

EHP Housing Partnership

Paper for meeting in Luxembourg on 11th and 12th June 2018.

Subject : Recommendations from Finance & Funding Sub Group

This paper sets out the recommendations from the EHP Finance & Funding sub group for consideration at the forthcoming EHP meeting in Luxembourg on 11th and 12th June 2018.

In putting these recommendations forward account has been taken account of the following :

- the survey which the EHP Finance sub group conducted among its stakeholders in March 2017, and which was reported on in Amsterdam in June 2017
- the two research studies commissioned by the EHP and overseen by the Finance sub group, namely the report undertaken by Professor Ken Gibb at Glasgow University, which looked at obstacles to increasing supply of affordable housing in six developed European nations, and the report from Jozsef Hegedus at MRI which examined the situation in newer EU member states. The reports' findings and recommendations were outlined at the EHP meetings in September 2017, the reports issued in October 2017, and covered the former report again covered in Jim Hayton's presentation at the EHP meeting in Lisbon in March 2018.
- discussion and outcomes from the various Finance sub Group meetings, and particularly that of the Geneva meeting in November 2017, which was summarised and circulated following that meeting
- account has also been taken of some helpful papers recently circulated, especially the outcomes from the General Housing Policy Working Group which were discussed in Lisbon. The paper on affordability recently circulated for the Luxembourg EHP meeting by Sven Bergenstrahle on behalf of the IUT is also helpful, and Housing Europe's excellent material on the role of EU Cohesion Policy and the European Semester in promoting affordable housing has also been very timely in formulating these recommendations from the Finance Sub Group.

Finance Sub Group recommendations and the connection to the Housing Partnership's Action Plan

The Housing Partnership Action Plan will be the key output from the EHP, and indeed all partnerships under the EU Urban Agenda. The key purpose of the Housing partnership is to identify and recommend actions which, if implemented, will help increase the supply of affordable housing throughout Europe. Actions are to be identified under the categories of *Better Regulation*, *Better Funding* and *Better Knowledge*.

Our Action Plan is to be approved in Ljubljana in September 2018. It currently contains five actions, which were approved for public feedback in July 2017.

Under *Better Regulation* three actions have been approved :

1. Provide guidance on EU regulation and public support for housing
2. Undertake capacity building for application of state aid rules affecting affordable housing provision at a city level
3. Revise the SGEI decision with regard to the narrow target group specified for social housing

Under *Better Knowledge* two actions have been approved :

1. Develop a good practice database for affordable housing
2. Provide policy guidance for affordable housing

No actions have yet been identified under the *Better Funding* category. This paper identifies some preferred actions in this category for the EHP to consider at the meeting in Luxembourg on 11th & 12th June 2018. The paper is accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation which will be delivered at the meeting.

Having regard to the EHP member survey, the two research reports and relevant background papers mentioned above, the Finance sub group recommends that the following are considered for inclusion as Actions in the EHP Action Plan.

EHP Finance Sub group Recommendations for Action via EHP Action Plan

It is recommended that the following recommendations are considered at the forthcoming EHP meeting in Luxembourg on 11th & 12th June 2018. Subject to approval and amendment they should then be included in the finalised EHP Action Plan to be approved at Ljubljana in September 2018.

Recommendation No 1 : that all EU nation states should be required to produce a national housing strategy to identify housing needs and the means by which these are to be addressed.

Recommendation No 2 : That the role of Not for Profit (NFP) housing providers – such as housing associations and co-operatives - should be favoured and promoted by the EU as part of the emerging EU Cohesion Policy, through for example including “*conditionalities*” in the allocation of EU funding

Recommendation No 3: That, through the Semester process and engagement with member states, the EU should promote reform and regulation of management standards in the private rented sector (PRS) to ensure safe and comfortable living conditions for all PRS tenants and residents

Recommendation No 4: That, supported by an agreed definition of affordable housing , the EU should formally recognise the central importance of affordable housing to human wellbeing, and use the Semester process to support and encourage long term investment in affordable housing, with robust systems to monitor progress towards targets.

Recommendation No 5: That the EU should embark on a concerted campaign to encourage EU states and NFP housing organisations to apply for funds which support investment in affordable housing. This should be supported by the emerging Housing Toolkit being developed by housing Europe which provides examples of successful funding applications. (URBACT also offers access to a database of successful local initiatives)

Recommendation No 6: that the EU should encourage and facilitate a knowledge exchange programme, including but not limited to, an Erasmus element, to promote the awareness and acquisition of strategic housing planning and funding skills throughout European nations. Following its last

meeting in Vienna December 2018, the EHP should play the key role in facilitating this programme.

Next steps

The above recommendations will be considered at the EHP meeting in Luxembourg on 11th and 12th June 2018 with a view to determining whether they should be included as Actions in the EHP Action Plan. In addition, any additional actions not proposed here can be considered for inclusion. When approved by the EHP, actions will be configured under the approved template for inclusion in the Action Plan (e.g. with reference to existing EU policies in the area concerned, which problem the action addresses and how the action helps solves this, partners likely to be involved etc) before final Action plan approval in Ljubljana in September.

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