

## A home for everyone

### EU support for better, greener and more affordable housing

**Barbara Lemke, Urban development expert – European Investment Bank:**

Social housing helps people to live in better conditions. The housing conditions are more environmentally friendly, better accessible, and probably also at lower rents than when they have to find a flat on the private rented market.

*Housing costs around 25% of European citizens' budget*

**Barbara Lemke, Urban development expert – European Investment Bank:**

Europe is very diverse. Some countries have a lot of share; maybe one quarter or one third, of social housing out of the total housing stock, other countries have only maybe 10% or even less.

The situation is a bit different in the eastern member states: they have privatised a lot of their former social housing stock after the end of the communist era. So, typically countries in the east of the European Union have a much lower share of social housing.

Typically for social housing there are some criteria in place. Not everybody can apply for a social housing flat, so a city or region has defined who is eligible. This can be income thresholds, this can be the number of kids in the family, and also very often there are points systems. So there are criteria in place which define how or how large a flat an applicant can get.

Social inclusion is important in Europe. The EIB does not only focus on very large infrastructure projects, but also on the population in Europe.

*The European Investment Bank has invested EUR 14bn in social housing since 2000*

**Barbara Lemke, Urban development expert – European Investment Bank:**

The EIB finances investment, investment in the future, which means the creation of new buildings, the improvement on existing buildings. When we look at a potential housing project which the

promoter presents to the EIB, we focus on the social rented housing. We want to see good building quality; we want to see a sound project, which meets building standards, so that there is acceptable quality for the tenants who will move in there. Is there public transport? How can people get to work, to school? So we focus a lot on a wider perspective really, creating sustainable neighbourhoods.

We finance many projects throughout Europe, but one project that I find rather typical and representative is the city of Munich, where we financed social affordable housing. In Munich there is a lot of pressure on the housing market. It's very difficult for households with a lower income to find a flat on the market. The city is growing a lot; it's an economic hub in Germany.

We have seen there are very interesting solutions to squeeze in housing into very little available sites and plots to achieve a social mix, to integrate different households and populations in one neighbourhood.

**Felizitas Lachermeier, Tenant:**

We were extremely happy when we were accepted. I have my own room now, and so does my father. The kitchen is being built. We're making ourselves at home.

**Klaus-Michael Dengler, GEWOFAG Soziales & Nachhaltiges Wohnen:**

There was nothing here a year ago. And now, in the record time of ten months, from cutting the first sod to moving in, we have a high quality housing area, in my opinion, with 81 apartments, which are all affordable to people who are otherwise unable to find anything on Munich's housing market.

*Projects in 12 countries*

*120 000 households financed in 2016*

**Barbara Lemke, Urban development expert – European Investment Bank:**

Social housing is a very local business, and I'm always impressed by the motivation and commitment of people we meet in projects. They make a big difference. A social housing provider is very much locally grounded, in the city, in the region, and very often we meet people who are very impressive and very motivated and committed to improving the conditions of housing for low- or lower-income households in their neighbourhoods.

*Need financing for your social housing project?*

*Contact your EIB regional office*

*[www.eib.org](http://www.eib.org)*