

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

Report of the Meeting of the Bureau of the Working Party on Land Administration (WPLA)

*4 September 2020
10:00 – 12:00 (CET)
WebEx*

Attendance:

Mr. Fredrik Zetterquist (Sweden), Chair
Ms. Kirsikka Riekkinen (Finland), Vice-chair
Ms. Mari Khardziani (Georgia)
Ms. Chryssy Potsiou, (Greece), Vice-chair
Ms. Elena Busch (Norway)
Mr. Konstantin Litvintcev (Russian Federation)
Ms. Elena Martynova (Russian Federation, observer)

UNECE Secretariat

Ms. Maike Salize

Item 1: Opening and adoption of the agenda

1.1 The Chair of the Working Party, Mr. Fredrik Zetterquist, opened the meeting and invited the Bureau to make any amendments to the previous Bureau meeting minutes and then to the agenda. Some factual corrections were requested by Ms. Mari Khardziani (Georgia) on item 2.1. The Chair asked the secretariat to reflect these changes and to circulate the revised final minutes. The Bureau adopted the agenda.

Item 2: Scenario Study on Future Land Administration

2.1 During a “tour de table”, the Bureau provided comments on the draft Scenario Study on Future Land Administration. The Bureau expressed its appreciation of the draft document and noted that it provides a common ground for WPLA focal points to enter into a strategic discussion on future land administration.

During the tour the table, the Bureau noted that, as regards the **four proposed scenarios for future land administration**, (i) providing more detailed descriptions of the implications of each single scenario, including examples for each scenario, could be useful as to enhance their understanding; (ii) exploring the option of adding context to the scenarios to allow for better comparison. This could be particularly useful for the fourth and considered most “visionary” scenario; (iii) more illustrations could be included to visualize the scenarios;

(iv) complementing the description of the scenarios with information from the UN-GGIM geospatial trends report; and (v) exploring how COVID-19 as disruptive change could be reflected in the scenario study.

Concerning the **self-assessment questionnaire**, the Bureau agreed that this should be an instrument for regular assessment to be used by WPLA as basis for a continuous dialogue with countries. It further noted in this regard (i) the importance of being able to compare responses to the questionnaire within a country over time. To facilitate this, an option would be to turn the self-assessment questionnaire into closed questions/multiple choice instead of descriptive/open questions; (ii) the need to regularly update the questions in the self-assessment tool and/or the scenarios (e.g. every 5-10 years) in order to remain relevant.

The Bureau agreed to review draft report in the light of the discussion and to submit the updated document as information document to the Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management. The Committee is invited to acknowledge this interim report at its eighty-first session (Geneva, 6-8 October 2020)¹.

The Bureau further agreed that the draft Scenario Study, and in particular the proposed four scenarios and the self-assessment questionnaire, should be consulted with member States during the 12th session. For the planning of the 12th session sufficient timing should thus be allocated for this agenda item.

Item 3: Programme of Work 2018-2019, Programme of Work 2020-2021 and including the work of Task Groups and status on actions

COVID-19 and WPLA contribution to post COVID-19 recovery

3.1 The Bureau continued its elaborations on observed COVID-19 impacts on the land sector and possible responses from WPLA. Mr. Konstantin Litvintcev proposed to organize a series of webinars to exchange experience of Land Administration experts on COVID-19. The Bureau agreed to consider this proposal in context of the preparations for the 12th session at the next meeting.

Capacity-building and international knowledge sharing:

3.2 Ms. Kirsikka Riekkinen informed the Bureau about a joint session of WPLA and FIG-Commission 7 on PPP in Land Administration during the FIG-Commission 7 Online Annual Meeting 2020 “Building community resilience: urban-rural linkages and strategies to deal with COVID-19” (20-22 October).

3.3 The Chair reported that planning for the workshop in Sweden in spring 2021 (tentatively late February/beginning of March 2021) on Education for Land Administration, including online education, is on-going.

¹ The revised and edited draft is available online from:

<https://www.unece.org/housing/cudhlm81.html>

Land administration reviews:

3.4 The next Country profile on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management will be for Albania. An inter-ministerial steering group has been set up. However, due to the uncertain situation the planning for travel to Albania has been delayed to spring 2021. A call for experts to contribute to the review of land related issues is still open. Bureau members interested to contribute to the CP are requested to contact the secretariat as soon as possible.

Review and update of the 2005 publication “Land Administration in the UNECE region: Development, Trends, and main principles”:

3.5 The Bureau discussed and agreed on the proposal by the Chair to not update this publication as other guidelines and reference frameworks with global reach have been developed since 2005, namely the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (IGIF) and the recently finalized Framework for Effective Land Administration (FELA). Instead, WPLA would explore the option of supporting implementation of these international frameworks, e.g. through the scenario study on future land administration and a related event at the 12th session.

Task Groups: Discussions on activities for the task groups for the Programme of Work 2020-2021

3.6 Informal settlements: Ms. Chryssy Potsiou reported that 140 participants had joined the webinar on 17 June where the Guidelines on the formalization of informal constructions were launched. In addition, she informed the Bureau about a recently approved project on the development of a Post COVID-19 Recovery Action Plan for Informal Settlements in the UNECE region.

3.7 Scenarios for future land administration and management: The draft report presenting the scenarios had been shared with the Bureau for review and approval before submitting it to the Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management for approval at its eighty-first session (6-8 October 2020). The Bureau welcomed the draft and provided comments during the tour de table under item 2.1 above.

3.8 On Prindex, Ms. Chryssy Potsiou reported that the Prindex group had launched its global report. About 1,000 replies per country had been received through interviews with property owners and tenants report launch. Prindex approached WPLA to support country analyses in Finland and Turkey where results indicated the highest/lowest perception of tenure security in the ECE region. Ms. Kirsikka Riekkinen expressed interest in contributing. The secretariat had shared some recommendations for Turkish experts to involve in the study with the Prindex group.

3.9 Concerning the preparations for a study on PPPs for Land Administration, Ms. Kirsikka Riekkinen reported that the questionnaire on PPPs in LA had been disseminated and 22 responses received. It was planned to present the results during the FIG Commission 7 Annual meeting on 21 October.

Item 4: The 12th Session of the WPLA

- 4.1 The secretariat updated the Bureau on the possible dates and venue for the 12th session of the WPLA in 2021. The Bureau agreed to hold the 12th session on 31 May and 1 June 2021 and accepted the offer of the Government of Malta to host the session.
- 4.2 The Bureau agreed that the theme of the 12th session should focus on the scenarios for future land administration and the effects of COVID-19 on the land sector, including acceleration of digitalization and expansion of e-services, blockchain and electronic IDs, as well as PPPs.

Item 5: Upcoming events and WPLA participation

- 5.1 List of events:
 - CANCELLED: 7-11 September 2020 – Fourth Regional workshop on IGIF to be held in Issyk-Kul, Kyrgyzstan
 - 5 October 2020 - SDG11 Day – Geneva
 - 6 October 2020 - Forum of Mayors – Geneva and online
 - 7-8 October 2020 - 81st Session of the UNECE Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management – Geneva and online
 - 20-22 October 2020 – Online Annual Meeting 2020 “Building community resilience: urban-rural linkages and strategies to deal with COVID-19”, FIG-Commission 7
 - End of February / early March 2021 - Workshop on education on land administration - Sweden
 - 31 May and 1 June 2021 - WPLA 12th Session – Malta
 - Proposal from Canada to invite WPLA for joint workshop during the week of May 8th, 2023. This event would replace the cancelled event in May this year

Item 6: Next Bureau meeting

- 6.1 The next bureau meeting will be held by WebEx and the secretariat will send out a poll to decide on the date.