

One euro for a house and its plot

10 September 2026

Nordhalben, a municipality in Bavaria, Germany, is taking an unusual approach to vacancy with two municipally owned, empty houses. The new information portal 1-Euro-Haus.de presents the project.

When city home ownership is out of reach for many families, unusual municipal initiatives can open up new possibilities. The €1 purchase price is real, but it represents only a small part of the total cost. · Image credit: 1-Euro-Haus.de

Nordhalben/Hof, 11 September 2026 – A house with its own plot for one euro: it may seem hard to believe, but it is happening in the Upper Franconian municipality of Nordhalben in Bavaria. The municipality is offering two vacant buildings in the town centre for a symbolic purchase price of €1 each. The new information portal 1-Euro-Haus.de provides details of the municipality, the two houses and the background to the project.

The €1 purchase price is genuine, but it accounts for only a very small part of the total cost. Buyers also face costs for the notary, land register, planning, expert assessments and the building work itself: both houses need extensive renovation.

These houses are therefore not for anyone looking for a home they can move into straight away. They are for people willing and able to take a long-term view of an old building, its renovation needs and how it might be used in the future.

An unusual way to tackle vacant property

Vacant buildings that are falling into disrepair present major challenges for many rural municipalities. They can damage the townscape, affect neighbouring properties and generate high long-term costs for local authorities. At the same time, older houses often contain valuable building fabric and are a visible part of local history.

A symbolic purchase price can draw attention to buildings that might struggle to find a new owner on the conventional property market. The key, though, is not the one euro but a buyer's willingness to invest time, perhaps some work of their own, and money in restoring the house.

For the municipality, the model offers a chance to bring vacant buildings back into lasting use. Prospective buyers, in turn, get the opportunity to buy a house and plot at a symbolic price and redesign it within their means.

Only the relevant municipality decides whether a sale takes place and on what terms. These may include requirements for the renovation plan, intended use and timetable. The terms negotiated between buyer and seller are recorded in the purchase contract.

Nordhalben leads the way

Nordhalben is in the Kronach district of northern Bavaria and part of the Franconian Forest region. The municipality has worked for years on revitalising its town centre and finding new uses for empty buildings.

It is the first municipality featured on 1-Euro-Haus.de, with two vacant residential houses that it owns:

1. A historic semi-detached house with around 110 square metres of living space and a plot of about 140 square metres. The building needs major renovation.

2. Another historic semi-detached house with a similar living area but a plot of around 200 square metres. Renovation needs are particularly extensive here.

Honest information, not a bargain-house promise

“The one euro naturally attracts attention. But what matters is the project as a whole. Interested people should first ask whether the building, the town and the work involved fit their lives now and in the future. They should then have the house assessed by qualified experts and use those findings to prepare a realistic renovation and financing plan. Doing some work yourself can certainly reduce costs, but it takes practical skills and a great deal of time. Not every job can be done without qualified professionals. Funding programmes may be available depending on the building, its location, the planned work and a person's circumstances. These options need to be checked early and on a case-by-case basis,” says Jürgen Klausmann, editorial lead for 1-Euro-Haus.de.

1-Euro-Haus.de only provides an overview of participating municipalities and the properties they report; it does not broker sales. The relevant municipality alone decides which buildings to offer, who may apply, how viewings and selection work, and whether a sale takes place and on what terms. Property details come from the municipalities; interested people can obtain binding information directly from the responsible local authority – in this case, Nordhalben.

An invitation to other municipalities

Municipalities that also want to offer vacant buildings for a symbolic price and try a new approach are welcome to contact 1-Euro-Haus.de.

“Many towns face similar challenges. We want to help give old houses a future while being honest with interested people about the opportunities, risks and real work involved. The €1-house model is not a cure-all for vacancy and structural change. But we would be pleased if, in individual cases, it helped renovate an empty house and bring it back into lasting use, revitalise a town centre and give people a home of their own,” Klausmann says.

About 1-Euro-Haus.de

1-Euro-Haus.de is an independent information portal run by TOGETHER GmbH, based in Hof. It covers municipal €1-house projects, participating municipalities, available buildings, and the opportunities and challenges of renovation.

1-Euro-Haus.de is neither an estate agent nor the seller of the houses shown. Property details are provided by the municipalities. Only the relevant municipality is responsible for binding information, advice, viewings, application procedures and sales.