

Factsheet for private landlords on the expert brief

Housing for newly arrived migrants in rural areas **More than a roof over your head**

The role of private landlords in providing access to housing, and thus to the integration of newly arrived migrants, is central. At the same time, these actors stand in a highly complex conflict area between the needs and wants of existing tenants and those of newly arrived migrants. Good communication skills and the ability to foster a positive dialogue on the one hand and providing friendly support to newly arrived migrants on the other, are the most important prerequisites for private landlords in the further integration of migrants.

Particularities of newly arrived migrants in rural areas

The **expert brief** *Wohnen von Neuzugewanderten in ländlichen Räumen – Mehr als nur ein Dach über dem Kopf* [Housing for newly arrived migrants in rural areas – More than a roof over your head] published in 2023 highlights the needs and aspirations of migrants regarding housing in rural areas. One **central finding of the analysis** is the partially **diverging needs and desires** that newly arrived migrants have compared to the local population. The wishes of newly arrived migrants are often highly dynamic and are in a constant state of flux. This group often also **requires** some **support** in accessing the housing market.

Barriers for newly arrived migrants on the housing market

Migrants face various **additional barriers** compared to the rest of the population when searching for housing. For instance, some landlords may **be reluctant** to **rent** an apartment to newly arrived migrants out of fear of the reaction of the other tenants or of neighbours. **Negative past experiences** with tenants with a migrant background, such as concerning the separation of waste for recycling or due to noise, may also make landlords unwilling to take on newly arrived migrants as tenants. In addition, setting any misgivings landlords might have aside, not every apartment or house is suitable for the needs of newly arrived migrants. Newly arrived migrants often prefer housing in a **central location** and/or a place with good **public transport** connections in order, for example, to be able to reach institutes of vocational training or public administration offices quickly without a car.

Possibilities for improvements and opportunities

Possible ways for rural regions to attract newly arrived migrants are offering a high quality of life, a safe and tranquil living environment, and more space for lower prices.

Central for the integration of newly arrived migrants in the (rural) housing market is the role of landlords. **Landlords** are often the first **port of call** for new arrivals in overcoming bureaucratic hurdles or in resolving conflicts with neighbours. As such, they can help in **dispelling any misgivings**. It is also not uncommon for friendships to form, for instance, when landlords help migrants with school work or language acquisition.

Mobility and access to transport possibilities are vital in making the periphery more attractive as living spaces. Local solutions, such as e. g. **carpooling** or a shuttle bus service, could act as a compensation for insufficient public transport service. Furthermore, ensuring a **stable Internet connection** will enable migrants to maintain contact with their family and friends.

Two particular recommendations for action can be derived from the above:

- Combat prejudice and discrimination among all participants and working to foster culturally sensitive understanding
- Foster ongoing dialogue between municipal offices, non-statutory welfare organisations, NGOs, volunteers and private landlords

