

There's no room for old utopias in the housing crisis

In recent times, we have seen a worrying increase in the illegal occupation of property in Portugal. This is undoubtedly a consequence of the severe housing crisis the country is facing, marked by a shortage of affordable housing and the consequent difficulty many families have in finding a decent home.

Faced with this scenario of near catastrophe, it is essential that the response to this problem remains on the agenda, in order to guarantee a decent response to all those who need it. How can we want to affirm our country as a fair and developed place if, because of this crisis, we see radical practices like these? The state must intervene quickly and in a structured way to enable all citizens to lead their lives with dignity.

Illegal occupation cannot be seen as a viable solution to the housing problem. While it is understandable that many families resort to this route out of sheer desperation, it is crucial that the state and the various players in the sector work together to create effective responses that reconcile the right to housing with respect for private property and the normal functioning of the property market.

I have been warning of the need for public policies that promote an increase in housing supply, namely by speeding up licensing processes, creating incentives for private investment in the construction of affordable housing and strengthening the public housing stock; as well as the all-important reduction in VAT on construction.

The real estate sector is prepared to collaborate actively in the implementation of these measures, but it is essential that there is a favourable regulatory environment that allows the solutions to be put into practice quickly.

In order to overcome the current housing crisis, it is essential to adopt a holistic and pragmatic approach. We must invest in solutions that promote a balance between supply

and demand, allowing more Portuguese to have access to housing at prices compatible with the country's economic reality. The creation of public-private partnerships, the promotion of affordable rentals and the rehabilitation of vacant buildings is a valid path that cannot be overlooked in the shadow of old and outdated ideological utopias. We need to put solutions on the table now!

The housing challenge demands responsibility and commitment from everyone. The way forward is through constructive dialogue between the public and private sectors, with a view to developing structured and lasting solutions. APPII will continue to defend a strong property sector, capable of responding to the needs of the population, always on the basis of legal certainty, trust and the sustainable development of the country. If we are looking for a solution to the housing problem in Portugal, we want to be part of that solution.

Get to work now!