



## **Report of the activities of the International Union of Tenants 2010-2012**

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## 1. Preface

**The global financial crises still haunts many households, tenants as well as owners. Hundreds of thousands of homeowners have been forced to leave their homes to the banks or to auctioneers. Tenants are likewise affected as many middle- and low income earners have lost their jobs, or have had their wages cut – and now have to find cheaper rentals, or move in with friends or relatives.**

Lack of affordable housing continued to burden low- and middle range income households in most cities and countries. Young families and single-parent households, and the elderly, are perhaps the worst hit.

Many countries still lack, or have insufficient, social/public housing. Also, in times of recession new construction of much needed social/public housing has come to a halt. Most countries in central and east Europe still lack any real stock of social housing, which leaves those who cannot afford to buy to go and find accommodation in the private rental market / which is very costly - see table below.

Keeping rents at fair and at affordable levels have always been one of IUT's main tasks, and during 2010-2012 has never missed an opportunity to point this out, at all levels.

**Table 1, Housing cost overburden rate by tenure status, 2011 (% of population)**

Country	Owner occupied without mortgage	Owner occupied with mortgage	Rent at market rate	Rent at reduced price, or free	Total population
Belgium	2.4	3.3	38.1	14.9	10.6
Czech Rep	6,4	5.3	25.0	18.7	9.5
Denmark	9.9	12.2	36.9	0	19.9
Germany	10.5	13.6	21.4	16.5	16.1
Greece	21.4	11.9	42.7	30.6	24.2
Spain	4.8	13.8	48.1	10.1	12.1
France	0.6	1.4	16.0	9.4	5.3
Italy	2.9	6.3	33.3	9.3	8.4
Latvia	10,5	27.9	16.5	12.5	12.6
Hungary	6.8	20.5	43.8	16.8	11.8
Netherlands	3.4	14.0	18.2	6.6	14.5
Austria	1.9	1.4	11.3	5.0	4.2
Poland	8.6	10.0	27.1	14.3	10.2
Portugal	2.0	8.5	25.5	3.1	7.2
Slovenia	2.8	10.5	18.3	5.6	4.7
Slovakia	6.4	23.6	12.9	8.9	8.4
Finland	2.8	2.3	12.5	8.3	4.4
Sweden	10.9	3.1	17.5	46.5	7.9
Switzerland	11.8	7.1	17.7	15.7	13.1
Norway	7.1	8.2	27.7	18.2	10.4
Croatia	7.8	13.3	33.0	12.8	7.8
UK	9.3	8.8	45.3	23.7	16.4
Euro area	5.1	9.1	23.9	10.6	10.9
EU 27	6.5	9.1	26.1	14.0	11.5

Source: Eurostat

The housing cost overburden rate is the percentage of the population living in households where the total housing costs ('net' of housing allowances) represent more than 40 % of disposable income ('net' of housing allowances).

**Energy costs** are of great concern to many tenant households, worldwide. For some it is the cost of heating and hot water which are of main concern, while for others it is about cooling

homes. Costs for energy rise every day and as a tenant you have little or no possibility to influence and reduce the costs.

Many tenants reduce consumption by turning down heating, or cooling, and freeze in wintertime and sweat in summertime, or try to use less hot water.

In Europe, in 2009, a major policy package was adopted and become a binding EU legislation known as the 20-20-20 targets: A reduction in EU greenhouse gas emissions of at least 20% below 1990 levels; at least 20% of EU gross final energy consumption to come from renewable energy sources; a 20% reduction in primary energy use compared with projected levels, to be achieved by improving energy efficiency.

Tenants play an important role in reaching the EU targets, as consumers of household energy, and they are prepared to play its part in reducing energy consumption.

Energy efficient refurbishment of the housing stock and renewal of the related energy supply systems are crucial and necessary steps to take. But IUT is worried that the costs for refurbishment will show on the rental slip and making costs for renting go up dramatically.

Costs for refurbishment and renewal of supply systems must be justly shared by all involved, and gains resulting from energy saving measurements should also result in lower rents. A win-win method is the best method for lasting and successful results.

IUT has been active in arguing that EU funding should be made available to a higher extent for energy refurbishment of the European housing stock, and that already financially burdened tenants should not be additionally burdened by having to pay for refurbishment.

**Social/public housing is a prerequisite for democratic societies with a social responsibility, the opinion that access to affordable rental housing such as** Social housing of good quality plays an important role in central and north European countries, while in southern Europe, North America, in Africa and in most countries in Asia – except Hong Kong – social housing plays a marginalised role. In Australia and the US social/public housing provides only for some 3-4 percent of the total housing stock, 6% in Canada while in Hong Kong almost 30% of the households are accommodated in public rental housing. In the EU 27 about 10% of the stock is social housing, with the Netherlands with the highest share of 32%, Austria 23% and Denmark, Sweden and the UK with some 18%.

**Social housing moving forward in the EU.** In 2010, the Socialist group in the Committee of the Regions started a campaign for setting an EU agenda for social housing. In November 2011, the political initiative “A European Agenda for Social Housing-More than a Roof over your Head” was launched. In December 2012 the European Economic and Social Committee voted in favour of a report which called for a legal framework favourable to the development of social housing. Later the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs of the European Parliament (EP) invited IUT as an expert for the hearing “Social housing: a way out of the crises”.

As a positive result, the initiative report on “Social Housing in the EU” reached a majority in the European Parliament plenary at June 11, 2013, by 353 “Yes” votes, 151 “No” and 189 abstentions.

IUT has played an active role, via its liaison office to the EU, in the various EU institutions during the congress period, and have co-operated with MEPs and NGOs willing to promote social housing.

Outside Europe, where IUT has its majority of members, IUT has assisted the Tenants Union of Queensland, Australia, in its efforts to stop the defunding of Tenants Advice and Advocacy Services and Tenant’s Union.

Stockholm in August 2013



/Magnus Hammar/  
Secretary General

## 2. Members

By December 31, 2012, IUT had 59 national or regional member organisations in 43 countries/states. (57 members in 2010, 54 members in 2007, 51 in 2003 and 37 in 2000)

Today, by October 2013, IUT has 62 members: 11 are Board Members, 25 are Members and 26 are Associated Members.

### IUT Members, by December 31 2010

#### EUROPE

<b>Country</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
1. Austria	Mietervereinigung Österreichs, MVÖ
2. Austria	Österreichischer Mieter-, Siedler- und Wohnungseigentümerbund
3. Belgium	Syndicat des Locataires - Huurdersbond
4. Bosnia-Herzegovina	Uduženje Stanara BIHUSS, Sarajevo
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. Israel	National Organisation for the Protection of Tenant's Rights
16. Italy	Sindacato Unitario Nazionale Inquilini ed Assegnatari, SUNIA
17. Italy	Sindacato Inquilini Casa e Territoria, SICET
18. Italy	Unione Nazionale Inquilini Ambiente e Territorio, UNIAT
19. Latvia	Latvia Tenants Association, LTA
20. Macedonia FYR	Union for Protection of Tenants , "MakeDom"
21. the Netherlands	Nederlandse Woonbond
22. Norway	Leieboerforeningen, Lbf
23. Poland	Polskie Zrzeszenie Lokatorów, PZL
24. Portugal	Associação dos Inquilinos Lisbonenses, AIL
25. Romania	Liga Asociațiilor de Proprietari Habitat, League HABITAT of Homeowners Associations
26. Russia	Russian Tenants Assoc. Ассоциация нанимателей жилья «РАНЖ»
27. Scotland	TPAS Scotland
28. Slovakia	Občianske združenie Právo na bývanie (Right to Housing)
29. Slovenia	Združenje Najemnikov Slovenije, Assoc. of Tenants of Slovenia
30. Spain	Federació d'Associacions de Veïns d'Habitatge Social de Catalunya, FAVIBC Barcelona
31. Sweden	Hyresgästföreningen, Swedish Union of Tenants SUT
32. Switzerland	Schweizerischer Mieterinnen-und Mieterverband / Deutschschweiz
33. Switzerland	Association Suisse des Locataires, ASLOCA Romande
34. Switzerland	Associazione Svizzera Inquilini
35. Wales	Welsh Tenant's Federation Ltd
36. Wales	TPAS Cymru

## **AFRICA**

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

## **ASIA**

47	India	Indian Federation of Tenants Council
48	Japan	日本借地借家人連合 , Japanese Tenants Association, JTA

## **AUSTRALIA**

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

## **NORTH AMERICA**

56	Canada	Tenant Resource & Advisory Centre, TRAC. Vancouver, BC
57	Canada	Federation of Metro Tenant's Association, FMTA
58	USA	San Francisco Tenants Union, STU
59	USA	NAHT, National Alliance of HUD Tenants

### **New members from 2013**

60. Fédération de locataires d'habitations à loyer modique du Québec, Canada (FLHLMQ)
61. National Private Tenants Organisation, NPTO, England
62. Urban Tenants Association of Kenya

### **Exclusions and withdrawal, 2010-2012:**

**Exclusion:** No members were excluded during 2010-2012

### **Four members ceased to exist, or IUT lost contact, 2010-2012:**

- Croatia: Savez Udruuga Stanara Hrvatske (Alliance of Tenants' Assoc.s' of Croatia)
- Greece: : Pannellinos Syllogos Prostatias Enikiaston (Panhellenic Renters' Protection Assoc.)

## **3. IUT Secretariat 2010-2012**

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) Ylva Westander until 2012.

From 2013 Maria Ekbon Åbonde is employed by SUT as IUT Assistant Secretary.

The Secretariat was sponsored by the Swedish Union of Tenants.

President: Sven Bergenstråhle, Sweden

Vice President: Richard Hewgill, England, from April 2007 – congress 2013.

Vice President: Jan Laurier, the Netherlands, from September 2010 -

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

#### 4. IUT Board

During 2010-2012 the IUT Board consisted of the following member organisations:

1. Austria: Mietervereinigung Österreichs



2. Denmark: Lejernes Landsorganisation, LLO



3. Finland: Vuokralaiset ry



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 ČR. SON



9. Norway: Norges Leieboerforbund.



10. Switzerland: SMV (Zürich), ASLOCA (Geneve) ASI (Messagno)



11. England, Tenants Participation Advisory Service, TPAS



#### Board meetings (hosting organisation)

- Helsinki (Vuokralaiset ry), April 9-10, 2010 (Helsinki appeal, see App I)
- Prague (SON), September 29-30, 2010
- Vienna (MVÖ), April 8-9, 2011
- Brussels, October 2, 2011
- Paris (CNL), March 23-24, 2012
- Naples (Sicet), September 1, 2012

## 5. IUT in Europe

### a. The European Union

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

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, issues on energy, social exclusion and the protection of the family.

Decent and affordable housing is a fundamental human need, and a basic human right. Nonetheless the challenge of ensuring housing for all, and thereby also contributing to the eradication of poverty and social exclusion, is still immense in a number of countries.

In a European Union where some 44 million citizens are at risk of poverty and where housing often accounts for more than 40% of a household's budget, access to housing should not be seen as an objective in isolation, but should indeed be a horizontal priority of economic and social policy formulation in the European Union and the Member States.

Whereas social housing first and foremost is a social policy issue, the overlapping of several policy areas cannot be ignored.

As the issue touches upon competition policy, social inclusion policies, as well as the use of structural funds, while also depending on the state of the global financial markets and the architecture of the European single market, it is imperative that it is addressed through an integrated and comprehensive approach.

Furthermore, in the pursuit of the Europe2020 agenda, eradicating homelessness and improving access to social housing, and thereby addressing both poverty and social exclusion, a common EU strategy and a platform for joining forces is required.

During the on-going financial, economic and social crisis, poverty and unemployment rates, social exclusion and housing needs have been on the rise.

### IUT EU liaison office - report of activities 2010-2012

- **Main conferences/hearings with IUT key-notes/interventions:**

#### 2010:

May 6: GUE/NGL Energy Poverty Workshop at the European Parliament, Brussels

June 1: Swiss Mission to the EU, Lobbying of NGO's in Brussels

June 9: BEX, The international Building Exchange conference, Brussels

October 7: Hearing on the Dutch case, Tweede kamer (Parliament of the Netherlands), The Hague

October 13: International Social Housing Summit, The Hague (NL)

November 5: Association of Austrian Social Housing Providers, Vienna, Austria

November 17: Committee of the Regions, Brussels, "More than a roof above your head"

#### 2011:

January 31-February: Meeting of German directors of tenant associations, Berlin

March 12: Deutscher Bundestag (German Parliament), Berlin, Green cities of the future



May 31: Swiss Mission of the EU, Lobbying of NGO's in Brussels  
July 6: Meeting with the president and vice president of the Urban Intergroup, European Parliament.  
October 3: International Tenants Day, Committee of the Regions  
October 15: Tenants Day la CNL, Lille, France  
October 24: Eurocities housing working group, Amsterdam (NL)  
November 1-2: International Social Housing Summit, Rotterdam (NL)  
November 25: Convention Party of European Socialists (PES), Brussels

## **2012:**

January 20: Federal ministry for housing Austria, Vienna  
February 6-7: Meeting of German Directors of Tenant Associations in Brussels  
February 28: Launch of the European Housing Review of RICS, Brussels  
March 5-6: Energy workshop together with DMB, SUT, TPAS, Woonbond, Cecodhas, Berlin  
April 1: Association for affordable housing provision, Krems/Donau, Austria  
May 9: Seminar and press conference with housing minister Blachfellner on the Salzburg housing fund, Austria  
May 16: Tenant Union of Winschoten, NL  
May 24: Presentation of the European Housing Forum Brochure "Affordable housing for all" to the Urban Intergroup, European Parliament, Strasbourg  
June 4: Representation of Berlin to the EU, Assoc. of Urban planners of Berlin/Brandenburg  
June 24-25: Trade Union for Construction and Wood, Austria, Brussels  
September 18: Trainees of the German Parliament (Deutscher Bundestag), Brussels  
September 26: Energy Poverty Workshop GUE/NGL group of the European Parliament, Brussels  
September 29: supervisory board of Nederlandse Woonbond, Utrecht (NL)  
October 5: 20 years celebration of Czech Union of Tenants, Prague  
October 30: European Economic and Social committee (EWSA), hearing on the French case, Brussels  
November 15: European Open Days of cities and Regions, Vienna, Austria  
November 16: Housing department of the City of Vienna, Austria  
December 18: Hearing at the European Parliament, Karima Dellis' initiative-report on social housing

### **• European Housing Forum**

The European Housing Forum was created in 1997, following the adoption of a resolution on the social aspect of housing by the European Parliament. Its members are all major international or European organisations working in the area of housing, representing consumers, providers, professionals and researchers.

The Forum is a place for exchange and debate. It regularly organises thematic seminars and conferences which are open to all interested parties.

The EHF promotes the importance of the housing sector in Europe by creating awareness amongst EU policy makers about the impact of a growing number of EU decisions on domestic housing policies. [www.europeanhousingforum.org/](http://www.europeanhousingforum.org/)

From May 2009 to May 2012 IUT and RICS co-chaired the European Housing Forum.



IUT organised in total 3 lecture series:

2010: "**Changing lifestyles, changing climate**: The role of housing in the EU", 4 lectures from March-June 2010

2011: "**Affordable Housing for all-policy implications of shrinking budgets**", 4 lectures from May 2011-October 2011

2012: "**Active Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity- the role of Housing**", 4 lectures from April-June 2012

**All results were published in three brochures, available in print and at [www.iut.nu/iut\\_eu.htm](http://www.iut.nu/iut_eu.htm)**



- **EU Housing Ministers meetings**

As ‘housing’ is not formally a competence of the EU, the European housing ministers meet under so called Informal Housing Ministers meetings. Apart from governmental representation, European NGOs have been invited to participate – often actively.

**2010:** Madrid, Spain: IUT, representing the European Housing forum, presented EHF’s views concerning affordable housing in relation to renovation, energy poverty.



- **Tenants Day 2011**

IUTs annual conference with the theme “Affordable rental housing for the young-make it happen now” took place in the Committee of the regions, 3 October, Brussels, with more than 100 participants.

All results, the conference report, the background papers and the “11 policy recommendations for affordable rental housing for young adults” are available at [www.iut.nu/conferences.htm#Tenant\\_Day\\_history](http://www.iut.nu/conferences.htm#Tenant_Day_history)



- **Legislation at the European Institutions**

- 1) **Committee of the Regions**

In November 2011 the Committee of the Regions launched the political initiative “A European Initiative for social Housing” <http://pes.cor.europa.eu/Meetings/Events/Pages/Social-housing.aspx>

The initiative was launched by Karl-Heinz Lambertz, Minister-president of the German speaking community in Belgium and Alain Hutchinson, CoR member and member of the Brussels city council.

IUT was closely involved in this initiative and a lot of our claims were picked up by the decision makers. A lot remains to be done but social housing is firmly anchored in the European agenda. The aim of this campaign is to speed up the process and ensure decent and affordable housing for all.

EUROPEAN UNION



**Committee of the Regions**

- 2) **European Economic and Social Committee**

As second EU institution, the European Economic and Social Committee picked up the housing question.

A hearing on Oct. 30 2012 titled “Allocation of social housing: Why the European Commission needs to change the game” was scheduled in response of the “French case” a complaint against France concerning their allocation policy in social housing. This complaint was a direct spin-off of the Dutch case.

IUT and la CNL were speakers at the hearing, invited by the rapporteur Raymond Hencks (Luxembourg).

[www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.events-and-activities-allocation-social-housing](http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.events-and-activities-allocation-social-housing)

A report of the hearing is available at:

[www.iut.nu/BrusselsNews/BrusselsNewsNov2012.pdf](http://www.iut.nu/BrusselsNews/BrusselsNewsNov2012.pdf)



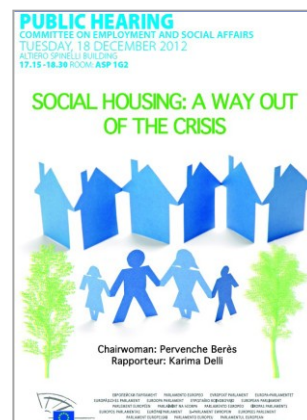
### 3) The European Parliament

Also the third EU-instance, the European Parliament, started in December 2012 with a legislative initiative.

On December 18, IUT had a preliminary hearing with rapporteur Karima Delli (GREENS) and other interested stakeholders in order to gather inputs and build a road-map. An EU coalition for affordable housing is growing up.

As a positive result, the initiative report on “Social Housing in the EU” reached a majority in the EU plenary at June 11, 2013 by 353 “Yes” votes , 151 “No” and 189 abstentions.

[www.iut.nu/BrusselsNews/July2013.pdf](http://www.iut.nu/BrusselsNews/July2013.pdf)



The detailed report of the hearing:

[www.iut.nu/EU/IUT\\_Brussels/Reports\\_News/BrusselsNews\\_december%202012.pdf](http://www.iut.nu/EU/IUT_Brussels/Reports_News/BrusselsNews_december%202012.pdf)

### 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, for a four year period, on the list of INGO:s entitled to lodge collective complaints of the European Social Charter. This entitlement was renewed for another period of four years; from 1 July 2010 to 30 June 2014.

### The European Court of Human Rights, ECHR

Two IUT members representing “Sitting tenants” in Central and East Europe (Slovenia and Latvia) have lodged collective complaints against their respective governments.

In 2008 the Association of Tenants of Slovenia, ZNS, together with FEANTSA, and IUT as third party intervener, lodged a complaint against the state of Slovenia. The Court has so far found almost all of ZNS' claims admissible. The case is still running.

In 2011 the Latvian case was partially accepted for examination by the ECHR.



Together with IUT's members in the CEE region IUT will continue to support “sitting tenants” in their struggle for fair treatment and the right to compensation.

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

During the period 2010-2012 IUT continued its close cooperation with members in the CEE region; Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia and Slovenia.

Since 1991, the CEE region is characterized by massive privatisation processes, resulting in a rather harsh climate where those who had the opportunity grabbed what they could of property, including housing, while other was left without.

Tenants in houses built by the state or municipality, roughly during 1945 and 1991, were offered to buy their flats, at often low costs. Flats which were, by the time of purchase, often in bad condition after many years of negligence.

This resulted in many “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.

Even though over 20 years have passed since the fall of Socialism in the CEE-region, the aftermath of the privatisation processes still continue to haunt many tenants, and many are those who fear losing their homes.

The CEE region is further marked by low levels of social housing, making it particularly difficult for low income households such as senior citizens and single person households with children to find affordable and decent housing.

The limited private rental sector is to a large extent unregulated, consisting of either expensive professional lettings to well-paid office workers, or of rooms or small flats subletted by private individuals.

The private rental sector is very little known about, as the letting takes place without any official registration.

#### **IUT Project funding for the CEE-region**

From 2010, project funding of 8.000 Euro per annum replaced the earlier (2007-2009) funding for annual conferences for CEE members.

#### **Recipients:**

**2010:** Polish Association of Tenants, PZL, for organising three meetings with tenants, Tenant Forums, campaigning against limited tenant’s right’s in Poland. With IUT participation.

**2010:** Latvia Tenants Assoc., LTA, for organising conference on sitting tenants, Riga June 17-16. Participation by Richard Hewgill, IUT vice President.

Continued...



**2011:** Občianske združenie Právo na bývanie (Right to Housing, Slovakia) for editing and printing a tenants magazine Právo na bývanie .

**2011:** Russian Tenants Association, for translating the Global Tenant to Russian, and seminar in Moscow in April 2012 about organising tenants in multifamily housing.  
With participation of the Polish Association of Tenants, PZL.

**2012:** Croatian Union of Tenants for organising a conference Sept 30-Oct. 1 in Zagreb, for an exchange of experiences of rental housing on the Balkan.

Participation from Bosnia & Herzegovina, and Serbia, and from IUT Secretariat; Sven Bergensträhle and Jørgen D. Jensen, LLO Denmark.



Zagreb 2012: M. Babić, Ivo Josipović (President of Croatia), S. Bergensträhle

### **Other IUT activities in the CEE region**

#### **2010**

**Slovakia, Bratislava,** September 10: The tenant association Občianske združenie Právo na bývanie (Right to Housing) organised a conference on the issue of ‘sitting tenants’ with IUT members in the CEE region (SON, Czech Rep., PZL, Poland, and Slovenia) with representation of FEANTSA and Habitat for Humanity.

#### **2011**

**Slovakia, Bratislava,** March 31: The Slovak tenant association Občianske združenie Právo na bývanie (Right to Housing) organised a seminar on ‘sitting tenants’ in the CEE region, with Lauri Sivonen representative of the Commissioner for Human Rights. Slovak government was represented by Ministry of Transport, Construction and Reg. Development.



From left: Lauri Sivonen, Kristian Straka, gov. rep. Magnus Hammar

**Hungary, Budapest;** 3-day conference ‘A vision for housing in Europe and Central Asia’, organised by Habitat for Humanity, April 4-6, 2011.

Presentations by IUT, Sven Bergensträhle and Magnus Hammar.

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

By the end of 2013, IUT had 11 members in Africa. Only one African member is a “paying member”, the Urban Tenants Association of Kenya.



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.

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.

IUT has had some cues from NUTEN (Nigeria) that they would be willing to take on the responsibility for the IUT-Focal Point for Africa.

In 2011, IUT was invited to speak in Cape Town, at an international conference organised by the Southern African Housing Foundation, September 11-14. Theme: ‘Social housing and the way forward’.

Magnus Hammar then paid a visit to Durban, where IUT’s South African member is based, the Organisation of Civic Rights.

## 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; Pakistan (March 2011), Japan (Nov. 2011 and July 2011), Hong Kong (March 2012).

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

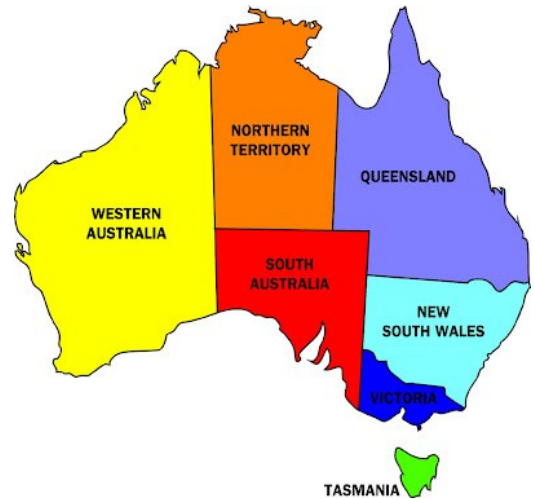


## 9. IUT and Australia & New Zealand

IUT has members in six out of eight Australian states and territories, and one member in N-Z.

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.



IUT was invited to speak at the plenary session of the 7<sup>th</sup> Australian National Housing conference, in Brisbane Queensland Oct. 30-Nov. 2, 2012, where Magnus presented the European housing situation on rental housing.

Magnus Hammar also met with the Housing Minister of Queensland, where he expressed his worries concerning the possible defunding of the Tenants Union in Queensland.

Magnus then travelled to meet with IUT's members in Sydney (NSW), Canberra (ACT), Hobart (Tasmania) and Melbourne (Victoria).

Contacts have been upheld with the AHURI (Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute). Australia was featured in the Global Tenant, December 2012

## 10. IUT and North America

IUT has presently (July 2013) five members in the US and Canada.

- Fédération de locataires d'habitations à loyer modique du Québec, FLHLMQ
- Tenant Resource & Advisory Centre, TRAC. Vancouver, BC
- Federation of Metro Tenant's Association, FMTA
- San Francisco Tenants Union, STU
- National Alliance of HUD Tenants, NAHT

Contacts with US and Canadian members are regular, but unfortunately limited to e-mail contacts.

USA was covered in the Global Tenant magazine: Chicago (March 2011), USA (July 2011), Chicago (July 2012), New York (Dec. 2012)

Canada was covered: Vancouver (Nov. 10), Bed Bugs (July 2011), Toronto (Nov. 2011), Tenant participation (March 2012), Seattle (Dec. 2012)

## 11. 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 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 on Housing and Land Management, at the UN in Geneva Switzerland.

continued

- **UN-HABITAT**

- **World Urban Forum 6, in Naples, September 2012**

The WUF 2012, organized by UN Habitat, was attended by 8.000 participants.

Theme: “The Urban Future”.

The IUT successfully applied for an own networking event at the WUF.

This event with the title “Tenants make cities, cities need affordable housing” was organized in cooperation with our Italian member union SICET.

All presentations are available at [www.iut.nu](http://www.iut.nu) , together with a report in the Global Tenant December 2012



IUT Board members in Naples at WUF 6

- **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:

**2010:** September 20-21

**2011:** October 3-4

**2012:** September 24-25, IUT represented by the IUT Secretariat Stockholm



## **12. 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, Delft the NL
- EHF, European Housing Forum, Brussels
- APNHR, Asia-Pacific Network for Housing Research, Hong Kong
- Social Platform, Brussels

## **13. Meetings with IUT members, and others**

### **2010**

- June 1-2: IUT Meeting with TPAS England, Manchester (Magnus Hammar)
- June 12-13: IUT participation/exhibition at AGM of Swedish Union of Tenants. (M.H.)
- November 12-14, IUT participation at Freja Forum, Skopje, Macedonia. Sven Bergensträhle spoke on the necessity of fair lease agreements.
- November 29: IUT at meeting on ‘EU and housing’, in Oslo, Norway. (M.H.)

### **2011**

- June 15-18: IUT participates in IV International congress of FAVIBC, Barcelona. (Sicet Italy, AIL Portugal, LLO Denmark, IUT Secretariat)
- October 21-23: IUT participation at TPAS Scotland Annual Conference (M.H.)

## 2012

- March 17: IUT participation at AGM of LLO, Denmark (M.H.)
- June 15-17: IUT participation/exhibition at AGM of Swedish Union of Tenants. (M.H.)
- October 14-16: IUT in Durban, with rep. of OCR and the Olof Palme International Centre.
- October 26-28: IUT participation at TPAS Scotland Annual Conference (Ylva Westander)
- November 3-4: IUT participation at congress of LLO, Denmark (Sven Bergenstråhle)

## 14. IUT and the Internet

[www.iut.nu](http://www.iut.nu) is IUT's main source and data base for information on rental housing. Up-dated daily.



## 15. Publications

- **Global Tenant magazine**

May 2010

November 2010

March 2011. Theme: Young Adults & Housing

July 2011

November 2011

March 2012. Theme: Tenant Participation

July 2012

December 2012. Theme: Australia



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

From May 2010, the GT is available in Russian. Credit to Russian Tenants Assoc. and students of Higher School of Economics, Moscow.

- **IUT Policy papers from IUT Brussels:**

- Active ageing and intergenerational solidarity
- Affordable Housing for all – Policy implications of shrinking budgets
- Changing lifestyles, changing climate – the role of housing in the EU

- **Others:**

- Tenants make cities, 13 arguments for rental housing
- IUT folders, reprints in English and French

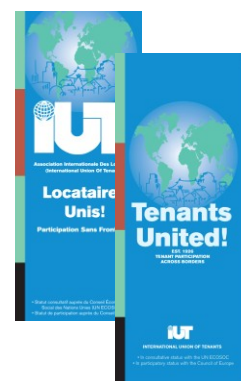


## 16. International Tenant's Day, and themes

2010, Oct. 4: "A new deal for affordable rental housing" See App. III

2011, Oct. 2: "Affordable rental housing for Young Adults"

2012, Oct. 1: "Rental housing - and why we like it! See App IV







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

www.iut.nu

**IUT Appeal**

**Europe needs a real Recovery Plan for the development of affordable rental housing**

<sup>1 (1)</sup>

Europe has just faced and still faces one of the worst financial crises since 1929. The effects of the crisis are particularly tough for many European citizens who have been deprived of their jobs and dwellings.

As a consequence, the housing issue is becoming increasingly important in Europe. In many European states, the financial crisis has caused a veritable housing crisis.

In order to solve this housing crisis affecting the lowest-income households, IUT is of the opinion that affordable rental housing must prevail. The private rental sector and ownership sector have both shown their limits in meeting the growing social demand.

Europe is a political, economic and industrial world power. It must guarantee its inhabitants decent and human living conditions fitting the stakes of our society.

In that context, IUT members is of the opinion that European states must bring a quick answer to this emergency situation by reinforcing the access to affordable rental housing.

In order to bring an effective and social answer to European peoples' expectations, financial means exist. The allocation of these means to the affordable rental housing is veritable political and social choice.


IUT launches an appeal to all Parliaments in Europe, but also to governments and representatives of each European state in order that financial means dedicated to affordable rental housing shall be preserved and reinforced.

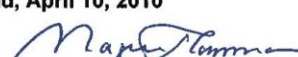
We urge the European states to set up national plans for affordable rental housing at the earliest. The balance of European society and its people depends on it.

Financial means for affordable rental housing could be a relevant opportunity to reinforce an economic stimulus plan.

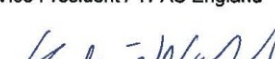
**Signed by IUT Board members in Helsinki, Finland, April 10, 2010**

  
/Sven Carlsson/  
IUT President, Sweden


  
/Richard Hewgill/  
IUT Vice President / TPAS England

  
/Magnus Hammar/  
Secretary General

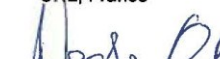
  
/Milan Taraba/  
SON, Czech Republic


  
/Katrine Woll/  
Lbf, Norway


  
/Eddie Jacquemart/  
CNL, France

  
/Jørgen D. Jensen/  
LLO, Denmark

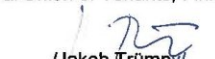
  
/Heidrun Clausen/  
DMB, Germany

  
/Nadja Shah/  
MVO, Austria

  
/Anne Viita/  
Central Union of Tenants, Finland

  
/Ronald Paping/  
Woonbond, the Netherlands

  
/Anders Konradsson/  
SUT, Sweden

  
/Jakob Trümpy/  
MV, Zürich, Switzerland

  
/François Zutter/  
ASLOCA, Geneva, Switzerland



## **In a social Europe we want more social housing!**

### **Joint statement: Confédération Nationale du Logement (CNL) – International Union of Tenants (IUT) on the French homeowners' (UNPI) complaint at the DG Competition.**

The financial crisis and the austerity measures that followed are seriously harming the social conditions of French households. Social housing is more important than ever, considering the high prices in the private rental market. Through its complaint submitted to the European Commission - DG Competition, the UNPI is again undermining the French social model, its mission and vocation. As representatives of the tenants, we need to clarify some points.

The *Loi Boutin* (2009) has dramatically reduced the possibility to access social housing for people in need, decreasing the income limit for eligibility by 10.3%. The result is that today 60% of the total population can access social housing compared to the 70% before the adoption of the law.

HLM bodies (social housing agencies) fulfill their scope in accordance with the SGEI law, housing very poor families in France: 50% of tenants in HLM receive housing benefits; 25% are very poor households.

People living in HLM units are subject to means testing (there is an income limit), which is not the case for people living in other accommodations – such as the Immeubles à Location Normale (ILN, normal rent) or the Pret Locatif Social (PLS, loan) – whose target is medium income and whose price per m<sup>2</sup> is higher. Tenants in HLM whose income exceeds the limit are obliged to pay a *surloyer* ("rent plus") which is used to finance the building and renovation of social housing.

Moreover, 160 000 housing units are empty for renovation or geographical/economic reasons. With 1.3 million people in need, the French government will provide the construction of 150 000 social housing units per year, for the next five years. Therefore, there is no room for UNPI to play with statistics.

European law regulating SGEI should not be instrumentalised in order to increase private landlords' profit. Rent prices in the French private market should be lower if they want to compete with social housing and answer people needs.

#### **Contacts:**

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**International Union of Tenants**

Association Internationale des Locataires

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

## **International Tenants' Day 2010**

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

October 4, 2010

1 (2)

**Affordable housing has always been central to the success of thriving mixed communities. But 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.

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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.

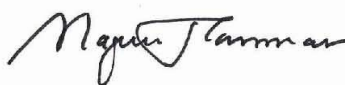
Energy poverty is a reality for many, for owners as well as for tenants. Energy prices incl. cost for heating continue to increase in all parts of the world. In the OECD countries, energy prices rose by nearly 11 percent in 2009, in the US by 19 per cent. Housing affordability is about costs, in relation 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 the most. According to the Eurostat publication *The Social Situation in the EU 2009*, 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 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 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.

Stockholm September 6, 2010



/Magnus Hammar/  
Secretary General



## International Union of Tenants

### Association Internationale des Locataires

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

## International Tenants' Day 2012

"Rental housing – why we like it!"

### 13 arguments for affordable rental housing

October 1, 2012

1 (1)

*"The combination of falling home prices, limited mortgage credit, continued liquidations, and better rental options is fundamentally changing the way Americans live. We believe this change is only beginning and is moving the country towards becoming a rentership society."*

Morgan Stanley; Housing Market Insights, a Rentership Society, 2011.

**We like rental housing!** In the ears of many this outcry might sound a bit too adjusted in order to suit IUT's aims. Yes, of course it fits well into IUT's work ambitions to bring out rental housing as a tenure form that has many positive features, which are not always brought to light. But we are also well aware of the fact that rental housing in many countries is considered as temporary housing, while waiting for one's own home, to buy, etc. Also, rental housing – private and social/public – has for many become a home of retreat when mortgage- or running costs have become unaffordable. In developing countries the majority of the low income, and poor, households rent out of necessity.

**The majority of tenant households**, who have chosen rental housing as their preferred tenure, live in countries where tenants' rights are respected and protected by law. And it's quite simple, if there is enough choice of rentals, if the quality is fine and costs are affordable and, in short, when rental housing is on equal footing with homeownership - then many prefer the convenience of renting. On the other hand, in countries where security of tenure is weak and where rents can be raised without notice and without reasonable causes and where the landlord only sees his tenants as sources of income - then everyone aims at homeownership. Who wouldn't!

Tenants make up for the majority in whole nations such as Germany (57 %) and Switzerland (69%), where the juridical safety nets take care of any mistreatment of tenants. And one out of every three US households rent their homes.

'Tenants make cities' is not an understatement, in Europe; Vienna (77%), Berlin (86%), Amsterdam (73%), Paris (53%), Brussels (57%) and in North America; New York (65%), Chicago (55%), Los Angeles (62%) and Montréal (50%).

On [www.iut.nu](http://www.iut.nu) you find IUT's 13 arguments for increased attention to the benefits of rental housing,

- in a condensed version
- as a full version, with references

Please make use of the International Tenant's Day to cast light on the advantages of rental housing!

/Magnus Hammar/  
Secretary General

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3 October, International Tenant's Day 2011  
**Affordable housing for the Young – now!**

