

MAYORS ^{FOR} HOUSING

President of the European Council
President of the European Commission
President of the European Parliament
President of the Eurogroup

21st October 2025

Dear Presidents,

Housing is the main source of social inequality across Europe. One of the main cleavages splitting our societies apart is between those who can access decent and affordable housing and those who cannot. Just as the European Union faces an unprecedented threat on our Eastern borders, we also face an unprecedented threat internally: the substantive social and political consequences of not taking the housing crisis seriously. If the EU is to avoid further populist, Eurosceptic gaining ground around the continent, **it needs to substantially increase its action on housing.**

We, the cities, lie at the core of the housing crisis, as it is in our streets where its impact is more noticeable. It is our neighbours who suffer the most from the effects of not being able to afford a home or of being expelled from their birthplace. When we fail to protect the right of our students and essential workers to remain in their communities, the social and urban fabric deteriorates. **As we are at the forefront of the crisis, we need to be at the forefront of the solution.** Any European response to the crisis needs to recognise its urban nature and needs to partner with cities as key enablers towards the solution. **This entails, at least, three key elements: agile funding, regulation and decision-making capacity.**

We recognise that the European Union institutions are making the right steps on this path. We welcomed President von der Leyen's announcement in her State of the European Union address that the European Affordable Housing Plan will be presented already this year and that European solutions to housing need to be anchored in local realities. We also support the creation of the Special Committee on the Housing Crisis in the European Union in the European Parliament, with whom we have closely collaborated, and with President Costa's initiative to include housing as an item in the agenda of tomorrow's European Council Summit. We also note the good progress in the Conclusions on housing by the Danish Presidency of the Council of the EU, and the ambitious plans by the EIB to increase funding opportunities for housing in cities. **However, we are following with concern the developments regarding the new Multiannual Financial Framework,** the drastic reduction of Cohesion funds, and the significant limitations being placed on the role of cities and regions.

Our message is clear: we need to act now. There is no time to waste. We, the cities, are ready. We are ready to partner with the EU Institutions to deliver an ambitious, substantial and long-lasting response to the main crisis impacting our cities and our citizens. **This week's discussion at the European Council is a very important milestone** in this regard – it is essential that Member States recognise the magnitude of this crisis and empower the European Commission to act urgently.

This is an idea that we have been stressing for months. The Mayors for Housing alliance was launched in December with 10 members. Ten months later, we are now 17 cities, from different geographies and political families, united around a single issue: the need for European action on housing. This is why we presented our **own European Housing Action Plan which identifies an investment gap of EUR 300 billion in housing across the EU.** The Plan revolves around a central idea: **the designation of stressed housing market areas as a mechanism to channel direct European funding to those areas that are most impacted by the crisis,** on an emergency basis as we did with the Recovery and Resilience Fund in the COVID-19 context, and in a structural way with the next Multiannual Financial Framework. It also stresses the need to adopt a comprehensive view of the crisis, from people experiencing homelessness to the urban middle classes experiencing severe housing affordability challenges. Finally, the Plan calls on the EU institutions to ensure that the right to housing takes precedence over the economic exploitation of homes in the context of the proliferation of short-term touristic rentals.

There is still a long way to go towards the full guarantee of the fundamental human right to housing, as stated in Principle 19 of the European Pillar of Social Rights and Article 34 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU. A fundamental right that is also key to boosting the competitiveness of our continent. **However, the European Council summit this week is a very relevant milestone on this path. Let us seize it.**

Yours sincerely,

Jaume Collboni, **Mayor of Barcelona**
Anne Hidalgo, **Mayor of Paris**
Roberto Gualtieri, **Mayor of Rome**
Femke Halsema, **Mayor of Amsterdam**
Haris Doukas, **Mayor of Athens**
Matteo Lepore, **Mayor of Bologna**
Lars Weiss, **Lord Mayor of Copenhagen**
Gergely Karácsony, **Mayor of Budapest**
Ray McAdam, **Lord Mayor of Dublin**

Sara Funaro, **Mayor of Florence**
Mathias De Clercq, **Mayor of Ghent**
Burkhard Jung, **Mayor of Leipzig**
Renaud Payre, **Vice-President of Lyon Metropole**
Giuseppe Sala, **Mayor of Milano**
Rafał Trzaskowski, **Mayor of Warsaw**
Tomislav Tomašević, **Mayor of Zagreb**