

Housing Challenges in the EU

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The situation

- The **diversity of local, regional and national housing traditions and systems** creates a unique fabric of housing provision all over the EU.
- The Global Financial Crisis led to massive **decline in investments in affordable and social housing** in Europe to half of pre-crisis level.
- There is a **steep and continuous increase in housing costs, gentrification, financialisation, touristification of the housing markets** in most EU cities and urban areas.
- A **growing number of EU citizens**, from low to middle class incomes **faces** affordability limits, **housing cost overburden**, low quality, overcrowded housing situations and are at risk of eviction.
- The **pandemic** has aggravated the situation dramatically.

Findings of the Housing Partnership

- Need to **increase and de-block available investment and build capacity to take up funding and financing** in various affordable housing options based on specific local market needs.
- Recognition that **EU policies and legislation have a great impact on housing** on local, regional and national level – better **monitoring** and data on EU and MS level is key to develop good housing policies.
- **Participatory and rights-based approach** needs to be integrated in housing policies on all governance levels.
- **Protection** of vulnerable groups and cities from **speculation is vital more than ever**; with a view to the social, climate and digital challenges in the housing sector, taking into account **gender disparities**.

Advocacy of the Housing Partnership

- Working with the **European Parliament**: 2020 INI report on housing of MEP van Sparrentak, work with URBAN Intergroup, EMPL, ENVI, IMCO
- Continued engagement to **protect local housing systems from further touristification** (Digital Services Act) towards COM and EP
- Assessment of ongoing EU initiatives, as the **MFF and RRF, Renovation Wave Strategy, Action Plan of the European Pillar of Social Rights**
- Work on need to revise **EU state aid rules** and **European Semester procedures** create better investment conditions for social, public and affordable housing on local, regional and national level
- Liaising with **EU presidencies on housing policy monitoring** systems
- **Promotion of exchange**, e.g. International Social Housing Festival, URBACT-UIA Network on Housing as a Right, EU think tanks and research
- **Advocacy for housing funding and financing** in the new EU instruments and programming period

Time to rethink housing policies

- Put **people at the center**: involve, empower, emancipate
- **Design** EU programmes **with cities** and **affordable housing stakeholders** in a **multi-level framework** to co-design, co-manage, co-own
- Housing financing has to account for the **long-term nature of housing needs**, **citizens and cities need protection from speculation and eviction**
- Foster **strategic and coordinated policy reform** to shape more effective housing systems
- Create **diverse, reliable, participatory and protective housing systems**

Governance is key

- Good housing policy needs a **stable governance framework** on all levels
- **Member States** have a specific **responsibility** to enable and empower their local and regional authorities to create liveable neighbourhoods
- **Global challenges** as the climate crisis, migration and socio-economic disparities have a strong effect on housing policies
- EU policy development on housing has only started with promising new initiatives as the Affordable Housing initiative.

Read more on the work of the Housing Partnership
of the Urban Agenda for the EU here:
<https://futurium.ec.europa.eu/en/urban-agenda/housing>

#Housing 2030

Joint initiative of UNECE, UN-Habitat and Housing Europe with a focus on affordable and social housing and housing finance, working in 4 fields:

- **Housing governance and regulation**, including measuring housing affordability
- **Access to finance** and funding
- Access and **availability of land** for housing construction, integration of planning of housing with planning of jobs and services
- **Climate-neutral housing construction and renovation**, including role of architecture, use of sustainable building materials, innovation in construction

#Housing 2030 – Activities 2020/2021

- **UNECE Survey** on housing affordability challenges, policy responses, capacity building needs of **56 governments**
- **Online call for best practices** via project website launched May 2020
- **Research** evidence review, chapters drafting and presentations
- **Four thematic** webinars plus **three regionally** focussed webinars (reaching around 1,200 participants)
- **A podcast series : Making a House a Home: Housing2030 special series**

Findings of #Housing 2030

- Need to rethink housing policy making
- Move away from just relying on market mechanisms
- Shape markets to better deliver the housing we need
- Need for co-operation of international community, national and local governments
- Empower cities to create liveable neighbourhoods

Next step:
Launch of the #Housing2030
Final Report and Website
www.housing2030.org

Ministerial Meeting, UNECE, 6 October 2021, Geneva