

City of Ghent joins international initiative for the right to adequate housing



On the occasion of an informal visit by UN Special Rapporteur Leilani Farha, the city of Ghent officially commits to implementing the right to adequate housing in conformity with international human rights law.

'Homelessness and forced evictions are on the rise, including in high-income countries. In many cities, housing has become unaffordable, even for the middle class. We need a paradigm shift from housing as a commodity to housing as an inalienable human right.'

— Leilani Farha, independent expert on the right to housing for the UN Human Rights Council

Ghent joins the growing group of municipalities, including Barcelona, Berlin, Seoul, Paris, London or New York City*, that have become part of 'The Shift', a multi-stakeholder initiative led by the UN Special Rapporteur Farha, the UN Human Rights Office (OHCHR), and United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG).

'Joining 'The Shift' is a natural step for the City of Ghent. We are proud to build on the work we have done so far to tackle discrimination on the housing market. We are also looking into the affordability of housing in our city. We want to share our experience, learn from others, and leverage the power of cities to advance the human rights agenda both locally and globally.'

— Daniël Termont, Mayor of Ghent

Welcoming Ghent's move, Birgit Van Hout, UN Human Rights Regional Representative for Europe emphasized the central place of the right to housing in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and its role as a lever for the realisation of many other human rights.

'Housing should be adequate, affordable and accessible. Let's use the momentum created by the Sustainable Development Agenda, to which all EU countries have committed, to make it a reality for all by 2030.'

— Birgit Van Hout, UN Human Rights Regional Representative for Europe

*Full list: Barcelona, Berlin, Seoul, Madrid, Montevideo, Paris, London, New York City, Plaines Communes, Greater Manchester, Durban, Amsterdam, and Mexico City

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UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Housing | The Shift



OHCHR | The Right to Adequate Housing Toolkit



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2018 is the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the UN on 10 December 1948. The Universal Declaration – translated into a world record 500 languages – is rooted in the principle that “all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.” It remains relevant to everyone, every day. In honour of the 70th anniversary of this extraordinarily influential document, and to prevent its vital principles from being eroded, we are urging people everywhere to Stand Up for Human Rights:

<http://www.standup4humanrights.org/>

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