

Housing Europe
Leaders' message to EU
Commissioner for
Energy and Housing,
Dan Jørgensen:
**Play your strongest
card to fulfill your
Housing
mission**



As the EU's first Housing Commissioner, you hold one of this generation's most vital roles.

You also hold a powerful strategic advantage: Europe's 43,000 local public, social, and cooperative organisations dedicated to housing provision. These bodies invest 50 billion per year delivering and renovating 400,000 homes annually without fueling speculation. When optimised they address climate and social challenges, and foster inclusive, sustainable communities. Some of them push the frontiers on digital, green, and social innovation, and have proven socio-economic and environmental impact:

In Flanders having access to social housing **decreases the risk of poverty for resident households by 40%.**

limited-profit housing (social housing) in Austria helps **households save €1.3 billion per year** through lower housing costs. This has a significant impact on their purchasing power and is estimated to add between €600 million and €1 billion to Austria's GDP per year.

In Estonia **17 jobs per 1 million euros of investment in renovation by home-owner cooperatives have been created** directly and indirectly per year. State subsidised renovation has been, in practical terms, budget neutral in the last 10 years.

In the Municipality of Copenhagen, **single parent households in private rentals spend 44% of their income on housing, compared to 32% for those in public housing.** Housing areas with affordable rents in cities help attract a productive workforce and a younger population, strengthening urban competitiveness. Nearly one in four students rents a home in public family or youth housing reducing risk of abandonment of studies.

50% of 322,000 Touraine Logement's (1 of the 385 French social housing providers) housing stock is rated A, B, or C on the energy scale, compared to only 24% of the total rental stock in Indre-et-Loire. This results in €476 in annual energy bill savings compared to a private rental in Indre-et-Loire — equivalent to more than one month's rent for a Touraine Logement tenant. This reflects the national figure; 46% of French social housing stock (5,7 million homes in total) is rated A, B or C compared to 25% of private rental.

In the Netherlands **74% of social housing is A, B or C rated** compared to 64% in private rental.

An **Irish housing association converted offices into 86 into homes saving 62% in whole of life emissions** when compared with a new build of similar type, and 73% reduction compared to demolition and rebuild.

EU SILC data estimates a quarter of the people who have overcome housing difficulties in their life did so by moving into social housing.

In Germany, cooperatives provide a non-market alternative to **close the gap between availability and demand** on the housing-market providing perpetual leases at regulated rents to 2.8 Million people.

In Hungary MR Community Housing Fund in cooperation with the Ministry of Interior, in January 2025, it launched a targeted program to support young people between the ages of 18 and 35 leaving child protection care to start an independent life, within the framework of which they can apply for safe, affordable housing.

They are your **Ace card**. They are vital to achieve your mission to drive an EU housing plan based on as you said at your hearing; investment, values and rules. For this you can shape the agenda with **better knowledge, better regulation, and better finance for housing at EU level**.

Better knowledge: Follow the principles and guidelines developed by international institutions and researchers around efficient housing outcomes such as Housing 2030

Housing Europe together with UN Habitat and UNECE HLM have produced the [Housing2030](#) study to identify success factors behind well functioning housing systems which generate long-term positive socio-economic and environmental outcomes. They include methods to increase leverage of investment in the system to avoid leakage of finance such as revolving funds like Denmark's Landsbyggefonden or the Austrian limited profit law, and guarantees like the Dutch Waarborgfonds.

Cost-recovery housing companies make savings by managing the full process from land acquisition to delivery, management, and maintenance. Social segregation is avoided and financial viability assured by providing housing for both low and middle income households where rent supplement is available where needed. The risk of degradation and dereliction is off-set by ensuring financing systems have included a margin for maintenance.

When these models have a stable framework they can reach scale and **minimise busts in construction activity** (where you have quota of 30 % social housing in private developments e.g. in NL it is social housing that drives construction activity, giving stability). Scaled systems accelerate innovation in modern methods of construction and circularity (e.g. the Kombohus Sweden and the Pirée network in France). Scaling up local energy production takes pressure off the grid (e.g. the Aster scheme in Flanders) and aids decarbonisation. Many have incorporated community involvement in their business models - for cooperatives this is a given. At scale public, social, and cooperative providers can facilitate structural innovations and partnerships with municipalities and associations to adapt to tackle complex societal challenges like homelessness (GbV with BAWO Housing First scheme in Austria), integration, disability, and labor market integration. Without these dedicated housing providers, associations and charities are often forced to carry out such work on an ad-hoc and improvised basis, with no long-term visibility regarding funding.

Better Regulation – make EU laws fit for sustainable housing systems:

The EC's Housing Taskforce consultation is on-going and we will actively contribute with proposals however we must go further and introduce **housing ex-ante evaluations and 'fit for housing' impact assessments of new, recast, and existing legislation by the European Commission** in partnership with Housing Europe, the Committee of the Regions, and Economic and Social Committee, to systematically incorporate the affordable housing perspective in EU legislative drafting. Past experiences, such as the attempt to integrate housing affordability considerations into the revision of the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive or the Soil Monitoring Directive and others¹ highlight the

¹Capital Requirements Regulation, Green Taxonomy, State aid rules, European semester, Fit-for-55, Nature Restoration Law and Soil Monitoring Directive

challenge. This way we can avoid unintended consequences of EU legislation which make it harder for local level to address the housing crisis. The accelerated revision of State aid rules for social housing should preserve the specific role of social, public, cooperative, and community-led housing providers to meet evolving housing needs, as defined by Member States. In the construction sector the EU can play a role to increase performance and should activate a fast-lane for this effort.

Better Finance: Make sure that EU funds allocated to housing overcome hurdles to reach the best projects which help address housing needs now, and in the long term while reviewing EU financial rules which may handicap Member States from addressing the housing crisis

The EC has committed to doubling cohesion policy support in this MFF and increase EIB finance and advisory to the sector via a new finance platform. Housing Europe is activating our network to help you realise these goals. We are also working to assure continued support to housing under the next MFF (2027). In 2023, Housing Europe established a new work stream² to allow Member States, banks, and public, social, and cooperative providers to draw inspiration from the Housing2030 success stories and exchange recent concrete initiatives such as the European Social Housing Alliance in France and. This Alliance brings together the CEB EIB and the national promotional bank CDC -and has assured 2.4 billion Euro in long-term intermediated loans at fixed rates under European EIB-CEB 2022-2024 resources/Recovery Plans. We invite the European Commission's new housing taskforce to support this workstream.

Based on discussions with local stakeholders, recommendations to increase uptake of funds include:

- Push to ensure that housing remains a priority not only in this Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) but also in the next one and under InvestEU. Competing priorities make it important to introduce earmarking for housing with proven socio-economic and environmental impact and public service obligations.
- Allow funding for renovation and conversion projects to also cover complementary measures e.g accessibility (in Spain, projects get more support if plans also include the introduction of lifts in buildings) social measures (outreach and accomodation for households during long renovation/decarbonisation processes). Prioritising schemes that include vulnerable groups and crucially align eligibility across funds to increase streamlining and roll out of projects.
- Increase the use of ETS II revenues for building renovation and decarbonisation to ensure a just energy transition - in particular but not only - through Social Climate Fund.
- Scale up EIB Support for strategic and structural investment and advisory support in sustainable housing systems. Ensure simplified access and favorable financing, including for example 0% loans for public, social, and cooperative housing. The EIB should focus not on project financing alone but on supporting well-established housing systems in Europe and helping to build new ones via de-risking and advisory services in line with Housing2030
- The new pan-European investment platform for affordable and sustainable housing should include targets to increase EIB support and public subsidies to the social, cooperative, and public housing.
- Crucially steps should be taken to prevent fiscal rules from penalising long-term housing investment by exempting non-speculative housing investment from deficit rules under the Stability and Growth Pact. Housing associations loans are on balance sheet in some Member States which can be a handicap vis-à-vis commercial counterparts.

²https://www.housingeurope.eu/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/The-new-European-Responsible-Housing-Finance-Working-Group_DIGITAL.pdf

Indicators at EU level

- ➔ Ensure that the funding provided by the new pan-European investment platform goes mainly to public, social, and cooperative housing, since this is the best way to achieve affordability and sustainability.
- ➔ Include an indicator in the European semester to promote an increase in the percentage of public, social, and cooperative housing in the total housing stock annually in Europe with a focus on pressure zones and/or increase of public support to social, cooperative and public. This will provide a wider economic boost by improving household purchasing power. Declining rates will have serious negative impacts on healthcare costs, social exclusion, environmental damage, and productivity.

Representatives in the Delegation:

Bent Madsen, President Housing Europe

Jouni Parkkonen, CEO Finnish Affordable Housing Companies' Federation - KOVA

Marco Buttieri, President Federcasa

Lutar Balazs, MR Community Housing Fund

Cathrine Holgersson, CEO Public Housing Sweden

Anna Michou, CEO Major Development Agency Thessaloniki (MDAT)

Laurent Ghekiere, Director of European Affairs, USH

Dr. Özgür Öner Director of the EU-Representation at GdW

Marie Roland, Société wallonne du Logement, Chef de programme et responsable PMO - Experte, Direction Générale

Robin van Leijen, Senior European Public Affairs, Aedes

Sorcha Edwards, Secretary General Housing Europe

Julien Dijol, Policy Director Housing Europe

Housing europe,
The **european federation of public,**
cooperative, and social housing, has been the
voice of this sector since 1988. Representing 44
national and regional federations and 16 partner
organisations across 31 countries, housing
europe oversees around 25 million homes,
accounting for 11% of europe's housing stock.



**HOUSING
EUROPE**

