

Strengthening of Urban Resilience in Housing

IWO e.V.
(NGO Housing Initiative for Eastern Europe)
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IWO e.V. is launching a new project «Strengthening of Urban Resilience in Housing» which is being implemented within the framework of the project “Strengthening of Urban Resilience in the Areas of Supply Infrastructure and Housing in Ukraine (SUR)» which is a part of the German transitional development assistance, commissioned by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.

The aim of the project is to develop the capacity of cities to respond to the housing challenges and threats caused by Russian military aggression, while addressing pre-existing structural problems in the housing sector. The project includes an educational program, an assessment of urban resilience and housing needs in cities, as well as the development of strategic goals and measures in this area and their integration into relevant city-level documents or the creation of a new local housing strategy.

Expected results of the project for the participating cities:

- deepening understanding of housing problems and prospects for their solution;
- familiarization with European models of social/affordable housing provision and assessment of the prospects of their application in Ukraine;
- introduction to European methods of managing the housing stock;
- comprehensive analysis of the resilience level and housing sector needs of the participating cities;
- formulation of strategic goals to strengthen the resilience in terms of addressing pressing housing issues in the participating cities in order to further develop relevant projects and attract funding.

The project is aimed at cities in Eastern, Northern, Southern and part of Central Ukraine, where the need for restoring housing stock and accommodating internally displaced persons is most acute. The target cities are large (but up to 1 million residents) and medium-sized cities that already have some experience in housing solutions for internally displaced persons (IDPs) and are highly motivated to implement innovative housing solutions for IDPs and other segments of the population in need of state support for housing.

Project implementation framework

The project “Strengthening Urban Resilience in Housing” is implemented by IWO e.V. within the framework of the project “Strengthening of Urban Resilience in the Areas of Supply Infrastructure and Housing in Ukraine” (SUR).

SUR is part of German transitional development assistance, commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.

Initiative Wohnungswirtschaft Osteuropa (IWO) e.V. – Housing Initiative for Eastern Europe (IWO) is a German non-governmental organisation whose mission is to support the market-based, sustainable, ecologically and socially compatible development of the housing and building sectors in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. With its members representing the developed German housing industry, a broad international network of experts and 22 years of experience working with the housing sectors of countries in transition, IWO offers the necessary expertise and organisational approaches to support the resilient recovery of the housing sector in Ukrainian cities.

All texts and materials under the project are the intellectual property of IWO e.V. and GIZ.

Project stages

1. TRAINING PROGRAMME (webinars)	2. ASSESSMENT OF HOUSING NEEDS AND RESILIENCE	3. DEVELOPMENT OF STRATEGIC GOALS AND DIRECTIONS FOR HOUSING RECOVERY
OBJECTIVE: To familiarise cities with approaches to resilient recovery, ongoing housing sector reform and best European practices in housing management.	OBJECTIVE: Comprehensive analysis of urban housing needs and resilience indicators. Preparation for informed formulation of housing recovery goals.	OBJECTIVE: Formulate and agree with the community on strategic goals and plans for resilient housing recovery. Integrate goals into relevant city-level documents.
TARGET AUDIENCE: 6 cities	TARGET AUDIENCE: 3 cities	TARGET AUDIENCE: 3 cities
TIMELINE: April – May, 2025.	TIMELINE: May – October, 2025.	TIMELINE: November 2025 – September 2026.
		ADDITIONALLY: for two interested cities – the creation of an operational model of a social housing operator (September - December 2026)

The project will be implemented in 2025–2026 in three consecutive stages:

- **Training programme**

The capacity building training programme for cities, which marks the start of participation in the project, provides a comprehensive overview of the state of the housing sector in Ukraine and a review of international experience with possible solutions to the problems. Up to six interested cities will take part in this programme. After completing the programme, interested cities can continue cooperation at the next stages.

- **Assessment of housing needs and resilience**

Project experts will work with the three cities to assess their needs and housing resilience. This phase will include city data collection, focus groups with key participants in the housing sector, socio-demographic assessment and analysis of the housing needs of the population, including internally displaced persons, and expert interviews. The phase will result in analytical reports for each of the three cities, outlining key issues, needs, and challenges, and assessing the resilience of the city's housing sector.

- **Development of strategic goals and directions for housing recovery**

Based on the analysis of the city, with the support of project experts, strategic goals and plans for resilient housing recovery will be formulated, as well as the financing options for these plans will be analyzed. Depending on the availability and specificity of local development documents (e.g., local housing strategies), the goals will be integrated into existing strategic documents or a new housing development strategy will be developed.

Project team



Knut Höller

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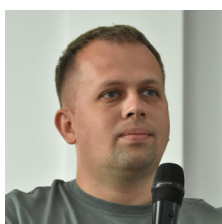
Serhiy Komnatny

Doctor of Law, scientific consultant, project expert.
Expert in housing policy and financial and credit mechanisms, coordinator of the working group on the development of housing legislation of the Ministry of Communities and Territories Development of Ukraine. For seven years, he headed the financial institution Derzhmolodzhytlo. Honorary President of the NGO Housing Ukraine.



Vsevolod Nikolaev

Doctor of Economics, Professor, Scientific Consultant, Project Expert. Professor at the Wrocław University of Science and Technology, Faculty of Civil Engineering. Specialist in residential property management, author of dozens of scientific papers in the field.



Yuriy Telipskyi

Project expert.
Director of the Lviv Intermunicipal Bureau of Technical Inventory, project manager for the construction and operation of residential buildings within the UNBROKEN ecosystem, head of the working group on the construction of social housing and a geriatric centre.

Some webinars will be joined by representatives of the Ministry of Communities and Territories Development of Ukraine, as well as other experts on the webinars' topics.

Defining housing resilience

The RDNA4¹ study shows that about 13% of Ukraine's housing stock has been damaged or destroyed as a result of Russian military aggression, affecting more than 2.5 million households. Reconstruction and renovation needs in this sector are the highest among the overall long-term needs. At the same time, millions of people have been displaced within the country or were stranded abroad.

The need to provide people with affordable, high-quality and secure housing, as well as to address the challenges in the sector that had previously accumulated, created the preconditions for a comprehensive reform in line with the provisions of the Ukraine Facility Plan . The European experience of providing housing for Ukrainian refugees has demonstrated the need to implement the best European practices in this area to strengthen the capacity to respond to such crises. An important component of the crisis response is urban resilience, an approach implemented by the GIZ project «Strengthening of Urban Resilience in the Areas of Supply Infrastructure and Housing in Ukraine (SUR).»

Urban resilience refers to the ability of a city and its key urban systems to quickly return to its functions in the face of critical disruption, adapt to changes and transform those elements of urban systems that limit such adaptability.

This implies the ability of local governments and the population to respond to challenges and recover the basic structure and functioning of the city. In the context of military conflicts, the concept of urban resilience indicates the degree of readiness of a city to counteract the negative effects of these conflicts. It also defines the maximum extent to which cities can withstand changes and stresses before starting to reorganise their structures and processes.

The housing sector as one of the key systems of a city is characterised by relevant socio-economic, environmental and technical components and has specific resilience indicators. The main components are the housing stock, population, housing economy and utilities sector with municipal and private economic entities, the construction industry and the housing management and maintenance services market (Fig. 1). The housing system operates in conjunction with other systems of the city and is influenced by the external environment with its stressors caused by military actions and their consequences for the territory.

¹ World Bank. (2025). Ukraine – Fourth Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment (RDNA4): February 2022 – December 2024 (English). Washington, D.C.: World Bank Group. <https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/099022025114040022> (Retrieved March 20, 2025)

² План для Ukraine Facility 2024–2027 (2024) UA. Ukraine Facility. URL: <https://www.ukrainefacility.me.gov.ua/> (Retrieved March 20, 2025)

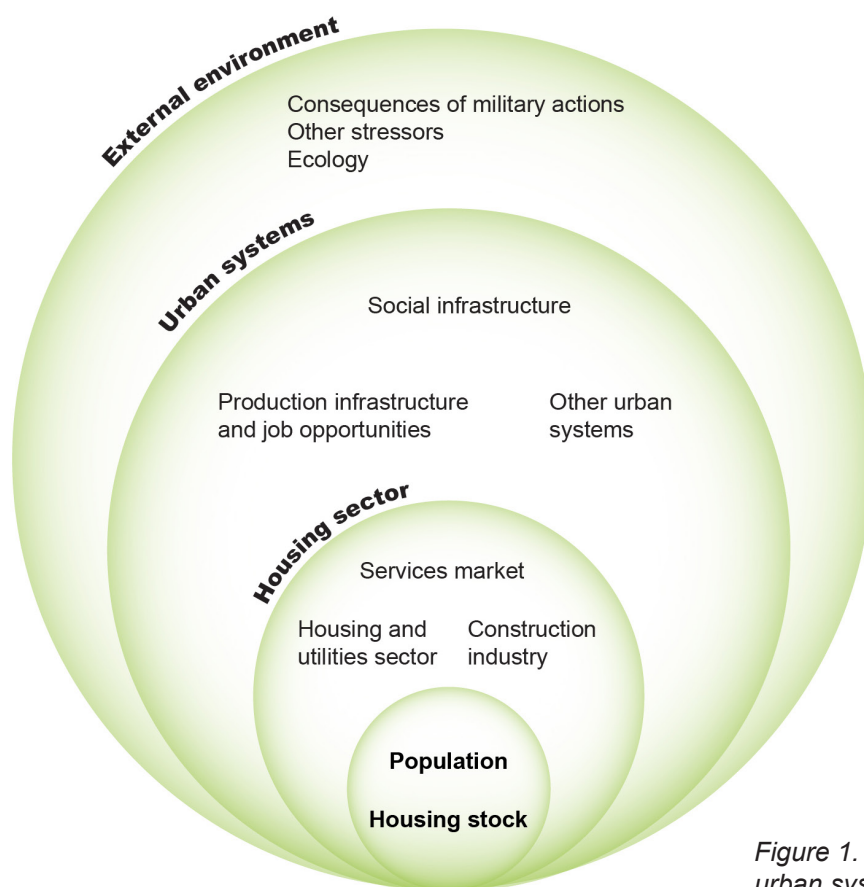


Figure 1. The place of housing in the urban system (developed by IWO e.V.)

The project experts adapted the characteristics of urban resilience to the housing sector of Ukraine with its inherent features and challenges, and developed a number of criteria and indicators to assess the resilience and needs of the city's housing sector. In particular, the criteria include:

- **Diversification of housing stock** to effectively meet different needs and respond to changes in demand patterns (e.g., relocation and increased pressure on the rental sector);
- **integration of resilience management functions** of a diversified housing sector;
- **availability of reserves** of housing, land for construction, and finance for housing development and maintenance;
- **engaging citizens** to participate in the development of the city's housing sector;
- **the reflexivity and response** of local governments and key stakeholders to community feedback, changing needs in the sector and various changes in the external environment, etc.

The project focuses not only on the challenges associated with the impact of the war, but also on the outdated problems and approaches to housing provision in the state housing policy, which reduce the adaptability and transformational potential to overcome the consequences of the war. The principle of 'building back better' declared by the Government of Ukraine is

particularly relevant to housing. It means transforming approaches to housing provision, housing management and maintenance, sustainable financing, institutional development and formalisation of housing relations.

Thus, the resilience of the urban housing sector in Ukraine today is the ability to respond quickly to the destruction of housing stock and resettlement. At the same time, it involves managing structural changes through diversification and adaptation of housing supply to changing demand, improving the management and maintenance of housing stock, and supporting the population. The housing resilience criteria used in this project are intended to guide cities in their recovery planning.

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