

Living with support

Housing schemes for the elderly and handicapped with support needs –
a response to demographic and social change

– **English Abstract** –

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Many people of different generations and in very different circumstances depend on a comprehensive care package to manage their everyday lives. In future the demand for differentiated forms of accommodation with support for the elderly and handicapped will continue to increase. Over the past few years the perspective has changed: from comprehensive care and support systems to the right of participation and self-determination; from standardized solutions to freedom of choice; from special institutions and separate buildings often on the urban periphery to living in a normal neighbourhood. This perspective is basically accepted, but in practice there are too few suitable offers. Projects have been realised in various locations, but experience with these has not yet been systematically documented and analysed. This is the aim of the present study. New, too, is the holistic approach which both combines the two systems and cultures of care for the elderly and care for the handicapped – long seen as totally separate, and brings together the social services with the spatial framework of urban planning and architecture. The focus is on the relationships between social needs and the varied responses to these in the built environment.

After an introduction to the topic and a review of the study there are seven brief portraits of ten persons altogether, showing their different views, needs and circumstances. A clarification of the terms "support" and "living with support" follows. The various existing forms of housing for the elderly and the handicapped are described.

The second chapter presents demographic developments, changed needs, legal questions and requirements so far known. The chapter also presents experiences in other countries.

Chapter three contains a detailed and elaborate documentation in texts, photographs and designs of 23 examples for different forms of housing with community support in Germany and other European countries. At the beginning "small" projects in a flat or house are presented followed by middle-sized and larger projects, up to an approach which encompasses a whole neighbourhood.

The documentation of the examples is based on on-site investigations, the evaluation of a large body of material and on one-to-one interviews with residents, relatives and other persons in responsible positions involved in the projects. In this way the perspective of all the stakeholders becomes apparent.

In chapter four, the examples, experiences and considerations of practitioners in the field are systematically analysed and compared. This includes: kinds of people living in the projects, general conditions, different types of neighbourhoods, accommodation, buildings and their surroundings, planning and participation processes, different organisational solutions.

At the end of the study recommended procedures are given which refer to the realisation of these forms of accommodation and to more general requirements.

The results of the study show that there are similar developments of needs and housing forms in the hitherto totally separate systems of care for the elderly and care for the handicapped. Synergies could be better utilised by a harmonisation of both sys-

tems. The study also reveals the range of housing forms: for people with similar or different support needs, different sizes of projects and projects realised in different building types (residential or mixed-use buildings, old, reconstructed or new buildings) and in different types of neighbourhoods (residential areas, mixed-use quarter; village, town and city; central and peripheral sites). The projects range from small ones for just a few people to approaches for a whole quarter. It also shows the range of models to organise the support: self-organisation by those who need assistance, by relatives, associations and initiatives or by institutions which provide care services. The support can be organised as domiciliary care services to the individual home or in residential form. The stringent separation of 'mobile' and 'residential' in both systems should be negotiated – this would allow more flexibility and the development of new forms of accommodation. New partnerships and co-operations concerning concepts and funding (between building firms and social care providers as well as associations, foundations and the private sector) will become more important. Finally, the study makes clear the close – and too often neglected – connection between social and urban-planning issues at all levels. Notably, mixed-use urban neighbourhoods offer favourable possibilities for independent living, even with handicaps.

The study aims to encourage the provision of more diverse housing for living with support – based on experiences and with a justifiable input of time and effort. It also wants to raise the awareness of the housing industry, urban planners and institutions responsible for support services so that they are better prepared for the expected demands of the elderly, of persons in need of care and of handicapped people.

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The report has 206 pages.

Content:

- ▶ Living with support – what is it about?
- ▶ New forms of housing: demand and requirements
- ▶ Examples for new forms of sheltered housing – practical experience
- ▶ Compendium of experiences and concepts
- ▶ Perspectives and recommendations

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