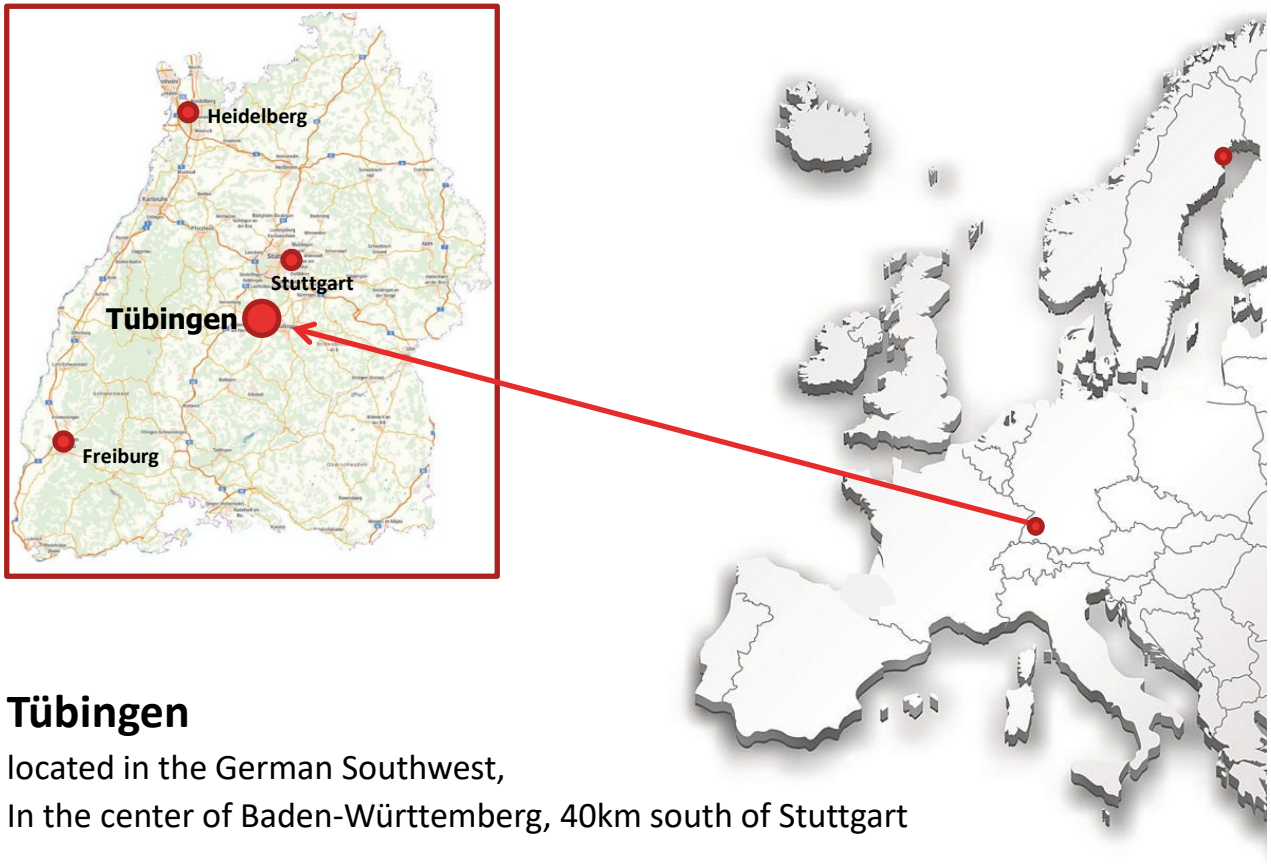
Tübingen
Universitätsstadt

DASH conference
Belgrade, October 2026

Testing the limits of municipal housing policy: Evidence from Tübingen



Tübingen

located in the German Southwest,
In the center of Baden-Württemberg, 40km south of Stuttgart

Images: left: LGRB Ba-Wü; right: © 2019 suche-postleitzahl.org



- Old University town with over 90,000 inhabitants and 40,000 jobs
- University and University clinic as main employer
- Growing AI and bio technology hub

City has been growing by up to 1,000 inhabitants per year

Population growth equals housing demand?

2015 – 2025: **+ 8.7% population growth versus + 10% housing unit growth**

Asking rent levels are on par with Hamburg, Berlin and Cologne

Why is the Housing market still under extreme pressure? And what should be done about it?

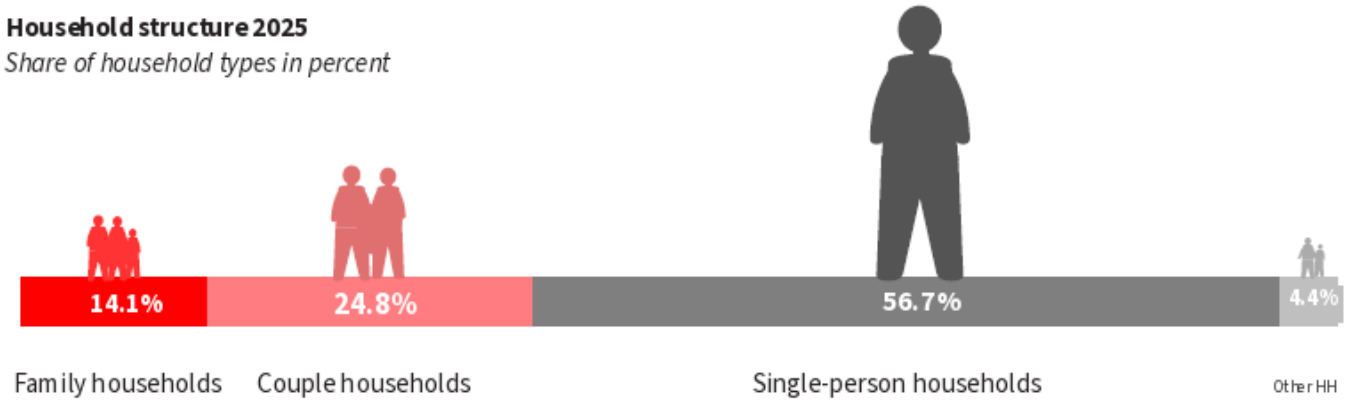
Data is needed to explain what is going on → Tübingens housing report 2026

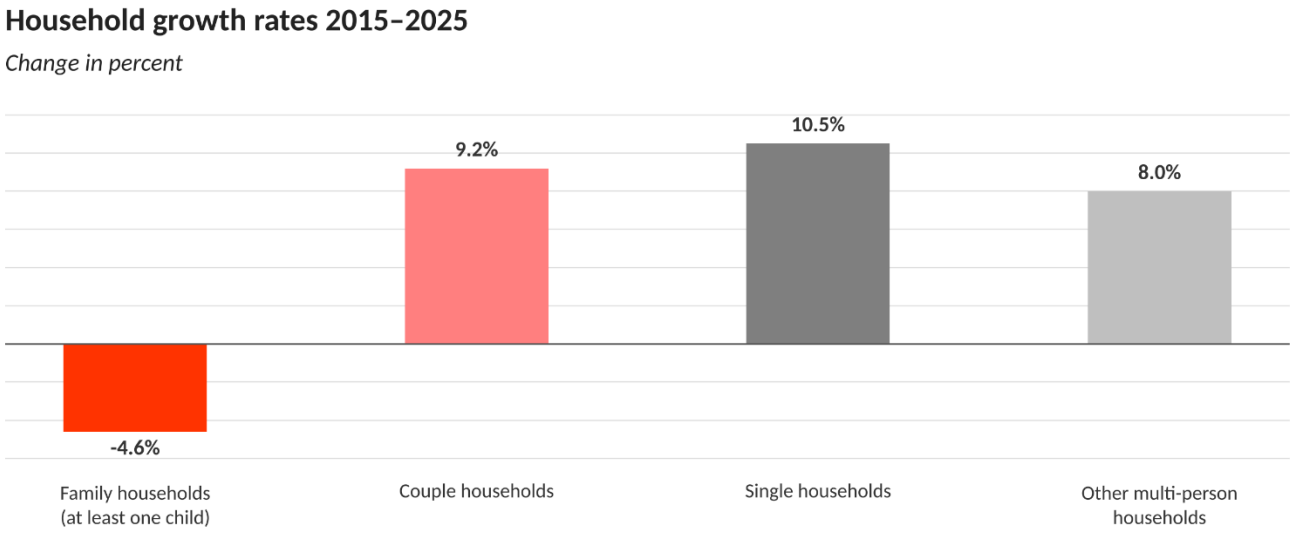
Four factors contribute to Tübingens mismatch in demand and supply:

1. **Smaller households**
2. **Mismatched housing stock**
3. **Growth of jobs and university**
4. **Dominance of private rental housing**

Smaller households – demographic change and housing pressure

1

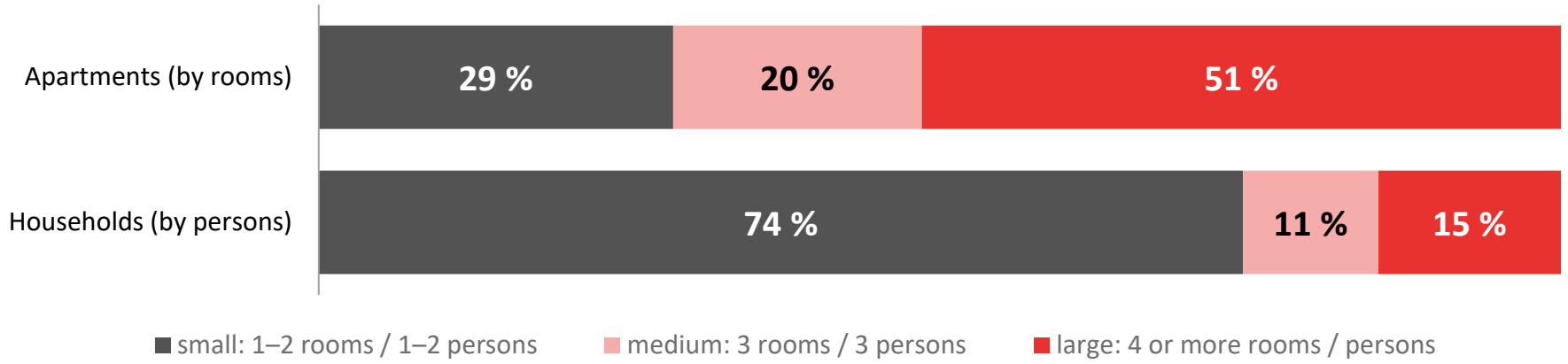




Large apartments, small households

2

APARTMENTS AND HOUSEHOLDS BY SIZE
Share in percent, Census 2022

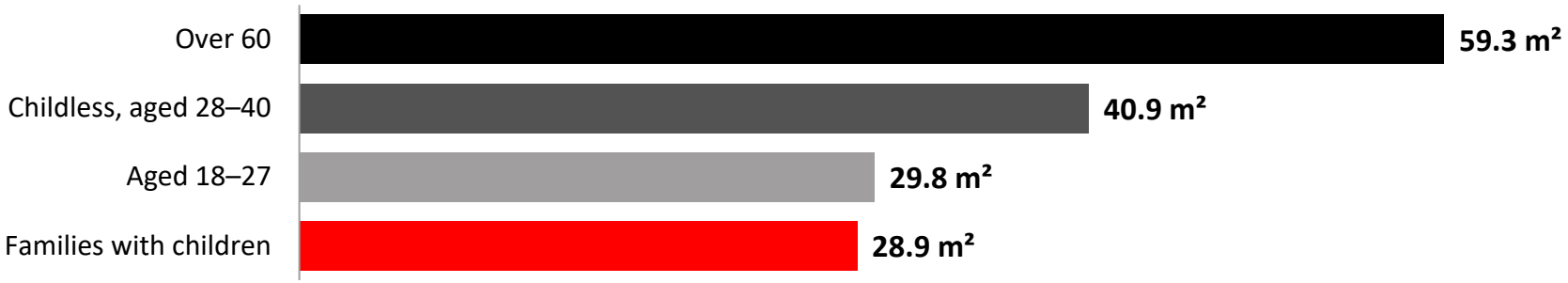


Source: Census 2022 (Housing Report 2026, Fig. 27, 28, 29). 45,896 apartments, 44,063 households.

2

The space is there – but occupied

LIVING SPACE PER PERSON
Square meters, Census 2022



1.2%

market-active vacancy – hardly any room to move

≈ 900

Households with three or more people have fewer rooms than occupants

Source: Census 2022 (Housing Report 2026, Fig. 26; Chapter 7).

Demand that shows up in no population statistics

3

Moves in and out 2015 - 2025

Number of moves in, moves out and net balance by age

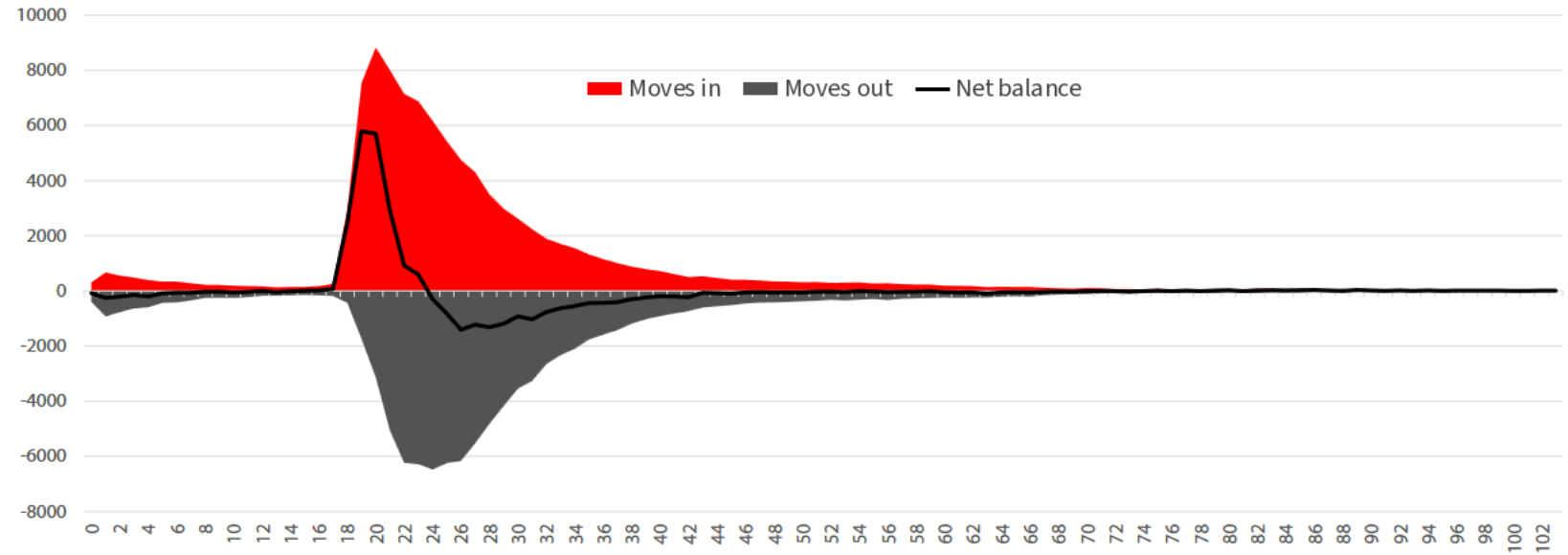


Figure 3. Source: University City of Tübingen, municipal statistics

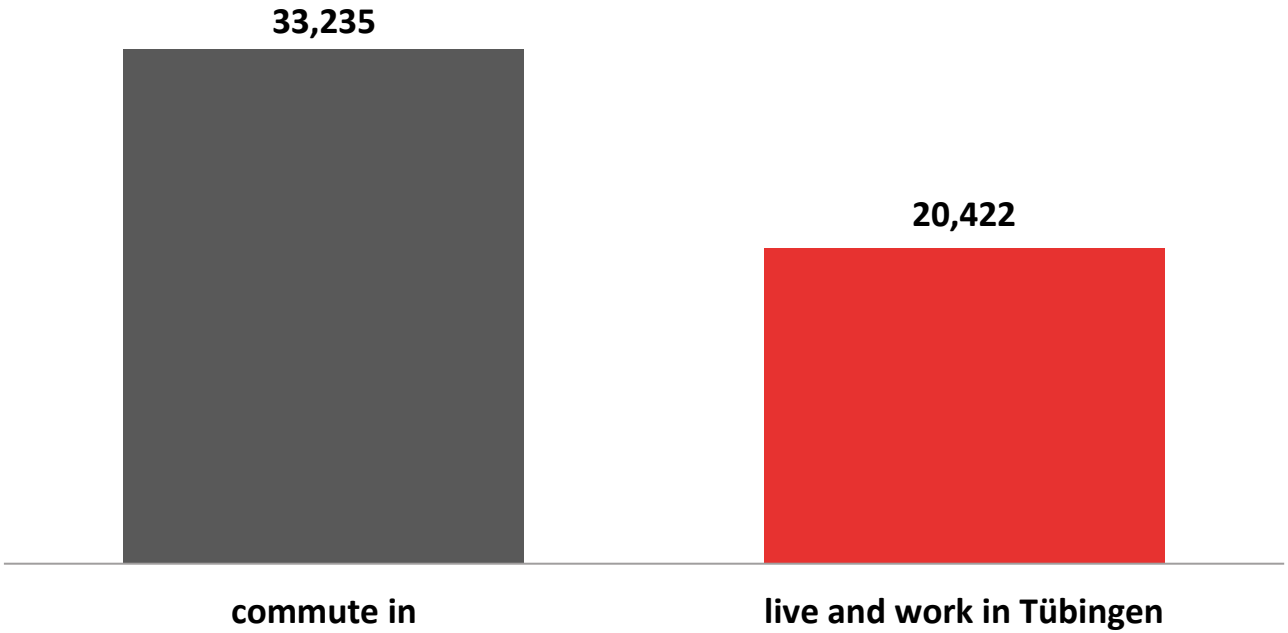
Sources: Commuter statistics of the Federal Employment Agency 2025; Tübingen municipal statistics (Housing Report 2026, Fig. 6, 14, 15).

Demand that shows up in no population statistics

3

PEOPLE EMPLOYED IN TÜBINGEN BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE
employees subject to social insurance contributions, 2024

61.9% in-commuter rate (Stuttgart 61.8% · Munich 51%)

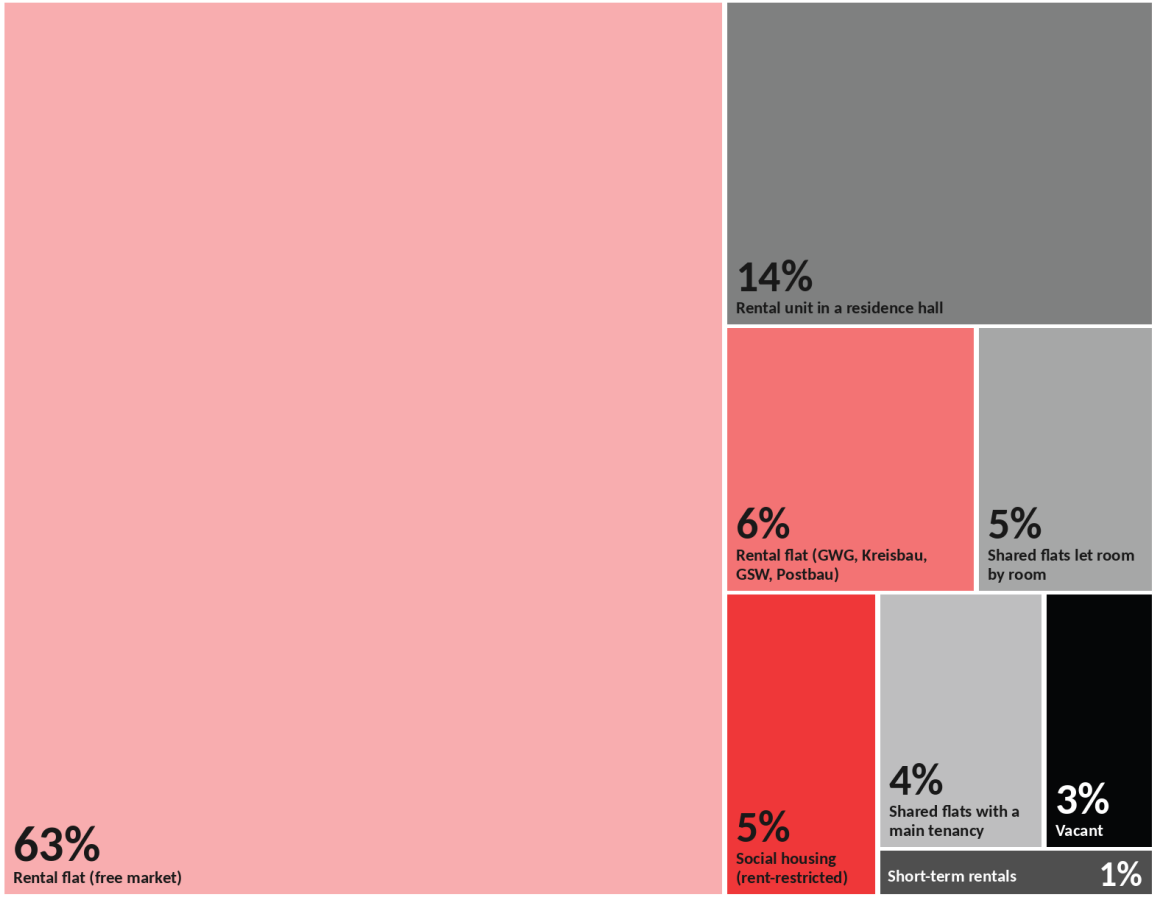


Sources: Commuter statistics of the Federal Employment Agency 2025; Tübingen municipal statistics (Housing Report 2026, Fig. 6, 14, 15).

Private Landlords dominate Tübingens rental market

Types of letting in the rental housing stock, 2022

Share of each type of letting in all housing units, in % (rounded)



73%

of the rental housing stock is let privately:

Landlords chose tenants by own criteria
¾ of apartments are not publicly advertised

5%

of the rental housing stock is social housing

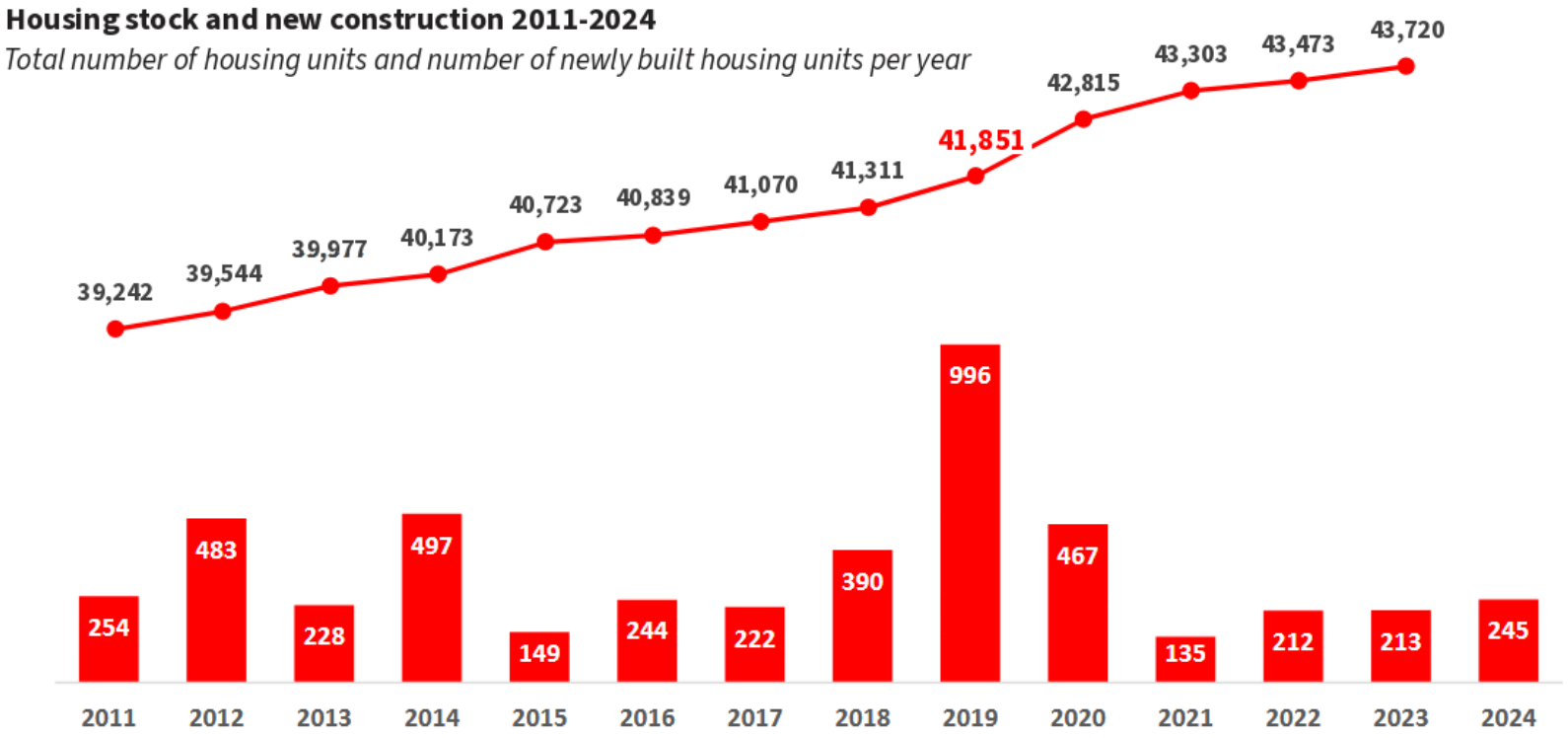
A further **6%**

Of the housing stock belongs to public companies

Landlords chose by set criteria
(such as status as key worker, urgency of housing need)

Obvious solution: increase the supply

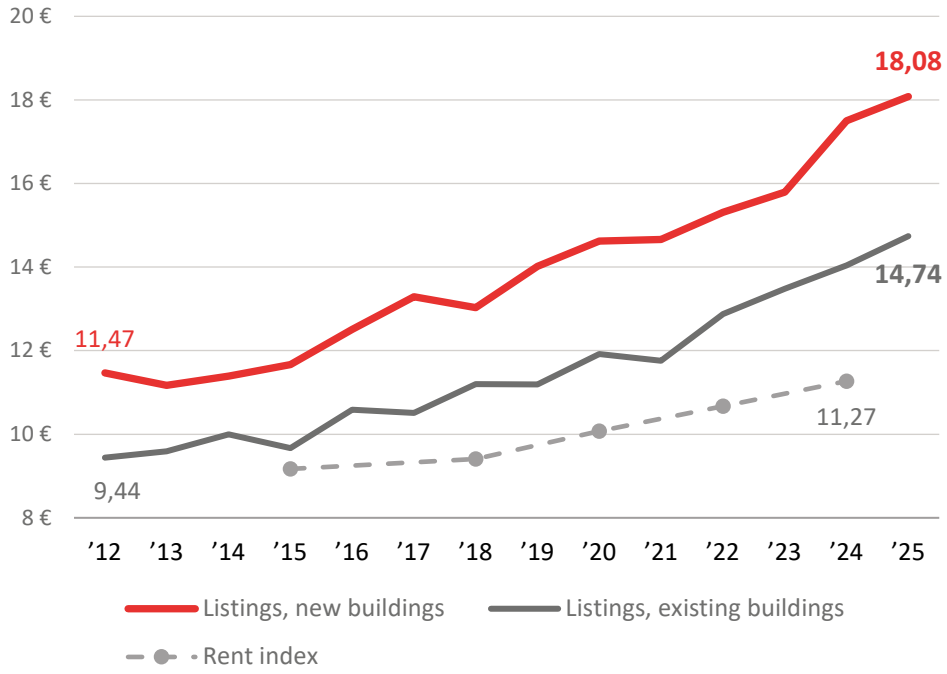
5,000 new apartments – increase in housing stock by 10%



Sources: Value Analyst 2025; rent index survey 2024; Statistical Office of Baden-Württemberg (Housing Report 2026, Fig. 20, 34, 36; Ch. 4.1, 5.2).

Despite increase in supply – drastic increase in rents

ASKING RENTS IN NEW AND EXISTING BUILDINGS
Euros per m², excluding utilities, 2012–2025



€5,000–6,000
Construction costs per m² (2025, incl. land)

€16–22
Rent per m² needed for unsubsidized new construction to pay off

Drastic increase in certain segments of the rental market:

Furnished apartments
with temporary leases

High-price „luxury“ segment
in existing buildings

Low-quality apartments rented to single households receiving social assistance (possibility to maximise €/m²)

Sources: Value Analyst 2025; rent index survey 2024; Statistical Office of Baden-Württemberg (Housing Report 2026, Fig. 20, 34, 36; Ch. 4.1, 5.2).

The consequence: un-affordability

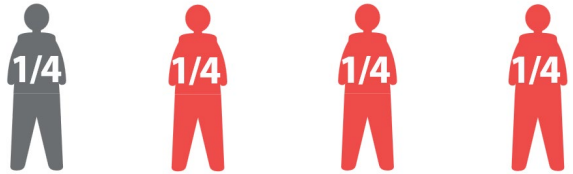
WHO CAN AFFORD A NEW RENTAL (withour state support)
Households in Baden-Württemberg by income, compared to Tübingens new rentaks (including grey market)

Families of Four



A third cannot afford moving to a rental accommodation without state subsidy, **another third** just about.

Single housholds

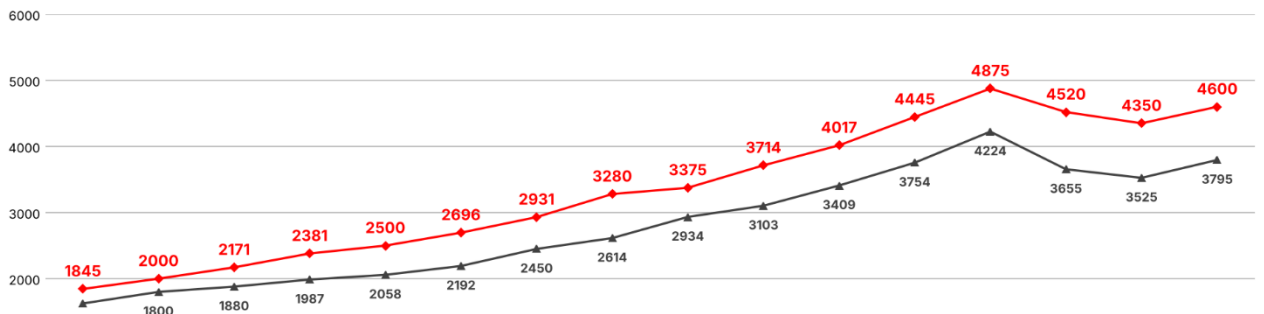


Withour state subsidy, only about **every fourth** person can afford to move into a regular one-bedroom apartment.

■ kann sich eine Wohnung leisten ■ gerade so ■ kann es nicht

Development of Average Prices for Existing Apartments, 2010 to 2025

Median values in euros per m² of living space



The consequence: rising individual subsidies

Total Housing Benefit (Wohngeld) Expenditure in Tübingen, 2018 to 2025

Annual costs

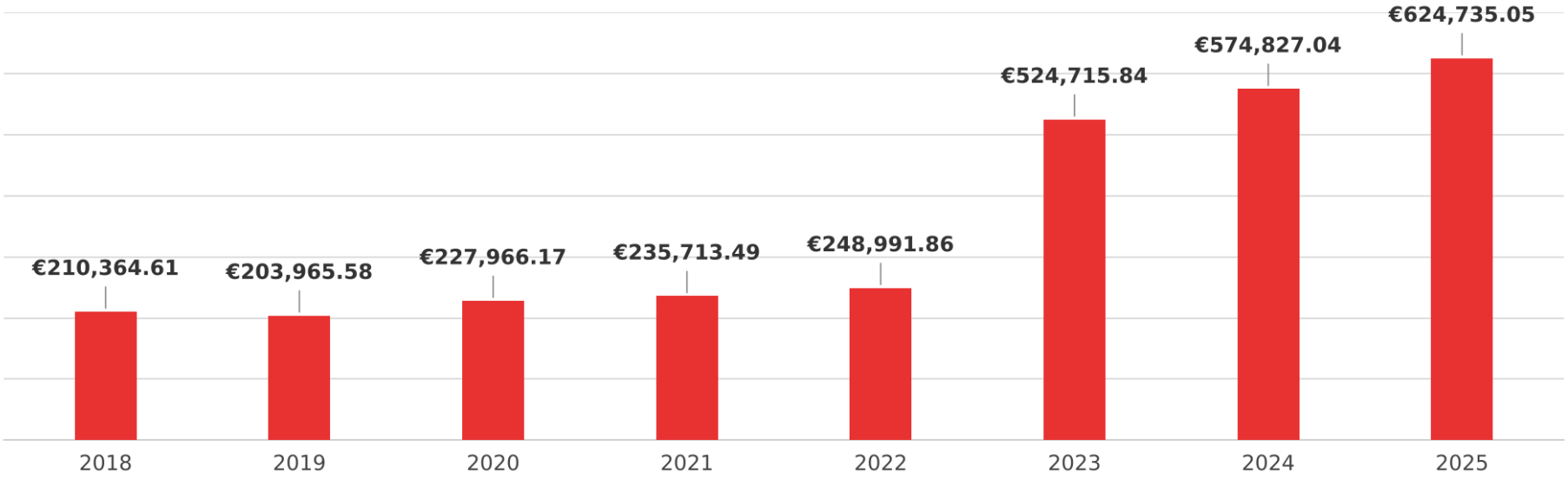


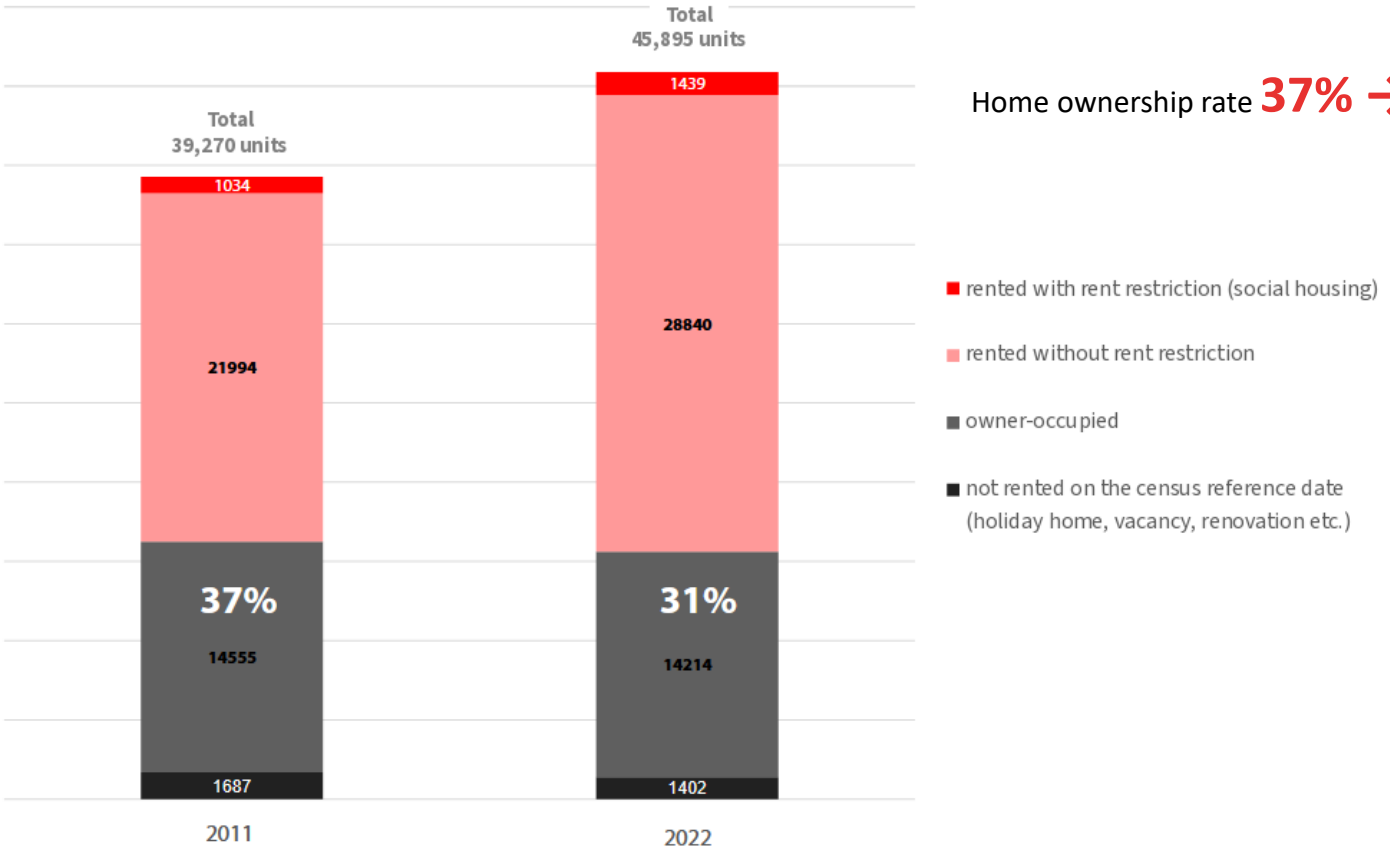
Figure 50. Source: Municipal statistics

Quellen: Mietspiegelerhebung 2024; Mikrozensus 2024; Zensus 2022 (Wohnraumbericht 2026, Abb. 30, 31, 44, 45).

Home ownership competes with rental housing

Owner-occupied and rented housing in the total housing stock, 2011 and 2022

Number of housing units on the respective census reference date

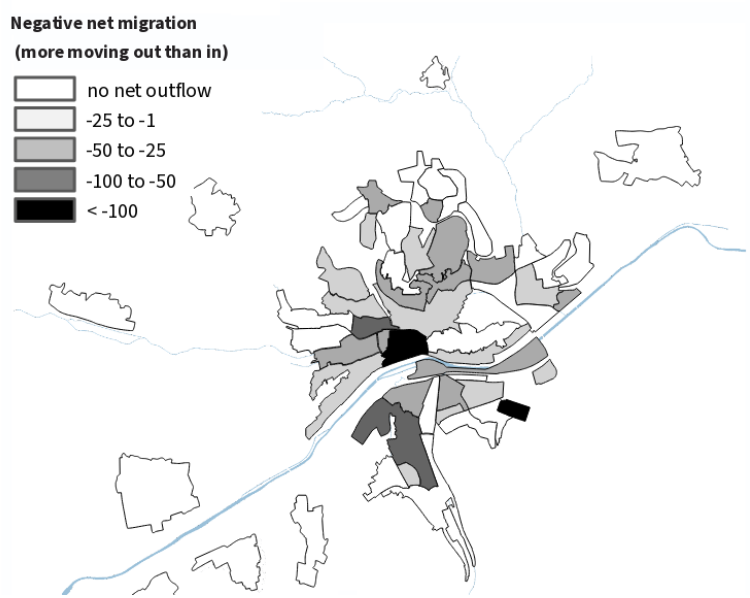


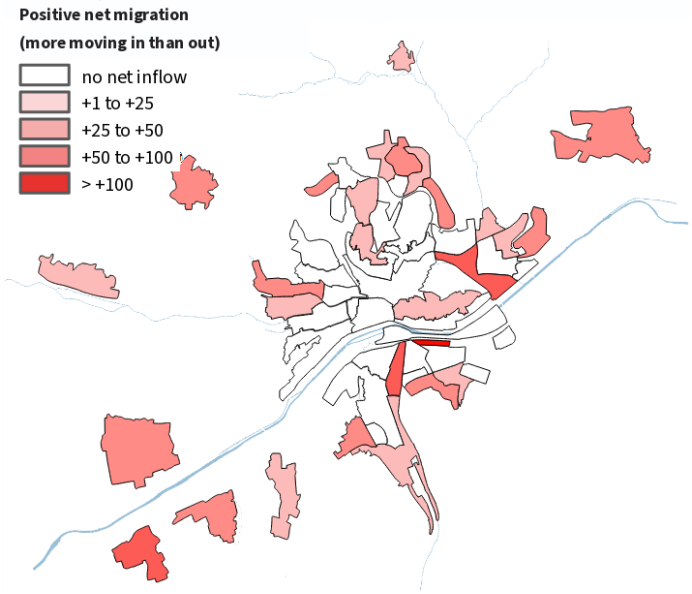
Home ownership rate **37% → 31%**

Sources: Value Analyst 2025; rent index survey 2024; Statistical Office of Baden-Württemberg (Housing Report 2026, Fig. 20, 34, 36; Ch. 4.1, 5.2).

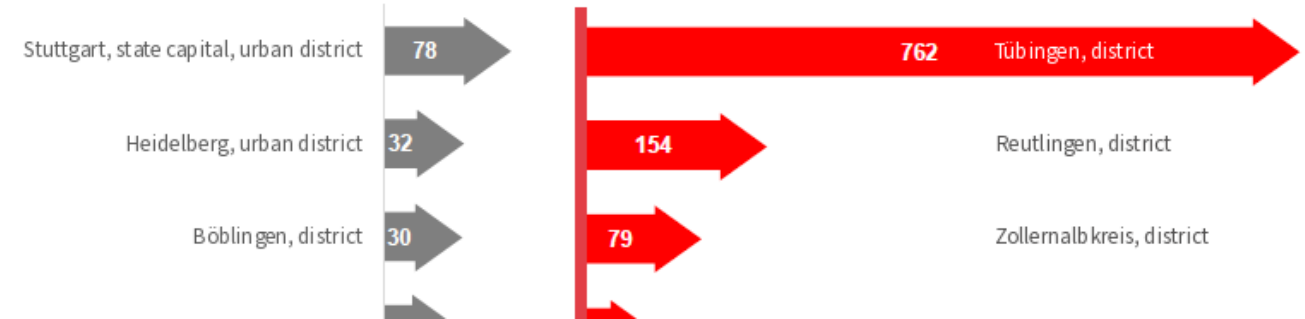
Families leave central areas - or altogether

Moves of family households* within the city, 2017 to 2025
Net balance of children under 18 moving in and out





Top 5 places of origin and destination of family households* 2017 to 2025
Net balance of children under 18 moving in and out

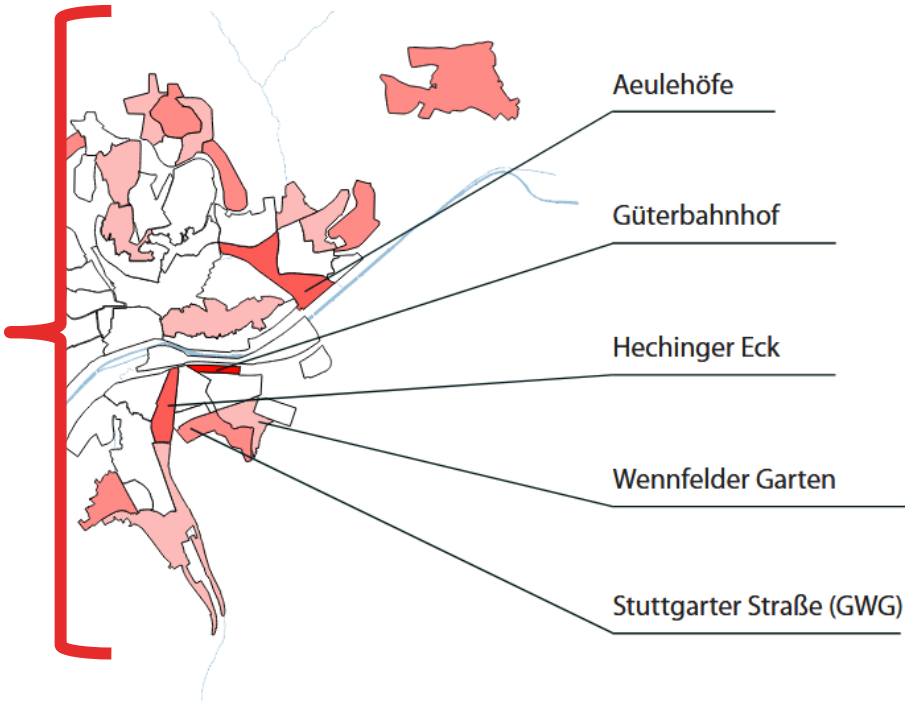


Where Families don‘t leave

Municipal programme “Fairer Housing”

- Managing housing development on municipal and private land
- Supporting public-interest-oriented housing providers
- Strengthening the municipal housing companies
- Using the potential of existing stock
- Housing for households facing particular difficulties on the housing market

In neighborhoods developed under the municipal Fairer Housing program: positive net migration of families



Results of the land allocation at Hechinger Eck (2025)



Despite “fairer housing” programme: Most new construction has been free market sales

≈ 5,000
new apartments since 2011 – stock +10%

NEW CONSTRUCTION 2011–2024
Share of new apartments

81% without rent restrictions



€5,000–6,000
Construction costs per m² (2025, incl. land)

€7,000–10,000
Sale price per m² (2025, incl. land)

€16–22
Rent per m² needed for unsubsidized new construction to pay off

Sources: Value Analyst 2025; rent index survey 2024; Statistical Office of Baden-Württemberg (Housing Report 2026, Fig. 20, 34, 36; Ch. 4.1, 5.2).

Empirical contribution to the scientific debate from a municipal perspective

The data suggests:

in markets with structurally persistent demand, high turnover and a dominant small-ownership structure, the preconditions for an effective filtering effect are not met.

Under these conditions, municipal steering through land policy, social rent restrictions and public-interest-oriented housing providers is more effective than merely expanding the overall supply.

Sources: Value Analyst 2025; rent index survey 2024; Statistical Office of Baden-Württemberg (Housing Report 2026, Fig. 20, 34, 36; Ch. 4.1, 5.2).

Conclusion

- New construction alone does not lead to more affordable rents
- Tübingen has exhausted almost all municipal steering options

What would Tübingen need?

- Municipal access to plots/building land
- Ability to regulate rents at the municipal level
- Housing subsidies focused on non-profit or public housing actors
- Planning regulations for long-term affordability
- New focus of housing subsidies: activating the existing stock
- Taxation of sale profits and land value rises - to be reinvested into non-profit housing

Sources: Value Analyst 2025; rent index survey 2024; Statistical Office of Baden-Württemberg (Housing Report 2026, Fig. 20, 34, 36; Ch. 4.1, 5.2).

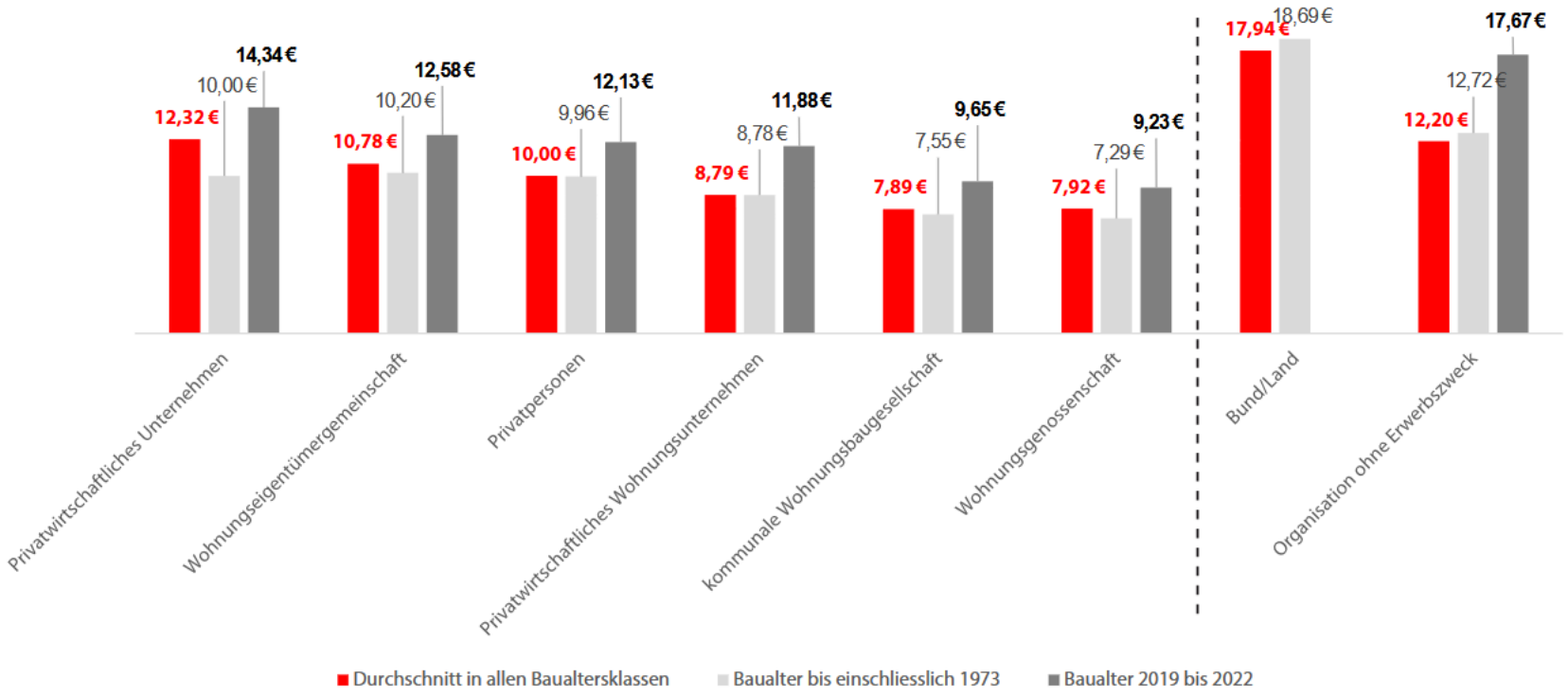
Thank you for your attention!



wohnraum@tuebingen.de

Miethöhen 2022 je nach Eigentumsform im Durchschnitt und in ausgewählten Baualtersklassen

Kaltmiete pro Quadratmeter Wohnraum



Sources: Value Analyst 2025; rent index survey 2024; Statistical Office of Baden-Württemberg (Housing Report 2026, Fig. 20, 34, 36; Ch. 4.1, 5.2).