

### **PRR and housing: the private sector is ready. What about the state?**

In recent years, the issue of housing has become one of the biggest social, economic and political concerns in Portugal. Today we face an accumulated housing supply deficit that compromises the quality of life of thousands of families, exacerbates inequalities and constitutes a serious obstacle to the country's economic growth. In this context, the Recovery and Resilience Plan (PRR) presents itself as a unique - and perhaps unrepeatable - opportunity to turn the page on this structural problem.

This is an unprecedented financial allocation, with more than 2.7 billion euros earmarked exclusively for strengthening affordable housing, spread over different axes ranging from the construction of new homes to the rehabilitation of buildings. However, as with other structural portfolios in the country, implementation has fallen far short of expectations.

More than two years after the launch of the RRP, the reality is that many projects have yet to get off the ground, blocked by a tangle of procedures, bureaucratic obstacles, delays in public tenders and difficulties in coordination between entities. Time is running out and, with it, the credibility of this historic opportunity.

It is at this time that the importance of the private sector's role in this equation must be reinforced. The Portuguese Association of Real Estate Developers and Investors (APPII) has reiterated, in every instance, the sector's total willingness to collaborate with the state and municipalities in responding to this national challenge. The private sector has the execution capacity, technical know-how, operational agility and, above all, the will to invest in sustainable, long-term solutions.

The public-private partnership model is increasingly the key to tackling the housing shortage. Whether it's through the transfer of public land under a surface right regime, the promotion of affordable rental housing with tax and urban planning counterparts, or the creation of innovative financial instruments that mobilize institutional investment, there are concrete and feasible paths that can - and should - be explored.

However, for this to happen, it is essential to create an environment of trust and stability. Legal certainty, regulatory predictability and administrative simplification are not just wishes of the sector: they are *sine qua non* conditions for investment. The state has a decisive role to play in creating this ecosystem favorable to cooperation, and must act as a facilitator rather than an obstacle to projects coming to fruition.

It is also important to ensure that municipalities have the necessary technical and human resources to implement the RRP projects, as well as clear and cohesive guidance on the strategic

objectives to be achieved. Decentralization, while positive, cannot be synonymous with fragmentation and inefficiency.

Housing is a constitutional right, but it is also a pillar of the country's social cohesion and economic competitiveness. We cannot continue to waste time, capital and trust. The RRP is an opportunity for structural transformation and must be taken with the seriousness and sense of urgency that the moment demands.

The message is clear: we have the resources, we have the knowledge, we have the right partners. What's needed now is execution. And fast. Portuguese families have already waited too long. I **reinforce the message I've been giving: the time to act is now!**