



Development Process and Land Strategies for Housing Affordability in Metropolitan Regions

Eurométropole of Strasbourg
20-21 June 2024



METREX SAH EG
Strasbourg Workshop



Introduction

This workshop aimed to ground the theoretical approaches used as analytical frameworks in the development process and, in particular, Anthony Giddens' structure and agency methods.

The workshop included several organisations and civil servants from the Metropolitan Region of Strasbourg, using two topics as case studies: 1) the implementation of the Housing First approach and 2) the land management policies and strategies currently employed by Strasbourg. Before the workshop, participants received an online presentation as well as reading material on structure and agency and the models of the development process as understood by Patsy Healey.

Also, before the workshops, relevant participants were asked to submit material regarding housing and land policies that could inform the conversation, not only as pre-reading material for the organizing team but also for international guests. During the workshop itself, the delivery team organises the session following a series of activities, including

the mapping of actors and institutions relevant to each case study (1 and 2) and designing a semi-structured questionnaire to guide conversations and encourage cross-organizational conversations as well as self-reflective thinking.

By bringing together both local and international experts on housing policy and land management strategies, the 2-day workshop in the Eurométropole of Strasbourg was intended as an executive training workshop using applied learning techniques that are based on current theories and exemplar practices specifically selected for the event. In addition, the grounding of structure and agency theories by empirically operationalizing it in a context familiar to participants, facilitated the learning process whilst providing a new tool to analyse local development processes, their institutions, and the agency of actors involved.

By engaging housing and land organisations involved in policy and management in Strasbourg, the workshops reinforced current integrated approaches and multi-actor exchange while offering

the **opportunity to raise questions and openly uncover opportunities and hurdles**, as well as finding ways of building resilience to their **impact on housing affordability at the metropolitan level**.

June 2024

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Day 1: Housing First

The first day of the workshops presented a multifaceted examination of housing issues and solutions (from policy, to social and environmental), combining practical experiences from Strasbourg with structure and agency frameworks applied to local urban development and housing markets.

The workshop opened with an in-depth overview of housing challenges and solutions in Strasbourg, France, with a particular focus on the implementation of the **Housing First approach** to address homelessness.

Key statistics about Strasbourg's housing context were presented. Participants learnt that over the past few decades, the metropole has experienced significant population growth, with around 512,000 inhabitants and 240,000 households.

This growth has led to increased pressure on the real estate market, with rising housing prices outpacing income growth. Approximately 30,000 households are on a social housing waiting list, and only one unit is allocated for every five applicants.

The situation is particularly dire for the poorest residents and implementing the **Housing First initiative** and imperative but not without challenges due to high demand.

Housing First is an approach that emerged in the 1990s in New York and it is designed to provide immediate, permanent housing to homeless individuals, particularly those with severe mental illnesses, substance abuse issues, or poor physical health. The core principle is that housing is a human right and should be provided first, before addressing other issues.

The Housing First model differs from traditional "staircase" or linear housing service approaches, which require homeless individuals to comply with strict pre-set standards (such as treatment for alcohol or drug addictions) before being deemed "house-ready."

Housing First flipped this conceptualization and offers first a house and then works on addictions or other social problems. It has shown to be more effective and potentially more cost-efficient, especially for those with complex needs. In Strasbourg, the Housing

First strategy focuses on five main goals:

- 1. Housing mobilization**, i.e. full use of available stock, including both private and public housing
- 2. Social care**, with three types of services tailored to different client's needs
- 3. Data analysis** delivered via a bespoke homeless observatory
- 4. Financial resources** provided by the programme to prevent eviction and give support to clients
- 5. Training and change management** to transition from the classical staircase system to the Housing First model

The implementation of Housing First in Strasbourg involves key partnerships with various stakeholders, including the state government, landlords, social organizations, and agencies like L'Agence d'urbanisme de Strasbourg Rhin Supérieur (ADEUS, see list of workshop participants in Appendix 1). The approach also emphasizes the importance of training, learning, and innovation.

The models draw on Patsy Healey's work on urban planning systems. Building on her findings, Claudia Murray argues that combining these models, particularly those focused on structure and agency, offers a more nuanced understanding of how housing

markets function and how initiatives like Housing First are implemented. Participants in the Strasbourg session were then involved in mapping actors and consider their agency (or power to operationalize the Housing First approach) within the

wider structural context of housing policies, regulatory context and culture of Strasbourg.

Participants came from various backgrounds, including urban planners, housing experts, and policymakers.

Mapping the actors involved

The working session included the co-development with participants of a graphic representation of the operationalization of the Housing First initiative in Strasbourg (see Graphic 1). The process of mapping it helped participants to visualize the various actors and institutions involved within the wider

context of housing and homelessness policies. The resulting graphic effectively showed the various structures and agents involved in the Housing First program, providing a clearer picture of how the initiative functions within the local context, and enabled the participants to develop a reflexive

discussion to evaluate the operationalisation of the Housing First approach.

As seen in Graphic 1, key players included state agencies such as the DDETS (Direction Départementale de l'Emploi, du Travail et des Solidarités) and DDT (Direction Départementale des Territoires), which handle social and housing issues, respectively. The Eurométropole de Strasbourg, the local government body, plays a crucial role in implementing housing policies and managing funds. Social landlords, developers, and construction companies are also significant actors in the housing sector.

A central institution in the housing ecosystem is the SIAO (Service Intégré de l'Accueil et de l'Orientation), which acts as an intermediary between those seeking housing and available housing options. The SIAO is relatively new and is still finding its place within the existing structure, but it's expected to become increasingly important in the coming years.



Graphic 1

Workshop discussion results: Challenges and opportunities

The discussion among the participants highlighted the challenges emerging in implementing Housing First policies in Strasbourg. While there have been some successes, with about 200 people housed through the program, this represents only a small fraction of the estimated 5,000 people in need. The main obstacle identified was the lack of affordable housing supply, which was attributed to structural factors of the local land market (i.e. limited availability of development land, which is pushing up values) as well as broader inflationary pressures, which are increasing construction costs.

The discussants also raised concerns regarding the availability of data on homelessness. **Although an observatory was established for this purpose**, it faced resistance from the State, which was hesitant to provide funding. Nevertheless, the observatory continues to operate and is now being considered as **a model for replication in other areas of France**.

This situation can be interpreted through the lens of structure and agency. Structurally, the resistance from the State reflects institutional constraints and power dynamics that limit the flow of resources and information, thereby shaping the broader environment in

which homelessness policy is developed. These structural barriers (such as funding priorities, bureaucratic inertia, and political will) can hinder innovation and data transparency. However, the continued operation of the observatory despite these obstacles highlights the role of agency. The individuals and organizations behind the observatory in Strasbourg exercised agency by pushing forward with their mission, demonstrating resilience and strategic action within a constrained system. Their efforts not only sustained the initiative but also positioned it as a potential model for other regions, illustrating how agency can challenge and reshape structural limitations over time.

Furthermore, participants also pointed out that while the state mandates the implementation of Housing First policies, it continues to fund emergency shelters and other traditional approaches. This creates a parallel system where the new Housing First approach coexists with the older “staircase” model of addressing homelessness.

This dual-track approach can also be examined through the lens of structure and agency. Structurally, the continued funding of emergency shelters reflects entrenched institutional practices and policy legacies that are slow to adapt, even in the face of new

mandates. These structures create inertia, reinforcing the older ‘staircase’ model and limiting the full integration of Housing First principles. At the same time, agency is evident in the efforts of Strasbourg local actors who are working to implement Housing First despite these contradictions. For example, the Housing First coordinator in Strasbourg is actively working to build a community of practice with counterparts in other cities, aiming to enhance local autonomy in implementing the program.

This proactive networking reflects a strategic effort to share knowledge, strengthen implementation capacity, and reduce dependence on top-down directives. At the same time, the presence of political support within the Eurométropole provides a favourable structural backdrop, enabling the coordinator to pursue these goals with institutional backing.

This interplay between individual initiative and supportive governance structures illustrates how agency can be amplified when aligned with enabling conditions.

Culture and local norms can also be understood as structural conditions that shape and sometimes constrain agency. In Strasbourg, participants noted a lack of public support for the Housing First initiative, with many residents opposing the development of social housing or accommodations for homeless individuals in their neighborhoods.

This 'Not In My Backyard' (NIMBY) sentiment reflects deep-seated cultural attitudes and social stigmas that act as structural barriers to inclusive housing policies. There is also a perception that the city is "always giving" to certain populations, which has led to resistance from some other residents.

Even when the local government has access to land, such as former military-owned sites, these cultural constraints, combined with political pressures, limit their ability to move forward with Housing First developments.

However, agency is still present in the actions of local officials and advocates who attempt to navigate these cultural and political landscapes. For example, Strasbourg's Housing First team reported that they

are seeking innovative ways to expand housing options, particularly through efforts to engage private landlords. One key initiative is the creation of the 'Facile' platform, designed to encourage private property owners to make their homes available for social housing. This reflects a strategic response to structural limitations in the public housing supply, as the team works to diversify housing sources and build partnerships beyond traditional channels.

Their proactive approach illustrates how local actors can creatively navigate structural constraints to advance the goals of Housing First.

The team also noted the importance of collecting data as evidence for the success of Housing First. Various indicators are used, including the number of private housing units mobilized and the number of people receiving social support.

A randomized study showed an 80% satisfaction rate among participants in the program, which is seen as a positive outcome.

While local officials and advocates in Strasbourg are actively working to engage communities, reframe narratives around homelessness, and promote inclusive urban planning, they find shifting public attitudes to be one of the most persistent and difficult challenges.

Cultural norms and deeply rooted stigmas around homelessness act as powerful structural barriers, often reinforcing resistance to initiatives like Housing First.

Despite their agency and commitment, these actors are frequently met with opposition that limits the pace and scope of change.

This highlights the complex interplay between structure and agency, where even determined efforts can struggle to overcome entrenched societal attitudes.

Table 1: summary of challenges and opportunities

Theme	Challenges	Opportunities
Housing Market Constraints	Severe shortage of affordable housing units High land prices and increasing construction costs Limited availability of development land	Exploring innovative mechanisms like engaging private landlords through platforms such as “Facile” Seeking alternative housing supply channels outside of traditional public sector provision
Data and Information Systems	Difficulties in gathering and sharing data about homelessness. State resistance to funding the local homelessness observatory	Local observatory continues to operate despite resistance Observatory considered a potential model for replication in other French regions
Policy and Institutional Dualism	Coexistence of Housing First and traditional “staircase” models. Continued State funding for emergency shelters, creating parallel systems.	Local Housing First coordinator fostering a community of practice. Institutional support from the Eurométropole enhances local autonomy and implementation capacity.
Governance and Funding Structures	Bureaucratic inertia and lack of policy alignment at State level. Structural funding priorities that inhibit innovation and adaptation	Local strategic action and networking to strengthen local capacities. Leverage of institutional backing to navigate funding and policy landscapes
Public Opinion and Social Norms	Public opposition to social housing in neighborhoods (NIMBYism). Cultural stigmas against homelessness. Perceptions of disproportionate support for certain populations	Efforts to reframe homelessness narratives. Engagement with communities to promote inclusive urban planning
Access to Land for Housing	Difficulty in securing suitable land, even when public or military-owned sites are available Political and cultural constraints limit use of such land	Proactive efforts by local officials to overcome barriers Exploration of underused land and non-traditional housing partnerships
Monitoring and Evidence Building	Need for robust metrics to prove effectiveness of Housing First	Use of indicators such as number of private units mobilized and social support cases Positive results from randomized study (80% satisfaction rate) used to justify programme continuation and expansion





Lessons learnt: Implementing reflexivity

This final part of the workshop was designed to encourage participants to reflect on their experiences with implementing Housing First and to share insights that could benefit other metropolitan authorities considering similar approaches.

As the discussion progressed, participants candidly explored the practical challenges they've faced, particularly the tension between the need for immediate, stable housing solutions and operating within systems traditionally geared toward gradual, conditional support. While they acknowledged some notable successes, they were equally open about the difficulties that remain. Importantly, they found the process of mapping the system implemented in the workshop (identifying actors, relationships, and bottlenecks), not only illuminating but also empowering.

This reflective exercise helped them better understand the complexity of their local context and identify areas where targeted action could lead to meaningful change. One participant described Housing First as a 'revolution' in housing policy, marking a decisive break from the traditional 'staircase' model of addressing homelessness. This characterization reflects not only the conceptual shift but also the practical challenge of implementing a model

that disrupts long-standing institutional norms and expectations. Participants acknowledged that embracing such a transformative approach requires more than policy change; it demands a deliberate effort to challenge and reshape existing structures. This includes questioning entrenched practices, reallocating resources, and fostering new forms of collaboration across sectors. For other metropolitan authorities, this highlights a critical lesson: implementing revolutionary policies like Housing First involves not just adopting a new model but actively confronting the structural inertia that can resist change."

In this context, the group emphasized the importance of developing a clear and compelling narrative around Housing First. While the model is complex, participants agreed that crafting accessible stories and explanations is essential for building public understanding and stakeholder support. Celebrating small successes and incremental progress, even when the overall numbers remain modest, was seen as a powerful way to sustain momentum and legitimacy.

This reflexive insight offers a valuable lesson: storytelling is not just a communication tool, but a strategic form of agency that can help overcome

structural resistance and foster broader acceptance of innovative housing solutions. Participants also reflected on the broader structural challenges that shape the implementation of Housing First, many of which were highlighted earlier in the workshop.

These include land scarcity, rising poverty, and the growing impact of climate change on housing systems. Importantly, participants recognized that these issues are not unique to Strasbourg; they are shared across cities and countries, pointing to the need for trans-local solidarity and shared learning.

There was a strong sense that housing policy must increasingly integrate ecological and social justice considerations, even though these values often clash with prevailing economic and political trends.

In this context, participants proposed creating opportunities for peer learning through site visits to cities where Housing First has been successfully implemented. This was seen as a powerful way to challenge persistent stereotypes about homelessness and to demonstrate the viability of the model in practice.

Such exchanges were framed as both a learning tool and a strategic form of agency, helping local actors build

confidence, gather practical insights, and strengthen their capacity to advocate for change within their own structural constraints.

For other metropolitan regions, this highlights the importance of fostering cross-city dialogue and experiential learning as part of a broader strategy for embedding Housing First principles.

Participants also took time to reflect on the workshop itself, expressing appreciation for the opportunity to step back and examine their work from a fresh perspective. Engaging with experts from other countries proved particularly valuable, as the external questions and insights helped surface blind spots and prompted reconsideration of certain practices within their own systems. This reflexive moment reinforced the importance of creating spaces for critical dialogue and peer exchange, where local actors can challenge assumptions and refine their approaches. For other metropolitan regions, this highlights the value of structured reflection and international collaboration, not only as a source of technical knowledge, but as a catalyst for deepening local agency and improving implementation strategies.

The conversation concluded with a strong sense of momentum and commitment to future collaboration. There

was a clear eagerness to deepen their understanding and broaden the coalition of stakeholders involved in shaping and refining Housing First policies. Throughout the discussion, a dual sense of challenge and optimism emerged. Participants were candid about the structural and cultural barriers they face yet remained deeply committed to Housing First as an innovative and potentially transformative approach to addressing homelessness.

Their reflections underscored the importance of continuous learning, adaptability, and collaboration, not only within their own city but across metropolitan regions. For others embarking on similar journeys, this experience offers a valuable takeaway: fostering spaces for critical reflection, peer exchange, and shared experimentation is essential for sustaining agency and driving systemic change.

Day 2

Land, Law, and the Limits of Agency in Urban Development

The second day of the Strasbourg workshop focused on the structural dimensions of land policy and urban development, and how local actors exercise agency within these constraints.

The conversation opened with a historical overview of Strasbourg's land strategies over the past two decades delivered by the local authority. Participants reflected on the city's shift from reactive development to a more proactive approach, particularly in acquiring and managing land within already urbanized areas.

This strategic pivot illustrates how local governments can assert agency by reshaping their role in land governance, even within the limits of national frameworks and market pressures.

A central structural constraint discussed was the French **ZAN law (Zéro Artificialisation Nette)** which mandates a 50% reduction in land consumption by 2030 and zero net land take by 2050. While the law reflects a broader ecological imperative, participants acknowledged the tension it creates for urban development, particularly in balancing environmental goals with the urgent need for affordable housing. This tension exemplifies how structural reforms, even when well-intentioned, can produce

new dilemmas for local actors. Yet, participants also saw opportunities: by rethinking density, land reuse, and urban form, cities like Strasbourg can exercise agency in shaping more sustainable development pathways.

The discussion then turned to the evolving role of stakeholders in urban projects. Strasbourg has encouraged private developers and social housing providers to take on greater responsibility for community engagement and project promotion, roles traditionally held by the city.

This shift reflects a redistribution of agency, where the municipality steps back to allow other actors to step forward. While this model has begun to influence practices across Alsace, participants noted that it requires careful coordination to ensure that social and environmental goals are not sidelined by market-driven interests.

Community resistance, particularly to social housing, emerged as a recurring theme. Participants identified **NIMBYism** as a significant structural barrier, often rooted in cultural attitudes and fears about change. However, they also shared strategies for navigating this resistance, such as highlighting the benefits of new developments (e.g., improved

energy performance, added services) and fostering early dialogue with residents. These efforts demonstrate how local actors can exercise agency by reframing narratives and building trust, even in the face of entrenched opposition.

The conversation also explored the structural mechanics of land value capture and taxation. Participants compared the centralized French system with more localized models in countries like the Netherlands and the UK. While France's approach offers stability, it can limit local flexibility and

Note

The Climate and Resilience Act of August 22, 2021, set the objective of achieving "Zero net land artificialization" (ZAN) by 2050, with an intermediate objective of halving ENAF consumption over the next ten years (2021-2031). This progressive trajectory must be reflected territorially in planning and urban development documents
Link: <https://www.ecologie.gouv.fr/presse/communiqu%C3%A9-presse-zero-artificialisation-nette-publication-decrets-dapplication>

responsiveness. A unique feature of the French system, the **versement mobilité**, a payroll tax used to fund public transport, was highlighted as a powerful tool for financing infrastructure.

This example illustrates how structural instruments, when well-designed, can empower cities to pursue integrated urban development.

Several persistent challenges were identified, particularly around the provision of social housing:

1. **High land prices**, especially on brownfield sites, which make affordable housing financially unviable.
2. **Municipal resistance**, with some localities opting to pay fines rather than meet social housing quotas.
3. **Unequal distribution of social housing**, placing financial and service burdens on cities like Strasbourg.
4. **Legal constraints**, such as the constitutional protection of private property, which limits the use of expropriation for public benefit.

These challenges underscore the structural limitations cities face, but also highlight the importance of creative agency, through land policy innovation, coalition-building, and strategic use of legal tools.

Participants reflected on comparative insights from other European contexts. They were particularly struck by the paradox that countries often seen as more liberal (e.g., the Netherlands) sometimes have more effective tools for land regulation and value capture than more state-oriented systems like France. This prompted a broader reflection on the need for **multi-level governance**, where local innovation is supported by enabling national and European frameworks.

Innovative models such as the **Bail Réel Solidaire**, which separates land and building ownership to maintain long-term affordability, were discussed as promising but still culturally unfamiliar in France. Participants expressed concern about the scalability of such models, especially given the reluctance of traditional financial institutions to support them. This highlighted the role of banks and lenders as structural gatekeepers, and the need for advocacy and policy reform to expand the space for experimentation.

The group also explored **participatory housing** and community-led development, sharing local experiences and acknowledging both the promise and the practical difficulties of implementing these models within the French

legal and cultural context. There was consensus that while innovation is essential, it must be balanced with more conventional approaches to meet the scale of housing need.

Public land ownership and leasehold systems were identified as key tools for maintaining long-term affordability and public benefit. Examples from Vienna and Singapore served as inspiration, showing how structural levers can be used to support inclusive urban development when aligned with strong political will and institutional capacity.

Throughout the day, participants navigated the tension between optimism about new models and realism about structural constraints. They recognized that while local agency is vital, it must be supported by broader policy shifts, particularly in areas like taxation, finance, and land regulation.

The workshop concluded with a call for multi-level policy responses that combine local experimentation with national and European support. Participants emphasized the importance of continued cross-national learning, peer exchange, and adaptation to local contexts. For other metropolitan regions, the Strasbourg experience offers a clear takeaway: transformative change in housing and land policy requires both structural awareness and strategic agency, working in tandem to build more just, sustainable, and inclusive cities.





Table 1: summary of challenges and opportunities

Theme	Challenges	Opportunities
Land Use Regulation and ZAN Law	Tension between ecological goals (ZAN) and housing demand. Restriction on land consumption limits development flexibility	Incentivize land reuse and rethink urban density Align local strategies with environmental sustainability
Land Strategy and Urban Form	High land prices in brownfield sites. Need for densification without compromising quality of life.	Strategic land acquisition in urban areas. Local governments asserting greater control in land governance.
Stakeholder Roles and Project Governance	Risk of social/environmental goals being sidelined when developers take on city roles Need for better coordination across stakeholders.	Redistribution of responsibilities encourages innovation Potential to involve more actors in achieving social goals.
Community Resistance and Cultural Attitudes	NIMBYism and entrenched cultural opposition to social housing	Use of early dialogue and narrative reframing to build support
Provision and Distribution of Social Housing	High land prices make affordable housing financially unviable. Municipalities avoiding quotas and fines instead Unequal housing burden on cities like Strasbourg.	Policy innovation and coalition-building to address housing imbalance
Legal and Constitutional Constraints	Protection of private property limits use of expropriation	Legal reform advocacy to expand public interest tools Exploration of new models to bypass property constraints
Innovative Housing Models and Finance	Financial institutions reluctant to support new ownership models Bail Réel Solidaire culturally unfamiliar and hard to scale	Advocate for lender support and policy reform Use of land/building separation to maintain affordability
Participatory and Community-led Development	Implementation complexity in legal and cultural context Difficulties balancing innovation with scale of housing need	Community empowerment and local ownership possibilities Blend participatory and conventional approaches to meet needs
Public Land Ownership and Leasehold Systems	Scarcity of available public land Challenges in managing long-term affordability through leaseholds	Use public land for inclusive development with long-term benefits Inspirations from Vienna and Singapore show viability
Multi-level Governance and Policy Alignment	Fragmented policy responsibilities across levels Limited national and EU support for local experimentation	Cross-national learning and peer exchange Integrate local innovation into national/EU frameworks

Conclusions

There's a debate about whether to focus narrowly on social housing or to consider the broader picture of housing development, including private market housing. Some argue that looking at the entire housing market might provide more comprehensive solutions.

The discussion also touches on the differences in public-private negotiations and partnerships across European countries, with the Netherlands seen as having a more established tradition of cooperation between public authorities and private developers.

Throughout the conversation, there's an emphasis on the practical, action-oriented nature of the Metrex network. The participants are keen to move beyond academic studies of governance and focus on concrete steps that metropolitan authorities can take to address housing challenges.

The group is also aware of the need to frame their research questions carefully to attract funding and produce meaningful results. They see the current phase as a "pre-research" stage, aiming to formulate key questions over the course of the year, potentially leading to more focused studies in the future.

There's recognition that while the housing crisis is a complex, multifaceted issue,

the METREX network's role is not to solve all problems but to identify key questions and challenges from a metropolitan governance perspective. This includes understanding the resources and capacities needed to implement ambitious housing policies.

Overall, the document reflects a group of professionals grappling with how to translate complex urban challenges into actionable research and policy recommendations. They are balancing the need for comprehensive understanding with the practical limitations of time, resources, and the diverse contexts of European metropolitan areas.

Appendix 1: List of participants Workshops

International experts:

. **Claudia MURRAY**: Research Fellow at the Department of Real Estate and Planning, Henley Business School, University of Reading, UK, and METREX SAH EG Coordinator

. **Theo STAUTTENER**, partner at Stadkwadraat, NL, is responsible for strategy development with specific expertise in financial management and risk management of the development process,

. **Prof. Erwin V/D KRABBEN** is Professor of Planning and Property Development in the Department of Planning at Radboud University, NL

. **José Manuel FERREIRA**, architect and urban planner, expert on EU projects, works in planning, mobility and housing policies, at Municipal and Metropolitan level since 1997. Participated and coordinated several Municipal, Metropolitan and Regional, European projects.

Participants:

Enzo DAUPHINOT, Cabinet President, Eurométropole of Strasbourg

Eric CHENDEROWSKY, Director of Urbanism and Territories at the City, Eurométropole of Strasbourg

Henk BOUWMAN, METREX

Jean-Yves NICOLLE, Eurométropole of Strasbourg

Jules BORTMANN, Homeliness Observatory, ADEUS - Urban Development and Planning Agency of Strasbourg Agglomeration

Lucie RODES, Head of Housing Department at the Urbanism and Territories Directorate, Eurométropole of Strasbourg

Marie VILLIEN, Cabinet President, Eurométropole of Strasbourg

Marie-Anne GOUJON, Eurométropole of Strasbourg

Nadia MONKACHI, ADEUS - Urban Development and Planning Agency of Strasbourg Agglomeration

Pia IMBS, President, Eurométropole of Strasbourg

Pierre LAPLANE, Managing Director, ADEUS - Urban Development and Planning Agency of Strasbourg Agglomeration

Simon BOICHOT, Communication Manager, SPL des Deux-Rives

Suzanne BROLLY, Deputy Mayor and VP, Eurométropole of Strasbourg

Syamak AGHA BABAEI, First Deputy Mayor and VP Eurométropole of Strasbourg

Virgil FOLLET, Land management department, Eurométropole of Strasbourg

Viviana RUBBO, METREX

Yann COIFFIER, Housing First Programme, Eurométropole of Strasbourg

Appendix 2: Summary of presentations

Ending Homelessness with Housing First

Yann Coiffier

Eurométropole of Strasbourg in key figures

Nadia Monkachi

Homelessness Observatory in the Eurométropole of Strasbourg

Jules Bortmann

Land tenure systems in the UK

Claudia Murray

Models of development process

Claudia Murray

Land-based finance for affordable housingInternational perspective

Prof. Erwin van der Krabben

Land use policy and third way ownership and funding

Theo Stauttner

Appendix 3: International experiences

Prof. Erwin van der Krabben: land policies and affordable housing

The workshop began with a presentation by Erwin van der Krabben on land policies and affordable housing. He emphasized that land policies serve two main goals: 1) making land available at the right place, time, and price for urban development, and 2) using increases in land value to fund public infrastructure, affordable housing, and other public goals. Van der Krabben highlighted China as an example of a country that has been very successful in capturing land value increases for urban development, though he noted this system also has some perverse incentives. He then discussed a recent OECD project on land value capture practices globally. A key insight was that experts are now preferring the term “land-based finance” over “land value capture” as it is more palatable to the private sector. However, a major challenge identified was that no country could accurately quantify how much land value increase is actually available to capture or how much is being currently captured.

The presentation then focused on a comparative study of housing policies in the UK, Germany, Sweden and the Netherlands. All these countries are facing affordable housing crises and struggling to meet ambitious targets for new housing construction. A key metric discussed was the elasticity of housing supply - how quickly housing supply responds to increases in demand and prices. The Netherlands and France were

found to have very low elasticity compared to countries like the US.

Van der Krabben shared data on new housing construction rates and policy ambitions in different countries, showing that actual construction is falling well short of policy goals in most cases. He then presented findings on the time it takes to go from an initial housing development idea to having an approved land use plan ready for construction, which averages 9-10 years in the Netherlands. This lengthy planning and approval process was identified as a major factor in the low elasticity of housing supply. The discussion then turned to the issue of building permits being granted but construction being delayed by developers, potentially for strategic reasons to benefit from further price increases. Data showed that for 50% of building permits in the Netherlands, construction starts within 2.5 years, but for many others, it can take 5-7 years or more.

Market concentration in the housing development sector was highlighted as another concern, with data showing high levels of concentration in many Dutch municipalities, potentially allowing developers to exert market power and strategically delay construction. The UK was cited as a country where the competition authority has taken action against large developers abusing market power in this way.

The presentation then covered how national governments are trying to address these housing challenges. Common diagnoses across countries included insufficient “shovel-ready” land with approved plans, complex

land ownership structures delaying development, ineffective land value capture policies, and rising construction costs. Policy responses have been similar across countries, including encouraging better use of existing land policy tools, simplifying planning procedures, providing housing subsidies, improving transparency around planning and infrastructure contributions, and increasing income from land value capture.

Van der Krabben compared housing subsidy levels across countries, finding much higher per-unit subsidies available in Germany and the UK compared to the Netherlands. He noted this relates to differences in social housing systems, with Dutch housing associations able to build social housing with less direct subsidy due to their strong financial position.

The discussion then focused on land value capture, with England cited as the only country with good data on this regard. Studies there found that about half of the land value increase from development permissions (estimated at 14 billion euros annually) is captured through various mechanisms, with the other half accruing to landowners as windfall profits. This raised questions about the appropriate balance and whether more of this increase should be captured for public benefit.

Dr Claudia Murray: land tenure systems in the UK

The presentation by Claudia Murray then shifted focus to land tenure systems in the UK. She provided an overview of the historical development of land tenure, explaining systems of tenure, freehold, and leasehold. Freehold was described as offering indefinite duration, full control (within legal limits), and hereditary rights.

Leasehold involves ownership for a fixed term, typically 99-125 up to 999 years in the UK, with ground rent often payable to the freeholder.

Claudia Murray then discussed more recent innovations like commonhold tenure for apartment buildings and Community Land Trusts (CLTs). CLTs were described as non-profit organizations that own land for community benefit, often providing affordable housing. A key feature is that when CLT homes are sold, only the building is sold, not the land, helping maintain affordability over time.

The presentation included a case study of a successful CLT development in London (St. Clement's), which combined market-rate housing, affordable housing, and CLT homes in a tenure-blind development. This was presented as a model for mixing different tenure types and maintaining affordability in high-cost urban areas.

However, Claudia also highlighted risks associated with leasehold systems, discussing a recent "leasehold scandal" in the UK where some major developers included rapidly escalating ground rents in leasehold contracts, trapping homeowners and making properties unsellable.

This illustrated the need for careful regulation and oversight of such systems.

Theo Stauttner: modernizing land use policy in the Netherlands

The discussion then moved to Theo Stauttner's presentation on modernizing land use policy in the Netherlands. He outlined three main objectives of current reform efforts: 1) making land available more quickly through faster planning and expropriation processes, 2) improving transparency and fairness in allocating public infrastructure costs, and 3) capturing more of the land value increase for public benefit.

Stauttner discussed various policy approaches being considered, including new tax mechanisms to capture value from properties benefiting from public investments without directly contributing (e.g., properties near new transit lines). He noted ongoing debates about whether such captured value should go to municipalities or the national government.

The presentation then focused on affordable housing strategies in the Netherlands. These include strict rent controls for social housing, policies to promote mid-priced rental housing, and efforts to expand affordable homeownership options. However, Stauttner noted challenges with some homeownership programs, where initial buyers can make large windfall profits when selling, undermining long-term affordability goals.

A significant portion of the presentation was dedicated to discussing innovative "third way" housing models emerging in the Netherlands, between traditional renting and owning. These include various forms of housing collectives and cooperatives, where residents have a strong sense of ownership and community involvement without necessarily having traditional legal ownership.

Stauttner provided several examples of such projects, including developments that combine housing with shared workspaces, community facilities, and innovative approaches to sustainability and urban regeneration. He emphasized that these models are not just about providing affordable housing, but also about creating vibrant communities and addressing broader societal challenges.

The presentation highlighted how these new models often struggle to secure traditional bank financing, leading to innovative funding approaches including crowdfunding and specialized funds supported by cities or the national government. Stauttner suggested that expanding support for such funding mechanisms could be an area for European-level policy intervention.

A key theme was the importance of combining "hardware" (physical housing), "software" (community and social aspects), and "orgware" (organizational and financial structures) in these new housing models. Stauttner argued that this holistic approach is crucial for creating truly sustainable and vibrant communities, not just affordable housing units.



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