



VITAL SPACES

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE UNECE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND LAND MANAGEMENT AND THE WORKING PARTY ON LAND ADMINISTRATION

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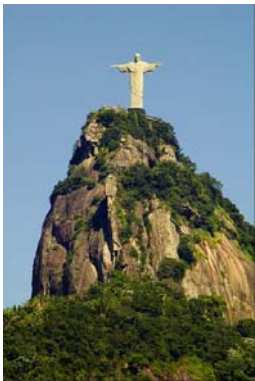
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UNECE ADVANCED AGENDA FOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY IN THE HOUSING SECTOR DURING WORLD URBAN FORUM 5// ЕЭК ООН выдвинула план мероприятий по эффективности использования энергии в жилищном секторе в ходе 5-го Всемирного форума городов

Rio de Janeiro, 22-26 March 2010



UNECE participated in the 5th session of the World Urban Forum, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 22 to 26 March 2010, under the motto "The Right to the City - Bridging the Urban Divide."

Ján Kubiš, UNECE Executive Secretary, was one of the speakers in a Dialogue on "Sustainable Urbanization: Cities in a Changing Climate", where he emphasized the role of UNECE as an inter-governmental forum to induce policy change on energy efficiency

regulations in the region.. He said: "In our region, buildings are responsible for over one third of the total final energy consumption. Much of this energy is used by the residential sector, where 80-90% of consumption can be attributed to the use stage of a building's life cycle. Therefore, today's investments in energy efficient technology could have a long-lasting impact in the sustainability of our built-in housing stock and it should be a top priority for authorities". Other speakers stressed the need that environmental benefits should go hand in hand with improvements in the social integration of urban spaces and higher employment levels.

UNECE also organized a networking event titled "Climate Neutral Homes," which featured a series of presentations addressing the

synergies between an increased reliance on green technologies in cities and related social and economic benefits. The speakers highlighted some of the areas for policy development currently identified or under consideration by Governments and local authorities that have proven beneficial to reducing emissions and carbon dependency and to increasing the overall sustainability of cities.

Participants discussed policies options, ranging from technical solutions such as low-energy housing, to passive housing, new standards for energy-efficient buildings, increased use of renewable energy, energy audits and retrofitting programmes for municipal and private buildings. It was acknowledged that there is a need for greater awareness of the building sector's potential as an accessible and efficient avenue for reducing GHG emissions. The problem is similar in both developed States and countries with economies in transition, and the solution is at hand: technologies that can reduce buildings' energy consumption between 30 and 50 per cent without greatly increasing investment costs.

This event also gave the opportunity to present and discuss the Action Plan for Energy Efficiency prepared by UNECE's Committee on Housing and Land Management. This plan provides guidance on twelve policy goals to fasten the transition towards climate neutrality in cities. It also describes existing barriers to the universal adoption of green technologies as they relevant for government authorities, real estate developers and consumers. The plan focuses on both institutional and technical challenges and it describes the need for urgent change in such areas as subsidies and taxation, monitoring and certification for buildings, research and development on green technologies and increased awareness among the general public, among other areas where reforms, if implemented will contribute significantly towards achieving a net-zero carbon housing sector by year 2020.

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// Европейская Экономическая Комиссия ООН приняла участие в пятой сессии Всемирного форума городов, проходившего 22-26 марта 2010 в Рио-де-Жанейро (Бразилия) под лозунгом «Право на город – ликвидация неравенства в городах».

В рамках диалогов «Устойчивая урбанизация: Города и изменения климата» Исполнительный секретарь ЕЭК ООН Ян Кубиш подчеркнул роль ЕЭК ООН как межправительственного форума, способствующего политическому диалогу по регулированию эффективности использования энергии в регионе. Он сказал: «В нашем регионе ответственность за 1/3 затрат конечной энергии несут здания. Большая часть этой энергии используется в жилом секторе, где 80-90% затрат происходит в период эксплуатации здания. Вследствие этого своевременное инвестирование в энергосберегающие технологии может оказать влияние в долгосрочной перспективе на устойчивое развитие нашего жилищного фонда, и это должно стать высшим приоритетом для полномочных органов». Другие выступающие обратили внимание на необходимость соответствия экологических выгод развитию социальной интеграции в городах и высоким уровнем занятости.

ЕЭК ООН также организовал мероприятие для налаживания контактов под названием «Климатически нейтральные дома», где прозвучал ряд выступлений, направленных на органическую связь между ростом доверия к технологиям, учитывающим экологический фактор, и соответствующими социальными и экономическими выгодами. Выступающие определили ряд сфер, по которым правительствам и местным органам власти необходимо разработать стратегии, которые уже показали, что они могут способствовать сокращению выбросов загрязняющих веществ в атмосферу, уменьшению зависимости от углерода, а также общему устойчивому развитию городов.

Участники обсудили политические альтернативы, варьирующиеся от технических решений, таких как строительство энергосберегающих домов, до пассивных домов, новых стандартов для энергоэффективных зданий, возросшего потребления возобновляемой энергии, энергоконтроля, а также программ по обновлению общественных и частных зданий. Была признана необходимость повысить уровень информированности о потенциале строительного сектора как доступного и эффективного пути к сокращению выбросов парниковых газов. Проблемы идентичны как в развитых странах, так и в странах с переходной экономикой, и решение в наших руках: технологии, способные сократить затраты энергии зданиями на 30-50 процентов без увеличения инвестиционных расходов.

Данное мероприятие также предоставило возможность представить и обсудить План действий по обеспечению энергоэффективности в жилищном секторе, подготовленный Комитетом по Жилищному хозяйству и землепользованию ЕЭК ООН. Данный план дает рекомендации по двенадцати политическим задачам, направленным на ускорение перехода к климатически нейтральным городам. Он также описывает существующие барьеры на пути к глобальному внедрению технологий, учитывающих экологический фактор, так как они имеют отношение к правительственным структурами, разработчиками и покупателями недвижимости. В Плате делается акцент на институциональных и технических проблемах, а также говорится о необходимости срочных перемен в таких сферах как субсидии и налогообложение, мониторинг и сертификация строительных работ, исследования

и разработка технологий, учитывающих экологический фактор, рост информированности среди общественности и других сфер деятельности, где реформы смогли бы значительно способствовать тому, чтобы жилищный сектор к 2020 году достиг нулевого уровня выброса углерода.

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**AZERBAIJAN HOSTED UNECE WORKSHOP ON
TRANSPARENT AND EFFICIENT LAND
MANAGEMENT // В Азербайджане пройдет
семинар по транспарентному и эффективному
управлению земельными ресурсами**



Transparent and efficient land management is a pre-requisite for the correct functioning of land and real estate markets, both of which play a fundamental role in guaranteeing a country's prosperity and sustainable development. Transparent institutions can reduce the costs of access to credit for people and increase the overall trust of society in public authorities. In order to enhance efficiency in the use of information, data on real estate objects should be collected timely, administrative costs for citizens should be minimized, fraud should be prevented and the right to access information on land and real estate should be guaranteed for the general public.

These are some of the principles recently discussed in a workshop on "Efficient and Transparent Land Management in ECE Countries", held on 4 and 5 March 2010 in Baku, Azerbaijan, which was organized by UNECE's Working Party on Land Administration (WPLA) and hosted by The State Committee on Property Issues of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The workshop took place at the time of the implementation of ongoing reforms of the real estate registration system in the Republic of Azerbaijan and in a period when many other countries, in particular in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia are carrying out reforms of their land administrations systems.

At present, Azerbaijan faces a series of challenges that include the need to correct discrepancies between land maps and the actual location of land parcels, the absence of adequate institutions to regulate real estate markets and the need to adopt objective methodologies for real estate valuation. To address these issues and guarantee security of tenure for all citizens, the government approved in 2007 a Real Estate Registration Project (RER) worth 38.5 million US dollars that seeks to create a single automated system for real estate registration to be finalized by year 2013. Presentations

by the host authorities and delegates from other countries in the UNECE region showcased the advantages of adopting the "one-stop shop" mechanism in land administration to facilitate registration, promote the merging of databases on land and real estate, increase the use of information technologies and reduce costs of real property transactions for consumers.

The workshop also addressed the need to promote transparency and public access to information on land. Participants were updated on a WPLA ongoing study on fraud in real estate registration and conveyancing, which maps the best practices available to monitor and prevent unlawful transactions in real property. Preliminary findings have shown that not only fraud is a real threat to the public good, but also that solutions are available to ensure the security of transactions through better monitoring, training schemes for civil servants and restrictions in access to information for anonymous users. The question of transparency as it relates to justice and fairness was also considered as addressed by pertinent legal instruments of inter-governmental organizations, including the UNECE Aarhus Convention and the FAO voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land and Other Natural Resources.

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// Транспарентное и эффективное управление земельными ресурсами является необходимым условием для надлежащего функционирования рынка земли и недвижимости, которые являются залогом процветания и устойчивого развития страны. Институциональная транспарентность способствует сокращению издержек на доступ к получению кредита, а также повышению доверия общества к органам государственной власти. Для повышения эффективности пользования информацией следует своевременно собирать данные об объектах недвижимости, минимизировать административные издержки для граждан, контролировать и предупреждать мошенничество, а также обеспечить широкой публике право доступа к информации о земле и недвижимости.

Данные принципы стали темой обсуждения во время семинара «Эффективное и транспарентное управление земельными ресурсами в странах ЕЭК», организованного Рабочей группой ЕЭК ООН по управлению земельными ресурсами 4-5 марта 2010 в Баку (Азербайджан), принимающей стороной которого выступил Государственный комитет по вопросам имущества Республики Азербайджан. Проведения данного семинара совпало с реформированием системы регистрации недвижимого имущества в Азербайджане, а также с реализацией реформ системы землеустройства другими странами, в частности странами Восточной Европы, Кавказа и Центральной Азии.

В настоящее время, перед Азербайджаном стоит ряд сложных задач, таких как необходимость корректировки несоответствий между топографическими картами и фактическим расположением земельных участков, нехватка компетентных органов для регулирования рынка недвижимости, а также потребность в принятии объективных методик оценки недвижимого имущества. С целью попытаться решить данные вопросы и тем самым обеспечить гражданам безопасность владения недвижимостью, правительство одобрило в 2007 году Проект регистрации недвижимого имущества стоимостью в 38.8

млн. долларов США, направленный на создание до 2013 года единой автоматизированной системы регистрации недвижимого имущества. Выступления принимающей стороны и делегаций других стран региона ЕЭК ООН показали преимущества принятия механизма «one-stop shop» в сфере управления земельными ресурсами с целью упростить регистрацию, способствовать процессу слияния баз данных земельных участков и недвижимости, стимулировать использование информационных технологий, а также снизить транзакционные издержки на рынке недвижимости.

Наряду с этим семинар обратил внимание на необходимость поддержания транспарентности и свободного доступа к информации о земле. Участники были проинформированы об исследовании случаев мошенничества во время регистрации и передачи недвижимого имущества. Данное исследование, проводимое в настоящее время Рабочей группой ЕЭК ООН по управлению земельными ресурсами, отображает передовой опыт координации и предупреждения незаконных сделок с недвижимостью. Предварительные выводы показали, что мошенничество представляет собой угрозу общественному благу, но, тем не менее, существуют способы обеспечения безопасности транзакций путем контролирования, обучения государственных служащих, а также ограничений в доступе к информации анонимным пользователям. Вопрос транспарентности, связанные со справедливостью и законностью, отражается в соответствующих юридических документах межправительственных организаций, таких как Орхусская конвенция ЕЭК ООН и Руководящие принципы ФАО в поддержку ответственного государственного регулирования владения землей и другими природными ресурсами.

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UNECE DISCUSSES THE BENEFITS OF E-GOVERNMENT REFORMS TO LAND ADMINISTRATION IN BELARUS



Overall, the implementation of e-government reforms can improve the delivery of government services and result in lower operating costs, increased revenue for fiscal authorities, improved

transparency in property transactions and reduced opportunities for fraud. These and other benefits of the digitalization of land and real estate information were recently discussed during a workshop on “Real property cadastre and registration services in the Economic Commission for Europe region: the impact of e-government” reforms”, held in Minsk, Belarus, on 8 and 9 June 2010, which was organized by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Working Party on Land Administration and hosted by the State Committee on Property of Belarus.

At the workshop, representatives of Belarus highlighted that, between 2003 and 2008, the number of registered land units in the country had increased from 100,000 to 1.1 million units annually.

A unified system of state registration for rights and transactions relating to real property had been set up in 2003, and much-needed e-government applications for property registration had been available to individual consumers since 2006. Those reforms had greatly facilitated the process of property registration, a representative explained.

Other speakers during the workshop discussed the importance of holding up the principles of uniformity, compatibility, trustworthiness and transparency in data management to ensure better integration of information resources and the successful implementation of the “one-stop-shop” mechanism for real property registration. Discussions also focused on the analysis of issues pertaining to the process of immovable property formation and the functions and goals of address registries to improve land administration in the UNECE region.

The workshop took place as e-government reforms in Belarus were being implemented to improve the integration of all national information services.

Over the past decades, many countries in the UNECE region have successfully converted their land registration and real property records from large collections of paper documents into a computerized form. To be used effectively, these instruments require appropriate legislation and a well-extended network of information technology, encompassing all regional administrations within member States. At the core is the need for information held in any locality to be compatible and interoperable with the broader national system. While many countries in the UNECE region have already successfully set up e-government technologies in land administration, others are only at the beginning stages; discrepancies also exist between countries in the allocation of responsibilities among Government authorities at the national, regional and local levels, which calls for enhanced international cooperation and for sharing experience. UNECE, through its Working Party on Land Administration, is working with its member States to ensure effective and efficient implementation of these new technologies in the area of land and real estate.

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TECHNICAL COOPERATION IN HOUSING AND LAND MANAGEMENT: FOCUS ON MAIN CHALLENGES TO COUNTRIES WITH ECONOMIES IN TRANSITION, by Serhii Yampolskyi



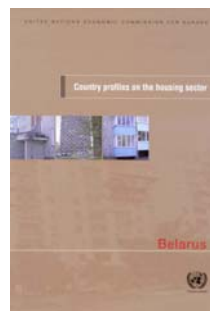
Mr. SERHII YAMPOLSKYI IS SECRETARY TO THE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND LAND MANAGEMENT OF UNECE.

Technical cooperation activities form an integral part of the work of United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and are focused on improving the national capacity of member states to implement the UNECE legal instruments, policy guidelines and recommendations as a means of their integration in the region and the world economy. They are carried out in accordance with the principles and priorities set up by the UNECE member States in the Technical Cooperation Strategy¹ adopted by the Commission at its sixty-second session in 2007.

Given the complexity of housing and land administration problems in countries with economies in transition and the importance of effective housing policy formulation, implementation and management for the success of economic and social reforms, UNECE continues to assist these countries in assessing their institutional, legal and financial frameworks for the housing and land management sectors and by providing concrete recommendations to the governments through its studies Country Profiles on the Housing Sector and the Land Administration Reviews.

Since the 70th session of the UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management (CHLM) held in September 2009, activities in the Committee’s area of work were focused on a number of topics of particular relevance to the region’s socio-economic and environmental agenda.

In 2009, the Country Profile on the Housing Sector of Belarus was launched, and its recommendations are now being taken into



account by the country in preparing their national concept paper on affordable housing. Strengthened focus on energy efficiency in housing and the increased involvement of the private sector also show the efforts that the Belarus government has made so far in implementing the Profile’s recommendations and guidance. On the same year, the Country Profile of Kyrgyzstan was finalized and some of its recommendations have already been put

into practice. Among these are the facilitation of property registration procedures implemented in cooperation with other stakeholders and the development of a unified policy for land management and resources initiated by the Government. Countries such as Albania, Serbia, Romania and Slovakia continue to incorporate recommendations from their housing Country Profiles in the reform of national legislation on urban planning and new spatial development strategies, as well as on social housing and condominium management.

Currently, the assessment of the housing and land management sector of Azerbaijan is being finalized and a launching conference of the Country Profile on the Housing Sector and Land Administration

¹ [http://www.unece.org/operact/Revised%20TCS%20e\[2007\].pdf](http://www.unece.org/operact/Revised%20TCS%20e[2007].pdf)

of Azerbaijan is scheduled on November 2010 in Baku. The Country Profile on the Housing Sector of Tajikistan developed jointly with its Land Administration Review will also be finalized in 2010.

As a follow-up to the Country Profiles on the Housing Sector of Belarus (2008) and Georgia (2007), two training workshops are being developed, in cooperation with the UN-HABITAT for Belarus' and UNDP for Georgia's, to strengthen the capacity of national policymakers and practitioners in the areas of affordable housing and legal aspects of housing privatization and management.

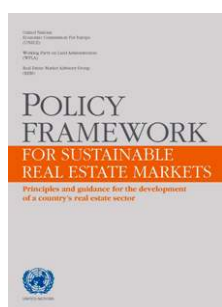
Increasing the knowledge of national policymakers and experts on energy efficiency in the housing sector was another focus area of technical cooperation assistance provided by CHLM. One of the key issues in this area is tapping the potential for energy savings and reduced carbon emissions offered by the building sector which is responsible for over one third of the region's total final energy consumption. In 2009, the workshops Energy Efficiency in Housing and Climate Neutral Cities held in Sofia and Geneva, respectively, discussed the importance of energy efficiency in housing and its links with socio-economic and environmental challenges, and emphasized the role of the building sector in the reduction of carbon emissions. Furthermore, the UNECE international forum on energy efficiency (Vienna, 2009) further examined the institutional, legal and financial challenges to improving energy efficiency in the UNECE region and contributed to the development of the Action Plan for Energy-efficient Housing, which will be presented at the 71st session of the CHLM for adoption.

In 2009, the UNECE publication "Green homes: Towards energy-efficient housing in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe region" was issued. It identified basic principles and priority areas that UNECE member States should consider with a view to developing effective policies on energy efficiency in housing.

Recognizing the importance of climate neutrality in cities for promoting sustainable development in the UNECE region, the 70th session of the Committee agreed to develop a study to identify means and tools for climate change adaptation and mitigation in cities and provide recommendations and guidelines for policymakers, practitioners and the general public. An extended outline of this study will be discussed by CHLM at its 71st session in September 2010.

The issue on improving the urban performance was the focus of another workshop organized by UNECE in Prague in May 2010. Its objective was to discuss and review examples and best practices of successful integrative approaches to urban planning with particular focus on the main challenges for up-to-date urban planning, such as reducing GHG emissions for urban areas, increasing social cohesion and reducing urban poverty. The workshop contributed to increased knowledge and understanding by policymakers and experts on such issues as urban planning and infrastructure and their role in achieving sustainable development, application of a comprehensive approach to spatial planning, energy efficiency and affordable housing, and strengthening social cohesion.

The inadequate regulatory framework in the real estate sector is another area of particular relevance to the region's socio-economic development that technical cooperation activities implemented by the CHLM and its Working Party on Land Administration addressed. In April 2010, the UNECE Real Estate Market Advisory Group (REM) released its first publication "Policy Framework for Sustainable Real Estate Markets: Principles and guidance



for the development of a country's real estate sector", which aims to promote the understanding of critical issues of the real estate sector and define key rules and principles for the development of sound real estate markets in countries with economies in transition in particular. REM will organize a roundtable in Ukraine in June 2010 to present the Policy Framework and promote its application.

Transparent and efficient land management is a prerequisite for the effective functioning of land and real estate markets, both of which play a fundamental role in guaranteeing a country's prosperity and sustainable development. To address a variety of land administration issues, including the need to promote transparency and public access to information on land, a workshop on "Efficient and Transparent Land Management in ECE Countries" was organized by UNECE in Baku in May 2010 in the context of Azerbaijan's reforms of its real estate registration system and the development of an automated system for cadastre and registration services. The workshop contributed to improved knowledge and understanding by national policymakers and practitioners of best practices and lessons learned from similar reforms in other countries of the UNECE region.

A number of other workshops/activities will be implemented under the CHLM programme of work in June-November 2010. In line with the UNECE Technical Cooperation Strategy, these activities will be focused on countries with economies in transition, provided upon requests of governments and/or recommendations of the CHLM, and implemented in those areas where the Committee has expertise and comparative advantage over other organizations. Particular attention will be given to the involvement of beneficiary countries and the use of national expertise to ensure sustainability and effectiveness of technical cooperation activities in the area of housing and land management and increase national ownership of development.

UN-HABITAT AND UNECE JOIN FORCES IN THE PREPARATION OF A TRAINING COURSE, by Tatiana Khabarova



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Issues of affordable housing are among the most urgent for practically all CIS countries. Housing reforms that took place in the 1990-s at often times concentrated on privatization and overlooked the importance of a more flexible approach meeting the needs of different population groups, particularly the low income ones. Housing is inseparably linked with construction and other sectors of urban economy. It is one of the sustainable urban development cornerstones and has to be duly and properly addressed. The UN-HABITAT – CIS Cooperation Committee recommended at its first session (St. Petersburg, January 2010) that UN-HABITAT and UNECE work together at the development of two training courses for representatives of CIS countries, as follows:

1. On affordable housing, to touch upon in particular the issues of social (rental) housing, energy efficiency in housing, management of multi-family houses and housing finance;
2. On spatial planning.

Affordable housing and social housing will be among the topics dealt by the training course. The range of issues covered under the latter is quite wide and includes legislative regulation of social and rental housing mechanisms, measures to promote participation of the private sector in the construction of social housing, its expected level of comfort and other issues. Another key topic will be energy efficiency in the housing sector and its affordable solutions. The training will also cover issues such as conditions of land plots provision for the construction of affordable housing, measures to make it cheaper, and others. It will have a length of one week and will be addressed to middle/high level government officials (“decision-making level”). The government of Belarus offered Minsk as the venue of the first training course (22-26 November 2010). UN-HABITAT and UNECE are now in the process of developing the modules/content and identifying possible trainers. It was also suggested that one of UNECE Country Profiles be presented and discussed during the training course, to provide participants with an opportunity to exchange views and experiences. The representative of Azerbaijan suggested that such training courses become a regular activity when some experience of holding such courses is accumulated.

The majority of CIS countries have already nominated their participants in the training and informed the organizers about their expectations. Social housing should be one of key topics of the training course.

The organizers of this first training course for CIS countries trust that this event will meet the expectations of all its participants.

INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS IN POST-SOCIALIST CITIES, by Dr. Sasha Tsenkova



Dr. SASHA TSENKOVA IS PROFESSOR OF PLANNING AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY.

Explosive Growth of Informal Settlements

Twenty years after the start of the transition to markets and democracy, post-socialist cities in South East Europe (SEE) embody the most significant aspects of a very dynamic economic, social, cultural and spatial transformation. One phenomenon which illustrates the complex impact of multiple transitions in the region is the rapid growth of informal settlements. Their history and evolution is diverse in terms of standard (from slums to luxurious residences), location (from suburbs to city cores and protected areas) and size (from several small units to settlements for over 50,000 residents). Informal settlements in SEE countries today are home to more than 2 million residents.¹

A number of factors contribute to the challenge—rapid urbanization, displacement of vulnerable people, dysfunctional land management and planning systems, and persistent shortage of affordable housing. The way different countries come to terms with the existing illegal and informal development in the future will differ depending on history, politics, economic and social development. Increasing decentralization and changes in governance also impact

¹ See Tsenkova, S. (2009) Housing Reforms in Post-socialist Europe: Lost in Transition. Springer-Verlag, Heidelberg.



Informal housing in the peri-urban areas of Pristina, Kosovo.

these choices since the solutions require action at all levels of government, leadership from the municipal administration and the mobilization of residents of the informal settlements. The solutions implemented so far range from legalization and inclusion in formal urban plans, regularization and provision of essential social services (schools, medical clinics) and technical infrastructure (safe roads, public transit, water and sewer), as well as resettlement programs in social housing.² The legalization of the unintended status quo is driven by efforts to capture public revenue and to stabilize large urban communities through social and infrastructure upgrading programs. In some countries (Croatia and Montenegro) legalization is carried out as an integral part of renewed efforts to develop statutory plans regulating development at the local level. In other countries (Albania and Serbia), legalization of informal settlements is addressed through special legislation, although implementation has been limited.



Illegal subdivisions and gated housing in Belgrade, Serbia.

A possible solution to informal settlement problems is associated with resettlement in social housing or some form of subsidized housing development. In most of the cases resettlement is targeting poor residents of informal housing or vulnerable groups such as Roma, refugees and internally displaced people. The importance of policies and programs that provide access to affordable and safe housing for informal residents, while widely recognized, is in many cases beyond the financial capacity of central and local governments, particularly in countries affected by war and the refugee crisis.

The Need for More Effective Policy Solutions

Addressing the problems of informal settlements requires a better understanding of their interrelated economic, social and environmental challenges. Countries in the region are grappling with the same set of systemic problems related to lack of access to affordable housing, inefficient planning and land management

² For a more detailed discussion of policy solutions refer to Tsenkova, S., Potsiou, C. and Badina, A. (2009) Self-Made Cities. In Search of Sustainable Solutions for Informal Settlements in the UNECE Region. Geneva: UNECE.

systems, as well as the lack of institutional capacity to integrate informal settlements, though in very different national contexts.

Within the framework of decentralized urban management across the region, the task of integrating informal settlements into formal city structure is vested with local governments. Legalization and upgrading, however, is particularly difficult to initiate without the institutional capacity at the local government level to lead the process of planning, legalization, infrastructure provision and effective resident involvement.

Addressing the multiple challenges of informal settlement legalization and integration across cities in the region requires more effective and coordinate approaches at the local, national and regional level. International organizations can facilitate the policy dialogue on these issues as well as facilitate the implementation process by focusing on systematic training and institutional strengthening of municipal planning capacities. Future capacity building efforts, while adjusted to national specifics, should address the following major issues: legal framework, legalization and enforcement, participatory planning approaches at neighborhood level (detailed urban plans) for integration of informal settlements, feasibility studies for infrastructure provision, fiscal and environmental impact assessments, and results monitoring and evaluation.



Resettlement of refugees in social housing in Podgorica, Montenegro.

WHAT'S NEW:

WELCOME TO THE NEW SECRETARY OF CHLM



Serhii Yampolskyi joined the Housing and Land Management Team of the EHLM Division at UNECE in May 2010. His previous experience with the UNECE includes coordination of UNECE technical cooperation activities and their integration in the work of the UN system at the country level. Prior to joining UNECE in 2006, he served in various posts at the Ministry of

Foreign Affairs of Ukraine and the State Committee on Science and Technologies of Ukraine dealing with economic and environmental issues. He was also involved in undertaking research activities during his academic career and earned a Ph.D. degree in technical sciences in 1987.

AT THE SECRETARIAT: OUR NEW INTERN



Dinara Orazbayeva comes from Kazakhstan and she is working as an intern at the UNECE until the end of July 2010. She is assisting with the preparation of the 71st session of the Committee on Housing and Land Management as well as activities for the Country Profile studies.

After completing her university degree in

International Relations at the Eurasian National University in Astana, Kazakhstan, Dinara worked as a Library Coordinator at the Alliance Française d'Astana Public Association and as Russian-French interpreter. She speaks three languages: Russian, French and English. For two years now, Dinara has been pursuing her master's degree in France. On her first year, she studied Public Economics and Management at Aix-Marseille University and this year, Governance of Organizations for International Development at the University of Grenoble.

Dinara has always been interested in public affairs. As a Vice-President in Alliance Française, she was in charge of cultural affairs and public relations and as a President of the Students' Association Epicentre at Grenoble University; she organized a students' tour to the international organizations in Geneva.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON NATURAL DISASTERS AND BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION SAFETY

The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) is organizing an "International Forum on Natural Disasters and Building and Construction Safety" in Baku, Azerbaijan on 16-17 November 2010.

The Forum will look at how countries in each of the sub-regions (North America, Western, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe and Central Asia) tackle the problem of building and construction safety when faced with natural disasters. The Forum will discuss institutional, legal, policy, technological, financial and other measures and solutions. More information regarding the central questions to be covered can be found in the concept note and the session outline.

Presentations at the Forum should focus on one or more solutions and measures adopted in one or more of the UNECE countries affected by natural disasters and highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the adopted measure(s), the challenges in implementing them and the measure(s)' potential for sustainability.

The Forum will be addressed to national and local authorities, practitioners, relevant NGOs and the private sector. The Forum's languages are English and Russian.

Should you be interested in presenting at the Forum, kindly send a 500 word description of your presentation to the Secretariat at: housing.landmanagement@unece.org not later than 15 July 2010.

The Secretariat will contact selected speakers by 30 July 2010.

SEMINAR ON BALANCING THE CONFLICTING NEEDS OF LAND-USE PLANNING AND INDUSTRIAL SAFETY



The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents and the Committee on Housing and Land Management invite you to a

seminar on balancing the sometimes conflicting needs of land-use planning and industrial safety.

Industrial facilities often need to be close to transport infrastructure and population centres for their daily operation, but to preserve safety they need to maintain an appropriate distance from housing, commercial or recreation developments.



"Integrating the knowledge and experience of industrial safety experts and land-use planners is vital to create safer communities and a healthier, cleaner environment."

Marco Keiner, Director UNECE Environment, Housing and Land Management Division

As cities continue to grow, more land for housing, commercial or recreation developments is required, increasing the pressure to build new developments closer to existing industrial facilities and making it difficult to find appropriate locations for new facilities.

Balancing the needs of industrial safety and new real estate developments for sustainable communities is complex and finding solutions requires an integrated approach.

"To maintain a safe and clean environment and ensure economic growth requires national authorities and the private sector to understand each other and work side by side."

Mr. Chris Dijkens, Chairperson, Industrial Accidents Convention



"Sustainable urban planning that takes into account industrial safety is crucial for spatial quality."

Wolfgang Förster, Chairperson, UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management

This seminar brings together the skills and experiences of all the relevant stakeholders, representing a diverse range of organizations including public safety and planning authorities, operators of industrial facilities, real estate developers and non-governmental organizations.

The seminar will address these complex issues from different perspectives and look for a common approach to finding solutions. More information about the seminar programme or to register for the seminar will be available soon through the seminar's information notice and the Industrial Accident Convention's website or the Housing and Land Management's website.

Key Information

Where: The Hague, The Netherlands

When: 11-12 November 2010

Who:

Representatives from the public and private sectors from UNECE countries are invited to attend the seminar, including:

- Safety authorities;
- Land-use planners;
- Operators of major industrial facilities;
- Real estate developers and;
- Non-governmental organizations working in housing or industrial safety

Registration

More information about registering will be available soon through the seminar's information notice and the Industrial Accident Convention website or the Housing and Land Management website.

Contact us at:

teia@unece.org or housing.landmanagement@unece.org to request more information or to express your interest in participating in the seminar.

A NOTE ON THE COORDINATOR:



Inputs to this newsletter are coordinated and edited by Ms. **Cecilia Batac**.

Contact her at Cecilia.Batac@unece.org

Disclaimer: This is not a UN official publication. This newsletter is distributed only electronically to CHLM and WPLA members and interested individuals and organizations wishing to receive information on the work on housing and land management. The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors of the articles and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the United Nations.