



'TWO YEARS LATER'

IMPROVEMENT OF COORDINATION BETWEEN DIFFERENT STAKEHOLDERS IN THE MANAGEMENT AND RENOVATION OF CONDOMINIUM BUILDINGS

National Round Table
Sofia, 30 November 2007

Final Communiqué

Introduction

The problem of management and renovation of condominium buildings and regeneration of housing estates is extremely important and typical for the biggest majority of Eastern European countries. Therefore, the European Commission has taken the decision to create the opportunity to open and utilize the structural funds for the renovation of existing housing in those countries.

An International Seminar with the decisive support of the Bulgarian Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands has taken place in November 2005 on the issues of the role of homeowners' associations in the process of housing renovation. Tailor made approaches have been launched as well as the creation of specialized national organization that was dedicated to represent the interests of the homeowners in condominium housing buildings. In spring 2006 the Union of Homeowners' Associations (CAC) has been established in order to unite the existing homeowners' associations as well as initiative groups of homeowners willing to start activities on the energy efficient renovation and management of their multistory housing buildings.

The Union of Homeowners' Associations (CAC) has organized its first annual National Round Table 'Two years later' on 30 November 2007 in Sofia. The event has been dedicated to the current development of all ongoing activities on the energy efficient renovation and management of condominium buildings as well as on the urban regeneration of the housing estates during the last two years after the International Seminar in 2005. Representatives of the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works, the Ministry of Finance, the Energy Efficiency Agency, the local government in Bulgaria, the National Association of Municipalities in Republic of Bulgaria, housing organizations from the Netherlands and Germany, Bulgarian nongovernmental and branch organizations, international financing institutions as well as homeowners' associations have participated in the event.

The National Round Table 'Two years later' has discussed the ways to improve the coordination and cooperation between different stakeholders in the process of decision taking in regard to the management and renovation of existing condominiums in order to meet the challenges of the efficient implementation of the National Housing Renovation Program and the realization of operation 'Housing Policy' of the first priority in the Operative Program 'Regional Development 2007-2013' of the Bulgarian Government. The annual event of the Union of Homeowners' Associations (CAC) has been in accordance with the mission of the organization to support the creation and successful operating of the homeowners' associations as active subjects of the energy efficient housing management and renovation as well as with the ambition of CAC to support the sustainable community based approach to the urban regeneration of housing estates in order to achieve contemporary standards of the living environment in Bulgarian cities.

After the discussion with representatives of the central and local government in Bulgaria, the financing programs and institutions as well as the nongovernmental sector the participants have made the following

Conclusions and Recommendations

1. The well being of cities is of general public interest. Therefore municipalities must be provided with sufficient legal and financial instruments to stimulate, steer and enforce urban regeneration activities.
2. Municipalities will not be able to get sufficient control over urban regeneration processes if no social rental sector is developed for those who cannot bear the financial burdens of homeownership. The establishment of social housing organizations, as proposed in the draft housing law, could be a solution.
3. Management, maintenance and renovation of the owner occupied housing stock are the primary obligation of the home owners. Municipalities could and should take a supportive role by setting up local support centers where homeowners and there organizations can get informed and supported.
4. There is an urgent need to create properly working and sustainable legal and financial forms and models for the stimulation of the initiative of the homeowners and their associations to take their responsibilities as active subjects of the renovation of the existing condominium buildings.
5. The central government as regulator and the local authorities as coordinators have to speed up and facilitate the incorporation of the motivated homeowners and their associations to take an active participation in the implementation of the National Housing Renovation Program of Republic of Bulgaria as well as of the operation 'Housing Policy' of the Operative Program 'Regional Development 2007-2013' of the Bulgarian Government.
6. The Union of Homeowners' Associations in Bulgaria has to coordinate the efforts of the homeowners' associations in their active inclusion in the process of housing renovation of existing condominium stock as well as in the urban regeneration of housing estates in order to achieve contemporary standards of the living environment in Bulgarian cities.