

FOUNDATION CENTESIMUS ANNUS PRO PONTIFICE

Madrid Chapter

THE HOUSING SITUATION.

A REFLECTION FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING.

2025/2026 ACADEMIC YEAR

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Report on the Housing Situation. A Perspective from Catholic Social Teaching

Foundation Centesimus Annus Pro Pontifice

Madrid Chapter

I. Preliminary considerations

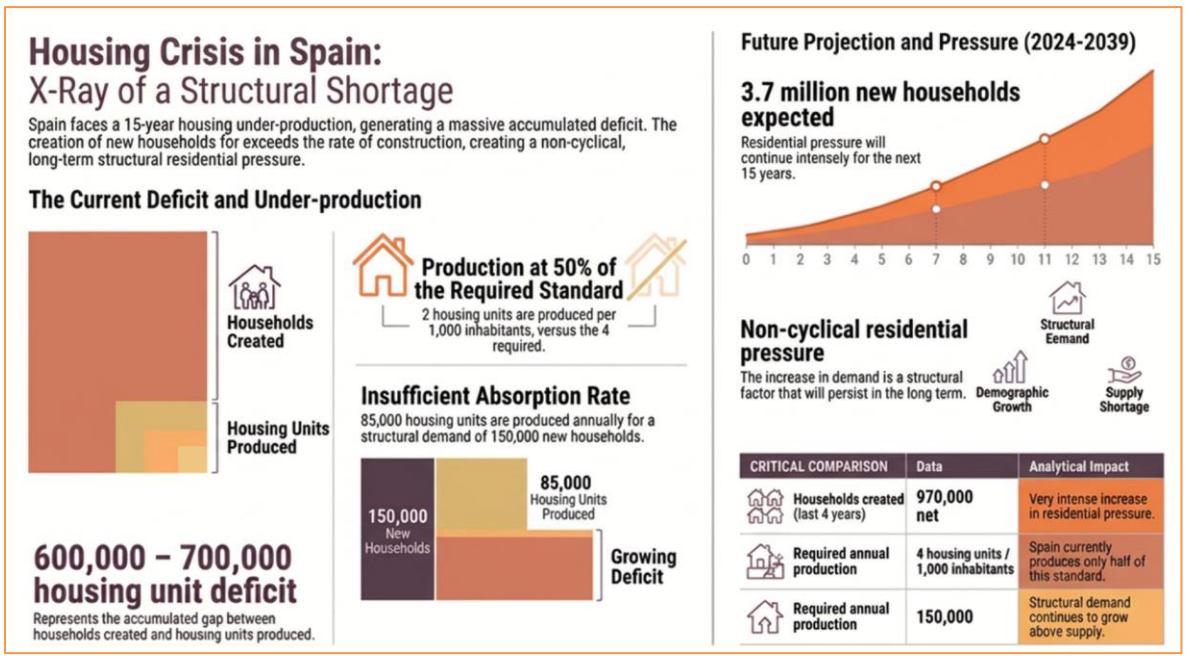
Throughout the 2025-2026 academic year, the Centesimus Annus Pro Pontifice Foundation examined the housing situation, primarily in Spain, from the perspective of Catholic Social Teaching (hereinafter, CST).

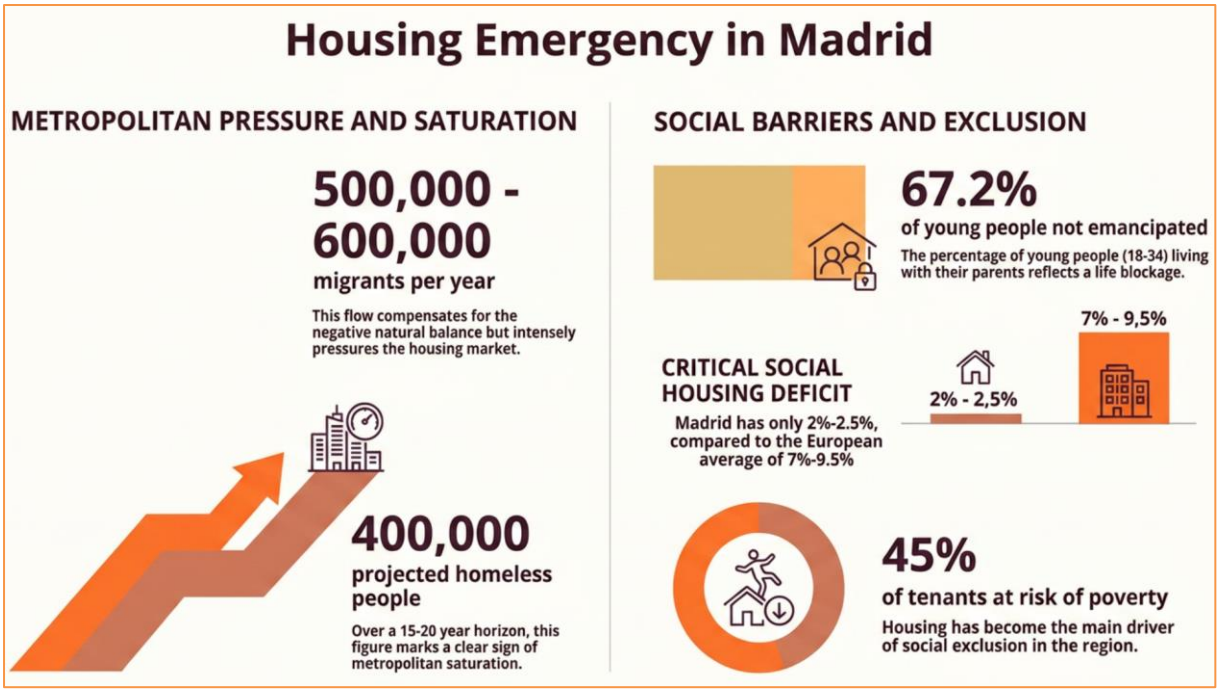
The sessions were organised progressively: first, by analysing the sociological, political and economic context; then, the causes that hinder access; subsequently, the effects on young people, migrants, older people, the working poor and other vulnerable groups; and, finally, practical applications and possible courses of action, including a specific experience in the Diocese of Córdoba. Each session was based on a preliminary presentation by experts, after which the Madrid Chapter - together with several members of the Barcelona Group - undertook a broader reflection through the lens of CST.

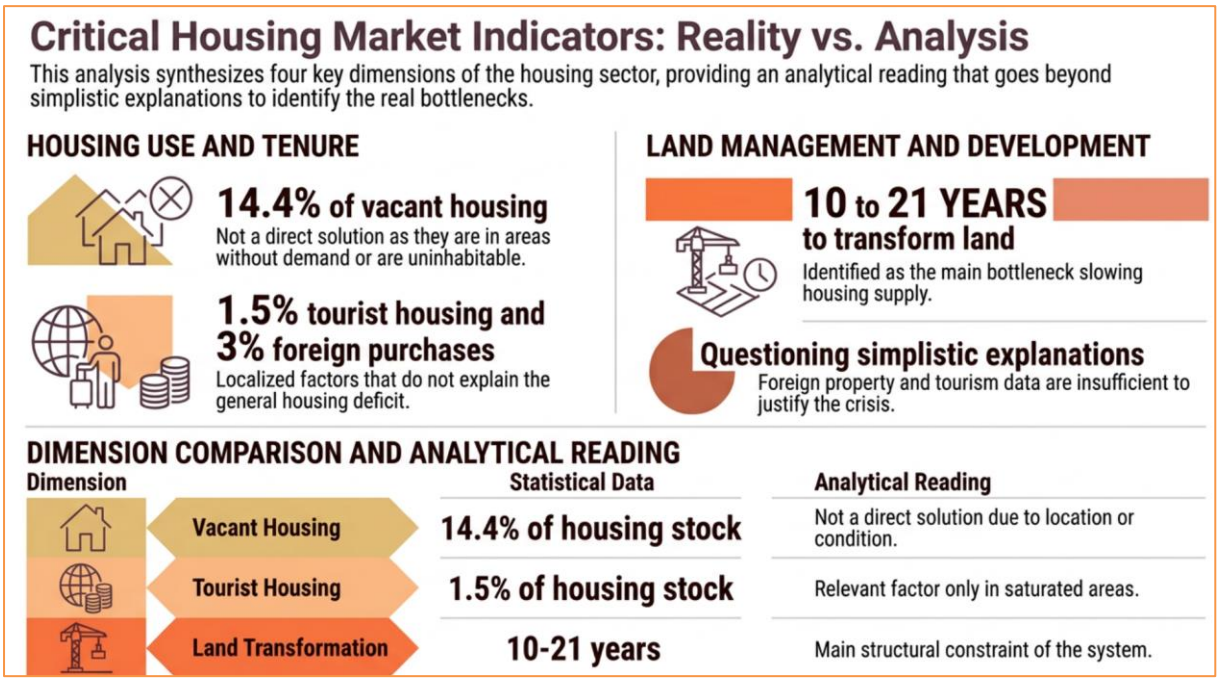
Housing therefore emerges not only as an economic asset, but as a basic social good, a factor of integration or exclusion, a source of family stability and a material condition for personal dignity. The diagnosis arising from the documents is clear: this is an extraordinarily complex problem and, as such, it has no simple solution. In other words, Spain faces a structural crisis of access to housing that cannot be explained by a single cause or resolved through a single measure. It is the combination of varied solutions, implemented from different areas and standpoints, that will make it possible to address at its roots the difficult task facing society in this field.

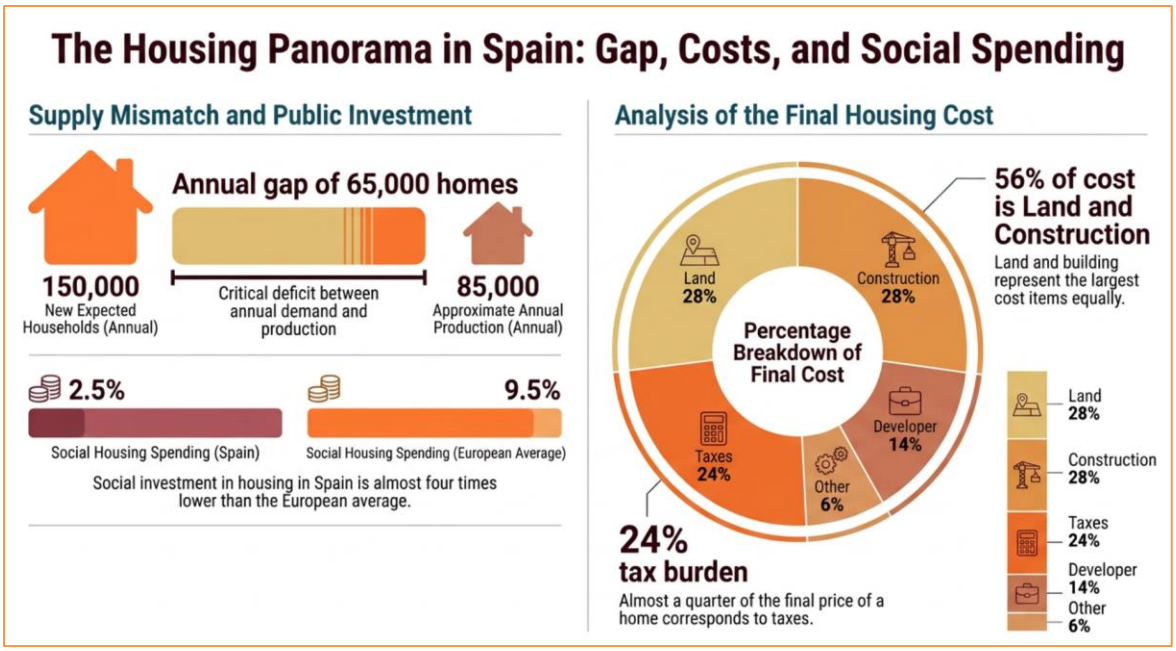
II. Current state of housing: key data (*)

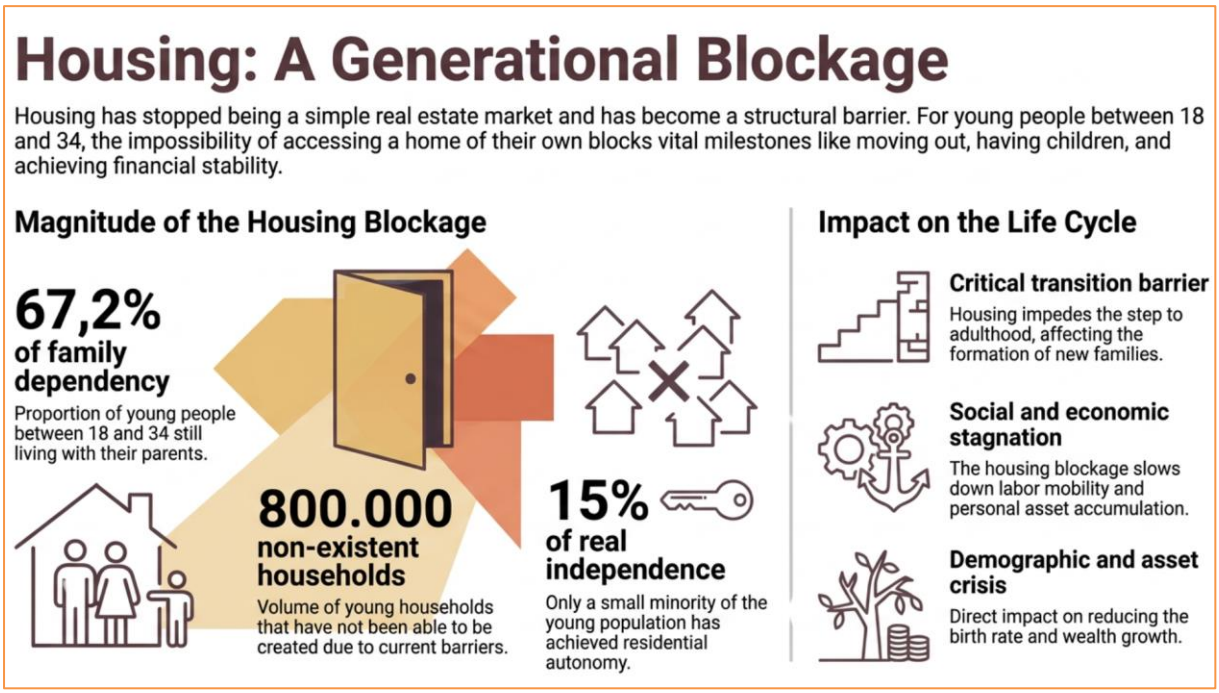
(*) The data included in the charts below were provided by the speakers who took part in the various sessions during the 2025-2026 academic year, as explained in the immediately preceding section.




Housing Emergency in Madrid
METROPOLITAN PRESSURE AND SATURATION
500,000 - 600,000
migrants per year
This flow compensates for the negative natural balance but intensely pressures the housing market.
400,000
projected homeless people
Over a 15-20 year horizon, this figure marks a clear sign of metropolitan saturation.
SOCIAL BARRIERS AND EXCLUSION
67.2%
of young people not emancipated
The percentage of young people (18-34) living with their parents reflects a life blockage.
CRITICAL SOCIAL HOUSING DEFICIT
Madrid has only 2%-2.5%, compared to the European average of 7%-9.5%
2% - 2,5%
7% - 9,5%
45%
of tenants at risk of poverty
Housing has become the main driver of social exclusion in the region.


Critical Housing Market Indicators: Reality vs. Analysis
This analysis synthesizes four key dimensions of the housing sector, providing an analytical reading that goes beyond simplistic explanations to identify the real bottlenecks.
HOUSING USE AND TENURE
14.4% of vacant housing
Not a direct solution as they are in areas without demand or are uninhabitable.
1.5% tourist housing and 3% foreign purchases
Localized factors that do not explain the general housing deficit.
LAND MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT
10 to 21 YEARS to transform land
Identified as the main bottleneck slowing housing supply.
Questioning simplistic explanations
Foreign property and tourism data are insufficient to justify the crisis.
DIMENSION COMPARISON AND ANALYTICAL READING
Dimension
Statistical Data
Analytical Reading
Vacant Housing
14.4% of housing stock
Not a direct solution due to location or condition.
Tourist Housing
1.5% of housing stock
Relevant factor only in saturated areas.
Land Transformation
10-21 years
Main structural constraint of the system.


The Housing Panorama in Spain: Gap, Costs, and Social Spending
Supply Mismatch and Public Investment
Annual gap of 65,000 homes
150,000
New Expected Households (Annual)
Critical deficit between annual demand and production
85,000
Approximate Annual Production (Annual)
2.5%
Social Housing Spending (Spain)
9.5%
Social Housing Spending (European Average)
Social investment in housing in Spain is almost four times lower than the European average.
Analysis of the Final Housing Cost
Land 28%
Construction 28%
Developer 14%
Other 6%
Taxes 24%
Percentage Breakdown of Final Cost
56% of cost is Land and Construction
Land and building represent the largest cost items equally.
24% tax burden
Almost a quarter of the final price of a home corresponds to taxes.
Land 28%
Construction 28%
Taxes 24%
Developer 14%
Other 6%


Housing: A Generational Blockage
Housing has stopped being a simple real estate market and has become a structural barrier. For young people between 18 and 34, the impossibility of accessing a home of their own blocks vital milestones like moving out, having children, and achieving financial stability.
Magnitude of the Housing Blockage
67,2%
of family dependency
Proportion of young people between 18 and 34 still living with their parents.
800.000
non-existent households
Volume of young households that have not been able to be created due to current barriers.
15%
of real independence
Only a small minority of the young population has achieved residential autonomy.
Impact on the Life Cycle
Critical transition barrier
Housing impedes the step to adulthood, affecting the formation of new families.
Social and economic stagnation
The housing blockage slows down labor mobility and personal asset accumulation.
Demographic and asset crisis
Direct impact on reducing the birth rate and wealth growth.

III. Structural diagnosis of the situation

III.1. The crisis as a "perfect storm"

The difficult housing problem is the result of a "perfect storm": social urgency, economic importance and extremely long planning times converge. The expression is apt because the problem does not arise from a single variable. At least six processes coincide: demographic growth, smaller households, population ageing, the emergence of new types of family unit, immigration, planning rigidities and a loss of construction capacity.

The result is cumulative pressure: even when homes are built, potential demand grows faster or is concentrated in places where output falls short. Madrid and Barcelona are paradigmatic cases: large, attractive urban areas with jobs, services and capital, but insufficient residential supply and acute territorial pressures.

III.2. Demand: more people, smaller households and metropolitan concentration

Average household size is falling because of ageing, divorce, cultural change and positive net migration. This means that the same population requires more homes than before. Comparing total population with the housing stock is not enough: the relevant question is how many households are formed, or are attempting to form.

Demand is also concentrated in cities offering the greatest employment and educational opportunities: Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia and Malaga. This concentration deepens territorial inequality: empty or inherited homes exist in low-demand areas, while major urban regions accumulate shortages. The 14.4% of technically vacant dwellings does not constitute a genuinely mobilisable reserve, because many are located in small municipalities or are not fit for habitation.

III.3. Supply: insufficient output and a weakened construction sector

Housing output is one of the central issues. Over the past 15 years, Spain has produced around 2 homes per 1,000 inhabitants, compared with a benchmark of 4 homes per 1,000 inhabitants[1]. The result is an accumulated shortage of between 600,000 and 700,000 homes.

However, inadequate supply is not solely a matter of political will. The construction sector is itself experiencing a profound internal crisis: an ageing workforce, low productivity, fragmented businesses, limited industrialisation and high costs. Industrialised construction accounts for only 1.5% of output, limiting speed, efficiency and the ability to attract new categories of workers.

III.4. Land and bureaucracy as bottlenecks

Land is one of the decisive factors. On the one hand, it represents 28% of the final price of a home; on the other, its development can take between 10 and 21 years. This creates a serious contradiction: social needs grow in short cycles, while planning and land development operate over exceptionally long cycles.

Administrative delay is repeatedly identified: licences, planning procedures, duplicated requirements, technical discretion and poor coordination. Time is crucial in the housing market: if

[1] Data presented by ARCANO at one of the study and reflection sessions held by the Madrid Chapter of the Centesimus Annus Pro Pontifice Foundation

demand grows today but supply arrives 15 years later, adjustment occurs through prices, exclusion and displacement.

III.5. Market failures

The private market can provide housing for households with sufficient purchasing power, but it cannot by itself meet the housing needs of low-income households or people with unstable earnings.

A recurrent issue is the inability of the free market to resolve the housing needs of migrants and workers on precarious wages, which points to the need for direct State intervention through subsidies or public housing.

Market failure operates at four levels:

1. **Affordability failure:** households need housing but cannot pay market prices.
2. **Displacement failure:** some solvent demand comes from wealthy investors, often foreign, whose purchases drive sharp increases in the most sought-after neighbourhoods; the wave of price rises then spreads towards outer districts and displaces weaker demand.
3. **Time failure:** the market responds too slowly because of land, licensing and construction constraints.
4. **Territorial failure:** available supply does not coincide with the places where demand is concentrated.

III.6. Public-policy failures

The State is not the sole culprit either, but it is one of the decisive actors. The analysis identifies a lack of foresight, inadequate public investment, a very small social housing stock, slow bureaucracy and policies focused on “managing scarcity” rather than increasing supply.

Spain's social housing stock, at around 2%-2.5%, is insufficient to respond to housing emergencies and remains far below European benchmarks. As a result, even vulnerable households depend on the private market.

A further tension exists between social and electoral criteria in the allocation of public housing, together with a loss of capacity to respond to emergencies.

III.7. Financing difficulties

Although low interest rates in recent years facilitated access to mortgage credit, following the 2011 property crisis banks were required to impose much stricter conditions for granting mortgages and valuing mortgaged assets. The State has shown little innovation in providing guarantees for young buyers. Changes to the tax treatment of mortgage-interest payments have increased borrowing costs. The financial sector has likewise shown limited innovation in creating new products, such as long-term mortgages or loans with an option to purchase.

III.8. The central tension: housing as a right versus housing as an asset

An ethical and structural conflict is present: housing operates simultaneously as a social right and as an economic asset. As an asset, it may serve as an investment, savings vehicle, inheritance, collateral and financial product. As a right, it is a condition for a dignified life, rootedness, privacy, family, health and social participation. The problem arises when the logic of property and wealth becomes dominant to the point of preventing large sections of the population from obtaining basic access.

This tension runs through the entire diagnosis. Inherited property in metropolitan areas can become a valuable asset, whereas inherited homes in rural areas may be liabilities with little economic value, widening social and territorial divisions.

IV. Social impact and the human dimension of the problem

IV.1. Housing as a driver of social exclusion

Housing has become the leading driver of social exclusion in Spain. This is significant because it shifts the traditional analysis, which focused solely on employment. Having a job no longer guarantees stable access to housing when wages are low, rents are high and supply is scarce.

Housing exclusion does not mean only sleeping on the street. It includes excessive debt, overcrowding, substandard housing, insecure tenancies, inability to leave the parental home, displacement to poorly connected outskirts, foregoing basic needs in order to pay rent and the loss of community networks.

IV.2. Young people: blocked independence and a breakdown of the social contract

Young people are among the groups most severely affected. 67.2% of 18-34 year-olds live with their parents or depend on them financially, compared with a European average of approximately 50%. This represents around 800,000 households that have not been formed.

The consequences are profound. The issue is not merely a delayed departure from the family home. Partnership formation, birth rates, labour mobility and adult autonomy are all postponed. This situation appears to be linked to low birth rates, democratic disaffection, risks to the welfare state and a weakening of the social contract.

In addition, the wealth held by young people is estimated to have fallen by 75% over 20 years, while the net wealth of a young household is eight times lower than that of an older household. This reflects not only income inequality, but unequal access to assets, inheritance and future security.

IV.3. Migrants and the working poor

Immigration is a factor affecting demand, but migrants should not be treated as the cause or blamed for the crisis. Positive net migration increases pressure on the housing market, especially in dynamic urban areas, but a rigorous diagnosis avoids turning migrants into scapegoats.

The particular problem faced by many migrants and working-poor households is that they stand at the intersection of two strained markets: low-paid employment and expensive housing. The second session noted that the free market offers no commercially viable solution for migrants on precarious wages, making direct State intervention necessary.

Housing exclusion is compounded by employment vulnerability, administrative barriers, discrimination, lack of knowledge of rights and reduced access to family wealth networks.

IV.4. Older people and pensioners

Older people and pensioners face growing difficulties both in obtaining and in retaining housing.

For this group, the problem assumes specific forms: one-person households, homes that are not adapted to their needs, pensions insufficient to meet rising rents, energy costs, dependence on family networks and the risk of isolation. In rented accommodation, vulnerability can be extreme: a rent increase or non-renewal of the tenancy can displace people with little ability to rebuild their residential lives.

IV.5. Vulnerable families and children

The fact that many families prioritise rent payments over other basic needs is particularly serious. Housing absorbs resources that should be devoted to food, health, education, transport or care. Instead of providing a platform for integration, it becomes a mechanism of impoverishment.

Intergenerational poverty affecting children shows that the problem does not end with the adult who signs the lease. It affects school performance, mental health, emotional stability, social relationships and children's future opportunities.

IV.6. Severe exclusion and groups outside the usual support channels

Groups experiencing severe exclusion - low qualifications, illiteracy, informal settlements and shanty towns - must be identified, because they are the people left outside traditional support channels.

This point is decisive: many protected- or affordable-housing schemes require minimum income, ability to pay, documentation, stability or registration. Those who do not meet these conditions are excluded even from solutions designed for vulnerable people. This is why social support, resource maps and coordination among organisations are so important.

V. An interpretation from the perspective of Catholic Social Teaching[2]

V.1. Human dignity

It is concrete people who count, each and every one of them and their families. Social movements, grand political proclamations in favour of the people and communitarian ideologies are of no use unless they are directed towards the advancement of persons - men and women - with their inalienable rights. Likewise, it is not enough to exalt individual freedom or private initiative if one then accepts that multitudes continue to live without decent work, safeguards or access to essential goods. (MH 58)

[2] The references are to the encyclical Magnifica Humanitas of Leo XIV (2026), which does not deal explicitly with housing but, in Chapter II, restates the traditional principles of Catholic Social Teaching in concrete terms

Catholic Social Teaching understands adequate housing to be one of the conditions necessary for human dignity. Access to suitable housing is not an abstract assertion, but a structural demand addressed to society.

From this perspective, a society that tolerates the inability of large groups to obtain a stable home is failing a basic condition of humanity. Housing is not merely a roof; it is a home in the fullest sense: privacy, security, rootedness, the possibility of family life, rest, health and participation in the community.

Applied to the diagnosis, dignity requires that the debate should not be reduced to prices, returns or licences. These factors matter, but they must be ordered towards a prior question: what material conditions does a person need in order to live as a person?

A primary residence is more than a house: it is a home, a basic asset and a space of dignity. Dignified housing should be understood not only as access to shelter, but as a real possibility of rootedness, family life and freedom. Wherever achievable, that possibility should culminate in access to a first owner-occupied home, because, according to CST, defending private property does not mean making it absolute; it means protecting it, extending access to it and directing it towards the common good.

V.2. The common good

Recognising that every woman and every man possesses inalienable dignity and rights that no human power may damage or remove requires us to shape the way we live together, our economic and political decisions and the concrete face of our cities. (MH 59)

The right to housing must be placed within the framework of the common good, which is not equivalent to the sum of individual interests. It requires structures that enable everyone, especially the most vulnerable, to participate in social life.

A city in which housing is unaffordable may be economically successful but socially unsuccessful. If it attracts talent and capital while driving out young people, essential workers, poor families and older people, its prosperity is morally incomplete. Some interpret the crisis as a symptom of the urban success of Madrid and Barcelona, while warning that this success requires collective management to prevent growing inequality.

From the standpoint of the common good, housing policy must coordinate urban planning, transport, public services, employment, education and territorial cohesion.

V.3. The universal destination of goods

This principle reminds us above all that the goods of the earth - land, water, air and natural resources - were given by God to the whole human family to sustain the life of all, today and in future generations, and that every person has an original right to use those goods. (MH 65)

The universal destination of goods requires us to ask how land, the existing housing stock, vacant property, public assets and the property of social or religious bodies are used. The fourth session explicitly raised the dilemma facing housing held by private or religious organisations: sale or social use.

This does not deny private property, but places it within a social function. Property cannot be made absolute when serious human needs are at stake.

Catholic Social Teaching makes clear that the Church may not only advocate affordable housing, but may also develop its own land or property for that purpose. Applied to Spain, this principle invites

the mobilisation of public land, underused assets, empty buildings and Church or social property, guided by prudence, viability and justice.

V.4. Solidarity

*Solidarity, therefore, is the concrete recognition that each person's destiny is bound up with the destiny of all; truly, "*no one is saved alone*."* (MH 73)

In this context, solidarity is not emotional sympathy but institutional commitment. It requires solutions to homelessness and housing insecurity and does not permit us to shelter behind physical or regulatory barriers that exclude new neighbours.

This has direct implications for the NIMBY[3] phenomenon: systematically opposing new homes, densification or affordable housing may protect immediate local interests, but it harms the common good when it prevents people from living close to work, family or services.

Solidarity also requires us to avoid blaming migrants, poor people or individual landlords. The documents emphasise that the problem is structural and calls for action by many different stakeholders.

V.5. Subsidiarity

Catholic Social Teaching uses the term "subsidiarity" for the principle that matters which can be addressed by individuals, families, local communities and intermediate bodies should not be absorbed by higher authorities. Higher-level institutions should recognise, protect and promote the freedom and creativity of lower levels, coordinating their contributions so that they cooperate effectively for the common good (MH 68).

Subsidiarity means that solutions should be organised at the nearest possible level, but with support from higher levels when a problem exceeds local capacity. Housing is a field in which this principle is particularly useful.

Municipalities know their land, licensing processes, neighbourhoods and applicant registers. Autonomous Communities coordinate housing, planning and services. The State can set financing, taxation, guarantee mechanisms and regulatory frameworks. Social organisations accompany specific people. The Church can contribute property, moral legitimacy, community experience and mediation capacity.

Subsidiarity does not justify every municipality blocking necessary housing. As CST indicates, responding to local concerns does not mean that small units of government may veto every form of housing.

VI. Assessment of selected models and experiences

VI.1. Madrid, "Greater Madrid" and metropolitan governance

Madrid is presented as a potential global metropolis with a national vocation, whose functional growth exceeds its administrative and jurisdictional boundaries and reaches beyond both the municipality and the Autonomous Community into areas such as Toledo, Segovia and Guadalajara.

[3] Not in my backyard

Without diminishing the principle of subsidiarity, this metropolitan dimension requires institutions, by common agreement, to overcome particular interests and plan urban development and transport through a shared vision.

Contribution of this approach: it recognises that housing cannot be planned solely within municipal boundaries. People live, work, study and travel through real metropolitan systems. If governance does not reflect that reality, policies arrive late or remain fragmented.

Risk: nearby towns may become mere dormitory settlements. The proposal therefore includes transport, public services, local employment and protection for medium-sized towns.

Lesson: the solution is not only to build more, but to build within a territorial structure that integrates housing, mobility, services and economic activity.

VI.2. Selected European models: Vienna, Bavaria, Denmark and the Basque Country

Among the European examples, Austria is presented as having a more established public housing stock. Vienna is cited as a model for social housing, although it is stressed that this is the result of 100 years of continuous policy.

Germany is mentioned for its federal structure, professional management and large rental operators. Bavaria and Denmark are associated with affordable ownership, cooperatives, shared ownership or collective ownership as a form of household wealth buffer.

The Basque Country is cited for models such as permanently price-regulated protected housing and Bizigune, a public intermediation programme.

What works: institutional continuity, permanent stock, professionalisation, coordination and rules that prevent the rapid privatisation of publicly supported housing.

What cannot simply be copied: models such as Vienna require decades, a specific institutional culture, sustained funding and political consensus. They are not immediate solutions.

Lesson: Spain needs a combination of instruments: social renting, protected ownership, cooperatives, public intermediation, public-private cooperation and permanent protection of housing's social purpose.

VI.3. Rent controls: limited usefulness and side effects

Price controls cannot be treated as an isolated measure, because they can also reduce available supply, generate rebound effects and an informal market, lower quality and displace demand towards peripheral areas.

Balanced assessment: controls may be justified as an emergency measure if they are precisely designed and protect vulnerable people, but they do not replace increased supply or the creation of social housing. The risk is that they become a permanent policy for managing scarcity.

We know that Spain's housing problem cannot be resolved solely through access to ownership; among other measures, it also requires a larger supply of public rental housing.

There is a widespread belief that, for cultural reasons, people in Spain prefer to access housing through different forms of ownership (purchase, inheritance or mortgage borrowing). As a result, the proportion of housing used for rental is much lower than in neighbouring countries. Nevertheless, given the difficulty of entering home ownership described in this and other studies, a large public stock of rental homes could form part of the solution.

In this respect, the national public-rental programme “Casa 47” has been well received. Its name invokes Article 47 of the Constitution, which establishes the right to housing. We also highlight programmes at Autonomous Community and municipal level in Madrid, Seville, Zaragoza, Valencia, Vigo and many other places. Although inadequate because limited supply faces very high demand, these programmes indicate the direction to follow, as major cities and Member States of the European Union have done for decades.

VI.4. The Córdoba case: the Church, social housing and INVICA

The Córdoba model is especially valuable because it demonstrates a practical initiative led by the Church in a context of need. It did not originate as a conventional public policy, but as a social and Church initiative supported by legislation, the National Housing Institute and the availability of land.

INVICA professionalised the initiative and provided continuity, developing more than 6,000 homes - and, according to some references, more than 7,000 - while expanding into other Andalusian cities. Its charitable nature and limitation to protected housing reduce its business margin but reinforce its social orientation; reinvesting 70% of profits in new developments helps sustain the model.

Positive features include the combination of social initiative, institutional support and professional management; access to land; reinvestment of profits; a focus on protected housing; and a balance between social mission and economic viability.

However, the difficulties include access to finance; high construction costs; the release of protected housing from restrictions after between 7 and 15 years, with the resulting risk of speculation; an inability to serve the most vulnerable; administrative delay; and the weakness of social renting.

The “Tu Techo” model, under which homes are rented to social organisations that act as guarantors, appears to be an interesting innovation for reducing risk and improving management.

Main lesson: the Church and social organisations can be important stakeholders, but they do not replace the State or the market. They work best where land is available at an accessible cost, finance is available, rules are clear and institutions cooperate.

VII. Proposals for improvement and good practice

VII.1. General criteria

The proposals must avoid two errors: believing that the market alone can solve everything, or that public intervention alone can do so. A mixed approach is required: more supply, a larger social housing stock, better regulation, legal certainty, protection for vulnerable people, institutional coordination, modernised construction and social responsibility.

VII.2. Short term: urgent measures

VII.2.1. Residential-emergency map and coordination of resources

It is proposed that resource maps should be shared, coordination improved and gaps in coverage identified. This measure should be immediate because many organisations already work with vulnerable people, yet overlaps, duplication and omissions remain.

Application: create coordinated registers involving municipalities, Autonomous Communities, Caritas, social organisations, parishes, foundations and social services. The objective is not merely to identify how many homes are available, but which groups remain excluded: older people living alone, single-mother families, migrants without support networks, the working poor, digitally excluded people and families at risk of eviction.

VII.2.2. Targeted protection for vulnerable households

If 70,000 vulnerable households could see their situation deteriorate when protective measures are withdrawn, public policy must prevent abrupt discontinuities.

Application: transitional rental assistance, mediation with landlords, eviction prevention, faster vulnerability assessments and coordination among courts, social services and organisations.

VII.2.3. Public intermediation and rental insurance

The importance of guarantee funds - operating in a manner similar to wage-guarantee or deposit-guarantee funds - public rental insurance and intermediation models has been emphasised. This approach can mobilise private homes without expropriation and without placing the entire burden on individual landlords.

Application: the public authority or an approved body guarantees payment, maintenance and return of the property; in exchange, the owner accepts an affordable rent and stable conditions.

VII.2.4. Balanced legal certainty

Legal uncertainty discourages renting, but housing is also a social right. The solution must be neither the withdrawal of protection from vulnerable people nor tolerance of chronic non-payment without a response.

Application: rapid procedures for non-payment by non-vulnerable tenants, compulsory mediation where vulnerability is verified, temporary compensation funds and alternative accommodation in serious cases.

VII.2.5. Selective densification and efficient use of the existing housing stock

Another option worth considering is increasing permitted heights in established areas, relaxing mandatory parking requirements and facilitating the subdivision of large dwellings into separate units.

Application: review planning rules that make housing more expensive or prevent the stock from being adapted to smaller households. This must be done with proper standards for habitability, light, ventilation, services and neighbourhood acceptance.

VII.2.6. Mobilising underused social and Church property

From the perspective of CST, the Church is called to promote, develop and advocate affordable housing, including through underused property where this is viable.

Application: a prudent inventory of underused Church or social property, legal and technical assessment, temporary transfer to specialist organisations, transitional accommodation programmes and cooperation with public authorities.

VII.2.7. Dignified emergency accommodation

As has traditionally been done, particularly by Church institutions, temporary emergency accommodation in dignified conditions must be offered to individuals and families in greatest need, with the support required to help them regain full autonomy as soon as possible.

VII.3. Medium term: structural reforms

VII.3.1. Land reform and shorter lead times

Land-development periods of between 10 and 21 years are incompatible with the social emergency.

Application: simplify procedures, establish a single point of contact, introduce deemed approval at defined stages, digitalise processes, use artificial intelligence for repetitive technical validation and impose administrative accountability for unjustified delays.

VII.3.2. Industrialisation of construction

Industrialised construction can improve productivity, shorten timescales, attract more women and young workers and make construction more sustainable.

Application: tax incentives, vocational training, approved standards, innovative public procurement, cooperation with universities and technology centres and support for companies adopting industrialised methods.

VII.3.3. Permanent public and social housing stock

The creation of a non-privatisable public stock of social rental housing should also be considered. Permanence is essential: if protected housing is released from restrictions too quickly, public investment ultimately feeds the open market.

Application: social rental housing for severe vulnerability, affordable housing for lower-middle incomes and permanently price-regulated protected ownership for households that can pay but cannot enter the open market.

VII.3.4. Public-private cooperation based on fairness

The importance of public-private cooperation is emphasised: the State could manage land and make it available to private operators to build and manage affordable rental housing.

Application: long concessions over public land, maximum rents, social access criteria, cost audits, maintenance obligations, transparency and eventual return to public ownership.

VII.3.5. Taxation geared towards access, not merely revenue

The cost structure shows that taxes and land account for a large share of the final price.

Application: defer property-transfer tax or VAT for young people over the life of the mortgage, grant tax relief to permanently affordable developments, penalise speculative uses in saturated areas and review charges that add no housing value.

VII.3.6. Employment and skills training linked to housing

The paradox of unemployment alongside a shortage of construction labour has been identified.

Application: training programmes in industrialised construction, energy-efficient refurbishment, maintenance, building care and trades, aimed at young people, migrants and people experiencing exclusion.

VII.4. Long term: transformative measures

VII.4.1. A National Housing Pact

The need for a National Pact must be underlined.

Minimum content: output targets, social housing stock, stable finance, land reform, protection for vulnerable households, territorial coordination, common indicators and annual evaluation.

VII.4.2. New metropolitan governance

The proposal for a metropolitan authority for Madrid responds to a reality: housing markets are metropolitan, not municipal.

Application: metropolitan consortia for housing, transport and land; joint planning with medium-sized towns; incentives for local employment; and prevention of dormitory towns.

VII.4.3. Cultural change: from housing as an absolute investment to housing as a social good

The tension between an economic asset and a social right cannot be resolved through legislation alone. It requires a public culture and a return to the traditional understanding of housing as a family-use good rather than primarily a financial asset.

Application: campaigns against the stigmatisation of vulnerable people, public education about reasonable density, social acceptance of affordable housing, recognition of responsible developers and condemnation of speculative practices.

VII.4.4. A plural tenure model

Spain has historically prioritised ownership, while in recent decades attention has shifted towards renting without consolidating a stable public housing stock.

Application: combine social renting, affordable renting, permanently protected ownership, cooperatives, use-right arrangements, shared ownership and rent-to-buy where appropriate.

VII.4.5. A permanent role for the Church and social organisations

The Córdoba model shows that social initiative can produce housing on a sustained basis when it has access to land, finance and professional management.

Application: create diocesan or inter-institutional housing platforms, revolving funds, land transfers, cooperation with foundations, "Tu Techo"-type models, social support and ethical assessment of available property.

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Many of the measures cited here, particularly those concerning increased supply, have been the subject of recent legislative initiatives. One example is Law 2/2026 of 11 June 2026 of the Community of Madrid, on urgent measures to increase the supply of publicly protected housing.

VIII. General conclusion

The housing crisis described is not a temporary episode or a simple price anomaly. It is a structural problem in which underproduction, household growth, immigration, population ageing, smaller households, planning rigidities, low construction productivity, a limited social housing stock, poor institutional coordination and the tension between housing as a right and housing as an asset all converge.

The central fact is not only that homes are in short supply. The shortage of affordable housing is reorganising society: it delays young people's independence, intensifies intergenerational inequality, makes the lives of the working poor more precarious, places migrants and older people at risk, weakens birth rates, erodes the social contract and turns rent into a cause of poverty for many households.

From the perspective of Catholic Social Teaching, housing cannot be reduced solely to having a roof. It must fundamentally be understood as a condition of dignity, a good necessary for the common good, a sphere of effective solidarity, an expression of the universal destination of goods and a privileged field for subsidiarity. This requires a transition from denunciation to action: building, renovating, financing, accompanying, coordinating, mobilising land and property and giving priority protection to vulnerable people. It is also an opportune moment for the Church to view the crisis as an opportunity for cooperation and participation. The Church has a responsibility to accompany this process and, insofar as possible, to help guide it.

The vision of the future emerging from the report is neither a society in which the State does everything nor one in which the market operates without limits. It is a model of shared responsibility, with the State acting as guarantor, a productive and regulated market, an active civil society, an engaged Church and citizens prepared to accept that affordable housing close to us is not a threat, but a requirement of justice.

The principal challenge may be summarised as follows: to move from managing scarcity to creating just abundance; from permanent emergency to stable planning; and from housing as an exclusive commodity to housing as a possible home for all.