

UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

# Housing and Land Management



UNECE



## ■ ABOUT US

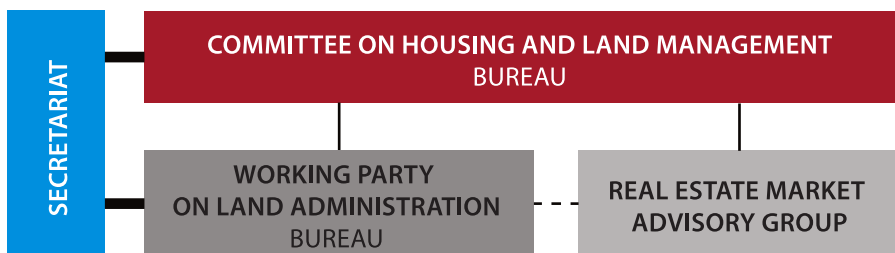
The UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management was established in 1947 as an intergovernmental body to address shared housing urban development and land management challenges across 56 member States in the UNECE region.

The Committee facilitates the dialogue between governments and supports knowledge transfer on innovative practices, gives advice and develops policy guidelines to address common housing, urban development, and land administration and management problems.



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The Working Party on Land Administration is a subsidiary body to the Committee. It supports and promotes security of tenure, improving and creating more effective land registries and promoting sustainable land use policies.

The Real Estate Market Advisory Group (REM) is a multi-stakeholder group of experts that advises both the Committee and the Working Party on all the issues within their mandate and, in particular, on adequate, energy-efficient and affordable housing, housing finance, sustainable urban development, smart cities and cities financing, registration and property valuation, land markets and land administration.

The Housing and Land Management Unit serves as a secretariat to the UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management, Working Party on Land Administration and the Real Estate Market Advisory Group.

## OUR GOALS

- Improving policy harmonization on housing, urban development, and land administration and management among government agencies in the UNECE member States
- Addressing major housing, urban development, and land administration and management challenges in the region
- Providing guidance for establishing more efficient legal and institutional frameworks for housing, urban development, and land administration and management
- Strengthen national and local capacity on affordable and adequate housing, smart and sustainable urban development and effective land administration and management

## **AREAS OF WORK**

### **Sustainable Housing and Real Estate Markets**

The Committee assists member States in improving building energy efficiency; facilitating the maintenance, management and refurbishment of existing housing stock; and developing real estate markets. It also offers recommendations in the area of housing affordability, social housing, low-cost housing and housing finance.

Through a network of Geneva UN Charter Centres, studies and regular national and regional capacity building activities, UNECE supports member States in raising capacity for implementation of the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing at national and local level.

### **Sustainable Urban Development and Smart Sustainable Cities**

The Committee promotes an integrated approach to planning and building smart sustainable cities and urban settlements. Activities under this area of work include the project “United Smart Cities” and focus on spatial planning, smart sustainable cities financing, performance assessment through key performance indicators and standards, data collection, and circular cities.

In 2016, UNECE, jointly with International Telecommunication Union, launched the initiative “United for Smart Sustainable Cities”, which is supported by 16 United Nations bodies.

### **Land Administration and Management**

Sound land administration and sustainable land management are indispensable for economic, social and environmental development. Improving land administration and management is a driving force for economic stability and growth.

Under this area of work, the Working Party on Land Administration addresses land registration, e-governance, land tenure, spatial information and cadastres. They are also vital for good governance.

### **Country Profiles on Housing and Land Management**

Country profiles are “snapshots” of the housing, urban development and land issues within a country. These are major undertakings where in-depth research and discussion between partners form a large part of the work.

They are conducted on the request of UNECE member States, coordinated by the secretariat and drafted by independent international experts.



1947

### **Establishment of the Panel on Housing Problems**

UNECE has taken over the responsibility for tackling the shortage of housing in post-war Europe from the Emergency Economic Committee for Europe (EECE). The Panel held its first session in Geneva in October 1947.

1951

### **UNECE Housing Committee**

The Panel was given a wider scope of work and thus, was established as an independent UNECE Housing Committee.



1986

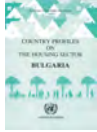
### **The Human Settlements Situation in the ECE Region**

First survey of the human settlements situation in the UNECE region was published.

1993

### **New programme of work: "Country Profiles on the Housing Sector"**

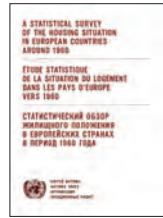
The only studies at country level that provides in-depth analysis of country-specific housing, urban development and land management policies, strategies, institutional and financial framework, and contains policy recommendations. The first project was the profile for Bulgaria in 1996. Since then, 17 countries in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia have been reviewed.



2000

### **Ministerial Meeting endorsed the "UNECE Strategy for a Sustainable Quality of Life in Human Settlements in the 21st Century"**

The Strategy was UNECE's contribution to the 2001 special session of the United Nations General Assembly on the review and appraisal of progress in the global implementation of the Habitat Agenda.

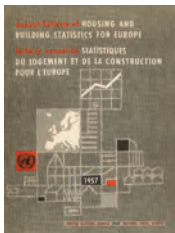


## **1947 ▶ A walk through history**

1958

### **Annual Bulletin of Housing and Building Statistics for Europe 1957**

First in the series of Annual Bulletin of Housing and Building Statistics in Europe was published.



1965

### **A Statistical Survey of the Housing Situation in European Countries Around 1960**

First survey of the housing situation in European countries was published.

1996

### **Meeting of Officials on Land Administration (MOLA)**

The scope of work of the Committee was extended to include urban planning and land use and thus, MOLA was established.

1997

### **Housing and Urban Management Advisory Network (HUMAN)**

The Committee established HUMAN as its advisory network to support the Committee's programme of work.

1999

### **Working Party on Land Administration (WPLA)**

From MOLA to WPLA. The group was granted a standing character by the UNECE Commission in recognition of its work in the promotion of land privatization and land registration systems in the UNECE region and of the need for such work to continue.

2009

### **"Green Homes"**

First publication to tackle energy efficiency in housing, the housing sector being a major consumer of energy, was published.



2009

### **"Self-Made Cities: In search of sustainable solutions for informal settlements in the UNECE region"**

The study addresses the phenomenon of informal settlements in the region and identifies policy responses.

**2012**

**REM Advisory Group**

The Committee discontinued the work of HUMAN as Advisory Group and REM became an advisory body to both the Committee and WPLA.

**2013**

**Ministerial meeting approved the Strategy for Sustainable Housing 2014-2020**

The Strategy guides the work of the Committee in fulfilling its mandate - "to promote the sustainable development of human settlements in the UNECE region while fostering economic and social prosperity and supporting democratic governance".

**2016**

**Habitat III Regional Report**

Report of the UNECE region to HABITAT III. Regional perspectives help shape the New Urban Agenda adopted at Habitat III Conference in Quito.



**2017**

**Ministerial meeting adopted the Geneva Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Housing and Urban Development**

The Ministerial Declaration promotes the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Paris Agreement on climate change, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda for Financing for Development, the UN-Habitat Global Housing Strategy, the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing, the International Guidelines on Urban and Territorial Planning, and the Strategy for Sustainable Housing and Land Management in the UNECE Region for the Period 2014-2020.

**70 years of the UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management ▶ 2017**

**2014**

**The Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing**

The Charter was approved by the Committee after two years of negotiations and was officially endorsed by UNECE on 16 April 2015.



**2014**

**United Smart Cities**

The multi-stakeholder project United Smart Cities was launched. It aims to address the major urban issues in medium-sized cities in countries with economies in transition in the UNECE region and supports the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

**2016**

**United for Smart Sustainable Cities Initiative (U4SSC)**

The U4SSC initiative was launched jointly with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) in response to SDG 11: "Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable". Currently 16 UN bodies joined the initiative.





## CONTRIBUTION TO THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The Committee contributes to implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and achievement of the housing, urban and land-related Sustainable Development Goals, especially Goal 11 “Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.” Under Goal 11, the Committee promotes decent, adequate, affordable and sustainable housing, and transparent land administration.

In addition, the Committee supports the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing, the Strategy for sustainable housing and urban development 2014-2020, and the Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Housing and Urban Development. The Committee encourages adoption of national, subnational and local housing policies that support progressive realization of the right to adequate housing for all as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living.

Under Goal 1, “End poverty in all its forms everywhere,” the Committee addresses the social dimension of sustainable housing and supports development of policies on housing affordability, including on “energy poverty”, social housing and low cost housing. Through the work of the Working Party on Land Administration, the Committee promotes access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws.

Because of the crosscutting nature of housing, land administration and management, and urban development topics, the Committee also contributes to the Sustainable Development Goals 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13 and 15. Due considerations are given to address climate change in national policies, strategies and planning in the areas of concern of the Committee.



## The UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management supports the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and achieving its SDGs:



### Goal 3 – Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

The Committee encourages adequate and healthy living through the promotion of good housing design, use of healthy and environmentally friendly materials, proper housing maintenance and retrofitting of buildings. Country Profiles on Housing and Land Management and Smart Sustainable City Profiles include analysis and policy recommendations



### Goal 6 – Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

The Committee in its activities promotes water and sanitation management as an integral component of all urban and housing strategies and policies. Country Profiles on Housing and Land Management and Smart Sustainable City Profiles include analysis and policy recommendations

The Committee promotes inter-agency coordination regarding water and sanitation management between urban and transport planners, disaster risk management entities, housing agencies and other infrastructure service providers



### Goal 7 – Ensure access to affordable, reliable sustainable and modern energy for all

The Committee works to improve energy efficiency in buildings and to facilitate the maintenance, management and refurbishment of the existing housing stock

The Committee supports the implementation of energy efficient standards through:

- Preparing national reviews of the housing, urban development, and land administration and management of member States (published as Country Profiles on Housing and Land Management)

- Providing policy advice to improve environmental and energy performance of dwellings, which contribute to combating energy poverty, and improving residents' quality of life

- Organisation of regional workshops to strengthen national capacities and exchange experiences and best practices

- Establishment of the Joint Task Force on Energy Efficiency Standards in Buildings (jointly with the Committee on Sustainable Energy)

- Conducting studies on mapping energy efficiency standards in the region

- Mapping existing technologies to enhance energy efficiency in buildings

- Establishing a database of experts on energy efficiency standards

- Supporting exchange of best practices and experiences of applying standards and technologies through regional and national meetings



### Goal 8 – Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

The Committee

- Provides policy advice to countries through preparation of national reviews of the housing, urban development, and land administration and management of member States, which are published as the Country Profiles on Housing and Land Management

- Promotes spatial planning by enabling efficient distribution of economic activities and improving access to technical and social infrastructure and services

The Committee supports policies that stimulate employment through investments in the green economy and innovation in technology in the field of housing and urban planning. Country Profiles on Housing and Land Management and Smart Sustainable City Profiles include analysis and policy recommendations on these topics

The Committee works on financing mechanisms for smart sustainable cities projects to enhance the competitiveness, attractiveness and sustainable economic growth at the local level



### Goal 9 – Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

The Committee works in collaboration with the Real Estate Market Advisory Group and the Working Party on Land Administration to develop stronger housing real estate markets

Through its United Smart Cities project, the Committee promotes the use of Information and Communication Technologies and Internet of Things at local level to enhance inclusiveness and participation, to support efficiency of urban operations and to improve the quality of life of cities' dwellers

The Committee works to harmonize building standards and building regulations in the UNECE region and to promote knowledge transfer and good practices sharing at the national and local level



## Goal 11 – Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

### The Committee

Promotes decent, adequate, affordable and sustainable housing and transparent land administration through its support to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, the New Urban Agenda, the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing, the Strategy 2014-2020, and the Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Housing and Urban Development

Promotes national, subnational and local housing policies that support progressive realization of the right to adequate housing for all as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living

The Committee's flagship product, Country Profiles on Housing and Land Management, is an important tool to analyse countries' housing, urban development, and land administration and management policies, and strategies, institutional and financial frameworks and to assess progress in achieving international commitments

The Committee and its Working Party on Land Administration promote transparent and efficient land administration and management through their regular sessions and workshops

The Working Party on Land Administration facilitates land rights, including ownership and security of tenure; and access to financial services, in accordance with national laws

The Real Estate Market Advisory Group assists the Committee on Housing and Land Management and the Working Party on Land Administration to develop stronger housing real estate markets through its workshops, studies on energy efficient housing; affordable and social housing; housing finance; property valuation and registration; land markets and land administration

The Committee support the transition to safer, more resilient and more "connected" cities within the UNECE region to enhance the sustainable growth of cities through the activities of the United Smart Cities project, including development of Smart Sustainable City Profiles, city action plans and training

The Committee works to implement and monitor the SDGs at the local level through indicator based Smart Sustainable City Profiles

The United for Smart Sustainable Cities (U4SSC) is an initiative supported by 16 UN agencies, who along with relevant stakeholders have accepted the challenge to create smarter and more sustainable cities globally. The initiative is a global platform for smart cities stakeholders, which advocates for public policies to encourage the use of ICT to facilitate the transition to smart sustainable cities. It develops studies and training material. The most important product developed so far are the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for Smart Sustainable Cities, which support cities to implement the SDGs at the local level



## Goal 13 – Take urgent actions to combat climate change and its impacts

The Committee supports innovation and the use of affordable and new technologies to facilitate the transition to a low-carbon, energy-efficient and more sustainable society through:

Support to the implementation of the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing,

Adoption of the Geneva UN Charter

Preparation of Country Profiles on Housing and Land Management

Preparation of Smart Sustainable City Profiles

Joint workshops on climate change and DRR with UNECE divisions (Industrial Accidents, Protocol on Water and Health)

Regional and national capacity building workshops in the UNECE region

The Committee supports resilient, connected, spatially and socially integrated, and compact cities in equitable partnership with rural areas through the implementation of International Guidelines on Urban and Territorial Planning; conducting studies, and organising capacity building workshops

The Committee supports the effort on climate change adaptation and mitigation by working on energy efficiency in buildings




## Goal 15 – Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems

The Committee supports member States to strengthen the sustainable management of their resources, including land, water, energy, forests and food, with particular attention to environmentally sound management via integrated urban planning that considers urban-rural linkages, climate change and disaster risks adaptation and mitigation

The Working Party on Land Administration facilitates land rights, including ownership and security of tenure; and access to financial services, in accordance with national laws





With its partner organizations, UNECE serves as a central contact point for any country within the region that needs advice or information on sustainable housing, urban development, and land administration and management, as well as a neutral platform for the exchange of experience, knowledge and best practices.

We regularly publish studies on common housing, urban development, and land administration and management problems in the region, looking at causes and recommending solutions.

We organize national and international training courses, workshops and conferences to disseminate good ideas and best practices and to elaborate national action plans in cooperation with governments.

We are inviting expressions of interest from member States, the private sector, and non-governmental and international organizations to provide expert support for the activities of the UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management.

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