

NEWSLETTER

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CYPRUS NATIONAL PILOT: Scaling Intersectional Deliberation

The Cyprus National Pilot served as a strategic **proof-of-concept** for the EU-CIEMBLY framework, demonstrating how deliberative democracy can be scaled from local engagement to a national-level mechanism. This transition tests the resilience of our theoretical models in a complex national context, bridging the gap between grassroots needs and institutional policy.



The Cyprus National Pilot demonstrated how intersectional deliberation can be applied at a national level. Bringing together residents with diverse backgrounds and lived experiences.

THE PILOT'S STRUCTURE

22 April | Online | Identifying priorities: This session focused on **Knowing**. Before identifying core themes, participants engaged in a Positionality exercise. This was a vital methodological step to ensure that the Assembly recognised how unequal access to resources and social positions shape people's lived experiences before identifying and prioritising the Assembly's main concerns.

25 April | In person | Expert contributions: Held at the University of Cyprus, this session deepened the **Understanding** phase. It shifted the focus from identifying grievances to analysing root causes, drawing on expert and stakeholder knowledge to dismantle widely held assumptions about housing.

6 May | In person | Developing recommendations: In the **Recommending** phase, participants finalised 14 concrete policy proposals. This session focused on ensuring that these community-driven solutions were aligned for presentation to national and European national and European decision-makers.

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CYPRUS CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY ON HOUSING

From 22 April to 6 May 2026, the EU-CIEMBLY team gathered 60 participants to navigate the complexities of housing issues in Cyprus and provide recommendations.

Intersectionality in Practice: Perspectives from Experts and Stakeholders

Integrating specific stakeholder expertise was vital for moving beyond superficial solutions to intersectional housing policy. To be effective, the Assembly's evidentiary base must account for how overlapping identities, including gender, migration status, and age, intersect with structural barriers.

During Session 2, four experts helped participants examine the structural causes of housing exclusion. Experts provided critical interventions that aligned with the Relationality and Interdependence model, which emphasises the interrelation of social experiences:

- **Ms. Niovi Georgiade:** Evaluated the necessity of gender-sensitive design, analysing how safety and domestic burdens create differing housing impacts for men and women.
- **Mr. Mattheos Demetriades:** Representing the Cyprus Red Cross Society, he highlighted how intersecting factors like ethnicity and socio-economic class create compounding barriers to housing for marginalised populations.
- **Dr. Stefanos Spaneas:** Synthesised the link between social cohesion and participatory platforms, arguing that housing stability is a prerequisite for active participation in democratic life.
- **Mr. Kleanthis Pissarides:** Contrasted the specific vulnerabilities of students from lower-income backgrounds and international students against general market trends, revealing unique risks of exploitation.

These insights provided the evidentiary foundation required to transition from individual reflection to structural political engagement.



Citizens' assemblies are more likely to influence policies when they secure meaningful institutional engagement. Session 3 featured high-level involvement from institutional actors, including the Member of the European Parliament Mr. Michalis Hadjipantela and the Commissioner for the Citizen Mr. Panayiotis Palates.

Key Themes from the 14 Recommendations: A Blueprint for Intersectional Housing Reform

The outputs of the Assembly were not a mere 'wish list' but a community-driven mandate for structural change, addressing the housing crisis through an intersectional lens.

Market Regulation

To address market volatility, the assembly recommends the utilisation of vacant and underused properties to stabilise stock. A key proposed mechanism includes the implementation of a points-based property-quality assessment system to inform proportionate rent caps, ensuring costs are proportional to safety and habitability.

Social Inclusion

The Assembly recommends the inclusion of social housing in all new major developments. Furthermore, it advocates for consultation with persons with disabilities during the planning of public housing to ensure that accessibility is integrated by design, not as an afterthought.

Protection & Transparency

To combat exclusion, the assembly calls for strengthening anti-discrimination laws and simplifying multilingual access to welfare and housing information. This is designed to remove the language-based barriers that often prevent migrants and people who do not speak the national languages fluently from accessing housing support.

Innovation

The Assembly proposes intergenerational cohabitation schemes, directly addressing the "Youth housing" crisis and the 'Aging stock' issues prioritised during the voting activity. These schemes allow retirees with excess space to live together with younger residents, fostering social cohesion and resource efficiency.

Future Outlook: The Path to the Transnational Pilot

The successful scaling of the Cyprus pilot has demonstrated that intersectional deliberation can thrive at a national level. As we move forward, EU-CIEMBLY is preparing for the Transnational Citizens' Assembly, our most ambitious milestone yet.

This fully online Assembly will involve 100 participants from six Member States. The strategic objective is to examine how the European Commission's European Citizens' Panels could become more inclusive and intersectional. This shift to a transnational context is the next step in our mission of **Redefining European Democracy**.



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