

Tenants and LLO, the tenants' organisation in Denmark

Denmark has 2.7 million housing units. Of these, more than one million are rental housing - that is 520,000 owned by private landlords and 540,000 owned by social housing societies.

In the private rental housing sector approx. 80 percent of homes are rented by the principle of a cost-specific and regulated rent and a smaller proportion of the homes (those built after 1991) has a so-called un-bound rent fixing. The social housing is organized in over 700 housing societies. The social housing involves relatively new buildings with less than 2 percent. of the houses built before 1940.

Independent of whether you live in private rented flat or in the social sector you can become a member of the tenants' organisation (LLO). LLO is a nationwide nonpartisan organisation owned by the members and designed to carry tenants' interests in both private and social rental housing and work for the strengthening of tenants' rights, for example through legislation and by maintaining the regulation of rents in the private rental sector, the strengthening and development of tenants' democracy, so that tenants have more influence over their housing and housing in general.

LLO helps when members have problems with rent increases, lack of house maintenance, termination of contract or other problems that may arise between the tenant and landlord. LLO helps to bring disputes to the relevant municipal regulators and if the dispute goes on in the judicial system, LLO can support through legal advice or barristers.

The tenants' organisation LLO has a well-known brand with a high degree of goodwill and its views are often quoted in national or local news.

LLO is a consulting party to all legislation which relate to tenants' rights and LLO as an organisation is represented in many public committees and commissions, including appoint representatives to defend tenants' interests in "the municipal regulator for the rent", complaints committees, housing commissions, urban renewal boards, etc.

Over the last years an increasing number of studies have shown that the economic growth experienced by Denmark during the boom was unfair. Despite full employment at the time and a focus on prosperity and increased wealth in society as a whole, studies have clearly demonstrated that the differences in income and fortunes between different groups in society were growing. And one of the places where the imbalance became most obvious was in relation to the housing market where you could see large increases in the gap between owners and tenants economic conditions from 2000 to 2008.

The statistical gap of capital owned by a typical home owner and a tenant was shown by a study in 2004 to be over 1 million DKR (133,333 Euro). And while housing assets for years has grown steadily and quietly for the owners, it looks bleaker for the tenants. Generally there is a tendency that affordable rental housing for persons with ordinary incomes disappears, leading to people with ordinary incomes and single person households increasingly are being squeezed out especially from the larger cities.

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