



International Union of Tenants

Association Internationale des Locataires

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

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The International Union of Tenants (IUT) calls for help for tenants to prevent a worsening of the European housing crisis

The IUT Board met in Helsinki in June 2022 during the Social Housing Festival and discussed the ongoing housing crisis in the countries represented at the Board. The Board therefore agreed to issue a statement to ask national governments and the European Commission to do more to help tenants.

Inflation - yet another burden on European tenants

In the Euro area, annual inflation was 8.1 per cent. in May 2022, up from 7.4 per cent. in April 2022, according to figures published by Eurostat. The price of energy increased year on year rose by 39.2 per cent. compared to May 2021. There are real fears that gas prices will rise up to 400 per cent. This year and many households will no longer be able to pay their skyrocketing bills. This increase spread to other price categories including food, industrial goods excluding energy and services which rose by between 3.5 per cent and 7.5 per cent in one year.

Throughout Europe inflation reinforces inequalities and makes the situation for the most vulnerable populations even more precarious

It reinforces the question of access to decent, adequate, and affordable housing and stresses the need for a fair and inclusive energy transition. The energy transition is one of the main challenges currently, including for tenants. Unlike property owners, tenants cannot act by defending themselves against increasing energy prices. They are depending on the property owners and are at risk of having energy renovations costs passed on to them. A big societal transition like the energy transition cannot afford to neglect the huge number of tenants in Europe. Therefore, increased tenant participation, right of consultation and government grant support for energy efficiency are required

IUT calls for the involvement of public authorities and the European institutions to take measures to protect tenants in the long term, taking into account the principles of subsidiarity. National policies have been put into operation already and deserve to be reviewed. These measures should be built upon and supplemented to help others in implementing best practice.

The IUT asks the Member States and the European Commission to decide and implement a plan for the protection of tenants around six objectives:

- Develop a policy of rent stabilisation and controls to prevent the indexation of rents in the face of inflation driving up rents and limit rent increases.
- Compensation for increases in energy costs by governments for low-income households.
- Implement a real energy renovation policy without making tenants bear its cost.
- Make housing stakeholders, (the people who rent) full partners in protecting tenants in consultation with their associations and representatives.
- No electricity of hearing cut-offs for households financially overburdened by increased energy costs.
- Suspension of notices to quit and eviction proceedings against tenants who have fallen behind with their energy payments.

We call for a strong commitment from the Member States and the European Commission to prevent housing costs i.e. rents and associated services rising further, to stop rental evictions, fight against exclusion and homelessness and make housing decent and affordable for all.

*INTERNATIONAL UNION OF TENANTS
Stockholm, June 2002*

The International Union of Tenants (IUT) is a non-governmental, not-for-profit membership umbrella organisation for global tenants' organisations. It was founded in 1926 in Zürich, Switzerland. Since 1956 its head office has been located in Stockholm, Sweden with a representative office in Brussels since 2008. The organisation consists of 74 national and regional tenant organisations in 51 countries and is financed through membership fees. IUT is a non-party political organisation, working along democratic lines.

IUTs purpose is to:

- *Promote the exchange of information and knowledge among its members,*
- *Safeguard the interests of tenants and to promote affordable and decent rental housing across the world.*

IUT considers housing to be a fundamental human right in every society. Housing needs to be addressed locally, nationally and internationally. Affordable and sound housing is one of the safeguards for peace and security, a fundamental pillar in all democratic societies and necessary for labour mobility. Lack of affordable housing and homelessness are major ingredients in social exclusion.