

Improving Housing Affordability in the UNECE region. Study proposal.

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UNECE



Background



- At 79th session (7-8 October 2018) the UNECE Committee requested the secretariat to conduct a survey to identify the needs and priorities for capacity-building and other activities to support further implementation of the Charter on Sustainable Housing (ECE/HBP/194).
- Extension of the survey to the study on housing affordability.

Housing context



- Housing plays a key role in the quality of life.
- The 2008 financial and economic crisis underscored the vital role housing markets play in economies in the UNECE region
- Poor, disadvantaged and vulnerable populations face unhealthy and unsafe housing and physical barriers, discrimination
- middle income earners living in urban areas particularly struggle with access to decent quality, affordable housing,
- Climate change demands that houses and human settlements become more resilient.

Aim and objectives of the study



The aim of the study is to improve capacities of national and local governments to develop policies that address the issue of housing affordability.

The study objectives are:

- To explore housing affordability challenges in the UNECE region & to report on ongoing activities that address these challenges
- To identify policy instruments and practical instruments that allow improving housing affordability at local, national and international levels
- To support the exchange of and disseminate 'good practices' in relation to the abovementioned instruments.



The study will be based on:

- review of documentary data dedicated to the subjects of ‘housing affordability’ and ‘housing sustainability’
- collection of primary data using a survey of the UNECE member States
- Peer-review by external partners, academia.

Main topics of the study



1. Land supply
2. Housing finance
3. The role of the governments in promoting housing affordability, including regulations
4. Housing supply
5. Adaption to climate change and extreme weather conditions.

Approach – develop on the basis of key international documents



To use the overall approach on key international documents: 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, especially SDG 11; the New Urban Agenda; principles of sustainable housing, as outlined in the Charter:

- (a) Environmental protection;
- (b) Economic effectiveness;
- (c) Social inclusion and participation;
- (d) Cultural adequacy.

Approach – promote evidence based policies



- To connect the study with the implementation of the 10th UNDA project ‘Evidence-based policies for sustainable housing and urban development in selected countries with economies in transition’, which focuses on approaches to (i) data production/collection; (ii) development of evidence; and (iii) decision-making in relation to sustainable housing and urban development policies in the UNECE countries.
- The project highlighted a need to ensure availability of evidence on housing affordability policies and regularly review their implementation.

Partners



- UNECE
- UN-Habitat
- Housing Europe
- OECD
- ENHR
- others

Selected resources



- UNECE Country Profiles on Housing and Land Management,
- SDG11 Synthesis Report on Cities and Communities,
- Housing Europe “State of Housing Report 2017”,
- OECD “Policies to promote access to good quality to promote affordable housing in OECD countries”,
- others.

Timetable



Provisionary timetable for 2019/2020 given availability of funding

- Review of documentary data, preparation of the questionnaire – October-November 2019
- Redistribution of the questionnaire – November 2019
- Collection of responses – December 2019
- Data analysis – December 2019 and January 2020
- Preparation of first draft – February 2020
- Feedback from partners – March 2020
- Preparation of the second draft – April 2020
- Presentation at the Second European Housing Leaders' Summit, June 2020
- Approval of the final draft of the study outcomes – 81th session of the Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management, 7-9 October 2020
- Preparation of the Ministerial declaration of the findings of the report (October 2020)
- Production of e-learning materials – June 2020 – December 2020
- Presentation of the preliminary results at the International Social Housing Festival in Helsinki, June 2021.

Thank you!

