

Europe: Not without shelter! Housing in Question

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Housing is a hard issue to deal with on a European scale. The diversity of national situations often renders comparisons between several countries and exchanges of experiences difficult. Individual stories are usually contrasted with specificities of national housing policies.

With this report, AITEC takes a chance in disregarding this confined view to unveil similar dynamics in different European countries.

It is constructed in the form of short records which highlight housing situations, urban dynamics or alternative initiatives. Each article is not intended to describe in a representative manner what takes place in European countries as a whole.

Leading us to deepen our mutual knowledge of our European neighbors in regards to housing, is meant to be tools of reflection, of debate and exchanges. This gives rise to the next meetings where we will be able to share our analyses and explore the challenges that reunite us to take greater action together.

The authors of these articles that make up the report come from various backgrounds.

Half of them participated in a European exchange program offered by “*Echanges et Partenariats*” for four years, focusing on urban exclusion. Seizing the occasion to enhance the slow work of reciprocal knowledge made possible through a series of exchanges, we suggested that the former volunteers report on their field experiments.

They therefore described in their own manner, with the passing of time or with the indignation which never disappeared, what they learned while working next to different European partners of activist and associative networks for several months.

Members of AITEC or of close networks and European partners, who had participated in the exchanges, completed, enriched and extended geographically and conceptually the accounts of the former volunteers.

You will discover that certain countries appear regularly throughout the report while others are absent. This closely corresponds to the state of our partnership relations with European social movements concerned with urban issues.

This is by no means a matter of its fate! This dossier is meant to evolve according to the remarks of each individual. We will update it regularly and hope that it will progressively become richer with new meetings and contributions.

A big thank you to all of those who collaborated on the publication of this report: authors, proofreaders, translators, partner associations and various volunteers!

Lucie Lechevalier Hurard, AITEC
October, 2008

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