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RESOLUTION

for social housing in Europe

Large European cities, January 2014

THE MAYORS OF THE EUROPEAN CITIES OF

**AMSTERDAM, BARCELONA, BERLIN, BRATISLAVA, BRUSSELS,
BUCHAREST, BUDAPEST, COPENHAGEN, DUBLIN, FRANKFURT, GRAZ,
HAMBURG, KRAKOW, LEIPZIG, LISBON, LJUBLJANA, MILAN, MUNICH,
NANTES, PARIS, PRAGUE, RIGA, ROME, TALLINN, THE HAGUE, TURIN,
VIENNA, VILNIUS, WARSAW AND ZAGREB**

PROMOTE THE PRESERVATION AND FURTHER EXPANSION OF SOCIAL AND SUSTAINABLE HOUSING IN EUROPE!

The diversity of Europe and its municipalities, cities, and regions is a great strength and one of the reasons for the special quality of the European social model. There are different approaches to achieve growth and employment in a social and ecologically sustainable way. We, in the cities, live diversity and apply innovative and integrative policies to work for the future of our citizens.

Guaranteeing affordable housing is one of the basic requirements for the development of opportunities and talent. It is the task and responsibility of social policies in municipalities, regions, and member states to guarantee high-quality, affordable housing for all.

As mayors we are aware of the importance of socially-oriented urban development. We must be able to guarantee a certain variety in the area of social, cooperative and public housing that often goes far beyond the mere provision of housing but, instead, provides important social infrastructure.

Subsidised housing must therefore be accessible for broad levels of the population also in the future. We disapprove of the approach to concentrate exclusively on low-income groups, as this would lead to social segregation. We are also aware of the importance of the housing industry, in particular of social housing policies, for the real economy as it can be a strong engine for economic growth.

The European Union and all its players should therefore respect the responsibilities of the aforementioned political levels because it is indispensable for EU member states and their regional and local authorities to independently determine the criteria for social housing in line with the principle of subsidiarity. This is the only way to react to local requirements and needs in a flexible manner. The development in some European cities has shown that a strict regulation of access criteria to social housing jeopardises the housing supply for certain population groups.

We therefore ask the European Commission to leave the definition of social housing and the decision on the type of provision to the member states and their local and regional authorities.

Here, we comply with important stakeholders such as CECODHAS Housing Europe, the federation of public, cooperative and social housing, and IUT, the international union of tenants.

We further welcome the exemption of social housing from the obligation of prior notification, adopted in the so-called “Almunia package”.

As mayors of European cities we also demand to cancel the restriction to “disadvantaged citizens or socially less advantaged groups” from the state aid package for services of general economic interest.

The signatories:

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Klaus Wowereit/Berlin

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