



## Stadt Leipzig

### Leipzig's Pledge to the European Pillar of Social Rights

Social policy in Europe has to protect the most vulnerable. This is especially true when it comes to housing. It is one of the most basic human needs and a human right. The developments of the past few years, such as rising rents and housing prices as well as a growing number of homeless persons, have created new challenges for many cities. In Leipzig, we aim to ensure that everyone living in our city has shelter and the chance to find decent housing in order to maintain social stability and cohesion.

#### **Commitment to Principle 19 „Housing and Assistance for the Homeless“**

The City of Leipzig has grown by more than 50.000 people in the past five years. This has led to a tighter housing market with the vacancy rate down to 2 %. The number of evictions and people using emergency housing has grown disproportionately. More people are living in temporary emergency apartments or are in need of social assistance to avoid eviction. The number of homeless people with multiple problems (such as psychological disorders, addiction and disabilities) has risen. Moreover, the number of homeless persons from other European countries, who are not entitled to social welfare, has grown.

To address this challenge, the City of Leipzig is active in the prevention of homelessness, emergency assistance and follow-up support. These services include counselling, paying for outstanding rent or energy bills as well as support for households with problems finding housing. The city also offers temporary apartments for evicted families and couples. Further services include street work, four night-time and two day-time shelters (with additional shelters in winter) where clients also have access to food, basic health services, clothing and social assistance. Two housing projects serve people with addictions. For those with additional problems, the city finances social support in six group homes and for people living individually. A specialised unit in the social welfare department coordinates these and other services. It also cooperates with the municipal housing company that has a share of more than 10% of the local housing market. In total, the City of Leipzig spent more than six million Euros on services in this field in 2018.

Shelter and decent housing are central to a life in dignity and safety. We have committed ourselves to expanding our efforts in this field. In 2018, the City of Leipzig adopted a new municipal plan for emergency housing that will adapt and strengthen the cities' services: the prevention of evictions will be further prioritized and the range of services will be adapted to new needs. Plans include the expansion of emergency shelters and group homes and the introduction of a vehicle offering emergency services for homeless people. Property owners will be offered incentives for renting out to households with difficulties finding housing. Through intensified cooperation with the municipal housing company the administration will secure additional rent-controlled apartments for use by the city. With these and other measures, Leipzig will raise its expenditures in this field to up to 10 million Euros in 2020.

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Leipzig, 28.01.2019