

Agenda Stad



Factsheet

Urban Agenda for the EU / Europese Agenda Stad

The Urban Agenda for the EU (UAEU) is a European project in which cities, regions, the European Commission, national governments, NGOs and other parties work together as equals on EU-wide issues to improve the position of cities in Europe. Better regulation, better funding and better knowledge are the pillars of the EAS.

What is the Urban Agenda for the EU (UAEU)?

Urban issues are at the centre of the UAEU. Many European parties work together as equals in partnerships on proposals that contribute to better regulation, funding and knowledge (exchange) for cities and regions in Europe. Parties such as cities, regions, countries, the European Commission, the European Parliament, the Committee of the Regions, the European Investment Bank, European urban umbrella organizations, experts and NGOs participate in the UAEU. The Netherlands is seen as a driving force behind the UAEU. The UAEU has been established on May 30th 2016, under the Dutch presidency of the European Union, on this date the Pact of Amsterdam was launched. This multi-level governance model is seen in Europe as one of the (lasting) successes of the Dutch presidency. This innovative way of public administrations strengthens the position of cities. Since 2015, the Netherlands has had a 'Dutch Urban Envoy' that is committed to further develop the UAEU in the Netherlands and Europe.

What are the beneficiaries of the UAEU?

- 135 concrete actions in areas such as health, housing, migration, mobility, digital transition and climate adaptation have been taken
- An (improved) national urban policy in various Member States. In Poland, cities are working together in national partnerships and Spain has a National Urban Agenda

- Sustainable Urban Policy is part of the European Commission's mandate and is receiving increased attention
- The European Commission has launched a European Urban Initiative, including 400 million euros in funding for urban programs and earmarking 8% of regional structural funds for sustainable urban policy.
- Information on urban policy at EU level (Urban Data Platform)
- UAEU and the partnerships have included the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals in their recommendations

What role does the Netherlands play in the UAEU?

The Netherlands is seen as a driving force behind the UAEU and is a participant or coordinator in various partnerships. The Dutch Urban Envoy is the face of the Urban Agenda and plays a connecting role between Member States, the Commission and Partnerships. The Dutch Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations has supported the following presidencies since 2016:

- Slovakia 2016/2: compiling the four Bratislava Partnerships.
- Malta 2017/1: compiling the four Malta Partnerships.
- Estonia 2017/2: conducting a broad survey on new Urban themes.
- Romania 2019/1: advising on Ministerial meeting and drafting of the Bucharest Declaration.
- Finland 2019/2: study on the influence of UAEU on urban policy in Member States.
- Germany 2020/2: advising on Council Conclusions and Legal Proofing.
- Portugal 2021/1: rapporteurship and preparation of the Ljubljana Agreement.
- Slovenia 2021/2: contribution to text proposals Ljubljana Agreement.

What role do the Dutch Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations and subnational authorities play?

The UAEU is one of the EU priorities of the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations. The minister support the development of the UAEU and, together with the subnational authorities, wants to put more emphasize on representing the interests of The Netherlands. The Netherlands believes that the stimulating and connecting role it currently plays at the EU level should be taken up by multiple member states from 2021 onwards (co-ownership).

The subnational authorities are in favour of the UAEU and work closely with the national government to coordinate the Dutch position and input towards the European Commission and Presidencies. The joint position of the Dutch authorities with regard to the future of the UAEU has been described in the intergovernmental Position Paper Urban Agenda for the EU.

The Taskforce on the Urban Agenda for the EU discusses all UAEU related issues.

Looking back on 2020

The year 2020 was an important year for the UAEU. A thorough evaluation shows that UAEU is a success ([Assessment Study of the UAEU European Commission](#)). To be even more effective and strengthen its position as a hub for urban regulation and urban policy in the EU, adjustments are needed in the selection procedures and governance, which means amending the Pact of Amsterdam in a way that the UAEU is ready for the new programming period (2021-2027).

The UAEU plays a vital role in implementing the New Leipzig Charter for Sustainable Urban Development in Europe, which was adopted at the end of 2020.

The UAEU has almost completed the first phase of its existence. All parties involved have decided to continue the UAEU beyond 2021. Most Partnerships end by 2021 at the latest and have delivered and partially implemented their Action Plans.

New Leipzig Charter

The New Leipzig Charter on the Sustainable Development of European Cities (NLC), the successor to the 2007 Leipzig Charter, is a political statement on the principles for sustainable urban development in the EU. The NLC was adopted on 30 November 2020 in the presence of the Minister of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, who also gave a key note speech. With Dutch support, the German Presidency has laid down the revised principles of the NLC and the new UAEU in new Council Conclusions. For the implementation of the Pact of Amsterdam, this was a crucial step in getting the UAEU on the agenda of the European Commission, Parliament and Committee of the Regions. The Council Conclusions of the new NLC were adopted on 17 December 2020.

Implementation Document and revised Urban Agenda

In order to implement the principles of the new NLC, the UAEU is required as an implementation tool. The executive role of the UAEU is therefore included as an Implementation Document (ID) to the New Leipzig Charter. The ID outlines the sketches of the new UAEU for the new programming period (2021-2027). The outlines will be elaborated in the Ljubljana Agreement (see below).

Better Regulation Initiative

Better European regulation for cities and regions is an important goal of the UAEU. Evaluations show that the necessary knowledge of regulations and processes is often lacking. Therefore, The Netherlands launched the Better Regulation Initiative (BRI) in 2020, which is being implemented by the Europa Decentraal. Structural legal support for the Partnerships and the UAEU after 2021 is the goal. Additionally, all BRI Actions of the Partnerships are assessed individually. Europa Decentraal completed this extensive quick scan in June 2021.

2021: Ljubljana Agreement

At the start of the Slovenian Presidency (SI PRES), the first version of the Ljubljana Agreement (LA) was presented to the Urban Development Group (UDG). The LA is an updated version of the Pact of Amsterdam and establishes the purpose and working method of the UAEU (including the selection of new themes and Partnerships) for 2021-2027. The LA will be adopted at an informal ministerial conference on November 26, 2021.

Financial and secretarial support for the UAEU and the Partnerships will end in October 2021. In order to prevent the UAEU from stalling until the implementation of the European Urban Initiative (end 2022), the Slovenian Presidency aims to launch two new Partnerships (or other forms of cooperation). NL supports this endeavour. Ideas from local authorities in particular are welcome and have been collected.

2022: European Urban Initiative

The European Urban Initiative (EUI) is an umbrella program for sustainable urban policy in Europe. It includes existing urban programs such as the Urban Innovative Actions, the Urban Development Network and the UAEU.

Article 12 (formerly 10) of the new ERDF/CF Regulation (EU 2021/1059 of 24 June 2021) provides that the ERDF supports the EUI. The EUI supports the UAEU and participation of local authorities in the Partnerships.

The EUI provides (in the Commission's plans) for the establishment and financing of an EUI Secretariat and National Contact Points in all Member States. The start of both is planned for the second half of 2022 (more realistic seems to be late 2022 or early 2023). Commission and Member States are not yet in agreement on budget and tasks.

Dutch participation in the 14 Partnerships from July 2021

	 		
2016 Amsterdam	2016 Bratislava	2017 Malta	2018 Wenen
Inclusion of Migrants Amsterdam (coordinator) Ongoing (2022)	Jobs and Skills Rotterdam (coordinator) Ongoing (2021)	Public Procurement Haarlem (coordinator) Ongoing (2021)	Security in Public Spaces Ongoing (2021)
Air Quality IenW (coordinator), Utrecht, Arnhem, Nijmegen Finished (2019)	Circular Economy Den Haag Finished (2021)	Energy Transition Tilburg, Groningen Finished (2020, prolongation possible)	Culture/Cultural Heritage Nederlandse Federatie Monumentensteden Ongoing (2021)
Housing BZK Finished (2018)	Digital Transition Eindhoven Finished (2021)	Sustainable Land Use Finished (2020, prolongation possible)	
Urban Poverty Finished (2019)	Urban Mobility Nijmegen Finished (2020)	Climate Adaptation Ongoing (2022)	