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Making EU funds work for **affordable housing:** lessons from Regions and Cities

INFORMATION SHEET

12 OCTOBER – 20 DECEMBER
CLOSE TO YOU 2026



Wednesday 18 November 2026
Office of the Presidency
of the Sicilian Region
12 Rue Belliard | Brussels

EUROPEAN WEEK of
Regions & Cities

Strong Regions, Strong Europe

REGIONE CAMPANIA | REGIONE ABRUZZO | verenigingen van woningcorporaties aedes | HOUSING EUROPE

Side event #EURegionsWeek Close to you

Making EU funds work for **affordable housing:** lessons from Regions and Cities

Brussels Office of the Presidency of the Sicilian Region | *12, Rue Belliard - 1040 Bruxelles, Belgium*
18 November 2026 | 9:00 am - 1:00 pm

ABSTRACT

The side event **"Making EU Funds Work for Affordable Housing: Lessons from Regions and Cities"** is set against the evolving backdrop of the **European Affordable Housing Plan**, which marks a shift from a chronic crisis towards a more coordinated European response. The initiative aims to foster a structured discussion on how different European housing models can contribute to shaping a more coherent and effective approach at EU level.

The initiative is aligned with the strategic framework of the **2026 edition of EURegionsWeek**, particularly its motto, **"Strong Regions, Strong Europe"**. It builds on the idea that the strength of territories lies not only in their ability to attract European funding, but above all in their capacity to turn these resources into tangible benefits for citizens. In this respect, **strong regions are those that demonstrate a genuine capacity to deliver**, translating funding into effective, inclusive and sustainable solutions and thereby contributing to strengthening the European Union as a whole.

By bringing together a strategic partnership comprising the **Sicilian Region**, the **Abruzzo Region** and the **Campania Region**, **Housing Europe** and **Aedes** (the Dutch Federation of Social Housing Associations), with contributions from representatives of **DG ENER** (*Housing Task Force*) and **DG REGIO** of the **European Commission**, the session aims to promote an exchange of experiences and different yet complementary housing models.

The objective is to highlight key **success factors**, identify **replicable models** and develop **operational recommendations**, drawing on the specific features and solutions developed across different geographical contexts.

BACKGROUND

In recent years, the housing affordability crisis has taken on structural dimensions across Europe, making the need for a coordinated response at EU level increasingly evident. Against this backdrop, the **European Affordable Housing Plan marks a paradigm shift**: from a chronic crisis towards a common strategy, aimed at increasing housing supply, regulating emerging phenomena such as short-term rentals, and supporting the most vulnerable groups, while strengthening the EU's role in promoting effective and sustainable solutions, in full respect of Member States' competences.

Although housing formally remains a national competence, it has progressively emerged as a **key issue on**

the European agenda. The experience of the Housing Partnership under the Urban Agenda has demonstrated how EU policies, financial instruments and regulatory frameworks have a significant impact on housing systems at local, regional and national levels.

Across Europe, housing systems are characterised by considerable diversity, reflecting different institutional traditions, governance models and market structures. At the same time, they face a number of common challenges:

- rising costs and declining housing affordability;
- reduced public investment in social and affordable housing;
- increasing pressure on urban and regional housing markets;
- growing demand across different income groups.

Against this background, the initiative ***"Making EU Funds Work for Affordable Housing: Lessons from Regions and Cities"*** is firmly embedded in the European debate, adopting a **comparative and policy-oriented approach** that uses the exchange of experiences and the comparison of different models as a basis for shaping a more structured European approach to housing.

OBJECTIVES

The *side event* is structured around **three main objectives**:

1. Comparative analysis of housing models

To analyse and compare different European housing systems, focusing on:

- governance models;
- funding mechanisms;
- regulatory frameworks;
- implementation capacity.

2. Identifying common ground and differences

To identify:

- shared principles (affordability, social inclusion and long-term investment);
- structural differences arising from national and regional contexts;
- enabling factors and barriers to policy implementation.

3. Contributing to a European approach to housing

To outline the key features of a European approach based on:

- better regulation;
- improved financing and investment conditions;
- stronger knowledge-sharing and the exchange of good practices.

The aim is to go beyond the mere presentation of projects, placing **delivery**, **impact** and **lessons learned** at the heart of the discussion. At a time when growing pressures on housing markets make it increasingly essential to ensure that available resources translate into tangible and measurable results at local level, this approach can help strengthen social and territorial cohesion.

PARTNERSHIP AND ADDED VALUE

The initiative is built around a **multi-level, multi-stakeholder European partnership**, bringing together:

- **Sicilian Region**
- **Abruzzo Region**
- **Campania Region**
- **Housing Europe**
- **Aedes**

The partnership ensures geographical balance and complementarity between different housing models. The Italian experience brings together housing policies and territorial development, while the Dutch model represents a well-established and structured system. Housing Europe, in turn, provides a European-level perspective, strengthening the link with EU policies and promoting the exchange of international experience and expertise.

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

The event will follow a **dynamic and interactive format**, structured around three main thematic areas:

1. Policy and regulatory framework

- Introduction to the **European Affordable Housing Plan**
- Links with **cohesion policy and post-2027 perspectives**
- **Key challenges** in terms of regulation, governance and administrative capacity

2. Comparative case studies

Presentation of different **housing models**:

- **Dutch model:** a well-established social housing system based on the role of housing associations
- **Abruzzo model:** collaborative governance and multi-level partnerships for the implementation of housing policies
- **Campania model:** an integrated regional strategy combining social housing, urban regeneration and the right to housing
- **Sicilian model:** regeneration of the public housing stock and integration of housing and social policies

Each case study will highlight implementation approaches, the use of EU funds, tangible impacts, challenges and solutions adopted.

3. Interactive discussion and programme development

A facilitated discussion will focus on:

- factors that enable or hinder the effective use of EU funds
- the transferability and scalability of the different models
- the role of multi-level governance
- key elements of a future European programme for housing

The session will also include an **exchange with the audience** and conclude with:

- a summary of the key messages
- identification of replicable models
- operational recommendations

EXPECTED OUTCOMES AND CONCLUSIONS

The initiative aims to deliver:

- a **comparative overview** of European housing models;
- the identification of **common key elements**;
- a set of **policy recommendations**.

The initiative seeks to make a tangible contribution to the European debate by demonstrating how strengthening **implementation capacity at regional level is essential to building a stronger, more cohesive Europe that is closer to its citizens**.

By combining comparative analysis with an operational perspective, the side event ***"Making EU Funds Work for Affordable Housing: Lessons from Regions and Cities"*** aims to move beyond the fragmentation of individual experiences and **recognise the diversity of European housing systems as a strategic asset** for developing more effective, scalable and inclusive policies.