

Housing Standards as They Were, Are, and Should Be! **(1928)**

Abstract

The 1928 film *Wohnkultur, wie sie war, wie sie ist, und wie sie sein soll!* [Housing as it was, as it is, and as it should be!] explicitly framed big-city life as a cold, machine-like, and nerve-rattling existence, in which residents long for a home that provides comfort and respite. Produced by the *Kölner Mieterschutzverein* [Cologne Renters' Protection Association] and based on a script by its energetic chairman, Fritz Stübig, the scenes and intertitles highlighted Cologne's squalid and insufficient housing stock. The film also promoted the benefits of membership in the *Mieterschutzverein*, which promised to remedy the situation by directly financing its own cooperative housing projects with green spaces and modern amenities.

Germany had suffered from a housing shortage since the late nineteenth century, and the acute scarcity of capital, manpower, and material during the First World War had only exacerbated the problem. Article 155 of the Weimar Constitution promised "a healthy home for every German," though, and the SPD, in particular, made housing one of its central priorities. Even though government agencies helped to fund over three-quarters of all housing construction after the war, however, their efforts never kept pace with demand. Non-profit building cooperatives, of the type that the *Kölner Mieterschutzverein* supported, helped to fill the gap by creating affordable housing through the contributions of their members. By the late 1920s, around 4,000 such housing cooperatives operated throughout Germany, seeking to provide hygienic living conditions for the country's urbanizing population.

Source

Source: *Wohnkultur, wie sie war, wie sie ist, und wie sie sein soll!*, dir. Fritz Stübig, 1928.

Courtesy of Köln im Film <https://www.koeln-im-film.de/datenbank/filme-a-z/detail/5009>

Recommended Citation: *Housing Standards as They Were, Are, and Should Be!* (1928), published in: German History in Documents and Images, <https://germanhistorydocs.org/en/weimar-germany-1918-1933/ghdi:video-5238> [March 16, 2026].