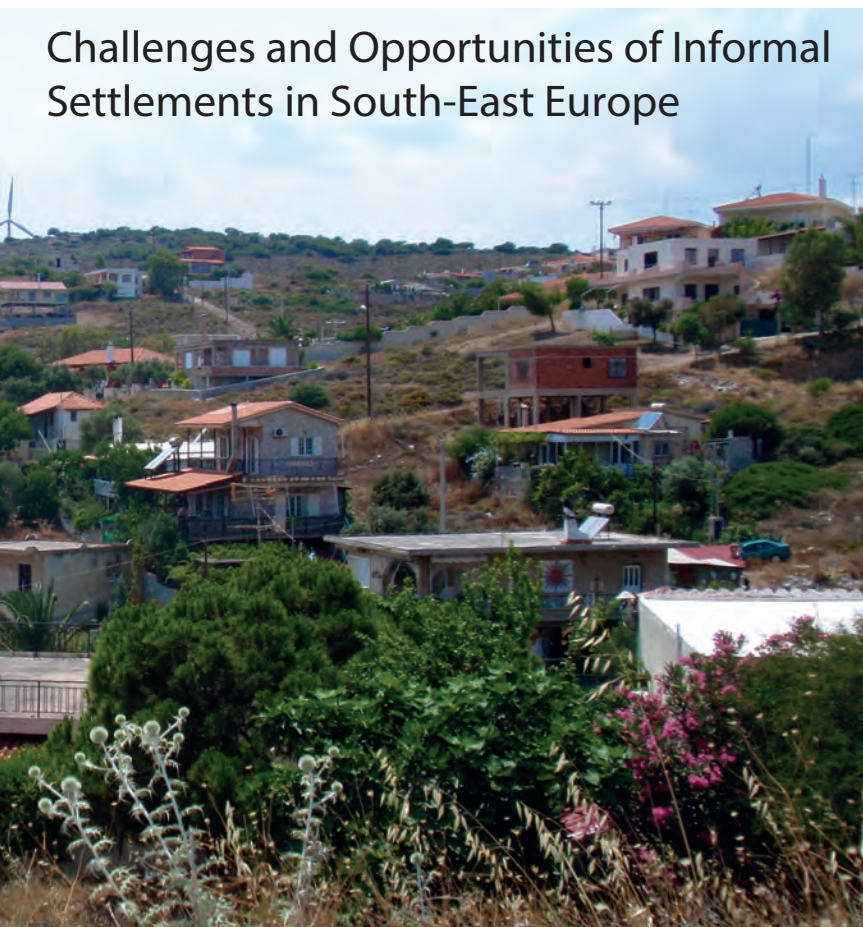


Formalizing the Informal

Challenges and Opportunities of Informal Settlements in South-East Europe



UNITED NATIONS

FORMALIZING THE INFORMAL: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS IN SOUTH-EAST EUROPE



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This publication is in English only.

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Housing, property rights, legalization, formalization, informal development, planning informalities, property registration, security of tenure, property market.

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FOREWORD

When hearing about informal settlements, pictures of the corrugated metal and cardboard houses of African slums or the favelas of Rio de Janeiro may come to mind. People are less aware of the fact that some of the 863 million people in informal settlements spread across the globe are located in the region of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. The importance of tackling this issue is undeniable and is underlined in the proposed United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 11, which stresses that cities and human settlements should be inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

Informal urban development is not a new issue for Europe. The southern part of the continent has long dealt with this problem. However, over the last 25 years, informal settlements have become an increasingly important and urgent matter in the region. At an international conference in 2007, it was estimated that more than 50 million people lived in informal settlements in 20 member States of the UNECE.

In 2009, the ECE Committee on Housing and Land Management published a first study on informal settlements: *Self-Made Cities: In Search of Sustainable Solutions for Informal Settlements*. The present report continues the discussion opened by the previous study. This report, *Formalizing the Informal: Challenges and Opportunities of Informal Settlements in South-East Europe* examines the causes of informal housing development in five countries of South-Eastern Europe – Albania, the Republic of Cyprus, Greece, Montenegro and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and assesses the governments' policies to address this challenge. Based on this assessment, the study makes policy recommendations to these five countries' governments. It also contains lessons learned and best practices that can be applied throughout the UNECE region.

This report is an excellent example of cooperation between the UNECE and the International Federation of Surveyors (FIG). Such cooperation and exchange of knowledge is an effective way of contributing to the formulation, implementation and monitoring of land policy and the promotion of sustainable land management.



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