

SEANAD ÉIREANN

Fógra Tairisceana:

Notice of Motion:

“That Seanad Éireann:

notes that:

- the private rental sector is dysfunctional with ever-increasing rents and decreasing standards;
- the average State-wide rent now stands at €1,823 per month; and the average new rent in Dublin city is €2,349, €1,999 in Galway city, €1,907 in Cork city, €1,907 in Limerick city and €1,537 in Waterford city – an annual increase of 6.8 percent State-wide;
- 21 counties have experienced double-digit rent inflation, with Donegal at 20 percent, experiencing the biggest hike in the State;
- renters do not have the same protections as those who can afford their own home;
- too many people cannot access secure or affordable accommodation and are forced to live in overcrowded, inadequate, or otherwise unsuitable accommodation;

notes with deep concern that:

- according to Eurostat, 68 percent of adults aged between 25 and 29 still reside in their childhood bedroom;
- a report by the National Youth Council of Ireland in 2022, shows 7 in 10 young people are ‘considering emigrating for a better quality of life than in Ireland’;
- between 1st July, 2022 and 30th June, 2023, 21,525 Australian Working Holiday Visas were issued to Irish citizens aged between 18 and 35;

further notes that:

- Government policy favours subsidy to big developers and institutional landlords, over local authorities and approved housing bodies;
- investment funds pay virtually no tax but charge sky-high rents;
- the increased activity of investment funds, such as bulk-purchasing of properties, rented back to people at extortionate rents;
- local authorities do not have the capacity or resources to fully assess and inspect private rental properties and therefore cannot be effective in ensuring compliance with the standards;

calls on the Government to urgently:

- ban rent increases for three years;

- reintroduce the temporary ban on no-fault evictions until there is a meaningful reduction in the numbers of people in emergency accommodation;
- legislate for tenancies of indefinite duration, as promised in the Programme for Government, to provide tenants with more security;
- increase targets and accelerate the delivery of social and affordable housing;
- publish a plan to deal with the disorderly exit of accidental and semi-professional landlords from the rental market;
- update the minimum standards as set out in section 65 of the Housing Act 1966, and provide for robust penalties for breaches relating to overcrowding;
- adequately fund local authorities to ensure that 25 percent of all private rental properties are inspected once a year, so that renters can be sure that their accommodation is safe;
- bring forward measures to effectively ban investment funds from bulk purchasing homes that otherwise would be available to home buyers and local authorities or approved housing bodies which must include increased stamp duty on such bulk purchases.”

– *Senators Fintan Warfield, Lynn Boylan, Paul Gavan.*

[29th February, 2024]