

Brussels, 3 December 2015

**Press Release**

**Start at Home**

**Our homes hold the key to a fair green energy transition**

*On the “Buildings Day” of COP21 Housing Europe, the European Federation of Public, Cooperative and Social Housing presents its contribution to the Paris Climate Conference and joins the Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction.*

During the 12 days that the COP21 will be unfolding in Paris, the already refurbished part of the Housing Europe members' stock will save around 230.375 kWh/m<sup>2</sup>, contributing to lower energy bills for their tenants and limiting the environmental effects of energy consumption. The housing, and foremost the public, cooperative and social housing sector, representing more than 11% of the overall European stock, holds the key in a fair green energy transition. Housing Europe member organisations have already started delivering [on the offer they made](#) at the UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen (COP15) in 2009.

***What our homes can do***

Commitments and targets set by global leaders in Paris may be attracting the attention of the whole world but there are many reasons to believe that fight against climate change should start at home.

From 2010 to 2015 it is estimated that **1.843.000 dwellings** within their stock have been refurbished, resulting into an **average refurbishment rate of 6,2 % which means that annually**, our members refurbish approximately **1,2 % of their stock**. These dwellings offer an average **energy saving of 45 kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/year** which makes their **tenants** able to **save on average 724 € on their energy bill** per year thanks to the improved energy performance.

The **President of Housing Europe, Marc Calon highlights** that there is only one way for the housing sector to make a difference concerning climate change:

*“We have **invested more than 32,8 billion Euros** in refurbishment projects in 5 five years because we know that there is a multiple return both for our homes and most importantly of our planet. On the ground we support technical and social innovation which is the mix that can guarantee a sustainable future.”*

To secure a solid way forward Housing Europe members have led or taken part in initiatives generating ground-breaking solutions. **For example**, [Energiesprong](#) has made Net Zero Energy refurbishments a market reality that is financed of the energy cost

The European Federation of Public Cooperative and Social Housing

savings, since a house does not consume more energy than it produces ( $E=0$ ); plus, it only takes 10 days and comes with a 30-year energy performance warranty from the builder, while energy bills for residents stay the same.

### ***What do our homes need?***

At these challenging times continuation of support to the affordable housing sector should be fostered so that it can keep making an even more significant contribution to the fight against climate change. There are 4 key steps that have to be taken:

#### **1. Empowering and involving citizen-consumers and communities**

Therefore, the role of local partnerships with energy companies, the construction sector and housing providers will be crucial in improving the ability of tenants to use their homes the best way possible.

#### **2. Adequate finance for energy efficiency**

Strengthen conventional and alternative ways to provide long-term low-cost capital financing for the renovation of social housing.

#### **3. New energy market design**

Better, more effective combination/mix of Renewable Energy Sources (RES) and Energy Efficiency policies should be a priority.

#### **4. Enabling EU legislation**

Both the EPBD and the EED should be turned into instruments to support local partnerships using cost effective measures.

### ***Towards a Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction***

Housing Europe has formally endorsed- President, Marc Calon signed the support letter- the formation of a Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction.

This initiative led by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) acknowledges that the buildings and construction sector can contribute significantly to achieving climate goals and the common objective of limiting global warming to below 2°C. By publicly committing to support countries to implement ambitious actions in the buildings sector, including to meet their Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs), the Alliance proposes to leverage capabilities that will facilitate:

- 1. Communication** – Raising awareness and engagements
- 2. Collaboration** – Taking action to further enable public policies and market transformations towards climate neutrality
- 3. Solutions** – Offering programs for further ambition and locally adapted solutions that firmly put the buildings sector on a below 2 °C path.

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## ADDITIONAL INFO

- [Check out our full COP21 Offer “Start at Home”](#) including data regarding job creation related to energy refurbishment and the payback of the investments made.
- We have also opened up the discussion on Twitter [#StartatHome](#)
- Find out more about the [Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction](#)
- Contact our Deputy Secretary General and Policy Coordinator, Julien Dijol at [julien.dijol@housingeurope.eu](mailto:julien.dijol@housingeurope.eu)

*\* **Housing Europe** is the European Federation of Public, Cooperative & Social Housing. Established in 1988 it's a network of 43 national & regional federations gathering about 41.400 providers in 23 countries who manage over 26 million homes, about 11% of existing dwellings in Europe.*