

Housing policy

The principle and the objective of the housing policy consist, in particular, in building up desirable legal, institutional and fiscal environment for the activities of all actors on the housing market. The State should not restrain economic functioning of the housing market; it, however, must simultaneously take supportive steps targeted on those groups of households, which cannot secure their housing on the market by themselves. The housing policy concept approved by the Government constitutes a binding strategic document for all Ministries, which sets forth basic directions of the development and specific objectives in the field of housing.

From the point of view of the actors on the housing market the objectives of housing policy are as follows:

- **Functioning of the housing market**, including relevant legal arrangements for owner-occupied, rented as well as cooperative housing, enforceability of laws included; elimination of price and legal distortions in the segment of rented housing is a constituent element of this objective,
- **Improvement of financial affordability of housing** for households, including social benefits in the field of housing compensating for overall expenditures on housing of a household with lower income,
- **Enlargement of the offer** of housing, even by means of support for a new construction, inclusive of construction of flats intended for social purposes,
- **Betterment of the quality** of housing, including assistance to the owners in management, maintenance, repairs and modernisation of the housing stock,
- **On-going monitoring of the housing market**, as well as monitoring of efficiency and effectiveness of individual supportive instruments and adjustment thereof,
- **Application of non-discriminatory rules** of the EU common market, conditions of competition included, and compatibility of public aid with Community laws.

The objectives mentioned above are accomplished by legal regulations (Civil Code providing information on flat rent, Act on Unilateral Increase of Flat Rent, Act on the Ownership of Flats, etc.) and further by means of supportive instruments in the area of housing. They involve programmes financed from the State budget through the Ministry for Regional Development of the Czech Republic, as well as the aid funded from the means of the State Housing Development Fund on the basis of individual Government Executive Orders specifying terms and extent of particular forms of the assistance.

Urbanization (urbanisation)

refers to the population shift from rural areas to urban areas, the decrease in the proportion of people living in rural areas, and the ways in which each society adapts to this change. It is predominantly the process by which towns and cities are formed and become larger as more people begin living and working in central areas.