



78th session of the Committee on Housing and Land Management

Capacity Building & Disseminating best practices in affordable housing

**How the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing inspired practical
steps to promote sustainable housing at regional, national and local levels**

**Sorcha Edwards, Secretary General
8 November 2017, Geneva**

Housing Europe bi-annual report

- Unique report in Europe that reflects the state of the housing sector in the continent.
- Detailed statistics per Member State
- The latest housing trends in a cross-country observation
- Thematic case studies
- Analysis of the interaction of housing policies and EU policies
- Local housing markets in the EU

Impact of 2017 edition

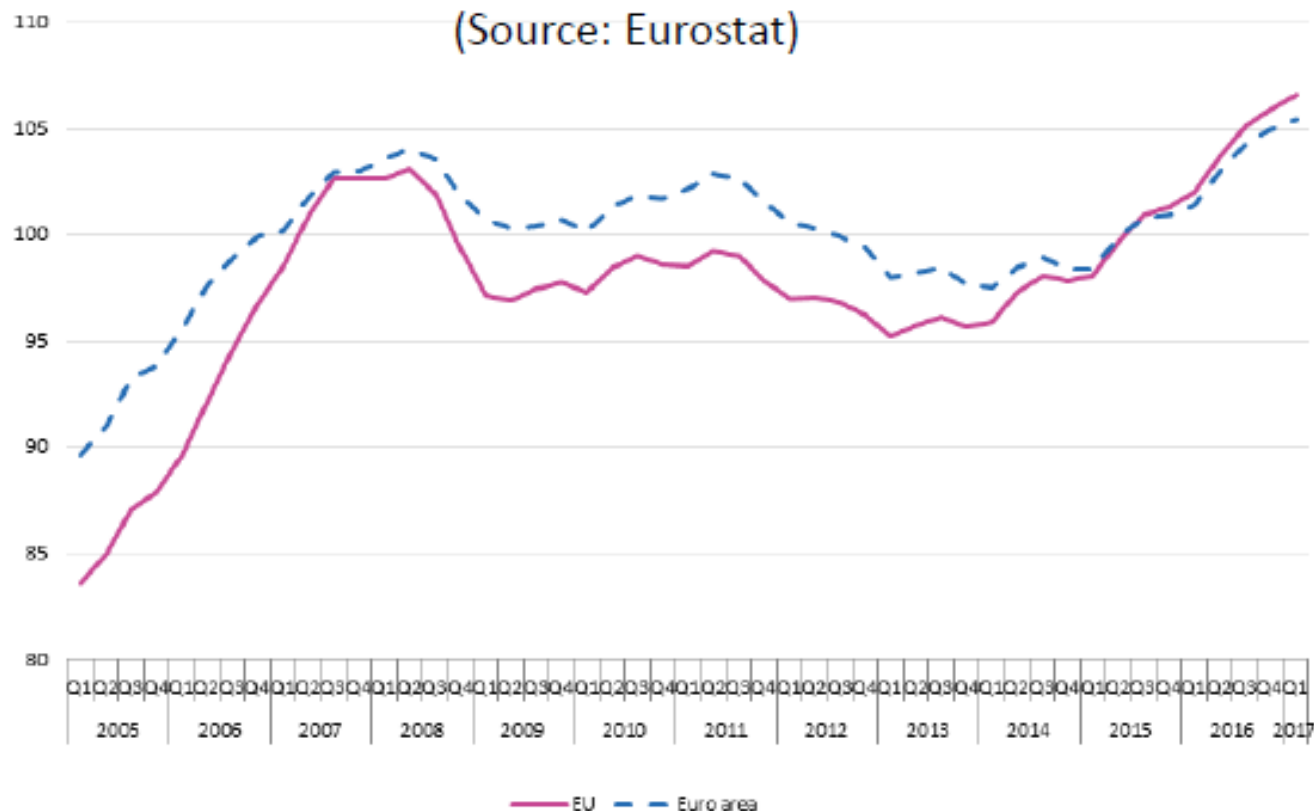
- 33.9k impressions on Twitter (retweets by Mayor of Paris, Anne Hidalgo)
- 10 articles quoted the figures (Lemonde, Politico, Irish Times, etc.)
- 3 event invitations



The growth recovery means also recovery in house prices, which are growing faster than income in most EU Member States

- Housing markets across the EU have started to speed up again: **2016 saw the highest annual growth rate in house prices since 2009, showing house price growth has overall picked up since the crisis.**
- This is not true everywhere: while in some countries like the UK or Sweden prices are higher than pre-crisis level, in others like Greece, Portugal and Spain the downward trend has only marginally slowed down.
- Crisis had a large impact in terms **of worsening households' economic situation and this means less capacity to make ends meet** even in a context of lower house prices.

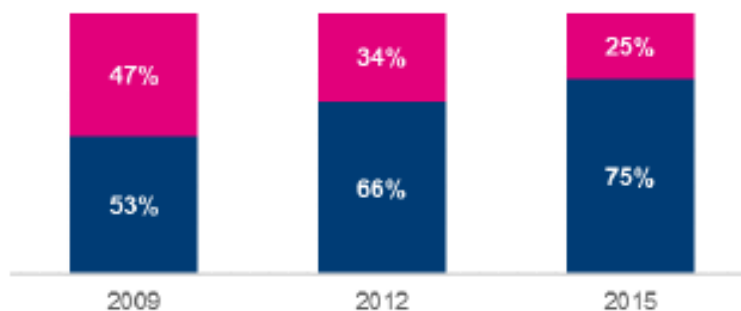
House Price Indices, 2005 - 2017
Euro area and EU aggregates Index levels (2015=100)
(Source: Eurostat)



Public funding towards capital spend on housing development and housing allowance

European Union (28 countries)

■ Housing allowance as % of total ■ Capital spend as % of total



Lesson not learnt by housing policy makers

- **The crisis could have represented a turning point showing the importance of investing in affordable, non-speculative housing. However, overall so far there has been little change in social housing policies.**
- Retreat of the state from housing policies (since the 90s at least, but in some countries the crisis has exacerbated this trend by putting a further constraint on public budgets)
- Shift in public spending from housing development to housing allowances (notably in the UK but also FR, NL – not in AT)

Why the Charter is Vital

- Political Leadership at International level
- Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing
- Quito Declaration – New Urban Agenda
- UN Habitat – Housing at the Centre
- Cities on the frontline and are reacting and Innovating – EU Urban Agenda
- Increasing availability for support for housing from CEB, EIB – Housing an investment not a cost!
- Knowledge is Power – Exchanges & Partnerships are vital to enable new housing policies

Affordable Housing in Cities – a Policy Toolkit

Housing Partnership of EU Urban Agenda better knowledge | funding | regulation

Aim – to enable improving provision of affordable housing in cities.

Objectives:

- to **compare and contrast** existing approaches to housing affordability in policy and practice
- to create **platform of knowledge** about 'solutions' to housing affordability problem(s)
- to **support cities** in problem-solving in terms of housing affordability through providing opportunity to learn from each other.

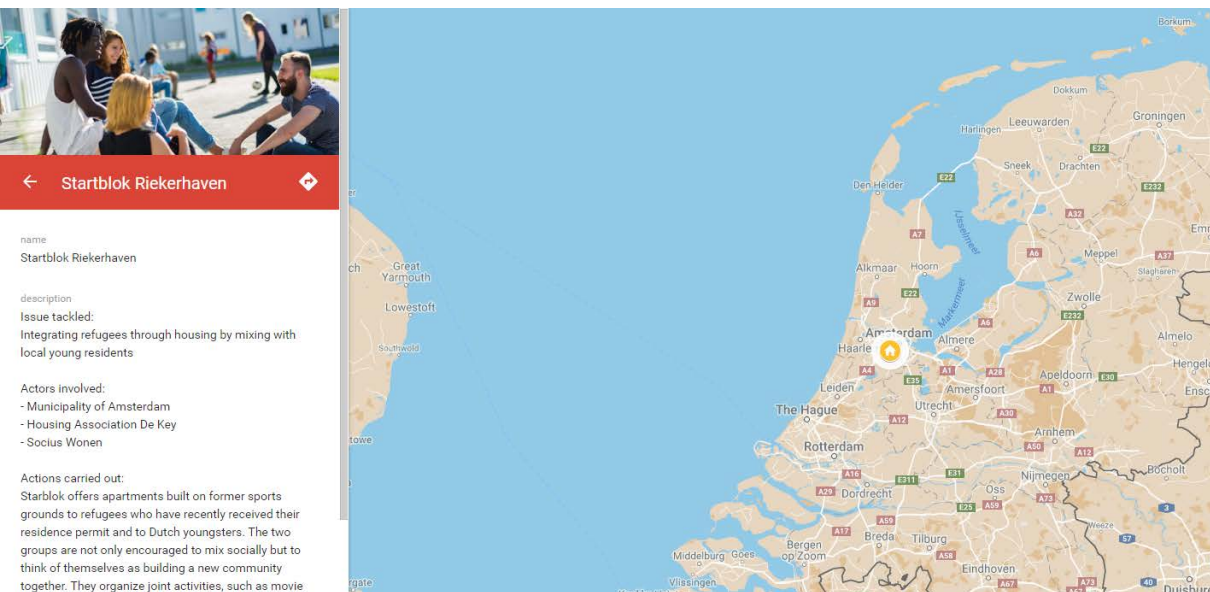
Added value:

- **Systematisation of existing knowledge** about housing affordability.
- **Providing space where end-users can learn** about various approaches to housing affordability in policy and practice
 - Clear and easy to read format allows embracing complexities of knowledge.
- **Improving evidence based policy-making** and increasing pace of decision-making about housing in cities.
 - Cities can benefit from upscaling and objectifying knowledge derived at local, regional, national and international levels.












Affordable Housing in Cities – a Policy Toolkit

- Still in its 'draft' phase (30 examples organized under 9 themes)
goo.gl/tEM92P
- It has been approved as one of the key actions of the Housing Partnership
- Next steps
 - identify possible elements of governance to be added (diversity of supply systems, tenants' protection)
 - Make sure to draw clear policy recommendations from it: practical approach to help policy makers at local and national level shaping their housing policies and tackling concrete issues.



Examples under the Themes

-  Integration
-  Social Mix
-  Social housing
-  Procurement Policy
-  Ageing
-  Energy efficiency
-  Use of EU funding
-  Empty homes
-  Mobilizing Private Stock for social purpose

Housing First in Finland:

Municipal Strategies to Prevent Homelessness

- Housing Finance and Development Center of Finland ARA + Cities of Espoo, Jyväskylä, Kuopio, Lahti, Tampere and Vantaa + Funding from ESF
- Municipal strategies for preventing homelessness, to be implemented in cooperation with experts through experience (repr different homelessness target groups).
- Builds on the success of PAAVO-programme to reduce long-term homelessness through 'housing first' approach (since 2008)



Residence mix in Denmark

- Flexible rental system where employed persons are eased access into housing areas with high unemployment
- Through renovations and by offering new types of accommodation the residential mix can also be enhanced, both within the social housing areas and in the cities
- In order to help vulnerable residents has been organised debt counselling where residents are advised on managing their budgets
- Study cafes, spare time youth jobs and on-site employment counselling

Transition Zero – NL, FR, NL

It is possible to carry on energy renovation
without increasing the rent

- Use of prefabricated elements allowing a full renovation in maximum 10 days
- net zero energy on the meter
- the use of renewable energy to cover the remaining energy needs
- in order to cover the renovation costs, the tenants pay energy fee instead the energy bill
- began with national energy efficiency pilot project in **the Netherlands** in order to reduce the energy bill of 111 000 existing dwellings

*Transition
Zero*



Use of EU funding



Examples

- Retrofitting multi-apartment buildings through ERDF in Estonia
- EFSI funding for Lisbon Urban Renewal strategy
- EFSI funding for affordable housing in Poznan
- Construction of energy efficient social housing in France

The modernisation of **Lisbon's** infrastructure

- An Urban Renewal Strategy developing project of the city of Lisbon, which focuses on different elements, one of them is Social housing.
- Lisbon is the first EU municipality to benefit directly from EU support under the Investment Plan for Europe.
- The objective is to contribute to the urban regeneration of the city and to support its long-term growth and competitiveness.



Photo: EU supports the modernisation of Lisbon's infrastructure with a EUR 250 million EIB loan under the Investment Plan for Europe. Mr Román Escolano, EIB Vice-President, and Lisbon Mayor, Mr Fernando Medina.

<http://www.eib.europa.eu/infocentre/press/releases/all/2016/2016-256-eu-supports-the-modernisation-of-lisbons-infrastructure-with-a-eur-250-million-eib-loan-under-the-investment-plan-for-europe.htm>

Poland- Poznan affordable housing

- Construction of approximately 1300 affordable housing units with necessary infrastructure
- The Project is expected to increase the capacity of Poznan to respond to housing need from those in the average income bracket of the population primarily within the existing urban area, thus reducing the risk of urban sprawl, migration and increasing the efficient use of resources.



Photo: <http://www.eib.org/infocentre/press/releases/all/2017/2017-027-contributing-to-social-inclusion-in-poland-eib-finances-1300-affordable-housing-units-in-poznan-under-ipe?lang=de>

In Charleroi, Belgium:

Gentle requisition for owners of vacant dwellings

- Restrictive legislative and local policy measure which aims to **encourage private owners to return housing that has been vacant more than 12 months to occupancy**.
- *Réquisition douce*: a process of support, information giving and positive collaboration with private owners to encourage them to return housing that has been vacant more than 12 months to occupancy.
 - If an owner refuses to return their vacant asset to the market, a 'forced requisition' can be issued by the Justice of the Peace.



Photo: Illustration - © Belga - Herwig Vergult

Social Rental Agencies in Luxembourg

Social Rental Agencies SRAs are publicly funded institutions which **enable lower-income households to access vacant private rental dwellings at a lower cost.**

- Homeowners are invited to contact directly the SRA
- Landlords are particularly encouraged to enrol within an agreement with the SRAs
- SRAs as a guarantor in case the tenant is in arrears and guarantee payment in case of vacancy.

Social rental agencies very clearly reach their target group, being **low to middle income and vulnerable households**. They also ask affordable rents when compared to market rents.



Cooperation between Housing Europe and the Committee on Housing and Land Management

- Assisting Member States to turn the Charter into reality on a practical level
- Provide a forum to brainstorm and capitalise on experience and knowledge
- Capacity building
- Mobilisation of experts in on-the-ground mission based work

Ad-hoc working group on Housing systems in transition

Increased need to deliver social and adequate housing in countries with housing systems in transition

Key needed areas of capacity building:

- Finance
- Long-term institutions
- Regulation
- Partnership



...Fits into the bigger picture

Global policy:

Habitat III declaration in Quito: “need for sustainable housing policies” & calls for the recognition of the variety of housing options.

European policy:

Pact of Amsterdam: “the necessity to set up long term housing institutions and structures... to build sustainable neighbourhoods”.

Aim: responding to real needs

Housing Europe-the international reference point for housing policy expertise can answer:

- Mobilizing members, partners
- Extensive knowledge about the organization and delivery of social, cooperative and public housing solutions.
- **Working streams in parallel:**
 - Ad-hoc working group (meeting 2 times/year)
 - NHExT
- **Instruments:**
 - Training courses (eg. Summer schools)
 - Exchange of experts
 - Other peer-to-peer learning possibilities
- **Participants:** practitioners and other experts in the field that have the required skills and knowledge on specific areas, new, adapted solutions.

About us in brief

Network of national and regional housing provider federations

- 4,500 public, voluntary housing organisations
- 28,000 cooperative housing organisations

45 members in 24 countries (20 EU Member States)

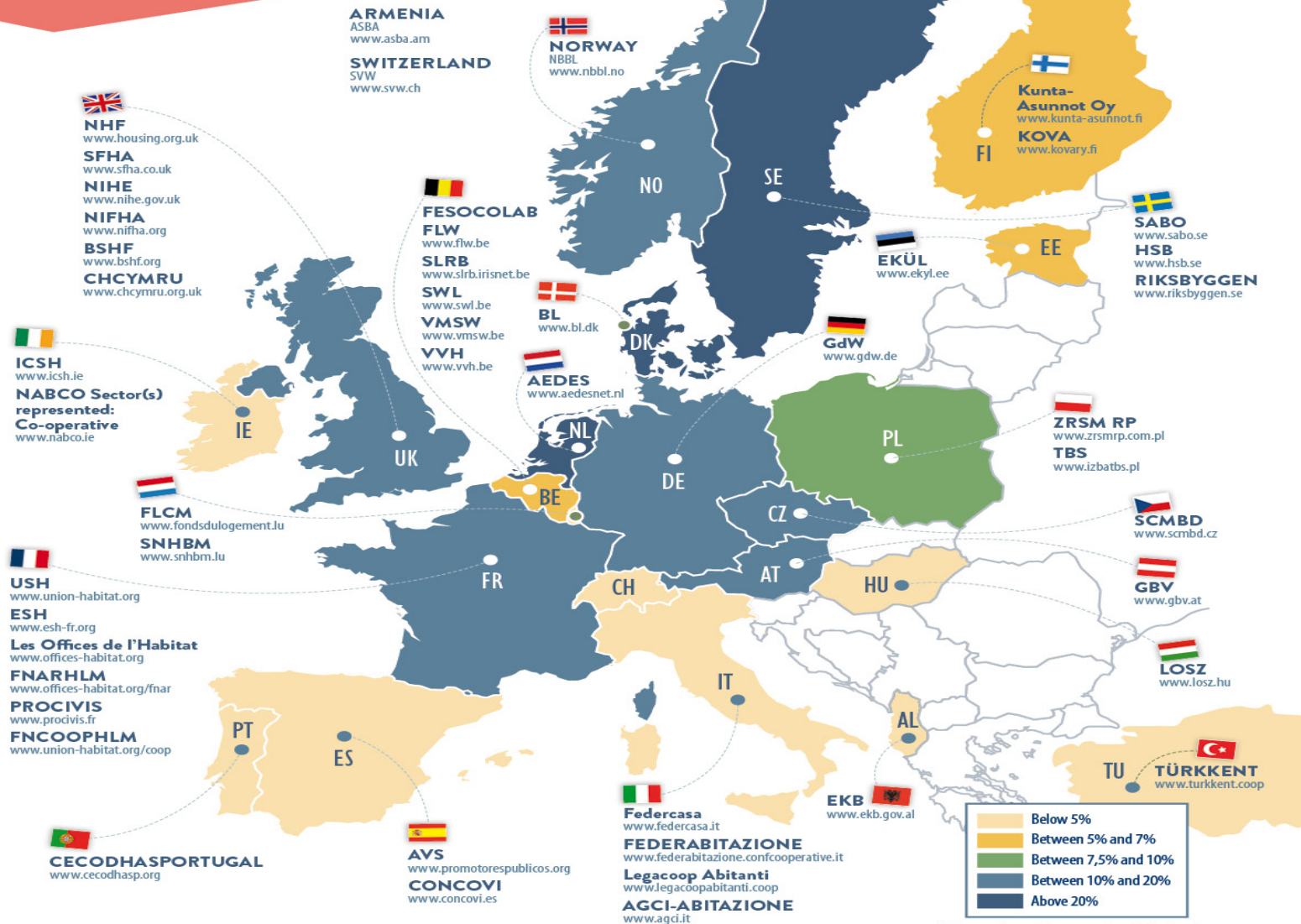
Manage 26 million dwellings, about 11% of existing dwellings in the EU



We 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 all are enabled to reach their full potential.

OUR MEMBERS

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS



OUR PARTNERS

- **Fondazione Housing Sociale (Italy)** - www.fhs.it
- **Habitat for Humanity** - www.habitat.org/emea
- **Social Housing & Property Rights in Kosovo** - www.shprk.org
- **TEI - Technical Educational Institute of Athens** - www.habitat.org/emea

Thank you for your attention!



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