



VITAL SPACES

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

IN THIS ISSUE:

Affordable Housing: UNECE and UN-HABITAT delivering as one in the CIS (Имеется русская версия).

Housing Country Profile: Belarus housing Country Profile launched (Имеется русская версия).

Age-friendly Housing: UNECE policy briefs on ageing: sharing good practice.

Urban Spaces: The UrbSpace project.

Social Housing: The Danish non-profit cooperative housing ('Almene Boligselskaber').

Housing Poverty: Researching the housing need in Hungary • A brief assessment of housing poverty and inequalities in Uzbekistan (Имеется русская версия).

At the Secretariat: Our new interns • A farewell message.

Announcements: Energy Efficiency Forum (Имеется русская версия) • International forum "Greening Real Estate Markets" • Azerbaijan hosts UNECE workshop on transparent and efficient land management • A seminar on "Coordination for safe neighborhoods" • UNDP-Moldova job vacancies • UNEP leads implementation of a TACC project.

Вы найдете статьи на русском языке внутри

UNECE AND UN-HABITAT DELIVERING AS ONE IN THE COMMONWEALTH OF INDEPENDENT STATES// Единство действий ЕЭК ООН и ООН-Хабитат в странах Содружества Независимых Государств

St. Petersburg, 27 January 2010



In countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), affordable housing has yet to become a reality. The region lacks a social rental housing market and its multifamily housing stock needs urgent restructuring. There is the additional problem of buildings that have become uninhabitable as the result of natural disasters like earthquakes.

UNECE's Country Profiles of the housing sector, performed in several CIS countries over the last years, have highlighted the challenges and the institutional, legislative, financial and technical gaps that need to be bridged to develop affordable, healthy and greener housing.

These studies have stimulated action at the national level, and prompted some capacity building activities from UNECE, including workshops on topics such as informal settlement formation, social housing, and energy efficiency in buildings. Tools such as the UNECE social housing guidelines or the recently developed Action Plan for Energy Efficiency in Housing have also been developed in response to these needs.

UN-HABITAT, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, has also become increasingly active in the region in recent years, in particular through the Project Office in Moscow, which serves as the regional hub for the exchange of information for CIS countries on human settlements and urban planning. For instance, in May 2006 UN-HABITAT organised a sub-regional conference on affordable housing in Dushanbe (Tajikistan) in cooperation with the Agency for Construction and Architecture under the Government of Tajikistan, supported by the Ministry for Regional Development of the Russian Federation.

For the UN to play an even more effective role on housing in the region, UNECE and UN-Habitat have joined forces and developed a work plan for their activities in the CIS region, which they will deliver more effectively through UN-Habitat's Moscow office. This plan, in the form of a Letter of Agreement, includes joint action on capacity-building workshops, as well as joint communication and fundraising activities.

In particular, during the meeting of the Committee on Cooperation between UN-HABITAT and the CIS Inter-Governmental Council for Cooperation in Construction Area in St. Petersburg on 26 January

2010, it was agreed to develop a joint training course on affordable housing for CIS countries.

According to Sergei Kruglik, Russian Deputy-Minister for Regional Development, the new initiative "will join the expertise of the two UN bodies in delivering a concrete and practical training course on a crucial topic for CIS countries such as affordable housing". Mr. Kruglik, who is responsible for developing affordable housing policies in Russia, currently chairs the CIS Inter-Governmental Council for Cooperation in Construction Area.

UNECE and UN-HABITAT identified training as a concrete capacity building measure that would allow CIS countries to upgrade their knowledge and skills regarding existing housing tools and mechanisms, discuss with experts the problems they face in their everyday work and create a regional network of professionals. The United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) will bring its assistance and expertise in developing an appropriate training approach and methodology.

For further information, please contact:

Paola Deda

Secretary to the Committee on Housing and Land Management
UNECE Environment, Housing and Land Management Division
Tel: +41 (0)22 917 2553
E-mail: paola.deda@unece.org

Tatiana Khabarova

Habitat Programme Manager
9, Leontyevsky pereulok
Moscow, Russian Federation
Tel: + 7495 787 22 53
E-mail: Tatiana.khabarova@unhabitat.org

// В странах Содружества Независимых Государств (СНГ) доступное жильё еще не являются реальностью. В этом регионе рынок социального арендного жилья отсутствует и многоквартирный жилищный фонд нуждается в срочной реструктуризации. К этому добавляется проблема строений, которые стали непригодными для жилья в результате природных бедствий, таких как например землетрясения.

Национальные обзоры жилищного сектора, подготовленные ЕЭК ООН в различных странах СНГ в течение последних лет, выявили имеющиеся проблемы, а также указали на имеющиеся разрывы на институциональном, законодательном, финансовом и техническом уровнях, которые следует преодолеть для развития доступного, здорового и учитывающего экологический фактор жилья.

Эти обзоры явились стимулом к действиям на национальном уровне, а также способствовали развитию со стороны ЕЭК ООН мероприятий по укреплению потенциала, включая проведение семинаров по таким темам, как неформальные поселения, социальное жильё и обеспечение энергоэффективности в строительстве. Такие инструменты, как Руководящие принципы ЕЭК ООН по социальному жилью или недавно начатый План действий по обеспечению энергоэффективного жилья также были разработаны с тем, чтобы помочь решению данных проблем.

Программа Организации Объединённых Наций по населённым пунктам (ООН-Хабитат) приобретает возрастающую роль в регионе в последние годы, главным образом через Регионального бюро в Москве, которое также является региональным центром для обмена информацией между странами СНГ в области жилья и городского планирования. Например, в мае 2009 года ООН-Хабитат, в сотрудничестве с

Агентством по архитектуре и строительству при правительстве Таджикистана организовал в Душанбе (Таджикистан) субрегиональную конференцию на тему создания доступного жилья. Встреча была организована при поддержке Министерства по региональному развитию Российской Федерации.

Для того, чтобы играть еще более активную роль в области жилищной политики в регионе, ЕЭК ООН и ООН-Хабитат объединили свои усилия и разработали план для организации мероприятий в регионе СНГ, который две организации будут осуществлять более эффективно через Московский офис ООН-Хабитат. Данный план, существующий существует в виде подписанного Соглашения, включает в себя как осуществление совместных действий при проведении семинаров по наращиванию потенциала, так совместный действия информационного характера и мероприятия по поиска финансовой помощи со стороны доноров.

В частности, во время встречи Комитета по сотрудничеству между ООН-Хабитат и Межгосударственного Совета СНГ по сотрудничеству в области строительной деятельности, состоявшейся в Санкт-Петербурге 26 января 2010 года, было решено разработать совместные обучающие программы по теме доступного жилья для стран СНГ.

По словам Сергея Круглика, заместителя министра по региональному развитию Российской Федерации, новая инициатива «объединит экспертизу двух организаций ООН в их усилия по организации конкретных и практических обучающих программ по такой крайне важной проблеме для стран СНГ, какой является доступное жильё». Г-н Круглик, являющийся ответственным за разработку политики по доступному жилью в России, в настоящее время также является Председателем Межправительственного Совета по сотрудничеству в строительной деятельности стран СНГ.

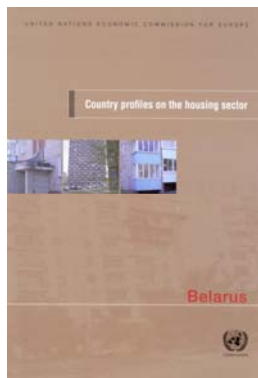
ЕЭК ООН и ООН-Хабитат считают, что обучение является конкретной мерой по созданию потенциала, который позволит странам СНГ повысить их знания по применению существующих инструментов и механизмов жилищного сектора, а также обсудить с экспертами проблемы, с которыми они сталкиваются ежедневно, и создать региональную сеть профессионалов. Учебный и научно-исследовательский институт Организации Объединённых Наций (ЮНИТАР) предоставит свою помощь и экспертные услуги в создании необходимых преподавательских подходов и методологии.

За дополнительной информацией просьба обращаться по следующему адресу:

Г-жа Паола Деда
Секретариат Комитета по жилищному хозяйству и землепользованию
Отдел ЕЭК ООН по окружающей среде, жилищному хозяйству и землепользованию
Тел: +41 (0)22 917 2553
Электронный адрес: paola.deda@unece.org

Г-жа Татьяна Хабарова
Администратор программы ООН-Хабитат
Леонтьевский переулок, 9
Москва, Российская Федерация
Тел: +7495 787 22 53
Электронный адрес: Tatiana.khabarova@unhabitat.org

UNECE COUNTRY PROFILE FINDS THAT MOST EXISTING BELARUSIAN HOUSING STOCK IS WELL REFURBISHED AND SAFE// Национальный обзор ЕЭК ООН по жилищному сектору свидетельствует о том, что большая часть существующего жилищного фонда в Республике Беларусь обновлена и является безопасной для проживания



"This is just the beginning", said Mr. Alexander Ilyich Seleznev, Minister of Architecture and Construction of Belarus, when officially receiving the Country Profile of the Housing Sector of Belarus from the Director of the UNECE Environment, Housing and Land Management Division, Mr. Marco Keiner. The Minister expressed his gratitude for the recommendations in the UNECE report and promised to continue to implement measures leading to a sustainable housing sector.

At a conference dedicated to the launch of the Country Profile, organized by the Ministry of Architecture and Construction (MoAC) in cooperation with UNECE, participants reviewed the actions taken to date by the Government to take up the Profile's recommendations and guidance. Examples of positive measures include the country's focus on energy efficiency in housing, the greater role of local authorities, the increased involvement of the private sector, and advances in needed construction and adequate housing for all citizens.

"Housing maintenance policies, which are of crucial importance in the region due to the large amount of khrushchovki (pre-fabricated 5-storey houses from the 1960s), are well developed and comprehensive. As a result, most of the existing housing stock is well refurbished and safe", said Mr. Keiner. Representatives of the housing sector in Belarus noted that many of the recommendations have already been undertaken or are planned for the near future. "The recommendations in the report have served to undertake structural changes in the sector", said Mr. Vladimir Doropievich, Deputy Head of the Ministry's Housing Construction Department.

The meeting was opened and chaired by Mr. Aleksandr Nichkasov, Deputy Minister of MoAC, and involved participants from all the relevant sectors and Ministries dealing with housing and construction, including Government officials, developers, local authorities, non-governmental organizations and international organizations.

To learn more about the UNECE country profiles, please visit the dedicated webpage (<http://www.unece.org/hlm/prgm/cph/welcome.html>).

For more information on the UNECE Housing programme, please contact:

Jakob Krupka

Capacity Building Officer
UNECE Environment, Housing and Land Management Division
Phone: +41 (0)22 917 2477

// "И это только начало", - сообщил Александр Ильич Селезнев, Министр архитектуры и строительства Республики Беларусь, во время официальной презентации Национального обзора по жилищному сектору Республики Беларусь, организованной Директором Отдела ЕЭК ООН по окружающей среде, жилищному хозяйству и землепользованию, г-ном Марко Кайнером. Министр поблагодарил за рекомендации, представленные в обзоре ЕЭК ООН, и пообещал продолжать принимать меры, направленные на улучшение жилищного сектора.

Участники конференции, организованной Министерством архитектуры и строительства Беларуси совместно с ЕЭК ООН по случаю выхода из печати Национального обзора жилищного сектора Республики Беларусь, рассмотрели меры принятые властями на сегодняшний день, касающиеся рекомендаций и руководящих принципов, содержащихся в Обзоре. Например, одна из таких мер направлена на повышенное внимание властей проблемам энергетической эффективности в жилищном секторе, увеличение роли местного правительства, повышение участия частного сектора и удовлетворение нужд по строительству, а также по обеспечению всех граждан доступным жильем.

"Политика, направленная на укрепление жилищного сектора, имеющая важное значение в регионе из-за большого числа хрущевок, хорошо развита и охватывает широкий круг проблем. В результате, большая часть существующих жилых помещений в Беларуси находится в хорошем состоянии и является надежной", - сказал г-н Кайнер. Представители жилищного сектора Беларуси отметили, что большинство рекомендаций уже выполняется или из выполнение планируется в ближайшем будущем. "Рекомендации, представленные в Обзоре, использовались для осуществления структурных изменений в жилищном секторе", - сказал Владимир Доропиевич, заместитель начальника управления жилищного строительства Министерства архитектуры и строительства.

Данная встречу открыл и возглавил г-н Александр Ничкасов, заместитель Министра архитектуры и строительства Республики Беларусь. На ней присутствовали участники из разных ведомств и Министерств, работающих с жилищным и строительным секторами, включая представителей правительства, строительных организаций, представителей местной власти, неправительственных и международную организаций.

Более подробная информация о Национальных отчетах ЕЭК ООН по жилищному сектору Вы можете на сайте: (<http://www.unece.org/hlm/prgm/cph/welcome.html>)

За дополнительной информацией просьба обращаться к:

Господину Якобу Крупка

Ответственному сотруднику по созданию потенциала
Отдел по окружающей среде, жилищному хозяйству и землепользованию Европейской экономической комиссии
Организации Объединенных Наций
Тел: + 41 (0)22 917 2477

UNECE POLICY BRIEFS ON AGEING: SHARING GOOD PRACTICE

Ageing

Population ageing is one of the biggest challenges of our century. While working-age adults currently make up the largest share of population and percentages of dependent children and older adults are relatively small, this situation is changing rapidly. In Europe, there are now 4.4 persons of working age per one person 65 or older. By 2025, there will be 3.1 and by 2050 only 2.1.

Policy briefs



To help its 56 member States make the appropriate policy responses, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) has launched a series of Policy Briefs on Ageing. Drawn from the latest insights in research, the Briefs highlight strategies for policymakers and offer good practice examples for the variety of policy contexts found in the UNECE region. The first four briefs are currently available in English and Russian. Some member States have decided to translate them and German, Serbian and Slovak versions will appear soon.

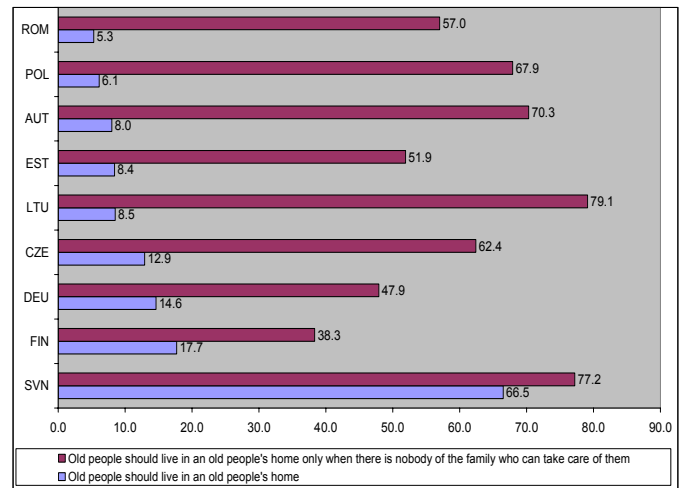
Age-friendly housing

Amongst others topics, references in housing arrangements of older persons are mentioned in the brief on participation and integration. There it is stated that in Europe, 35% of women and 13% of men above 60 years of age live alone. This trend is in accordance with a general preference for independent living in developed countries. However, older persons living either alone or in skipped-generation households tend to be an especially disadvantaged group in the less developed regions. In many cases, living alone is not a matter of choice, but of external circumstances, especially for women who live longer and are less likely to find a new partner in older age. For the same reason, more women than men live in nursing homes. Institutional care, however, is generally regarded as a measure of last resort for those who are in constant need of medical care and assistance.

Many older persons prefer to live independently for as long as possible and can be enabled to do so with some help such as removing barriers in homes to make them suitable for persons with disabilities or by offering services at home for persons with reduced mobility. Examples of such services include meals on wheels, assistance in the household and with shopping and hairdressing. For older persons whose pension is small, financial support may be feasible, for example, in the form of discounted repair services or heating subsidies.

To avoid unnecessary institutionalization of older persons who require frequent assistance, families should be empowered to provide care and support. This may involve financial support or temporary institutional care to allow family members who provide care to take holidays.

Figure: Views on the responsibility for the care of elderly people (percentage)



Source: Höhn (2008).

Good practice example

To share and learn from good practices, the briefs include an example on each discussed issue. For instance, in the area of age-friendly housing, the United Kingdom has developed standards and programmes how to make houses suitable for all ages.

Lifetime homes in the United Kingdom

In the Green Paper "Homes for the Future", the British Government sets out standards requiring new housing be accessible, adaptable and otherwise suitable for people of all ages. It is recommended that also neighbourhoods are planned according to the needs of all generations, e.g. with parks, shops, and health centres. With respect to already existing housing, the Government invests in adapting homes to make them suitable for people with impaired mobility, with 30 per cent more funding for the Disabled Facilities Grant. Furthermore, it is planned to offer older people new 'handyperson' services for quick repairs and adaptations, giving many more of them that bit of extra help. Finally, a new national information service is provided to make sure that all older people have access to good housing advice.

Source: United Kingdom; Department for Communities and Local Government, Department of Health; Department of Work and Pensions (2008): Lifetime homes, lifetime neighbourhoods. A national strategy for housing in an ageing society. London

UNECE Policy Briefs on Ageing can be downloaded at www.unece.org/pau/age/Policy_briefs

Available briefs:

1. Mainstreaming ageing
2. Gender equality, work and old age
3. Older persons as consumers
4. Integration and participation of older persons in society

Coming soon:

5. Lifelong learning
6. Health promotion
7. Towards community long-term care

More information:

UNECE Population Unit

Email : ageing@unece.org

Tel +41 22 917 1204

“MAKING ATTRACTIVE URBAN SPACES - MORE QUALITY FOR URBAN ENVIRONMENT”

Presentation of the project UrbSpace, by Ms. Zuzana Hudekova



Ms. ZUZANA HUDEKOVA IS A LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT WORKING AT THE REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER (REC SLOVAKIA) BASED IN BRATISLAVA.

Towns and cities are perceived as engines of regional development, offering a broad range of services and economic and cultural opportunities. However, urban concentrations of population bring a number of problems. The spread of urbanization removes previously clear boundaries between settlement and surrounding landscape, putting great pressure on the natural landscape setting. In this context open urban spaces play a vital role. Their environmental importance is underlined by their potential to mitigate adverse effects of climate change, which are likely to be especially marked in urban areas. The design of high quality urban spaces, involving inputs from community groups, is also an increasingly important aspect of the planning process. Such places help to define the public life of a village or town by strengthening the „local spirit“.



Urban open space is a generic term covering all non-built up spaces within the administrative boundaries of a town or city. In this sense urban open space includes all ‘outdoor’ spaces including streets and squares, woodlands and agricultural areas as well as traditional parks and gardens. More recently the concept has been expanded to include those parts of the built fabric which are open to the sky, including roofs, terraces, balconies etc. and even building facades, where these can be clad with vegetation. As a consequence of this extended definition is important as urban open space can be seen as a continuous matrix of space within which all the built components of the city are situated, and which flows between and over the buildings, linking the urban centre with the surrounding peri-urban and rural landscape. As such it can be seen as representing an essential part of the basic infrastructure of all urban areas.

Understanding the varied functions of urban open spaces is an important part of helping to improve their effectiveness, both by enabling better management of existing urban spaces as well as improving the design of new ones. There are many attempts to list these functions, but the following summary divides the functions up into three main groups:

- Environmental and ecological functions
- Social and societal functions
- Structural and aesthetic functions

Principal objective of the project “UrbSpace” is to promote sustainable urban development taking into consideration all aspects and functions of urban open space (as described above), and its improvement in terms of design quality, accessibility and functionality.



These objectives will be achieved by realization of the following activities:

- state of art analyses in the participating project countries
- definition of relevant criteria and principles for public space design in smaller urban areas with regard to all aspects of sustainable development (environmental, social and economic)
- development of a joint strategy and tools for sustainable urban spaces involving relevant stakeholders to improve the planning process with respect to accessibility for all
- development and realization of pilot actions in different central space urban areas (urban, coastal and cross border) – designed and worked out through a participatory process by communities, that will examine the implementation of the joint strategy for sustainable urban spaces.
- dissemination of results throughout the project lifetime at different levels (from local to European) and targeting different actors.

The partnership of the UrbSpace project comprises a variety of multi-sectoral organizations ensuring a multi-actor approach. The project is being realized during the period from November 2008 till October 2011 and it is implemented in Austria, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. The project leader is REC Slovakia. The project is funded through Central Europe Programme. More information on the project could be found on the web page www.urbanspaces.eu.



UrbSpace kick-off participants.

RESULTS OF INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH: THE DANISH NON-PROFIT COOPERATIVE HOUSING ('ALMENE BOLIGSELSKABER') IS THE BEST SOCIAL HOUSING SYSTEM IN EUROPE, by Arild Holt-Jensen

A policy of social mix in housing neighborhoods is clearly linked to the Nordic welfare state ideals that gradually developed from the 1930s and was considerably strengthened in the first decades after World War II (WW2). There is a Nordic tradition of shared, fundamental values and similar policies with public responsibilities for education, health care and the social sector. In other fields there is a mixed private market – public economy structure in which the public state guarantees a degree of minimum living standards for everybody, for instance providing minimum old age pension to all citizens.



Mr. ARILD HOLT-JENSEN IS PROFESSOR EMERITUS IN GEOGRAPHY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BERGEN IN NORWAY.

All the Nordic countries have provision of good housing conditions to all citizens as a major policy objective, and additional objectives concern equity and social integration. Both national and local governments have a basic responsibility for housing provision, however, construction is done by private enterprises while cooperative, municipal and other non-profit developers have an important role as commissioners for the work and later as estate owners. Thus, the Nordic housing system consists of a mix and interplay between private and public actors. In a broad role the state primarily provides civil law basis for the housing sector.

Despite the common shared principles, there are surprisingly large differences among the Nordic countries in the way housing is provided and financed. 'Path dependencies', developed from the countries' political decisions in 1945-1948, explain to a large extent why the housing policies in the 5 Nordic countries are 'so different' in spite of the common understanding of a welfare state. Norway and Iceland have given strong priority to home ownership while Denmark and Sweden have a relatively strong tradition for rented housing. In Norway and Iceland there has been a remarkably little public, municipally-owned housing. Finland has a larger percentage of owner-occupied housing, often built by the owner, than Sweden and Denmark, and also a larger part of public and non-profit renting than in Norway and Iceland. This is partly due to the very serious housing situation in Finland after WW2, when the country had to provide housing for approximately 400'000 Finns that fled from Karelia when this part of the country was lost to the Soviet Union. Of major international interest is however the different and special social housing provisions in Denmark, Sweden and Norway. The following summary is both based on EU-financed NEHOM project 2000-2004 and Nordic Council financed Nordic-Baltic Housing Neighbourhood Project 2004-2008.

In Denmark 20% of all dwellings (larger percentage in bigger towns) are in non-profit rented housing companies (almene boligselskaber). Like Swedish municipal housing companies and Norwegian coops they are intended as housing provision for all income and social groups, but the municipalities have the right to allot up to 25% of the housing for social clients. Almene boligselskaber are self-owning institutions built with some public support and run on a non-profit basis. The tenants are collective owners and have great influence as

they constitute the majority in the governing assembly and the management board. The sector consists of more than 700 non-profit housing organizations with more than 7000 member sections, which in practice are self-governing. This means that rents are based on the real costs of running one section so it is thus a benefit to live in a section that was built some decades ago. But as ownership is collective, a tenant cannot sell his/her share as is the case in Norwegian coops.

In Norway there is a very small municipally-owned, social rented housing sector. It was the share-owning coops that provided the element of 'social housing' after WW2 and today these must be regarded as private, or rather, indirect ownership. The rent to each coop section (borettslag) is based on the real costs for running that section, but a privately paid share can be sold at what the market is willing to pay. Although the tenants have direct democratic control on each section (borettslag), this does not influence their housing costs very much as most of a shareowner's housing costs are related to payment of the private loans taken up to buy the share. Rented private and public housing in Norway is also dominated by the market value.

Indirect ownership in share-owning coop housing is also of importance in Sweden although it has a rather large municipally-owned rented sector. There are some 300 publicly-owned housing companies with a total of approximately 900 000 dwellings. This is housing provision for the general public; there is no formal social rented housing in Sweden but the municipalities can purchase or rent flats for their social clients. A special feature in Sweden is the presence of a very strong national tenant (renters) association. Rents are to a large extent decided through negotiations between the municipal housing companies and the tenant organization, and are then based on utility value (bruksvärde) rather than on what the market is willing to pay.

The tenure system, housing organizations and financing has thus developed quite differently in the Nordic states and these institutions are now difficult to change for political reasons - there is a strong 'path dependency'. Table 1 gives an overview of the housing tenure in the Nordic countries.

Table 1. Distribution of housing stock in 2000 by tenure form, in percent

	Direct Owner-ship	Indirect Owner-ship	Public & Social rental sector	Private rental sector	Other	Total
Denmark	51	6	20	19	5	100
Finland	64	-	17	15	4	100
Iceland*	81	5	4	10	-	100
Norway	63	14	5	18	-	100
Sweden*	38	16	23	17	6	100

Source: Karlberg, B. and A. Victorin (2004).
*estimate.

The variations in forms of tenure between the Nordic countries are also reflected in rather large variations in housing subsidies and property taxation. In Sweden and Denmark, the real estate taxation is important as public revenue and has substantial impacts on housing costs. In both Finland and Norway, property taxation in the last years is insignificant while in some municipalities it is completely abolished. What is important in Norway, Sweden and Finland, and partly Denmark is the tax deduction for loan interest, which also benefit owner occupiers. Housing allowances as a share of GDP is negligible in Norway and Iceland (0.12 % in 2002) but between 0.61% and 0.70% in Sweden, Finland and Denmark. Production

subsidies after WW2 were rather important (for instance in the form of low interest rates on State Housing Bank loans in Norway) but of less importance now. The total net housing subsidies make up approximately 1 per cent of GDP in Denmark, Norway and Finland and approximately 0.5 per cent in Sweden. In general, they have been reduced in the later years in Sweden, Denmark and partly Finland, but have increased in Norway due to reduced real estate taxation.

No housing system solves all social, environmental and economic problems but our conclusions from the European comparative studies is that the Danish system comes very close to an ideal solution. Only the Danish non-profit 'almene boligselskaber' (20 % of the national housing provision) combines non-profit rent with bottom-up democratic rule by the inhabitants in each housing estate. The Norwegian coops also have this bottom-up democracy but rents are dominated by the market value of the share. The Swedish public housing companies are run top-down and needs more governance inputs by the renters but what is positive is that rents are based on utility value rather than market value.

The Danish system of collective ownership was inspired by the Danish system of cooperative shops (Brugsforeninger= user associations), dairies, slaughterhouses, etc. in which you become part of the collective ownership when you register as regular customer or deliverer of primary products. This was closely connected to the education and organisations built by free-holding farmers in Denmark from the 1850s on. As a member, you can take part in elections of the board and discuss budgets (and rents in housing coops), but as these are not shareholding companies, elections and decisions are not based on economic strength. These users associations may be seen as practical modification between capitalism and socialism and as such, could be an inspiration both for transition economies and developing countries.

There are of course also critics of the system. The present liberal-conservative Danish government has suggested 'a right to buy' the apartments in the system as many of those living there are able to pay a market rent. This has not been a success because why would you buy something you own albeit collectively? There are also problems related to the allocation of 'up to 25%' of housing in the co-ops to social clients. Some coops have problems mainly related to a large percentage of immigrants and asylum seekers from third world countries. Many immigrants do not understand the bottom-up democratic system. Top-down training and public government initiatives have to be introduced. In general, 25% social clients in a neighborhood are too large; other European projects show that 10% social clients are ideal to integrate in a good way. In Norway the municipalities can buy up to 10% of the apartments in share-owning coops, but the co-ops have the right to refuse admission of clients that do not fit in. In general, this means that alcoholics and drug addicts have to be provided other types of housing. Another problem with the Danish non-profit coops is that it may be difficult to reach agreements on major rehabilitation projects as this means increase in the rent compared to Norwegian share-owning co-ops where rehabilitation projects increase the value of each inhabitant's share.

RESEARCHING THE HOUSING NEED IN HUNGARY, by József Hegedüs

In Hungary, Metropolitan Research Institute carried out a housing research that was commissioned by Habitat for Humanity. The study focused on identifying the housing need in the country, paying special attention to the vulnerable groups.

The research has revealed that social and economic changes after transition to a market economy in Hungary seriously affected the housing situation. In the past decades, household income in the country decreased, state subsidies were cut, and housing investment plummeted, while housing costs increased dramatically. The number of social housing units has been shrinking, as it has become the responsibility of the local government but without provision of adequate resources by the central government. Thus, local authorities wanted to get rid of the social housing stock. Moreover, the 1993 housing law gave the buying right to the sitting tenant, and as a consequence 85 percent of the housing stock was privatized. Currently, the share of municipal housing is not more than 4 percent, while, according to conservative estimates, minimum 300 thousand social housing units are needed (8 percent of the stock).



JOZSEF HEGEDÜS IS
MANAGING DIRECTOR OF
THE METROPOLITAN
RESEARCH INSTITUTE IN
BUDAPEST, HUNGARY.

As a result of all the changes, the nature of social housing problems in Hungary has changed in the last twenty years and converged towards the European definition. As revealed by the research, the two main factors contributing to the housing poverty are:

- **Affordability** of housing expenses. This poses a serious problem for low-income social groups. In 2003, around 500,000 households were in arrears endangering their security of tenure. Due to the price/income ratio, the affordability of adequate housing also poses a serious problem for average families without access to help from parents or family.

- **Poor quality of the housing stock.** It encompasses energy costs and regional disparity regarding types of housing unit. The biggest part of the existing housing stock does not meet European standards; 10-12 percent of the housing stock can be classified as "dwelling without comfort." Furthermore, over 100,000 people live on segregated, hardly habitable estates. Panel housing estates have serious structural problems.

Beyond a macro-level analysis of the housing problem, the study defined 4 typical situations that can increase the probability of poverty housing.

- Young families with children or planning to have children who have no financial reserves or significant family support.
- People living in isolated, segregated slums, typically unemployed, inhabiting poor-quality homes in bad need of repairs.
- Older families typically living in homes that they own. They have low income but face high utility expenses.
- People living in types of institutional care in a variety of circumstances: homeless, orphans, individuals leaving jail, addicts.

There are a number of economic and social factors which lead to serious housing problems: rigid housing market; housing as capital rather than consumer good; discrimination; extreme income inequality; distorted ownership structure as a result of housing privatization, limitations of controlling housing expenses in housing estates and condominiums. However, individual behavior of households, like irrational consumption patterns, irresponsible household finances, tax evasion, maximization of subsidies, unexpected illnesses and divorces also plays a role alongside the structural social reasons.

The study has given an overview of housing subsidy programs and analysed how these programs alleviate the risk of housing poverty. The study concluded that most of the housing policy tools available in 2009 were ineffective in dealing with complex housing situations. In order to increase the social effect of the housing policy, efforts of public, private and non-profit institutions committed to social housing should be coordinated to influence the decision makers and raise housing issues on the political agenda.

HOUSING POVERTY AND INEQUALITIES IN UZBEKISTAN: A BRIEF ASSESSMENT// Жилищная бедность и неравенство жилищных условий в Узбекистане: краткая оценка, by Anna Badyina



ANNA BADIYINA IS A DOCTORATE STUDENT IN URBAN GEOGRAPHY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.

According to government documents, the 1991 'give-away' privatization has endowed most households with housing assets and therefore low-income people in Uzbekistan are not associated with lack of access to housing. In September 2009, 99.6% of the housing stock is already privately owned.

While 30% of the existing housing stock is multifamily and 70% single-family, 30% of the population lives, by contrast, in individual houses and 70% in multifamily houses. So far there have been no aggregate data on the physical state of the existing multifamily housing. The scale of the deterioration of the housing stock can only be inferred from the President's 2004 report that stated that in Tashkent City alone, 45% of all houses were in need of major overhauls.

Official statistics show more than 60,000 new households are formed each year and 85,000 families are on housing waiting list.

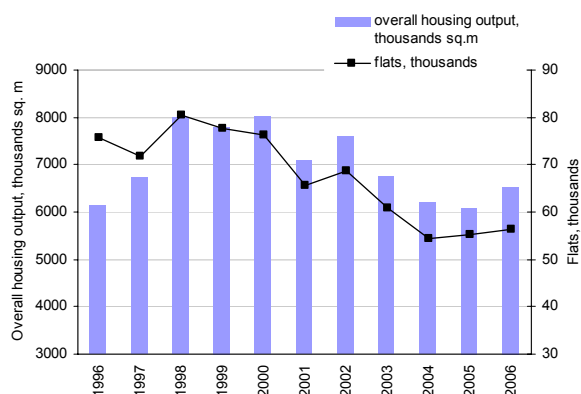


Figure 1: Houses completed in Uzbekistan in 1996-2006

However, today's housing output (Fig. 1) is mainly provided by private developers for upper-income and upper-middle income groups and is geographically concentrated. Leading positions in housing provision are taken by the more prosperous Samarkand, Kashkadarya, Namangan and Tashkent regions. In Tashkent, inner-city housing development schemes usually involve the renovation of

old housing stock with the resettlement of original residents and the subsequent production of housing estates for the so-called 'bourgeois' stratum. These areas contrast with degrading housing and infrastructure that accommodates the majority of the population.



Fenced housing estate for 'bourgeois' stratum.

Recent State Responses to Improve Access to Housing

Legal and institutional framework

Some room for housing is provided within the country's Welfare Improvement Strategy; however a comprehensive vision on how the housing sector as a whole should contribute to tackling the disparities in living standards across regions and cities is lacking. There is also the need for practical action plans with clear targets, links to related programs and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms that can assess their impact on socio-economic and spatial disparities. Furthermore, implementation responsibilities in housing matters are rather divided between different authorities.

Housing affordability

Since 2005, the State has supported the development of affordable mortgages. A special Mortgage Lending Support Fund and Ipoteka Bank were both introduced. The latter provides long-term subsidized mortgages to middle-income and young families (typically for 15 years with a 3-year interest-only payment period) and subsidized loans to home-builders and building material manufacturers. The Mortgage Fund offers long-term mortgages at a 5% interest rate for a 15 year-period, as well as credit lines for Ipoteka Bank for further allocation of loans to builders of targeted housing.

In terms of mortgage affordability, a typical case study was provided during the fact finding mission: a young family is offered a 64 sq. m subsidized apartment for \$28,000 under a 14%-interest mortgage with a three year interest-only period (subject to 25% down payment). The interest-only payment for the first year (after the down payment) would be \$2,940 or approximately 60% of the total wage of an average household of two earners (an average monthly per capita wage in 2009 was \$200). The total annual payment for a straight repayment mortgage, including both interest and payment, towards the capital loan amount would be \$4,025 or 84% of a household wage.



Affordable housing for young families, Tashkent 2009.

Good achievements in maintenance and management of the existing multifamily housing

Currently, all multifamily housing in Uzbekistan is covered by homeowners associations. Before 2006 the large associations (embracing 40-50 buildings) were managed by municipal housing and utilities companies, but the homeowners had limited voice in such arrangements. Based on a 2006 law, new self-organized 'democratic' associations have emerged in many such contexts and they usually exercise better control over housing assets. In October 2009, such self-organized associations accounted, for example, for 40% of the total in Tashkent City.

Since 2004 the State has invested in major overhauls of the multifamily houses built before 1991. Annually, the State earmarks funding to compensate for up to 70% of the expenditures on repairs to multifamily houses. Homeowners associations are required to finance the remaining 30%. Also, between January and September 2009, following the President's Decree On Additional Measures to Encourage the Expansion of Subcontracting for the Complete Reconstruction and Repair of Housing Stock, more than 400 specialized repair and construction organizations were created in towns and districts.

Despite such achievements, homeowners associations experience difficulties in accessing public funding. In the context of the large associations, there are acute challenges in collecting fees, and financial indebtedness may reach up to USZ 2-3 billion.

Stimulating housing construction in rural settlements

The year 2009 was declared the year of the improvement of rural settlements. A special development company was formed to coordinate the construction of the standardized cottage-type residential projects. A Rural Development Bank was also created to provide rural families with subsidized mortgages at a 7% interest rate for 15 years. It is expected that as many as 7 million square meters of rural housing will be constructed between 2009 and 2015 as a result of these programs.

// Согласно правительственным документам, в результате массовой приватизации жилья большинство населения в Узбекистане владеет жильем, и поэтому бедность и малообеспеченность не ассоциируются с жильем. В сентябре 2009 года в Узбекистане было приватизировано 99.6 процентов жилья.

Если 30 процентов существующего жилого фонда составляют многоквартирные дома и 70 процентов односемейные дома, то наоборот, 30 процентов населения проживают в односемейных домах и 70 процентов в многоквартирных домах. К настоящему времени не существует сводных данных о реальном техническом состоянии существующего многоквартирного жилого фонда.

Оценить физический износ жилья можно только косвенно, например, на основе выступления Президента в 2004 году, где было отмечено, что на тот момент только в отдельно взятом городе-столице Ташкенте 45 процентов всех домов нуждались в капитальном ремонте.

Согласно официальной статистике, ежегодно появляется более чем 60 000 семей и 85 000 семей стоят в очереди на улучшение жилищных условий. Однако сегодня строительство жилья в основном ведется на деньги частных застройщиков и для узкой категории граждан с высокими и выше среднего доходами. Также, жилищное строительство в основном сконцентрировано в преуспевающих Самаркандской, Кашкадарьинской, Наманганской, и Ташкентской областях.

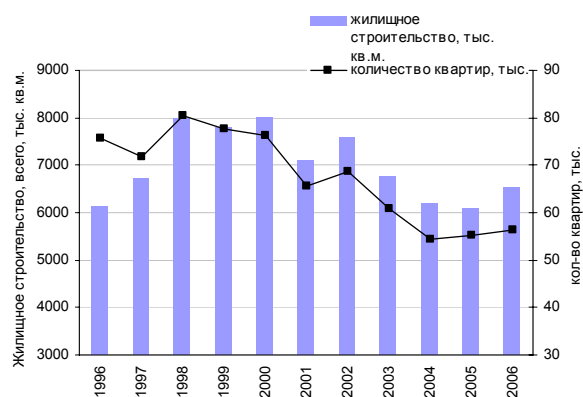


График 1: Строительство жилья в Узбекистане в 1996-2006 г. г.

В Ташкенте, жилищное строительство в центре города, как правило, осуществляется за счет переселения граждан из ветхого или аварийного жилого фонда с последующей его реконструкцией и созданием жилой среды для так называемых «буржуа» - формирующегося нового слоя городского общества. Такая жилищная застройка составляет контраст с ветхими жилыми массивами с изношенной инфраструктурой, размещающими остальную, большую часть населения.

Существующие механизмы улучшения жилищных условий населения Узбекистана

Законодательные и институциональные инициативы

Улучшение жилищных условий является одной из первоочередных задач недавно принятой Стратегии повышения благосостояния населения Узбекистана, однако отсутствует единое представление о том, как жилищный сектор в целом должен способствовать решению проблемы региональных и городских диспропорций в уровне жизни населения. Помимо этого, необходимы следующие элементы: план мероприятий с четкими целевыми показателями и связями с сопутствующими программами, механизмы осуществления мониторинга и оценки воздействия мероприятий на социально-экономические и пространственные диспропорции. Кроме того, на сегодняшний момент, функции по осуществлению жилищной политики раздроблены между различными правительственными учреждениями, ведомствами и министерствами.

Повышение доступности жилья

С 2005 года, правительство Узбекистана реализует программы развития доступного ипотечного жилищного кредитования. Специально для этих целей созданы «Фонд поддержки ипотечного кредитования» и ипотечный банк «Ипотека банк». Последний предоставляет льготные ипотечные жилищные кредиты для семей со средним уровнем дохода и для молодых семей (как правило, на 15 лет с выплатой в течение первых 3-х лет только процентов по предоставляемому кредиту), а также льготные кредиты застройщикам и производителям строительных материалов. «Фонд ипотечного кредитования» предлагает долгосрочные ипотечные кредиты сроком на 15 лет под 5% годовых, а также осуществляет кредитование «Ипотека банк» с целью предоставления им в дальнейшем кредитов застройщикам, возводящим жилье по государственным целевым программам.

В отношении доступности таких ипотечных кредитов для населения, во время ознакомительной миссии был приведен типичный пример: с участием «Ипотека банк» среднестатистической молодой семье предлагается квартира (построенная в рамках государственной программы) размером 64 кв.м стоимостью \$28 000 под 14% годовых, с выплатой в течение первых 3-х лет только процентов по кредиту (при

условии оплаты 25 процентного первого взноса). Выплата только процентов по кредиту в течение первых 3-х лет (после выплаты первого взноса) составит \$2 940 или примерно 60% от заработной платы вместе взятых работающих членов указанной среднестатистической семьи (средняя заработная плата на одного работающего составила в 2009 \$200). Итоговая годовая сумма выплат по ипотечному кредиту, включая проценты по кредиту и тело кредита, составит \$4 025 или 84% от заработной платы указанной семьи.

Эксплуатация, ремонт и управление существующего многоквартирного жилого фонда

В настоящее время, товарищества собственников жилья (ТСЖ) сформированы во всех многоквартирных домах. До 2006 года созданные крупные товарищества (объединяющие 40-50 домов) находились в управлении муниципальных коммунальных служб. При таких обстоятельствах собственники имели «ограниченный доступ» к решениям по управлению домом. С вводом в 2006 году закона о разукрупнении ТСЖ, стали появляться так называемые «демократические» ТСЖ, создаваемые по инициативе собственников на один многоквартирный дом, и позволяющие собственникам осуществлять контроль над управлением дома. К примеру, в Ташкенте, в октябре 2009 года такие «демократические» ТСЖ составили 40% от общего количества созданных в городе ТСЖ..

С 2004 года, правительство Узбекистана инвестирует в капитальный ремонт многоквартирных домов, построенных до 1991 года. Ежегодно из бюджета выделяются средства для финансирования до 70 процентов затрат на капитальный ремонт многоквартирного жилого дома. Остальные 30 процентов должны финансироваться самими ТСЖ. Также, с января по сентябрь 2009 года, согласно постановлению Президента Узбекистана «О дополнительных мерах по стимулированию расширения подрядных работ по реконструкции и ремонту жилищного фонда на условиях «под ключ», было создано более 400 строительных организаций, специализирующихся на выполнении ремонтных и строительных работ.

Несмотря на хорошие результаты, ТСЖ испытывают затруднения в доступе к указанным государственным средствам. В отношении крупных ТСЖ, существуют сложные проблемы с взиманием обязательных сборов с собственников на ремонт и поддержание домов, с финансовой задолженностью, достигающей в отдельных случаях 2-3 миллиарда сумов.

Стимулирование строительства жилья в селах

В Узбекистане, 2009 год объявлен годом села. С целью координирования проектов строительства стандартного жилья коттеджного типа в селах, специально создана строительная компания. Также, создан банк развития села, который будет выдавать льготные кредиты сельскому населению на 15 лет под 7% годовых. Ожидается, что в результате этой программы, в период с 2009 по 2015 г.г. в селах будет возведено не менее 7 миллионов квадратных метров жилья.

WHAT'S NEW:

AT THE SECRETARIAT: OUR NEW INTERN

Justyna Balbier, a Polish national, started an internship at the UNECE in February 2010 and will stay for three months. She is assisting in the organization and servicing of workshops and meetings, in particular the 71st annual session of the Committee on Housing and Land Management.



Justyna graduated from Università Bocconi, Milan, Italy, in 2008, earning the title of Bachelor of Science in Business Administration. She is currently attending the second year of Master of Science in Economics and Management of Innovation and Technology at the same institution. In her studies Justyna concentrates on sustainable development issues. In the past she pursued studies at Lancaster University Management School, UK, and the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich as an exchange student.



Alena Vasilevich has recently started work at the UNECE as an intern. Alena will support the work of the Housing and Land Management Unit until the end of July 2010.

Alena is from Belarus and is currently studying and living in Grenoble, France. In 2008, she graduated from the University Stendhal, Grenoble, and she is now on her second year in a Master's Degree program at the Institute of Political Sciences in Grenoble. Alena is specializing in International Organisations, NGOs and IGOs. As part of her study program, she spent 3 months at Amnesty International, Sydney-Australia as an intern. Due to her personal and academic background, Alena is sensitive to the issues of economic and social development as well as human rights protection in Eastern Europe.

AT THE SECRETARIAT: A FAREWELL MESSAGE

Dear country representatives, experts, colleagues in other organizations and friends,

This is to inform you that as of 1 April 2010 I will no longer work with the UNECE Environment, Housing and Land Management Division of UNECE as secretary to the Housing and Land Management Committee. I have been in fact promoted to a new position within UNECE Trade and Timber Division.

While I am glad and ready for the new challenge ahead, saying goodbye to the 'housing family' is not an easy task.

In these two years we have achieved a lot together, addressing and advising on many of the many challenges of the today's' urban world. Energy efficiency in housing, informal settlements, land administration and climate neutral cities, the pitfalls of the real estate market, building and construction safety and many more topics have been part of our crowded agenda, and made our daily work busy and interesting.

I have enjoyed very much working with you, greatly benefited from your cooperation and advice, and I am very thankful for the support you have always given me. Our meetings and work have always been serene and harmonious, productive and ambitious in their results, making me feel trusted as secretary to this important Committee.

I will say goodbye in person to those Bureau members that will attend the meeting on 19 March. For those that I cannot meet in person, this is my most heartfelt thank you and goodbye.

To the extent possible, I will continue to take the cause of the CHLM forward in my future assignments and will certainly continue to spread the word about your good work whenever I have the opportunity.

All the best,
Paola



ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Energy Efficiency Forum to be held in Bishkek on 23-25 June 2010 // Форум по энергоэффективности пройдет в Бишкеке с 23 по 25 июня 2010 года

Energy efficiency has a greater role to play than any other source, whether coal, gas, nuclear, or renewable, towards this target. With this in mind, UNECE in cooperation with other UN agencies and programmes is organizing a forum in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, from 23 to 25 June 2010. The event will open with a high level segment to discuss the challenges of energy efficiency in CIS countries, and then continue through two separate sessions to discuss green building and energy efficiency in housing and investments in energy efficiency and renewable energy projects respectively.

The workshop on green building will discuss the following issues:

- Policies and tool on energy efficiency in buildings
- Energy efficiency in the public and municipal sector
- Energy efficiency in housing
- Green building and climate change.

For more information on this event and the green building workshop kindly contact the UNECE CHLM Secretariat.

//Эффективность об сбережения энергии будет играть более значимую роль на пути к данной цели, чем эффект от сбережения от любого другого источника, будь то уголь, газ, или же атомное или возобновляемое топливо. Учитывая это, ЕЭК ООН в сотрудничестве с другими агентствами и программами ООН организует форум в Бишкеке, Кыргызстан, с 23 по 25 июня 2010 года. Указанное мероприятие будет предварено встречей на высшем уровне для обсуждения трудностей, стоящих в области энергоэффективности перед странами СНГ. Затем форум будет продолжен проведением двух отдельных сессий по обсуждению «зеленых» зданий и энергоэффективности в строительстве, и финансирование энергоэффективности и проектов по обеспечению возобновляемой энергии.

Семинар по «зеленым» зданиям будет охватывать следующие вопросы:

- Стратегии и инструменты по обеспечению энергоэффективности в строительстве
- Энергоэффективность в общественном и муниципальном секторах
- Энергоэффективность в жилищном секторе
- «Зеленые» здания и изменения климата.

За более подробной информацией по указанному мероприятию и семинару по «зеленым» зданиям просим связаться с секретариатом ЕЭК ООН.

International Forum "Greening Real Estate Markets: A Multistakeholder Perspective" 26-27 April 2010, Dessau, Germany

Registration is now open for this forum, organized by the UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management and its Working Party on Land Administration, in cooperation with the German Environment Agency (UBA).

More detailed information can be found on the event's website that also includes a section for registration:

http://www.umweltbundesamt.de/umweltoekonomie-veranstaltungen/greening_real_estate/index.php

AZERBAIJAN HOSTS UNECE WORKSHOP ON TRANSPARENT AND EFFICIENT LAND MANAGEMENT

Transparent and efficient land management is a pre-requisite for the correct functioning of land and real estate markets, both of which play a fundamental role in guaranteeing a country's prosperity and sustainable development. Transparent institutions can reduce the costs of access to credit for people and increase the overall trust of society in public authorities. In order to enhance efficiency in the use of information, data on real estate objects should be collected timely, administrative costs for citizens should be minimized, fraud should be monitored and prevented and the right to access information on land and real estate should be guaranteed for the general public.

These are some of the principles recently discussed in a workshop on "Efficient and Transparent Land Management in ECE Countries", held on 4 and 5 March 2010 in Baku, Azerbaijan, which was organized by the UNECE Working Party on Land Administration (WPLA) and hosted by The State Committee on Property Issues of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The workshop took place at the time of the implementation of ongoing reforms of the real estate registration system in the Republic of Azerbaijan and in a period when many other countries, in particular in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, are carrying out reforms of their land administrations systems.

At present, Azerbaijan faces a series of challenges that include the need to correct discrepancies between land maps and the actual location of land parcels, the absence of adequate institutions to regulate real estate markets and the need to adopt objective methodologies for real estate valuation. To address these issues and guarantee security of tenure for all citizens, the government approved in 2007 a Real Estate Registration Project (RER) worth 38.5 million US dollars that seeks to create a single automated system for real estate registration to be finalized by year 2013. Presentations by the host authorities and delegates from other countries in the ECE region showcased the advantages of adopting the "one-stop shop" mechanism in land administration to facilitate registration, promote the merging of databases on land and real estate, increase the use of information technologies and reduce costs of real property transactions for consumers.

The workshop also addressed the need to promote transparency and public access to information on land. Participants were updated on a WPLA ongoing study on fraud in real estate registration and conveyancing, which maps the best practices available to monitor and prevent unlawful transactions in real property. Preliminary findings have not only shown that fraud is a real threat to the public good, but also that solutions are available to ensure the security of transactions through better monitoring, training schemes for civil servants and restrictions in access to information for anonymous users. The question of transparency as it relates to justice and fairness was also considered as addressed by pertinent legal instruments of inter-governmental organizations, including the UNECE Aarhus Convention and the FAO voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land and Other Natural Resources.

For further information please contact:

Ariel Ivanier
Secretary to the Working Party on Land Administration
UNECE Environment, Housing and Land Management Division
Palais des Nations
CH-1211 Geneva 10
Switzerland
Phone: +41 (0) 22 917 2553
Fax: +41 (0) 22 917 0107
E-mail: ariel.ivanier@unece.org
Website: <http://www.unece.org/hlm/welcome.html>

COORDINATION FOR SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS

Concept note

A seminar to be organized by the UNECE Secretariat Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents and the Committee on Housing and Land Management

Background

The prevention of industrial accidents at facilities handling, storing or producing hazardous substances is an important instrument for ensuring sustainable development in the industrialized world. It is aimed at decreasing the potential hazards and/or limiting effects that might develop in the event of an accident at industrial facilities by applying safety measures. Such measures would refer first of all to proper characterization of substances, active processes and activities that could possibly cause an accident, followed by identification of accidents scenarios and modeling of consequences, risk assessment associated with the identified scenarios, and finally the establishment of safety policy and management system for the hazards and risks.

The prevention of accidents and consequently assuring the safe operation of industrial facilities is mainly the responsibility of operators. They are required to demonstrate the level of safety of facilities to inspection authorities (environmental inspectorates, labour inspectorates, fire services, etc) to obtain operation permits and licenses.

The task of preventing accidents in industrial facilities is complex and needs good cooperation and coordination between many professionals responsible for safety at both industrial and authorities' level.

Nonetheless, the prevention should not stop inside the facilities but needs to address also the vicinities and ensure that any effects of accidents on the environment or human life and/or health are avoided or limited. To this end, policies were developed for siting new hazardous installations or introducing substantial changes to existing ones. These mainly require, in the case of new siting, adequate distance from the industrial facilities of highly populated residential and commercial establishments potentially at risk in the event of an accident. Such distances should also be observed by environmentally important areas and critical infrastructures. For changes to existing policies, adequate measures are to be taken so that these changes do not increase the potential hazards/risks level on the existing vicinities.

The siting policies, especially in the western part of the UNECE region, are rather properly enforced on the operators who will receive licenses or permits only if the level of hazard/risk on the vicinities is acceptable and the adequate distances are observed.

Despite the policies on siting enforced on the operators, one can see an increasing number of different settlements located nearby hazardous industry. Such a situation is lately a result of the residential or retail areas expanding and coming closer to existing hazardous facilities. This increases the risks associated with the latter ones.

With the tendency of cities expanding towards the hazardous facilities enforcing adequate safety measures only on the side of the hazard source may not lead to satisfactory results anymore. Therefore one would need to look for solutions applicable to outside of the facilities, e.g. limitation on land-use developments in the zones around hazardous facilities or application of safety measures for the new developments. These should allow continuing the operation at the hazardous facility at the same time keeping acceptable potential hazard/risk level on the population present at the new developments.

It is evident that prevention needs to expand outside the facilities and should involve authorities in charge of land-use planning and permitting non-industrial developments. It should also involve developers that are building the retail or residential real estates. Hence, the modern approach to prevention would require much more coordination and cooperation than it used to until now. It is necessary to ensure that effective mechanisms for such coordination and cooperation are in place.

The discussion on cooperation and coordination patterns and good practices could be intensified if addressed in international forums.

The UNECE, and its division of Environment, Housing and Land Management brings together expertise on issues related to both industrial safety (through the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents) and land-use/management (through the Committee on Housing and Land Management). This offers an unique opportunity for starting an international dialogue aiming at strengthening the cooperation between safety and real-estates professional representing both private and public sectors for ensuring safe neighborhoods.

The dialogue will start with the organization of a seminar to be held back to back with the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the UNECE Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents, hosted by the Netherlands, that is on 11-12 November 2010 (afternoon session on 11 Nov, Thursday, and morning session on 12 Nov, Friday).

The seminar will consist of three sessions:

Session I will aim at building the understanding between safety and land-use planners representing public and private sector. The authorities should present to each other the objectives and priorities in their work, whereas the representatives of industry and developers should speak about their interests in coordination and integration of safety aspects in land-use planning.

Session II will focus on the review of availability of different instruments, policies, experience and good practices for creating safe neighborhoods around major industrial facilities and on that basis discuss and look for solution on how to integrate the safety aspects into the land-use planning and achieve more coordination in the future.

Session III will be devoted to wrapping up and agreement of the way forward.

The seminar is aimed at representatives of public and private sectors: safety authorities and land-use planners for the public sector and operators of major industrial facilities and property/real-estates developers for the private sector.

The seminar languages will be English and Russian.

Experts interested to deliver a presentation in session II or III are requested to send an abstract to the secretariat not later than 30 April to TEIA@unece.org

For more information on the seminar, please contact:

Lukasz Wyrowski
Secretary to the Convention
Tel: +41 22 917 4053
E-mail: Lukasz.Wyrowski@unece.org

THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (UNDP) – REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA SEEKS INTERNATIONAL CONSULTANTS



The UNDP office in Moldova is seeking candidates for the following positions:

1. International Consultant: Publics Assets Management Assessment - <http://www.undp.md/employment/2010/1-50/031/index.shtml>.

2. International Consultant : Housing Management and Maintenance Assessment - <http://www.undp.md/employment/2010/1-50/030/index.shtml>.

Detailed information on the vacancies could be found in the UNDP Moldova website using the links above.

TERRITORIAL APPROACH TO CLIMATE CHANGE (TACC) PROJECT

The Territorial Approach to Climate Change (TACC) is a partnership of four UN agencies with sub-national territories and their associations. TACC focuses on the level of governance covering territories below the national level (depending on the governance structure these include states, provinces, cities etc.), usually referred to as 'regions' and its overall objective increased resilience to climate change impacts and reduced carbon footprint in sub-national territories in developing countries and countries with economies in transition. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is currently leading the implementation of the first phase of the TACC project aiming at increased knowledge and capacity by sub-national territories to identify risks and opportunities related to climate change at the sub-national level and to design integrated climate change policies and plans within national plans, based on sound knowledge and science.

If you are interested in contributing to this project or would like to receive more information please contact the focal point for UNEP in Europe, Ms. Giovanna Chiodi Moiré by email giovanna.chiodi-moire@unep.org or telephone +41(0)22 91 78513.

A NOTE ON THE COORDINATOR:



Inputs to this newsletter are coordinated and edited by Ms. **Cecilia Batac**.

Contact her at Cecilia.Batac@unece.org

Disclaimer: This is not a UN official publication. This newsletter is distributed only electronically to CHLM and WPLA members and interested individuals and organizations wishing to receive information on the work on housing and land management. The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors of the articles and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the United Nations.