

Press release

EXPO REAL Trend Index 2025

Real estate sector cautiously optimistic about the future

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- Survey of exhibitors and visitors ahead of EXPO REAL explores key industry trends
- Strong call for reduced bureaucracy in the real estate sector
- Better financing conditions and lower construction costs are seen as the biggest levers to address the housing shortage

The outlook for the real estate market is improving. The latest EXPO REAL trend index, which surveys exhibitors and visitors at the leading international trade fair for property and investment, taking place in Munich from October 6 to 8, paints an overall optimistic picture – though many challenges remain. The survey reveals that 44% of respondents are “optimistic” about the international real estate market, 35% remain “neutral” and just 22% are “cautious”.

"The current trend index shows that we have reached the bottom and confidence is gradually returning. While the weakening economy, interest rates, political factors and bureaucracy remain key challenges, the overall balanced sentiment indicates a market slowly returning to normal. This shift is encouraging, especially for EXPO REAL, which promotes international dialog and solution seeking in the industry," explains Stefan Rummel, CEO of Messe München.

However, the survey also highlights the many challenges the real estate industry continues to face. Among the most pressing concerns are interest rate policies and political conditions, which 94% of respondents rated as “very important” or “important” factors influencing the market. Just behind are the issues of “economy” and “bureaucracy” with 90% and “capital availability” at 89%.

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Overwhelming call to reduce bureaucracy

When asked about ways to improve the situation, the majority of respondents called for “less bureaucracy” (79%). In second place was the desire for better “capital availability” (64%). “Standardization of legal frameworks in Germany” (47%) and the “transformation of existing properties” (43%) ranked third and fourth, respectively, though at a clear distance.

Housing remains leading asset class

In terms of asset class importance, there are only slight changes compared to the previous year. Housing continues to lead, with 75% of respondents (70% in 2024), followed by care properties with 66% (2024: 67%) and data centers with 63% (2024: 61%). Logistics was also significant among 47% of respondents. On the other hand, respondents remained cautious with the more traditional asset classes of hospitality, office and retail, with each receiving just over 10% of mentions.

Diverse range of investors

Among potential investors, respondents see the greatest potential in asset management companies and funds, with 87% of mentions, closely followed by institutional investors, family offices and private equity (83% each). New, innovative financing methods, such as online crowdfunding, continue to receive 27% approval, remaining a niche phenomenon for now.

USA declines

In terms of the global market outlook, there is a significant shift in the decreasing confidence in the United States. While the US still ranked second in 2024 with 66% of mentions, only 45% of respondents now see the US as an important market for the future. Europe remains at the top with 80% (2024: 81%) of respondents, followed by the Asia-Pacific region, which is now in second place at 64% (2024: 61%). Within Europe, Western Europe continues to dominate (84%) ahead of D-A-CH region and Northern Europe (79% each).

Greatest growth expectations for A locations in B cities

Respondents continue to assess the greatest growth potential for A locations in B cities, followed by B locations in A cities and A locations in A cities.

Solutions to the housing shortage

“Creation of housing” remains a core issue for both policymakers and participants in the EXPO REAL Trend Index 2025. Survey respondents identify improved financing conditions (95%) and a significant reduction in construction costs (94%) as the greatest levers to solve the housing shortage. Other key solutions include building on existing properties (91%, ranked 3rd), eliminating expensive construction standards (87%, ranked 4th), and serial and modular construction (86%, ranked 5th). However, there is widespread skepticism regarding the effectiveness of the “construction turbo” by the new government aimed at faster housing development. Only 13% of respondents rate the measures as “very good” or “good”. In contrast, considerably more respondents, at 27%, give it a grade of “unsatisfactory” or “inadequate”.

Claudia Boymanns, Exhibition Director of EXPO REAL, comments: “EXPO REAL brings together key stakeholders from politics, real estate, and finance to discuss solutions for affordable housing. I am particularly pleased about the visit of Mona Keijzer, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Housing and Spatial Planning from the Netherlands, as well as Eamon Ryan, Chair of the European Commission's new Housing Advisory Board, who will be participating in several panel discussions on the topic of affordable housing. The new Federal Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Building, Verena Hubertz, has also announced her visit.”

As the central meeting point for the international real estate industry and the highlight of the real estate year, EXPO REAL serves as a vital barometer, reflecting the mood and trends within the sector. 579 exhibitors and visitors to EXPO REAL took part in the online survey in the run-up to the trade fair. The survey was conducted in September 2025 by the independent market research institute IfaD on behalf of EXPO REAL.

More information about EXPO REAL can be found online at:

<https://exporeal.net/en/>

About EXPO REAL

EXPO REAL is Europe's largest trade fair for real estate and investments. It acts as a central platform for international market players to exchange ideas and do business. The trade fair covers all segments of the real estate industry, including office, retail, hotel, logistics and housing, and highlights the entire life cycle of real estate properties: from project development, financing and marketing, to operation. Special focus is placed on the topics of sustainability, digitalization and the transformation of the industry. The next EXPO REAL will be held in Munich from October 6 to 8, 2025.

Messe München

As one of the world's leading trade fair organizers, Messe München presents the world of tomorrow at its around 90 international trade fairs. These include twelve of the world's leading trade fairs such as bauma, BAU, IFAT, and electronica. Its portfolio comprises trade fairs for capital and consumer goods, as well as for new technologies. Together with its 1,300 employees in the group and the affiliated companies, it organizes trade fairs in China, India, Brazil, South Africa, Turkey, Singapore, Vietnam, Hong Kong, Thailand, and the U.S. With an international network of affiliated companies and foreign representatives, Messe München is active worldwide. The more than 150 events held annually attract around 50,000 exhibitors and around three million visitors in Germany and abroad. This makes Messe München an important economic driver, triggering purchasing power effects in the billions.