

A Work Project, presented as part of the requirements for the Award of a Master's degree in
Management from the Nova School of Business and Economics.

**SCENARIOS FOR THE FUTURE OF EUROPEAN UNION ENVIRONMENTAL
DIRECTIVES AND REGULATIONS AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR THE
EUROPEAN REAL ESTATE SECTOR – EXPLORING RISKS, OPPORTUNITIES
AND STRATEGIES FOR MOME – MEGATRENDS & TRENDS**

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Abstract: This work project applies the Intuitive Logics School to explore the future of EU environmental policies and their impact on the European real estate sector until 2030. Through a combination of interviews with EU employees, foresight experts, and industry leaders, as well as a collaborative workshop with MOME, the study analyzes plausible developments and their implications for market dynamics and regulatory adaptation. By addressing uncertainties such as ‘Supply Chain Stability’ and ‘Qualified Workforce Availability’, four scenarios are developed to enhance the sector’s preparedness for upcoming challenges. The work concludes with both scenario-specific and general strategic recommendations, providing MOME with actionable insights to ensure resilient operations through 2030.

Keywords: *Scenario Planning, Strategic Foresight, Strategic Implications, Real Estate Industry, Housing Cooperatives, Business Model Canvas, Porter’s 5 Forces, TOWS Matrix*

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Glossary

AI – Artificial Intelligence	ETS – Emission Trading System Directive
approx. – approximately	EU – European Union
BIM – Building Information Modeling	EuGB – EU Green Bond (Regulation)
BTR – Build to Rent	GDP – Global Domestic Product
CAGR – Compound Annual Growth Rate	GHG – Greenhouse Gases
CBAM – Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism	GRI - Geopolitical Risk Index
CEAP – Circular Economy Action Plan	IoT – Internet of Things
CO ₂ – Carbon Dioxide	JVR – Job Vacancy Rate
CRMA – Critical Raw Materials Act	KU(s) – Key Uncertainty
CRM(s) – Critical Raw Material(s)	LCA – Life Cycle Assessment
CSDDD – Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive	MEPS – Minimum Energy Performance Standards
CSRD – Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive	MMC – Modern Methods of Construction
DNSH – Do No Significant Harm	MNC – Multinational Corporations
DT – Digital Twins	MSR – Market Stability Reserve
EC – European Commission	NBS – Nature-based Solutions
ECI – Early Contractor Involvement	PMT – Probabilistic Modified Trends
EED – Energy Efficiency Directive	RED – Renewable Energy Directive
EII(s) – Energy-intensive industries	RRF – Recovery and Resilience Facility
EPC – Energy Performance Certificate	SFDR – Sustainable Finance Disclosure Regulation
EPBD – Energy Performance of Buildings Directive	SMEs – Small & Medium-sized Enterprises

1 Introduction

"Scenarios are not predictions, they are stories about how the future might unfold", emphasizes Peter Schwartz (1991) in his fundamental work on scenario planning. The complexities of today's regulatory environment and sustainability challenges resonate deeply with this principle. Faced with the intersection of rapid climate change, geopolitical conflicts, and pandemic recovery, the European Union (EU) has introduced ambitious environmental initiatives such as the Fit for 55, which represents a key milestone of the European Green Deal by 2030. Such measures promise to have a severe impact on industries, particularly the real estate sector, which accounts for 37% of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (UNEP 2023b). This work project aims to address the uncertainties and strategic implications arising from the evolving EU regulatory landscape by focusing on MOME. The key challenge, identified in collaboration with MOME's leadership, can be formulated as follows: 'How can MOME adapt to the future development of the EU environment shaped by directives and regulations by 2030 in order to increase its competitive edge and achieve its objectives?'

Using the *Intuitive Logics School's* scenario planning methodology, this project explores plausible futures that highlight the critical uncertainties affecting the EU's environmental policies and their implications for the real estate sector. This qualitative approach facilitates the management of uncertainty while encouraging dynamic and adaptive thinking (Bradfield and Van Der Heijden 2005).

Therefore, the intent is to provide MOME with strategic tools and actionable insights that will help the organization thrive in an uncertain future. The ultimate goal of this work is to improve MOME's resilience and align its mission with the broader objectives of the EU's sustainability agenda by identifying risks, exploring opportunities, and developing responsive strategies.

1.1 Market Overview – European Real Estate Industry

The total value of the European real estate market will reach approximately (approx.) €106.8 trillion in 2024, representing an increase of 4.5% year-on-year. About 81% of the value relates to the dominant segment "residential real estate"¹ (19% to "commercial real estate"²). This valuation imbalance (Figure 12) is primarily due to the strong demand for housing in Europe's major cities, coupled with the low supply of housing as urbanization continues (Statista 2024b). The year 2023 has been associated with geopolitical challenges that have led to high inflation and subsequent interest rate hikes. Due to the level of uncertainty and the increased cost of capital, investors and private clients have adopted a “wait-and-see” approach (PwC 2023), which has significantly weakened demand (Δ transaction volume 2023: -11% – Figure 13). Looking forward, the market is projected to stabilize and grow steadily at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 3.2% to €125.1 trillion by 2029 as it recovers from the recent downfall (Statista 2024b).

As a result of rising house prices and the aforementioned surge in borrowing costs, affordable housing is in high demand, particularly in the EU's major cities. The associated decline in demand for home ownership favors investment in the build-to-rent (BTR) sector. Investors are looking for long-term, stable returns as long as current trends in urban living continue. Developers are focusing on urban, modern rental buildings with amenities such as onsite gyms and co-working spaces aimed at young professionals or city dwellers, adding to the BTR trend (Deloitte 2024b). In the commercial real estate sector, logistics is experiencing an upturn as a result of the ongoing shift towards e-commerce. On the other hand, demand for traditional office buildings is declining due to remote working and the wider adoption of hybrid working models. In general, environmental regulations are seen as the critical and defining factor for the future

¹ Residential real estate market covers houses and apartments

² Commercial real estate market covers office buildings, retail spaces, warehouses, industrial properties

development of the entire European real estate industry. Both the growing demand from buyers and investors for sustainability-compliant properties/projects and the tightening of standards are putting pressure on the industry and will result in additional costs (e.g., renovations, green tech). Assets that are already compliant are currently traded at a premium, whilst in the longer term the associated efficiency benefits and reduced environmental impact will lead to a further uplift in property values (PwC 2023) (Figure 14 for detailed analysis).

1.2 Introduction of MOME

MOME is a Porto-based start-up company founded in 2023. It focuses on the development and management of housing cooperatives. The business model aims to address the growing problem of housing affordability in Portugal. MOME manages the entire lifecycle of a cooperative - from land identification and construction to ownership transfer (Figure 15).

MOME's housing cooperatives operate as non-profit entities, where individual ownership homes are sold at cost, covering only the actual development costs (Figure 16). This ensures transparent pricing with no extra profit margin. Upon completion, members can freely dispose of their homes without restrictions. MOME's main target group is the Portuguese middle class, with actual customers belonging to both the middle and upper classes.

The start-up follows strict principles to ensure the sustainability of its projects. The standards are set in line with the EU taxonomy to help reduce environmental impact. In practice, this means using modern methods of construction (MMC) and modular components to reduce material waste or integrating nature-based solutions (NBS), such as green roofs, to contribute to better air quality in the city. Currently, the company manages two housing cooperatives: PEDRAS.COOP in Vila Nova de Gaia (13 houses), and HERA.COOP in Porto (96 units). Until 2030, MOME aims to provide more than 1,500 homes at affordable and transparent prices in urban centers throughout Portugal (MOME 2024) (Figure 17 for Business Model Canvas).

2 EU Environmental Measures Overview

To critically examine the future of the EU's sustainability policies and their implications on the real estate sector, it is essential to have a comprehensive understanding of relevant environmental regulations and directives. The following subchapters provide an overview of these legal frameworks, discussing their purpose and objectives, as well as their current state.

EU directives set legally binding targets to be reached by all Member States. However, they grant national authorities flexibility in the form and manner of transposition into national law within a certain period (usually two years). Thus, directives may allow for differences in how countries intend to meet the targets (EU 2022a).

EU regulations, by contrast, are directly binding and applicable in all Member States without requiring national implementation. Hence, they are generally applicable and foster uniformity within the EU, with no room for national divergence or deviation (EU 2022b).

2.1 Green Deal 2050

The EU Green Deal, a concept to combat climate change, was first outlined in 2018 and was legally adopted in June 2021 as the European Climate Law. The main objective of the Green Deal is to create a climate neutral EU by 2050. This is to be achieved by having zero net domestic emissions by 2050, while decoupling economic growth from resource use and leaving “no person or place behind”. The package of measures can be divided into several policy areas, such as Clean Energy, Sustainable Industry, Building and Renovation or Pollution Elimination (European Parliament & Council 2021).

2.2 Fit for 55

Following on from the Green Deal, the Fit for 55 package was adopted in July 2021, setting out initiatives to reduce GHG emissions by at least 55% by 2030 compared to 1990 levels (EU 2024d). It provides a specific plan of 19 directives and regulations with milestones up to 2030

(European Parliament 2024). It should be noted that any legislative proposal will have to go through the EU legislative process, requiring approval by the Parliament and the Council. A detailed overview of the Fit for 55 initiatives follows in this chapter.

The *EU Emission Trading System Directive* (ETS), introduced in 2005, is the EU's main emission-reducing tool and has led to a 41% decrease in emissions. The scheme operates on a cap-and-trade basis, with a decreasing cap over time on the total amount of emissions allowed in the energy-intensive industries (EIIs), commercial aviation, electricity and heat generation sectors. Around 10,000 companies are allocated³ certificates or they acquire them (auction based), which confer the right to emit one ton of carbon dioxide (CO₂). They are obliged to submit regular reports on their emissions and sufficient certificates without being fined for every surplus ton of CO₂. Unless allowances are earmarked for a specific fund, most auction revenues will go to national budgets (around 75.7% in 2023), with 50% to be invested in climate or energy-related projects (EC 2024a). The ETS is being reformed as part of the Fit for 55 initiatives to bring it into line with the new targets. This involves increasing the emissions reduction target in selected sectors from the original -43% to -62% by 2030. The annual cap reduction of -2.2% will be accelerated to -4.3% (2024-2027) and -4.4% (2028-2030). The free allocation of certificates is to be gradually phased out by 2034. From 2024, the maritime sector will be included in the ETS, while the ETS2 system for the combustion of fuels in buildings, road transport and smaller sectors will be introduced as a complement in 2027. ETS2 will be based on an upstream cap-and-trade principle, which requires fuel suppliers to monitor and report their emissions. The cap is set at a level that will result in emissions being 42% lower in these areas than they were in 2005 by 2030.

³ Allocation is based on factors such as product-related benchmarks (avg. emission of the 10% most efficient plants in the sector), historical production data (capacity, activity), carbon leakage risk (sectors at risk of relocating production to countries with fewer regulations receive more allowances to protect competitiveness) (EC 2024n).

To mitigate the risk of carbon leakage⁴, the EU has devised the *Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism* (CBAM) Regulation to ensure that a fair price is placed on the carbon emissions embedded in imported goods. It aims to align the carbon costs of imported goods with those of domestic production within the EU, in addition to adhering to the standards set by the World Trade Organization. The transitional phase, which will end in 2025, serves as a pilot for reporting considering cement, iron, steel, aluminum, fertilizers, electricity and hydrogen. Currently, importers operating in the EU must disclose the embedded emissions of goods covered by the CBAM Regulation without surrendering ETS allowances. From 2026, they will be required to register with the relevant national authorities and declare their annual number of imported emissions. From this date, importers will be obliged to acquire⁵ and surrender allowances for the imported embedded emissions. Upon the conclusion of the transitional phase, a review of the system will be conducted, with the possibility of subsequent adaptations. Furthermore, the intention is to extend the scope of the program to include additional goods by 2030.

New climate targets required the EU to adapt its existing *Renewable Energy Directive* (RED). These adjustments include a mandatory target of 42.5% of renewable energies in the energy mix of 2030 (previously 32%). To counteract disparate developments in different economic sectors, respective targets for 2030 have been defined. The transportation sector must either reduce its GHG intensity by 14.5% or increase the share of renewable energies to at least 29%. In the context of buildings, a target of 49% renewable energy must be achieved, while the EU's industries in general must increase the annual share of green energy forms by 1.6%. With respect to the heating and cooling sector, the utilization of renewable energy must improve by 0.8% on an annual basis by 2026 and by 1.1% by 2030. Beyond this, the new directive is designed to expedite the approval process by categorizing projects as being of public interest,

⁴ Risk of companies moving production sites to countries with laxer emission restrictions (EC 2024a)

⁵ Price is based on the weekly average auction price of the ETS allowances (€/ton of CO₂ emitted)

thereby accelerating the integration of renewables within the EU (EU 2023a). The RED was adopted in November 2023 and should be transposed into national law by May 2025 (EC 2024b).

According to the EU, saving energy and reducing its consumption will be as critical as the transition to renewable energies. Therefore, modifications to the existing *Energy Efficiency Directive* (EED) were conducted. Such amendments include the implementation of heightened energy efficiency standards, which have been designed to facilitate a reduction in final energy consumption of 11.7% on a EU level by 2030 (compared to 2020 forecasts). Member States are now required to establish indicative targets at national level, while the EU has identified key sectors for energy efficiency measures, including buildings, industry and transportation. Average annual energy savings of 1.49% are anticipated, reaching 1.9% by the end of 2030. Furthermore, the public sector is obliged to register annual energy savings of 1.9%, including a commitment to renovate 3% of the floor area of public buildings each year (EU 2023b). The official deadline for the national transposition of the EED is set for 11th October 2025 (EC 2024h).

The *Effort Sharing Regulation* (ESR) sets binding targets for each Member State to reduce GHG emissions in sectors not covered by the ETS. These include road transport, buildings, agriculture, small industry and waste, which together account for 60% of EU emissions. The regulation was adopted in 2018 with an initial target to reduce GHG emissions in these sectors by -29% by 2030 compared to 2005 levels. As part of Fit for 55, the ESR has been adapted to meet the ambitious Green Deal targets, hence the new target is a 40% reduction compared to 2005. Each Member State contributes to the achievement of the targets. However, the level of each reduction target is differentiated according to Global Domestic Product (GDP) per capita to ensure a fair distribution of the financial burden of the green transition. Economically strong countries such as Finland, Sweden or Germany must achieve -50%, while Bulgaria, for

instance, only has to reach -10%. Member States are given flexibility. If countries emit less than their annual limit, they can carry over the surplus to the following year. Likewise, allocations for the next year can be brought forward if the limit is exceeded. Countries can also trade allocations with other countries. The amendments were approved by the Council in March 2023 and have thus entered into force (EC 2024m).

A further cornerstone of the EU's sustainability agenda is the *Energy Performance of Buildings Directive* (EPBD), addressing their significant impact, which accounts for 40% of final energy consumption and 36% of energy-related GHG emissions. The revised directive establishes new standards and timelines for all building types, recognizing the potential for improvement of existing buildings (75% are energy inefficient): Starting in 2028, all new buildings owned by public bodies must be zero-emission, while all others must comply by 2030. With regard to existing non-residential buildings, Member States are required to define a minimum energy performance standard (MEPS) to target the 16% of worst-performing buildings by 2030 and 26% by 2033. In addition, existing residential buildings must reduce their primary energy consumption by 16% by 2030 and 20-22% by 2035. However, 55% of the anticipated energy savings will be achieved through renovations. Beyond that, the directive creates incentives for green energy solutions, including solar. These become binding in phases between 2027 and 2031, applying to various building types and sizes (e.g., new residential buildings from 2030) (EU 2023c). The revision was adopted in April 2024 and has to be transposed by all Member States until May 2026 (EC 2022a).

2.3 Critical Raw Materials Act

The *Critical Raw Materials Act* (CRMA), which was introduced in 2023, represents an initiative designed to secure the EU's supply of critical raw materials (CRMs)⁶, which are

⁶ 34 materials raw materials of high economic importance for the EU, with a high risk of supply disruption due to their concentration of sources and lack of good, affordable substitutes (EC 2024f)

indispensable for the green and digital transition. In light of the accelerated growth in global demand for CRMs and the prevalence of geopolitical instability, the CRMA is designed to mitigate the reliance on third-party suppliers. The objective is to achieve a minimum extraction rate of 10%, a processing rate of 40%, a recycling rate of 25%, and a maximum source rate of 65% for the EU's annual consumption. Furthermore, the administrative burden associated with obtaining permits for extraction, processing, and mining is to be reduced, and national programs for exploring geological resources are to be established. The act empowers the Commission to regulate the environmental footprint, thereby increasing the circularity and sustainability of critical materials. In order to reduce dependence on third countries, a network of strategic partnerships is to be established, and soft and hard infrastructure projects along the entire raw materials value chain are to be created (EC 2024g).

2.4 Circular Economy

In 2020, the EU adopted a new *Circular Economy Action Plan* (CEAP), a key component of the Green Deal, which is primarily focused on reducing the environmental impact by introducing circular material use practices. These pertain to the design, production, consumption and disposal of products, thus establishing sustainable products as the norm within the EU. The plan comprises measures specifically targeting sectors with high resource consumption, such as electronics, packaging, buildings, and construction (EC 2020b). Additionally, waste prevention plays a central role in the CEAP. To this end, a uniform model for the separation and labeling of waste will be introduced in all Member States. Efforts will also be taken to reduce waste exports and illegal shipments in the EU (EC 2020a). By 2030, the use of circular materials is to be doubled, and the overall consumption footprint significantly reduced (EU 2020). To track the progress and effectiveness of policy measures in the Member States, the CEAP has now introduced a monitoring framework with new indicators, such as the material footprint or resource productivity (eurostat 2024a).

2.5 EU Taxonomy

The *EU Taxonomy* is the key framework for the EU's plan to channel investment towards sustainable economic activities as a further lever to achieve climate neutrality. The regulation sets out criteria for defining which economic activities are considered environmentally friendly and sustainable (EC 2024j). A distinction is drawn between "eligible" and "aligned" activities. The former are activities that potentially meet the taxonomy's technical screening criteria, while the latter are fully compliant (EC 2021e). These are centered on six climate targets (Figure 18). Large and listed companies are required to report on their percentage of aligned turnover / CapEx / OpEx⁷ providing insight into their current sustainable state, but also their future direction (EY 2024). The aim is to enhance transparency and combat greenwashing (EC 2024j). As of November 2024, the taxonomy encompasses sectors such as energy, transportation, and real estate, with the intention to incorporate more in the future (EC 2021e). For taxonomy-aligned companies, this means improved access to green funding, increased investor confidence and a stronger market position (EC 2021e). From 2025, companies will have to disclose their compliance with the "Do no significant harm" (DNSH) principle⁸. One year later, credit institutions will have to publish their alignment of the trading books and fees with the taxonomy (EC 2024k).

2.6 Financing

In order to finance the Green Deal, the European Commission (EC) has pledged to mobilize a minimum of €1 trillion in sustainable investments over the next decade (EC 2024l). Consequently, 30% of the *EU's annual budget* (MFF 2021-2027) and the *Next Generation EU* instrument, devised to facilitate recovery from the COVID-19 crisis, will be allocated to green investments. A core component of this fund represents the *Recovery and Resilience Facility*

⁷ Capital Expenditure, Operating Expenditure

⁸ To not carry out economic activities that do significant harm to any environmental objective (EC 2021c).

(RRF), obtaining a budget of €672.5 billion. Member States are obliged to invest 37% of the allocated RRF funds in climate-related projects and reforms.

Moreover, the *EU Cohesion Policy* aids regions and municipalities in the implementation of large-scale investments aligned with the Green Deal with at least 30% of the *European Regional Development Fund* and 37% of the *Cohesion Fund* allocated towards climate neutrality (EC 2024l). Furthermore, the EC has devised the *Just Transition Mechanism*, which is anticipated to mobilize at least €55 billion of private and public investment from 2021 to 2027. The aim is to support the regions that are most affected by the green transition. The emphasis is on initiatives such as the reskilling of labor and combating energy poverty (EC 2024s).

The *InvestEU* program offers both funding and an EU budget guarantee to support investments in key areas such as sustainable infrastructure, innovation and social skills (EU 2024a). At least 30% of the investments must be climate related. Furthermore, an additional *Just Transition Scheme* within the program facilitates investments in regions affected by the change (EC 2024l). Alternatively, the *EU Green Bond Regulation* (EuGB) represents a different way of financing the green transition and defines a voluntary framework for the issuance of bonds by EU / non-EU organizations (e.g., listed companies, government institutions, financial institutions). The aim is to facilitate the allocation of capital to environmentally sustainable projects that align with the EU taxonomy (Debevoise & Plimpton 2024). Consequently, green bonds are prominent in sectors such as energy or buildings (Climate Bonds Initiative 2024). According to the new regulation, a minimum of 85% of the bond proceeds must be allocated to activities that meet the criteria of the EU taxonomy. The remaining 15% may be utilized for activities that have not yet been defined in the taxonomy, if they do not violate the DNSH principle. This flexibility permits issuers in nascent green sectors to access green bonds as a funding option regardless (Debevoise & Plimpton 2024). However, it is bound to strict disclosure requirements (e.g., pre-issuance fact sheets, impact reports), which must undergo external review (Ashurst

2023; BaFin 2024), offering issuers and investors an increased transparency with reduced greenwashing risks (EC 2021a). Driven by a high demand for green investments, green bonds can have lower interest rates than conventional funding, making them potentially more favorable (KPMG 2015). The EuGB entered into force in December 2023 and will be fully applicable one year later in December 2024 (Debevoise & Plimpton 2024).

2.7 Transparency

In order to track the progress of the green transition while providing investors, consumers and other stakeholders with transparency on the sustainability performance of companies, the EU has adopted three directives in the area of disclosure: the *Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive* (CSRD), the *Sustainable Finance Disclosure Regulation* (SFDR) and the *Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive* (CSDDD). The first (national transposition: July 2024 (EC 2024c)) requires selected EU companies⁹ to disclose how they manage social and environmental risks and their impact on people and the environment. The aim is to harmonize sustainability reporting and reduce costs, with first reports expected in 2025 (EC 2024e). By setting out how financial market participants must disclose sustainability information, the SFDR helps investors allocate their capital in sustainable projects and companies. In this way, the regulation contributes to the EU's goal of attracting private funding for a shift towards climate neutrality (EC 2024q). The CSDDD (national transposition: July 2026) aims to ensure that all major EU companies¹⁰ identify and mitigate the impact of their value chain on human rights and the environment by requiring due diligence and the submission of an action plan by 2027 (EC 2024d).

⁹ Requirements (two out of three): Large companies (+€50m net turnover, +€25m assets, +250 FTE); listed SMEs (+€8m net turnover, +€4m assets, +50 FTE); Non-EU companies will also have to comply if they generate a +€150m net turnover in the EU (Normative 2024)

¹⁰ EU Companies: +€450m Global net turnover, +1000 FTE; Non-EU Companies: +450€m net turnover (Deloitte 2024a)

3 Literature Review

3.1 Historical Context and Purpose of Scenario Planning

Scenario planning is a strategic method for exploring a range of plausible futures in the context of uncertainty. Its various methods are applicable to a set of entities, including companies and political institutions. The aim of this literature review is to provide a consolidation of the most important academic papers on the topic and review the key findings on the principal approaches, their limitations as well as the evolution of scenario planning.

According to Bradfield and Van Der Heijden (2005), the concept of scenario planning has its roots in military strategy, where it was first used by Herman Kahn from the RAND Corporation. He applied scenario planning to anticipate and prepare for possible future events in the context of national defense (Wack 1985). Thanks to Kahn's pioneering work on "thinking about the unthinkable" (1962), Pierre Wack was able to apply this knowledge to corporate strategy. His mission to navigate Royal Dutch Shell through the oil crises of the 1960s and 1970s and to anticipate the oil shocks remains the classic case of scenario planning and provides the first evidence that it can help organizations improve their strategic position.

Throughout the literature, most authors stress that scenario planning is not a tool that can predict the future. Rather, it is a tool that helps to simulate a number of potential scenarios in the future. Schoemaker (1995) highlights the value of scenario planning in facilitating the navigation of uncertainty, enabling managers to identify the key drivers of change. Consequently, scenario planning allows any organization to increase its strategic flexibility. As van der Heijden (1996) claims, it can also facilitate corporate learning by encouraging strategic conversations about the future. This encourages participants to consider possibilities beyond those typically addressed in conventional problem-solving and thereby makes organizations more agile and resilient to future challenges in the long term.

The relevance of scenario planning nowadays extends beyond the realm of business and has notable applications in public policy, healthcare and environmental management (Ramírez and Wilkinson 2016). Peterson, Cumming, and Carpenter (2003), for example, examine the use of scenario planning in the context of climate change adaptation and show how it facilitates the formulation of adaptive strategies to cope with potential environmental change.

3.2 Principal Approaches of Scenario Planning

Based on Bradfield and Van Der Heijden (2005), three dominant methods of scenario planning have emerged over the years, each with its own characteristics: The *Intuitive Logics School*, *La Prospective* and the *Probabilistic Modified Trends School* (PMT).

The *Intuitive Logics School* approach, first articulated by Wack (1985) and later refined by Schwartz (1991), is the entirely qualitative of the three and has emerged as the most common in business settings. It is based on narrative scenarios and focuses on understanding and identifying the key drivers of change. Scenario building is achieved through structured workshops in which the identification of key uncertainties (KUs) and the formulation of plausible future narratives are critical steps. The principal objective is to challenge established mental models and expand strategic thinking. This technique is especially valued for its flexibility and adaptability in contexts where quantitative data is scarce or unreliable (Schwartz 1991).

La Prospective, which originated in France, was first developed by Michel Godet. This approach is more formal than Intuitive Logics and uses a combination of qualitative and quantitative data to construct potential scenarios. The main purpose of *La Prospective* is to help organizations formulate long-term visions through a systematic examination of trends, risks and potential disruptions (Godet 1991).

The *PMT* approach stands out from the range of scenario planning methodologies being the only purely quantitative technique. Its origin is rooted in statistical and probabilistic concepts,

which is why it attempts to assign probabilities to potential future events. It uses historical data and trends as a basis and is known as the most analytical and data-driven of the three dominant schools.

3.3 Critiques and Evolution of Scenario Planning

Despite the many advantages, critics such as Goodwin and Wright (2001) have identified some limitations of the various approaches to scenario planning.

On the one hand, they point out that qualitative methods, such as the *Intuitive Logics School*, often lack the precision for which quantitative forecasting is known. As Bradfield and Van Der Heijden (2005) analyzed that the effectiveness of scenario planning depends on the quality of the scenarios, a potential limitation could be that scenarios based on narratives are too subjective. However, as the willingness of decision-makers to engage with scenarios is equally important, it is crucial that decision-makers do not disregard scenarios because they challenge deeply ingrained mental models or even power structures of the organization.

On the other hand, the *PMT's* quantitative approach is accused of being overly deterministic and relying too much on past trends to predict the future, thus failing to account for unforeseen or disruptive changes.

As most organizations' strategic environment is in a state of constant evolution and increasing complexity, it is inevitable that scenario planning methods also evolve in response. Krupp et al. (2014) specifically recommend the incorporation of new tools such as big data, artificial intelligence (AI) and computational modeling to increase the rigor and relevance of scenario planning. This approach could lead to the creation of more dynamic, data-driven scenarios that more accurately reflect the complexities of the modern world. In addition, Ramírez and Wilkinson (2016) present a perspective on scenario planning as a way to help organizations prepare for the future, but also to challenge their understanding of the present.

In conclusion, scenario planning continues to be a central technique for strategic consideration in environments subject to uncertainty. It brings the ability to consider many plausible future scenarios, creating a useful tool in multiple sectors that can benefit from enhancing organizational resilience.

4 Methodology

The following section provides an overview of the scientific methods employed in the preparation of this report. It offers an outline of the principal stages of the scenario planning methodology and a comprehensive description of the procedures and other frameworks and instruments utilized. Additionally, it presents a summary of the data collection process and includes a detailed illustration of the client's involvement in this project.

		INTUITIVE LOGICS SCHOOL					
		00	01	02	03	04	05
TASKS	ENVIRONMENTAL MEASURES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and describe relevant EU environmental measures for defined focal issue 	FRAMING & SCOPING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify key challenge with MOME Develop and validate focal issue and time horizon 	EXPLORE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify drivers of change Discuss and evaluate the list of those drivers (megatrends, trends, uncertainties, etc.) 	SYNTHESIZE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine key uncertainties Construct scenario narrative framework Challenge and validate scenarios with experts Conduct Porter's 5 forces analysis for comparison 	ACT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore implication of each scenario for MOME Create scenario – specific and overall strategic action plan 	MONITOR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify set of early indicators Set an objective value and a range for each indicator Monitor developments and challenge assumptions
	TOOLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unstructured meeting Desk research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PESTLE analysis Expert interviews Desk research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scenario Matrix Expert interviews Porter's five forces Desk research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshop w/ MOME TOWS Matrix Miro board Desk research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scenario Cockpit Desk research
	INVOLVEMENT		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nuno Pimentel (C) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> António Vicente (E) Antonios Sfakiotakis (E) Tanja Schindler (E) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> António Vicente (E) Christiane Conrads (E) João Braz Pereira (C) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nuno Pimentel (C) Francisco Antunes (C) Sofia Barbosa (C) João Braz Pereira (C) Maria Fontes (C) Susana Brito (C) Vasco Gomes (C) 	

Figure 1 - Methodology Overview | (E): Expert, (C): Company | Source: Own Creation

4.1 Research Design and Implemented Tools

The real estate industry requires significant change to cope with the environmental challenges of the future (Walacik and Chmielewska 2024). Given the fact that MOME operates in this field, a significant part of this work project is dedicated to researching and identifying the key

drivers of change that shape this industry and thereby enable the company to keep pace with changing trends and increasing uncertainties.

After analyzing the merits and drawbacks of the different scenario planning approaches outlined in the Literature Review chapter, the research team decided to adopt the *Intuitive Logics School* method to address the focal issue within the defined time horizon. The main reason for this choice revolves around the participatory nature of this approach that permits the incorporation of valuable insights from the partner company, thereby ensuring that the research is aligned with its perspective. Yet, the chosen method also allows for flexibility in handling uncertainty as it focuses on discussing multiple plausible futures while also fostering creativity by employing scenarios based on narratives (Bradfield and Van Der Heijden 2005). The input of the partner organization was complemented by the involvement of industry- and institutional experts through interviews at different stages of the process, which proved invaluable during the examination of the five phases of the *Intuitive Logics School*.

Phase 1 (Framing and Scoping): The first phase of the collaborative field lab was kicked off by an initial working meeting on September 6, 2024. The aim of this first discussion was to align MOME's current challenges and research interests with the student team's proposed hypotheses, supporting questions, and initial idea of the project design and implementation. As a result of previous desk research and this exchange of ideas, the focal issue and time horizon were determined and validated by the supervisor, the client's CEO Nuno Pimentel, and the project team. This set the stage for the following phases and enabled the project team to continue and narrow down its research.

Phase 2 (Explore): With the objective of identifying the industry's patterns of change and the factors that impact the implementation of the EU's sustainability measures, the second phase was initiated by individual, independent research on the focal issue. By scanning relevant literature, such as journal- and news articles as well as reports from political institutions, the

first goal was to get an overview of the most influencing trends, megatrends and predetermined elements. Rather than treating predetermined elements as static constants, the research team decided to integrate these elements directly into the broader discussion of trends and megatrends. This allows their influence to be seamlessly reflected alongside dynamic changes, providing a more coherent and realistic understanding of the factors at play. Next to that, the PESTLE framework was applied to collect and organize the most important uncertainties in a structured manner. This tool proved particularly suitable as it comprehensively considers the main dimensions of the industry's external environment (Yüksel 2012). The individual members' findings were then discussed and consolidated during a team-internal workshop to conclude the phase.

Phase 3 (Synthesize): The selection of the above-mentioned uncertainties and especially their ranking from 1-10, based on their level of uncertainty and impact, were both discussed and validated with three different interview partners (Figure 1). As the initial classification of the uncertainties stemmed from desk research conducted by the project team, the discussions and interviews with renowned experts added an additional, valuable layer in terms of robustness. After validating the list of uncertainties and their respective classification, the next step consisted of determining the KUs for the subsequent scenario development. Considering that all upcoming phases depend on this decision, it was of utmost importance to ensure that the resulting scenarios comply with the following criteria: *Plausibility, Internal Coherence, Relevance, Divergence, Engagement and Actionability* (Wright and Cairns 2011).

Given these prerequisites, the area of interest within the upper right quadrant of the uncertainties matrix (Figure 3) resulted from applying a combined threshold of 8 between both the level of uncertainty and the impact on the focal issue. The uncertainties meeting this requirement were then subject to controls of interdependency among each other to ensure that they are suitable for becoming potential KUs.

Additionally, uncertainties with commonalities, intersections or supposed correlation were merged into clusters to avoid repetitiveness. Upon completion of these steps, the two KUs with the highest combined ranking served as the two axes of the scenario matrix. This matrix consists of four quadrants that are generated by assigning one KU to the horizontal- and one to the vertical axis. Thereby, each quadrant represents a distinct scenario with a unique narrative behind.

To ensure its practical relevance and internal consistence, the four scenarios were validated by an industry expert and the client organization. The project team's decision to apply a uniform approach to all narratives and conclude them by analyzing the real estate industry's attractiveness through a Porter's Five Forces framework is supposed to maintain comparability and enable the reader to differentiate between the scenarios. The outcomes were presented and discussed during the second official working meeting with the supervisor and the client's CEO Nuno Pimentel on November 13, 2024.

Phase 4 (Act): The fourth phase of the work project commenced with a collaborative workshop with the partner organization on November 27, 2024. Its aim was to present the finalized scenarios to MOME's core team and jointly derive strategic implications for each of the four narratives. For that purpose, the project team considered a TOWS matrix to be the most suitable tool for this exercise, provided that by comparing internal strengths and weaknesses with external opportunities and threats, the TOWS matrix enables specific strategies to be derived that are tailored to the company's particular situation. Hence, the TOWS matrix helps to make strategic decisions that take both internal and external factors into account (Derr, Georg, and Heiler 2021).

To conceptualize the approach, the project team created a Miro board which served as a visual workspace to collectively brainstorm and gather ideas. The first step consisted in defining MOME's strengths and weaknesses together. Subsequently, the project team introduced each

scenario's specific opportunities and threats that were prepared beforehand to guide the discussion. Based on the examined strengths and opportunities, as well as the opportunities and strengths identified, the aim was to commonly answer the following questions:

- *How can MOME leverage strengths to benefit from opportunities and overturn threats?*
- *How can MOME overcome weaknesses to benefit from opportunities and avoid threats?*

The drawn conclusions contributed substantially to the derivation of specific strategic implications for the distinctive scenarios, as well as an overall action plan for MOME. Given the time restriction of the workshop, the project team additionally conducted further desk research and made use of the information gathered through the expert interviews from previous phases to complete the analysis and provide additional strategic recommendations.

Phase 5 (Monitor): The final phase of the field lab focused on the identification and monitoring of early indicators. These indicators, identified by the research team, serve as critical signals to guide MOME in assessing which scenario is likely to unfold and ensure that the organization remains vigilant and adaptable to emerging changes in its evolving landscape. Constant monitoring is thus required to capture both gradual trends and sudden changes to anticipate future scenarios. The tool that proved to be the most suitable for this purpose is the Scenario Cockpit as its visual representations aid in communicating strategic actions to stakeholders, fostering a shared understanding and facilitating collaborative decision-making.

4.2 Strategic Collaboration: Client and Expert Involvement

Irrespective of the work project's phase, the input from both renowned experts and the client organization has been of great support for the research team and contributed significant additional value. To address MOME's research interests and the focal issue within the agreed time horizon, the insights received from third parties encouraged the team to challenge the status quo and take new perspectives.

During the initial stage, *Framing & Scoping*, no experts were involved in defining the cornerstones of the field lab, namely the focal issue and time horizon. The phase consisted of an unstructured meeting with the client organization's CEO Nuno Pimentel to understand MOME's strategic priorities and research interests for the upcoming years. This information exchange based on informal questions prepared beforehand by the project team culminated in the validation of the project scope.

In contrast, the next two phases of the project, i.e. *Explore* and *Synthesize*, included several expert interviews and validations of the project team's findings and main assumptions (Appendix 1). António Vicente (Deputy Head of Representation at the EC), Tanja Schindler (Foresight Advisor to the EC) and Antonios Sfakiotakis (Policy Coordinator at the Secretariat General – European Green Deal Unit) assisted the team in ranking the uncertainties according to their level of impact and uncertainty, as well as in the selection of the KUs and scenario matrix validation through semi-structured interviews. Likewise, Christiane Conrads (Partner and Global Real Estate Leader at PwC) participated in a semi-structured interview and approved the different scenarios and their implications on the real estate industry. João Braz Pereira (Head of Knowledge and ESG Initiatives at MOME) supported by sharing industry insights and valuable feedback during a semi-structured interview which was implemented to more accurately address MOME's research interest.

To examine MOME's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for each scenario and derive strategic recommendations in response, the *Act* phase consisted of a two-hour collaborative workshop with seven members of MOME's core team (Appendix 2). It served to answer the last part of the project's challenge set out in the title, namely '*Exploring risks, opportunities and strategies for MOME*'.

During the final *Monitor* stage of the project, no experts were consulted. However, all five phases highly benefited from the valuable insights received while conducting the work project.

5 Phase 1 – Framing & Scoping

The initial phase establishes the foundation for scenario planning by outlining the focal issue and the time frame of the project (Schwartz 1996). The focal issue defines the contextual and transactional scope of the project. It is important to ensure that the focal issue is specific enough to enable strategic decisions, yet broad enough to allow for exploration. A clearly stated focal issue enables a structured and comprehensive analysis of plausible futures, thereby enhancing clarity and focus in the decision-making process (Chermack 2011; Bradfield and Van Der Heijden 2005). The time horizon defines the temporal scope of the scenario planning process and ensures that it is aligned with the focal issue and the organization's objectives. An optimal time horizon should be long enough to allow for fundamental changes and distinctive scenarios, but short enough to ensure practical relevance for strategic decisions (Schwartz 1996; Ramírez and Wilkinson 2016). It therefore enables the organization to anticipate future opportunities and challenges and to strengthen its ability to adapt.

5.1 Focal Issue

With 40% of the EU's total energy consumption, the European real estate sector is the single largest energy consumer in Europe and is responsible for a significant carbon footprint with 36% of energy-related GHG emissions. It is therefore evident that the sector has a key role in reducing Europe's emissions (EC 2022a).

Concurrently, the EU has declared itself to be a global leader in the creation of a sustainable world. With the Green Deal, a package of targets and measures to achieve climate neutrality by 2050 has been declared, which will significantly transform every sector and industry (EC 2024r). The huge emission impact of the real estate industry highlights the crucial role it will play. However, while many of the Green Deal measures have already been passed into law, the actual implementation faces major challenges and uncertainties (EC 2021b). The impact of climate change, technological disruption through AI, growing geopolitical tension, migration

and demographic change are just a few of the factors that have the potential to significantly influence the EU and therefore the measures of the Green Deal (Eurofound 2024).

To explore the future development of the European real estate industry, it is essential to understand the dynamics of implementing EU sustainability measures. The interplay of these factors will not only determine the industry's ability to align with climate neutrality goals but also its capacity to remain competitive and resilient in an evolving environment. This necessity leads to the focal issue of this study: *'Future of EU environmental directives and regulations and their implications for the European real estate sector'*.

To investigate the focal issue in depth, a framework was constructed using the following supporting questions:

- What are the main obstacles faced by the EU in coordinating the green transition amid a rapidly evolving global landscape, shifting demographics, rising populism, and changing migration dynamics?
- How can real estate companies sustain their competitiveness while complying with the increasing regulatory measures imposed by the EU?
- How are EU environmental directives and regulations driving changes in construction methods, materials, and building technologies?
- What are the implications of the Green Deal on the availability and development of affordable housing across the EU?

5.2 Time Horizon

Upon first consideration, the 2050 target established by the Green Deal appears to offer a reasonable timeframe for addressing this focal issue. Nevertheless, an examination of the rapidly evolving circumstances within and surrounding the EU reveals that the initial timeframe is too expansive to provide a sufficient foundation for analyzing developments (EC 2024i; Schwartz 1996).

The Fit for 55 represents a pivotal initial milestone in the pursuit of the Green Deal, delineating tangible objectives and measures that must be implemented and achieved by 2030 in order to facilitate the realization of the 2050 objective (EU 2024d). Despite some of the measures already being codified into law, there remains significant uncertainty regarding the extent to which they will be implemented by 2030. This timeframe aligns with MOME's primary objective of providing 1,500 residential units by 2030. An objective that is directly aligned with the company's mission of providing affordable and sustainable housing and is thus significantly influenced by the implementation of EU measures until 2030.

The project team therefore determined that the time horizon until 2030 serves as an ideal reference point, as it accommodates sufficient uncertainties and changes in EU measures, as well as their impact on the real estate industry. Simultaneously, this timeframe facilitates the evaluation and scenario development through specific objectives, which ensure meaningful and reliable scenarios for MOME.

6 Phase 2 – Explore

Phase 2, *Explore*, aims to deepen the understanding of the research topic by systematically scanning the broader environment to identify external drivers of change that could directly or indirectly shape the future development of the EU environmental directives and regulations and their impact on the real estate industry. In the *Intuitive Logics School's* Phase 2, predetermined elements are also analyzed as events that are nearly certain to occur or have already taken place, but whose consequences have not yet fully unfolded (Wack 1985). These elements are often treated as static constants; however, this paper takes a different approach by embedding these elements within the discussion of trends to more seamlessly reflect the underlying dynamics. This captures the interconnected drivers influencing the future, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the forces at play and the pathways they may create.

Individual Part – Elena Cox

6.1 Megatrends & Trends

Drivers of change, such as megatrends and trends, are forces beyond the control of any particular organization that will shape future dynamics. Megatrends are long-term, broad-based processes of change that have a dramatic impact on the development of society (McGregor 2012). The main characteristics of megatrends are their long-time horizon, as they can be observed over decades, affect all regions extensively and influence all actors in society. Trends represent more specific, shorter-term patterns of change that are often driven by megatrends. They highlight emerging shifts and act as gradual drivers, providing insights into long-term shifts affecting specific industries or regions. In Phase 2, identifying and analyzing these megatrends and trends is critical to understanding the dynamic business landscape in which MOME operates.

6.1.1 Megatrend 1: Climate Change

The phenomenon '*Climate Change*' refers to long-term and lasting alterations in the average global temperature and weather patterns. Since the 19th century, the primary cause of climate change has been human-related activities, especially the burning of fossil fuels, which releases GHG into the atmosphere. This creates a heat-trapping layer that slowly raises global temperatures and drives the environmental changes that can be observed around the world today (UN, n.d.-a).

The impacts of climate change are severe, posing threats to the life of entire species, increasing the likelihood of natural disasters and causing disruption of ecosystems. The accelerating impacts and effects of the changing climate are becoming increasingly evident as communities face extreme heatwaves, wildfires, storms and floods, alongside rapid glacier melting and rising sea levels. Even if global warming is limited to 1.5°C, as stipulated in the Paris Agreement, nearly half of the world's population would be exposed to flooding as well as heat and water

stress, while almost a quarter would be exposed to extreme hazards, which can affect their lives and livelihoods (WEF 2021a).

The United Nations Environment Program's most recent Emissions Gap Report highlights the progress that has been made since the Paris Agreement in 2015, as the GHG emissions in 2030 were initially projected to increase by 16%, while current estimates suggest a lower increase of just 3% (UNEP 2023c). To prevent global warming from exceeding 1.5°C, the EU has set a target to reduce emissions by 55% by 2030, with the aim of reaching net zero by 2050 (EC, n.d.). Every industry has a role to play, but the real estate sector is particularly important, as it is responsible for around 37% of global GHG emissions, primarily because of the energy used to power buildings and the emissions produced during the creation of construction materials (UNEP 2023a).

The urgency of the climate crisis is indisputable, yet the window for such severe impacts to be mitigated is still open. Immediate and transformative actions by all sectors of the economy must come into play if the increase in temperature is to be contained at 1.5°C. Looking ahead, the building blocks for the future should include collaboration, innovation and a commitment to sustainable development. Decisions that are taken today will determine whether the global population can secure a livable and resilient future for the generations to come.

Trend I: Increased Societal Environmental Awareness

The trend of '*Societal Environmental Awareness*' has grown significantly in the recent decade and is characterized by an individual's or society's recognition of the relationship between human behavior and the health of the environment (Si, Jiang, and Meng 2022). Although individuals with heightened environmental awareness are more likely to think about their personal impact on the planet, it does not necessarily imply sustainable behavior (Nayeon and Kyungtag 2023). Factors such as cost and convenience often discourage consumers from

choosing green alternatives, pushing them towards cheaper, non-sustainable options (Elhaffar et al. 2023).

Environmental awareness began to gain traction in the 1980s and reached a critical turning point with the establishment of international agreements such as the 1992 Kyoto Protocol, which aimed to reduce the emission of six GHGs (Lee et al. 2015). Over time, scientific discoveries and increased coverage of climate change in mainstream media have further fueled awareness. Education and access to information have played a central role in raising awareness, while social networks and media have amplified these efforts and promoted collective action and behavior change (Kollmus and Agyeman 2010).

Environmental awareness is widespread in Europe, with 78% of citizens recognizing the impact of environmental problems on their daily lives and health, and 84% emphasizing the importance of EU environmental legislation in protecting the local environment (EU, n.d.). This underlines the need for effective policies to align consumer attitudes with tangible sustainable outcomes. On the demand side, consumer interest in sustainability has put pressure on producers and suppliers to adapt, which in turn has increased the availability of greener products (WEF 2021b). According to a study by Kearney (2020), most sustainable products are more expensive than conventional ones and therefore require subsidies or incentives to remain competitive in the market. By creating frameworks that support sustainable consumer choices, governments and organizations can encourage the adoption of greener products and make sustainability a more achievable goal for everyone (Awewomom et al. 2024).

The real estate sector has also felt the effects of this trend, since heightened awareness has driven the need for more sustainable building practices and regulatory policies that promote green development. Governments and corporations are increasingly adopting policies that prioritize energy efficiency, the use of sustainable materials and the reduction of carbon footprints in buildings (Hafez et al. 2023). Public awareness has also put pressure on the real

estate sector to adopt certifications such as *Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design* and *Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method* to validate the environmental performance of their projects (Gil-Ozoudeh et al. 2024).

Societal environmental awareness shapes how individuals, societies and organizations understand their role in creating a more sustainable world, highlighting the need for personal action and collective regulatory support. Increased awareness creates opportunities for industries to innovate and adapt to meet the evolving expectations of an increasingly conscientious consumer base.

Trend II: Green cities

The concept of the '*Green City*' has emerged as a response to the growing challenges of climate change. A green city is defined as an urban area that prioritizes environmental sustainability and the well-being of its citizens through the integration of advanced information and communication technology infrastructure and services. The main objectives of green cities include achieving carbon neutrality, improving energy and resource efficiency, and ensuring cost-effective urban solutions (Luvisi and Lorenzini 2014).

Where traditional urban growth occurs, the effects of air and water pollution and poor waste management contribute to environmental degradation. In contrast, the green city advocates urban development that incorporates sustainable practices in energy, transport, land use and water management, in addition to public policy. This integrated approach has not only responded to global environmental problems, but also supports economic development and the well-being of people in urban areas (Wikantiyoso and Tutuko 2013).

Innovation and strategic planning are defining features of a green city. By using renewable energy sources, reducing waste generation and ensuring sustainable land use, these cities strive to create equal or greater value with fewer resources (Hadjichambis et al. 2022). Green cities focus on infrastructure efficiency to minimize pollution, promote long-term economic

sustainability and reduce reliance on fossil fuels by investing in sustainable transport systems (Loorbach, Frantzeskaki, and Avelino 2017).

Urban pollution, including inadequate sewerage systems and untreated waste, is a major threat to public health, as it leads to increased amounts of human waste and industrial wastewater being discharged into the environment on a daily basis. Green cities seek to address these issues, by applying integrated control systems, sustainable water solutions, more effective waste management processes and by improving overall air quality. These efforts not only benefit public health but also contribute to creating more climate-resilient urban environments (Naydenov and Atanasov 2022).

To promote sustainable urban development, the EU annually awards the *European Green Capital Award* to cities that are leading the transition to a greener future. This award motivates city authorities and residents to improve their urban environment and make real efforts to combat pollution and become more sustainable (EU 2024c). Copenhagen, the winner in 2014 is an example of a leading green capital (EC 2014). Copenhagen's residents have a high level of acceptance of climate change, and the city exemplifies leadership in urban planning and design, using public-private partnerships to promote eco-innovation and sustainable employment (Smiley, Chen, and Shoo 2021).

Green cities are shaping the future of urban life, combining technology and sustainable practices to build healthier and more resilient communities. These cities directly address environmental challenges and promote innovative solutions, consequently leading the way to a sustainable future. They provide urban areas around the world with effective tools to combat climate change while improving the daily lives of their residents.

6.1.2 Megatrend 2: Global Realignment – Demographic and Political Shifts

The global landscape is undergoing profound change, driven by significant demographic shifts and evolving political dynamics. Demographic change is reshaping global economies and

societies, affecting labor markets, health systems and urban development. These changes are driven by two main structural factors: natural and migration factors. Natural demographic changes include increasing life expectancy and declining fertility rates in Europe, contributing to population ageing, slower population growth and, in some cases, population decline. Migration factors cause changes in demography and population trends, since people move mainly in search of better living conditions and employment opportunities (OECD 2024).

Demographic trends tend to take much longer to develop, however, international migrations are subject to sudden disruptions or accelerations by events such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing Russian attack on Ukraine. While these shocks can be temporary, in some cases they are durable enough to shift the demographic course. These demographic changes have put pressure on social security systems and labor markets (EC 2023d).

The EU faces significant demographic challenges, primarily due to an ageing population and declining fertility rates, resulting in a 40% shortage in the working-age population (EC 2023a). The proportion of people aged 60 and over in Europe has risen from around 20% in 2000 to almost 24% in 2015 and is expected to rise to almost 30% by 2030 (EU 2015). An ageing population reduces the rate of innovation and puts significant pressure on public budgets due to public spending on pensions, social security and health care (The Economist 2023).

In most European countries, even a significant increase in net migration flows would have only a minimal impact on reversing the decline in the working-age population. However, migration can reduce regional imbalances in EU countries and address short-term shortages in certain occupations (OECD 2018). Political reforms to address these challenges, such as raising the retirement age, have fueled public frustration, often leading to a surge in support for national-populist movements and contributing to the rise of populism and far-right parties across Europe (Lopes, n.d.).

Political dynamics are increasingly shaped by the resurgence of nationalist and populist movements, fueled by growing concerns among the population about immigration, rising economic inequality and fears of losing control of national sovereignty. Political events such as the Brexit in the United Kingdom and the election of populist governments in countries like Hungary and Italy have disrupted long-standing political alliances (Mudde and Kaltwasser 2018). This wave of populism is causing countries to lean towards protectionist policies, prioritize their own economic security and rethink their role in international partnerships. The increasing political uncertainty has led to a re-evaluation of global supply chains and trade relations, with many countries opting for reshoring and safeguarding critical industries (European Parliament 2021).

These demographic and political realignments have significant implications for the real estate industry. It increases demand for a variety of housing options, from affordable urban housing for younger people to accessible and supportive housing for older adults. Politically driven shifts towards protectionism and reshoring may also impact urban infrastructure development, as governments reconsider the localization of industries and prioritize resilience over globalization.

Trend III: Migration & Political Shift

Migration is a transformative global trend, due to the deepening process of globalization and influenced by economic, environmental and social issues (European Parliament 2020). The process of migration highlights regional economic disparities and growing gaps between societies (International Organization for Migration, n.d.).

In recent years, the EU has experienced significant migration flows due to conflicts, economic pressures and climate change. In 2022, 5.1 million immigrants from non-EU countries entered the EU, an increase of around 117% (2.7 million) compared to 2021. In addition, 1.5 million people moved between EU Member States in 2022, an increase of around 7% compared to 2021

(eurostat 2024f). This surge has triggered political tensions and debates about national identity, security and resource allocation.

Migration issues have significantly shaped Europe's political landscape and fueled the rise of populist and anti-immigrant parties. These parties capitalize on public concerns about labor market competition, pressure on social services and cultural change. In the Netherlands, for instance, the nationalist and populist PVV, led by Geert Wilders, became by far the largest party in the 2023 elections (Van Holsteyn and Irwin 2024). His main campaign message was one of anti-immigration and strong anti-climate action, as he wants to abolish the Dutch Climate Change Act and withdraw from the Paris Agreement on climate change (The Guardian 2023). The growing influence of such parties has led to more restrictive immigration legislation, making it difficult to create a coordinated, EU-wide response to migration issues (Schain 2018). These political shifts have implications for the EU's internal cohesion and its ability to address global issues such as climate change and international security.

Many industries are affected by this trend, including the real estate sector, as the growing demand for housing and urban infrastructure in high-demand areas is driving up property prices and rents (Unal, Hayo, and Erol 2024). This underlines the urgent need for more affordable housing options as rising costs push more people out of the market. A lack of affordable housing can exacerbate housing shortages, increase homelessness and widen socio-economic divides, potentially leading to increased social unrest and political backlash (Akinsulire et al. 2024).

Migration is changing the social, political, and economic landscape of Europe, while exposing inequities and putting pressure on infrastructure. Politically, it has prompted greater populism and tighter restrictions, challenging the cohesion of the EU. Addressing these challenges effectively requires innovative policies that build resilient, sustainable and equitable cities.

Trend IV: Increasing Fragmentation of Globalization

For decades, the world has moved steadily towards greater global integration, with international trade becoming a cornerstone of economic growth and stability after the Second World War (Qiu, Xia, and Yetman 2024). However, recent geopolitical tensions have signaled a period of structural change, characterized by increasing geopolitical fragmentation and a shift in the global order. The trend towards globalization peaked around the 2008 financial crisis, after which countries adopted protectionist policies (Goldman Sachs 2024).

A growing number of states are competing for influence in the world, attempting to seek control over critical resources, untapped markets and transport routes. Consequently, leading to heightened tensions, which further fragments international relations and fuels global instability (PwC 2024b). This has led to noticeable effects such as a slowdown in global flows of goods and capital, increased restrictions on trade and investment, heightened political risks and growing migration concerns.

Recent events such as Brexit, the invasion of Ukraine and ongoing conflicts in the Middle East have prompted policymakers to rethink their countries' economic strategies. This has strained international relations, and instead of promoting open markets, trade restrictions, including both tariff and non-tariff measures, have gained momentum in recent years (ECB 2019).

Trade tensions between major economies such as the US and China, as well as disruptions from the COVID-19 pandemic and sanctions against Russia following its invasion of Ukraine, have increased protectionist behavior globally (Fajgelbaum and Khandelwal 2021; European Council 2023). These developments have exposed the fragility of global supply chains, leading to shortages of essential goods, rising logistics costs and inflation (IMF 2023). In response, countries and companies have begun to shift the focus of their supply chains from cost optimization to resilience, investing in inventories, reshoring production and diversifying sources of supply (Sanders 2023).

Moreover, rising nationalism and populism are other key factors contributing to this trend of increasing fragmentation. Movements such as “Make America Great Again”, the US-China trade war and Brexit emphasize domestic production and national economic priorities (EC 2022b). These shifts have prompted countries to localize critical industries, as reflected in initiatives such as the EU Chips Act and Made in China 2025, which aim to reduce reliance on global supply chains and strengthen domestic capabilities (EC 2023b).

Geopolitical fragmentation is reshaping the global landscape, shifting it towards stronger regional economic blocs and alliances of like-minded nations. Rather than collapsing, global trade is evolving, taking new routes and forming new partnerships in response to geopolitical pressures. Despite these changes, trade remains a cornerstone of the global economy, but it is increasingly characterized by competing interests and fragmented infrastructures, reflecting a world that is more divided but still deeply interconnected.

6.1.3 Megatrend 3: Digitalization

The megatrend of digitalization is a transformative force that permeates every aspect of modern life and has prompted industries to undergo a process of reinvention. Digitalization involves turning analogue data into digital language. The objective is to enhance value creation and establish a competitive advantage through the continuous integration and scaling of technology across all areas (McKinsey 2024). In today’s world, it is imperative for organizations to develop and adopt a clear digital transformation strategy, to ensure their competitiveness and long-term survival (Benga and Elhamma 2024).

Digitalization includes technological advancements, such as AI, Internet of Things (IoT), augmented reality and big data analytics (Oberzaucher, n.d.). These innovations drive efficiency and improvement of processes, while lowering operational costs. For instance, the IoT in smart buildings monitor and manage energy use, therefore decreasing energy expenditure and emissions (Selvaraj 2023).

Organizations that undergo a digitalization process may benefit from greater efficiency and productivity, accelerating innovation, and better data analysis. Although going digital evokes many benefits, it also requires substantial investments and associated costs in, for example, infrastructure, employee training and cybersecurity. Risks such as data privacy issues and susceptibility to cyberattacks further underscore the importance of a well-designed digital strategy (Hu, Wu, and Yu 2023).

Nevertheless, the uneven access to digital technologies among nations and regions can intensify inequalities. Communities lacking digital infrastructure or skills may face economic stagnation and reduced competitiveness in the global marketplace (UN 2020). Similarly, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) may struggle to afford expensive digital technologies or develop cost-effective in-house solutions to continue their business (Singh and Ji 2023).

Digitalization is modifying industries across the world, creating new opportunities for innovation, growth and efficiency. In sectors like real estate, the use of digital tools has become essential for improving sustainability and making operations more efficient, especially as the demand for green buildings grows (Asif, Naeem, and Khalid 2024). Finally, looking ahead, it is crucial to ensure that digital advancements benefit everyone, helping to create growth that is both inclusive and sustainable in today's digital world.

Trend V: Remote Work

The rapid rise of remote work has notably intensified in recent years, primarily as a result of technological innovations, shifting perspectives on work-life balance and global phenomena such as the COVID-19 pandemic (Stephen and Odubade 2024). Remote work can be characterized as any employment conducted outside the traditional office milieu, frequently from home, utilizing information and communication technology to enable flexible work arrangements (Donnelly and Johns 2020). This transformation has engendered a multitude of opportunities, such as greater flexibility, access to a worldwide talent pool, reduced overhead

expenses and environmental advantages. However, it has also posed challenges, particularly regarding the maintenance of productivity, communication and collaboration in remote environments (Wang et al. 2020).

Remote work has reshaped what people value in a home and how office spaces are utilized, which has caused a noticeable change in the real estate market. Many individuals now prioritize spacious homes in quieter suburban or rural areas that offer the flexibility and comfort needed for both living and working, including dedicated home office spaces (Liu and Su 2021).

Commercial real estate is suffering due to a reduced demand for traditional office spaces. Empty office buildings are increasingly being repurposed into mixed-use spaces or hybrid housing, combining residential, work and leisure functions to meet the evolving needs of remote workers (McKinsey 2023). These conversions not only address housing shortages, particularly in major cities, but also promote the sustainable reuse of urban infrastructure (Remoy and Van der Voordt 2014). This trend reflects a significant shift in urban planning, emphasizing flexible and multifunctional spaces as key features of a modern city design.

Trend VI: PropTech (Property technology)

'PropTech', or property technology, is a growing trend, which combines real estate with revolutionary digital technologies such as AI, blockchain, virtual reality, and the IoT. This fusion creates innovative solutions that enhance and change the way properties are bought, sold, managed, and utilized. PropTech enhances efficiency, transparency and customer experience throughout the real estate industry which benefits various stakeholders including developers, property managers, buyers and renters (Siniak et al. 2020).

In the early 2000s, platforms like Zillow, Redfin, and Trulia pioneered PropTech by transforming real estate services into online platforms. These platforms introduced online brokerage and sales services that revolutionized the way people search for and buy property (McClure 2024). Today, the PropTech sector is expanding rapidly, driven by digital advances,

increasing urbanization and a growing emphasis on customer-centric property services (Uske 2024).

This phenomenon has mostly been observed in larger economies, including North America, Europe, China, and India (Braesemann and Baum 2020). The core business of real estate is still space-based, but the PropTech boom has demonstrated that much of the information surrounding real estate can be digitalized. The “datification” of the real estate sector is reshaping how information is used to improve property management, guide investments, and elevate the customer experience. Tools such as AI, use machine learning to forecast property values, identify investment opportunities, and offer tailored property suggestions (Baum 2017). The IoT transforms properties into smart buildings by connecting systems such as heating, ventilation, air-conditioning and lighting to enable monitoring and control, which in turn optimizes energy use and cuts costs (Oberzaucher, n.d.).

Nevertheless, adopting PropTech requires a considerable investment in large-scale digital infrastructure, training workforce, and strengthening cybersecurity. For smaller property owners and traditional real estate firms, these costs can be a major barrier, making it difficult to adopt these new technologies (Ahmad and Murray 2019).

Technologies such as Building Information Modeling (BIM) allow developers to visualize and simulate building performance prior to construction. It allows for greater representation of building parameters and construction in three dimensions (Tang et al. 2017). Moreover, BIM helps in sustainable development, by demonstrating how some design choices affect the environment, energy consumption and how effectively resources are being used (Chong, Lee, and Wang 2016). BIM supports the creation of digital twins (DT) by integrating data from IoT sensors and other sources (Sepasgozar 2020). DT create a virtual model that simulates and predicts production activities in parallel with physical operations (Seaton et al. 2022). This

technology enhances the value of information, saves physical resources, and improves maintenance strategies.

The growth of PropTech signals an important change in the real estate industry, steering it towards smarter, data-driven decisions and more streamlined property management. With collaboration between technology developers, policymakers and property owners, the benefits of PropTech can extend beyond major cities and advanced economies, impacting a wider range of communities.

Group Part

6.1.4 Megatrend 4: Urbanization

The megatrend '*Urbanization*' describes a transformation within societies. It can be observed on a global level and is marked by a rapid and accelerated shift of population to urban areas as well as a steady expansion of cities. More than 56% of the total world population currently lives in cities, a significant increase from one-third in 1950. By 2050, this figure is expected to reach about two-thirds (UN, n.d.-b) (Figure 19), with Asia and Africa being driven by migration from rural areas. Populations in these areas are primarily seeking better living conditions and economic opportunities in urban settings (PwC 2016). Meanwhile, in Europe 75% of the population already lives in cities (Figure 20) (Statista 2023), which is expected to increase to around 83.7% by 2050 (EC 2020d).

Well-structured urbanization has the potential to contribute positively to societal well-being (Correia et al. 2024). However, this trend also poses significant challenges. In more developed economies and older cities in the developing world, infrastructure will be stretched to its limits and beyond as populations grow. In the developing world, rapidly expanding cities will require significant (smart) infrastructure investment simply to accommodate the rate at which they are growing and people are migrating. In addition, a large proportion of the population lacks access to basic infrastructure (Zhang 2015). Although cities occupy only 2% of the earth's land surface,

their activities consume more than 75% of the world's material resources (WEF 2022). Moreover, poorly planned urbanization is a major contributor to rising CO2 emissions (Xiaomin and Chuanglin 2023). This suggests that unplanned urban growth can have serious consequences for both public health and the environment. In addition, loss of green space and fertile land, housing shortages, increased traffic and pollution are other related problems that are likely to occur (Evers, Katuric, and van der Wouden 2024).

Cities play an important role in developing smart, sustainable and inclusive economies through urban renewal projects (UN-habitat 2021). To fully realize their benefits, the focus must shift to accommodating rapid population growth and creating vibrant urban environments that contribute positively to society and the planet. Investing in efficient infrastructure, strengthening urban resilience and promoting inclusive urban policies can transform growing cities into engines of sustainable development.

Trend VII: Gentrification

'Gentrification' is the process of renovating and refurbishing working-class or low-income neighborhoods to make them more appealing to wealthier residents or businesses (Tulier and Allen 2019). This typically results in elevated property prices, rental rates, and cost of living, which displaces long-term residents who can no longer afford to stay. Although it can result in enhanced facilities and economic revival, there are concerns about how it might affect social cohesiveness as well as the neighborhoods' cultural identities. This duality has sparked ongoing debates among policymakers, who remain divided over its implications for social justice and urban development (Smith 2023).

The drivers of gentrification involve a combination of political, social, and economic factors. People with higher incomes get drawn to urban areas due to economic shifts like the growth of high-tech industries or the inflow of capital into urban real estate markets (Zuk et al. 2017). The phenomenon is further fueled by social changes, including a growing preference for inner-city,

cosmopolitan lifestyles (Florida 2017). Moreover, the implementation of gentrification projects in aging neighborhoods is further encouraged by government policies such as tax breaks for real estate developers (Hwang and Sampson 2014).

To address these challenges, cities must promote economic inclusion. They must adopt equitable urban development strategies that both prioritize affordability and mitigate the risk of displacement. The implementation of targeted policy tools can ensure that gentrification contributes to long-term urban success while preserving social equity and inclusion.

Trend VIII: Collaborative Living Models

'*Collaborative living models*', including co-living and co-housing, are becoming increasingly popular as an innovative approach to changing urban lifestyles and housing needs. They are particularly appealing to professionals, students and individuals looking for an affordable, convenient and socially connected housing option (Jarvis et al. 2016).

The rise of co-living highlights a shift in real estate trends, with developers increasingly adapting their projects to meet these preferences. Co-living spaces offer flexible lease terms, affordability and shared amenities, making them especially attractive to those seeking convenience and community (Corfe 2019). This trend highlights the importance of housing innovation in addressing challenges such as population density and social isolation (Hacke, Muller, and Dutschke 2019). In contrast to traditional models, co-living spaces encourage interaction and support networks through the direct integration of shared kitchens, lounges, co-working spaces and community-building events (Steding 2019). They address urban housing needs by offering fully furnished private rooms or studios alongside shared amenities such as co-working spaces, gyms and terraces (Bergan and Power 2024). At the same time, co-housing offers a more suburban or rural alternative by clustering privately owned units around shared spaces, where residents can often manage their own communities (Beck 2019).

As interest in collaborative housing options continues to grow, it is foreseeable that they will play an important role in the future of urban development. Their long-term success will depend on their ability to scale in different urban contexts, while remaining affordable, inclusive and adaptable to changing societal needs.

6.2 Uncertainties

In the final stage of the *Explore* phase, the uncertainties regarding ‘*the future of EU environmental regulations and directives*’ were systematically analyzed. Uncertainties are unpredictable factors that have a significant influence on the focal issue, often by shaping a range of different possible future scenarios (van der Heijden 1996). Through a combination of desk research and an internal team workshop, 12 uncertainty factors were identified and defined (Appendix 3). These uncertainties were filtered into the categories of the PESTLE framework (Figure 2) which suggests a structured approach to identifying and understanding relevant external factors (Buye 2021).

Institutional Stability & Unity of the EU: The EU is a dynamic institution, constantly adapting to changing circumstances both inside and outside the EU. As a result, there is uncertainty about the future institutional stability and cohesion of Member States. While a stable and united EU enables coherent development and implementation of environmental policies, instability and disagreement can lead to delays or even blockages. Cohesion also influences consistency of implementation, which is a key factor in efficiency and the emergence of internal conflict (EC 2024i).

Political Right Shift of Member States: Right-wing populist parties tend to prioritize sovereignty and economic concerns over EU energy and climate policies (Huber et al. 2021). In power, they could counteract national and EU policies with political instruments that can reduce the overall impact of policies and make it more challenging to achieve environmental goals. In particular, the election years of 2025 and 2026, when influential countries such as

Germany, Sweden, Spain, Italy and Poland vote, will provide insight into the extent to which right-wing populist parties influence the implementation of environmental measures (Bundestag 2024).

Geopolitical Stability: Countries with stable political environments, where terrorism and political violence are minimal, often demonstrate a stronger commitment to social and environmental causes (Costantiello and Leogrande 2023). However, geopolitical risks, such as military conflicts, sanctions or blockades can disrupt the focus on environmental initiatives across the EU. Such events can create uncertainty over resources and cause governments to shift focus and funding away from sustainability efforts, making it harder for them to achieve their environmental goals (Khan, Khurshid, and Cifuentes-Faura 2023).

Economic Situation: Economic fluctuations can create uncertainty and shape how regulations are prioritized and carried out. There is generally increased support for improving environmental practices and advancing sustainability initiatives during periods of economic growth, when more financial resources are available, and investor confidence is high (Delova-Jolevska et al. 2024). However, during economic downturns or financial crises, the focus can shift away from long-term environmental goals as other political priorities take over, and investor confidence drops, which can hinder or delay sustainability efforts (Geels 2012).

Financing Conditions and Inflation: Financial conditions and inflation can affect the investment flows into environmental measures. When financing conditions are favorable, characterized by low interest rates and a stable and controlled inflation, there's a low borrowing cost which expands the willingness to invest in sustainable initiatives. Conversely, an increase of the interest rates and inflation raises the cost of borrowing and therefore decreases investment in ambitious sustainable projects due to the reduced availability of funds (Busch, Bauer, and Orlitzky 2015).

Supply Chain Stability: The EU's green transition is critically reliant on specific components and raw materials¹¹ essential for sustainable technologies (Christou and Carrara 2024). As the EU mainly imports these resources from abroad, disruptions in these supply chains can delay the timely implementation of environmental measures and significantly increase the cost of the transition. In addition, they could lead to a loss of transparency in supply chains, jeopardizing the assurance of sustainable standards (Nobletz, Svartzman, and Dikau 2024).

Societal Acceptance: Surveys show large regional and social differences in the acceptance and support for more sustainable and environmentally responsible practices. Further discrepancies arise in the degree to which citizens are willing to adapt their lifestyles. These are accompanied by a growing mistrust of national and EU institutions (PwC 2024a; Jon Henley 2023). A lack of social acceptance can cause politicians to counteract environmental measures and can deter companies from investing in sustainable practices (EC 2021b).

Qualified Workforce Availability: To cope with the challenges associated with the green transition, companies need to ensure large-scale recruitment and sufficient investment in reskilling and upskilling of their employees (EC Directorate General for Economic and Financial Affairs 2022). The main challenges include increased reporting requirements such as CSRD, a structural lack of construction, roofing and electrical workers as well as bureaucratic hurdles to employing foreign manpower (Brucker Juricic, Galic, and Marenjak 2021). Therefore, EU Member States are tasked to identify gaps in their workforce and respective skillsets within the frame of the RED. This is because qualified professionals can significantly impact the implementation of environmental initiatives and either expedite or slow the achievement of EU targets (Bezerra, Martins, and Macedo 2024).

Mass Migration Patterns: Recent data (eurostat 2024c) show a steady increase in first-time asylum applications in the EU. However, it is uncertain whether this trend will continue or be

¹¹ Such as Lithium, Cobalt, Nickel, Copper, Manganese and Rare Earth Elements (RRE).

mitigated by measures such as the EU Migration Pact (EC 2024o). According to the Eurobarometer, immigration is the second biggest concern of the EU population at 8%, ahead of the environment and climate change (EC 2024p). A heightened public attention can put pressure on policy makers and influence the setting of government priorities (Bundesinnenministerium 2024), potentially reducing the importance of the green agenda.

Technological Innovation: The EU's capacity and the development for innovation will influence both the effectiveness and the long-term viability of environmental policies. Incorporating new technological paradigms is increasingly seen as a driver of resource efficiency. The incorporation of innovative technologies acts as a driver that enhances resource efficiency (Chatzistamoulou and Koundouri 2024) and can facilitate the transition to a decarbonized economy (Fleiter 2019). However, the definition of innovation implies uncertainty, as its potential value may or may not be realized in the future (Jalonon 2011).

Climate Change Intensity: In recent decades, Europe has been affected by a series of extreme weather events, including droughts, forest fires, and floodings, which are expected to increase in the future. An increase is likely to drive greater public awareness and an elevated focus on the environment, potentially prompting substantial policy shifts (Davidsson 2020). The catastrophes do not only pose risks to human health, but they also result in substantial economic losses (approx. €740 billion from 1980 – 2022 in the EU) (EEA 2024a). Moreover, enormous costs may also lead to a reallocation of EU financial resources towards warning systems, protection measures and reconstruction funds (Davidsson 2020; EC 2021d).

Project Backlog: Given that renewable energy licensing is a lengthy process and usually takes years, the EC tasked the EU Member States to identify, evaluate, and denominate suitable *go-to areas* that are available for renewable energy projects to accelerate the expansion. Despite the commission's effort, the current levels are not consistent with the aspired plan (EC Directorate General for Communication 2022). To date, projects are still evaluated on a first-

come, first-served basis, which means that the most mature projects - i.e. those that are most likely to be realized, cannot be prioritized by public administration (WindEurope 2024). This causes delays, which can be significantly reduced by streamlined administrative processes, less bureaucratic hurdles and effective stakeholder engagement (Silva, Sánchez-Hernández, and Carvalho 2023; Marques et al. 2021).

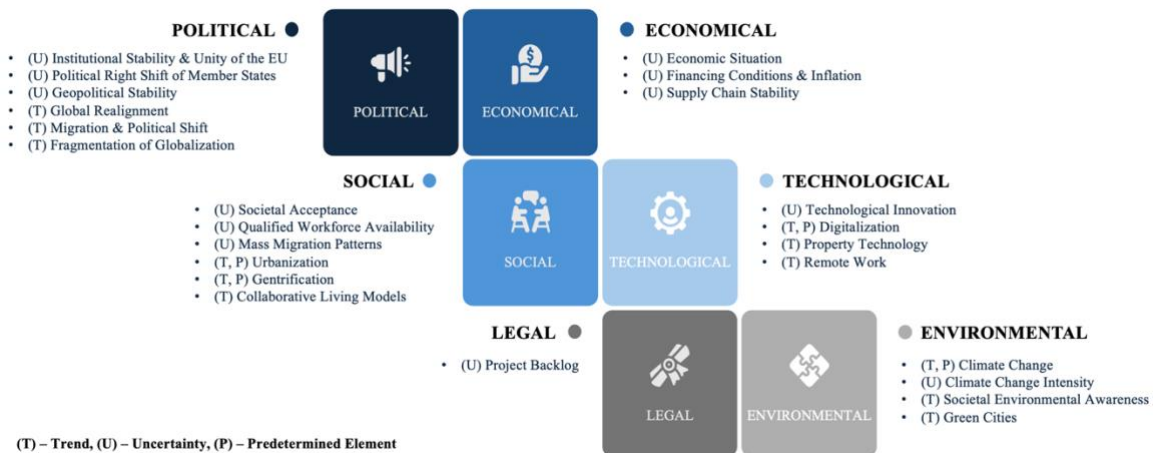


Figure 2 - PESTLE / Source: Own Creation

7 Phase 3 – Synthesize

The purpose of the *Synthesize* phase is to identify the two KUs, which are defined by the events or forces whose outcomes are the most uncertain and that could have the highest impact on the focal issue within the time horizon. These two critical uncertainties are then mapped in a matrix and will serve as the basis for the scenario planning exercise (Schoemaker 1995). For the exact procedures of the uncertainty mapping and the scenario matrix development please refer to the Methodology (s. Chapter 4.1), for the ranking of all uncertainties, refer to Appendix 3.

7.1 Grouping & Identification of Key Uncertainties

The critical uncertainties resulting from the defined area of interest were *Supply Chain Stability*, *Geopolitical Stability*, and *Qualified Workforce Availability*. By grouping uncertainties with chronological and causal relationships, one can ensure that each cluster remains sufficiently independent of the others (Wright and Cairns 2011). In this way, the distinctive impact on the

focal issue can be clarified. The critical uncertainty of *Supply Chain Stability* is increasingly driven by *Geopolitical Stability*. In an interconnected, globalized world, rising tensions between nations can lead to supply chain disruptions that restrict access to goods and resources. These disruptions often take the form of trade restrictions, sanctions or regulatory barriers, which can also be described as the weaponization of the supply chain to achieve political objectives (Aronow 2024). Recent international conflicts underscore the direct link between geopolitical dynamics and supply chain vulnerabilities (KPMG 2022).

Conversely, *Qualified Workforce Availability* represents an independent critical uncertainty. Factors such as the reskilling of existing personnel or the bureaucratic hurdles related to labor mobility in terms of the green transition are not influenced by potential supply chain disruptions or geopolitical stability, since they are mainly restricting the availability of goods and materials. Thus, the analysis identified two distinct clusters. The first cluster encompasses *Geopolitical Stability* and *Supply Chain Stability* (named after the chronologically last), while the second cluster consists solely of *Qualified Workforce Availability* (Figure 3).

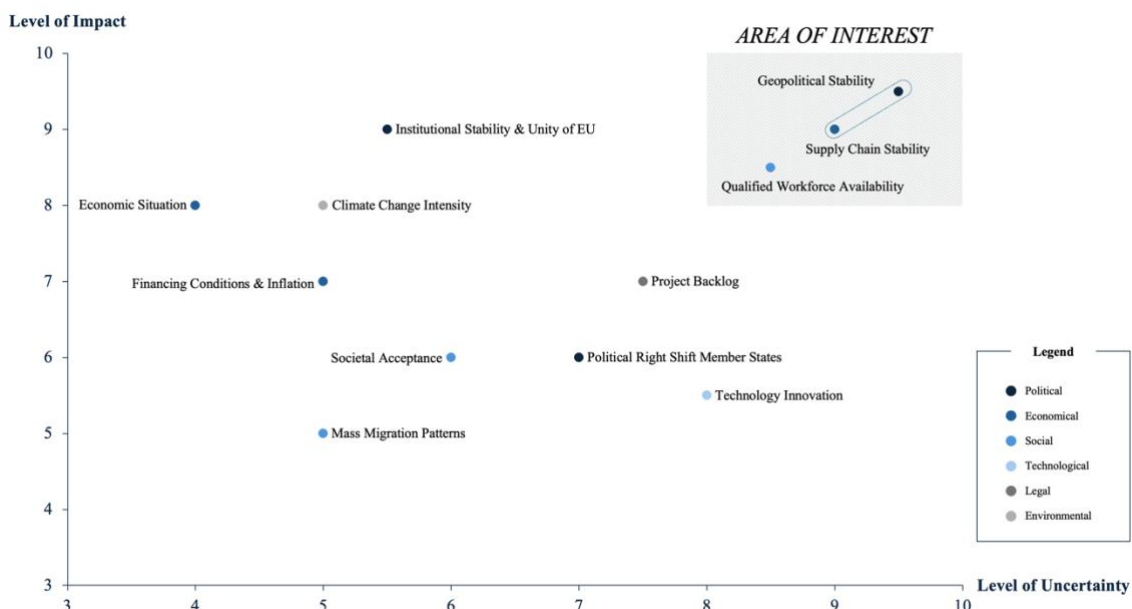


Figure 3 - Uncertainties Mapping | Source: Own Creation

7.1.1 Key Uncertainties

Key Uncertainty 1: Supply Chain Stability

High Impact: The EU's green transition is inextricably linked to increasing the share of renewable energies in the energy mix. However, the introduction of renewable technologies for energy production is strongly linked to imports, as the EU relies heavily on external suppliers for solar panels, lithium batteries, wind turbine components, and the CRMs necessary for its production (EC 2023c). Given the limitations of the EU's own procurement and production capabilities, there is a risk of significant gaps in the supply of renewable energy (IEEP 2024). The reduction of the share of fossil fuels in the energy mix would not be possible, with serious consequences for the environment, society and the economy. Consequently, a decelerated and less stable inflow would result in a significant delay to the green transition and in a substantial increase in cost (IEA 2023). Serious disruptions would even make it impossible to implement the measures as currently planned.

High Uncertainty: The significant uncertainty surrounding the stability of the supply chain originates from the EU's reliance on imports and refining of CRMs and technologies from only a few countries with which there has been a history of repeated geopolitical tension in recent times. China is the dominant producer of six of the ten most production-concentrated CRMs, while Russia is the second largest producer in three of them (Kowalski and Legendre 2023). With regard to heavy rare earths, which are essential for the development of renewable energy technologies and especially electric vehicles, the EU currently relies on China for 100% of its supply (EC 2024f). Other key suppliers of CRMs are the Democratic Republic of Congo, Peru, South Africa, Indonesia and Australia. In all ten of the most important CRMs, production is concentrated in a maximum of two countries, which account for at least 70% of global production (Kowalski and Legendre 2023). Geopolitical tensions, especially with China, have in the past led to artificial disruptions in supply chains. The export ban on magnet production

technologies announced in 2023 as a means of exerting pressure on the US, the export restrictions on gallium and germanium announced in July and the most recent export ban on three critical raw materials to the US in December 2024, serve to illustrate this point (Pickles 2023; Seaman 2024; GLOBSEC 2024). The current extremely tense geopolitical situation, as well as specific EU conflicts with China, such as its close cooperation with Russia and an ever-escalating trade war, has led to heightened political tensions between the EU and China. These tensions are reaching levels not seen in decades and pose significant risks to global supply chains (Xiatong 2024; CB 2024) (Figure 22).

Key Uncertainty 2: Qualified Workforce Availability

High Impact: To realize the full potential of the green transition, the EU needs to close the skills gap as the availability of a sufficiently qualified workforce significantly impacts the achievement of climate targets. An insufficient number of skilled labor force could hamper the EU's transition to a green economy and lead to delays in the implementation of the European Green Deal, especially in high-demand sectors such as renewable energy and construction. This skills gap could lead to economic disruption and job displacement, especially in carbon-intensive industries, while exacerbating regional and demographic inequalities. In addition, a lack of readiness in workforce development could drive up economic costs as labor markets struggle to keep pace with the demands of the green transition (EC Directorate General for Economic and Financial Affairs 2022). Thus, the existence of skilled workers exerts influence on two crucial dimensions of the measures' implementation, i.e. time and costs, and is hence to be classified as highly impactful.

High Uncertainty: The degree of uncertainty surrounding the *Qualified Workforce Availability* is highly affected by the EU's acute shortage of technical workers and other skilled professionals. The mentioned transition could require over 1 million new jobs by 2030, with jobs in the renewable energy sector and other clean energy technologies growing faster than in

other sectors (European Labour Authority and Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini 2024; CEDEFOP 2021). Yet, it remains unclear to what degree the EU will tackle the bureaucracy regarding effectively employing workers from abroad. Time loss in this respect results from ongoing difficulties in recognizing foreign diplomas. Although the EU has a framework for the mutual acknowledgement of professional qualifications, it does not cover all professions or countries outside the EU (EC Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion and ECORYS 2016). This is complemented by complex work permit and visa procedures. Each Member State has its own requirements, leading to inconsistencies and making it difficult for employers to recruit workers from outside the EU in a timely manner (European Court of Auditors 2024). Thus, both the bureaucracy associated with hiring foreign workers and the time needed to diligently train workers adds a considerable level of uncertainty to the implementation of the EU's sustainability measures.

7.1.2 Scenario Matrix

The scenario matrix was built by combining the two KUs: *Supply Chain Stability* and *Qualified Workforce Availability*. The integration of both uncertainties – and the definition of the two opposing and extreme spectrums of each axis – allows for the emergence of four distinct scenarios. Each scenario results as a unique combination of factors that impact the future of the EU environmental regulations and directives.

The first axis represents the *Supply Chain Stability* and is defined by the following spectrums: Spectrum 1, which addresses an '**Unstable Supply Chain**' and is characterized by an environment of geopolitical tensions, resulting in CRMs shortages and increased prices due to tariffs. Contrarily, spectrum 2 consists of a '**Stable Supply Chain**', where the EU maintains healthy relationships with key trade partners, thus ensuring a secure and stable supply of CRMs without shortages or imposed tariffs. The second axis, *Qualified Workforce Availability*, encompasses the subsequent spectrums. Firstly, spectrum 1 embodies a '**Scarcity of Qualified**

Workforce’ mainly caused by a lack of talent in the EU and strict immigration policies. In contrast, spectrum 2 is classified as an **‘Availability of Qualified Workforce’**, foreseeing the EU has been able to address the skilled workforce gap.

As a result, the four scenarios that arise from the combination of two different spectrums of each axis are the following: **‘Voltage Revolution’**, **‘Digital Backbone’**, **‘Efficiency Gambit’** and **‘Broken Foundations’**. The scenario matrix helps guarantee that all scenarios are distinct enough while covering all possible future factors and combinations of the KUs that could impact the focal issue (Figure 4). Moreover, each scenario provides a descriptive narrative that envisions the possible real-life challenges and opportunities by the specified time horizon.

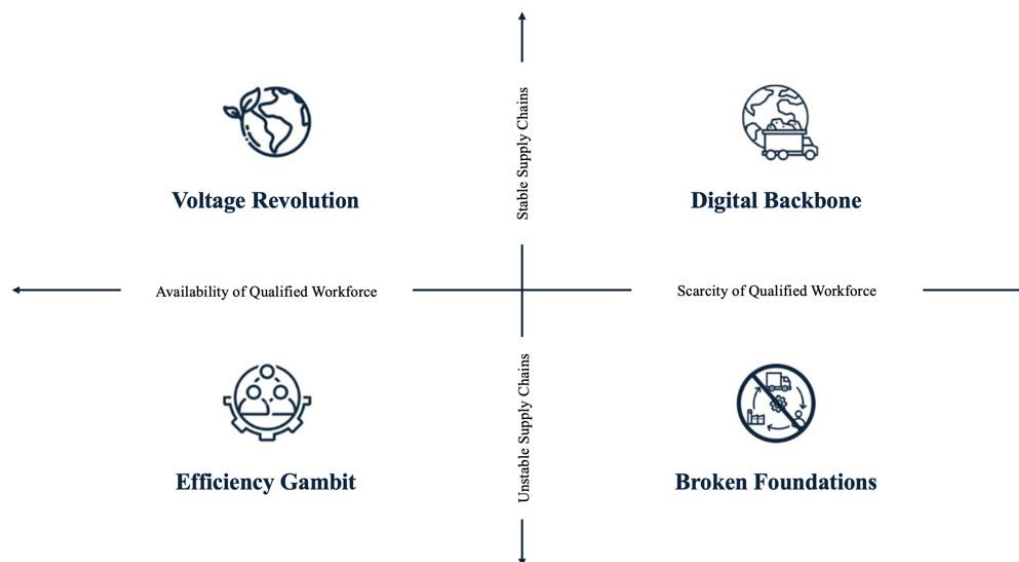


Figure 4 - Scenario Matrix / Source: Own Creation

7.1.3 Cross-validation of the Scenario Matrix

To ensure the robustness of the scenario matrix, a cross-validation was carried out with further expert input. To this end, the project team held a semi-structured meeting with Christiane Conrads, Global Leader for Real Estate and ESG at PwC (Appendix 1). Her dual expertise in EU environmental policy and the real estate sector provided an additional critical perspective to validate the approach adopted. During the discussion, Conrads highlighted the strong link between the stable supply of CRMs/green technology with geopolitical tensions and their impact on the European real estate industry, particularly given that a stable supply of these

materials is crucial to achieving the sector's sustainability goals. At the same time, her insights into workforce dynamics confirmed that targeted reskilling to meet the demands of new technologies, as well as labor mobility and migration, are key to implementing these policies, thus confirming the second KU. The feedback not only validated the approach taken, but also enriched the scenario development with nuanced perspectives on its potential logical evolution.

7.2 Scenario Narratives

The structure of the following scenarios is based on the respective attributes of the two KUs. The consequences resulting from these effects are examined in two interlinked layers: the contextual environment from an EU perspective and the transactional layer specific to the European real estate sector. The contextual layer examines the broad systemic influence of the uncertainties on the implementation of the relevant EU measures and their interlinking in a logical chain. Whether or not the measures can be successfully implemented is influenced by factors such as the energy mix, energy prices or carbon prices. These factors shape the wider environment in which EU industry and society act. The transactional layer thus describes market developments, pursued by both the KUs and the contextual environment. Finally, the attractiveness of the industry is evaluated with the Porter's 5 forces framework, creating comparability (Figure 5).

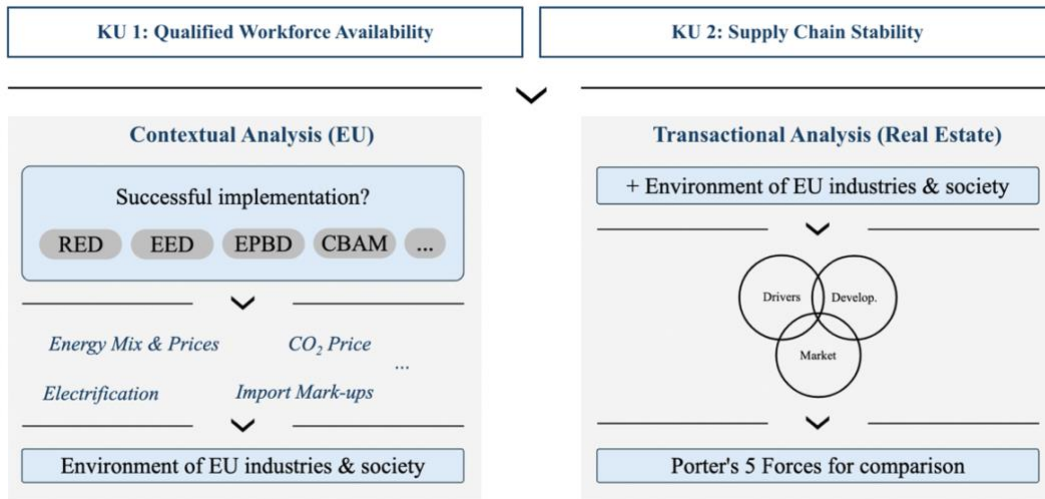







Figure 5 - Scenario Structure | Source: Own Creation

7.2.1 Scenario Comparison

The EU, its industries and its society are differently impacted by the four distinctive scenarios. To facilitate their comparison, this section offers a consolidated view on the most important contextual/transactional factors (Figure 6) and illustrates the attractiveness of the real estate industry per narrative based on the Porter's 5 forces framework (Figure 7).

	 RENEWABLE ENERGY EXPANSION	 ENERGY EFFICIENCY ENHANCEMENTS	 EMISSION OF GREENHOUSE GAS	 INDUSTRY ELECTRIFICATION	 KEY LEVER
Scenario 1: Voltage Revolution	↑	↑	↓	↑	ELECTRIFICATION
Scenario 2: Digital Backbone	↗	↗	↓	↗	TECH / AI / DIGITAL
Scenario 3: Efficiency Gambit	→	↑	→	→	ENERGY EFFICIENCY
Scenario 4: Broken Foundations	→	↓	↗	→	EU TAXONOMY






 Increase
  Slight increase
  Stagnation
  Slight decrease
  Decrease

Figure 6 - Scenario Comparison | Source: Own Creation

In *Scenario 1*, significant progress is made in all areas. Renewable energies and energy efficiency are greatly expanded, industrial electrification progresses, and GHG emissions fall significantly. This scenario is therefore the most ambitious and reflects a comprehensive transformation in which electrification serves as a key lever.

In contrast, *Scenario 4* shows only minimal progress. Renewable energies are stagnating, as is the electrification of industry. There is also no improvement in the reduction of GHG emissions. This scenario emphasizes the importance of regulatory framework conditions such as the EU taxonomy criteria, which need to be adapted to the industry needs.

Scenario 2 focuses on technological and digital innovations, in particular AI and automation. Although there are slight improvements in energy efficiency and a smaller reduction in emissions in this scenario than in *Scenario 1*, progress in renewable energies and electrification remains rather moderate given the scarcity of skilled workers.

In *Scenario 3*, energy efficiency is increased, but other areas largely stagnated, particularly the expansion of renewable energies and electrification. Nevertheless, a moderate reduction in emissions is achieved.

Overall, *Scenario 1* stands out as the most optimistic vision of a sustainable energy transition, while *Scenario 4* paints a conservative picture. *Scenarios 2 and 3* move between these extremes and each focus on specific approaches. The scenarios therefore not only show different development paths, but also the areas of tension between technological, regulatory and infrastructural measures to achieve climate targets.

	 INDUSTRY RIVALRY	 BARGAINING POWER OF SUPPLIERS	 BARGAINING POWER OF BUYERS	 THREAT OF NEW ENTRANTS	 THREAT OF SUBSTITUTES
Scenario 1: Voltage Revolution	HIGH	LOW – MODERATE	MODERATE – HIGH	MODERATE – HIGH	MODERATE
Scenario 2: Digital Backbone	HIGH	HIGH	LOW – MODERATE	LOW – MODERATE	MODERATE
Scenario 3: Efficiency Gambit	MODERATE	MODERATE	MODERATE	LOW – MODERATE	MODERATE – HIGH
Scenario 4: Broken Foundations	HIGH	HIGH	LOW	MODERATE – HIGH	MODERATE – HIGH

Figure 7 - Porter's 5 Forces Scenario Comparison | Source: Own Creation

Operating in an environment characterized by a stable supply chain and a sufficient number of skilled workers, the *'Voltage Revolution'* scenario offers the best conditions for buyers to leverage their bargaining power and new players to enter the market.

Contrariwise, the *'Broken Foundations'* narrative represents a unique opportunity for suppliers to take advantage of their high negotiating power given the scarcity of qualified labor and the unstable supply chain which results in an ever-increasing reliance on few providers in the market.

The *'Digital Backbone'* and *'Efficiency Gambit'* scenarios present opposing challenges to the industry. While the first one forces the industry to find solutions to compensate for the labor market shortages, the latter is affected by an unstable supply chain and insufficient supply of CRMs. More precisely, the *'Digital Backbone'* scenario offers more favorable conditions for suppliers in terms of bargaining power while the *'Efficiency Gambit'* scenario is more advantageous for buyers provided that they can choose from a wider range of substitutes than in the *'Digital Backbone'* scenario.

Common to all narratives is the intensity of competition, i.e. industry rivalry, which is at least moderate across all four. Apart from that, the threat exerted by substitute firms or products is at least moderate in all scenarios as well.

8 Phase 4 – Act

The Act phase is of central importance for translating scenario findings into strategic action. To this end, MOME's strengths and weaknesses were jointly examined in a collaborative workshop and a TOWS matrix served as the basis for deriving implications for each of the four narratives (Phadnis, Sheffi, and Caplice 2022). Additionally, an overarching action plan was developed to guide the client organization effectively under various plausible future circumstances

8.1 Cross – Scenario Strategic Recommendations

The preceding strategies have been elaborated based on the scenario-specific configurations of the selected KUs. Given that there are plausible events for which the company should prepare independently of the scenario to navigate the future successfully, the following section presents an overarching action plan that aims to provide concrete guidance. This involves identifying actions that can be effective under multiple future conditions, thereby enhancing organizational adaptability (Phadnis, Sheffi, and Caplice 2022).

Marketing and Awareness: A first, important point that MOME must capitalize on is the use of marketing strategies to raise general awareness of the cooperative housing model in Portugal, while increasing its visibility as an emerging player in this market. To achieve this, MOME should resort to different marketing strategies. To build brand recognition and establish credibility, MOME must focus on leveraging its unique strengths in sustainability and innovative construction practices. The company can highlight its expertise in MMC and NBS through targeted marketing campaigns. By demonstrating the environmental benefits and cost efficiencies of these methods, MOME can position itself as a leader in sustainable and affordable housing. MOME's digital presence should be optimized to engage potential customers and stakeholders. The company's website must feature comprehensible explanations of its cooperative housing model, along with educational blogs, videos, and testimonials. Social

media platforms can amplify this content and run targeted campaigns to reach younger, environmentally conscious audiences. Emphasizing affordability and transparency will resonate strongly with those struggling with the current housing crisis. Establishing thought leadership is another critical step. MOME should publish whitepapers and articles on the advantages of cooperative housing and innovative building practices. Participating in real estate expos, delivering presentations, and collaborating with sustainable housing forums can further enhance credibility. Additionally, highlighting partnerships with well-known organizations in press releases and marketing materials will help offset concerns about MOME's lack of a track record and establish the company as a trustworthy entity.

Customer and Product Focus: To reach audiences that may not have access to social digital platforms, MOME should use traditional marketing which entail collaborations with TV channels, local newspapers, and community radios, particularly in urban centers like Lisbon and Porto. Moreover, MOME should bet on physical advertising strategically placed in high-traffic urban areas such as crowded train- and metro stations in city centers. These locations are perfect for reaching the attention of daily commuters who may be searching for affordable housing options. According to diverse studies, these physical ads create instantaneous awareness and increase brand recognition and recall (Roux 2016). To increase the conversion rate, MOME should consider hosting workshops and webinars to explain the process, benefits, and financial commitments required and meet potential cooperators in person. Simultaneously, to engage with the younger demographics, it is recommended that MOME takes into consideration strategic collaborations with influencers who tour cooperative housing projects and discuss their potential. This represents a great way to resonate with younger audiences and attract their attention in an authentic and trustworthy way.

Community-centric approach: Fostering engagement by creating lasting value for the communities MOME serves, has the potential to become central to the company's mission of

providing affordable, sustainable living. Therefore, several actions can be taken to encourage collaboration and build trust. To begin with, MOME's projects should include shared, community-oriented spaces such as co-working areas, recreational facilities or common gardens. This can help to create interaction and develop a sense of involvement and ownership. Apart from that, the company could assist in the organization of events such as charity runs or community cleanups which can help to strengthen local connections. The cooperatives managed by MOME can, for instance, initiate partnerships with schools and NGOs, thereby making sure that they gain publicity from people who share the same values. Finally, MOME can significantly contribute to promoting equity and inclusivity in the Portuguese society. Through policies that welcome individuals from different socioeconomic, cultural, and generational backgrounds while keeping housing costs accessible to a diverse demographic, MOME's housing cooperatives can create communities where members not only live but thrive together, fostering both individual well-being and collective progress.

Risk Mitigation: The scarce availability of workforce and the rising cost of materials present a significant risk for MOME, given the company's reliance on suppliers and construction service providers. The guarantees provided to the cooperative's members in the *Preliminary Contract of Sales* could potentially become a significant financial burden for MOME in the event of delays or price increases. This could have a detrimental impact on the company's early-stage success, particularly if it lacks sufficient capital reserves. It is therefore of the utmost importance to be able to rely on an existing network of suppliers and partners. To mitigate this risk, it is recommended that MOME transparently report these clauses to the supplier side within the ECI Model. Furthermore, a risk analysis should be conducted, and if feasible, a contractual clause for a maximum price and project duration should be implemented. It is therefore recommended to engage in collaboration with local, sustainable partners whose reliability has been demonstrated in previous projects and whose business risk is more readily

assessable. This approach facilitates transparency while mitigating dependence on volatile global supply chains. Additionally, it would be advisable to explore the possibility of concluding long-term, cross-project framework agreements with fixed price ranges to ensure long-term planning security.

Financing: MOME's access to EU funding is constrained as a purely private sector entity, with funding limited to small-scale projects due to restricted resources. However, in addition to accessing national funding opportunities, MOME is eligible for funding under the InvestEU program. The InvestEU Fund offers direct and intermediate financing options for sustainable and inclusive investments. InvestEU can be particularly relevant, as it explicitly provides funds for subsidized loans and guarantees for small businesses (EU 2024a) and as MOME has already demonstrated compliance with the requisite criteria for funding, it is highly recommended to apply for InvestEU (Appendix 4). To access InvestEU, MOME must first verify and document its own eligibility. This includes classic business documents that demonstrate the economic viability of MOME, as well as project specific information. These include a description of the project, detailed funding requirements and evidence of the project's impact on EU objectives (EU 2024e). As the InvestEU Fund works through selected financial intermediaries, applications must be submitted directly to them. In Portugal, the main partner is Banco Português de Fomento, with many other smaller, private and regional financial service providers awarding smaller contracts (EU 2024b). Once the financial partner has been selected, a project proposal is submitted outlining the project and its conformity with the objectives of InvestEU. If the proposal is successful, the financing terms are negotiated.

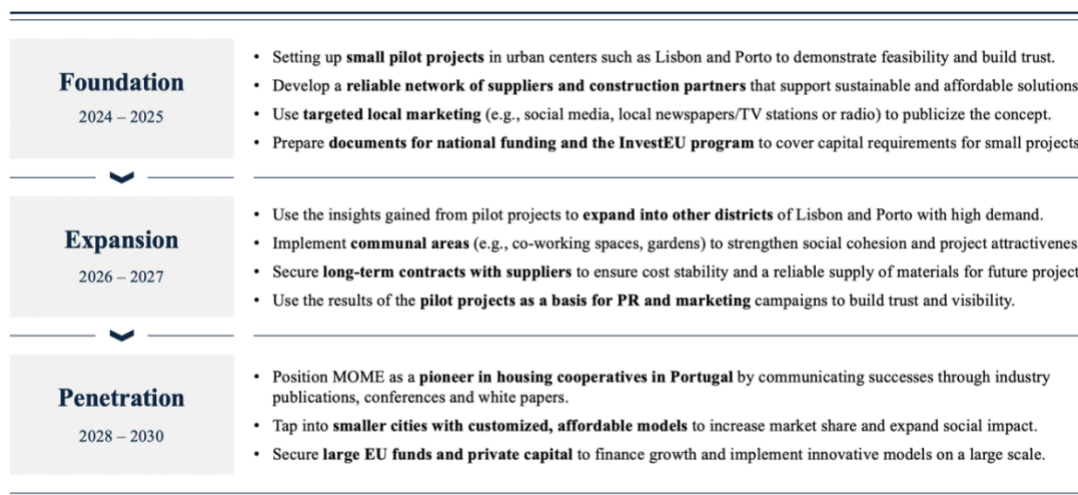


Figure 8 - General Strategic Roadmap MOME | Source: Own Creation

9 Phase 5 – Monitor

The *Monitor* phase is the final phase of the *Intuitive Logics School* approach. It aims to keep track of each scenario's evolution by comparing it with the progress of the real-world environment. As a result, it enables identifying which possible scenario is most likely to unfold, and therefore which strategy is best employed (van der Heijden 1996).

For this purpose, the '*Scenario Cockpit*' approach is used, which consists of the following two main steps. First, the early indicators must be clearly defined, and threshold values are attributed to each indicator. The second and final step involves constantly monitoring the value ranges of each indicator (Wulf, Brands, and Meissner 2010). This approach allows MOME to understand which scenario is likely to emerge and thus quickly adapt its strategy.

Early Indicators and Threshold Values

The selection of early indicators must be carried out carefully, based on the following specific criteria: *measurable and quantifiable; relevant to the development of the scenarios; specific to a certain aspect of the scenarios; timely to provide information early enough; and actionable to provide insights into strategic changes*. Using these criteria, six early indicators were selected. Moreover, thresholds were introduced in two different ways. First, for those indicators for which it was feasible and appropriate to do so, a trend line was established, and the

corresponding thresholds were set by considering the trend values for the years 2026, 2028 and 2030. Then, for the remaining metrics, fixed thresholds were set by analyzing historical trends while ensuring there is sufficient time to act strategically before they escalate.

Geopolitical Risk Index: The Geopolitical Risk Index (GRI) serves as an effective instrument for the early recognition of emerging tensions. The intensifying trade conflict between the USA, the EU and China illustrates how geopolitical crises can directly impact the supply chains of entire sectors. When the index value is situated within a range of 150 – 200, geopolitical tensions have emerged and are bound to escalate (Figure 25). In all previous instances, values for the GRI exceeding 200 have signified global crises that have exerted a substantial influence on the global economy and supply chains (Statista 2024a). Considering this, the threshold value of 150 provides accurate and precise insights on geopolitical developments while also serving as an early warning system that allows for a timely strategy adaptation before outcomes escalate. Contrarily, values below 150 represent a stable geopolitical environment and low conflict risk, fostering economic growth.

Supply Chain Stability Index: The Supply Chain Stability Index represents the reliability of the supply chain over time. It provides a quantifiable way to monitor disruptions and other dependency risks that affect the operational efficiency of the supply chain. This enables the identification of instabilities that are not merely geopolitical in nature, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, which caused a sharp increase in the index between 2020 and 2022 (KPMG 2024). In recent years, the index has fluctuated between -1.5 and 3, with -1.5 representing a low level of supply chain stress and 3 indicating a fragmented supply chain (Figure 26). Given that critical disruptions in the past have been caused primarily by geopolitical developments that are impossible to predict and trend, the threshold value of 0 should be considered when assessing supply chain robustness. This baseline level encompasses normal supply chain stability in the absence of disruptions. Values below this threshold may represent a stable supply chain with

respect to CRMs, while values above indicate a stressed supply chain environment where affected materials should be promptly identified, and appropriate measures taken to mitigate potential supply chain dependency risks.

Job Vacancy Rate & Employment Rate: The EU job vacancy rate (JVR) is a key indicator for assessing the state of the labor market. Job vacancies are defined as paid positions that employers advertise and actively seek to fill immediately or in the short term. Over the past decade, the rate in the EU has risen from 1.3% to 2.4%, signaling challenges in filling advertised positions (eurostat 2024e) (Figure 27). Future values exceeding the trend line may indicate a growing shortage of skilled workers, while lower values could either suggest an influx of additional workers into the bloc or targeted retraining of existing workers to match labor market demands. However, it should be noted that a downturn in the EU's economic situation may result in fewer job vacancies being advertised, potentially distorting the information provided by the JVR alone. Therefore, the employment rate represents a vital complementary indicator. The EU tracks the seasonally adjusted rate quarterly, considering all persons aged 20 – 64 who are employed or have an unmet need for employment. As of Q2 2024 the rate stands at around 75% and has increased by 8% within one decade (eurostat 2024b) (Figure 28). When combined with the JVR, the employment rate provides insights into the labor market's health. If the JVR falls, for instance, below its trend line and the employment rate's values also stagnate or decline below its threshold, this indicates fewer job advertisements rather than an increasing number of vacancies being filled, as was the case during the COVID-19 pandemic. Conversely, if the JVR falls below the threshold and the employment rate rises above, it can be assumed that workers' access to vacancies has improved, for example through a larger workforce and skills adapted to the transition.

Labor Migration: This indicator assesses the inflow of foreign labor into the EU by tracking the issuance of first-time residence permits for employment. In 2014, the number of issuances

amounted to approx. 457,000, while in 2024 it had already reached 1.26 million (eurostat 2024g), corresponding to a CAGR of 10.7%, thus illustrating the increasing trend of labor migration in the European labor market (Figure 29). An inflow of first-time residence permits for employment above the trend line slope may indicate a harmonization of EU labor migration policies or agreements between different Member States and third countries to facilitate the issuance of work visas. Values below the threshold may signal a less relevant and attractive European market for foreign workers, potentially causing labor shortages.

Personnel Cost Index of Construction Industry: The index tracks the costs of gross wages and salaries for employers in the construction industry. Accordingly, it uses Q1 2015 as the base value of 100. The indicator shows stable and steady growth through Q4 2019, with a CAGR of approx. 4.6%. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the index fell by about eleven points, but quickly recovered and continued its previous upward trend to 149.7 points in Q3 2023 (eurostat 2024d) (Figure 30). Future movements above the trend line may indicate that the industry will continue to experience labor shortages with increased wage levels. Conversely, should the index drop below the trend line, it can be associated with lower construction activity or indicate that there is sufficient labor available in the bloc and the industry, leading to non-competitive wage structures.

Renewables Share in Energy Mix: The share of renewable energies in the EU's total energy production is an important indicator that quickly helps to identify which scenario is most likely to unfold. A target line has been established by the EU, which demonstrates a threshold for the period up to 2030. It illustrates the requisite increase in the share of renewable energy to achieve the 2030 target of 42.5% (EEA 2024b) (Figure 31). Values that fall below this target line may represent either CRMs shortages or a lack of skilled workforce that stagnate the development of renewable energy technologies. Alternatively, values that are on par or above the planned

line could indicate stable and reliable access to CRMs, as well as the availability of skilled workers which are crucial to the growth of renewable energy share.

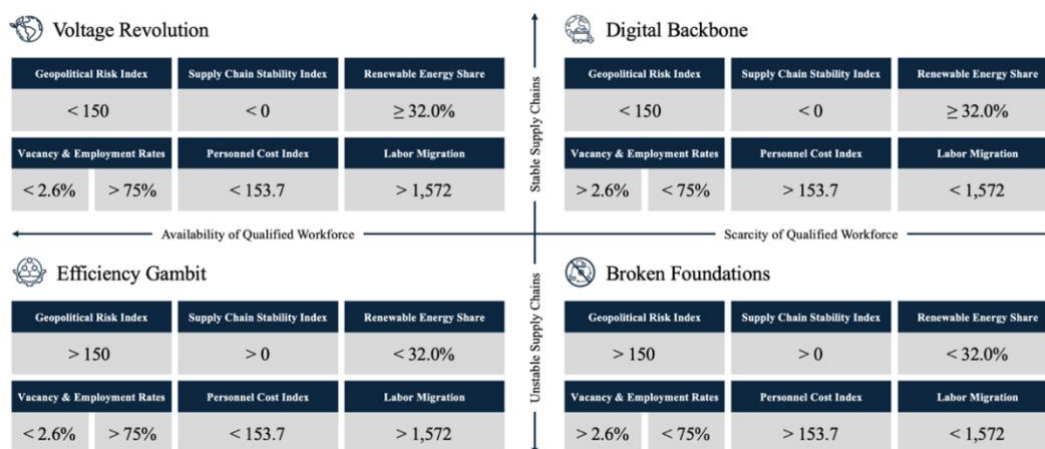


Figure 9 - Monitoring Thresholds 2026 | Source: Own Creation

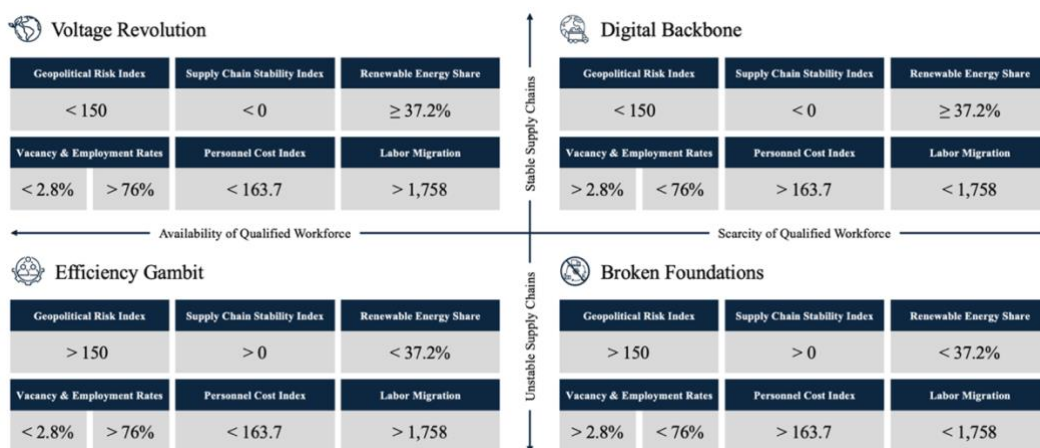


Figure 10 - Monitoring Thresholds 2028 | Source: Own Creation

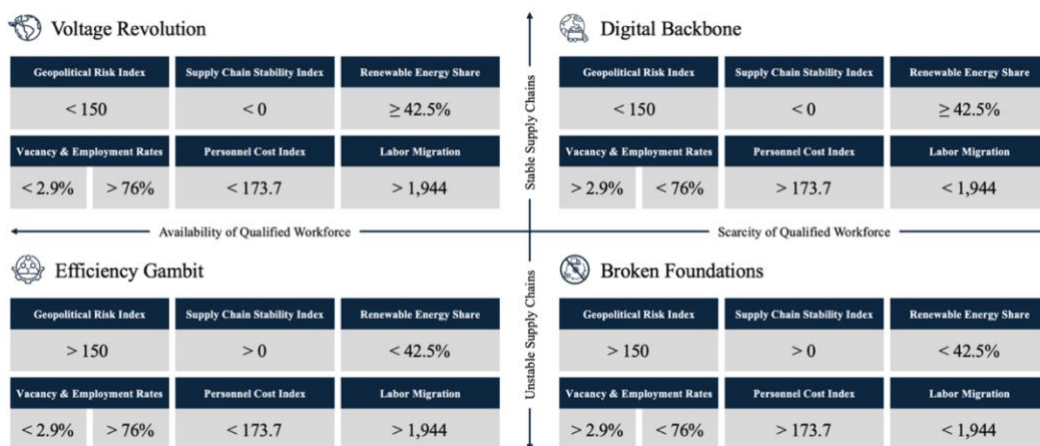


Figure 11 - Monitoring Thresholds 2030 | Source: Own Creation

Constant monitoring

The last and most important step of the Scenario Cockpit framework is to constantly monitor the development of the early indicators. Accordingly, threshold values have been provided for the years 2026, 2028 and 2030, therefore allowing for continual monitoring, which is adapted over the years to ensure alignment with the evolving environment of each scenario. The selection of these years as key monitoring points is closely aligned with the nature of the real estate industry and the slow pace of the EU environmental regulatory landscape. Adhering to this approach enables companies to be agile and proactive in their decision-making processes, allowing them to quickly adapt to the most appropriate strategy.

10 Conclusion

This work project focused on exploring the future of the European real estate sector, particularly in light of evolving environmental regulations and their implications for MOME. Employing the *Intuitive Logics School's* scenario planning methodology, and leveraging insights from industry experts, four plausible scenarios for 2030 were developed, along with strategic recommendations to enhance MOME's competitive edge while aligning with sustainability goals.

To better understand how the sector will evolve, key trends and patterns of change were identified. They include the rising importance of sustainable building practices and digitalization, as well as the ongoing demographic and urbanization shifts shaping housing demand. Further, common to all scenarios is the critical role of regulatory frameworks such as the Fit for 55 package and the EU taxonomy, which drive the need for innovation in construction methods, energy efficiency, and sustainable materials. However, the industry also faces critical uncertainties, particularly regarding *Supply Chain Stability* and *Qualified Workforce Availability*, which have a significant impact on its future trajectory.

To respond to the external environment's evolution, MOME should adopt general strategies independently of which scenario unfolds. These entail focusing on modular and energy-

efficient construction, deepening long-term collaborations with innovative and sustainability-focused stakeholders, and investing in cutting-edge technologies. For instance, in the *'Voltage Revolution'* scenario, where regulatory alignment is strong, MOME should position itself as a leader in the lower-income segment and offer smaller projects and units to meet the new target group's needs. Conversely, in the *'Broken Foundations'* scenario, where sustainability and regulatory progress stagnates, MOME would need to emphasize cost efficiency and adaptive resilience to survive in a highly competitive and low-growth market. The remaining scenarios, i.e. *'Digital Backbone'* and *'Efficiency Gambit'*, call for tailored strategies focusing on digital integration and optimized resource management to thrive in varying regulatory and technological landscapes.

Finally, several indicators have been identified to help MOME monitor and adapt its strategy as these trends and uncertainties evolve. This ensures that MOME remains resilient and competitive. The indicators include advancements in green technologies, shifts in societal and regulatory attitudes, and disruptions in global supply chains.

In conclusion, this research highlights the complexity of the EU regulatory landscape and the critical role of strategic foresight for companies like MOME. By understanding potential directions of change and preparing to evolve accordingly, MOME can position itself as a sustainable and innovative leader in the European real estate sector.

11 Limitations & Further Research

This report utilizes the *Intuitive Logics School* approach for scenario planning to analyze the potential development of the EU environmental directives and regulations and their impact on the real estate industry by 2030. This qualitative approach served as the primary methodology for constructing the scenarios; however, the lack of quantitative data limits the ability to measure specific impacts that could otherwise make the findings more robust and actionable. Additionally, while the methodology captured a range of potential developments, it does not

adequately prepare for ‘black swan’ events, which are unexpected, high-impact disruptions that although unlikely, can have significant effects on the EU environment as well as the European real estate sector and merit consideration for future scenario planning. Moreover, the analysis in this report is carried out at EU level, which may overlook significant country-specific differences, such as those for Portugal. This work primarily considered the most relevant environmental policies and their interactions, while future research could include additional EU measures to develop even more detailed scenarios at EU and industry level. The real estate industry is also large and multifaceted, encompassing a range of activities such as construction, property development, facility management and investment across residential, commercial and industrial segments. This diversity makes it inherently difficult to capture the full complexity of the industry in a single report. Furthermore, the workshop was conducted exclusively with the partner company, which is primarily specialized on the housing cooperative sector. Future research would benefit from the involvement of a wider range of stakeholders, such as commercial property developers and investors.

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13 Appendix

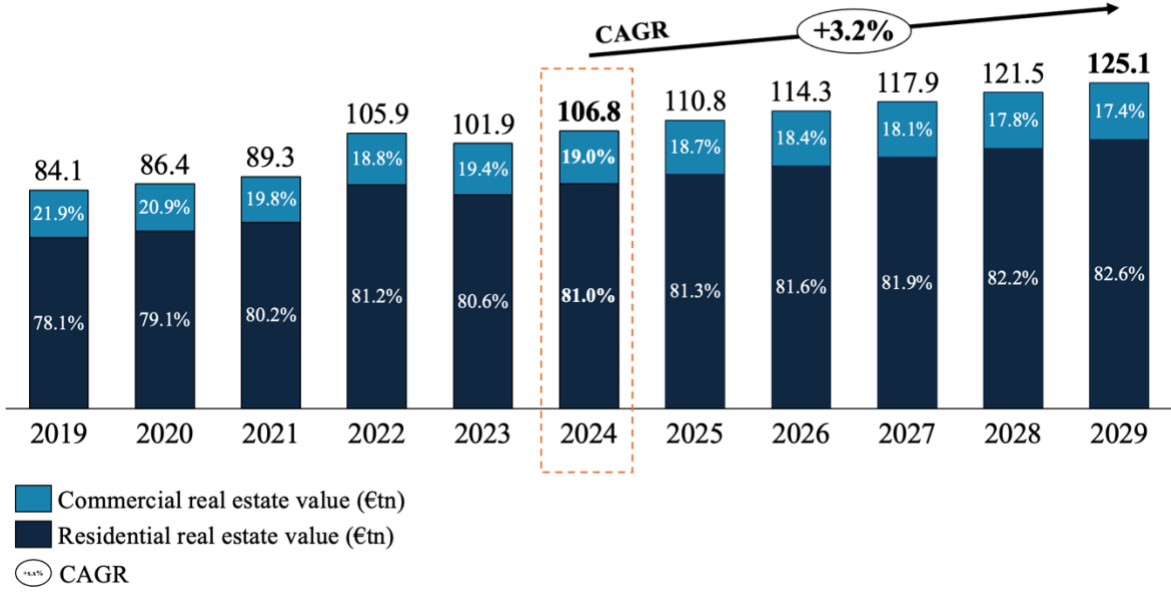


Figure 12 - European Real Estate Valuation Balance | Source: Own Creation based on Statista 2024c

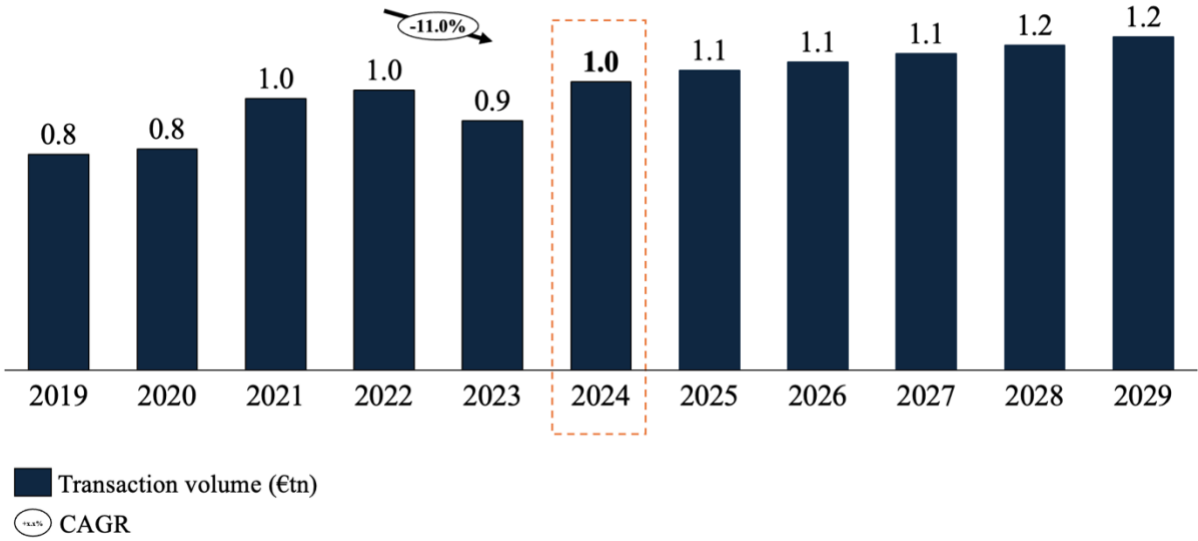


Figure 13 - European Real Estate Transaction Volume | Source: Own Creation based on Statista 2024c



INDUSTRY RIVALRY – HIGH

Competition for prime assets (well located / ESG compliant / stable demand) in capital cities and central markets remains fierce between developers and investors: Safe investments with high demand to better meet their ESG requirements (good location, ESG-compliant). Rivalry is also increasing in niche segments such as student apartments or co-living. The conversion of old buildings to ESG conformity is also having an impact on competition.

BARGAINING POWER OF SUPPLIERS – HIGH

Currently, suppliers have a strong bargaining position due to shortages of building materials and skilled labor. This shortage increases construction costs and gives suppliers more power over developers due to a one-sided dependency. Further pressure on developers to utilize sustainable building materials and technologies strengthens the position of suppliers, since such materials are often more expensive and scarcer.

BARGAINING POWER OF CUSTOMERS – MODERATE

Tenants' negotiating power is limited in urban areas, as the supply of affordable housing is scarce and rents continue to rise. Investors waiting for favorable opportunities (especially in "wait and see" mode) typically have a stronger position as they have capital and can wait for favorable market conditions. Private buyers have a mixed negotiating position. On the one hand, high interest rates limit the access to financing, reducing demand. However, this is outbalanced by high demand for residential property in many cities.

THREAT OF NEW ENTRANTS – LOW to MODERATE

Development of real estate in attractive locations or for ESG-compliant projects requires significant investment. New market entrants face difficulties in gaining access to sufficient capital, which represents a significant barrier. Local market knowledge and existing networks create additional challenges for newcomers who have to compete with established players. ESG compliance is increasingly becoming mandatory, which increases complexity for new market participants. Within the niche markets, entry barriers are lower than in the traditional real estate segments.

THREAT OF SUBSTITUTES – LOW to MODERATE

Forms of housing like co-living, serviced apartments and specialized housing solutions such as student residences or senior housing offer customers alternatives to conventional rental apartments and are becoming increasingly popular. Furthermore, investors are also seeing alternative forms of investment such as infrastructure projects and sustainable energy solutions as a substitute for traditional real estate assets.

Figure 14 - European Real Estate Industry 2024 Porters 5 Forces | Source: Own Creation based on Deloitte 2024b; PwC 2023a; CBRE 2024b

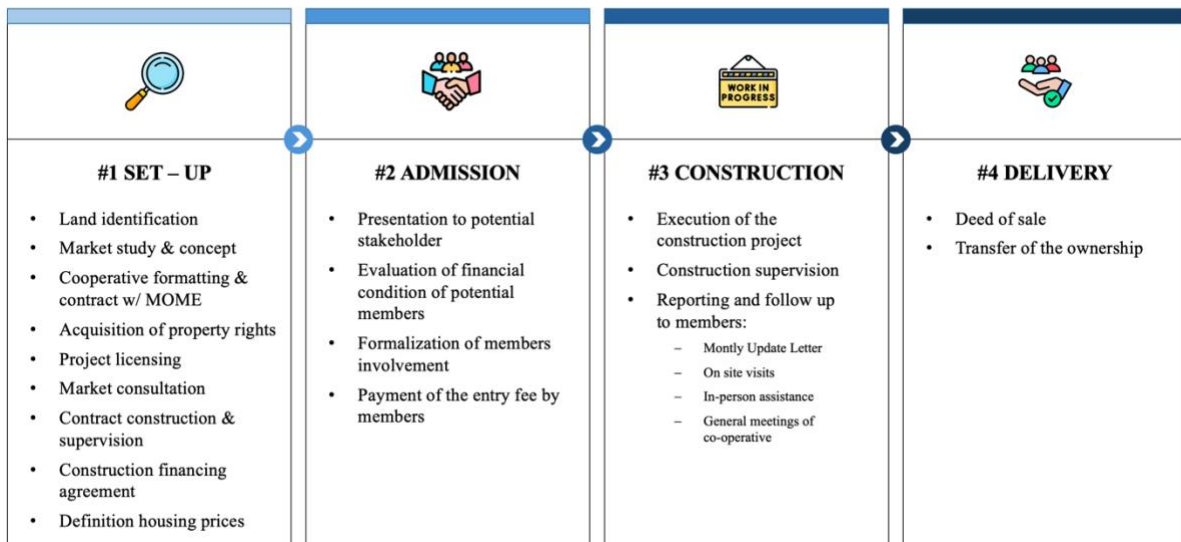


Figure 15 - Lifecycle Cooperatives MOME | Source: Own Creation based on MOME 2024c

Components of acquisition costs – Article 17 of Decree – Law No. 502/99

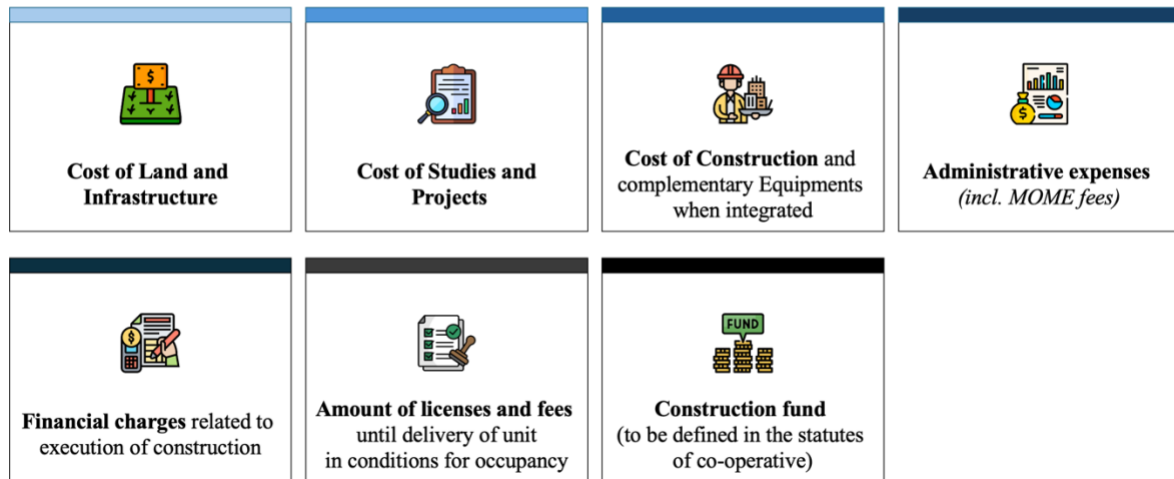


Figure 16 - Costs Housing Cooperatives Portugal | Source: Own Creation based on MOME 2024c

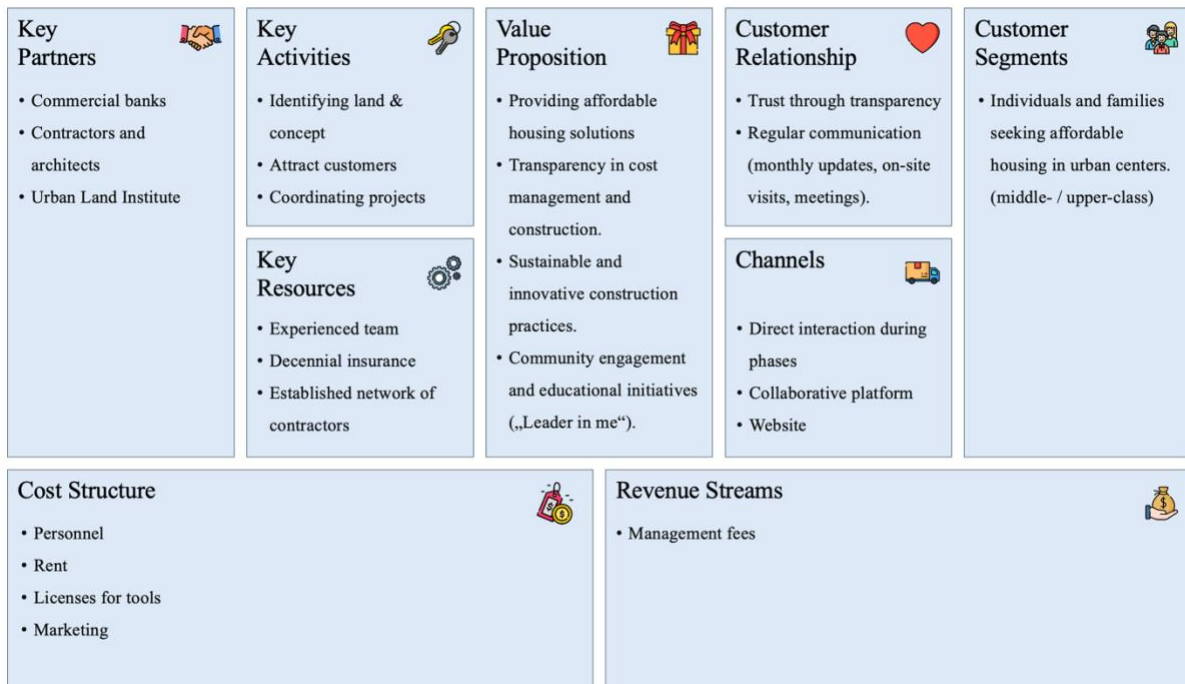


Figure 17 - Business Model Canvas | Source: Own Creation based on MOME 2024c

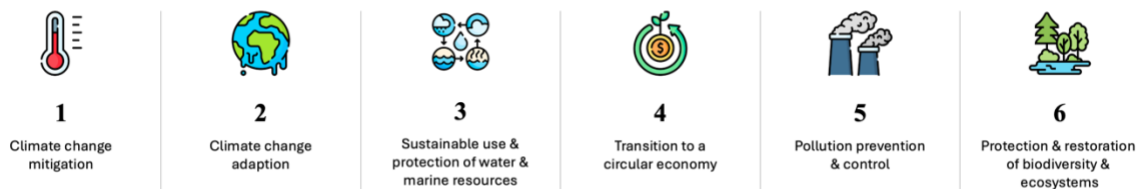


Figure 18 - Defined Climate Goals EU | Source: Own Creation based on EC 2024s

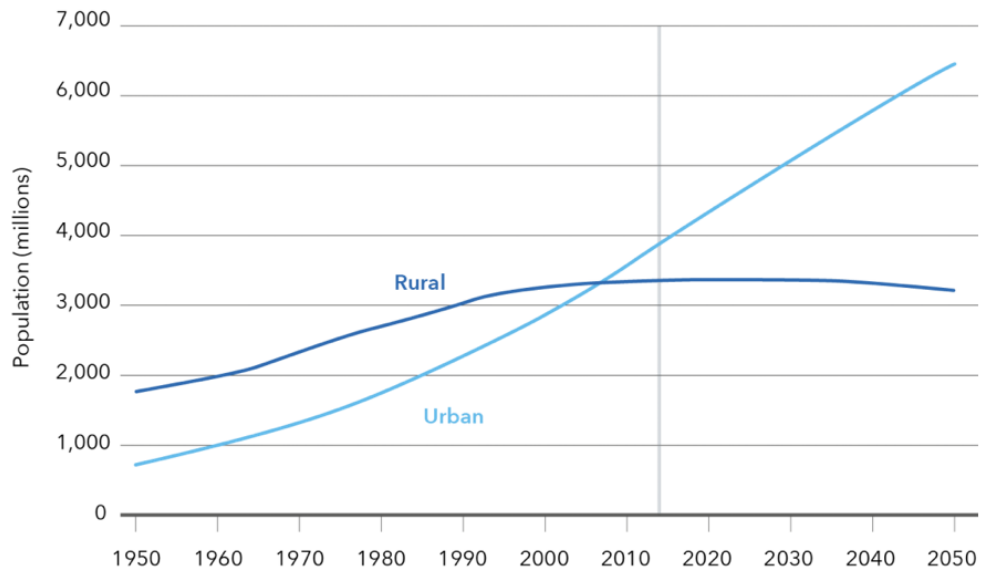


Figure 19 - Urban and Rural Population of the World, 1950-2050 | Source: UN 2014



Figure 20 - Urban Population in 2023 | Source: Own Creation based on EC 2024s

PESTLE	Uncertainty	Level of impact (1-10)	Level of uncertainty (1-10)	Configuration 1	Configuration 2
Political	Institutional Stability & Unity of the EU	9	5,5	Strong and cohesive EU	Fragmented EU with national interests diverging
	Political Right Shift of Member States	6	7	Moderate right influence	Dominant right-wing influence
	Geopolitical Situation	9,5	9,5	Stable international relations	High geopolitical instability
Economical	Economic Situation	8	4	Upturn with economic growth	Economic downturn
	Financing Conditions & Inflation	6	5	Favorable with low interest rates and stable inflation	Unfavorable with high inflation and interest rates
	Supply Chain Stability	9	9	Resilient supply chains	Vulnerable supply chains disrupted by crises
Social	Societal Acceptance	6	6	Widespread public support for sustainability	Public skepticism and opposition
	Qualified Workforce Availability	8,5	8,5	Sufficient supply of skilled workers	Shortages of qualified workers
	Mass Migration Patterns	5	5	Uncontrolled migration	Managed and stagnated migration
Technological	Technological Innovation	5,5	8	Rapid innovation in sustainable technologies	Slow pace of technological innovation
Legal	Project Backlog	7	7,5	Highly bureaucratic procedures with excessive compliance costs	Streamlined regulatory frameworks with reduced bureaucracy
Environmental	Climate Change Intensity	8	5	Severe climate disruptions	Moderate climate impacts

Figure 21 – Uncertainty Ranking / Source: Own Creation

Raw Material	Phase	Import Dependency	Supplying Countries	Usage in Renewable Tech.
Magnesium	Refining	100%	China (93%)	Lightweight Structures Electric Vehicles Batteries
Heavy Rare Earths	Refining	100%	China (98%)	Permanent Magnets Electric Vehicles Energy Efficient Lighting
Light Rare Earths	Refining	100%	China (99%)	Permanent Magnets Alloys Catalysts
Platinum Group Metals	Refining	100%	South Africa (N/A) Russia (N/A)	Hydrogen Fuel Cells Energy Storage Catalysts
Lithium	Refining	100%	Chile (78%)	Electric Vehicles Energy Storage Energy Grids
Niobium	Refining	100%	Brazil (85%) Canada (13%)	High-Strength Steels Photovoltaics Supercapacitors
Tantalum	Extraction	99%	Congo DR. (36%) Rwanda (30%) Brazil (13%)	Capacitors Thin-Film Photovoltaics Turbine Electronics
Natural Graphite	Extraction	95%	China (47%) Brazil (12%) Norway (8%)	Electric Vehicles Energy Storage Fuel Cells
Cobalt	Extraction	86%	Congo DR. (68%)	Electric Vehicles Stationary Energy Storage Hydrogen Production

Figure 22 - Selected CRMs with Highest Import Dependency / Source: Own Creation based on Blengini et al. 2020; EC 2020c



Figure 23 - Photovoltaic Power Potential Portugal | Source: Global Solar Atlas 2023

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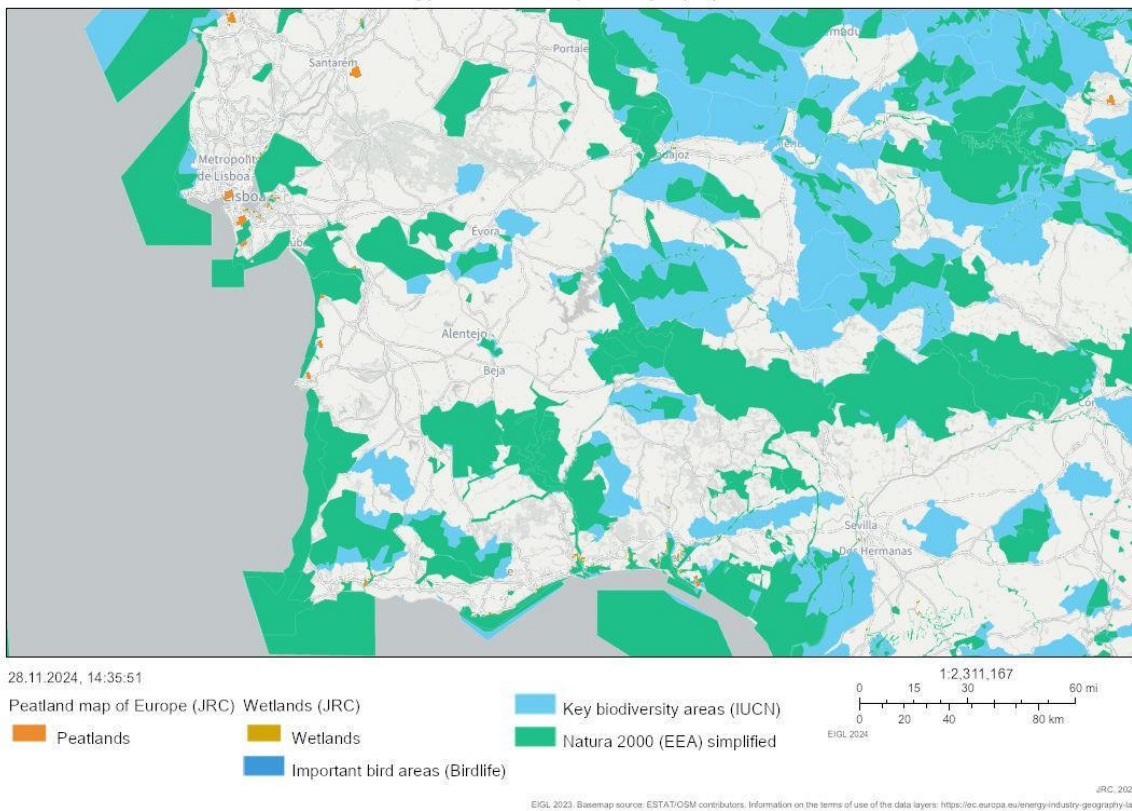


Figure 24 - Natura 2000 & Biodiversity Areas Alentejo Region | Source: EIGL 2024

Geopolitical Risk Index | 2000 – 2030

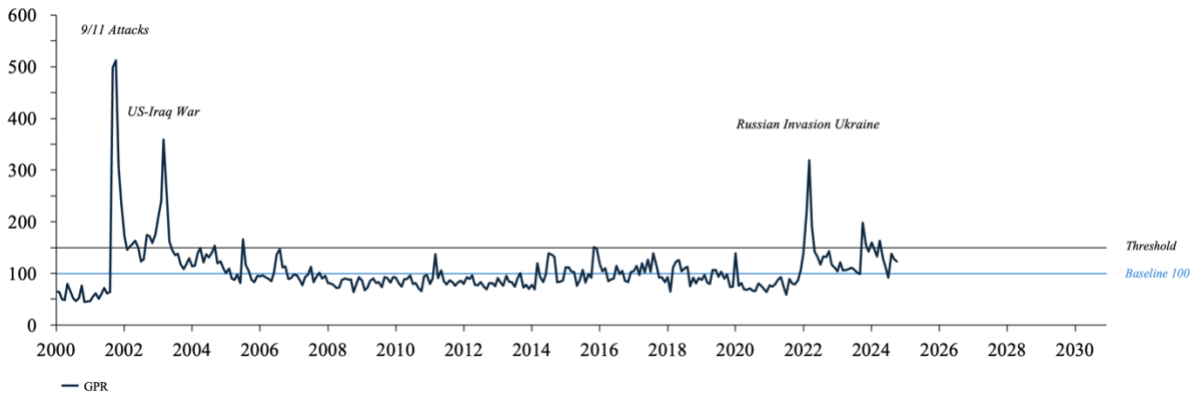


Figure 25 - Geopolitical Risk Index | Source: Own Creation based on Statista 2024b

Supply Chain Stability Index | 2008 – 2024

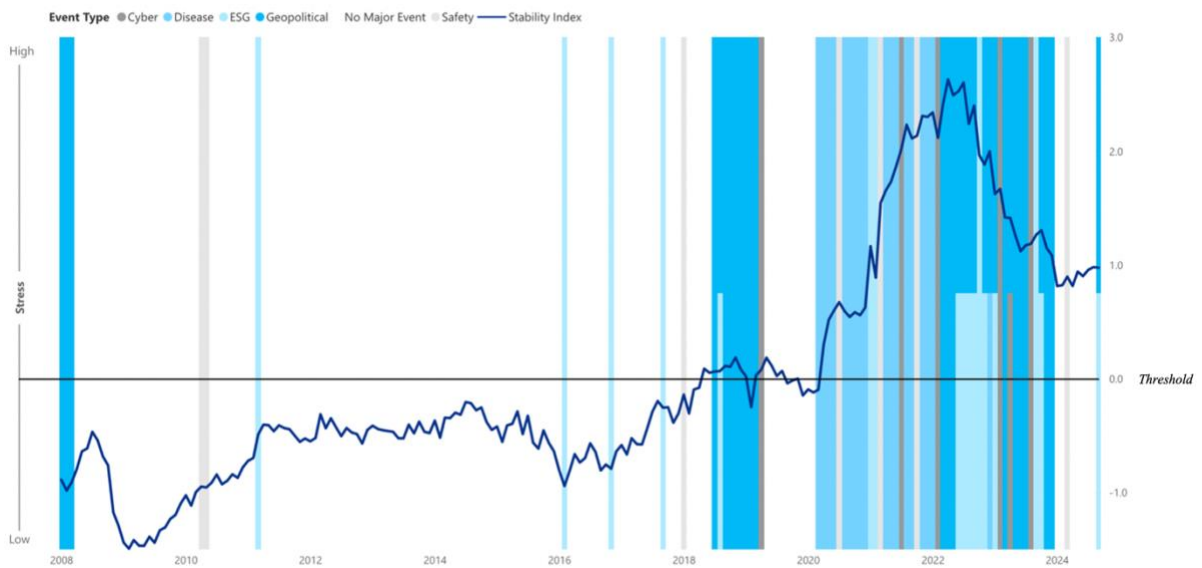


Figure 26 - Supply Chain Stability Index | Source: Own Creation based on KPMG 2024

Job Vacancy Rate EU | 2011 – 2030

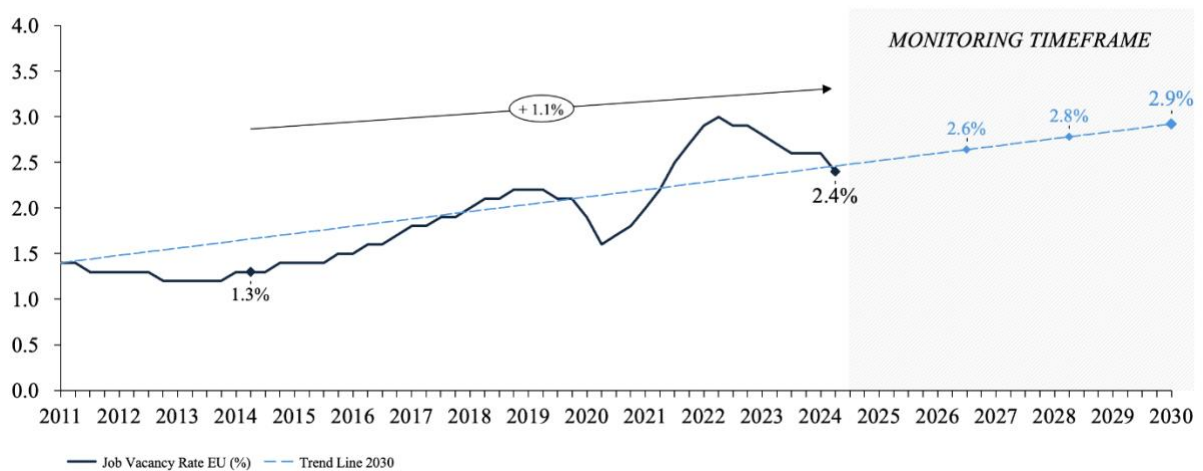


Figure 27 - JVR EU | Source: Own Creation based on eurostat 2024e

Employment Rate EU | 2009 – 2030

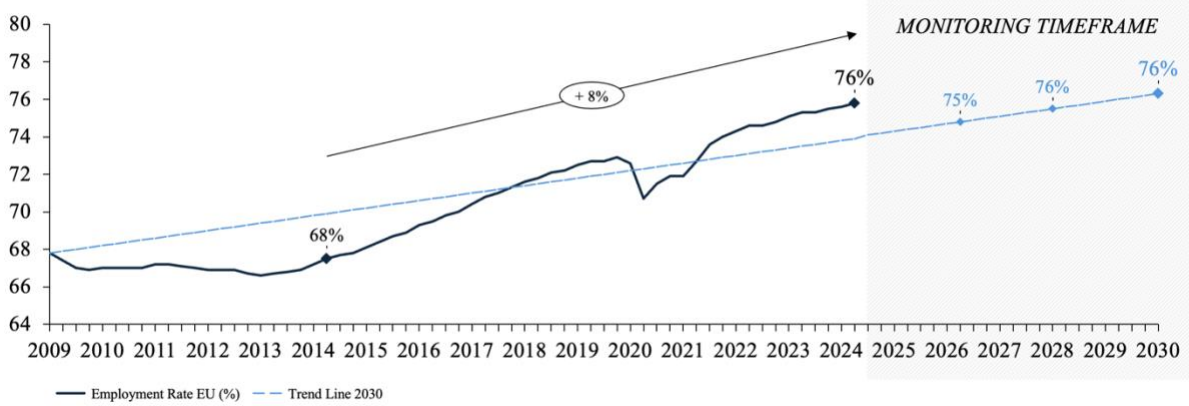


Figure 28 - Employment EU | Source: Own Creation based on eurostat 2024b

First Residence Permits issued (Employment) | 2014 – 2030

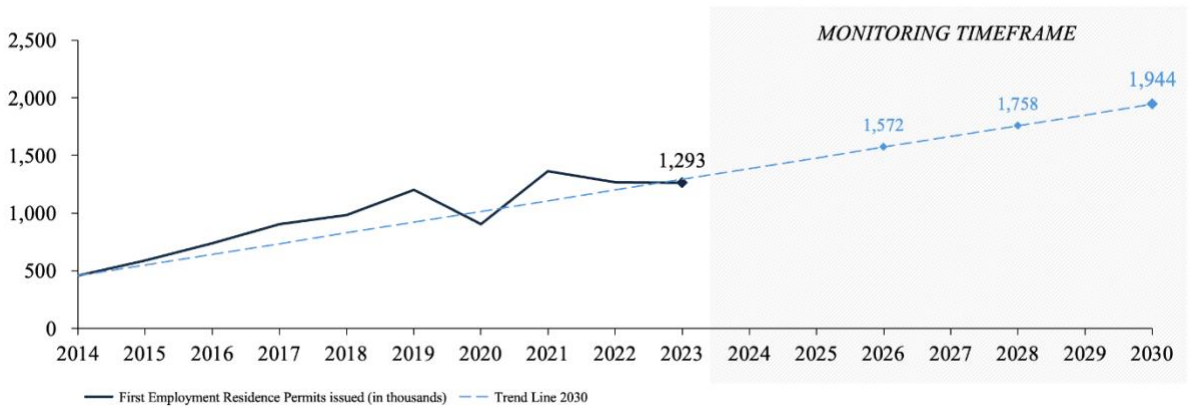


Figure 29 - Permits (Employment) EU | Source: Own Creation based on eurostat 2024g

Personnel Cost Index Construction EU | 2015 – 2030

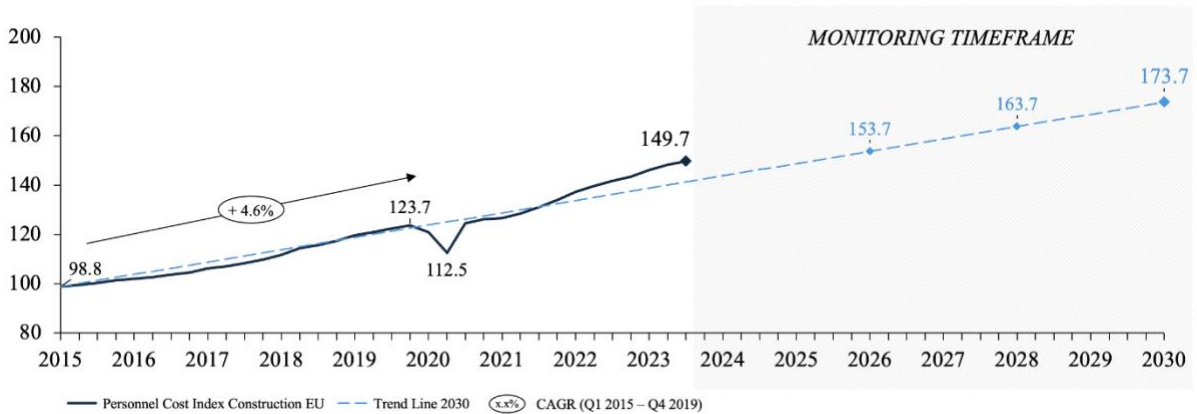


Figure 30 - Personnel Cost Index Construction EU | Source: Own Creation based on eurostat 2024d

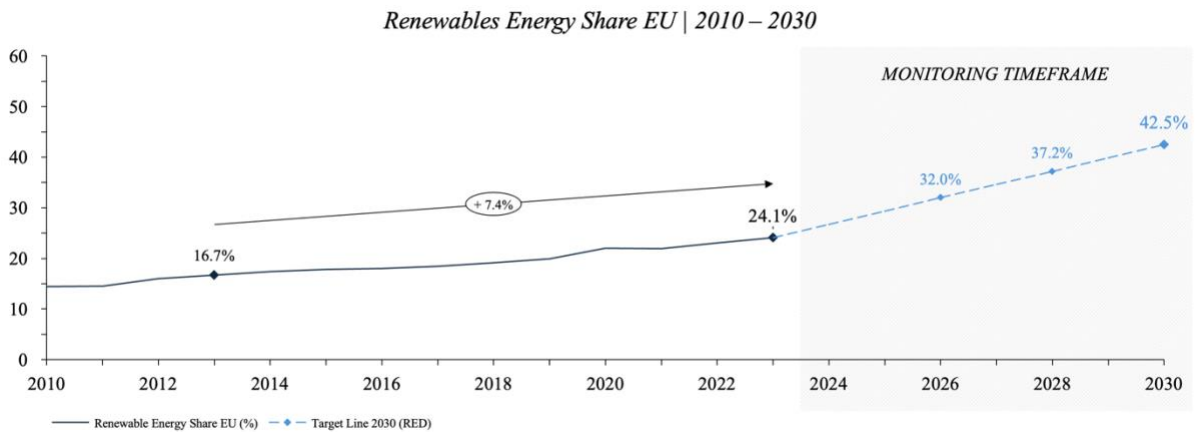


Figure 31 - Renewables Energy Share EU | Source: Own Creation based on EEA 2024b

Appendix 1

Interview Summaries

Interview 1: Assessing and Validating Uncertainties

Date: 09.10.2024

Interviewee: Professor Antonio Vicente

Disclaimer: The interview with Prof. Antonio Vicente was held in English and was kicked off by a short introduction round of all participants, which is not part of this summarized transcript. Prof. Vicente accepted the proposal to record the meeting. Direct quotations were only inserted after his permission had been obtained.

Summary: The initial meeting with Professor Vicente was conducted with the objective of assessing and validating the initial uncertainties identified as being of particular importance. In response to the uncertainty surrounding the National Implementation, Professor Vicente asserted that it was less uncertain than the project team had initially estimated. He clarified that the Fit for 55 measures have already been legislated, and that there is a minimal theoretical and even more limited practical possibility of stopping or reversing them. The only exceptions would be in the adaptation of these measures using technical standards and delaying specific dates. Subsequently, Prof. Vicente guided the team to the central issue, namely, the

implementation of measures. He proceeded to emphasize the pivotal role of accessibility to technologies and the availability of labor in influencing the implementation process. When questioned about access to technology, he used the example of Europe's dependence on renewable technologies, especially from China, to highlight its impact. In cases of complete dependency, failure would have a detrimental impact on the EU's green transition. With regard to geopolitical stability, Professor Vicente recommended an increased uncertainty, given that recent developments have shown that these dependencies have become an effective means of exerting pressure and have become part of sanctions.

Main Conclusions:

- The role of political influence is relatively limited, given that the measures in question are already incorporated into legislation and there is no evidence of significant political decision-makers seeking to halt or even reverse them.
- It is possible to adapt some individual measures by adding or removing technical standards, and to slow down the process by pressuring delays.
- The primary source of uncertainty is the implementation process.
- The most significant influencing factor is access to these technologies, which can be affected by geopolitical conflicts.
- The availability of labor is another crucial factor (discussed in detail in second session)

Interview 2 – Assessing and Validating Uncertainties

Date: 24.10.2024

Interviewee: Tanja Schindler

Disclaimer: The unstructured interview with Tanja Schindler was conducted by the project team in German. It began with a short round of introductions, a reiteration of the topic of the

paper, and the motivation of the project team to write a paper in the area of strategic foresight, which is not included in the summary. Tanja Schindler agreed to record the meeting.

Summary: The interview began with the project team asking her for her assessment of the biggest drivers of change in relation to our focal issue by 2030. Ms. Schindler highlighted the bureaucratic hurdles within the EU and between Member States. She gave an example from her own experience to illustrate her point: she recently wanted to hire a person from the Netherlands for her company in Germany, but it was not easy for her to do so. If the person is not willing to move to the company's country, a branch has to be opened in the person's home country. In a broader sense, she believes that there needs to be a united Europe that allows for cooperation to manage the green transition. The project team then presented Ms. Schindler with a list of uncertainties based on desk research and previous expert input. Ms. Schindler was asked to give her assessment of the list and to provide input on points where she disagreed with or wanted to highlight. Thus, she mitigated the uncertainty of the political shift to the right in Europe, which the team considered to be very significant, in terms of the chosen focus and time horizon. She attributed the polarization of society primarily to populism and poor communication by current politicians. The impact of new right-wing governments by 2030 would be limited primarily due to the lengthy decision-making processes in Brussels. In addition, she said, social engagement and awareness among younger generations is at an all-time high, reducing the level of uncertainty associated with it. The project team would have initially identified this as a potential KU. Ms. Schindler also highlighted the importance of knowledge transfer within the EU, which she linked to her initial assessment of labor mobility in Europe. The high youth unemployment rates in the south can be an important lever if cross-border mobility could be facilitated. Equally important is the recognition of professional qualifications and diplomas, both for EU Member States and for third-country nationals seeking work in the EU. Finally, she considered access to technologies such as solar panels to be more important than technological innovation,

especially with the chosen time horizon. In her view, innovations will not be scalable and therefore not market-ready enough to have a high impact on achieving the goals.

Main Conclusions:

- The mobility of workers within and into the EU is an important success factor for the green transition, but bureaucratic hurdles pose an obstacle.
- Polarization of society and a shift to the right have only a limited impact on the Fit for 55 goals by 2030 due to the inertia of processes and populism.
- Young generations are showing great willingness and commitment to green change.
- Access to key technologies is more important than new innovations by 2030.

Interview 3 – Assessing and Validating Uncertainties

Date: 28.10.2024

Interviewee: Antonios Sfakiotakis

Disclaimer: The unstructured interview was conducted by the project team in English. The conversation began with an introduction to the topic of the paper and a brief round of introductions, which are not included in the summary. Mr. Sfakiotakis agreed to the recording of the interview, but it was also made clear that his statements were his personal expert opinion and not the official position of his employer, the EU.

Summary: The project team has shared the selection of uncertainties and the associated rating (level of impact/uncertainty) with Mr. Sfakiotakis and asked him to provide his opinion on selected points where he does not agree with the rating or would like to highlight his opinion. The first topic addressed was the institutional stability of the EU and the potential shift to the right in the Member States. The interviewee elaborated that the long-term orientation of EU policies such as the Fit for 55 is very unlikely to be derailed by political changes among the members. Even potential leadership changes such as Marine Le Pen in France or the rising

influence of the AfD in Germany are very unlikely to result in significant deviations by 2030 due to institutional inertia at the country and EU level and long-term commitments by European industries in the area of sustainability. Industries have already made substantial investments in a low-carbon future, which makes abrupt policy reversals economically infeasible. Another key issue was global competition. The EU is heavily dependent on other global powers such as the US and China for energy and raw materials. The interviewee emphasized that decoupling from China should be avoided and instead a de-risking of dependencies should be undertaken in order to strengthen the global competitiveness of European industries as much as possible. He also highlighted the potential supply chain risks in the future for CRMs in the EU, which could escalate due to potential upcoming crises such as the one in Taiwan. It was emphasized that this is particularly concerning due to the importance of these materials for the green transition. The expert considered social acceptance of climate policies to be higher than ever, which has been further strengthened by the increasing frequency of extreme weather events. He also identified the shortage of skilled workers as a serious factor in achieving the climate goals by 2030. He linked this to broader education challenges, as reflected in declining PISA scores, and the urgent need to re-skill the existing workforce. Finally, he sees factors such as the economic situation or financing conditions as predictable with robust forecasting tools and therefore with low uncertainty.

Main Conclusions:

- EU climate policy remains resilient to political changes in the Member States due to long-term industrial commitments.
- Global supply dependencies exist and need to be de-risked to ensure raw material security.
- Social acceptance is very high today and contributes to support for climate targets.

- A shortage of skilled workforce is coming into focus by 2030 and requires both changes in education and reskilling.
- Economic factors are easy to predict and are therefore less uncertain.

Interview 4: Assessing and Validating Uncertainties 2nd Session

Date: 30.10.2024

Interviewee: Professor Antonio Vicente

Disclaimer: Prof. Vicente accepted the proposal to record the meeting. Direct quotations were only inserted after his permission had been obtained.

Summary: The second meeting with Professor Vicente served the purpose of validating the final KUs. Accordingly, the project team presented the idea of merging supply chain stability, related to renewable technologies and critical raw materials, with geopolitical stability. Professor Vicente approved this concept and advised that we consider increasing the impact and uncertainty of this factor in comparison to other uncertainties. Simultaneously, he underscored the significance of accurate framing. For instance, the conflict in Sudan had a negligible impact on global supply chains, whereas the war in Ukraine resulted in a complete transformation of the European energy landscape. He agreed with the idea of framing the uncertainty very specifically to China and other important suppliers due to the dependencies on renewable energy technologies and CRM. Professor Vicente expressed reservations about the concept of a potential social acceptance KU. He justified this by noting that public acceptance of such changes occurs over many years and is therefore not especially uncertain. Furthermore, he observed that acceptance of climate-friendly policies remains high, as evidenced by the Eurobarometer survey. In addition, social acceptance could not be viewed in binary terms, which would have made mapping on the scenario matrix more difficult. Conversely, he advocated the prioritization of workforce availability as the second KU. Professor Vicente

highlighted that, despite the EU's advancement in renewable technology, the existing workforce may not be sufficient to implement these technologies on a wide scale. In response to a question regarding the uncertainty associated with this factor, he highlighted the potential for the skills gap to widen further, but also for it to narrow again if the planned visa and recognition programs are implemented successfully and promptly. Furthermore, he underscored the education protectionism that persists within EU countries, emphasizing the necessity of addressing this barrier to successfully admit qualified and specialized workers across the EU.

Main Conclusions:

- Validation of the first KU: Supply Chain Stability.
- Supply Chain Stability must be specifically framed to ensure high impact and uncertainty.
- Rejection of the KU social acceptance due to insufficient uncertainty.
- Validation of the second KU: Skilled Workforce Availability.
- Confirmation of sufficient uncertainty, as skills gap can be both increased and reduced through the right measures.
- Highlighted educational protectionism as a key barrier in workforce availability.

Interview 5: Challenge and validation of the four developed scenarios

Date: 04.11.2024

Interviewee: Christiane Conrads

Disclaimer: The interview with Christiane Conrads was held in German and was kicked off by an extensive introduction round of all participants, which is not part of this summarized transcript. She accepted the proposal to record the interview, orally agreed on the students' wish to cite her statements and asked for the final version of the work project to be sent to her.

Conrads was taking notes on the scenarios and shared her comprehensive feedback after hearing the four scenarios.

Summary: The project team started off explaining the purpose of the work project, its focal issue, time horizon and the main ideas and concepts behind strategic foresight, scenario planning and the *Intuitive Logics School* approach that will be applied for the scenario exercise. Subsequently, the scenario matrix was shown to Christiane Conrads while explaining the framing and the implications of the two KUs to better understand the four underlying scenarios. The project team also added that all scenarios follow the same structure: They begin with an analysis of the contextual factors, where the implementation of the EU's sustainability directives and regulations is analyzed and end with an analysis of the transactional factors, where the impact of these measures is concretely applied to the real estate sector.

Then, Joshua Jungblut started off presenting the '*Efficiency Gambit*' (formerly: '*Disruptive Efficiency*') scenario. Moritz Fischer continued presenting the '*Voltage Revolution*' (formerly: '*Green Symphony*') scenario and Theofanis Orfanidis concluded presenting the '*Digital Backbone*' (formerly: '*Green Gridlock*') and '*Fading Horizon*' (formerly: '*Green Struggle*') scenarios.

Christiane Conrads thanked the team members for sharing their insights, ideas and assumptions with her and expressed her deep interest in knowing more about the European Commission's go-to areas, which she had not heard of beforehand. Thus, the team shared an article published by the official website of the EC in the chat. She stated that she very much liked the approach of splitting the analysis into contextual and transactional factors, which helps to break down the topic and add value by reducing complexity. She agreed with selection of the KUs, highlighting the dependence and interplay between CRMs (necessary for green technology) and geopolitical risks. She also reinforced the importance of reskilling the existing workforce for the transition, for instance from brown industries to green industries. Finally, she got back to the logic chains

presented in the different scenarios, highlighting the importance of this exercise for the future of the Real Estate sector, yet recommended the team to consider the following topics and ideas.

Main conclusions:

- Energy monitoring, facility management, the use of digital devices such as smart meters, building management, etc. are also very important pillars of the transition, yet oftentimes neglected in the discussion. However, the number of workers who can install, operate and maintain it is still too small.
- When talking about using alternative/transition fuels in response to the lack of skilled workers for expanding renewables (sources of energy), one must keep in mind that also in these areas many people are close to retirement. Therefore, countries such as Germany are considering recalling recently retired pensioners to stabilize energy supply. However, this will only happen at a high price.
- Reducing energy consumption and decarbonizing buildings dominate debates and regulation. As positive as this development is in view of climate change and the industry's contribution to it, it ignores many other relevant aspects of sustainability. One of these issues is the loss of biodiversity and the critical situation of many ecosystems. Depending on the scope of your work project, this is something to think about as well.

Appendix 2

Workshop Summary (27.11.2024)

Participants:

Last name:	First name:	Institution:	Role:
Antunes	Francisco	MOME	Executive President
Barbosa	Sofia	MOME	Production Manager
Braz	João	MOME	Head of Knowledge & ESG Initiatives
Brito	Susana	MOME	Financial Manager
Cox	Elena	Nova SBE	Project Team
Fischer	Moritz	Nova SBE	Project Team
Fontes	Maria	MOME	Marketing & Design Manager
Fratila	Andrei	Nova SBE	Project Team
Jungblut	Joshua	Nova SBE	Project Team
Orfanidis	Theo	Nova SBE	Project Team
Pimentel	Nuno	MOME	General Manager

Table 1 - Workshop Participants / Source: Own Creation

Summary: On November 27, a joint workshop was held with partner company MOME to examine the four scenarios developed and their implications for the company. The goal of the workshop was to examine both external and internal factors for each scenario and to develop strategies using the TOWS framework (Threats, Opportunities, Weaknesses, Strengths) as a central analysis tool.

The session began with an introduction to scenario planning, outlining its purpose and methodology. Each scenario was then discussed individually, focusing on potential developments at the EU level related to the implementation of specific environmental policies, driven by the two KUs that could affect the future of the industry.

Participants were actively involved in applying the TOWS framework to each scenario in an engaging, collaborative format. First, key strengths and weaknesses within each scenario were identified, and then the discussion moved on to analyzing the threats and opportunities arising

from wider environmental changes. To facilitate collaboration and capture all participant inputs effectively, a Miro board was used throughout the session.

This structured approach provided a clear understanding of how each scenario differed and highlighted the unique challenges, opportunities and strategic considerations inherent in each possible future.

Miro Board:

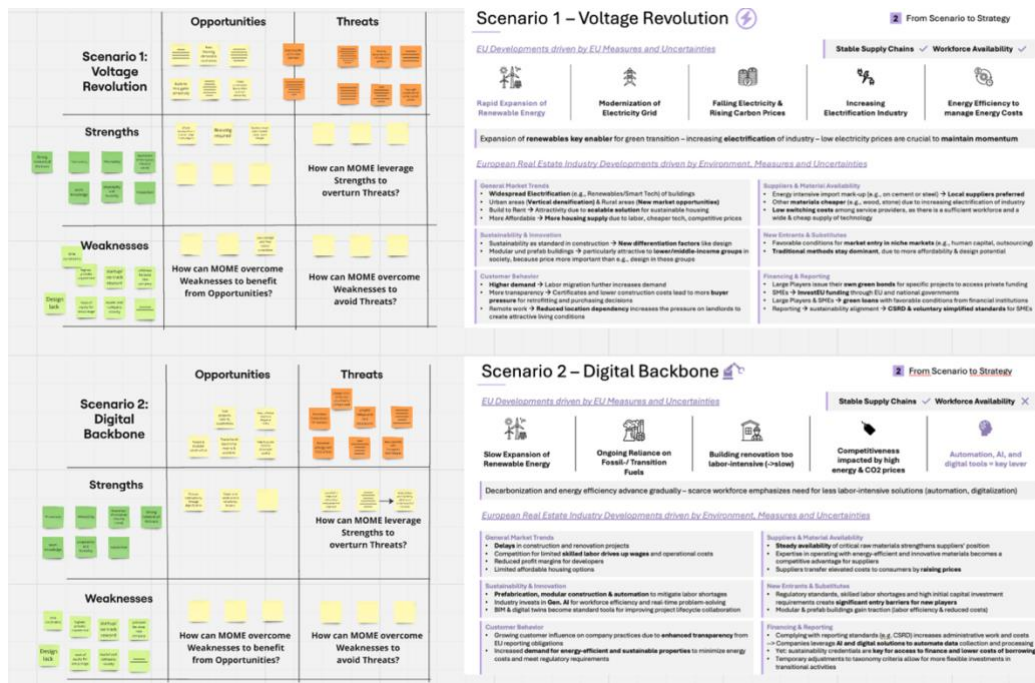


Figure 32 - Workshop Miro Board 1/2 | Source: Own Creation

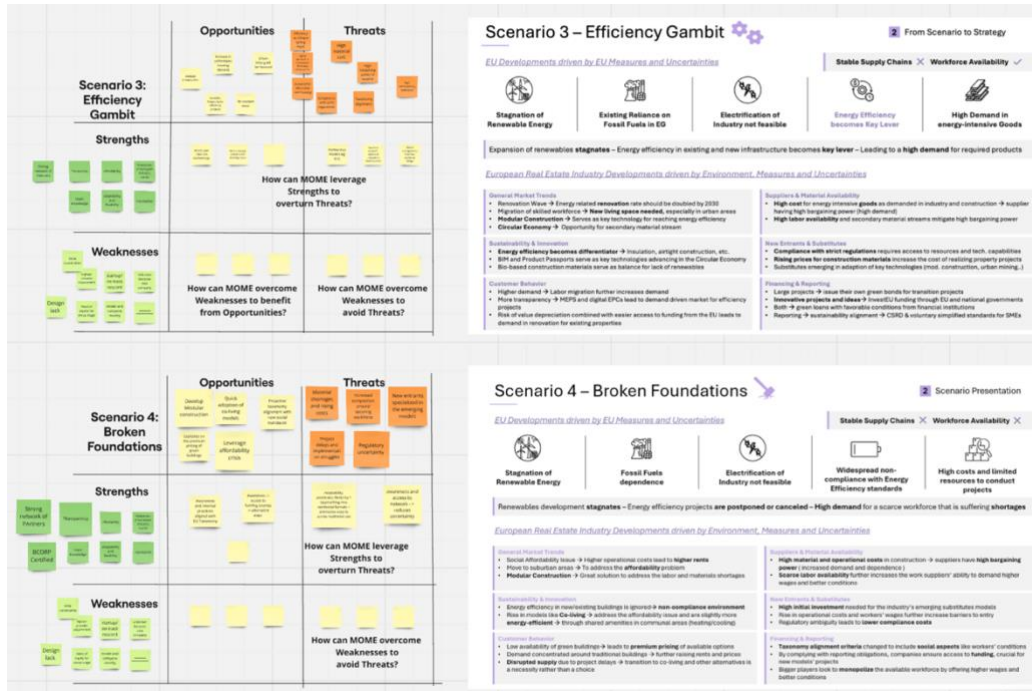


Figure 33 - Workshop Miro Board 2/2 | Source: Own Creation

Appendix 3

Uncertainties Description

Uncertainty	Level of Impact (1-10)	Level of Uncertainty (1-10)	Justification
Institutional Stability & Unity of the EU	Score: 9 <i>Acute impact</i>	Score: 5.5 <i>Neither likely nor unlikely to predict</i>	Critical for the enforcement of sustainability measures, as cohesion ensures consistent & unified policy application across Member States (acute impact). Yet, growing political & economic pressures (e.g., Brexit, internal divides) create moderate uncertainty regarding long-term unity and its role in addressing climate & sustainability goals.
Political Right Shift of Member States	Score: 6 <i>Moderate impact</i>	Score: 7 <i>Uncertain to predict</i>	A shift towards right-wing parties can reduce the prioritization of sustainability in policy agendas. However, for the selected time horizon (2030), most measures are already being transposed & implemented and thus too costly to overturn (moderate impact). The variability in electoral

			outcomes across the EU introduces significant uncertainty about the long-term prioritization of sustainability.
Geopolitical Situation	Score: 9.5 <i>Acute impact</i>	Score: 9.5 <i>Extremely uncertain to predict</i>	Global conflicts, trade tensions, and energy dependency (e.g., reliance on non-EU fossil fuels) directly affect the EU's ability to implement the green transition (high impact). High geopolitical volatility, such as outbreaking wars or sanctions, exacerbate the unpredictability (high uncertainty).
Economic Situation	Score: 8 <i>High impact</i>	Score: 4 <i>Somewhat likely to predict</i>	Economic growth or recession influences the funding available for sustainability projects and the political will to enforce them (high impact). Given that economists regularly publish forecasts on GDP and other metrics, uncertainty is moderate .
Financing Conditions & Inflation	Score: 6 <i>Moderate impact</i>	Score: 5 <i>Neither likely nor unlikely to predict</i>	Inflation and rising interest rates affect the affordability of green technologies and the financial feasibility of large-scale sustainability initiatives (high impact). The uncertainty stems from fluctuating global economic conditions and monetary policies, however, can also be roughly forecasted by economists (moderate uncertainty).
Supply Chain Stability	Score: 9 <i>Acute impact</i>	Score: 9 <i>Extremely uncertain to predict</i>	The implementation of sustainability measures relies on stable supply chains for renewable energy technologies and materials that are also needed for automation (acute impact). Disruptions from geopolitical tensions, disputes, pandemics, or trade wars introduce high uncertainty .
Societal Acceptance	Score: 6 <i>Moderate impact</i>	Score: 6 <i>Uncertain to predict</i>	Public engagement and support for sustainability measures can accelerate their implementation and increase their success (moderate impact). However, societal acceptance for trade-offs is increasing according to the latest Eurobarometer, leading to moderate uncertainty .
Qualified Workforce Availability	Score: 8.5 <i>Acute impact</i>	Score: 8.5 <i>Extremely uncertain to predict</i>	A skilled workforce is crucial for executing technological and challenging infrastructural transformations required by sustainability goals (acute impact).

			The high uncertainty reflects the mismatch between current workforce qualifications and the rapidly evolving demands of green industries, as well as the gap to fill between increasing number of jobs while the working age population is steadily decreasing.
Mass Migration Patterns	Score: 5 <i>Moderate impact</i>	Score: 5 <i>Neither likely nor unlikely to predict</i>	Mass migration influences infrastructure and resource allocation, but its direct influence on the implementation of sustainability measures is relatively lower (moderate impact). Uncertainty is moderate , as migration patterns depend on unpredictable factors. However, migration is certainly going to increase by 2030 given the geopolitical and climatic circumstances.
Technological Innovation	Score: 5.5 <i>Moderate impact</i>	Score: 8 <i>Uncertain to predict</i>	Breakthroughs in technology can accelerate sustainability projects, but the required technology for the achievement of the EU's goals for 2030 does already exist and solely needs to be comprehensively implemented (moderate impact). Reliance on innovation for the future, coupled with high investments in R&D introduce high uncertainty due to the unpredictability of the progress made until 2030.
Project Backlog	Score: 7 <i>High impact</i>	Score: 7.5 <i>Uncertain to predict</i>	Delays in infrastructure- and energy transition projects hinder progress towards sustainability goals (high impact). High uncertainty arises from the unsolved problem how to tackle bureaucratic inefficiencies and labor shortages.
Climate Change Intensity	Score: 8 <i>High impact</i>	Score: 5 <i>Neither likely nor unlikely to predict</i>	Climate change poses significant risks to ecosystems and economies, which is why the EU will need to allocate significant funds to the consequences of potential climate catastrophes (high impact). Uncertainty is moderate as the long-term trends are well-established, though specific regional effects remain variable.

Table 2 - Uncertainties | Source: Own Creation

Appendix 4

InvestEU Criteria:

Elimination of potential market failures or investment gaps: The project to be financed must solve an existing problem for which funding is required. MOME fulfils this requirement, as affordable and sustainable housing has been identified as a clear gap in Portugal.

Contribution to EU policy objectives: With its focus on energy-efficient construction, MOME corresponds to one of the classified priorities.

Economic viability: MOME must be able to demonstrate that the project is financially sustainable through transparent cost structures.

Transparency and reporting: MOME must transparently document and disclose the use of funds. Detailed project reporting is also required.

Taxonomy compliance: MOME is already taxonomy compliant.