

# URBAN AGENDA FOR THE EU



## Thematic Partnership on Building Decarbonisation: Integrated Renovation Programmes and Local Heating and Cooling Plans

### Background document for applicants

**3 July 2024**





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**Contact:** [urbanagenda@urban-initiative.eu](mailto:urbanagenda@urban-initiative.eu)

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>GLOSSARY.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>1. CONTEXT OF THE CALL AND SELECTION PROCESS.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON UAEU AND PARTNER RESPONSIBILITIES .....</b>	<b>6</b>
2.1 What is the Urban Agenda for the EU?.....	6
2.2 The process of the UAEU .....	8
2.3 The governance bodies of the UAEU .....	8
2.4 Role of Partners within the Partnership .....	9
2.5 The European Urban Initiative .....	10
<b>3. THEMATIC FOCUS .....</b>	<b>12</b>
3.1 Justification to launch a Thematic Partnership on <i>Building Decarbonisation: Integrated Renovation Programmes and Local Heating and Cooling Plans</i> .....	12
3.1.1 Initial scope of the topic and its relevance .....	12
3.1.2 Summary of the findings of the Ex-Ante Assessment against the UAEU assessment criteria .....	13
3.2 Thematic Focus.....	14
<b>4. CATEGORIES OF PARTNERS.....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>5. SELECTION CRITERIA .....</b>	<b>18</b>
5.1 Specific selection criteria for applicants as Partners .....	18
5.2 Specific selection criteria for local authorities .....	19
5.3 Specific selection criteria for applicants as Coordinators .....	19
5.4 Horizontal selection criteria applicable to the Partnership.....	20



# GLOSSARY

CALM	Coordinators and Action Leaders Members
CEMR	Council of the European Municipalities and Regions
CoR	European Committee of the Regions
DGUM	Directors General for Urban Matters
EAA	Ex-Ante Assessment
EED	Energy Efficiency Directive
EBPD	Energy Performance of Buildings Directive
EIB	European Investment Bank
EUI	European Urban Initiative
FED	Future Electricity Market Design Directive
UAEU	Urban Agenda for the EU
UATPG	Urban Agenda Technical Preparatory Group
UDG	Urban Development Group
NBRP	National Building Renovation Plans
NECP	National Energy and Climate Integrated Plans
OFC	Other Forms of Cooperation
RED	Renewable Energy Directive
TP	Thematic Partnership
TPO	Thematic Partnership Officer

# 1. CONTEXT OF THE CALL AND SELECTION PROCESS

This Call for expression of interest for Partners aims at establishing the **Partnerships** under the Urban Agenda for the European Union (UAEU) on (i) **Water Sensitive City** and (ii) **Building Decarbonisation: Integrated Renovation Programmes and Local Heating and Cooling Plans**.

Both topics were proposed within the Gijon Agreements at the Informal Ministerial Meeting on 14 November 2023. This call follows the Ex-Ante Assessments (EAA) on "**Water Sensitive City**" and "**Building Decarbonisation: Integrated Renovation Programmes and Local Heating and Cooling Plans**."

The EAA was proposed as a new step towards the creation of Partnerships and Other Forms of Cooperation (OFC) in the scope of the new phase of the UAEU established by the Ljubljana Agreement. The EAAs were developed between 10<sup>th</sup> of January and 26<sup>th</sup> of June 2024, to deploy a pragmatic, effective and result-oriented approach aiming at increasing the impact of future UAEU deliverables. The EAA has the purpose to optimise focus, timing and activities of the multi-level cooperation, as well as safeguard suitable level of partners' thematic and procedural expertise, in view of proposing an analysis and recommendations as to the conditions to launch a Call to create two new Partnerships of the UAEU.

Both EAA reports highlight the importance of a launch of the Partnerships and propose recommendations for a possible thematic focus of the Thematic Partnerships in relation to Better Knowledge, Better Funding and Better Regulation pillars. The final EAA reports were adopted by the **Directors General on Urban Matters (DGUM) on 26 June 2024** and the decision was taken to launch the Calls for the selection of Partners of the two new Thematic Partnerships. The eligible categories of Partners are specified under each priority theme, in section 4 below.

## The Call will remain open - until 2 October 2024.

The Call will remain open from **28 August until 02 October 2024**. The assessment of applications will be conducted by the experts responsible for each EAA of the themes and the selection criteria used to assess the applications were discussed and agreed in the UATPG meeting on 3 July 2024. These are presented in section 5 of this document.

The Call materialises into two **EU surveys** to be filled in by applicants, one for each theme. The surveys are accessible on the UAEU website: <https://www.urbanagenda.urban-initiative.eu/>

The survey questions are based on the selection criteria. Once the Call is closed, a proposed list of selected partners will be presented to the Directors Generals on Urban Matters in November 2024, seeking for their decision. If the DGUM's decision is positive, the Partnerships on Water Sensitive City and Building Decarbonisation: Integrated Renovation Programmes and Local Heating and Cooling Plans will be officially established.

## 2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON UAEU AND PARTNER RESPONSIBILITIES

### 2.1 What is the Urban Agenda for the EU?

The following sections aim to identify the **key objectives and features of the Urban Agenda for the European Union (UAEU)**. Applicants who wish to have more in-depth knowledge of the refer to the [UAEU website](#) read the following relevant material which contains more comprehensive information and details.

- [Pact of Amsterdam \(2016\)](#)
- [Assessment Study of the Urban Agenda for the European Union \(2019\)](#)
- [New Leipzig Charter \(2020\)](#)
- [and its Implementation Document \(2020\)](#)
- [Ljubljana Agreement \(2021\) and Multiannual Working Programme for the Urban Agenda for the EU - the Next Generation \(2021\)](#)
- [Urban Agenda for the EU: Multi-level governance in action \(2021\)](#)
- [Gijon Agreements \(2023\)](#)

The Urban Agenda for the EU is an **innovative multi-level governance initiative on urban policy**, developed in the scope of intergovernmental cooperation on urban matters, and officially established by the [Pact of Amsterdam](#) in 2016. It enables cities, Member States, city networks, the European Commission, other EU institutions, the Union's advisory bodies, and other stakeholders to come together to **jointly tackle pressing urban matters** and deliver concrete outputs for the benefit of EU citizens. The Urban Agenda for the EU is **boosting the role of cities** in national and EU policymaking to better connect the EU with citizens' needs. It is a key delivery mechanism at EU level for the [New Urban Agenda \(Habitat III\)](#).

Making **multi-level governance** tangible has been recognised as one of the most important successes of the Urban Agenda for the EU. Multi-level governance is crucial beyond this initiative and at the EU level, it is widely promoted through **Cohesion policy** in order to target the investments in the most efficient and balanced way.

The Urban Agenda seeks to stimulate action along three key objectives (or "pillars"): **Better Regulation, Better Funding and Better Knowledge**.



**Figure 1 - Source: EUI**

In addition, the UAEU aims to address several cross-cutting issues<sup>1</sup> and thematic priorities. The Pact of Amsterdam led to the selection of an initial list of 12 priority themes for challenges to be addressed in Thematic Partnerships. In 2018, two more themes were added, and two Thematic Partnerships launched accordingly<sup>2</sup> (Assessment study, 2019). Lastly, in 2021 the Ljubljana Agreement defined other four thematic focuses: Greening Cities, Sustainable Tourism (which have been launched in winter 2022) and Food and Cities of Equality (which have been launched in winter 2023). The Gijon Agreements (2023) proposed a selection of priority themes for future partnerships and agreed on seven new cross-cutting issues.

The complete list of themes tackled through Partnerships so far is the following;

1. Urban Poverty
  2. Inclusion of Migrants and Refugees
  3. Housing
  4. Air Quality
  5. Urban Mobility
  6. Digital Transition
  7. Circular Economy
  8. Jobs and Skills in the Local Economy
  9. Sustainable Land Use
  10. Public Procurement
  11. Energy Transition
  12. Climate Adaptation
- 
13. Culture/Cultural Heritage
  14. Security in Public Spaces
- 
15. Greening Cities
  16. Sustainable Tourism
- 
17. Food
  18. Cities of Equality

The 18 Thematic Partnerships have brought together more than 330 partners/members ranging between local, regional and national authorities, European Institutions, NGOs

<sup>1</sup> The seven cross-cutting issues are: Urban policy for the common good; Integrated and innovative approaches; Effective urban governance, participation and co-creation; multilevel governance; place-based approach and 3 spatial levels of the new Leipzig Charter; Planning and balanced territorial development; International dimension.



and Umbrella Organisations, research institutions, programmes and networks as well as private companies.

## 2.2 The process of the UAEU

As per the Pact of Amsterdam, a Partnership achieves results in about three years, but the partners may agree to prolong their activities. Each Partnership is tasked to prepare an **action plan which contains actions** (and possibly recommendations) that aim at addressing issues that hamper urban development in the specific thematic area and that are meant to be implemented after. The actions target one (or more) specific pillar(s) of the UAEU on Better Regulation, Better Knowledge and/or Better Funding and are addressed at the local level, national level and/or EU level. As for the type of actions, these may include the development of (new) data and indicators, guidance documents and handbooks, roadmaps/strategies, the design of a new governance structure, impact assessments, policy recommendations, toolkits etc. Each action has an action leader and contributors. Each action describes the issue at stake and explains what action is needed to solve this issue, including how it will be concretely implemented, by when and by whom. For more inspiration on what previous actions had been defined and implemented, you can consult the [Urban Agenda for the EU Brochure](#) as well as the [Monitoring Table of Actions \(version 2021\)](#) and the new [UAEU website](#).

The Partnership follows a structured process to develop its action plan, beginning with a scoping phase that involves brainstorming and creating an orientation paper, focused on potential subthemes under Building Decarbonisation: Integrated Renovation Programmes and Local Heating and Cooling Plans. This phase is shortened due to prior EAA contributions, which serve as a baseline. Next, the stocktaking phase involves analysing challenges, identifying solutions, and selecting actions. The draft action plan is then publicly reviewed and refined based on feedback from the European Commission, Members of the Urban Development Group and other interested stakeholders. Final approval occurs at the Directors General meeting on Urban Matters, after which implementation begins. The process includes multiple meetings and collaboration among Member States, the European Commission, and other stakeholders, as outlined in the Pact of Amsterdam.

## 2.3 The governance bodies of the UAEU

'The strategic steering of the UAEU is provided by the **Directors-General on Urban Matters (DGUM)**, which is the high-level decision-making body initiated prior to the Urban Agenda for the EU. The DGUM is composed of all Member States, the Commission and city representatives and associations (European Committee of the Regions (CoR), Eurocities, Council of the European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) and is co-chaired by the country holding the EU Presidency and the Commission (European Commission, 2017).

'The **Urban Development Group (UDG)** (expert working level) is made up of representatives of the Member State ministries responsible for urban issues, as well as other representatives of the multiple levels of governance (EC, EP, EIB, CoR, EESC, city representatives Eurocities and CEMR). The UDG is an informal advisory body to the Directors-General's on Urban Matters (DGUM). Its role is to both review the progress of the Partnerships and discuss issues pertaining to the UAEU at the intergovernmental level (European Commission, 2016). In principle, DGUM makes decisions based on the opinion forming process at the level of the UDG' (Assessment study, 2019).

'It was considered that the work of the Partnerships requires "operational guidance and interpretation of aspects of the Pact of Amsterdam and its Working Programme in



between UDG meetings.” (Bulgarian Presidency of the EU Council, 2018) [...] The mandate, scope, responsibilities and tasks of an **Urban Agenda Technical Preparatory Group (UATPG)** was thus created as a non-decision-making body, to act “as a technical executive group, supporting the actual Presidency of the Council in preparing UDG and DGUM meetings only with respect to the items related to UAEU”, and coordinate the technical issues related to the preparation of UAEU Partnerships (ibid). The UATPG is composed of 10 members, including: six Member States at a time – representing the rolling Presidencies (the two past Presidencies, the current one and the three succeeding ones); Commission (with the UAEU Technical Secretariat); three members in total from the European Committee of the Regions, Eurocities and CEMR’ (Assessment study, 2019).

## 2.4 Role of Partners within the Partnership

The following sections aim at capturing some of the expected roles of the partners in the scope of the Partnership in a succinct and non-exhaustive manner. The Pact of Amsterdam and the Multiannual Working Programme contain more comprehensive information and details on these roles.

### Cities

Urban authority representatives are at the heart of the UAEU. They identify the challenges they face at the local level and act as partners by contributing to the work on the actions and to their implementation (also as action leaders), by bringing inputs, by making the link to relevant activities or resources and by taking part in meetings. They also liaise with other cities to create bigger impact on the implementation of actions.

### City organisations (European and national) and URBACT

City organisations such as the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR), EUROCITIES, other bodies representing Urban Authorities at European and national levels, as well as EU programmes dedicated to sustainable urban development such as URBACT and The European Urban Initiative (EUI) bring their expertise and experience on the exchange of good practices and knowledge. They act as a partner, by contributing to the work on the actions and to their implementation (also as action leader), by bringing inputs, by making the link to relevant activities or resources and by taking part in meetings. They disseminate the outcomes of the UAEU to the cities which are part of their networks and promote synergies with a second circle of cities, who may in turn, contribute to the Partnership.

### Member States

They act as a partner, by contributing to the work on the actions and to their implementation (also as action leader), by bringing inputs, by making the link to relevant activities or resources and by taking part in meetings.

Member States ensure that the UAEU outcomes reach the local authorities in their Member State, e.g. by sharing the outcomes with cities that are not directly participating in the UAEU. Member States may provide financial resources to the implementation of the UAEU, e.g. through the organisation of meetings/events, the translation of documents in their national language, the support for the participation of cities etc.

### EU Institutions

The **European Commission** acts as a facilitator of the UAEU by providing EU funds to support the Partnerships’ activities and by making the link with the EUI Permanent Secretariat. The Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy coordinates the EU

support and helps to connect to relevant services within the European Commission to support the design and implementation of actions. The European Commission services act as partners of the Partnership, by contributing to the work on the actions and to their implementation (also as action leader), by bringing inputs, by making the link to relevant activities or resources and by taking part in meetings.

The **European Parliament** may consider the results and recommendations of the Partnerships for the agenda of relevant Committees when discussing relevant new and existing EU legislation and the [Urban Intergroup](#) may play an advisory role in the UAEU process.

The **European Committee of the Regions** and **European and Economic and Social Committee** may act as partners by contributing to the work on the actions and to their implementation (also as action leader), by bringing inputs, by making the link to relevant activities or resources and by taking part in meetings. They may contribute to the outreach of the UAEU, with dedicated activities aiming to involve a broader range of local authorities and civil society organisations.

The **European Investment Bank** (EIB) acts as a partner by contributing to the work on the actions and to their implementation (also as action leader), by bringing inputs, by making the link to relevant activities or resources and by taking part in meetings.

### **Other stakeholders**

Other stakeholders act as partners, by contributing to the work on the actions and to their implementation (also as action leaders), by bringing inputs, by making the link to relevant activities or resources and by taking part in meetings.

### **Coordinators**

Coordinators are responsible for the overall coordination of Partnership activities and are the main contact person for internal and external communication and outreach. They organise and chair Partnership meetings, organise and coordinate the work in between meetings, send e-mails to partners, reach out to other Partnership Coordinators, represent the Partnership in conferences, monitor and report on the Partnership's activities etc. Coordinators act as partners, by contributing to the work on the actions and to their implementation (also as action leaders), by bringing inputs, by making the link to relevant activities or resources and by taking part in meetings.

## **2.5 The European Urban Initiative**

1. As stipulated in the Cohesion policy regulatory framework for 2021-2027, the [European Urban Initiative \(EUI\)](#) shall support the UAEU, and upon request from one or more Member States, it may also support intergovernmental cooperation on urban matters. The support will be delivered by the EUI Secretariat, hosted by the Region Hauts de France. It will build on the outputs from the previous years of work and implementation and will seek to integrate as much as possible elements of the relevant urban-related initiatives and programmes as well as the work streams of the EUI. The UAEU will benefit from wider support in the context of the EUI, notably National Contact Points that will assist in the communication, dissemination and capitalisation activities of the UAEU and support relevant outreach. The support provided by the EUI includes all phases of the implementation of a Thematic Partnership / OFC, starting from the setting up of a new Partnership (including the Ex-

Ante Assessments of Partnership proposals), and possibly Other Forms of Cooperation on an ad-hoc basis up to the implementation of the Action Plan. Since 2023 the EUI provides a comprehensive support package for all new Thematic Partnerships established after 2021. This support package includes the following services:

- **Administrative Support:** Each UAEU Thematic Partnership will be secured with a Thematic Partnership Officer (TPO) for a duration of up to 3 years. The TPO provide advice and guidance about partnership planning, management, and monitoring.
- **Initiation Phase Service:** The EUI Secretariat will provide during the initiation phase to every UAEU Thematic Partnership initiation meetings and provision of support materials about the UAEU structure, templates, timelines for key deliverables and principles of managing the UAEU TP.
- **Provision of External Expertise Service:** Each Thematic Partnership will benefit from up to 70 expert days per year. The experts will be contracted when knowledge, know-how and expertise are not already available inside the Thematic Partnership or when there is not sufficient capacity to achieve a certain goal.
- **Reimbursement of Travel and Accommodation:** Financial support is offered to urban authorities and associations or groupings of urban authorities to actively participate in their UAEU Thematic Partnership in-person meetings to compensate for their limited resources and to actively participate in the Coordinators and Action leaders' in-person Meetings (CALM). This service is limited to cities for up to 500.000 inhabitants.
- **Communication and Dissemination Support:** The EUI secretariat offers communication and dissemination support, including information sessions and trainings, linked to the EUI Communication & Dissemination Strategy 2021 – 2027. Thematic Partnerships have the possibility to promote and disseminate content linked to their activities through news articles on the UAEU website, via the EUI Knowledge and Exchange Sharing Platform Portico, EUI newsletter, events and UAEU social media accounts.
- **Creation of Synergies:** Overall, the EUI Secretariat supports synergies between the UAEU Thematic Partnerships and other EUI work streams. Furthermore, it organises Coordinators and Action Leaders' Meetings (CALM) to offer a structured moment where the UAEU Thematic Partnership coordinators and action leaders of all ongoing Thematic Partnerships can exchange directly about the status of implementation of the Thematic Partnership, Action Plan and related events.

The EUI Secretariat will, together with the UAEU Thematic Partnerships, monitor the status of the UAEU development and implementation.

## 3. THEMATIC FOCUS

### 3.1 Justification to launch a Thematic Partnership on *Building Decarbonisation: Integrated Renovation Programmes and Local Heating and Cooling Plans*

The objective of this call for Expression of Interest is to select suitable and motivated partners for the UAEU Thematic Partnership on Building Decarbonisation: Integrated Renovation Programmes and Local Heating and Cooling Plans.

The analysis presented in the related EAA report confirms that the opportunity to launch the *Building Decarbonisation: Integrated Renovation Programmes and Local Heating and Cooling Plans* partnership is excellent at this time. This theme is well aligned with the current EU priorities.

#### 3.1.1 Initial scope of the topic and its relevance

The European Union has set very ambitious energy and climate goals, including the decarbonisation of the building stock by 2050. For achieving these goals Member States are obliged to develop and submit **National Energy and Climate Integrated Plans (NECPs)** and **National Building Renovation Plans (NBRPs)**. Under the revised **Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD)** local authorities must input/be consulted by Member States for their NBRPs for improving the energy efficiency and retrofitting of the building stock. Member States shall aim to reduce average residential energy use by 20-22% by 2035, and to renovate the 26% worst-performing non-residential buildings by 2033. The recently adopted **Energy Efficiency Directive (EED)** requires cities with 45,000 inhabitants to develop local cooling and heating plans. Adding to this, the Renewable Energy Directive (RED) includes a mandatory percentage of renewable energy in local heating and cooling plans, and a future electricity market design directive (FED) to put in place the incentives for occupants, building owners, distribution system operators, and investors to deliver renovations of buildings and urban regeneration investment into flexible energy resources, from heat pumps, solar panels and storage to heating and cooling networks.

To address these challenges, a multi-level governance approach to the decarbonisation of buildings with integrated renovation programmes under the EPBD and local heating and cooling plans under the EED and RED encourages a district, portfolio, and neighbourhood approach to make full use of the provisions in these recently recast directives. This approach will be linked with the future design of a decarbonised electricity grid, from the flexibility of energy use and development of district heating and cooling to the development of energy communities. To put in practice these objectives, it is important to develop programmes, strategies and plans at the local level.

### 3.1.2 Summary of the findings of the Ex-Ante Assessment against the UAEU assessment criteria

The need for partnership actions to test and demonstrate approaches to multilevel governance to deliver this interaction of district and neighbourhood approaches and integrated renovation plans with local heating and cooling plans to decarbonise Europe's building stock will intensify as EU and Member States implement the EBPD, EED, RED, and the FED with the assistance of local authorities. The New Leipzig Charter states:

*Climate-neutral energy supply, renewable resources, the implementation of energy efficiency measures, as well as climate-resilient and carbon-neutral buildings will contribute to significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions and helping European cities adapt to the impacts of climate change.*

The EAA identified places where better regulation, funding, and information meet the needs of small and medium sized cities to decarbonise buildings. Aggregating renovation demand to attract public and private investment is a particular barrier for interaction with EU and Member State programmes and strategies. In smaller cities, there are additional benefits of integrated renovation programmes including public, residential, and non-residential buildings to enable action and investment. This will be enabled by improvement in aggregating information on the scale of renovations needed in smaller cities.

The proposed theme will make a significant contribution to better regulation and funding of building decarbonisation through the EU's policy environment. The theme of building decarbonisation will have impact on better funding in the long-term. Member States must prepare and submit draft National Building Renovation Plans (NBRPs) by December 2025 as the Commission sets out the next multiannual financial framework (MFF) that will run from 2028 to 2034. The Social Climate Fund (created alongside ETS2) will mobilise at least €86.7 billion over the 2026-2032 period. Member State should submit plans to use this funding by June 2025.

In the short term, [Renovate Europe](#) expects more than €100bn, about one third of all 2021-2027 cohesion policy funding, will go to finance sustainable 'green transition' projects, and €20bn in the current MFF to help Member States, regions and cities to directly invest in energy efficiency. The private sector, however, will provide most of the funding. The EU supports this with loans and co-financing through InvestEU and the EIB. The EIB loans €150bn through the current MFF for urban projects, for example the European Initiative for Building Renovation: The [EIB-R was established by the Renovation Wave](#) to support building renovation plans.

Integrated renovation programmes and local heating and cooling plans are new parts of the *regulatory environment* for local authorities and Member States. The preamble to the EPBD states: "integrated district or neighbourhood approaches help to increase the cost effectiveness of the renovations required for buildings that are spatially related [to access a] variety of solutions at a larger scale." The EPBD requires these approaches, and how energy communities can be involved in their delivery in Member State NBRPs. The

EED requires input on integration of renewable energy into local heating and cooling plans. The FMD needs to incentivise Distribution System Operators, building owners, and occupiers to invest in renovations that rely on renewable energy, from heat pumps to storage. For all of these to be a success, local authority data and input on the most impactful district and neighbourhood approaches to decarbonising buildings through renovation and heating and cooling systems.

There are existing *gaps and recommendations* for a partnership to take action across building decarbonisation and integrated renovation programmes, and local heating and cooling plans. Overall gaps found in previous thematic partnerships that need to be addressed in this partnership:

- Interaction with national strategies for climate, urban policy, and energy policy was limited
- One-stop-shops focus on individual renovation solutions and have limited knowledge on district and neighbourhood solutions

Previous TP themes covering the energy transition, housing, greening cities, and climate action all identified further gaps to explore. There are challenges for integrated renovation programmes to link to energy masterplanning and to be able to attract blended public and private finance for both distributed and centralised district energy projects, including opportunities for State Aid to accelerate private investment. Other opportunities include the combination of green infrastructure with integrated renovation programmes and new approaches to energy flexibility in urban regeneration and energy renovation strategies.

### 3.2 Thematic Focus

This opportunity meets the first UAEU emphasis to increase actions for Better Regulation. The interaction between the EPBD and the EED across the EU is central to this potential thematic partnership. Local authorities are obligated to create local heating and cooling plans to decarbonise and increase renovations of buildings. The EPBD includes requirements for district and neighbourhood approaches to renovation of spatially related blocks, integrated renovation plans, and involvement of energy communities in Member States' national building renovation plans. The Future Electricity Market Design of the EU will ingrain incentives, from speed of access of electrified heating to the grid to consumer pricing, for decarbonisation of buildings. Local authorities in this TP will develop new ways of collaborating with building owners, Distribution System Operators, and Member States to increase the use of district and neighbourhood approaches to renovation of spatially related blocks.

The opportunity also meets the second UAEU emphasis to increase involvement of small and medium-sized cities in this TP. The EED states that local authorities may collaborate together to write and implement local heating and cooling plans. Financial and technical assistance from the EIB needs scale to engage. Small and medium-sized cities in this TP can develop new ways of collaborating with nearby cities, other cities in their State, and across the EU to increase renovation of buildings through use of the EED and EIB.

The opportunity will be maximised by including housing, non-residential, and public buildings in the national building renovation plans, local integrated renovation plans, local energy communities, and local heating and cooling plans addressed by this TP. Small and medium-sized cities need to maximise the volume of buildings in their integrated renovation plans – including the 3% annual renovation target for public buildings in the EED and the target to renovate the 16% worst-performing non-residential buildings by 2030 in EPBD – to create the scale needed for success in financing and implementation. Across all local authorities, spatially related areas that are the subject of district and neighbourhood approaches in EU cities are mixed-use.

This TP should include areas of cities in need of district and neighbourhood approaches to renovation, as any local authority would include all buildings in their local heating and cooling plan, integrated renovation plan, or local energy community. Inclusion of all buildings in these areas will make the TP more coherent when addressing the Future Electricity Market and grid stability as millions of buildings move their heating and cooling fuel from natural gas to electricity. Local authorities in the TP should focus on integrated renovation programmes with a balance of social and economic goals. It would be appropriate to include housing, but inappropriate to include some large non-residential developments (e.g. shopping centres, warehousing districts, and airports) where there are few spatially related housing blocks or public buildings.

For this theme, the analysis and feedback from stakeholders means a focus on:

- District and neighbourhood approaches to integrated renovation programmes
- Local heating and cooling plans as local development documents
- Future electricity market design that supports decarbonisation of buildings
- Cost effectiveness of renovations of spatially related buildings

The table below outlines examples of possible field of action for the Partnership to consider and which pillar they fall into.

**Table 1: Subtopics of possible field of action for the Partnership.**

Subtopic	Possible field of action	Pillar
District and neighbourhood approaches to integrated renovation programmes	Criteria for a local authority to identify integrated renovation programmes to support in their local heating and cooling plans	Better Regulation
	Supporting building owners in districts designated for integrated renovation programmes	Better Regulation
	Impact of local heating and cooling plans on urban regeneration	Better Knowledge



Impact of local heating and cooling plans	Impact of local heating and cooling plans on city climate adaption plans	Better Knowledge
Future electricity market design that supports decarbonisation of buildings	Integrated renovation programmes and local heating and cooling plans: Renewable energy communities and local energy system design	Better Regulation
	How local heating and cooling plans fund infrastructure through grid reinforcement and/or energy flexibility services	Better Funding
Cost effectiveness of renovations of spatially related buildings	Blended finance challenge for implementing integrated renovation programmes	Better Funding
	Promoting economic benefits of integrated renovation programmes equally and fairly	Better Funding





## 4. CATEGORIES OF PARTNERS

The composition of the partnership is essential in defining the theme as the background of each partner will play a critical role in this process. Eligible partners include:

- **Cities of all sizes** (including city regions, Functional Urban Areas and Agglomerations)
  - small (less than 50.000 inhabitants)
  - medium (between 50.000 and 250.000 inhabitants)
  - large (more than 250.000 inhabitants)
- **Regions and Regional Development Agencies**
- **Member states** (through relevant national level ministries and agencies)
- **Partner States** (Norway and Switzerland)
- **European and national city umbrella organizations.** Examples include:
  - European umbrella organisations
  - Member State associations
  - Urban planning institutions
  - Associations of building owners
  - Trade associations for renovation and the energy transition
- **Research organisations** and/or experts specialising in applied research relevant to renovation of buildings, urban planning, and energy grids

## 5. SELECTION CRITERIA

### 5.1 Specific selection criteria for applicants as Partners

The specific selection criteria below will be assessed on the basis of a **0-3 scale**. The selection criteria in detail:

- 1) **Motivation to become a member to** advance one or more of the four identified focus areas (See Table 1 in Section 3) in a way that contributes to improve EU policy, regulation and knowledge and brings specific contribution at the city level.
  - a) Provide evidence of relationship between the specific expertise of the applicant (and a potential member) and the specific issue or set of issues that motivate the applicant to be part of this specific partnership.
  - b) Applicants should show awareness of [previous activities in UAEU Partnerships](#) that may be related to the sub-themes and issues of their concern. Applicants need to demonstrate willingness to participate in meetings, share experience and disseminate knowledge; willingness to participate in EU policy dialogue etc.

- 2) **Expertise** and qualifications of the applicant with regard to at least one of the sub-themes and issues included referred to in Section 3 'Thematic focus'  
In the case of small and medium-sized cities, the expertise may be limited to specific aspects of the issue concerned and may have been developed through cooperation agreements with local, regional or national stakeholders. In case applicants possess knowledge/experience other than the ones mentioned above, they should clearly state it in the expression of interest. Expertise should be clearly demonstrated through description of past projects and initiatives.  
The main areas of expertise to be considered are:

- A) Building renovation programmes, including investment, financing, and installation of heat pumps, solar, storage, and district heating and cooling systems. Expertise of collaboration with building owners with local authorities to speed up funding and implementation of renovation programmes would be welcome.

**and/or**

- B) District and neighbourhood approaches to renovation, including cost-effective technologies for spatially related buildings and collaborative financing of these approaches. Public-private investment collaboration (e.g. through the EIB) expertise are especially welcome.
- C) Energy masterplanning, from local area energy planning to local heating and cooling plans. Expertise in collaboration with utilities and distribution system operators are especially welcome.

The expertise and experience could be acquired through (national, regional, or local) policy making, projects (design, management and/or implementation), research, activism (in case of NGOs and watchdogs) as well as active participation in international, EU and national networks within EU or national programmes focused on integrated renovation programmes and local heating and cooling plans.

- 3) **Outreach to relevant stakeholders and participation** in networks and cooperation programmes at local, regional, national and EU level, also based on previous experiences, with reference to building decarbonisation and/or urban policy issues, as well as the sub-themes and issues included in Section 3 'Thematic focus'
- 2.
- 4) **Readiness to participate with own human and financial resources:** availability and commitment of human and financial resources throughout the duration of the Partnership. As per the Multi Annual Working Programme, this will not be the prevailing criterion for small and medium sized cities.

## 5.2 Specific selection criteria for local authorities

- 5) **Social and economic goals:** Local authorities joining the TP should have or be interested in having a focus on integrated renovation programmes with a balance of social and economic goals. It would be appropriate to include housing, but inappropriate to include some large non-residential developments (e.g. shopping centres, warehousing districts, and airports) where there are few spatially related dwellings or sector premises. Local authorities that apply to be partners should show that they will include in their work in the partnership:
  - a) Predominately residential premises to be renovated across all the integrated renovation programmes envisaged for the city put together
  - b) Several instances within the city's envisaged integrated renovation programmes where residential and non-residential premises will be renovated within the same buildings and/or spatially related block.

## 5.3 Specific selection criteria for applicants as Coordinators

All the above specific selection criteria (1-4) and in addition:

- 6) **Project management expertise:** 1. specifically concerning projects and initiatives in multilevel governance and European/international contexts, based on evidence from previous experience 2. including expertise in dissemination and institutional communication at EU and national level

- 7) **Commitment** of adequate allocation of human and financial resources throughout the lifecycle of the partnership
- 8) **Proposal of a plan for the kick-start** of the Partnership's work based on the outcomes of the EAA and for the management of the new partnership.

**Table 2: Assessment grid for specific criteria for applicants (members and coordinators)**

Specific Selection Criteria for Members	Points*
1) Motivation to become a member	0-3
2) Expertise across three areas	0-3
3) Outreach	0-3
4) Readiness to participate with own human and financial resources	0-3
Additional Selection Criteria for local authorities	
5) Social and economic goals: Residential and non-residential balance	0-3
Additional Selection Criteria for Coordinators**	
6) Project management expertise	0-3
7) Commitment	0-3
8) Proposal of a plan for the kick-start	0-3

\*Points:

0	insufficient
1	sufficient
2	good
3	excellent

## 5.4 Horizontal selection criteria applicable to the Partnership

The Partnership will represent a diversity of members at different levels of governance. The horizontal criteria aim at guaranteeing a composition of the Partnership consistent with the objectives of the Urban Agenda for the EU and of the new Partnership on **'Building Decarbonisation: Integrated Renovation Programmes and Local Heating and Cooling Plans**. These will be considered once the specific selection criteria described below are assessed, in order to make a selection amongst the highest scoring participants. In line with objectives of the Urban Agenda for the EU the selection criteria for the potential members of the **'Building Decarbonisation: Integrated Renovation Programmes and Local Heating and Cooling Plans** UAEU Partnership are as follows:

- 9) **Multi-level and multi-stakeholder approach:** in line with the Pact of Amsterdam, the Partnership will be composed of **about 15 to 20 partners** from all levels of government and from different types of organisations. In order to



ensure the representativeness of the local level, the Partnership will include **at least five cities** (urban authorities), as well as European and national city umbrella organisations.

10) **Size of cities:** at least one 'small-sized city' (below 50.000 inhabitants) and one 'medium-sized city' (below 250.000 inhabitants) will be part of the Partnership. In line with the Ljubljana Agreement Multi Annual Working Programme, 'if no small and medium-sized urban authorities are selected in the open call, a nomination of small or medium-sized urban authorities can follow. Nominations can be proposed by Member States, Committee of the Regions and URBACT (upon approval of the Monitoring Committee) to the DGUM.' As the horizontal criteria will not be scored, the small and medium-sized cities with the highest assessment score(s) on the specific selection criteria will be selected.

3.

11) **Geographical balance:** During the selection process, one of the aims will be to ensure a relative geographical balance between the members across Member States and Partner States.

12) **Prior involvement in the UAEU:** Prior involvement in the UAEU is not required. The selection should give the opportunity to new cities/organisations to be involved as far as possible.

**Coordinators:** a maximum of two will be appointed, at least one from a city (regardless of size). In their expression of interest, applicants should indicate if they would like to be considered for the role of a Coordinator.