

Autumn 2025

◆◆◆ IUT President Marie Linder meets Commissioner

Dan Jørgensen ◆◆◆



IUT Delegation meets Commissioner for Energy and Housing Dan Jørgensen in Brussels



On the 18th of September a delegation of the International Union of Tenants (IUT) led by President **Marie Linder** met with EU Housing Commissioner **Dan Jørgensen** to discuss the future of affordable housing and tenants' rights across Europe. The delegation was also composed by IUT Secretary-General **Dan Nicander**, the Head of the EU liaison Office **Barbara Steenbergen** and the head of the IUT Housing Policy Working Group **Johan Mirtorp**.

The exchange marked a significant step in strengthening cooperation between the IUT and the European Commission at a time when housing affordability is one of the Union's most pressing social challenges.

Marie Linder underlined that the dialogue was "important and constructive," noting that it demonstrated clearly that tenants must be included in EU-level housing policy discussions. Commissioner Jørgensen likewise stressed the value of close collaboration with the IUT, particularly as work progresses on the forthcoming EU Affordable Housing Plan, expected to be launched later this year.

In their discussions, the Commissioner expressed appreciation for the IUT's strong engagement and long-standing advocacy efforts. Linder emphasized that the meeting reaffirmed the need to continue pushing for fair and secure housing conditions for the millions of tenants represented by the IUT across Europe. Commissioner Jørgensen was also formally invited to present the new

housing plan at the **IUT World Congress**, to be held in Malmö and Copenhagen on **7-9 May 2026**.

The IUT continues its mission to promote fair, secure, and affordable housing: no household should be required to spend more than 25% of its income on housing; all EU Member States must ensure a sufficient share of affordable homes; and rented and owned housing should receive equal treatment in policy frameworks.

IUT Contributes to High-Level Implementation Dialogue on EU Support for Affordable Housing



On 13 November in Brussels, the International Union of Tenants (IUT) participated in the Implementation Dialogue with Executive Vice-President of the European Commission **Teresa Ribera**, joining representatives from European institutions, housing organisations, and civil society to discuss the future of EU support for affordable housing. The meeting centred on the ongoing revision of State aid rules, a process with major implications for how public resources can be used to address Europe's deepening housing affordability crisis.

In the discussion, the IUT underlined a crucial point: EU funds and loans directed to private investors must be tied to strong and enforceable conditionalities and social safeguards to prevent speculation and ensure long-term affordability for tenants. Without binding obligations, participants stressed, public resources risk reinforcing market pressures rather than alleviating them.

Representing the IUT, **Zeno Winkels**, member of the IUT Board and President of Woonbond, together with **Barbara Steenbergen**, Head of the IUT Liaison Office to the EU, reaffirmed the organisation's long-standing position that security of tenure and affordable rents must remain core elements of any future EU framework. They advocated in particular for open-ended rental contracts and effective rent caps as key protections for tenants across Europe.

During the session, Zeno Winkels formally handed Executive Vice-President Ribera the **IUT's policy booklet¹**, which sets out ten concrete recommendations for strengthening affordability, safeguarding tenants' rights, and promoting fair and sustainable housing systems. The document reflects the IUT's commitment to ensuring that tenant voices remain central as the EU reshapes its housing policy instruments.

The dialogue provided a constructive platform for exchanging views, and the IUT welcomed the opportunity to contribute to shaping State aid rules that genuinely support affordable, secure, and socially responsible housing across the Union.

¹ [https://www.iut.nu/news-events/new-iut-position-](https://www.iut.nu/news-events/new-iut-position-papers-expand-on-the-delft-declaration/)

[papers-expand-on-the-delft-declaration/](https://www.iut.nu/news-events/new-iut-position-papers-expand-on-the-delft-declaration/)

Marie Linder at the Popular Assembly for Housing Injustice – European Parliament



The Popular Assembly for Housing Justice, organized by The Left in collaboration with the Rosa Luxembourg Foundation and held at the European Parliament on 16 October, brought together Members of the European Parliament, tenant unions, local activists, researchers, and housing movements from across Europe to confront one of the continent's most pressing challenges: the right to housing. The event, titled "Homes for People, Not for Profit," created a space for collective reflection and mobilisation at a time when speculation, gentrification, and financialisation are exacerbating housing insecurity across Europe.

Opening the Assembly, MEPs **Irene Montero** and **Leïla Chaïbi** framed the housing crisis as a direct consequence of political choices that prioritise markets over people. They highlighted that the first European Action Plan on Affordable Housing expected in December will require strong counter-lobbying from social movements and progressive parties to resist the influence of financial and real estate interests.

The first panel was moderated by **Martin Schirdewan** (Co-Chair of The Left Group). Speakers from Italy, France, Spain, Sweden, and Germany described a Europe where rents have soared, wages stagnated, and evictions multiplied.

Marie Linder, President of the International Union of Tenants and the Swedish Tenants' Union described how Sweden's strong tenant protections coexist with a growing shortage of affordable homes. She reminded participants that in Sweden, tenants have the right to negotiate rents collectively and to stay indefinitely in their homes, although these guarantees are being eroded by market pressures.

During the rest of the session, participants reaffirmed that the fight for housing is inseparable from the fight for democracy, social justice, and equality. Across Europe the same demand resonates: homes must serve people, not profit.

UN-HABITAT Expert Group Meeting on Housing Indicators and Policies in the EU



At the Expert Group Meeting on Housing Indicators and Policies in the European Union, held on 2–3 October 2025 in Brussels, Session 2 examined regulatory approaches to Europe's rental markets. **Barbara Steenbergen**, Head of the IUT Liaison Office to the EU, presented an overview of rental market regulation across Member States

In her intervention, Steenbergen stressed that rent stabilization mechanisms are most effective when integrated into a wider housing strategy, alongside eviction protections, housing allowances, and sustained investment

in social and affordable housing. She highlighted that modern stabilization systems focus on regulating rent increases over time, rely on transparent reference indexes, and allow adjustments when quality improvements are made. Poorly designed loopholes, especially vacancy decontrol, were identified as major threats to regulatory effectiveness.

Steenbergen emphasized that enforcement tools such as administrative fines, rent tribunals, and disclosure obligations remain crucial. Without credible oversight, she warned, rent controls can become merely symbolic and fail to deliver real affordability gains. She concluded that well-embedded, well-designed, and firmly enforced rent stabilization mechanisms can help reduce inequality, provide stability for tenants, and support affordability in high-pressure housing markets.

IUT Housing Policy Working Group meeting in Vienna – 15 and 16 October



On October 15 and 16, IUT **Housing Policy Working Group** convened in Vienna for a two-day meeting hosted by the **Mietervereinigung Österreichs** and its Secretary General and member of the **HPWG Marisa Herzog-Perchtold**, bringing together tenant representatives from across Europe to assess

major ongoing EU policy processes that will shape the future of affordable and secure housing.

Discussions focused on three core developments. First, the group examined the European Parliament Special Committee on Housing draft initiative report on housing, noting its growing political relevance at a time of widening affordability gaps. Second, members reviewed the European Commission's consultation on the forthcoming European Affordable Housing Plan, which is expected to set out a comprehensive EU framework addressing supply, affordability, and tenant protection. Finally, the Working Group assessed the Commission's parallel consultation on Services of General Economic Interest (SGEI) in the housing sector, a critical issue for safeguarding public, social, and affordable housing providers across Member States.

From a tenants' perspective, these processes will be decisive in shaping how Europe ensures accessible, quality, and secure homes in the years ahead. The Working Group reaffirmed the IUT's commitment to contributing actively to each of these initiatives.

As part of the programme, participants joined an on-site study visit to **Wientalerrasse**², one of this year's EHRIN Awards winners. The project offered an inspiring example of sustainable, socially inclusive housing in practice, illustrating how innovative architectural design and strong social objectives can successfully align to support communities.

The meeting in Vienna strengthened cooperation among national tenant organisations and reinforced the IUT's strategic role in Europe's ongoing housing policy debates.

² <https://www.responsiblehousing.eu/2025>

Danish Presidency high-level conference on affordable housing

On 29 and 30 September 2025, the Danish Presidency of the Council of the European Union hosted a high-level conference in Copenhagen on affordable and sustainable housing. The event brought together MEPs, representatives of EU institutions, national and local authorities, and civil society to discuss the urgent housing challenges faced by European households.

Speakers emphasised that the housing crisis is a daily reality for low- and middle-income families, with rising rents and limited access to adequate housing undermining social cohesion. EU Commissioner Dan Jørgensen highlighted the potential to learn from successful urban regeneration projects, while HOUS Committee Chair Irene Tinagli pointed to speculation and short-term rentals as key drivers of the crisis, calling for increased public and social housing investment. Matthew Baldwin, from the European Commission's Housing Task Force, underlined the need to combine innovative approaches with proven solutions to shape a European housing plan that delivers tangible results.

Discussions addressed the measurement of housing affordability and the specific obstacles faced by young people, students, and vulnerable households. Participants stressed the importance of coordinated action across all levels of governance and the need for inclusive policies that ensure access to decent, sustainable, and affordable housing.

The conference reinforced the principle that effective solutions to Europe's housing crisis require public investment, protection of tenants, and a strong focus on the most vulnerable.

Barbara Steenbergen at the UGT Housing Congress in Málaga: Opening Spaces, Building Solutions



The International Union of Tenants (IUT) took part in the **UGT Housing Congress**, “*Abrir espacios, construir soluciones. Más y mejor sindicato*”, held on the 10-11 November in Málaga. The event brought together trade union leaders, policymakers, and housing experts to discuss the social and political challenges shaping Europe's housing landscape.

Representing the IUT, **Barbara Steenbergen** participated in the panel “*El futuro de la vivienda en Europa*”, joining MEP **Alicia Homs**, **Christian Fölzer**, Head of Gewerkschaft Bau-Holz, and Maria del **Carmen Barrera Chamorro**, UGT's Secretary for European Policies. The session, moderated by **Ainara Fernández Tortosa** from the Institute for Human Rights and Business, explored the structural causes of Europe's housing crisis and the policy tools needed to address it.

In her intervention, Barbara Steenbergen outlined the IUT's central priorities for a fair and tenants centered housing agenda. She stressed that housing must be recognised and protected as a fundamental right and not treated as a speculative asset. She highlighted the urgent need for stronger tenant protections, fair and transparent rent

regulation, and substantial investment in social and affordable housing. Steenbergen also underlined that the green transition must be socially just, ensuring energy efficiency measures do not increase housing costs or exacerbate inequalities.

Throughout the discussion, she emphasised that coordinated action at local, national, and EU level is essential to ensure that housing systems deliver affordability, security, and dignity for all households.

European Parliament HOUS Committee Exchanges Views with Commissioner Teresa Ribera – 17 November

On 17 November 2025, the **HOUS Committee** held an exchange of views with **Teresa Ribera**, Executive Vice President of the European Commission, on the **European Commission's proposal to revise the SGEI Decision on Affordable and Social Housing**. Ribera highlighted the urgent housing crisis across Europe, noting that young people struggle to access homes and families spend a high share of income on housing. She stressed that coordinated EU action is needed to promote affordable, sustainable, and energy-efficient housing, while respecting Member States' competences. Ribera emphasized that affordable housing will complement, not replace, social housing, and that the revision aims to simplify funding rules, ensure transparency, and prevent speculation through conditionalities on price, quality, and minimum project duration.

Members raised important points during the discussion. **Jana Toom (RE - ES)** underlined the situation in depopulated areas, pointing out that "empty blocks of the Soviet era are very low energy efficient. On State aid we need change; simplification is not enough." **Vicent**

Marzà (G/EFA – ES) stressed long-term affordability, stating that "prices below market are not enough, and ten years is absolutely not enough. Conditionalities are necessary to prevent speculation by private actors."

Ribera responded that rural and urban areas require tailored approaches, that subsidiarity must be respected, and that conditionalities and guidance will ensure public and non-profit providers deliver affordable, quality housing without creating opportunities for speculation. She stressed the importance of learning from successful experiences across Europe and providing the tools for Member States, regions, and municipalities to implement effective solutions.

EESC Publishes Opinion on European Affordable Housing Plan – 18 September



The **European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)** has published its exploratory opinion "**For a European Affordable Housing Plan – the contribution of civil society**" (TEN/848), adopted at plenary on 18 September 2025. The opinion, requested by the Danish Presidency of the Council of the EU, was prepared by rapporteur **John Comer** and co-rapporteur **Thomas Kattnig**, with **Marisa Herzog Perchtold** serving as advisor to the co-rapporteur.

Marisa Herzog Perchtold played a key role in ensuring that civil society perspectives, tenants' rights, and the needs of non-profit

housing providers were central to the recommendations. The opinion welcomes the launch of the first European Affordable Housing Plan (AHP) and the appointment of a dedicated Commissioner for Housing, calling for swift implementation and a coordinated European Housing Task Force. It emphasizes enshrining the right to housing in EU law, broadening access to social housing, regulating short-term rentals, promoting “Housing First” programmes to tackle homelessness, and supporting sustainable, accessible, and affordable housing through innovative financing and digitalisation.

Through her contributions, Marisa Herzog Perchtold ensured that tenants’ voices are fully represented, reinforcing the EESC’s commitment to inclusive, sustainable, and socially just housing policies across Europe.³

Barbara Steenbergen at the RICS Built Environment European Summit 2025 – 20 and 21 October



The **International Union of Tenants (IUT)** took part in the **RICS Built Environment European Summit 2025**, held on 21st October at the Hungarian Central Bank in Budapest. The event brought together real estate professionals, policymakers, investors, and sustainability experts to discuss the challenges and

opportunities shaping Europe’s built environment.

Representing the IUT, **Barbara Steenbergen** participated in a fireside chat on “Tackling the Affordable Housing Crisis in Europe”, alongside **Andrea Colantonio** from the European Investment Bank (EIB), **Matthew Baldwin** from the European Commission Housing Taskforce, **Raúl García Rodríguez**, and **Luca Bertalot**. The session, moderated by **Raul Garcia Rodriguez** from the UNECE Real Estate Market Advisory Group, examined the social, economic, and environmental factors driving Europe’s housing crisis and explored innovative policy and financing solutions.

In her intervention, Barbara highlighted that affordable housing is one of the most urgent challenges facing Europe’s cities today. She emphasized the need to address economic inequality, demographic shifts, and climate pressures through innovative, sustainable, and inclusive housing solutions. Steenbergen shared insights on initiatives such as the European Responsible Housing Initiative (ERHIN), which promotes sustainable, socially responsible housing across Europe, and stressed how such approaches can make housing accessible while advancing broader affordability and sustainability goals.

She also underlined the importance of integrating tenant perspectives into housing policy, advocating for housing to be recognized as a fundamental right, with strong tenant protections, fair rent regulation, and substantial investment in social and affordable housing. Steenbergen emphasized that a socially just green transition is essential, ensuring that energy efficiency measures do not exacerbate housing costs or inequalities.

Throughout the discussion, she reinforced that coordinated action at local, national, and EU

³ <https://www.eesc.europa.eu/en/our-work/opinions-information->

[reports/opinions/european-affordable-housing-plan-contribution-civil-society](https://www.eesc.europa.eu/en/our-work/opinions-information-reports/opinions/european-affordable-housing-plan-contribution-civil-society)

levels is crucial to ensure housing systems deliver affordability, security, and dignity for all households.

Housing and Food: Communities and Local Governments Driving Fair Sustainability Transitions – EESC



On 6 November 2025, the European Economic and Social Committee in Brussels hosted the morning session of the policy dialogue “Housing and Food: Communities and Local Governments Driving Fair Sustainability Transitions”. Organized by ICLEI Europe, the session focused on sustainable, affordable, and socially inclusive housing practices, highlighting the vital role of civil society and local governments. **Patrick Janssen**, Alderman of Urbanism and Housing in Antwerp, shared insights on the city’s housing challenges and initiatives. **Joseba Aranzabal Iraeta** presented the case of Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain. **Emiliano Rocchetti** highlighted tenant-centered approaches, presenting award-winning initiatives such as Sostre Civic and Stockholmhusen, where publicly owned land ensures long-term affordability and tenant participation in decision-making. Rocchetti also Highlights the need to make it easier for tenants to participate in the co-management, co-decision processes regarding energy

renovations and new construction of buildings, to better ensure that housing serves those who actually live in it. **Thomas Kattinig** discussed the Viennese model, emphasizing that EU state aid rules should better accommodate social housing. Overall, the session illustrated how locally led and socially conscious housing strategies can reconcile affordability, sustainability, and social equity.

EqualHouse Partners Gather in Brussels – 15 and 16 September



On **15–16 September**, the partners of the EqualHouse project⁴ met in person for the first time in a year and a half in Brussels, marking an important moment of reconnection and renewed collaboration. The discussions signalled a transition from identifying Europe’s housing challenges to developing concrete, evidence-based solutions for the EU and the UK.

During the meeting, participants reviewed recent project outputs, including 28 updated country fiches offering a clear comparative overview of housing unaffordability and exclusion across all EU Member States and the UK.

The IUT delegation—Barbara Steenbergen (Head of the EU Liaison Office), Emiliano Rocchetti (EU Policy Officer), and Marianna Freni (Policy Trainee)—reaffirmed IUT’s strong

⁴ <http://equalhouse.eu/>

commitment to dissemination within the EqualHouse project. As part of this work, the delegation also provided a brief feedback summary of the seminar on rent regulation, rent control, and rent stabilisation organised by the IUT during the International Social Housing Festival in Dublin, outlining the key political, legal, and advocacy perspectives presented there.

Emiliano Rocchetti at the EURHONET Conference in Bari



IUT was present at the **Eurhonet Conference and General Assembly 2025**, held on 22–23 October in Bari, Italy, hosted by ARCA Puglia Centrale. The two-day event brought together social housing providers, policymakers, and tenant representatives to share best practices, reflect on innovations in tenant services, and discuss priorities for the coming years.

During the first day, which focused on innovative services for tenants, participants heard presentations on a variety of inspiring initiatives. These included “Wohnen im Viertel: Living in the Neighborhood” by Münchner Wohnen (Germany), the POC Legalità programme in Puglia, Poplar HARCA’s Oar & Explore service in the UK, and Lunds Kommuns Fastighets AB’s sustainability strategy in Sweden.

Emiliano Rocchetti (IUT), reacted to these presentations by highlighting the tangible benefits these initiatives bring to tenants. He stressed that initiatives like urban regeneration, legal support, sustainability

measures and community-building programmes demonstrate how housing providers can place tenants at the centre of their work. Rocchetti emphasised that it is essential to continue and strengthen cooperation between Eurhonet and the IUT, ensuring that tenants’ perspectives and needs remain the guiding principle in all social and affordable housing projects.

The conference also featured a study visit to the **San Girolamo district**, showcasing urban regeneration and community-focused redevelopment, including the waterfront project and public artworks such as Jasmine Pignatelli’s sculpture, designed to commemorate Bari’s history of solidarity. Rocchetti’s reflections underscored that the success of such projects depends on active tenant engagement and the integration of social, cultural, and environmental considerations.

Housing in the 2025 Country Specific Recommendations - A Comparative Analysis Seminar series IUT



On 25 November 2025, the International Union of Tenants held a members-only seminar via Teams, focused on housing challenges highlighted in the European Commission’s 2025 Country-Specific Recommendations (CSRs). Led by **Marianna Freni** of the IUT EU

Liaison Office, the session offered a comparative analysis of housing and tenancy-related issues across a selection of Member States, including Austria, Czechia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Portugal, Sweden, Italy, Belgium, and Spain. The seminar aimed to connect the Commission's findings with the realities faced by tenants, exploring affordability, security of tenure, and access to adequate housing. By comparing Member States' experiences, the discussion emphasized that the housing crisis is a serious and widespread challenge affecting countries from all across Europe, signalling the urgent need for comprehensive and coordinated policy responses. The session reinforced IUT's commitment to advocating for housing as a human right, emphasizing that EU policy and national reforms must prioritize people over profit to ensure affordable, secure, and sustainable homes across Europe.

Housing for breakfast – Norway Mission to the EU



At the “**Housing for Breakfast**” seminar, hosted by the Mission of Norway to the EU and KS, EU housing initiatives, including the upcoming **Affordable Housing Plan**, were discussed with policymakers and stakeholders.

Emiliano Rocchetti of the **International Union of Tenants (IUT)** highlighted the importance of putting tenants at the centre of housing policies, stressing long-term affordability, social

inclusion, and tenant protections to prevent speculation and ensure dignified, sustainable housing for all.

The seminar also featured insights from the European Commission Task Force on Housing, the Danish Presidency, Housing Europe, and Huseierne, and showcased best practices from the **EEA and Norway Grants** supporting disadvantaged groups. Participants emphasized collaboration and participatory approaches to guarantee access to quality housing, especially for the most vulnerable.

HOUS Committee Activities for the 2nd half of 2025



In September 2025, the **HOUS Special Committee** fully resumed its institutional activities after the summer break, launching a new phase marked by an intensive agenda of meetings, hearings, and political exchanges. This autumn cycle has been crucial for reinforcing the analytical work developed so far, gathering input from experts and stakeholders, and advancing the Committee's contribution to the emerging European action plan on housing.

On 25 September, the Committee held a meeting dedicated to discussing the draft report on the EU housing crisis, formally opening the amendment process and defining the upcoming legislative steps. Around the same time, a joint EMPL–HOUS public hearing addressed demographic trends and housing

needs, providing essential data for understanding how Europe's evolving demographics affect housing demand.

In October, during two extraordinary meetings in Strasbourg, the Committee engaged in high-level exchanges with key members of the European Commission. On 9 October, HOUS Members met with Executive Vice-President Stéphane Séjourné to discuss issues linked to the Committee's mandate, including short-term rentals and the impact of tourism. On 20 October, they held an exchange of views with Executive Vice-President Roxana Mînzatu, focusing on housing accessibility, social rights, and the situation of vulnerable groups.

Activities intensified further in November. On 3 November, the Committee hosted the workshop "Dynamics in the Housing Crisis", which explored vulnerability, short-term rentals, and construction and renovation trends. On 4 November, two public hearings took place: the morning session on "Tourism, Short-Term Rentals and Housing Affordability", examining how to balance economic growth with accessible housing markets; and the afternoon session on "Housing Challenges for Young Europeans", focused on student accommodation, youth emancipation, and talent retention.

Social Investment and Poverty Reduction in the next MFF - European Parliament



S&D Group and Social Platform hosted the event "Social Investment and Poverty Reduction in the next MFF", co-organised by the S&D Group and Social Platform. The meeting brought together EU policymakers and civil society organisations to discuss how the forthcoming Multiannual Financial Framework can effectively support Europe's social objectives at a time when competing priorities, particularly defence and competitiveness, risk overshadowing the fight against poverty. Contributions from representatives of NGOs, including Save the Children Italy, Diakonía España, Caritas España and COFACE Families Europe, illustrated how ESF+ funding is already shaping concrete improvements in people's lives, from access to essential services to strengthened social inclusion measures. Together, these experiences demonstrated that social investment produces long-term, structural benefits when funding is stable and well-targeted. During the panel discussion, representatives from the European Parliament, the European Commission, and the Committee of the Regions shared their views alongside contributions from other experts and civil society actors. Speakers warned that social priorities risk being diluted unless stronger commitments are built into the next MFF. Representing the International Union of Tenants, **Marianna Freni** underlined that housing must be considered a core social

investment. She stressed that EU funds can contribute to tackling the housing crisis only if they include safeguards ensuring long-term affordability, recalling cases in which publicly funded housing has later been sold to private investors, eroding its social purpose. The event concluded with a shared recognition that the next MFF will be decisive: without stronger investment and clearer protections, the EU will not be able to deliver on its ambition to reduce poverty and reinforce social inclusion across Member States.

Housing for the Common Good: Sustainable housing governance in European cities and regions



On the 14th of October, as part of the **European Week of Regions and Cities**, the **Capital Cities and Regions Network (CCRN)** organized a vibrant political debate to discuss the vital role that local and regional authorities play in promoting good housing governance, policies and projects.

The session was moderated by **Michaela Kauer**, Director of the Brussels Office of the **City of Vienna**, and included speakers from several European cities: **Floor Roduner**, Deputy Mayor of the City of Haarlem; **Elina Treija**, EU Local Councillor of Riga City Council; **Dermot Lacey**, Councillor of Dublin City Council; and **Pascal Smet**, Member of the Brussels Parliament and of the Committee of the Regions.

The debate aimed to answer three main questions: what is the main housing challenge in each city, what best practices have been implemented to address these challenges, and what are the expectations from EU policymaking to support affordable and sustainable housing.

Elina Treija highlighted the challenges of aging, energy-inefficient housing causing energy poverty, slow renovations, and a lack of affordable rentals, stressing support for vulnerable groups and funding for old Soviet apartments. **Dermot Lacey** framed housing as a civil rights issue, calling for EU recognition of the crisis, relaxed state aid rules, and sharing best practices. **Floor Roduner** addressed rising prices and shortages, noting the difficulty for middle-income households to access affordable homes despite Haarlem's strong social housing system. **Pascal Smet** presented the Social Rental Agency as an innovative way to expand access for lower-income tenants.

Also contributing to the discussion, **Emiliano Rocchetti**, Policy Officer at the IUT Brussels Office, underlined the need to strengthen collaboration between local authorities and tenants, ensuring their active participation in the co-decision, co-management, and co-design of housing policies...because, in the end, it's tenants who make cities.

Anti-Poverty Day 2025, Brussels – European Parliament



Organised by the European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN), the 2025 Anti-Poverty Day gathered EU policymakers, civil society, and people experiencing poverty to reaffirm that eradicating poverty must remain at the heart of European policy.

Speakers including Carlos Susías (President of EAPN) and Sonia Vila Nuñez (European Commission) agreed that eradicating poverty requires a preventive, coordinated, and inclusive approach, noting that anti-poverty efforts must extend beyond social policy to areas such as energy, transport, health, and economic policy. Seamus Boland (President of the European Economic Social Committee) emphasized that economic development should automatically contribute to fighting poverty, with civil society placed at the heart of Europe.

The event showed that poverty is not only lack of resources but also lack of voice. Panelists emphasized the importance of meaningful, co-constructed participation. Children, single parents, migrants, and other people experiencing poverty must be actively involved in shaping policies, with their input genuinely considered rather than treated as symbolic. Participation is not charity, they noted, it is democracy in action, essential for designing policies that truly address the realities of poverty.

Participants then engaged in stimulating workshops addressing specific challenges in the fight against poverty.

IUT Brussels has moved to a new Office



In autumn 2025, the International Union of Tenants (IUT) moved its Brussels office to a new address in the heart of the European Quarter: Rue Général Leman 24, B-1040 Brussels. The move brings the organisation even closer to the EU institutions and networks it works with daily, strengthening its capacity to follow policy developments more closely. The relocation reflects IUT's continued commitment to representing tenants at the European level and ensuring that their concerns remain at the forefront of discussions on housing policy and human rights. The new premises offer a more functional space for the Brussels team, better suited to meetings and ongoing advocacy on behalf of tenants across Europe. The Brussels office invites all partners and colleagues to note the change and warmly welcomes visits to the new location.

Acknowledgements



In early September, IUT Brussels had the pleasure of welcoming our new Policy Trainee, **Marianna Freni**. Her passion, preparation, and steady support have been an essential asset to the office. The International Union of Tenants is deeply grateful for her contribution and wishes her every success as she moves forward.

© IUT liaison office to the EU

Barbara Steenbergen, Emiliano Rocchetti and Marianna Freni

More info:

Barbara Steenbergen, Head of IUT liaison office to the EU, Brussels

barbara.steenbergen@iut.nu