



The Just City Dimension

Housing

How UAEU partnerships can be used by policy and decision-makers to end homelessness and provide adequate and affordable housing

This article is part of a series of articles based on the 14 Partnerships of the Urban Agenda for the EU. Structured around the three city dimensions of the New Leipzig Charter (the Productive, the Green, and the Just City), the articles link Partnerships' actions and activities with other relevant EU projects and initiatives supported by Cohesion Policy (including Urban Innovative Actions, URBACT, or Article 7 cities benefitting from ERDF). The articles demonstrate the key role of cities in the Urban Agenda for the EU, and focus on specific actions they have led and implemented. Overall, the articles aim at showcasing practices and experiences on how different tools and funding support can help cities face their challenges in a strategic way towards sustainable urban development.

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How UAEU partnerships can be used by policy and decision-makers to end homelessness and provide adequate housing

Because of the lack of adequate and affordable housing in Europe, and a crisis exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, the efforts of the Urban Agenda for the EU are important milestones in the achievement of a 'just city' as promoted by the New Leipzig Charter. Questioning the meaning of a just city and the role of housing, this article portrays city examples framed by three Partnerships of the Urban Agenda for the EU. Perspectives on and solutions to the future of housing policies in Europe will conclude this contribution.

The 'just city' dimension included in the New Leipzig Charter in 2020 is a welcome novelty for European policies and debates. Rooted in the Lefebvrian concept of 'right to the city' and its subsequent elaborations¹, the 'just city' approach entails a radical critique of the idea of cities as engines of economic growth and surplus value creation, producing and reproducing unequal societies. Today, at the hinge of this process of unequal societal and wealth production, is housing². 'Everywhere, with variations in localities, there has been a paradigmatic shift: from housing as part of social policies (requiring a state intervention to provide a resource not covered by the market, by the salaries or by the distribution of wealth) towards housing as a commodity, later turning housing to a financial asset,' says Raquel Rolnik former UN Rapporteur on Adequate Housing³. The world's biggest asset class is residential property: with an estimated value of about US \$200 trillion, homes are collectively worth about three times as much as all publicly traded shares⁴. Traded as assets, housing becomes inaccessible for many. Because of this, growing numbers of people face a growing level of stigmatisation, discrimination and exclusion across age, gender, sex and race. This also happens through legal means, criminalising, evicting, and banishing the poor, thus pushing the unhoused to the margins. Hence, the sheer societal impacts of this contraposition between housing as a lucrative business in global finance and housing as a right to a safe roof enabling one to live a decent life, are dramatic. The

¹ Seminal references Harvey D.,1973 Social Justice and the City, Johns Hopkins University Press, Manuel Castells, The Urban Question, 1977

² Seminal references Harvey D.,1973 Social Justice and the City, Johns Hopkins University Press, Manuel Castells, The Urban Question, 1977

³ Colini, L. et al. Interview with Raquel Rolnik, former UN special rapporteur on adequate housing EU UIA/URBACT January 2021www.right2housing.eu

⁴ <https://www.economist.com/graphic-detail/global-house-prices>

achievement of a more cohesive, socially and economically fair European society through the lens of the New Leipzig Charter must have adequate housing at its crucible.

The housing crisis in European cities

The Charter for Fundamental Rights⁵ recognises and respects the right to social and housing assistance to ensure a decent existence for all those who lack sufficient resources⁶. The respect of the Charter is also one of the Cohesion Policy 2021–2027 enabling conditions for the European Social Fund + (i.e. conditions that must be respected so Member States can access funding). But while *'the Charter must be respected and promoted by EU institutions and Member States, many ignore its existence and the prospects for its application,'* says Maria Aldanas, Lawyer and Policy Officer at FEANTSA⁷. Actions to strengthen and promote the application of the Charter over the next decade have been set out in the Strategy for the effective implementation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights by the European Union⁸. With the **European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan**, the EU is also engaging in numerous actions to support equal opportunities, housing and assistance for the homeless, and access to essential services.

In Europe, where some of the richest countries in the world are to be found, on any given night 700,000 individuals sleep rough, and their number has risen by 70% since 2010⁹. In Ireland, where the number of homeless families has increased by 232% since July 2014, almost one third of people in emergency accommodation are children¹⁰. The figures are also dramatic among asylum seekers, especially in the countries at Europe's external borders¹¹. All over Europe, with significant variation among Member States, 4% of the population suffered from severe housing

⁵ Art. 34.3. 3. In order to combat social exclusion and poverty, the Union recognises and respects the right to social and housing assistance so as to ensure a decent existence for all those who lack sufficient resources, in accordance with the rules laid down by Union law and national laws and practices. <https://fra.europa.eu/en/eu-charter/article/34-social-security-and-social-assistance>

⁶<https://www.feantsa.org/download/2016-06-housing-related-binding-obligations6411857525167192995.pdf>

⁷ Interview to Maria Aldanas on the right to housing in Europe Feb, 2021 for an article still unpublished for the EU Urbact programme.

⁸https://ec.europa.eu/info/aid-development-cooperation-fundamental-rights/your-rights-eu/eu-charter-fundamental-rights/application-charter/eu-strategy-strengthen-application-charter_en

⁹ FEANTSA, Foundation Abbé Pierre, 5th Overview of Housing Exclusion in Europe, 2020

¹⁰ <https://www.focusireland.ie/resource-hub/about-homelessness/>

¹¹ FEANTSA, Foundation Abbé Pierre, 5th Overview of Housing Exclusion in Europe, 2020

deprivation in 2019¹². With a gender pay gap around 14%¹³ and youth unemployment reaching peaks of 39.9% as in Spain¹⁴, housing affordability has a relevant age and gender dimension¹⁵.

The housing crisis has been manifesting in the lives of millions of people facing housing overburden costs, overcrowding, unaffordability of rent, accumulated rental debts, dependency on mortgages and growing risks of eviction, and steadily escalating house prices especially in historical and touristic destinations through the unbridled market of short-term rentals. In this scenario, the pandemic has laid bare pre-existing inequalities, proving that adequate and safe housing is lifesaving. In the context of the first months of the public health emergency, unprecedented measures have been taken to protect the most vulnerable¹⁶. S. Coupechoux and C. Serme-Morin, authors of the 5th Overview on Housing Exclusion, highlighted that such efforts by governments – aimed at accommodating people sleeping rough to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus – showed that *'homelessness is not systematic and could be eradicated if political will, cross-sectoral collaboration funding and human resources are aligned to hit the same target'*¹⁷.

While the pandemic offered an opportunity to speed up and mobilise resources for implementing these policies, the reality is that these often remained confined in the frame of exceptionality or have not been implemented as planned¹⁸. This unrolled while house price statistics showed a growth of 2% in the first quarter of 2021 compared to 2020 in France, Germany, Ireland¹⁹, despite job losses during the pandemic, further stressing housing inaccessibility for a significant part of the population. Taking stock of these trends and

¹² one in ten private tenants spent more than 60% of their disposable income on housing (+9,3% since 2010), 17,1 % of the EU population lived in overcrowded households in 2019, 6,9 % of the EU population was unable to keep their home adequately warm. https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Living_conditions_in_Europe_-_housing#Key_findings

¹³ <https://www.statista.com/statistics/266228/youth-unemployment-rate-in-eu-countries/>

¹⁴ European wide statics and information are not available to see the breadth of the exclusionary phenomena affecting racial, sexual, people with activity limitation

¹⁵ Eviction bans have been adopted by many Members States (e.g. Austria, Belgium, France, Italy, Ireland etc.), rental freeze, reduction of rents, mortgage forbearance, deferment of utility payments etc. with temporary accommodation provided in most countries for the homeless population (it is claimed that more than 90% of people sleeping in the streets in the UK have had a safe place to stay during the peaks of the virus Coronavirus Nearly Ended Street Homelessness in U.K. Maybe Not for Long. (Published 2020)

¹⁶ <https://urbact.eu/files/housing-web-conference2-no-one-left-behind-presentation-0>

¹⁷ <https://urbact.eu/files/housing-web-conference2-no-one-left-behind-presentation-0>

¹⁸ After the first quarter of 2021, when Europe seems to slowly emerge from the pandemic, studies start to unveil that evictions have been still performed. In Italy, despite the policy instruction to safeguard the disadvantaged during the pandemic, forced evictions of Roma were carried out by local authorities <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/10/affordable-housing-key-to-resilience-post-covid/>

¹⁹ <https://www.economist.com/graphic-detail/global-house-prices>

considering the root causes, it is essential to plan, work and realise the expectations of the New Leipzig Charter and halt the permanent housing crisis.

Mapping cities' practices through the lens of the Urban Agenda for the EU Partnerships

While the political challenge is to push governments at all levels to commit to adequate housing, the Urban Agenda partnerships have contributed by showing that adequate housing is fundamental to achieve better cohesion (especially the partnerships on urban poverty, housing and inclusion of migrants and refugees)²⁰.

Significant outcomes have been achieved: actions, recommendations and proposals of the Housing Partnership have been adopted in the Van Sparrentak parliamentary report '[Access to Decent and Affordable Housing for All](#)' (January 2021), while the [EU Platform on Homelessness](#) launched in June 2021 under the Portuguese presidency is directly linked to the Urban Poverty Partnership demanding EU governments to end homelessness by 2030. Cities have an important role in implementing these recommendations and actions and exchanging knowledge across Europe, as the [Urban Academy on Integration](#) (Action of the Inclusion Partnership) has been doing when addressing challenges, including housing. Through the lens of selected Urban Agenda actions²¹, some examples from cities active in European initiatives, such as in URBACT networks, Urban Innovative Actions projects, the URBACT/UIA initiative 'Cities engaging in the right to housing' and Sustainable Urban Development strategies (Article 7 of regulation (EU) No 1301/2013), represent relevant practices and opportunities for other cities to be inspired by.

'Homelessness – Ending homelessness by 2030, through the reform of social inclusion strategies at the national level' (UA EU Urban Poverty Partnership, Action 8)

The pandemic has shown that temporary solutions to homelessness in hotels and shelter have helped in an emergency situation, but that there is evidence that long-term solutions are needed

²⁰ The inclusion of migrants and refugees is the only partnership that decided to continue its collaboration including new partners in the programme. The three mentioned partnership have been among the four first partnership of the pact of Amsterdam 2016 launching the Urban Agenda for the EU and were called Pilot partnerships. Among them only the partnership of migrants and refugees is still active now at the time of writing July 2021.

²¹ The actions have been proposed by Ecorys coordinating the production of these UAEU article series.

to eradicate homelessness. The **Housing First** model is considered an effective and viable response, as the national-level adoption of this model in Finland has demonstrated.

“It's proven that Housing First really works: in many cities that are using it, people stay in their house for years. It's also cost-effective, and in the end, cheaper than sheltering. And it's better for health because people are more likely to stay outside of the health system.”

- Patricia Vanderbauwhede, ROOF Project Leader in Ghent

The **city of Ghent** (BE) leads an URBACT network of nine cities called ROOF²² with a goal of *functional zero homelessness* – in other words eradicating ‘structural’ homelessness. They aim to achieve this by: gathering accurate data on homelessness using an **ETHOS Light** methodology that was developed to measure homelessness at EU level; working with civil society, public institutions and private sectors to shift from ‘managing’ to ‘eradicating’ homelessness; and adopting the Housing First model. The constitution of the URBACT network ROOF is strongly linked to the implementation of action 13 of the Urban Poverty Partnership, through the launch of a **policy lab** during the lifetime of the partnership in 2018 where cities have been invited to share local policies, experiences and potential synergies for collaboration.

As an **Article 7** city, the sustainable urban development **strategy** of Ghent benefits from cohesion policy in different ways, promoting integrated projects funded by the ERDF, and combining participation in various EU programmes, most notably URBACT with **ROOF** and **Civic eState** – a network focusing on civic management of abandoned building as urban commons – and the EU Urban Innovative Actions project **ICCARUS**, dedicated to making more affordable housing available to captive residents through the use of revolving funds.

In the case of **Barcelona**, the municipality acts as a mediator with the landlord and the person at risk of being evicted with a special budget dedicated to avoiding people sleeping rough. This is accompanied by other forms of secondary protection mechanisms such as helping people find a home when leaving prisons or hospitals, and helping those unhoused due traumatic experiences such as domestic violence (which mostly affect women). *'In particular we have been worried about the situation of women experiencing homelessness, because for them it is*

²² <https://urbact.eu/roof>

particularly violent and much less visible in the street,²³ says Laura Perez Castano, Councillor in the area of Social Rights, Global Justice, Feminism and LGBT. These policies are now reviewed from a gender perspective, and the municipality has developed tools especially for women, with the support of services considering their specific needs. As part of this approach, Barcelona launched the **first women-only homeless centre²⁴** in 2020. *'During the pandemic we received more than 1,000 calls for people in vulnerable situations,'* continued Laura Perez Castano, *'requests which cannot be fulfilled when there is a lack of social public and affordable housing.'*

“Recommendations on good housing policy and governance at local, regional, national and EU levels” (UA EU Affordable Housing Partnership: Ch. 3.1)

'During the pandemic, a lot has changed and a lot has stayed the same in terms of housing. What is new is that we see a return of public interventions on housing considering that the pandemic had massive effects on job losses, and more people had been unable to pay their rents and mortgages. [...] It is a silent return of the state intervention – we do not want to stay silent,'²⁵ says Michaela Kauer, Coordinator of the Urban Agenda for the EU Housing Partnership.

The Housing Partnership has mapped some recommendations for good housing policies and has provided accurate data showing that there is a housing crisis, aggravated today by the COVID-19 pandemic. What are the tools public authorities can put in place to define good housing policies that secure housing affordability over time?

As part of the URBACT/UIA initiative **‘Cities engaging in the right to housing’**, Florian Schmidt, Councillor for Urban Policy of Friedrichshain, Kreuzberg, speaks of the case of **Berlin²⁶**, where legal tools are put in place to stop growing unaffordability in a booming housing market²⁷. **Berlin’s housing crisis** has caused significant mobilisation of civil society and strong political pressure on the government both at local and national level to intervene with policies to mitigate the trend. While a **law establishing a five-year total rent freeze** has been **stopped** at

²³ Housing is for all. 16 June 2021 A web talk on homelessness and what Greens in government want to do about it <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fm1RDFDVW7w>

²⁴ This example relate the city also active in various Urbact networks dealing with inclusion policies

²⁵ <https://euregionsweek2020-video.eu/video/how-to-implement-the-right-to-housing>

²⁶ Berlin is among the cities adopting the Sustainable Urban Development strategies (Article 7 of regulation (EU) No 1301/2013) <https://urban.jrc.ec.europa.eu/strat-board/#/factsheet?id=DE-082&fullscreen=yes>

²⁷ The city (and state) has historically one of the highest percentage of rental in EU (over 80% of the population live in rented houses); both in the East and West part of the city the former public stock has been massively privatised during the post 1989 transition.

federal level, other measures are in place to attempt to protect the population at risk of displacement. The most innovative and never-used-before measure is the referendum for the expropriation of large residential landlords (DW enteigen). The ballot, due by the end of September 2021 and prompted by two rounds of petitions since 2018, would activate a part of the German constitution that allows the state to take over 'land, natural resources and means of production' in exchange for compensation. If it passes, it will oblige the largest private landlords to sell their properties to the city government at a 'fair' price. This would be an unprecedented example of controlling the speculation of housing and its detrimental effects on the population from which other cities can learn from.

Another measure already in place is the *vorkaufsrecht* (right of first refusal), and the *milieuschutz gebiete* (areas of social protection). These measures are in the context of German state laws which guarantee the rights of tenants and include a **rent cap** preventing rent from increasing over a fixed percentage by year and protecting tenants from being evicted by excessive rent increases. Nevertheless, some landlords have tried to circumvent the rules, most typically through luxury renovation. German law allows larger rent increases if a landlord demonstrably improves the quality of an apartment. As a matter of fact, after a building's owner executes renovations such as new balconies, heating or insulation, many tenants might see their rent increase and, unable to pay, are evicted – this process has become known as 'reno-viction'. In these cases, the first essential tool for the local administration is the existence of the 'social environment protection areas', of which 64 are currently defined in Berlin²⁸. This policy is completed by the option to apply the 'right for first refusal' (only) in these areas: de facto the municipality can intervene when properties are on sale with the perspective of speculative luxury regeneration either for making a pre-emptive offer, or to indicate alternative buyers that can exercise this right to buy, and financially support their bid. This is typically used for giving priority to public or private actors to take over the property to establish less exploitative management and to assure the existing inhabitants of their future rental conditions.

²⁸ According to estimates by the Berlin Tenants' Association, some 460,000 flats are currently located in social environment protection areas. This corresponds to approximately 30% of Berlin's rented flats. These are areas of the city where the social composition of the population is established as a value to be preserved. Among the related measures, a specific procedure requires additional permissions for the landlords to refurbish their properties. The municipality can also refuse the modernisation if it leads to higher rents.

This tool has been used in several cases in Berlin in different forms. It is used to accompany the community of inhabitants to decide which owner they prefer and also helps to set up (and fund) foundations or cooperatives taking over the property of the buildings, and to prioritise and financially support public companies to buy the property. It must be noted that, as in the words of Florian Schmidt, this instrument has been applied quite systematically in Kreuzberg in recent years with the effects of a establishing a 'radical' pilot model, *'this measure became famous because in this legislation with the new elected government at city level such measures were easy to apply because there was money to do it'*²⁹. In other words, the existence of progressive policy instruments is definitely an important part of the solution, but the political will to invest public funds in contrasting the commodification of housing is an essential factor for success.

Vienna's strategies to ensure affordable housing

Differently from Berlin, **Vienna** which is leading the Urban Agenda Housing Partnership, and does not employ pre-emptive rights to mitigate the market, but rather intervenes in steering the production of new housing to grant a sufficient supply of affordable housing. This is done through *wohnfonds_wien (WW)*, the fund for housing construction and urban renewal, a private limited-profit organisation with a strong relationship, both strategically and financially, with the city of Vienna. In Vienna, appropriate areas for land development opportunities are specified in the city's long-term Urban Development Plan (STEP 2025), developed as part of a broad, inclusive dialogue process at city level. WW is in charge of the purchase of land and delivery of sites for affordable housing. It is just one market player in the land market and has no formal market privileges or exclusive property rights. However, in practice it has a dominant position in the land market, which the limited-profit sector must work with, being not only the main provider of land in Vienna but also the city's contracted approval authority for relevant subsidies. Its influence derives from the cost of rent policy and subsidy conditions, which tie rent to development costs. WW tries to minimise these costs, especially the price of land, in order to reduce the cost of rent and maintain housing quality.

To promote transparency, quality, innovation and efficiency in the land transfer process from WW to the respective property developers, Vienna set up, in 1995, an entirely novel process – the developer competitions. Every subsidised newly built project must be assessed on the basis

²⁹ UIA Urban Voices Podcast n.1, April 15, 2021. <https://anchor.fm/urban-voices/episodes/Podcast-1-Cities-engaging-in-the-Right-to-Housing-Collaborative-housing-eutjaj>

of quality criteria, either in a public developer's competition procedure (above 500 dwellings) or by the Land Advisory Board (up to 500 apartments). The main focus is on overall quality and achievement of a balance within the four-pillar model which assesses economy, social sustainability, architecture and ecology. The winning team has the right to buy the construction site at a fixed price, which includes housing subsidies (up to 35% of the total construction costs) as a package to allow the team to implement its award-winning project.

“Establishing an Urban Academy on Integration Strategies to promote knowledge-sharing among local and national governments” (UA EU Inclusion of Migrants and Refugees Partnership – Action 5)

Cities are inspired by practices implemented in and by other cities. This is what the Urban Agenda for the EU partnership on inclusion of migrants and refugees encourages for the ‘**Urban Academy**’ action. Cities and experts are brought together to respond and find solutions to questions posed by the cities themselves concerning a variety of issues and opportunities related to migrant population. *‘There is a lot of discussion of what happens at macro level but the urban academy enables people with a ground prospective to come together and to face each other’s challenges,’* says Sinthujan Varatharaja, member of the European Migrant Advisory Board³⁰. The second urban academy was specifically dedicated to exploring challenges on ‘**Housing – Providing adequate and affordable housing for migrants**’ and participants learned from cities that are advancing and innovating in this respect. The UIA project ‘Curing the Limbo’ is another significant example in this context.

Athens Curing the Limbo³¹

The case for **Athens**, member of the Inclusion of Migrants and Refugees Partnership and recipient of funding under UIA, is an inspiring project as it connects the issues tackled by the three Urban Agenda for the EU partnerships on housing, refugees and poverty in an exemplary way. The limbo represents for refugees stranded in the Greek capital, whose plans were to continue their trip to Western Europe but were forced to stay. People who have been granted asylum but are offered no supportive services or structured opportunities for integration and

³⁰ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-90A3x579dE>

³¹ <https://curingthelimbo.gr/en/home>

empowerment have difficulties finding a home, face different levels of poverty and are affected by apathy and incapacity to find a real inclusion in local society. Athens was impacted by a decade of financial crisis but was able to build over a significant experience of active citizenship to respond to the most pressing local issues. A web of informal, independent civic initiatives organised themselves to offer solidarity and support to those more in need, and some of these issues were related to the increasing refugee and migrant crisis.

Through the implementation of 'Curing the Limbo' pilot initiatives, the idea was that matching active citizens with refugees trapped in such neglected conditions could lead to more autonomy and a sense of belonging. The project provided refugees with a comprehensive set of complementary support services, language courses and employment training to improve their basic skills and increase their likelihood of employment. The key measure however was access to affordable housing, mobilising the housing stock that was available in the city at the time³². The pilot affordable housing model of Curing the Limbo is based on ensuring and maintaining high levels of interaction between project participants and the host community. To ensure the quality and sustainability of the housing models, Catholic Relief Services, the partner in charge of this task, created a 'technical steering group' that includes experts on housing, sociology and urban studies to ensure a holistic intervention. The action is carried out through a series of assessments to collect the necessary information and ensure the proposed solutions respond to both housing and community needs. The existence of vacant apartments and buildings responds to the lack of refugee housing by offering property owners incentives – both financial and social – to participate in the programme. In this way, an actual dysfunction of the city – the excess of unused stock burdening the city's dynamism – will respond to the lack of affordable housing for those in need, becoming an integral part of the city's urban development through the networking of refugees with the civil society. Housing in formerly abandoned properties is offered to refugees and in return, participants are expected to network and engage in community service and participate in a skill-development programme. Moreover, the Housing Facilitation Unit (HFU) enhances the engagement of refugees through tailored exchange plans which meet their individual interests and needs. Athens is also implementing an article 7 sustainable urban development strategy called 'Athens 2020: sustainable development for tourism culture and innovation'³³. Although the main focus of the strategy is tourism and the creative industry, it also promotes a few initiatives which explicitly mention migrants as

³² <https://curingthelimbo.gr/affordable-housing-en>

³³ <https://urban.jrc.ec.europa.eu/strat-board/#/factsheet?id=EL-022&fullscreen=yes>

beneficiaries (on housing, shelter and smart city/web tools) and other initiatives which tackle migrants indirectly considering that the intervention areas show a high share of foreign-born population, and tackle themes that are of high importance to migrants (for example initiatives on social infrastructure and protection of vulnerable groups)³⁴. The case of Athens shows how, even if indirectly, sustainable urban development strategies can benefit migrant integration through a place-based approach³⁵.

Conclusion

The year 2021 marks an important political moment for housing to which different voices have contributed from governments, civic movements, international organisations as well as the Urban Agenda for the EU. With the Portuguese Presidency 2021, progress has been made in calling on EU-wide cities and service providers to collaborate and exchange knowledge and practices, through a newly launched platform, in the frame of the Action Plan the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan³⁶. It is in **Principle 19** that the European Pillar of Social Rights sets an important basis for Europe to tackle housing inequalities. The promises for this Europe-wide commitment to adequate housing began early in the year, on 21 January, when the EU parliament voted the resolution on the 'Access to Decent and Affordable Housing for All' report by MEP Kim van Sparrentak. In addition, the **Recovery and Resilience Facility** offers new options for Member States and cities to invest in housing, together with the start of the 2021–2027 **Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF)**, that foresees important investments such as allocating at least 25% of ESF+ resources to social inclusion, and 5% to tackling **child poverty**³⁷. The Affordable Housing Initiative will support and facilitate such project pipelines by focusing on renovating housing districts, putting quality, liveability, affordability and access to newest technologies at the forefront. It will mobilise cross-sectoral partnerships between industries (e.g. renewable energy, construction, housing), public authorities, civil society and tenants to support their innovation capacity and assure wide participation. Besides these funding lines,

³⁴ Karadimitriou, N. and Maloutas, T. (2021) Impact of Sustainable Urban Development strategies on migrant integration in Athens, Presentation at the JRC ERA Workshop International migrants in Functional Urban Areas. How strategies of sustainable urban development can foster the integration of migrants? 25 February 2021

³⁵ Fioretti, C., Proietti, P., Tintori, G. (2021), Tackling pockets of loneliness in Functional Urban Areas. Do urban development strategies benefit migrant integration? Presentation at the 60th ERSA Congress, 24-27 August 2021

³⁶ https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/economy-works-people/jobs-growth-and-investment/european-pillar-social-rights_en

³⁷ https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/2021_2027/ see also objective 5. A Europe closer to citizens (supporting locally led development and sustainable urban development).

there is potential to match different European funds with financial tools and institutions building more capacity, for instance the EIB Advisory Hub, to help housing organisations and cities making better use of different funding opportunities. However, cities can learn from other cities and the above-mentioned practices show that cities are at the forefront of this endeavour to grant housing as a pillar for the just city and that the messages of the Urban Agenda for the EU are still important today with long path ahead.

