



MERGING

INTEGRATION FOR MIGRANTS

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strategies, policies, dwellings and governance**

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Thanks to the volunteers, beneficiaries and social workers for their time and precious insights.

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INTRODUCTION

This deliverable (D5-5) is dedicated to the functioning phase of the three pilot projects of the MERGING research-action program. The functioning phase of a housing project refers to the stage where the constructed buildings are fully operational and occupied, with all systems and services running efficiently to support the residents' daily activities. This phase focuses on ensuring the sustainability, usability, and ongoing management of the housing units to maintain a high quality of living for the occupants.

As a reminder, within the fifth work package of MERGING dedicated to the implementation of the pilot projects, deliverable D5-1 deals with contracts and agreements among actors thus showing their respective shares of responsibilities. D5-2 shows a body of documents organised through an index that reveals the iterative loops undertaken within any design process, here highlighted through the complexity of experimental project management and development due to the context of a European research-action program of three years. D5-3 focuses on planning and financing by presenting key working documents (Gantt diagrams) and budget management. Lastly, D5-4 highlights the achievements and turning points in the building process.

As MERGING states, access to housing is a crucial factor in the integration process of newcomers in European countries. Adequate housing plays a significant role in shaping the overall well-being and social inclusion of newcomers, while their administrative status may range from undocumented migrants to refugees being granted subsidiary protection. In such a process, often difficult for the individuals who are facing it, social support plays a crucial role and helps on many levels such as social integration, access to education and employment opportunities, access to health services and well-being. In the pilot projects, in Valencia and Lyon, the addition of a common space to the housings themselves also enables to foster community engagement. After the investing phase which enabled the creation of the places at the core of the pilot projects, these are to be inhabited thus entering the functioning (also called operating) phase. If, within MERGING, the design and implementation of the pilot projects are coordinated by Quatorze with the strong support of partners from the consortium especially UJML, UVEG and UGOT, during the design, construction and, beyond MERGING, during the functioning phase, local stakeholders with expertise in refugee reception and support have been mobilised to participate in the experimentation of the pilot project and to ensure social follow-up for the beneficiaries.

Alike the previous deliverables, this document is organised in three main parts, one per pilot project and each part is subdivided by following a common framework. The deliverable follows the tasks one may find in the application submitted to the European Union.

To do so, the deliverable will look upon the actors gathered in the pilot projects developments and will give a focus on the beneficiaries of the pilot projects. Firstly, the document is about the social follow up which is conducted by local NGOs already specialised in the social support of newly arrived migrants. This part will show the updated map of involvement shown in deliverable 4.2 (WP4). It will also highlight the profiles of the beneficiaries who are already

living in the pilot project (Valencia) or who will move in (Lyon and Gothenburg). Who are they (age, gender, administrative status) ? How did they get here and where were they before ?

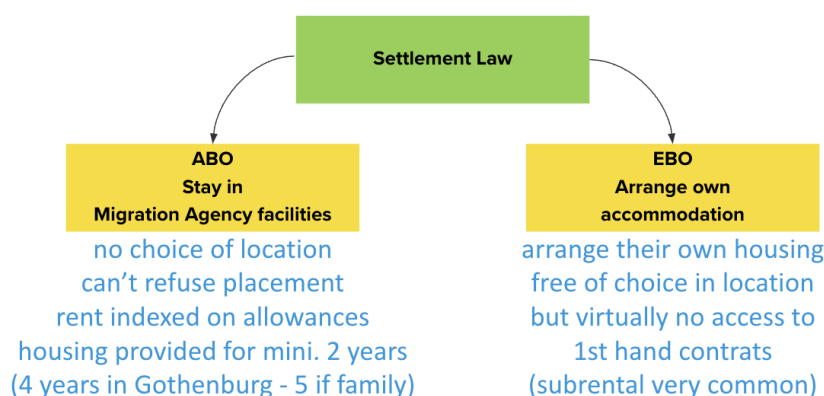
Secondly, the document will describe the property management and rental management conducted by a local stakeholder. What kind of contract or agreement was signed ? Between whom, for how long and at which price?

Thirdly, the document will expose the activities conducted with the beneficiaries and neighbours to highlight the process of linking with the host society thus fostering social integration both within MERGING and in the long run. As Joelle Zask states: *"Neighbourhood has this essential aspect that it prepares to consider the external world as a shared environment among different beings."* (Zask, 2022, p.107).

1. GOTHENBURG

1.1 CONTEXT

Refugee integration in Sweden, particularly regarding housing, is managed at the municipal level. However, housing poses challenges due to long-standing shortages, notably in major urban centres such as Stockholm, Gothenburg, and Malmö. Public housing, offering affordable rentals, often entails lengthy waitlists, sometimes spanning up to a decade (see MERGING, WP2, D2.3). This scarcity impacts both newcomers and policymakers grappling with the politicisation of housing policies. In Sweden, the Settlement Law governs refugee housing, applying to all international protection recipients who stayed in Swedish Migration Agency facilities during asylum processing. Asylum seekers can choose their own accommodation (EBO) or remain in Migration Agency facilities (ABO), where they have limited choice and cannot refuse placement. Once granted asylum, individuals previously in the Supported Housing (ABO) system are allocated to a municipality for a minimum of 2 years, aligned with the establishment program duration. These beneficiaries cannot request relocation and must arrange their own housing if they decline the assigned placement. Conversely, those under the Law on Own Housing (EBO) continue arranging their accommodation post-protection. Divergent interpretations of the settlement law by municipalities result in varied housing durations, ranging from 2 to indefinite years. Consequently, precarious housing situations persist across municipalities, impacting those transitioning from ABO contracts, navigating the housing market independently, or awaiting public housing allocation. In Gothenburg, where public housing waitlists average 6.5 years, accessing housing post-municipal contract expiration poses significant challenges.



In Gothenburg public housing waitlists average 6.5 years
 Difficult to access housing post-municipal contract expiration (gap)
 Shortage of quality affordable housing + many small flats

Figure 01 : Schematic representation of the Settlement Law applicable to asylum seekers in Sweden since 2016 (Quatorze's elaboration based on WP2)

Municipality-wide integration policies, exemplified by Gothenburg's Integration Centre, cater to all international protection beneficiaries. Services include informational assistance, women's empowerment programs, language courses, and civic integration initiatives. In Gothenburg, single refugees (ABO) receive four-year rental contracts, while families receive five-year contracts. To prevent segregation, apartments are allocated in areas with lower immigrant concentrations. Rent affordability is also considered, ensuring that refugees can cover rental expenses with their allowances. Social networks play a vital role in housing acquisition for refugees, often leading them to share accommodations with friends or family. Accessing housing in the open market poses challenges, with public housing offering lower rents but extensive wait times. The private rental market faces supply shortages and may require stable, well-paying employment. Additionally, rising real estate prices and income limitations make homeownership unattainable for many refugees in Sweden like most countries across Europe. As Milla Anjou and Elias Winden, from Räddningsmissionen, Sweden state:

“In Gothenburg, the average waiting time for an apartment varies depending on the location, in the suburbs, it usually takes around 5 years to secure an apartment while in the inner city the waiting period extends from 5 to 10 years. For refugees assigned to Gothenburg by the Swedish government, the collaboration yields approximately 4 years of housing for individuals and 5 years for families with children. At the end of such periods, some of these families and individuals are at risk of facing homelessness. The situation and tensions around housing has sparked conflict regarding the fairness of the overall existing queuing system with different perspectives and priorities among individuals and families. To facilitate the rental process between the landlord and the tenant, Räddningsmissionen acts as an intermediary and assumes responsibility for paying the rent and ensures that all administrative tasks related to the units are completed, including obtaining insurance coverage. The social follow-up is not part of their expertise and it is not a mandatory requirement to enter the housing devices. Here, Räddningsmissionen relies on a network of partners to address social needs as they arise (e.g. Swedish church). Families apply for financial assistance, Räddningsmissionen and the municipality jointly submit applications for funding to the county or region. Then, the family pays the allocated funds to Räddningsmissionen, who then disburses the payments to the landlords. The organisation experimented with subsidising 5 or 10% of the rent in the past but has stopped this practice. A rental deposit is not mandatory in these arrangements as ‘when they get an opportunity, they take care of the opportunity’ (Elias Winden, Interview 09/10/2021).”

1.2 SOCIAL FOLLOW UP

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

The organisational structure of MERGING's pilot project in Gothenburg revolves around the operation of one independent, small sized, housing unit. It is designed to host one to two related persons (couple or family members). The coordination of the pilot project has been ensured by Quatorze along with Räddningsmissionen and Bobini with the support of a refugee organisation called Support Group Network. The Lundby Parish provides social support when asked by the beneficiary. Once status is granted, social follow up is not compulsory in Sweden. The beneficiary moving in the house may be employed or in paid training and follow Swedish language class or other training provided by the municipality.

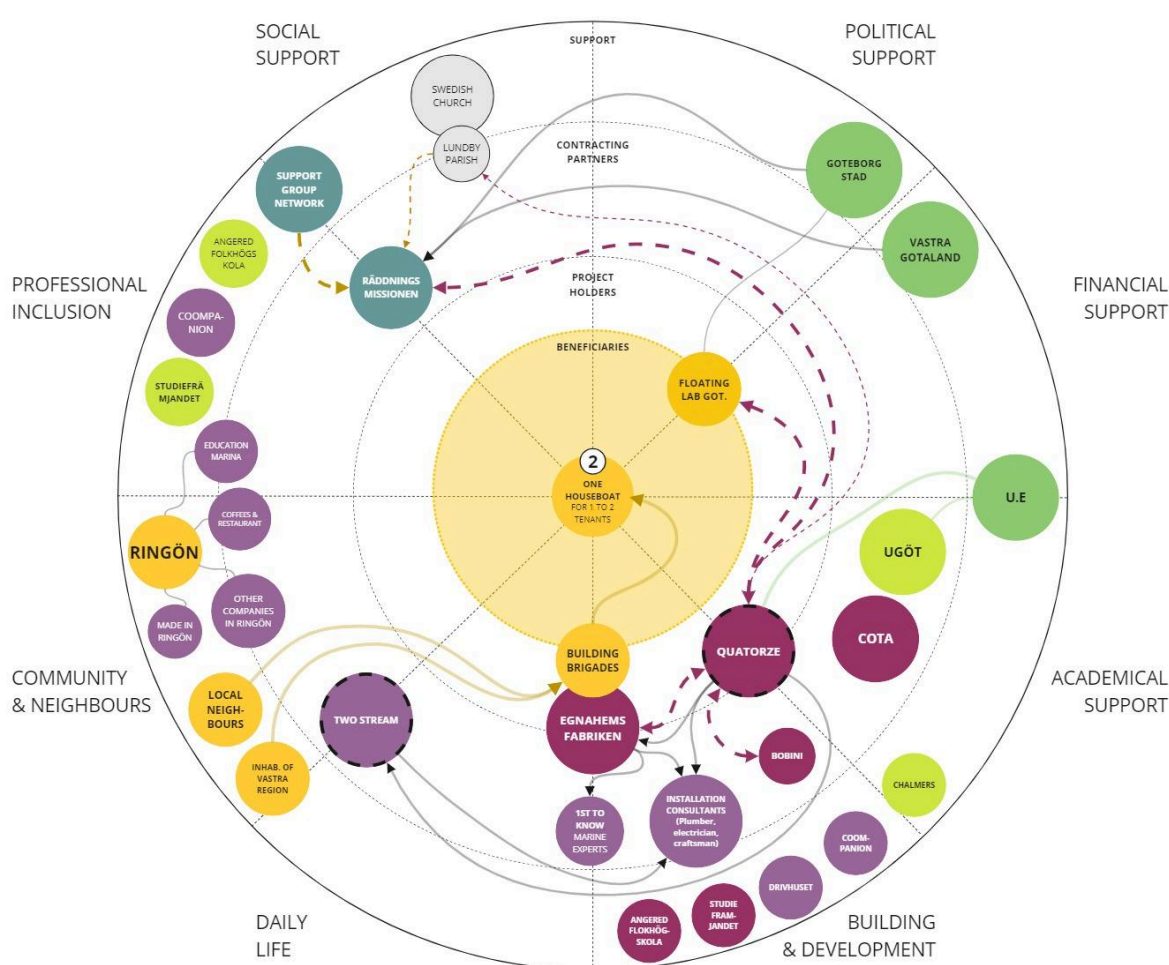




Figure 02: Map of involvement representing the actors gathered around the project both during the investment and operating phases (©Quatorze, 2024)

The partners involved in the functioning phase of the project will hold a meeting every two months on top of regular email communication. The beneficiary of the pilot project will be invited to these meetings every three months. The metre reporting will be done monthly. To ensure a local rental management, human resources at Räddningsmissionen are funded by the municipality of Gothenburg. Quatorze's human resources for the follow up and costs related to the operating of the house are financed by the rent with an additional dedicated MERGING's budget for unforeseen costs. Currently bridging with potential partners through the Gothenburg Floating Lab and partners involved in the workshop dedicated to dissemination, the partners involved in the functioning phase are nurturing a network to gather up a consortium to further develop housing for refugees and newcomers in Gothenburg. To date, Bobini, the Support Group Network, Angered School for the People and Coompanion have shown interest in developing training sessions on building ecological dwellings dedicated to social inclusion.

AUTONOMOUS BENEFICIARY

As stated in MERGING's second work package, research *"has also shown how refugees moved to different places in Sweden after their initial settlement which was decided by the government. The criteria for their internal movement were connected to their level of education and to the local labour market. Highly skilled refugees tried to move to the bigger cities in search of better jobs (Haberfeld et al. 2019)"* (WP2, D2.3a, p. 30). With its size and being the first prototype, the house calls for autonomous beneficiaries, willing to live on their own while being close to the city centre in a neighbourhood with many job opportunities. The pilot was initially intended for young single men willing to work in the fluvial industry. Coming down to refugees, the pilot project could be used to bridge the gap between access to housing provided by the public authorities (3 to 5 years depending on household) and access to public housing or housing in the open market (about 6,5 years in Gothenburg).

The journey on this topic started by meeting two women from Ukraine in December 2022. Thanks to Åsa Isacson from Egnahemsfabriken, we could meet a mother and her daughter, who fled the starting war in their homeland. Yet, being in the ABO system specially designed for Ukrainians they chose to remain in this state-driven process as changing status meant lowering their allowances. Furthermore, at this point the house was not finished (see WP5,

D5.4). Once the location of the houseboat was stabilised and the network of actors was strengthened, the seeking for beneficiaries started out again about a year later, in December 2023. Indeed, parallel to the works carried out to finalise the houseboat and make it habitable - connecting it to mainland electricity, freshwater and sewage ; searching for the future first tenants began.

Before the winter holidays period, a few digital meetings were held with Milla Anjou, a project coordinator for Räddningsmissionen. This structure, an NGO which we encountered earlier in the research phases of the project, aims to “address social vulnerability through acute, long-term and preventive interventions”.

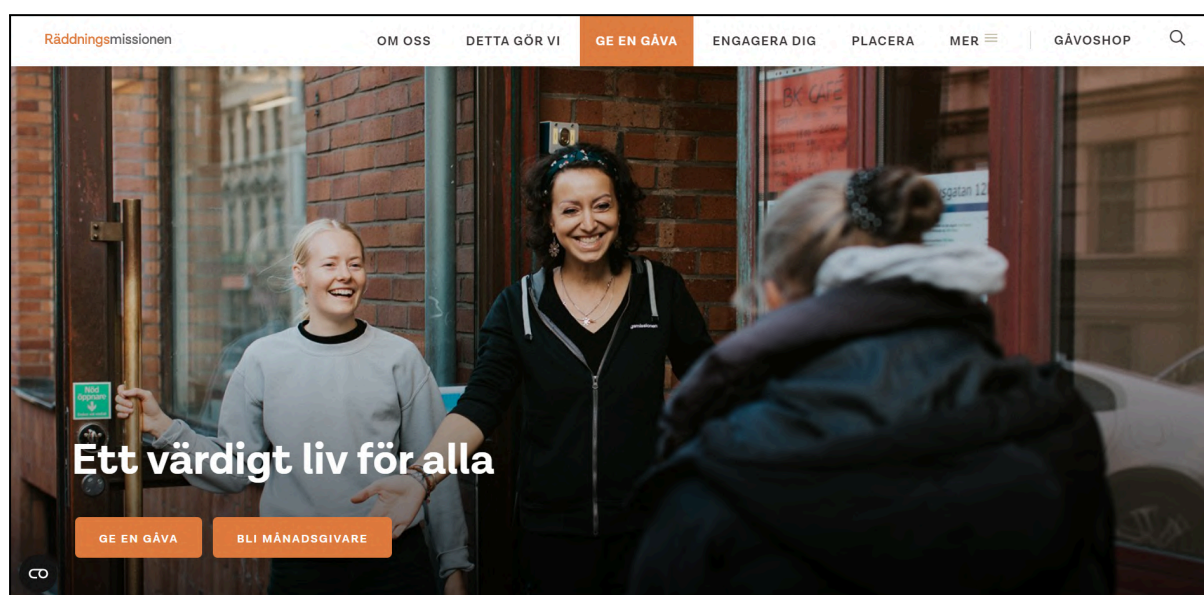


Figure 03 : Extract from Räddningsmissionen website
<https://raddningsmissionen.se/verksamhetsomraden>

In time, Milla Anjou became the local social partner for this project, and Räddningsmissionen’s network of beneficiaries provided potential candidates interested in inhabiting the houseboat. Together with Dan Melander, they organised a few meetings and arranged visits. The first appointment was postponed for health and weather reasons. The rescheduled visit was held on the 2nd of February and the proposal was turned down due to health reasons. The rent was initially set out at 7400 SEK (\pm €650), which is lower than the average rent in Gothenburg, but proved to be too high for the targeted group. Identified as an obstacle by our local contact, it was lowered down to 6000 SEK (\pm €522). Ultimately, the rent has been set at 5000 SEK (\pm €436) including charges with no deposit required. Finding a beneficiary proved challenging, which can be explained as follow:

“It is difficult to find tenants for the houseboat, many of the people I talked with did not know what a houseboat was, they were a bit sceptical when I explained about it. Some of them thought the space was too expensive for the size. But there were also other coincidences like, one person had Swedish citizenship, one needed a larger apartment because he had two children in Iran that he wanted to come to Sweden,

one had an illness and he did not think this was going to be a good solution. But mostly I think the people we meet in general have a restricted economy and are only able to pay around 5000 kr/month or so. And this is the biggest concern at the moment in our daily job. The rents are high and people's economy is restricted.” (email, M. Anjou, Räddningsmissionen, 05/01/2024)

Milla & Dan met a person at the houseboat on the 14/02/2024 with an interpreter. Dan informed us afterwards, *“He seemed sceptical at first but became more and more interested the longer they were there”*, but this 45-year-old Ukrainian refugee eventually turned down the possibility as he had found another opportunity more suitable with his health situation. The next visit happened one week later with a young Polish married couple, Klaudia and Jacob, aged 22 and 24, in pressing need for new housing. They visited with Dan and met Quatorze's team at the end of February 2024. Yet, it was assessed that their situation did not match the criteria as, being European citizens and economic migrants, they did not have refugee status. Their profile was then considered outside of the scope and we had to come back to them with a negative response.



Figure 04 : Visits of interested tenants in front of ANNA, first semester of 2024

Going back to MERGING's core criteria led to meeting Berivan, a young Syrian woman who visited the house on the 22nd of March. During the visit she said she was ready to move-in in April. However, although she seemed very interested on the day the visit took place, she then had doubts. Few days later, she was not sure anymore :

“She is a little bit scared of the water because she can't swim and so on. She told me maybe she had another place she could rent, but was going to get back to me this week about it.” (email, M. Anjou, Räddningsmissionen, 26/03/2024)

Opening up the scope of our search for an interested potential beneficiary. We sent out a call to various persons and local partners we had met in Sweden along MERGING’s process with a detailed description of the house and rental conditions.

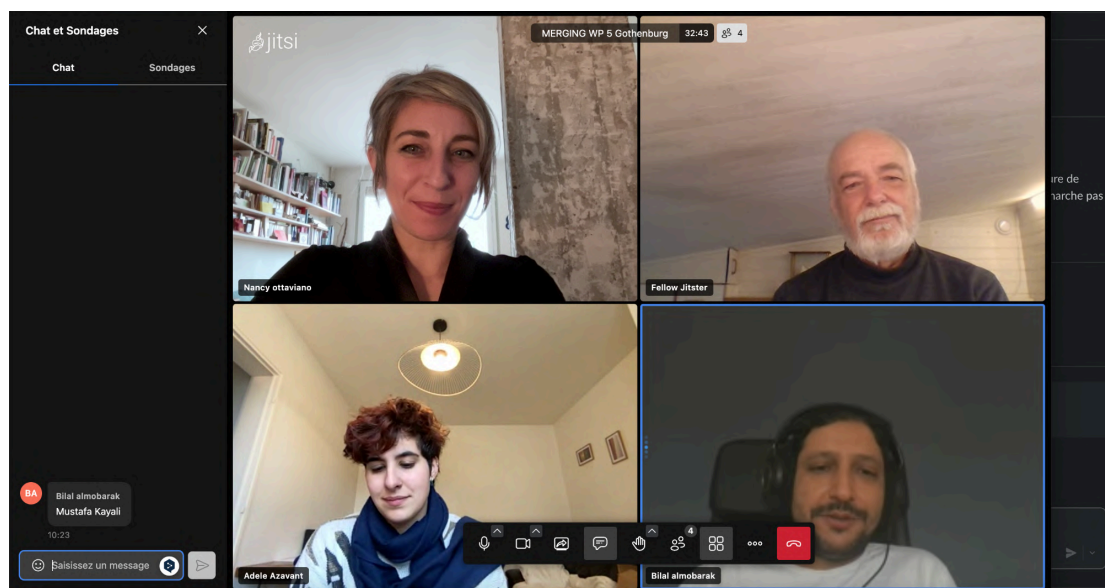


Figure 05 : Screenshot of an online meeting with Dan Melander from Bobini, Bilal Almobarak from Support Group Network and Quatorze’s team.

At the beginning of April, an online meeting with Bilal Almobarak from Support Group Network (SGN) was held. The SGN is “*a migrant-led organisation initiated by refugees to support refugees on all levels with a special focus on social inclusion, business empowerment, interculturality, and higher education inclusion*” (SGN, 2024). Mr Almobarak took part in the early stages of MERGING and had met with Dan in the Theory of Change workshop held by COTA.

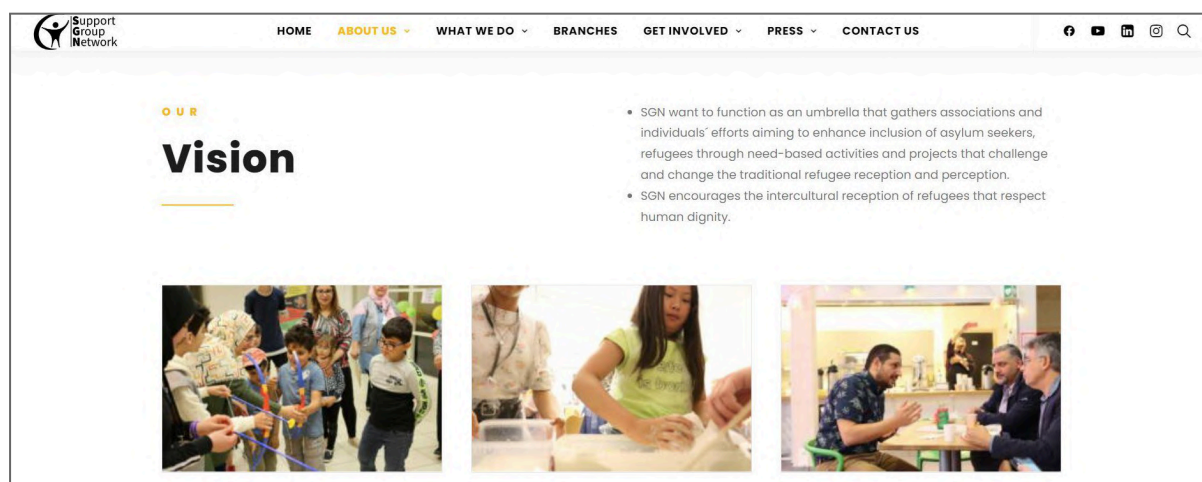


Figure 06: Screenshot, Support Group Network website.

<https://supportgroup.se>

Thanks to the SGN, few potential tenants were identified. Ultimately, a visit of the pilot was organised by Milla Anjou on the 22/04/2024, ending up in a positive outcome. The person who moved in is a man from Afghanistan with refugee status in his late thirties working in the building industry. The rental agreement was signed shortly after the visit, on the 26/04/2024 through Räddningsmissionen as intermediary lessee. Settling in the house, the facilities are finally inhabited and start to be called homes :

“I spoke to him on the phone yesterday. He is enjoying himself. He is a kayaker and outdoorsman, so he plans to get a kayak now and keep it at home. He has good contact with Beine. He thinks it works for him, He points out that he fits in there among all the other lonely original men who live in their boats at this dock. We will be heard and seen in the future.”

(email, Dan Melander, Bobini, 08/05/2024)

In Sweden, the pilot project called for an autonomous tenant with refugee status who shall be able to live on their own and pay a small rent. Yet, if MERGING's pilots are partly intended to accelerate integration, in Sweden, social follow-up does not occur like in France and in Spain. Here, the civil society plays a role on side integration activities rather than helping out on reception activities such as accessing rights, language classes, job employment support and other related activities. These are provided by public authorities. This explains Räddningsmissionen's position on the requirements of the proposed social part of the partnership agreement. This chapter has been removed from the agreement bonding Quatorze - acting as owner, and Räddningsmissionen - acting as intermediary lessee. Yet, the core integration factor of this pilot project relies on its location close to the city centre.

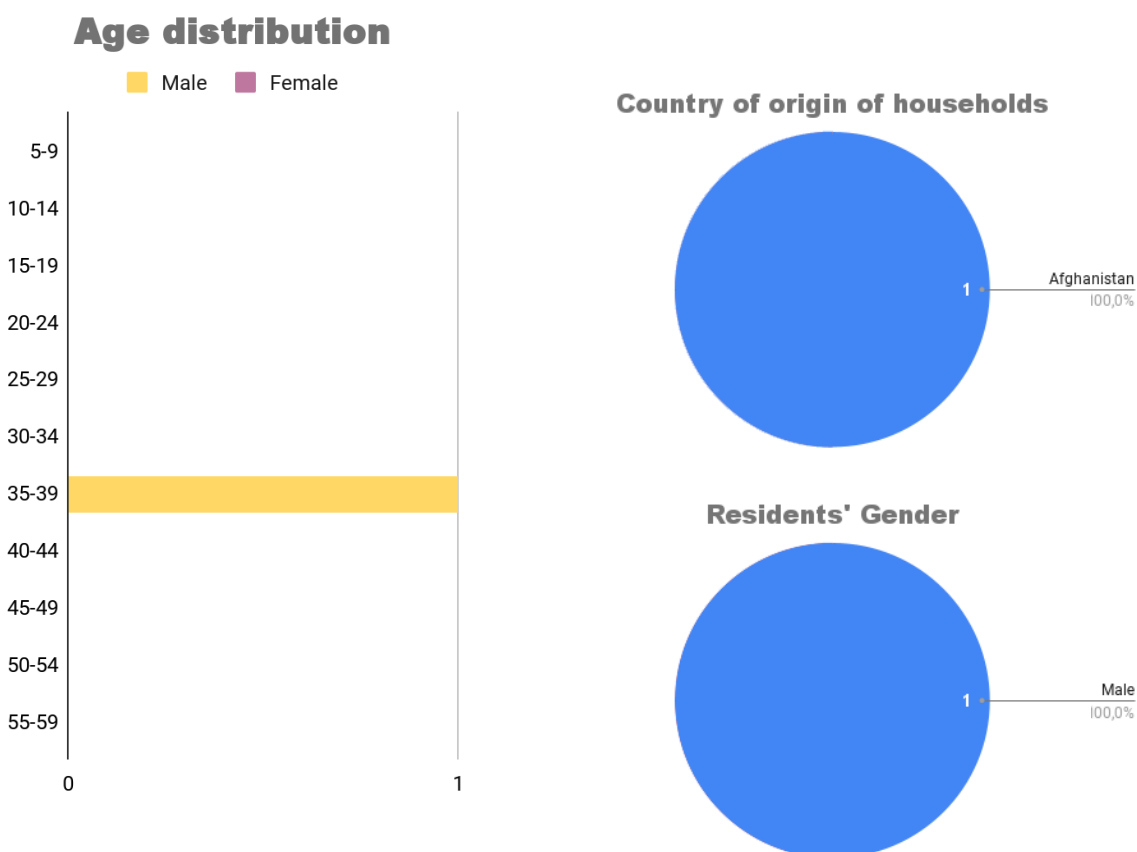


Figure 07: A single young male adult for one autonomous home designed for one or two persons.

1.3 PROPERTY AND RENTAL MANAGEMENT

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

The building of the houseboat was financed by the European Union. During the process of construction and since its finalisation, Quatorze ensures a role of owner and project manager. However, the rental management is locally ensured by Räddningsmissionen. As seen above, they played a crucial role in finding a tenant and are now operating the facilities.

Responsibilities of the owner of the plot

In this pilot project no plot is directly owned. The bottom of the river belongs to the public authorities whose signed emphyteutic leases with private operators all over Ringön. Yet, being in the open market, Twostream, owner of the marina, is responsible for providing proper access to the boats and houseboats, including proper anchorages as well as suitable sewage, drinkable water and electricity connections. On quay, these facilities shall offer separated autonomous metre readings. They also are responsible for keeping the surroundings clean.

Responsibilities of the owner of the facilities

The owner of the houseboat is responsible for providing decent quality living on board, including functioning kitchen appliances, bathroom facilities, toilets and safe electricity. The houseboat is furthermore equipped with safety items such as fire extinguishers, fire blanket and smoke detectors. The owner is responsible for having valid insurance for the facilities.

Responsibilities of the operator

The operator is responsible for collecting the rent of the tenant, making and signing move-in and move-out inspection papers provided by the owner when someone moves in or out of the housing. Inform the owner about all changes in the tenant's situation.

Contractualisation

A rental agreement is signed between the owner of the Marina and Quatorze. The agreement lasts 6 months renewable without limitation of time. Aside, a partnership agreement is signed between Quatorze and Rådningsmissionen and a rental agreement is signed between Rådningsmissionen and the tenant. This agreement lasts one year and may be renewed up to three times, thus offering a mid-term possibility of living by the city centre.



| | LESSOR | LOCAL PARTNERS | | | SOCIAL SUPPORT | BENEFICIARIES | | |
|---|------------|-------------------|--------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Responsibilities | QUATORZE | EGNAHEMS FABRIKEN | 1ST TO KNOW BOBINI | MERGING PARTNERS | LUNDBY PARISH | DIRECT BENEF. | INDIRECT BENEF. | LOCAL AUTHORITIES |
| A COSY FLOATING HOME - HOUSEBOAT ANNA | | | | | | | | |
| RENTAL MANAGEMENT | | | | | | | | |
| Identification of beneficiaries | support | | | | X | | | ? |
| Signing occupancy contracts with residents | informed | | | | X | X | | |
| Inventories of locations on entry and exit | informed | | | | X | X | | |
| 12 MONTHS Collecting rents, managing financial transactions (if applicable) | X | | | | X | if applicable | | ? |
| 6 MONTHS Payment of quay space at Education Marina, Ringön, Got. | through EF | | | | informed | informed | | |
| 6 MONTHS Payment of charges (water, electricity, etc.) | through EF | | | | estimation | informed | | |
| 12 MONTHS Small maintenance / repairs | informed | | | | X | X | | |
| 12 MONTHS Medium maintenance / repairs | X | X | | | informed | | | |
| 12 MONTHS Insurance Contract (Signing and paying) - owner | X | support | | | informed | | | |
| 12 MONTHS Insurance Contract (Signing and paying) - inhabitant | informed | | | | X | | | |
| 12 MONTHS Housing taxes (rubbish collection, community taxes, etc.) | X | estimation | | | X | | | X |
| SOCIAL SUPPORT | | | | | | | | |
| Social accompaniment of housing users | | | | | X | X | | |
| DEVELOPMENT | | | | | | | | |
| Community support in the neighbourhood | | | X | | X | x | x | |
| Creating a network of potential owners of floating homes | | | X | | X | | | |
| Answering calls for fundings | X | X | X | X | ? | | | |
| MONITORING & EVALUATION | | | | | | | | |
| Convening of assemblies and meetings | X | X | X | x | X | X | X | X |

Figure 08: Task distribution scheme based on the work done in D5-1 (©Quatorze, 2024).

BENEFICIARIES AS TENANTS

Rent

The rent of the house is set at 5000SEK (±€436) which includes taxes, electricity and water costs. It is due every month by the tenant to Räddningsmissionen who forward the money to the landlord.

Security deposit

No security deposit is required by the tenant to move in. A provision for works is included in the overall budget management of the pilot project (see D5.3).

Resident expenses

The tenant covers the costs of furniture not already provided with the housing either through second hand or obtained through donations. The follow up provided by Råddningmissionen ensures that the tenant is adequately installed according to their financial means.

Social housing allowance

Depending on the status of the tenant, he/she may receive a social housing allowance. Yet, he/she may also be autonomous in their incomes (paid training programs or employment).

Property tax

No property tax is applicable to inhabitants of boats and houseboats in Sweden. The landlord of the marina pays tax to the municipality.

Other responsibilities

The tenant shall have his/her own valid home insurance.

1.4 NEIGHBOURHOOD ACTIVITIES

After the settlement law in 2016 all municipalities were forced by law to receive a specific share of beneficiaries of international protection thus leading to a more even distribution of refugees across the country. Before bigger cities hosted more persons (WP2, D2.3a, p. 49). In the Swedish context, the role of public authorities is very strong in the reception of refugees. If the civil society was very active in 2015, when more refugees arrived in the country as well as across Europe, since 2018 its role is both very important and rather vague: *“In recent years, the civil society has shifted from reception activities to integration”* (ibidem, p.50). These integration activities may include language class, social support or community involvement. In MERGING, at the local scale, the pilot project in Sweden appears to be an innovative grassroots initiative. From construction to operating, it is deeply intertwined with civil society.

Daily Life

The daily life of the pilot project is facilitated by its location close to the city centre with Central Station and the biggest commercial centre of Gothenburg being 15 minutes walk away. The daily life is punctuated by the activities led at Enrico Palazzo as well as the close neighbours and various economic activities gathered in the neighbourhood.

Internal Regulations & management of Common Areas

The internal regulations of the Marina are applicable to the pilot project including keeping tidy the surroundings and access pontoons and not creating nuisances for the neighbours.

Furthermore, the processes usually applied by Räddningmissionen are applicable to the pilot project.

Events and Civic Life

Gothenburg has a vibrant cultural life, with most events taking place in the historic centre. In Ringön, the annual Ö-Festen festival takes place for three days along Ringögatan, Järnmalmgatan and the various basins in Ringön to promote the district, its workers (companies, artists...) and its residents.

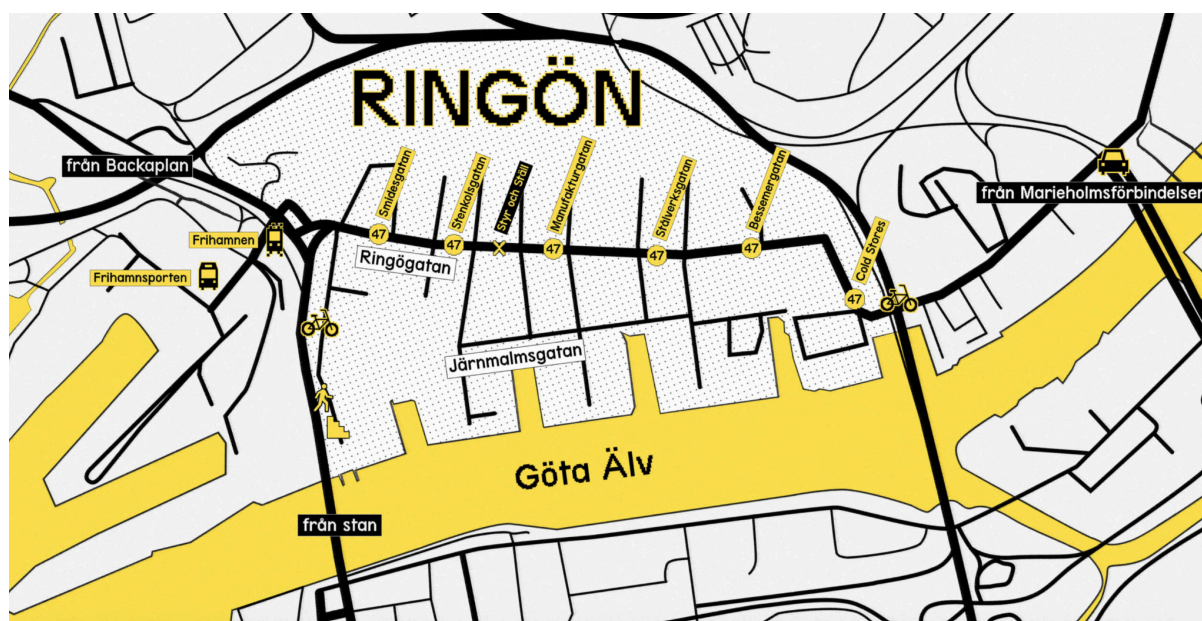
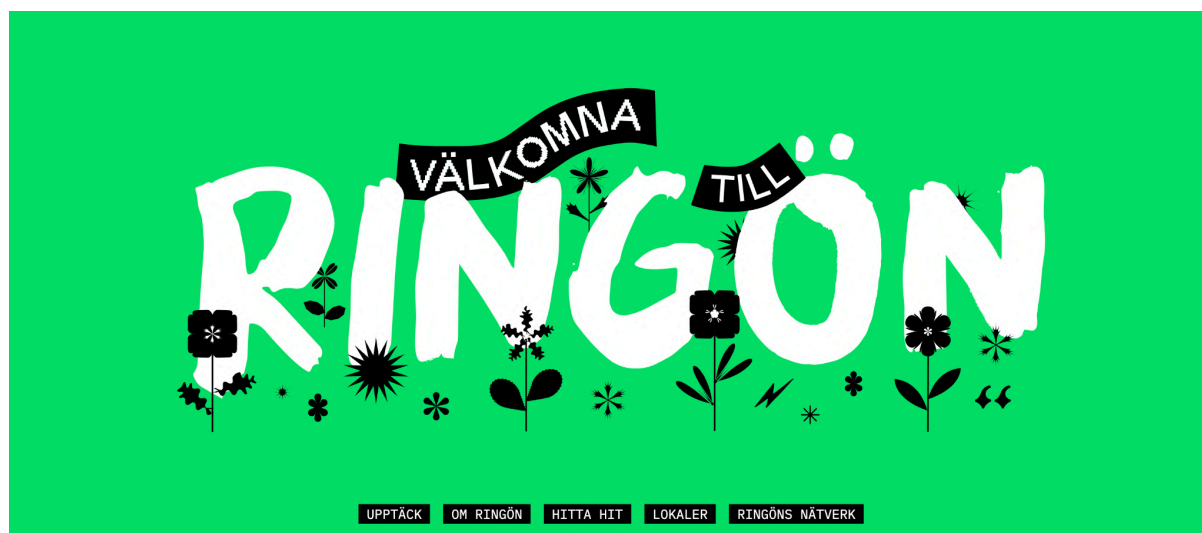


Figure 09: Few visuals from the Last Ö-Festen in Ringön, bridging with the Jubilee of the city in 2024

1.5 FEEDBACKS

Ecological, efficient and comfy

During Prototype Gothenburg and the public visits organised on board, many visitors expressed their feelings about the inside space :

“Only 28sqm ? It looks bigger.”

“It’s nice because wherever you look, you see outside, there is always a landscape.”

“There is a real kitchen and a real bathroom.”

“It is well organised”

“I like the wood on the floor and walls.”

(Visitor’s verbatim, June and September 2023).

Now being daily inhabited, how does ANNA become a home and what does make it feel like home ? To answer this question, the tenant’s point of view is acute.

With a tumultuous residential trajectory and experiences of homelessness, the beneficiary settles into the premises and finds their bearings. The house serves as both a mirror and a motivational factor:

“It is an immigrant house without foundations and I have an immigrant soul. [...] The house gives me a reason to survive, to overcome obstacle. I am thankful, I appreciate everything I have. I want it to be my home sweet home” (Tenant of ANNA, interview 31/05/2024)

In the marina, the proximity of other boats and industrial facilities can occur a sense of promiscuity :

“The neighbours are really close and with all the windows, sometimes it feels like everyone can see me.” (ibid.)

To some extent this can be mitigated through small works such as adding curtains, but coming to sound, the house itself can not solve it all. Yet, this kind of issues echoes common neighbouring problems. Designed for two, in the future, another location might be more suitable to host a young couple as “all the neighbours are men, and it all feels very manny sometimes”. Despite these consideration when asked about the favourite part of the houses, the parts that give a sense of home, the terrasses are highlighted:

“The place I like best, even if I spend only 5 minutes a week there because I don’t have more time, is the terrasse. I set out a small chair and a tiny table. I drink my maté tea there, peacefully.” (ibidem.)

On the other side, the bedroom’s terrasse, less large, is used to sit on the parapet of the terrace with the legs dangling toward the water. Facing an industrial paysage without view toward the neighbours, brings ecological philosophical thought to mind:

“I live on the water, I sit next to the water, I look at the water but I can not fish in it or swim in it because of the oil and so on. The river actually is industrial water.” (ibidem.)



A fragile self-sustaining business model

The tenant moved in at the end of April 2024. In the meantime, the metre readings were checked every month by a janitor, a close neighbour living on the water who is also one of the experts working on the project through First to know (see D5.2 on the design of the pilot project). To ensure the maintenance of the installations and to prevent the water connections from freezing, the houseboat and its connections were heated even when the house was inhabited. These side costs add with the insurance and the rent for the quay space.

The rent has been calculated to cover up these fixed costs, while a portion of the budget is reserved for unforeseen operating costs that may arise, including maintenance if necessary. This provisional budget envelope being limited future fundings are to be gathered around the long term operating and dissemination of the project. ANNA being an asset, in the long run and under conditions, it may be transferred to a local organisation.

Times and uncertainties

The marina offers 6-month contracts, which can be renewed without amount limitation. However, maintenance works are currently being planned to improve some of the pontoons and possibly create additional quay space allotments. This creates some uncertainty about the exact location of the pilot project. This shall be discussed and clearly exposed to the tenant who signed a 12 months with relatively short term notice in case one of the parties wishes to terminate. Whether the houseboat shall move or not does necessarily mean that the tenant shall leave the house. Furthermore, in a project built by and with the host community, the bridges and links created in the neighbourhood suggest that solutions can be found at the local level. For instance, at Education Marina (under new ownership since March 2024) or with other private landowners around Ringön's basins.

Meanwhile, discussions and dialogues between the Gothenburg Floating Lab and the municipality are still ongoing.

1.6 EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Easier access to employment

The main expected outcome for the tenant who is hosted in the pilot project and for the future tenants is a facilitated access to employment opportunities by living close to where these opportunities are. At the greater scale, Gothenburg does show some segregative pockets gathering higher rates of foreign born citizens and higher unemployment rates linked to lower education levels (see MERGING, WP4, D4.1). Place of opportunity, Ringön is quite close from the main urban amenities and from a vibrant working environment.



Finding roots in a vibrant community

With its industrial feel, the neighbourhood hosting the pilot project is also renowned for its party places and annual festival. Many artists' workshops are disseminated around the neighbourhood along with few artists' housings. Having a specific status, it is not part of forthcoming urban development planned by the city council. Yet, a report was ordered by the city council to study up opportunities in the development of inhabited marinas in Gothenburg. A comprehensive plan was produced covering the area along the banks of the Göta river (areas of Frihamnen, Lindholmen, Centralen, Skeppsbron, and Järnvågen-Klippan) following an assignment from the City Council in 2022. It aimed at highlighting the assets of the riverside areas, establishing opportunities and obstacles, and presenting planning hypotheses for the future development of the city.

The city planning departments integrate in their investigations the question of rising sea levels, which they quote as *“a big issue for Gothenburg and how we want to develop our new areas”* (Emma Josefsson, Traffic planner for Gothenburg City, 28/02/2024). The investigation spots points of interests like the Västtrafik ferries, houseboats and leisure boats, a recycling barge, new bridges, a tram tunnel, the preservation of landscape, locations for ecological measure, and the possibilities to be bathing in the river. This last point is already happening close to the Jubileum Parken and famous sauna designed by Raumlabor in Frihamnen. Different areas are considered for houseboats in this study, the issue being the sometimes poor conditions in which the quays can be found, and with sometimes polluted soils due to past industrial activities. As *“there is competition for the usage of land and quays”* (ibid.), one pending element is the status to give to houseboats, specifically regarding building permits and ownership of the property. As Martin Storm (head of the planning department in Gothenburg) says *“So, well, we're onto investigating those fine lines, actually, between a boat and a house”*. For the property aspect, the river being a public good, some sort of rental or occupancy agreement are to be further explored.

From a workshop to further European developments

Ways of living on the water may be further explored in future collaborative European projects as European metropolises are regularly facing a lack of plots to build up accessible housing. This future project may be a H2020 program oriented on [co-design and co-construction of public spaces in neighbourhoods by communities](#), [delivering innovative solutions to enable the green transition](#) or [freight transport decarbonisation in an affordable way](#) for some team members of the Gothenburg Floating Lab network. See also the allotment garden and its micro-alguas as foodstock, close to which ANNA was parked during Prototype Gothenburg which is now being further developed at the [European scale](#).

In the struggle for accessing good price & good quality housing, many target groups are competing. The structural lack of housing in Europe firstly impacts those whose criterias do not secure landlords. Here, public housing plays a crucial role. Yet, nowadays the price of land favours private investors and high standards real estate operations. A way to undermine this financialisation of land and real estate market is to divide the property in volumes with the land on one hand and the dwellings on the other hand alike the Community Land Trust model



which is now applicable in some European countries with local adaptations. This division between land and building is a connection point between MERGING's Swedish and French pilot projects. Up north, the waterways have been used as land reserves thanks to the floatable house. The device can be splitted to be installed on land, without deep foundations. Without foundations at all, the tiny houses are also dividing up properties and balancing out responsibilities along partners.



2. LYON

2.1 CONTEXT

Since 2020, the City and Metropolis of Lyon has promoted hospitality towards individuals facing homelessness and inadequate housing. Through a hospitality policy, based on sheltering and support, the local authorities intend to address social, health, and humanitarian emergencies. To date, over 3000 individuals are provided shelter by the Metropolis, out of which, one third is falling under the jurisdiction of the State.

In 2019, before the MERGING project was drafted and received favourable feedback within the framework of the H2020 program, the association Quatorze and the FNDSA worked on a project to deploy the In My Backyard (IMBY) program in Lyon. Since 2015, this program offers tiny houses placed in the garden of volunteering families to host refugee people. Together, on behalf of the metropolitan council, the two organisations designed a set of participatory tools and gave inputs to deploy IMBY within the greater Lyon. While this feasibility study was being implemented, QUATORZE also developed HAMO (Habitats Mobiles) in Montreuil, close to Paris, which is a solidarity shared house composed of four autonomous tiny houses gathered around a common living room and placed in a community garden.

In the meanwhile, at the national level, the development of tiny houses and more broadly of light movable housing for homeless and people in need of housing was arising. From **le Ty village in Saint Brieuc** in 2019 to Hameaux Légers in Brittany or the Collectif Tiny House France, this type of dwellings also reached out for people seeking for ecological ways of living which relates to downsizing or minimising one's belongings.



Figure 10 : Ty village in Saint Brieuc © Magazine La Jaune & La Rouge N°772 February 2022 and Tiny houses for social housing in Britain, France ©Ouest-France November 2023

In Lyon, since 2021, the concept of housing homeless individuals in tiny houses has been well articulated in various proposals, overall receiving positive feedback from stakeholders in the area. This principle connects with transitory urbanism strategies. Subsequently, the Metropolis decided to establish sites for tiny houses and entrusted their management to various associations in Lyon: Le Mas and the FNDSA. In these examples, the tiny houses were purchased in bulk from suppliers and, most of them, are used to accommodate women with

children under 3 years old and unaccompanied minors who are under the jurisdiction of the Metropolis. Two tiny house accommodation sites funded by the Metropolis are currently being operated by FNDSA, Les Amazones in Vaise (9th arrondissement) and La Saulaie in Oullins (southwest suburb of Lyon). To operate such places, organisations from the civil society are key players. Receiving public funds, they are organising the reception activities and services needed by asylum seekers and refugees, thus sometimes providing services on behalf of the state. Yet, in France, public authorities have specific responsibilities for specific target groups. Many NGOs are therefore financed by various public schemes in order to suit these predefined requirements.

Since the initial feasibility study, the title COCON became a generic name to gather the different places offering to live in autonomous tiny dwellings operated by the FNDSA. The COCON project designed through MERGING is part of this trend of autonomous transitory sheltering close to common right housing conditions. Yet, the MERGING's french pilot projects carries out some innovations to this typology of housing for refugees: a tailor made, individualised social follow up respecting one's pace, high quality autonomous dwellings with generous common spaces fostering bonds and bridges with the host society, a collaborative governance with a strong network of partners.

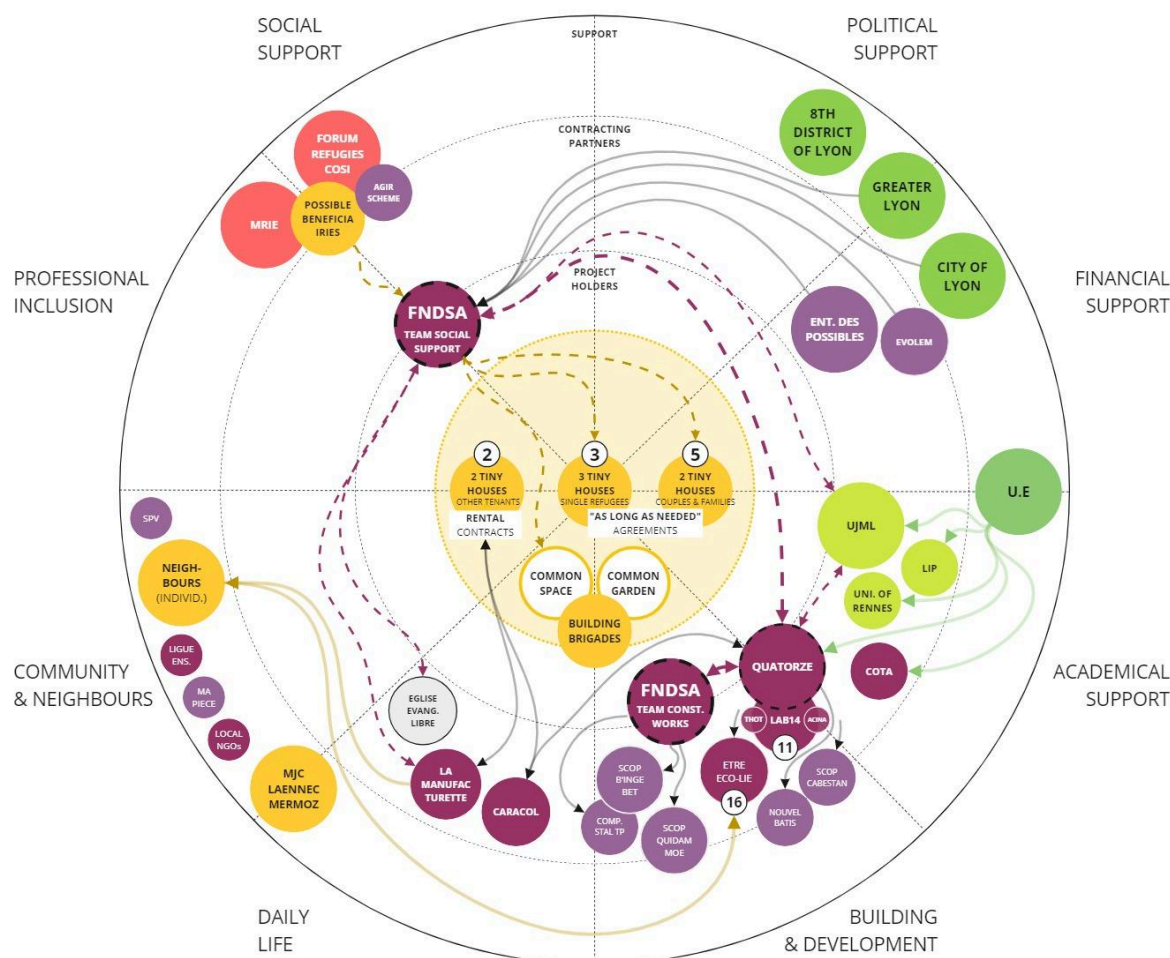


Figure 11 : Les Amazones, La Base ©Thierry Fournier/ Métropole de Lyon
 and Zone Libre in Villeurbanne ©Tim Douet

2.2 SOCIAL SUPPORT

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

The organisational structure of Lyon's pilot project revolves around gathering 7 households hosted in tiny houses in one urban landscaped garden. Despite their sizes, most of these living units can host single persons or couples (double bed in mezzanine) and one can host a three-member family (two mezzanines one for double bed, one for single bed). Out of these 7 tiny houses, 2 are dedicated to promoting social mix on the plot. Lastly, the pilot project embraces shared spaces with the yurt and community garden. The coordination of the pilot was initiated as a strong collaboration between the FNDSA and QUATORZE, who hold weekly meetings along with the UJML and, from time to time, related partners (e.g. Université de Rennes, COTA). Administrative, social and labour support is provided by the FNDSAs social workers and a community manager to bond with the neighbours and surroundings. The FNDSA is funded by a renewable yearly national funding (Direction Migration et Intégration - DMI) as well a subsidy from Evolem Citoyen, l'Entreprise des possibles, the Metropolis of Lyon and crowdfundings in the frame of the national certification "Dons en confiance". In term, following the FNDSA's regular process, the project may receive as well support from private foundations. In Lyon, the social support provided by the FNDSA takes place as a reinforcement of the AGIR scheme carried out by Forum Réfugiés Cosi.



LEGEND

| | | | | | |
|-----|---------------------------------|--|---------------------------|-------|----------------------------|
| (X) | AMOUNT OF BENEFICIARIES | | PRIVATE COMPANIES | | FINANCE & SUBCONTRACTING |
| | PROF. ACTORS MANDATED | | THIRD SECTOR ENTITIES | --- | CORE LOCAL PARTNER TO DATE |
| | PROF. ACTORS WITHOUT MANDATE | | CONFESSIONAL ORGANISATION | ... | MERGING PARTNERS |
| | DIRECT & INDIRECT BENEFICIARIES | | LANDLORD | | |
| | PUBLIC AUTHORITIES | | BENEFICIARIES PATHS | | |
| | PUBLIC ENTITIES | | BUILDING BRIGADES | | |

Figure 12: Map of involvement representing the actors gathered around the project both during the investment and operating phases (©Quatorze, 2024)

A BALANCED MIX OF BENEFICIARIES

Direct beneficiaries

The criterias for defining the main target group for the pilot project have been set by MERGING's research-action frame as defined in the initial work packages (WP2). The importance given to the administrative status of the beneficiaries is a major shift in the usual

habits of the FNDSA and QUATORZE, two NGOs who promote unconditional support and access to housing for all.

To fit into this frame, the beneficiaries have been identified by the FNDSA through a local network of actors. Firstly, as the FNDSA usually proceeds, the social workers engaged a dialog with the Maison de la Veille Sociale (MVS)¹. Yet, according to the information gathered at the MVS on the people in need, MERGING's criteria were "too restrictive". Therefore, the beneficiaries of the pilot project have been oriented by Forum Réfugiés Cosi, a major actor in Lyon for providing shelter and support to migrants (access to rights, health, education and employment, see MERGING, WP4, D4.1). Ultimately, the households of COCON are taking part into the AGIR² scheme carried out by Forum Refugees Cosi which is specifically dedicated to refugees. From another standpoint, according to the responsible of the whole COCON service within the FNDSA, the beneficial effect of the project relies on the specificity of the refugee population's needs. In France, between the time individuals file their asylum application and when they receive their documents, the duration can vary depending on the circumstances. Once the documents are obtained, individuals may not always have had the time or mental availability to envision a professional, personal, or familial life project in France. Hence, the importance of providing a dedicated moment and a secure, supportive environment for this purpose which is the aim of COCON. Yet, for the responsible of three housing schemes within the FNDSA : "Refugee status does not unite people; it is not a common point. [...] It is merely an administrative commonality." (interview 15/03/2024). One of the roles of the social workers team is to foster autonomy by understanding each trajectory but also a sense of belonging to a new community even if this is only for a few months.

Households have been identified in order to create a balanced mix between genders, ages and countries of origin. Another important factor was also the date of arrival and steps into their integration processes.

¹ The Maison de la Veille Sociale, which can be translated to the Rhône Social Monitoring Center oversees the SIAO (Single Point of Access to Housing) of the department. They collect housing requests from individuals involuntarily deprived of personal accommodation, they refer to available accommodation options from member structures of the group, the support for transitioning from accommodation to social housing. The MVS also manages the departmental observatory for assessing housing and accommodation demands and responses for individuals without housing.

² AGIR, Accompagnement Global et Individualisé des Réfugiés, is a program aiming for Comprehensive and Individualised Support for Refugees. It started in 2022 and is planned to be extended to cover the entire metropolitan area by 2024. Inspired by the Accelair program implemented by Forum Réfugiés since 2002, it aims to provide comprehensive and individualised support to beneficiaries of international protection for a maximum period of two years, with a focus on facilitating access to employment and housing.

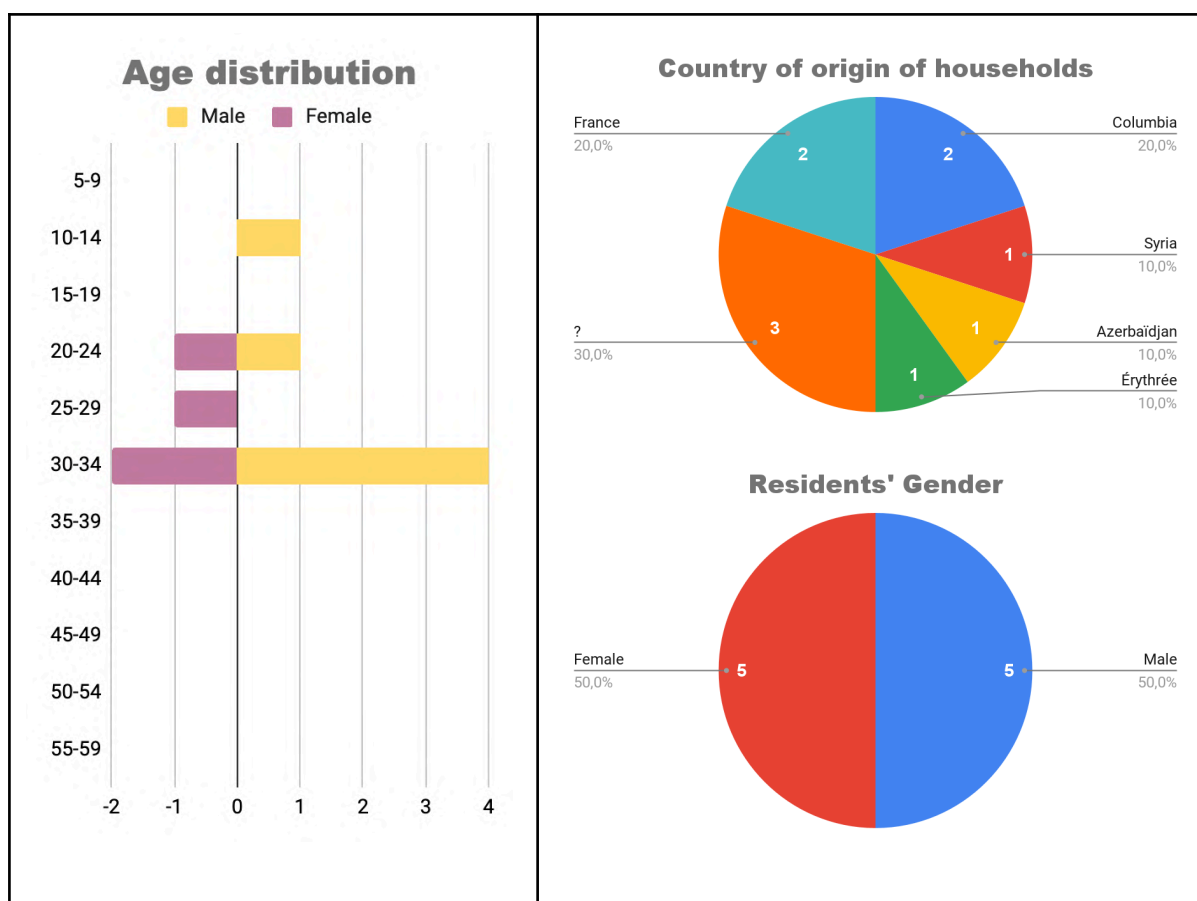


Figure 13: Age, gender and residents' origins distribution in the pilot project in Lyon

Each tenant has a specific background and trajectory. One person is coming from Erythre and was just granted refugee status, one from Syria and got the refugee status less than a year ago, one from Azerbaïdjan and has been in the AGIR scheme for almost 2 years, two persons are from Columbia and arrived in France a year ago. This couple was granted the BPI status (Beneficiary of International Protection) 6 months ago. Lastly, a household with one 10 to 14 year old kid shall move into the tiny house belonging to the Eglise Anglicane. Their country of origin is not known yet. Thanks to this melting pot, a variety of steps into the integration process is observable, thus fostering peer-to-peer learning: some are currently working while others are just starting to take French classes.

All are seeking for independent homes as some have been previously sheltered at third-parties places (family related or friends), at hotels (thus paying high rent) or in collective building with dormitories. Some have experienced street life for a few nights or much longer.

Indirect beneficiaries

One of the specificities of Lyon's pilot project relies on fostering a social diversity in the inhabited mix. Here, two kinds of indirect beneficiaries can be identified : the non refugee

tenants of two tiny houses and the neighbours gathered through the yurt and community garden.

Two tiny houses are dedicated to host people whatever their administrative status and country of origin is: students, young workers, any people in need of affordable housing. In the tiny house belonging to La Manufacturette, a NGO based in Lyon, a music student is soon moving in. The last tiny house dedicated to such a purpose belongs to Quatorze and its rental management is operated through Caracol. This french NGO is managing solidarity shared houses in France and is starting to develop in Lyon's area. This organisation is selecting one young worker out of 5 interested people.

Furthermore, the garden and yurt enabled the partners to gather a community of neighbours who are the second type of indirect beneficiaries of the project. To date, about 50 individuals living in surroundings are taking part in the implementation of the pilot project. Thanks to the work undertaken by the community facilitator hired by the FNDSA about 15 local associations are interested in setting a calendar of activities on the plot.

Promoting autonomy & community

The social follow up philosophy of the FNDSA relies on going toward the person and letting the person assess and express their agreement on receiving the support. On a daily basis, this is a process of walking the thin line between "going toward" and "free adhesion" is insufflating gentle progressive empowerment.

To do so, one shall notice that there are limitations to individualised support especially if it is provided by the same person overtime. While this individual support may typically help the housed person regain self-confidence at the beginning, a form of dependency relationship can also develop between the beneficiary and the social worker. The housed person may then remain *"in a state of dependency and rely entirely on their reference person"* (Head of COCON service, FNDSA). To mitigate this risk the FNDSA's coordinator of the social workers explains the importance of a broader community involvement:

"It is important for us to broaden this relationship to include other individuals, who may not specialise in social support, such as volunteers or neighbours. Hence, the importance of providing spaces for interaction, such as the yurt, to facilitate exchanges among beneficiaries and between beneficiaries and individuals external to the site. These exchanges can be informal, occurring during activities such as laundry chores or initiated by the community facilitator by proposing communal activities open to both site residents and neighbours. This serves as a means for the housed individuals to network, begin forming social connections, and even professional contacts." (Service manager at FNDSA, 15/03/2024).

Opening up the site generates social interactions which, in turn, requires social capabilities. Self-management of the sites is also among the underlying principles of the social support

philosophy in the COCON program. To enhance collective autonomy, the programme is offering autonomous dwellings which are echoing single housing units:

"It's quite logical that it operates as a housing-type system. That means individuals have complete autonomy, which is why we need people who are, in quotation marks, well-equipped" (Head of COCON service, FNDSA, 03/11/2023)

The choice of tenants was also guided by a capability assessment and an overall perceived stability. Dealing with other places with heavy ruling and collective dormitories, the social worker's teams sometimes face violences both toward the facilities and team members. In such places, some people have addiction and/or psychological issues. According to the FNDSA, in COCON, the individuality and intimacy are key added values:

"Here, there is my living space that begins and ends within a perimeter I can physically encompass, and it's not the same as my neighbour's; it's a separate entity. There's an individual dimension with beginning and end." (Innovation Manager at FNDSA, conference-debate 15/03/2022, Lyon)

Furthermore, the quality of the living unit, its ability to bring a sense of beauty also has an impact on the beneficiaries self-esteem :

"Before, we had sites with bungalows... It's the same... Well, no, it's not the same. Before the tiny houses, there were bungalows. We brought in prefabricated ones like that, next to each other, on top of each other, all white, all ugly. Because we were in places where we couldn't build. So here, it gains in beauty, which I think is important; people arrive at a place that is beautiful. The interior of a tiny house is much warmer." (Head of COCON service, FNDSA, 03/11/2023)

Coming down to the tiny houses designed for Lyon's plot, they are *"the result of four years of experimentation, and their design has been informed by the feedback from the residents of the previous four tiny houses"* (Quatorze's project coordinator, conference-debate 15/03/2022, Lyon). Initiated by Quatorze for IMBY, their interior design has been progressively improved based on moving out interviews with their users who all add refugee status.

Seemingly oxymoron, the social support thus becomes an accompanied autonomy of the beneficiaries relying on their intimacy and a sense of community appearing through meeting places and activities as well as self-organisation:

"In fact, the site belongs to you, we are here for the site's security, ensuring that your tiny house is in good condition, that you can eat, that you can move around, and that we provide social support in your daily life in this place. Ideally, we would like you to have... a bit of self-management." (Head of COCON service, FNDSA, 03/11/2023)

The self-management on site is becoming possible thanks to a resilient net of responsibility sharing in the property and rental management.

2.3 PROPERTY & RENTAL MANAGEMENT

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

The building of two tiny houses and one yurt was financed by the European Union. During the process of construction and since its finalisation, Quatorze ensures a role of owner and project manager for these built realisations. However, the plot belongs to the FNDSA who ensures the responsibility of the landlord both on the investment and operating phase during which this organisation ensures social support, community building and the rental management of the facilities. As seen above, they played a crucial role in finding partners, local support and most importantly tenants. They are now operating the facilities.

Responsibilities of the owner of the plot

The FNDSA is responsible for the overall management of the property which mainly includes the servicing of the plot in the investment phase and the supervising of the operating phase. In doing so, the FNDSA is engaged in taking care of the facilities installed on the property as well as insurance, fluid and housing tax (rubbish collection, community taxes, etc.). payments among other responsibilities as described in MERGING's WP5, D5.1.

Responsibilities of the owners of the facilities (tiny houses and yurt)

On the plot, 2 tiny houses are owned by the FNDSA, 3 by Quatorze, 1 by the Eglise Anglicane and 1 by La Manufacturette. Each stakeholder is responsible for the quality of their facility including quality of the construction itself, its equipment (heating system, access to water and connection to sewage) and, to some extent, the furniture of the homes. Each owner shall have his own insurance for the facilities. Agreements bond the FNDSA and the owners and define the financial conditions and core responsibilities of each party.

Lastly, Quatorze owns the yurt which is an equipment open to the public. Hereby, Quatorze is responsible for the respect of the french regulation about accessibility for all and protection against fire. These have been insured both in the design and construction process (design and choice of material) and reinforced by the validation by a control office (Veritas). One specific agreement bonds the FNDSA and Quatorze to define the financial conditions and core responsibilities of each party about this facility.

The facilities built within MERGING are made available free of charge for the pilot project. All the other facilities shall pay a rent of the space on the plot and a contribution to the water and electricity expenses.

Responsibilities of the Operator

The operator being also the landlord, the FNDSA responsibility is to provide decent accommodation that does not endanger the safety or health of the tenant. They are required to provide the tenant with a number of documents when the lease is signed and during the term of the lease, noticeably an accommodation agreement and inventories on entry and exit.



Any work that does not fall within the scope of rental repairs is the sole responsibility of the operator throughout the term of the lease. In COCON, the operator is responsible for furnishing the dwellings. In addition to these rental management aspects, for all the direct beneficiaries of the project, the FNDSA is responsible for providing social support.

The operator also collects rents when applicable and follows up on the payment of charges. By general rule at the FNDSA, no deposits are requested to enter the facilities. Yet, in order to accompany the households toward common right housing, they are invited to pay a progressive rent that is indexed on their incomes.

Contractualisation

As shown in deliverable 5.1 at the beginning of work package 5, the making and operating of the pilot project relies on various agreements and contracts, both during the investment phase and operating phase. The multilayered partnerships and responsibilities are materialised through contracts and agreements, such as:

| Responsibilities | FNDSA | Quatorze | Eglise Anglicane | La Manufacturette | Caracol | Direct Benef. | Indirect Benef. |
|--|-------|----------|------------------|-------------------|---------|---------------|-----------------|
| INSTALLATION ON THE PLOT | | | | | | | |
| Agreement on yurt & tiny houses MERGING for core social project | X | X | | | | | |
| Agreement on tiny house for core social project | X | | X | | | | |
| Agreement on tiny house social mix Ernestine | X | X | | | | | |
| Agreement on tiny house social mix Living Lab | X | | | X | | | |
| SUBRENTAL MANAGEMENT | | | | | | | |
| Use of one tiny house | | X | | | X | | |
| ACCOMMODATION AGREEMENTS | | | | | | | |
| Accommodation agreement for 5 beneficiaries of core social project | X | | | | | X | |
| Accommodation agreement for 1 beneficiary social mix | | | | X | | | X |
| Accommodation agreement for 1 beneficiary social mix | | | | | X | | X |
| INSURANCES | | | | | | | |
| Owner insurance | X | X | X | X | | | |
| Tenant insurance | | | | | | X | X |

Figure 14: Summary of the agreements needed to operate the pilot project

| | LESSOR | LESSEES | | OPERATING TEAM | | BENEFICIARIES | | |
|--|--------|----------|-----------|---------------------|----------------|----------------------|------------------------|----------------|
| RESPONSIBILITIES | FND SA | Quatorze | UJML | Community Animation | Social Workers | Direct Beneficiaries | Indirect Beneficiaries | Local Partners |
| RENTAL MANAGEMENT | | | | | | | | |
| FIVE TINY HOUSES FOR DIRECT BENEFICIARIES | | | | | | | | |
| Rental agreement on using the plot | X | X | support | | | | | X |
| Building & refurbishment of tiny houses | | X | | | | | | |
| Furnishing of tiny houses | X | X | | | | | | |
| Identification of beneficiaries | X | | | | X | | | |
| Signing occupancy contracts with residents | X | | | | X | X | | |
| Inventories of locations on entry and exit | X | | | | X | | | |
| Collect rents / Dedicated bank account management | X | | | | | | | |
| Payment of charges (water, electricity, etc.) | X | | | | | | | |
| Small maintenance / repairs | | | | | X | X | | |
| Medium maintenance / repairs | X | | | X | | | | |
| Insurance Contract (Signing and paying) | X | | | | | | | |
| Housing taxes (rubbish collection, community taxes, etc.). | X | | | | | | | |
| TWO TINY HOUSES FOR OWNERS | | | | | | | | |
| Rental agreement on using the plot | X | X | | | | | | X |
| Identification of beneficiaries | | X | support | | | | | |
| Signing occupancy contracts with residents | | X | | | | X | | X |
| Collect rents / Dedicated bank account management | | x | | | | | | x |
| Payment of charges (water, electricity, etc.) | | x | | | | | | X |
| Insurance Contract (Signing and paying) | | x | | | | | | X |
| COMMONS | | | | | | | | |
| Management of refurbishment works of the premises | X | | | X | X | X | X | |
| Furnishing of premises | X | X | | X | | | | |
| ACTIVITIES & SUPPORT | | | | | | | | |
| Social accompaniment of housing users | X | | support | X | X | | | 2/months |
| Socio-labour accompaniment of housing users | X | | | X | X | | | 2/months |
| Proposals and follow up on activities within common space | X | | | 2/months | | 2/months | | 2/months |
| Mediation for the reservation of common space | X | | | every 2 months | | every 2 months | | |
| Data collection for assessment of activities with COTA (WP6) | X | | trimestre | trimestre | | trimestre | | trimestre |

Figure 15: Task distribution scheme based on the work done in D5-1 (©Quatorze, 2024)



BENEFICIARIES AS TENANTS

Rent

The rent of the tiny house is collected by the FNDSA and is progressive, depending on the tenant's incomes. If people do not have any income they do not pay any rent. Once the receive at least the Revenu de Solidarité Active (RSA)³, a rent applies : 15% of their incomes with a maximum of €250/month.

| | Amount of dependent person | Amount since the 1st of April 2024 |
|----------------------|--|------------------------------------|
| Single person | 0 | €635.70 |
| | 1 | €953.56 |
| | 2 | €1 144.28 |
| | Additional dependent person supplement | €254.28 |
| Couple | 0 | €953.56 |
| | 1 | €1 144.28 |
| | 2 | €1334.99 |
| | Additional dependent person supplement | €254.28 |

Figure 16 : Amount of the Revenu de Solidarité Active applicable since 01/04/2024 in France

Security deposit

No security deposit is required by the tenant to move in. A provision for works is included in the overall budget management of the pilot project (see D5.3).

Resident expenses

The tenant covers the costs of furniture not already provided with the housing, he/she can seek support of the FNDSA if specific needs. The follow up provided by the FNDSA ensures that the tenant is adequately installed according to their financial means.

Social housing allowance

Depending on the status of the tenant, he/she may receive a social housing allowance or a public allowance such as the RSA. Yet, he/she may also be autonomous in their incomes (paid

³ Allocated to over 2 million low-income French citizens by the Caisse d'Allocation Familiale (CAF) or Mutuelle Sociale Agricole (MSA), the RSA is reserved for individuals with limited resources to ensure them a minimum subsistence income. It is granted under certain conditions such as being at least 25 years old (except for pregnant women or parents); residing in France for at least 9 months of the year; being of French nationality, a citizen of the European Economic Area, Swiss, or having a valid residence permit for at least 5 years. Some individuals aged between 18 and 25 may also qualify for the "young active" RSA, provided they have been employed full-time for 2 years out of the last 3 years.

training programs or employment). In case a social housing allowance is perceived by the tenant this amount is included in his/her overall income.

Property tax

No property tax is applicable to inhabitants under an accommodation agreement. The landlord pays housing related taxes to the municipality.

Other responsibilities

In COCON, the tenants do not need to have their own valid home insurance as they are sheltered by the FNDSA acting both as landlord and operator.

Before entering the project, the tenants have been informed about its community building aspect. Their involvement in the daily life and events organised on site is part of a moral contract that is now being developed with all the stakeholders. In time, it will become an internal regulation shared by all tenants and users of the facilities.

2.4 NEIGHBOURHOOD ACTIVITIES

The research conducted in the fundamental phase highlighted a trend of relegating migrants to distant and rural areas, even though the characteristics of the installation neighbourhood significantly influence the speed and quality of the integration process. Therefore, location appears as a key factor in the facilitation of integration for migrants and refugees. As a reminder, during deliverable 4.1, four main criteria have been defined for the locations of the pilot projects : access to public transportation, access to daily life services, the dynamism of the neighbourhood, and facilitated conditions for social follow-up.

Daily Life

The daily life of the pilot project is facilitated by its location close to the city centre with La Part Dieu train station being a 20 minutes metro ride and access to various public transport services. The daily life of the neighbourhood is punctuated by the activities led at the MJC Laënnec-Mermoz which proposes many cultural and sport activities for both youth and adults. Daily shopping is accessible with a 5 to 10 minutes walk.

Internal Regulations

The change of plot for the pilot project that occurred along the process led back to the location of the 8th district of Lyon, at rue bataille which literally means battle. Due to squatting, the daily life on the plot had been difficult for the close neighbours as some drug dealing, prostitution and street mechanics happened between 2019 and 2021 on the plot. At the first public meeting some reactions among the neighbours summed up fears and frustrations:

"Your project, if we are naive, we can only adhere to it. You talk to us about refugees, tiny houses, inclusion... Refugees are migrants, tiny houses are mobile homes... In fact,

there can be 35 people on the site." (A resident, public meeting at the local community centre, 18/11/2022)

To give an appropriate answer to such fears, the team undertook participatory events on the field to provide information and expose the future functioning of the place. The internal regulations and the process usually applied in other housing schemes operated by the FNDSA are applicable to the pilot project. In France, since January 2002, the Law No. 2002-02 reforms social and medico-social action and requires medical-social establishments to draft operating regulations in accordance with the provisions of Social Action and Families Code. In the pilot project there is one single internal regulation for all kinds of beneficiaries direct and indirect and all kinds of users (workers, volunteers, visitors...).

A first draft has been set up by the FNDSA's team and will be updated every 6 months with the inhabitants of the plot during assemblies called CO-HAB (see D5.3). The internal regulation firstly exposes the rights of the tenants (dignity, privacy and intimacy, safety, individualised social support, confidentiality and personnel data management, general information about their rights). The second part exposes the need for respect for the other users and facilities (decency, state of inebriation, bans on drugs and weapons, as well as all acts of violence). The third part exposes the rules of collective living. The place is open H24/24 and D365/365. The tenants can have hosts, in such cases they are responsible for their host. To save space in the housings, the yurt can be used as a laundromat with one washing machine. A weekly agenda, organised among tenants, settles the shifts in using this shared facility. The garden next to the yurt is also considered as a shared space while the 4sqm gardens in front the tiny houses are semi-private. The fourth part focuses on the use of private spaces and highlights the requirements the tenant shall meet by ensuring good maintenance of the premises. It includes the right to visit the housings with the agreement of the tenant unless imminent danger is observable. It mentions that tenants can have guests and animals depending on agreement of the whole group. The last part clarifies the possible penalties in case the tenant does not comply with the internal regulations: an oral warning, a written warning, a temporary prohibition from accessing common areas and lastly the initiation of the termination procedure for the residency contract in the most serious cases or in case of repeated breaches. This last step concerns only the most serious offences or repeated breaches:

"This is really, really rare. It almost never gets to this point. This is exactly why it is useful to have these clear steps." (COCON service manager, ibid.)

Symbols of their autonomy, the tenants have: one key of the tiny house, one key of the yurt and one key of the access portal. They can receive their mail at the address of the pilot project and benefit from one important paper for any administrative process in France: a certificate of accommodation.

Management of common space

The human resources allocated by the FNDSA to this new site are primarily dedicated to the community outreach dynamics led by the community facilitator (see D5.3).

Providing activities open to the neighbourhood carries out a positive effect in helping prejudices and barriers to accepting refugees to be overcome. Before the opening, various public meetings and actions have facilitated the acceptance of the site's establishment in the neighbourhood (egg hunt, exhibitions, lunch on the grass...). Through discussions at public meetings with neighbours, it appears that the establishment of such a site could be an opportunity for residents of the neighbourhood who addressed the Municipality, present during the initial public meeting, to express their needs.

Events and Civic Life

Lyon has a vibrant cultural life hosting various biennale and annual events known at the national and international levels. Yet, the neighbourhood where the pilot takes place is relatively far away from such high standard cultural events. Popular and contrasted, Mermoz-Laënnec in the 8th arrondissement is seeking for local, entrenched cultural life. At COCON, some activities will be undertaken by the FNDSA and local partners to open the place both to direct and indirect beneficiaries of the project.

On the **13th of February 2024** a first envisioning workshop was facilitated and organised by the FNDSA with the support of COTA to define the name and baseline of the project. At this point, the name of the project which varied between Cocon-Merging, Cocon-Bataille or Bataille officially became **La Yourte, Cocon Solidaire**.

On the **7th of March 2024** some plantation of trees provided by the Société Protectrice des Végétaux (SPV) gathered young civic volunteers and members of the FNDSA to start the landscaping of the plot. This session gathered about 12 people.

On the **12th of April 2024**, an afternoon tea gathered the future residents (before moving in) to get to know each other and meet the other residents. This time also enabled the co-construction of the site's rules and regulations.

On the **23rd of April 2024** a Corporate solidarity day with the team of Ma Pièce event company was intended with the objectives of planting hedges and shrubs with the SPV, who's been already involved in the landscaping of the plot. The team also took part into the construction of raised garden beds using reclaimed wood with your assistance. La Manufacturette designed the furniture and supervised the construction. The FNDSA insured the provision of materials. The persons involved were team members of Ma Pièce, and staff of the FNDSA, La Manufacturette and SPV. The event gathered 10 people.

On the **27th of April 2024**, a public participatory construction site was held with the aim of building pallet sofas or other furniture for the garden such as further garden beds or bike racks. The event involved a participatory cooking workshop and some gardening. In total, 20 people participated to the event, including 3 residents.



Figure 17: Landscaping of the plot with the SPV and young volunteers

On the **3rd of May**, an official visit of city representatives was organised to prepare for the future official opening and on the **29th of May** a second envisioning workshop was held about the future activities that can arise at La Yourte COCON Solidaire. The community facilitator gathered about 12 persons to first think about the “perfect neighbourhood” and open ideas up to then lists potential activities to organise in the garden and the yurt. Do It Yourself sessions, repair labs, world culture through singing, dancing and other small shows in various languages arised in the discussions. One tenant who just moved in came for a few moments. The needs and abilities to be able to take part in such workshops are focus points of the community facilitator as well as the amount of activities to increment in order to give enough time and space to the tiny house dwellers to adjust to their new environment. In the landscaping project, the small, symbolical fence between the community garden and the housings is important.

On the **31st of May 2024** and for the first time, the yurt will be lent to another organisation for the hosting of a public event : a conference about migration and exile in Lyon Metropolis area. On the **1st of June 2024** another public participatory construction site event is planned in order to build some signage and other elements to be defined based on needs following the first construction site that may imply gardening (beds, compost installation, rainwater harvesting, etc.), participatory cooking workshop with Potinambour and sewing workshop for making cushions for the sofas.

Seeing the plot open and some activities going on, neighbours stopped by to get information about the place, thus promoting the next event.

The official inauguration will be hosted on the **20th of June 2024**. This date aligns with the international day of the refugees. From 6:00 to 9:00 PM, this public opening is being prepared by the FNDSA's community facilitator and will propose welcoming speeches along with visits, buffet and fooding, exhibitions and the making of participatory art as well as a concert. On this date, the future program of various activities planned at La Yourte will be unveiled.

2.5 FEEDBACKS

From shelters to homes

During the first visits on site with potential beneficiaries, like in Sweden, some potential tenants turned down the opportunity to move in. These visits occurred in November and December, at the core of winter during rainy days with mud due to ongoing remaining works and no vegetation. The yurt was built but some tiny houses were still missing. For the service manager at FNDSA, the tiny houses received mitigated feedback, as *"in people's minds, it doesn't match their way of living or their expectations"* (interview, 15/03/2024).

Most expectations tend toward regular housing in flats, buildings or houses. For some, this aspects led to the involvement in the pilot project :

"At first, it's often a reaction... a bit of surprise. I think it reflects the idea or at least what people had in mind in terms of accommodation. But once we explain the project as a whole, the fact that the tiny homes are completely individual spaces, people are generally happy; they see the benefit. When they enter, they find that it is well made, well designed, and that the spaces are optimised." (Service manager at FNDSA, 15/03/2024).

Despite their small size, the tiny houses offer all the services of a regular housing, thus giving a sense of comfort. If it is too early to hear from the inhabitants who just started to move in since the 13th of May, the previous feedbacks from IMBY's program occur positive outcomes:

"Actually, when you enter the tiny house, you think about something else, you're home." (W., Inhabitant of Capucine, 2021)

Individual housing in tiny houses preserves the individual's privacy, thus enabling them to engage in a process of care for themselves. Therefore, it becomes crucial for them to define their needs. Hence, the importance of having social workers to assist them in this process. Having a small yet decent and independent accommodation secures the pathway towards integration and enables beneficiaries to envision their future by contemplating prospective projects. This housing device, goes along with a policy of personalised social support based on their empowerment and autonomy within a community.

Fostering social mix

In this pilot project a certain form of social mix is to be experienced thanks to the planification of 2 out of 7 tiny houses intended to accommodate individuals who are not having a refugee

status. To do so, Quatorze gathered partners with whom the organisation had worked before such as Caracol and La Manufacturette. These two NGOs are in charge of finding such tenants. This is an important innovative point of the project. While most facilities for newcomers and people in need are intended exclusively for one homogeneous target group (i.e. only asylum seekers, only women with kids under three years old...), the pilot project advocates for diversity. If it is too early to draw on learnings from this proposal, this aspect of the pilot concept is a seed to observe in the long run. Additionally to the creation of common spaces, this social mix is intended to facilitate the integration of beneficiaries into the neighbourhood, enabling them to engage with local residents and interact with other site residents, whether refugees or non-refugees.

Sense of home, sense of community

In the French pilot project, a facilitator is dedicated to the animation of the site, which supports the creation of a common project both for the direct and indirect beneficiaries. By opening the site to the neighbourhood, and inviting neighbours in joined activities, cultural encounters are encouraged and strengthened. Going along the autonomous dwellings, the yurt and community garden are being progressively transformed through co-construction and volunteering. These facilities are both fully part of the pilot project concept.

"At first, it makes them smile, but then they are impressed by the structure; they find it beautiful." (Service manager at FNDSA, 15/03/2024).

Following the envisioning workshops held by the FNDSA, La Yourte Cocon Solidaire was chosen as the name for the pilot project. This highlights the ability of this unique architecture to become a local landmark. Being identified as a reference point in the neighbourhood helps sustain activities and volunteer involvement over time. In the near future, the project will transition from being a reference point to becoming a meeting point. This process is currently being facilitated by the community facilitator hired by the FNDSA:

"Building a network of committed neighbours and partners is intended to have multiple key impacts. Firstly, it facilitates intercultural encounters between exiled individuals and neighbourhood residents. Secondly, it creates social ties among all residents. Thirdly, it strengthens a spirit of mutual support in the neighbourhood and around the project. Fourthly, it facilitates access for residents to public services (activities of the MJC, social centre, municipal social services, etc.). Lastly, it helps them in understanding local support systems and structures and reinforces the social and cultural integration of residents through cultural and linguistic activities offered on-site, between residents and neighbours." (Community manager, FNDSA, extract from handbook D4.6 & D56)



Figure 18: Envisioning workshop at La Yourte Cocon Solidaire ©FNDSA, May 2024

2.6 EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Sustaining an ongoing dynamic

The pilot project is intended for 5 years of operating at completion. To sustain the dynamic of opening the site to a wider audience, to create bonds with other sheltering places or local activities and, to take care of the place thanks to participatory constructions, some human and financial resources are necessary. Here, NGOs regularly apply for fundings whether public or private. For instance, the FNDSA applied for one grant dedicated to further investment in the revegetation and gardening of the site (8000€ - Fondation Amar y Servir) and applied to another call for funding dedicated to the social support and general operating of the plot (16000€ - Immigration Ministry). In the meanwhile, Quatorze is preparing for a crowdfunding to support the FNDSA in the building of one remaining facility, the bike storage and rubbish management space. This part of the construction is intended to happen in September 2024 and will imply the inhabitants of the plot and surroundings, like the yurt did. Getting responses to calls for funding generally takes several months thus leading to action within a relative uncertainty. Gathering a collage of fundings is time consuming. Often, funders expect a short term, measurable impact yet integration comes over time as it needs to follow one's path and pace.



Disseminating integration

When it comes to housing for migrants and people with heavy social difficulty, NGOs are often managing places with homogeneous target groups and with little, overused common spaces dedicated only to the sheltered people. Here, the pilot project gives the opportunity to experiment new practices, thanks to the common space and its role in integration of a wide range of populations. This can enhance the expertise of NGOs in supporting foreign individuals. Having the support of research and making real scale demonstrators helps to disseminate such experience to public authorities, thereby changing and legitimising their actions under a new shed of light. The FNDSA is already well-recognized locally by these authorities. Within research action processes such as MERGING, NGOs engage in collective reflection with academics on the project's impact, which appears to serve as a motivating factor:

"In a project like CoCon, it's something a bit different for the moment, we're going to do something experimental, a research-action, and we're very happy about that. At the same time, I hope that it can permeate, spread, and transform our ways of doing things everywhere and for everyone because that's how we transform society, and that's a bit of our ambition too." (Director of FNDSA, conference-debate on March 15, 2022, in Lyon).

Expanding light housing programs

Regarding public authorities and local policies, it shall be mentioned that the pilot project represents an expansion of existing tiny house programs in the area of Lyon. The current tiny house accommodation schemes in the Lyon Metropolis provide shelter for women with children under 3 years old or for young individuals seeking minority protection. However, these schemes lack dedicated site animation or social diversity. There have been no participatory construction projects, neither for the tiny houses, which were purchased in bulk from a manufacturer without prior consulting the hosted population, nor for communal spaces like the yurt, garden and bike storage. On existing sites owned by the Metropolis and managed either by FNDSA or the association Le Mas, there has been no specific hiring for animating the common space, nor any diversity in the housed populations. While they provide shelter, they are less focused on integration, especially considering that minors and some foreign women may not obtain resident status. Here, both the design, making and operating of the pilot are game changers:

"173 Rue Bataille is [...] a drop in the ocean yet simultaneously crucial because the approach is based on innovative methodological principles (involvement of residents, participation in project governance bodies...) that can bring about change at the FNDSA, in other associations, and in the Metropolitan area. How do we turn 173 Rue Bataille into a virtuous facility?"

(FNDSA innovation manager, interview on 01/012/2023).



Figure 19: Common spaces, semi-private and private space ©FNDSA, April 2024

3. VALÈNCIA

3.1 CONTEXT

The functioning phase of the València pilot project, called Caliu Urbà, as outlined in deliverable 5.5 is a pivotal aspect conceived in WP4 and WP5 to extend over several years. It is poised to commence during the program, allowing for an initial evaluation to illuminate factors driving and hindering development in WP6.

The València pilot project has been significantly influenced by the progression observed since the early work packages (WP) and the establishment of networks fostered by the UVEG. Grounded in operational concepts of integration, rooted in social capital theories, it has laid the groundwork for dialogues with both public and social entities. From the outset, it was evident that a multidimensional approach was necessary, with housing taking precedence due to the project's thematic focus. Moreover, the importance of community development at various scales, within the migrant community and with local neighbourhoods, became apparent.

Identification of the Agermanament Comunitari Valencià project in WP2 and 3, and its recognition as a successful case study, facilitated connections with administration and social entities, fostering collaboration with EVha, the entity providing the 8 housing units and community space. These entities comprised the committee that defined selection criteria for beneficiaries, with Valencia Acull being designated for implementing social support. Understanding this trajectory across different work packages is essential to grasp the functioning of the pilot, encompassing governance and the social and material resources mobilised to date.



Figure 20: Farewell event for Àngela, social worker of Valencia Acull and yoga workshop given by a beneficiary. ©Caliu Urbà, 2024.

3.2 SOCIAL FOLLOW UP

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

The organisational structure of the Caliu Urbà within the Merging project revolves around the operation of eight cohabitation units. Among these units, five consist of nuclear families, two are single-men households, and one is a shared housing arrangement between two women.

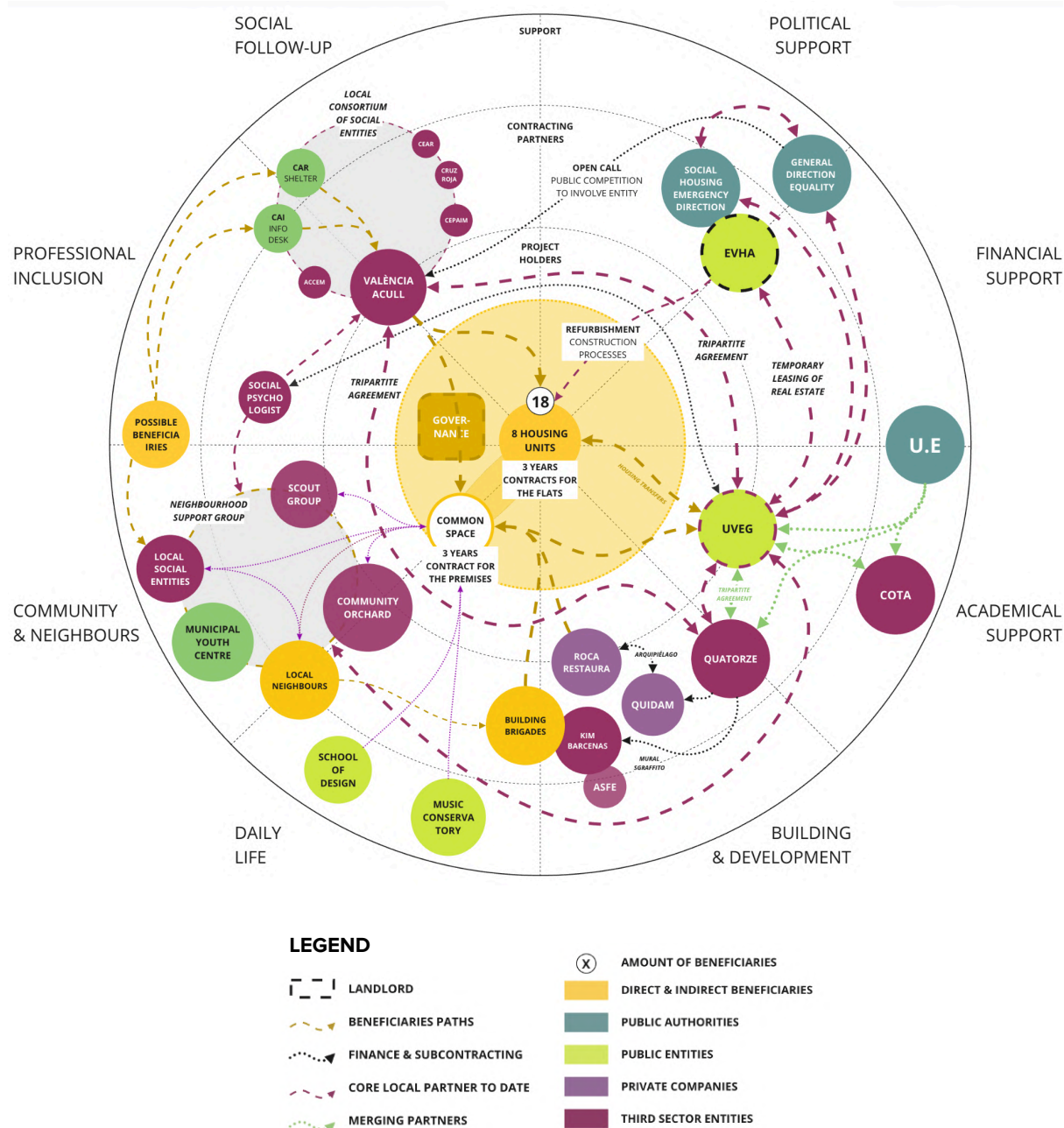


Figure 21: Map of involvement representing the actors gathered around the project both during the investment and operating phases (©Quatorze, 2024)

The coordination of the pilot project is ensured by UVEG, which holds weekly meetings attended by Quatorze and València Acull. Administrative, social, and labour support is

provided by a social worker from València Acull, funded partly by a grant from the General Directorate of Equality and Diversity, and partly by UVEG. Starting in 2024, UVEG also funds the work of a social psychologist, focused on community animation within the group formed by all the family units. This work has played a significant role in the creation and utilisation of the community space, which serves as a venue for both individual and group support meetings since its inauguration.

A BALANCED MIX OF BENEFICIARIES

The criteria for defining the beneficiaries of the housing units have been set by the collective of social and public entities forming the consortium of social organisations (CEAR, CEPAIM, Red Cross, CAI, CAR, ACCEM, València Acull), with coordination by UVEG and the presence of Quatorze. This process has been conducted taking into account the overall framework of the Merging project and the specific context of the territory of the Valencian Community and Spain. The beneficiary families have been referred: three by València Acull, two by CMSS⁴ Quatre Carreres, two by CEAR, and one by ACCEM.

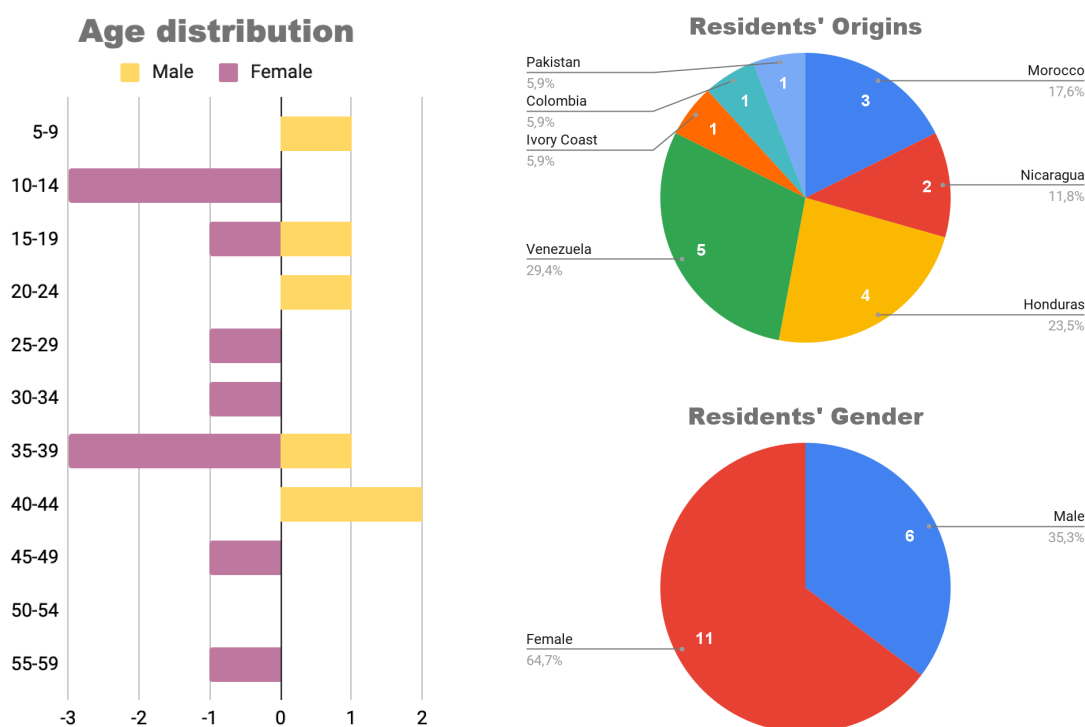


Figure 22: Graphs representing the composition of the group of beneficiaries of the pilot in Valencia (©Quatorze, 2024).

The beneficiary families of the project in Valencia encompass a wide range of ages and family sizes. In total, the project supports individuals and families totalling 17 people. The families consist of single individuals, single-parent households, and traditional families, originating

⁴ Municipal Social Services Centre of the Valencian City Council.

from various countries such as Pakistan, Morocco, Venezuela, Colombia, Ivory Coast, Honduras, and Nicaragua. Among them, there are individuals ranging from 23 to 56 years old, with the majority falling within the working-age range. There are families with children ranging from as young as 7 to 18 years old, highlighting the presence of minors within the beneficiary group. These families represent the diverse backgrounds and circumstances of migrants seeking assistance and support in Valencia. All beneficiaries are fluent in Spanish, with the exception of the person from Pakistan who is in the process of learning Spanish.

3.3 PROPERTY AND RENTAL MANAGEMENT

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

In the Caliu Urbà project, the management of property and rentals involves several key responsibilities and processes:

Responsibilities of the Owner

The EVha (Entidad Valenciana de Vivienda y Suelo) leases the renovated housing units to the UVEG (Universitat de València), delegating all rental management responsibilities to the UVEG. However, EVha retains ownership-related responsibilities, such as ensuring the structural integrity and overall condition of the properties. This means that while UVEG handles tenant relations, rent collection, and day-to-day management, EVha is accountable for significant maintenance tasks, structural repairs, and long-term property upkeep. This division of responsibilities ensures that the housing units remain in good condition and that tenants receive reliable support both from the property management and ownership sides.

Responsibilities of the Operator

The UVEG manages the rental process, transforming traditional rent payments into contributions to a common fund over the three-year lease period. This approach is designed to foster a sense of community and collective responsibility among the families. The contributions serve as a resource for shared projects, enhancing community cohesion and mutual support. To facilitate this process, UVEG collaborates closely with València Acull, an organisation dedicated to supporting migrants, and engages a social psychologist to provide comprehensive support. Through both individual and group discussions, families are guided on how to manage their contributions effectively and are educated on the principles of rental payments. This dual approach not only familiarises families with the concept of rent but also integrates educational discussions and employment opportunities into the program. The aim is to empower families, helping them to understand the financial responsibilities of housing while simultaneously providing them with the tools and opportunities to improve their socio-economic status.

Contractualization

After signing the lease agreement for the eight apartments and common area, the Universitat de València (UVEG) entered into a tripartite agreement with Quatorze, an architectural and social innovation collective, and València Acull, a local organisation supporting migrant families. This tripartite agreement establishes a collaborative framework in which each party has clearly defined roles and responsibilities. Under this agreement, families sign rental contracts with all three entities. These contracts detail the rights and obligations of each party, ensuring transparency and accountability. UVEG handles the overall management and administration of the rentals, Quatorze provides support with architectural and infrastructural aspects, and València Acull offers social and community integration services. This comprehensive approach aims to create a supportive and sustainable living environment for the families, combining housing stability with social support and community building.

| | LESSOR | LESSEES | | SUBCONTRACTOR | |
|--|-----------------------|-----------|----------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Responsibilities | EVha | Quatorze | UVEG | València Acull | Beneficiaries |
| EIGHT FLATS | | | | | |
| RENTAL MANAGEMENT | | | | | |
| Refurbishment of flats | before starting pilot | | | | |
| Creation of the Contingency Fund | | beginning | | | |
| Furnishing of the flats | | | beginning | | End of Merging |
| Identification of beneficiaries | punctually | | punctually | punctually | |
| Signing occupancy contracts with residents | punctually | | punctually | punctually | |
| Inventories of locations on entry and exit | | | | punctually | |
| Collect rents / Dedicated bank account management | | | | monthly | |
| Payment of flat charges (water, electricity, etc.) | | | | punctually | monthly |
| Maintenance / repairs under the responsibility of lessees (not inhabitants) | | | | punctually | |
| Signing Insurance Contract for each flat | | | | punctually | |
| Paying Insurance Contract for each flat | | | | punctually | |
| Housing taxes (rubbish collection, community taxes, etc.). | | | 1st & 2 nd year | | Third year |
| ACTIVITIES & SUPPORT | | | | | |
| Social accompaniment of housing users | | | | weekly | informally |
| Socio-labour accompaniment of housing users | | | | weekly | informally |
| Proposals and follow up on activities within common space | | | | weekly | informally |
| Mediation for the reservation of common space (birthdays, social events, etc.) | | | Continuously | Continuousl y | informally |
| Data collection for assessment of activities with COTA (WP6) | | quarterly | quarterly | quarterly | informally |
| | LESSOR | LESSEES | | SUBCONTRACTOR | |

| Responsibilities | EVha | Quatorze | UEG | València Acull | Beneficiaries |
|---|------|--------------|------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| PREMISES | | | | | |
| RENTAL MANAGEMENT | | | | | |
| Management of refurbishment works of the premises (community space) > during the construction phase | | weekly | | | |
| Furnishing of premises (community space) | | at beginning | | | |
| Payment of the premises charges (water, electricity, etc.) | | | | Monthly (until April/2024) | Monthly (from Mai/2024) |
| Maintenance of the premises (repairs, spare parts, etc.) | | punctually | | punctually | punctually |
| ACTIVITIES & SUPPORT | | | | | |
| Convening of assemblies and meetings | | | quarterly | | informally |
| Community support in the neighbourhood | | | punctually | punctually | informally |
| Coordination of activities on the premises | | | punctually | punctually | informally |
| Concierge service on the premises | | | | punctually | weekly |
| Management of the reservation of the common space | | | | monthly | informally |
| Contact with public administrations and social entities | | | quarterly | | informally |
| Data collection for assessment of activities with COTA (WP6) | | quarterly | quarterly | quarterly | informally |

Figure 23: Task distribution scheme based on the work done in D5-1 (©Quatorze, 2024).

Rental Management Tasks

In the Caliu Urbà project, rental management tasks are primarily handled by València Acull's social worker and social psychologist. They are responsible for addressing daily rental issues and ensuring the well-being of the residents. When problems arise that require additional expertise or intervention, they refer these issues to the Universitat de València (UEG) or Quatorze. These organisations then coordinate with the relevant parties, such as the Entitat Valenciana d'Habitatge i Sòl (EVha), especially for matters related to structural issues, building facades, or carpentry problems. This collaborative approach ensures that all aspects of property management are addressed efficiently and effectively, maintaining the quality and habitability of the housing units.

Insurances

Insurance coverage for the Caliu Urbà project is managed by València Acull using the budget provided by Quatorze. This arrangement simplifies the insurance contracting process, as València Acull, being a local entity and a signatory to the tripartite agreement, can navigate the local insurance market more effectively. This ensures that all necessary insurance policies are in place, providing protection against potential risks and liabilities. The streamlined process helps in reducing administrative burdens and allows for quicker response times in case of incidents, ensuring continuous protection for the property and its residents.

Operator Fees

Effective property and rental management in the Caliu Urbà project is achieved through the seamless collaboration between the EVha, UVEG, Quatorze, and València Acull. Each organisation brings its expertise and resources to the table, focusing on community empowerment and resource optimization. This integrated approach ensures that the housing units are well-maintained, residents are supported, and the overall goals of the project at the community scale are met. By working together, the entities create a sustainable model for community housing, addressing both the immediate needs of the residents and the long-term sustainability of the project.

BENEFICIARIES AS TENANTS

Rent

For the initial three years, families residing in the Caliu Urbà project housing units are not required to pay rent. However, there is a future objective to introduce a progressive payment scheme. This scheme would involve families making contributions to a common fund, which will be managed collectively for communal purposes. The goal is to gradually accustom residents to the concept of rental payments, while simultaneously creating a shared resource that can be used to support community projects and initiatives. This approach aims to foster a sense of ownership and collective responsibility among the residents, enhancing community cohesion and sustainability.

Security Deposit

In the Caliu Urbà project, no security deposit has been established. Typically, a security deposit is a sum of money paid by the tenant to the landlord at the beginning of the lease. It serves as a safeguard against potential damages to the property or unpaid rent during the lease period. However, in this project, the decision to forgo a security deposit aligns with the initiative's goal of reducing financial barriers for families who may already be experiencing economic hardships. This decision helps to ensure that more families can participate in the project without the burden of upfront costs.

Resident Expenses

Families are responsible for covering the costs of furniture that is not obtained through donations. Despite this, the project ensures that social support is available so that all families are adequately furnished and installed in their new homes, regardless of their financial situation. The activation of a citizen network, facilitated by the UVEG team's deep knowledge of the local context, has been crucial in mobilising resources and support. This network helps bridge the gap between available donations and the needs of the families, ensuring a more equitable distribution of resources.



Social Housing Allowance

In line with typical social housing policies, the rent should not exceed one-third of the family unit's income. This criterion is essential to ensure affordability and prevent financial strain on the families. In the case of the Caliu Urbà project, the same principle will be applied, taking into account the conditions set by the EVha, which are referenced against the IPREM (Public Indicator of Multiple Effects Income). This ensures that rent remains within a manageable proportion of the residents' income, supporting their economic stability and well-being.

Property Tax

The property tax, which is a tax levied by the local government on the value of the property, is covered by the EVha. This tax responsibility typically falls on property owners and can represent a significant financial obligation. By covering this cost, the EVha alleviates an additional financial burden from the residents, allowing them to focus their resources on other essential needs and contributing to the overall affordability of the housing solution. This support is part of the broader effort to ensure that the housing remains accessible and sustainable for the families involved.



Figure 24: Assembly of the group of beneficiaries for the organisation of activities in the common premises and the management of the functioning (©CalIU Urbà, 2024).

3.4 NEIGHBOURHOOD ACTIVITIES

Daily Life

Primarily centred around the common space, a 45m² facility located on Bisbessa Street, conveniently close to all the residences, and designed for flexible use catering to the varied interests of the participants. This space is adaptable for activities involving other local entities and residents of the neighbourhood. A prior effort was undertaken by the technical team to identify associative initiatives within the neighbourhood. Families were informed about these initiatives and connected with them, such as the community garden and the choir, which two family units have started attending. This preparatory work ensures that families can integrate

seamlessly into the community, fostering a sense of belonging and participation in local activities.

Internal Regulations

A core group has been formed to reach consensus on the regulations. Important considerations for the self-management of a shared space, such as cleanliness and repairs, are being addressed by this group. The agreements and guidelines for the proper use and enjoyment of the community space stem from the meetings held by the beneficiary families of the project during the first three assemblies in 2024. For the proper use of the community space, the families involved have categorised and organised five main lines:

Payment of Utilities (Water and Electricity)

A monthly rotation assigns one participant to handle the payment transfer to Valencia Acoge for each utility. This person will inform the families of the costs and divide the expenses equally among the participants. The responsible person keeps a record in Excel of payments and deadlines, and once all families have paid their share, they will make a transfer to Valencia Acoge and send proof to the social psychologist overseeing community animation. Payments can be made in cash, by Bizum, or transfer, with all receipts shared via the collective WhatsApp group.

Key Guardians

Monthly, a family member is designated as the key guardian. This person records key handovers, notes about the space, and requests for keys, ensuring effective and real-time communication about the use and responsibilities of the space.

Cleaning the Local

After each activity, it is crucial to clean and organise the space to ensure its proper use. This includes sweeping, cleaning chairs and tables, kitchen furniture, the bathroom, yoga mats, and sound equipment (if used), and taking out the trash (separating plastics, cardboard, glass, and organic waste). Monthly deep cleans are proposed with volunteer help.

Management of Common Areas

The collective group is in the process of creating a calendar with a defined and agreed-upon agenda. Monthly meetings will be held to monitor progress. Key aspects related to the management of a self-managed space, including scheduling and maintenance, are being discussed by the group.

Activity Management

The monthly key guardians update the activity board every two weeks with upcoming events and changes. Interested parties can register activities on the group calendar and the space board, communicating through both channels. A form will be created for neighbours and local associations interested in using the space, detailing their information, activity, interest, and

possible dates. This form includes basic agreements on cleaning, communication, and use, emphasising the space's non-profit nature. Attendance lists for each activity will be maintained.

Communication of Notifications and Updates

General communications will be via the group's WhatsApp channel. Payment proofs, activity options, and other management communications can be sent via WhatsApp and email. The email account allows access to Google Drive folders for sharing formats, activity photos, payment receipts, and activity ideas, ensuring all members have document access. Activities are scheduled using the Caliu Google Calendar, with events, times, and invitees. Monthly assemblies will review new activities, proposals, and follow up on previous agreements.

Events and Civic Life

Plans for events and community engagement are still in the works. Ideas for potential activities include dance workshops, gymnastics, yoga, culinary classes, and makeup tutorials. Considering the central location of the facility in Valencia, there is potential to incorporate local traditions into these events.

“Participating in the project has provided us with security, helping us integrate more smoothly into the community. The team's work has been incredible, aiming to integrate us as a family into communal social life, fostering personal and communal development. The experience has been fulfilling, making us more sensitive to situations we were unaware of. The housing aspect has been particularly significant. Besides social, personal, and occupational support, stable housing has been the main benefit. We transitioned from CEAR, a supportive NGO, to facing the economic challenges of finding housing independently. Sharing an apartment with others, we struggled but now enjoy stability. The project's support in securing our own space has been invaluable, contributing to our emotional and economic stability. We aim to gain knowledge and support to become more independent socially and economically, recognizing the importance of integration within the community. Achieving long-term housing stability and becoming fully integrated members of the community are key objectives of this project, which we highly value. (Interview with Jeilyn del Valle Vivas Carpintero, housing resident and participant, January 2024).”

3.5 FEEDBACKS

A pilot built on benchmarks

The implementation of Caliu Urbà has been a progression accompanied by the stages of the Merging project. During WP2 in 2021, 10 expert interviews on housing and integration of migrants were conducted. Taking into account their knowledge in the field and the examples of good practices, some of the people interviewed established a series of recommendations that should be taken into account, both with regard to the scope of analysis and to public

policies on access to housing for the migrant population. The importance of raising public and political awareness of the need to invest resources to solve this situation of residential vulnerability was stressed. This involves placing housing as a central element of social integration.

“It is fundamental to really make a change, it is fundamental that for the first time in this country, and after the more than significant influx of immigrant population and the growth of second generations, that a lot of resources are poured in. Housing needs a lot of resources. They are not comparable to those of healthcare, but it needs many, many more (interviewee 3, male, 2021).”

Innovative policies are called for that go a step further in order to make progress in the current situation. In this sense, different lines of action are proposed that are aimed at increasing the stock of social housing and mixtcity. According to this expert, the application of international initiatives that take advantage of socio-demographic dynamics would be a possible solution to both the housing shortage and the deficiencies of the dependency law.

“To make innovative policies, of course, apart from the will, we need some resources. So it is necessary to use part of the housing stock that the administration may have to think about these innovative ideas. One example, which is the one I mentioned, is co-housing between elderly and non-elderly people, which also includes elderly and non-elderly people from different backgrounds. For me this would be extremely important. And to promote a population that is ageing in diversity and that in many cases in our country, with a dependency law that is not sufficiently deployed and needs help, needs assistance and young people are it (interviewee 3, male, 2021).”

“It is important not to create mixed neighbourhoods and sites, but to take advantage of the ones we already have. This is not easy in my view, but we can take advantage of demographic dynamics that are unavoidable. The first is ageing. We have a situation where more and more people are either living alone or will cease to live alone and therefore there will be housing in certain places. We must be sufficiently careful and sufficiently proactive to see if these single people want to live alone, in some cases they do not want to live alone and, therefore, co-housing strategies can be put in place. And in cases where this housing is no longer used by older people because they die, how do you plan for viable residential strategies (interviewee 3, male, 2021).”

Thus, from this approach, it is recommended to create the necessary incentives to take advantage of underutilised housing and to contemplate the potential of existing housing.

“The other would have to do with increasing the stock of social housing where we are, which is residual, at least at a level comparable to the European average, but above 10%, now we are... below 5%; therefore, at least double it and that this should

not be done with strategies of residential estates but in a way that allows us to enter within the same urban framework that we already have, to insert residentially in very diverse populations. And to think of this diversity as a potential and not as a burden or an element of stigmatisation (interviewee 3, male, 2021)."

"That there are sufficient incentives so that some of these dwellings do not fall into disuse, for example. Or that they are not damaged, that they are not, obviously, underused. And, obviously, new housing also needs to be built, without a doubt, but perhaps it should not be done as much as we thought. What should be done is to use the resources that exist and make good use, also, of the capacity we have to integrate young populations with older populations. This for me is fundamental (interviewee 3, male, 2021)."

Facing the local situation

Based on this understanding, the project focuses on the integration, cooperation, and community work of the population whose asylum applications have been denied. The "housing first" concept is supported by the adverse situation in accessing the housing market, as a result of rising prices and increased requirements in the rental market in economic and labour terms. This phenomenon is even more adverse for migrants, particularly those belonging to more racialized and stigmatised groups who suffer exclusion mainly due to racist and xenophobic prejudices. The Ciutat Vella district, particularly the administrative neighbourhoods of El Carme and El Mercat, especially the area historically known as Velluters, has the highest population variation in the city with 28,763 inhabitants, including 6,768 foreign nationals. The majority of these citizens come from European countries (37.6% from the EU and 14.3% from the rest of Europe), South America (20.3%), and Africa (9%).

New arrivals, new resources

Following the implementation of Caliu Urbà through Merging, the current stage focuses on working from the resources to take care of needs of psychosocial and community support for the collective and neighbourhood cohesion, promoting interaction spaces among the various neighbourhood groups. Psychosocial support in intercultural mediation will strengthen and enhance the existing resources of each individual within their migration trajectory and reception process, fostering cohesion in the community. The axis of this phase is based on four dimensions: individual, family, community, and social. Networking with neighbourhood social entities, youth groups, and cultural associations will encourage the construction of both institutional and non-institutional support networks, promoting social integration, socio-affective participation, critical engagement, and empowerment, along with building bonds and collective experiences, and consolidating transnational and local social fabrics.

"The key is to work within the community. Here, more than anything, I am a tool to help bring the design and mural to life with the goal of building a community. Our main objective is to create a mural that answers a question that arose: If our

community were a garden, what would it look like? From there, all participants were asked to give us some words, which we collected to generate a design. That was the first part, where we could talk with them and create a space for sharing their experiences of being here, as well as everything they've lived through to get here. Now we are in the phase of developing the mural. We have incorporated these words into a design, and we are now preparing the mural. It is a constructive technique that involves different layers. That's why we are here with the trowel, the palette knife, and the mortar. All the participants come and go, and the intention is that this mural will also have another interaction with the viewer, as they will read the words and find a message related to the project's objective, which is about how we are inhabiting new environments. (Interview with Kim Barcenas, Participatory Construction Trainer, December 2023)"

Creation of ongoing relations

The comprehensive support provided by the project's team, including social workers, legal advisors, and psychologists, has been instrumental in fostering personal growth and empowerment. The participant's gratitude is palpable, highlighting the transformative journey facilitated by the project, from initial introduction through Valencia Acoge to active involvement in community activities like the choir and exploring the gardens. The sense of belonging and fulfilment derived from these experiences begins to show, emphasising the project's success in fostering social connections and personal development.

"I received great support from everyone there—the social worker, the legal team, and the psychologist. I learned about the project through Valencia Acoge, who gave me this opportunity. I am very grateful and doing well here. I've grown a lot and learned many things. I am currently participating in the choir, which I enjoy very much. I also had the chance to visit the gardens and the orchard several times, which I loved because I like plants. Right now, I am very happy with the choir; it's a fantastic group, and I enjoy sharing this experience with everyone involved. Socially, I have been doing well, connecting and meeting many people from the Caliu Urbà group. This involvement has helped me grow, learn more, and gain more experience. I hope we continue to have more opportunities to advance together in this project. It has been a tremendous support for everyone. I look forward to participating in more activities and future projects, learning a lot, and seeing more opportunities given to others. I am truly grateful for this wonderful project and the opportunities it provides (interview with Indira Quintero Matos, housing resident and participant, January 2024)".

3.6 EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The Caliu Urbà project, set to conclude in April 2024 under the MERGING initiative, envisions several significant outcomes that extend beyond its current timeline. Given that the provisional lease of the 8 housing units and the community space by EVha to the University of

Valencia (UVEG) continues until June 2026, it is crucial to secure ongoing funding for the socio-community support of the families involved.

Development of a Common Fund

One of the primary expected outcomes is the establishment of a transparent, co-managed common fund. This fund aims to contribute to the self-sustainability of Caliu Urbà, reducing reliance on periodic public grant applications. The common fund will support various communal needs and projects, fostering a sense of ownership and financial autonomy among the residents. Evaluating the social and financial independence achieved by the participating households is another key outcome. This assessment will guide potential transitions, allowing for the entry and exit of beneficiaries based on their level of autonomy and readiness for independent living.

Public Administration Involvement

The possibility of transferring the management of Caliu Urbà to a public administration is being explored. Such a transition could ensure the project's sustainability by integrating it into existing governmental structures dedicated to social housing and community development. Negotiations are being considered to transition the current provisional lease arrangement to a standard social rental regime under EVHA, where legally permissible. This shift could provide more permanent and secure housing solutions for the residents.

Securing Additional Funding

Efforts are being made to secure funding from both public and private sources to maintain the psycho-social and employment support provided to the families. Continued financial backing is essential for offering consistent support services that facilitate community cohesion and individual well-being. The second phase of the Caliu Urbà project has been submitted to the call for subsidies of the Obra Social la Caixa of the Valencian Community. In order to present it, the team encountered the difficulty that the social entities with which they work already had projects oriented to this call, which only finances one project per entity. This is why they contacted the association Revivir Valencia, of which the social psychologist working on the project is a member. Although this organisation was initially created to support victims of the armed conflict in Colombia, they are currently dedicated to supporting migrants with a focus on the community dimension.

The Caliu Urbà project presented to la Caixa Foundation is focused on the promotion of the social integration of migrants in the gentrified district of Ciutat Vella through community engagement. The proposal has been formulated on the basis of the integration concept developed through Merging, which is seen as a three-way process involving migrants, their existing communities, and the host society. These three levels of actors create various forms of connections, producing social bonds among refugees/migrants themselves and with other communities, including non-migrant community members. The holistic integration model focuses on social factors that reflect relationships between refugees and individuals, groups,

and institutions, and how the social and institutional environment includes and adapts to them.

The project funding will cover the involvement of personnel for socio-labour accompaniment, psychosocial support, and community animation. Funds are allocated for training, awareness, and community activities, strengthening networking with institutions and associations. Activities will be participatory, involving both migrants and neighbourhood residents, and managed transparently and through participation. The focus will be on community animation in areas affected by gentrification, recognizing the importance of communal spaces. The project will identify and collaborate with "positive deviants," individuals whose successful strategies offer solutions to common problems, and engage "early adopters." These groups represent about 14% of the indirect beneficiaries, estimated at 700 individuals during the first phase in Ciutat Vella.

Long-term Evaluation and Replicability

In addition to these immediate outcomes, a prospective evaluation is underway to assess the feasibility of consolidating Caliu Urbà as a well-established, extensible, and replicable program. The goal is to determine best practices and create a model that can be applied to similar contexts, ensuring broader impact and sustainability. Drawing inspiration from the concept of "caliu," which signifies a warm and affectionate environment, the project seeks to create a welcoming and protective atmosphere. Caliu Urbà interprets integration in the EU context as a process involving the recognition of rights, duties, and citizenship. It encompasses a multisectoral inclusion route that covers employment, housing, education, health, and social services. The project also addresses the subjective aspects of integration, where subjective well-being and feelings of security, stability, and belonging are critical for connecting with other societal actors. This is facilitated through language, cultural understanding, and knowledge of the legal-administrative framework.





Figure 25: Inauguration of the community premises in Calle Bisbessa. ©Caliu Urbà, 2024.

CONCLUSION

This deliverable concludes the 5th work package of MERGING about the implementation of the pilot. Following D5.1 about contracting agreements, D5.2 about the design, D5.3 about timeframes and budget and D5.4 about the construction process, this deliverable focuses on the functioning of the three housings projects. Ultimately, the handbook (D4.6 and D5.6) concludes this part of the research by providing potential project holders of housing for integration with a set of tools to undertake such projects. The initial application was very ambitious, yet, expected achievements have been met in the making and operating of the pilots.

Social support, following one's path and pace

The main goal of social support is to promote autonomy and uphold common rights. Paradoxically, in the long run, the goal of social support is to render itself unnecessary.

To get started, housing projects for integration should allocate sufficient time to hear and define the needs and desires of the tenants. Understanding the needs of tenants, both as a collective target group and as individuals, is essential. Each target group and each person has specific needs, and it is important to identify and seek complementarities among them. In addition to housing, social support encompasses various areas such as language classes (oral and written), health (physical and mental), professional integration and access to employment, participation in community life which is part of understanding socio-cultural norms, food security, and budget management. Aiming for autonomy is also securing the beneficiaries' access to right and to a stable administrative status. Mental health is an important and often undermined aspect of social support. For some persons, psychological support may be necessary to address the situation in the country of origin, conditions of the journey, trauma from lack of care in the arrival country, trauma of exile (acculturation), and stress about the future. is essential and can address issues such as attachment, setting limits, finding a framework, addictions, loss of hope, vulnerability, and managing post-traumatic stress symptoms.

If the housing is transitional, a minimum duration should be established and clearly exposed to the tenant. The duration for accessing housing depends on the local context. Social support might begin before the housing period and, in many cases, extend beyond the stay in the housing. The social support may include some visits in the housing, to check on and help with daily maintenance. To foster integration and autonomy, social support should aim to secure access to common right housing, whether in social housing stocks or in the open market. It is important to plan for the beneficiary's exit from the program from the moment they enter.

Social support relies on a moral contract more than anything else.

Rental management, sharing responsibility

Whether they're splitted or not, in property and rental management, the key concept is responsibility and its distribution among stakeholders. This distribution relies on written contracts to delineate roles and obligations clearly. The contractualisation is therefore part of the risk management.

The owner of land or buildings remains responsible for major works, ensuring the structural integrity and significant repairs of the property. The operator, acting as the main manager, has several critical duties. They sign contracts with tenants, conduct entry and exit inventories, collect rent and guarantee deposit if applicable, and oversee maintenance and minor repairs. Additionally, the operator is responsible for reporting claims to the insurance company. Tenants are responsible for the upkeep of their housing during their residency, emphasising the importance of having their home insurance when applicable. The contract bonding the operator and the tenant shall mention specific details: parties involved, type of agreement, date, duration, conditions and a detailed designation of the place, including its equipment and appliances. This clarity ensures all parties understand their responsibilities and the expectations placed upon them.

The rental management orchestrates cash flows. In the three pilot projects, the choice has been made to not request a guarantee deposit as it would become an obstacle for tenants with vulnerable economic situations. Rent policies vary by country: in Spain, rent is not applicable, while in France, it is calculated progressively based on income. Similar to Sweden, rents in France just cover for some expenses related to the housing, including electricity and water expenses.

In projects where facilities are shared among tenants, i.e. in Lyon where the housings are independent but placed on the same plot, the matching process is important, allowing the tenant to move towards a sense of choice in cohabitation, with the freedom to refuse.

Lastly, any housing project for integration needs to apply some sort of internal regulations both for the housings themselves and the common spaces.

Neighbourhood activities, promoting the commons

Elinor Ostrom's "Governing the Commons" challenges the belief that common pool resources inevitably degrade without strict regulation. She highlights communities' capacity for self-organisation and governance to ensure sustainable resource management, emphasising principles like clear boundaries and collective decision-making. Ostrom argues that when individuals participate in resource management, sustainable practices are more likely to be adopted, fostering a sense of responsibility and stewardship. Social capital, including networks and trust, plays a crucial role in facilitating cooperation and resolving conflicts. By showcasing community-based governance's effectiveness, Ostrom promotes commons for community development and well-being, emphasising local empowerment and decentralised resource management as pathways to equitable and sustainable development. By proposing common spaces open to various types of users, the housing for integration projects can become common goods. The concept of transforming the reception and integration of refugees into a common good is both innovative and inspiring which can lead to sustainable

and beneficial outcomes for society as a whole. From a public health standpoint, such an integration approach can have positive impacts on the mental and physical health of refugees, while enriching the cultural and social diversity of host communities. Commons support the process of changing the way one's look at people in exile thus progressively enhancing mutual understanding and acceptance of cultural differences and thus fostering social peace in a deteriorating social and political context. **Moving from sheltering to housing by offering quality living in a common commodity is paving the way for more humanistic and effective approaches in managing the future migration flux that European societies may encounter.**

Feedbacks & expected outcomes

Regarding **dignity and sense of comfort**, the primary feedback on the social housing units in Valencia and the light permanent houses in Lyon and Gothenburg highlights the quality of life they provide. As demonstrated in the evaluation report on the pilot project in Valencia, after a few months in the housing scheme, feelings of safety and self-confidence improved for newcomers, migrants, and refugees, similar to other citizens. One important ongoing challenge lies in **maintaining the premises** and taking care of both the places and the people. Despite their different forms, the pilot projects pursue a unified urban strategy: **a constellation of small projects aimed at achieving integration seamlessly blended into their respective contexts**. Contrasted and very different from one another, each pilot project addresses a specific context with its own network of actors and partners, policies and political representatives, urban regulations, building codes, typical materials, and economic circumstances. Though MERGING's pilot projects may vary in form—ranging from tiny house hamlets to floating residences and clusters of flats—they share a common strategy and objective: integration through participatory community development. By prioritising small-scale individual housing over large collective structures, the projects aim to seamlessly integrate within existing contexts, thereby avoiding the creation of isolated enclaves that become focal points for public scrutiny. One ongoing challenge is the pressure on land and the housing shortage in European metropolises, necessitating a change and **some juridical creativity in the approach to land use**, including temporary uses and questioning its waste and predation.

About **social support**, the operation of small housing for integration projects presents organisational challenges, as there is no economy of scale, necessitating a cluster-based approach. Is such small initiatives, involving a third-place facilitator or a psychologist and one or more social workers, viable in the long term? An association's ability to sustain it is questionable given the need of human resources on one hand and the amount of beneficiaries on the other. For instance in Valence, beneficiaries' follow-up was transferred to the public system when funding ceased for the previously implicated NGO. These findings imply that continued partner involvement requires significant cost-sharing. Yet, if this financial aspect should be highlighted, the learnings on this topic are that social projects need to be structured organically, akin to clusters of small living spaces disseminated across cities. Aimed as common goods, spreading these schemes also aims to collaboratively build urban and societal cohesion. Involving local partners in a multidisciplinary manner, one ongoing

challenge to this approach is to **organise these clusters** without adding to the difficulties faced by social workers, especially in a field already burdened by low income, difficult working conditions therefore needing practice analysis groups, particularly in the broader social sector in France.

MERGING's pilot projects **promote autonomy within communities**. It is crucial to demonstrate that categorising individuals when addressing housing and integration is paradoxical. The aim to avoid creating homogenous pockets (e.g., large emergency shelters) shall remain central. Instead, these projects explore solutions through small-scale setups and functional diversity, which naturally lead to a mix of residents. Starting from vulnerability criteria, an empowering social support will help to demonstrate the benefits of diversity for integration through housing. One major ongoing challenge on this aspect lies in balancing a sense of comfort and well-being while maintaining alignment with the aim of going toward common law rights. It is essential not to create a disruptive transition when residents move out. Continuing to foster connections through common spaces can **facilitate the transition into mainstream housing**.

In total, MERGING brings together ten partners within the consortium and nineteen local partners. Considering that each of these 39 organisations encompasses numerous individuals actively involved in the development of the pilot project, it is crucial to emphasise the importance of uniting in a collaborative human endeavour. These combined efforts underscore the **importance of multisectoral cooperation**, as highlighted in the dedicated evaluation report on three transversal questions: How did we work together? What did we achieve together? What did we learn together? Further feedback, outcomes and expected outcomes can also be found in the evaluation reports produced by COTA on each pilot. ([Evaluations reports](#), COTA, WP6). Here, one ongoing challenge is to **maintain this cooperation** through benevolent governance, effectively bonding the members of MERGING and the local partners.

This project has been the most challenging, creative, innovative, non-linear endeavour one can dream of. By demonstrating how policy makers and partners can collaboratively support pilot social housing initiatives to boost innovation into each other's organisation, by engaging in a multi-actor approach, connecting people, and ensuring a favourable legal framework and participative governance, MERGING demonstrates that it is possible to support long-term social change. This initiative not only produces valuable knowledge but also changes the narrative about migration, making it a model to follow in the future. At the end of the research and considering life trajectories of the tenants, the inhabited projects are just at their beginnings. From now on and in the future, it is time to disseminate the results, experimental learnings, and findings of this European research-action program.