

# EuroHealthNet – Response to the consultation on ‘Fighting housing exclusion’

April 2026

[https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/17252-Fighting-housing-exclusion\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/17252-Fighting-housing-exclusion_en)

EuroHealthNet welcomes the European Commission’s initiative to propose a Council Recommendation on fighting housing exclusion. We support this initiative as a timely and necessary step to help prevent and address homelessness, support people in precarious housing situations, and strengthen the social dimension of the European Pillar of Social Rights. Housing exclusion is one of the most severe forms of poverty and social exclusion, with major consequences for physical and mental health, wellbeing, and life expectancy.

Challenges such as housing insecurity, unaffordable housing, poor housing quality, energy poverty, overcrowding, and unhealthy living environments are increasing across Europe and disproportionately affect people in vulnerable situations, including low-income households, single parents, older people, minority groups, and children. Addressing these challenges matters because access to affordable, adequate, and healthy housing is essential for both health and social inclusion. Poor housing conditions, including damp, mould, insufficient heating or cooling, indoor and outdoor pollution, overcrowding, and structural deficiencies, are associated with respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, poor mental health, stress, and worse life outcomes. Housing policy is therefore also a public health and health equity issue.

A stronger focus on prevention is essential. This means acting earlier on housing insecurity, evictions, affordability pressures, and energy poverty, before people are pushed into homelessness. It also requires closer links between housing, health, social protection, employment, and community services.

Where homelessness does occur, housing-led approaches, including ‘Housing First’, should be central to the response. Stable housing is a precondition for improving health, accessing services, and supporting social inclusion. Such approaches are most effective when combined with integrated social and health support tailored to people’s needs.

At the same time, greater attention is needed to housing quality and the wider living environment. Affordable housing must go hand in hand with healthy, energy-efficient, and climate-resilient homes, alongside access to services, public transport, and green space. Measures to reduce energy poverty, improve building quality, and support sustainable renovation are important for reducing inequalities and promoting wellbeing.

To ensure lasting impact, the initiative should also encourage the supply of social and affordable housing through approaches that avoid segregation and foster mixed, inclusive communities. In parallel, Member States should be supported in making better use of European Union funding and existing policy tools.

EuroHealthNet therefore welcomes the initiative and calls on the European Commission to reflect the following elements in its proposal for a Council Recommendation:

- recognise and support the access to affordable, adequate, and healthy housing as essential for health and social inclusion;
- strengthen prevention, including action on housing insecurity, evictions, and energy poverty;
- promote housing-led and ‘Housing First’ approaches;
- improve housing quality, energy efficiency, and healthy living environments.

EuroHealthNet stands ready to contribute further evidence and practical examples from public health and health promotion actors across Europe, including through our European Pillar of Social Rights Flashcard Tool, designed to highlight relevant policy tools and best practices from across Europe. Our European Pillar of Social Rights Flashcard Tool, including the flashcard on Principle 19 on housing and assistance to the homeless, is available here: <https://epsr-flashcards.eurohealthnet.eu/principle-19/>



**Co-funded by  
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