

# CONGRESS DOCUMENTS



**International Union of Tenants**

**Prague, Czech Republic  
October 1-3, 2010**





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## Members by June 30, 2010

### EUROPE

	Country	Organisation	Category
1	Austria	Mietervereinigung Österreichs, MVÖ	BM
2	Belgium	Syndicat des Locataires - Huurdersbond	AM
3	Bosnia-Herzegovina	Uduženje Stanara BIHUSS, Sarajevo	M
4	Croatia	Savez Udruga Stanara Hrvatske. Alliance of Tenants' Assoc.s' of Croatia	AM
5	Croatia	Udruga Stanara Hrvatske, Assoc. of Croatian Tenants	M
6	Czech Republic	Sdružení Nájemníků ČR, SON	BM
7	Denmark	Lejernes Landsorganisation, LLO	BM
8	England	Tenants and Residents Organisation of England, TAROE	AM
9	England	Tenants Participation Advisory Service, TPAS	BM
10	England	National Fed. of Tenant Management Organisations Ltd, NFTMO	M
11	Estonia	Eesti Üürnike Ühingute Liit, Estonian Union of Tenants	AM
12	Finland	Vuokralaisten Keskusliitto, Central Union of Tenants	BM
13	France	Confédération Nationale du Logement, CNL	BM
14	Germany	Deutscher Mieterbund e. V. , DMB	BM
15	Greece	Pannellinos Syllogos Prostatias Enikiaston	AM
16	Italy	Sindacato Unitario Nazionale Inquilini ed Assegnatari, SUNIA	AM
17	Italy	Sindacato Inquilini Casa e Territoria, SICET	M
18	Latvia	Latvia Tenant Association	M
19	Macedonia FYR	Union for Protection of Tenants , "MakeDom"	M
20	the Netherlands	Nederlandse Woonbond	BM
21	Norway	Leieboerforeningen, Tenants Association, Norway	BM
22	Poland	Polskie Zrzeszenie Lokatorów, PZL	M
23	Portugal	Associacao dos Inquilinos Lisbonenses, AIL	M
24	Romania	Liga Asociatiilor de Proprietari Habitat, League HABITAT of Homeowners Associations	M
25	Russia	«Ассоциация нанимателей жилья «ПАНЖ» Russian Tenants Assoc.	M
26	Scotland	TPAS Scotland	M
27	Slovakia	Občianske združenie Právo na bývanie (Right to Housing)	M
28	Slovenia	Združenje Najemnikov Slovenije, Assoc. of Tenants of Slovenia	M
29	Spain	Federació d'Associacions de Veïns d'Habitatge Social de Catalunya, FAVIBC Barcelona	AM
30	Sweden	Hyresgästföreningen, Swedish Union of Tenants SUT	BM
31	Switzerland	Schweizerischer Mieterinnen-und Mieterverband/Deutschschweiz	BM
32	Switzerland	Association Suisse des Locataires, ASLOCA Romande	BM
33	Switzerland	Associazione Svizzera Inquilini	AM
34	Wales	Welsh Tenant's Federation Ltd	AM
35	Wales	TPAS Cymru	AM

## AFRICA

36	Benin	Association Solidarité Défense Droits de Locataires, ASDDL	AM
37	Dem. Rep. of the Congo	Association Congolaise d'Assistance aux Locataires, ACALOC	AM
38	Kenya	Kenya Tenants Welfare Union	AM
39	Nigeria	National Tenants Union of Nigeria	AM
40	Nigeria	Socio-Economic Rights Initiative, SERI	AM
41	South Africa	Organisation of Civic Rights, OCR	M
42	Tanzania	Tanzania Tenants Association, TTA	AM
43	Togo	National Consumers and Environment Association of Togo	AM
44	Uganda	Uganda National Tenants Union, UNTU	AM

## ASIA

45	India	Indian Federation of Tenants Council	AM
46	Japan	日本借地借家人連合 Japanese Tenants Association, JTA	M

## AUSTRALIA

47	Queensland	Tenant's Union of Queensland Inc, TUQ	M
48	Victoria	Tenants Union of Victoria, TUV	AM
49	ACT, Canberra	Tenants' Union, ACT, Canberra	M
50	Western Australia	Tenants Advice Service, TAS	M
51	Tasmania	Tenants Union of Tasmania	M
52	New South Wales	Tenants Union of NSW co-op Ltd, Sydney	AM
53	New Zealand	Manawatu Tenants Union	AM

## NORTH AMERICA

54	Canada	Tenants' Rights Action, TRAC. Vancouver, British Columbia	M
55	USA	San Francisco Tenants Union, STU	M
56	USA	NAHT, National Alliance of HUD Tenants	AM

## SOUTH AMERICA

vacant

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### Membership categories

BM: Board Member (minimum annul fee of € 1 500)

M: Member (minimum annul fee of € 60)

AM: Associated Member (no fee)

# Agenda

## IUT Congress

### Prague Oct. 1-3, 2010

draft as of September 4

- Friday Oct. 1, at 09.30 -18.00.
- Saturday, Oct. 2, at 10.30 (NB. Czech-presentations Saturday at 09.00-10.00)

1. Opening of the meeting:		IUT President: Sven Carlsson
2. Adoption of the Agenda		
3. Role call	Appendix I	Sven Carlsson
4. Election of; a. Chairpersons b. Secretary	Appendix II	Sven Carlsson
5. Election of; a. IUT President for congress period 2011-2013 b. Hq of the IUT Secretariat for congress period 2011-2013	Appendix III	Chair
6. IUT congress statement	Appendix IV	Chair
7. IUT activity report 2007-2009	Appendix V	Chair/ Magnus Hammar/ Barbara Steenbergen
8 a. The Financial Report 8 b. The Auditor's report 8 c. Discharge from liability	Appendix VI	Chair
9. Appointment of auditors for 2008 – 2010.	Appendix VII	Chair
10a. Motion 1 (1), from Members	Appendix VIII	Chair
10b. Motions, A-E, from IUT Board Proposals for changes of the IUT Statutes	Appendix IX	Chair
11. Approval of membership applications 2007-2010	Appendix X	Chair
12. Report; Ceasing of Membership 2007-2009	Appendix XI	Chair
13. Presentation IUT Plan of Action 2011-2013 incl. Brussels EU update from IUT liaison office to the EU	Appendix XII	Chair/ Magnus Hammar/ Barbara Steenbergen
14. Other businesses		Chair
15. Next congress, 2013		Chair
16. Closing of the meeting		Chair





## Role call: Delegations to the XVIII congress, Prague October 1-3, 2010

<b>IUT Member</b>	<b>Head of Delegation</b>	<b>Category</b>
Association Suisse des Locataires, ASLOCA Romande, Switzerland	M. Carlo Sommaruga, Secretary General	BM
Confédération Nationale du Logement, CNL, France	M. Serge Incerti Formentini, President	BM
Deutscher Mieterbund e. V. , DMB Germany	Mr. Lukas Siebenkotten, Director	BM
Federació d'Associacions de Veïns d'Habitatge Social de Catalunya, FAVIBC Barcelona, Spain	Mr. Albert Arnau, President	M
Hyresgästföreningen, Swedish Union of Tenants SUT	Mr. Anders Konradsson, Head of Dep.	BM
Japanese Tenants Association, JTA	Mr. Kazuo Takashima, President	M
Latvia's Tenants Association, Latvia	Mr. Edvards Kvasņevskis, Chief Executive	M
Leieboerforeningen, Tenants Association, Norway	Mr. Lars Aasen, Chief Executive	BM
Lejernes Landsorganisation, LLO, Denmark	Ms. Helene Toxværd, President	BM
Liga Asociatiilor de Proprietari Habitat, League HABITAT of Homeowners' Associations, Romania	Mr. Mihai Mereuta, President	M
Mietervereinigung Österreichs, Austria	Mr. Georg Niedermühlbichler , President	BM
Nederlandse Woonbond the Netherlands	Mr. Ronald Paping, Director	BM
Organisation of Civic Rights (OCR) South Africa	Dr. Sayed Iqbal Mohamed, Director	M
Polskie Zrzeszenie Lokatorów, PZL, Poland	Ms. Alicja Sarzynska, President	M
Právo na bývanie (Right to Housing) Slovakia	Mr. Kristián Straka, President	M
RANJ /Russian Tenant Union Russian Fed.	Ms. Elena Shomina, vice President	M
Scweizerischer Mieterinnen-und Mieterverband / Deutschschweiz	Mr. Jakob Trümpy, Board member	BM
Sdružení Nájemníků ČR, SON, Czech Republic	Mr. Milan Taraba, Chairman	BM
Sindicato Inquilini Casa e Territoria, SICET Italy	Mr. Massimo Petterlin, National Secretary	M
TRAC Tenant Resource & Advisory Centre Vancouver, Canada	Ms. Martha J. Lewis, Executive Director	M
Tenant's Union of Queensland Inc, TUQ, Australia	Ms. Penny Carr, Statewide Coordinator	M
TPAS England, Tenants Participation Advisory Service,	Ms. Michelle Reid, Chief Executive	BM
TPAS Scotland, Tenants Participation Advisory Service	Ms. Lesley Baird, Chief Executive	M
Udruga Stanara Hrvatske, Assoc. of Croatian Tenants, Croatia	Mr. Marijan Babic, President	M
Udruzenje Udruga "BIHUSS" Sarajevo Bosnia & Herzegovina	Mr. Mehmedalija H. Huremović, President	M
Union for Protection of Tenants,"MakeDom" Macedonia	Ms Maja Dilberova, vice President	M
Vuokralaisten Keskusliitto, Central Union of Tenants, Finland	Ms Anne Viita, Chief Executive	BM



### 4. Election of congress Chair, and congress Secretary

**The Secretariat proposes the congress to elect;**

- a. as Chair of the congress: Phil Morgan<sup>1</sup>
- b. as vice Chair: Nadja Shah<sup>2</sup>
- c. as Secretary: Ylva Westander, IUT

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<sup>1</sup> Phil Morgan is former Chief Executive of TPAS England, and former Executive Director of Tenant Services, Tenant Services Authority (TSA).

<sup>2</sup> Managing Director at the MVÖ, Mietervereinigung Österreichs



## **5. Election of IUT President and Secretariat**

### **a. IUT President for congress period 2010-2013**

**Proposal:**

The IUT Board proposes the congress to elect \_\_\_\_\_ as President for the period;  
congress 2010 - congress 2013.

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**Background information on:**

**Present occupation:**

**Political assignments:**

**Housing situation:**

**Family:**

**Prefers to do on spare-time:**

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### **b. Hq of the IUT Secretariat for 2011-2013**

**Proposal:**

The IUT Board proposes the congress to approve of the offer from the Swedish Union of Tenants to host the IUT Secretariat for the period; congress 2010 - congress 2013.





# International Union of Tenants

## Association Internationale des Locataires

### **A new deal for affordable rental housing**

IUT Congress Statement

Prague, October 1, 2010

1 (2)

**Affordable housing has always been central to the success of thriving mixed communities. However with house prices and rents rising rapidly in recent years, even in the current downturn market, affordability is more important than ever.**

Home plays the most important role as space of sanctuary to all, irrespective of tenure and incomes. Well-off households have usually no problems assuring themselves good and safe housing, but less well-off, low income and poor households often struggle to maintain this sanctuary.

The choice whether to rent or to own your home should be possible, and a right, in all countries. Young households and ageing households particularly need this choice. Security of tenure exists in countries where the state has established legal frameworks and norms where tenants are as well protected as owners, and where the state considers all households equal, tenants as well as owners.

**Housing plays a key role in politically and economically stable and sound societies,** and is one fundamental pillar for peace and stability. Where housing is scarce, unaffordable and of low quality there exists a permanent uneasiness among its population. Affordable housing is one important ingredient in making labour markets flexible, a fact acknowledged several times by the EU. Several researches have shown that homeowners are considerably less likely to migrate than renters. According to the EU and UN-ECE; if the level of homeownership is too high in a country, this may seriously hamper the spatial flexibility of the labour force. Therefore IUT would like governments to reduce subsidies, like tax relief, to home owners.

**The social and public housing rental sector** plays a key role in the housing supply, particularly in western Europe where it is often considered to be on equal footing with the ownership sector and as such inhabited by, income wise, broader groups of households. In the US, Australia, Canada, in eastern Europe and elsewhere in the developed world social housing is merely for the low income, poor and marginalized households, and then becomes stigmatized, which results in unwanted segregation.

IUT is of the opinion that social housing should be accessible to broader income groups and that architecture and standards should be attractive and of high quality.

**Investing in social housing** is one of the best mechanisms of reversing rise in unemployment; Social housing has strong multiplier effects in terms of employment and has greater long-term impact on the labour market than other construction investments. Construction multipliers are in the range of 1,7 to 1,9 meaning that for every 100 jobs created in construction of social housing another 70 to 90 jobs are sustained elsewhere in the economy, due to a higher labour-intensity in house building activity and producing new jobs in the social service sectors.

**The private rental sector** has many of the positive advantages earlier mentioned. But this sector is too often and in too many countries encumbered with a bad reputation of high rents in relation to size, quality and management. Still, the private rental sector plays an important and positive role in many countries where this sector is regulated by laws and efficient regulations, that e.g. secure tenancies and regulates rent setting.

**Private Public Partnership** plays a vital and thriving role in many countries when it comes to housing constructions and management. This partnership is to be encouraged further, if this partnership can result in affordable homes.

**Energy poverty** is a reality for many, for owners as well as for tenants. Energy prices incl. cost for heating continue to increase in all parts of the world. In the OECD countries, energy prices rose by nearly 11 percent in 2009, in the US by 19 per cent. Housing affordability is about costs, in relation to income. Costs for maintenance, management, refurbishment and energy all end up on the household's expense account, and most often tenants in the private sector are the worst hit.

**Tenants pay most.** According to the Eurostat publication *Consumers in Europe*, tenants in Europe living in cities and pay market rents, pay almost 34 percent of their disposable income as a whole for housing. Tenants in the UK and Spain pay 44 resp. 42 percent. Owners without mortgage only pay 16 percent, and with mortgage 21 percent. Worst off are tenants who are below the "poverty threshold", with income below 60 percent of the national median income. In Slovakia, Poland, Latvia, Ireland and Belgium, these tenants pay an average over 60 percent of their disposable income for housing.

The members of the International Union of Tenants urge governments to facilitate the construction and access to safe and sound affordable rental housing in the following ways:

- a. **Reduce subsidies, like tax relief, to home owners;**
- b. **Strive for a minimum of 33 % rental housing, of the total stock on a national level, and of which at least 50 % should be social / public housing;**
- c. **Stimulate the supply of affordable rental housing, by allocation of funding and state/municipally owned land;**
- d. **Work against segregation and towards social cohesion by stimulating local diversity of housing types and housing tenure (rental vs. owner-occupied), and prevent the development of large areas of low-quality rental housing.**
- e. **Focus on the quality at least as much as on the quantity;**
- f. **Stimulate the development of lifetime housing and housing with care and support;**
- g. **In the EU; Housing should remain a strict non EU competence. EU states should be allowed to keep national housing characteristics and nationally agreed housing policies such as access to social housing for broader groups of the society.**



### 7. IUT report, congress period 2007-2009

(attached at the very end of the congress documents, page 49)

This report includes;

- Preface by Secr. Gen. Hammar on the perhaps the three overall factors that have had large impact on housing, rental housing in particular, around the world: the global financial crises, privatisation processes and increased costs for construction and energy
- Development of Members
- Info about IUT Secretariat and the IUT Board
- IUT in the European Union
- IUT in Central and Eastern Europe, CEE
- Reports on IUT project funding
- IUT and Africa, Asia, Australia
- IUT and the UN and Council of Europe
- IUT publications and more.

IUT's most important development during the congress period was the establishment of the IUT liaison office to the EU, in Brussels, in early 2008.

Barbara Steenbergen was appointed IUT liaison officer to the EU, and set up an IUT office only some five minutes from the main buildings of the EU institutions, like the Parliament and Commission.

The IUT EU liaison office has since its establishment become an active and already well-known institution in the EU-capital. Together with other housing-NGO:s our office has had considerable impact on the many decisions and documents that are connected to housing; Energy Performance Buildings Directive, Energy Directive, Regional Dev. Funding for housing, State aid to housing, etc.

IUT is presently, 2009-2011, co-chair the EU housing network European Housing Forum, EHF.

IUT continued to support members in central and eastern Europe, the CEE-region, particularly in their struggle for housing rights when it comes to the category of tenants named "sitting tenants".

IUT has today 57 national or regional members, in 44 countries – three more members than in 2007. Four members have left IUT, or ceased to exist.

Russia and Slovakia are two new members which have shown great interest in IUT, and have also been very active in their home countries.

IUT has now seven very active members in Australia/N-Z. If it was not for the distance between Europe and Australia we would surely have had more active and personal contacts.

Africa is represented by ten organisations, of which IUT keeps in regular contact with only a few; South Africa, Liberia, Tanzania, Nigeria and Kenya. Only South Africa (OCR) is a paying member.

IUT does not actively strive to enrol new members, but whenever the Secretariat happens to come upon a tenant organisation we send them greetings, and tell them about our existence.

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**Proposed Action:** The Board proposes the Congress to approve the Report





INTERNATIONAL UNION OF TENANTS

## FINANCIAL REPORT / DIRECTOR'S REPORT

### 2007-2009

The Secretariat and the President of the International Union of Tenants (IUT) hereby submit the statement of account for the fiscal years 2007-01-01 – 2009-12-31.

IUT's field of activities constitutes of assembling, processing and dissemination of information about the housing-, especially rental, policies in the present 57 member organisations in 44 countries. Also, IUT work, through political lobbying, for equal rights to affordable housing and the necessity for every country to maintain a sufficient rental housing stock, both social, public and private.

IUT represents its members in contacts with the European Union and through its consultative status in the United Nations and participatory status with the council of Europe. During the congress period IUT, in 2008, opened an IUT liaison office to the EU, in Brussels. This office was made possible through a joint 3-part project for financing, between the Swedish Union of Tenants (Hyresgästföreningen), German Tenant Union (Deutscher Mieterbund e.V.) and the other 9 members of the IUT Board.

The financial results and present financial position, as for the rest, may be concluded by attached income statement and balance-sheet.

The organisation has no staff, thus no salaries have been paid during the financial years.

### **Disposition of the Result**

The financial result for the fiscal years 2007-2009 amounts to € 21 276.

The result for each fiscal year has been brought forward to a new account.

## INCOME STATEMENT

€ Euro	Note	2009	2008	2007
Membership fees		68 275	56 503	66 364
Grants		13 285	10 719	-5 375
Participation fees				0
<b>Operating income</b>		<b>81 560</b>	<b>67 222</b>	<b>60 989</b>
Operating expenses		-46 847	-61 716	-79 272
Administrative expenses		-1 442	-3 775	-3 223
<b>Operating profit</b>	1	<b>33 271</b>	<b>1 731</b>	<b>-21 506</b>
Financial income	2	428	3 464	4 195
Financial expenses		0	0	-307
<b>Profit after financial items</b>		<b>33 699</b>	<b>5 195</b>	<b>-17 618</b>
<b>NET PROFIT</b>		<b>33 699</b>	<b>5 195</b>	<b>-17 618</b>

## BALANCE SHEET

€ Euro	Note	2009-12-31	2008-12-31	2007-12-31
<b>ASSETS</b>				
<b>Current assets</b>				
<b>Current receivables</b>				
Clearing account at Swedish Union of Tenants		0	0	4 424
Prepaid expenses and accrued income		376	0	0
<b>Cash and bank</b>		117 903	99 883	85 632
<b>Total Current assets</b>		<b>118 279</b>	<b>99 883</b>	<b>90 056</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>118 279</b>	<b>99 883</b>	<b>90 056</b>
<b>EQUITY TRANSFERS AND LIABILITIES</b>				
<b>Equity</b>	3			
<b>Non-restricted equity</b>				
Retained profits		70 549	61 031	89 734
Net profit		33 699	5 195	-17 618
<b>Total equity</b>		<b>104 248</b>	<b>66 226</b>	<b>72 116</b>
<b>TRANSFERS</b>				
Baltic/Polish fund		2 167	4 472	8 236
<b>TOTAL TRANSFERS</b>		<b>2 167</b>	<b>4 472</b>	<b>8 236</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>				
Trade creditors		5 427	4 466	2 917
Accrued expenses and prepaid income		2 436	558	1 412
Clearing account at Swedish Union of Tenants		4 001	24 161	0
Current liabilities		0	0	5 375
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<b>11 864</b>	<b>29 185</b>	<b>9 704</b>
<b>TOTAL EQUITY AND LIABILITIES</b>		<b>118 279</b>	<b>99 883</b>	<b>90 056</b>

## NOTES TO THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

### NOTE 1 – Operating profit by cost centre

€ Euro	2009	2008	2007
Membership board	67 145	55 577	65 201
Membership others	1 130	926	971
IUT-secretariat Brussels, x-tra contributions	13 285	10 719	0
Interest	428	3 464	3 887
In common	-3 097	-3 737	-3 630
Member organisations	-1 120	-815	-928
Europe East	-2 633	-2 983	-4 650
Europe West	0	0	-2 033
Developing countries	-331	0	-1 242
Board meetings and related costs	-1 159	-4 400	-3 595
UN-ECE/Geneva	-1 048	-705	-1 016
UN Habitat	0	0	-1 016
NGO:s	-129	-475	-122
EU and Brussels office	-4 001	-14 408	-2 230
Global Tenant	-22 133	-19 266	-21 335
Translations	-659	-630	-502
OPIC-project	0	-2 639	-5 104
IT / Website	-673	-5 282	0
Marketing	-777	-53	-969
Grants CEE region	-6 121	-7 119	-4 030
Grants (travel exp. etc.)	-306	-373	-2 746
Secretariat	-2 985	-2 606	-3 055
Congress	-1 117	0	-29 474
	<b>33 699</b>	<b>5 195</b>	<b>-17 618</b>



**NOTE 2 – FINANCIAL INCOME**

Interest income refer to holdings of bank account and clearing account at Swedish Union of Tenants. The average interest on deposits is 3,45 percent 2007, 4,22 percent 2008 and 0,63 percent 2009.

**NOTE 3 – EQUITY**

€ Euro	Retained profits	Net profit
January 1, 2007	73 338	18 646
Appropriation of net profit 2006	18 646	-18 646
Appropriation of net profit 2007	-17 618	
Appropriation of net profit 2008	5 195	
Exchange rate fluctuation (January 1, 2007 – December 31, 2009)	-9 012	
Net profit 2009		33 699
<b>December 31, 2009</b>	<b>70 549</b>	<b>33 699</b>



STOCKHOLM <sup>18/5</sup> 2010

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Sven Carlsson'.

/ Sven Carlsson/  
President

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Magnus Hammar'.

/Magnus Hammar/  
Secretary General



## AUDITORS' REPORT

We have audited the financial reports of the International Union of Tenants, IUT, from; January 1st, 2007, to December 31st, 2009. The audit includes the accounts and the President's and the Board's administration for each financial year. The audit has been executed according to established customs.

Ernst & Young AB has executed the examination in detail.

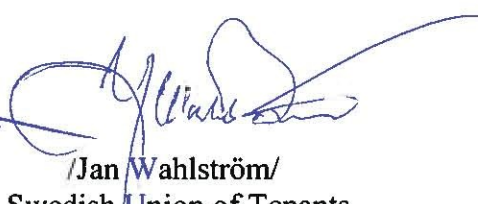
In accordance to our recommendation, the income statements and balance sheets of the International Union of Tenants, IUT, have been adopted, and the profit has been dealt with in accordance with the proposals of the Secretariat and the President.



/Magnus Fagerstedt/  
Authorized Accountant  
ERNST & YOUNG AB



/Per Inge Ahlbäck/  
Swedish Union of Tenants  
Hyresgästföreningen



/Jan Wahlström/  
Swedish Union of Tenants  
Hyresgästföreningen



**9. Appointment of auditors for 2011 - 2013**

**Proposal:**

The Board proposes the Congress to approve of the suggestion to accept Ernst & Young Ltd. and two representatives of the Swedish Union of Tenants as auditors for 2011-2013.



## **10a. Motions to the Congress (from IUT members) 1 (1)**

**1. Subject:** Solving the problem of Sitting Tenants by paying them just compensation or giving them municipal flats in ownership without ransom.

**Introducer:** Latvia's Tenants Association, LTA

### **Background:**

Sitting Tenants are those tenants presently living in privatized (restituted) houses, about 10 % of all tenants. These tenants were discriminated in comparison with the other tenants - those living in municipal flats. Sitting Tenants were pushed away from the process of privatization, and they lost their privatization certificates.

In Latvia there is not free market of rental houses. There are about 8,000 families in queue for municipal flats. There are not free municipal flats to be offered to anyone who want it. There is a violation of social justice in case of Sitting Tenants and this injustice must be repaired.

### **Motion:**

Apply to all CEE countries' Parliaments urging them to;

- a.** ratify the revised European Social Charter including article 31 – Right to Housing – and
  - b.** ratify the protocol to the Charter giving right for collective complaint to European Social Commission.
  - c.** Urge the CEE countries' governments to restore social justice for Sitting Tenants.
- 

### **Report from the Board:**

The IUT sponsored the LTA to organise a two-day event in Riga, June 17-18, in order to raise the issue of sitting tenants in Latvia.

By June 1010, in the CEE region, states which have not ratified the Rev. European Social Charter are: Czech Rep., Croatia, Latvia, Macedonia and Poland.

Further, the majority of CEE states have not ratified the Collective Complaints Protocol

### **Proposed action:**

**a.** The IUT Board proposes to the Congress to adopt the proposal that IUT should contact governments in CEE states which have not ratified the Rev. European Social Charter, urging them to do so.

**b.** The IUT Board proposes to the Congress to adopt the proposal that IUT should contact governments in CEE states which have not ratified the Collective Complaints Protocol, urging them to do so.

**c.** The IUT Board proposes to the Congress to adopt the proposal that IUT should urge the governments in CEE states to restore social justice for Sitting Tenants.



**10b. Motions to the Congress, A-E**  
(from IUT Board)

**Proposals for changes in the Statutes of IUT**

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**A. §2 “What the IUT is”**

**Original text:** IUT is a non-governmental organisation with consultative status to UN ECOSOC. IUT is a democratic, non-party political organisation.

**Proposal:**

§2. “What the IUT is” the WG proposed the following: “IUT is a non-governmental organisation with consultative status to UN ECOSOC, *and participatory status with the Council of Europe*. IUT is a democratic, non-party political organisation.”

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**B. §5 “Membership of the IUT”**

**Original text:** Membership of the IUT shall be open to all national and regional tenants’ organisations and to institutions and organisations according to 4.II.B.

**Proposal:**

Membership of the IUT shall be open to all national and regional tenants’ organisations and to institutions and organisations according to 4.II.B.

**New and additional text:** *“In countries with more than one national or regional organisation, and where the organisations fulfill the criteria for membership, all are eligible for membership in the IUT. Before the IUT Board decides of approval, the Secretariat sends the application to existing member/members from the specific country, so that this organisation – if they want to – can make a pronouncement.”*

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### C. §5: III Suspension of membership

#### Original text:

- A) A member may leave the IUT at the calendar year's end occurring after six months have elapsed since the date when the members requested permission in writing to leave the IUT.
- B) Membership may be suspended by a two-third majority decision of the Board if the organisation in question has acted contrary to the principles of the Statutes, or if the membership fees payable are still outstanding more than 12 months after falling due. The Board shall consider cases of "enforceable events".  
A proposal to such an effect may be announced by the Secretariat in such a time, that the member may lodge an appeal against such a decision by submitting a written statement to the Secretariat within two months from the date when the member received the proposal from the Secretariat.
- C) The next Congress must give a final ruling on decisions of this kind (5:III: a-b).

#### Proposal:

IUT Board proposes to add a financial/economical reason for suspension of membership;

#### §5:III Suspension of membership

- A) A member may leave the IUT at the calendar year's end occurring after six months have elapsed since the date when the members requested permission in writing to leave the IUT.
- B) Membership may be suspended by a two-third majority decision of the Board if the organisation in question has acted contrary to the principles of the Statutes, or if the membership fees payable are still outstanding more than 12 months after falling due. The Board shall consider cases of "un-foreseeable events".

#### New and additional text:

*C) Membership may be suspended if a member has received financial contributions from, or via, the IUT, and has failed to satisfactory report in due time to the IUT Secretariat on the expenses, or has been found to have misused all, or part of, the financial contribution.*

*D) A proposal of suspension under B) and C) should be announced by the Secretariat in such a time, that the member may lodge an appeal against such a decision by submitting a written statement to the Secretariat within two months from the date when the member received the proposal from the Secretariat.*

*E) The next Congress must give a final ruling on decisions of this kind. (§5:III a-c)*

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### D. §6 The Secretariat

**Proposal:** The IUT Board proposes to add one item after 6j;

**New text:** *6k) "The Board shall no later than one year (two board meetings) before the next Congress, appoint a Nominations Committee consisting of three members from the Board, which shall advise the Board of the nominations at the Board meeting prior to the Congress.*

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## E. §7 The Congress

**Original text:** Proposals for the congress agenda (motions) and amendments to the IUT Statutes shall be submitted to the Secretariat at least three months before the Congress.

Members shall inform the Secretariat of the number of delegates they propose to send, no later than two months before the Congress.

A congress agenda and amendments to the Statutes and the Secretariat's report on operations and financial statement with the Auditor's report shall be submitted to the members at least one month before the Congress.

**Proposal:**

*“Proposals for the congress agenda (motions), **the Nomination Committee’s proposal for President and Vice President**, and amendments to the statutes shall be submitted to the Secretariat at least three months before the Congress.”*

*(...)*

*“A congress agenda, **the Nomination Committee’s proposal for President and Vice President**, amendments to the Statutes and the Secretariat's report on operations and financial statement with the Auditor's report shall be submitted to the members at least one month before the Congress”*

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## **11. Approval of membership applications 2007-2009/2010 (Sept.30)**

Approval of membership applications Jan 1, 2008 – June 1, 2010 of the following organisations;  
M=Member, AM = Associated Member

- a) Liberia: Liberia National Assoc. of Tenants and Residents, LNATR, ( as AM), January 12, 2008
- b) Latvia: Latvia Tenants Association, LTA, (as M) April 25,2009
- c) Australia: Tasmania Tenant Union, Inc. (as M), Sept. 28, 2009
- d) Russia: Russian Tenants Association, (as M) April 10, 2010
- e) Israel: National Organisation for the Protection of Tenant's Rights (as AM), April 10, 2010

### **Report from the Board:**

The IUT Board has, at board meetings 2008-Sept. 2010, approved as members the organisations a-e. The Secretariat has had regular contacts with these organisations, and the Secretariat has no doubts whether these organisations are well functioning organisations, and comply with IUT Statutes for membership.

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**Proposed Action:** The Board proposes to the Congress to approve of the above listed organisations to become Members, respectively Associated Members, of the IUT.



## **12. Report; Ceasing of Membership 2007-2009**

The following organisations have discontinued their membership with IUT, due to closure of organisation, or that contacts with the organisation have ceased;

- a) Latvia; Tenants Society of Liepaja, due to discontinuation
- b) Ecuador; Asociacion de Inquilinos del Ecuador, AIE, due to lack of communication
- c) Hungary; Lakásbérlok és Lakók Egyesulete, LABE, due to lack of communication
- d) Serbia; Assoc. of Tenants from Serbia "Habitat, due to discontinued activities

**Proposed Action:** The Board proposes the Congress to approve the Report

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## Plan of Action, goals and intentions 2011-2013

### Preface

Housing is a big ship to steer, and to alter the course in housing policies takes many years, or even decades. No one can expect that the “goals and intentions” from the previous congress period, 2008-2010, to be fulfilled and achieved. Therefore the Plan for 2011-2013 contains wording which is transferred over from the previous Plan of Action.

In 2007 we wrote “...witnessed an increased development of privatisation and the withdrawal of states’ and governments’ intentions and responsibilities to up-keep their political and social agendas concerning the provision of affordable housing.”

At the congress in Berlin 2007 the congress laid down that “lack of decent, sound, secure and affordable housing is primarily a threat human mental and physical well being but also a threat to social justice and stability.”

This development, privatisation etc., has not changed very much, and the scarcity of affordable housing is still evident in most countries.

In 2007 we also pointed out HIV and AIDS as a major cause to poverty and homelessness in developing countries. But this disease, and effects such as homelessness, is also a major problem in developed countries, such as in the US where an estimated one million people living with HIV and AIDS.

Energy costs have emerged as another threat to affordable housing. And reports say that tenants are the worst hit. Tenants also have less possibility, compared to owners, to influence these costs. Energy will, and has already, become an issue on the IUT agenda.

As we must face reality such as limited resources, much of the IUT activities are centred to Europe. The work of IUT’s office in Brussels, since 2008, is with European matters, and IUT’s work follows closely topics on the agenda of the European Parliament and Commission, like social cohesion, energy, EU funding and matters regarding regulations on state subsidies. It is in these and similar topics where IUT can have a say.

“Sitting tenants” in Central and East Europe has been an important IUT issue since 2007, or before, and it most certainly will continue to be so for the next congress period. Sitting tenants are still endangered and, together with IUT members in the CEE region, IUT will continue to work on this issue.

**Again, we must recall the perhaps four most important international agreements where the Right to Housing, or comparable wording, is mentioned;**

The Preamble to the United Nations Charter includes these famous words:

“We the Peoples of the United Nations determined ... to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, ...”

- **UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights;**

Article 25 (1): *Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing...*

This Declaration has been signed and ratified by every country in the world.

- **Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural rights, article 11;**

*The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions. The States Parties will take appropriate steps to ensure the realization of this right, ...*

All 192 members of the UN, except a handful of states, like the US, South Africa and Cuba, have ratified this Convention.

- **European Social Charter, revised, article 31;**

*With a view to ensuring the effective exercise of the right to housing, the Parties undertake to take measures designed:*

*- to promote access to housing of an adequate standard;*

*- to prevent and reduce homelessness with a view to its gradual elimination;*

*- to make the price of housing accessible to those without adequate resources.*

All European countries represented in the IUT have signed the Rev. European Social Charter. But a large number of states have not yet ratified the same Rev. Charter; Austria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Latvia, Poland, Switzerland, Macedonia and the UK.

- **Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU (2000/C 364/01), article 34 :  
Social security and social assistance**

1. The Union recognises and respects the entitlement to social security benefits and social services providing protection in cases such as maternity, illness, industrial accidents, dependency or old age, and in the case of loss of employment, in accordance with the rules laid down by Community law and national laws and practices.

2. Everyone residing and moving legally within the European Union is entitled to social security benefits and social advantages in accordance with Community law and national laws and practices.

3. *In order to combat social exclusion and poverty, the Union recognises and respects the right to social and housing assistance* so as to ensure a decent existence for all those who lack sufficient resources, in accordance with the rules laid down by Community law and national laws and practices



Many may think that these papers are just “for show”, but when a country ratifies an international agreement, it assumes a legal obligation to fulfill the agreement’s intentions. And these are in fact the only international instruments and agreements that we, as tenant representatives, can lean on when it comes to international pressures and influence on our respective governments. Where we can put up our governments against the wall, and ask for implementation and results.

Concerning the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights EU; with the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty this Charter has now the same legal value as other treaties.

**IUT and its members must;**

1. Pressure governments which have not yet ratified the UN Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the revised European Social Charter, to do so, and
2. that once ratified, the contents of the Convention and Charter must be included in national legislation.
3. Follow up on the realization and upholding of the laws.
4. Lobby national governments to fully take the Article 34 of The Charter of Fundamental Rights into consideration in their respective housing policies.

**NB;** One key instrument and a manual for the implementation of the right to housing in national constitutions are the very concrete recommendations of the Commissioner for Human Rights presented at the Council of Europe in June 2009.

Available from [www.iut.nu/iut\\_council\\_of\\_europe.htm](http://www.iut.nu/iut_council_of_europe.htm)

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## **Main goals and intentions 2011-2013:**

- **Prevent the loss of affordable rental housing, and**
- **prevent large scale privatisation and capitalisation of municipal and social housing, and,**
- **counteract the ever increasing costs for household energy, with particular focus on costs for tenants.**

The main aim for the IUT must be to, together partners, continue to safeguard the provision of affordable rental housing and point out the effects caused by large scale privatisation and capitalisation, and clearly argue why affordable rental housing is by aiming at these target groups;

- governments, and ministries
- local authorities and other decision makers,
- EU Parliament, the EU Commission and relevant Director General (DG:s), the EU Council, and the Committee of the Regions
- UN Habitat Nairobi, and UN ECE Geneva (Economic Commission for Europe), the Committee on Housing and Land Management,
- Council of Europe / European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) / European Court of Social Rights (ECSR)
- media
- researchers and academics in the field of housing

## **Making this possible through (Executors)**

- the IUT Secretariat in Stockholm which has the overall administrative responsibility,
- the IUT Liaison office to the EU, Brussels, responsible for IUT EU-affairs with the EU-institutions and IUT members,
- IUT members who are the main institutions responsible for country specific affairs, at national level.

## **Working methods and target groups:**

- Contact making and sharing information between IUT Stockholm/ IUT Brussels and IUT members.
- Lobbying EU institutions such as the EU Commission and its relevant Director Generals (DG:s) and Members of the European Parliament (MEP:s), the Members of the Committee of the Regions (CoR)
- Lobbying national governments in cooperation with members
- Cooperation with Brussels based Civil Society Organisations (CSO:s) such as the members of the European Housing Forum (EHF), and other CSO:s.
- participate actively in the UN-ECE (UN Economic Commission for Europe), within the Committee on Housing and Land Management and its working groups and through disseminating information to participating government representatives,
- sharing information with UN Habitat, Nairobi and with its regional offices.
- monitoring the states' compliance with Councils' European Social Charter, particularly on Article 31 – The Right to Housing
- dissemination of information to members and other interested parties via the Global Tenant magazine and other publications and reports.
- Seminars/conferences organised by IUT, like the Tenants' Day in Brussels, and in cooperation with IUT members.
- IUT web site [www.iut.nu](http://www.iut.nu)
- IUT shall present arguments about the positive effects of affordable rental housing.

## **1. General and administration**

### **a. Enlargement**

IUT comprises today of 57 members, in 44 countries. This is an increase from 54 members by December 2007 and from 51 members in 2004.

Board members have remained steady, eleven.

We are glad to note that the number of paying Members (60 Euro) have increased from 12 organisations in 2005 to 24 by December 2009.

We will of course try to convince all non-paying members to become paying members.

Until increased funding is possible, the IUT will not actively strive to enlarge the organisation. We will of course consider and accept any new eligible applicants, but only true organisations representing tenants will be granted full membership. Others may apply to become associated members.

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### **b. Staff**

Today IUT involves two full time employees, the Secretary General in Stockholm and the Head of Liaison office to the EU, in Brussels.

Additionally, today the IUT Secretariat in Stockholm has an Assistant Secretary supplied by the SUT, for some 15/20 percent of a fulltime.

We do not anticipate any further financial resources.

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### **c. Financial undertakings / project funding**

The annual working budget of IUT, Stockholm and Brussels, is roughly € 100,000, which derives exclusively from fees paid by Board members' (~98 %) and Members' (~2 %).

The Secretariat in Stockholm is hosted and financially sponsored by Hyresgästföreningen, the Swedish Union of Tenants, SUT.

The IUT liaison office to the EU is sponsored by the German Tenants Association, Deutscher Mieterbund e.V., DMB, together with SUT.

As during the previous congress period, the IUT will in principle not commit itself to any financial undertakings when it comes to supporting the administration and projects of individual member organisations.

With one exception;

The IUT aims at, through out the congress period or by any decision of the IUT Board, to continuously support IUT members in Central and east Europe, the CEE region by project funding of up to 8,000 Euro/year.

This support will be evaluated and decided on a year to year basis by the IUT Board.

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### **d. Information**

The IUT website [www.iut.nu](http://www.iut.nu) is the main tool for sharing and spreading information.

Collecting, processing, analysing and sharing information will continue to be one of the main tasks for the IUT.

The IUT will strive to supply its member organisations with as much relevant information on housing as possible, through the IUT website and e-mail, through the Global Tenant magazine and through postal sendings.

During 2009/2010 IUT produced three country reports; the Netherlands, England and Austria. IUT will consider producing housing reports from other countries in 2011-2013.

## **2. IUT and the regions, and prioritised topics**

### **a. The EU**

In the spring of 2008 IUT opened its liaison office to the EU in Brussels, and IUT's presence in Brussels has made IUT a proportionately well known actor in the EU capital.

**Tenants' Days:** Main IUT events on the Brussels parquet will be the international conferences on the occasion of International Tenants Day October 3, 2011 and October 1, 2012.

**IUT and its EU members** will continue to communicate the contributions of tenant organisations in national housing policy and at European level and raise the visibility of tenant organisations as key stakeholders. They will emphasize the role of affordable rental housing in the social inclusion and urban renewal policies of the EU.

### **- The housing dimension of the EU social cohesion policy**

Lack of affordable housing has been particularly highlighted in Europe as an obstacle to labour mobility and economic growth. Lack of housing in major cities has contributed to the stagnation of economical progress.

Lack of affordable housing continues to be one major ingredient to increased social exclusion and hinders integration. It is no secret that lack of housing always have negative affects on the under privileged and socially and economically weak groups in the society.

One of the targets of the new EU 2020 strategy is a "new sustainable social market economy". A key element of the social market economy is equal access to quality social services, including housing. A shortage of quality, decent housing at affordable prices contributes to social exclusion, yet its provision remains a competence of the Member States. Nevertheless the IUT and its members believes it is a shared responsibility between Housing Ministries to work together to find solutions that address housing exclusion and energy poverty within the EU. It is of crucial importance to reinforce the housing dimension of the future Cohesion and Energy Policies of the EU.

**IUT and its EU members** will promote the role of sustainable rental housing to face social and demographic changes on the EU social agenda, the EU "Stockholm program", and the EU 2020 strategy to fight poverty.

Housing should become recognized as one of the key elements to enhance social inclusion.

### **- Affordability of energy efficiency**

**Energy costs** for households continue to burden many less well off households. And low income tenants are the worst hit.

Energy poverty is a growing problem for many residents. National energy policies are determined by EU-legislation and directives, with major effects on the housing costs for residents.

**IUT and its EU members** will promote good energy saving policies. Liberalisation of the energy markets must lead to;

- more competition, and falling prices.

In addition the construction standards of housing shall be revised towards more energy efficiency under the condition that there is a guarantee of neutral housing costs.

**IUT** will emphasize the priority role of investment in housing in the new Energy Action Plan on Energy Efficiency (EEAP) of the EU as key for economic and social recovery.

**IUT and its EU members** will follow up on the national legal implementation of the EU Renewable Energy Directive (RES) and the Energy Performance for Buildings Directive (EPBD).

**IUT and its EU members** will strengthen the aspect of consumer protection in energy policy and forward integrative solutions to solve the problem of energy poverty.

#### **- New EU Funding for housing: the European Regional Development Fund**

The 2008 opening of the structural funds was of great importance as it stated the Commission's willingness to thrive for improved living conditions in all member states. Four percent of the current ERDF is eligible for housing refurbishment in the old EU member states, six percent in the new member states.

**IUT will lobby** the EU commission and governments to ensure that EU funding towards energy efficiency and renewable energy measures is expanded for the new structural funds period 2013-2019.

#### **- The EU internal market and Services of General Interest (SGI)**

**IUT will** continue to stress the importance of strengthening the social housing sector against restrictive regulations of the EU internal market, based on the principal of subsidiarity.

**The IUT will** continue to address the EU Commission that it should not limit access to social housing to socially disadvantaged groups only, an approach that excludes other groups of citizens in need, especially given the lack of affordable housing.

**IUT will** push for a broad definition of social housing in SGI-related decisions of the EU Commission

#### **- Housing in the EU and demographic changes**

The creation of lifetime homes and neighbourhoods ensures that people can live for longer in an independent manner in a familiar environment. This, in turn, increases wellbeing and makes people less dependent on health care, creating significant cost savings. Reality shows that we didn't even reach a basic standard in creating suitable homes for an ageing population. Only 1% of all buildings in Europe are built barrier-free.

**IUT will** continue to stress the necessity to change the construction of housing in order to guarantee accessibility, no barriers and extra nursery services for elder people.

---

#### **b. IUT and the CEE region, incl Russia.**

IUT will continue to support tenants in the CEE region, with particular focus on "Sitting tenants", in Central and East Europe, CEE.

As mentioned under headline "Financial undertakings / project funding", IUT has budgeted € 8,000 / year towards CEE related projects.

The Russian Tenant association, which became a member of IUT in April 2010, is in close and regular contact with IUT. IUT will strive at further developing these contacts during 2011-2013.

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### **c. IUT Africa**

For background, please see Report of Activities.

During the two previous congress periods, 2004-2009, the IUT undertakings in Africa, have been very limited, to say non-existing. However the Secretariat has maintained regular contacts with members in Tanzania, South Africa and to some extent also Kenya.

Unless there is co funding from any IUT member or external funding, IUT does not intend to commit itself to any activities in Africa also for 2011-2013, which involves financial commitments. This lack of attention to African members, and tenants, does not derive from lack of interest or indifference. It is about directing IUT activities to where we have a chance to make a difference in relation to limited resources.

---

### **d. IUT and Asia**

IUT will continue to be up-dated on the overall housing situation in Asia, mainly through its membership in the APNHR, Asia-Pacific Network for Housing Research:

<http://web.hku.hk/~apnhr/> and sporadic contacts with Housing Rights organisation in Asia. The Japanese Tenants Association, JTA, will continue reporting on the housing situation in Japan.

IUT does not plan for any specific activities in this region. However, if an IUT member takes the initiative for arranging activities the IUT will of course have a positive attitude and shall explore the possibilities to contributing to the activity.

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### **e. IUT and Australia/New Zealand**

IUT contacts with IUT member organisations in the present six Australian states, and one member in N-Z, are steady and regular. IUT will continue the exchange of information with our members in Australia and New Zealand.

IUT Focal Point Australia will continue to be IUT's main source of information.

If circumstances allow, IUT will participate in the 7<sup>th</sup> National Housing conference, September 2011, in Brisbane.

Otherwise, IUT does not plan for any specific activities in this region, but will of course consider any proposal from member that seeks cooperation.

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### **f. IUT and South America**

IUT has no members in South America, but is in regular contact with Union Argentina de Inquilinos. We have invited them to become an IUT member.

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### **g. Secure tenure and the right to housing**

Secure tenure is not taken for granted in most states though out the world, and worst off are residents in developing countries. As always it is the low income households, poor people and squatters that are most often affected, and they have always lived under the threat of being evicted.

Also, evictions in developed countries are frequently occurring, with homelessness as a result. In particular, IUT has had regular reports from IUT members about evictions in central and east Europe, where vulnerable groups such as the elderly and sitting tenants are the most affected.

Household members becoming unemployed is the most common cause to eviction, in all countries.

**IUT and its members will continue to** influence national governments to have them guarantee that rights to secure tenure are implemented in national legislation.

**IUT will, together with its national members,** appeal to the governments to promote the right to housing and work for equality and non-discrimination in housing systems and inspire effective responses to homelessness, poverty and dismal housing conditions.

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#### **h. Housing and physical wellness**

Throughout many communities, persons living with HIV or AIDS risk losing their housing due to compounding factors, such as increased medical costs and limited incomes or reduced ability to keep working due to AIDS and related illnesses. Stable housing is the cornerstone of HIV/AIDS treatment, allowing persons with HIV/AIDS to access comprehensive healthcare and adhere to complex HIV/AIDS drug therapies.

Also, the increasing incidence of tuberculosis (TB) is partly a result of poor and damp housing.

**According to resources, IUT and its members will** give attention to the effects of lack of physical wellness such as HIV/AIDS and TB in correlation to housing.

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#### **i. Information**

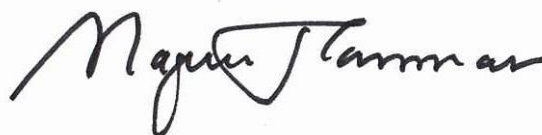
The IUT website [www.iut.nu](http://www.iut.nu) is the main tool for sharing and spreading information.

Collecting, processing, analysing and sharing information will continue to be one of the main tasks for the IUT.

The IUT will strive to supply its member organisations with as much relevant information on housing as possible, through the IUT website and e-mail, through the Global Tenant magazine and through postal sendings.

During 2009/2010 IUT produced three country reports; the Netherlands, England and Austria. IUT will consider producing housing reports from other countries in 2011-2013.

Stockholm, August 2010



/Magnus Hammar/  
Secretary General, IUT







## **Report of the activities of the International Union of Tenants 2007-2009**

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## 1. Preface

**Three overall factors had large impact on the lives of many tenants during the past congress period; the global financial crises, the privatisation processes and the rapidly increasing costs for construction and energy. All contributing to increased lack of affordable rental housing in most parts of the world.**

**The financial crises** perhaps directly hit homeowners with house mortgages the worst. But the negative side effects such as redundancies particularly hit low income households of which many are tenants, which resulted in evictions. In many countries

The financial crises of 2007 to the present dominated much of the housing debate during the past congress period. The crisis was generally triggered by a liquidity shortfall in the USA banking system, caused by the overvaluation of assets. It has resulted in the collapse of large financial institutions and the bailout of banks by national governments, around the world. The collapse of a global housing bubble, which peaked in the USA in 2006, caused the values of securities tied to real estate pricing to drop thereafter, damaging institutions globally.

In many countries, the housing market suffered considerably, resulting in numerous evictions, foreclosures, and prolonged vacancies. The recession resulted in many losing their jobs, followed by loss of their homes. Maybe the recession hit homeowners more than renters, but in countries such as in England many private tenants had to move out as their house owners had to sell their houses.

Lack of affordable housing continued to burden low- and middle range income households in most cities and countries. Housing markets were, and still are, unbalanced and housing choice were often limited and unaffordable.

More than 70 % of Europeans lived in a home owned by a member of their household, with the proportion of owner occupiers being particularly high in the former Socialist countries in the CEE region. See table.

Increased costs for construction of residential housing also made the output of affordable housing less obtainable. From 2005-2010 costs for residential housing construction increased by 12 percent in the EU 27<sup>1</sup>. Worst off was Latvia where costs increased by 59 %, in Romania by 42 %, in Bulgaria by 44 %, by 23 % in Norway and 21 % in Sweden.

In 2007, according to an OECD/Eurostat report, construction costs were 63 % higher in Denmark than the EU 27 average, 51 % higher in Sweden, 23 % in Austria, the Netherlands and in Switzerland, 16 % in Germany and 12 % higher in France<sup>2</sup>.

Most countries rely on the market to solve housing shortages. At the same time privatisation of social and public/municipal rental housing continued. E.g. in England the many programs following the M. Thatcher's Right to Buy schemes have resulted in a total sale of 2 million of the total 6 million council and RSL dwellings. Within the social rented sector, local authority ownership in the UK has fallen from near monopoly levels, 93% in 1981, to 55 per cent in 2006, with the balance shifting to housing associations.

**The massive privatisation** of state and municipal housing has been most evident in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). This privatization took different forms. Public housing was mostly transferred (either sold or transferred for free) to sitting tenants, but some was sold to private companies. For example, in the Czech Republic blocks of flats were sold to legal entities (mostly cooperatives) comprised of tenants.

Privatisation to sitting tenants has profoundly influenced the redistribution of wealth within society. There are the winners, who acquired high-quality properties at big discounts, properties that they could choose to capitalize, or continue living in.

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<sup>1</sup> Eurostat; Construction cost - new residential buildings

<sup>2</sup> OECD Econ. Surveys, Switzerland, 2009.

There are also the “losers”, not only those who did not acquire any housing via privatisation and cannot afford decent housing, but also those who, via privatisation, acquired properties that were in such poor condition that costs for maintenance and repairs constitute a huge financial liability. They became the “poor owners”.

The current problems associated with former public housing which is now owner-occupied stem from three main factors: The first is the physical state of this housing stock, which consists mostly of deteriorated multifamily buildings with neglected repairs and serious technical deficiencies. The second factor is the fact that ownership passed to individual, often low-income owners, who cannot afford the maintenance and necessary repairs. The third factor is that responsibility for this housing stock was passed to the new owners without ensuring the necessary financial, legal and organizational conditions.

Besides the lack of funds (both private and public), there is also a lack of legal regulations concerning owners’ associations and the management of multifamily blocks, and a lack of cooperation among the new owners.

The end of state monopoly has not translated into a competitive market. Instead it has produced private oligarchies and massive profits.

**In 2007, according to the EU report “The Social Situation in the European Union, 2009” Europeans in the EU 25 lived according to this table;**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Owner occup. without mortgage</b>	<b>Owner occup. with mortgage</b>	<b>Rent at market rate</b>	<b>Subsidised rent</b>	<b>Rent-free</b>	<b>Total</b>
Belgium	32,9	39,5	19,1	7,2	1,2	100
Czech Rep	63,3	11,3	4,8	17,8	2,8	100
Denmark	14,6	52,5	32,9	0	0	100
Germany	57,2		35,4	4,8	2,6	100
Estonia	70,9	15,9	4,4	1,6	7,3	100
Ireland	44,9	33,2	8,7	12,1	1,1	100
Greece	63,9	11,7	17,9	0,9	5,6	100
Spain	50,6	33,3	7,3	2,8	5,9	100
France	36	26,2	19	15,3	3,5	100
Italy	59	13,8	15,4	2,7	9,1	100
Cyprus	54,7	19,4	9,9	0,9	15,1	100
Latvia	81,5	2,9	5,7	6,4	3,4	100
Lithuania	83,5	5,8	1,2	1,8	7,8	100
Luxembourg	31,3	43,2	19,7	3,3	2,5	100
Hungary	73,7	14,9	2,7	3,7	5	100
Netherlands	8,5	58,5	32,7	0	0,3	100
Austria	33,1	28,1	29,6	6,6	2,6	100
Poland	59,4	3	2,6	1,1	34	100
Portugal	50	24,3	9,8	7,6	8,4	100
Slovenia	77	4,3	5,5	1,8	11,4	100
Slovakia	84,2	4,9	9,2	0,5	1,2	100
Finland	31,8	41,8	9,8	15,8	0,7	100
Sweden	15,2	54,3	28,5	2	0	100
UK	26,5	47	8,2	17,4	0,9	100
EU	44,8	27,2	13,1	7,7	7,2	100

**Division of population by housing tenure, 2007**

*Source: EU-SILC 2007*

Privatisation and a general retreat by governments from the housing arena have pushed up sales; this has been particularly evident within the CEE-region and China but is also taking place in many Western European countries and Australia. Many housing estates are now a mix of public and private, raising questions about the division of responsibilities between different owners. Legislation to address this is not adequate and public managers are still hampered by the bureaucratic mechanisms within their organisations, while the new owners are not used to their responsibilities for maintenance. Added to this are the limited financial resources for renewal and maintenance among both public and private owners at a time when the need for investments is urgent, especially within the massive housing estates dating from the communist era.

**Energy/fuel poverty** became a recognized term during the congress period. Fuel poverty is commonly applied to developed countries and to cool climates that need heating for part, or all, of the year. However it has also been considered in terms of warm climates for cooling and in developing countries with regards to the provision of fuel for cooking. IUT has on the whole been engaged with fuel poverty in countries with cool climates, for heating of homes. The buildings sector, comprising residential and commercial consumers, accounts for about one-fifth of the world's total delivered energy consumption.

When a family is not able to afford the costs of keeping its house warm and the lights on, it is hit by fuel poverty, or energy poverty. Between 50 million and 125 million people in **Europe** are estimated to be fuel poor, according to European Fuel Poverty and Energy Efficiency project (EPEE).

**The definition of fuel poverty** is officially defined in the UK; a household is in a situation of fuel poverty when it has to spend more than 10% of its income on all domestic fuel use, including appliances, to heat the home to a level sufficient for health and comfort.” This definition is also used unofficially in other countries such as France, Australia and Canada. In many EU countries, not the least in Central Europe, it is common that poor people pay well above 10% of their income for household energy costs. It is also common that poor people disconnect from heat and gas supply to save money.

**In Central Europe** the traditional solution was to subsidize energy supply for the entire population, with the well-known results of low energy efficiency and no incentives to develop renewable energy. With the reductions of the subsidies there are now incentives to save energy, but too often the poorer part of the population suffers from high household energy bills with the low efficiency in existing houses and higher energy costs. The disconnection from district heating networks also lead to deteriorating of the basis for cogeneration of heat and power, one of the ways to use fuel more efficient.

An EPEE project from 2009<sup>3</sup>, reported from a SILC-survey, result from four European countries, Spain, Belgium, France and Italy. Even though property owners are in a big majority in **Spain** (4 in 5 households), being a tenant increases the risk to live in fuel poverty (over representation of factor 4 in the case of arrears).

**In Belgium**, 1 in 7 people is suffering from fuel poverty (14.7%).

**In France**, according to the SILC survey, 6.2%, i.e. 1.59 million households answered they could not afford to pay to keep their home warm. Tenants are overrepresented; 55% of the households had problems with heating costs, even though they represent only 37% of French households.

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<sup>3</sup> EPEE: European Fuel Poverty and Energy Efficiency, 2009. SILC; EU – Statistics on Income and Living Conditions, 2005.

In **Italy**, 10.9%, i.e. 2.57 million households had answered they could not afford to pay to keep their home warm. Again tenants were overrepresented; 22% of the households are concerned by fuel poverty even though they represented 13% of Italian households.

In **Australia**, it is not the cold, but the heat that contributes to fuel poverty. According to the Daily Telegraph, NSW, high temperatures were linked to 374 deaths in the state of Victoria in 2009. In New South Wales, in 2009, 18,000 households had their power cut off. The NSW energy ombudswoman predicts that the number of people fearing they will have their electricity disconnected had increased by one third.

An analysis<sup>4</sup> in **New Zealand** suggested that between up to 14% of the country's households, or some 400,000 people, could be in fuel poverty nationwide. In the south, where the climate is colder, as many as 32% of the households are supposedly in fuel poverty.

**Canada:** Furthermore, about one million households, in 2006, spent more than 10% of their income on energy costs<sup>5</sup>. Alarming as this figure is actually grossly understated because utilities are often included in rent. High and unaffordable energy expenditures, is a prevalent issue affecting about one fifth of residents in Ontario<sup>6</sup>.

## **IUT and EU**

Perhaps the most important change to the IUT administration and increased strength was the opening of the IUT Brussels/EU office in 2008. Barbara Steenbergen from the Deutscher Mieterbund was appointed to head this office, very centrally located in Brussels in Rue du Luxembourg.

The 100 % increase of IUT resources has resulted in IUT being able to be present, active and influential in the EU debate on housing in connection with; state aid and social housing as part of SGEI (Services of General Economic Interest), energy costs, housing and urban development, housing rights and social inclusion.

## **IUT becomes its own**

IUT has up to now been operating under the official umbrella of the Swedish Union of Tenants (SUT), for simply practical reasons. IUT has been audited as a subordinate of the SUT.

On Sept. 13, 2009 IUT was registered as an independent non-profit Swedish NGO, and was allotted an organisation number; 802445-3642.

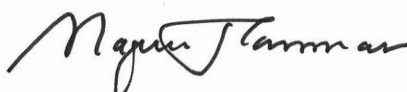
The SUT will continue to host and sponsor the financial administration of IUT.

Others:

Please also see "extracts from a Report of the UN Special Rapporteur Raquel Rolnik, on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living", presented to the UN General Assembly 4 February 2009.

Much of what we, housing and tenant's rights defenders, is experiencing in our home countries is verified and confirmed in this report. Appendix VII

Stockholm August 31, 2010



/Magnus Hammar/  
Secretary General

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<sup>4</sup> Fuel Poverty in New Zealand, Dept of Physics, Univ of Otago, N-Z.

<sup>5</sup> From factsheet: The case for a national strategy on low income energy and water efficiency by Shaun Loney

<sup>6</sup> Journal of Hunger and Poverty, Vol 1, No 1 (2009) Kristen Meredith Forbes Cairney

## 2. Members

In 2010, by June 30, the IUT had 57 national or regional member organisations in 44 countries/states. (54 members in 2007, 51 in 2003 and 37 in 2000)

12 are Board Members, 22 are Members and 23 are Associated Members.

### IUT Members, by December 31 2009

#### EUROPE

	Country	Organisation
1	Austria	Mietervereinigung Österreichs
2	Belgium	Syndicat des Locataires - Huurdersbond
3	Bosnia-Herzegovina	Uduženje Stanara BIHUSS, Sarajevo
4	Croatia	Savez Udruga Stanara Hrvatske. Alliance of Tenants' Assoc.s' of Croatia
5	Croatia	Udruga Stanara Hrvatske, Assoc. of Croatian Tenants
6	Czech Republic	Sdružení Nájemníků ČR, SON
7	Denmark	Lejernes Landsorganisation, LLO
8	England	Tenants' and Residents' Organisation of England, TAROE
9	England	Tenants Participation Advisory Service, TPAS
10	England	National Fed. of Tenant Management Organisations Ltd, NFTMO
11	Estonia	Eesti Üürnike Ühingute Liit, Estonian Union of Tenants
12	Finland	Vuokralaisten Keskusliitto, Central union of Tenants
13	France	Confédération Nationale du Logement, CNL
14	Germany	Deutscher Mieterbund e V , DMB
15	Greece	Pannellinos Syllogos Prostatias Enikiaston
16	Italy	Sindacato Unitario Nazionale Inquilini ed Assegnatari, SUNIA
17	Italy	Sindacato Inquilini Casa e Territoria, SICET
18	Latvia	Latvia Tenants Association, LTA
19	Macedonia FYR	Union for Protection of Tenants , "MakeDom"
20	the Netherlands	Nederlandse Woonbond
21	Norway	Leieboerforeningen, Lbf
22	Poland	Polskie Zrzeszenie Lokatorów, PZL
23	Portugal	Associacao dos Inquilinos Lisbonenses, AIL
24	Romania	Liga Asociatiilor de Proprietari Habitat, League HABITAT of Homeowners Assoc.'s
25	Scotland	TPAS Scotland
26	Slovakia	Občianske združenie Právo na bývanie (Right to Housing)
27	Slovenia	Združenje Najemnikov Slovenije, Assoc. of Tenants of Slovenia
28	Spain	Federació d'Associacions de Veïns d'Habitatge Social de Catalunya, FAVIBC Barcelona
29	Sweden	Hyresgästföreningen, Swedish Union of Tenants SUT
30	Switzerland	Schweizerischer Mieterinnen-und Mieterverband / Deutschschweiz
31	Switzerland	Association Suisse des Locataires, ASLOCA Romande
32	Switzerland	Associazione Svizzera Inquilini
33	Wales	Welsh Tenant's Federation Ltd
34	Wales	TPAS Cymru

#### AFRICA

35	Benin	Association Solidarité Defense Droits de Locataires, ASDDL
36	Dem. Rep. of the Congo	Association Congolaise d'Assistance aux Locataires, ACALOC
37	Kenya	Kenya Tenants Welfare Union
38	Liberia	Liberia National Association of Tenants and Residents
39	Nigeria	National Tenants Union of Nigeria
40	Nigeria	Socio-Economic Rights Initiative, SERI
41	South Africa	Organisation of Civic Rights, OCR
42	Tanzania	Tanzania Tenants Association, TTA
43	Togo	National Consumers and Environment Association of Togo
44	Uganda	Uganda National Tenants Union, UNTU

## **ASIA**

- |    |       |   |
|----|-------|---|
| 45 | India | Indian Federation of Tenants Council          |
| 46 | Japan | 日本借地借家人連合 , Japanese Tenants Association, JTA |

## **AUSTRALIA**

- |    |                   |                                       |
|----|-------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 47 | Queensland        | Tenant's Union of Queensland Inc, TUQ |
| 48 | Victoria          | Tenants Union of Victoria, TUV        |
| 49 | New South Wales   | Tenants Union of NSW                  |
| 50 | ACT, Canberra     | Tenants' Union, ACT, Canberra         |
| 51 | Western Australia | Tenants Advice Service, TAS           |
| 52 | Tasmania          | Tenants Union of Tasmania. TUT        |
| 53 | New Zealand       | Manawatu Tenants Union                |

## **NORTH AMERICA**

- |    |        |  |
|----|--------|--|
| 54 | Canada | Tenant Resource & Advisory Centre, TRAC. Vancouver, BC |
| 55 | USA    | San Francisco Tenants Union, STU                       |
| 56 | USA    | NAHT, National Alliance of HUD Tenants                 |

## **MEMBERS from 2010**

- 57 Russian Tenants Association, Некоммерческое партнерство «Ассоциация нанимателей жилья» «РАНЖ»

Further, IUT has received an application from the following organisation;  
Israel; National Organisation for the Protection of Tenant's Rights.  
(membership will be discussed by the IUT Board on September 30, 2010)

### **Exclusions and withdrawal, 2007-2009:**

**Exclusion:** No members were excluded during 2007-2009

### **Four members ceased to exist, or IUT lost contact, 2007-2009:**

- Ecuador : Asociacion de Inquilinos del Ecuador, AIE
- Hungary : Lakásbérlok és Lakók Egyesülete, LABE
- Serbia: Assoc. of Tenants from Serbia
- Latvia: Latvia Tenants Society of Liepaja

## **3. IUT Secretariat 2007-2009**

The IUT Secretariat continued to hold its office within the premises of the Swedish Union of Tenants, SUT, centrally located in Stockholm, Sweden.

The secretariat consisted of two paid staff members, one full time (Magnus Hammar) and one part time, (approx. 15 % of a fulltime) (Annika Ekström until 2008, followed by Jenni Pelling until 2009, followed by Ylva Westander until today).

The Secretariat was sponsored by the Swedish union of Tenants.

President: Sven Carlsson, Sweden

Vice President: Richard Hewgill, England, from April 2007 – congress 2010.

The IUT Secretariat met regularly, approximately six times per year.

Meetings have been carried out both as video conferences and as ordinary meetings.



## 4. IUT Board

During 2007-2009 the IUT Board consisted of the following member organisations:

1. Austria: Mietervereinigung Österreichs



2. Denmark: Lejernes Landsorganisation, LLO



3. Finland: Vuokralaisten Keskusliitto



4. France: Confédération Nationale du Logement, CNL



5. Germany: Deutscher Mieterbund e. V.



6. Sweden: Hyresgästföreningen



7. the Netherlands; Nederlandse Woonbond



8. Czech Republic: Sdružení Nájemníků CR. SON



9. Norway: Norges Leieboerforbund.



10. Switzerland: Schweizerischer Mieterinnen- und Mieterverband



11. Switzerland: Assoc. Suisse des Locataires-Federation Romandevc, ASLOCA.



12. England, Tenants Participation Advisory Service, TPAS



### Board meetings were held in,

- Geneva (ASLOCA), May 13-14, 2007
- Berlin (DMB), September 9, 2007
- Vienna (MVÖ), January 11-12, 2008
- Copenhagen (LLO), April 4-5, 2008
- Brussels, October 5, 2008
- Göteborg (SUT), April 24-25, 2009
- Brussels, October 4, 2009

The respective hosting organisations sponsored parts of the meetings.

## 5. IUT in Europe

### a. the European Union

(detailed report from the IUT EU liaison office is available on congress USB stick)

Housing is not considered as a competence of the European Union. This is referred to as the *principle of subsidiarity*. But several of the issues under the EU agenda touch down on housing; state aid and competition, homelessness, social exclusion and the protection of the family.



#### 2007

IUT looks into the possibilities to open a liaison office to the EU in Brussels.

**October 1:** International Tenants' s Day. Members of the IUT organised events, etc. according to their own preferences. IUT Statement: *Future of Rental Housing?* **Appendix I**

#### 2008

From January 2008 IUT is represented in Brussels, Belgium with a liaison office to the European Union (EU).

Barbara Steenberg, from the Deutscher Mieterbund e.V. in Berlin was appointed Head of the EU liaison office.

Aim of the office is to influence the legislation on European level and promote the interest of tenants in the political debates in EU parliament (EP), EU commission (COM), EU council and Committee of the Regions (CoR).

Issues on the EU agenda with shared legislative competences closely related to housing:

- Right to housing as part of the EU Social Charter
- Social housing as a part of the services of general interest (SGI)
- State aid for social housing in accordance to the state aid rules on the internal market of the EU
- Housing as a key factor of the social inclusion and territorial cohesion policy of the EU general strategy »EU 2020«
- Structural and regional policy with direct impacts on the financing of urban renewal, housing and neighbourhood management by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)
- Energy policy in the framework of the »EU climate package 20/20/20« (20% more energy efficiency, 20% less greenhouse gas emissions, 20% share of renewable energies in the energy mix until the year 2020), 100% EU-competence

**Major events/conferences 2008**, in Brussels if not further specified

**March 5:** IUT-DMB conference "*Housing for an ageing society*"

**September 18:** IUT panel participation in symposium "*Towards a European Policy for Sustainable Housing*", in the European Parliament.

**October 6:** "International Tenants Day 2008" conference in the European Parliament, on the theme; "*Decent and affordable housing in the European cities.*", with 110 participants from 19 countries. **See Appendix II.**

The event was organised under the patronage of UN-HABITAT and the Urban-Logement Intergroup of the European Parliament.

The conference was followed by an opening reception of the IUT-Brussels office at Rue du Luxembourg 23.



**April 21-22**, Ancona Italy: IUT panel participation in seminar “*Sustainable Energy and Social Housing*”, by IUT Vice President R. Hewgill.  
Organised by CECODHAS and Federcasa, Italy.

## **2009:**

**Major events/conferences in Brussels**, if not further specified

**March 26:** Start-up conference “Social aspects of living” organized by Czech Union of Tenants (SON), FES and Deutscher Mieterbund at Friedrich-Ebert-Foundation in Prague.

**April 15:** Conference “Decent housing for a social Europe: European structural funds: a solution for the Eastern European housing markets?”,  
EU-representation of Friedrich-Ebert-Foundation and organized commonly by the Czech Union of Tenants (SON), IUT Brussels and Friedrich-Ebert-Foundation (FES)

## **October 5:**

- **IUT/FES Symposium “Right to Housing** - Future perspectives of a European Housing policy for a more social Europe”.

This symposium was a follow-up by the conference

- **“Decent housing for a social Europe** - Could European structural funds be the answer for the Eastern European housing sector?”

- **International Tenants’ Day 2009**, European Parliament, on the theme: “*Tackling the financial crisis with a new deal for affordable housing*”, see **Appendix III**.

Some 120 participants, from over 20 countries, were registered.

The event was in cooperation with UN Habitat and the European Housing Forum and was followed by a well-attended reception in the European Parliament, Salons des Députés.



## **Main political and legislative initiatives in 2008 and 2009:**

- IUT-statement in the consultation of the EU-commission: Energy Performance Buildings Directive

- IUT-amendments to the Energy Performance Buildings directive (EPBD)

- IUT-amendments to the Renewable Energies Directive (RES)

- IUT/CECODHAS lobbying to open the EU Regional Development Funds ERDF for investments in housing

- IUT/Hyresgästföreningen (SUT)/Woonbond-intervention concerning the Swedish and Dutch cases on state aid for housing addressed to Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, Chairman of the European Socialist Party PES

- Policy Document “Tenants Milestones for the new European Parliament 2009-2014” see **Appendix VI**

- IUT/European Housing Forum lobbying for a new Urban Intergroup in the European Parliament

- IUT-statement to the European Commissions consultation on the evaluation and revision of the EU Action Plan for Energy Efficiency (EEAP)

- IUT/Nederlandse Woonbond briefings of the Urban Intergroup on the Dutch case.

### **European Housing Forum, EHF**

The IUT is one of eleven members of the “housing-network” European Housing Forum, EHF. This network consist of eleven European organisations where housing is a major, or partial, topic.

Regular meetings (3-5 meetings annually) are held with the EHF members, in Brussels, on a rotating chairman ship amongst the members of the Forum.

IUT is (2009-2011) co-chair of the EHF, together with the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS)



The EHF has become well recognised by the EU Commission, and is often regarded as the body for housing discussions and debate, often with a social and economic heading.

The EHF is usually invited to the thematic EU informal Housing Ministers annual meetings.

**2007**, May 24-25, in Leipzig, Germany: *“Territorial development and social cohesion”*.

**2008**, Nov. 24-26 in Marseille France: *“Access to Housing for persons with difficulties”*

**2009**, June 24-25 in Prague, Czech Republic: Informal working meeting of the "EU Housing Focal Points". (no EHF participation)

### **b. Council of Europe**

From January 2005 the IUT holds participatory INGO status with the Council of Europe, Strasbourg. (INGO = International Non-Governmental Organisation)

The Councils’ Social Charter, article 31, stipulates “The right to Housing - with a view to ensuring the effective exercise of the right to housing, the Parties undertake measures designed:

1. to promote accesses to housing of an adequate standard;
2. to prevent and reduce homelessness with a view to its gradual elimination;
3. to make the price of housing accessible to those without adequate resources”.



NGO:s with participatory status are entitled to lodge complaints of violations of the Social Charter, with the European Committee of Social Rights.

On May 15, 2006, the IUT was included on the list of INGO:s entitled to lodge collective complaints of the European Social Charter, from July 1, 2006 to June 30, 2010.

This entitlement was renewed for another period of four years; from 1 July 2010 to 30 June 2014.

### **c. IUT in the Central and East Europe (CEE) region, incl Russia**

During the period 2007-2009 IUT continued its close cooperation with members in the CEE region, where massive privatisation of state and municipal housing took place from ~2000 - until today. Tenants in houses built by the state or municipality were offered to buy, at often low costs, their flats. Flats which were, by the time of purchase, often in a bad condition after many years of negligence. Many of these less well-off tenants instead became “poor owners”, with no or little possibility to contribute to the renovation of common spaces, roofs and windows.

Tenants in privately owned houses, often in restituted houses, were never given this option of purchase, and became “sitting tenants”, in houses with often new owners and landlords living abroad. These “sitting tenants” now experience a large amount of insecurity when it comes to rent increase and security of tenure.

Tenant representatives in the CEE region are of course the best to deal with these matters. At the congress in Birmingham in 2004, the Association of Tenants of the Republic of Slovenia, Združenje Najemnikov Slovenije (ZNS), were given the mandate to coordinate the members in the CEE region through its office of IUT Regional Office for Central and Eastern Europe, IUT-ROCEE, in Ljubljana. ZNS' first mandate ended by 2006 but was given renewed mandate by the 2007 congress in Berlin.

Main issue for IUT-CEE ROCEE has been to deal with the problems and situation of "sitting tenants", described above in brief.

**Annual meetings with the member organisations in Central and Eastern Europe organised by the IUT Regional office for CEE (ROCEE) were held in:**

**2007**

- **March 23-24, Dubrovnik; 2nd meeting of the CEE Working Group.**

CEE members: Poland (PZL), Czech Rep. (SON), Macedonia (MakeDom), Croatia (ATAC), Slovenia (ZNS).

Guests: Lauri Sivonen (Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights), Sven Carlsson (IUT President), Jörgen Jensen (IUT Board Member)

Contents:

- presentations of the problems of the sitting tenants in CEE
- tenants' protection under the European Convention for Human Rights, European Social Charter and UN law (Jure Debevec/ZNS)
- Slovenian cases at the ECHR, Hutten-Czapska v. Poland, Czech owners v. Czech Republic

- **September 15, Ljubljana; 3rd meeting of the CEE working Group for Sitting Tenants**

CEE members: Poland (PZL), Slovenia (ZNS), Croatia (USH), Macedonia (MakeDom), Serbia (Assoc. of Tenants in Private Flats)

Contents:

- country reports on the situation for sitting tenants,
- information about the upcoming Expert's Workshop on Housing Rights (Commissioner for Human Rights), September 24/25 in Budapest,
- IUT Petition to the European Parliament and Council of Europe.

**2008**

- **March;** IUT Petition on the issue of Sitting Tenants problem in CEE to the European Parliament and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, drafted by Mateja Fajs chair IUT WG on Sitting Tenants.

**November 1, 2008 – January 31, 2009:**

- 397 signatures collected IUT Petition on IUT website
- 67 signatures were collected at the Tenants' Day in Brussels, Oct. 6.

In 2008 the Association of Tenants of the Republic of Slovenia, Združenje Najemnikov Slovenije (ZNS), started cooperation with FEANTSA (Fed. of the European Organisations of the Homeless) for the purpose of filing a collective complaint to the European Court of Social Rights, ECSR, Strasbourg.

This resulted in official Complaint; No 53/2008.

This cooperation with FEANTSA was a result from the fact that IUT was not able to supply the WG or ZNS with the legal expertise that was needed for the formal juridical filing of the case to the ECSR.

## 2009

- **April 17-18, Ljubljana; 4th meeting of the CEE Working group for Sitting Tenants.**

CEE-members: Czech Republic, Poland, Latvia, Slovakia, Croatia and Slovenia.

IUT Board: Richard Hewgill and Jørgen D. Jensen.

FEANTSA was represented by Matti Mikkola.

Contents:

- presentation of housing situation in CEE
- social housing study tour in Ljubljana
- presentation of FEANTSA and Housing Rights Watch project
- evaluation of the ROCEE work since 2004.
- the meeting presented conclusions and proposals to the IUT Board.

## 2008-2009

- IUT Petition regarding Sitting Tenant's situation in the CEE region collected signatures. **Appendix IV**
  - 67 signatures at the Tenants Day, Brussels 2008
  - 397 signatures collected (Nov. 1, 2008 - Jan. 31, 2009) at IUT website / Petition-online
  - 584 signatures collected in Slovakia, by Občianske združenie Právo na bývanie (Right to Housing)
  - 1 349 signatures collected in Czech Rep. by SON, Czech Union of Tenants.

2,397 signatures were sent, in May 2009, to the European Court of Social Rights, ECSR, Strasbourg, and to the President, Lluís Maria De Puig, of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.

## Other IUT activities in the CEE region.

### 2007

**January 20-23: Kraków, Poland:** IUT Secr. Gen. by invitation of PZL, Polish Assoc. of Tenants visits Kraków, to learn more about situation of private and "sitting tenants" in Poland. Study visit to Nowa Huta and meetings with tenants.

**March 21: Slovenia:** Letter to the Minister Janez Podobnik, IUT Statement on Housing Conditions in the Republic of Slovenia.

**April 1-4: Moscow:** Study visit of IUT Secr. Gen., incl. seminar participation at Moscow State Univ. of Economics, study visits, meetings with New Eurasia Foundation and with different housing NGO:s.

**September 24-25, Council of Europe,** Commissioner for Human Rights, Expert workshop, "Housing rights: Positive duties and enforceable rights", presentation on sitting tenants in CEE, by Mateja Fajs, ZNS.

**Nov. 11-14: Tuzla, Bosnia and Herzegovina.** IUT-presentation, by Anna Eklöf, at Freja Forum workshop: Housing is a Human Right!

## 2008:

**March 3-5, Riga, Latvia,** Secr. Gen. meets with Latvian housing NGO:s and maintenance companies and participates in study visits, by invitation of Sergey Mirsky, MEP.

**April 24-25, Warsaw, Poland:** Secr. Gen. participates at housing NGO meeting, organised by Polska Unia Lokatorów, Polish Union of Tenants.

**October 13-14: Murmansk, Russia:** IUT participation by Secr. Gen. at 3<sup>rd</sup> Conf. of Housing City Renewal and Social Welfare in the North. By invitation of Husbanken, Norwegian State Housing bank.

**November 8-14:** IUT organised study visit in Stockholm for 13 representatives of the Russian Union of Tenants.

## 2009

**February 14-21;** Karol Szylo, representative (lawyer) of PZL (Polish Assoc. of Tenants) visits three offices of the Swedish Union of Tenants to study the Swedish housing system. Sponsored by IUT and SUT.

**October 1-2, Bucharest Romania:** IUT participation on Tenant's Day seminar on Urban Regeneration, by IUT Board member Jørgen D. Jensen.

**October 9-10, Kraków, Poland:** IUT representation by Secr. Gen. on Tenant's Day seminar, together with representatives of Swedish Union of Tenants.

**October 16-18, Skopje Macedonia:** IUT participation by IUT vice-president R. Hewgill and Secr. Gen. M. Hammar at IUT/MakeDom seminar, IUT CEE project "Western Balkan united for rental housing".

The Russian Tenant Association (RTA) joined IUT formally in April 2010, but established contacts with IUT in 2007/2008. Also, RTA's leading lady Prof. Elena Shomina had contacts with IUT already in the 1990's, with former IUT Secr. Gen. Nic Nilsson.

## 6. IUT project funding

### a. with OPIC funding

Since the early 1990's IUT has been able to apply and receive project funding from OPIC, the Olof Palme International Centre, which This finding is part of the Swedish bilateral ODA funding, and as such subordinated political priorities by the Swedish government.

The political colour of Swedish governments has changed from red/green to blue during the years and priorities for ODA funding has changed, meaning that countries that once were eligible for project funding are no more eligible.

**Serbia:** 2005-2006 (2007) IUT, via OPIC, funded a project in Serbia, with the purpose of establishing a tenant association, and setting up an "Info-centre –Habitat" in Belgrade. In January 2007 OPIC discovered that the Serbian project coordinator was closely affiliated with the Radical party of Mr Milosevic. IUT was instructed that OPIC would withdraw further funding to the project. The project was officially reported on to OPIC, and concluded, in 2008.



## **b. IUT CEE project funding**

The IUT Regional Office for Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) was 2001-2004 hosted by SON, the Czech Union of Tenants, and 2005-2007 by Združenje Najemnikov Slovenije (Association of Tenants of the Republic of Slovenia). IUT contributed with € 5,000/year to the CEE office.

The IUT Regional Office for CEE ceased to exist, from December 31<sup>st</sup> 2007.

(Some of the issues of the present IUT-CEE regional office remained on the agenda of the Working Group for Sitting Tenants, according to proposal adopted in Dubrovnik, March 23-25, 2007.)

In 2008, the IUT Board has decided to reorganize IUT funding, and applications procedures for the IUT CEE region. From 2008, any IUT-CEE (category Member) could apply for project funding.

Maximum amount: € 8,000 / year.

### **IUT CEE projects 2007-2009:**

#### **2007:**

- € 5,000 to Assoc. of Tenants of Slovenia, ZNS: 3<sup>rd</sup> conference on Sitting Tenants, in Ljubljana

#### **2008:**

- € 2,100 to Polskie Zrzeszenie Lokatorów (PZL) for organising conference on Dec. 10 on the occasion of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Also, on Nov 27, PZL organised a public meeting in Krakow on the issue of “sitting tenants”. (Money from IUT Baltic-Poland Fund)

- € 8,000 to Assoc. of Tenants of Slovenia, ZNS: for organising 4<sup>th</sup> conference on Sitting Tenants, in Ljubljana April 17-18.

#### **2009:**

- € 1,500 to Polskie Zrzeszenie Lokatorów (PZL) for organising housing/tenant conference in Krakow on the occasion of PZL's 20th anniversary, October 9. (Money from IUT Baltic-Poland Fund)

- € 5,451 to “MakeDom”, Macedonia, for organising Balkan-conference, October 16-18, in Skopje, plus printing of “MakeDom” brochure in English and in Macedonian.

## **7. IUT and Africa, and IUT-Focal Point for Africa, FPA**

The IUT-FPA has since 1994 been hosted by the Tanzania Tenants Association, TTA, itself established in 1988. Since 1994 a number of activities took place in collaboration with TTA and IUT, the most recent in 1999.

During 2001 and 2002 the TTA-FPA received funding. This funding came to a halt in 2003, as the IUT Secretariat could not find that any activities had been undertaken that involved tenants in a broader perspective.

Other African organisations have shown interest in pulling the African organisations together, but this interest has never come to any concrete actions.

In 2003 the IUT Board decided to stop further IUT financial collaboration/cooperation with TTA-FPA, until the Tanzanian organisation could show that it had the administrative capacity to more efficiently handle projects.

By the end of 2009, IUT had ten members. Only one African member is a “paying member”, the Association of Civic Rights, South Africa.



The purpose of a Focal Point must be, to a certain extent, to ease the workload of the IUT Secretariat and to be able to create and maintain a network of African tenant/consumer associations both economically and in practice. Also, the Focal Point must, to a certain degree, be able to collect and compile information from IUT members in the region. The IUT will revitalise the IUT-FPA when an African organisation emerges that has the practical possibility and to a certain extent, financial capacity to run such a focal point, on its own or with partners.

Today (June 2010), the leadership of TTA in Dar es Salaam is unclear. IUT, in 2009, received documentation from the “new”? leadership of the TTA-organisation which said that Mr Ludger B. Nyoni and I. Njohole of TTA, had been barred, by the court, to present themselves as President and Secr. Gen. of TTA.

## 8. IUT and Asia

During the congress period IUT involvement with “housing in Asia” has been limited to information exchange with Mr. Kazuo Takashima, Japanese Tenants Union, and sporadically with various Asian Housing Rights NGO:s.

reports from Asia appeared in the Global Tenant magazine; Japan (Sept. 2009), Nepal (April 2009), China (April 2009) and Hong Kong Dec. 2008).



IUT is a member of the Asia Pacific Network for Housing Research.

## 9. IUT and Australia & New Zealand

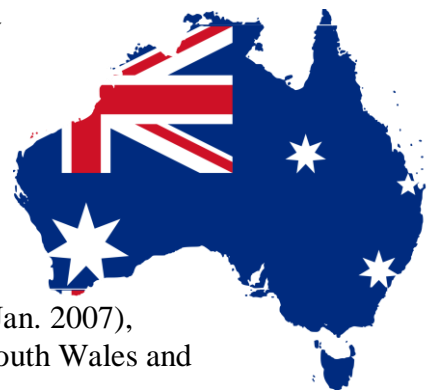
Regular contacts with IUT members in Australia and in New Zealand were upheld during the congress period.

IUT Focal Point Australia, Penny Carr of TUQ, has regularly provided the IUT Secretariat with news and information.

We are pleased by the fact that IUT now has members in six out of eight Australian states and territories, and one member in N-Z.

Contacts have been upheld with the AHURI (Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute).

Articles from Australia and New Zealand appeared in the Global Tenant magazine; special feature issue on Australia (Jan. 2007), Queensland (Sept. 2008), New Zealand (April 2009), New South Wales and Tasmania (Dec. 2009)



## 10. IUT and the United Nations

The IUT is in Consultative Status with the UN Social and Economic Council, ECOSOC. As such, the IUT has access to all meetings under the ECOSOC.

There are mainly two UN institutions that address the housing:

- UN-HABITAT (UN Human Settlements Programme), with HQ:s in Nairobi Kenya
- Economic Commission for Europe, ECE, (incl. Canada and the US) and its committee: The Committee on Housing and Land Management, at the UN in Geneva Switzerland. (also there are UN Economic Commissions for Asia & the Pacific (incl. Australia), Africa and Latin America & the Caribbean)

### - UN-HABITAT

IUT attended WUF:s in 2004 and 2006, but refrained from participation in the World Urban Forum (WUF IV) in China 2008, due to costs.



### - UN-ECE / Committee on Housing and Land Management

These meetings deal with European housing affairs, often with a social dimension. A major part of the agenda deals with the particularly difficult housing situation in the CEE region. The Committee also produces country reports on housing. Participants are civil servants from housing ministries, or equivalent. The Committee meet every 3<sup>rd</sup> year on “high level”, at ministerial level.

UN ECE Committee meetings, at the UN in Geneva:

**2007:** September 17-18, IUT represented by the IUT Secretariat

**2008:** September 22-23, IUT represented by the IUT Secretariat

**2009: September 23-24,** IUT represented by the IUT Secretariat, IUT intervention in debate on Energy efficiency in Housing; “Tenant participation in energy saving measures”.

#### Other;

**November 23-25,** Vienna Austria: IUT representation at UN-ECE workshop on energy efficiency, by Reiner Wild, Berliner Mieterverein e.V., “Initiation of energy residential renewal on local comparative rent”.



## 11. IUT and other Non-Governmental Organisations, NGO:s

The IUT is in partnership, as members, with other NGO:s.

- ENHR, European Network for Housing Research
- EHF, European Housing Forum
- APNHR, Asia-Pacific Network for Housing Research

## 12. IUT active participation in assorted activities

**2007:**

- IUT exhibition at Deutscher Mietertag, in Stuttgart, May 31. June 2

**2008:**

- IUT exhibition at congress of Swedish Union of Tenants, in Luleå. June 13-15

## 2009:

- **Italy:** IUT participation at national congress of SICET, May 6-7, by Barbara Steenbergen
- **France:** IUT participation at congress of CNL, May 21, by IUT President Sven Carlsson and Barbara Steenbergen.
- **Norway:** Written reaction on deregulation of rents in Oslo, Norway, Oct. 4. **Appendix V**
- **Germany:** IUT participation at Deutscher Mietertag, in Leipzig June 5-6 by IUT Board member Jakob Trümpy.
- **Sweden:** IUT Brussels, Barbara Steenbergen participation at “International housing day”, November 6, at Swedish Union of Tenants.

## 13. IUT and the Internet

IUT launched its website, [www.iut.nu](http://www.iut.nu), in November 1999.

The site is up-dated daily, and it is the main up-to-date source of IUT, about rental housing information, national housing policies etc.



## 14. Publications / reports

- **Global Tenants magazine:**

January 2007 Theme: Australia

June, 2007 Theme: Russia

November, 2007: Theme: IUT Congress

April, 2008

September, 2008

December, 2008

April, 2009

September, 2009

December, 2009

From April 2009, the GT is available in French. Credit to Stéphanie Sotison, CNL.



- **Reports:** (all reports are available on the congress USB stick)

***Right to Housing, facts & news***, and its status at international and national levels, and institutional levels (UN, Council of Europe, EU), 2009.

***Tackling the Financial crises with a new deal for affordable housing, International Housing Perspectives*** including country tables summarizing rescue and recovery plans, 2009.

### ***Country reports, 2009:***

- Austria
- England
- the Netherlands

## 15. The Tenants Charter

The first Tenants Charter was adopted by the IUT congress in Bergen, Norway, 1974.

The present Tenants Charter was adopted at the IUT Congress in 2004, 30 years after the Bergen congress.

The Tenants Charter is available on the IUT website in the following ten languages; Bosnian, English, French, German, Icelandic, Japanese 日本語, Polish, Spanish and Russian.





*Consultative status with  
UN Economic and Social Council  
- Participatory Status with the  
European Council*

## International Union of Tenants

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### Future of Rental Housing?

Statement for the International Tenants Day

October 1, 2007

**Rental housing is a good way of living... when the conditions are right!**

- Rental housing enhances social cohesion,
- Rental housing is flexible, and easy to swap,
- Rental housing involves no money to real state agents,
- Rental housing is the perfect choice for young people, and the elderly,
- Rental housing requires no need to work on the plumbing, heating or to do repairs and maintenance!

IUT and its members consider affordable rental housing a vital component to the struggle for social cohesion and inclusion in every country and society. Rental housing facilitates mobility, which contributes considerably to more flexible labour markets and less unemployment. Rental housing also makes it possible for young people, students and workers, to stay in other cities or countries for longer or shorter periods. Elderly people often find well functioning rental housing attractive as it often includes services.

Our governments, irrespective of political habitat often praise rental housing, and say that rental housing is an important and essential component of every well functioning society. But, unfortunately this is too often lip-service!

The share of rental housing is decreasing in practically all countries, often to levels which are way below sustainable levels - as in the region of central and east Europe - to levels below 5 percent of the total stock. How does this reality benefit social cohesion?

IUT regrets that many governments, at local, state and federal level;


- consider rental housing as secondary to ownership, through different tax incentives that makes ownership economically more favourable – in spite the fact that rental housing is in many countries often inhabited by low income households,
  - place housing on a level equal to other commercial merchandise, and as such housing is treated under market conditions. This only favours the financially strong households – a minority of households.
  - are of the opinion that the Market and ownership can solve deficiencies such as lack of housing, unaffordability, and insecure legal circumstances.
- This is unfortunately nothing but delusions.

*"A well functioning society needs a variety of dwellings in regards to size and standard – and tenure, for different needs and periods of a person's life. It must be up to a person's own choice, according to circumstances, whether he or she wishes to own or rent the dwelling" (The IUT Tenants' Charter).*

**IUT and its 54 members in Europe, Asia, Australia and North- and South America are convinced that rental housing will continue to play a key role in urban renewal and in socio-economic and sustainability!**





 <p>- Consultative status with UN Economic and Social Council - Participatory Status with the Council of Europe</p> <p><b>www.iut.nu</b></p>	<h2>International Union of Tenants</h2> <h3>Association Internationale des Locataires</h3>	
	<b>Stockholm (Hq):</b> P.O. Box 7514 103 92 Stockholm, Sweden Tel: +46 8 791 02 25 Fax: +46 8 20 43 44 e-mail: info@iut.nu	<b>IUT Liaison Office to the EU</b> Rue du Luxembourg 23, 5 ème étage B-1000 Brussels, Belgium Tel: + 32 2 513 07 84 Fax: +32 2 513 09 55 e-mail: barbara.steenbergen@iut.nu
	<b>IUT Secretariat:</b> President; Sven Carlsson, Sweden, Vice President; Richard Hewgill, England Secretary General; Magnus Hammar Assistant Secretary; Annika Ekström	

### IUT statement for the International Tenants' Day, October 6 2008

#### Promoting affordable housing is a key factor

Increasing house prices, rents and cost of living in general make life hard to live for many city residents. Residential rents in Mumbai India increased by 21 % from May 2007 to May 2008 and in Beijing rents rose by 18 % in 2007. At the same time house prices rose by almost 50 % in Sofia Bulgaria, by 33 % in Poland and 11 % in Sweden.

The biggest rental increases in Europe in 2007 occurred in Moscow, up by 29 %. In Bucharest Romania rents went up by 23 %. Hong Kong has had rent increases of 22 percent the same year and has the world's priciest apartment rents, with the lease for a three-bedroom unit costing more than US\$ 9,700 on average a month.

London rents were at their highest for 10 years in December 2007 reported a City estate agent. Key public sector workers are being frozen out of the housing market in two-thirds of the towns and cities of Britain after prices have doubled in five years. The Halifax bank found the asking price for a house in 339 of 519 towns surveyed was unaffordable for police officers, ambulance staff, firemen, nurses and teachers. In 2001, the figure was 124.


In Australia 93 % of Sydney's key workers have been priced out of the city shows a report this year. The findings also show housing prices have risen by two-thirds across Australia since 2002. The average income has increased by less than half that amount over the same time.

Reports from many states and cities around the world say that they are having difficulties in recruiting key workers such as school teachers, firemen, police, nurses etc, because of unaffordable housing costs. Even the Market has reacted to this intolerable situation, as lack of housing leads to a slow down in economy.

Several cities around the world are developing schemes for new affordable housing particularly aimed at workers in the public and service sectors. But the construction is slow and the flats are too few. It is not enough with a few hundred here and another hundred there.

Hundreds of thousands of people are waiting for affordable and decent housing in Europe, near to where the job opportunities are. They are tired of getting up by four or five in the morning to make it to work! All breadwinners want to be back home in time for dinner and to say good night to their children - something of a human right too. Our politicians want us, the workforce, to be "flexible", but they have to give us the possibilities!

**On the occasion of the International Tenants' Day, October 6**, the International Union of Tenants will convene an open seminar in the European Parliament in Brussels. Members of the European Parliament, experts as well as representatives from a wide range of European housing NGO:s will stress the necessity for a new deal in housing, to increase the output of affordable housing in Europe.

  
 Magnus Hammar  
 Secretary General







International Union of Tenants  
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## IUT statement for the International Tenants' Day, October 5 2009

### "Tackling the financial crises with new deal for affordable housing"

1 (1)

Housing and construction is one of the largest financial sectors - and a key instrument in tackling the present financial recession. Housing construction can boost regional and local markets and can set the financial wheels in motion.

Increased investment in affordable rental housing, where social and public housing play a major role, would be a major contribution in getting local economies back on track! Public investments must focus on areas that can provide the greatest social and economic benefits.

Government investments in energy efficiency renovation have several benefits; saving energy and money, and at the same time a reduction in CO2 emissions. The recession together with high energy costs has hit low income households the most and many have problems paying the housing costs.

The numbers of evictions are steadily rising. These households urgently need housing assistance. Social urban development is suitable instrument to attack inequality and fight social exclusion and segregation. Not-for-profit housing companies and public housing companies are major stakeholders in these processes.

#### These examples point in the right direction;

- The **European Union** has made available € 8 billion for energy saving measures in multi-family housing. (But not sufficient, as the total Regional Development Fund amounts to €195 billion)
- The government in **Ontario, Canada**, is up grading social housing and has provided CA\$ 100 million.
- The **Australian** government is allocating AU\$ 6,5 billion (€3,8 billion) for up grading existing dwellings and construction of 20 000 new social housing units.
- The SAR government in **Hong Kong** is allocating HK\$ 17 billion (€1,5 billion) to assist tenants who are not able to pay rents, by exemption from six months from rates (tax) and two months rent paid by government.
- To assist poor tenants, the **UK** government has announced a two percent rent decrease in social housing rents. But, UK housing associations fear less income, which will lead to less construction.
- The **UK** based 2020 Group, chaired by K. Baker, former housing advisor to the Prime Minister, says that building 100 000 new social homes over the next two years would save 30 000 jobs in the industry.
- **Germany** introduced a Modernization Programme for Buildings in order to reduce CO2 emissions. The government now increases the already used € 900 million with another € 500 million. The German Gov. estimates that 220.000 jobs have been secured in construction businesses.
- **Spain**, autonomous region of Pais Vasco, will assist unemployed residents by buying their homes, which then becomes social housing – but with an option to buy back.
- **Italy**, the government in Lombardy has made € 1,500 /household available to pay rents for the unemployed, and another € 20 million to assist tenants in rent arrears.
- **Swedish** public housing companies have purchased private market residential houses which have been impossible to sell for market prices.

We, tenant representatives worldwide act as catalysts and urge our local and national governments, and the European Union, to increase investments in new construction and renovation of social/public/private rental housing. Also, immediate measures have to be taken in order to assist households which fall into rent arrears, to avoid evictions.

/Sven Carlsson/ IUT President

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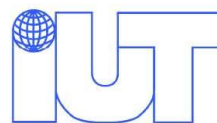
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### Sender of Petition:

### International Union of Tenants / Association Internationale des Locataires

- Consultative status with UN Economic and Social Council
- Participatory Status with the Council of Europe



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### Sitting Tenants IUT-Petition

“Sitting tenants” are tenants in Central and Eastern Europe who, in the times before transition, acquired a civil right for resolution of their housing needs. Whilst varying from country to country these rights, either for public flats or private flats that were controlled by public authorities, entitled them to permanent, non-profit, secure and inheritable tenure in their homes.

Whilst most sitting tenants were offered a high continued level of protection of rights for those in properties restituted or handed back, to pre-war private owners or their heirs, under restitution laws the rights of the latter were minimized and the level of protection was severely reduced.

It is against the human rights of these tenants, and natural justice, that they should be expected to carry the burden of supporting the rights of the restitution landlords without support from the State.

**We call upon all States to recognize the problems of Sitting Tenants in restituted dwellings and to protect their Human Rights by ensuring protection of rights equal to those afforded to all other Sitting Tenants.**

IUT Secretariat October 5, 2008

/Sven Carlsson/ President





International Union of Tenants

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1(2)

The Norwegian Government  
Minister of Local Government and Regional Development

The City Government of Oslo  
Commissioner of Department of Welfare and Social Services

### **IUT reaction, and request, on the planned deregulation of rents in Oslo, Norway**

International Union of Tenants (IUT) is deeply worried about the situation for tenants in Oslo, Norway, living in rent regulated flats. We are informed that from January 1, 2010, the rent regulation system will be abolished and be replaced by the system of market rents.

A recent study<sup>i</sup> estimates that approximately 3500 households, many of which are single person households, have low income and are elderly and disabled, will have to face an increase in rents between 50 and 200 per cent<sup>ii</sup>.

Further, single parents and persons with average incomes, key workers - like nurses or teachers - will also be negatively affected. Many of those affected have lived in their flats for years, even sometimes for several generations. Their entitlement to continue living in their dwellings will be undermined by an excessive rent level. According to the study approximately half of the households will not have the necessary income to pay a market rent next year.

We are aware of the fact that the Norwegian Government and Municipality of Oslo have planned a temporary housing allowance for rent regulated households. But the Norwegian Tenant Association, (Lbf) and other NGOs claim that many households will have insufficient benefits or no benefits at all from housing allowances. We are also informed that implementation of the new allowance system is far behind schedule and it is unsure if it will be ready when market rent is introduced by the end of the year. (before: in a few months.)

We believe that the planned deregulation will result in evictions and serious decrease in the standard of living to groups of already low-income, elderly or disabled people, and we question if this action accords with Human Rights standards and the welfare principles of Norwegian society. We are worried that too strict limitations in the possibility for receiving public supportive funding will result in many cases of households falling out of today's support system. For disabled people finding accessible alternative housing is an even more serious problem.

We particularly ask the legislative authorities in Norway to observe Article 31 of the revised European Social Charter of 1996, accepted by Norway in October 2007, which reads:

*"With a view to ensuring the effective exercise of the right to housing, the Parties undertake to take measures designed:*

- 1. to promote access to housing of an adequate standard;*
- 2. to prevent and reduce homelessness with a view to its gradual elimination;*
- 3. to make the price of housing accessible to those without adequate resources.*

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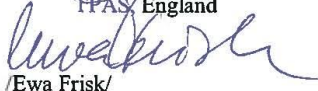
IUT stresses the fact that most European countries have various forms of rent regulations. Without such regulations it is expected that homelessness will rise dramatically. We therefore ask the Norwegian Government to reconsider the need for a system of price regulations in the rental sector and also reconsider the plans of introducing market rent in this particular sector of the housing market in Oslo at the time being.

Brussels October 4, 2009

  
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/Richard Hewgill/ IUT Vice President  
TPAS, England

  
/Jørgen D. Jensen/  
Lejernes Landsorganisation in Denmark

  
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Hyresgästföreningen, Sverige


  
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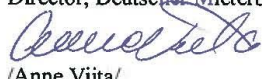
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Confédération Nationale du Logement, France

***IUT is an international Non Governmental Organisation for 55 national and regional tenants associations in 45 countries.***

***IUT enjoys consultative status with the UN ECOSOC and participatory status with the Council of Europe.***

#### References;

<sup>i</sup> Ingar Brattbakk: **Rent Control – Status prior to the repeal of the Rent Regulation Act in 2010.**

Tenants and tenancies subject to provisions of the Rent Regulation Act, Chapter 2

NIBR Report 2007:21

<sup>ii</sup> The NIBR report estimates an increase of the rent to 47-63%. Leieboerforeningen and other groups claim this is too low, and estimate a 100-200% increase as an average.





**International Union of Tenants**  
 Association Internationale des Locataires

### **Five Tenants' Milestones for the European Elections 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.





**UN General Assembly,** HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL  
GENERAL A/HRC/10/7

**On adequate housing as a component of the  
right to an adequate standard of living**

Extracts from:

**Report of the UN Special Rapporteur Raquel Rolnik on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context. 4 February 2009.**

**This paper was delivered to the UN General Assembly on February 4 2009, in the context of the global financial crises.**

**Full paper with references is available on: [www.iut.nu/iut\\_un.htm](http://www.iut.nu/iut_un.htm)**

22. Neoliberal priorities such as fiscal constraint, free trade, reduced welfare spending and lower taxation, were soon endorsed by governments across the world.

Accordingly, by the end of the 1990s, there was a worldwide shift “away from an emphasis on State economic management and service provision, to an ethos of ‘privatism’ in the provisioning and regulation of social and economic life”

27. In general, the role of governments concerning housing has been seen to shift in these countries<sup>1</sup> from that of a provider to that of a facilitator.

Thus, there has been a significant reduction in the construction of adequate housing for the poor - and most vulnerable groups - along with decreasing national budgets and available public funds.

28. Persuaded that they should diminish their intervention, governments started adapting their budgets and decreasing the funding for public housing and subsidies. It is argued that the current housing difficulties in **France** can partly be explained by an insufficient construction level throughout the last decade. While, home ownership has grown steadily in France since 1954, between 1989 and 1995 this increase slowed down due to the reduction of Government-subsidies.

Similarly, in **Poland**, a variety of central Government subsidies to housing have been cut over the past decades, as much as ten times over the period 1995-2004.

29. In most **developing countries**, especially those which had passed through intense processes of urbanization in the 1960s and 1970s (like Brazil and other Latin American countries) the rolling back of the State interrupted fragile attempts to establish welfare systems. The result was, in most cases, an increase in poverty and informal arrangements, worsening the living standards of the poor.

37. In some countries, **selling publicly owned houses to the tenants** has been seen as a way to increase homeownership while diminishing State expenditure, especially in terms of maintenance.

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<sup>1</sup> Where major transfer from State control to the private sector of economic activities has taken place - mentioned in para 26.

The privatization of public housing has taken various forms, including the sale of public rented housing through right-to-buy policies to sitting tenants (as in **the UK**), property transfers to not-for-profit actors (as in **the Netherlands** and **the UK**) and in some cases to profit-maximizing actors (as in **Germany**).

38. Larger-scale privatization of public housing has also taken place in **countries in transition** from planned to market economies.

According to the World Bank, in transition countries, a considerable amount of residential property - perhaps as much as \$1 trillion worth – changed from public to private hands.

39. The increasing commercialization of housing associations and housing companies has also been noted in **countries in transition**.

Their consequent adoption of financial risk avoidance strategies has the effect of drawing social housing away from a focus on the most deprived and at risk households; the vetting of tenants for reliability and the use of eviction orders are symptomatic of this process.

41. The World Bank is now suggesting that, in developing countries, **housing policies for low and moderate income groups should not be excessively weighted towards owner-occupied** solutions and that “Households with low and uncertain incomes may be better off renting than owning housing that meets standards for health and safety. If subsidies are provided, they should be available for either ownership (for example with down payment assistance) or rental (for instance with rental vouchers), and in either case for new or used units.

42. For instance in **Canada**, tenant protection and rent regulation law were terminated in 1998 in Ontario, which may have led to an increase in evictions.

In **Spain**, the liberalization of rental contracts initiated in 1985 by the Boyer Act, and continued in 1994 by the Urban Rental Law (*Ley de Arrendamientos Urbanos*), aimed at facilitating the renting of homes by owners. However, it seems that this measure has not been fully productive or acted as an incentive to the rental market, while it has possibly negatively affected security of tenure.

68. Foreclosures have also concerned housing units that were rented. In some cases, tenants were not aware that their landlord was subject to a foreclosure procedure and were evicted from their homes with little or no prior notice.

69. In some cases, not having a permanent address leads to exclusion from certain types of aid, or results in denial of civil and political rights, including the right to vote.

70. Following foreclosure, many families have no savings left, which makes them unable to afford a rental security deposit. Even if they can afford the security deposit, they are considered as less able to meet debt obligations or mortgage payment, and thus they are not eligible for a new rental contract.

**Extracts from UN Special Rapporteur Raquel Rolnik's  
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:**

78. All actors involved in the housing sector should fully recognize the multiple dimensions of housing, which is much more than a mere financial asset and has great implications for the individual, the community and society as a whole.

79. The right to adequate housing should be fully integrated into all policies, projects and activities concerning housing, in particular those designed by public authorities.  
All public and private actors involved in housing need to acknowledge the right to adequate housing and take it into account in their work.

83. States should support access to adequate housing by measures such as promoting alternatives to private mortgage and ownership-based housing systems, and develop new financial mechanisms that can ensure the improvement of the living and housing conditions for the majority of the world's population, which has not been well served by existing mechanisms.  
**They should not reduce State expenditure on housing. On the contrary, public funding for housing and construction of public housing will need to increase in order to address the impact of the crisis on the most vulnerable.**

84. In some countries, homeownership has been traditionally seen as the safest form of tenure and rental tenure has been less secure, with a greater potential for eviction.  
Recent events clearly show that homeownership is a secure form of tenure only under certain circumstances, in particular when there are adequate, sustainable and stable financial means to achieve it. **Rental tenure could be made more secure with appropriate legislation to protect tenants against abusive evictions, as well as to expand access to affordable, controlled and subsidized rent mechanisms.**

**86. States must acknowledge that markets alone are unable to achieve adequate housing for all.**

Effective regulation and close monitoring by the State of private sector activities, including financial and building companies, is required.

**87. In some situations, States should consider intervening in the market,** for instance through equitable land-use policies, public financing and housing provision, **appropriate rent regulation and reinforcement of legal security of tenure.**

Enshrining in relevant legislation the right to adequate housing will help in ensuring an appropriate role for the State in the housing sector.

88. States should take mitigating measures to lessen the impact of foreclosures and the crisis, for instance in **cases of tenant eviction due to foreclosure or because of unpaid rents due to the economic crisis.**

In particular, States should make every effort to prevent homelessness which pushes households into inadequate housing and has a detrimental impact on the enjoyment of other human rights by individuals, families and communities, including their access to education, work and an adequate standard of living.

91. Economic hardship risks causing a wave of disinvestment in housing, yet it is crucial both for social and economic reasons, that massive investment in housing take place instead. States must react as promptly and efficiently as they did to intervene in the international financial system to address the housing crisis worldwide, so as to implement their obligation to protect the right to adequate housing for all.

**International Union of Tenants**

**[www.iut.nu](http://www.iut.nu)**

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