



A BETTER FUTURE FOR OUR COMMUNITIES

*30 years providing
housing for all
for societies that
include & support*



**HOUSING
EUROPE**

1988 - 2018

A BETTER FUTURE FOR OUR COMMUNITIES IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY

By Cédric Van Styvendael, President of Housing Europe



There are two ways to approach the future, either react to the various developments or try to shape it proactively. In the case of Housing Europe, I think we are already heading down a one-way street and we have but the one option: which is to shape it. The occasion of the 30-year anniversary of our organisation offers us a good opportunity to take a step back and reflect on our very mission.

Today's highly globalized and interconnected world is changing at a very fast pace and we can feel the effects of this constant transformation happening at international scale at the local level almost immediately. The public, cooperative and social housing providers across Europe are facing big challenges, such as an ageing population, migration and increase in homelessness to name a few. These, as well as other defining factors in the urban and rural fabric, are calling on us to adapt the way we operate and provide homes.

In fact, we should not forget what gives shape to our vision statement, which is the reality of us securing more than «just» a roof for people. We work hard and we have to work harder to deliver services that are based on broad partnerships at local level with other relevant associations, such care providers, training centres and of course the local authorities. Now more than ever, we have to capitalize on strong alliances that will help us have an even bigger impact on improving people's lives. Housing is where everything starts.

Our rich legacy over the last thirty years can guide safely towards the future. No matter how much things change in our society, it is up to us to maintain the same level of commitment and positive footprint on our neighbourhoods. I am confident that we will continue to do that over the next thirty years as none of us are alone in this. We have the power of this network. We have to use it more. We have to use each other more than ever before in the past.

Once you have finished browsing through the pages of this special publication, I am sure that you will have drawn inspiration from the things we have achieved together as well as from the passion with which so many people have been involved in our family for a number of years. In the end, I am sure that you will agree with me that it is not our choice but rather our responsibility and obligation to shape a better future for our tenants and for our wider communities.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Van Styvendael', written in a cursive style.

KEY EVENTS

1985

The story begins in Strasbourg.

1990

The First European Seminar of CECODHAS Housing Europe.

1995

Social Housing Observation Unit begins work.

1988

CECODHAS is established – first General Assembly takes place in Rome on 4 March 1988.

1993

CECODHAS launches a European Social Housing Charter calling on governments to fund housing programmes to end homelessness in Europe.

1998

Closer ties with housing ministers – CECODHAS gains access as a recognized actor to the informal meeting of EU housing ministers. Launch of “CECODHAS News” in the same year.

2002

First full-time staff member appointed at CECODHAS representation in Brussels.

2004

Relaunch of the European Social Housing Observatory that remains active until the present day.

2005

Europe’s first social housing week in Brussels, 10-14 October.

2007

Housing Europe Centre inauguration in Brussels, Square de Meeûs 18.

2008

Launch of the Housing Europe flagship EU project “POWERHOUSE” that ran until 2010 and then was revamped as POWERHOUSE nearly Zero Energy Challenge (2012-2015).

2009

“Copenhagen (COP15) Offer” to fight Climate Change from Europe’s Cooperative and Social Housing providers.

2012

“Housing Europe Review: The Nuts and Bolts of the European social housing systems” published, a report that becomes point of reference for social housing in Europe

2013

Launch of the European Responsible Housing Initiative (ERHIN).

2015

Housing Europe joins the EU Urban Agenda.

Housing Europe publishes in May “The State of Housing in the EU” report that becomes the biennial compass of Europe’s housing sector.

2014

Revamp of the Housing Europe visual identity and website.

2016

Housing Europe runs the year-long “Housing for All” campaign that delivers the public, cooperative and social providers’ message at Habitat III Un Conference in Quito.

Launch of the second edition of the European Responsible Housing Awards.

2017

Housing Europe co-organises the first ever International Social Housing Festival, 13-21 June in Amsterdam.

“The State of Housing in the EU 2017” is published.



CECODHAS-Housing Europe through the eyes of TINEKE ZUIDERVAART

Housing Europe: what does it mean to me

Apologies, but I cannot help but still think of [it] as CECODHAS (Comité Européen de Coordination de l'Habitat Social or European Liaison Committee for Social Housing), the European organisation in which I was involved, in a number of capacities including as Executive Secretary, from 1992 until 2012.

It was and still is an organisation where members come together to work on the extremely important issue of housing, and specifically housing for those who cannot secure it on their own through the market.

Indeed, for myself and many others it was a platform where people from all over Europe would come together for meetings, but also for endless lunches and dinners, featuring deep, heavy discussions that would often continue until late at night at the hotel bar! And so, during my time, we, slowly but surely, all came to know, understand and appreciate each others' views. The North-West-South differences became less important when friendships developed.

In that sense, I am happy to report that, six years after I left the organisation, many friendships still exist and are very important to me!

Memories

It is very difficult to choose just the one – I could easily write a book full of memories.

In fact, my very first meeting was the 1992 Strasbourg Congress. I was a teacher at the time and was asked, through a friend at Nationale Woningraad (one of the two housing federations in the Netherlands), to accompany a group of Dutch housing directors who were participating in the congress.

So after many long presentations on housing, which I had found quite difficult to follow because it was all new to me, it was eventually time for the Q and A.

I'll never forget how, a man stood up, and began to read aloud, in French, off of what looked like at least 10 typed up pages, lasting what seemed like half an hour or so (and I am hardly exaggerating...) and that was only to ask one question... In later years I came to know him better: Zisis Theos!

CECODHAS had been lobbying for some time to be present at the annual Conference of EU Housing Ministers. If memory serves, we were allowed to attend as observer for the first time in Dresden in 1994. Three years later, in Amsterdam, we organised an exhibition of housing across member states for the Conference.

And then it was in Graz in 1998 that the CECODHAS President was asked to make an official contribution to the Conference itself and this became the custom in years to follow (Kuopio, Paris, Prague, etc.)

So, that first time in 1998, it was myself as Executive Secretary and Andrew Malone who was President, who were invited. We were met at the airport in Graz by an official delegation and our taxi to the hotel was escorted by motor riders! After the Conference, we all had dinner by candlelight in a old palace... Yeah, such a difficult job...!

Achievements

Representation in Brussels

Already in 1992 we were proposing a permanent presence in Brussels. It took years of meetings and discussions but finally, after a decision in 2000, we were very pleased to welcome our lobbyist in Brussels, Claire Roumet. This was a first step, and a short while later she became our General Secretary. This then meant the end of the Permanent Commission, as it was no longer necessary. Its final meeting was in Venice in 2004.

With the permanent presence in Brussels, the function of Executive Secretary was no longer needed, in fact, I was the last person to do this work and then left the role when President Nico van Velzen was succeeded by Luc Laurent in Bruges in 2002.

At last, in 2007, the Brussels office was officially opened, a very important step towards achieving continuity and efficiency!

Recognition on a European level Over the years, a great many steps were taken to be recognised as an important player in housing at the European level. Housing was not an official European matter or competence, but instead the responsibility of each member state, however of course there were many indirect links such as building regulations. And so, one major achievement was when we united with other organisations in the European Housing Forum and together managed to ensure that housing was considered at the EU level, for example in relation to Services of General Interest (SGI) in 2006.

Working groups Finally, I cannot leave out the important work done from the early days and onwards, not only in the three main Sections, but also in the thematic working groups. It was a really great, productive way to involve national and local specialists.

To name just a few of the working groups: EU Legislation, Accessible and Adaptable Social Housing, Urban Regeneration, Environment Friendly Building, Social Policies, East and Central Europe, Migrants and Ethnic Minorities, IGLOO, and so on...

To finish, I cannot and must not forget to mention the important role played by the European Housing Observatory, with Laurent Ghekiere!

One particular memory I have, was back in 1994 when the Netherlands instituted a significant change in housing financing, called "le brutéring.", where outstanding loans of housing associations were crossed out against future subsidies, a step towards making those organisations more independent from the state. A very technical development and therefore a rather complicated matter to explain, but this was no problem at all for Laurent Ghekiere, simply explaining it to all members in French, "le brutéring..."

OVERVIEW OF SOME MAJOR ADVOCACY ACHIEVEMENTS (2005-2018)

The permanent representation of Housing Europe (then CECODHAS) in Brussels began work in the form of a small team back in 2000. Our policy work has since been the effort of the secretariat supported by the advocacy work and expertise of our members with a permanent office in Brussels, in particular USH and GdW.

Step by step HE developed strong alliances and partnerships. We became members of various organisations whose objectives were in line with the interests of our own members and could defend them at a macro political level: the Social Platform, Cooperatives Europe, International Cooperative Alliance, Finance Watch, the Coalition for Energy Saving, SDG Watch Europe, International Cooperative Alliance, Finance Watch, the Coalition for Energy Saving, SDG Watch Europe. Further to that we developed partnerships with international organisations such as UNECE and Habitat for Humanity. We have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Cooperative Housing International which is part of the International Cooperative Alliance in order to strengthen the representation of the cooperative sector at every level of our work.

Thanks to those alliances and partnerships as well as an efficient cooperation with our members, we recognise the following achievements over the last decade:

2000	Recognition of the right to housing assistance in the European Charter of Fundamental Rights and recognition of housing policy as one of the important tools to achieve a more social Europe (European Social Agenda).	2014	Housing is eligible for the European Structural and Investment Funds without maximum ceiling per Member State. Between 2014 and 2020 about €6 billion will be spent in new construction and renovation of existing buildings.
2005	European Commission decision on state aid for SGEI exempt from notification the support given to social housing companies as part of their public service mission.	2015	Housing projects are supported by the European Fund for Strategic Investments ("Juncker Fund"). In 2018, more than €2 billion are invested in social housing via the Juncker Fund.
2006	Housing is excluded from the scope of the Services Directive.	2016	The public procurement directives allow for cooperation between social housing company (mutualisation of resources).
2006	Thanks to the lobbying of Housing Europe members, reduced VAT rates for construction and renovation of housing within the framework of social policy are prolonged.	2017	The European Pillar of Social Rights states that "access to social housing and housing assistance of good quality shall be provided for those in needs".
2009	Following the European economy recovery plan, housing is made eligible for the European Structural Funds (for a maximum of 4% of total ERDF spending per Member State). From 2009 to 2014 about 2 billion € are spent in housing-related projects.	2017	The opportunity to use ERDF support to build long-term infrastructure for refugees was opened by the Commission and made it possible to combine the funds with AMIF support.
2012 & 2018	The Energy Efficiency Directive and its revised version provide for a favour legislative environment recognising technical feasibility and cost efficiency as key criteria for the implement of energy efficiency measures.	2018	The Energy Performance of Building Directive provides for the decarbonisation of the building stock while recognising the need for a balanced approach between energy efficiency and renewable energy as well as the need for adequate skills and finance.



CLAIRE ROUMET Interview

What is, in your view, the added value that Housing Europe brings to its members, to policy makers and to the academic world?

To the academic world it is quite obvious for me, it helps the connection with reality on the ground. It provides aggregate figures thanks to its nature as a federation. So, this offers a valuable hub to get the data and to get a real grasp of what's going on.

To its members, it's a tank for innovation. But it also brings them the unique possibility to have a collective voice. And this gives power, it adds weight which the members might not have otherwise. And it creates a community, too. I think that's really something I still miss. I miss not being part of the Housing Europe community.

Because it's a community of interest in fighting for the right to housing and for a cohesive society.

To the policy makers, Housing Europe is a key platform because there is no other federation with the knowledge and the outreach capacity to its members on housing. Everything else is extremely fragmented. So, in short, Housing Europe brings housing to the policymakers.

How do you estimate that the role of the organisation will change in the course of the next 30 years?

I suppose it will change a lot. Not so much the role itself but mainly the way this is translated into action. So, the role will still be to fight for the right to housing, to make sure that the general policy landscape, the policy context is adequate, not promoting housing as a commodity but as a vital part of the future energy systems. Housing Europe should keep making sure that housing is seen as an economic stabilizer.

But the nature of the work will change, as I see it also in Energy Cities with the role of the local authorities changing a lot... New ways of making policy, new implementation mechanisms, pushing forward partnerships between the Public sector and the citizens. This is what Housing Europe needs to look at, namely how to ensure that there is kind of public-citizens partnership in delivering housing solutions. And that the policy and the legal landscape leave in this area as many possibilities as possible open

It's a different scheme, it's about granting money to one actor, it's about supporting very diverse forms of partnerships. So, the future may be more complex but there is also a lot more potential.

* Claire Roumet was appointed as the CECODHAS face in the capital of Europe in 2000, being thus the Secretary General for 14 years in a row. She is now Executive Director of Energy Cities.

What does Housing Europe mean to you?

I think that the word that comes to mind is concrete in the sense that what I really liked when I was working at Housing Europe is the fact that members are actually doing stuff. They are doers. They have very strong roots in their work.

What is your most vivid memory from your time at Housing Europe, if you can pick one?

Well, it's always difficult to pick just one... But definitely I would mention the first big debate, outside the strict housing scope, with Richard Wilkinson.

He gave an inspiring speech about how inequalities are inefficient in society. It's been a great exchange with a key thinker. That would be my first thought.

But I would also mention a roundtable at the European Committee of the Regions to which we had been invited, with Jeremy Rifkin and the Vice-President of the European Commission at that time, Günther Oettinger.

We talked about the Third Industrial Revolution and how important is to completely involve the housing sector that should be 100% carbon neutral.

So, I think it was really important to be seen as an industrial partner at such an extremely high-level event. I remember being the only young woman among numerous older men (laughs).

What has been the most significant achievement of the organisation during your time?

I think this is quite easy and probably most people would answer the same... It was the moment when we made the European Commission change its view, making it possible to use the Structural Funds in housing.

Before that, the Structural Funds could be used to support everything but nuclear production and housing. And it was thanks to the Eastern European members, since the enlargement created a new momentum, supporting our long-standing request.

30 YEARS THROUGH THE FAST LANE

Our Research Coordinator, Alice Pittini is taking you on a flash trip through the major housing trends over the last 30 years.

Housing markets across Europe and the globe went through booms, busts, and there are signs of bubbles taking shape again.

The risks of overleveraged financialization of housing and speculation on homes of low income households in countries like the US, UK, Ireland, Spain and the Netherlands are clear after the financial crisis. This might have been averted if the social outcomes and impacts for households and communities would have been tracked and would have re-diverted financial means into more socially responsible investments.

Home ownership increased dramatically since the Eighties, driven by socio-demographic change, the development of the mortgage markets but also policy choices towards privatization of large parts of public housing.

Housing policy in many countries was decentralized with stronger competences to regions/regional states and the local level.

With a few exceptions countries in the EU shifted the focus from producing new social housing to paying benefits directly to residents. In the light of current emerging housing shortages at the local level, this policy trend may well have to be reversed.

Social rental housing as a share of the overall housing sector has decreased in most countries, but the sector has been also deeply transformed with increasing professionalism and diversification of activities and at the same time a stronger social role/commitment.

As 'Airbnb' type of short term lettings are spreading in recent years, people who need to rent a home to make their life in the city are being pushed out. However, a number of community-driven initiatives are popping up across Europe, from CLTs to coops. This is the kind of 'collaborative economy' we would like to see encouraged by the EU.

Compared to 30 years ago, the question of energy efficiency and use of renewables has taken up a central place in the way we work and social, public and cooperative housing providers are seen as strong players in leading the energy transition.

The digital revolution has deeply transformed every area of human life and our societies, and it's bringing about new developments also in the way we plan, build and manage our homes and services to residents.

Overall, and most important: having a roof over one's head is still central for people's lives and wellbeing, but it's not getting any easier particularly for those on low incomes. As the market is failing many, our role must become increasingly important.

DAVID ORR *Interview*



What does Housing Europe mean to you?

I've been involved in Housing Europe for 28 years and all the way through that what I've found is – friendship, companionship, and ideas, and a willingness to share ideas. I think during that time, Housing Europe as an institution has become a very important voice for housing in the European Union and elsewhere, and I think it has done a pretty impressive job.

What is your most vivid memory from your time at Housing Europe, if you can pick one?

My most vivid memory is in the period when I had the honour of being President - we celebrated our 25th anniversary and I was able to preside over the celebrations that we had in Paris, which included a really spectacular dinner on the Seine, with the Eiffel tower lit up and people really enjoying each other's company, being able to celebrate what we'd achieved but still understanding that there was work to do. So that's a pretty vivid memory.

What has been the most significant achievement of the organisation during your time?

So, two – one is a personal thing - I think if I've done nothing else, I take credit for Housing Europe being called Housing Europe rather than CECODHAS which never meant anything to anyone. So I'm very pleased about that!

But right at the heart of the mission of Housing Europe has been this engagement with the EU which had always turned its back on housing. I remember when I was Vice President - representing Housing Europe at a conference in Bratislava where I made the case, and this was something that we'd been working on for a long time, that if the EU was serious about tackling climate change and energy inefficiency, they would have to start with housing. And there were senior people from the Commission who were at that and they said, "You know... that's right, we agree". And it was in that period of time that I think the lobbying that Housing Europe did persuaded the EU that it had to have a view, at the very least, about the energy efficiency of our existing homes and I think that was a breakthrough moment and that has made quite a profound difference to the lives of many, many Europeans and I think that is an important achievement.

What is, in your view, the added value that Housing Europe brings to its members, to policy makers and to the academic world?

I think we are increasingly good at sharing and I've always thought that... Well, this may not be a surprising thing to say right now, but Britain has a tendency to be a bit isolationist. I do think that the vote to leave the EU is a reflection of that and the fact that we have a tendency to think that, if we haven't thought about it it's not worth thinking. I think our engagement with Housing Europe has demonstrated that we do have solutions and ideas that other people can pick up on, but other people have solutions and ideas that we can pick up on and mould and make work in our places, with our challenges, and I think that's been really important.

How do you estimate that the role of the organisation will change in the course of the next 30 years?

I think that the challenges of providing adequate housing for everyone are going to get greater, not less. Having a strong, consistent voice for housing in the individual countries of Europe, but also collectively across the continent of Europe, not just in the EU, but actually across all of the peoples of Europe is going to become increasingly important. I think that Housing Europe has an important job to play in helping us to develop a narrative that puts us on the front foot so that we're not always on the back foot saying "No" to something that any government is doing but saying, "We have ideas, we have solutions, we have ways that can make this work. Look to what we are doing and copy it and do it more" and being in control of that narrative. In the National Housing Federation at present, we are running a programme called "Creating our Future" – the ambition is that housing associations understand that they don't just have to inherit a future that other people define but they can think to themselves, "What does good look like for us, in ten years, in twenty years, in thirty years, and how are we going to get there?" I think Housing Europe has the opportunity to develop that kind of narrative to create our European housing future.

* David Orr has been involved in Housing Europe since 1990, serving as President from 2008 to 2010. David will retire from his position as Chief Executive at the National Housing Federation (NHF) at the end of September 2018.

INNOVATION FIRST!

For more than 15 years, Housing Europe has been supporting EU-wide initiatives and projects that promote innovative solutions to timely challenges and using evidence to help shape the policies of the future. Below, we have put together a summary of the key platforms that have helped our network interact with leading organisations and institutions from a wide range of sectors, pushing our knowledge and the way we operate forward.

POWER HOUSE nearly Zero Energy Challenge (nZEC)

was the first and the flagship EU project for Housing Europe that started in 2008 under the name "POWERHOUSE" and was revamped in 2012 under an updated name with the support of the Intelligent Energy Europe programme to provide a structure for an exchange between social housing practitioners of the public, cooperative & social housing sector to learn from each other about energy performance of buildings and to inform policy makers of the outcomes of this exchange.

• www.powerhouseeurope.eu

The European Core Learning Outcomes for Integration of Support and Housing (ELOSH)

was a European project that addressed the need for Continuing Vocational Education & Training on the integration of support and housing for people with support needs. The initiative focused on the transfer of innovative learning results and training materials on the integration of housing with health, care and support. This material promoted the co-production of services including citizen's needs as its core.

• www.elosh.eu

The **HOST project**, launched in 2011, part of The Ambient Assisted Living (AAL), has been a setup of experimentations and exchange of practices between 4 European countries – Italy, France, UK and Spain – and enabling the dialogue between different models of social housing organisations, such as the French generalist model of social housing and the Italian and English specialised model and the collaboration between different actors, such as housing providers, universities and institutional actors. The partners of the project will develop a digital infrastructure of the social housing and a gateway to their services.

• www.host-aal.eu

The European Responsible Housing Initiative (ERHIN)

is first online resource center entirely dedicated to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in the not-for-profit, public and cooperative housing sector. The initiative reflects the sector's commitment and contribution to sustainable and inclusive growth in Europe, also joining forces with tenants' associations. The project has triggered the European Declaration on Responsible Housing, the Responsible Housing CSR Code of Conduct and the first edition of the European Responsible Housing Awards.

• www.responsiblehousing.eu

In the E3SoHo project

on ICT for Energy Efficiency in Social Housing, Housing Europe provided a socio-economic analysis of the use of ICT in social housing. The overall aim of the project was to implement integrated and replicable ICT-based solutions for the reduction of energy consumption by providing tenants of social housing direct feedbacks on their consumption. There were three test pilots in Spain, Italy and Poland.

• www.e3soho.eu

SHELTER was about improving the energy performance of buildings while reducing costs for Social Housing Providers & Residents by improving the planning, design and commissioning along the whole renovation supply chain. This EU funded project involved 6 Social Housing Organisations, 1 Research Centre and 3 European Professional Federations, including Housing Europe. One of the outcomes was the SHELTER Guide with recommendations a methodology for social housing providers on choosing the best adapted delivery methods. The closing event took place in association with the Irish EU Presidency.

Energiesprong has made Net Zero Energy refurbishments a market reality that is financed of the energy cost 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.

• energiesprong.eu

Taking stock, looking forward. Our current and future EU projects.

HEART is a multifunctional retrofit toolkit including different components (ICT, BEMS, HVAC, BIPV and Envelope Technologies) that cooperate to transform an existing building into a smart building. The Toolkit thus provides high energy saving levels, energy fluxes optimization, data exchange, stakeholders' active involvement and Smart Grid interactivity. At the centre of the project are two buildings managed by social housing providers. One is managed by Est Metropole Habitat near Lyon in France. The other one is from ACER and situated near Regio Emilia in Italy.

Housing Europe is involved in the dissemination of the results, the intervention context, the exploitation of the project results and the demonstration activities, especially on the analysis of building users' acceptance and satisfaction.

• www.heartproject.eu

TripleA-reno

wants to make nZE (nearly Zero Energy) renovations attractive for consumers and end-users. The project will work on improving the information and communication on real, proven performances of energy usage, indoor quality and personal health by developing an open and end-user-centred gamified (based on game-design elements and game principles) platform for decision support, quality validation and community building. The Open Gamified Platform will solve barriers concerning user behaviour and help to raise consumer awareness.

Housing Europe is involved in the dissemination of the results, the targeting of information and communication to end-users, exploitation and EU wide replication and demonstration and the validation of methodologies.

HOUSEFUL will deliver innovative circular solutions and services for the EU housing sector. The HOUSEFUL project proposes an innovative shift towards a circular economy by demonstrating the feasibility of an integrated systemic service composed of 11 circular solutions to become more resource efficient throughout the lifecycle of a building, including energy, materials, waste and water aspects. HOUSEFUL concept will be large scale demonstrated at 4 demo-sites, adapting the concept to different scenarios, including in social housing buildings. The two social housing buildings are located in Austria (Vienna) one of which is managed by social housing provider NEUES LEBEN and two in Spain (Sabadell & Terrassa) managed by the public housing provider Agència de l'Habitatge de Catalunya.

Housing Europe is involved in the co-creation process, large scale demo buildings (especially improving access to finance through alternative investments) and in providing policy recommendations at local, regional, national and EU scale to increase the circularity level of the housing sector.

• **Keep an eye on all Housing Europe projects on our website: <https://bit.ly/1WPC120>**

* For questions contact Sébastien Garnier, Innovation and Project Manager sebastien.garnier@housingeurope.eu

LAURENT GHEKIERE

Interview

What does Housing Europe mean to you?

Housing Europe represents both the diversity of social housing, its actors and particularities in the EU but also the convergence of issues and developments. A good example of a European network.

What is your most vivid memory from your time at Housing Europe?

A meeting in Berlin with our German colleagues from GdW and the housing association of the city of Berlin on the day the Berlin Wall fell. Unforgettable!

What has been the most significant achievement of the organisation during your time?

The recognition of social housing as a Service of General Economic Interest (SGEI), the EU decision on the compatibility of state aid to social housing and its exclusion from the services directive.



What is, in your view, the added value that Housing Europe brings to its members, to policy makers and to the academic world?

A real expertise on housing in the EU and the capacity to produce the biannual report on the state of housing in the EU.

How do you estimate that the role of the organisation will change in the course of the next 30 years?

Housing Europe will continue its necessary development and will become a key player in the EU to tackle the housing crisis in major European cities and advise policy makers both in Brussels and in the Member States.

* Laurent has been involved in Housing Europe since June 1988 when the first executive committee was held in Bordeaux during the French congress of social housing. He is still Director of European Affairs for the Union Sociale pour l'Habitat (USH).





Meeting with Jacques Delors – 1987



Constituent General Meeting in Brussels – 1988



Meeting in Valencia – 1996



Group photo in Sweden – 1999



First Cecdhas Conference in Strasbourg – 1992



Study visit in Barcelona – 1992



Group photo in Malmö – 2001



CECODHAS marches for Social Europe – 2002



Meeting in Athens – 1993



Team preparing meeting dossier – 1994



Social Housing Week in Brussels – 2005



Housing Europe new office inauguration in Brussels – 2007



Housing conference in Montpellier – 1995



Group photo in Brussels – 1995



Conference in Vienna – 2007



Conference in the Paris City Hall – 2008



Jeremy Rifkin at Housing Europe meeting at the Committee of the Regions, Brussels – 2008



Public Section meeting in Chania – 2009



Study visit in Copenhagen – 2013



Visiting Solar Decathlon Europe in Versailles – 2014



Arriving at the meeting in Mallorca – 2009



European Parliament Hearing on use of Structural Funds in housing – 2010



European Responsible Housing Code of Conduct signed in Brussels – 2014



Team after meetings in Lisbon – 2015



Meeting in Warsaw – 2011



Summer Colloquium in Leuven – 2013



Housing Europe Family in Geneva – 2016



25 year anniversary reception at the European Parliament – 2013



Conference in European UN Headquarters in Geneva – 2016



Housing Europe Conference during the 1st International Social Housing Festival in Amsterdam – 2017

MARCO CORRADI Interview



What does Housing Europe mean to you?

Housing Europe is a large community of men and women coming from different countries, territories and cultures, united by a common goal: sustainable housing for all. The members of Housing Europe believe in their social mission and together identify the best suitable solutions, improving the lives of millions of European citizens.

Housing Europe is a place for extraordinary comparison, collaboration and exchange of experiences that accelerates the ability to prevent and tackle challenges with a strong innovative drive.

What is your most vivid memory from your time at Housing Europe?

From a personal point of view, I had the opportunity to meet many people from different countries and I realized that the world is «smaller» than it seems. I appreciated the continuous introduction to ideas that makes you feel really part of a united community: Europe.

From a professional point of view, Housing Europe has been a great opportunity for growth, based on merit, skills, capacity continuously stimulated by debate.

Housing Europe is a laboratory where you have the opportunity to develop projects, actively participate, learn, compare and share.

What has been the most significant achievement of the organisation during your time?

Maintaining the unity of so many different associations and even growing over the years is, in my opinion, the first result achieved. Even in spite of difficulties, we have been able to adapt to changes and present ourselves as a credible and innovative body in a historical period characterized by great contradictions.

Today, we are an important and competent reference point for our members and for the international institutions and associations. Housing Europe, thanks to its strong capacity for analysis, action and experimentation through projects, is a well respected interlocutor.

What is, in your view, the added value that Housing Europe brings to its members, to policy makers and to the academic world?

Housing Europe, through its members, has a direct connection with the ground, where the various communities are faced with a number of social issues, and tackles challenges in the general interest of citizens.

For this reason, over the years the organisation has invested heavily in analysis and research. In Housing Europe today, we are talking not only about social housing in general, but about integration, young people, the elderly, smart cities, smart buildings, smart communities, energy efficiency and urban regeneration, BIM and new services for living.

The “world of social housing” includes a variety of issues that Housing Europe addresses in their complexity through in-depth comparative analysis, supported by a strong capacity to identify solutions that can be applied effectively and even replicated at a later stage, at European, national, regional and local level.

How do you estimate that the role of the organisation will change in the course of the next 30 years?

There are many big changes currently unfolding and the unknowns are many... However, I am confident that Housing Europe is in position to maintain a leading role in international exchange, in promoting innovation, aimed at the well-being of European citizens.

* Marco Corradi has been involved in Housing Europe for more than two decades. Among other contributions, Marco has led from 2010 to 2014 the “Energy Expert Network”, the permanent working group within Cecodhas which is dedicated to the energy efficiency of buildings. Until present day, he is Member of the Board of Directors of Housing Europe representing Federcasa, while being President of ACER Reggio Emilia, a public housing company based in Reggio Emilia, Italy.

WHAT THE BRUSSELS SCENE SAYS ABOUT US



“Housing is at the crossroads of a considerable number of policies which are of key concern for local and regional authorities at EU level: social rights, the energy transition, EU investment through Cohesion Policy and the European Fund for Strategic Investment, public services and competition policy. This is why Housing Europe and its network is an indispensable partner for the European Committee of the Regions, both in terms of expertise and as a political ally in the fight to anchor housing policy as a cross-cutting priority to EU policies. Housing deserves indeed its own, proper EU agenda! Let’s do our utmost to build it!”

Karl-Heinz Lambertz, President of the European Committee of the Regions



“Promoting people-centred services is integral to the work of Social Platform, and Housing Europe is a frontrunner in advocating for access to quality social housing services. Having been a member of Social Platform for many years, Housing Europe’s invaluable local, national and EU level expertise is clearly reflected in our joint policy positions. We look forward to many more years of collaboration to secure a strong, sustainable and inclusive EU that leaves no one behind!”

Kélig Puyet, Director of the Social Platform – The platform of European Social NGOs



“Housing Europe and FEANTSA share a long history of cooperation. Homelessness cannot be solved without affordable housing solutions, and who better to turn to than to the social housing sector represented by Housing Europe. We are very grateful for the commitment of Housing Europe and its members to help address the homelessness crisis and look forward to exiting joint initiatives in the future. Congratulations with your 30th birthday.”

Freek Spinnewijn, Director of FEANTSA – The European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless



For many years, Housing Europe has been a very active partner of the European Parliament’s URBAN Intergroup. This is one of the first organisations which joined MEPs working on urban issues. With its 30 years of experience, Housing Europe provides a unique expertise on Social, public and co-operative housing. This is key when EU lawmakers are drafting policies ensuring access to decent and affordable housing for all in communities which are socially, economically and environmentally sustainable.

Jan Olbrycht, MEP (EPP, Poland) & President of the European Parliament URBAN Intergroup

STAFF'S CORNER



SORCHA EDWARDS

"Dedication to common goals coupled with pragmatism about getting the job done. These are the threads that brings the different strands of our work together and make me proud to represent Housing Europe."



JULIEN DIJOL

"Helping providers across Europe to improve housing conditions and neighbourhoods while sharing the value of fairness with colleagues and members is what drives me every day at Housing Europe!"



ALICE PITTINI

"Working for Housing Europe is being part of a great team – not in Brussels but also with our members across Europe – one that works on concrete key issues never losing sight of the principle of ensuring housing for all."



MICHALIS GOUDIS

"My communication work for Housing Europe helped me understand the modern world better, draw inspiration at personal level and feel indeed part of a dynamic movement that changes people's lives."



EDIT LAKATOS

"Working at Housing Europe has tangible impact. It offers professional and personal satisfaction that we contribute to sustainable thinking and often structural change across Europe."



SÉBASTIEN GARNIER

"Our members care about providing good housing for all in sustainable communities. It is motivating to contribute to their constant efforts to improve and innovate, together with great colleagues."



MARIEL WHELAN

"I believe homes in sustainable communities for all, is the solution to the "Housing Question", as well as global inequality and injustice, so seeing this in action at Housing Europe is an educational, inspiring privilege."



ABDERRAHIM KHAIRI

"Together with my great team, I feel like we can do so much at European level to speak up and stand up for those who cannot make their voices heard."



ALESSANDRO CESALE

"Working for Housing Europe has been a wonderful experience from day one. I was delighted and grateful to be part of this network and the values it stands for."
After 8 years at Housing Europe, Alessandro is now the Secretary General of Eurhonet.

WE ARE OUR MEMBERS

We joined Housing Europe because...

- “... more than 20 years ago to learn about the European policy system related to housing, gain experience and work together with our colleagues from other Member States for the realization of a common European legal framework.”
Tamás Farkas, Director of LOSZ (Hungary)
- “... since we are a small country, it is always inspiring and valuable to us to connect with other organisations from all over the world. Even if the political and economic conditions in different countries may not be the same. There are challenges and issues which do not end at the front door, the garden gate, the housing complex or the country border.”
Urs Hauser, Director of the Swiss Housing Cooperatives
- “... we strongly believe that it is essential to share practices and knowledge at international level, to promote research projects with European Funds, to be part of an organisation able to make a positive lobbying to promote housing policies at a European Level, in an age where national contexts are increasingly related to the choices of the European Commission.”
Rossana Zaccaria, President of Legacoop Abitanti, the Italian Association of Inhabitants' Cooperatives
- “... we want to be closer to Europe! We are in a process of reform and we want to get the best from the experiences of our sister organisations. We also believe that other organisations can benefit from our good and less good experiences. Being a member of Housing Europe will keep us up-to-date with news in policies at EU level. Last, but not least, being a member of HE will give us the possibility to have a voice in the decisions that EU will take in the future and that might affect housing.”
Doris Andoni, Former General Director of National Housing Agency of Albania
- “... we feel that together we are stronger. Affordable housing is a major challenge all around Europe and we need to work together to tackle the issue.”
Jaana Närö, President of KOVA (Finland)
- “... the European Commission has a big impact on social housing in the Netherlands, despite the fact that Housing is officially not a policy area of the EC. Take the 'Dutch case', where a decision of the Commission paved the way for an income ceiling in the Dutch social housing, for instance.”
Marnix Norder, President of Aedes – The Federation of Dutch Social Housing Associations
- “... we need to join forces with our European counterparts with regard to legislative proposals, but also to inspire and to be inspired by the good practices that are carried out in Europe.”
Anders Nordstrand, CEO of SABO (Sweden)
- “... we believe that housing is – and will be more and more – also shaped at European level, through financial regulations, energy requirements etc. Also, as VVH believes a lot in sharing experiences between our members, we are also convinced that it is very interesting to do this with colleagues from other countries, too.”
Björn Mallants, Director of VVH (Belgium – Flanders)
- “... whatever the British electorate may say, the UK is a European country. Europe is rich with extraordinary people and has some of the best housing practice in the world. Why would we not want to be part of that?”
David Ireland, Director of World Habitat (formerly known as BSHF)
- “... it is the strongest network of housing organisations in Europe today, a dynamic voice in housing debates and umbrella-organization with high capacity for raising housing policy issues at European level.”
Andres Jaadla, CEO of EKÜL (Estonia)
- “... we believe in the power of the European idea: Being stronger together.”
Axel Gedaschko, President of GdW (Germany)

- “... cross-regional cooperation and knowledge transfer will be in the future of paramount importance and will constitute a competitive advantage.”
Dr. Klaus Lugger, Former Head of GBV International Relations (Austria)
- “... housing is diverse in different countries. Experiences from other countries help us develop different operating models in Finland and meet changing market needs.”
Jarmo Kuosa, CEO of Kunta-asunnot Oy/ Municipal Housing Ltd. (Finland)
- “... to learn more about the various experiences of social housing in Europe.”
Guy Entringer, Director of SNHBM (Luxembourg)
- “... it is a strong platform at EU level of like-minded housing federations with a strong mutual learning and exchange that would benefit our sector in Ireland.”
Dr. Donal McManus, CEO of the Irish Council for Social Housing (ICSH)
- “... as a new organization we need to quickly adapt best housing practices to our country. Housing Europe provides unique opportunity for learning, networking and sharing. Current trends in Housing Europe create new opportunities for non-EU countries to benefit from and contribute to the network.”
Ara Nazinyan, Executive Director of ASBA (Armenia)
- “... we benefit hugely from learning about the experiences, innovation and knowledge of our colleagues across the continent. As co-operators we naturally believe that we can achieve more working together than we can on our own. Decisions are made in Brussels that have important consequences for families and communities across Europe and we find that Housing Europe is hugely effective in making heard the voices of housing providers and the people who use their services.”
Kieron Brennan, CEO of Co-operative Housing Ireland
- “... it's where the European action is! Housing Europe gives us the opportunity to discuss everything with other members and dig deeper regarding European issues and institutions.”
João Carvalhosa, President of CECODHAS Portugal
- “... it's vital that housing bodies share knowledge and good practice and learn from each other.”
Mary Taylor, Former CEO of SFHA (Scotland)
- “... this gives us useful information about housing policy and housing conditions in other European countries. Housing Europe is expanding our horizon in our national affairs.”
Thor Eek, CEO of NBBL (Norway)
- “... it represents our interests in the institutions and authorities of the EU and because meetings and discussions with other members are a way of learning from each other and growing.”
Luca Talluri, President of Federcasa (Italy)
- “... we have to look further than our own borders: it's important to have a voice at the European level.”
Ben Forier, Director of VMSW (Belgium, Flanders)
- “... Housing Europe is an important voice at the EU level for us as cooperative housing providers. We benefit a lot from discussions with other members and the meetings in Brussels.”
Pernilla Bonde, CEO of HSB (Sweden)
- “... sharing information and initiatives with other European countries is a source of knowledge and inspiration. As housing is not formally a European competence, an organization like Housing Europe is also essential to bring the focus on the cross-cutting character of the right of housing at that level.”
Alain Rosenoer, General Manager of SWL (Belgium, Wallonia)

* All quotes above are taken from the series of interviews we have been running on our blog under the title “10 minutes with...” that introduces our audience the people leading the work of our member organisations.

You may read the complete interviews here <https://bit.ly/2LaUU0F>

ALBANIA

- National Housing Agency (EKB)

AUSTRIA

- Austrian Federation of Limited-Profit Housing Associations (GBV)

BELGIUM

- Federation of Housing Co-operatives of Brussels (FESOCOLAB)
- Walloon Housing Fund (FLW)
- Housing Company of the Brussels Capital Region (SLRB)
- Walloon Housing Company (SWL)
- Association of Flemish Social Housing Companies (VWH)
- Flemish Company for Social Housing (VMSW)

CZECH REPUBLIC

- Union of Czech and Moravian Co-operative Housing (SCMBD)

DENMARK

- BL – Danish Social Housing

ESTONIA

- Estonian Union of Co-operative Housing Associations (EKÜL)

FINLAND

- Municipal Housing Ltd (Kunta-asunnot Oy)
- Association for Advocating Affordable Rental Housing (KOVA)

FRANCE

- Social Union for Housing (USH)
- Social Enterprises for Housing (ESH)
- National Federation of Cooperative Associations for Low-Rent Housing (FNCOOP HLM)
- Public Local Organizations for Social Housing (OPH)
- National Federation of Regional Social Housing Associations (FNAR HLM)

GERMANY

- Federal Association of German Housing and Real Estate Companies (GdW)

HUNGARY

- Hungarian Association of Housing Cooperatives and Condominiums (LOSZ)

IRELAND

- Irish Council for Social Housing
- Co-operative Housing Ireland

ITALY

- Federcasa
- Alliance of Italian Cooperatives in the Housing Sector

LUXEMBOURG

- Fund for Housing Development (FDLH)
- National Affordable Housing Company (SNHBM)

NETHERLANDS

- Association of Dutch Housing Corporations (Aedes)

NORWAY

- Co-operative Housing Federation of Norway (NBBL)

POLAND

- Polish Chamber of Commerce of Low Cost Social Housing (TBS)
- Auditing Union of Housing Co-operatives activity (ZRSM RP)

PORTUGAL

- CECODHAS Portugal

SPAIN

- Spanish Social Housing Association (AVS)
- Spanish Confederation of Housing Cooperatives (CONCOVI)

SWEDEN

- Swedish Association of Public Housing Companies (SABO)
- HSB Housing Cooperative Association
- RIKSBYGGGEN Housing Cooperative Association

TURKEY

- Central Union of Turkish Urban Cooperatives (TÜRKKENT)

UNITED KINGDOM

- National Housing Federation
- Scottish Federation of Housing Associations
- Northern Ireland Federation of Housing Associations
- Northern Ireland Housing Executive
- Community Housing Cymru
- World Habitat



PARTNERS

- ▶ Fondazione Housing Sociale (Italy)
- ▶ Habitat for Humanity
- ▶ Social Housing & Property Rights in Kosovo
- ▶ TEI – Technical Educational Institute of Athens

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

- ARMENIA – National Social Housing Association Foundation (ASBA)
- SWITZERLAND – Swiss Housing Cooperatives

328,481 members of staff employed by local housing providers

Total number of dwellings renovated in 2014: 1,283,231

Total number of dwellings completed in 2014: 301,878

Housing Members invested 31,895,287,258 € in 2015

7,198 members of staff employed by the national federations



From Strength to Strength: SHAPING THE FUTURE WE WANT

By Sorcha Edwards, Secretary General, Housing Europe

“For all of us, the first step on the road to success is recognising our strengths, and once we identify those strengths we need to invest in them.”

Housing Europe’s message looking toward the occasion of 30 years since its foundation – For the future we want to invest in Europe’s strengths, invest in those 46,000 local public, social and cooperative housing providers scattered around our cities, towns and villages, big and small, old and new. They add to the diversity and resilience of communities that makes Europe strong.

Every day we see the proof that public, social, cooperative housing providers can be locomotives for better lives and neighbourhoods, better cities and societies. We however also see how financial and policy condition can radically impact work, in NL alone the level of new production by housing associations dropped from 40,000 to 20,000. In Italy between 2005 and 2014 dropped by 50% to 4,500 units. Housing Europe’s priority is to ensure that Europe recognises this sector in its diversity as one of its key strengths and ensures that its laws and instruments promote the stable, financial framework it needs to flourish.

The future is Playing to our Strengths

No other geographic region on the planet has this resource. The 46,000 local responsible housing providers brought together under Housing Europe is a key strength for our region. Meeting the 2030 Global Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 11 on Sustainable Cities and Communities which commits signatories to ‘make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable’ requires making the right housing policies. In the Global New Urban Agenda UN Habitat has called for Housing at the Centre however this is an even bigger challenge without dedicated expert housing providers.. Putting our sector in this global perspective, as Housing Europe does, shows our governments at local, national, European level that these organisations, some in existence for over 100 years are a priceless strength to be fostered and supported and replicated in other regions to meet our global goals.

The future is Equal

Public investment in social housing represents just 0.66% of European GDP, historically low and on a downward trend. The lack of adequate affordable housing is accentuating inequalities in our societies. Housing is now the single highest expenditure for Europeans at about a quarter of total EU’s household budget. When you can’t afford a good home, you live in un-healthy, overcrowded conditions or become homeless. Housing inequality is both affected by income inequality and contributes to it. Spatial segregation can result in limits in access to transport, education, health and sense of community. Inequality affects everyone and Housing Europe, through its campaigning and lobbying, sends the clear message of how our sector is counteracting growing inequalities.

The future is Urban

Currently the lack of affordable, sustainable and energy efficient housing is one of the biggest risks faced by our cities. Urbanisation is a fact of life in Europe as we head towards 80% of us living in cities by 2050. Getting it right is not. Future-proofing cities means making sure they can welcome students, low and middle-income groups, new-comers. Without adequate housing provision at the right price, this is no longer possible. OECD warns of growing numbers being excluded from our cities. Affordable housing and jobs are not in the same place. Cities need a housing supply that the market does not answer. The supply must address homelessness, low and middle-income groups. It must address the needs of refugees students, of tourists, of young families, of the elderly. Housing providers are increasingly enlarging their scope to cover these diverse asks.

The future is connected

The populist vote has reached highest levels since 1940. Loss of connections and trust is one of the causes. The anti-migration vote was one of the key reasons behind the Brexit vote. In a world of growing instability, local connections and quality local services are the way forward to foster trust and address divisions. Cooperative, public, social housing providers connect people with each other, with services, with what they need to improve their lives.

The future is circular

poorest regions. The current movement towards making the economy circular has placed housing providers at the forefront in many regions. Local jobs, more efficient use of local materials for construction, locally produced renewable energy means better management of water and waste, as well as more resilient neighbourhoods.

The future we want requires responsible finance

Macro economic conditions make European real estate a target for investment. Among the top 5 most interesting sectors for private investment are: private rental residential, student housing and retirement or assisted living. Much of this investment however is speculative and will contribute to inequalities linked with unaffordability. Housing Europe at EU

level is at the forefront of the work to re-balance this situation. Continuous collaboration with European Banks has resulted in 14 billion Euro worth of loans to the social housing sector. Work with DG Regio has resulted in 6 billion of allocation of EU funds to our sector 2014-2020. The annual costs of 194 billion of inadequate housing for our economies has been recognised by the European Foundation for Living and Working Conditions through a study contributed to by Housing Europe’s Observatory. The Observatory also contributed to a report endorsed by the European Commission calling for an annual increased investment of € 57 billion in affordable energy efficient housing.

The next step on the way to the future we want is to remove obstacles to this investment and position the sector at national and regional and local level to channel those funds into the responsible housing needs.

Housing Europe HQ has developed from a one-woman organisation 30 years ago to a 6-person team today. We are the voice of the responsible housing sector in Brussels. Housing Europe is called upon to join European expert committees on issues ranging from integration of migrants to energy efficiency to structural funds. The Housing Europe’s State of Housing publication is a point of reference in Brussels and beyond and has opened doors such as that to contribute to the high-level report on boosting investment in social infrastructure. Our report on uptake of cohesion funds in housing is the only report of its kind and its usefulness has been publicly recognised by entities such as the EIB. Our work supporting countries with housing systems in transition is backed by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. Our work on Basel macro prudential rules on banks, VAT directive and Energy Efficiency Directive ensures that members’ concerns are reflected in legislative outcomes.

Our daily work is a delicate balance between policy shaping and advocacy, research and intelligence gathering and ‘working out-loud’ by communicating on our actions and achievements. However, we as a team also recognise our strength, which is the continuous contribution of our members through daily interaction, our working committees, board, General Assembly, conferences, visits, social media. This continuous exchange and reinforcement across and between members and the team at the Brussels office is our lifeblood and is what will bring Housing Europe as an organisation from strength to strength.

Together let’s pave the way for a Europe that invests in its strengths!



The European Federation of
Public, Cooperative and Social Housing



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Housing Europe is the European Federation of Public, Cooperative and Social Housing

Established in 1988, it is a network of 45 national and regional federations which together gather about 43.000 public, social and cooperative housing providers in 24 countries. Altogether they manage over 26 million homes, about 11% of existing dwellings in the EU.

Social, public and co-operative housing providers have a vision of a Europe which provides access to decent and affordable housing for all in communities which are socially, economically and environmentally sustainable and where everyone is enabled to reach their full potential.