



Tenants' Milestones for the European Elections June 7, 2009
“Tenants make a social Europe”

1) Everybody should have the right to affordable and decent housing- the right to housing is a therefore a fundamental right

The constitution of Europe, the Lisbon treaty, has to guarantee social rights on key territories. The right to housing is a fundamental right which has to be part of the national constitutions as well of the Lisbon treaty.

2) Apply EU state aid rules to support our national systems of financing affordable housing.

Decent and affordable housing in healthy and decent neighbourhoods is one major pillar of the social and territorial cohesion policy. EU member states should actively promote the construction and the maintenance of social housing. The EU commission shall apply suitable state aid rules to support these member state policies- and not jeopardize it.

3) Fight housing exclusion and energy poverty - ensure that enough EU-public funding is committed to make energy- efficient housing more affordable for low income groups

16% of the European population, 78 million people are at risk of poverty. The costs for housing, heating and electricity have been increasing rapidly. Key workers have massive problems finding affordable rental housing in the cities, especially poor households living in run down apartments are endangered by energy poverty. The energy-efficient renovation of housing is the most effective method to fight energy poverty. The EU 20-20-20 climate commitment (20% less greenhouse gas emissions, 20% more energy efficiency and 20% share of renewable energies until the year 2020) will not be reached without focusing on the existing housing stock responsible for 40% of Europe's greenhouse gas emissions. EU structural funds should speed up the process of the energy-efficient refurbishment of housing. The opening of the funds for housing in the EU 27 is a breakthrough decision-now we need continuity. The EU should guarantee the stable financing for the current and future EU structural funds period after 2013. The European Investment Bank (EIB) shall provide new financing instruments and funds for energy efficiency improvements in private and public social housing. Energy efficient housing should not be a privilege of the rich- the big challenge will be to create equal access to low-income households.

4) Make energy-efficiency visible in housing - ensure transparent and consumer-friendly labelling by prioritising the adaption of the new energy performance buildings directive in 2009

The recast of the energy performance buildings directive (EPBD) is a big step towards more transparency on the housing market. Knowing the energy performance of your building is the first step to save energy. Tenants strongly support the new EPBD and claim for a fast legislation process. Tenants appeal to the landlords' responsibility and are ready to offer a strategic partnership to boost investments in energy-efficiency.

5) Tackling the financial crisis with a new deal for affordable housing and social urban development focusing on the inhabitants of our cities

Housing and construction is one of the largest sectors in Europe. It is also a key sector to tackle the financial and economical crisis by boosting regional labour markets and economies. Promote investments in affordable and decent housing in decent and healthy neighbourhoods in a way out of the crisis. Social urban development should strive to improve the quality of living in our cities and respect the needs of the inhabitants. Not-for profit companies and public housing companies are those responsible for the return on capital for our cities. Social urban development is suitable instrument to attack inequality and fight profound instability caused by segregation. The EU economic recovery plan (EERP) and the policy of territorial cohesion are steps in the right direction. Future EU financing shall be targeted fighting the ghettos and create decent and stable neighbourhoods with affordable housing.