ASVAL's participation at the working meeting organized by the European Commision Housing Task Force

On behalf of ASVAL, the Spanish Rental Housing Association, I would like to address the growing trend of intervention measures and restrictions aimed at protecting housing affordability.

We fully support the objective of ensuring access to affordable housing. However, evidence across multiple European markets shows that overly restrictive policies—such as rigid rent controls or disproportionate limitations on rental activity—can be counterproductive. Rather than improving affordability, they often reduce supply, deter investment, and eventually harm the very households they intend to protect.

Effective intervention must begin with adequate public spending—something that remains insufficient in countries like Spain—and be grounded in real, transparent data. Policies must be carefully designed, executed with precision, and accompanied by strong mechanisms to mitigate unintended consequences.

At the same time, legal certainty and trust are essential. Both institutional and small landlords need a stable and predictable framework that gives them confidence to remain in the rental market. Policies should actively incentivize owners to continue renting their homes, rather than withdrawing them from the market, converting them to short-term uses, or selling them.

Moreover, when restrictions are applied broadly—such as generalized rent controls not based on the specific circumstances of households—they can generate unintended redistributive effects. In practice, this may lead to protecting tenants who do not require support, reducing their housing cost burden, while excluding more vulnerable households from access to rental housing, as current evidence in regions like Catalonia suggests.

Institutional housing providers are long-term partners in delivering stable, high-quality rental housing. To unlock their full potential, we need a predictable regulatory framework, legal certainty, and policies that encourage investment in new and existing housing stock.

At ASVAL, we believe that sustainable affordability can only be achieved by increasing supply, fostering public-private cooperation, and implementing targeted support measures for vulnerable groups—without undermining market dynamics.

Thank you very much.

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