

# EAUH2026

CITY NETWORKS IN EUROPE  
AND BEYOND

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## Session 70 Main Session

### SHELTERING THE DISPLACED: HOUSING THE 'OTHER' AND THE MAKING OF THE POST-WAR CITY

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#### Keywords

Postwar Europe, migration, urban  
policies, housing models,  
postcolonial legacies, welfare

#### Synthesis

This session explores how post-war population movements reshaped European cities through categorized housing policies targeting newcomers.

It examines their socio-political and spatial impacts, and investigates the dynamics of integration, segregation, and urban transformation.



The decades following World War II saw major demographic shifts in Europe due to forced displacements, decolonization, labor migration, and rural-to-urban movement. These flows—sometimes encouraged by European states to support reconstruction and modernization—reshaped the social and spatial fabric of cities, generating urgent housing and infrastructure demands. National and local authorities, often backed by international organizations, developed targeted housing policies for populations categorized along geopolitical, administrative, or ethnic lines. Social housing, initially for the working classes, was redefined to include schemes such as transitional settlements, hostels, camps, and shelters for “foreigners”. These forms of housing institutionalized differentiated management of inhabitants, without however accounting for their social and cultural realities. Shaped by the circulation of architectural and planning paradigms—from modernism to welfare urbanism—such models contributed to hybrid or contested urban forms and reinforced segregationist logics, often inherited from colonial legacies, even in countries without direct colonial legacies. In parallel, grassroots and activist responses proposed solidarity-based alternatives and challenged dominant representations of stigmatized housing forms.

This panel explores housing strategies and migrant housing forms developed in Europe after 1945, by states, cities, NGOs, and since the 1990s, city networks addressing migration. We invite contributions focusing on migrant housing forms – transitional shelters, camps, collective or informal housing- with attention to policy/model circulation, the socio-spatial inequalities produced, and integration into welfare systems, labor markets and development ideologies.

#### Axes of analysis

- Continuities and contrasts between social housing and migrant-specific housing: postcolonial legacies, planning principles, architectural forms, and everyday practices.
- Plurality of actors and scales: role of states, cities, NGOs, international bodies (UNHCR, World Bank), and grassroots efforts in shaping housing categories.
- Urban and territorial policies: inclusion/exclusion of migrant housing in urban agendas; environmental conditions and vulnerabilities of such settlements.
- Appropriation and resistance: how inhabitants negotiate or reshape their environments; the role of activism and social sciences in transforming narratives.

We welcome comparative and multi-scalar approaches. This panel contributes to wider debates on migration, housing, and the transformation of post-war European cities—topics that remain politically charged today.