

HOLISTIC VISIONS: ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

Thursday, 19 May 2022
4 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

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Key words: location; housing price; services and
security; diversity; family structure; unoccupied
housing; right to housing; financing affordability;
banking system; repair; maintenance; urban poor.

The UIA 2022 International Forum “Affordable Housing Activation: Removing Barriers” accelerates previous discussions on access to housing and provides an action-oriented declaration as an outcome of the Forum to be held in Madrid, Spain from 18 to 20 May 2022. The Forum is organized by the International Union of Architects (UIA) and the Superior Council of Colleges of Architects of Spain (CSCAE).

The Forum’s main objective is to contribute to improving access to decent and adequate housing throughout the world, through the generation of global networks and alliances that promote shared knowledge. The AHA Forum identified six barriers to affordable and adequate housing: mismatches (housing needs, demand, and supply), financing, policies & regulations, promotion & production, ownership & tenure and urban design. The session on economic sustainability serves to bring issues of economic sustainability into all above mentioned “barriers” to help overcome them. This session considers economic sustainability can be ensured in urban design (barrier 4); housing legislation (barrier 2) financial investment into real estate (barrier 3), as well as the production of housing (barrier 5), and others. In recent years, the economic sustainability dimension has become a prominent component of affordable and sustainable development in delivering quality of life for communities.

Economic sustainability in relation to access to decent and affordable housing, offers effective solutions that facilitate their implementation and maintenance. Speakers will discuss the use of financially profitable and innovative techniques, systems and tools that facilitate the viability of projects, their execution and design and the involvement of various stakeholders. This in turn has a beneficial effect in terms of economic activity and can generate a positive impact on initiatives in the societies where they are being promoted.

Housing infrastructure is a vital part of the urban economy. Without adequate and affordable housing for all urban dwellers, economic development is inhibited. Housing investments have been shown to have direct positive effects on employment, income generation, savings, labor productivity and regional development. Housing is an integral element of a country's economy. Its backward and forward linkages with other parts of the economy closely link people's needs, demands and social processes with the supply of land, infrastructure, building materials, technology, labor, and housing finance. These linkages enable housing to act as an important driver for sustainable development and the economy.

Likewise, acting on the housing supply can influence the market and other related factors (such as employment). In this sense, the scale of the housing supply is considered fundamental, as it affects housing prices and overall market performance. Therefore, acting on it improves not only the availability of housing, but also its affordability, the economic and employment situation of households, and reduces poverty and inequalities.

HOLISTIC VISION:

Economic sustainability in relation to architecture and to access to decent and affordable housing that offers effective solutions that facilitate their implementation and maintenance. Experts and leading architects will employ specific examples to discuss the use of financially profitable and innovative techniques, systems and tools that facilitate the viability of projects, their execution and design and the involvement of the various stakeholders. This in turn has a beneficial effect in terms of economic activity and can generate a positive impact on initiatives in the societies where they are promoted.

Objective of the session

Propose three priority actions for economic sustainability to accelerate the crossing of the six barriers to ensure affordable housing.

Guiding Questions

- What could be the most effective ways to promote the role of affordable housing in economic development and the contribution of the sector to stimulating productivity in other economic sectors?
- How can housing strategies that directly connect with parallel efforts on employment generation or investment in environmental sustainability be ensured, instead of a purely quantitative (as opposed to qualitative) approach for the construction of housing units?
- How do we ensure housing affordability for most of the population in a sustainable and acceptable economic model?
- How do we finance and promote investments contributing to sustainable housing strategies?
- Can events, discussions, etc. change perception of private sector on investing in adequate and affordable housing?



Agenda of the session

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- 4 p.m. Opening intervention of the Chair's session.
Felipe Vera, Housing and Urban Development Specialist, Harvard University Graduate School of Design
- 4:15 p.m. Initial proposal of priority actions to face the barrier by each speaker:
- *Haymanot Watchmeister*, Faculty of Law, Stockholm University
 - *Gonçalo Byrne*, President of the Portuguese Order of Architects
 - *Grzegorz Gajda*, Urban Specialist, European Investment Bank (EIB)
 - *Natalia Martínez*, Fundacion Habitat3
 - *Richard Sennett*, Senior Fellow of the Center on Capitalism and Society, Columbia University
- 4: 45 p.m. Reactions from the Chair/speakers to the introductory remarks and first round of guiding questions to focus the discussion on specific proposals.
- 5: 00 p.m. Presentation of the first invited architect (on-line): *Kunlé Adeyemi*
- 5:20 p.m. Reflections on the case presented and second round of guiding questions
- 5:30 p.m. Presentation of the second invited expert: *Richard Florida*, Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto
- 5:50 p.m. Reflections on the case presented and third round of guiding questions
- 6:00 p.m. Wrap-up and summary of priority actions proposed for the AHA Forum Madrid Declaration
- 6:30 p.m. End of the session

Biographies of invited chair and speakers

Felipe Vera, trained as an Architect and Urban Planner at the University of Chile (2009). He holds an MDeS in Urbanism, Landscape and Ecology from the Harvard Graduate School of Design (2013) and a Master in Real Estate Project Management from the University of Chile (2010). He is a specialist in the Housing and Urban Development Division of the IDB. From the Bank's Headquarters in Chile and Argentina he works on slum upgrading programs, urban revitalization of central areas, sustainable infrastructure, metropolitan governance and sustainable housing. Previously he was a Research Associate and Visiting Professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Design and Director of the Research Center for Ecology, Landscape and Urbanism at the UAI in Chile.

Haymanot Watchmeister, Faculty of Law, Stockholm University. Dr Haymanot Wachtmeister (LL.M and PhD from Faculty of Law, Stockholm university) is a researcher in commercial law, specialized in housing markets. She has a unique knowledge of the Swedish rent control system being the first legal researcher to publish the first extensive PhD thesis on rent control and rent setting legislation in Sweden. As a commercial law specialist, she has a unique understanding of the interface between market and law. Her experience from private practice, legislative bodies, international organizations and qualified legal research gives her a unique profile. She has presented her research several times within the TENLAW project and ECHR conferences, and also contributed to the FEANSA national report about Sweden during 2020.

Gonçalo Byrne, President of the Portuguese Order of Architects. In 2005 he was awarded the title of Doctor Honoris Causa from the Lisbon Faculty of Architecture, Technical University of Lisbon, and was awarded the Grand Cross of the Order of Santiago da Espada by the President of the Portuguese Republic. Included in his diversified body of work, in terms of scale, theme and programme, the more relevant examples are the recent interventions in the Monastery of Alcobaça and its surrounding areas, the building for the Headquarters of the Government of the Province of Flemish Brabant in Leuven, Belgium, the Marine Traffic Control Tower for the Port of Lisbon Authority, the "Império" Quarter in the Chiado area of Lisbon, the Faro Theatre in the Algarve, and the National Museum Machado de Castro, in Coimbra, this latter project currently under construction. Within the area of urban planning, he carried out the Detailed Plans for the surrounding areas of the Ajuda National Palace, in Lisbon, for the Higher City University, in Coimbra, for the "Cava do Viriato" within the scope of the Polis Programme, in Viseu, as well as the Plan for the Town of Trancoso, this within the scope of the Programme for the Historical Villages of Portugal. He is currently developing relevant projects such as the Estoi Inn & Charm Hotel, in the Algarve, the Viseu Inn, the Estoril – Sol Building Complex, the "Jade" Building Complex in Lisbon, the New Central Laboratory for EPAL (Lisbon Water Distribution Company) and several single-family villas in the Bom Sucesso Resort in Óbidos.

Grzegorz Gajda is Senior Urban Specialists at the European Investment Bank. He appraises projects submitted for the EIB financing both from the European Union countries and from outside of the EU. Previously, while he was with the IFC he led Ukraine Residential Energy Efficiency Project. Prior to the IFC, he was with European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, where he appraised, negotiated and implemented urban investment projects in

Poland and Ukraine. He comes from Warsaw, Poland and holds MA Econ. from Warsaw University.

Natalia Martínez, Fundacion Habitat3, Graduated in Economics, specializing in Political Science and Sociology (Barcelona, 1991), she completed a postgraduate Erasmus in Leisure and Tourism at the Universiteit Gent and the Cheltenham School of Higher Education. It is worth mentioning her research works: “Organized vacations and visual disabilities” (1992) and “Special Centers of Occupational Workshops in Barcelona” with Professor Sebastià Sarasa Urdiola of the Pompeu Fabra University (1994). Her professional activity is developed in the real estate sector. She is a qualified Real Estate Agent (1993) and a registered Property Administrator (1994). She was owner and director of the family business Inogar dedicated to real estate brokerage, asset and rental management and community administration until 2011, later this company merged with Amat Immobiliaris, where she worked for four years in the department of assets. In October 2015 she joined the team of the Hàbitat3 Foundation, housing for social inclusion, as Head of the Area of housing recruitment. She is a member of the Board of Trustees of Som – Fundació since 2009.

Richard Sennett, Senior Fellow of the Center on Capitalism and Society, Columbia University. Richard Sennett currently serves as Chair of the UN-Habitat Urban Initiatives Group. He is Senior Fellow at the Center on Capitalism and Society at Columbia University and Visiting Professor of Urban Studies at MIT. Previously, he founded the New York Institute for the Humanities, taught at New York University and at the London School of Economics, and served as President of the American Council on Work. Over the course of the last five decades, he has written about social life in cities, changes in labour, and social theory. His books include *The Hidden Injuries of Class*, *The Fall of Public Man*, *The Corrosion of Character*, *The Culture of the New Capitalism*, *The Craftsman*, and *Building and Dwelling*. Among other awards, he has received the Hegel Prize, the Spinoza Prize, an honorary doctorate from Cambridge University, and the Centennial Medal from Harvard University. Richard Sennett grew up in the Cabrini Green housing project in Chicago. He attended the Julliard School in New York, where he worked with Claus Adam, cellist of the Julliard Quartet. He then studied social relations at Harvard, working with David Riesman, and independently with Hannah Arendt.

Case studies

Kunlé Adeyemi is an architect, designer and development researcher whose works are internationally recognised for originality and innovation. He is the founder and principal of NLÉ – an architecture, design and urbanism practice founded in 2010, for innovating cities and communities. Adeyemi’s notable works include ‘Makoko Floating School’, a groundbreaking, prototype floating structure once located in the lagoon heart of Lagos, Nigeria. Makoko Floating School has since evolved into ‘Makoko Floating System (MFSTM)’ – a simple, prefabricated, building solution for developments on water – now deployed in 5 countries across 3 continents. This acclaimed project is part of NLÉ’s extensive body of work – the ‘African Water Cities’ – which explores the intersections of rapid urbanisation and climate change. In 2016 NLÉ was awarded the Silver Lion Prize for its second iteration of Makoko Floating School (MFS II – Waterfront Atlas) at the 15th International Architecture Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia. Other NLÉ projects include A Prelude to The Shed in New York, USA, the Black Rhino Academy in Karatu, Tanzania

and the Serpentine Summer House at the Royal Kensington Gardens in London, UK. Before founding NLÉ, Adeyemi worked closely with Rem Koolhaas for about 9 years at the world-renowned Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA), where he led the design and development of significant projects such as the Shenzhen Stock Exchange tower in China, the Qatar National Library and Qatar Foundation Headquarters in Doha, Samsung Museum of Art and the Prada Transformer in Seoul. Alongside his professional practice with multiple prestigious awards, Adeyemi is an international speaker and thought leader. He is one of UNDP's African Influencers for Development (AI4D) Supergroup. He served as juror and nominator for distinguishing many industry talents including the RIBA international Prize, the AIA awards, Venice Biennale jury, and the Rolex Mentor and Protégé program. Adeyemi holds an honorary doctorate degree in Architecture from Hasselt University, Belgium, and a certificate in Real Estate Economics and Finance from the London School of Economics (LSE). He is an Adjunct Visiting Professor at the University of Lagos, Nigeria and has held several academic positions including the 2017 Aga Khan Design Critic in Architecture at Harvard University Graduate School of Design, an Adjunct Associate Professor at the Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation, Columbia University, New York, a visiting critic at Cornell University and Visiting Lecturer at Princeton University – where he leads academic research in architecture and urban solutions that are closer to societal, environmental and economic needs.

Richard Florida. Richard Florida is one of the world's leading urbanists. He is a writer and journalist, having penned several bestsellers, including the award-winning *The Rise of the Creative Class* and *The New Urban Crisis*. He co-founded CityLab, the world's leading publication for cities and urbanism. He is a researcher and professor, serving as University Professor at University of Toronto's School of Cities and Rotman School of Management. He has previously taught at Carnegie Mellon University and been a visiting professor at Harvard and MIT. He is an entrepreneur, as founder of the Creative Class Group which provides strategic advice to companies, foundations and governments worldwide, and serves on the boards of several real estate development firms, venture capital firms, and investment funds.

