

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe



**Working Party  
on  
Land  
Administration**



UNITED NATIONS

## Land – The Basis for a Prosperous Economy

All human activities depend on land. Land provides space for living, resources for industry, parks for our leisure and much more. How land is administered, registered and used affects every family's happiness and every country's prosperity:

When people feel secure in their homes, they have more time to educate their children, care for their health and work productively.

Security of tenure forms the basis of decent housing. Also, when people feel secure from displacement, they are more likely to take care of and renovate their homes.



Well-administered land markets allow people to buy, sell and rent their homes freely and put people in charge of their own well-being.

Transparent and consistent land administration reduces risks to borrowers and developers. This gives lenders confidence and draws investment funds into a country.

The 56-country United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) region is vast and diverse. It comprises countries from Europe, the former Soviet Union (including the Caucasus and Central Asia), Israel and North America. Each country faces its own challenges and deals with them in its own way.

Advanced economies try to achieve ecologically sustainable urban development, ensure real estate market stability and transparency and find innovative uses of technology in order to increase customer service and protect against fraud. Many transition economies are still adapting to the mass privatization of housing that took place in the 1990s. They are working to build an adequate communal infrastructure and to develop effective housing policies and systems of property rights.

## Promoting better land administration

As the UNECE Working Party on Land Administration – an intergovernmental group of policymakers and experts – we help countries use land to maximize their economic potential and to develop their resources in a sustainable way.



We promote security of tenure, more effective land registries and sustainable land policies. We provide a neutral platform for sharing knowledge and fostering discussion between Governments and other land stakeholders on developing best practices in land registration systems, land consolidation and informal settlements management.

We advise Governments on land management issues and on creating land management institutions. To help countries develop better land registry and cadastre systems, we contribute to policy formulation, promote best practices and improve data collection.

We coordinate our activities with other organizations and encourage partnerships in the public and private sectors. For instance, we work closely with national and local governments, and with international organizations such as EuroGeographics, the International Federation of Surveyors, the European Land Registry Association, the European Land Information Service, the Permanent Committee on Cadastre in the European Union, the Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Bank.



## How we promote best practices

We hold workshops on e-governance, sustainable land management, informal settlements and real estate markets.



We prepare land administration reviews – detailed analyses of countries' land management systems. The reviews form part of the UNECE country profiles on housing and land management.

We benchmark and inventory land administration systems to help countries evaluate their own systems and see what might be improved.

We share the results of our research with Governments, non-governmental organizations, academia, companies and any with an interest in better land management.

## Future directions

We will be expanding our activities in transition countries, where new land systems are developing rapidly, and continue to encourage East-West cooperation.

We will provide guidelines on how land registration and cadastre agencies can best be designed to work together. Upcoming research will look at the pros and cons of merging cadastre agencies and land registries.

We will assess the economic benefits of sound land administration and cadastre institutions in several countries, irrespective of the countries' stage of development. A new publication will use a survey of national governments to look at how land management systems are changing throughout the region.

We will promote best practices for informal settlements, building on our case studies and recommendations. Field studies of target countries are the core of our new study on informal housing.



### Contact

If you would like more information on our land work, please contact us at:

#### **Housing and Land Management Unit**

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe  
Palais des Nations

CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland

E-mail: [housing.landmanagement@unece.org](mailto:housing.landmanagement@unece.org)

<http://www.unece.org/hlm/welcome.html>