



# 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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## **11 claims by the International Union of Tenants towards the EU Green Deal renovation wave- Boosting the economy by combating energy poverty and creating a sound and safe living environment in green quarters**

- 1) The EU Green Deal should be combined with measures to also ensure an economic recovery after the Corona Pandemic. It is a growth strategy that aims to transform the EU into a fair and prosperous society. Measures must be designed that in the long term they support the development towards a society that is socially, economically and ecologically sustainable. Otherwise, citizens will have to pay twice.
- 2) Housing cost neutrality (entailing rents, energy costs and local taxes) should be the main principle of the EU Green Deal. As renovation costs can be passed on to the tenants in most European Member states, renovation often contributes to the displacement of residents and the gentrification of entire quarters. Affordability in renovation means that rent increases are fully balanced by energy-savings. The model of housing cost neutrality thus combines social and climate goals in an ideal way and prevents "renovictions" (evictions by renovation).

- 3) The public funding for the energy efficient renovation of public, affordable, cooperative and social housing is insufficient compared to incentives for private housing. This contributes to the further weakening of tenants with low- and middle incomes, aggravating energy-poverty of an already fragile group. Public funding should be concentrated on public, affordable, cooperative and social housing.
- 4) Public funding for the renovation of private rental housing should be combined in line with rent caps in order to prevent the capitalization of funding.
- 5) Maintain local democratic principles: Tenants' participation should be mandatory when deciding about the standard and costs of renovation. Public funding should be based on projects where a thorough participation of tenants in planning and execution have been guaranteed.
- 6) In the rental housing sector, energy consumption- and energy emission taxation have very limited steering effects. Tenants have no possibility to invest in energy saving measures. This can only be done by the landlords. But landlords are not affected by this taxation, as taxes are passed on to the tenants by rent increases. For this reason we need also legally based positive and/or negative incentives aimed at landlords. For example, a ban on rent increases for homes that do not meet a minimum energy efficiency standard (see also: claim 9).

- 7) Prevent that energy consumption- and energy emission taxation hits the fragile households the hardest, as these groups are mostly living in the less energy efficient buildings. Possible measures to ensure this is a redistribution of those taxes to low- and middle income groups by climate allowances in housing, and coupling public EU spending with the existence of those allowances.
- 8) The EU should ensure the principle of subsidiarity. EU Member states can agree on climate goals, but the means how to reach those goals should be taken at local level.
- 9) A reliable system of measuring and comparing existing conditions and predicting effects of energy savings is crucial. The measuring should be in kwh/m<sup>2</sup>, in order to allow transparency and comparability, which is not the case in the current different national systems of labelling in energy classes.
- 10) Circular economy: When the renovation wave starts, we will live with the results for decades. Planning for upcoming renovations will result in less ecological impacts in the future. Low-carbon and sustainable construction standards must be followed, and the use of renewable energies and materials that are free from harmful chemicals and substances affecting the health of the residents should be specified.

- 11) Sustainable built environment: De-carbonizing strategies should be area based, not only building based. The improvement of local energy systems, tapping local energy resources, the emission reduction at local level, the fostering of "prosumer"- models, mainly supported by social, affordable, public and cooperative housing providers, can lead the way to entire green quarters, where housing security, affordability and health of the residents are at the forefront.

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