



Resolution 2626 (2025)¹

Analysis and guidelines to guarantee the right to housing

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The right to adequate housing is a universal human right recognised in international human rights law, including the European Social Charter (revised) (ETS No. 163). It stems from everyone's right to an adequate standard of living and is key to the enjoyment of all economic, social and cultural rights within the international human rights framework, on a similar footing with civil and political rights. Adequate housing means the right to live somewhere in security, peace and dignity – in a home that is safe, healthy, affordable, accessible and adapted to needs, with safe drinking water and sanitation and energy facilities. Ensuring the right to housing for all is not only a legal obligation but a cornerstone of social justice and human development, and thereby of democratic stability.

2. As human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated, a violation of the right to adequate housing may affect the enjoyment of a wide range of other human rights. At the same time, the right to adequate housing may also be affected by the extent to which other human rights are guaranteed. While the right to adequate housing is central to human well-being, it remains a broken promise for more than one billion people worldwide who are not adequately housed. In Europe, over 1.3 million people were homeless in 2023, including 400 000 children, and about 19.2 million experienced severe housing precariousness.

3. Wars and armed conflicts escalate the housing problem for affected populations, as in Ukraine, where about 13% of housing has been severely damaged or destroyed. The Parliamentary Assembly notes that, in light of the deliberate mass destruction of homes in war zones – notably the catastrophic humanitarian situation in Gaza, where 92% of all residential buildings have been destroyed or damaged – the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing has called for the establishment of a new crime – domicile – at the international level.

4. The Assembly deplores the financialisation of housing, which is treated as a commodity rather than a human right and a social good. It is concerned that the lack of housing supply in many cities, rising income inequalities and unemployment, the cost-of-living crisis and high interest rates, as well as soaring rents and housing shortages caused by secondary residences and short-term rentals, are putting access to adequate housing under pressure across Europe. In this context, certain categories of the population – such as low-income and single-parent households, migrants, including refugees and internally displaced persons, Roma, the unemployed and precarious workers, persons leaving institutional care, students and young people, families and older persons – are particularly vulnerable and require special protection.

5. The Assembly underlines the obligation for member States to ensure the effective implementation of the right to housing in line with the requirements of international human rights law, notably the European Social Charter (revised) (Articles 16, 30 and 31), emphasising the prevention of homelessness and providing for holistic short-, medium- and long-term measures. It highlights the need to adapt existing and new housing to the modern requirements of sustainable development and increased resilience to the effects of climate change and natural disasters.

1. *Assembly debate* on 2 October 2025 (35th sitting) (see [Doc. 16244](#), report of the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development, rapporteur: Ms Aurora Floridia; and [Doc. 16268](#), opinion of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons, rapporteur: Mr Paul Galles). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 2 October 2025 (35th sitting).



6. The Assembly is concerned about rising income and housing inequalities in member States, while the social housing sector has been outsourced to the private sector and underfinanced in many of them. It acknowledges the pressing need to counter the financialisation of, and speculation in, housing markets, promote affordability and prevent homelessness. It calls on Council of Europe member States to:

- 6.1. treat housing as a human right, not as a commodity;
- 6.2. increase public investment in social and affordable housing, in particular at the level of local authorities;
- 6.3. adopt long-term, rights-based housing strategies focused on the prevention of homelessness. The prevention of homelessness should also be considered when designing migration and asylum policies;
- 6.4. provide legal safeguards against forced evictions and homelessness, which can be enforced in all contexts, irrespective of the residents' administrative status, as well as balanced protection for both owners and tenants;
- 6.5. remove all administrative barriers to accessing emergency shelters;
- 6.6. improve housing benefit systems, income support mechanisms and the transmission of housing between generations;
- 6.7. regulate short-term rentals and vacant properties to increase the housing supply;
- 6.8. implement stricter regulations to curb real estate speculation.

7. Recognising good practices in selected member States and cities, the Assembly highlights the effectiveness of long-term public investment, mixed-income housing, integrated social services and sustainable construction. It invites member States to:

- 7.1. introduce rent regulation in urban areas with high demand for housing and link rent increases to regional average income rather than inflation;
- 7.2. promote housing co-operatives and limited-profit housing schemes;
- 7.3. support young people's access to affordable housing through co-housing, student accommodation, targeted subsidies and intergenerational housing facilities, and support young refugees and asylum seekers in their transition to adulthood by extending access to adequate housing and support services beyond the age of 18, in line with Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)4 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on supporting young refugees in transition to adulthood;
- 7.4. ensure access to decent housing for low-income and single-parent households, migrants, including refugees, Roma, persons with disabilities, the elderly, women leaving violent relationships and persons leaving institutions;
- 7.5. provide information for tenants on housing rights and financial literacy.

8. The Assembly considers that the right to housing, viewed through the sustainability prism, blends the ecological perspective (resource saving, climate-resilient design, low environmental footprint) with social justice (protection of vulnerable population groups, non-discrimination, equal opportunities for all), public health ("One Health" approach to balance and optimise the health of people, animals and ecosystems) and economic rationale (quality growth, shared prosperity, smart investment and long-term gains). Considering that action is less costly than inaction, the Assembly urges member States to:

- 8.1. prioritise large-scale renovation of ageing housing stock, notably under the European Green Deal and the Renovation Wave initiative, where appropriate;
- 8.2. mainstream energy-efficient, climate-resilient and low-carbon housing models;
- 8.3. invest in sustainable public infrastructure and spatial planning that integrate environmental, economic and social objectives;
- 8.4. facilitate access for vulnerable households to financing for environmentally friendly housing.

9. The Assembly reminds member States of their obligations under the European Social Charter (revised) to provide adequate housing to all persons regularly residing on their territory, and at the very least to provide shelter for all others. To fulfil these obligations in practice, it urgently calls on member States to:

9.1. increase the number of available places in reception accommodation and include contingency planning, so that every person seeking asylum and every unaccompanied minor can be adequately housed;

9.2. refrain from accommodating asylum seekers and unaccompanied minors in unsuitable facilities such as (*de facto*) detention sites and military facilities;

9.3. ensure independent monitoring of reception facilities, with accessible complaint procedures, as recommended in [Resolution 2613 \(2025\)](#) “The challenges and needs of public and private actors involved in migration management”;

9.4. support refugees leaving reception centres, people leaving immigration detention centres and unaccompanied minors leaving care facilities in moving into independent housing within the local community. This support should include providing sufficient time to leave these institutional settings;

9.5. ensure that housing support services are not required to report persons in an irregular situation to immigration enforcement authorities, and that information collected to support access to adequate housing is not used for immigration control.

10. The Assembly reminds member States of their obligations under Articles 16, 30 and 31 of the European Social Charter (revised) and recommends:

10.1. accepting Articles 16, 30 and 31, and ratifying, accepting or approving the Additional Protocol to the European Social Charter Providing for a System of Collective Complaints (ETS No. 158), if they have not yet done so;

10.2. strengthening the enforcement of socio-economic rights based on the guidance of the European Committee of Social Rights (ECSR) and extending the implementation of social rights enshrined in the European Social Charter (revised) to all persons residing on their territory;

10.3. collecting disaggregated housing data to identify and address systemic inequalities.

11. The Assembly strongly supports the work of the Council of Europe Development Bank in helping member States deliver more sustainable, inclusive and affordable housing for vulnerable populations, particularly in reconstruction efforts in Ukraine and in addressing structural housing deficits in disadvantaged urban and rural areas.

12. The Assembly encourages member States to guarantee that humanitarian organisations and individuals providing shelter or aid to migrants experiencing homelessness are not criminalised or faced with administrative sanctions, including under laws to combat migrant smuggling, as recommended in [Resolution 2568 \(2024\)](#) “A shared European approach to address migrant smuggling”.

13. Finally, the Assembly invites the national parliaments of member States to:

13.1. monitor the implementation of the right to housing at national and local levels;

13.2. ensure meaningful participation of youth and vulnerable communities in housing policy design;

13.3. work towards the recognition of domicile and the establishment of it as a crime at the international level.