

## NEWS



Housing

## Together for the right to housing

Monday 22/10/2018

Upon a decision by the Board of Directors, Metropolis has endorsed the declaration **Cities for Adequate Housing**, launched by UCLG as a call for **housing to be treated as a human right, rather than as a commodity**. With this declaration, we join forces with the United Nations Member States and human rights bodies, local and regional governments, and civil society organizations, for the right to adequate, safe and affordable housing. (you can read the declaration [here](#))

Cities for Adequate Housing is a global call for action which builds on the campaign **“Make the Shift”**, launched by the UN Rapporteur on Adequate Housing. This is a worldwide movement to reclaim and realize the fundamental human right to housing – to move away from housing as a place to park excess capital, to housing as a place to live in dignity, to raise families and participate in community.

“Housing is only adequate if it is affordable, if it has potable water, sanitation facilities, electricity and other basic services and if it is close to schools, health services and employment opportunities. The right to housing is interdependent with other socio-economic human rights such as rights to health, education, and employment. It is also integrally connected to rights to non-discrimination and equality. And, because adequate housing is crucial to the social conditions necessary for human dignity, it is intimately connected to the right to life.” states the UN Rapporteur on Adequate Housing, Leilani Farha.

Across the world, real estate speculation is driving social exclusion and the disorderly expansion of metropolitan territories. When most of the income of citizens must be dedicated to housing, they are unable to cope with other vital expenses and are pushed away to resettle in marginalized urban areas. Although an absolute worldwide value for housing affordability is debatable, a common benchmark is that housing expenses should not surpass 30% of a dweller’s gross income. The preliminary results of a research carried out by the London School of Economics with 30 of our members for the **Metropolis Observatory** show that

the average of housing affordability in these metropolises is of 14% of citizens' income, with **Johannesburg and Atlanta with the most affordable rates** (respectively 2,5% and 2,6%), and **Shanghai with the least affordable housing rates** (42,8% of citizens' income).

The declaration **Cities for Adequate Housing** is particularly linked to concrete challenges pervading the realization of the right to housing faced by local and regional governments, such as the lack of national funding and market deregulation. Committing to the right to housing, we demonstrate a contribution to our shared commitment to the implementation of the SDG 11, to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

These are the Metropolis members that have already joined the declaration:

1. Ajuntament de Barcelona
2. Àrea Metropolitana de Barcelona
3. Câmara Municipal de Lisboa
4. EtheKwini Municipality (Durban)
5. Gobierno de la Ciudad de México
6. Greater Manchester Combined Authority
7. Intendencia de Montevideo
8. Seoul Metropolitan Government
9. Taipei City Government
10. The Governing Mayor of Berlin
11. Ville de Montréal

The Cities for Adequate Housing declaration is open to the endorsement of organizations and individuals. If you would like to join it please visit the website [citiesforhousing.org](http://citiesforhousing.org).