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Taskforce on Affordable, Sustainable Housing

Submitted By: Institute for Human Rights and Business

Organization Profile

Organization Name: Taskforce on Affordable, Sustainable Housing (TASH)

Organization Type: Civil society

Website:
https://www.ihrb.org/projects/taskforce-on-affordable-and-sustainable-housing-tash

Practice Details

Country(ies): No specific country

City(ies): No specific town

Start Year: 2021 **Ongoing:** Yes **End Year:** N/A

Main Adequate Housing Components:

Affordability

Accessibility

Housing Thematic Areas:

Housing Affordability & Financing

Housing & Climate Mitigation

Housing Policy, Legislation & Governance

Relevant SDGs:

1 NO POVERTY

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

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Problem & Context

The global housing crisis threatens both social stability and climate action. With 1.8 billion people lacking adequate housing and real estate accounting for 38% of global emissions, current investment patterns are accelerating inequality and environmental degradation.

Real estate is the world's largest asset class, yet institutional investors face no common standards to ensure affordability or sustainability. In 2024, only 1% of leading real estate firms reported on affordability in their disclosures. This lack of accountability enables displacement, crowding out of individual buyers, and rising emissions. Policy gaps—especially in financial regulation, corporate accountability, and investment standards—have allowed these harms to persist unchecked, despite growing evidence that better-aligned capital in the housing ecosystem could transform it for the better.

Solution Developed

TASH (Taskforce on Affordable, Sustainable Housing) is a global initiative aligning real estate investment with the right to housing and climate goals. It addresses the dual challenge of affordability and sustainability by creating standards that guide capital flows toward socially and environmentally just outcomes. Its main beneficiaries are low-income and marginalised groups most vulnerable to housing insecurity and unaffordability and climate impacts.

TASH's objectives include: (1) co-creating investor standards that reflect planetary boundaries and human rights; (2) promoting investment structures that prevent displacement and financial speculation; and (3) embedding housing justice in global and regional regulations. Its approach is uniquely systemic, bridging human rights, climate action, and finance.

Innovations include an accountability mapping of investor and state responsibilities, a risk framework for real estate actors, and a collaborative governance model across NGOs, regulators, and investors.

Implementation

TASH membership includes: the Institute for Human Rights and Business, The Shift, Predistribution Initiative, World Benchmarking Alliance, and International Union of Tenants. Together, they represent a unique cross-section of actors across the housing ecosystem—investors, business, and rights holders—enabling inclusive and viable solutions.

Supported by €250,000 from Laudes Foundation and $55,000 from ClimateWorks, TASH's work to date has encompassed (i) A strategic scoping review to identify gaps and value-add; (ii) Building a diverse multi-stakeholder coalition; (iii) Analysing over 200 reports to develop an evidence base on housing, finance, and sustainability; (iv) Mapping accountability mechanisms and identifying regulatory entry points; and (v) Hosting multi-stakeholder convenings to collectively shape the initiative.

Each founding member brings unique expertise and understanding of the main leverage points and constituencies—PDI on financial structures and investor practice, IUT and The Shift on resident protections, WBA and IHRB on business models, benchmarks, and frameworks—ensuring relevance and legitimacy. Planning began in early 2021, with a European pilot phase in 2024 and 2025. Resources supported European research, network-building, and the design of implementation frameworks, while partnerships ensured alignment with policy trends like the EU Affordable Housing Initiative and CSRD. In 2026, we aim to expand the work to a global scale.

Enablers & Obstacles

TASH emerged in response to the global housing crisis, where private capital plays an increasingly central role—reflected in initiatives like the European Commission's Affordable Housing Platform and the growth of asset manager capitalism worldwide.

A key enabler is TASH's coalition: an unlikely yet powerful alliance across investor (PDI), business (WBA, IHRB), and resident (IUT, The Shift) perspectives. This diversity allows for credible, balanced solutions in a time of political polarization and eroding trust. TASH's ability to convene across sectors creates space for constructive dialogue and shared frameworks.

Obstacles include a lack of common standards, investor short-termism, and limited data on social outcomes. These are addressed through rigorous research, alignment with regulatory trends, and co-creation with stakeholders. The urgency of housing insecurity and climate breakdown adds momentum, making TASH's approach timely, feasible, and globally replicable.

Results & Impact

TASH's European pilot has generated foundational outputs with global relevance:

- A summary of 200+ documents outlining the impacts—positive and negative—of different investment models on housing affordability & sustainability. E.g. Cities like Berlin, London, Amsterdam, Paris and Vienna have greater investor influence in residential markets (https://tinyurl.com/3nwhahdy); investor strategies in Madrid have led to unaffordability, inhabitability and low security of tenure (https://tinyurl.com/2pfnz2am);
- An accountability map identifying where investor and state obligations intersect and where standards are absent;
- A governance model enabling inclusive participation across sectors and regions;
- Increased recognition by institutional actors of the need for investment frameworks that integrate human rights & climate goals.

These outputs are shaping investor standards, advocacy efforts, and benchmarks across Europe and beyond. Importantly, TASH centres the experience of marginalized households—

especially renters facing eviction, poor housing, or market exclusion—and ensures their priorities inform the investment agenda.

Longterm, TASH's work will help shift capital flows toward energy-efficient, affordable homes that support resilient, inclusive communities. By embedding social and environmental obligations into investor practices and regulatory frameworks, TASH supports systemic transformation—reducing emissions, enhancing equity, and improving housing security globally.

Replication & Scale Up

The approach we have taken is scalable and must, in fact, be scaled to the global level in order to tackle a global crisis, particularly given the mobility of global capital and the increasing role played by real estate investors in growing economies.

While the work we've undertaken so far has global implications, the focus of the research has been on the European context. With additional funding, we would be keen to scale this work further to other regions and continents.

Our proposed approaches to scaling include

- Expand membership to include organisations with expertise in additional regions / contexts
- Complement EU research with global insights, including evidence of good practice and alternate investment structures
- Expand accountability mechanisms mapping to the global scale
- Research and co-development of tools/guidance that informs good practice and alternate investment
- structures
- Dissemination

Policy Uptake

This housing practice has informed or been partially integrated into policy discussions, strategies, or pilot-level policy instruments.

This work is being embedded in emerging frameworks such as the Taskforce on Inequality and Social-Related Financial Disclosures, The European Affordable Housing Plan, the EU Commission's Pan-European Platform for Affordable and Sustainable Housing, and the Global Real Estate Sustainability Benchmark

Lessons & Takeaways

We would love to broaden the range of actors involved in the process, and to test the recommendations with practical pilot projects.