

# Urban Agenda for the EU - Housing

Fields marked with \* are mandatory.

## Objective of the survey

In order to realise the full potential of the European Union and deliver on its strategic objectives, the Urban Agenda for the EU strives to involve Urban Authorities in achieving Better Regulation, Better Funding and Better Knowledge, and last, but not least, Better Governance. In line with the strategic aims established with the 'Pact of Amsterdam' of May 2016, the Urban Agenda for the EU is a new working method to ensure maximum utilisation of the growth potential of cities and to successfully tackle social challenges envisaged by urban areas. It aims to promote cooperation between Member States, Cities, the European Commission and other stakeholders, in order to stimulate growth, liveability and innovation in the cities of Europe.

As stated in the Pact of Amsterdam, Thematic Partnerships are the key delivery vehicle towards realising the goals of the Urban Agenda for the EU. The Pact of Amsterdam lists 12 Priority Themes for the Urban Agenda for the EU. One of the first four “pilot” partnerships that have been set up is the **Partnership on Housing** (coordinated by Slovakia and the City of Vienna). Since its kick-off meeting in December 2015 it has been working intensively and can now share its first actions and recommendations in the field of better regulation and better knowledge. Deliveries on better funding will be available later this year, as the relevant background research is still ongoing. The Housing Partnership is composed of 6 cities/city networks, 5 Member States, 2 observer Member States, EU Commission, EIB and important stakeholders from the supply and demand side. In this composition, it encompasses the broad diversity of housing systems and traditions throughout the territory of the EU. It has been in close contact with a wide range of interest groups, stakeholders and local, regional, national and European organisations and institutions from its very first day, as affordable and adequate housing is a crucial issue all over Europe.

**This online public feedback is part of a process to evaluate the actions and recommendations developed by the Partnership on Housing.** The eventual Action Plan would greatly benefit from the insights of relevant stakeholders, who have the opportunity to contribute to the improvement of actions and recommendations to be implemented in the future.

The results of the online public feedback will be taken into consideration by the members of the Partnership on Housing for the further development of the Action Plan. The first deliveries will be presented to the DG meeting on urban matters (DGs responsible for urban matters in their Member

States, the European Commission, the CoR, CEMR and EUROCITIES) taking place on 26 October 2017.

**The individual contributions to this public feedback will not be published on the Internet. At the beginning of the questionnaire, you will be able to choose between providing your personal details or submitting your contribution anonymously.**

**THANK YOU IN ADVANCE FOR YOUR COLLABORATION!**

## **Target group(s)**

Contributions are sought from individuals and national authorities, intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations, social partners, social enterprises, NGOs and civil society, private and public housing associations, cooperatives and tenants' organisations, academic institutions, financial institutions, international organisations, EU Institutions and Agencies, based in EU Member States or third Countries.

## **Period of the online public consultation**

From 17/07/2017 to 25/08/2017

## **How to submit your contribution**

You can contribute to this online public feedback by filling out the online questionnaire, available hereafter. You may find it useful to refer to the background documents which are published alongside this consultation.

**Individual contributions to this public feedback will not be published on the Internet.** Answers to the online questionnaire will be taken into account by the Partnership as input to a revised version of the Action Plan.

**Replies may preferably be submitted in English.**

## **Reference documents and websites**

1. [Background Paper to the Public Feedback on Housing](#)
2. [Pact of Amsterdam](#)
3. [Futurium – section dedicated to the Partnership on Housing](#)

## Disclaimer

The information and views contained in the contributions published are those of the authors and do not reflect the official opinion of the European Commission. The Commission does not guarantee the accuracy of the information contained therein. Neither the Commission nor any person acting on the Commission's behalf may be held responsible for the content and the use which may be made of the information contained therein.

## Contact details

Secretariat of the Urban Agenda, Communication team  
E-mail: [UA.communication@ecorys.com](mailto:UA.communication@ecorys.com)

- \* 1. Are you responding as an individual:
- Yes
  - No

\* 1.a. Which country are you from?

- Austria
- Belgium
- Bulgaria
- Croatia
- Cyprus
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- Estonia
- Finland
- France
- Germany
- Greece
- Hungary
- Ireland
- Italy
- Latvia
- Lithuania
- Luxembourg
- Malta
- Netherlands
- Poland
- Portugal
- Romania
- Slovak Republic
- Slovenia
- Spain
- Sweden
- United Kingdom
- Other

Please specify

*1000 character(s) maximum*

\* 1.a. Are you a public, private or non-governmental organisation?

- Public
- Private
- NGO

Specify level:

- EU
- National
- Regional
- Local
- International
- Other

\* 1.b. In which country is your organisation based?

- Austria
- Belgium
- Bulgaria
- Croatia
- Cyprus
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- Estonia
- Finland
- France
- Germany
- Greece
- Hungary
- Ireland
- Italy
- Latvia
- Lithuania
- Luxembourg
- Malta
- Netherlands
- Poland
- Portugal
- Romania
- Slovak Republic
- Slovenia
- Spain
- Sweden
- United Kingdom
- Other

Please specify:

*1000 character(s) maximum*

2. Name, surname and position of the respondent (this information will be kept strictly confidential)

*1000 character(s) maximum*

3. Name of the institution (if applicable - this information will be kept strictly confidential)

*1000 character(s) maximum*

4. Email ((this information will be kept strictly confidential)

*1000 character(s) maximum*

## THEME 1 : Better Regulation

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## Description

This theme focuses on the effects of EU regulations in supporting public investments in affordable housing. Many cities are facing population growth creating even more pressure on the housing market, and a lack of affordable housing for broad parts of their populations at the same time. Developments in recent years in Europe including the uncertainty and instability of the finance framework and the lack of legal clarity have led to an alarming decline in investment at a local level. In order to address all these challenges national and local authorities must be brought into a position to adopt supportive housing policies in order to create the right conditions and incentives for investment in social and affordable housing.

### [ACTION N° 1 – Guidance on EU regulation and public support for housing](#)

#### Presentation of the theme:

Evidence from a wide range of cities and Member States shows that there is an urgent need for a clarification on the effects of EU regulations including state aid rules to state support available for affordable and social housing in general and multi-level apartment buildings in particular in order to deblock investment potential, especially on local level. In this context, the acceptance of sustainable goals like social mix and social cohesion as valid public policy objectives for which State aid may be granted shall be explored.

1. On a scale from 1 to 5 (with 1 being the weakest and 5 the strongest), to what extent do you find this issue crucial and why?

	1- Weakest	2- Weak	3- Regular	4- Strong	5- Strongest	N /A
* To what extent you find this issue crucial?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

1.a. Please justify briefly your scoring

*1000 character(s) maximum*

## Guidance Paper on EU regulations and public support for housing

The action is the delivery of a guidance paper on EU regulations and public support for affordable housing. It is expected to contribute to better knowledge at all levels on the application of EU regulations on public support measures for the provision of social and affordable housing. It may help to develop different perspectives regarding the application and interpretation of the regulations and lead to improvement of the current legislation, thus allowing for deblocking investment potential and contributing to more social cohesion, social mix and giving positive impulses to the urban economy.

\*2. Based on your experience, do you believe that this action would contribute to addressing the above mentioned bottlenecks?

- Mostly Yes
- Partially Yes
- No
- I don't know

2.a. Please justify briefly your choice

*1000 character(s) maximum*

\*3. According to your experience, do you believe that the bottleneck presented above could be better tackled through other action(s)?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

3.a. If yes, please briefly indicate which other actions should be considered and who should be involved in their implementation?

*1000 character(s) maximum*

\*4. Are you aware of initiatives or documentation developed at EU, national or local level that could be relevant for this action?

- Yes
- No



4.a. If yes, thank you for providing relevant details

1000 character(s) maximum

**ACTION N° 2 – Capacity building for application of state aid rules in affordable housing sector at a city level**

**Presentation of the theme:**

There is both a need for greater understanding in city authorities on the use of state funding support to improve the quality and affordability of housing for households in sustainable and liveable communities as well as for better recognition of the specific needs of cities to find solutions for their housing situations by EU institutions. This can concern both concrete projects (e.g. new housing, renewal of multi-residential buildings) as well as the general housing provision systems.

1. On a scale from 1 to 5 (with 1 being the weakest and 5 the strongest), to what extent do you find this issue crucial and why?

	1- Weakest	2- Weak	3- Regular	4- Strong	5- Strongest	N /A
* To what extent you find this issue crucial?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

1.a. Please justify briefly your scoring

1000 character(s) maximum

**Capacity building workshop on application of state aid rules**

The Housing Partnerships will organise a capacity building workshop of up to 60 participants from cities, Member States and relevant EU institutions, provided that funding is made available by the Technical Secretariat. The workshop will take place in 2018 and shall gather both practitioners and legislators. This action will aim to provide more clarity and guidance on the use of state support in the housing sector in general and the multi story apartment buildings in particular. It will help to ensure progress towards the more effective application of EU regulations in the housing sector and develop knowledge on the specific barriers that cities face in the application and interpretation of the state aid rules.

\*2. Based on your experience, do you believe that this action would contribute to addressing the abovementioned bottlenecks?

- Mostly Yes
- Partially Yes
- No
- I don't know

2.a. Please justify briefly your choice

*1000 character(s) maximum*

\*3. According to your experience, do you believe that the bottleneck presented above could be better tackled through other action(s)?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

3.a. If yes, please briefly indicate which other actions should be considered and who should be involved in their implementation?

*1000 character(s) maximum*

\*4. Are you aware of initiatives or documentation developed at EU, national or local level that could be relevant for this action?

- Yes
- No

4.a. If yes, thank you for providing relevant details

*1000 character(s) maximum*

**ACTION N° 3 – Revision of the ‘Services of General Economic Interest’ (SGEI) decision with regard to the narrow target group of social housing**

**Presentation of the theme:**

EU competition rules on state aid can be exempted if the performance of certain housing investments satisfy the “Services of General Economic Interest” (SGEI) criteria for exemption. The current definition of social housing as set out in the SGEI Decision (2012) generates legal uncertainty for investors, financiers and city and national authorities. It is questionable from a subsidiarity and proportionality perspective in the context of how Member States and local authorities support the provision of social housing.

1. On a scale from 1 to 5 (with 1 being the weakest and 5 the strongest), to what extent do you find this issue crucial and why?

	1- Weakest	2- Weak	3- Regular	4- Strong	5- Strongest	N /A
*To what extent you find this issue crucial?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

1.a. Please justify briefly your scoring

*1000 character(s) maximum*

**SGEI Revision to create more social mix and social cohesion**

The Housing Partnership is of the opinion that in the SGEI context, social housing must allow cities to pursue the aims of social mix and social cohesion and therefore should be accepted under the definition of social housing in the SGEI. The future review of the SGEI 2012 Decision should take this into account and delete the mention of social housing as limited to "disadvantaged citizens or socially less advantaged groups".

\*2. Based on your experience, do you believe that this action would contribute to addressing the abovementioned bottlenecks?

- Mostly Yes
- Partially Yes
- No
- I don't know

2.a. Please justify briefly your choice

*1000 character(s) maximum*

\*3. According to your experience, do you believe that the bottleneck presented above could be better tackled through other action(s)?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

3.a. If yes, please briefly indicate which other actions should be considered and who should be involved in their implementation?

*1000 character(s) maximum*

\*4. Are you aware of initiatives or documentation developed at EU, national or local level that could be relevant for this action?

- Yes
- No

4.a. If yes, thank you for providing relevant details

*1000 character(s) maximum*

**General Questions for all 3 actions:**

\*1) Would you like to be kept informed on the developments of these actions related to the regulatory framework of the SGEI decision and on the activities of the Partnership?

- Yes
- No

Please indicate your email address:

*1000 character(s) maximum*

\* 2) Do you think that other bottlenecks in the context of Better Regulation should be tackled with more urgency than the above mentioned one?

- Yes  
 No

Please elaborate.

*1000 character(s) maximum*

## THEME 2: Better Knowledge

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There is an increased need for social and other affordable housing options in Europe, especially in urban areas that are likely to suffer even more from a lack of affordable housing in the future. The level of social and affordable housing across Europe has been in general decline over the last 30 years as the role of the private sector has increased and the global financial crisis has led to a fall in public expenditure linked to housing. Despite affordable housing being a key issue across many of Europe's cities and despite there being a range of good and bad practice linked to tackling this challenge, there is a need to develop better knowledge and 'what works and why' in the provision of affordable housing., also in its governance context.

### ACTION N° 4 – Affordable Housing Good Practice Database

#### **Presentation of the theme**

Despite affordable housing being a key issue across many of Europe's cities and despite there being a range of good and bad practice linked to tackling this challenge, there is no definitive and single place that city practitioners and/or housing legislators can go to in order to learn about 'what works and why' around affordable housing. This knowledge gap acts as a bottleneck to investment, with housing practitioners and /or legislators not currently having a single source to access in order to learn and swap ideas on this key urban issue.

1. On a scale from 1 to 5 (with 1 being the weakest and 5 the strongest), to what extent do you find this issue crucial and why?

	1- Weakest	2- Weak	3- Regular	4- Strong	5- Strongest	N /A
*To what extent you find this issue crucial?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

1.a. Please justify briefly your scoring

*1000 character(s) maximum*

### **Affordable Housing Good Practice Database**

The action will design and implement an online database that gathers and presents best practices attached to social and affordable housing across Europe with a particular focus on the governance systems. The database will aim to get 30 representative examples from across the EU, covering different housing traditions and along a set of categories. At a time when more investment is needed in the affordable housing sector, the database will provide knowledge at national, regional and city level so that a more definitive understanding on solutions can be developed.

\*2. Based on your experience, do you believe that this action would contribute to addressing the abovementioned bottlenecks?

- Mostly Yes
- Partially Yes
- No
- I don't know

2.a. Please justify briefly your choice

*1000 character(s) maximum*

\*3. According to your experience, do you believe that the bottleneck presented above could be better tackled through other action(s)?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

3.a. If yes, please briefly indicate which other actions should be considered and who should be involved in their implementation?

*1000 character(s) maximum*

4) Currently, the database will cover the following issues. Please specify their importance (with 1 being the less and 5 the most important):

	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
* Integration	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Social Mix	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Social Housing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Procurement Policy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Ageing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Energy Efficiency	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Use of EU Funding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Financial contribution of national governments	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Empty Homes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Mobilising Private Stock for Social Purposes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Other (please specify)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please specify:

*1000 character(s) maximum*

\*5) On the governance context, which normative elements on local/regional/national level would be important in your opinion (Tick if positive)?

- Encouraging a diversity of affordable housing provision models
- Enhancing the protection of tenants and home owners from evictions
- Promotion of tenants' and home owners' participation in the co-creation of their buildings and wider neighbourhood
- Stabilisation and regulation of rents to ensure their sustained affordability while guaranteeing security of tenure
- Involving private investors in affordable housing projects
- Integrated participatory city planning with a focus on social inclusion and social mix
- Other(s) (please specify)
- None of above

Please specify:

*1000 character(s) maximum*

\*6. Are you aware of initiatives or documentation developed at EU, national or local level that could be relevant for this action?

- Yes
- No

6.a. If yes, thank you for providing relevant details

*1000 character(s) maximum*

## **[ACTION N° 5 – Provide policy guidance for supply of social and affordable housing in Europe](#)**

### **Presentation of the theme**

The knowledge gap on 'what works and why' with respect to affordable housing acts as a bottleneck to innovation, with housing practitioners and legislators not currently having a single source to access information on tools that could include templates, models, datasets and policy documents. As many cities, regions and countries are currently facing challenges regarding the formulation of affordable housing policies, guidance and knowledge exchange is necessary.



1. On a scale from 1 to 5 (with 1 being the weakest and 5 the strongest), to what extent do you find this issue crucial and why?

	1- Weakest	2- Weak	3- Regular	4- Strong	5- Strongest	N /A
*To what extent you find this issue crucial?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

1.a. Please justify briefly your scoring

*1000 character(s) maximum*

### Housing Policy Toolkit

The objective is to develop a Housing Policy Toolkit (building on the best practices data base described in the previous action) that provides examples and tools of the ways that social and affordable housing can be provided in Europe's urban areas. The toolkit will not simply give information on good practice on affordable housing but provide tools that could include templates, models, datasets and policy documents that housing practitioners and legislators can actually use in their work and easily interpret into their own setting and context.

\*2. Based on your experience, do you believe that this action would contribute to addressing the abovementioned bottlenecks?

- Mostly Yes
- Partially Yes
- No
- I don't know

2.a. Please justify briefly your choice

*1000 character(s) maximum*

\*3. According to your experience, do you believe that the bottleneck presented above could be better tackled through other action(s)?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

3.a. If yes, please briefly indicate which other actions should be considered and who should be involved in their implementation?

*1000 character(s) maximum*

4) Currently, the database will cover the following issues. Please specify their importance (with 1 being the less and 5 the most important):

	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
* Economic effectiveness, responsibility, and sustainability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Local social sustainability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Environmental sustainability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Cultural adequacy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Good governance and fair relations with stakeholders	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Responsible human resources management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Housing affordability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Other (please specify):	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please specify:

*1000 character(s) maximum*

\* 5) Would linking the guidance categories to funding from EU institutions be an interesting option to explore further in your opinion?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

\*6. Are you aware of initiatives or documentation developed at EU, national or local level that could be relevant for this action?

- Yes
- No

6.a. If yes, thank you for providing relevant details

*1000 character(s) maximum*

**General questions for all 2 actions:**

\* 1) Would you like to be kept informed on the developments of these actions related to good practices and guidance for the provision of affordable housing and on the activities of the Partnership?

- Yes
- No

Please indicate your email address:

*1000 character(s) maximum*

\* 2) Do you think that other bottlenecks in the context Better Knowledge should be tackled with more urgency than the above mentioned one?

- Yes
- No

Please elaborate.

*1000 character(s) maximum*

