



UNIVERSITAT
ROVIRA I VIRGILI
Housing Chair



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON LEGAL ASPECTS OF HOUSING

Ensuring the effective exercise of the right to housing in the EU. Access to adequate and affordable housing for all

Tarragona, Spain

Date: 27 and 28 April 2017

Venue: Campus Catalunya, University Rovira i Virgili,
Av. Catalunya, 35 – 43002, Tarragona, Spain.

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A. INTRODUCTION

In the case *Kusionová* of the European Court of Justice 10-9-2014, the Court stated that “Under EU law, the right to accommodation is a fundamental right guaranteed under Article 7 of the Charter that the referring court must take into consideration when implementing Directive 93/13” and that “*the European Court of Human Rights has held, first, that the loss of a home is one of the most serious breaches of the right to respect for the home and, secondly, that any person who risks being the victim of such a breach should be able to have the proportionality of such a measure reviewed*”.

It seems that, for the first time, the ECJ goes a step forward acknowledging a sort of subjective right to housing (“accommodation”) which goes beyond all EU Constitutions that, when acknowledging the right to housing, simply provide for a mandate to the public Administration to undertake policies and legislation to fulfil that right. In addition, many countries have implemented or are in the process to implement Directive 2014/17, which may entail an important impact in the affordability and the way households will access to housing.

In any case, many evidences have been already been found to trace a path among housing tenures as a way to access to housing, overindebtedness, evictions and, ultimately, homelessness. One of the most recent works is the “Pilot project - Promoting protection of the right to housing - Homelessness prevention in the context of evictions” (VT/2013/056)¹ that compares for the EU Commission data, causes and effective policies that may help to reduce households’ overindebtedness, evictions and homelessness. Among them, several relate to housing tenures, such as housing tenures and human rights, housing tenures and consumers’ rights, continuum of housing tenures including enough affordable housing, restricting the use of short-time tenancies, assessing the impact between eviction measures and the housing and mortgage markets and to promote responsible lending.

All these aspects will be in the core of this international conference, for the first time organized by the Housing Chair of University Rovira i Virgili and the Housing Rights Watch network of FEANTSA. This is a unique opportunity to gather together a network of more than 40 Spanish researchers that have been working to study how to reform housing tenures to make access to housing more affordable, stable and flexible for households in a project called “*Reforming housing tenures: the access to housing through tenancies, homeownership and their taxation*”; and the Housing Rights Watch network of FEANTSA, a European interdisciplinary group of associations, lawyers and academics from different countries, who

¹ To be found at <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=7892&type=2&furtherPubs=yes>.

are committed to promoting the right to housing for all. HRW seeks the realisation of the right of every person to live in dignity and to have a secure, adequate and affordable place to live.

B) CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

***Spanish and English are the official languages of the Conference.
There will be professional simultaneous translation throughout all the sessions from one into the other language.***

THURSDAY, 27TH APRIL 2017

10:30-12 h.	Sightseeing in the Roman Town of Tarragona and housing Informal meeting at the Portal del Roser (Via de l'Imperi Romà, Tarragona) <i>Please, confirm your attendance to this event ticking its box in the on-line registration form (PC)</i>
12:30-13:30	Registration at the conference venue <i>Welcome snacks, drinks and coffee</i>
13:30-13:45	Opening Ceremony / Words of Welcome Contributors: Prof. Dr. Josep A. Ferré, Rector of University Rovira i Virgili (PC) Carles Sala Roca, Catalan Secretary of Housing Dr. Julio Gómez Pomar, Spanish Secretary of Infrastructure, Transport and Housing (PC)
13:45:14:45	Plenary session 1. "Evictions and homelessness in Europe" Joan Uribe, President of FEANTSA, OHSJDD Dr. Padraic Kenna, Univ. of Galway, HRW correspondent. <i>Evictions and homelessness in Europe</i> Koldo Casla-Salazar, Researcher on the right to housing, Amnesty International Spain. <i>Evicted Rights II: Right to housing and gender impact of rental evictions in Spain</i>
14:45-15 h.	Lunch
15 h.-17 h.	Workshop 1. HOMEOWNERSHIP AND MORTGAGES. Dr. Héctor Simon (coord.). Presentation of papers related to homeownership, mortgage lending, mortgage market, Directive 2014/17 implementation, reckless banking practices.
17 h. - 17:15 h.	Coffee-break
17:15 h - 19:15 h.	Workshop 2. EVICTIONS. Gemma Caballé (coord.). Presentation of papers related to evictions, causes, legal, sociological and Welfare State way to stop or palliate them, solutions to solve their consequences.
20 h.	Conference dinner (Seminar) <i>Please, confirm your attendance to this event ticking its box in the on-line registration form</i>

FRIDAY, 28TH APRIL 2017

9 h.	<p>Plenary session 2. “Housing tenures in Europe”</p> <p>Prof. Dr. C. Schmid, ZERP, University of Bremen</p> <p>Prof. Dr. Sergio Nasarre Aznar, UNESCO Housing Chair, U. Rovira i Virgili, <i>Drafting attractive residential leases for EU peripheral countries</i></p> <p>Prof. Dr. Esther Muñiz, University of Valladolid</p>
10 h.	Coffee-break
10:15 - 12:15	<p>Workshop 3. TENANCIES AND INTERMEDIATE TENURES. Rosa Maria Garcia (coord.). Presentation of papers related to tenancies, control vs liberalization, short tenancies, holiday tenancies, stigmatization of tenancies, alternative housing tenures to tenancies and homeownership.</p>
12:15- 13:15	Lunch
13:15-14:15	<p>Plenary session 3. Strategic litigation in the area of housing rights in Europe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • María José Aldanas, FEANTSA Policy Officer and HRW Coordinator. • Javier Rubio, attorney CAES. <i>Preliminary rulings before the ECJ.</i> • Anais Franquesa, attorney at Iridia. <i>Use of art 39 before the ECHR and the decision on the interim measure.</i> • Marie Rothhahn and Sarah Coupechoux, Fondation Abbe Pierre. <i>Legal cases to contribute to the right to housing in France.</i>
14:30-16:30	<p>Parallel workshop 4a. RIGHT TO HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS. Núria Lambea (coord.). Presentation of papers about paths in and out, Housing First, affordable housing, empty housing, squatting. Homelessness, prevention, tackling and reaction. Criminalization of the homelessness and use of public spaces.</p>
14:30-16:30	<p>Parallel workshop 4b. HOUSING TAXATION. Dr. Ángel Urquizu (coord.). Presentation of papers about taxation of homeownership, tenancies and intermediate tenures. Comparative, European and international housing taxation.</p>
16:30-16:45	Coffee-break
16:45-18:45	<p>Workshop 5. EUROPEAN INSTRUMENTS, POLICIES AND JURISPRUDENCE. Collective complaints and other instruments to defend housing rights in Europe. Maria Font (coord.). Presentation of papers about European instruments, policies and litigation in relation to housing, evictions and homelessness. Collective complaints. Infringement procedures.</p>
19 h.	Preview of the Documentary Film “The Line”, about evictions and homelessness produced by the UNESCO Chair of Housing URV.
19:20 h.	Closing
20:30 h.	<p>Informal dinner (to be determined according the no. of people)</p> <p><i>Please, confirm your attendance to this event ticking its box in the on-line registration form (PC)</i></p>

C) CALL FOR PAPERS

Papers are welcome to be presented during the foreseen Parallel sessions in the Conference. Each presenter should send an abstract of maximum half a page up to **27th March 2017** to the coordinator of the workshop she wants to submit the paper. E-mail addresses of each coordinator are:

- a) Workshop 1. Homeownership and mortgages. Dr. Héctor Simón (hector.simon@urv.cat).
- b) Workshop 2. Evictions. Gemma Caballé (gemma.caballe@urv.cat).
- c) Workshop 3. Tenancies and intermediate tenures. Rosa Maria Garcia Teruel (rosamaria.garcia@urv.cat).
- d) Parallel Workshop 4a. Right to housing and homelessness. Núria Lambea (nuria.lambea@urv.cat).
- e) Parallel Workshop 4b. Dr. Ángel Urquizu (angel.urquizu@urv.cat).
- f) Workshop 5. European instruments, policies and jurisprudence. Collective complaints and other instruments to defend housing rights in Europe. Dr. Maria Font (maria.font@urv.cat).

After the acceptance of the abstract by the peer review committee, the presenter will be allocated a discussant. The presenter should then send a **draft of the full paper to the workshop coordinator on the 20th April 2017** to allow her discussant to prepare the discussion properly. The paper presentation will approx. last for 10 mins, plus a discussion of 5 mins., with 5 more mins. of opened floor.

D) REGISTRATION

Registration for the conference is open until 24th April 2017.

Please proceed for registration at: <http://housing.urv.cat/conference-27th-28th-april-2017-ensuring-the-effective-exercise-of-the-right-to-housing-in-the-eu-access-to-adequate-and-affordable-housing-for-all/>

Conference fee is €150, which includes all coffee-breaks and lunches, the Conference dinner, plus visit to *Roman Tarraco and housing* the first day.

The registration fee is to be paid to the following current account of the University Rovira i Virgili in Spain:

IBAN: ES9601826035450201605723

SWIFT: BBVAESMMXXX

An evidence of the payment is to be sent to Mrs. Alba Madrid (alba.madrid@urv.cat).

E) CERTIFICATES

Certificates will be issued both for attendance and papers' presentation.

F) ABOUT THE UNESCO CHAIR OF HOUSING AND THE UNIVERSITY ROVIRA I VIRGILI

The UNESCO Housing Chair of the University Rovira i Virgili (Spain) is the single Housing Research Centre in Spain with an international and interdisciplinary approach. It is a division of the Public University Rovira i Virgili, which ranks 4th among all Spanish Universities and 83 in the world among universities under 50 years (Times Higher Education).

The creation of the Chair was announced at the *European Network for Housing Research* 25th International Conference in June 2013, although some of its researchers have been dealing with housing research for the last 20 years. Five PhD candidates and seven senior researchers are currently working at the Chair, which main objectives are specialized research, teaching and transfer of knowledge in the field of housing.

Since June 2013, the Chair members have published 72 research works in 7 countries and have delivered 173 speeches in 25 more. The Chair has been also invited to draft five pieces of legislation for the Spanish and the Catalan governments, while has been a team member of 3 EU-funded projects (EU Parliament and EU Commission). In addition to this, the Chair is currently working at six national-funded research projects and has successfully finished other four. The Housing Chair has the explicit support of 10 private and public partners. It runs two postgraduate courses on mediation and on real estate agents.

Researchers of the Chair are constantly present in the media to disseminate the results of their research topics, which cover many fields of housing, such as housing access, housing tenures, housing as a fundamental right, and management of social housing, real estate agents and tenancies.

Researchers and stakeholders can follow the Chair activities at its webpage (<http://housing.urv.cat/en/cover/>) and through its Newsletter (<http://housing.urv.cat/en/cover/research/newsletter/>).

G) ABOUT FEANTSA and HRW

FEANTSA, the European Federation of National Organisations working with the Homeless, was established in 1989 as a European non-governmental organisation to prevent and alleviate the poverty and social exclusion of people threatened by or living in homelessness. It is the only major European network that focuses exclusively on homelessness.

FEANTSA currently has more than 130 member organisations, working in close to 30 European countries, including 28 EU Member States. Most of FEANTSA's members are national or regional umbrella organizations of service providers that support homeless people with a wide range of services, including housing, health, employment and social support. They often work in close co-operation with public authorities, social housing providers and other relevant actors.

FEANTSA works closely with the EU institutions, and has consultative status at the Council of Europe and the United Nations. It receives financial support from the European Commission.

The Housing Rights Watch network of FEANTSA (<http://housingrightswatch.org>), a European interdisciplinary group of associations, lawyers and academics from different countries, who are committed to promoting the right to housing for all. HRW seeks the realisation of the right of every person to live in dignity and to have a secure, adequate and affordable place to live.

H) THE VENUE. ABOUT TARRAGONA

According to Lonely Planet², Tarragona is a “effervescent port city, Roman history collides with beaches, nightlife and a food scene that perfumes the air with freshly grilled seafood. The biggest lure is the wealth of ruins in Spain’s second most important Roman site, including mosaic-packed museums and a seaside amphitheater. A roll-call of excellent places to eat gives you good reason to linger in the knot of lanes in the medieval center, flanked by a broad cathedral with Gothic flourishes. Tarragona is also a gateway to the Costa Daurada’s sparkling beaches and the feast of Modernism architecture in nearby Reus”.

For more info, visit <http://www.tarragonaturisme.cat/en>

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v. 3-2-2017

² <https://www.lonelyplanet.com/spain/catalonia/tarragona>.