



Housing Strategy of the City of Niš



Niš City Assembly
City Housing Agency
Niš 2007

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Assembly of the City of Nis
City Housing Agency
Nis 2007

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**РЕПУБЛИКА
СРБИЈА**



REPUBBLICA ITALIANA



City Housing Agency Niš

Foreward

It is a great honor and pleasure for me, as a Mayor of the City of Nis, that our city adopted the first Housing Strategy in Serbia. The Strategy was adopted on 12 December 2006 and it represents joint vision and willingness of all stakeholders to contribute to good quality housing conditions for Nis inhabitants through collaboration and partnerships.

After many years of neglecting the housing issues – at local and national level – during which the citizens were practically forced to resolve their housing problems by themselves, adoption of the Housing Strategy created favorable climate for undertaking direct steps towards establishment of a system that should regulate and improve the housing situation in Nis. The key commitment of the City of Nis is to provide its citizens available housing through provision of construction land for new housing construction, development of public and private rental sector, upgrading of the management and maintenance system of the existing housing stock. This document provides a framework for implementation of political, economic and social measures that will enable systemic and efficient increase of availability of adequate housing for all, including poor and vulnerable social groups, by strengthening institutional and human capacities.

City of Nis Housing strategy was formulated with considerable political interest for its adoption and further implementation. The document provides for possible allocation of local resources – public and private, as well as attraction of other investments. The participatory and transparent process of strategy formulation included representatives of public, private and civil sector, and without their participation the realization and implementation of this document would not be possible. We aimed for our housing strategy to be in harmony with European Union standards and I believe that our resources, both professional and infrastructural, will be directed towards implementation of these standards.

I would especially like to acknowledge UN-HABITAT, and its Settlement and Integration of Refugees Programme – SIRP, implemented in cooperation with Ministry for infrastructure of the Republic of Serbia, and funded by the Government of Italy, for its assistance and support in formulation and adoption of the document, which can have implications also on formulation of future national housing policy.

Kostić Smiljko
The Mayor
City of Niš

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Foreward

The way of approaching the creation, management and financing of the issues of housing on the national and local levels has a direct impact on the lives of the people in the community. Adequate housing is a fundamental need of every individual and a key element of every economy.

Therefore, it is no surprise that, bearing in mind the importance of the local housing policy, the City of Niš began, by a Decision of the Mayor, the preparation of the City Housing Strategy as the basic strategic document for its formulation and implementation. The preparation of the document itself was entrusted to the City Housing Agency as the local institutional instrument for solving the housing needs of the socially vulnerable categories of the population.

On 9 March 2005, UN-HABITAT – the United Nations Human Settlements Programme and the City of Niš signed a Memorandum of Understanding for the implementation of SIRP – the Settlement and Integration of Refugees Programme, which has provided, through a donation of the Government of Italy, the technical and financial support for this project, for which I wish to thank them on behalf of the citizens of Niš.

The adoption of such a document was aimed at answering the question of how to achieve accessibility of housing and develop the rental sector, both the public and the private, with complete legal security, or how to implement special programmes for solving the housing problems of the poor and vulnerable social groups. The answer to both these and other questions are contained in this document and are defined by the sector strategies for 2007-2012 and the action plan for 2007-2008.

The City Housing Agency, which is in charge of carrying out the activities, has developed this document according to the methodology of participatory approach, with the participation of over thirty stakeholders from the public, private and civil sectors.

The Housing Strategy of the City of Niš is in accordance with the national policy, as well as with the policy of the European Union, and it provides a framework for access to national, regional and European financial organizations.

I believe that this publication will make a significant contribution to the development of the housing sector in the entire region and pave the way for sustainable development and investments in housing construction.

Finally, I would like to emphasize that this document pays special attention to solving the housing situation of vulnerable groups, which is in keeping with the National Strategy for Poverty Reduction. Furthermore, it has taken into account a realistic financing method in order to provide a connection between the social and economic development of the entire region.

Dorđević Vesna
Director
City Housing Agency

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1. Summary

The Law on Local Self-Government, the Draft Law on Social Housing in particular, gives local governments considerable jurisdiction over the implementation of Housing Policy, especially social housing policy. The Draft Law on Social Housing provides that municipalities/cities should prepare Municipal/City Housing Strategies. The Mayor's decision No. 2565/2005-01 dated December 7, 2005 put the City Housing Agency in charge of developing the City Housing Strategy.

The formulation of the City Housing Strategy of the city of Niš involved eight working stages (preparatory activities – information gathering, consultations and initial research, mobilization and organization of stakeholders; preparation of the City Housing Profile; formation of sector work groups; preparation of sector strategies and goal finalization, preparation of the Draft City Housing Action Plan; public discussion and definition of inter-sector coordination; definition of implementation methodology and instruments for monitoring activities and the process of City Housing Strategy approval and beginning of realization). Stakeholders from all three sectors (public, private and civil) took part in formulating the City Housing Strategy (see Annex 1).

The formulation of the Draft City Housing Strategy was finished in September 2006.

Bearing in mind the analysis of the existing housing situation in Niš, current and future housing needs, potentials and limitations present in public, private and civil sectors of the city, as well as the housing situation in the Republic of Ser-

bia, the stakeholders involved in formulating the Housing Strategy of the city of Niš agreed that the general development goal of the strategy should lead to the improvement of the situation and provide, above all, the following:

- Provision of a large number of high-quality locations for new housing construction under market conditions, which are intended for social housing and are in accordance with city planning and property laws, equipped with infrastructures and fully functional.
- Revitalization of the housing stock owned by the city, activation of privately-owned housing potential intended for renting and institutional strengthening of the non-profit housing sector.
- Better housing amenities within the existing housing stock, its better and more effective maintenance, with a clear division of authority and obligations between the public sector and apartment owners.
- More efficient management of the city housing policy implementation, transparency and efficiency in the functioning of the city government, services and companies in charge of implementing the policy.
- Improvement of the housing quality of the vulnerable and deprived groups while creating the financial, institutional and organizational possibilities for further development of social housing.

The general development goal of the Housing Strategy of the City of Niš is defined as follows:

Achieve accessibility of housing and availability of the housing stock with:

- **complete legal security of the rental housing sector and establishment and further improvement of social housing, based on non-profit and low-profit housing organizations within the public sector and appropriate housing programs,**
- **development of the institutional infrastructure and encouragement of new apartment construction, as well as**
- **improvement of the management and maintenance of the existing housing stock.**

Priority strategic goals have been defined as follows:

- I Provision of the city construction land for new housing construction;**
- II Support for the development of the rental sector, both public and private, and the creation of conditions for complete legal security in this sector;**
- III Improvement of the system of management and maintenance of the existing housing stock;**
- IV Development of institutional infrastructure and increasing the capacity of the city government for the implementation of the housing programs;**
- V Development of special programs for solving the housing problems of poor and vulnerable social groups.**

Sector strategies for the period from 2007 to 2012 have been defined according to each priority strategic goal and the related Action Plan for the period from 2007 to 2008 has been prepared. Instruments for monitoring and evaluation have also been defined.



2. Introduction

2.1 Context

The meaning of apartment, housing and housing needs can be observed from the social, economic and political points of view. From the existential point of view, an apartment is seen as a primary human need. The social meaning of an apartment also proceeds from the fact that an apartment is a primary human need, which means that it is impossible to imagine the life of any man or family without it, as well as that an apartment is something irreplaceable, meaning that everyone must have it. This is why the social definition of apartment and housing includes various state and social aids and support that are present almost worldwide, regardless of the development level of a specific country. Housing needs are not met only according to the market principles of offer and demand.

The economic valuation of an apartment and housing starts by regarding an apartment as a property of long-term use, which encourages production and employment by its construction and which, in the phase of usage, contributes to the increase of work efficiency by creating better living and working conditions. Economic aspects of an apartment lead to the conclusion that an apartment is a commodity, whose great individual value, long-lasting character and immobility are stressed as characteristics which distinguish it from other types of commodities. According to this definition of an apartment, introduction of economic relations seems necessary in the phase of construction, purchase and use of an apartment through economic rents and the creation of market conditions for acquiring and using an apartment.

On the other hand, an apartment is also an important social right in the majority of developed countries. The right to a decent apartment is guaranteed by constitutional provisions. The realization of this right is one of the political priorities. By accepting the Millennium Development Goals of the United Nations, our country has pledged, among other things, to develop and improve the universal right to housing for all, as part of achieving Millennium Goal 7 ("Ensure environmental sustainability") and specific goal 32 ("Reduce the proportion of people without the right to housing").

Bearing in mind the importance of the local housing policy, the city of Niš began the preparation of the City Housing Strategy, as the basic strategic document for its formulation, implementation and monitoring progress during the implementation. Keeping in mind

the wider territorial context, the City Housing Strategy of Niš complies with national, regional and EU policies and provides a framework for accessing national, regional and European financial organizations.

The legal framework for the formulation of the City Housing Strategy is contained in the Law on Local Self-Government and the Draft Law on Social Housing. In accordance with its authorities prescribed by this Law, the local community has the right and the responsibility to prepare the Local Housing Strategy.

The City Housing Strategy of Niš deals with problems regarding all types of housing (private housing stock, publicly-owned housing stock, etc.), and in terms of territory, it includes the entire city territory, together with rural settlements.

2.2 National framework

The City Housing Strategy of Niš is being formulated during a period when the National Housing Strategy of Serbia has not yet been adopted. The document "Draft Housing Sector Study of the Republic of Serbia", prepared by the Ministry of Capital Investments of the Republic of Serbia, and the Methodological Guidelines for the Formulation of the Municipal Housing Strategy (UN-HABITAT and the Ministry of Capital Investments of the Republic of Serbia) were both used during the formulation of the City Housing Strategy.

The City Housing Strategy complies with the Poverty Reduction Strategy for Serbia, the National Strategy for Solving Problems of Refugees, Exiled and Internally Displaced Persons, the Local Sustainable Development Strategy and the Draft Strategy for Integration and Provision of New Authorities to Roma People.

2.3 Description of the formulation process

Based on the Memorandum of Understanding, signed between Niš City Assembly and the United Nations Human Settlements Program UN-HABITAT on March 9, 2005, "The Settlement and Integration of Refugees Program" (SIRP) is being implemented in Niš. Besides Niš, this program involves six more municipalities throughout Serbia. One of the most important activities included in this program is the formulation of the City Housing Strategy, to be

adopted by the City Assembly later on.

By the Mayor's decision no. 2565/2005-01 of December 7, 2005, the City Housing Agency, which has been the partner in this project, was put in charge of the formulation of the City Housing Strategy.

The formulation of the City Housing Strategy of Niš was based on:

- Existence of political awareness and consensus of all political decision-makers about the need for its formulation and implementation,
- Participatory process, which involved all stakeholders and
- Transparency in the process of stakeholder identification, vision formulation and problem identification, as well as in the formulation of the strategy itself.

The formulation of the City Housing Strategy of Niš included eight working phases (preparatory activities – information gathering, consultations and initial research, mobilization and organization of stakeholders; preparation of the City Housing Profile; formation of sector work groups; preparation of sector strategies and goal finalization, preparation of the Draft City Housing Action Plan; public discussion and definition of inter-sector coordination; definition of implementation methodology and instruments for monitoring activities and the process of City Housing Strategy approval and beginning of realization).

Stakeholders from all three sectors (public, private and civil) took part in formulating the City Housing Strategy (see Annex 1).

The formulation of the Draft City Housing Strategy was finished in September 2006.



3. City Housing Profile

3.1 Description of the situation in areas relevant for housing

3.1.1. Population

According to the last census from 2002, the number of inhabitants of Niš is 250.518, which is 3.3% of the total population of Serbia. The population density of the city of Niš is 421 inhabitants per km², i.e. five times higher than the average population density in Serbia. In addition to urban centers (inner territory of the city of Niš and Niška Banja), population density is higher than the national average in the majority of villages as well. Life expectancy of children born after 2000 is 72 years for male population and 75 years for female.

Two thirds of the population is urban. The urbanization level on the territory of the city of Niš is 71%, (compared to 56% in Serbia), although it has been reduced from 86% to 71% over the last two decades. A network of 71 settlements has been created on the city territory.

There are 70 settlements on the territory of the city of Niš, two of which are urban (Niš and Niška Banja), while the remaining 68 settlements are rural. The ratio between the rural and urban population has been relatively stable over the past twenty years, with about two thirds of urban population. This scale of settlement centrality indicates the development tendencies and directions, i.e. development process concentration in two urban centers, and above all, in the urban settlement of Niš itself.

The rural population in the urban system of Niš is spread out as follows: 9.9% in small villages (0 - 500 inhabitants), 42.60% in medium-size villages (500 - 2,000 inhabitants) and 47.9 % in large villages (over 2,000 inhabitants). More than half of the villages on the territory of Niš have negative or zero population growth rate. The majority of villages with a positive population growth rate fall into the category of villages with 1000 - 2000 inhabitants.

The settlement density on the territory of the city of Niš is almost twice as large as the average settlement density in the Republic of Serbia. Negative population growth rate has constantly been recorded in Niš since 1997. This trend is present even today, with a slight reduction of the negative population growth rate (in 2001 - 1.9%, 2002 - 1.1% and 2003 - 1.7%). Intensive urbanization and migrations from villages to town have drastically been reduced after 1980. During the wars on the territory of the Former Yugoslavia, automatic population inflow was

caused by migrations of refugees from Croatian and Bosnian territories and later by migrations of internally displaced persons from Kosovo and Metohija.

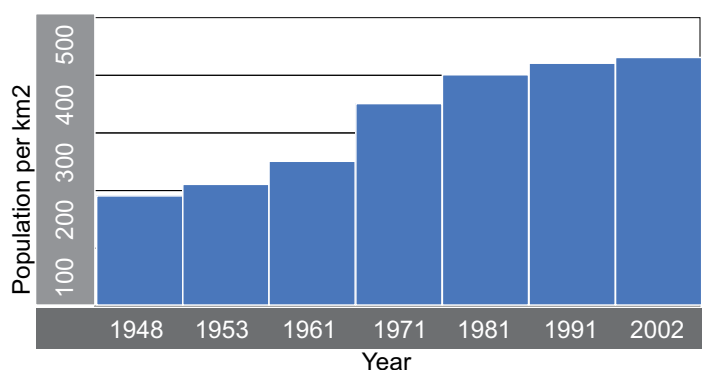
According to origin, the population of the city of Niš in 2002 consisted of 51.6% of autochthonous population and 47.4% of migrated population. In the period between censuses the largest part of the migratory population in Niš came from the territory of other municipalities of the same Republic (29.7%), while about 9.7% came from the territory of the same local unit. The population influx of persons from former SFRY republics was relatively moderate (4.7%), while the population from other economic and administrative centers accounted for 3.5% of the total immigrated population.

The percentage of population over 65 years of age in the total population in the period from 1991 to 2002 increased from 9.7% to 14.2%, while during the same period the percentage of the young from the category up to 24 years of age decreased from 32.4% to 28.9%. Nonetheless, the predominant percentage of the population is accounted for by working-age population (69.1% in 2002).

There are 85.269 family households living in Niš, with approximately 2.9 members per household. After 1990, this growth of the number of households decreased considerably on the urbanized city territory, almost stopped on the rural territory, but continued at the same pace in the suburban settlements of Niš.

The average number of members in a family household in Niš is 2.9 and it is constantly declining. The relative decline is most pronounced in the rural area and least present in suburban settlements. Two-member, three-member and four-member households prevail in the house-

Image 1. Increase of the city of Nis population density in the period 1971 - 1991



hold structure, but there are also a significant number of single-member households (17.1%). A great number of the inhabitants of Niš live in a family household with one or both parents, even after the age of 25 (13%). There is an almost identical number of family households with a single parent with children, but there are twice as many single mothers as there are single fathers. The number of divorces compared to the number of marriages is increasing.

The basic economic characteristics of the population of Niš are:

- the predominant working-age population (165,403 inhabitants) is the city potential and the percentage of employed working-age population is 69.03%, which is close to the average Republic level (70.9%);
- 114,179 inhabitants account for the total active population, i.e. the activity rate is 45.6% (RS 45.3%);
- the employment rate of the active population is 60.1% (RS 60.4%), while in 1991 this rate was 81.2%;
- the unemployment rate of the active population is 39.4% (RS 28.5%), while a decade and a half ago this rate was lower by even 18 index points.

3.1.2. Economic situation

Numerous limitations which hinder the functioning of Niš economy are the result of the synergic effects of the following factors:

- technological and economic lagging of a considerable number of installed capacities – reduced operating ability, worn-out equipment which is inadequate for the current, technological and production demands of the market;
- predominant presence of traditional industrial production;
- incomplete privatization process;
- undeveloped economic infrastructure;
- undeveloped market institutions;
- lack of investments and the evident need for large investments;
- significant insolvency and lack of short-term and long-term assets for financing the production, export and new investment plans;
- lack of capital for investments in new equipment and technology;
- difficult return to the markets lost by long sanctions;
- unfavorable age structure of the population and intensive brain drain of young, qualified and creative labor force.

Since 2000 there has been a constant growth of national income per capita in Niš, which in 2003 exceeded the national average. However, the value of this index has reached just half of the value from the early 1990s. In 2003 the gross domestic product per capita in Niš was 10% higher than the national average, even though it was only 74% of the GDP value in 1990. In 2003 the gross domestic product in Niš economy was nearly €1,800 per capita, which enabled a national income of slightly over €1,400 per capita in 2003, i.e. 5.9% above the national average. A vast majority of the 2,960 companies in Niš belong to the group of small and medium enterprises (2,833 small and 104 medium), whereas only 23 are from the group of large enterprises. In addition to these, there are 9,946 registered shops. The largest number of companies is from the trade sector (47%) and processing industry (30%). The companies from the processing industry account for 36% of national income, while trade companies account for 29% of national income.

Niš economy can be generally considered unsuccessful: in 2004 losses in economy were 5.2 times higher than profit!

In 2004 the public sector participated with 4.6% in the number of companies of Niš economy and with 17.4% in the number of the employed, it created 0.6% gain and 9.1% of the total revenue of the local economy, but also caused a loss of 20%.



The number of the unemployed was constantly increasing in absolute numbers in the period from 1995 to 2000 and from 2001 to 2003. The unemployment rate in 2004 was 36.8%, or 179 unemployed per 1000 inhabitants, which is within the limits of the national average. Besides a high total rate, Niš records a high unemployment rate of the active population (39.4%), which is 11 index points above the national average. A decline of the number of the employed in economy is also evident (compared to year 2000 - 13.3%), with a simultaneous employment increase in non-economic activities (6.6% in the same period) and an increase of the number of self-employed persons (nearly 46% in the period 2001 - 2004). 42.3 % of the employed in Niš economy earn their living in 22 large enterprises. Small and medium enterprises (2,327) employ a total of 23,825 employees.

The privatization process on the territory of the city of Niš was initiated for 73 socially-owned companies. The total number of workers in companies awaiting the privatization process is over 20,000, which is one fourth of the employed in the city. Thus, it is evident that in the upcoming period there will be a considerable reduction of workers in the socially-owned companies awaiting privatization, but there will also be an increase of the unemployment rate and the number of "transitional losers".

The level of actual income in Niš is low and in September 2005 it was RSD 16,512. In the beginning of 2006 there was a further lagging of Niš regarding the average net income, so that in spring 2006 Niš ranked last among cities in Serbia, with an average net income of RSD 16,505, which is a third less than the net income realized in Belgrade. At the same time, the average net income in economy was even lower (RSD 14,471). However, living costs were increasing on an annual level from 9.5% and retail prices from 10%.

3.1.3. Socioeconomic situation of the population

Niš is considered to be among the more developed municipalities (category 4) with a development level higher than the average in Serbia. On the other hand, the whole Southeastern Serbia, which gravitates towards Niš, has the highest percentage of the poor (16.6%), with an enormous poverty risk (56.6%) and number of the poor that accounts for 22% of total population.

Active population accounts for 45.6% of the total city population. The percentage of the dependent population is high (34.3%), and so is the percentage of the population who realize their income through pensions or other state transfers.

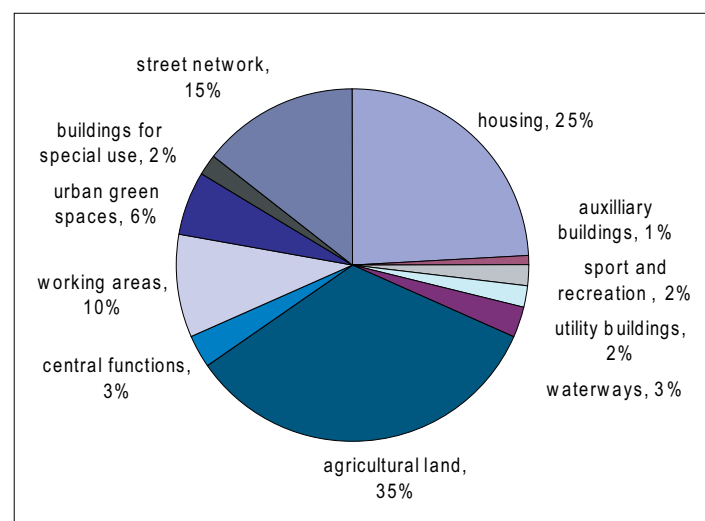
There is no reliable research for the city of Niš regarding household stratification according to the financial or property status. If projections for the whole Serbian territory are used, it can be concluded that 12,000 households have a very low financial status, 42,000 have low, 18,500 middle, 8,500 moderately high and only 4,200 households have a high financial status.

The average monthly housing expenditures (rent, electricity, heating, gas, water, telephone, etc.), which, in Niš, can be estimated at 20% of the total monthly income in a household, is still on a relatively low level compared to the percentage spent on these expenditures in more developed countries. Reasons for this lie in the following:

- a) the prices of these services are still non-economic (this, above all, refers to prices within the jurisdiction of the local self-government, whereas the price of electricity is getting closer to economic prices);
- b) the rent for rental housing does not have a great influence on the total average monthly expenditures for housing costs, because the percentage of households who became apartment owners by apartment privatization is predominant compared to the percentage of households that live in rented apartments.

On the other hand, it is evident that households that fall into the low and medium-low financial status category (63% of the total number of households) are not able to regularly settle their liabilities regarding housing, whereas households from the medium financial status category (22% of the total number of households) can regularly settle their housing expenditures, but they are not able to invest in the maintenance of the living spaces. None of these categories (85% of households in total) is able to finance the acquisition of a new apartment with their own financial means or apply for getting a credit according

Image 2. Land use according to the Master plan of Nis dated 1995



to the existing credit conditions.

The most vulnerable households are old-age households, rural households, households from the category of socially vulnerable social groups, Roma households and refugees and internally displaced persons (the sequence does not reflect the intensity of vulnerability).

In the City budget for 2006 only 0.16% was allocated for housing, and a half of the planned amount is for payment of annuities from previous periods and the rest of the amount for implementation of UN-HABITAT project.

3.1.4. Use of land

The Master Plan for Niš 1995-2010 from 1995 planned the formation of five centers of community settlement with the projection of 288,500 inhabitants by 2010. The Master Plan included the area of Niš with 11 suburbs and 7 rural settlements, with the total area of 15,036 ha. Such projections have not been realized for the most part, so that Niš is still a monocentric settlement.

According to the existing city organization and development possibilities, Niš is a monocentric



cally organized city with a main city center, and the Master Plan anticipates that Niš will remain as such, with the addition of the missing central functions of city and regional character.

3675.68 ha, i.e. 25% of the total area included in the plan, are intended for housing.

Since the city construction land does not exist on offer (there is no possibility for the land to be on offer because the whole land is in state ownership), there is also no market formed price for the land. Evaluation of the city construction land is carried out by administratively determined payments (for the use and development

of the construction land), which is why the prices are dual as well: unrealistically low for individual users who pay compensation for usage and high for investors who pay compensation for development of the city construction land.

During 2006 the formulation of a new Master Plan for Niš began, significantly increasing the scope of the plan.

3.1.5. Infrastructure

The city is well covered by the water supply network. The main problems in water supply are the lack of capacity for supplying the consumers in the third water zone during the summer and insufficient percentage of payments for water consumption (about 82%). A particular problem regarding payments are consumers living in multi-unit residential buildings, which are connected to the common water gage. Due to the undefined status of the tenants' assembly and inability to cut off individual consumers in residential buildings, there is frequent dissatisfaction of both the consumers and the Public Company.

The city territory coverage with the sewage system is satisfactory. However, the city of Niš does not have a central plant for filtering city sewage waste, which causes enormous pollution of the Nišava River as the recipient. The rural area is also well covered by the sewage system. Besides this lack of a filter plant, the basic problem of Niš sewage system is that there is no separate system for atmospheric waste.

The public heating system covers 1,236,138.27 m² of the housing area, i.e. 21,864 apartments in buildings for collective housing and 821 houses, which is around 30% of the total city housing stock. All parts of the city connected to the public heating are well covered, except Duvanište, where there is a deficit in infrastructure.

The gas line branch reached Niš in 2004 and since then only the primary gas line ring has been developed so that there are no apartments connected to the gas line network.

The whole territory of the city of Niš is covered with electricity supply network. 99.4% of apartments in Niš have electricity.

The water current of the river Nišava, which flows through the urbanized city territory, is completely regulated. The city has a particular problem with unregulated underground water and landslides. The most serious problems with landslides are on the territory of the municipality Crveni Krst in Mramor and municipality Niška Banja.

3.1.6. Existing municipal plans and programs

The Master Plan of the city of Niš 1995-2010 was adopted in 1995 and its first modifications, which are still in force today, in 2000. The procedure for making the new Master Plan for Niš started during the first half of 2006. Compared to the current Master Plan which covers an area of 150.36 km², the new plan should cover an area twice as large of around 291km². Based on the Master Plan of Niš the City Assembly adopted 251 plans of detailed regulation, together with one plan of general regulation.

The project for Territorial Planning of the City of Niš is planned in cooperation with the district Empoli Valdelsa, which will make a socio-economic atlas of Niš and clear pictures regarding resources and needs which will serve as starting points for defining strategy and appropriate measures for opening the participatory process of territorial planning which will lead to the adoption of the development plans.

In 2001 the then Municipality of Niš adopted the Local Environmental Action Plan, as a planning document which highlights priorities and necessary actions for environmental development and protection.

Apart from annual development plans that are required by the Law on Local Self-Government, the city of Niš does not have an integral development plan.

3.2 Housing Situation

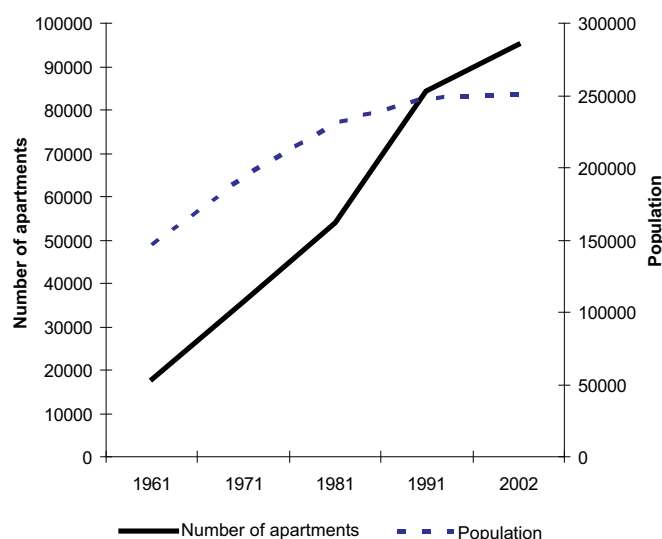
3.2.1. Housing situation – general picture of the situation

The housing reform was realized by the adoption of the Housing Relations Law in 1990 and Housing Law in 1992, which established the legal base for the mass privatization of apartments in public ownership. In the period from 1990 to 1993 nearly 98% of apartments were privatized in Serbia. Despite this, there were no fundamentally new legal or financial mechanisms, regulatory measures, or market oriented systems in the housing field in Serbia. The housing field was left to the market, which was still not regulated enough, while the state decided not to interfere and was often uninterested in these problems. Local self-governments had (and still have) limited authorities in regulation of housing problems (solving housing problems of households of citizens who are unable to earn money, persons with the right of occupancy of apartments which are denationalized, citizens who live in unhygienic housing conditions and individuals who have made special contribution to social life in the community). However, the state does not

provide local authorities with any additional resources for these purposes. On the other hand, the Law on Assets Owned by the Republic of Serbia does not provide municipalities with property ownership, even over the small number of apartments in public ownership left after the privatization of the housing sector, so they cannot count on revenues from that side. As a result, apart from rare exceptions, in the previous decade local authorities in Serbia did not use their already limited authorities in providing apartment availability to their citizens, behaving according to a pattern imposed on them by the central government policy.

85,269 households on the territory of Niš live in 95,130 apartments intended for permanent housing. Statistically, there is more than one apartment per one household (1.12). The average apartment area in Niš is 59.42 m². On average, each household uses 66.29 m² of housing space, while, according to the census from 2002, each inhabitant of Niš used approximately 22.56 m² of housing space. A vast majority of apartments is owned by private persons (over 98%). An insignificant number of apartments which have not been privatized are still in public ownership with a tendency of further privatization. Based on the available statistical data, the number of apartments intended for renting cannot be directly determined, but we can mention a figure of 6,200 to 7,500 apartments, i.e. 7.5 – 9 % of the total housing stock. The rent in the rental sector depends on the size and location of the apartments (i.e. proximity to the city center) and it ranges from €50 to €250. The average monthly rent of a two-bedroom apartment in the outer city center is €150.

Image 3. Dynamics of the overall housing stock of the city of Nis in the period 1961 - 2002 in relation to the population growth



Apart from the smaller subsidies for the housing of socially vulnerable persons, the municipal budget does not have means allocated for housing improvement. After the cancellation of the Solidarity Fund for Housing Construction by the adoption of appropriate legislation on the level of the Republic of Serbia, there has been no initiative on the municipal level intended to improve the housing status of citizens or to invest



in the maintenance of the existing stock or the construction of new apartments. The funds from the privatization revenues intended for the local self-governments (above all, the funds from the privatization of the Tobacco Industry) have not been directed towards improving the city housing situation.

3.2.2. The existing housing stock

Individual housing constitutes 88%, while collective housing constitutes 11% of the total space intended for housing. Individual housing is more common than multi-unit (collective) housing (1:2.3). Every fifth housing unit in the city urban area was built before 1960, whereas in the rural area every third unit is more than 45 years old. The entire housing stock in Niš can be used in the next 15 years. In the rural area, the situation is much worse than in the urban city area: out of the 17% of the households in the village area, 99% live in houses with electricity, while only 86% of them have water supply and sewage installations. Only 66% of the rural households live in the appropriate modern sanitary conditions.

The housing stock of Niš developed intensely in the period from 1961 to 1981, following the dynamics of the city population growth. This was particularly characteristic of the urban area. From 1981 to 1991, there was an even more drastic growth in the number of housing units, bearing in mind that the population growth was gradually slowing down. However, it is interesting that in the period from 1991 to the last census, many more apartments were built, when compared to the tempo of population growth, which almost came to a standstill in that period.

93,592 housing units are in private ownership (98.1% of all occupied permanent housing units), whereas only 385 housing units are in public ownership (the so-called "unbought apartments"). The remaining 1,000 plus are assumed to be owned by companies and enterprises or to be on the market, labeled as unsold.

Permanent housing units constitute 94.1% of the total housing stock (in Serbia 92.8%), 84% of which are permanently occupied. Every third housing unit is in the rural area. 10% of unoccupied housing units (more than 10,000 on the city territory) offer a statistically significant potential for the development of the housing sector, primarily rental housing. However, their territorial disposition is unsuitable: a certain number of these units is in the rural area (47% of the to-

Table 1. Number and size of the housing units in Nis by the manner of use in 2002

	Total Housing Stock	Housing units by the manner of use						
		Units for permanent housing				Unoccupied units		Units intended exclusively for business activities
		Total	Occupied	Unoccupied		For holidays and recreation	In the period of agricultural seasonal works	
				Temporary	Deserted			
Number	100.931	95.130	83.546	10.423	1.161	4.728	408	665
Total size(m2)	5.944.540	5.652.957	4.987.305	612.856	52.786	234.062	16.584	40.937
Average size by unit m2	58,90	58,48	59,69	58,80	45,46	49,50	40,64	61,56

Source: Statistical Yearbook of the City of Nis, 2004.

tal number, whereas when compared to the total number of the housing units in the city territory, units in the rural area account for 37%), where there are neither high housing requirements, nor demand, and a number of them are no longer occupied due to migrations or the absence of proper living conditions in the units. Nevertheless, it seems that, concerning this parameter,

of units referred to as occupied by the relatives of the owners are also rented – on the basis of some kind of unofficial agreement between the owner and the tenants. Therefore, it can be concluded that 7.5-9% of the total permanently occupied housing stock is being rented (6,200-7,500).



the situation is slightly better than the overall situation in Serbia

A certain number of the units in private ownership are statistically registered as units that are not occupied by their owners, but by tenants, relatives or someone else. Since there is no official statistics of rented units, it can be assumed that the units referred to as the units occupied by tenants or "someone else" are usually rented by the owner, but also that a significant number

47.9% of the units have the "standard" occupancy rate (one person per room), 23.6% have "normal" occupancy rate (two people per room), whereas each fifth unit is over-crowded (19.6%). The average number of rooms in occupied permanent housing units is 2.53 (total number of rooms 211,893). According to the criterion one room – one person, Niš lacks 38,625 rooms. In other words, on average, 1.18 people live in one room.

Table 2. Housing units for permanent living in Nis and their size by the type of the unit in 2002

	Type of housing unit						
	Total	Separate rooms	Studios and single bedroom units	Double bedroom units	Three room unit	Four room unit	Five room unit and larger
Number	95.130	1.178	13.119	34.185	34.542	9.000	3.106
Total size	5.652.957	21.920	427.475	1.777.078	2.310.201	744.759	371.524
Average unit size		18,60	35,58	51,98	66,88	82,75	119,61
Share in the total Housing Stock		1,2%	13,8%	35,9%	36,3%	9,5%	3,2%

Source: Statistical Yearbook of the city of Nis, 2004

In 32% of the units there is less than 15m² per person (which is the same as in Belgrade), out of which 1/3 of the units has less than 10m² per person. Slightly less than half of the units have between 15 and 30m² per person, while 21% of the units have more than 30m² per person.

Out of the 83,546 occupied permanent housing units on the territory of Niš, more than half (57%) has between 40 and 70m². The most common are units covering 51-60m² (24%), while only 3% of the units are larger than 100m². The percentage of small units up to 30m² (8%) is slightly higher. Studios and separate rooms account for 5% of the total number of units, one-room apartments account for 9%, while two-room (36%) and three-room (37%) apartments have the largest share. Apartments with 4 and more rooms constitute only 13% of the total housing stock.

Only 5.6% of the housing units were built before 1919 (which is almost the same as the national average), while the largest number of units was built during the period of socialism, between 1960 and 1980.

The housing standard has been considerably improved concerning the comfort of living. 27.8% of the units have all the parameters of the com-

fort of living (central or floor heating, water supply, sewage system and power supply), 65.9% have all the parameters of the comfort of living except public heating, 3.5% of the units have no sewage system, while 2.6% have neither water supply nor sewage system. Only 112 units on the city territory have no installations at all. The comfort of living in the rural area is much lower than in the urban area.

Ever since the 1980s, the number of housing units in Niš has been higher than the number of households (1:1.12). This surplus of housing space cannot be rented easily nowadays due to many reasons: individual houses are not of interest to the potential tenants since they are not properly equipped (there is no public heating, as well as many other requirements), because of territorial disposition, habits, etc; rental sector is not legally organized, there are no guarantees for either the landlords or the tenants; rents are too high for the tenants, while for the landlords they are not profitable, since they are often lower than the costs of the amortization of the unit, etc. 91% of the total number of occupied units is occupied only by one household, 6.2% is occupied by two households, while 433 units are occupied by three or more households. As many as 431 one-room apartments (including studios) are occupied by more than one household, while 1,800 two-room apartments are occupied by more households.

There are 6 student homes, one home for mentally handicapped children and young people, one for socially underprivileged children, one center for the old, one home for adult invalid people, one monastery night-quarters and 10 collective apartments for various purposes. In 2002 a total of 3,225 people have been living in these collective apartments, 2,122 people being permanent tenants and the rest being people whose families live in other places. Total area of the units intended for pupils and students is 14,500 m².

3.2.3. Management and maintenance of the housing stock

Since the majority of the housing units are in private ownership, the management and maintenance of the housing stock is the responsibility of the owners. Every third unit in collective housing is maintained by PC "Nišstan", while the rest is maintained by several private companies. Taking into consideration that contracts are mostly made for the maintenance of the collective housing, it is obvious that private companies are much less involved in the maintenance of housing units than PC "Nišstan". The average cost of regular maintenance is RSD 80-150 per unit. The biggest problems are with capital repairs and are usually solved either by granting private investors the right to build on flat roofs, which makes the whole condition of the urban area much



worse, or by renting common premises. These solutions can, by no means, be considered as permanent, but only as temporary.

Two main problems appear considering the management and maintenance of the existing housing stock in Niš. The first is the inability to make the tenants' assembly pay the common costs. This is particularly the case with the payment of the bills for water supply and public heating. The other problem is connected to the maintenance of elevators in the residential buildings. According to the assessment of PC "Nišstan", which is in charge of the maintenance of part of the elevators in the city, 70% of the elevators require considerable investment, while 50 elevators should be completely put out of use, because they are dangerous for those who use them. Moreover, there is a problem concerning the bad condition of the fire protection installations.

3.2.4. Public housing stock

In 2002 Niš had 385 unbought housing units, which is a negligible percent of the total housing stock. All the units are in function, totally equipped with installations, with electrical or public heating. The existing public housing stock consists mainly of old apartments built in the period from 1950 to 1975, which are not maintained due to the lack of means in the City budget. The rents for the tenants are non-economic and very low. The City does not invest the necessary funds in the maintenance of these units.

3.2.5. Informal and substandard settlements

The total number of applications for legalization in accordance with the new law on the territory of the City is 10,911, 3,000 of which were legalized by the end of 2003. Illegal construction is most widely spread in suburban settlements (9.maj, Branko Bjegović, Durlan, Duvanište, Calije, Brzi Brod). There are two obviously substandard settlements on the city territory (Stočni Trg and part of the settlement Crvena Zvezda) and both are inhabited by the Roma people. Both settlements are in the urban area of the city, while Stočni trg is less than 1km away from the city center. A large number of suburban areas do not meet the standards completely, primarily regarding the equipment with infrastructures. The most serious problems are connected to the sewage system and the lack of asphalt roads.

3.3 Housing conditions of vulnerable groups

3.3.1. Housing conditions of vulnerable groups

The total number of refugees living in the territory of Niš is 4,554, one third of whom are from the territories of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and other former republics. The refugees increased the number of population in Niš by 1.91%, thus placing Niš in the group of municipalities with a considerable number of refugees in Serbia. A small number of the refugees have permanent employment, while most of them are "absorbed by the gray economy". The status of the refugees changes when they are granted nationality, which makes it difficult to statistically trace their housing situation. For example, by mid-2004 there were about 800 refugees in Niš from the territories of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, 170 of whom were accommodated in six refugee centres, while all the others were in the private housing units. Although some refugee centres in the city were closed, refugees still live in the Youth center in Pantelejev, the Institution for Youth Education in Palilula, the motel "Mediana", the hotel "Srbija" in Niška Banja, the resort "Trem" in Sićevo and the elementary school "Đura Jakšić" in Jelašnica. Most families lived in rented apartments (92%), paying monthly rent of €50 (21%), €50-100 (52%) and more than €100 (19%). When asked about their preferences concerning possible future accommodation, the majority of refugees decided on becoming owners of a housing unit, by buying the 50m² unit, with a repayment period of 15 years, 15% down payment and a monthly installment of €150 (80%). Only 1/5 of the refugee families chose the possibility of renting an apartment of the same size owned by the City, with the monthly rent of €50.

Although the number of internally displaced persons from Kosovo and Metohija is much larger than the number of refugees, their housing problems are much different. A common housing profile of this category cannot be determined with certainty, partly due to the lack of adequate statistical data. A part of them solved their housing problem by buying apartments available on the market, thus increasing the demand and the prices by 15-20%. Another part built their own individual housing units in suburban parts of the city, often without a valid building permit, thus increasing the size of informal settlements. There is, also, a considerable number of those who rented apartments or decided to live with relatives. Evaluation of the apartment market shows that 1/3, which is 1,200-1,500 families, belongs to each of the three categories.

In Niš, there are around 1,000 people who receive special medical care and help. The num-

ber of people with invalidity is much greater. According to the evaluation of the Association of the Disabled, 700-800 of the disabled are in a wheelchair. Housing conditions of the disabled cannot be generalized and depends mostly on the economic status of the families they live in. Generally speaking, the most serious problem of the disabled is the lack of housing subsidies for the disabled with worse economic status and the unsuitability of housing units for the special needs of those with impaired or disabled locomotor function. More than half of these people are extremely poor. Such a high level of poverty greatly affects housing poverty as well. On the other hand, so far the disabled have not been or have only partly been regarded as a category that needs special subsidies to increase its housing accessibility. The City has no special funds allocated for this purpose. Unsuitability of housing units for the special needs of the disabled is present to a high degree in units intended for collective housing. This situation has improved following the adoption of the proper Law.

According to the official data of the census, there are 5,687 Roma people living in Niš, although their estimated number varies between 25,000 and 30,000 people, 1,200 of them being in the category of the temporary displaced. More than half of the total Roma population (62%) is under 25, whereas those older than 60 constitute only 4.11%. The percentage of the unemployed Roma

people in the territory of Serbia is four times higher compared to the whole population. Only 27.2% of the Roma people in Niš are economically active. Almost 1/3 of Roma people in Niš receive some kind of social help, and for 18% of Roma families social welfare is the only means of living. A considerable number of Roma families live on the help they receive from relatives working abroad (20-27%). Only 9% of Roma people have permanent income from their work, including retirement and health insurance. Only 2.5% of Roma women are permanently employed.

The majority of Roma population in Niš, whether in the rural or urban areas, live in extremely bad housing conditions. According to the research carried out by the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights of Serbia and Montenegro, there are about 10,780 Roma people living in three settlements in the city of Niš. The settlement Beograd mala, located in the central part of the city, belongs to the group of traditional settlements built before 1900. Apart from 5,000 indigenous Roma people in the settlement, there are 1,500 displaced Roma people from Kosovo and 2,000 people of Serbian and other nationalities. The settlement is mostly urbanized, although there are very poor parts which require intervention. The old settlement Stočni trg with 4,000 mostly indigenous Roma people is also in a fairly bad condition, but the worst situation concerning urbanization is in the settlement Crvena Zvezda, inhabited by 400 people. The remaining settlements of the Nišava region are inhabited by about 4,000 Roma people. These people stick to their settlements and resist attempts of relocation to other parts of the town.

3.3.2. Housing subsidies and incentives

According to the Decision on Extended Rights in the area of social care from 2005, the City took the responsibility to co-finance the housing costs of the most underprivileged citizens. The right to housing subsidies in the amount of RSD 450 per month is granted to the families whose income is less than the double value of the limit for the material provision of a family. In February 2006, there were 3,096 families receiving housing subsidies.

Apart from these incentives and subsidies, there are many other that are not (or not fully) granted by local government.

- Within the SIRP program, financed and implemented by UN-HABITAT in several towns in Serbia, 75 apartments are being built for refugees, former refugees with low income and socially vulnerable local population. In the first phase it is planned that 45 apartments be built, while in the second there should be 30 apartments in housing units (basement + ground floor + 4 floors) in part of block 8 in Pasi Poljana.



- The Decision on Rights in the area of social care on the territory of the city of Niš provides for social housing in protected conditions. One of the successful realizations of this type of housing are two new two-storey units with 13 apartments of different structure and common living room in Pasi Poljana. The partners in this project are SDC (Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid Department), Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy of the Republic of Serbia, the City of Niš, Social Work Centre in Niš, UNHCR Belgrade, and the Commissariat for Refugees of the Republic of Serbia. The value of the donation is €265,000.
- The Government of Germany, through the implementation partner, Federal Institution for Technical Support THB, provided the €450,000 donation for the construction of 40 apartments. The City participated in the realization of the project by providing construction land with adequate infrastructures, the necessary permits and agreements and connecting of the building to the infrastructures. The construction is finished and the next steps are the signing of Lease Contracts and moving into the apartments.
- The Foundation for Solving the Housing Needs of Young Scholars and Artists of the University of Niš functions as a non-profit organization that solves housing problems of the scholars of the University of Niš. At the beginning of 2004, the Construction Office of the Republic of Serbia placed 112 apartments in the settlement Stevan Sindelić in Niš at the disposal of the Foundation. After an open competition, the apartments were leased for a fixed period with the possibility of purchase under favorable conditions (repayment period of 40 years, annual interest 0.5% and 10% down payment). The construction of another building with 20 apartments is expected to start in 2006, financed by funds the Foundation accumulated through the payment of credit installments.
- In March 2006 a Contract on Construction was signed to regulate the building of 24 apartments for the socially vulnerable, refugees and war invalids since 1991. It will be financed by the Government of Japan, Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy of the Republic of Serbia and the City of Niš. The Contract is intended to provide 24 apartments with total area of 845 square meters and total value of €250,000.

3.4 Apartment construction

3.4.1. Major stakeholders, possibilities and limitations of the improvement of housing construction

The main proponents of the housing policy and housing construction in the city are:

- Public sector

CITY AUTHORITIES – decision-makers (the Mayor, the City Manager, the City Architect, the City

Table 3. Number of constructed, unfinished housing units and average number of constructed units per years in Nis, in the period 1990 – 2005

Year	Number of constructed housing units	Size in m2	Number of unfinished housing units	Number of constructed housing units per 1000 inhabitants
1990	1.213	80.593	9.504	4,9
1991	1.442	93.262	8.070	5,8
1992	899	58.588	7.718	3,6
1993	834	54.719	6.066	3,3
1994	830	54.136	5.063	3,3
1995	386	26.686	3.195	1,5
1996	515	41.039	3.095	2,0
1997	1.427	116.133	1.326	5,7
1998	476	35.478	901	1,9
1999	363	24.743	772	1,4
2000	447	29.242	792	1,8
2001	403	28.152	798	1,3
2002	267	17.609	1.307	1,6
2003	453	28.710	1.633	1,8
2004	845	59.169	2.012	3,3
January-June 2005	320	22.187	622	

Source: Municipalities in Serbia 2004, Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia; Department for Economy, Sustainable Development and Environmental Protection

Table 4. Prices of the newly constructed housing units in the first semester of 2004

	Number of housing units	Size of living apartment area (m ²)	Price per m ² (RSD)	Which includes		
				Price of building land	Construction price	Other expenses
Serbia	772	42.336 (avg. 54,8 m ²)	69.682 (€980)	19.098 (27%)	42.636 (61%)	8.148 (12%)
Belgrade	225	16.027 (avg. 71.2 m ²)	89.189 (€1.255)	26.941 (30%)	53.626 (60%)	8.622 (10%)
Nis	46	2.573 (avg. 55.9 m ²)	37.347 (€525)	6.164 (16%)	27.750 (74%)	3.439 (10%)

Source: Economist Magazine No 226, 20 September 2004

Council, the City Assembly);

CITY ADMINISTRATION – City departments (Department of Planning and Construction, Department of City Property, Department of Economy, Sustainable Development and Environmental Protection, Department of Communal Affairs, Power Engineering and Traffic, Department of Social Protection – Office of the Trustee for Refugees, Department of Inspection);

PUBLIC COMPANIES AND INSTITUTIONS owned by the City (PC City Construction Office, PC City Planning Office, PUC Naissus, PUC City Heat Plant, PC “Nišstan”, PC CHA – City Housing Agency);

INSTITUTIONS ON THE LEVEL OF THE REPUBLIC AND THE STATE – RCO Real Estate Register, Ministry of Finance – Tax Administration, State Army)

- Private sector

- Private companies – investors and their associations

- Construction companies

- Tenants’ councils

- Self-help construction

- Banks and other financial institutions

- Civil sector

- Non-profit housing organizations

- The University, scientific and professional associations

3.4.2. Use of city construction land for housing

Old buildings built before 1945 are located in the city nucleus, the most expensive housing land. Afterwards, the construction mostly took place on the free land in the vicinity of the city center. In the after-war period, there was a mass usage of the mounting concrete constructions during the building of the modern settlements on the farther free locations. Thus, technically

most modern buildings for the collective housing were built relatively far away from the city center. Unfortunately, there were no urban services, which decreased their value. In the suburbs, informal settlements were formed, mainly consisting of individual housing objects. Having no corresponding infrastructure, they limited the development of the city.

This kind of activities caused irrational use of the land resources, high costs of equipping distant and unattractive locations with infrastructure and expensive pulling down and moving of the central city locations.

In the period of transition, there is a tendency of building new housing units on the flat roofs of the old buildings. In a large number of cases this is statically inappropriate, with no esthetic principles and with no parking places for the new housing units.

3.4.3. Current housing construction

It was not before 2004 that the current housing construction showed certain signs of recovery from the stagnation in the 1990s, with the average construction of three apartments per 1,000 citizens. Such a trend was partly maintained in 2005. At the beginning of the 21st century housing construction in Niš is characterized by

- absence of any significant public investments in housing construction,
- complete absence of investment in the construction of apartments intended for renting,
- absence of any subsidies for individual housing construction, as well as insufficient number of locations for this type of construction,
- considerable number of “small” private investors, who are trying to build using money paid for the apartments in advance or acquired through various business activities (other than housing construction),
- lack of building locations in the city nucleus and lack of investors interested in the building of collective housing units in suburban settlements,
- long and complicated procedures of solving the legal and property relations and unsatis-

- factory situation in the cadastre,
- construction of units on flat roofs, which are of different quality, but, in most cases, unsatisfactory,
- design and construction of small (often sub-standard) housing units,
- lack of updated city decisions which could standardize the quality of housing construction, which on the one hand gives the possibility of subjective estimation during the issuing of building permits, while on the other hand it lowers the quality of existing housing construction,
- noncompliance with urban traffic standards during the construction of units in collective housing, which leads to a lack of parking places in the city nucleus,
- difficulties in the operation of "traditional" contractors, that is, public construction companies and the appearance of small and medium construction enterprises, which are only partly equipped for bigger construction requirements.

The construction price of an apartment consists of many elements. The mere purchase of the location accounts for 16% of the whole investment (this percentage is considerably below the national average of 27% or the average in Belgrade of 30%). Lower costs include obtaining the building permit, which is €3,000-4,000 depending on the area of the apartment. Architectural concept design costs, on average, €15 per m², which is around €20,000 for better locations. Construction land costs €40-100 per m². The cost of the construction itself is between €400 and 650, depending on the quality. Various taxes for different utility services should also be added.

3.4.4. The market

The market of apartments in Niš is still insufficiently regulated by offer and demand. Recent examples of this imbalance caused by compulsory migrations, privatizations of large systems and changes in the fiscal and legislative sectors left serious and long-lasting consequences, both on the real estate market and on the average buyer of an apartment. Since 1999 there have been several blows, which have greatly affected the selling prices of newly built and old apartments:

- Inflow of temporarily displaced persons from Kosovo and Metohija during 1999, 2000 and 2001 led to the increase of the price of apartments (around 20%).
- Privatization of the Tobacco Industry in 2002 considerably increased the demand and by extension the prices.
- Introduction of VAT also influenced the increase of the prices of apartments in Niš.

The expected market stabilization is in progress, although there was no significant decrease in

the prices of apartments. They are too high, especially for old apartments, whose price is the same as that of new apartments. Agencies do not expect either a rise or a fall in prices in the following period, regardless of the fact that offer was higher than demand in the first half of 2006. Prices of used apartments on the market are €400-1,000 per m². The highest interest is still in the smallest and fairly small apartments, while there is considerably less interest in apartments over 40m². Analyzing the potential buyers of such apartments, it can be concluded that apartments are bought by families with high incomes, more as a way of investing in real estate, than out of a real need for solving their housing problem. The other group is young married couples who want to start their own household with the financial help of their parents (most often large apartments are sold in order to buy two smaller apartments). This is only a partial solution of the housing problems in the City, since only 15% of the families can afford an apartment in this way.

Introduction of mortgage housing loans has not yet had much effect on the real estate market, due to the inadequate amount of loans with regard to the current housing construction and the short period since their introduction.

The market of new apartments in the period between 2000 and 2004 is characterized by a special financing relation: the investor sells apartments in the phases of construction for cash. The risk of the transaction is taken both by the investor and the buyer, which is typical of the dis-



organized market of countries in transition. The turnover of the capital is great. This situation has been changing in the last year due to the drop in the purchase power, lower demand and worse quality of apartments (especially in extensions). The consequence is a certain number of unsold apartments, built in this way (agencies in Niš estimate that there were 1,000 unsold apartments at the end of 2005), as well as a certain number of investors who went bankrupt. Housing cooperatives do not exist in Niš, and neither does a formal market of apartments intended for renting.

- tions.
- By 2015, urbanization rate will reach 73-75%

III The number of new marriages could reach a stable level of 1,400 per year, with a slight increase in the number of divorces.

IV The current trend of decreasing number of family members could continue, with a tendency to stop at around 2.8 per family.

V The main category that will be in need of an apartment in the upcoming period will be young married couples establishing a family household. With a more favorable crediting

3.5 Assessment of current and future housing needs

Table 5. Assessment of current and future housing needs

Year	Total number of apartments needed	For social housing
2007	1.050	220
2008	1.150	300
2009	1.200	300
2010	950	150
2011	950	150
2012	950	150

3.6 Conclusions

3.6.1. Current and future housing needs

I Even today, more than 2,000 new housing units are needed due to family separations.

II The population of Niš will increase by 2,800 to 3,500 people on the urban territory of the city, while at the same time the population in the rural area will decrease by 1,500 to 2,000 by the year 2010 due to the following reasons:

- The birthrate will remain negative until 2010, with a slight increase in the period between 2010 and 2015;
- Substantial migration from other places to Niš cannot be expected since the economy of Niš is not economically attractive;
- Internal migrations (village – city, above all) will continue;
- It is unrealistic to expect that internally displaced persons will return to Kosovo and Metohija by 2010, whereas in the period between 2010 and 2015 the return of a small number of them can be expected;
- Emigration, especially of the young to foreign countries, will cease;
- A certain number of economic emigrants and asylum seekers from Western Europe will be returned due to the obligations taken on by the state in the process of European integra-

policy and the expected measures of the Government of Serbia concerning housing policy, it can be realistically assumed that a number of new families of average wealth will move to the category of the well-off, which accounts for 30-35% of newly married couples (400-450 new families ready to buy an apartment) a year.

VI The remaining family categories which may be in need of an apartment are :

- returned asylum seekers (150-200 families a year, in the period between 2007 and 2008), and
- a number of existing households with an unsolved housing problem (250 apartments a year till 2010 and 150 apartments after this period).

VII Part of these families will solve their housing problem by renting an apartment, which will depend on the policy of strengthening the rental sector.

VIII Higher employment rate and better economic situation of families, which could have a significant impact on the increase of demand on the market, cannot be expected realistically.

IX It is realistic to expect that changes in the housing availability policy, new mechanisms of housing crediting and housing subsidizing will

not increase the demand before the year 2009.

X It is estimated that on the territory of Niš there are around 2,000 members of the Serbian Army that should belong in this category. These are short-term needs and they will represent a significant demand factor until 2010.

3.6.2. Problems, limitations and obstacles

I Problems, limitations and obstacles concerning investors, buyers, landlords and tenants

- Restricted housing finance due to the risk for creditors (which is still too high)
- Lack of suitable locations
- Banks are not yet ready to support small private investors
- The procedure of issuing a building permit is long and insufficiently institutionally organized
- The apartment market is not properly organized
- Absence of an apartment renting market
- Disloyal competition on the market
- Lack of modern technical rules and standards for apartment construction

II Problems, limitations and obstacles concerning the functioning of local self-government

- Absence of a city housing policy and social housing policy
- Lack of budgetary and non-budgetary resources
- The monopoly of central government over city construction land
- High rate of illegal construction
- Legal restrictions on granting free use of city construction land for building social housing apartments
- Absence of a suitable internal organization within the local government that would integrally perceive and solve housing problems
- Lack of adequate personnel in the existing administrations and public companies

3.6.3. Potentials

I More favorable legislation

II Fiscal benefits

III Mortgage Law

IV Founding of the City Housing Agency and its participation in solving the housing problems of vulnerable social groups



4. General development goal

Bearing in mind the analysis of the existing housing situation in Niš, current and future housing needs, potentials and limitations present in public, private and civil sectors of the city, as well as the housing situation in the Republic of Serbia, the stakeholders involved in formulating the Housing Strategy of the city of Niš agreed that the general development goal of the strategy should lead to the improvement of the situation and provide, above all, the following:

- Provision of a large number of high-quality locations for new housing construction under market conditions, which are intended for social housing and are in accordance with city planning and property laws, equipped with infrastructures and fully functional.
- Revitalization of the housing stock owned by the city, activation of privately-owned housing potential intended for renting and institutional strengthening of the non-profit housing sector.
- Better housing amenities within the existing housing stock, its better and more effective maintenance, with a clear division of authority and obligations between the public sector and apartment owners.
- More efficient management of the city housing policy implementation, transparency and efficiency in the functioning of the city government, services and companies in charge of implementing the policy.
- Improvement of the housing quality of the vulnerable and deprived groups while creating the financial, institutional and organizational possibilities for further development of social housing.

The general development goal of the Housing Strategy of the City of Niš is defined as follows:

Achieve accessibility of housing and availability of the housing stock with:

- **complete legal security of the rental housing sector and establishment and further improvement of social housing, based on non-profit and low-profit housing organizations within the public sector and appropriate housing programs,**
- **development of the institutional infrastructure and encouragement of new apartment construction, as well as**
- **improvement of the management and maintenance of the existing housing stock.**





5. Priority strategic goals

Taking into account the current housing situation, stated housing needs, potentials and limitations, and, above all, the overall development goal of the Strategy, priority strategic goals have been defined as follows:

1. Provision of city construction land for new housing construction;
2. Support for the development of the rental sector, both public and private, and creation of conditions for complete legal security in this sector;
3. Improvement of the system of management and maintenance of the existing housing stock;
4. Development of institutional infrastructure and increasing the capacity of the city government for the realization of housing programs;
5. Development of special programs for solving the housing problems of the poor and vulnerable social groups.

5.1 Provision of city construction land for new housing construction

Within the activities and measures envisaged by the action plan which is part of this document, in the period up to 2012 the City of Niš will provide, through mechanisms of land policy, the necessary city construction land for the construction of apartments under market conditions and for the construction of apartments for renting under accessible conditions, as well as establish mechanisms for the long-term provision of land intended for housing, especially city construction land intended for social housing. By the end of 2008 the City will infrastructurally equip locations for new housing construction under market conditions of 380 apartments in buildings intended for collective housing on the territory included in the current Master Plan, 900 housing units for individual housing on the territory included in the current Master Plan and 400 housing units for individual housing in the rural area, as well as allocate special locations intended for social housing (at least 6-8 locations for collective housing construction) in the new Master Plan of the City and give priority to developing these locations by plans of detailed regulations and city planning projects.

Starting from the policy defined in the Draft National Housing Strategy and the real market and social needs of the City of Niš, the activities concerning construction land that are to be carried out within the city of Niš in the period covered by this Strategy are the following:

- Urgently make the Decision on Public Construction Land in accordance with the provisions of the Law on Planning and Construction, which regulates that issue and implies the obligation to make such a decision.
- Clearly define in the new Master Plan of the city of Niš new residential zones and blocks

for residential building reconstructions in the City nucleus, and define the basic criteria and standards of housing construction, reconstruction and extension in the document.

- Reexamine the system of functioning of the city rent as the main source of income for financing housing construction:
 1. analyze the existing practice of using the renting potentials in Niš and the experience of referential cities in Serbia and use it to make an analysis of renting potential of the City of Niš,
 2. replace the currently used model of public utility cost accounting on a zone-based system with a model of cost accounting according to the analysis of renting potentials of each location, using the suitable methodology. Bearing this in mind, it is necessary to change the existing Decision on Standards for Contracting and Setting the Price for Developing Construction Land ("Official Gazette of the City of Niš" no.1/2004);
 3. examine the system of compensation for the use of construction land and introduce as payers of this fee new bases and users that have been free from paying it so far.
- Carry out the infrastructural equipping of construction land for new housing construction using the funds from city rent, privatization and donations, and offer this to interested investors on the market. The dynamics of infrastructural equipping of construction land should keep up with the need for apartments, realized through construction under market conditions:
 1. in 2007 infrastructurally equip the construction land for construction of 180 apartments in buildings intended for collective housing in the area included in the current Master Plan (MP), 450 housing units for individual housing in the area included in the current MP and 200 housing units for individual housing in

the rural area;

2. in 2008 infrastructurally equip the construction land for construction of 200 apartments in buildings intended for collective housing in the area included in the current Master Plan (MP), 450 housing units for individual housing in the area included in the current MP and 200 housing units for individual housing in the rural area;

3. in the period from 2009 to 2012 coordinate infrastructural equipping of construction land for the new housing construction under market conditions with the new MP and the needs stated in this strategy.

- Allocate locations intended for social housing (at least 6-8 locations for collective housing construction) in the new Master Plan and give priority to developing these locations by plans of detailed regulations and city planning projects.
- Provide land for social housing under special legal terms (by expropriation) and equip it with infrastructures also under special (privileged) terms.
- Reach an agreement with the Army of the

Republic of Serbia on ceding a part of the complex of existing military structures in the city proper, the purpose of which would be an overall evaluation and planning in the new MP for housing construction and other productive purposes.

5.2 Support for the development of the rental sector, both public and private, and creation of conditions for complete legal security in this sector

Achieving this specific goal by 2012 will lead to solving the problem of authority over the development of the rental sector, as well as instruments and practical policies used to stimulate landlords and tenants through:

- **regulation of the legal relationship between the tenants and the landlord;**
- **subsidizing the public sector (the city) for the construction of apartments to be rented (building subsidies) or for the tenants (subject subsidies);**
- **provision of rental housing quality.**



The rental housing sector will be advanced into a transparent and well-organized system of housing which will provide protection and security to the citizens. It is necessary to organize rental housing in the public stock, along with the construction of new social apartments intended for renting, by certain legislative measures, as well as measures on the local community level so that they offer the highest level of social and legal protection. Part of rental housing in private apartments should be brought to the level of controlled rent by both direct and indirect measures of fiscal policy.

Concerning rental policy, "protected" rents should be coordinated with the economic criteria of management and maintenance, that is, principles of covering expenses; at the same time, it is necessary to establish a transparent system of rental subsidies for the socially vulnerable categories of citizens. Therefore, it is necessary to establish a database of apartments that are rented and records of rent levels. Rental policy should include the system of subsidies for covering housing expenses.

On the other hand, it is obvious that there are a certain number of apartments in Niš which are not in the rental circulation for various reasons. Owners of these apartments should be encouraged to offer them to tenants under market conditions by measures of the housing policy.

The following measures and activities are planned:

- Delegating the authority for the development of the rental sector (creating a database and a legal and advisory center) to the City Housing Agency as a non-profit organization within the public city sector;
- Normative arrangement of the system of renting apartments on the City territory;
- Development of the system of facilitatory measures (allowing the use of city land under special conditions, determining locations for rental housing in the urban plans) for investment into apartments to be rented under conditions regulated by the City;
- Introduction of market prices for the use of city construction land for families which are not using the apartments for permanent residence;
- Creating conditions for founding non-profit organizations for the development of rental housing;
- Increasing housing mobility through measures that allow for an easier exchange of apartments that are rented.

5.3 Improvement of the system of management and maintenance of the existing housing stock

In the period up to 2012 the City of Niš will finance, together with owners of apartments, the overhaul of 150 elevators in multi-unit residential buildings, by 2010 the number of connections to district heating will be increased by 30% by putting the "Apelovac" heating plant into operation and 400 apartments in the rural area of the municipality Pantalej will be connected to the water supply system. The completion of works on the water supply of apartments in water zones III and IV will ensure the necessary pressure in the water supply system for apartments located in these water zones.

The management and maintenance of the housing stock represent one of the priorities, on both the national level and the territory of the City of Niš. The restructuring of the housing stock through its privatization and new legislation that transfer the responsibility for the management and maintenance of the existing housing stock to new owners through the institution of the residential building as a legal entity did not bring any of the expected improvements; on the contrary, in many of the cases the problem of the management and maintenance of the existing housing stock was intensified. In this way the existing housing stock faced the decrease of its market value due to insufficient investment into its maintenance. Awaiting the new strategic determinations and legislation on the level of the Republic (above all, condominium), this strategic goal implies the following activities:

- General overhaul of elevators in the City area;
- Enlarging the installed capacities of public heating (putting the "Apelovac" heating plant into operation and building new capacities);
- Detailed normative regulation of issues concerning the management and maintenance of buildings by a Decision on city level in order to determine the instruments that will compel all joint owners to take measures and meet obligations, which will ensure that the minority will act in accordance with the terms of the majority in multi-unit residential buildings, as stated in Article 6 of the Law on Residential Building Maintenance;
- Further development of the market of maintenance of residential buildings.

5.4 Development of institutional infrastructure and increasing the capacity of the city government for the realization of housing programs

The jurisdiction over activities from the domain of defining and implementing the housing policy on the level of the City of Niš will be divided between stakeholders in the public sector by putting the city government (primarily, the Department of Planning and Construction) in charge of the overall implementation of the housing policy of the city of Niš, while the City Housing Agency will be responsible for the realization of individual strategic goals.

Given that positive legislation implies that the local self-government is in charge of meeting the housing needs of the people who live in its territory and bearing in mind that institutional and personnel qualifications of the city government and public utility companies in this area were as negligent as the central and local authorities were towards housing issues in the previous period, it is necessary to direct special attention to the developing of institutional infrastructure and the increasing of capacity of the city govern-

ment and public companies to create, carry out and supervise the implementation of the housing strategy of the City. The following activities are to be carried out in the period determined by the Strategy:

- Removing the tasks of recording and managing the housing stock in the public ownership from the domain of work of the City Property Department and entrusting these tasks to the City Housing Agency who will be in charge of implementing the City Housing Strategy, as well as improving the management and maintenance of the existing housing stock;
- Organizational and personnel strengthening of the Department of Planning and Construction with the aim of enhancing the efficiency and transparency of the public sector in the area of housing policy;
- Development and adoption of annual housing programs on the level of the City;
- Development and adoption of annual social housing programs on the level of the City;
- Reaching a Decision on the City level about the standards of the construction of new apartments, which will define the standard of apartment occupancy, technical conditions and rules for design and construction.

5.5 Development of special programs for solving the housing problems of the poor and vulnerable social groups

Achieving this specific goal will be based on the social housing concept. The modern social housing concept implies a complex set of measures in the field of housing policy, incentives and subsidies which enable low-income families to exercise their housing rights under conditions which would be unavailable to them directly on the market. All the measures to be taken can be classified into two groups:

- Programs providing direct participation of the City in supplying the available apartments for the poor and vulnerable social groups, with financial assistance of the Republic (from various budgetary or non-budgetary funds, in accordance with the National housing strategy) and the donor community.
- Programs including the distribution of income (for example, subsidizing of the housing expenses) which would be financed from the Republic budget, with proportional donations from the City budget. This means that part of the expenses (5-20%) is financed from the City budget, which creates an incentive for a more careful selection of program beneficiaries.



The following measures and activities are planned:

- Construction of accessible apartments intended for social housing;
- Urgent solving of the sanitary problems in Roma settlements in the City (Stočni trg, Crvena Zvezda) and involving representatives of the Roma community in the process of finding an adequate solution;
- Conducting the annual analysis of the effects of housing subsidies for the socially vulnerable and gradually expanding the range of subsidies in accordance with the City budget;
- Determining the locations for the development of social housing through new housing construction in the Master Plan of the City of Niš;
- Development and adoption of precise criteria of housing poverty;
- Organizational and personnel strengthening of the City Housing Agency which is in charge of implementing the program of solving the housing needs of the poor and vulnerable groups;





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6. Sector strategies 2007 – 2012

6.1 Provision of city construction land for new housing construction

	Description	Indicators	Source of verification	Assumptions and risks	Time frame
General strategic goal	Achieve accessibility of housing and availability of the housing stock with complete legal security of the rental housing sector and establishment and further improvement of social housing, based on non-profit and low-profit housing organizations within the public sector and appropriate housing programs, development of the institutional infrastructure and encouragement of new apartment construction, as well as improvement of the management and maintenance of the existing housing stock .				
Priority strategic goal	Provision of city construction land for new housing construction	Provision of a large number of high-quality locations for new housing construction under market conditions, which are intended for social housing and are in accordance with city planning and property laws, equipped with infrastructures and fully functional	The Mayor's report to the City Assembly on the progress in the housing policy implementation		2007 – 2009
Results	1. Decision on public construction land adopted	The Assembly of the city of Niš adopted the decision on public construction land	Decision on public construction land in the Official Gazette of the city of Niš	Absence of political consensus Blockage in the work of the City Assembly	the beginning of 2007
	2. New residential zones to be given under market conditions and residential zones intended for social housing (6-8 zones) were defined in the new Master Plan of the city of Niš	Residential zones to be given under market conditions and residential zones intended for social housing (6-8 zones) were defined in the GP of the city of Niš	MP of the city of Niš	Delay in the adoption of the new MP of the City of Niš Lack of adequate locations Unsuccessful negotiations with the Army of the Republic of Serbia	2007
	3. New residential zones for residential building reconstructions in the existing City nucleus were defined in the new Master Plan of the city of Niš	Residential zones for residential building reconstructions in the existing City nucleus were defined	MP of the city of Niš	Delay in the adoption of the new MP of the City of Niš	2007
	4. Basic criteria and standards of housing construction, reconstruction and extension were defined	Decision defining the basic criteria and standards of housing construction, reconstruction and extension was reached on the City level	MP of the city of Niš Decision on the Criteria and Standards of Housing Construction in Niš	Absence of political will Lack of trained professionals Blockage in the work of the City parliament	2007
	5. The analysis of the renting potentials of the City of Niš was carried out	Recommendations for the new methodology of calculating the compensations for the development and use of city construction land	The analysis of the renting potentials of the City of Niš	Limitations in the existing legislation Inadequate training of the City administration and services for carrying out the analysis	2007
	6. Decision on the Standards for Contracting and Establishing the Price for Developing Construction Land was changed, in accordance with the recommendations of the Analysis of Renting Potentials of the City of Niš	Considerable interest of important private investors Properly regulated market Increased income of the city budget	Decision on the Standards for Contracting and Establishing the Price for Developing Construction Land Analysis of budgetary income from the city rent	Limitations in the existing legislation Absence of political will	2007

	Description	Indicators	Source of verification	Assumptions and risks	Time frame
Results	7. Infrastructurally equipped construction land for the construction of 180 apartments in buildings intended for collective housing in the area included in the current Master Plan (MP), 450 housing units for individual housing in the area included in the current MP and 200 housing units for individual housing in the rural area	Considerable interest of important private investors More demands for the concession of city construction land Properly regulated market Increased income of the city budget	Annual report of the City Housing Agency Report on projects of the Department of Planning and Constructing Analysis of budgetary income	Lack of locations for housing construction under market conditions in the existing MP of the City of Niš Insufficient interest of the investors Lack of budgetary and non-budgetary city funds (reduced inflow of funds into the city budget from land sales and compensations for developing city construction land)	2007
	8. Infrastructurally equipped construction land for the construction of 200 apartments in buildings intended for collective housing in the area included in the current Master Plan (MP), 450 housing units for individual housing in the area included in the current MP and 200 housing units for individual housing in the rural area	Considerable interest of important private investors More demands for the concession of city construction land Properly regulated market Increased income of the city budget	Annual report of the City Housing Agency Report on projects of the Department of Planning and Constructing Analysis of budgetary income	Slow progress in the system of financing housing construction and apartment purchasing Lack of locations for housing construction under market conditions in the existing MP of the City of Niš Insufficient interest of the investors Lack of budgetary and non-budgetary city funds	2008
	9. The analysis of the effects of infrastructural equipping of locations for housing purposes has been made and coordinated with the new MP of the City of Niš and the action plan of infrastructural equipping has been adopted for the period 2009 – 2012		The analysis of the effects of infrastructural equipping of locations for the period 2007 – 2008 Action plan of infrastructural equipping of locations for housing construction for the period 2009 – 2012	MP of the City of Niš not adopted	2009
	10. 6 to 8 locations for collective housing construction intended for social housing were defined in accordance with city planning and property laws (plans for detailed regulation and city planning projects were made and adopted)	6 to 8 locations for collective housing construction intended for social housing made fully functional	The decision of the City Assembly on allocating the building land to the City Housing Agency under special conditions Plans for a detailed regulation City planning projects	Law on social housing not passed Decision on the public city construction land not reached Lack of locations intended for social housing owned by the city	2007 – 2008
	11. Agreement reached with the Army of the Republic of Serbia on the cession of part of the existing complex of military buildings in the City proper to the City of Niš	Locations for the new housing construction	An agreement with the Army of the Republic of Serbia signed	Insufficient support of the Government of the Republic of Serbia and failure to include locations suitable for the housing construction in the Master plan of the Government of the Republic of Serbia Absence of political will on central and local levels	2007

6.2 Support for the development of the rental sector, both public and private, and creation of conditions for complete legal security in this sector

	Description	Indicators	Source of verification	Assumptions and risks	Time frame
General strategic goal	Achieve accessibility of housing and availability of the housing stock with complete legal security of the rental housing sector and establishment and further improvement of social housing, based on non-profit and low-profit housing organizations within the public sector and appropriate housing programs, development of the institutional infrastructure and encouragement of new apartment construction, as well as improvement of the management and maintenance of the existing housing stock.				
Priority strategic goal	Support for the development of the rental sector, both public and private, and creation of conditions for complete legal security in this sector	Revitalization of the housing stock owned by the City, activation of the housing potential in private ownership intended for renting and institutional strengthening of the non-profit housing sector	The Mayor's report to the City Assembly on the process of housing policy implementation		
Results	1. Delegating the authority for the development of the rental sector (creating a database and a legal and advisory center) to the City Housing Agency as a non-profit organization within the public sector of the city 2. Normative arrangement of the system of renting apartments on City territory	New way of monitoring the situation and recording the existing and the new housing stock owned by the City New institutes of the legal and advisory center in the field of protection of landlords and tenants	The decision on entrusting the affairs of monitoring and managing of the housing stock owned by the City to the City Housing Agency was reached on the City level New systematization of the City Housing Agency	Lack of consensus within the City government Lack of personnel, space and material potentials of the City Housing Agency	2007
	3. Development of the system of facilitatory measures (allowing the use of city land under special conditions, determining locations for rental housing in the urban plans) for investment into apartments to be rented under conditions regulated by the City	System of facilitatory measures for investors ready to finance the construction of rental apartment was developed	Decision of the City	Vague legislation Lack of a National Housing Strategy or absence of rental sector development as one of its goals	2009 – 2010
	4. Introduction of market prices for the use of city construction land for families who are not using the apartments for permanent residence, or renting them under the conditions regulated by the City	Decrease of the number of apartments not used for permanent residence	Decision of the City	Lack of political will Stagnation or decrease in the purchasing power of citizens	2009
	5. Creating conditions for founding non-profit organizations for the development of rental housing	Increase of the number of apartments in rental circulation Lower rents	Analysis of the development of the market of rental apartments	Absence of the Law on Social Housing Lack of a National Housing Strategy or absence of rental sector development as one of its goals	2010
	6. Increasing housing mobility through measures that allow for an easier exchange of apartments that are rented	Increase of the number of apartments in rental circulation	Analysis of the development of the market of rental apartments	Absence of the Law on Social Housing Lack of a National Housing Strategy or absence of rental sector development as one of its goals	2009 – 2010

6.3 Improvement of the system of management and maintenance of the existing housing stock

	Description	Indicators	Source of verification	Assumptions and risks	Time frame
General strategic goal	Achieve accessibility of housing and availability of the housing stock with complete legal security of the rental housing sector and establishment and further improvement of social housing, based on non-profit and low-profit housing organizations within the public sector and appropriate housing programs, development of the institutional infrastructure and encouragement of new apartment construction, as well as improvement of the management and maintenance of the existing housing stock.				
Priority strategic goal	Improvement of the system of management and maintenance of the existing housing stock	Better housing amenities within the existing housing stock. Better and more effective maintenance of the existing housing stock, with a clear division of authority and obligations between the public sector and the apartment owners			
Results	General overhaul of elevators in the City area	150 elevators overhauled in buildings in the City area in the period 2007 – 2012	Annual reports on the efficiency of Public Company 'Nišstan' Inspection in the field	Lack of financial resources for co-financing by citizens	2007 – 2012
	Continued building of the heating plant "Apelovac" and its putting into operation	Heating plant "Apelovac" put into operation Number of apartments connected to public heating increased by 30% by 2010	Annual reports of Public Company 'Gradska toplana' Inspection in the field	Lack of financial resources	2007 – 2008
	Completion of works on water supply of apartments in water zones III and IV	Increased pressure in the system in the summer period	Annual reports of Public Company 'Naissus' Inspection in the field	Lack of financial resources	2007 – 2008
	Villages in Pantalej municipality connected to the water supply system	400 apartments in the rural area connected to the water supply system	Annual reports of Public Company 'Naissus' Inspection in the field	Lack of financial resources	2007 – 2010
	Normative regulation of management and maintenance of buildings in the City area	Decision on management and maintenance of residential buildings made	Decision on management and maintenance of residential buildings	No changes in the Law regulating this subject matter	2009

6.4 Development of institutional infrastructure and increasing the capacity of the city government for the realization of housing programs

	Description	Indicators	Source of verification	Assumptions and risks	Time frame
General strategic goal	Achieve accessibility of housing and availability of the housing stock with complete legal security of the rental housing sector and establishment and further improvement of social housing, based on non-profit and low-profit housing organizations within the public sector and appropriate housing programs, development of the institutional infrastructure and encouragement of new apartment construction, as well as improvement of the management and maintenance of the existing housing stock.				
Priority strategic goal	Development of institutional infrastructure and increasing the capacity of the city government for the realization of housing programs	Managing the city housing policy more efficiently and achieving greater transparency and efficiency in the functioning of city government, services and companies in charge of carrying out the policy			
Results	Recording and managing the housing stock in public ownership was entrusted to the City Housing Agency	More efficient management of the housing stock in public ownership	Annual report on the operation of the City Housing Agency	Absence of consensus in the City Assembly	2007
	Department of Planning and Construction made stronger in terms of organization and personnel	Increased efficiency and transparency of the public sector in the housing policy field	Annual report on the operation of the Department Analysis of the operation of the Department (number of files and issued permits)	Absence of political consensus	2007 – 2009
	Annual housing program adopted on city level	Increased efficiency and transparency of the public sector in the housing policy field	Annual housing program	Lack of management expertise and skills in the public sector	Permanent task
	Annual social housing program adopted on city level	Increased efficiency and transparency of the public sector in the housing policy field	Annual housing program	Lack of management expertise and skills in the public sector	Permanent task
	Adoption of the Decision on city level on the standards of construction of new apartments, which will define the standard of the occupancy rate, technical conditions and the rules for design and construction	Higher quality of new housing construction	Decision on apartment construction standards in Niš		2007

6.5 Development of special programs for solving the housing problems of the poor and vulnerable social groups

	Description	Indicators	Source of verification	Assumptions and risks	Time frame
General strategic goal	Achieve accessibility of housing and availability of the housing stock with complete legal security of the rental housing sector and establishment and further improvement of social housing, based on non-profit and low-profit housing organizations within the public sector and appropriate housing programs, development of the institutional infrastructure and encouragement of new apartment construction, as well as improvement of the management and maintenance of the existing housing stock.				
Priority strategic goal	Development of special programs for solving the housing problems of the poor and vulnerable social groups	Improving housing quality of the vulnerable and deprived groups while creating financial, institutional and organizational possibilities for further development of social housing			
Results	Completion of the construction of 392 apartments intended for privatization from the National Investment Plan for workers employed in state administration on the location "Stevan Sindelić"	392 family households with their housing problem solved	Inspection in the field		2007-2008
	Completion of the construction of 200 apartments intended for social housing, 120 of which are intended for renting without the possibility of privatization	200 family households with their housing problem solved	Inspection in the field	Lack of adequate legislation Lack of financial resources Lack of city planning documentation	2008
	Completion of the construction of 300 apartments intended for social housing, 120 of which are intended for renting without the possibility of privatization	300 family households with their housing problem solved	Inspection in the field	Lack of adequate legislation Lack of financial resources Lack of city planning documentation	2009
	Completion of the construction of 450 apartments intended for social housing, 200 of which are intended for renting without the possibility of privatization	450 family households with their housing problem solved	Inspection in the field	Lack of adequate legislation Lack of financial resources Lack of city planning documentation	2010 – 2012
	Completion of the construction of 40 apartments intended for renting for internally displaced persons on the location "Ledena Stena"	40 families of internally displaced persons with their housing problem solved	Inspection in the field		2007
	Completion of the adaptation and construction of 21 apartments in Kovanlučka Street intended for renting for refugees and internally displaced persons, as well as for other population from the category of vulnerable people	21 families of internally displaced persons with their housing problem solved	Inspection in the field		2007
	Adoption of the Program for Solving the Problem of Dislocation of the Roma settlement "Crvena Zvezda" (150 families), with the help of representatives of the Roma community	The conditions for solving the sanitary problem of this settlement were created	Program for Solving the Problem of Dislocation of the Roma settlement "Crvena Zvezda"	Lack of political will Inefficiency of civil services in charge of planning Lack of legal and planning mechanisms	2007.

	Description	Indicators	Source of verification	Assumptions and risks	Time frame
Results	500 prefabricated terraced houses were built on the location „Stočni Trg“ in the vicinity of the existing Roma settlement on the Jewish cemetery, intended for residence of the Roma community	Improved housing quality of the Roma population	Inspection in the field	Lack of financial resources Lack of city planning documentation	2007-2010
	Adoption of Regulations concerning the criteria for distribution of apartments built according to social housing programs	There are precise and transparent criteria of housing poverty	Regulations concerning the criteria for distribution of apartments built according to social housing programs		2007
	Locations for social housing development through new housing construction have been specified in the MP of the City of Niš – Ledena Stena for collective housing development, Mokranjčeva and Pasipoljana for individual housing development	Possibility for solving legal-property relations for social housing development under special conditions was created	MP of the City of Niš	MP of the City of Niš not adopted	2007
	City Housing Agency, which is in charge of implementing the City Housing Strategy, is well-equipped in terms of finance and personnel (introduction of necessary new software, employment of no more than three people with university degrees, training for the employed)	Increase of budgetary and non-budgetary resources for the operation of the City Housing Agency	Budget of the City of Niš	Lack of budgetary resources Lack of political will	2007-2008



7. City Housing Action Plan 2007 – 2008

No	Activity	Strategic goal	Description of the activity	Implementation arrangements	Program activities to be implemented	Ways of providing funds
1.	Define and plan residential zones and locations for housing purposes in the new Master Plan of the city of Niš	Providing city construction land for new housing construction	The mentioned activities represent the preparatory phase for providing locations for new housing construction both for the market and social housing. Since the activities from the work program are simultaneous with the outlining and approving of the MP of Niš, it is necessary to coordinate them with the formulation of the MP. The mentioned activities are a form of city planning measures.	Activities carried out by: City Planning Institute Participants: CHA, Department of Planning and Construction Note: Forming a Work Group for Housing within the team for the MP formulation is recommended	Adopt the Decision on public construction land Define new residential zones for allocation under market conditions and residential zones for social housing (6 to 8 zones) in the new Master Plan of Niš Define residential zones for the reconstruction of housing construction in the existing city nucleus in the new Master Plan of Niš	City budget (current expenses)
2.	Define basic criteria and standards of housing construction, reconstruction and extension	Providing city construction land for new housing construction	Make a detailed expert analysis and based on it make a decision on criteria and standards of housing construction, reconstruction and extension on the city territory. This decision will be a form of regulation establishing parameters of housing comfort, requests that planners, investors and contractors are to meet during the construction of (primarily multi-unit) buildings intended for housing.	Activities carried out by: CHA Participants: University of Niš, Department of Planning and Construction, City Planning Institute, City Construction Office, business association "Investitor", "Nišproject"	Make a detailed expert analysis of the existing legal regulations and construction standards in the Republic of Serbia, examples of good practice in other compatible cities and specific needs of the city of Niš. Prepare a draft of the Decision on criteria and standards of housing construction, reconstruction and extension on the city territory	City budget (current expenses)
3.	Development of a new model of economic valorization of the city construction land in Niš	Providing city construction land for new housing construction	Make an analysis of the rental potential of the city of Niš and based on its results, propose changes in the Decision on the Standards for Contracting and Establishing the Price for Developing Construction Land, the aim of which is better economic valorization of the city construction land.	Activities carried out by: CHJ Participants: Work Group (Independent experts, City Construction Office, CHA)	Make an analysis of the rental potential of the city of Niš Prepare a draft of the Decision on the Standards for Contracting and Establishing the Price for Developing Construction Land, the aim of which is better economic valorization of the city construction land.	City budget Financing of the project from donor funds RSD 1,500,000
4.	Infrastructural equipping of construction land for the construction of 380 apartments in buildings intended for collective housing on the territory included by the current MP, 900 housing units for individual housing on the territory included in the MP and 400 housing units for individual housing in the rural area	Providing city construction land for new housing construction	Within the Program of the City Construction Office for 2007 and 2008, and within potential additional resources from the realized privatization and based on the project financing, the city will infrastructurally equip the land intended for new housing construction, which will be offered to potential investors under market conditions. One third of the planned land will be in the rural area.	Activities carried out by: City Construction Office Participants: CHA	An adequate decision made by the City assembly. Purchase and legal and property regulation of the land Building of infrastructure	City budget (RSD 100,000,000 in 2007 + RSD 100,000,000 in 2008) Obtaining loans from business banks (RSD 210,000,000)

No	Activity	Strategic goal	Description of the activity	Implementation arrangements	Program activities to be implemented	Ways of providing funds
5.	Making and adopting detailed regulation plans and city planning projects for 6 to 8 locations intended for social housing development and legal and property regulation of these locations	Providing city construction land for new housing construction	Legal and property regulation will be carried out and the appropriate city planning documentation will be approved for the city-owned locations (Majakovski Street) and the locations that will be transferred to the city ownership under special conditions (in accordance with the Decision on City Construction Land) (Pasipoljana and Mokranjčeva for individual housing, Ledena Stena for collective housing, Jewish Cemetery - partial relocation of Roma settlement). Thus, locations for housing construction for social housing for the following period will be prepared in 2007.	Activities carried out by: CHA Participants: City Planning Institute, City Construction Office	Making and adopting detailed regulation plans and city planning projects Legal and property regulation of the locations	City budget (current expenses)
6.	Finalizing negotiations with the Army of the Republic of Serbia over the cession of part of a complex of existing military buildings in the city proper to the city of Niš under market conditions	Providing city construction land for new housing construction	The Government of Serbia has adopted the Master Plan for selling locations and buildings of the Army of the Republic of Serbia, according to which a certain number of locations must be offered to local self-governments under market conditions (compensation or exchange of apartments) by the end of 2007. The ongoing negotiations with RSA over the cession of the land in military buildings "Stevan Sindjelic" and "Bubanj" should be completed by an agreement on the exchange for the newly built apartments (local self-governments have a possibility to negotiate without a tender)	Activities carried out by: The Mayor Participants: CHA	-	City budget (current expenses)
7.	Delegating authorities for rental sector development (creating a database and a legal and advisory centre) to CHA and regulating the rental housing sector	Support to the development of the rental sector, both public and private, and creation of appropriate conditions for complete legal security in this sector	The authority to manage the city-owned housing stock is transferred to CHA by the city decision, clearly defining CHA obligations to keep record of the existing city stock, manage its maintenance and all future initiatives and programs that will increase and improve this stock. New institutes of the legal and advisory centre within CHA are introduced. CHA prepares all necessary decisions which regulate the rental housing domain on the city territory.	Activities carried out by: City Mayor, City Council, CHA	Preparation and adoption of the Decision on entrusting the record keeping and management of the city-owned housing stock to the City Housing Agency and creating a new internal organization of CHA Preparation and proposal of the Decision on the regulation of the rental housing sector	City budget (current expenses)

No	Activity	Strategic goal	Description of the activity	Implementation arrangements	Program activities to be implemented	Ways of providing funds
8.	General overhaul of 60 elevators in buildings intended for multi-unit housing on the city territory, according to priority plan of PC Ništan	Improving the system of management and maintenance of the existing housing stock	Based on technical criteria, PC Ništan will propose an elevator overhaul plan on the city territory which will be adopted by the City Council. Costs of elevator overhaul will be equally divided between the city (50 % subsidy) and apartment owners (50 % participation). City Council will adopt criteria for exemption from payment of complete or partial costs for poor families who are apartment owners.	Activities carried out by: Public Company Ništan Participants: CHA, City Council	Making and adopting the elevator overhaul plan Preparing project documentation and General elevator overhaul	City budget Financing of the project from donor funds (optional) RSD 70,000,000
9.	Completion of the construction of the "Apelovac" heating plant and its putting into operation	Improving the system of management and maintenance of the existing housing stock	According to the existing program of the PC City Heating Plant	Activities carried out by: PC City Heating Plant	According to the existing program of the PC City Heating Plant	City budget RSD 100,000,000
10.	Completion of works on water supply to apartments in water zones III and IV	Improving the system of management and maintenance of the existing housing stock	According to the existing program of the PC Naissus	Activities carried out by: PC Naissus	According to the existing program of the PC Naissus	City budget RSD 50,000,000
11.	Construction of water infrastructure in the rural area	Improving the system of management and maintenance of the existing housing stock	According to the existing program of the PC Naissus	Activities carried out by: PC Naissus	According to the existing program of the PC Naissus	City budget RSD 50,000,000
12.	Organizational and personnel strengthening of the Department of Planning and Construction	Development of institutional infrastructure and improving city government capacities for implementing housing programs	Department of Planning and Construction will strengthen its personnel by employing up to 2 experts with a technical university degree and previous working experience and up to 2 trainees with a technical university degree. Department of Planning and Construction will strengthen its organization by introducing the Geographical Information System, followed by appropriate professional training of employees and networking with City Planning Institute and public companies. The internal organization of the Department of Planning and Construction needs to be in keeping with the obligation to meet the deadlines for issuing building permits according to the Law on Planning and Construction	Activities carried out by: Department of Planning and Construction	Hiring new employees Introduction of the Geographical Information System and training	City budget RSD 10,000,000
13.	Making annual housing plans and annual social housing plans	Development of institutional infrastructure and improving city government capacities for implementing housing programs	CHA is under obligation to make an Annual Housing Plan and an Annual Social Housing Plan, adopted by the City Council	Activities carried out by: CHA Participants: All stakeholders	-	City budget (current expenses)
14.	Development and adoption of the Decision on standards of apartment construction in Niš	Development of institutional infrastructure and improving city government capacities for implementing housing programs	CHA will prepare and propose to the City Assembly to adopt the Decision on new apartment construction standards, which will define the apartment occupancy standard, technical conditions and design and construction rules	Activities carried out by: CHA	-	City budget (current expenses)
15.	Construction of 200 apartments intended for social housing, 120 of which are to be rented without the possibility of privatization	Development of special programs for solving housing problems of the poor and vulnerable social groups		Activities carried out by: CHA	Development and adoption of the Decision on Housing Poverty and Criteria for Solving Housing Problems Apartment construction Carrying out the competition for the selection of housing beneficiaries	Financing of the project from donor funds with city budget participation. Obtaining loans from business banks RSD 700,000,000

No	Activity	Strategic goal	Description of the activity	Implementation arrangements	Program activities to be implemented	Ways of providing funds
16.	Construction of 392 apartments intended for privatization from the National Investment Plan for workers employed in state administration on the location "Stevan Sinđelić"	Development of special programs for solving housing problems of the poor and vulnerable social groups		Activities carried out by: Building Directorate of Serbia		National Investment Plan RSD 600,000,000
17.	Construction of 40 apartments intended for renting for internally displaced persons on the location "Ledena Stena"	Development of special programs for solving housing problems of the poor and vulnerable social groups		Activities carried out by: CHA		Financing of the project from donor funds RSD 80,000,000
18.	Adaptation and construction of 21 apartments in Kovanlučka Street intended for renting for refugees, temporarily displaced persons and vulnerable local population	Development of special programs for solving housing problems of the poor and vulnerable social groups		Activities carried out by: CHA		Financing of the project from donor funds RSD 32,000,000
19.	Adoption of the Program of the Dislocation of "Crvena Zvezda" Roma settlement (150 families), with the participation of Roma community representatives	Development of special programs for solving housing problems of the poor and vulnerable social groups	CHA will prepare the Program of the Dislocation of "Crvena Zvezda" Roma settlement with the participation of Roma community members and will submit it to the City Assembly for adoption. The program will be implemented in the next phases of the implementation of the City Housing Strategy.	Activities carried out by: CHA		City budget (current expenses)
20.	Construction of 500 prefabricated terraced houses on the location "Stočni trg" in the immediate vicinity of the existing Roma settlement on the Jewish Cemetery, intended for Roma community housing	Development of special programs for solving housing problems of the poor and vulnerable social groups	This program will solve the problem of a part of the unsanitary settlement "Stočni trg" built on the territory of the Jewish Cemetery. The already adopted city planning concept design will be used alongside the further development of the detailed regulation plan. The construction of 500 prefabricated houses for displacement is planned, bearing in mind that they will be located in the vicinity of the existing Roma settlement, which is in accordance with the specific housing needs and preferences of the Roma community.	Activities carried out by: CHA		Financing of the project from non-budgetary funds, republic funds or donor funds with the participation of the city budgetary funds RSD 200,000,000
21.	Organizational and personnel strengthening of the City Housing Agency	Development of special programs for solving housing problems of the poor and vulnerable social groups	City Housing Agency will strengthen its personnel by employing up to 2 experts with a technical university degree and up to 2 experts with a university degree in Law and Economy and with previous working experience as well as up to 2 trainees with a technical university degree. City Housing Agency will strengthen its organization by introducing the Geographical Information System, followed by appropriate professional training of employees and networking with the Department of Planning and Construction, the City Planning Institute and public companies.	Activities carried out by: CHA	Hiring new employees Introduction of the Geographical Information System and training	City budget RSD 10,000,000

8. Monitoring and Evaluation Instruments

8.1 City Housing Agency

The City Housing Agency is the main implementer of the City Housing Strategy of the City of Niš.

As already mentioned, the Law on Local Self-Government, and especially the Draft Law on Social Housing, gives local governments considerable jurisdiction over the implementation of Housing Policy, especially social housing policy. The Draft Law on Social Housing provides that municipalities/cities should form non-profit housing organizations which are given the authority to implement social housing programs on the municipal/city territory. The City Housing Agency is a non-profit housing organization, which has already been formed with that aim by the City of Niš.

8.2 General Implementation Methodology

The main method of the realization of the Housing Strategy of the City of Niš is connecting activities given within the Action Plan into integrated projects. Projects are comprised of activities from all relevant sectors important for the improvement of a certain housing issue.

8.3 Monitoring

The Mayor of Niš is in charge of monitoring the progress of the City Housing Strategy implementation. Every second year the Mayor of Niš submits a report on the City Housing Strategy implementation to the Assembly of the City of Niš.

Project	Number of activities from the Action Plan
The project of providing city construction land and sustainable financing of the infrastructural equipping	1,2,3,6
The project of infrastructural equipping of new housing construction	4
The project of improving capacity on the city level for implementation of the housing strategy	5,7,12,13,14
The project of improving housing quality of the existing housing stock	8,9,10,11
Social housing project	15,16,17

Indicators of monitoring the realization of particular activities are stated in Chapter 6, Sector Strategies 2007-2012. The implementers are listed in chapter 7, City Housing Action Plan 2007-2008.

Annex 1.

List of stakeholders that participated in the Strategy formulation

1. City Architect
2. Department of Children, Social and Primary Health Care
3. Department of Planning and Construction
4. Department of Economy, Sustainable Development and Environmental Protection
5. Property Department
6. Commissariat for Refugees
7. Social Welfare Center
8. Statistics Department of the City Assembly
9. Ministry of Finance – Tax Administration, branch office in Niš
10. Army of Serbia and Montenegro – Army Construction Office
11. Real Estate Registry Office, Niš
12. PC City Planning Institute
13. PC Objedinjena naplata
14. Public Utility Company Naissus
15. Public Utility Company Gradska toplana
16. PC City Construction Bureau, Niš
17. PLC "Gradjevinar"
18. AIK Bank
19. "Nišinženjering"
20. Designer company "NIŠ PROJEKT"
21. Real Estate Agency "TWINS"
22. Roma Association
23. Association of Architects, Niš
24. Private Property and Human Rights Protection League
25. Civil Society Development Center "Protekta"
26. Faculty of Civil Engineering and Architecture
27. NGO Micro Development Fund
28. Association of Disabled Persons - NILKO
29. Serbian Radical Party
30. Serbian Renewal Movement
31. Business Association "Investitor"

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SIRP
Settlement and Integration of Refugees Programme
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