DASH International Conference

Contributions of a Social Housing Data Observatory to the design of local housing policies

Linking Housing Policy and Practice

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DASH
Deliver sAfe and Social Housing

Porto. Domus Social

Domus Social
Who are we?

We are a municipal company whose purpose is the promotion and management of public housing owned by the Municipality of Porto, as well as the maintenance and conservation of all municipal buildings, facilities and infrastructures.

Towards a better, fairer and more sustainable Porto for all



50 municipal neighbourhoods

227 dispersed buildings



13.000 housing units

30.000 residents

+205 municipal buildings

Including 60 schools and 18 health centers

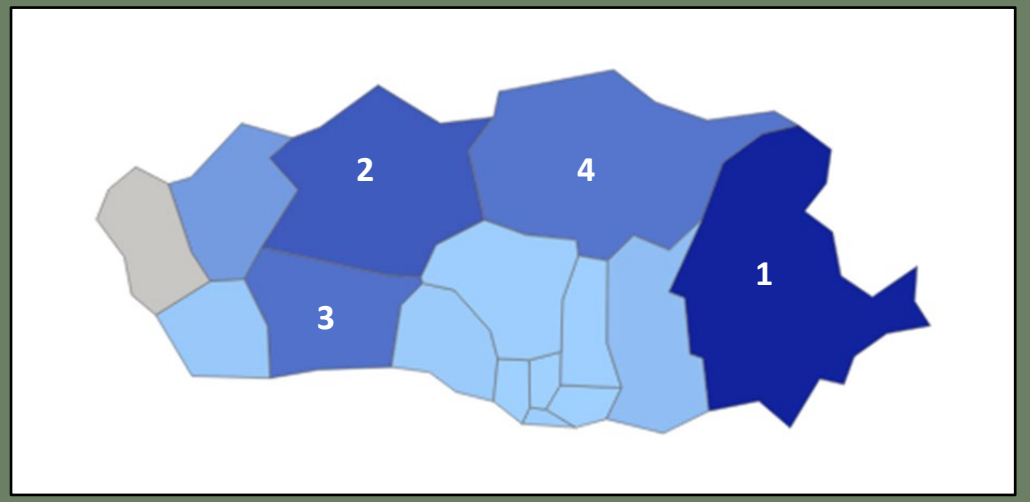
Scale of the municipal housing stock

1 - Campanhã
8144 residents

2 - Ramalde
5615 residents

3 - Lordelo
4517 residents

4 - Paranhos
4900 residents



Around 12% of the population of the municipality of Porto lives in social housing

The policy problem

Housing decisions require an integrated view of supply and demand

Who needs a different housing response?
Where are the gaps?
Which priorities should guide municipal action?



Why a Social Housing Data Observatory?

The growing complexity of contemporary housing challenges demands evidence-based policies. The social reality is too dynamic to be managed without systematic data.

Why an Observatory?

From management to policy

Observing is not just monitoring what exists. It is identifying what is missing, anticipating what is to come and underpinning decisions.

Observing in Social Sciences

A strategic commitment: looking critically at social phenomena, identifying patterns and inequalities and informing decisions.



Housing needs to be observed and analysed

Why an Observatory?

A tool of public policy

Support for policy formulation, monitoring and evaluation: not a data repository, but a platform for analysis, reflection and social innovation.

Transparency and citizenship

Open data, accessible reports and citizen participation: knowledge production as a strategic and political act.



Housing needs to be observed and analysed

The Three Main Pillars of the Observatory

Supply Management

- Characterisation of the municipal housing stock
- Sociodemographic profile of residents
- Number of buildings and territorial distribution

Demand Management

- Application processes and applicant profiles
- Response times and admission criteria
- Analysis of social housing allocation

Synergies and Coverage

- Integrated view of housing supply across the municipality
- Fit between housing and the population's needs
- Social indicators and territorial analysis



Objectives and Priority Thematic Areas

General objective

Producing systematic, accessible and useful knowledge on public social housing in Porto, supporting policy decisions, housing management and citizen participation.

Specific Objectives

- Monitoring the supply and demand for social housing in Porto
- Analysing the living conditions of residents in public housing
- Identifying territorial inequalities and patterns of exclusion
- Assessing the social impact of housing policies
- Promoting open data and transparency in municipal management



Objectives and Priority Thematic Areas

Priority Thematic Areas

- Sociodemographic profile of the residents
- Condition and conservation of the housing stock
- Affordability and financial burden on families
- Analysis of demand and allocation processes
- Monitoring of territorial inequalities

Data Insights• Demographic Profile
Tenants vs. Housing Applicants

Age group

TENANTS

66–70 years

Majority age group
~39% between 61–75 years

HOUSING APPLICANTS

36–40 years

Majority age group
~30% between 31-45 years

Family type

TENANTS

31,7%

Single-person households
25,1% single-parent families

HOUSING APPLICANTS

30,0%

Single-parent families
31,6% single-person households

Employment Status

TENANTS

51,0%

Retirees
25,0% actively employed

HOUSING APPLICANTS

45,6%

Actively employed
28,6% retirees

Dependents

TENANTS

76,8%

Without dependents

HOUSING APPLICANTS

52,8%

Without dependents

From Data to Decisions: Products, Tools and Impact

Sistema Business Intelligence (BI)

All socioeconomic and demographic data are aggregated in real time — continuous monitoring, systematized analysis, immediate decision support.

Thematic reports

In-depth analyses of specific dimensions: resident profile, financial burden, territorial distribution, and changes in demand.

Ex.: *Annual report*

Interactive Cartography

Territorial visualisation of supply and demand data: identifying spatial patterns of inequality and concentrations of vulnerability.

Ex.: *Map of residents by parish*

Open data

Public release of data on the housing stock: transparency, citizen participation, and scope for independent research.

Ex.: *Housing data portal*

Comparative studies

Comparison with national and European data, partnerships with observatories, and production of indicators on housing poverty and exclusion

Ex.: *Comparison with national data and European benchmarking*

The Observatory as an Instrument of Public Policy

1 Foundation for more effective policies

Up-to-date evidence for better-targeted policy decisions: supports priority-setting and resource allocation based on concrete data

Ongoing Social Diagnosis

2 Prevention and Rapid Response

Detects early signs of exclusion, poverty, unemployment, or housing crisis: improves the capacity of public and social bodies to intervene

Real-time Indicator Monitoring

3 Strategic and Flexible Planning

Supports more dynamic and adaptable planning: keeps pace with social, economic, and demographic changes as they happen

Identifying Emerging Trends

4 Participation and Transparency

Making data available to citizens is part of the strategic relationship with residents, promoting and ensuring their informed participation

Open Data · Active Citizenship

Three analytical pillars

Housing stock and residents

Homes, buildings and the demographic and socioeconomic profile of the housed population

Housing demand and access

Applicant profiles, applications, allocation and response times

Territorial analysis

Distribution of housing and needs, with attention to unequal coverage



Data and analytical approach

1	**Administrative records**	Housing stock, registered residents and housing applications
2	**BI consolidation**	Organised indicators and comparative analytical views
3	**Descriptive analysis**	Profiles, territorial patterns and changes over time
4	**Policy interpretation**	Questions for housing management and municipal planning

The BI system in practice



Housed population and applicant profiles

Single-person households

Housed population

31.6%

Housing applicants

31.7%

+0.1 pp

about the same

Single-parent families

Housed population

25.1%

Housing applicants

30.1%

+5.0 pp

higher among applicants

Actively employed

Housed population

25.0%

Housing applicants

45.6%

+20.6 pp

higher among applicants

Retired / pensioners

Housed population

51.0%

Housing applicants

28.6%

−22.4 pp

lower among applicants

Different profiles raise questions about the fit between existing responses and current demand.

Potential policy applications

INFORMATION	POLICY QUESTION	POSSIBLE RESPONSE
Demographic profile	Where are adapted homes most needed?	Target accessibility assessments
Household composition	Does the stock fit household needs?	Review suitable dwelling sizes and support options
Demand and allocation	Where is access most constrained?	Review allocation capacity and processes

Example: planning for accessible housing

Policy question

Where do accessibility needs and available homes diverge?

Data needed

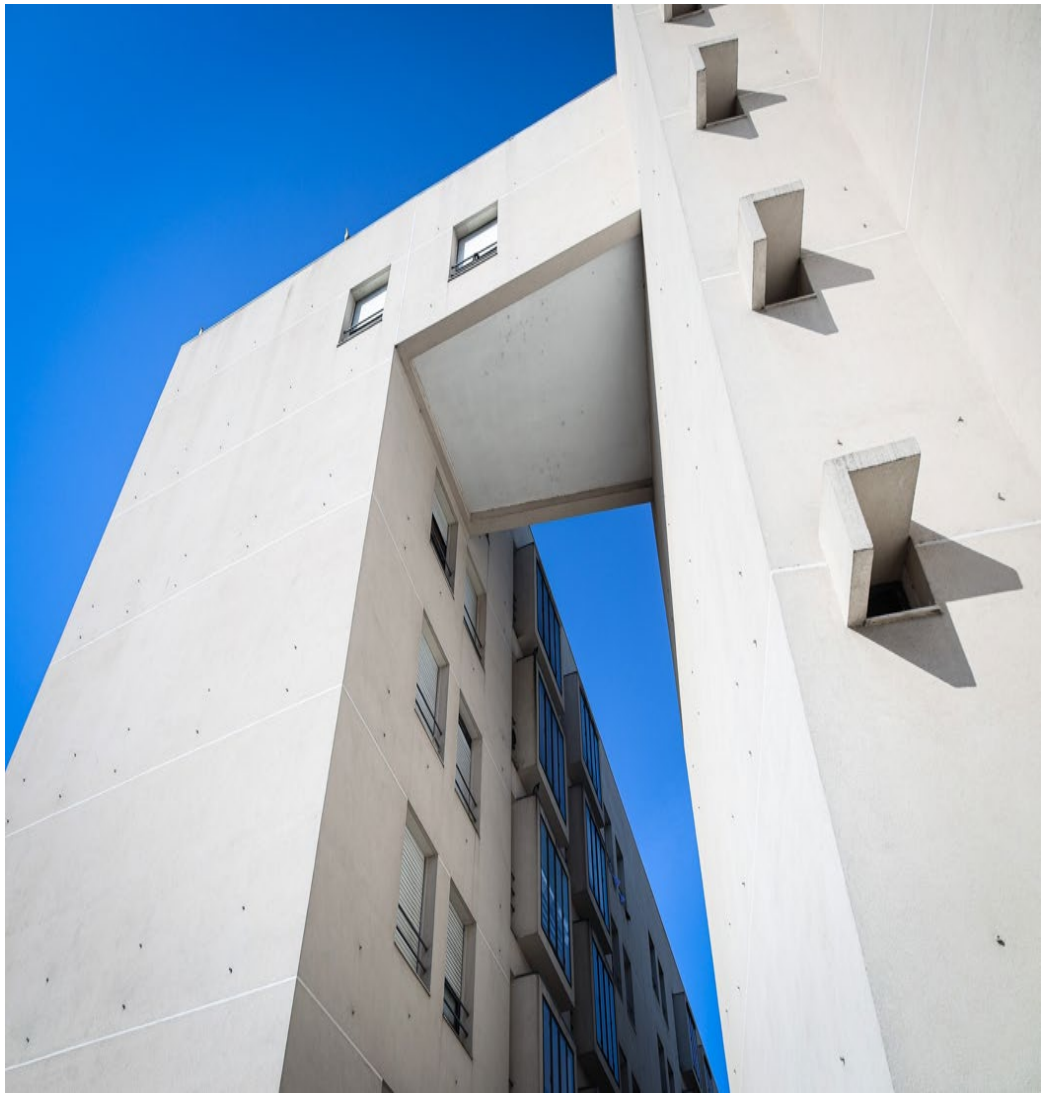
Mobility needs, dwelling accessibility and requests for adapted housing

Decision supported

Priorities for assessment, adaptations or transfers

Follow-up

Resolved needs and response times



Data quality and interpretation

Defined populations

Dwellings, households, individuals and applications need distinct indicators.

Timely records

Dashboard freshness depends on updates to the underlying household records.

Coverage and disclosure

Registered demand has limits. Public outputs need clear, aggregated reporting.

Evidence of policy effects

Policy evaluation needs evidence on implementation and outcomes.

Reliable interpretation depends on definitions, coverage and data quality.

Data quality and interpretation

01	**Consistent records**	Shared definitions make comparisons meaningful.
02	**Practical questions**	Analysis starts with decisions that housing teams need to make.
03	**Dialogue across roles**	Analysts and practitioners interpret evidence with decision-makers.
04	**Feedback from implementation**	Monitoring outcomes improves subsequent analysis and planning.

Development priorities

Thematic studies

Housing poverty, financial burden and changing needs

Indicators and comparison

Affordability and territorial inequality, with national and European benchmarking

Policy monitoring and evaluation

Stronger evidence on how municipal responses address identified needs





Next Steps

- Production of thematic studies based on available data, including on housing poverty and household financial burden;
- Comparison with national and European data: benchmarking and partnerships with other similar observatories;
- Creation of new indicators, namely on poverty, affordability, and territorial inequality;
- Strengthened support for the formulation, monitoring, and evaluation of public policies on social housing.



Linking housing policy And practice

Reliable housing data can inform local decisions.

Monitoring implementation can improve the next decision.

Thank you

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