

PH4.2 SOCIAL RENTAL HOUSING STOCK

Definitions and methodology

Social housing includes different forms of housing support across OECD countries, with considerable cross-national differences in terms of tenure, size, and type of providers. For the purpose of this indicator, the “social rental housing stock” refers to *the stock of residential rental accommodation provided at sub-market prices and allocated according to specific rules rather than according to market mechanisms* (Del Pero et al., 2016). Data used in this indicator are taken from the replies provided by governments of EU and OECD member countries to the OECD 2016 Questionnaire on Affordable and Social Housing (QuASH 2016).

Key findings

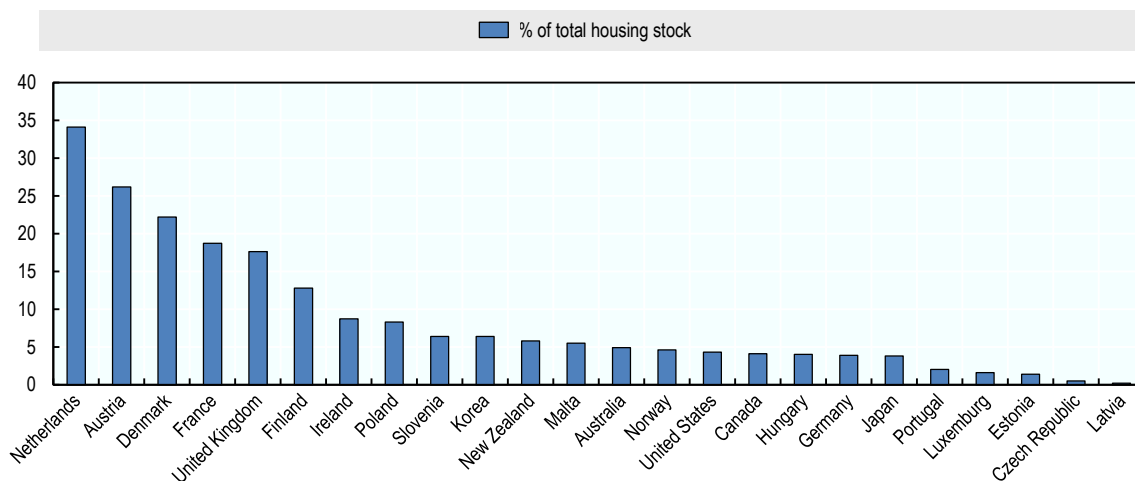
Chile, Greece and Turkey have virtually no social rental sector, and in Mexico public rental housing is only offered to armed-forces personnel. Considering the formal definition Sweden does not social rental housing either. Please refer to indicator number PH 4.1 for further details.

Among countries that do have a social rental housing sector (Figure PH4.2.1), the latter is smallest in Eastern European countries (the Czech Republic, Estonia and Latvia) and Luxemburg, where it accounts for less than 2% of the total housing stock. At less than 10% of the housing stock, the sector is also relatively small in small (less than 10% of the housing stock) in Japan, Germany, Hungary, Canada, the United States, Norway, Australia, Malta, New Zealand, Korea, Poland, Portugal and Ireland. Finland, the United Kingdom and France have an intermediately-sized social rental housing sector, while at over 20% of the housing stock, the sector is largest in Denmark, Austria, and the Netherlands (data on the number of dwellings in absolute terms are available in online Annex under PH4.2.A1).

A variety of providers are involved in social rental housing. Figure PH4.2.2 represents the relative size of the stock managed by the different providers, as a share of the total social rental sector in each country. Sole provision of social rental housing by public authorities tends to be associated with a small social rental housing sector, as illustrated by Eastern European countries as well as Norway and Japan. By contrast in countries with a large share of social rental housing such the Netherlands and Denmark we find a strong prevalence of the not-for-profit sector. In the United Kingdom and Austria a large not-for-profit sector coexists with a significant stock owned and managed by local authorities, even though local authorities in both these countries have sharply reduced their investment in the construction of new dwellings. The large HLM sector in France is constituted by providers with different legal forms but they all have to follow the same regulation and they have been here classified as not for profit providers. Provision of social rental housing by private individuals and for profit providers is important in Germany and the United States but not elsewhere. In only a few countries are central government agencies involved in the direct provision of social housing, namely Korea, Luxemburg, Malta, New Zealand and Slovenia.

Figure PH4.2.1 Relative size of the social rental housing stock

Number of social rental dwellings as a share of the total number of dwellings, 2015 or latest year available^{1 2}



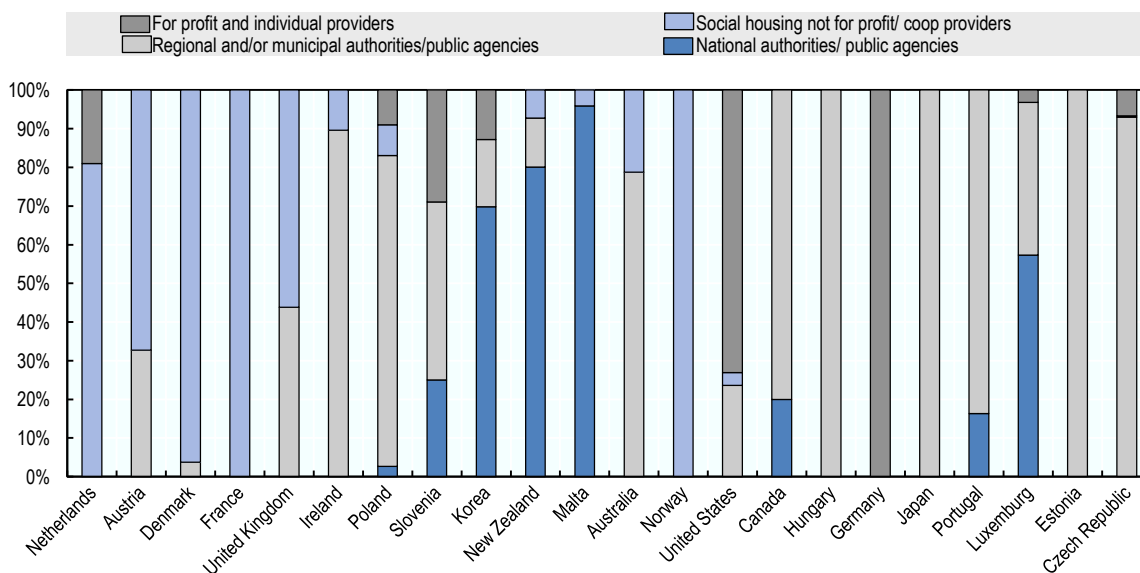
1. There is no social rental housing in Chile, Greece, Mexico, Romania, Sweden and Turkey. Information on the size of the sector is missing for Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Lithuania, the Slovak Republic, Spain and Switzerland.

2. Data refer to 2011 for Canada, Hungary, Ireland, Luxemburg and Malta; 2012 for Germany; 2013 for Denmark, Estonia, Japan and Poland; 2014 for Australia, Austria, France, Norway and the United Kingdom.

Source: OECD, QuASH 2016.

Figure PH4.2.2 Providers of social rental housing in selected OECD countries

Percentage of social rental dwellings by type of provider, latest year available^{1 2}



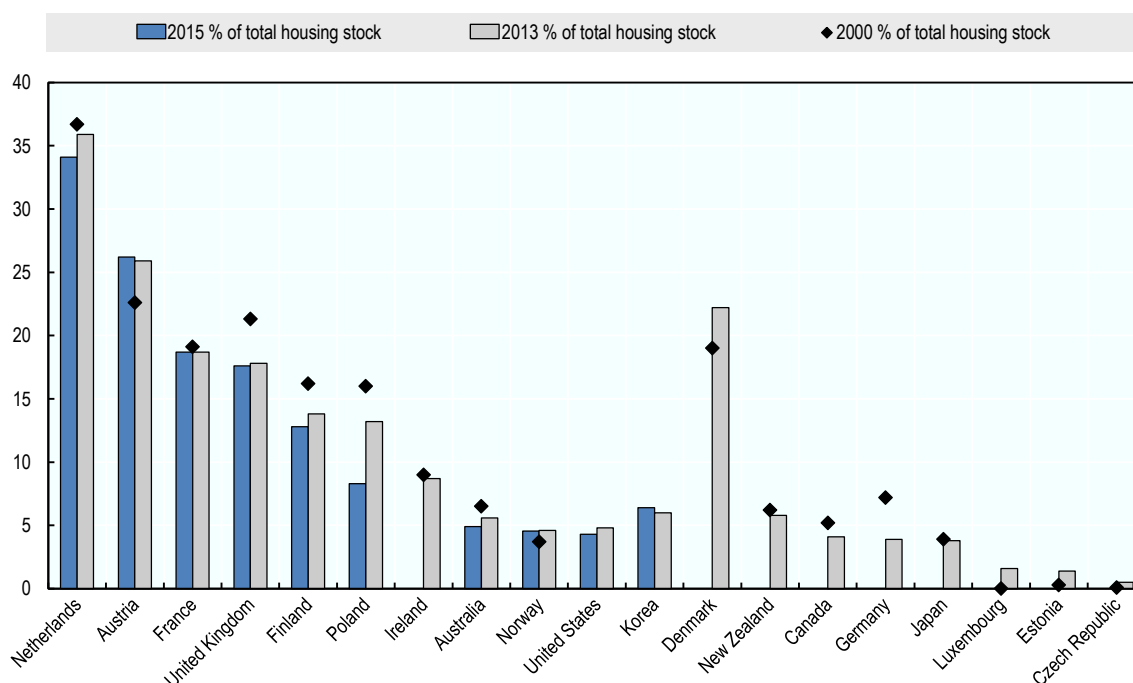
1. There is no social rental housing in Chile, Greece, Mexico, Romania, Sweden and Turkey. Information is missing for Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Finland, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Lithuania, the Slovak Republic, Spain and Switzerland.

2. Data refer to 2011 for Canada, Hungary, Ireland, Luxemburg and Malta; 2012 for Germany; 2013 for Denmark, Estonia, Japan and Poland; 2014 for Australia, Austria, France, Norway and the United Kingdom.

Source: OECD, QuASH 2016.

Data from QuASH only allow for limited comparison over time. Figure PH4.2.3 shows that since the early 2000s Germany, Poland and the United Kingdom had the most significant reduction in the relative size of the social housing sector. The sector also shrank in Australia, Canada, Finland, the Netherlands, and the United States. On the contrary, social rental housing increased in Austria, Canada, Denmark, the Czech Republic, Estonia, France, New Zealand and Norway. The decline in the stock of social rental housing in a number of countries is to be partly imputed to a slowdown in new social housing construction as well as policies supporting the privatization of social housing as for instance in Germany, Poland and the United Kingdom.

Figure PH4.2.3 Social rental housing stock: trends over time
 Social rental dwellings, % of the total housing stock in selected years (2000, 2013, 2015)¹

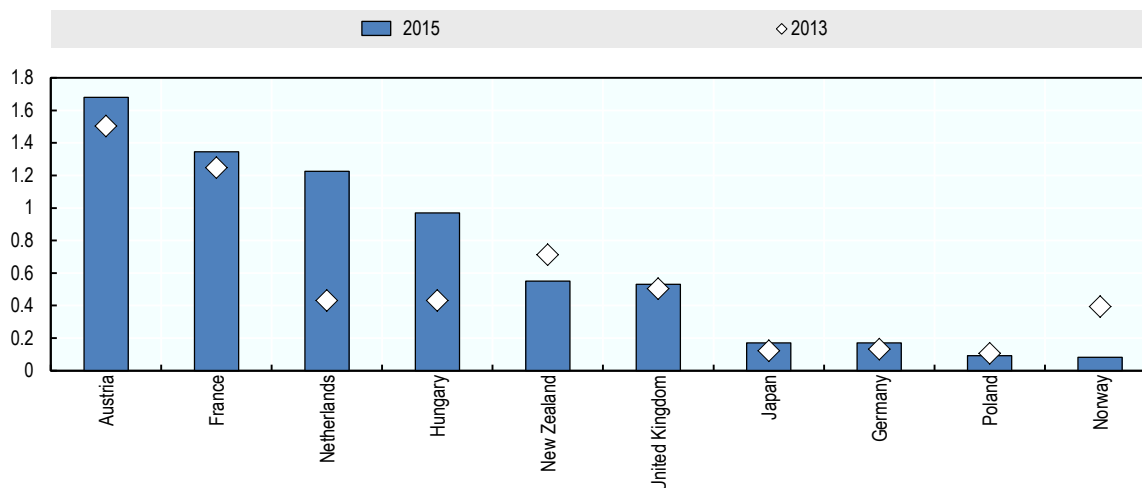


1. Data for 2013 actually refer to 2011 for Canada, Hungary, Ireland, Luxembourg and Malta; 2012 for Germany. Data for 2015 refer to 2014 for Australia, Austria, France, Norway and the United Kingdom. Data for 2000 refer to 2001 for Australia, Austria and Finland, 2002 for Germany and 1998 Japan.

Source: OECD QuASH 2016

Based on Figure PH4.2.4, the construction of social housing appears to have recently picked up, with higher levels in 2015 compared to 2013. Among countries for which the information is available, the number of dwellings added yearly to the existing social rental stock through construction and acquisition has increased in 2015 compared to 2013 in the United Kingdom, France, Austria, Japan, Czech Republic and Hungary, while it decreased in Norway, New Zealand, Poland, and the Netherlands. The number of social rental dwellings added to the existing stock in 2015 was particularly high in Austria, France and the Netherlands.

Figure PH 4.2.4: Social rental housing: yearly construction and acquisition of dwellings in selected countries
 Number of new social rental dwellings per thousand inhabitants, added to the existing stock through construction and acquisition of dwellings, 2013 and 2015¹



1. Only countries for which the information is available are included.

Source: OECD QuASH 2016.

Data and comparability issues

The relative size of the social rental sector was calculated on the basis of the overall number of dwellings in each tenure (owner occupied dwellings, market rented dwellings, co-operative dwellings, social rental dwellings, others), as collected from governments in the OECD 2016 Questionnaire on Affordable and Social Housing (QuASH 2016). There are significant gaps in the information gathered which does not allow for including all reporting countries, as indicated in the notes to the figures above. The fact that the years of reference of available information varies across countries constitutes an additional limitation.

Sources and further reading:

Braga M. and Palvarini P. (2013) *Social Housing in the EU*. European Parliament, Brussels

Dol, K. and Haffner, M. (2010) *Housing Statistics in the European Union 2010*, Dutch Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, The Hague

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Salvi del Pero, A. et al. (2016), "Policies to promote access to good-quality affordable housing in OECD countries", OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Papers, No. 176, OECD Publishing, Paris <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/5jm3p5gl4djd-en>

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (2015) *Social Housing in the UNECE Region: Models, Trends and Challenges*. United Nations, Geneva

Whitehead C. and Scanlon K. (2007) *Social Housing in Europe*. LSE London;