

Self-Made Cities

**In search of sustainable solutions for informal
settlements in the UNECE Region**

UNECE WPLA 6th Session

Geneva, 18-19 June

Informal Settlements in the SEE countries, seen through the case of Albania

- **Scale fo the problem:**

- In the **UNECE Region**, **50 million** people are affected by informal developments;
- In the **Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**, they are home to **11%** of the population in the 14 largest cities.
- In Belgrade, informal settlements take up to **40 %** of the residential areas.

- **Albania:**

- more than 30% of population lives in a way or another in an informal building and account for **3 km²** area occupied

- **Tirana:**

- 96,529 self declarations or **36%** of total

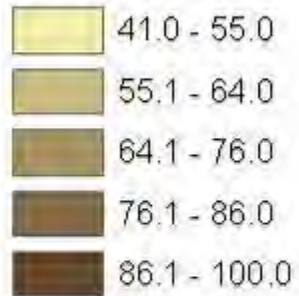
Main reasons for Informal Settlements in EU, SEE and Albania

Reasons for informal development	EU Countries	SEE Countries	Albania
Industrial development	✓	?	
Demographic phenomenon (Migration)	✓	✓	✓
Natural disasters	✓	✓	
Human disasters	✓	✓	
Institutional/Administrative deficiencies/ constrains: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • land manag. & property registrat.; • Planning & approval; 	✓	✓	✓
Lack of Affordable housing solutions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High share of private property; • Low rate of rental sector 	✓	✓	✓

Legend

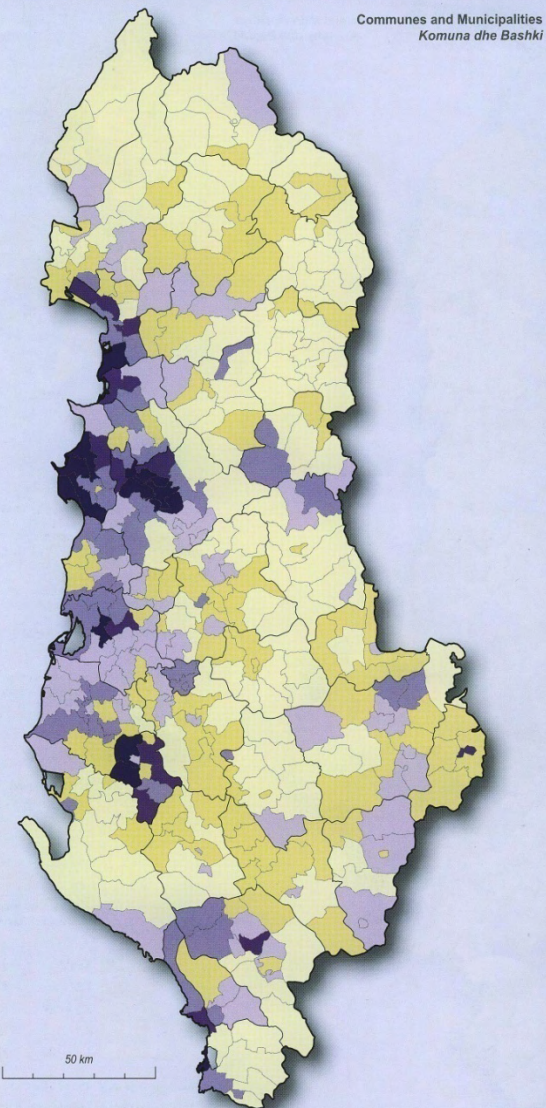
Eastern, Western Europe and CIS

Level of Urbanization (000s)



Internal Migration Migracioni i Brendshëm

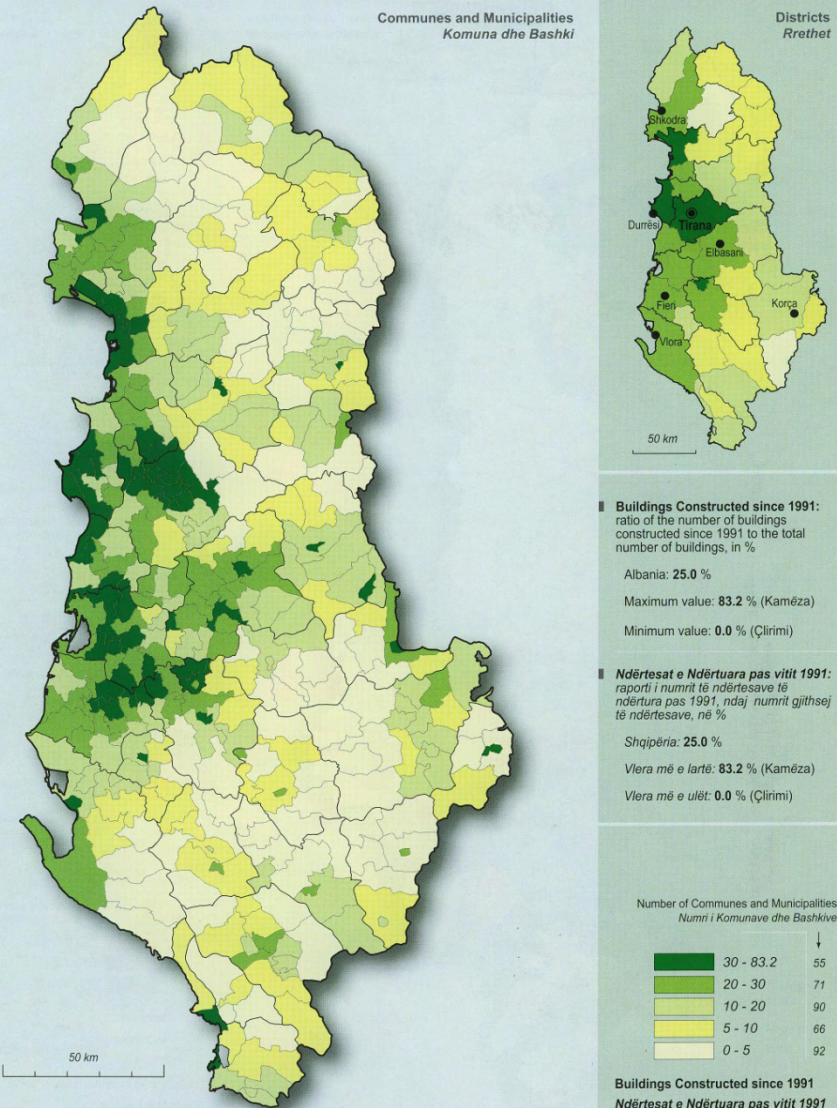
1989-2001

Source: Population and Housing Census of Albania, 2001 *Burimi: Regjistrimi i Popullsisë dhe Banesave, 2001*

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Buildings Constructed since 1991 Ndërtesat e Ndërtuara pas vitit 1991

2001

Source: Population and Housing Census of Albania, 2001 *Burimi: Regjistrimi i Popullsisë dhe Banesave, 2001*

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Typology of informal settlements

1. Squatter settlements on public or private land:

- Land is occupied;
- Land is bought with or without legal transactions;
- House is built with no permission, no plan and no project



Tirana - Early Transition in the 1990s



- Unprecedented Rural-Urban migration led to very high demand for housing
- Private sector GDP contribution grew from 10% to 75% (1992 to 1996)
- Kamza Municipality (north of Tirana) grew 10-fold (1994 to 2000)
- Investment in housing supported by remittances
- Informal neighborhoods lacked clear title, basic infrastructure etc.

Tirana - Since the 1990s



- Growing urban density in city center and along development corridors
- Active creation of public open spaces and urban façade improvements
- New road widening projects on the inner ring roads
- Decentralization began to have operational impact
- Housing development-informal/formal-middle/lower income families

Typology of informal settlements

2. Settlements for refugees and vulnerable people:

- Bosnia and Herzegovina some 445,000 homes or 37% of pre-war housing have been partially or totally destroyed;
- In Kosovo, 30% of the housing stock was damaged;
- In Croatia the damaged and demolished housing stock is over 200.000 dwelling units, or close to 13% of the total

In Albania is typical for some Roma communities



Typology of informal settlements

3. Illegal subdivision:

- Legal land property;
- Unauthorized land developments;
- Illegal subdivisions on the fringes (South-Eastern Europe—Serbia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Greece)
- **Extra-urban settlements** in protected or recreation zones and coastal areas
- Unauthorized Infill housing constructions in cities



Typology of informal settlements

4. Substandard inner-city housing

- Overcrowded;
- Dilapidated housing;
- Without adequate facilities;
- In city centers or densely urbanized areas;
- **In Albania, approx. 20% of self declaration correspond to deviation of approved project**



Challenges of Informal Settlements

- **Economic challenges:**
 - The “dead capital” – in Albania it is estimated approx. 6 billion USD;
 - Under-utilization of land
 - density approx. 10 units/ha;
 - Residents do not pay taxes, fees, electricity, water;



Challenges of Informal Settlements

- **The Social Challenge** - residents of informal settlements are often :
 - Poor;
 - Disadvantaged;
 - Face higher unemployment, social hardships and tenure insecurity;
 - Are not eligible for social benefits



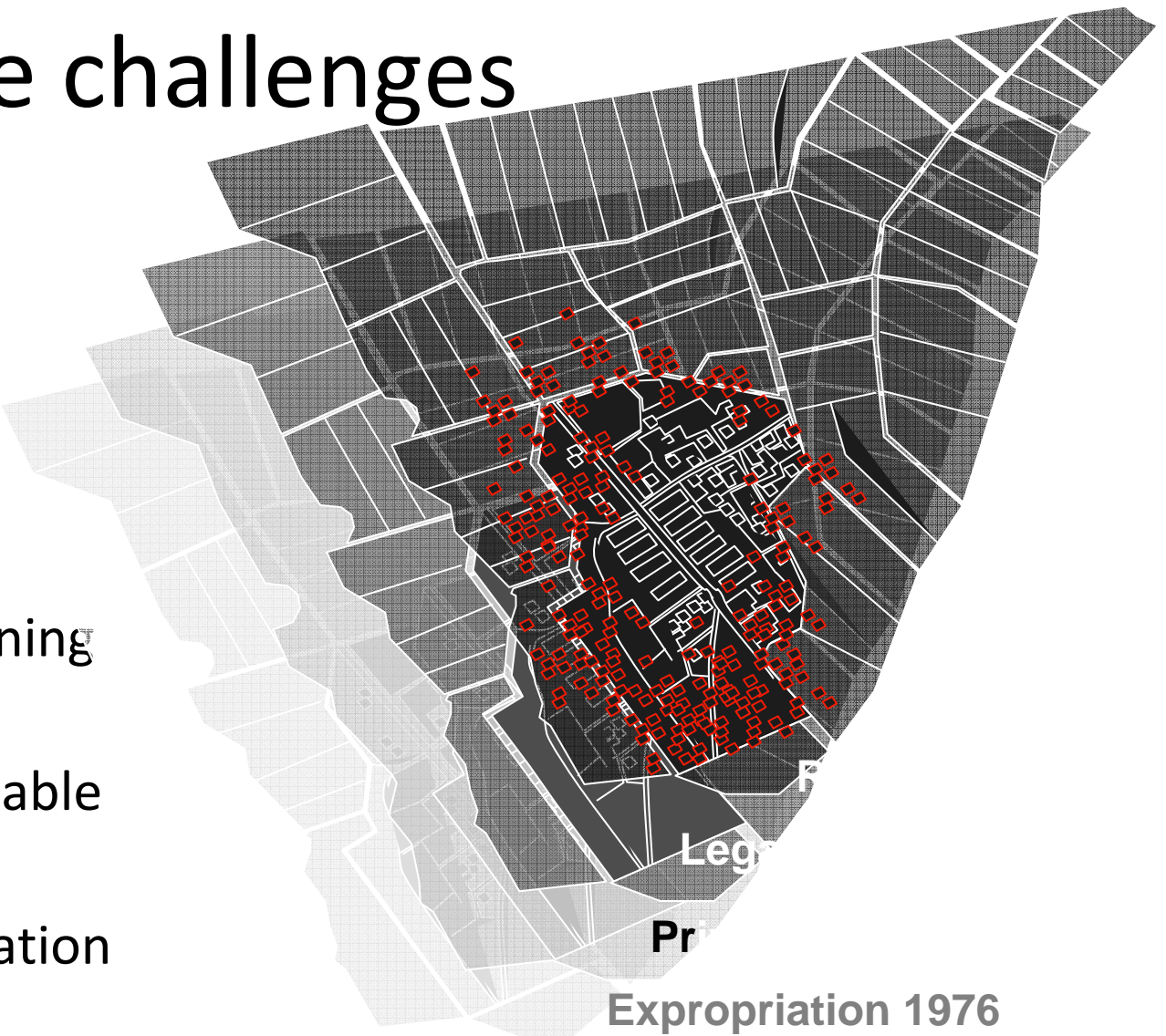
Challenges of Informal Settlements

- **Environmental challenges;**
 - landslides,
 - flooding,
 - Poor drainage,
 - Environmental pollution and;
 - Exposure to various environmental hazards



Governance challenges

- Incomplete land registration;
- Constrains in land supply;
- Inefficient & bureaucratic planning procedures;
- Insufficient affordable housing;
- Clearing & registration of properties



Expropriation 1976

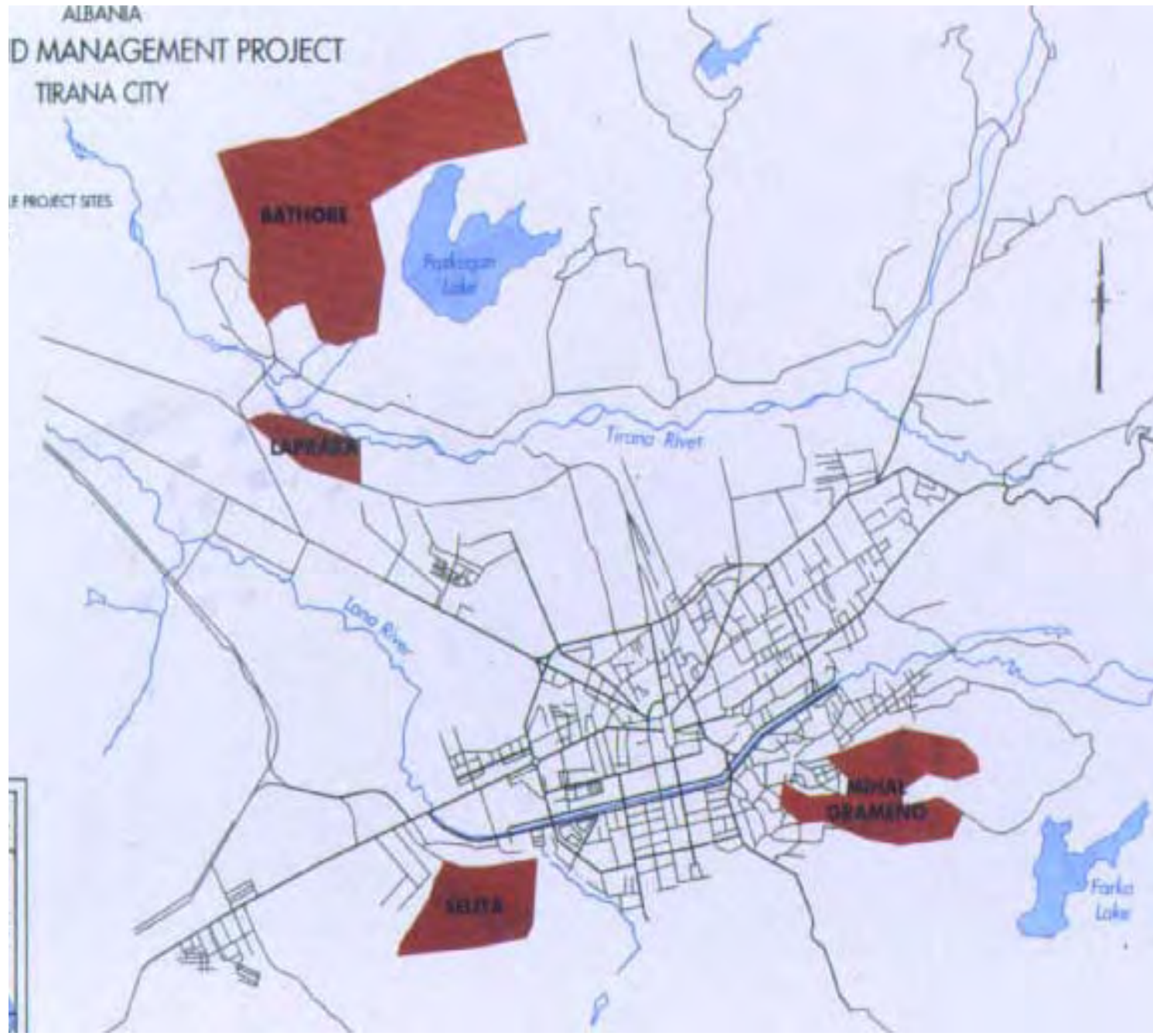
Agricultural Reform 1946

Some Approaches

- **Regularization & upgrading:**
 - Bottom-up approach;
 - Demand driven
 - **Albania – World Bank Project**
- **Resettlement & reallocation:**
 - Albania – the Social Housing Project;
- **Urban renewal & regeneration strategies:**
 - Albania – to start
- **Formalization & legalization:**
 - Integration in the formal land & housing market;
 - Formalization of land tenure;
 - Cost recovery of urban costs and;
 - Capture the public revenues;
 - [Albania – actual practice based on the law](#)

ALBANIA
WATER MANAGEMENT PROJECT
TIRANA CITY

PROJECT SITES



Lapraka : Origin of Residents

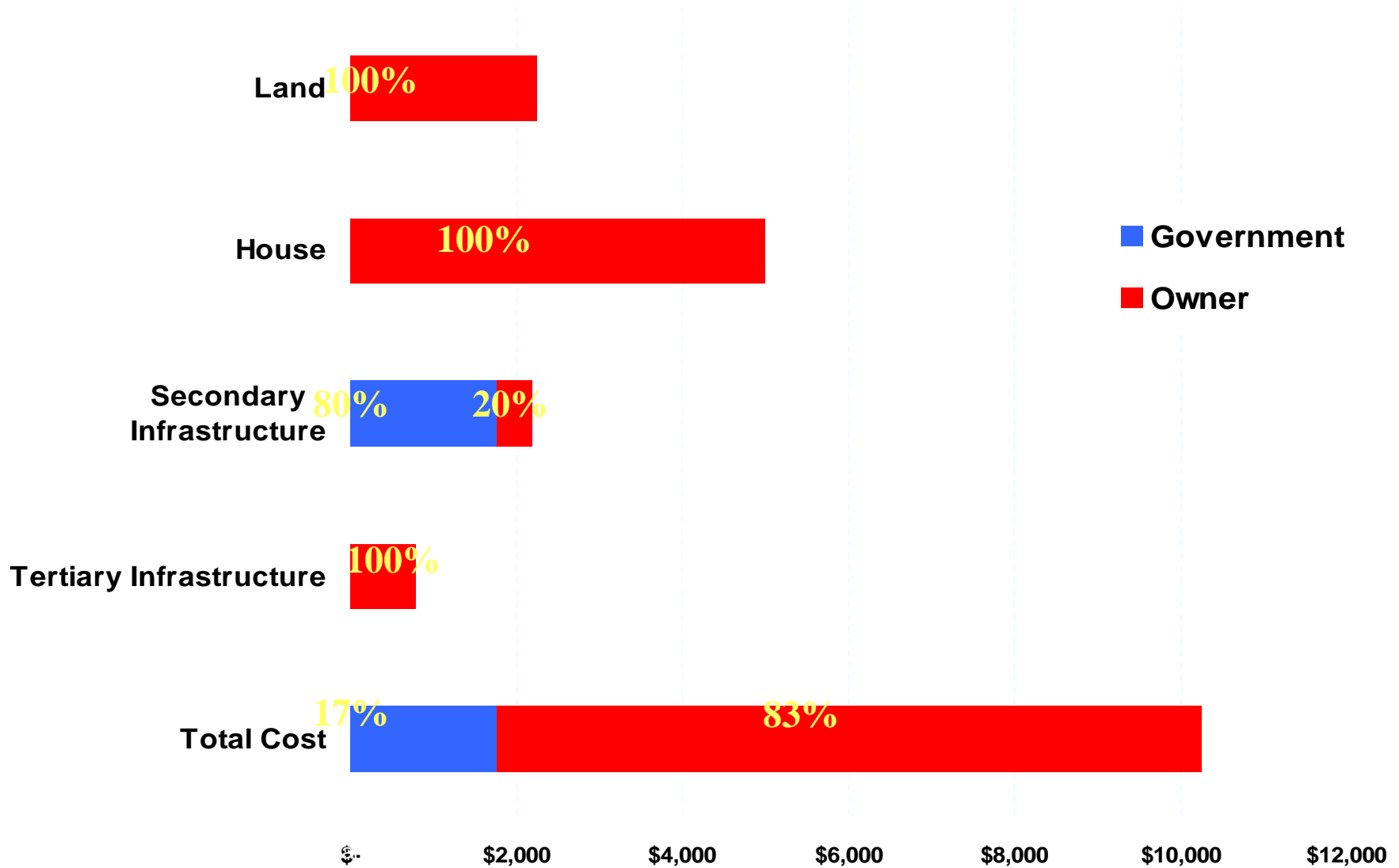








Typical Allocation of Housing and Infrastructure Costs: Tirana, Albania (per parcel)

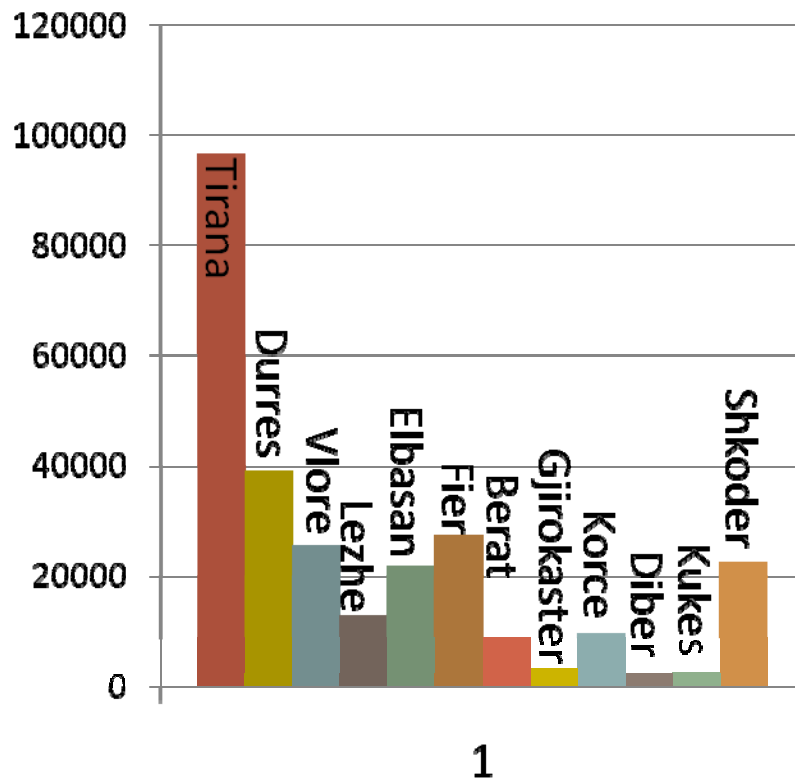


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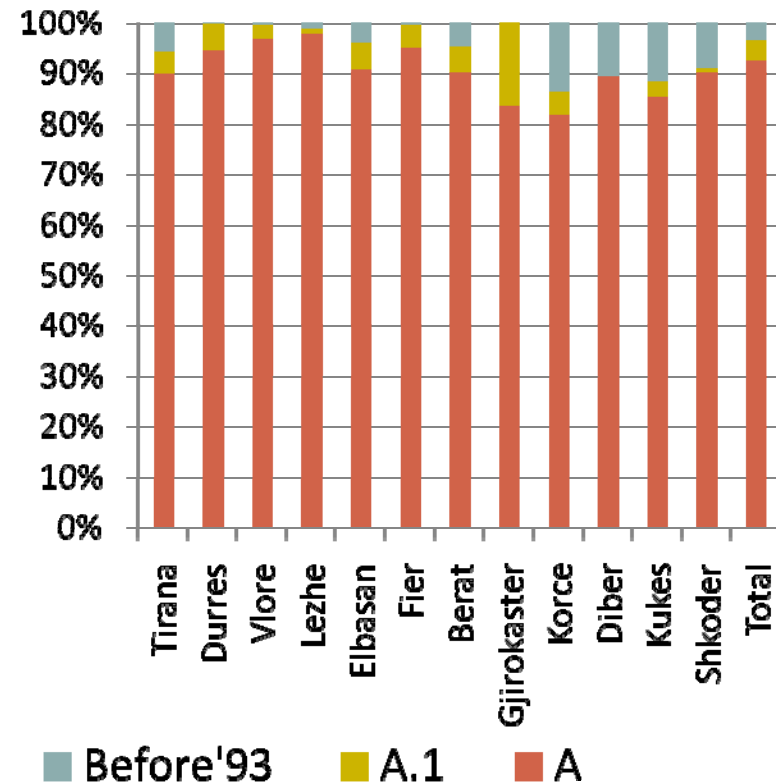
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Legalization process in Albania

Distribution of 270,000 informal development by regions, as by self declarations



178,000 properties entered into digital elaboration



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Some Conclusions (Policy Guidelines)

- No “one-size-fit-all” solution;
- Need to address the spatial manifestation of social inequalities;
- Better governance, reduce barriers and improve efficiency;
- Focus on inclusive housing, land and planning policies;
- Including informal settlements into the system of land management