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Extended Abstract – Special Session S45 Ecological Transition

Reduce Poverty Through The Application Of Social Protection Measures In Urban Welfare: Introduction Of Housing Policies Within Urban Regeneration Strategies In City Planning.

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Introduction of housing policies into the urban planning processes, with specific reference to the municipality planning, takes on particular relevance among central issues scheduled by the first goal of the 2030 UN Agenda For the Sustainable Development, which aims to “end poverty in all its forms everywhere”.

By examining the complex structure of legislation that regulates the government of contemporary Italian and European territories, based on accurate case study analysis of planning virtuous models, a setting of initial references for affordable housing is meant to be implemented, to constitute an opportunity for the future of the communities. The opportunity of taking advantage of quality and affordable living space should be guaranteed even to the most vulnerable sectors of the population: a scenario that becomes possible when institutional mechanisms are socially inclusive, supportive and capable of resolving requests, assuming a planning model in contrast to the phenomena of abandonment, degradation, or gentrification of some areas that define a contemporary city, with a systematic method of introducing housing policies in local urban planning. The most significant issue of the modern urbanism discipline is the belief that the high percentage of people that own the home in which they live, can constitute an adequate guarantee concerning the satisfaction of housing needs; actually, this need has taken on the characteristics of an emergency; recognizable in the exponential increase in evictions, especially in the areas of large urban metropolises, and has become a structural socio-economic feature of the population, and a measure of the inefficiency of cities.

Changes linked to different demographic trends, migration, and the economic crisis have contributed to the birth of new population segments, who; despite not being in an desperate poverty condition; cannot afford any means of access to the housing market: retirees, elderly people living alone, single-income families, young students and immigrants, who are experiencing a blockage of opportunities for professional fulfillment, the impossibility of creating new families, and in general an unsustainable lowering of the quality of life. Local urban planning must respond to these issues, addressed towards a disorganic manner, very often only in regional laws. In the first place, meeting housing needs is recognised as a key component of urban efficiency, as well as of social cohesion

and integration; moreover, the important contribution that mechanisms of equalisation can offer to relaunch housing policies in the absence of public resources, especially for the reduction of the cost of certain areas, preponderant on the total cost of interventions , and for the redistribution of profits and enhancements arising from urban transformation.

These components are priority aspects for the territorialisation of housing policies, which must be able to be integrated into the municipal urban plan, which assumes the role of "infrastructure of urban policies and housing". Testing this new role requires clarity in legislative principles and operational methodologies to consolidate innovations introduced at regional and local level.

The systematic reduction of public resources, to be allocated to the construction of public housing and the evasion of housing demand, and the parallel increase in the need for welfare, makes it inevitable for housing policies to have to interface with an increasingly dilated economic and social crisis globally.

The strategies to be implemented must start from housing needs and ensure a widespread and integrated housing offer in the existing city, within the urban regeneration strategies and aimed at social cohesion and urban resilience.

To ensure the sustainability of the governance processes of urban transformations with the integration of housing policies within the decision-making and implementation processes, the system of actions implemented by public decision-makers must necessarily be based on innovative forms of public-private partnership, on the control of decision-making processes, and on participatory processes strongly marked by strategic choices preliminary to the planning phase.

The common trait that identifies the virtuous experiences in the practices of insertion of housing policies inherent to the provision of new social housing within the urban regeneration strategies is recognizable in the intention, when verifiable, of public clients, to correlate the principles of sustainability with the design of settlements capable of constituting more equitable and credible models for the contemporary city.

An excellent example to refer to the goals of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development within the integration of the housing policies tools into the urban regeneration strategies of the cities is the #Housing2030 Program, a joint international initiative of housing experts from over 56 governments through UNECE and UN-Habitat and 43,000 affordable housing providers and neighborhood developers represented by Housing Europe. The initiative aims to improve the capacity of the governments, both national and local, to provide an affordable housing system according to a proceeding of sustainable design of the settlements.

What does a concept with similar characteristics entail? It aims to provide a toolkit of tried

and tested housing policy solutions for policymakers, made of strategic land policy, purposeful investment and good governance.

An effective functioning of the housing system goes together with the necessity of good governance, and if it lacks the aforementioned functioning it does not work at its full potential. A clear division of roles among national, regional and local governments is required, to define responsibilities and systems of monitoring and accountability for decision making, policy development, and implementation.

In almost every European country exists a mechanism for the governance of public and social housing system, subsequently divided into regional legislation, which includes an housing system directly provided from the local government or public authorities, but the key concept is that urban planning should put human rights as the most important question of the issue of the urban sustainable development.

An effective housing strategy should be formulated alongside other relevant policies to sustainably shape more affordable and inclusive housing outcomes.

Another aspect who plays a major role in improving the capacity of housing systems to deliver affordable locations to live is the government of the land policies: a good system can shape markets that promote more inclusive, stable, and sustainable living environments, which strengthen communities and support productive economic development by enabling more affordable housing to be provided.

Another strategy to fight poverty through the integration of housing policies into the urban regeneration strategies in the cities is definitely to improve a system of sustainable housing for the environment: creating a climate - neutral housing through the decarbonization of housing stock.

Each country has different priorities to take care of, that range over from the need to make the housing stock energetically efficient, to the switch to renewable resources to produce energy: all these issues converge on the question of the energy prices, that is a significant part of the domestic expenditures; together with the increasing of land, property and rent prices, household are constantly put in a challenging economic situation, according to the so - called “energy poverty” phenomenon.

What tools contribute to climate-neutral housing construction and renovation?

Strategies provides to improve a legislation which prohibits an excessive rent increase when energy renovation does not respond to requirements, such as providing an economic support for the renovations itself; designating specific areas for zero - carbon social housing settlements, purchasing existent buildings for coordinating a program of accessible and affordable housing, building capacity in energy efficiency among building owners, managers and end-users.

Housing contributes significantly to social solidarity, environmental sustainability, and economic stability, and is central to people's and neighborhoods' lives, health, dignity and safety: policymakers have the responsibility to shape more resilient housing systems and ensure that decent homes and neighborhoods are affordable, safe and accessible, through effective and concrete policy tools: effective governance, strategic land policy, housing investment and active promotion of climate neutral and affordable neighborhoods.

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