



National Technical University of Athens
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***INFORMAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE
EUROPEAN REGION AND THE ROLE OF LAND
ADMINISTRATION***

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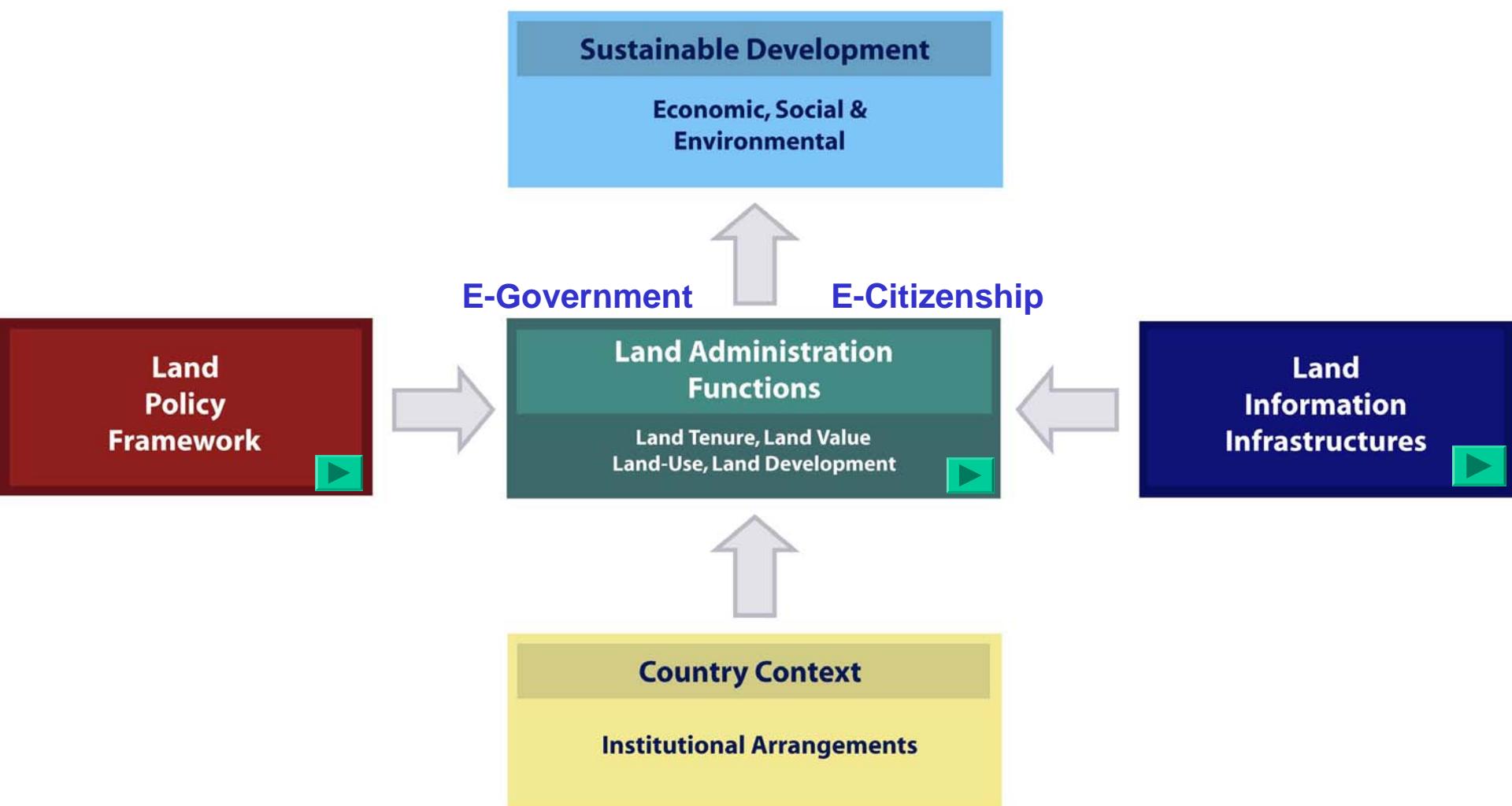
UNECE WPLA Workshop on “Influence of Land Administration on People and Business”, 2-3 October 2008, Cavtat, Croatia

RAPID POPULATION INCREASES OFTEN LEAD TO UNPLANNED OR INFORMAL DEVELOPMENT

- 50% of the world's population lives in the cities. City centers often attract those looking for employment, education and better living conditions. Much of the world's current urban expansion is caused by the poor migrating in unprecedented numbers. This situation is found in low- or middle- income areas and results in an overwhelming capacity in certain places.
- 1 of every 3 city residents lives in inadequate housing with few or no basic services, like fresh water sanitation or security. The world's slum population is expected to reach 1.4 billion by 2020. People seem to prefer to live in urban squalor to rural hopelessness.
- It is a matter of human rights that people are free to choose where they will live; however it is a matter of good governance to achieve sustainable urban growth.

- Why do surveyors and land administrators care?
- How are they involved?
- What is their role?

The land management paradigm (Prof Stig Enemark)



Sound land Management is the operational process of implementing land policies in comprehensive and sustainable ways

Land policy is part of the national policy on promoting:

- Economic development
- Social justice and equity
- Political stability

Land policies may be associated with:

- Security of tenure
- Land markets – land transactions & access to credit
- Real property taxation
- Sustainable management and control of land use
- Provision of land for the poor, minorities and women
- Measures to prevent land speculation and to manage land disputes



Land Administration Functions

(Prof Stig Enemark)

Land administration functions ensure proper management of rights, restrictions, responsibilities and risks in relation to property, land and natural resources

- Land tenure, securing and transferring rights in land and natural resources
- Land value, valuation and taxation of land and properties
- Land use, planning and control of the use of land and natural resources
- Land development, implementing utilities, infrastructure and construction planning



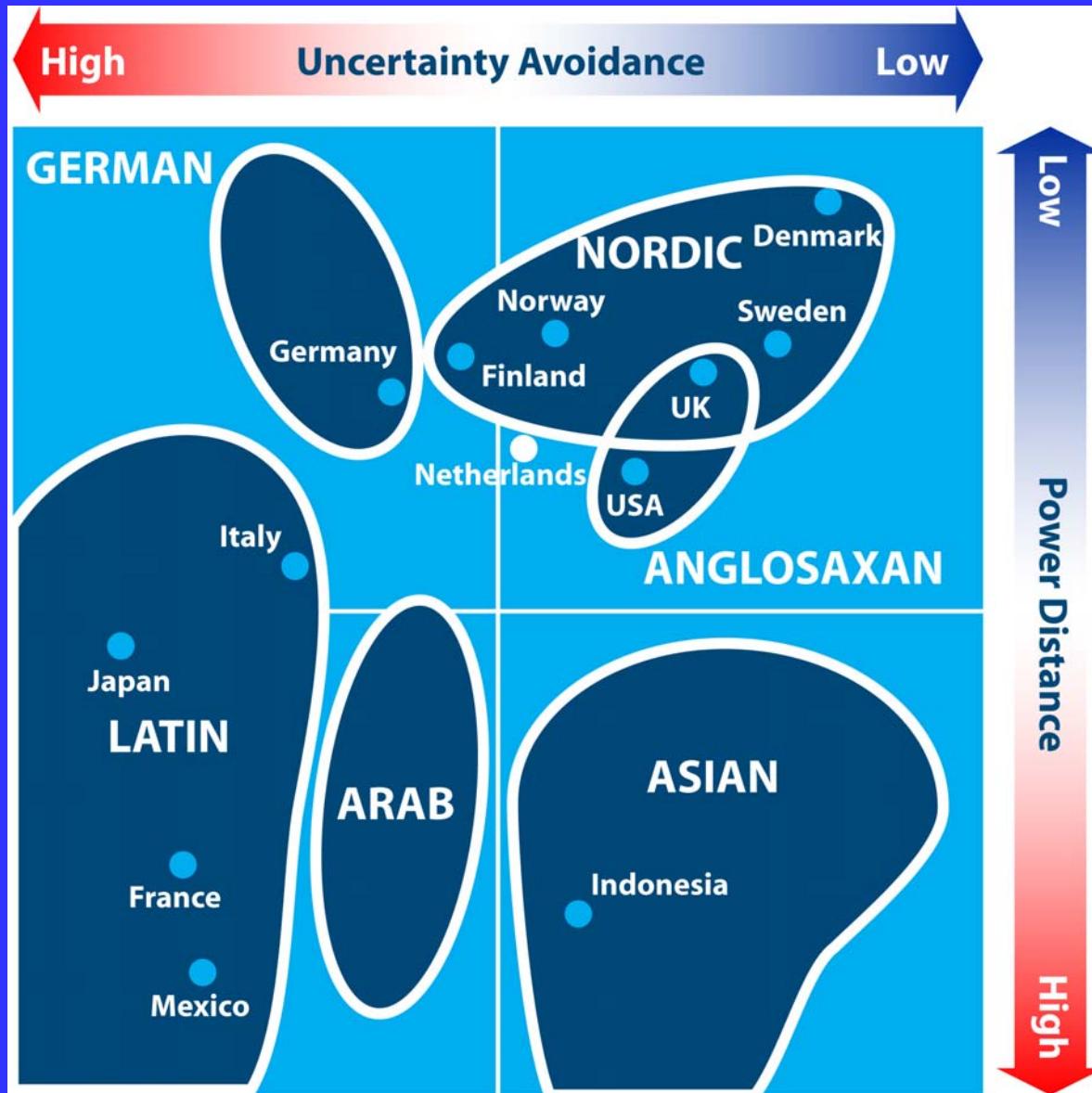
- Cadastral data, topographic data
- Spatial data infrastructure (data sharing, cost recovery, access to data, data models and standards)



Lack of an integrated approach

- In many countries there is a tendency to separate land tenure rights from land use rights
- Planning and land use control is not linked with land values and the operation of the land market
- This may be compounded by poor management procedures that fail to deliver required services
- This reveals a much deeper problem: the failure to treat land and its resources as a coherent whole
- Many countries in Europe are facing problems in this regard and with regard to informal urban development

A cultural map of the world



Uncertainty avoidance:

The preference of structured situations over unstructured or flexible ones

Power distance:

The degree of inequality among people accepted by the population

Geert Hofstede (2001)

Informal Urban Development

- “Informal”, “unplanned”, “illegal”, “unauthorized” or “random” urban development is an issue of major importance in a large number of countries. There is no clear common definition of what an “informal settlement” is
- The most important factors for characterizing an area as such are: **land tenure, quality and size of construction, access to services, and land-use zoning**
- According to UN-HABITAT, the largest slum areas are in **sub-Saharan Africa, South and East Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, ex-Soviet countries, and West Asia**
- **Although not all informal development can be characterized as slums, it may still present serious environmental, social and economic problems**

The major reasons for informal settlements are:

- **historic, political, social, and economic conditions leading to urbanization**
- **Population fluxes as a result of armed conflicts and natural disasters**
- **lack of spatial information & planning**
- **unrealistic zoning regulations**
- **marginalization, poverty and lack of financing mechanisms for affordable housing**
- **inconsistent and complex legislation**
- **excessive bureaucracy regarding land development and building permits**
- **illegal subdivision and construction on agricultural lands**
- **political reluctance to confront the situation**

Social exclusion

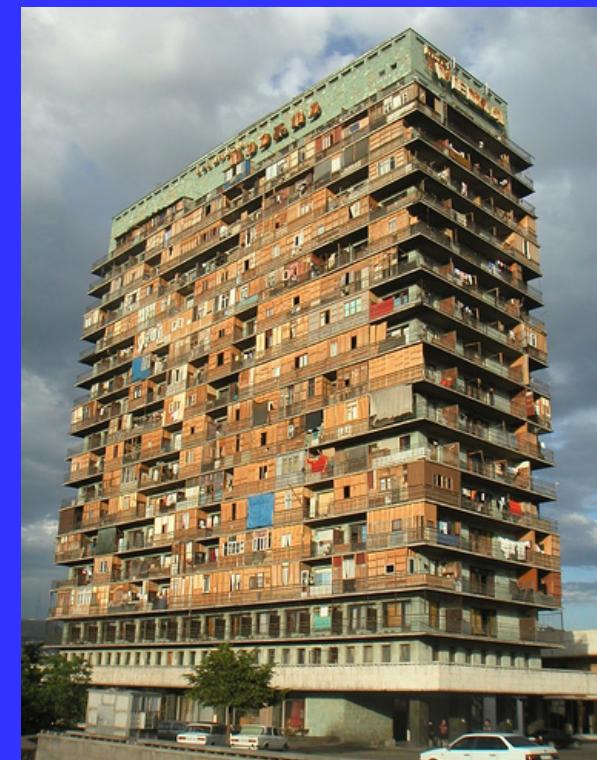


Roma communities

(Tsenkova – Potsiou 2008)

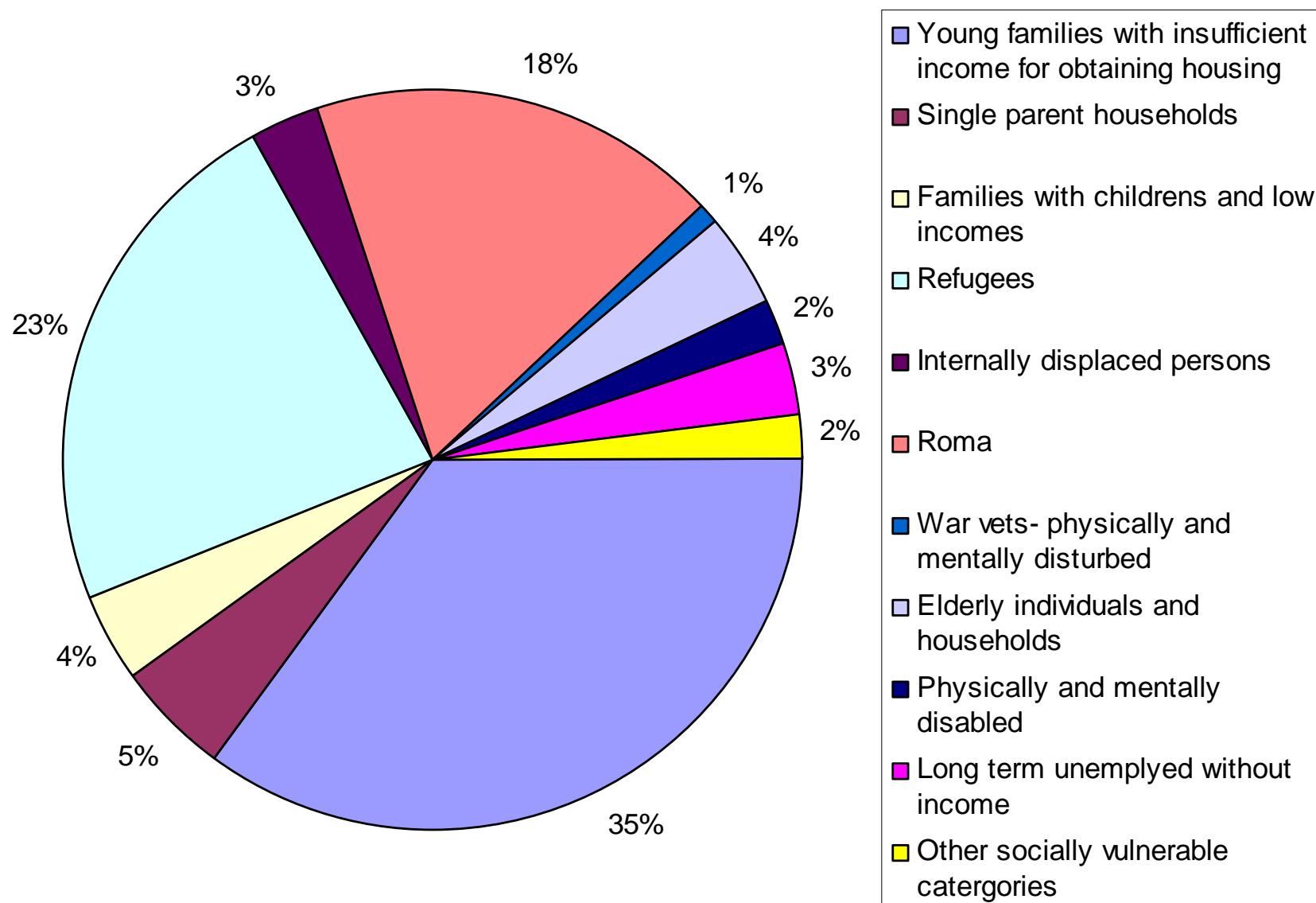
The housing crisis of refugees and displaced people in:

- Azerbaijan
- Georgia
- Montenegro



Informal settlement residents in Belgrade

(Tsenkova-Potsiou 2008)



Squatting on state land is less common phenomenon today

- Today the majority of informal construction in many parts of the UNECE region is of a **good, permanent type**, and can be characterized as “affordable housing” especially where no affordable housing policy is provided by the state.
- Land values at the fringe of urban areas are lower and more affordable to low-income households. Therefore, informal development is located in such areas, and is accompanied by illegal construction on either legally owned small land parcels or on squatted public land for housing purposes. This is usually characterized as “illegality of need”.

Matrix of Informal Settlement Types

(Tsenkova-Potsiou 2008)

	Inner city	Peri-urban	Substandard/Slums	Relatively good quality
Squatter settlements on public or private land;	•	•	•	
Settlements for refugees and vulnerable people;	•		•	
Upgraded squatter settlements	•	•		•
Illegal suburban land subdivisions on private or public land		•		•
Overcrowded, dilapidated housing without adequate facilities	•		•	

THE EFFECTS OF UNPLANNED DEVELOPMENT

Illegal construction often involves:

- **high construction costs,**
- **poor construction quality,**
- **lack of access to public services, and**
- **cannot be transferred or mortgaged**

A considerable amount of capital is tied up in such buildings

Types of Informal buildings

The extent of unplanned development varies

In some regions these are single-family houses, while in some others they may even be as extensive as 10 story multi-family buildings!



Doris Andoni 2007



*Ioannidis- Potsiou
2006*

**Informal settlements
within industrial zones**



*Ioannidis- Potsiou
2006*

Informal development appears also within formal urban areas, in order to increase profit

