

HOUSING AND SOCIAL RIGHTS IN THE BARCELONA METROPOLITAN AREA

DREAM
DIAGNOSI
REFLEXIÓ
ESTRATÈGIA
ACCIONS
METROPOLITANES

DREAM COLLECTION

The DREAM collection (an acronym for the Catalan words for Diagnosis, Reflection, Strategy and Metropolitan Actions) proposes the construction of metropolitan narratives in the Barcelona metropolitan area based on a focus of resilience that implies assessing the risks to establish metropolitan strategies.

The new strategic lines of the AMB are contained, therefore, in a series of volumes that all follow a single methodology. The collection is divided into three main themes that are expressed by three different colours: economy and social rights (yellow), governance (violet) and sustainability (green). The first volume (red) provides the framework for the collection and explains the DREAM methodology applied to the other volumes. These are written by various specialists, together with the AMB's Strategic Planning Area, and each one deals with a sectoral area from diagnosis and reflection to subsequently establish a set of strategies and associated metropolitan actions.

VOLUME

This publication is the result of collaboration between the Strategic Planning Area of the AMB and the Barcelona Metropolitan Housing Observatory. It explains the impact made by access to housing on the living conditions of the population in the metropolitan sphere. The volume makes a diagnosis of the current situation in relation to access to housing in the Barcelona metropolitan area, analyses the evolution of the policies applied and establishes the bases for improving metropolitan governability in association with housing policies. Lastly, it defines the set of strategic lines that should contribute to improving housing policy in the metropolitan sphere, giving examples from the most relevant experiences elsewhere in Europe

HOUSING AND SOCIAL RIGHTS IN THE BARCELONA METROPOLITAN AREA

DREAM
DIAGNOSI
REFLEXIÓ
ESTRATÈGIA
ACCIONS
METROPOLITANES

The question of housing has been widely discussed from the perspective of social rights in the specialised literature. However, it has recently acquired greater relevance due to the impact that it is having on the living conditions of the population. In effect, the outbreak of the international financial crisis in the summer of 2007, and the economic recession that followed, led to a worsening of the population's living conditions in general, and of their residential conditions in particular. One of the most harmful consequences of from the viewpoint of the right to housing was the increase in mortgage evictions. Very soon, however, it could be confirmed that the problem of housing was also increasing in the field of rentals, a sector that in the preceding decades had gradually declined in importance in our cities, but that since then has not ceased to grow, in terms of both demand and of the focus of problems.

Recent data compiled by the Metropolitan Housing Observatory, published in *L'habitatge a la metròpoli de Barcelona el 2018* (Housing in the metropolis of Barcelona in 2018), indicate that households that rent their homes in the city of Barcelona have grown from representing 28.5% in the year 2001 to 30.1% in the year 2011 and to 35% in the year 2017. Moreover, this increase in households that rent their homes has been combined, since the year 2013, with a growing gap between the evolution of the average incomes of households and the average price of housing. Thus, in Catalonia, between the years 2013 and 2018, while household incomes increased by just 1.3%, average house rental prices, in contrast, increased by 27.7%. Furthermore, unlike access to ownership, where financing conditions can cushion this growing gap, increases in the average price in the rental field are proportionally transferred to the amount that households have to allocate to pay the cost of their housing.

In this line, various studies have shown that in Spain, in Catalonia and in the Barcelona metropolis, the cost of rental housing for household economies is among the highest in the European Union – see, for example, the study by Jordi Bosch: “La dimensión económica de la exclusión residencial: Cataluña en el contexto europeo” (The economic dimension of residential exclusion: Catalonia in the European context) published in the journal *ACE* in 2017. Thus, according to data published by the Barcelona Metroplitan Housing Observatory, approximately four out of every ten households that rent their homes in the Barcelona metropolitan area have to assign

40% or more of their incomes to pay their housing expenses. This is a problem that has an even greater impact on the population with lower incomes, which explains – as contained in the report *L'habitatge i els seus efectes en les condicions de vida de la població metropolitana de Barcelona* (Housing and its effects on the living conditions of the metropolitan population of Barcelona), published in the year 2019 by the team at the Institute for Regional and Metropolitan Studies of Barcelona – that the cost of housing almost doubles the poverty risk rate among rental tenants in the Barcelona metropolitan area.

The data noted above are just one indicative example of the impact of housing on the population's living conditions and on their social rights, which Jordi Bosch expands upon in this study, based on the axis of residential exclusion. However, one of the original aspects of this book is that it passes from the study of the problems derived from housing to the dimension of public policies and governance.

With regard to policies, the current situation is based on a deficit that greatly hinders the launching and consolidation of structural policies for housing: the residual nature of the affordable housing stock. In short, it can be noted that this housing stock should be consolidated through an increase in production, on the one hand, but also through the incorporation of stock through other mechanisms such as acquisition and transfer of use. Furthermore, a part of this stock should be assigned to rental and the part not assigned to it should have maximum guarantees for maintaining its social function in the future. It is a case, therefore, of a set of instruments and actions that, combined and with continuity, should permit a progressive increase in the stock assigned to social policies.

Any reader of these lines will most probably have already deduced the scope and nature of a housing policy of a structural nature, as well as the need to accompany all of these actions with a comprehensive vision. So, this is one of the aspects that Jordi Bosch invites us to discuss by centring the housing policies debate around the appropriateness of legal forms for implementing a planning instrument on a metropolitan scale.

However, as has often been indicated, planning instruments, and policies in general, need a political authority to manage them, and the case of housing is no exception. This is the premise that links the question of housing policies and instruments with the debate on metropolitan governance in the field of housing, the third major issue dealt with in this study. The author does this from a comparative international perspective, a field in which he has penned several publications, prominently including “Les polítiques metropolitanes d'habitatge a Europa: els casos de Londres, París, Brussel·les i Barcelona” (Metropolitan Housing Policies in Europe: the case of Lon-

don, Paris, Brussels and Barcelona), published in 2011, and more recently, “La planificació de les polítiques d’habitatge a escala metropolitana: Barcelona en el context internacional” (The planning of housing policies on a metropolitan scale: Barcelona in the international context), corresponding to issue number 61 of the journal *Papers*, published in the year 2019.

In summary, when tackling the question of housing and social rights in the Barcelona metropolitan area, this volume combines elements of analysis and diagnosis with proposals in the field of the planning and governance of housing policies from the metropolitan scale. The result is an understandable and, at the same time, thought-provoking document. Understandable because in his analysis of the current reality, the author equips himself with well contrasted data and information. And thought-provoking because he shows his readers different international experiences and realities in an invitation to reflect upon them.

Carme Trilla

President of the Barcelona Metropolitan Housing Observatory
and of the Hàbitat 3 Tercer Sector Social Foundation

CONTENTS

DIAGNOSIS	Housing, social rights and the welfare state	14
	The metropolitan dimension of housing	16
	Link between metropolitan governability and housing policies	17
	Diagnosis for the treatment of residential exclusion	18
	Urban segregation and gentrification	
	Diagnosis for a housing policy	29
	Weakness of the housing policy in the Barcelona metropolitan area	
	Impact of the crisis on housing policies	
	Implementation of new housing policy instruments	
	Lack of a metropolitan housing plan	
	Limitations of housing policy urban planning instruments in the metropolitan area	
	Diagnosis for a metropolitan governability of housing	43
	Lack of a comprehensive model of metropolitan governability in housing matters in the Barcelona metropolitan area	
	Creation of Habitatge Metròpolis Barcelona as an opportunity	
REFLECTION		50

CONTENTS

STRATEGY	Development of a metropolitan governability model better suited to housing policies	56
	Line 1. Assignment of competence for housing policy planning to the AMB	
	Line 2. Advancing towards a model of municipal cooperation in housing matters	
	Improvement of planning of housing policies in the metropolitan area	57
	Line 1. Development of a metropolitan housing plan	
	Line 2. Integration of housing policies with urban planning and the metropolitan mobility system	
METROPOLITAN ACTIONS	Development of a metropolitan governability model better suited to housing policies	62
	Action 1. Assignment of competence for housing policy planning to the AMB	
	Action 2. Advancing towards a model of municipal cooperation in housing matters	
	Improvement of planning of housing policies in the metropolitan area	64
	Action 3. Development of a metropolitan housing plan	
	Action 4. Integration of housing policies with urban planning and the metropolitan mobility system	
REFERENCES		70



DIAGNOSIS

This book has two major goals. The first is to examine the current housing situation in the Barcelona metropolitan area from three angles: residential exclusion, housing policy and metropolitan governability associated with housing policies. The second, in line with this diagnosis (summarised in fig. 1, which shows strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats), is to formulate the main strategic lines that should help improve the scope, as well as the efficacy and efficiency, of metropolitan housing policy in Barcelona, based on some of Europe's most interesting experiences which are best suited to the current situation of the Barcelona metropolis.

It should be said that the development of both of these goals is based on three prior premises: the consideration of housing as a key element of the welfare state, the recognition of the metropolitan dimension of the housing problem in cities, and the need for a model of metropolitan governability that enables the implementation of housing policies on this scale.

HOUSING, SOCIAL RIGHTS AND THE WELFARE STATE

Housing is an essential element of people's quality of life and wellbeing; a basic commodity that is indispensable for the correct personal and social development of individuals and of families. It is the shelter that protects us from the harshness of the elements; the refuge that offers us security and privacy; the place where we undertake a large part of our everyday activities, such as eating and sleeping; and the space where we articulate many of our social relationships, whether inside the home, for example, in the form of sharing it with other household members, or with the surrounding community in the form of the neighbourhood.

Furthermore, a lack of decent and adequate housing, in both physical and economic terms, limits possibilities for enjoying other basic social rights such as the right to health or to education. A vast body of scientific evidence exists showing the negative impact that inadequate living conditions exert on health, as well as on the academic performance of children and young people. This is especially true for household units living in substandard, insecure, or overcrowded housing and those suffering energy poverty, residential instability – understood as the household being forced to change dwelling frequently – or economic stress, due to the excessive expense of housing (it is generally considered that residential costs should not exceed a threshold of between 30% and 40% of household income). The most extreme cases, reflecting a lack of basic social rights due to the shortage of housing, consist of rough sleepers and homeless people, for whom the impact of this situation is devastating in all dimensions of their lives.

		STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
INTERNAL ANALYSIS	Residential Exclusion	The positive impact of economic recovery on the living conditions of a segment of households.	The consequences of the bubble: housing as a line of social fracture. The problems of access and permanence in the rental market. Urban segregation and gentrification.
	Housing policy	The implementation of metropolitan policies (social cohesion, rehabilitation, energy poverty, etc.). The availability of the Metropolitan Action Plan (PAM) with housing policy directives for the period 2016-2019. New housing policy instruments: the production of affordable housing on consolidated urban land.	The weakness of housing policy in the metropolitan area. The impact of the crisis on housing policies. The lack of a metropolitan housing plan. The lack of an urban development master plan. The limitations of housing policy urban planning instruments in the metropolitan area and the progressive depletion of free and developable land.
	Governability	The creation of Habitatge Metrópolis Barcelona. The existence of metropolitan public operators in land and housing matters (IMPSOL, Metropolitan Housing Consortium, etc.). The creation of the Barcelona Metropolitan Housing Observatory.	The absence of a comprehensive model of metropolitan governability in housing.
		OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
EXTERNAL ANALYSIS	Residential exclusion	Those relating to housing policy and governability.	The competition from temporary uses of housing, mainly of a tourist type. Consolidation of the metropolitan area as a global space for high property performance. The forecast demographic growth.
	Housing policy	The growing importance of housing in the Catalan political sphere. The territorial sectoral Housing Plan. The debate on new housing policy instruments (control of rentals, cooperative housing, etc.). The modification of the Law on urban rentals.	The structural weakness of housing policy in Catalonia. The introduction of exemptions in the duty of assigning land to subsidised housing in new developments.
	Governability	The next municipal elections. The tendency, on an international scale, for metropolitan governments to take on competences in housing on an exclusive or shared basis.	The limited capacity to reach long-term agreements between the different authorities on housing matters, as well as the transfer of competences. The lack of debate on the metropolitan governability of housing policies.

Fig. 1. Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in housing matters in the Barcelona metropolitan area. *Compiled by the author.*

Housing also plays a determinant role in the possibility of enjoying sufficient disposable income to satisfy other basic needs, in equality between men and women, and in the realisation of other social rights such as the right to an independent life or to a dignified old age.

For all these reasons the right to decent housing is, on the one hand, of a basic and universal nature as recognised by the Universal Declaration on Human Rights of 1948, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of 1966 and the majority of national constitutions. And on the other, it is considered a key pillar of the welfare state because when residential exclusion in a society reaches high levels, the efficacy of its set of social policies is severely weakened due to the inter-relationship between housing and other social rights.

However, in comparison with other public policies such as education or healthcare, those related to housing have not received the same attention from the authorities although, as we will see, their degree of development varies substantially between countries.

THE METROPOLITAN DIMENSION OF HOUSING

The process of contemporary metropolitanisation is no longer limited to the physical expansion of the metropolitan-urban phenomenon but is, above all, characterised by the growth – in number and intensity – of interrelations and interdependencies of an economic, social and cultural type that are created between all of its component elements (residents, institutions, businesses, etc.). Obviously, this integration goes beyond the administrative limits of the municipalities that constitute the metropolitan territory, to the point of configuring a hierarchised network structure with a tendency to spread across the entire territory.

Housing has been no stranger to the evolution of these metropolitan dynamics. In fact, in metropolitan environments, housing problems reveal certain very pronounced common features. It is in these major urban centres where house prices reach the highest values, creating severe obstacles to economic accessibility across a broad segment of demand, and where shortages of affordable housing are more numerous. This is not due only to the high prices but also to the dynamics of metropolitan demographics and the difficulties of generating social housing in the city that is already consolidated, and where urban segregation processes are greater.

Therefore, in keeping with these metropolitan residential dynamics, it is also from this same scale that the problem of housing in these territories must be tackled if we truly want to provide an effective response to the serious residential exclusion problems mentioned.

LINK BETWEEN METROPOLITAN GOVERNABILITY AND HOUSING POLICIES

To be able to tackle the housing problem in these urban environments correctly, a metropolitan governability model is needed that enables coordination of all the levels of government involved in this field. However, unlike in other fields such as transport, territory zoning, or the environment, competences in housing matters have not been taken on board in a generalised way by metropolitan governments. According to studies by Tomàs (2009), only seven (32%) of 22 metropolitan areas analysed in Europe and North America had competences in housing matters. This situation represents, in many cases, an unscalable barrier to planning and implementing housing policies on a metropolitan scale. As pointed out by Knieling (2014: 39):

“As for housing and residential developments, regional cooperation is of capital importance for securing sufficient solutions. However, in many metropolitan regions, local interests and the competences of the municipalities lead to deficits in governance.” [Translation by the author.]

In the same vein, Gómez-Álvarez *et al.* (2017: 113) point out that:

“In major urban agglomerations, the city as a system is fragmented, and the metropolitan area, formed by many actors. Sectoral views prevail over focuses on comprehensive development. Water management and drainage, transport policies, waste management, and housing are just some of examples of this institutional fragmentation in urban development.” [Translation by the author.]

Furthermore, in recent years a change of tendency is being observed in this sense. There are increasing numbers of metropolitan governments that, either exclusively or in coordination with other levels of government, are working to make effective the right to decent housing in their territories. By way of example, the following metropolitan governments in Europe, North America and Oceania are currently exercising functions in housing matters: the regional government of New South Wales in Sydney (Greater Sydney Commission, 2018), the government of the State of Victoria in Melbourne metropolitan area (Victoria State Government, 2017), the city of Toronto (Toronto City Council, 2009), the Metropolitan Community of Montreal (Communauté Métropolitaine de Montréal, CMM) (Andersson, 2015: 74; OECD, 2016: 146), the regional district of Greater Vancouver (Greater Vancouver Regional District, GVRD) (Andersson, 2015: 75; Metro Vancouver, 2016), the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG), (Andersson, 2015: 77), the Metropolitan Authority of Minneapolis-St. Paul (Andersson, 2015: 75; OECD, 2016: 151), the metropolitan government of Oregon, called Metro (Gómez-Álvarez, *et al.*, 2017: 314-322), the Brussels-Capital Region (Bosch, 2011), the Greater Paris Metropolis (Métropole du Grand Paris, 2018), the Metropolis of Lyon (OECD, 2016: 167), the Metropolis of Aix-Marseille-Provence (in accordance with Law no. 2014-58, of 27 January 2014 and subsequent modifications), the Greater London Authority

(GLA, 2010, 2011, 2014, 2018a), the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (Cox, 2014: 24), the Leeds City Region together with the Homes and Communities Agency (Cox, 2014: 24), the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA, 2016; GMP and HC, 2018), the Metropolitan Region of Amsterdam (MRA, 2016), and the Hanover Region (Keilmann-Gondalekar *et al.*, 2018).

DIAGNOSIS FOR THE TREATMENT OF RESIDENTIAL EXCLUSION

Consequences of the property bubble: housing as a line of social fracture

The bursting of the property bubble which took place in late 2007 and early 2008, and the subsequent economic crisis, exerted a strong impact on the population's economic and social conditions. From 2008 onwards, unemployment started growing in both the whole of Catalonia and in the Barcelona metropolitan area, reaching maximum rates in the year 2013.

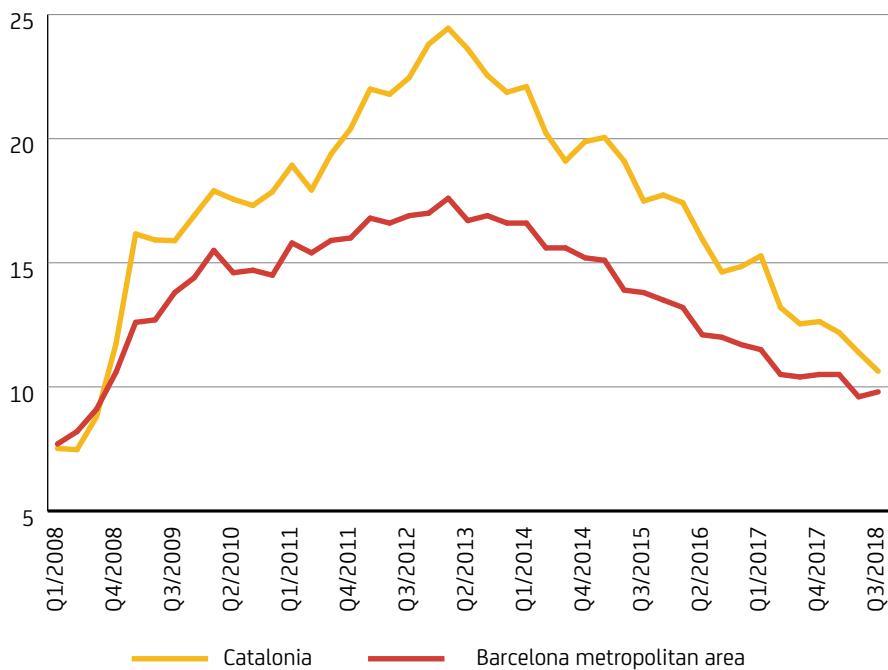
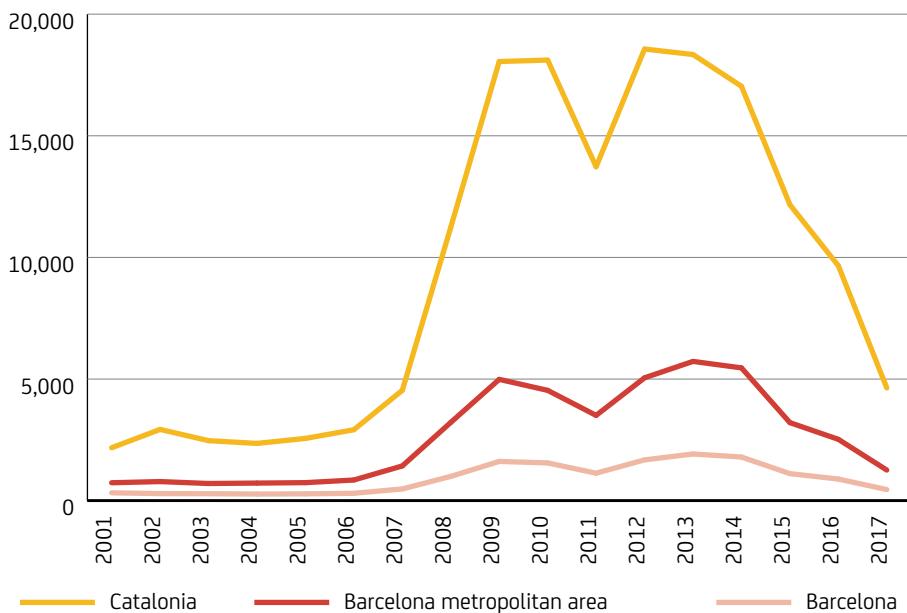


Fig. 2. Unemployment rate. Catalonia and the Barcelona metropolitan area, 2008-2018. Compiled by the author based on the Active Population Survey, INE.

This fast and intensive destruction of jobs caused exponential growth in the number of households facing difficulties in paying the cost of their housing, above all among those who had gone into property ownership at the high point of the residential market, i.e., in the years prior to the outbreak of the crisis. The most dramatic expression of this residential crisis has been the pronounced increase in mortgage executions (fig. 3) and repossession (fig. 4).

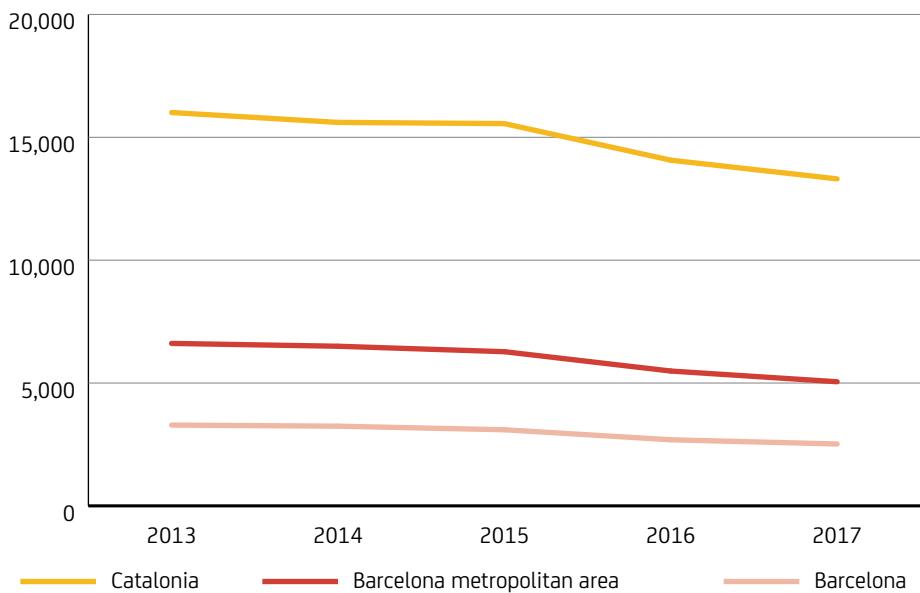


Note: due to the lack of correspondence between the boundaries of the legal jurisdictions and of municipalities in the metropolitan area, these results include the data of Vallirana and Rubí, even though they do not form part of the AMB, and do not include Tiana because it belongs to the legal jurisdiction of Mataró.

Fig. 3. Mortgage executions. Catalonia, Barcelona metropolitan area and Barcelona, 2001-2017.

Compiled by the author based on data from the General Council of the Judiciary.

From 2014 onwards, with the progressive reduction in unemployment, the economic capacity of households gradually recovered and, logically, the percentage of those that had to allocate more than 40% of their incomes to pay for housing progressively declined. For example, while in 2011 some 16% of households in the Barcelona metropolitan area were in this situation of economic overburden due to housing, five years later, in 2016, the percentage had fallen to 10.4%. And in the city of Barcelona, a similar situation occurred. Over the same period of time, the rate of overburden fell from 17.3% of households to 13.4%. This improvement of family economies also led to a reduction in mortgage executions and repossession (fig. 3 and 4).



Note: due to the lack of correspondence between the limits of the legal jurisdictions and of municipalities in the metropolitan area, these results include the data of Vallirana and Rubí, despite their not forming part of the AMB, and do not include Tiana because it belongs to the legal jurisdiction of Mataró.

Fig. 4. Repossessions. Catalonia, Barcelona metropolitan area and Barcelona, 2013-2017. Compiled by the author based on data from the General Council of the Judiciary and IDESCAT.

However, despite the behaviour of some indicators of residential exclusion that are close to levels prior to the start of the crisis, it is true that the situation is not, by a long way, the same as it was previously. During the period 2007-2017 there were over 146,000 mortgage executions in Catalonia, of which 41,000 were in the Barcelona metropolitan area. And during the five-year period between 2013 and 2017 (there are no detailed data available prior to 2013) over 74,000 Catalan households have suffered repossession, with close to 30,000 in the metropolitan area.

The statistics from the Register of Applicants for Officially Subsidised Housing also reflect the growth in the number of households needing government help in order to access a dwelling (fig. 5). Between the years 2011 and 2018, the number of people included in this register in Catalonia practically doubled, reaching 120,000 applicants, close to 60% of whom live in the Barcelona metropolitan area and 32% in the city of Barcelona, percentages much higher than their demographic weight across the whole of Catalonia.

In short, it is evident that the political, economic and social policy of the last decade has unfortunately emphasised the role of housing as a factor in social exclusion, in a particular-

ly serious way in the Barcelona metropolitan area, as well as in inequality, given the enormous difference in efforts that must be made by owner-occupier households, without payments pending and with mortgage loans close to completion, and those made by people who have to pay current market rental prices or have substantial mortgage burdens.

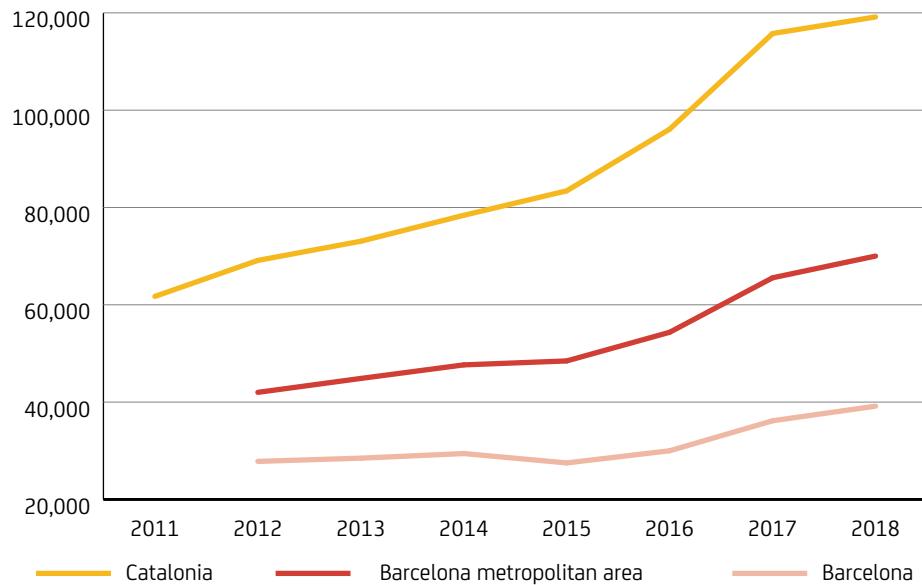


Fig. 5. People included in the Register of Applicants for Subsidised Housing. Catalonia, Barcelona metropolitan area and Barcelona, 2 October 2018. Compiled by the author based on data from the Secretariat of Urban Habitat and Territory.

Problems of access and permanence in housing: rental market crisis

Today, one of the most vulnerable groups in terms of residential exclusion in the Barcelona metropolis is formed by households that are renting their homes. The main reasons behind this circumstance are four: an increase in demand for rental housing in recent years; a shortage of availability of rental housing; an increase in the percentage of households at risk of social exclusion in this segment of the residential market; and the weakness of social housing policies and subsidies to help with paying the rent. Furthermore, especially in Barcelona, tourism exerts additional pressure on rental prices, and this has been amplified with the proliferation of tourist apartments thanks to online platforms such as Airbnb.

Following the bursting of the residential property bubble, conditions for being granted mortgages became tougher due both to the lack of liquidity in the financial system and the growing risk of insolvency among applicants. This demand was also fuelled by the incapacity of many households to honour mortgage commitments within a context of high econom-

ic and labour uncertainty. And it is also likely that the strong fall in housing prices following the crisis acted as a disincentive in access to ownership. The combination of all these factors has favoured an increase in demand for rental housing over the last decade.

Moreover, in comparison with a large majority of European countries (fig. 6), in particular with those that formed the EU-15, the rental market segment in Catalonia and in the metropolitan area is one of the smallest, above all due to housing policies and related fiscal policies implemented during the Franco regime, which were based on the promotion of home ownership and which, to a large extent, saw continuity during the following decade.

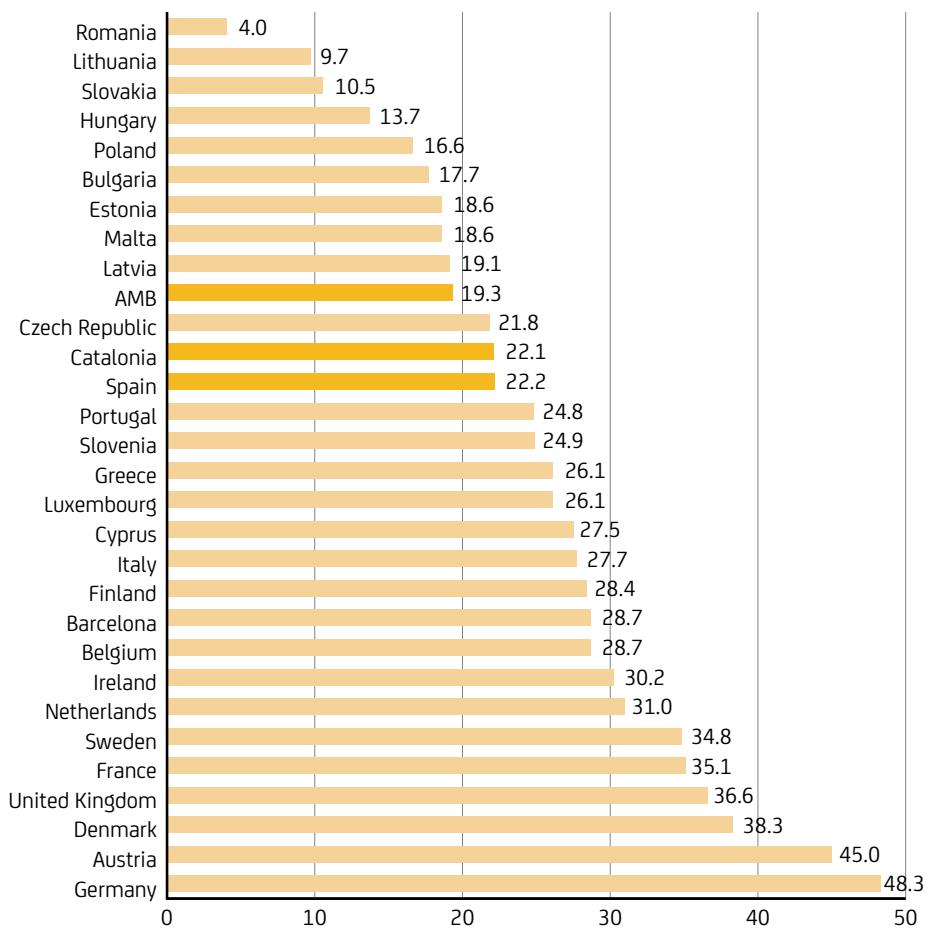


Fig. 6. Percentage of the population aged 16 years and over that rent their homes. Spain, Catalonia, Barcelona metropolitan area, Barcelona, and European countries, 2016. Compiled by the author based on the results of the European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions 2016 (EU-SILC), EU-ROSTAT (European countries); rest of areas, Survey on Living Conditions 2016 (ECV), INE and IDESCAT.

Barcelona, in contrast, has always had a larger number of rental homes (fig. 7). Historically, one of the reasons behind this was the higher proportion of old rent-controlled rental contracts protecting the tenant indefinitely (it is estimated that in 2016 these still represented some 3.1% of the total of main residences), but it is not the only one. The existence of strong demand for rental in the city, both internal and from abroad, along with the increase in prices, makes offering properties for rent a very attractive proposition, along with investment in property for this purpose. In fact, in relative terms (for each 1,000 inhabitants), the number of new rental contracts signed in Barcelona during the year 2017 was, in nearly all districts, higher than in any other metropolitan municipality (fig. 8).

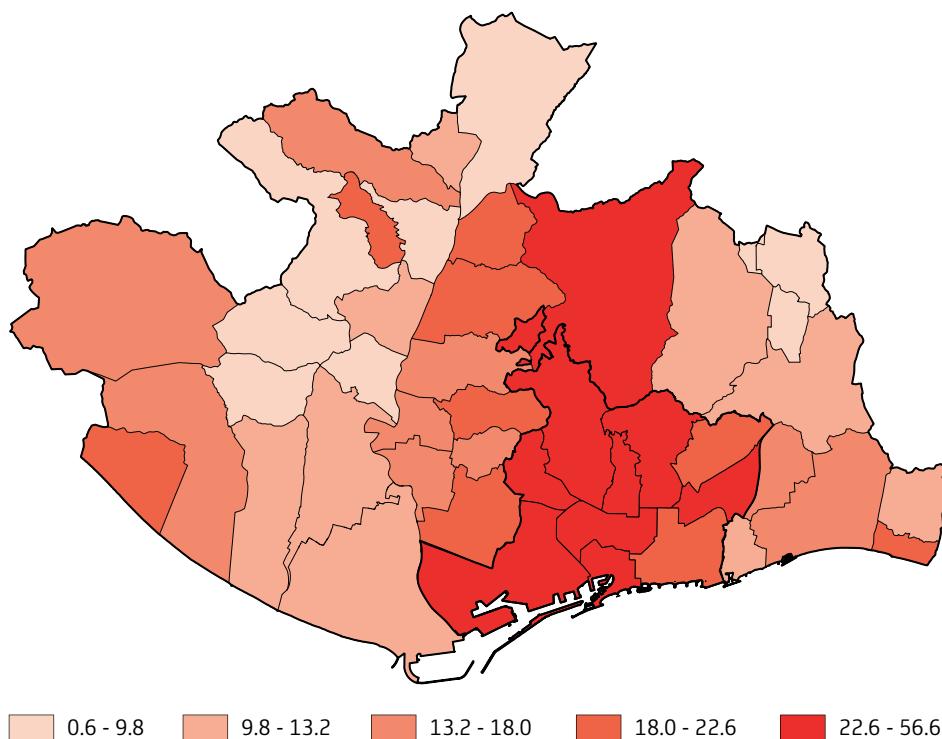


Fig. 7. Percentage of rented homes. Municipalities in the Barcelona metropolitan area and districts of Barcelona, 2011. *Metropolitan Housing Observatory based on the 2011 Population and Housing Census, IDESCAT.*

This imbalance between supply and demand is the main factor explaining the greater resistance to decreases among rental prices in comparison with those for homebuying during the deflationary period (2007-2014), as well as their faster recovery since 2014, above all in the city of Barcelona (fig. 9).

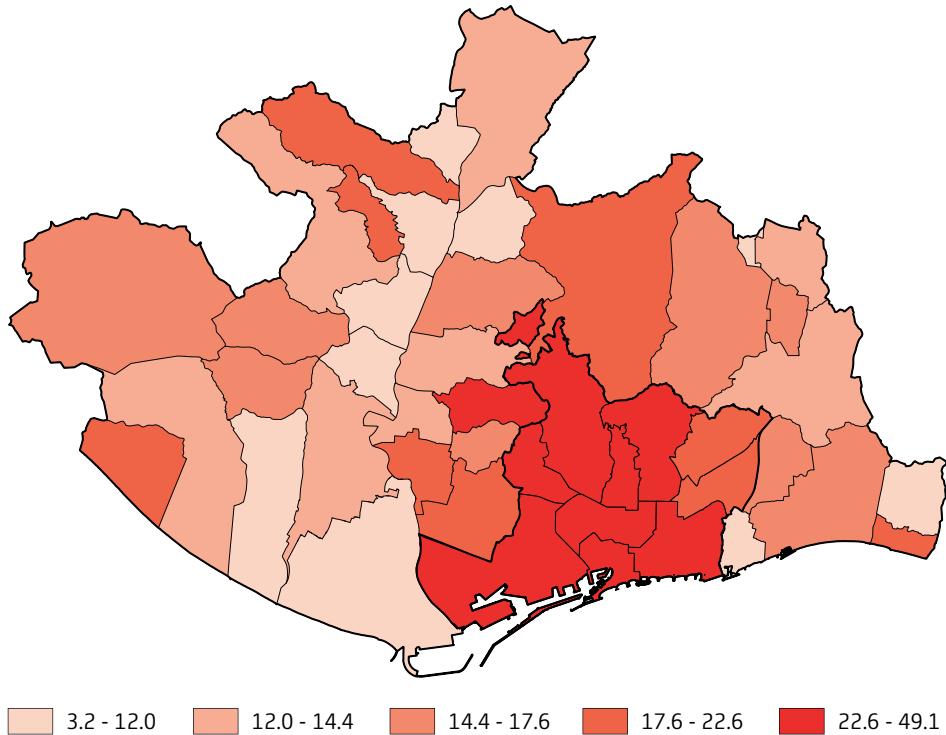


Fig. 8. New rental contracts per 1,000 inhabitants. Municipalities in the Barcelona metropolitan area and districts of Barcelona, 2017. *Metropolitan Housing Observatory using data from the Secretariat of Urban Habitat and Territory, based on rental deposits lodged with INCASOL and the continuous population municipal census of 2016.*

Overall, this has meant that the economic burden that households paying rent must support to pay the cost of their housing, measured as a percentage of income, has grown continually over the last decade, as has the percentage of households renting their homes that have to allocate over 40% of their income to housing, a percentage that stands among the highest in the whole of Europe (fig. 10).

Unfortunately, these costs have been unaffordable for many households (fig. 11). In the five-year period from 2013-2017, of over 74,000 evictions that took place in Catalonia, 64% (over 48,000) were the consequence of legal procedures deriving from the Law on urban rentals. The proportion of evictions from rental households is even higher within the Barcelona metropolitan area, at 76% of all those executed, approaching nearly 84% in the city of Barcelona.

To a certain extent, these data suggest that the residential crisis that began in late 2007, in one of its most serious expressions – i.e., the loss of the home due to a lack of economic resources – far from remitting, has passed from a first phase marked by mortgage executions (of which many are still pending judicial resolution) to another that fundamentally affects households renting their homes.

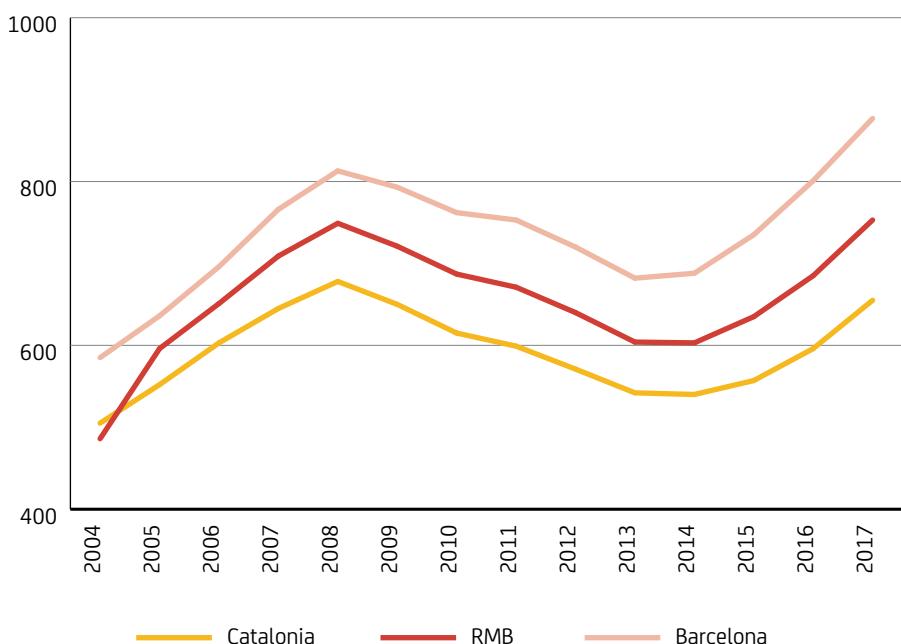


Fig. 9. Evolution of the average price of monthly rental. Catalonia, Barcelona metropolitan region (RMB) and Barcelona, 2004-2017. Compiled by the author based on data from the Secretariat of Urban Habitat and Territory.

URBAN SEGREGATION AND GENTRIFICATION

Residential segregation is the separation of social groups in urban environments according, mainly, to income levels. Within these segregation dynamics, the housing market acts simultaneously as both a driving force and a filter (Nel·lo, 2001). On the one hand, better-off households tend to segregate themselves voluntarily in urban areas where housing prices reach higher values, and on the other, households with lower incomes find themselves forced to live in neighbourhoods that are economically more affordable and, in general, where the housing stock presents more deficits.

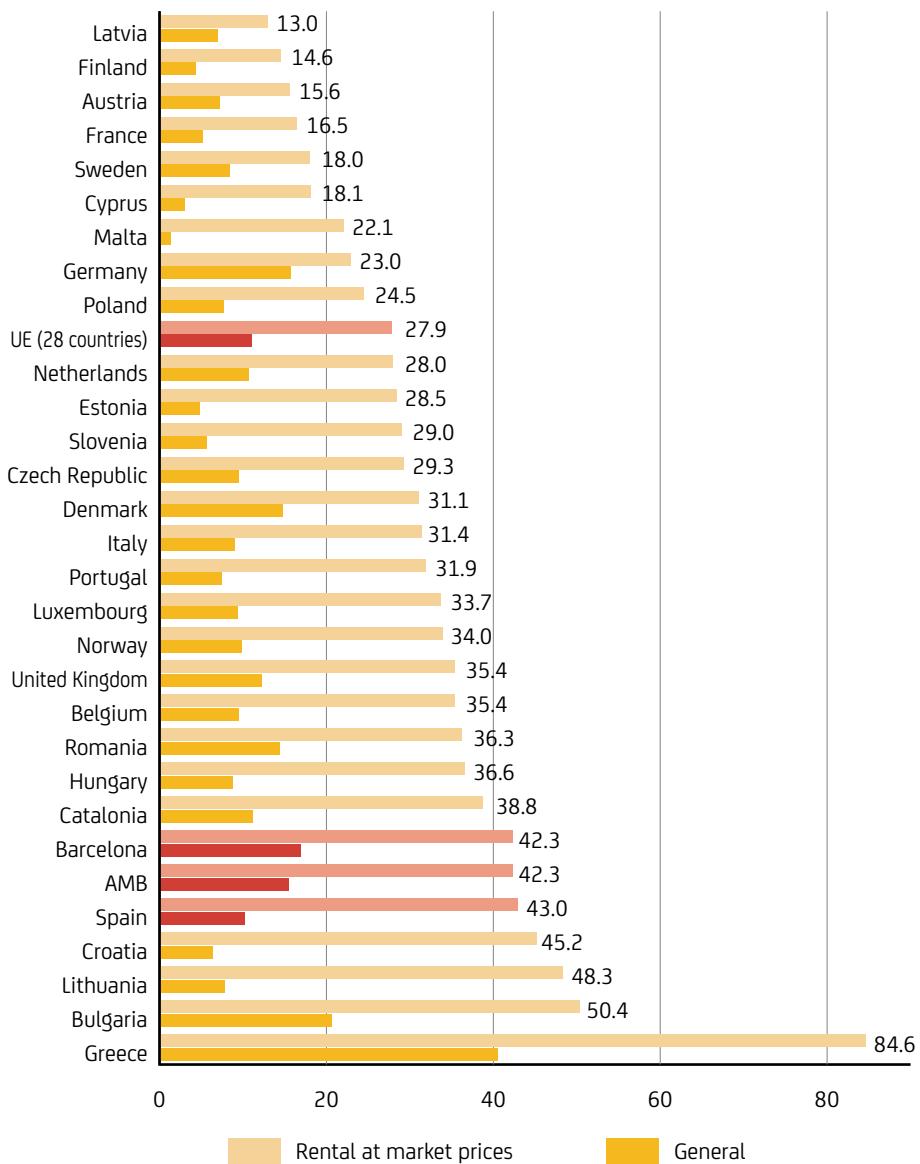


Fig. 10. Rate of overburden in spending on housing between the whole of the population and people renting homes at market prices. Spain, Catalonia, Barcelona metropolitan area, Barcelona and other European countries, 2016. Compiled by the author based on results from the European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions 2016 (EU-SILC), EUROSTAT (European countries); rest of areas, Survey on Living Conditions 2016 (ECV), INE and IDESCAT.

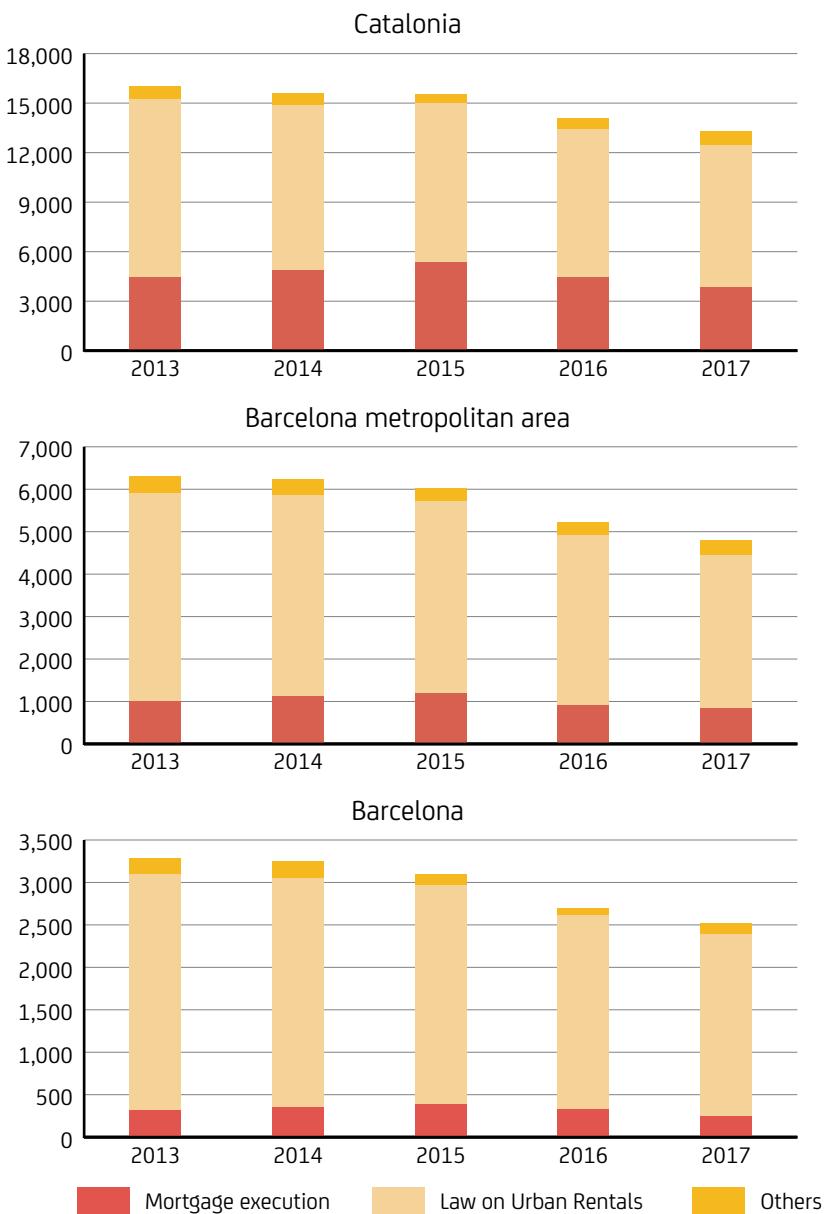


Fig. 11. Evictions according to type of tenure. Catalonia, Barcelona metropolitan area and Barcelona, 2013-2017. Compiled by the author based on data from the General Council of the Judiciary and IDECAT.

During the 1980s and 1990s, the processes of integration and extension of the territory of the Barcelona metropolis were accompanied by a certain balance in the distribution of income around the territory, but since the start of the 21st century, this tendency has been reversed. Numerous studies coincide in highlighting the fact that, in recent years, there has been a notable increase in residential segregation in the Barcelona metropolis (Donat, 2017; Nel·lo and Blanco, 2015). Specifically, according to the results of the Neighbourhoods and Crisis project (Barris i Crisi, Blanco and Nel·lo, 2018), between the years 2001 and 2012, vulnerable census sections in the Barcelona metropolitan region increased from 166 to 352, in other words the amount more than doubled, with an increase of 112%. However, the largest growth took place in the number of better-off census sections, which grew from 58 to 262 over the same period, in other words, they increased by 351.7%.

	2001		2012		Variation 2001-2012	
Vulnerable sections	166	4.8%	352	9.7%	186	112.0%
Sections with more resources	58	1.7%	262	7.3%	204	351.7%
Total	3,474	100.0%	3,612	100.0%	138	4.0%

Fig. 12. Residential segregation in the Barcelona metropolitan region. *Blanco and Nel·lo (2018)*.

One of the segregation processes that takes place in the established city is so-called gentrification, which consists basically of the substitution of the population resident in a determined urban area, mainly households with medium and low incomes, by another enjoying significantly higher purchasing power. This socioeconomic change is usually accompanied by improvements to both the public space and dwellings alike, thanks to the investments made, as applicable, by the public or the private sector.

Currently, the majority of gentrification processes taking place in the metropolitan area, above all in the city of Barcelona, have their origins in three interrelated factors: the growing profitability of rental housing, the extraordinary pressure that tourism has been exerting on the Barcelona housing market since the city became one of the most important tourist destinations in the world and an urban rental legislation that, with three-year rental contracts and non-regulated updating of prices, leaves rental households without any kind of protection. However, with respect to rental regulations, it is important to underline that in December 2018, these were modified by the Spanish government (Royal Decree Law 21/2018, of 14 December) and, among other changes, the term for contracts was extended from three to five years and the term for tacit extension, from one to three years.

DIAGNOSIS FOR A HOUSING POLICY

WEAKNESS OF THE HOUSING POLICY IN THE BARCELONA METROPOLITAN AREA

From an international perspective, the degree of development of housing policy is very weak in Spain and Catalonia alike. Within this context, it is hardly surprising that the scope of the housing policy in the Barcelona metropolitan area is also very limited. It is necessary to bear in mind that, in general, the economic capacity of local and metropolitan governments for the implementation of housing policies is conditioned largely by the funding available for such policies within national or regional budgets, for which there is usually a certain concordance between the degree of cover for housing matters on a national, regional and metropolitan scale in each residential system.

The weight of social housing in the total of the Catalan housing stock is minimal given that it represents just 1.3% across the whole of Catalonia and 1.4% in Barcelona and the metropolitan area, figures that are far below those of other countries in the centre and north of Europe (fig. 13). Also, the system for housing payment allowances, measured both as a percentage of GDP allocated to that purpose and as a percentage of beneficiary population, average allowance amount (Bosch, 2017; Trilla and Bosch, 2018), spending per inhabitant (fig. 14) or as a percentage of total social spending (fig. 15), in general, is much lower than in the majority of European countries.

IMPACT OF THE CRISIS ON HOUSING POLICIES

Unfortunately, the economic crisis has worsened even further the structural weakness of housing policies in Spain and Catalonia. The budgetary adjustments that have followed on from each other since 2009 led to a drastic fall in the construction of publicly subsidised housing (fig. 16), as well as in the number of rental payment allowances until the year 2013 (fig. 17), in Catalonia and the metropolitan area and city of Barcelona alike.

The number of contracts signed through mediation schemes has also gradually fallen year after year since 2011 (fig. 18). This decline is attributable to the insufficiency of the allowances available and, in particular, of those aimed at adapting housing, but presumably also due to the shortage of empty housing in certain municipalities, the increase in demand for rental and the growing differential between free rental market prices and affordable rental. All in all, it reflects the exhaustion of a model that needs to be redesigned in line with the current context.

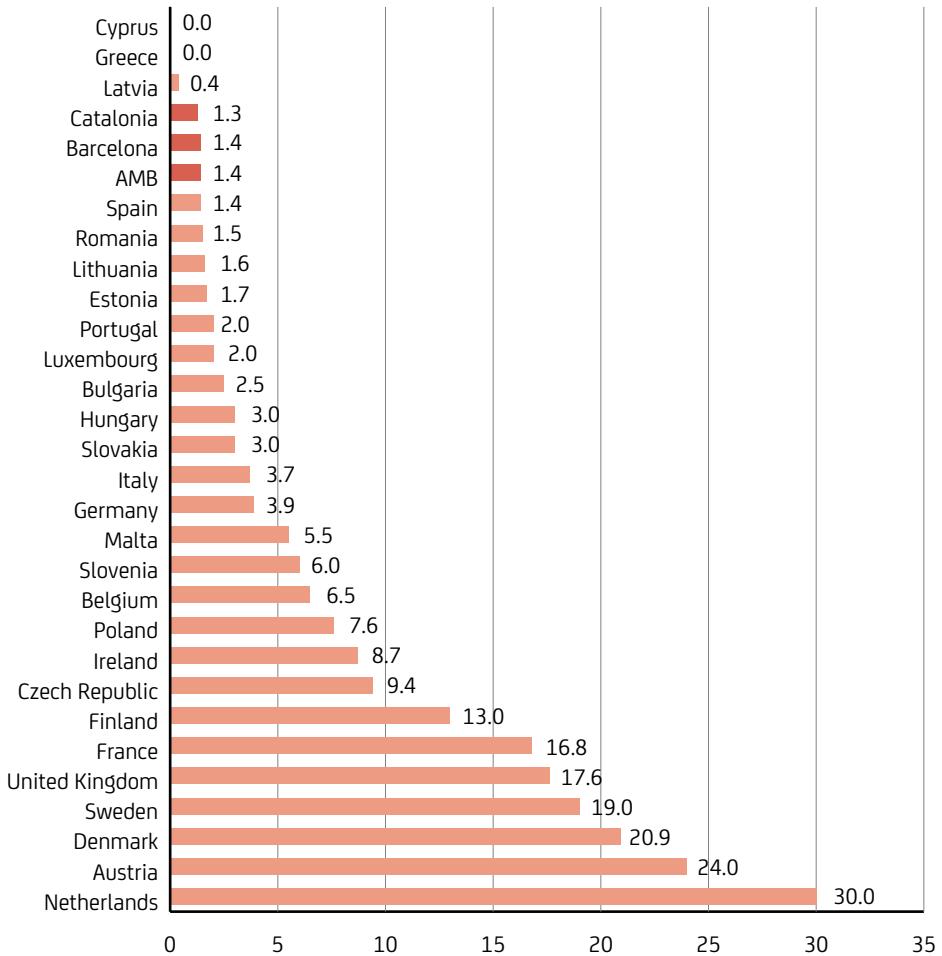


Fig. 13. Social rental housing as a percentage of the total housing stock. Spain, Catalonia, Barcelona metropolitan area, Barcelona and European countries, 2017 (or latest year available). Compiled by the author based on data from the Secretariat of Urban Habitat and Territory (Catalonia), the Einsfoessa survey 2018 (Spain) and the rest of countries (Laino and Pittini, 2011; Pittini et al., 2017).

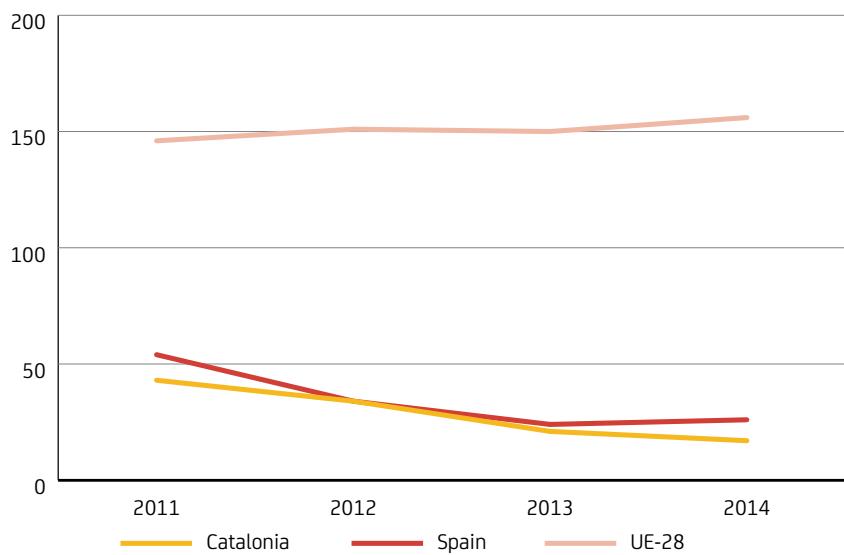


Fig. 14. Spending per inhabitant on housing services in purchasing power units. European Union (EU-28), Spain and Catalonia, 2011-2014. Compiled by the author based on data from Eurostat and IDESCAT.

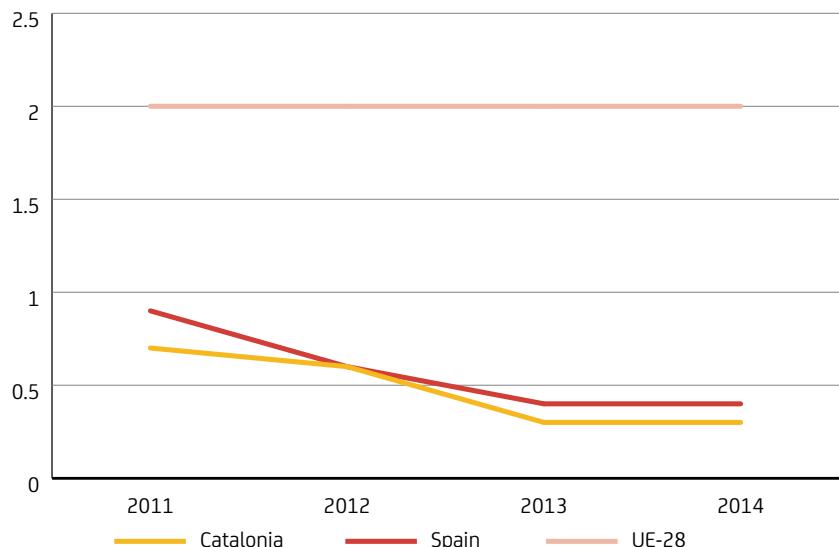


Fig. 15. Spending per inhabitant on housing as a percentage of total expenditure. European Union (EU-28), Spain and Catalonia, 2010-2014. Compiled by the author based on data from Eurostat and IDESCAT.

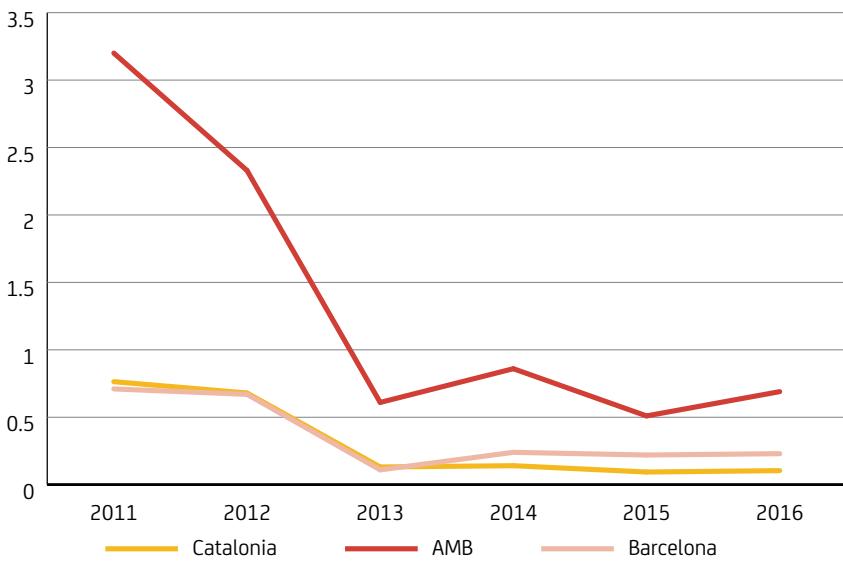


Fig. 16. Publicly subsidised homes completed per 1,000 inhabitants. Catalonia, Barcelona metropolitan area and Barcelona, 2011-2016. *Compiled by the author based on data from the Secretariat of Urban Habitat and the continuous municipal census of the population.*

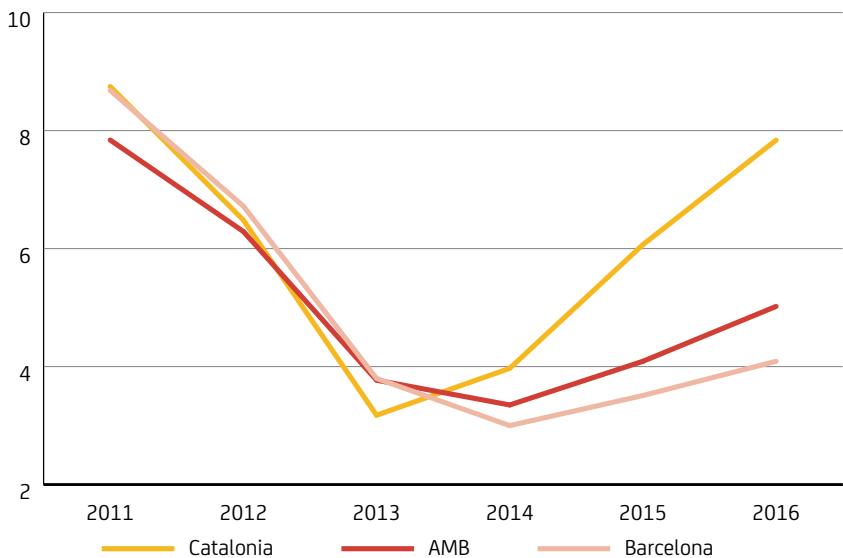


Fig. 17. Housing payment allowances per 1,000 inhabitants. Catalonia, Barcelona metropolitan area and Barcelona, 2011-2016. *Compiled by the author based on data from the Secretariat of Urban Habitat and the continuous municipal census of the population.*

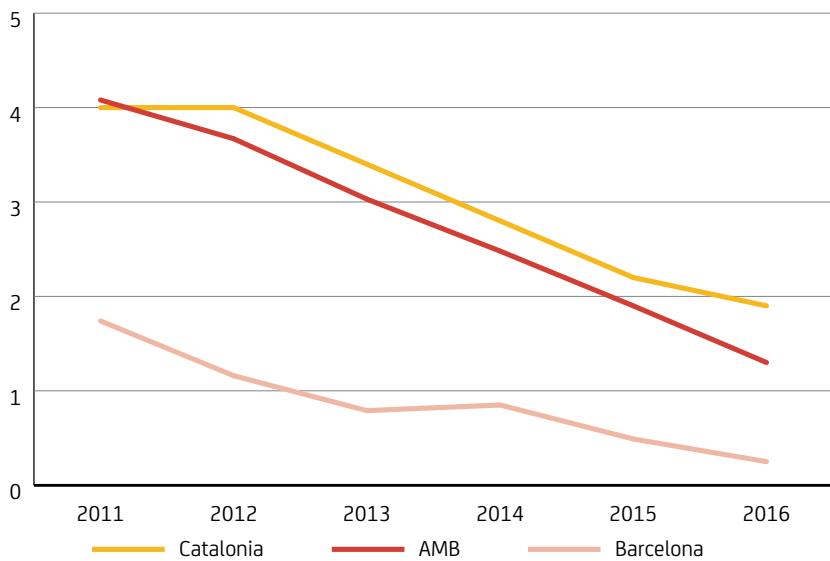


Fig. 18. Contracts signed by mediation schemes per 10,000 inhabitants. Catalonia, Barcelona metropolitan area and Barcelona, 2011-2016. Compiled by the author based on data from the Secretariat of Urban Habitat and the continuous municipal census of the population.

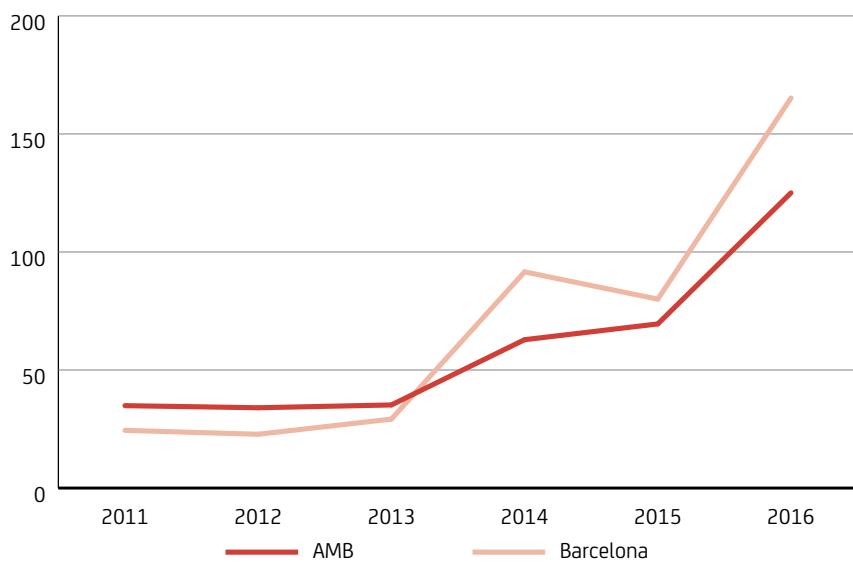


Fig. 19. Municipal spending on housing per inhabitant. Barcelona metropolitan area and Barcelona, 2011-2016. Compiled by the author based on data from the Metropolitan Housing Observatory.

Fortunately, however, the recent positive evolution of some indicators enables the future to be viewed with a certain degree of optimism. Since 2013, the number of allowances for housing payment has grown substantially across the whole of Catalonia and also, although with less intensity, in the metropolitan area and in Barcelona (Fig. 17). Municipal spending on housing in the metropolitan area has also increased, in this case thanks, above all, to the budgetary effort made by Barcelona City Council which, in relative terms, has more than quintuplicated spending in this field (fig. 19).

IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW HOUSING POLICY INSTRUMENTS

Another promising aspect of the housing scenario in the metropolitan area is the current technical and political debate regarding the appropriateness of implementing new housing policy instruments in order to tackle the high levels of residential exclusion. In some cases, this debate has actually led to specific measures.

An example of this is the city of Barcelona initiative relating to the modification of the planning that obliges allocation of 30% of the floorspace of new residential developments – or of any major rehabilitation projections covering over 600 square metres of floorspace on consolidated urban land – to subsidised housing. This proposal was approved in December 2018 by the Urban Planning Sub-Committee of Barcelona (a professional governing body jointly formed by the City Council and the Generalitat) and affects only the city of Barcelona. The main interest of this measure, which exists in other European cities such as Paris, lies in the fact that it will enable the offering of affordable housing to be extended to existing urban areas, where it is more difficult and costly to promote this type of housing due to the lack of land available. However, this is not a problem exclusive to Barcelona but is also suffered by many other metropolitan municipalities, for which reason it would be advisable to extend the initiative to the whole metropolitan area, although modulating it so that it is adapted to the different realities of the metropolitan territory.

With an identical purpose, at the same session of the Barcelona Urban Planning Subcommittee, under the Law on the right to housing of 2007, the whole of the city was declared to be an area with first-refusal and pre-emptive rights and the conditions were established that have to be fulfilled by properties subject to this preferential right to acquisition by the City Council.

One of the most controversial measures on the table is the establishment of a control over the increase in housing rental income or, alternatively, incentives such as allowances so that prices do not exceed a determined threshold. Since the year 2017, the Metropolitan Housing Observatory has been collaborating with the Generalitat of Catalonia in the production of a reference index of rental prices for this purpose. In fact, the Housing Agency of Catalonia already launched, in the year 2017, the so-called rental prices reference index, for informa-

tion purposes, which has even entered the Spanish parliamentary debate as legislation on urban rentals is the competence of the state.

LACK OF A METROPOLITAN HOUSING PLAN

One of the problems of the Barcelona metropolis is that it does not have a housing plan that sets goals for the medium and long term and that, in accordance with these, programmes the corresponding actions that it is necessary to develop. This shortage is related directly with the institutional and competence framework in force (see, in this respect, the section below on governability) and it is particularly serious because, according to the projections formulated by IDESCAT, demand for housing due to demographic reasons will grow in the coming years. At least until the year 2026, a net increase is forecast in the number of households in the city of Barcelona and the metropolitan area higher than that of the whole of Catalonia, of above 6% (fig. 20), and many of the new households that will be formed will foreseeably need some form of public support to access decent and adequate housing. In this scenario, it is urgent to have a housing plan that defines the actions that need to be carried out to be able to cater for these needs. It should not be forgotten that housing policies are characterised by slowness when they involve urban development operations.

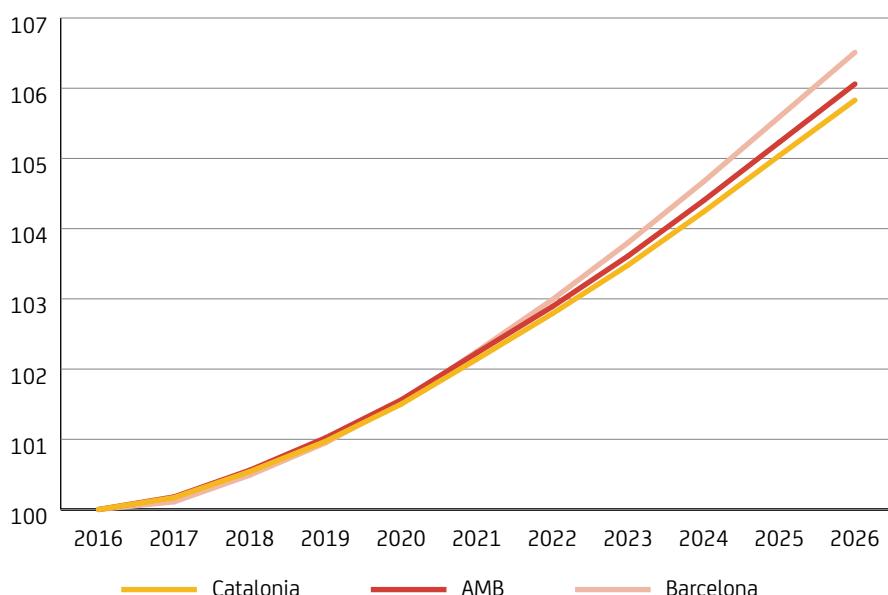


Fig. 20. Projections of households in relative terms according to the average scenario. Catalonia, metropolitan area and Barcelona, 2016-2026. Compiled by the author based on household projections of the IDESCAT (base 2016).

Notwithstanding this, the government of the Metropolitan Area established some strategic lines on housing policy matters in the Metropolitan Action Plan for the period 2015-2019 (PAM) (AMB, 2016) which have been developed in the form of directives (AMB, 2017).

In housing matters, the PAM sets as a major strategic priority the development of a metropolitan housing policy as a service of general interest that contributes towards equalising out the problem of access for those layers of the population with the lowest incomes and to give compliance to the mandate of urban solidarity within the sphere of the AMB (AMB, 2016). Based on this consideration, it plans a series of lines of intervention that are rolled out into diverse goals and actions related as much with design, implementation and evaluation of metropolitan housing policies as with related aspects of government (for more details on the treatment of housing in the PAM, see fig. 21). Among all these objectives, it is important to highlight the following: promote the metropolitan housing strategy by coordinating the set of actors involved in order to consolidate the right to housing; reinforce the Metropolitan Housing Observatory as an instrument for analysis and support of public policies in this area; increase the supply and availability of housing for social rental in the Barcelona metropolitan area through actions such as the creation of a metropolitan public housing operator; and promote the optimum management of empty housing, public and private alike, for social uses.

Currently there are two elements that could lead to the development of a metropolitan housing plan: the Urban Planning Master Plan for the metropolitan area (PDU), currently being written up in accordance with the provisions established by the AMB Law, and the Territorial Sectoral Housing Plan (PTSH) produced by the Generalitat of Catalonia, which was undergoing a public exhibition process prior to initial approval at the end of 2018.

It is the responsibility of the PDU, as the urban planning figure, in accordance with the urban planning regulations in force (Article 56 of Legislative Decree 1/2010, of 3 August, approving the consolidated text of the Law on Urban Planning), to establish: “The programming of supra-municipal policies on land and housing, agreed with the local councils concerned (...). This programming must guarantee intermunicipal solidarity in the execution of policies on affordable housing and public housing subsidies and the sufficiency and viability of these policies to guarantee the constitutional right to housing (...).” Specifically, the metropolitan PDU, in accordance with Law 31/2010, of 3 August, on the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona, has, among others, the objective of “Defining metropolitan policies on land and housing, and also on economic activity, to guarantee intermunicipal solidarity in the execution of policies on affordable housing and public subsidies, the sufficiency and viability of these policies to guarantee the constitutional right to housing (...).” (Article 22.e). With this purpose, it has to incorporate a social report with the definition of the objectives of subsidised housing (Article 24.1.h) and to classify and qualify the lands necessary to achieve the goal established in the metropolitan programming of land and housing (Article 23.2). Therefore, the PDU has to incorporate in its documentation the equivalent of a met-

ropolitan housing plan, at least, with regard to the land and housing policy urban planning instruments.

For its part, the PTSH, according to the provisions of Law 18/2007, of 28 December, on the right to housing, constitutes the guideline framework for the application of housing policies across the entire territory of Catalonia. In accordance with the version of December 2018 of the PTSH, the municipalities of the metropolitan area, except for Badia del Vallès, form part of the so-called areas of strong and accredited demand, for which reason, firstly, they are subject to the urban solidarity mandate, in other words, they have to increase their stock of housing assigned to social policies (according to the definition in Article 74 of Law 18/2007) during the next 15 years until it represents 15% of the total stock (currently, in the metropolitan area, this stock represents only 7.4% of homes); and, secondly, they have to expand, also over the next 15 years, their social rental stock from the current 1.4% up to 5.8% of the total of main residences. To be able to achieve both objectives it is virtually essential to draw up local or supra-local housing plans that detail the actions that must be carried out in each municipality. And, therefore, to guarantee coherence across the whole metropolis, the most desirable route would be to have a metropolitan housing plan based on which the rest of the local and supra-local plans would be rolled out.

AREA Line of intervention	Goal	Actions
SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AREA 1. Policies to combat inequalities, promote social inclusion and citizen rights.	1.1. Promote programmes and projects to tackle inequalities and reinforce equal opportunities and social rights.	1.1.9. Promote, together with housing services, the social rentals plan for the most disadvantaged groups and cooperate with the housing services on the specific programme to avoid evictions for reasons of economic vulnerability on a metropolitan scale.
		1.1.10. Participate in the definition of a metropolitan housing policy in relation with those programmes directly concerning the creation of employment, economic reactivation and social cohesion linked to rehabilitation, the adaptation of empty dwellings, energy efficiency, social rental and the promotion of affordable housing.
	1.2. Promote policies of metropolitan coordination and coexistence that reinforce social guarantees.	1.2.4. Participate in those programmes that are promoted in matters of urban renewal and rehabilitation of housing that consider the improvement of the public space and the housing facilities for more vulnerable groups to encourage cohesion, coexistence and security in the territory.

Fig. 21. (Continued)

AREA Line of intervention	Goal	Actions
TERRITORY 4. Consolidation of the right to housing.	4.1. Promote the metropolitan housing strategy by coordinating the set of actors involved in order to consolidate the right to housing.	<p>4.1.1. Define a metropolitan housing policy based on specific programmes of recovering empty housing, extensive rehabilitation, social rental and development of affordable housing jointly with the Social and Economic Development Area.</p> <p>4.1.2. Involve all the authorities in the metropolitan sphere in order to unify criteria and strategies with respect to housing policies.</p>
	4.2. Reinforce the Metropolitan Housing Observatory as an instrument for the analysis and support of public policies in this area.	<p>4.2.1. Analyse the evolution of the housing sector, the demand, and the proposal of measures to correct the imbalances, with the cooperation of the Metropolitan Housing Consortium.</p> <p>4.2.2. Make proposals regarding adaptability to new social needs (family, demographic, etc.) to guarantee the maintaining of a quality of building construction in accordance with welfare and quality-of-life parameters.</p> <p>4.2.3. Gather information relating to residential social exclusion (people who are rough sleepers, homeless, or have insecure or inadequate housing) and to evictions, social emergencies and social differences in the metropolitan municipalities.</p> <p>4.2.4. Undertake studies, together with the municipalities, on levels of debt, the increase in metropolitan residential debt and the census of empty homes.</p> <p>4.2.5. Provide the information necessary, on housing matters, for the development of work for the drafting of the PDU.</p>
	4.3. Increase the offering and availability of housing for social rental in the Barcelona metropolitan area.	<p>4.3.1. Constitute a new operator for the construction or acquisition of housing assigned to the creation of a metropolitan public rental housing stock.</p> <p>4.3.2. Work together with the metropolitan town councils to increase the social housing stocks.</p> <p>4.3.3. Explore pathways for metropolitan social pricing in subsidised rental.</p> <p>4.3.4. Draw up a policy for the prevention of metropolitan social emergencies in housing matters through management.</p>

Fig. 21. (Continued)

AREA Line of intervention	Goal	Actions
TERRITORY 4. Consolidation of the right to housing.	4.4. Expand the public housing stock.	<p>4.4.1. Study the viability of public assets and land in order to satisfy the demand and needs for subsidised housing.</p> <p>4.4.2. Promote joint action on a metropolitan scale and agree with the banks, major owners, and SAREB, lines of work that will make possible projects for new publicly owned housing and support for the transfer of private housing for social use.</p> <p>4.4.3. Establish agreements with the owners of empty buildings to assign these properties for social use with public guarantees.</p> <p>4.4.4. Promote and build affordable housing in different forms of access, so that they permit the drawing up, construction and management of the corresponding projects.</p> <p>4.4.5. Promote new forms of access to housing: surface rights, urban trade-work tenancy, shared ownership, temporary ownership, transfer-of-use cooperatives, etc.</p>
	4.5. Promote the optimum management of both public and empty private housing, for social uses.	<p>4.5.1. Roll out a specific metropolitan regulation in the area of social housing with parameters for participation and also with a social contract.</p> <p>4.5.2. Manage efficiently the rental stock (public and private) to help overcome situations of vulnerability and facilitate a reasonable rotation of housing for new applicants.</p> <p>4.5.3. Periodically evaluate municipal public housing companies with common parameters of efficiency, efficacy and results.</p>
TERRITORY 5. Improvement of neighbourhoods and policies for rehabilitation of housing and support for local councils.	5.1. Coordinate a metropolitan strategy for neighbourhoods improvement.	<p>5.1.1. Establish metropolitan goals in urban renovation matters by municipality and by zone/neighbourhood together with the local councils and in coordination with the Social and Economic Development Area, referring especially to the improvement of the public space and facilities.</p> <p>5.1.2. Participate in the development of a comprehensive strategy along the Besòs axis from a global perspective in all spheres (social, economic, territorial, infrastructures, etc.), paying special attention to strengthening existing territorial, human, natural, cultural and urban planning resources such as, for example, river and coastal spaces or the area around the Three Chimneys and their urban contexts.</p> <p>5.1.3. Facilitate the development of similar strategies in those metropolitan spaces in which the municipalities manifest their will to work in a coordinated way.</p>

Fig. 21. (Continued)

AREA Line of intervention	Goal	Actions
AREA OF GOOD GOVERNANCE AND TRANSPARENCY 2. An efficient and sustainable administration at the service of citizens.	2.1. Ensure the necessary financial and general resources to guarantee the effective execution of the AMB action plans.	<p>2.1.1. Promote a study of alternatives in matters of finance, reviewing fiscality, the contributions of metropolitan municipalities and other components of the AMB's finances, oriented towards achieving the economic balance of the different spheres of management and incorporating social and environmental criteria.</p> <p>2.1.2. Secure resources for the AMB's spheres of competence and investment not envisaged in the current financing model, with specific participation of the State and the Generalitat given the special nature of the metropolitan area.</p> <p>2.1.3. Study in depth the improvement of the diverse aspects that make up the economic management of the AMB by optimising mechanisms for analysis, administration and evaluation of the results of diverse programmes.</p>
AREA OF GOOD GOVERNANCE AND TRANSPARENCY 3. Strengthening of metropolitan governance and participation and of the agencies directly linked to the AMB.	3.2. Study in depth the model of open, transparent and local administration.	<p>3.2.2. Promote measures that tend to strengthen metropolitan governance and agencies directly linked to the AMB.</p> <p>3.2.3. Initiate debate on the definition and the future challenges of the AMB in institutional, democratic and competence terms.</p> <p>3.2.4. Coordinate and align the actions of the agencies dependent on the AMB with government action.</p> <p>3.2.5. Approve the metropolitan service charters.</p> <p>3.2.6. Develop the potential of the metropolitan administration in matters of shared services and cooperation between municipalities and institutions of a metropolitan sphere, analysing the possibility of establishing synergies between municipalities to optimise resources and gaining efficiency in services.</p>

Fig. 21. (Continued)

AREA Line of intervention	Goal	Actions
STRATEGIC PLANNING AREA 2015-2019	1.1. Promote and monitor the goals and actions for evaluating the fulfilment of the Metropolitan Action Programme.	1.1.1. Participate in the monitoring of the system of indicators in order to meet the PAMB targets.
1. Give impetus to coordination with the spheres of social, economic, territorial and environmental development of the AMB within a cross-cutting and strategic perspective.	1.2. Promote coordination between the Strategic Planning sphere and the Action Programme line linked to goals and actions for social and territorial cohesion.	1.1.2. Study the territorial scenarios of metropolitan development through the comparative analysis of the evolution of different metropolitan spheres from all over the world for the different objectives of the PAMB.
		1.2.2. With the collaboration of the IERMB, give impetus to the devising and evaluation of indicators and parameters of metropolitan inequalities in access to basic health, education, housing and social services.
		1.2.4. Participate in the evaluation of the implementation of housing policies aimed at energy rehabilitation and the improvement of housing in collaboration with the Housing Consortium.
	1.3. Promote the conducting of studies on the metropolitan economic reality.	1.2.5. Produce standard studies for social services projects on a municipal scale (access to housing, rehabilitation of housing, child education in environments of social fragility, etc.), for the construction of public policies in the AMB.
STRATEGIC PLANNING AREA 2015-2019	2.1. Introduce a systematic approach to the socioeconomic and spatial data of the area and the metropolitan region of Barcelona coordinated by the IERMB.	1.3.4. Create, together with the Social and Economic Development Area, instruments for evaluating and recommending public policies for social inclusion.
2. Systematic approach to data on the area and the metropolitan region.		2.1.2. Roll out the organisational measures necessary to expand participation and interaction in the deployment of the IERMB Action Plan with the members of the Consortium, the academic institutions and civil society.
		2.1.5. Establish the spheres of the metropolitan neighbourhoods as statistical spheres of the AMB for the definition of metropolitan policies.
		2.1.7. Identify and analyse the data of the social and economic reality of residents in the AMB by producing a Survey on Living Conditions.

Fig. 21. (Continued)

AREA Line of intervention	Goal	Actions	
STRATEGIC PLANNING AREA 2015-2019	3. Strengthening of the metropolitan governance and participation and of the agencies directly linked to the AMB.	<p>3.1. Give impetus, from the Strategic Planning Area, to measures that tend to strengthen metropolitan governance and the agencies directly linked to the AMB.</p> <p>3.2. Renew the Metropolitan Strategic Plan Association as an instrument for a metropolitan policy and make inroads into the process of adaptation of the IERMB to the new realities of the AMB.</p>	<p>3.1.1. Propose, within the framework of the new AMB term of office, new mechanisms and actions for improvement of the metropolitan governance.</p> <p>3.1.2. Promote relations and the sphere of coordination between the AMB and the institutions and organisations of the second metropolitan concentric zone through the Arc Metropolità project, with the setting up of specific work groups.</p> <p>3.2.1. Inject dynamism into the debate on the definition of strategic lines for the metropolitan region and participate actively in the formulation of goals for the future, with the rest of the AMB management areas and other agents involved.</p> <p>3.2.2. Give support to the actions of invigoration of the various management areas of the AMB through the joint promotion of committees for coordination and current and future planning, for the medium and the long term.</p> <p>3.2.3. Give active support to the Metropolitan Strategic Plan Action Programme and promote the upgrading of the Metropolitan Strategic Plan 2025-50.</p> <p>3.2.4. Develop a participative process with the organisations and stakeholders of the metropolitan territory of Barcelona to debate the strategic pillars of a metropolitan policy that gives support to the councils of mayors in the different metropolitan strategic pillars.</p>

Fig. 21. Overview of the lines of intervention, goals and actions of the Metropolitan Action Plan 2015-2019 in housing policy and in related aspects of governance. *Compiled by the author based on the Metropolitan Action Plan (PAM) for the period 2015-2019 (AMB, 2016).*

LIMITATIONS OF HOUSING POLICY URBAN PLANNING INSTRUMENTS IN THE METROPOLITAN AREA

A characteristic feature of metropolitan areas is the scarcity of vacant land available for new residential developments in the more central zones. This circumstance limits the implementation of housing policy urban planning measures in these zones such as, for example, the obligation that a percentage of new homes be subsidised. This is why some of the new housing policy instruments around which debate revolves today are so relevant, such as the control of rental prices or the duty of promoting affordable housing in property operations situated on consolidated urban land.

This does not mean, however, that these housing policy urban planning instruments have no use in metropolitan environments, quite the contrary. In general, in metropolitan areas, new residential developments have their place, either in the more peripheral municipalities, which usually have more land available for development, or in the central municipalities thanks to urban planning operations for the change of use of obsolete industrial or tertiary fabrics. Both cases offer an unbeatable opportunity to expand the affordable housing stock and, in fact, the most adequate approach in these urban planning operations would be to increase the obligatory percentages of new subsidised homes established with a general character, preferably in the form of social rental.

In the case of the Barcelona metropolitan area, except for some municipal initiatives that increase demands, the most common situation is that these new developments reserve the minimum percentage of subsidised housing established by the urban planning regulations for the whole of Catalonia: 30% of new residential floorspace, of which 20% has to be allocated to subsidised housing under the general regime, the special regime or both regimes (Article 57.3 of Legislative Decree 1/2010, of 3 August, approving the Consolidated Text of the Urban Planning Law).

To correct this situation in the Barcelona area, the PDU or future metropolitan housing plan that is drawn up should examine the land needs for affordable housing in the long term and, in accordance with these needs, establish broader obligations in terms of land for subsidised housing in the new developments, in a way that is consistent with the goals set in the PTS. With respect to these reserves of land for subsidised housing, it is necessary to bear in mind that Law 3/2012, of 22 February, modifying the consolidated text of the Urban Planning Law, introduced a series of exemptions with regard to the obligation of compliance that would need to be reviewed, given the strong expansion of levels of residential exclusion across the whole of Catalonia.

DIAGNOSIS FOR A METROPOLITAN GOVERNABILITY OF HOUSING

LACK OF A COMPREHENSIVE MODEL OF METROPOLITAN GOVERNABILITY IN HOUSING MATTERS IN THE BARCELONA METROPOLITAN AREA

Because of their very nature, housing policies nearly always develop into complex institutional and competence frameworks in which different levels of government participate. It is for this reason that, so that these policies can be planned and rolled out adequately in metropolitan environments, a model of governability is necessary that coordinates the role of the actors involved in all phases of the process of development of these policies, in other words, in their planning, adoption, implementation, evaluation and review. However, there is no single model of metropolitan governability valid for this objective, as in the in-

ternational context we find both governments of one or two levels and formulas based on municipal cooperation that permit the correct rolling out of housing policies from a metropolitan dimension.

In the case of the Barcelona metropolis, the current legal and institutional framework is incomplete in this sense. As we will see, there are numerous bodies with competences in the field, but there is a lack of coordination of actions between all of them. In fact, it is at an intermediate point between metropolitan realities that have no metropolitan bodies with competences in this field and those that enjoy a consolidated, complete and coherent model in the institutional and competence plane in housing matters.

The public actors of housing policy in the Barcelona metropolitan area

There are currently four metropolitan agencies with competences related with housing: the government of the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona (AMB), the AMB Housing Consortium (also known as the Metropolitan Housing Consortium, CMH), the Metropolitan Institute of Land Promotion and Property Management (IMPSOL) and the Barcelona Metropolitan Housing Observatory (O-HB).

In 1974, the so-called Metropolitan Corporation of Barcelona (CMB) was created. It was a supra-municipal organisation that fundamentally had competences in planning, urban development management and infrastructures across the 26 municipalities that formed part at that time of the Municipal Metropolitan Entity of Barcelona. The CMB was dissolved in 1988, in accordance with the provisions of the Territorial Organisation Law of 1987, and it was not until the year 2011, with Law 3/2010, of 3 August, that the metropolitan government was recovered. From then on it was called the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona (AMB) and covered a territorial area larger than its predecessor (36 municipalities).

In accordance with the Law of creation of the AMB, this authority enjoys competences in urban planning, transport, water and waste, environment, infrastructures of metropolitan interest, economic and social development and social and territorial cohesion, but it does not have competences in housing policy matters, except those derived from its competences in urban planning. Specifically, this Law entrusts the AMB with the development of the Metropolitan Urban Planning Master Plan and, through this, it has to classify and quantify the lands necessary for achieving objectives in land and housing matters in accordance with the social report of the Master Plan. However, during the 2016-2019 term of office, the AMB has rolled out a line of subsidies for the payment of supplies that is managed by the Economic and Social Development Area.

For their part, in the year 2007, the Generalitat of Catalonia and the Association of Municipalities of the Barcelona Metropolitan Area (MMAMB) created the Metropolitan Housing Consortium (CMH) which, according to its statutes, has the purpose of developing in its

sphere the functions, activities and services in housing matters that the regulations attributes to the consortium organisations. Therefore, among other attributions, it is the organism responsible for the planning, programming and management of subsidised housing and for neighbourhood remodelling actions, for approving criteria for accessing subsidised housing, for the management (prior delegation) of public properties of lands and of those assigned to subsidised housing and the promotion of rehabilitation, for allowances for rental and for the management of social housing stocks. As can be observed, the CMH is, on paper, the main organisation with competences in housing policy in the Barcelona metropolitan area. The problem lies in the fact that, in practice, the activity of the CMH is essentially limited to the promotion of rehabilitation, the installation of lifts and the elimination of architectural barriers.

The other metropolitan body is the IMPSOL, a local public business organisation dependent on the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona that is entrusted with the development of land for all kinds of activities (in fact, it is configured as a special urban development organisation according to the provisions of the urban planning legislation) and with the building and development of affordable housing.

Also, in mid-2017, the Barcelona Metropolitan Housing Observatory (O-HB) was created jointly by Barcelona City Council, the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona, the Provincial Council of Barcelona and the Generalitat of Catalonia as an instrument for the analysis and consultation of data related with housing on a metropolitan scale. The O-HB should play a key role in the generation of the knowledge necessary to be able to plan metropolitan housing policies and evaluate them correctly.

However, in addition to metropolitan bodies, there are a multitude of other public actors that, in one way or another, also intervene in the metropolitan territory in housing matters. Firstly, the Generalitat of Catalonia, directly through the Secretariat of Urban Habitat and Territory, or through its dependent public agencies, mainly INCASOL and the Catalan Housing Agency, also acts in the metropolitan area in the housing field in very diverse ways, for example, in the development of subsidised housing, as owner and manager of part of the social rental housing stock, with the programme for improvement of neighbourhoods and also with operations for remodelling neighbourhoods. And, secondly, from the local sector, the metropolitan municipalities, some of which have their own company or public housing agency (e.g. the Municipal Institute for Housing and Rehabilitation in Barcelona, Promusa in Sant Cugat, Vimusa in Sabadell, Promunsa in Sant Just Desvern, Prat Espais in El Prat de Llobregat, and SM Habitatge in Terrassa), within the framework of the Law regulating the basis of local government and the different sectoral regulations. These also exercise competences in housing, although it is necessary to emphasise that their scope is strongly limited by their available financial capacity. And, in addition to the above, there is also the Barcelona Housing Consortium (CHB) created in 1998 by the Generalitat of Catalonia and Barcelona City Council with the aim of undertaking the planning, programming and management of publicly subsidised housing, under both ownership and rental tenure, in the city

of Barcelona, and REGESA, a business corporation attached to the Barcelonès Comarcal Council, whose main task is land management and urban planning, but which also runs property developments, constructs facilities and car parks, manages the latter and executes rehabilitation works.

In short, as happens in other countries, housing policies in the metropolitan area are being developed within a complex competence framework in which different administrative levels and a host of public organisations participate, even though, unlike other metropolitan systems, Barcelona has not yet completely defined an own model of governability in housing that gives consistency to the actions of all the related actors.

CREATION OF HABITATGE METRÒPOLIS BARCELONA AS AN OPPORTUNITY

Barcelona City Council and the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona (AMB) have recently promoted the creation of Habitatge Metròpolis Barcelona (Housing Metropolis Barcelona, HMB), a public-private operator envisaged in Barcelona's Plan for the Right to Housing which should enable the offer of affordable rental to be increased in the city and the 36 municipalities in the metropolitan area. The appearance of this new organisation on the metropolitan scene could constitute a key element for completing and coordinating the set of public and private actors of the Barcelona urban agglomeration.

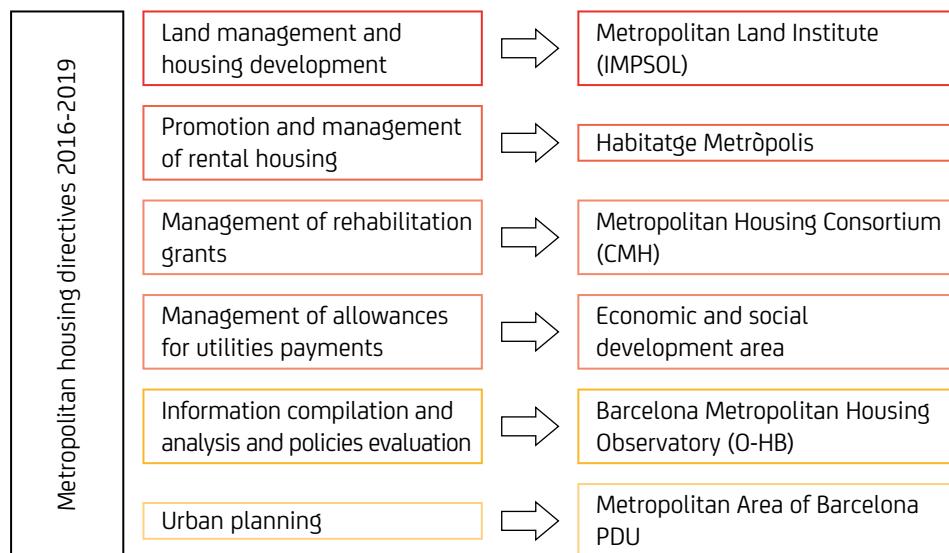


Fig. 22. Functions in housing and metropolitan actors. *Compiled by the author.*



REFLECTION

A resilient view of the territory for good strategic planning means assessing the risks that the metropolitan territory is exposed to and drafting the strategic policies most necessary for tackling them. It is for this reason that the DREAM (Diagnosis, Reflection, Strategy and Metropolitan Actions) methodology can help to find answers regarding housing for a resilient territory, answers that are expressed in this text.

The metropolitan context is changing: we are experiencing a crisis in access to housing that has led to this sector acquiring a central role among the concerns of citizens. For this reason, in order to improve metropolitan social cohesion, it is necessary to facilitate access to housing by improving supply in an innovative way from the social viewpoint, reinforce supportive and local supportive networks and develop mechanisms to tackle energy poverty and other services.

The current social subsidies system is overwhelmed. There are territories with high unemployment rates and with serious educational deficits among their populations, this is generating spatial segregation in the most impoverished areas. And, in this sense, it is necessary to highlight the lack of metropolitan services to tackle situations of social exclusion and severe poverty, such as those faced by homeless people.

Housing production and management also have profound implications for the risks associated with climate change and the demand for better management of natural resources which, as well as involving the energy transition, has a significant environmental relevance.

It is important to add to these social, economic and sustainability risks the further risks of a lack of governance. In this sense, it is necessary to underline the potential offered by the Law on the AMB, which is explicitly contained in its Article 14. Besides the most consolidated areas – urban planning, transport, mobility and environmental services – also highlighted, among others, are the promotion and implementation of common public policies in matters of municipal services and of promoting social and territorial cohesion, the protection of the environment, health and biodiversity, and measures for fighting against climate change. It is from this perspective that housing policies can be approached with a cross-cutting vision.

This entire list of growing needs requires an increase in resources that must necessarily be associated with a new political strategy in which metropolitan strategic planning is essential.

As has been seen previously, the Metropolitan Action Plan (PAM) proposes, as a strategic line, the consolidation of the right to housing. Reading the Law that regulates the AMB, it is evident that the latter has competence for developing public policies for social and territorial cohesion, housing policies and also policies for economic development – from a productive and social viewpoint – that will be essential components of this new planning.

If we look at social risks, the one that stands out is the increase in social vulnerability and lack of cohesion due to the long process of economic crisis, which has generated unemploy-

ment and led to precarity for workers, preventing them from giving a response to their families' needs. In some territories, the deterioration of this situation could even give rise to a lack of security. Furthermore, the ageing of the population and the absorption of immigration will also acquire an increasingly central role. We have to add, to all of this, the arrival of speculative capital which increases the prices of housing rental, meaning that the average population cannot afford it.

Moreover, there is a programme of government defined by the PAM and a set of competent metropolitan services prepared for reorganisation. There are also instruments and programmes that are applied to sectors, or to small territorial spheres, that need to be elevated to a systemic vision that covers the whole of the territory managed by the AMB.

We have a Metropolitan Housing Observatory, with all the instruments necessary for information and analysis, thus enabling the needs and challenges in the housing sphere to be determined. In addition, we also have a new Metropolitan Housing Operator (HMB), with the capacity to provide capital and manage the public housing stock.

We have a set of Metropolitan Housing Policy Directives 2016-2019 which specify:

- Administrative instruments and other means for action:
 - The instruments of the AMB already available and operative currently in these policies (Department of Urban Planning Services, IMPSOL, Metropolitan Housing Consortium) and in close collaboration with the various metropolitan municipal councils and their instrumental resources in public housing matters.
 - The Metropolitan Housing Observatory (O-HB), created through an AMB agreement with Barcelona City Council, Barcelona Provincial Council and managers of social housing in Catalonia, and open to providing its services to local governments and their housing policies.
 - The Metropolitan Housing Operator, a public-private company designed to boost major housing development projects in all metropolitan municipalities, including Barcelona, and which is currently at the preliminary study phase prior to its constitution.
 - Cooperation with third-sector organisations through collaboration agreements in all kinds of projects, including both the development and management of affordable-rental public housing.
- Urban planning and property market actions:
 - The rehabilitation of dwellings and buildings in poor conditions.
 - The promotion of affordable-rental dwellings in the different modalities: subsidised, public, etc.
 - Complementarily, the development of public housing under a regime of access to ownership, with a limited price and guarantee of permanence in the affordable housing system, in cases where this is required for the operation's economic viability and that permit reinvestment in new public rental housing projects.

- Developing new forms of access to housing, such as those based on the transfer of surface rights, urban trade-work tenancy, shared and temporary ownership, transfer-of-use cooperatives, etc.
- Urban renewal and regeneration, incorporating actions involving the urban space, the housing stock and the social fabric of neighbourhoods and towns.
- The IMPSOL, as an urban development operator, to give support to local councils in urban planning and land generation projects and opportunities for the construction of public housing.
- Activating the incorporation into the public housing stock of land plots, paralysed construction projects and buildings in irregular or loss-making situations, in terms of their physical condition, lack of occupation or legal situation alike.

It is necessary to point out that, in addition, we also have:

- Experience in neighbourhood plans.
- Capacity for production of services, both that of municipalities and that of the AMB, which needs to be reoriented towards new needs.
- Experience in neighbourhood renewal, which has been expanded to the 10 Neighbourhoods for 10 Municipalities project.

However, to be able to go further, governance is necessary to facilitate this. And, within this framework, work can be done towards the development of a model of metropolitan governability more suited to housing policies, that enables the planning competence for housing policies to be assigned to the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona and at the same time enables advancement towards a model of municipal cooperation in housing matters. This new perspective must be associated with the drawing up of a Metropolitan Housing Plan and the integration of housing policies with urban planning and the metropolitan mobility system.



STRATEGY

DEVELOPMENT OF A METROPOLITAN GOVERNABILITY MODEL BETTER SUITED TO HOUSING POLICIES

The Metropolitan Action Plan for the period 2015-2019 (PAM) (AMB, 2016) implicitly recognises the need to advance towards a metropolitan governability model in housing that enables better structuring and coordination of public action (see fig. 21). Specifically, in the Territory area, it proposes to “involve all authorities in the metropolitan sphere in order to unify criteria and strategies with respect to housing policies” (action 4.1.2) with regard to consolidating the right to housing. It also sets itself the goal of “coordinating a metropolitan strategy for the improvement of the neighbourhoods” (goal 5.1) with the aim of improving rehabilitation policies. In a more generic way and within the Good Government and Transparency Area, the PAM proposes the need to strengthen the metropolitan governance (intervention line 3, action 3.2.2), “to coordinate and align the actions of agencies dependent on the AMB with government actions” (action 3.2.4), and “develop the potential of the metropolitan administration in matters of shared services and cooperation between municipalities and institutions in the metropolitan sphere (...)” (action 3.2.6). Also, in the Strategic Planning Area, the PAM recognises that it is necessary, “within the framework of the new AMB term, to propose new mechanisms and actions for the improvement of metropolitan governance” (action 3.1.1). The strategy that is being developed to follow is framed within this set of goals and actions that the PAM formulates towards metropolitan governability.

LINE 1. ASSIGNMENT OF COMPETENCE FOR HOUSING POLICY PLANNING TO THE AMB

A possible solution for amending the deficits of governability in housing matters suffered by the Barcelona metropolitan area is the transfer of municipal competences in this field towards a higher level of government. These could be attributed to the Generalitat of Catalonia, or to the AMB and the Generalitat jointly through the CMH as, in fact, is already envisaged to a certain extent in its statutes but, within the current context, the most logical conclusion would be for this higher level of government to be the AMB. This latter option, which has the support of some authors (Bosch, 2011; Gerőházi and Tosics, 2018), would require a modification of the Law on the creation of the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona with the incorporation of this competence, at least, in matters of planning through the development of a metropolitan housing plan.

Within the international scenario there are similar experiences that would support this option. Probably the most appropriate example for the AMB is the Greater London Authority, as both institutions have followed a parallel evolution. The previous governments of both metropolises were dissolved in the mid-1980s and restored years later: that of London in the year 2000 and the AMB in 2010. Furthermore, the Greater London Authority Act of 1999 did not initially foresee any competences in housing, so it was not until the modification of the Act, which was carried out in 2007, that London’s metropolitan government took on competences in this field.

LINE 2. ADVANCING TOWARDS A MODEL OF MUNICIPAL COOPERATION IN HOUSING MATTERS

Another way of improving the metropolitan governability of Barcelona in housing would be to establish a model based on intermunicipal cooperation, in which decisions in this respect are taken between all the municipalities on a consensus basis in a kind of metropolitan housing committee and, if considered opportune, the AMB or even the Generalitat would be members of it.

The main advantages of this solution lie in the lack of any need to introduce legal reforms given the flexibility and low level of institutionalisation involved in this model. Against this, the main obstacles that would need to be overcome to be able to reach agreements would fundamentally be three: local resistance of the NIMBY (Not in My Back Yard) type, which could emerge against certain social housing actions; a lack of political tradition among our institutions with regard to sharing competences; and the unavoidable need to separate decisions on housing matters from the more everyday and electioneering-type political debates.

A good international example of metropolitan cooperation that can serve as a reference point for this strategic line is the functioning of the Metropoolregio Amsterdam (MRA) which, as we will see shortly, is based on voluntary cooperation through thematic committees with the participation of political representatives from all levels of the regional government.

IMPROVEMENT OF PLANNING OF HOUSING POLICIES IN THE METROPOLITAN AREA

The PAM 2015-2019 also echoes the limited planning of housing policies on a metropolitan scale. In the Territory sphere, to consolidate the right to housing, it explicitly admits that it is necessary “to define a metropolitan housing policy (...)” (action 4.1.1), and “to involve all the authorities in the metropolitan sphere in order to unify criteria and strategies with respect to housing policies” (action 4.1.2) (fig. 21). Moreover, one of the priority goals of the PAM 2015-2019 is to promote and consolidate a sustainable mobility system based on public transport through, among other elements, the approval and rolling out of the Metropolitan Urban Mobility Plan as a structuring instrument. And, logically, this mobility system has to be coordinated with the other areas of social, economic and environmental development of the AMB from a cross-cutting and strategic perspective, in accordance with the provisions established in the first line of intervention of the PAM in the Strategic Planning Area. For these reasons, this strategy for improving the planning of housing policies in the metropolitan area is proposed from two angles: based on the development of a metropolitan housing plan and through the integration of this with urban planning and the metropolitan mobility system.

LINE 1. DEVELOPMENT OF A METROPOLITAN HOUSING PLAN

Planning is essential in the process of development of any housing policy, even though, according to the territorial sphere that it covers, the plan will have certain particularities. Metropolitan housing plans are determined largely by the fact that they occupy an intermediate position among programming on a national scale (or regional scale, according to the competence framework of the country concerned) and on a municipal scale. For this reason, they cannot be exclusively strategic, but have to have some degree of material precision to facilitate their development by the municipalities or, even, the direct execution of the actions programmed. This brings with it the need to adapt the development of the plan to the existing model of metropolitan governability, identifying all the actors involved in the execution and their functions and competences and establishing mechanisms of monitoring and evaluation.

A strategy that can facilitate metropolitan planning in housing is the development of plans that only tackle a specific problem, such as, for example, attention to rough sleepers and the homeless, energy poverty, rehabilitation, or the development of social housing. Nevertheless, this fragmentation of planning into thematic sub-spheres has to be carried out on the basis of a framework strategic document in which the directives of the metropolitan housing policy are defined, since the main danger of this proposal is a lack of coherence across the set of actions overall.

Another key element in these plans is funding, given that, in general, the economic capacity of local and metropolitan governments is insufficient for funding their actions in housing. The most usual situation is that a large part of the economic resources necessary for their execution originates from national or regional budgets. In consequence, the higher level of government has to participate in one way or another in the development of the plan in order to guarantee that it fits in with the directives of national scope and with the budgets. In some cases, the metropolitan plan is subject to approval by a higher level of government, while in others, simply, it is represented by the collegiate body that takes decisions in this respect within the metropolitan sphere.

Within the European context, one of the metropolitan spheres with the most experience in housing planning is London and, as we will see shortly, the current Greater London Housing Strategy incorporates many of the elements explained previously.

LINE 2. INTEGRATION OF HOUSING POLICIES WITH URBAN PLANNING AND THE METROPOLITAN MOBILITY SYSTEM

The housing problem is not limited to its physical and economic characteristics, but rather it has a collective dimension that ranges from the neighbourhood to the entire city and that encompasses social, labour, economic and political aspects related with the urban phenom-

enon. It is what is known as the right to the city and it includes the right to housing in a traditional sense.

Probably the most important recognition of the need to incorporate this global vision into housing policies can be found at the last “Habitat on urban settlements” conference organised by the United Nations in Quito in 2016, which approved the so-called New Urban Agenda (NUA) (United Nations, 2017).

The NUA defines the right to the city as “a vision of cities for all, referring to the equal use and enjoyment of cities and human settlements, seeking to promote inclusivity and ensure that all inhabitants, of present and future generations, without discrimination of any kind, are able to inhabit and produce just, safe, healthy, accessible, affordable, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements to foster prosperity and quality of life for all” (United Nations, 2017:11), which implies, therefore, “(...) equal access for all to public goods and quality services in areas such as food security and nutrition, health, education, infrastructure, mobility and transportation, energy, air quality and livelihoods” (United Nations, 2017:11).

On a practical level, this right to the city has to be promoted, among other measures, through “(...) age- and gender-responsive planning and investment for sustainable, safe and accessible urban mobility for all and resource-efficient transport systems for passengers and freight, effectively linking people, places, goods, services and economic opportunities” (United Nations, 2017:13).

One urban planning technique for integrating housing into planning and complying with the right to the city is so-called Transit-Oriented Development (TOD). Technically, TOD is based on the delimitation of areas of mobility for pedestrians and cyclists simultaneously with the definition of urban planning and of the mobility network, with special attention paid to public transport hubs. The result of this focus gives rise to urban residential environments organised around centres of mobility, with relatively high residential densities and with a certain degree of mixture of uses in order to enable many daily commutes being made without the need to use any means of transport (Bernick and Cervero 1997; Cervero, 1998; Dittmar and Ohland, 2004). It is a case, in short, of approaching the right to the city and equal opportunities through urban planning.

In the case of the Barcelona area, the fact that the Master Plan is being written, and that no metropolitan housing plan exists, constitutes an unbeatable window of opportunity for planning this territory from the principles of the right to the city and, in particular, the right to affordable and sustainable mobility. In this sense, the way in which the Amsterdam metropolitan area has integrated urban planning, mobility and housing could be of great use for the metropolis of Barcelona.



METROPOLITAN ACTIONS

DEVELOPMENT OF A METROPOLITAN GOVERNABILITY MODEL BETTER SUITED TO HOUSING POLICIES

ACTION 1. ASSIGNMENT OF COMPETENCE FOR HOUSING POLICY PLANNING TO THE AMB

Example: The Greater London Authority

The London area has a long tradition of metropolitan governments. Between the years 1889 and 1965, the so-called London County Council (LCC) was the metropolitan level of government until it was eventually substituted through the 1963 London Government Act by the Greater London Council (GLC). At that time, the Law of 1963 granted the GLC, among other functions, attention to the needs of affordable housing in those metropolitan municipalities that did not have sufficient resources to develop it.

The Local Government Act, 1985, abolished the GLC and it was not until the year 2000 that the current metropolitan government of London, this time called the Greater London Authority (GLA), was established thanks to the Law of the year 1999 (1999 GLA Act).

In line with the legislation framework in force, the current model of metropolitan governability in London is on two levels: on the one hand there is the metropolitan government proper, the Greater London Authority, and on the other there are the 33 municipalities – 32 boroughs plus the City of London – which it encompasses. It is worth noting that the boundaries of the GLA are the same as its predecessor organisation, the GLC.

The GLA's activity is fundamentally strategic and its main mission is to establish and promote the metropolitan strategy in those fields in which it has competences. Initially, in the year 2000, these included police, transport, fires and safety planning, urban planning and land use. Subsequently, the legislative modification introduced in the year 2007 (the GLA Act 2007), expanded the GLA's competences to include housing, adult education, waste, culture, sports, healthcare, sustainable development, energy and climate change.

With respect to housing, the 2007 reform commissioned the GLA with the development of a metropolitan Housing Strategy, regulating its content and processing as well as the relationship with housing associations and the 33 municipalities in the metropolitan area. In general lines, the Housing Strategy was to establish the major lines of action, the location and territorialisation of future affordable housing in the boroughs, the types of affordable homes and the main priorities. The Act also established that all housing strategies, plans and policies that, on a lower level, could be developed by the metropolitan area boroughs would have to be consistent with the Housing Strategy, thus guaranteeing coherence between the Strategy and actions on a municipal scale.

For the development of the competences attributed to it, the GLA has various agencies such as the London Fire Commissioner, the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime, Transport for London and two public development corporations (the London Legacy Development Corporation and the Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation).

It is also interesting to be aware of the system for electing the political representatives of this metropolitan government because, unlike many other governments that are chosen indirectly, both the Mayor of London and the 25 members of the legislative assembly are elected directly by universal suffrage through elections every four years.

ACTION 2. ADVANCING TOWARDS A MODEL OF MUNICIPAL COOPERATION IN HOUSING MATTERS

Example: The Amsterdam Metropolitan Region

The so-called Metropoolregio Amsterdam (MRA) is the metropolitan government of the urban system situated around the capital of the Netherlands. The governability of the MRA is based on voluntary cooperation between the provinces of Noord-Holland and Flevoland, the 33 municipalities in the two provinces, the city of Amsterdam and the transport organisation of the Amsterdam Region (Vervoerregio Amsterdam) on the basis of agreements signed in 2016 by all of the organisations. On an institutional level, this cooperation is developed through thematic committees with the participation of political representatives from all governments of the region. There are currently three committees, for mobility, the economy and the territory. The central goal of the mobility committee is to develop strategies to improve traffic and public transport in the region and, in accordance with these strategies, to develop projects for the corresponding infrastructures. For its part, the main task of the economics committee is to tackle the challenges that the economic structure of the region must face in relation with globalisation and European integration. Finally, the purpose of the territory committee is the coordination of all the actors involved in the regional planning of its sphere and to develop common strategies in this field, with special attention paid to four interrelated aspects: mobility, sustainability, landscape and housing.

With regard to housing, which is dealt with by a specific sub-committee, the members of the MRA work together to create an operational regional housing market. They share information and knowledge on the functioning and cohesion of the housing market in the metropolitan area and jointly promote studies (e.g. MRA, 2018a), as well as ensuring that residential housing production is adequate in accordance with the housing plans of the municipalities of the MRA, and also that housing supply is affordable for the different income levels that characterise the demand.

IMPROVEMENT OF PLANNING OF HOUSING POLICIES IN THE METROPOLITAN AREA

ACTION 3. DEVELOPMENT OF A METROPOLITAN HOUSING PLAN

Example: The Greater London Housing Strategy

Within the legal and competence framework of Greater London as explained previously, various plans have been produced since the reform of the 2007 Act (GLA, 2010, 2011, 2014), of which the last, called the Housing Strategy, covers the period 2018-2022 (GLA, 2018a). The proposals in the last plan, as in its predecessors, are based on an accurate diagnosis of the housing problem in the metropolitan area, included above all in the series of reports periodically published by the GLA under the title *Housing in London, The evidence base for the Mayor's Housing Strategy*, and they were adopted following a period of public consultation with citizens and the different organisations working in this field.

The Housing Strategy is structured into four priority pillars, each of which is broken down into several specific actions for achieving them. The Strategy's first priority is to promote the construction of more new homes that are more affordable, in order to cater for demand, which means it is necessary to identify and develop more land and achieve higher levels of density, increase public investment in housing and infrastructures, and advance in diversification and skills provision for the residential construction sector, including public development and development by non-profit organisations in order to increase the supply of affordable housing.

The second major goal that it sets itself is improving the quality of the housing stock and advancing in the creation of more inclusive neighbourhoods, which implies the highest standards of quality and safety in residential construction, investments in improving residential accessibility – especially to cater for the needs of disabled people and those arising from ageing – and increasing the participation of residents and the community in the processes of renovations and new builds.

The third pillar of the Strategy proposes to achieve fairer residential, legal and economic conditions for rental tenants through measures such as, for example, legislative reforms that favour residential stability, grants for the renovation and adaptation of these homes and rent control measures.

The fourth focuses on the fight against the problems faced by homeless people. For this purpose, the Strategy considers it essential to increase public spending to expand the number of places in the homeless people's support network so that they can come off the streets, and to deal with this problem in a preventive way through measures that correct its causes such as, for example, the residential instability suffered by households in the private rental segment or the shortage of affordable rental homes.

It is important to point out that, for the correct execution of the measures mentioned, the GLA has also drawn up an implementation plan (GLA 2018b) that details the specific actions that must be carried out for the implementation of the Strategy, the expected results, the indicators for monitoring it, time horizons and the starting point from which to measure them.

The GLA has also made an evaluation of the impact of each of the proposals included in the Strategy (GLA, 2018c) and, in summary, it concludes that the Plan will have a positive impact with regard to equity, health inequalities and delinquency levels, antisocial behaviour, and feelings of fear and insecurity.

ACTION 4. INTEGRATION OF HOUSING POLICIES WITH URBAN PLANNING AND THE METROPOLITAN MOBILITY SYSTEM

Example: The Amsterdam Metropolitan Region's Action Agenda

The MRA's framework planning document is the so-called *Ontwikkelingsbeeld Noordvleugel 2040* (Development Vision 2040) which was drawn up in the year 2007 (MRA, 2008), a type of instrument that, in accordance with the new Netherlands Territorial Planning Law that entered into force in mid-2008, is of a binding nature for the authorities promoting it.

This Plan establishes the main lines of development for the MRA until the year 2040, so that this metropolis can become an internationally competitive region with a polycentric model of a compact towns network consistent with the network of infrastructures, the landscape and the needs of the people living there.

In 2014, it was considered necessary to draw up an Action Agenda (MRA, 2016) for the correct deployment of the Development Vision 2040 in the MRA territory through the materialisation of actions for the following four years, as well as to update some of the forecasts made. With respect to housing, specifically, the Development Vision forecast net growth in the number of households in the region of 150,000 units until 2040, but the demographic evolution of the first years was more intense than expected, which forced a revision of these figures.

According to its new demographic projections, the Action Agenda forecasts that to meet all residential demand it will be necessary to build 250,000 new homes by 2040, of which 60,000 should be completed during the 2016-2020 period. It is envisaged that the majority of these homes will be developed in locations close to the main public transport networks and in a way integrated with the metropolitan bicycle network in order to guarantee coherence between residential fabric and metropolitan mobility, and taking into account the demand for new facilities that they will generate. In particular, the Agenda underlines the priority of developing these residential hubs around two main stretches of railway: the Alkmaar-Utrecht and the Leiden-Lelystad sections.

With this goal, the Agenda proposes a series of complementary territorial strategies. Firstly, it places emphasis on the need to increase the densification of these residential areas through measures such as, for example, the transformation of obsolete tertiary and industrial spaces into residential uses. Secondly, from the management angle, it is necessary to adapt the municipal zoning plans in these new residential areas and promote their development through duly dimensioned investment programmes that, furthermore, implement actions relating to land policy at these sites. And, with respect to the public transport system, given the growth in the number of users, the Agenda envisages significant improvements in the infrastructures with the aim of being able to expand, above all, the current capacity and frequencies of the networks of trams and regional railways. As for the homes that need to be developed, given the prices structure of the residential market and the different capacities of the demand, the Agenda advocates that many of these new housing units should be allocated to affordable rental.

To make these goals a reality, the Agenda proposes two specific actions: the obligation of all the municipalities in the region to formalise agreements on programming and coordination of their residential actions, in particular, their housing plans (action 1) and the obligation that all the municipalities of the MRA report on the availability of residential lands for the next four to ten years (action 1.2). The detailed implementation of these two actions has been covered in a subsequent publication by the MRA (2018b) and, among other results, it has enabled us to find out the remaining urban planning potential in number of residential units in the MRA. Specifically, the study validates the goals set, given the existence of lands on which 297,000 new homes could be developed (MRA, 2017).

With respect to housing, the Agenda also recognises the need to examine the situation of the residential neighbourhoods in order to adapt them to their residents, in particular, to elderly people, given the ageing process being suffered by the region (action 1.4).



REFERENCES

- AMB (2016). *Pla d'actuació metropolità. Mandat 2015-2019. 28 de juny de 2018.* Barcelona: Àrea Metropolitana de Barcelona.
- AMB (2017). *Directrius de la política metropolitana d'habitatge 2016-2019. Informe del 25 d'abril de 2017.* Barcelona: Àrea Metropolitana de Barcelona.
- Andersson M. (2015). *Unpacking Metropolitan Governance for Sustainable Development.* Bonn: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.
- Bernick, M. and Cervero, R. (1997). *Transit Villages in the 21st Century.* New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Blanco, I., and Nel-Lo, O. (ed.) (2018). *Barrios y Crisis. Crisis económica, segregación urbana e innovación social en Cataluña.* Valencia: Editorial Tirant Lo Blanch.
- Bosch, J. (2011). *Les polítiques metropolitanes d'habitatge a Europa: el cas de Londres, París, Brussel·les i Barcelona.* Barcelona: Diputació de Barcelona, Centre per a la Innovació Local (CIL).
- Bosch, J. (2017). La dimensión económica de la exclusión residencial: Cataluña en el contexto europeo. *ACE: Arquitectura, Ciudad y Entorno*, 34(12), p. 69-96.
- Cervero, R. (1998). *The Transit Metropolis: A Global Inquiry.* Washington, DC.: Island Press.
- Cox, E. (2014). *Home economics: The role of housing in rebalancing the economy.* Newcastle upon Tyne: Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR).
- Ditmar, H. and Ohland, G. (2004). *The New Transit Town. Best Practices in Transit-Oriented Development.* Washington, DC: Island Press.
- Donat, C. (2017). Crisis, ciclo inmobiliario y segregación urbana en la región metropolitana de Barcelona. *Archivio di Studi Urbani e Regionali*, (118 supl.), 195-219.
- Gerőházi, E. and Tosics, I. (2018). *Addressing the metropolitan challenge in Barcelona metropolitan area. Lessons from five European metropolitan areas: Amsterdam, Copenhagen, Greater Manchester, Stuttgart and Zürich.* Barcelona: Àrea Metropolitana de Barcelona.
- GLA (2010). *The London Housing Strategy.* London: Greater London Authority, Mayor of London.
- GLA (2011). *The Revised London Housing Strategy.* London: Greater London Authority, Mayor of London.

- GLA (2014). *Homes for London: The London Housing Strategy*. London: Greater London Authority, Mayor of London.
- GLA (2018a). *London Housing Strategy*. London: Greater London Authority, Mayor of London.
- GLA (2018b). *London Housing Strategy: Implementation Plan*. London: Greater London Authority, Mayor of London.
- GLA (2018c). *London Housing Strategy. Impact Assessment*. London: Great London Authority, Mayor of London.
- GMCA (2016). *Draft Greater Manchester Spatial Framework*. Draft for consultation. Manchester: Greater Manchester Combined Authority.
- GMP and HC (2018). *Item 11. GM Housing Strategy and Draft GM Housing Vision*. Manchester: Greater Manchester Planning and Housing Commission.
- Gómez-Álvarez, D., López-Moreno, E., Rajack, R. and Lanfranchi, G.I. (ed.) (2017). *Steering the Metropolis: Metropolitan Governance for Sustainable Urban Development*. Inter-American Development Bank.
- Greater Sydney Commission (2018). *Greater Sydney Region Plan. A Metropolis of Three Cities – connecting people*. Sydney: State of New South Wales.
- Keilmann-Gondhalekar, D., Vogt, C. and Eisenbeiß, K. (2018). *Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals for Urban Resource Efficiency, Economic Prosperity and Social Inclusion*. Bonn: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.
- Knieling, J. (2014). *Metropolitan Regions: Definitions, Typologies and Recommendations for Development Cooperation*. Bonn: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.
- Laino, E. and Pittini, A. (2011). *Housing Europe Review 2012. The nuts and bolts of European social housing systems*. Brussels: CECODHAS, Housing Europe.
- Metro Vancouver (2016). *Regional Affordable Housing Strategy*. Vancouver: Metro Vancouver.
- Métropole du Grand Paris (2018). *Plan métropolitain de l'habitat et de l'hébergement. Document d'orientations*. Paris: Métropole du Grand Paris.
- MRA (2008). *Ontwikkelingsbeeld Noordvleugel 2040*. Amsterdam: Metropoolregio Amsterdam.

- MRA (2016). *MRA Actie-Agenda 2016-2020*. Amsterdam: Metropoolregio Amsterdam.
- MRA (2017). *Analyse Monitor Plancapaciteit MRA 2017*. Amsterdam: Metropoolregio Amsterdam.
- MRA (2018a). *Wonen in de Metropoolregio Amsterdam 2017. Onderzoek, Informatie en Statistiek*. Amsterdam: Metropoolregio Amsterdam.
- MRA (2018b). *Overdrachtsdocument Metropoolregio Amsterdam Actie 1.1. In gesprek over onze woningbouwopgave tot 2040*. Amsterdam: Metropoolregio Amsterdam.
- Nel·lo, O. (2001). *Ciutat de ciutats. Reflexions sobre el procés d'urbanització a Catalunya*. Barcelona: Empúries.
- Nel·lo, O., and Blanco, I. (2015). *La segregació urbana a la regió metropolitana de Barcelona*. Publicacions del Pla estratègic metropolità de Barcelona, 24.
- OECD (2016). *OECD Territorial Reviews: The Metropolitan Region of Rotterdam-The Hague, Netherlands*. Paris: OECD Publishing.
- Pittini, A., Koessl, G., Dijol, J., Lakatos, E. and Ghekière, L. (2017). *The State of Housing in the EU 2017*. Brussels: CECODHAS, Housing Europe.
- Tomàs, M. (2009). *La gobernabilidad metropolitana en Europa y América del Norte*. Barcelona: Diputació de Barcelona.
- Toronto City Council (2009). *Housing Opportunities Toronto. An Affordable Housing Action Plan 2010 – 2020*. Toronto: Toronto City Council.
- Trilla, C. and Bosch, J. (2018). *El parque público y protegido de viviendas en España: un análisis desde el contexto europeo*. Madrid: Fundación Alternativas and Fundipax.
- United Nations (2017). *New Urban Agenda*. Quito: Habitat III Secretariat.
- Victoria State Government (2017). *Plan Melbourne 2017-2050*. Brunswick: The State of Victoria, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning.

CREDITS

DREAM Collection

04 Housing and Social Rights in the Barcelona metropolitan area

Authors

Carme Trilla
Jordi Bosch
Carles Donat
Francesc Magrinyà

Collaborators

Víctor Ténez

Editorial coordination

Laura Parellada

Translations and proofreading

Jordi Curell
Debbie Smirthwaite

Layout and printing

Ediciones Gráficas Rey, SL

Graphic design idea

Mònica Alegre
Marta Calvet

National Book Catalogue Number

B 13735-2019

ISBN

978-84-87881-46-6

www.amb.cat

www.pemb.cat

© Àrea Metropolitana de Barcelona

© of the texts, their respective authors

© of the images, their respective authors

AUTHORS

Carme Trilla is an economist and an expert on housing. She was general director of Housing and secretary of Housing for the Government of the Generalitat of Catalonia between the years 2004 and 2011. She was sponsor of Law 18/2007, on the Right to Housing, of Catalonia. She has authored a large number of publications, prominently including several on housing policies. She is currently a member of the Advisory Council for the Neighbourhoods Plan, an initiative promoted by Barcelona City Council, and she chairs the Barcelona Metropolitan Housing Observatory and the Hàbitat 3 Tercer Sector Social Foundation.

Jordi Bosch Meda holds a PhD in Architecture, a diploma in Public Administration and Management and a degree in Political Science. An expert on housing policies, urban planning and residential systems, he has published ten books and over thirty articles on these subjects. He has received various awards, including the Luciano Parejo Prize for territorial and urban planning (2017) and the Ricardo Santos National Prize for Urban Planning (special mention) (2012).

Carles Donat holds a PhD in Geography and is an expert on housing. He has worked at the Institute for Regional and Metropolitan Studies of Barcelona as head of the areas of Territory and Housing. He is the author of various publications on housing that focus on the metropolitan scale of Barcelona. He is currently associate professor at the Department of Geography of the Autonomous University of Barcelona and head of projects for the Barcelona Metropolitan Housing Observatory.

Francesc Magrinyà holds a degree in Civil Engineering from the Polytechnic University of Catalonia (UPC) and a PhD in Urban Planning from the ENPC Paris I Sorbonne. He is currently director of the Strategic Planning Area of the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona. An expert on urban planning and mobility, he has worked as a consultant and head of mobility at the Urban Ecology Agency of Barcelona. He has been curator of various exhibitions and teaches Urban Planning at the UPC.



Planificació
Estratègica
Habitatge



Pla Estratègic
Metropolità
de Barcelona