STR regulation and post-pandemic strategies to reintroduce STRs into the residential housing market

May 25th 2021, 15.00–16:30 CET
By-invitation online meeting with experts and city representatives (via Teams)
Organised by: CIDOB (Barcelona Centre for International Affairs) with the support of Barcelona City Council

Rising housing prices have over recent years made access to rental properties more difficult in a range of European cities. The growth of online platforms offering short-term rentals (STRs) such as Airbnb has had a harmful impact on the availability of long-term rentals. In this context, cities face a number of challenges when trying to regulate STRs due to their lack of competencies, capacities and resources, as well as the existence of outdated national and EU regulatory frameworks vis-à-vis the digital economy. City governments have particular difficulty compelling digital platforms to share data, verifying whether they are offering apartments with or without legal permission, and properly taxing properties that benefit from STR arrangements.

The COVID-19 pandemic and resulting drastic fall in economic activity and collapse of tourism have changed this scenario. In this context, cities like Barcelona are seeing between 60% and 70% of STRs being advertised as medium-term rentals (up to 11 months). In light of the new situation, this workshop aims to present the results of CIDOB's Global Cities report STR regulation and post-pandemic strategies to reintroduce STRs into the residential housing market. The report explores the main post-COVID policy measures adopted in cities to transform and consolidate STRs into long-term rentals. It also identifies the main STR strategies in European cities, as well as the key elements of the new European regulatory framework, the Digital Services Act, which may open a window of opportunity to better regulate and control STRs.

The event is organised by CIDOB's Global Cities Programme with the support of Barcelona City Council. It will bring together researchers, city representatives and city networks to discuss the study's main findings.

15:00 – 15:05 Welcome and introduction
Agustí Fernández de Losada, Director, Global Cities Programme, CIDOB

15:05 – 15:20 Presentation of the study
Carles Mascarell, Political Scientist, former advisor at the Council of European Municipalities and Regions, CEMR
Mariona Segú, Researcher at Institut National d’Études Demographiques, INED

15:20 – 15:30 The Alliance of Cities for STR
Mark Boekwijt, EU Representative, City of Amsterdam

15:30 – 16:25 Discussion with participants
Debate facilitated by:
Eva García-Chueca, Senior Research Fellow, Global Cities Programme, CIDOB

16:25 – 16:30 Concluding remarks
Eva García-Chueca, Senior Research Fellow, Global Cities Programme, CIDOB