

# The Decarbonisation Summit 2025

## Emission Cuts and Housing Affordability

Reinforcing energy independence and diffusing social tension through integrated housing and climate policy



The 2025 Eurobarometer reveals that housing is one of the top concerns for Europeans, while companies struggle to find workers—an issue made more acute by high rents. Recent national elections show just how politically vulnerable governments become when housing policies fall short. Meanwhile, the 2040 emission-cutting deadline is fast approaching.

This summit will explore different paths to decarbonisation that keep liveable neighbourhoods and affordability at the centre. Beyond neighbourhood-scale renovation, pre-fabrication methods and low-carbon new delivery using bio-sourced materials, heat pumps and sustainable mobility, the agenda will also highlight how **local energy production**—from shared renewables to community energy systems—can ease household energy costs and accelerate climate goals. We will further examine the **conversion of existing buildings** as an essential strategy to expand housing supply while reducing the carbon footprint of construction.

Projects from the public, social and cooperative housing sector that are showing the way forward will be showcased. The Summit will also connect these practical solutions with the evolving EU policy and financial framework, ahead of the launch of the Affordable Housing Plan, the deadline for the re-allocation of Cohesion Funds for Housing, the roll-out of the Social Climate Fund (SCF), and the implementation of the revised Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD).

# Programme

Date	Sessions
<b>Wednesday 3rd December</b>	
<b>9:30-10:30 – Welcoming coffee and registrations</b>	
<b>10:30-11:00 – Opening</b> Moderated by Sorcha Edwards, Secretary General at Housing Europe <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Marco Corradi - President of Housing Europe</b></li> <li>• <b>Eamon Ryan – Chairman, Advisory Board at the Housing Task Force, European Commission</b></li> </ul>	
<b>11:00-13:00</b>	<b>Neighbourhood-scale renovation with a social purpose</b> <i>Salle des guichets</i>
<b>13:00-14:00 - Lunch</b>	
<b>14:00-16:30</b>	<b>Reduced parking for affordable housing</b> <i>Zinneke</i>
	<b>Tackling embodied carbon through wooden construction</b> <i>Salle des guichets</i>
<b>Thursday 4th December</b>	
<b>9:30-10:30 – Welcoming coffee and registrations</b>	
<b>10:30-12:30</b>	<b>Prefabricated construction and renovation</b> <i>Salle des guichets</i>
<b>12:30-14:00 - Lunch</b>	
<b>14:00-16:30</b>	<b>Decarbonised heating and cooling through heat pumps</b> <i>Salle des guichets</i>
<b>16:45-17:00</b>	<b>Closing by Sorcha Edwards, Secretary General at Housing Europe</b>

03 December | 11:00-13:00

## Neighbourhood-scale renovation with a social purpose



The housing and climate crises, combined with the rising cost of living faced by Europeans, require us to rethink how housing is delivered and managed. The green agenda is experiencing a backlash as low-income groups feel left behind and priced out. Public, social, and cooperative housing providers are demonstrating an alternative path – one that reconciles decarbonisation with the urgent need for new and affordable housing, improves the performance of existing homes, and promotes local energy production to reduce bills and enable low-income households to be part of the transition. Conversion, rooftop extensions, infill, and right-sizing also help save embodied energy and maximise resources. Solutions must therefore include greening the existing housing stock, reducing the impact of new construction, and delivering new homes through innovative, resource-efficient approaches.

This session will explore how climate-neutral neighbourhood renovation can drive decarbonisation while strengthening social cohesion and affordability. Drawing on lessons from ARV, Affordable Housing Initiative European Partnership and real-life pilots in Germany, Spain, France, and Denmark, the discussion will highlight how integrated neighbourhood approaches align technical innovation, social purpose, and energy communities to deliver systemic impact.

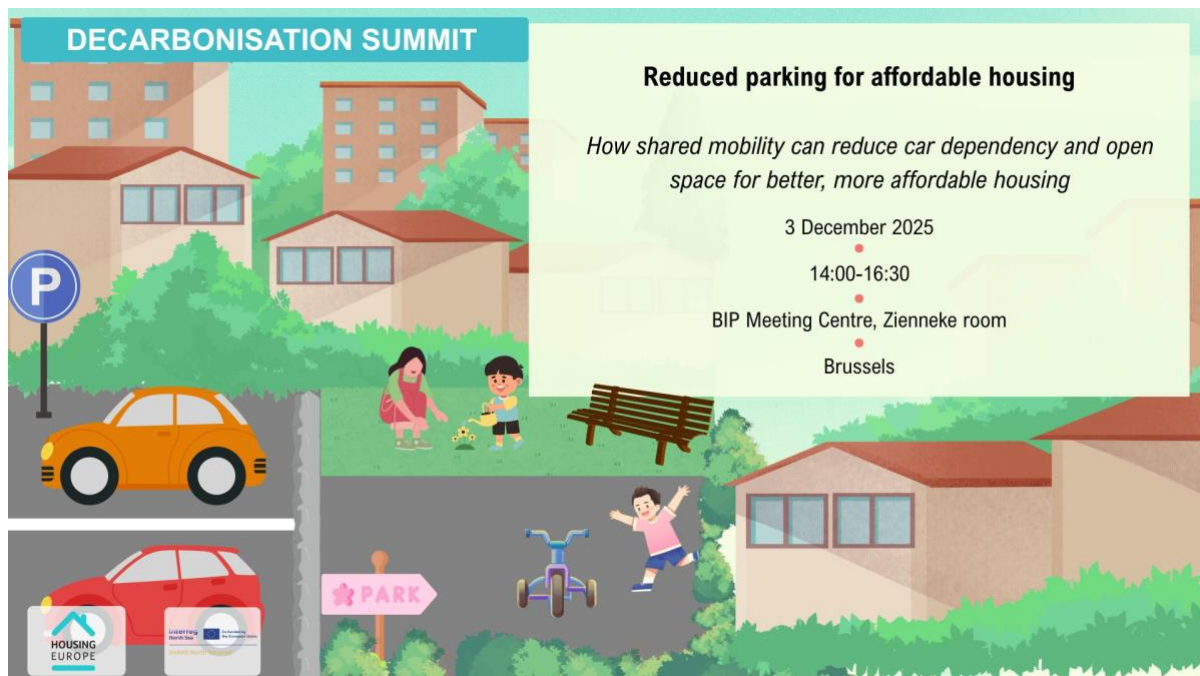
The session will also reflect on the role of EU regulation and funding, including the Social Climate Fund, the ETS extension, and Member State implementation of the EPBD, in supporting a just and inclusive renovation wave.

## Agenda

11:00 – 11:10	<p><b>Moderated by Sorcha Edwards, Secretary General at Housing Europe</b></p> <p><b>Opening session</b>  <b>Robert Nuij, DG ENER (Head of Unit, DG ENER, European Commission)</b>  — overview of how Member States are implementing the EPBD and what this means for the renovation wave.</p>
11:10 – 12:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>João Gonçalves (Director of Innovation, Housing Europe)</b> — What the Affordable Housing Initiative European Partnership is doing for district-level renovation, capacity-building, and integrated decarbonisation.</li> <li>• <b>Ingrid Vogler (Head of Energy and Technology, GdW)</b> — Why the neighbourhood approach makes economic sense; examples from Germany balancing decarbonisation and affordability.</li> <li>• <b>David Mayol (Architect, IBAVI)</b> — Climate-resilient design and architectural approaches supporting fairness, social purpose, and reduced embodied carbon.</li> <li>• <b>Torben Esbensen and Torben Leth (Sondebourg Social Housing Company)</b> — The tenant perspective and lessons from Denmark on fair, socially inclusive renovation.</li> <li>• <b>Greta Tresserra (Architect and International Consultant, Architects' Council of Europe)</b> — Applying EU renovation frameworks (EPBD, NEB and energy-transition initiatives) at neighbourhood scale to foster innovative renovation while preserving affordability, cultural identity and social cohesion.</li> </ul> <p>Q&amp;A (5 minutes)</p>
12:20 – 13:00	<p><b>Roundtable discussion amongst speakers</b>  Moderated by Sorcha Edwards, Secretary General at Housing Europe</p>

Wednesday 03 December | Parallel session I - 14:00-16:30 H

## Reduced parking for affordable housing



Private fuel-based vehicles like cars are a key source of carbon emissions, pollution and grey infrastructure in housing projects, particularly those located in peripheral areas. Sustainable mobility can be decisive in bringing whole life-cycle carbon emissions down, especially in new builds. The public, cooperative, and social housing sector can play a pivotal role in leading a new housing paradigm that optimises land use and prioritises low-carbon, affordable and healthy mobility options.

Incorporating shared mobility into social housing projects in the national Social Climate Plans can bring Social Climate Fund (SCF) co-financing, as they align well with the objectives of providing affordable, low-emission transport options for low-income communities. However, car-oriented parking norms, strict building codes and regulatory restrictions to collaborate with mobility providers are limiting public, cooperative and social housing providers in their transition to sustainable mobility.

As part of the EU-funded Interreg North Sea Region project “**SHARE-North Squared**” aiming to integrate shared mobility solutions into housing developments, the Cities of Bremen (Germany) and Mechelen (Belgium) are introducing groundbreaking policy measures to change mobility in public, cooperative and social housing. This session will explore how shared mobility—through carsharing, bikesharing, micromobility, and integrated public transport—can act as a transformative lever in decarbonising public, cooperative, and social housing by reducing car dependency, cutting emissions, and enhancing spatial justice for communities.



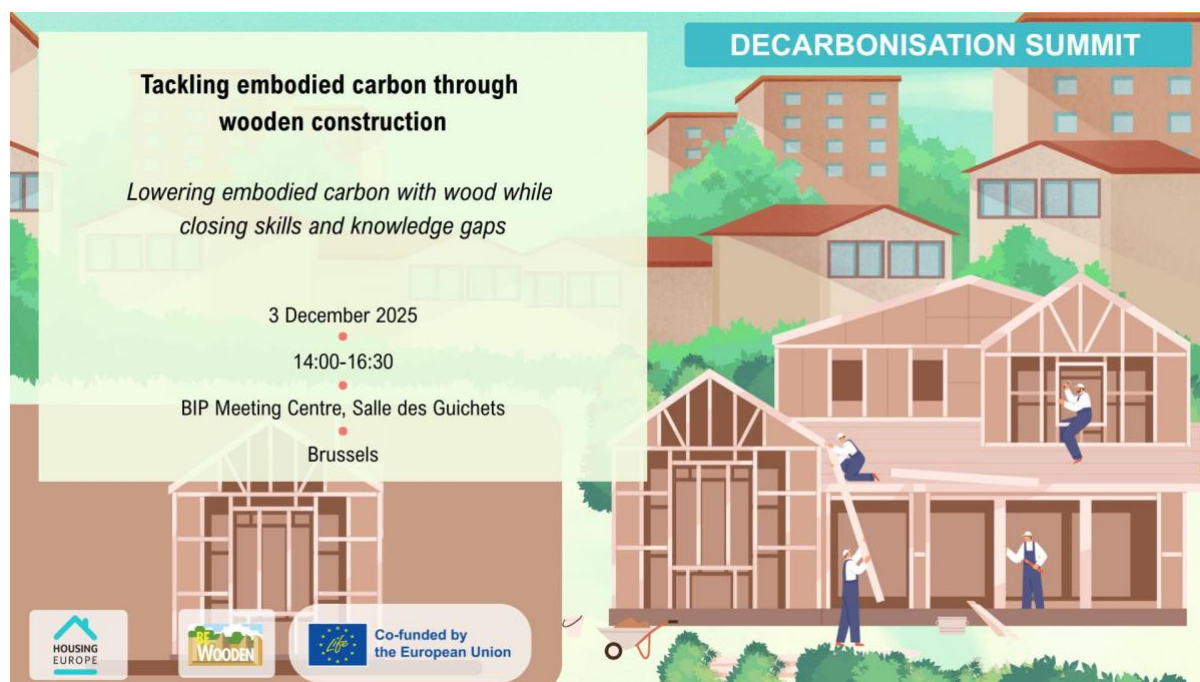
## Agenda

14:00-14:15	<b>Opening and moderation by Jelten Baguet, MPACT</b>
14:15-14:30	<b>Social Climate Fund: ensuring the just transition towards climate neutrality</b> by Constantin Heitzer, DG CLIMA European Commission
14:30-14:45	<b>Potential of the Mobility Transition for Tackling the Housing Crisis</b> by Alexander Czeh, Mobility Lead, Associate Director at Buro Happold Berlin and Visiting Lecturer at TU Berlin
14:45-15:00	<b>Cities supporting sustainable mobility in social and affordable housing</b> by Ivo Cré, Director of Policy and Project at Polis
15:00-15:15	<b>Innovative parking by-laws for social housing in Bremen</b> by Cornelia Cordes, Coordinator of SN2 on behalf of City of Bremen
15:15-15:30	<b>Beyond the doorstep: mobility in social housing in Flanders</b> by Gert Eyckmans, Director of Initia Vlaanderen
15:30-16:15	<b>Roundtable discussion with dice</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Constantin Heitzer, DG CLIMA European Commission</li> <li>• Alexander Czeh, Mobility Lead, Associate Director at Buro Happold Berlin and Visiting Lecturer at TU Berlin</li> <li>• Ivo Cré, Director of Policy and Project at Polis</li> <li>• Cornelia Cordes, Coordinator of SN2 on behalf of City of Bremen</li> <li>• Gert Eyckmans, Director of Initia Vlaanderen</li> </ul>

Wednesday 03 December | Parallel session II - 14:00-16:30 H

## Tackling embodied carbon through wooden construction

The role of bio-based materials and the New European Bauhaus in building greener futures ([Streaming available](#))




When it comes to buildings, embodied carbon accounts for more than 50% of a project's whole life carbon footprint. Since the revised EPBD requires all buildings to be Zero Emission Buildings (ZEB) by 2050, shifting to bio-based materials such as wood is one of the most effective ways to reduce embodied carbon and move toward compliance. However, lack of skilled practitioners, diverging national regulations and cultural resistances due to the perceived risk of damage in case of fires or floods are some of the factors hindering uptake of this sustainable material in the residential sector in several European countries.

In this session -coinciding with the project's final conference- we will explore how **LIFE BE-WoodEN** contributed to overcoming this knowledge gap by developing a series of training opportunities and studies on wood use -encompassing sustainability, financial feasibility and more technical aspects, such as deterioration and protection and mechanical properties - targeting architects and practitioners working in the public, social and cooperative residential sector. More over, a series of training materials are devoted to include New European Bauhaus Compass and principles in designing housing and common spaces

All activities were guided by a framework inspired by the core dimensions of the New European Bauhaus: inclusion, sustainability, and beauty. A notable example was the Challenge Based Learning launched by Regione Liguria, which engaged local stakeholders, including architects and social innovators, in co-creating the common areas of a social housing complex for elderly residents in Imperia using wood. The initiative resulted in a replicable model for collaborative placemaking aimed at making shared spaces more inclusive and aligned with local needs. Participating designs will be showcased in an exhibition, with the winning team recognized during an official award ceremony.

## Agenda

14:00-14:20	<p><i>Master of Ceremonies: Andreja Kutnar, University of Primorska</i></p> <p><b>Opening session</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marco Corradi, <b>President of Housing Europe</b></li> <li>• Elena Montani, Head New European Bauhaus at JRC</li> <li>• Jonathan Duwyn, Buildings Lead, at the Buildings, Cooling and Subnational Engagement Unit at UNEP Climate Change Division</li> </ul>
14:20-15:30	<p><b>Panel on the uptake of wood in social housing with emphasis on training needs, policy gaps, upskilling and reskilling and NEB approach.</b> Moderator: João Gonçalves, Housing Europe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Silvia Melegari, Joint General Secretary at CEI-BOIS &amp; EOS</li> <li>• Sofia Hansdotter, Expert Property Development, <b>Public Housing Sweden</b></li> <li>• David Bravo, Architect, WikiHousing</li> <li>• Jacques Timmerman, Chair of the ACE New European Bauhaus Working Group, Architects Council of Europe</li> </ul>
15:30-16:45	<p><b>Presentation of results and award ceremony</b> Moderator: Uwe Kies, Secretary General, Innovawood</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achievements of the LIFE Programme - Piedad Rivas Lopez, Project Advisor at CINEA</li> <li>• LIFE BE-WoodEN project results - Giovanna Franco, Project Leader Be-WoodEN University of Genoa</li> <li>• The NEB Academy Alliance - Andreja Kutnar, Full Professor, University of Primorska</li> <li>• Case studies:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Emilia-Romagna Region/ introduced by ART-ER (Region Research Agency) Feasibility study about establishing a local supply chain in social housing</li> <li>◦ <b>ARTE Imperia</b> (Public Housing Agency from Imperia) – Introduced by Regione Liguria and ARTE Imperia: Innovation Challenge for the design of the common areas of an elderly home</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Award ceremony with the participation of the Innovation Challenge Winning Team</li> </ul>
 <p><b>The award ceremony will be accompanied by a celebratory toast</b></p>	



Thursday 04 December | 10:30-12.30 H

## Prefabricated construction and renovation



Decarbonising the housing stock not only requires scale, but also fast, affordable and standardised methods of renovation and construction. This session will delve into how prefabricated renovation and construction at scale can accelerate the decarbonisation of public, cooperative, and social housing in a cost-efficient way while promoting industrial competitiveness. Drawing inspiration from the **GigaRegioFactory** project—which uses open-source tools and plug-and-play industrialised retrofit packages to aggregate and renovate housing clusters to net-zero energy standards across Belgium and France — participants will explore high-impact industrial processes for deep energy renovation. The **Build-Up SPEED** initiative will show how modular, factory-built components accelerate construction timelines and cost-effectively deliver quality social housing units. Finally, the **BARRIO** project will showcase the demand-aggregation model to upscale pre-fab renovation projects. Together, these pioneering examples highlight how combining off-site prefabrication and digital planning tools can unleash a transformative approach to decarbonising affordable housing and support housing supply in light of the upcoming European Strategy for Housing Construction.

## Agenda

10:30-10:45	<b>Introductory remarks: 15 years of industrialized renovation</b> <b>Julien Dijol, Housing Europe</b>
10:45 - 11:45	<b>Presentations by :</b>  <b>Sofia Hansdotter</b> , Expert Property Development, Public Housing Sweden <b>Giulia De Aloysio</b> , Head of Financing, Certimac and coordinator Barrio project <b>Dario Marino</b> , Edera, Giga Regio Factory and Build Up Speed project <b>Germain Adell</b> , Director, Metabuilding <b>Alan Milne</b> , European Membership Director, Modular Building Institute <b>Fernando Sigchos Jiménez</b> , Secretary General at European Builders Confederation (EBC)
11:45 - 12:20	<b>Panel discussion and Q&amp;A with the audience</b>
12:20 - 12:30	<b>Conclusion</b>

Thursday 04 December | 14:00-16.30 H


## Decarbonised heating and cooling through heat pumps ([Streaming available](#))



About 50% of all energy consumed in the EU is used for heating and cooling, and more than 70% still comes from fossil fuels, mostly natural gas. Heat pumps are one of the key technologies promoted by the European Commission as part of its decarbonisation strategy. REPowerEU, for example, sets the target of installing at least 60 million additional heat pumps by 2027. However, the rollout, across both private and social, public and cooperative housing, is facing setbacks, as shown by declining sales in 2024.

By exploring the work of the EU-funded **install.res** project, participants will gain insights into how high upfront costs—one of the main barriers to heat pump adoption—are addressed in the install.res pilots. Representatives from the pilots in Austria, North Macedonia, Slovenia, Poland, and the Netherlands will talk about their experience with putting innovative business and delivery models for heat pumps into practice. These experiences feed into a broader discussion on enabling a just heat transition and ensuring that low-income households and residents of social, public, and cooperative housing are not left behind. The session will also examine how national policies, strategies, and standards can create the right conditions to ensure equitable and inclusive access to clean heating solutions.

## Agenda

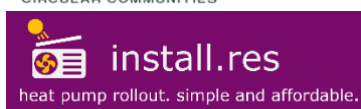
14:00-14:10	<p><i>The session will be moderated by Marine Cornelis, expert in people-centric energy and climate policies</i></p> <p><b>Opening - EU Policy Context - Silvia Rezessy, DG ENER B3</b></p>
14:10-14:25	<p><b>install.res and the Business &amp; Delivery Model Catalogues</b></p> <p><b>Herbert Tretter &amp; Louise Meister, Austrian Energy Agency</b></p>
14:25-15:25	<p><b>Lessons learnt from case studies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• North Macedonia, Vladimir Gjorgievski, UKIM and SDEWES-Skopje</li> <li>• Austria, Patryk Czarnecki, Institute of Building Research &amp; Innovation and Sozialbau AG</li> <li>• Slovenia, Suzana Guček, KRONOTERM</li> <li>• Poland, Piotr Sprzączak, Veolia ESCO Polska</li> <li>• Netherlands, Michiel van der Vight, De WarmteTransitieMakers</li> </ul>
15:25-15:40	<p> <b>Coffee break</b></p>
15:40-16:40	<p><b>Panel Discussion:</b> Connecting Local Practices to National and EU Policy Frameworks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jozefien Vanbecelaere, Policy Director, European Heat Pump Association</li> <li>• Silvia Rezessy, Policy Officer, DG ENER</li> <li>• Jennifer Whitty, Sustainability Manager, Tuath Housing</li> <li>• Bjorn Mallants, Woon trots</li> <li>• Vladimir Gjorgievski, Assistant Professor, UKIM and SDEWES-Skopje</li> </ul>
16:40	<p>Closing remarks by Sorch Edwards, Housing Europe</p>



## Organising Partners



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