



Brussels, June 2009

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Summer report from IUT Brussels office

- **Elections to the EU Parliament**

375 Million European citizens were asked to vote for the new European Parliament between June 4 and 7, 2009. The turnout was disappointingly low: 43%, however this is in line with the voting trends since 1979 and a stabilisation on low level. There were some exceptions, turnout increasing significantly in Denmark, Estonia and Latvia.

The conservative EPP-ED managed to hold its ground as the largest group with 35, 9% (0, 8%) of the votes. The socialist PES 21, 9% (- 5, 7%) lost most heavily as its constituent parties in larger member states such as UK and France suffered severe losses. Third power is the liberal ALDE with 10, 9% (-1, 8%). The Greens, by contrast, had a good election day with 7, 2% (+ 1, 7%). Also small populist and far right parties featured. The share of parties allied to no fraction increased to 12, 6% (+ 8, 8%).

While 80% of representatives in the European Parliament sit with Pro-European parties, the emergence of the far right is a cause for concern. Britain elected two BNP MEPs and 13 from UKIP, while far right representatives were also elected in Austria, Italy, the Netherlands, Denmark, Slovakia, Hungary and France. Many of the votes for populist, Euro sceptic and anti immigrant parties came from the heartland of social democratic and socialist parties.

The centre left failed to appeal its traditional base. But the centre right did not exactly win these elections. Despite a strong conservative and right tendency the new European parliament is more heterogeneous than ever before. IUT will have to search for new strategic alliances to secure a majority of votes for our legislative proposals.

Read more about your national results and the elected persons per country on:

http://www.elections2009-results.eu/en/index_en.html

The new parliament will be constituted July 14, 2009.

- **Social**

The opening of the structural funds with 8 billion Euro for housing is prior for the housing policy actors in the EU-institutions. Still it is not very clear how to apply for that money. **Cecodhas published a manual with questions & answers:**

<http://www.cecodhas.org/content/view/783/70/>

Please forward it to your national stakeholders, the local tenants unions, housing providers, civil servants in the housing units of your national and regional government, your local council etc.

Every renovation project co-financed with EU-money can lower the rents of the tenants, so please keep on spreading the good news.

- **Technical**

The European Commission just launched a **public consultation on the evaluation and revision of the EU-action plan for energy-efficiency.**

http://ec.europa.eu/energy/efficiency/consultations/doc/2009_08_03_eeap/2009_eeap_background_document.pdf

For us as a stakeholder it is necessary to give a statement, action plans are the basis for new EU-directives.

In our **statement for IUT** I will concentrate on more cost-effective measures on energy-efficiency in the **building sector**, supported by **state incentives** as grants, loans, tax reductions; the necessary **affordability of energy-efficiency** measures for tenants, the need for consumers and tenants to have more transparency about the energy costs by **consumer-friendly labelling**, the need to **sponsor information campaigns for tenants** and landlords on **how to save more energy**. We will also stress that the **European Investment Bank** should provide sound **financial instruments** and funds for energy-efficiency improvements. In addition, **financing from the structural funds should continue beyond 2013**

- **Miscellaneous**

- **IUT chairs European Housing Forum** together with RICSAs of June 2009, IUT is elected co-chair of the European Housing Forum (EHF), together the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS).

Read more on: http://www.iut.nu/iut_eu.htm#EHF and

http://www.rics.org/Newsroom/Keyissues/Urban/housingmemberexpertise_f_160209.htm

- **Lobby the setting up of a new Urban-Housing-Intergroup**

As a result of the elections to the new parliament, the president of the Intergroup, Jean-Marie-Beaupuy and most of the vice-presidents are not any longer MEPs.

Since the Intergroup is one of our main policy partners we strongly have to lobby that a new Urban-Housing intergroup is set up in the next legislation period. The European Housing Forum is sending a letter to all new elected Members of the Parliament (see document attached).

- **Recommendation to address your national MEPs**

You might attach the EHF-letter when informing and lobbying your own MEPs to **actively pursue** a new Urban Housing Intergroup.

- **Coming soon: International Tenants Day 2009, October 5,**

Theme: Rental housing and the financial crisis - threats and challenges

The preliminary program of **International Tenants Day 2009** is sent out the next days. In the morning IUT Brussels and Friedrich-Ebert-Foundation IUT are inviting to their 3rd joint conference event: "The right to housing- perspectives for a social European housing policy". In the afternoon we will have our IUT Tenants Day 2009 in the European Parliament, followed by a "Welcome new MEPs" reception together with the European Housing Forum.

The IUT-EU advisory group will do the political planning of our main IUT-event in Brussels, we'll come back with more detailed news in August.

You can already **register** at iutbrussels@skynet.be or fax: +32 2 513 0955 by using the registration form.

Best regards,

Barbara Steenbergem

Head of liaison office to the EU
