

Covid-19 and the Real Estate Sector

As the European economy comes to a halt CEPI calls for attention to be paid to the concerns of the real estate sector to avoid the risk of a damaging crisis.

The public health emergency caused by the Covid-19 pandemic is now impacting on the real estate sector. This situation calls for careful management to avoid damaging consequences for the European real estate market. Lockdown measures introduced in different countries restrict the ability of real estate professionals to carry out their professional activities. Estate agents are unable to conduct viewings (or these are severely restricted) or meet with clients and help them with moves. Existing transactions face uncertainty due to difficulties in completing and handover of keys while accepting new instructions is very difficult. This is likely to result in a substantial fall in the number of transactions. Property managers are faced with difficulties in ensuring the safe upkeep and maintenance of buildings. It is difficult to arrange for necessary works to be done whilst respecting rules on social-distancing. Property managers of multi-dwelling units are also experiencing difficulties as general meetings of co-owners have been halted and decisions cannot be taken.

We recognise the difficulty of the current situation and paramount importance of public health measures to overcome the crisis. However, we must remind EU and national regulators that:

- Most companies active in the real estate sector are SMEs and need urgent support to maintain their business activities.
- The real estate sector is vital to the European economy as a source of investment and as an engine of growth and job creation.
- Financial liquidity and availability of funds are fundamental to the health of the real estate market.
- Consumer confidence needs to be upheld in the interests of the continuing functioning of the market for both sales and rentals.

We ask that the needs of the real estate sector not be overlooked in the introduction of support measures. Financial support for all European business activities including real estate services for at least the next few months needs to be assured in all ways possible. At the same time the opportunity should be taken to promote green investment in the real estate sector to promote the implementation of the European Green Deal.

Real estate and the built environment in general provide places of shelter for all in the current difficult circumstances. The real estate market needs to continue to function in the interests of all EU citizens who need to be able to find decent housing and shelter, as well as for investors in these uncertain times.

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Connecting European Real Estate Professionals Across Europe

The mission of CEPI, the European Association of Real Estate Professions, is to support the European real estate market and cross-border transactions by enhancing and strengthening the work and activities of real estate professionals. We represent twenty-six national professional organisations of estate agents and property managers based in eighteen EU and EFTA countries. Their individual members are active in all sectors of the residential real estate market on a daily basis involving both sales transactions and long-term management. Transparency Register ID number: 1094652600-90.