

Transnational Innovation Program on Homecare and Community-based Services

Austria

This initiative is part of the Transnational Innovation Program within the Caring Communities project.

Co-Housing Melange

A community-based housing model for people aged 55+ that combines independent living with structured peer support, helping residents stay active, connected and out of formal care for longer.

What it is and who it serves

Co-Housing Melange is a shared-living model developed by Caritas Vienna for older adults aged 55 and above who want to live independently but not alone. It responds directly to three pressing challenges in Vienna's home care landscape: demographic ageing, the steady rise of single-person households and growing social isolation among older residents.

Rather than waiting for care needs to emerge, the model builds a supportive community first - residents co-create their living environment, share daily life and rely on each other for everyday support. This delays the point at which formal care services become necessary and reduces loneliness as a health risk.

Organization details

Caritas Vienna is a non-profit social service provider within the Caritas Austria network, delivering social, care, and community-based services across Vienna. The organization has long-standing experience supporting vulnerable groups, advancing social inclusion and developing innovative community-care models, of which Co-Housing Melange is the most recent.

Development stage

The initiative has successfully completed its initial pilot phase and is now moving into scaling.

Results achieved so far:

- 1 co-housing site established in Vienna
- 8 housing units in operation
- 8 residents aged 55+ currently living in the community
- Monthly facilitated meetings running regularly to support group dynamics and community-building
- Internal processes tested and refined; the model is confirmed as viable in practice

Future plans

Building on the results of the pilot, Caritas Vienna plans to scale Co-Housing Melange across Vienna by developing additional sites in cooperation with property developers and establishing corporate partnerships to secure long-term financing. In parallel, the team will design a sustainable business model that allows new locations to operate independently while remaining true to the community-based, preventive character of the initiative.

A central part of the next phase is strengthening resident participation and self-organization, which the pilot has shown to be the heart of the model. Through the Transnational Innovation Program, the experience gathered in Vienna will also be shared with partners in other countries, opening the way for Co-Housing Melange to be adapted and replicated in different national contexts.

Contact data

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