

Roundtable III: UNECE - REM

Topic: **Housing affordability, energy efficiency and Health, Policy Challenges: The applicable regulations in cities and regions**

Date: Friday 1st September 2023, 14.30-16.30pm

Moderator: Albert Saiz, MIT

Panelists:

1. Doris Andoni – Chair of Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management, UNECE Housing and Land Management Secretariat.
2. Vahid Khatami – Secretary to the Working Party on Land Administration, UNECE
3. Paloma Taltavull – Chair of Real Estates Market Advisory Group (REM)
4. Kat Grimsley – REM Vice-Chair
5. Helena Beunza – URBHE
6. Raúl Garcia-Rodriguez – REM member

A. INTRODUCTIONS – 30 minutes

1) Chair: introduces session and asks panelists to each briefly introduce themselves

2) For Doris:

As current Chair of the UN's Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management (CUDHLM), could you please briefly share the mission of the Committee and tell us why this work is so important in the context of housing affordability?

3) For Paloma:

As Chair of the Real Estate Markets Advisory Group – known as REM, could you please give us some examples of the reports and research undertaken by REM and how they can be used to help stakeholders at city and national levels?

4) For Vahid:

As Secretary to the Working Party on Land Administration, how do you see the different Member States engaging in knowledge sharing around affordable housing?

B. DISCUSSION of DRIVERS (causes affordability challenges) – 30 minutes

(6 people x 2 mins each response + buffer = 15 mins.... 2 questions)

5) What have you seen as the main contributing factors leading to affordability challenges in your different jurisdictions or geographic work areas?

6) What connections do you see between energy efficiency and affordability in the housing market?

C. POLICY RECOMENDATIONS and INTERVENTIONS – 30 minutes

(more detailed responses, ~5 mins each)

7) Please tell us about recent housing projects you have worked on and how findings from these reports can be used to support policy changes?

- Doris – Country Profile Albania
- Paloma – REM report overview
- Kat – #Housing2030
- Helena – Affordability Challenges in Spain
- Vahid – no slides
- Raúl – no slides
- Albert comments

D. FINAL REMARKS – 25 minutes

8) For each panelist to answer in turn:

In closing, what one thing would you like us to take away from today's discussion?

(6 people x 2-3 mins each response + buffer = 20 mins)

Additional potential questions at the end (depending on time and response from public)

Topic: Private participation

What do you think about attracting private capital/investors for the development of affordable housing schemes, is it doable, necessary, advisable? What would be the drivers for private investors to enter? and the risks of having them in the capital mix? Is it really an investment class?

Topic: National versus municipal action

When thinking about housing policies we oftentimes focus our attention on national laws and programs. What do you think should be the role of the local government? What kinds of resources do municipalities need to be more active in affordable housing? How can we achieve better coordination between national and municipal governments on this issue?

Topic: Demand-side versus supply-side policies

Demand-side policies provide subsidies to buyers or renters (which they can often use wherever they want), whereas supply-side ones provide assistance to developers or develop the buildings directly (the emphasis tends to be on a specific neighborhood). Do you have a preference? Are they incompatible? If not, how can we combine them to improve outcomes?

Topic: Housing affordability versus poverty

Housing prices and rents have clearly gone up fast in the past two decades. However, part of the problems with affordability are driven by relative poverty and increased inequality. Is housing policy the best way to address poverty? How do housing policy/programs interface with other tax, social security, or redistributive programs? Is there a good coordination between the different social programs—including housing?

9) Summary and closing by Chair