

# Housing and the city: the new challenges

By Sabine Le Bayon, [Sandrine Levasseur](#) and Christine Rifflart

The residential real estate market is a market like no other. Since access to housing is a right and since inequalities in housing are increasing, the role of government is crucial to better regulate how the market functions. France has a large stock of social housing. Should it be expanded further? Should it have a regulatory role in the overall functioning of the housing market? Should our neighbours' systems of social housing, in particular the Dutch and British systems, be taken as models? On the private market, the higher prices of home purchases and rentals illustrate the lack of housing supply in the country's most attractive areas. At the individual level, the residential market is becoming less fluid: moving is difficult due to problems finding housing suited to career and family needs. It is therefore necessary to develop appropriate policies to enhance residential mobility and reduce imbalances by stimulating the supply of new housing.

Housing is also an integral part of our landscape, both urban and rural. It distinguishes our cities of today and of tomorrow. The commitments made in the framework of the Grenelle environmental consultation process demand a real revolution in land use as well as in technical standards for construction. To ensure more housing, should undeveloped land be used or should developed land be exploited more intensely? How should a housing stock that has become obsolete in terms of energy standards be renovated, and how should this be financed?

These are the challenges addressed by the contributions collected in the new book [Ville et Logement](#) in the Débats et politiques series of the *Revue de l'OFCE*, edited by

Sabine Le Bayon, Sandrine Levasseur and Christine Rifflart. With authors from a variety of disciplines (economics, sociology, political science, urban planning) and backgrounds (researchers as well as institutional players), this review aims to improve our understanding of the issues related to housing and the city.