

Institute for Social Research
Working Papers
No. 1 : January 2002

**Rent Assistance:
Time for a Policy Review?**

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Rent Assistance: Time for a Policy Review?

Abstract

In 1997, after several years of heated policy debate, plans to integrate Commonwealth rent assistance (RA) with assistance under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement (CSHA) were abandoned. Since then, governments have focused on micro-level reforms to RA and CSHA programs separately. This paper argues that it is time to look again at the bigger picture. It places RA in an international context and considers how it was shaped by some of the key features of the Australian income security system. The paper highlights a number of issues about the present RA strategy to stimulate wider debate about current policy settings.

Key words

housing allowances
private rental
housing policy
rent assistance
housing assistance

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