

## **PROMOTION OF THE HABITAT AGENDA AT A NATIONAL AND LOCAL LEVEL**

### **A. General**

In 1996, was held in Istanbul the United Nations World Conference on Human Settlements, known as HABITAT II. This Conference, and the World Conference on the Environment, held in 1992, in Rio de Janeiro, constitutes the landmarks in the awareness by the International Community, of the need for the environmental protection and the sustainable development of cities and settlements.

At the Conference of Istanbul two texts were adopted: The first is the HABITAT AGENDA, where goals and principles, the commitments and the Global Plan of Action are formulated, for the achievement of viable, healthy, safe and equitable settlements and the assuring of access to adequate shelter for all. The second text is the Istanbul Declaration, in which the Heads of States or Governments and official national delegations, assembled at the UN Conference on Human Settlements, declared their decision to bring into effect the engagements undertaken for the implementation of the HABITAT AGENDA and the corresponding National Action Plans. Both texts were approved by Decision of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

The HABITAT AGENDA, which, together with AGENDA 21 adopted in Rio de Janeiro, constitute the World Contract of Principles, which the countries were committed to implement, encouraging, at a national and local level, concrete policies and programs that promote a sustainable - viable development, that is the development that combines economic prosperity with the protection of the environment, social cohesion, and maintenance of cultural identity.

In 2001, the Special Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, known as Istanbul +5, was held in New York, during which the assessment and the evaluation of the implementation of the HABITAT AGENDA for a period of 5 years were effectuated.

### **B. The promotion of the HABITAT AGENDA at a national and local level in Greece**

With regard to the implementation of the HABITAT AGENDA at a national and local level the following steps were taken:

The realisation, at the very beginning of the need of co-ordination of all actions and of the establishment of the principle of collectiveness in the concretisation of the principles of the HABITAT AGENDA in Greece, led to the constitution of the National Committee HABITAT II, with the participation of all partners of the HABITAT AGENDA, representatives of Central Administration, Local Government, Non Governmental Organisations, professional associations, the academic community and the private sector. The National Committee HABITAT II promoted the elaboration of a National Report, in which the priorities, the objectives and the action targets of the HABITAT AGENDA are expressed and constitute the official position of both the Ministry of Environment, Physical Planning and Public Works (Ministry of Environment) and of the various institutions represented in the National Committee HABITAT II.

The National Action Plan for Cities and Housing 1996-2000 (NAP cities and housing), which constitutes part of National Report, sets the framework in the following sectors, in order to be confronted the revealed problems:

Among the sectors referred to the first target that is «ensuring safe, healthy, equitable and sustainable cities», are the following:

- the rational land use according to the principles of the sustainability,
- the upgrading of the cities environment,

- the balanced development of the settlements in rural areas,
- the provision of technical infrastructure for healthy living conditions,
- the provision of social infrastructure, basic services and amenities,
- the development of transports and communication systems,
- the prevention of disasters and the readiness in order to face the consequences of natural disasters and catastrophes,
- the rational use of energy,
- the preservation and the revival of historical heritage.

Among the questions referred to the second target, that is «ensuring adequate shelter for all», are the following:

- the ensuring of land and housing supply,
- the provision of financial resources for the housing sector,
- the support of different social groups in order to facilitate their access to housing.

One of the main objectives of the HABITAT AGENDA is the promotion of local action plans at the municipal level. For this aim, the Ministry of Environment, Physical Planning and Public Works undertook to promote the Pilot Program “Integrated Local Programs of Sustainable Development, in application of HABITAT AGENDA”. The objective of the Pilot Program is to drive the local authority towards the idea of a local strategic planning and programming, promoting the integrated approach of local questions, in application of HABITAT AGENDA.

After relative invitation of the Ministry of Environment 491 proposals of actions were submitted, for their integration in the Pilot Program. The Committee of Evaluation, which was constituted by technicians (executives) of the Ministry of Environment, Physical Planning and Public Works as well as representatives of Academic and Scientific Institutions, selected 58 proposals of action, of equivalents Local Authorities. A basic principle in the whole process of evaluation of the proposals was the fair representation of all administrative regions of the country, as well as all categories of Local Authorities, as these are determined depending on their population, their economic and geographic character and their level of growth. The maturity and the innovative character of the proposal constituted a basic criterion.

Out of these proposals, 48 satisfied the conditions of integration in the Pilot Program and their financing from Metre 7.2., of the Operational Environmental Program, under the 3<sup>rd</sup> Community Support Framework.

The Pilot Program of each local authority, entitled “Integrated Local Sustainable Development Program, in application of HABITAT AGENDA at local level”, contains:

- The drafting of an **Integrated Local Program for Sustainable Development (I.L.P.S.D. HABITAT AGENDA)**, which will define the aims and actions that promote economic development, social cohesion, environmental protection and the protection and enhancement of cultural heritage. The procedure is to secure local involvement and through it the sensibility and endorsement of the program’s implementation.
- The **Practical Application** of an action included in the I.L.P.S.D. HABITAT AGENDA of the local authority, that has positive effect on all or most sectors involving the quality of life such as the economy, the society, the culture and the environment.

The Aim of the Pilot Program is:

- To drive the local authority towards the idea of a local strategic plan and program
- To understand the necessity to adopt a comprehensive policy of strategic planning in order to tackle the multiple modern problems of cities and towns.
- To promote the faith in participation and cooperation as the most democratic and effective ways to implement successfully local initiatives.
- To extract conclusions for the development of comprehensive attitudes in tackling difficult modern problems concerning Housing and Settlements.

The Pilot Program is promoted by the Administration Service of the “Operational Environmental Programme”, under the Community Support Framework. According to Law 2860/2000 (Official Journal of the Greek Republic 251A/2000), this Service has the responsibility of the follow-up and the control of the whole Pilot Program, in all its stages. The responsibility for the implementation of the each action lies on the final beneficiary Local Authority.

We note that, I.L.P.S.D.’s HABITAT AGENDA and Practical Applications, have been included for the 48 Local Authorities and are financed with **18.2 million Euro**, by the “Operational Environmental Program” (constituting an action or a sub-action of the Program). From these 48, 22 have to self finance their I.L.P.S.D.’s HABITAT AGENDA, which concerns a minor amount less than 1,5 million Euro.

The I.L.P.S.D.’s HABITAT AGENDA are elaborated according to the “Guidelines”, drawn up by the Housing Department. The Guidelines are in conformity with the HABITAT AGENDA and NAP cities and housing recommendations, for the implementation of actions at a local level by Local Authority Agencies, it detects actions that must be promoted, it connects each one proposed action with the competences defined by the Municipal Code and other institutional provisions and, in general, they are a functional tool of activation of (bringing into action the) Local Authorities, to (towards) the sustainable development direction.

The responsibility of the assistance of the Service of Administration of the Operational “Environmental” Programme in the monitoring of the I.L.P.S.D.’s HABITAT AGENDA was assigned, by the no 43492/25.10.2006 Decision of the Minister of Environment, in the Housing Department, as the competent department.

Specifically, the Housing Department undertook the work to express an opinion on the equitable elaboration of studies of I.L.P.S.D. HABITAT AGENDA, in order that the Service of Management of Operational “Environmental” Program publishes the Certification of Keeping (Respect of) the Obligations by the Final Beneficiary, of paragraph 4, article 6, Law 2860/2000.

The follow-up and the monitoring of I.L.P.S.D.’s HABITAT AGENDA studies is continuous, until the completion of the Pilot Program.

The realization of both the I.L.P.S.D. HABITAT AGENDA and of the intervention that is included in it constitutes the necessary and capable condition for the issue of the above certification from the Service of Management of Operational “Environmental” Program.

The Service of Management of the Operational “Environmental” Program maintains the responsibility of the follow-up of the application and the control of the Pilot Program in all its stages, the economic management of this Program and of course the follow-up of the works of rehabilitation included in the Pilot Program.

By the successful elaboration of the Pilot Program and more specifically by the elaboration of I.L.P.S.D.’s HABITAT AGENDA, the interested Local Authorities will constitute an example of comprehensive approach of (to the) local questions (matters), aiming at a sustainable development.

The I.L.P.S.D.’s HABITAT AGENDA will constitute the strategic frameworks of action on the basis of which the Local Authorities will have the possibility, co-ordinately and non- fragmentarily, to face the problems in all sectors, that concern the viable quality of life in the cities and housing.

With the elaboration of I.L.P.S.D.’s HABITAT AGENDA, the Ministry of Environment aspires to drive the local authority towards the idea of local strategic planning and programming, promoting a comprehensive way of approaching local problems.

### **C. The promotion of the implementation of HABITAT AGENDA at the local level**

Concerning the promotion of the implementation of the aforementioned 48 I.L.P.S.D. HABITAT AGENDA, the following progress has been made:

- 25 municipalities have submitted their Programs, of these 8 have been reviewed positively, 5 need minor corrections while the remaining 12 have been sent remarks to better their proposals.
- 23 municipalities have not submitted their Programs, of these though 2 have made good progress and could submit their positions.

From the total budget of 18,2 million Euro the expenditure is 16 million Euro (88%).

It is expected that all programs will have been submitted and reviewed before the end of the year.

A list of the 48 participating Local Authorities follows.

**LIST OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES  
THAT PARTICIPATE IN THE PILOT PROGRAM  
HABITAT AGENDA**

1. Cooperation of 21 Local Authorities of NORTH EAST ATHENS **GREEN**  
TAYGETOU 11 & PAPANASTASIOU Str  
PSYCHIKO, T.K. 15 452  
Involved  
Municipalities: CHALANDRI, AG.. PARASKEVI, CHOLARGOS, PAPAGOU,  
NEO PSYHIKO, PSYHIKO, PHILOTHEI, AMAROUSSIO, PEFKI,  
VRILISSIA, MELISSIA, KIFISSIA, NEA ERITHREA, GALATSI,  
N. IONIA, IRAKLIO, LIKOVRISSI & METAMORFOSSI.  
Communities: EKALI, PENTELEI & NEA PENTELEI.
2. AVDIRA Municipality yellow
3. AG. NIKOLAOS Municipality
4. AG. ANARGIRI Municipality
5. AGRINIO Municipality
6. AIGALEO Municipality blue
7. AIGIROS Municipality blue
8. AKRATA Municipality
9. AKROTIRI Municipality
10. ALEXANDROUPOLI Municipality yellow
11. AMAROUSIO Municipality green
12. ANTIGONIDES Municipality yellow
13. ANO SIROS Municipality blue
14. ARGOSTOLIO Municipality yellow
15. ARTA Municipality
16. ARCHANES Municipality
17. VERTISKOS Municipality yellow
18. Gazi Municipality red
19. KARDITSA Municipality
20. KARPENISI Municipality blue
21. KOZANI Municipality
22. KOMOTINI Municipality yellow
23. KONITSA Municipality red
24. MASTICHOCHORIA Municipality

25. MASTOROHORIA Municipality
26. MELITIEOI Municipality
27. MITILINI Municipality yellow
28. NAXOS Municipality
29. NAFPAKTOS Municipality
30. N. KAZANTZAKI Municipality
31. N. IONIA MAGNESIA Municipality
32. OROPEDIO LASITHI Municipality yellow
33. PAVLIANI Community blue
34. PELLA Municipality red
35. PENDALOFOS Community blue
36. PERAMA Municipality yellow
37. PLASTIRA Municipality yellow
38. POLIKASTRO Municipality red
39. RAFINA Municipality
40. RODOS Municipality
41. SOFADES Municipality blue
42. STYLIS Municipality yellow
43. SIKEES Municipality
44. TIRNAVOS Municipality yellow
45. FILIATRA Municipality red
46. FLORINA Municipality
47. CHAIRONIA Municipality
48. OLENI Municipality blue

**Note:**

- L.A. whose Program has not been submitted
- L.A. whose Program has not been submitted but have good progress and can support their positions
- L.A. whose Program has been submitted and positively reviewed
- L.A. whose Program has been submitted and needs minor corrections
- L.A. whose Program has been submitted and have received remarks to better their proposals