

Generation Rent

The Future of the Private Rented Sector in Ireland



Date: Tuesday 16th June

Time: 9.00am to 3.30pm

Venue: Royal Irish Academy,
19 Dawson Street,
Dublin 2



#genrentire



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The Future of the Private Rented Sector in Ireland

Threshold believes that it is time to develop a national strategy to provide Ireland with a modern, affordable and inclusive private rented sector (PRS). This conference is about the future of a generation of renters, whether they are young families, single parents, immigrants or older people living alone. It is also about the more than 160,000 landlords whose livelihoods, at least in part, depend on the private rented sector.

Background

The PRS has doubled in size over the past decade, with one in five households in Ireland renting from a private landlord, and an even higher proportion in urban centres. Demand will remain high for some time to come due to limited access to other housing tenures.

Major reforms of the PRS were introduced in the Residential Tenancies Act 2004 which increased security of tenure, introduced limited rent regulation and a dispute resolution process through the Private Residential Tenancies Board (PRTB). Revised minimum standards for PRS accommodation were introduced in 2008/9. However it is clear that the PRS is in need of further reform.

The PRS currently faces numerous challenges: high rents are making accommodation unaffordable for many households; increasing numbers of landlords are struggling and choosing to leave the market; tenants' security of tenure remains limited; and a significant amount of rented accommodation still fails to meet basic legal standards. The clearest evidence of these difficulties is the significant rise in family homelessness over the last eighteen months. The vast majority of these families were living in the PRS immediately before they became homeless.

While these difficulties affect the vulnerable in society most acutely, they also have an impact on the wider economy and society. A range of bodies including business and employers' groups, property professionals and investment agencies have stated that shortcomings in the PRS pose a threat to Ireland's future economic health.

In the past twelve months a number of important reports on the future of the PRS have been published by the PRTB and NESC to foster dialogue around reforming the sector. The Social Housing Strategy 2020 and the Construction Strategy 2020 have both identified improved regulation of the PRS as necessary for their ambitious goals to be realised. This conference will add to this ongoing dialogue.

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

9:00 am to 9:30 am

Registration and Tea/Coffee

9:30 am to 9:45 am

Welcome by Conference Chair:

Frank McDonald, Journalist and Writer

Opening Address:

Senator Aideen Hayden, Threshold Chairperson

Session 1: Current State of the Private Rented Sector

9:45 am to 10.10 am	Keynote Address: Private Renting after the Global Financial Crisis Prof. Peter Kemp, University of Oxford
10.10 am to 11.00 am	Private Renting in Ireland Today Bob Jordan and Senator Aideen Hayden, Threshold Private Renting and the Irish Economy Frank Conlon, IDA Ireland Renting in Europe: Berlin and Vienna Derek Scally, <i>Irish Times</i> Berlin Correspondent Followed by Q&A
11.00 am to 11.15 am	Break

Session 2: Reform of the Private Rented Sector

11.15 am to 11.30 am	Keynote Address: Context for Reform of the Private Rented Sector Rory O'Donnell, National Economic and Social Council (NESC)
11.30 am to 12.30 pm	i) REGULATION OF THE PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR Current Regulatory Framework and Forthcoming Changes Anne Marie Caulfield, Private Residential Tenancies Board Regulation of the Private Rented Sector: Where Do We Go From Here? Prof. Eoin O'Sullivan, Trinity College Dublin Is Regulation Failing the Most Vulnerable Tenants? Liz Kerrins, Society of Saint Vincent De Paul Followed by Q&A
12.30 pm to 1.15 pm	ii) SUPPLY OF PRIVATE RENTED ACCOMMODATION Property Industry's Role in the Supply of Private Rented Housing Peter Stafford, Property Industry Ireland Approaches to Promoting Supply of Affordable Rental Housing John O'Connor, Housing Agency Followed by Q&A
1.15 pm to 2.15 pm	Lunch

Session 3: Mapping the Future

2.15 pm to 2.30 pm	Interview with Alan Kelly TD, Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government by Broadcaster Alison Comyn, UTV Ireland
2.30 pm to 3.15 pm	Debate on the Future of the Private Rented Sector: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Karl Deeter, Irish Mortgage Brokers• Prof. Tony Fahey, University College Dublin• Senator Aideen Hayden, Threshold• Anne Marie Caulfield, Private Residential Tenancies Board Short inputs followed by debate
3.15 pm to 3.30 pm	Synopsis and wrap-up by Chair
3.30 pm	Close

Speaker Biographies

Anne Marie Caulfield is the Director of the Private Residential Tenancies Board (PRTB) which was established in 2004 to operate a national tenancy registration system and to resolve disputes between landlords and tenants. It also provides policy advice to the Government on the private rented sector.

Alison Comyn is a broadcaster who co-anchors UTV Ireland's weekday news programmes 'Ireland Live' and 'Ireland Live at 10'. She has previously worked on programmes with RTÉ, BBC, Sky News and Channel 4.

Frank Conlon is Head of the Strategic Property Division, with IDA Ireland, a State agency responsible for the development and winning of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into Ireland. He has responsibility for the delivery of property solutions to meet the needs of IDA's extensive client company base.

Karl Deeter is a financial adviser/analyst at Irish Mortgage Brokers and at Advisors.ie. He is a regular contributor to media discussions on property and finance and is a *Sunday Business Post* columnist.

Professor Tony Fahey has been Professor of Social Policy in University College Dublin since 2007. His research deals with a range of issues connected to social policy in Ireland and the European Union, including family dynamics, housing, poverty and spatial aspects of disadvantage and of policy responses to disadvantage.

Senator Aideen Hayden is chairperson of Threshold and became a Senator in 2011. She is the Labour Party spokesperson on Finance, Housing and European Affairs and is the Vice-Chair of the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform. A qualified solicitor with a degree in economics and a PhD in housing policy, she campaigns in the area of housing and social policy and is a regular media contributor.

Bob Jordan has been the Chief Executive of Threshold since 2007. He has held senior management, research and communications roles with Dublin Simon Community, CPLN Partnership and Nexus Research.

Alan Kelly T.D. is Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government, having previously been Minister of State at the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport. He was first elected to the Dáil as a Labour deputy in 2011 representing North Tipperary. He has previously served as a MEP for Munster/Ireland South.

Liz Kerrins is the Social Policy Development Officer with the Society of Saint Vincent De Paul. She has worked for Threshold as a Housing Advice Worker and Researcher; the Children's Rights Alliance; the Centre for Social and Educational Research, DIT; and the Children's Research Centre, TCD as Senior Policy Officer.

Professor Peter A. Kemp is Professor of Public Policy at the University of Oxford. His most recent books include *Transforming Private Landlords: housing, markets and public policy* (2011) and *Private Rental Housing: comparative perspectives* (2014), both with Tony Crook. For many years he has contributed to policy debates about private renting in Britain and overseas. He was elected to the British Academy of Social Sciences in 2011.

Frank McDonald is the former Environment Editor of the *Irish Times* and has written extensively on property-related issues. He is the author of *The Destruction of Dublin* (1985), *Saving the City* (1989) and *The Construction of Dublin* (2000) and joint author of *Chaos at the Crossroads* (2005) and *The Builders* (2008).

John O'Connor is the Chief Executive of the Housing Agency, which was set up in May 2010 to work with and support local authorities, approved housing bodies and the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government in the delivery of housing and housing services.

Dr. Rory O'Donnell is the Director of the National Economic and Social Council (NESC). He led the Council's work on housing in 2004 and the preparation of four NESC reports on housing in 2014-15: *Social Housing at the Crossroads* (May 2014); *Homeownership or Rental: Which Road is Ireland On?* (November, 2014); *Ireland's Rental Sector: Pathways to Secure Occupancy and Affordable Supply* (May 2015); and the forthcoming *Housing Supply and Land: Driving Action for the Common Good*.

Professor Eoin O'Sullivan is Professor in Social Policy and Head of Social Work and Social Policy at Trinity College, Dublin. He has contributed to publications on social issues such as homelessness, housing, crime and children's rights and has served on the PRTB, the Rent Tribunal and the Planning Group on Rental Assistance.

Derek Scally has been Berlin Correspondent with the *Irish Times* since 2000. He has written on property issues in Germany, in particular the mixed record of Irish property developers there.

Peter Stafford is Director of Property Industry Ireland, an independent representative organisation for the Irish property industry. He has previously worked as director of policy and public affairs in the Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland and as head of research in the Construction Industry Federation. He has published widely on the politics of Irish urban regeneration and city-regional governance in Ireland.

Threshold is a national housing charity that provides housing advice, advocacy and support services to over 20,000 people annually, the vast majority of whom live in the private rented sector. It has offices in Dublin, Galway and Cork.

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