

News from the OECD Champion Mayors

Fall 2020

Montreal's Economic Recovery Plan Aims to Create a More Inclusive Future Fall Mayor of the Moment – Valerie Plante, Montreal, Canada



Montreal is investing \$72 million to relaunch its economy after the impact of COVID-19, support the city's most affected businesses, and implement programs promoting diversity and equal access to employment.

Montreal's consistent population growth over the past 60 years has also necessitated changes to the city's approach to urban planning to provide a sustainable environment and affordable housing. [Read the Mayor's interview.](#)

Cities Focus on COVID-19 Recovery

COVID-19 has affected all cities, and the desire to "build back better" - inclusive, greener, and smarter is strong among Champion Mayors.

The 5th Meeting of Champion Mayors theme: Inclusive Growth, Recovery and Resilience in the COVID-19 era, will draw on insights from the forthcoming case study: *Inclusive Growth, Economic Recovery and Resilience in Bilbao*. Champion Mayors will also share ideas on harnessing digitalisation and smart city strategies for more inclusive growth, and using SDGs to guide long-term recovery strategies.

Read our [latest update on COVID-19 impacts and recovery](#)



[strategies](#) from 100+ cities worldwide. Now also available in [French](#), [Spanish](#), [Portuguese](#) and [Japanese](#).

Housing in Cities in the COVID-19 Era – Inequality Matters Webinar Series



Housing inequality, marked by differences in prices, quality, location, and accessibility, came to the fore during government-implemented "stay at home" measures.

Webinar panellists **Michael Hancock**, Mayor of Denver (USA), **Michaela Kauer**, Director of Vienna's EU Liaison Office in Brussels, **Daniela Grabmüllerová**, Deputy Minister, Section of Coordination of EU Funds and International Relations, Ministry of Regional Development, Czech Republic and **Sjoerdje Van Heerden**, Scientific Officer, Joint Research Centre, European Commission, explored how local and national governments can offer more affordable and sustainable housing for all. [View the recording.](#)

Champion Mayors Focus on How to Provide Affordable Housing For All

Housing inequality is a more pressing issue than ever before. We highlight a few ways Champion Mayors are addressing housing issues. For more information and examples, visit the [Housing page of the website](#).

In July 2020, [Lisbon](#) (Portugal) launched a Safe Rent Program ([Renda Segura](#)) that has converted short-term rentals in the city centre to long-term rentals. The program enables landlords to lease their properties to the municipality for a minimum of five years. The city finds tenants through an affordable housing program targeting young people and middle class families, which enables key workers to return to live in the city centre after being priced out.



'[Porto 15](#)' is the first public housing project in Italy for people under 35 years old. [Bologna](#) (Italy) renovated a building it owned in the city centre, where each floor in the 18 unit building, contains shared services, such as a communal living room/kitchen and laundry. A charter of values between the municipality and tenant sets out an agreement of what is expected, and both the municipality and the local community benefit. In addition to Porto 15, 3000 housing units are dedicated cooperatives and maintain below market rents.

As part of a comprehensive housing plan to increase affordable housing in [Paris](#) (France), the city has had the right to pre-emptively purchase buildings since 2014. When apartments are sold, in areas where lower income residents are being displaced, they must first be offered to the city. The apartment still sells at the market price, but the price is decided by the city. If the seller doesn't like what is offered, they can appeal to the courts to have it re-priced, or withdraw the property from the market.



By 2023, [Aberdeen](#) (UK) aims to provide increased support for those who need it to live independently, prevent homelessness, improve heating affordability, and improve standards of housing generally. The city is using the [Local Housing Strategy](#) to enable residents to live in good quality sustainable homes they can afford and that meet their needs. The strategy covers all types and tenures of housing including social, private rentals and owner-occupied. The plan guides the delivery of 385 affordable homes, and 2,000 council homes.

Building on earlier programs, [New York City](#) (USA) is helping families and seniors afford their rent, buy a first home, and stay in the neighbourhoods they love. [Key initiatives](#) of the city's [Housing New York 2.0](#) plan include the development of anti-displacement strategies in targeted neighbourhoods, preservation projects to enable seniors to stay in their apartments, connecting homeowners with funding for repairs, building affordable new housing, and reshaping shared housing to leverage use of modular design and construction.





Los Angeles (USA) is focussing on improved collaboration between city departments to combat homelessness. Commitments in the city's [Comprehensive Homeless Strategy](#) (CHS) include identifying critical needs, maximising temporary and permanent housing opportunities, providing training and paid work experiences to homeless jobseekers, greater availability of safe and accessible shelter and increased access to hygiene resources. The city also aims to provide 1500 beds in temporary shelter in each district.

A Territorial Approach to the Sustainable Development Goals

How can the SDGs guide long-term COVID-19 recovery of cities and regions?

Cities and regions have a key role to play in reaching the SDGs during the Decade of Action. OECD estimates show that at least 70% of cities have not achieved 15 of the 17 SDGs, and 80% of regions have not achieved any of the 17 goals. A Territorial Approach to the SDGs offers a clear and stable framework to shape long-term recovery strategies. [Bonn](#) (Germany) [Viken](#) (Norway), [Flanders](#) (Belgium), [Kopavogur](#), (Iceland) and [Southern Denmark](#) (Denmark) set ambitious goals to reach the SDGs. The 3rd OECD Roundtable on SDGs took place in November. [View the recording](#) of the Roundtable.



Does investment in Smart Cities really improve people's lives?

As we learn to live with COVID-19, digital technologies and innovation have never been so valuable to help cities build a more inclusive and sustainable future. The Roundtable discussion supported a holistic approach across sectors, the vital role of stakeholder engagement, and local and national leadership was considered critical to advance measurement of smart city performance. [View the recording](#).

The End of 2020 – An Unusual Year

As this eventful year ends, we wish all our readers a happy, healthy and restful holiday.

Thank you for your contributions to meetings, webinars, reports, and, more generally, to support the work of the Champion Mayors initiative during 2020. Stay safe and we look forward to continuing our work advancing inclusive growth together next year.

New Publications

- [Cities and Regions at a Glance](#)
- [Transport Bridging Divides](#)
- [Improving Transport Planning for Accessible Cities](#)
- [The Circular Economy in Cities and Regions](#)

[Sena Seqbedzi](#), Coordinator, Champion Mayors for Inclusive Growth, [OECD CFE](#)



The [Champion Mayors](#) initiative is managed by the [OECD Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities](#). The centre provides comparative statistics, analysis and capacity building for local and national actors to work together to unleash the potential of entrepreneurs and small and medium-sized enterprises, promote inclusive and sustainable regions and cities, boost local job creation, and support sound tourism policies. Sign-up to receive the [CFE Newsletter](#).