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Economic Commission for Europe

Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management

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Item 5 (f) of the provisional agenda

Review of the implementation of the programmes of work 2023–2024:

Activities of the Real Estate Market Advisory Group for Sustainable, Climate-Neutral and Energy-Efficient Buildings and Cities

Programme of work and terms of reference of the Real Estate Market Advisory Group for Sustainable, Climate-Neutral and Energy-Efficient Buildings and Cities for 2025–2026

Note by the Bureau of the Committee

Summary

The mandate and the terms of reference of the Real Estate Market Advisory Group for Sustainable, Climate-Neutral and Energy-Efficient Buildings and Cities were extended until the end of 2024 and its workplan for 2023–2024 adopted pursuant to decisions by the Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management, at its twenty-third session (San Marino, 3–7 October 2023, ECE/HBP/213, para. 73) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) Executive Committee (EXCOM) at its hundred and twenty-sixth meeting (Geneva, 13 January 2023) (ECE/EX/2023/L.3, para. 3). The document is submitted according to A/78/6 (Section 20).

At its meetings, on 29 April and 28 June 2024, the Bureau of the Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management recommended the extension of Advisory Group's mandate until the end of 2026 and agreed on its programme of work for 2025–2026.

The Committee is invited to endorse the programme of work and the terms of reference of the Advisory Group for 2025–2026, as contained in sections I and II of the present document, respectively. It then is invited to recommend to EXCOM to renew the mandate and approve the terms of reference and the programme of work.

I. Programme of work of the Real Estate Market Advisory Group for Sustainable, Climate-Neutral and Energy-Efficient Buildings and Cities for 2025-2026

A. Objectives

1. The Real Estate Market Advisory Group for Sustainable, Climate-Neutral and Energy-Efficient Buildings and Cities Advisory Group (the Advisory Group) supports the Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management (the Committee) and the Working Party on Land Administration (the Working Party) in the implementation of their programmes of work. In this regard, the Advisory Group assists the Committee and the Working Party in developing stronger and more sustainable housing; real estate markets; and sustainable smart cities. The Advisory Group reports to both bodies.

B. Activities

2. The activities of the Advisory Group address, according to its draft terms of reference (ECE/HBP/2024/8, section II), focus on the following thematic priorities:

- (a) Affordable, adequate and healthy housing, and real estate markets;
- (b) The sharing economy in the housing market;
- (c) Housing finance (including transparent financial products for housing);
- (d) Climate-neutral and energy-efficient buildings and cities;
- (e) Refurbishing, retrofitting and decarbonizing housing stock;
- (f) Property valuation and registration;
- (g) Fire safety in buildings;
- (h) Smart, circular and sustainable cities;
- (i) Land markets and land administration (including related topics like land planning and housing sustainability);
- (j) Urban planning and design.

C. Proposed activities for the programme of work 2025–2026

3. The Advisory Group, in cooperation with the Committee, the Working Party and their Bureaux, will:

(a) Organize international workshops, side events and training activities to support the implementation of the programmes of work of the Committee and Working Party, including the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing and the Action Plan “Place and Life in the UNECE – A Regional Action Plan 2030: Tackling challenges from COVID-19 pandemic, climate and housing emergencies in the region, city, neighbourhood and homes”.

(b) Prepare studies, policy briefs, best practice guidelines and recommendations on the above-mentioned thematic priorities.

(c) Support the dissemination of information about activities of the Committee and the Working Party, including the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing and the Action Plan “Place and Life in the UNECE – A Regional Action Plan 2030s”, through presentations at international meetings, and the preparation of articles in books, journals and mass media, including social media.

4. The Advisory Group will also:

(a) Participate in the Committee's activities on energy-efficient and affordable housing, especially in support of the ECE Joint Task Force on Energy Efficiency Standards in Buildings;

(b) Provide input into the Committee's activities on smart sustainable cities and country profiles, including the development of smart sustainable city indicators and standards, the preparation of smart sustainable city and country profiles and action plans. The Advisory Group members will participate in related events and capacity-building workshops and will also support the ECE secretariat with fundraising for future activities under this topic. They will also participate in the activities of the "United for Smart Sustainable Cities" initiative.

5. The Committee is invited to endorse the Advisory Group programme of work and to recommend to the Executive Committee to approve it for the period 2025-2026.

II. Terms of reference of the Advisory Group for 2025-2026

A. Objectives

6. The Real Estate Market Advisory Group is a subsidiary body (a team of specialist) of the Committee and its Working Party on Land Administration. The Advisory Group supports both bodies in the implementation of their programmes of work, assisting them in developing stronger and more sustainable housing, real estate markets, and smart sustainable cities (see also para. 1 above).

B. Activities

7. The activities of the Advisory Group address:

- (a) affordable, adequate and healthy housing, and real estate markets (including sharing economy in the housing sector);
- (b) housing finance (including transparent financial products for housing);
- (c) climate-neutral and energy-efficient buildings and cities;
- (d) management of multi-apartment buildings;
- (e) property valuation and registration;
- (f) fire safety in buildings;
- (g) smart, circular and sustainable cities;
- (h) land markets and land administration (including related topics like land planning and housing sustainability);
- (i) Urban planning and design.

8. The Advisory Group will, according to the needs expressed by member States and following decisions by the Committee:

- (a) Provide practical advice on overcoming the challenges addressed by the Committee and the Working Party in order to improve conditions for sustainable housing, urban development and land management;
- (b) Prepare guidelines and best practices that support sustainable housing, urban development and land management, including best practices for encouraging investment in national housing real estate markets;
- (c) Recommend activities to the Committee and Working Party to support the implementation of their programmes of work;
- (d) Assist the Committee and Working Party in undertaking studies and advisory missions; organizing seminars and training workshops; drafting policy documents and

guidelines; collecting data; disseminating information on the activities of the Committee and developing training material;

(e) Work with the Committee and Working Party to assist countries with training and capacity-building for stakeholders involved in the housing market;

(f) Collect examples of good practice in housing, urban development and land administration reforms in the ECE region; and develop studies on topical issues proposed and accepted by the Committee and Working Party;

(g) Assist the Committee and the Working Party with specific projects at their request.

9. The Advisory Group may propose specific activities. The final decision on activities to be carried out by the Advisory Group remains with the Committee.

10. The Chair of the Advisory Group will, when possible and necessary, attend meetings of the Bureau of the Committee to discuss and present the work of the Advisory Group.

C. Membership

11. The selection of Advisory Group members will be in line with the “Guidelines for the establishment and functioning of teams of specialists within UNECE” (ECE/EX/2/Rev.1) and the following rules and principles:

(a) Members of the Advisory Group must either be nominated by member States, or by non-governmental organizations that are recognized by the Economic and Social Council, or proposed by the secretariat;

(b) Members shall be representatives of the private sector, non-governmental organizations, academia and municipalities;

(c) Each member State or non-governmental organization may nominate, at most, one member of the Advisory Group at a time;

(d) Nominations must be submitted to the secretariat at least 14 days before the Committee session in which the nomination is to be submitted;

(e) Nominations must be renewed, or new nominations submitted, when the mandate of the Advisory Group is extended, normally, every two years.

12. The composition of the Advisory Group should, to the extent possible, include members whose knowledge and experience cover all areas under the programme of work of the Committee.

13. Members of the Advisory Group participate in activities of the Committee in their own personal capacity.¹

14. The Advisory Group will select from its own members a Chair and one or two vice-chairs. The Chair and the vice-chair(s) remain in charge for a period of maximum two years. The renewal of their appointment is possible for a maximum of two more periods.

¹ Members who have not been active for at least one whole year without a written notification to the secretariat will be automatically removed by the secretariat, who will inform said member via email. Members who prove to be inactive include those who do not participate in meetings; do not contribute to studies and other activities of the Advisory Group; and do not respond to emails and messages by the secretariat.