

Resolution of temporary housing inhabitants

The new Housing Code, approved by the current State Duma and supported by the president and government, aims to remove housing rights from as many people as possible.

In particular, the new Housing Code facilitates evictions. According to the logic of the market, the rich will live in the best houses and will earn money through property speculation, while the poorest are evicted and relocated to outlying areas where buildings are largely dilapidated. However, as the situation of workers' housing shows, not even the right to this kind of inadequate accommodation can be guaranteed. We have lived on these estates for decades, and there are millions of us throughout the country. Yet the Housing Code refuses to acknowledge our existence.

Because of the housing policy carried out by president Putin and the party in power, "United Russia", we, the residents of communal housing, are faced with ending up back on the streets. This has already become a dreadful reality for some of us. We came to our town to work – more often than not occupying demanding and difficult positions - and have lived in our homes for 10, 15, 20 years, or longer. We have worked hard and honestly in our factories, on our construction sites, and in our scientific institutes.

At the beginning of the 1990s, when the criminal privatizations began, our homes, previously municipal, were sold to corrupt businessmen or simply offered to certain organizations, along with the residents, and this is in violation of all existing laws at the time. Our status became practically that of serfs.

Because of long waiting lists and complex judicial procedures, it is almost impossible for the "privatized" residents to file a complaint against the illegal privatization of their homes. As for those residents who are lucky enough to live in municipal housing, the majority do not have the same rights as other residents – they have to fight to obtain recognition for the right to privatize their housing.

Yet our temporary housing is the only place in which we live. We have been living here with our families for years. First they tricked us by offering us apartments that are still yet to materialize; and now they say that we are "temporary" residents and that the landlords can do whatever they want to us in order to make profit. The landlords make the most of this opportunity, endlessly upping the rent, depriving us of the right to privatize our housing, continually cutting down our allotted space, evicting us, refusing to accept our children, making us sign commercial leases, putting pressure on us. We protest, and the authorities claim that all of these dealings are "legal".

Therefore We demand:

- abrogation of the new Housing Code as being unconstitutional and in violation of the citizens' right of tenure;
- the confiscation of temporary housing where there are permanent residents, and a subsequent change in status from private to municipal, in order that the residents are able to legally privatize their housing without difficulty and supplementary costs¹;
- the repeal of deadlines by which one must file a complaint against the illegal privatization of buildings;
- recognition of the illegal nature of all the operations surrounding the selling and buying of temporary housing;
- signing the social housing contract with all the residents of the housing;
- the putting in place of a permanent registration for all permanent residents of temporary housing;
- the right to free privatization for all permanent residents of the temporary housing;
- new accommodation for all those that live in overpopulated or dilapidated housing;
- residents' participation in juridical decisions pertaining to them through representatives of housing committees;
- lowering the cost of utilities to a standard level in line with the rest of the region.

¹ Remember that in Russia, until 2010, residents can privatize the housing that they lived in during the Soviet regime (the deadline was moved back after massive protests).