

(English version)

**Priority question for written answer P-000688/25
to the Commission
Jean-Paul Garraud (PfE)
(13 February 2025)**

Subject: Priority for Europeans in access to housing in the light of rises in poor housing and homelessness

Recent reports by the European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless paint an alarming picture of poor-quality housing in Europe getting worse. A million people are reported to be homeless, while 19.2 million live in unsafe housing. Although the EU has taken a number of initiatives in that area, policy responses have still not been able to curb the crisis, which affects, first and foremost, Europeans facing hardship.

At the same time, significant sums are invested through public policies into putting up newly arrived immigrants in specific accommodation facilities. This state of affairs calls into question what the priorities are with regard to housing and social assistance.

1. To what extent does the Commission consider Member State policies to combat poor housing and homelessness effective, particularly for Europeans facing hardship?
2. Does it have an assessment of the impact of EU funds allocated to social housing and emergency accommodation, in particular, as regards the balance between Europeans facing hardship and new immigrants?
3. Does it intend, with a view to combating homelessness and poor housing effectively, to encourage Member States to reserve a minimum share of social housing and emergency aid for Europeans?

Submitted: 13.2.2025

**Answer given by Mr Jørgensen on behalf of the European Commission
(13 March 2025)**

The European Platform on Combatting Homelessness provides support to Member States to design and implement effective national homelessness strategies ⁽¹⁾.

In December 2024, a Policy Toolkit to Combat Homelessness prepared by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) with the financial support of the Commission was launched.

Since the launch of the Platform in 2021, around half of the Member States have designed or revised national homelessness strategies, in line with the guidelines and knowledge developed by the Platform. The monitoring and evaluation of these strategies will be the focus of the future EU work on homelessness ⁽²⁾.

Various EU programmes and instruments are already available for Member States to support social and affordable housing, though no assessment regarding their impact along citizenship status of beneficiaries is available ⁽³⁾. To assist Member States in harnessing the available EU funding opportunities, the Commission also published a toolkit ⁽⁴⁾.

The Commission also co-chairs with the Council of Europe Development Bank a working group on access to finance. The aim is to map available funding options, to build capacity and enhance the expertise of project promoters and to support the development of projects to combat homelessness, including social/affordable housing and social support services.

⁽¹⁾ See for example the EU-funded policy toolkit developed by the OECD in support of the Platform (https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/oecd-toolkit-to-combat-homelessness_0fec780e-en.html).

⁽²⁾ A second EU-funded project with the OECD that started on 1 February 2025 will focus on the 'Implementation of homelessness and housing exclusion strategies: monitoring and evaluation'.

⁽³⁾ 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.

⁽⁴⁾ Social Housing and beyond. <https://european-social-fund-plus.ec.europa.eu/en/news/commission-launches-toolkit-support-social-housing-member-states>

The Commission will put forward a European Affordable Housing Plan to address structural drivers of the housing crisis. The policies to combat homelessness will be a component of this Plan and the first-ever EU Anti-Poverty Strategy. In the context of these initiatives, the Commission will carefully consider the matters described by the Honourable Member.
