

# HOUSING



**IS NOT A PRIVILEGE**



**IT'S A RIGHT!**

**EL CAMPAIGN PLAN  
2025 ON HOUSING**



**European LEFT**

**HOUSING**

**CAMPAIGN**

# EL CAMPAIGN PLAN 2025 ON HOUSING

The Party of the European Left (EL) believes that the right to housing is a crucial priority for the people of Europe. According to recent studies, many EU citizens are struggling to afford their housing costs, which have been rising significantly across the EU. Between 2010 and 2023, the average housing rent in the EU increased by 22%. Additionally, 10.6% of people in EU cities spent more than 40% of their disposable income on housing costs (compared to 7% in rural areas), 11% of the population were unable to adequately heat their homes (a situation referred to as «energy poverty»), and around 17% of the EU population lived in overcrowded home. Furthermore, young people are becoming independent later and later, while the number of homeless individuals continues to rise each year.<sup>1</sup> This highlights the urgent need for action. That's why, throughout 2025, the EL is embarking on a campaign to claim housing as a fundamental right, not a privilege reserved for the few.

Social movements, trade unions, and left-wing organizations are advancing proposals on this topic. This common vision must inspire us to build a campaign that fosters solidarity with all struggles to guarantee an essential element in the living conditions of the working class in Europe: decent and affordable housing.

Recent mobilizations, such as the housing protests in Spain, which saw over 100,000 people take to the streets in Madrid, reflect the frustration of working men and women struggling to make ends meet while investment funds drive up housing costs to unprecedented levels. Similar mobilizations in other cities highlight the urgent need for action.

Significant efforts are also being made at the institutional level. Examples include Austria, the city councils of Paris and Barcelona, and other municipalities implementing concrete measures. While detailing every initiative is beyond the scope of this document, we aim to synthesize and integrate the demands of social movements and trade unions with successful practices already in place.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Eurostat, *Housing in Europe* - 2024 edition.



# PROPOSALS TO ADDRESS THE HOUSING CRISIS

- **Public investment in public social housing** Expand social housing beyond lowest-income groups to include the broader population, inspired by concrete positive examples of universal housing models all over Europe. The EU can provide funding and support to member states without breaching regulations.
- **Legal caps on rent and sale prices:** Introduce legal measures at the national or local level to cap housing costs.
- **Regulate Tourist Rentals:** Limit the number of tourists use.
- **Restrict Speculative Ownership:** Control and limit housing ownership by vulture and investment funds.
- **Ban Evictions Without Alternatives:** Prohibit evictions unless adequate housing alternatives are provided.
- **Financial aid for Housing Rehabilitation:** Provide financial aid for housing rehabilitation that prioritize sustainability and energy efficiency criteria. This could be funded through European resources, such as financing at 0% interest or subsidized rates.
- **Contain interest rates and challenge ECB independence:** Advocate for policies to contain interest rates and challenge the European Central Bank's (ECB) independence, ensuring interest rates do not become tools of speculation that harm citizens.
- **Mobilize Unoccupied Housing:** reclaiming unused land and encourage the use of unoccupied housing.

The housing crisis is a huge issue that impacts the entire European working class. The main aim of this campaign, led by the Party of the European Left, is to fight for better living conditions for all.

While millions struggle for access to decent housing, the EU prioritizes increasing military spending under the pretext of increasing securitization driven by escalating armed conflicts. This blatant misallocation of resources must be challenged to address the real needs of people across Europe.



## DETAILS OF THE CAMPAIGN:

**DURATION OF THE CAMPAIGN:** FROM JANUARY TO NOVEMBER 2025.

**SLOGAN:** "HOUSING IS NOT A PRIVILEGE, IT'S A RIGHT".

### DEVELOPMENT OF THE CAMPAIGN IN TWO PHASES:

The first phase will build up awareness of the housing crisis and will focus on producing graphic materials and texts (we are collecting short reports of national situations) that can be utilized by the EL parties to highlight and denounce the commodification of housing . This phase is planned to last until May.

The second phase of the campaign will start in May and will concentrate on the issue to proposing solutions and alternatives.

Throughout both phases, activities will be organized in various countries, guided by proposals from member parties and additional suggestions received. Currently, we have activities planned in Austria, France, Greece, Italy, Spain, Belgium, and potentially Germany.

**Campaign activities:** Three types of activities will be carried out throughout the campaign, although additional activities may be considered as the campaign evolves. These include visits to examples of best practices, support for mobilizations in different countries, and visits to highlight problematic housing situations. Collaboration will also be sought with MEPs, inviting them to participate in various activities, while they may also propose other initiatives. We also aim to include representatives from the trade union community to broaden the scope and effectiveness of our actions.

The campaign will be co-organized and co-financed with EL member parties, The Left group and MEPs to generate synergies and greater impact in the different countries.

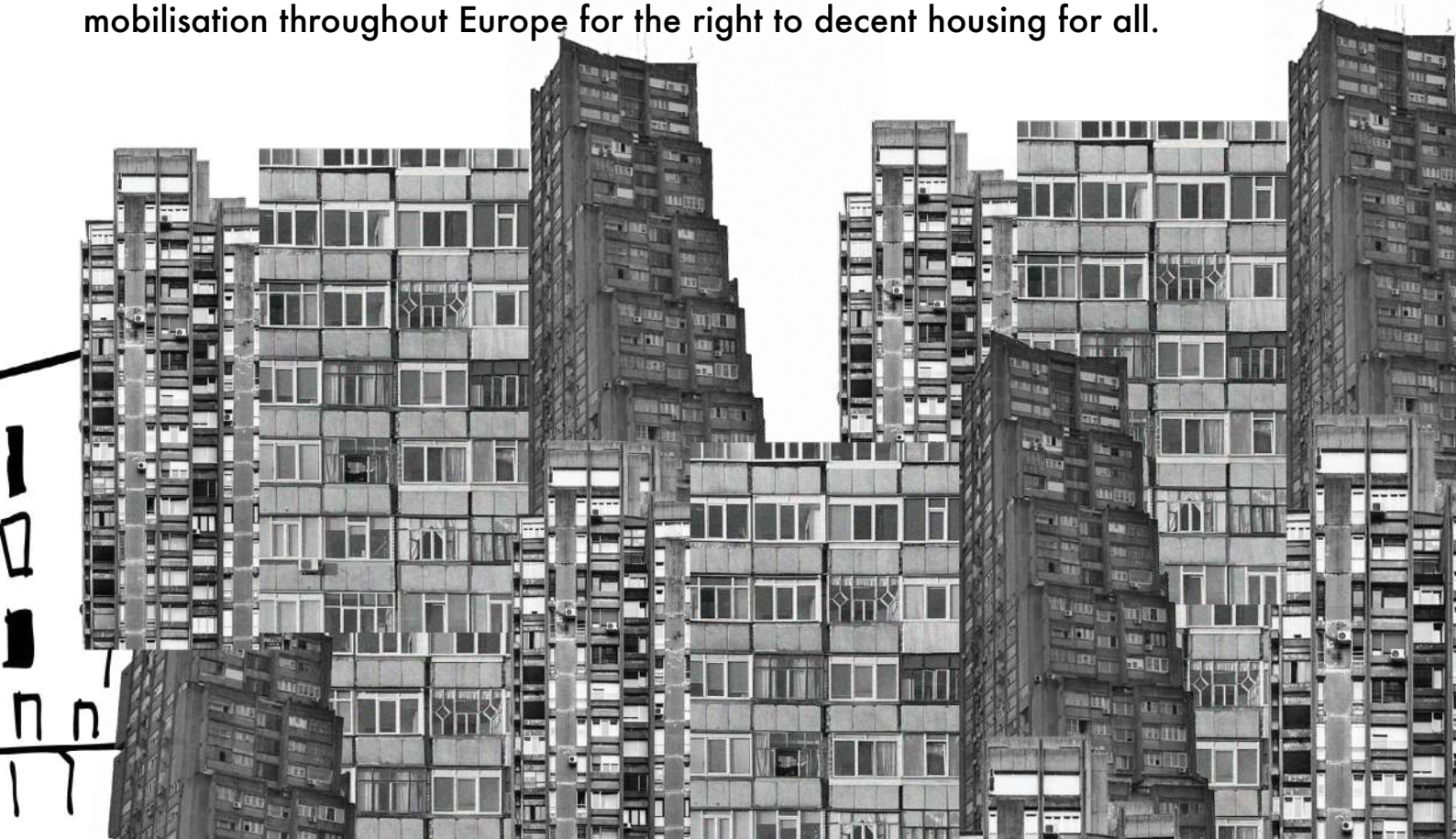


## AIMS OF THE CAMPAIGN:

- To fight for the improvement of living conditions for the working class in Europe.
- To raise awareness about housing issues across Europe.
- In collaboration with transform! europe, coordinate events to raise awareness on housing issues, either in EL events (e.g. Summer University) or in other conferences.
- To support the efforts of the European Left's member parties.
- Link the struggle for public services and decent employment to the housing issue.
- To develop and disseminate proposals to address the housing crisis.
- To support mobilizations from trade-union and civil society advocating for the right to decent housing in different countries.
- Coordinate at European level actions with trade unions and work on extending this collaboration to all levels (national, regional and local).
- To enhance collaboration with MEPs and The Left in the European Parliament, as well as local elected decision-makers.
- To increase the visibility of the Party of the European Left.

The European Commission will be approached with two key demands: to allocate public funds exclusively to public social housing and to promote direct financial support for people.

We see this campaign as a further boost to what could be a process of popular mobilisation throughout Europe for the right to decent housing for all.



## PRELIMINARY CAMPAIGN TIMELINE:

### FIRST PHASE - January to May 2025

Focus: Housing issues in Europe

Important dates:

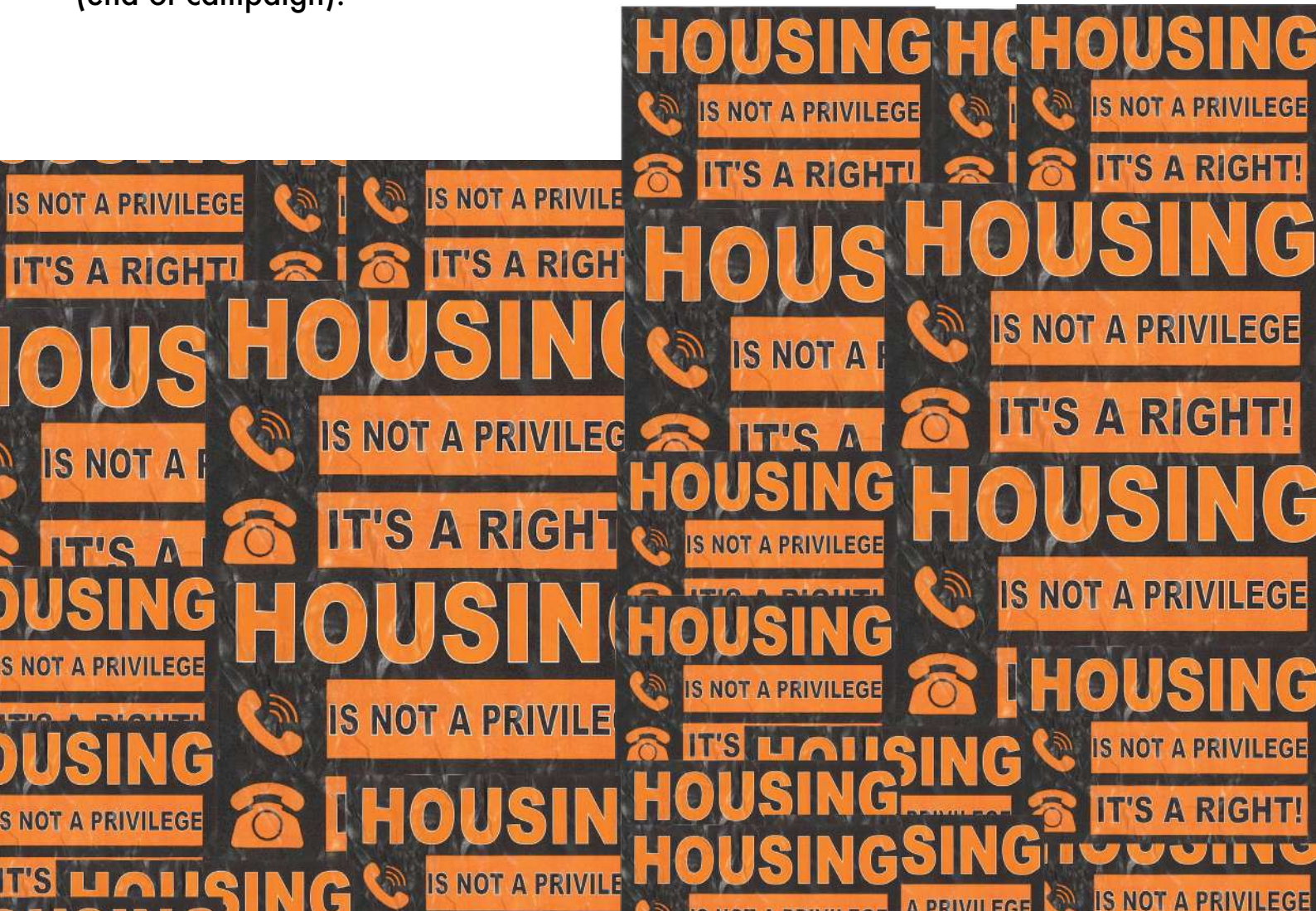
- 01/30: Digital launch of the campaign
- 02/14: Conference in Madrid: Best practices from regions and municipalities where the left is, or has been, in power.
- April: Activity in Marseille: actions and speeches against Airbnb and to improve housing conditions for students.
- May: Activity in Athens: link between housing issues and trade unions.

### SECOND PHASE - June to November 2025

Focus: Proposed solutions to housing issues in Europe

Key dates:

- June: Rome - as part of the Italian Social Forum on Housing
- July: as part of the Summer University of the EL and transform!europe
- Austria
- Berlin
- November: as part of the European Forum of Left, Green and Progressive Forces (end of campaign).



# **DRAFT: 5 FOCAL POINTS FOR CAMPAIGN COMMUNICATION:**

## **1. END HOUSING AS A COMMODITY – END SHORT-TERM RENTALS**

**Problem:** The financialization of housing has turned homes into profit-making assets rather than spaces for living. Short-term rentals and unchecked speculation drive up prices and push people out of their communities.

**Demand:** Enforce rent caps, implement rent controls, and regulate short-term rentals to ensure housing serves people, not profits.

## **2. HOUSING FOR PEOPLE, NOT PROFIT – PUBLIC NON-PROFIT HOUSING**

**Problem:** Private market housing has failed to meet the needs of workers and marginalized groups, prioritizing landlords' profits over public good.

**Demand:** Expand public control of housing through non-profit, social housing programs that guarantee affordable, quality homes for all.

## **3. YES TO HOMES, NO TO WAR MACHINES**

**Problem:** Governments spend billions on the war economy while neglecting urgent social needs like housing. Militarized budgets fuel destruction abroad and austerity at home.

**Demand:** Redirect funds from weapons to building affordable, sustainable housing. Prioritize peace and investment in communities.

## **4. HOUSING IS A FEMINIST ISSUE**

**Problem:** Housing insecurity disproportionately affects women, especially single mothers, survivors of domestic violence, and low-income workers. Safe, affordable homes are essential for gender equality.

**Demand:** Provide accessible housing options for women and families, fund shelters for survivors, and design housing policies that account for women's unique needs.

## **5. GREEN HOMES FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE**

**Problem:** The housing crisis and climate crisis are interconnected. Energy-inefficient homes contribute to environmental degradation, while climate change worsens housing insecurity.

**Demand:** Invest in green housing that is affordable, energy-efficient, and resilient to climate impacts. Make sustainable living accessible for all.

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