



**Economic and Social  
Council**

Distr.  
GENERAL

HBP/2000/6  
10 July 2000

ORIGINAL : ENGLISH

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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

Item 6 of the provisional agenda  
for the sixty-first session  
(Geneva, 18 and 20 September 2000)

DRAFT PROGRAMME OF WORK

Introduction

1. The present note provides information to assist the Committee in discussing and establishing its programme of work, the duration of each activity, as well as its methods of work. The Committee's Bureau met twice between the sixtieth and sixty-first sessions of the Committee to review the programme of work and its implementation.
2. The draft revised programme of work is set out in annex I. Each programme element has a fixed duration. When discussing its programme of work, the Committee should keep in mind that the programme should reflect the real interests of member countries and their willingness to contribute to its implementation in terms of expertise, human and financial resources.
3. At its fifty-fourth session, the Commission endorsed the new system of prioritization of work programmes for each of its Principal Subsidiary Bodies as proposed by the Group of Experts (E/1999/37-E/ECE/1374, para. 27). The Bureau of the Committee has considered the issue and prepared a draft programme (annex II) for discussion and agreement by the Committee.

4. At the Committee's session, the secretariat will report on the Human Settlements Trust Fund's expenditures and balance in 2000. It is important to stress that without the Trust Fund the Committee would not have been able to carry out its programme of work. However, the Trust Fund needs to be maintained at a level that allows the Committee to fulfil its task. It is, therefore, important that countries should make either general contributions to the Trust Fund or specific contributions to earmarked programme elements.

5. A tentative list of meetings is presented in annex III.

Proposed decisions by the Committee

6. In the light of the discussion, the Committee may wish to:

(a) Take note of the progress made in the implementation of the programme of work;

(b) Update and approve its programme of work, as presented in annex I and in the light of the challenges specified in the Strategy;

(c) Adopt the prioritization pro forma, as presented in annex II;

(d) Call upon Governments to make either general contributions to the Human Settlements Trust Fund, or specific contributions to earmarked programme elements.

Annex I

DRAFT PROGRAMME OF WORK

SUBPROGRAMME 10 - HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

10.1.1 Country profiles on the housing sector

Description: The housing sector has a critical role to play in ensuring the success of economic and social development in the ECE region and the reform process in countries in transition. At the same time, the process of transition to a market economy has had a profound impact on housing policy implementation and management. This project represents a tool for Governments to analyse their housing policies, strategies, institutional and financial frameworks for the housing sector and to compare the progress made internationally. The country profile is a process-oriented exercise. At its core is an analytical study on the housing sector, drafted by independent international experts. It draws on the Committee's work on housing and building statistics. Recommendations for improving policies and practices are an essential part of the programme. It also aims to provide information to potential investors.

Work accomplished: The country profiles on the housing sector of Bulgaria, Poland, Slovakia and Lithuania have been published. A roster of international experts was established.\* The international team of experts for the study on the housing sector of Romania undertook two missions in May and July 2000. The country profile project is presented on the Web site (<http://www.unece.org/env/hs/cph>).

Work to be undertaken: The Committee will continue activities for the preparation of country profiles on the housing sector. In the autumn, work will start on a sixth study. A fact-finding mission by an international team of experts for the next study is planned for January 2001. Possibilities for holding further workshops or ad hoc meetings of experts to discuss the results of project implementation and disseminating the experience in ECE countries will be explored. A follow-up programme for the studies undertaken will be tested. Cooperation with Habitat, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the European Union and the World Bank will be maintained and strengthened.

Duration: 2000 - 2003.

10.1.2 Improvement of urban environmental performance

Description: Local systems and cities are efficient starting points for promoting sustainable consumption patterns. Numerous initiatives have already been launched in cities and towns to raise public awareness of the

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\* A workshop on housing finance was held in Romania (January 2000) to prepare for the country profile.

environmental impact of individual consumption behaviour, to promote environmentally sound goods, services and sustainable use of energy, water, raw materials and land by individuals and communities. It is recognized that environmentally sound urban and regional transport coordinated with sustainable land use and planning at the central, regional and local levels may lead to a substantial reduction in the impact on human health, natural resources and the environment, while improving the quality of life and economic performance. Integration of land use and local transport policies requires integrated thinking and action across all policy areas and at all levels of decision-making.

Work accomplished: In cooperation with the Committee on Environmental Policy, a workshop on encouraging local initiatives towards sustainable consumption patterns was held in Vienna in February 1998. As a follow-up, a joint steering group on urban transport patterns and land-use planning was established. At its first meeting, held in Lyons (France), the steering group prepared a detailed work programme (HBP/2000/8).

Work to be undertaken: A workshop will be organized in 2001 jointly with the ECE Committee on Environmental Policy. The workshop will address practical experience in the environmentally sound management of urban transport integrated with sustainable land-use planning. Based on the workshop's results, guidelines for governments will be prepared for submission to a joint meeting of the Bureaux of both Committees, and then, if agreed, to the Fifth Ministerial Conference ~~A~~Environment for Europe@.

Duration: 2000 - 2002.

#### 10.1.3 Land registration and land markets

Description: Proper land registration is crucial for security of tenure and property rights, effective housing policies and the promotion of market-oriented reforms in economies in transition, as well as in the context of European integration. The activity is aimed at providing assistance to countries in transition in reforming cadastre and land registration systems and sharing information and experience of modernizing land administration systems in the developed market economies through education and training; research and development; exchange of experience; transfer of technology; and standardization.

Work accomplished: The inventory of land administration systems in Europe and North America was published in 1999 and the study on key aspects of land registration and cadastre legislation was prepared and published with the assistance of HM Land Registry (United Kingdom). Three workshops were held: on modern cadastre (Bonn, Germany, in March 1999); on land registration (London, September 1999) and on public/private sector relationships in the establishment of land registration systems (Tirana, March 2000).

Work to be undertaken: The Working Party on Land Administration will promote the practical application of the ECE Land Administration Guidelines (ECE/HBP/96) in countries in transition, inter alia, through different types

of operational activities in these countries. As a joint activity with UNDP, it is envisaged that in 2000 a team of international experts will visit Armenia to evaluate its land administration reform. A survey of the current structure of landownership and the existing legislation to restrict/limit the sale of property in ECE countries will be prepared. A workshop on safety mechanisms in the creation of real property markets will be organized in Madrid (Spain) on 28-29 September 2000. In 2001, workshops are planned in Sweden and Armenia. The second session of Working Party on Land Administration will take place in Geneva on 19-20 November 2001.

Duration: 2000 - 2002.

#### 10.1.4 Housing modernization and management

Description: This activity provides an opportunity to look in detail at urban regeneration policies and at the existing and emerging housing problems, especially regarding the existing housing stock and its management. As a result of the privatization process in countries in transition, the proportion of owner-occupied dwellings in multi-family housing has increased considerably. It is therefore important to establish property rights, define mixed ownership forms, and analyse legal conditions of condominiums, their organizational and management frameworks.

Work accomplished: A meeting on public/private partnership in human settlements development was organized in Manchester (United Kingdom) on 6-7 November 1999. A workshop on urban renewal and housing modernization took place in Prague on 14-17 June 2000.

Work to be undertaken: A task force and a reference group will be established to prepare practical guidelines on housing condominiums to address the major aspects in the public/private sectors in economies in transition.

Duration: 2000 - 2002.

#### 10.1.5 Development of human settlements statistics

Description: The Committee, together with the Conference of European Statisticians, develops and improves international human settlements statistics, and publishes the Bulletin of Housing and Building Statistics for Europe and North America every two years.

Work accomplished: The Annual Bulletin of Housing and Building Statistics for Europe and North America was published in 2000. The human settlements statistics Web site (<http://www.unece.org/env/hs/bulletin/>) has been in operation since 1999.

Work to be undertaken: The Committee will prepare the next issue of the Bulletin of Housing and Building Statistics for Europe and North America to be published in 2002. Meanwhile, annual statistics gathered through the questionnaire will be posted on the Web site. The Committee and its Bureau

will consider possibilities for setting up a database on housing indicators for the ECE region.

Duration: 2000 - 2003.

10.1.6 Major trends characterizing human settlements development

Description: The development of human settlements encompasses a wide range of changes and trends which are not always compatible with the principles of sustainability. More knowledge of the forces influencing the configuration of urban development and the characteristics of the implementation of urban policies will be provided by studying major trends characterizing human settlements development and presenting national experiences in formulating and implementing policies for a more sustainable development of human settlements.

Work accomplished: The study on Major Trends Characterizing Human Settlements Development (ECE/HBP/108) was published as a result of work carried out by two task forces. The study served as a background paper to the Eighth Conference on Urban and Regional Planning. An abstract of the study was prepared to assist the participants in the preparation of their response papers for the Conference. The Eighth Conference was held in Madrid from 8 to 11 June 1998. Another study on Human Settlements Trends in Central and Eastern Europe was prepared and published in October 1997 (ECE/HBP/105). A team of experts visited Kyrgyzstan in July 1999 and prepared a country review A Sustainable Development and Human Settlements - Overview and Recommended Actions (HBP/2000/2) to assist the Government of Kyrgyzstan in the implementation of its human development strategies.

Work to be undertaken: Both above-mentioned publications will be revised every five years in a single volume. A research conference will be organized in the United Kingdom in 2002. The Committee will continue the exchange of experience in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda.

Duration: 2000 - 2002.

Annex II

DRAFT

PRIORITIZATION PRO FORMA ECE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

Explanatory note:

In recent years, the Committee on Human Settlements has demonstrated its ability to streamline its programme of work (10 programme elements in 1995 and 6 programme elements in 2000), its methods of work (the Committee was the Commission's first Principal Subsidiary Body to introduce the workshop programme and adopt the related guidelines). In response to the Commission's decision, it took initiative, adopted and applied a new form of cooperation with the business community and local governments by establishing an Advisory Network on Housing and Urban Management in 1998. The Committee has prepared the ECE Strategy for Sustainable Quality of Life in Human Settlements in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. It is envisaged that the Strategy will offer guidance for the Committee to structure and continuously adapt its programme of work for the first 5-10 years of the new millennium.

The Committee's activities are of considerable importance for all ECE countries. It is essential that the experience of democratic societies in sustainable development, real property rights, local governments and democratic values should be introduced in all parts of the ECE region.

SECTION 1: PRIORITIZATION

No.	Programme elements and activities	Priority level (H, M, L)	Regular budget Professional staff
1	Country profiles on the housing sector	H	0.9
2	Improvement of urban environmental performance	H	0.3
3	Land registration and land markets	H	0.6
4	Housing modernization and Management	H	0.3
5	Development of human settlements statistics	L	0.1
6	Major trends characterizing human settlements development	M	0.1

SECTION 2: ACTIVITY OPTIONS

A. With the addition of one extra staff member (three instead of two)

The Committee would be in a position to promote more effectively better living conditions in the ECE region, through democratic governance, strong public participation, security of real property rights, as defined in the ECE

Strategy for Sustainable Quality of Life in Human Settlements in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and the Ministerial Declaration.

It would be possible, inter alia, to:

(a) Carry out two country profiles of the housing sector per year (instead of only one); or

(b) Intensify land administration activities and establish a new organizational set-up for cooperation with the World Bank, EU and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) on these issues.

B. With the reduction of one staff member (one instead of two)

It would be impractical for the Committee to implement the tasks defined in its mandate and within its competence.



Annex III

TENTATIVE LIST OF MEETINGS<sub>\*/</sub>

Meetings

17-19 September 2001	Geneva	Sixty-second session of the Committee on Human Settlements
19-20 November 2001	Geneva	Second session of the Working Party on Land Administration

<sub>\*/</sub> Bureau meetings, task force meetings and other informal consultations are not listed.