

AFD Lend Lease 3 Links and Notes - Housing Policy in Helsinki, Vienna, Berlin, Barcelona, Kerala, and Boston

- Helsinki's homelessness housing campaign
<https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2019/jun/03/its-a-miracle-helsinkis-radical-solution-to-homelessness>
 - Helsinki owns 60,000 social housing units; one in seven residents live in city-owned housing. It also owns 70% of the land within the city limits, runs its own construction company, and has a current target of building 7,000 more new homes – of all categories – a year.
 - In each new district, the city maintains a strict housing mix to limit social segregation: 25% social housing, 30% subsidised purchase, and 45% private sector. Helsinki also insists on no visible external differences between private and public housing stock, and sets no maximum income ceiling on its social housing tenants.
- Portland anti-homeless boulders
 - <https://www.koin.com/news/local/multnomah-county/odot-using-boulders-to-deter-camps-near-downtown-highways/1526283654>
- India's socialists & housing (see page 3 highlights for figures - page 7 is more detailed)
https://newclimateeconomy.report/workingpapers/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2018/09/CUT18_Leeds_Housing_Final-1.pdf
 - Rapidly built around 18,000 homes in the two major cities at half the average national cost for BSUP housing projects and achieved a high occupancy level (around 100%) in part because they were more affordable and also because they were nice homes. People were also given more flexibility to build their own homes if they already owned land and wanted to do that with government assistance.
 - *The partnership between the state of Kerala, Kudumbashree and COSTFORD promoted the widespread use of sustainable architecture practices. Examples include building flood water retention and drainage in houses in coastal communities, using materials and layouts that regulate indoor temperature, adding rain harvesting and biogas facilities to reduce energy consumption costs and blending houses in with their natural environment. All of these factors helped reduce the costs and carbon intensity of construction as well as the energy needs of inhabitants and their impact on the local environment. They also contributed to the satisfaction of residents, as evident in the high occupancy rates.*
 - *The south Indian state of Kerala has a unique political, economic and cultural history. During the late 20th century, poverty levels were drastically reduced, despite only modest economic growth. Social scientists and commentators refer to the strong civic sector as a primary driver of development, championing the seemingly sustainable form of growth as the “Kerala model”. Socio-cultural factors, such as multifaith communities and matriarchal family structures, may partly explain its high literacy rates and gender equality.*

- ▪ *Access to adequate, safe and affordable housing is the first indicator of the 11th Sustainable Development Goal. Housing is necessary because it allows people to lead healthy, secure, productive and dignified lives and because it is as a durable asset that provides owners with a way to save and gain access to credit. A sufficient supply of affordable, low-carbon, climate-resilient housing is critical to ending poverty and supporting economic development in cities around the world.*
- ▪ *Worldwide the number of people without access to adequate, safe and affordable housing is expected to grow to 1.6 billion by 2025.¹ An estimated 1 billion new homes will be needed by 2025, costing up to US\$11 trillion.²*
- ▪ *The new housing stock needs to be compatible with the Paris Agreement. This is challenging, because low-carbon building materials are often more expensive than traditional materials and securing affordable, well-located, safe urban land, which could improve accessibility and climate resilience in cities, is difficult.*
- ▪ *Given India's rapid urban population growth, 110 million new housing units will need to be constructed by 2022. About 90 per cent of them will be required in urban areas.³ ▪ In the absence of sufficient formal housing provision by either markets or the state, informal settlements have grown rapidly. Conservative estimates suggest that at least 99 million people—about a quarter of India's urban population—live in informal settlements, most of which lack risk-reducing infrastructure such as drains and sewers.*
- Vienna's public housing
 - https://www.huffpost.com/entry/vienna-affordable-housing-paradise_n_5b4e0b12e4b0b15aba88c7b0
 - Social housing in Vienna has been widespread since the 1920s when the post-war municipality, led by the Social Democrats, began building high-density estates all over the city — typically six- to eight-story apartment blocks with communal green spaces. Today, anyone earning up to \$53,225 a year after taxes is eligible to apply for a subsidized apartment in Vienna in a country where the median gross annual income is [about \\$31,500](#).
 - According to the municipality, 62 percent of Vienna's citizens currently live in social housing. Here, rents are regulated and tenants' rights are strongly protected. In contrast, less than 1 percent of America's population lives in [public housing](#), which is limited to low-income families, the elderly and people with disabilities.
 - While Vienna may be an example of how to do public housing better, Austria has not been immune to fears about an influx of refugees benefiting from government assistance in recent years. The country elected a [right-wing coalition government](#) in December, and rhetoric about immigrants putting pressure on public resources has grown even in its cosmopolitan capital city.
 - “There is a still a strong idea here that public housing is something for everybody,” says Andreas Rumpfhuber, a Viennese architect. “But we have similar problems to other countries. We have right-wing populists talking about

whether refugees deserve public housing. So there are still dangers ahead for the [Vienna] model.”

- <https://www.pri.org/stories/2015-10-26/why-rich-people-austria-want-live-housing-projects>
- OECD Social Housing as Share of All Housing (Austria #2 at 26%): <https://www1.compareyourcountry.org/housing/en/3/all/default> [Compare to US % of housing that is social: <https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/americas-public-housing-program-faces-uncertain-future>]

Most public housing in the US is at least 40 years old and needs major capital repairs like new windows, plumbing, roofs, and heating systems to keep it operational. Many years of funding cuts, poor management, and weak oversight from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) have left many housing authorities to face the hard reality that they may not be able to keep their buildings open. HUD secretary Ben Carson stated in [an op-ed in the Washington Post this past Sunday](#) that “HUD’s budget cannot keep pace with the growing capital needs of public housing.”

The New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA), the nation’s largest housing authority, is the most extreme example of how the public housing crisis is endangering the families who depend on public housing. [The agency faces a \\$25 billion capital backlog](#) and has a severe management crisis. This past winter, [80 percent of its 320,000 residents experienced at least 24 hours without working heat](#), and the agency admitted that lack of resources led it to cover up problems like leaking pipes and mold instead of repairing them.

[Most alarming, children in NYCHA units were exposed to lead](#). Instead of protecting them from being poisoned, the agency appears to have disregarded the test results.

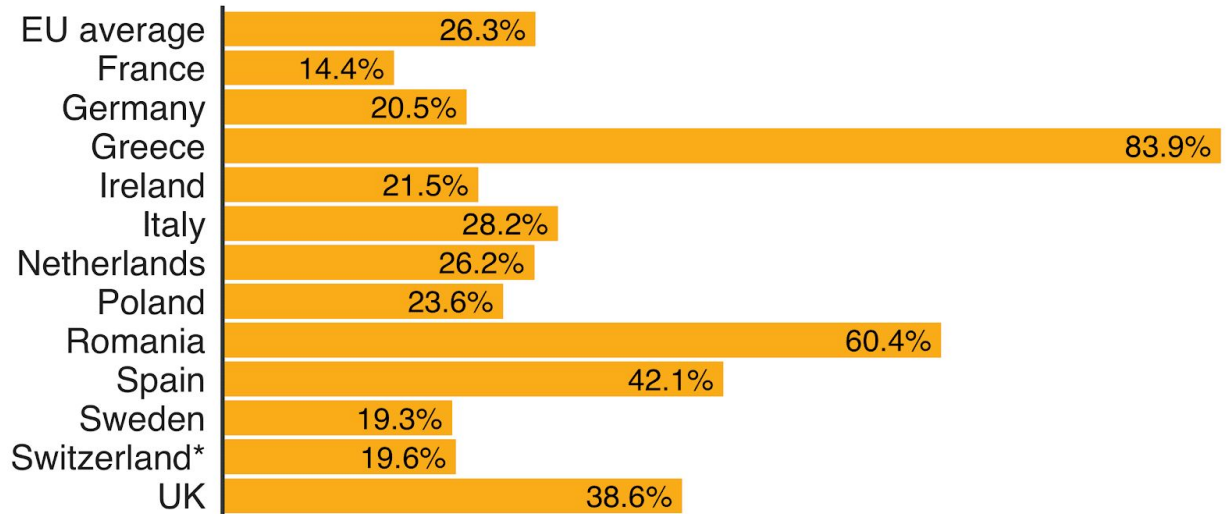
- Barcelona Housing Expropriation

- Spain’s court has partially lifted a suspension of a 2016 law that was being used by Barcelona to seize unused homes for social housing, albeit on a small scale. The city government recently moved to take 5 of the more than 2000 vacant homes in Catalonia for a temporary period of social housing use for a 4 to 10 year period. All 5 homes were owned by financial institutions, not individuals. Other owners of vacant homes will be fined for extended vacancies or given written warnings urging them to find a productive use for the homes. https://www.barcelona.cat/infobarcelona/en/expropriation-and-social-use-of-empty-bank-owned-flats-to-resume_640261.html
- In May 2019, protesters moved furniture and beds into the streets of Barcelona to protest the housing crisis, demanding “the immediate expropriation of all houses owned by banks and real estate funds, the 50 percent reduction of rental prices, and a stop to all evictions in the city” <https://www.presstv.com/Detail/2019/05/12/595724/Barcelona-Protests-Housing-Crisis>

- The mayor struggled in the recent elections but was re-elected by a left and center left city council coalition.
<https://www.commondreams.org/views/2019/06/17/barcelona-being-fearless-city-mayor-means-letting-people-decide> *Led by former housing activist Ada Colau, who was elected Mayor in May 2015, Barcelona’s government has been in the hands of a movement that had become a political party—Barcelona en Comú. They won office on a pledge to “develop the city as a commons,” meaning a place for people, not a profit center for speculators and extractive corporations. In office, Colau halted new hotels, stopped thousands of foreclosures, supported worker owned cooperatives, and formed the state’s largest publicly-owned utility. They also encouraged a free, neutral, cooperatively owned broadband network called Guifi.net that offers low price WiFi and a prize-winning alternative to the telecom giants.*
- Spain as a whole just enacted a national rent rise cap tied to inflation which will last 5 years for ordinary landlords but last 7 years for big Institutional investment speculators in hopes of pushing them to sell and leave the market
<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2019-06-19/spain-is-latest-battleground-in-global-affordable-housing-fight>
- Massachusetts: State Rep. Mike Connolly (Boston DSA-Cambridge/Somerville, former Occupy Boston) - Housing for All legislative package: An Act enabling local options for Tenant Protections; An Act requiring zoning for multifamily housing near transit; An Act facilitating local approval of Inclusionary Zoning; An Act financing an Emergency Supplemental Affordable Housing Bond; An Act facilitating Housing For All [housing-first homelessness response]; An Act enabling a local option for a tax on vacant units in large residential buildings
https://www.repmikeconnolly.org/connolly_introduces_housing_for_all_agenda
 - Historical parallels:
<http://arsenalfordemocracy.com/2015/09/28/the-russian-revolution-the-1918-massachusetts-convention/>
- Berlin Rent Control Strengthened to a Freeze
 - “Berlin backs five-year rent freeze amid housing pressure”
<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-48677393> [graphic next page]

How much of a burden are housing costs to tenants renting at market price?

Percentage of tenants overburdened by housing costs, 2017



Note: Switzerland is not a member of the European Union. Also, the overburden rate is the percentage where housing costs are greater than 40% of disposable income

- Source: Eurostat