Spatial Patterns of Affordable Housing Needs in Portugal

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Abstract

Ensuring the provision of affordable housing is an important and challenging role of planning practice, both at macro and micro level. The adequacy of housing supply to the population's (present and future) needs, preferences and income is particularly relevant and complex in territories where standard housing market mechanisms typically fail. In places, shaped by socio-economic vulnerabilities (such as high proportions of population with low income levels) and by severe demographic decline processes (associated with high levels of vacancy houses), the mismatch between the market drivers (e.g. demand and supply) and the efficient market conditions to produce affordable and good solutions for all population is a crucial issue in the context of public policy. Thus, a spatial composite indicator of housing accessibility, considered in this article as a combination of need and affordability, is developed. More specifically, the former is assessed by the balance between housing stock (supply) and number of households (demand), while the latter is captured by the equilibrium between housing price (supply) and household's income conditions (demand).