



VITAL SPACES

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

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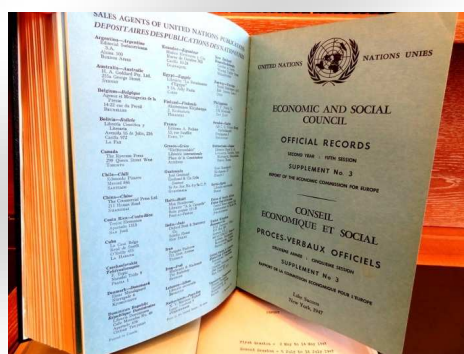
THE UNECE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND LAND MANAGEMENT CELEBRATES ITS 65TH ANNIVERSARY, by Gulnara Roll

Housing is a basic need and the right to housing is also a basic human right. According to the *United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights*¹, everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing, medical care and necessary social services.

UN member States have established a number of international bodies, which support their efforts aimed to provide the population with adequate housing. In 1947, the UN Economic Commission for

Europe (UNECE) was established and the Committee on Housing and Land Management was one of the first bodies set up under the UNECE umbrella with the mandate to "study housing

problems of common interests to European countries and advise the Commission on the means, technical and economic, of assisting and expediting the housing programmes of the member countries". At



the time of its establishment in 1947, it was named UNECE Panel on Housing.

After the Second World War, the Panel on Housing focused on providing support to the governments in the post-war reconstruction of the housing stock in Europe. The challenges were basic and complex at the same time, among them: organizing reconstruction to ensure people had roof over their heads and access to basic services such as water and sewage; addressing issues of home ownership brought about by the massive displacement of people. There was no systematic information available as well on the fast-changing housing situation across Europe so the Panel on Housing was also requested to "collect, analyse and disseminate statistical and other information" on the housing situation.

The implementation of post-war housing reconstruction programmes in European countries highlighted the importance of land accessibility for housing. It was recognised that housing and land should be administered together. Land administration and land management were added to the Panel's mandate. The increasing scope of responsibilities of the Panel transformed it into a 'Housing Committee' reporting directly to the Commission. It was later renamed as 'Committee on Housing, Building and Planning' and then as 'Committee on Human Settlements'. Today, the Committee is called the 'Committee on Housing and Land Management'.

The issues that the Committee addresses today are different from what they were 65 years ago and they changed as Europe transitioned to new economic systems and societies. In Europe, the existing housing stock requires refurbishing to ensure good quality and energy efficiency. Another important issue is the growing economic disparities between different layers of the population and the need to promote social cohesion in urban areas. With the growing rural – urban and international migration, affordability of housing became important across the UNECE region. Affordability of housing is a burning issue today. The economic crisis has profoundly

¹ UN General Assembly resolution 217A (III), 10 December 1948, Article 25(1).

affected the whole Europe. It caused many people to lose jobs putting a heavy toll on their financial capabilities to pay for housing.

XIII. RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING A PANEL ON HOUSING PROBLEMSⁱ

The Economic Commission for Europe,

In conformity with its decision taken at the first session, and considering also the general principles contained in the Executive Secretary's report to the Governments members of the Economic Commission for Europe, relating to the transfer of the functions of the Emergency Economic Committee for Europe (E/ECE/35),

Resolves:

1. To establish within its framework
 - (c) A panel on housing problems;
4. That the Panel on Housing Problems shall:
 - (a) Study housing problems of common interests to European countries and advise the Commission on the means, technical and economic, of assisting and expediting the housing programmes of the member countries;
 - (b) Collect, analyse and disseminate statistical and other information.

Instructs

The Executive Secretary to convene, as soon as he deems appropriate, the Panel hereby established.

ⁱ ECOSOC. Economic Commission for Europe. Report to the ECOSOC on the 1st and 2nd sessions of the Commission, held at Geneva from 2 to 14 May 1947 and from 5 to 16 July 1927, Document E/451, pages 23-24)

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union and end of the Cold War, international efforts were required to support the reconstruction of the housing stock in transition countries of South-Eastern, Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. In those countries, the priority direction is the establishment of good governance, including effective financing of the housing sector and land management.

Natural disasters, such as earthquakes, floods, and landslides, resulted in large-scale damages to housing across the UNECE region. The experiences from dealing with natural disasters during the recent years have demonstrated the importance of developing long-term strategies for disaster risk reduction for the housing sector and land use planning.

Environmental quality, affects the quality of life, especially that of the urban population. Indoor air quality and water quality are, today, among the main reasons for deaths in the urban population. Therefore, promoting good environmental quality of homes is another important direction in the implementation of housing sector policies.

Sustainable management of land resources is another key direction of work that needs to be promoted. On-going urbanization occupies more and more territory of land (agricultural as well as forested areas) resulting to less and less - green spaces. Today, conflicts are growing over the use of land resources.

Actions to promote sustainable housing and land management at the national level are, undoubtedly, the most important. However, further improvement or even sustaining the current quality of living

is impossible without international cooperation and regional coordination.

The UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management continues its work on the current challenges in housing and land management through the implementation of its activities, such as the Country Profiles on the Housing Sector, Land Administration and Management, Real Estate Market Stability, Energy Efficiency in the Residential Sector, Affordable and Social Housing, Green Buildings, etc.

In autumn 2013, the UNECE Ministerial Conference on Housing will take place, where further steps in international cooperation on the housing sector and land management in the region will be addressed.

TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE HOUSING IN THE UNECE REGION

Human settlements in the UNECE region are faced with environmental, economic and social challenges. Common problems include the lack of sustainable housing policies and legislation, inefficient management of the existing housing stock, environmentally unsound dwellings that consume too much energy, and rapidly growing urban sprawl. These challenges are amplified by other problems such as the financial crisis, climate change, increasing population, migrant flows and natural disasters.

As a coordinator of regional action, the UNECE is leading the way in addressing sustainable housing. Currently, UNECE member States are exploring the possibility of developing a framework convention on sustainable housing as an instrument that could tackle the region's housing challenges. The Working Group that was established by the Committee on Housing and Land Management to assess the possibility of developing the legal framework met three times in the last two years. In April this year, the Working Group decided to recommend to the Committee at its *seventy-third session* (25-26 September 2012) to consider favourably the development of a framework convention on sustainable housing. A legal agreement on housing will be one of the main topics for discussion at the upcoming session of the Committee. The decision taken in September will be presented at the *2013 Ministerial meeting on Housing and Land Management* for consideration.

UNECE TO INITIATE WORK ON THE COUNTRY PROFILE ON THE HOUSING SECTOR IN UKRAINE

Ukraine faces major housing challenges, including poor energy efficiency and low affordability. Ukraine is also one of the most energy-intensive economies in the world. According to World Bank estimates, the energy consumption of Ukrainian buildings is around 250 – 275 Kilowatt hour per square meter (kWh/m²), which is at least double that of Western Europe's average of around 120 kWh/m². In spite of growing energy prices, the residential sector's energy consumption has not changed during the last 20 years.

Affordability is also a key concern. According to the International Housing Affordability Index, which looks at urban housing prices within the context of local wage rates, housing affordability in Kiev, capital of Ukraine (index value 6.0), is close to levels in the largest world megapolises such as London (6.9) and New York (6.2) and is even higher than in Moscow, capital of the neighbouring Russian

Federation (5.0). There is also a housing shortage in Ukraine compared to most European countries.

This year, UNECE will initiate work on the Country Profile on the Housing Sector in Ukraine. This is the main outcome of a research mission conducted on 17 – 25 March 2012 in Ukraine by a delegation consisting of the UNECE Secretariat and international experts. The study, which should be ready in May 2013, will cover, in particular, the existing housing stock and new housing construction, the socio-economic framework of the housing sector, land management, and the institutional, legal and financial framework. Based on the results of the study, UNECE experts will formulate policy recommendations to the Ukrainian Government, who will then develop a national implementation plan.

Housing policy is high on Ukraine's government agenda. In 2011, the Government adopted a state programme for the construction of affordable housing for 2010–2017. There is good potential for the development and effective implementation of housing policies in Ukraine due to their relatively high level of human capital, a solid institutional framework for housing policy; and a legal framework that is being regularly updated.

At the closing meeting of the research mission, the Minister of Regional Development, Construction and Municipal Economy, Mr. Anatoly Bliznyuk welcomed the Country Profile as an opportunity to receive an independent review of the housing situation and policy in Ukraine and he called for wider application of best international practices in the housing sector. He also expressed hope for continued cooperation with the UNECE beyond the work on the Country Profile, for example in the review of draft laws and strategic documents related to the housing sector.

For more information on the energy consumption of Ukrainian buildings, see: www.worldbank.org/ua

For information on the Demographia International Housing Affordability Index: <http://www.demographia.com/dhi.pdf>



Photo by: Cecil Batac

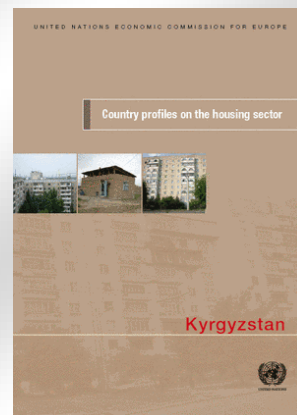
KYRGYZSTAN'S COUNTRY PROFILE ON HOUSING LEADS TO NEW COMMITMENTS IN THE COUNTRY

// Национальный обзор по жилищному сектору Кыргызстана ведет к принятию страной новых обязательств

In Kyrgyzstan for every 1000 inhabitants there are only 210 housing units. This is less than half the EU average, which is 446. Average

floor space per capita is also extremely low (around 5 m², compared to Europe, the United States and China, where floor space per capita is around 48, 81 and 26 m² respectively).

The Country Profile of Kyrgyzstan, launched on 21 February 2012 in Bishkek, further highlights the need to refurbish deteriorated housing stock according to modern energy-efficiency standards. To tackle the widespread housing shortage, it recommends that measures be developed to reduce construction costs and to promote the use of local, sustainable building materials. The lack of up-to-date master plans and strategic land-management policies has led to spontaneous urban sprawl in larger Kyrgyz cities. The report recommends reducing the size of land plots allocated for construction in order to increase building density.



Recommendations of the Country Profile are being taken seriously by the country. "The housing challenge is high on the political agenda", confirmed Mr. Shekshenbek Shaimbetov, Advisor at the Department of Real Estate in the Government of Kyrgyzstan. As a result, the Government has already launched a national programme on "Affordable Housing", has submitted a draft of Housing Code to the Parliament for approval and is establishing a state mortgage lending agency.

Organized by the State Registry of Kyrgyzstan and UNECE, the launching event for the Country Profile on Housing and Land Management brought together over 40 representatives of different ministries and agencies, NGOs, international donor organizations and financial institutions. Participants agreed on a declaration calling on the Kyrgyz Government to address the difficult housing situation by passing new laws, developing a strategic plan and enhancing the intersectoral coordination.

The Country Profile is available in English and Russian at: http://www.unece.org/hlm/publications_recent4.html

// В Кыргызстане на каждую тысячу жителей приходится только 210 единиц жилья, что представляет собой менее половины средней ЕС, которая составляет 446. Средняя жилая площадь на душу населения является чрезмерно низкой (около 5 кв.метров, в то время как в Европе, в Соединенных Штатах Америки и в Китае жилая площадь на душу населения составляет соответственно около 48, 81 и 26 кв.метров).

Национальный обзор по жилищному сектору Кыргызстана, официальная презентация которого состоялась сегодня в Бишкеке, особо подчеркивает необходимость модернизации ухудшившегося запаса жилого фонда в соответствии с современными стандартами в области энергоэффективности. Для решения проблем, связанных с растущей нехваткой жилья, обзор содержит рекомендации по разработке мер, направленных на снижение стоимости строительства и на содействие использованию местных устойчивых строительных материалов. Отсутствие обновленных генеральных планов развития городов и стратегий по управлению земельными ресурсами привело к хаотичному разрастанию агломераций больших городов Кыргызстана. В докладе содержатся рекомендации по снижению размера участков земли,

отведенной для строительства, с тем чтобы повысить плотность застройки.

Рекомендации, содержащиеся в Национальном обзоре жилищного сектора, рассматриваются с самым серьезным вниманием. "Проблема жилья является одной из приоритетных в политической повестке дня", подтвердил господин Шекшенбек Шаимбетов, советник Департамента по рынку недвижимости при Правительстве Кыргызстана. Как результат такого подхода, Правительство уже начало осуществлять национальную программу "Доступное жилье", а также представило проект Кодекса по жилью в Парламент для одобрения и установления государственного агентства по займу на жилье.

Организованная Государственным регистром Кыргызстана и ЕЭК ООН официальная презентация Национального обзора по жилищному сектору и управлению земельными ресурсами собрала около 40 представителей из различных министерств и агентств, неправительственных организаций, международных организаций-доноров и финансовых учреждений. Участники приняли декларацию, призывающую Правительство Кыргызстана рассмотреть трудную ситуацию в области жилищного хозяйства путем принятия новых законов, развития стратегического плана и укрепления координации между секторами.

Обзор по сектору жилья на английском и русском языках можно найти по адресу :

http://www.unece.org/hlm/publications_recent4.html

NATIONAL ACTION PLAN OF MONTENEGRO FOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY MEASURES IN THE RESIDENTIAL SECTOR // Национальный план действий Черногории по мерам энергоэффективности в жилищном секторе, by Wolfgang Amann



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About the author: As director of IIBW, Dr. Wolfgang Amann has executed 300 research and consulting projects on housing finance, housing policy and housing legislation in Austria, the EU and many CEE and transition countries. He is a consultant for the UN and World Bank and teaches real estate economics at several graduate programmes in Austria.

UNECE has developed an "Action Plan for Energy-efficient Housing in the UNECE Region", which provides a framework for governments to increase energy efficiency in the housing sector and address economic and environmental challenges more effectively.

The "National Action Plan of Montenegro" is the first spin-off of the UNECE framework document. It aims at assisting the Government to enhance its energy efficiency policy for residential buildings through the: (i) assessment of the existing legal and institutional framework

for energy efficiency in the housing sector; (ii) identification of institutional/legal impediments as well as priority areas for action; and (iii) development of an action plan for improving energy efficiency in the residential sector of Montenegro.

A specific focus of this National Action Plan is energy efficiency measures in the context of informal housing regularization. Informal housing is a serious challenge for Montenegro with roughly one third of the population living in informal buildings.

A wide range of Montenegrin laws and by-laws on planning and construction, housing and property, as well as energy and energy efficiency, were reviewed. The Action Plan includes recommendations to consolidate and comprehensively amend existing legal regulations, and develop the legal basis for the creation of an institutional framework for the effective utilization and wide application of measures to reduce energy consumption in the residential building sector.



Montenegro has made good progress in transposing EU regulations on energy efficiency into national law. Nevertheless, national legislation still needs to be harmonized with a number of EU directives in this area. This requires legal reforms in national and municipal legislation and, more importantly, it requires law enforcement. Therefore, the majority of recommended actions aim at enhancing visibility and raising awareness of energy efficient practices in everyday life.

Similar to other Central and Eastern European countries and EU candidate states, basic provisions for increasing energy efficiency in the residential building sector exist but are outdated and do not meet current technical standards. Examples include the creation of owners' associations, the establishment of sound housing management schemes and the enforcement of energy efficiency measures in regional planning as well as building permission.



The following main policy areas have been identified:

- Social policy action against housing and energy poverty;
- Improvement of knowledge on energy efficiency, and informal housing;
- Improvement of knowledge transfer;
- Harmonization of national law with EU legislation on energy efficiency;
- Development of financing tools for energy efficient affordable housing and housing refurbishment;
- Capacity building both at national and municipal level;
- Implementation and wide application of energy efficiency principles in planning procedures;
- Creation of owners' associations and implementation of housing management schemes;
- Informal settlement regularization;
- Coordination and promotion of existing initiatives on energy efficiency.

The Action Plan identified over 50 targets and actions related to energy efficiency infrastructure and legislation, financial infrastructure, energy performance standards and technology integration, access to affordable and energy efficient housing, as well as, capacity-building, education and awareness-raising. In this regard, the following actions are considered as particularly important:

- Improve the statistical basis and develop a knowledge base on housing and energy efficiency;
- Develop a set of cost-efficient measures for financial incentives to improve energy efficiency in new construction and housing refurbishment;
- Create a business environment for housing management;
- Link informal settlement regularization with energy efficiency measures;
- Strengthen mandatory energy and carbon performance requirements;
- Make installation of thermal solar panels obligatory;
- Focus on energy efficiency;
- Develop guidelines for solar planning;
- Improve access to affordable and energy efficient housing;
- Set up an Energy Agency; and
- Develop a media and public awareness campaign.

// ЕЭК ООН разработала «План действий по энергоэффективности жилья в регионе ЕЭК ООН», который является рамочным документом для национальных правительств по повышению энергоэффективности жилищного хозяйства и более эффективному решению экономических и экологических проблем.

«Национальный план действий Черногории» - это первый продукт рамочного документа ЕЭК ООН. Он нацелен на помощь правительству в разработке программ энергоэффективности жилых зданий путем (i) анализа существующих юридических и институциональных рамок в сфере энергоэффективности жилищного сектора; (ii) определения институциональных и юридических препятствий и приоритетных мер и (iii) разработки плана действий по улучшению энергоэффективности жилищного хозяйства Черногории.



Национальный план действий уделяет особое внимание мерам энергоэффективности в области регулирования несанкционированного жилого фонда. Несанкционированное жилье представляет для Черногории серьезный вызов, поскольку примерно одна треть населения проживает в зданиях, построенных без соблюдения законодательных требований.

Был проанализирован широкий спектр законов и подзаконных актов по проектированию и строительству, жилищному хозяйству и собственности, а также по энергетике и энергоэффективности. План действий включает рекомендации по приведению в порядок и комплексной корректировке существующих юридических регуляторов, а также по разработке юридической базы для создания институциональных рамок их эффективного применения и комплексной реализации мер по сокращению потребления энергии в области жилищного хозяйства.

Черногория добилась хороших результатов в трансляции постановлений ЕС по энергоэффективности в национальные законы. Тем не менее, национальное законодательство все еще нуждается в гармонизации с рядом директив ЕС в этом секторе, что требует реформ национальной и муниципальной юридической базы и, особенно, инструментов правоприменения. Поэтому большинство рекомендованных действий направлены на повышение осведомленности населения о мерах энергоэффективности и их популяризацию в повседневной жизни.



Как и в других странах Центральной и Восточной Европы и в странах-кандидатах в члены ЕС, в Черногории существуют

базовые положения по энергоэффективности жилищного сектора, но они уже устарели и не отвечают современным техническим стандартам. В качестве примера можно привести программы создания ассоциаций собственников жилья, разработку действенных моделей управления жилищным хозяйством и включение требований по энергоэффективности в региональные планы и строительные стандарты.

Были определены следующие стратегические направления действий:

- социальная политика по преодолению жилищной и энергетической бедности;
- повышение качества информации по энергоэффективности для владельцев несанкционированного жилого фонда и улучшение распространения информации;
- гармонизация национального законодательства по энергоэффективности с законодательством ЕС;
- разработка финансовых механизмов для строительства и ремонта доступного энергоэффективного жилья;
- повышение потенциала национальных и муниципальных органов власти;
- включение принципов энергоэффективности в проектные механизмы и их широкое применение;
- создание ассоциаций собственников жилья и улучшение механизмов управления жилищным хозяйством;
- повышение качества несанкционированного жилья;
- координация и популяризация имеющихся инициатив в сфере энергоэффективности.

План действий определяет свыше 50-ти задач и мер по инфраструктуре и законодательству в сфере энергоэффективности, финансовой инфраструктуре, стандартам потребления энергии и их технологическому внедрению, доступному энергоэффективному жилью, а также по повышению потенциала, просвещению и повышению осведомленности.

Среди них наиболее важными являются следующие меры:

- улучшение статистической базы и разработка информационной базы по жилью и его энергоэффективности;
- разработка малозатратных схем финансового стимулирования энергоэффективности новых построек и ремонта имеющихся;
- создание бизнес-среды в сфере управления жилищным хозяйством;
- включение мер энергоэффективности в регулирование несанкционированного жилья;
- ужесточение требований по энергии и углероду;
- введение обязательных требований по установлению термальных солнечных батарей;
- акцент на энергоэффективность, а не на возобновляемые источники энергии на уровне отдельно взятого домашнего хозяйства;
- разработка рекомендаций по использованию солнечной энергии;
- улучшение доступа к посильному энергоэффективному жилью;
- создание Энергетического агентства и

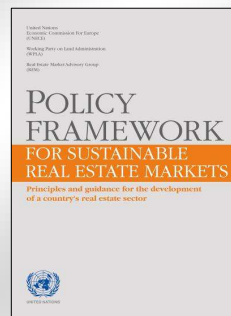
- разработка кампании по повышению осведомленности и по вовлечению СМИ.

HOW THE REAL ESTATE SECTOR CAN HELP DRIVE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT // ЕЭК и Всемирный банк организовали в Москве

UNECE and World Bank held an international Forum in Moscow on sustainable real estate markets // Форум по развитию устойчивого рынка недвижимости



The Forum on “Sustainable Real Estate Markets: Principles and Guidance for Development” was held in January 2012 to draw attention to ways in which secure and well protected property rights, and accurate and accessible information, can attract greater investment and increase economic growth. The event was hosted by the World Bank and co-organized with the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation, UNECE and its Real Estate Market Advisory Group.



Policy Framework for Sustainable Real Estate Markets (2010)

Opening the Forum, the Deputy Minister of Economic Development of the Russian Federation, Mr. Igor Manylov, said that “as we can see from the recent global financial crisis, the stability of national economies, as well as of the world's financial and economic well-being, depends on the sustainable development of real estate markets, and on their effective functioning and regulation”.

To promote an understanding of critical issues in the real estate sector and define key rules and principles for developing sound real estate markets, in 2010 the Real Estate Market Advisory Group published a “Policy Framework for Sustainable Real Estate Markets: Principles and guidance for the development of a country's real estate sector”.

According to the Chair of the Group, Giampiero Bambagioni, who is also one of the authors, “if regulated and based on transparent real

estate and financial markets, the real estate sector could be a driving force for sustainable development”.

Government officials, representatives of the private sector, as well as international experts exchanged views on the current situation in the real estate sector of the Russian Federation, and how to apply the principles and guidance of the Policy Framework in that country's particular institutional context. In the area of registration and cadastre, the Russian Federation has gained much experience which it can share on the implementation of modern multifunctional centres in selected regions offering excellent client service and available online information.

Participants from UNECE, the World Bank and the Ministry of Economic Development agreed to further expand and develop their cooperation in sharing international best practices and promoting reforms in housing and land management. Specifically, the Round Table participants recommended establishing working groups to develop recommendations for updating legislation in the Russian Federation on the topics of property evaluation, taxation and social housing.

UNECE promotes sustainable housing and land management by offering policy advice, the exchange of best practices among its 56 member States, and the setting up of model technical projects. One of UNECE's objectives is to promote efficient land administration.

// в Москве прошел Форум "Стратегическая основа развития устойчивого рынка недвижимости", целью которого являлось обратить особое внимание на то, что надежные и хорошо защищенные права на собственность, аккуратная и доступная информация будут способствовать увеличению инвестиций и экономическому росту.

Форум открыл Игорь Манылов, заместитель министра экономического развития Российской Федерации. Принимающей стороной Форума выступил Всемирный банк, организаторами Форума выступили также Министерство экономического развития Российской Федерации, ЕЭК ООН и ее Консультативная группа по рынку недвижимости.

ЕЭК ООН способствует процессу обеспечения устойчивого жилищного хозяйства и управления земельными ресурсами путем оказания консультативных услуг по стратегиям и путем обмена передовым опытом между ее 56 странами-членами, а также путем осуществления модельных технических проектов. Одной из целей ЕЭК ООН является содействие эффективному управлению земельными ресурсами в ее странах-членах. В апреле 2010 года была выпущена публикация *"Основы политики для устойчивых рынков недвижимости: Принципы и рекомендации по развитию сектора недвижимости страны"*, являющаяся частью данной деятельности. Эта публикация направлена на помощь в понимании критических аспектов в секторе недвижимости и в определении ключевых правил и принципов для развития надежного рынка недвижимости. По словам Председателя Консультативной группы по рынку недвижимости ЕЭК ООН, являющегося также одним из авторов публикации *"Основы политики"*, Жампьеро Бамбаджиони, *"Сектор недвижимости, если он регулируем и опирается на транспарентный рынок недвижимости и финансовый рынок, может стать движущей силой для устойчивого развития"*.

Участники форума обсудили основные принципы и положения, представленные в публикации *"Основы политики"*. Представители правительственных кругов, частного сектора, а также международные эксперты провели обмен мнениями по текущему положению в секторе недвижимости в Российской

Федерации и обсудили, как применять принципы и руководства, изложенные в публикации *"Основы политики"*, с учетом институциональных особенностей Российской Федерации. В области регистрации и кадастра Россия накопила опыт, которым она могла бы поделиться с современными многофункциональными центрами в отдельных регионах, предлагая прекрасные услуги клиентам и имеющуюся "онлайн" информацию.

Участвующие в форуме представители ЕЭК ООН, Всемирного банка и Министерства экономического развития России договорились и далее расширять и развивать сотрудничество в обмене международным передовым опытом и в содействии осуществлению реформ, направленных на улучшение законодательных рамок в жилищном хозяйстве и в управлении земельными ресурсами.

LAND MARKETS, OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES IN AZERBAIJAN'S AGRICULTURAL LANDS // Земельный рынок, возможности и вызовы сельскохозяйственных угодий Азербайджана by Kanan Seyidov



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Land is a natural resource and an important component of the biosphere. It is a source of prosperity for man: a natural and main production source.

The growing world population has increased food requirements and this, in turn, has sparked great interest and demand for arable land. The price of agricultural land has, therefore, risen. While some experts believe that this increase in the price of land is just temporary because of its short-term profitability, others believe it's otherwise.

Privatisation on a large-scale of land, and land reform were launched after 1992 when Haydar Aliyev came to power in Azerbaijan. The Agrarian Reform Commission was formed to handle the privatization of rural lands. The implementation of agrarian reform resulted in the abolition of 2042 kolkhozes and sovkhoses. Currently, land ownership in Azerbaijan has 3 forms: state, municipal (public) and private.

Land of Azerbaijan is categorized according to purpose and legal regime:

- land for agricultural purpose
- land for residential settlements (cities and rural areas)
- land for industrial, transportation, communication, and defense purposes
- land of safeguarded territories
- land of forest resources
- land of water resources
- reserved land

Land for agricultural purposes includes land used in food production, as well as land used by buildings and facilities for agricultural needs. Any land used in connection with food production, such as scientific-

research, educational purposes, teaching and experimental purposes belong to this category.

Foreigners, stateless persons and people with foreign rights can obtain land for agricultural purposes only on the basis of tenant rights.

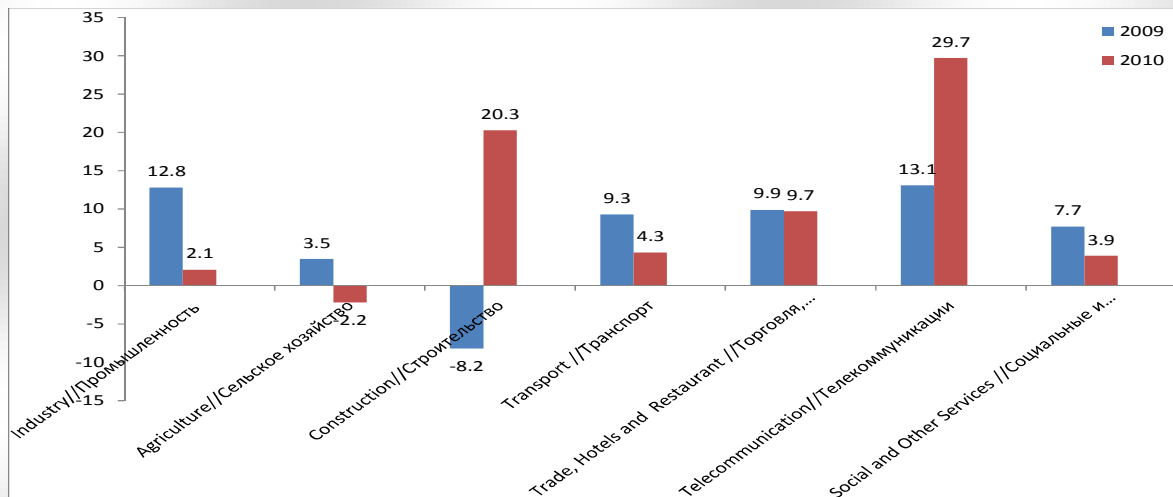
Azerbaijan covers a territory of 8,641,500 hectares, of which 49.6% is suitable for agriculture. Arable land is 0.17 hectares per person.

Azerbaijan's most serious environmental problems in agriculture are soil erosion, salinization resulting from deteriorated infrastructure, and pollution from chemicals used in fertilizers and pesticides. The negative effect of these factors in agriculture affects the poverty level, both in economic terms and health. A strategy for poverty

reduction should reflect a complex approach to the rehabilitation of lands directed to the interests of the rural population and agricultural sector. Such an approach should put importance on the following:

- Restoration of lands polluted by industrial and agricultural wastes
- Use of agricultural fertilizers and the other substances according to appropriate indicators and technical norms
- Reduction of grazing of pastureland
- Prophylactic measurements against erosion

Real Growth Rates in comparison to the same period of the previous year, % //
Реальные темпы роста относительно того же периода предыдущего года, %



Source: Report of the Ministry of Economic Development of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

// Земля является природным ресурсом и важным компонентом биосферы. Она источник благосостояния человека, естественный и основной ресурс производства.

Растущее население земли предъявляет повышенные требования к продовольствию, что, в свою очередь, порождает большой интерес к пахотным угодьям и спрос на них. Соответственно, возрастают и цены на сельскохозяйственные земли. Одни эксперты считают такой рост цен на землю временным явлением из-за их краткосрочной рентабельности, другие же уверены, что он будет постоянным.

Может ли глобальный спрос на сельскохозяйственную продукцию обеспечить всем равную и постоянную выгоду? Факты, подтверждающие огромную ценность земель, были отмечены в отчете Всемирного банка.

Крупномасштабная приватизация земель и земельная реформа начались в Азербайджане после 1992 года, когда к власти пришел Гейдар Алиев. Для приватизации сельских угодий была создана Комиссия по аграрной реформе. В ходе реформы было распущено 2042 колхоза и совхоза, и в настоящее время собственность на землю имеет три формы: государственная, муниципальная и частная.

Земли в Азербайджане классифицируются в зависимости от их целевого предназначения и юридического статуса:

- сельскохозяйственные угодья
- земли жилых поселений (городских и сельских)

- земли промышленного, транспортного, оммуникационного и оборонного назначения
- заповедные и охраняемые угодья
- лесные угодья
- земли водных бассейнов
- земли резервного запаса

Сельскохозяйственные угодья включают земли для производства продовольствия, а также земли для построек и других объектов сельскохозяйственного назначения. Сюда же относятся земли, используемые для научных исследований,

образования, обучения и экспериментальных работ, связанных с производством продуктов питания.

Иностранные лица, лица без гражданства и лица с правами иностранного гражданина могут приобретать земли сельскохозяйственного назначения только на правах аренды.

Азербайджан занимает территорию в 8 641 500 га, из которых 49.6% пригодны для сельскохозяйственного использования. Пахотные земли составляют 0.17 га на одного жителя. Наиболее острыми экологическими проблемами в сельском хозяйстве Азербайджана являются эрозия почвы, засоление земель из-за разрушающейся инфраструктуры и их загрязнение химикатами, содержащимися в удобрениях и пестицидах. Негативные последствия этих факторов влияют и на благосостояние человека, снижая уровень его экономического достатка и оказывая отрицательное воздействие на его здоровье. Стратегия сокращения бедности должна базироваться на комплексном

подходе к реабилитации земель в интересах сельского населения и всей сельскохозяйственной отрасли. Приоритетами такого подхода должны быть:

- восстановление земель, загрязненных промышленными и сельскохозяйственными отходами
- использование удобрений и других материалов с соблюдением технических требований и необходимых стандартов
- сокращение выпаса скота на пастбищах
- профилактика эрозии

RUSSIAN HOUSING POLICY: IDEAS, INTERESTS, INSTITUTIONS - A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE, by Marina Khmelnitskaya



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The development of housing policy in Russia over the last three or four decades can be interpreted as a learning dynamic - one in which shifts between different broad frameworks of policy, or policy paradigms, occupy a prominent place.

The housing policy of the Soviet Union was dominated by a paradigm of 'socialist distribution'. It included state provision of housing, maintenance and utilities to the majority of citizens. The results of these policies, however, were far from enviable. Over more than 70 years of Soviet history, the country had lived through a never-ending housing crisis. Housing shortages, the poor quality of housing services alongside the elite privileges and corruption involved in housing distribution caused dissatisfaction among the people while also being criticised by Soviet social scientists.

In response to these failures tentative steps to transfer the Soviet housing sector onto a market basis were taken by the Soviet authorities in the mid-1980s. Yet, more decisive moves towards introducing a market paradigm in housing were made by the Russian Federation, still a republic within the Soviet Union, in the final years of its existence, in 1990-1991. During this period, the ownership of all housing in Russia was transferred to local administrations and the privatisation of all types of state-owned accommodation was allowed. Such a 'revolutionary' shift was permitted by the systemic transformation of Soviet politics during perestroika and the election of a radical leadership of the RSFSR in 1990-1991. Yet, we have to acknowledge the very general character of this initial housing reform package.

During the subsequent period, specifically between 1992 and 2004, the post-Soviet government gradually introduced a set of policies, aimed at the spread of owner-occupied housing, liberalisation of maintenance and utilities, and the development of mortgage finance. These measures 'filled' the earlier 'general market' paradigm of 1990-1991 with specific policy instruments while also gradually pushing it towards owner-occupation as the predominant tenure type.

The adoption of such a paradigm can be explained with reference to policy ideas inspired by the American housing experience and shared by government reformers and their advisors. Important also was the popularity of housing privatisation with the general public. Nevertheless, some experts criticised the neglect of alternative tenure forms, as rent and cooperatives, which as they noted, were familiar from the Soviet period. Yet, given that these critics did not enjoy access to the government, their views had no policy impact at the time.

The adoption of Russia's new Housing Code in December 2004, while institutionalising in policy the paradigm of owner-occupation, also marked the start of a new phase in the development of the housing sphere. The new and on-going process is connected to the shift from a sole emphasis on private housing towards a more balanced tenure structure. The ascent of the new 'mixed' paradigm resulted from the partial failures of earlier policies as well as changes in economic and intellectual contexts.

While post-Soviet housing privatisation appeared to be a success story,¹ the organisation of the management of private accommodation largely failed to meet expectations. This failure in turn still stands in the way of reforming the maintenance and utility sector. Simultaneously, the low affordability of mortgages presents a barrier to further proliferation of owner-occupation outside the boundaries of Russia's large cities.

Against this background, an important causal factor contributing to the paradigmatic evolution of the mid-2000s appears to be a change in policy thinking among the international housing expert community in relation to the housing policies of post-communist countries. International specialists from the mid-2000s started to favour a greater variety of housing forms. Also significant were changes in the institutional positions of those domestic Russian specialists who supported non-private tenure types. Finally, we can point to the influence of such factors as the economic crisis and the plans of the government to introduce a new property tax from 2013 that have made housing rental more attractive in recent years.

In practice, the shift to a mixed housing paradigm manifests itself in the adoption of legislation promoting cooperative and rental housing, for instance the adoption of the 'Programme for the development of a rental housing market' by the Ministry of Regional Development in April 2011.

These are certainly not the only developments in contemporary Russian housing. The promotion of owner-occupation via the development of affordable mortgages has continued. Simultaneously, the increasing role of the Russian state in the country's economy is evident in the housing sphere in the operation of two state foundations for the 'Development of Housing Construction' and for the 'Reform of Housing and Utility Services' established in 2007 – 2008.

¹ More than 80 percent of accommodation in Russia was privately owned in 2010. See: Federal'naya Sluzhba Gosudarstvennoy Statistiki, 2010, Rossiyskiy Statisticheskiy Ezhegodnik, available at http://www.gks.ru/bgd/regl/b10_13/Main.htm accessed 16 September 2011, tables 6.37 and 6.38.

See for instance: Economic Commission for Europe, 2006, Guidelines on Social Housing: Principles and Examples, New York and Geneva: United Nations, available at <http://www.unece.org/hlm/publications.html> last accessed 3 November 2011; World Bank, 2006, Rental Choice and Housing Policy Realignment in Transition: Post-privatization Challenges in the Europe and Central Asia Region, Authors: Hans Joachim Dubel, W. Jan Brzeski and Ellen Hamilton, Research Working Paper 3884

Overall, however, when considering the transformation of Russian housing policy in recent decades we may interpret this development as a process of ‘learning’. We observe the learning from policy failures which recently, for instance, have transformed the policy-makers’ preferences towards a mixed housing paradigm. We also

THE SPATIAL DETERMINANTS OF RESIDENTIAL ENERGY DEMAND: THE CASE OF FRENCH HOUSEHOLDS, by Laure Lampin



LAURE LAMPIN IS FINISHING HER PHD IN ECONOMICS AT THE CENTRE INTERNATIONAL DE RECHERCHE SUR L’ENVIRONNEMENT ET LE DÉVELOPPEMENT (CIRED) AND THE ECOLE DES PONTS PARISTECH, WHERE SHE PERFORMS ECONOMETRIC AND MODELING ANALYSES TO STUDY THE ECONOMIC AND SPATIAL DETERMINANTS OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY.

By directly acting on the demand for mobility and residence by individuals, cities and urban form can play a crucial role in reducing the demand for energy thus affecting climate change. Numerous studies have revealed the significant role of urban form and density in affecting the demand on transport via commuting behavior,¹ while very few have focused on the impact of density and spatial planning in altering residential energy use. This article aims to fill in this void and show the importance of the residential dimension of the energy demand in the climate change debate.

Urban form and density affect the demand on residential energy through four main impact mechanisms, or effects (see also Figure 1 for an illustration of this):

- I. ‘*Housing size effect*’, describes the impact of residential density on the available surface of household dwellings, which in turn affects the energy used.
- II. ‘*Housing type effect*’, explains the effect of density on the type of dwelling (apartments in the city centre vs. detached houses in the peripheries), which is likely to affect the demand on energy.
- III. ‘*Energy source effect*’, concerns the influence of urban density on the energy sources available (gas and electricity mainly), with gas heating equipment being more frequent in dense urban areas than electricity. This affects the demand on residential energy by urban households through energy parameters such as heat production efficiency or price.
- IV. ‘*Heat island effect*’, deals with residential density affecting the energy requirements by individuals through altering the average city temperature.

We tested and estimated the causal impact of the four effects on energy demand by households. To do this, we employed the 2006 Housing survey of the French National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE),² which provides information on household social and economic characteristics, housing

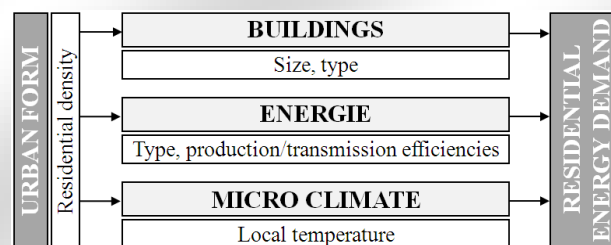
¹ Results from meta-analytical estimation show that on average, mobility is 12% lower in twice-denser areas (Lampin, 2012).

² The overall method employed was quite accurate and made use of a two-step procedure including qualitative logit models and a Residual Inclusion

identify the learning from the past - with policy ideas transmitted by domestic expert communities. This process, finally, involves learning from different regions. Notably, continental Europe is providing an important reference point for housing policy actors at present.

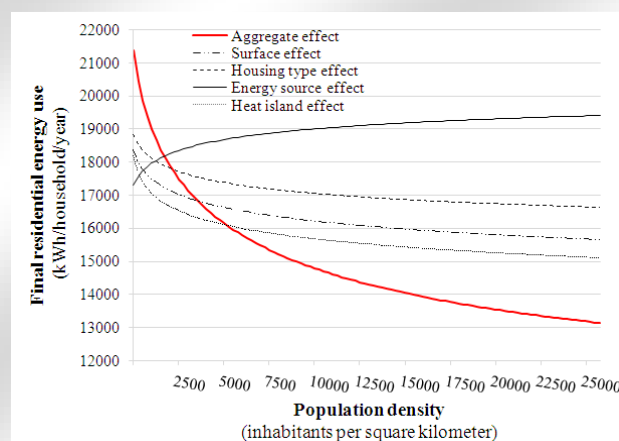
characteristics and energy use. Empirical estimations were run on a dataset containing 27,940 valid observations.

Figure 1: Schematic representation of the impact mechanisms of urban form on residential energy use



We found that low population density has a significantly negative effect on residential energy consumption in cities. In particular, households living in twice-denser locations face a 12% lower energy demand for residential activities. This result aggregates the net effect of the four impact mechanisms tested, each of which showed significant but qualitatively different effect. Figure 2 illustrates this.

Figure 2: Breakdown of residential energy demand by density-related impact mechanisms



As it can be seen, the heat island effect represents the main source of impact of density on residential energy use. During wintertime, central denser areas are warmer than the suburbs. Households located in twice-denser areas save up to 4% in energy for heating than in the peripheries. The ‘housing size’ and ‘housing type’ mechanisms also act so as to reduce the energy demand for heating by 3.6% and 2.8% respectively in twice denser areas. Finally, the ‘energy source effect’ is found significantly positive, with a 2.6% higher energy use in areas of twice higher density. The dataset reveals that the use of gas equipment decreases with density in French cities, while the opposite holds for electricity. On the other

method to control for endogeneity issue. All methodological details are purposely omitted here for the sake of space but are fully discussed in the original paper (Lampin and Grazi, 2012).

hand, households reported as using gas face higher energy demand than households using electricity for energy services. This result is partially explained by price asymmetries between gas and electricity, with the latter being twice as expensive as the former. Coupling this work with results showing the contribution of density in significantly reducing transport-related energy use provides promising quantitative insights in support of the role of urban form and planning in curbing energy demand and associated carbon emissions.

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This paper was prepared as a proposal for contribution to the UNECE Housing and Land Management Unit newsletter. The findings summarized here are more thoroughly presented and discussed in Lampin and Grazi (2012).

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GATED COMMUNITIES IN CHINA: POSITIVE INSIGHTS FOR URBAN PLANNING, by Martijn Hendriks



MR. MARTIN HENDRIKS FOCUSES ON URBAN DEVELOPMENTS IN CONTEMPORARY CHINA, RESEARCHING ON GATED COMMUNITIES AND SERVICE ACCESSIBILITY. HE PARTICIPATES IN A SELECTIVE RESEARCH MASTER IN HUMAN GEOGRAPHY & PLANNING AT THE URBAN AND REGIONAL RESEARCH CENTER OF UTRECHT UNIVERSITY.

The Chinese economic reform led by Deng Xiaoping started in December 1978 and brought about immense changes in the country. The reforms on land and housing led to the 'commodification' of housing in 1989. Chinese can now sell and buy a house, which they could not do under Mao's rule. Previously, housing in cities was provided by the state through the state-owned enterprises ('danwei'). Since the great reform, many Chinese rapidly became richer and the middle class grew. Consequently, large groups of Chinese moved to private housing estates, and nearly all of these estates are walled and gated. These gated communities or estates are called "xiaoqu".

Gated Communities worldwide as a negative phenomenon

Gating of residential areas in cities is a global trend. Gated communities can be seen in many developed and developing countries; they separate the urban rich from the urban poor. There are many reasons for the worldwide spread of gated communities. Some researchers believe that neoliberalism is a major cause; this stream in political economy allows for the privatization of urban space. There are also many individual reasons attributed to the prevalence of gated communities. Among them: fear of city life, especially in cities where criminality rates are high; privacy, such as in post-communist countries; preference for specific lifestyles; availability of high-quality facilities offered by the gated

communities; prestige; and, of course, better quality high-end housing. Perhaps, the motives for moving into these gated communities differ among residents, but what is common is that the people who are able to move in all belong to affluent population groups. This is not at all surprising because these people have the financial means to choose where they want to live regardless of price. As such, the urban rich are able to enjoy preferential and high-quality living environment. Urban planners, researchers and policy makers, in general, perceive the proliferation of gated communities as negative because it leads to exclusion. Non-residents are unable to enter gated communities and less people have access to the many services and amenities that these communities offer.

The positives of Gated Communities: the China example

Explorative research in Guangzhou, China shows that the development of gated communities is not as exclusive as perceived and could be an interesting means for providing services to the urban community. The author's research focused on the provision and accessibility of services inside xiaoqu. The most important outcome is that many services, such as sport facilities, parks, shopping malls, as well as, social services like schools and health clinics, are actually open to non-residents of the gated communities. Moreover, the local government is heavily involved in the provision of facilities and services, for example, education. The government requires developers to provide a school in a xiaoqu as a prerequisite to obtaining the land on which the xiaoqu will be constructed. These schools will be financed by the developers but run by the local government to ensure that access is not restricted to residents only. Sometimes, parking lots are provided as well. The research in Guangzhou showed that a gated community is not a new phenomenon in China, and that culture and history determine in great part their existence. During the period of dynasties, walls demarcated residential territories, and during the era of socialism under Mao's rule, walls surrounded the *danwei*, which provided many facilities as well. Chinese do not necessarily perceive a wall as negative. In fact, walling a residential area, as well as provision of services, is expected in housing development because it is 'normal'.

A xiaoqu in Guangzhou with over 50,000 inhabitants



When facilities in gated communities are provided by the private sector and actually serve the wider urban population, the prevalence of gated communities has a potential positive impact in efficient service provision, especially in cases when the public sector is forced to cut their budget expenses. The Chinese case of Guangzhou shows that gated communities could serve as efficient means for the provision of services in cities. Developers finance the existence of many facilities as buyers pay low housing prices for high-quality facilities. With the influence of local governments, as the Guangzhou case reveals, public private partnerships could evolve in service provision and the organization of access to these services for the wider urban population.

A middle school in a xiaoku in Guangzhou



Picture by the author

The research was presented at the AAG Annual Meeting in New York on February 24-28 during the session: *Chinese urban spatio-temporal developments in perspective II*.

MY GRANDMOTHER IS MY 'WHY', by Sara Lindberg

I was an intern at the UNECE Housing and Land Management unit. In one of our staff meetings, we did a communication exercise. Everyone had to answer to the question why. Why do we work at the Housing and Land Management (HLM) unit, why do we want to get up in the morning from a warm bed with the feeling that we will do something important, necessary and justified?

As people around me started to scribble down things on the paper in front of them, I started to feel an immense sensation as though I soon be interrogated by a professor on a test I had not quite been studying hard enough for. Images flashed in front of my eyes of the unit's website, information on where and how the Unit carries out its work, publications that had been produced, and meetings and conferences I had attended so far.

To make the argument that housing is important is not difficult. Our home is the cornerstone of our lives; it is the nest we feel secure in and where we share moments with family, friends and partner. To answer why housing is important would be answering in general terms to a personal question. In my opinion, what motivates people is one's personal identification with the job or studies one is pursuing. So I asked myself: what is my personal identification with housing? What was my first experience that shows how the housing sector differs across the region of ECE?

The answer is all my summers spent as a child with my grandparents on the country-side in south-west Poland. These summers are my best childhood memories; running in the fields, playing with the dogs that ran around freely in the village or playing hide and seek with the other children while making arrows on the street with chalk to indicate the hiding place.

Another favorite memory is the bathing time. To take a bath, one had to go outside to a separate little building where you will find a large metallic container filled with cold water used for bathing. From that container, one pours water in a smaller water container that was in fact a sort of water boiler. This small container has an inbuilt wood burning stove where one made a fire to heat up the water. When that was done, the boiling water is mixed with cold water in a circular shaped metallic hot tub until the perfect temperature is achieved. After the bath, the hot tub is tipped over on the stone

floor to make the water run through a hole in the wall into the garden.

All these seemed exotic and charming as a child. Later on, I realized what a burden it must have been during the winter months, how non-environmental friendly it was to pour the soapy water into the nature, and what a luxury it was to make oneself a bath in the winter without making all that physical effort.

After my grandfather's death, my grandmother moved away from the country side to the city. She now lives in an apartment with hot water and a bathtub that works. How strikingly different it is in Sweden where I was born and grew up. In Sweden, you can live isolated in the north in the middle of a forest and yet still have all the modern facilities. To reduce the gap in housing facilities between and within the UNECE member States for aging persons like my grandmother is what motivated me most as an intern at the UNECE HLM unit.

CHALLENGES OF INTERNAL MIGRATION AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN MONGOLIA, by Javkhlan Bayarsaikhan



Javkhlan Bayarsaikhan started her 3-month internship with the UNECE Housing and Land Management Unit in April. Her responsibilities include assisting in organizing the forum "Recovery, Sustainability, and Evolution: Perspectives on the Real Estate Economy", the review of the Country Profile on Ukraine, and other emerging tasks. She is from Mongolia and currently taking up a Master's degree in International Business

Management at the University of Applied Sciences Northwestern Switzerland. She has worked for several international organizations, such as the European Commission in Switzerland and World Bank in Mongolia. She also has a working experience in the private sector in U.S.A and Singapore.

Being born and raised in Mongolia is a privilege and at the same time a huge responsibility because you are representing a country with proud history, rich culture, nomadic legacy, and pristine nature. Beyond these, Mongolia has become the spot for the 21st century "California Gold Rush" in Asia and the next hot investment destination with its billions of dollars' worth of untapped mineral deposits. Mongolia's economy grew by 17.3 percent last year, thus becoming the fastest-growing economy in the world.³ This economic growth, stimulated mainly by the mineral resources such as coal, copper, gold and uranium, is anticipated to continue at double digit rates in the coming years⁴. However, growth does not always happen along a straight line. We are facing many economic, social and environmental challenges.

The capital city of Mongolia, Ulaanbaatar, is the coldest capital city in the world.⁵ In the winter temperatures average from -10C to -30C

³ <http://mobile.bloomberg.com/news/2012-04-16/mongolia-starts-share-sale-process-for-state-owned-coal-company>

⁴ <http://www.worldcoal.org/resources/eccoal/eccoal-current-issue/investing-in-energy-infrastructure/>

⁵ <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/activityandadventure/6967719/Top-10-the-worlds-hottest-and-coldest-places.html?image=4>

and at night it often falls to -40°C ⁶. It is the largest city in Mongolia and home to nearly 40 percent of the country's population.⁷ Its economy generates more than 60 percent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP). The difficulties brought about by the transition from a centrally planned economy to a free market, as well as



series of severe winters, have resulted in a large-scale migration of herders bringing with them their gers (Mongolian for nomadic tents). They moved from the countryside to the city in search of better living conditions and job opportunities. This rural-urban migration pattern has accelerated the growth of ger areas in cities.

In Ulaanbaatar more than 60 percent⁸ of its population lives in the ger areas. In spite of this, these areas are regarded only as temporary settlements and therefore, not properly considered in the city's development programmes. Sustainable development of ger areas in Ulaanbaatar is a critical problem. Ulaanbaatar's ger areas lack modern infrastructure services.⁹ Nearly none are linked to a central heating system; 85 percent of the ger residents use wood or coal-burning stove for heating. Very few have access to pipes that supply drinking or hot water so they have to obtain water at public water kiosks. Less than 30 percent of the ger residents have access to sanitation, which causes widespread pollution of groundwater.



Poor urban services have resulted in environmental deprivation, such as air pollution. Ulaanbaatar ranks high among the most polluted cities. According to World Health Organization standards, its "harmful dust" is 6-7 times higher than what the guidelines allow. Air quality is poor because of a number of reasons, including

pollution due to power plants, industry, domestic heating and transport. The poor air quality poses health risks, which is evident by the growing number of children suffering from respiratory diseases and hepatitis.

The Government and development partners have started taking action on the conditions of the ger areas through cadaster implementation, and provision of energy-efficient low-pressure boiler stoves and water kiosk networks. However, a sustainable solution is to replace the ger areas into apartment building complexes. Ulaanbaatar needs good governance to provide apartments at an affordable cost. This would require improving mortgage financing in the banking sector and developing effective real estate markets with appropriate procedures for defining prices for private land transactions. Converting ger areas into apartment building complexes would need heavy investment so it might take some time to make this happen.

As a citizen of Mongolia, I feel it is a responsibility to contribute to the transformation of our capital city into a healthy and safe environment. I see my internship in the UNECE's Housing and Land Management unit as the preliminary preparation for my intent to contribute to Mongolia's brighter future and bring bigger impact to its development.

WHAT'S NEW:

A NEW SECRETARY FOR THE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND LAND MANAGEMENT!



Gulnara Roll is head of Housing and Land Management Unit of UNECE and Secretary to the intergovernmental Committee on Housing and Land Management since January 2012. Gulnara holds a Ph.D. in Human Geography and Environmental Sciences.

She started her career at St. Petersburg Urban Planning Institute where she was involved in the preparation of municipal and regional development plans for the Russian cities of Yakutsk, Vladivostok, and Kamchatka Island. Further, she worked as a lecturer in Environmental Sciences at the Geography Department of St. Petersburg State University.

For personal reasons, Gulnara moved to Tartu, Estonia in 1993 where she worked for the Peipsi Center for Transboundary Cooperation, a non-profit institute dealing with regional development projects in the Eastern Baltics; and as a researcher at the Institute for Government and Policy of the University of Tartu. She gained her international experience while working in Brussels at INTAS (International Association for the promotion of scientific co-operation with the countries of the former Soviet Union).

Gulnara has been with UNECE since 2009 where she initially worked in the Environment Division.

⁶ <http://www.economist.com/node/21543113>

⁷ http://www.wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDS/IB/2011/12/20/000333037_20111220235126/Rendered/PDF/660830WPO.PUBL0lia0CS0FY0110Report.pdf

⁸ <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/2010/01/14730845/mongolia-enhancing-policies-practices-ger-area-development-ulaanbaatar>

⁹ <http://blogs.worldbank.org/eastasiapacific/mongolias-growing-shantytowns-the-cold-and-toxic-ger-districts>

OUR NEW STAFF



Michael A. Milligan joined the UNECE Housing and Land Management unit in January as an Economic Affairs Officer. He is primarily working on developing projects to address member state land management concerns and preparing workshops and conferences related to land administration and real estate.

Michael has a Bachelor of Science in physics from the University of Buffalo and a doctorate in economics from the University of New Mexico, where he focused on international and development economics. His work experience includes a year of teaching at a school for autistic children, two years of service as a physics teacher in Guinea with the volunteer organization Peace Corps, and work at USAID in the Bureau for Europe and Eurasia.

Michael can be contacted by email at Michael.Milligan@unece.org or by telephone at +41 22 917 1357.

OUR NEW INTERN



Vladimir Suvorov Vladimir started his internship at the Housing and Land Management Unit of the Trade and Sustainable Land Management Division of UNECE in January 2012. His responsibilities include contributing to the work of the Committee on Housing and Land Management and its Working Group on a Possible Framework Convention on Sustainable Housing. His work for the Working Group involves

legal research, including research on strategies for sustainable housing, preparation of documents, and communication with representatives of countries and other stakeholders concerning matters related to the Working Group.

Vladimir recently graduated from the Institute of Law, Social Management and Security of Udmurt State University, where he obtained a Jurisprudence Degree. He holds a Bachelor of Laws from the University of Sussex. His study programme also included a 2-year course on management in the University's School of Business, Management and Economics.

As a student, Vladimir completed an internship at the Central Election Commission of the Udmurt Republic. His professional interest embraces the interface between the economic and legal issues of international trade in the framework of sustainable development.



ANNOUNCEMENTS:

SECOND HOUSING FORUM EUROPE & CENTRAL ASIA, April 2013

PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE HOUSING FUTURE FOR ALL

by Don Haszczyn
Area vice-president
Habitat for Humanity
Europe and Central Asia



Four partnering organizations are planning to hold the second Housing Forum Europe & Central Asia in April 2013. The Forum will provide a platform for an international exchange of ideas on the housing sector stakeholders' vision and will identify priorities for improving housing conditions in the European & Central Asian region.

It will be the second joint forum organized by the partnering institutions:

- the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies,
- the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe,
- the United Nations Development Program and
- Habitat for Humanity International Europe & Central Asia

The Forum will be two days packed with high-quality speakers, presentations, workshops and roundtable discussions on key issues — energy efficiency, green building standards, healthy housing, environment, sustainable development, vulnerable populations, disaster prevention — and will help the sector create an evidence-based agenda for promoting and achieving sustainable housing in this region for future generations.

THE OBJECTIVES OF THE FORUM WILL BE TO:

- identify, debate and document the key challenges for housing sector in Europe and Central Asia;
- provide an opportunity to learn about innovative and cutting-edge practices, technologies and approaches to address housing challenges;
- identify practical and sustainable solutions for complex housing issues;
- inform political debate on housing issues.

The **First Housing Forum Europe & Central Asia** took place in April 2011 and brought together representatives of government, the private sector, civil and social organizations, as well as international organizations and institutions which contributed to building a common vision for affordable and sustainable housing in the region. Speakers' presentations from the first Housing Forum are available at the forum's website.

We believe that the **First Forum** laid a solid foundation for cooperation between main stakeholders in the future and we hope the **Second Housing Forum** will carry on this tradition.

We strongly encourage stakeholders dealing with the promotion of sustainable housing in the European & Central Asian region to participate in this event. Visit the forum website at www.ecahousingforum.eu and stay informed with the latest updates.

If you are interested in contributing to this project or would like to receive more information please contact us at

info@ecahousingforum.eu.

For media inquiries contact Katerina Bezgachina at

kbezgachina@habitat.org.



// Второй форум по жилищным вопросам в регионе Европа и Центральная Азия, апрель 2013.

На пути к обеспечению устойчивых жилищных условий для всех

Автор Дон
Хашчин
Региональный
вице-президент
“Хабитат фор
Хьюменити”
Европа и
Центральная
Азия



Второй форум по жилищным вопросам в регионе Европа и Центральная Азия, намеченный на апрель 2013 года, является совместным проектом 4 сотрудничающих организаций:

- Международной Федерации обществ Красного Креста и Красного Полумесяца,
- Европейской Экономической Комиссии ООН,
- Программы развития ООН и
- “Хабитат фор Хьюменити” Европа и Центральная Азия.

Приглашаем Вас принять участие в увлекательной дискуссии, посвященной энергетической эффективности, стандартам зеленого строительства, здоровым жилищным условиям, устойчивому развитию, уязвимым группам населения, программам реагирования на стихийные бедствия и многим другим актуальным вопросам.

Основные цели Форума:

- Выявление и обсуждение основных проблем жилищного сектора в Европе и Центральной Азии;
- Предоставление возможности обмениваться опытом и узнавать о передовых практиках и подходах к решению жилищных проблем;
- Поиск практических и рациональных способов решения комплексных жилищных проблем;
- Включение жилищных вопросов в политическую повестку дня.

Первый форум по жилищным вопросам в регионе Европа и Центральная Азия прошел в апреле 2011 года и собрал представителей правительств, частного сектора, общественных

и международных организаций и институтов. Дискуссия в рамках форума позволила участникам добиться большего единства в видении доступного и устойчивого жилья в регионе. Презентации участников первого Форума доступны на [сайте](#).

Первый форум по жилищным вопросам в регионе Европа и Центральная Азия заложил крепкий фундамент для сотрудничества между заинтересованными сторонами и в будущем. Мы надеемся, что Второй форум продолжит эту традицию.

Более подробную информацию и последние новости вы всегда можете найти на [сайте форума](#).

Если вы хотите принять участие в этом проекте или получить больше информации о Втором форуме, вы всегда можете связаться с нами по электронной почте

info@ecahousingforum.eu.

Журналистов по всем вопросам просим обращаться к Катерине Безгачиной по электронной почте kbezgachina@habitat.org.

A NOTE ON THE COORDINATOR:



Inputs to this newsletter are coordinated and edited by Ms. **Cecilia Batac**. You may contact her at Cecilia.Batac@unece.org // Материалы для настоящего бюллетеня новостей подобраны и отредактированы координатором госпожой Сесилией Батак. Вы можете связаться с ней по адресу Cecilia.Batac@unece.org.

For more information on the areas of work of the UNECE Housing and Land Management unit, please visit its website:-

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

For inquiries, send email to:

housing.landmanagement@unece.org

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