



31 March 2020

The current tenants' situation in Italy during the Coronavirus crisis

In Italy, the Coronavirus crisis also ends up aggravating ancestral problems connected to the lack of affordable housing and in particularly eviction management. In Lombardy and Veneto, the most affected regions by the virus, according to the latest data released by the Ministry of the Interior, have over **40 thousand requests for evictions**. For this reason the national secretary of the CISL (Italian confederation of trade unions), **Giulio Romani**, and the secretary general of the CISL tenants' union Sicut, **Nino Falotico**, with a note addressed to the Prime Minister and to the ministers of Health, Interior, Justice and Infrastructures, call for the temporary suspension of real estate evictions relating to homes occupied by residents in coronavirus risk areas.

In the request letter sent to the government on the 2nd of March 2020¹ the two secretaries stressed that: *"The evictions or the release of the first dwelling houses foreclosed, due to the owner's insolvency, could also concern people who have already tested positive to the infection or otherwise would make these subjects particularly exposed to contracting the virus"*.

And again: *"It should also be considered that the temporary suspension of evictions in risk areas would allow the use of the public resources usually used in evictions for better control of the ongoing health emergency."*

The Sicut secretary general sent another note to the government on the 17th of March², called **"Request for further measures for the housing sector"**, highlighting that in the drafts of the "Cura Italia"³ decree there is no trace of specific measures for tenants.

Some people have seen their income capacity compromised due to the coronavirus epidemic and are not able to pay the rent. The complaint was made by the secretary general Sicut, Nino Falotico, who recalls as a model the recent ordinance of the mayor of Milan with which the payment deadline for rents and expenses for residential housing was deferred to 30 September 2020 with the possibility of paying in installments according to the economic condition of the household.

"For these reasons we urge the executive to establish a guarantee fund to cover the non-payment of rents by tenants who will suffer a significant reduction in income due to the coronavirus epidemic. Furthermore, taking into account the need to avoid displacements of the population as much as possible, we ask for the deferment of the payment of the rent relative to the months of March and April". These are measures that, according to Sicut, should cover tenants, both in public and private housing. In the note addressed to the government, the Sicut secretary general, in addition to reiterating the request for a moratorium on evictions, indicates *"the urgent need to find temporary housing solutions in favor of the homeless and, more generally, of citizens in conditions of socio-economic fragility, without adequate and safe accommodation".*

¹<http://www.sicet.it/news/comunicati-stampa/coronavirus-cisl-e-sicet-stop-esecuzione-sfratti-nelle-zone-a-rischio-contagio>

²<http://www.sicet.it/news/comunicati-stampa/coronavirus-falotico-serve-un-sostegno-economico-per-chi-vive-in-affitto>

³[http://www.sicet.it/attachments/article/595/20200317_070%20\(1\).pdf](http://www.sicet.it/attachments/article/595/20200317_070%20(1).pdf)



In the latest press release of March 18⁴, 2020 the secretary general of Sicet, **Nino Falotico** commented the decree of the government “Cura Italia” published the day before (Legislative Decree n°18): *“Well done the government on the stopping of evictions, but we insist on the need for a temporary rental guarantee fund.”*

Coordination needed of article 103 with article 83- eviction ban and need for a guarantee fund

*“Article 103 paragraph 6 - reports the secretary of Sicet - suspends all real estate evictions, even for non-residential use, until 30 June 2020. This norm, which largely satisfies our request made to the government together with CISL , should then be coordinated with **article 83** of the decree which provides for a general postponement of the court hearings to a date after April 15 and therefore in principle also determines a temporary suspension of the validation of the evictions recently ordered. Article 103, paragraph 1, suspends the expiry of the terms of all administrative proceedings initiated ex officio or by a party request from 23 February to 15 April, therefore the terms of the calls for the assignment of public residential housing should be postponed, for the request of contributions for rent and for the registration of private deeds at the Revenue Agency ”.*

⁴<http://www.sicet.it/news/comunicati-stampa/cura-italia-accolta-la-richiesta-del-sicet-e-della-cisl-di-bloccare-gli-sfratti>



The city of Milan and the region Lombardy: measures taken to protect tenants' rights during the Coronavirus crisis

The Lombardy region is one of the most affected by the infection of Covid-19 and both, the government of Milan⁵ and of the region⁶, decided to take particular measures to defend tenants.

With the **regional decree of the 16th March 2020**, the municipality of Milan took a *“relief measures for citizens who are in conditions of economic and social fragility, without adequate and safe accommodation, as well as health workers of all levels”*. The decree orders until the end of the sanitary emergency:

1. to ensure the provision of free municipal property housing, earmarking them for the hospitalization of citizens, medical staff and health workers who are in condition of assistance, for the time necessary to guarantee conditions for the protection of their physical health;
2. to finalize the management of the properties in progress entrusted to third party managers/ concessionaires for the same purpose as above;
3. to instruct the competent departments to arrange a reasonable deadline for the expiry of the terms of contracts/agreements expiring, signed with the property managers owned by the municipality and already assigned to the housing emergency;
4. to order the deferral of the payment deadline for the rents and expenses of public residential housing by 30.09.2020, with the possibility of installment payments which may take account of the economic situations of the families.

In the press release of Sicet Milan of the 19th March 2020⁷ shows the efforts of the tenants' union to achieve others important goal in the name of the tenants. They report the teleconference meeting between the councilor for housing and social services of the municipality of Milan, **Gabriele Rabaiotti**, and the Tenants Union. The central theme of the meeting concerned the urgent measures related to the ongoing health emergency that often is intertwined dramatically with the housing emergency experienced by many families.

The councilor, applying mayor **Giuseppe Sala's** ordinance of 16 March (see above), is also working on the response to the housing emergency, recognizing, as the tenants' association had requested, the close link between the availability of a home and the protection of public health.

The councilor is also informed of the possibility of using some hotel structures and some accommodation not included in public housing for homeless families in order to protect their own and others' health.

⁵https://www.comune.milano.it/documents/20126/78875953/ORDINANZA_SINDACO_13_del_16+marzo2020.pdf/3a0d313b-42e3-6165-497c-a341fe7ef09b?t=1584385189124

⁶<http://www.anci.lombardia.it/documenti/9726-DGR%20morosit%C3%83%C2%A0%20incolpevole%202974%202020.pdf>

⁷https://www.cislmilano.it/dettagli_articolo/9707/Case-popolari-positiva-sospensione-sfratti-e-scadenze-Reperire-presto-alloggi-per-chi-senza?fbclid=IwAR3klzPNsgvlzdj1IQRcKsMLVHBv6sxB89Y_etd2X7JQgSNBtXy_CiKOCU



Finally, the tenant unions welcomed the suspension of evictions until June 30, introduced by law decree n° 18 of 17 March 2020 (Cura Italia) and the suspension of the administrative procedures provided for in the same decree.

In addition, it has been confirmed that all deadlines, including the possibility of making administrative appeals to the municipality of Milan, of responding to the registry office for tenants of public housing, of contributing to the solidarity contribution for tenants in Metropolitana Milanese accommodation (public housing of Milan) or to respond to decrees of revocation, are suspended to implement the government decrees.

The tenants' unions are therefore busy, in these days, to verify that the proposed actions are taking place and to report, as far as possible, the emergencies that could arise.

Solidarity initiative of the tenants of the Milan district “Lorenteggio – Giambellino”:

The neighborhood network “Laboratorio di Quartiere of the Milan district “Lorenteggio-Giambellino” has decided to activate a fundraiser to support families, lonely people, young and elderly people in this difficult situation⁸, by establishing a community fund for families and inhabitants who cannot access other public and institutional contributions. The money collected will be destined only to direct help of the inhabitants in difficulties, therefore not to pay or finance services managed by the various organizations. The money will be used essentially for helping people with primary goods such as food and personal hygiene; **housing costs** such as electricity and gas bills and other costs incurred for the maintenance of essential services; health needs like medicines, medical visits or paid therapies; and school supplies as supports for online lessons, homework material or photocopies.

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⁸<http://www.laboratoriodiquartieregiambellinolorenteggio.org/>