

Study of municipal and cantonal apartments



Given a lack of information about the apartments owned by cantons, cities and municipalities in Switzerland, the Swiss Federal Housing Agency recently commissioned EBP to carry out a nationwide survey.

Many cities and municipalities, as well as a number of cantons own apartment buildings and individual apartments that they rent out to tenants. Precise figures relating to these apartments have been unavailable since the year 2000 when the government discontinued its census-taking activities. There is also little information available about who the tenants are and what the terms of their rental agreements are. Given the lack of data, the Swiss Federal Housing Agency, the Association of Swiss Cities and the Association of Swiss Municipalities got together to commission a study of municipal and cantonal apartments.

Survey of all cantons and municipalities

EBP developed and carried out the study, the scope of which included interviewing various experts and carrying out an online survey of municipalities and cantons throughout Switzerland. With more than 1,400 municipalities, including all of Switzerland's major cities, and more than half of the country's cantons participating, the survey succeeded in shedding light on a topic that had long escaped examination. The results indicate that around 80 percent of all municipalities own apartments, i.e. for a combined total of around 45,000 apartments. Interestingly enough, Switzerland's major cities are not the only major owners. Three-quarters of the municipalities with fewer than 2,000 residents also own apartments. Municipal apartment ownership tends to be more common in French-

Client

Swiss Federal Housing Agency

Facts

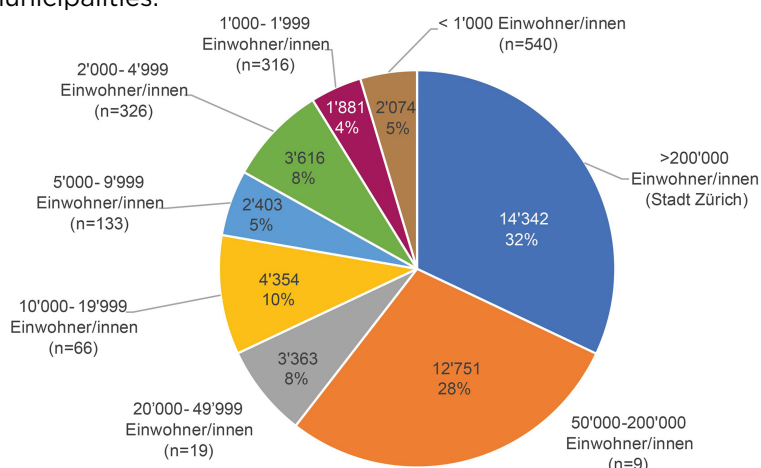
Period	2016 - 2017
Project Country	Switzerland
Survey participation rate	63 %
Number of municipal apartments	45,000

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speaking municipalities and far less common in Italian-speaking municipalities.



Three-quarters of the apartments reserved for special purposes or subject to special rental criteria

One-fifth of the municipal apartments are used for a particular purpose. Smaller municipalities also own such apartments, for instance, for employees, asylum seekers and senior citizens. While tenancy in more than half of the municipal apartments is not related to any special purpose, the municipalities often make use of special provisions in their rental agreements to limit eligibility. For instance, tenants are often required to ensure a minimum degree of occupancy or prove that their income does not exceed a certain limit. However, there are at least 10,000 municipal apartments in Switzerland – almost one-quarter of the total number – to which no special tenancy criteria apply.

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