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## **Introduction**

There are shared housing and land management challenges across the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) region<sup>1</sup>. To address those challenges, two intergovernmental bodies were established: the UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management (CHLM,) and its subsidiary body the Working Party on Land Administration (WPLA)<sup>2</sup>. The Committee facilitates a dialogue between governments for sharing innovative practice, giving advice and developing policy guidelines to address common housing and land management problems.

The overall goals of the Working Party are to promote and improve land administration and land management in the UNECE region. The work of the Committee and the WPLA is also supported by the Real Estate Market Advisory Group (REM), an advisory body to the Committee and the WPLA, consisting of experts from the private sector.

At its meeting on 2 April 2012, the Committee Bureau discussed the need for a Strategy on Sustainable Housing and Land Management to give direction to its work, including specific targets for member States to achieve by 2020. The Bureau stressed the importance of promoting more effective housing policy reforms by setting specific targets and monitoring their implementation.

The Committee at its seventy-third session held from 24 to 26 September 2012 entrusted the Bureau with developing the vision, objectives and targets of the strategy, based on specified procedures, starting with a questionnaire to member States.

To assist the Committee and its Bureau in developing the strategy, the Committee secretariat drew up a questionnaire (for more information, please visit the site <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=32606>) and conducted an online survey on challenges and priorities in housing and land management in the UNECE region. This report analyses the outcomes of the survey.

## **Acknowledgements**

Organization of the survey and preparation of the report was led by a consultant, Ms. Doris Andoni, MSc. in Urban Housing Management, Head of the Housing Policy Department of the Albanian Ministry of Public Works and Transport between 2001 and 2012, Chair of the Committee on Housing and Land Management between 2006 and 2009 and member of the Bureau between 2002 and 2012.

The report was prepared under the supervision of Paola Deda and Gulnara Roll of the Secretariat of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). General guidance for the work was provided by the Bureau of the Committee, the Chair, Wolfgang Förster, and the Director of the UNECE Trade and Sustainable Land Management Division, Virginia Cram-Martos. Comments and suggestions for the preparation of the report were contributed by many experts, whose help is much appreciated. Furthermore, a number of people working on behalf the secretariat helped at different stages with reviewing the report, including Maike Christiansen, Michael Milligan and Nina Peeva. Christina O'Shaughnessy provided the language editing of the report and Oleg Chikurov translated respondents' responses from Russian into English.

The report was made possible thanks to the timely responses of member States and other stakeholders to the questionnaire. Our special appreciation goes to the Federal Government of Switzerland, which supported this work financially as part of developing the Strategy and

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<sup>1</sup> [www.unece.org/oes/nutshell/region.html](http://www.unece.org/oes/nutshell/region.html)

<sup>2</sup> See more at [www.unece.org/hlm/welcome.html](http://www.unece.org/hlm/welcome.html)

targets for sustainable housing and land management in the UNECE region from 2014 to 2020.

## **Survey objectives and approach**

The survey had the following four objectives:

1. To obtain general information on key actors and their roles in housing, urban planning and land administration in the UNECE region
2. To obtain the views of member States and other stakeholders on the challenges they face in establishing a sustainable housing sector
3. To assess progress made by member States in developing policies, legislation, programmes and projects in housing and land management that address the three components of sustainability (economic, environmental and social)
4. To assess the relevance of UNECE publications and their use by member States to develop new housing and land management policies.

Invitations to participate in the survey were sent to 112 potential respondents who represented the following three clusters of Committee stakeholders:

1. CHLM focal points in 56 member States
2. WPLA focal points, also representing 56 member States
3. International experts, representing international intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, the private sector and academia.

The questionnaire was made available online in English and Russian from October 2012 to the end of January 2013.

There are regional differences in the housing and land management situation across the UNECE region. In order to analyse these differences, the respondents were requested to select their subregion as follows:

1. European Union (EU) member States prior to 2004 (EU15)
2. EU enlargement (12 countries joined EU in 2004 and 2007)
3. Russian Federation, South-Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia
4. United States and Canada
5. Other countries (Israel, Switzerland).

This enabled the secretariat to better identify the specific challenges and needs of these five groups of countries.

To allow the secretariat to analyse the main groups of stakeholders, the respondents were also asked to mark the sector they represented:

1. Public sector housing and urban planning (represented by CHLM focal points)
2. Public sector land administration (represented by WPLA focal points)
3. Other stakeholders, including representatives of international intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, the private sector and academia engaged in housing, land management, human rights, and environment.

If not otherwise specified, the summaries refer to the responses from all three sectors that respondents represent and all five subregional clusters.

### General information on the survey outcomes

Out of the 112 potential respondents, 55 or 49% of all responded. Out of the 55, 44 fully completed the questionnaire<sup>3</sup>. For the categorization of the respondents by subregion, see figure 1. From the total, 27 of the respondents represented the housing sector (see figure 2), 14 represented land administration and 6 respondents came from international organizations, the private sector or academia.

Figure 1. Survey respondents by subregion

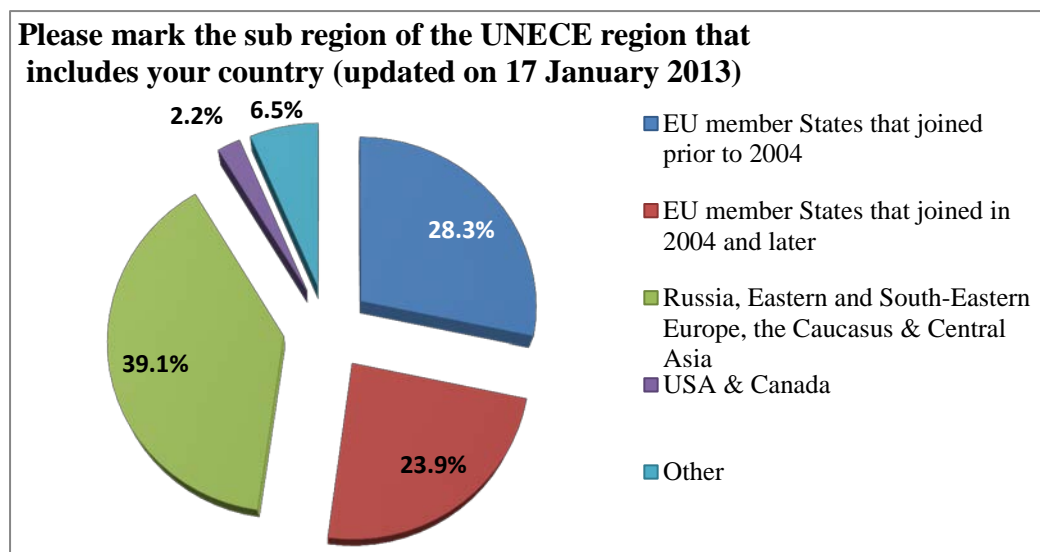
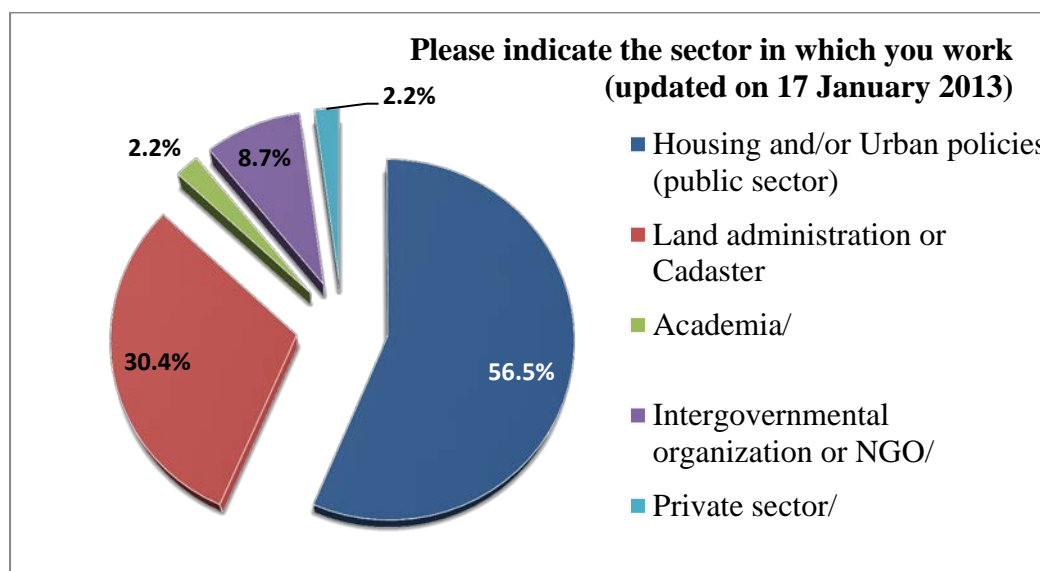


Figure 2. Survey respondents by sector



<sup>3</sup> Situation on 18 January 2013.

## **Structure of the report**

The structure of the report follows that of the survey and consists of six chapters:

**Chapter 1** analyses the main actors in the field of housing, urban management and land administration. It examines the role of each actor and the main housing and land management policy instruments that are in use. It also discusses the main instruments that governments and stakeholders use in housing, urban planning and land management

**Chapter 2** addresses the challenges that UNECE member States face in achieving sustainable development of the housing sector.

**Chapter 3** analyses the progress of member States in different housing and land management sectors.

**Chapter 4** summarizes the suggested priorities for the Committee's programme of work, divided into three main components: sustainable housing, sustainable urban management and land administration.

**Chapter 5** focuses on the Committee's publications and aims to identify those that are the most useful, and suggest future topics and focus.

**Annexes** provide details of respondents' replies.

Text of the questionnaire is provided on a separate document accessible at: <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=32606>

## Chapter 1. Governance, main actors in housing, urban planning and land management and policy instruments

An analysis of the main players (actors) in the field of housing, urban planning and land administration is crucial for the work of the Committee. Housing processes engage a considerable number of actors compared with other similar fields such as urban management and land administration.

The questionnaire identified some of the most important of these actors. The large number of actors and the wide and complex ranges of their roles have a bearing on the work of the Committee. Housing policies are usually designed at a national level but in almost all cases are implemented at a local level, and during the process of their design and implementation other stakeholders are involved.

Several member States have gone through the process of transition from a centrally planned to a market economy, and even traditional market economy countries have gone through structural reforms. In many of these reforms, housing has been one of the most affected areas.

Reforms resulted in decentralization of housing responsibilities from higher to lower levels of government. Privatization involved changes in actors and a general withdrawal of government from housing provision, therefore, leaving more space for the private sector and introducing alternative policy instruments.

It is, therefore, important to know who are the main players and to identify their roles both for directing the assistance at the right level and for building strategies to involve other non-governmental players in this process.

### 1.1 Actors and their role (Q1)<sup>4</sup>

Replies to the questionnaire demonstrated that, in the UNECE region, housing and urban planning are highly decentralized. The competencies of the federal/national governments are limited to formulating policies and legislation (confirmed by 96% of the respondents), establishing norms and standards (confirmed by 94% of the respondents) and providing subsidies for housing (confirmed by 76% of the respondents).

**National governments have shared responsibilities with regional and local governments as well as with the private sector** for providing social or affordable housing, offering loans for housing purposes, setting urban regulations, approving urban plans, and investing in urban infrastructure.

Management of the housing and urban planning issues is in the hands of **local governments**, who are responsible for the following:

- Providing and managing urban infrastructure
- Managing public land for housing purposes
- Providing social housing and their management

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<sup>4</sup> Q with a number indicates the number of a question in the questionnaire

- Managing the territory by setting sectoral urban regulations, approving urban plans and enforcing regulations
- Managing waiting lists for social housing
- Delivering capacity-building programmes

**Local governments** also have shared roles with national governments primarily in providing subsidies for housing and with the private sector in condominium management.

Despite of being the main provider of housing in the market, **private sector has also a dominant role in providing loans for housing and management services for condominiums**. It is also engaged to a certain extent (confirmed by around 40% of respondents) in investments in urban infrastructure, water and sanitation, which shows a trend towards public-private partnerships, most probably implemented through concessions. In some countries, the private sector is also involved in the management of social housing.

**Non-for-profit organizations** are less engaged than other actors; however, in some countries they play a role in providing management services for social housing or condominiums and in providing social housing and capacity-building.

The primary role of **households** is their engagement in the management of condominiums. They are also involved as stakeholders while discussing policies, legislation, standards and norms. The questionnaire did not include a separate question on households' role in financing the construction of single family dwellings. However, evidences from Country Profiles studies and presentations by member States during CHLM sessions, show for an important role they have in financing the constructions of their own dwellings and, in particular, providing housing in the informal sector.

**While housing and urban management are highly decentralized, activities related to land administration are primarily competence of the national governments**, as is confirmed by more than 85% of respondents.

Responsibilities, related to land administration are shared with regional and/or local governments and the private sector, the latter relating to the provision of information services on properties.

Thirty per cent of the respondents also reported the participation of **academia** in providing capacity-building, preparation of policy documents, legislation, standards and norms.

## **1.2 Housing and urban planning policy instruments that are implemented at a national and/or local level (Q2)**

Nineteen possible policy instruments were listed in the questionnaire. These were identified based on the UNECE publications on housing and land management. Different countries use a number of different policy instruments to provide affordable housing for their population. They range from urban planning (i.e.: urban plans, density bonus and development rights) to fiscal and financial instruments (tax relief, subsidies, public investments and loans, etc..).



### Top three policy instruments, used by member States

According to 80% of the respondents, **urban plans** are used as an instrument to ensure adequate space for and the appropriate location of social and/or affordable housing.

**Public investments** in social or affordable housing are used by 76% of the countries. **Incentives to the private construction sector to provide energy efficient homes** are provided by 62% of countries (see annex. 1 for more details of the answers).

Other important policy instruments that are used include:

- **Public loans** for housing provision and/or renovation
- **State-owned land that is** made available free of charge for social and/or affordable housing
- **Rent control** in the social housing sector.

Specific instruments, not included in the list, are:

- “Government **guaranteed bank mortgages** to supplement regular bank mortgages” and “**Incentives** to households/contractors for retrofitting or building energy efficient homes” (used by Israel)
- Tax cuts for the labour costs incurred by craftsmen for the renovation, maintenance, or modernization of a person’s personal residence (used by Germany).

It is evident that the classical policy instruments—urban plans and public investments in social housing—are still prevalent. However, the questionnaire results do not show if the level of public investments increased or decreased over time or if the housing needs of the population are being fulfilled or not. In addition, the low level of responses indicating public-private partnerships for providing affordable housing may point to the need for further studies on housing problems in the region and the ways they are addressed.

The high level of responses on the use of incentives for the private sector to provide energy efficient homes points to the importance of the role that EU regulations and financial instruments can play in supporting member States. This becomes evident in the subregional analysis, which shows that in the 15 EU member States (that joined before 2004) this instrument is used more than in other subregions. It also shows a higher level of awareness in these countries of the need for improving energy efficiency and (probably) a higher degree of familiarity with this instrument and the capacities to make use of it.

## 1.2.1 Subregional analysis

Analysis of housing policy instruments used at the subregional level suggests the following:

### 1.2.1.1 EU member States (EU 15)

The policy instruments most used in EU 15 countries are **tax deductions** for interest paid on housing mortgage loans, **incentives** to the private construction sector to provide **energy efficient homes**, and **subsidies** to households for housing renovation. **Urban plans** are used to ensure adequate space for and appropriate location of social and/or affordable housing, in some cases a certain portion of new private sector housing construction is **mandated** to be social and/or affordable housing and **rent control** is applied in the social housing sector.

Governments also invest in the construction of provide social and affordable housing, and direct subsidies to households are used for rent and mortgage payments.

### *1.2.1.2 European Union enlargement*

All former centrally planned countries of Central and Eastern Europe that joined the EU in 2004 and 2007 use **urban plans** as an instrument to ensure adequate space for and the appropriate location of social and/or affordable housing. Some 80% of them use **public loans** for housing provision and/or renovation and offer **subsidies to households for rent payment**.

Rent control in the social housing sector and subsidies to households for housing renovation are used by **70%** of countries, while 60% of them **invest** in social and/or affordable housing and provide **incentives** for the private construction sector for **energy- efficient homes**.

Some **50%** of countries provide, free of charge, **State-owned land** for social or affordable housing and **Subsidies** to households for mortgage payments. To a lesser degree these countries use **tax deduction** for interest paid on housing mortgage loans. Other instruments are not very commonly used.

### *1.2.1.3 Russian Federation, Central Asia, Caucasus and South-East Europe*

In this group of countries, 88% of Governments **invest in social housing**, 82% use **urban plans** as an instrument to ensure adequate space for and appropriate location of social or affordable housing and offer **land free of charge** for provision of social housing.

Some **59%** of countries responded that they use **subsidies** to the banking sector to reduce mortgage interest rates, 53% use **incentives** to the private construction sector to provide **energy efficient** homes. They also use **public loans** for housing provision or renovation, while it is interesting to note that these countries, as in the EU member States group, **mandate** that the **private sector** dedicate a certain portion of new housing construction to be social or affordable. To a lesser extent, transition economy countries use different types of subsidies to households and tax deductions.

The high level of responses confirming the public investment in social housing may be questioned, because these countries have the lowest percentage of social housing, when compared with EU countries. However, this result may show a new trend in these countries, toward increasing the social housing stock.

### *1.2.1.4 USA and Canada*

No reply

### *1.2.1.5 Other countries*

The housing policy instruments that countries of this group use most are public loans for housing provision or renovation and government investment in social or affordable housing and, to a lesser extent, subsidies. There has been a general trend in the last 20 to 30 years toward a withdrawal of governments from subsidising the housing sector. The questionnaire results also show the impact of the economic crisis, which has obliged governments to reduce public spending and consequently housing subsidies.

## **Chapter 2. Main challenges in developing sustainable housing, urban management and land administration sectors**

### **2.1 Challenges in housing, urban planning and management and land administration (Q3)**

Countries in different UNECE subregions are faced with several challenges as a result of globalization and the need to increase competitiveness, economic and financial crises, climate change, urbanization, demographic changes, including in and out migration, ageing of population, and a decrease in the natural growth rate.

These challenges have major implications for housing and urban management policies. However, despite the fact that certain phenomena are global; the resilience of countries towards them can vary because of different economic, social and environmental conditions. For example, the financial crisis became almost a global phenomenon, but not all the countries were affected to the same extent. Less developed countries, for instance, because of their less sophisticated financial systems, seemed to have been less affected.

Climate change also affects countries in different ways because some countries are more fortunate in their natural conditions. Those countries that already have put in place climate-resiliency measures are less affected.

It is therefore expected that countries of different regions respond differently to the same challenges, including the global ones.

This section analyses the responses to the questions on this topic, as well as giving a breakdown by subregion.

The questionnaire listed 27 potential challenges. These challenges were identified through the literature review and discussions of the Committee and Working Party on Land Administration (WPLA) sessions as reflected in the Committee and WPLA official documents.

The challenges are divided between three areas of work of the Committee: (a) housing; (b) urban planning and management; and (c) land administration. The challenges also take into consideration the three aspects of sustainability: social, environmental and economic, including the institutional aspects of sustainability.

The three first challenges rated by the respondents concern the housing sector:

1. Inefficient use of energy in the residential sector
2. Lack of affordable solutions for young people who enter the housing market
3. Limited access to affordable, quality and healthy housing in the market

The remainder of the “top ten” are as follows: (also see annex 2 for more details of the answers).

4. Lack of easy access for disabled and aged persons due to physical/architectural barriers
5. Low political attention to housing and urban development issues
6. Decreased housing affordability as result of the economic crisis and unemployment
7. Deteriorated housing stock due to a lack of maintenance and investment

8. Reduced access to credit for households due to the financial crisis
9. Reduced financing for housing from the state and/or local government budget
10. Risks to residential buildings from natural and human-generated disasters, including the impacts of a changing climate and earthquakes.

## 2.1.1 Analysis by subregion

### 2.1.1.1 European Member States (EU15)

All respondents indicated that the biggest challenge for this subregion is the “**inefficient use of energy** in the housing sector”.

Housing affordability seems to be a growing challenge in EU countries, since all respondents indicated that the second group of greatest challenges included: “**decreased housing affordability** as result of the economic crisis and unemployment”; “**lack of affordable housing** solutions for young people who are entering the housing market” and “**limited access to affordable, quality and healthy** housing in the market”.

The third greatest challenges were “**Reduced financing for housing** from the state and/or local government budget” and “**Low political attention** to housing and urban development issues”.

This group of countries gave the lowest rating to challenges related to land administration and cadaster systems. This can be explained with the fact that these countries have a well-established land administration system.

### 2.1.1.2 European Union enlargement (Countries having joined after 2004)

For this group of countries, the biggest challenge is the “**inefficient use of energy** in the housing sector”, followed by the “**Lack of easy access for disabled** and aged persons due to physical/architectural barriers”.

The third group of priority challenges includes the:

- Low political attention to housing and urban development issues
- Lack of affordable housing solutions for young people who are entering the housing market
- Limited access to affordable, quality and healthy housing in the market
- Reduced financing for housing from the state and/or local government budget
- Inability of local governments to manage urban growth, control urban development and enforce regulations
- Decrease in housing affordability as a result of the economic crisis and unemployment.

### 2.1.1.3 Russian Federation, South-East Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus

Even for this group of countries, “**inefficient use of energy** in the housing sector” is the biggest challenge, which governments should deal with as a priority. Almost at the same level of priority stands the challenge of “**Risks to residential buildings** from natural and human-generated disasters, including the impacts of a changing climate and earthquakes”, followed

by the third group of big challenges, which includes (according to the weight given to by countries, from highest to lowest):

- Reduced access to credit for households due to the financial crisis
- Limited access to affordable, quality and healthy housing in the market
- Deteriorated housing stock due to a lack of maintenance and investment
- Lack of affordable housing solutions for young people who are entering the housing market
- Declining urban densities due to emigration, the decrease in natural population growth and an ageing population
- Decreased housing affordability as a result of the economic crisis and unemployment.

#### ***2.1.1.4 USA and Canada***

No reply

#### ***2.1.1.5 Other countries***

The biggest challenge for both of these countries is “**inefficient use of energy** in the housing sector”, followed by:

- **Risks to residential buildings** from natural and human-generated disasters, including the impacts of a changing climate and earthquakes
- **Limited access** to affordable, quality and healthy housing in the market
- **Decreased housing affordability** as result of the economic crisis and unemployment
- **Shifts in demand** as a result of demographic changes (declining and/or ageing population)
- **Lack of affordable housing** solutions for young people who are entering the housing market
- **Abandoned** ex-industrial sites.

### **2.1.2 Analysis based on the professional engagement of respondents**

It is important to analyse the responses to this question from the perspective of the professional engagement of the respondents in the fields of housing and land administration. Three groups of stakeholders are identified and their responses analysed. The first two groups are representatives of national governments engaged in housing policy and land administration and the third group includes international experts, represented by the international private sector, NGOs and international organizations.

#### ***2.1.2.1 Respondents from the public sector engaged in housing and/or urban policies***

This group of respondents has indicated the “**inefficient use of energy** in the housing sector” as the biggest challenge, followed by “**Limited access to affordable, quality and healthy housing in the market**”, “**lack of easy access for disabled and aged persons** due to

physical/architectural barriers” and “**Lack of affordable housing solutions** for young people who are entering the housing market”.

### ***2.1.2.2 Respondents from the public sector engaged in land administration***

Surprisingly, even for this group of respondents the “**inefficient use of energy** in the housing sector” is the biggest challenge, while the three challenges related with land administration are rated with the lowest grade of priority.

### ***2.1.2.3 Other stakeholders (academia, NGOs, private sector)***

For this group of respondents, the three biggest challenges, rated equally, are the “**Inefficient use of energy** in the housing sector”, “**Risks to residential buildings** from natural and human-generated disasters, including the impacts of a changing climate and earthquakes” and “**Lack of affordable housing solutions** for young people who are entering the housing market”.

Other highly ranked challenges include, in order of importance,:

- Deteriorated housing stock due to a lack of maintenance and investment
- Decreased housing affordability as result of the economic crisis and unemployment
- Lack of easy access for disabled and aged persons due to physical/architectural barriers
- Low political attention to housing and urban development issues
- A high level of corruption at the local level in dealing with land use and building permits.

## **Chapter 3. Progress in reforms in housing and land management in the period from 2002 to 2012**

This chapter analyses the reforms undertaken in two periods: 2002-2009 and 2009-2012. The division in two periods of time was done in order to assess the short- and long-term impacts of reforms.

### **3.1 The main reforms undertaken by member States in the fields of housing, urban planning and land administration (Q4 and Q5)**

This question was answered by 36 respondents, out of which 24 are from the housing and urban planning sector, 9 from land administration and the rest from the group of other stakeholders.

The respondents confirmed that reforms have taken place in their countries in the three areas and during the two periods of time. Countries have been engaged in policy reforms, drawing up legislation, strategies, action plans and undertaking institutional reforms. For both of the time periods, the number of countries reporting reforms in the housing field is the highest, followed by reforms in urban planning and land administration.

Visible progress in policy reform was reported by 62% of the respondents. There are more than 60 policy documents, 39% of which in housing, 32% in land administration and 29% in urban planning.

The region has also worked on more than 70 strategies mostly in housing, approximately 60 action plans, more than 150 laws, approximately 300 regulatory acts and some 30 institutional reforms. While policy reforms (policy papers, strategies, action plans, laws, regulatory acts) are concentrated in the housing sector, institutional reforms have mostly happened in the area of land administration (37%).

Some countries have provided further information on the types of reforms and their content (summarized in annex 3).

### **3.2 Significant examples that show how countries have addressed housing challenges (Q6)**

Thirty countries provided examples from a policy area, a programme or a pilot project that show how they have addressed housing challenges. Out of the 30 responses, 11 countries have classified their example as covering policy area, 15 as a national programme, 1 as a pilot project and the rest fall under the category “other”. Based on the area of activity, 14 countries have examples related to affordable housing, 7 to energy efficiency in housing, 2 concern refurbishment of the housing stock, 4 the regularization/legalization of informal settlements and 2 fall under the category of “other”.

Most of the examples provided (20) started between 2002 and 2009, while 10 started between 2010 and 2012. Out of 30, only 4 examples have been completed, while 26 others are still ongoing.

Detailed responses on housing programmes / projects implemented by countries are summarized in annex 4.

## **Chapter 4. Priorities for the future work of the Committee**

The priorities are grouped according to the current four areas of work under the Committee: (a) sustainable housing and real estate markets; (b) sustainable urban development, (c) land administration and management and (d) country profiles on the housing sector.

The priorities for the future work of the Committee are analysed both by “total respondents” and by “subregion”. In addition, for each area of work, the views analysed are those of respondents that are engaged in that particular area, i.e. for the area of work “Sustainable housing and real estate markets”, the views of respondents from the housing and urban planning field are also given.

### **4.1 Area of Work I. Sustainable housing and real estate markets (Q7)**

Within this area, the highest priority has been given by respondents to “Energy efficiency in housing”. This is consistent with the replies to the question on the major challenges perceived by respondents.

In second place, with almost the same level of priority, comes: “Maintenance, management and refurbishment of the existing housing stock” and “Housing affordability, social housing and low cost housing”.

The lowest priorities are given to: “Public-private partnerships for affordable housing” and “Real estate markets”. Among possible reasons for such a low rating could be a scepticism on the private market to respond effectively to the public objectives in the housing sector. Another reason may be related with the perception of the public sector, which made up a majority of the respondents.

#### **4.1.1 Subregional analysis of responses**

##### ***4.1.1.1 EU member States (EU15)***

For this group of countries, the highest priority is “Energy efficiency”, followed by “Ecological housing”, while the lowest priority is given to “Real estate markets”.

##### ***4.1.1.2 European Union enlargement***

This group of countries has indicated that the most important area is “Energy efficiency”, followed by “Housing affordability, social housing and low cost housing”, and followed by a number of priorities, each having the same importance:

- Maintenance, management and refurbishment of the existing housing stock
- Accessibility to housing (barrier-free housing)
- Financial instruments for housing such as housing subsidies, allowances, etc.
- Ecological housing.

##### ***4.1.1.3 Russian Federation, South-East Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus***

This group of countries seems to consider all the future areas of work as having almost the same priority, with few differences between each other. However, the highest points are shared between “**Energy efficiency**” and “**Housing affordability, social housing and low cost housing**”, followed by:



- “**Maintenance, management and refurbishment** of the existing housing stock”
- “**Resilience of housing** to earthquakes and other natural and man-made disasters” and
- “**Accessibility** to housing (barrier-free housing)”.

#### **4.1.1.4 USA and Canada**

There was only one response from this group of countries, which marked the following as being at the same highest priority level:

- Maintenance, management and refurbishment of the existing housing stock
- Ecological housing
- Healthy housing
- Energy efficiency in housing.

#### **4.1.1.5 Other countries**

There are two responses from this group, which has marked as the most important areas “**Healthy housing** “, “**Energy efficiency in housing**” and “**Housing affordability, social housing and low cost housing**”.

### **4.1.2 Analysis by area of professional engagement**

#### **4.1.2.1 Housing & Urban planning**

Below are the three highest priorities given to the activities of the future work of the Committee in this area, by respondents that are engaged in housing (from highest to lowest):

- Energy efficiency in housing
- Maintenance, management and refurbishment of the existing housing stock
- Housing affordability, social housing and low cost housing.

### **4.2 Area of Work II. Sustainable urban development (Q8)**

The activities that have been given the highest priority by respondents are, “**Compact cities (increasing density and efficiency of urban areas)**” and “**Low carbon and climate neutral cities**”.

In second place come, “**Smart cities** initiative, which addresses information, communication and technology in urban planning”, “**Inclusive cities**” and “**Resilience** of cities to disasters”, while the lowest priority is given to the component “**Shrinking cities**”.

The low priority given to this last subject may have different explanations:

- Country respondents in this sector may have little awareness of the future population trends in European cities and demographic changes resulting in ageing populations, which can be interpreted as a call to provide member States with more information on this subject

- Country respondents are more concerned about areas affected by urban growth, which require planning for additional services
- The tendency for targeting investments to areas with high economic return
- The political gains are less in areas with decreasing populations
- Last, but not least, there could be a problem with this “buzzword”, which might not have been correctly understood and, therefore, may need to be revised.

## 4.2.1. Subregional analysis of responses

### 4.2.1.1 EU member States (EU15)

For this group of countries, the highest priority is “**Low carbon and climate neutral cities**”, followed by “**Inclusive cities**”.

### 4.2.1.2 EU enlargement

This group of countries has marked equally, as the most important two areas: “**Smart cities initiative**, which addresses information, communication and technology in urban planning” and “**Low carbon and climate neutral cities**”.

### 4.2.1.3 Russian Federation, South-East Europe, Central Asia and Caucasus

For this group of countries the highest priorities for the future work of the work area: “Sustainable urban development” are shared between “**Resilience of cities to disasters**” and “**Compact cities (increasing density and efficiency of urban areas)**”

### 4.2.1.4 Other countries

This group of countries shares the highest priority among “**Smart cities initiative**, which addresses information, communication and technology in urban planning”, “**Compact cities (increasing density and efficiency of urban areas)**” and “**Inclusive cities**”.

## 4.2.2 Analysed by area of professional engagement

### 4.2.2.1 Housing & Urban planning

Below are the three highest priorities given to the activities of the future work of the Committee by respondents that are engaged in housing & urban planning (from highest to lowest):

- **Compact cities (increasing density and efficiency of urban areas)**
- **Low carbon cities and climate neutral development in cities**
- **Smart cities initiative**, which addresses information, communication and technology in urban planning.

## 4.3 Area of Work III. Land Administration and Land Management (Q9)

Four components were identified here, out of which the highest priority was, “**Land registration**”, followed by “**E-governance and land tenure**”. The lowest priority was given to “**Informal settlements**”.

That informal settlements received the lowest priority can be explained by the fact that this programme area is very focused on land registration, while informal settlements includes a wide range of different policies, and the registration is the last step. Only 18% of the 27 EU member States gave the highest priority to this programme element, as compared to 65% of “transition economy” countries.

#### **4.4 Area of Work IV. Country profiles on housing and land management (Q10)**

This area of work has three components, which are prioritized by the respondents as below:

- Development of Country Profiles based upon requests from Governments
- Technical model projects to support the implementation of Country Profile recommendations
- Monitoring of implementation of Country Profile recommendations.

#### **4.5 Priorities for the activities of the Committee (Q11)**

The Committee assists member States by using different tools and implementing different activities. Nine groups of different activities were identified for the purpose of the survey, among which, the respondents gave the highest priority to the followings (listed from the highest to the lowest):

- “Developing policy **guidelines**, policy **frameworks** and **action plans**”
- “**Thematic discussion** during Committee sessions on specific topics”.
- “Conducting **studies** on specific topics”
- “Developing **Country Profiles** on housing and land management”
- “Organizing **international conferences** and **seminars** to promote the exchange of experiences and best practices”.

##### **4.5.1 Subregional analysis**

###### **4.5.1.1 EU member States (EU 15)**

For this group of countries, the activity of “Thematic discussion during Committee sessions on specific topics” has the highest priority. The second priority activity is, “Conducting studies on specific topics”, which is followed by the activities, “Organizing international conferences and seminars to promote the exchange of experiences and best practices” and, “Developing Country Profiles on housing and land management”.

###### **4.5.1.2 EU enlargement (EU12)**

This group of countries has rated as a first priority the activity, “Developing **policy guidelines**, policy frameworks and action plans”. The second priority is given equally to “**Conducting studies** on specific topics”, “Organizing **international conferences** and seminars to promote the exchange of experiences and best practices” and “**Thematic discussion** during Committee sessions on specific topics”.

#### ***4.5.1.3 Russian Federation, South-East Europe, Central Asia and Caucasus***

This group of countries, which form the largest number of respondents by subregion has indicated “Organizing **capacity-building** events in countries and sub regions” as the highest priority activity, followed by “Model projects to support the implementation of **Country Profile** recommendations”. The third group of activities rated as important are:

- Supporting the development and implementation of international standards for the building sector
- Organizing **international conferences** and **seminars** to promote the exchange of experiences and best practices
- Thematic discussion during Committee sessions on specific topics
- Developing policy guidelines, policy frameworks and action plans.

#### ***4.5.1.4 USA and Canada***

For USA and Canada (one respondent only), the priority activities should be, from highest to lowest importance:

- Developing policy guidelines, policy frameworks and action plans
- Developing Country Profiles on housing and land management
- Monitoring the implementation of Country Profile policy recommendations
- Model projects to support the implementation of Country Profile recommendations
- Organizing capacity-building events in countries and subregions
- Thematic discussion during Committee sessions on specific topics.

#### ***4.5.1.5 Other countries***

The highest priority activities are “Developing **policy guidelines, policy frameworks and action plans**”, followed by “Developing **Country Profiles** on housing and land management”, “**Model projects** to support the implementation of Country Profile recommendations”, “Conducting **studies** on specific topics” and “Organizing **capacity-building** events in countries and subregions”.

## Chapter 5. UNECE publications

### 5.1 Committee publications used by countries and their relevance (Q12)

The publications, rated to being the most relevant is the “**Country profile studies 2006 – 2011**”. The second most highly rated publication is the, “**Guidelines on social housing**”, which is followed by the “**Action plan for energy-efficient housing in the UNECE Region**”.

Comment from Spain: “...our legislative and regulatory tradition has generally been based on our own experiences, and on the countries from our nearest European environment. Items 13 and 14 of the questionnaire, relate to the quality and value of a series of UNECE publications, many of them related to Eastern European countries having a very different situation from Spain in relation to urban settlements, tenure security, cadaster, real estate market, privatization of State housing buildings, and regulation of building and urban planning...”

The comments from Spain may suggest that the UNECE publications on housing and land management should also target housing, urban planning and land management issues in Western Europe and America and not be limited to the countries in transition.

#### 5.1.1 Subregional analysis

##### 5.1.1.1 EU member States (EU 15)

This group of countries has indicated as the most relevant to their work the publications related to the environmental aspects of sustainability. The most relevant publication is “**Climate neutral cities: How to make cities less energy and carbon intensive and more resilient to climatic challenges**”, followed by the publication “**Action plan for energy-efficient housing in the UNECE Region**”. In third place come the publications “**Guidelines on Social Housing: Principles and Examples**” and “**Land administration in the UNECE Region: development trends and main principles**”. In fourth position is the publication “**Policy framework for sustainable real estate markets**”.

Among the less relevant publications are: “**Self-made cities**” and “**The relationship between population and housing**”

##### 5.1.1.2 EU enlargement (EU12)

This group of countries has a more mixed interest in different topics; however, environmental topics are also relevant to their work. The most interesting publications for this group of countries are the, “**Policy framework for sustainable real estate markets**” and the, “**Country profile studies**”, followed by “**Action plan for energy-efficient housing in the UNECE Region**”, “**Social and economic benefits of good land administration**”, “**Guidelines on condominium ownership of housing for countries in transition**” and “**Housing finance systems for countries in transition: principles and examples**”

Among the less relevant ones are: “**Climate Neutral Cities: How to make cities less energy and carbon intensive and more resilient to climatic challenges**”, “**Self-Made Cities**” and “**Trends and Progress in Housing Reforms in South Eastern Europe**”

### **5.1.1.3 Russian Federation, South-East Europe, Central Asia and Caucasus**

The most relevant publications for this group of countries are the, “**Country profiles**”, followed by “**Guidelines on Social Housing: Principles and Examples**” and by “**Land Administration in the UNECE Region: Development Trends and Main Principles**”

Publications, considered to be the least relevant are earlier publications (2003 – 2005) on land administration topics, as well as the 2009 publication “**Guidance and Good Practice for the Application of Fees and Charges**”.

In this subregion, however, many experts cannot read English. Those respondents did not mention the UNECE publications that had not been translated into Russian. For the purpose of future planning, therefore, translation of the publications into Russian is important to ensure that they are read by experts in the transition countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

### **5.1.1.4 USA and Canada**

No reply

### **5.1.1.5 Other countries**

The most relevant to the work for this group of countries is the publication, “**Action Plan for Energy-Efficient Housing in the UNECE Region**”, followed by the equally rated publications “**Green homes**” and “**Guidelines on Social Housing: Principles and Examples**”.

## **5.2 Quality of publications (Q13)**

The highest rated publication is, “**Guidelines on Social Housing: Principles and Examples**”. The second highest are the, “**Country Profile Studies**” and “**Housing Finance Systems for Countries in Transition: Principles and Examples**” followed by, “**Action Plan for Energy-Efficient Housing in the UNECE Region**”.

### **5.2.1 Subregional analyses**

#### **5.2.1.1 EU member States (EU 15)**

For this group of countries the highest rating for quality corresponds with the highest rating for relevance, that is to say the publication, “**Climate Neutral Cities: How to make cities less energy and carbon intensive and more resilient to climatic challenges**”. “**Self-Made Cities**”, which was rated as least relevant, is highly rated for the quality. It means that for this group of countries the topic of informal settlements is not relevant, however the publication is qualitative.. The second place for publication quality is given to “**Country profile studies**”, “**Green Homes**” and “**Action Plan for Energy-Efficient Housing in the UNECE Region**”. The following publications come in third place:

- “National Action Plan of Montenegro for **Energy Efficiency** Measures in the Residential Sector”
- “Policy Framework for **Sustainable Real Estate Markets**”
- “**Guidelines on Social Housing: Principles and Examples**”
- “**Land Administration** in the UNECE Region: Development Trends and Main Principles”

- “Study on the Challenges of Fraud to **Land Administration** Institutions”.

#### **5.2.1.2 EU enlargement (EU12)**

The publications receiving the highest quality evaluation are the “**Housing Finance** Systems for Countries in Transition: Principles and Examples”, “**Guidelines on Social Housing:** Principles and Examples”, “**Country Profile Studies**” and “**Guidelines on Condominium Ownership of Housing** for Countries in Transition”.

The publication given the lowest evaluation by this group of respondents is, “**Self-Made Cities**”.

#### **5.2.1.3 Russian Federation, South-East Europe, Central Asia and Caucasus**

This group of countries has considered “Self-Made Cities” as the publication with the highest quality. The second group of publications that received high quality rating are the following:

- **Guidelines on Condominium** Ownership of Housing for Countries in Transition
- **Guidelines on Social Housing:** Principles and Examples
- **Spatial Planning:** Key Instrument for Development and Effective Governance (March 2008)
- Action Plan for Energy-Efficient Housing in the UNECE Region.

Among the less highly evaluated publications for this group of countries is the “Green Homes”. The main reason for this is that the Russian version of the publication was not available prior to the survey.

#### **5.2.1.4 USA and Canada**

No reply

#### **5.2.1.5 Other countries**

For this group of countries the highest quality publications are, “**Green Homes**” and “**Climate Neutral Cities:** How to make cities less energy and carbon intensive and more resilient to climatic challenges”

### **5.3 Reasons for poor quality rating of publications (Q14)**

No response qualifies the UNECE publications as “poor” or “very poor”. Question 14 was supposed to be answered only if the answer to the previous question had been “poor or “very poor”. However, there are a few responses and comments to this question, which suggest that improvements could be made to the quality of analytical content, focus on topics that are interesting to more countries, and that bring value added to the previous publications.

One of the respondent comments that “*even if with overall good results, a more innovative approach and a greater attention on case studies is needed*”, another comments: “*...all publications are useful to access the information, but some of them are very specific for only one country or some countries*”, while another says: “*I am always impressed with the quality of publications*”.

## 5.4 Frequency of use (Q15)

With regard to the frequency of use of the UNECE publications, 56% of respondents say that they read / use them a few times a year, while 30% say that they use them a few times a month while 7% have never read them.

## 5.6 Desirable topics for future publications: most like to see (Q16)

Countries were asked to choose only one from a list of possible topics for further UNECE publications. 30% of respondents answered that they need more “**Information on housing policies** and/or specific policy instruments used in different countries in the UNECE region”, followed by “**Comparative** studies on housing policy, urban planning instruments and land administration”.

The third ranking from interest was given to a number of equally rated topics, those being:

- Action plans on different subjects
- Policy guidelines on different topics
- Case studies on policies and/or projects to promote/ implement energy efficient houses
- Case studies on projects on retrofitting existing housing
- Data relevant to housing and/or land management.

**Croatia** suggested a, “*publication on a common platform for action of central (region) local/government for reduction of risks to residential building from natural and human-generated disasters*”.

## 5.7 Desirable topics for future publications: most helpful in work (Q17)

Countries were also asked to select those topics that UNECE publications should focus on to help in their work. To this question, 64% of respondents answered “Housing finance”, 61% of respondents have indicated “Energy efficient housing”, 55% “social housing” and “affordable housing” and 50% “Housing stock management”. Less important were the topics: “**Shrinking cities** due to population loss” “**Low-carbon cities**” and “**Disaster resilient cities**”

One respondent from an international organization suggest the followings as future topics for UNECE publications:

- Formation of condominiums (good practice throughout UNECE region)
- Housing for vulnerable groups (good practice throughout UNECE region)
- Each publication should have a component on vulnerable groups and any special considerations regarding them in relation to the theme of the publication.

## 5.8 Suggestions by countries on how UNECE publications could be improved to be more useful (Q18)

- Topics of interest for future UNECE publications, related to the challenges that countries are facing: affordability issues, energy efficiency, housing management, the green economy and compact and smart cities



- More comparative analyses
- UNECE publications are very useful and good reference point for development policy directions; more information on action plans could also be very useful
- Comparative studies related to the socio-economic characteristics of countries within the topic “how an authoritative and transparent system for registration of land and property facilitates economic growth and stability”
- It could be more relevant to get more feedback in terms of experiences such as data conversion activities or land information systems development from different countries
- More country profiles, especially for: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia, Croatia, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Russian Federation, Serbia and Turkey. Include consideration of vulnerable groups in each publication
- Considering the need for documenting in order to update/improve the national legislation and regulations in the activity fields of our institutions, UNECE publications should supply periodically syntheses and thematic assessments regarding legislation / methodological guides/best practices etc. in UNECE member States. These synthetic analyses should follow the themes identified by the member States and they should briefly present the information obtained from each Member State. It would also be useful if we could obtain from UNECE the right to translate into our national languages information from these publications and use these materials on official sites, acknowledging the source
- In the case of publications that have recommendations or guidelines it would be very useful if a short independent document (like a flyer) is produced (it is easier to use for dissemination and awareness-raising, easier and more affordable to translate when appropriate), with the listing of the key topics and the recommendations or guidelines.

## Annex 1. Main instruments in housing and urban planning (Q2)

Table 1. Responses on housing and urban planning policy instruments (updated on 2 January 2013)

|    | Answer options (2 January 2013)  | Response % | Response count |
|----|--|------------|----------------|
| 1  | 1.Urban plans to ensure adequate space and appropriate location for social and/or affordable housing/              | 79.1%      | 34             |
| 2  | 5.Government investment in social and/or affordable housing/   | 76.7%      | 33             |
| 3  | 10. Incentives to the private construction sector to provide energy efficient homes/                               | 62.8%      | 27             |
| 4  | 15. State owned land made available free of charge for social and/or affordable housing/                           | 60.5%      | 26             |
| 5  | 4.Public loans for housing provision and/or renovation/  | 58.1%      | 25             |
| 6  | 16. Rent control in the social housing sector/   | 55.8%      | 24             |
| 7  | 6.Tax deduction for interest paid on housing mortgage loans/   | 51.2%      | 22             |
| 8  | 3.Mandate for a certain portion of new private sector housing construction to be social and/or affordable housing/ | 46.5%      | 20             |
| 9  | 11. Subsidies to households for rent payment/  | 46.5%      | 20             |
| 10 | 12. Subsidies to households for mortgage payments/   | 46.5%      | 20             |
| 11 | 13. Subsidies to households for housing renovation/  | 44.2%      | 19             |
| 12 | 8. Subsidies to the banking sector for mortgage interest reduction/  | 39.5%      | 17             |
| 13 | 7.Subsidies to private construction sector to provide social and/or affordable housing/                            | 30.2%      | 13             |
| 14 | 17. VAT deduction/reduction for housing renovation/  | 27.9%      | 12             |
| 15 | 14. Subsidies to households for housing maintenance/   | 23.3%      | 10             |
| 16 | 9. Subsidies to private landlords for providing low housing rents/   | 16.3%      | 7              |
| 17 | 18. Transfer of Development Rights used to provide social and/or affordable housing/                               | 16.3%      | 7              |
| 18 | 19. Urban density bonus used to provide social and/or affordable housing/  | 14.0%      | 6              |
| 19 | 2.Contribution paid by either employees or enterprises to a social housing fund/                                   | 7.0%       | 3              |
|    | Other (please specify), or leave a comment/  |            | 2              |
|    | <b><i>answered question</i></b>  |            | <b>43</b>      |
|    | <b><i>no reply</i></b>   |            | <b>10</b>      |

## Annex 2. Challenges in housing, urban planning and management and land administration (Q3)

Table 2. Challenges rated according to the priority given by member States (Updated on 2 January 2013)

|    | Answer options   | Rating average | Response count |
|----|--|----------------|----------------|
| 1  | 1) Inefficient use of energy in the housing sector   | 4.00           | 42             |
| 2  | 8) Lack of affordable housing solutions for young people who are entering the housing market/  | 3.54           | 42             |
| 3  | 3) Limited access to affordable, quality and healthy housing in the market/  | 3.51           | 41             |
| 4  | 4) Lack of easy access for disabled and aged persons due to physical/architectural barriers/   | 3.45           | 42             |
| 5  | 5) Decreased housing affordability as result of the economic crisis and unemployment/  | 3.35           | 42             |
| 6  | 22) Low political attention to housing and urban development issues/   | 3.34           | 42             |
| 7  | 2) Risks to residential buildings from natural and human-generated disasters, including the impacts of a changing climate and earthquakes/ | 3.25           | 42             |
| 8  | 9) Deteriorated housing stock due to a lack of maintenance and investment/   | 3.24           | 42             |
| 9  | 10) Reduced access to credit for households due to the financial crisis/   | 3.22           | 42             |
| 10 | 11) Reduced financing for housing from the state and/or local government budget/   | 3.19           | 41             |
| 11 | 21) Inability of local governments to manage urban growth, control urban development and enforce regulations/                              | 3.00           | 41             |
| 12 | 13) Inability of local governments to implement housing programmes/  | 2.95           | 42             |
| 13 | 20) Declining urban densities due to emigration, decrease of natural population growth and an ageing population/                           | 2.95           | 41             |
| 14 | 18) Inefficient use of urban land as a result of low-density developments/   | 2.89           | 41             |
| 15 | 23) Lack of inter-ministerial coordination/  | 2.89           | 41             |
| 16 | 24) Lack of coordination between national, regional and local authorities/   | 2.84           | 40             |
| 17 | 7) Shifts in demand as a result of demographic changes (declining and/or ageing population)/   | 2.77           | 40             |
| 18 | 14) Lack of capacity to monitor the implementation of projects and regulations/  | 2.77           | 41             |
| 19 | 17) Loss of rural land due to uncontrolled urban growth and urban sprawl/  | 2.77           | 41             |
| 20 | 19) Abandoned ex-industrial sites/   | 2.77           | 41             |

|    |   |      |    |
|----|---|------|----|
| 21 | 16) Increased social segregation in housing/  | 2.74 | 42 |
| 22 | 15) Lack of knowledge and of awareness how to reduce the carbon footprint of cities through planning/   | 2.69 | 41 |
| 23 | 12) Nonexistent or inaccessible statistical data on housing, urban development and land administration/   | 2.65 | 43 |
| 24 | 6) Increased homelessness/  | 2.64 | 40 |
| 25 | 27) Outdated cadastral and land registration systems that do not provide a basis for economic and social development/                                     | 2.62 | 41 |
| 26 | 26) Inefficient and nontransparent land administration systems, which create problems with security of tenure, transactions and evaluation of properties/ | 2.53 | 42 |
| 27 | 25) High level of corruption at the local level in dealing with land use and building permits/  | 2.46 | 41 |
| 28 | Other (please specify)/   |      | 3  |
|    |   |      |    |

## **Annex 3. Reforms undertaken in housing, urban planning and land administration (Q5)**

**1. Armenia** - A number of regulatory documents have been adopted in the housing sector: the Law on Apartment House Management, Five-Year Strategy on Improving Apartment House Management and Operation, Action Plan for Five-Year Strategy Implementation, and several governmental decisions and regulations to solve the housing problems of people who suffered in industrial and natural disasters. Radical reforms regulating the development of strategic town-planning documentation and administering licensing procedures were undertaken in urban planning in 2010-2011. The new legislative acts and amendment of the previous laws were aimed at the simplification of documentation development, optimization of project contents, reduction of licensing procedures, decrease in time and cost, and introduction of new procedures for the adoption of town master plans.

**2. Belarus:** Several policy and legislative reforms have been undertaken :

- a. Land Code 2008 was amended. As a result, legal entities can acquire private property rights on land via auction. Before the amendment, they could have acquired the rights only in special cases and there was no procedure regulating private property acquisition
- b. The President's Decree № 667 was adopted on 2.12.2007, which declared the unity of land parcel and the building. After the land is allocated by the state the land user is obliged to apply for the registration of rights within 2 months, otherwise the allocation decision can be declared invalid
- c. President's decree № 58 adopted in 02.09.2009 regulated in detail the reimbursement of damage to the owners of expropriated land. Detailed order of the allocation on the state owned land for the social housing needs was adopted
- d. President's Decree № 431 adopted on 23.09.2011. Legal entities and citizens are allowed to use the land allocated for residential purposes simultaneously for business purposes (tourism etc.) without any local authority's special decisions. Legal entities can buy the parcels of land that were earlier allocated to them with the right to use for the price of 70% of their cadastral value. Also, they can buy land from citizens (earlier - only local authorities).

**3. Croatia:** In 1997 the Government passed the Physical Planning Strategy, and in 1999 it approved the Action Plan and Physical Planning Programme of the Republic of Croatia. From 2004 to 2009 the physical planning of the coastal area was defined by the Physical Planning and Construction Act and the corresponding ordinance.

**4. Denmark:** Institutional reforms resulted with changes of administration from three tiers of government into two.

**5. Germany** – 1) Housing Reform of the federal system in 2006 which resulted in a transfer of responsibility for the promotion of housing to the regions Urban planning; 2) Bills for strengthening climate protection and sustainability in urban planning law; 3) Launch of the National Urban Development Policy

**6. Israel:** In addition to a policy of continuously updated planning and building codes and procedures, and in keeping with decisions made and objectives outlined at successive United Nations and World Urban Forums, the Government has taken numerous decisions, made policies, action plans for implementation and operates projects and programmes with the

objective of promoting sustainable development, energy efficiency and preparedness for climate change. Some of these are:

- a. 246 (2003) A Strategic Plan for Sustainable Development in Israel
- b. 12 separate decisions (1998-2010) to promote the development of renewable sources of energy and solar energy in particular
- c. 474 (2009) Israel's Preparedness for Climate Change and for Reduction of Carbon Emissions
- d. 1504,2508 (2010) Drafting a National Plan for Reduction of Carbon Emissions in Israel "Green" Standards and Building Codes
- e. 1045 (2011) Thermal Insulation for Residential and other buildings
- f. 5281 (2011) Buildings Less Damaging to the Environment - (2012) New National Building Code under constant review to be incorporated into the Planning and Building Law Statutory and other plans
- g. (approval stage) National Outline Plan 10 Photovoltaic Apparatus as a Preference for Development of Renewable Energy Sources
- h. (preparation stage) Financial Mechanisms to Promote the Installation of Retrofit and Passive Energy Technologies and Reduce Energy Costs in New and Existing Residential Units Pilot programme to implement and measure the benefits of government funded retrofit in public housing projects.

7. **Italy** - Regional laws for the planning and building sector (e.g. Lombardy and others).

8. **Serbia:** A part of the Recommendation from the Country Profile on the Housing Sector is still the unofficial policy document in the housing sector.

9. **Spain:** The current policy paper on housing is the Housing Plan 2009-2012, affected by the Sustainable Economy Act 2011, and the Boost to the Rehabilitation Royal Decree 2011. In relation to urban planning the Toledo Declaration was approved in 2010, the Consolidated Text of the Land Act in 2008 and the Valuation Regulations in 2011.

10. **Tajikistan:** The development of legislation is a basis for reforms in the housing sector. Tajikistan has seen some progress in the development of relevant legislation to improve the housing sector in the following directions: property rights and their registration, privatization of public housing, housing management, planning and construction. The main legislative acts providing the framework for the housing policy and housing normative basis are the following: 1) The Law on Energy Saving, of May 10, 2002. No.29; 2) The Resolution on Procedures for Providing Teachers, Researchers of Educational, Professional Development and Retraining Institutions and Educational Publishers with Free Housing, Water Supply, Electricity and Heating Facilities in Urban and Rural Settlements of the Republic of Tajikistan, of June 13, 1996, No.270; 3) The Housing Code of the Republic of Tajikistan, of December 12, 1997, No.505; 4) The Law on State Registration of Real Estate and Property Rights, of March 20, 1998, No.375; 5) The Land Code of the Republic of Tajikistan, of December 13, 1996, No.326; 6) The Resolution of the RT Government on the Identification of Low-Income Families and Compensations for Energy and Natural Gas Consumption, of August 1, 2008, No.379; 7) The Resolution of the RT Government on the Concept of Social Protection in the Republic of Tajikistan, of December 29, 2006, No.783; 8) The Resolution of the RT Government on the Development of the Construction Complex until 2012, of December 2, 2006, No.518; 9) The Resolution of the RT Government on the Concept of Land Use, of August 31, 2004, No.349; 10) The Resolution of the RT Government on Benefits for Young Teachers, of May 3, 2006, No.197; 11) The Resolution of the RT Government on

Procedures of Interest Free Credits for Civil Servants to Construct Residential Facilities and Improve Housing Conditions, of May 30, 2008, No.272; 12) The Constitutional Law on Local Governments, of May 17, 2004, No.28; 13) The Resolution of the RT Government on Procedures for State Recognition of Housing Facilities, of June 30, 2004, No.280; 14) The Law on Housing Privatization, of November 4, 1995, No.114; 15) The Law on Apartment House Maintenance and Homeowners Associations, of August 5, 2009, No.542; 16) The Law on Investments, of May 12, 2007, No.260; 17) The Law on Home Mortgage, of March 20, 2008, No.364; 18) The Resolution of the RT Government on Housing Privatization and Procedures for Computing the Value of Acquired Housing Facilities, of June 4, 1996, No.226; 19) The Resolution of the RT Council of Ministers on Tariffs for Privatized House Maintenance and Rent Rates for Public House Owners, of February 28, 1994, No.101; 20) The Resolution of the RT Parliament on the National Strategy of Tajikistan Development until 2015, of June 28, 2007, No.704; 21) The Statute of the State Unitary Enterprise “Housing Services and Utilities”, of July 31, 2001, No.357; 22) State Building Requirements and Standards; 23) Statutes and Provisions of Institutional Structures

**11. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia:** A number of legal acts have been developed and approved, including: amendments to the Law on Construction Land which decentralizes management and responsibility for urban construction land to municipalities from the central government and Law on handling illegally constructed buildings and amendments to the law for real estate cadastre. The Government has also developed a study on Illegally Built Objects and Illegal Development and approved 4 Strategies for Management of State Construction Land and Public Assets, Poverty Reduction, Social Inclusion (in housing) and Strategy for Housing.

The plan for implementing the Housing Strategy has been divided into 7 tasks:

- a. To improve the existing legal regulation
- b. To strengthen the institutional capacities in the field of housing
- c. To establish efficient and stimulating system of financing the housing
- d. To encourage the construction of rental apartments
- e. To prompt the buildings of apartments
- f. To legalize those illegal building that satisfy the urban plans
- g. The last task is to revitalize the existing housing capacities.

**12. Ukraine:** 1) Eight laws are in the process of being amended; 2) five government decisions have been adopted; 3) nine orders of the Ministry issued; 4) four research projects were completed and confirmed by the government Research Council.

## **Annex 4. Examples of policies, programmes or projects implemented in housing, urban planning and land management (Q6)**

**1. Armenia:** Within the Statutory Programme on the Regeneration of Areas Destroyed by the 1988 Spitak Earthquake, a complex reconstruction of destroyed settlements is under way in compliance with the existing sanitary and urban development requirements for earthquake resistant construction. The complex reconstruction was launched in 2009 and is planned to be finished in 2013. This programme will solve the housing problems of 6,500 families deprived of homes during the earthquake. The programme includes a demonstration project supported by the UNDP GEF on the construction of several buildings with energy-saving facilities.

**2. Azerbaijan.** State Programmes on Social Housing for Refugees from Armenia and Forced Migrants. State Programme of Regional Development (includes a housing component). State Programme of Baku Suburbs Development (includes a housing component).

**3. Belarus:** Soft lending programmes for affordable housing have decreased since 2012 through the expanded State support for housing construction. The people are stimulated to handle their housing problems with the maximum involvement of their own funds, home mortgage instruments and housing construction savings.

**4. Croatia:** The Ministry for Construction and Physical Planning established a programme on social housing. This programme enables creditworthy citizens who do not have their own houses or apartments to buy a property with the support of the Government and local municipality. In that programme land and utility equipment are financed or donated by local government, and loan conditions are more favourable than those of the market.

Under that programme, during the period from 2001 to 2012 5,500 housing units were built. The Government has also established housing care programme for Homeland War victims, and during the period from 1997 up to the present, 6,138 house units have been built. Third Programme from Croatian Government is the Housing Programme for Returnees, Former Holder of Tenancy Rights, and within operative plans that was provided 4,915 housing units (benchmark for 2009, was 2,070). During the period from 1996 to 2012, the Government organized the refurbishment of 149,000 house units in towns and settlements, which had been destroyed during the Homeland War. These figures of refurbished units include different models of renewed housing units.

**5. Cyprus** - The town planning “amnesty” or “regulation” arises from the proposed amendments of 2009 to the current national legislation concerning the Town and Country Planning Law, the Immovable Property Law, the Sale of Land (Special Execution) Law and the Regulation of Streets and Buildings Law.

The aspiration of the abovementioned amendments, which have been proposed on the basis of five draft bills, is the modernization of the legal framework that regulates the issue of licences for non-permitted expansions/amendments in existing developments, the issue of building permission certificates and, but not limited to, the issue of modernized title deeds. A town-planning amnesty has been proposed in order to provide relief to the buyers from bearing the risk of not being given a completion certificate and title deed, due to some minor irregularities which are usually found to a great extent in already constructed buildings. Minor irregularities might, for example, be parking spaces that not having been designated.

**6. Finland** – The Government introduced a programme to reduce long-term homelessness.



**7. Georgia:** The Law on Recognition of Ownership Rights to Land in Legitimate Possession and Use by Physical Persons or Legal Entities of Private Law provides for the basic principles and conditions for legalizing the ownership rights to such lands. The law identifies two types of land: land in legitimate possession and use, and land occupied without permission.

It also specifies categories of land, which shall not be subject to recognition of ownership rights /legalization. These land parcels include: cattle transfer routes, , recreational zones, lands containing historical, cultural, natural and cult/religious monuments, protected territories, squares, streets, and lands containing reservoirs and hydro-technical buildings. Based on this law, a Presidential Decree has been adopted, which provides for the procedures for recognition of ownership rights, rules of operation of a commission of local self-governmental bodies, its composition and its member's legal capacity.

The Presidential Decree applies only to legalization of buildings or their parts (not land) built without permission or/and which violate the design for those buildings which were built before 2007.

On the basis of the Government resolution, the procedure for granting construction permits and the permit conditions were simplified.

According to national legislation, the registration system is based on the principle of legal unity according to which the real property consists of land (cadastral parcel) together with everything that is permanently attached to the land on the surface of the land. Thus, land and any building located on the land are considered as one property object. The owner of the cadastral parcel is also the owner of the building, which is built on the parcel and vice versa.

Apartments and business premises in multipurpose housing stocks are registered in the manner that each flat is attached to the ideal share of ownership over the whole real property (cadastral parcel). Land in legitimate possession (use) – State-owned agricultural or non-agricultural land parcel with buildings or without them, to which a person's right of legitimate possession had been conferred before enactment of this Law; also land illegally occupied before 1994 and recorded in the Archive of Technical Inventory. Land occupied without permission – State owned agricultural or non-agricultural land parcel with buildings or without them, which has been occupied without permission before enactment of this Law by a physical person, legal entity of private law or other organization determined by law and which are not disposed by the State at the time when ownership right recognition is requested.

**8. Germany** - The KfW promotional programme for energy-efficient construction and refurbishment of residential buildings is one of the most important instruments for energy saving and climate protection in the German building sector. From 2006 to September 2012 more than 2.9 million dwellings were supported with about 112 billion Euros.

**9. Ireland:** Regeneration programmes have been instituted mainly in larger cities. In Limerick city, a major programme is under way to clear former social housing schemes and replace them with a more sustainable model which is best suited to the challenges of the twenty-first century. By this programme, it is hoped to dispel some of the worst aspects of the former developments, including by tackling organized crime which had increased there over the years. Economic renewal of these areas is expected to result in a reduction in unemployment and poverty traps, with a corresponding rise in life quality and community building.

**10. Israel:** The National Clearance and Re-Construction Programme to increase urban densities and raise the standard of housing in dilapidated urban areas was adopted. Urban

renewal according to modern building standards prevents dilapidation of the inner city and its housing stock, improves the urban environment and promotes retrofit for energy efficiency. The socio-economic strength of new residents arrests the crumbling of the inner city social fabric. Building in built areas makes advantageous use of land resources, existing services, infrastructure and institutions, contributes to the preservation of open spaces and helps to raise the level of disaster preparedness –e.g. newer and safer building regulations to mitigate the effects of an earthquake. The primary objective of the government Clearance and Construction programme is to stimulate new massive construction in built urban areas by creating conditions that encourage intensified free-market activity. Real estate transactions are privately funded. Experience has shown that urban revitalization succeeds when the following conditions are in place:

- a. approved building rights enhance the profitability of urban revitalization
- b. residents are the decision makers and the primary beneficiaries
- c. plans adapt existing parcelling and infrastructure in order to expedite individual Clearance and Construction projects.

Local authority initiatives are encouraged as Government policy concentrates on the empowerment of municipalities. Municipalities are responsible for site selection, planning, completion of infrastructures and public institutions and for providing an information network to encourage public participation. Municipalities are also expected to operate public information networks and run public participation activities in accordance with the planning process. The focus is on economically viable sites comprising residential as well as mixed land uses. A Government fund helps municipalities to promote statutory plans for increased building rights at viable sites and to finance a private project manager.

Revenues generated by development fees derived from on-site activities are held in a closed municipal fund to finance on-site infrastructures and public institutions. Private entrepreneurial initiatives provide private funding for preparation & approval of statutory plans for increased building rights. Entrepreneurs are responsible for communication with residents and for drafting agreements with municipalities to finance infrastructures and public institutions. Government and municipal tax incentives for householders and entrepreneurs are in place.

“The objector resident” allows the majority of residents to sue an objector resident - torts suit - for an unreasonable refusal of the “Clearance and Re-Construction” transaction A "Clearance and Re-Construction Assessor" is provided in a new legal proceeding which helps residents to assess whether the proposed transaction is fair and profitable – before they exercise their right to suing in court.

All transactions are transparent requiring full and transparent disclosure on the part of every person who works for the entrepreneur, or is in receipt of fees from the entrepreneur. All residents must receive equal compensation.

**11. Latvia:** Type of activity - EU fund, area of activity - The activity "Thermal insulation Improvement of Multi-Apartment Buildings" available amounts to 62.75 million LAT. The goal of the activity is to improve the energy efficiency of multi-apartment buildings, and to ensure energy efficiency and sustainability of the housing stock. The programme will be available until all funds are spent. After the renovation, thermal energy savings should not be less than 20%.

Apartment owners can be reimbursed for 50% of the total eligible costs. The following costs are supported: technical survey of buildings, energy audit of building, building design, preparation of estimates, construction works (renovation), building inspection and

supervision. Eligible multi-apartment houses can receive funds if: (a) the buildings was placed in service during the period from 1944 until 1993; (b) one owner owns no more than 20% of the apartment; (c) non-residential floor space does not exceed 25% of the total floor space

**12. Lithuania** - The Programme for Modernization of Multi-apartment Buildings. The Government approved the National Housing Strategy on 21 January 2004. One of the goals of the strategy is to ensure efficient use, maintenance, renovation and modernization of the existing housing, and efficient energy use. To accelerate the insulation of multi-apartment houses and the modernization of the energy systems, the Programme for the Modernization of Multi-apartment Houses was approved by Government resolution No. 1213 on 23 September 2004.

The programme's main task was to provide support to home owners of multifamily buildings by introducing energy efficiency measures. The participants in the programme were the apartment owners, the Housing and Urban Development Agency, municipalities, commercial banks, housing-loan-insurance companies, housing administration companies, engineering consultant companies (preparing energy audits and investment proposals), contractors, etc.

In 2010, a financing mechanism (JESSICA) was developed, by which State support would comprise about 30% of the rehabilitation project value from 2011 onwards: 100 % support for technical documentation preparation and expenses for supervision of construction works if D class will be achieved; 15 % support for energy efficiency measures implementation if D class will be achieved; 100 % support for low-income families. JESSICA loan-maturity up to 20 years at fixed annual interest rate of 3 per cent. Under this programme, 500 multi-family houses were completely renovated.

**13. Portugal** - Special Rehousing Programme (PER and PER-families)-specific rehousing programmes, launched in the 1990s. These programmes consisted of rehousing in adequate dwellings households and persons who used to live/residing in slums.

- PROHABITA programme implemented since 2004. This programme finances and grants housing solutions for families/households with housing difficulties; promotes controlled-cost housing, reinforces rehabilitation and provides direct financial support for families to ensure rehousing in situation of natural disasters or catastrophes and emergency situations. The programme allows mainly the Municipalities to build, buy, rehabilitate or rent houses/dwellings.

- RECRIA programme launched in 2000. This rehabilitation programme supports the implementation of upkeep works and the improvement of degraded real estate and dwellings by way of the granting of incentives by the State and by the municipalities.

- SOLARH – programme created in 1999. The programme is intended to finance, in the form of an interest-free loan, the carrying out of works and the improvements to permanent owned housing and vacant housing owned by individual or public entities, including common parts of buildings;
- Doorway 65 – Youth was created in 2007. The programme grants direct subsidies to young people from 18 to 30 years old for accessing the rental housing market.

**14. Republic of Moldova:** In 2007 a project on construction of social housing was launched, financed by the Council of Europe Development Bank. It was finished in 2011, with 4 housing blocks with 249 apartments built in 3 cities.

**15. Romania:** The “First House programme” is a governmental programme aiming to facilitate access to housing (either buying or building a house) for individual persons through loans guaranteed by the State.

**Financing:** The programme ensures the necessary financing for acquiring the first house in privileged conditions thanks to the State guarantee.

**Beneficiaries:** Individual persons who do not own a house (either alone or together with their spouse or other persons) and who do not have another housing mortgage.

**16. Serbia:** The first activity is implementation of the National Social Housing Strategy, which was adopted by the Government in February 2012 the second one is the Project on Local Social Housing Schemes, which will be implemented based on Loan agreement with the Central European Bank. The Building Directorate was charged by the Government with the responsibility for the construction of a residential and office complex on the site Barracks "Stepa Stepanović" Vozdovac in Belgrade (4616 apartments). The concept of spatial development is based on rebuilding the military barrack complex "Stepa Stepanović" as an affordable residential and commercial complex with support facilities. For information, please visit the website of the Building Directorate [www.gds.rs/](http://www.gds.rs/) and the Ministry of Construction and Urbanism [www.mgu.gov.rs/](http://www.mgu.gov.rs/)

**17. Slovenia:** Rent subsidies introduced.

**18. Spain:** Since the beginning of the 20th century (1911), successive housing plans have been developed to facilitate public access to social housing. The current 2009-2012 National Housing and Rehabilitation Plan follows the principles of the 2007 Leipzig Charter and pays attention to marginalized districts with aids to purchase and rent housing and urban renovation, the rehabilitation of existing buildings, the creation of initiatives for renovation and rehabilitation such as the Integrated Rehabilitation Areas (ARIS), Urban Renovation Areas (ARUS) and slum clearance. It also includes rehabilitation and energy efficiency initiatives such as the so-called RENOVE aids. Since the current plan ends in 2012, a new multi-year plan is being prepared that pays special attention to rented housing, a trend with a low percentage in Spain, and the rehabilitation and renovation of districts and buildings.

**19. Switzerland:** Energy saving programme in housing and other buildings. Subsidies constitute 10 %-15 % of the investment costs. The programme is financed by a tax on CO<sub>2</sub>-emissions legislated on the national level and implemented by the cantons.

**20. The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia:** On 22 February 2011 the Law on handling illegally constructed buildings came into force. This law establishes the conditions, the way and procedures for recording and specifying the legal status and sanctions for those that have built illegally. Applications for legalization of illegally built structures could be submitted within a period of 6 months, from 1 March to 30 September 2011. After that date the inspections of the civil engineering became very strict.

The municipalities have been obliged to solve all these applications for a period of five years. The Ministry of Transport is continuously observing the implementation of the law and gives its support for successful realization of the process. Only structures that can be included in the urban planning documentation can be legalized. The Ministry has issued a Rule Book for including the illegally constructed structures within the urban plans.

Law ('Official Gazette of RM' No 23/11). The subject of this law are the illegally built objects on which all construction and installation works had been completed by the day on which this law came into force, and they represent a construction and functional whole.

Determination of the legal status implies the registration of the illegal object in the public book for registering real estate rights and fitting them into the urban-planning documentation, through a procedure that has been determined by this law. The procedure is implemented by the State administration body in charge of spatial management and by the local self-government units. To determine the legal status of an illegally built object, an application is

submitted by the owner to the local self-government unit on whose area the illegal object is built.

**21. Turkey:** An Integrated Urban Development Strategy and Action Plan, a strategy paper which expresses the solution of the problems of urbanization, settlement and planning, was adopted for the period of 2012 - 2023. This is the first strategy paper, which addresses issues of urban development in an integrated way.

**22. Ukraine:** The State Social and Economic Programme on Affordable Housing for 2010-2017. The framework for identifying the main principles of housing policy in state support for people who need to improve their housing conditions is based on the Decree of the President of Ukraine of 8 November 2007 No.1077/2007 On Measures for Construction of Affordable Housing and Improvement of Housing Provision.

The programme acknowledge the construction of affordable housing with State support as a leading policy to secure the constitutional right to housing for the Ukrainian people. Implementation was initiated by the Ukrainian Government.

The resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of 11 November 2009, No.1249 adopted the State Social and Economic Programme on Affordable Housing for 2010-2017, which provides for the development of unified principles of housing provision.

The programme includes new instruments of housing provision for the population, including young families and single young people, through co-financing of housing construction by the State and the people who need to improve their residential conditions. Thus at present two instruments are in operation within the programme: State coverage of 30% of expenses for the construction (acquisition) of affordable housing and easing of mortgage loans to provide affordable housing for people who need to improve their residential conditions. The mechanism of their operation and participation requirements is defined in the resolutions of the Cabinet of Ministers of 11 February 2009, No.140 and of 25 April 2012, No.343. The institution administering public and other funds for programme implementation is the State Specialized Financial Agency “State Fund for the Promotion of Housing Construction for Young People”.

At the present stage of social and economic development of the country, the introduction of the “efficient homeowner” is a key element in the housing reform. The management system based on homeowners’ associations and the definition of the efficient homeowner are stipulated in the Law on the State Programme of the Housing Reform and Development for 2009-2014. At present Ukraine has 14, 651 homeowners’ associations operating in 17,418 apartment houses. The programme provides for the establishment of 45, 530 associations in 2014.