

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002216/24
to the Commission
João Oliveira (The Left)
(22 October 2024)**

Subject: Financing for the expansion and renovation of public housing stock

The housing crisis is taking on increasingly worrying proportions.

Large swathes of the population have trouble finding affordable housing, whether to buy or rent. Although the problem is more acute for people with money difficulties, it also affects the middle classes, and it is worse in large towns and cities and those with greater tourism pressure.

These difficulties are the product of policies involving liberalising the sector, catering to property funds and speculation, granting privileges to tourism and devaluing housing for residential purposes, precarious rental conditions, shunning the role of the state and eradicating its intervention in a number of aspects of the sector, including by providing next to no public investment.

Taking into account that the Commission's references to this problem have been few and far between and too vague:

1. Does it believe that additional dedicated EU funding needs to be established and made available to Member States so that they can expand and renovate public housing stock, tackle property speculation and uphold the right to decent, affordable housing for all?
2. What means, including financial, does the Commission believe should be harnessed to give effect to national policies designed to achieve those objectives?

Submitted: 22.10.2024

**Answer given by Mr Jørgensen on behalf of the European Commission
(24 January 2025)**

The first-ever European Affordable Housing Plan, announced by the President of the Commission in the Political Guidelines 2024-2029 ⁽¹⁾, will support cities and Member States in tackling the housing crisis by offering technical assistance and focus on investment and skills needed.

To promote investments in affordable and sustainable housing, the Commission has established a new taskforce on housing and will work closely with international financial institutions, notably the European Investment Bank, national promotional banks and other relevant stakeholders on a pan-European investment platform to induce more private investment for social and affordable housing.

It will also work on a proposal allowing Member States to double the planned cohesion policy investments in affordable housing.

Various EU Funds are already available for Member States to support social and affordable housing ⁽²⁾. To assist Member States in harnessing the available EU funding opportunities, the Commission published a toolkit ⁽³⁾.

The Commissioner for Energy and Housing has also been tasked with making proposals aimed to tackle systemic issues with short-term accommodation rentals and the inefficient use of the current housing stock.

⁽¹⁾ See 'Political guidelines for the next European Commission 2024-2029': https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/e6cd4328-673c-4e7a-8683-f63ffb2cf648_en?filename=Political%20Guidelines%202024-2029_EN.pdf

⁽²⁾ Recovery and Resilience Plans (RRP) include measures worth at least an estimated EUR 21.3 billion that contribute to social housing and other social infrastructure for social inclusion purposes alone. In addition, the RRP's also cover measures promoting affordable housing. (Estimated expenditure is based on the pillar tagging methodology for the Recovery and Resilience Scoreboard and corresponds to the measures allocated to the policy area 'Social housing and other social infrastructures' as primary or secondary policy area).

The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) focuses on the provision and improvement of physical housing infrastructure, including through energy efficiency measures. EUR 10.4 billion in total investment is planned, involving an EU budget contribution of EUR 7.5 billion (from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), Cohesion Fund (CF) and Just Transition Fund (JTF)). This support primarily focuses on energy efficiency measures to reduce energy costs.

The InvestEU programme is mobilising public and private investments in affordable social housing. EUR 2.8 billion is earmarked for the Social Investments and skills window (including other priorities such as microfinance, social finance and social impact) and EUR 9.9 billion for the sustainable infrastructure window.

The European Social Fund+ (ESF+) can support Member States in facilitating access to housing and promoting integrated services, in line with the European Pillar of Social Rights. An exact amount indicating the amount of the ESF+ funds allocated only to housing-related actions cannot be determined. Nevertheless, EUR 16.8 billion is programmed for access to services which can include housing, and more are still available from an envelope of EUR 45.6 billion envisaged for social inclusion.

⁽³⁾ Social Housing and beyond. <https://european-social-fund-plus.ec.europa.eu/en/news/commission-launches-toolkit-support-social-housing-member-states>

The Commission is working on the implementation of the recent short-term rental regulation ⁽⁴⁾. It foresees the provision of reliable data on short-term rental, to help Member States designing the most appropriate and targeted measures. All these actions should help EU citizens to access more affordable housing.

Finally, the Commission will also lead on conducting an analysis of the impact of housing speculation and its economic consequences, as well as propose follow-up actions where needed.

⁽⁴⁾ Regulation (EU) 2024/1028 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 April 2024 on data collection and sharing relating to short-term accommodation rental services and amending Regulation (EU) 2018/1724, OJ L, 2024/1028, 29.4.2024 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32024R1028>