OCTOBER 2026 NEWS



Build Europe Congress in Naples: housing challenges, urban regeneration, and award-winning projects

Build Europe's Congress brought members together in Naples from 28 to 30 October 2026 for discussions on housing markets, European policy and the conditions needed to deliver more homes. Organised in cooperation with Confindustria Assoimmobiliare, Build Europe's Italian member, the Congress also included the Build Europe Awards and visits to urban regeneration projects. The Awards ceremony took place on Wednesday 28 October at Castel Nuovo, also known as Maschio Angioino, following a guided visit to the castle and its museum. The ceremony recognised projects combining architectural and environmental quality with practical benefits for residents and communities.

The Grand Prix was awarded jointly to Evanesens, by Roxim Promotion in Montpellier, France, and De Groene Loper, by Ballast Nedam Development in Maastricht, the Netherlands. Laura Lieto, Deputy Mayor of Naples, and Davide Albertini Petroni, President of Confindustria Assoimmobiliare, announced the winners. Evanesens integrates planted terraces into a residential development and reuses water for irrigation. Its 74 homes include 14 offered below

market prices to help first-time buyers. De Groene Loper demonstrates how major infrastructure work can create opportunities for neighbourhood regeneration: moving a motorway underground made room for a 2.6-kilometre green corridor, new homes and public spaces, reconnecting areas previously divided by the road.



The Pioneer Prize went to Rockywood, the PRIMUS office development in Offenbach, Germany. The project combines timber construction with flexible spaces and provides twenty years of rent-free premises to Boxclub Nordend, supporting the club's work with young people.

The Coup de Cœur, a separate special award, recognised the Khutory Project, by Housing for IDP & DOM Development in Ukraine. An abandoned hospital was converted into 14 fully furnished, permanent apartments for 37 people displaced by the war. The project also prompted improvements to the village's water supply.

Build Europe President Andreas Ibel presented a Special President's Award to CX Naples Centrale Campus & Hotel, developed by Investire SGR and CX Living, for its contribution to regeneration around Naples Central Station. COIMA SGR received a Special Mention for the Milano Cortina 2026 Olympic Village and its subsequent use as student accommodation. The ceremony also recognised the other Grand Prix finalists, UpTown Milano, by Near SGR, and La Canopée, by Equilis.

The jury was chaired by Gianluca Brunetti, former Secretary-General of the European Economic and Social Committee. Its members were Laura Lieto, Belgian architect Xavier Callens, Build Europe Vice-President Jean-Paul Scheuren, and Christophe Sykes, Director General of European Construction Products.



On Thursday, discussions turned to the difficulties facing housing development and the European initiatives intended to address them. National reports supplied by members illustrated the pressures on housing production and demand. Germany reported 206,600 homes completed in 2025, an 18% annual decline. In France, reservations of new homes fell by 23.6% in the second quarter of 2026 compared with the same period a year earlier. England recorded 190,600 new homes completed in 2024/25, down 4%. Reports from other countries showed improving activity, although increases in permits or construction starts did not always translate immediately into more completed homes.

The European Investment Bank presented the Pan-European investment platform for affordable housing, including support for construction, renovation and innovation. Discussions considered how financing can reach viable projects and help increase housing supply, alongside the need to address obstacles involving land, permits, infrastructure and construction costs. The EU Tax Omnibus discussion focused on interest limitation rules. Housing developers often pay interest on borrowing for several years before a project generates income. The recommendations

discussed seek to ensure that tax rules reflect this development cycle, including through updated thresholds, longer periods for using deductions and appropriate treatment of social and affordable housing.

A substantial part of the meeting concerned the Affordable Housing Act. The presentation distinguished the Commission's non-binding Recommendation from the proposed Regulation governing certain restrictions in areas under housing stress. Build Europe's recommendations focused on assessing how more homes could be delivered before introducing restrictions: identifying the housing need, establishing what prevents construction and considering measures that address those obstacles. The discussion also examined how affordability obligations can affect project viability and investment. Members considered Build Europe's contribution to the EU Working Group on Financing Sustainable and Affordable Housing, with an emphasis on linking financial measures to identifiable housing needs and additional homes that households can afford to buy or rent. Follow-up to the Commission's recent implementation dialogues on housing and the Birds and Habitats Directives covered clearer and faster permitting, coordinated environmental assessments, simpler VAT rules and greater certainty for brownfield redevelopment. Confindustria Assoimmobiliare also presented Italy's Piano Casa, while the strategic discussion considered priorities for Build Europe's future advocacy. The afternoon Board of Directors and General Assembly meetings addressed membership, governance, financial planning and future activities. The Board's agenda also included contaminated sites and brownfield regeneration, together with updates on European projects.



The development visits provided practical examples of several issues discussed during the meetings. On Thursday evening, participants visited CX Naples Centrale Campus & Hotel, where former offices have been converted into student accommodation and shared facilities, supporting regeneration around a major transport hub.

Friday's tour included ReStart Scampia, where participants visited the construction site with Deputy Mayor Laura Lieto and met Omero Benfenati and representatives of Comitato Le Vele. The programme provides for 509 new homes, alongside services and public spaces, with the aim of giving local families dignified housing and improving their neighbourhood. Meeting residents' representatives brought the social purpose of the redevelopment directly into the visit.

The tour also included the future America's Cup site, extending the Congress's examination of how major redevelopment projects can reshape urban areas. Across the three days, the meetings, Awards and visits connected European housing policy with concrete examples of development, reuse and regeneration, and with the needs of the people who live in these places.

You can find all the Congress presentations here, and the pictures of the events here.

HOUSING POLICY NEWS

Build Europe participates in Implementation Dialogue on housing supply with Commissioner Jørgensen

On 14 October 2026, Build Europe President Andreas Ibel participated in the European Commission's Implementation Dialogue on Housing Supply, hosted by Commissioner for Energy and Housing Dan Jørgensen in Brussels. The meeting brought together more than 20 stakeholders from across the housing sector to identify obstacles to residential development, including lengthy permitting procedures, regulatory complexity and financing constraints. The discussions will contribute to the Commission's Housing Simplification Package, expected in 2027.

President Ibel stressed that the housing crisis is also affecting public confidence in democratic institutions. He called for clear decisions, rapid action and concrete results to increase housing supply and improve affordability. Commissioner Jørgensen also acknowledged the connection between addressing housing shortages and strengthening trust in public institutions.

More information can be found here.

Council adopts Recommendation on Housing Exclusion and Homelessness

On 19 October 2026, the Council of the European Union adopted a Recommendation on fighting housing exclusion, including homelessness, as part of the implementation of the European Affordable Housing Plan presented by the European Commission in December 2025. The Recommendation calls on Member States to adopt or strengthen national and regional strategies based on a person-centred, housing-led approach. It proposes measures to identify households at risk of homelessness, prevent evictions, simplify access to social services and provide long-term housing solutions.

The Council also recognises the shortage of social and affordable housing as a major factor contributing to housing exclusion. It therefore encourages public and private investment in new and renovated housing, alongside better use of the existing housing stock.

Member States are encouraged to report to the Commission every five years on the effectiveness of their measures.

More information can be found here.

European Commission publishes clarifications on the proposed Affordable Housing Act and discusses its implementation with Regions and Cities

On 23 October 2026, the European Commission published a technical and legal explanation of the proposed Affordable Housing Act, presented on 9 September 2026 and currently under examination by the European Parliament and the Council. The proposed Act consists of two complementary elements: a Commission Recommendation encouraging measures to increase the supply of affordable, social and student housing, and a proposed Regulation establishing a common framework for assessing certain restrictions intended to protect housing affordability and availability.

The Commission clarifies that the proposed Regulation does not require public authorities to introduce restrictions or grant them new powers. Instead, it aims to provide greater legal certainty when assessing measures affecting internal market freedoms, particularly regarding

their necessity, non-discrimination and proportionality. The Commission also stresses that restrictions alone can't resolve structural housing shortages and that increasing housing supply remains essential. The proposed framework would preserve the responsibilities of national, regional and local authorities for housing policy decisions.

On 28 October, the Commission organised an online meeting with representatives of European regions and cities to explain the proposed framework, address questions and gather feedback on its practical implementation at local and regional level.

More information can be found here and here.

FISCAL & FINANCIAL NEWS

Build Europe participates in the launch of the EU Working Group on Financing Sustainable and Affordable Housing

On 20 October 2026, Build Europe, represented by its Managing Director Filiep Loosveldt, participated in the launch of the European Commission's Joint PEIP–EEEFC Working Group on Financing Sustainable and Affordable Housing. According to the European Commission, more than 100 experts participated in the opening meeting. The Commission estimates that Europe needs approximately €150 billion in additional annual housing investment. Over the next 18 months, the Working Group will develop practical financing tools and solutions, including blended financing models, mechanisms to aggregate smaller projects and support for innovation in construction, including modular and offsite building methods.

The opening session brought together representatives of the European Commission, the European Investment Bank (EIB), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), national and regional promotional banks, and housing and construction stakeholders. Discussions highlighted the urgent need to mobilise public and private investment, scale up proven financing models, strengthen financial intermediation and simplify regulatory frameworks. Particular emphasis was placed on using scarce public resources strategically to attract additional private capital and translate investment into tangible housing outcomes.

Build Europe contributed to this debate by proposing an additional deliverable under the financing workstream: "*1.6 From Housing Finance to Housing Delivery – Connecting Investment, Delivery Conditions and Household Access*". The proposal emphasises that access to finance alone

does not guarantee additional housing supply. Planning and permitting delays, regulatory uncertainty, project viability and household access to finance must also be addressed. Build Europe therefore proposes a practical, provider-neutral framework to identify the actual constraints preventing investment from translating into completed and affordable homes. The European Commission will circulate a follow-up survey in the coming weeks to further define the working structure. The first sub-working group meetings are scheduled for 8–9 December 2026, with the aim of agreeing on concrete deliverables for the next 18 months.

Build Europe will assess the final structure and determine where its expertise can make the most effective contribution.

More information can be found here and here.

EU house prices rise by 4.7% and rents by 3.0% in the second quarter of 2026

On 1 October 2026, Eurostat published new data showing that house prices in the European Union increased by 4.7% in the second quarter of 2026 compared with the same period in 2025, while rents rose by 3.0%. Compared with the previous quarter, house prices increased by 1.2% and rents by 0.7%.

At national level, house prices increased faster than rents in all 18 Member States for which comparable data were available. Compared with the 2025 annual average, the largest increases in house prices were recorded in Bulgaria (+14.3%), Portugal (+14.2%) and Lithuania (+12.8%), while Finland (-1.5%) and France (-1.4%) recorded decreases. Rents increased in all EU Member States over the same comparison period, with the largest rises recorded in Romania (+41.2%), Croatia (+22.1%) and Slovenia (+10.2%).

More information can be found here.

ECB keeps interest rates unchanged amid rising energy prices and economic uncertainty

On 29 October 2026, the Governing Council of the European Central Bank (ECB) decided to keep its three key interest rates unchanged. The deposit facility rate remains at 2.50%, the main refinancing operations rate at 2.65% and the marginal lending facility rate at 2.90%.

The ECB noted that rising energy prices are increasing risks to inflation while weighing on the economic growth outlook. Although underlying inflation has remained broadly stable, the prolonged energy shock could lead to higher inflation and weaker economic activity. The ECB also reported that financing conditions have tightened since its previous meeting, potentially affecting investment and economic growth.

The Governing Council reiterated its commitment to stabilising inflation at its 2% medium-term target. Future interest rate decisions will continue to follow a data-dependent, meeting-by-meeting approach, without committing to a predetermined rate path.

More information can be found here.

ENVIRONMENTAL & TECHNICAL NEWS

Build Europe participates in Implementation Dialogue with Commissioner Roswall on EU Nature Protection Legislation

On 23 October 2026, Build Europe, represented by its Managing Director Filiep Loosveldt, participated at the invitation of European Commissioner Jessika Roswall in the Implementation Dialogue on the stress test of the EU Birds and Habitats Directives. The dialogue focused on identifying practical opportunities to simplify the implementation of EU nature protection legislation while maintaining its environmental objectives. Build Europe highlighted three key priorities for the residential development sector:

- More integrated and strategic environmental assessments, identifying ecological constraints at an earlier spatial planning stage and reducing duplication at project level.
- More proportionate, standardised and predictable procedures, including the reuse of existing ecological data, better coordination between competent authorities and more efficient permitting processes.
- Greater coherence between EU environmental and housing policies, particularly through clearer guidance on how objectively demonstrated housing needs may be considered under the Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI) provisions of Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive.

Build Europe emphasised that effective nature protection and housing delivery should be pursued together, rather than through fragmented and overlapping administrative procedures.

As a concrete follow-up, Build Europe invited the European Commission to consider a dedicated guidance initiative on proportionate and integrated nature assessments for housing development, covering strategic spatial planning, ecological data reuse, coordinated permitting procedures and clarification of Article 6(4).

Build Europe looks forward to continuing its constructive dialogue with the European Commission on improving the implementation of EU environmental legislation while facilitating the delivery of much-needed housing across Europe.

More information can be found here.

New European Bauhaus Lab Housing promotes sustainable and affordable residential development

On 30 Septmber 2026, European Commission has presented the New European Bauhaus (NEB) Lab Housing, an initiative bringing together architectural quality, sustainability, resilience and social inclusion to address Europe's housing challenges. Coordinated by the Architects Association of Lithuania, the Architects' Council of Europe and Kaunas University of Technology, the initiative explores solutions including the reuse of existing buildings, circular and low-carbon construction, sustainable urban development and affordable housing.

Building on the NEB Catalogue of Blueprints for Affordable and Resilient Homes, the Lab will develop additional practical guidance and capacity-building activities to support housing projects across Europe.

More information can be found here.

EU construction production increases, while building construction continues to decline

On 20 October 2026, Eurostat published new data showing that construction production in the European Union increased by 2.0% in August 2026 compared with the previous month, and by 2.6% compared with August 2025.However, the figures reveal significant differences between construction sectors. While overall construction activity increased, building construction

declined by 4.1% year-on-year. Over the same period, civil engineering and specialised construction activities recorded increases of 2.8% and 2.9%, respectively.

The figures highlight the contrasting trends within the European construction sector, with building activity continuing to face difficulties despite growth in overall construction production.

More information can be found here.

NEWS FROM BUILD EUROPE MEMBERS' AND OTHER COUNTRIES

France – Housing permits rise slightly in september, but remain below historical levels

In September permits increased by 1.2% month-on-month, reaching 31,428 homes. Over the preceding 12 months, authorisations remained 9.1% below their five-year average.

More information can be found here.

France – Property developers report further deterioration in housing construction prospects

INSEE's October survey shows worsening expectations for housing starts, including both market-rate and social housing, alongside growing concerns about buyers' financing conditions.

More information can be found here.

Germany – Residential building permits increase by 6.8% in August 2026

Germany authorised 20,600 dwellings in August, while total residential permits increased by 12.1% over January–August compared with the same period in 2025.

More information can be found here.

Romania - Build Europe represented at the Affordable Housing Summit in Bucharest

On 5 October 2026, Build Europe was represented by Theodora Blum at the Affordable Housing Summit organised by FIDES at the Palace of Parliament in Bucharest, Romania. The event brought together representatives of public institutions and the housing and construction sectors to discuss the challenges of housing affordability and the measures needed to increase residential supply.

Build Europe's participation formed part of its ongoing engagement with European and national stakeholders on housing policy, with particular attention to the role of private developers in delivering additional affordable homes.

Spain – Spanish government approves new housing measures

On 6 October 2026, the Spanish Government approved a package of 21 measures aimed at addressing housing affordability and increasing residential supply.

The package includes restrictions on certain property acquisitions by large landlords and investment entities, extended protections against evictions, limits on rent increases and tighter regulation of temporary rentals. It also introduces higher taxation on certain residential rental profits of SOCIMIs (listed property investment companies). On the supply side, the Government announced a €10 billion financing programme for first-time homebuyers, €280 million in guarantees for industrialised construction and €400 million to support social housing providers, alongside reduced VAT on permanently protected housing.

The measures combine support for affordable housing development with tighter regulation of private investment and rental markets, raising questions about their potential impact on investment incentives and housing supply. The decrees remain subject to parliamentary approval.

More information here.

UK – Housing starts in England increase by 20% Year-on-Year in Q2 2026

Housing starts reached 35,910 in the second quarter, up 20% year-on-year, while housing completions increased by just 1%.

More information here.

Build Europe's upcoming activities

- 10 November 2026: Discussion at the European Parliament on the Affordable Housing Act
- 17 November 2026: Monitoring Committee meeting
- 25-26 November 2026: Informal meeting of EU Housing Ministers (Dublin, Ireland)
- 15 December 2026: High Level Construction Fourm on European Strategy for Housing Construction