	URBACT III Programme Manual	Fact Sheet 1 The URBACT Programme

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0. Introduction

Cities face a wide range of challenges in the coming years ranging from how to tackle an ageing population to reducing their carbon production. The crisis has left many cities dealing with high unemployment and a weakened economy. Under austerity policies and because of a reduced tax-take, the cities have fewer resources with which to combat greater needs.

URBACT is a know-how programme that promotes exchange and learning between cities. It uses European Structural Funds to achieve its goals. It does not do investments and nor does it carry out pilot projects.

The URBACT programme started in 2002 with URBACT I which ran until 2006 and was focused on helping the cities that had benefited from URBAN I and II to exchange experience on sustainable regeneration, mostly practiced in small areas of cities. URBACT II ran from 2007-2013 and widened the scope to focus on sustainable urban development across a wide range of policy areas. More than 50 networks, typically of ten cities, have been supported in this period. It aims to sustainable integrated urban development in cities across Europe. It is one of the European Territorial Cooperation Programmes along with ESPON, INTERREG Europe (formerly IVc) and INTERACT. URBACT is an instrument of the Cohesion Policy and is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund.

The main mechanism that URBACT uses to achieve its objectives is through co-financing exchange and learning networks that typically run for 30 months and involve six to twelve cities, depending on

the type of network. Each network focuses on a specific theme or challenge. The key output under URBACT 2 has been the production of a local action plan produced by a local support group made up of key stakeholders. Other outputs include case studies and thematic reports.

URBACT's mission is to enable cities to work together and develop integrated solutions to common urban challenges, by networking, learning from one another's experiences, drawing lessons and identifying good practices to improve urban policies.

Following the success of the URBACT I and II programmes, URBACT III has been developed to continue to promote sustainable integrated urban development and contribute to the delivery of the Europe 2020 strategy.

1. Context of the programme

1.1 The strengthened urban dimension in the Cohesion policy for 2014-2020

Europe 2020 sets out to achieve smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. These objectives have been given clear targets
- Employment
    - 75% of the 20-64 year-olds to be employed
- R&D / innovation
    - 3% of the EU's GDP (public and private combined) to be invested in R&D/innovation
- Climate change / energy
    - greenhouse gas emissions 20% (or even 30%, if the conditions are right)lower than 1990
    - 20% of energy from renewables
    - 20% increase in energy efficiency
- Education
    - Reducing school drop-out rates below 10%
    - at least 40% of 30-34–year-olds completing third level education
- Poverty / social exclusion
    - at least 20 million fewer people in or at risk of poverty and social exclusion

The Territorial Agenda 2020[1] sets out six territorial priorities:

- promote polycentric and balanced territorial development;
- encouraging integrated development in cities, rural and specific areas;
- territorial integration in cross-border and transnational functional regions;
- ensuring global competiveness of the regions based on strong local economies;
- improving territorial connectivity for individuals, communities and enterprises;
- and managing and connecting ecological, landscape and cultural values of regions;

Together the Europe 2020 and the Territorial Agenda provide the overall strategic framework for EU cohesion policy in the period 2014-2020 and bring smart, sustainable and inclusive growth objectives to territorial cohesion.

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[1] The Territorial Agenda of the European Union defines six territorial priorities. http://www.eu-territorial-agenda.eu/Reference%20Documents/Final%20TA2020.pdf

Cities generate most of the opportunities and most of the challenges facing Europe today. They generate the most GDP but also the most of greenhouse emissions and waste and and concentrate much of Europe's poverty.

Article 2 (3) b of the regulations[2] governing URBACT III states in that "ERDF supports interregional cooperation to strengthen the effectiveness of cohesion policy in promoting the exchange of experience concerning the identification, transfer and dissemination of good practices on sustainable urban development, including urban-rural linkages."

URBACT will support urban dimension of the Cohesion policy that has been strengthened. The ERDF regulations in the programming period 2014-2020 include tools and concepts that offer new opportunities for the urban dimension[3]: These include actions to promote integrated sustainable urban development actions under the so-called Article 7 of the regulation and specifically the new Integrated Territorial Investments as well as participatory approaches through Community Led Local Development and Urban-Rural Partnerships.

URBACT III will complement the work undertaken by the Urban Development Network[4] and will support cities implementing Article 7 for integrated approach to sustainable urban development.

1.2 New aspects of URBACT III

URBACT II had a wider thematic scope to promote exchange and learning on sustainable urban development; it developed the so called "URBACT method" to promote an integrated and participatory approach with impacts in the cities involved in its "action planning networks".
It went beyond exchange and learning activity through the inclusion of capacity building measures. In its final year pilot networks on implementation and transfer were tested. In addition, new tools to share urban knowledge and know-how on thematic issues were developed.

Building on the experience of URBACT II and taking in account the context of the cohesion policy for 2014-2020, the new aspects of URBACT III are:
- A focus not only on the action planning phase but also on the implementation phase of integrated urban strategies and actions for more impact in cities and with stronger links with the mainstreams programmes.
- More capacity building actions to increase the know-how and the capacities of practitioners-decision makers of cities and of all the stakeholders involved in URBACT networks
- More work with national level and managing authorities involved in urban development
- A thematic coverage with a balance between thematic priorities and the bottom up approach of URBACT II which was highly praised by cities
- A result oriented approach using the Cohesion Policy Logical framework.
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[2] See http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/what/future/index_en.cfm for specific provisions for the support from the European Regional Development Fund to the European territorial cooperation goal.
[3] Common provision for ERDF, ESF, CF, EAFRD, EMFF and specific regulations for ERDF, ESF, European territorial cooperation regulations. See http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/what/future/index_en.cfm
[4] The Urban Development Network (UDN) will be made up of cities on which Article 7 actions are targeted as well as those participating in Urban Innovative Actions under Article 8.

2. Strategy of URBACT III

The strategy is made up of four specific objectives. These are discussed in turn below:

2.1 To strengthen Local Capacities on Integrated and Sustainable Urban Development

City administrations and stakeholders need to continually improve and build knowledge and skills to enable them to develop and implement sustainable integrated policy to respond to the manifold challenges they are facing.

Integrated urban development is a cornerstone of URBACT. The principles of integrated urban development were defined in the Leipzig Charter. The charter argues that an horizontal and vertical integration of policies and actions, designed and implemented with a participatory approach involving all stakeholders, are essential components to achieve the sustainable development of cities...

URBACT III will use its resources and know-how to strengthen the capacity in cities to deliver integrated urban strategy and actions on the thematic objectives corresponding to their challenges; the main target participants will include practitioners, city managers, elected representatives and stakeholders from other public agencies, the private sector and civil society.
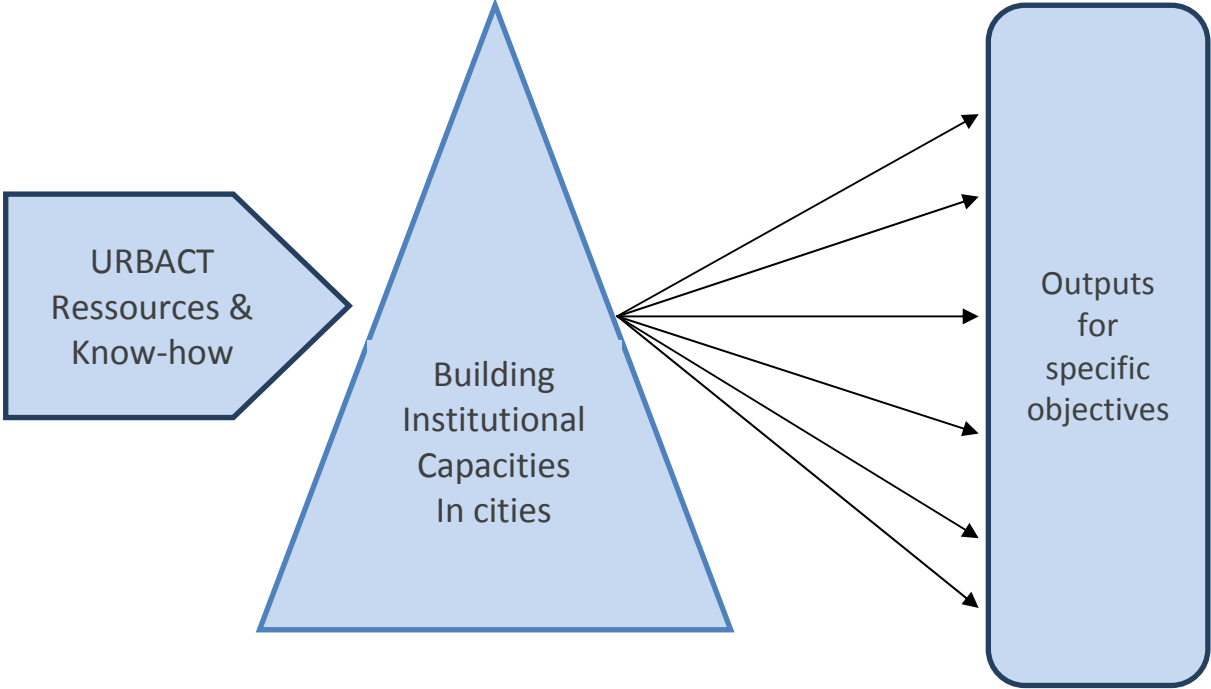
The activities of the programme are placed under the thematic objective 11 **"enhancing institutional capacity and efficient public administration"**. It contains a specific investment priority *'Disseminating good practice and expertise and capitalising on the results of the exchange of experience in relation to sustainable urban development, including urban-rural linkages'* dedicated to URBACT III[5].

URBACT does not carry out investment *per se* in urban development (such as road or science park construction) but achieves its impact through improving the quality of design and implementation of local actions and strategies.

As illustrated with the analogy of a prism in the image below. URBACT III is delivered through the thematic objective 11 on capacity building for cities, which refract across 10 thematic objectives and will serve to improve the impact of EU investments in urban areas in these policy fields.

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[5] As outlined in Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 (ETC) Article 7 (1) (c) (ii) and URBACT III operational programme par. 1.1.1 « URBACT in the legislative package for the programming period 2014-2020

THE URBACT prism

2.2 Needs of cities and corresponding specific objectives[6]

While the first specific objective of the programme is directly connected with the improvement of capacities of cities, the three others are contributing to it as well: the second one for cities designing integrated urban strategies and actions, the third one for cities designing integrated urban strategies and actions, and the fourth one for practitioners and decision-makers at all levels.

These specific objectives address the needs of city stakeholders at every stage of the delivery of urban policy and action which were identified.

Needs of cities	Specific objectives of URBACT III
1) Cities need to improve their capacity to develop and implement integrated urban strategies and actions.	1) To improve the capacity of cities to manage sustainable urban policies and practices in an integrated and participative way.
2) Cities need integrated urban strategies and actions for sustainable development	2) To improve the design of sustainable urban strategies and action plans in cities.
3) Cities need support for implementation of their integrated urban strategies and actions.	3) To improve the implementation of Integrated Plans for sustainable urban development.

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[6] URBACT III operational programme par.1.1.3 and table 2

4) Practitioners and decisions makers of cities, national, regional and EU need to have access and share relevant knowledge to foster sustainable urban development.	4) To ensure that practitioners and decision-makers at all levels (EU, national, regional and local) have increased access to URBACT thematic knowledge and share know-how on all aspects of sustainable urban development in order to improve urban policies

3. Thematic coverage

As explained under section 2.1, URBACT's strategic focus is to strengthen local capacities on integrated and sustainable urban development. URBACT is programmed under Thematic Objective 11 "enhancing institutional capacity and efficient public administration"..

URBACT will concentrate 70% of the programme resources for exchange and learning on five of the ten Thematic Objectives. These were identified in consultation with member and partner states (in bold in the table below). The remaining 30% of the budget for exchange and learning will be available for issues related to the other five thematic objectives and other issues in a bottom up approach to respond to specific requests from cities.[7]

The concentration will be achieved through the targeting of the calls for proposals for URBACT III networks. This will be organised through a precise definition of the thematic objectives in the calls in relation to urban issues and through a close monitoring and assessment of the projects. For that purpose an "urbanised" definition of the 10 thematic objectives has been made.

In addition the ERDF and ESF investment priorities with high relevance for urban issues related to these thematic objectives have been listed. It has to be underlined that these investment priorities do not apply to URBACT but to mainstream programmes.

The thematic objectives have been grouped under three broad fields.
- A. "economy and competitiveness"
- B. "urban environment and resilience"
- C. "employment, social and education"

	Thematic Objective (prioritised in bold)
Economy and Competitiveness	**1. Strengthening research, technological development and innovation**
	2. Enhancing access to, use and quality of information and communication technologies
	3. Enhancing the competitiveness of SMEs,
	4. Supporting the shift towards a low-carbon economy in all sectors
Urban environment and resilience	5. Promoting climate change adaptation & risk prevention & Management
	6. Protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency
	7. Promoting sustainable transport and removing bottlenecks in key network infrastructures

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[7] URBACT III Operational Programme par.1.2

Employment, social and education	8. Promoting employment and supporting labour mobility
	9. Promoting social inclusion and combating poverty
	10. Investing in education, skills and lifelong learning by developing educational infrastructure
	11. Capacity building

A. Economy and competitiveness

European cities follow different development trajectories and their diversity has to be exploited instead of expecting a single more normative model. Boosting competitiveness in the global economy has to be combined with making local economies more sustainable by anchoring development efforts in the local economic tissue.

I. Strengthening research, technological development and innovation

The EU 2020 strategy argues that Europe must develop its own distinctive and "broader" approach to innovation which addresses the major societal challenges and involves all actors and regions in the innovation cycle. This approach opens up new opportunities and challenges for cities. The closeness of city governments to users, local firms, and knowledge producers, as well as their direct experience in dealing with local needs means that they can play an important role as brokers between different parts of the "innovation ecosystem". They can use different tools to smooth the journey that innovatory ideas have to take in the different stages of the innovation cycle to full scale application. In this way, they can ensure that innovation is "smarter" in the sense of matching the real needs and potential of local firms and inhabitants. Indeed many of the roles that cities can play to stimulate **innovation are closely related to the core components of the URBACT methodology – namely** coproduction through multi-stakeholder local support groups and the development of local action plans.

II. Enhancing access to and, use and quality of information and communication technologies

Information and communication technologies (ICT) and specific urban technologies have the potential to support cities in addressing many urban challenges. These range from hard technological solutions in the field of urban energy efficiency, renewable energy, transport, safety, etc. to soft solutions for social interaction, citizens' participation or global management systems for city administrations or agencies. City managers must avoid the pitfalls of sectoral visions built on technology alone; the systemic dimension of problems and the high level of future uncertainty demand a refined understanding of the challenges and the possible technological responses within a wider societal context. A real challenge lies in engaging people in the active co-design of technologies in a social context that could result in social and technological innovation.

III. Enhancing the competitiveness of SMEs

Cities face major problems in converting or changing their development trajectory. They must create a favourable entrepreneurial environment while at the same time addressing employment, education and social issues; there is always a risk that a focus only on competitiveness could rely exclusively on an external qualified workforce and fail to create job opportunities for local people. A new sense of modesty and realism about what cities themselves can achieve is emerging. Cities often have neither the competences, nor the scale or the skills for directly providing certain services such as financial or non-financial support for firms. Meanwhile they can go further in their role as focal points for mobilising the business community, the universities, the civil society organisations; they

can in addition promote physical spaces as incubators or "anchors": they have also a specific responsibility for linking better public services with better jobs.

IV. Supporting the shift towards a low-carbon economy in all sectors

The low-carbon economy will have a much greater need for renewable sources of energy, energy-efficient building materials, hybrid and electric cars, 'smart grid' equipment, low-carbon power generation, carbon capture and storage technologies. There is conclusive evidence that building a low carbon economy can be a driver of socially inclusive economic development. The city should follow a twin-track approach, a carbon reduction strategy for housing, transport and industry, and a business, skills and jobs strategy to build a future-proof economy rooted in sustainable local business and employment growth. Cities have many instruments they can mobilize: use planning powers (environmental regulations on the quality of new development, and requirements for local energy generation), investment in their own housing or public buildings for energy efficiency, investment in new technologies linked with mobility, use procurement effectively, ensure local people benefit from new low carbon jobs, identify any training needs, etc.

B. Urban environment and resilience

They are many issues which cities can address through changing their physical structures and initiating changes in the behaviour of people and how they use these: to coordinate better transport, land use and open space planning and to explore alternatives to car mobility; to enhance the energy efficiency of buildings; to foster urban renewal and to develop and promote high quality public spaces and built environment; to protect and promote cultural heritage; to develop interconnected green and water areas for leisure and protection of the biotope; to promote new ways of food consumption, of energy production, of waste disposal; to promote better links between the dense urban areas and their rural surroundings.

V. Promoting climate change adaptation and risk prevention and management

Climate change has considerable impact on cities. Many of them are vulnerable because they are easily threatened by an overflow of rivers or the sea. The consequences of a lack of urban planning to prevent urbanization in high flood risk areas can be critical. Increasing temperature levels mean that the soil can become very dry or humid and the stability of buildings can be threatened. So, specific regulations are needed. The population has to be carefully involved in urban planning but also in all rescue plans which are needed when the worst has occurred. This issue is very sensitive for cities with a lot of environmental, economic, social aspects which have to be considered and interlinked.

VI. Protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency

A city is a complex organism whose well-being relies on the use of resources: air, water, soil, energy and land – all of which have to be carefully used and protected. So the city has to organize as much as possible the use of its resources in a circle so that water, soil and waste, can be reused. A few cities, of modest size, have even managed to produce enough energy for their needs with local resources. Meanwhile for the great bulk of them the priority is to reduce the use of energy for housing (in the EU 12 nearly 40% of the housings are high rise blocks with very low insulation), and for the other buildings, to promote renewable energies, to limit the urban sprawl, to promote the use of public transport, to develop new mobility schemes and behaviours.

An important basis for the efficient and sustainable use of resources is a compact settlement structure - in much of Europe this has been characterised as a polycentric structure of metropolitan areas instead of urban sprawl). This can be achieved by spatial and urban planning, and by a land policy which prevents urban sprawl. The strategy of mixing housing, employment, education, supply and recreational use in urban neighbourhoods is thought to be more sustainable than the rigid separation of land uses (Leipzig Charter). The compact and green city offers an interesting urban landscape, a healthy functional mix, and a good quality of architecture and design in its built environment. It offers easy access to green areas and open space for everyone. It takes care of and makes use of its historical site and monuments.

VII. Promoting sustainable transport and removing bottlenecks in key network infrastructures

The development of sustainable mobility is a key challenge for cities. Sustainable mobility includes several dimensions; energy-efficient and affordable public transport systems; a friendly environment for soft transport modes such as cycling and walking; easy access to all neighbourhoods, on foot, by bike, by public transport; local transport networks that need to be well connected to the regional network; peri-urban networks that need to be planned within the context of overall land-use and spatial developments. New mobility with cycling, walking, public transport are key factors to improving the quality of life in deprived areas, by increasing access to key services and jobs. In order to foster urban renewal, transport nodes must be integrated with social, cultural and economic activities. Sustainable mobility is at the heart of the city development strategy; so it has to be closely interlinked with other key policies of a city: urban planning, land policy, housing policy, economic and social development.

Because of likely future increases in energy prices and for city transport) innovative solutions are needed to ensure increased mobility in cities, and to allow the poorer strata of society to access job opportunities.

C. Employment, social and education

People living in the city are its main priority as well as its principal resource. They need a well-functioning city with access for all to job opportunities, effective services, good housing and overall a high quality of life and physical surroundings. The city must take care of all groups and neighbourhoods, promoting solidarity and investing in their education.

VIII. Promoting employment and supporting labour mobility

According to the EU's current Broad Guidelines for Economic Policies, "Member States should guarantee all citizens equal access to the economy. Inclusive growth should, therefore, contribute to creating a society in which all citizens participate in the labour market and profit from economic benefits". Most of the interventions of the cities are on the supply-side through the activation and up-skilling the competences of different target groups. Unless these supply-side measures run in parallel to those to increase the demand for labour, the result can only be a displacement of existing job vacancies among different groups. Although a lot can be achieved on the supply side: it is necessary to understand employer needs to prepare tailor made training; it is also very useful to anticipate on the medium term what enterprises will need. Consequently, schools and enterprises must be brought together to co-operate more effectively – in a process that should include other key stakeholders, including learners.

IX. Promoting social inclusion and combating poverty

Located at the interface between their inhabitants and other levels of government, cities have a better understanding of people's needs and the problems of exclusion that confront certain

individuals, families and groups. There are different policy areas where cities can intervene to make sure that each person in society has the right to live in dignity. These policy interventions range from creating conditions to generate new jobs, developing skills, providing affordable healthcare, reducing the negative effect of environmental pollution, improving access to ICT, increasing participation in cultural activities, improving public transport, providing affordable homes and addressing housing exclusion. Actions on the city level have to be combined very often with area-based interventions to avoid deprived areas becoming ghettos.

XX. Investing in education, skills and lifelong learning by developing educational infrastructure

The long-term economic health of towns and cities relies on investment in citizens' skills and professional qualifications. Cities are a place of education and skills development, where a lifelong learning revolution can happen. They are communities in which business and industry, schools, colleges, universities, professional organisations and local government cooperate closely in order to transform them into physically, economically and culturally pleasant places to live. The city has not only to provide the basic infrastructure needed but also to help to connect the different institutions, schools, universities, businesses, professional organisations and NGOs; the city has to target social groups which have specific support needs (early school leavers, immigrants, etc.) but also to encourage educational institutions which fit with the global development strategy of the city and with the needs of its inhabitants. This is a fine balancing act.

4. Programme main actions

The main actions developed by the programme are contributing to the four specific objectives (i.e. those for capacity building, action planning, implementation and capitalisation- See 2.2). They are dedicated to:

Transnational networking *(objective 2 and 3)* to support cities with the design and implementation of integrated urban strategies, building on mutual learning and the transfer of good practices.
This transnational networking will take place within three types of networks: *Action Planning networks* for cities wishing to design an integrated and sustainable urban strategy and action plan, *Implementation networks* for cities wishing to implement integrated and sustainable strategy and actions and *Transfer of good practices networks* for cities wishing to transfer a good practice from a giving city to receiving cities.

Capacity-building activities *(objective 1)* to enhance the capacities of urban players to develop integrated and participatory approaches to the design and delivery of public policies (through national seminars, Summer Universities, etc.).

Capitalisation and dissemination *(objective 4)* of urban knowledge, practices, policy recommendations etc. to inform policy-making and delivery at local, regional, national and EU level (through seminars, web platform, publications, National URBACT Points, etc.)

These main actions are described in the corresponding fact sheets as described in the table.

Specific objectives of URBACT III[8]	Main corresponding actions	Fact Sheet
1) To improve the capacity of cities to manage sustainable urban policies and practices in an integrated and participative way.	Capacity building activities[9]	Fact sheet 3
2) To improve the design of sustainable urban strategies and action plans in cities.	Action and Planning networks	Fact sheet 2A
3) To improve the implementation of Integrated Plans for sustainable urban development.	Implementation networks	Fact sheet 2B
	Transfer of good practices networks	Fact sheet 2C
4) To ensure that practitioners and decision-makers at all levels (EU, national, regional and local) have increased access to URBACT thematic knowledge and share know-how on all aspects of sustainable urban development in order to improve urban policies	Capitalisation and dissemination activities	Fact sheet 4

5. Programme area and beneficiaries

5.1 Programme area

The URBACT III programme area consists of[10]:

- The 28 EU Member States
- Partner States Norway and Switzerland. Partners from Norway and Switzerland cannot make use of ERDF allocations, but as official partner states in the URBACT III programme cities are co-financed at 50% by national funds.
- Instrument for Pre Accession (IPA) countries. Partners from IPA countries can participate in operations using IPA funding, without receiving ERDF co-financing
- Other countries. Partners from other countries, anywhere in the world, can participate with their own funding.

5.2 Beneficiaries

5.2.1 Cities as main beneficiaries for all programme activities

The main beneficiaries of the programme shall be cities from EU 28 Member States, Norway and Switzerland willing to develop integrated strategies and action plans for sustainable urban development.

Under URBACT III, the beneficiary "city" refers to the public local authority representing[11]:

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[8] URBACT III operational programme par.2.A.2
[9] URBACT III operational programme par.2.A.3
[10] URBACT Operational Programme, par. 1.1.1 Introduction
[11] URBACT Operational Programme, par. 2.A.3.1 b/ and c/

- Cities, municipalities, towns;
- Infra-municipal tiers of government such as city districts and boroughs in cases where they are represented by a politico-administrative institution having competences for policy-making and implementation in the policy area covered by the URBACT network concerned in which they are willing to get involved;
- Metropolitan authorities and organized agglomerations in cases where they are represented by a politico-administrative institution having delegated competences for policy-making and implementation in the policy area covered by the URBACT network.

They are no limit of size for cities wishing to participate in URBACT activities: "URBACT will respect the diversity of European settlement system and will target all kinds of European cities and towns including smaller and medium sized cities which tend to have less capacity and fewer specialised staff"[12].

5.2.2 Other beneficiaries of transnational networking

For the actions implemented under Objective 2 and 3 the list of other eligible beneficiaries is defined as follows[13]:

- Local agencies defined as public or semi-public organisations set up by a city, partially or fully owned by the city authority, responsible for the design and implementation of specific policies (economic development, energy supply, health services, transport, etc.)
- Provincial, regional and national authorities, as far as urban issues are concerned;
- Universities and research centres, as far as urban issues are concerned

The number of such beneficiaries is limited within a given project. See Factsheets on each kind of network for more detail.

5.2.3 Co-financing rates

The beneficiary cities and other eligible beneficiaries shall be co-financed for the actions implemented under Objective 2 and 3 from ERDF as follows[14]:

- Less developed and transition regions[15] as defined in EU Regulation 1303/2013 Article 120 3 (b) (c) (d) shall receive up to 85% ERDF contribution
- More developed regions as defined in EU Regulation 1303/2013 Article 120 3 (e) shall receive up to 70% ERDF contribution

5.2.4 Reaching cities and stakeholders beyond the circle of main URBACT beneficiaries

It is estimated that 70 networks with more than 500 cities involved will be launched during the entire life of the programme.

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[12] URBACT Operational Programme, par. 1.1.2
[13] URBACT Operational Programme, par. 2.A.3.1 b/ and c/
[14] URBACT Operational Programme, par. 5.3 Mobilization and circulation of financial flows : The contribution of the various partners to the financing of the programme
[15] For the definition of More Developed, Transition and Less Developed regions refer to the detailed map available in the DG Regional and Urban Policy website http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/index.cfm/en/

Through the transnational networking (specific objectives 2/3) and capacity building activities (specific objective 1), the programme targets as main beneficiaries these 500 cities and their stakeholders from the EU 28 Member States as well as Norway and Switzerland that are willing to develop and to implement integrated strategies and action plans for sustainable urban development or to transfer a good practice. These cities are the main beneficiaries of the programme.

Through its transnational networking and capacity building activities the programme will support around 5% of all the cities in Europe with more than 10000 habitants; it is therefore very important to consider as much as possible also this "second circle" of cities which will not participate directly in URBACT networking actions. It will be done through the capitalisation and dissemination activities of the programme under the specific objective 4 to consolidate and share knowledge acquired and developed in URBACT networks to those cities beyond the URBACT beneficiaries.

6. Programme Funding

The URBACT III programme is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) at EUR 74 301 909€ for a total eligible budget of EUR 96 324 550€.

More than half of the programme ERDF shall be dedicated to exchange and learning activities undertaken by cities with a further more than 40% of the ERDF budget dedicated to programme activities such as capacity building for urban stakeholders, expertise at project and programme level and National URBACT points.

7. Programme implementation structure

The management of this programme is based on the management structure applicable for a Structural Funds programme and is made up of:

- **a Managing Authority (MA)**

The Managing Authority is responsible for managing and implementing the Programme on behalf of the participating States in accordance with the relevant Community and national legislation. The participating states have designated the Commissariat général à l'égalité des territoires (CGET) located in France to take over these tasks.

- **a Certifying Authority (CA)**

The Certifying Authority is responsible in particular for certifying eligible expenditure as well as submitting payment applications to the European Commission and paying the corresponding public contribution to beneficiaries. According to Article 21 of Regulation (EU) 1299/2013 [CTE] the Managing Authority shall fulfil the functions of Certifying Authority.

- **an Audit Authority, (AA)**

The Audit Authority is responsible that audits are carried out to verify the effective functioning of the management and control system of the Programme. The Audit Authority is assisted by the Group of Auditors comprising representatives of each EU Member State and Partner State.
The "Commission Interministérielle de Coordination des Contrôles des Opérations co-financées par les Fonds Européens" (CICC) is acting as Audit Authority of the Programme.

- **a Monitoring Committee (MC)**

The Monitoring Committee is the main decision making body of the Programme. It is composed of representatives of all 30 Member and Partners states that participate in the Programme. The European Commission (Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy) attends with no voting rights. The Monitoring Committee is responsible for ensuring the effectiveness and quality of the Programme as well as for selection of projects.

- **a Joint Technical Secretariat (JTS)**

The Joint Technical Secretariat is responsible for providing all necessary information and management services towards the project partners. The JTS also supports the MC, MA, CA and AA in meeting their tasks. The office of the Joint Technical Secretariat is located in France.

The characteristics, tasks and responsibilities of each of these bodies are described in more details in the URBACT III Operational Programme, section 5.1.