

Municipality contact your Municipal Information Officer.

You are also encouraged to contribute to your municipality's spatial planning process by attending public consultations. The Municipality is obliged by law to listen to your input. *For more information on public consultations contact your Municipal Information Officer.*

Goals and actions for urban upgrading and regularisation

On 16 November 2006, the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning, UN HABITAT and the OSCE organized a workshop in which all municipalities, relevant ministries as well as civil society and the private sector reviewed the situation in Kosovo in co-operation with internationally recognized experts. As a result of the workshop, the organizers prepared a list of recommendations to the Kosovo institutions and the informal settlements inhabitants themselves.

A way forward

Kosovo needs better cities. To prevent future informal development and to integrate existing informal neighbourhoods in the urban areas the following goals should be met:

- a) regularise existing informal settlements and prevent the development of future ones;
- b) ensure a sustainable urbanisation process in Kosovo; and
- c) develop a sustainable land governance policy for Kosovo.

In order to achieve these goals, the Government, the municipalities and inhabitants themselves will need to take steps in accordance with their responsibilities. All of these steps will be part of a Kosovo Action Plan on Informal Settlements to be developed by the Government.



FOR A BETTER LIFE IN OUR MUNICIPALITY!



Urban Upgrading and Regularization of Informal Settlements in Kosovo



Regularisation and prevention of informal settlements in the Municipalities of Kosovo

Kosovo neighbourhoods that are built without construction and/or urban planning permissions, and in some cases without proof of actual land ownership, are considered **informal settlements**.

In general, residents of *informal settlements* do not enjoy many of the benefits of the cities, including access to public services such as roads, electricity, water and sewage, nor secure property rights.

These benefits are rights that the Kosovo Government is obliged to respect as it recognizes the right to adequate housing (Article 11.1 International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights) which includes access to services and a degree of property rights security.

These rights are also contained in the notion of the 'right to the city', that is, the right of all inhabitants to have access to collective infrastructures, services and facilities, and the obligation to contribute to the development process.

While everyone in Kosovo has a 'right to the city', everyone must also fulfil their obligations to improve the cities of Kosovo, by meeting obligations such as paying property taxes and utility bills and respecting property rights and the rules for urban planning and construction.



Do I live in an informal settlement?

If you lack all necessary urban and construction permissions, infrastructure and/or do not formally own the land your house is built on you are living in what is regarded as an 'informal settlement'.

However, there are many different types of informal settlements. Some are built by wealthy and some by poor people. Most of them are constructed on private property by its owners, but some settlements unlawfully occupy land and thus provoke serious problems to other persons as well as inhabitants themselves.

How do I regularise my situation?

You can approach your Municipality to enquire about how to regularise your situation.

The Government will determine what cases can be legalised and what you will need to do.

In addition, the Government continues to work on developing procedures that will make this process smoother.

Why is it important to legalise your property?

Legalising your property will mean that it can be included in urban planning and thereby better access basic services.

It will also help the Municipality to better meet its obligation to ensure for the city's healthy development, by being better able to plan for meeting residents' needs.

What are the obligations of the Municipality?

According to the international standards, governments have the obligation to take steps to help you access serviced land and adequate housing.

The European Partnership Action Plan, the Kosovo Standards and the Vienna Declaration on Informal Settlements in South Eastern Europe also support the regularisation of informal settlements and the prevention of future ones.

Spatial planning is one of the tools that the Municipality has at its disposal to help residents regularize their housing. According to the applicable law, it is also obliged to consult with the residents when developing these plans.

What are my obligations?

Build legally and do not unlawfully occupy land!

You should never occupy someone else's or public land, as this is against the law and will have negative legal consequences.

Obtain the necessary permits prior to starting construction and register your property!

This will help the municipality to better plan the city's development.

You should also contribute to your city's development by paying utility and property taxes.

How can I approach the Municipality?

For construction and planning issues, you should contact the Directorate of Urbanism in your Municipality.

At the central level, you may contact the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning/Department of Spatial Planning.

You are encouraged to participate in community NGOs and other civil society organisations to promote your rights in the Municipality. *For more information about NGOs working in your*