

From refugee camp - to social housing in Greece



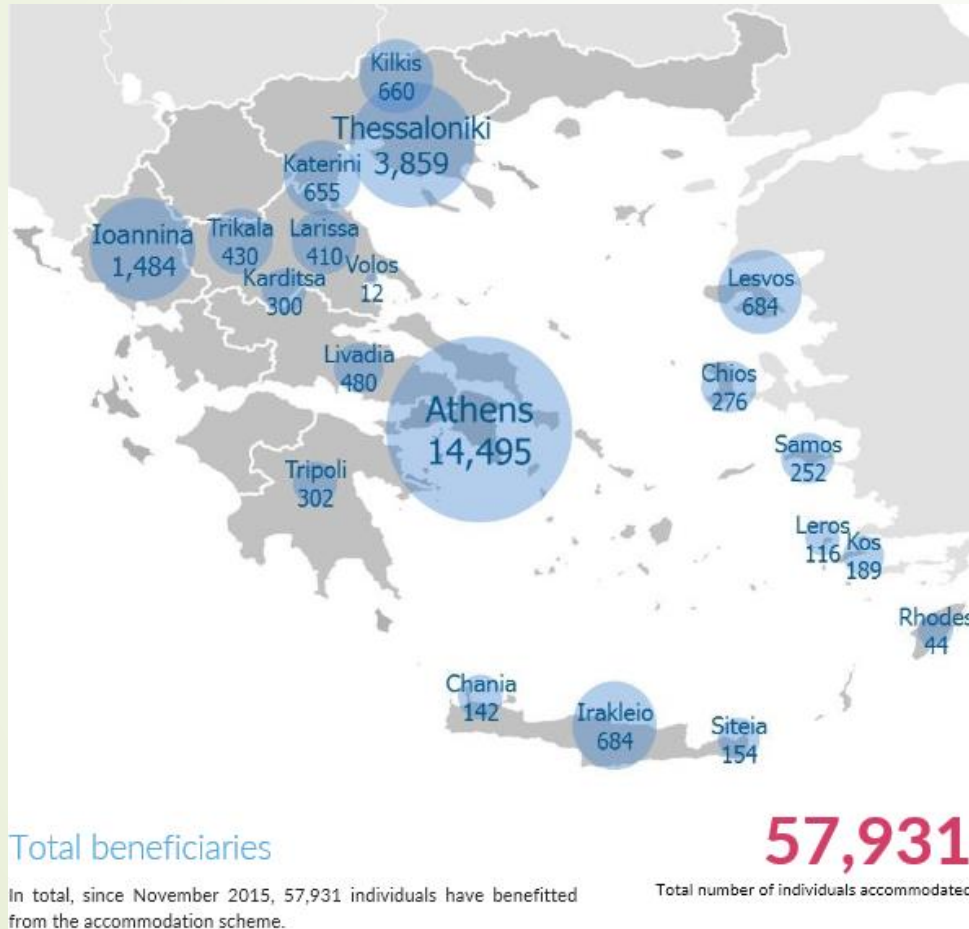
Peer to Peer Learning and Knowledge Exchange on
Migration - Public space, housing & right to the city

From refugee camp - to social housing in Greece

- Two study visits for activists involved in housing projects between Greece and Germany, with the purpose of sharing knowledge and experience, foster collaboration and exchange of expert advice on ways to establish and develop sustainable social housing projects in Greece.
- The 1st study visit will bring activist in Thessaloniki, where they will meet with local groups that are running housing projects and get to know the situation and the difficulties they are facing.
- The 2nd study visit will bring activist in Berlin, where they will be able to visit successful social housing projects, meet the people that develop and run them and discuss possible ways to collaborate and transfer the experience from Germany into the Greek reality.

From refugee camp - to social housing in Greece

(13 -19 May 2019)



High interest from projects across Greece resulted in organising visits to 4 cities:

- Athens, 13-15 May
- Katerini, 16 May
- Thessaloniki & Kilkis 17-19 May

Invitations



From refugee camp - to social housing in Greece

As the financial and refugee crises continues to drive more vulnerable people to poverty and while many families are losing their homes, several organised groups and local initiatives are looking for affordable housing models and lasting solutions to homelessness. There is a clear need across Greece for living spaces, whose existence will reflect the needs of their residents and their evolution would be at least partially protected from various political fluctuations and unstable donations.

On this challenge, associations Ethos and Inwale (Projekthaus Potsdam-Babelsberg) with support from Mietshäuser Syndikat, come together to organise a range of exchange visits and experience sharing discussions between activists and groups involved in social housing projects across Greece and Germany. The events will foster collaboration and provide the opportunity to exchange ideas, stories, challenges and solutions on how to establish and develop sustainable social housing projects. We wish that the ideas and knowledge shared from this peer-learning exchange, inspire wide and diverse social housing solutions that will develop collectively among different communities across Greece.

The first exchange visit is organised in the middle of May and will bring together activists from Greece and Germany with wide experience in supporting social housing projects. For this, we are inviting interested groups and organisations who are committed in developing long-term social housing solutions in Greece to join and welcome this initiative.

Planning dates for projects visits and team discussions:

In Athens 13-15 May

In Katerini 16 May

In Thessaloniki and Kilkis 17-19 May

For more information and planning arrangements please contact stefanos@ethosngo.org

You can find more about us at: <http://ethosngo.org/> <https://www.syndikat.org/en/>
<http://www.projekthaus-potsdam.de/index.php/>



MAY
14

Συνεταιριστική κατοικία, το παράδειγμα του Projekthaus Potsdam

Public - Hosted by Ελληνικό Δίκτυο για το Δικαίωμα στη Στέγη και την Κατοικία and Communitism

✓ Going ▾

...

🕒 Tuesday, 14 May 2019 from 18:00-21:00
about 2 weeks ago

📍 Communitism
Κεραμεικου 28, 104 36 Athens, Greece

Show map

✉ Invited by Panagiotis Tzannetakis

About

Discussion

55 went · 351 interested

See All

13/05/19



Project Mazi is a refugee housing project which will provide a home to five young men who are in Athens on their own and currently living on the streets. 'Mazi' meaning together in Greek speaks to the sense of community and support that we will create with this housing project. We will set up a cosy flat which will provide them with not just a roof over their head but also a safe space to call their own.

This project, running for a minimum of one year, aims to be a stepping stone to long term accommodation, allowing them to become more independent and begin to build a brighter future. A dedicated live-in support worker from the refugee community will offer emotional and practical support alongside an external coordinator.

Young refugee men on their own in Athens are left unsupported by the system, often forced to live on the streets and in turn are exposed to crime, violence, drug abuse and sexual exploitation. Without housing in Greece you cannot access vital services including non-emergency health care, registered employment, financial support, a bank account, public education, or even a public transport card. **With project Mazi we hope to not only improve the lives of the 5 young men who gain a home, but to also create a model which will be replicated so as to reach out to more people who need it.**

We are a group of long term independent volunteers from various grassroots organisations working with displaced people living in Greece. All of us have worked on different issues supporting refugees in Athens and everyone of us has been struck by the ongoing problem of accommodation. **We know we cannot wait for an inadequate system to change - we have to fill the gaps it leaves now!** In order for the project to run for one full year we must raise £20,000. This will include rent, bills, financial support for the internal and external coordinator among others.

For more information about the budget or the project as a whole please see our crowdfunding page: <https://chuffed.org/project/mazi-housing-project-help-us-provide-a-home-to-support-young-men-displaced-in-athens>. Or for more information you can contact us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/mazihousingproject/> or email: mazihousingproject@gmail.com.

Thank you for your support!

Mazi team started recently a refugee housing project which provides one home to five young men who are homeless and alone in Athens.



www.facebook.com/mazihousingproject/

13/05/19

Holes in the Borders

- 6 volunteers
- 3 houses
- Funding limitations
- Project could close by the end of this year

www.holesintheborders.org



14/05/19

Communitism

Communitism is based on sharing spaces, means of production, competences and time through practices of cooperation, solidarity and mutualism.



Communitism calls for building owners (public or private) and communities to share responsibilities on maintaining and preserving cultural heritage.

Planning to buy 5 empty buildings for collective use and housing in the centre of Athens. (Keramikos)

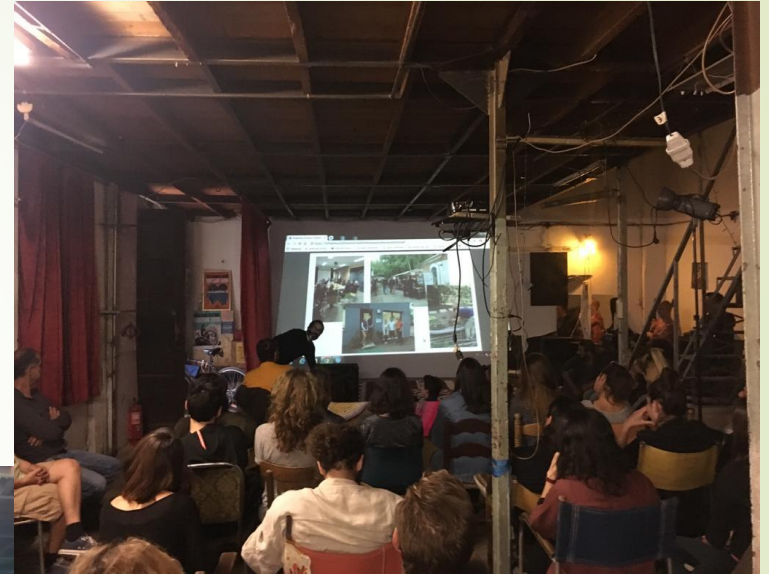
www.instagram.com/communitism/

14/05/19

Communitism - Open Discussion



- Co-housing models presentation 30 min
- 3 hours discussion (approx. 50 people)



15/05/19

Co-Hab Athens

An ongoing research-project on co-housing and collective ownership models for reclaiming affordable habitat quality in Athens.



Half of the group is committed to live together by creating a cooperative urban co-housing project.



www.cohabathens.com

16/05/19

Perichoresis - Katerini



A fast-growing organisation providing humanitarian assistance and protection for refugees in a wide range of projects, including housing, food distribution, logistics, health care, legal aid and education.

- 124 apartments
- 600 residents

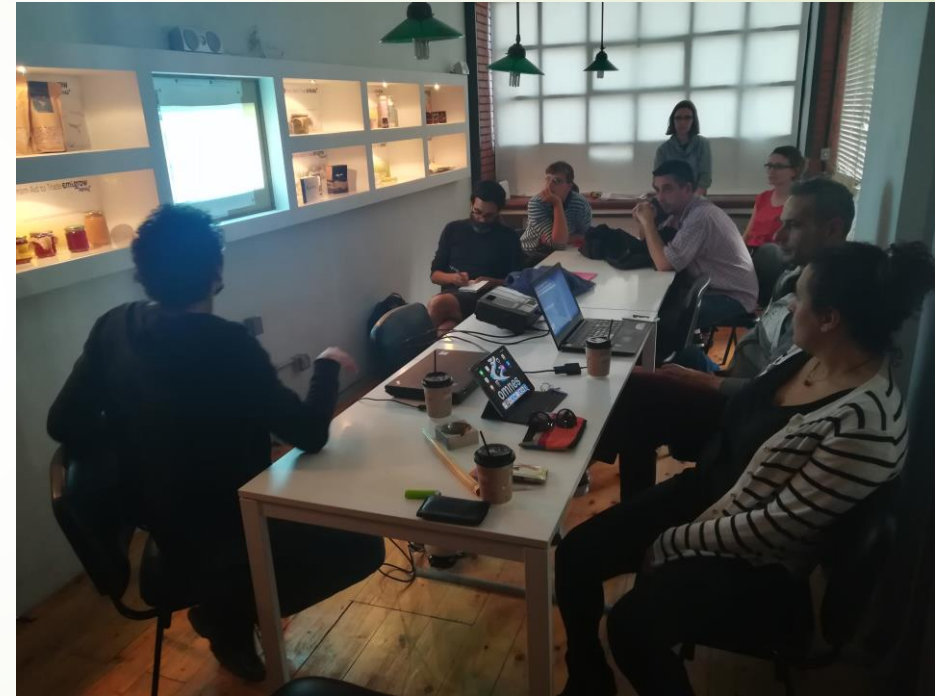
www.perichoresis.ngo



17/05/19

OMNES - Kilkis

A grassroots organisation which originates from a volunteer movement born in the region of North Greece and is nowadays developing their inclusive vision gradually through a large housing program, an inclusion centre and a livelihood component.



www.omnes.gr

18/05/19

ETHOS - Thessaloniki

A protective apartment for 12 refugee children that end up alone in Greece and become homeless as they turn 18 years old.



www.ethosngo.org

Social space “To perivoli mas”

About us

As the financial crises continues for more than 10 years to drive Greek society into poverty, we observe a dramatic increase in people that are struggling to survive as a result of loss of income while they experience daily socioeconomic exclusion due to the inability to meet their basic needs and to secure appropriate housing. In this sad reality where economic market rules regulate and degrade our daily life and our interpersonal relationships, we seek to create a social space open for activities that generate an alternative paradigm of cooperation, community relations and collective actions. We wish to create a prototype of social synergy that reflects the needs of our community today and of the society we dream for our children.

Starting with food and the relations that form throughout its cycle (from seed planting and cultivation, to crop collection, processing and cooking, to re-processing of food waste and composting), three local associations from Thessaloniki, Agroecopolis, Ethos and Pervolarides of Thessaloniki each contributing their experience and local volunteer network, created the social space “To perivoli mas” where the following activities are hosted:

Community cooking where the main objective is to prepare food for homeless people. Locals and refugees come together to meet their neighbours, to taste and learn new recipes and to share their love for food and for helping others. Community cooking also provides the basis for further activities that promote altruism and social integration.

Food waste reuse where we collect products close to their expiring date as well as fruits, vegetables and fish that otherwise would be dumped. This food is thereafter processed, cooked and distributed to homeless people and vulnerable families. Nothing goes wasted!

Re-processing food that otherwise would go wasted into sauces, marmalade and compost. We are creating a “cooperative production chain” by re-processing and redistributing food to people living in poverty.

Beekeeping which is a traditionally cooperative process that teaches us how to work together with the bee populations for the production of organic honey, while we support the natural regeneration process by nourishing nature’s pollinators.

Solidarity olive collection where every November, unemployed and volunteers together we gather the yearly production from olive trees that are donated to our cause and we distribute the olive oil to families with extremely low or no income.



Urban gardening where we will seek to create food as well as to share methods of food cultivation and management of organic household waste for the production of gardening compost/fertilizer. Through the cultivation of urban gardens, we wish to regenerate not just the depleted soil of our neighbourhoods, but also our community relations. Cultivation of food enables us to plant the seeds for the “cultivation” of solidarity and social cooperation.

CSA and development of direct links between producers and consumers through a Community Supported Agriculture scheme which facilitates access to cheap, locally produced organic food while ensuring that producers are guaranteed an ongoing demand for their production at a fair price.

Employability and vocational inclusion is created through training events and workshops (food cultivation and processing, beekeeping, etc.) that facilitate the development of vocational skills and aim at the creation of new employment possibilities.

Social networking between like-minded people and local groups with common concerns and interests as well as with communities beyond Greece, so we can support each other and share our ideas, knowledge and good practices. Our needs and our dreams unite us, no matter where we are and where we come from.

What we do

We act where social protection is missing, to support our neighbour and those in need by creating fundaments for social mobilisation and cooperation through solidarity actions. We aim at empowering community relations, at mobilising those unemployed and the creation of synergies between people irrespective of their social and cultural background. Our social space is a meeting place and a point of reference for everyone that wants to offer their free time, talent and skills to the community and for social empowerment and integration.

We make no distinctions between people and there are no “beneficiaries”. We believe that each person brings their own contribution to the community, like water drops come together to create rivers and seas. This is why we make an open call to all those who wish to unite with us, with the neighbourhood, the community and the society we live in.

[Visit us in our new space “To perivoli mas”, Alkminis 13-15, T.K. 54249](#)

Contact us and follow our activities on:

[Facebook / Περβολάρηδες Θεσσαλονίκης-Pervolarides of Thessaloniki](#)

[#cookingtogetherforall](#)



2nd visit

From refugee camp - to social housing in Greece

(12 - 17 August 2019)



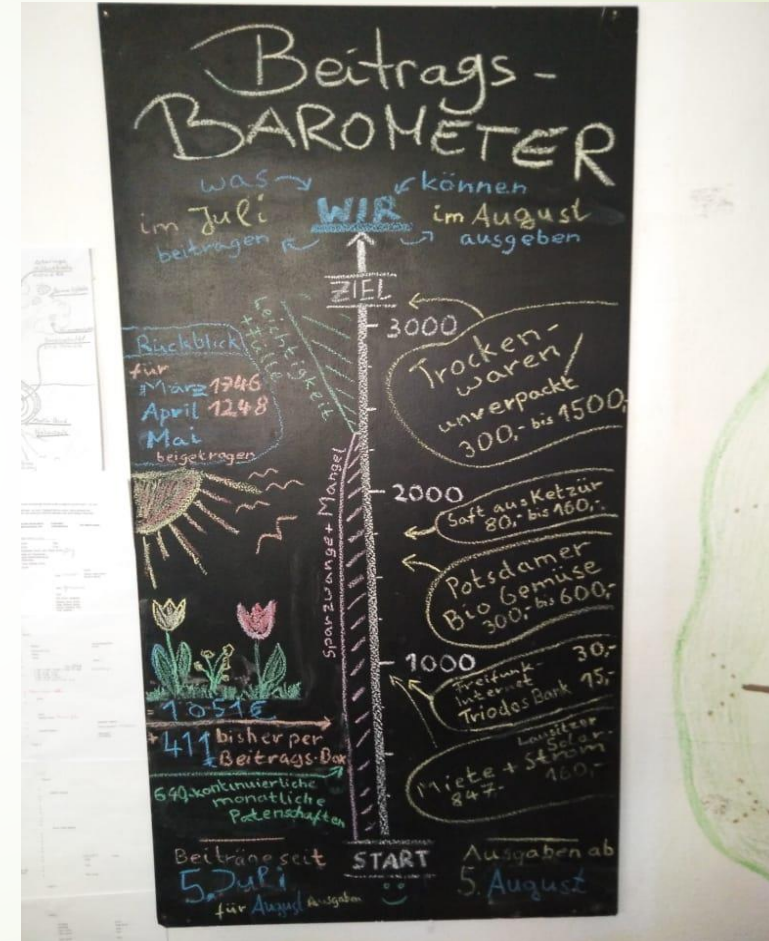
- Berlin
- Potsdam-Babelsberg



12/08/19

Madia

Community kitchen that facilitates cooking with rescued food and solidarity agriculture. With no price tags and financially sustained mainly by contributions from the community.



<https://mapove.wordpress.com/>

13/08/19

Rechenzentrum

FOR (Friendly Takeover Computer Centre) association with more than 170 members is running a creative house and interface for art and culture, open for encounters, actions and collaborations in the city's historical centre since 2017. Currently threatened by gentrification and neo-fascist plans for reconstruction of Potsdam's Garrison Church landmark.



<https://rz-potsdam.de/cms/>

14/08/19

Freiland

A collective and cultural centre created in 12,000 m2 of public land with 5 buildings that include Spartacus club, café hausZwei, seminar rooms, music rehearsal rooms, youth centre and Free Radio Potsdam. “Free country” is organised with democratic consensus in open plenary discussions that decide the use of space and the development of workshops, events, festivals, political and cultural interventions and new projects and collective actions.



www.freiland-potsdam.de

15/08/19

Quartierstreff Staudenhof

ZOF association (ZukunftsOrientierteFörderung) has been responsible since October 2012 for housing traumatized refugee women with their children, and from June 2014 for housing refugees in 30 central flats. Since January 2018, they have set up a neighbourhood meeting on the ground floor of their housing block with the aim of connecting the neighbours and further support the integration of refugees through cultural, social and structural participation activities.



www.quartierstreff-staudenhof.de

16/08/19

Pastuerstraße housing project

Social housing model that develops on long-term lease of state owned property. With special focus on solidarity, joined activities and shared tasks and responsibilities between the members (e.g. cooking, caring for children).



17/08/19

Projekthaus - Potsdam

Co-housing project that unites political, social and cultural work and includes living spaces, seminar and guest rooms, workshops and office space. The project house supports various political, social, cultural and ecological groups and individuals with spaces, technology, infrastructure, know-how and advice on collective housing management and finances. Main project areas focus on creating integration workshops for refugees, theatre and media projects, antiracist education as well as education in the fields of ecology, solidarity economy and sustainable development.



www.projekthaus-potsdam.de

There is more to learn from each other

- Social housing in Germany has developed extensively over the past 60 years and particularly after the collapse of DDR, growing from alternative squatting movements and anarchist groups fighting for long-term use of state owned properties, all the way to collective ownership through shareholding companies owned by residents. This evolution did not come easy or without challenges and carries forward plenty of diverse experience and know-how that can be transferred and utilised in Greece.
- Systemic change in Germany came mainly after pressure from public support that followed the development and struggles of various successful collectives and co-housing projects.
- Financial barriers and cultural/social limitations are recurrent challenges both for German and Greek projects. Solutions include careful financial planning and information sharing, as well as the development of a representative umbrella network/organisation with independent advisory and protective/regulatory role, that can in turn facilitate financial guarantees for housing projects and support their ability to access public funds and cooperative or private financing institutions.
- Commitment of a group to share a way of life comes first, and then comes everything else!
- Co-Hab and Communitism have united their efforts and resources in creating a joined co-housing project. Currently they are applying for funding (Actors for Urban Change) together with a group of Syrian refugees and wish to send a team to Projekthaus-Potsdam on residential training, to learn about financial structures and how activities and work-spaces are organised in a self-sustaining way.

Thank you

This knowledge and experience exchange has been very insightful and motivating for all of us and created strong bonds and great connections - besides a mailing list for sharing our ideas and all relevant information.

