

Urban Agenda for the EU

Cities are expected to play a key role in delivering the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, green and inclusive growth (European Union, 2015). Therefore, the EU's cohesion policy for the 2014–2020 period seeks to support towns and cities through a range of European investment priorities, such as urban mobility, economic and social regeneration, the digital agenda, improvements in research and innovation capacity, and the low-carbon economy. In the past years, the European Commission, EU Member States and

European cities have collaborated to develop an Urban Agenda for the EU. The core objective of the Urban Agenda for the EU is to involve cities in the design of EU policy, to mobilise cities for the implementation of EU policies, and to strengthen the urban dimension in these policies. Under the 2016 Dutch EU Presidency, the Urban Agenda for the EU aims to strengthen the urban dimension in EU policies by: (1) improving the development, implementation and evaluation of EU legislation ('better regulation'); (2) ensuring

better access to and utilisation of European funds; and (3) by improving the EU urban knowledge base and stimulating the sharing of best practices and cooperation between cities. In 2016, the Urban Agenda for the EU is focussing on 12 priority themes (see infographic), as well as aiming to promote stronger cooperation between the European Commission, EU Member States and cities in order to stimulate smart, green and inclusive growth in the cities of Europe.



Smart growth

The Europe 2020 strategy envisions the transition towards smart growth through the development of an economy based on knowledge, research and innovation. Concerning smart growth, cities are at the forefront of innovation. Moreover, the physical concentration of people and capital means that cities are more productive than other places.



Green growth

The green growth objective relates to the promotion of more resource-efficient, greener and competitive markets. Healthy, compact and energy-efficient cities are key to green growth in Europe. Many European cities are currently developing or expanding their networks for sustainable transport, waste management, district heating and green infrastructures.



Inclusive growth

The inclusive growth priority of the Europe 2020 strategy encompasses policies aimed at fostering job creation and poverty reduction. Cities can contribute to inclusive growth by combating social polarisation and poverty, by providing affordable housing and by integrating refugees and migrants into urban society.

Towards smart, green and inclusive cities

