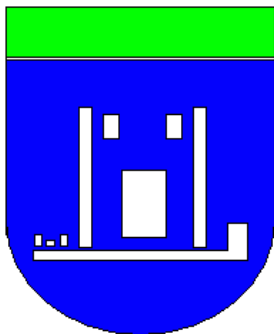


# The Sitting Tenants Problem in Slovakia



IUT Congress Prague October 2. 2010

- All tenants had been assigned to their flats by administrative decisions, all did have the same rights



**Before 1989**

- After 1989 restitution of property brought nationalized buildings to the hands of previous owners (including the tenants – the new owners had to respect previous contracts).



- Housing reform based on massive privatization of the publicly owned housing stock. The whole concept of housing perspective based on home ownership. On the one hand generous conditions for purchases, on the other hand decreasing of the legal protection of tenants (the people got the chance to buy their homes except for the sitting tenants)

**1993 – Start of the housing reforms**



1. More than 90% of the Slovak homes became private
2. The majority of Slovak families became home owners, the wealth of the population has been based on home ownership
3. The sitting tenants became a marginal category, set under existential threat. The majority of the population do not care of the problem, the people have their cheap purchased homes (the purchase of a previous publicly owned flat is considered as a natural think)
4. The politicians have been reluctant to solve the problem since the majority of the society is not affected

## Outcome of the reforms

**The sitting tenants problem is a problem of the social weak (pensioners etc.) Other tenants did have time enough to solve their housing problem by themselves. So let us provide social assistance (at the lowest standard of course) to those who are in existential threat.** This position is pretty suitable for the state which positions itself into the role of the „rescuer of the poor ones“ leaving its own responsibility for the situation unmarked. Also a solution is comfortable“ for the state – providing social assistance in form of social flats or financial allowance would be definitely cheaper than make up for the whole damage caused by mistakes in the housing policy towards the sitting tenants.

**Position - State**



1. It is not the sitting tenants who is to blame for nationalisation of private property during the communist time and it should not be the sitting tenants who should pay the bill for it. The state made up for the nationalization by handing over the stolen property but the state did not made up for exploitation the nationalized property in a manner as it was its ownership. Tenants hired their flats in previous times in good faith from the state, moreover there was no other chance.
2. When looking for a suitable solution state can not disregard the fact that it artificially created an environment where the only „normal“ model of housing is based on home ownership
3. Tenants can not agree with the argument that they did have 18 years to solve their problem, the state who caused the problem did have 18 years time to solve it

## Position sitting tenants

- State started to accept the situation of the sitting tenants as a problem it should deal with



**Conclusion 1**

Positions of the state and the tenants differ  
(not only in Slovakia)



**Conclusion 2**

The positions of the state and the tenants differ (not only in Slovakia, all states seem to be on the same line as well, as the tenants in all states concerned are more or less on the same line) – someone is right and someone wrong. Who is right and who is wrong?

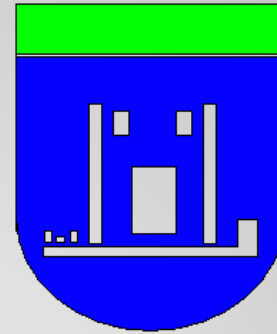
**Conclusion 3**



Is a solution without a (at least a slight) consensus of all parties concerned a good one? Is it not worth to look for the answer, who in the dispute over the final solution of the sitting tenants problem is right and who wrong? If yes, who is the one that should be asked, and how?



**Conclusion 4**



**[www.staromestan-ba.sk](http://www.staromestan-ba.sk)**

**[straka@posta.sk](mailto:straka@posta.sk)**