



The European Federation of
Public, Cooperative and Social Housing

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PRESS RELEASE

Housing in the EU urban agenda of our future

Social investment for a fair development

The increasing urbanization over the last decades has generated, among other things, numerous challenges that the **EU urban policy** has to address in order to secure a sustainable future for both the European cities and most importantly their people. CECODHAS Housing Europe has participated in the Forum "**CiTIES: Cities of Tomorrow**" hosted by the European Commission in Brussels this week, and uses this occasion to identify concrete **policy priorities in the future urban agenda**.

CECODHAS Housing Europe Secretary General, Claire Roumet underlined in her address at one of the side-events of the Forum that:

"New investment in social infrastructure is needed for a fair growth in times of economic and social instability. Housing should be at the core of all the measures planned or taken as a number of issues related to housing affect almost every aspect of the urban everyday life."

Poverty and energy poverty keep growing alarmingly at levels that once seemed impossible in the EU. Being poor has tremendous **effects on health and social life**, while someone not being able to warm their household adequately consequently adds to the problem. Being poor should not equal living under poor housing conditions, violating thus a fundamental human right, recognized both by the UN and the European Institutions. So, **better housing for low-income people** is crucial not only from a moral point of view but from an economic one, too.

Income inequalities trigger instability and tension in the urban environment. This is why a viable EU urban policy should take them into deep consideration and try to reduce them to avoid segregated areas as well as to bring housing markets back to a better balance. For this to happen, **more rentals at affordable prices should become available**. Furthermore, local authorities should be on the one hand obliged by the EU institutions to create the much desired **social mix** in the neighborhoods but on the other hand also helped in attracting the funding needed.

The financial resources are again the big question since the crisis has drained the capability of the public authorities and has increased at the same time both their social responsibilities. While the European Investment Bank cannot be in the forefront of the urban regeneration, **alternative sources** of finance have to be looked for, such as crowdfunding for instance, that may empower the disposable EU funds.



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The European Union has developed **interesting financing mechanisms**, particularly through the Structural Funds. European programs like URBAN I and II as well as national experiences such as the initiative “Soziale Stadt” in Germany have shown the added value of a flexible approach of urban revitalization measures. This is why it is very much needed a **pool of expertise** to be created for cities across the EU that could thus offer them more tools to tackle urban challenges.

41 **affordable housing organizations** in 19 EU countries, members of CECODHAS Housing Europe are fully mobilized to ensure that the city of tomorrow will be fair and sustainable. They are taking thus part in partnerships to offer high quality housing in good locations, which meets a diversity of needs, conserves the environment both in the present day and in the future, helps to make cities more attractive through a more extensive urban mix and treats its tenants fairly.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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CECODHAS Housing Europe is a network of national and regional housing federations of housing organisations. Together the 41 members in 19 European members States manage 25 million dwellings which represent 12% of the total housing stock. Its members work together for a Europe that provides access to decent and affordable housing for all in communities which are socially, economically and environmentally sustainable and where all are enabled to reach their full potential.