

Review of the contributions of the Urban Agenda for the EU to the implementation of the New Urban Agenda

European Commission

Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy
Deputy Director-General for Implementation (REGIO.DDG)
Unit – Inclusive Growth, Urban and Territorial Development (REGIO.DDG.03)
B-1049 Brussels

Contact

e-mail: REGIO-URBAN-TERRITORIAL@ec.europa.eu

Manuscript completed in October 2021.

Disclaimer

This report has been delivered under the Framework Contract 'Support to the implementation of the Urban Agenda for the EU through the provision of management, expertise, and administrative support to the Partnerships', signed between the European Commission (Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy) and Ecorys.

The information and views set out in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official opinion of the European Commission. The Commission does not guarantee the accuracy of the data included in this report. Neither the Commission nor any person acting on the Commission's behalf may be held responsible for the use which may be made of the information contained therein.

More information on the European Commission and its activities is available on <http://europa.eu>.

ISBN: 978-92-76-43346-0

DOI: 10.2776/356964

© European Union, 2021

Reuse is authorised provided the source is acknowledged. The reuse policy of the European Commission documents is regulated by Decision 2011/833/EU (OJ L 330, 14.12.2011, p. 39).

The photos and graphics from this publication are under the copyright of the EU and other parties. For any use or reproduction of photos or graphics that is not under the EU copyright, permission must be sought directly from the copyright holders.

Authors: Dr. Orna Rosenfeld (independent expert), Chiara Savina (Ecorys), Julie Bourneix (Ecorys). Elodie Salle (Ecorys)



Contents

Executive summary.....	7
-------------------------------	----------

1.0 Introduction.....	9
------------------------------	----------

1.1 Context and background.....	9
1.1.1 The Urban Agenda for the EU and the EU Cohesion Policy	9
1.1.2 The New Urban Agenda and its overarching framework, the SDGs.....	11
1.1.3 Establishing the links between the UAEU and the NUA	12
1.2 Aim and objectives of the report	14
1.3 Summary of methodology applied for this report.....	15
1.4 How to read this report	16

2.0 Setting the stage: A shared approach to sustainable urban development and linkages between the UAEU and the NUA	18
--	-----------

2.1 Shared principles of urban governance	18
2.1.1 Multilevel governance.....	19
2.1.2 Integrated approach	20
2.1.3 Partnership approach and co-creation	21
2.1.4 Place-based approach.....	23
2.2 Thematic linkages	24

3.0 How is the UAEU contributing to the implementation of the NUA in the EU?	27
---	-----------

3.1 How is the UAEU contributing to the NUA Transformative Commitments for Sustainable Urban Development?	28
3.1.1 Sustainable urban development for social inclusion and ending poverty	29
3.1.2 Sustainable and inclusive urban prosperity and opportunities for all	33
3.1.3 Environmentally sustainable and resilient urban development	36
3.2 How is the UAEU contributing to the NUA Effective Implementation?	40



3.2.1 Building the Urban Governance Structure: Establishing a Supportive Framework.....41

3.2.2 Planning and Managing Urban Spatial Development43

3.2.3 Means of Implementation45

4.0 How does the UAEU link and contribute to SDG 11?51

5.0 Conclusions and recommendations56

5.1 Conclusions56

5.2 Recommendations..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**





Tables

Table 1: Structure of the report	16
Table 2: Multilevel governance principle in the UAEU, NUA, Cohesion Policy, and New Leipzig Charter	19
Table 3: Integrated approach in the UAEU, NUA, Cohesion Policy, and New Leipzig Charter	20
Table 4: Partnership approach and co-creation in the UAEU, NUA, Cohesion Policy, and New Leipzig Charter	22
Table 5: Place-based approach in the UAEU, NUA, Cohesion Policy, and New Leipzig Charter	23
Table 6: Summary of thematic linkages between UAEU, NUA, Cohesion Policy, and SDGs	25

Figures

Figure 1: The 14 UAEU Partnerships	10
Figure 2: Links between the UAEU, NUA, Cohesion Policy, and SDGs	13
Figure 3: Timeline of milestones for UAEU, NUA, SDGs, and Cohesion Policy, and their key documents	14
Figure 4: UAEU Partnerships' contribution to the NUA Transformative Commitments categories	29
Figure 5: UAEU Actions contributing to the three categories of commitments under 'Sustainable development for social inclusion and ending poverty'	30
Figure 6: UAEU Actions contributing to the two NUA categories under 'Sustainable and inclusive urban prosperity and opportunities for all'	34
Figure 7: UAEU Actions contributing to the two NUA categories under 'Environmentally sustainable and resilient urban development'	37
Figure 8: UAEU Partnerships' contribution to the NUA 'Effective Implementation' categories	41
Figure 9: UAEU Actions contributing to the NUA category 'Building the Urban Governance Structure: Establishing a Supportive Framework'	42
Figure 10: UAEU Actions contributing to the NUA category 'Planning and Managing Urban Spatial Development'	44
Figure 11: UAEU Actions contributing to the NUA category 'Means of Implementation'	46
Figure 12: Nexus between SDG 11, other SDGs, and the New Urban Agenda	52
Figure 13: Number of UAEU Actions contributing to SDG 11 Targets	53



Glossary

BR, BF, BK	Better Regulation, Better Funding, Better Knowledge
CEMR	Council of European Municipalities and Regions
ECCP	European Code of Conduct on Partnerships
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESF	European Social Fund
ESIF	European Structural and Investment Funds
EU	European Union
FEAD	Fund for European Aid to the most Deprived
MTA	Monitoring Table of Actions
NUA	New Urban Agenda
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SUD	Sustainable Urban Development
UAEU	Urban Agenda for the EU
UIA	Urban Innovative Action
UN	United Nations
URBACT	European exchange and learning programme promoting sustainable urban development



Executive summary

The Urban Agenda for the EU (UAEU) represents the first of the EU's three voluntary commitments to implement the United Nations (UN) universal New Urban Agenda (NUA)¹. The Pact of Amsterdam (2016), which launched the UAEU, states that the UAEU is meant to 'contribute to the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the global NUA, as part of the Habitat III² process'. Thus, this report reviews the contributions of the UAEU to the NUA, by exploring its operations and implementation in the period between 2016 and mid-2021. It also presents the links with the EU Cohesion Policy (2014–2020) and outlines contributions to UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11, 'Sustainable Cities and Communities'. A methodology, underpinned by the grounded theory approach, was developed in the scope of this assignment, through which the 132 UAEU Actions were systematically linked to the paragraphs of the NUA.

The UAEU brings forward principles of modern urban governance for sustainable urban development, as well as urban topics and challenges which are considered of main importance for urban areas. In this regard, the UAEU and the NUA are strongly linked to each other, as they share key principles of urban governance (multi-level governance, integrated approach, partnership approach and co-creation, place-based approach). Such principles are also at the core of EU Cohesion Policy and were reinforced at EU level through the adoption of the New Leipzig Charter and the 2021–2027 Cohesion Policy Programming Period through its new Policy Objective 5, 'Europe closer to citizens', which is entirely dedicated to sustainable urban and territorial development. Moreover, the UAEU and NUA tackle similar urban challenges: the Priority Themes addressed by UAEU Partnerships can also be found in the NUA. They are strongly linked to the EU Cohesion Policy (2014–2020) Thematic Objectives, as well as to various targets of the global framework of the SDGs.

UAEU Actions significantly contribute to the implementation of the NUA commitments in the EU. All 132 Actions put forward by the UAEU Partnerships have been proven to contribute to the implementation of at least one or more of the 138 NUA paragraphs constituting the global urban commitments. UAEU Actions make the greatest contribution to achieving the NUA Transformative Commitments for Sustainable Urban Development under the 'Environmentally sustainable and resilient urban development' category, with 85 Actions contributing to advancing the commitments under this category. With regards to the NUA 'Effective Implementation' categories, the UAEU Actions contribute most to the implementation of NUA paragraphs under the 'Means of Implementation' category, with 58 Actions contributing to advancing the NUA commitments under this category.

The report also provides main conclusions from the analysis conducted, as well as concrete recommendations for a possible continuation of this review, and for establishing the review framework of the next phase of the UAEU. In particular, establishing long-term monitoring of the UAEU Actions is recommended, including assessing the

¹ https://www.urbanagendaplatform.org/european_union.

² The Habitat III was the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development, which took place in October 2016 in Quito Ecuador. In its resolution 66/207 and in line with the bi-decennial cycle, the UN General Assembly decided to convene the Habitat III Conference to reinvent the global commitments to sustainable urbanisation and to ratify the NUA.



impacts of future Actions and their contributions to the NUA. Concerning the setting of the review framework for the next phase of the UAEU, giving further flexibility to Partnerships would better correlate their Actions to the NUA, and boost the UAEU cross-cutting issues. Finally, this report highlights the possible relevance of the unique UAEU governance system at the international stage.





1.0 Introduction

This chapter presents contextual information which is instrumental to understanding the analysis presented in the following sections. It introduces the initiatives which are considered in this review, and explains the interlinkages between them. It also summarises the methodology applied for this report and provides an overview of the chapters and sections included.

1.1 Context and background

1.1.1 The Urban Agenda for the EU and the EU Cohesion Policy

The EU Ministers responsible for urban matters adopted the Pact of Amsterdam³, a key document for establishing an EU-wide approach to urban development challenges and reinforcing the urban dimension in EU decision-making, in 2016. The Pact launched the Urban Agenda for the EU (UAEU), **a multi-level and multi-stakeholder instrument for dialogue and collaboration** which brings together urban areas of EU Member States, European institutions, and other relevant stakeholders under Partnerships in order to identify and find solutions to urban challenges⁴. By involving all governmental levels in the design and implementation of EU policies, the UAEU puts a multi-level governance and participatory approach into action, aiming to strengthen the urban dimension in EU policies.

The UAEU is implemented through a consistent and concrete set of Actions, some of which are listed in the Pact of Amsterdam⁵. These include the EU One Stop Shop for Cities⁶, the dedicated urban investment advisory platform URBIS⁷, the organisation of a biennial CITIES Forum⁸, and other tools to ensure effective implementation of the UAEU, some of which were delivered through the European Commission's support to the UAEU (e.g. the series of articles⁹ and webinars¹⁰). As the key delivery mechanism of the UAEU, the already established 14 Thematic

³ *Pact of Amsterdam* (2016). Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/policy/themes/urban-development/agenda/pact-of-amsterdam.pdf.

⁴ European Commission, *Assessment Study of the Urban Agenda for the European Union (UAEU)*, Final Report, November 2019. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/studies/pdf/assess_uaeu_en.pdf.

⁵ The full list is available at p. 28 (iv) of the Pact of Amsterdam (2016).

⁶ Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/info/eu-regional-and-urban-development/topics/cities-and-urban-development_en.

⁷ Available at: <https://eiah.eib.org/about/initiative-urbis.htm>.

⁸ More information regarding the last Cities Forum, organised in 2020, are available at:

https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/conferences/cities_forum_pt/.

⁹ Available at: <https://futurium.ec.europa.eu/en/urban-agenda/posts/tags/series-articles?language=en>

¹⁰ All material from the series of webinars is available at: <https://futurium.ec.europa.eu/en/urban-agenda/events/series-webinars-2021-how-are-urban-initiatives-and-actions-supporting-green-just-and-productive>.

Partnerships gather various governmental levels and stakeholders. As shown in the figure below, each Partnership has a different thematic focus, in line with the initial Priority Themes¹¹ outlined in the Pact of Amsterdam.

Figure 1: The 14 UAEU Partnerships



Source: UAEU infographic

Each Partnership¹² delivered an Action Plan¹³ (14 in total), covering 132 Actions¹⁴ overall. The Actions propose concrete outputs and solutions to urban challenges targeting different levels of governance (EU, national, regional, and local) and contribute to the three pillars of EU policymaking and implementation: Better Regulation, Better Funding, and Better Knowledge. In addition, as stated in the Pact of Amsterdam¹⁵, Partnerships shall consider the relevance of 11 cross-cutting issues for their Priority Themes. These address several topics, such as sound and strategic urban planning, an integrated and participatory approach, impact on societal change, and urban regeneration, among others.

The UAEU, as a policy instrument, **is proposing ways to improve existing policies, initiatives, and their implementation for the benefit of urban areas** in the EU. This is the case, in particular, with the **Cohesion Policy**, which comprises a **structured urban and territorial dimension** with dedicated principles, instruments, and provisions for deploying investments. Cohesion Policy is one of the main development and investment policies of the EU and promotes economic, social, and territorial cohesion among European regions through support from the European Structural and Investment (ESI) Funds. It impacts many fields, including education, employment,

¹¹ The Pact of Amsterdam indicates an initial list of 12 Priority Themes 'taking into account the priorities of the EU 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth', which 'guide the actions of the Urban Agenda for the EU'.

¹² At the time of publication of the latest version of the Monitoring Table of Actions (March 2021), eight Partnerships were still active and implementing their Action Plans, while five closed their activities.

¹³ All Action Plans of the UAEU Partnerships can be found on Futurium: <https://futurium.ec.europa.eu/en/urban-agenda>.

¹⁴ According to the latest version of the Monitoring Table of Actions (March 2021) at the time of writing.

¹⁵ The full list is available at p. 8 of the Pact of Amsterdam (2016).



energy, the environment, the single market, research, and innovation¹⁶, by targeting EU regions, cities, and territories and supporting job creation, business competitiveness, economic growth, and sustainable development to improve citizens' quality of life¹⁷. During the 2014–2020 period, the **sustainable urban dimension of Cohesion Policy has been strengthened**, as illustrated by Article 7 of the ERDF Regulation, according to which Member States should earmark at least 5% of their national ERDF allocation to supporting sustainable urban development strategies. European urban development has also been reinforced by the adoption of the Leipzig Charter¹⁸. First signed in 2007 by the European Ministers for Urban Development and Regional Planning, the Charter boosts the use of integrated urban development policy and sets out the key principles behind it. A revisited version of the document (the New Leipzig Charter¹⁹) was adopted in November 2020, and provides a key policy framework document for sustainable urban development in Europe. It is strongly aligned with the 2021–2027 Cohesion Policy, its new Policy Objective dedicated to urban and territorial development, and its framework for sustainable urban development.

1.1.2 The New Urban Agenda and its overarching framework, the SDGs

UAEU Partnerships are meant to 'contribute to the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the global NUA, as part of the Habitat III process', as highlighted in the Pact of Amsterdam. The **NUA is the first internationally agreed document detailing the implementation of the urban dimension of the universal SDGs**. The SDGs, which were adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, provide a global framework for action 'for people, planet, and prosperity', and set the global development agenda until 2030 through 17 'Global Goals' with 169 targets²⁰.

Adopted in Quito in 2016, the **global NUA is intended to guide sustainable urban development for the period up to 2036**, setting out a shared vision and global standards. It is a framework that lays out how cities should be planned and managed to best promote sustainable urbanisation and the role of local authorities in that process²¹. The NUA also provides suggestions in terms of governance and NUA implementation, addressing the ways in which cities are planned, designed, managed, governed, and financed to achieve the targets laid down in the SDGs.

¹⁶ EU aimed to meet five concrete objectives by 2020 – on employment, innovation, education, social inclusion, and climate/energy. Each Member State has adopted its own national targets in these areas, in order to reach these goals and address the diverse development needs in all EU regions.

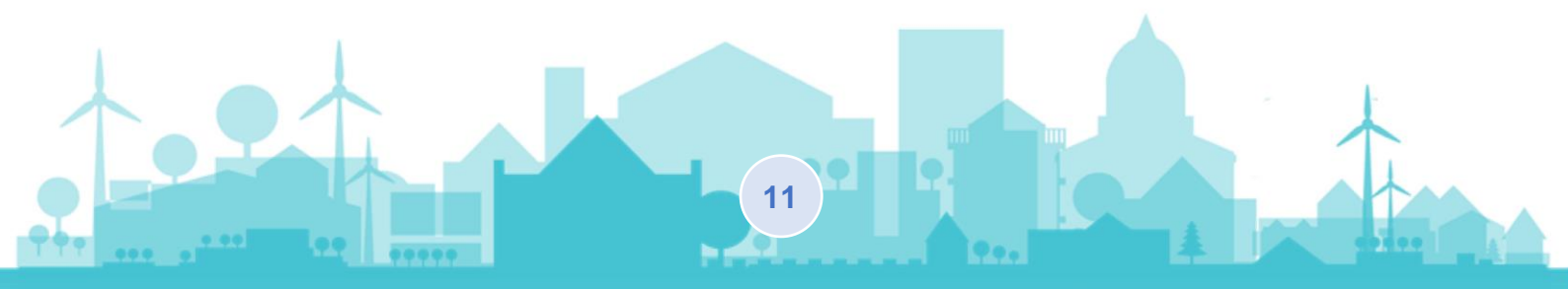
¹⁷ European Commission, *An introduction to EU Cohesion Policy 2014-2020*. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/informat/basic/basic_2014_en.pdf.

¹⁸ Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities, 2007. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/archive/themes/urban/leipzig_charter.pdf.

¹⁹ New Leipzig Charter, 30 November 2020. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/brochure/new_leipzig_charter/new_leipzig_charter_en.pdf.

²⁰ United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Available at: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>.

²¹ Habitat III Policy Paper, *Urban Governance, Capacity and Institutional Development*, February 2016. Available at: <https://uploads.habitat3.org/hb3/PU4-HABITAT-III-POLICY-PAPER.pdf>.





The NUA includes different sections, formed by specific paragraphs. It begins with the Quito Declaration on Sustainable Cities and Human Settlements for All, followed by the outline of the shared vision, principles, and commitments of the NUA, which have a universal scope. The core of the document is its Implementation Plan, which delineates the Transformative Commitments for Sustainable Urban Development and Effective Implementation. The NUA then concludes with a follow-up and review section.

In this context, the **UAEU is the key delivery mechanism for implementing the NUA** in the EU, and represents one of the EU's three voluntary commitments supporting the implementation of the NUA²², as presented at the Habitat III Conference in 2016²³.

1.1.3 Establishing the links between the UAEU and the NUA

As illustrated in Figure 2, UAEU, NUA, SDGs, and Cohesion Policy are interlinked instruments at global and regional²⁴ levels which **foster a shared approach to sustainable urban development**. At international level, the SDGs are the global framework for sustainable development, while the NUA implements their urban dimension. At EU level, the UAEU is contributing to improving EU policies (in terms of funding, regulation, and knowledge), and this is particularly the case with Cohesion Policy, which includes a structured urban and territorial dimension. Moreover, the UAEU represents the delivery mechanism for the EU's commitments to the NUA, therefore contributing to delivering both the NUA Objectives and the relevant SDGs. Finally, the EU Cohesion Policy is also substantially contributing to the implementation of the NUA and SDGs in the EU.

²² The EU participated in Habitat III, the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development, in 2016. Here, the NUA was adopted by UN Member States. In this context, the EU made three voluntary commitments to support the implementation of the NUA at EU level: a) Developing a global, people-based definition of cities and settlements, b) Delivering on the Urban Agenda for the EU, c) Fostering global city to-city cooperation via the International Urban Cooperation programme.

²³ See: https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/newsroom/news/2016/10/19-10-2016-eu-voluntary-commitment-to-the-new-urban-agenda-webstreamed-on-19-october.

²⁴ According to the UN the term 'regional' refers to the global regions such as the Europe, Africa, South America.



Figure 2: Links between the UAEU, NUA, Cohesion Policy, and SDGs



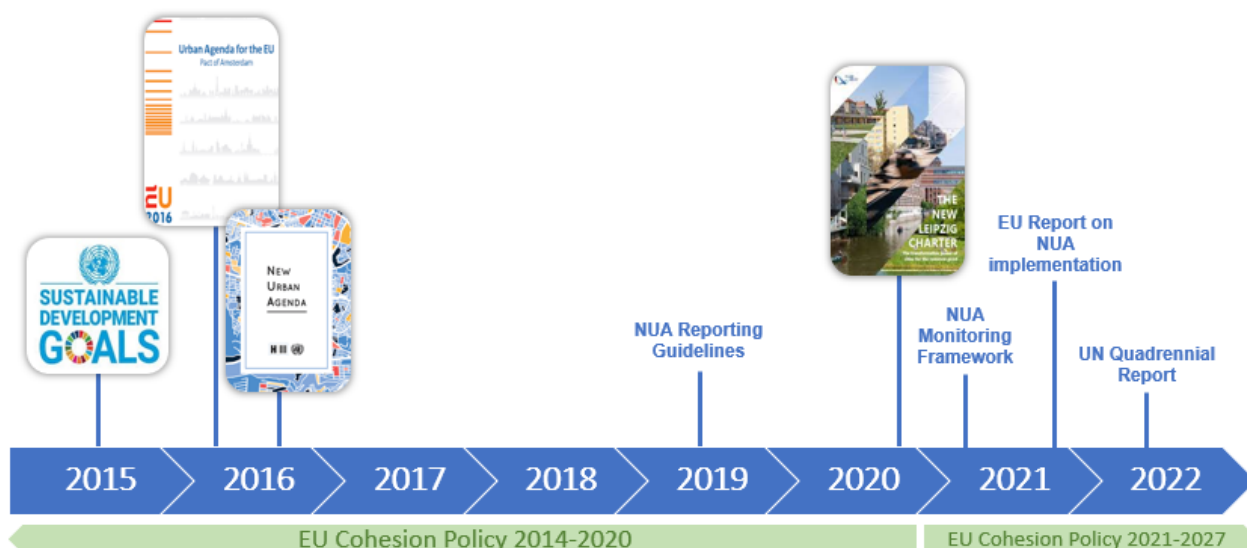
Source: Own elaboration

It is also important to note that **the UAEU and NUA were established around the same period (in 2016)**, and they both reference each other (even if implicitly, as is the case for the 11 UAEU cross-cutting issues). They take into account existing frameworks set up through the SDGs and Cohesion Policy 2014–2020 (with the Common Provisions Regulation²⁵ adopted in 2013), and could also potentially influence the following programming period (2022–2027). For the purpose of this review, it needs to be acknowledged that the guidelines for reporting on the implementation of the NUA²⁶ and the NUA Monitoring Framework were published several years after the establishment of the UAEU (in 2019 and 2021, respectively), and therefore they could not be used by UAEU Partnerships when developing their Action Plans. The figure below presents a timeline of the mentioned initiatives and adoption of their key documents. The timeline also shows some relevant next steps, namely the EU reporting on their implementation of the NUA (foreseen at the end of 2021) and the UN Quadrennial report on progress in implementation of the NUA.

²⁵ The Common Provisions Regulation is the over-arching regulation that outlines the rules that must be followed while using the European Structural and Investment Funds: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32013R1303>.

²⁶ <https://unhabitat.org/guidelines-for-reporting-on-the-implementation-of-the-new-urban-agenda>.

Figure 3: Timeline of milestones for UAEU, NUA, SDGs, and Cohesion Policy and their key documents



Source: Own elaboration


1.2 Aim and objectives of the report

The purpose of this report is to **identify and examine the different angles through which the UAEU contributes to the delivery of the NUA at EU level. The review is intended to be a part of the European Commission's voluntary reporting activity on implementation of the NUA in the EU.** It also provides recommendations and lessons learnt which could contribute to future arrangements for continuation of the UAEU (its methods, monitoring, and reporting). The report looks at the UAEU operations and implementation in the period between 2016 and mid-2021. The analysis covers the UAEU governance structure and its 14 Thematic Partnerships, as well as their Action Plans and their 132 Actions (as per March 2021²⁷²⁸).

This report first examines the existing linkages between the two initiatives, in terms of shared principles and approaches, and then describes how the UAEU contributes to achieving the Transformative Commitments of the NUA Effective Implementation. While the report primarily focuses on the UAEU contributions to the NUA, the links with Cohesion Policy are also presented (notably its urban dimension), as it is particularly emphasised in the Pact of Amsterdam, and marks a major contribution to actual delivery of the NUA. The report also outlines the

²⁷ According to the latest version of the Monitoring Table of Actions (March 2021) at the time of writing. Available at: <https://futurium.ec.europa.eu/en/urban-agenda/monitoring-actions/monitoring-table/table-actions-update-march-2021>.

²⁸ As previously mentioned, the UAEU is delivered through a concrete set of actions which go further than the work of the Partnerships, as stated in the Pact of Amsterdam. However, it was chosen to focus on the analysis of the governance and Partnerships' deliverables for this review.



contribution of the UAEU to SDG 11, 'Sustainable Cities and Communities', through its contributions to the NUA, building on the UN-established conceptual links between the NUA and SDGs.

1.3 Summary of methodology applied for this report

In the absence of a suitable methodology provided by the UN for global regional²⁹ reporting for the NUA, **a methodology was developed within the scope of this assignment** to enable regional reporting in general, and UAEU contributions to the implementation of the NUA in particular. The methodology is underpinned by the grounded theory approach³⁰, which ensures that it is based on actual practice and available evidence, documents, and/or data produced by the UAEU between 2016 and mid-2021. Several sources were initially used to develop the methodology and, secondly, to carry out the analysis presented in this report. Notably, data was taken from the Partnerships' Action Plans and the UAEU Monitoring Table of Actions (MTA)³¹ (the latest version available when this report was drafted was March 2021).

The methodology used to draft this report was developed through a multi-step approach using a literature review and assessment, situated knowledge from practice and observation, and elaboration of a methodology to report on the contribution of the UAEU to the delivery of the NUA. The following steps were applied:

1. **Ground qualitative data in the multi-annual monitoring system of the UAEU MTA, 14 Partnerships, and 132 Actions:** The UN Habitat proposed indicators are not deemed suitable for this reporting, as they exclusively refer to the national level. The report therefore presents evidence on the progress and achievements of the 132 Actions defined and implemented (or in the process of implementation) by the UAEU Partnerships, as described in their Action Plans and the UAEU MTA³².
2. **The NUA reporting structure:** The NUA reporting structure, as proposed in the Guidelines for Reporting on the Implementation of the NUA and the respective Monitoring Framework, **was used as a basis** in order to facilitate comparability. However, given the purpose and regional focus of this report, the structure was adapted to allow for broad reporting on UAEU contributions. Notably, the sub-categories presented in the sections of the NUA reporting have been adapted based on the regional focus of the UAEU.

²⁹ The UN provides a methodology for reporting at the national level. However, such methodology is not applicable for the 'regional' level as per UN definition (i.e. global regions).

³⁰ Glaser, Barney G & Strauss, Anselm L., 1967. *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*, Chicago, Aldine Publishing Company.

³¹ The Monitoring Table of Actions is the tool which monitors the advancements and progresses of the UAEU and in particular the Actions of its Partnerships.

³² As the Action Plans were developed in the first phases of the lifespan of the Partnerships, it must be acknowledged that adjustments might have happened after the development of these documents, and therefore activities of the Partnerships might have been carried out in a different way than what initially planned. On a similar note, the Monitoring Table of Actions is compiled based on a Partnerships' self-assessment and self-reporting, and therefore it might not be an objective nonbiased reflection of the reality of the Actions' implementation.

3. Establish the UAEU-NUA nexus: In order to establish a common standard to link UAEU Actions with the NUA, the 132 Actions of the UAEU Partnerships were systematically linked with individual relevant paragraphs of the NUA³³. However, it should be noted that the analysis carried out for this review does not consider the impact of UAEU Actions, but rather it focuses on the linkages with NUA paragraphs. This common approach provided a basis for appropriate data identification, collection, and assessment for NUA reporting. As the NUA paragraphs are linked with the specific targets of SDG 11, the links between the UAEU Actions can be established through specific NUA paragraphs, which are then linked to specific SDG 11 targets.

1.4 How to read this report

This report takes into account the UN Guidelines for Reporting on the Implementation of the NUA³⁴, which provide a structure for the preparation of national reports on progress in the implementation of the NUA. As this report focuses on the contribution of the UAEU to implementation of the NUA in the EU, necessary adjustments to the structure provided by the UN were made.

The structure of this report and a short description of each chapter is presented in the table below.

Table 1: Structure of the report

Chapter in this report		Description
2. Setting the stage: A shared approach to sustainable urban development and linkages between the UAEU and NUA		Not part of the UN Reporting Guidelines, this Chapter analyses the conceptual linkages, in terms of overall principles of good governance and urban themes tackled, between the two initiatives.
3. How is the UAEU contributing to implementation of the NUA in the EU?	3.1. How is the UAEU contributing to the NUA Transformative Commitments for Sustainable Urban Development?	Originally Part 1 of the UN reporting guidelines, this Chapter analyses how UAEU Actions contribute to the advancement of the NUA Transformative Commitments in the EU.
	3.2. How is the UAEU contributing to the NUA Effective Implementation?	Originally Part 2 of the UN reporting guidelines, this Chapter analyses how UAEU Actions contribute to the advancement of the NUA Effective Implementation in the EU.
4. How is the UAEU contributing to SDG 11?		Not part of the UN reporting guidelines, this Chapter highlights the contribution of the UAEU to SDG 11 targets through its contribution to the NUA.

³³ The overall links between the 132 UAEU Actions and NUA paragraphs (and by extension with SDG11 targets) are presented in Annex 1 of this report.

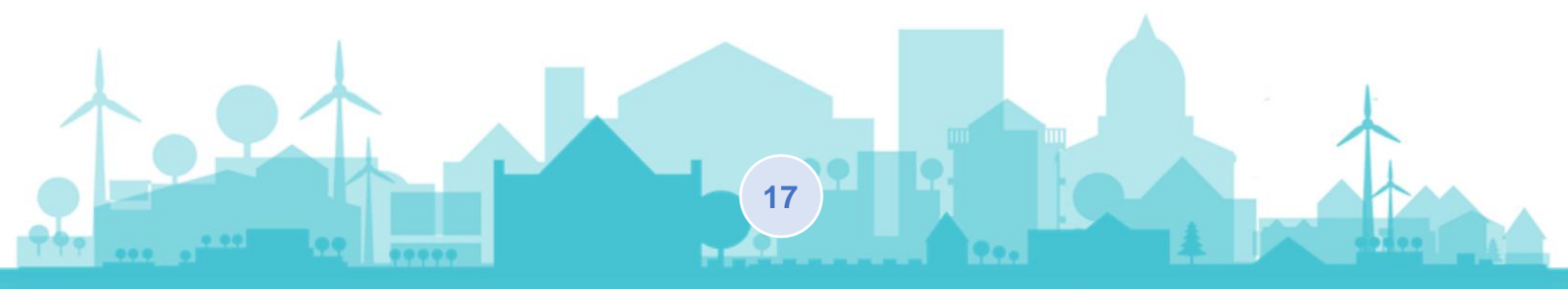
³⁴ UN Habitat, *Guidelines for Reporting on the Implementation of the New Urban Agenda*. Available at: https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/documents/2019-07/20190628_draft_nua_reporting_guidelines_1.pdf.



5. Conclusions and recommendations

This Chapter presents the main conclusions of the analysis and provides concrete recommendations for a possible continuation of this review, as well as for the next phase of the UAEU.

Throughout the report, good practices and concrete examples of Actions implemented by the UAEU Partnerships are presented in blue boxes.





2.0 Setting the stage: A shared approach to sustainable urban development and linkages between the UAEU and the NUA

Before exploring the contributions of the UAEU to the NUA, it is important to provide an overview of the conceptual linkages that exist between the two initiatives. Indeed, both are bringing forward principles and approaches of urban governance for sustainable urban development, as well as urban topics and challenges which are considered of main importance for urban areas. In this regard, **the Urban Agenda for the EU and the NUA are strongly linked to each other, as they share key principles of urban governance and objectives of sustainable urban development**, as well as **main topics** to be tackled by urban areas.

Thus, this Chapter explores the principles of urban governance to sustainable urban development and the thematic linkages which are shared by the UAEU and NUA, highlighting the linkages which exist in their key documents.

2.1 Shared principles of urban governance

Good urban governance is crucial to address the complexity and interdependency of policies in urban areas and to achieve sustainable urban development. Thus, both the UAEU and the NUA share some key principles which set the framework for the implementation and development of urban governance, in particular:

- Multilevel governance;
- Integrated approach;
- Place-based approach;
- Partnership approach and co-creation.

These principles are also present in the sustainable urban development dimension of Cohesion Policy 2014–2020 and are at the core of both the New Leipzig Charter adopted in 2020, and the 2021–2027 Cohesion Policy.

Thus, this section analyses the linkages between the UAEU and NUA in terms of principles of urban governance. Such analysis is crucial to set the scene before diving into examination of the contributions of the Urban Agenda for the EU to the NUA (explored in Chapter 3 of this report) in order to give a complete overview of the existing linkages between the two initiatives. In this context, the analysis also considers Cohesion Policy 2014–2020 and the New Leipzig Charter, as they also provide the framework for sustainable urban development in the EU.

The analysis takes into account the following key documents: the Pact of Amsterdam, the NUA, the Common Provisions Regulation of Cohesion Policy 2014–2020, and the New Leipzig Charter. The results of the analysis of the shared principles of urban governance are presented below.

2.1.1 Multilevel governance

Multilevel governance is at the heart of the UAEU. Through the Partnerships, the UAEU addresses challenges beyond the traditional administrative borders and levels of governments. The Pact of Amsterdam indeed defines the UAEU as a ‘new form of informal multilevel cooperation’. Multilevel governance is also supported by the NUA, which puts forward ‘effective local and metropolitan multilevel governance’ (NUA paragraph 90). In the EU context, Cohesion Policy presents multilevel governance as one of the requirements for implementing the different structural funds. The concept of multilevel governance in the EU as a key principle for implementing sustainable urban development is also highlighted in the New Leipzig Charter. The table below provides an overview of the analysis of the key documents in relation to multilevel governance.

Table 2: Multilevel governance principle in the UAEU, NUA, Cohesion Policy, and the New Leipzig Charter

Multilevel governance			
UAEU (Pact of Amsterdam)	NUA	EU Cohesion Policy 2014 – 2020 (Common Provisions Regulation)	New Leipzig Charter
13. (...) the Urban Agenda for the EU is a coherent set of actions of key European actors. It is a new form of informal multilevel cooperation where Member States, regions, representatives of urban authorities, the European Commission, the European Parliament, the Union's Advisory Bodies (CoR, EESC), the EIB, and other relevant actors work in partnership.	<i>Paragraph 90:</i> (...) support strengthening the capacity of subnational and local governments to implement effective local and metropolitan multilevel governance , across administrative borders, and based on functional territories, ensuring the involvement of subnational and local governments in decision-making and working to provide them with the necessary authority and resources to manage critical urban, metropolitan, and territorial concerns.	(11) (...) The purpose of such partnership is to ensure respect for the principle of multi-level governance (...) Article 5 is dedicated to 'Partnership and multi-level governance' .	Every governmental level – local, regional, metropolitan, national, European, and global – has a specific responsibility for the future of our cities based on the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality. Complex challenges should be jointly tackled by all levels of urban and spatial policy. This requires the cooperation of all societal actors, including civil society and the private sector. As recommended by the Pact of Amsterdam and the NUA, vertical and horizontal multi-level and multi-stakeholder cooperation , both bottom-up and top-down, is key to good urban governance.

2.1.2 Integrated approach

As outlined in the Pact of Amsterdam, the Urban Agenda for the EU relies on the principle of an integrated approach³⁵ to sustainable urban development. An integrated approach is also listed as one of the 11 cross-cutting issues to be considered by Partnerships when developing their Action Plans, highlighting the importance and horizontal nature of this principle. Furthermore, the NUA supports an integrated approach towards sustainable urban development (NUA paragraph 15.c). The importance of this principle is also reinforced through paragraphs 82 and 88. An integrated approach is also at the core of the sustainable urban dimension of Cohesion Policy, as a key element to be included in Partnership Agreements. Finally, an integrated approach is also listed in the New Leipzig Charter as one of the key principles of good urban governance. The table below provides an overview of the analysis of the key documents in relation to an integrated approach.

Table 3: Integrated approach in the UAEU, NUA, Cohesion Policy, and New Leipzig Charter

Integrated approach			
UAEU (Pact of Amsterdam)	NUA	EU Cohesion Policy 2014 – 2020 (Common Provisions Regulation)	New Leipzig Charter
<p>6. The Urban Agenda for the EU will rely on the principle of an integrated approach to sustainable urban development as the guiding principle to achieve the goals of the three policy pillars.</p> <p>Integrated approach is also listed as one of the cross-cutting issues (12.4) to be considered by UAEU Partnerships.</p>	<p><i>Paragraph 15 c):</i></p> <p>Adopt sustainable, people-centred, age- and gender-responsive, and integrated approaches to urban and territorial development by implementing policies, strategies, capacity development, and actions at all levels, based on fundamental drivers of change (...)</p> <p><i>Paragraph 82:</i></p> <p>We invite international and regional organisations and bodies, including those of the United Nations system and multilateral environmental agreements, development partners, international and multilateral financial institutions, regional development banks, the private sector, and other stakeholders, to enhance coordination of their urban and rural development strategies and</p>	<p>(20) The Partnership Agreement should set out (...) arrangements for the partnership principle and an integrated approach to territorial development.</p> <p>(33) Where an urban or territorial development strategy requires an integrated approach because it involves investments under more than one priority axis of one or more operational programmes, it should be possible for action supported by the Funds, that can be complemented with financial support from the EAFRD or the EMFF, to be carried out as an integrated territorial investment (...)</p> <p><i>Article 15</i></p>	<p>All areas of urban policy have to be coordinated in a spatial, sectoral and temporal manner. An integrated approach relies on simultaneous and fair consideration of all concerns and interests relevant to urban development. Therefore, it should pool and balance different, partly conflicting interests, as well as the mutual effects of different interventions. Cities need to establish integrated and sustainable urban development strategies and assure their implementation across the city as a whole, from its functional areas to its neighbourhoods.</p>

³⁵ The UAEU highlights the importance of integrated approach to urban development, which goes beyond sectoral policy, is supported by cooperation across levels and across stakeholders, goes beyond administrative boundaries and targets cities of all sizes. Thus, integrated approach is meant as multi sectors interventions, which take into account all multifaceted aspects of sustainable urban development and their interactions, and require the set-up of sound development strategies for investment.



	<p>programmes to apply an integrated approach to sustainable urbanisation, mainstreaming implementation of the NUA.</p> <p><i>Paragraph 88:</i></p> <p>We will ensure coherence between goals and measures of sectoral policies (...) at different levels and scales of political administration, across administrative borders and considering the appropriate functional areas, in order to strengthen integrated approaches to urbanization and implement integrated urban and territorial planning strategies that factor them in.</p>	<p>2. The Partnership Agreement shall also indicate: an integrated approach to territorial development (...) or a summary of the integrated approaches to territorial development based on the content of the programmes (...)</p>	
--	--	---	--

2.1.3 Partnership approach and co-creation

The 14 Partnerships are at the core of the UAEU, as they represent its delivery mechanism. They are composed of stakeholders representing different levels of governance, and were established to work together on urban topics through a co-creation process. In this regard, the NUA highlights the importance of involving all relevant stakeholders through participation in policymaking processes related to sustainable urban development. This principle is also deemed of key importance in the urban dimension of Cohesion Policy, which ensures a participatory approach through the involvement of relevant stakeholders. In this regard, the European Code of Conduct³⁶ proposed a strengthened partnership approach by laying down a common set of standards to improve consultation, participation, and dialogue with partners during the planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of projects financed by the European Structural and Investment Funds. New forms of participation, including co-creation and co-design, are also put forward by the New Leipzig Charter in the framework of principles of good urban governance. The table below provides an overview of the analysis of key documents in relation to partnership approach and co-creation.

³⁶ European Code of Conduct on Partnership. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32014R0240&from=EN>

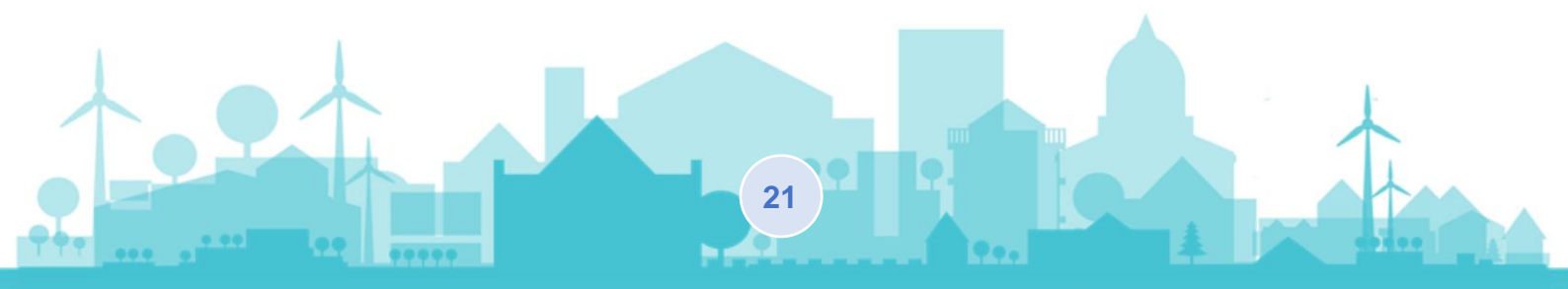


Table 4: Partnership approach and co-creation in the UAEU, NUA, Cohesion Policy, and New Leipzig Charter

Partnership approach and co-creation			
UAEU (Pact of Amsterdam)	NUA	EU Cohesion Policy 2014 – 2020 (Common Provisions Regulation)	New Leipzig Charter
<p>The Urban Agenda for the EU offers a new form of multilevel and multi-stakeholder cooperation with the aim of strengthening the urban dimension in EU policy.</p>	<p><i>Paragraph 15 (b)</i></p> <p>We commit ourselves to working towards an urban paradigm shift for a NUA that will recognise the leading role of national Governments, as appropriate, in the definition and implementation of inclusive and effective urban policies and legislation for sustainable urban development, and the equally important contributions of subnational and local governments, as well as civil society and other relevant stakeholders, in a transparent and accountable manner.</p> <p><i>Paragraph 21:</i></p> <p>We urge all national, subnational, and local governments, as well as all relevant stakeholders, in line with national policies and legislation, to revitalise, strengthen, and create partnerships, enhancing coordination and cooperation, to effectively implement the NUA and realise our shared vision.</p>	<p>(11) Each Member State should organise a partnership (...) to ensure the ownership of planned interventions by stakeholders and build on the experience and the know-how of relevant actors.</p> <p><i>Article 5:</i></p> <p>1. For the Partnership Agreement and each programme, each Member State shall, in accordance with its institutional and legal framework, organise a partnership with the competent regional and local authorities. The partnership shall also include the following partners: (a) competent urban and other public authorities; (b) economic and social partners; and (c) relevant bodies representing civil society, including environmental partners, non-governmental organisations, and bodies responsible for promoting social inclusion, gender equality and non-discrimination. (...)</p> <p>3. The Commission shall be empowered to adopt a delegated act (...) to provide for a European code of conduct on partnership (the 'code of conduct') in order to support and facilitate Member States in the organisation of partnership (...). The code of conduct shall set out the framework within which the Member States (...) shall pursue the</p>	<p>New forms of participation should be encouraged and improved, including co-creation and co-design in cooperation with inhabitants, civil society networks, community organisations, and private enterprises. Experimenting with new forms of participation can help cities manage conflicting interests, share responsibilities and find innovative solutions, while also reshaping and maintaining urban spaces and forming new alliances to create integrated city spaces.</p>

		implementation of partnership.	
--	--	--------------------------------	--


2.1.4 Place-based approach

A place-based approach not only addresses the specific needs of each territory according to its own needs and specificities, but also allows for developing and implementing integrated and tailored solutions. This principle is integrated into the UAEU as one of the 11 cross-cutting issues³⁷, as a means to develop sound and strategic urban planning. Similarly, the NUA is also promoting sustainable management and use of natural resources and land to foster equitable territorial development. In the EU policy framework, place-based approach is of great importance, as it is one of the guiding principles of the urban dimension of Cohesion Policy, which recognises that urban challenges manifest differently in different places, and that Cohesion Policy leaves no place behind. This is also acknowledged by the New Leipzig Charter, which includes place-based approach as one of the key principles of good urban governance. The table below provides an overview of the analysis of key documents in relation to place-based approach.

Table 5: Place-based approach in the UAEU, NUA, Cohesion Policy, and New Leipzig Charter

Place-based approach			
UAEU (Pact of Amsterdam)	NUA	EU Cohesion Policy 2014–2020 (Common Provisions Regulation)	New Leipzig Charter
<p>As part of the cross-cutting issues to be considered by the Partnerships:</p> <p>12.3 Sound and strategic urban planning (...) with a place-based and people-based approach.</p>	<p><i>Paragraph 49</i></p> <p>We commit ourselves to supporting territorial systems that integrate urban and rural functions into the national and subnational spatial frameworks and the systems of cities and human settlements, thus promoting sustainable management and use of natural resources and land, ensuring reliable supply and value chains that connect urban and rural supply, meeting demand to foster</p>	<p>(5) (...) it should be possible for the ESI Funds to be combined into integrated packages which are tailor-made to fit the specific territorial needs.</p> <p>(21) Member States should concentrate support to ensure a significant contribution to the achievement of</p>	<p>Places should be regarded as reference points for an integrated horizontal and vertical approach. Urban strategies and urban funding instruments should be based on sound analysis of the specific local situation, especially potential benefits and risks, stakeholders, and restrictions, while following place-based development. This will enable endogenous urban transformation and reduce local socioeconomic inequalities. Appropriate formal and informal instruments should cover all spatial levels, from neighbourhoods to local authorities</p>

³⁷ In the Pact of Amsterdam, cross-cutting issue 12.3 mentions 'Sound and strategic urban planning' (link with regional planning, including 'research an innovation smart specialisation strategies' (RIS3) and balanced territorial development) with a place- and people-based approach.



	equitable regional development across the urban-rural continuum and fill social, economic, and territorial gaps.	Union objectives in line with their specific development needs . <i>Article 15:</i> 1. The Partnership Agreement shall set out (...) an analysis of disparities, development needs, and growth potential with reference to the Thematic Objectives and territorial challenges (...)	and wider functional areas, including the metropolitan level.
--	--	---	---

2.2 Thematic linkages

The **UAEU and the NUA tackle similar urban challenges**. The 14 Priority Themes of the UAEU (12 initial Priority Themes identified in the Pact of Amsterdam and two additional ones) are inclusion of migrants and refugees, air quality, urban poverty, housing, circular economy, jobs and skills in the local economy, climate adaptation, energy transition, sustainable use of land and nature-based solutions, urban mobility, digital transition, innovative and responsible public procurement, security in public places, and culture/cultural heritage. These urban themes have guided the work of the 14 UAEU Partnerships.

These themes relate to European priorities and address the specific challenges faced by European cities.

In this regard, the 14 themes of the UAEU are strongly linked to the 11 EU Cohesion Policy (2014–2020) Thematic Objectives. Nevertheless, the Priority Themes of the UAEU can also be found in the NUA. Although the NUA approaches these themes from an international perspective, as global urban challenges, it tackles a broad variety of urban issues, many of which are also addressed by the work of the UAEU Partnerships. Not only are the urban themes of the UAEU aligned to those covered by the NUA, but they are also strongly linked to various targets of the global framework of the SDGs.


The table below provides a summary of how the 14 UAEU Priority Themes relate to the key urban themes addressed by the NUA. It also shows their linkages with the EU Cohesion Policy Thematic Objectives and the SDG targets. The table presents the key commitments of the NUA and the relevant SDG targets as far as they relate to the key themes tackled by each UAEU Partnership. The table also links the themes of the UAEU Partnerships to the Thematic Objectives of the Cohesion Policy 2014–2020. A more comprehensive and detailed version of the table can be found in Annex 3.

Overall, the linkages outlined in the table show that each of the 14 UAEU Priority Themes are also addressed by at least one of the NUA commitments, and can be linked to at least one SDG target. Furthermore, these urban themes are strongly connected to the Thematic Objectives set by the EU Cohesion Policy³⁸.

Table 6: Summary of thematic linkages between UAEU, NUA, Cohesion Policy, and SDGs

UAEU Priority Themes	EU Cohesion Policy 2014 – 2020 (Thematic Objectives)	NUA commitments	SDG targets
Air quality	TO4	Paragraph 55	3.9
	TO6		11.6
Digital transition	TO2	Paragraphs 66, 156	9.c
Urban mobility	TO4	Paragraphs 50, 54, 66, 114	11.2
	TO7		
Jobs and skills	TO8	Paragraphs 43, 56, 57	4.4
	TO10		8.3
			8.5
Circular economy	TO6	Paragraphs 71, 74, 76	8.4
			12.2
Inclusion of migrants and refugees	TO9	Paragraphs 28	10.7
Housing	TO9	Paragraphs 31, 33, 46, 105, 106, 107	11.1
Urban poverty	TO9	Paragraphs 25, 33	1.2
Climate adaptation	TO5	Paragraphs 67, 79, 101, 143, 144	1.5
			11.b
			13.1

³⁸ Only Thematic Objectives which are strongly relevant to the work performed by each UAEU Partnership have been listed in the table. Other Thematic Objectives which are not listed in the table can be relevant for to the work of the Partnerships, however. This is the case, for instance, for Thematic Objective 1, 'Strengthening research, technological and innovation', which is a cross-cutting theme that can be linked to the work of most of the Partnerships.



Energy transition	TO4	Paragraphs 14, 54, 66, 75, 121	7.1 7.2 7.3
Innovative and responsible public procurement	TO11	Paragraphs 138, 151	12.7
Sustainable land use and nature-based solutions	TO6	Paragraphs 14, 51, 69	15.3 15.9
Security in public spaces	TO9 TO11	Paragraphs 99, 103	16.1 16.a
Culture/cultural heritage	TO5 TO9	Paragraph 124	11.4 12.b



3.0 How is the UAEU contributing to implementation of the NUA in the EU?

This chapter explores how the UAEU is contributing to the implementation of the NUA in the EU. The assessment of the contribution of the UAEU to the NUA focuses on the two overarching categories of the NUA Implementation Plan: Transformative Commitments (Section 4.1) and Effective Implementation (Section 4.2).

The core of the NUA is its Implementation Plan³⁹, which is divided into two sections:

- **Transformative Commitments (NUA paragraphs 23 to 80):** About 60 paragraphs outlining the global commitments for sustainable urban development, which are grounded in social, economic, and environmental dimensions.
- **Effective Implementation (NUA paragraphs 81 to 160):** About 80 paragraphs outlining the global commitments to establish an enabling framework for sustainable urban development.

The Pact of Amsterdam states that ‘the Urban Agenda for the EU will contribute to the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the global NUA as a part of Habitat III process’. The UAEU Partnerships were invited to consider various cross-cutting issues including the international dimension and the links with the NUA and SDGs. To that end, when developing their Action Plans, Partnerships were asked to link their Actions with the commitments of the NUA. Each Partnership developed their own way to identify their contributions and/or establish links with the NUA⁴⁰.

For the purpose of the analysis carried out in this report, the 132 Actions developed by the 14 UAEU Partnerships have been explicitly linked to the relevant specific NUA paragraphs. Such analysis ensures that the method for identifying the links between UAEU Actions and NUA paragraphs is consistent, allowing comparability. Annex 1 presents an overview of the links between each of the 132 UAEU Actions and the relevant NUA paragraphs. In order to ensure that previous efforts are taken into account, the analysis also looks at the links previously identified by the Partnerships in their Action Plans and integrates them into the assessment.

³⁹ The Quito Implementation Plan for the New Urban Agenda (NUA paragraphs 23 to 160) aims to implement the NUA as a key instrument for national, sub-national, and local governments and all relevant stakeholders to achieve sustainable urban development.

⁴⁰ Because each Partnership recorded and reported on the contribution of their Actions to the NUA and SDG targets in their own way, this reporting exercise was not consistent across all Partnerships in their Action Plans. Therefore, the analysis performed for this review took into account the self-assessment of the Partnerships, but went beyond by systematically linking the UAEU Actions with the relevant NUA paragraphs.



3.1 How is the UAEU contributing to the NUA Transformative Commitments for Sustainable Urban Development?

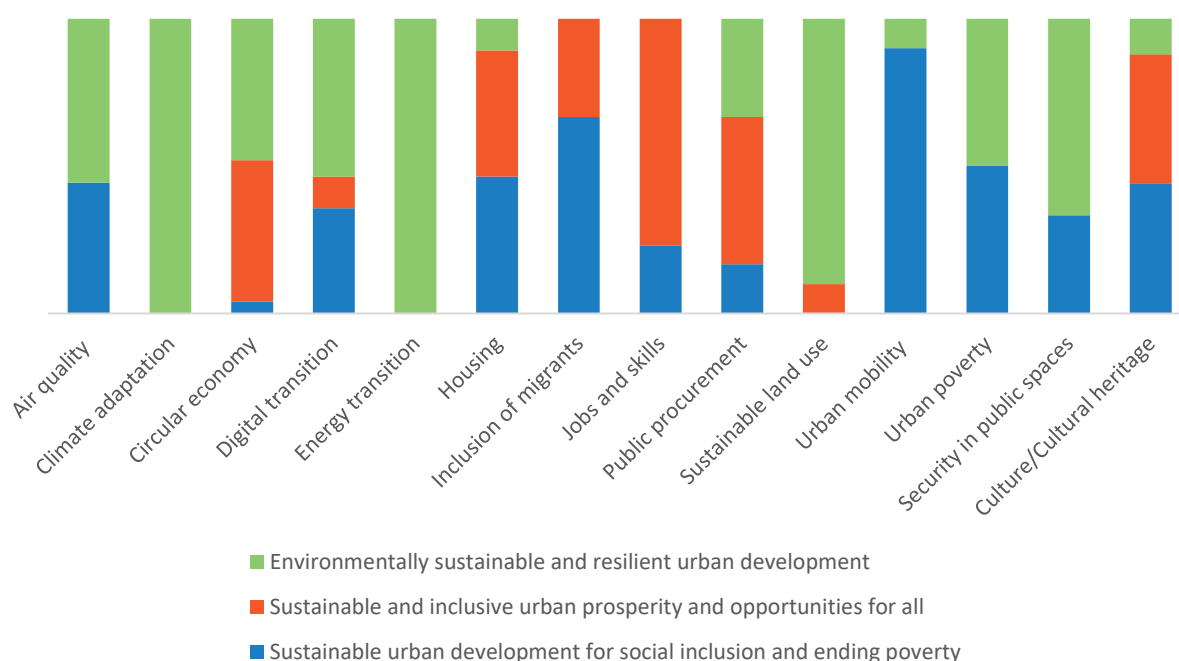
To harness the full potential of sustainable urban development, UN Member States have committed to a number of Transformative Commitments outlined in the NUA, which are grounded in the three indivisible dimensions of sustainable development: social, economic, and environmental. The Transformative Commitments are grouped under the following three categories:

- **Sustainable urban development for social inclusion and ending poverty** (*NUA paragraphs 25-42*)
- **Sustainable and inclusive urban prosperity and opportunities for all** (*NUA paragraphs 43-62*)
- **Environmentally sustainable and resilient urban development** (*NUA paragraphs 63-80*).

The 14 Partnerships of the UAEU are implementing the NUA commitments at EU, national and local level through 132 concrete Actions aiming at better regulation, knowledge, and funding under their respective Priority Themes. Each Partnership has put forward Actions which are contributing to one or more of the three NUA categories. Each of the 132 UAEU Actions have been linked with at least one of the NUA Transformative Commitments.

Figure 4, below, illustrates how the Actions of each Partnership contribute to sustainable urban development for social inclusion and ending poverty, sustainable and inclusive urban prosperity and opportunity for all, and environmentally sustainable and resilient urban development. It shows that some Partnerships have developed Actions which solely contribute to one of the NUA categories. This is the case, for instance, of the Actions proposed by the Partnerships on climate adaptation and energy transition, which are focusing exclusively on the environmental dimension of the NUA. Other Partnerships have developed Actions which are contributing to two of the NUA categories. This is the case for instance of the Partnership on Inclusion of Migrants, which focuses its work on the social dimension of the NUA, but is also contributing to the economic dimension of sustainable urban development. Lastly, the figure shows that many of the Partnerships have developed Actions which are contributing to the three NUA categories. This is the case for the Partnerships on Culture/Cultural Heritage, Public Procurement, Housing, Digital Transition, and Circular Economy.

Figure 4: UAEU Partnerships' contribution to the NUA Transformative Commitments categories



Source: Independent analysis

Following the three NUA categories, this section examines how the UAEU, through the Actions implemented by its 14 Partnerships, is contributing to the implementation of the Transformative Commitments of the NUA in the EU⁴¹.

3.1.1 Sustainable urban development for social inclusion and ending poverty

The NUA commitments under this category focus on the **social dimension of urban sustainability**. About 18 NUA paragraphs outline the commitments made toward promoting social including and contributing to end poverty. They underline the equal rights of all people to the benefits that cities can offer⁴², and envisage cities and human settlements that 'fulfil their social function, including the social and ecological function of land, with a view to progressively achieving the full realisation of the right to adequate housing as a component of the right to an

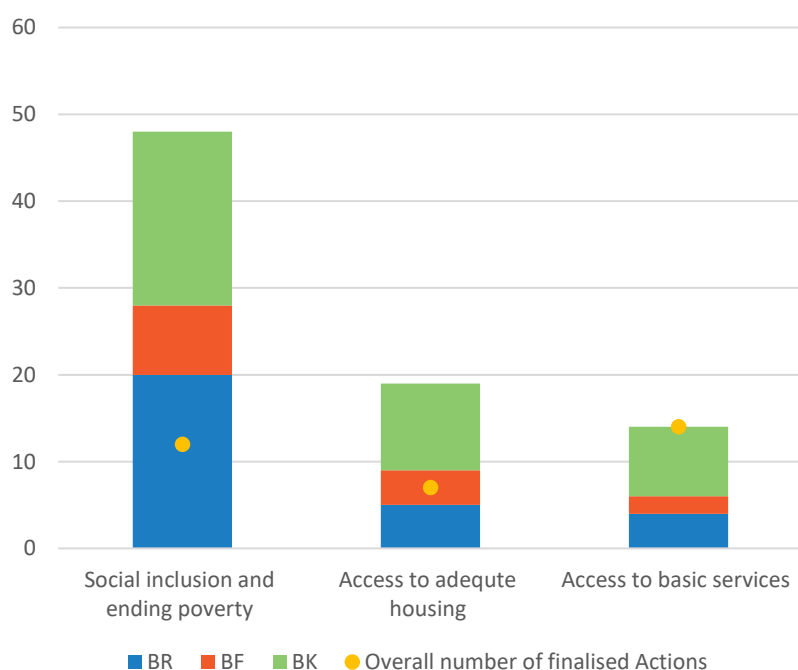
⁴¹ Data and figures presented in this section are based on an independent analysis establishing links between each of the 132 UAEU Actions and NUA paragraphs. Results of this analysis are presented in Annex 1 of this report.

⁴² UN Habitat, *The New Urban Agenda Illustrated*, 2020. Available at: https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/2020/12/nua_handbook_14dec2020_2.pdf.

adequate standard of living, without discrimination, universal access to safe and affordable drinking water and sanitation, as well as equal access for all to public goods and quality services in areas such as food security and nutrition, health, education, infrastructure, mobility and transportation, energy, air quality and livelihoods⁴³.

Overall, **76 Actions proposed by various UAEU Partnerships**, of which 32 are finalised, contribute to the implementation of the NUA commitments under this category, and to advancing sustainable urban development for social inclusion and ending poverty in the EU, as illustrated in Figure 5.


Figure 5: UAEU Actions contributing to the three categories of commitments under sustainable development for social inclusion and ending poverty



Source: Independent analysis

These Actions, mainly developed by the Partnerships on Air Quality, Digital Transition, Housing, Integration of Migrants and Refugees, Urban Poverty, Urban Mobility, and Culture/Cultural Heritage, delivered concrete outputs which contribute to advancing social inclusion and ending poverty, and access to adequate housing and basic services in the EU. These Actions include, for instance, the provision of policy recommendations on the protection of unaccompanied minors and on improving funding for deprived areas, guidance for local cultural services

⁴³ NUA Paragraph 13(a).



fostering social inclusion, development of data on urban poverty at EU level, and guidance on promoting sustainable and active mobility behaviours and ideas to improve the EU gender-poverty-energy nexus data.

Following the three NUA sub-categories, the sections below provide examples of how UAEU Actions are contributing to reinforcing the social dimension of sustainable urban development in Europe.

3.1.1.1 Social inclusion and ending poverty

The NUA aims to eradicate poverty and enhance social inclusion. In this regard, it pays specific attention to battling discrimination faced by marginalised and vulnerable groups⁴⁴, such as women, youth, older persons, persons with disabilities, and migrants. Overall, **48 Actions** designed by the UAEU Partnerships have the capacity to contribute to reducing poverty and inequalities, enhancing social inclusion, and ensuring access to public spaces in the short, medium, and long term. The Partnerships on Urban Poverty (12 Actions) and on Inclusion of Migrants and Refugees (8 Actions) contribute the most to this NUA sub-category, but other Partnerships such as Digital Transition (10 Actions), Job and Skills (3 Actions), and Culture/Cultural Heritage (11 Actions) have also put forward several Actions to address inequality issues. Some examples are presented in the box below.

Establishment of an Academy on integration strategies, inclusion of migrants and refugees (IN04)

The **Partnership on Inclusion of Migrants and Refugees** introduced the participation of migrants and refugees in the development of UAEU Actions through the establishment of an Urban Academy on integration strategies, with the objective of supporting learning and exchange of experiences between practitioners and policymakers working on integration at the local, regional, and national level, with a focus on cities. Two successful editions of the Urban Academy were held, and the decision was made to make it an annual event. Following the example of this Partnership, the European Commission set up its own refugee advisory group, ensuring the long-term impact of this Action at the EU level.

NUA reporting categories: 2. Reduce inequality in urban areas by promoting equally shared opportunities and benefits. 3. Achieve social inclusion of vulnerable groups (women, youth, older persons, persons with disabilities, and migrants).

NUA paragraphs: 25, 28, 32.

Strengthening the desegregation principle in EU Urban Areas (UP11)

This Action, designed by the **Partnership on Urban Poverty**, fights against the issue of residential and educational segregation faced by marginalised communities, in particular the Roma minority. The Action proposes strengthening and mainstreaming the principle of desegregation into the regulation on the use of EU funds post-2020. The Partnership produced a checklist for cities to support the development of urban desegregation actions addressing the problem of residential and/or educational segregation, primarily of Roma, but also of other ethnic minorities.

NUA reporting categories: 2. Reduce inequality in urban areas by promoting equally shared opportunities and benefits. 3. Achieve social inclusion of vulnerable groups (women, youth, older persons, persons with disabilities, and migrants).

NUA paragraphs: 34, 40.

⁴⁴ UN Habitat, *The New Urban Agenda Illustrated*, 2020. Available at: https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/2020/12/nua_handbook_14dec2020_2.pdf.



Measure the impact of social cohesion and inclusion on security in public spaces of urban and peri-urban areas Security in public spaces (SE05)

The **Partnership on Security in Public Spaces** developed a [manual for European cities](#) to apply the Collective Impact Model⁴⁵ to address complex urban security and social cohesion challenges. The guidance includes an overview of the Collective Impact framework and inspiring case studies. It also outlines the key challenges and limitations of the model, and provides local policymakers with practical tools and recommendations to apply it.

NUA reporting categories: 4. Ensure access to public spaces including streets, sidewalks and cycling lanes.

NUA paragraphs: 33, 34, 37.

3.1.1.2 Access to adequate housing

The NUA emphasises the need to provide equal access for all to adequate and affordable housing⁴⁶. Overall, **19 Actions** advanced by the UAEU contribute to this objective. The Housing Partnership's Actions have been fully dedicated to this NUA commitment. The Partnership on Urban Poverty also addressed related issues, such as security of tenure and homelessness. Some examples of these Actions are presented in the box below.

Affordable housing good practices database (HO04)

The **Partnership on Housing** developed an [online database](#) gathering best practices for the social and affordable housing sectors. The database contributes to fostering learning and knowledge exchange on the provision of affordable housing in European cities.

NUA reporting categories: 1. Ensure access to adequate and affordable housing.

NUA paragraphs: 31, 32, 33.

⁴⁵ Collective Impact (CI) is a systematic approach to addressing complex problems at the systems level through multi-sector collaboration. It offers a framework for cross-sector collaboration between communities and organisations to solve specific social problems and achieve large-scale change for a common purpose. As a systems-level approach, CI is based on the premise that complex problems will not be moved by one-time interventions. They require a coordinated effort by multiple actors, working across sectors (e.g., civil society, government, and business organisations) within a structured framework (Kania & Kramer, 2011).

⁴⁶ NUA, paragraph 14(a).



Ending Homelessness by 2030 (UP08, UP09)

The **Partnership on Urban Poverty** designed two actions to end homelessness and build capacity to use EU funds to that end. Members of the Partnership worked on creating a formal framework to advance the commitment of the EU to eradicate homelessness by 2030 under the SDGs by promoting effective multi-level engagement of all relevant stakeholders at the EU level, and the development of national social inclusion strategies at Member State level.

NUA reporting categories: 1. Ensure access to adequate and affordable housing.

NUA paragraphs: 31, 32, 33, 34 .

3.1.1.3 Access to basic services

Another commitment of the NUA is to provide equal access for all to physical and social infrastructures and basic services, such as safe drinking water and sanitation, waste disposal, renewable energy, and sustainable mobility⁴⁷. Several Partnerships intend to bring further advancement of access to these services, such as the Energy Transition Partnership, which notably aims to increase the amount of local and renewable energy, or the Urban Mobility Partnership, which focuses on providing access to more sustainable and efficient urban mobility. Overall, **14 Actions** of the UAEU contribute to this NUA sub-category.

Scaling up innovative clean buses, Urban Mobility (UM04)

The **Partnership on Urban Mobility** proposed an Action to support the market introduction of clean (alternatively fuelled) buses through relevant EU funding sources and the Clean Buses Deployment initiative. It published a brochure on the matter. Moreover, the Partnership raised awareness of relevant tools and disseminated knowledge for authorities with the publication of the policy brief , 'The Impact of Electric Buses on Urban Life'.

NUA reporting categories: 2. Ensure access to safe and efficient public transport system.

NUA paragraphs: 32,36, 37.

3.1.2 Sustainable and inclusive urban prosperity and opportunities for all

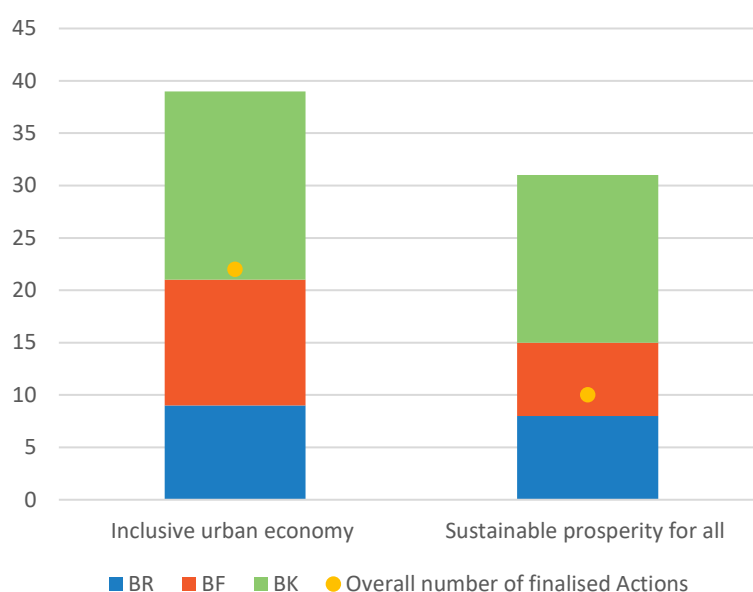
The NUA commitments under this category focus on the **economic dimension of urban sustainability**. About 20 NUA paragraphs outline commitments to sustainable and inclusive urban prosperity and opportunities for all. The commitments follow the overarching principle of 'ensuring sustainable and inclusive urban economies' by 'leveraging the collective benefits of well-planned urbanisation, including high productivity, competitiveness, and innovation, promoting full and productive employment and decent work for all, ensuring the creation of decent jobs and equal access for all to economic and productive resources and opportunities, and by preventing land speculation, promoting secure land tenure, and managing urban shrinking, where appropriate'⁴⁸.

⁴⁷ NUA, paragraph 34.

⁴⁸ NUA, paragraph 14(b).

Overall, **59 Actions** proposed by various UAEU Partnerships, of which 26 are finalised, contribute to the NUA commitments under ‘Sustainable and inclusive urban prosperity and opportunities for all’, as illustrated by Figure 6.

Figure 6: UAEU Actions contributing to the two NUA categories under ‘Sustainable and inclusive urban prosperity and opportunities for all’



Source: Independent analysis

These Actions, mainly implemented by the Partnerships on Circular Economy, Housing, Jobs and Skills, Public Procurement and Culture/Cultural Heritage, are delivering concrete outputs that support better regulation, knowledge, and funding for more inclusive urban economy and sustainable prosperity in Europe. They include, for instance, providing guidance for cities to develop collaborative economies or to implement waste prevention, re-use, and recycling; recommendations to establish financial blending facilities for cities and SMEs; recommendations to include a human capital agenda and a local dimension into regional innovation strategies; creating better conditions for business development by establishing a job-oriented ecosystem; developing toolkits for cities to put in place innovative and sustainable public procurement strategies; or guidance to create cultural hubs which support the local economy and cultural offer.

Following the two NUA sub-categories, the sub-sections below explore how the UAEU Actions contribute to the NUA Transformative Commitments related to the economic dimension of urban sustainability.



3.1.2.1 Inclusive urban economy

Transformative Commitments of the NUA related to economic sustainability include ensuring productive employment and decent work for all, paying special attention to disadvantaged groups, promoting and enabling a fair and responsible business environment, and supporting small and medium enterprises. Seven UAEU Partnerships designed Actions to ensure further advancement of the European and local economies towards inclusion through different dimensions. This is particularly the case for the Circular Economy Partnership (10 Actions), the Public Procurement Partnership (6 Actions), and the Housing Partnership (12 Actions). Overall, **39 UAEU Actions** contribute to this NUA sub-category.

Guidance on building city strategic procurement and how to manage strategic procurement (PP01)

The **Partnership on Public Procurement** developed a [guidance toolkit](#) (including visual materials) to help politicians and city practitioners (especially mid-sized and small ones) to build their own public procurement strategy. Such tool allows the implementation of an overarching strategy for cities and to face sustainability challenges. The guidance includes a self-assessment tool for the public organisations to check their current level and the level of ambition of the Procurement Strategy in order to help to define the next steps on the operational, tactical, and strategic levels in the organisation.

NUA reporting categories: 4. Promote and enabling, faire and responsible environment for business and innovation.

NUA paragraphs: 44, 47.

Prepare a blueprint for a Circular City Portal (CE03):

The majority of cities in the EU currently lack comprehensive strategies for the circular economy that go beyond the utility and waste management sector. Thus, **the Partnership on Circular Economy** developed a [Circular City Portal](#), an openly shared knowledge base that can inspire and guide cities in their journey towards a circular economy. In addition, it also created a [blueprint](#) for policymakers, which can act as a first guide for those who want to explore circular city governance.

NUA reporting categories: 1. Diversify the urban economy and promote cultural and creative industries. 4. Promote an enabling, fair, and responsible environment for business and innovation.

NUA paragraphs: 45,47,48

3.1.2.2 Sustainable prosperity for all

The NUA commits to 'increasing economic productivity, as appropriate, by providing the labour force with access to income-earning opportunities, knowledge, skills, and educational facilities that contribute to an innovative and competitive urban economy'⁴⁹. To this end, it focuses on diversifying the urban economy and promoting cultural and creative industries, and developing technical and entrepreneurial skills, and urban-rural linkages. Overall, **31 UAEU Actions** contribute to achieving the transformative commitments under this NUA category. The Culture and Cultural Heritage Partnership (11 Actions), the Jobs and Skills Partnership (7 Actions) and the Circular Economy Partnership (7 Actions), in particular, have put forward a number of actions designed to diversify industries and develop new skills.

⁴⁹ NUA paragraph 56.



Talent office (JS01)

A mismatched skillset is one of the biggest issues that cities face in terms of jobs and skills. The **Partnership on Jobs and Skills** has developed an Action which set up a new governance structure to support and enhance talent development and connect it with stakeholders. This 'Talent Observatory' will provide real-time intelligence, enabling all labour market actors to operate more efficiently.

NUA reporting categories: 2. Develop technical and entrepreneurial skills to thrive in a modern urban economy.

NUA paragraphs: 58.

CHIME - Cultural hubs for innovation, modernisation, and enhancement (CCH03)

The aim of this Action, developed by the **Partnership on Culture/Cultural Heritage**, is to constitute a platform to strengthen artistic production and innovation, improving working conditions and promoting a structural framework for self-employed artists, granting them space for cultural productions, and promoting participation and transparency in cultural management.

NUA reporting categories: 1. Diversify the urban economy and promote cultural and creative industries.

NUA paragraphs: 38, 45.

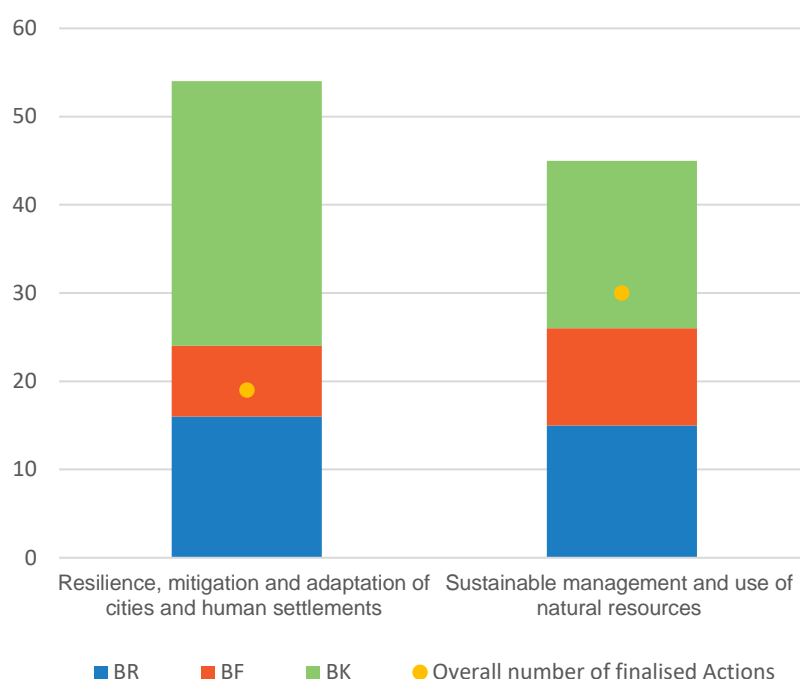
3.1.3 Environmentally sustainable and resilient urban development

The NUA commitments under this category focus on the **environmental dimension of urban sustainability** by 'promoting clean energy and sustainable use of land and resources in urban development, by protecting ecosystems and biodiversity, including adopting healthy lifestyles in harmony with nature, promoting sustainable consumption and production patterns, building urban resilience, reducing disaster risks, and by mitigating and adapting to climate change'⁵⁰. About 18 NUA paragraphs outline the commitments to environmentally sustainable and resilient urban development.

Overall, **85 Actions proposed by various UAEU Partnerships**, of which 39 are finalised, are linked to commitments under 'Sustainable and inclusive urban prosperity and opportunities for all', as illustrated by Figure 7.

⁵⁰ NUA paragraph 14(c).

Figure 7: UAEU Actions contributing to the two NUA categories under 'Environmentally sustainable and resilient urban development'



Source: Independent analysis

These Actions, mainly implemented by the Partnerships on Air Quality, Climate Adaptation, Circular Economy, Energy Transition, Digital Transition, and Sustainable Land Use, are delivering concrete outputs which help to advance sustainable management and use of natural resources and strengthen the resilience of European cities. They are, for instance, providing guidance on better air quality planning, political training on climate adaptation, recommendations for improving funding for circular economy projects, and policy recommendations to maximise the use of waste heat in cities, developing a handbook to raise awareness on nature-based solutions and sustainable use of land, and setting-up an observatory on culture/cultural heritage and climate change.

Following the two sub-categories of the NUA, the sections below provide examples of how UAEU Actions are advancing the environmental dimension of sustainable urban development in the EU.

3.1.3.1 Resilience, mitigation, and adaptation of cities and human settlements

The NUA focuses on fostering both adaptation and resilience of cities. It introduces the commitment to 'supporting the medium to long-term adaptation planning process, as well as city-level assessments of climate vulnerability



and impact, to inform adaptation plans, policies, programmes and actions that build the resilience of urban inhabitants, including through the use of ecosystem-based adaptation⁵¹. Furthermore, the NUA strives to reduce the loss of biodiversity and enhance ecosystem conservation. Overall, **54 Actions** contribute to the transformative commitments under this sub-category. Actions put forward by the Partnerships on Climate Adaptation (10 Actions) and Sustainable Land Use (9 Actions) significantly address these topics, but other Partnerships such as Circular Economy (10 Actions), Urban Poverty (12 Actions), and Security and Public Places (6 Actions) also contribute to strengthening the resilience of cities.

Political training on climate adaptation (CA07)

Climate adaptation measures sometimes require substantial up-front investments that can only be secured with sufficient knowledge, political backing, and coordination at city level. The **Partnership on Climate Adaptation** tackled this issue by developing an Action which delivers training on climate adaptation to local politicians. The sessions focus on, among other things, the benefits of climate adaptation, how to deal with it in a city, and how to communicate with citizens and involve different actors.

NUA reporting categories: 2. Implement climate change mitigation and adaptation actions.

NUA paragraphs: 79, 80.

Guiding Principles for Resilience and Integrated Approaches in Risk and Heritage Management in European Cities (CCH08)

The overall objective of this Action from the **Partnership on Culture/Cultural Heritage** is to foster the integration of urban built heritage into Disaster Risk Management (DRM), climate change, and environmental plans and policies at the local level. To achieve this, the Action aims to establish recommendations and guiding principles for relevant local authorities and other relevant actors, including citizens.

NUA reporting categories: 2. Implement climate change mitigation and adaptation actions.

NUA paragraphs: 77.

3.1.3.2 Sustainable management and use of natural resources

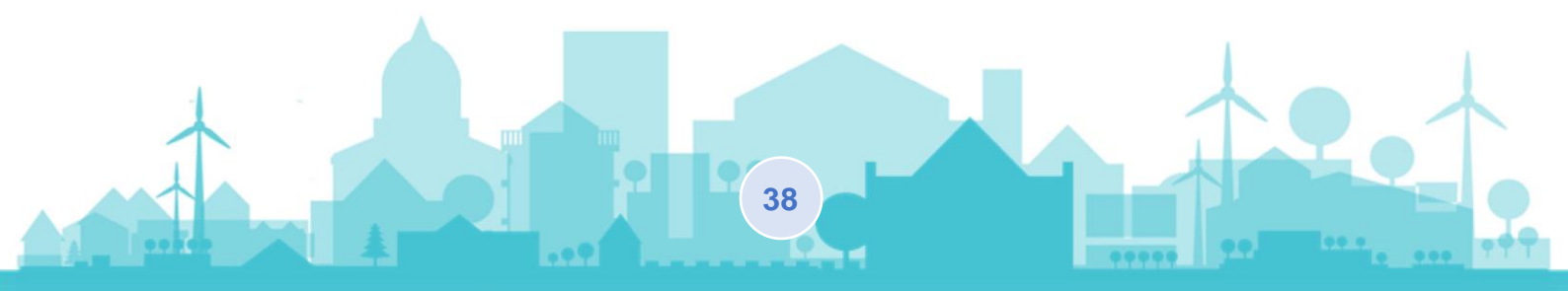
The NUA promotes sustainable use, management, and conservation of natural resources, focusing on resource efficiency. Furthermore, it introduces the commitment to ‘adopting a smart-city approach that makes use of opportunity from digitalisation, clean energy and technologies’⁵² to provide options for inhabitants to make more environmentally friendly choices. Overall, **45 UAEU Actions** contribute to enhancing the sustainable management and use of natural resources. Partnerships on Digital Transition (15 Actions), Circular Economy (12 Actions), Air Quality (5 Actions), and Energy Transition (5 Actions), in particular, aim to tackle these issues.


Better air quality planning (AQ02)

Almost three-quarters of Europeans live in cities, which are the immediate level of intervention in dealing with threats to human health coming from pollutants. However, air quality planning in the EU does not always fall under the responsibility of cities. This raises two needs: to improve coordination between different levels of governance, and to improve coordination within cities between sectors that impact air

⁵¹ NUA paragraph 20.

⁵² NUA paragraph 66.





quality levels. In order to address this, the **Partnership on Air Quality** developed a [Code of Good Practice](#) and a [European Catalogue of Air Quality Measures](#) in order to share information on air quality measures and facilitate their comparative analysis.

NUA reporting categories: 1. Strengthen the sustainable management of natural resources in urban areas.

NUA paragraphs: 79, 80.

Help make water legislation support the circular economy in cities (CE07)

Efficient re-use of water is essential in the transition towards a circular economy. Increasing the available volume of re-used water for appropriate use (i.e. street cleaning) would reduce demands on scarce drinking water. The Partnership on Circular Economy calls for robust and comprehensive EU legislation to create an environment where cities will develop and implement solutions for water re-use as part of a strategy for better water management and transition towards a circular economy. To help drive this forward, the Partnership developed a [position paper](#), which fed into ongoing revisions of EU strategies on water and wastewater.

NUA reporting categories: 2. Drive resource conservation and waste reduction, reuse, and recycling.

NUA paragraphs: 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75.



3.2 How is the UAEU contributing to the NUA Effective Implementation?

To achieve the NUA Transformative Commitments towards global urban sustainable development, an enabling policy framework is required at the national, sub-national, and local levels. Integrated and complementary processes and actors such as participatory planning, coordination of urban and rural development strategies and international cooperation will assist the implementation of the NUA⁵³. In the section 'Effective Implementation', the NUA outlines five main pillars: national urban policies, urban legislation and regulations, urban planning and design, local economy and municipal finance, and local implementation. These pillars are laid out across the following three sub-sections:

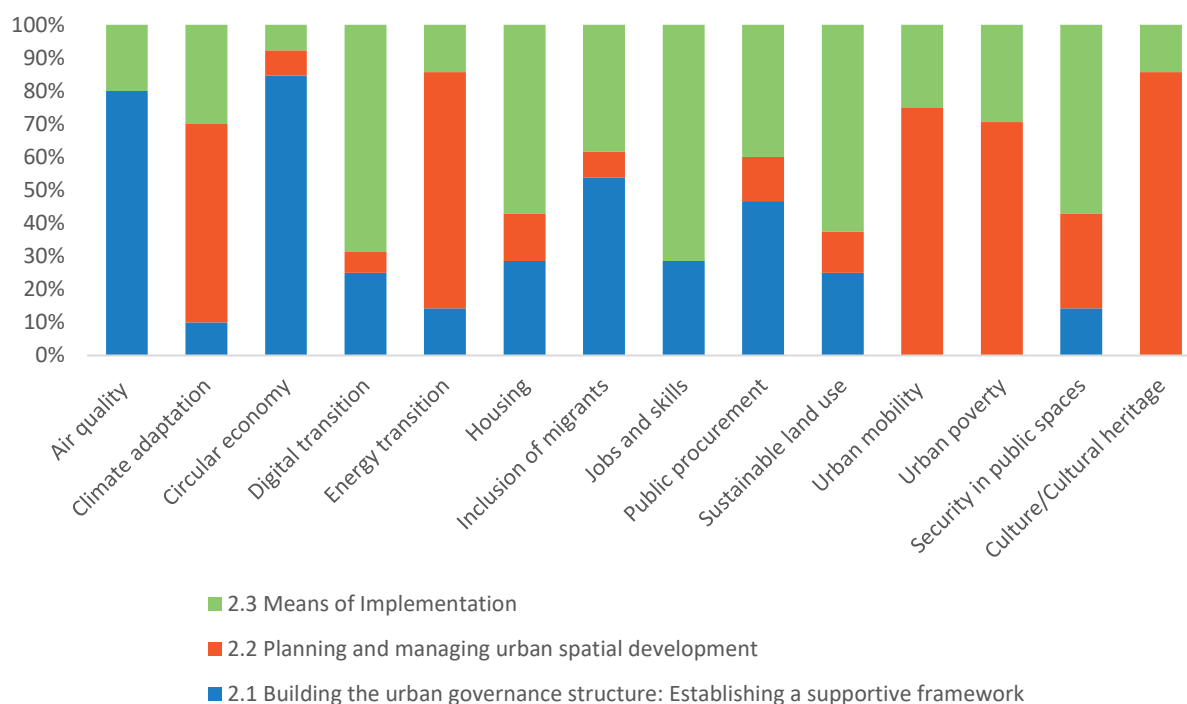
- **Building the Urban Governance Structure: Establishing a Supportive Framework** (*NUA paragraphs 85-92*)
- **Planning and Managing Urban Spatial Development** (*NUA paragraphs 93-125*)
- **Means of Implementation** (*NUA paragraphs 126-160*)

Through the concrete Actions put forward by its Partnerships, the UAEU is contributing to establishing an enabling framework for sustainable urban development at EU, national, and local level.

Figure 8, below, illustrates how the Actions of each Partnership contribute to building the urban governance structure at the EU, national, and local levels, planning and managing urban spatial development in the EU, and providing means of implementation. It shows that each Partnership has developed Actions which contribute to at least two of the three NUA categories under Effective Implementation. The majority of the Partnerships contribute to the three categories through the Actions they have developed.

⁵³ NUA Explainer, available at: https://uploads.habitat3.org/hb3/New-Urban-Agenda-Explainer_Final.pdf.

Figure 8: UAEU Partnerships' contribution to the NUA Effective Implementation categories



Source: Independent analysis

This Section explores how the UAEU Actions are linked to the NUA paragraphs under Effective Implementation, and how these Actions contribute to building the urban governance structure in the EU (Section 4.1.1), planning and managing urban spatial development in the EU (Section 4.1.2.), and to providing means of implementation (Section 4.1.3.).

3.2.1 Building the Urban Governance Structure: Establishing a Supportive Framework

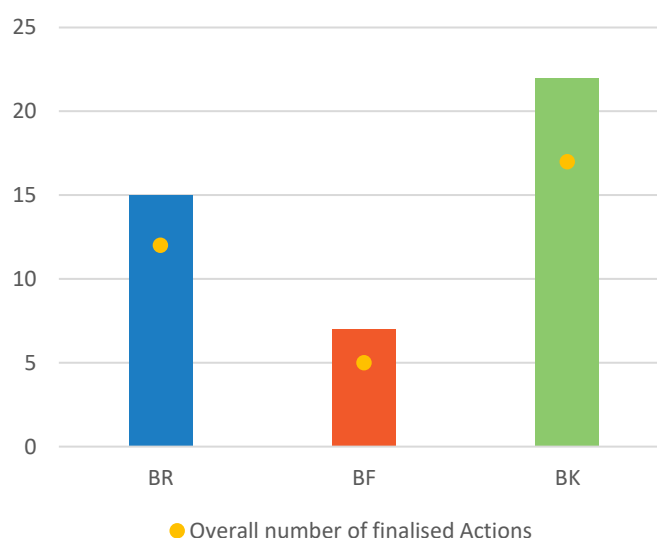
About eight paragraphs of the NUA outline the establishment of a supportive framework for good urban governance at all levels. Inclusive, implementable, and participatory policies are fostered to ensure effective implementation of the New Urban Agenda Framework. Local and urban governments are a particular focus, with support for capacity, reliable financing mechanisms, and management structures. The NUA promotes the cooperation of all levels of government.

As already mentioned, the UAEU itself already represents a collaborative platform, putting into practice a multi-level governance and multi-stakeholder approach. While the existing principles of urban governance shared by

both the UAEU and NUA were already analysed in Chapter 2, this section focuses on the concrete contributions of the UAEU to the NUA Effective Implementation by looking at the UAEU Actions, their implementation, outputs, and results.

Overall, **49 Actions** proposed by various UAEU Partnerships, of which 34 are finalised, contribute to building the urban governance structure at the EU, national, and/or local levels. As illustrated in Figure 9, these Actions focus on all three pillars of EU policymaking and implementation: better regulation, better funding, and better knowledge.


Figure 9: UAEU Actions contributing to the NUA category ‘Building the urban governance structure: Establishing a supportive framework’



Source: Independent analysis

These Actions are mainly developed by the Partnerships on Air Quality, Circular Economy, Inclusion of Migrants, and Public Procurement. The Partnerships produced tools and guidance to empower urban and local authorities, including a Code of Good Practices for Cities, Air Quality Action Plans, and a handbook for urban authorities for the re-use of buildings and spaces. They have also developed new governance structures, such as the European Migrant Advisory Board, comprised of migrants and refugees, set up to advise and contribute to the work of the Partnership on Inclusion of Migrants and Refugees. Moreover, Partnerships have put forward various policy recommendations to improve access to funding and to strengthen the capacity of local authorities. Examples of Actions and how they are contributing to specific NUA commitments are presented below.

Recommendations on EU security strategy, multi-level, participatory and innovative governance and funding (SE02)



The **Partnership on Security in Public Spaces** developed an Action to promote the role of local and regional authorities and integrate them into the governance of security-related issues at national and European level. In this context, the Partnership has put forward a [declaration](#) calling on European and national institutions to involve local and regional authorities in the elaboration of the foreseen Cohesion Policy Funds Regulation.

NUA reporting categories: 3. Develop legal and policy frameworks to enhance the ability of governments to implement urban policies. 4. Build the capacity of local and subnational governments to implement local and metropolitan multilevel governance.

NUA paragraphs: 86, 87, 88, 89.

Identification of gaps in regulation (and its implementation) on air pollutant emission sources (AQ01)

The **Partnership on Air Quality** developed a [Position Paper on the Fitness Check of the EU Ambient Air Quality Directives](#), which includes recommendations to improve the implementation of air quality legislation and identify regulation gaps in the urban environment. It reviews interactions between different regulations and the implementation of air quality legislation, providing information on funding mechanisms and knowledge sharing. The position paper was developed through a public consultation, and in liaison with the Partnership on Urban Mobility and the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy.

NUA reporting categories: 3. Develop legal and policy frameworks to enhance the ability of governments to implement urban policies.

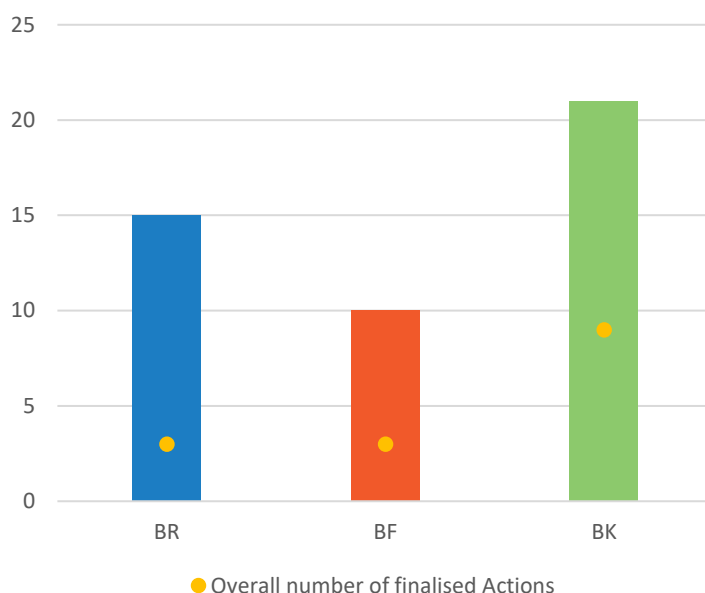
NUA paragraphs: 89, 94.

3.2.2 Planning and managing urban spatial development

About 33 paragraphs of the NUA outline the global commitments for planning and managing urban spatial development. Integrated planning aims to balance short-term needs with long-term desired outcomes, while making investments sustainable and fully part of the development strategy chosen. The issues addressed include connections between cities and territories, housing policies, infrastructure and services, security and safety, mobility, and culture as a priority component of urban planning.

Overall, **46 Actions** developed by the UAEU Partnerships, out of which 15 are finalised, contribute to implementing NUA commitments to promote integrated, sustainable, and balanced territorial planning and development in the EU. As illustrated in Figure 10 below, these Actions, which are at different stages of implementation, are focusing on all three pillars of EU policymaking and implementation.

Figure 10: UAEU Actions contributing to the NUA category Planning and Managing Urban Spatial Development



Source: Independent analysis

These Actions are mainly put forward by the Partnerships on Climate Adaptation, Energy Transition, Urban Mobility, Urban Poverty and Culture/Cultural Heritage. The Partnerships have developed actions aiming at strengthening the role of small- and medium-sized cities such as strengthening the knowledge of European municipalities in the framework of Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S). They have also developed actions which contribute to implement integrated and balanced territorial development policies such as an analysis of national multilevel urban development and planning regulation with a focus on climate adaptation. Other Actions contribute for instance to include culture as a priority component of urban planning, such as the development of a strategic plan for the culture enhancement in the urban framework. Examples of Actions and how they are contributing to specific NUA commitments are presented below.

Reducing diversity of Urban Vehicle Access Regulations (UM07)

Cities across the EU are implementing Urban Vehicle Access Regulations (UVAR) due to growing evidence of the effects of air pollution on health, rising congestion, and the failure to meet EU emission standards. The European Commission currently receives many inquiries concerning the lack of harmonisation of urban access regulation schemes in the EU. The **Partnership on Urban Mobility** has therefore designed an Action to increase transparency of the schemes for citizens and businesses by addressing existing fragmentation and providing the right framework conditions for local action by providing recommendations and best practices. The developed outputs are a [dedicated website](#) containing updated UVAR information, as well as a [guidance document](#) providing recommendations and best practices that can support local administrators in designing and implementing UVAR.



NUA reporting categories: 7. Implement sustainable multimodal public transport systems including non-motorised options.

NUA paragraphs: 113, 114, 116, 117, 118

A flexible concept for setting up further development of Local Cooperation Centres for innovative and sustainable procurement (PP06)

The **Public Procurement Partnership** put forward several Actions to strengthen the role of smaller cities and empower them to develop innovative public procurement strategies. A remarkable Action in that regards shows how to set up [Local Cooperation Centres](#) for innovative and sustainable procurement that is adaptable to the local situation. These centres can foster training and skills development, networking, and potentially joint purchases. They are particularly beneficial to allow smaller municipalities to access the experience of larger towns and cities.

NUA reporting categories: 6. Strengthen the role of small and intermediate cities and towns.

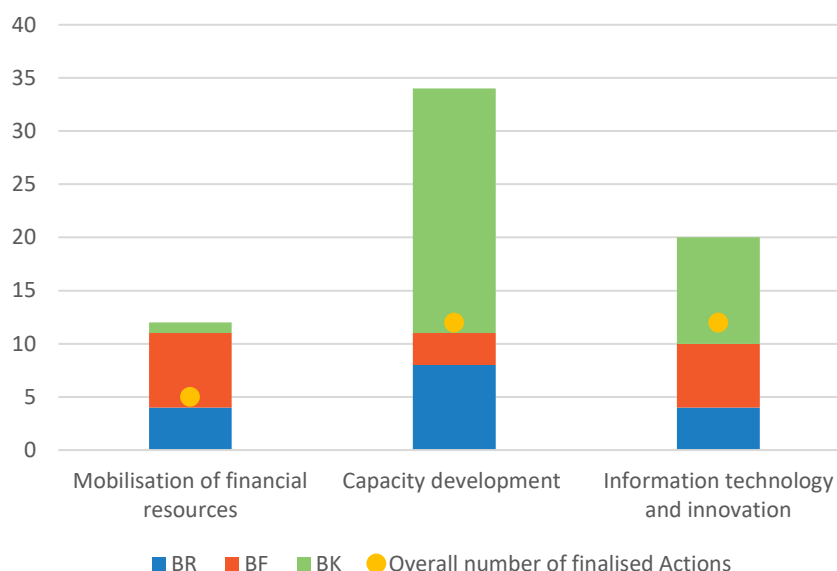
NUA paragraphs: 102, 115.

3.2.3 Means of Implementation

About 35 paragraphs of the NUA elaborate the means of implementation for the NUA. The complexity of this agenda requires many actors and a variety of means along with an enabling environment. Core means for the NUA implementation are capacity development, cooperation, mobilisation of financial resources, alongside political and legal frameworks.

Overall, **58 Actions** introduced by the UAEU Partnerships, out of which 29 are finalised, contribute to put forward various means of implementation to enable sustainable urban development in Europe. As illustrated in Figure 11, about half of these Actions provide capacity development means, mainly through Actions targeting Better Knowledge.

Figure 11: UAEU Actions contributing to the NUA category Means of Implementation



Source: Independent analysis

All 14 UAEU Partnerships developed at least one Action contributing to the NUA Means of Implementation pillar. Tackling various urban challenges, these Actions are, for instance, aiming to strengthen the ability of cities to access various EU funds (e.g. Cohesion Policy funds) by formulating policy recommendations for EU policymakers to enhance their accessibility. Several Actions foster knowledge exchange and cooperation between cities on various urban themes. Other Actions are enabling local authorities in the digital transition or developing data and indicators to enhance the capacity of local authorities in data collection, monitoring, and analysis.

Following the NUA guidelines, this section is divided into three categories of Means of Implementation: mobilisation of financial resources, capacity development, and information technology and innovation.

3.2.3.1 Mobilisation of financial resources

To finance the implementation of the NUA Objectives, mobilisation of adequate and appropriately directed financial resources is needed. The NUA describes ways to widen the potential revenue base of municipalities in paragraphs 130–145. This can be done by expanding traditional resources, mobilising innovative revenue sources, and putting in place long-term, predictable financing mechanisms.

Overall, **13 UAEU Actions** contribute to the mobilisation of financial resources for European cities. Mainly, these Actions put forward concrete proposals to enhance the access of local urban authorities to EU funds (in addition to the EU urban ring fencing already in place under the ERDF) and to provide funding targeting the needs and



priorities of urban areas. Actions are developed by the Partnerships on Climate Adaptation, Circular Economy, Digital Transition, Housing, Inclusion of migrants, Jobs and Skills, and Urban Mobility. Examples of Actions and how they are contributing to specific NUA commitments are presented below.

Including recommendations for the Operational Programmes (OPs) of the ERDF in order to improve its accessibility for municipalities (CA03)

The **Climate Adaptation Partnership** produced [recommendations](#) for Operational Programmes (OPs) of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) to improve access to these funds for local authorities, and to increase climate adaptation actions' implementation. These recommendations were brought to the attention of EU Member States and authorities managing the ERDF, with a view to advancing the new programming period (2021–2027). These recommendations have also fed into several open consultations regarding various EU legislative initiatives related to the European Green Deal and climate change.

NUA reporting categories: 3. Formulate sound systems of financial transfers from national to subnational and local governments based on needs, priorities and functions.

NUA paragraphs: 130, 135, 136, 139.

Improving access for cities to EU integration funding (IN03)

The **Partnership on Inclusion of Migrants and Refugees** submitted [recommendations](#) to improve EU funding for integration of Migrants and Refugees to better target the needs of local authorities, and to enhance access for cities to these funds for integration.

NUA reporting categories: 3. Formulate sound systems of financial transfers from national to subnational and local governments based on needs, priorities and functions.

NUA paragraphs: 135, 136.

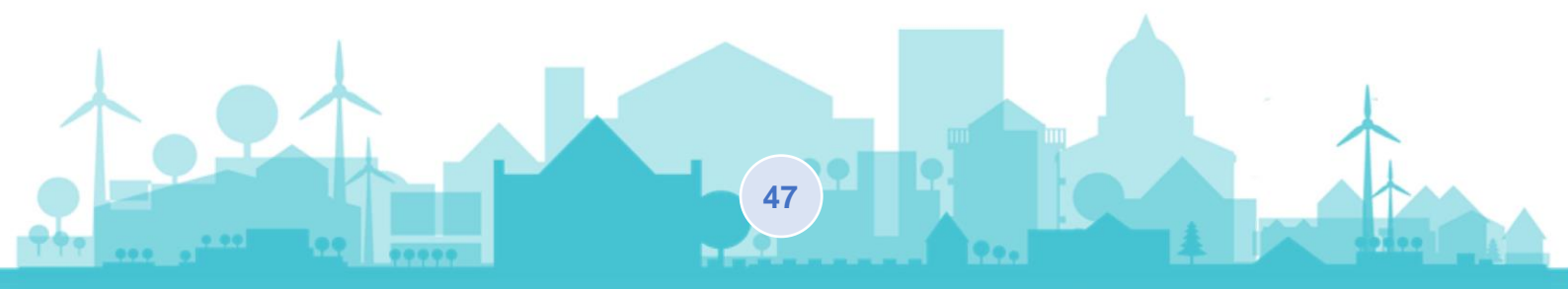
In regard to EU financial resources, a number of Actions target EU Cohesion Policy, as shown in the box below.

UAEU Actions targeting EU Cohesion Policy and its related funds

A significant number of Partnerships developed Actions specifically targeting Cohesion Policy, the EU's main investment policy directed to regions and cities. Overall, **27 UAEU Actions relate to the EU's Cohesion Policy**.

14 of these Actions are [recommendations](#) and suggestions for EU policymakers to improve Cohesion Policy by providing better access to relevant EU funds, strengthening the role and the involvement of regional and local authorities in its various instruments, or even by increasing funding for certain urban-related issues. The **Partnership on Climate Adaptation**, for instance, delivered concrete recommendations on the ERDF Operational Programmes (OPs) to improve the accessibility of local authorities (CA03). These recommendations were addressed to EU Institutions and Managing Authorities; they also fed into several relevant EU open consultations. The **Partnership on Circular Economy** submitted a position paper to the Commission advocating for the mainstreaming of circular economy, in particular at urban level, in the post 2020 Cohesion Policy (CE01). The inclusion of circular economy in the Policy Objective 2 of the new Cohesion Policy 2021–2024 was a positive outcome for the Partnership.

13 Actions provide [guidance](#) or have developed [toolkits](#) for local and urban authorities to better use the available funds under EU Cohesion Policy. For instance, the **Partnership on Public Procurement** [mapped](#) existing EU funds, such as the ESIF programmes (e.g. Horizon2020, UIA, and URBACT) and financial instruments that can support cities to develop strategic and innovative public procurement. The results of this Action have been published as an [e-learning module](#), providing cities with easily accessible information on financing public procurement strategies in a user-friendly way. The Partnership on Sustainable Land Use developed a [guidebook](#) promoting Functional Urban Areas (FUA) cooperation as a tool to mitigate sprawl. The guidebook notably explores the financial incentives supporting





the promotion of FUA cooperation, which include funding from the EU Cohesion policy, as well as national funds. The guidebook also includes recommendations on how to better use the various EU Cohesion funds to better support FUA cooperation.

3.2.3.2 Capacity development

NUA paragraphs 146 to 155 present capacity development, knowledge exchange, cooperation, and partnerships as important means of implementation that create an enabling environment conducive to transformative changes, providing mutually beneficial grounds for the generation and implementation of new policies, initiatives, and tools and allowing national governments, local governments, and urban stakeholders to jointly lead on the implementation of the NUA⁵⁴.

As the UAEU represents a cooperative platform for stakeholders to exchange, share knowledge (also by enabling collaboration with other knowledge-based initiatives, such as URBACT) and work together in Partnerships, its very nature supports capacity development and knowledge exchange. Nevertheless, this section focuses on UAEU Actions which have developed concrete tools and mechanisms to build the capacity and strengthen knowledge of local and urban authorities, as described in the relevant NUA paragraphs.

Overall, **32 Actions** contribute to building the capacity of urban authorities in the EU. Most Partnerships have proposed at least one Action contributing to this NUA category. The Partnerships on Urban Poverty, Security in Public Places, Sustainable Land Use, Public Procurement, and Housing are putting forward the most Actions to this end. Examples of Actions and how they are contributing to specific NUA commitments are presented below.

Towards more evidence-based integration policies in cities: Setting the agenda, exploring comparable indicators, and developing a toolbox for good practice transfer (IN02)

The **Partnership on Inclusion of Migrants and Refugees** contributed to expanding the Europe-wide knowledge base on migrant integration at urban and regional levels. Its members advocated for evidence-based policies in cities by producing concrete recommendations and gathering tools, such as a mapping an existing sources of data on integration in Europe and a list of EU integration indicators. A concrete outcome of this Action and key step towards better availability of comparable integration data on urban and regional level was the publication by Eurostat of new data on integration outcomes at infra-national levels and scales from 2018.

NUA reporting categories: 1. Expand opportunities for city-to-city cooperation and fostering exchanges of urban solutions and mutual learning. 5. Engage local government associations as promoters and providers of capacity development.

NUA paragraphs:146, 148.

⁵⁴NUA Handbook, available at: https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/2020/12/nua_handbook_14dec2020_2.pdf.



Future Labour Market Skills (JS02)

The **Partnership on Jobs and Skills** designed and launched the [Digital Skills Map](#), an online repository of best practices and local approaches to digitalisation in vocational education and training, to transfer knowledge and develop future labour market skills. The Map [enables exchanges](#) and experience sharing between cities in Europe. As of February 2021, the repository entails 60 projects from 14 countries.

NUA reporting categories: 1. Expand opportunities for city-to-city cooperation and fostering exchanges of urban solutions and mutual learning .

NUA paragraphs:146, 148.

Funding and financing guide for brownfield redevelopment (SLU02)

The **Partnership on Sustainable Land Use** and Nature-Based Solutions is developing a compilation of funding and finance options to stimulate brownfield development where lack of finance is a barrier. The aim is to promote access to funding/finance to overcome the cost barriers to brownfield development.

NUA reporting categories: 6. Implement capacity development programmes on the use of legal band-based revenue, financing and other tools.

NUA paragraphs:130, 131, 132.

3.2.3.3 Information technology and innovation

The NUA calls for innovation in the policy and government arena by promoting ‘the development of national information and communications technology policies and e-government strategies, as well as citizen-centric digital governance tools, tapping into technological innovations, including capacity-development programmes, in order to make information and communications technologies accessible to the public’ (*NUA paragraph 156*).

Overall, **20 UAEU Actions** contribute to building the capacity of and enabling urban authorities with regards to the digital transition and information technology innovations. Half of these Actions are put forward by the Partnership on Digital Transition, but other Partnerships, such as Public Procurement and Security in Public Places, have also developed Actions in this area. Examples of Actions and how they are contributing to specific NUA commitments are presented below.

Helping cities develop a user-centric e-government model (DT04)

The **Digital Transition Partnership** developed and launched an online [Digital Services for Europe Toolkit](#), which allows cities and municipalities to generate a local roadmap for their digital transition. This e-government platform fosters the re-use of knowledge, technology, and legislation that is available to countries and cities. The Partnership is also testing this strategy through five living labs (Hamburg, Kutina, Split, Croatia, Netherlands, and Estonia).

NUA reporting categories: 2. Expand deployment of frontier technologies and innovations to enhance shared prosperity of cities and regions. 3. Implement digital tools, including geospatial information systems to improve urban territorial planning, land administration and access to urban services.

NUA paragraphs: 156, 157.



Digital neighborhood instrument (DT02)

Millions of people across Europe lack the basic digital skills needed to make use of online services and digital mobility, tools for enabling mobility, access to services, and employability, among others. The **Digital Transition Partnership** proposed an Action focusing on the development of a neighbourhood instrument which establishes access points where people can get support and training for digital services. The Partnership developed a booklet providing a toolbox, which could be useful in setting up a digital centre or a place that people with no digital skills can turn to for help.

NUA reporting categories: 1. Develop user-friendly, participatory data and digital platforms through e-governance and citizen-centric digital governance tools.

NUA paragraphs: 156.



4.0 How does the UAEU link and contribute to SDG 11?

The SDGs represent an important cross-cutting issue within the UAEU⁵⁵. In 2015, the EU made a commitment to fulfil global objectives aiming for sustainable development in all places and for everyone by 2030, incorporated in the United Nations 2030 Agenda and its 17 SDGs⁵⁶.

The 2030 Agenda has interlinkages with other global agendas, including the NUA. As a matter of fact, the NUA is the first internationally agreed document detailing the implementation of the urban dimension of the SDGs. The NUA acts as an ‘enabler’⁵⁷ or ‘accelerator’⁵⁸ of **SDG 11** (Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable). While SDG 11 sets targets and defines indicators to measure progress and growth, the NUA ‘builds on SDG 11, focusing on what needs to be done to ensure cities and human settlements as vehicles of development’.⁵⁹

UN Habitat establishes links between the tangible SDG 11 targets and specific NUA paragraphs, as shown in Figure 12. By systematically linking each of the 132 Actions of the Urban Agenda for the EU with NUA paragraphs, as it has been done for this report⁶⁰, it is possible to establish links between the UAEU and SDG 11 through its contribution to the NUA. These links should be considered in this light, as the actions sometimes only contribute indirectly to the targets of SDG 11.

⁵⁵ As indicated in the Pact of Amsterdam.

⁵⁶ United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, available at: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu=1300>.

⁵⁷ European Commission, Urban Agenda for the EU: Multi-level governance in action, 2019. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/brochure/urban_agenda_eu_en.pdf.

⁵⁸ UN Habitat, The New Urban Agenda Illustrated, 2020. Available at: https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/2020/12/nua_handbook_14dec2020_2.pdf.

⁵⁹ UN, Tracking Progress Towards Inclusive, Safe, Resilient and Sustainable Cities and Human Settlement – SDG 11 Synthesis Report, High level political forum 2018. Available at: <http://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/sdg11-synthesis-report-2018-en.pdf>.

⁶⁰ See the overview of the links between UAEU Actions and NUA paragraphs in Annex 1.

Figure 12: Nexus between SDG 11, other SDGs, and the NUA

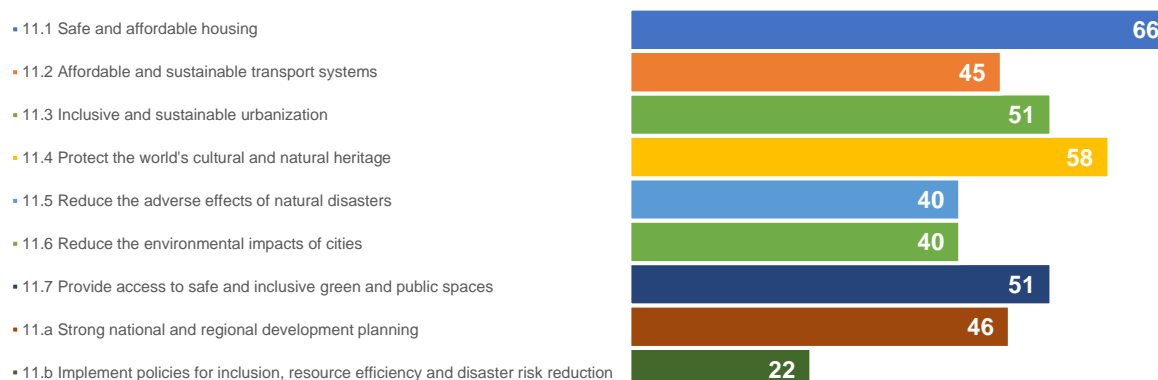
THE SDG 11 TARGET	LINKAGES TO OTHER SDGS	LINKAGES TO New Urban Agenda PARAGRAPHS
11.1 By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums		31, 32, 33, 34, 46, 61, 70, 99, 107, 108, 110, 112
11.2 By 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations...		48, 50, 54, 113, 114, 115
11.3 By 2030, enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries		29, 39, 40, 41, 42, 92, 149, 155, 156, 157, 160
11.4 Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage		38, 63, 66, 121, 122
11.5 By 2030, significantly reduce the number of deaths and the number of people affected and substantially decrease the direct economic losses relative to global gross domestic product caused by disasters, including water-related disasters, with a focus on protecting the poor and people in vulnerable situations		65, 68, 69, 71, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 119, 123
11.6 By 2030, reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management		65, 68, 69, 71, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 119, 123
11.7 By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities		37, 53, 55, 56, 67, 100, 109
11.a Support positive economic, social and environmental links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas by strengthening national and regional development planning		87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 158, 159
11.b By 2020, substantially increase the number of cities ... adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience to disasters, and ... disaster risk management ...		77, 78, 86, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98

Source: UN Habitat, *The New Urban Agenda Illustrated*, 2020

Figure 13 (below) illustrates how the Actions from the UAEU Partnerships can be linked to SDG 11 targets⁶¹ in the EU, through their contribution to the relevant NUA paragraphs as identified by the UN.

⁶¹ The link established between UAEU Actions and SDG 11 targets through their contribution to the NUA is indirect. Therefore, the UAEU Actions do not contribute directly to SDG targets with investments or the creation of programmes for financing specific projects or activities, but rather contribute through policy support measures.

Figure 13: Number of UAEU Actions contributing to SDG 11 targets



Source: Independent analysis

Safe and affordable housing (SDG Target 11.1)


Half of the Actions implemented by the Urban Agenda for the EU are contributing to the global goal of ensuring access for all to adequate, safe, and affordable housing and basic services. The Partnerships on Housing, Urban Mobility, and Sustainable Land Use contributes the most, as all of their Actions can be linked to this target. The Partnerships on Energy Transition, Inclusion of Migrants and Refugees, Urban Poverty, and Public Procurement have also put forward a significant number of Actions contributing to this target.

Affordable and sustainable transport systems (SDG Target 11.2)

A third of the Actions implemented by the Urban Agenda for the EU contribute to advancing the goal of providing access to safe, affordable, accessible, and sustainable transport systems for all, notably by expanding public transport with special attention paid to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities, and older persons. The Actions proposed by the Partnership on Urban Mobility particularly contribute to the SDG target 11.2, but other Partnerships, such as Housing, Security in Public Places, and Urban Poverty have also produced Actions that can be linked to this target.

Inclusive and sustainable urbanisation (SDG Target 11.3)

Almost 40% of the Actions presented by the Urban Agenda for the EU contribute to enhancing inclusive and sustainable urbanisation and capacity for participatory, integrated, and sustainable human settlement planning and management. Many of the Actions put forward by the Partnership on Air Quality, Digital Transition,



and Urban Poverty are particularly relevant to SDG target 11.3. Other Partnerships, such as Security in Public Spaces, Jobs and Skills, Inclusion of Migrants and Refugees, and Housing have also developed several Actions that can be linked with this target.

Protecting cultural and natural heritage (SDG Target 11.4)

44% of the Actions of the Urban Agenda for the EU contribute to strengthening the efforts to protect and safeguard European cultural and natural heritage. Significantly contributing to this goal are the Actions implemented by the Culture/Cultural Heritage Partnership. Through their contribution to the relevant NUA paragraphs, several Actions developed by the Partnerships on Urban Poverty, Public Procurement, Digital Transition, and Circular Economy also have linkages with this target.

Reducing the adverse effects of natural disasters (SDG Target 11.5)

Around 30% of the Actions of the Urban Agenda for the EU contribute to the goal of significantly reducing the number of people affected, and decreasing the economic losses caused, by disasters in the EU, with a focus on protecting the poor and people in vulnerable situations. Actions developed by the Partnerships on Sustainable Land Use, Energy Transition, Circular Economy, and Climate Adaptation are mostly relevant for SDG Target 11.5.

Reducing the environmental impact of cities (SDG Target 11.6)

Around 30% of the Actions proposed by the UAEU Partnerships contribute, through their alignment with the relevant NUA paragraphs, to reducing the adverse environmental impact of European cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and waste management. All the Actions implemented by the Partnerships on Sustainable Land Use and Circular Economy can be linked to SDG Target 11.6. Other Actions put forward by the Partnerships on Air Quality, Climate Adaptation, and Energy Transition can be linked to this target as well.

Access to safe and inclusive green and public spaces (SDG Target 11.7)

Almost 40% of the Actions implemented by the Urban Agenda for the EU contribute to providing access to safe, inclusive, and accessible green and public spaces in the EU. Actions proposed by the Partnership on Security in Public Spaces are the most relevant for advancing progress on SDG Target 11.7 in the EU. Other Partnerships such as Urban Poverty, Urban Mobility, Public Procurement, and Air Quality can also be linked to this target.

Strong national and regional development planning (Target 11.a)

About 35% of UAEU Actions contribute to the goal of supporting positive economic, social, and environmental links between urban, peri-urban, and rural areas by strengthening national and regional development planning through contribution to the relevant NUA paragraphs. Relevant Actions for SDG Target 11.a



include Actions put forward by the Partnerships on Circular Economy, Digital Transition, Housing, Inclusion of Migrants and Refugees, Jobs and Skills, Public Procurement, and Security in Public Spaces.

Implementation of policies for inclusion, resource efficiency, and disaster risk reduction (SDG Target 11.b)

About 17% of UAEU Actions contribute, through their contribution to the relevant NUA paragraphs, to increase the number of European cities adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience to disasters, and holistic disaster risk management at all levels. Actions developed by the Partnerships on Air Quality and Climate Adaptation are most relevant to SDG Target 11.b, but other Partnerships, such as Security in Public Spaces and Public Procurement, have proposed Actions that can be linked to this target as well.





5.0 Conclusions and recommendations


This final chapter presents the main conclusions from the analysis presented in the previous sections and outlines some tangible recommendations for a possible continuation of this review, as well as for the next phase of the UAEU.

5.1 Conclusions

The analysis presented in this report outlined the following conclusions in relation to the conceptual linkages between the initiatives examined, and the UAEU contributions to the NUA and SDGs:

- **The UAEU and NUA are strongly aligned.** They share and promote common urban governance principles, such as multilevel governance, integrated approach, partnership approach and co-creation, and place-based approach, which are also common to EU Cohesion Policy. These key urban governance principles are outlined both in the Pact of Amsterdam and in the NUA, and can be found in the Cohesion Policy legislation and the New Leipzig Charter. The NUA and the UAEU also tackle common urban priority themes, such as culture, inclusivity, security and safety, affordable housing, sustainable public procurement, adaptation to climate change, energy transition, air quality, circular economy, sustainable land use, job creation and the urban economy, digital transition, poverty, and mobility. The 14 Priority Themes of the UAEU addressed by the Partnerships are also at the core of various NUA commitments. Moreover, these themes are also linked to the Cohesion Policy Thematic Objectives and global SDG targets.
- The analysis performed for this report showed that **UAEU Actions are significantly contributing to the implementation of the NUA commitments** in the European Union. The report establishes that all 132 Actions put forward by the UAEU Partnerships⁶² contribute to the implementation of at least one or more of the 138 NUA paragraphs constituting the global urban commitments; therefore, each UAEU Action contributes to advance at least one Objective of the NUA in the EU.
- The implementation of the NUA rests on two pillars: 1) Transformative Commitments for Sustainable Development and 2) Effective implementation of the prior. The comprehensive analysis of the UAEU Actions and their implementation process show that the UAEU contributes to both in a significant way.
- UAEU Actions make a greatest contribution in achieving the NUA Transformative Commitments under the ‘**Environmentally sustainable and resilient urban development**’ category, with 85 Actions contributing to advancing the commitments under this category, while respectively 76 and 59 Actions contribute to

⁶² As previously explained, the analysis carried out for this review focuses on UAEU governance aspects and the Partnerships' work, and does not consider other actions implementing the UAEU (such as the One Stop Shop, Urbis, etc.).



advancing NUA commitments under the categories 'Sustainable urban development for social inclusion and ending poverty' and 'Sustainable and inclusive urban prosperity and opportunities for all'. This shows that while also contributing greatly to the social and economic dimension of sustainable urban development, UAEU Actions contribute most to the environmental dimension, in line with the European Commission priorities, such as the European Green Deal.

- With regards to NUA Effective Implementation, the UAEU Actions contribute most to the implementation of NUA paragraphs under the category '**Means of Implementation**', with 58 Actions contributing to advancing NUA commitments under this category. Respectively 49 and 46 Actions contribute to advancing NUA commitments under 'Building the Urban Governance Structure: Establishing a Supportive Framework' and 'Planning and Managing Urban Spatial Development'.
- Regarding **SDGs**, the 14 Priority Themes of the UAEU are aligned with themes tackled by the SDGs, in particular SDG 11 targets. Through their contribution to the NUA commitments, the analysis showed that UAEU Actions can be linked to each of the SDG 11 targets, showing their strong potential to contribute to them.

The analysis also identified some challenges and limitations in relation to the current UAEU framework:

- While the Pact of Amsterdam is, in spirit, aligned with the NUA and other international frameworks the EU is committed to (such as the SDGs, the Paris Agreement, and the Sendai Framework), it **did not explicitly provide a framework for implementing the NUA**. The international dimension (contribution to NUA and SDGs) is indeed one of the cross-cutting issues that the Partnerships were tasked to consider. However, the Pact of Amsterdam did not systematically lead to the operationalisation of the NUA Commitments, as it provides little steer as to how the UAEU Partnerships could practically address and contribute to achieving them.
- There are immense differences between the links with the NUA that the Partnerships have reported in their Action Plans and the links that this analysis found. The ex-post analysis carried out for this report found that there are a lot more links between the Partnerships' Actions and the NUA than what the Partnerships have self-assessed. This means that the **urban practitioners implementing the UAEU were not fully aware** on their contributions to the NUA (and SDGs).
- **Achieving age and gender responsive policies in sustainable urban development** are priorities of the NUA. Although age and gender are mentioned as part of one of the cross-cutting issues of the UAEU Partnerships' work in the Pact of Amsterdam, the analysis found that these issues were overlooked by UAEU Partnerships, as only one UAEU Action specifically addressed them.




5.2 Recommendations

Building on the conclusions outlined above, there are a number of recommendations that are suggested for the future monitoring and assessment of the implementation and impact of the existing UAEU Action Plans and Actions in relation to their contribution to the implementation of the NUA, namely:

- Long-term monitoring of UAEU Actions being implemented: The methodology made available for the development of this report, particularly related to the identification of the nexus between the UAEU (Actions) and the NUA (paragraphs), **can be operationalised and used for long-term monitoring** of the UAEU Actions, which are currently in the process of implementation, **vis-à-vis the relevant NUA paragraph(s)**. However, this would thus call for a commitment to long-term monitoring of the UAEU Action implementation process and relevant data collection to be built into the new UAEU partnerships. The monitoring and data collection are vital, should the European Commission wish to continue analysis and reporting on the contributions of the UAEU (in its current form) to the NUA.
- Assessing the impact of future Actions and their contribution to implementation of the NUA: The current monitoring system of UAEU Actions (through the MTA) proved to be useful, and hence it is recommended to continue as such to **ensure a systematic way to track the status of the active Partnerships' work on a regular basis**. Nevertheless, the analytical and scientific limitations of the ad-hoc ex-post analysis provided in this report should be acknowledged, as well as the fact that there is a difference between monitoring outputs and results designed for UAEU, and assessing the impact of the Actions and their contributions to the implementation of the NUA and SDGs examined in this report. In order to enable future analysis related to the contribution of the UAEU to the implementation of the NUA and SDGs, the value and methodology for a long-term monitoring of the UAEU Actions should be investigated. Furthermore, as in the case of new Action Plans, the MTA should be expanded to include monitoring of UAEU contributions to the EU international commitments (i.e. NUA and SDGs), relevant data collection, and design of a standardised analytical framework that will allow long-term NUA reporting of the UAEU, should the European Commission deem this necessary.

Moreover, the following recommendations are suggested in relation to the setting of the framework for the next phase of the UAEU:

- Ensuring flexibility to Partnerships: The analysis carried out for this report proved that by addressing European, national, local, and urban challenges, the UAEU Partnerships implicitly contribute to addressing a number of larger international issues tackled by the NUA and the SDGs. **It is important for potential future Partnerships to be properly informed early on about EU International Commitments**, such as the NUA and SDGs, and thus empowered to link their Actions with such commitments. Indeed, a great advantage of the UAEU is that the **Partnerships and its members**, experts, and practitioners working on their respective Priority Themes, **have been given full independence** to analyse relevant urban challenges and address them practically by implementing their Actions. In doing so, they have contributed



to advancement of EU, national, local and urban policies within the particular frameworks that they have set for themselves.

- Developing new Actions and linking them with NUA: The methodology developed for this report could also be used to **further develop the specific section in the Action Plan dedicated to implementation of the EU International Commitments**. Providing guidelines for Partnerships would enable them to develop more 'conscious' links between their Actions and the NUA commitments at an appropriate stage of the Action Plan development. Linking UAEU Actions during their mid-term design process would also showcase the potential global relevance of the Action Plans and hence **allow the Partnership members to become a part of international networks** working on the specific NUA paragraphs. For this purpose, this present review can be used as a source of inspiration for future Partnerships to showcase how, by working on European, national, and local urban challenges, they contribute to broader international objectives such as the NUA, the SDGs, or other global frameworks.
- Boosting the UAEU cross-cutting issues: The 11 cross-cutting issues identified in the Pact of Amsterdam are strongly aligned with the NUA commitments, even if implicitly. In order to facilitate future monitoring and analysis of UAEU contributions to the NUA, it would thus be beneficial to clearly define and state such linkages. In addition, given their importance, it is recommended that the framework for these cross-cutting issues within the UAEU is better operationalised, so as to ensure that they are fully considered in the work of the Partnerships. For this purpose, two possible means are suggested:
 - a. **Development of impact categories**, which would encourage future Partnerships to better integrate such issues into their Actions. Such categories would also allow for better monitoring of the Action Plans and their contributions to such issues.
 - b. **Creation of dedicated cross-thematic and horizontal Partnerships**, dealing with specific cross-cutting issues.

Finally, another recommendation is suggested concerning the potential relevance of the UAEU governance system at the international stage.

- The UAEU has set up a community of practitioners who jointly addressed common urban challenges, at the European, national, local and urban levels. It also brought together policymakers and practitioners to work together in a unique and innovative governance structure that allowed them to discover and address the issues of joint concern. Such a structure has also provided inspiration for developments at national and/or regional level. The Actions developed by the UAEU mainly address issues and challenges that are relevant for the EU context and there is no direct evidence that the solutions identified can be upscaled globally. Nevertheless, the **unique and experimental governance system of the UAEU could potentially be used to tackle urban issues and implement the NUA commitments in other world regions**, their nations and cities.



Sources

Common Provision Regulation, Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32013R1303>.

European Code of Conduct on Partnership. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32014R0240&from=EN>.

European Commission, *Assessment Study of the Urban Agenda for the European Union (UAEU)*, Final Report, November 2019. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/studies/pdf/assess_uaeu_en.pdf.

European Commission, *An introduction to EU Cohesion Policy 2014-2020*. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/informat/basic/basic_2014_en.pdf.

European Commission, *Urban Agenda for the EU: Multi-level governance in action*, 2019. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/brochure/urban_agenda_eu_en.pdf.

Habitat III Policy Paper, *Urban Governance, Capacity and Institutional Development*, February 2016. Available at: <https://uploads.habitat3.org/hb3/PU4-HABITAT-III-POLICY-PAPER.pdf>.

JRC, *Handbook of Sustainable Urban Development Strategies*, 2020. Available at: <https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC118841>.

Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities, 2007. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/archive/themes/urban/leipzig_charter.pdf.

Monitoring Table of Actions of the Urban Agenda for the EU (updated in March 2021). Available at: <https://futurium.ec.europa.eu/en/urban-agenda/monitoring-actions/monitoring-table/table-actions-update-march-2021>.

New Leipzig Charter, 30 November 2020. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/brochure/new_leipzig_charter/new_leipzig_charter_en.pdf.

UAEU Futurium website. Available at: <https://futurium.ec.europa.eu/en/urban-agenda>.

UN Habitat, *Guidelines for Reporting on the Implementation of the New Urban Agenda*. Available at: https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/documents/2019-07/20190628_draft_nua_reporting_guidelines_1.pdf.

UN Habitat, *The New Urban Agenda Illustrated*, 2020. Available at: https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/2020/12/nua_handbook_14dec2020_2.pdf.



UN Habitat, *NUA Monitoring Framework and related indicators*, 25 September 2020. Available at: https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/2020/10/nua-monitoring-framework-and-related-indicators_1.pdf.

UN Habitat, *The New Urban Agenda Explainer*. Available at: https://uploads.habitat3.org/hb3/New-Urban-Agenda-Explainer_Final.pdf.

United Nations, New Urban Agenda adopted on 20 October 2016. Available at: <https://uploads.habitat3.org/hb3/NUA-English.pdf>.

United Nations, *Tracking Progress Towards Inclusive, Safe, Resilient and Sustainable Cities and Human Settlement – SDG 11 Synthesis Report*, High level political forum 2018. Available at: <http://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/sdg11-synthesis-report-2018-en.pdf>.

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Available at: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>.

Urban Agenda for the EU Futurium website. Available at: <https://futurium.ec.europa.eu/en/urban-agenda>.

