[Press release – MEPs: Access to adequate housing should be a fundamental European right](#)

The resolution – adopted by352 votes in favour, 179 against and 152 abstentions on Thursday – states that decent housing includes access to clean and high-quality drinking water, adequate sanitation and hygiene facilities, as well as connection to sewage and water networks. The right to adequate housing is a fundamental human right that should be enshrined in national and European law, say MEPs.

Minimum mandatory requirements for habitable homes should be introduced at EU level that include healthy indoor air quality and are aligned with WHO guidelines, MEPs urge. They also call on the Commission and member states to prioritise the reduction of emissions and to boost energy efficiency through housing renovation.

Eradicating homelessness by 2030

In many EU countries, rates of homelessness have increased over the last decade due to rising housing costs and social programmes and benefits being cut and suspended. The resolution reiterates [Parliament's earlier call for an EU-wide goal to end homelessness by 2030](#). In addition, exceptional measures to prevent homelessness and protect homeless people in the COVID-19 crisis should be maintained – particularly moratoria on evictions and on disconnection from energy supplies as well as the provision of temporary housing.

Keeping housing affordable

MEPs also call on member states and regional and local authorities to put in place legal provisions to protect the rights of tenants and owner-occupiers.

Housing is considered affordable if the occupant's remaining budget is at least sufficient to cover other essential expenditure. While this threshold is currently set at 40%, more than a quarter of European tenants in commercial housing spend a higher percentage of their income on rent, with average rents constantly increasing.

Finally, MEPs point out that the expansive growth of short-term holiday rental is removing housing from the market and driving prices up, which can make living in urban and tourist centres significantly more difficult.

Quote

Rapporteur [Kim VAN SPARRENTAK](#) said: "European rules are often better at protecting profit generated by the housing market than protecting people who need a roof over their heads. We need the EU to step up its game and use all the tools available to do its part, together with the member states. The report offers concrete solutions for all levels to take action. We can solve the housing crisis if we want to, and we can end homelessness by 2030."

Background

According to [research by Eurofound](#), inadequate housing costs EU economies 195 billion EUR every year. A growing number of people living in the EU find housing difficult to afford and spend a disproportionate amount on housing. In particular, single parents, large families and young people entering the labour market find that their income is insufficient to afford market rents but too high for them to be eligible for social housing.