# WPLA- FAO joint webinar series Land administration during the COVID-19 pandemic

## Accelerated Digitalisation: The impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Land Administration sector

The twelfth session of the Working Party on Land Administration

31 May 2021

# Introduction

The workshop explored the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the application of new electronic and digital services in land administration.

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected property markets worldwide and we have experienced a paradigm shift in every part of our lives.

Some of the immediate impacts include accelerated digitalisation of services and processes, transformation of communication and marketing methods and changed travel patterns and routines. It will also have long-lasting effects on people, technologies and governance.

# Case Studies

Case studies were presented by the United Kingdom, the Russian Federation and Croatia, followed by a complementary intervention from Bosnia and Herzegovina and a panel discussion.

Experts in Land Administration and Management were invited to join this discussion to explore what the benefits and opportunities are, if there have been any unintended consequences as a result of accelerated or unplanned digitalisation, how challenges have been overcome and what the longer-term implications might be.

# Benefits and opportunities

## United Kingdom

A market better informed by digital data

Increasingly digital-only processing, providing transparency, efficiency and speed

Digital property information is easier for all to use in the support of private and public sector services and a sustainable future

## Russian Federation

Pre-pandemic 95% of paper applications came through the multifunctional centers. There was an almost complete suspension of the centers' work and the share of electronic services increased

After the restrictions were lifted, the share of electronic services remained high

The share of e-services for real property registration increased by 1.5 and mortgages by 4 times the previous levels

## Croatia

Pre pandemic electronic online elaborates accounted for 70% now averaging around 80%

Introduced digital ID signatures

online applications rose from 22% to 51% - that percentage appears to have been sustained

Greater acceptance of the Professional bodies and public to use of electronic services

## Bosnia and Herzegovina

Due to pandemic many previously analogue transitions between government departments have now been converted to electronic systems

More data is now available to the public online

## Serbia

Other government bodies during the pandemic realised the importance of access to data and so became more co-operative in providing data for their projects

The crisis helped focus on the new Geo data portal and encouraged ideas from other departments and users as to how it worked

# Outcomes

## United Kingdom

Electronic signatures version 1: witnessed electronic signatures

Electronic signatures version 2: qualified electronic signatures

Digital identity checking

## Russian Federation

Creation of partnership with mortgage companies to use electronic mortgages

AI system to speed up and reduce the complexity of creating digital copies of archived docs

Expect to complete the digital transformation by 2023

## Croatia

Introduced eCase - Allows LR to communicate directly with court department over land issues

Electronic services set up allowed LR staff to work from home and there was not as much disruption to services

Developing an eReconstruction application - to be used in areas hit by the earthquake to help supply information to those affected and help rebuild their homes

## Bosnia and Herzegovina

Improved the communication electronically between the two arms of their Land Registry

Improved electronic storage

Accelerated the conversion of paper to digital storage of data

## Serbia

New online payment introduced allowing the public to order data online

Website was improved, providing greater variety of services and data offered

Some forms were made available online

Established new online services with other government ministers to supply data to them

# Challenges and Learning

## United Kingdom

Working together across the property market is key to improving the home buying and selling process

Work needed real pace in 2020 but had to be balanced against providing digital services in a safe and secured way

Applying digital identity checking technology used in other sectors

## Russian Federation

Many elderly had very poor knowledge of the internet and electronic applications – training sessions created

Approached top international Land Registries for help and advice – will maintain closer relations in future

Survey of property owners / professional bodies and state bodies to see what was wrong with the services and what they wanted to see – identified 120 pain points

## Croatia

During the pandemic the country was hit by a massive earthquake

The technological framework allowed the LR to function despite the pandemic

The pandemic raised public awareness of electronic systems and their importance

Will continue to digitise LR operations for great efficiency, safeguards and transparency

## Bosnia and Herzegovina

Many of the electronic systems did not talk to each other

Many inter government transactions were done by paper

Few government functions are online - Introduced digital platform for the public to access systems

## Serbia

Some systems were already online - had a program of electronic advancement in place

Needed to enable remote access for staff - Introduced shift work to cover technical cover

Jurisdictive issues over electronic signatures

# Next steps

Would you like to attend more webinars on the topic of accelerating digitisation?

How else can we share experiences to help each other?