin.

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<sup>62</sup> It is interesting to note that these spaces contribute to the city *de facto mixité*, acting as spaces of social and urban integration.

<sup>63</sup> The expression used in French to talk about people who speculate on the housing needs of people in difficulty is symbolic: *marchands de sommeil*, sleep entrepreneurs. They are people, usually owners, who illegally rent rooms or beds in degraded flats, without any kind of guarantee for the renters.

<sup>64</sup> For the translation of HLM see note 1.

<sup>65</sup> In 1963 this organisation changed its name into *Sonacotra* because its competencies no longer concerned only Algerian workers but all immigrant people regardless of their country of origin.

With the consolidation of the immigration phenomenon over time, the State introduced a new measure which, this time, was devoted not only to migrants but also to their families. This is the FAS (*Fond d'action sociale pour les travailleurs musulmans en metropole et leur familles*—Social Action Fund for Muslim Workers in Big Cities and Their Families), set up in 1958 and mainly used to solve the problems of *bidonvilles* and makeshift camps. This gave rise to the building of first-aid shelters, retirement homes and temporary dwellings, rather than to the building of public houses. Essentially, it was an emergency policy: urgent problems, require prompt solutions. In fact, despite these actions, housing problems remained serious so that between 1964 and 1975 the State undertook a real fight against *bidonvilles*, which were mostly absorbed in a few years. The element featuring immigrant social housing policies during the fifties and sixties was to consider the immigrant presence, and therefore their housing needs, as temporary. In time, with the appearance of stabilization policies, as a consequence of the existence of a growing awareness of a more stable and enduring presence of immigrants, the problem with immigrant housing was sidestepped because it was considered as linked to the adaptation difficulties of immigrants. It is in this sense that we should read the policy of the *Cités de transit*, residential estates for immigrants equipped with basic comforts. Their stay in the *Cités* lasted two years at the end of which families were supposed to move to HLM flats, but this happened very seldom.

### **3.2.2 Stabilisation policies**

The 1970s were an important turning point from many points of view. Immigrants could have access to the HLM stock, following the same path as French lower classes. Nevertheless, the access of immigrants to residential public housing should be read in light of some considerations: a relief of the housing crisis, in those years French middle class families and the richest segments of lower classes bought a house and vacated many flats of the HLM stock, built between 1955 and 1970, and the latter will be occupied by immigrant families in search for bigger flats and a more stable occupation; the increase of family reunifications, because of which the *foyers* appear as an inadequate solution. But, immigrant access to public housing also represents a “sign of decay” (Simon, 2003b). On one hand, immigrant access to this housing stock occurs in specific parts of it, that is in the less attractive parts which are old and badly placed. With time this tendency has reinforced the presence of neighbourhoods with very high concentration of immigrants, giving life to a segregation system within public housing. From the other side, residential mobility of immigrants, within or outside of public housing, seems to be extremely low to the point where their access to an HLM flat seems to be the point of destination rather than, as it expected, an intermediate stage. To move to other neighbourhoods, which are better equipped with infrastructure and more attractive because of the image they convey, is much less frequent and more difficult for immigrants than for natives. This trend has not changed in the last few years. According to a survey carried out in 1996 by INSEE (Boëldieu and Thave 2000), immigrants with the same social and family situation as the natives have more difficulty with residential mobility. But, at the same time, thanks to State measures introduced between 1975 and 1990, immigrant families residing in a temporary flat have been reduced from 10% to 4%. This fact and the improvement of immigrants' housing conditions during those years have to be read in light of an upward residential mobility and of the re-employment of the temporary or unhealthy housing stock in urban centres (called “de facto social housing stock”). Therefore, the structural improvement of the housing stock has influenced and improved the residential mobility of immigrants from the mid-1970s to the 1990s. In particular,

immigrants have moved away from the private market (rental and non-rental) to turn to the public one, with major differences in terms of ethnic communities<sup>66</sup>. Such differences give origin to two different models. The first one is generally defined as an “entrepreneurial model” and it is based on a strategy whose main goal is access to the estate. This model is based on the search for decision-making autonomy because actors control most of the choices they make, and on emancipation from the systems of flat allocation which depend on the State or on its related structures. Spanish, Portuguese and Asian migrants follow this model, especially in light of the economic model they, particularly Portuguese and Asian, can undertake. They develop self-employment careers based on strong family and ethnic networks, in small businesses in the subcontracting sector of the textile, building and electronic industries. In the second model, the improvement of housing conditions lies in access to public housing, and that implies a strong dependence on the public bodies that are responsible for the HLM housing stock. This residential model, which we could define as “dependent” and concerns migrants from the Maghreb, Turkey and sub-Saharan Africa, is oriented towards dependent work in industry and the third sector and it is therefore influenced by the new productive systems. The financial and employment difficulties that distinguish these groups (which register unemployment rates that are greatly above the national average) make them even more dependent on public help in many sectors.

The differences outlined by these two residential models are also evident with regard to the place of residence: people who follow the first model (the entrepreneurial model) rarely live in houses with no comforts or in the suburbs or strongly stigmatised neighbourhoods, unlike what happens for those in the second model. This difference is important especially in light of the segregation that follows the residential mobility of immigrants.

In the French case, the presence of neighbourhoods at risk, with a strong presence of immigrants, is a reality that has been existing consistently. There are many factors that contribute to the strong presence of immigrants in some neighbourhoods: length of access to the HLM housing stock, the features of the estate (costs, position, flat capacity, etc.), urban policies and the strategies of actors. The strong presence of immigrants in some neighbourhoods is also the result of specific policies that, more or less consciously, have confined immigrants in the most qualitatively and quantitatively degraded and suburban parts of the public housing stock. As we have seen, on a first stage (during the 1970s and 1980s) policies towards immigrants were able to provide them access to the HLM housing stock (consequently stimulating an upward residential mobility of French families through the access to the estate). At this stage, procedures of flat allocation contributed to “confining” some immigrant groups in the most marginal areas of the cities and of the social housing stock. Later on (during the 1990s), the development of spatial and social polarization of cities gave birth to a series of “readjustment” policies based on the imperative of the social *mixité* on the one hand and on housing rights on the other, as we have seen in the first section. These policies (Besson Law, LOV Law, SRU Law, etc.) tried to reverse the trend by allowing the immigrants access not just to the housing stock and neighbourhoods that were already in difficulty or stigmatized (those where immigrants mainly go to).

From this point of view, therefore, the issue of competition between immigrants and natives is not present. Competition exists between immigrants and others who apply for accommodation; it is an

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<sup>66</sup> Immigrants who mainly apply for public houses are Algerians (more than half of Algerians apply), Moroccans (47% of Moroccans apply), Tunisians (40% of Tunisians apply), immigrants from other African countries and Turks (40% of Turks apply). On the contrary, immigrants coming from other countries turn to the HLM sector for accommodation less frequently: south-east Asians (26%), Portuguese (22%) (Boëldieu and Thave 2000).

ordinary competition of those who are on the waiting list for flat allocation and know that there are criteria to follow. Actually, the worst flats go to immigrants, those in the suburbs, the most degraded, and placed in the most stigmatised neighbourhoods. These flats catalyse very little competition because even if institutions, for *mixité* purposes, try to allocate them to population groups who are “not at risk”, these groups willingly “give up” their place to immigrants.

The majority of current policies have ended up reproducing discrimination practices in the name of a principle of social cohesion, with the purpose of ensuring a fair distribution of functions, infrastructures, population and activities. This goal was based on a settlement policy able to guarantee the social *mixité* through the redistribution of population groups with special social positions, but also and implicitly, with specific ethnic origins. This happened among public, but also private, operators through the building of a precise notion of “category at risk”. A research report by GELD (*Groupe d'étude et de lutte contre les discriminations*, 2001) on racial discrimination in access to public housing has just emphasised this aspect, showing how the bodies in charge, but also the private market, look at immigrants as a category at risk towards whom a “probabilist discrimination” is made; that is, the fact of having collected negative information on a certain group of people leads to a lack of acceptance those who are part of this group. In practice, the report shows that such discrimination happens in many different ways: through management of application files which is not very transparent, a perfunctory treatment of paperwork of applicants who have a surname that sounds like a particular ethnic origin, greater slowness in dealing with paperwork presented by immigrants. In particular, the individual evaluation of applicants in search for a house has left the place to a social representation of the risk linked to specific groups. The image of immigrants is often associated with a loss in the value of the neighbourhood, with the escape of good neighbours. These representations affect allocation practices formalising - almost setting - a clear distinction between “good and bad people”, and postulating a sort of “social capacity” of neighbourhoods, in spite of formal criteria for house allocation.

The situation is made more difficult by the fact that such rationales of actors are included in a national context which encourages a greater social *mixité* at all urban levels (neighbourhoods, cities, agglomerations). The purpose of the social *mixité* originated from the fear of imbalances that the crises of the *banlieues* and the urban riots of the 1980s started to emphasise. These crises have been interpreted in terms of cohabitation conflicts among inhabitants with different features, especially immigrants/non-immigrants. According to this interpretation, the crisis is due to the surpassing of a “threshold of acceptability” of immigrants beyond which the balance is broken. This would cause the residential escape of non-immigrant population strengthening the marginality and stigmatisation of these neighbourhoods.

Not only does the issue of *mixité* appear problematic in its assumptions but also in its effects. In this sense, the social conflict that originates when flats are allocated to immigrants or to people of immigrant origin is emblematic. Such is the case studied by a group of researchers in the city of Paris (Bacqué and Fijalkow). *Mixité* policies are usually based on two kinds of action: diversification of the population in working class neighbourhoods or in neighbourhoods with a high presence of immigrants; and creation of social houses in the most well-to-do neighbourhoods for middle-low classes. The Parisian working group has focused on the second type of action, less frequent but more problematic. Researchers have studied the case of two apartment buildings only partially surveyed, through the acquisition-convention procedure, by OPAC (*Office public de l'aménagement et de la construction*), the office which is in charge of the management and building

of public houses. The convention procedure consists in integrating social houses into buildings for private renters. This means that two kinds of population groups (beneficiaries of public housing and private renters) live together and coexist. In the surveyed neighbourhoods (*arrondissement* 9 and 17, well-off neighbourhoods of the capitol), this produced conflicts among the first residents who have suddenly found themselves living in an “HLM apartment house”, classified as public housing; that is, associated with a certain kind of population and socially stigmatised. The downgrading of the building *status* (from private apartment building to public house), linked to the change of its social identity, causes the effect called passive mobility (Bourne, 1981; Lévy, 2005) which consists in a mobility due to a change of the surrounding environment and not of the flat itself. Passive mobility is badly perceived by original residents. The interviews conducted during the survey showed that the majority of them have ended up pitting old and new owners against each other, or identifying residents with the categories of “black” and “white”, or the buildings with the label of “bi-ethnic“, “African” apartments, since most of the beneficiaries were African families. The analysis of social representations of the owners shows the existence of tensions and conflicts which have often been more announced, or considered as inevitable, rather than actually real or occurred. Clearly, in the two experiments examined, cohabitation is not so well accepted, especially from the original owners who have experienced the change in the social status of their apartment building without having any real influence on this process. At the end of the study, the authors have underscored how in the cases considered, the *mixité* shows two limitations: on the one hand it seems to concern only the working class or middle-low classes since well-off classes can move away if they are subject to such an operation; on the other hand, the *mixité* seems an unavoidable choice, albeit negatively experienced especially by middle classes who have a feeling of imposition from this operation and the subsequent downgrading. Therefore, according to the authors, this kind of social *mixité* guarantees spatial equity (immigrants’ access to central spaces) but not social cohesion as it causes tensions, discrimination rationales and so on.<sup>67</sup>

This example shows that the issue of *mixité* and its contradictory effects are particularly complex when applied to populations of immigrant origin.

The situation today has not changed; rather, if associated with special conditions (the financial crisis and its influence on the housing market) it has ended up becoming exasperated. We can therefore state that currently social housing policies for immigrants basically lie on two principles: territorial dispersal of immigrants is desirable for a balance in the social relations of the city; and immigrant integration must take place through individual procedures without considering community belonging. These two principles have turned into practices in the institutional context which favour discrimination, as it has been pointed out in many studies.

In such a context, as we said, the role of the third sector appears to be crucial in putting forward effective alternatives to official practices, more than to official policies. If we consider the main problem, that of discrimination in access to public housing, associations have been involved for years on two fronts: in the strong and steady denunciation of discriminatory practices<sup>68</sup> and the housing emergency in France (especially in the Parisian agglomeration<sup>69</sup>). The first issue is often

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<sup>67</sup> Presently, there are some doubts about the result of spatial equity if interpreted as the possibility of freely choosing one’s own place of residence and not only the mere possibility of having access to it. From this point of view, a space can be accessible without being democratic.

<sup>68</sup> This is the case with associations like France terre d’Asile, Emmaus, Fondation Abbé Pierre.

<sup>69</sup> According to a report by the Abbé Pierre Foundation, the region of Île-de-France and the Parisian agglomeration could hold the sad record of the most serious crisis of the housing market at a national level because of the presence of

faced with important lobbying and communication campaigns, through annual reports on the state-of-the-art of immigrant housing access. But, the greatest part of the action of the non-profit sector is represented by concrete help to immigrants' housing problems. Many associations or NGOs<sup>70</sup> face the most substantial problem for an immigrant person without a stable working contract, that is, solvency. These groups implement measures like the three-party contract (non-profit actor, agency or private owner, and immigrant), or they vouch for the person in difficulty. This type of action is the most frequent because it is also the most frequently requested by the beneficiaries themselves. Over the last few years some associations have initiated a kind of action to awakening private owners of buildings or flats, asking them to commit themselves to put their estate at an affordable price for immigrants who turn to such associations. This practice is more and more common even in the smallest associations and mainly addresses immigrants who have come to France a short time before, with only small circles of acquaintances or community networks and in search of their first job. Another kind of action, which is frequent as well and of great help for immigrants who already have a more or less stable job, is support given for filling out the forms regarding financial assistance (APL—*Aide Personnalisée au Logement*) and the paperwork concerning flat allocations. In such cases, immigrants have to face a complex bureaucracy which often appears as a true obstacle to them. Many of those who are regular and meet the requirements for housing allocation are often excluded from lists because of incomplete forms or for a failure to present certain documents.

### **3.3. Actors of social housing policies addressing immigrants. The rising role of the associative sector**

#### **3.3.1 Institutional actors**

As we can observe from the outline of the main immigrant policies and measures made during the last few years, the French State has been a crucial actor through many organisations like FAS, Soncaotral and especially HLM organisations which with time have been changing to include more and more diversified actors. Within the HLM system, a series of actors plays a role in housing policies, especially those intended for immigrants, at various levels of influence and authority. These include prefects, mayors, local politicians, builders and private entities. Beside these institutional or para-institutional actors, a strong influence is represented by the world of associations which, with time, have been increasingly present where the State has appeared to be inadequate in terms of defence of rights, especially housing rights.

The policy scope of these actors varies, as it is obvious, according to the kind of actor they are. As far as the State is concerned, its policies are made at the national level, that is, the State implements various measures (laws, funds, etc.), organisations (HLM) responsible for house management, and flat allocation and maintenance, placing their activity at the national level through the definition of competencies, criteria, and budgets. The majority of non-profit organisations<sup>71</sup>, but also institutional

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factors such as: the presence of a very selective (and therefore discriminatory) market; the presence of a part of the population who is dependent on this market; the presence of private housing stock which is very old and cheap – this is important in a region where there are many low-skill jobs, poor families and many immigrants (half of all residence permits are issued in the region of Île-de-France); and the presence of actors who take advantage of this kind of housing stock. See Abbé Pierre Foundation (2006).

<sup>70</sup> Un toit pour toi, FAPIL (*Fédération des associations et des acteurs pour la promotion et l'insertion par le logement*); SNL (*Solidarités nouvelles pour le logement*); USL (*Union Sociale pour l'Habitat*), etc.

<sup>71</sup> An exception are big associations (Emmaus, Abbé Pierre), which also work at the national level through sensibilisation actions, research activities and analyses on social housing problems in France, etc.

and para-institutional organisations, which are supposed to put national provisions into practice, all work on a local level.

As for the institutional actors, as we have said, the HLM system is the one which most influences the residential mobility of immigrants. HLM organisations have to deal with complex situations and put into practice many contradictory motions included in the legislative regulations of the central government (fight against discrimination, increase social *mixité*). At the local level, they also have to interact with other institutional actors with whom the dialogue is not always as easy as expected, like prefects, local institutions (*agglomerations*), companies, through the so-called 1% house<sup>72</sup> measure, social organisations like CAF (*Caisse d'Allocations Familiales*)<sup>73</sup>. All these actors (the State through prefects, municipalities through mayors, HLM organisations and house builders) are entitled to a share of houses allocated on the basis of their participation in home building or on the basis of the guarantees they provide for loans taken out. Generally, each of them puts forward a number of candidates that the commission of HLM organisations can decide to reject. This means that mayors do not have a lot of leeway in managing the population of neighbourhoods in their cities, even if some legislative measures have assigned them a certain share (20%) of the reserved positions. In this system, private companies have a rather confined role which consists of the building, management and maintenance of public housing.

Among these actors, it is worth paying special attention to prefects and their action, given the topic of this section. Prefects, the main representatives of the direct power of the State, have started to have a role in these policies only recently with the purpose of amending the distortions produced in “the market of social housing allocation” at the local level. In this way, thanks to POPS (*Plans d'occupation du patrimoine social*), for example, prefects have gained the power to designate people to accommodate with priority, in case of non-fulfilment from other local actors. Nevertheless, apart from this theoretical possibility, just few prefectures in France really use this prerogative they have been assigned, on one hand because of the poor information and documentation on flats that are actually available<sup>74</sup>, and on the other because of local contexts and tensions or the various interpretations of concepts like balance, *mixité*, etc. In particular, the shortage of human and material resources, which is translated into bad management of files and poor organisation of housing services, adds to the limited knowledge of the exact number and location of flats prefects are in charge of. The hesitant actions of prefects are also and mainly influenced by the fact that they could designate and do usually choose immigrants among the people to accommodate with priority. They do so since their responsibilities include administrative police and the control of integration and immigration according to law regulations. Often prefects do not send applications of immigrants who, they already know, will be refused by HLM organisations. It is a sort of censorship that reinforces the image of immigrants as a category at risk.

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<sup>72</sup> All employers with more than 10 employees have to pay 0,45% of their wage costs for the “building effort” (*effort de construction*; until 1992 the rate of contribution was 1%; since then, the name of this instrument has never changed its name, although it changed its rate). They can meet this obligation by building houses themselves or issuing loans to their employees, or they pay their contribution to institutions which are in charge of receiving it and using it to build houses or to provide financial support, loans, subsidies, etc.

<sup>73</sup> The CAF is part of the *Sécurité Sociale* national system and represents the Family Sector. It deals with the everyday life of families and offers them subsidies and services in various fields: access to social housing, training, help to families (like babysitting for working mothers), fight against temporary work, disabled people. It is a mainstay of the French “social model”. In France there are 123 CAF spread all over the territory.

<sup>74</sup> According to Patrick Simon, this lack of information is often due to a conscious strategy of HLM offices that do not appreciate the direct intervention of the State in managing the housing stock.

“As many surveys have shown, prefecture services are aware of the fact that ‘foreign’ applications are subjected to discrimination, even if the reason cannot be made explicit as such (Bourgeois, 1996). Regularly, prefects see HLM organisations turn down applications, claiming the social employment of their estate and, as a result, people considered “difficult”, often immigrants or supposed as such, are refused. Anticipating these reactions, prefectures often do nothing but reinforce these discriminatory practices and interiorise the criteria of HLM organisations” (Simon and Krizbaum, 2001).

Other important actors are mayors and local politicians, who are even more sensitive to local dynamics than prefects. They are careful to assert their share of allocated flats as they are very interested in the population policies of their towns and cities. As they have to manage a long-term political role, many mayors consider immigrants to be political dynamite and therefore are reticent to support their applications. This is clear from the criteria that some of them establish, like the length of stay in the municipality or compulsory residence in the municipality in which you apply for a house, etc.

### **3.3.2 Non-institutional actors**

In such a context, associations are those which, all things considered, have to manage immigrants’ house access, especially if we consider the general trend of French policies, especially from the 1990s on, consisting of the inclusion of immigrants (with difficulties and often objectively diversified and complex residential needs or projects) in the category of the socially weaker strata. With time, associations and third-sector organisations have become real substitutes for the social or private sector, increasingly improving their operational strategies so as to treat the issue of social housing as a whole: dwelling, management of residents and their relations.

As for immigrants’ dwelling, the contribution of the third sector is more and more significant and it is based primarily on rather “classic” measures and initiatives: transition lease in the name of the association, waiting to pass it to the renter in difficulty the association vouches for, intermediation and guarantee within the housing market, logistic support for fill out the forms for social housing allocation, financial support for flat renovation or financing of part of the rent.

Moreover, according to the AITEC (*Association Internationale de Techniciens, Experts et Chercheurs*) classification, within the associative or third sector organisations we identify various actors who can be distinguished in terms of their level of interaction with public institutions and the policy sector. In particular, there are:

- Associations in charge of the management of HLM flats and close to left wing parties;
- Charitable and religious associations;
- Associations fighting for the “mal-logés” which currently merge with humanitarian movements and claim independence of purposes and action from the parties and State, together with the possibility taking direct actions;
- “Interface” associations, which manage the relationship between the population and the public authority, through urban policies and social engineering techniques. They are intermediary associations, for example in projects on participatory urban planning or in the relationship between residents and local institutions.

Today many of these segments of the associative sector tend to merge, especially by building common platforms concerning the fight for acquisition of housing rights for those who are excluded.

### 3.4. Conclusions

Every year about 220 000 people come to France from other countries, with their own migratory projects, and also, and especially, with specific housing needs. These people often move towards special sectors of the private and public housing stock, but it is increasingly difficult, from the point of view of data collection for example, to find out about the forms of housing allocation and the needs resulting from this.

As is already known, housing, together with employment, are the main means of integration, identification and stabilisation, especially for immigrants. Nevertheless, French policies have never established a connection between housing and integration policies and have treated them separately. For example, in the beginning the issue of discrimination was treated in relation to the working environment. This is because of greater mobilization against discrimination in the working environment, since, on one hand, it is perceived as more serious because of the consequences and the symbolic meaning it carries, and on the other, because the responsibility of this type of discrimination mainly concerns the labour market rather than public policies. French immigrant social housing policies have considered and dealt with the presence of strong discrimination in this field only lately, and the policies themselves have contributed to such discrimination.

As we have observed, the first housing policies towards immigrants, which date back to the 1950s and 1960s, were based on an ad hoc treatment which often consisted of their accommodation within the *Cités de transit*, *foyers* where immigrants lived for more than twenty years. Over time, through the consolidation of the migratory phenomenon and family reunifications and by means of the upward residential mobility of part of the French society, things changed. Immigrants became part of the public housing stock and stopped being confined to and associated with special housing solutions or neighbourhoods (during the 1970s and 1980s). Nevertheless, things seem to improve only slightly. This is indicated by the presence—up to today, even if to a lower extent—of a “third habitat” which many immigrants rely on because of their difficulties in being included in the public housing system.

In the 1990s immigrants were considered the *unmentionable* in social housing policies. This failure to recognise this part of the population as a group with varied housing needs to be managed appropriately, is linked with the presence, from the 1980s on, of a series of social problems often associated with the migratory phenomenon and urban segregation. Facing these problems, currently, the French State implemented a series of policies aiming at fighting segregation and favouring greater diversity at various urban levels. But these policies were not free from complexities and ambiguities and, in practice, gave life to many discriminatory practices both in the public and private housing market, especially the rental one.

Discrimination continues to influence the residential mobility of immigrants, which has never been taken into consideration by any public policy or intervention. It is not surprising that associations dealing with immigrant housing integration have pointed out that facing the same unstable situation, immigrants find it more difficult to enter the housing market than French people.

Nevertheless, in light of this general framework, we do not have to believe that the many legislative measures, the organisations and the policies fielded by the French State have only produced discriminatory practices. Actually, France has examined the problem of immigrant social housing from the beginning and before other European countries. However, these policies were supported by visions and principles that considered immigrants as temporary actor and not as part of the French society. Today French policies face the difficulty of combining, in practice, principles like the social *mixité* and the fight against discrimination. Many studies and surveys have been commissioned by French public organisations at all levels, but first at the national level. This reflects the fact that the State is more and more aware, thanks also to the work of denunciation by associations and because of the contradictions coming from the concrete implementation of policies that, in principle, are at the forefront within the European framework.

**CHAPTER 4.**  
**SOCIAL HOUSING AND ETHNIC MINORITIES IN GERMANY**  
Marina Seveker

**Introduction**

This chapter provides a general overview of present-day social housing policy and measures in Germany. It also analyses the role of housing actors in this field as well as the relevance of social housing programmes and pilot projects addressing different targeted groups, especially immigrants. Housing markets in Germany are more or less balanced at the moment because of a relatively high vacancy rate. There are 24 million rented dwellings. The paid rents were actually valued at 200 billion euro. In Germany, the proportion of people who live in publicly financed low-cost housing (*Sozialwohnung*) has declined overall. This is true for 2.9% of Germans without a migration background and 9.5% of people with a migration background (Friedrich, 2008). The share of social housing stock has decreased. The accession to rent or home ownership is particularly difficult for persons with a migration background. The home ownership rate in Germany of 42.6% is low (Braun/Pfeiffer, 2006). The number of people who own their homes has slightly increased; 40.7% of ownerships are autochthones, 22.4% are persons with a migration background (Einwanderungsgesellschaft, 2010); 38% are homeowners with a Turkish migration background, whereas thirty-three per cent of Turkish immigrants who are renting dwellings plan on acquiring property (Sauer and Halm, 2009). However, the proportion of homeowners with a migration background in municipalities is different. In Berlin, 5% of homeowners have a migration background, whereas overall 20% of the population groups in Berlin live in the privacy of their own home. One out of ten people with a migration background plans on acquiring property (ibid.). The rate of homeownership of persons with a migration background has grown in recent years. Persons with an Italian, Croatian, Polish and Turkish migration background have relatively high homeownership rates, while persons from Bosnia and Herzegovina are seldom homeowners (Friedrich, 2008). However, it is difficult for families to acquire property because of the generally high cost of properties, child-raising expenses and private pension schemes (ibid.). Migrants have, on average, less income at their disposal to finance their own houses. The ethnic German repatriates - the so-called *Spätaussiedler* - tend to acquire a property more frequently than other immigrants, despite the privileges have gone back. Migrant households are put at a disadvantage compared to autochthonous households in terms of the rate of homeownership, affordable living space per person as well as expenditure on rent. A convergence rate between migrants' housing needs and those of autochthonous populations respectively increasing discontent of immigrants with their own housing situation is often interpreted in social-scientific studies as a sign of integration (Friedrich, 2008). Studies on the effects of the housing environment and segregation have not yet provided clearly interpretable results in view of integration, whereas a decrease in migrants' wishes to return to their countries of origin and, consequently, to acquire housing property is mostly interpreted in research studies as a boost to integration (ibid.).

Research studies show that persons with a Turkish migration background frequently, but not exclusively, live in segregated areas, while persons with an Italian migration background seldom live in segregated areas (Friedrich, 2008). Sixteen per cent of the people with a Turkish ethnic background live in ethnic and/or socially segregated areas (Sauer and Halm, 2009). However persons with a Turkish migration background are not the dominant population group in segregated

districts. There is a higher concentration of people from the former Yugoslavia and the post Soviet-States in such districts (Münch/Kirchhoff, 2009). The T ASD (*Türkische Akademiker und Studenten in Deutschland*) study shows that the educated elite with a Turkish migration background does not tend to live in segregated areas; it lives mostly in a family-oriented way. Students and graduates with a Turkish background do not live further than 60 km away from their parents' house and demonstrate a low awareness for value of home ownership (Sezer, 2008). In Germany, ethnic segregation has generally declined in limited areas, but there are still many multiethnic districts considered structurally disadvantaged (ibid.).

In 2010, foreigners and Germans with a migratory background made up a total of 15.6 million people (Einwanderungsgesellschaft, 2010) living in Germany. These population groups are often disadvantaged in housing markets compared to the autochthonous population (Bursa, 2007; Münch and Kirchhoff, 2009). Migrants often live in worse dwellings and pay higher rents than the autochthonous population. People with a migratory background pay higher gross base rents (*Bruttokaltmieten*) on average (6.24 euro per square metre) than the whole population (6.01 euro). The highest rents are paid by foreigners (6.38 euro), in particular foreigners of the first generation (6.42 euro). Reliable survey data on a price-quality ratio as well as the quality of rented dwellings are not available (8. Lagebericht, 2010). Nevertheless, the annual report of the Expert Council for Migration and Integration shows that the housing facilities of populations with a migratory background are largely equal to those of the autochthonous one (Einwanderungsgesellschaft, 2010). The Federal Office for Building and Regional Planning (BBR) examines continuously in the so-called BBR survey the appraisal of existing spatial housing and living conditions in Germany, perception of deficits and residential preferences, and evaluates questions with regard to the following five areas: dwelling, residential area, neighbourhood and integration, spatial mobility, economic situation and employment. The survey shows that the share of perceived frictions amounted to a nearly steady 7% in Western Germany and 10% in Eastern Germany in 2008. Neighbourhood relations were mainly regarded as good or normal (cf. [http://www.bbr.bund.de/nn\\_23744/BBSR/DE/Raumeobachtung/GlossarIndikatoren/indikatoren\\_\\_dyncatalog,lv2=104648,lv3=464382.html](http://www.bbr.bund.de/nn_23744/BBSR/DE/Raumeobachtung/GlossarIndikatoren/indikatoren__dyncatalog,lv2=104648,lv3=464382.html), downloaded on 20.07.2010). The positive appraisal among foreigners was clearly dependent on their length of stay. Above all, young adults who are less than 30 years old reported confrontations, whereas people who are aged 70 and over did not report any conflicts at all. This shows that mutual acceptance rises with increasing age and rising length of stay of immigrants.

“Housing companies look at certain indicators. There is no systematic discrimination against ethnic minorities. Besides, there are also landlords with a Turkish migration background who do not accept every person as a prospective tenant” (ibid.). Furthermore, belonging to a certain income group is crucial. Some housing organisations practice quotas for ethnic and aged groups and households with children to minimise possible conflicts (cf. Gestring, Janssen and Polat, 2006). On the one hand, it seems to be a current trend. On the other hand, reliable data on the scope of this development are currently not available.

“Because of ethnic origins, immigrants face a double burden. Certain ethnic origins are associated with an urban underclass. German names do not mean to be more worthwhile than English or other names. A person who comes from France is often associated with a middleclass. Berlin’s level of rents and dwellings on good terms attract small private prospective buyers, e.g. from Denmark and

Italy. Nobody asks them about their ethnic origin or migratory background” (interview with the Tenant Community of Berlin, 2010).

However, migration issues cannot be dissociated from social problems. “Social problems are boiling up within stratification. Conflicts arise. It is not direct conflict between migrant and autochthonous populations. Conflicts between gangs are also based on an economic foundation” (interview with the Tenant Community of Berlin, 2010). The conflicts between persons with and without a migration background are often non specific. It is often noise nuisance caused by children or guests and visitors. Cultural attitudes can also cause conflicts in the neighbourhood. The following complaints are common: stair cleaning, garbage separation, cooking habits, leisure behaviours and use of green spaces (Gestring, Janssen and Polat, 2006). Different lifestyles can lead to conflicts, e.g. between elderly and young families. Furthermore generational conflicts may hide ethnic conflicts because young families are more numerous among immigrants.

“Residents’ letters to the Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Affairs express citizens’ perception of housing needs and conflicts. Discrimination and social conflicts are not the subject of these letters. Residents have written to the Ministry mostly to learn more about the rent law, energy, existing supports and subsidies” (interview with the Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Affairs, 2010).

Immigrants have become more similar to autochthonous populations with regard to housing facilities in recent years. Nevertheless, available studies point out that migrant and autochthonous groups are not equally treated on housing markets (vgl. Gestring, Janssen and Polat, 2006; Ungleichbehandlung, 2008). Immigrants are considered second-rate tenants with regard to high-quality dwellings (Gestring, Janßen and Polat, 2006). Moreover, migrants are especially dependent on housing markets’ fluctuations. Social polarisations and a divided housing supply jeopardize social cohesion (Holm, 2006).

#### **4.1. Main Trends and Changes in Social Housing Policies in Germany. Differentiation of Population and Housing Forms and Reduction of Social Housing Stock as Challenges**

##### **4.1.1 General Trends and Changes. Support for Households in Need Has Replaced Support for Wider Parts of the Population**

Housing policy in Germany was instituted as a policy sector in the 20th century. The housing policy has departed from the Fordist mode of regulation and has reduced State interventions to regulate urban areas. Government’s withdrawal is typically outlined by privatisation, liberalisation and deregulation (Holm, 2006). In the 1990s, two trends dominated the housing policy: new housing construction and liberalisation; as a result of liberalisation a part of municipal and State-owned housing firms was privatised. From the point of view of the Tenant Community of Berlin the city’s housing policy has been only housing sell-off policy since 2004 (Oellerich, 2009).

Now, new housing construction shows a downward trend in Germany. Nevertheless, additional dwellings must be constructed in population centres (Koalitionsvertrag, 2009). The orientation towards improving housing stock thus outweighs new construction.

Since the late 1980s, German housing policy has marked a turn away from the supply of dwellings to support for individual households. Since 1990, the German state has stepped back from housing policy, and social housing has weakened (Holm, 2006). Moreover, with regard to the Berlin Tenant Community’s perception of the housing policy, the “middle class” becomes the focal point of

political thoughts and is supported through both “building groups”<sup>75</sup> and “townhouses”<sup>76</sup>. Nevertheless, the housing policy has selected eligible recipients on the basis of income since June 6, 1994 (*Wohnungsbauförderungsgesetz*). Until 2001, housing policy in Germany aimed to support wider parts of the population. Now, however, it is aimed at supporting specific target groups like those households which are unable to find decent housing in the free housing market and/or low income households, among them immigrants. The social housing policy focuses on supports for households in need. Needs are indicated not only by low income households, but also, additively or alternatively, by specific problems of access to renting a dwelling or house (that is true for households with children, single parents, pregnant women, elderly persons, handicapped or homeless people et al.).

To avoid the number of empty buildings, property owners are ready to accept low-income households with rent solvency because of person-related housing benefits. The revaluation of residential accommodations then becomes a replacement for low income households. Both developments lead to a concentration of low-income households, among them immigrants, in the so-called low-income housing areas. If they do not possess sufficient social and economic resources, low-income residents will remain in overburdened parts of town. The average rent costs become a more and more important selection criterion for a renting dwelling.

Housing markets in Germany exhibit large regional differences, that is why housing measures should be adapted to local needs and conditions<sup>77</sup>. In particular, concepts of social housing developed by municipalities are actually in great demand. It is still necessary to support a low-priced housing supply in economically strong regions. At the same time, there is an oversupply of dwellings in other regions.

Modern society faces significant challenges: erosion of the economic basis of industrial production, transition to a service society, decrease of population, aging population, and increase in single-person households, varying population and pluralisation of lifestyles. As a consequence, there is a trend of differentiation of housing forms. On the one hand, people prefer having the possibility to retreat into privacy, on the other hand, while they intend to have some privacy, at the same time they enjoy the advantages of collective or cross-generation housing as well as the mutual help at neighbourhood. Demographic changes are also prompting an increasing demand for handicapped-

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<sup>75</sup> “Building groups” are not socially mixed; they are homogeneous with regard both to age and profession. The “middle-class” forms both “building groups” and cross-generational communities. “Building groups” mean communities of building owners based on common interest and convenience. It is expected that immigrants also form “building groups” and/or homogeneous groups with regard to ethnic background.

<sup>76</sup> “Townhouse” is derived from a house in town and means in Germany new modern town houses or luxury real estates.

<sup>77</sup> For example, the housing demand in Berlin is stronger than the housing supply that is why Berlin’s rents have increased. “Interventions are only oriented towards the middle-class and/or urban bourgeoisie” (interview with the Tenant Community of Berlin, 2010). The urban bourgeoisie replace the “old-established population” in certain Berlin quarters. The replacement has involved migrants and other low income households. Such replacements are a trend in Berlin. From the point of view of the Tenant Community of Berlin the government has focused on “building groups” and has ignored the current market development and the needs of economically weak population (Oellerich, 2009: 8). Construction in the luxury segment is booming, while in Berlin, at the same time social housing to address average wage-earners with children is neglected (Linde, 2009). “The Berlin Senate is fighting against the consequences of its own housing policy via neighbourhood management (Quartiersmanagement). The freshly painted fronts of houses and the neighbourhood management will not change the economical situation of residents” (cf. Villinger, 2009). The problems the housing market has suffered today do not stem primarily from new construction, but from lack of conserving what exists, of improving the environment, of modernisation, of what could be called an “overburdened neighbourhood”. Since the end of the 1990s, the main focus of the housing policy has been on promotion of home ownership and stabilisation of “overburdened neighbourhoods”—that means “low-income housing areas”.

appropriate dwellings and senior-friendly dwellings. There is a need for innovative housing forms and needs-based dwellings.

In general, the present-day housing policy trends are as follows: a drastic reduction of social housing stock; forced sell-off of municipal and publicly financed low-cost dwellings since mid-1990s and striking orientation of non-profit housing companies towards economic effects rather than towards social-political responsibility (Holm, 2006). Moreover, the housing policy in Germany tends to focus on social housing (Bericht, 2009). Social housing measures should address the issues of accommodation or affordability of dwellings and safety of tenants.

#### **4.1.2 Promoting Social Cohesion and Integration within Cross-policy Interactions**

With the Housing Support Act of 2002 the mass model turned programmatically into a residual orientation that means the turn away from the support for wider parts of the population to support for households in need. The urban development has apparently eliminated the social housing in Germany. Strengthening social cohesion and integration of immigrants, preservation of historic buildings and urban structures, reuse and conversion of brown field sites and removal of constraints in the living environment are the most important goals of urban development policy. Sub-goals of the housing measures involving immigrants are social cohesion, creation and maintenance of socially stable inhabitant's structures and settlement patterns, etc.

The present-day housing policy cooperates with environmental and climate policy on energy-efficient restoration, with capital formation policy on issues of home ownership, with family policy and active aging policy on improvement of living and housing conditions, and with urban development policy on revitalisation of town centres (Wohngeld and Mietenbericht, 2006). The cooperation with social policy on housing benefits (responsibility of the federal government and the states) and costs for rent in the case of “Hartz IV” (responsibility of the federal government and municipalities) is particularly complex. These supports are overlapping and not transparent. The policy sectors in this area are not well co-ordinated and harmonized. The housing, revitalisation and de-segregation policies cooperate also with integration policies to create living spaces and infrastructure, pooling resources and abilities of immigrants and involvement of migrant associations. With an enabling approach the housing policy focuses on improving the framework conditions and promoting projects to optimise the engagement of ethnic minorities, as well as on involving and working together with migrant associations and supporting them in networking and in professional volunteer management (e.g. within the project “Voluntary Services Make Competent”).

#### **4.2. Trends and Changes Addressing Immigrants. From Providing Accommodation to Promoting Area-Based or Culturally Sensitive Measures Involving Immigrants**

Setting up households by the baby-boom generation from the 1960s and unexpectedly high immigration rates after the reunion and the border opening to East Europe as well as wars and social unrest and, consequently, an increased number of asylum-seekers in Germany caused growing scarcities which appeared to be mastered not only by the boost of social housing construction.

In the 1990s, housing companies and municipalities faced various problematic issues because of a falling number of subsidised dwellings, partly combined with the concentration of publicly financed low-cost dwellings in certain districts and the need to provide accommodation as quickly as possible for large numbers of ethnic Germans from the CIS countries, for civil war refugees and

asylum-seekers. The social housing construction was increasingly financed by the federal government. In 1989, specific programmes were implemented to build living quarters for ethnic Germans (*Aussiedler*) and “resettlers” (*Übersiedler*). Socio-political problems resulting from the concentration of low-income, educationally distant and unintegrated immigrants date back to this time. It is indisputable that the construction of publicly financed low-cost dwellings is a manifestation of the problem and that the problems increased through the spatial concentrations of such dwellings and the neglect of social and technical infrastructure to support these groups.

German housing interventions have been never focused on emergency dwellings for the homeless, refugees or other marginalised groups in general (Droste and Knorr-Siedow, 2007). Moreover, “these groups were supported by social or health programmes, rather than through the housing finance system” (ibid., p. 96). In the 1960s, the main issue was housing promotion for the so-called guest workers. Their accommodation regularly turned out to be a room which a guest-worker had to share with many other people. Guest-workers were accommodated in barracks and former production halls because of scarce living quarters in general. Furthermore, they had to be provided with accommodation in specially constructed immigrant hostels and in large suburban housing estates within social housing construction in the 1970s. The first approaches promoting housing integration were created in 1973. Since the mid-1970s, measures have been applied to avoid the so called ghettos at the local level (Münch and Kirchhoff, 2009). Municipalities have promoted initiatives to achieve a social mix in districts. These activities have taken place to stabilise the structure and to improve the living and housing conditions in segregated areas. The “Districts with Special Development Needs - the Socially Integrative City” programme was established in 1999 by the federal government and the federal states (*Bundesländer*) with the aim of counteracting the widening socio-spatial rifts in the cities. Efforts to improve the housing conditions of immigrants have been very much area-based.

Such efforts were followed by a transition from the construction of publicly financed low-cost dwellings and providing of a large number of dwellings as well as the obligation to live in subsidised dwellings to the flexibility of this accommodation obligation, improvement of housing and living conditions and creation and maintenance of socially balanced inhabitant structures and changes in construction. Furthermore, the social housing policy addressing immigrants changed from providing accommodation to support of area-based projects and neighbourhood work with involvement of immigrants. The first housing projects explicitly addressing immigrants were implemented in the early 1990s (“International Housing Concept” in Cologne, “Habitat: International Housing Concept in Kronsberg” in Hannover, “Integrated Housing” in Munich). These approaches were not initiated and designed by residents and were overloaded, to some extent, with unrealisable objectives<sup>78</sup>. These were mostly initiatives of municipalities. Desired effects of the approaches to stabilise the city districts were also partly overestimated (ibid.).

Not only municipalities, but also cooperatives and housing companies had to respond to changes of the tenant structure marked by households with a migration background with respect to a rising heterogeneity of population groups and their needs. A housing estate was saved from demolition and transferred to a housing co-operative with 65% of residents with a migration background by the commitment of individuals from the cooperative sphere with the support of the City Council at the end of the 1980s (e.g. Ludwig-Frank Cooperative in Mannheim). The Association of Housing and

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<sup>78</sup> See Schader Foundation, cf. [http://www.schader-stiftung.de/wohn\\_wandel/474.php](http://www.schader-stiftung.de/wohn_wandel/474.php)

Real Estate Industry (VdW) of Rhineland Westphalia emphasised the meaning and the role of immigrants on housing markets as a central issue for the housing industry and set out a first package of measures and strategies in 2002. The Federal Association for Property Ownership and Urban Development (*vhw*) also deals with issues of immigrants and housing within the scope of its own research studies and specific trainings. It also provides a forum for development of offers to stimulate cooperation between the state, the municipality, civil society and the private sector. The *vhw* has focused in recent years on promotion of individual responsibility and the initiatives of citizens with and without a migration background.

The increasing number of older immigrants also constitutes new challenges for the housing industry, municipalities and respective organisations. Welfare organisations earlier recognised that the housing needs of immigrants have been paid too little attention. Since the beginning of 2000, in cooperation with municipalities, migrant organisations and other organisations in the sector of community work have developed and implemented culturally sensitive concepts in the area of housing and health. The federal government responded to these developments by supporting pilot projects which were aimed at developing and testing culturally sensitive modules for the vocational training of caregivers for the elderly involving the Turkish-German Health Foundation. Acquisition of knowledge about ethnic-specific and intercultural aspects was stipulated in the training and examination regulation. Welfare organisations are also committed to culturally sensitive accommodations for older migrants. However, these have not yet been explicitly supported by the legislative framework. Nevertheless, the welfare organisations and housing organisations have developed services for elderly persons. For example, Caritas has developed concepts for older migrants who commute between Germany and their country of origin (e.g. services during the time of their absence in the federal territory or flat-sharing). Furthermore, immigrants have been initiators of their own projects in the areas of health care and, to some extent, housing, and have established since the end of the 1990s, such services as flat-sharing communities with assisted living or hospices at the latest.

### **4.3. Actors of Social Housing Policies Addressing Immigrants. The Dominance of Ethnic-Blind Support and Creating New Measures Meeting Immigrants' Needs**

#### **4.3.1 Housing Policy as a Joint Responsibility of the Federal Government, the Federal States and Municipalities**

Housing actors in Germany are ministries (for example, the Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Affairs (BMVBS), municipalities, the “Working Group of the Ministers and Senators of the Federal States (*Länder*) Responsible for Building, Housing and Settlement” (ARGEBAU), housing companies, and respective research institutes. In recent years, the federal government has stepped back from housing policy (Holm, 2006). The disappearance of the letter “w” in the designation of the Federal Ministry responsible for housing policy has demonstrated the loss of significance of housing policy at the national level: in 2005, the Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Housing (*Bundesministerium für Verkehr, Bau- und Wohnungswesen*) was renamed the Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Affairs (*Bundesministerium für Verkehr, Bau- und Stadtentwicklung*). Since the late 1980s, German housing policy has marked a turn away from supplying dwellings to support for individual households. Social housing policy was transferred to subject-related supports at the national level in general. The instruments used in the

present-day housing policy contain both subject-related supports e.g. social benefits (housing benefits and assumption of the costs of renting a dwelling and heating) and object-related supports. Subject-related and object-related supports as policy instruments are related to all housing market participants. Subject-related supports (direct payment to recipients, subsidies) and object-related supports (payment in kind, loans) are ethnic-blind. It was a significant shift in housing policy in Germany from object-related supports to subject-oriented supports which strengthen the rent solvency of recipients. In 2009, 1.2 billion euro were distributed for housing benefits (*Wohngeld*), 16 billion euro for costs of renting and heating, and a maximum of 1 billion euro for social housing support (Völker, 2010). 8 million households and/or 20% of all private households are actually low income households (ibid.). There are over 25 per cent affordable housing throughout Germany (5 euro per m<sup>2</sup>). Low-income households are also supported by governmental-funded programmes and regulations: financial assistance within social housing, nursing care insurance and unemployment benefits II (*Arbeitslosengeld II*).

Nevertheless, there are special access conditions to social housing measures for immigrants. Nationality is not decisive in this context. The access conditions are determined by the residence status of immigrants and the length of their residence in the country, to some extent. The regulations may vary from one federal state to another. In Rhineland-Palatinate, migrants who possess a residence permit for at least two years are eligible to apply for authorisation to live in publicly financed low-cost housing (*Wohnberechtigungsschein*). Asylum-seekers are not eligible for this housing authorisation. In North Rhine-Westphalia, foreigners and their dependents who are in possession of a residence permit of less than one year (or a settlement permit, an EC long-term residence permit or persons who are entitled to freedom of movement) are entitled to obtain a housing authorisation because the housing authorisation is also valid for one year. Germans and foreigners as well as stateless persons who are in possession of a residence permit (a settlement permit, an EC long-term residence permit, an unlimited residence permit, a residence title for exceptional purposes) or who are granted a temporary suspension of deportation are eligible for housing benefits. Foreigners who are entitled to asylum are also eligible for housing benefits. However, members of a NATO troop stationed in the federal territory, and persons who have been exempted from the regulations on social security valid in the federal territory pursuant to the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic and Consular Relations are not eligible. Asylum-seekers and foreign students who are in possession of a residence permit for study purposes are not entitled to the so called "Hartz IV"<sup>79</sup> (including assumption of costs of renting a dwelling and heating). Furthermore, foreigners are not eligible for benefits in accordance with the Code of Social Law II (SGB II) during the first three months of their stay in Germany. This exclusion also affects EU citizens.

The federal government is responsible for the framework of housing policy (e.g. rent laws). In particular, federal housing policy focuses on energy-efficient restoration and climate protection. The responsibilities of the current federal government in the area of social housing are few in contrast to previously legislations. The federal government focuses on improving accommodation and stabilisation of the living environment. New publicly financed low-cost dwellings are not being built today. The federal states and municipalities are operating with social housing and subsidized dwellings, but not the federal government. In regions with economic strength, both incomes and

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<sup>79</sup> The Hartz laws have reformed the labour market since 2005. They take the name of the Head of the Commission "Modern Services in the labour market." Hartz IV is a colloquial name of ALG II (*Arbeitslosengeld II*) or unemployment benefits II.

rents are relatively high. These circumstances require regulation of social housing in those areas. Large regional differences have to be taken into account in this regard, however. It was one of the reasons for the transfer of responsibility for social housing to the federal states to ensure an appropriate housing supply for households in need<sup>80</sup>. However, the federal states support renovation and conversion for low-income households (interview with the Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Affairs, 2010). The federal states are also responsible for new construction and support of ownership (e.g. towards households with children). Furthermore, modernisation and transformation of senior-friendly dwellings have been funded by the federal government. The federal states also develop programmes to meet the needs of senior citizens and handicapped persons. The local authorities support individuals' access to renting a dwelling and/or provide accommodation for low-income households, households with children and senior citizens. In accordance with regulatory legislation (*Ordnungsrecht*), cities and municipalities are obliged to provide accommodation for homeless households. As a result of that change to the framework conditions the legislature implemented new regulations. In accordance with the Housing Support Act (*Wohnraumförderungsgesetz - WoFG*) of January 01, 2002, much more leeway and responsibilities in the area of social housing policy were given to municipalities and local authorities.

#### **4.3.2 The Small Role of Private Landlords, New Tasks of Non-Profit Organisations and Public Organisations between Profit and Public Interests**

In recent years, there has been a change of housing landscape in Germany. Public authorities and property owners have sold off parts of their housing stock (Hallenberg, 2008). Nevertheless, the essential structure of German housing markets continues to be steady. Over the last ten years, private small vendors have extended their housing stock from 59% to 61% (ibid.). The housing stock of professional providers amounted to 39 per cent, including 17% of private enterprises, 9% municipal housing companies,<sup>81</sup> 1% other public housing firms, 9% housing co-operatives, 2% private owners whose dwellings are managed by professional enterprises, and 1% other vendors, e.g. churches (Völker, 2010).

The state of Berlin currently has six housing companies and/or a 15% share of the total housing stock of the city. According to their statutes and company agreements the municipal housing companies of Berlin will provide affordable accommodation for all housing market participants. Therefore, they have also defined their goal to become a profitable company (Holm, 2008). In addition, the municipal housing companies will promote innovative housing for elderly persons and take a pioneering role in energy-efficient measures. Social urban development of public housing companies is currently seen as a development of support measures for home ownership and enhancement of housing stock (ibid.). Furthermore, in accordance with Coalition Agreement the government wants to support owner-occupied property as a form of retirement provision which strengthens regional ties: "The purchase of shares in a housing cooperative for personal residential purposes works in much the same way. We want to raise the proportion of owned residential property in Germany. To this end, we simplify the home pension scheme" (Koalitionsvertrag, 2009).

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<sup>80</sup> The federal government has provided the federal states with financial means in the amount of €18.2 million to realise housing programmes without imposing any new conditions or demands until 2013 (cf. Bericht, 2009)

<sup>81</sup> Municipalities have sold 15% of their housing stock, their share has decreased from 12.5% in 1998 to about 9.3% in 2008 (Hallenberg, 2008)

The willingness of the housing industry and private investors to be involved in social housing has decreased because social housing efforts do not benefit wider parts of the population as they did in the post-war years, but rather focus on low income and socially deprived households.

Entrepreneurially oriented local policies are oriented towards an influx of favoured tenants<sup>82</sup> rather than on inhabitants' needs (Holm, 2006). "Investors do not cooperate with municipalities and do not accept every tenant" (interview with the Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Affairs, 2010). The role of private landlords seems to be marginal (interview with the Tenant Community of Berlin, 2010). Nevertheless, the largest part of low-income households occupies private landlords' rental dwellings (Völker, 2010). Private owners facilitate competition. They invest also in stocks. Housing policy should continue to involve all groups of owners to support social housing.

Municipalities and their housing companies are responsible for supporting households with social problems: "Public housing companies are still exemplary. They are good for public interests, not from the standpoint of market. They should be more involved in political frameworks again. They should not be obliged to the market. The municipal housing companies should be more obliged to social responsibility and political engagement" (interview with the Tenant Community of Berlin, 2010).

"Non-profit organisations play a small role. They have not occupied a special position yet. Until 1990 (abolition of the Non-Profit Housing Act, *Wohnungsgemeinnützigkeitsgesetz*), there was a charitable status, as a consequence, they were tax-free. Non-profit organisations were allowed to have a 4% yield return. This group of organisations has been very committed to public housing" (interview with the Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Affairs, 2010). The non-profit organisations have made available dwellings for "poorer social classes" supported by the state. Noteworthy are projects of the Protestant Church which supports construction for families with children.

Non-profit housing organisations are often landlords in districts or quarters chosen by "guest workers' families": These are the so-called settlements of factory-owned housing units of housing companies linked to industry or the housing stock of municipal housing companies. Shareholders of non-profit organisations have obliged these organisations to behave in a charitable way, particularly after the abolition of the charitable status. Their tasks continue to promote social housing. Municipal housing companies are first of all responsible for provision of housing in cases of so-called "emergency housing". Municipal housing companies are partners with municipalities in the area of social housing. The tasks related to support of owned residential property, abolition of dividend restrictions, special management tasks (coping with communication problems, development of new models for management of housing stock and support for the mostly foreign tenants), social tasks (reconstruction and other services, emergency calls, purchases of food or room cleaning against payment, Internet training for tenants or advantageous possibilities for participation in car-sharing); tenant's social services (debt counselling) and participation in the neighbourhood management (parent and child groups, German language courses for foreigners or ethnic Germans) are new for the non-profit organisations. Many of the non-profit housing organisations had to establish tenant's social services which provide debt counselling because of a special composition of their tenants.

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<sup>82</sup> Favoured tenants can be households with high incomes, e.g. so-called "urban bourgeoisie."

Migrant organisations have been involved in housing projects to some extent. They are often members of round tables and districts' respectively local working groups at the municipal level. They have started own projects addressing elderly migrants with regard to health and care – but there have been only a few initiatives in the area of housing to date. Migrant associations have taken part in the organisation of “street festival”, their representatives are members of special committees or have established their own Migrant's Working Groups to improve the district's programmes. In general, there has been a change in the role of the public sector in recent years from promoter to sponsor and partner of social housing measures. The tasks of social housing were delegated to the local level. The federal government, however, has promoted specific programmes with regard to recognised special needs and has supported municipalities with pilot projects addressing immigrants and elderly persons in recent years.

### **4.3.3 Social Housing Policies and Measures Addressing Migrants**

#### **4.3.3.1 Ethnic Blind Housing Measures**

Since the mid-1970s, measures have been applied to avoid the so-called ghettos in urban spaces at a more local level (Münch and Kirchhoff, 2009). The federal government has also started the Urban Redevelopment programme in the states of the previous West Germany since the 1970s. The programme indicated a change of policy from external expansion to inner-city rehabilitation and improvement. It is aimed at modernisation and improvement of buildings and urban infrastructure in cities and towns. The costs are shared by the federal government, the federal states and the municipalities. After reunification in 1989/1990, this programme was extended to the “new” federal states. The Urban Heritage Conservation programme started in 1991. It focuses on preserving historic city centres and the restoration of buildings to preserve cultural value and promote a private-ownership structure. At the beginning of the programme, there were subsidies only for historic cities in former East Germany. The programme was later extended to the former West Germany. The ‘Urban Redevelopment in West Germany programme, the Urban Redevelopment in Eastern Germany programme, and the Active City and Local Centres programme fund the energy-saving renovation of the social infrastructure and are not specifically targeted on immigrants (Coalition Agreement 2009).

The federal government works together with the KfW<sup>83</sup> (*Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau*) to provide programmes for residential buildings; e.g. “Home Ownership”, “Energy-Efficient Rehabilitation and Construction” as well as “Housing Modernisation”. The KfW has promoted non-specific programmes in the areas of construction, modernisation and energy conservation.

Further housing programmes funded by the government are mostly area-related and focus on local facilities, cooperation and integration of different population groups in the districts. The “Local Concepts: Housing” Programme and the “Socially Integrative City” programme were initiated to reinforce cities and/or city districts with special development needs. Municipalities have promoted initiatives in order to achieve a social mix in districts. These activities have also been found to stabilise the structure and to improve the living and housing conditions in segregated areas. Cities and local authorities have initiated their own projects to develop innovative policies on housing and cultural diversity at the local level. This now appears to be a trend. Initiatives within the European

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<sup>83</sup> The KfW is a bank owned by the Federal Republic of Germany (80%) and the federal states (20%).

Network of Cities for Local Integration Policies for Migrants (CLIP) should be mentioned in this context. In Germany Frankfurt and Stuttgart participate in the CLIP projects.

Since January 2007, municipalities in Germany have got an instrument to influence the local housing market within the government-funded programme “Local Concepts: Housing”. Eight pilot projects have been supported and tested within this ExWoSt<sup>84</sup> programme. The main objectives of these projects are housing for low-income households and/or households who have difficulties in finding affordable homes, balancing housing supply against housing demand, reinforcement of city centres, testing of forms of communication and cooperation and “Housing Improvement District”. Synergies between the housing policy and the urban development policy are of great importance within these concepts. Projects within the programme aim developing appropriate local concepts. The ExWoSt programme is not specifically targeted to immigrants. But that does not mean that immigrants have not been perceived as a target group of new planning measures. Migrants have already been partially involved in the development of new concepts. Working groups, supervision groups, workshops and round tables together with migrant associations should be established and/or organised within these projects. New forms of cooperation should also be tested and evaluated within this programme.

The so-called “Socially Integrative City” programme has been financed by the federal government and the federal states since 1999. It is aimed at counteracting the widening socio-spatial rifts in the cities. The federal government has promoted measures to improve integration into villages, towns, cities and districts with special development needs and/or measures with regard to ethnic segregation. Social-integrative projects have been supported within the programme. The programme is also aimed at the linking of measures and resources in accommodations providing incentives for cooperation.

The programme supports local efforts in the following areas: employment (e.g. training for unemployed persons), social issues (e.g. improvement of housing and living conditions and infrastructure as well as enhancement of the social mix with autochthonous populations), ecology (e.g. appropriate forms of housing), participation (facilitating approaches and inhabitants' initiatives), and policy (integration of different policy sectors). Since 1999, 523 quarters in 328 municipalities have been funded with 2.3 billion euro (Schuleri-Hartje, 2010).

From January 1995 to December 2000, the North-Rhine Westphalia Ministry of Economy and Work supported the pilot programme “Working and Housing”, which combined publicly sponsored employment and training of unemployed people with the creation of additional housing for groups who are disadvantaged on housing markets. Today this type of integrated labour-market project has spread. It has also been supported within present-day state-funded programmes. Within the “Socially Integrative City” programme the federal government supported additional non-construction measures with 95 million euro over the years 2006-2008. Measures of local economy and employment policy, youth politics and educational policy as well as integration of immigrants have been recently supported within the programme in a competitive procedure. Complementary programmes supported by the European Social Fund (ESF) have partnered with the “Socially integrative city” programme since 2007.

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<sup>84</sup> Housing measures and scientific research within the “Experimental Housing and Urban Development” (ExWoSt) programme are funded by the federal government. The ExWoSt is responsible for scientific supervision of pilot housing projects and specialist advice in the spheres of spatial planning, urban development and housing and building. It contributes to an innovative and solution-orientated practice in housing and urban design.

There are also signs of a change in awareness about forms of housing for elderly persons. Germany has experienced construction and transformation of senior-friendly dwellings in recent years. Housing aspects in the construction of nursing homes are currently much more in favour than care aspects. For example, it has been noted that double rooms are not popular with old people and a long corridor is economically wasteful (Kirsch, 2008). The federal government aims to promote a successful generational policy that enables elderly persons to live independently as long as possible. General approaches to senior-friendly housing for elderly persons include nursing homes, new cross-generational housing institutions; hospices established by immigrants and senior citizens' homes with culturally appropriate housing advice and support services as well as assisted living facilities for the elderly with a migratory background. The "Improving Cross-generational Housing and Neighbourhood" programme (*Wohnen für Mehrgenerationen-Gemeinschaft stärken, Quartier beleben*) has been funded by the Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth and includes 30 innovative collective housing projects. The projects focus, inter alia, on renovation, construction or special collective housing forms for old people, e.g. in rural areas.

The "Housing Modernisation" programme ("Senior Housing Conversion" sub-programme - *Altersgerecht Wohnen*) began in April 2009. Low-interest loans from the KfW banking group are available for private individuals and landlords in order to adapt owner-occupied or rented dwellings for use by old and handicapped persons. The federal government has funded this programme with 80 million euro until 2011. The federal government has also supported the "Innovations for Appropriate Urban Neighbourhoods for Families and Senior Citizens" ExWoSt programme since December 2005. There have been 27 projects with a focus on joint services and neighbourhoods within this programme. These two programmes were initiated by the federal government and are non specific for immigrants but for elderly persons. Furthermore, the following new measures are provided and supported by the federal states in Germany: supports for regular facilities in Rhineland-Palatinate to meet the special needs of senior citizens with a migratory background and immigrants in need of care, "Grow Older in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern" (access to existing services); advanced training in culturally sensitive geriatric care for nursing and care assistance in Saxony-Anhalt; an intercultural opening of the geriatric care services in Berlin (admission and care in regular care services and facilities).

Innovative social housing approaches of the housing industry should be particularly noted here. These approaches can be divided into three groups: problem-related approaches (high segregated buildings have being dynamited and new one-family-houses have been built; noise telephone hotline with regard to noise nuisances; delinquency, vandalism, drugs and "felt insecurity" concierge boxes, complaint management, conflict mediation in neighbourhoods, a civil alarm system and urban renewal measures; missing social cohesion at neighbourhood accommodation management together with inhabitants, modernisation with involvement of inhabitants, establishment of social care facilities, supply of public rooms, leisure offers); target group-related approaches (migrants integration courses and German language courses; old people home visits made by association of volunteers, care of children with involvement of old people, assisted living, home emergency calls and medical supervision, provision of guest apartments for home visits by family members, intermediation of services) and neighbourhood-related approaches (structural improvements in residential areas art projects, environmental planning measures; facilitating measures construction of clubs, participation in the neighbourhood management, e.g. green

neighbourhood housing for young and old persons in Mainz, enabling measures in Kassel) (cf. Behr et al., 2008).

#### **4.3.3.2 Measures Promoting Integration and Meeting Migrants' Needs?**

Municipal and non-profit social care facilities have traditionally partially compensated for inadequate social housing for households facing social problems. Specific housing programmes addressing immigrants which are supported by the federal government have been rare until now. There have been mostly initiatives addressing the social housing of immigrants at the local level since the end of the 1980s. Furthermore, specific housing programmes for families with children, handicapped, disabled and old people initiated by the federal government and the federal states are new. Political awareness of spatial settlement patterns and problem situations of immigrants has actually grown (Einwanderungsgesellschaft, 2010). There are new initiatives within the neighbourhood support programmes which focus on housing and health issues and sensitise the migrant population groups to health damages because of mildewed dwellings. The following spheres of activity have received priority within these programmes: employment, education, social integration and residents' participation as well as value creation in residential areas. The federal "Social Town—Education, Economy, Work in Residential Areas" programme (*Soziale Stadt—Bildung, Wirtschaft, Arbeit im Quartier [BIWAQ]*) supported by the ESF is one of the programmes that have been implemented for 2008–2012. It is aimed at integration of immigrants and improvement of their educational and labour market situation. Specific housing programmes targeted on immigrants have been increasingly initiated in recent years (2008–2010).

There are also projects which are not state funded and have been initiated by civil society, e.g. housing projects addressing women or health and geriatric care projects initiated by migrant associations. There have been individual initiatives of immigrants in this area since the end of the 1980s. Traditionally, German welfare organisations have attempted to take into account the interests and needs of immigrants within the scope of their activities. Ethnic, but also ethnically mixed initiative groups, have initiated services and organisations to meet the needs of immigrants as well. Migrant associations or groups for students, women, youth and senior citizens with a migratory background have followed the already existing labour associations, religious associations, leisure associations and sports associations; family associations and parental associations; professional associations and trade associations; political associations, cultural associations and linguistic associations; social and humanitarian associations of migrants since the 1990s. The outpatient 'Lifetimes e.V.' hospice service of Wuppertal was founded in 1995. It is open for various cultures and denominations. It is financed by the health insurance schemes, by fines from the public prosecutor's office and a significant portion from private donations. In 2005, seven German and Korean women with various professional and biographic backgrounds founded the "Dong Heng" hospice in Berlin. At the beginning, a Korean women's group had the idea to found a hospice for Koreans. Many of these women had come as young nurses to Germany. A large amount of their work is done on a voluntary basis.

There are also programmes to design living environments to meet the needs of elderly immigrants, e.g. "Intercultural Gardens" programmes, which have begun proliferating throughout Germany in recent years (Olbermann, 2007, cf. <http://www.stiftung-interkultur.de>; <http://www.los-online.de>). In 1995, Bosnian refugees from Gottingen and the Ethiopian agrarian engineer Tassew Shimeles went in search of suitable land to cultivate even in exile. They founded their own association which was

supported by the Caritas and the local parish from the beginning. Intercultural gardens became community gardens. These are places where a lust for nature and gardens met a mixed society of migrant and autochthonous populations. Such joint ventures should lead to a better social climate in districts and at the neighbourhood level. The aim of the intercultural gardens is not only urban recreation, but also intercultural communication and integration on the basis of a resource-oriented approach.

Since April 2010, the Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Affairs has promoted the specific “Integration and City District Policy” ExWoSt research programme and pilot projects for better integration in cities. Projects in six municipalities (Mülheim an der Ruhr, Trier, Hamburg, Nürnberg, Jena and Quakenbrück) have been funded by the federal government within this programme. Projects have been realised under scientific supervision which should analyse how successful integration of migrant populations and socially excluded autochthonous population groups can be optimised. Research results should influence the future development of both the integration policy and the urban planning policy of the federal government. There remains the question how investigations and new and existing pilot projects can evolve into meaningful and sustainable housing strategies. The measures within the programme are aimed at structural and strategic interaction, networking and intercultural opening of local services as well as the participation of immigrants and migrant associations in the decision-making processes.

#### **4.4. Conclusion**

Traditional housing policy focused only on providing accommodation or economic support. Furthermore, housing policy was marked by individual-related benefits and property oriented subsidies (e.g. introduction of home annuity [*Wohn-Riester*] and building savings support). It was a significant shift in housing policy from object-related supports to subject-oriented supports which strengthened the rent solvency of recipients. This change has led to a loss of importance of social housing. However, the promotion of homeownership is of increasing importance today.

Rents for small dwellings and the percentage of old people living in single households have increased. There is a need for appropriate regulations on social housing addressing not only elderly persons, but also lower-income households, among them immigrants, households with children, handicapped and disabled people, especially in regions with economic strength. New forms of housing for the elderly are a niche market for innovative senior-service providers because the existing forms of housing often addressed wealthy pensioners.

The federal government has not yet built new subsidised dwellings. Meanwhile, existing social housing stock has decreased. Instead of other subsidies (taxes, abolition of homeowner credits), control over markets is considered a preferred “instrument”. Housing policy does not use nationally standardised instruments throughout Germany considering regional differences of housing markets. Thus political measures, which allow more flexibility at the local level, are relevant. The first social housing measures addressing immigrants stemmed from municipal initiatives and referred to present and previous municipal and publicly financed low-cost dwellings. Housing projects were mainly effective if the municipalities worked together with housing companies, housing cooperatives and migrant associations from the outset of the project, e.g. in Muenster. Immigrants were implicitly targeted by the area-based and social mix policies as long as the promotion of housing was aimed at supporting wider parts of population, representing efforts at the neighbourhood level. The previous political discourse, which did not take into account that

Germany has become a country of immigration and migrants will stay permanently, also played a role in this context. As a rule, migrants' initiatives focus on finding solutions for current problems which become their main concern. In recent years, political awareness about housing needs and social housing measures has increased not only at the national and regional level, but also among immigrants. There is increasing awareness of key policies and immigrants not only about consequences of demographic change, but also about the frequently precarious situation of immigrants.

The quantity of existing housing projects and programmes gives an impression that there are many practical and political solutions to social housing. The quantity of new social housing projects surely indicates a rising political awareness of the needs and meaning of immigrants. A detailed analysis of housing policies and practices shows that pilot projects have mostly been supported by the federal government. There remains the question how housing solutions that work well in pilot projects can be transferred to sustainable interventions. Until now, the results of those programmes have been mitigated. The government advocates for “excellent” integration projects and will transform them into standard options. It also aims to achieve the best possible cross-linking of various local integration support measures.

In recent years, housing policy has been recognised as having to focus on social housing although the housing markets in Germany are more or less balanced. It is crucial to avoid social polarisation and to involve residents in housing programmes in order to promote politically sustainable housing. The ethnic-blind approach in the form of subject-oriented supports coexists with innovative projects explicitly addressing different population groups, among them immigrants. Innovative housing policy reacts to the trends and supports development of new housing forms. General cross-generational and collective housing approaches are new. Existing specific social housing measures addressing immigrants have been initiated to enable migrants to participate in housing approaches and to improve their housing situation and integration in different ways. Specific measures towards immigrants are aimed at reducing the differences between migrant and autochthonous populations.

Overall, analysis of the housing policy and social housing measures shows the following implications regarding recent trends: lower new-construction activity (a record low), a rapidly falling vacancy rate in some regions, striking orientation of non-profit housing companies towards economic effects than towards social-political responsibility, drastic reduction of social housing stock, forced sell-off of municipal and publicly financed low-cost dwellings, scarcity of low-priced dwellings, falling incomes on the more precarious labour market, an increasing number of small households as well as newly planned reductions of unemployment and housing benefits. These implications make clear that there are new challenges in the area of social housing for the federal government, authorities, associations and civic society. The experiences with new social housing measures addressing immigrants will increasingly gain in importance.

## CHAPTER 5. SOCIAL HOUSING POLICIES AND INTEGRATION POLICIES IN EUROPE: LINKS AND INNOVATIVE TRENDS

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### 5.1 Framing the issue: general trends of social housing policy

As we said in the Foreword, the main goals of this report are, first, investigating the links between social housing policies and integration policies and, second, identifying innovative social housing projects addressing working and retired persons belonging to ethnic minorities.

Both these analyses need a contextualization in the general development of this policy sector. Therefore, before analysing issues concerning ethnic minorities, we briefly summarise the main developments and trends of social housing policies in Europe. Actually, despite the diversity of measures adopted in the four European countries analysed in the previous chapters, it is possible to identify some common steps (Cecodhas 2007b).

- I. In the Nineteen century, as a consequence of the industrial revolution and massive urbanization housing started to be perceived as a social problem; however, at the beginning social housing was developed mainly at the initiative of charitable institutions and private companies. The state only gradually took responsibility for the provision of decent housing to disadvantaged people.
- II. In the post–WWI decades, massive reconstruction and economic and demographic boom led nation states to further develop the public system of social housing, providing housing for the working and middle classes.
- III. Since the 1970s social housing has been characterised by a reduction of public expenditure and an increasing market-orientation. In the 1980s governments started targeting public housing expenditures on “vulnerable groups” and gradually opting for demand-side subsidies to the detriment of supply-side subsidies.

Although the trends begun in the 1970s and 1980s are still ongoing, in the last years political authorities have increasingly recognised the severe shortages of affordable housing and social housing has come back into the public debate and the political agenda (ibid.). However, European countries agree that the post–WWII social housing models should be abandoned in favour of more effective (and in some cases cheaper) ones. As various scholars have pointed out (Kleinman at al., 1998; Edgar et al., 2002; Cecodhas, 2007b; UNECE, 2006; FEANSTA, 2005; Musterd and Murie, 2006; Tunstall and Fenton, 2006) and the previous chapters clearly highlighted, the current trends in social housing seem to be the following.

- ***Retreat of the state from housing provision and adoption of a market-oriented approach to social housing.*** Especially in the countries characterized by large social housing sectors, public authorities have undertaken stock transfer operations to housing associations/companies and have increased economic independence of the latter. As a consequence, the housing associations/companies have fostered the diversification of their portfolio developing also profitable and non-residential activities for subsidizing social housing.

- ***Decentralization of social housing policies*** through the transfer of tasks and responsibilities from the central state to the regional and/or local level. The main rationales for this process have been the will to make social housing policies closer to the users and the necessity of coping with growing inequalities in the regional housing market and different local needs.
- ***Development of neighbourhood services and additional services for tenants.*** Social housing providers not only manage social housing, but also build infrastructures and services for residents, foster social integration and support residents' positive inclusion in the neighbourhood. In fact, they are increasingly recognizing that, in order to achieve ethnic minorities' housing integration meant in a broad sense, not only housing is needed, but also special services to facilitate their access to education, training, jobs and welfare services and to promote positive relations among neighbours.
- ***Increasing emphasis on area-based policies.*** These measures go beyond the provision of housing and are generally aimed at fostering the renovation of specific city areas and the development of social cohesion.
- ***Increasing emphasis on access to home-ownership.*** Social housing providers usually sell housing in order to guarantee the economic sustainability of their activity and/or to provide affordable housing to households who are not able to access home-ownership in the free market. In this last case, some innovative solutions to keep the prices low have been developed (see, for instance, the share-ownership in the UK, Chapter 1).
- ***Renovation of housing stock.*** The rehabilitation and renovation of existing stock is a priority especially in countries where there are large-scale social housing estates built post-WWII.
- ***Targeting of social housing on the "vulnerable groups"***, i.e. people with special needs (e.g. disabled, elderly, young families, etc.) or with relatively low incomes. This is the result of a double process. First, the above-mentioned support to home ownership risks leaving in social housing only households who cannot afford the purchase. Second, the reduction of social housing expenditure has produced in many cases restrictions of access to social housing estates leading to a concentration of deprived households.

Despite the last trend above, we can distinguish two main allocation criteria for provision of social housing: universalistic or targeted (Cecodhas, 2007b). The universalistic model aims at providing the whole population with housing of decent quality at an affordable price. Therefore, in this model, housing is considered a public responsibility and is delivered either through municipal housing companies or through non-profit organisations. In this approach, social housing is allocated through waiting lists with or without priority criteria, and local authorities reserve a number of vacancies for those households who have an urgent housing need. In this conception, rents are cost-based, but there is a rent guarantee for disadvantaged households and housing allowances. The targeted approach, on the other hand, is based on the assumption that the objectives of housing policy are met predominantly by the market and that only those households for whom the market is unable to deliver housing of decent quality at affordable prices should benefit from social housing. Within this approach, however, there is wide variation in terms of the type and size of the social housing sector, as well as in the criteria of allocation. According to Cecodhas's categorisation, The Netherlands adopts a universalistic approach, while France, Germany and the UK have a targeted approach.

The way in which social housing deals with ethnic minorities is strongly influenced both by these differences among countries and by the general transformations analysed above. On the other hand, the settlement of ethnic minorities has affected social housing policies fostering, for instance, increasing emphasis on area-based and social mix policies, as we will explain later.

## 5.2. Integration policies and social housing policies: a history of hidden links

As we already said before, Cecodhas (2007b) underlined the weak links between integration and social housing policies in European countries. Here, we try to understand if, despite the few formal links, integration policies have influenced social housing policies.

As we explained in the Foreword, the four analysed countries traditionally show different integration policy models which can be classified on the basis on two main criteria: 1) the degree of recognition of cultural diversity, i.e. the recognition of immigrants' specific cultural traits (multiculturalism) vs. the tendency to ignore and remove their cultural specificities (assimilationism); 2) the degree of state intervention, i.e. public support for removing or maintaining immigrants' cultural features (statelist approach) vs. the attribution of these tasks to civil society organisations (societal approach) (Zincone 2009; Caponio 2006; Heckman et al., 2010). The combination of these two criteria produces the typology shown in the following table. As we can see, the four analysed countries are located in different categories, thus the comparison among them is particularly relevant.

**Table 1 - Integration policy models**

	<b>Assimilationism</b>	<b>Multiculturalism</b>
<b>Statelist approach</b>	INCLUSIVE STATALIST ASSIMILATIONISM France	INCLUSIVE STATALIST MULTICULTURALISM the Netherlands
		EXCLUSIVE STATALIST MULTICULTURALISM Germany
<b>Societal approach</b>	INCLUSIVE COMMUNITARIAN ASSIMILATIONISM USA	INCLUSIVE COMMUNITARIAN MULTICULTURALISM The UK

*Source: Zincone (2009)*

If we consider the questionnaires on innovative social housing projects addressing ethnic minorities that we submitted in Germany, France, the Netherlands and England (see Foreword and Annex 1), we observe a certain correspondence between integration models and the approach towards ethnic minorities adopted in social housing. Although the comparison between the four countries is based on a small number of questionnaires, especially for Germany and France<sup>85</sup>, some relevant differences emerge: in France, where the assimilationist approach has prevailed, the investigated projects which declared to have specific goals concerning ethnic minorities are only 40% compared

<sup>85</sup> In The Netherlands 19 questionnaires were collected, in the UK 15 questionnaires (this stage was focused on England only), in Germany 8 questionnaires and in France 5 questionnaires.

with 75% in Germany and 93% in England. The percentage in The Netherlands, albeit higher than in France, is not as high as in the other multicultural countries: 62% of the investigated projects have specific goals concerning ethnic minorities<sup>86</sup>. This is probably due to the fact that since the late 1980s in social housing references to ethnic background in any official formulation were banned, as we will better analyse later.

Other relevant data concerning this issue are the share of ethnic minorities among the beneficiaries. Social housing projects exclusively addressing ethnic minorities seem to be particularly widespread in England, where they represent 72% of the investigated projects<sup>87</sup>, while in the other countries the percentage is much lower than 50%. Actually, the societal approach, which assigns an active role to self-organised ethnic minorities in producing social housing provisions (see, for instance, the BME Housing Associations in the UK, Chapter 1), probably fosters the development of specific measures more than the statist approach does. Non-profit ethnic organisations are in fact less committed to satisfying the housing needs of the whole population and less worried about avoiding criticism for preferential treatment reserved for specific groups than public authorities – even when the latter are multiculturalist oriented.

Finally, the presence of links between social housing policy and integration policy is also confirmed by data on the synergies developed by the innovative projects investigated in this research: 52% of projects<sup>88</sup> include synergies with ethnic minority integration policies (see also section 5.3).

***These data suggest that housing policies are increasingly aware of their relevance in terms of ethnic minorities' integration and are progressively used also for this purpose. Links between the two policy sectors then seem to become stronger.***

However, we should remember that the four analysed countries are moving away from the traditional integration models and are shifting towards a sort of convergence (Zincone 2009; Bertossi 2007). Integration policies are indeed always on the move. Thus, in order to better understand whether integration policies have influenced social housing policies, we now look not only at the aforementioned integration models but also at the evolution of integration policies over the last fifty years including current changes. In the following tables we compare the development of social housing policy approaches towards ethnic minorities and the integration policies of each country.

We have used the IMISCOE Working Papers for identifying the integration policies in Germany and the Netherlands<sup>89</sup> and a COMPASS paper<sup>90</sup> for describing the integration policies in France and the UK. As far as the social housing policies are concerned, we have used the analysis contained in the previous chapters.

We begin by comparing British integration policies and the approach towards ethnic minorities of the social housing policies.

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<sup>86</sup> A total of 10 out of 16 projects, since there are 3 missing responses.

<sup>87</sup> A total of 8 out of 11 projects, since there are 4 missing responses

<sup>88</sup> It means 23 out of 44 projects since there are 3 missing responses.

<sup>89</sup> M. Borkert and W. Bosswich, 2007; M. Bruquetas-Caleejo, et al. 2007.

<sup>90</sup> C. Bertossi, 2007. For the British case we also referred to the country report produced with IMISCOE C9 Cluster by Cerna and Wietholz (2007).

**Table 2 - The United Kingdom**

	<b>Integration policies in the UK (COMPASS paper)</b>	<b>Social housing policies towards ethnic minorities in the UK (see Chapter 1)</b>
1960s	<p>The beginning of race relations policy: 1965 and 1968 legislation on race relations came into force and integration was defined by Home Secretary “as equal opportunity accompanied by cultural diversity”.</p> <p>The management of the integration of ethnic minorities was decentralised at the local level, making the city the area where the issue of ethnicity would be managed.</p> <p>The national Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants was established to support the activities of local organisations committed to helping migrants.</p> <p>By the mid-1960s a number of politically influential NGOs had begun to monitor whether equality opportunity existed <i>de facto</i>, publishing report.</p>	<p>From the late 1950s, it was clear that newly arrived immigrants were living in the worst housing conditions, often in inner city areas.</p> <p>A number of vibrant new inner city housing associations were formed to renovate the dilapidated housing in which many BME people were living.</p> <p>The Housing Associations Charitable Trust was set up to address housing problems faced by immigrants.</p>
1970s-80s	<p>The Race Relation Act 1976 introduced the concept of indirect discrimination, made racial and sex discrimination illegal in public places, employment and housing, and even permitted a certain degree of affirmative action.</p> <p>This Act made local councils responsible for equal opportunities and good relations between communities of different races.</p> <p>In 1980s many structures were set up to deal with the race relations agenda.</p> <p>After 1981 and 1985 inner-city riots, a frequent government response to ethnic minority discontent was to co-opt black middle class leaders into low-level policy making.</p>	<p>In the 1970s The Black and Minority Ethnic Housing Associations were set up through local initiatives.</p> <p>In the 1980s “Positive Action Training in Housing” was developed to provide work and training programmes in housing for members of black and minority communities, especially in local authorities housing departments and in the larger housing association.</p>
1990s	<p>Illegal immigration and asylum became highly politicised.</p>	<p>Illegal immigration and asylum led to a tightening of the formal rules governing eligibility to apply for social housing.</p>
2000s	<p>New public issue arose around the “failure of integration” after the urban riots in North West England in 2001.</p> <p>In response to urban riots, a new agenda emerged centred on “community cohesion” and placing an emphasis on a participative conception of citizenship with a shared vision and sense of belonging for all the communities in British society.</p>	<p>In the mid-2000s the accommodation of asylum seekers was reorganised around a more diffused and dispersed pattern of accommodation.</p> <p>After the urban riots of 2001, at the local level spatial dispersal programmes were adopted on the idea that spatial segregation within towns leads to “separate but parallel lives. However, the main response rests on straightforward community development practices.</p> <p>As consequence of the Equality Act 2010 and the</p>

	<p>The Race Relations Act 2000 extended the Act of 1976 to the whole public sector and schools and gave public authorities a new statutory duty to actively produce and publish a race equality scheme or policy.</p>	<p>proposed choice-based letting system, housing associations specialised in providing housing only to specific ethnic minorities will no longer be allowed to do so since this approach is deemed as discriminating .</p>
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In the United Kingdom, in the last fifty years the approaches of social housing policies towards ethnic minorities seem to have mirrored changes in integration policy paradigms. Since the 1960s British integration policy has been non-assimilationist and ethnic minorities have been encouraged to adhere to any cultural traits they might wish to retain. At the same time the UK has been a forerunner in terms of equal opportunity policies and anti-discrimination legislation. In the 1970s the multiculturalist approach was strengthened and ethnic minorities have become actors in the social and political institutions (Geddes 2003). This institutionalisation was reflected by the social housing policy sector through the establishment of BME housing associations and the development of “Positive Action Training in Housing”.

In the 2000s the emphasis on community cohesion and concern for ethnic minorities’ “parallel lives” have once again influenced social housing and urban policies, which are increasingly aimed at fighting the concentration of ethnic minorities through dispersal programmes. Furthermore, the recent Race Relations Act might hamper the specialised ethnic-sensitive approach of the BME housing associations, reflecting the new “community cohesion” approach focused on shared elements rather than on differences among ethnic groups.

**Table 3 - France**

	<b>Integration policies in France (COMPASS paper)</b>	<b>Social housing policies towards ethnic minorities in France (see Chapter 3)</b>
1950–1960s	Immigration was dealt with in a purely economic perspective. The presence of migrant workers was not considered to be a long-term phenomenon. Labour migration was left to central administrative bodies. Integration was not an issue.	Specific social housing policies addressing immigrants were developed, mainly with the aim of providing temporary accommodation. In 1956 Sonacotral (Building National society for Workers from Algeria) was set up with the aim of providing housing (mainly residences and temporary accommodations) for male Algerian workers in France. The FAS (Social Action Fund for Immigrants and their Families) was created but it was mainly used to solve the problem of bidonvilles and to build temporary housing solutions. Between 1964 and 1975 the State engaged in a fight against bidonvilles where many immigrant workers lived. The <i>Cités de transit</i> for immigrants were set up.
1970s	There were plans to repatriate immigrants, but they failed. With the closure of the borders in 1974, the presence of immigrants changed: families increased by way of reunification. Children of these migrants automatically became French citizens by virtue of nationality law.	Immigrants gained access to the HLM social housing stock. However, they settled in the lowest quality stock, fostering ethnic segregation.
1980s	The early 1980s were marked by a series of riots linked to the issue of the integration of immigrant communities into urban areas. The debate around immigration centred on integration of immigrants and national citizenship began. The “France of integration” of 1980s gave way to assimilation. New organisations were set up by immigrant communities at the start of 1980s (the 1981 law gave foreigners the right to form organisations without prior permission from the Prefecture). Collective actions by immigrant communities became a national phenomenon and SOS Racism and France Plus were created.	As a consequence of urban riots and immigrant movements, innovative approaches were developed connecting housing policies to a wide range of issues concerning urban life (infrastructure, meeting and leisure places, collective perception of places, etc.). The policy focus passed from neighbourhoods to cities: the DSU approach ( <i>Développement Social Urbain</i> ), i.e. integrated city development, was adopted .
1990s	Riots in urban areas were considered to be a combined issue of spatial segregation and social exclusion in urban areas.	Evidence of immigrants’ segregation and urban riots led to urban policies centred on the <i>mixité sociale</i> , on the one hand, and on housing rights, on the other hand (p. 13): Besson Law 1990 on housing policies, although without a clear reference to immigrants, had a goal of fighting discrimination, and the LOV Law ( <i>Loi d’Orientation sur la ville</i> ) was aimed at fostering

	<p>The policies concerning problematic areas involved a set of local participants which could include organisations based on national, ethnic or religious solidarity, promoting a sort of ethnicisation of policy-making at the local level. At the same time, local authorities could promote certain forms of communitarism by negotiating electoral support from certain group in exchange for responding to their cultural or religious needs.</p>	<p>the <i>mixité sociale</i> .  Since the 1990s immigrants have been included in the wider categories of the socially weak people.  The non-profit sector has increasingly become a complement to the public social housing sector, especially at the local level, and has developed skills in coping with specific ethnic minorities' housing problems. Some of them have been directly involved in the management of HLM housing stock.</p>
<p>Late 1990s  2000s</p>	<p>Discrimination enters national debate.  New public anti-discrimination initiatives and laws were adopted.  French State confirms that (religious) identity is considered an obstacle to integration (e.g. the law of 15 March 2004 banned conspicuous religious symbols from State schools).</p>	<p>Current social housing policies concerning immigrants are based on two principles: first, the territorial dispersion of immigrants fosters balanced social relations in urban areas; second, integration of immigrants should occur on an individual basis not on an ethnic basis.</p>

In France, the approach of housing policy towards ethnic minorities partially reflects the integration policy paradigm. Clear matches between the two policy sectors were registered. Transitory accommodations were provided as long as immigrants' presence was considered temporary, i.e. until the 1970s. After France recognised that it was an immigration country, immigrants gained access to HLM social housing stock. Subsequently, as a consequence of urban riots, social housing and urban policies have even (although implicitly) become important tools of integration policy aimed at fostering the dispersal of ethnic minorities and their dilution and assimilation into the French society (Donzelot 2004). Actually, as Casillo explains (Chapter 3), although the concern about social mix is mainly a concern about ethnic mix, ethnic minorities are not usually explicitly mentioned and social housing policies for immigrant and ethnic groups are subsumed within the policies for disadvantaged people.

On the other hand, despite the rhetoric on assimilationism and the blindness to the issue of ethnicity at national level, the local practices have always been more sensitive to ethnicity (Caponio 2006; Moore 2004; Geddes 2003). This gap between the national blind-ethnic approach and the local ethnic-sensitive approach seems to characterise both integration and social housing policies.

**Table 4 - Germany**

	<b>Integration policies in Germany (IMISCOE working paper)</b>	<b>Social housing policies towards ethnic minorities in Germany (see Chapter 4)</b>
1950s–1960s	During the post-WWII period the guestworker policy prevailed.	In the 1960s, guest workers were accommodated in barracks, former production halls and caserns. They were promoted with accommodation in specially constructed immigrant hostels and in large suburban housing estates within social housing construction in the 1970s.
1970s–1980s	The 1978 German parliament was concerned with rising conflicts among immigrants and autochthons and approved the establishment of a “Commissioner for the Promotion of Integration of Foreign Employees and their Families”, who in 1979 published a memorandum demanding active integration policy. Social integration of migrants was promoted from the early 1970s only at the local level, by recognised welfare organisations, local communities and local labour administrations.	Since the mid-1970s measures have been applied to avoid ghettos at the local level and municipalities have promoted initiatives for achieving a social mix. Social housing initiatives implicitly addressing immigrants began in the 1980s, but were developed only at the local level without direct involvement of the federal government. Since the end of the 1980s immigrants have developed their own housing projects.
1990s	In the 1990s Germany began to recognise itself as an immigration country. Since the 1990s local integration programmes have differentiated to a broad scope of services for immigrants, although in most cases not explicitly directed towards migrants.	The first housing projects explicitly addressing immigrants were implemented in the early 1990s, mainly on municipalities’ initiative.
	In the mid-2000s consistent integration policy came into force for the first time (2005). The BAMF (Federal Office for Immigration and Refugees) started several pilot programmes for integration measures at the local level, cooperating with cities and welfare NGOs with longstanding experience.	Specific housing programmes targeted on immigrants promoted by the federal government are very recent. Since the beginning of the 2000s welfare organisations have developed in cooperation with municipalities, migrant organisations and other non-profit organisations culturally sensitive concepts in the area of housing. The federal Government responds to these developments by supporting pilot projects . Strong synergies between housing policies and urban development have been developed to achieve a social mix; however, immigrants are an implicit target of area-based policies.

Like in France, German integration policy and social housing policy approaches towards immigrants have partially matched. The two policy sectors have shown similar approaches especially at the beginning (i.e. during the post-WWII period, when specific but temporary housing provisions for migrants were realised, reflecting the recognition of the specificity of immigrants’ needs but not their permanent settlement in the country) and in recent years (i.e. in the 2000s when

wide-scope integration policy has come into force and, contemporaneously, specific housing programmes targeting ethnic minorities have been developed by federal government).

In the middle, a crucial role was played by local public actors and especially by local non-profit organisations, including immigrants' associations. Actually, as in France, for a long period the mismatch was mainly between national integration and social housing policies which were reluctant to consider the permanent settlement of immigrants, and local integration and social housing measures which developed pragmatic responses to migrants' needs.

**Table 5 - The Netherlands**

	<b>Integration policies in The Netherlands (IMISCOE working paper)</b>	<b>Social housing policies towards ethnic minorities in The Netherlands (see Chapter 2)</b>
1960s–1970s	<p>Immigrants were seen as temporary migrants and guest-workers. Reception facilities were short-term orientated and scarce.</p> <p>In the 1970s a welfare policy was developed to respond to the needs of some vulnerable groups, such as guest workers, asylum-seekers, migrants from Surinam and Dutch Antilles, Moluccas and the Travellers.</p> <p>Many private institutions were initiated to separately provide welfare services for each of these groups.</p> <p>Welfare organisations and churches took care of most of services of immigrants during the 1960s and 1970s.</p>	<p>In the 1950s and 1960s housing schemes to accommodate persons from former colonies in barracks, monasteries and residences were formulated by the Dutch State.</p> <p>Several collective tenant associations were set up in the 1970s, but they have always been colour-blind. Nevertheless, there are immigrant welfare organisations which provide information and arrange socio-cultural activities.</p>
1980s	<p>Ethnic Minorities Policy began. The presence of long-term immigrants was recognised and the major political goal was to integrate them into Dutch society.</p> <p>The policy aimed at achieving equality for ethnic minorities and anti-discrimination legislation was reinforced.</p> <p>A group-oriented approach which emphasised respect for own cultural identity prevailed.</p>	<p>In housing the main object was closing the gap between immigrants and locals and policies were ethnically sensitive.</p> <p>In 1981 all legally residing aliens were given access to social housing.</p> <p>The development of ethnic HAs such as the BME in the UK was discussed but stopped.</p>
1990s	<p>Republican Integration Policy was adopted. In the early 1990s a shift from a group-oriented approach to individual integration took place accentuating the socio-economic aspects of integration rather than the cultural and religious ones: measures specifically targeting ethnic minorities were abandoned.</p>	<p>In the late 1980s in social housing references to ethnic background in any official formulation were abolished and the ethnic-targeting practices were deemed discriminatory. The only basis of social housing policies became socio-economic status and immigrants have been targeted on the basis of their income levels.</p> <p>However, cultural features have been addressed at the implementation stage of social housing policies.</p> <p>From the beginning of the 1990s non-Western</p>

		immigrants have become an implicit target of restructuring and renovation plans such as the Big City Policy.
2000s	<p>Integration Policy New Style, centred on a neo-assimilationism approach, has been adopted.</p> <p>However, group-specific policies still survive at the local level of policy and the institutional locus of many policy measures has remained with specific ministries and local governments.</p>	<p>Urban policies implicitly address immigrants, in the perspective of enhancing social cohesion. Projects based on low-income households and area regeneration are the main tools.</p> <p>There are still projects at the local level which put attention on ethnicity, built on the multi-cultural legacy of the past.</p> <p>Housing plans have been developed for meeting the housing needs of temporary workers from Eastern Europe mainly employed in agriculture and construction.</p>

Also in the Netherlands integration policy and social housing policy approaches towards immigrants have partially matched. When immigration was conceived as temporary (1960s-1970s), specific short-term housing measures were undertaken. Then, when the presence of long-term immigrants was recognised in the 1980s, foreigners were given access to social housing. In the following decades the approach of housing policy to ethnic minorities has reflected the changes occurred in integration policies passing from a multiculturalist to an ethnic-blind paradigm. However, despite the increasing ethnic-blind approach, the specific needs of ethnic minorities, together with other non-ethnic-specific cultural needs, have been satisfied in social housing policy implementation carried out by housing associations, particularly at the local level. Actually, Bruquetas-Caleejo et al. (2007) point out that, despite the new neo-assimilationist paradigm, the integration policies were left almost untouched or changed only marginally, producing an increasing divergence between policy formulation and policy implementation and between symbolic politics at the national level and more pragmatic problem-coping approach at the local level. The process was similar to the decoupling or *décalage* that Schain (1999) observed in France. To sum up, as far as the social housing policy approach towards ethnic minorities is concerned, it seems that national level and local level show a certain mismatch given that the first has been characterised by an ethnic-blind approach since the 1980s and the second by an ethnic-sensitive approach.

To conclude, we can affirm that in the four analysed countries *social housing policy approaches towards ethnic minorities have partially reflected the changes that occurred in integration policy, therefore links between the two policy sectors are stronger than they might appear; they are sometimes hidden, but not absent. Actually, the main mismatch occurs not between policy sectors, but between the local level and the central level.* In fact, the local level seems to be the main locus of innovation and application of an ethnic-sensitive approach. It is not by chance that 86% of the social housing innovative projects addressing ethnic minorities investigated during this study have been developed at the city (or even neighbourhood) level.

It is worth noting that the above-mentioned gap between local and national policies is probably widened by some social housing trends such as the shift from public to social housing companies and from a hierarchy control to a more contractual relationship between the commissioning authority and providers (Cecodhas 2007a). These developments have given broader leeway to local social housing providers allowing them to adopt different approaches towards ethnic minorities, since public authorities are less often chiefs and more often partners of local networks.

The innovative social housing projects investigated in this research reveal indeed a **widespread use of partnerships**: only in 3 cases out of 41<sup>91</sup> there are no partnerships. In some countries, this new networking approach has been institutionalised. For instance, in the UK, all local authorities are required to have “local strategic partnerships” which serve as consultative forums across public, private and voluntary sector organisations (Chapter 1). Surprisingly, a great part of partnerships seem to still be homogeneous, i.e. among actors with the same institutional nature (public, non-profit or for profit): this situation concerns around a third of the total valid cases of the investigated innovative projects (12 out of 41).

Nevertheless, **local subjects involved in social housing policies are increasingly diverse** and include public, private and social agencies, such as local authorities, community representatives, welfare services, police, private companies and social housing associations. In the innovative projects investigated in this research the presence of for-profit organisations have been registered in 10 cases out of 41<sup>92</sup> (24%). Public actors are involved in 32 projects out of 41 (78%)<sup>93</sup>. Finally, 31 out of 41 investigate projects (76%) involve non-profit actors (voluntary associations, NGOs, etc.), 19 of which include housing associations.

It is evident that non-profit organizations play a crucial role, especially in catering to changing demands and needs arising from a new profile of the social housing tenants, including ethnic minorities. As the previous tables point out, the **non-profit sector has in fact become increasingly specialised in coping with ethnic minorities’ housing problems**.

In France, for instance, the non-profit sector denounces discriminatory practices and provides concrete help to immigrants such as mediation between tenants and landlords in the private market, economic guarantees for fostering housing access, support in bureaucratic matters, etc. (Chapter 3). In the Netherlands, the ethnic-sensitive housing projects are promoted by housing associations rather than by local authorities (Chapter 2).

In contrast, in Germany the role of non-profit sectors in social housing seems weaker. However, migrant organizations are increasing and are progressively involved in municipal housing projects or act their own initiative to developed culturally sensitive housing measures. More in general, within the non-profit sector, minority ethnic-led NGOs have a relevant role working in partnership with mainstream housing and service providers to overcome the barriers in using these services experienced by ethnic minorities (Edgar, 2004). The most emblematic case is represented by British BME housing associations which have promoted diffusion across the housing sector of an increased sensitivity to ethnic minorities’ housing issues and provide a legitimated public voice to persons with a migratory background (Chapter 1).

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<sup>91</sup> On this issue the valid responses total 41, since there are 6 missing answers.

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<sup>93</sup> Public actors are almost always involved in the investigated projects in all the analysed countries except for the Netherlands, where a leading role is played by Housing Associations.

The analysis of social housing policies in France, Germany, the UK and the Netherlands pointed out another common element concerning the approach to ethnic minorities: *the increasing concern about ethnic territorial segregation*, which has been accompanied by a shift from individual-based policies to area-based policies. Therefore social housing policies have been increasingly related to urban renewal, local development and social cohesion policies. The questionnaires on innovative social housing projects addressing ethnic minorities that we submitted in Germany, France, The Netherlands and England confirm this trend: 26 out of 44 (59%) innovative projects<sup>94</sup> include synergies with social cohesion policy, 18 (41%) with urban regeneration policy, 16 (36%) with local development policy.

For instance, the German federal government has developed the “Social City” programme in order to combine individual policy and area-based policy in a joint strategy for fighting social exclusion and the decline of neighbourhoods (Chapter 4). In the Netherlands, the Big Cities policy considers the neighbourhood the key element of integrated interventions and is based on the assumption that “disadvantaged neighbourhoods are segregated neighbourhoods, which should become desegregated and ‘restructured’, first physically, after which a social and ethnic mix is expected to follow” (Chapter 2). In France the issue of social mix is at the heart of the new social housing policies (Chapter 3).

The formal goal of such social mix policies and urban renewal programmes is the enhancement of housing and the social status of socially excluded groups. However, the actual aim often seems to be the prevention of social tensions between natives and residents with a immigration background as well as the dispersal of ethnic minorities. It is not by chance that these policies have usually been triggered by urban riots, as the previous tables show.

Finally, *an under-investigated link between immigration policies<sup>95</sup> and social housing policy towards ethnic minorities has emerged from our analysis*. For instance, in The Netherlands in the last decade housing measures for temporary workers coming from the Eastern Europe have been developed. Some of the innovative practices identified in England have this same target (see Annex 1). It means that the restrictions in immigration policies and the increasing emphasis put on temporary migration have fostered the development of housing measures for guest workers, resembling the 1950s and 1960s housing policies addressing immigrants.

### **5.3 Innovative projects and trends: high attention to beneficiaries and low investment on learning processes**

As the Cecodhas (2007b) report points out, there is an effort to cater to changing demands and needs arising from the new profiles of the social housing tenants, including immigrants, etc. As we explained above, in order to identify these innovative processes, in the four analysed countries we have tried to find out innovative social housing projects addressing (also) ethnic minorities, meant as measures promoted by public, private or non-profit organisations for accession to rent or home ownership showing innovative elements in comparison with the traditional housing policies (see Foreword). Likewise, the traditional policies which have been improved by innovative elements are included in our definition.

Obviously, it is beyond the scope of this report to provide a complete review of innovative social housing projects in all the case study countries. We just identified some examples (see the list in

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<sup>94</sup> The valid responses total 44 since there are 3 missing responses.

<sup>95</sup> Immigrations policies are those policies which rule the access to the country

Annex 1) in order to illustrate the nature of innovation in this policy sector. Let's then point out the major innovative trends emerging from this analysis.

A first trend concerns the **increasing attention on beneficiaries' participation**. Actually, 31 out of the 41<sup>96</sup> (76%) innovative investigated projects directly involve the beneficiaries. Their participation consists in active involvement in some activities (shooting documentaries, public events, etc.) or is related to the planning of housing design and neighbourhood services with the result of rising democratisation and public accountability of social housing. Their participation seems to be the product of two different processes: a more active process, according to which tenants and residents organised themselves in order to put pressure on housing and services providers, and a more passive process where services and housing providers seek the beneficiaries' involvement and support it with special actions. The first process is particularly widespread in the UK and the Netherlands, although with some relevant differences. In the United Kingdom it is developed (also) on an ethnic basis through, for instance, the BME associations, while in the Netherlands tenants associations are usually ethnic-blind.

It might be possible that the increasing attention to beneficiaries' demands is partially responsible for the increased attention to immigrants' specific needs. A second trend consists in fact in **developing culturally sensitive social housing** through multicultural building and housing arrangements (i.e. transforming small dwellings into bigger dwellings for large ethnic families, designing some apartments for meeting the requirements of religious Muslims, etc.).

A third innovative trend consists in going beyond providing housing and **developing enabling tools aimed at giving people the means to access the housing market and services**. For instance, although 20 out of the 47 innovative projects identified in this research are committed to traditional providing activities such as building and restructuring houses and managing housing funds, a great deal of projects carry on enabling measures (sometimes together with providing ones): 20 out of the 47 projects provide information about the housing market, housing laws and rules, housing policies and services, etc.; 19 projects support weak housing demand in accessing home ownership; 13 projects try to match housing supply and weak housing demand on private rental housing market. Economic guarantees in favour of landlords or banks (1 project) and loans at lower rates (4 projects) seem to be much less widespread enabling measures.

The spread of enabling tools goes together with an increasing **adoption of holistic strategies** according to which social housing measures are accompanied by support in employment, education, health, social and cultural mediation, etc. For instance, most of the innovative projects investigated in this research provide support to housing integration in a broad sense: 21 projects out of the 47 offer support in managing the house (teaching the apartment house's rules, teaching tenants' and landlord's duties, etc.), 21 projects offer cultural or conflict mediation among tenants/residents, 15 projects conduct social inclusion activities such as training courses, job seeking, language courses, etc.

This holistic approach has likely fostered the **development of synergies with other policy sectors**. The table below shows the number of social housing innovative projects that have developed synergies.

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<sup>96</sup> The valid responses total 41 since there are 6 missing responses.

**Table 6 – Synergies of investigated social housing projects with other policy sectors**

Policy sectors	Numbers of innovative projects which have developed synergies
Social cohesion policy	26
Urban regeneration policy	23
Ethnic minorities' integration policy	23
Local development policy	16
Anti-discrimination policy	12
Employment policy	10
Active aging policy	10
Retirement policy	7
None	4
Migrants' return policy	1

*Note: The valid responses are 44 since there are 3 missing responses.*

Clearly, the policy sectors most interrelated with social housing seems to be social cohesion, urban regeneration, ethnic minorities' integration and local development. As we said in the previous sections, the relationships with these policy sectors might mean that social housing measures are increasingly used for integration purposes, especially through an area-based approach centred on local regeneration and development. Synergies with anti-discrimination policy are highly developed too, probably because of the increasing importance of this policy sector at the EU and national levels. In fact, as the tables of the previous section show, new anti-discrimination laws concerning housing recently have come into force in France and the UK.

Another trend is represented by the *increasing attention towards the elderly*. The two main actions targeting this category are: the adaptation of the housing stock to the needs of the aging population and measures for allowing elderly people to live at home longer (i.e. home care services). These measures are often part of broader programmes targeting the growing elderly population. In fact, synergies with other policy sectors, in particular with active aging policy, are developed: they concern around one fourth of the innovative projects investigated (see table above). On the contrary, attention for specific cultural needs of elderly people with an ethnic background is not so widespread: it has been pointed out mainly in the Netherlands and in the UK where the multiculturalist approach has prevailed, while in Germany these kinds of initiatives are mainly pilot projects promoted by some immigrants organisations.

Finally, it is worth focusing on some organisational aspects of the innovative projects investigated in this research. First of all, when respondents are asked about the main *reason for developing the project*, the most frequent answer is obviously the “rise of new housing demands” (20 projects out of 41<sup>97</sup>). The hints derived from other responses are more interesting but contradictory. On one hand, the investigated projects seem to correct and compensate for the inefficiencies of social housing policies since 17 projects out of 41 have been developed because of the “failure of previous

<sup>97</sup> The valid responses are 41 since there are 6 missing responses. The total responses are more than 41 since some respondents chose more than one answer.

or existing services”. On the other hand, contingent and exogenous elements seem to drive the development of these projects since 14 out of 41 have been established thanks to the “personal initiative and commitment of some members of the organization”. Finally, funding opportunities or availability of dwellings played a crucial role in only 7 projects out of 41.

From the organisation point of view, *learning processes and knowledge-based development of projects* are usually considered indicators of innovation. Nevertheless, the great majority of the projects investigated in this research have been developed without looking at other projects. It might mean that learning processes are not very diffused. Furthermore, intra-organisational learning prevails over inter-organisational learning since only 3 out of 40<sup>98</sup> projects have been inspired by projects carried out by other organisations. The limited learning processes are confirmed by the fact that few of the investigated projects were planned on the basis of the available data on housing demands (12 projects out of 40<sup>99</sup>), experts’ advice (11 projects out of 40) or specifically commissioned studies (8 projects out of 40). On the contrary, 32 projects out of 40 were developed only on the basis of the organisation’s previous experiences. Actually, it is known that the research-policy nexus is still weak in social policy development (Penninx and Scolten, 2009).

Low attention to knowledge production and transfer in social housing policies addressing ethnic minorities is mirrored also by data concerning the projects’ content: only 4 projects out of 46 conduct consulting and advisory activities addressed to private, non-profit and public organisations, 4 projects organise training activities addressed to social housing operators, and 7 carry out research and investigation activities.

Finally, from the organisational point of view, it is worth noting that only *a minority of the innovative projects investigated in this research are institutionalized*. In fact only 10 out of 39<sup>100</sup> (26%) are classified by respondents as “ordinary”, i.e. constituting a steady part of national/regional/local social housing policies. This result is of course also the product of the innovative nature of the investigated projects. However, it casts doubts on the ability of social housing policy to absorb innovation.

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<sup>98</sup> The valid responses are 40 since there are 7 missing responses. The total responses are more than 41 since it was possible to give more than one answer.

<sup>99</sup> The valid responses are 40 since there are 7 missing responses. The total responses are more than 41 since it was possible to give more than one answer.

<sup>100</sup> The valid responses are 39 since there are 8 missing responses.

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## Annex 1 – Innovative social housing projects addressing ethnic minorities

Country	Name of the project	Innovative aspects	Percentage of ethnic minorities among beneficiaries
The Netherlands	Tweede Jacob van Campenstraat	The project aims at providing better and more modern houses with affordable rent instead of old post-war houses. The residents participate in decisions about the design of indoor and outdoor spaces.	NA
The Netherlands	Huur op Maat (Amersfoort) ( <i>Suitable Rent</i> )	The project aims at improving affordability of the social rented stock and increasing freedom of choice for people searching for a dwelling. In essence, it adjusts the rent of a social house according to the tenant's income, whereas before the rent depended only on the actual house value.	NA
The Netherlands	Blasiusstraat te Amsterdam	The project targets people over 65 years old and is aimed at building housing both for rental and purchase. It guarantees the participation of future residents through a residents' committee.	26-50%
The Netherlands	De Nieuwe Akbar	Instead of full demolition of buildings, this project was executed by renovating. Following a complete physical restoration (yards, exteriors, balconies), there was a guidance programme to integrate the new tenants into the neighbourhood (including visits from Turkish and Moroccan-speaking employees).	NA
The Netherlands	Hotel Oranje	The project uses obsolete housing as an opportunity to provide housing for temporary migrant workers from Poland; they stay in the Netherlands for 10 weeks and then return to Poland for 3 weeks. The project also provides basic language courses, a translator, bus-service to Poland and the possibility of receiving Polish television channels.	100%
The Netherlands	Klooster Nazareth	The project has led to the creation of temporary houses for temporary workers in a former monastery. Furthermore, within the project a policy nota describing how to deal with temporary workers was produced for local municipalities.	100%

The Netherlands	Koningsvrouwen van de landlustad	The project consists of a renovation of a steel monument. It is characterized by a high level of participation, despite social and language barriers, since tenants co-designed the new apartments.	76-99%
The Netherlands	Noordwest friesland project	The project aims at housing temporary workers in regular homes scattered throughout the region on the basis of an agreement with an employment agency that is also responsible for the guidance and supervision of the homes and their residents. Legally the project is challenging since it needed changes in housing tenure (from living to accommodation) requiring the collaboration of four municipalities.	100%
The Netherlands	Overtoomse Veld Middengebied Zuid	The project aims at creating flexible and diverse apartments which respond to the housing needs of people with different income, age, housing preferences, etc. The input of current and future tenants and homeowners were used to draw the final design.	51-75%
The Netherlands	Mi Akoma Di Color	The project is meant as a “colorful” project since it targets people with several ethnic backgrounds. The future homeowners participated in designing the dwellings and in the selection of the architect. The beneficiaries of the project also actively participated in the construction of the neighbourhood and their cultural needs were taken into consideration, even when building public spaces around the houses.	51-75%
The Netherlands	Achter de voordeur	The aim of the project is improving the socio-economic situation of the inhabitants of a problematic neighbourhood. Instead of simply providing economic support, social workers visit certain households and ask about satisfaction with the area, individual opportunities and social integration. The beneficiaries are directly involved by discussing their problems and finding opportunities together with agencies; they are expected to take the initiative to improve their language skills, education, social participation, area safety, etc.	51-75%
The Netherlands	Starterslening ( <i>Starter loans</i> )	The project provides a starter loan which bridges the gap between the purchase price of the beneficiaries’ homes and the maximum amount of money, based on income, they can borrow from a bank.	NA

The Netherlands	Slimmer Kopen® (ie. Smart Purchase)	Promotion of home-ownership for low-income people; the buyer can buy with a 25% (maximum) discount, he/she may also sell the house for an accordingly lowered price.	NA
The Netherlands	Rotterdamse Klushuizen (also known as “169 huizen”)	The City buys dilapidated housing properties from private landlords and sells them to people who are interested in buying the property for a cheap price. In return the City requires that the new owner remodel and renovate the house in a way that meets strict quality criteria, providing advice on their process of remodelling the house. One of the aims of the project is to encourage the movement of enterprising people who care about their house and surroundings into neighbourhoods with socio-economic problems and physical decay where usually few native Dutch people live.	11-25%
The Netherlands	De Tuinen	The project aims to respond to the housing demands of elderly people with specific health care needs considering not only current, but also future necessities. New owners/tenants have a wide range of options for designing their house so that it suits their needs.	NA
The Netherlands	Wi Makandra	This is was one of the first elderly ethnic-based (Surinamese) communities in Amsterdam. This community sought a location where the oldest members live together and provides care for some. With this purpose, they sought help and advice at the Amsterdams Steunpunt Wonen, which is a housing and living support organisation. Now they live in a elderly complex where there are various ethnic/cultural meeting centres used for cultural meetings, celebrations of particular Surinamese holidays, keti koti, srefidensi, in which also other ethnic groups can take part.	100%
The Netherlands	Renovatie Narcissenlaan/Gladiolenlaan	The projects have carried out facade renovation and refurbishment throughout common areas. A residents’ committee has actively participated in the project.	NA
The Netherlands	Te Woon	The project aims to eliminate most of the differences between renting and buying. This goal is pursued by giving all inhabitants of the targeted buildings the choice to rent or to buy and treating all of them equally regardless of housing tenure (for instance, all inhabitants are given equal rights in decisions).	40%

The Netherlands	Woongroep Andalus	This is a Moroccan elderly community living in a residential complex which was promoted by the community itself. They have a meeting centre which is directly accessible from the individual apartments and it is also open to outsiders. This centre can be easily divided by a sliding door in order to allow women and men to carry on separate activities when they want to, responding to a specific cultural need of this elderly ethnic community. Apartments are both rented and sold and some of them are reserved for widows.	100%
UK	Karin Housing and Social Need	Karin is run by Somali people with the support of other BME community members. Its first goal is to provide affordable houses and, wherever possible, to adjust provision to the cultural needs of the community. Second, Karin provides community services such as healthy eating, intergenerational projects, supplementary language classes for the BME community, youth services, training, advocacy, etc. They are also involved in developing programmes that foster community cohesion, by encouraging dialogue between the Somali and indigenous communities.	85%
UK	Working Together/Routes to Engagement	The aim of the project is to encourage BAMER (Black, Asian Minority Ethnic and Refugee) voluntary organisations in selected boroughs in London to understand and become further involved in local decision-making processes. The BAMER Voluntary and Community Organisations (VCOs) feel that they are disadvantaged because councils give preference to more established groups, or they feel that they do not receive consideration from their local council because they are an ethnic minority group. The project aims to tackle this issue.	100%
UK	Azuka (Places for People)	Azuka recognises the potential for increased discrimination in cases where race is linked with mental health issues. It provides housing, benefits, learning and community services to persons with mental health problems. In particular, Azuka is a scheme with nine self-contained flats offering supportive accommodation to primarily African Caribbean people who experience mental health issues. Service users are encouraged and supported to develop and enhance skills of living independently in the community. Azuka residents are involved in a number of	100%

		specific programmes and events, including confidence building courses (requested by tenants), and events involving the local community in order to dispel common myths.	
UK	Asra Midlands Multi Lingual Contact Centre	The project is a part of Sanctuary's commitment to developing homes and services tailored for meeting the specific needs of a culturally diverse community. The goal is to ensure that beneficiaries are able to reside as independently as possible and receive support in their accommodation which recognises their specific language needs. Flats or houses are equipped with a pull cord or button so that residents can contact the ASRA Contact Centre staff who are able to converse in the Asian languages of Gujarati, Hindi, Punjabi and Urdu. A dedicated team of multi-lingual staff are on hand round-the-clock and are committed to providing the highest standards of care.	100%
UK	New Arrivals Service, Sheffield City Council	The project targets Slovak Roma people, traditionally subject to extreme exclusion, by involving them in projects and enabling them to speak up for themselves through language and literacy classes, explanation of local democracy, and community capacity building. The programme also aims at including children from this community in the city nurseries and schools, which they do not normally attend. Providing information about housing and other aspects of the neighborhoods within which migrant and immigrant workers are settling is of particular importance. The project has improved the relations between this community and the local population.	100%
UK	BME Housing Strategy Monitoring Group	The BME Housing Strategy Monitoring Group, an informal group which includes 40 members drawn from BME tenants and residents across Sheffield, provides a forum through which strategic housing issues for Black and Minority Ethnic communities are identified, discussed and addressed. It plays a vital role in reviewing Sheffield City Council's BME Housing Strategy. In general, the goals of the Group are to review housing policy and services to ensure that they meet the needs of BME communities.	100%
UK	£50k House Project: Twice	The Twice the Terrace project was funded by the Housing Market Renewal	NA

	the Terrace	programme, set up by the central government in 2002. Several show homes were built to show different kinds of adjustments that can be made to older houses during refurbishment. One of the show homes was Twice the Terrace, whose principle of refurbishment was to take two small Sheffield terraced houses and convert them into one five-bedroom house to meet the needs of large BME families.	
UK	Asylum Seekers Service	The service's goal is to ensure that safe and supported accommodation is provided to the asylum seekers until their application is determined. The Asylum Seekers Unit has also developed an initiative called “placing non-white faces onto all white estates”. This means that black and minority ethnic people are actively moved into mainly white estates. Hand in hand with this programme is an awareness raising programme which supports the promotion of community cohesion, through educating the wider public about the cultural backgrounds of both the newcomers and the local population. Asylum Seekers Service has also developed grant aid to support local groups and communities which help people seeking asylum or with refugee status.	100%
UK	Creating Ethnically mixed communities	Creating Ethnically Mixed Communities was a direct result of the Bradford City Council's attempt to reduce interracial tensions after the race riots in 2001. The core strategy is to bring people closer together by moving Asian families into neighbourhoods that were previously all white. The moves are fully supported by the housing association. Cooperation with the local police and other local authority agencies is developed in order to ensure that in case of racist behaviours the intervention would be immediate. The approach involves moving several families together into the new neighbourhood - usually an extended Asian family comprising several households who previously lived together or in close proximity - to ensure mutual support within the family.	50%
UK	Housing Management (Nashayman Housing Association Ltd in Halifax)	Particular attention is given to adjusting the architecture and interior design of housing to meet the cultural needs of the (mostly Asian Muslim) tenants (eg. provision of two reception rooms, one for women and one for men; large kitchen to	50%

		facilitate needs of large and/or extended family; separate water taps in the toilets because of the religious rules for hygiene). New initiatives include introduction of the BME families in the areas that are not traditionally inhabited by the BME community trying to house the extended family together or in a close proximity in order to assure financial and moral support and make families much more resilient to racism and possible attacks.	
UK	Let's live together	The aim of the project is to provide housing opportunities for both Asian and White families in the "non traditional areas". It helps the Asian families who are interested in living in houses within white communities to move into traditionally white neighbourhoods and vice versa. HA workers accompany the visits to non-traditional areas, show the property and make a support plan for those wishing to move on individual basis. The initiative does not provide financial, but only social support. The project includes events to bring people together from different ethnic backgrounds (white and Asian) and to promote dialogue between them.	NA
UK	Invest to Save Budget: Changing Community in Crewe Project	Services were provided by the Crewe and Nantwich Borough Council. These included forms of support in housing integration to help migrant workers settle in the local area (e.g. tenancy rights, housing advice and advocacy services, help with gas and electricity connections, etc), training courses, help in job-seeking and language courses. One of the main objectives of the project was co-ordinating an improved response and reducing stress on service providers by migrant workers and their families, as well as providing services in the language of the migrants (Polish). As part of this project the Polish Association was founded with the goal of encouraging self-help and aid integration.	100%
UK	Cheshire East Migrant Project	The Cheshire East Migrant Project continues and expands the spatial coverage of the Changing Community in Crewe Project. An important feature of the "community development" aspects of the project is that it provides a more effective method of communicating specific information about housing rights, problems and solutions than one-on-one advice. This is especially important because the project itself does not directly provide housing to migrants. Rather, it facilitates solving the	100%

		problems which migrants face when they live on scattered, and sometimes not well-managed caravan sites.	
UK	Tenant Participation—engaging with the BME communities in Bristol	This is a city-wide initiative aimed at covering all BME members who are linked to social housing in any way. A unique aspect of this project is the effort to adjust information (audio, visual, textual) in ways which are useful for different communities through detailed research on the community’s cultural background. The activities include: Information delivery related to housing (publications, DVDs, CDs); focus groups in peoples’ preferred language, community events, cultural awareness training for BME and non-BME tenants and staff.	NA
UK	West Cornwall Migrant Worker Action Group (MIGWAG)	The Migrant Worker Action Group was set up as a response to complaints from the public about unauthorised caravan sites. It adopts a multi-agency approach to ensuring health, safety and welfare of migrant workers working and living in the area, starting with gathering evidence about housing and health conditions. Instead of working in isolation, the statutory agencies which form the group co-operate to better address issues concerning migrant workers.	NA
Germany	Bremen Home Endowment, Endowment Village of Gröpelingen, Multicultural Centre	The project aims at responding to demographic developments such as aging and migration providing a culturally appropriate senior citizens’ dwelling house, new housing facilities and care facilities for German and Turkish senior citizens. It guarantees not only care of the elderly, but also networking with social and cultural institutions in neighbourhoods and cooperation among young artists, older and handicapped people and parents of the toddlers’ group.	NA
Germany	Local office for employment—network of mediation in neighbourhood assistance in accommodation and the district	The network provides placement of domestic and care workers and home assistance for the elderly, ill and handicapped people in the district in order to allow them to remain at home in their familiar environment. The new contacts between “assistants” and seniors promote understanding and cohesion in the neighbourhood.	50%
Germany	Integration project “Living well with each other!”	The action of the public organisation GESOBAU AG is characterised by social, economic and ecological sustainability. The GESOBAU AG has integrated the	15%

		social dimension of housing into its corporate planning.	
Germany	Development and optimisation of municipal integration models for new immigrants in Münster and Enschede (briefly: Integrate Immigrants)	The project targets districts which show segregation trends. It considers housing management as the most important component of the process of integration which has been extensively neglected. The project includes: individual consultation by social workers for carrying out a detailed anamnesis and pointing out individual integration contacts; advisory support services including searching for accommodation in districts without segregation; intensive committee work and townwide networking. Private landlords and the big housing organisations supported the project work with appropriate dwellings. The project also tries to foster the “developed prototypes” to the welfare organisations.	100%
Germany	Cooperative Housing for migrants	The project offers loans at low rates, supports access to home ownership, fosters the matching of housing supply and weak housing demand and provides housing management and cultural mediation. A great deal of the target is made up of Turkish minority.	NA
Germany	Training for Volunteers “Leuchtturm”	The association is active in the intercultural hospice area. This projects consists of training hospice assistants. The participants took active part in role plays and advanced training, above all in biography work. The German language training and the biography work particularly address immigrant groups.	60%
Germany	Pfungstadt’s little village	The project concerns 45 aging dwellings and 72 sustainable dwellings. It has achieved a cooperation with inhabitants, ensuring sustainable rent costs and integrating the project into the city accommodation concept. It also provides cultural mediation.	NA
Germany	Frankfurt programme active neighborhood	The project provides social district management. It adopts an integrative approach for social-spatial development and fosters participation across ethnic borders, age limits and language boundaries.	NA
France	RELOREF (Réseau pour l’Emploi et le Logement des Réfugiés)	The aim of the project is linking at the national and local levels the sectors of asylum, housing and employment and developing transitory housing for refugee households in order to provide individual and collective inclusion projects. The tools of the project are specific for refugee families: accommodation, support of	100%

		social and working inclusion, workshops for finding flats in the private market carried out by CADA France terre d'asile. In fact, one of the goals of the project is finding affordable houses for refugees in the private market through partnerships with private actors such as the UNPI (National Union of Private Landlords), FNAIM (National Federation of Real Estate Agency), FAPIL (Federation of Associations of Inclusion through Housing) and the PACT Federation.	
France	Recherche logement désespérés	The project aims to respond to elderly immigrants who go back and forth to their country of origin keeping the possibility of using welfare services. The association provides apartments where three elderly immigrants can live in turn. Therefore, each of them pay just one third of the total rent.	NA
France	association Solidarités Nouvelles pour le Logement Paris	The action of SNL Paris is based on the involvement of citizens in their neighbourhoods. It includes the search for houses and support for social inclusion through the engagement of two volunteers who live in the same neighbourhood. Each tenant is a member of the association and is invited to take part in local groups and in the activities of the association, including the steering committee.	51-75%
France	Terray	The project aims to allow immigrant elderly people to live at home as long as possible. For this purpose, the association also provides social and health care to elderly immigrants through three members of its team who collaborate with the services of the neighbourhood.	NA
France	Jeunes locataires accompagnés	The target of the project is constituted of 18–25-years-old who have difficulty accessing social housing because they are young and the number of small flats is few. They are young persons who can rely on stable economic resources but cope with an instability derived from their social, family or physical situation. The association fosters matches between their housing demand and housing supply and provides support for housing and social integration for 6 months.	NA

## Annex 2 – The questionnaire

### 1. Name of the project:

2. **Start** (mm/yyyy): |\_|\_| |\_|\_|\_|\_| **End** (mm/yyyy): |\_|\_| |\_|\_|\_|\_|

### 3. Territorial area concerned by the project:

### 4. Actions of the project (you can choose more than one option)

#### a. Increasing housing supply:

- building and restructuring of houses
- economic contribution to housing funds
- management of housing funds

#### b. Providing economic support:

- economic guarantees in favour of landlords or banks
- loans at lower rates
- economic aids for housing expenses not to be refunded by beneficiaries

#### c. Providing accommodation:

- housing management (management of rent collection and arrears, repairs and maintenance service, , etc.)
- matching/mediation between weak housing demand and supply on rental housing market
- support weak housing demand in accessing home ownership
- providing accommodation in collective dwellings or apartments (charged or not)
- information activities (on housing market, housing laws and rules, housing policies and services, etc.)

#### d. Supporting housing integration:

- support in managing the house (teaching the apartment house's rules, teaching the tenant and the landlord's duties, etc.)
- cultural or conflicts mediation among the beneficiaries
- cultural or conflicts mediation between the beneficiaries and the inhabitants of the area concerned by the projects (joint owners, neighbours, etc.)

e.  Social inclusion activities (training courses, job seeking, language courses, etc.)

#### f. Fostering social housing development:

- consulting activities addressed to private, non-profit and public organisations
- training activities addressed to social housing operators
- public campaigns
- research and investigation activities

g. Others (please, specify.....)

4a. Please, give a brief description of the most innovative aspects of the project (max 5 lines)

4b. Is an active involvement of the beneficiaries in the development of the project formally pursued? If yes, please give a brief description of their involvement (max 5 lines)

4d. Does the project formally establish goals or activities specifically addressed to the beneficiaries of immigrant/ethnic background? If yes, please give a brief description (max 5 lines)

4c. The relations between the beneficiaries of immigrant/ethnic background and the natives are:  
 very good                       good with some little problems                       difficult  
Please give a brief description of these relations (max 5 lines)

**5. Results achieved during 2009 (or during the most recent year available). Please, fill in only the lines concerning the services you provide:**

<i>Type of result</i>	<i>Rough annual amount</i>
Managed apartments	
Beneficiaries accommodated in (rented or purchased) apartments or in collective dwellings	
Beneficiaries who got economic support	
Beneficiaries who received support in housing integration (conflicts mediations, etc.)	
Participants to training activities	
Other (please, specify.....)	
Other (please, specify.....)	

**6. Synergies developed through the project with other policy sectors:**

- urban regeneration policy
- local development policy
- social cohesion policy
- ethnic minorities' integration policy
- antidiscrimination policy
- employment policy
- retirement policy
- active aging policy
- migrants' return policy
- other (please, specify.....)

none

**7. Partners of the project (please, specify the name of the project leader and the partners and for each of them select with X the type of involvement in the project):**

Role of the partners	Project leader .....	1° partner: .....	2° partner: .....	3° partner: .....	4° partner: .....	5° partner: .....
Funding						
Building or restructuring dwellings						
Providing services (housing management, providing information, providing economic support, etc.)						
Selection of beneficiaries						
Communication campaign						
Research and development, evaluation						
Other (specify.....)						
Other (specify.....)						

**8. Number of persons (both of your organisation and other partners) employed in the project during 2009 (or during the most recent year available), excluding people employed in building activities: |\_|\_|\_|\_|\_|**

**9. Rough percentage of total budget derived from the project's revenues/fees/rents:**

0%     1-25%     26-50%     51-75%     76-100%

**10. The project is an ordinary project (i.e. it constitutes a steady part of the national/regional/local social housing activities)?**

Yes  
 No

**11. Which is the main reason for developing this project?**

- rise of new housing demands (please, specify which kind of demands .....)
- failure of previous or existing services (please, specify which kind of failure.....)
- funding opportunities or availability of dwellings
- personal initiative and commitment of some members of the organisation
- others (please, specify.....)

**12. The project is:**

- developed from a previous project carried out by your organisations (please, specify...- link...)
- inspired by project carried on by other organisations (please, specify.....- link.....)
- created *ex-novo*

**13. The project has been developed on the based on:**

- the available data on housing demands
- studies specifically commissioned by your organisation (please, specify the name of the organisation which carried on the study.....- link.....)
- experts' advice
- your organisation's experience

**14. Rough share of retired persons among beneficiaries in the last year:**

- 0%       1-25%       26-50%       51-75%       76-100%

**15. Rough share of beneficiaries with an immigrant/ethnic background in the last year:**

- 0%
- 1-10%
- 11-25%
- 26-50%
- 51-75%
- 76-99%
- 100%

**16. Main ethnic groups among beneficiaries (rough percentage):**

<i>Ethnic groups</i>	<i>Rough percentage on the beneficiaries belonging to ethnic minorities</i>
1°	%
2°	%
3°	%
Other ethnic groups	%
<i>Total</i>	<i>100%</i>

**17. Has the project stirred any public debate or controversy, particularly about the presence of ethnic minorities among the users/beneficiaries?**

Yes (please,

specify.....)

No

**18. Contact persons:**

**19. Documents available for further details (please attach any relevant information material or links to web pages):**