Event Details

Title of event:
SHRINKING CITIES: CAN THEY STILL BE PROSPEROUS?
DATE: 9 February from 12.30-13.30 (Hall 2 Room 8)
VENUE: Hall 2 Room 8

Organization Details:
Moscow Higher School of Economics; UN-HABITAT

Description
This is a panel presentation event, focused on sharing city-to-city experiences in managing the phenomenon of shrinking cities; discussing the evidence base and current trends; as well as the implications from a territorial development approach. It will bring together prominent universities and think-tank institutions from Armenia, Moldova, Russian Federation, Uzbekistan and possibly Poland, along with other experiences in particular from the Eastern Europe and Central Asia regions.

Summary
The urbanization experience of countries across Eastern Europe and Central Asia has specific features, for several reasons. Most of these countries attained high-urbanization levels under a centrally-planned system, in which non-economic factors were pivotal in shaping the spatial distribution of both the population and economic activities. Today, urbanization in these countries is also profoundly affected by demographic transition.

Compared to the rest of the world, countries in the region have much lower population growth rates and are among the only countries experiencing both a decline of their total population and of their urban population, and experience the phenomena of shrinking cities. As an example, three countries: Armenia, Belarus, and Russia saw their total population decrease in 1996–2014. The population decrease (of the total population in 1996) was as follows: Russia – 3 per cent, and Belarus and Armenia – 7 per cent. In other cases, such as the Balkan Region or Eastern Europe, some countries experienced important levels of migration to upper-income countries. These factors, along with other significant transformations in the economy and the environment, had an undeniable impact in cities.

On one hand, this has brought new urban champions, such as country capitals with vibrant economies and global visibility. On the other hand, it has left behind other human settlements, particularly small and intermediate cities, that are struggling to thrive and most importantly are losing its population. These are factors which also have an interface with a city’s culture. Data from more than 5,000 cities across Eastern Europe and Central Asia indicates that bigger cities tend to grow more (or decline less) than smaller cities. Capital cities and secondary cities also appear to have an advantage in attracting populations.

A decline in city population has implications on policy development. This includes fiscal imbalances, because the revenue base of cities is eroded, while the per capita cost of providing services increases. In addition, given the durable character of housing, this reduction in population can lead to housing vacancies, low housing prices, and urban blight.
This event aims to open a pertinent discussion on this topic and to bring relevant voices from the Eastern Europe and Central Asia region, and globally, to share their first-hand experiences.

**Guiding Questions**
The term ‘Shrinking City’ suggests an urban community that is facing remarkable challenges on the economic and social sectors. Yet, there are opportunities that merit to be discussed and shared at the World Urban Forum such as:

1. How to promote a sustainable urban development approach in shrinking cities?
2. What specific opportunities do they offer?
3. What innovative policy responses can be shared in this regard?
4. What are the lessons learned from those experiences?

**Key objectives:**
1. To identify policy-making opportunities for shrinking cities to promote sustainable urban development though sharing first-hand experiences;
2. To increase the understanding on the best way to implement the Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda in shrinking cities;
3. To discuss the opportunities offer by frontier technologies in improving the living standards in shrinking cities

**PROGRAMME**

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<td>12:30 -</td>
<td><strong>Moderation:</strong> Åsa Jonsson, Coordinator, Project Coordination Office</td>
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<td>12:35</td>
<td>for Countries of the CIS, UN-Habitat</td>
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<td>12:35-13:05</td>
<td><strong>Case study presentations</strong></td>
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<td><strong>RUSSIA:</strong> Irina Ilina - Director IRSUP, NRU Higher School of</td>
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<td><strong>MOLDOVA:</strong> Sergei Munteanu - Ministry of Economics and Infrastructure</td>
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<td><strong>POLAND:</strong> Karol Janas, Head of Urban Policy Observatory at the</td>
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<td>Institute of Urban and Regional Development</td>
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<td><strong>ARMENIA:</strong> Arsen Karapetyan - Executive Director, Development</td>
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<td>Solutions Institute, Foundation, Yerevan</td>
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<td><strong>UZBEKISTAN:</strong> Zafar Mirzaulukov, Lead Specialist of Migration</td>
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<td>Monitoring Division, Uzbekistan Urbanization Agency</td>
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<td><strong>Open discussion from the floor</strong></td>
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Sergei Munteanu
Leading Adviser, Department of Urbanism, Construction and Housing, Ministry of Economy and Infrastructure of Moldova

Sergei graduated from Technical University of Moldova in 1979, where he was studying architecture. He joined the CRAterre - the International center for Earthen architecture - in 1993 where he was studying architecture from soil until 1995. Starting from May 1994 he served as a Deputy Architect Chief in the City Hall of Kishinau for almost 12 years.

In September 2007 he started to work in Ministry of economy and Infrastructure of Moldova in the position of Leading Adviser in the Department of Urbanism, construction and housing. Sergei speaks fluently four languages: Russian, English, Romanian/ Moldavian, French.

Irina Ilina
Director of the Institute of Regional Studies and Urban Planning, HSE University, Russia

Irina graduated from Moscow State University in 1982, where she was studying Economic Geography. She holds a PhD in Economics. From 2010 to 2011, Irina served as a Deputy Head of the Department of Nature Management and Environmental Protection of the Government of Moscow. Prior to that, she was Deputy Director in the Research and Design Institute of the General Plan of Moscow and Deputy Head of the Research and Design Department.

In 2011 she joined Institute for Regional Studies and Urban Planning in Higher School of Economic and two years later she became a Director of the Institute for Regional Studies and Urban Planning. In addition, she is also working in academia, Since 2004 she has been working in the Faculty of Management, Federal State Educational Institution Financial University under the Government of the Russian Federation, as a Professor.

Arsen Karapetyan
Founder, Executive Director, Development Solutions Institute Foundation, Armenia

Arsen Karapetyan is an urban development (specialized on housing and infrastructure development) and regional/local economic development specialist. Graduated with a degree in Civil Engineering from the Polytechnic Institute in Yerevan, Armenia and a MA in Economics at the University of Colorado in Denver, USA. During 1985-1993, he has worked as a structural design engineer for residential, public and industrial buildings. Starting in 1993, he joined the Ministry of the Economy of Armenia and worked for 4 years in the fields of housing, infrastructure and economic development areas.

In the last 20 years he has been involved in coordinating projects, consultancy work and research. He was involved in international and local projects as project manager and consultant, both in Armenia (in projects funded by USAID, World Bank, EC, UNDP) and in Georgia (in
Zafar Mirzaulukov graduated from Tashkent State Technical University in 2016 and right after his graduation, he entered Uzbekistan State Institute of Arts and Culture. From February 2018 Zafar has been serving as a Member of the Chilanzar District Council of People’s Deputies of Tashkent city. Prior to this position he was working in a Recreation park named after Gafur Gulom as an Associate Director.

Karol Janas is the head and co-founder of Urban Policy Observatory at the Institute of Urban and Regional Development, Poland. The main areas of expertise are urban policy monitoring and evaluation; urbanization processes in transitional countries of Central Eastern Europe and transformative approach to urban regeneration. Karol cooperates closely with urban policy-makers both at governmental and local level, doing his best to bridge the gap between the theory-based evidence and the practice.

Karol used to work as researcher and lecturer at the Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland (2005-2012) earning a PhD in urban geography. Manager of many international research and development projects, Karol coordinated work of experts from over 20 countries preparing the first State of the European Cities in Transition Report for the UN-HABITAT. Karol has been engaged from many years in international development programmes (i.e. Polish-Aid in Ukraine and Moldova, EU Twinning project and Visegrad Fund projects in Georgia).

For further information, please contact:

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