



REDUCING  
HOUSING  
INEQUALITIES

# National Report on the Housing System from a Multi- Level Perspective: Switzerland

An extract from Deliverable 4.2, '*National Reports on the Housing System from a Multi-Level Perspective*', of the ReHousIn project

August 2025

# FOREWORD

This report is an extract from Deliverable 4.2, ‘National Reports on the Housing System from a Multi-Level Perspective’, of the ReHousIn project, which analyses housing systems in nine European countries, focusing on tenure-policy frameworks and housing supply dynamics.

The full version of the deliverable is available [here](#).

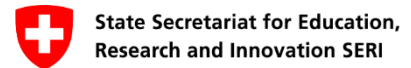
Title	National Report on the Housing System from a Multi-Level Perspective: Switzerland
Author(s)	Jennifer Duyne Barenstein, Hannah Widmer, Salome Rohner (ETHZ)
Cite as	Duyne Barenstein J., Widmer H. and Rohner S. (2025). <i>National Report on the Housing System from a Multi-Level Perspective: Switzerland. Deliverable 4.2, “National Report on the Housing System from a Multi-Level Perspective”</i> . ReHousIn: Contextualized pathways to Reduce Housing Inequalities in the green and digital transition  <a href="https://rehousin.eu/sites/default/files/media/documents/National%20Report%20on%20the%20Housing%20System%20from%20a%20Multi-Level%20Perspective_Switzerland.pdf">https://rehousin.eu/sites/default/files/media/documents/National%20Report%20on%20the%20Housing%20System%20from%20a%20Multi-Level%20Perspective_Switzerland.pdf</a>
Dissemination level	Public
Submission date	August 2025
Work package	WP4 [Changing housing systems & welfare regimes: filtering crises differently]
Project title	ReHousIn: Contextualized pathways to Reduce Housing Inequalities in the green and digital transition.
Grant Agreement No.	101132540
Coordinator	Metropolitan Research Institute (MRI)

This document has been prepared in the framework of the European project ReHousIn – “Contextualized pathways to reduce housing inequalities in the green and digital transition”.

The ReHousIn project aims to spark innovative policy solutions towards inclusionary and quality housing. To achieve this, it investigates the complex relationship between green transition initiatives and housing inequalities in European urban and rural contexts, and develops innovative policy recommendations for better and context-sensitive integration between environmentally sustainable interventions and socially inclusive housing.

This project is co-funded by the European Union. The UCL's work on this project is funded by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) under the UK government's Horizon Europe funding guarantee. The ETH work on this project is funded by the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) under the Swiss government's Horizon Europe funding guarantee.

Views and opinions expressed are those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union, European Research Executive Agency (REA) and other granting authorities. Neither the European Union nor the granting authorities can be held responsible for them.



## Table of Contents

<b>1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2 THE HOUSING DEBATE .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>3 HOW THE HOUSING SYSTEM HAS CHANGED.....</b>	<b>8</b>
3.1 Q1: Degree of commodification.....	8
3.2 Q2: Impact of exogenous macro-trends, policies and crises: What have been the events that really made a change in each tenure? .....	14
3.3 Q3: Capacity to filter crises: how does each housing system respond to macro-events and crises? .....	15
<b>4 CONCERNS REGARDING THE GREEN-HOUSING NEXUS .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>5 REFERENCE LIST .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>6 APPENDIX .....</b>	<b>24</b>
6.1 Appendix 1: Information on data used for tables on tenure structures in Switzerland and Zurich .....	24
6.2 Appendix 2: Distribution of tenures, 1990-2020, Switzerland and Zurich.....	25
6.3 Appendix 3: Distribution of tenures by income quintiles, 1990-2020, Switzerland and Zurich 27	
6.4 Appendix 4: Distribution of tenures by income quintiles, 1990-2020, Switzerland and Zurich 29	

# 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Switzerland is a country of tenants with the lowest homeownership rate in Europe. Currently only 35.9% of dwellings are owner-occupied. Housing policy at the national level is rather weak, and the responsibility for housing primarily lies with municipalities and cantons. The Swiss housing system strongly relies on the private market for the provision of housing. The Swiss housing system has relied on housing cooperatives and other non-profit housing associations as providers of social rental housing, with state-provided social housing occupying a marginal role.

With regard to the trajectory of the Swiss housing system in the direction of de-commodification or (re-)commodification, it should be noted that there have not been substantial changes since the 1990s at national level. On the one hand, a compulsory and de-commodifying value capture recovering at least 20% of planning gains was introduced in 2014. On the other hand, several aspects of commodification can be observed: presently there is only modest support for non-profit housing, while there was more substantive financial means for a limited number of years prior to 2003. Even though there is rent regulation, its enforcement is weak and the modest protection of tenants from rental contract cancellations is creating major hardships to tenants in a market that is increasingly dominated by financialised actors. Encouraged by urban environmental and energy policies that promote denser and more energy efficient construction, these tend to demolish and rebuild or completely renovate their properties in order to be able to cancel rental contracts and increase initial rents to prevailing market rent. Some local governments have responded to this trend and the related housing affordability crisis with more regulations or additional support schemes for non-profit housing.

Macro-trends like financial crises, the Covid pandemic or the energy crisis did not have a strong influence on the Swiss housing system. However, the trend of financialisation presents a key obstacle in the provision of affordable housing as it leads to extremely high land prices that limit local governments' capacity to actively develop housing or support non-profit providers. The high land and housing prices encourage the demolition of affordable housing and its replacement with more expensive housing. These practices are particularly affecting fast growing large cities and are compounded by environmental and energy policies that promote densification and energy refurbishments.

## 2 THE HOUSING DEBATE

Switzerland has historically been and continues to be a country of tenants with the lowest homeownership rates in Europe. Currently only 35.9% of dwellings are owner-occupied (BFS, 2024b). Several reasons explain this low rate of homeownership such as the very high prices of residential real estate (Bourassa & Hoesli, 2010), and the relatively late introduction of condominium ownership (only in 1965) in combination with a housing stock that, especially in cities, consists to a large extent of multi-apartment buildings (BWO, 2005). The private rental housing is the largest sector still holding a moderate protection of tenants, as eviction is regulated and rents can only be adjusted to reflect higher operation and maintenance costs, and changes in interest rates (Bourassa et al., 2010a, p. 270). In most cantons, they can be adjusted to the market in case of a change of tenants. However, as rent increases are formally allowed only in case of value-enhancing investments, the previous rent must be disclosed to a new tenant upon request. Some cantons have introduced a mandatory disclosure of the previous rent when setting up a new contract.

There are considerable differences in the tenancy structure between urban and rural areas. In predominantly rural cantons, the homeownership rate of households is above 50%, whereas it is below 20% mainly in urban cantons such as Geneva and Basel-City (BFS, 2024a).

Currently, the main concern in housing debates is the housing shortage. In the last years, the vacancy rate has fallen to an average of 1.08% (Figure 1). However, the vacancy rate varies greatly between different regions, and is particularly low in large cities, their agglomerations, and municipalities. Many tourist regions in the Alps are suffering from a housing crisis caused by the heated market for vacation residences, which severely affects the local population and the seasonal workers employed in the tourist industry. In Zurich, the vacancy rate was as low as 0.07% in 2024 (BFS, 2025).

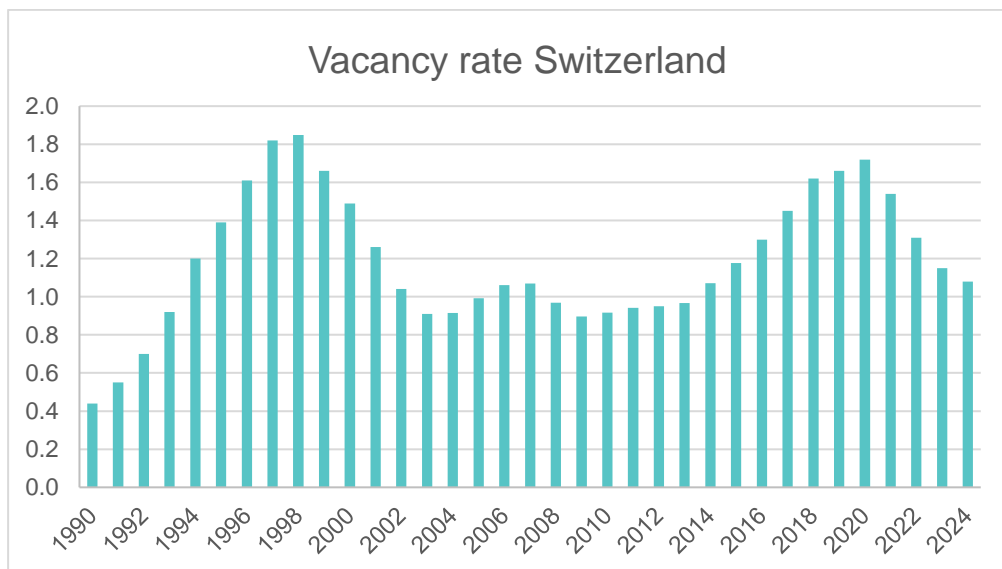


Figure 1: Vacancy rate in Switzerland, 1990-2024. Data: Federal Statistical Office.

The shortage of housing, in combination with the financialization of the housing sector (Theurillat et al., 2010, 2015; Young, 2019), also leads to problems of affordability. Since 2000, rents have increased by 30%, and house prices by 80%<sup>1</sup> (BWO, 2023). Housing costs (i.e. housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels) are relatively high in European comparison in general (Eurostat, 2023), and for households in the lowest quintile of incomes, housing costs are well above 30% of their gross income (BFS, 2024c). The demolition of affordable housing and its replacement with more expensive units, which is made more profitable by densification policies, exacerbates the problem.

The disappearance of affordable housing due to total renovations and demolitions is therefore heavily debated and affects vulnerable groups in particular. The Swiss tenancy law permits rent increases following value-enhancing renovations, a mechanism designed to maintain housing quality. However, financialised landlords leverage this to renovate and align rents with market rates, leading to a replacement of affordable housing. Urban densification, often driven by financial motives, further contributes to the exclusion of low-income groups, in particular migrants and single-parent households (Lutz et al., 2023).

Housing lies primarily within the responsibility of municipalities and cantons. Some cantons have responded to the housing crisis by enhancing tenant protection, while some municipalities promote affordable housing through special legislations, subsidies and the provision of public land on building lease to non-profit housing providers, such as housing cooperatives. The housing crisis and potential solutions are debated differently by the population, the cantons and the federal state, depending on the region, local housing markets, and political orientation. In the absence of a strong national housing policy (Cuennet & Favarger, 2002; Lawson, 2009), national measures to counteract the housing shortage and the affordability crisis remain limited.

---

<sup>1</sup> The growing unaffordability of homeownership is also evident in the decrease of the share of owner-occupiers across all income quintiles between 2010 and 2020-22 (see Appendix 4).

## 3 HOW THE HOUSING SYSTEM HAS CHANGED

### 3.1 Q1: Degree of commodification

- I. *What is the direction of travel of the national / local housing system: are these becoming more de-commodified (universalist) or re-commodified (residualist) over time?*

Switzerland is a country of landlords and tenants. More than 60% of households are tenants renting their homes either from private landlords or living in public or other non-profit housing (Arbaci, 2019; Lawson, 2009). The Swiss welfare regime has been fostering only a partial de-commodification of housing system by developing a variant of unitary rental system, which was more reliant on a larger, yet regulated private rental sector, and a smaller social rental sector by non-profit housing providers. However, processes of housing de-commodification and re-commodification have been concurrent, though at different scale and pace among cantons. Historically, housing provision relies largely on private developers and landlords, as well as on housing cooperatives and other non-profit housing associations for the provision of social rented housing since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, receiving from the national or local governments financial support or support in the form of land leases (Cuennet & Favarger, 2002; Lawson, 2009). Direct national housing intervention is rather weak, as there is, for example, no extensive provision of social rented housing by the national state, whereby initiatives – if any – are left to lower levels of governance. However, state support to the promotion of affordable housing<sup>2</sup> has gradually weakened and is currently limited to the non-profit sector. Today, non-profit housing only represents a niche of 3.9% in the total of housing units (BWO & BFS, 2024). National funding schemes were extended in the post-war periods and were strongest in the 1990s, but even then only 20% of new dwellings were built with financial support by the government (Lawson, 2009). The rental market is regulated through the tenancy law, which has changed from 1<sup>st</sup> generation (freeze on rent) to a 2<sup>nd</sup> generation in the 1970s, with more moderate rental regulation (Bodmer, 2023a; Kettunen & Ruonavaara, 2021; Rohrbach, 2014). On the one hand, the tenancy law prevents excessive initial rents, restricts speculative rent increases and should protect from arbitrary evictions (thus partly keeping a more de-commodified private rental sector). On the other hand, it allows landlords to increase rents as costs rise (increased operating and maintenance costs and/or interest rates), and under Swiss

---

<sup>2</sup> State support at both national and local level is contingent on providers adhering to the Charta of the Swiss non-profit housing providers. To receive subsidies, non-profit housing providers also must ensure compliance with standards defining minimal requirements regarding the quality of housing, ecological and social sustainability, but also setting limits to the dwelling size and the level of amenities. The Charta also ensures that non-profit housing is permanently withdrawn from speculation. Non-profit housing providers therefore do not engage in commercial activities. Generally, the non-profit housing sector, consisting of housing cooperatives and public rental housing, is of high quality and well located. Accordingly, there is neither residential segregation nor residualisation or stigmatization of the non-profit sector.



tax law, landlords and owner-occupiers can deduct refurbishment costs and loan interests from taxable income. Since 2008, the reference interest rate, defined based on the average mortgage rates of Swiss banks, is updated quarterly by the Federal Office for Housing (*Bundesamt für Wohnungswesen*, BWO), and landlords are allowed to increase rents according to this rate even in case of fixed or no mortgages. Several attempts have been made to uncouple rents from interest rates, but all have failed for political reasons (Vujanovic, 2016, p. 24). With regard to offering rents, the Swiss tenancy law foresees elements of market rents and cost rents that sometimes conflict, resulting in an unclear legal situation (Bodmer, 2023b). Commodification was further facilitated in 1970 by allowing landlords to terminate the rental contract on a 3 months' notice without having to provide a reason (Rohrbach, 2014), except for a period immediately after a change in ownership. Some municipalities and cantons have defined official cancellation dates (two or three dates, or each month except December). Also, tenants are responsible for checking the legality of initial rents, rent increases, cancellations of rental contracts, and for contesting them in court. This requires significant knowledge and financial resources (Debrunner, Kolocek, et al., 2024).

In Switzerland, the housing allowance scheme for tenants is residualist since means-tested, directed to vulnerable households. This, however, is not a national scheme and the maximum rent to be taken over for an indefinite period is determined by the municipalities (SKOS, 2019).

Also, the land system is, overall, not particularly de-commodified, but it is highly regulated through the planning system. Built-up or buildable land is mostly owned by private individuals or companies, and usually public land does not play a significant role in controlling land price and speculation. The share of land owned by municipalities can differ widely (Gerber, 2008), and there is no data on the amount of public land at the national scale. However, the control over land speculation (and partial prevention against disproportional increase on land price) is guaranteed through a highly regulated planning system, which plays a role in supporting the partial de-commodification of the housing system. Similarly, the property gains tax (*Grundstückgewinnsteuer*) reduces incentives for speculation, while allowing profit on buying and selling land. Tax on gains on the sale of land and real estate must be paid to the cantons or municipalities, and the tax rate depends on the length of ownership (the longer the property stayed with one owner, the lower the tax), thus preventing land and real estate flipping, but it varies from canton to canton (VZ VermögensZentrum, n.d.). A tax on planning gains has also been introduced (see below). However, as the primary objective of the planning system is the protection of landscape and agricultural land, and, consequently, densification, we see an increase in land prices despite regulations.

Looking at the direction of travel of the Swiss housing system over the period 1990-2020, we can observe a strong path dependency, with no substantial shifts in the tenure system nor in the supply system.

In fact, stronger interventions in the housing market in the 20<sup>th</sup> century were a reaction to crises during and after the world wars. These interventions were not aimed to provide adequate housing in terms of quality and quantity, but should be seen as elements of broader social, economic and monetary policy objectives (Müller, 2021). In Switzerland, liberalism determined housing policies already since 1950, after a relatively short period of state interventions during periods of scarcity, such as the 1920s and the post-WWII period. However, in 1949 the Swiss

Landlords Association (*Hauseigentümerverband Schweiz*, HEV) launched a referendum demanding to end federal subsidies to housing construction, which was accepted by the majority of the Swiss voters in 1950. The same year the federal council also started a partial deregulation of rental price control, shifting from 1<sup>st</sup> generation rent freeze to 2<sup>nd</sup> generation moderate regulation with control mechanisms which were discontinued in 1970 (Rohrbach, 2014). With these events, the relatively strong intervention of the state in the housing sector came to an end. However, even before that the Federal Council only took over reluctantly a stronger role in supporting housing, by emphasizing that this was the role of cantons and municipalities and that private sector actors were best suited to provide housing. Ever since, there have not been any relevant federal policy instruments, neither to promote private homeownership nor social housing. With no support from the central government, many cantons and communes did not have the capacity nor the political will to engage in the housing sector. This situation left significant freedom to private developers to invest in the private rental market. The call for a free housing market went hand in hand with a high degree of cartelisation in the construction industry (Müller, 2021, p. 94). The HEV, already in its 1950 annual report explicitly called flats a commodity (Müller, 2021, p. 96). In the following years housing constituted a prime investment for the middle class and small owners, which in most cases owned only one apartment building, with institutional owners playing only a marginal role. In the post-war period Switzerland was the only western country where homeownership shrank down to 28.1%. Attempts to substantively change the Swiss housing system and introduce stronger national housing policy instruments were hindered by the direct democracy and the federalist structure of Swiss politics (Lawson, 2009).

Nevertheless, despite its inertia, there have been some smaller changes in the Swiss housing system that show aspects of de-commodification or re-commodification. In the period studied here, the subsidies for social rent within the framework of the Housing and Property Promotion Act (*Wohnbau- und Eigentumsförderungsgesetz*, WEG) were discontinued. With the WEG, the public sector offered loans to reduce initial rents, guarantees and subsidies for the acquisition of land reserves and sureties for construction costs for profit and non-profit housing developers from 1975 to 2003 (Cuennet and Favarger 2002). This act was replaced by the Housing Promotion Act (*Wohnraumförderungsgesetz*, WFG), which made the promotion of non-profit housing an official task at the federal level, but only provides modest support to non-profit housing providers (Lawson, 2009). Indeed, we see a decrease in the share of individuals living in housing cooperatives in the period 1990-2020 and an increase of homeownership, in particular between 1990 and 2010 and for the top-two income quintiles (see Appendix 2-4).

While there have been no substantial change to the tenancy law between 1990 and 2020, we observe that the enforcement of rent regulation continues to be weak. This, and the modest protection of tenants from rental contract cancellations is creating much hardship to tenants in a market that is more and more dominated by financialised actors that acquire or develop new properties, completely renovate their existing ones, or even fully demolish and rebuild them anew, in order to be able to cancel rental contracts and increase initial rents to the current market rents (Debrunner, 2024). These practices are compounded by environmental and energy policies that promote densification and energy refurbishments and are increasingly leading to the displacement of vulnerable groups (Lutz et al., 2023). At the same time there has been a substantial shift in the ownership structure of rental units. Private companies used

to own 30% of all rental units in 2003, but their share increased to 41% in 2021 (see WP2.1 report). This is attributed to increased investment in real estate by pension funds, insurance companies, and investment funds. Taken together, these dynamics suggest a commodifying trajectory of the housing system, as there are now more and more actors in the private rental sector for whom housing is primarily a source of return on investment taking advantage of the possibilities provided by the liberal tenancy law.

On the other hand, we see some de-commodifying tendencies in certain municipalities that have started to secure land from speculation by lawfully forbidding the public sector to sell public land (and sometimes giving the government a mandate to increase the share of public land) and by introducing municipalities' right of first refusal. Some cantons (Vaud, Geneva) already have the right of first refusal that municipalities can activate in times of housing shortage. Withdrawing land from speculation through the right of first refusal seems one of the key solutions to address housing affordability problems – albeit an expensive one – since rising land prices, especially in areas with limited land reserves, are often unaffordable for the public sector, too (CRED, Universität Bern & IAZI, 2023).

Since the revision of the Federal Spatial Planning Act which came into force in 2014, the absorption of added value in real estate through planning changes (planning gains) is regulated. The change in value due to rezoning is federally bound to be compensated with at least 20% of the added value, but it lies within the competence of cantons to define the regulation in detail. The cantons apply this very differently; in most cases the fee has the character of a tax that is due when the property is built on or sold (Lezzi, 2014), and takes values between 20% and 50% (EspaceSuisse, 2024).

Overall, we observe a slight trend towards the commodification of the national housing system, which is primarily driven by financialization, and, to a lesser extent, by changes in tenure policies or the housing supply system.

## *II. Are there structural divergences (tensions) between the direction of travel (universalist - residualist) of the national housing system, and the local housing system?*

As mentioned above, national policies provide only limited support to non-profit housing, based on the view that cantons and communes are responsible for housing. In the past, there have been popular initiatives for a stronger state intervention in the housing sector (e.g. the popular initiative “*Mehr bezahlbare Wohnungen*” of 2016), but Swiss voters and cantons followed the advice of the Federal Council and rejected the initiative in a popular vote.

Structural tensions in Switzerland's housing system also find their expression in the large number of popular initiatives or referenda demanding more state support to housing or stronger tenant protection. Between 1945 and 2020 there have been several national level initiatives and referenda on related topics. Most of them have been rejected by the majority of the Swiss voters because they were mainly driven by urban centres, while housing is much less a problem in rural cantons.

Generally, there is a considerable difference in the tenure structure between urban and rural regions, with urban regions being more strongly characterised by renting (private rent and

social rent), and rural regions having a higher share of homeownership. Regarding the direction of travel towards de-commodification or re-commodification, the statistical analysis of the tenure structure implies a similar trajectory for both the national level and Zurich between 1990 and 2020 when looking at the tenure structure of individuals (see Appendix 2): the share of owner-occupation has increased (CH: +5.0 percentage points, ZH: +3.1 percentage points), and there is a slight decrease in the share of social rent<sup>3</sup> (CH: -0.7 percentage points, ZH: -3.4 percentage points). The share of private rent has developed differently at the two levels, (CH: -2.6 percentage points, ZH: +5.3 percentage points), but with the private rental sector being regulated, this is no clear divergence.

However, in terms of policies, there are some differences between the local/cantonal and the national level, that might not be showing effects yet. Currently, large cities are facing a severe housing crisis; vacancy rates are below 1% and rental prices have increased dramatically. Population growth, urban densification and energy policies are triggering speculative investments in housing and leading to the demolition of older and affordable housing stock. In cities under pressure, there is a strong public demand for affordable housing that finds its expression in popular initiatives and mass demonstrations demanding more public intervention. In Zurich, where the affordability crisis is particularly severe, over the last few years there have been five mass demonstrations demanding more affordable housing and the stop of speculative demolitions of affordable housing. Remarkably, Zurich's housing system is already characterised by strong housing policies, with around 28 per cent of its rental housing stock being non-profit, housing about one third of its total population (Stadt Zürich, Stadtrat, 2024). The political goal is to reach one-third non-profit housing by 2050, through the direct provision of public social rental housing, as well as by supporting housing cooperatives and other non-profit housing providers through the provision of public land on leasehold terms, favourable loans and direct financial participation by the city.

Another instrument to promote affordable housing introduced by Zurich and other cities is fixing a percentage of affordable housing for new developments and in turn allowing the developers a higher utilisation of the plot (e.g. with special land-use plans or '*Sondernutzungsplänen*'; Verheij et al., 2025). Inclusionary zoning, i.e. fixing a percentage of affordable housing in zoning plans, is also an option given to municipalities by certain cantons (e.g. Canton of Vaud), but is used only timidly so far. Using zoning to increase the volume of affordable housing is, however, much followed by the Canton of Geneva. It has designated development zones

---

<sup>3</sup> The share of social rent is quite similar across income quintiles at the national level (see Appendix 3). In Switzerland, there is therefore no residualisation of the social rental sector observable. In Zurich, where there is much more cooperative housing, the shares of people living in this sector have dropped somewhat between 1990 and 2020 for the upper two quintiles and remained more or less stable for the lower three quintiles (see Appendix 4). Still, this is not linked to a residualisation or stigmatisation, also due to the high quality of non-profit housing.

(zones de développement), in which at least one third of the dwellings of new developments must be non-profit housing (Canton de Genève, n.d.).

Another city that currently is facing severe housing affordability problems is Zug. This is the result of a fiscal policy attracting very high-income groups. To tackle the housing crisis the city has introduced a regulation that new developments in areas that are to be densified should include at least 40% affordable housing (Urban, 2023).

Other measures, so far only adopted by the Cantons of Basel-City, Geneva, and Vaud, relate to a stronger protection of tenants from (energy) refurbishment-related evictions and unproportional rent increases. In Basel-City, for example, in case of a housing shortage, i.e. a vacancy rate below 1.5%, refurbishments and demolitions need a permit, rent increases are limited, and rents are controlled for 5 years (BSS Volkswirtschaftliche Beratung AG, 2024), a clear step of de-commodification.

### *III. What synergies and/ or conflicts exist between the vertical and horizontal governance levels?*

As argued by Lawson (2009), Switzerland federalist state structure and its broad and direct electoral franchise have been an impediment for the development of redistributive social and economic policy. In fact, demands for stronger national housing policies are typically not supported by rural voters and cantons and accordingly are rejected in popular votes.

The same dynamics play at cantonal level. Often, demands from larger city governments and their populations for de-commodifying measures cannot obtain a majority of votes because they are not supported by the voters in their rural areas, where access to housing is less of an issue. It is therefore no coincidence that the Cantons of Basel-City and Geneva have a more de-commodified housing system, as both cantons mainly consist of their capital city.

Moreover, most of the responsibility in planning lies with the municipalities. While all municipalities have the same task of implementing the Federal Spatial Planning Act according to cantonal structure plans, the amount of resources and knowhow varies greatly between differently sized municipalities. In a majority of municipalities, the absence of any municipal (or cantonal) housing policy makes the integration of (national) planning and housing objectives even more difficult.

### 3.2 Q2: Impact of exogenous macro-trends, policies and crises: What have been the events that really made a change in each tenure?

- I. *To what extent are processes of de-commodification and re-commodification in each housing system driven by, or respond to, the identified exogeneous macro-trends (e.g. EU policies / welfare restructuring) and crises (e.g. financial crisis, housing affordability crisis)?*

As no larger shifts of de-commodification or re-commodification have occurred in Switzerland in the period from 1990 to 2020, macro-trends do not seem to have a strong influence on the Swiss housing system.

The global financial crisis of the 1990s influenced the Swiss housing system in two ways. It led to the introduction of stricter condition to access mortgages for the purchase of a private property<sup>4</sup>, making it even more difficult for lower income groups to access home ownership. It also influenced the national housing policy. The framework of the Housing and Property Promotion Act (WEG), in force from 1975 to 2003, permitted controlled rent increases in the federally subsidised flats. During the years of stagnation, these increases were not tenable for many tenants, which meant that many of the housing providers were not receiving sufficient rental income to meet their obligations to the Confederation (Cuennet & Favarger, 2002). The federal government set up its own rescue company for those properties (Bundesrat, n.d.). By the end of the 1990s, it was therefore clear that the WEG had to be revised, and it was finally replaced by the Housing Promotion Act (WFG) in 2003.

The shifts toward de-commodification observed in the planning system by introducing a mandatory value capture of planning gains in the revised Federal Spatial Planning Act (SPA I) cannot be clearly attributed to a broader macro-trend. It should rather be seen as a measure accompanying the general objectives of the SPA I, namely a cap on buildable land and densification within existing settlements, because the revenues from value capture are used for compensation for rezoning, regional structure planning, infrastructure, etc. (EspaceSuisse, 2024).

One of the macro-trends that was identified for having a large impact on the housing situation in Switzerland is the financialization of housing (Theurillat et al., 2010, 2015; Young, 2019). While there have been no policy responses to this macro trend at national level, the effects of financialization on house prices and rents are very tangible not only in large cities (Debrunner, Jonkman, et al., 2024; Gehriger, 2024), but also in tourist regions in the mountains where

---

<sup>4</sup> Today, banks provide a loan-to-value ratio of 80%, meaning that 20% of the house price must be covered by a down payment. Until 1990, the percentage of equity required for a mortgage was only 10% (Bourassa et al., 2010b).



(luxury) second homes are increasingly eroding the affordable housing stock for locals (ARE et al., 2024).

The current housing crisis fuelled by financialization is triggering a growing public demand for state intervention in the housing sector and has, in some cases (see Section 3.1) led to local responses of de-commodification, or at least mitigating some of the crisis' worst impacts. The movement is struggling to gain sufficient political support at a national level, however.

### 3.3 Q3: Capacity to filter crises: how does each housing system respond to macro-events and crises?

- I. *What is the capacity of the local and national housing system to provide affordable housing? Identify the key obstacles to production of affordable housing, and the key enablers of the production of affordable housing, in both the national and local housing systems. (e.g. increase in community led housing programmes have enabled more affordable housing provision, but this has been constrained by the lack of public land)*

For Switzerland, when considering the housing systems' capacity to filter crises, it is important to not only look at the production of affordable housing, but also at the disappearance of affordable rental housing through total renovation or demolition.

#### Enablers of and obstacles to the production of affordable housing

A general obstacle that applies to the whole of Switzerland are the very high costs of housing production caused by the high land prices, labour costs, building materials and building standards (BAK Basel Economics AG, 2010). Limited subsidies from the national government to non-profit housing providers constitute a major obstacle for municipalities to support the construction of affordable non-profit housing, which are provided primarily by cooperatives. Providing access to cheaper finance is the main mechanism used at the national level to support the supply of affordable housing (Lawson, 2009).

At local level, it is important to underline that only large and fast-growing cities are facing severe housing affordability problems, while rents remain by and large affordable for most of the people in most medium- and small towns. In these municipalities, local governments generally do not have any housing policy to subsidize the supply of affordable housing but provide vulnerable households with demand-side subsidies.

Large cities, such as Zurich, Basel, Geneva, Bern, and Lausanne are facing serious housing affordability problems and accordingly have housing policies explicitly aiming at tackling the problem, generally through a mix of demand- and supply-side subsidies and through a direct engagement in the production of public subsidised housing. Key obstacles are the shortage of public land, extremely high land prices, the high costs of production, the long procedures for obtaining building permits, and to some extent also the insufficient number of non-profit housing providers with the capacity or willingness to engage in new housing projects.

Apart from non-profit rental housing, a housing system could also promote affordable homeownership. However, in Switzerland little is done to promote homeownership, even though the issue is often on political agendas (Thalmann, 1999). The Swiss Association of

Homeowners is lobbying for owners of rental housing rather than for individual homeownership (Müller, 2022). Key obstacles to affordable homeownership are, just like in the rental market, high land prices in combination with lending criteria that make mortgages inaccessible for many, and high costs of production.

### Drivers of the disappearance of affordable rental housing

The main factors driving the disappearance of affordable rental housing and reinforcing each other, are the tenancy law that only moderately protects tenants and lacks effective enforcement mechanisms, the financialization of real estate, and the demolition of affordable rental housing and its replacement with more expensive units which is partly driven by environmental and energy policies.

The standard rates defining to which extent landlords can increase rents after a renovation are fixed by the tenancy law, but only controlled if a tenant contests the rent increase. This provides an incentive for extensive renovations that can be used to raise rents to the market rents. The weak protection from rental contract termination has a similar effect, because cancellation of all contracts in order to renovate or demolish the building and afterwards align rents to changed market conditions is lucrative (B,S,S & Basler & Hofmann AG, 2014). These options are primarily --although not exclusively-- attractive to financialised actors. Moreover, just as for rent increases, tenants need to contest their initial rent if they consider their rent excessively high. Except for a few cantons, landlords must communicate the rent paid by the previous tenants only on request, making a contestation even more demanding.

In combination with the dwindling availability of green and brown fields, particularly in cities, and the mandatory inward development/densification policy in Switzerland, the construction of more (affordable) housing units is increasingly only possible by demolishing (more) affordable but less dense housing. This does not only cause displacement of the most vulnerable people but is increasingly contested on social as well as environmental grounds. The current regulatory framework does not internalise the social and ecological external costs of demolitions that occur in the form of CO2 emissions and in rising social welfare costs when displaced tenants cannot find again appropriate housing. At a local level, the Canton of Geneva, for example, has a law that prohibits demolitions, except for cases where a building poses a threat to health and safety, or where there is a strong public interest (Loi sur les démolitions, transformations et rénovations de maisons d'habitation (mesures de soutien en faveur des locataires et de l'emploi) (LDTR), 1996). This measure effectively reduces the number of demolitions and displaced people (Kauer et al., 2025)

## *II. How have the identified crises and macro-trends affected the capacity of these housing systems to provide affordable housing?*

Macro-trends such as global players' investments in Switzerland's housing market have contributed to dramatic increases of land prices which have a major influence on housing affordability. Even cities determined to increase the stock of non-profit housing are facing challenges to achieve their goals due to the lack of public land reserves. The high land and housing prices encourage the demolition of affordable housing and its replacement with more luxurious housing. This trend is particularly affecting fast growing large cities.



### III. *What challenges have the state and non-profit sector faced, in the light of recent crises (e.g. 2008 GFC, Covid emergency interventions)?*

During the financial crisis in 2007 Switzerland did not face a real estate crisis as other European countries did (Wehrmüller, 2014, p. 37). As a result, foreclosures and evictions were not a growing problem during that time. The GFC mainly had an indirect effect as it contributed to make investments in real estate in Switzerland even more attractive, thus contributing to hikes in prices. Under such conditions, producing affordable housing becomes increasingly challenging for the non-profit sector.

With regard to Covid pandemic there is no evidence that Switzerland's marginal non-profit housing sector was affected, but it may have increased the demand for secondary residences in tourist areas, intensifying pressure in the housing markets there.

## 4 CONCERNS REGARDING THE GREEN-HOUSING NEXUS

In our analysis of environmental and energy policies (EEPs; more specifically: densification, energy refurbishments, nature-based solutions, NBS) in Switzerland, we have seen that there is an awareness of the negative repercussions of densification and energy refurbishments on housing affordability, while such a debate by and large lacks in the case of NBS (see report WP3.2). It is furthermore clear from our desk research and from the interviews we held with the national level administration, that EEPs and housing policy are inherently separate; concerns regarding their interlinkages are raised by some actors, but tackling them cross-sectorally is challenging because each federal office has its distinct mandate and objectives and cannot or does not want to take on housing objectives.

The repercussions of densification and energy refurbishment policies are mainly discussed in terms of their consequences for tenants. A tenancy law that only moderately protects tenants and gives landlords' interests considerable weight leads to a situation where extensive renovations<sup>5</sup> or demolitions and total reconstructions are causing rent hikes and displacement. While buildings might be more energy efficient and denser afterwards, the social costs of displacement, the ecological costs of demolitions and the higher building density that is not necessarily coupled with higher use density, are externalised. So far, there are no policies at

---

<sup>5</sup> It should be noted that it is not possible to distinguish separate the effect of energy refurbishments on rent increases from that of other value-enhancing renovations, because in most cases, they are carried out simultaneously. It is therefore also not clear to what extent policies and subsidies for energy refurbishment contribute to the problem of rent increases after renovations.

national level that aim at internalising these costs to motivate landowners to adopt more ecological and socially sustainable solutions, but regulations in the cantons of Geneva and Basel-Stadt (on rent increases, on demolitions, etc.), provide examples of such policies. Bans on demolitions such as in Geneva could help prevent displacement and promote soft densification, i.e. the conversion and adaptive re-use of existing buildings that would contribute to higher use density as opposed to mere building density.

One of the main challenges in the Swiss case is the rising share of institutional owners, for whom housing is a mere commodity. To enhance their returns, they often opt for the cancellation of rental contracts in order to raise rents after renovating or demolishing and reconstructing because this is the only way to raise existing rents to market rents. An opportunity within this setting could be that institutional owners are quite keen to comply with ecological standards so that their properties do not lose value in the future (anticipating further regulation, for example). However, no equivalent “standards” for the social costs of displacement and the ecological costs of demolitions exist.

An aspect of the green-housing nexus that is less discussed in the Swiss context is the inequality between homeowners and tenants regarding subsidies. Ideally, subsidies for energy refurbishments (or NBS, but so far, these exist only in some cities/municipalities) would only be given to those homeowners that need an additional incentive. In reality, the Buildings Programme, the national programme for energy refurbishment subsidies, has a considerable deadweight effect, meaning the subsidies benefit also those that would have carried out the refurbishment even without subsidies (BFE & EFK, 2024).

As of now, there is hardly any debate on how NBS are or will be affecting housing. NBS on public land might increase rents and house prices and thus contribute to gentrification, but for Switzerland, there is no research on related issues yet. Whether or not NBS on private land count as value-enhancing and would thus allow rent increases is not clearly defined in the Swiss tenancy law.

## 5 REFERENCE LIST

- Arbaci, S. (2019). Paradoxes of segregation: Housing systems, welfare regimes and ethnic residential change in Southern European cities. Wiley.
- ARE, BWO, & SECO. (2024). Dokumentation Erfahrungsaustausch 'Erstwohnraum in Tourismusgebieten im Alpenraum'.
- BAK Basel Economics AG. (2010). Preis bestimmende Faktoren im Schweizer Bauhauptgewerbe – Ein internationaler Vergleich.
- BFE, & EFK. (2024). Subventionsprüfung des Gebäudeprogramms.
- BFS. (2024a). Bewohnte Wohnungen nach Bewohnertyp und Wohneigentumsquote, nach Kanton—2010-2022 [Data set]. <https://www.bfs.admin.ch/asset/de/30885303>
- BFS. (2024b). Eigentübertyp der Mietwohnungen. <https://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/de/home/aktuell/neue-veroeffentlichungen.assetdetail.30885461.html>
- BFS. (2024c). MONET 2030: Wohnkosten. <https://www.bfs.admin.ch/content/bfs/de/home/statistiken/nachhaltige-entwicklung/monet-2030/indikatoren/wohnenkosten.html>
- BFS. (2025). Leerwohnungsziffer politische Gemeinden. Leerwohnungsziffer | Karte. <https://www.bfs.admin.ch/asset/de/32411470>
- Bodmer, F. (with Pensimo Management AG). (2023a). Der Schweizer Wohnungsmarkt: Eine Auslegeordnung. Park Books.
- Bodmer, F. (with Pensimo Management AG). (2023b). Der Schweizer Wohnungsmarkt: Eine Auslegeordnung. Park Books.
- Bourassa, S. C., & Hoesli, M. (2010). Why Do the Swiss Rent? The Journal of Real Estate Finance and Economics, 40(3), 286–309. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11146-008-9140-4>

- Bourassa, S. C., Hoesli, M., & Scognamiglio, D. (2010a). Housing Finance, Prices, and Tenure in Switzerland. *Journal of Real Estate Literature*, 18(2), 261–282.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10835547.2010.12090281>
- Bourassa, S. C., Hoesli, M., & Scognamiglio, D. (2010b). International Articles: Housing Finance, Prices, and Tenure in Switzerland. *Journal of Real Estate Literature*, 18(2), 263–282.
- B,S,S, & Basler & Hofmann AG. (2014). Energetische Sanierung. Auswirkungen auf Mietzinsen [Studie im Auftrag des BWO].
- BSS Volkswirtschaftliche Beratung AG. (2024). Wohnraumschutz im Kanton Basel-Stadt – Auslegeordnung.  
[https://media.bs.ch/original\\_file/1c39581f6646c5b92eee412007fd08e8cc26d65c/186cd4cd-4fd5-4be5-8003-b4eb359bff9d.pdf](https://media.bs.ch/original_file/1c39581f6646c5b92eee412007fd08e8cc26d65c/186cd4cd-4fd5-4be5-8003-b4eb359bff9d.pdf)
- BWO. (2005). Briefing – Wie viele Haushalte haben in der Schweiz Wohneigentum und warum sind es nicht mehr?
- BWO, B. für W. (2023). Ursachen für steigende Wohnkosten in der Schweiz mit Fokus auf die Raumplanung. <https://www.bwo.admin.ch/bwo/de/home/Wohnungsmarkt/studien-und-publikationen/wohnkosten.html>
- BWO, & BFS. (2024). Statistik des gemeinnützigen Wohnungsbaus 2024.  
<https://www.bfs.admin.ch/asset/de/33027944>
- Canton de Genève. (n.d.). Logements en zone de développement. ge.ch. Retrieved 13 June 2025, from <https://www.ge.ch/node/29620>
- CRED, Universität Bern, & IAZI. (2023). UrsachenSteigenderWohnkosten\_D\_ger.  
[https://www.cred.unibe.ch/unibe/portal/fak\\_wiso/wiso\\_kzen/cred/content/e54603/e274780/e277402/e1430740/UrsachenSteigenderWohnkosten\\_D\\_ger.pdf](https://www.cred.unibe.ch/unibe/portal/fak_wiso/wiso_kzen/cred/content/e54603/e274780/e277402/e1430740/UrsachenSteigenderWohnkosten_D_ger.pdf)
- Cuennet, S., & Favarger, P. (with Favarger, P., Thalmann, P., & Thalmann, P.). (2002). La politique du logement. Presses polytechniques et universitaires romandes.

- Debrunner, G. (2024). The Business of Densification: Governing Land for Social Sustainability in Housing. Springer Nature Switzerland. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-49014-9>
- Debrunner, G., Jonkman, A., & Gerber, J.-D. (2024). Planning for social sustainability: Mechanisms of social exclusion in densification through large-scale redevelopment projects in Swiss cities. *Housing Studies*, 39(1), 146–167. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02673037.2022.2033174>
- Debrunner, G., Kolocek, M., & Schindelegger, A. (2024). The decommodifying capacity of tenancy law: Comparative analysis of tenants' and landlords' rights in Austria, Germany, and Switzerland. *International Journal of Housing Policy*, 1–23. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19491247.2024.2367835>
- EspaceSuisse. (2024). Mehrwertabgabe: Vergleich der kantonalen Bestimmungen. <https://www.espacesuisse.ch/de/raumplanung/handlungsfelder-der-innenentwicklung/mehrwertausgleich>
- Eurostat. (2023). Housing in Europe – 2023 edition. <https://doi.org/10.2785/279048>
- Gehriger, L. (2024). Operationalizing the problem of political alienation for housing studies: Tenants experiencing mass cancellations of rental contracts in Basel, Switzerland. *Housing Studies*, 39(11), 2963–2983. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02673037.2023.2238643>
- Gerber, J.-D. (2008). Les stratégies foncières des grands propriétaires fonciers collectifs: Le cas des cantons et des communes de Bienne, la Chaux-de-Fonds et Zürich. Working Paper de l'IDHEAP, 8. <https://boris.unibe.ch/61949/>
- Kauer, F., Lutz, E., Büttiker, D., & Kaufmann, D. (2025). Bautätigkeit und Verdrängung in der städtischen Schweiz. Bundesamt für Wohnungswesen. 10.3929/ethz-b-000741248
- Kettunen, H., & Ruonavaara, H. (2021). Rent regulation in 21st century Europe. Comparative perspectives. *Housing Studies*, 36(9), 1446–1468. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02673037.2020.1769564>

- Lawson, J. (2009). The Transformation of Social Housing Provision in Switzerland Mediated by Federalism, Direct Democracy and the Urban/rural Divide. *European Journal of Housing Policy*, 9(1), 45–67. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616710802693599>
- Lezzi, M. (2014). Mehrwertabgabe gemäss Artikel 5 Raumplanungsgesetz.
- Loi sur les démolitions, transformations et rénovations de maisons d'habitation (mesures de soutien en faveur des locataires et de l'emploi) (LDTR), Pub. L. No. rsGE L 5 20 (1996). <https://silgeneve.ch/legis/index.aspx>
- Lutz, E., Kauer, F., & Kaufmann, D. (2023). Mehr Wohnraum für Alle? Zonenplanänderungen, Bauaktivität, und Mietpreise im Kanton Zürich von 1996-2020 [Bericht ETH Zürich]. <https://doi.org/10.3929/ethz-b-000603242>
- Müller, F. (2021). Neoliberale Wohnungspolitik avant la lettre? Staatliche Regulierung und private Interessen im Wohnungsbau in der Schweiz (1936-1950). *Traverse: Zeitschrift Für Geschichte*, 28(1), 92–116. <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-919509>
- Müller, F. (2022). Mieter:innenland Schweiz. Siedlungsprojekte, politische Regulierung und private Interessen im schweizerischen Wohnungsbau. Universität Zürich.
- Rohrbach, H. (2014). Die Entwicklung des schweizerischen Mietrechts von 1911 bis zur Gegenwart.
- SKOS. (2019). Der Grundbedarf in der Sozialhilfe. Fact-Sheet. [https://skos.ch/fileadmin/user\\_upload/skos\\_main/public/pdf/medien/medienkonferenzen/2019\\_medienkonferenz/190108\\_FS-Grundbedarf.pdf](https://skos.ch/fileadmin/user_upload/skos_main/public/pdf/medien/medienkonferenzen/2019_medienkonferenz/190108_FS-Grundbedarf.pdf)
- Stadt Zürich, Stadtrat. (2024). Umsetzung wohnpolitischer Grundsatzartikel, Bericht 2020-2023. <https://www.stadt-zuerich.ch/de/aktuell/publikationen/2024/umsetzung-wohnpolitischer-grundsatzartikel-2020-2023.html>
- Thalmann, P. (1999). Which is the appropriate administrative level to promote home ownership? *Swiss Journal of Economics and Statistics (SJES)*, 135(I), 3–20.

- Theurillat, T., Corpataux, J., & Crevoisier, O. (2010). Property Sector Financialization: The Case of Swiss Pension Funds (1992–2005). *European Planning Studies*, 18(2), 189–212. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09654310903491507>
- Theurillat, T., Rérat, P., & Crevoisier, O. (2015). The real estate markets: Players, institutions and territories. *Urban Studies*, 52(8), 1414–1433. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098014536238>
- Urban, K. (2023, November 9). Zunehmende Mietregulierungen in Städten: Die grosse Übersicht. *Wüest Partner*. <https://www.wuestpartner.com/ch-de/2023/11/09/zunehmende-mietregulierungen-in-staedten-die-grosse-uebersicht/>
- Verheij, J., Hengstermann, A., & Gerber, J.-D. (2025). Land Policy in Switzerland: A Renewed Interest in Public Landownership to Support Land-Use Planning. In T. Hartmann, A. Hengstermann, M. Jehling, A. Schindelegger, & F. Wenner (Eds), *Land Policies in Europe: Land-Use Planning, Property Rights, and Spatial Development* (pp. 187–201). Springer Nature Switzerland. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-83725-8\\_12](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-83725-8_12)
- Vujanovic, P. (2016). Policies to Tame the Housing Cycle in Switzerland. OECD. <https://doi.org/10.1787/5jm3scgb48d4-en>
- VZ VermögensZentrum. (n.d.). Eigenheim verkaufen: So hoch ist die Grundstückgewinnsteuer. Retrieved 10 June 2025, from <https://www.vermoegenszentrum.ch/vergleiche/eigenheim-verkaufen-so-hoch-ist-die-grundstueckgewinnsteuer>
- Wehrmüller, A. (2014). TENLAW: Tenancy Law and Housing Policy in Multi-level Europe. National report for Switzerland. <https://arquivo.pt/wayback/20160421110915/http://www.tenlaw.uni-bremen.de/reports.html>
- Young, C. (2019). Wem gehört die Schweiz? Das Geschäft mit den Mieten. Mieterinnen- und Mieterverband. <https://www.mieterverband.ch/mv/mitgliedschaft-verband/zeitschrift-mw/artikel/2019/Das-Geschaeft-mit-den-Mieten.html>

## 6 APPENDIX

### 6.1 Appendix 1: Information on data used for tables on tenure structures in Switzerland and Zurich

The tables for Switzerland and for Zurich are based on the Swiss census (1990 and 2000) and the register data and surveys that replaced the census system in 2010: the statistics of population and households (STATPOP) and the structural survey (*Strukturerhebung*). Data on individual incomes was provided by the Central Compensation Office (*Zentrale Ausgleichsstelle*). In this income data source, all incomes that are relevant in the social security scheme Old-Age and Survivors Insurance (*Alters- und Hinterbliebenenversicherung, AHV*) can be found, meaning other forms of income, e.g. capital income, is not considered.

The Swiss census and its successor statistics collect data on tenure. However, it differentiates only between tenants (or sub-tenants), members of housing cooperatives, condominium owners, house (co-)owners, and people who live in “other” tenures (e.g. as leaseholders, dwelling is offered free or at a reduced rate by employer, or people living in a collective household such as a care home). We therefore can neither distinguish between outright and mortgaged owners, nor between the length of tenants’ contracts. Tenants living in dwellings owned by public authorities – which would count as social rent in the framework of this report – are registered as tenants and are thus included in the private rental sector in these tables. This introduces some bias, as in Switzerland, 4% of dwellings are owned publicly, and a larger bias in Zurich, where this share is 7% (in 2023).

Because the information on tenure is, from 2010 onward, collected via a sample survey, pooling data from three years is recommended for smaller spatial units. Thus, we used data from the years 2010-2012 and 2020-2022 instead of 2010 and 2020 only. Results from 2010-2012 and 2020-2022 are subject to a margin of error of max.  $\pm 0.04$  (95% confidence level) for the whole of Switzerland, and  $\pm 0.17$  (95% confidence level) for Zurich.

Tables are based on *individuals, not households*. Due to the re-organisation of the census system, aggregation at the household level is not possible for the years 2010 and 2011, which is why we opted for individuals as the basic unit for our tables. Generally, owner occupation is more prevalent and private rental less prevalent when looking at individuals as opposed to households, because smaller households, especially 1-person-households are more likely to be tenants.



## 6.2 Appendix 2: Distribution of tenures, 1990-2020, Switzerland and Zurich

Table 1-CH: Proportion and change in proportion of individuals in each tenure, Switzerland

Tenures	1990 (%)	2000 (%)	2010-12 (%)*	2020-22 (%)*		1990 - 2000	2000 - 2010-12*	2010-12 - 2020-22*	1990 - 2020-22*
OO	35.7	37.9	42.0	42.9		2.2	4.1	-1.3	5.0
PR	55.1	51.2	50.9	51.2		-3.9	-0.8	2.2	-2.6
SR	3.4	3.3	2.9	2.4		-0.1	-0.7	0.0	-0.7
Other	5.7	7.5	4.2	3.6		1.8	-2.7	-0.9	-1.7
<b>Total</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0					

Sources: compiled by authors; data from the Federal Statistical Office (Census, Statpop and Strukturerhebung) and the Central Compensation Office (individual incomes). Percentages are based on individuals, not households.

\* Margin of error (2010-12, 2020-22): max.  $\pm 0.04$  (95% confidence level).

Table 2-CH: Proportion and change in proportion of individuals in each tenure, Zurich

Tenures	1990 (%)	2000 (%)	2010-12 (%)	2020-22 (%)		1990 - 2000	2000 - 2010-12*	2010-12 - 2020-22*	1990 - 2020-22*
OO	6.9	7.6	10.4	10.9		0.7	2.1	0.3	3.1
PR	68.0	66.3	71.6	72.4		-1.7	6.4	0.6	5.3
SR	18.7	18.7	16.3	15.7		0.0	-3.1	-0.3	-3.4
Other	6.4	7.4	1.7	1.1		1.0	-5.5	-0.6	-5.0
<b>Total</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0					

Sources: compiled by authors; data from the Federal Statistical Office (Census, Statpop and Strukturerhebung) and the Central Compensation Office (individual incomes). Percentages are based on individuals, not households.

\* Margin of error (2010-12, 2020-22): max.  $\pm 0.17$  (95% confidence level).

## 6.3 Appendix 3: Distribution of tenures by income quintiles, 1990-2020, Switzerland and Zurich

Table 3-CH: Proportion of individuals in each tenure, by income quintiles, Switzerland

Tenures	Bottom quintile (%)	2nd quintile (%)	3rd quintile (%)	4th quintile (%)	Top quintile (%)	Bottom quintile (%)	2nd quintile (%)	3rd quintile (%)	4th quintile (%)	Top quintile (%)
	<b>1990</b>					<b>2000</b>				
OO	39.0	31.9	27.0	28.4	46.4	38.5	36.8	29.4	32.5	51.3
PR	51.5	60.0	66.6	65.6	48.6	49.9	53.8	61.9	59.7	42.6
SR	3.6	3.1	2.7	3.5	3.2	3.5	3.2	3.1	3.2	2.4
Other	5.9	5.0	3.8	2.6	1.8	8.1	6.2	5.6	4.6	3.7

Tenures	Bottom quintile (%)	2nd quintile (%)	3rd quintile (%)	4th quintile (%)	Top quintile (%)	Bottom quintile (%)	2nd quintile (%)	3rd quintile (%)	4th quintile (%)	Top quintile (%)
	<b>2010-12*</b>					<b>2020-22*</b>				
OO	39.1	39.4	28.1	35.7	55.5	37.8	35.1	26.1	33.8	51.8
PR	48.7	52.4	65.5	59.8	41.9	52.7	57.7	68.0	61.9	45.5
SR	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	1.5	2.7	2.8	2.8	2.7	1.7
Other	9.7	5.6	3.9	1.8	1.1	6.8	4.5	3.0	1.7	1.0

Sources: compiled by authors; data from the Federal Statistical Office (Census, Statpop and Strukturerhebung) and the Central Compensation Office (individual incomes). Percentages are based on individuals, not households. \* Margin of error of the proportions (2010-12, 2020-22): max.  $\pm 0.11$  (95% confidence level).

Table 4-CH: Proportion of individuals in each tenure, by income quintiles, Zurich

Tenures	Bottom quintile (%)	2nd quintile (%)	3rd quintile (%)	4th quintile (%)	Top quintile (%)	Bottom quintile (%)	2nd quintile (%)	3rd quintile (%)	4th quintile (%)	Top quintile (%)
	1990					2000				
OO	7.34	5	3.95	3.98	11.13	6.97	6.35	5.15	5.3	13.74
PR	66.75	70.75	76.31	75.9	71.91	65.19	68.41	72.29	73.43	70.6
SR	18.33	17.07	14.53	16.78	15.07	17.88	18.54	17.05	17.29	11.97
Other	7.58	7.18	5.21	3.35	1.88	9.95	6.7	5.51	3.98	3.68

Tenures	Bottom quintile (%)	2nd quintile (%)	3rd quintile (%)	4th quintile (%)	Top quintile (%)	Bottom quintile (%)	2nd quintile (%)	3rd quintile (%)	4th quintile (%)	Top quintile (%)
	2010-12*					2020-22*				
OO	8.4	6.9	4.6	6.1	14.5	8.99	5.94	4.51	6.09	13.52
PR	69.6	74.6	78.5	79.8	77.7	69.04	75.28	79.07	81.07	79.94
SR	17.2	17.0	16.0	13.3	7.5	19.7	17.79	15.77	12.33	6.33
Other	4.8	1.5	1.0	0.8	0.3	2.27	0.99	0.66	0.51	0.21

Sources: compiled by authors; data from the Federal Statistical Office (Census, Statpop and Strukturhebung) and the Central Compensation Office (individual incomes). Percentages are based on individuals, not households. Margin of error of the proportions (2010-12, 2020-22): max.  $\pm 0.44$  (95% confidence level) for 2010-12, and max.  $\pm 0.39$  (95% confidence level) for 2020-22.

## 6.4 Appendix 4: Distribution of tenures by income quintiles, 1990-2020, Switzerland and Zurich

Table 5-CH: Change in proportion of individuals in each tenure, by income quintiles, Switzerland

Tenures	Bottom quintile (%)	2nd quintile (%)	3rd quintile (%)	4th quintile (%)	Top quintile (%)	Bottom quintile (%)	2nd quintile (%)	3rd quintile (%)	4th quintile (%)	Top quintile (%)
	1990 to 2000					2000 to 2010-12				
OO	-0.5	5.0	2.5	4.1	4.9	0.6	2.6	-1.4	3.2	4.2
PR	-1.6	-6.2	-4.6	-5.9	-6.0	-1.3	-1.4	3.5	0.1	-0.7
SR	-0.1	0.1	0.3	-0.2	-0.8	-0.9	-0.6	-0.5	-0.6	-0.9
Other	2.2	1.2	1.8	2.0	1.9	1.5	-0.6	-1.7	-2.8	-2.7

Tenures	Bottom quintile (%)	2nd quintile (%)	3rd quintile (%)	4th quintile (%)	Top quintile (%)	Bottom quintile (%)	2nd quintile (%)	3rd quintile (%)	4th quintile (%)	Top quintile (%)
	2010-12 to 2020-22					1990 to 2020-22				
OO	-1.4	-4.4	-1.9	-2.0	-3.7	-1.2	3.2	-0.8	5.3	5.4
PR	4.1	5.3	2.6	2.1	3.7	1.2	-2.4	1.5	-3.7	-3.1
SR	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	-0.9	-0.3	0.1	-0.7	-1.5
Other	-2.9	-1.1	-0.9	-0.2	-0.1	0.9	-0.5	-0.7	-0.9	-0.8

Sources: compiled by authors; data from the Federal Statistical Office (Census, Statpop and Strukturerhebung) and the Central Compensation Office (individual incomes). Percentages are based on individuals, not households. \* Margin of error of the proportions (2010-12, 2020-22): max.  $\pm 0.11$  (95% confidence level).

Table 6-CH: Change in proportion of individuals in each tenure, by income quintiles, Zurich

Tenures	Bottom quintile (%)	2nd quintile (%)	3rd quintile (%)	4th quintile (%)	Top quintile (%)	Bottom quintile (%)	2nd quintile (%)	3rd quintile (%)	4th quintile (%)	Top quintile (%)
	1990 to 2000					2000 to 2010-12				
OO	-0.4	1.4	1.2	1.3	2.6	1.4	0.5	-0.5	0.8	0.8
PR	-1.6	-2.3	-4.0	-2.5	-1.3	4.4	6.2	6.2	6.3	7.1
SR	-0.4	1.5	2.5	0.5	-3.1	-0.7	-1.5	-1.1	-4.0	-4.5
Other	2.4	-0.5	0.3	0.6	1.8	-5.1	-5.2	-4.6	-3.2	-3.4

Tenures	Bottom quintile (%)	2nd quintile (%)	3rd quintile (%)	4th quintile (%)	Top quintile (%)	Bottom quintile (%)	2nd quintile (%)	3rd quintile (%)	4th quintile (%)	Top quintile (%)
	2010-12 to 2020-22					1990 to 2020-22				
OO	0.2	-1.4	-0.5	-0.4	-1.2	1.2	0.5	0.2	1.7	2.1
PR	0.2	2.0	1.4	2.3	2.7	3.0	5.8	3.5	6.2	8.5
SR	1.8	-0.3	-0.9	-1.7	-1.4	0.7	-0.3	0.6	-5.1	-8.9
Other	-2.2	-0.3	0.0	-0.2	-0.1	-4.9	-6.0	-4.3	-2.8	-1.7

Sources: compiled by authors; data from the Federal Statistical Office (Census, Statpop and Strukturhebung) and the Central Compensation Office (individual incomes). Percentages are based on individuals, not households. Margin of error of the proportions (2010-12, 2020-22): max.  $\pm 0.44$  (95% confidence level) for 2010-12, and max.  $\pm 0.39$  (95% confidence level) for 2020-22.