

## PROPOSALS ON REFORMING HOUSING SECTOR IN THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS

At present, Belarus has a unique, rather interesting and at the same time complicated housing and utilities sector. The undertaken reforms and the social vector of state development resulted in the fact that more than 85% of the housing fund is privately owned. In Germany, for example, the figure does not exceed 42%. At the same time, the maintenance and operation of this property is in the hands of the state, which acts through its various agencies, while the share of private sector in this area is a bit more than 1%. It is clear that the situation where private property is serviced by the funds of the state budget, that is, for the money of each of the citizens, is a bit absurd and socially unfair. With the aim to change the situation, reduce the burden on the budget and reach social justice, laws and regulations were adopted to admit private businesses into the housing and utilities sector. Real estate owner were granted the right to choose the form of relationships, first of all among themselves, as well as in relation to providers of utility services and the companies involved in servicing.

However, the practice has shown the Belarusians' unpreparedness to fully correspond to the notion "real estate owner"; and the enacted laws and regulations proved to be incapable in respect of rather important aspects related to real estate operation.

The objective of the study is to create a new socially balanced model of managing the housing and utilities sector, the idea being not to provoke any systemic and conflict scenarios in interaction of commercial structures, bodies of state government and consumers of services in the housing and utilities sector, but to obtain reliable and efficient instruments for addressing (local, random and temporary) contradictions.

The problems addressed within the framework of the study were as follows:

- To analyze and identify the provisions (laws and bylaws) that do not meet the actual practice of the housing and utilities sector and hinder positive social and economic trends that have emerged in the area;
- To draft proposals for reforming the procedures of budget financing of the housing and utilities sector;
- To offer specific amendments to the existing laws and normative acts;
- To identify other problems in the way of reforming the housing and utilities sector;
- To plan further work on studying the experience of other countries in the issues of reforming and operating the housing and utilities sector.

The material of the study will allow understanding the processes underway in the housing and utilities sector and reveal specific contradictions and gaps in the existing legislation; the study will voice out the main problems and the sourced of their origin. In general, the work may become a start of a more profound and thorough study with a more detailed examination of other countries' experiences. That may ultimately serve a basis for drafting a comprehensive programme of reforming the Belarusian housing and utilities sector.