

## EAPB Summit in Barcelona: BID Romania Joins as Housing Crisis Tops Agenda

Barcelona, 1 July 2025 – The European Association of Public Banks ([EAPB](#)) held its General Assembly in Barcelona, hosted by long-standing member the Institut Català de Finances ([ICF](#)). The event brought together leaders from Europe's public banking sector to celebrate milestones, deepen collaboration and discuss pressing challenges.

### ICF Marks 40 Years of Public Banking Excellence

Catalonia's promotional bank celebrated four decades of driving industrial growth, green transition, and social impact.

Ms. Vanessa Servera, CEO of ICF, said:

*"Hosting the EAPB General Assembly in Barcelona is a testament to our shared vision. For 40 years, ICF has partnered with businesses, institutions, and European public banks to turn bold ideas into reality. We celebrate our past achievements and reaffirm our commitment: to keep building a more innovative, sustainable, and inclusive Europe—together.\*"*

### BID Romania Joins the EAPB

The EAPB also announced [BID Romania](#) (Banca de Investiții și Dezvoltare) as its newest member. The Bucharest-based development bank aims to boost financing for SMEs, start-ups, and green infrastructure — priorities it shares with the wider EAPB network.

Mr. Dan Sandu, CEO at BID Romania stated:

*"We look forward to working with fellow public banks to expand our impact in Romania and across Europe. Together, we can ensure that viable projects receive the necessary funding when private finance needs an extra layer of support. This collaboration will help us achieve our mutual objectives, from boosting SME access to finance to attracting private investment for critical initiatives."*

### Sustainable and Affordable Housing: A Strategic Priority

With housing rising to the top of Europe's policy agenda, the General Assembly reaffirmed the role of public banks in financing affordable, energy-efficient, and climate-resilient housing. The EAPB outlined three priorities for action:

1. Flexible State Aid Rules – Tailor frameworks to support social and affordable housing.
2. EU Funding as a Catalyst – Leverage EU funds in cooperation with the EIB, to complement national programs and reduce construction costs.
3. Mobilizing Private Capital – Establish an EU-wide framework for social impact financing and green bonds.

### EAPB President's Call to Action

EAPB President and CEO of [NWB Bank](#), Ms. Lidwin Van Velden concluded:

*"Time is of the essence. EU citizens demand results, the climate crisis is worsening, and housing shortages are growing. We must act now by fostering collaboration to empower national and regional promotional banks, cutting red tape to ensure simpler access to funds, and working with private finance to unlock bold solutions for sustainable, affordable housing for all. It's time to deliver."*

The EAPB remains committed to advancing the role of public banking in sustainable development, fostering collaboration, and shaping policies that support inclusive growth across Europe.

Pictures of the meeting are available [here](#)

You can find our report on how Europe's promotional banks are building a sustainable, inclusive future—one home at a time—[here](#)

You can find our detailed policy recommendations [here](#)

For media inquiries, please contact us [here](#)

## **About EAPB:**

The European Association of Public Banks (EAPB) gathers member organisations (financial institutions, funding agencies, promotional and public banks, associations of public banks and banks with similar interests) from 17 European Member States and countries, representing directly and indirectly the interests of over 90 financial institutions towards the EU and other European stakeholders. With a combined balance sheet total of about EUR 3.4 trillion and a market share of around 15%, EAPB members constitute an essential part of the European financial sector.