

Ladies and Gentlemen,

There are a lot of people in this city who have found refuge after fleeing from many different countries, who have started fresh in Heidelberg, who are already integrated into German society. Some of them are students and employees, and some are activists in society.

I have discussed with other refugees about what they expect from the mayor of Heidelberg, to solve issues they experience living in Heidelberg:

“I have been in Germany for eight years. We need apartments. There are not enough, and even if we find one, the landlord or lady will not give it to us.”

Someone drew my attention to the complicated administrative language:

“I’ve been living in Germany for seven years and I speak German well. But I still struggle understanding the authorities’ letters and documents. We need simplified language.”

A young woman complained about education being inaccessible:

“I’m 16 years old and have been living in Germany for 3 years. When we came here from Afghanistan, my siblings and I had to wait for almost a year before getting a spot at school. In 2022, Ukrainian refugees did not have to wait. We are happy for them. But we want equal treatment.”

Someone else told me about this inequality:

“I’ve been living in Heidelberg for five years. This year, a meeting centre for Ukrainian refugees was opened. We need open spaces for everyone!”

And one man told me:

“I’ve been living in Germany for four years. I work in Heidelberg, but have to live in Mannheim. Because I’m a foreigner, I have no chance of finding an apartment. I earn enough money, but nobody wants to rent to me. When the landlords see my foreign name, they don’t even reply.”

“My family and I were allowed to live at Henkel-Theroson-Straße for only two years. When we had to find a new place to live, we couldn’t find one with the money we had. Refugee families can’t afford rent in Heidelberg.”

“I came to Heidelberg to study, and then my partner and our daughter wanted to move in with me. I couldn’t find an apartment in Heidelberg, so I moved to Eppelheim even though I study in Heidelberg. I founded a group in Heidelberg and am its chairman. Our group is active in Heidelberg, not in Eppelheim.”

I repeat:

Speech – Refugees  
Demonstration “Heidelberg for All”

18.11.2022

We desperately need affordable and sufficient living space in Heidelberg!  
We must fight against discrimination on the housing and job market!  
It must be possible to write authority documents in an easy-to-understand way!

I hope you have a wonderful future in Heidelberg.

Thank you for listening!