



**HOUSING FORUM**  
EUROPE & CENTRAL ASIA



## A vision for housing in Europe and Central Asia

April 4-6, 2011  
Budapest, Hungary

### OVERVIEW

The past few years have demonstrated just how central housing is to our economic, environmental and human development.

For the first time, housing decision makers, professionals, policy makers and other major stakeholders are aiming to “build” a more sustainable and resilient housing future for the Europe and Central Asia region. This first housing forum aims to provide an opportunity for sharing best practices, learning and tackling the key housing issues we face today.

Three days packed with high-quality speakers, presentations, workshops and roundtable discussions on key issues—the economic crisis, the environment, development, vulnerable populations, disaster prevention—will help us create an evidence-based agenda for promoting and achieving a

vision for a sustainable housing sector in this region for future generations.

**Attendance is limited to 200 participants!**

### FORUM HIGHLIGHTS

- Presentations of research papers or case studies.
- Panel discussions and roundtables.
- Showcases of innovative projects and initiatives.
- Workshops.

### WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

If you are concerned about providing housing solutions, you cannot afford to miss the Europe and Central Asia Housing Forum 2011.

The forum will be of interest to both decision-makers and housing-sector professionals in Europe and Central Asia.

## TRACKS & THEMES

### A) Housing: A political agenda

This track looks at the political aspects of housing and how housing rights, policies and governance are crucial to a well-functioning housing sector. Activities within this track will draw on examples of regulation, housing rights, good governance, education, housing tenure, social and affordable housing, security, housing administration and management, urban planning, and gender and youth inclusion to identify a broad agenda for housing.

### B) Housing vulnerabilities

This track focuses on addressing existing physical and environmental housing challenges in order to build more resilient homes and cities for all:

- Housing Condominiums: Upgrading, maintenance, winterization, energy efficiency and replacement.
- Natural disasters: Preparedness, response and recovery, coordination and protocols.
- Aging populations and migration from rural areas.
- Lack of social and affordable housing (especially for young people).
- Sustainable relief and reconstruction.

### C) Housing beyond the crises

This track focuses on sharing successful, scalable and sustainable models for housing finance solutions to the current economic, financial and environmental crises. Cases may relate to energy efficiency and innovative financing, housing and mortgage finance, housing microfinance, housing guarantees, social and affordable housing, land tenure, technology, production and distribution, community participation and empowerment, renewable energy, green jobs, and climate change.

### D) Housing and human development

This track will explore the links between housing and reducing poverty. We will explore scalable housing models in relation to development, inclusion, health, education, gender, spatial segregation/isolation, combating fuel poverty, renewable energy, job creation and other human development benefits of housing, including “co-benefits.”

[www.ecahousingforum.eu](http://www.ecahousingforum.eu)



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### RATIONALE

The past few years have highlighted just how central housing is to our economic, environmental and human development in the Europe and Central Asia region. Housing is central to many aspects of our lives: our education, security, health, environment, employment, communities, even our identity.

While the housing sector continues to feel the impacts of the recent financial, economic and political crises, some countries and actors are finding new and innovative solutions.

The challenges are complex and include the environment, the reduction of poverty and exclusion, an aging population, a lack of affordable housing for the next generation, ineffective financial regulation and practices, outdated and dilapidated housing stock, vulnerable populations, natural and civil disaster response and prevention, financing, and the fact that housing accounts for more than 30 percent of energy consumption in the Europe and Central Asia region.

There are also numerous and increasing barriers to entry to both the private and social housing markets, especially for the more vulnerable in our societies. And there is a need to build and improve homes so that they reach decent standards in tenure, adequate living space and durable construction, and so that they have affordable access to water, sanitation and energy. Such challenges are often only compounded by structural conditions specific to post-communist economic and social transition countries, such as the denationalisation and privatisation of housing, the phasing-out or abandonment of social housing models, the underdevelopment of housing finance, and the banking sector more generally. But, as the world's attention turns from an economic and financial crisis to an environmental one, the issue of housing, while highly politicized, remains fragmented and generally low on the regional developmental agendas.

Many organisations and agencies are promoting decent housing in Europe and Central Asia. These organisations are developing specific expertise and capacity in the creation of models and solutions for housing, including from the policy, financial and technical perspectives. Several key stakeholders in the housing field are organising large-scale events to raise awareness about the links and overlaps between such global issues and decent housing. Despite significant areas of overlap, however, there is no common approach to housing in the Europe and Central Asia region.

Globally, urbanization and population growth both continue at an alarming pace, with the world population set to grow to 9 billion by 2050. The majority of the world's population is now living in cities. Despite the efforts of many and the Millennium Development Goals, this is changing social patterns and exacerbating demand for decent housing, resulting in increasing poverty and civil unrest and adding to the burden on the environment. The impacts of climate change, including climate-related disasters, mitigation policies, desertification and the risk of rising sea levels, are important impacts on human settlement. While the issues in the Europe and Central Asia region are different, the impact of these global changes is profound and not limited to increasing demands on immigration both within and into Europe.

The time has come, therefore, for the key decision makers and stakeholders in the housing field to cooperate to build a sustainable and resilient future for all, and to bring the issue of decent housing to the forefront of the agenda in the Europe and Central Asia region. Through the first Europe and Central Asia Housing Forum, the partners wish to explore opportunities for the development of a coordinated vision for the housing sector in the region. Such a vision will take into account the core competencies of the different stakeholders in the Europe and Central Asia housing field, as well as key policy opportunities presenting themselves to the sector both now and in the immediate future.

**In partnership with:**



More information  
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