WE ALL WANT A PLACE TO BELONG

Across Europe, managing to find and keep a safe and affordable home long-term is becoming harder for many people.

While this housing crisis affects many different groups, **evidence collected by the Red Cross EU Office and National Red Cross Societies in 22 EU Member States** shows that people in migration face additional barriers that can push them towards homelessness and housing exclusion.

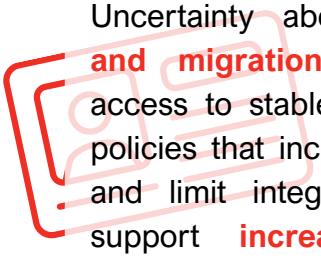
A home is a place to feel safe and stable.

Adequate housing is more than a roof over your head. It means a home that is affordable, secure, habitable, accessible, appropriately located, culturally adequate and connected to essential services. It cannot mean living in overcrowded and unsafe conditions or moving repeatedly between temporary accommodations.

Adequate housing is **a human right and a foundation** for health, work, education and participation in society.

Why are people who have migrated to the EU particularly affected?

Because they face a chain of structural barriers that reinforce one another, our research identified four of them:



Uncertainty about **documentation and migration status** can limit access to stable housing. Migration policies that increase legal precarity and limit integration and housing support **increase the risk of homelessness.**

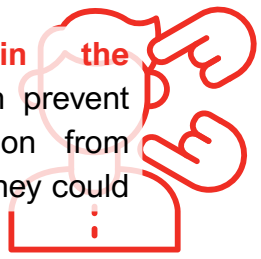


Rising costs and limited social housing affects everyone, but it hits people with **fewer resources and fewer options** the hardest.

Asylum seekers often face **difficulties transitioning from reception** centres to independent stable housing.



Discrimination in the rental market can prevent people in migration from accessing homes they could have afforded.



These barriers are not inevitable: many are shaped by policy and legal frameworks, gaps in support and a systemic shortage of affordable housing in Europe.

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What is the human cost of housing exclusion?

For anyone, experiencing housing insecurity can be **damaging to physical and mental health**, make it harder to find and keep a job and limit access to essential services such as education and healthcare.

Facing discrimination, constantly moving, or living in poor-quality and unsafe conditions also make it **harder to participate fully in one's community**.

People in migration are particularly vulnerable to these impacts. Many have already experienced hazardous journeys, trauma, language barriers, discrimination and restrictive migration policies, which can affect their health, well being and ability to build a stable life.

The impact extends beyond people in migration themselves.

Frontline organisations, such as the Red Cross, are working hard to respond and support people in these situations, but they are often operating within a fragmented and underfunded system. **Social workers** spend a lot of time and energy navigating scarce accommodation options for people in migration and regularly end up relying on **informal networks** to fill gaps in the system.

What needs to change?

We call on the European Union and Member States to:

- Guarantee essential **support based on need**, regardless of legal status.
- Reduce legal precarity, **protect humanitarian assistance** and establish effective firewalls between essential services and immigration enforcement.
- Expand social and **affordable housing** and remove administrative barriers to access.
- Create **supported pathways from reception systems** into secure, stable housing.
- Tackle discrimination and counter divisive narratives through inclusive housing policies and public discourse that **addresses the structural causes of housing exclusion** rather than scapegoating people in migration.

Housing is a fundamental human right.

Ensuring that everyone can access adequate housing is essential if Europe is to build inclusive, **resilient communities** and meet its ambition of **ending homelessness by 2030.**

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