ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Ensuring the Right to Adequate Housing

Research Report

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Issue: *Ensuring the Right to Adequate Housing*

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Introduction

In today's society, homeless people are a common sight we have become accustomed to. As one of the worst consequences of lack of adequate housing, homelessness can be found anywhere around the world. It is undoubtedly a breach of human rights needing to be solved. Due to the escalation of housing prices worldwide, even people with moderate wages lack the financial means to buy or rent a decent home and face the threat of homelessness subsequent to, for example a divorce.

Adequate housing is both an issue for less economically developed countries (LEDCs) and for more economically developed countries (MEDCs) for different reasons. The people that are not able to access a house in a certain city, are inclined to create their own temporary housing just outside the borders, called slums. Usually, this temporary housing turns into permanent housing, causing major human rights issues, since housing in slums is not nearly adequate. More developed countries with a 'stable and secure' environment for investments face entirely different issues that influence housing problems. Foreign investors, mostly wealthy people, state their interest in buying homes which are being built inside the city. These luxury homes are unaffordable for many locals whether it is for purchase or rent. The ones who do buy these homes most often do so with the intention of buy-to-let. This situation causes inequality in the number of homes available in different price categories, causing an extreme lack of adequate housing in the lower price categories.

The issue is quite challenging to mitigate due to the fact that government and other funds' preferences often do not align with the interests of the adequate housing problems. In numerous countries there are rules on, for example, minimum lot sizes to ensure the quality of the housing that is built. International organisations such as the UN pressure for the quality of new housing projects to be sufficiently high according to their human right standards. However, this makes it hard for organisations or the state to build low-income housing. This forms a barrier between wanting to solve the housing problem and not wanting to spend the needed amount of money on it. The rise in cost of building materials has only worsened this problem more.

As it is evident this is an issue of great importance. There is a UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) which touches on the importance of adequate housing. Goal number 11 expresses: "Sustainable cities and communities" and encapsulates making "cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable". This includes ensuring adequate housing to everyone and fighting against all contingent issues such as: institutional racism, access to fundamental housing-related services, tenant protection, forced displacement.

Definition of Key Terms

Housing:
"Residential environment which includes, in addition to the physical structure that man uses for shelter, all necessary services, facilities, equipment and devices needed or desired for the physical and mental health and social well-being of the family".[1]

Secure Tenure:
"The legal right to continue living in or using a building, land, etc. that is rented from the owner"[2]

Mortgage:
"An agreement that allows you to borrow money from a bank or similar organisation, especially in order to buy a house, or the amount of money itself"[3]

Commodity:
"Commodity housing means housing that has been sold at a market price, and not (for example) as a subsidised benefit to employees and therefore subject to resale restrictions."[4]

Forced Evictions:
"Permanent or temporary removal against their will of individuals, families and/or communities from the homes and/or land which they occupy, without the provision of, and access to, appropriate forms of legal or other protection."[5]

Displacement:
"Physical displacement is the result of eviction, acquisition, rehabilitation, or demolition of property, or the expiration of covenants on rent- or income-restricted housing. Economic displacement occurs when residents and businesses can no longer afford escalating rents or property taxes"[6]

Poverty Rates:
"The poverty rate is the ratio of the number of people (in a given age group) whose income falls below the poverty line; taken as half the median household income of the total population."[7]

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[1] Habitat Editors. "Affordable Housing." *Habitat For Humanity*, https://www.habitat.org/emea/about/what-we-do/affordable-housing 10/9/2022
[2] Cambridge Editors. "Security of Tenure." *Cambridge Dictionary*, https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/security-of-tenure. 10/9/2022
[3] "Mortgage." *Cambridge Dictionary*, Cambridge Dictionary, https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/mortgage . 13/9/2022
[4] Unknown. "Commodity Housing Definition." *Law Insider*, https://www.lawinsider.com/dictionary/commodity-housing . 10/9/2022
[5] OHCHR Editors. "Forced Evictions and Human Rights." OHCHR, 15 Dec. 2015, https://www.ohchr.org/en/land/forced-evictions-and-human-rights. 10/9/2022
[6] Planopedia Editors. "What Is Displacement?" *Planetizen*, https://www.planetizen.com/definition/displacement . 10/9/2022
[7] OEDC Editors. "Inequality - Poverty Rate - OECD Data." *TheOECD*, https://data.oecd.org/inequality/poverty-rate.htm

Less Economically Developed Countries (LEDCS):
"The way that a country organises its use of money, goods, and trade is described as its economy. Some countries have less developed economies than others. These are sometimes referred to as less economically developed countries."[8]

More Economically Developed Countries (MEDCS):
"MEDCs are also called developed or industrialised countries, or MDCs (more developed countries). The MEDCs account for less than 20 percent of the world's total population."[9]

General Overview

To start off, the right to adequate housing has previously been discussed in numerous international charters and treaties, including the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the 1951 United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child, which offers children the right to adequate housing, international law that acknowledged the right to adequate housing, as used in article 25(1) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the basic international human rights conventions that recognized the right to adequate housing.

The right to adequate housing directly concerns all states, due to the fact that they all have approved at least one international treaty concerning adequate housing and have all agreed in protecting the right to adequate housing through international declarations, action plans or conference outcome documents. Most constitutions defend the right to sufficient housing or highlight the general obligation of the state to provide appropriate housing and living circumstances for each one of their citizens despite their racial background, gender, sexuality et cetera. Courts from other legal systems have also ruled on matters involving its enforcement, such as forced displacement, tenant protection, institutional racism, or access to fundamental housing-related services.

Key Aspects to Adequate Housing

[8] Britannica Editors. "LEDCS." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., https://kids.britannica.com/kids/article/less-economically-developed-countries/476290 . 10/9/2022
[9] Britannica Editors. "MEDCS." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., https://kids.britannica.com/kids/article/more-economically-developed-countries/476290 . 10/9/2022

The Committee of Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights of the United Nations (ECOSOC) has stated that the right to sufficient housing cannot be defined narrowly. Alternatively, it should be viewed as the right to habitat somewhere safe, peaceful, and dignified. The Committee's general remarks No. 4 (1991) on the right to appropriate housing and No. 7 (1997) on forced evictions explain the features of the right to adequate housing.

Prior to conducting research on this topic it is necessary to take into consideration what makes a house, adequate housing. And no, it is not just four constructed walls. The right to appropriate housing includes fundamental freedoms necessary for an individual to have a healthy lifestyle. These liberties include: protection from forced displacement and unjustified destruction and demolition of one's house; the right to be free from arbitrary interference within one's home, privacy, and family; and the right to choose one's abode, select where to live, and freedom of movement. Moreover, there are entitlements included in the right to appropriate housing. Those entitlements are: safekeeping of tenure; housing, territory, and property restitution; fair, without discriminating access to appropriate housing; and engagement in decisions that concern housing at the national and local levels and more.

More specifically, housing is insufficient if its inhabitants do not have a degree of tenure security that provides legal protection from enforced evictions, abuse, and other threats. On the other hand, housing is insufficient if its tenants have access to clean water, proper hygiene, energy for cooking, heating, electricity, kitchen equipment, or garbage disposal. As far as affordability is concerned, housing is insufficient if the cost jeopardises or curtails the inhabitants' fulfilment of other human rights. Then, on habitability, housing is characterised as inadequate if it does not ensure security or sufficient space, as well as protection from the cold, moisture, heat, rain, wind, various health dangers, and construction hazards. Its accessibility should be to each and everyone and take into account the rights of disadvantaged individuals.

Another important freedom which is usually disregarded is location. Housing is incompetent if it is isolated from career opportunities, medical services, schools, daycare providers, and other social facilities, or if it is located in polluted or dangerous areas. And lastly, cultural adequacy is of great importance and deems to be a major issue worldwide. Housing provided ought to be respectful towards all ethnical groups and cultural identities. If not, it cannot be put under the category of “adequate”.

Forced Evictions

As of recent years, one of the most common problems with housing is forced evictions and displacement. The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) has stated that no less than 2 million individuals are against their force evicted worldwide each year, with a million more threatened to become displaced. Protection from forced evictions is a fundamental feature of the right to sufficient housing and is inextricably tied to security of tenure.

Forced evictions occur during numerous circumstances and for a variety of reasons, such as to open the way for growth and infrastructure initiatives, urban refurbishment or city rejuvenation, or prestigious global events, as a consequence of disputes over land rights, armed conflicts, or discriminatory societal patterns.Forced evictions are generally violent and primarily affect the poor, who frequently face additional human rights breaches following the eviction. In many cases, forced evictions exacerbate the situation they intend to solve. They may be recognized as a crime, a severe infringement of human rights and a possible violation of the right to appropriate shelter. Large-scale evictions can, in general, be acceptable only in rare situations and only if they occur in conformity with the applicable principles of International law.

Even if eviction is justified due to repeated inability by the tenant to pay rent or damages of the property, without valid reasoning, the government must guarantee that it is handled in a legitimate, reasonable, and proportional way, and in conformity with international law. Evicted people should have effective legal resources, particularly fair compensation for personal property lost as a result of the eviction. Evictions should not leave people destitute or susceptible to subsequent human rights abuses. Generally speaking, international human rights law compels governments to consider all viable options prior to conducting any eviction in order to prevent, or at least reduce, the necessity for force.

Whenever evictions are carried out as a last option, people impacted must be provided with sufficient procedural safeguards, which may discourage future evictions. These include: a chance of discussion; sufficient and fair warning; timely access to information on the planned eviction; and the participation of state officials throughout it.

Adequate Housing on Specific Social Groups

Rent burdens and evictions disproportionately affect communities of colour. According to studies from the United States of America (USA), individuals of colour, notably Black and Latinx people, account for around 80% of those facing eviction. One study found that, after adjusting for education, Black households are more than twice as likely as white households to be evicted. In a Milwaukee research, women from Black communities accounted for 30% of evicted renters while being just 9.6% of the city's population. In Boston, 70% of market-rate evictions were filed in neighbourhoods of colour, despite the fact that such regions account for roughly half of the city's rental market.

Researchers from UC Berkeley and the University of Washington showed the number of evictions for Black families in Baltimore outpaced those for white households by approximately 200%, with the Black renter eviction rate exceeding the white renter eviction rate by 13%. A sample of housing court cases in New York City revealed that 70% of families in housing court are headed by a female of colour, often Black or Hispanic. Even after adjusting for poverty and income rates, about 60% of primarily Black communities in Virginia had an annual eviction rate of more than 10% of families, which is almost four times the USA's national average. From 2016 to 2018, the top ten eviction filing tracts in Cleveland were all majority Black tracts, with just six having poverty rates exceeding 10%.

Due to previously constructed societal norms that apply to this day to numerous nations, tenure is frequently interpreted, documented, or registered in the name of males, making women reliant on male relatives for tenure security. Furthermore, while collective forms of tenure might include women, decision-making is frequently controlled by men. Studies have shown that women have limited personal or economic autonomy when they lack authority over housing, land, or property, and they are more exposed to abuse within the family,

community, and society at large. They also mention that when a woman's access to housing, land, or property is contingent on a third party, she is susceptible to homelessness, poverty, and destitution if the connection fails[10].

The above are only a few of the social groups that struggle with adequate housing. This also applies to displaced refugees and migrants that do not have the economic ability to purchase housing, people with disabilities that suffer from stigmatization in the market, indigenous people that suffer with systemic discrimination in the housing market and more.

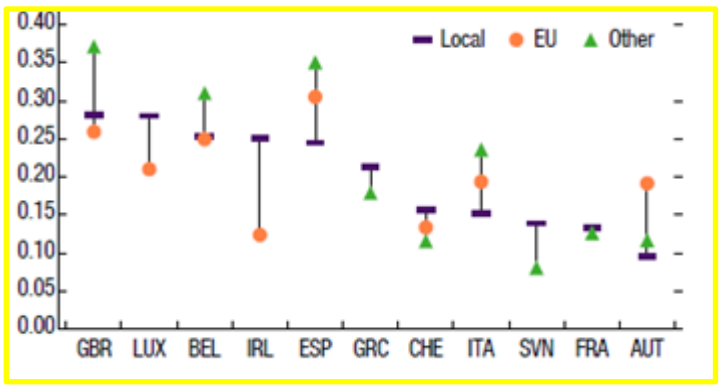

Figure 1: Share of Overburdened Tenants Renting at Market Price within nationalities

Homeless People and Slums

Figure 2: Sustainable Development Goal Number 11

By the end of 2008, it was estimated that half of the world's population was living in cities, many of which lacked appropriate infrastructure and services. According to UNHabitat, the world's 1 billion poor people living in slums are the most vulnerable urban dwellers. More than 930 million slum residents live in developing nations, accounting for 42% of the urban population. This proportion is especially high in Sub-Saharan Africa, where slum dwellers account for 72% of the urban population, and in Southern Asia, where they account for 59%. Slums are characterised by a lack of long-term housing, limited living space, a lack of clean water, inadequate sanitation, and other issues.

Slum-dwellers frequently lack tenure security due to the informal nature of their settlements, making them subject to forceful evictions, threats, and other types of harassment. According to UN-Habitat, around 2 million people are forcibly evicted each year, the majority of them are slum residents. Forced evictions often have severe consequences on these inhabitants, leaving them destitute and pushing them farther into poverty.

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[10] OHCHR Editors. "The Right to Adequate Housing, Fact Sheet No. 21 Rev 1". *OHCHR* https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Publications/FS21_rev_1_Housing_en.pdf . 26/10/2022

Authorities, whether national or municipal, are frequently hesitant to provide basic services to slums precisely due to the fact that they are characterised as "informal". As a result, slum inhabitants have little or no access to safe drinking water, appropriate sanitation, or power, and garbage collection is either restricted or non-existent. Slum dwellers sometimes pay 5 to 10 times more for water than higher-income urban residents because slums are not linked to piped water systems.

Homelessness is usually associated with households that lack a shelter that falls within the definition of living quarters. Individuals carry their few goods with them when sleeping in the streets, doorways, piers, or any other location. It has been emphasised that restrictive definitions are insufficient, and that in developing nations, the most popular definitions recognize that social exclusion is a component of the homeless experience. In this regard, UN-Habitat emphasises that homelessness involves belonging nowhere rather than merely having someplace to sleep. Due to the lack of a generally agreed-upon definition of homelessness, there is inadequate data on the magnitude of this situation, which impedes the creation of cohesive plans and policies.

The Current Crisis

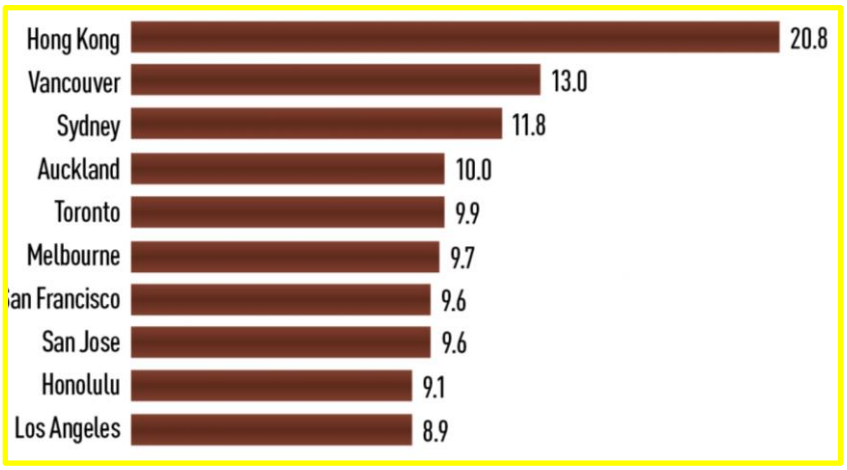

Figure 3: Least affordable housing markets ranked by house prices to income ratio

According to a 2019 survey conducted by the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy (LILP), 90 percent of the 200 cities questioned were judged expensive to live in, based on average housing price in relation to median income. COVID-19's influence has only exacerbated the housing problem, and government programs aimed to avert economic instability created are not sustainable in the long run.

Housing prices throughout the world grew dramatically in the final half of 2020 and the first half of 2021; in the USA, prices rose by 11 percent over the time, the quickest rate in 15 years, while in New Zealand, prices rose by 22 percent. As a result, numerous nations, notably Italy and the United States, enacted provisions to safeguard mortgage holders against foreclosure. The argument for this was that mortgages might be reduced while earnings remained stagnant, and many people were becoming unemployed as a result of the epidemic.

The growth in home prices also corresponds with rising demand for more housing as a result of a growing population and demographic shifts. This demand for housing has been especially strong in city centres, where there are adequate transportation options and a surplus of public amenities.

The decline in homeownership as a result of expensive housing has called into question the economic benefits of home ownership even more. Home ownership has long been celebrated as the ultimate aim, particularly in MEDCS. However, it appears to be a dysfunctional idea at times, resulting in yawning inequities, as well as inflaming generational and regional differences in LEDCS.

Prior to COVID-19, shortage of affordable housing had already been prevalent worldwide. This was aided by an expansion of luxury tower blocks in cities throughout the world, which was partly motivated by the rise of foreign investors. As a result, housing for poor and middle-income residents in LEDCS are in limited supply. In recent decades, Vancouver has been seen as a safe haven for rich Chinese to safeguard their money. This has resulted in a rise in the affluence of specific regions of the city, which has reduced the city's general living affordability.

House prices in the United States have risen by approximately 40% since 2000, with the median home in 200 US cities now costing $1 million. For the great majority of the people, home ownership has become unreachable. The National Low Income Housing Coalition concluded that a tenant working 40 hours per week and earning minimum wage cannot afford a two-bedroom apartment in the United States. Exclusionary zoning regulations, which prohibit new projects in specific parts of the United States, are one of the causes of the housing crisis. There are also rules establishing minimum lot sizes and requiring a certain number of parking spaces per development.

Some cities throughout the world have been working on affordable housing plans to tackle the housing issue for the last few years, and ideally these innovative means of handling the housing crisis may be learned from and used on a worldwide scale. In Australia, the state government of Sydney announced in 2018 a cooperation with the private sector and community housing organisations to create and repair 23,000 social housing apartments around the city.

According to the LILP statistics, while household debt may stimulate economic development and employment in the near term, people are eventually obliged to cut back on spending to repay these loans. As a result, debt harms the economy in the long term, and hence inexpensive housing is ultimately advantageous for both homeowners and the economy both in MEDCS and LEDCS. While it is critical to find a solution to the existing discrepancy between home prices and incomes, it is equally critical to investigate other alternatives to overpriced housing in cities. This involves reusing empty sites and upgrading transportation linkages in order to enhance the quantity of available land.

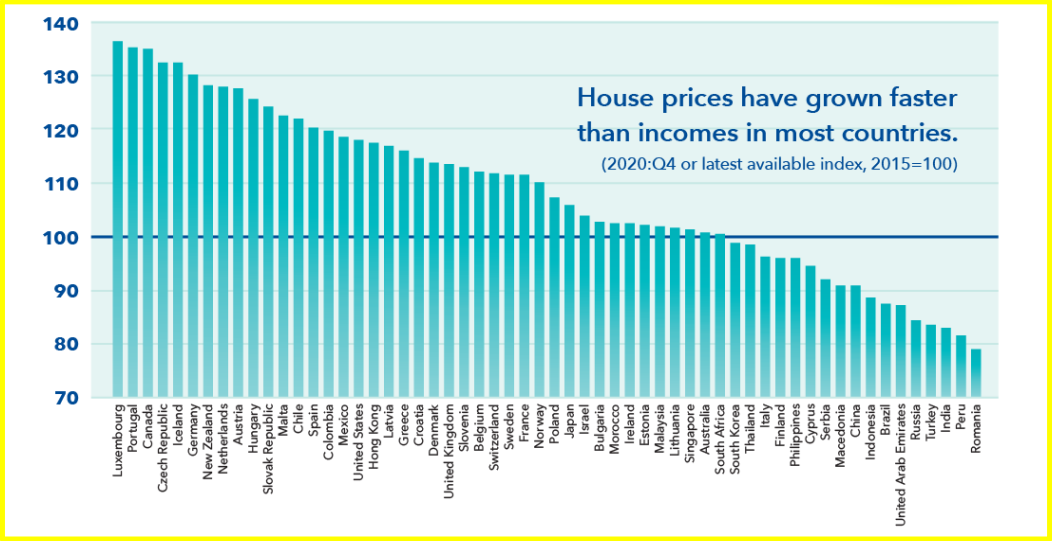

Figure 4: House Price to Income Ratio Around the Globe

Major Parties Involved

Australia

Despite the fact that, in Australia, laws and policies concerning the right of adequate lack of affirmation, there have been numerous notable innovative programs which strive to mitigate housing issues in their cities. For instance, there was a partnership established in Sydney, between the state government, the private sector, and community housing groups to develop and renovate social housing units throughout different neighbourhoods. In Melbourne, apartments were built through a certain scheme of which the first small part was sold at market rate enabling the necessary deposit and repayments to be reduced on the others. However, these innovative programmes did not solve the serious discrimination those who do not have the means to purchase a home suffer, especially in the private rental housing market. This discrimination is caused by the affordability problems of housing and the home-ownership model in Australia.

China

China has the world's biggest housing market and the world's least affordable housing market, Hong-Kong. The worsening gap in income, wealth and housing quality between those who rent and home-owners is worrisome. Home-owners are able to gain affordability in their housing, and renters are often immigrant workers who do not have full citizen rights or young graduates. Home-owners, as opposed to renters, have privileges such as the right to local schools. In China's plans this will gradually be phased out however, and some cities have put caps on the housing prices.

Local governments in China are dependent on revenue from land lease premium more than ever before, similarly to India. Similar to India as well is the way in which many low income people are forcefully evicted and their houses demolished to make room for other building projects. Evictions are a big problem in China and it is dangerous to protest or call for your rights when you are evicted.

India

In India home demolition is a massive issue with either an organisation or state authorities being responsible. For example: in 2015, Indian Railways levelled over 1,500 homes in Shakur Basti, Delhi without notice or rehabilitation. No one has been held accountable and the state denies any causality between the eviction and the deaths. It has been characterised as a violation of multiple laws and international human rights standards.[11] Low income housing is almost nowhere to be found in India, resulting in improvised temporary housing with no provision of tenure security on the land.

India is a great example of the financialization of housing provision. They are reliant on the private sector to meet their housing shortage. This causes adequate housing to be viewed as merely for those who can afford it which results in the state not investing in public housing. Real estate organisations in India often use affordability as an excuse to receive government funding to cheaply build middle class housing instead of those with the most urgent need.

The best way for India to go about their housing crisis would be to offer provision of land with tenure security instead of constructing homes, since these homes are not affordable for the ones in need. A human rights based approach would reduce the amount of effort needed to solve their housing crisis.

Since affordability of construction materials of housing has decreased, India found a special construction material which uses a minimal amount of expensive materials. Houses made from this material could be more affordable, however the material is not yet often used in construction.

United States of America (USA)

In the United States of America, there are no federal laws guaranteeing the right to adequate housing, even though they have signed numerous international resolutions regarding the right. Housing is treated more as a commodity than a right resulting in an immense affordability crisis, with a shortage of at least 7 million affordable homes. Since it is considered as a commodity, managing, providing, and funding affordable housing is not the responsibility of governing bodies. The US housing market is very attractive for foreign investment because of its secure and stable environment, meaning it is more in the interests of organisations and corporations to build luxury homes than affordable homes. As a result, statistics showcase an increasing number of families in the US spending more than fifty percent of their income on housing.

Recognising adequate housing as a right by federal law could bestow responsibility onto city governments and landlords for lack of affordable housing, criminalisation of homelessness, and evictions. Some recent proposals have used adequate housing as a right, for justifying investments in adequate housing affordability and construction. As of now, Americans are provided with some protection, such as freedom from housing discrimination through the Fair Housing Act. However, the effects of the protection against housing discrimination are not sufficient to equalise the, still, enormous disparities between different ethnicities and income groups.

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[11] Twaalfhoven, Becky. "The Human Right to Adequate Housing in India: Obstacles and Challenges." Georgetown Journal of International Affairs, 12 Nov. 2019, www.gjia.georgetown.edu/2019/03/22/human-right-to-adequate-housing-india

European Union (EU)

The EU recognizes the right to decent housing as a human right containing clean and high-quality drinking water, adequate sanitation and hygiene facilities, as well as connection to sewage and water networks. Its Member States have urged for minimum mandatory requirements for homes to be introduced, for example good indoor air quality aligned with WHO standards.[12] As of now the European rules are mostly to protect housing market profits, not the ones looking for a home. They want this to change. The EU has sufficient (financial) capability to be able to shift the focus and the adequacy of housing in their countries.

International Monetary Fund (IMF)

The IMF is an agency of the United Nations, and an international financial institution.[13] Their goal is to maintain global monetary cooperation, offer financial stability and a platform for international trade, improve economies and reduce worldwide poverty, and make resources available for member countries in financial difficulty. The means the IMF uses to reach their goals are funds, gathering statistics and analysis, recommending a specific policy, and keeping track of their members' economies.

The IMF organises conferences on which policies are discussed, for example on housing issues. They recommend holding the governmental bodies responsible for housing matters and recognising housing as a human right.

Timeline of Events

December 10, 1948	Universal Declaration of Human Rights (including the right to adequate housing)
December 16, 1966	Signing of International Covenant on Economic and Social Rights which enshrines adequate housing
1987	Realising the Right to Adequate Housing
1991	Declaration of the Key Aspects to Adequate Housing
1997	Protection from Evictions Act

[12] MEPs: Access to Adequate Housing Should Be a Fundamental European Right | News | European Parliament. 21 Jan. 2021, www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20210114IPR95632/meps-access-to-adequate-housing-should-be-a-fundamental-european-right .

[13] Wikipedia contributors. "International Monetary Fund." *Wikipedia*, 10 Sept. 2022, www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Monetary_Fund .

2000	Mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing
2018	Sydney cooperation with the private industry and community housing organisations to create and repair social housing apartments and Melbourne foundation of the apartment project
2019	India discovery of a less expensive construction material and Texas introduction of 3D printing to construct houses
2020	Renewed Resolution on the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing
2020-present	Housing Shortage Crisis

Relevant Documents

- **International Covenant on Economic and Social Rights**

  A covenant signed in 1966 in the General of the United Nations (UN) which "enshrines economic, social and cultural rights such as the rights to adequate food, adequate housing, education, health, social security, water and sanitation, and work."

- **CESCR General Comment No. 4: The Right to Adequate Housing (Art. 11 (1) of the Covenant)**

  A covenant adopted at the Sixth Session of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, on 13 December 1991 identifying certain aspects of the right to housing that must be taken into consideration when applying (key aspects).

- **The Right to Adequate Housing: Fact Sheet No. 21/Rev.1**

  A report published by the Office of the United Nations Human Rights Commissioner (OHCHR) and United Nations Human Settlement Program (UN Habitat) covering the definition of adequate housing, the key aspects of it, the groups it affects and other information necessary to gain a better understanding of the situation.

- **Covid-19 and the Right to Adequate Housing**

  A report published by OHCHR concerning the impact of COVID-19 on housing shortages and their rise of prices as well as the way to move forward.

Possible Solutions

Firstly, it would be beneficial to thoroughly inform people, organisations and governing bodies on the magnitude of the adequate housing problem prevailing worldwide and the pressing need to solve it, while also noting the economic and social profits of adequate housing for every party. Adequate housing is very contingent to all basic human rights and therefore should be a top priority. The fact that it is not a top priority anywhere, means it would be a good start to bring awareness to the problem everywhere important. Making people cognizant of the situation will lead to more help on the issue as a whole.

This would be a concrete start, encouraging countries to add the right to adequate housing and the freedoms it contains to their constitutions. These should include: protection against forced evictions and the arbitrary destructions and demolition of one's home; the right to be free from arbitrary interference with one's home, privacy, and family; the right to choose one's residence, determine where to live and to freedom of movement; security of tenure; housing, land and property restitution; equal access to adequate housing; and participation in housing-related decision making on national and community level.[14]

Furthermore, it would be advantageous for countries to protect the right to adequate housing with the assistance of appropriate government policies and programmes, including national housing strategies. This could be done by following the example Australia has set by reusing and renovating buildings in order to create adequate homes in their cities. National housing programmes would need to fulfil all key elements of adequate housing. As analysed in the general overview section these elements include: security of tenure, availability of services, affordability, habitability, accessibility, location (housing is not adequate if it is cut off from employment opportunities, health-care services, schools, childcare centres and other social facilities, or if located in polluted or dangerous areas) and cultural adequacy (housing is not adequate if it does not respect and take into account the expression of cultural identity). To increase the amount of land available for people to live happily in, countries should discuss ways to make the city centre more accessible from outside of the city itself. More specifically, laying new roads for cars that connect the country as a whole or by investing in increased and improved public transport.

Possibly, setting up a goal of, for instance, a certain number of adequate houses needing to be added through projects per year, will help motivate countries to work on their status quo on solving the adequate housing issue. Lastly, it would be useful to consider new appropriate governmental policies regarding the tremendous effects corporate relocations and foreign investment have on the housing market in certain countries.

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