

INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL HOUSING FESTIVAL

BARCELONA 2023



REPORT

4th INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL HOUSING FESTIVAL JUNE 2023



Ajuntament de
Barcelona

B Institut Municipal
de l'Habitatge
i Rehabilitació

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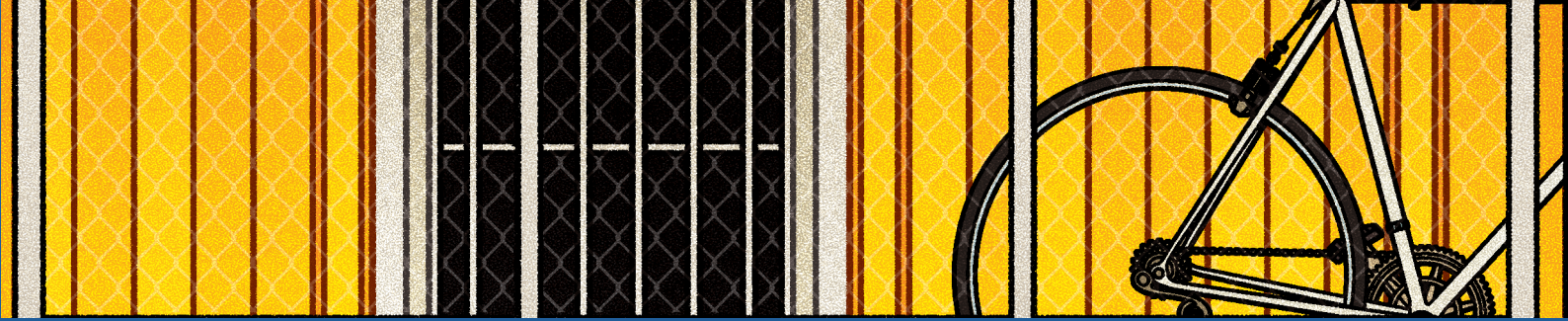
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1.

PRESENTATION





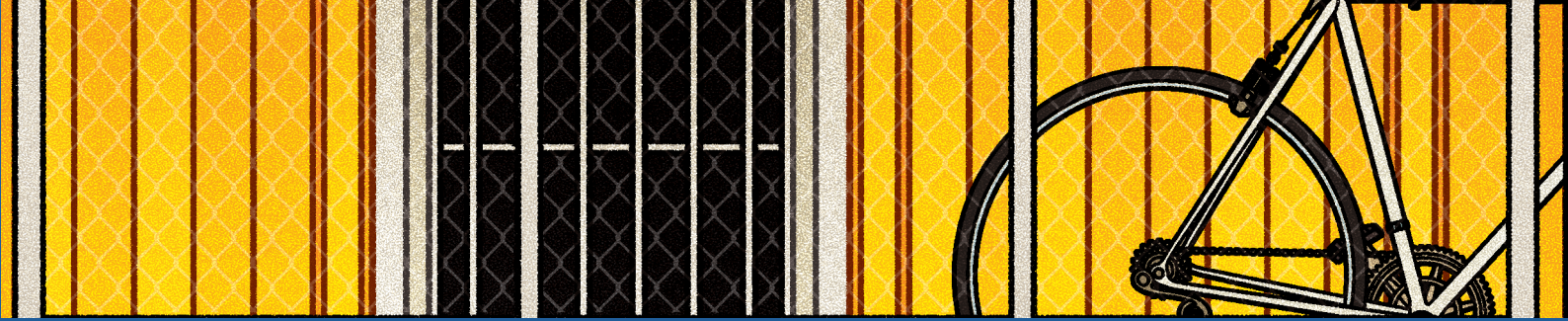
1.1. What is the International Social Housing Festival?

The International Social Housing Festival (ISHF) is an initiative of Housing Europe, the European Federation of Public, Cooperative and Social Housing, together with its members and allies, who operate in 25 countries and whose work encompasses 25 million homes, accounting for 11% of housing stock in the EU.

The first edition of the ISHF was held in Amsterdam in 2017 and was attended by around 1,300 people, who took part in a total of 45 events over two days. The second edition was held in Lyon in 2019 and welcomed around 5,000 participants in 70 events taking place over four days. The third edition, which was originally scheduled for 2021 but had to be postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic, was finally held in Helsinki in June 2022 and was attended by around 1,000 people, who took part in 80 activities over three days. The fourth edition, held in Barcelona in 2023, is the subject of this report.

The ISHF is a unique opportunity to encourage discussions by Housing Europe's member organisations and, above all, between them and the various players involved in the field of housing, such as research centres, professionals, local authorities, residents and activists. It is also a great opportunity to coordinate the housing sector and foster technical exchange and collaboration in the international arena.





1.2. Previous editions: Amsterdam, Lyon, Helsinki

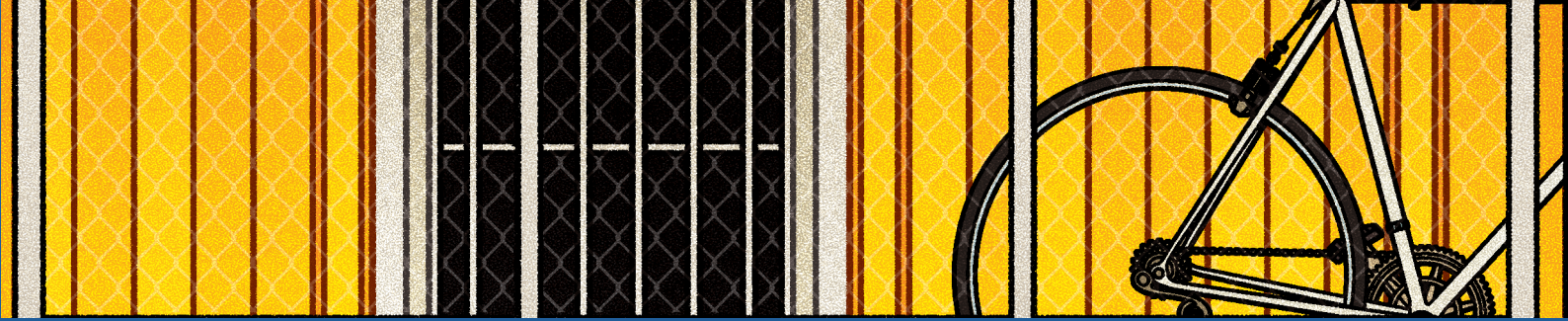
First edition of the ISHF: Amsterdam, 2017

“Affordable housing now, better communities tomorrow”

The first edition of ISHF featured over 40 events organised by 30 partners in eight different parts of the Dutch capital, dedicating over 168 hours to a basic human right. The first event celebrating the long tradition of decent and affordable housing started in Amsterdam on 13 June 2017 and attracted over 1,300 visitors.

Over nine days, the ISHF illustrated the added value of social housing for sustainable communities through conferences, workshops, talks, tours, presentations, exhibitions, film screenings, discussions, installations, children’s activities and much more. The event was a joint initiative of the Het Schip Amsterdam School Museum, Aedes (the Dutch Federation of Social Housing Associations), Housing Europe (the European Federation of Public and Cooperative Social Housing), the Amsterdam Federation of Housing Corporations and the Municipality of Amsterdam. These organisations turned the festival into an exchange forum for residents, tenant associations, owners, opinion leaders, housing cooperatives, urban planners, administrators, developers, managers, designers, academics and policymakers. The issues of migration to cities, segregation, property inequality and diversification were the common thread that ran through the various events held as part of the festival.





Second edition of the ISHF: Lyon, 2019

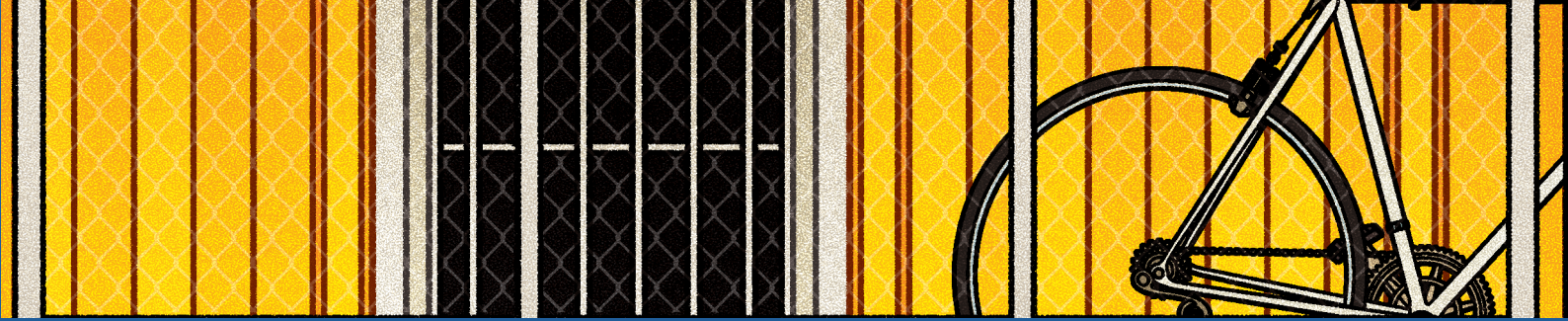
“Our planet, our cities, our homes”

After the first edition held by the city of Amsterdam, in the summer of 2019 the International Social Housing Festival continued its journey in Lyon. This second edition of the ISHF welcomed over 5,000 people, with more than 70 events over four days.

ISHF 2019 established links between the homes we live in, the cities we inhabit and our quality of life in general, with the aim, through a variety of events, to stress the importance of access to decent housing for all on the one hand, and celebrate Europe’s long tradition of public, cooperative and social housing on the other, acknowledging the need to adapt our systems to address both the current housing challenges and those we will encounter in the future.

A key outcome of the ISHF was the Lyon Commitment, in which key players in the field of housing joined forces at various levels and concluded “**a new deal for housing**”, showing how the EU can lead the way with the Affordable Housing Action Plan 2019-2024. Overall, tribute was paid to over 100 federations and social landlords operating for a century or more in the exhibition “**History of Social Housing in Europe**”, organised by the Union Sociale pour l’Habitat (USH), Housing Europe and the Spanish Association of Public Housing and Land Managers (Asociación Española de Gestores Públicos de Vivienda y Suelo, AVS). The festival also proved to be a great opportunity to host the third edition of the Responsible Housing Awards, which received a record-breaking 87 entries from 16 countries across five categories.





Third edition of the ISHF: Helsinki, 2022

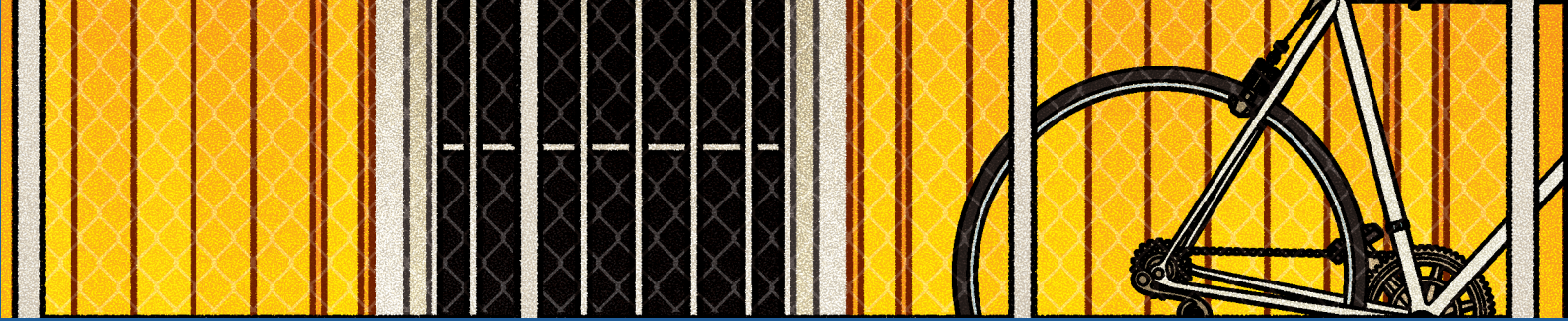
“Housing as the foundation of a good life”

Following two years of planning, and despite the delays caused by the Covid-19 crisis, it was finally possible to hold a face-to-face event from 14 to 17 June 2022. The festival was attended by around 1,000 participants between public, cooperative and social housing providers, municipal authorities, EU public decision-makers, bankers, urban planners, architects and researchers, who came together to pay tribute to social housing policies and discuss how to overcome the many challenges facing this sector. The festival explored the concept of housing as the foundation of a good life.

At the opening ceremony, Bent Madsen, President of Housing Europe, stressed that *“Homes but also neighbourhoods and communities must all be part of a housing policy and we need to be closely in touch with the people living there to further develop the housing policies in our countries. In many cases and states, national social policies still fail at delivering social support to the most vulnerable. We have to clearly understand what we are doing with social interventions when developing human infrastructure development and working on spatial planning. This is what the welfare state and housing policy need to be about and we need to see a clear connection between housing and the welfare state in times of a housing crisis.”* Sorcha Edwards, Secretary General of Housing Europe, for her part, highlighted that *“the festival wakes us up to what works well and what models need to be revamped, being aware helps us to avoid accidents because mistakes in housing policy take a long time to have an impact, and getting together is an opportunity to learn and tackle challenges collectively”*.

During the 2022 edition, Housing Europe either led or was involved in the organisation of 16 events, seeking solutions to the issues of new-age youth housing, decarbonisation, the prevention of homelessness, circularity, data and AI for buildings, green roofs and responsible housing.





1.3. Presentation of the 4th International Social Housing Festival – Barcelona

ISHF Barcelona 2023 revolved around the central theme of “**Learning from the challenges and policy responses of mature and emerging housing systems**”. Every country in the world is currently trying to solve a housing crisis. Although social, economic and environmental urban challenges can vary between countries, they are all facing the same major issues.

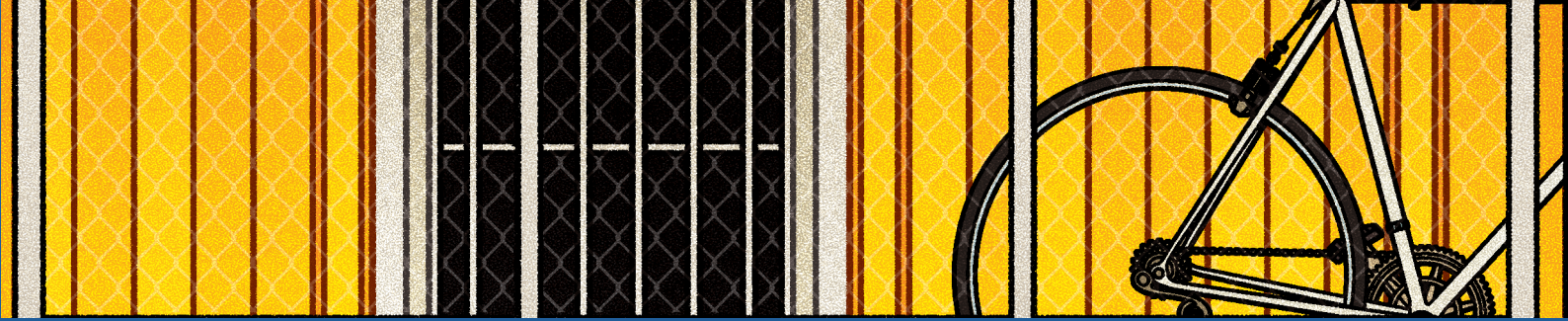
Solving the housing crisis may at first glance seem easier for mature and functional housing systems with a sound welfare state. However, you don't need to look much further to see that even those regions and cities that have a large amount of social and affordable housing must continue to take action to avoid rent burden or homelessness. Furthermore, there is a link between the housing crisis and the climate crisis in that affordability must be achieved within certain climate boundaries. In other words, we must (among other things) renovate at the same time as we increase the housing stock, serve an ageing population while getting up to date with new technologies to help young people access housing, fight discrimination and segregation, and challenge the growth of tourist accommodation in the city's most attractive areas.

At the same time as all this, emerging housing systems, some of which are at their earliest stages, are getting ready to take a huge leap in terms of scale, facing both structural and emerging challenges on the way. Learning from past mistakes or from the successes achieved by other models with an innovative mindset can take them very far, as well as provide a new source of inspiration for more mature housing systems, which are having to deal with new challenges that not even the mature systems have been able to overcome.

Housing systems have also been gradually reshaped by external factors such as the global health pandemic, devastating war invasions and financial crises. At a time of growing instability and uncertainty, it has become imperative to reshape housing systems to make them more egalitarian, environmentally sustainable and resilient. Barcelona is particularly affected by these factors, both new and old. This is why the city wanted to host the fourth edition of the ISHF as part of its efforts to bring innovation into its housing policies: in order to learn and share experiences with other players in the public and private spheres.

1.4. Barcelona as Host City in 2023

While housing systems all over the world have seen a growing role for the private market in their urban development processes, as well as a reduction in the public sector's involvement in the regulation and direct provision of housing in recent decades, some cities – including Barcelona – are putting in place innovative housing policies to address the social emergency resulting from the financialisation of housing, the lack of affordable housing, evictions and increasing homelessness.



Guaranteeing decent and quality housing to enable citizens to live with dignity requires political will, dedication and time, as well as adequate and targeted investment. Barcelona is a good example of local potential and of the limitations of that political will to strengthen its housing system in a weakly regulated market with insufficient public resources for housing policies.

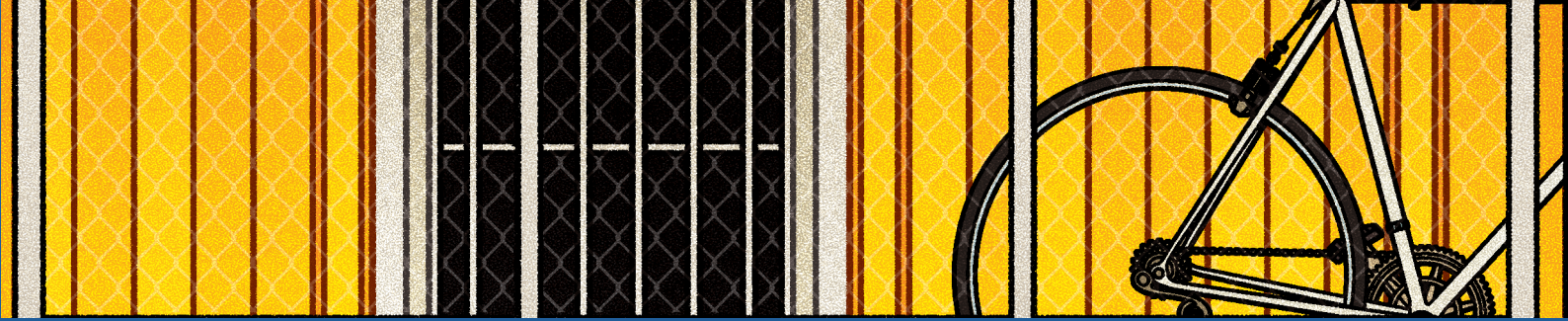
The fourth edition of the International Social Housing Festival (ISHF) focused on public housing policies and the challenges they face all over the world, both in countries with advanced housing systems and in those with emerging models, with a particular focus on southern Europe and significant participation from the rest of Europe, Asia, Africa and America.

1.5. The 4th International Social Housing Festival in figures

The International Social Housing Festival was held in Barcelona from 7 to 9 June 2023. Its impact was truly global, with over 2,000 participants attending from more than 82 countries, and with the participation of over 200 organisations from the social housing sector. This international presence highlights the festival's importance as a meeting place for experts, governments, social enterprises and members of the public to exchange ideas and best practices in the field of social housing. It featured participants from many different backgrounds and regions and fostered a rich and multifaceted discussion on global housing challenges and solutions.

In order to accommodate this diverse and engaged audience, events were held at ten different venues as part of the festival, providing a dynamic environment for discussions, workshops and networking opportunities. Furthermore, the festival featured an impressive programme of three plenary sessions and over 60 side events. These side events gave participants the chance to discuss specific subjects in greater detail, share local knowledge and explore innovative approaches to the various issues involved in the field of housing.

As well as the extensive programme of plenary sessions and side events, there were over 15 stands and six exhibitions at the festival venue, as well as over 30 visits to social housing projects in Barcelona. This multifaceted approach enabled attendees to explore a wide range of housing-related topics and initiatives, ranging from sustainable construction methods to urban planning strategies. The combination of diverse participation, a high number of venues and a comprehensive programme highlights the festival's commitment to moving the global conversation on social housing forward while promoting collaboration and innovation.



1.6. Promoting and partner organisations

ISHF 2023 was made possible by the leadership of Housing Europe and Barcelona City Council as its promoting organisations and the collaboration of the Barcelona Metropolitan Area, the Catalan Land Institute (INCASÒL), the Catalan Housing Agency, the Valencian Land and Housing Entity (Entitat Valenciana d’Habitatge i Sòl) and the Spanish Ministry of Transport, Mobility and Urban Agenda.

Promoting organisations:



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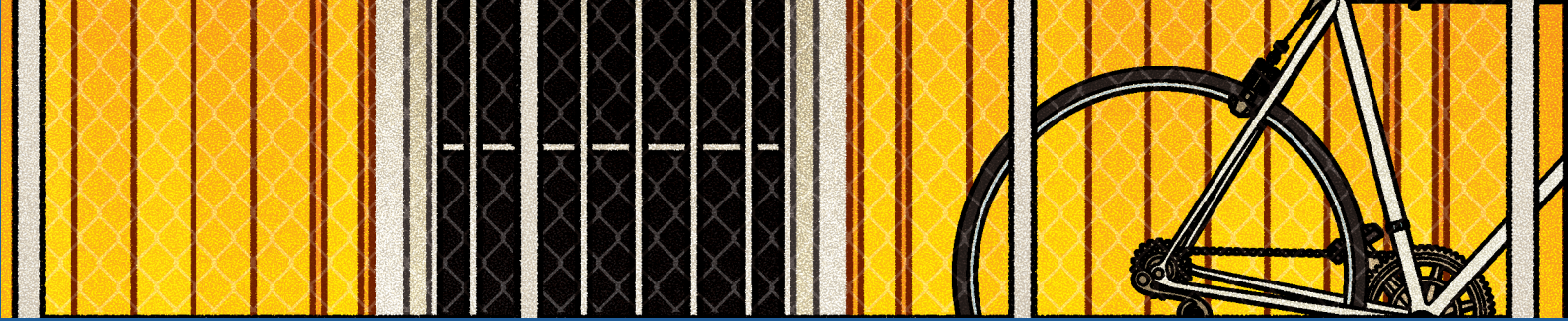
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Barcelona City Council, through the Barcelona Housing Consortium, which also includes the Generalitat de Catalunya, plans and carries out most of the municipality’s housing policies and programmes.

The Barcelona Municipal Institute of Housing and Renovation (IMHAB) is the city’s public housing organisation. With its current portfolio of 11,500 social and affordable homes, it is the largest organisation of its type in Spain. The IMHAB is also responsible for carrying out the 2016-2025 Barcelona Right to Housing Plan.



Housing Europe is the European Federation of Public, Cooperative and Social Housing. The organisation, which was created in 1988, is a network of 46 national and regional federations representing 43,000 housing providers in 25 countries. Together, they manage around 25 million homes, close to 11% of all homes in Europe.



Collaborating Organisations:



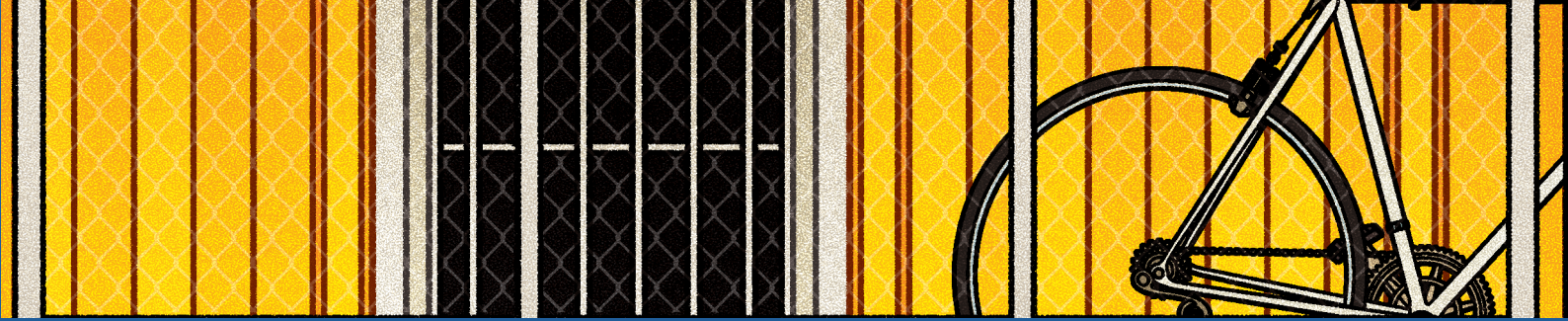
The Barcelona Metropolitan Area (AMB) is responsible for the land and housing policies established in the urban planning legislation. These duties are delegated to it by the metropolitan municipalities, and it carries them out to ensure intermunicipal solidarity in these actions. The Metropolitan Institute of Land Development and Property Management (IMPSOL) is the local public-owned company through which the Barcelona Metropolitan Area promotes and manages affordable housing.



The Generalitat de Catalunya is the only public administration with competence in the field of housing. At the ISHF, the Generalitat de Catalunya was represented by the Department of Territory, which is responsible for the regulation and implementation of housing policies in Catalonia, and took part through the Catalan Land Institute (INCASÒL) and the Catalan Housing Agency (AHC). INCASÒL has urban planning powers in relation to land and housing planning and management, manages the security deposits for rented properties, promotes public rental housing, develops land for both economic and residential uses, is involved in the remodelling of neighbourhoods and renovates historical heritage. The Catalan Housing Agency, for its part, carries out and manages housing policies, for example by managing social housing, housing grants and subsidies and the renovation of the housing stock, promoting the construction of social housing and access to housing, and providing assistance and mediation services for people who are losing or have lost their homes.



The Valencian Land and Housing Entity (EVHA) is a public-owned company attached to the Second Vice Presidency and Ministry of Housing and Bioclimatic Architecture of the Valencian government. The EVHA develops housing policies, manages a public stock of over 14,000 homes in various municipalities of the Valencia region, and is involved in the management of residential land and land for industrial and logistics uses.



The Spanish Ministry of Transport, Mobility and Urban Agenda (MITMA) carries out housing actions in coordination with the autonomous regions and promotes access to housing and urban renovation, regeneration and rehabilitation through grants and subsidies.



Fira Barcelona

Fira de Barcelona is one of Europe's most important trade fair organisations in terms of event volume and quality, high quality of venues, and professionalism and experience in holding events. It is a consortium made up of Barcelona City Council, the Generalitat de Catalunya and the Barcelona Chamber of Commerce in which public ownership is combined with autonomous business management. It hosts over 150 events per year, as well as around 1,000 activities within the framework of its trade shows.

2.

INTRODUCTION AND PLENARY SESSIONS





This chapter discusses the main theme of the festival: the challenges of emerging and mature models in the field of housing. It also contains the mayor of Barcelona's opening speech, introduces Barcelona's housing policies for 2015-2023 and discusses the content of the three plenary sessions held in ISHF 2023.

2.1. The challenges of emerging and mature housing models

The 4th International Social Housing Festival focuses on what we can learn from both well-established and emerging housing systems about the social and economic challenges that are emerging all over the world, with particular focus on southern Europe and significant participation from other continents, such as America, Asia and Africa. Although mature and emerging models differ hugely in their historical development, with over a century of deployment of public policy on social housing, and although these policies have started to be deployed in emerging models in the last decade, the truth is that no model is perfect and all countries are far from solving the housing crisis.

Mature models can generally be found in central and northern Europe, with examples including, among others, Austria, the Netherlands, Switzerland, France, Germany and the Nordic countries of Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Finland. These countries stand out for the size of their social rental housing stock, which is above the European average and in some cases tops 30%, which they combine with strong market regulation and an extensive programme of rent grants and subsidies. However, these models have recently found themselves under pressure too, particularly following the 2008 economic crisis.

This is the case, for example, of the Netherlands, where this sector recently went through a period of liberalisation. In the 1990s, the Netherlands gave the market too much space – an entire decade of neoliberalism. The country introduced temporary leases, which undermined tenants' rights. In addition, the assistance provided by the government to buy properties was supporting mainly the private sector. In 2013, it introduced a tax for landlords to address the consequences of the 2008 financial crisis. This seriously affected social housing providers, who were forced to sell their properties on the private market to cover this tax. The Netherlands also introduced new allocation criteria for housing associations, which have failed to provide the necessary solution for a waiting list that is on average 13 years long. This has led to a severe housing crisis, particularly in Amsterdam, where young people are taking longer to leave home, vulnerable groups are excluded, neighbourhoods are segregated and the city faces huge sustainability challenges. The question regarding the Netherlands' current system and issues such as tenants' rights and housing associations has been whether local players should be focusing on improving or maintaining the system.

Despite their relatively large social housing stocks, mature housing models still result in a shortage of supply such that demand cannot be met, which is why they still have long waiting lists. Mature models have also suffered as



a result of financialisation, the global trend of approaching housing as a good investment asset. Investments seeking the highest possible profit are causing instability, and the problem has recently been addressed more by providing financial assistance for renting than by providing social housing, i.e. by subsidising demand rather than supply.

Public spending on these subsidies is therefore increasingly growing, leading to greater rather than lower inflation. The most serious challenges facing mature systems are: how to ensure that there is enough affordable housing and how to make this housing sustainable, how to prevent the financialisation of the housing market, and how to create more cohesive communities. Fortunately, housing is back on the political agenda, even in places where the model had appeared to be successful.

Emerging models, on the other hand, can be found in southern European countries, such as Spain and Italy, as well as in eastern European and English-speaking countries. Their situation is very different: in the past they relied on the market to provide housing for everyone, with almost no government intervention. This has resulted in a very deregulated rental market and a very limited social housing stock accounting for only 1-5% of the total. These models have been more seriously affected by recent crises, and the system has been unable to prevent the waves of evictions that have taken place. Furthermore, the starting point for emerging models is already-built cities with insufficient land to build social housing, smaller public budgets for housing than those of mature models, a pro-ownership social mindset under which renting is not seen as a viable option and a host of vested property interests that preclude any kind of regulation. The problem is compounded by the new situation of global labour mobility and tourism, which local residents are unable to compete against, eventually being forced out of their own neighbourhoods.

As housing systems in these emerging models have gradually seen an increase in market-driven urban development and shrinking regulation and direct provision of housing by the public sector in recent decades, some cities (such as Barcelona and Bologna) are introducing innovative housing policies to tackle the urgent social needs resulting from the financialisation of housing, lack of affordability, evictions, homelessness and migratory flows, among other trends.

All this requires political will, dedication and time, as well as adequate and targeted investment and wide-reaching social and political consensus, to ensure that societies have enough decent and quality housing to maintain a decent standard of living. Emerging models can show new paths and alternative solutions that may also be of interest to more established models.



2.2. The challenges facing Barcelona. Welcome speech by the mayor of Barcelona



The mayor of Barcelona, Ada Colau, opened the 4th International Social Housing Festival by thanking all the parties involved in its organisation, with particular emphasis on the partnership established with Housing Europe. As Barcelona was the host city, the mayor set out the main housing challenges and strategies put in place by Barcelona City Council under her baton (2015-2023).

“Social housing is key to a strong society and to restore municipalities’ trust in democracy”. Rather than legitimising speculation with housing as an asset, public administrations should treat affordable housing as a central aspect in society, not in order to address vulnerable people’s problems but because housing is a basic right, something that we need in order to live, develop and contribute to society.

The mayor said that, for years, housing in Spain has been treated not just as a commodity but as an asset for speculation, an approach that has to a great extent been legitimised by public administrations. This has led to a housing and eviction crisis: the housing emergency resulted in a wave of evictions, first due to mortgage defaults and then due to rent arrears. All this created strong demand for social services, putting pressure on them. The administration has got no tools left to deal with this. There is a clear shortage of social housing: at the start of the current mandate, the City Council found that it had been left with a housing stock of only 1.5%. There was therefore a clear shortage of public and social housing. A meagre stock that left the City Council effectively unable to tackle the huge housing emergency.



In view of this, the housing policy strategy developed by Barcelona City Council was a paradigm shift towards housing as a right: one of its priorities has been to move away from the traditional paradigm and treat housing as a fundamental right and an essential public service rather than as a commodity. One of the main lines of action taken to achieve this has been increasing the rate at which public and social housing is built in an effort to increase the public and social housing stock. The 7,500 public housing units in existence at the start of the mandate have now risen to 11,500, and a total of over 14,000 is expected to be reached in the next two years. A number of innovations to housing policy have also been made. These include (among others):

- Creating an anti-eviction unit.
- Acquiring homes in the private market through a public purchase programme.
- Mediation with small landlords to offer lower rents.
- Implementing the 30% rule, under which private developments are required to allocate 30% of their units on consolidated urban land to social housing.
- Industrialisation in the construction of housing.
- Rent regulation.

The mayor noted the importance of learning from both local (social movements) and international (models from northern and southern Europe) experiences to carry out these policies. She also stressed the wish to avoid creating ghettos and to ensure that there is social housing in every neighbourhood. But the main thing is to bring about a paradigm shift and raise awareness of the importance of affordable housing.

2.3. “Affordable housing” mission. Barcelona City Council’s housing policy for 2015-2023¹

The housing issue is a complex, systemic, interconnected and urgent one. It is a clear example of a perverse problem with no magic solution. Any policy that starts from the premise that the housing crisis can be solved with a single measure is doomed to failure. And anyone who reduces the housing crisis to a mere imbalance between supply and demand (an interpretation that leads to the claim that the solution is to increase supply) is also mistaken, as are those who claim that there is no need for more housing because the only measure we need is market regulation to reduce speculation and protect tenants.

1. Written by Javier Burón Cuadrado, housing manager at Barcelona City Council; Eduardo González de Molina, policy adviser at Barcelona City Council and affiliate academic at the UCL Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose; and Eduard Cabré Romans, international Housing Policy consultant at Barcelona City Council



Spain needs not just rental homes but specifically affordable rental homes. In other words, it needs homes for people whose incomes are too low for market prices. As recently stated by the Bank of Spain, the system is becoming increasingly inaccessible, and the proportion of income spent on rent continues to rise. This is a clear weakness in the market: supply has failed to meet the growing demand to a sufficient extent. Housing Europe has shown (2023) that, with only 2.5% of social housing (compared to the EU average of 9.3%), Spain still has a long way to go.

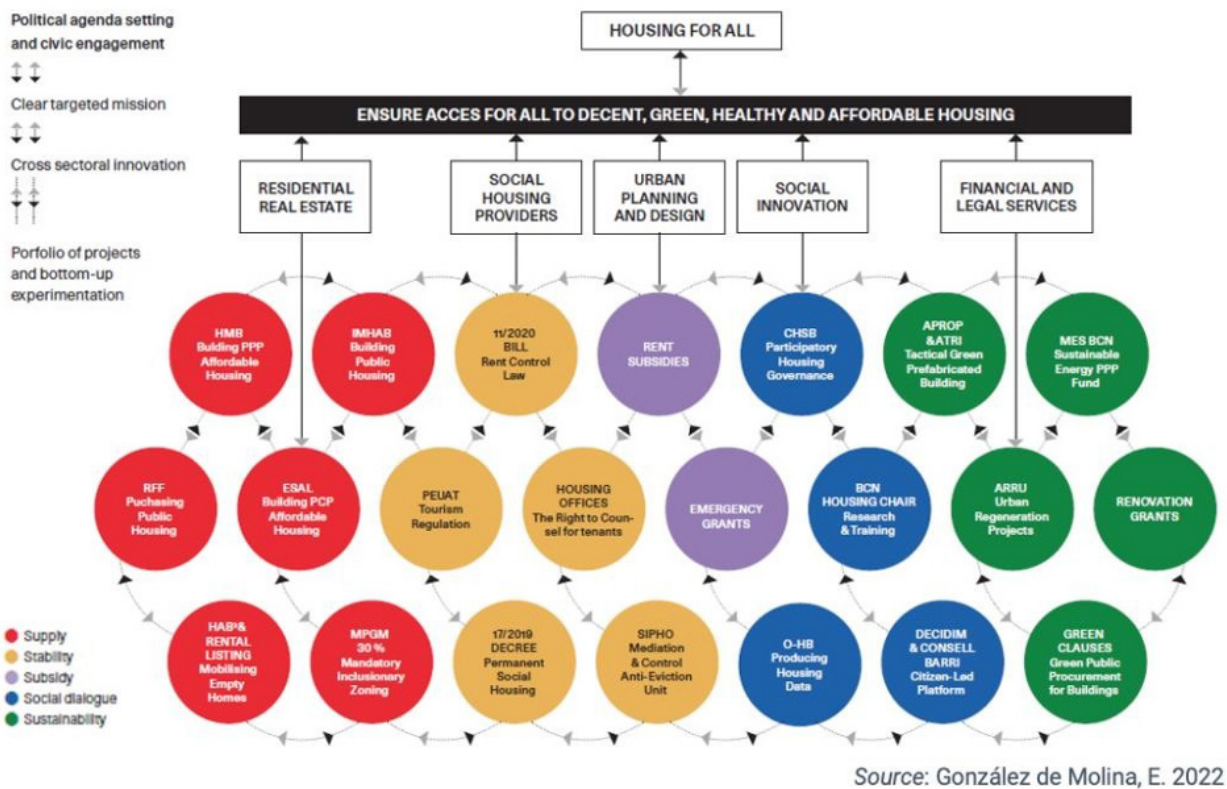
Without a large stock of affordable housing, it is simply impossible for the non-profit sector (public, public-private or third sector) to become a systemic player in the market with the ability to soften the effect of price fluctuations and provide enough affordable housing to guarantee people's right to housing. Responsibility for rectifying this historic shortage lies with all the relevant players in the housing system. But what mechanisms are needed in order to develop affordable housing on a sufficiently large scale and at the necessary speed to meet the demand that remains unmet?

Not only is the housing crisis particularly complicated but housing policy is itself inherently complex too, as well as slow, costly and controversial. In addition to broad consensus, shared goals, a great deal of collaboration and a hybrid policy that makes use of all available tools, a successful policy requires significant long-term funding. However, before any of this, it needs direction, an aim, a mission. As argued by Mariana Mazzucato in her book *Mission Economy*, the market is a social construct, the product of dealings between the public, private and third sectors. The public sector must set the market's direction, shaping it to make sure it meets public targets. In the context of housing, the mission is to make it affordable to guarantee the universal right to housing.

Barcelona has been shifting the paradigm of its housing policy since 2015. It has drawn inspiration from the success achieved by Vienna, over the course of a century and in a fairly different context, to develop a new approach aimed at giving tenants greater protection while it builds affordable housing for everyone within planetary boundaries. For the last eight years (2015-2023), Barcelona has thus been implementing a housing policy that follows the six principles of the Right to Housing mission. In its 2016-2025 Right to Housing Plan, Barcelona is therefore developing a market-shaping approach. In addition to this new way of developing mission-oriented housing policies, Barcelona has outlined five sub-missions in accordance with the principles of the three S's suggested by Shane Phillips in *The Affordable City* – supply, stability and subsidy – plus two more added by Eduardo González de Molina – social dialogue and sustainability.



Map of the Barcelona Right to Housing Plan (2015-2023) mission



PROMOTION

The city started by committing to a housing mission that guarantees access to decent affordable housing with net-zero emissions for everyone. The first aim in the achievement of this mission was to double Barcelona's social housing stock within ten years. Shaping the market towards achieving that mission entailed making the private sector responsible for the provision of affordable housing by introducing inclusive zoning regulations under which 30% of housing in the current urban structure and 40% of housing in new developments must be affordable housing (with at least half earmarked for rental in the latter case). Increasing the production of housing by Barcelona's housing authority (IMHAB) was a significant aim.

However, the new role of providing public housing required a different kind of public sector: an entrepreneurial state. Barcelona has invested in internal capabilities within IMHAB and increased coordination between social and urban planning services and the housing authority as a decentralised network of entrepreneurial public organisations. Furthermore, it has developed the necessary capabilities to be a major buyer in the market by buying existing



private buildings for public ownership. A new housing purchasing strategy has been implemented by legislating for a right of first refusal in the whole of the Barcelona area (ATR - “right of first refusal and withdrawal” area). The city has invested €190 million in the purchase of 1,600 housing units. This purchase of 50 existing buildings in total corrects imbalances between geographical areas and curbs speculative investments. As an additional step, the city is also launching a pilot project by a public-private fund to purchase, renovate and rent out existing buildings, providing a great example of an urban wealth fund. However, increasing the supply of permanently affordable housing on the necessary scale and at the necessary rate would require direct provision by the public sector and collaboration with other players.

The city has created symbiotic public-private partnerships and a mutualistic ecosystem. One of these collaborations is with social housing providers (ESAL agreement) under a participatory bottom-up process. The other type of collaboration is carried out through a public-private venture (HMB) with value-sharing methods. Firstly, the ESAL agreement seeks to build and renovate at least 1,000 affordable homes using municipal buildings and land. The agreement is based on two different methods for the provision of affordable housing: social rental housing and the right-to-use cooperative housing model. Barcelona has also recently seen the creation of Housing Metropolis Barcelona (HMB), a company that operates with both public and private funds in the Barcelona Metropolitan Area. HMB’s goal is to provide 4,500 affordable rental housing units. The public (BCN and AMB) and private (Neinor and Cevasa) partners bring the same amount of capital (50%) to the venture. They share the risks and the profit and play an equal part in all decisions, which are taken by a board of directors with the same number of members from each investor plus an independent director elected by mutual agreement. Another strategy for increasing the affordable housing supply is to use vacant homes.

Empty housing units have been put to use through the temporary management of privately owned housing by public players in exchange for giving owners subsidies and incentives through a variety of intermediation schemes, of which one is publicly run (Bolsa) and another is run in partnership with a non-profit housing provider (Hàbitat3), which won the World Habitat award in 2019. All these efforts would not have been possible without a long-term results-focused funding strategy based on public investment plus the crucial financial support of public investment banks in the form of low-interest long-term loans. This has given the market a strong signal and sense of direction, creating expectations of new cross-departmental investment opportunities that attract basic and high-level investments to the housing market. A total public investment of €1.5 billion has been made in the last eight years to achieve this mission. This fair funding strategy was awarded the European Responsible Housing Award in 2019.

PROTECTION

A key mission of any housing system is to give tenants protection and stability. The uncertainty arising from skyrocketing prices leads to rents that cause economic hardship, forcing people to leave their homes. Dealing with this displacement is very stressful and affects both their mental and physical health, particularly if they have to leave the local community and, therefore, their social network. This is why, as its first goal, the government of the



city set out to create an anti-eviction unit, which has prevented 90% of attempted evictions in the city and received a World Habitat Award in 2023. As 98% of all homes in Barcelona are privately owned, security of tenure requires compliance with a variety of regulations, such as those relating to urban planning, habitability standards and security of tenure.

One of the measures put in place by Barcelona City Council to advocate for tenant stability is its proposal for a rent control system. The regional law passed for this purpose (Law 11/2020) curbed the rise in rental prices while promoting the supply of affordable housing. Evidence shows that the rent control system in place in Catalonia reduced rents by 6% without reducing supply. However, it was held unconstitutional by the Spanish Constitutional Court for reasons of jurisdiction. The new Spanish housing law was enacted partly as a result of this legal defeat. This is a housing law that, among other things, contains rent control provisions for the entire country, which Barcelona has undertaken to apply. As for compliance with urban planning and habitability requirements, Barcelona City Council has also increased the number of inspections and penalties handed out for illegal and abusive practices. The approval of the Special Urban Development Plan for Tourist Accommodation (PEUAT) has made it possible to restrict the rise in the number of tourist apartments in the city's most saturated areas. At the same time, corporate landlords and investors have been given penalties for harassment with the aim of reaching agreements to ensure that tenants do not lose their homes.

PREVENTION

In order for the public sector to provide new housing or develop the necessary institutional mechanisms to promote affordable housing on a large scale by partnering with private non-profit or limited-profit organisations, we need time and a decades-long collective effort. Until we have successfully developed a sufficiently large off-market housing stock for it to have a structural effect on prices, other mechanisms to help give access to the private market to those people who lack the necessary resources without such support will continue to be required.

Although rent control measures have been proven to effectively curb price increases in the private market, they are still unable to provide affordable housing to households in receipt of support from social services, which are often those on very low incomes. Until those needs can be met by the public affordable housing stock, we must provide financial support to close the gap between rental prices and the prices that households can afford to pay. Rent subsidies are therefore used to fight the housing emergency by preventing (among other things) evictions and severe rent burdens. Barcelona has significantly increased the amount of rent subsidies available: between 2015 and 2022 it spent over €345 million, helping 29,814 households in 2022, 63% more than the 18,208 it helped in 2014.

PARTICIPATION

The social dialogue mission seeks to involve all players in the decision-making process. In addition to helping speed up the development of new affordable housing, the public and private sectors, the third sector and civil society must play a significant role in the consolidation and professionalisation of the housing sector. Public involvement in the design and implementation of housing policy is crucial when it comes to incorporating the contributions of both residents and the many organisations operating in the housing sector. The city has guaranteed that this mission



will include a monitoring and accountability mechanism. Barcelona has created two participatory governance tools: the Barcelona Council for Social Housing (CHSB) (a participatory council that includes all social housing providers) and the citizen-run online platform DECIDIM. These tools earned Barcelona its place as the first European Capital of Democracy. In addition, data production is key to good monitoring and is the reason behind the creation of the Barcelona Metropolitan Housing Observatory (OHB) and the Barcelona Chair for Housing Studies, created in partnership with public universities as research and training institutions.

PRESERVATION

Amid the climate crisis, the fact that 40% of CO₂ emissions in cities are from residential buildings – which, to make matters worse, are ageing and are energy-inefficient – means that the sustainability mission must be the final pillar of a comprehensive housing and renovation policy. On the other hand, renovating housing entails keeping the current stock in adequate condition and fit to live in. Furthermore, committing to sustainability requires a commitment to energy efficiency and the use of sustainable materials and construction methods when building housing. Renovation grants are a crucial lever in the City Council's efforts to promote the transition to sustainability. The city has undertaken to use them as its main tool to ensure the proper maintenance of the city's private housing stock. Between 2015 and 2022, Barcelona city spent €190 million on the renovation of 77,000 housing units. In addition, developing new industrialised housing with sustainable and low-carbon materials is an essential prerequisite for striking the necessary balance between sustainability and affordability by creating more social housing. Barcelona has also received a number of international awards, including the New European Bauhaus Prize and the EU Prize for Contemporary Architecture (EU Mies Award), for its sustainable, affordable and community-led architectural designs.



2.4. New housing challenges and solutions in Catalonia and Spain



The opening session, which was moderated by Sorcha Edwards, Secretary General of Housing Europe, featured Iñaki Carnicero, Secretary General for Urban Agenda and Housing of the Spanish government; Marina Berasategui, Secretary of Housing of the Generalitat de Catalunya; and Antonio Balmón, mayor of Cornellà de Llobregat and Executive Vice President of the Barcelona Metropolitan Area.

To provide some context, Sorcha Edwards explained that public, social and affordable housing in Catalonia and Spain accounts for less than 2% of all housing, which means that public authorities have very limited tools to address the current affordability crisis. She also said that the opening plenary session of ISHF 2023 will include representatives from the public administrations in charge of housing in Barcelona, Catalonia, the Valencia region and Spain to discuss the main challenges that must be overcome to guarantee the universal right to adequate housing and some of the solutions that are currently being tested to achieve this.

Iñaki Carnicero of the Spanish Ministry of Mobility, Transport and Urban Agenda explained that the Spanish housing market faces many challenges, of which access to housing is its most pressing one, a concern shared by various countries regardless of their level of development. It is key to ensure that housing policies are not used as political tools and that everyone understands that access to decent housing is a fundamental right. In addition, the importance of the quality and adaptability of housing became clear during the pandemic, as it has a direct impact on people's health and well-being, leading to the acknowledgement that the different types of housing must be adapted to current social demands.

The Spanish government has therefore taken various steps to address these challenges. The Spanish Ministry of Transport, Mobility and Urban Agenda has invested ten times as much as previous administrations in this area. It



has also launched the 2022-2025 State Housing Plan, whose main focus is on the most vulnerable people and which entails an investment of €1.7 billion. A €3.5 billion programme funded by European funds was designed during the health crisis to renovate housing and neighbourhoods, with a particular focus on improving the energy performance of buildings to achieve decarbonisation goals.

The private sector plays a key role in solving the housing problem. In order to encourage its involvement, resources have been allocated to the construction of affordable rental housing. Furthermore, the public land authority SEPES has put in place significant measures to mobilise public land to encourage the building of housing. These include purchasing a large amount of land from the Spanish Ministry of Defence for the construction of 20,000 more units.

Finally, the recently approved State Housing Act introduces tax and regulatory measures to improve the situation of the property market. The new act identifies “stressed market areas”, which are those where housing prices have increased significantly or in which families are having to spend over 30% of their income on housing. It then establishes measures to control these price increases, particularly in the case of large property owners.

Marina Berasategui of the Generalitat de Catalunya explained that there are three aspects to the housing crisis. The main ones are social and environmental, but the financial aspect must not be ignored. These represent the various challenges facing Catalonia’s housing market. The financial challenge faced by public policies on housing, as well as the now chronic structural vulnerability in policies, were stressed. These make it very difficult to maintain a balance between a free market and the protection of vulnerable people. The existence of a “**housing emergency situation**” in Catalonia that requires quick and effective solutions was highlighted.

Berasategui noted in this regard the importance of innovation in housing policies and strategies, saying that the public administration is striving to adapt and evolve in this area. The Generalitat de Catalunya is working at various intervention levels and collaborating with various players, such as local government and the financial sector. This collaborative approach was highlighted as an essential part of the effort to address the current housing challenges. Attention was drawn to the use of public-private partnerships as a key tool that can turn the administration into an innovative bureaucracy and makes good use of the private sector’s expertise and capabilities. Berasategui also highlighted the creation of a national housing pact for Catalonia that seeks to share goals and responsibilities among the various players involved in the housing market.

Finally, Antonio Balmón pointed out in relation to the local and metropolitan arena that the Barcelona Metropolitan Area, which includes 36 municipalities and a population of around 3.5 million, has been taking active action in relation to housing policies for decades. Social housing in particular has been a priority, seeking not just to provide citizens with a decent place to live but also to balance and cool down the private market and make the city more homogeneous from a social and economic point of view.

A key challenge in this regard has been to avoid creating social housing estates isolated from urban realities, something that happened in the past. These projects, particularly those that were built during Franco’s government and the early days of democracy, were often abandoned and did not receive adequate maintenance and support. The current strategy seeks to incorporate social housing into the existing urban structure. The evolution of cities and citizens’ needs makes it essential not only to build new homes but also to renovate existing ones.



This includes adapting old buildings to new climate and social circumstances, for example by making them energy-efficient and guaranteeing their accessibility. It is also essential that we identify and take advantage of empty private properties, especially those that have no clear purpose due to the absence of heirs or owners.

Finally, despite the successes achieved, the metropolitan area is still facing challenges, such as a lack of financial resources. However, the Spanish government's cooperation and support have been crucial in recent years. The construction of around 5,000 homes is planned for the next few years, and work on renovation initiatives will also continue. Despite the progress made, there is a general consensus that there is still much more that can be done to improve Barcelona's housing situation.

2.5. Emerging housing systems in southern Europe





In this session, Professor Mariana Mazzucato, founding director of the UCL Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose, and Leilani Farha, Global Director of The Shift, set out a new framework to guarantee the right to housing based on their new working paper “**The Right to Housing Mission**”. Their speeches provided the framework for a round table discussion featuring elected officials, professionals and researchers from five European countries (Spain, Portugal, France, Italy and Greece), who shared their experiences.

Leilani Farha made it very clear at the beginning of the second day that: “Every dollar of public money should be spent on a human rights goal, and this applies to housing too.” Leilani Farha’s core argument is that housing is a fundamental human right. This is a right that is key to human well-being and provides a foundation for other rights, including rights to health, education, water and sanitation, freedom of association and freedom of expression, and the right to life itself. However, in practice giving effect to this right requires new ideas and policies.

A human rights-based approach should be enough to trigger government action, but unfortunately this is not the case. A housing mission such as that proposed by Mariana Mazzucato could provide motivation for policymakers, as it is a challenge, a carrot rather than a stick.

As well noted by Bologna Deputy Mayor Emily Clancy, municipalities working together to provide affordable housing in Italy are asking their government to enact a law that covers public housing, implements programmes for well-being and the homeless, ensures stable funding and regulates short-term rental platforms.

Dimitra Siatitsa, a post-doctoral researcher at the University of Crete and the National Technical University of Athens, reported that Greece has no social housing. The opportunity provided by the fall in housing prices that followed on from the financial crisis was used by financialisation, in the form of investment funds, to buy a large proportion of the housing stock. Accessing housing is now becoming increasingly difficult for many people, particularly young people and immigrants but, in spite of all the hardship, there is still a lack of social movements fighting for their social right to housing.

Seville municipal housing manager Felipe Castro is working on attracting private-sector developers to build housing under the city’s control. Regarding Portugal, Filipa Roseta, Housing Councillor for Lisbon, outlined three goals to be planned by the capital in the next ten years. The last decade was the worst in history for housing production. As a result, our current priority is to increase supply, and more specifically to mobilise 2,000 empty housing units and create a new non-profit cooperative housing sector. UPC Professor Josep Maria Montaner concluded by welcoming Spain’s new State Housing Act (Act 12/2023), which will make it possible, among other things, to regulate short-term rentals.



2.6. Emerging housing initiatives in the Americas



This last plenary session focused on emerging initiatives in the Americas. These ranged from South America's precarious systems and the structural housing crisis in the form of slums to North America's huge inequality in access to housing between those with resources and those without. The plenary session highlighted the truly global nature of the housing crisis and the fact that it affects both developing countries and the world's wealthiest countries.

In her opening speech, Adrienne Todman, Deputy Secretary of the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), said that: *"We know that the dignity of having somewhere we can call home is key to our ability to connect with society."* She mentioned in particular the United States' rental assistance programme under which families have received a total of USD 10.5 million. This is a new initiative to address the lack of shelter for homeless people and the need for greater protection for tenants. She also stressed her government's great trust in the ability of public-private partnerships to provide affordable housing.

In addition, regarding the United States' housing crisis, Todman said that: *"I also believe that a single person can make a difference. When you create a home, you literally change someone's life. Creating a home brings about change. Please think about this when your work in the field of housing is difficult. Your work will enable homeless people to live with dignity. Families will find a home. Housing is ultimately not just about having walls around you and a roof over your head. It's about people. When things get harder, think about this festival. You and I are making housing possible. Enjoy your time. And let's get down to work."*



Moving on to Latin America, Alejandro Echévarri, co-founder of the URBAM project, presented three core ideas. In Latin America, it is not easy to innovate in the field of housing. But there are some recipes for success. One of these is the fact that projects with strong social and territorial ties that create synergies between existing initiatives last longer than political attacks, which means they can be scaled up. The second idea is that initiatives cannot be scaled up without increasing and strengthening local capabilities. And the last idea is that cities are settings for education in which unexpected allies may be found along the way.

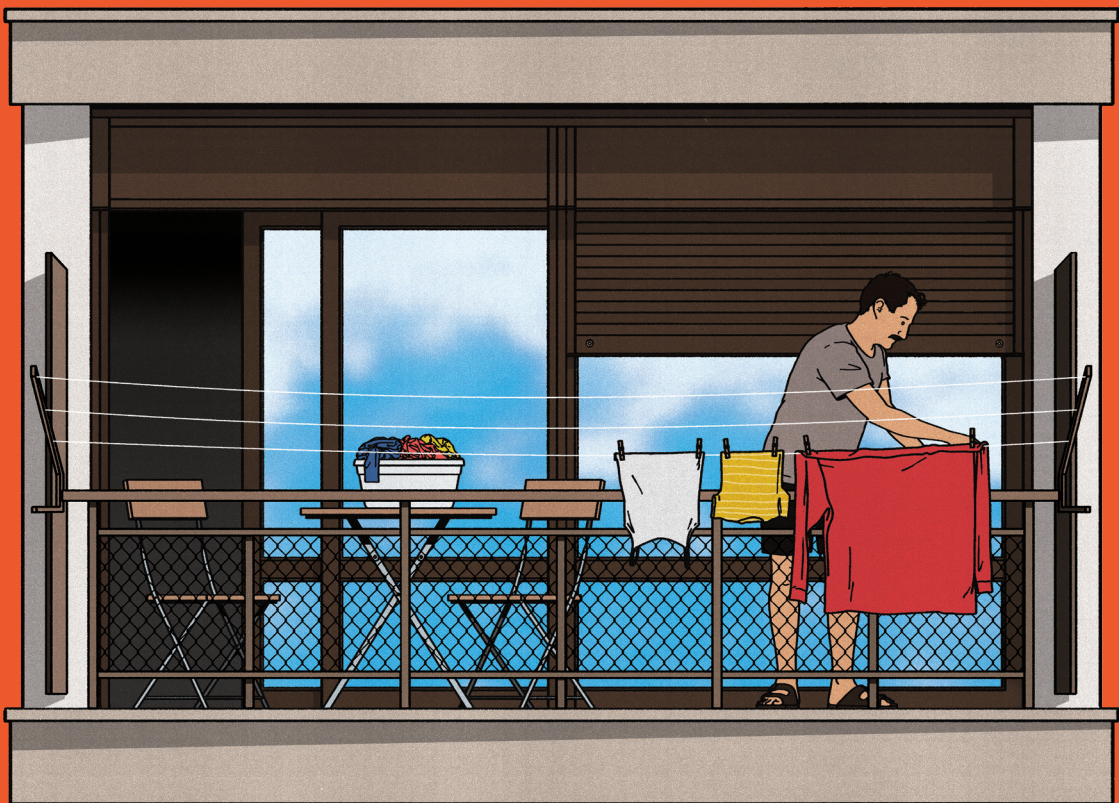
Ana Falú, Professor at the National University of Cordoba, Argentina, agreed that the city is an educational setting. The interdependence between housing and the city. The housing policy must be linked to the city model. This way, we can move towards achieving a social mix, a mix of ages and sustainability. Falú also highlighted women's role in good urban and housing design. Due to the sexual division of labour, women are often the poorest members of society and the most affected by its inequalities. But their perspective is key if we want to build a more egalitarian city. And, finally, we must not forget or neglect the key role of LGBTI minorities.

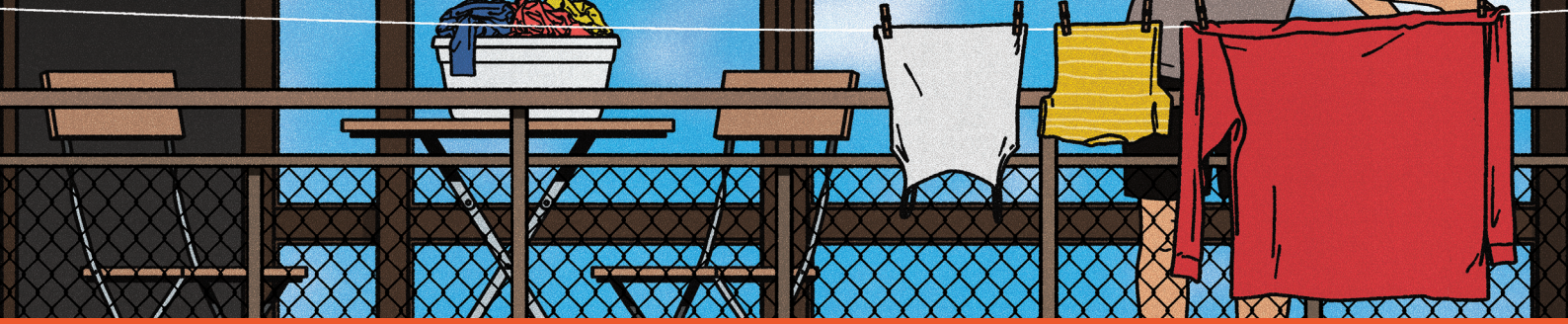
From Peru, Former Deputy Minister of Housing of the Peruvian National Government Elizabeth Añaños expressed her concern regarding the lack of housing policy in her country. The Peruvian housing crisis has left its residents with only two options: to either traffic in land and slums through organised crime or cram themselves into proper housing. The only solution to this problem that has been found is self-building. However, self-built homes are at great risk due to the area's high seismic activity. The national government has given priority to the middle class: only 4% of subsidies go to the most vulnerable families. The two tools put in place by Añaños during her term in government were the National Housing Policy, which diversified solutions, and the Sustainable Urban Development Act, which sought to adapt new urban developments to planetary boundaries.

Gervasio Muñoz, president of the National Federation of Tenants, was another voice from Argentina. He started by mentioning that the world's first tenant strike, known as "**the broom strike**," was held in Argentina in the early 20th century. In addition to suspending payments, it enabled prices to fall. From 1940, with a new popular government and a significant constitutional reform, a new article on the social role of housing was added to the Constitution and a chamber of housing was created. However, the progress made in the field of housing was outweighed by the country's successive coups d'état. Following the reinstatement of democracy, the growing role of trade unions became key to recovering a certain degree of protection for tenants. The new Rent Act of 2020 is an example of this. Carlos Araya, head of the Housing Policy Division of the government of Chile, concluded by explaining that Chile has a clear housing emergency with its high percentage of slums and overcrowding. A new critical point of the new Chilean constitution is currently under discussion. Where some argue that housing should only be accessed through ownership, others believe that the housing access policy should be neutral and all forms of housing should be regulated and protected. From the Chilean government's point of view, the most important step is to incorporate a social rental housing policy. A key role in housing policy for the government is also being sought. Furthermore, the government has recently made its first purchase of public housing. And, finally, it has committed to geographical balance. These are the main problems faced by Latin America: restoring the government's role, creating a public housing system, committing to renting and regulating slums.

3.

BARCELONA-CATALONIA: AN EMERGING MODEL





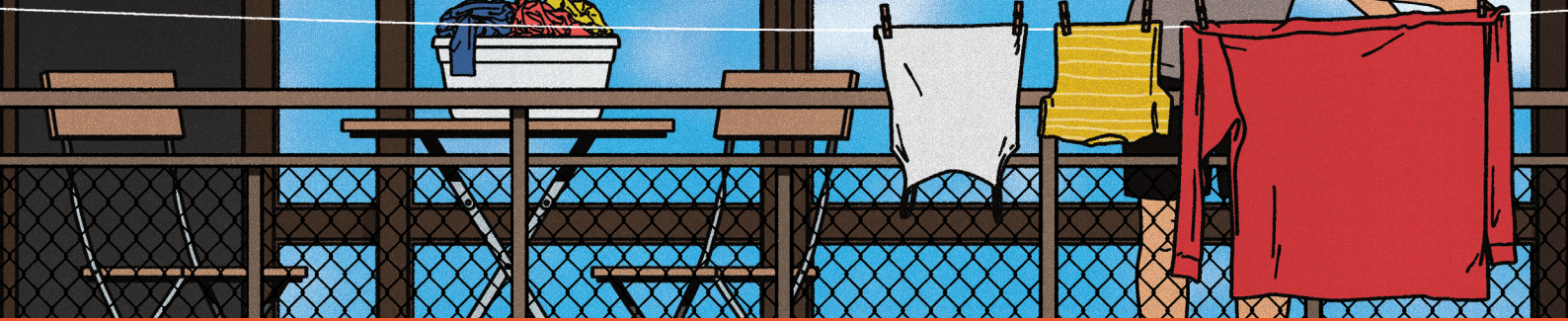
One of the discussions in the main sessions, which were held in the auditorium before a large audience, related to the state of housing in Catalonia and Barcelona, an emerging system in southern Europe. The subjects addressed included subjects as varied as urban planning strategies, formulas to increase the social and affordable housing stock, public-private and public-community partnerships to increase the affordable housing stock, the energy renovation of housing, the regulation of the housing market and the transformative power of architecture.

3.1. Urban planning strategies that help provide affordable housing



Urban planning policy in Barcelona and Catalonia has been through significant changes in recent years to tackle the affordability of housing and encourage urban regeneration and inclusion. Some of the urban planning innovations made in Catalonia include implementing inclusive zoning, imposing permanent restrictions on the privatisation of affordable housing and recognising the right of first refusal and withdrawal for local governments in relation to private residential buildings.

Three key ideas were presented at the session by Guillem Costa, dean of the Architects' Association of Catalonia. He started by stressing the importance of sustainability in the construction of buildings, highlighting their physical



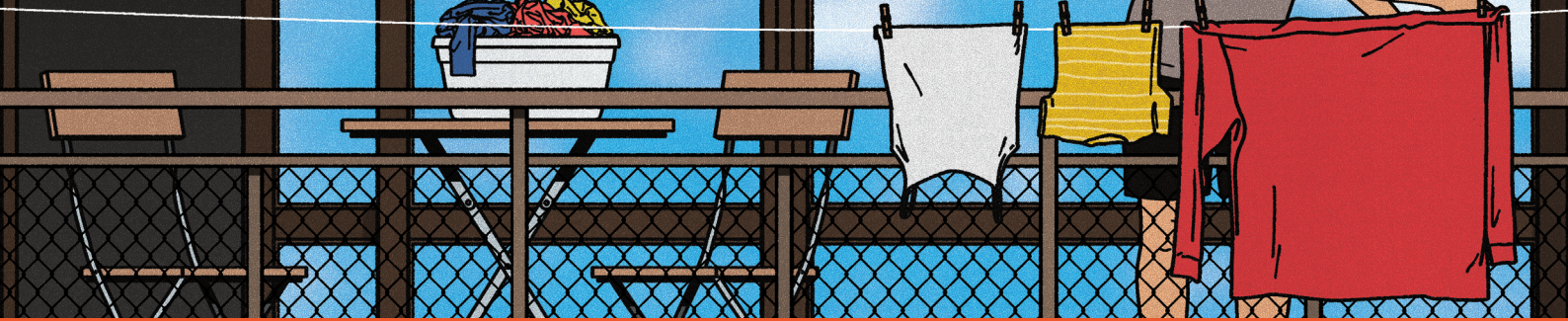
proximity to services as a key factor. He then highlighted the commitment to affordable housing, particularly for renting, as well as the need to ensure the quality of these homes. He finally mentioned the need to accelerate procedures and reduce implementation periods in urban development processes.

Laila Grau, manager of Urban Planning at Barcelona City Council, also shared two core ideas. The first one was the requirement to earmark 30% of new buildings for social housing, combined with giving effect to the right of first refusal and withdrawal. And the second was the importance of ensuring the indefinite existence of public housing to ensure it remains available over time. INCASÒL director Maria Sisternas provided a history of the organisation and stressed the need for delegated development in the field of affordable housing.

Mireia Peris, who is in charge of the Urban Master Plan (PDU) for the Barcelona Metropolitan Area, explained that, under the new master plan, between 120,000 and 150,000 new affordable homes are to be created in the Barcelona Metropolitan Area, thus reaching the figure of 10% of social housing stock. Although a significant step forward from the current average of 2.5%, this would still fall far short of the original goal of 15%. To achieve this, the PDU regulates new urban uses in new urban developments.

Finally, Shane Phillips, manager of the Randall Lewis Housing Initiative for the UCLA Lewis Center for Regional Policy Studies, said that the fight against California's housing crisis starts by addressing the endemic issue of homelessness. His proposed measures tackle the importance of increasing the supply of affordable homes and improving cooperation between the various levels of government. One of his key proposals is to foster the construction of new homes and the purchase of existing properties to turn them into affordable accommodation. To achieve this, he suggested reducing the minimum parking space requirements applicable to new developments, which could reduce construction costs. Phillips also stressed the importance of cooperation between geographically close municipalities, with support from the government, in the promotion of coordinated housing policies that are effective at a regional level. However, he also warned of the risks of over-privatisation, which could lead to solutions that do not necessarily address the most vulnerable people's needs or ensure accessibility and affordability in the long term. These ideas reflect a comprehensive and multi-sector approach to one of California's most complex urban challenges.

The proposed solutions included setting time limits on tourist licences, encouraging economic activity on the ground floors of buildings and considering buying land from private individuals in areas earmarked for new homes. The idea that architecture tends to be of higher quality when developed on public land was also mentioned.



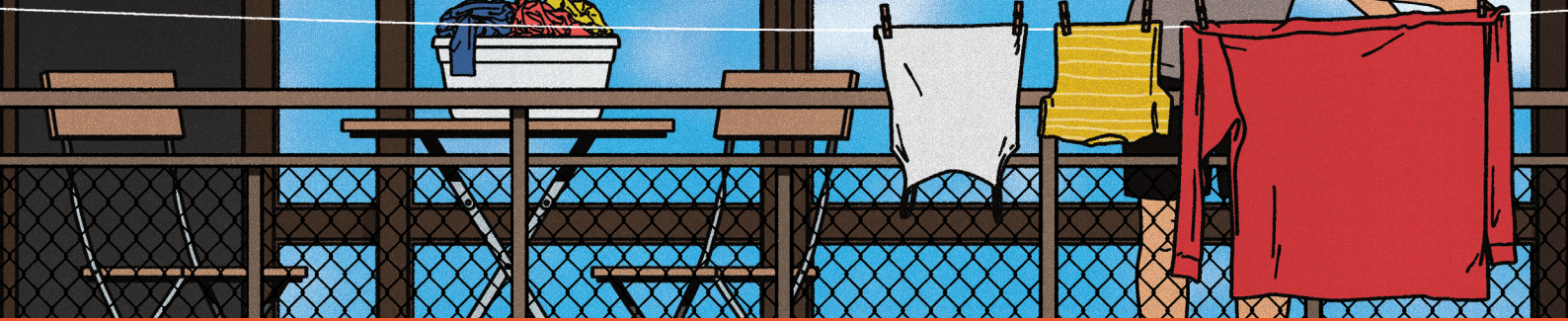
3.2. Increasing the social and affordable housing stock



In Spain there is a broad political consensus on the urgent need to increase the public housing stock in cities and regions throughout the country, particularly in stressed market areas. In this session, Javier Burón, manager of Housing for Barcelona, stressed the importance of giving priority to renting over selling as a key strategy to tackle the housing crisis. He also noted that managing rents in public housing is a significant challenge, especially in Barcelona.

Sílvia Grau, director of the Catalan Housing Agency, presented the ambitious aim of reaching 15% of affordable housing including a variety of models, such as rental housing and public and private housing, with the goal of building 10,000 homes in three years. She also highlighted the importance of social cohesion and energy renovation when planning affordable housing in Catalonia.

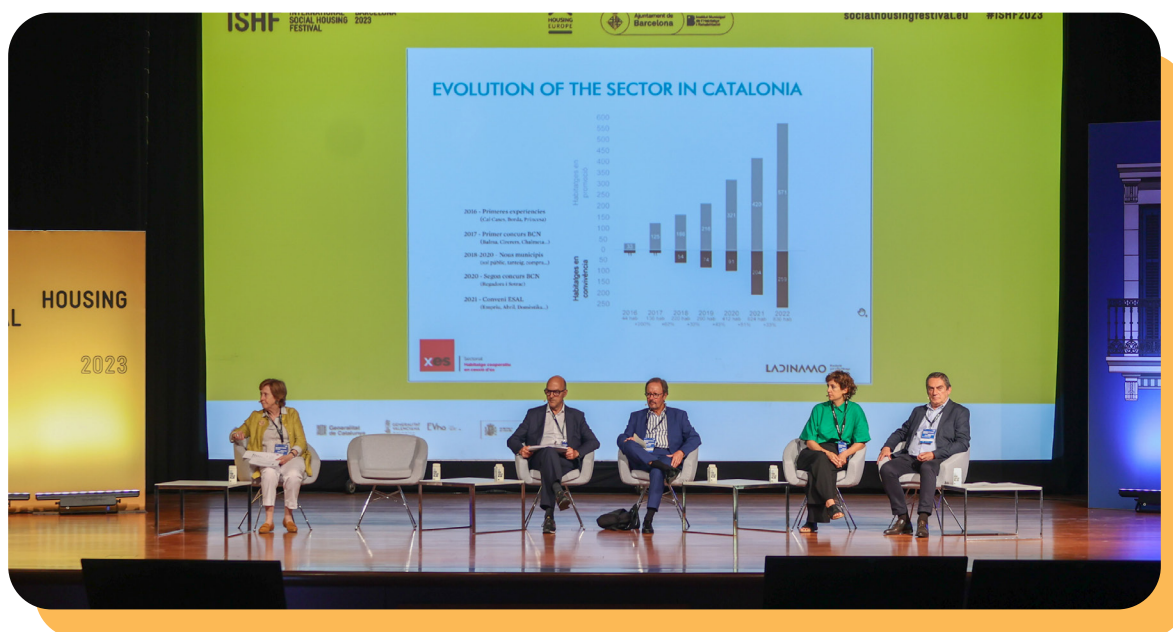
The speaker Laia Claverol, manager of Social Rights for Barcelona, highlighted the need to tackle the housing emergency and focus support on people. She also drew attention to the challenges of ageing and the poverty line, as well as the issue of substandard housing. Next to her, Amadeu Iglesias talked about the lack of proper funding for the construction of public housing and the exploration of new cooperative models for the assignment of land. He also mentioned access to funding through the EIB (European Investment Bank) and the Spanish Official Credit Institute (ICO).



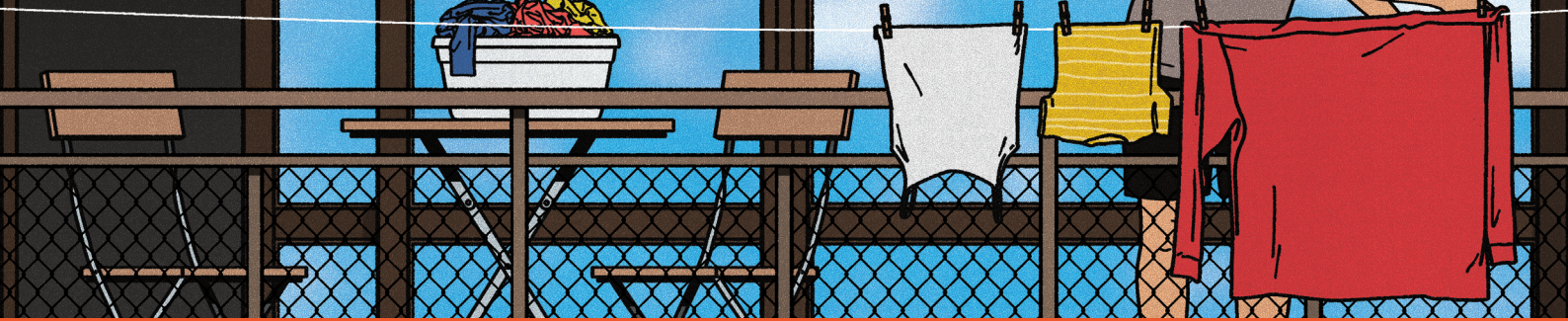
Finally, FEANTSA director Ruth Owen talked about the need to align Europe’s housing policies and noted that public housing units in England are being sold off faster than new ones are being built. She also stressed the importance of regulating housing and the influence of the new housing act in this regard.

The main problems mentioned included concerns about evictions and the need for long-term housing policies that last beyond changes in political mandates. The solutions proposed included a combination of price control and rent subsidies until enough affordable housing can be provided. The role of the third sector in the search for more social and affordable housing was also highlighted. The new housing act is also considered a significant factor to be taken into account in the future.

3.3. Public-private and public-community partnerships for the provision of affordable housing



In Spain, Barcelona and Catalonia have been pioneers in the implementation of public-private and public-community partnerships to address the growing need for affordable housing. This session examined two innovative projects to increase the affordable housing stock in the region.

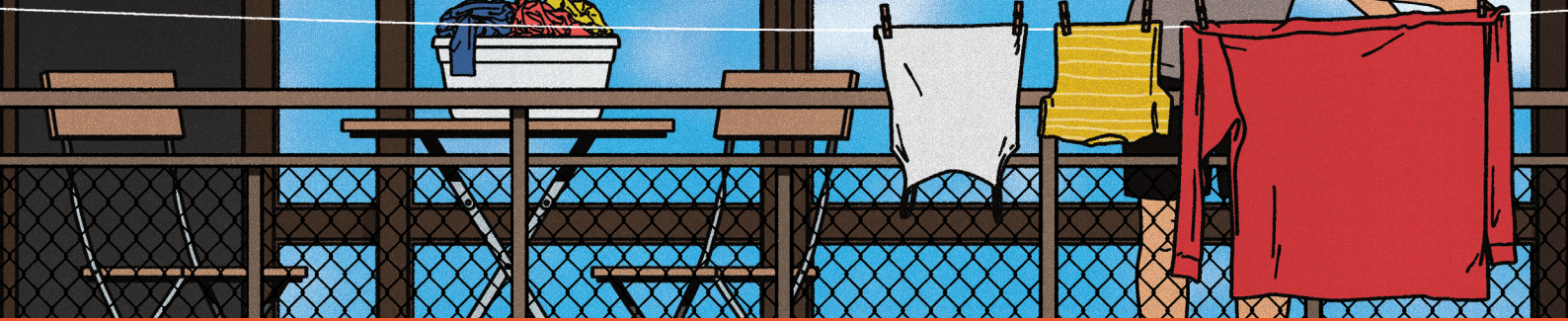


The first of them is a partnership agreement (ESAL agreement) between Barcelona City Council and social housing providers to develop 1,000 affordable rental and cooperative housing units. The second is the creation of the first mixed public-private housing provider in the metropolitan area (HMB), which is developing some of the 4,500 affordable rental homes in the Barcelona Metropolitan Area. The 2022-2036 Social Pact for Housing was also presented at the session as part of a key strategy for the implementation of housing policies.

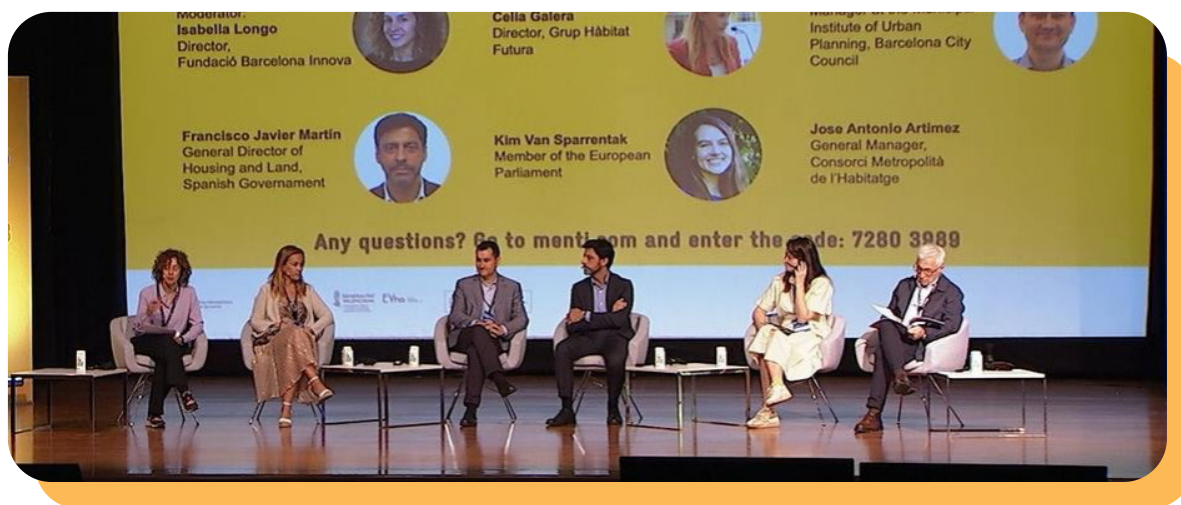
The first speech was given by Ramon Torra, manager of the Barcelona Metropolitan Area, who highlighted the importance of sustainable, inclusive and technologically innovative housing. He also drew attention to the challenges of funding and taxation and the need to develop the third sector in the field of housing and foster trust-based collaboration. Glòria Rubio, coordinator of La Dinamo foundation, highlighted the exponential growth undergone by the cooperative model based on the assignment of use in recent years and provided constructive criticism of bidding processes for cooperatives and how agreements such as the ESAL agreement are concluded. She also highlighted the importance of adequate regulation, access to land and funding for such projects. Cevasa CEO Donato Muñoz, for his part, provided a history of his company and an explanation of the Habitatge Metròpolis Barcelona project. He also drew attention to the need for tax reforms to make projects viable.

Pedro Javier Jauregui, Deputy Minister of Housing of the Basque regional government, gave a presentation on the 15-year Social Pact for Housing (2022-2036) and highlighted the importance of providing grants and subsidies until the envisaged number of homes is reached. He also mentioned the creation of a Housing Forum to monitor this pact. Vanesa Valiño, Chief of Staff of the Councillor's Office for Housing for Barcelona, finished by highlighting the need to increase Barcelona's public housing stock. She also referred to the Barcelona Right to Housing Plan (PDHB) as a consensus-based plan and mentioned the importance of approaching housing as an asset for use rather than for speculation.

In the discussion on common solutions for emerging models, the importance of direct award thanks to the Catalan legislation and ICO funding was highlighted. It was suggested that housing plans should be implemented for a ten-year minimum period and that agreements to develop housing policies should be concluded without political or other confrontations. Tax reductions from 21% to 4% in the case of VAT and to 25% in the case of corporate tax were mentioned as key measures.



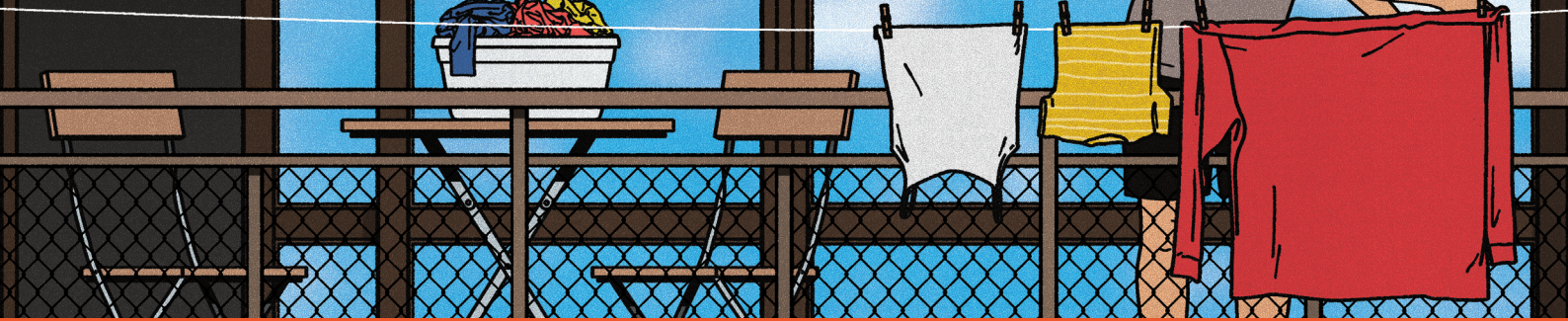
3.4. Next Generation EU: housing renovation and urban regeneration



This session addressed housing renovation and urban regeneration, which are key issues on the European political agenda. Emphasis was placed on the fact that the Next Generation EU scheme is providing funding to accelerate the energy transition, but a question regarding the specific challenges arising in its implementation was raised. The progress made in Barcelona and Catalonia was discussed. This includes, for example, the fact that Barcelona city spent €190 million on the renovation of 77,000 housing units between 2015 and 2022. Furthermore, new industrialised homes have been developed using sustainable and low-carbon materials.

The speaker Celia Galera, director of the Habitat Futura group, stressed the importance of energy efficiency, leading to a 48% saving in primary energy consumption. The implementation of social workshops on renovation to help make decisions and create cooperative energy communities was also mentioned. MEP Kim van Sparrentak highlighted the need to address the issue of homelessness and the investment in housing as an asset. She also talked about the importance of targeting Next Generation EU funds at social housing and the fight against energy poverty. David Martínez, manager of the Municipal Institute of Urban Planning, shared the Besòs-Maresme experience and stressed the importance of making an initial diagnosis, local residents' positive acceptance of items such as lifts and balconies/terraces, and the industrialisation of renovation, which has a high percentage of municipal subsidies.

Francisco Javier Martín, Director General for Housing at the Ministry of Transport, Mobility and Urban Agenda (MITMA), stressed that renovation adds stability to the construction sector and presented the Resilience Plan. It was also stressed that renovation must be based on technical rather than financial factors, and the creation of energy communities was discussed. Finally, José Antonio Artímez, manager of the Barcelona Metropolitan Area Housing



Consortium, gave a presentation on the consortium under his charge and on the Barcelona Metropolitan Area Renovation Plan, which involves 800 master plans and personalised letters to owners of buildings built before 1980.

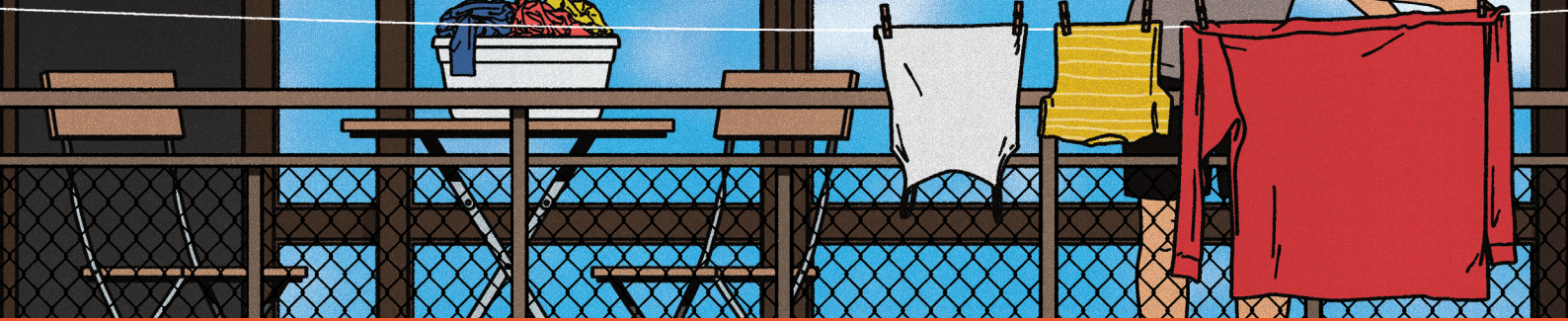
It was mentioned in the discussion that older users are often concerned about the future of their homes and how it may affect their grandchildren. The complexities involved in managing the Next Generation EU funds and the need for technical language that is easier to understand for local residents were also mentioned. The common solutions suggested included the need for stable regulations and criteria for long-term work in homes and the importance of technical personnel adapting to customers' needs in projects for the renovation of vulnerable spaces.

3.5. Understanding and regulating the private property market



This session, which was held under the name “Understanding and Regulating the Private Housing Market”, explored rent control and how to improve and increase it to help the thousands of tenants who fall victim to abusive practices or are unable to obtain housing at all due to high market prices.

The debate, which was moderated by Economics Professor Jordi Jofre, featured Lucía Martín, Acting Councillor for Housing and Renovation at Barcelona City Council, Barcelona Bar Association lawyer Cristina Vallejo, Jaime Palomera, director of the Housing and City department at the Barcelona Urban Research Institute (IDRA), and



Barbara Steenbergen, head of the Liaison Office to the EU of the International Union of Tenants (IUT). The session focused on how to improve tenant protection against rent increases and insecure tenure at a time when most housing is privately owned and tenant evictions are frequent. Catalonia's experience with rent control was discussed, querying whether this is the best way to protect tenants, and other possible strategies and designs for rent control were explored.

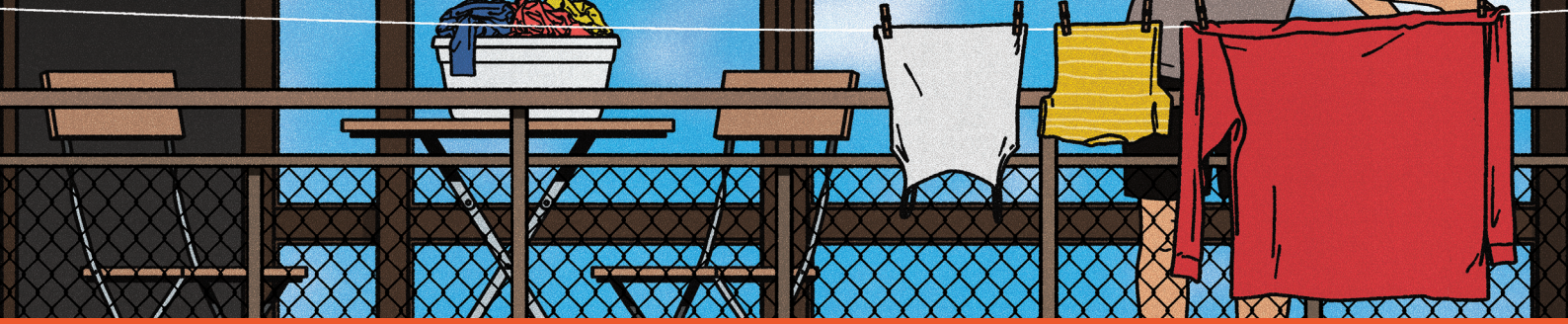
Lucía Martín González, Councillor for Housing and Renovation at Barcelona City Council, explained the efforts made by the city in this regard, which include the creation of a housing observatory and an award-winning anti-eviction unit. She highlighted the regulations applicable to purchases of blocks of flats, which give the municipal government a right of first refusal, and talked about the framework act recently passed in Spain following a long fight by social institutions.

ICAB lawyer Cristina Vallejo presented a critical view of the act. She questioned whether all regions apply it equally following the elections and pointed out that it does not apply to the municipal sector. Vallejo stressed the need to give legal protection to owners too, on the basis that owning three or four properties does not necessarily mean that they are very rich.

Jaime Palomera of the Barcelona Urban Research Institute challenged the common narratives: the claim that rent control doesn't work and the idea that building more housing is better than regulating the existing stock. He referred to studies that show the positive effects of rent control in the United States, with mixed results in the case of Barcelona. Palomera raised key questions on the design of rent control, such as its application to the entire private sector, monitoring vacancies between leases, its application by the administration and security of tenure.

Finally, Barbara Steenbergen called for rent controls and for more five-year limits unless the quality of housing is significantly improved. She reminded attendees that *"If this is the case, rent can go up by 3-5%, which is a normal rent increase for providers of social and affordable housing"*.

She also pointed out that: *"Things are being done very well in Barcelona, which is providing solutions to real problems. But, like in many other European cities, we're too late."* Steenbergen also mentioned Ukraine as an example of why regulating prices is key. In that country, construction costs have risen by 30% as a result of the war, and mass migration to densely populated cities continues to increase. So how can we find accommodation for everyone? Not enough housing will be built. Demand will never be met. So vulnerable people end up living in private housing. The cardinal rule of the housing market is that *"the most vulnerable always live in the worst homes"*.



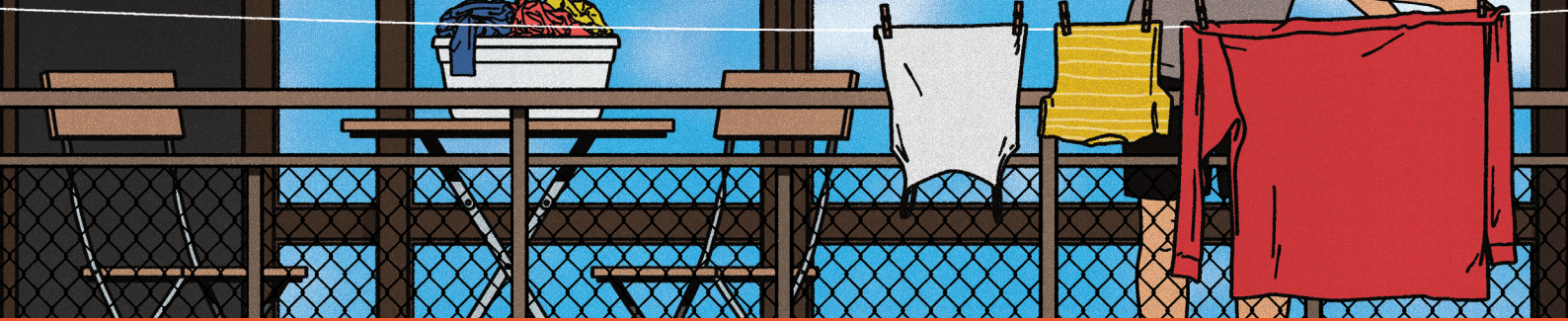
3.6. The transformative power of architecture: Barcelona 2026, UNESCO-UIA World Capital of Architecture



In July 2021, Barcelona was officially named UIA-UNESCO World Capital of Architecture and host of the 2026 UIA World Congress. To move forward in the preparation of contents for that event, the importance of architecture and its link to housing were discussed at the session “**The Transformative Power of Architecture: Barcelona 2026, UNESCO-UIA World Capital of Architecture**”. The talk, which was moderated by Anna Ramos, director of the Mies van der Rohe Foundation, covered the various aspects of architecture.

Paul Karakusevic, founder of Karakusevic Carson Architects, highlighted the importance of architectural design in the improvement of people’s quality of life, as well as the need for public funding and control throughout the construction process and for community engagement in new construction or renovation projects.

Cierto Estudio co-founder Ivet Gasol presented The Room Community, a project involving 237 social housing units under construction designed collectively to promote unity and access to community spaces. The design includes four types of homes, with kitchens aimed at creating open community spaces. Urban Facts architect Maria Buhigas criticised the type of urban planning that results in an unsustainable suburban sprawl and in the emergence of slums as a result of housing needs. She also warned about eco-neighbourhoods, which can actually perpetuate urban unsustainability.



Barcelona Regional managing director Josep Bohigas stressed that housing must take a central role in the construction of the city, and he mentioned the “**Barcelona, posa’t guapa**” time, when priority was given to public spaces over housing. He called for a city model that focuses on people and on finding a solution to their housing problems. Sandra Bestraten, chair of the Official Architects’ Association of Catalonia, noted that Barcelona’s building stock is obsolete in terms of energy efficiency and accessibility and said that homes must be adapted to accommodate the growing number of elderly people and people with functional diversity in the city. To achieve this, she mentioned innovative solutions such as sharing lifts between communities.

Barcelona City Council Chief Architect Xavier Matilla talked about the importance of housing in the structure of the city. He mentioned in this regard Barcelona City Council’s initiatives to create innovative housing with a focus on decarbonisation and industrialisation. He also drew attention to the inclusion of sustainability criteria in the technical specifications and terms and conditions of public contracts to encourage decarbonisation in architecture.

They all agreed on the importance of analysing cities from inside the homes themselves and on all the elements that come into play in an architectural project although, as noted by Buhigas, *“the data have shown that planning in the construction of housing is the exception rather than the norm all over the world”*.

4.

THEMATIC SESSIONS





The first few chapters of this report addressed the main events and plenary sessions. This chapter, on the other hand, discusses the main content of the more than 60 side events held at the International Social Housing Festival in Barcelona. These side events provided more specific multidisciplinary content on key specific issues in the field of social housing.

Details of the main contents of the side events are provided below, grouped into four blocks of topics, with opinion articles and a summary of some of the parallel sessions:

- **4.1. Tenant associations and social impact:**

This chapter draws attention to how tenant movements are increasingly influencing the shaping of housing policies. The rise of housing activism has not only earned social recognition for tenant groups but has also enabled them to significantly impact the regulation of the housing market. The side events in this block of topics covered successful strategies involving tenant unions getting together and influencing policy, leading to legislative changes and structural reforms benefiting tenants, which reflects a new era of citizen empowerment in the management of housing.

- **4.2. Sustainable housing and renovation:**

The current need to integrate sustainability into the social housing life cycle was discussed in this chapter. Renovation and construction innovations that not only make buildings more energy-efficient but also increase residents' well-being were presented. Discussions revolved around the challenges and opportunities of green technologies and the policies that can be put in place to encourage sustainable practices in housing, thus making sustainability a core pillar of the future of social housing, provided that it does not come at the expense of affordability as a result of green gentrification.

- **4.3. Models for Funding and Increasing the Stock of Public, Public-Private and Public-Community Housing:**

The expansion and funding of the social housing stock is a huge topic that requires collaboration by various players. This chapter explored innovative models, including public-private and public-community partnerships, as well as public development. Case studies and programmes that have successfully increased access to quality housing by means of collaboration between the public and private sectors and cooperatives were presented, and the importance of ownership diversification and funding for the development of social housing was highlighted.

- **4.4. Social Housing for Vulnerable Groups:**

The elderly, the young and the homeless. The last chapter focused on social housing solutions for society's most vulnerable people, which have greater difficulty accessing housing. Policies and projects to support the elderly, young people in search of their first home and homeless people were discussed here. The importance of creating inclusive and accessible communities was one of the main focuses of these discussions, as was the need for support structures to guarantee the safety, social integration and autonomy of the city's most disadvantaged people.

4.1. Tenant associations and social impact



4.1.1. Tenants for safe and affordable housing²

The fight for affordable rent, fair housing legislation and the development of social, public and cooperative housing has been a constant struggle over the last century. Similarly, discouraging harmful practices and speculation is still an important area of focus for all tenant unions worldwide. These challenges are as relevant today as they were a century ago. The solutions to these problems change based not only on the time you live in but also on where you live. The current challenges relate to rising inequality in most countries: financialisation, gentrification, touristification, the rising cost of living, energy poverty, the lack of legal means to be part of the decision-making process in relation to one's own home and living environment, and more. However, the core aim is still to uphold the right to housing as a fundamental human right.



In the case of conflicts, such as the one taking place in Ukraine, residents need protection against inadequate construction practices and cost-cutting measures, and buildings must be designed to withstand natural disasters. In addition, and as a separate issue from the humanitarian tragedies affecting the victims of Russia's attack against Ukraine, this war is also a major blow to the European economy, and its impact, far from being restricted to Europe, is global. In many places, the problem of rapidly growing inflation is compounded by the rising cost of living, posing a major challenge for low- and middle-income households in particular. This leads to a constant increase in the need for adequate housing. The inability of new construction to keep up with growing demand further hinders access to decent and affordable housing. In Europe, policy as a direct result of the war focuses on energy security, and many European tenants face the immediate prospect of energy poverty.

The current problems put the focus back on the importance of ensuring that the following principles are observed by decision-makers not just in Europe but worldwide:

- The moratorium on tenant evictions for those who are behind on their rent is a key tool at times of economic instability such as now.
- Public funding for the energy-efficient renovation of public, affordable, cooperative and social housing is not enough compared to the incentives for private housing. This further weakens the position of low- and middle-income tenants, which magnifies the energy poverty of an already vulnerable group. Public funds must focus on public, affordable, cooperative and social housing, as well as on affordable privately-owned rental flats. If public funds are used for private rental flats, the agreements that govern them must be subject to specific conditions, such as mandatory limits on rent.
- Rent control and stabilisation policies help prevent the application of inflation-based rent increases, which leads to more renting and restricts rent increases, particularly in privately rented properties.
- The use of energy renovation policies is key to ensuring that tenants are not negatively affected by renovations and fall victim to "renovictions" (renovation-based evictions leading to the displacement of residents).
- Enabling institutional tenants to participate and be democratically involved to the highest possible extent ensures a level playing field between them on the one hand and owners and housing providers on the other.

In view of this, the International Union of Tenants is calling on public representatives from all over the world to:

- Ensure that the "housing cost neutrality" principle applies to social, public and private housing if refurbishments lead to rent increases or are not cost-neutral, so that renovation costs are no longer borne by tenants.



- Ensure that energy measures with a direct or indirect impact on energy-poor or vulnerable people or those on low and middle incomes do not affect those groups. Energy poverty must therefore be given a broader definition that takes account of comfort and health and decent standards of living and the reasons for failure to achieve these: insufficient disposable income, high energy costs and energy-inefficient housing.
- Work together with civil society organisations such as tenant unions on a platform dedicated to the reduction of energy poverty. Tenant unions must have a voice in the legislative process relating to rent control and stabilisation, the provision of affordable housing and the fight against energy poverty.

4.1.2. A comparison between tenant associations in Sweden, Germany and Spain

How do tenant associations work, be they new or over a century old? In Sweden, Germany and Spain, tenant unions are associations that protect tenants' rights and interests. In Sweden, the Union of Tenants is a membership organisation that negotiates rent for its members to prevent disproportionate rent increases and provides legal assistance in housing disputes. In Germany, these unions are the housing version of trade unions. Their aim is to help achieve mass mobilisation and defend tenants' interests. In Spain, tenant unions fight against exponential rent increases and increasingly shorter leases. These associations seek to defend tenants' interests as regards both rent levels and the duration of leases, as well as providing members with services such as legal advice and the organisation of campaigns against speculation and evictions.

In this session, Mari Pueyo, representing the Sindicat de Llogateres (the Tenant Union for Catalonia), an international working group (speaker), explained that the main mission of the Barcelona Tenant Union, which was founded in 2017, is to defend tenants' rights and fight unfair evictions and excessive rent increases. Their demonstrations, strikes and awareness campaigns have successfully drawn attention to the city's housing problem and brought about changes in local housing policies.

Bernhard von Grünberg, Kolja Bienert and Heike Keilhofer explained the situation in Germany. In Germany, the Deutscher Mieterbund (DMB) represents the German Federation of Tenant Associations and is one of the largest consumer organisations in the country. Its regional branch, Deutscher Mieterbund Bonn/Rhein-Sieg/Ahr e. V., covers the Bonn, Rhine-Sieg and Ahr areas. This non-profit organisation is a staunch defender of tenants' rights. It deals with matters ranging from private to public housing and has links to a large network of similar associations in the country. Its main duties include, among others, providing legal advice, representing tenants in various types of negotiations, educating people about rights and responsibilities in relation to renting, influencing politics to achieve



fair housing policies, and holding events to educate its community of tenants and strengthen their position. While Berlin is a classic example, the Berliner Mieterverein (BMV), which was created in 1888, together with the campaign “Deutsche Wohnen & Co. Enteignen”, seeks to protect tenant rights in Berlin and has driven initiatives to expropriate large property companies and influenced housing policy with laws such as the *Mietendeckel* (rent freeze).

In the case of Sweden, Erik Elmgren and Marie Linder explained that the Swedish Tenants’ Federation (Hyresgästföreningen), founded in 1923, represents tenants and defends their rights and interests. Its main aim is to ensure that rents are fair, homes are safe and well maintained, and tenants receive fair and equal treatment. It seeks to influence housing policy both locally and nationwide, calling for regulations that benefit tenants and working to ensure that they enjoy a high level of protection and that their voice is heard in matters relating to their homes.

As for its operation, the Swedish Union of Tenants provides members with advice and support on renting matters, including maintenance and disputes with landlords. It also negotiates collective agreements with housing companies on tenants’ behalf, giving them the ability to significantly influence the terms of their leases. Furthermore, it provides tenants with information and education on their rights and duties and holds events and activities to educate its community of members and strengthen their position.

4.1.3. Towards a housing system that protects tenants. The Role of Rent Control

“Economic lobbies are one thing, and citizen pressure groups are another”, said Barbara Steenbergen at the ISHF side event “**Towards a Fair Housing System**”. Some lobby for the general good, and others for their own profit. Steenbergen, head of the Liaison Office to the EU of the International Union of Tenants (IUT) in Brussels, lobbies for the weakest members of society, for tenants’ interests throughout Europe. She spoke directly to the tenants in the room, who accounted for around half the people present. “*Your landlord is always in control. Regardless of where you are. You need to be watchful of what they may do in relation to your rent.*” However, the IUT cannot become directly involved in tenant-landlord dealings. Instead, Steenbergen talks to national and local governments all over Europe to ask for public funding specifically for public, affordable, cooperative and social housing, as well as for affordable private rental flats with mandatory rent limits. “*Without limits, there’s no solution*”, she said. Moratoriums on evictions against tenants who have fallen behind on their rent. Energy renovation policies to prevent tenants from being detrimentally affected by renovations, forcing them to leave due to gentrification and renovations (renovation-related evictions). The highest possible participation by institutional tenants, ensuring fair conditions between them on the one hand and owners and housing providers on the other.

The role of rent control. The war in Ukraine has led to a 30% rise in construction costs, and mass migration to densely populated cities is increasing. How can we find accommodation for people? We won’t build enough housing. We’ll never catch up. So vulnerable people end up living in private housing. The cardinal rule of the housing market is that “*the most vulnerable always live in the worst homes*”. Barbara Steenbergen, head of the Liaison Office to



the EU of the International Union of Tenants, called for rent controls and more five-year limits unless significant improvements to the quality of housing are made. Steenbergen reminded attendees that *“If that’s the case, rent can go up by 3-5%, which would be a normal rent increase for providers of social and affordable housing”*. But be warned: if there is no tenant union to fight for you, responsibility for helping tenants lies with the city. However, furnished apartments fall outside the rent control law. This means that landlords can add a mattress, a table and a few chairs and call it a furnished property.

4.1.4. “Casa Bloc, renovating an idea” and Cinefòrum

This was a unique opportunity to see a preview of this film, which shows how the project “Llar Casa Bloc, homes for inclusion” was carried out. It shows the network of partnerships that made it possible, the respect felt for the purpose of this architectural and social housing milestone from 1930, and how its transformation addresses today’s housing needs. The stories of new tenants provide powerful examples of the impact of housing and support on people’s lives.

Hàbitat3 started by telling the story of the iconic Casa Bloc, which was built 90 years ago drawing from the principles of the New European Bauhaus and has recently been renovated as part of the efforts to fight housing exclusion. The building was designed as social housing by the Catalan group of architects GATCPAC during the Spanish Second Republic to accommodate and restore the dignity of people with learning difficulties, the homeless and those at risk of vulnerability. Following the resumption of the project after the Civil War, it was given to the police and the army to thank them for their services. Finally, during the 1940s it was used to house widows. All the staircases in the duplex properties (except for one) were removed by the army, changing the layout of the flats. Now it is coming back to life for good, showing what people need to live with dignity.

Today’s Casa Bloc provides a roof (and a lot more besides) for 17 households that were previously homeless, living in inadequate conditions, the victims of gender violence or facing eviction. Furthermore, this flagship project won the 2019 World Habitat Award. This is why our Secretary General, Sorcha Edwards, stressed the important role of films and stories in enabling us to *“visualise what’s possible”* to create safe and affordable homes by renovating vacant properties. Casa Bloc is now a beacon of social inclusion, providing furnished one- and two-bedroom flats with balconies for people at risk of social exclusion, and with a committed support team that helps them with their transition.

The film set the tone for the discussion at the ISHF: what people need to live a decent life. There is much disagreement about the policies that should be adopted, but we must continue to focus on social needs and long-term partnerships for affordability.

4.2. Sustainable housing and renovation



4.2.1. Mass renovation of housing at affordable prices: industrial and social innovations

RE-DWELL and Housing Europe held a joint seminar to discuss whether social policies are in line with environmental policies and whether the environmental framework for housing is socially fair or leads to greater burdens for tenants. Some of the key takeaways of the seminar were that homes should not simply be updated but renovated en masse, the renovation process should be industrialised, segregation should be avoided, organisational transformations should be carried out to make social innovation possible, and socially fair improvements to quality of life should be ensured.

Paul Dufraisse from GreenFlex (France) said that the rate of implementation of net-zero solutions must be increased, industrialised off-site solutions must be implemented in order to minimise disruption, more players need to be attracted by including architects, and the market must be scalable in order to maintain affordability. Furthermore, the expansion must now increase from thousands to millions.

Alex Fernandez, a researcher and PhD candidate who is also involved in the RE-DWELL programme, said that the main problem he can see with ESG funding is the difficulty in defining and establishing clear limits and indicators for



environmental, social and governance funding. Social housing providers obtain funding from government grants and loans, as well as from the capital market. *“If we want to build social housing on a large scale, we still need public funding”*, he said.

Becky Ritchie from Clarion Retrofit, the UK’s largest social housing organisation, with 125,000 social homes located all the way from Plymouth in the south of England to York in the north, also has a resident-focused charity arm called Clarion Futures. The UK has 4.4 million homes to renovate, and its Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) is government funding for renovations based on a “worst first, fabric first, no regrets” approach. Clarion has funded 100 jobs in renovation awareness training and created a 12-stage renovation roadmap. According to Ritchie, *“It’s not just about carbon: it’s about a fair and equitable transition for our residents”*.

Back in Spain, Nina Turull Puig of Sostre Cívica, the housing cooperative that promotes the **“right to use: no buying or renting” principle**, provides members with emotional and financial support. To help them, we must define how a group of people want to live and then seek funding. Support comes from the municipal government and, sometimes, from the private market. Project to renovate Clau Mestra, a former teachers’ residence. Historically, jobs in Spain came with accommodation, for example in the case of teachers. Many of these homes now stand empty. Clau Mestra is a social housing building remodelled by Sostre Cívica. Groups of residents organised themselves, went from planning meetings to painting and started to pool their energy, minimising the materials used. They enjoy the benefits of biomass energy and solar panels but also rely on a shared mobility network.

Julien Dijol, head of Policy at Housing Europe, stressed that needs are urgent and essential, and not just in the short term but in the long term too. *“This is a time of economic, climate, biodiversity and social need”*, he said, adding that *“we must find a balance for what we spend our money on”*. *“We can’t afford to put all our money into one need”*, he said. *“Decarbonisation is happening, and social housing is now more efficient in terms of energy, water and resources than in other types of housing. Our future challenges are taking into account the effect of behaviour to reduce the rebound effect and the quality of work and the supply chain. Industrialisation is another good solution to make a difference to these problems. Furthermore, renovation has the additional benefit for people of reducing CO₂. The main benefits are quality of life, comfort in summer, greenery and new business.”*

4.2.2. Involving residents to achieve sustainability goals

How can we better involve residents in the construction of sustainable neighbourhoods? Several projects that put resident participation at the centre of remodelling processes were discussed at this side event. Caroline Cheng of SINTEF presented the SMILE methodology (Scope, Map, Implement, Learn, Enhance) developed under the ARV project.



The process involves analysing the main players involved in order to focus on specific needs. Gaining a deep understanding of the target groups enables us to write messages from the tenant's perspective. *"Sometimes, things don't happen the way you expected. The human factor must be taken into account at every stage of the process."* Marta Nicolau Prohens of Palma City Council presented a set of strategies to create an inclusive energy transition process and carry out large-scale remodelling actions. One of the main challenges we had to address was people's distrust of institutions. Developing an accessible presence within the neighbourhood and diversifying the communication of information was crucial.

4.2.3. Housing cooperatives for environmental and social sustainability

Guido Schwarzendahl, who attended on behalf of German cooperatives, referred to the global scale of the cooperative housing sector, which in practice includes many kinds of housing and living arrangements. CASAE, for example, showcased its cooperative social housing work in Italy, including the remodelling and reuse of existing public buildings and their conversion as cooperative housing. Once CASAE has agreed with the owner of a building to carry out a new housing project, they put out a call for future residents.

Sostre Cívic, Catalonia and the Balearic Islands' award-winning housing cooperative body, provided an overview of its new approach to cooperative social housing. It is growing quickly, with 140 homes already finished and 300 new ones under construction. The organisation has achieved this through a combination of new projects with public rental/remodelling projects. These cover the housing needs of many types of households, including specific projects for the elderly and emergency accommodation.

The TULE initiative discussed how co-housing can be used to tackle climate sustainability issues. The answer is that this can be done through collective decision-making and by pooling resources and efforts to increase the scope of sustainable actions. The Austrian Federation of Limited-Profit Housing Associations (GBV) showed that, despite having a large amount of good quality social housing, the Austrian government invests less in housing (capital investment and income supplementation) than other developed countries. This is due to the strength of the system, where money is kept inside it and reinvested. This includes cooperatives, which own a significant number of Austria's social housing units.

The key takeaways of the session were generally that, despite the diversity of its approaches, the cooperative housing sector is always about cooperation and about bringing people together to find collective solutions. This enables them to deliver better outcomes in terms of affordability, adaptability, inclusion and social and environmental sustainability for residents.



4.2.4. INCASÒL's cardboard factory

This tour focused on the Llandrich former cardboard factory, which looks onto the Besòs River on one side and the city on the other. The Llandrich factory, which is near the now-closed thermal power station that is still one of Badalona's most iconic buildings, operated between 1919 and 2008. The Catalan Land Institute (INCASÒL) and the factory's public owners are looking into the potential for remodelling, renovating and reusing the now-crumbling building. The original permeated brick façade was designed to allow the cardboard hanging from the wooden structures above head height (or at eye level, depending on each person's height), in a similar way to a suspended ceiling, to be aired and dried by the air coming up from the river. The aim is to create a cohesive atmosphere with the Besòs river and highlight the local identity by converting the cardboard factory into mixed-tenancy homes with a focus on sustainability. Amid the need for social and affordable housing, this building provides a great opportunity for new social housing, but this is yet to actually happen. A new plan based on the combination of two principles – urban hybrid (mixed use) and CREHAB (living and working) is currently being considered.

The crucial item on the agenda is to consider “social activation beyond the physical renovation of the area, because we are in the middle of a global social crisis.” We want prefabricated systems to reduce time, cost and waste; renewable energies; a new public space with access to the river; an increase from 120 to 150 homes; and communal areas for added social value. Social and structural analyses are being carried out with the local community's involvement to ascertain the factory's architectural, social and historical heritage value. The housing units will be held under a variety of tenancy types based on three “plots of land”: 1. affordable rental housing; 2. a space on the ground floor to be used by cooperatives for communal areas and social rental homes; and 3. private property. INCASÒL is considering a public-private partnership under which it owns the land, which it then rents out to the private or tertiary sector under a 75-year lease. After this time, it can either be leased again or taken over by someone else. But whoever rents it must ensure minimum sustainability levels, a policy currently being tested in Catalonia by INCASÒL. The remodelling work is a long undertaking.

The structure must be upgraded to support more storeys, and the basement needs reinforcement. But it is a sublime space with a beautiful façade, which could always be removed and reused, an idea that is already being explored. What will be the winning option? Remodelling, circularity or demolition?



4.3. Models for funding and increasing the stock of public, public-private and public-community affordable housing



4.3.1. In order to improve affordability, Spain needs more rental housing³

Every year leading up to the global financial crisis (GFC), Spain built more homes than any of its European counterparts. During that time, housing prices skyrocketed, doubling in real terms between 2000 and 2007, which made them less affordable for most households. Spain's experience is an objective lesson in the argument that, in the aim of making housing more available, a plentiful supply is necessary but not enough. It is also a cautionary tale on excessive reliance on home ownership and the need for sound alternatives, including social housing and private rental homes. In a way, this experience of the property market in the 2000s is not unique to Spain. But what makes the country's case special is its extraordinarily high rate of home ownership, which probably added fuel to the fire. At 83.2%, in 2004 its rate of home ownership was over ten percentage points higher than that of any other OECD country. The country's strong political and policy support, which included various financial incentives for owners, gave residents the message that home ownership was socially desirable.

If you take a reckless financial sector, a supportive political environment, FOMO (fear of missing out) and a dominant majority of residents who benefit (at least temporarily) from rising house prices, you have a powerful recipe for real property over-investment. Many of the drawbacks of home ownership can be summed up in a single word: expectations. Expectations are what makes the difference between how much someone will pay to buy a home and how much a tenant will pay to rent it. If a home buyer expects house values to increase in the future,

3. Written by Shane Phillips, manager of the Randall Lewis Housing Initiative for the UCLA Lewis Center for Regional Policy Studies.



this expectation is capitalised in the purchase price, and they will therefore pay more for that home. The reason rental housing is so important is precisely because expectations don't work in the same way as when selling. They still exist: in particular, if developers don't expect rents to cover their debts and repayments to investors, they won't build the homes in the first place. But, as a first approximation, tenants don't care about expectations regarding the property's value. They don't care what a building may be worth to an investor ten years down the line.

Tenants only care about what a rental unit can offer them right now, whether that is the number of bedrooms and bathrooms, whether or not it has air conditioning, or how close it is to work, parks and other amenities. It is these factors, rather than vague ideas about future policies and monetary conditions, that determine the rent that tenants are willing to pay. This also helps explain the high volatility of house prices compared to rent.

The lesser role of expectations in renting has two important consequences. Firstly, it restricts the likely actions of builders of residential properties. When homes are valued based on their current usefulness, as in the case of rental housing, developers cannot simply build wherever they want. If they build too far away, far from where people actually want to live, they will find that either rents are too low or they end up with a high vacancy rate, all of which will lose them money.

And secondly, living in rental accommodation changes residents' incentives. While rising values are good for owners, they are bad for tenants. Rising price values reduce tenants' prospects of owning their own home one day and increase the wealth gap between tenants and owners. High house prices are also linked to high rents, although the latter are generally slower to rise and fall. And, while the NIMBY ("not in my back yard") mindset can be seen in all tenancies, tenants are usually more likely to support the building of homes in their neighbourhoods, protection measures that increase housing security, and funding for social housing and other programmes that benefit low-income households. As a general rule, tenants want homes to be more affordable, and home owners want them to be more expensive. More tenants means more political pressure to keep house prices under control.

In order for countries such as Spain and the US to be more affordable, they must make greater efforts to encourage rental housing, particularly in high-demand cities and neighbourhoods. This will reduce support for constantly rising house prices and move the production of new housing to places that will yield the highest financial and environmental benefits. Both countries have given priority to home ownership over renting for many decades, and culture doesn't change overnight. Most people will still want to own their homes, and that's fine. What we can – and should – do is give residents more options for how they want to live and make it easier for them to choose to steer clear from the risks and volatility of home ownership if they so wish. An initial step in this direction is building more rental housing for people in all income brackets.



4.3.2. Redefining the role of public housing agencies in southern Europe

This session addressed the role of public housing agencies in southern Europe. These are housing agencies or companies that provide social housing to people who are struggling to access housing in the market. Among other things, they usually provide rent grants and subsidies, public rental housing and legal advice, as well as carrying out social housing purchase assistance programmes. However, their role has changed.

There was an interactive discussion on the various roles that can be played by housing agencies during the session. Countries that are currently thinking about the role and possibilities of their housing agencies, such as Albania and Montenegro, exchanged their points of view with other countries whose experience is more consolidated, such as Ireland, Slovenia, Croatia or Austria, addressing institutional/organisational aspects of housing agencies and the various financial schemes available.

Marco Corradi from Italy stressed some of the common problems affecting southern countries. The first of these is having a rental sector that is both small and unaffordable and excludes low-income families and, increasingly, also middle-income families. We need a system approach that mobilises all sectors/resources under the public administration's leadership. We must completely turn around our approach to housing so that it is seen as a people-centred system of offering and sharing services.

These goals are enshrined in the **Pantheon Pact** signed by public housing federations in Italy, Spain and Portugal. Filipa Roseta said that the basis for common policies is making sure that the right to housing underlies everything. She added that, with political will and agreement, you can achieve anything. This was shown, for example, by Lisbon's great urban renovation programme, which allowed it to do away with its favelas (slums) in the 1990s, transforming the lives of thousands of people. ISHF 2023 included an exhibition on this programme.

Doris Andoni from the Albanian government explained that her country is facing mass emigration by young people and that one of the reasons for this is a lack of access to housing. The National Housing Agency provides affordable housing for sale on a small scale, but more funding from other sources is needed in order to provide social housing.

4.3.3. Social Housing in East Asia

East Asia has been described as a "society of owners". Housing in east Asian countries has developed in different ways, and the amount of public rental housing in each country varies. The panel provided brief histories of the social housing provisions, current conditions and challenges of Hong Kong, Taiwan, South Korea and Japan.

Asian housing professionals have a special relationship with ISHF, because they took part in its first-ever edition, held in Amsterdam, and have had a long and productive collaboration with the professionals of that city. Yi Ling Chen, an associate professor at the University of Wyoming, organised a programme of housing specialists working



in Taipei, Tokyo, Hong Kong and Seoul and provided updates on the affordability and provision of affordable housing. The first presentation was given by Kuo-Chung Wei, who talked about the “miracle of Taipei”, as referred to by Chen, which refers to the fact that the city has built a significant stock that now accounts for 2% of the total and will soon increase to 5%. A robust model for the funding, building and operation of social housing was created. This enabled developers to create more diverse projects, breaking away from stereotypical and tiresome perceptions of social housing, incorporating social services into buildings and encouraging neighbours to take care of each other.

The second presenter, Geert Kornatowski of Kyushu University in Japan, explained the entirely different challenges facing that country. Japan faces an incredibly rapidly ageing population. Between 10% and 20% of homes in Japanese cities, mainly in city centres, are derelict. Non-profit social housing providers don't exist. In fact, there is hardly any “social housing” to speak of at all. In Japan, vulnerable people in need of housing support receive subsidies from the government. These are relatively high compared to those available in other Asian countries. This type of voucher-based system enables owners to renovate areas in poor condition and provide social housing.

The third presenters, who came from Hong Kong, explained the challenge facing their city. Accessing social housing has become harder over time. In the last ten years, the minimum waiting time has risen from one to six years. To address the shortage of housing, the current administration is planning to build 30,000 temporary flats, as well as more permanent projects with an expected completion time of five years.

4.3.4. The Role of Housing Associations in the Creation of Social Housing

Various organisations that advocate for social and affordable housing in Catalonia presented their views in this panel discussion. They include Cruise Housing (Ireland), Vivienda Cohabitac and the UNESCO Housing Chair at Rovira i Virgili University. Cruise Housing shared its experience of building social housing in Ireland, and Vivienda Cohabitac explained its efforts to promote affordable housing in Spain.

Although strategies to promote social and affordable housing in Spain are under development, they have shown promise. The panel explored various methods to achieve this, with particular emphasis on initiatives led by non-profit organisations. Such organisations can collaborate with both the public and private sectors to facilitate access to affordable housing. Furthermore, the UNESCO Social Housing Chair shared innovative points of view on how to tackle Spain's housing problem.

Non-profit organisations play a key role in the supply of affordable social housing. Attention was drawn to the partnership formed by HOGAR SÍ and Provivienda to find a new social and affordable housing model for Spain. By working hand in hand with the public and private sectors, these organisations are able to identify each community's housing needs and develop solutions that are both affordable and sustainable.

4.4. Social housing for vulnerable groups: the elderly, the young and the homeless



4.4.1. Industrialised housing, an alternative option in the fight against housing shortages in Spain and Chile⁴

Chile is in the unfortunate position of facing a variety of natural and man-made disasters from time to time, mainly due to its varied geography, a problem now being exacerbated by the effects of climate change. The human aspect should be the government's first priority when responding to a catastrophe, empathising with victims' pain and putting itself in other people's shoes. Thinking about subsequent actions. This entails the twofold challenge of acting with the right combination of humanity and technical tools. Everything else comes after that, starting with the challenges of reacting quickly and proactively in reconstruction plans, collecting all the lessons learned and continuing to develop new strategies to tackle these emergencies, as there will always be a specific characteristic that will force us to innovate. An example of such learning was the approach taken to the reconstruction of the city of Viña del Mar following the fire of December 2022. But the housing emergency is not caused solely by natural disasters.



The fact that homes are considered a good investment beyond their social function and the guarantee of people's rights wreaks havoc in every country. To address this conflict, both Chile and Spain are developing public policies aimed at increasing or encouraging the creation of social and affordable housing stocks available to the most vulnerable people. Although this is not a new experience, industrialised housing is one of the core innovative pillars of our Emergency Housing Plan aimed at reversing this shortage of affordable housing. Many industrialised housing projects were developed during Salvador Allende's government, specifically after the 1971 earthquake. Now, over 50 years after that initiative, industrialisation is one of the options used to increase the productivity of the construction sector.

Housing industrialisation is quicker, more sustainable and less polluting than the traditional option, and it does not detrimentally affect the quality of construction. In fact, it places higher technological demands on the sector. Similar initiatives are being promoted in Barcelona, a city with which we have also shared cooperative housing experiences. Amid the housing emergency, the Spanish Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning is aware that, in addition to providing housing, we have a duty and a commitment to carry out comprehensive actions that take urban and socio-community aspects into account and, while we're at it, that include a disaster risk prevention approach.

Finally, in order to be successful, this management must involve all players in society. Public-private cooperation, including the civil society, companies, NGOs and various public institutions, is particularly relevant in this regard. This collaboration is of utmost importance when it comes to including the wealth and diversity of the communities that live in every part of the country, and it will help improve their quality of life. As Spain debates what could be its first democratic housing law, Chile is starting to work on a new approach to facilitate access to housing amid a debate that, in the medium term, could lead to the recognition of the right to housing in the new Constitution. Two emerging models that share not only their challenges but also the lessons learned.

4.4.2. Developing housing under the Housing First approach

Homelessness, often driven by unaffordable housing, a shortage of supply and a lack of long-term political commitment, is still an alarming problem in most European countries. The Housing First hub and the Housing Solutions Platform (Plataforma de Soluciones de Vivienda) have identified as a key area for building capabilities the cooperation problem between housing and social workers, as well as the more general integration of the support services that can help people access rented homes and keep them for an indefinite time. In our opinion, this kind of targeted approach is key to the success of local initiatives such as Housing First projects.

This workshop presented innovative local actions to tackle the lack of housing and exclusion through prevention and collaboration with providers of housing and social services. Far from restricting itself to the mobilisation of housing, the session also explored comprehensive support, collaboration with social workers and the building of partnerships, with a particular focus on cooperation between municipalities and organisations that provide the



comprehensive support that goes hand in hand with housing. The event was mainly aimed at policymakers, housing providers and social workers who support people wishing to access and keep housing. In other words: how to successfully carry out Housing First programmes in practice.

Bent Madsen, President of Housing Europe, and Gyorgy Sumeghy, Director for Policy at Habitat for Humanity, gave the opening speeches. Madsen noted that, to ensure that housing reaches those in greatest need and successfully carry out Housing First programmes, housing and social services must work together, and the experience of experts who work every day to inform decision-making must be included.

Sumeghy spoke about the importance of a social welfare system that works well to take previously unavailable housing and make it available for Housing First projects. The panel discussion included case studies (from the UK, Ireland and Spain) on how to obtain housing for Housing First, and reactions from different cities were shared. Joey Lawrie from Homes for Good (Glasgow, UK) said that everyone deserves to have an affordable home, because it is the foundation of everyone's life. 35% of the organisation's properties are social rental homes. It runs a social rental agency that buys and rents private properties for social rental.

Renaud Payre, manager of housing at Lyon Metropole, noted that the city has been carrying out Housing First projects since 2018. To address the issue of affordability, we need to mobilise the supply of housing, including private stock. Payre also sent a strong message for the EU: "The housing crisis is a new reality, and we must find a new paradigm: a new European housing policy." He explained that housing is a European problem (it is related to employment and social and integration issues) and that the EU's institutions should therefore think of it as a European housing policy.

Colin O'Reilly, representing the city of Dublin, stressed that communicating with the host community is a complex and time-consuming problem. The key is to build trust with the communities in which the Housing First projects are to be built. Dublin plans to build 707 Housing First homes. Of all the homes needed, 70% are one-bedroom properties.

Carme Fortea, head of the service for the homeless in Barcelona city, talked about the close collaboration between associations and NGOs since 1985. Barcelona has 800 social workers who provide support to people accessing the city's 1,700 Housing First homes. It spends €43 million per year on this.



4.4.3. Co-creating housing policies with young people

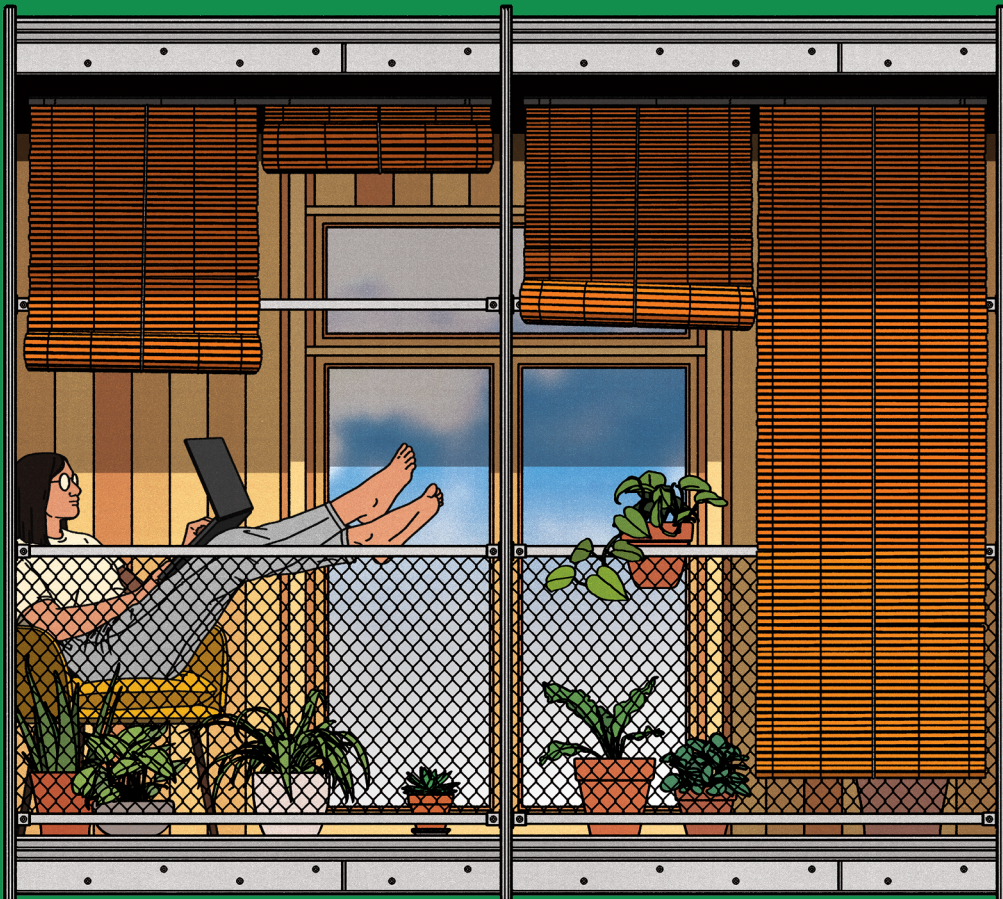
“Young people must stand up for their own housing needs.” Martina Gentili of the Delft University of Technology made it clear that we cannot create housing policies for young people without listening to young adults themselves. What problems do they face, and what solutions would they like to see implemented? The feedback process between young people and policymakers is crucial. *“The main change we want to bring about with the Uplift project is a change in policymakers’ mindset to understand the importance of co-creation.”*

“In the UK, young people are stigmatised for their youth.” Amanda Oliver of Tai Ffres, which is part of the United Welsh housing association, provided specific examples from Wales.

One of these was the End Youth Homelessness coalition, which sought to bring about change to involve young people in housing policy at the homelessness prevention stage. *“Young people have opportunities to contribute to government initiatives and are trained in research techniques.”*

5.

CONCLUSIONS





5.1. The future of housing systems

Europe's housing systems are at a crossroads: either they try to put in place a housing system that is safe, affordable and sustainable through public action and aim it at the market to meet public goals, or they allow an insecure, unaffordable and unsustainable housing system to exist, releasing the public sector from its responsibilities and leaving the guarantee of the right to housing to the market. Emerging and mature models share the same dilemma in this regard.

Despite having a significant amount of social housing, demand still exceeds supply in mature housing models, which leads to long waiting lists. In those models, the financialisation trend has turned housing into an investment asset, leading to instability and a growing use of rent subsidies instead of supplying non-market housing. The key challenges they face include providing affordable and sustainable housing, preventing the financialisation of the market and building more robust communities. Emerging models, on the other hand, which can be found in southern and eastern Europe and English-speaking countries, are based on a deregulated market with few social homes and have seriously suffered from recent crises, leading to high eviction rates. In these areas, which have little room for building and where great emphasis is placed on ownership over renting, innovative policies to tackle issues such as unaffordability and forced evictions are emerging in cities such as Barcelona and Bologna.

It should be noted that European law recognises housing as such, as a right of every EU citizen. It also considers the enjoyment of the right to decent and adequate housing to be a prerequisite to exercising and accessing other fundamental rights and even to human dignity itself. Europeans in general, and their public sector in particular, have a mission: to develop a housing system as simply another pillar of the European social model. And that entails developing a public housing service and a set of regulations to prevent speculation, protect residents and guarantee the social function of property, thus giving effect to the right to housing.

In this context, these are the main ideas that came out of the discussions of the 4th International Social Housing Festival:

1. A housing system based on social dialogue and tenant empowerment

European housing models, both emerging and mature, must create a social contract, understood as a broad setting for consensus. This must be aimed at shaping an agreed, stable, coherent and evidence-based regulatory framework. It must provide a balance between affordability and security for tenants and reasonable profit for landlords. The regulation of the housing system must be decided based on social dialogue and collective bargaining between tenant associations, owners' associations, housing providers and the public sector. This requires tenant unions and owners' associations to be recognised by law as legitimate parties in this conflict. However, what is



particularly critical is for tenants, who create part of the demand in the rental market, to form associations and defend their interests as a group. If there is an imbalance of power between tenants and owners, the weaker party will always be the loser.

In addition, forums for debate, exchange and the creation of information, consultation, negotiation, assessment and consensual decision-making should be created. This would give tenants both a voice and a participatory role. The outcome of social dialogue can lead to better designed regulations and public policies and help apply them effectively and with higher-quality results. All this with the aim of increasing residential democracy. However, in order to hold evidence-based discussions, we must create a housing market statistics system based on a sound and reliable public statistical framework.

2. A sustainable and decarbonised housing system based on the principle of a fair ecological transition

Guaranteeing the right to housing must not clash with planetary boundaries. Amid the global climate emergency and increasing inequalities all over the world, any housing policy that is in line with European commitments must envisage public strategies and foster private initiatives to increase energy efficiency and reduce the carbon footprint while improving the habitability of the current housing stock and making it more affordable and efficient. It is therefore key to reduce the ecological footprint of both the building sector and existing housing in line with the goals of the 2020-2050 Urban Agenda for the EU. Furthermore, energy-saving actions on building envelopes should also be included, and additional building renovation measures (such as improving accessibility, adding renewable-energy installations and upgrading installations) should be promoted.

Finally, a significant proportion of housing in Europe's rural areas is not fit to live in. Action from the European public sector to renovate assets in depopulating areas to improve access to housing and its quality for subsequent rental would be very useful. However, as warned by Housing Europe and the International Union of Tenants, among others, the ecological transition in the field of housing must be fair. Further cases of renovation and green gentrification cannot be allowed. There shouldn't be a trade-off between sustainability and affordability.

3. A balanced housing ecosystem aimed at guaranteeing the right to housing

We must not forget that the market is a social construct made up of the dealings between the private and public sectors and civil society. The public sector must therefore shape the market to fulfil public goals, which are to create a housing market that is affordable, sustainable and balanced in its area. This requires the rental supply structure to be diversified, with for-profit and non-profit organisations working together with the public sector to produce social and affordable housing. The stock of social and affordable housing can be increased through a variety of methods: building, attraction and purchase of properties, either through direct or delegated public developments, and by means of public-private and public-community partnerships. However, as a principle for reconciling the



challenges of the ecological transition, we should prioritise the growth of the housing stock and maximise the use of current housing. It is essential to mobilise the empty housing stock while we buy and build sustainably in stressed urban areas.

A balanced and diversified housing ecosystem should include collaboration between the public sector and social housing providers. To this end, changing the focus of the legal definition, using the public funding instruments available, providing sufficient residential land and giving tax incentives to social housing providers are the basis for the emergence of new suppliers that can carry out the necessary purchases, renovations, mobilisations and housing developments at the necessary scale and rate. Furthermore, a housing market aimed at serving the public interest must also put in place control and sanctioning processes to prevent speculation, discrimination and abusive behaviour. We need property projects that provide reasonable long-term profit so we can give dignity to tens of millions of families by means of a decent life and home, while minimising the impact on our environment, as the planet and its resources are finite.

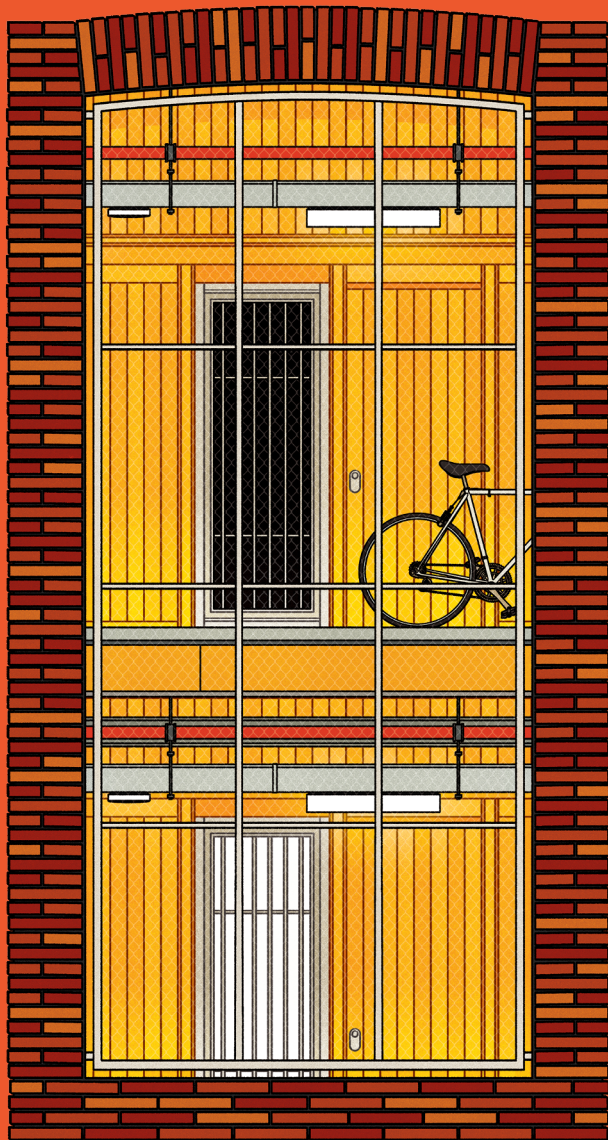
4. Housing as a new pillar of the European social model that affords special protection to vulnerable groups

For emerging models, the development of housing as a social right entails moving towards the guarantee of housing as a subjective right that can be enforced in court. Developing this new pillar of the welfare state entails, among other things, preventing the privatisation of social housing (as has happened in the UK, Germany or Spain, for example) by ensuring it always remains in public ownership, as well as by increasing the supply of social and affordable rental housing.

The social and affordable housing stock can be increased through new construction and the purchase and mobilisation of empty homes, in combination with the necessary legal reforms to ensure there is a sufficient supply of horizontal and vertical space for residential use and public services. However, increasing supply is not enough, especially for the most vulnerable members of society. Reinforcing the issue of housing as social policy (rent grants and subsidies) by means of strategic partnerships with social services is key. It is also necessary to put in place specific mechanisms against serious residential exclusion, such as the Housing First approach or the co-housing model for homeless people, victims of gender violence, people with functional diversity or mental health problems, refugees, single-parent families, people with high levels of recognised disability and other people in situations of social exclusion. Finally, Europe is also facing the serious problem of an ageing population: comparative analyses have shown that both emerging and mature housing models include a large number of inaccessible homes.

6.

EPILOGUE



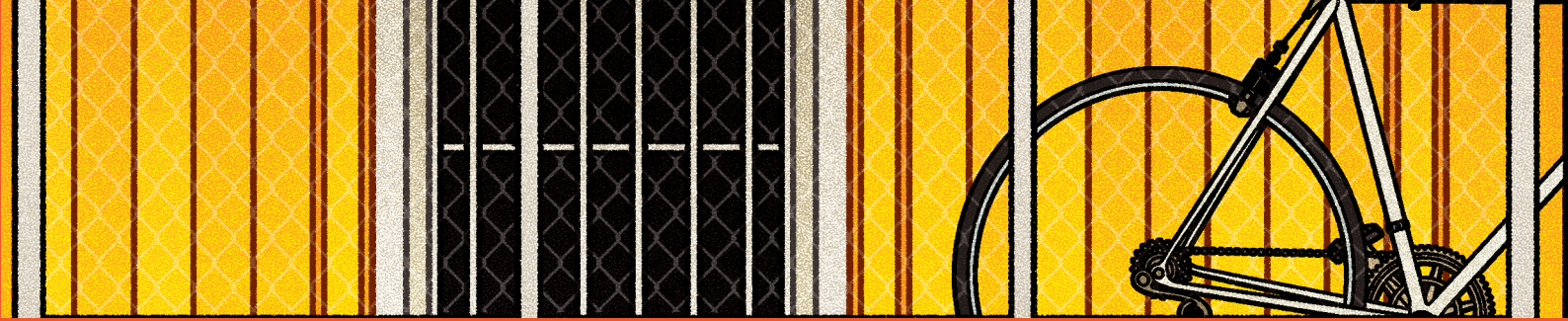
6.1. Closing ceremony



During the closing ceremony, Bent Madsen, President of Housing Europe, reminded attendees of one of the main reasons for holding the International Social Housing Festival: to make different society-led ideas come together, to learn and start working together, and to get closer to each other after the ISHF. The key principles are: nurturing and preserving the network, and co-creation.

Madsen also announced that the fifth edition of ISHF, which is planned for June 2025, will be held in Dublin. *“After Amsterdam, Lyon, Helsinki and Barcelona, we think the Irish capital can trigger a true debate on what really matters to the people on the street.”*

Darragh O’Brien, Irish Minister for Housing, took the baton from Barcelona and concluded that: *“Living in the rich part of the world, we should be able to provide homes for our people. We should not be seeing high numbers of homeless people, and this is our motivation every day. I’m completely committed to doing it.”*



6.2. Lessons learned from holding the 4th edition of the ISHF⁵

The Barcelona edition of ISHF 2023 was a three-day event attended by over 2,000 professionals from the field of housing, advocates, researchers and residents of 82 different countries to take part in over 100 activities, site visits and exhibitions spread out throughout Barcelona and its metropolitan area. The festival was a success in every way: it had more than twice the number of attendees than in 2022; there were more representatives from southern and eastern Europe, Latin America, Asia and Africa; it included projects such as the Affordable Housing Initiative Tech Camp and the launch of the European Community Land Trust Network; and, above all, participants stated that they were happy with the many opportunities for exchange and inspiration provided by it.

But how did we get here? Preparations for ISHF 2023 started just after the third edition, held in Helsinki, came to an end in June 2022, and they included a number of milestones that have been key to the success of this year's edition:

- **International partnerships:**

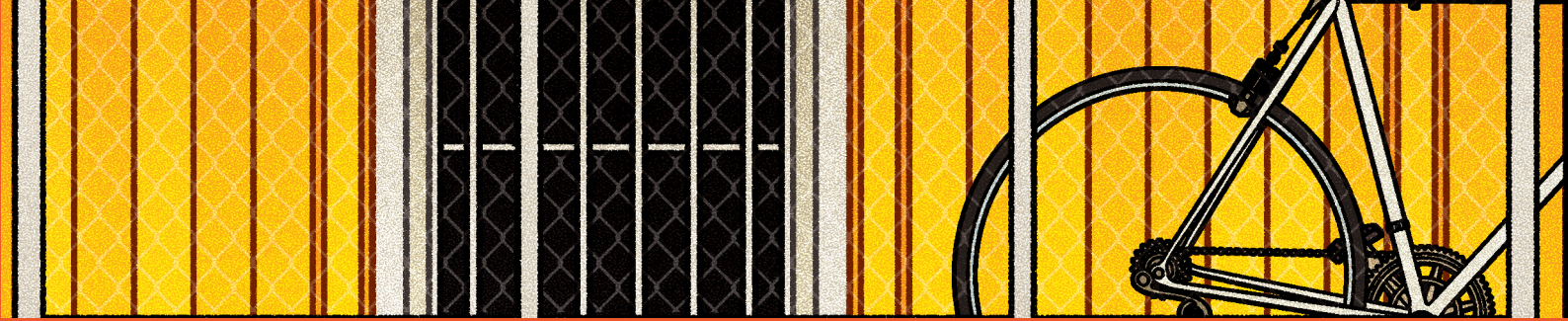
ISHF 2023 has benefited from the support and contributions of Housing Europe's International ISHF Committee, which includes representatives from the previous host cities – Amsterdam, Lyon and Helsinki – and from the contributions of several international networks of which Barcelona has been a member for the past few years. These include, among others, United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), Eurocities, the Ibero-American Centre for Strategic Urban Development (CIDEU), Habitat International Coalition (HIC), the Global Platform for the Right to the City and the CoHabitat Network.

- **Geographic diversity:**

ISHF attendees have traditionally been mainly from European countries. However, this edition has stood out for its geographic diversity, as its attendees hailed mainly from America (Latin America, the Caribbean and North America), followed by Asia and Africa. This is the first sign that the ISHF has become the leading event for housing professionals worldwide.

- **Local associations:**

Barcelona's ISHF 2023 candidacy was backed from day one by many local and national organisations, which have helped organise the event and which have been key to ensuring the diversity of players and points of view that have been the defining characteristic of this edition of the festival. Over 200 local and international organisations have held activities as part of ISHF 2023.



- **An open mindset:**

Despite the tensions arising from the debate on the issue of housing in a complicated market such as Barcelona's, the success of ISHF 2023 is due to the inclusion of speakers with different points of view and a variety of activities representing the full spectrum of diversity of the public, cooperative and social housing sectors. All stakeholders were able to contribute, undoubtedly fostering greater cohesion within the sector.

- **Institutional support:**

ISHF is a free event, and the associated organisation costs have been borne by the public administrations involved in its organisation. Barcelona has forged a multi-level partnership with all the public entities in charge of housing in the city: Barcelona City Council, the Barcelona Metropolitan Area, the Generalitat de Catalunya and the Spanish Ministry of Transport, Mobility and Urban Agenda. The Valencian government also came forward to support the event, and Barcelona Provincial Council provided some venues for events.

- **Political leadership:**

If Barcelona had not become an international model for emerging housing policies, ISHF 2023 would not have been possible. The festival is the culmination of a process in which many players have played their part but that has the Department of Housing at its centre.

By choosing Barcelona to host ISHF 2023, Housing Europe acknowledged the city's international leadership and put the spotlight on the specific challenges facing southern Europe, which are often forgotten in the European debate. In an article published a few hours after the end of ISHF, Sorcha Edwards, Secretary General of Housing Europe, drew attention to the city's leadership and transformative power and referred to it as a source of inspiration for both emerging and well-established housing systems.

All the players in Barcelona and Catalonia's public, cooperative and social housing sectors are fully aware that, despite the leap in quality of recent years, the housing emergency remains one of the main problems for most of the population. This challenge cannot be addressed solely through local housing policies. Instead, it requires a legal framework that guarantees the right to housing and addresses the root of the problem. However, ISHF proves there is a mobilised sector aligned with shared goals that is willing to take on a more active role in the design and implementation of housing policies and plans, both regionally and nationwide.

ANNEX

ISHF – Exhibitions at the Palau de Congressos de Montjuïc



Ajuntament de
Barcelona

Institut Municipal
de l'Habitatge
i Rehabilitació

Industrialised housing

This exhibition uses pilot competitions for industrialised public housing to examine the benefits and advantages of this new way of working in the field of construction. These tools are bringing about a profound change in the way we produce housing, with the aim of finding more tailored solutions to the simultaneous housing, environmental and socio-economic crises.

Co-housing

The co-housing exhibition showcases the benefits of one of the models that have recently become most firmly established in the city and that has many advantages over more common and traditional housing models. Co-housing has spread out all over the city with 19 projects resulting in the creation of over 400 homes with this method. One of the core principles of co-housing is the promotion of community life and mutual support, with homes that help to fight loneliness and individualism. They often have the added advantage of having a positive impact on neighbourhoods, as they allocate commercial premises to their initiatives or social housing to more vulnerable people. Furthermore, ethical funding leads to a process of self-development that results in lower end prices and makes it possible to reinvest any profit in the social and solidarity economy. This is what makes it possible – with the government's support – to reduce residents' initial contribution by around 50%. In addition, the collective ownership of buildings helps fight speculation and makes it impossible to make a capital gain or personal profit. In fact, members can use their homes and communal areas for an indefinite time, and their initial capital contribution will be refunded if they leave the cooperative.



Living on the edge – XII BIAU

The Ibero-American Biennale of Architecture and Urbanism (BIAU) is a Spanish government initiative and one of the key references when it comes to ascertaining the current and prospective status of architecture and urban planning in the Ibero-American community. This edition, held under the title "Habitar al margen" ("Living on the edge"), focused on housing and human habitability and discussed the social dimension of architecture and its potential to propose alternative solutions to the urban challenges of the 21st century.



FONDAZIONE DELL'ORDINE DEGLI ARCHITETTI,
PIANIFICATORI, PAESAGGISTI E CONSERVATORI
DELLA PROVINCIA DI MILANO

Social Housing in Europe – Matilde Baffa Ugo Rivolta European Architecture Award

The exhibition showcased the eight projects that won each edition of the Matilde Baffa Ugo Rivolta European Architecture Award. Its aim was to renew the commitment to publicise the best social housing actions built in Europe in the last few years and reinforce the award's position as an international benchmark for research and debate, with a focus on the general quality of the built environment and the sustainability of the architectural design.



Gebalis

30 years of PER – Special resettlement programme

In 1993, the Portuguese Social Democratic government created a national scheme to eradicate the country's low-literacy migrant slums that had sprung up in the outskirts of the largest city centres in response to job opportunities in various sectors. The municipality of Lisbon responded with a mass social housing programme, creating Gerbalis, a multinational with an integrity-based social development perspective, for the promotion and integrated municipal management of housing in 1995.



RE-DWELL
MSCA-ITN

Providing affordable and sustainable housing in Europe

This exhibition presented a network of housing projects and concepts that reflect the transdisciplinary research carried out in relation to affordable and sustainable housing under the RE-DWELL programme. The definitions of different concepts are all interrelated and linked to a collection of examples of homes. This was shown by means of self-supporting A0 panels providing a visual representation of the links between concepts and projects and encouraging visitors to reflect on the many connections between them.

Exhibition: Housing in the Basque Country



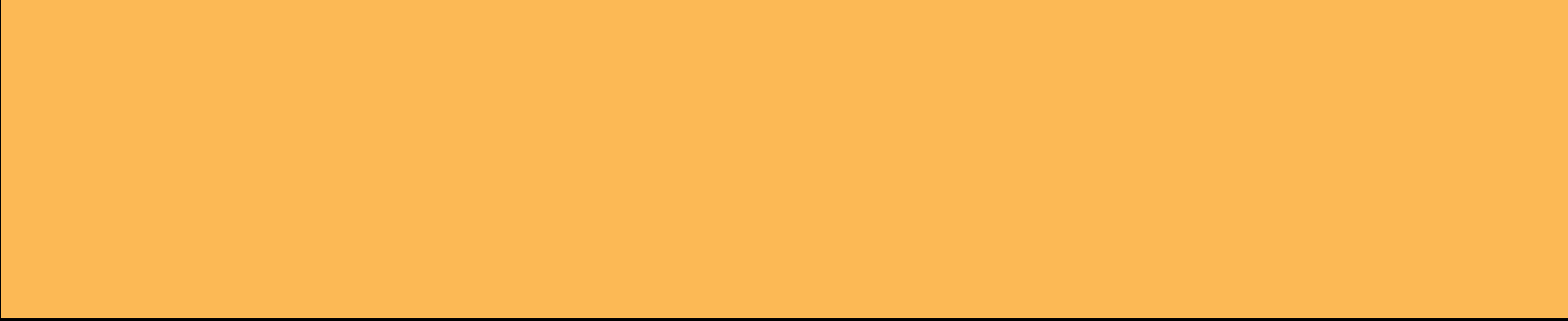
“Housing in the Basque Country” reviewed a full cycle of expansionary investment in public housing from the Spanish transition to democracy to the recent economic crisis. The exhibition reflected four decades of collective work through 30 examples in the form of plans, photographs and models. In addition to some statistics, it provided a picture of today’s everyday life in social housing neighbourhoods. Visitors were able to gain an overall understanding of public housing policies from what real life in them is like to the key concepts at macro level.

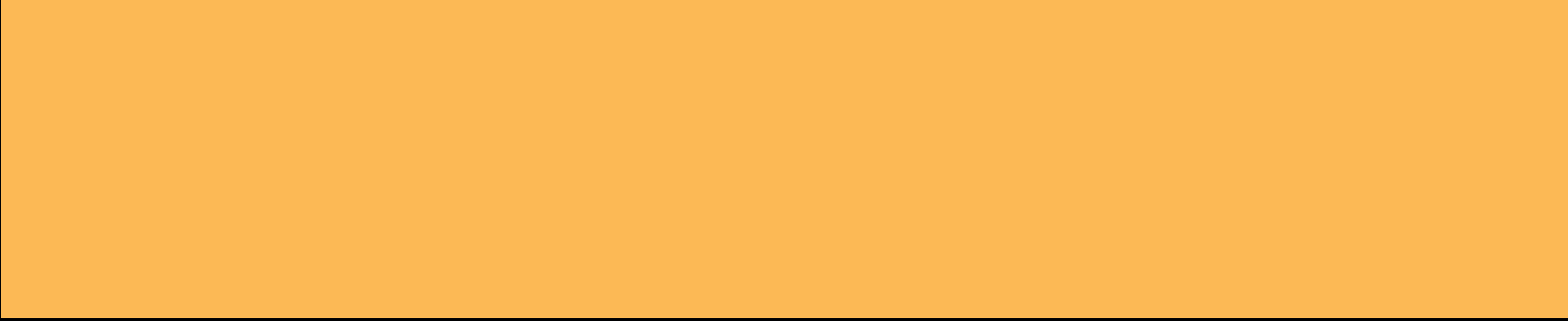


Future social housing – social housing with re-installable, loss-less prefabricated buildings

This exhibition presented a modular building called the Holon Building, which uses an innovative stainless steel B-CORE material. It can be mass-produced in industrial production lines and quickly shipped anywhere in the world in standard containers. It can then be assembled in only 28 hours. Our social housing includes passive building design and other environmental protection technologies to maximise the conservation of energy. In parallel to this, we are exploring the far-reaching prospects of artificial intelligence in the field of social housing and community sustainability through art and design.

ISHF – Museum exhibitions





ISHF – Visits



FIELD TRIPS

- 1 Glòries, Meridiana and Poblenou Superblock ↑ Diagonal 240
- 2 Cohabitacs' housing project Bolívia 177 ↑ C/Bolívia 177
- 3 La Borda cooperative housing ↑ C/ de la Constitució, 85 – 89
- 4 Cohabitacs' housing Project Adefa Barquín *Bus from Palau de Congressos
- 5 Urban regeneration: Fàbrica de cartó. ↑ Plaça d'Andreu Molins, Sant Adrià del Besòs
- 6 Care program for people in a housing emergency situation ↑ Metro Stop Ciutat Meridiana (L11)
- 7 Germanetes public rental housing ↑ C/ Comte Borrell, 159
- 8 Glòries public housing for the elderly ↑ C/ Ciutat de Granada 145
- 9 Tanger transitional housing mixed facility ↑ C/ Tanger, 40
- 10 Centre Rosario Endrinal homeless communal housing first for women ↑ Via Augusta, 405 – 407
- 11 La Xarxaire cooperative housing ↑ PG: de Joan Borbó, 11
- 12 Mass Madera - Industrialized construction of public rental housing ↑ C/ Lola Iturbe 13
- 13 La Llavor homeless facility for women ↑ C/ Saldes, 6-8
- 14 Sant Ildefons urban regeneration site ↑ Centre Cívic Sant Ildefons, C/de la Gerdera
- 15 Exhibition 'Housing landscapes' ↑ Espai Mercè Sala (L3-L5)
- 16 Sant Antoni superblock and Consell de Cent green axis ↑ Plaça de Corxa Pérez
- 17 Field trip 22@ ↑ Jardins de ca l'Aranyó
- 18 Renovation Training Program in Trinitat Vella ↑ Metro Stop Trinitat Vella (L1)
- 19 Círcles & La Morada cooperative housing ↑ Plaça de les Dones de Nou Barris
- 20 Cohabitacs' housing project Xaloc & Terral ↑ *Bus from Palau de Congressos
- 21 Cohabitacs' Guided Tour to Llar Casa Bloc and Casa Bloc Apartment-Museum. ↑ C/ de la Residència, 10, Baixos, (Oficina Håbitat3)
- 22 La Mina urban regeneration site ↑ Metro Stop Besòs Mar (L4)
- 23 Can Fabra youth housing ↑ C/ Parellada 9
- 24 Ali Bei senior housing and temporary accommodation ↑ C/ Ali Bei 100-102
- 25 APRÒP Glòries transitional housing ↑ C/ Irena Sandler 22
- 26 La Balma cooperative housing ↑ C/ d'Espronceda 135
- 27 Princesa cooperative housing ↑ C/ Princesa 49
- 28 Former La Model prison regeneration site ↑ C/d'Entença 155
- 29 Besòs-Maresme urban regeneration site ↑ Rambla de Prim, 87
- 30 WikiHousing Open House Day ↑ Rambla Prim, 25B
- 31 IMPSOL housing projects in Sant Just Desvern and Gavà ↑ *Bus from Palau de Congressos

Finally, this section provides a summary of the visits carried out during the conference. Visits to public, cooperative and social housing buildings, innovative urban developments and other public services that are typical examples of a way of making policy at the service of the public.

1. Towards the city we want. Visit to Glòries, Avinguda Meridiana and the Poblenou superblock

Organised by Barcelona City Council. This activity included visits to the city's strategic projects at the new Plaça de Glòries, Avinguda Meridiana and the Poblenou superblock led by the Chief Architect.

2. Cohabitac. Bolívia 177 housing project

Organised by Fundació Habitatge Social. In this tour, participants were shown the 19-home building built in 2012 for families in a situation of housing exclusion. Explanations were provided by both the architect (who pointed out the architecture designed to help disadvantaged families: the construction method, energy efficiency, Districlima heat and cold system, pneumatic waste collection, etc.) and the foundation's social educator, who provided details of the main aspects of the support programme for the families involved and the keys to its success.

3. La Borda housing cooperative

Organised by La Dinamo Fundació. The subject of this tour was La Borda, the first housing cooperative built on a municipal site in Barcelona, which is now one of the city's flagship projects. This project is the most recent winner of the EU Prize for Contemporary Architecture – the Mies van der Rohe Award – due to its innovative nature and contribution to non-speculative architecture.

4. Cohabitac: Adela Barquín housing project

Organised by Fundació Família i Benestar Social. The Adela Barquín project brings together two of our missions: to promote and manage social housing and to provide support for the elderly. Its aim is to maintain and improve personal autonomy through the ageing process and help people combat loneliness. Helping them with their relationships, giving them everything they may need to make life easier in comfortable social housing. The management team explained its structure.

5. Urban regeneration: the cardboard factory

In this visit, which was organised by INCASÒL, participants learned about the development of an ambitious project to recover the former Llandrich cardboard factory in the metropolitan area of Sant Adrià del Besòs. As part of the design of the site, the building was renovated to turn it into a sustainable housing project (with social housing) as well as an area representing the site's previous uses and how it had evolved since then.

6. The Neighbourhood Plan: "High-Complexity Properties" and the Assistance Programme for People in a Housing Emergency Situation

Organised by Fomento de Ciudad. Participants in this tour learned about the Neighbourhood Plan, which strives to reverse the city's inequalities and drives various housing-related lines of action. One of its core programmes is the "High-Complexity Properties" programme, which drives the renovation of the city's most vulnerable properties. Participants visited a building in Ciutat Meridiana that has been renovated under the "High-Complexity Properties" programme. The Psychological and Emotional Care Programme for people in a housing emergency has also been carried out in the Nou Barris district's Zona Nord. The programme's team of psychologists provide emotional support to families before, during and after eviction.

7. Germanetes public rental housing

Organised by the Barcelona Municipal Institute of Housing and Renovation (IMHAB). The role of Barcelona in the construction of public housing was explained in this visit. Barcelona's public housing stock has grown by over 50% in the past eight years. This has required the IMHAB to develop new management capabilities. In this site visit, participants were given an overview of a public housing project (Carrer de Borrell, 159) within the framework of the Germanetes urban regeneration site.

8. Public housing for the elderly in Glòries

Organised by Barcelona City Council. Participants in this visit were introduced to the model of housing with services for the elderly, which is unique to Barcelona. This model jointly addresses: 1) the right to housing; and 2) the right to age with dignity, retaining one's autonomy and independence. These are social rental homes with municipal protection for over-65s who are able to live on their own and either do not own a home or own a home that is not accessible.

9. Tànger mixed transitional accommodation centre

Organised by Barcelona City Council. Participants were introduced to the Tànger individual accommodation centre with collective services, which contains 20 accommodation units and the use of communal rooms. The centre provides an accommodation and socio-educational assistance service for homeless people in a situation of social exclusion every day of the year.

10. Rosario Endrinal Centre, the first community housing centre for women

Organised by ASSÍS-IMSS. Participants visited the Rosario Endrinal Home, which seeks to create a before and an after in the support of homeless women. The aim of this project is to support and empower chronically homeless women based on guaranteeing their right to housing by providing support based on the Housing First community model with a gender perspective.

11. La Xarxaire housing cooperative

Organised by La Xarxaire housing cooperative. In this visit, participants learned about the La Xarxaire housing cooperative, a building containing eight social housing units and communal areas on Passeig de Joan de Borbó, 11, la Barceloneta, developed by La Xarxaire Cooperativa d'Habitatge, SCCL. Visitors were shown the main parts of the building and one home, and they heard explanations about the main aspects of the development: social and financial processes, architecture, construction and environmental decisions.

12. Industrialised construction of public rental housing

Organised by the Barcelona Municipal Institute of Housing. Participants visited the 40-unit social housing building at Carrer Lola Iturbe Arizcuren, 13, Barcelona, which was designed by the architects Vicente Guallart and Daniel Ibañez and developed by the Barcelona Municipal Institute of Housing. The building has a glued laminated timber structure in the form of CLT panels and a vertical structure with CLT walls.

13. La Llabor centre for homeless women

Organised by Sant Joan de Déu. In this visit, participants were introduced to La Llabor, a temporary assistance centre solely for homeless women and non-binary people. It contains 40 individual rooms with communal areas, and each person has two assigned workers who help them with their process by means of a person-focused action.

14. Sant Ildefons de Cornellà neighbourhood

Organised by the Metropolitan Housing Consortium. This tour included a description of a housing renovation in the Sant Ildefons area of Cornellà de Llobregat through urban planning instruments. A new refurbishment strategy model.

15. Official opening of the exhibition "Housing landscapes"

Organised by AMB IMPSOL. This activity included a visit to the exhibition "Housing Landscapes," which examined the concepts addressed in the publication of the same name ("*Paisajes habitacionales*"), a publishing project that narrates a landscape seen from the viewpoint of living in it, an inclusive and projective look at collective housing in Catalonia. The exhibition sought to depict a visual and friendly dialogue between our housing landscapes and those that, in spite of being in distant lands and having different climates and societies, fit comfortably with our way of inhabiting.

16. Superblock. Tour of Sant Antoni and the Consell de Cent green hub

Organised by Barcelona City Council. The tour included a visit to the superblocks, a new spatial organisation model under which traffic-calming measures are applied to a cluster of blocks and public spaces are recovered for pedestrians. Participants visited the Sant Antoni and Eixample green hub superblocks.

17. Tour of the 22@ District

Organised by Barcelona City Council. In this activity, participants toured the 22@ area while learning about the applicable urban planning regulations. The recent changes to the General Metropolitan Plan have updated the approach to the challenges and opportunities arising from the new urban context and to move towards a more inclusive, productive and sustainable 22@ district based on a mixed city model whose environmental quality boosts economic activities and people's daily lives.

18. The Neighbourhood Plan: renovation through training programmes. The case of Trinitat Vella

Organised by Fomento de Ciudad. Participants were introduced to the Neighbourhood Plan. This plan applies to the city's 23 neighbourhoods with the worst inequality indicators, and innovation-based policies have been carried out for this purpose. One of these is the Renovation Training Programme in the Trinitat Vella neighbourhood, which seeks to address the need for its buildings to be renovated and occupied. It does this by means of a professional training course (300 hours) for people living in neighbourhoods covered by the Neighbourhood Plan who are unemployed or in a situation of job insecurity. The project was presented on site, and participants visited the building complex to be renovated, which is known as the Patronato flats.

19. Cirerers and La Morada cooperative housing

Organised by Sostre Cívic and La Dinamo Fundació. The tour included two cooperative housing projects in Les Roquetes: Cirerers and La Morada. Cirerers is a Sostre Cívic cooperative housing project. The members of the cooperative have been living in it since April 2022. During the visit, participants got to know the building and its communal areas. La Morada, for its part, is a feminist and LGBTIQ+ project under which a private plot has been recovered to build social housing in Barcelona. As the building is still under construction, the focus of the visit was on explaining the main features of the project.

20. Guided tour of Cohabitac. Xaloc and Terral housing project

Organised by Fundació Nou Lloc Habitatge Social. Participants visited Xaloc, a 43-unit social rental housing building in Sant Pere de Ribes that is scheduled for delivery in late June. During the visit, they were treated to explanations of the air source heat pump system and an exhibition on the establishment of the project. There was also a visit to the Terral building (with 62 homes) in Sitges, which was delivered in December 2022. As the building is identical to Xaloc, visitors were able to appreciate the evolution of the development from its pre-tenant stage to its post-delivery stage, when it is full of life.

21. Cohabitac. Guided tour of Llar Casa Bloc and the Museum-Apartment in Casa Bloc

Organised by Fundació Hàbitat3 Tercer Sector Social. This was a joint tour of the inclusion homes in the Hàbitat3-led Llar Casa Bloc project, a runner-up in the 2022 ERH Awards, in which 26 people in receipt of assistance from social organisations or referred by Barcelona City Council's Emergency Board started a new life in 2021. The project involved renovating two floors in Casa Bloc and the Casa Bloc Museum-Apartment, which provides an example of this building, a flagship of 1930s social housing and architecture.

22. Urban regeneration: la Mina

Organised by INCASÒL. Tour of la Mina. Recovering this neighbourhood was a clear step forward in the aim of improving the area, whose social and urban planning problems were affecting its residents. INCASÒL's actions helped alleviate some of its problems, and residents' quality of life improved.

23. Can Fabra youth housing

Organised by the Municipal Institute of Housing and Renovation. Participants visited the Can Fabra rental housing project for young people, which includes 46 housing units in a former industrial warehouse of the Fabra i Coats complex. The project's early-20th-century original brick structure has been preserved, and sustainable construction techniques have been used to produce the housing units.

24. Alí Bei housing for the elderly and temporary accommodation

This visit featured a project of 49 social housing units aimed mainly at people over 65 who are able to live independently and who either do not have their own home or have a home that is not fully accessible. Ten of these units are used as temporary accommodation for people receiving support from the City Council's social services.

25. APROP Glòries temporary accommodation

Organised by Barcelona City Council. The focus of the visit was on the APROP Ciutat Vella and APROP Les Glòries temporary local accommodation service for people at risk of social exclusion and being monitored by social services. The service covers the management of the accommodation service at the centre, socio-educational assistance and support in the transition to a more stable home.

26. La Balma cooperative housing

Organised by Sostre Cívic. This visit focused on La Balma, a cooperative housing building built on municipal land in Poble Nou. It is a seven-storey building with 20 homes and many shared spaces designed for communal living. It is the first new-construction project for Sostre Cívic, an organisation that supports cooperative groups wishing to purchase or develop buildings, usually on municipal land, and that advocates for this sector in Catalonia.

27. Princesa cooperative housing

Organised by Sostre Cívic. The focus of this visit was on the Princesa cooperative, which is located in the gentrified neighbourhood of El Born and is the city's first right-to-use housing project. It is part of Sostre Cívic, an organisation that supports cooperative groups wishing to purchase or develop buildings. The original elements of the building, which was built in the mid-19th century, were recovered in the renovation. The project includes five 45 m² and 65 m² homes and three areas for communal use.

28. Remodelling of La Model prison

This tour was organised by Société du Logement de la Région de Bruxelles-Capitale, Vrije Universiteit Brussel – Architectural Engineering, Barcelona City Council, BinHôme and Roto. It focused on the remodelling of the former La Model prison. The planning project for the former prison complex envisages building facilities and social housing on this site, as well as a new urban park, preserving the heritage and taking environmental aspects into account. The project, which was drawn up with the team behind the “Model, batega!” winning entry, will make it possible to start drafting the plans for the facilities to be built in the first phase of the project: the primary and secondary school, the sports centre and the Memorial. This will be followed by public housing, a social economy centre and a nursery.

29. Guided tour of the urban regeneration area in the Besòs-Maresme neighbourhood

Organised by the Municipal Institute of Urban Planning (IMU). Participants visited the urban regeneration programme in the Besòs-Maresme neighbourhood, one of the city's low-income areas. The first assessment involved an inspection campaign that enabled the City Council to find out the condition of the buildings, which are privately owned, and to take as a matter of priority both any necessary interim actions and the final actions.

30. WikiHousing open day

Organised by Straddle3, Societat Orgànica and La Hidra Cooperativa. Participants visited WikiHousing Barcelona, a citizen co-production initiative carried out in a public housing building for young people. The building, which is on a municipal site in the neighbourhood of Poble Sec, explores the most innovative sustainable wood-based prefabrication and water and energy efficiency techniques. The building is the product of a participatory co-design, self-construction and community co-management process carried out by a group of over 50 young people, who acquired new skills in the process and became empowered as active citizens.

31. Guided tour of the IMPSOL social housing developments in Sant Just Desvern and Gavà

Organised by AMB IMPSOL. Participants visited the social housing developments in Sant Just Desvern (30 units) and Gavà (136 units) developed by IMPSOL/AMB. A private coach was used for this tour.

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