The most important part of the problem in fact is how to construct, in every detail and thoroughly, the individual dwelling cell. Apart of this task, architects have to solve the problem: how to incorporate the total of those cells, that is the neighbourhood, into the general aspect of the town in a way which will create equally favourable conditions to every section of inhabitants. These insightful lines pronounced by Ernst May at the occasion of the second C.I.A.M.- Congrès Internationaux d’Architecture Moderne held in Frankfurt (1929) illustrate how mass housing became a social utility (and still is), so that it demanded different lines of action starting from the typological concerns stretching towards the town planning aspects. Although German housing projects occupied a central position, the international conference worked as a stimulating platform for introducing other perspectives. Indeed, “Die Wohnung für das Existenzminimum” played a significant role for all those experiences recognized as modern housing because, as pointed out by Catharine Bauër in her seminal study “Modern housing”, 1936), they have certain qualities and embodied certain methods and purposes which distinguish them from the typical residential environment of the past century. 2019 marks the 90th anniversary of the second C.I.A.M. and it represents a springboard for this special issue of “Urban Planning”, which aims to widen the debate over housing experiences beyond any geographical and time frameworks. We invite scholars and Ph.D. students to submit contributions focused on case studies or particular planning strategies starting from Neues Bauen to the present days. Nevertheless, this issue of “Urban Planning” will be arranged around some key topics expressed in C.I.A.M programmes – e.g. urban policies, spatial models and ideas, typological aspects, technological and standardisation aspects, social factors – because they are still relevant starting points for a comparative perspective. This would lead to demonstrate how housing has always embodied a social, morphological and structural unit for living, which has affected, and still does, the form and evolution of the city.