



# **The Urban Dimension in the new EU Cohesion Policy**

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# Overview

- *Present*
  - **Existing Urban Threats and Challenges**
  - **Existing Tools and Mechanisms (Urban Audit, RFSC)**
- *Future*
  - **Cohesion policy and related initiatives**
  - **Urban agenda etc.**

# Challenges

- **Smart Growth** Challenges – transition towards a knowledge society; developing city resilience etc.
- **Green Growth** Challenges – greater energy and resource efficiency; transition towards a sustainable city etc.
- **Inclusive Growth** Challenges – counter social/spatial segregation; demographic challenges etc.
- **Transversal Challenges** – attractiveness, territorial coherence etc.

# Importance of urban knowledge

- Knowledge crucial both for **diagnosis** of problems and creation of **solutions**
- A new era for urban development - the production and **exchange of knowledge** is more crucial than ever
- Cities must have the capacity to assess their own situation – and reliably **compare themselves** to others
- Importance of **knowledge reinforced** in future policy e.g. Innovative Actions etc.

# Towards harmonised concepts: a new definition of urban areas

- Joint EC-OECD harmonised definition
- Developed **together** OECD-REGIO-EUROSTAT-JRC
- **Validated** by the national statistical institutes
- Adopted as an official spatial definition by Eurostat
- **Compatible** with the "degree of urbanisation" typology of local administrative units



European  
Commission

## 2012: Urban Audit Cities and Larger Urban Zones

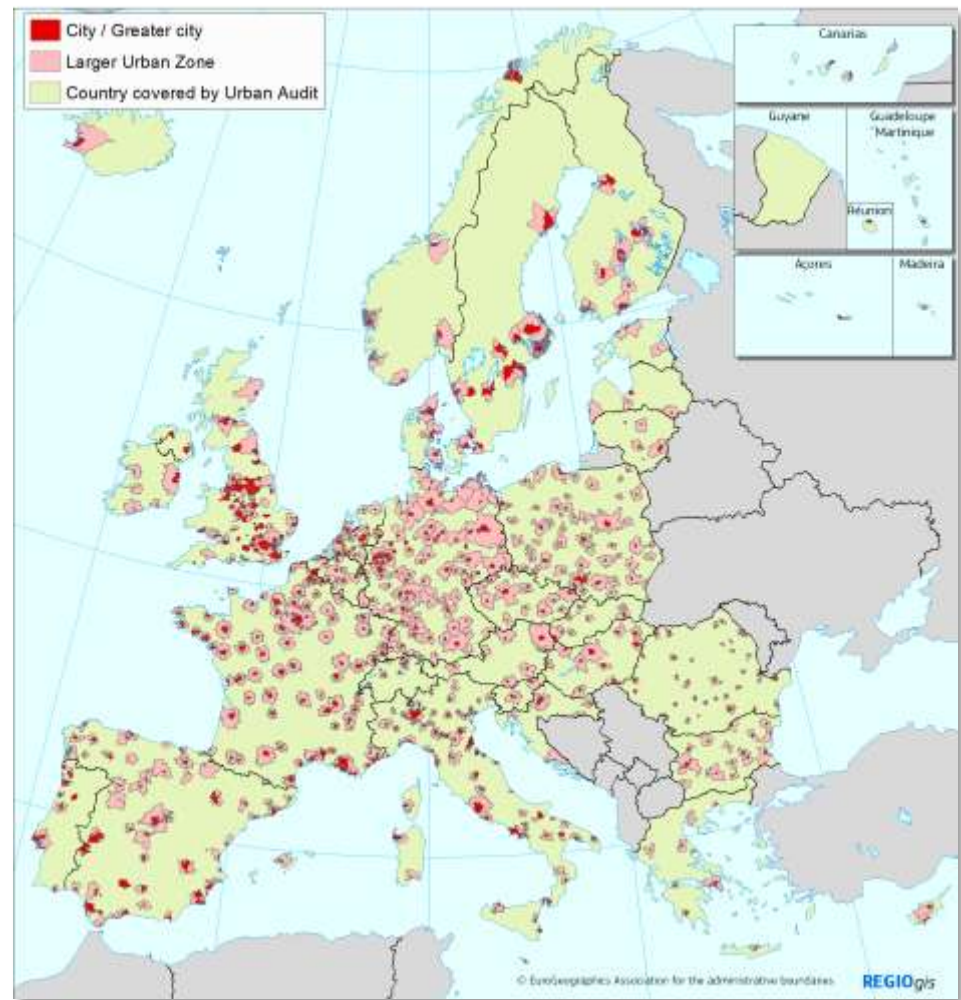
# Urban Audit

Eurostat regular data collection on all cities with an urban centre of at least 50,000 inh.

Also covering commuting zones

Data:

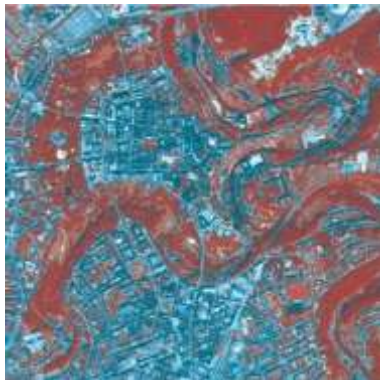
[http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/region\\_cities/city\\_urban/data\\_cities/database\\_sub1](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/region_cities/city_urban/data_cities/database_sub1)



# The Urban Atlas: harmonised and detailed land use data

- A Copernicus land monitoring service
- Comparable, high-resolution land use datasets for European cities and their surroundings, based on:

Satellite  
imagery



Imperviousness  
(soil sealing)



Road  
network





# Joint Programming Initiative JPI Urban Europe

- Strengthen **research and innovation** in the field of urban development
- Addresses the entire **urban** field
- Tackle long-term urban trends and challenges – bringing **different actors** together.



## Reference Framework for Sustainable Cities

- An **interactive web-tool** designed for cities created by Member States
- Aim is to facilitate integrated and sustainable urban development through better **dialogue**
- The RFSC offers a range of different tools to cities:
  - A tool **to develop a sustainable urban strategy** or project
  - A tool **to check** the integrated approach of an urban strategy or project
  - A tool **to monitor** the progress over time.
- RFSC will become part of URBACT III from end of 2014 and will be further improved
- RFSC and related information site – [www.rfsc.eu](http://www.rfsc.eu)

## Strengthening the urban dimension

- *Concentration on EU priorities – **Europe 2020 strategy***
- *Keeping the urban dimension in the **mainstream**, but **improving** it:*
  - Enhancing the integrated approach
  - Better involvement of cities
  - Reintroduction of an experimental strand

# Minimum 5% allocation

- Member States should **earmark at least 5%** of ERDF resources for integrated sustainable urban development with a **degree of management delegated to urban authority level**
- To be implemented **through integrated urban strategies** that take into account economic, social, environmental, climate and demographic challenges.
- Not all of these challenges have to be addressed using ERDF financing – **local and national resources can be used also**



# Urban Innovative Actions

- **EUR 330 mio** allocated to this initiative over 2014-2020
- Identify and test **new solutions** – aim is to generate knowledge which can then be mainstreamed (research element is crucial)
- Focus will be on those **urban challenges that will grow in importance** in the coming years
- Innovative Actions can take the form of studies or pilot projects

# Urban Innovative Actions (2)

- **Several calls** over the 2014-2020 period
- Topics to be decided in consultation with Member States
- **Applicants** can be:
  - **Urban authority** for an urban area comprising at least 50 000 inhabitants
  - **Association or grouping** of urban authorities with a combined population of at least 50 000 inhabitants
- Amount granted shall not exceed **€5 mio** (ERDF co-financing rate – maximum 80%)
- Maximum duration for each action is three years



# Urban Development Network + CLLD

## UDN

- UDN promotes the **practical implementation** of the urban dimension in **direct dialogue** with cities. No funding linked to the network
- **Exchange of experience and capacity building**
- *Target group:*
  - Urban Authorities managing integrated urban strategies funded by ERDF Article 7 and cities implementing urban innovative actions.

## CLLD

- Based on the **LEADER approach** (EARDF) - support from **all 5 Funds** (ERDF, ESF, CF, EARDF, EMFF)
- Support for **local development strategies** – can be focussed on environmental challenges (e.g. on carbon reduction in an area)
- **Designed and implemented by the local community** including *partners from public and private sector, civil society, etc.*

# URBACT III

- URBACT III currently being developed with Member States
- Expected approval of programme during summer 2014
- URBACT III will have **additional resources** - 74m€ ERDF
- Will be **similar to URBACT II** but will include link to UDN, inclusion of RFSC etc.

# URBACT III

- **Thematic Coverage** selected after consultation with MS
- **70%** of exchange and learning budget to be dedicated to **5 Thematic Objectives:**
  - strengthening research and innovation
  - supporting shift towards a low-carbon economy in all sectors
  - protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency
  - promoting social inclusion and combating poverty
  - promoting employment and supporting labour mobility
- The remaining 30% will be available for all other themes based on a bottom up approach





## European Innovation Partnership – Smart Cities and Communities

- EIP-SCC – city, industry, research, citizens
- Focus on ICT, ENERGY and TRANSPORT
- Aim is to **overcome bottlenecks** impeding the changeover to 'smart' cities
- To create the **infrastructure** of tomorrow



# Towards a EU Urban Agenda

- > CITIES Conference in February 2014
- > Comprehensive agenda for urban policy at European level does not exist
- > Clear need for urban Agenda to enhance urban dimension **in national AND EU policies**
- > Aims of urban agenda:
  - .....address policies with adverse effects on cities
  - .....implement policies with urban dimension
  - .....cities' role for implementing EU 2020 strategy

# Thank you!

<http://ec.europa.eu/cities>

- Question for debate: What should an EU urban agenda be?*
- d) Should an EU urban agenda define priorities to work on? Should it limit itself to tackling certain specific challenges?
  - e) Should an EU urban agenda be a vision or a concrete strategy? Should it have priorities, tasks and timescales?
  - f) Should it provide a new working method between EU, MS and city actors?

### 3.3 How should an EU urban agenda be implemented?

Whatever form an EU urban agenda might take, there are some key aspects that need to be addressed in relation to its implementation, such as agreed roles of different actors, ownership, incentives and commitment. It has to demonstrate its usefulness through results. If the agenda is not to become static there is a need for monitoring and stocktaking, as well as mechanisms for adjustment and development. Policy needs to be underpinned by solid, relevant and up-to-date knowledge. Surveys on issues such as urban sprawl, the state of the housing stock, demographic trends, quality of life can help to monitor progress towards shared objectives and targets, etc. An urban agenda could be built on peer review of the urban impact of European and national policies or on how cities implement local action plans. There might be a particular role for the Reference Framework for Sustainable Cities (RFSC), both as a tool for cities to plan their development in an integrated way, but also to guide policies at a higher level.

- Question for debate: How should an EU urban agenda be implemented?*
- g) What steps are needed to develop an EU urban agenda?
  - h) What should be the roles of the EU Member States, the Commission, and regional and local authorities?
  - i) How should the implementation of an EU urban agenda be monitored and steered?

"After many years of discussions about the urban dimension of cohesion policy and taking stock of numerous positive experiences of the European initiative URBAN I and II I now with great satisfaction that we are talking more and more about a European urban policy. Its elements are already present in many EU policies but today, for the first time, we are aware of the process of creating it. The programming period 2014-2020 will be the first test for this new approach." (Jan Cibulka, Member of the European Parliament, Chair of the URBAN Intergroup)