




Sought, found. The results of the area search.

**FINDING
PLACES**.hamburg 

HCU | HafenCity Universität
Hamburg

City Science Lab
A Cooperation with the
MIT Media Lab


Hamburg



Joining the conversation. Joining the search.

In numerous workshops, almost 400 citizens of Hamburg proposed 161 areas. Areas for far more than the 20,000 accommodation places sought were sent to the city for assessment. Of the areas proposed, the city evaluated 44 to be suitable following initial assessment. The number of accommodation places recommended by the workshop participants for these areas is around 6,500. In what follows, read the results and commentaries on the areas and where we go from here.

Short profiles of all the areas discussed and proposed – including the comments from the workshops and the city's inspection results – you can find online:

www.findingplaces.hamburg

#findingplaces



Many thanks!

We extend our thanks most sincerely to the many citizens of Hamburg who, in the course of the project FindingPlaces, went on the [lookout for areas for the erection of refugee accommodations](#).

The workshop participants [discussed](#) the interactive model in an objective and engaged manner and in doing so made a [constructive contribution](#) to the accommodating of refugees in Hamburg

In addition to the concrete suggestions, the project FindingPlaces also facilitated the [dialogue between the citizens of Hamburg and the representatives of the city](#) concerning the accommodation of refugees.

It made an important contribution to showing in a [transparent and accountable way](#) how the city proceeds in the assessment of sites for the accommodation of refugees. [In this way many people who did not participate in the workshops could also profit from the project.](#)

And something else: The use of the interactive city model conveyed an impression of how the [participation of the public in the city's plans](#) can be improved by means of [modern technology](#).



The project FindingPlaces.

FindingPlaces is a collaborative project of the HafenCity University Hamburg in conjunction with the city of Hamburg. In workshops during the period from 26 May to 15 July 2016, citizens of Hamburg searched on an interactive city model (a so-called CityScope) for public areas suitable for the erection of refugee accommodations. The mission: to find areas enabling the accommodation of 20,000 refugees in total.

The workshops were moderated by steg Hamburg (*Stadterneuerungs- und Stadtentwicklungsgesellschaft Hamburg* [Urban Renewal and Urban Development Corporation Hamburg]) and carried out academically by the HafenCity University Hamburg. Additionally, representatives of the city districts as well as of the *Zentraler Koordinierungsstab Flüchtlinge* (ZKF) [Central Coordination Unit for Refugees] supported the discussions with their expert knowledge.

The participants proposed specific areas and discussed the advantages and disadvantages in depth. Furnished with their comments and a recommendation for a certain number of accommodation

places, the suggestions were sent to the city for assessment. The city examined the areas within 14 days. The inspection results were published online at <www.findingplaces.hamburg>. The inspection result and the comments on an area were also stored in the interactive model so that subsequent workshop participants could retrace which parcels of land had already been discussed with what result.

After examination by the city, 44 areas remained that appeared suitable according to the initial assessment for a temporary development with refugee accommodations. The recommendations of the workshop participants for these areas cover about 6,500 accommodation places. This corresponds to approximately the number of refugees who are currently still living in precarious accommodation situations, such as building supply stores or initial reception sites and who already have a claim to a follow-up accommodation. What was assessed and how the assessment took place, please read on the following pages.





Briefly explained: CityScopes.

For the joint discussion of complex urban contexts, a collaboration between the HafenCity University Hamburg and the Media Lab of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT Media Lab) brought CityScopes to Germany for the first time.

CityScopes are interactive city models that help with the vivid representation of urban contexts and also their communication to non-experts. In the CityScienceLab of the HafenCity University Hamburg, such CityScopes were built expressly for the project FindingPlaces, through which the interested public, in addition to specialists, proposed and discussed areas.



Procedure for the area assessment.

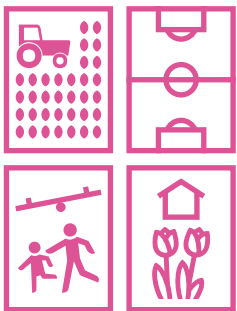
The areas proposed in the workshops were assessed by the ZKF in relation to their suitability for the accommodating of refugees. All areas underwent a multilevel assessment procedure; in doing so, 44 areas as of August 2016 were rated as suitable following initial assessment.

In the assessment of the areas, a series of criteria are examined and weighed. If some of these criteria apply to a proposed area, the areas are not excluded immediately. Rather, in the individual case, dispensations can then be granted, e.g., from nature- and landscape-conservation legal restrictions (as the case may be, with compensatory obligations); soil remediation can follow; building operations on the parcel can be adjusted (backfill, pile foundation, shock absorption) or noise-control

measures taken. In doing so, however, the economic viability, on the one hand, is always to be weighed and, on the other, the duration of such measures against the background of the urgent need for space.

An area can still ultimately be dropped through the consideration of social, urban-development and neighbourhood interests. In the process, the social status and social situation of the district, for example (among other things, due to already existing accommodation facilities), or the city-planning decision for a priority use of the area for residential construction or for the establishing of certain businesses are taken into account.

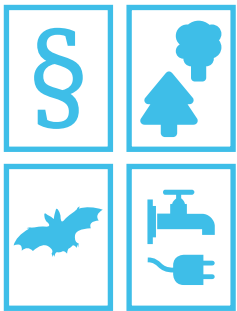
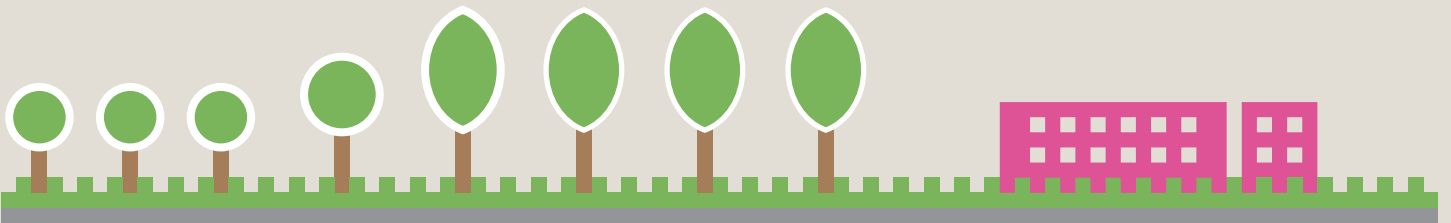
All assessments and trade-offs take place in agreement with the respectively responsible professional authority and district authorities. For this purpose, regular meetings occur with the districts.



First of all, the actual availability has to be determined:

- While the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg is in principle the owner of the proposed areas (direct ownership or ownership through its state-owned enterprises, corporations or other subdivision), many of the proposed areas are still in current use (e.g., sporting or recreational uses, agricultural lease agreements, etc.).
- The availability must exist immediately or in the short term in the scope of the project assignment for FindingPlaces (short-term capacity building of 20,000 accommodation places in the year 2016/2017) in order to enable the rapid creation of accommodations.
- Public areas are not available that are subject to another, indispensable and non-transferable use. As a result, school properties, allotment gardens and district playgrounds are eliminated as a rule.
- Furthermore, the areas must possess the prerequisites to enable the economical building of an accommodation facility for at least 3 to 5 years (development potential).

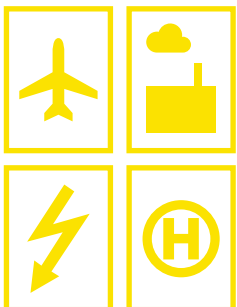
1 | Availability



Both legal and factual aspects can restrict the development potential. Especially to be reckoned among the assessment criteria:

- Zoning designation: Is a facility for social purposes with a residential-like character permitted?
- Is it permitted in terms of planning regulations to erect a refugee accommodation on the proposed area?
- Do other provisions and standards exclude a use of the area as a refugee accommodation (e.g., nature reserve, storm surge zone, fixed and temporary flood plain zones, forest, presence of protected species, compensation areas set according to the Federal Act for the Protection of Nature, and much more)?
- Is the area viable on economic grounds, that is, on the basis of topography and soil properties (steep slopes, uncertain subsoil, etc., which would sharply raise the building costs)?
- Is the parcel sufficiently accessible (e.g., road access for construction and emergency/fire-fighting vehicles, connection to water supply, electricity available and directly producible)?

2 | Development Potential

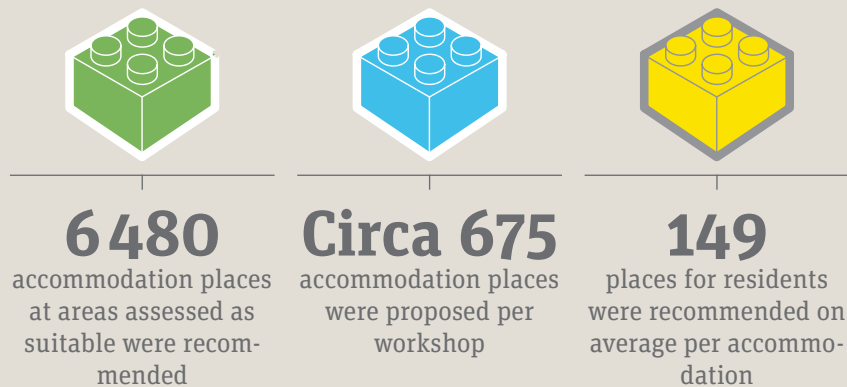
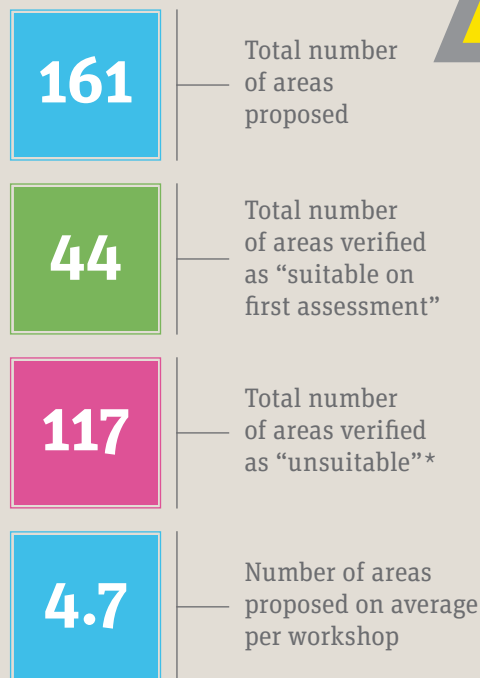


Usability of an area can especially be excluded or restricted for a residential-like facility due to:

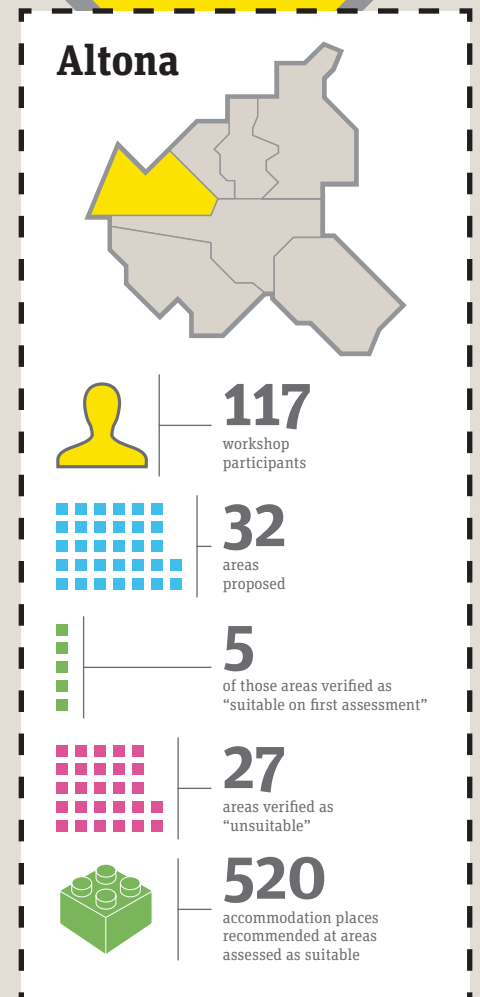
- Noise and vibration emissions hazardous to the health (Aircraft Noise Protection Zone 1, traffic and industry noise above 70 dB);
- Pollution emissions hazardous to the health (air pollutants, soil pollutants);
- The distance to facilities where hazardous incidents have occurred;
- Electromagnetic emissions from electrical power lines (safe distances must be observed);
- Missing infrastructure (accessibility of public transportation; accessibility as best possible within walking distance of local supplies, daycare and school).

3 | Usability

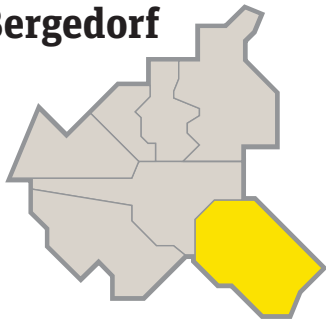
FindingPlaces in numbers.



* Areas were particularly classified as unsuitable because they were not available (among other reasons, use for residential construction, business, agriculture); because indispensable park, grass or playground areas were at stake; or because structural reasons spoke against them (contaminated sites, emissions, slopes).



Bergedorf



13

workshop participants



11

areas proposed



0

of those areas verified as "suitable on first assessment"



11

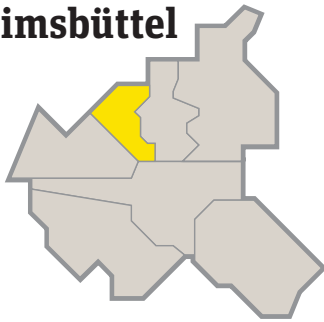
areas verified as "unsuitable"



0

accommodation places recommended at areas assessed as suitable

Eimsbüttel



76

workshop participants



27

areas proposed



5

of those areas verified as "suitable on first assessment"



22

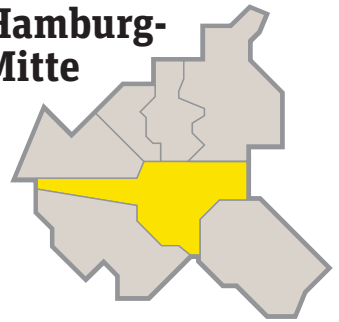
areas verified as "unsuitable"



1180

accommodation places recommended at areas assessed as suitable

Hamburg-Mitte



55

workshop participants



23

areas proposed



7

of those areas verified as "suitable on first assessment"



16

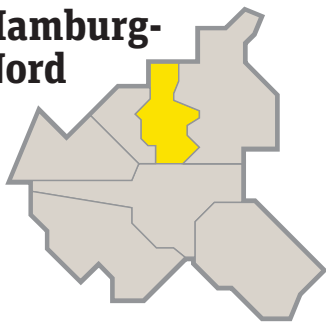
areas verified as "unsuitable"



1310

accommodation places recommended at areas assessed as suitable

Hamburg-Nord



56

workshop participants



23

areas proposed



3

of those areas verified as "suitable on first assessment"



20

areas verified as "unsuitable"



620

accommodation places recommended at areas assessed as suitable

Harburg



29

workshop participants



21

areas proposed



13

of those areas verified as "suitable on first assessment"



8

areas verified as "unsuitable"



1010

accommodation places recommended at areas assessed as suitable

Wandsbek



43

workshop participants



24

areas proposed



11

of those areas verified as "suitable on first assessment"



13

areas verified as "unsuitable"



1840

accommodation places recommended at areas assessed as suitable

What was discussed:

The diversely mixed groups in the workshops consisted of up to 20 people each. A central concern was to incorporate the local expertise and site knowledge of the citizens. This may be available through, for example, common everyday practices like regular jogging on a certain stretch; knowledge about the children's path to school; or walks with the dog.

In this way, it was possible in the project to bring together the city's statistics and data on potential areas with the everyday observations of the participants. Included among the latter, by way of example, were statements about how much or little a park or sports complex is actually used. It was then

a matter of researching and discussing these in the project FindingPlaces. The issue at stake was how citizens evaluate areas – also so as to be able to put into question relevant political premises.

Fundamentally, the conversational atmosphere during the two-hour workshops was constructive and matter-of-fact. This was encouraged through the conception of the workshops: On the interactive model, the citizens had to make quite concrete suggestions for refugee accommodations. Because of this, fewer general political discussions emerged. Moreover, the professional moderation and the possibility of relying on the expertise of district representatives as well as staff from the ZKF increased the objectivity of the discussion.

A selection of the most frequently discussed topics:

■ In general, **public green areas** (such as parks, grass verges or meadows, in particular the preservation of trees), sports complexes, playgrounds and parking spaces were the most frequently discussed: Does a park have a high social value because it is used as a place to stay or is the park rather a place to pass through? Is a sports field potentially used only sparingly and could it be developed in the interim? Can large-area parking spaces be done without?

■ A tendency could be recognized to relatively **decentralized and smaller accommodations** (in sizes from 40 to 160 places). However, larger accommodations (for up to 500 residents) were also proposed repeatedly. An argument for this was adduced several times by participants who are active in refugee accommodations: Thus, for certain voluntary social offerings, like a bicycle workshop, for example, it is necessary to have a minimum number of people who also use these. Otherwise, such an offering is not worth it.



- How to deal with areas in a time of **increasing urban density** was discussed generally: Can a growing city like Hamburg still afford to keep golf courses and polo fields or intra-urban allotment gardens? Can agricultural areas continue to lie within the city limits?
- Repeatedly, **areas near to social and transportation infrastructure** were chosen in order to create the best possible conditions for a successful integration. The integrative power of densely populated zones was also positively valued.
- A frequent question was why accommodations or residences for refugees were not immediately planned into **new housing developments** so that refugees could be directly integrated through the regular residential construction, instead of accommodating refugees in separate facilities.
- A major concern of participants was, furthermore, the **fair distribution of accommodations amongst the city districts**.



There were also critical voices:

- There was a desire to discuss more concertedly the **conversion** of already existing buildings as well as other conceptual solutions, e.g., adding another storey to buildings or eliminating vacant lots.
- There was also the admonishment that **privately owned areas** should equally have been part of the search.
- Repeatedly the concern came up that the planned temporary development is intended to **pave the way for a later development**.
- It was asked why one had to come to the HafenCity University Hamburg in order to participate and why this did not occur **directly in the city districts**.

Thinking in a solution-oriented way:

The research question of the CityScienceLab posed how digital technologies can meaningfully promote citizen participation. In the process, the project FindingPlaces produced very constructive discussions and bases for decision. It showed that blanket (and ideological) assertions decreased in the course of the workshops and that the participants realized how difficult complex discussions of areas are in a growing city like Hamburg. With the

aid of the moderated workshops on the interactive city model, it was possible citywide to observe and discuss concrete areas. On the basis of the task formulation, all participants began to deliberate on the factual level and formulate suggestions.

In this way, those present were invited to think in a solution-oriented way: If no accommodation ought to be built at a certain site, then where?



The CityScope for FindingPlaces.

The CityScope technology developed by the MIT Media Lab was supposed to be used for FindingPlaces, too. Indeed, initially not only a small-scale area, but the entire federal state of Hamburg was supposed to be investigated, for which a 4 m² large CityScope was produced. This made extensive structural and technical changes necessary.

Colleagues from the Department of Geomatics at the HafenCity University Hamburg provided the technical planning and implementation of hard- and software in collaboration with the CityScienceLab. The representation of static maps as a background to dynamically animated rasters was replaced by an interactive, web-browser-based map application, a so-called WebGIS.

Additionally, the cartographic representation of the processed data was a challenge: For instance, if all 30 criteria for the use-restriction of areas were projected onto the model, the participants would

hardly have been able to recognize anything due to the multitude of information. As a result, the criteria were summarized and converted into three categories, which represented the availability of the public parcels of land for a development with refugee accommodations: Yellow-coloured areas were able to be built upon with few restrictions, orange-coloured areas with middling, and red-coloured areas with high restrictions. It could thus be guaranteed that participants had an initial, easily understandable orientation to the model. Access to all 30 criteria and further information was then ensured in a second step via displays next to the model.

The reduction of the originally large volume of data into a small, i.e., class-categorized dataset – connected to an explicit key – stood the test. Even when a need for detailed information was revealed in discussions, hardly any problems of comprehension arose.



Where do we go from here?

The project FindingPlace confirms that the CityScopes are suited to bringing together citizens of the city of Hamburg in order to be able to objectively discuss even emotionally loaded topics of urban development. The same can now be of great use for other issues in the city – not only for the participation of city residents, but also for discussion between professional experts.

The workshops have also shown, nevertheless, that further need for development exists. So it is a goal of the CityScienceLab to improve the software to the extent that all the functions of the CityScope can be operated easily and intuitively at the model table.

To this point the projection, retrieval and writing of area attributes, as is known from the

FindingPlaces workshops, is not using all the existing functions of the CityScope. These possibilities should be expanded so that multifaceted what-if questions can be visualized and discussed.

In doing so, the focus is on urban issues that grapple with the intermixed and collective life in the city. Depending on usage, the type and number of interactions with the model are adjusted and extended in order, for example, to run through scenarios on new forms of mobility or investigate smart solutions for the realms of living and working.

The distinctive feature of observing varying scales at several stations and hence experiencing changes at both the district and city level remains in the process the core task of the CityScopes.





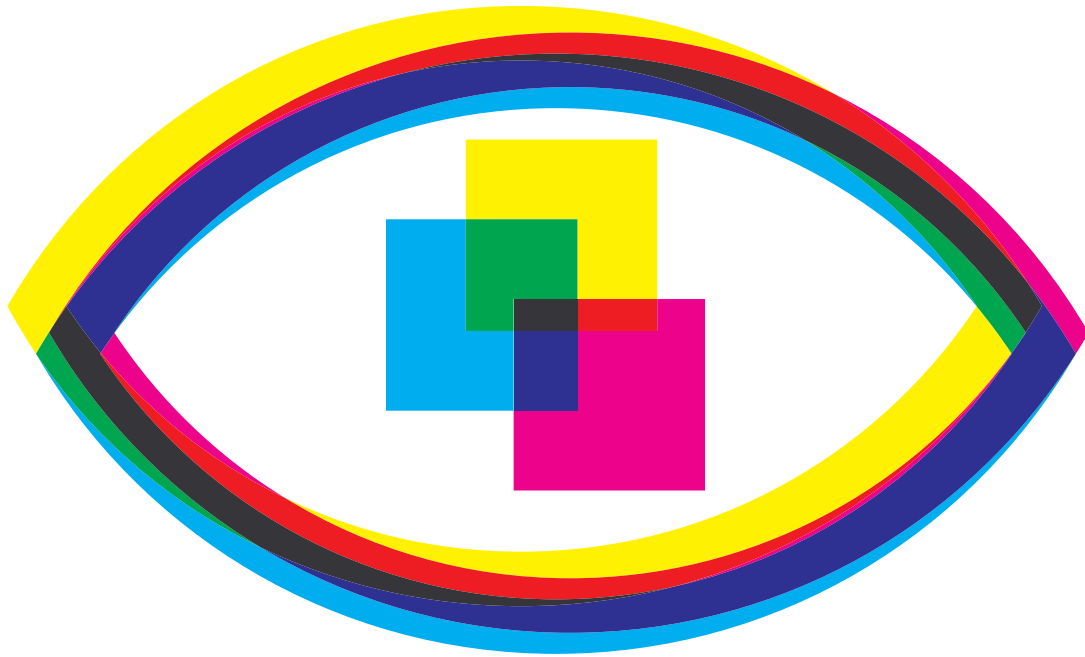
When does building take place?

All 44 areas that received a positive first assessment were examined further and in detail for implementation. In several meetings in the meantime, advice about the feasibility has been provided by a city-wide steering committee, in which the state councils of the relevant professional authorities, all district office superintendents, the ZKF as well as *fördern&wohnen* [support&reside] (institution under public law) and the *Landesbetrieb Immobilienmanagement und Grundvermögen* (LIG) [State Corporation for Property Management and Real Estate] are represented. As a result, as of the end of September 2016, 18 areas that appear fundamentally realizable have emerged from the 44 areas in total.

For 12 of these areas, continuing tests are still necessary. For 5 areas, an implementation is recommended; for these areas, initial preliminary

planning for realization has already been approved and commissioned. These areas lie in four different districts, and more than 600 accommodation places for refugees can be built. For one additional area, while its suitability was indeed established, it was nevertheless deferred on further consideration since in the immediate vicinity the use of an area was already being negotiated. The assessments would be continued where required as an alternative.

Following the public discussion of these results with the participants of FindingPlaces at the closing event on 15 September 2016, the respective district office and ZKF will further inform all interested citizens as well as district assemblies in analogous information events about the concrete development proposals for these areas.



Supplementary Information

FindingPlaces is a collaborative project of the HafenCity University Hamburg (HCU Hamburg) in conjunction with the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg. The workshops were conceived and carried out by the HCU Hamburg / CityScienceLab and steg Hamburg mbH.

Linked together around the complex of themes concerning the accommodation of refugees are many different agencies and offices of the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg. Among others, the following public authorities are involved in the assessment of properties: *Behörde für Inneres und Sport* (BIS) [Authority for Internal Affairs and Sport]; *Behörde für Arbeit, Soziales, Familie und Integration* (BASFI) [Authority for Work, Social Affairs, Family and Integration]; *Zentraler Koordinierungsstab Flüchtlinge* (ZKE, joint staff of BIS and BASFI) [Central Coordination Unit for Refugees]. For improved readability, the term “city” is collectively used in this brochure instead of the naming of all participating authorities.

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