

***An opening statement***

***Mrs. Justyna Skrzydło,  
Deputy Minister of Infrastructure and Construction,  
The Republic of Poland  
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***Seventy-eighth session of the Committee on Housing and Land Management***

Dear Hosts, Mesdames and Messieurs Ministers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

- on behalf of Mr. Andrzej Adamczyk, Minister of Infrastructure and Construction of the Republic of Poland, I would like to thank for the kind invitation to participate in the seventy-eighth session of the Committee on Housing and Land Management.
- Today we celebrate the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the Committee of Housing and Land Management, the inter-governmental body addressing the housing challenges of the UNECE region and providing international platform for cooperation on issues related to sustainable housing and urban development, land administration and management as well as spatial planning.
- Therefore, the exchange of best practices, especially in the framework of international organizations, such as UNICE, is of most importance as it facilitates creation of effective instruments supporting public policies, including housing. Poland has its own historical experience with social and economic transformation that took place over past years.
- The Government which I represent pays utmost attention to services satisfying most basic needs of citizens and advocates policy of sustainable social and economic development. Activities carried out by the Polish Government are based on the Strategy of Responsible Development. The Strategy encompasses all branches of the economy and clearly stipulates our developmental goals and targets. Housing policy is one of the major priorities of the Government in Poland, understood as introducing solutions that increase the availability of housing, with special attention devoted to families with average and low income.
- In 2016 the Polish Government adopted the National Housing Programme. The National Housing Program is the strategic governmental initiative devoted to housing policy in the mid-term horizon. The Programme addresses targets and instruments of supporting the housing sector in the perspective of 2030.
- The problem of housing availability, defined as the inability to purchase or rent an apartment on market basis, also in Poland is closely related to the demographic problem. Therefore, the "National Housing Program" is directly linked to other government efforts aimed at

overcoming negative demographic trends, including other programmes addressing needs of families.

- The National Housing Programme defines three basic strategic objectives:

objective 1

**Enhancing access to flats for persons with incomes that do not allow the purchase or rent of a flat under commercial terms and conditions.**

Until 2030, the target number of flats per 1,000 residents shall achieve the current EU average. This means an increase from the current level of 363 to 435 flats per 1,000 persons.

objective 2

**Enhancing the possibility to satisfy basic housing needs of persons threatened by social exclusion, due to low incomes or a particularly difficult situation.**

Until 2030, municipal self-governments shall be able to satisfy housing needs of all households currently waiting to rent a flat from a municipality. As of the end of 2014, 165.2 thousand households waited for renting a municipal flat.

objective 3

**Improving living conditions for the society, the technical condition of housing resources and enhancing energy efficiency.**

Until 2030, the number of persons living in sub-standard conditions (due to the poor technical condition of buildings, the lack of basic technical installations, or overpopulation) shall decrease by 2 million persons (from approx. 5.3 million to approx. 3.3 million).

- The basic set of activities, which serve to achieve the abovementioned objectives, is named: "Housing+" programme including three pillars:

pillar I

affordable housing for rent, with the option of terminal purchase of a dwelling by the tenant; these actions are conducted by public company BGK Nieruchomości S.A. and, since 2018, by National Real Estates Stock - the public institution responsible for the management of public real estates;

pillar II

social rental housing for persons with low income, realized by municipalities, social housing associations (towarzystwa budownictwa społecznego) and housing cooperatives;

pillar III

the support of systematic savings for housing targets – planned to introduce from 2019.

- According to the latest data, in the framework of the “Housing+” programme, about 20 thousand rental dwellings are contracted or under realization.

- The above mentioned activities are supplemented by comprehensive changes in:

- housing regulation

new urban and construction codes, changes in rules of the protection of tenants, changes in rules of the management of municipal, housing cooperatives and social housing associations housing stock;

- housing finance

using of UE structural funds in order to support the realization of social and technical infrastructure accompanying housing, enabling the real estate’s investment trusts to invest in rental housing;

- strategic matters

comprehensive attitude to the problem of housing for the older and handicapped persons.

- Let me mention that the National Housing Programme is now well on track and I am pleased to emphasize that all interventions as described in the Programme have been successfully initiated and entered the implementation phase. I am also proud to say that our Programme engages cross-sector entities, including local government, banking sector, public-private partnerships and thus enabling result-oriented tools to be utilized in order to achieve expected results.
- It is worth noting that the *Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Housing and Urban Development* addresses specifically issues of social inclusion, increasing homelessness, complexity of growing inequalities. We are confident that promoting dialogue between governments and relevant stakeholders to facilitate the exchange of experience and the sharing of good practices is a reliable way forward.
- Let me thank again for the possibility to participate in this important and exceptional event. I am convinced that today’s debate will contribute to further progress in the field of sustainable housing.
- I am very pleased to recall that Poland will soon celebrate its 100. Anniversary of Regaining its Independence. This is genuinely an excellent occasion to invite you all to join us in Poland in hailing together this outstanding anniversary.
- Thank you for your attention.